

Other Cases against BCWS March 8, 2011

Beyond the Manta Apparels/Envoy Group case (number 51) and the Nassa Group case (number 48), six of the remaining eight cases (case numbers 30, 31, 36, 37, 38, and 89), including all three cases filed under the Speedy Tribunal Act, relate to incidents on July 30, 2010. One of those cases (number 36) concerns property destruction of Nassa Group, but was not filed by Nassa. On July 30 Kalpona Akter and Babul Akhter were attending a BCWS staff meeting in the BCWS Gazipur office, approximately 35 kilometers away from where the incidents took place. According to Ms. Akter and Mr. Akhter, the meeting started at approximately 9:30 a.m. and ended at about 2:00 p.m.. After the meeting, there were informal discussions with the staff until about 6:30 p.m., when Ms. Akter and Mr. Akhter closed the office together with the staff and departed. The meeting participants are listed in the sign-in book for the meeting.

While in the meeting, Ms. Akter reportedly received a text message from a U.S. Embassy officer, on leave in Malaysia, saying that he heard about the protests and wondered whether she was safe. Ms. Akter also reports that when she received news that the Navana Towers was attacked by mobs, she called the Walmart representatives who have an office there to inquire about their safety. Charges relating to this incident (case number 89) include using explosives, an offense punishable by death under the Explosive Substances Act of 1908.

Regarding the two remaining charges (case numbers 87 and 88), which relate to incidents in the Aasulia industrial area on July 31, 2010, BCWS claims that none of the accused was present. Mr. Islam was not in the area at all from June 16, the day he was detained and tortured by officers of the National Security Intelligence, and August 29, when he surrendered to a judge. Mr. Akter and Ms. Akhter were both in the Ramphura office of the BCWS on July 31.