



From left, 12-storey Shezad Plaza that has no parking space, 18-storey Silver Tower with parking facility for 15 cars and 15-storey PBL Tower for 12 vehicles only in the city's Gulshan area.

# High-rises without parking lots add to traffic congestion

MORSHED ALI KHAN

An alarming rise in high-rises without adequate parking facilities is hamstringing the government's ambitious drive to ease the city traffic.

Most of the city's 10-storey and higher buildings -- estimated at 570 - - do not have the parking space prescribed by the law, official sources said. The violation is fast contributing to the chaos on the already clogged city thoroughfares.

According to the Building Construction Rules, 1996, 23 square metres of parking space is a

must for every 200 sq m floor space of commercial buildings, 100 sq m of shopping complexes and 300 sq m of hospitals and clinics.

The law, however, has been pervasively flouted throughout the city. Traffic sergeants in Gulshan, Banani, Uttara, Panthapath area and Motijheel said on any working day roads and open spaces are choked with vehicles looking for a parking space. The multitudes of visitors to the offices in those areas have no option but to leave their cars on the roads, often in multiple rows, creating severe traffic congestion. Hundreds of thousands of

working hours are lost every day as more and more people are caught in the congestion.

Spending millions on improving traffic signals, intersections and roads will not solve the traffic problem, the sergeants observed. One of them stationed in Dhanmondi said on condition of anonymity, "The city's traffic situation is set to deteriorate rapidly if the high-rises don't arrange for their own parking spaces as required by the law."

In a recent visit to Gulshan sections 1 and 2, where existing and under-construction high-rises

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## 29 killed in new wave of Iraq bloodshed

### 14 bodies found in garbage dump

AFP, AP, Baghdad/ Kut

A car bomb ripped through a busy market south of Baghdad and another smashed into a minibus packed with policemen north of the capital yesterday, killing a total of 29 people and wounding more than 40.

The latest bloodletting came as Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari attempted to put the final touches to his cabinet line-up, three months after general elections and more than a week after unveiling a partial government list.

"A car bomb with a suicide driver exploded at around 3 pm (1100 GMT) in the Mokhadar market, in the centre of Suwayrah, killing 17 and wounding 40," police Captain NamirAli told AFP.

The blast blew market stalls to pieces, as panic reined amid the carnage and medics tried to treat the most urgent cases next to the mangled wreckage of several vehicles.

The city lies in a lawless area where Sunni Arab militant groups have carried out scores of attacks against security forces and imposed their authority on civilian residents.

Some 60 bodies were fished out of the Tigris River near Suwayrah last month. President Jalal Talabani said they were those of Shias sized in a mass hostage-taking by Sunni militants in the nearby town of Madain.

Earlier Friday, a suicide bomber

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## Fresh al-Qaeda plot to kill Musharraf foiled

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistani intelligence agents have foiled a new plot by al-Qaeda militants to assassinate President Pervez Musharraf, security officials said yesterday.

Seven conspirators were arrested in a number of raids in central Punjab province in late April, one week before the capture of alleged al-Qaeda number three Abu Faraj al-Libbi in a northwestern region, the officials said.

The group included Mushtaq Ahmed, a junior air force official who escaped from jail late last year after being convicted of a key role in a 2003 attempt to eliminate Musharraf, and who was recaptured

last week.

"First we smashed the gang plotting a new attack on Musharraf and then a week later we netted two Arabs including al-Libbi," a top intelligence official said.

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Prayer Timing		
May 7		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-15	4-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-34	6-38
Esha	8-00	8-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		

## Blanket immunity to WB to be challenged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Alliance Against World Bank Immunity, a civil society movement, will go to the court to challenge the blanket immunity likely to be given to the World Bank (WB) at the next parliament session.

The alliance has chalked out several programmes to protest the immunity likely to be given by The

International Financial Organisations (Amendment) Act, 2004 at the parliament session beginning on May 12.

The programmes include rallies and discussions across the country, road march and submission of a memorandum to the speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad.

"The immunity goes directly

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