

Judges, judiciary enjoy 100 pc freedom: Khasru

As the lawmakers of Jatiya Party (Mizan-Manju) blamed the government for "politicising" the judiciary, Law Minister Abdul Matin Khasru claimed that the judges and the judiciary are now enjoying 100 per cent independence, reports UNB.

Although the separation of the judiciary from the executive was not formally done, the judiciary on all counts is enjoying full freedom without any influence from the government, he said in Parliament yesterday.

Khasru said appointment, transfer and promotion of judicial officers were being done in consultation with the Supreme Court.

He added that so long, the magistrates were under the control of the executive, but for last three months their transfers were being done as per consultation with the Supreme Court.

The Law Minister made the statement in response to Golam Farook Ovi and Adv. Fazle Rabbi of Jatiya Party, who blamed the government for its failure to separate the two organs of the state as per commitment of Awami League.

Separation was not done. Rather, judges are terrorised by bringing out lathi procession," Ovi said.

He alleged that obstruction is created to the rule of law, and the judiciary being influenced politically.

Adv Fazle Rabbi said despite election pledge, the BNP government of Begum Khaleda Zia did not fulfil its commitment. Similarly, the Awami League also could not do it yet.

He said: "Although we give lip service to rule of law, we

don't have sincerity about it, nor any such spirit. Separation of the judiciary is a must for rule of law," he said.

"What the Law Commission is doing?" asked Rabbi and demanded decentralisation of the judiciary through Upazila system.

Rejecting the allegations of Ovi and Rabbi, the Law Minister said: "We never interfere with the dispensation of justice. We never make phone calls for any 'laddir' (recommendation) as was seen in the past."

Rotary News

North West meeting

The first meeting of the new Rotary year 2000-2001 of the Rotary Club of Dhaka North West will be held tomorrow at Sonargaon Hotel at 4.00 pm as part of the Interclub meeting.

Members have been requested to attend on time.

Recognition to Talents in Rotary

The first-ever programme on 'Recognition to Talents in Rotary' will be held at Sonargaon Hotel at 4 pm today, says a press release.

Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof Dr AK Azad Chowdhury and Millennium Rotary Governor Rtn M Ozair Farooq will be present as chief guest and special guest respectively.

Rotary Club of Dhaka Cosmopolitan has organised the event.

Armed forces are nation's pride: Noor Uddin

Minister for Science and Technology Lt Gen (Retd) Noor Uddin Khan yesterday described Bangladesh's armed forces as the nation's pride as they had played their due role during various critical periods of the nation and proved their worth abroad, reports BSS.

Responding to cut motions raised by Golam Faruque Ovi and Fazley Rabbi of Jatiya Party (M-M) in the Jatiya Sangsad, he said the armed forces had sincerely fought against the miscreants in the CHT region, worked during the natural disasters and other critical hours as part of their duty to the nation.

In their cut motions, the JP legislators opposed the demand for grant of Tk 3326.90.35.000 for meeting the expenses of the Defence Ministry during the fiscal ending June 30, 2000. They also proposed to divert this grant to meeting other basic needs like infrastructure development, education, health and law and order.

Noor Uddin Khan, also in charge of the Defence Ministry in the Jatiya Sangsad, said the armed forces had also proved their skill in restoring discipline in the country's traffic management time and again when they were called in to do so.

Ovi criticised the purchase of MIG-29 at a cost of Tk 750 crore and frigates at a cost Tk 850 crore, alleging that these deals had, in fact, made some people millionaires overnight.

Rabbi's argument was that Bangladesh should not have spent so much money for such deals when the country has friendly relations with all other countries.

Noor Uddin said Bangladesh's armed forces also earned foreign currency worth Tk 1,100 crore over the years by working in the UN peace missions. They have also earned much laurel for the country by proving their skill and efficiency in the UN peace missions in different countries, he told the House.

He said the government has modernised the armed forces and developed the National Defence College. "The Air Force and the Navy are also being modernised to meet the need of the hour," he said.

There are now two TV centres and 13 relay stations in the country.

2nd C'wealth photo awards announced

Three Commonwealth media organisations have announced 'The 2nd Commonwealth Photograph Awards' for the photographers of Commonwealth countries, reports UNB.

Commonwealth Press Union (CPU), Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA) and Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO) are presenting the award. The theme of the photographs is "communication."

This is an open competition for all Commonwealth residents for colour or black and white photographs.

The entrants are invited to interpret the themes as freely as they like.

The photographs must be reached in the following address by July 20. Address: Photo Awards, CBA, 17 Fleet Street, EC4Y 1AA, UK.

Tk 12 cr earned from TV fees

Government earned Tk 12 crore 16 lakh 69 thousand from "television fees" during the first 11 months of the outgoing fiscal year (1999-2000), State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayed said in Parliament yesterday, reports UNB.

Replying to a question, he also said that three new TV relay stations would be installed at Rajshahi divisional town, Rangamati and Ukhia in Cox's Bazar in the next fiscal year.

There are now two TV centres and 13 relay stations in the country.

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