

Queen hires

FROM PAGE 16

The appointment is said to be especially important now the Duke of Edinburgh is set to retire from public life this year.

Major TA, 38, moved to the UK from Ghana with his parents in 1982. He studied at Queen Mary University in London and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

He joined the Blues and Royals to become the first black British Army officer commissioned into the Household Cavalry and acted as escort commander for the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge in 2011.

In the same year, he commanded the Blues and Royals taking part in the Queen's birthday parade.

He lives in London with his wife, Joanna Hanna-Grindall, who works as the Victoria and Albert Museum's corporate partnerships manager.

Buckingham Palace has been accused of racial discrimination in the past.

Staff policy published by Buckingham Palace states: "The household aims to employ the best people from the widest available pool of talent ... irrespective of gender, race, ethnic or national origin."

Speaking on film for a documentary on Britain's open and democratic society, Major Twumasi-Ankrah said: "As a young child, watching the her majesty the Queen's birthday parade on television, I would have never imagined that one day I'd command the regiment which I'd fallen in love with."

Mosul

FROM PAGE 16

fought to retake the last two IS-held areas near the Tigris.

Earlier yesterday, Iraq's Joint Operations Command had said it killed "30 terrorists" trying to escape across the river.

Even in the final days of the battle, thousands of civilians remained trapped inside the Old City and those who fled arrived grief-stricken after losing relatives in jihadist sniper fire and bombardments.

Around 915,000 residents have fled Mosul since the start of the battle for the city in October, the United Nations said this week.

Iraqi forces are backed by air strikes and advisers of the US-led coalition fighting IS in Iraq and Syria since 2014.

Abadi declared on Twitter late last month that "we are seeing the end of the fake (IS) state".

The United Nations predicts it will cost more than \$1 billion to repair basic infrastructure in Mosul. In some of the worst affected areas, almost no buildings appear to have escaped damage and Mosul's dense construction means the extent of the devastation might be underestimated, UN officials said.

EC talks

FROM PAGE 1

The EC would inaugurate updating of the voter list from Mymensingh on July 25. The CEC would inaugurate the process at Sadar upazila at 11:00am, the EC secretary said.

The commission would also hold talks with the civil society representatives at 3:00pm on July 31 at the EC Secretariat.

Asked when the commission would start talks with the political parties, Abdullah said, "The date has yet to be fixed. Talks with the political parties will be held between August and October."

Both the ruling Awami League and BNP have welcomed the EC move to start dialogues with the civil society and the political parties.

Earlier, the Huda-led commission initiated talks with different political parties with all the registered political parties responding positively. However, BNP boycotted the Kazi Rakibuddin-led commission demanding election under a non-partisan caretaker administration.

The next parliamentary polls are supposed to be held between late December 2018 and early January 2019.

Praising the EC's move to hold talks with different political parties, AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif told The Daily Star that this initiative would pave the way to hold a free and fair election.

On the other side, BNP standing committee member Moudud Ahmed said, "We will discuss the issue within our party forum and review the whole thing."

The AL wanted to use EVM in next parliamentary elections, but BNP urged the commission not to use that.

CEC Nurul Huda had earlier said they would use EVM in next polls if all political parties reached a consensus to that end.

Contacted, Mahbubul Alam Hanif said, "The Election Commission has dropped EVM from the roadmap. It is the commission's guideline, not a decision."

"The commission will take a decision in consultation with the political parties. We will place our logic in favour of EVM. We hope all the parties will support EVM. The world is moving forward; why should we lag behind in using technology?" he added.

Lawmakers tear into

FROM PAGE 1

opposing the 16th amendment.

They claimed that being "opportunist", a number of members of the amici curiae, appointed by the SC, had provided "false and fabricated" information to the court.

The lawmakers said if the parliament had the power to impeach the president, the Speaker and the prime minister, then why could it not impeach the SC judges for misconduct or incapacity?

The parliament in September 2014 passed the 16th amendment, which abolished the chief justice-led Supreme Judicial Council and restored the authority of parliament to remove SC judges.

The High Court in May last year ruled that the 16th amendment was illegal and unconstitutional. It said the amendment went against the principles of the separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary.

On January 4, the government filed an appeal with the SC against the HC verdict.

A seven-member SC bench, led by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha, on July 3 unanimously upheld the HC verdict.

Arguments during the hearing of the appeal and the HC's observations made it clear that article 70 of the constitution, which prevents MPs from working independently in parliament, largely contributed to the amendment being declared illegal.

In its verdict, the HC strongly criticised article 70 as well as the lack of unity among political parties.

While dealing with the appeal, the SC in February requested 12 senior jurists to place their opinion.

The 12 member amici curiae include Justice (retd) TH Khan, Dr Kamal Hossain, barristers Amirul Islam, AF Hasan Arif, Ajmal Hossain, Rafiqul Haque, Shafique Ahmed, Rokonuddin Mahmud, MI Farooqui, Fida M Kamal and lawyers Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan, and AJ Mohammad Ali.

Nine of them recommended scrapping the amendment. One spoke in favour of it while the other two did not give any opinion.

AL MP and Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed in his speech yesterday said, "Even the president, the prime minister and the speaker can be impeached by parliament. Then why they [judges] cannot be impeached by parliament?"

Mentioning that parliaments of almost all countries have the power to impeach judges, Tofail called upon the law minister to take realistic measures to restore the 16th amendment.

Pointing to arguments made by the amici curiae, especially Dr Kamal Hossain and M Amirul Islam, Tofail said they had delivered the "worst speech" before the SC. He said their speeches were full of misleading information.

"I am surprised that they identify themselves as the architect of the constitution. But they gave totally false information that India and many other countries at present do not have the provision for parliament to impeach judges," he added.

He said Dr Kamal and Amirul had earlier commented that the 1972 constitution was perfect and that it was one of the best constitutions in the sub-continent.

"But now they are speaking against the 1972 constitution...."

Tofail said the duo argued in favour of the Supreme Judicial Council which is present in Pakistan's constitution.

"I have no words to condemn them. They are opportunists."

Pointing to weakness of the judicial council system, Tofail said, "How would subordinate judges try allegations brought against the chief justice?"

Taking part in the discussion, Matia Chowdhury questioned how the SC

judges could judge their own misbehaviours and irregularities.

She said that on at least four occasions the judicial councils did not find allegations of irregularities and misconduct against judges to be true.

A few months ago, additional registrar, on the order of chief justice, had asked not to probe allegation raised against an SC judge by the ACC," she said.

She said a judge has circulated leaflets urging a halt to war crimes trial but the supreme judicial council did not see it to be improper behaviour. Another judge had forged his LLB certificate but the council saw no irregularities.

Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal MP Mayeen Uddin Khan Badal, who initiated the attack on the SC, taking the floor on a point of order said, "They should make clear how parliamentarians have challenged the basic structures of the constitution."

"An apex court verdict has declared military dictator Ziaur Rahman's rule illegal, how can the court now restore the system of Supreme Judicial Council introduced during the tenure of the dictator?"

Awami League lawmaker Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim said, "We all know that the judiciary is independent ... the hands of judiciary cannot be longer than that of the parliament."

People who were opposing the 16th amendment were trying to create a conflict between parliament and the judiciary, Selim said.

Rashed Khan Menon said a vested quarter was trying to create division between parliament and the judiciary.

He said Ayub Khan introduced the Supreme Judicial Council system and it was included through the 5th amendment.

Jatiya Party lawmaker Zaiuddin Ahmed, AL lawmaker Ali Ashraf and other MPs taking part in the discussion said the apex court verdict would be reviewed and the 16th amendment would be restored.

Information minister Hasanul Haq Inu said the Appellate Division verdict was somehow "motivated" and "part of a conspiracy".

Judges must

FROM PAGE 1

the SC yesterday afternoon in order to discuss some urgent issues, meeting sources said.

Quoting the chief justice they said there were allegations that some lawyers, who are members of some judges' families, moved cases before the benches of their friendly judges to get orders in their favour.

During the last Supreme Court vacation, some orders of bail were issued in cases that did not deserve bail, a source said citing the chief justice's statement.

The judges are accountable for their activities, Justice SK Sinha said. Show-cause notices would be issued and appropriate action would be taken if allegations were brought against any judge in connection with indulging in anomalies and if the allegations were found to be true, he said.

Sources said the chief justice issued the warning so that all judges work more honestly, sincerely, punctually and no question could be raised about their activities after the Supreme Judicial Council was restored.

The Supreme Judicial Council, led by the chief justice and two senior-most judges of the Appellate Division, has been restored following the SC verdict that upheld a High Court judgement scrapping the 16th amendment of the constitution.

The 16th amendment had empowered parliament to remove judges for incapacity or misconduct.

Count your blessings

FROM PAGE 16

anything other than accessories. "I realised that was not the solution. Then I just started to accept what was given to me," he said. At 16, he discarded the use of his artificial limbs.

Fiercely independent, Janis fashioned his car in a way so that he could drive on his own. An electric wheelchair further ensures that he can move without requiring assistance. "My parents wanted me to be independent," he said.

Shifting focus on his childhood days, the German youth shared that when he was five, his "powerful" mother saw potential in him and thought he should go to a regular school instead of a special one.

At school, his mother even argued with teachers urging them to involve him in dance class.

When Janis had his epiphany and realised the full extent of his circumstances, his perception of life began to change. "It took me about eight years to be able to say I don't miss my arms and legs," he recalled.

Now, when travelling around the world and even in his own community, he said most of the time he finds that people are astonished seeing the things he does without having arms and legs.

His immense drive stems from his desire to pursue new challenges.

He shared that when he told his parents about travelling to Bangladesh for motivational speeches, they were surprised.

However, while admiration has been plenty, Janis has also faced his fair-share of more apprehensive people.

At times, he noticed people feeling hesitant when coming in contact with him. But Janis negotiated such situations by starting conversations with light jokes. He never wanted his body to become a barrier to meeting new people.

"I want to live my life," he said.

He believes everybody is gifted with unique abilities while it is the responsibility of teachers, parents and people around to find it.

One real condition Janis finds in him is restlessness. Thus, he cannot stay at home for more than four weeks, opting instead to travel and meet new people.

He has visited several countries and has given inspirational talks in Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and Europe. He was invited by a Buddhist monk in Sri Lanka to motivate people there.

A self-taught motivational speaker, Janis said he gave 60 lectures last year.

When asked about his aspirations, taking another sip from his coffee mug, he said the funny thing about his life is that he never wanted to be a motivational speaker but somehow got engrossed in it in 2013.

Over the subsequent years though, Janis fell in love with his job as people across the world enjoyed his speeches and the great feedback he got back made him realise the impact he could have on people. He has never looked back since.

Myanmar, Yanghee Lee, will undertake her sixth information-gathering visit to the country from July 10 to 21, according to a UN statement issued in Geneva yesterday.

Over 1,100

FROM PAGE 1

The rest were from other countries.

Mustafa further said 56 employers were also detained for hiring and harbouring undocumented migrants.

The crackdown was launched after a deadline to apply for temporary enforcement card (e-card) expired at midnight on June 30, according to media reports.

The e-card acts as temporary validation to allow foreign workers who do not have valid documents to work in Malaysia.

The card, however, expires on February 15 next year and before that the cardholders must obtain a valid travel document from the embassies of their respective countries.

Soon after the crackdown, a large number of both legal and illegal foreign workers have gone into hiding and their employers fear they will not turn up for work until things have cooled down.

Qatar to seek

FROM PAGE 16

including in Paris and London, Marri said.

On June 5, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt announced they had cut all ties with Qatar, accusing Doha of supporting Islamist extremists.

The four countries pulled their diplomats from Qatar, suspended all flights to and from Doha and ordered all Qataris to repatriate within 14 days.

Qatar has said thousands of its citizens have been affected by the isolation measures in what has emerged as the worst diplomatic crisis to hit the Gulf in recent years. Doha's National Human Rights Committee in June said the sanctions represented a violation of the rights of some 140 Qatari pupils studying in the UAE, Saudi and Bahrain.

Qatar Airways has made Doha a global hub in just a few years, but experts say neighbouring Gulf states barring it from their airspace threatens its position as a major transcontinental carrier.

Persuade

FROM PAGE 2

Filippo Grandi expressed immense gratitude to Bangladesh for its sacrifice by giving shelter to a huge number of Myanmar refugees.

"Bangladesh needs full appreciation and recognition for the sacrifice it is making for the Rohingya refugees," he said.

PM's Principal Secretary, Dr Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury, and UNHCR Country Representative in Bangladesh, Shinji Kubo, were present on the occasion.

GRANDI VISITS ROHINGYA REFUGEES TODAY

Our diplomatic correspondent reports that the visiting head of the UN refugee agency will visit the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar today, to observe the plight of Myanmar's Muslim minority, who fled to Bangladesh due to persecution.

During the meeting, the foreign minister urged the UNHCR to ask the government of Myanmar to take "meaningful measures" and ensure the return of all Myanmar nationals staying in Bangladesh.

Earlier, Grandi visited Myanmar and met top government leaders, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi. He also visited Rakhine state and met with displaced Muslims in Sittwe's Dar Paing camp and Maungdaw, and urged Myanmar to grant citizenship to the Rohingyas.

International attention in the months since has been on reports of grave human rights violations allegedly perpetrated by security forces against the Rohingyas. Nearly 75,000 members of the Muslim minority have fled to Bangladesh since the crackdown began on October 9 of that year.

According to an official estimate, there are 75,000 new additions. Of the 33,000 of these registered Rohingyas, 13,000 are in Kutupalong and 20,000 in Nayapara refugee camps. Another three lakh Myanmar nationals have been living illegally in Cox's Bazar, Chittagong, Bandarban and Rangamati districts for a while.

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