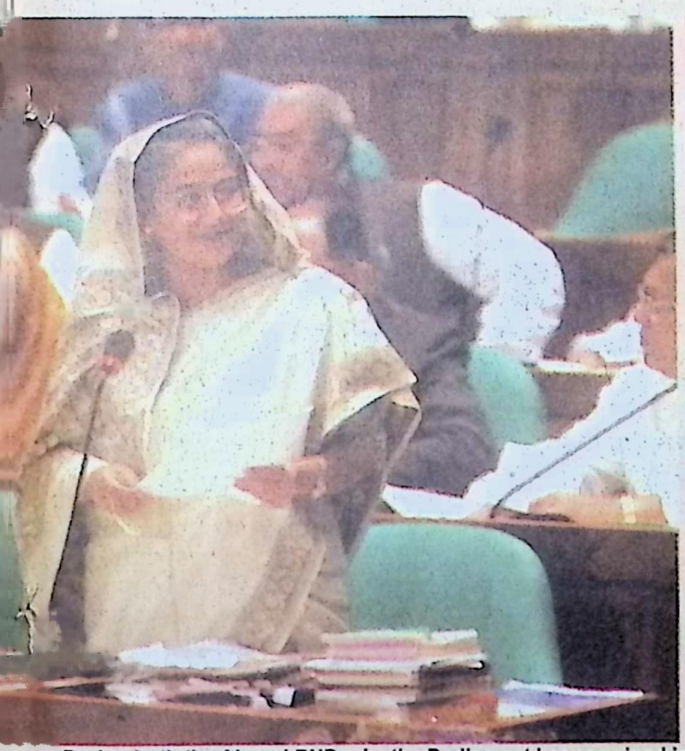
The parliamentary committee system, which has been established first in 1979, says Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, is the first such system in South Asia. He believes the MPs have taken serious interest in how the government functions and so far these committees have performed, to a commendable extent, the job of a vigilant watchdog.

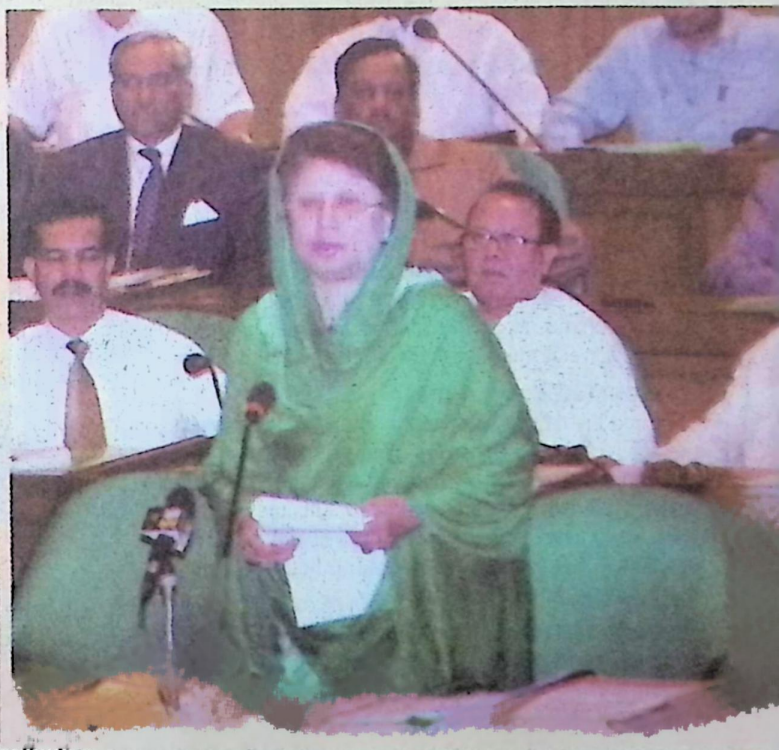
Standing committees should be made more functional, says Chowdhury. "There is a serious power crisis in the country; students are studying under candle-light to sit for the first public examinations of their lives. Somebody must be held accountable. Why can't the concerned committee summon the minister and the energy secretary to know what has gone amiss? Suppose they tell you that a project has been delayed or the planning commission has not given clearance, call the planning secretary or the planning minister or the finance minister and fix it.

"If the committees had performed like this, things would have been a lot different."

"Because the MPs have got involved in extra-legislative activities the entire local government is falling apart."

-Salahuddin Quader Choudhury





During both the AL and BNP rule, the Parliament has remained ineffective.

Obviously the role of the Members of Parliament determines the health of the parliament. While their primary task is to formulate and pass laws in practice, MPs are more concerned about pleasing their constituencies to ensure re-election. That in itself may not be considered a huge transgression given the culture of our politics; but what is worrisome is the level of corruption many MPs may indulge in.

G M Quader says that this is true of only ruling party MPs. "They are given lots of irregular and irrelevant jobs that serve personal or party interest. MPs decide what tenders will go at what price, estimates will be manipulated-- a two-crore project may become a 22-crore taka project if they decide. They will decide who will also drop the tender so that members can make comparative statements that says these are the tenders and this is the lowest bidder so in the case of any corruption case later, all the papers will be in order and nobody will know if -two-crore taka project has become a 22-crore taka project,"Quader alleges.