

HC verdict was not correct

FROM PAGE 20 court that some other accused along with Muslemuddin had been involved in the killing of Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmad, AHM Quamruzzaman and Captain Mansur Ali on November 3, 1975.

The state council was placing submission before the apex court yesterday during its fourth day of hearing on the government's appeal against the HC verdict. The verdict had acquitted six former army personnel, who were among the convicted in the jail killing case by a lower court.

The acquitted are dafadar Marfat Ali Shah, dafadar Abdul Hashem Mridha, Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farooq-ur Rahman, Lt Col (retired) Sultan Shahrar Rashid

Khan, Maj (retired) Bazlul Huda and Maj (retired) AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed.

Yesterday, the six-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain adjourned the hearing on the appeal until today.

In 2004, the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court sentenced three former army personnel to death and 12 others for life in the case. The court awarded capital punishment to Muslemuddin, Marfat Ali Shah and Abdul Hashem Mridha.

Those who were awarded life imprisonment for abetting the killers are Syed Farooq-ur Rahman, Sultan Shahrar Rashid Khan, Bazlul Huda, Lt Col (dismissed) Khondaker Abdur Rashid, Lt Col

(relieved) Shariful Haq Dalim, Lt Col (retired) SHMB Noor Chowdhury, AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed, Lt Col (retired) AM Rashed Chowdhury, Maj (relieved) Ahmed Shariful Hossain, Capt (retired) Abdul Majed, Capt (relieved) Kismat Hasem and Capt (relieved) Nazmul Hossain.

On August 28, 2008, the HC upheld the capital punishment of Muslemuddin, but acquitted Marfat Ali and Hashem.

It exempted from the case Farooq, Shahrar, Mohiuddin and Bazlul Huda, who had already been executed in the Bangabandhu assassination case, and did not say anything about the eight others given life term by the lower court.

One million dollar man

FROM PAGE 20 And he shows that from bionic arms and legs to artificial organs, science is beginning to catch up with science fiction in the race to replace body parts with man-made alternatives.

Leading UK roboticists Richard Walker and Matthew Godden build Rex using \$1 million-worth of state of the art limbs and organs borrowed from some of these world leading laboratories and manufacturers.

Rex's components include an arm with 26 degrees of movement, one less than a human arm, which teaches itself to work, glasses which

send images to a microchip in the retina which then sends electrical impulses to the brain, and a battery powered heart which is currently being used for temporary donors.

Rex also has bionic ankles, which use a motor and spring system to mimic the actions of the human calf muscle and Achilles tendon.

Rex was created for C4 show How to Build a Bionic Man which follows social psychologist Bertolt Meyer, who lost his left hand as a child, as he meets scientists working at the cutting edge.

Dr Meyer, whose £30,000 bionic hand is the

most advanced on the market, said he had a "personal interest" in the "explosion of innovation" which has occurred in the last six years.

One organ that science cannot yet match is the human brain. Made up of a hundred billion neurons, it is the most complex structure in the known universe.

But scientists at the University of Southern California are studying the electrical signals in rats' brains to develop microchips that may one day be able to restore memory and even cure Alzheimer's by working with living brains.

Unfit yet licensed as fire-safe

FROM PAGE 1 notice on Tazreen Fashions in July, 2012 asking it to renew the licence. But the factory owner did not pay heed to that.

Maj Mohammad Mahboob, a director of Directorate of Fire Service and Civil Defence, admitted that the factory building lacked fire-protected emergency escape as per building code.

Deputy Director of fire service Abdus Salam said they had issued licence for three-storey factory building but the owner extended it up to ninth floor without complying with necessary fire safety measures.

Asked why they had issued licence and approved renewal for the subsequent years, Brig Gen (retired) Abu Nayeem Md Shahidullah, director general of fire service, said Tazreen building had complied with fire safety measures on the whole.

"There were only minor rectifiable safety deviations for which written instructions were given on the building owner along with licence for rectifications," he said adding that

buyers do not place order if fire licence is not updated.

Asked if fire licences are issued in this fashion, Brig Nayeem said they issued licence if safety compliance was found "reasonably satisfactory".

He attributed the loss of lives in Tazreen fire to unauthorised warehouse on the ground floor where all the three staircases meet, and the hindrance created by factory officials.

Meanwhile, visits to the building revealed gross violation of safety codes, including absence of an emergency exit.

The fire department chief had earlier admitted that none of the three staircases at Tazreen was fire protected as required by safety law.

Mubasshar Hussein, president of Institute of Architects Bangladesh, said the fire department had no scope for issuing licence to this factory, as it had grossly violated building rules and fire safety provisions.

The structure lacked fire-protected emergency exit and traceable water reservoir dedicated to fire

fighting, he said.

A fire escape at a multi-storey building has to be fitted with fire resistant doors and must have easy access, unhindered route and safe refuge as per the building code. Firemen too use the emergency escape to help evacuation and douse fire.

The factory building was set up on a 10-foot-wide rural pathway in the midst of homesteads. The rules required at least 30-foot-wide road for such structures.

Moreover, highly flammable garment materials were stacked around a high-voltage electric substation and electric generator with every chance of fire on the ground floor, said Mubasshar Hussein.

The said code also requires a fire protected lift with alternative power supply which would be used for fire fighting and exit in case of a building higher than six storeys.

"It is a wonder how the fire authority issued licence to this factory at all. The factory owner did not obtain clearance during building expansion, and the occupancy certificate

after completion, both of which are issued by the fire department," said Hussein.

Fire licence implies that safety measures are satisfactory as per law and building code. Nazma Akhtar, president of Sammito Garment Sramik Federation, said the fire department and labour department officials could not answer why they had issued licences to Tazreen.

On top of that, the local Union Parishad gave approval to Tazreen factory although the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha is to do that.

Md Shafiul Islam Mohiuddin, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said they had launched an inspection at 10 randomly chosen factories through a team of engineers, architects, firemen and labour department officials on December 23 last year.

The pilot inspection would prepare a status report with recommendations on ensuring basic safety provisions, he added.

President's

FROM PAGE 1 scheduled to place the motion to thank the president for his address when the House resumes its sitting this afternoon after a two days recess, officials in the parliament secretariat said.

Like the previous four consecutive years, parliament will begin the discussion amid boycott by the opposition lawmakers belonging to BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami and Bangladesh Jatiya Party.

The opposition lawmakers were also not present when President Zillur Rahman addressed the Jatiya Sangsad in the last three New Year sessions.

The possibility of opposition MPs' return to the House during this session is also slim as the prevailing political situation has become complicated further, the opposition leaders said.

"We have yet to take any decision to return to the House," Moudud Ahmed, a member of the national standing committee of BNP, told The Daily Star over the phone yesterday.

If the opposition lawmakers do not join the House, Awami League-led ruling alliance MPs will have the opportunity to use all the 40 hours allocated time for discussion on the thanksgiving motion.

Participating in this year's discussion, the ruling alliance MPs may highlight the government's successes and blast the opposition.

Last year, the Business Advisory Committee had allocated 40 hours time for discussion on the thanksgiving motion. But parliament spent 50 hours and 26 minutes.

The BNP-led opposition MPs returned to the House on March 18 when the discussion on thanksgiving motion on the president's address was near its end.

The discussion was concluded on March 20. On the last day, Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia participating in the discussion spoke for two hours.

Since then, the opposition lawmakers have been boycotting the House.

Advertisement for BSMRAU (Bangladesh School of Management and Research University) featuring a portrait of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and text about agricultural education.

Advertisement for Sylhet Gas Fields Limited (SGFL) regarding a tender for gas supply, including company details and tender specifications.

Advertisement for Election Commission Secretariat regarding an invitation for tenders for various goods and services, including a table of items and prices.

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