

## Rumana's eyes

**FROM PAGE 20** Meanwhile, Rumana's assailant husband Hasan Sayeed Sumon yesterday confessed to trying to strangle her in a planned way.

"Sumon admitted that he planned to kill his wife, but he did not say clearly how, when and why he wanted to do that," said Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Detective Branch (DB South) Monirul Islam, who was grilling Sumon on remand.

A Dhaka court on Thursday placed Sumon on a two-day remand in an attempt-to-murder case.

Quoting Sumon, the DC said Rumana was working with a computer in her father's room on June 5. Her daughter Anusha was there with her. All on a sudden Sumon entered the room and locked the door from inside. He then swooped on Rumana and pushed his fingers in her eyes and dragged her by hair on the floor.

Seeing this, the daughter screamed out for help. Their domestic helps Shamsunnahar and Latifa came rushing and found the room locked from inside. They banged on the door several times and unable to break through they went for duplicate keys.

Seeing Sumon trying to strangle his wife, the domestic helps forced him away from Rumana, the DC said, adding, "Had the help come late, Rumana would have been dead."

Sumon escaped right after the incident.

The DB official said they would talk to the victim, her daughter and the domestic helps to get a clear picture of the incident.

## CU student

**FROM PAGE 20** his body hanging from the ceiling fan around 7:30pm after the house owner and his elder brother Md Osman informed them.

"Finding the door of his [Lokman] room closed from inside for a long time, I informed the house owner," said Osman.

Lokman, who used to live with his elder brother at Sikder Bhaban, left a note mentioning "No one is responsible for my death", police said.

He became ill after sitting two papers of his third year final exam held in last March, Osman said adding that he could not sit for the remaining exams due to the illness.

"Since then he remained sad. He might have committed suicide due to frustration," Osman added.

The body was sent to his village home in Kishoreganj for burial, said Abdur Rouf, officer-in-charge of the police station.

## Rape 'tools of war' in Libya: Hillary

**AFP, Washington**

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton accused the forces of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi on Thursday of using rape and violence against women as "tools of war."

Hillary said the United States was "deeply concerned" by reports of widescale rape in Libya and "troubled" by reports that governments across the Middle East and North Africa were using sexual violence to punish protesters.

"Rape, physical intimidation, sexual harassment, and even so-called 'virginity tests' have taken place in countries throughout the region," she said in a statement.

"Gaddafi's security forces and other groups in the region are trying to divide the people by using violence against women and rape as tools of war, and the United States condemns this in the strongest possible terms."

International Criminal Court prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo said last week that there was evidence the Libyan authorities bought "Viagra-type" medicines and gave them to troops as part of an official rape policy.

Clinton mentioned Iman al-Obeidi, whose accusations of rape against soldiers loyal to Gaddafi garnered worldwide attention when she stormed into the Rixos hotel in Tripoli -- where many Western journalists were based -- and threw open her coat to reveal scars and bruises on her body.

## Tidal surges

**FROM PAGE 1** single-decker launches in all 20 internal routes of the district yesterday.

Vast areas of all seven upazilas of the district got flooded by the tidal surge.

All ferry terminals in the district went under water disrupting road communication. Pontoons of Lebukhali, Kalapara, Mohipur, and Hazipur ferry terminals on Kuakata-Dhaka Road, Boga ferry terminal on Patuakhali-Galachipa Road, Parakunjo ferry terminal on Patuakhali-Mirzaganj Road also went under water.

Over 50 chars under Patuakhali, Kalapara, Mirzaganj, Galachipa, Dasmina, Baufal, and Dumki upazilas went under 4-5 feet deep water.

Flood-control dams in different places under Mirzaganj and Kalapara upazila were damaged. A sluice gate of Nilganj area of Kalapara upazila was destroyed and two villages--Sultanganj and Nilganj--were inundated, said an official of Kalapara Water Development Board.

Two-thirds of the district town itself went under water. Torrential rain continued to paralyze life there.

Fishes worth over Tk 1.5 crore was lost as many enclosures was washed away by the surge, sources in the District Fisheries Office said.

In Barguna, strong current damaged a portion of the 15km dam of the Water Development Board in Amtoli upazila. The gushing water flooded crop fields and inundated houses. High winds uprooted electric poles and trees, disrupting utility services.

In Sharankhola of Bagerhat, many people were marooned as the tidal surge devastated the area. More than 100 homes were washed away and at least 30 under-construction houses for the Sidr victims were damaged.

In Pirojpur, a dam on the Baleshwar in Zia Nagar upazila was breached by the tidal surge and it inundated low-lying areas, including Khol Southkhali, Patua and Balipara.

The tidal surge also

## Global

**FROM PAGE 20** emerging nations such as China and India will sustain strong demand.

"These developments, coupled with the implementation of biofuel mandates have increased demand and made processors and consumers much less responsive to high commodity prices," said the OECD and FAO report.

With low stocks and sticky demand the report found that weather-related production variations have become a "prime source of international price stability," as evidenced by soaring prices following a drought in Russia and wet weather in the United States last year.

"Weather-related crop yield variations are expected to become an even more critical driver of price volatility in the future," the report said.

They foresee price rises of 15 percent for rice; 20 percent for maize, vegetable oils and sugar; 30 percent for poultry, and nearly 50 percent for butter.

The OECD and FAO expect global agricultural production to grow at 1.7 percent annually on average over this decade, down from 2.6 percent last decade. Production per capita is still projected to rise 0.7 percent annually.

The report also foresees further robust growth in the use of agricultural products to make biofuels.

By 2020, the OECD and FAO expect 13 percent of global coarse grain production, 15 percent of oil production and 30 percent of sugar cane production to be used to make biofuels.

Higher oil prices would encourage further use of agricultural feedstocks for biofuel production, they noted, and may make it viable in some countries without government policy support.

flooded Mathbaria Bazar, Majherchar and Sapleja area in Mathbaria upazila and Beeldumuria, Panakhali and Sathia in Nazimpur upazila of the district.

In Cox's Bazar, low-lying areas of Cox's Bazar, Teknaf, Moheshkhali and Kutubdia also went under 3-4 feet water.

Our Chittagong correspondent reports: Halishahar, Agrabad and coastal areas of Patenga were waterlogged after the 2-4 feet higher-than-usual tidal surge.

Five fishing trawlers sank in the Meghna in the tidal surge and bad weather in Telichar area of Ramgati upazila Friday afternoon, UNB reports.

Locals said the surge was 3-4 feet high. Belal Hossain, chairman of Char Abdullapur union, said heavy rain damaged 10-15 houses in Telichar and inundated many char areas leaving 15,000 people marooned.

Our correspondent Manikganj said ferry service on Patuuri-Dauladia route resumed at 9:30am yesterday after a 12-hour disruption due to stormy weather.

Hundreds of vehicles including buses were seen waiting on both sides of the Padma.

According to a special bulletin from the Met office, the depression over south-western part of Bangladesh and adjoining West Bengal moved slightly north-northwestwards, weakened into a land depression and was still hovering over the Ganges delta area of West Bengal and adjoining Bangladesh.

It is likely to move in land further in a north-northwesterly direction and gradually weaken, said the Bulletin.

Squally weather may continue near maritime ports and coastal areas of Bangladesh and it is likely to improve later today, said an official of the Met office.

## Workers Party

**FROM PAGE 1** call on the first day of a two-day meeting of the party's central committee at its headquarters in the capital, said a press release.

The party leaders also criticised the parliamentary special committee's recommendation for keeping the word Bismillah in the preamble of the constitution and Islam as state religion.

They also urged the lawmakers not to approve any proposal that goes against the fundamental principles of the constitution.

Chaired by party President Rashed Khan Menon, the meeting was also addressed by party General Secretary Anisur Rahman Mallick.

## Jailed Iran brothers win global health prize

**JAEP, Washington**

Two Iranian doctors who were jailed three years ago for allegedly plotting to overthrow the government were awarded a global health prize on Thursday for their efforts to treat patients with HIV.

Kamiar and Arash Alaei were arrested in June 2008 and accused of communicating with the United States in a bid to unseat the regime of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Kamiar, 37, was released several months ago and was on hand to accept the award in Washington, but his elder brother Arash, 42, remains in Tehran's Evin prison where he is serving a six-year sentence.

The pair, known for their efforts to help drug addicts infected with HIV and improve conditions for sick prisoners, were not allowed to work as doctors while behind bars.

The Alaei brothers are regarded as pioneers of AIDS treatment in Iran, where discussions about sex and drugs are often taboo.

## Bumper

**FROM PAGE 20** during Chaitra, the last month of the spring.

According to Madhupur agriculture office, pineapple has been cultivated on 7,500 hectares of land in Idilpur, Sholakuri, Dokhala, Beibaid, Kailakuri, Hagurikuri, Pargachha, Alokdia, Aushnara, Digor Baid, Arunkhola, Laofula, Raniaid, Moter Bazar, Jalchhatra, Garo Bazar and Ralsulpur areas of the upazila.

The fruit was grown on 7,300 hectares of land in 2010 while on 7,000 hectares in 2009, 6,500 hectares in 2008 and 5,550 hectares in 2007.

"We are expecting around 1 lakh tonnes of pineapples in the upazila," said an agriculture officer.

The farmers of the upazila expect a higher yield of around 18 to 20 tonnes per hectare. They used less amount of plant hormone this year, said a farmer.

Limited use of hormones has boosted the demand for pineapples from Madhupur and the local farmers are getting Tk 12 to 13, Tk 2 to 3 more than that of the last year, on each fruit, said Abdul Mannan, a pineapple farmer of Sholakuri.

Hormone is usually used here to grow bigger pineapples and ripen those.

SM Afazuddin, deputy director (DD) of Tangail Agriculture Extension Department (AED), told The Daily Star that they have provided the farmers with different supports, including training, this year.

Local agriculture officials motivated the pineapple growers not to use chemicals for ripening the fruit, he said.

"The farmers of Madhupur have come to realise that they actually incur losses by ripening pineapples with chemicals as the fruit then rot within two days," the DD added.

## Saleh won't

**FROM PAGE 20** protesters to set up an interim ruling council, which would prevent Saleh returning to power.

On Wednesday, Hadi met representatives of youth protests which have raged since late January demanding the ouster of Saleh. They pressed him to give a clear stance on their demands, and gave him two weeks to respond.

The meeting followed talks between Hadi and the parliamentary opposition in which they agreed on calming the situation as a first step towards reviving the political process.

Washington on Thursday welcomed Hadi's talks with opponents of Saleh, who was a key US ally in the war on al-Qaeda.

"We have been encouraged that Vice President Hadi has started some outreach to the opposition and started some dialogue," said US State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland.

Protesters had on Monday given Hadi 24 hours to declare his position on their call for him to join the proposed council which they said would lead the country for a maximum of nine months.

The activists said the council would "appoint a nationalist and compatible figure to form a government of technocrats."

They also called for the dissolution of parliament and Yemen's consultative council, for the formation of a committee to draw up a new constitution, and for dates to hold a referendum on the constitution and for elections.

The ruling General People's Congress and government officials have been adamant that Saleh was quickly recovering and that he would return to Yemen soon.

Saleh, who has been in power since 1978, has steadfastly refused to endorse a Gulf states proposal for him to transfer power to his deputy and resign in return for parliamentary immunity against prosecution.

His presidential term is due to end in 2013.

## Graft documents

**FROM PAGE 1** graft suspects got reappointed and promoted on grounds of unavailability of any evidence or documents of their misdeeds.

The communications ministry formed a committee on October 24 last year to investigate appointments, promotion and corruption of Shahab Uddin and Bangladesh Railway Director General TA Chowdhury.

The probe body headed by Joint Secretary (Development) Mohammad Mostafa found nothing wrong with the officials or their activities. The other two committee members are Deputy Secretary Mohammad Amin and Senior Assistant Secretary Ilias Hossain.

The probe body was formed in the face of media criticism of the appointment and promotion of the officers, and under pressure from the parliamentary standing committee on communications ministry.

The committee in its

report in February said the communications minister ordered departmental action against those who made confessions to the Tac as per the Government Servants (Discipline & Appeal) Rule, 1985.

"But there was no information about who went to Tac, what confessions they made and what kind of offences they committed," says the report.

The ministry had to halt the process on legal grounds, it says.

The commerce minister said he would surely take action against the graft suspects, if evidence against them was found.

He said many of those who faced the Tac claim the then administration had forced them to make confessions.

The minister said the officers were given appointment and promotion after getting the nod from the law ministry.

On the missing documents, Abul Hossain said he

would enquire about the matter.

The probe body enquired about Shahab Uddin's freedom fighter certificate that he submitted to return to government service after his retirement. There have been allegations that his freedom fighter certificate is fake, but the committee could not prove it.

Shahab Uddin went on retirement on completion of 57 years in service on November 18, 2009. He rejoined the RHD on December 14 the same year after the government extended the service age of freedom fighter employees by two years.

On assumption of office in 2009, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed pledged to take action against the public servants who confessed to their guilt before the Tac. But nothing has been done so far.

On the contrary, many government officials, who confessed to their involvement in corruption, have been rewarded.

## Foresters fight

**FROM PAGE 20** forest stations deep in the Sundarbans between 2006 and 2007. Fifteen of 72 stations are operating without any firearms in Khulna, Sathkira and Bagerhat, he added.

The policy was adopted after a group robbers stormed a forest office and looted its arms in 2006.

During a recent visit to the three districts, this correspondent found that the understaffed forest offices are vulnerable to even rain. The offices are not secure enough to keep firearms.

On an average, four to six forest officials work at each camp in the Sundarbans.

Instead of taking an initiative to protect the arms, the DoF withdrew those, leaving the protectors vulnerable to the destroyers of the world's largest single-unit mangrove forest.

The unarmed officials are now "protecting" the forest from 10 major gangs of about 300 robbers equipped with light machine guns, AK-47, sophisticated pistols, revolvers and walkie-talkies.

Some fortunate foresters, who have official arms, confront these gangs with old-fashioned .303 and Chinese rifles and short-range guns.

"We now avoid any confrontation with the robbers," said the rescued forester requesting to remain unidentified.

The foresters, who are often accused of plundering trees, indeed work in a dangerous condition. They get no allowance although they work in such hostile areas risking their lives.

The forest department does not have a single doctor for its officials in the

Sundarbans where chances of falling ill are higher than in any other places. Foresters say there are instances of their colleagues dying of diarrhoea or snakebite before they could be sent to hospital.

In addition, there is no budget for fuel. So the foresters have to spend from their own pockets for fuel required for daily patrol, taking the arrested criminals and the seized materials to police stations and attending court hearings.

"When a forester has to bear the expenditures himself, it naturally destroys his morale," said a top forest official at the DoF headquarters in Dhaka in return for anonymity.

Conservator of Forest, Khulna, Akbar Hossain hopes the situation will improve, as the department is going to launch a European Union-funded project that will provide necessary logistic support.

The government is also considering introducing risk allowances, he added.

Lengthy judicial process, alleged non-cooperation from police, and a nexus of criminals, dishonest foresters, journalists and law enforcers also add to the despair of the forest officials.

As a result, they are left with no other choices but living in good terms with robbers and illegal loggers.

"We've an understanding with robbers and illegal loggers. If confronted, we show our departmental flag. They won't harm us then. Actually, they respect us in a way," said the rescued forester.

In reality, the foresters follow the rules of the criminals. Deep in the Sundarbans it has become a

tradition that robbers use forest stations as a resting place while the foresters cook for them.

"On that particular day, we had challenged them mistakenly taking them for crab collectors," the rescued official recalled.

## 2 brutally

**FROM PAGE 20** the upazila, said that some miscreants brought the two to the river bank in Bhatgaon village anytime on Thursday night and hacked them dead.

The decapitated head of Kajal, three sharp weapons and two cell phones were recovered from the spot.

The murder might be the result of previous enmity, the OC said adding that the other head might have been thrown into the river.

Kajal came out of his home on Tuesday to go to one of his relative's house in Chilmari upazila of Kurigram district, family members of Kajal told the local journalists.

However, they could not ascertain the reason behind the killing.

The bodies were sent to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital (DJMCH) morgue for autopsies.

In another incident, Rafiza Begum 27, a housewife of South Durgapur village in Dinajpur Sadar upazila, was strangled allegedly by her husband for dowry on Thursday night.

Police arrested her husband Md Tariqul Islam, 35.

Rafiza often complained that Tariqul and his family members tortured her for dowry, said Robiul Islam, brother of the deceased.

Her body was sent to DJMCH morgue for an autopsy.

## Road crash

**FROM PAGE 1** policemen.

Two policemen and the van driver died on the spot. One died while he was being taken to a hospital and another at the hospital.

The dead were identified as police constables Utpol, 28, Rouf, 26, Aslam, 25, and Razzaque, 26, and pick-up van driver Swapon, 20.

The policemen were going to Nandigram upazila of Bogra for the ongoing union parishad election duty.

The injured were admitted to Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital in Bogra.

Reaz Uddin, officer-in-charge of Shahjahanpur Police Station, said police seized the bus while the bus driver and helper fled.

## 1 dies

**FROM PAGE 20** officer-in-charge of Pirgachha Police Station, said the clash occurred between the supporters of defeated member candidate of Chowla UP Sirajul Islam and winner Abdul Hakim at around 7:00pm.

The supporters of Sirajul attacked Hakim's men immediately after the election results were announced.

The injured were taken to RMCH.

## BNP defers

**FROM PAGE 1** the caretaker system in the charter.

It also postponed yesterday's preparatory meeting between Alamgir and Rajshahi leaders to finalise the road march route.

Central BNP leader Ruhul Kuddus Talukder Dulu told The Daily Star yesterday that they were ready to hold the meeting but it was cancelled according to a party decision.

Alamgir said the party will announce its next agitation programmes today to protest "the government move to abolish the caretaker government system."

The party may go for a series of countrywide demonstrations including protest rallies and processions, say party insiders.

Khaleda on Thursday reiterated her stance on the issue, and said the caretaker system must remain unchanged in the constitution. She also turned down the ruling party's suggestion to return to parliament with a new formula for the caretaker system.

Alamgir said their agitation will continue and the prime minister will be forced to bow down to the people's demand to retain the caretaker system in the constitution.

"The caretaker system must continue. There is no scope for talks with the government on this issue. BNP will not participate in the next election, if not held under a non-partisan caretaker government," he told reporters after placing wreaths at the grave of party founder Ziaur Rahman.

Party vice chairmen Hafizuddin Ahmed and Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, released on bail on June 15, also placed wreaths at Zia's grave. The two leaders were arrested in the capital during the opposition enforced 36-hour hartal across the country.

## Bangladesh

**FROM PAGE 1** People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

"It's important that the compound of UNMIS can become a sort of safe area where civilians are effectively protected," France's UN ambassador Araud told reporters after a Security Council meeting.

A UN peacekeeping spokesman said the company of Bangladesh troops had been sent to Kadugli and that the area around the UN compound had become a safe haven to protect civilians.

UN peacekeeping chief Alain Le Roy told the Security Council that up to 6,000 people were camped out around the base. The United Nations estimates that 60,000 have been displaced by the fighting in South Kordofan alone, including about 70 percent of the population of Kadugli.

The Security Council is to get a briefing on Monday from former South African president Thabo Mbeki and UN envoy Haile Menkerios on attempts to seal a peace deal between the north and south governments.

Araud said that if there was no agreement by Monday the Security Council would have to "express itself in very strong terms to call for an end to the violence."

## Indian army

**FROM PAGE 20** along with a modern lab of 50 computers for training its troops," Indian Army officials said here yesterday.

The 3.7 inch howitzers were part of the first artillery unit of the Bangladesh Army and they had requested the Indian Army for these, they said.

The Indian Army chief will also gift a rock-climbing wall to the Bangladesh Army for helping in training of its mountaineers.

Commissioned in the Rajput Regiment in 1971, Gen Singh had taken part in Bangladesh's Liberation War and was part of the operations in several areas including Feni and Cox's Bazar.

Gen Singh, who is going to Bangladesh at the invitation of his counterpart Gen Mohammed Abdul Mubeen, will also call on President Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

He will also review the passing-out parade of the 64th Long Course and the 35th Special Course of the Bangladesh Military Academy on June 22 before returning next day.