



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

Regional Seminar for Asia-Pacific Parliaments

Ending the cycle of violence against girls in Asia-Pacific

Dhaka, 23-25 September 2014

Organized by
the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Parliament of Bangladesh



Bangladesh Parliament

GENERAL INFORMATION

The seminar for Asia-Pacific parliaments on *Ending the cycle of violence against girls in Asia-Pacific*, co-organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Parliament of Bangladesh, will be held from 23 to 25 September 2014 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE SEMINAR

Violence against women and girls continues to be a major issue on the international human rights and health agendas. It is a universal phenomenon, differing only in scope and nature from one society to another. The figures are alarming: globally six out of every 10 women will fall victim to physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetimes; one out of five women will be a victim of rape or attempted rape at some point in her life; 35 per cent of all murders of women in the world are committed by an intimate partner; 14.2 million girls are married each year before their eighteenth birthday.

Violence against women and girls occurs in the broad context of gender-based discrimination and unequal power relations in both the public and private spheres. In the private sphere, it encompasses domestic and intimate violence that includes the threat or actual use of physical, psychological, sexual and/or economic abuse against a woman by her family members. In the public sphere, it includes sexual violence, harassment and exploitation. States may also condone violence against women, through their agents or public policies, by enacting inadequate laws or through ineffective enforcement, effectively allowing the perpetrators of violence against women to benefit from impunity.

Early marriage, also known as “child marriage”, is a form of violence that is a reality for both boys and girls, although girls are disproportionately affected. Early marriage violates many of the rights to which girls are entitled under treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the right to education, to freedom from violence, to access to reproductive health and to consensual marriage. Early marriage is a form of violence that persists in many countries and continues to have negative rights and health outcomes for girls.

Parliaments and their members are uniquely placed to exercise leadership and spearhead efforts to make a difference for girls at the national level. They can call into play a number of major tools and initiatives to tackle this issue, ranging from the development of legislation to the adoption of national budgets and awareness-raising.

2. VENUE AND DATE

The seminar will be held at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in Dhaka over three days, from 23 to 25 September 2014.

3. PARTICIPATION

The seminar will be open to members and staff of the following national parliaments:

Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.

Pacific: Australia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Parliaments are invited to send delegations of up to four members and composed of both sexes.

4. ORGANIZATION OF PROCEEDINGS

The meeting will take the form of a discussion based on practical experiences in the region of ways to prevent and combat violence against girls, with early marriage, sexual and domestic violence as cases in point.

The programme will be drafted by the IPU in cooperation with the Parliament of Bangladesh.

The seminar proceedings will take place in English.

5. DOCUMENTS

Written texts of presentations by resource persons will be distributed to participants as they become available.

In cooperation with the IPU, the World Health Organization will conduct research and produce a study relevant to the issues under discussion.

Participants wishing to distribute to their colleagues relevant documentation will be required to provide it in sufficient quantities and put it on a table set aside for that purpose.

6. REGISTRATION

Invited parliaments are requested to send the list of participants attending the seminar **no later than 10 September 2014**, using the enclosed Registration Form, to the following addresses:

Contact/address in Bangladesh:

Senior Secretary
Bangladesh Parliament Secretariat
Shere Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh.
Phone: 88-02-9119140
Fax : 88-02-9119186
E-mail: secretaryp@yahoo.com
(**Attention** : Senior Assistant Secretary (IPA-1),
Phone: 88-02-9125391, Cell: 88-01715 819388
E-mail: ashraf6812@yahoo.com, ipa1branch@yahoo.com)

cc:

Inter-Parliamentary Union
5 chemin du Pommier
case postale 330
1218 Grand-Saconnex
Geneva
Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 919 41 50
Fax: +41 22 919 41 60
e-mail: postbox@ipu.org

7. HOTEL ACCOMMODATION AND RESERVATIONS

The Parliament of Bangladesh has identified the following hotels for the seminar participants. The participants are responsible for payment of their accommodation and other expenses related to their participation in this seminar.

(i) **Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka**, IO7 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue Dhaka-12 1 5, Bangladesh
Tel +88 02 8140401, Fax +88 02 8113324, reserve.ppdac@panpacific.com
bizcenter.dac@panpacific.com
www.panpacific.com

(ii) **Radisson Blu Water Garden Hotel Dhaka**
Airport Road, Dhaka Cantonment Dhaka 1206, Bangladesh.
Tel: + 880 2 8754555, Fax: + 880 2 8754504
www.radissonblu.com/hotel-dhaka

8. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

In order to ensure an efficient reception service, all participants are requested to provide their arrival and departure information, including dates, flight numbers and arrival and departure times, on the hotel reservation form.

The competent services of the Parliament of Bangladesh will welcome delegates upon their arrival at Shah Jalal International Airport, Dhaka, and arrange their ground transfers to and from the airport. They will also provide transfers for delegates between their hotels and the official seminar venue and related events.

9. VISAS

Entry visas are required except for citizens of countries which have visa exemption agreements with Bangladesh.

For delegates from countries where there are no Bangladesh diplomatic/consular missions, visas will be issued upon arrival at Shah Jalal International Airport. Delegates from such countries are requested to send to the contact in the Parliament of Bangladesh a copy of their passport indicating its number, as well as flight details (name of airline and the date and time of arrival at Dhaka), in order to facilitate their entry into Bangladesh.

Please note that this arrangement is applicable only for entering and leaving Bangladesh. For travel routed through other countries, delegates must make their own arrangements, in compliance with the immigration requirements of those countries.

10. MEDICAL FACILITIES

During the seminar, first aid facilities will be provided at the venue. All other medical facilities and prescriptions are at the participants' own expense.

11. REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION DESK

A Registration and Information Desk will be available to participants at the seminar venue from 22 to 25 September. It will be open from 8 a.m. until the end of the day's proceedings.

Participants are requested to register with this service as soon as possible after their arrival. The Desk will issue identity badges, deal with enquiries concerning the seminar and handle messages and mail.

For the purpose of identity badges, delegates are requested to send the Host Parliament, via e-mail, passport-size photographs of themselves, with white backgrounds, along with their travel details. They may also, if they wish, provide a profile or biographical data.

12. SECURITY

All necessary security measures will be taken by the national authorities. Participants will be required to wear their identity badges at all times when they are at the seminar venue and at all official functions during the seminar.

13. WEATHER CONDITIONS

The climate in Dhaka is tropical: hot, wet and humid. The city has a monsoon season that lasts from May until the end of September. In September temperatures average 29°C and range from 26 to 32°C, and the average rainfall is 300 mm.

14. CURRENCY REGULATIONS

The Taka (Tk) is the official currency of Bangladesh. In June 2014, the exchange rate was Tk 77.425 = US\$ 1.

15. PRESS

Journalists wishing to cover the seminar are requested to obtain accreditation from the Host Parliament.

16. OTHER SERVICES

The following services will be available to participants at the seminar venue:

- Bureau de change/currency exchange
- Cyber Café
- Stenographic assistance
- Photography

17. SOCIAL EVENTS

The programme of social events will be communicated to participants in due course.