

Khaleda symbolises mainstream BNP

Most leaders in Pabna say action against Mannan Bhuiyan correct

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Majority BNP leaders in Pabna think the faction led by Begum Khaleda Zia is the 'mainstream BNP' and Khandaker Delwar Hossain is its secretary general.

Expelled secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan is nobody in the party, they said.

They will not support Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan as he was expelled by the party chief for 'anti-party activities', they said while talking to this correspondent.

This correspondent talked to a good number of front ranking leaders of the district committee including acting president Abdullah Al Mahmud Mannan Master, vice-president AKM Musa, secretary Habibur Rahman Tota, Sadar upazila unit president Abdus Samad Khan Mantu and some other leaders of the party and its front organisations.

They expressed similar views about Khandaker Delwar Hossain and Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan.

Bangladesh Nationalists Party (BNP) was formed by Ziaur Rahman. Begum Khaleda Zia carried the ideology of the party now, they said.

"Mannan Bhuiyan has been expelled from the party. So, he is nobody in the party now", said Abdullah Al Mahmud. Most party leaders and activists in Pabna are with Delwar as he enjoys confidence of Khaleda Zia, he said.

"They will not support Mannan Bhuiyan".

He however said few of the grassroots leaders met him so

far. They will hold a meeting and express their resolve when the ban on indoor politics goes, he said.

Pabna district BNP secretary Habibur Rahman Tota said there may be difference of opinion among leaders as BNP is a big party. But the move taken by Mannan Bhuiyan is damaging the party and his expulsion was a correct decision by the party chief.

About reforms in the party, they said this should be done keeping Begum Zia in her position. She symbolises unity of the party and its ideology, they said. Thinking reforms without the party chief would be dividing the party to serve 'self interest', they said.

Asked how Begum Zia will lead the party from jail, they said it is a temporary problem for the party. She will come out if the trial is fair as the charges are false, they claimed.

They refuted Mannan Bhuiyan's claim that he musters support of most of the central committee leaders and former lawmakers.

Grassroots leaders and workers are with Begum Zia across the country. In Pabna, most leaders at upazila level criticised Mannan Bhuiyan for his recent steps and statements as regards the party, claimed Pabna Sadar upazila BNP president Abdus Samad Khan Mantu. Similar is the situation in most districts, he claimed.

"If the situation changes, most leaders now with Mannan Bhuiyan will leave him. The MPs

who are with him do not organise the party. The party is run by people at grassroots level," Mantu said.

Mahmud also claimed that grassroots leaders of BNP's fronts including Jatiyatabdil Jubo Dal, Chatra Dal belong to the mainstream of the party led by Khaleda Zia and Khandaker Delwar.

He said Mannan Bhuiyan is misleading party men in the name of reform. The leaders now with him while soon fall apart, he added.

Pabna district BNP president Sirajul Islam Sarder and organisaing secretary Kamrul Hassan Mintu are detained.

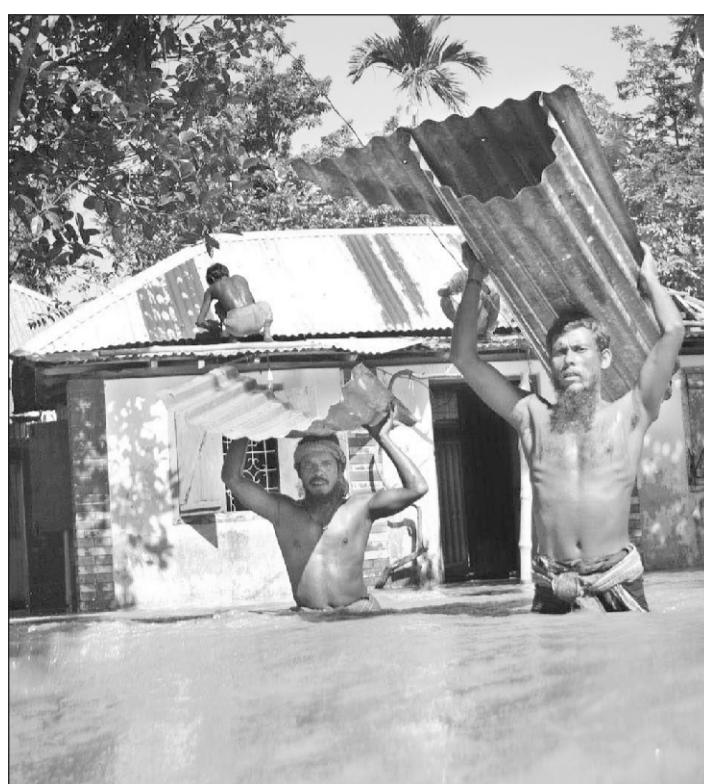
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As flood situation deteriorated in central districts, a family dismantling their house in Sadipur village in Faridpur yesterday to move to safety (left) and boats replaced motorised transports in many areas in Sirajganj town.



PHOTO: STARFOCUS BANGLA

One held with 7 bombs

A CORRESPONDENT, Chawabganj

Rapid Action Battalion arrested one person with seven bombs at Laharpur of Moharajpur union under the Sadar upazila Friday afternoon.

The arrestee, Habibur Rahman, 36, of Sintola village under the Sadar upazila was riding a rickshaw on Chapainawabganj-Sonamasjid highway with a carton containing the bombs at around 4:00pm when the Rab team held him, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Chapainawabganj Sadar Police Station, Ahsanul Haque, said.

Rab handed over Habibur and the bombs to them at around 8:30pm, the OC added.

WAGES DISCONTENT IN PLATINUM JUBILEE JUTE MILLS

Workers attack labour leaders' house, police deployed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

President of Platinum Jubilee Jute Mills Workers' Union Sheikh Delwar Hossain and general secretary Md. Jahangir Hossain were injured as they came under attack by a group of casual workers at about 9 am in front of the mill administrative building yesterday.

The incident occurred when over 400 casual workers were observing two-hour sit-in programme as part of their ongoing agitation launched on September 10 to press the demand for daily wages of Tk 115.

BJMC refused the demand and agreed to pay Tk 90 to casual workers as daily wage.

According to Jahangir Hossain, a group of casual workers attacked his house without any provocation. They ransacked all rooms, damaged furniture and looted gold ornaments of his wife Lipi Begum and daughter Kaniz Fatema Liza.

Some workers made an

attempt to drag my twenty-year old daughter Liza out of the house but failed as she was rescued by neighbours, Jahangir claimed.

While going away angry workers threatened to kill him for siding with the mill management against their interest, Jahangir alleged.

Jahangir's wife Lipi Begum lodged an FIR with Khalishpur police station naming 20 casual workers as accused for looting money and gold ornaments.

Police arrested two FIR-named accused from in front of the mill gate. They are Shamim and Mujibar.

Security forces have been deployed in and around the mill and also in front of high officials' residences to stave off further violence.

Earlier on Friday, angry casual workers confined the BJMC project director and six other officials in a room of the administrative building for four hours from 8 am to 12 noon and snatched their personal belongings including money.

On information, security forces rushed there and rescued the officials.

None of them attended office yesterday. Members of their families feel insecure, some of the officials said.

Workers in seven state-owned jute mills today begin three hours' sit-in in the mills demanding payment of arrears.

Diarrhoea spreads in Bandarban

One killed, many attacked

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

ment.

Another medical team was sent to remote Hopy Gopai Para where one person died of diarrhoea, said the acting civil surgeon of Bandarban. But the victim could not be identified.

The disease spread as people use river water for drinking and household work, doctors said.

High temperature in last few days has also contributed to spread of the disease, the said.

Locals said diarrhoea outbreak has become a yearly matter due to unavailability of pure water in absence of sufficient tube-wells.



The Parbatya Buddha Mission, a local organisation, distributing relief among flood victims in Khagrachhari town yesterday.

Equal salary for women demanded

RU CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar in Rajshahi have urged the caretaker government to adopt a policy for ensuring equal salary of women in agricultural sector.

Barendra Unnayan Forum (BUF) and Mass Line Media Centre jointly organised the seminar titled, 'Discrimination of Women's Salary.'

Niskriti director SK Lalor presided the seminar held at Rajshahi Chamber of Commerce and Industries auditorium while divisional labour court chairman Rafiqul Islam attended the seminar as chief guest.

Speakers said women are the worst victims of gender discrimination as they do not get the same facilities enjoyed by their male

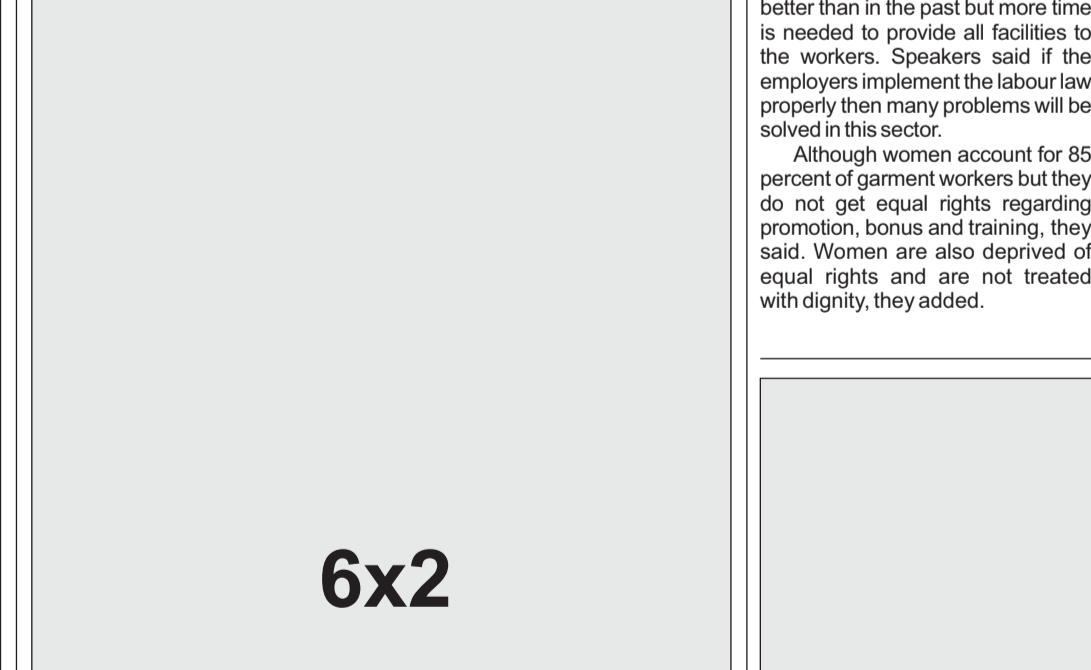
counterparts.

Women continue to face discrimination in every aspect of life, especially at workplace although they have immense contribution to the country's economy, they said.

They suggested for formation a monitoring cell in job sector to monitor torture and harassment on women workers.

While addressing, some employers said the situation is now far better than the past but more time is needed to provide all facilities to the workers. Speakers said if the employers implement the labour law properly then many problems will be solved in this sector.

Although women account for 85 percent of garment workers but they do not get equal rights regarding promotion, bonus and training, they said. Women are also deprived of equal rights and are not treated with dignity, they added.



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DAE office besieged for fertiliser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Angry farmers yesterday besieged the Jessor office of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) at Churhamonkati in Kotwali police station for fertiliser.

Farmers also demanded arrest of dealers for selling major quantity of urea in black markets.

The siege continued from 10 am to 12 noon. Farmers confined two DAE officials who were later rescued by members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) following police failure to tackle the situation.

Earlier, police and angry farmers were locked in chase and counter chase at about 11:30 am. They pelted stones on police when they tried to disperse them. Two farmers named Mushtaque and Shaimi were picked up for pelting stones at police.

Later, a large number of farmers brought out a big procession and paraded the streets of the district town.

On contact, Jessor Kotwali Police Station officer-in-charge (OC) MA Matin confirmed the report.

11x2

6x2

4x1

8x3