

'Postal officials carried out Home Ministry order to censure letters'

The Jatiya Sangsad resumed its sitting Monday at 4.10 pm with Deputy Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali in the chair, reports BSS.

The day's proceedings began with recitations from the Holy Quran. Before the start of the question and answer hour, the Deputy Speaker wanted to know from the Law and Justice Minister Mirza Golam Hafez as to who will answer the question on behalf of Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, who was not present in the House at the time.

Taking the floor, the Law Minister looked at the Shipping Minister M K Anwar. The Deputy Speaker said the chair should be informed in advance who was to answer questions on behalf of a concerned Minister if the Minister remained absent from the House. That he expressed the hope in future things should be done in the proper manner.

No sooner than the Deputy Speaker completed his statement, the Health and Family Welfare Minister entered the House and took this seat. He then answered the questions relating to his ministry.

After the question and answer hour, the Deputy Speaker adjourned the House for 20 minutes for the Asr prayer.

On resumption of the House after the Asr prayer, the Deputy Speaker disposed of all the call attention notices except the one table by Rahmat Ali (AL-Gazipur) on the situation arising out of the closure of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) in Bangladesh.

Rising on point of order several members demanded a statement from the Finance Minister on the closure of the operation of the BCCI. The Members who demanded such a statement were Shajahan Siraj, Shamsuddoha (CPB-Nilphamari) and Moulana Motiur Rahman Nizami.

Saifur Rahman
Speaking briefly on the situation, the Finance Minister, Saifur Rahman said the statement of the Bangladesh Bank on the situation in the BCCI was published in the newspapers in Monday. The operation of the bank was suspended keeping in

view the interests of the public. He said the operation of the bank was stopped Monday in Manila and it was done in India Sunday.

The Finance Minister said in Hong Kong a subsidiary of the BCCI had also been closed Monday.

He said the government had written to the owners of the bank in Abu Dhabi for protecting the interests of the depositors in Bangladesh.

He assured the House that the government had taken all possible legal steps to protect the interests of all depositors here.

He said the House could thoroughly be informed as soon as details on the situation were available.

Fazle Rabbi
At this stage, Fazle Rabbi (JP-Gaibandha) rose on a point of order saying that right from the beginning of the session none of the Jatiya Party members got any scope to move any motion under rules 71 and 164. He said the chair did not accept any motion from the JP members so far.

Rabbi alleged that they were being discriminated in the House and demanded an immediate end to this partisan outlook.

The Deputy Speaker, appeared to be helpless as at least a dozen members rose to their feet to make their points or order.

Matia Chowdhury
He then gave the floor to Begum Matia Chowdhury (AL-Sherpur), who informed the House that two of her notices under Rule 68 and Rule 71 were pending in the Parliament Secretariat on the suspension of the Asst Post Master General of Rangpur by the government.

Elaborating her point, Begum Matia Chowdhury said that postal officials of Rangpur had only carried out the written order of the Home Ministry for censoring the letters of some opposition leaders. She said the decision of the government to suspend the officer was illegal.

As soon as Mrs Matia Chowdhury took her seat, the chair requested Deputy Leader of the House to move for the formation of various Parliamentary Standing Committees.

Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury then proposed an eight-member committee on government assurances. In the proposal, Treasury Bench Member A S M Hanhan Shah was chosen the Chairman while the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad came in the second place of the list.

The composition of the committee was strongly protested by Suranjit Sengupta who argued that it was not in order. Sengupta said, a government party member should not head a committee which is to deal on government's assurances.

Chief Whip of the Treasury Bench Khandaker Delwar Hossain then took the floor and said the names for the committee were given by the Opposition Chief Whip and it was completely in order.

Rashed Khan Menon
But his view was strongly objected by opposition member Rashed Khan Menon and Tofael Ahmed, who argued that for the sake of giving democracy an institutional shape, the Treasury Bench should place the name of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in any committee with proper honour. Tofael also urged the government party to drop the name of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition or to give him a proper place to honour the spirit of democracy.

The Deputy Leader of the House Prof Chowdhury at this stage requested the chair to allow him to withdraw the proposal on the committee for further consultations.



Moudud Ahmed
Barrister Moudud Ahmed, the Jatiya party leader, then

took the floor to say that the Treasury Bench should further consult with the opposition parties to make these committees flawless. He argued that the present difficulties in forming the committees would be removed if the Treasury Bench held further consultations with the opposition.

The chief Whip of the ruling party again took the floor and said that the names of the members had been included in the committee after proper consultations with the opposition Chief Whip.

B. Chowdhury
Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, then proposed a 10-member standing committee on privileges with the Speaker as chairman. The list included Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, in the second and third places. But the proposal was promptly protested by the Jatiya Party member Advocate Fazle Rabbi, who said since it was an important committee, one of his party member should also be included in it.

Barrister Moudud Ahmed then stood up and regretted that although the Jatiya party was the second biggest party in the opposition, none from the party was included in this important committee. Moudud also urged the Treasury Bench to take at least one member from his party in the committee. But Prof. Chowdhury said that the composition of five other committees would be announced later. The Jatiya Party members would be included in those committees, he said.

Following the reluctance of the Deputy Leader of the House to accept Jatiya Party members in the privileges committee, all the Jatiya Party members rose to their feet and started shouting in favour of their demand. Moudud said that for the greater interest of democracy, the second biggest opposition party in Parliament must not be ignored.

He also said that if this "genuine" demand was not accepted the Jatiya Party would have no alternative but to leave the House.

He then asked the Deputy Leader of the House under which principle the committee was being formed.

Prof. Chowdhury then took the floor and said the Jatiya Party members had been included in almost all other committees.

Party members had been included in almost all other committees.

Salahuddin Quader
Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury (NDP-Chittagong) then suggested that the House suspend the formation of the committees till today (Tuesday). He also said that he was not consulted either by the opposition Chief Whip or by the Treasury Bench on these issues.

Mohammad Nasim, the Chief Whip of the opposition, taking the floor promptly said that Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury was not consulted because they knew that he was an "automatic choice of the Treasury Bench."

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia entered the House when the Treasury Bench Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain was refuting the allegations of the opposition members on the formation of the committees referring to a 22-member list supplied to Parliament Secretariat by Moudud Ahmed. Khandaker Delwar Hossain said this list of the Jatiya Party did not include any name for the privilege committee.

Begum Matia Chowdhury (AL-Sherpur) then rose on a point of order saying that Rule 267(4) stipulated that no member should pass between the chair and any member who was speaking. Begum Chowdhury referred to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia who entered the House when the Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain was on his feet.

The House burst into a big laughter when the Leader of the House Begum Khaleda Zia took the floor and called Mrs Matia Chowdhury as "Musammata Matia Chowdhury". The Prime Minister jokingly said that Mrs Chowdhury had already learnt parliamentary practices "but I could not as yet."

The long debate on the formation of the parliamentary standing committees came to a close when the Deputy Leader of the House, Prof B Chowdhury proposed withdrawal of the formation of the committee.

When the House resumed its sitting after the Magreb prayers with Deputy Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali in the chair, deputy leader of the House

Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury announced the names of the members of the committee on public undertakings headed by Mian Dr Mansur Ali (BNP-Chuadanga). Prof Chowdhury also announced the composition of the standing committee on public accounts with L K Siddiqui (BNP-Chittagong) at the head.

Suranjit Sengupta
Ganatantri Party leader Suranjit Sengupta said according to convention, the standing committee on public accounts was to be headed by the leader of the opposition. In 1979, veteran politician Ataur Rahman Khan became the Chairman of this committee.

We expected that this committee would also be headed by the Leader of the Opposition or a veteran opposition MP to be nominated by the Leader of the Opposition, he added. He further said, accountability was essential to give democracy an institutional shape and stamp out corruption.

Delwar Hossain
Joining the issue, Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain said records showed that from 1973 onward, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts had been selected from the Treasury Bench. Ataur Rahman Khan was made Chairman of this committee after Atauddin Khan became Minister, he said, adding Ataur Rahman Khan was not in the opposition at that time.

Abdus Samad Azad
Supporting the contention of Suranjit Sengupta, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad said his submission merited consideration. He pleaded for keeping the composition of the committee in abeyance for arriving at a consensus on its formation through further discussion.

Deputy Leader of the House Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury informed the House that in 1973 Zahirul Qayum was chairman of the standing committee on public accounts, in 1979 Atauddin Khan had been its chairman. After

Atauddin Khan became Minister, Ataur Rahman Khan was made its Chairman. Hence, it was not true that the Chairman of this committee had always been chosen from the opposition, he added.

Nurul Islam Moni (Ind-Borguna) said since the government spent money from the national exchequer it was not desirable that the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts was selected from the Treasury Bench. The convention of all democratic countries in the world was that the Chairman of this committee was appointed from the opposition side, he said.

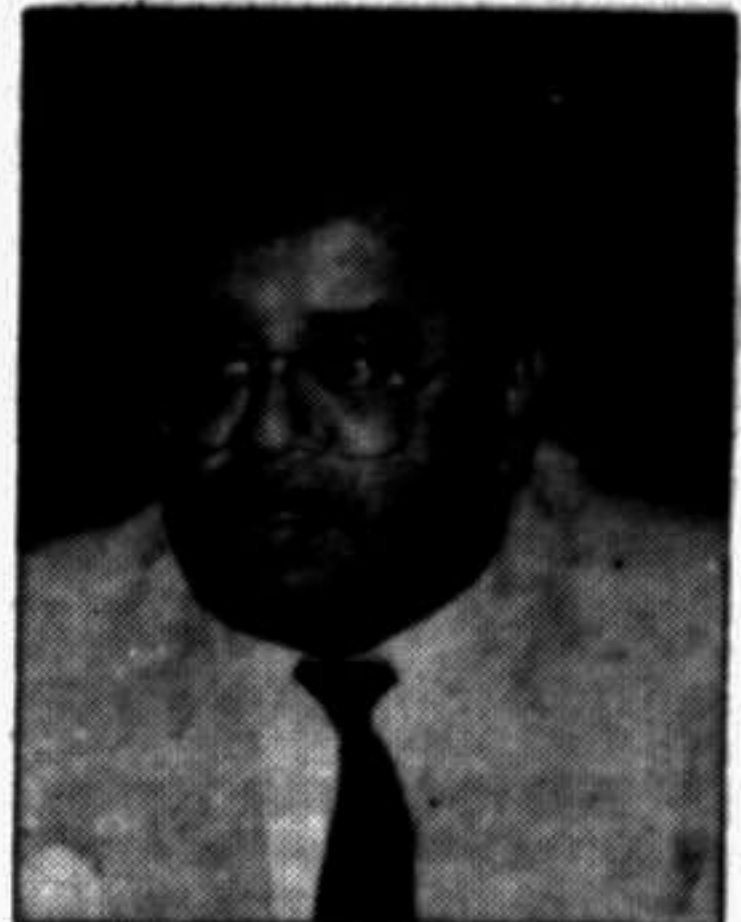
Hafizuddin Ahmed
Maj (Retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed (Ind-Bhola) said all irregular acts or practices of the past should be discarded and all that was good should be accepted. He said three independent members in this House had formed a group and it had its own identity. He pleaded for including the name of Nurul Islam Moni in the Standing Committee on Public Accounts stating that he had the experience of working with this committee in the past.

The House adopted the Committee on Estimated Accounts unanimously. The Deputy Speaker then gave the floor to Mr Mohammad Abdus Shahtid to table his call attention notice on matters or urgent public importance.

Kamal Ibne Yusuf
Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf gave a brief reply on the call attention notice.

After disposing of the Call Attention Notice, the chair gave the floor to Chief Whip of the Treasury Bench Khandaker Delwar Hossain.

Delwar Hossain said the government would give more thought on the proposed Value Added Tax Bill, 1991, and hence it would not be moved today. He said he was on the advice of the Leader of the House and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, he was proposing to adjourn the House till 4 pm tomorrow. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition gave his consent on the proposal and the Deputy Speaker adjourned the House at 8.25 pm to meet again at 4 pm today (Tuesday).



Nazmul Huda

Participating in the debate, State Minister for food Mr Nazmul Huda refuted the contention of Nurul Islam Moni. He said he was pained at the propensity of some opposition members to oppose the selection of a member as Chairman of a committee when his name was announced. It amounted to an aspersion on a member whose name had been announced as a Chairman of a particular committee but later opposed by some one, he said.

Metropolitan

Literacy of women necessary for development : Badruddoza

Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury laid emphasis on literacy of women for development of human resources of the country, reports BSS.

Secretary ANM Eusuf and UNDP Resident Representative Charles H Larstmont as special guests. President of the mission Al-Haj Md Selimullah presided. The Education and Cultural Affairs Minister said the BNP government has strong political commitment for launching a mass literacy programme for spreading education among the common masses. He said since the women-folk constitute about half of our population, they will be given priority in the mass education programme. The people must be given functional education for

eradication of poverty, malnutrition and unemployment under the programme for developing human resources, he added. Prof Chowdhury said female education is an imperative for building a prosperous society. He also laid stress on development of curriculum of female education for achieving higher literacy rate among women. He called upon the representatives of different NGOs working in this field to put in their best efforts for making the mass education programme a success.



Miss Stephanie Shwabsky, Acting Australian High Commissioner in Bangladesh, handed over a cheque for distribution among the cyclone affected war veterans of World War-II to Acting Director, Bangladesh Armed Services Board, on Monday. — ISPR photo

Tk 60 lakh BSRS loan recovered against Tk 535 cr

State Minister for Finance Mujibur Rahman on Monday paid a surprise visit to the Head Office of the Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha (BSRS). He was accompanied by Joint Secretary of Finance Division Abdur Rob, reports BSS.

During the visit, the State Minister saw the BSRS documents and found that the progress of its loan recovery was not desirable. The Sangstha recovered Taka 60 lakh only during the last six months out of the outstanding loan of Taka 535 crore and 71 lakh. The BSRS has provided loan for projects of frozen fish, cold storages, jute mills, carpet mills, distilleries, textiles mills engineering industries and chemical industries. It was found in the BSRS documents that most of the projects had been non-functioning since their inception which proved that the investment was not done properly. The Sangstha had realised Taka 13 crore and 61 lakh out of outstanding loan of Taka 62 crore and 22 lakh by selling the properties of 12 projects in January last. Later, the State Minister at a meeting with the officials asked the BSRS officials to take stringent legal measures against the willful defaulters for recovering the outstanding loans in the overall national interest.

Students asked to boycott AL-backed BCL

Bangladesh Chhatra League (N-S), the student wing of JSD (Inu), held a rally at the Aparajeyo Bangla of Dhaka University demanding trial of the killers of their leader Mahbubur Rahman. The rally was addressed by Nazmul Huq Pradhan, Shafi Ahmed, Roknuzzaman Rokon and Maniruzzaman Titu. Speakers at the rally accused the Awami League-supported Bangladesh Chhatra League (A-A) for terrorism on

the campus and called upon the students to boycott them politically. They strongly condemned the BCL (A-A) for providing shelter to the alleged killers of Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon and termed this as a betrayal to the martyrs of the anti-autocratic movement. The speakers also called upon the students to gear up movement against any attempt to foil congenial academic atmosphere on the campus.

BUET admission test today

The admission test of the Engineering Faculty of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) for undergraduate students of 1990-91 session will be held today (Tuesday). Meanwhile, all preparations have been completed to conduct the test by BUET authorities. Students' entrance on the campus has been strictly prohibited during the exam hours.

Girl commits suicide

A teenaged girl Sharmin Akter after being rebuked by her mother committed suicide by hanging herself at the bath room of her residence at Ahmedbag under Sabujbagh police station of the city. The attending physician of Holy Family Hospital declared her dead while she was taken there.

Dr Mottaleb created new idea about treatment

A rich tribute was paid to late Dr Mottaleb, founder of the Community Health Research Association and medical researcher of the country, at a meeting held in observance of his first death anniversary in Dhaka Monday afternoon. Presided over by Justice MA Rouf, Vice-Chairman of the Association, the meeting was attended by Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs, Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury as chief guest. National Prof Dr Nurul Islam and eminent educationist and researcher Dr Ashraf Siddiqi spoke on the occasion as special guests. The Minister said Dr Mottaleb was a physician with exceptional talents who evolved new method of health care through creation of awareness and preventive measures. He said the method and findings of his treatment created new idea about treatment among the physicians. He called upon the doctors community to uphold the contribution of Dr Mottaleb among the new generation of physicians. The other speakers in the discussion said Dr Mottaleb contributed a lot towards improving standard of medical education and research through Community Health Research Association. They added that Dr Mottaleb was a dedicated so-

Two children hurt in blast at Kalabagan

Two children were injured in a bomb explosion at Kalabagan in the city Monday afternoon. The boy (8) Shaheen and girl Dina (5) were injured during a clash between two groups of people at the area at 5 pm. The injured children were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). A case was filed with Dhanmndi Police in this regard.

Mosques provided with Tk 1.68 cr as grant

The government has provided the mosques in the country Taka 1,68,32,400 as grant till May 15 of the fiscal 1990-91. State Minister for Religious Affairs, Prof M A Mannan told the Jatiya Sangsad Sunday, reports BSS. Replying a question from Shah Mohammad Rafiqul Bari Chowdhury (JP-Sherpur), State Minister said allocations were made upazila-wise and distributed under the recommendations of Parliament members. Answering another question from Mostafa Rashidi Shuja (AL-Khulna), Prof Mannan said according to a survey done by the Bureau of Statistics in 1983, there were 1,32,312 Mosques in the country.

Moazzem demands release of JP leaders

Jatiya Party Secretary General Shah Moazzem Hossain expressed concern at the ailment of four confined JP leaders and former ministers Colonel (Retd) Zafar Imam, Sheikh Shahidul Islam, Ruhul Amin Howlader and Kazi Feroz Rashid.

Army contingent leaves for Kuwait

The first batch of the Bangladesh army contingent led by Col M Shah Jalal left Dhaka for Kuwait early Sunday morning, an ISPR press release said, reports BSS.

Parents can help prevent drug addiction

Parents can play a vital role in motivating their children to keep away from the scourge of drug addiction, reports UNB. Without parental support and involvement, no community or school can be successful in developing a sound approach to eliminate drug abuse. Beverly Barron, a drug abuse prevention specialist and Regional Coordinator for Texas' War on Drugs said this while addressing a two-day long workshop on "Drug abuse prevention" at the American Cultural Centre in Dhaka on Sunday evening.

Referring to the role of parents she said due to the big family size in Bangladesh, they have an added responsibility to oversee what their children are doing. She proposed that parent teachers association can also



The central biennial council session of Jatiya Sramik Party was held at Mirpur recently.



Dhaka University Officers' Association went on strike on Monday to realise their demands. The office-bearers and members of DUOA met at TSC to decide on future action programme. — Star photo