



Discussion on vote of thanks

Opposition attacks gov't economic policy

By Staff Correspondent

The opposition members in Parliament yesterday alleged that the economic and foreign policies being pursued by the present government have failed to protect the interests of the country.

Economic stagnation is now prevailing in the country while Bangladesh has lost its friends abroad except in the World Bank, Abdul Awal Miah of the Awami League said taking part in the discussion on the President's address to the House on the opening day.

But the treasury bench members refuted the opposition allegation saying the President's speech had clearly highlighted the government's achievements in various socio-economic sectors.

Abdul Awal said the government's wrong economic policy has alienated the people from the BNP, and this has been reflected in recent city corporation polls.

The people will give a similar verdict in the next national election, Awal Miah said adding "the economic policy has crippled the vast majority of people who have lost their purchasing power."

Quoting from a number of news items published from time to time in The Daily Star, Awal Miah said "the Finance Minister himself admitted that the micro-economic performance is very poor."

Awal claimed that the Governor of Bangladesh Bank had also given last month "a grim picture of the country's economy."

Termining Saifur Rahman as an "active worker of the Awami League", Awal Miah said his policy helped the opposition win the mayoral polls. Saifur Rahman was not present at the House.

Initiating the debate, treasury bench leader L K Siddique urged the opposition to maintain strict democratic values by practising tolerance, Siddique

JS hails

From Page 1 Col 7

tion of the Chakmas as a welcome step. He said the credit to a great extent goes to the convenor and members of the National Committee on the CHT.

Moulana Sobhan, however, alerted the national committee to keep vigilance on the activities of the Shantibahini.

Awami League leader Abdul Hasan Chowdhury appreciated the beginning of homecoming of Chakma refugees saying it as a good start. He said the success of the national committee on hill tracts once again proved that a united approach could help attain any success or solve problem.

He, however, criticised the slow process of repatriation of the Rohingya refugees.

He suggested detailed discussion on the Rohingya problem in the Sangsad.

BNP member Major (Retd) Akhteruzzaman praised the diplomatic success of Col Ol Ahmed in tackling the Chakma refugee problem. He also thanked the members of the national committee in this regard.

Awami League member from the Chittagong Hill Tracts Dipanker Talukder welcomed the steps initiated by the government but called for carrying forward political approach to have a lasting solution to the problem.

Govt to build memorial plaque at Rayer Bazar

The government has decided to build a memorial plaque at Rayer Bazar in the city to uphold the true history and spirit of the country's liberation war. Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Mia told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, reports BSS.

Work on the project would start after finalisation of the proposed plan of the memorial, the minister said in reply to a question from Prof Rafiqul Islam of the Awami League.

He said an amount of Taka 6.56 crore has been estimated as the cost of the project including the price of the land.

Answering a supplementary question the minister said the government would do whatever was necessary to uphold the true history and spirit of the Liberation War.

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FBUTA observes strike

By Staff Correspondent

University teachers of the country observed a strike yesterday in protest against the proposed amendment to the University Ordinance of 1973.

The strike, called by the Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association (FBUTA), was observed in the Dhaka, Jahangirnagar, Chittagong and Rajshahi Universities, as well as the BUET and the Agricultural University in Mymensingh, according to FBUTA sources.

The varsity teachers are agitating to resist any amendment to the Ordinance without prior consultation with them.

The FBUTA termed the proposed amendment as an attempt to strengthen government control over the higher educational institutions.

Our RU correspondent adds: In solidarity with the FBUTA the Rajshahi University teachers' Association (RUTA) yesterday observed strike.

The teachers wore black badges and did not attend any classes in the university yesterday.

Meanwhile, the admission tests for the first year honours (Session 1993-94) of the university, scheduled to start from February 26, have become uncertain as the deans' committee and the academic committee of the Department of Management have announced not to participate in any duties of the forthcoming admission test in protest against alleged illegal admission of a first year student in the Management Department last year. The committees have given ultimatum to the authority to cancel the admission of the student by February 20.

The RUTA has extended its support to the deans' and academic committees' ultimatum.

He refuted the claim of L K Siddique that the country had progressed during their rule and said the only development during the present rule was the "terrorism".

In this context, he said the Anti-Terrorism Law was enacted only to suppress the opposition. Shaheed also criticised the government's canal digging programme.

A K M Kamruzzaman, a treasury bench member from Comilla, said the country was progressing fast under this government.

Jamaat member Azizur Rahman Chowdhury, without referring to the President's speech, appealed to all members to help run the country under Islamic rules and regulations.

The Deputy Speaker, Humayun Khan Panni, adjourned the House at 4.05 pm to resume at 11 am today.

Jamuna bridge foundation to be laid Mar 20

The foundation stone of the Jamuna multi-purpose bridge will be laid on March 20, Communications Minister Ol Ahmed said yesterday, reports UNB.

The minister told parliament during the question hour that Tk 509.26 crore will be spent for the bridge during the current fiscal year. Of the amount, Tk 337.09 crore will be spent in foreign exchange and Tk 172.17 crore in local currency.

The total cost of the bridge has been estimated at 550 million US dollars.

Ahmed said the bridge will be built keeping the provision for railway.

2 DU teachers

From Page 1 Col 8  
broad day-light has created panic and a sense of insecurity among the DU teachers. The General Secretary of the Dhaka University Teachers Association (DUTA), Dr Arefin Siddique, giving his reaction to the press, said, "The presence of police on the campus is meaningless if they cannot protect the people from such incidents in broad daylight."

Meanwhile, a couple was mugged off gold ornaments and money at Dhanmondi, Road No 4, last night.

A retired Lieutenant Colonel Azam Harun and his wife fell prey to street muggers at around 8 last night while they were returning home by a rickshaw after shopping at the Elephant Road market.

Eight to nine muggers riding on three rickshaws waylaid the victims and snatched six bangles, three finger-rings, two chains of gold, one wrist watch and a purse containing Tk 2000, the couple said.

Mrs Azam said that the muggers aged between 20 to 25 were wearing lungis. One of the muggers pointed a knife at her and another holding a cracker threatened them not to shout, she added.

"There were bystanders witnessing the incident but none offered help," said the lady.

A case was lodged with the Dhanmondi Police Station last night, but the muggers who fled the scene by the same rickshaws could not be traced.

During last two months several muggings were committed on Dhanmondi roads 3 and 4.

CU B Com pass results announced

CHITTAGONG, Feb 16: The results of B Com pass and supplementary examinations held in 1992 under the University of Chittagong were announced here today, reports BSS.

According to a university press release, 2217 students have passed the examination out of 5095 examinees who included 279 external candidates.

The percentage of pass in the regular examination is 43.9 while in the external is 35.4.

A total of 366 students passed in second division and 1851 candidates in third division.

None has secured first division.

A total of 125 students appeared in the B. Com supplementary examination, of whom 107 came out successful. The percentage of pass is 85.6.

Saudia to buy entire fleet from US cos

WASHINGTON, Feb 16: The White House announced today that Saudi Arabia has agreed to buy dollar 6 billion in commercial aircraft from Boeing Co and McDonnell Douglas Corp in a major boost to the flagging US aircraft industry, reports Reuter.

A White House statement said Saudi Arabia, choosing American firms over European competitors, would purchase the entire replacement fleet for its commercial airline, Saudia Airlines, from the two US companies.

Afghan factions violate truce, kill 13

KABUL, Feb 16: Rival Afghan factions traded rocket and machine-gun fire shattering a temporary ceasefire and killing at least 13 people, government sources and witnesses said today, reports Reuter.

Forces loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani and his opponents led by Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum accused each other of being the first to violate the ceasefire that went into effect on Tuesday.

Hekmatyar's militia fired 40 rockets into Kabul since Wednesday morning, killing 13 people and wounding 17, the official Kabul Radio said.

ICC Trophy

From Page 1 Col 8  
cast sky and rain drops to collect the necessary 69 runs for victory when play got off to a delayed start yesterday.

They lost the wickets of opener Jahangir and Bulbul but skipper Faruque and Nannu remained unseparated on 27 and 12 to post 99 for three in 22.4 overs.

Bangladesh now have four points from two matches, having earlier recorded a win against Argentina by an identical margin of seven wickets. They play their next match against the USA on Feb 19.



Deputy Leader of the Jatiya Sangsad Professor Badruddoza Chowdhury addressing a seminar on 'The Quest of Osmany in Achieving Economic Emancipation and Building National Character' organised by the Bangabir Osmany Smriti Parishad at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Rebuild nation unitedly as envisaged by Osmany'

By Staff Correspondent

Deputy Leader of Parliament Dr AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday urged all political parties to unitedly resist terrorism and uproot corruption to rebuild the nation as envisaged by Bangabir MAG Osmany.

He was addressing a seminar on 'Osmany in Search of Economic Freedom and Rebuilding the Nation's Character' at the National Press Club.

The seminar was organised by the Bangabir Osmany Smriti Parishad Dhaka to mark the 10th anniversary of the death of the Commander-in-Chief of the Liberation War of Bangladesh General MAG Osmany.

The function presided over by parishad president Syed Abul-Hossain Khwaja was also addressed by Justice Kemaluddin Hossain, Gano Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain, Humayun Rashid Chowdhury, Shahjahan Siraj MP, Suranjit Sengupta MP, Nur-e-Alam Siddique, Brigadier (Retd) Feroze Salauddin and others.

It is not possible to curb terrorism by framing and applying laws. Only collective efforts can change the present scenario of violence', Badruddoza said.

Clarifying the government's position in dealing with the law and order situation, the Deputy Leader of the House said, "We admit there is corruption in the administration as well as at other levels. There is widespread terrorism too. But the government does not give indulgence to terrorists or corrupt people."

Shahjahan Siraj MP urged the government to arrange the functions relating to the birth and the death anniversaries of Osmany at the Osmany Auditorium. "Since the founding of the Osmany Auditorium it is rather ironical that no such anniversaries of Gen Osmany took place at that auditorium," he pointed out.

Dr Kamal Hossain said that since independence, the country deviated from the ideals of democracy and the rule of law. He said that after the BNP came to power in 1991—over 6000 students had been injured in campus violence, different campuses were closed 162 times because of violence while 89 died.

It is very regrettable that the Parliamentary Committee on curbing terrorism, which was set up in 1991, had not held a single meeting over the

last two years. The members of Parliament should respect the people's demand to curb terrorism and immediately sit together for a permanent solution, he said.

The speakers described the Commander-in-Chief of the Liberation War Gen MAG Osmany as one of the most ideal personalities of the nation who was a brave warrior and had a deep commitment to parliamentary system of democracy.

The speakers said that the death anniversaries of all national leaders including Osmany, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Ziaur Rahman should be observed at the state level.

Our Correspondent from Sylhet adds, the 10th anniversary of the death of General Osmany was observed here with due solemnity yesterday.

Different political, social, cultural and youth organisations and the Muktiyoddha Sangsad held separate programmes to mark the day.

The district unit of the Jatiya Janata Party arranged a discussion meeting, Milad Mahfil, offering of fatcha and placing of wreath at the mazar of the late leader.

National and party flag were hoisted at the party office here yesterday.

The Muktiyoddha Sangsad also held a discussion on the life of Gen Osmany at the Osmany Museum.

Speakers in the meetings recalled the contributions of the late illustrious son of the soil.

5 file nominations for Magura-2 seat

MAGURA, Feb 16: Five candidates submitted nomination papers to the Returning Officer today for the bye-election in Magura-2 constituency of the Jatiya Sangsad scheduled for March 20, official sources said, reports UNB.

Awami League has fielded Shaquazzaman Bachchu to run for the parliamentary seat that fell vacant following the death last month of his father Asaduzzaman, a senior leader of the party.

The other candidates are: Kazi Salimul Haq of the BNP, Nital Roy Chowdhury of the Jatiya Party, Prof Golum Akbar of the Jamaat-e-Islami and Moulana Mahbubur Rahman of the Islami Oikya Andolan.



Bosnian refugees walking inside a camp near Rawalpindi in Pakistan on Tuesday. Some 200 Bosnian Muslims who have been staying in this camp for eight months are desperate to leave for countries in West Europe or the United States of America.

4 killed, 10 hurt in Sylhet road accident

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Feb 16: Four persons were killed and ten others injured in a road mishap this afternoon on the Dhaka-Sylhet highway.

The accident occurred at Losna near Srimangal when a Sylhet bound coach collided head on with a speeding truck coming from the opposite direction.

The victims had been identified as Rajabuddin, 45, Tota Miah, 50, Bashir, 25 and another unidentified man aged about 30. All of them hailed from Nabiganj thana under Habiganj district.

Of the injured Abdul Hakim and Lechu Miah had been admitted to the Sylhet MAG Osmany Medical College Hospital with critical injuries.

Mob ransacks train: 8 hurt in clash with police

JHENIDAH, Feb 16: Eight people were injured, one with bullet, in a clash between police and a mob which allegedly ransacked a train at Kotchandpur station today, reports UNB.

Seriously injured Yadul was admitted to the Kotchandpur Hospital with bullet wounds on the back and chest. Railway policeman Abdus Salam, who was in the train, one Osman and five others suffered minor injuries.

Witnesses said the clash erupted when railway policemen nabbed one Abdul Hye in Jessore after he had a tussle with co-passengers over a seat in the Rajshahi-bound train from Khulna—the Mahananda.

Hearing the news, about 1,000 angry people seized the train at Kotchandpur, dismantled its hose-pipe and destroyed the windowpanes by throwing stones. They were demanding immediate release of Hye.

The protesters hauled up the train at the station for about two hours from 3 pm to 5 pm.

Rao: Minister

From Page 1 Col 3

ity of a reshuffle," a source in Rao's Congress (I) Party said, a day after the prime minister called on President Shankar Dayal Sharma here for reportedly discussed possible changes in the cabinet.

But Congress spokesman Vithal Gadgil said he was not aware of Rao's plans.

"Yes, there are gaps in the cabinet," Gadgil told AFP. "But when he is going to fill them up, I don't know."

The widely-circulated Times quoted unidentified political sources as saying that Rao was planning to make additions and changes in his three-tier council of ministers before Sunday.

The crucial portfolios of Defence and Industry have been vacant for months, while External Affairs Minister Dinesh Singh's work has been severely restricted because of poor health.

Two junior ministers will cease to be MPs in April and will have to quit.

The opposition has also been pressing for the dismissal of a minister blamed by a parliamentary panel for a huge bank scam.

"The prime minister has been throwing hints and now and then about a cabinet reshuffle," the Congress sources said. "He thinks new people have to be inducted."

The Observer said the cabinet was most likely to be changed on Thursday or Friday. The Times added that Rao would "almost certainly take this opportunity to drop some ministers".

Rao's position at the head of the Congress has been strengthened recently by the poor performance of the main opposition Hindu Party in state elections in November and the defection of 10 opposition MPs in December gave his party a slender majority in parliament after two years of uncertainty.

The Midnight File

Mandela announces concessions

JOHANNESBURG, Feb 16: African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela announced major concessions Wednesday to an opposition alliance in hopes of avoiding a boycott of national elections and reducing the threat of civil war. "We must treat the threat of civil war seriously. That is why we have gone out of our way to make these concessions," Mandela told a news conference after an emergency meeting of the group's policy-making National Executive Committee, reports AP.

Two top Zhirinovskiy allies quit

MOSCOW, Feb 16: Two top members of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's ultranationalist party quit its parliamentary faction Wednesday, citing "ideological" differences with their power hungry leader. One of the defectors, Viktor Kobelev, accused Zhirinovskiy of extremism, alienating Russia's allies and usurping power in the Liberal Democratic Party, or LDP, which got the most votes in the December parliamentary elections, reports AP.

1000 buried in Ghana

ACCRA, Feb 16: One thousand corpses have been buried and security forces are searching for more after ethnic fighting which engulfed Ghana's northern region, the officer in charge of security operations said today. Brigadier Joseph Smith told reporters in the regional capital Tamale the military was gradually regaining control of the situation and had started disarming the warring factions, reports Reuter.

Bouys along coast of Bay can monitor storm surges

A Canadian expert has suggested deployment of about nine bouys along the Bay of Bengal to monitor and gather data for forecasting tidal surges and tropical cyclones in Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Simon GP Skey told a seminar here yesterday that 100 per cent accurate prediction about incoming storms or cyclones is impossible, but "several appropriate measures can help us in this regard".

The Institution of Engineers and the National Oceanographic and Maritime Institute jointly organised the seminar on Prediction of Storm Surges along the Coast of the Bay of Bengal at the Institution's conference room on Tuesday.

Canadian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Jon J Scott, former Naval Chief, MH Khan, Director of the Meteorology Department, H Khan Chowdhury were among those who spoke on the occasion. MK Das, Chairman of the Naomi, presided.

Presenting a paper at the seminar, Skey cited the example of Canada's west coast where as many as 20 bouys gather data about ocean conditions and said nine bouys could be placed around the Bay of Bengal for that purpose.

He said the cost of such bouys would be much lower in Bangladesh in comparison with those built in Canada.

These bouys will monitor and collect data to transmit to geo-stations for effective management of data and disseminate data for early warning to the people of the coastal areas.

Some speakers suggested that the holding of a regional seminar with representatives from the Bay of Bengal nations could be of assistance in evolving appropriate measures.

Revamping BNP

From Page 1 Col 7  
its credibility to a great extent during nine years of the autocratic regime.

"We failed to convince the people that the reform programme undertaken by the BNP government had saved the country from ruin and the people will get the benefits after several years," the ruling party policy-maker said.

Since assumption of power by the BNP in March, 1991 factionalism inside the party had also become acute. In fact, this was identified as the major cause of the debacle in the Dhaka and Chittagong city polls — both former strongholds of the party.

Other sources in the party said that the high command had already decided to charge the policy of maintaining the status quo to restructure the various tiers of party leadership.

That move, however, was stalled by the unwanted controversy surrounding the appointment of High Court judges and the Attorney General's resignation drama last week.

Preoccupation with day-to-day governance and the current parliamentary session are also slowing down the process.

He pointed out that the Secretary General and most of the members of the powerful Standing Committee have been in their posts for about seven years now during which time no major changes took place in the front or mid-ranking leadership either.

Three posts of the 15-member highest policy-making body have remained vacant for a long time. Similarly, posts in the Central Executive Committee have also remained vacant even after the committee was expanded from 151 members to 185 during the last council session.

Only some mid level leaders of the Chittagong City Committee have been taken to task after the defeat in the city polls. However, a number of other top-ranking leaders in Chittagong and many others in Dhaka are likely to get the axe on similar grounds.

"The sooner our chief (Begum Zia) goes for action, the earlier the party will get new dynamism and direction," one leader concluded.

Writ  
From page 1 Col 5  
draw the stay order. Besides, the mayor-elect Mohammad Hanif has also appealed to the High Court to withdraw the stay order which was preventing him and 89 elected commissioners from taking their oaths because the EC is not being able to announce the final official results.

Considering the matter to be an urgent one, the High Court bench, comprising Justice Abdul Jalil and Justice Ruhul Amin, on February 14 fixed today (Thursday) for hearing of the writ.

Chakmas  
From Page 1 Col 8  
The long awaited repatriation of the refugees began following a tripartite understanding reached recently among the representatives of Bangladesh, India and the Hill Tracts Refugee Welfare Association.