

Corruption thrives on development projects

Public expenditure review finds

STAR REPORT

The Public Expenditure Review Commission (PERC) has revealed in its preliminary finds that development projects are the main source of corruption in the public sector and national resources are drained out or wasted at different stages of implementation.

"I hardly find any government department where there is no corruption... it's high in development expenditure," M Hafizuddin Khan, chairman of the PERC, told reporters after a meeting with Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman at the

National Economic Council yesterday.

Formed on June 13 this year, the PERC will make recommendations for prudent public spending after reviewing different aspects of revenues and development spending.

The PERC chairman, who was also finance and planning advisor to the last caretaker government, thinks development spending can be reduced, but there is a little scope to cut expenditure in the revenue budget unless the size of the administration is slashed.

"There are 1,100 projects, many of them are not essential and some

serve no purpose," Khan said.

And some projects are not well conceived, he said. A Tk 50 crore project, for instance, has been on the way to implementation over the years, but the government has allocated only Tk 50 lakh to it.

Earlier, the World Bank said the size of the annual development programme (ADP) in the budget is staggering and continues to include activities that have made the rationale of the public sector questionable.

The FY03 ADP comprises 1,098 projects in the main programme

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Sony murder Sagar's bail prayer rejected

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka yesterday rejected the bail petition of Nurul Islam alias Sagar, the main accused in the BUET student Sabequn Nahar Sony murder case.

Magistrate Maksudur Rahman Patwari passed the order following a petition seeking his bail.

Moving the petition, Advocates Abdur Rahman Hawlader and Abdul Karim said Sagar was falsely implicated in the case. Moreover, two other co-accused in the case, were earlier granted bail. So, Sagar should be granted bail as co-accused, they said.

The prosecution side opposed the bail petition stating that another accused Mushfiq Uddin Tagar earlier gave a confessional statement to a magistrate disclosing the name of Sagar as the main accused in the

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Progress report on separation of judiciary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will submit today a progress report on implementation of a 12-point directive by the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court for separation of the judiciary from the executive.

The Appellate Division had asked the government on June 19 to submit a monthly progress report on separation of the judiciary.

The government submitted a progress report on August 14, but the court rejected it and wanted a fresh report on August 27.

JCD leader's wife, seven others held for N'ganj violence

OUR CORRESPONDENT N'ganj

Police yesterday arrested wife of local Jatiyatabdi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader Zakir Khan and seven others in connection with Friday's violence at Char Syedpur area.

At least 25 people were injured as Zakir and his gang opened fire in a clash over extortion of tolls.

Police raided Zakir's house in the town's Deobhagh area at 8.45pm and held his wife, Irin Khan along with her three-year daughter, Lyon Khan, police sources said.

Police held Irin in a bid to know the whereabouts of her husband, the sources added.

Police also raided the local BNP office and arrested seven followers of Zakir from there. They are Shah Alam, Shankor, Amir, Mizan, Shahin, Khorshed and Rusel.

Police said they all accompanied Zakir during Friday's violence. Zakir has been absconding since then.

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Earth Summit begins amidst iron security

AFP, Johannesburg

The UN Earth Summit got under way under iron security in Johannesburg yesterday while on the fringes thousands of activists from five continents forwent formality with an old South African struggle dance.

The biggest UN meeting yet is taking place in the plush suburb of Sandton where police at sunrise encircled the building, blocked off streets and sent two helicopters into the sky to keep watch.

Some 20,000 people arrived to hear South African President Thabo Mbeki urge delegates to produce

concrete measure to combat poverty and environmental degradation, making it past metal detectors and policemen who searched their cars, even passing mirrors beneath the vehicles, reducing progress at a snail's pace.

Nobody is allowed into the bustling centre without a badge - blue for official delegates, brown for the 4,375 member of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) attending as observers and green for the 2,560 journalists covering it.

Mbeki's speech was broadcast on two screens above a sea of keyboards in the press centre, 10

minutes' walk from the main four-storied building where 104 heads of state and government are expected next week to tackle the thorniest issues.

For the moment it is filled with UN delegates running from meeting to meeting on health, water, energy and biodiversity with mobile phones to their ears and carrying files that grow ever bigger.

The delegates from the NGOs, whom the summit organisers say are vital to help implement the decisions expected at the summit, move around with less ease.

They will need a new access card

for every day of the summit and on Monday French member of parliament and opposition politician Yves Cochet complained that he waited for an hour-and-a-half to enter the building.

The main meeting ground for the NGOs lies some 20 kilometres away from Sandton at the Nasrec exhibition grounds, south of Johannesburg and here thousands of human rights, anti-globalisation and environmental activists on Monday kicked life into their gathering, which got off the ground slowly

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PHOTO: STAR

A woman stands in front of her vandalised house in Sarongodia village under Sreepur Upazila, Magura, yesterday. Armed activists of the ruling party damaged their opponents' houses in a two-day clash.

Roughed-up 'mugger' dies at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An alleged mugger who was roughed up by a mob at Kaptanbazaar in the city's Sutrapur area on Sunday died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Tofassal Hossain, 24, of Nawabganj was beaten up by the mob Sunday night. Witnesses said he attempted to mug a pedestrian at about 10:00pm Sunday.

The body was sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy. A case has been filed with the Kotwali Police station in this regard.

In another incident, police shot and wounded an alleged extortionist, while a mob beat up another when they were demanding toll at a shop at Segun Bagicha in the city's Ramna area yesterday evening.

Ramna police said that the two were arrested and a pistol was recovered from their possession.

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Ruling party rivals vandalise village, clash in Magura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Violent incidents of clash and plundering in last two days at village Sarongodia of Sreepur upazila in the district have sent a wave of panic among the villagers.

During a visit yesterday to Sarongadia village, about 20 km off Magura district town, this correspondent found that many villagers had already fled their homes fearing further clashes and police harassment.

Sources said a long-standing rivalry over supremacy in the area has prevailed between Sreepur thana unit Jubo Dal president Ashrafur Islam Nalim and a member of the same unit of BNP's convening committee Mushfiqur Rahman Kanon of the aforementioned vil-

lage. On Saturday night, supporters of Mushfiqur severely beat up one Zahidul Islam of the rival group, resulting in a violent clash on Sunday morning leaving at least 20 people injured, five of them seriously.

Both the groups used lethal weapons during the clash.

The five seriously injured identified as Zahidul, 32, Berek Mondal, 45, Abdul Kuddus, 32, Minu Mondal, 22, and Shukura were admitted to Magura Sadar Hospital.

On Sunday afternoon, both feuding sides went on the rampage in the village, which continued till about 9:00pm, witnesses said.

Police and locals said armed supporters of each side swooped on

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Road accident kills six in Gazipur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eight people were killed in two road accidents in Gazipur and Comilla yesterday.

Six people were killed and 15 others injured when a Dhaka-bound bus and a Gazipur-bound human hauler collided in front of Rupsa Garments at Board Bazar at Gazipur yesterday morning.

Eight people were sent to the

Dhaka Medical College Hospital where the on-duty doctors declared three of them dead.

Hospital sources said three people died on the spot and the bodies were sent to the Tongi Hospital for autopsy.

Gazipur police identified five of the victims as Dr Parijat Sarkar, Ripon, Akkas Ali, Mamun and Faruq. The injured being treated at the DMCH are - Akkas, Shamim, Jafar, Nayan, and Samsir.

Our Comilla Correspondent adds: A freedom fighter and another person were killed when a Dhaka-bound passenger bus knocked down a tempo on the Dhaka-Chittagong Road yesterday morning.

Witnesses said the bus knocked down the tempo in Katherpool area under Chandina upazila. The passenger died on the spot while the tempo driver was seriously injured.

The tempo driver later succumbed to his injuries at Comilla Medical College Hospital (CMCH). A

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Nasim cross-examined in Jail Killing Case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Former home minister and Awami League leader Mohammad Nasim, 14th prosecution witness in the Jail killing case, was cross-examined for about four hours in the Special Court adjacent to Dhaka Central Jail yesterday.

Judge Ahmed Jamil Mostafa then adjourned the hearing till September 18.

Mohammad Nasim, son of M Mansur Ali, one of the four national leaders killed in jail, told the court, "I along with my parents, brothers and sisters lived at House-30 at the city's Hare Road (his father was the then home minister.) On the night of August 15, 1975, I woke up from sleep on hearing sounds of gunshots and heard a news on radio that father of the nation Bangabandhu (Sheikh Mujibur Rahman) was killed. Khondaker Mushtaque took over power and declared martial law in the country."

He went on, "As my father was home minister, we became con-

cerned about his (father) security and shifted him to a nearby house of a judge and then to my maternal uncle's house at Eskaton in a security van. We stayed there for the whole day."

Nasim said Khondaker Mushtaque was looking for his father and at night some army men were found moving about there. His father became nervous seeing Mushtaque on television. He was then shifted to T and T staff quarters.

"The following day at about 10 am, we attempted to shift my father to another place in my friend's car. But a car with arrived at my uncle's Eskaton residence, KM Obaidur Rahman and Shah Moazzem Hossain came out of it and wanted to know the whereabouts of my father," Nasim said during the cross examination.

The former home minister told the court, "I had a heated exchange of words with them. They said they would take a decision for my father's security and wanted to talk to him.

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Aug 27		6-22 pm
Aug 28	5-39 am	

Prayer Timings		
August 27		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-29	6-34
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation