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HC asks govt not to further remand Partha

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered the government not to further remand Shaibal Saha Partha on charges of his link to the August 21 grenade attacks and to hospitalise him for treatment as soon as his current remand ends on September 22.

It also ordered the government to follow two sections of Article 35 of the constitution, related to respect of prisoners' rights, in regard to Partha, who has also been implicated for allegedly issuing death threats to Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina in an e-mail.

The government has been ordered to send Partha to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital.

A vacation bench of the High Court composed of Justice Nazrul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Mir Hasmat Ali issued the order after Partha presented a statement in court following a writ petition filed

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NBR seeks spl bench to resolve huge pending cases

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has some 8,000 customs, VAT and income tax related cases amounting to Tk 2,179 crore unresolved with the High Court and they have written to the law minister to form a special bench for their speedy disposal.

Some of the cases date as far back as 10 years and the pending cases are putting brakes on the tax realisation, officials at the NBR complained.

"We have sent the matter to the chief justice for consideration," Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed told The

Daily Star on Sunday.

The Customs Department has 6,600 pending writ and reference cases totalling Tk 738 crore, VAT Department 400 cases equivalent to Tk 745 crore and Income Tax Department 639 cases amounting to Tk 696 crore. NBR officials said half the cases have been filed in writ petitions.

An official at the Income Tax Department of the NBR explained that two types of income tax-related cases go to the High Court. If a taxpayer is unhappy with the ruling of the NBR Tribunal and its Appellate Division, he files a reference case with the High Court. And when the NBR takes action against a taxpayer

on charges of tax evasion, the taxpayer files a writ petition. For instance, the official said, the NBR recently unearthed an undisclosed Tk 12.35 crore income by one Sharfuddin Ahmed after he showed to have earned only Tk 2 crore in his last year's tax assessment.

After the detection of the graft, the Central Intelligence Cell, a newly formed intelligence unit of the NBR, ordered the Gulshan Branch of Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) Limited on August 29 to freeze his accounts.

But the NBR orders were nullified as the High Court stayed the orders of the tax authorities following a writ

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GRENADATE ATTACK Investigators clueless even after a month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A long month into the grisly grenade attacks apparently to assassinate the entire leadership of the main opposition Awami League (AL) that killed 20 people and injured over 200, investigators are still clueless about who the masterminds are and what could have been their motives.

All the five intelligence agencies -- Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Detective Branch (DB), Special Branch (SB), National Security Intelligence (NSI) and Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) -- and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab)

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DEAD END?

A month into the grenade blasts, little headway has been made into the investigation of the grisly incident and the enquiry appears to be all but fizzled out.

Following are the developments that took place since August 21.

Aug 21: Nineteen killed and over 200 injured in grenade blasts and firing on AL rally at Bangabandhu Avenue.

Aug 22: One-member judicial commission formed and asked to submit a report in three weeks. The police refuse to accept two first information reports (FIR) of the Awami League, record those as general diaries. The police file two cases and the CID, DB, SB, NSI, DGFI and Rab tasked with the probe. A grenade recovered from the market near AL headquarters and another at Dhaka Central Jail. Police hurriedly bury two unknown dead victims, including one with alleged link to the perpetrators, in the night and hand over rest of the bodies to the relatives for burial.

Aug 23: Cases transferred to Detective Branch. India offers assistance in probe.

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Govt liable to bring culprits to justice

Powell writes Hasina on grenade attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Secretary of State Colin Powell in a letter to Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina said it is Bangladesh government's responsibility to track down and bring the criminals of August 21 carnage to justice.

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Harry K Thomas yesterday handed over the letter to Hasina, also the Awami League (AL) chief, at her Sudha Sadan residence.

"If asked, the US will extend all possible support to Bangladesh government. However, the obligation to resolve the crime, identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice is clearly the government's responsibility," Saber Hossain Chowdhury, Hasina's political secretary, quoted Powell as saying.

The US ambassador after handing over the letter told reporters that

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Lilly chariot... a joy ride with 'Shapla' (Water Lilly) plucked from a bog in Keraniganj on the fringe of Dhaka sends some 16 kids floating on air yesterday. Shapla stems are used as cheap, popular vegetables.

Witness account of jail killing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The horrendous operation to assassinate the four national leaders in Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975 was conducted from the Bangabhaban under direct supervision of then president Khandaker Mushtaque Ahmed and some people loyal to him, a key witness said.

From the Bangabhaban, Mushtaque directed jail officials to carry out the orders of a group who had gone to the central jail to kill the four leaders, said then jailer Aminur Rahman in his deposition in the historic jail killing case.

Under orders from then captain Moslem, the jail officials at gunpoint brought the four leaders -- Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, captain Mansur Ali and Quamaruzzaman -- together in a room. Moslem and some other army personnel then hurriedly entered the room and fired indiscriminately on the leaders killing them. The assassins then left the jail premises, he recalled.

Aminur Rahman's deposition On that night (November 3) night, SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Haunted Hasina confines herself to her residence

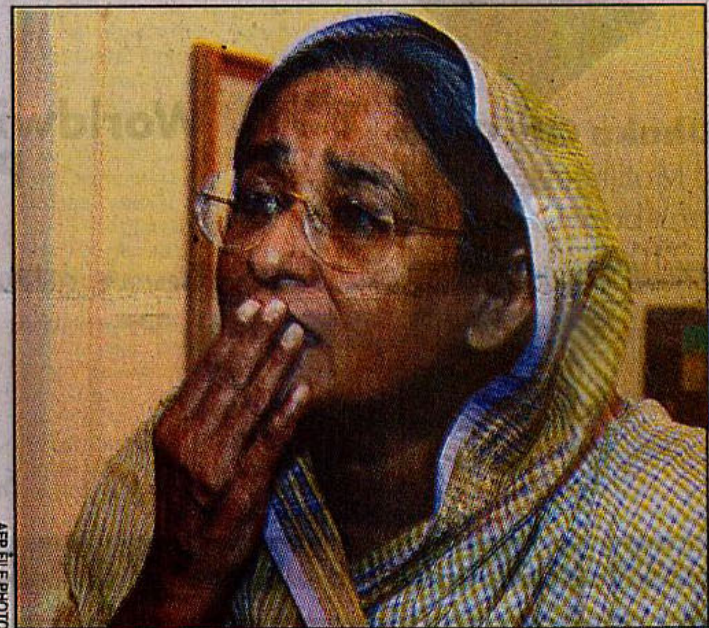
SHAMEEM MAHMUD

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina remains virtually confined to her Dhanmondi residence after the deadly grenade attacks on her rally in the heart of Dhaka on August 21 and repeated death threats by unnamed people.

She is now trying to recover from the horror of the grisly attacks in an apparent lonely life on the first floor of her four-storey Sudha Sadan residence under tight security.

Hasina, believed to be the prime target of the assailants, survived the attacks in front of the headquarters of main opposition Awami League (AL) of which she is the president with grievous inner ear injuries, but the bloodbath left 20 people killed and over 200 injured.

"Apart from the shock, Hasina is suffering from acute hearing problem stemming from the bangs of grenade blasts. Her hearing problem has been worsening," said Saber



Sheikh Hasina

State minister's house looted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Robbers yesterday looted gold ornaments, US dollars and cash worth over Tk 5.9 lakh from the Mirpur residence of State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Milton.

Police said some unknown burglars entered the 205/3, South Peerer Bagh residence sometime between 9:30am and 12:30pm

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Wrong lies in use of Section 54

Attorney general talks about law abuse

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Attorney General AF Hassan Arif yesterday said that section 54 of the criminal procedure code (CrPC) is relevant and necessary for law and order.

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Verdict on belated jail killing case today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court hands down its belated verdict on the historic jail killing case today, 29 years into the brutal assassination of four national leaders.

Syed Nazrul Islam, acting president of Bangladesh government in exile, Tajuddin Ahmed, prime minister, M Mansur Ali, finance minister, and AHM Qamaruzzaman, minister of home affairs, relief and rehabilitation, were killed inside Dhaka Central Jail on November 3, 1975.

Judge Mohammad Motiur Rahman of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka will pronounce the judgement at 10:30am amid tight security.

The authorities have limited the

entry of journalists and lawyers (not involved in the case) to the courtroom. Only 30 reporters have been listed for entry to the courtroom.

Security men barred journalists and lawyers not only from the courtroom but the court premises in the name of tightening security during the scheduled verdict on September 7, which was deferred because of the judge's illness. They also clubbed journalists as they protested the restriction on their entry.

Before pronouncement of the verdict, the court will decide on two petitions the lawyer for accused-on-bail Taheruddin Thakur filed on September 4 in the last-ditch effort to save his client.

Taher's lawyer appealed to court

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Ashes war today

AGENCIES, Birmingham

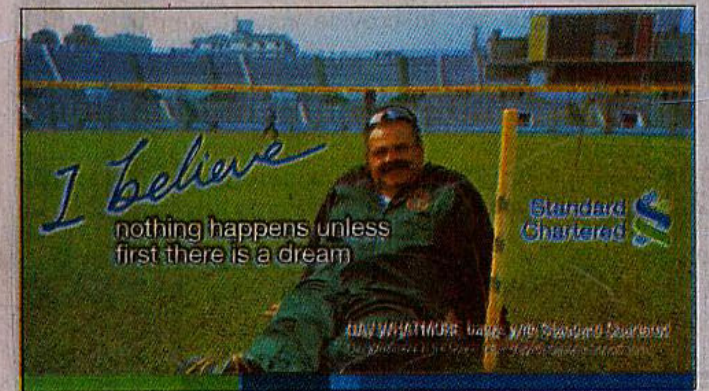
England captain Michael Vaughan insisted his side were excited, not overawed, by the prospect of playing Australia in Tuesday's ICC Champions Trophy semifinal here at Edgbaston despite losing their last 14 one-day matches against the world champions.

"It's a special game. It's a semi-fi-

nal and something we haven't been involved in for a long time," Vaughan told reporters on Monday.

"But we are still going to give it our best shot. There's a huge goal to play for in a final (at The Oval) on Saturday in our own country," said Vaughan, who added Australia were "hot, hot favourites" to win on Tuesday.

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Business leaders react to some Indian media propaganda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of country's business community yesterday reacted sharply to propaganda by a section of Indian media against Bangladesh on August 21 rally blast describing it an attempt to instigate political instability and a disturbing element to Indo-Bangla relationship.

They said while the two governments have been continually striving to improve cooperation, a section of Indian media have resorted to motivated and outrageous propaganda against Bangladesh only to disturb the relationship.

"One Indian English daily has

made two editorial comments last month on August 21 incident suggesting the Indian government to "firmly deal" with the activities of the incumbent government of Bangladesh," the leaders of 15 trade bodies and chambers said in a press statement.

About the August 21 incident, another Indian daily suggested that India might have no option but to develop a pro-active policy to encourage internal political change within the subcontinent and talked about the need for 'external intervention to restore at least minimum freedom'.

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Custodial deaths must be dealt with seriously

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Participants in an international conference yesterday called for a serious approach in dealing with death in police custody as such practices deny the victims justice.

They also observed that law-enforcing agencies should be more careful in use of section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

They were addressing a second day session of the three-day conference jointly organised by law, justice and parliamentary affairs ministry, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Australian High Commission.

Speaking at the session titled 'National Security and Impunity: A Case for Human Rights Intervention', Inspector General of Police (IGP) Shahidul Hq said custodial death should be looked at somewhat differently.

"Sometimes we (police) have to pick up people already in very critical condition and later when they die in our custody, we have to shoulder the blame," said the IGP.

For instance, sometimes drug addicts die in the police custody when they fail to continue the regular intake of drug during detention, the IGP added.

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