

VAT termed contrary to fundamental rights

# 'AL government had to accept help under PL-480'

The Jatiya Sangsad resumed its sitting at 4-12 pm on Monday with Deputy Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali in the chair, reports BSS.

The proceedings of the House began after recitation from the Holy Quran and the scheduled question-answer session continued till the break for Asr prayer.

As the House resumed after the Asr prayer, Deputy Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali disposed of the privilege motions.

Then Sharif Khasruzzaman (AL-Narail) tabled his call for attention notice on opening of Khulna Medical College in the current fiscal. He said every divisional headquarters in the country had a medical college, adding, Khulna Medical College was established in taking many aspects into consideration.

He said the southern districts of the country around Khulna had been victims of neglect and deprivation for long. He said the Medical College established in Khulna for the welfare of the people of a vast area was, unfortunately, closed down for unknown reasons.

He called for the opening of the Medical College considering its importance.

He further said Khulna is the country's third largest city and is also an important commercial centre. He said since the country's second largest sea port, Mongla is also under the greater Khulna district and the industrial city has a good road network with the greater Jessore, Kushtia districts, it was desirable that more attention should be given to develop this region.

**M K Anwar**

Speaking on the call attention notice, on behalf of the Health and Family Planning Minister, Chowdhury Kamal Uddin Yusuf, Shipping Minister M K Anwar said, 'Khulna Medical College started functioning in the year 1980-81 in a rented house and students also took admission. But the Minister said, the Medical College was closed down in July 1982.'

He said the 250-bed Khulna's General Hospital has been set up on the 43.2 acres

of land which was acquired for the Medical College.

He said the government has a plan to establish a Medical College in Khulna under the current five-year plan. He, however, said there was no allocation for the purpose in the annual development plan this year due to fund constraints. He said the work on the setting up of the Medical College in Khulna would be taken up as soon as funds were available.

**Khasruzzaman**

Taking the floor again, Khasruzzaman said, the concerned minister, in reply to a starred question on April 25 last, informed the House that Taka two crore had been allocated for establishing a Medical College in Khulna. But, he said he was surprised to see no allocation for Khulna Medical College in the current budget.

He urged the concerned ministry to manage the required fund from the gross amount of Taka 600 crore which had been allocated in the current budget and start work for the establishment of the Medical College. He said admission of students into the college must also start this year.

M K Anwar said the government had plans for setting up some more medical colleges in the country besides the one in Khulna. He said the establishment of the medical colleges was not possible this year due to non availability of funds.

The Deputy Speaker said more on the matter could be heard when the Health and Family Planning Minister would turn up in the House.

Thereafter, Deputy leader of the House Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury proposed the formation of the Standing Committee of Privileges. He proposed the name of Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas as Chairman of this Standing Committee and the names of Begum Khaleda Zia, Sheikh Hasina, Mirza Gholam Hafiz, Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury, Khandker Delwar Hossain, Tofael Ahmed, Shahjahan Siraj, Maulana Mattur Rahman Nizami and Md Aminul Huq as its members.

The proposal of Prof Chowdhury was carried out by the House unanimously.

**Rashed Mosharraf**

Taking the floor next, Alhaj Rashed Mosharraf (AL-Jamalpur) said thousands of people of his constituency had been rendered homeless with the collapse of Harindhara embankment by the onrush of flood water of other rivers Brahmaputra and Jamuna. He said no relief materials had been sent by the government as yet for the affected people.

**Lutfur Rahman Khan**

State Minister for Relief Lutfur Rahman Khan said, the statement of Alhaj Rashed Mosharraf was not based on fact. He gave a list of the relief materials and grants given for the flood affected people Sarishabari, Madarganj, Dewanganj and Jamalpur.

When the House took up the discussion on the national budget, the Deputy Speaker gave the floor to Md Fazlur Rahman (BNP-Natore).

Rahman described the budget for 1991-92 as pro-people and realistic in the context of the objective situation, obtaining in the country.

**Fazlur Rahman**

Listing the achievements of the BNP government during the five months of its existence, Fazlur Rahman said the new government had exempted land revenue upto 25 bighas of land, written off loan upto Taka 5,000 with interest, extended the age limit for government service and taken steps for the employment of lakhs of unemployed youth. The new government, headed by Begum Khaleda Zia, had also successfully tackled the aftermath of the unprecedented cyclonic storm and tidal surge, he added.

He said the economy of the country had been shattered during the nine years of autocratic rule which had squandered the state money in unproductive sectors and maintained a top heavy administration.

With such adversities in the country's economic front, how a better budget could be prepared than the present one, he

asked. He then replied to the criticism of Awami League member Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim against the government while participating in the general discussion on the budget in the House Sunday.

Fazlur Rahman alleged that the government, which came to power after the independence of the country, had made drastic amendments to the Constitution contrary to the hopes and aspiration of the people.

He alleged that the geographical independence which the nation attained through the supreme sacrifices of thirty lakh martyrs was jeopardised by the then government through handing over Berubari to India.

Rahman said, although the Awami League government used to raise slogan against US imperialism, they had to accept help under PL-480. Rahman questioned whether it was possible on the part of any government to frame a national budget for Bangladesh without taking help and assistance of the World Bank, IMF and other aid-giving agencies.

Rahman said, the Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman had been able to receive the highest amount of assistance from the Paris Consortium. The foreign responses and commitment for helping Bangladesh was the reflection of their faith and confidence in the democratic government of BNP, he added.

Rahman discarded the allegation of the opposition regarding the prices of essential commodities and law and order situation of the country, saying that the situation was worst even during the time of Awami League government. He also gave a comparative picture of law and order situation and the prices of essential goods during the Awami League period.

Quoting a number of newspaper headlines during the period between 1973 and 1974 about serious lawlessness and sufferings of the people due to atrocities of the Rakkht Bahini and Mujib Bahini, Fazlur Rahman said the people had no social security during the Awami League time.

The BNP leader told the House that even the then Home Minister had admitted in the Jatiya Sangsad that, 9,560 murders and 12 thousand dacoities were committed in 1974. The number of political murders was two thousand, he said quoting a press report of those days.

When his speech was repeatedly interrupted by some Awami League members, Rahman wanted to know as to why those leaders who had launched movements, unitedly, were now in different political platforms. He referred to the names of Tofael Ahmed (AL), Abdur Razzak (BKSAL), Serajul Alam Khan (JSD), Monirul Huq Chowdhury (JP), Shahjahan Siraj (JSD-S).

Rahman said the BNP leader Prime Minister Khaleda Zia had never betrayed the cause of the people and it was proved through massive verdict of the masses in favour of BNP in the last general elections. Begum Zia herself was elected from five seats, he said and added that his party did not want to possess the sole agency of patriotism. All the MPs of all the parties have equal right to love the country, he said.

Fazlur Rahman continued his speech when the House re-assembled after the Maghreb prayer with Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas in the chair.

He demanded introduction of a Sadar hospital in the Natore district and commissioning of Rooppur Atomic Energy Centre, which is the commitment of the past governments.

**Moudud Ahmed**

With the permission of the chair, Jatiya Party leader Moudud Ahmed at this stage said his party had supported the 10-member standing committee of privileges without even though there was no JP representation.

He said when this committee was proposed on Monday last, it was withdrawn by the Treasury Bench for consideration. When he demanded the inclusion in it of at least one member from the JP, which is the second largest opposition party in the House. But after discussions with

the Treasury Bench members, Moudud said, he felt the inclusion of a JP member in the committee after the exclusion of another member might embarrass the excluded member and as such his party had accepted the original committee.

**Jahangir Hossain**

Taking part in the general discussion on national budget of 1991-92, AKM Jahangir Hossain (AL-Patuakhali) said the Finance Minister had tried to befool the whole nation by placing the budget in a tricky way. The people including professional groups took to the streets spontaneously against the budget, he said.

He said the people would be exploited with the introduction of the Value Added Tax (VAT).

He said different clauses of the VAT bill were contrary to the fundamental rights of the people.

He expressed his hope that the government would take lesson from the mistakes of the past.

Jahangir also drew attention of Communications, Education and Land Ministers for the solution to some problems of his constituency.

**Shahjahan Omar**

Mohammad Shahjahan Omar (BNP-Jhalakathi) said he had been permitted to speak at a time when most of the senior members of the House and when both the VAT and the Finance Bill got a passage by the House.

He said in a country like ours it was difficult to give a budget. He, however, congratulated the Finance Minister for presenting a realistic budget to the nation.

Referring to the VAT, Omar said the VAT was a progressive system of taxation.

Congratulating the Finance Minister for allocating the highest amount to the education sector, the BNP member said this money should be judiciously spent so that people get its benefits.

Omar expressed his indignation at the present system of education with so many curricula, which is not found anywhere in the world.

Drawing the attention of the Education Minister, Omar called for formulating a realistic education policy for the country. He said the nation would remember the Education Minister in future if he succeeded in this regard.

Omar said a large number of cases were now lying with the High Court for years together. He said senior lawyers there were compelled to join the judiciary and if they did not agree, they were not allowed to practice. He called for following the same policy in the country for the greater interest of the nation as well as the people.

**Nazir Hossain**

Nazir Hossain (CPB-Sunamganj) drawing the attention of the relevant authorities, said his constituency is now engulfed by flood and thousands of people are marooned.

Termining the proposed budget as a budget for imposing taxes, the CPB member said the Finance Minister prepared the budget at the advice of the officials of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

He said industrial development would not be achieved if the government failed to increase the purchasing capacity of the people and enhance internal consumption.

**Mahbubul Alam**

Participating in the discussion, the Whip of the Treasury Bench Mahbubul Alam (BNP-Feni), said the members in the House who were opposing the government party for the sake of opposition did not say anything for the good of the people. He said the welfare of the 12 crore people did not find any place in their speeches.

He said some political parties had not participated in the 1986 general elections in utter disregard to the people's will. The sufferings of the common man would not have been so heavy.

He said the Finance Minister had amply demonstrated his sincerity to the

general mass by withdrawing the Value Added Tax from some essential items. He said exemption of VAT from a number of items used by the general public proved that BNP was respectful to the hopes and aspirations of the people.

Mahbubul Alam also quoted some excerpts from some dailies and weeklies including daily Banglar Bani and Weekly Holiday in support of his speech.

He also drew the attention of the concerned ministries to the problems, the people of his area were facing.

He said the roads were in bad shape and bridges and culverts were in dilapidated conditions. He also stressed on the construction of embankment along the coastal belt of the country.

**Hafizuddin Ahmed**

Speaking next Major (Rtd) Hafizuddin Ahmed (Ind-Bhola) said the Finance Minister was a talented man and his budget speech was a testimony to his talent no doubt. But, he said the budget he has placed in the House would not bring any good for the common man.

He said 'it was budget of the rich, for the rich and by the rich'. He said the provision of Taka 600 crore proposed in the budget for contingency expenditures was a violation of the financial discipline.

He said the proposed budget was not meant for the people who lived below the poverty level. He said it failed to give any guideline for the agricultural sector.

About the much-talked-about Value Added Tax (VAT), Maj Hafiz said a 'VAT phobia' has already gripped the nation. He said the people should have been adequately educated before the introduction of VAT.

Maj Hafiz said the present government had done a good job by taking measures for the realisation of the outstanding loans. He hoped that the government must be sure that no one could wriggle out by using their connections with the top notchers in the society.

Incomplete

## Metropolitan

**N'ganj Mahila College**

### JCD bags 9 posts, BCL 5 in polls

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, July 15: Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) won nine seats including the post of Vice-President while the Awami League backed Chhatra League (BCL) captured five posts including these of the General Secretary and the Assistant General Secretary in the Narayanganj Sarkari Mahila College Students Union election held today.

A total of 34 candidates from three panels contested for 14 seats in the election. The panels were JCD's Shampa-Laki, BCL's Mala-Baby and the Chhatra Union panel which did not get any post.

Amena Begum Shampa, the JCD nominated VP, got 254 votes while her nearest rival Mahmuda Begum Mala of the BCL received 243 votes.

### Pucca road to be constructed on city protection dam

Communications Minister Oil Ahmed Monday said that pucca road would be constructed on the flood protection embankment around the eastern side of Dhaka City, reports BSS.

Addressing a meeting at Mautail, he said such roads would be constructed in phases on all such embankment and transports during the monsoon. Responding to peoples demand, the minister assured that the Kajlar part portion of the Jatrabari-Demra Road would be reconstructed with new carpeting within next one and a half month.

The Communication Minister said that the BNP had formed a government after getting the peoples mandate and it would make every effort to live upto expectations. He said nine years of autocratic rule left the country into economic shambles and the BNP government was trying hard to bring the nation out from such a situation. Salauddin Ahmed, the local MP also addressed the meeting.

Naznin Akter Baby the BCL candidate for the General Secretary post got 253 votes while her nearest rival Sharmin Sultana Laki of the JCD got 235 votes. BCL candidate Marufa Mahbub Tuhin for the AGS seat got 252 votes.

Other elected candidates are Aklima Khatun, Sports Secretary (JCD) Magazine Editor Asma Khanam (JCD) Auditorium Secretary Fozia Begum, (JCD) Literature Secretary Amina Parveen (JCD) Cultural Secretary Nila Chowdhury JCD, Religion and Social Welfare Aroza Sultana Mukta (BCL) and Assistant Religion and Social Welfare Secretary Nila Rani Basu (BCL). JCD won three out of the four seats for members and the BCL-one.

The total number of voters was 840 and 62.86 per cent of them cast their votes. The last election of the college was held in 1987.

### SARPV team working in Cox's Bazar

The Social Assistance and Rehabilitation for the Physically Vulnerable (SARPV) Medical Relief team has undertaken a Medical Relief Programme with the help of Royal Netherland Embassy from July 11 in Chokoria under Cox's Bazar district for about 3 months for the recent cyclone affected disabled persons, says a press release.

The team will provide follow-up of treatment facilities, supply physical aids (Artificial Limbs) house-hold appliances (utensils) repair houses for the disabled people of that area, so that they can get rid of further disabilities.

The handicapped persons of this area (hit by recent cyclones) are requested to contact SARPV Relief Camp at Chakoria upazila Head Quarter on all working days.



Students of Homeo College brought out a procession in the city on Monday in protest against the hooliganism in the college. —Star photo



A Board Meeting of United Leasing Company Ltd (ULC) was held on Sunday in the registered office of the Company. The meeting was presided over by Kafiluddin Mahmood, Chairman of the Company and participated by the Directors including PA Leggat of Lawrie Group and David Johns of CDC. R Hoyle of Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC), UK and Basudev Dahal, Resident Representative of ADB attended the meeting as special guests.

### 1,100 kg Ruhi fish fries released in beel Hilna

RAJSHAHI, July 15: The Director of Fisheries Department AK Ataur Rahman on Monday released 1,100 kg of Ruhi fish fries in Beel Hilna under Mohanpur Upazila of the district under 'Third Fisheries Project', an official source said, reports BSS.

Fortyone tonnes of fish fries will be released in the beel in phases under the project being financed by the IDA, UNDP, ODA and the Bangladesh Government. 11200 kg of fish fries have been released in the beel so far.

The Director of Fisheries Department while releasing the fish fries called upon the people for proper preservation of the fish fries.

### Tk 4,440 cr for 389 irrigation, flood control projects since '71

The government had taken 389 projects on Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control with an estimated cost of Taka 4,439.93 crore from the fiscal 1971-72 to 1989-90, Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Minister M. Majid-ul-Huq told the Jatiya Sangsad in Monday, reports BSS.

Giving a written reply to a question from Nurul Islam Moni (Ind-Barguna), the Minister said, 294 of the projects have been completed and work on the rest 95 projects is going on involving Taka

3579.74 crore in local and hard currency.

In reply to another question, from Abdul Mattin Khasru (AL-Comilla), Huq said, a total of 113.24 km of embankment has been constructed on both sides of the River Gumti in Comilla district and the construction of 28.76 km of embankment is yet to begin. A decision has been taken to begin work on the rest 28.76 km, under Gumti Project-Phase-1, during 1991-92 year, the Minister said.

### Plan to modernise system of DU Library

By DU Correspondent

Lim Chee Hong, Chief Librarian of Sails University of Malaysia met Prof Maniruzzaman Miah, Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University Tuesday at his office in Dhaka. Chee Hong was in Dhaka in connection with preparing a report on the way to modernise the systems of Dhaka University Library by examining its existing functioning system.

The visit of Chee Hong was arranged by the Asia Foundation in Dhaka as per agreement between the foundation and the Dhaka University to help modernise the university library.

Zil A Takar, Assistant Representative of Asia Foundation in Dhaka accompanied Chee in the meeting.

### Concern over demolition of slums

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Destitutes Welfare Association in a meeting at its Central Office on Monday expressed concern over the ousting of slums from different parts of the city.

The meeting was presided over by its President Atiqur Rahman and addressed among others by Amanullah Khan, Adviser, Munna Morshed, Vice President, M A Hamidul Huq, General Secretary, Sk Kamal Hossain, Organising Secretary and central leader Jahangir Alam, Abdul Jalil and Ishhaq Hawlader.

The leaders said that the destitutes had some contribution and appealed not to oust them from any of the slums without rehabilitating them elsewhere.

### Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Prof Akhteri Begum will be held on Wednesday at her 19/1 Eskaton Garden residence after Asr prayer, reports UNB.

Relatives and wellwishers have been requested to attend it. Akhteri Begum, Head of the Economics Department of Badrunessa Government Women's College, died of haemorrhage on Sunday.

### Bay fish export fetches Tk 206 cr

State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Abdullah Al-Noman told the Jatiya Sangsad on Monday Bangladesh had earned Taka 205.85 crore by exporting 14,042 tonnes of fish caught from the Bay of Bengal during 1989-90 financial year, reports BSS.

Replying to a question from Mr. Latifur Rahman (Jamaat-Nawabganj), Mr. Noman said 45,000 tonnes of fish had been caught from the Bay during 1989-90 out of which 14,042 tonnes had been exported.

In reply to another question from the same member, Mr. Noman told the House that 385.58 lakh fish fries had been released in open waters bodies during 1989-90 at a cost of Taka 87 lakh.

Replying to a question from Mr. Abdul Mattin Khasru (AL-Comilla), the State Minister said there are 2,60,658 hectares of fish cultivable waterbodies in the country. He said more than 15,29,000 tonnes of fish could be produced in these waterbodies.

### Four killed in incidents

By DMCH Correspondent

Four persons were killed in separate incidents in city on Monday.

Mohammad Ali (27), an employee of EMC Jute Mills, Narshingdi was killed by a minibus near Shalida at Narshingdi-Dhaka Road at 10-30 am. He was brought to DMCH and succumbed to his injuries Monday.

Sabujbag police recovered a body of an unidentified man (26) from Bishaw Road in front of Moutaj Hotel at 6-00 am. The body was brought to DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Anwar (28), a paper seller was died on the spot while he was run over by a Dhaka-bound truck from Tongi near Zia International Airport. The killer truck was detained by Cantonment police.

Shipon (11), son of Abdul Hye was injured seriously when a minibus struck him near Nilkhet on Sunday at 8-00 am. He was brought to DMCH and succumbed to his injuries afterward.

taken for the development of fish resources through developing fish fry stocks in greater Sylhet and Mymensingh districts under the Second Fish Development Projects and in greater Rajshahi and Khulna districts under the Third Fish Development Project of the Fisheries Directorate.

Besides, he said, steps had been taken for fish cultivation though demonstration farms in stagnant waterbodies of the country.

### Tk 10 lakh contrabands seized at Zia

Air Freight Custom Surveillance team on Monday seized contraband goods including VCR, VCP telephone and colour TV sets worth Taka ten lakh at the Zia International Airport, reports BSS.

According to a Press release of the Customs, the goods were imported from Singapore showing them to be personal luggage with the destination shown as Sylhet.

### Call to hand over old Radio building to Diabetic Samity

By Staff Correspondent

Officers Club of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh urged the government to hand over the abandoned 'Radio Bangladesh' building situated nearby Ibrahim Memorial Diabetic Centre to the Diabetic Samity.

The club said 'Radio Bangladesh' building is required because diabetic patients are increasing and space in the Ibrahim Diabetic Centre is limited.

The club of the samity Sunday held its bi-annual meeting at the Diabetic Centre in the city with club President Dr CM Delwar Rana in the chair.

Dr Abul Hashem Mia, Dr Benazir Kamal, Babu Nani Gopal Bank and Begum Shane Ara among others addressed, the meeting.