Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury cautioned that if this kind of practice continued, there would be no ac-

countability of the government. Speaking about imposition of taxes, he said while the budget proposed reduction of taxes on air-conditioners, it raised taxes on edible oils.

He said the popularity of



depend on how it acts on various issues.

Chowdhury expressed the hope that the democratic government would follow mixed and competitive economy and reduce losses in the public sector enterprises so that the people were exempted from the burden of additional taxes.

Asaduzzaman

As soon as Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury concluded his speech on the Finance Bill. Asaduzzaman (AL-Magura) rose on a point of order and drew the attention of the chair to Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure to say that the formation of the parliamentary committee as put on the order of the day ahead of the legislative business, has been bypassed.

He said as there was no announcement from the chair in this regard, the transaction of business in the House might have been a violation of the

The Speaker told the member that the discussion on the formation of the parliamentary committee was kept pending after he received a letter from the Leader of the House in this respect. So, the Speaker said, it is not a violation of the rule.

Hadiuzzaman

Participating in the discussion on the Finance Bill, Shah Hadiuzzaman (AL-Jessore) said a tax phobia, particularly the proposal of introducing Value Added Tax (VAT), has already gripped the country. he said the small traders are passing their days in fear.

He said although the Finance Minister has proposed taxes on several items he has not given any guideline for organising our manpower to utilise it properly.

Tabibur Rahman

Speaking next, Tabibur Rahman Sardar (AL-Jessore) said tax proposals on ball point pen, cotton yarn and soyabean oil have already made adverse effects on their prices.

He said the prices of lungis, and sarees have also gone up as a result of the tax proposal on yarn. He said the price of one kg soyabean has shot to taka

Abdur Razzak

Abdur Razzak (BAKSAL-Shariatpur) said the tax proposal on gas, soyabean and ball point pen and the reduction of taxes on white cement and airconditioners were in no way social justice.

He said the Finance Minister spoke of self-reliance in his budget speech but had not given any direction for achieving it. He said contrary to the expectation of the people, he price of diesel has not yet been reduced. He called for reduction of the price of diesel



in the greater interests of the poor peasants and increasing farm production.

He pleaded for sending the Finance Bill to elicit public opinion before adopting it.

Motia Chowdhury

When the House re-assembled after Asr prayer with Deputy Speaker Shetkh Razzak Alt in the chair, Begum Motia Chowdhury (AL-Sherpur) was given the floor to speak on the Money Bill.

She said the Finance Minister had proposed imposition of taxes on gas, fertilizer, electricity and other essential items on the recommendation of the World Bank. She charged the Finance Minister with favouring the

'200 wealthy families now replace 20'

richer section of people by reducing duties on luxury goods such as air cooler and fruits and decreasing travel tax.

Begum Motia Chowdhury expressed her apprehension that the condition of farmers would further deteriorate following increase in electricity and gas tariff. She said the BNP government promised to launch market economy in the country, but this type of economy would not succeed if bank loans worth Taka thousands of crore remained unrealised. She called upon the government to take effective steps for the realisation of outstanding loan to the tune of Taka 10 thousand crore from defaulters. The government must try to ensure the recovery of at least 25 per cent of the defaulted loan, she added.

Salahuddin Yusuf

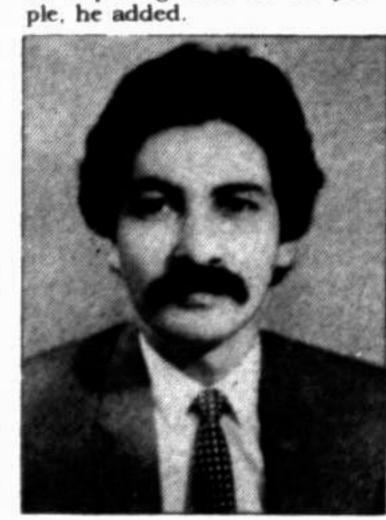
Salahuddin Yusuf (AL-Khulna) questioned the wisdom of the Finance Minister in building a self-reliant economy by borrowing huge funds from abroad and depending heavily on foreign aid. By this only an economy dependent on foreign aid would be built, he added.

He said time has now come to think seriously on how to build rural based economy in our country where 80 per cent of the people are farmers. He criticised the Finance Minister for raising the exemption limit of wealth tax for a house from Taka 25 lakh to Taka 50 lakh on the one hand and proposing increase in taxes on gas, fertilizer and agricultural products on the other he strongly pleaded for giving subsidy on agricultural inputs including fertilizer for building agriculture based economy.

Yusuf regretted that East Bengal (now Bangladesh) was surplus in food and West Bengal deficit in this commodity in 1947 but the situation has now changed the other way round. Provision of adequate irrigation facilities. installation of a large number of tubewells, both shallow and deep, and supply of adequate inputs have made West Bengal in India self sufficient in food he said and demanded similar facilities for the farmers of our country.

He expressed his grave concern at the influx of landless people into urban areas of the country in search of job for their survival and called for effective measures to check the growth of landless people. In this connection, he laid emphasis on family planning programme to contain population explosion.

The Awami League member from Khulna demanded of the government for the repatriation of huge funds which ex-President Ershad had accumulated through corrupt means and transferred them to foreign countries. Steps should also be taken for the recovery of defaulted loans worth Taka 10 thousand crore. If even Taka one thousand crore of the outstanding loans could be realised, there would be no need for imposing taxes on the peo-



Nurul Islam Moni

Nurul Islam Moni (Ind-Barguna) criticised the tax proposals in the budget and demanded withdrawal of the proposed taxes on agricultural products and additional tax on

He demanded withdrawal of the proposed wealth tax on those who were renting their houses built with loan money.

Referring to the proposed compulsion for investing 25 per cent of the industrial profits in buying government bonds, he said this would limit expansion of the industries. referring to the tax proposals on dividend of the companies, he said this would encourage the traders and investors to give false declaration.

Shudhangshu Shekhar

Shudhangshu Shekhar Halder (AL-Pirojpur) criticised he proposal for VAT and said it was not clear on what basis this taxation was being made.

Making comments on the Finance Bill, he said there was no mention of the Pay Commission in this bill.

Matiur Rahman Nizami

Jamaat group leader Mattur Rahman Nizami said measures had to be taken so that investments were not made in unproductive sectors which their part was one of the vance income tax and licence last financial year

might give rise to the plunder-

ing of national wealth. Nizami observed that the previous government had raised taxes on different articles but it did not take steps for internal resource mobilisation. He urged the government to see that the taxes benefit the government in raising the

Nizami referred to the increase in municipal taxes and said this did not enhance the municipality's income as people started evading axes. he said the Dhaka Municipal Corporation was reported to be incurring a loss to the tune of Taka 1.50 crore.

Matiur Rahman Nizami said during Pakistan period there were some 22 wealthy families this number went upto about 200 in Bangladesh alone when this country came into being. Now the figure stands at several hundred, he said.

He called for taking a correct wealth assessment report from those families. He said we have to keep watch on the corrupt officials and also to take appropriate measures to check. smuggling of national wealth.

hancement of electricity rate said as a result the Bangladeshi products would not be able to complete with foreign products. This would also hinder industrialisation in the country, he added. He was also critical of rais-

Nizami criticised the en-

ing the price of natural gas and said it would affect agricultural production as the price of fertilizer would go up. Nizami called for abolishing

K M Jahangir

interest and alcohol.

KM Jahangir (AL-Patuakhali) said there should be some difference in the functioning of an autocratic and a democratically elected government. He said the democratic government should not impose taxes as was done by the previous regime.

Criticising the imposition of taxes. Hossain said while the government was talking about the welfare of the rural people. it was at the same time imposing fresh taxes on them. He said the farmers would be worst hit by the high price of natural gas.

Participating in the debate M Shamsudduha (CPB-Nilphamari) said the VAT system should be introduced on some items on an experimental basis to serve the public interest. He said VAT was a modern system but the people of our country were not aware of it.

He demanded withdrawal of new tax proposals on diesel

Biswas in the chair.

the holy Quran the scheduled

question-answer session began

and continued till the House

was adjourned for the Asr

the prayer the Speaker dis-

posed of all the call attention

notices on matters of urgent

public importance except the

one moved by Begum Motia

Chowdhury on melting of sugar

Haronur Rashid

Rashid Mian (AL-Khulna)

placed his call attention notice

on the lack of security for the

labourers working in the

Sunderbans and the situation

created by attacks by Tigers

Moving his notice Sheikh

Harunur Rashid said about 500

wood-cutters, honey collectors

and fishermen lost their lives

falling victim to man-eater

Royal Bengal Tigers. He said

the forest department was not

taking any steps to protect the

deceased had not even re-

ceived any compensation. He

said the situation had created a

commotion among the mem-

it was necessary to take mea-

sures for protecting the lives

of the poor wood-cutters and

pay the families of the de-

ceased Taka two lakh each as

Abdullah Al Noman

tion notice, the State Minister

for Environment and Forests

Abdullah Al Noman said he

statement of Harunur Rashid

was partly true. He said ac-

cording to records 32 wood-

cutters, honey collectors and

fishermen were killed by man-

eaters in Burigoalini, Goalkhali,

Baidyamari, Narikelbaria,

Chadpi, Nilkmal and Supati ar-

eas in seven months from

He said carelessness on

November 1990 to May this crore.

Speaking on the call atten-

Sheikh Harunur Rashid said

He said the families of the

lives of the wood-cutters.

bers of the public.

compensation.

Thereafter Sheikh Harunur

in Khulna CSD godown.

As the House resumed after

censorship of letters of

political leaders in Rangpur, tant who took care to make of this issue.

M Asaduzzaman (ALcountry corruption free, and said President Ershad had also came to power declaring jehad against corruption.

He said if President Ershad could be tried for visiting Atroshi 100 times at the cost of the state, then why the Peer of Atroshi would not be tried for amassing wealth through corruption and smuggling. He demanded confiscation of his

Criticising taxation proposal on gas, power and fertilizer, he demanded withdrawal of the proposals and said this budget would make the poor poorer. He said the tax proposals would affect the small industries and encourage smuggling. He said the country has now

turned into a market of a particular country from where all kinds of agricultural products including meat is imported. He also criticised the VAT sys-Asaduzzaman demanded in-

Abu Lais Mubin

troduction of the constitution

amendment bill in the House

immediately.

Speaking next on the Finance Bill, Abu Lais Mubin Chowdhury (JP-Habigani), said that the budget was full of tall talks but regretted that no provision was made to give relief to the farmers who are the backbone of our survival.

He said it was unbelievable that the rate of interest on loans for the farmers was the highest in the country whereas this rate for many other sectors, including the loan for multi-storied buildings, was much less.

cultural loans up to Taka 5000 the morning sitting that this source from which this gap ing many a historic task and this in the Finance Bill and as mismanaging the relief operation, he said. The Jatiya Party member

said the previous government of H M Ershad took several steps for the welfare of the farmers but the present budget lacked any reliefs to this community.

Mohammad Nasim

Chief Whip of the Opposition Mohammad Nasim was next to take the floor.

advised to take care while dis-

the forest employees also keep

an eye on them as a precaution

and in the event of any attack

by tigers they fire blank shots

(woodcutters, honey collectors

State Minister said the Forest

Department does not have any

provision to give such com-

pensation to the deceased. But,

he said, since the matter had

been raised by a member it

will be discussed in the

Ministry and a decision will be

fended his demand for giving

compensation and mentioned

the compensation being given

in case of the train accident

victims in support of his no-

there was any plan to dredge

the rivers Kalma and Bhadra

which have dried up enabling

the tigers to cross them

government has a plan to

Saifur Rahman

attention notice, the Speaker

asked Finance and Planning

Minister Saifur Rahman to

seek permission to introduce

the Value Added Tax (VAT) bill

year by earning Taka 31 crore

press release Monday, the gov-

but the earning was Taka 2544 rencies etc.

After disposing of the call

dredge the channels.

The State Minister said the

He also wanted to know if

Sheikh Harunur Rashid de-

and fishermen) defence.

in the air in their

As for the compensation the

The Jattya Sangsad resumed causes of their deaths. He said

its sitting Monday at 4.12 pm the legal permit holders for

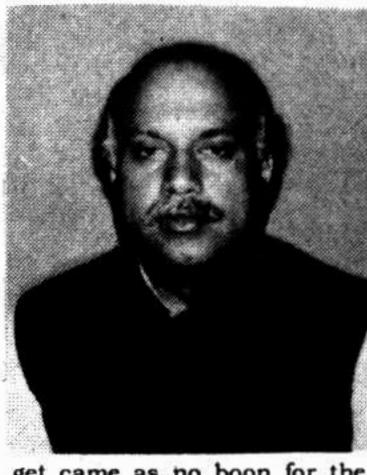
with Speaker Abdur Rahman entering the Sunderbans are

After the recitation from charging their duties. He said

taken.

he demanded an early solution the budget only a good balance-sheet.

Nasim also quoted some: Magura) referred to the com- economists who described the mitments of the Treasury budget as not "pro-people" and Bench leader to make the highly dependent on foreign aid and observed that the bud-



get came as no boon for the struggling class who thought a democratic government would give relief to the common man.

Mohammad Nasim said with no control over the market, the budget had already contributed to the increases in the prices of essential commodi-

ernment that came through a bloody mass upsurge against an autocratic rule increased taxes on items like baby food, ball pen, soyabean oil, etc. The Opposition Chief Whip

It is unfortunate that a gov-

urged the government to withdraw these taxes even at this stage, otherwise the Opposition would have to go to the streets to force the government withdraw them.

Mohammad Nasim said the VAT system, which the Finance Minister described as realistic, proved unsuccessful in Indonesia. It was not a.pplied to items like baby food in England, he said.

The Opposition Chief Whip Chowdhury referred to the referred to Prime Minister exemption of interest on agri- Khaleda Zia's comment during and wanted to know the government was accomplishwould be met. The Finance said tasks achieved by the BNP Minister made no mention of government were, in fact, such this remains a big questions after the catastrophic cyclones in Chittagong and some other coastal districts.

Mohammad Nasim supported the demand of the government employees for publication of the Pay Commission report and said the government employees had played an important role in the last antiautocrat movement.

Moudud Ahmed

The Minister sought the

At this stage several opposi-

permission of the chair to in-

tion members rose to their

feet, saying they had objections

Surarijit Sengupta

(Ganatantri Dal-Sunamganj)

said he would object the intro-

duction of the bill on a "point

said no tax could be realised

without the laws enacted by

the House but here the VAT

tax had already taken into ef-

fect from June 1 under an or-

dinance promulgated by the

The President could excer-

ctse his legislative power un-

der article 93 of the constitu-

tion but only under exceptional

cases, Sengupta said. But here,

he argued the tax realised un-

der the ordinance without the

budget being passed by the

House amounted to violation of

opined that realisation of taxes

without the Parliament's ap-

proval even did not take place

during Pakistani days despite

the fact the people saw many

an undemocratic action in

stitution because we are

pledge bound to honour its

sanctity and hence this bill

which violates the constitu-

tion cannot be introduced," he

In addition to excess rev-

smugglers during the year. The

The customs spent Taka six

"We must uphold the con-

The opposition member

Acting President.

the constitution.

those days.

Ctg customs earns

Tk 31 cr excess revenue

Chittagong customs has set a view as against Taka 159 crore

excess revenue over the target enue earning, the customs

fixed for the year, reports BSS. seized contraband worth Taka

ernment fixed the revenue seized contraband included

earning target for the year gold, cigarettes, alcohol, tele-

1990-91 at Taka 2513 crore vision sets, VCR, foreign cur-

Chittagong customs also crore out of its total earning of

realised Taka 210 crore as ad- Taka 2544 erore during the

According to a customs 25.50 crore and arrested 20

record during the last financial in the previous year.

CHITTAGONG. July 1: fee during the year under re-

The opposition member

Suranjit Sengupta

to the introduction of the bill.

troduce the bill.

of order."

As the Opposition Chief He quoted from some Whip completed his speech, newspapers and said the bud- the Acting Leader of the Jatiya get presented by the Finance Party Parliamentary Party Referring to the reported Minister was a document pre- Moudud Ahmed drew the atpared by a chartered accountention of the chair to the fact

32 wood cutters killed by Royal Bengal Tigers

that he was not being called upon to speak although his name was included in the list of speakers.

But Deputy Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali said he was going by the list provided by the Opposition Chief Whip and Moudud Ahmed's name did not figure direction. in that list.

Displaying a paper, Moudud Ahmed said, "Here is the list and my name is very much there."

The chair remarked: "But your name is not in the list given by the Opposition Chief Whip - I am going by that as per your desire."

Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim intervened to say that Moudud's name was there in the list.

The Deputy Speaker checked the list again and said that Moudud Ahmed's name was not there.

The Chief Whip then regretted that Moudud's name was not marked incidentally. This led Moudud to make a

caustic remark against Nasim: "He is the Chief Whip of Awami League and not of the Jatiya Party - otherwise he would have given my name.

The chair then gave the floor to Moudud and requested him to make his speech brief.

Moudud Ahmed said the Finance Bill is an inseparable part of the budget and hence any discussion on it is important since it would have a bearing on the budgetary pro-

He said the reality of a budget in a developing country like ours was that the Finance Ministers had to struggle hard to present a balanced budget and so he appreciated the problems faced by the Finance Minister.

The Jatiya Party parliamentary leader quoted a newspaper issue of last year when the Jatiya Party government was



Moudud said the budget lacked any philosophy and was full of self-contradictions.

He said the Taka 700 crore shown as revenue earnings would come as a blow to the

SSHalder

S S Halder (AL-Pirojpur said the ordinance expired vesterday and the Finance Minister could have intro duced this bill till June 30.

He opposed the introduc tion of the bill today and said would be highly improper if

was done. Salauddin Quader

Salauddin Quader Chowdhury (NDP-Chittagong) echoed the opinion expressed by Surantit Sengupta and wanted a ruling from the chair whether a bill that amounted to violation of the constitution could be intoroduced in the House.

Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas said he would definitely give his decision but only after hearing the other side.

Mriza Golam Hafiz

Replying to the Opposition objections, Law and Justice Minister Mirza Golam Haftz ridiculed the contention that the bill could not be introduced on the ground men tioned by the other side.

"You can give objections to the merit of the bill when it is introduced but how can one object to the very introduction of the bill?" he asked.

Describing the opposition arguments that the bill could not be introduced since the validity of the ordinance expired on June 30 as "illogical," the Law Minister said he was hearing for the first time that a bill could not be introduced on such flimsy ground.

Mirza Golam Hafiz said if the realisation of taxes had been unjustified one could go to court and seek justice but wondered how could one op pose the introduction of the bill itself.

"We have introduced many such bills in the last session of the House," he said.

The chair then asked the Finance Minister to introduce the bill. The VAT Bill-1991 was introduced in the House. The entire Opposition then walked out of the House

the bill. The Speaker adjourned the House at 6.40 pm till 4 pm Tuesday.

protesting the introduction of

common people since they would have to bear the brunt of these taxes.

Moudud Ahmed said the budget made no mention of meeting the industrial and other problems which were important for giving a financial

He said his party members would stage a walkout from the house protesting against the budgetary provisions on three counts. First, the budget failed to reflect the hopes and aspirations of the people, secondly, it contributed to spiralling prices and finally, the budget made no effort to streamline the tax administra-

tion and wipe out corruption. Moudud Ahmed and his party members then staged a walkout from the house.

Shawkat Ali

Speaking next, Col (Retd) Shawkat Ali (AL-Shariatpur) said instead of realising the existing taxes properly, the government looked keen on imposing new taxes. He said much of our problems would have been greatly reduced if adequate care was taken to ensure realisation of existing taxes after curbing corruption.

Participating in the discussion on the Finance Bill the Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad, Sheikh Hasina Sunday said the tax proposals in the budget would hard hit the poorer section of the society and widen the rich-poor gap, putting the hard-earned democracy at stake.

She said if the poor people of the country could not be saved and an ideal situation for their survival could not be created all our efforts would go astray

She said the tax proposals on items like soyabean oil, gas, papers and agricutlural implements would serve as a death-knell to the poor. She said the reduction of taxes on some items including white cement, air-conditioners, furniture and cars for individual use would be like carrying coal to newcastle and push the poor into a world of darkness.

She said it seemed that the budget of the previous government was being placed in this house with the application of language which is not easily detectable. But, a careful examination would reveal the jugglery of words. She said the general masses have been able to detect that

Sheikh Hasina

Sheikh Hasina said the burden of proposals for the reduction of taxes to the tune of Taka 78 crore on the items used by the well-to-do people has been passed on the items used by poor.

She said the budget presented by the then Awami League government in the warravaged country in 1972 did not contain any tax proposals. She said everything was in tatters then, there was no farm production and the quantum of foreign loan received was only Taka 86 crore.

She said it seemed that the Finance Minister had placed the budget to pave the way for corruption. She said the government wanted the development of education only in speeches. She said the development of education would never be possible by imposing taxes on papers and ball point

Sheikh Hasina said our dependence on foreign assistance would further increase if on some specific items only. we fail to raise production in

She said the proposal for tax reduction to the tune of 78 crore Taka from the luxury items should be withdrawn. She said the nation must be

guided towards a new hope to keep the democratic process set in motion in the country uninterrupted

She called for the withdrawal of the taxes on items like gas, soyabean oil, ball point pen, papers and agricultural implements. She also said the proposed Value Added Tax (VAT) should also be with-

She said the tax proposals have already influenced the market adversely.

The Leader of the Opposition said the budget would encourage corruption and stand as an impediment towards becoming the self-reliant.

Saifur Rahman Winding up the debate, Fi-

nance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman announced withdrawal of proposed 10 per cent excise duty on domestic gas, reduction of duty on ball point pen ink to 60 per cent from 75 per cent and on aluminium ingot from 20 per cent to 10 per cent. He also announced reduc-

tion of tariff value on chilly to Taka 20 thousand per ton from Taka 25 thousand. He further said that the proposed compulsory investment of 20 per cent of the exempt income in the purchase of government bond or security by an industrial company has been reduced to 10 per cent.

He said duty on petrol driven jeeps above 2000 cc has been raised from 60 per cent to 75 per cent to make up the revenue losses because of withdrawal and reduction of

duties. The Finance Minister pointed out that he took these measures in deference to the wishes of the Leader of the House, Leader of the Opposi-

tion, members of Parliament and the members of the public. After the speech of the Finance Minister, the House rejected by voice vote the proposals for eliciting public opin-

ion on the bill. The house adopted the bill for discussion.

Nine members from the Opposition participated in the discussion on the amendment

of the bill.

Abdul Matin Opening the discussion Ab-

dul Matin (AL-Comilla) said

the Finance Minister had given tax relief to those who could pay and imposed on those who could not. Mizanur Rahman M Mizanur Rahman Manu

(AL-Dinajpur) said the government should reconsider the proposal for increasing the ceiling of wealth tax up to Taka Rashed Khan Rashed Khan Menon (WP-

Bakerganj) said the budget

gave tax relief to the richer

section while it did not con-

sider the shelterless. Even the professionals were not exempted from taxation, he said. Suranjit Sen Suranjit Sen Gupta (Gantantree Party-Sunamganj) expressed doubt about the realisation of tax money

through VAT. He said VAT or-

isfy the World Bank.

M Asaduzzaman(AL-Magura) said smuggled goods flooded the market and sugar, oil, chilly, salt and ginger were imported from outside.

M Asaduzzaman

Redwan Ahmed M Redwan Ahmed (Ind-

Comilla) said VAT was also

proposed on imported goods

which would be used for manufacturing exportable products. He said this would affect ex-Azizur Rahman M Azizur Rahman Mia(AL -

Naogaon) demanded withdrawal of tax on imported goods, brought as luggage by wage earners.



Shamsudduha

M Shamsudduha (CB-Nilphamari) reiterated his demand for introduction of VAT

Awal Mia M Abdul Awal Mia (AL-Kush-

tia) said tax on newsprint

should be reduced to make

newspapers available at a fair **Azizul Hug**

Azizul Huq (BNP-Bogra)

moved an amendment on the The chair then wanted to know from the Finance Minis-

something after the discussions on the amendments. Several Opposition members uttered "VAT-VAT" signalling to the Finance Minister that they would like to hear

ter if he wanted to speak

something about the withdrawal of the VAT proposal. The Finance Minister said introduction of the VAT was a new thing and it must be al-

lowed to be experimented. He said the government had regulatory powers and could consider withdrawal of VAT

from any item if any practical problem arose. The entire Opposition then left the House.

The Deputy Speaker put the amendments to vote and all the amendments except the two were rejected by voice

pose the passage of the bill by the House. The Minister proposed the passage of the bill. The House passed Finance

The chair then requested

the Finance Minister to pro-

Bill 1991 in an amended form by voice vote. The chair then adjourned

the house at 10.38 pm till 4 pm Monday.

dinance was promulgated on June 1 even before the sitting of the Parliament, only to sat-