

HC stays order

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 asking the government to explain in a week why the suspension of Ariful as Sylhet City Corporation (SCC) mayor should not be declared illegal.

Rajshahi Mayor Bulbul said he also would challenge his suspension in the HC.

The HC asked the government to explain why the provisions of the Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009, under which Ariful was suspended, should not be declared unconstitutional, Ariful's lawyer Muhammed Abdul Halim Kafi told The Daily Star.

Now there is no legal bar preventing Ariful from discharging his duties as SCC mayor, he said.

LGRD secretary and its deputy secretary concerned, divisional commissioner and deputy commissioner of Sylhet, chief executive officer of the SCC and commissioner of Sylhet Metropolitan Police have been made respondents to the rule, the lawyer added.

The HC bench of Justice Syed Muhammad Dastagir Husain and Justice Md Ataur Rahman Khan also fixed April 9 for holding a hearing on the rule.

The bench came up with the order and rule after hearing Ariful's writ petition challenging the legality of the LGRD ministry decision to suspend him and the provisions of the Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009, that allows the ministry to suspend a mayor.

Asked, Ariful said his suspension was "a drama that shouldn't have taken place in a democracy. It undermines people's votes."

Citing the petition, lawyer Halim said the LGRD ministry's decision to suspend Ariful was illegal and had mala fide intentions as the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court has month upheld a High Court order that stayed his suspension on a similar ground.

The apex court had earlier justified another HC verdict that had declared the suspension of Rajshahi Mayor Mosaddek illegal.

Halim said the provisions of the Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009 that allows the LGRD ministry to suspend a mayor was illegal and unconstitutional, as it allows punishment of a person before the end of trial

proceedings, he said.

RAJSHAHI MAYOR TO CHALLENGE HIS SUSPENSION

Mosaddek Hossain Bulbul's lawyer Aminul Haque Helal said his client would file a writ petition with the HC today challenging the legality of his suspension.

"I am an elected mayor. Both the Supreme Court and the High Court gave orders in my favour. Even if I am accused in criminal cases, no one can dismiss me until I am proven guilty," Bulbul told The Daily Star.

The LGRD ministry on Sunday issued a suspension order on Bulbul, saying a Rajshahi court accepted charge sheets against him in two cases filed under the Explosive Substances Act. The charge sheets were accepted around two years ago.

"It's illegal. They cannot dismiss me on the same ground again," he said.

Following the Apex Court verdicts in their favour last month, Ariful and Bulbul went to their respective offices Sunday morning.

Minutes after he entered his office, Bulbul was informed that he had been suspended again.

Two bodies recovered after 6 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Law enforcers recovered the remaining two bodies of militants from Atia Mahal in Sylhet's Shibbari yesterday, six days after the end of an army raid in the house.

Four militants were killed in "Operation Twilight" that officially ended on March 28.

The two newly recovered male bodies were no longer in a state to be identified and were sent to Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital for autopsies, said Lt Col Ali Haider Azad Ahmed, commanding officer of Rapid Action Battalion, while briefing the media near the militant den yesterday evening.

Earlier in the day, a bomb disposal squad of Rab led by Lt Col Ariful Islam Mahmud began searching the five-storey building for explosive substances and bombs left unexploded.

During "Operation Twilight", the bodies of two militants were recovered by the army. With two more bodies remaining inside, army personnel handed over the building to police.

But it took six days to start scanning the place for more bodies and further evidence, as law enforcers were busy in operations in Moulvibazar and Comilla, the Rab official said.

Sylhet Metropolitan Police, Fire Service and Civil Defence, Sylhet City Corporation and Sylhet Osmani Medical College Hospital helped check the building, he added.

The bomb squad will resume the operation around 10:00am today for further investigation, Haider said, adding that it may take long to examine the whole building to ensure no explosive is left and no bomb remains unexploded, which were hurled by army personnel.

The Police Bureau of Investigation and the Criminal Investigation Department will collect evidence from the building for further investigation, said Zedan Al Musa, additional deputy commissioner of Sylhet Metropolitan Police.

BTRC doesn't think it realistic

FROM PAGE 1
 other communication services like WhatsApp, Viber, and IMO were there and that it would hurt people who rely on Facebook for their businesses.

The telecom regulator also said communication between expatriates in Europe, the Americas and Bangladesh could become difficult if the government went ahead with the ban.

Instead of going for the ban, the BTRC recommended that the parents be urged to use parental control software, security software and privacy features to prevent their children from using Facebook excessively.

It recommended government steps like launching awareness programmes in schools and colleges and in the media about responsible use of Facebook.

The BTRC also laid importance on guardians' awareness on the mobile and internet usage of their wards.

The telecom division issued a press release that said the government had not yet decided to block Facebook and urged all not to panic over the matter.

"We have sent our recommendations hours after receiving the government's letter and in there we haven't said anything in favour of Facebook blocking," said Md Sarwar Alam, secretary and spokesperson of the BTRC.

Alam said they just made some recommendations on this issue and hoped the government would consider those before making its decision.

The Daily Star obtained copies of the BTRC's letter and the cabinet division's letter.

After the news of the government's attempted ban broke, Mustafa Jabbar, president of Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS), said if the government blocked any sites like Facebook, they were ready to take to the streets to protest.

"Students nowadays use Facebook for their group studies and the bureaucrats need to understand this."

In line with a resolution in the Deputy Commissioners' conference held in July last year, and with the approval of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the cabinet division asked the telecom division on March 27 to take steps to block Facebook for six hours a day.

In November 2015, the government blocked Facebook, its messenger, Viber and WhatsApp on national security grounds.

Then, Hasina in parliament had said WhatsApp and Viber would be blocked temporarily, when needed, in order to capture militants and prevent terrorist activities in the country.

The government lifted the ban 22 days later.

In 2012, the government had blocked YouTube for 260 days.

10 killed in Russian metro station blast

FROM PAGE 1
 travelling between the Technological Institute and Vosstaniya Square stations at 2:40pm local time (1140 GMT), said the spokesman of Russia's anti-terrorist committee (NAK) Andrei Przhedzomsky.

The NAK committee later confirmed security services had found another explosive device at the Vosstaniya Square metro station. This device did not explode and was immediately "neutralised."

The metro network in Saint Petersburg announced it was shutting down entirely after evacuating all passengers.

It later said some lines had been reopened but there remained "only limited service on the two lines in the blast area".

The Moscow metro also tweeted that it was "taking additional security measures" as required by law in such situations.

NAK said in a statement carried by Russian news agencies that security was being stepped up at transportation hubs and crowded spots across the country.

INTERNATIONAL CONDOLENCES

Saint Petersburg announced three days of mourning in the city while President Vladimir Putin, who was holding a meeting nearby in his

official Strelina presidential palace, offered "condolences" to those hurt in the blast and to the loved ones of those killed.

In Washington, US President Donald Trump described the blast as a "terrible thing."

"Happening all over the world, absolutely a terrible thing," Trump said during an event at the White House.

EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini wrote on Twitter she was following developments "together with all EU foreign ministers" gathered for a meeting in Luxembourg.

"Our thoughts are with all the people of Russia," she wrote.

It's not the first time extremists have targeted Russia's public transportation systems.

In 2013, Russia was hit by twin suicide strikes that claimed 34 lives and raised alarm over security at the Sochi Winter Olympic Games.

A bombing at the main railway station of the southern city of Volgograd killed 18 people while a second strike hit a trolleybus, killing 16.

A suicide raid on Moscow's Domodedovo airport claimed by Islamic insurgents from the North Caucasus killed 37 people in January 2011.

Russia has intervened militarily to bolster Syrian President Bashar al-

Assad's forces in September 2015, turning the tables on the battlefield just as rebel forces were strengthening their hold on key areas.

Russian bombardments helped the regime retake rebel areas in the east of the northern city of Aleppo after four years of fighting.

Higher price

FROM PAGE 16
 acquire such places of worship will relocate or rebuild those with their own funds."

The cabinet secretary said if, for example, there was a mosque on a road and was obstructing movement of people, then the mosque could be relocated.

He said as per the existing ordinance, an official equivalent to an additional district or session's judge is appointed as arbitrator in such cases.

As per the proposed law, there would be joint district or sub-judges in this position, he said, adding that an official equivalent to a district judge would hear the appeals regarding land acquisition.

The cabinet approved in principle the draft law on December 5 last year and formed a committee headed by the law minister to review it citing that land was a complex issue.

ATIA MAHAL

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OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

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7 held

FROM PAGE 16
 He said police first asked them to surrender, but when they did not comply, police broke into the house and detained them.

The SP said no firearms or explosives were found in the house. But police recovered several computers and some chequebooks, electronic devices and jihadi books from the house.

They had been living in the house for the last four months, police said.

Police said one of the detainees, Masum, first identified himself as a brother of the house owner. But he later admitted that he was a distributor of consumer products and rented the house.

Except Amir, five others were working with Masum.

Additional SP of Mymensingh Noor-Alam said the detainees were taken to the office of the Detective Branch (DB) of police for interrogation.

Bilkis Begum of a neighbouring house said the house owner lives in the capital.

Five die

FROM PAGE 16
 Members of Bangladesh Coast Guard and teams of Special Warfare Diving and Salvage (SWADS) with two Bangladesh Navy ships were searching for the missing yesterday, said a text sent by the Navy.

The OC added that the recovered bodies were handed over to the families.

A probe committee headed by the Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Sandwip was formed to find the reasons for the sinking, said Chittagong Deputy Commissioner Shamsul Arefin.

Tough task for Tigers

FROM PAGE 16
 T20I starts with the hosts having some course correction to do as well. While there is something to be said for the notion that history does not really matter in the game's shortest format and consequently the one which is most influenced by stray bits of fortune, it is still worth it to unpack those three stats.

Sri Lanka's 10 losses at the Premadasa go back to February 2009, and there really is no shame in losing to the teams-- India, Pakistan, New Zealand, West Indies, South Africa and Australia -- that bested them at today's venue over the last eight years. Leaving aside the Premadasa, they have a 14-11 win-loss record in the format at home, and a 4-1 advantage over Bangladesh in T20Is. On the other hand, the 2-1 series wins in South Africa and Australia may be a source of great confidence for the home side, but the South African side was one without the likes of Hashim Amla, Faf du Plessis, Dale Steyn, Morne Morkel or Kagiso Rabada while AB de Villiers played just one game. The Australian side, meanwhile, was without most of their main players who started the first Test match in India barely 15 hours after the third T20I down under.

"When we played the decider against England in Chittagong, we lost despite having a good record there," said Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza when asked about Sri Lanka's poor Premadasa record. "So these things don't really matter much."

The one stat that is most relevant is Bangladesh's past record. In subcontinental conditions in India in the World Twenty20, they lost four group matches on the trot against Pakistan, Australia, India and New Zealand before going to New Zealand and losing all three T20Is earlier this year. Also among those eight defeats is arguably their most painful defeat in recent times -- the World T20 group match against India which they lost after needing two to win off three balls.

They have also won just five matches against Test teams other than Zimbabwe, and only 20 out of 65 overall in the format. The only positive for Bangladesh seems to be that in the teams' last meeting in February 2016 in the Asia Cup in Dhaka, Bangladesh came out trumps. But recent form and the personnel at hand makes it a tough ask for the tourists to reverse this particular trend.

Sri Lanka have the legendary Lasith Malinga set to continue his appear-

ances in the shortest format after making a comeback during the Australia T20Is during which he looked a little sluggish but effective nonetheless. But now seems fitter and closer to his best as he was firing in the yorkers at pace at the centre wicket under lights during practice yesterday.

Nuwan Kulasekara is expected to share the new ball, and if his four wickets in the last ODI are any indication, the movement he generated under lights will arguably be even more lethal, and unlike in ODIs, there will be little time for Bangladesh to recover. Then there is Lakshan Sandakan, the chinaman bowler who had troubled Bangladesh in the Tests. Sri Lanka's batting may be a weak point, with no Angelo Mathews, but there is still enough firepower in the likes of Kusal Perera, Upul Tharanga and Bangladesh's scourge in the late order, Thisara Perera.

While Sri Lanka have opted for an experienced squad with their youngest player being Vikum Sanjaya at 25, Bangladesh have chosen to include some youngsters in the squad, drafting in the 20-year-old seam-bowling all-rounder Mohammad Saifuddin. It is perhaps the bowling that will be more important for Bangladesh, and they will be looking to Mustafizur Rahman to regain some form after an indifferent ODI series. The uncapped Mehedi Hasan Miraz's possible inclusion may be of interest too; it is as yet uncertain what Bangladesh's bowling line-up will be. It may be a repeat of the ODI attack that performed generally well.

On the batting front much will depend on Tamim Iqbal, and he may be required to play a role similar to that he performed in the first ODI in Dambulla by batting through the overs so that the others can bat around him.

However, it seems that if both teams play at their best, Sri Lanka will have more firepower to reverse their Premadasa record.

ACC arrests 3

FROM PAGE 2
 He said he took Tk 50 lakh as loan from Bangladesh House Building Finance Corporation and the rest came from the sale of some inherited property and a flat to his brother.

He refused give details of the property and flat.

"I'm a graduate. There are many in Rajuk who even can not sign their name but live a life more lavish than mine," he said.

anonymity said the housing project would be developed with the facility of a proposed ring road recommended in the revised Strategic Transport Plan.

A press release from Rajuk said the scheme named "Keraniganj Model Town" would not affect people's existing homestead, and the "propaganda" in this regard was unfounded and ill-motivated.

The reality is that the feasibility is being conducted for a planned urbanisation of available vacant land without affecting any structure, it said. Once the scheme is implemented, local people will be benefitted with civic amenities and improved road services.

The scheme would be finalised after consulting with the local public representative, said the press release signed by the Rajuk secretary. It also urged people not to be misled by what it termed propaganda.

Locals protest

FROM PAGE 16
 Abdus Sobhan, a farmer of Kalatia village, said the land was their main source of livelihood. "What will we do if the government acquires the land?"

Contacted, Abdur Rahman, acting chairman and a board member of Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk), said, "We are just conducting a primary feasibility on a proposed housing scheme, but not by disturbing the existing settlement in anyway."

The proposed site of the project will be on an open space of around 2,500 acres from Atibazar road to west of Buriganga river, he said.

It would be a planned urbanisation, but a vested quarter was instigating locals for their own interest, the Rajuk chairman said, adding that the affected land owners would be rehabilitated and provided with due compensation as per law.

A Rajuk town planner wishing

anonymity said the housing project would be developed with the facility of a proposed ring road recommended in the revised Strategic Transport Plan.

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IPU to propose anti-terror actions

FROM PAGE 1
 the concluding day of five-day 136th IPU assembly that began on Saturday in Dhaka.

"Violent extremism is born out of frustration, out of inequality in the society, injustice, violation of human rights and lack of opportunity ... so these are the things we are addressing in the strategy to combat terrorism and militancy."

"A series of actions that will help the global parliamentary community to prevent those things that lead to terrorism," said Chungong.

He also said terrorism is the single most dangerous threat to stability, to peace in the world today. "It is a global phenomenon. Today no society is immune from terrorism; therefore, we need global solution."

Chungong said IPU would highlight an action-oriented proposal how parliaments could take practical action in national and international level to alleviate inequality and restore dignity of human being in all aspects of social, political and economic arena.

Pointing to the global phenomenon of terrorism and militancy, the IPU secretary general said, "We should not allow terrorism to occur before you do something about it."

Taking part in debate titled "Role of parliament in preventing outside interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states", Lebanese delegation

proposed that no member country of IPU would finance or assist in terrorism activities.

Most of the member countries supported the Lebanese proposal, and it would be included in the final resolution, an IPU official said.

Talking to reporters after the debate at the BICC, Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad MP Dipu Moni, who led the country's delegation to the programme, said all members of IPU took part in the debate and supported the proposal.

Dipu, also chief of the parliamentary standing committee on foreign affairs, said lawmakers of different countries at the discussion also focused on the MP's role in stopping financial or any sort of assistance to terrorism and militant activities.

In the debate of IPU's standing committee on democracy and human rights, the debate was on how institutions of democracy -- parliament, political parties and elections -- would change between now and 2030.

It was also discussed how parliaments would work to increase the number of people in the society who believe in collaborative, participative, tolerant and transparent process of decision-making in a changing international environment and what parliaments should do in order to reinforce the idea of democratic diversity around the world.

A lawmaker of the United Arab

Emirates said many governments across the world were facing challenges of globalisation.

"We have to take a vow to work for the enhancement of the political participation of all the citizens of the countries," he said.

He said the UAE has established "Ministry of Tolerance and Happiness" to strengthen the social cohesion and effectively ensure happiness of the citizens.

"We have to be tolerant throughout the world and we have to work to achieve social justice."

In the debate, discussants stressed the need for holding free and fair elections and freedom of the press, and they urged the lawmakers to take effective steps to make the parliaments functional.

Kazi Firoz Rashid, an opposition lawmaker of Bangladesh, said Bangladesh was always sincere in protecting human rights, democracy and establishing the rule of law.

"Freedom of the press is essential for flourishing democracy and we have ensured it."

A Ugandan lawmaker said repression of the minority was taking place across the world, and women were also being repressed. "Democracy and repression cannot walk together."

A Palestinian lawmaker said people were being deprived of their rights due to weak democratic system.

S Korea, Japan, US hold drill against N Korea submarines

AFF, Seoul

South Korea, Japan and the US yesterday held a joint naval exercise aimed at countering missile threats from North Korean submarines, Seoul's defense ministry said, amid mounting concerns over the hermit state's weapons programme.

Pyeongyang is on a quest to develop a long-range missile capable of hitting the US mainland with a nuclear warhead, and has so far staged five nuclear tests, two of them last year.

The three-day drills involving more than 800 troops kicked off after US President Donald Trump warned Sunday that the United States is prepared to act unilaterally to deal with North Korea's nuclear program if China proves unwilling to help.

The exercise began off South Korea's southern coast near Japan, featuring multiple naval destroyers and helicopters used in anti-submarine warfare, the ministry said.

HC upholds

FROM PAGE 16
 sale of antibiotics of penicillin and cephalosporin groups, hormonal and anti-cancer drugs by the 28 companies.

It also asked the authorities to explain in two weeks why their inaction to stop the production and marketing of those drugs should not be declared illegal.

The government has recently submitted a report to the HC saying that it has complied with the February 27 order by stopping production and marketing of the drugs by those companies.

The HRPB submitted the writ petition to the HC in February, saying a committee of experts formed on instructions of the Speaker recommended in February last year that the production of the drugs should be stopped as they don't meet the standards (Good Manufacturing Practice) set by the WHO.

The companies against which the HRPB brought allegation of not following GMP are Amico Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Aztec Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Bengal Techno Pharma Ltd, Benham Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Central Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Descent Pharma Ltd, Dr TIM's Laboratory Ltd, Globex Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Greenland Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Inova Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Mks Drugs Ltd, Medimet Laboratories Ltd, Modern Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Mystic Pharmaceuticals Ltd, National Laboratories Ltd, Organic Healthcare Ltd, Oyster Pharma Ltd, Premier Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Prime Pharmaceuticals Ltd, Seema Pharmaceuticals Ltd, United Chemicals Pharmaceuticals Ltd, White

Leopard

FROM PAGE 16
 Kathmandu is close to forested hills and leopards are occasionally known to stray into the city.

In the past birds have posed serious safety problems at the single-runway airport, although stray cattle and dogs have also been known to disrupt flights.

In 2016, a plane with nine passengers was forced to make an emergency landing when a bird struck its right wing.

Nineteen people were killed in 2012 when an aircraft hit a bird and crashed shortly after taking off from the airport.