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WOMEN IN UPAZILA PARISHADS

Male colleagues sideline many

Reps mention lack of facilities, funds as obstacles to their work

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Female vice-chairpersons of upazila parishads yesterday expressed frustration that they had to face obstacles in addressing issues related to development and women empowerment. Speaking at a view-exchange meeting, they also said that despite being elected public representatives, they had to work with limitations and inadequate funds, which hampered their daily activities.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organised the view exchange with female vice-chairpersons and municipality mayors on strengthening local government through empowering women. The programme was held at The Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh in the capital.

At present, 487 women are serving as vice-chairpersons and four others as municipality mayors, said Rekha Chowdhury, vice president of Mahila Parishad, while reading out a statement.

In a number of cases, female representatives complained of not getting much help from their male colleagues. "They were also isolated by their male colleagues," she added.

Around 70 vice-chairpersons and an elected female municipality mayor from Natore attended yesterday's event.

An upazila parishad consists of a chairman, two vice chairpersons (one of them a woman), chairmen of all union parishads under the upazila concerned, mayors of all municipalities, if there are any, and female members of the reserved seats.

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Devotees make their last-minute preparations for the pilgrimage to Makkah at Ashkona Hajj Camp in the capital yesterday. This year's first hajj flight leaves for Saudi Arabia this morning.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

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Hajj flights begin today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

This year's first hajj flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines is scheduled to depart 7:55am today from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Rashed Khan Menon and Religious Affairs Minister Principal Matior Rahman will be at the airport to see off the 419 hajjis, ministry sources said.

Although mismanagement in hajj flight schedule, poor accommodation facility for hajjis and fraudulence of private hajj operators have been common in recent years, this year they have taken all-out preparation to operate hajj flights timely, Md Hafizuddin, joint secretary of religious affairs ministry, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Talking to this newspaper earlier, Menon and Matior said they would take stern action if any negligence was found against private hajj agencies or others in carrying hajjis to Saudi Arabia and providing them their accommodation there.

RULES FOR JUDGES

Govt gets one more week to issue gazette

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday gave the government one more week for issuing a gazette notification on the discipline and code of conduct for the lower court judges.

The government has sought time extension on different occasions following which the court also gave time 22 times for issuing the notification.

The Appellate Division on July 2 gave the government a two-week ultimatum to that end.

"It's the last chance," Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha said that day as he was presiding over a seven-member bench of the apex court during hearing the issue.

The SC yesterday gave one more week in response to a petition moved by Attorney General Mahbubey Alam seeking the time for issuing the notification.

The attorney general moved the petition during hearing of Masdar Hossain case, popularly known as the judiciary separation case.

A six-member bench of the Appellate

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Israel under fire over holy site

Violence leaves eight dead in Jerusalem; shooting at its embassy in Amman kills 1

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel faced mounting pressure yesterday over tougher security at a sensitive Jerusalem holy site as a shooting at the its embassy in Jordan raised further concerns after a weekend of deadly unrest.

It was not immediately clear whether the incident in Amman -- in which a Jordanian man was killed and an Israeli seriously injured -- was linked to the dispute over the Jerusalem compound.

But it came after new security measures were implemented at the Jerusalem holy site after a weekend of violence left eight people dead, with fears of further violence.

Israeli officials signalled they may be open to changing the measures at the Haram la-Sharif mosque compound, known to Jews as the Temple Mount, after metal detectors were installed at entrances following an attack that killed two policemen.

Jordan is the custodian of the holy site, and in what a security source in Amman described as an "incident" at the Israeli embassy yesterday, a Jordanian man was killed and an Israeli seriously injured.

Police in Amman said there had been "a shooting at a residential building inside the compound of the Israeli embassy".

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Case against UNO Salman withdrawn

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Suspended Barisal Awami League leader Obaidullah Sazu has withdrawn the case he filed against Barguna Sadar UNO Tariq Salman.

Sazu appeared before Barisal Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court yesterday for withdrawal of the case.

The suspended religious affairs secretary of Barisal AL and president of the district bar association sought Tk 5 crore in the defamation case he filed last month against Upazila Nirbahi Officer Tariq.

"I withdrew the case for the interest of our country and the party," he told reporters.

The Awami League had suspended Sazu over the filing of the case.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reportedly criticised the filing of the case against

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Driving more than two hrs a day lowers IQ



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Driving for more than two hours a day steadily reduces intelligence, a new study suggests.

Researchers investigating how sedentary behaviour affects brainpower found IQ scores fell faster in middle-aged Britons who drove long distances every day.

Kishnan Bakrania, a medical epidemiologist at the University of Leicester, told The Sunday Times: "We know that regularly driving for more than two to three hours a day is bad for your heart."

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ASK slams Savar MP over crossfire comment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) yesterday criticised ruling Awami League MP Enamur Rahman's recent remark that he had five people killed in crossfire and that he had made a list of another 14 to be executed that way.

In a statement, ASK said such comments from a ruling party lawmaker acknowledge the culture of impunity.

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SIBL Foundation Hospital & Diagnostic Center

PRAYER TIMING JULY 24

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN	4-15	12-45	5-00	6-54	8-15
JAMAAT	4-50	1-15	5-15	6-58	8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

MISSIONS ABROAD

ACC moves to probe passport fee 'scam'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday formed a three-member committee to investigate alleged misappropriation of Tk 3,786 crore received in passport and visa processing fees by 65 Bangladesh missions abroad.

Based on the report published in The Daily Star on June 18, the ACC formed the committee, led by ACC Director Syed Iqbal Hossain, to probe how officials embezzled the money, misusing power, said a source of the anti-graft body.

The foreign ministry owed the home ministry over Tk 1,586 crore for hand-written passports delivered between 2000 and 2016. During this period, Bangladesh embassies and missions distributed over 30 lakh hand-written passports.

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In the wake of the chikungunya outbreak in the capital, demand for mosquito repellants is on the rise. Against this backdrop, hawkers are selling various insecticides, *inset*, in different areas of the capital. The photo was taken outside Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



DIALOGUE ON POLLS

EC to invite 59 members of civil society

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission will invite 59 civil society members to join the talk on election on July 31.

The talk will be held at 11:00am instead of the previously scheduled 3.00pm at the EC Secretariat.

"We will begin sending the invitations to 59 civil society members from tomorrow," EC Secretary Muhammad Abdullah told The Daily Star.

Former advisers to caretaker governments, educationists, social activists and renowned persons were chosen, Abdullah said.

It will be an open discussion, where the invitees will talk on any issue relating to election, he said, adding that there was no specific agenda.

Election manual for parliamentary polls, schedules of the previous national elections and EC's roadmap agenda would be given to invitees along with the invitation letters, he said.

The EC unveiled a year-long roadmap for the next parliamentary election a few days ago.

The agenda of the roadmap are talks with political parties and other stakeholders, reforming the electoral law, demarcation of constituencies, updating voter lists, preparing a list of possible polling stations, taking application from new political parties willing to be registered with the EC, and building the capacity of officials to hold national election.

The Awami League termed the roadmap realistic while the BNP alleged that the commission and the government is

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