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BNP wants Education Minister to quit

Opposition BNP yesterday demanded resignation of the Education Minister for his reluctance to restore normal academic atmosphere in the Dhaka University, reports UNB.

Earlier, on Saturday, the BNP asked the Home Minister to resign for his complete failure to maintain law and order in the country.

Briefing newsmen at the Sangsodh Bhaban yesterday evening, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury blamed negligence of the government particularly of Home and Education ministers, for destroying the academic atmosphere and causing unprecedented deterioration of the law and order.

The government has shown limitless cruelty and acted quite irresponsibly in dealing with the situation, he alleged, saying the education minister remained silent despite the resignation of vice-chancellor, proctor, nine provosts and

house tutors.

The entire administration of the Dhaka University has collapsed due to their resignation, the BNP leader said.

Prof B Chowdhury quoted the VC's statement of resignation and said that such an event in the highest seat of learning was unprecedented in the history.

The government has undermined the Dhaka University, he said adding there is no scope of undermining this incident, which will only bring more disaster for the nation.

He alleged that armed hoodlums were moving scot-free creating anarchy and shedding bloods on the campus.

He said the Education Minister and the Home Minister have failed to carry out their responsibilities.

Prof B Chowdhury went on: When the valuable academic life of 28,000 students has become uncertain, we can't sit idle in the House. We've to raise the point before the nation, but the ruling party is not allowing us to discuss the issue in Parliament.

He accused the Home Minister of using the police against the innocent students and helping the terrorists to evict the general students.

BNP central leaders and MPs were present at the press briefing.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina consoling the mother of Rezaul Karim Ratan yesterday. Ratan was killed during clashes in Bogra on Saturday. — PID photo

Fiery debate in JS

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the salvation of the departed souls of those killed in Bogra. Moulana Delwar Hossain Saidee led the prayer, abandoned by the ruling party MPs.

Initiating the debate, BNP lawmaker Abu Yusuf Mohammad Khalilur Rahman accused the Speaker of denying the opposition's right to speak in parliament.

The House plunged into chaos when Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury warned that he would not allow the member to speak if there was any further unpleasant remark towards the chair.

At this stage, young BNP member Mashur Rahman took the floor and alleged that as many as 50 workers of BNP and its front organisations were killed by the Awami League regime in last two months.

Nine people were killed in Bogra, of whom two buried without proper funeral rites while automatic LMG was being demonstrated by pro-government students in Dhaka University, he said.

Alamgir Kabir said the situation has deteriorated to such an extent that the daughter of late Awami League leader Tajuddin Ahmed filed a case of repression against her husband who was arrested recently.

The BNP member demanded resignation of the Home Minister and said the hands of the Prime Minister are stained with blood.

K M Obaidur Rahman said the government failed to take any pragmatic steps to deal with the situation. Rather, the home minister's provocative remarks further deteriorated the situation, he added.

Moulana Delwar Hossain Saidee quoted newspaper reports on recent incidents of violence and terrorism, and said there is no doubt that law and order has aggravated. He said it needs the sincerity of the two leaders in combating terrorism.

In a sharp rebuttal to the opposition allegations, Awami League organising secretary and Telecommunication Minister Mohammad Nasim came out with full fury and straightaway blamed BNP and JCD for the situation in Bogra.

He alleged that the situation was created to provoke police to open fire. In a planned way, JCD and Jubo Dal had lost terrorism throughout the country.

Referring to the resignation of DU vice chancellor Prof Emajuddin Ahmed, the Awami League leader said it was designed to destabilise the situation.

He accused the former VC of patronising the armed terrorism by JCD and giving them shelter during the last four years.

He wondered why the former VC did not submit resignation when police staged atrocities on students at the Jagannath Hall during Begum Khaleda Zia's regime.

Nasim said an enquiry should be made to see how many houses Prof Emajuddin owns in Dhaka city and how his daughter and son-in-law got jobs in the Dhaka University.

Former DUCSU VP Akhtaruzzaman accused BNP of creating a planned situation to fish in the troubled water.

Before staging the walkout at about 5:55pm, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury said Vice-Chancellor Prof Emajuddin Ahmed, Proctor Nazrul Islam and nine provosts had resigned in the wake of an explosive situation on the DU campus.

Prof Chowdhury quoted the VC's statement on resignation and said such an event at the highest seat of learning is un-

precedented in the annals of history.

As some Treasury bench members raised a hue and cry in the middle of his comment, he said there is no scope of undermining this incident which will only bring disaster for the nation.

"The administration of Dhaka University has collapsed, armed hoodlums are moving scot-free letting loose anarchy and shedding blood on the campus," the BNP leader told the House.

Chowdhury alleged the government demonstrated a "mindless cruelty and irresponsibility" by turning a blind eye to the DU situation while the Education Minister and the Home Minister failed to carry out their duties.

Rebutting the walkout, Deputy Leader of the House Zilur Rahman accused the opposition of trying to fish in the troubled water as BNP could not accept its electoral defeat.

He said they staged walkout frequently on different pretexts from the first day of this maiden session of the new Parliament.

Zilur alleged that Prof Chowdhury made untrue and provocative remarks to find a plea for walkout, and denounced the reasons for Opposition walkout as ludicrous.

Education Minister ASHK Sadek said he was amazed at the statement of the Deputy Opposition Leader on the resignation of the DU Vice-Chancellor.

"If we try to find out the causes behind the DU situation, then we will have to speak against the Vice-Chancellor. The last few days' incidents in Dhaka University are nothing new. In last five years, many more tragic incidents have occurred there."

Even students were killed on the open stage on the campus and general students fled the horrible scene. "What that famous VC had done at that time? I don't want to speak against him in his absence..." the Education Minister said.

Sadek said he had conversations with the Vice-Chancellor and that he requested him to continue in office so that the situation does not worsen.

But he (VC) issued the statement all on a sudden, the Education Minister told the House. Sadek pointed out the VC's political affiliation and said he had always worked in favour of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and instigated students in last four years.

Sadek said he would come up with full details about the Vice-Chancellor today.

Sheikh Fazil Karim Selim of Awami League said Vice-Chancellor Prof Emajuddin Ahmed was the President of Zia Parishad and helped JCD in launching terrorist acts.

"The drama of resignation was to cover up his misdeeds for last five years," he said in a bitter criticism of the VC who tendered resignation on Saturday amidst a wave of violence at the university.

WB support

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the privatisation programmes, participation of women in development activities and the need to attract foreign investment in Bangladesh.

The measures for strengthening the implementation capacity also came up during the meeting, said a PID handout.

The Finance Minister apprised the World Bank Vice President of the government's main thrust of economic policy which emphasises poverty alleviation through high growth rate with equity and social justice, including strengthening the local government institutions.

Drastic action

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Mentioning the compensation for the families of those killed, Hasina said a life could never be compensated. The shock of death cannot be overcome by money or anything else.

"I know the depth of shock for losing the near and dear ones," said Hasina, who lost her parents and other members of the Mujib family in the August 15, 1975 coup.

"What is the benefit of those who are trying to create a law-and-order situation, who will be much benefited from the deterioration of law and order," she questioned.

She directed the police and district administration to be more active and sincere in restoring peace in the besieged town.

Later, the Prime Minister talked to father and mother of school Rezaul Karim, killed on Saturday, and consoled them. She took bullet-struck Alamgir Hossain in the helicopter and brought him to Dhaka for better treatment.

Home Minister Rafiqul Islam, Inspector General of Police Azizul Haq and the Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner were present at the meeting.

The Prime Minister later handed over a cheque for Tk 100,000 to the parents of Rezaul Karim.

BNP gheraoes Chuadanga DC's office

From Our Correspondent

CHUADANGA, Aug 25: The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) workers gheraoed the office of the Deputy Commissioner here today demanding immediate release of a party activist, Nur Ali, secretary of Sankar Chandra union BNP, who was arrested about two weeks ago for his alleged involvement in the killing of an Awami Jubo League worker.

The BNP workers staged a sit-in in front of the DC's office from 11 am to 5 pm and did not allow anybody to enter the office.

UNSC seat

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claims to the seat and there is already strong international lobbying for the position. While Japan is the second major financial contributor to the United Nations after the United States, India as a leader of the Non-Aligned group commands support of a large number of UN members.

However, informed diplomatic observers feel that there would be a tough contest between Japan and India for one of the ten non-permanent seats, a broadly belonging to the Asian geographical region. The election to these ten non-permanent seats are held in a staggered manner in alternate years.

India was last elected to a non-permanent seat for 1991-1992 while Japan was a member of the Security Council in 1992-1993.

Bangladesh is still to decide as to whom to vote in the secret balloting for the Security Council seat. Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad addressing a press briefing had earlier said, "Bangladesh will decide on the subject when time comes."

Both Tokyo and New Delhi are learnt to be very active to secure Dhaka's support for the prestigious position. "It will be difficult to arrive at a decision," said an informed observer. "Both countries are important to us. While India is our closest neighbour, Japan is one of the largest donors," the same source pointed out.

Japan, sources said, has become more keen to get elected to the non-permanent seat since moves for increasing the number of permanent seats in the Security Council by incorporating the two big economic powers, Germany and Japan, are yet to be mooted firmly.

Soccer fans clash with police in Barisal: 18 hurt

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Aug 25: At least 18 persons were injured in a clash between police and spectators at the Pataharat RC College ground at Mehendiganj this afternoon. Three policemen were among the injured.

Witnesses and police said, football match was being played between the Andharmanik Secondary School and the Pataharat Muslim High School. When the play was halfway, some unruly spectators tried to enter the play-ground and the clash started when the police on duty resisted them.

The injured policemen include Sub-Inspector Iftakhar Uddin Ahmed, 28.

Police arrested Md Selim, 15, Khairul Bashar, 16, Sirajul Haq, 20, Rafiqul Islam, 26 and Rezauddin Ahmed 20 and Ripan, 18, in this connection.

Appointments

Additional Director General of Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training Mustafizur Rahman and Member of Bangladesh Handloom Board Sheikh Shafiqul Islam have been appointed as Directors of Bureau of Anti Corruption, said an official handout yesterday, reports UNB.



Chhatra League activists in a brawl with police in front of the Mohsin Hall of Dhaka University after their leader Shamim Ahmed was picked up by police. — Star photo

Draft bill for SEPZ

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The proposed bill is the outcome of the summit meeting between the heads of governments of Bangladesh and South Korea in May 1995, wherein it was agreed that a privately managed EPZ sponsored by Youngone Corporation of Korea would be set up in the country.

Youngone Corporation, a Seoul-based company which started its operation in Bangladesh in 1980 and is now the largest manufacturer at the government managed EPZ, sought permission for setting up the Zone. The Prime Minister's Office issued a letter of permission to the company to set up the Zone in Chittagong. But the company decided to shift to an alternative site because of civil suits and other hindrances over the land, the sources said.

Now a consortium of Korean companies with Youngone as the sponsor has proposed an investment of up to one billion US dollar over 10 years to establish and administer the SEPZ on the left bank of Karnaphuli river near the Chittagong Urea Fertiliser factory site covering 2,700 acres, said Kihak Sung, President of Youngone.

The Prime Minister's Office has asked the Land Ministry on Saturday to expedite allotment of khas land and acquisition of land under private management since the major chunk of the site happens to be government owned khas land. The PMO also advised the Board of Investment to coordinate the process for expeditious allotment of land, he added.

T & T College student shot

By DMC Correspondent

A student of T&T college was injured when a group of unidentified youths shot him near the T&T colony under Motijheel thana yesterday evening.

Bashir Ahmed, 22, who received bullet wounds in his waist was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), hospital sources said.

Relatives alleged that Bashir, son of one Shamsuddin, suddenly came under attack when he was going to Arambagh. Previous enmity was reportedly the cause of the attack.

In another incident, a businessman was injured when a group of alleged extortionists stabbed him at Jatra Bari under Demra thana yesterday evening.

The victim Matin Chowdhury, 42, Managing Director of Rugganj Property, received injuries in his face. He was admitted to the DMCH.

Matin alleged that the toll collectors stabbed him when he refused to pay them money.

Ties with China to grow further, PM tells PLA team

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangladesh's endeavours to build cordial and friendly ties with all the countries in the region including China would continue in the interest of ensuring economic development as well as peace and tranquillity of the region, reports BSS.

She was talking to the visiting delegation of the Chinese People's Liberation Army led by its Deputy Chief of General Staff Lieutenant General Kui Fulin, which called on the Prime Minister at her office.

Expressing the hope that the visit of PLA team would further strengthen the existing friendly relations, the Prime Minister said that bilateral cooperations in various fields would be further accelerated in the days ahead.

Kui Fulin expressed his deep gratitude for the warm hospitality extended to him and his delegation by the people of Bangladesh. He said that the friendship between the two neighbouring countries is tested. He also stressed diversifying the economic cooperation between the two countries.

Hartal observed

From page 1

DIG, Rajshahi Range, however, urged the agitated people to give him the names of policemen responsible for the killings.

Meanwhile, the BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders today declared at a meeting at Satmatha that if anybody could bring any police officer, responsible for firing in the JCD office he would be awarded Tk 2 lakh.

UNB adds: In the afternoon, a series of action programmes were announced from a rally of All-Party Student Unity at the Satmatha Crossing.

The programmes include hoisting of black flag in all educational institutions in the northern region tomorrow (Monday), barricade at Satmatha crossing on August 28 and a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the town on August 29.

Move to oust Benazir 8 Pak opposition MPs submit resignations

PESHAWAR, Pakistan Aug 25: Eight Pakistani opposition MPs, joined by 20 provincial legislators, today announced their resignations at a mass rally against Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, reports AFP.

The resignations, which were presented to opposition leader Nawaz Sharif amid chanting of anti-government slogans by a crowd of 30,000, can take effect only after they are submitted to Speakers of the respective assemblies.

But the move was seen giving a symbolic push to an uncertain opposition plan for mass resignations from parliament and provincial legislatures to pressure Benazir to step down.

The 28 legislators, 20 of whom are members of North West Frontier provincial assembly, belong to Awami National Party, a key group in a 14-party anti-Benazir opposition front led by Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML).

At the federal level, the combined opposition parties have a total of 42 deputies in the 87-member Senate and 86 out of the 217 member National Assembly. Most are from the PML.

"Benazir does not resign,"

people from the four provinces will march on Islamabad and force her to quit," Sharif warned, addressing the rally.

The opposition front has planned similar rallies in other parts of the country to gear up its current campaign to oust Benazir.

Qazi Hussain Ahmed, the chief of Pakistan's main fundamentalist party, the Jamaat-i-Islami, has already sent his resignation to the chairman of the Senate, of which he is a member.

The fundamentalist party has said its three other deputies in the National Assembly would resign when all opposition legislators resign en masse.

Benazir has rejected the opposition demand for snap polls under a caretaker administration as undemocratic, and said her government would complete its five year term and organise elections in 1998.

Home Minister seeks BNP's help to maintain law & order

Home Minister Rafiqul Islam has sought cooperation from opposition BNP to maintain law and order and curb terrorism, reports UNB.

"Barring a few scattered incidents, the overall situation is completely under the control of the government," he said last night, winding up a short discussion on the country's law and order situation.

He called the Bogra incident unfortunate and non-political, and said that partisan politics was injected into the incident with an ulterior motive.

"The enquiry committee has been set up and it will come out who is behind the scene and who was killed by whose bullet," the minister told Parliament.

The Home Minister expressed his surprise over a new development in Bogra after the visit of BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday and said that a move for an all-party peace meeting was hampered due to BNP's absence.

Tidbits

Members burst into shouts when M Morshed Khan commented, "Sleeves of the AL lawmakers' coats have become non-existent following their practice of folding those frequently."

At one stage of the shouts, Morshed Khan sat down by suspending his speech on the proposed budget. The House returned to silence and the BNP MP resumed his speech after the Speaker assured him that any objectionable remark would be expunged from the proceedings.

Abul Kalam Azad of the ruling party, who was given floor to speak on the budget, after Morshed Khan, castigated the BNP lawmaker without mentioning his name for "roaming about the AL leaders by wearing a Mujib coat once upon a time and then boot-licking Ershad and Zia."

This generated fresh heat in the House where MPs of both the sides jumped on their feet and shouted at each other. As Morshed Khan sought floor on personal explanation, the Speaker said, "So far I've heard, your name has not been mentioned. Even then I'll examine the proceedings."

Major (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed of BNP was insisting on extending his time for discussion on the budget after the time allotted for him expired. Hafiz was given five minutes extra time after an AL MP spoke.

Taking the floor, Hafiz told the Chair, "Maybe I am the first to deliver a split budget discussion speech and it's a new record."

A smiling Speaker replied, "It's better to create new records sometimes."

WB for action

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report pointed out that rural financial markets in Bangladesh are fragmented and inadequate to meet the demand for financial services.

It suggested that the government should extend financial sector reforms to the rural financial sub-sector to make financial and institutional policies consistent across all sub-sectors.

The primary objective of rural financial reforms should be to create a strong and efficient system of financial intermediation, and to develop such a system, important policy and institutional reforms are necessary.

These reforms should be part of a comprehensive strategy aimed at developing the rural financial markets (RFMs) as a whole, said the report which also suggested that the government should stop political interference in operation of rural financial intermediaries (RFIs).