

## Rail minister sick, flown to Singapore

UNB, Dhaka

Railways Minister Mujibul Haque was taken to Singapore at the wee hours of Saturday as he fell sick due to gastrointestinal problems.

Kibria Majumder, personal secretary of the minister, said Mujibul Haque was flown to Singapore around 2:30am from the Combined Military (CMH), Dhaka as his condition was unchanged.

Earlier on Thursday night, the minister fell sick in his hometown Comilla. He was immediately admitted to a local clinic, 'Moon Hospital', and then moved to the Dhaka CMH early Friday.

Mujibul Haque who got married just last year at the age of 68 suffered internal bleeding due to the gastrological problems.

## Woman's eye

FROM PAGE 16

the woman, they rushed to the house and rescued her.

She was rushed to an eye hospital in the capital's Shyamoli area.

Later, police arrested Sukhi's husband Rabiul.

Officer-in-Charge SM Mamruzzaman of Savar Model Police Station confirmed the incident to the UNB.

However, no case was filed yet in this connection.

## Ashraf wants

FROM PAGE 16

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had laughed at the question, the sources said.

The minister said he needed to learn from the officials how the ministry worked.

The senior secretary then briefed him on the ministry activities.

Syed Ashraf is the first public administration minister after the parliamentary democracy was established in 1991. Since then, all prime ministers had kept the portfolio for themselves.

### NO OFFICE?

There was no designated office for the newly appointed minister at the ministry, which led Ashraf to leave work early yesterday.

"As I have no office, I will leave the ministry. If there is any work to be done, please send the files to my official residence from where I will work. I will come to the ministry once an office is ready for me," Ashraf was quoted as saying by a meeting source.

Talking to journalists earlier, Ashraf said he needed a little bit of time to get familiar with the work of the ministry and learn about its jurisdictions.

Replying to a query about politicisation of the administration, he said he did not know whether it was an

issue in the ministry.

"We don't believe in politicisation of the administration," he said, adding that those who were competent would work and prosper.

Meanwhile, presence of officials and employees at Bangladesh Secretariat was thin as many officials were on leave. The minister said his ministry would work in full-swing when they join work.

On July 9, Ashraf was removed from the LGRD and cooperatives ministry and made a minister without portfolio following the prime minister's displeasure over his absence in an important meeting.

Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain replaced Ashraf.

Amid speculations that Ashraf may become inactive in the political arena and start living in London, Hasina summoned him to Gono Bhaban several times between July 10 and July 16 and convinced him to call off his London plans.

Awami League insiders claimed that the prime minister had offered Ashraf, also the general secretary of ruling Awami League, to take charge of either foreign, home or any ministry of his choice.

## Israel in 'abusive arrests' of Palestinian children: HRW

AFP, Jerusalem

Human Rights Watch yesterday accused Israel of "abusive arrests" of Palestinian children as young as 11 and of using threats to force them to sign confessions.

Israeli authorities failed to inform parents of their children's arrest or whereabouts, the New York-based watchdog added, drawing on accounts of several children detained during intense unrest in east Jerusalem and the West Bank late last year.

HRW's Middle East director Sarah Leah Whitson urged the United States to pressure its Israeli ally to end what it said were long-standing "abusive practices".

The rights group issued the accusations as US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter began a visit to Israel.

"Israeli security forces have used unnecessary force to arrest or detain Palestinian children," it said in a report giving details of the "abusive arrests" of six children.

"Forces have choked children, thrown stun grenades at them, beaten them in custody, threatened and interrogated them without the presence of parents or lawyers, and failed to let their parents know their whereabouts."

## Cabinet reshuffle

FROM PAGE 3

on July 9, and after the span of one week, he was given the charge of Public Administration Ministry.

When the prime minister's attention was drawn regarding Ashraf's portfolio changing, she said cabinet reshuffle could be done at any time. "Distribution of portfolio among the cabinet members is the jurisdiction of the head of the government. We may bring this kind of change in time to time."

She also mentioned that changing in the cabinet brought dynamism in its activities and people also got more interest in this matter. "It's a simple matter... it happens always and every country and there is no scope for making adverse comments about this matter."

In this connection, she recalled that after the independence of the country when Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the head of the government, the charge of AL was given to AHM Quamruzzaman with minister status as Bangabandhu left the party's presidency.

The prime minister also remembered that Bangabandhu in 1957 quit the cabinet and became the general secretary of the party to build the party. "It was a unique case in the country and he was the only one person who left ministership to organise the party."

## 3 brothers

FROM PAGE 16

with his group were watching a football match at a local playground.

Suddenly, a brawl over a disputed piece of land broke out there, said Nurul Amin Swapan, chairman of Nateshwar Union Parishad, quoting witnesses.

At one stage, Mawla along with his men stabbed the three brothers repeatedly with sharp weapons.

Kamal died on the spot while Harun and Babul were critically wounded, said Swapan.

The two were declared dead after being rushed to Noakhali Abdul Malek Ukil Medical College Hospital.

On information, police recovered Kamal's body from the spot and sent it to the hospital morgue where all the three bodies had the autopsies done.

The chairman said the brothers were allegedly involved in drug peddling and mugging in the area.

They were accused in several cases with Sonaimuri Police Station, said OC Haniful.

A case in connection with their killing was being filed. The suspects had reportedly gone into hiding.

## ISIS claims

FROM PAGE 16

avenge the killing of Sunni Muslims in the northern Iraqi town of Hawija, and that the suicide car bomber was carrying around three tonnes of explosives.

Iraqi officials declared victory over Islamic State in Diyala earlier this year after security forces and Shia paramilitaries drove them out of towns and villages there, but the insurgents remain active in the province.

Security forces and militia groups are currently focused on the western province of Anbar, where they have been gearing up for an offensive to retake the mainly Sunni governorate - Iraq's largest.

The United Nations said earlier this week that nearly 15,000 people had been killed in the 16-month period up to April 30.

## Comet probe Philae 'silent'

AFP, Paris

Europe's comet-riding robot lab Philae has fallen "silent", said ground controllers yesterday who feared it may have shifted on the rough, alien surface, out of radio range.

The latest data suggested the probe, perched on a comet streaking towards the Sun, may no longer be in line of contact with its orbiting mothership, Rosetta, which relays its messages to Earth, they said.

"In the telemetry received, we have observed signs that Philae could have moved and that its antennas are thus perhaps more concealed or their orientation might have changed," said project leader Stephan Ulamec of the German Aerospace Center (DLR).

The washing machine-sized lander may have been dislodged by the gas and dust blasting from Comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko as it draws ever closer to the Sun.

The data also indicated one of Philae's two transmission units appeared not to be working properly, and a receiver was damaged, said a statement from the European Space Agency (ESA) which described the lander's status as "uncertain".

"At the moment we have some

concerns about this," DLR spokeswoman Manuela Braun told AFP. "We are trying to understand."

Philae, which touched down on 67P on November 12 last year, went into hibernation three days later, and woke up again on June 13 for intermittent communications with Earth.

It has since called home eight times, the last on July 9 when critical data was uploaded from Philae's prodding and probing of its alien home.

But since then, the robot probe has gone "back to 'silent mode'," said the DLR statement.

Efforts are being made to contact Philae, possibly by adjusting Rosetta's orbit to try and find a better connection.

But moving the lander itself is no an option for now.

"At the moment, we don't move it because we don't want to irritate it," said Braun. "We want to understand the situation before changing anything which might result in a worse situation."

There has been an added complication: Rosetta has had to be moved into a further orbit as its star-reading navigation system was being confused by the dust particles streaming out of the comet.

## Moyna Mia confesses crime

FROM PAGE 1

yesterday, police sources said.

Several men beat Rajon to death on July 8. They also recorded it and uploaded the footage on the internet sparking huge public outcry.

Police arrested Moyna at his home in Pirpur area of Tuberbazar in Sylhet with the help of locals on July 14. The next day, a court placed him on a seven-day remand.

Earlier, Akhtar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Jalalabad Police Station, had said Moyna caught Rajon and tied him to an iron bar and called in Kamrul Islam, a key accused in the case.

Kamrul on reaching the spot started beating up Rajon. Later, Kamrul's brothers, including prime accused Muhith Alam, joined in.

After Rajon's death, Moyna and others took Rajon's body to Kumargaon residential area where locals caught Muhith, the OC said. The others managed to flee, he added.

Muhith during interrogation has also confessed his involvement, sources said.

He had told police that apart from himself five people were involved -- his brothers Ali Mia, Shamim and Kamrul Islam; security guard Moyna Mia and Dulal Mia.

OC Akhtar said Muhith, on remand, disclosed important information about the killing but they were not making it public for the sake of investigation.

He said fresh remand for Muhith could be sought if he did not make a confessional statement before a magistrate.

## 100 made homeless in fire

FROM PAGE 16

human casualties in the fire as most residents were away for Eid, said Osman Gani who owns the shanty. Gani is a local Awami League leader and commissioner of Ward 21 of Dhaka North City Corporation.

"I'm thankful that my children left Dhaka before Eid. But I don't know where they will live now when they return," said Anwara Begum who works as a maid in the city. She lived in one room at the boarding.

An electric short-circuit was the probable reason behind the fire, Abdul Halim, deputy assistant director of Fire Service and Civil Defence of Dhaka, told The Daily Star.

Locals, however, said the fire originated from a stove used by a shanty

dweller to make fuchka.

District Relief and Rehabilitation Officer Anwarul Islam Khandker, who visited the scene, confirmed that around 200 shanties, most of them locked, were burnt.

Gani said the shanties were built atop a pond that belonged to his family. The shanties stand on pillars erected in the water body and have electricity and gas supply.

An employee of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Ltd who visited the spot, however, said that the gas connection was illegal.

It took firefighters an hour to bring the fire under control. Firefighter officials said that they struggled to reach all portions of the shanties because of the narrow road that led to

## JCD president, 5 others held

FROM PAGE 16

filed by the arrestees.

Police said pro-BNP student body leader Rajib and his "associates" were held with 45 yaba tablets in Dumki upazila of Patuakhali around 11:30pm Sunday. The six were traveling in a car to Kuakata from Barisal.

Azam Khan Faruqui, officer-in-charge of Dumki Police Station, said on information they stopped the car near Lebukhali ferry terminal on Barisal-Patuakhali highway and found the tablets inside a bag.

Meanwhile, JCD yesterday termed the recovery of yaba tablets from Rajib staged by the government and demanded that he be released immediately.

At a press briefing at BNP's central office in capital's Nayapaltan, the organisation also declared a two-day protest programme for arresting Rajib "without any reason".

"The arrest of Rajib was nothing but a provocative act of the government at a time when the BNP and its associate bodies are not involved in any movement," said Nazmul Hasan, a JCD vice-president.

He, while reading out a statement, alleged that the police themselves had

planted the tablets in the car to tarnish Chhatra Dal's image.

Chhatra Dal further alleged that police did not tell local journalists about Rajib's arrest when they rushed to the scene.

Our Patuakhali correspondent said Foyez Ahmed, additional superintendent of police (ASP) in the district, briefed reporters about the incident at the district Detective Branch of police's office around 2:00am yesterday.

After the arrest, police brought the six to the DB office and quizzed them.

The police officer did not reveal the identities of the arrested five "associates" of Rajib.

JCD insiders said they were Rajib's village friends from Barisal's Muladi.

At the briefing, ASP Foyez said they also seized a bottle of whisky from the car.

Rajib was produced before reporters but was not allowed to talk to them.

The police official said a case under the narcotics control act was filed against the arrestees.

There are at least 30 cases against the JCD president with different police stations in the capital in connection with his involvement in "subversive activities", according to JCD insiders.

## Indian man confesses to multiple child murders

AFP, New Delhi

Indian police said yesterday they are investigating whether a man arrested for the murder and sexual assault of a six-year-old girl may have been a serial child killer after he confessed to 14 more crimes.

Ravinder Kumar made the confession after he was arrested in New Delhi on Thursday, Deputy Commissioner of Delhi Police Vikramjeet Singh told AFP.

Singh said police questioned the 24-year-old labourer after discovering he had been detained in a separate assault case last year and released on bail.

"We specifically arrested Ravinder Kumar over the assault and murder of a six-year-old girl," he said.

"After we realised that he had previously been arrested in a similar case, we interrogated him... and he told us of at least 14 other cases."

A police officer who spoke on condition of anonymity said Kumar had

confessed to the "assault and murder of 14 or 15 children over the last few years".

"We are in the process of ascertaining all his claims and separate teams are looking at every claim," the officer told AFP.

The case has drawn comparisons with the gruesome discovery in 2006 of the dismembered bodies of 19 people in sewage drains near a house in Noida, a satellite city of the Indian capital.

Many of the victims in that case -- dubbed the "house of horrors" -- were children abducted from the poor neighbourhood of Nithari nearby.

Parents of the victims later said police had not taken them seriously when they initially reported their children missing because they were poor.

Police arrested Kumar after finding his identity card at a construction site where they discovered the body of the six-year-old victim, who had gone

missing last week.

Speaking to AFP from the police station where he is being held, Kumar said he had been drunk when he attacked his victims, and committed his first such offence in 2008.

"I used to do these acts alone, after getting drunk," he said.

"After my first assault I did many others. Some around places where I used to get work... or around my (home) or my relatives' homes."

Police have sent teams to the areas where Kumar claimed to have committed the crimes, and have ordered a psychological profile.

But they said their investigations would take time.

"We have the evidence to link him to his present arrest, but it could be a long investigation process for other claims as he has given a broad timeframe of his acts and also doesn't know the exact area where he committed those acts," Singh said.

## New Clooney project to probe financing of African wars

AFP, Nairobi

Hollywood actor George Clooney launched a new initiative yesterday aimed at ending conflicts in South Sudan and elsewhere in Africa by tracking the money involved.

The Sentry, founded by Clooney and John Prendergast of The Enough Project advocacy group, will investigate the ways conflicts in South Sudan, Sudan, the Central African Republic and Democratic Republic of Congo are financed.

"Real leverage for peace and human rights will come when the people who

benefit from war will pay a price for the damage they cause," the 54-year old Oscar-winner, who has a long history of working as an advocate for peace in Sudan and South Sudan, said in a statement.

Prendergast, a former Africa director at the US National Security Council turned human rights activist, said "conventional tools of diplomacy" have so far failed and that "new efforts must centre on how to make war more costly than peace".

"The objective of The Sentry is to follow the money and deny those war profiteers the proceeds from their

crimes," said Prendergast.

Clooney and Prendergast's previous initiative, the Satellite Sentinel Project, launched in 2010 using satellites to monitor and map evidence of conflict and human rights abuses on the ground, producing images of razed villages and troop movements.

Then, the fear was of war between Khartoum and Juba as the south prepared for its independence in July 2011.

But in late 2013 civil war broke out inside the new nation of South Sudan rendering Clooney's satellites, flying 300 miles above the north-south

## People start returning to capital

FROM PAGE 16

Talking about the current situation, Abul Kalam, president of bus owners association of Mohakhali bus terminal, said as the public rush was low and no gridlock was created as of yesterday. But severe traffic congestion may hit the roads in two days, he warned.

"People have started coming back. Although few seats of our buses were empty today [Monday], all of our seats are booked from tomorrow [Tuesday] to next four to five days," said Mosharrar Hossain, general manager of Hanif Paribahan.

During visits to Gabtoli and Mohakhali bus terminals yesterday, people were seen returning to Dhaka

with smiling faces that reflect the joyous moments they have been through in last few days with beloved family members.

"All of our cousins and relatives get together once in every year during the Eid-ul-Fitr. We had a lot of fun this time and now returned to our normal busy life," said Rowshan Haque, an employee of a private company, who came from Jessore to Gabtoli yesterday afternoon.

Almost the same scenario was noticed at Kamalapur. Those who travelled by train yesterday had to buy advance tickets on July 16.

However, launches have got comparatively fewer passengers so far

due to incessant rain and rough weather.

"Today, I did not see excessive passengers on the launches. The number of passengers was almost equal to that of normal time," Rony Ghosh, who travelled from Munshiganj to Sadarghat, told The Daily Star.

Many passengers thronged the launch ghat early in the morning to board a vessel, but more returned to Dhaka by buses and trains, reports our Chandpur correspondent.

Ferry services at Mawa-Kawarakandi and Paturia-Dauladia routes were smooth and traffic flow was normal, said officials at both

the Philippines. "For 70 years we wanted this."

The apology comes near the 70th anniversary of the end of the war.

It also comes amid a lawsuit in which the descendants of hundreds of Chinese men forced to work in wartime Japan are seeking millions of dollars in compensation from a subsidiary of Mitsubishi Corp and a joint venture between Mitsubishi Corp and Mitsubishi Materials Corp.

Kimura declined to discuss the lawsuit. He also declined to discuss whether the apology would be echoed by other companies that benefited from the labour of captured soldiers.

## Mitsubishi apologises

FROM PAGE 16

died, said Rabbi Abraham Cooper, an associate dean at the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

Six prisoner-of-war camps in Japan were linked to the Mitsubishi conglomerate during the war, and they held 2,041 prisoners, more than 1,000 of whom were American, according to nonprofit research centre Asia Policy Point.

Mitsubishi Materials Corp's predecessor ran four sites that at the time of liberation in 1945 held about 876 American prisoners of war. Twenty-seven Americans died in those camps, Asia Policy Point said.

While previous Japanese prime

ministers have apologized for Japan's aggression during World War Two, private corporations have been less contrite.

On Sunday, Kimura was flanked by Yukio Okamoto, a forced labourer in a copper mine and a special advisor to Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, along with an image of American and Japanese flags.

In the audience were other forced labour survivors and family members.

"This is a glorious day," said 94-year-old veteran James Murphy, who survived working at Mitsubishi Mining's Osarizawa Copper Mine and the infamous Bataan Death March in