

SC stays order

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requires that only an advocate on record moves files for hearing in court, unless a lawyer is instructed by him.

"We were surprised by the order, as we were not present in court," said Tanjib, one of the lawyers who moved for the writ petition against the construction.

A High Court bench on June 21 declared illegal the under-construction residences in the Jatiya Sangsad complex and asked the government to take steps to announce the parliament building as part of national heritage.

Justices Mohammad Iman Ali and Shamim Hasnaine in their order described the construction as an "arrogant attitude of this government".

The High Court order came after the Institute of Architects Bangladesh and Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, an organisation of environment activists, filed a writ petition against the tampering.

Earlier, the government made three attempts to get a stay order on the High Court order, which proved unsuccessful.

Yesterday, Additional Attorney General Fida M Kamal moved for the government and obtained the stay order without any opposition, although petitioners have filed a caveat, an official request to a court not to proceed with a case without notice to the person making the

request.

Lawyers for the petitioners said yesterday's stay order was issued although the government only appealed for a date for leave petition hearing. The government obtained the stay order in an effort that the senior experts said might have misled the Appellate Division.

The construction that began in an open space on the western side of the Sangsad Bhaban on October 25, 2002 also breached the National Building Code and ignored Rajuk's official order and protest of architects and environmentalists.

The Sangsad Bhaban, a marble stone and concrete structure, is an architectural masterpiece admired around the world and the construction of the new residences there was carried out without permission from Rajuk, the regulatory authority, required under the Building Construction Act, 1952.

The High Court also said the construction was carried out in a place earmarked in the original plan of Louis Kahn as an open space and such construction is against public interest.

In May 2003, the High Court stayed the construction, but a day before the vacation on August 27, 2003 the Appellate Division stayed the HC order. Equipped with the Appellate Division's stay order, the government resumed construction and completed the buildings.

'Bhaban' grafts not overlooked

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Board of Trustees Treasurer Prof Muzaffer Ahmed yesterday said the corruption committed by different 'Bhabans' fell under the related sectors and the 'miscellaneous' head.

He was replying to a query of a reporter on involvement in corruption of different alternative power-houses of political parties known as 'Bhabans' that generally influence key political and administrative decisions.

"Definitely, we took it into consideration and their corruption were shown in the related sectors and under miscellaneous head," Prof Ahmed said without elaborating.

Twin bus

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immediately clear if that number included the bombers.

"We have to fight this terror," Prime Minister Ariel Sharon told reporters at the parliament in Jerusalem. "This is the policy of the government and this is my policy. The fight against terror will continue with full strength."

The blasts came just hours after Sharon presented to his Likud party the most detailed timetable yet for Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, and warned party rebels the plan "will be implemented, period."

Hamas, which has carried out dozens of suicide bombings over the past four years of fighting, claimed responsibility for the attack in a leaflet passed out in Hebron, the closest West Bank city to Beersheba.

In the Palestinian refugee camp of Ein el-Hilweh in southern Lebanon, gunmen fired shots into the air to celebrate the attacks, a Palestinian official said.

Palestinian militants haven't carried out a major attack inside Israel since March 14, when 11 people were killed in the port of Ashdod. Afterward, Israel assassinated Yassin, the Hamas spiritual leader in the Gaza, and then Rantisi.

Israel has said the lull was due to its success in fighting militants, not a lack of effort by the armed groups. Israel has arrested or killed dozens of militants in recent months. Israel also says its contentious West Bank barrier has prevented numerous attacks. The barrier, about one-quarter complete, has not reached the area near Hebron.

NONCHALANT
Sramik Dal

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Karmachari Sammonoy Committee (SSKSC) and ravaged union office and the portraits of DCC Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

Chief Health Officer Colonel Azizul Haq was outside office then.

The SSKSC was formed last month merging five registered organisations including three trade unions and two workers associations of DCC.

Member Secretary of the Sammonoy Committee S M Mosharaf Hossain Milon alleged the activists of Jatiyatabadi Sramik Karmachari Union (JSKU), another faction of JSU, are responsible for the attack.

President of JSKU M Zahangir Alam denied the allegation.

Admitting the incident, Secretary of DCC M Alamgir Hossain told reporters he has informed the mayor of the matter and action will be taken against the persons involved.

Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka was not at the office to comment on this incident.

Besides, Mosharaf said some activists loyal to his opponent Zahangir attacked his home on Monday morning and chopped one of his supporters, Jalal, who is now in critical condition in Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The conflict between the two factions erupted as activists of Zahangir Alam attacked a procession of the Sammonoy Committee in Motijheel and injured at least seven on the way to join the ruling BNP's protest rally in Muktagong on Sunday.

The Sammonoy Committee leaders have filed a case with Motijheel Police Station in this regard.

Alliance leaders

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that her husband was killed in police custody.

All shops and bazars at Sher-e-Bangla road, Nirala residential area and Gallamari in the city remained closed from dawn to 4:30pm yesterday in the wake of Litu's death.

Three platoons of police in riot gear were deployed at west Bania Khamar and Nirala till his burial.

Litu's wife, their son Ashikuzzaman Pritom, his uncle Vice-chairman of Jatiya Party (Ershad) Abul Hossain, father-in-law Dr Abdul Jabbar and younger brother Moniruzzaman Elu have demanded investigation into what they said was his custodial death.

Nine-day opposition

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including rallies, mourning processions, human shields and rallies, would graduate into a tougher movement.

The parties at separate press briefings announced different rallies in Dhaka on September 29 and a joint public rally in Chittagong on September 29.

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina will address the September 29 AL rally at Paltan Maidan, set to be her first public meeting after she survived an assassination attempt on August 21 on Bangabandhu Avenue where grenade attacks killed at least 19 people.

Parties in the 11-party alliance, except for the WP did not declare the simultaneous programmes yesterday as discord surfaced in the unity of the left alliance over the declaration of one-point oust government movement with the main opposition.

Talking to The Daily Star, 11-party alliance co-ordinator Abdus Samad said the grouping's adjourned meeting is likely to be held on September 4 to iron out the political situation and 'discord'. He hoped all differences would be resolved and a united movement against the government and fundamentalist forces would be strengthened.

Leaders of Jatiya Party (Ershad), the second largest opposition party, discussed AL's appeal to join hands with the oust-government movement.

In line with fresh agitation, Awami Mahila League and other women's organisations bring out a procession from the Central Shaheed Minar this afternoon after a rally there.

"We are announcing demonstrations until September 9 as part of the oust-government movement," AL

India offers probe

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the bomb attacks. He sought cooperation from all quarters including the main opposition AL in carrying out a proper investigation.

Mannan apprised the ambassador of the prime minister's move to meet the leader of the opposition. He said the government sincerely wants to hold a constructive dialogue with the AL to contain the violent crimes and reach a consensus on other issues of national interest.

The US ambassador however declined to make any comment to the waiting newsmen.

British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury yesterday meanwhile called on Information Minister M Shamsul Islam and discussed issues in which the August 21 grenade blasts featured prominently. The minister briefed the high commissioner on the government steps taken after the bomb incident.

UNREALISTIC
Foreign Minister M Mosharaf Khan

Foreign Minister M Mosharaf Khan yesterday said a probe under the United Nations (UN) and Commonwealth is unrealistic and impossible since they do not have their own probe bodies.

Asked if a joint probe by the US, Britain, India, Pakistan, and Australia is on the cards after their offers to help in the investigation, Mosharaf said, "They are only a couple of countries,

BNP denies AL JS

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But, the AL in its letter demanding the 10 chairs to Hossain claimed in the Seventh JS it did offer proportionate number of JS committee chairs to the BNP, which it did not accept.

Chief Whip Hossain however termed the AL's claim misleading and false.

Bitterly criticising the ruling alliance for refusing the AL demand, Shahid told The Daily Star yesterday, "On the one hand, its response to our demand comes after about two years and, on the other hand, its attitude shows it isn't sincere at all to making parliament truly functional."

He said the AL would reply the treasury bench chief whip's letter after the AL Parliamentary Party examines and discusses it in its meeting.

The AL on July 12 last, over two and a half years into the JS's five-

General Secretary Abdul Jalil told a press conference yesterday evening at the party's Dhamondii office, adding fresh programmes will come after September 9.

The AL and its front organisations will form human shields across the country tomorrow, while the Mahila Awami League will say special prayers at the party's headquarters on Bangabandhu Avenue on September 3.

CPB PROGRAMMES
The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) on Monday declared a series of agitation programmes to realise its six-point demand. Processions will be held in every district with a centrepiece demonstration in Dhaka on September 4, a country-wide tour from September 10-15, demonstrations in district and upazila headquarters from September 20-25 and rallies in the capital and districts on September 29.

IP ELECTIONS MEET HASINA
Our leaders are discussing the Awami League's proposal with party chairman HM Ershad and a decision will be taken soon," said Jatiya Party president member GM Quader after an hourlong meeting with Hasina at the latter's Sudha Sadan. He described the meeting as a courtesy call to express sympathy for the leader.

"The country is heading towards autocracy and I feel the government should step down immediately," Quader, also younger brother of Ershad, told reporters after the meeting.

Jatiya Party (Manju) Chief Anwar Hossain Manju met the leader of the opposition at her residence yesterday evening and discussed the latest political development.

but an Interpol investigation covers probe assistance from 181 of its member states."

"At this stage we do not want bilateral assistance, if we did we would have asked for it by now," he said when asked about Indian External Affairs Minister K Natwar Singh's offer to assist Dhaka in the probe.

'INDIA STANDS READY'
Singh in a letter dated August 27 to Mosharaf said the Indian government 'stands ready to assist' the Bangladesh government in ensuring enquiry into any that may be required."

He expressed profound shock on behalf of Indian government and people and condemned the grenade attack on AL rally.

Singh offered to work together with Dhaka to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. The Indian foreign minister also expressed his hope that the Bangladesh government would bring the perpetrators to justice and avoid recurrence of such attacks.

EX-FOREIGN SECYS MEET
Seven former foreign secretaries met again at the state guesthouse Padma yesterday following a meeting with the prime minister on Saturday to discuss Bangladesh's international image and how to best tackle foreign relations in the aftermath of the August 21 grenade attacks.

BNP denies AL JS

year term, submitted a list of its lawmakers for incorporating them into the 45 parliamentary standing committees. But the AL MPs were not absorbed into the committees in the last JS session.

In the forwarding letter of the list, Shahid reiterated the AL's demand for at least 10 chairs of the JS committees. The AL list came almost a year after formation of the vital committees during last year budget session.

In his August-15 letter, Hossain also said all the JS committees were formed keeping the proportionate slots for the AL vacant, adding the lawmakers duly nominated by the AL would be included in the committees.

But, the opposition chief whip pointed out that his party had already submitted its nomination through the July-12 list.

Lawyers boycott

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were political grounds.

The meeting decided that any member, including the attorney general, would be expelled from the Bar in failure to comply with the boycott decision.

Rokan claimed the boycott for an indefinite period was successful on the first day yesterday as most members qualified to appear in the chief justice's court had abide by the decision.

About the criticism against him, the SCBA president said the boycott decision had been taken at the general meeting. "It was not intended to divide the organisation. We will take utmost care to maintain our unity."

Meanwhile, Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Olkya Parishad yesterday strongly protested the boycott decision, terming the action an infringement on functioning of the judges and violation of fundamental rights of justice seekers.

The parishad, known as platform of lawyers of the ruling alliance, at a meeting viewed that the SCBA was being used as a political platform.

The speakers, also members of the SCBA, asked its leadership not to abuse the association as an instrument of a particular political quarter to implement the narrow political objective. Keep the Bar above party politics, they said.

The meeting in a resolution con-

Abductors kill

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College, from Madhabpur village at around 7:00pm.

The body was sent to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.

Three unidentified youths called out Talash, son of Afsar Uddin Pramanik, primary education officer of Bheramara upazila, at home at about 11:45pm and he never returned.

A unanimous caller later demanded Tk 4 lakh for his release. As his family failed to pay the money, the abductors slaughtered him, they added.

Abductors freed fertiliser trader Jahurul Islam of Harinarayanpur Bazar in exchange of Tk 1 lakh, sources said.

A gang picked up the trader on August 21 when he was returning home from Mahishdanga Bazar of Jhenidah at about 8:00pm and demanded Tk 5 lakh ransom, they added.

All flaws worth

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audit systems of different public sector organisations to ease the CAG staff's work on small transactions.

He however said the performance of internal audit systems of 70 per cent public enterprises is very poor, creating a scope for massive corruption by their officials.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman on Monday and Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed yesterday criticised the CAG's office for preparing reports on 'trivial issues'.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the two-day regional auditors general conference on 'Harmonising institutional efforts for promoting accountability in the public sector', the law minister echoed the finance minister's remarks at its inaugural ceremony.

Moudud said, "CAG's office conducts audits on very insignificant issues, which also makes the reports difficult and at once time-consuming to read."

It should make reports on major financial transactions only, which will make the reports reader-friendly.

The conference was attended by 30 delegates including a number of auditors general from the Saarc and other countries of the region.

The CAG's office in association with the World Bank and Canadian International Development Agency (Cida) organised the conference.

Presiding over a business session
on the 'Role of parliamentary financial committees in promoting accountability', Harun-Al-Rashid, chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (Pac), the only constitutional parliamentary body responsible for auditing public sector expenditure, observed that the Pac reports should be discussed in parliament to ensure accountability of the government.

Shahad Chowdhury, director general of Works Audit Directorate, who made a presentation at the business session, said the Pac of last two parliaments submitted only nine audit reports but none of these reports were discussed in parliament.

12 Nepalese
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The 12 were last shown in a videotape on Saturday reading a statement saying they had been misled into working in Iraq by "American lies".

Nepal's ambassadors to Pakistan, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, speaking to media in the kingdom, had expressed hope in recent days that the hostages would be freed after the kingdom stressed it was not part of the US-led coalition in Iraq.

Nepal declined US requests to contribute troops, saying its army was busy fighting a bloody Maoist insurgency.

Earlier Islamic militants holding two French journalists captive gave Paris another 24 hours to scrap a controversial ban on Islamic headscarves as their hostages warned time was running out to save their lives.

Low response
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representative Jorgen Lissner. He described the present situation in flood-affected areas as a "quiet disaster" and worried donors no longer saw the need for aid because the dramatic television images had stopped.

"The post-flood situation is extremely dangerous for the very poor because they have no income, no shelter, no assets and are vulnerable to disease," Lissner said.

About 69 million dollars have been received and some rehabilitation programmes have started, including food assistance and water and sanitation assistance, since the UN's August 12 appeal to help victims facing shortages of food and other essentials.

But Lissner said donors' focus had shifted amid the Darfur crisis in Sudan and Bangladesh's changing political situation after the August 21 blast targeting the main opposition leader.

He said a United Nations meeting in Geneva on Tuesday would review the status of the appeal for aid. The floods affected 33 million people at their height and left thousands stranded for weeks.

Interpol explosive

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dispatched from its headquarters said they will provide analytical, forensic and other services in the ongoing investigation to help Bangladesh police authorities identify and apprehend those responsible for killing 19 people and wounding some 200 others in the grisly attack.

A source said a CID team yesterday interviewed AL lawmaker Kazi Zafarullah and recorded his statement about what he saw during the carnage. The source could not however say where the AL legislator was interviewed.

The senior AL leader told The Daily Star on Monday that two youths launched the grenade attacks on the AL rally by throwing at least two grenades from the pavement between Ramna Bhaban and City Bhaban. He also claimed to have seen a tall, dark-complexioned youth throwing something at the truck from the footpath between Ramna Bhaban and City Bhaban.

JUDICIAL BODY SPEAKS TO HASINA
The one-member Judicial Inquiry

Commission yesterday sought an appointment with Leader of the Opposition and AL President Sheikh Hasina to speak to her about the attack.

A commission source said Justice Md Joynul Abedin spoke to Hasina by telephone for the appointment, which is yet to be fixed.

The AL sources said he may inspect the bulletproof sports utility vehicle of Hasina, which was riddled with bullets and grenade shrapnel while carrying her to safety.

The commission visited Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University yesterday evening and recorded statements of some of the carnage victims. Besides, the commission listed names of two witnesses to the bomb blasts till 2:00pm.

The commission will make the list for two more days and ask those on the list to come up with information at its office at 2/A, Circuit House Road, Kakrail for official record.

31.4 percent of the reported incidents. The actions include informing the authorities concerned about 9.3 percent of the incidents, lodging lawsuits against 7.7 percent and investigating 4.4 percent.

Among the cities, the capital was found as the most corruption-prone, with Ramna coming up at the top once again among the metropolitan areas with a total of 58 corruption incidents.

Among the districts, Dhaka topped the list with 17.4 percent corruption cases, followed by Chittagong with 8.8 percent. The least number of corruption incidents were reported in Nawabganj and Shariatpur districts.

The TIB study found male officials to be generally much more corrupt than the females. About 50 percent men were found involved in corruption, while women accounted for 2.6 percent.

The gender of the remaining 47.4 percent corrupt officials could not be learnt.

Among the ranks, high officials were found to be more corrupt, with 21.6 percent incidents, than their subordinates accounting for 15.4 percent. Clerks were involved in 6.8 percent grafts.

According to the study, government officials and employees tend to serve personal interests by misusing and abusing their authority, which accounted for 38.2 percent grafts reported in the 23 newspapers. Bribery, embezzlement, extortion and cheating are some dominant modes of their corruption.

On an average, the newspapers published 174.3 incidents of corruption a month. The TIB study team cross-checked 15 percent of the newspaper reports, in which about 78.5 percent reporters were able to produce documents in support of their reports, while 5.3 percent could not produce any.

On validity of reported corruption cases, 49.4 percent officials admitted them right away, while 22.6 said the reports were mostly correct, about 3.3 percent said some facts were correct, while 22.4 percent claimed them to be untrue, and the rest 2.3 percent declined to comment.

Earth warned on 'tipping

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important as the programme to prevent collisions with asteroids. Professor Schellnhuber is research director of the UK's Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research.

He was speaking at the EuroScience Forum in Stockholm, at a briefing by the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme entitled Beyond Global Warming: Where On Earth Are We Going?

Professor Schellnhuber said 12 "hotspots" had been identified so far, areas which acted like massive regulators of the Earth's environment.

If these critical regions were subjected to stress, they could trigger large-scale, rapid changes across the entire planet. But not enough was known about them to be able to predict when the limits of tolerance were reached.

"We have so far completely underestimated the importance of these locations," he said.

"What we do know is that going beyond critical thresholds in these regions could have dramatic consequences for humans and other life forms."

One example of a hotspot was the North Atlantic current, the ocean circulation pattern responsible for bringing warmer air to northern Europe, the collapse of which could lead to a very large regional climate shift.

Others were the West Antarctic ice sheet, the Sahara desert, and the forests of the Amazon basin. Yet another hotspot, Professor Schellnhuber said, was the Asian

monsoon system.

"Modelling has shown that if air pollution and land use change, this could alter the albedo, the reflectivity, of the land," he told BBC News Online.

Husband kills
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Mamata Bala Nath, 25, her mother Bakul Bala Nath, 50, and sister Kali Bala Nath, 18.

Sujan first chopped his mother-in-law dead. As his wife and sister-in-law tried to save their mother, they also met the same fate. The killer fled the spot immediately.

Police later recovered the bodies and brought them to the city for autopsy.

Local people said Sujan, who hails from Bagerhat, came to Chittagong about seven years ago and got a job at a salt factory at Kalurghat in the city's Chandraon thana. He married Mamata in 1997 and started living at his mother-in-law's house at Hasnapura. Later, he quit his job and forced his mother-in-law to give him money to start a shop in the locality.

But trouble started when Mamata and other members of the family came to know that Sujan has another wife -- Zhumu Das, 24 -- in Raozan upazila, whom he married in 1996 and also has a son from her.

Sujan also has a son from his second marriage and was allegedly trying to develop extra-marital relations with his sister-in-law Kali Bala.