

CIP status for 10 top taxpayers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to reward 10 top taxpayers with the status of Commercially Important Person every year to encourage people to pay direct tax.

The decision came at a weekly cabinet meeting at Bangladesh Secretariat with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair. The cabinet also approved a policy subject to amendments.

Commercially Important Persons would be entitled to a host of facilities including access to VIP lounge at airports, ticket quota in Biman, railways and water transport, and entry pass to the Secretariat.

Ten people with highest tax returns for five consecutive years would be given special cards to enjoy some government facilities subject to conditions, Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam

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STALKING 4 BCL men expelled from DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University yesterday expelled four students, all members of Bangladesh Chhatra League, for a year for harassing a female student on the campus and assaulting six other students who had protested the stalking on Sunday evening.

DU authorities also issued them a show-cause notice asking them to respond by November 24 why they would not be permanently expelled from the institution.

The expelled are Moidul Islam Mahi of Public Administration department, Rubayet Hossain of Philosophy, Soheli of Peace and Conflict, and Nazmul Hasan Rumi of Economics

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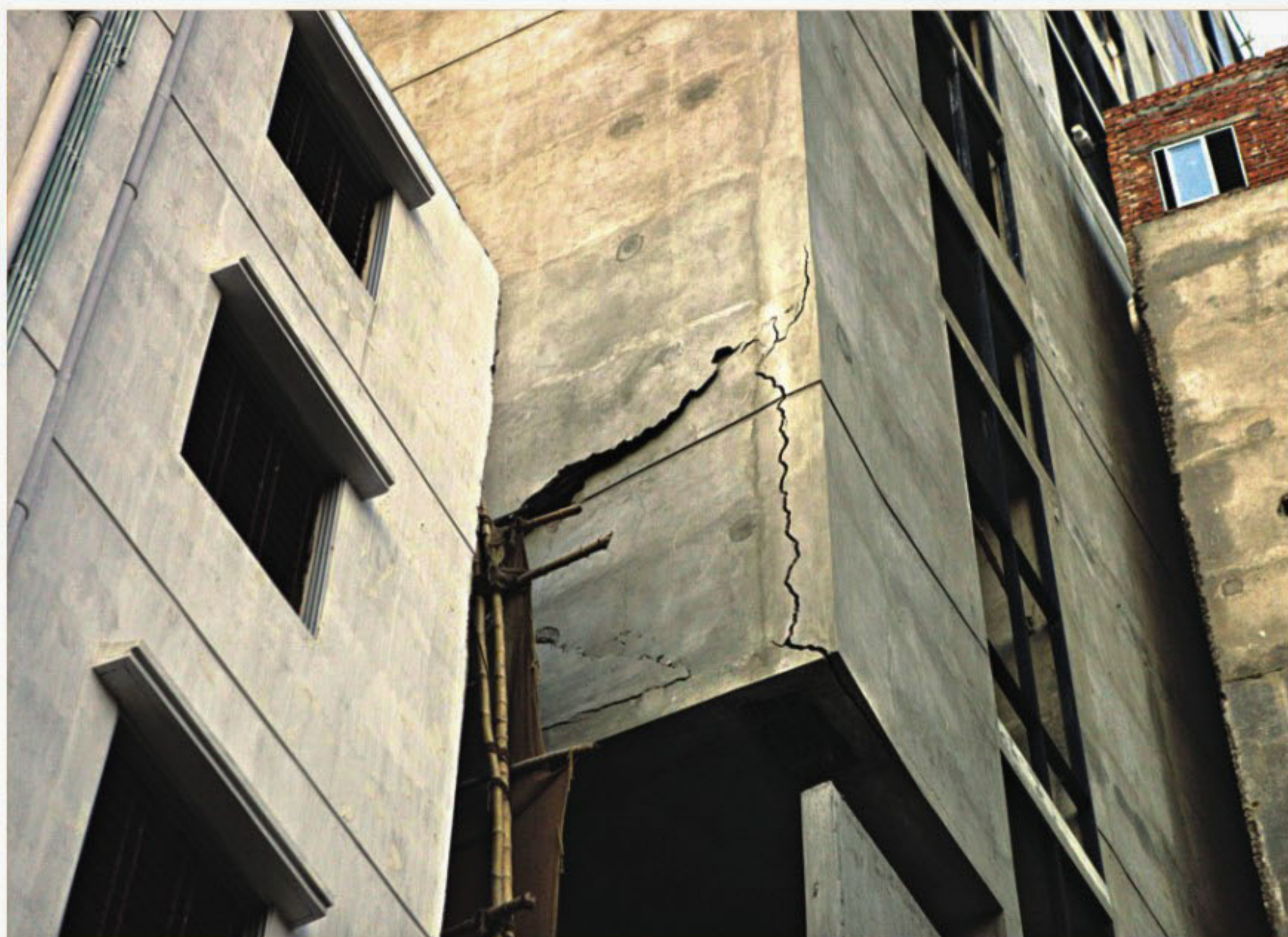


PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Cracks appear in 17-storey Nasir Tower in the city's Kanthalbagan area after a seven-storey under-construction building leaned on it Sunday night. The photo was taken yesterday.

Developer warned about a year back

Tilted high-rise built without proper piling work; Rajuk blames staff shortage for not following up on its notice

HELEMUL ALAM

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha had served a deviation notice about a year ago to the developer of the seven-storey Asia Haider Tower in Kathalbagan of the capital that tilted and sank into the ground on Sunday night, but the developer had not responded to the notice.

The tower tilted onto a 17-storey building next to it before sinking into the ground by about 10 feet.

Despite receiving the Rajuk notice, the developer Asia Comtech Bangladesh constructed the faulty tower only 17 feet away from the next building. But according to the approved

design, the building was supposed to be constructed 25 feet away from the next one, said Aminur Rahman, authorised officer 1 of Rajuk.

The tilted building is among 5,000 such structures in the capital, identified by Rajuk as buildings in violation of rules, and risking the neighbourhoods.

Rajuk did not follow up with Asia Comtech after serving the notice, neither did it demolish the illegally constructed parts of the building. Rajuk Chairman Nurul Huda said with a limited manpower the agency could not possibly demolish illegal portions of all 5,000 errant buildings that had been served such notices.

The agency however did demolish illegal portions of 200 such buildings after the notices had been served since last year. Rajuk will gradually demolish all illegal portions of those 5,000 buildings, if the owners do not correct the faults by the time the demolisher get there, the agency chairman added.

It will start demolishing the errant Kathalbagan building as soon as possible.

"We have issued a letter to the Buet authorities, requesting them to form a team to help us with the demolition, through supervision" said Nurul Huda.

Illegally built portions are not the

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KASHMIR DISPUTE Obama: US won't impose solution

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

US President Barack Obama has ruled out any possibility of his country imposing a solution on India and Pakistan for the long-standing dispute over Kashmir and said it is for the two countries to resolve the issue.

"Kashmir is a long-standing dispute. The US cannot impose a solution to this problem but we will be happy to play a role the two parties consider appropriate," said the US president yesterday at a joint press conference at the palatial Hyderabad House in New Delhi at the end of his three-day India tour.

The US and India agreed that all countries in South Asia must work together and ensure that there "are no safe havens for terrorists," he said.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said India is committed to engaging Pakistan to resolve all outstanding issues, including Kashmir, but talks cannot go on "while terror machines are active."

Obama said dialogue between India and Pakistan "may not begin on the flash point of Kashmir" and the two countries have to take confidence-building measures before turning to such issues.

He said it was for India and Pakistan to resolve tension in their own interests.

"A strong and peaceful Pakistan is in the interest of India and I believe both India and Pakistan."

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No free transit Muhith tells media after meeting with Indian HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There will be no free transit, insists Finance Minister AMA Muhith.

Bangladesh will definitely charge fees for allowing Indian vehicles to use its territory, he told reporters yesterday after a meeting with Rajeet Mitter, Indian high commissioner in Dhaka. "We'll charge fees for capacity maintenance, as our infrastructure will be used by their cargoes," Muhith noted.

The government is working to frame new rules and fix the amount of fees to operationalise road and rail transit, he added. "It will take two to three months to finalise the rules."

Replying to a query, the minister said the main opposition's anti-transit stance is "political".

Earlier on Sunday, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia warned the government against giving transit to India. Addressing a rally in the capital, she also said no foreign vehicles would be allowed to use Bangladesh territory.

Muhith said Bangladesh has already been offering India limited transit through waterways as per the Protocol Agreement of 1972, and it receives around Tk 4.5 crore in fees annually for maintenance of the routes.

Besides, it charges conservancy and pilotage fees, which take the total earnings from water transit to around Tk 20 crore a year.

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CANTT HOUSE CASE Khaleda Zia moves to challenge HC verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday filed an appeal with the Supreme Court (SC) to overturn the High Court (HC) verdict that had upheld the government's notice asking her to vacate the cantonment residence.

Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division, Justice Md Muzammel Hossain fixed

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SYLHET MEDICAL BCL-Shibir clash leaves 38 injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

At least 38 students including 25 BCL men sustained injuries in a clash between the activists of BCL and Shibir over establishing supremacy on Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College campus yesterday.

Of the injured, 31 were admitted to the medical college hospital. Police arrested six activists of Shibir from the college campus in this connection.

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BABU MURDER Three more accused held in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police last night picked up three more accused in the murder case of Boraigram upazila chairman Sanaullah Noor Babu from the capital's Manik Miah Avenue area.

The arrestees are Ashrafur Islam Mithu, 32, Lutfur Rahman, 35 and Mohammad Badsha, 35, all hailing from the same upazila.

Mithu is a cousin of main

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