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Bangladesh: The Inu faction of the Jatiya Samajtantrik (JSD), including the party's structure, its leaders, its activities, its policies, and its alliances with other parties; whether members face problems with the government or police authorities (2000-2003)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

Several 2003 media reports cite Hasanul Haq Inu as the current president (*Bangladeshi News* 16 Jan. 2003; *The Independent* 20 Sept. 2003), or leader (ibid. 7 May 2003; *Bangladeshi News* 23 June 2003), of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) (National Socialist Party). Hasanul Haq Inu^{3/4}who formerly led a separate JSD faction that joined the Left Democratic Front in 1994 (*Political Parties of the World* 2002)^{3/4}was the general secretary of the JSD Rab faction, under then party president A. S. M. Abdur Rab (*Europa World Year Book* 2003 2003, 671). After winning one seat in the June 1996 elections, the JSD (Rab) faction became part of the Awami League (AL) coalition government that ruled Bangladesh until July 2001 (*Political Parties of the World* 2002, 37) .

The student-led Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) is reportedly backed by the JSD (*The Daily Star* 31 Mar. 2001; ibid. 25 Mar. 2001; ibid. 1 Apr. 2001). According to *The Daily Star* , a dissident group of BCL members and alleged supporters of A. S. M. Abdur Rab, went on a "rampage" after Mirza Anwarul Huq, who the dissidents protested was a non-student, married, businessman, was elected general secretary of the organization (1 Apr. 2001). The dissident group subsequently broke away from the central BCL committee and formed their own committee with S. M. Shahebullah Rana as president and Mehedi Hasan Khokon as general secretary (*The Daily Star* 1 Apr. 2001).

During 2003, AL leaders initiated meetings with the JSD (Inu), the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) (*The New Age* 13 Aug. 2003) and other pro-liberation parties and groups in an attempt to unite against what they believe are the "tyranny, misdeeds and misrule of the BNP-led alliance government" (*The Independent* 13 Aug. 2003). For example, in 2002, Inu publicly accused the BNP of appointing and transferring government officials on the basis of their personal and political affiliations and alleging that money was involved in their transactions (*Holiday* 19 Apr. 2002).

At a June 2003 meeting organized on the fifty-fourth anniversary of the founding of the AL party, Inu announced that everyone should participate in a unified front against the ruling Bangladesh National Party (BNP) (*Bangladeshi News* 23 June 2003). Addressing his fellow party members at a Dhaka city unit workers meeting in September 2003, Inu encouraged JSD leaders and workers to help put an end to the BNP regime through their support of the proposed multi-party government (*The Independent* 20 Sept. 2003). Meer Hossain Akhter, Dhaka city unit president, Nazmul Huq Prodhan, joint

general secretary, Md Khaled, organizing secretary, and Ataur Rahman, city unit general secretary, also spoke at the meeting (ibid.).

In August 2003, the JSD (Inu) formally acknowledged its support for the AL's request to unify the opposition parties with a proposal identifying the following key issues to be addressed by the alliance:

The ... introduction of bicameral parliament, decentralisation of power, reform in the Election Commission and electoral laws, separation of the judiciary from the executive and the establishment of rule of law.

...[E]nsuring neutrality, transparency and accountability in the administration, introduction of the 'social market economy,' equal rights for women, safeguarding the values and spirit of the Liberation War with [the] trial of ... war criminals and a ban on religion-based politics, introduction of science and technology-based education, protection of natural resources including gas and strengthening of regional and sub-regional co-operation (*The Independent* 13 Aug. 2003).

Earlier in 2003, the JSD (Inu) invited all Bangladeshi political parties, including the BNP, to engage in a national dialogue intended to ascertain common views on issues such as terrorism, natural resources, the rule of law, anti-corruption, an ombudsman office, and empowering local governments (*The Daily Star* 20 Jan. 2003). However, no information on the response to the proposed national dialogue by other Bangladeshi parties could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

The JSD (Inu) is also developing stronger ties with the left-leaning CPB and the Gonorantri Party (GP) (ibid. 5 Sept. 2003). After meeting several times, the three parties agreed to work collaboratively to fight government cutbacks, privatization, and growing fundamentalism in Bangladesh (ibid.). Hasanul Haq Inu, Jafar Sazzad, Moinuddin Khan Badal, Mir Hossain Akhter, Robiul Alam, Monsur Ahmed and Azizur Rahman were among the JSD (Inu) members who took part in the meetings (ibid.).

Other activities of the JSD (Inu) party during 2003 included organizing demonstrations to protest the U.S.-led war in Iraq (*The Independent* 13 Apr. 2003). JSD president Inu publicly criticized the United States foreign policy as "'aggressive unilateral-ism and militarism'" (*Bangladeshi News* 16 Jan. 2003).

While no mention is made of the JSD (Inu), Amnesty International press releases from 2002 and 2003 urge the BNP government to stop politically motivated detentions of AL opposition supporters (6 Sept. 2002; 9 Jan. 2003). Amnesty states that "prisoners remanded in police custody for interrogation are often subjected to torture" and that the government fails to protect prisoners from torture and to sentence those responsible (AI 9 Jan. 2003).

No information on whether JSD (Inu) members face problems with government or police authorities could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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