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Bureaucrats' Secret Meeting

No investigation initiated yet

Advisers against giving 'em polls responsibility

Star Report

Criticising the officials who attended a secret meeting at former Board of Investment chief Mahmudur Rahman's Uttara office on Friday, advisers to the caretaker government said these officials should not be given any election-related responsibility.

No investigation against these officials was initiated until yesterday.

Sources, however, said the Cabinet Division will soon send a proposal to the president to form a committee and probe the incident.

The home ministry is also planning to investigate the matter separately.

Energy Adviser Hasan Mashhud told the press yesterday that the advisers discussed the matter with the president on Saturday.

"The president said he is expecting an intelligence report based on which he would take action," he said.

The conduct of the officials joining a secret meeting is unbecoming of government servants, Finance Adviser Akbar Ali Khan said, adding, "We are going through a process for election. At this hour we should not keep such controversial officials in election-related duties."

"As a former government employee, I am shocked by their behaviour. Government officers cannot escape like thieves (as newspaper photographs show).

"If they were doing anything good there [Mahmudur Rahman's Uttara office], there was no reason to try to escape like thieves. This has created a deep suspicion.

"If that was a social visit, why did they turn off light, hide their faces and run away?

"They have tarnished the image of the government and their own. Legal measures should be taken against them," Akbar said.

Housing Ministry Adviser Dhiraj Kumar Nath, who is also a member of the caretaker government's administrative restructuring committee, said he had asked the Cabinet Division and the establishment ministry to take necessary steps in this regard.

"We are looking into it very seriously because neutrality of the administration is very important," Nath said.

"The establishment ministry is under the president. We expect there would be a good action soon," he added.

"The way they were hiding their faces gives the impression that they were coming out from a red-light area. I denounce them. I hate them. Those who behaved like that did not have

guts. They do not have any idea of the code of conduct of civil servants," Home Secretary ASM Zahirul Islam said.

"Our intelligence is now investigating the matter," he added.

Referring to the media's naming the home secretary as one of the officials involved in 'Uttara conspiracy' meeting, he said, "I denounce the journalists who named me and the inspector general of police. This was a figment of imagination."

"If the home secretary or the IGP makes a visit anywhere, that can not be hidden," he said, adding, "Besides, why should we go there?"

The 'Uttara conspiracy' meeting attended by quite a few senior government servants became a matter of discussion among the officers and employees at the secretariat yesterday.

Expressing their grievances to the press, several officials said the dubious act of the few has given the administration a bad name.

They termed it the 'end result of politicisation' of the administration and said perhaps selected officials were being used for manipulation of the upcoming elections.