

BNP stages walkout Bangabandhu Medical Varsity bill passed

Despite severe criticism and walk-out by the Opposition, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Bill, 1998 was passed by Parliament on Monday, reports UNB.

BNP lawmakers questioned the utility of changing the name of PG Hospital into Bangabandhu Medical University and said this would only undermine the name and fame of a great personality like Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Some BNP members called Bangabandhu a great leader, but cautioned that sycophants and flatterers had misguided Sheikh Mujib that led to his unfortunate death.

Today, these sycophants are again trying to misguide Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and kill Bangabandhu a second time, said the BNP members who demanded to elicit public opinion before the passage of the Bill.

The Opposition was bitter about renaming educational institutions,

roads, bridges and different institutions after the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur, Sheikh Hasina, her mother, brother, sister and sister-in-law.

The BNP MPs said some Awami Leagues, who were not seen even to pray for slain Bangabandhu or attend his Namaj-e-Janaza after his death, are now in a race to please Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The Opposition said the people would have gladly accepted the Bill had the government brought it to set up a new medical university and name it after Bangabandhu, instead of changing the name of the PG Hospital.

About 20 BNP and Jatiya Party members joined discussion on the principle of the Bill and brought amendments to it.

Health Minister Salah Uddin Yusuf, who piloted the Bill, strongly defended the legislation saying that

See Page 12 Col. 5

Medical Varsity bill

From Page 1 Col. 7
the PG Hospital was set up by Bangabandhu himself. The proposed university would facilitate higher education for the doctors, he added.

Brushing aside the Opposition criticism, he said the Bill was not aimed at a mere change in the name of the PG Hospital.

He argued that with the establishment of the Bangabandhu Medical University, Bangladeshi doctors won't need to go abroad for the FRCP or MRCP degrees.

The Health Minister, a veteran Awami League since Bangabandhu's time, appeared little emotional and said Awami League has no weakness for establishing any name.

Responding to the Opposition, Salah Uddin Yusuf said the people of this country once raised the slogan in unison: One nation, one country — Bangabandhu, Bangladesh.

"Bangabandhu means Bangladesh...one cannot imagine Bangladesh without Bangabandhu," he said amidst thumping of desk by the Treasury Bench members.

The Health Minister said in many countries, institutions were named after great men and scholars.

"Even in our country, many institutions were named after great men such as Sri Salimullah Medical College, Sher-e-Bangla Medical College, Suhrawardy Hospital."

During its rule, BNP named airport, fertilizer factory, Red Crescent unit and many other establishments after Zia, he said.

The Health Minister alleged that through a conspiracy, a strike was made with the help of only 25 to 30 nurses at the PG Hospital after it was named as Bangabandhu Medical University.

But, he said, the conspirators had failed to spread the strike in other parts of the country.

The BNP members, led by KM Obaidur Rahman, walked out of the House when Deputy Speaker Abdul Hamid put the Bill on voice vote.

The House adopted the Bill with a minor amendment of BNP MP Abdul Mannan (Dhaka-2) after more than two hours' discussion.

Those who took part in the discussion on the Bill are Mashiur Rahman, Shahidul Islam, Zafrul Islam Chowdhury, Sarwar Jamal Nizam, Shamsul Alam Pramanik, Ehsanul Huq, Ziaul Huq Zia, Goutam Chakravorty, Gazi Mohammad Shajahan, Prof Shahidul Islam, Syed Mehedi Ahmed Rumi, Alamgir Mohammad Mahfuzullah Farid, Major (Rtd) Akhtaruzzaman, Alamgir Kabir, Kazi Golam Morshed, Shah Mohammad Abul Hossain, Mozahar Hossain, Salahuddin Ahmed and Abdul Mannan of BNP and Abu Lais Mohammad Mobin Chowdhury of Jatiya Party.