



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with top officials of Army Headquarters Selection Board-2016 at the army HQ conference hall at Dhaka Cantonment yesterday.

PHOTO: PMO

## Consider '71 spirit in giving promotion

PM tells army

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the spirit of independence and Liberation War should be the basic and prime guiding principles for army, while this should also be an issue of consideration for the officers' promotion in service as well.

Addressing Army Headquarters Selection Board-2016 at Dhaka Cantonment, she said the military leadership should be delegated to officers who are patriotic and have faith in the spirit of the great war of liberation.

Hasina, who is also in charge of the defence ministry, asked the selection board to take into consideration the officers' leadership quality, professional competence, field level success, discipline, honesty and obedience for promotion.

The prime minister said members of the army during the tenure of the present government always stood by it whenever it was necessary. For this

reason, it's required to give leadership to the competent, efficient, able and patriotic officers.

Hasina expressed satisfaction over the introduction of 'TRACE' (Tabulated Record and Comparative Evaluation) system for officers' promotion in the army.

The system gives comparative evaluation of different aspects of professional competence, she said.

She said a disciplined and strong army can play a very pivotal role in strengthening and consolidating democracy in a country. So, leadership should remain in the hands of the officers who are educated, able, conscious and intelligent and above all who have the determination to consolidate democracy.

"You have to rise above every personal likes and dislikes and judge everything impartially to pick up the patriotic officers," the prime minister said.

Pointing out to the development of

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## UK worried over rising extremist attacks

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United Kingdom has expressed concern over the rise of extremist attacks on secular writers and religious minorities in Bangladesh and urged the government to ensure protection of life from the extremist attacks.

"Extremist attacks on minority groups and threats against secular bloggers continued. In addition to extremist attacks on Christians, Buddhists and Hindus, 2016 has also seen an increase of wider intolerance towards minority religions," according to a UK government report released on July 21.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office updated its report "People's Republic of Bangladesh - Human Rights Priority Country" on that day. It also said there was no improvement in the human rights situation in Bangladesh in the first six months of 2016.

The report said the UK continues to support and promote freedom of expression and protection for those

who exercise it in Bangladesh, including through a new programme funded by the Magna Carta Fund for Human Rights and Democracy.

The British High Commission is also working closely with international partners in Bangladesh to support those under threat from extremist attacks, such as providing information on help available from local, regional and international non-governmental organisations.

"We continue to urge the government of Bangladesh to ensure that those carrying out extremist attacks are held to account, that life is protected and that the right to justice and free speech for all Bangladeshis is upheld," it said.

Mentioning about the municipal elections, which ended in May and were held on party lines for the first time, it said the polls saw significant levels of violence in which 116 people were reportedly killed.

"Looking ahead to the second half of 2016, we want Bangladesh to

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## Quasem wants

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charge framing by the International Crimes Tribunal-2 in the case against Mir Quasem Ali, he said.

The apex court may hold hearing on the adjournment petition today, he added.

Earlier on June 21, the apex court fixed July 25 for the hearing of the petition that sought review of its judgement.

On June 19, Quasem submitted the petition to the apex court through his lawyers seeking review of its verdict that had upheld his death penalty for the crimes he committed during the Liberation War in 1971.

In the petition, the Jamaat-e-Islami leader prayed to the SC to acquit him of all seven charges on which he was found guilty.

The International Crimes Tribunal on June 6 issued a death warrant against Quasem Ali hours after the SC had released the full text of its verdict upholding his death penalty.

On November 2, 2014, the ICT-2 handed down capital punishment on the 63-year-old Jamaat leader, who was the chief of anti-liberation force Al-Badr in Chittagong, for committing crimes against humanity.

On March 8 this year, the Appellate Division upheld the ICT-2 verdict.

Quasem is considered by many as the main financier of the anti-liberation party. He allegedly paid \$25 million to an American lobbyist firm to carry out a smear campaign to make the war crimes trial controversial, the then law minister Shafique Ahmed told parliament on April 28, 2013.

The death row war criminal was shifted to the Dhaka Central Jail from Kashimpur prison in Gazipur on June 20.

masterminds of the two attacks and nabbing suspected militants.

The Rapid Action Battalion has released a list of 262 missing people and police suspect some 100 of them have links with terror groups.

The government has also launched a counter-motivation campaign to prevent youths from being brainwashed by any militant outfits.

The DC conference comes against this background.

DCs are the heads of district administration and also the focal points of implementing all government decisions.

Some DCs in their written proposals sent to the Cabinet Division recommended installing CCTIVs in all important establishments at district levels.

Earlier in 2013, the government formed anti-terror committees in district, upazila and union levels. But recent media reports said the committees remain dysfunctional in almost all districts.

The cabinet secretary said after the recent attacks, DCs were asked to remain alert and make the committees functional.

Other issues on the conference agenda include strengthening local government institutions, gearing up disaster management, relief and rehabilitation activities, use of ICT and e-governance and improvement of the quality of education, healthcare and family welfare.

Divisional commissioners and DCs are expected to present 336 suggestions and recommendations on 39 ministries to be discussed at the conference, according to documents on the conference.

### MORE POWERS FOR EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATES

A number of DCs recommended increasing the powers of executive magistrates by empowering them to issue affidavits. Now only judicial magistrates can do that.

They also want the government to appoint lawyers to defend the verdicts of the mobile courts during the disposal of the appeals made by convicted persons.

The DC of Cox's Bazar proposed setting up barbed fences on Bangladesh-Myanmar border to prevent Rohingya people from illegally entering Bangladesh.

The DC also wants that the government hand over to the Coast Guard the responsibility to monitor the maritime boundary from the Naf river to Shah

## The village artisans of Savar

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The jewellery-making business has made the village renowned.

"Our jewellery are not only catering to the demands in Bangladesh; they also go to Italy, Middle East and India," said Dulal Rajbangshi, general secretary of Bhakurta Bazar Gold Silver and Imitation Merchants Cooperative Samity.

Opu Das is another jeweller. He and his brother inherited the family business of making anklets from silver. The 36-year-old himself has been in the trade for the last 15 years.

Chaity Jewellers, run by Opu, employs seven artisans who make jewellery from silver and copper. On an average, they make 300 pairs of anklets a month to fill orders from stores in the capital's Tantibazar, the jewellers' hub in the country.

The village's expertise in jewellery-making dates back to 1980s when most male members used to work for jewellery shops in Tantibazar.

But when finished gold items started to flood the market in the 1990s, their demand fell.

Some of them returned to their village homes and began making jewellery from silver. They were able to make a living from the trade between 1995 and 2010. Again the silver jewellery market faced a downturn.

This was the time when the village artisans started to look for an alternative, as this was the only trade they knew.

They found copper as an alternative to silver. They used the designs of gold and silver jewellery to create a market.

Now there are about 100 shops in

Bhakurta Bazar and at least 50 shops each in adjacent Solar Market and Bottola Bazar, Dulal said.

In total, there are 500 shops and households involved in the trade, providing livelihood to at least 2,500 families in Bhakurta and neighbouring villages.

"When we started producing jewellery from copper, people doubted whether the jewellery will sell. But the demand for our jewellery is good," he told The Daily Star on June 23.

Actual combined sales figures are hard to come by. Dulal puts the average daily sales at Tk 5 lakh and it goes up during the peak season in the winter. The annual sales might come to Tk 20 crore.

Sales also go up ahead of Eid festivals, particularly in Eid-ul-Fitr, according to Dulal.

Bhakurta's artisans have not abandoned silver completely -- about 75 percent of jewellery is made up of copper and the rest from silver and gold.

Initially, some craftsmen used to import raw materials and chemicals from India. Now those are locally available.

The artisans start working around 8:00am and continue until midnight, but the wage is very low, said 45-year-old Dulal.

Opu earns Tk 100 a bhoori as making charge while his artisans from the village get Tk 40 a bhoori.

Women are a large part of the business. Jewellers say there are jobs that male artisans are not interested in because of low return. These jobs are left to the village women who prefer to

work in their leisure time to supplement the income of their families.

One of them is Shoma Rani. These correspondents found her sitting on the stairs of her rented house, meticulously making small coiled copper thread to be used in necklaces.

She said she could make one kg of copper thread a day, which earned her Tk 400.

"I do this whenever I get time as my income can give my two children better food, clothes and education," said Shoma whose husband is also an artisan.

Her two daughters -- Sathi Akhtar and Dipti Rani Sarker -- were sitting with her. Sathi, 12, studies in class-VI at a school in the village and Dipti, aged 14, is a student of class-VIII in the same school. Sathi makes copper threads while Dipti puts beads on necklaces and other jewellery.

Dipti says she has learnt it from her mother and aunt who are also involved in jewellery making.

Hindu families used to dominate the trade in the past. But now many Muslims have joined in. At present, 95 percent Hindu population of the village and 50 percent Muslims are involved in the trade, according to Dulal.

Thirty-year-old Ali Asgar has been in the business in Bhakurta Bazar for more than a decade. He runs a shop of raw materials and chemicals. He also has 30 artisans working for him from their homes and making jewellery.

"I sell the items to wholesalers in different parts of Dhaka and some buyers from India," he said.

## Significant progress in probe

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how the attack was carried out. "We are trying to arrest them."

The DMP chief stressed the importance of landlords providing police with detailed information about the tenants.

"Owners of the two flats didn't keep any information about their tenants.

We are investigating to find out whether they did it intentionally," he said.

Recently, two persons were arrested for allegedly renting out their flats in Mirpur and Bashundhara Residential Area to the suspected Gulshan attackers and withholding information about their tenants from the police.

Asaduzzaman then warned of taking legal action against all city landlords if they did not provide tenants' information to the local police stations.

He also criticised some television talk-show participants for raising questions about various police actions.

"It is our legal and constitutional duty to take action against those who

disrupt security [measures]... If somebody gets disappointed to see us performing this duty, I will say that they are the patrons [of criminals]."

On July 1, a group of armed terrorists stormed the Holey Artisan Bakery at Gulshan in the capital, killing 20 hostages, mostly foreigners. Two police officials were also killed.

## Dutch-Bangla chamber leader

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"We went to almost all medicine shops near the residence with his picture. The shop owners said they have not seen him," said Rashidul Hassan, younger brother of the businessman.

"My brother did not receive any threat from any quarters," Rashidul said when asked if anyone had threatened the businessman over any issue.

Hassan was supposed to leave for his Eskaton office with his account officer Selim Reza around 9:30am on Saturday.

Selim, a resident of nearby Jigatola area, came to Hassan's house around 9:10am, Rashidul said.

Talking to The Daily Star, Selim said

Hassan had phoned him around 8:30am, asking him to come to his house if he was ready.

Building's security guard Abul Bashar said Hassan did not take his car when he left to buy medicine though he drives car every day to go to office.

Concerned over Hassan's going missing, the DBCCI board held an emergency meeting yesterday evening. The Board of Directors is seeking earnest cooperation and appropriate steps from law enforcers and other authorities concerned, read a DBCCI press release.

Nazrul Islam Chowdhury Didar, administrative officer of the DBCCI, said Hassan was elected president of

the chamber in October last year. He is also the licensee of the Singapore-based retail company Crocodile International in Bangladesh.

Hassan opened a showroom of Crocodile products at Bashundhara Shopping Mall in the capital in April. He also manufactures Crocodile products like T-shirts, trousers, polo shirts and jeans in different factories in Bangladesh, Nazrul added.

Currently, DBCCI has 165 members and its office is on the eighth floor at the city's 52/A Hassan Holding at Eskaton. He was not involved with any other chamber before becoming the president of the DBCCI.

The Crocodile office is on the

seventh floor of the same building.

The DBCCI has been preparing to arrange a single-country fair scheduled to be held in the Netherlands in September this year.

Nazrul added Hassan was one of the shareholders in the recently closed Chemico Bangladesh Ltd, a factory which used to produce polythene products and export those to the Netherlands.

The Chemico was a joint venture company of four or five shareholders of Bangladesh and the Netherlands.

A senior leader of the apex trade body, the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, said Hassan had regular contacts with

## IS attack in Kabul a war crime: UN

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including shoes, ID cards and protest banners with messages such as "Don't eliminate us".

Many protesters defiantly camped there overnight, holding candlelight vigils and reciting Koranic verses even though the government announced a 10-day ban on public gatherings on security grounds.

The wounded overwhelmed city hospitals, with reports of blood shortages and urgent appeals for donors swirling on social media.

'HEINOUS ATTACK'

The devastating attack in the capital represents a major escalation for IS, which so far has largely been confined to the eastern province of Nangarhar where they are known for brutality including beheadings.

The Afghan government is currently in the middle of an operation backed by Nato airstrikes against IS in Nangarhar, after Ghani earlier this year claimed that the group had been defeated.

Nato this month claimed that the

group's influence was waning as it steadily lost territory, with their fighters largely confined to two or three districts in the province from around nine in January.

"There is no doubt that IS is under intense pressure in Nangarhar, and they are desperate to reassert themselves with attacks such as the one in Kabul," analyst Ahmad Saedi told AFP.

The Taliban, who are in the middle of their annual summer offensive and are more powerful than IS, strongly denied any involvement in Saturday's attack.

The National Directorate of Security, Afghanistan's main intelligence agency, said the attack was masterminded by Abu Ali, an IS commander in Nangarhar's volatile Achin district.

The bombings, which killed at least 80 people and wounded 231, mark the deadliest single attack in Kabul since the Taliban were toppled from power in a 2001 US-led invasion, the interior ministry said.

In the last 18 months, 38 Americans, civilian and military, have died in the country, reports CNN.