BNP, AL under allies' | Economic sense | Dhaka to attend

showing keen interest in having Jatiya Party (Ershad) on board their alliances to ensure victory in the election.

But the party [JP-Ershad] itself seems divided over the issue. While a section of JP leaders wants to join the ruling coalition, the others oppose the idea. Party insiders said Ershad will take decision in this regard during the caretaker government rule.

Meanwhile, the plot continues to thicken with Ershad declaring recently that his party would not join any coalition. Addressing a view-exchange meeting in Rangpur on Sunday, he said, "We will contest the next election

Sources said partners of ruling BNP want to finalise seat sharing within a very short time. Jamaat, most significant ally of BNP, has already identified at least 60 seats to contest for. But they have yet to get the nod from the BNP high command regarding this plan.

The Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ), another partner of ruling BNP, had announced that they would nominate candidates for 17 seats in the next election, Fazlul Hug Amini, leader of an IOJ faction, has expressed a desire to contest from Sunamaani-2 in addition to his regular constituency at Brahmanbaria. But BNP leaders are not happy with some of the IOJ leaders'activities.

Sources said Jamaat has expressed dissatisfaction over the move to have JP-Ershad in their coalition. Jamaat policymakers fear the JP's joining the coalition will mean for them [Jamaat] less importance within the alliance. JP-Ershad will be allotted at least 50 seats in the northern districts, they think.

"Jamaat is now more organised and has expanded its organisational activities across the country during the present regime. The foundation of the party is stronger than ever before and I know all these factors will be considered," Jamaat chief Motiur Rahman Nizami told a private television chan-

On Nizami's comment, Law Minister Moudud Ahmad has said it is premature to discuss the matter [seat sharing].

In 2001 election, Jamaat as a coalition partner contested at 31 constituencies and won 17 seats while the IOJ won only two of the seven seats they contested for. Later, two more IOJ candidates won the byelections in Narail and Sunamganj. Bangladesh Jatiya Party (JP-

Naziur), another partner of the ruling coalition, won four of the eleven seats it was allocated. This time the party will seek more seats, sources said.

A BJP leader told The Daily Star that their chairman Naziur Rahman

Maniur will contest at two constituencies including Bhola-1, from where the State minister for Religious Affairs Mosharraf Hossain Shahjahan was elected in 2001.

Sources said Naziur is now bargaining with both BNP and AL over seat sharing. His son Andaliv Rahman Partho will also contest the next election from a constituency in Bhola

The AL allies in 14-party want AL to come clean about its position on seat sharing for the next election. Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon and JSD President Hasanul Hug Inu said the 14 party alliance should start working on seat sharing alongside the ongoing movement for electoral

"The Workers Party is planning to field candidates at 40 constituencies and I think it will be finalised on discussion within the opposition combine, Menon told The Daily Star yesterday. "Seat sharing should be the main topic for us to discuss after forcing the government to accept the reform oposals," he added.

AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil who is also the co-ordinator of 14-party alliance has said that they will take decision on it later. "When the election is still in doubt, how should we discuss seat sharing now?" he questioned.

20-year-old

July 9 the same year.

The IO also prayed for discharge order acquitting Jahangir and four others from the case to the trial court.

The case was then transferred to the Second Court for Prevention of Public Safety Disturbance Crime. Dhaka for its quick disposal.

The court took up the case for trial on July 29, 2001 and after examining all documents of the case, the judge discharged Jahangir and four others

The court staff did not send any discharge order for Jahangir's release despite the court order. As a result, Jahangir had been in custody for over five years.

When reached, peshker (staff) of the court Mohammad Mojibur Rahman told The Daily Star that he knew nothing about the incident and his predecessor peshker should be able to answer why the discharge order was not sent for Jahangir's

Rahman's predecessor peshker was not available for his comment as the PSA court had earlier been dissolved and he was transferred to another district.

Jahangir's lawyer Mozammel Haq Chowdhury regretted the negligence and expressed his dissatisfaction over his client's loss of five invaluable

US custody to interrogation centres

countries: Egypt, Poland and

dismissed the report, saying it

flying up to 150 of the most serious

suspected terrorists from one

country to another, but said they

receive "diplomatic assurances"

from authorities that they will not use

torture on the detainees they

The January report said President Bush "has made clear

that the United States stands

against and will not tolerate torture

had to take up the new task of updat-

EC Secretariat to explain in detail

about the expenditure for preparing

the fresh electoral roll when the

secretariat made a fresh demand for

releasing another Tk 40 crore for the

ongoing task of updating the voter

submitted about a 100-page docu-

ment to the finance ministry describ-

ing different expenditures of its

scrutinise the Election Commission

Secretariat papers and take deci-

sion," said a finance ministry

source. "So, we are emphasising on

the legal aspects of releasing funds

for the same organisation twice," he

Rahman Chowdhury told journalists

yesterday that the matter regarding

the EC proposal for fresh fund will

any formal decision about the EC

proposal will not be taken before

next Sunday as the finance minister

now in Iran and due back on

"By this time, if there is any

positive sign from the government

high-ups for releasing fresh fund for

the EC, we will verbally notify them

to expend the money," the source

added. "The official order will come

after the minister's return," he said.

A ministry source, however, said

be resolved within a week.

Finance Secretary Siddiqur

"It will take at least six months to

previous work.

added

On Sunday, the EC Secretariat

The finance ministry asked the

under any circumstances.'

ing the existing voter list.

Finance finds

lacked firm new evidence.

Britain and the United States

US officials have acknowledged

Amnesty accuses

Amnesty's Middle East and North Africa unit and an author of the

The United States has consistently said it does not permit suspects to be shipped to countries that

The report said more than 100 defendants in terrorism-related trials in Jordan have complained over the past decade of being

subjected to torture by Jordan's General Intelligence Department. The Amnesty report called on Jordan to end its practice of holding

In an 87-page report filed in suspects in secrecy, reduce the January with a United Nations powers of the General Intelligence committee, the United States Department, promptly investigate insisted it is "unequivocally and punish any cases of torture and opposed" to torture and that its stop participating in US renditions. commitment to the ban "remains unchanged.'

In June, a Council of Europe investigator concluded that most European states had facilitated the rendition of terrorism suspects from

Judges killing

matter after two weeks

Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Abdur Rauf Miah yesterday moved for the prayer in the court while DAG Md Helal Uddin Mollah and DAG ABM Waliur Rahman assisted him.

A Barisal court on May 29 awarded death sentences to JMB chief Abdur Rahman, his deputy Siddigul Islam Bangla Bhai and five other militants and acquitted one in the sensational Jhalakathi judges' killing case.

The others to walk the gallows are JMB Mailish-e-Shura members Ataur Rahman Sunny, Abdul Awal and Khaled Saifullah, suicide bomber Iftekhar Hasan Al Mamun and Asadur Rahman Arif. Arif is still at large.

Immediately after the lower court's verdict, the government took steps for quick disposal of the militants' death reference case as over 500 cases still await paper book preparation and death reference hearing before the HC.

Currently, paper books are being prepared for the cases of 2003. If the paper book for the Jhalakathi case were prepared in the usual manner, the HC hearing on death sentences of the militants would not be held before 2009.

On the government's instructions, the attorney general's office in June petitioned the HC to give priority in preparing the paper book for the death reference case. The HC granted the prayer on June 15. After completion of the paper book the government moved in the death reference bench for hearing of the

discord the two countries are now developing economic relations considering economic benefits. She said the ADB is interested in developing regional cooperation by

providing assistance in transport, port and energy sectors. She described the next election as a "major internal challenge" for the country and said it is critical to keep up the reform momentum in the lead

up to the elections. "A number of challenges continue to pose risks to the macroeconomic performance in the period ahead. These include political transition, weakness in the infrastructure and the under-pricing of energy products." she said.

The ADB country director also disagreed with the Transparency International's label of Bangladesh as the most corrupt country. "I never agreed that Bangladesh is the most corrupt country. Maybe, there are corrupt officials, but how can an entire country be corrupt?" she said.

"Of course, there is corruption in this country, but at the same time there are many honest people...We need to work on it and address the problem," she added.

Describing some landmark proects of the ADB in Bangladesh, Hua Du said the bank is considering to support the construction of the Padma Multipurpose Bridge by financing \$300 million.

She said the amount includes \$25 million for the detailed engineering design of the bridge and safeguarding issues like its environmental and social impact.

Hua Du said under the Gas Transmission and Development Project approved last year, four gas pipelines totalling 353km would be constructed to transport about 360 million cubic feet natural gas per day to the country's less developed western region that includes districts such as Raishahi and Khulna, coverng an area with a population of nearly

India, Pakistan

FROM PAGE 16

The Saran-Khan talks were to review progress in the peace process, launched in 2004 after the nuclear-powered rivals came close to the brink of another war.

The peace process has made slow progress, particularly over the central dispute over Kashmir.

In recent months, rising separatst violence in Kashmir had hurt momentum with India accusing Pakistan of failing to keep a promise that it would not allow its territory to be used by anti-Indian militants.

Open fire

Pointing to some other problems including corruption at Chittagong port, he said the garment owners are "extorted at several stages at the port". The exporters have to pay an extra \$1 lakh dollar on each ship at the Chittagong port, he noted. BGMEA President SM Fazlul

Hoque said the garment owners want to get rid of the huge hidden expenditure that they now have to

'They say we exploit the workers but there is none to say that the garment owners in fact are being exploited "he added

In addition to paying Tk 2,500 to the state coffers, a factory owner has to pay the customs officials Tk 10,000 and this trend needs to be changed, he argued.

Fazlul said getting imports cleared on time is another big problem for the garment owners. Moreover, electricity crisis has pushed up the production cost to a much higher level, he added.

Commerce Secretary Firoz Ahmed called on the garment owners to do their best regarding wages of the workers.

EC sounds

FROM PAGE 1 home, could not gain enough pace even vesterday.

The assistant registration offi-

cers (ARO) are repeatedly saying that many assistant officials have refused to join the work. 'Ten of 59 assistant officials

applied to me today seeking relief from the task." Abul Kalam Mostafa. an ARO and also headmaster of Mirpur Government High School, yesterday said, adding, "Those who applied seeking relief did not join the

"Only 15 of the required 25 officials are now working. The rest refuse to work saying that they did not get payment for their work during preparation of the 'controversial' fresh voter list." Kazi Abdur Razzak, ARO of Mohammadpur in the capital, told reporters on Sudnay.

In many rural areas, the task is yet to begin, as there is confusion among the assistant officials due to uncertainty of the remuneration as well as non-communication about their recruitment and lack of adequate publicity.

Our Nilphamari correspondent adds: The task of voter list update is yet to get momentum as the assistant officials who were recruited for door to door visit expressed unwillingness to do the job. In the situation, the deputy commissioner has warned of 'stern action' for failure to do the job properly.

None of the EC officials visited the Jahangirnagar University (JU) campus in last four days although over 10,000 people including students and teachers are eligible for being registered as voters, reports

our JU correspondent. Our Khagrachhari correspondent reports: Most of the officials recruited for updating the voter list in the area did not know about their appointment for the job

will exchange views on regional and

international security issues. The meeting, he said, will review the outcomes of a number of expertlevel meetings and adopt ARF statements on disaster management and emergency response, fighting cyber-terrorism and promoting people-oriented approach to counter terrorism.

"Bangladesh's presence will strengthen South Asian participation in the ARF process along with India and Pakistan," the foreign secretary said.

Replying to a question. Hemayetuddin said having experience in peacekeeping and disaster management, Bangladesh will share its experiences with ARF

On the sidelines of the ARF meet, Foreign Minister Morshed Khan will hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts, the foreign

Hemavetuddin said he will not rule out the possibility of Morshed Khan's meeting with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who will attend the ARF meeting.

preventive diplomacy.

member countries Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Ten dialogue partners of the forum are Australia, Canada, China, EU, India, Japan, New Zealand States.

was admitted to the ARF in 2005.

14-party long march

Obaidul Quader said grenade attacks might be carried out to foil the road march programme. He also said the ruling party cadres might take to the streets to foil the

He said the government would be responsible if any attacks were carried out or any untoward incidents took place.

officials of law enforcement agencies on Sunday directed them to deploy Battalion (Rab) to keep close eyes on the proceedings so that no untoward incidents took place during the opposition programme.

enforcers will be deployed to maintain law and order.

on Sunday requested people not to carry sticks, sharp weapons or explosives during the 14-party opposition combine's road march programme. The restrictions have been imposed to keep law and order in the city and ensuring security to public life and property, said a DMP press release. The opposition alliance

announced the six-day road march from today to July 30 aiming to involve thousands of people in the street agitation to compel the BNP-Jamaat alliance government to accept reforms in the caretaker government and in the election commission (EC). Today the march will begin from

Abdullahpur in Tongi at 4:00pm and head for Mohakhali in the capital Senior leaders of the opposition alliance will also take part. The opposition leaders claimed they would mobilise around one lakh people for the programme.

start from Narayangani Ring Road

64 more dengue India tests

Identifying the locality of dengueaffected patients, the DCC officials are arranging spray of insecticides and larvaecides within 500 yards of the affected areas to keep the situation under control.

Putting emphasis on keeping the surroundings clean, DCC authorities have urged people not to get panicked.

The period between May and August usually experiences dengue outbreak every year, as aedes mosquito, which is the carrier of dengu virus, breeds during the rains.

PCJSS member

work sources said

quoted the locals as saying

BDR, BSF trade

Following the incident, the Indian border guards have reinforced their

BDR too has been put on alert to avoid untoward incidents, BDR

SC asks

FROM PAGE 1 After the AG's submission, barrister Amir UI Islam, the intervener of the case, told the court that the government did not maintain 12-point SC

directives for the implementation of

the separation of judiciary. The full bench of the SC Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed JR Mudassir Husain asked barrister Amir to submit a comparative chart showing which actions of the government do not match with the directives of the SC.

The court fixed Thursday for next nearing of the case.

The nine government officials who have been facing contempt charge for distortion of the 12-point directives of the SC were also present at the court

Established in 1994, ARF has been dealing with security issues as confidence building measures (CBM), peacekeeping, disaster relief, counter-terrorism, transnational crimes, maritime security and

The forum comprises Asean

South Korea, Russia and the United Papua New Guinea, North

Korea, Mongolia and Pakistan are observers to the forum. East Timo

Nayabazar [2nd Buriganga Bridge] to

Muktangon in the capital, and Amin

Bazar to Russell Square in

similar programmes across the

country from July 27 to 28 at union

parishad and district headquarters.

The opposition will also organise

In view of the road march, the

Police arrested around 2,000

police have started rounding up

opposition activists in the capital and

people across the country, including

267 in the capital, on various charges

until 8:00pm yesterday, said a police

termed the arrests 'a planned BNP-

Jamaat government measure to foil

the road march'. A senior police

official preferring not to be named

denied allegations of 'mass arrest'

and said the arrests were 'routine

The opposition combine has

taken all out measures to make the

road march successful and for this

they held a series of preparatory

meetings with the leaders of both the

city and districts adjacent to the

central office in the capital and urged

the people to make the marches a

Secretary Abdul Jalil, also the coordi-

nator of the opposition alliance.

protested the mass arrest and

warned the government of tougher

and vigorous movements if they tried

to foil the march. He also vowed to

resist any election in the country

before implementation of the reforms

in the caretaker government and the

Agni III ballistic missile, with a range

of 4,000 kilometres (2,480 miles),

failed during a trial launch earlier this

the army, airforce and the navy and

can carry a 15-kilogram (33-pound)

conventional warhead up to nine

from the Chandipur-on-Sea range,

200 kilometres (124 mies) northeast

of the Orissa capital of

Bhubaneshwar, officials said on

They declined to say whether the

The Trishul has previously under-

gone tests for its sea-skimming role

and also against land-based and

three of the five guided-missile

systems it developed as part of an

ambitious programme launched in

1983 to become self-reliant in missile

technology.
India, which tested a series of

nuclear devices in 1998, has already

Nuclear-armed rivals India and

developed and deployed two ballistic

Pakistan have fought three wars, two

over the disputed Himalayan region

would require Iran to suspend all

package of incentives in exchange

for a suspension of enrichment.

missiles and a surface missile.

Iran stays

India has stepped up the testing of

All three Trishul launches were

kilometres (5.5 miles).

tests were successful.

airborne targets.

Monday

The Trishul is designed for use by

The AL also held a meeting at its

Chairing the meeting AL General

police activities'.

The 14-party opposition combine

n other places of the country.

Dhanmondi on July 30.

and end at Jatrabari. On July 29 from

programme.

The state minister for home affairs at an emergency meeting with the top members of police and Rapid Action

Sources said around 10.000 law

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP)

Tomorrow the road march will

The armed men sprayed bullets on him as he fell down after the first shot to confirm his death, Jana Sanghati Samity sources and police

An armed group of UPDF had kidnapped Jana Sanghati Samity supporter Samaraj, 35, of Bhaibonchhara village of the same upazila on July 18. Samaraj is yet to be traced. The Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity suspects he may have been killed by rivals.

position along the border.

uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities. The five permanent Security Council members plus Germany decided to send the Iran nuclear dossier back to the Security Council after Tehran failed to respond to a

> Elham said that Iran "still considers the European offer a good opportunity to sort out Iran's nuclear issue with dialogue and diplomacy". Iran insists it wants to enrich uranium solely to make reactor fuel

Top nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani said Iran would respond to the nuclear offer by August 22.

and argues that this is a right under

the nuclear Non-Proliferation

Iran warned Sunday that it would retaliate against any Security Council resolution ordering it to stop uranium enrichment.

Steps taken

FROM PAGE 1 the Lebanon airport was damaged

in bombardment The government would then arrange ships or chartered aircraft to bring the expatriates home.

IOM, however, is experiencing fund crisis and currently they are discussing fund-raising strategies with various governments. If unsuccessful, they might ask the governments to transport their own nationals at their own expense.

The foreign secretary at the briefing continued by saying that the Bangladesh high commissioners in Jordan and Egypt and honorary consuls in Beirut and Syria have been instructed to extend all possible assistance to any Bangladeshi citizen-in-distress.

He. however, said that there have been no reports of Bangladeshi casualties in the Israeli attacks so far.

A source in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told The Daily Star that most of the 10,000 Bangladeshis residing in Lebanon are without valid documents and this situation might deter them from registering to come home. A BBC report said, responding to

an appeal by the Sri Lankan govern-

ment, the IOM transported 270 Sri

Lankan citizens out of Lebanon in two convoys on Thursday and An Indian warship carried 600 evacuees to Cyprus on Thursday and an Air India plane brought 261

Indians to Mumbai, and the rest to

RU classes

Madras (Chennai).

Following university Proctor Enamul Haque and students' adviser Prof Zahid Hassan Milky's meeting with the aggrieved students. Vicechancellor Prof Altaf Hossain called the students and teachers of marketing department at his residence and discussed students' demands. After assurance by the vice-

person will not be recruited, the agitating students withdrew their sitin programme and went back to their department. Earlier, the students boycotted their classes and examinations and

formed a human chain on the cam-

pus demanding cancellation of the

chancellor that the 'controversial'

Meherpur

FROM PAGE 16

A team of Rapid Action Battalion entered the campus at about 11:00am and beat up students. They picked up two others and handed them over to police.

chased the transport workers and the law enforcers and snatched the two students from the policemen. The authorities declared the

After the incident, the students

college closed for an indefinite

Karnaphuli bridge FROM PAGE 1 served a legal notice in this connection to the ministries of communications, shipping, and environment and the chief engineer of Roads and Highways Department, the project

director of the third Karnaphuli

bridge project and China Major Bridge Company. But the authorities concerned did not respond to the The petitioner said if the construction of the bridge is based on the faulty design ignoring the experts' recommendation, it would cause excess sedimentation in the Karnaphuli river resulting in the loss of navigability and adversely affect

public property in violation of Articles 31 and 32 of the constitu-Advocate Asaduzzaman moved the case on behalf of the petitioner.

the port channel. Therefore, such

construction will cause ruination of

Nepal scraps

FROM PAGE 16

earlier this month, the interim government slashed public funds for the monarchy by almost 71 percent. In June, the newly reinstated parliament voted to strip Gyanendra of all political power and control of the 90,000-strong army.

The king sacked the government and took absolute power in February 2005. But an alliance of Gyanendra reinstating parliament.

The rebels and the new interim government are now engaged in a peace process aimed at sharing power to end a decade-old insurgency that has claimed more than

FROM PAGE 16 plutonium production capacity for its

nuclear weapons programme? "South Asia may be heading for a

nuclear arms race that could lead to arsenals growing into the hundreds of nuclear weapons, or at minimum, vastly expanded stockpiles of military fissile material. Pakistani officials would neither

tute's estimates.

tion of anonymity, acknowledged that a nuclear expansion was under way, the Post reported. The newspaper reported that a Europe-based diplomat and nuclear expert and a US-based expert who reviewed the commercially available satellite images and supporting

Rice in Lebanon

Beirut in what US officials said was a "show of support" for Lebanon.

"We believe that a ceasefire is urgent." Rice told reporters en route to the region, where she is also due to hold talks with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and then Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas.

"It is however important to have conditions that make it sustainable."

The visit came as Washington appeared increasingly estranged from European and Arab allies over Israel's massive onslaught that has set off fears of a humanitarian catastrophe as thousands of foreigners and Lebanese flee

At least 363 people have been

killed in Lebanon, along with 37 confirmed Israelis, in the deadliest crossborder conflict since the Jewish state invaded its northern neighbour in 1982, triggering accusations that it was using excessive force to stop Hezbollah

Israel, which is struggling to knock out Hezbollah despite its vastly superior military might, has suggested it would accept some form of international peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon.

Despite the stepped-up diplomacy. fighting continued as Israeli forces moved towards Bint Jbeil, the largest town in the border zone and a Hezbollah stronghold, after taking control of the nearby strategic village

of Marun al-Ras Al-Jazeera television reported that two soldiers were killed but this was

not confirmed by Israel. "Heavy exchanges of fire, with automatic weapons and anti-tank rockets, is taking place this morning between Israeli soldiers advancing from Marun al-Ras toward Bint Jbeil... and Hezbollah combattants," a local police officer said.

The army also said two Hezbollah militiamen captured by troops near Marun al-Ras on Sunday had been brought to Israel

Washington has come under increasing pressure for bold action amid criticism it is stalling to allow Israel time to attempt to wipe out Hezbollah, which set off the conflict after seizing two Israeli soldiers on July But Hezbollah chief Hassan

the rocket fire, and ruling out any efforts for a negotiated settlement unless it involved a prisoner swap. "We are truly in a state of war and Hezbollah's priority is to stop the savage Zionist aggression on I ehanon." he told As-Safir newspaper. "We do not feel that we are currently

Nasrallah remained defiant, vowing

that deeper incursions would not stop

interested in discussing ideas or nitiatives.' One person was killed in a new round of air strikes on Monday on southern Lebanon, which has borne

the brunt of the bombardments.

Streams of people, many waving white flags, have been making a desperate trek from the area after Israel ordered them to leave their homes, raising fears it was planning a large-scale ground invasion. And as the grim death toll mounts,

so has international criticism of the offensive, which has left Lebanon virtually cut off from the world, made hundreds of thousands of people refugees in their own country and destroyed billions of dollars of infrastructure. The United Nations launched an

urgent appeal for 150 million dollars

Monday to help hundreds of thou-

sands of civilians displaced by Israeli attacks on Lebanon. The sum included an appeal by the UN Children's Fund (Unicef) for 23.8 million dollars for Lebanese children who have borne the brunt of Israel's military onslaught on the country, the

agency said in a statement. The appeal is part of the overall UN flash appeal for 150 million dol-

lars." it said. UN humanitarian coordinator Jan Egeland, in Lebanon to launch a urgent appeal for funds for half a million people made homeless by Israel's onslaught, criticised both Israel

"My position is very clear - the hostilities must stop immediately. Civilian populations are not targets.

and Hezbollah for attacking civilians.

That is against the law, humanitarian law," he said on a visit to a refugee centre in the mountains east of Beirut.

Even a minister from close US ally Britain, which had drawn Arab anger for appearing to back US support of the bombardment, has described Israel's tactics as "very difficult to understand". Israel's ambassador to the United

States rejected the criticism, saving the assault had dealt a "real blow" to Hezbollah, damaging the group's arsenal and killing a "few hundred" of its fighters. But in the first openly expressed

reservations by an Israeli minister on the success of the offensive, minister without portfolio Eitan Cabel said: "I admit I had hoped for better from the General Udi Adam, the com-

mander of Israel's northern military

region, said the offensive will continue for "several weeks" although it now appears Israel has backed off from a Before her departure from the United States, Rice and President George W. Bush met visiting Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-

Faisal, who was also reported to have presented concrete plans for a truce. White House officials said President Bush remains opposed to an immediate ceasefire to stop violence in the Middle East, despite personal pleas from ally Saudi Arabia that he help stop the bloodshed.

Saudi officials said he proposed an

exchange of prisoners between

Hezbollah and Israel, something the Israeli government has so far ruled out without the prior release of the two Svria, which backs Hezbollah and is blamed by the United States for

no choice but to respond.

Israel invaded Lebanon it would have

ous Syrian offer of dialogue in characteristically blunt fashion, saying "Syria doesn't need dialogue to know what they need to do."

troops from European Union coun-Its mandate "will have to include control of the border crossings between Svria and Lebanon, deploy-

the Lebanese army," he said. As the bombardments continue across Lebanon, foreign governments have been forced to lay on a flotilla of ferries, warships and cruise liners to evacuate stranded nationals, mainly to the nearby resort island of Cyprus which has been battling to find temporary accommodation and flights for the

match his or his Aunt's names on the passenger list. The immigration police made frantic efforts to trace his family but

According to Aloysius, he arrived at ZIA from Lagos with his aunt Rose on Sunday at 10:38am.

"My aunt went to pick up our uggage but did not come back,' "The problem is no one showed

out which flight brought them in Asked about their plan of action if no one ever shows up to receive the

mon fund". Several senior jail officials strongly criticised the move as well as

the IG's explanation terming it "a

"Are the jails trade centres?...The authorities cannot collect money since there is a clear prohibition," a senior jail superintendent told The Daily Star yesterday seeking ano-

public exchequer and were spent for the prison-run schools and mosques. Collection of money from these

sought, the Prisons Directorate gets fund for holding special events. Some jail officials alleged that the formation of the common fund is a

But IG Prisons Zakir Hossain said the money from the common fund will be spent for small repair work, cultural functions, sports and special dinners. "It takes a long time to do the

repair work through the proper chan-

nel. Now we can do it with our own

A three-member committee comprising the iail superintendent. jailer or deputy jailer, and a cleric at each prison is maintaining the common fund, he said. On the allegation of shifting Tk 2

lakh from the fund of Dhaka Central Jail mosque to the common fund, the IG Prisons said, "It is not true. I have heard that Tk 10 used to be collected from each visitor for the mosque fund before I took over. But it has been stopped.

of Kashmir, and frequently test-fire seven political parties working with missiles. Under an agreement, each Maoist rebels organised mass side is notified in advance of missile FROM PAGE 16 protests in April that lead to earned used to be spent for the

lame excuse" Pakistan

inside the prisons, crops, fruits, trees, canteens and the shops used to go to confirm or deny the report, but a senior Pakistani official, speaking on condi-

> of the earnings from the shops, canteens, nurseries and ponds goes to the common fund. "Fish and vegetables grown at the prisons are used for the inmates." he claimed.

data concurred fully with the insti-

stoking the conflict, has warned that if

"What will we do? Stand by with our arms folded? Absolutely not. Without any doubt Syria will intervene in the conflict," Information Minister Moshen Bilal told a Spanish newspaper. US ambassador to the United

Nations John Bolton rebuffed a previ-

Olmert, whose army is also fighting a second deadly offensive in the Gaza Strip that has left over 100 Palestinians dead, said he would accept a peacekeeping force in Lebanon "made up of

ment in south Lebanon and support for

summer holiday season.

Aunt deserts

estimated 70,000 evacuees at peak

without any success as of vesterday evening.

"We were scheduled to fly for London to go to my parents' place,' he told the immigration police.

up to receive the boy," an immigration police officer at ZIA told The Daily Star yesterday. "Our task would be much easier had we found

We're trying to trace the flight." boy, the officer said, "He will be in

Prisons break rule

prison-run primary schools and mosques, it now goes to the "com-

Incomes of prisons from other sources like the ponds and nurseries

earnings for the common fund has taken a lot of flak from many jail officials who see it as a misuse of prisons' earnings. The IG Prisons said only a portion

"We decided to form a common fund with portion of the earnings to

added Aloysius.

our custody and we will try to locate

meet the expenses of some everyday activities and special events," he Some officials, however, said if

move to use the prisons' funds for the luxury of the senior officials. There is even no system of audit of this fund," said an official.

fund." he explained.