

## ‘Rules in local govt law needed to ensure female empowerment’

February 27, 2015 12:15 am·0 Comments

Staff Correspondent



Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust holds a roundtable on empowerment of women union council members at BLAST seminar room in Dhaka on Thursday. — New Age photo

Policy makers, experts and rights activists on Thursday said that rules for the Local Government (Union Parishad) Act, 2009 was necessary to ensure equality of female politicians. They also urged the government to implement the Constitutional provisions and existing laws to eliminate all discrimination between men and women. The speakers participated in a roundtable discussion on power and special functions of female union parishad members from reserved seats. The discussion was jointly organized by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust and Dhaka Tribune at the BLAST head office in the capital. BLAST has prepared a draft rules on the power and special functions of female union parishad members from reserved seats following the local government act.

While presenting the draft, BLAST consultant Tajul Islam said the UP female members will be able to implement all powers given in the rules without any discrimination. Their power and activities will include – advisor to three wards, taking decision, form coordinated women board and gender committee, participation in purchase committee and other responsibilities according to the local government act, he said. Dhaka university public administration professor Zarina Rahman Khan said there should not be any special activities for UP female members but there should be common responsibilities for all, to ensure equity. She also urged the authorities to use the word ‘nari’ instead the word ‘mohila’ in all strata of the society to ensure dignity for women. Lawmaker Fazilatun Nesa Bappi said UP female members were still deprived of dignity. Law, justice and parliamentary affairs ministry deputy secretary Umme Kulsum said women should fight to gain dignity and their own position in the local government. Ain o Salish Kendra representative Towfiq Al Mannan said the same importance should be accorded to whether women have the opportunities for forwarding their empowerment.

BLAST vice chairperson, Board of Trustees, Justice Mohammad Awlad Ali stressed on implementation of the constitutional provisions and laws to ensure equity of men and women. Another lawmaker Selina Jahan Lita said monitoring was important to watch UP members’ activities and whether they need improvement. The discussion was moderated by Sujan secretary Badiul Alam Majumder while BLAST director S M Rezaul Karim and senior researcher Rezaul Karim Siddique, diakonia country manager Khodeja Sultana, Dhaka Tribune chief editorial writer Niaz Alam and Bangladesh Supreme Court lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan were also present.