

Sircar drew Tk 28 lakh

FROM PAGE 1 (CAG) however termed the Speaker's actions regarding withdrawal of the medical allowance unlawful and unethical.

"The speaker has ignored the laws by approving his medical bill. He cannot take the medical bill in such an unprecedented way," immediate past Speaker advocate Abdul Hamid told The Daily Star.

Sircar has approved the medical bill unethically, former CAG M Hafizuddin Khan said, adding, "The Speaker will have to return the money to the government exchequer since he can in no way approve this medical bill."

In the seventh parliament the office of the CAG had objected to such a medical allowance, which was approved by the then speaker late Humayun Rashid Chowdhury, he said.

But this time, the office of the Controller General of Accounts, which was separated from the office of the CAG during the tenure of the last BNP government, did not raise any objection to the Speaker's medical allowance. An official entrusted with looking after the accounts of the Jatiya Sangsad said they had cleared the bill on receiving the Speaker's undertaking.

"The Parliament Secretariat sent the undertaking to us and we cleared the bill," said an official.

Officials in the Parliament Secretariat said they had initially objected to the bill, as the existing laws do not allow the Speaker to have the medical bill for his treatment abroad without prior permission of the prime minister.

But Sircar on July 7, 2006 came up with a written undertaking and guarantee that he would be responsible for paying the bill, if any question is raised in future.

On receiving the written undertaking and instructions, the Parliament Secretariat cleared a medical bill of Tk 27.86 lakh, said the officials.

On other occasions also, the speaker withdrew good amounts of money in the name of his medical allowances, said a source in the Parliament Secretariat.

**SPEAKER'S UNDERTAKING** The Speaker and Deputy Speaker (Remuneration and Privileges) Act 1974 says other allowances and facilities of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker shall be the same as admissible to a minister under the act of 1973, Jamiruddin Sircar said in his undertaking.

Being the chief of the executive, the prime minister gives approval for some medical facilities outside the country for a minister, if necessary, he said.

Sircar said exercising the provision 12 of the Special Medical Attendance Rules 1950, former prime minister Sheikh Hasina during the seventh parliament approved Tk 35.71 lakh for the then speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury's kidney treatment abroad.

The prime minister also approved Tk 5.74 lakh for treatment of the then chief whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah, he continued.

Referring to the prime minister's approval for former chief whip's treatment, former CAG Hafizuddin said his office had raised objection to the medical bill of Hasnat Abdullah as the then Speaker of the seventh parliament approved it.

Later, the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina had approved the bill by exercising the relevant rules, Hafizuddin said referring to the Special Medical Attendance Rules.

Jamiruddin Sircar himself mentioned that the then prime minister Khaleda Zia had approved special medical allowances for the VVIPs in eighth Jatiya Sangsad, but the prime minister did not accord approval for his medical expenditure abroad.

In such a situation, the speaker claimed, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) was informed of the matter and the PMO suggested settling it according to the Jatiya Sangsad law 1994. "It seems the prime minister does not want to exercise her power in this regard," goes Sircar's undertaking.

The Jatiya Sangsad Act 1994 does not contain any provisions regarding medical allowances for the Speaker or any lawmakers.

The act however says the Speaker will be the final authority regarding the expenditure of the Parliament Secretariat's annual budget. Jamiruddin Sircar exercised this power also to clear his medical bill.

The Speaker is the final authority regarding the Parliament Secretariat's annual budget and he will be responsible to the parliament through the office of the CAG, said the Speaker in his undertaking.

EXPERT OPINION

Asked whether or not the Speaker can approve such medical bill to meet the expenditure of his treatment abroad, former Speaker Abdul Hamid said the Speaker is entitled to an annual medical allowance of Tk 2 lakh in the country. But to have the money, he will have to submit copy of the bills and vouchers in the Parliament Secretariat, he said.

"If the Speaker wants to have medical treatment abroad, he will have to bear the expenditure himself, unless he falls sick during an official visit abroad. The prime minister however can allocate a

special amount of money for the Speaker's treatment abroad," Hamid said, referring to the Speaker and Deputy Speaker (Remuneration and Privileges) Act.

Terming the Speaker's action unprecedented, Hafizuddin, also a former adviser to the caretaker government, said if the Speaker's activities raise questions due to lack of transparency, then how the Jatiya Sangsad will ensure transparency and accountability of the government.

This correspondent in last two days repeatedly tried to contact the Speaker over telephone, but failed as his personal staff, both at his residence and office, replied each time that the Speaker was busy.

It was not possible to visit the Speaker's office to talk to him due to restrictions on journalists' entry into the parliament building. The Speaker imposed the restriction about three months ago following newspaper reports about irregularities in the Parliament Secretariat.

ACC chief

FROM PAGE 16 and bringing the culprits to book," Hasan Mashhud said.

The ACC boss also emphasised paying reasonable remuneration to public servants and advocated for creating social awareness against the scourge of corruption involving the mass media and civil society.

He also asked to enact tough laws and implement these without fear and favour. "Remove the blocks in the way of fair prosecution; remove the taints, if any, in the judicial system. Hire good lawyers and produce good evidence to get the desired verdicts," ACC chief said.

He also stressed on enhancing efficiencies of the agencies including the ACC, judiciary, police, National Board of Revenue, Audit and Comptroller General's Office and the Bangladesh Bank to fight against corruption.

"Over the decades corruption has been patronised politically which explains its being immune to eradication efforts," Hasan Mashhud felt. "Political will, which is imperative for fighting corruption, simply does not exist."

Rights activists

FROM PAGE 16 suffering from serious illness.

Advocate Sultana Kamal of Ain O Salish Kendra, Shaheen Anam of Manusher Jonno Foundation, researcher Dr Hameeda Hossain, Farida Akhter of UBINIG, Begum Shamsun Nahar of Nari Pakkho and Dr Naila Khan of Somkillo Nari Samaj signed the letter.

"In particular, we would like the government to take cognisance of some of the persons who need immediate medical treatment such as Sigma Huda, who is suffering from diabetes, heart and kidney problems and Sabera Aman, who has breast cancer."

Because of these serious complaints they need immediate medical treatment, but have not been given hospitalised care, the letter said.

Assuring the government that their appeal is based purely on humanitarian ground, they said, "We believe that law should take its course and justice prevail equally for everyone."

Hasina, Khaleda

FROM PAGE 16 cannot avoid the responsibility for corruption committed during their rules," Matin said, adding: "If necessary, they'll be brought to justice."

Dismissing the allegation that only politicians are being charged with corruption, he said the anti-corruption drive is not targeting any particular individual or quarter. Actions are being taken against those involved in corruption, he said.

To another question, Matin said initiative to form a national security council taken soon after the present caretaker government took power is now in cold storage.

The adviser said the National Coordination Committee on Serious Crimes approved 17 cases to be filed against 18 people.

He said relevant documents for filing the cases will be sent to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

2 die

FROM PAGE 1 measuring about 25 feet in height and 30 feet in width, collapsed on the workers working under the gate at 2:10pm. Thirteen workers got trapped under the rubble.

Of the two deceased, one died on the spot while the other died on way to hospital.

About 25 construction workers were working on the site at the time.

Officials from the Fire Brigade and Civil Defense in Tongi thronged the spot immediately and rescued the trapped workers. The injured were taken to local clinics and to Tongi Medical College and Hospital.

The construction work of the medical college has been going on for four years.

It is suspected that use of sub-standard construction materials caused the collapse.

Army chief for end to corruption

FROM PAGE 1 Against Corruption (Gopac) at Hotel Radisson in the capital.

The government is also using South Asian examples from Pakistan and India, alongside others, as 'useful guides' to design legal frameworks and to set up codes of conduct against corruption, said the general.

But he identified 'creating a moral high ground against corruption' as the biggest challenge, 'as many people have become accustomed to underhanded ways'.

For South Asia, he said the major areas of corruption have been major defence deals, development projects, election funding, politically sponsored criminality, abuse of power, money laundering, and human and drug trafficking.

Moeen also slated foreign donors saying, "Foreign aids or investments have political and strategic considerations attached to them rather than having the economic needs and policy reforms of the recipients as priority issues." He added, "In some cases, about 40 percent of these aids are spent by their consultants or experts."

In his seven-point proposal Gen Moeen said there must be a parliamentary ombudsman in order to strengthen parliamentary oversight of state activities, and to ensure that lawmakers do not only attend the parliament and tow the party lines, but also stand up and express their views to spark genuine debates.

He also recommended creation of a 'moral high ground against corruption', ensuring exemplary punishment for all guilty of corruption, establishment of an independent and neutral judiciary, socially boycotting the corruptionists, reorganisation of and a pay increase for the police force, and continuing 'regular' drives against corruption and its agents.

The General also said lack of transparency and accountability can largely be 'attributed to a lack of political will which is a direct consequence of the confrontational nature of politics'. When an audience member suggested that individuals be prohibited from participating in elections once they are found guilty of corruption, Moeen said the Election Commission is looking into the possibility of it.

"You can bring as many reforms as you want, but if you don't educate your voters then they will elect the same people again," he said adding that voters should be informed of the consequences of voting for the corruptionists.

"We must educate voters so that parties cannot buy votes and voters do not have to sell their votes. A voter will have to know that by voting for the corrupt, they will be eating one very good meal, in exchange for going hungry for five years," he said.

Moeen said, "Every effort has to be undertaken for rectification and

prevention and for building the system around a legal basis," a part of which, he said, will be the introduction of a Right to Information Bill. Referring to a Transparency International Bangladesh report, Moeen said, "Right to information is limited [in Bangladesh] making it far more difficult to uncover corrupt activities and to follow through with prosecutions."

"I hope that in the near future the interim government will introduce a Right to Information Act of our own so that corrupt officials cannot hide behind the cloak of secrecy and escape punishment," he added.

Asked why a Right to Information Bill needs to be passed, Moeen said government officials abused the Official Secrets Act 1923 to cover-up corrupt practices. "The days of secrecy are over," he said adding that satellite pictures of even army bases are available on the internet nowadays.

"We have to revisit the Secrets Act and take proper action.... We need to define secrecy," Moeen said adding that greater regulations need to be worked out for ensuring transparency.

Moeen also credited the press freedoms behind much of the success of India's economy, and accountability in the United Nations.

The army chief said the Indian and Pakistani examples in fighting corruption will be a 'useful guide'. He cited Indian press freedom, establishment of Central Vigilance Commission for receiving general complaints on abuse of power there, and legal protections for government whistleblowers there to enhance transparency.

An audience member asked Moeen, why lessons have to be taken from the 'military government' of Pakistan, prompting Moeen to retort, "Let me reassure you, the army is not ruling the country. Anyone can think anything they want. As I said before, some people smell a rat in everything."

"But it is always good to take good examples, what is wrong with that?" he asked adding, "Regardless of their form of government, if a state is doing a good job, pick it up and implement it!"

"The important thing is for us to judge what is good for us, and then we can borrow good policies and plans from anywhere else in the world," he said.

Asked about the nature of an impending legislation on political funding, Moeen said no one previously asked the political parties to disclose their finances in Bangladesh's history, but now the 'people are asking about the source of the money, and if their accounts are audited or how they are using the money'.

He said the Election Commission (EC) will 'make it into a law' once it discusses the matter with political parties.

When former BNP lawmaker and

ex-agriculture minister MK Anwar from the audience suggested that improvements in the education sector is an imperative for creating informed voters and to strengthen the moral fabric of the population, Moeen agreed, but added, "My question to you is, your party was in power for the last five years, why didn't they do anything? If you addressed these problems then the problem would be reduced by now."

However, Moeen went on to say that the education sector itself has become very corrupt and that the country is full of 'ghost schools and teachers'. He said in those ghost schools, teachers take their wages from the state but never attend classes and the money pumped to improve the schools never reaches the schools.

"No one has looked into this in the last 36 years, but it is better late than never, so let's come together to fight," he added.

We are also learning from the experiences in South Korea, Singapore and Malaysia.

Regarding the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC), he said the reconstituted commission had to fill the gaps in the faulty previous act and at the same time had to root out corrupt ACC officials who had been using the regulatory commission as a platform for their misuse of power.

Referring to Tuesday's comment by Moeen that even NGOs are 'apparently' corrupt, an audience member pointed out that NGOs have been the 'driving force' of 'positive elements' in the country.

Moeen replied, "Yes, NGOs are doing a good job, but, let's face it, some are making money. If they do a good job, let's congratulate them, but if they're doing bad things, I'll be the last person to congratulate them."

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar opened the workshop and also presented a paper on corruption while Kuwaiti lawmaker Naser Al Sane, and the vice-chair of the Arab regional chapter of GOPAC also spoke on the occasion.

Nine of a family

FROM PAGE 1 Local sources said the elderly family members tied up the younger ones with clothes and then, altogether, jumped under the train.

Local people described the incident as a "preplanned suicide" as a grave was dug on the premises of their house and a coffin was also kept there. They said the family had confined themselves to their house and led an isolated life.

Police cordoned off the house, 10 yards from the place of occurrence. They sent the bodies to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital for autopsies.

Rab captures 2

FROM PAGE 1 November 14, 2005. The other six including JMB supremo Abdur Rahman and his deputy Bangla Bhai were executed in different jails on March 29.

During the raids on Tuesday and Monday, Rab personnel seized two 9mm pistols with nine bullets, seven computers, a large number of compact disks (CDs) and books on 'jihad'.

Rab officials told a press briefing yesterday they arrested the two top JMB leaders following leads from Sagar Hossain and Saiful Islam.

Locals in Muktaghchha upazila of Mymensingh caught Sagar and Saiful and handed them over to police when they were fleeing after gunning down madrasa teacher Rafiqul Islam at Titlia village on Monday morning.

The two arrestees were then taken to local camp of Rab-9 where they were quizzed. Both admitted that they killed Rafiq on orders from Faruq and Rakib.

Acting on information given by them, a team led by Rab Mymensingh camp commander Major Iqbal raided Rakib's house in

Akua Chukaitola area of Mymensingh town at around 3:30am on Tuesday and arrested Arif and Rakib along with their wives.

A joint team of Rab intelligence wing and Rab-9 then raided Faruq's rented house in the capital's Mirpur at around 10:00am on Tuesday following information given by the arrestees.

Rab officials said sensing their presence, Faruq opened fire on Rab personnel. Rab responded to it with fire and Faruq was injured. He was then arrested, and two pistols, bullets, computers, CDs and books on jihad were seized from his house.

At the press briefing, Rab Director General Hassan Mahmood Khondkar said arrest of the JMB leaders particularly the two Shura members is a remarkable success of their activities. "We will not stop with this success, we will continue our efforts to combat militancy," he added.

Earlier, Rab Intelligence Wing Director Lt Col Asif Ahmed Ansari briefed journalists about the raids.

Khaleda's advisers

FROM PAGE 1 general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan will soon announce a comprehensive reform proposal.

"We believe that the clause should be changed to make the parliament more effective," said ZA Khan, an adviser to the BNP chief and a pro-reform leader, while talking to The Daily Star.

"The party might tear apart if we fail to reform the party," ZA Khan added.

Over the BNP chiefs' conspiracy allegation, two of her other advisers, Inam Ahmed Chowdhury and Mofazzal Karim, said the reform initiative is not a conspiracy, only an effort make the party well organised.

Both Inam and Mofazzal, former bureaucrats, made the remarks after visiting BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan at his Gulshan residence.

They also said there is no other alternative but to implement the reforms since it is the desire of the people.

"How could she [Khaleda] term the reform [initiative] a conspiracy when she herself also spoke of reforms?" questioned Inam Ahmed Chowdhury.

Rebutting Khaleda's claim that

IRAQ WAR

Hillary urges

quick end to US involvement

AP, Washington

Presidential contender Barack Obama on Tuesday dismissed his Democratic rivals' change of heart on the Iraq war as too little too late, while Hillary Rodham Clinton urged a quick end to US involvement in the conflict.

Obama, an Illinois senator, and Clinton, a New York senator, focused on the nearly 4 1/2 year war in dueling speeches only a few city blocks apart in the first-in-the-nation voting state of Iowa. Senators will have a chance to vote in the coming days on whether to begin withdrawing US forces from Iraq, where the conflict has claimed more than 3,600 US lives.

"Being a leader means that you'd better do what's right and leave the politics aside because there are no do-overs on an issue as important as war," Obama said, adding that the Iraq war should never should have been authorized or waged.

Obama, then a state lawmaker in Illinois, opposed the war from the start. Clinton voted in 2002 to give President Bush the authority to launch the invasion to topple Saddam Hussein's regime, but has said she would have opposed the war if she knew then what she knows now.

"Our message to the president is clear," Clinton told a crowd of about 250. "It is time to begin ending this war not next year, not next month but today."

Throughout the campaign, the two who have raised more money than their rivals and rank high in most opinion polls have debated the nuances of their opposition to the war.

In the Senate, Clinton and Obama are both sponsoring Iraq-related amendments to the defense bill being considered this week. Two other Democrats with White House ambitions Sens. Joe Biden of Delaware and Chris Dodd of Connecticut are sponsoring proposals as well.

Clinton, along with West Virginia Sen. Robert Byrd, will introduce an amendment to repeal congressional authorization for the war. It would require President Bush to seek new authority from Congress to extend the conflict beyond Oct. 11, 2007, five years after the original permission was given.

Obama is taking the lead on amendments that would boost funding for mental health services for veterans and require better government oversight of military contractors.

Most Democrats are expected to support an amendment that would require combat troops to begin redeployment from Iraq within 120 days of enactment.

Dodd wants to take matters a step further: He will introduce an amendment that would require troops to be withdrawn immediately and end funding for all combat operations by March 31, 2008.

108 lost life

FROM PAGE 1 In 2004, 2005 and 2006, only the old buildings collapsed or subsidized in the city but this year two under-construction buildings collapsed allegedly due to lack of monitoring and non-compliance with the building regulations.

Following the collapse of an under-construction Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) sweeper colony building at Dayaganj on May 25, the visitors' shade of an under-construction hospital collapsed, killing two workers at Kamarpara near Ashulia yesterday.

Weak monitoring of Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk), using low quality construction materials, violation of building code and filling up the wetland are the main causes behind the building collapse, experts said.

The April 11 2005 collapse of Spectrum, a 9-storey garment factory building in Savar killed 66 garment workers, injured 173 others and it took nine days to clear the rubble and recover the dead bodies. But no one got any exemplary punishment, although the probe report identified faulty constructions and lack of maintenance as the reasons of the building collapse.

The phoenix building that housed a proposed kidney hospital at Teigaon, collapsed on February 25, 2006 killing 21 workers and injuring over 50 others. It was revealed that the owner did not have any approval for the hospital or reconstruction of the building.

A century-old building at Shankharibazar collapsed on June 9, 2004, killing 19 people of a couple of families. That time the DCC authorities announced that they would evacuate and knock down all other old buildings around. But it is yet to be done and hundreds of people are still living in the area, risking their life.

The construction sector itself remains a silent unsafe working place for the workers. Eighty construction workers died and at least 173 others were injured in workplace accidents throughout the country in 2005, reveals a survey conducted by Bangladesh Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Foundation, a rights organisation for the workers.

JMB has no link

FROM PAGE 1 He however hoped to hunt down the ones responsible for the blasts soon. "Zadid al Qaeda, Bangladesh [means New al Qaeda or an Establishment of al Qaeda] claimed the responsibility of the blasts that injured a rickshaw puller in Chittagong.

Another detained JMB member, Sagar Hossain alias Sayeem, told The Daily Star that he, at the directive of Arif and another detained shura member Anwar Hossain Faruq, had shot Jhalakathi Public Prosecutor advocate Haider Hossain who was the chief counsel of the case filed against JMB militants for killing two Jhalakathi judges.

Still a teenager, Sagar said Faruq gave him a pistol and sent him along with three others from Dhaka to kill Haider on April 11. He said that he himself shot Haider at point blank range.

Locals at Muktagachha caught Sagar and another JMB member while they were feeling the scene after shooting a madrasa teacher at Muktagachha on July 9.

Following the arrest and execution of six top JMB leaders including the outfit's supremo Abdur Rahman and his second-in-command Bangla Bhai, Arif played a pivotal role in JMB.

Arif said that following the death of their leaders, the organisation was reconstituted under the leadership of present JMB ameer Moulana Saïdur Rahman—who was a former ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh Habiganj unit.

The four other new shura (highest policy making body members) members he named are himself, Anwar Hossain Faruq, Abdullah Tashnim and Abubakar Siddiqi Nahid alias Russell. Of the five shura members, JMB ameer Saïdur Rahman and Russell are still at large.

During the brief conversation outside a press briefing, Arif, a condemned killer of two Jhalakathi judges, told The Daily Star how he conducted suicide attacks on the judges and where his hideouts were.

Asked if he regretted killing the judges or being involved in militant activities, Arif confidently told journalists present at a press briefing at Rab headquarters, "Ideologically, I am right."

Three other JMB activists accompanied him at the press briefing.

Arif said the then JMB shura member Khaled Saïfullah—the in-charge of Barisal region—with the assistance of other top JMB leaders, made the blueprint to kill senior assistant judges Jagannath Pandey and Sohail Ahmed by carrying out a suicide bomb attack in the district town on November 14, 2005.

Falu's wife

FROM PAGE 16 Alam Khondaker were remanded yesterday on different terms in connection with graft and cheating cases.

The hearing on a seven-day remand prayer by Dhanmondi police in connection with a case filed against former communications minister barrister Nazmul Huda for extorting Tk 1 crore from Uttara Motors Limited will be held today.

**CASE AGAINST FALU'S WIFE** Senior Session Judge Mohammad Azizul Haq of the Metropolitan

Sessions Judge's Court passed the order and directed officer-in-charge (OC) of Motijheel Police Station to attach her properties immediately.

Earlier, on July 5 the same court issued an arrest warrant against Falu's wife after Mohammad Masudur Rahman Masud, deputy tax commissioner of Tax Circle of the NBR, filed the case.

The court also directed Motijheel OC to implement the arrest warrant and submit a report by yesterday whether she was arrested or not.

The court fixed Monday for next hearing of the case.

In his complaint, Masud said Mahbuba evaded Tk 1.58 crore income tax from 2001 to 2006.

Mahbuba repeatedly gave false information to the income tax department about her real income and expenditure and did not show her income tax returns, the complainant added.

She also did not submit statement about her salary received from ntv, even though she had withdrawn Tk 9,60,000 from the satellite TV channel.

After a long investigation, the Central Intelligence Cell found out about her taking salary from ntv, Masud added.

**CASE AGAINST NASER** Another Dhaka court yesterday placed Naser on a five-day remand in connection with a graft case filed for submitting false statement to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

Metropolitan Magistrate Jagannath Das Khokon passed the order after ACC Deputy Director Golam Shahriar Chowdhury, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, produced him before the court with a seven-day remand prayer.

In his forwarding report, the IO said he would quiz Naser to gather information about his ill-gotten wealth, his sources of income and whereabouts of the wealth.

The defence lawyers sought cancellation of the remand prayer saying their client would be tortured if he is placed on remand.

After hearing both the sides, the court rejected the defence plea and granted a five-day remand.

On May 27, ACC Deputy Director Moniruzzaman Khan filed the case with Gulshan Police Station against Naser and his wife Rizina Naser.

In the case statement, the complainant said Naser and his wife did not mention properties worth Tk 4.90 crore in their wealth statement.

Naser is now in jail while his wife did not get bail from any court.

**TOYMUR CASE**

"Being directed by Khaled Saïfullah, I brought Shakil alias Mollah Omar to a house at Jhalakathi where he [Mollah Omar] made the bomb that killed the two judges," Arif said adding, another executed JMB leader, Mamun, later carried the bomb with him.

Shakil, nick-named after Al Qaeda leader Mollah Omar for his expertise in bomb making, was killed inside a Comilla den during encounter with Rab on March 13, 2006.

Father of a 19-month-old girl, Arif said that before moving to Mymensingh in the first week of July, he hid in a house at Faidabad in Uttara. Arif, hailing from Barguna and a Kamil student at Nesaria Kamil Madrasa in Barguna, joined the JMB in 2002.

Asked whether JMB received foreign funds, Arif said since he only needed around Tk 5,000 a month for his personal expenses, it was quite easy to arrange that fund from local sources. JMB activities did not require a large amount of either.

Sabina

FROM PAGE 16 Welfare Minister Maj Gen (retd) Dr ASM Matiur Rahman yesterday visited Sabina at the hospital at around 1:00pm.

He enquired about her health and wished her speedy recovery.

While talking to the newsmen, the adviser said that Sabina Yasmin is a national asset and he would talk to Chief Adviser Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed about whether the government can bear the total expenses of her treatment.

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury also visited Sabina yesterday morning. LDP Sports Secretary Harun ar Rashid and Information and Research Secretary Jahangir Alam was with him.

Sabina, who is diagnosed recently with Non hodgkin's Lymphoma, a type of tissue cancer, was admitted to Labaid Specialised Hospital on June 12.

Fowzia Yas