

# Displaced students will be rehabilitated: DU VC

By DU Correspondent

Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Emajuddin Ahmed assured the students of immediate measures to rehabilitate the displaced students in their respective halls within three days.

The VC gave this assurance at a meeting with leaders of various student organisations ahead of the long-awaited DUCSU election scheduled for April 12.

Prof Emajuddin also said that the university authorities would take necessary measures to hold the elections of the Dhaka University Central Students Union (DUCSU) peacefully.

The rules and regulations of DUCSU were also read out in the meeting, sources said.

Pro-Awami League Chhatra League President Moinuddin Hasan Chowdhury alleged that a large number of activists of his organisation was not being allowed to stay in Zahurul Huq, Saitmullah and Mohsin Halls.

Provoists of the three halls assured the BCL leader that they would take steps to reha-

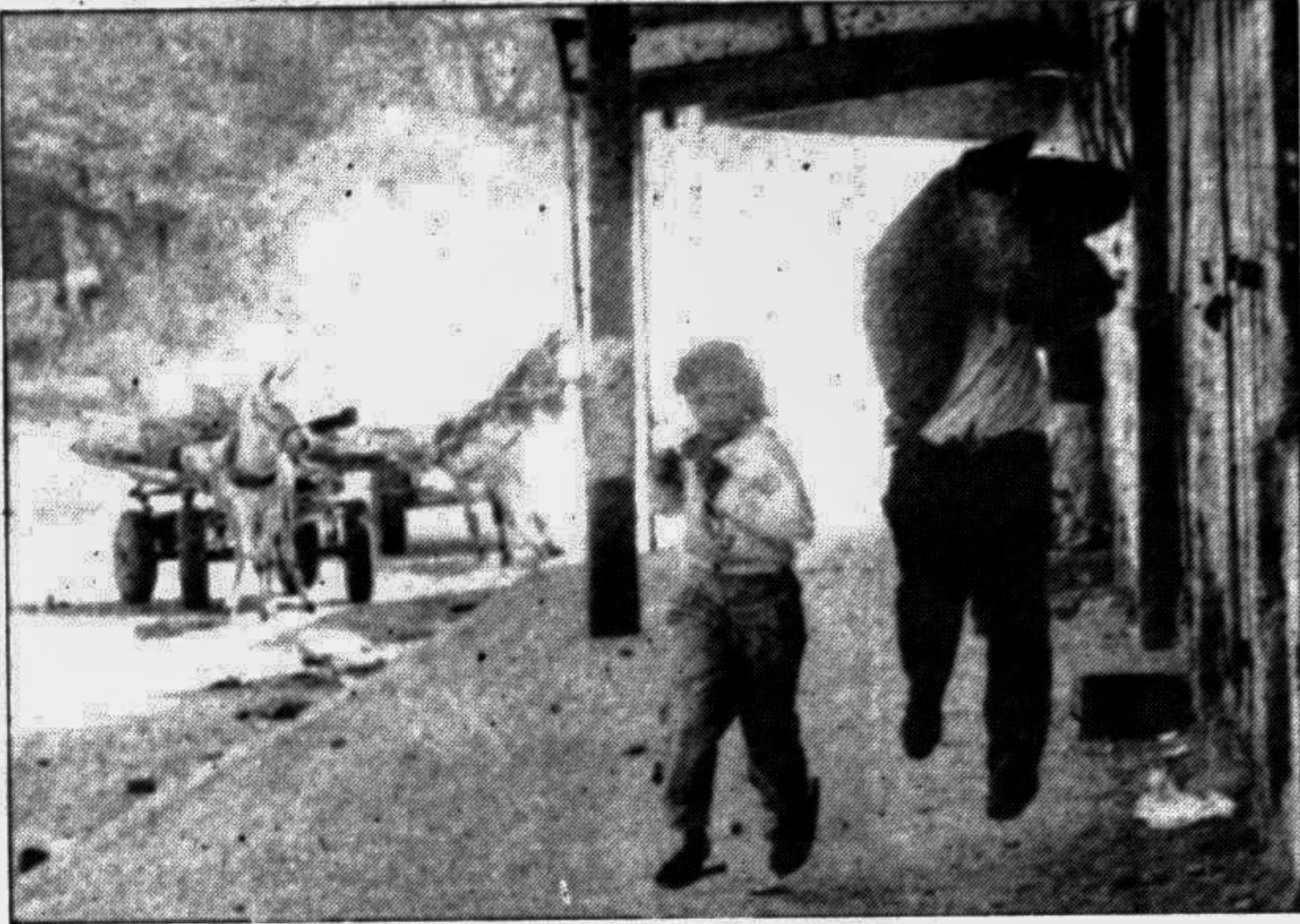
bitate genuine students in their respective halls. Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders rejected the allegation of the BCL leader, saying that they are always in favour of genuine students to stay in the halls.

Leaders of Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikyo called upon the authorities to announce a code of conduct for the DUCSU and hall union elections.

All the student organisations agreed to cooperate with the authorities for peaceful holding of the DUCSU elections as per schedule.

The meeting chaired by the VC Prof Emajuddin Ahmed was attended by Provoists, Proctor and student leaders Nazimuddin Alam, Fazul Haq Milon, Moinuddin Hasan Chowdhury, Iqbalur Rahim, Ruhul Quddus Babu and Belal Chowdhury.

Meanwhile, JCD, BCL (M) and GCO held rallies on the campus yesterday urging all concerned to free the DU from terrorism for holding the DUCSU peacefully.



Palestinians flee tear-gas lobbed by Israeli soldiers during clashes in Gaza City yesterday. Violence erupted in the Gaza Strip yesterday after a curfew was lifted. — AFP photo

## Nor'westers likely by monthend

By Staff Correspondent

Severe to moderate nor'westers may hit some parts of the country this month, Met office sources said yesterday.

In a monthly bulletin, it said two to three severe nor'westers may hit Rajshahi, Dhaka, Sylhet and Comilla region during the second half of February while other parts of the country may experience one to two of moderate intensity.

It forecast that all the five divisions would experience rain in March.

## Visuddhananda Mahathero passes away

CHITTAGONG, Mar 2: Mahasanganayaka Visuddhananda Mahathero, President of Bangladesh Bouddha Kristi Prachar Sangha, died of chronic bronchitis at a city clinic here this noon, clinic sources said. He was 86, reports BSS.

One of the founders of Kamalapur Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery of Dhaka, Mahathero left behind a large number of disciples, countless devotees and relatives to mourn his death.

Vice-Chairman of Buddhist Religious Welfare Trust late Mahathero who was also high priest of Dharmarajika Buddhist Monastery of Dhaka, had immense contributions in promoting relationships in dif-

## Fire damages 20 houses in city

## Hasina fears rigging in byelection

MAGURA, Mar 2: Awami League president Sheikh Hasina today expressed fear of rigging by the ruling party in the upcoming Magura-2 byelection to escape a debacle like the one it suffered in the city corporation elections, reports UNB.

"Awami League will not tolerate any vote dacty in the byelection and will give an appropriate reply if the election is rigged," Hasina said while addressing a campaign meeting for her party candidate at Arapara High School ground this afternoon.

Presided over by Shalika thana Awami League president Tarapada Biswas, the meeting was also addressed by Khan Tjpu Sultan MP, Dhirendranath Shambhu MP, Shah Haduzzaman MP and Abdul Jalil.

Party central leaders Begum Sajeda Chowdhury MP and Abdur Razzak MP were present but did not address the meeting.

The Awami League chief told the meeting that people have become annoyed with the BNP government due to its betrayal, patronisation of terrorists, non-implementation of the joint declaration of the three alliances and ineptitude to run the administration.

She alleged that instead of fulfilling the pledges made during the 1991 parliamentary elections, the BNP has been patronising the terrorists to rigging to power.

Hasina, also the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, said the BNP lost the right to stay in power any longer as it had totally failed to run the country and fulfil the hopes and aspirations of the people.

The opposition leader referred to the allegations of corruption against 17 ministers and criticised the government for not taking any steps yet against them.

"The people have no confidence in the BNP government. It is now the duty of the Awami League to free the people from the clutches of the BNP regime," she told the meeting.

Hasina urged the people to cast their votes in favour of the Awami League candidate Shafiguzzaman Bachchu.

On her way to Magura from Jessore, the Awami League chief addressed some wayside gatherings at Beluabari, Talkori, Chaturbaria, Singra, Kalia and Simakhali.



Ven V Mahathero ferent fields between Bangladeshis Buddhists and other Buddhist countries of the world.

Widely acclaimed at home and abroad as an emissary of religion, Mahathero received Asian Peace Award from Mongolia and Mohatma Gandhi Prize from Norway for his humanitarian service.

Mahathero established a number of educational institutions and temple-cup-orphanages in the country. He also attended a number of international conferences on Buddhism and non-violence throughout the world.

The mortal remains of Mahathero will be kept preserved for ceremonial cremation at a convenient time.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas has expressed profound grief and shock at the demise of venerable Visuddhananda Mahathero.

In a condolence message yesterday, the President said that the contribution of late Visuddhananda Mahathero to Buddhism, Buddhist community and peace will be remembered for long. His death is a great loss to the Buddhist community, he added.

In a message, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday condoled the death of venerable Visuddhananda Mahathero.

The Prime Minister said the nation, especially the Buddhist community, lost a great religious personality in his death. He was dedicated to the cause of the religion and peace, she added.

UNB adds: Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina also expressed shock at the death of chief religious leader of the Bangladesh Buddhist community Visuddhananda Mahathero.

In a message of condolence, she said Visuddhananda Mahathero dedicated his life to the cause of human welfare and established many schools and humanitarian organisations.

Meanwhile, the treasury and the opposition members of the committee started a fresh debate yesterday when Education Minister

Mostafiz said the incident evoked sharp reaction all over Bangladesh and the killing was described as barbaric.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had expressed deep shock at the killing, he added.

The Foreign Minister stated that the Prime Minister had issued a statement condemning the killing and expressing Bangladesh's solidarity with the Palestinians. Parliament, he said, also adopted a resolution condoling the deaths and expressing deep shock at the killings.

Mostafiz said he had a meeting with heads of missions of the Muslim countries in Dhaka on February 28 and had communicated the sentiment of the people of Bangladesh at the Hebron massacre to all the Muslim countries.

Refuting the opposition charges, the Foreign Minister said a spokesman of the government had on the night of the incident on February 25 issued a statement expressing deep shock at the killing of Muslims at the mosque.

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## Probe body decision

Jamiuddin Sircar proposed that an introduction to the report be prepared holding the opposition members responsible for the committee's failure to frame the terms of reference. The opposition members protested the move.

The Education Minister changed his position only when Rashed Khan Menon started drafting an introduction blaming the treasury bench members.

In his proposed draft, Menon observed that the treasury bench members consistently showed an unbending attitude towards their original stand all through the meeting which actually foiled the proposed investigation. Besides, the treasury bench members did not agree to the opposition demand for calling Irrigation Minister Majid ul Huq and Tofael Ahmed — the accused and the accuser — before the committee, Menon said.

Finally, the members of both the benches decided to abandon the idea of incorporating into the report any statement blaming each other. Now, the report is scheduled to contain a statement that the members had made best efforts to reach an agreement on the issue but failed to narrow down the difference of opinions.

Once the final report produced in the House, the Jatiya Sangsad will decide the fate of the proposed investigation.

UNB adds: Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina also expressed shock at the death of chief religious leader of the Bangladesh Buddhist community Visuddhananda Mahathero.

## BSF attempt to kidnap Bangladeshi

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Mar 2: An attempt to kidnap a Bangladeshi by a group of Indian BSF men was foiled at the Stripur stone quarry of Gowainghat thana yesterday evening.

Seven members of the BSF entered into Bangladesh territory and caught Rabiul, a stone quarry labourer, when he was loading a truck.

The Indian security men beat up Rabiul and also tried to kidnap him from the spot.

Hearing his hue and cry labourers working in the adjacent areas rushed in and rescued him.

The BSF men left the area immediately.

An official source confirmed the incident and said the matter had been protested with the Indian authorities.

## Eid shopping

From Page 1 Col 4

As estimated yesterday, the prices of local cotton trousers range between Tk 250 and 500, best quality local jeans between Tk 700 and 1200, adults T-shirts Tk 200 and 300, and shirts Tk 200 to 800.

For the local garments products many of the buyers flocked to Bangabazar Hawkers Market and the sidewalk-market opposite to the Dhaka College.

The most expensive market, according to a buyer, is Isha Khan Market at Kakrail while the most reasonable one is at Mouchak.

On the working days the markets were frequented by the members of the fair sex who poured into the saree shops at the Baily Road. Traditional Mirpur Katan, soft and half silk, Tangal Half silk, Jamdani, Rajshahi silk, Baluchury and Kanchubaran are few of the brands in demand.

Panjabi, which is the most sought after men's dress, is being bought from different handicrafts shops instead of the markets. The prices of the panjabis range between Tk 150 to Tk 2,500. New Elkphant Road continued to be the shoes haven where footwear-wearers are sold for Tk 200 to Tk 5000.

On her way to Magura from Jessore, the Awami League chief addressed some wayside gatherings at Beluabari, Talkori, Chaturbaria, Singra, Kalia and Simakhali.

## AL clarification

By Staff Correspondent

Abul Hasan Chowdhury MP of the Awami League (AL) yesterday observed that the AL chief Sheikh Hasina was always committed to opposing racism as well as racial discriminations against any people of the world.

Chowdhury, Secretary of the International Affairs sub-committee of the party, made this observation while giving a clarification on a remark of Hasina published in the country's print media the day before.

According to the media report, Hasina had accused information Minister Nazmul Huda of being biased towards the Jewish community which eventually sounded the AL chief's bias against the Jews.

However, Abul Hasan Chowdhury in his clarification, issued to the press said, "I would like to assure everybody that racism and racial bias is the farthest from Sheikh Hasina's mind."

## Burglary

From Page 1 Col 7

Both police and Secretariat officials said the thieves got inside breaking through five collapsible gates and a number of security locks of the rooms.

The rooms of M Azizul Karim, a joint-chief of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, M Siddiqur Rahman Majumder, a Deputy Secretary of the same ministry, Abdur Rahim, Principal Information Officer and M Makhbul Ahmed, Additional Principal Information Officer were broken open.

Talking to The Daily Star, Makhbul Ahmed said the thieves were skilled and took enough time to ransack all the rooms.

He expressed surprise and concern over the repeated burglaries in the well-protected Secretariat building. "The motive is still a mystery... Only police can find it out," he added.

In January, a fire broke out mysteriously in a room of the Ministry of Religious Affairs where some papers and materials were gutted.

And last year, some burglars broke open a room of the Civil Aviation Ministry but no loss was reported. A good amount of cash was taken away by the burglars from the office of the Science and Technology Division.

However, the keys to the doors and the collapsible gates are generally kept with a caretaker. A contingent of police force under an ASP works round the clock in the Secretariat for its security.

A case was lodged with the Ramna police station. But no headway was made in the police investigation into any of the previous cases.

## The Midnight File

### Maglaj under Serb attack

SARAJEVO, Mar 2: The Muslim-held town of Maglaj in northern Bosnia was under fierce attack by besieging Serb forces, radio Sarajevo reported today. No independent confirmation was available of the report, which said that Serb infantry had made several attempts to pierce the defences of the mainly-Muslim Bosnian government army. The radio also said that more than 3,000 shells had fallen on the town, without indicating since when. It was also uninformative on the outcome of the Serb attacks which have intensified in the last two weeks, reports AFP.

### Pamfilova's resignation accepted

MOSCOW, Mar 2: President Boris Yeltsin on Wednesday formally accepted the resignation of Social Welfare Minister Ella Pamfilova, his press service said. Pamfilova first submitted her resignation in January, citing the growing influence of conservatives in Yeltsin's government. Her resignation was not accepted then, reports AP.

## National book policy announced

The government yesterday announced the national book policy aimed at encouraging publication of quality books and export those to the international market, reports UNB.

"The policy will help boost up the publication industry and encourage maximum utilisation of books," State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahan Ara Begum told a press conference at her Secretariat office yesterday.

The 34-point national book policy was approved by the Cabinet on February 28.

The State Minister said that the policy would help reduce the country's dependency on imported books and improve qualitative standard of books and regulate the price in the local market.

A national committee will be formed within a month to execute the policy, she said.

Replying to a question, Prof Jahan Ara said book export has increased in the last few years. In 1990-91, the export earning from books was Tk 98 lakh which doubled last year.

The country imported books worth about Tk 8.25 crore in 1990-91, the import

of India being more than Tk three crore against exports worth Tk 68,000.

The import of books has increased in the last few years, the state minister said.

The objectives of the book policy includes building up a publication infrastructure, encouraging the involvement of educated manpower in this industry, modernisation of printing industries, use of ISBN and classification number, increasing publication of books for children as well as text and reference books.

The newspapers are facing manifold problems, including the newsprint crisis that forces the owners to purchase newsprint from the market at an exorbitant price just to prop up the industry, he said.

The BSP President also pointed to the maldistribution of the government advertisements and said most newspapers were being deprived of their due economic cooperation from the government.

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## Opposition adamant

From Page 1 Col 5

tion group leaders.

The Jatiya Party's parliamentary chief Moudud Ahmed, the Jamaat's Maulana Abdus Sobhan, the Workers Party's Rashed Khan Menon, the Ganatantri Party's Suranjit Sengupta, Shamsuddoha of the CPB and Tofael Ahmed and Mohammad Nasim of the Awami League were present at the briefing. According to sources, Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury of the NDP and Maulana Obdul Huq of the IOJ also attended the opposition meeting.

The opposition parties staged a walk out on Tuesday in protest against some comments of the Information Minister, which the opposition alleged had hurt their religious sentiments.

The ruling party is creating all these crises but the Leader of the House seems to be unconcerned," Samad Azad, flanked by Moudud Ahmed and Maulana Sobhan, told the reporters.

The opposition leaders also rejected the Foreign Minister's statement in the House yesterday saying "it proved the justification of our demand for a general discussion on the Hebron issue."

Samad Azad also termed the Foreign Minister's statement as 'untrue' as he (foreign minister) did not meet the mission chiefs of the Islamic countries in Dhaka as claimed in his statement.

UNB adds: Jatiya Party leader Moudud Ahmed rejected Mostafizur Rahman's statement in Parliament calling it "disappointing."

He also called untrue the foreign minister's claim that he had discussed the Hebron incident with Ambassadors of Muslim countries here at an iftar party on February 28.

Referring to Deputy Leader Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury's comment that such incident's took place in the past and no question of seeking apology was raised at that time, Moudud said the information minister's derogatory remarks hurting the religious sentiment cannot be compared with any other incidents.

"This is much more important. It is linked with religious sentiment and it is an international and humanitarian issue."

Jamaat leader Maulana Abdus Sobhan demanded that the Information Minister seek unconditional apology not only in Parliament but also to the whole nation. He condemned Huda for his reported statement outside the House that they (opposition) have no religious feeling and the question of hurting their sentiment

is not arise.

Sobhan also rejected the arguments of Badruddoza Chowdhury as an eyewash.

Rashed Khan Menon said that the government's attitude demonstrates that it has surrendered to the American imperialism and Jewism. "We want to know what foreign policy the government is now pursuing. We want to find out its weaknesses."

Menon said the Information Minister's remarks have not only hurt the opposition but members of the treasury benches also. Quoting press reports, he said Major (rtd) Akteruzzaman rushed to the information minister to protest his remarks while another BNP MP Ziaul Haq openly said that they feel embarrassed by the remarks of certain ministers.

The minister (Huda) has committed offence by making such derogatory remarks, Menon said.

Suranjit Sengupta said the opposition could demand the expulsion of the Information Minister under rule 15 and 16 of the Rules of Procedure but we only asked him to tender apology.

Referring to the Prime Minister's silence on such an important issue, he said, "What does she lead as the leader of the House? Parliament cannot be run by a runner as we see in the cricket match. She must be present and run the House."

Shamsuddoha of CPB expressed his dismay as the government is giving protection to the Information Minister instead of taking action against him.

IPSA Bill '94 passed

A bill providing for establishment of an Institute for higher studies, research and technological development on agriculture was passed by Parliament yesterday without any discussion in the absence of the opposition, reports UNB.

The Institute of Post-graduate Studies in Agriculture (IPSA) Bill, 1994 was brought by Agriculture Minister Majidul Huq replacing the ordinance on it promulgated in January last.

About 50 amendments to the bill stood in the names of opposition members fell through as none of those was moved.

This is the first legislative business achieved by the House during its current session which began on January 5. Most of its time had gone in unscheduled debates.

Referring to the increased foreign investment in the country's capital market, Saifur Rahman said the foreign investors are coming to invest in the country because of a favourable investment climate restored by the government by taking appropriate measures.

He also referred to a solid exchange system in this regard, which, according to the Finance Minister, brought about substantial changes in the attitude of the foreign investors by restoring their confidence.

He said the country has been striving for a self-reliant economy, but still 70 per cent of the development budget come from outside.

Saifur deplored that the nation is still in the vicious cycle of low income and low savings. He, however, stressed the need for promoting savings to intensify the investment activities.

The Minister also emphasised the need for an outward-oriented investment friendly climate for rapid growth in the private sector.

Restriction on forex

From Page 1 Col 8

government declared the Taka fully convertible in the current account without reference to Article 8 of the IMF, although two restrictions and some moderate restrictions continued to persist in its transactions.

The two restrictions are in sending money for family maintenance and school-level education of Bangladeshi children abroad while there are moderate restrictions in carrying money for business trips and travelling abroad.

Acceptance of Article 8 by the country would also mean that there will be no restriction in investing in Bangladesh by the foreign investors and remitting the profits to their homeland, although such restrictions were removed much earlier by the government. Some 77 countries have accepted Article 8 of the IMF so far.

Finance Minister, in his speech, also said restrictions in forex transactions on capital account would also be withdrawn soon.

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