

## Zafar for national unity to resist campus violence

Prime Minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed on Monday underlined the paramount importance of national unity to resist violence on the campus and spread education throughout the country, reports BSS.

He was of the view that elimination of terrorism and violence on the campus was not the concern of the government alone. Unity of all shades of opinion was essential to wipe out this social scourge from the campuses, he stressed.

The Leaders of the House was winding up a discussion of the "situation in the educational arena" in the Jatiya Sangsad. The discussion was initiated by Education Minister Sheikh Shahidul Islam in the House yesterday.

Kazi Zafar Ahmed said President Ershad had laid emphasis on production-oriented and purposive education in keeping with the need of our sovereign country. This could be achieved only through national unity, he added. Expressing his concern over growing terrorism in the campuses, he said a discussion on the issue was very significant. The destiny of the nation and the future of the country lay in critical analysis of the issue, he said.

The Prime Minister pointed out that as many as 15,000 acts of violence occurred in the campuses during the last 18 years. Outing an English weekly news magazine, he said nearly 200 students had lost lives in clashes and violent actions

all over the country during the last two years.

He informed the House that violence had claimed ten lives in the Dhaka University during the last year alone. On top of this, session jam was adding much to the anxiety of the guardians as several working hours were lost during the last 18 years.

Quoting a survey report conducted by a private organisation, Kazi Zafar said 53 per cent of those interviewed by the organisation maintained that political parties and their lackeys were responsible for violence in the campuses.

Tracing the history of Dhaka University, he said this seat of learning was once known as the Oxford of the East.

This famous university began its journey in 1921 with the theme "truth shall prevail". Men of versatile genius converged at this university and here the "Bose-Einstein theory" was evolved, he added.

The Prime Minister regretted that the theme "truth shall prevail" seemed to have been replaced by "muscle-power shall prevail". Murder, bloodshed, session jam and endless waste of youth force were the inevitable consequences of the latest trend in the campuses, he held.

The Prime Minister said, "our hearts ache and our heads droop with shame when we look at the recent developments on the Dhaka University campus. Here brutal

(See Page 10 Col. 4)

## Zafar

From Page 1 Col. 3

force has become more powerful than logic. Residential halls are occupied through muscle power just as 'chars' are taken possession by use of arms. Again lethal weapons regain supreme where the students are supposed to be engaged in the pursuit of knowledge and education.

### Guardians spending huge sums

he said the guardians were spending huge sums very year for the education of their wards. But violence and other detestable acts were polluting the sacred arena of the university campus, he said adding, poet Al Mahmud in one of his works, questioned whether the Dhaka University had been transformed into a village of dacoits.

The Prime Minister read out excerpts from the editorials of different newspapers of Dhaka, including the Sangbad, and Banglar Bani, on growing violence in the campuses. These editorials maintained that the seeds of terrorism were being sown in the political process. Some of the editorials blamed the activities of political parties for giving rise to violence in the campuses, he said.

The leader of the House said President Ershad had abolished the student front of the Jatiya Party with the hope of freeing the campuses of unholy and undesirable acts. The President had also appealed to other political parties not to use students as their political weapons, he said.

He quoted some of the thought provoking comments of celebrated educationists of the county including, a former Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, on the deterioration of situation in the university campuses. Prof Siddiqui, a critic of the present government, had also admitted that irresponsibility on the part of a section of

teachers and their rivalry had led to the present situation and rise of terrorism in the campuses, he added.

The Prime Minister said the University Ordinance, a ordinance was promulgated in 1973 with the hope that atmosphere of education for the good of the nation. In this connection, he said, a tree is known by its fruits. But the present situation in the campuses was compelling all right-thinking people to question the propriety of this ordinance, he added. ED

The leader of the House said more than 98 per cent of the expenditure of the universities were being borne out by grants from the government since this grant was coming from the national exchequer, the people had the right to know whether this was being properly spent, he added.

On university autonomy, he quoted a columnist as having said "it is a government within the government". He agreed with the observation of the thinker who said, "autonomy is not an end by itself but means to an end."

Because of the recent developments and situation of the campuses, questions had been raised in different quarters about how far the present autonomy of the universities was justified, he said.

The Prime Minister referred to the committee unanimously constituted in the Jatiya Sangsad in 1987 to review the situation in the campuses in this respect as the Sangsad was dissolved. INCOMPLETE