



“He [Zelensky] doesn’t have anything until I approve it. So we’ll see what he’s got.”
Donald Trump ahead of Ukraine peace talks

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Jamaat question deepens rift within NCP

Tasnim Jara quits, 30 others object to ‘seat-sharing’ with the Islamist party

SHAMIMA RITA

Just a day before the deadline for submitting the nomination papers, the National Citizen Party faces turmoil as two key leaders have quit over the party’s decision to pursue a seat-sharing deal with Jamaat-e-Islami.

Senior Joint Member Secretary Tasnim Jara announced her resignation yesterday, and Joint Secretary Arshadul Haque stepped down on Thursday, with sources suggesting others may follow.

At least 30 central leaders wrote to Convener Nahid Islam, warning that an alliance with Jamaat would betray grassroots leaders and undermine the party’s ideology.

“The basis of our objection lies in our party’s declared ideology, the historic accountability associated with the July uprising, and fundamental questions of democratic ethics,” the letter said.

They argued that since the July uprising, Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing, Islami Chhatra Shibir, have engaged in divisive politics, infiltration, sabotage, false accusations against the NCP, propaganda during student union elections, and online character attacks on female members.

The letter also cited Jamaat’s anti-independence role in 1971, its collaboration in genocide, and its stance on wartime crimes as fundamentally incompatible with Bangladesh’s democratic consciousness and the party’s values.

“Our responsibility is to guide the state and society toward human rights, religious tolerance, equal dignity of women and men, protection of minorities, civic rights, and above all, democratic values. Any alliance with Jamaat-e-Islami would weaken this moral position and damage our credibility.”

30 NCP leaders in their letter to party convener

Stressing the legacy of the July uprising, they said, “Our responsibility is to guide the state and society toward human rights, religious tolerance, equal dignity of women and men, protection of minorities, civic rights, and above all, democratic values. Any alliance with Jamaat-e-Islami would weaken this moral position and damage our credibility.”

The letter reminded leaders that they had previously criticised Jamaat’s duplicity on reform issues and declared their intention to contest all 300 seats independently, going on to form the “Gonotantik Songskar Jote”.

Noting that nearly 1,500 nomination forms were sold and 125 candidates were selected, the letter warned that shifting to an alliance for a few seats would deceive the nation and disappoint supporters seeking principled, future-oriented politics.

“If moderate supporters withdraw, the party will lose its centrist base. This would harm the NCP’s independent political agency,” it said, urging a clear stance against any alliance with Jamaat.

“Strategy should be determined by principles; principles should not be sacrificed for tactical considerations.”

According to NCP sources, the party had been preparing to contest the election alone for the past two months but changed its position after the killing of Sharif Osman Bin Hadi, spokesperson for Inqilab Moncho and an independent candidate for Dhaka-8.

Since then, security concerns among NCP leaders and activists have intensified, while party leaders have increasingly felt that alignment with a major political force is necessary to consolidate the NCP’s place in national politics.

Tasnim Jara was not a signatory to the letter. She announced her decision to run as an independent candidate from Dhaka-9 in a Facebook post yesterday.

Addressing the residents of Dhaka-9, Jara wrote in her post, “I promised you and the people of this country that I would fight for you and for building a new political culture. No matter what the circumstances may be, I am firmly determined to keep that promise.

“Candidates backed by political parties have local party offices and

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Through the dense fog, a motorcyclist navigates a barely visible road in the Birulia area near the capital’s Uttara yesterday morning. The photo was taken around 8:00am.

PHOTO: STAR



Khaleda Zia ‘going through critical phase’

Says Dr Zahid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is passing through a critical phase, and it cannot be said that her physical condition has improved, her personal physician Zahid Hossain said yesterday.

He added that Khaleda’s elder son, BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman, has sought prayers from people across the country for his mother’s quick recovery.

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Seat-sharing math grows complex for Jamaat

Leaders claim they’re close to agreement despite NCP in the fray

RASHIDUL HASAN

The seat-sharing talks between Jamaat-e-Islami and its seven allies, including Islami Andolan Bangladesh, appear increasingly complicated with the NCP and other parties seeking a share as well.

Jamaat and IAB leaders, however, insist a deal is imminent, and a nomination list is expected to be finalised today, a day before the deadline for nomination submission.

“The top leaders of Jamaat and Islami Andolan Bangladesh are scheduled to hold a meeting tonight [yesterday] to finalise the nomination list,” IAB Secretary General Yunus Ahmed said. “The list will be made public through a press conference tomorrow [today] or the day after.”

The talks formally began on December 9, with Jamaat leaders initially hopeful that a final list of candidates from the eight like-minded parties could be announced within a week.

But things became so difficult that senior Jamaat leaders cancelled prearranged programmes to focus solely on negotiations, according to an aide to a top Jamaat leader.

Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar, however, dismissed claims of discord. “Our discussions with different

political parties regarding seat sharing are almost at the final stage. It will be finalised very soon,” he said.

Echoing that optimism, Jamaat Assistant Secretary General and head of the party’s publicity wing, Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair, said they hoped to complete the process before the December 29 nomination deadline.

Jamaat is holding seat-sharing talks not only with its ideological allies but also with the NCP, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Bangladesh Labour Party.

“Additional time is required for redistribution of nominations as several new political parties, including the National Citizen Party, have joined discussions with us,” he said. “The nomination list of the eight like-minded parties and others who joined us will be

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MOMENTUM FROM TARIQUE’S RETURN

BNP looks to take it to ballot box

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The BNP is aiming to sustain the momentum generated by acting chairman Tarique Rahman’s return and rally supporters ahead of the upcoming 13th national election.

The party believes that Tarique’s homecoming has dispelled the uncertainty and confusion that had surrounded the polls.

Senior leaders said party workers are energised, with his arrival adding fresh pace to campaign activities nationwide.

“Tarique Rahman’s return has put an end to all kinds of doubts surrounding the upcoming polls. Leaders and activists are now united and energised. His arrival has also strengthened the BNP and given the party new drive, which leaders and activists want to maintain,” said BNP Joint Secretary General Syed Emran Saleh Prince.

Echoing the sentiment, BNP Standing Committee member Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku said the interest and excitement among party members and the public in general over Tarique Rahman’s homecoming was positive for BNP.

According to insiders, party leaders and activists want to avoid creating any situation that could negatively affect the election environment or harm the party’s image, especially now that Tarique is present in the country.

BNP wants to prevent any disorder among its leaders and activists during the election period that could give rival parties an opportunity to undermine the party.

The leadership sees this present moment as a chance to turn public attention towards BNP as the election approaches.

Sources note that meetings, outreach programmes and internal coordination efforts are expected to increase in the coming days, particularly at the grassroots level.

Senior leaders plan to stay engaged in election-focused activities. As part of this, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir will

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Tarique, Zaima finish process to become voters

BNP acting chief offers fateha at Hadi’s, Koko’s graves

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman and his daughter Zaima Rahman yesterday completed the procedures required to be listed as voters ahead of the national election and referendum on the July charter slated for February 12.

On the third day of their return, the father-daughter duo visited the Election Commission office in the capital’s Agargaon separately amid heavy security to register as voters in Ward no. 19 under the Dhaka-17 constituency.

The family’s present address on Gulshan Avenue falls under that ward.

Tarique has not been listed as a voter yet because he has been away since the EC began preparing voter lists with photographs ahead of the December 2008 polls.

The Election Commission will hold a meeting today to decide on the inclusion of Tarique and Zaima in the voter list, said EC Secretary Akhtar Ahmed.

According to Section 15 of the Voter List Act, 2009, the EC may, at any time, include or remove the name of any person entitled

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BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman gets his photograph taken as part of his voter registration process yesterday afternoon at the Election Commission headquarters in the capital’s Agargaon. He is expected to receive his national identity card within 24 hours.

PHOTO: BNP MEDIA CELL

HADI KILLING Inqilab Moncho calls blockades in all divisional cities today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inqilab Moncho yesterday announced all-out blockades in all divisional cities from today as its protests demanding justice for slain leader Sharif Osman Bin Hadi spread beyond the capital.

The blockades will begin at 11:00am, the organisation said in a Facebook post around 11:30pm. The announcement was also made from Shahbagh intersection, where Inqilab Moncho continued its sit-in for the second consecutive day, reports Prothom Alo.

During the programme at Shahbagh, Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan and Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sheikh Md Sazzat Ali visited the site and briefed protesters on the progress of the investigation around 11:00pm.

Pledging quick submission of the charge sheet and speedy trial, the adviser said, “The interim government is working to identify those who killed martyr Osman Hadi and those who worked behind the scenes, and to bring them to justice.”

The DMP commissioner said the

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