

JS bodies failing to function properly

TIB study says; finds political influence, conflict of interest of MPs as key reasons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parliamentary standing committees are unable to work effectively to ensure accountability and transparency in the ministry activities due to political influence and conflict of interest among committee members, a TIB study has found.

In addition, the House bodies have no power to compel someone to appear before them or to force any authority to submit any document. Besides, the ministries do not pay any heed to the committee recommendations, as there is no legal obligation to do so.

In its study, the TIB found that quality, competence, experience and conflict of interest of lawmakers are not considered while forming the parliamentary committees.

According to the graft watchdog, the ruling party chief interferes in the process of committee formation and also in the process of the selection of the committee chief.

The study -- Effectiveness of Parliamentary Standing Committees of Bangladesh: Problems and Way Forward -- was released at a press conference at the TIB office in the capital's Dhanmondi yesterday.

The study, done between January 2009 and April 2015, was based on the activities of 11 standing committees (out of total 50) on the same number of ministries of the ninth and the tenth parliament.

They are the committees on education, health, LGRD, road and transport, labour and employment, industries, housing and public works,

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Farhad Reza, a college student from Sathkira with disabilities, speaks at the programme titled "Inclusive Health and Rehabilitation for the People with Disabilities" at The Daily Star Centre yesterday while Chairperson of the National Advisory Committee on Autism and Neuro-Developmental Disability Saima Wazed Hossain, left, listens.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Khaleda won't be at court today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Khaleda Zia will not show up before the special court at Bakshi Bazar today, said a senior counsel of the BNP chief last night.

"BNP chairperson has been suffering with one of her eyes and she is preparing to go to London for treatment. Therefore, she will not be able to appear before the special court tomorrow [today]" Khandker Mahbub Hossain, a senior counsel for Khaleda, told The Daily Star.

Hossain, also an adviser to the BNP chief, said they would file a time petition with the court, which is hearing the Zia Orphanage and Zia Charitable Trust graft cases.

The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the cases against her during the army-backed caretaker government regime in 2007 in

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PART - 2

It has always been mutual: Malaysia needs workers, and Bangladesh has plenty of them. That's why, Malaysia, after Saudi Arabia, has become the second most sought-after destination for Bangladeshi jobseekers. Given this, a transparent system for labour recruitment could have dismantled the human trafficking chain and also save the lives of hundreds of migrant workers. But why the two countries have so far failed to devise one such mechanism? In the second part of a three-part series, The Daily Star focuses on new recruitment system for workers.

Worry hangs over hope

Malaysian delegates in city to settle new recruitment system for workers

PORIMOL PALMA

A Malaysian delegation reached Dhaka yesterday to discuss the mode of labour recruitment through the private sector amid a number of controversies and unaddressed concerns.

The four-member delegation, led by Malaysia's immigration department's Director General Datuk Mustafa Ibrahim, would hold discussions with high officials of the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training today.

Tomorrow, they would hold a meet-

ing with Expatriates' Welfare Minister Nurul Islam and then the ministry officials, an official of the ministry told The Daily Star.

"We will share our ideas ... but the recruitment mode will be finalised

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BGB vows to stop cattle smuggling

To prevent Bangladeshis from entering India; Indian home minister says cattle smuggling declines

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid a curb on the supply of cattle from India, Border Guard Bangladesh yesterday said it would make all-out efforts to stop Bangladeshis entering India for cattle.

Most of the border killings take place because of the cross-border cattle smuggling, said BGB Director General Major Gen Aziz Ahmed, adding that whether cattle supply was less or more did not bother him; what bothered him was killings of Bangladeshis on the border.

"My message to my force is that ensure

no Bangladeshi can enter India to bring cattle," he said at a press briefing at the BGB headquarters, days after his return from an annual meeting with Indian Border Security Force.

On India's side, export of cattle is a very sensitive issue, he said.

"They cannot allow it [cattle export] officially. I also cannot tell them officially that you allow it."

The BGB chief said the curb on Indian cattle supply was a blessing, as it would help Bangladesh to become self-reliant in two years.

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Adivasis stage a street play at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital yesterday during their celebrations to mark the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples 2015. Bangladesh Adivasi Forum organised the festivities.

Call for rights, dignity

Int'l Day of World's Indigenous Peoples observed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The indigenous communities across the country yesterday observed the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, demanding equal rights and dignity everywhere.

Lamenting that they still do not have constitutional recognition, they called upon indigenous youths and students to be vocal in realising their demands.

Academics, rights activists and civil society members also expressed solidarity with the indigenous people, who marched in rallies, performed their traditional dances and staged a play at the Central Shaheed Minar and Bangla Academy in the capital.

"Throughout my life, I have seen so much of deprivation, discrimination and the rulers' communal attitude that brought unbearable pain in my life," said Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma alias Santu Larma, president of Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples' Forum.

Addressing the inaugural session of a two-day programme at Bangla Academy, Larma, also chairman of the Chittagong Hill Tracts

Regional Council, said extreme nationalism of the ruling elites proves that they have not been democratic and respectful to around three million indigenous people of 54 indigenous communities in Bangladesh.

Worldwide, the day was observed with the theme "Post 2015 Agenda: Ensuring indigenous peoples health and wellbeing".

Prof Mizanur Rahman, chairman of the National Human Rights Commission, said there were efforts from various quarters to hamper celebration of the day in the country.

Referring to deprivation of land rights and violence on the indigenous people in the hill districts, he regretted that abductors of Kalpana Chakma, a hill women's leader who was kidnapped 19 years ago, have not been brought to justice yet.

Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Rashed Khan Menon said there is a negative attitude towards the indigenous people in the highest level of the society, which is reflected in other levels.

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SAUDI ATTACK Identities of Bangladeshi victims confirmed

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh embassy in Riyadh has confirmed the identities of the Bangladeshis killed and injured in August 6 suicide bomb attack on a mosque in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

Four Bangladeshis were killed and four others injured in the bomb attack during Zohr prayers at the mosque in the Mohamel Cantonment in Abha under Al-Aseer province of the country, according to a press release of the foreign ministry issued yesterday.

An Islamic State group

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'Chemical gardens' power light bulb

MAIL ONLINE

Researchers at Nasa's Jet Propulsion Laboratory have grown underwater chimney-like structures capable of generating enough electricity to power a light bulb.

The team linked several of these chimneys to get the required electricity.

Chimney-like structures, also known as 'chemical gardens', form on the seafloor at hydrothermal vents - openings in the planet's surface where

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CONTEMPT CHARGE Zafrullah apologises to tribunal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Zafrullah Chowdhury yesterday offered unconditional apologies to a special tribunal for his comment of June 10 that drew contempt of court proceedings against him.

On behalf of Zafrullah his lawyer M Sayed Ahmed Raza submitted a petition making unconditional apologies to the International Crimes Tribunal-2, which initiated the contempt proceedings.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice Obaidul Hassan with members Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Md Shahinur Islam fixed today for hearing the matter as the lawyer filed a time petition.

In presence of his lawyers, video footage of Zafrullah's comment was shown on a large screen in the courtroom. At that time, Zafrullah, also a freedom fighter, was present at the tribunal.

Zafrullah faced contempt

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PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 10
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-25 12-45 4-45 6-41 8-00
JAMAAT 5-00 1-15 5-00 6-44 8-30
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