

## Surprise junk rush

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adviser to Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina. He was also one of the sponsor directors of both banks before being removed from the boards for loan defaults.

M Morshed Khan, an adviser to BNP's Chairperson Khaleda Zia, is a shareholder of AB Bank by way of his Pacific Motors. Incidentally, Khan and Salman are also relatives, as the former's daughter is married to the latter's son. Khan, who had fled the country after the 1/11 changeover in 2007, recently came back, and the rumour has it that the aforementioned relationship had a lot to do with it.

Meanwhile, a friendship between one of the IFIC shareholders, who also holds a key position in IFIC Bank, and Salman deepened after AL's recent ascension to power.

The past also reveals how Salman had wielded his influence on the two banks to take out millions in taka through a hundred fictitious accounts until the scam was detected by the central bank. Old timers still remember the innovative process of siphoning money off those banks through inland bill purchase (IBP) by Beximco.

Now, those connections, records of the past, and the insidious deals -- all are raising the question -- why those two banks suddenly started purchasing shares of a lacklustre company when no one else cared about it.

**HOW IT HAPPENED**  
AB Bank and IFIC Bank bought a huge chunk of Bextex shares just before the dividend declaration.

Investors flocked to Bextex shares following the dividend declaration, making the prices soar. Prices of each share rose to Tk 44.9 as of May 10 this year from Tk 23.8 on January 1, nearly an 88 percent upward jump.

Taking the opportunity of the price jump in Bextex shares, the two banks started offloading the shares they were holding -- at higher prices, and within a week they made a hefty profit by selling a half of Bextex shares in their portfolios.

AB Bank had bought 80 lakh Bextex shares for prices

ranging between Tk 24.50 and Tk 29.30 each between April 26 and May 3 of this year, while IFIC Bank had bought 15.30 lakh shares just within two days -- April 27 and 28 -- for Tk 29 to Tk 30, according to an investigation by Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE).

DSE opened the investigation after an unusual price hike, and abnormal transactions in Bextex shares.

AB Bank started selling Bextex shares on May 6, which went on till May 10, selling off 30 lakh shares from its portfolio. IFIC Bank sold 8.75 lakh Bextex shares on May 6 and 7 for Tk 40 to Tk 45 each.

Usually, institutional investors, including banks, do not invest in Z category or junk shares, as return on the investment is not secured.

No Z category or junk share was found in AB Bank's portfolio in the six months prior to April 26, 2009, while no transaction in Z category shares was found in IFIC Bank's portfolio between January 1 and April 26 this year.

**AB BANK'S VERSION**  
Contacted by The Daily Star, AB Bank said they bought Bextex shares after analysing future forecast of Bextex.

"We have a strong research team, which assessed the future forecast of Bextex, and the team predicted that Bextex shares will be strong in the coming days," M Fazlur Rahman, head of investment banking division of AB Bank, said.

He said if it can be predicted that the price of a security, no matter whether it is a junk one, will go up, then 'why not invest in it'?

"We sold Bextex shares, as we got expected prices," he said adding that they are still buying and selling Bextex shares.

Asked whether they had earlier information about dividend declaration by Bextex, he denied and said, "It's baseless."

**IFIC BANK'S VERSION**  
Mohammad Abdullah, deputy-managing director of IFIC, said the bank maintains a small portfolio. "We have an investment committee, that suggests buying and selling of shares as per our investment guidelines, after analysing the market trend. The suggestions

are approved by the management," Abdullah said.

Abdullah also said the bank not only bought Bextex shares, but also shares of other companies during the period. "We didn't do anything wrong. We invested in shares as per usual course of banking," he asserted.

**SECCOMMENTS**  
DSE submitted its investigation report to the Securities and Exchange Commission, and urged the regulator to take necessary steps based on the findings.

In the investigation, DSE concluded that the buying binge of the two banks led to a 'demonstrated upward trend' in prices and transaction volume of Bextex shares, as institutional investors play a great role in the market.

General investors got interested in buying Bextex shares as they found that institutions were buying huge quantities of shares.

Contacted, SEC Chairman Ziaul Haque Khondker told The Daily Star, "The commission is studying the report."

**AN EXPERT'S OPINION**  
Market experts however questioned the dividend declaration, and asset revaluation of Bextex.

"The market regulator and other relevant authorities should check who did the asset revaluation. Is it an independent chartered accountant? Or is it an auditing firm appointed by the company itself? Who regulates the valuer firm?" Salahuddin Ahmed Khan, former chief executive officer of DSE, told The Daily Star.

Khan, who teaches finance at Dhaka University, said, "As far as I know, asset revaluation can be shown in the capital reserve of a company, but it can't be disbursed as dividends as long as it remains as unrealised gain."

A big question mark hangs over the purchase of the huge quantity of shares by the two banks just before the dividend declaration. And the dividend declaration by Bextex on the basis of asset revaluation also raised questions in the public mind, as dividend is usually declared - based on a company's earnings.

## JS gets graft details

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his/her misconduct no matter whether any specific provision exists or not," the probe report says.

The principal aims of this inherent power are to protect the dignity of the House and ensure people's confidence in it so that democratic system can remain effective, it says.

Formed on March 19, the probe body formed three sub-committees to conduct enquiry into the alleged widespread corruption in Parliament Secretariat during the last seven years from November 2001 to January 25, 2009 when Speaker Abdul Hamid assumed office.

Ruling Awami League lawmaker Fazle Rabbi Mia, chief of the parliamentary probe body, placed the 784-page report in parliament with huge documents on corruption and misuse of power committed by Sircar, Akhtar Hamid and Delwar. The report contains 16 recommendations.

The white paper of the alleged corruption points out anomalies in taking medical bills, using unauthorised public vehicles and taking additional fuel allowances, corruption in procurement, beautification and arboriculture, recruitment, entertainment bills, allocation of residence for officials and receiving money from the Parliament Members' Club.

Rabbi yesterday told The Daily Star that the House would discuss the findings and recommendations in its next session to decide the next course of actions.

The probe committee considers the wrongdoings of the trio as even more serious than the unreasonable expenditures by the MPs of the UK parliament.

"Former speaker Jamiruddin Sircar and former deputy speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui took oath to do right to all manner of people according to law, without fear or favour, affection or ill-will. But they breached their oath of offices while discharging duties and committed misconduct, thus tarnishing the dignity of the two high offices," the probe report says.

Opposition chief whip Zainul Abidin Faroque was a member of the probe committee, which was formed in the presence of the BNP-led opposition

lawmakers in the House. Faroque, however, has not attended any meeting of the committee without citing any reason.

Sircar, Akhtar Hamid and Delwar, who is BNP's incumbent secretary general, have repeatedly refuted the allegations against them and claimed that the probe body was formed illegally to tarnish their political image.

Submitting the report, Rabbi said the committee worked with sincerity and honesty and without any political motivation. He read out the recommendations in parliament.

After the report was placed, Speaker Abdul Hamid said discussion on the report would be held later.

**MEDICAL BILLS**  
The report says Sircar illegally approved and drew a medical bill of Tk 27.86 lakh for himself and approved bills of Tk 1.21 lakh for Akhtar Hamid and Tk 6 lakh for Delwar.

By approving medical bills for Akhtar Hamid and Delwar, Sircar made them his associates in his illegal and immoral activities, the report says, recommending that the House initiate steps to recover the amount and deposit it to the public exchequer.

Delwar, who was then the president of the Parliament Members' Club, took Tk 18 lakh as medical bills on four occasions. "Taking advantage of the absence of a fair policy on donating the club's money, he misused power and did unethical deed," the probe body says.

Of Tk 64 lakh earned by the club, Delwar donated Tk 60 lakh to a number of lawmakers, most of who belonged to the then ruling BNP. Even incumbent chief whip Abdus Shahid and opposition chief whip Faroque took Tk 1 lakh and Tk 3 lakh for treatment.

The probe committee has recommended formulating a fair policy on donating the club fund.

**USAGE OF UNAUTHORISED VEHICLES**

In addition to his entitlement, the former speaker used three vehicles and took Tk 37.80 lakh

as additional fuel allowances.

His deputy Akhtar Hamid used two vehicles and took Tk 58.86 lakh while former chief whip Delwar used one and took about Tk 36 lakh as fuel allowances in addition to their entitlement.

The former deputy speaker even used the government vehicles for former BNP senior secretary general Tarique Rahman's political tour and took fuel allowances for that.

The committee recommends that the House recover Tk 1.33 crore from the trio and deposit it with the exchequer.

**NON-RETURN OF FURNITURE**

The probe report reveals that Sircar approved over Tk 12 lakh for purchasing furniture, air conditioner, and other items for his official residence. But he did not return those on expiry of his tenure. The committee says his action is tantamount to embezzlement.

Delwar also did not return to the parliament secretariat the items that he took for his official residence. The items include air conditioner, refrigerator, sofa and computer.

The probe body has made recommendation for recovering the items or the money spent for buying those from the two.

Delwar also forced the parliament secretariat to clear the utility service bills of his house at 103, Sharat Chandra Road at Armanitola. The report says the secretariat paid bills of 12 electricity meters and gas bills of eight ovens.

The committee says he was entitled to receive electricity bill of one meter and recommended recovering the money paid for bills of 11 additional meters.

**PURCHASE OF GIFT ITEMS**

In absence of any policy regarding purchase of gifts items, Sircar, Akhtar Hamid and Delwar abused their power to buy gift items worth Tk 47.48 lakh, says the report.

The committee recommends formulating a policy determining the types of gifts and the ceiling of expenditure to prevent wastage of public

money.

**ENTERTAINMENT BILLS**

The committee says Sircar drew about Tk 2 lakh for iftar party showing additional attendance of 1,791 people. In fact, 2,200 people were present at the iftar party sponsored by the speaker on October 3, 2006. He also drew Tk 1.99 lakh as dinner bills for 1,458 people.

It says the former speaker increased the prices of 20 food items at the parliament cafeteria, allowing the cafeteria to charge higher prices.

The probe body suggests that the parliament recover the extra money charged for the food items and the additional money drawn by Sircar for the iftar party.

Delwar received Tk 75,000 as entertainment bills for the period from July 21, 2006 to September 1, 2006. But in an affidavit, Delwar said he was in Singapore for treatment at that time. The probe body terms his action fraudulent and recommends recovering the money from him.

**BEAUTIFICATION AND ARBORICULTURE**

Following the former speaker's approval about Tk 1.39 crore was spent in the last seven years for beautification and arboriculture in and around the parliament building.

The committee has recommended filing departmental cases against the officials of the arboriculture department and Public Works Department (PWD) for wasting public money.

The report says former deputy speaker Akhtar Hamid misused Tk 3.11 lakh for building sheds for ducks through the PWD although there was no allocation in the parliament secretariat budget for such a purpose.

The committee recommends recovering the money from him.

**RECRUITMENT**

The former speaker appointed 256 third- and fourth-class employees in 2006 for the Parliament Secretariat, ignoring an establishment ministry order on recruitment. Even he did not maintain the criteria or

any quota for making the appointments, says the report.

The committee suggests scrapping all the appointments and recovering the money given as salaries to the employees.

Sircar also appointed 42 employees for the parliamentary standing committees on October 28, 2006, a day after the eighth parliament was dissolved. They were paid Tk 10 lakh as salaries for eight months till June 30, 2007.

The report says Sircar also spent Tk 1.83 lakh for giving salaries to a number of peons although there was no parliament at that time.

He appointed 42 more peons on permanent basis for the chiefs of parliamentary standing committees.

They were paid Tk 51.12 lakh as salaries from December 17, 2006 to January 2009 without existence of any parliament during the period.

The probe body recommends recovering around Tk 63 lakh in total from Sircar.

It also suggests taking departmental actions against the parliament secretariat officials who were in the selection committee on recruitment. **BNPPP REJECTS REPORT**  
The BNP Parliamentary Party (BNPPP) yesterday outright rejected the all-party parliamentary committee's probe report placed before the House, saying the "politically motivated" report has been prepared for tarnishing the image of BNP leaders.

"The probe body does not have any legal base. Therefore, we reject the findings of the probe report," Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Faroque said on behalf of the BNPPP at a press briefing at the parliament's media centre immediately after the report was placed in parliament.

He said those who raised the allegations against the BNP leaders were assigned to carry out the enquiry.

BNP lawmakers Shahid Uddin Chowdhury Anne and Mahbub Uddin Khokon, among others, were present.

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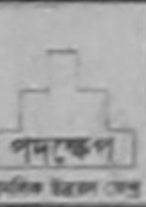
## India Supreme Court steps into gay sex law dispute

AP, New Delhi

India's Supreme Court agreed Thursday to hear a petition from a Hindu astrologer who is seeking to annul a recent landmark ruling that decriminalised gay sex.

In his petition, Sushil Kumar Kaushal said "even animals don't indulge in such activities," adding that allowing gay sex would help spread HIV/AIDS.

The latest development indicated that despite a recent Delhi High Court ruling, gays in India still face a long battle to gain acceptance social and legal in this deeply conservative country where even heterosexual sex is talked about in hushed tones. "If such abnormality is permitted, then tomorrow people might seek permission for having sex with animals," Kaushal said.



## ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রমে নেতৃত্বদানের সুযোগ

**পদক্ষেপ মানবিক উন্নয়ন কেন্দ্র** ১৯৮৬ সালে প্রতিষ্ঠিত জাতীয় পর্যায়ের একটি অন্যতম বেসরকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান (NGO) এবং পল্লী কর্ম সহায়ক ফাউন্ডেশন (পিকেএসএফ) এর শ্রেষ্ঠ সহযোগী সংস্থা হিসাবে পুরস্কার প্রাপ্ত একটি সংস্থা। "পদক্ষেপ" এর লক্ষিত জনগোষ্ঠীর জীবনযাত্রার গুণগত মান উন্নয়নে সমন্বিত উন্নয়ন কৌশল অবলম্বন করে বিভিন্ন কার্যক্রম বাস্তবায়ন করছে যার মধ্যে রয়েছে ক্ষুদ্রঋণ, স্বাস্থ্য, শিক্ষা, শিশু উন্নয়ন, কৃষি, মৎস্য ও পশুসম্পদ, পুষ্টি, HIV/AIDS, পানি ও পয়ঃ নিষ্কাশন ইত্যাদি। যথার্থ দক্ষ ক্ষুদ্রঋণ পেশাজীবীদের মধ্যে যারা এ সেক্টরে আগামী দিনের চ্যালেঞ্জ গ্রহণে উদ্বীপিতভাবে অগ্রহী তাদের নিকট হতে নিম্নোক্ত পদের জন্য দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

**পরিচালক (ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রম):**

ক) শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা যেকোন বিষয়ে স্নাতকোত্তর পাশ। প্রার্থীর পেশার সর্বশেষ পর্যায়ে ন্যূনপক্ষে ১০০ শাখা ও ১ লক্ষাধিক ক্ষুদ্রঋণ গ্রহীতা সমন্বিত ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রম সুষ্ঠুভাবে পরিচালনায়রত থাকতে হবে এবং ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রম পরিচালনায় তার মোট অভিজ্ঞতা অন্ততঃ ১৫ বছর হবে।

খ) প্রার্থীর বয়সঃ সর্বোচ্চ ৫০ বছর তবে ৪০ বছরের নিম্নে নয়।

গ) মাসিক বেতনঃ আলাচনা সাপেক্ষে। সংস্থার নিয়ম অনুসারে নির্দিষ্ট সময়ান্তে কর্মদক্ষতা মূল্যায়নের ভিত্তিতে চাকুরীতে নিয়মিতকরণসহ সংস্থার নির্ধারিত বেতনস্কেলভুক্ত করা হবে।

ঘ) অন্যান্য সুযোগ-সুবিধাঃ বছরে ২টি বোনাস, সিপিএফ, গ্রাচুইটি, সার্বক্ষনিক ট্রান্সপোর্ট সুবিধাসহ সংস্থার নিয়ম অনুসারে অন্যান্য সুযোগ-সুবিধা প্রদান করা হবে। তাছাড়া পেশাগত দক্ষতা প্রমানের মাধ্যমে সংস্থার উচ্চতর নেতৃত্বে উন্নীত হওয়ার সুযোগ থাকবে।

ঙ) দায়িত্বের সর্বশেষ বিবরণঃ পরিচালক (ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রম) কে দায়িত্ব বিমোচনের লক্ষ্যে "পদক্ষেপ মানবিক উন্নয়ন কেন্দ্র" এর ২০৭টি শাখা ও প্রায় ২০০০ (দুই হাজার) কর্মী সমন্বিত ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রমের আওতায় হতদরিদ্র ক্ষুদ্রঋণ কার্যক্রম, গ্রামীণ ক্ষুদ্রঋণ, নগর ক্ষুদ্রঋণ, ক্ষুদ্র উদ্যোক্তাঋণ, কৃষকদের জন্য ঋণ কার্যক্রমকে গতিশীল ও উচ্চ গুণগতমান সম্পন্ন নেতৃত্বের মাধ্যমে টেকসহিভাবে এগিয়ে নিয়ে যেতে হবে।

অগ্রহী প্রার্থীদের পূর্ণ জীবনবৃত্তান্তসহ (জীবনবৃত্তান্তে কর্মপক্ষে দুই জন বিশিষ্ট ব্যক্তি, যিনি প্রার্থীকে চিনবেন তাঁর নাম, ঠিকানা ও টেলিফোন/মোবাইল ফোন নম্বর উল্লেখ করতে হবে) যোগাযোগের নিমিত্তে টেলিফোন/মোবাইল ফোন নম্বর (আবশ্যক) উল্লেখ পূর্বক শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার, পেশাগত অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র/প্রমানপত্রের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি, সদ্যাতোলা ২ (দুই) কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ছবিসহ বরাবর, নির্বাহী পরিচালক, পদক্ষেপ মানবিক উন্নয়ন কেন্দ্র, প্রধান কার্যালয়, বাজী নং ৫৪৮, রোড নং ১০, বায়তুল আমান হাউজিং সোসাইটি, আদাবর, মোহাম্মদপুর, ঢাকা-১২০৭, এই ঠিকানায় আগামী ২০ জুলাই, ০৯ ইং তারিখের মধ্যে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। মূল দরখাস্ত ও বামের উপর স্পষ্টাক্ষরে পদের নাম উল্লেখ থাকতে হবে। যে কোন আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা কর্তৃক স্বরক্ষণ করে। লিখিত/মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশ গ্রহণের জন্য কোন প্রকার খরচ প্রদান করা হবে না।



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Your application will give examples of your general competence in working with others; communicating with others; planning and delivery of work; analysis and use of information; and influencing. Your written and spoken English must be excellent.

### COMPENSATION PACKAGE

A competitive salary starting at BDT 274,170.00 per month, with annual progression plus benefits will be offered for this post. A relocation allowance for successful overseas candidates will be offered if necessary.

### CONTACTS

For an application form, a written exercise and full job description, please email: [dfidrecruitment@dfid.gov.uk](mailto:dfidrecruitment@dfid.gov.uk) and put **"Request for Application Form"** in the Subject box. The papers will then be sent to you electronically. Only applications made on the DFID Application Form and submitted in electronic copy will be considered.

Application forms should be emailed to the above email address no later than **31 July 2009**. All completed application forms submitted via email should include **"Completed Application Form"** in the Subject box.

Selection is on merit although you will need to hold Bangladeshi citizenship or have a work permit valid for Bangladesh.

Applications are welcome from all ethnic groups, women and disabled people. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for the selection process which will be through an Assessment Centre arrangement.