

Staff Reporter

First, he had been the object of ridicule in the media industry. Now it is his cabinet colleagues who ridiculed Social Welfare Minister Syed Mohsin Ali for his abusive remarks against journalists.

Most of the cabinet members who were present at Monday's regular weekly meeting ridiculed the minister and laughed at him, a cabinet member attended the cabinet meeting told.

He said some ministers at the meeting said the Social Welfare Minister should not talk like the way he did even with an individual. Mohsin Ali was also present at the cabinet meeting.

"The cabinet members requested Mohsin Ali to be careful in the future while speaking in any public meeting," the minister said wishing not to be named.

Another minister told that the cabinet expressed its dissatisfaction over Mohsin Ali's conduct with journalists and said such attitude has embarrassed the government. It happened at a time when the government is running the country peacefully and successfully, they said.

"We said when the economic indicators are showing good signs and people are happy with the government such unwarranted incident embarrasses the government and puts it in an awkward position," he said.

Some cabinet members also said the words 'rubbish' and 'khobish' are originated and imported from Sylhet.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith also hit headlines for his choice of word like 'rubbish' on various issues in recent past. "So far, the word 'rubbish' has been used by the Finance Minister while

commenting on the media. That's why we said these two words are from Sylhet," the minister said.

He also said that the Prime Minister, who was presiding over the cabinet meeting, did not take part in the discussion on Mohsin Ali. "She was silent," he added.

Addressing a discussion at Sylhet Zilla Parishad Auditorium on Saturday, Mohsin Ali came down hard on journalists, saying, "Journalists are rubbish and characterless... Be careful, you won't be able to sleep with your wives."

Mohsin Ali also claimed that the Prime Minister had praised his previous comments bashing the media and asked him to continue with the media attack.

In the face of widespread criticisms for his abusive remarks about journalists, the Social Welfare Minister on Sunday made an apology to the journalist community.

The minister in the statement said, "I do believe journalism is a noble profession. The people involved in the profession lead an honest and dauntless life."

In the statement, Mohsin Ali said he had made the remarks in Sylhet targeting only a couple of journalists who have been publishing news distorting his remarks for a few days. "I'm deeply saddened as the journalists of the country got hurt by my remarks."

Mohsin claimed that he has lost his temper as some journalists were making fun of the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister when he was stepping into the stage for addressing the program.

Meanwhile, leaders of different journalist bodies denounced the minister's indecent remarks and urged the government to bring him to justice after removing him from the cabinet. They also urged the minister to offer apology for his offensive remarks against the journalists.

Earlier on January 28, Mohsin had apologized for smoking on the dais at a children's function in Sylhet city and promised not to repeat such actions.

On July 22, he came down heavily on journalists, and said a law would be formulated to make sure the electronic media had no freedom. On August 4, the cabinet approved the National Broadcast Policy-2014.

Today, the Cabinet also discussed the National Broadcast Policy-2014 which drew criticisms from different section of people.

“The cabinet discussed the matter. It found that BNP is protesting the Policy on political ground,” the cabinet member told UNB.

During the discussion, he said, Information Minister Hasanul Huq Inu said he would hold a press conference to dispel the misunderstandings over the policy.