

National flag

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by the district administration at Shaheed Shamsujoha Park, sources said.

Seeing her flag-bearing vehicle, some people said, they thought the lawmaker had been awarded the ministerial post.

Even leaders and activists of the ruling Awami League at the programme venue mistook the car for a vehicle of a minister and ran to receive the guest but saw, to their dismay, Selina getting out.

In the face of criticism, the lawmaker in front of others at the venue asked her men to remove the flag.

"I did not notice the flag. Someone might have hoisted it," she told The Daily Star by phone.

According to the flag rules, those entitled to fly the national flag on their vehicles are Speaker of parliament, chief justice, chief whip, deputy speaker of parliament, cabinet ministers, leader of the opposition in parliament, persons accorded status of a cabinet minister and heads of diplomatic or consular missions in foreign countries.

Besides, ministers of state and deputy ministers or persons accorded the status of minister of state or deputy minister are allowed to travel in flag-bearing vehicles while on tour outside the capital or abroad.

Minor boy abused for quitting job

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In yet another incident of child abuse in the country, owner and staff of a restaurant in Akkelpur of Joypurhat yesterday cut the hair and shaved the eyebrows of 12-year-old Sazzad Hossain for quitting his job.

Police said Sazzad left Mega Hotel and Fast Food some three months ago as he was often abused there.

"This evening when Sazzad was walking by the restaurant, its owner and staff caught him, took him to a nearby hair salon and cut his hair and shaved his eyebrows," Ashraful Islam, officer-in-charge of Akkelpur Police Station, told The Daily Star last night.

"After hearing the incident from his parents, we rushed to the spot and arrested restaurant owner Abdul Matin, staff Rubel and salon owner Sumon," the OC said.

Sazzad's father Shohur Ali filed a case against the abusers, OC Ashraful Islam added.

'ISIS' supremo

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Islamic State figure killed in a US raid in May, US counter-terrorism officials told ABC News.

The information about al-Baghdadi's actions came from many sources including US interviews with at least two teenage Yazidi girls held as sex slaves in Sayyaf's compound and the interrogation of Sayyaf's wife, Umm Sayyaf, who was captured by US forces in the raid in which her husband was killed, the officials told ABC News.

Mueller went to Turkey in December 2012 to work for a Turkish organization providing humanitarian aid to Syrian refugees along the Syrian border.

Islamic State has beheaded numerous hostages, including three Americans. Its forces control wide swathes of territory in Iraq and Syria.

Lenzner said Mueller's parents were told at a meeting in Washington of Mueller's abuse by al-Baghdadi and her torture while held captive. Lenzner was not clear about whether al-Baghdadi was responsible for torturing Mueller.

Mueller's family declined to comment directly on Friday.

40 'suffocated'

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Second World War," EU Migration Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos told a press conference.

Avramopoulos, speaking after a trip to Athens on Thursday, said Europe as a whole was struggling with a surge in migrants, with the situation in Greece "particularly urgent" as almost 50,000 people arrived there last month.

"What we must do and the (European) Commission has done it, is to organise our system in order to face this problem in a decent, civilised and European way," he added.

The UN refugee agency said the number of people driven from their homes by conflict and crisis has topped 50 million for the first time since World War II, with Syrians hardest hit.

More than 101,700 migrants have arrived in Italy by boat since the start of the year, with at least 2,040 others dying on the crossing, according to the latest figures compiled by the International Organization for Migration.

Some 124,000 refugees and migrants also landed on the Greek islands during the first seven months of the year -- up 750 percent from 2014, according to UN figures.



The sport utility vehicle of Selina Akter Banu with the national flag on it in Meherpur town yesterday. The MP from reserved seats for women is not entitled to have the flag on her car.

PHOTO: STAR

Of the lucky ones

FROM PAGE 16

The indifference of senior leaders of the ruling Awami League and the BNP indicated that they were less bothered about their programmes' impact on education, they alleged.

"I don't think the political parties really care about our children's education. I heard that the children of many politicians are studying abroad," said Tahmina Sultana, a teacher of Birshrestha Munshi Abdur Rouf Public School and College, whose son passed the HSC exams this year.

She believes that the three-month-long political unrest had a negative impact on students' preparations in this year's SSC and HSC exams.

"The politicians seem oblivious to their programmes' impact on students," she added.

Since January, colleges could not hold regular classes for crucial three months before the exams while students remained uncertain about the exams due to the political unrest.

The Daily Star has found that the children of a number of leaders of the AL, the BNP, the Jatiya Party, the Jamaat-Islami and a few other parties either got their education or are studying abroad.

Senior BNP leaders, including Mirza Abbas, Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain, Moyeen Khan, Abdullah Al Noman, Altaf Hossain Chowdhury and Sadeque Hossain Khoka, got their children admitted to educational institutions abroad.

The children of some other BNP leaders, including Jamiruddin Sircar, Mahbubur Rahman, Hannan Shah, Salauddin Quader Chowdhury and Mir Nasir, received education abroad.

A number of AL leaders also sent their children abroad to get higher education. They include Suranjit Sengupta, Syed Ashraful Islam, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Mohammad Nasim, Kazi Zafarullah, Engineer Mosharrar Hossain, AHM Mostafa Kamal, Shawkat Ali, Faruk Khan, Jahangir Kabir Nanok, Abdur Razzak, Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury, Abdus Shahid and Shamsul Haq Tuku.

Some leaders of the Jamaat, the JP and the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal also sent their children abroad for better education.

The children of Jamaat leaders Motiur Rahman Nazami, Muhammad Kamaruzzaman and Mir Quasem Ali either received education or are studying abroad.

JP chief HM Ershad's son and daughter studied in London. Party leaders Ruhul Amin Hawlader, Kazi Firoz Rashid and Ziauddin Bablu also sent their children abroad to study.

All three daughters of Anwar Hossain Manju, chief of Jatiya Party (Manju), studied abroad. Party's

Secretary General Sheikh Shahidul Islam sent his son to Australia to study there.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal leaders are also on the list. Three sons and a daughter of JSD leader Mayeenuddin Khan Badal studied abroad. Party leader ASM Abdur Rob's two sons study abroad while another is a student of an educational institution in the capital.

Two sons of Liberal Democratic Party Chief Oli Ahmed studied in the UK.

Bikolpodhara Bangladesh Chairman AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury's son Mahi B Chowdhury, also joint secretary general of the BDB, studied in the US.

It was a special circumstance that left Awami League President Sheikh Hasina with no choice but to have her son Sajeb Wazed Joy and daughter Saima Wazed Putul educated at institutions in India and the US.

Hasina had to stay outside the country following the brutal killing of her father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with most family members on August 15, 1975.

Hasina's four granddaughters and a grandson now study abroad. Putul's four children study in Canada and Joy's daughter in the US.

Three granddaughters of Hasina's political archrival Khaleda Zia are studying abroad. Of them, the only daughter of BNP Senior Vice Chairman Tarique Rahman, elder son of Khaleda, is studying in London.

Two daughters of BNP chief's deceased son Arafat Rahman Koko study in Malaysia.

Following the 1/11 changeover in 2007, Tarique and Koko along with their wives and children left the country on parole in September 2008.

However, there are many leaders who chose to have their children educated at institutions here.

AL leader Tofail Ahmed's daughter studied at Dhaka Medical College.

AL Presidium Member Nuh-ul-Alam Lenin's elder daughter completed her studies here and the younger one is a student of a private university in the capital.

A daughter and a son of AL leader Abdul Matin Khasru also study here.

Talking to The Daily Star, eminent academic Prof Syed Manzoorul Islam said the fact that many politicians sent their children abroad to study meant they didn't have faith in the country's education system.

They would have worked to improve the educational institutions in villages if their children had studied there, he said.

"Most of our politicians pay lip

service to issues relating to our education system. Poor allocation for education in the national budget reflects their lack of commitment to education in the country," said Prof Manzoorul.

WHAT THE POLITICIANS SAY
"It is true that many of our politicians don't have concern for students as their children study abroad," said BNP standing committee member Mahbubur Rahman.

"They do politics only to make a fortune. Most of their children neither stay in this country nor study here. Then why will they be concerned about our education system or our children's future?" he asked.

JP Secretary General Ziauddin Ahmed Bablu said, "It is normal for people to think that politicians bother the least about the future of the children of others, as their children get education in developed countries."

General people, especially students and their guardians, lost respect for politicians due to the BNP-led alliance's blockade and hartal that had severely affected academic life of students, he said.

Some leaders, however, said politicians did nothing wrong by sending their children abroad for better education.

"I don't see anything wrong in educating one's children abroad if he or she can afford it," said AL leader Lenin.

The AL presidium member said he didn't have the financial ability to send his daughters abroad for education.

It's not true that children of all politicians study abroad. And it's also unfair to put all politicians in the same category, and to say that they are not worried about hartals and blockade, he said.

Asked, BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan said, "The media always tries to malign politicians whenever there is a movement in the country to materialise people's just demands."

"The fact is that no human rights, rule of law or democracy exist now in the country. People's ongoing movement to restore democracy and human rights is very important from this point of view."

"Why are you singling out politicians' children? Is it because of your ill motive to malign them?" asked Nazrul.

AL Presidium Member Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim said it was not true that politicians didn't care about the country's education system.

Asked about his children, he said they studied abroad and were now staying in Bangladesh.

"They could have easily settled abroad, as they were educated there. But they are here to serve the country," Selim said, adding all his grandchildren are studying in Bangladesh.

MADARIPUR SCHOOLGIRLS 'MURDER'

Three accused on seven-day remand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Madaripur court yesterday placed three accused on a seven-day remand in a case filed for the "killing" of two schoolgirls on Thursday.

Madaripur Sadar Police Station Officer-in-charge Mohammad Shahjahan, also the case's investigation officer, said he had sought a 10-day remand for the trio after producing them before the court of chief judicial magistrate.

The accused are Rakib, Shipon Shikder and Rafiqul Shikder.

Shipon and Rafiqul were arrested on Thursday while Rakib yesterday morning, the OC added.

Seven youths, including the arrestees, were accused in the case.

Sumaiya Akhtar and Happy Akhtar, both class eight students at Mostafapur Bahumukhi High School, were poisoned to death after rape by the seven, victims' families alleged.

According to the case statement, the youths killed the victims and later poured poison into their mouths to make it look like suicide, said police.

The other accused are Rana Shikder, Mehedi Hasan, Uzzal and Sajon in the area.

Sources at the Madaripur Sadar Hospital said they primarily found that poison was the cause of their deaths. Doctors also found some injury marks on different parts of Sumaiya's body. But they would be able to confirm the cause of death after the results of the viscera tests.

On Thursday, Sumaiya and Happy left their homes at Mostafapur village in Sadar upazila around 3:00pm to attend tuition classes at school.

Around 4:30pm, four youths, aged between 18 and 20, brought the girls to the hospital unconscious and claimed that the victims had taken poison. They died at the hospital.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, plaintiff of the case Billal alleged that he went to Sadar Police Station to

file a murder and rape case, but police let him lodge only murder case, dropping the rape allegation.

He said the accused Rakib disturbed his daughter, Sumaiya, and Shipon gave her marriage proposal earlier.

Billal said he believed that his daughter could not commit suicide. The accused poisoned them to death after rape, he claimed.

Tofazzal Matabbar, grandfather of Happy, alleged that the accused were trying to influence the police.

Mohammad Shahjahan, IO of the case, denied the allegation.

NAT'L MOURNING DAY

Programmes in front yard of Khaleda's family home

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

Local Awami League yesterday held different programmes to mark the National Mourning Day right in front of BNP chief Khaleda Zia's ancestral home at South Sreepur in Feni's Phulgazi upazila.

However, no one from Khaleda's family was seen there.

AL lawmaker Nizamuddin Hazari and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal MP Shirin Akhter, among others, attended the programmes that included special prayers, a discussion and distribution of food among the destitute.

Asked about it, MP Nizam Hazari said: "Begum [Khaleda] Zia's cousin Shamim Mazumder had told me, 'You people arrange the food distribution programme at different places every year. This time, you can do that at our place.' So, I agreed..."

Heartbreak for 15,000

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The first flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines will leave Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport with 419 pilgrims at 8:30am.

The hajj flights will continue until September 17. The return flight will start on September 28 and end on October 28.

The Saudi authorities fixed a quota of 1,01,750 Bangladeshi pilgrims this year. Of them, 10,000 will perform hajj under government arrangement and the rest under private management, said officials at the religious affairs ministry.

The pilgrims were selected through an online registration system launched by the ministry this year.

The ministry officials said around 91,908 aspiring pilgrims registered online within the February deadline, but 1,11,012 people deposited money with the agencies concerned.

As the total number of the pilgrims depositing money for the hajj exceeded the Saudi imposed quota, the ministry found that around 20,000 pilgrims were not included in the database.

The aggrieved pilgrims then demanded that the government take measures to ensure they make the pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia. They had also staged several demonstrations in March in the city to press

home their demand.

Upon the pilgrims' demand, the parliamentary standing committee on the religious affairs ministry in May decided to talk to the Saudi authorities to settle the issue.

A delegation led by Religious Affairs Minister Matiuur Rahman visited Saudi Arabia in June but failed to convince the Saudi authorities to allow the additional pilgrims.

"We have nothing to do for them [the pilgrims] as the Saudi authorities did not allow them to perform the hajj," Chowdhury Md Babul Hassan, secretary of the ministry, told The Daily Star.

Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (Haab) President Mohammad Ibrahim Bahar, however, said they finally managed to take in 5,000 pilgrims who had already deposited money but could not get registered on time.

He said they found that some 5,000 registered pilgrims would not be able to perform hajj this year due to various reasons. So they took those people in their place.

At least 7,000 to 8,000 disappointed pilgrims, who deposited the money but failed to be registered in the database, would have to take their money back, Bahar said, adding that they would be given priority next time.

Youth fakes own kidnap

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An employee of Reliable Polytechnic Institute, Mehedi lives with his wife at a rented house in the town's Naruli. He completed BSc in textile engineering last year from Noakhali Govt Textile Engineering College.

An anonymous caller phoned Mehedi's father Md Abul Hossain, 55, on August 3 afternoon to inform him that his son has been kidnapped. The caller asked Abul to send him a ransom of Tk 5 lakh through a mobile banking account, said police quoting Mehedi.

Two days later, Abul filed an abduction case with Bogra Sadar Police Station, accusing unnamed people of the crime. Law enforcers used modern equipment to spot the "abductee" and managed to arrest him on Friday.

Mehedi opened "Perfect Coaching" in Banani of Bogra town a few months ago by spending Tk 5 lakh. He borrowed the amount from his father and some neighbours and relatives, according to police.

The youth faced difficulties in running his family as his employer's payment was irregular and only a few polytechnic students enrolled for coaching. He recently decided to cook up the abduction scheme only after his

father, a private school teacher from Gozaria village in Sonatola upazila, pushed him to repay the loan.

Yusuf of Kazipur upazila in Sirajganj used at least four SIM cards to call Mehedi's father asking for ransom. The two left Shantahar of Bogra on August 3 afternoon and travelled to Gaibandha, Rangpur, Nilphamari, Dinajpur, Khulna, Pirojpur and Bagerhat before returning to Bogra two days ago.

Talking to The Daily Star, Abul Hossain said he works hard to make a living for his family. Besides being a schoolteacher, he also owns a rice-husking business. He deposited Tk 2 lakh into four mobile banking accounts to "free his son from kidnappers".

THREE BEHIND BARS
The Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court-1 of Bogra yesterday afternoon sent the three arrestees to jail after police produced them before it in the case.

Earlier, Mehedi made a confessional statement before the magistrate under section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, said court sources.

A local lawyer said if found guilty, the accused face a jail sentence of between one and seven years.

'Young Jupiter' planet seen

FROM PAGE 16

The new world shows the strongest methane signature ever detected on an alien planet. Previous Jupiter-like exoplanets have shown only faint traces of methane, making them very different from the heavy methane atmospheres of gas giants in our Solar System.

The astronomers also detected water, using GPI's spectrometer instrument.

These findings indicate that it might be similar to planets in our Solar System, yielding additional clues to the formation of giant, astronomical bodies.

The vast majority of alien solar systems that have been discovered are very different from our own, with massive planets -- so-called "hot Jupiters" -- orbiting close to their stars. This is partly because such systems are easier to detect with the techniques currently used to search for planets orbiting distant stars.

"Previous search methods couldn't find systems like our own, with small, rocky worlds close to their star and large, gas giants at large distances like Jupiter and Saturn," said co-author James Larkin, from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

"The search for large planets at large

separations from their star is exactly the goal of GPI. These solar systems are likely much more similar to our own."

Studying such worlds should reveal how common our Solar System architecture truly is.

A TALE OF TWO THEORIES
Astronomers believe the gas giants in our Solar System formed slowly -- by building up a large core over a few million years and then pulling in a huge amount of hydrogen and other gases to form an atmosphere. This is known as a "cold-start".

But the Jupiter-like exoplanets that have been discovered so far are much hotter than models have predicted. This hints that they could have formed quickly -- as gas collapses to make a scorching planet in what is known as a "hot-start".

The core build-up process can also form rocky planets like the Earth. But the fast collapse process might only make giant gas planets. The planets in our Solar System are 4.5 billion years old, but at just 20 million years old, 51 Eridani b might be young enough to reveal clues about how it was created.

"This planet really could have formed the same way Jupiter did; the whole solar

system could be a lot like ours," said co-author Bruce Macintosh, from Stanford University's Kavli Institute.

The new gas giant is roughly twice the mass of Jupiter. Until now, the gas giant planets that have been directly detected have been much larger -- five to 13 times Jupiter's mass.

It orbits a little further from its parent star than Saturn does from the Sun and has a temperature of 430C (800F), hot enough to melt lead, but still rather cold compared with other alien gas giants, which reach temperatures above 540C (1,000F).

The Gemini Planet Imager is installed on the 8m Gemini South Telescope in Chile. It began science operations in 2014.

Other scientific instruments designed to detect exoplanets do so indirectly, by, for example, detecting the dip in starlight as a planet passes in front of its parent sun. GPI instead searches for light from the planet itself -- referred to as direct imaging.

The astronomers use adaptive optics to sharpen the image of a star, and then block out the starlight. Any remaining incoming light is then analysed, with the brightest spots indicating a possible planet.