

Rescuer

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into the wreckage of the building to pull out trapped people a day after it collapsed on April 24.

"When he returned home the third day after he joined the rescue work, he looked very upset. He repeatedly told me how hard it was for him to leave behind trapped people crying for help," said Irin, who married Faruq only four months ago.

Faruq's sister Ayesha Begum said the sight of so many people lying dead under the debris shocked him so much that he started to have nightmares of trapped people screaming for help.

With high fever, he was taken to a local hospital, Savar Super Clinic and Diagnostic Centre, where he received treatment for three days. Humayun Kabir, manager of the clinic, said Faruq showed symptoms of mental illness, and doctors there referred him to the DMCH on May 2 for better treatment.

"He was so traumatised that he wouldn't even let me use the bathroom, saying I would get trapped there," said Irin with tears welling up in her eyes.

Dr Muntasir Maruf, assistant registrar of National Institute of Mental Health, said, "Many survivors of the Savar building collapse have developed such symptoms."

They need both counselling and medication, said Maruf.

Rescuers, survivors and witnesses might develop such symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, he said.

Tenders

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Cooperation Agency (Jica).

The deal was signed after primary discussions on the Western Bangladesh Bridge Implementation Project.

Quader said, 187 bridges will be built and renovated in the country's western districts under the project.

Kei Poyama, senior representative of Jica, and MAN Siddique, secretary of the Road Division, signed the deal on behalf of their respective sides.

About the Tk 22,000-crore Metro Rail Project in Dhaka, the minister said, the work of this important project would begin within next July.

The communications ministry has already begun its works to purchase lands from the Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) for building the depots, he told the journalists.

The government has already signed an agreement with Jica for the metro rail project.

As per the deal, Jica was financing Tk 16,500 crore while the rest of the project cost would be borne by the government.

Quader also said the construction work on the Second Meghna Bridge, Second Gomoti Bridge and Second Kanchpur Bridge would begin in September this year.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) has already approved a Tk 9,000-crore project to construct the bridges on Dhaka-Chittagong highway.

Ban calls

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died and 60 were injured in clashes between police and protesters in Dhaka.

Ban also urged political and religious leaders to "engage in constructive dialogue and help defuse the tensions."

The clashes erupted just over a week after the Rana Plaza collapse in Savar, which killed more than 730 people.

US CONCERNED

The United States has expressed concern over the violence in Bangladesh over the weekend and urged the government to ensure safety of all citizens.

"While engaging in peaceful protest is a fundamental democratic right, we firmly believe violence is never the answer," Acting Deputy Spokesperson of the US State Department Patrick Ventrell told a press briefing in Washington on Monday.

Speaking at the daily briefing, Ventrell said the US looked to the government of Bangladesh for ensuring safety of all its citizens and encouraged all Bangladeshis to peacefully express their views.

About violence, the State Department official said, "We are concerned by the violence in Bangladesh over the weekend, including the violent deaths of at least several individuals."

He added the US embassy in Dhaka was closely engaging with all parties to urge calm and encourage dialogues.

LAND BOUNDARY BILL

Uproar in Rajya Sabha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Rajya Sabha, upper house of the Indian parliament, witnessed an uproar yesterday as External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid moved on to introduce a constitution amendment bill to help implement the land boundary agreement with Bangladesh.

The incident took place when Khurshid rose to move The Constitution (119th) Amendment Bill, 2013, amidst noises caused by the main opposition BJP over coal block allocation and bribery allegations in railway ministry.

Asom Gano Parishad (AGP), a former ruling party of north-eastern Indian state of Assam, lawmakers Kumar Deepak Das and Birendra Kumar Baishya raised slogans carrying placards against the bill and rushed towards Khurshid in a bid to snatch a copy of it from him.

Some congress members, including Parliamentary Affairs Minister Rajiv Shukla, prevented them from snatching the bill.

Amid chaos, Khurshid sat down without the process of introduction of the bill being completed.

Following the incident, Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman P J Kurien adjourned the House.

The constitution amendment bill seeks to give effect to the acquiring of territories by India, and transfer of certain territories to Bangladesh in pursuance of the agreement between the two countries.

Das and Baishya later told reporters that they were

opposing the bill fearing it would lead to a secessionist movement in Assam, which was not in the country's interest.

Baishya said this was not an issue of Assam but that of the sovereignty of the nation.

Das said, "The bill will start a secession movement. Therefore, we are opposing it and we will not let it be introduced in the parliament."

Two AGP lawmakers said the federal government had signed a pact with Bangladesh, which was not known to the people of Assam.

The government was doing it for their political interest, not in the interest of Assam, they added.

As they were losing huge area of Assam to Bangladesh, they could not support the bill, the AGP lawmakers noted.

Against this backdrop, it is not clear when the bill will be introduced and the current budget session is scheduled to end on May 10.

The Bill was also listed for introduction in the Rajya Sabha last month, but the standoff between the Congress-led UPA government and the opposition on a range of issues had stalled proceedings in the parliament.

Under the land boundary agreement, Bangladesh and India will exchange 161 adversely-held enclaves to help implement the Indira-Mujib land boundary pact of 1974.

Bangladesh has already implemented the pact following approval from Bangladesh parliament.

Four Hefajat leaders sued

Accused of embezzling money collected for Savar victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Four Hefajat-e Islam leaders were sued on Monday night for misappropriating money collected for the Savar tragedy victims during a grand rally in Rajshahi.

The accused are Hefajat's Dhaka city unit Secretary General Junayed Al Habib, Rajshahi city unit Convenor and Rajshahi University's Islamic Studies teacher Sheikh Taiyabur Rahman Nijami, the city unit joint Convenor Jamal Uddin, and Treasurer Abdul Jabbar Jihadi.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Hefajat's Rajshahi city unit office secretary and principal of Jinnahnagar Darul Ulum Etimkhana and Madrasa, filed the case with Rajpara Police Station, said ABM Rejaul Islam, officer-in-charge of the station.

Jinnah in the case alleged that the accused misappropriated more than Tk 5 lakh in donation collected from the people on April 29 during a rally.

According to the case statement, individual contribution ranged from Tk 500-1000.

But Jamal Uddin later that day told him the collection amounted to Tk 2.21 lakh.

However, no money was paid to any of the Savar tragedy victims, said Jinnah in the case statement, adding that the money might have been used for Hefajat leaders' trip to Dhaka instead.

Police said the accused are on the run.

21 died

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stood at 21 with the death of a second Border Guard Bangladesh member yesterday, officials said.

"Take 21 as the exact figure [toll]," Home Minister Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir told BSS without elaborating when asked about the varied figures of those killed in the clashes.

A senior police officer had earlier given a breakup of the toll saying nine people were killed in the capital on May 5 and 6, seven at Kanchpur of Narayanganj on May 6, four in Hathazari and one in Bagerhat on the same day.

He said of the dead, six were members of the armed forces or law enforcement agencies who died in the capital, Narayanganj and Hathazari of Chittagong on those two days.

Mainstream Bangladesh media yesterday put the toll over the as high as 28 with the overnight death of a paramilitary soldier while the rightwing Naya Diganta in its today's issue said 22 people were killed in the past three days of clashes.

But the BNP-led 18-party alliance with Jamaat-e-Islami being a major partner yesterday called a two-day shutdown from tomorrow to protest what they described as "mass killing" of Hefajat activists during and after their May 5 Dhaka siege programme.

Senior BNP leader MK Anwar at a news briefing yesterday claimed the law enforcement and paramilitary forces accompanied by ruling Awami League activists killed "several thousand religious leaders and scholars."

He also alleged that a ruling Awami League leader led the arson attack at the Baitul Mukarram. Responding to the BNP leader's allegations, the home minister said, "Mr MK Anwar is spreading falsehood, which he is habituated to. I challenge him to prove his claim."

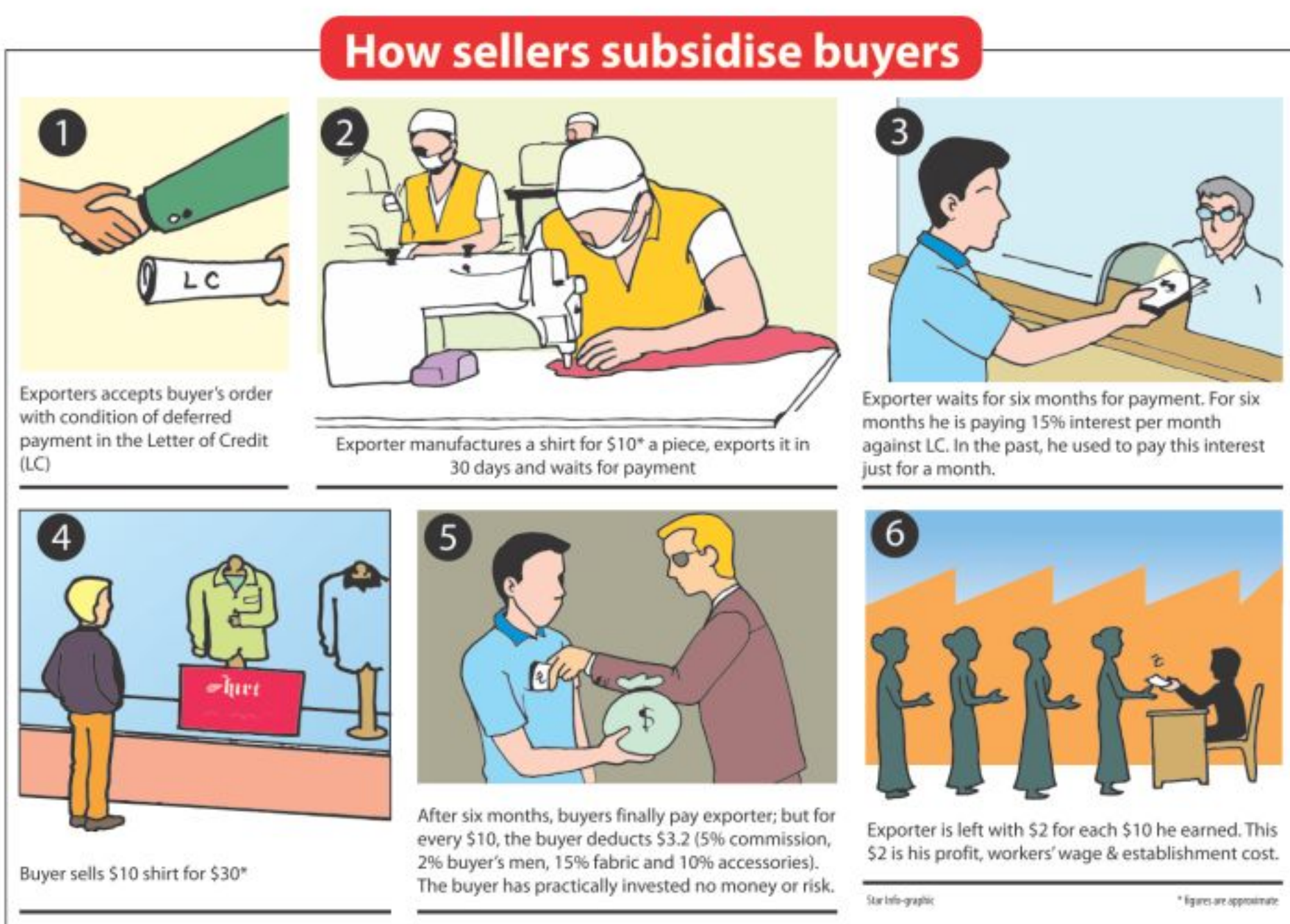
The minister said Anwar would have to take responsibility for his irresponsible comments.

Muhiuddin further said BNP chief Khaleda Zia proved herself a party to a plot by ordering the BNP men to stand by Hefajat activists when they carried out the mayhem.

Awami League spokesperson Mahbubul Alam Hanif binned MK Anwar's allegations and asked the BNP leader to prove his statement or face legal action.

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In a press release, it described the Monday's operation as an act of genocide.



Secret cuts

FROM PAGE 1

buyers. Garment-makers take loan, free of interest for 90 days, against the L/C in executing orders. So, for the period beyond 90 days, manufacturers have to fork out 15pc interest.

Frustrated, yet manufacturers are ever obliging because they do not want to upset the buyers and stay without work. If shut, a small knit factory with 35 machines loses about \$9,000 a day in production and \$1,000 in overhead costs. For a small woven factory with 120 machines, the loss goes up to \$14,000.

Since victims do not complain, the central bank and garment owners' association choose to turn a blind eye to this unethical practice.

This newspaper has also gathered how criminalisation of the business has, over the years, gradually been nudging the world's number-two apparel-maker down the hill.

Order worth a dollar that a buyer places actually does not add up to a dollar. On different pretexts and through underhand dealings, they take back almost 25 cents, leaving the manufacturers to complete the job with the remaining 75 cents.

With these cents, manufacturers buy fabrics and accessories, make clothes, pay establishment costs, ship out clothes, and are expected to pay workers reasonably and make good profit as well.

But profit has been hard to come by for the last few years. The way most of the big international buyers squeeze price off orders in one way or the other can only be dubbed as blatantly criminal, unethical and ruthless.

A Dhaka-based manufacture exports cotton long sleeve tops for a Spanish buyer for decades. The buyer comes back every year with repeat order, lowering the price further. Though manufacturing cost including wages doubled within this span of eight years, the price was pushed down to \$2.40 a piece this year from \$3.40 in 2005.

At every factory, employers and employees alike rejoice the day when L/C from the buyer arrives. It is almost like an Eid day for all. But little do they cheer about

COST BREAKUP

60% Fabrics

10% Accessories

5% Wastage

3% Documentation & Handling

2% Transportation

20% Establishment & Overhead

the day when payment arrives from the buyer. More often than not, the balance sheet, upon execution of order, bears the testimony of a huge loss.

Take Momtaz Uddin as our manufacturer and let's see why his balance sheet turned horrific.

Say, for example, he has shipped out 20,000 shirts within L/C time limit and with quality checked by buyer's men during production. The \$10 a shirt price is only on paper.

The buyer deducted 5pc from L/C for expense of his offshore office in Hong Kong. Some buyers ask for it in cash and some through L/C. Like others, he too has to be party to money laundering. The purpose of an offshore office is unknown.

Still, he considers himself lucky for getting the order directly from the buyer. Had a buying agent gotten between them, he would have lost up to 5pc further.

Momtaz, as asked by the buyer, bought fabrics and accessories from his nominated suppliers. Previously, fabrics and accessories worked as price cushions for him. Through hard negotiation, he used to save at least 25pc, 15 from fabric and 10 from accessories. Now the buyer is scooping the cream off from his suppliers. He curses the buyer but keeps obliging him.

His buyer proudly advertises to his customers that all products are human body friendly. So, Momtaz had to certify the products with chemical and metal test for

both fabrics and accessories. The tests were costly, and ate up 2pc.

The buyer has a small front office too in Dhaka for quality inspection at factory and correspondence back to Italy. Head of his Dhaka office discretely made it clear that he did have a share in the pie. And a modest 1pc for him keeps the manufacturer away from any trouble.

There are still more mouths to feed. Momtaz had to win favour of quality controllers and merchandisers from the buyer's local office.

Cash, gifts and tummy-full of lunch at every visit to the factory did keep his production trouble-free. Along the way, a few thousand dollars went up in the smoke.

So, 33pc was off the price already, and the manufacturer had not started production yet.

There was time a few years back when the L/C was more relaxed. He could get payment within three days after submitting shipping documents with his bank. As the buyer now withholds payment for up to six months now, he takes loan from bank to pay workers and meet other operational costs. Momtaz further counts losses in 15pc interest on the loan.

The misery does not end here.

Once the orders are shipped, the buyers often start complaining that the product standards are not up to the mark (this they do despite the fact that they control quality). Or that business is bad and they cannot sell products.

Now that is a chiller. Because the next thing the buyers will ask for is a discount. Since they cannot sell or the product quality is not good, they will demand a price cut.

With their back against the wall, manufacturers like Momtaz look for ways to cut costs and survive.

They are left with 20pc of the price that is kept for operational and establishment expenses including wages of the workers.

So, cheap clothes and corruption combine to take its toll on workers. They are given poor wages and a cheap, unsafe place to work in.

And disasters start brewing in silence.

Shibir, BNP

FROM PAGE 20

The fierce clash erupted in at least 10 points of the three-kilometre stretch of Dhaka-Chittagong highway, from Signboard area to Kanchpur bridge, after Hefajat men had been driven away from their rally in the capital's Motijheel area at the small hours on Monday.

Locals said the villagers had joined the mayhem following a call for help on a loudspeaker from Madaninagar Madrasa that said, "Save us, save the madrasa."

However, the victims of Monday's clash were neither any teacher nor any student of Madaninagar Madrasa.

Monir Hossain, uncle of Osman Goni Badhan who died in the clash, said had the announcement not been made, such huge number of casualty would not have taken place.

Badhan's father Kaikobad yesterday told The Daily Star that his son had gone to a shop near the clash area to recharge his mobile phone.

He said his college-going elder daughter had died in a road crash on May 6, 2006, the same day his son died seven years later, trying to save her brother Omar Faruk, 11, who is now a student of a local madrasa.

During a visit to Sanarpar, Nimai Kashari, Madaninagar and Shimiral yesterday it was found that locals were still in panic and most of the shops of those areas were closed.

Locals said driven away from Motijheel, Hefajat and Jamaat-Shibir men had gathered at local madrasas in Siddhirganj of Narayanganj and immediately blocked the Dhaka-Chittagong highway.

Around 6:00am, they clashed with law enforcers and started vandalising vehicles, highway police station and outpost, and roadside business establishments.

The situation turned worse around 7:00am when the unruly activists had sought help from locals through the announcement and the villagers joined them.

The clash lasted for around seven hours.

The locals had joined the clash because a large number of around 2,000 Madaninagar Madrasa students come from families living in nearby areas. The villagers had come out to save their children and the madrasa, said locals.

Some students of Madaninagar Madrasa said more than 1,000 madrasa students had come to their madrasa from different districts, including Chittagong, Comilla and Noakhali, to join Hefajat's Dhaka siege programme.

The outsiders had returned to Madaninagar Madrasa after being driven away from Shapla Chattar early Monday, they added.

Held Hefajat

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Meanwhile, more than 50 thousand leaders and activists of Hefajat-e Islam and Jamaat-e-Islami, including Junaid Babunagari, have been made accused in 19 cases for Sunday's anarchy in the capital.

Of the cases, 10 were filed with Paltan, seven with Motijheel, one with Shahbagh and another with Ramna police stations by the relatives of victims, Islamist leaders, businessmen, shop owners, employees of different establishments, political parties, police and government officials.

Around 15,000 people have been sued in each of the cases filed with Paltan police and 1,500 people in each case filed with Motijheel, police said.

Besides, around 12,000 men of Hefajat and Jamaat-Shibir stand accused in five cases in Bagerhat and 5,000 in Chittagong for violence leaving seven people dead, report our correspondents.

Yesterday, Junaid, arrested at the capital's Lalbagh on Monday night, was placed on a nine-day remand in connection with the killing of sub-inspector Md Shahjahan during a fight between Hefajat men and law enforcers at Motijheel early Monday.

Another Dhaka court ordered a two-day remand for 40 Hefajat activists, arrested for the violence, when police sought remand for seven days each.

Train set on fire again

FROM PAGE 1

Halishahar, said Nazrul Islam, superintendent of GRP in Chittagong.

The railway authorities suspended station master Mahbubur Rahman and three other officials for negligence of duties. Besides, Railway Nirapatta Bahini suspended its habildar Manjurul Alam and guards Jasim Uddin and Raihan Ali.

Quoting witnesses, station manager ANM Shamsul Islam said the train was parked at platform number-5 around 4:50am when some miscreants poured petrol on it and set alight the five coaches in the middle of the train and fled the scene.

Six firefighting units from Agrabad and Nandankanan fire stations rushed to the spot and doused the blaze around 5:50am. None was injured in the incident, said sources at Fire Service and Civil Defence headquarters in Chittagong.

The train left Chittagong Railway Station for Dhaka at 8:45am, one hour and 45 minutes behind its schedule, after replacing the burnt

coaches.

Superintendent of GRP Md Nazrul Islam said six people were directly involved in the arson attack.

During primary interrogation, the five detainees admitted that they are members of Islami Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, he added.

The authorities estimated the loss caused by the fire at around Tk 6 crore. A four-member probe committee has been formed by the Bangladesh Railway (east zone) to investigate the arson attack and submit a report by today, said Md Rakanuzzaman, divisional commercial officer of the zone.

A case was filed with the GRP outpost of Chittagong Railway Station in this connection.

MINISTER VISITS STATION Railways Minister Mujibul Haque visited the Chittagong Railway Station yesterday evening to see the damages caused by the arson attack.

Talking to journalists, he

blamed Jamaat-Shibir men for the attack and urged people to protect public property.

Attacks on trains and railway tracks have become a regular occurrence in the country since February 28 when Jamaat leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee was sentenced to death by the International Crimes Tribunal-1 for committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

On March 3, activists of Jamaat-Shibir set ablaze three coaches of a train in Rajshahi. The following day, some Jamaat-Shibir men set fire to three coaches of a train in the capital and to an abandoned locomotive in Chittagong.

Miscreants torched a coach of another train at Mymensingh Railway Station on March 26.

At least 30 passengers were injured on April 2 when six coaches of a Chittagong-bound train from Dhaka derailed in Comilla after suspected Jamaat-Shibir men removed several fishplates from the railway tracks.