

# Volatile politics drives

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positive direction."

The Daily Star correspondent raised these issues with Koji Nojima, chief of the Japan-Bangladesh Joint Committee for Commerce and Economic Cooperation. He noted that hartal is also a big hurdle. "It's a major concern for investors because a hartal brings in enormous loss for them."

Japanese business leaders have discussed the hartal issue with both Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and leader of the opposition Sheikh Hasina. But whoever is in the opposition takes the side of enforcing hartals, making the investors nervous.

They are also unnerved about the way the government deals with tenders which are specially funded by Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA). "Its Japanese taxpayers money. But for some unknown reasons, we get to see that Japanese companies do not win any tender despite their merits. All contracts go to Chinese or Korean contractors. This is certainly another hurdle," quips Nojima.

A recent example of such bid manipulation is the sixth tendering of the Japan funded 90 megawatt Fenchuganj project. A disqualified Chinese company, Harbin, was awarded this contract while a Japanese bidder withdrew from the tender complaining that the government is clearly siding with Harbin for unknown reasons. Sources in the tendering process said that lobbying and undue benefits actually decided who gets the contract.

"I believe major contracts under Japanese ODA should go to Japanese companies," Nojima added.

"I also believe that yen loans should be dedicated for infrastructure developmentconstruction of bridges, development of export processing zones (EPZs), power plants for the EPZsthings which will benefit among others, the Japanese investors," Nojima pointed out.

The veteran businessman pointed out to stimulate Japanese investment in Bangladesh, the country must have a clear idea about its economic goals.

"I don't see any clear policy focus of Bangladesh in industrial development. Whereas, after the second world war, Japan took 5 billion dollars loan from the USA to reconstruct the country till 1952. In the following 14 years, Japan took another 850 million dollars from the USA to build its infrastructure. In 1990, we paid back our loans and we grew because our government had a clear centralized focus," Nojima said, "but tell me what is the focus (of using loans and investment) of Bangladesh?"

"You need to develop major export products other than garments and textiles. Bangladesh must also emphasise on setting up

infrastructures within the EPZs. We have some Japanese companies in the EPZs. For an example, a Japanese company is polishing camera and golf parts, a sudden power breakdown or water shortage will lead to his big loss. I request Bangladesh government to divert its yen loans to the EPZ to make sure such matters do not hurt the investors," Nojima pointed out.

"The world is changing. Anti-Japanese demonstrations in China are holding many Japanese investors from pumping in more money in China (which has been a major investment recipient in recent times). They are moving to India, Vietnam and Thailand. Bangladesh can be an ideal location too."

"Now is the right time for Bangladesh to do right things and give right signals to attract Japanese investment," he pointed out.

Bangladesh Ambassador to Japan, M Serajul Islam, also believes that this is the right time for Bangladesh to draw Japan's attention. "For Japan, getting into the UN Security Council is a major issue and Bangladesh is giving support to Japan. This also gives Bangladesh a position to negotiate good deals," he pointed out.

"Japanese investment in China is now sagging and the investment is now diverting to other Asian countries," Islam added.

"Frankly, investors will come to Bangladesh when they will see profits. Our investment package is good. They can get duty free access in some exports. So there is no doubt that this is the time when Bangladesh should ask Japanese investors to come in," he pointed out.

## Correction

Yesterday's Daily Star report headlined "Mosharraf quits on car scam" on the resignation of AKM Mosharraf Hossain, state minister for energy, erroneously mentioned that the minister received a Tk 1 crore Lexus car from Niko Resources. Actually the model of the car is Toyota Land cruiser Cygnus. A pre-imported price of 4,700cc Cygnus 2005 model in question is US \$64,800, which is equivalent to nearly Tk 39 lakh. We regret the inadvertent error.

## 40 Indian

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"Presently, there are only four such crocodiles in the country, two each in Chittagong Zoo and Khan Jahan Ali's mazar in Bagerhat, and the four have long been suffering from old age complications," said Dr Tapan Kumar Dey, project director of the safari park.

Dr Tapan, who is also divisional forest officer (DFO) of Wildlife Management and Nature Preservation Department, said the main objective of the Safari Park is breeding, rehabilitation and preservation of rare and near-extinct wildlife of different areas of the country.

Forest and environment ministry took an initiative for this purpose in 2003 and sought assistance from the Indian government to collect freshwater crocodiles. "After this request, the Crocodile Bank Trust of Madras agreed to provide us the 40 crocodiles," Dr Tapan said, adding that 32 of the crocodiles are female and eight male.

Three species of crocodiles now found in the subcontinent are salinewater crocodiles (*Crocodi lus palustris*), freshwater crocodiles (*Crocodi lus porosus*) and gharial crocodiles (*Gavialis gangeticus*), he said.

The entrance near which the attack took place is a main entrance for civilian employees working in the Green Zone, as well as for journalists and other visitors to the area, which also houses the US and British embassies.

# Bidisha denied bail

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The court also fixed July 4 for next hearing on the issue with lower court documents.

Earlier on Saturday, the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM's) Court rejected Bidisha's bail petition.

Moving the bail petition yesterday, defence counsel Zahurul Islam told the judge's court that police seized some documents from Ershad's 'President Park' residence and filed the case against Bidisha. But why the case was filed against her, the lawyer asked.

Defence lawyers Kazi M Sajwar Hossain and Kamruzzaman Mahub told the court that though their client was seriously ill, she was tortured during her remand.

They also submitted that Bidisha was not getting proper treatment at the prison cell of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMUH). Earlier, She was granted ad-interim bail in three cases, filed by Ershad and police.

But police filed the money laundering case when Bidisha was about to be released from jail on Thursday.

The counsels for Bidisha also said the case was filed to harass her politically, and the government has done it for petty gains. Ershad too should be accused in the case as the date of occurrence was during their conjugal life. If the former president is made an accused, vital clues to what really happened will come out, they said.

Moreover, the legal provision under which the charge has been brought against allows bail, the lawyers argued.

## 3 lynched

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the extortionists red handed when they came to Baitun Noor mosque at 3pm to collect the toll. They were beaten to death then and there.

Eyewitnesses said the extortionists were killed by a group of plainclothes policemen. A senior officer of Khulna Metropolitan Police denied the allegation.

The dead bodies are now lying in the morgue of Khulna Medical College Hospital. A general diary was filed with Sonadanga thana this evening in this connection.

In another incident, an extremist was lynched by an angry mob at Sonakhali under Fakirchat upazila of Bagerhat early yesterday morning.

According to police, a group of extremists assembled at Sonakhali village to prepare for a criminal mission. One of them was caught by an angry mob and beaten to death, while the others managed to escape, police said.

Earlier on Saturday night, two snatchers were severely injured when they came under attack by an angry mob at the Picture Palace Cinema Hall Square under Khulna thana. The injured were identified as Masum, 30 and Babu, 32. They are undergoing treatment in the Khulna general Hospital.

According to eyewitnesses, the snatchers were attacked when running away after snatching money from a woman. Eyewitnesses added that Masum and Babu identify themselves as police informers and realise tolls from unauthorised roadside stops.

## Shaheed Minar

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Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is expected to lay the foundation stone of the Shaheed Minar during her visit to Tokyo next month.

The Bangladesh embassy in Japan and the Japan-Bangladesh Society (JBS) have jointly initiated erecting the Shaheed Minar. Expatriate Bangladeshis have also come forward to help materialise the move.

Young Bangladeshi architect and researcher at Chiba University Masum Iqbal, a JBS member, had first proposed erecting a Shaheed Minar in the Japanese capital.

He made the proposal at a discussion meeting organised by Bangladesh Journalists and Writers Forum in connection with observance of International Mother Language Day by a Tokyo-based Bangla newspaper Probas on February 20.

TV personalities Shykh Siraj and Saifulah Mahmud Dulal, novelist Imdadul Haque Milon and journalist Monir Haider attended the discussion.

The expats also organise Boishakh Mela at Ike Bukuro Nishiguchi Park every year.

The Mela committee presented a replica of the Shaheed Minar designed by Hossain Munir to Md Sirajul Islam, Bangladesh ambassador to Japan. Sirajul later forwarded it to authorities of Toshima Ward, who permitted construction of the monument.

The Bangladesh mission, Mela committee, JBS, Journalists Writers Forum, different expats' organisations have joined hands to implement the proposal.

## Tk 240cr revenue

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do not maintain accurate statistics of their export and import activities to abuse the facility, the official added.

Around 90 percent of the misuse took place in the readymade garment sector and the remaining 10 percent in the backward linkage industries.

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) sources said the association itself is now monitoring the use of bond facilities. But they denied the involvement of the BGMEA members in the abuse.

"No BGMEA member can abuse the facility due to constant and automated monitoring and observation by the association," a BGMEA leader claimed.

Another businessman said the misuse of bond facilities in connivance with some government officials is rampant and it poses a threat to the genuine exporters.

He said the authorities have cancelled and suspended licences of the dishonest businessmen but the corrupt customs officials have gone unpunished as no departmental action has been taken against them.

The bond commissionerate recently initiated a move to stop the fraudulent activities and requested the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Department to deploy their officials to check the misuse of bond facility.

In order to stop the malpractice, the commissionerate has planned to introduce several new requirements for taking a bond licence from the 2005-06 fiscal year.

The businessmen applying for bond licence will have to inform the commissionerate about their production capacity and manpower, utility service status and potential market.

The commissionerate will make it mandatory for the licence seekers to place catalogues and detailed description of machines to be imported.

The government set up the commissionerate to issue the licence and monitor bonded warehouse facility in 2000 to the cent percent export oriented industries, especially the readymade garment and its backward linkage industries.

The commissionerate has already issued 4,373 licences.

A National Board of Revenue official said the government earned Tk 403 crore in revenue through the customs bond commissionerate in the current fiscal.

# CPD identifies

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"collective failure."

He stressed the need for political dialogues to overcome the failure.

Saifur claimed the proposed budget was the reflection of the philosophy of the current political government. "This is a political government, we have the people's mandate and it is normal that our commitment will be reflected in the budget."

The minister claimed that whatever measures were proposed in the budget were in the right directions. "We know very well what people want and what are their requirements because we move around the country," he noted.

"But it is very difficult to understand people's norms sitting in a five-star hotel and living in the capital," the minister said pointing at the city-based economists and researchers.

On the challenges of budget implementation, Saifur said nowhere in the world budget is implemented 100 percent. "Comparing to many other countries, our process of budget implementation is in much better position," he claimed.

About the continuation of the provision for whitening black money, the minister said the measures were taken considering the economic reality of the country.

Explaining the reality, Saifur referred to various decisions taken recently to bring dynamism in the economy. In this regard, he mentioned the introduction of floating exchange rate, full freedom of import and enacting Anti-Money Laundering Act.

Responding to the criticism of keeping huge amount of money as block allocation in the budget, the finance minister said the money has been kept to face natural disaster or any emergency situation in the country.

The minister denied the allegation of ignoring the areas belonging to the opposition lawmakers while making budgetary allocations for development. "It might happen as an isolated case but it is not our policy," he said.

CPD Chairman Prof Rehman Sobhan chaired the dialogue which was addressed, among others, by former finance ministers AMA Muhith and M Saiduzzaman, Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shahid, Mushfiqur Rahman MP, GM Quader MP, Abdur Razzaq MP, Abdul Khaleq MP, Finance Secretary Zakir Ahmed Khan, Bangladesh Bank Governor Salehuddin Ahmed, World Bank Country Director Christine Wallich, DCCI President Sayeeful Islam, Dr Mantaj Uddin, Dr Masud Ali, Prof Abu-Ahmed, and Prof Ashraf Ali.

AMA Muhith strongly criticised the budget saying that it was just a

prescription of indiscipline. Suggesting structural reforms in the budget, he said the government's implementation capacity of the budget is questionable.

Muhith said the government has failed to handle the power crisis, which is fundamental requirement for investment in the country.

Criticising the proposed budget for keeping huge amount of money as block allocations, he alleged that the money would be spent for the election purposes of the ministers and the treasury bench lawmakers.

The former finance minister also opposed the practice of issuing statutory regulatory order (SRO) before and after the presentation of budget in parliament.

Former finance minister M Saiduzzaman said the budget lacked measures to reduce wastage of money and resources in the country. He observed that the government subsidy in agriculture hardly reaches the genuine farmers.

He suggested providing the farmers with direct cash incentives.

World Bank Country Director Christine Wallich said the government should be watchful so that projects are not influenced by undue political pressures.

She said the tax on the SIM (subscriber identity module) card of mobile telephone would affect the growth of telecommunications sector in the country. She stressed the need for detailed discussion of budget in parliament.

Awami League lawmaker Abdur Razzaq alleged the areas belonging to the opposition lawmakers were being deprived of development budget allocation. He urged the development partners to see whether their money was being distributed equally.

Razzaq said the government has made a budgetary allocation of Tk 60 crore for Gram Sarker, a local government body which is not functioning at all.

Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shahid said the opposition bench lawmakers are not in a position to join parliament because they hardly get floor to speak. Besides, objectionable comments are often made against the leader of the opposition, he pointed out.

Finance Secretary Zakir Ahmed Khan said the block allocations were kept for facing unforeseen circumstances. He said the spending process of the money is also completely transparent. "No money is spent on any unapproved project," he claimed.

# 2 grenades

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Based on Milon's confessional statement, the elite force yesterday raided Chabipur village in Mohipal at around 1:35am and recovered the grenades, one .303 cut-rifle, one single-barrel gun, 17 rounds of .303 bullet and nine cartridges from a jungle near the local Brac office.

In the other incident, the BDR seized a sophisticated foreign made 9mm pistol and some bullets from a jungle in Bhuiyanchhari area under Baghaichhari upazila, reports Our Correspondent in Rangamati.

A BDR team, after an overnight stay cordoning off a hill and its adjacent areas, raided a "machang ghor" on the hilltop in the early morning and found the pistol wrapped up in polythene inside a box along with some bullets and two magazines.

However, no one was arrested in the incident.

Meanwhile, the members of Rab, Chittagong with the help of local people held three muggers from Dhanialapara area under Double Mooring Police Station in Chittagong on Saturday night while

three others of the gang fled with the booty.

Sources said, six muggers came by two CNG-run autorickshaws and attacked Jahangir Alam's motor parts shop on the Dhaka Trunk Road at Dhanialapara at around 7:30pm. They looted around Tk 60,000 from the cash box and two cell phone sets from the shop.

Three of the muggers fled with the looted goods in one autorickshaw when a Rab patrol team with the help of locals held the three others in the other autorickshaw.

The three—identified as Bandhan Darr, 25, Md Mizan Chowdhury, 18, and Md Touhidul, 39—were handed over to the Double Mooring police.

Earlier last Wednesday, army personnel in a special raid recovered an AK-47 assault rifle from Ghilachhari in Mohalchhari upazila of Khagarchhari district, a stronghold of the pro-PCJSS supporters, sources in the security forces said.

The army, however, failed to round up any gunrunners.

# 4 jailed for 33 years

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had earlier stayed the proceedings of charges brought against him in the supplementary charge sheet following a quashment petition.

Judge Mohammad Nazrul Islam of the Fifth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court handed down the verdict in presence of the convicts except one.

The convicts are Babul's driver Mohammad Farid, Mohammad Ilias Khan, Saiful Islam and Abdul Al Mamun alias "Jasad" Babu who was tried in absentia.

In the order, the court said there were no eyewitnesses in the case but the accused were given the punishment on the basis of their confessional statements and the circumstantial evidence gathered during the investigation.

The order acquitted Jubo League leader Sahabuddin Shah, Kazi Golam Kibria Tipu, Shariful Islam, Asadur Rahman Jahangir and Shahidul Islam Chunnun as the charges brought against them were not proved.

Obaidul Haq Babul, managing director of Anannya Apparels Limited and a renowned industrialist as well as a contestant in the 1996 Bhol-1 by-election, was gunned down in the city's Pallabi area at about 10:35pm on

## Mahi barred

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from entering the town.

The BDB's Bagherhat unit booked the pourashava auditorium two days ago on rental basis to hold a conference of the party's district-level activists.

But the pourashava chairman cancelled the BDB's booking on Saturday and handed over the cancellation letter to the local BDB leaders yesterday morning.

The letter issued by the Bagherhat Pourashava chairman said they had decided to cancel the booking of the auditorium for Sunday as two political parties called simultaneous programmes there which might lead to law and order deterioration.

The additional district magistrate of Bagherhat also imposed Section 144 within 400 metres of the pourashava auditorium prohibiting rallies and processions from 8:00am to midnight.

Earlier, when Mahi's motorcade reached the mazar of Khan Jahan Ali, criminals allegedly belonging to the ruling BNP moved around brandishing arms.

"The booking of pourashava auditorium was cancelled due to pressure from the ruling party high-ups," Mahi said at a press conference at Gopalganj Circuit House.

Political activities of the BDB cannot be stopped through imposing Section 144, he said.

Meanwhile, Bagherhat district Jubo Dal President Fakir Tarique Islam claimed that the pourashava authorities gave permission to the Jubo Dal on June 15 for holding a meeting at the auditorium.

He blamed the pourashava authorities for creating 'unnecessary' problems through giving the BDB permission to hold meeting at the auditorium and said neither the BDB nor the Jubo Dal could hold meeting there due to enforcement of Section 144.

## Speaker

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lawmaker raised the issue on a point of order, quoting a recent statement of the leader of the opposition.

The lawmaker Ali Newaz Mahmud Khaiyam alleged the main opposition has been thwarting investigation into the crime from the very beginning.

"The opposition leader's statement that said the government is contemplating making a fabricated investigation report on the August 21 grenade attack is nothing but an attempt to divert the public attention," Khaiyam said.

"The Awami League (AL) president issued the statement when the investigators are close to unearthing the criminals behind the attack," he said quoting newspaper reports.

The speaker, however, said the opposition leader has given the statement out of the House. He suggested the BNP lawmaker to discuss it outside parliament.

"The August 21 grenade attack issue is a sub judice and for this there cannot be any discussion at this moment in the House," Sircar said.

However, most of the ruling coalition lawmakers during the discussion on budget referred to the August 21 grenade attack and accused the AL of committing the crime with the help of a neighbouring country to embarrass the government.

BNP lawmakers Monirul Haq Chowdhury and Nasirul Haq Sabu before the speaker's ruling said the AL chief is making motivated statements on the attack on her party rally when the "cat is coming out of the bag."

## VAT on Teltalk

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Order (SRO) by National Board of Revenue (NBR).

The petitioners through the PIL pleaded the court to issue a rule as to why Teletalk should not be ordered to supply SIM cards for Tk 1800 as declared earlier.

NBR on June 09 issued an SRO imposing Tk 1200 VAT on each SIM card. Teletalk in an urgent notice on June 13 told that the lottery winners will have to pay an additional Tk 1200 along with the earlier declared Tk 1800 to collect their SIM cards.

The petitioners won the Teletalk Bangladesh lottery for its SIM cards at Tk 1800, but are now under orders to pay additional Tk 1200 as VAT imposed with retrospective effect.

The said they took part in the lottery for SIM card of mobile phone at Tk 1800. But later the government imposed a VAT of Tk 1200, raising the cost to Tk 3000.

The petitioners told that a total of 50,000 people had won the lottery and of them, 20,000 were already given SIM cards for Tk 1800 before issuance of the notice. So, demanding an additional Tk1200 for the remaining 30,000 is discriminatory and against the fundamental right of equal treatment under the law.

Besides, it was a public offer by Teletalk to provide a SIM card for Tk 1800 and the petitioners had accepted it. But now by asking for an additional Tk 1200, the Teletalk authorities are breaching the agreement between them and the petitioners.

Advocate Idrisur Rahman filed the petition on behalf of the aggrieved.

Finance secretary, telecommunications secretary, chairman of NBR, and managing director of Teletalk are among the six respondents of the petition.

# Mixed reaction

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and MPs consider the removal of Mosharraf as "a severe punishment for a minor crime." There are several ministers in the government who did major crimes in the past but are still enjoying power, they said.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, a number of senior ministers and lawmakers said Mosharraf has had good relations with the foreign oil companies and might have often taken huge financial benefits from them, but he was not sacked when those allegations came in the past.

Several top BNP leaders said almost all ministers use vehicles of various projects or the subsidiary bodies of their ministries. "There may be something wrong... taking a vehicle from a oil company is a silly cause. Maybe Mosharraf lost his credibility or failed to satisfy the powerful quarter in BNP," said an important minister on condition of anonymity.

He said Mosharraf maintained a very strong lobby with the Young Turks of the BNP, particularly the Hawa Bhaban, known as the party's 'alternative power house.' "But I don't understand what threw away Mosharraf from the powerful quarter," he added.

There are more than half a dozen ministers and state ministers in the cabinet whose corruption is proven, but they are still holding their portfolios, said another influential BNP leader.

Mentioning the names of several

## Cops accused

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The accused in the murder case are sub inspectors Anisur Rahman, Shah Alam, Ranjit Kumar Das, assistant sub inspectors Habibur Rahman and Shamim-ur-Rashid, constables Forkan and Tayeb Ali and informer Akram.

"I am being given death threats by the accused for refusing to withdraw the case filed with the court of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) on June 12 this year," said Fatema Khatoun in a press conference held at noon today at the Khulna press club.

Fatema Khatoun, an eminent social worker, alleged that her younger brother Munna was picked up by the accused in front of the Awami League office on the evening of August 31 last year without any specific charge. He was later subjected to inhuman physical torture while in Khulna thana custody because he failed to pay taka one lakh as a bribe, she added. Munna succumbed to severe injuries at 9pm on the same night at Khulna Medical College Hospital.

The human rights status of Bangladesh as pictured in the conference is not true, he added.

The UK Parliamentary Human Rights Group was one of the sponsors of the conference.

# Mosharraf's fate fixed

FROM PAGE 1  
Shahidul, now secretary to the prime minister, was transferred to the education ministry from energy ministry when he tried to take actions against some corrupt officials in Titas Gas, against Mosharraf's will.

The prime minister had asked Shahidul to investigate Mosharraf's activities. His findings led the PM to ask the state minister to stand down in the context of the carscam.

Sources said there were indications of his ouster for the last one or two months.

The PMO stripped him of powers to take policy decisions about two months ago. He was asked to take decisions only after consulting the prime minister.

The probe by Shahidul meanwhile led the government to make some administrative changes in the Petrobangla affiliates. In the last one month, the government transferred or demoted 17 officials and experts in the affiliates.

Earlier this month, Mosharraf went to Canada and US on a trip along with some Petrobangla officials at the expense of Niko. The cost is however recoverable from gas sales from Niko's concern in Bangladesh and this means the trip is unwittingly paid for by Bangladesh, Petrobangla sources said.

During Mosharraf's absence, the government transferred three officials including a joint secretary in the energy ministry.

"The PMO received complaints that Mosharraf is tarnishing the image of the prime minister by persistently telling foreign companies and diplomats that he wants gas export but the prime minister is resisting the move," a PMO official said.

Despite his graft infested past records, Mosharraf was picked by the prime minister for the position he held till his ouster. Sources said Mosharraf, who spearheaded the Kafco deal by going against the interest of Bangladesh, was also patronised by some foreign oil companies before he was made state minister. His recent actions had however harmed financial interests of some powerful lobbies at the 'alternative centre of power' in the government, which set the ball rolling against him.

Mosharraf yesterday reiterated his position on the car scam to the press, saying there is nothing wrong in using such cars since all other ministers also

## Wamin ansars

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They have received necessary training at Gazipur Ansar Academy for their overseas jobs, an inter-ministerial meeting on sending ansars abroad was told yesterday.

"Male ansars will also be sent abroad with female colleagues in the future," the meeting at the home ministry was informed.

Chaired by State Minister for Home Lutfozzaman Babar, the meeting also discussed several issues like health check-up, fixing various fees, including passport and visa fees, and their job term.

The female ansars have received necessary training in household work and speaking in English and Arabic languages.

State Minister for Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment Maj (ret'd) Qumrul Islam, among others, was present.

ministers and state ministers, the BNP leaders said they also should have been removed from the cabinet a couple of years ago.

Besides, the relatives and sons of several ministers and leaders are also engaged in widespread corruption. Also there are corrupt officials at the Prime Minister's Office, whose names recently came out in newspapers, but these officials are still there, they said.

Majority BNP leaders believe that time has come to remove the ministers having corruption allegation from the cabinet immediately, otherwise removal of Mosharraf on a silly cause will not be acceptable to people.

### LONDON HR MEET

## Disappointment over HC Karim's statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lord Avebury, a House of Lords member, yesterday expressed disappointment over the statement of Bangladesh High Commissioner to UK about the June 17 European human rights conference on Bangladesh in London.

Avebury, also the chairman of the steering committee of the conference, in a statement said, "I am disappointed by the false statement issued by AH Mofazzal Karim, Bangladesh High Commissioner in London."

The aim of the conference was to provide an opportunity for a factual analysis of the very serious problems affecting secular political parties/groups as well as ethnic