

## **Opposition protests Islamic militancy instead of education**

Opposition lawmakers Tuesday censured the government for "deceiving" people using Islam ahead of elections as Parliament passed the Islamic University (Amendment) Bill, 2006 and Madrasah Education (Amendment) Bill, 2006, reports UNB.

Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk piloted the bills to affiliate Fazil and Kamil Madrasahs with Islamic University to recognize Fazil and Kamil as graduation and post-graduation degrees respectively.

Opposition chief whip Abdus Shahid, Col. (retd) Farooq Khan, Shajahan Khan, Adv Rahmat Ali, Panchanan Biswas and Promod Mankin of Awami League, and

Bangabir Kader Siddiqui of Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Janata League criticized the Education Minister for what they said the hasty move to pass the bills.

Awami League members alleged that militancy was encouraged in the name of Islamic education undermining the true Islam. They also alleged that many madrasahs were used as training ground for armed militancy and killings. Illegal arms were also recovered from some madrasahs.

The opposition lawmakers alleged that the two bills were brought to Parliament hastily to bluff the religious-minded people ahead of the next general elections.

Demanding circulation of the bill to elicit public opinion, they suggested that the curriculum of Islamic education should be upgraded with modern education, science and technology.

Otherwise, they observed, mere recognition of Fazil and Kamil as equivalent to graduation and

post-graduation would not serve the purpose in this competitive era.

Defending the bills, Education Minister Dr Osman Farruk said the bills would ensure modernization of Islamic education upholding the Islamic values.

Disagreeing with the opposition's views that madrasah students turned into militants, he said students from both madrasah and general education were engaged in militancy.

Under the Islamic University (Amendment) Bill, a 15-member Academic Committee would be constituted with Islamic University Vice-chancellor as its chairman.

The Academic Committee shall be the main academic body of the Fazil and Kamil madrasahs under the University. The Committee shall have the control and general supervision over and be responsible for maintenance of standard of education and examination.