

Upazila parishads

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upazila parishads, have also been controlling many local development activities engaging their party people to ensure their stronghold in the areas.

"Upazila executive officers and MPs are controlling everything including administrative and development work. Even the government carries out all its correspondence with the upazila executive officers. We have nothing to do at the moment," Bishwanath Sarker Bitu, chairman of Badarganj Upazila of Rangpur told The Daily Star recently.

Under such circumstances, over 1,400 elected chairmen and vice-chairmen of 481 upazila parishads across the country have not received any remuneration since their elections on January 22 this year, as the government has yet to fix the amount. They are not even getting any fund for running their offices.

The government also has yet to frame the rules of business for upazila parishads, triggering frustration among the elected representatives of newly revived upazila level local government system, which had been dissolved in 1991 to satisfy the erstwhile MPs and bureaucrats.

The national committee to monitor the functions of the upazila parishads also has not held any meeting yet, since its formation four months ago.

Almost all upazila parishads have yet to form a set of departmental standing committees to carry out their tasks properly as well, because of a lack of guidelines. Many of the parishads do not even meet regularly, said a number of upazila chairmen.

Those frustrated chairmen also said they just go to their offices, spend some time there, and then leave due to not having anything specific to do. They do not even get any administrative file to deal with, they added.

"We have four things -- copies of the gazette of our elections and oath, a space for the office and a circular of May. We got nothing to make the upazila parishad effective for public welfare," Harun Ur Rashid, chairman of Dumki upazila parishad of Patuakhali, told The Daily Star.

Harun, also the convener of Bangladesh Upazila Parishad Association, said the situation is quite humiliating for the elected upazila parishad chairmen and vice-chairmen.

"We can't let the situation to continue for an indefinite period. We are consulting to launch an agitation for an effective upazila parishad system, in light of the constitution and law," he said. The agitation might be launched soon after the Eid-ul-Fitr, he added.

According to the constitu-

King of Pop

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on a warm summer evening to celebrate the singer's life.

Jackson's children -- Prince Michael II, Paris, 11, and seven-year-old Prince Michael II, otherwise known as "Blanket" -- placed a crown on their father's flower-laden coffin before the service got underway.

Unpredictable to the last, Jackson was late to his own funeral, his ornate casket set down before mourners more than 90 minutes after the service had been scheduled to start Thursday evening.

Jackson's brothers -- all dressed identically in black suits and red ties while each wearing a solitary white glove in tribute to the pop icon -- served as pallbearers as the coffin was removed from the hearse.

His children reportedly left notes in their father's coffin reading "Daddy we love you, we miss you."

Mourners made spontaneous tributes to Jackson in a service held beyond the prying eyes of hundreds of media personnel gathered outside the Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Hollywood to whom of late Jackson's brothers -- all dressed identically in black suits and red ties while each wearing a solitary white glove in tribute to the pop icon -- served as pallbearers as the coffin was removed from the hearse.

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