

Outlaws plan united action

Top leaders for single platform during caretaker govt

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Back From Shaikupa (Jhenidah)

Top leaders and cadres of outlawed parties in south-western region have decided to gear up activities under the joint banner of 'Naxalite movement' after takeover by the caretaker government.

Top leaders of several outlawed parties recently held two separate meetings at Kodalia village in Jhenidah Sadar and Malithia village in Shaikupa upazila in Jhenidah district.

The outlaws plan best use of the 'appropriate time' as the democratically elected four-party alliance government ends its tenure within a few months, the sources

informed.

At their latest meeting held on Sunday at Malithia village, leaders of the underground outfits discussed ways to revamp all outlawed parties under a 'single platform', the sources said.

"To evade attention of police and local people, they arranged a small gathering pretending that it was a get-together of some of friends", one source said. Earlier they held another meeting on Saturday at Kodalia village in Jhenidah Sadar upazila.

The meeting at Malithia was attended by founder of Janajuddha faction of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) Abdur Rashid alias Dada Tapan. Pulok of PBCP (Red Flag) and

Madhu Babu of Chinnomul Communist Party (CCP) were among others who attended the meeting. None from Biplobi Communist Party (BCP) attended the meeting, the sources said.

At the meeting, most of the outlawed leaders said there was no alternative to launching 'operation together' for survival of parties, the sources said. The meeting however could not finalise the 'agenda' for activities during the tenure of the upcoming caretaker government or which of the political parties to be supported in the next general election.

Dada Tapan, top leader of Janajuddha, the strongest outlawed outfit in the region, proposed merger of small under-

ground parties with Jannajuddha. However, this was not accepted by other leaders, who suggested formation of an alliance.

At the meeting, they decided that to work for a common goal, an alliance could be formed, primarily styled 'Naxalite Movement'. They also discussed possible shelters during the caretaker government's tenure, sources in intelligence agencies said.

But they were unanimous on one issue to avenge the 'killings' of their party cadres in the name of 'crossfire'. The meeting also decided to gear up their 'operations' after takeover by the caretaker government.

Though sources in intelligence agencies confirmed the meetings,

police officials in Jhenidah are tight lipped on the matter.

A high ranking police official in Jhenidah, seeking anonymity however admitted that they heard about the meetings at Kodalia and Malithia villages. He said the outlaws chose the two villages near border of the Magura and Jhenidah districts, considering them safe places to escape arrest.

He said police are alert and a drive is on to nab the outlaws.

Activities by outlaws declined somehow after several drives by law enforcers and killings of cadres in 'crossfire'. Some top outlaws including 'Kashi Siraj' of Kushtia, Laltu of Chuadanga and Shimul are now behind the bars.



Teachers and employees of non-government schools brought out a procession and held a rally in Sylhet city as part of their countywide programme yesterday to press their 10-point demand.

PHOTO: STAR

Teachers in dists vow to realise demands

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Striking school teachers brought out processions and held rallies in district headquarters yesterday in a run up to their July 23 'grand rally' in the capital to press their 10-point demand.

At the rallies, leaders of Shikhhok Karmachari Oikhya Parishad vowed to continue the strike till the demands are met. Tougher agitation programme will be announced at the 'grand' rally, they said.

Addressing a divisional rally of teachers in Jessore, chief coordinator of the Parishad Selim Bhuiya claimed that at least four lakh teachers and employees of schools will attend the Dhaka rally on July 23, our Jessore Correspondent reported.

Selim Bhuiya demanded resignation of Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman for what he called playing a role against the interests of teachers. State Minister for Education Ehasanul Haque Milon also betrayed with their cause, he alleged at a big rally held at Jessore Edigah Maidan. It was presided over by Atiar Rahman.

Selim Bhuiya said, "Agitation will continue till an announcement is made for payment of 100 per cent salary of non-government teachers and employees from the government exchequer.

Teachers will not return home till their 10-point demand is met, he said.

"The prime minister and the education minister had agreed in principle to meet our lawful demands but the finance minister and the state minister for education spoiled the whole thing", Selim said.

"He (Mannan Bhuiyan), then an opposition leader, requested us to break the hunger strike, promising that non-government school teachers would get 100 of their salary from the government exchequer of BNP goes to power", Selim claimed.

No party could go to power in the past by depriving the teaching community, he said.

In Gaibandha, over 1000 teachers and employees brought out a procession yesterday in the town as part of their countywide programme.

The processionists paraded the main roads of Gaibandha town and later held a rally in front of the office of Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer. Speakers at the rally urged the government to fulfil their demands to remove the disparity in salary with government school teachers.

They also condemned the police action on peaceful programme of teachers in Dhaka and demanded punishment to the persons responsible for this.

Expressing solidarity with demand of teachers, Gaibandha units of Samajtantrik Chattra Front formed a human chain on DB Road in the town.

Father, son electrocuted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A father and his son were electrocuted at Monoherpur village in Gaibandha Sadar upazila as they came in contact with a snapped live wire of Power Development Board (PDB) that fell on their cropland earlier.

Locals and police said Abdul Mollah, 56 and his son Abdul Hamid, 27, went to work in their field near their house.

Unaware of the live wire on the field, Abdul Hamid first came in contact with it and was electrocuted. In an effort to save his son, the father touched him and was electrocuted instantly.

Villagers later recovered the bodies. The power line was connected with an irrigation equipment.

BNP leader tortured by party rivals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Ruling BNP leader and chairman of Ghoraghat upazila was tortured by his party rivals last night.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team led by Ghoraghat thana officer-in-charge Abu Bakkar Shiddique raided the house of Delzar Hossain Billu, general secretary of Ghoraghat BNP.

They arrested Billu with 20 bottles of phensidiyl in his possession.

But, the party rivals snatched Billu away from police custody at 10.30 pm.

They tortured him confining him at a house till midnight for his alleged misappropriation of Tk.1.5 crore.

At around 3.40am Billu was handed over to police, according to police sources.



PHOTO: STAR

The Chichirbandar Karent Hat Degree College, 12 miles from Dinajpur town, is threatened with erosion by Kakra river, which has already devoured about 200 sq metres of its compound. The college authorities said they urged the Water Development Board to take immediate steps to save the college, but to no effect.

RU students continue agitation

RU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Progotishil Chhatra Jote (PCJ) staged separate demonstrations at Rajshahi University yesterday demanding resignation of vice-chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain for appointing "controversial" persons as teachers in some departments.

They also protested against selection of a 'controversial person' for appointment as teacher in marketing department who was dismissed from another university earlier for alleged immoral activities.

At rallies in front of central library, the student leaders criticised university authorities for 'illegally' appointing more teachers than the vacant posts in the departments.

They also criticised RU VC for allowing murder suspect Islami Chhatra Shibir leader Salehi to appear at Masters examination and demanded a reversal of the process.

Mahbub Alam Salehi, president of Shibir unit at RU, is a key suspect in RU teacher S Taher Ahmed murder case.

The student bodies also demanded arrest and punishment to killers of Prof Taher.

They said eight persons have been selected for appointment against two vacant posts in Marketing department.

One of them - Bakhtier Ranawas dismisses for service in a university in Chittagong earlier for immoral activities, they said.

They threatened of tougher agitation if the university authorities do not stop such "illegal" appointment of teachers and employees and allow Shibir cadre Salehi to appear at examination.

Earlier, activists of the two student bodies brought out separate processions on the campus.

Meanwhile, several hundred students marketing department yesterday staged an hour-long sit-in in front of administrative building protesting selection of Bakhtier Rana for appointment as a teacher in the department.

During the sit-in, some agitating students tried to damage the official car of RU vice-chancellor but were resisted by police.

The students later held a rally in front of central library premises where they threatened to boycott classes and examinations for an indefinite period if the selection of the 'controversial' person is not cancelled.

The students gave an ultimatum till July 23 when a Syndicate meeting is scheduled to be held.

Earlier, the students of Marketing department submitted separate memorandums to RU VC and the department chairman demanding cancellation of the selection of the teacher.

Zia fertiliser incurs loss of Tk 85 cr in a year

Technical faults keep factory idle for 73 days in last fiscal

SHEIKH SHAHIDUL ISLAM, B'baria

Zia Fertiliser in Ashuganj Factory incurred a loss of Tk 85 crore in the last financial year Tk 55 crore on count of production loss and Tk 30 crore for selling urea at prices lower than production cost.

The factory suffered a production loss of 1,25,000 tonnes as it remained inoperative for 73 days due to the technical faults.

The production target was 4,20,000 tonnes of urea during fiscal 2005-2006.

A few days into the financial year, the compression tube of the factory blasted with a big bang, keeping the giant factory silent for 20 days. As technical problems occurred frequently after the dis-

ruption, the BCIC authorities scaled down the production target to 3,80,000 tonnes.

Sources in the factory said the old machinery and equipment always kept them worried as it might stop rumbling any time.

Faults were detected often in the ammonia plant, cooling tower, compressor tubes and other vital and major equipment as those were old.

An engineer seeking anonymity said daily production came down to 75 per cent of its average capacity after a devastating fire in the ammonia plant in February last year.

The factory is now producing 1200 to 1250 tonnes of urea daily against its capacity of 1600 tonnes. The cost of production is also rising

due to old machinery. Raw materials which earlier produced 1600 tonnes now produce 1200 to 1250 tonnes, he said.

The factory could not achieve its production target during 2004-2005 financial year also.

The factory's loss is increasing as urea is sold at below the production cost. The production cost of urea is Tk 5600 per tonne, which is sold at Tk 4800, incurring a loss of Tk 800 per tonne. The total loss on this count stood at Tk 30 crore during 2005-2006 financial year, the sources said.

The factory needs a thorough overhaul immediately to keep it running, they said.

Dissolve MP's 'pocket' bodies

BNP men in Netrakona hold rally, procession

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Several hundred BNP activists took out a procession in Kendua upazila headquarters Tuesday evening and held a rally in front of the Press Club demanding dissolution of newly formed BNP committees in Kendua and Atpara upazilas.

The committee in Kendua was formed at a party council held on June 27, which was boycotted by a faction of the party unit, party sources said.

They claimed that the committee was formed at the behest of Khadija Amin MP. She earlier formed union committees ignoring dedicated party workers and later formed the upazila committee with her men, they alleged.

President of the new committee Nazmul Haque Kachi and its secretary Delwar Hossen Buiyan joined BNP from Jatiya Party (Ershad) one year ago, they said.

Earlier, on June 25, hundreds BNP activists from Kendua and Atpara upazilas (constituency of ruling party MP Begum Khadija Amin) brought out a procession and held a rally in Netrakona district town demanding cancellation of the June 27 council of Netrakona district BNP, planned by Khadija Amin.

The protest programmes were led

by central Jubo Dal leader Rafiqul Islam Hilali. They had alleged that Khadija Amin planned the council by sidelining dedicated party leaders and workers.

Ignoring the protests, Khadija Amin MP and Netrakona district BNP president MAKarim Abbasi MP held a council and selected a district committee, allegedly violating the party constitution, party sources said.

Netrakona district BNP secretary Mahfuzul Haque and organising secretary Nazrul Islam Khan did not attend the June 27 council conference.

Speakers at yesterday's rally at Kendua sought immediate intervention by BNP chief Khaleda Zia and secretary general Abdul Mannan Buiyan to resolve the crisis.

They said BNP leaders and workers in Kendua will not accept Khadija's 'pocket committees' in Kendua and Atpara upazilas.

They also brought allegations of corruption and undemocratic practices against her. There was no development in the area during her tenure, they claimed.



PHOTO: STAR

BNP men brought out a procession in Kendua upazila in Netrakona on Tuesday demanding dissolution of 'pocket' committees of the party formed by the local lawmaker.

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