

JS passes seven University Bills

The Jatiya Sangsad on Tuesday night passed seven University Amendment Bills of identical nature seeking to create post of more than one Pro Vice-Chancellors in the Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Jahangirnagar, Khulna, Shahjalal and Agricultural Universities, says BSS.

Piloted by the Education Minister, ASHK Sadique, the Bills were earlier scrutinised by the Standing Committee on Education Ministry with the note of dissent by two opposition BNP members Alamgir Kabir and Mashiur Rahman who had suggested to specify the number of Pro Vice-Chancellors for the Universities instead of the words "more than one".

The House, however, rejected all the amendments brought by the opposition members.

Over two dozens of opposition members spoke in support of their amendments.

The bills are: the Dhaka University (Amendment) Bill, 1999, the Rajshahi University (Amendment) Bill, 1999, the Chittagong University (Amendment) Bill, 1999, the Khulna University (Amendment) Bill, 1999, the Jahangirnagar University (Amendment) Bill, 1999, the Agricultural University (Amendment) Bill, 1999, the Shahjalal Science and Technical University (Amendment) Bill, 1999 and the Islamic University (Amendment) Bill, 1999.

UNB adds: Opposition lawmakers in Parliament Tuesday came down heavily on the government for "spoiling academic atmosphere" alleging that terrorism and rape had plagued the campuses.

Taking part in the discussion on bills for appointment of more than one Pro Vice-Chancellor in seven universities, they said creation of more than one post would further complicate the university administration and lead to politicisation.

The BNP members said the "plan" behind the Bills is to appoint the government's own men

to the posts of Pro Vice-Chancellor.

Such creation of more than one post of Pro-VC would politicise the university administration, feared the opposition MPs.

They urged the government to give more attention to primary education to increase literacy rate in the country instead of spending money for such "unwarranted" administrative post.

Those who took part in the

discussion were Goutam Chakrabarty, Abul Kalam Azad Siddiqui, Ziaul Huq Zia, Zafrul Islam Chowdhury, Sarwar Jamal Nizam, Adv Khairul Enam, Syed Mehdi Ahmed Rumi, Mashiur Rahman, Shahidul Islam, Mozahar Hossain, Alamgir M. Mahfuzullah Farid, Alhaj Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mujibur Rahman Sarwar, Prof Shahidul Islam, Maj (Retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed, Gazi Mohammad Shahjahan, Nazimuddin Alam, Alamgir Kabir and Maj (Retd) Akhtaruzzaman of BNP, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Dr. M. Asadur Rahman of Jatiya Party Moulana Delwar Hossain Sayeedi of Jamaat-e-Islami and Abdul Latif Mirza of Awami League.

The opposition members said the Bills were moved at a time when, what they said, terrorism gripped the educational campuses and mass raping by Chhatra League activists at the Jahangirnagar University have shocked everyone, but no action was taken against the offenders.

Defending the bills, the Education Minister said since the numbers of students and residential halls, and the annual budget of the universities have gone up many times over the years, the appointment of more than one Pro Vice-Chancellor has become essential for the university administration.

He said although there was provision of appointing more than one Pro-VC in the 1973 University Ordinance, but at that time no Pro-VC was appointed. It was done later on.