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JS body to reinvestigate 2007 Aug incident at DU

A parliamentary panel on Sunday decided to reinvestigate the August 20, 2007 'heinous' incident between army personnel and students of Dhaka University during the military-backed interim government that led to the arrest and conviction of some teachers also, reports UNB.

A meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education Ministry with its chairman Rashed Khan Menon in the chair took the decision and asked the Home

Ministry to make over all information and data of its different intelligence agencies about the army-DU student confrontation to the committee.

Registering their strong condemnation over what the parliamentarians called military atrocity against teachers and students, the meeting also sought the full report of the judicial inquiry conducted by a retired judge, Justice Habibur Rahman, into the incident that had trig-

gered a backlash across the country.

Briefing newsmen at the Media Centre of Parliament after the meeting, Rashed Khan Menon, also president of the Workers Party, said they also would take interview of the victims-teachers and students who were subjected to repression.

"If necessary, the military intelligence officials involved in the violence will be summoned before the committee," the lawmaker told the reporters.

The committee was surprised to note that the Education Ministry has no document of the happenings barring the sentences for conviction and exoneration of the convicted teachers.

The conviction orders have not yet been withdrawn. As a result, the teachers concerned are facing problem in getting visas—already many have been refused the same.

"The matter of conviction was stage-managed," he said, adding that the offenders went scot-free without any accountability.

Replying to a question he said they would take decision on the next course of action after examining those information, inquiry report and interviews with teachers and students as they want to clearly project before the people the actual happenings centering the brawl between army personnel and the students over witnessing a football match at Dhaka University playground. The fistfights later fuelled protests in almost all the educational institutions across the country.

Menon alleged the military intelligence agencies brutally tortured teachers and students of Dhaka University

(See Back Page Col.6)

JS body to investigate

and other universities taking them blindfolded under police and military custodies.

"Many of the victims are living with disabilities following the inhuman torture," said the lawmaker from the leftwing party, a component of the ruling Awami League-led grand alliance. "Such

barbaric incident had not taken place in the last 22 years," he added.

He disclosed that a number of teachers from Dhaka and Rajshahi universities have submitted letters to the Parliamentary Standing committee to reexamine the cruel episode of the military-backed interim government, seeking further investigation and justice.

He said following the letters the committee discussed the matter with utmost importance. "We want to settle the matter once for all considering legal, moral and ethical grounds."

Menon said they want to resolve the matter to prevent recurrence of such incidents.

Replying to a question, the committee chairman said the date for inviting victim teachers and students for interviewing will be fixed at the committee's next meeting.

He further said the parlia-

mentary subcommittee to investigate corruption and irregularities in non-government educational institutions submitted its report.

Menon said a four-member subcommittee headed by Shah Alam was also assigned to probe alleged irregularities and corruption at the examination inspection and audit department of the Education Ministry.

The committee was asked to report back in two months time.

The committee chairman said the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) apprised the committee that it would be able to complete the printing of 21 crore textbooks for the next academic session within the stipulated time.

Standing-committee members Kazi Faruq Kader, Biren Shikdar and Shah Alam were present at the press briefing.