



N'GANJ ABUZZ WITH CAMPAIGNS

Clockwise from top left, Awami League nominated mayoral candidate Selina Hayat Ivy greets a child as part of a door-to-door campaign in the city's Khanpur area. BNP-nominated candidate Shakhawat Hossain Khan speaks with a vegetable vendor in Nabiganj area of Bandar upazila. Election campaign posters hang overhead on Bangabandhu Road. Law enforcement personnel inspect a vehicle in Chasara as security measures have been beefed up ahead of the polls, scheduled to be held Thursday. Meanwhile, 22 platoons of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) will be deployed in the city from today who will work as a striking force, along with members of Rab and police, reports a correspondent in Narayanganj, quoting Retuning Officer Nuruzzaman Talukder. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTOS: ANISUR RAHMAN



Ivy wants Siddhirganj OC's withdrawal

Aspirants go door-to-door; central leaders join in
A CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

With only two days remaining before voting, the electoral campaigns of candidates of the Narayanganj City Corporation (NCC) polls have reached its peak. Mayoral and councillor aspirants along with their supporters are visiting door-to-door to convince voters. Central leaders of both ruling Awami League and BNP as well as their front organisations are visiting Narayanganj to beef up campaigns of their parties' candidates. While campaigning in the city's Tolla Bazar area, Selina Hayat Ivy claimed that she would definitely win, if free and fair elections are held. "Since beginning, I have been saying that I don't want any extra privilege from the Election Commission as a ruling party's candidate. I just want a fair election," she told reporters. Meanwhile, Ivy demanded changing officer-in-charge of Siddhirganj Police Station citing that he played a "controversial" role. But, she did not mention any specific reason. BNP-nominated mayoral candidate Shakhawat Hossain Khan also made a similar claim that he would win, if elections are held fairly. Talking to reporters in the city's Bandar area yesterday, he

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Migrants protected neither at home nor abroad

Rights activists tell discussion, citing high travel costs and poor services at destination countries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

High migration costs and poor services at labour receiving countries are major challenges to protect the rights of Bangladeshi migrants, rights activists and policymakers said yesterday. Over 70 lakh migrant workers are contributing to the country's economy by remitting around \$15 billion every year, but unfortunately they are not getting expected services at home and abroad yet, they said. The government must enforce protection measures for the migrants to uphold their dignity, they told a discussion at the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, speaking about the celebration of International Migrants Day in Bangladesh yesterday. "Reduction of migration costs, control of

influence of middlemen in the recruitment process, and poor services at destination countries are now major challenges in the migration sector," Prof CR Abrar, executive director of Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), told The Daily Star. The government must focus on implementation of its laws and policies formulated to regulate the sector; otherwise the governance and protection issues cannot be ensured, he observed. In the destination countries, the services of the labour wings and the missions must be upgraded for migrants' benefits, Prof Abrar said. Speaking on the occasion, the chairperson of parliamentary standing committee on expatriates' welfare and overseas

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Proper registration must for labour rights

Speakers, labour leaders tell roundtable at The Daily Star Centre

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers and labour rights activists yesterday urged employers to properly keep records of their employees to ensure labour rights in the country. They opined that if the employers properly keep all necessary paperwork, the labourers will get proper recognition for their work, which will in turn help ensure their rights including workplace safety and compensations during accidents. They said these when addressing a roundtable organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) and Sramik Kormochari Oikya Parishad (SKOP) at the capital's The Daily Star Centre. The speakers also urged the government to reform the existing labour law and incorporate a chapter elucidating issues regarding compensating dead and wounded workers. Speaking at the programme, Jatiya Sramik League General Secretary Humayun Kabir said, "As per laws, registration process for recruiting workers is a must, but many of

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Govt working to check terror financing

Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque tells anti-terrorism workshop for officials

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT



Bangladesh has strong political commitment and taken comprehensive measures to effectively combat terrorism and stop terror financing in the ever-changing world, Foreign Secretary Md Shahidul Haque said yesterday.

"There is absolute political commitment. Our prime minister leads the anti-terrorism and violent extremism issues from the front," he said, mentioning that coordination is another important area for combating terrorism and terror financing.

He was addressing the inaugural session of a two-day capacity building workshop on "terrorist designation and asset freezing regime under UN Security Council Resolutions," at the foreign ministry.

Chairman of National Board of Revenue (NBR) Chairman Md Nojibur Rahman and UN officials also spoke on the occasion. This was second such workshop aiming to train government officials, especially the customs officials, about the threats and flow of terrorist financing pursuant to relevant UNSCRs.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Counter Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CITF) jointly organised

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Rushanara to discuss trade as UK prepares to leave EU

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Rushanara Ali MP, the UK prime minister's trade envoy for Bangladesh, has arrived in Dhaka to reaffirm the importance the UK attaches to its trade and investment with Bangladesh, according to a statement.

Dhaka is considering the visit highly important as the visit is taking place at the time when the United Kingdom is preparing to leave the European Union, which may affect its trade relations with other countries.

"This is my first visit to Bangladesh as a trade envoy. Besides our historic ties, Bangladesh has exciting opportunities for British companies as its economy is growing impressively. As a great trading nation we in the UK are keen to deepen our trade relationship with Bangladesh," Rushanara said in a statement.

During this visit, she said, "I will discuss mutual prosperity goals with political and business partners... I am also keen to ensure Britain continues to have a strong partnership with Bangladesh in promoting further development and tackling the threat of climate change."

Marking her visit, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Alison Blake said Ali's visit should be taken as sign of the UK's commitment to building on their trade and investment relationship with Bangladesh.

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Female UP members should be legally empowered

Discussion on their exclusion told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should formulate rules specifying the power and jurisdiction of female members of reserved seats in the Union Parishads (UPs) to end discriminations against them, a discussion was told yesterday.

Chairmen and male members of UPs deprive their females colleagues of their due honour and power in many ways due to lack of government rules, while empowerment of female members is crucial for strengthening local government bodies, they viewed.

They were speaking at a discussion on the "activities and power of female members of reserved seats of

Union Parishads", organised by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Osnara Parul, a female member of Kalikapur UP under Manda upazila of Naogaon, said the chairman and male members joining hands together deprived females in implementing social safety net programmes.

For example, a general ward male member gets 35 VGF cards, and proportionately, a female member of reserved seat is supposed to get 105 cards because each reserved seat represents three general wards, she said. "But we get only 30 VGF cards," she said.

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CLIMATE CHANGE FUND

Disbursement cumbersome States frustrated finance minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith yesterday expressed his frustration as the developed countries have been maintaining a "cumbersome" procedure for disbursing the climate change fund.

"The procedures for the use of climate change fund are ridiculously complex," he said at the inaugural of a media workshop on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The minister said developed countries are primarily responsible for the climate change, which is affecting countries like Bangladesh that do not have much contribution to carbon emission.

"They have demonstrated good will in terms of financing the climate change programme. They're doing [the funding] all over the world, although Bangladesh is very unfortunate that it doesn't get much of the share," he said. "I am raising this con-



cern through this programme."

The workshop, held in the city's Cirdap auditorium, was jointly organised by Inter Press Service (IPS), an international news wire service, and United Nations Foundation.

Financing for adaptation is critical for Bangladesh that tops the list of countries that are most vulnerable to climate change.

According to the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), each metre of rise in sea level will inundate 17 percent of landmass in Bangladesh.

Experts say Bangladesh faces challenges of frequent cyclones, floods, changes in rainfall patterns and salinity, which in turn affect the country's agricultural production system and public health.

Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, Bangladesh's lead negotiator at the Paris climate conference this year, said the supply of funds by the developed

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Md Ashalat informs a passerby about his weight on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue for Tk 2 yesterday. This is what Ashalat does for a living. Though physically challenged by birth, he does not want to limit himself to begging like before. He said he bought the weighing scale for Tk 600 recently and now takes care of his family from the money he earns, around Tk 300 per day. Ashalat of Thakurgaon does not want to be considered a burden, but rather become self-employed and a source of inspiration to other physically challenged people. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Jamdani designs losing out to financial hardships

Weavers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Financial hardship of weavers, scarce supply of quality threads and changing tastes of customers are the major barriers to persevering distinctive designs of Jamdani clothes, speakers told a seminar yesterday.

They said many classic designs of Jamdani were extinct, with the weavers not being able to use them over a long period owing to the challenges.

They said these while addressing a seminar "Jamdani Motif Preservation-2016" at the capital's Bangladesh National Museum, organised by the National Craft Council of Bangladesh (NCCB) that recently implemented a one-year project "Preservation of the Jamdani Motifs and Designs" sponsored by the US Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation.

A total of 400 weavers were interviewed in 11 different areas under the project.

The speakers at the seminar alleged that some people in India are selling sarees in

the name of Jamdani, adding that consumers do not want to pay appropriate prices for the Jamdani clothes.

NCCB President Chandra Shekhar Saha presented a keynote paper and said it is urgent to ensure demand and adequate supply of Jamdani sarees.

Mentioning that the weavers create such unique, artistic designs following an intricate maze without making use of machine, he said, "Weavers have all the necessary skills and potentials. Now they require [financial] support to save the industry."

Saying that traditions and significance of Bangladeshi clothes captivated her, US Ambassador to Bangladesh Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat said, "In 2014, the United States Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation was awarded to the National Craft Council of Bangladesh to help keep the historic crafts... alive in the face of increasing competition of machine mills textiles."

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