

Two garment factories shut amid fear of collapse

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka city corporation authorities yesterday forced two apparel factories to shut in a building, which is susceptible to collapse.

SAS Fashion Ware Ltd and Top Kind Apparel Ltd were housed on the second floor of the building, owned by the city corporation, at Karwan Bazar.

The closure however created worries among hundreds of workers who became jobless within a matter of hours and were still to get their dues.

Some workers of SAS Fashion said they did not get salaries and overtime allowances for April. The owners also did not pay the overtime bills for March.

"We will be in serious trouble to get job at the time when many factories are closing down for faults in buildings," said Rahima Akhter, an operator at SAS Fashion. "We demand our arrears of the past months and three months' salary for the layoff," she said.

SM Akhtaruzzaman, assistant vice president of SAS Fashion, said the factory would pay the salaries for April on May 14. "We wanted to pay the overtime bills today and salaries on May 14, but the workers refused to take the overtime allowances today," he added.

Akhtaruzzaman said the city corporation authorities earlier hung a notice in the building, asking the factory owners and operators of shops to relocate.

Some 400 people worked at SAS Fashion, he added.



A gayebana namaz-e-janaza, organised by BNP, for people who died in the joint operation of Rapid Action Battalion, Police and Border Guard Bangladesh in the capital on Sunday night following a daylong mayhem by Hefajat-e Islam in the city, was held before BNP's central office in Nayapaltan yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

HEFAJAT'S ATROCITIES Jamaat was the mastermind: CPB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) has alleged that Jamaat-e-Islami was the mastermind of Sunday's violence in Dhaka as it conspired to create a deadlock situation by "strategically" using the programme of Hefajat-e Islam to foil the war crimes trial.

"Although we accuse mainly Jamaat for the violence, Hefajat-e Islam and BNP can not escape the responsibility of the atrocities because they instigated the violence," said CPB President Mujahidul Islam Selim at a press conference at his party office in the capital yesterday.

The arson attack was launched at first at CPB office around 11:00am, and later the atrocities spread out in phases to its adjacent area, he said.

Properties worth of over Tk 3 crore have been damaged, and many necessary documents have been burned in the office, he added.

Lambasting the government and administration for allowing Hefajat to hold rally in the capital, Mujahidul said, "The government has failed to ensure security for public life and properties."

"They (communal force) do not have any religious agenda, rather they are working for implementing political agenda and conspiring to destroy the foundation of our independence," he said.

Appeal for help

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Suma Sarkar, 21, mother of a one-year-old boy, has alarmingly gained weight in the past four months. "At first we saw it, then her limbs started to hurt, and she could barely walk," said her elder brother Biplob Sarkar.

"It finally appeared that her kidneys have shrunk too much to function," he added. If she is to live, her kidneys must be replaced, which would cost about Tk 16 lakh, he said. "She is running out of time," said Biplob, who owns a barber shop in the capital's Kachukhet with Suma's husband, Sarder.

Family members have appealed to the generous and well-off people to help save her life. Assistance can be forwarded by contacting Biplob on 01672584494.

SHAPLA CHATTAR CRACKDOWN Judicial probe sought

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bikolpodhara Bangladesh (BDB) and Bangladesh Krishok Sramik Janata League (BKSJL) demanded a judicial probe into the crackdown by law enforcers to disperse the Hefajat-e Islam gathering at the Shapla Chattar of Motijheel on Monday, terming it a "mass killing".

The two parties, also members of the BNP-led 18-party alliance, made the demand at the gayebana namaz-e-janaza, held at the BNP central office in the capital, for the deaths of Hefajat-e Islam men in the incident.

BDB chief AQM Badrulroza Chowdhury demanded that the government form a judicial probe body and make public its report on the deaths from the "massacre".

"The government forces carried out mass killings at Shapla Chattar. It is unprecedented in the world's history. Such atrocities took place during March 25, 1971, when Pakistan occupation army swooped on unarmed Bangalees," he said.

Echoing with the BDB chief, BKSJL President Kader Siddique said he had not witnessed such a "brutal massacre" during his life.

Convenor of Dhaka City unit 18-party alliance Sadeque Hossain Khoka said the way government carried out the "massacre" it could not be how a government would treat the people.

Arrest order issued against MK Anwar
COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued an arrest warrant against BNP standing committee member MK Anwar following a case filed over making a comment against Svechhasebak League leader Debasish Biswas.

In his complaint, Debasish mentioned that Anwar at a press conference on Monday said he (Debasish) burnt down the Holy Quran near Baitul Mukarram Mosque during Hefajat violence on Sunday.

Debasish said Anwar's statement was "false, fabricated and derogatory", adding that his speech was also "instigative to destroy communal harmony."



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