



Workers busy constructing a median strip where the inauguration plaque of the Mouchak-Moghbazar flyover will be placed at the capital's Saat Rasta intersection. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

### Flyover to open in 3 phases

FROM PAGE 16 ready for inauguration. The construction work of this portion was carried out hurriedly over the past few weeks to get it ready for inauguration. As to why a section of the flyover was being hurriedly opened, Project Director Nazmul Alam said, "We just wanted to open as much of it to the public as is ready, since a high volume of traffic uses this road." "The sooner we open it, the more it would help the people," he said. As to whether they had any estimate of the volume of traffic that use this portion of the road, Nazmul said, "I can't say that instantly." He said they would open another two-kilometre stretch of the flyover -- from Banglamotor to Mouchak -- in June and rest of the flyover covering Mouchak, Rajarbagh and Shanti Nagar by early next year. The deadline for the project is June next year. The Saat Rasta-Moghbazar section of the flyover would facilitate only a portion of the existing traffic volume, as there is no provision for right turns,

said relevant experts. Prof Shamsul Hoque, who worked as a technical expert on Strategic Transport Plan of Dhaka, said it would help as a parallel alternative diversion for traffic during the ensuing metro rail construction work along Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. One may recall that the Local Government Engineering Division embarked on the Tk 1200-crore controversial flyover scheme in early 2013 with a faulty layout configuration of 2005, ignoring mandatory approval of Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority. The flyover aimed at resolving notorious traffic congestion in Mouchak, Malibagh, Moghbazar and adjoining areas will hardly serve the purpose, as it lacks necessary right turn provision, leading experts had said. As a consequence, public transport vehicles rushing from Motijheel through Shanti Nagar, Rajarbagh, and Mouchak will have no option to turn right towards Tejgaon at Moghbazar intersection, they said. The flyover received strong criticism

that it would be an immovable road-block to the implementation of the mass transport services like metro rail (MRT) and rapid bus service (BRT). Two metro rail routes and two rapid bus service routes were recommended in the Strategic Transport Plan along the road corridors, now obstructed by the flyover. It would primarily serve cars only for partial passage while the footpaths and foot bridges in the project area would be reduced and removed to give way to the flyover, they said. Apart from ignoring mandatory transport coordination authority's approval, the LGED did not involve relevant experts or hold any public hearing on the flyover. Initially, it was supposed to be completed in two years since contract signing in late 2012. A total of 18 ramps, including eight for ascending, are planned to land at Saat Rasta, Pragati Sarani, and FDC intersection, near Holy Family Red Crescent Medical College and Hospital at Eskaton Garden, Moghbazar, Rajarbagh and Shanti Nagar.

### Two ministers kept mum

FROM PAGE 1 hold their portfolios, sources said. On Sunday, the Supreme Court convicted and fined them Tk 50,000 each for committing contempt of court by making contemptuous and derogatory comments about Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha. Following the judgment, various quarters called on the two ministers to resign on moral grounds. Road Transport Minister Obaidul Quader said after yesterday's cabinet meeting that it was up to the ministers whether they would resign. "It's their personal matter as ethics vary from person to person." The issue was not discussed in the cabinet meeting or in any party forum, although the government high-ups did not take the two their comments on the chief justice positively, he added. "The chief justice is an institution. No one should make any sweeping comments on an institution," he said.

After the cabinet meeting, Qamrul and Mozammel declined to comment if they would quit. Asked about his next course of action regarding the verdict, Qamrul said he would decide on it after talking to his lawyers. Mozammel said he would make the decision upon getting the copy of the verdict. Qamrul and Mozammel made headlines early this month, by coming down hard on the chief justice for two days in a row. They criticised the CJ, after the country's top judge expressed dissatisfaction over the "poor performance" of the prosecutors and investigators of the war crimes tribunal in dealing with the war crimes case against Mir Quasem Ali. Qamrul demanded formation of a new bench, keeping the chief justice out of it, for hearing Quasem's appeal afresh. Mozammel went on to say that the CJ should not be delivering the verdict in the appeal.

They offered conditional apologies for the comments, but the SC refused to accept those as their comments had maligned and undermined the office of the chief justice and interfered with the administration of justice. Also, there statements are highly derogatory and contemptuous. LEGAL NOTICE A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday sent a legal notice to the cabinet secretary, requesting him to explain in 72 hours as to why holding of the post of minister by Qamrul and Mozammel should not be declared illegal. In the notice, SM Zulfiqur Ali also urged the cabinet secretary to explain why using the national flag by the two ministers in their cars should not be treated as sedition. The ministers have violated article 148 of the constitution by making contemptuous statements and it means that they broke their oath of office, he said.

### Exhumation of body ordered

FROM PAGE 1 playing a "dubious role" regarding the incident. A second-year history student of Comilla Victoria College and a theatre activist, Tonu was found dead about 400 yards away from their house inside Comilla Cantonment on the night of March 20, according to her family members. Her father Yaar Hossain, an employee of Comilla Cantonment Board, filed a murder case with Kotwali Police Station the next day, accusing unnamed persons. The case has been handed over to Comilla DB. Meanwhile, eight days have passed but law enforcers are yet to quiz anyone outside the family. They haven't detain anyone either. Tonu's parents Yaar Hossain and Anwara Hossain, brother Nazmul Hossain and a cousin-sister were brought to the office of Rab-11 in Comilla city around 3:30am on Saturday from their Mirzapur village home in Muradnagar upazila. The Rab men dropped them at their house in Comilla Cantonment around 5:00am after the interrogation. The family went to the village for burial of Tonu. Again in the afternoon, detectives took the family members from the Cantonment house to Kotwali Police

Station for interrogation. Yesterday, asked whether they interrogated anyone outside the family, SP Shah Abid replied in the negative. "There are different stages of investigation. We want to do it meticulously," he told The Daily Star over the phone. On the progress in investigation, the SP said they were preparing to produce evidence before the court, seeking permission for forensic tests. Yesterday, Bangladesh Chhatra Union issued an ultimatum to the authorities to arrest the killers of Tonu in 48 hours. Otherwise, the left student body will march towards the Prime Minister's Office on March 31. If the culprits still remain at large, the organisation will call for a strike at all educational institutions across the country on April 4, said its General Secretary GM Jilani at a press briefing at Dhaka University. At another press briefing held at DU, Snehardi Chakrabarti, general secretary of another left student body Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, criticised the government for its silence over the issue. "When students are protesting, attempts are on to bury the incident," he said. Bangladesh Nari Mukti Kendra and Samajtantrik Chhatra Front along with students of Eden College formed a human chain on the college campus and brought out a protest procession

at Azimpur area yesterday. On Comilla Victoria College campus, several hundred students demonstrated at the Shaheed Minar premises from morning. They named the Shaheed Minar premises "Tonu Chhatter". Also yesterday, students and teachers of Sylhet Agricultural University formed a human chain amid rain around 10:00am. Tying up mouths with black cloth and holding placards, they staged a silent protest against the killing. Campus-based cultural organisation Krishnachura arranged the event. A student with a placard, reading "Justice must prevail for Tonu", said, "We want justice, not only for Tonu, but for all women who died facing brutality and being raped." Students of Murari Chand College formed another human chain in front of the campus in Sylhet in the afternoon. In Mymensingh, students of Govt Ananda Mohan College formed a human chain on the road in front of the college campus. They also brought out a procession. The protesters slammed police for failing to nab suspects even in eight days and said they will continue to protest until the culprits are arrested. [Our correspondents from Comilla, Sylhet and Mymensingh contributed to this report]

### 2 Bangladeshis Pakistan mourns

FROM PAGE 16 Before the police could catch the abductors numbering five to six people, they fled the scene leaving the migrants locked in a room. Officials of Al-Madina Group, employer of Asad and the other Bangladeshi, brought them to their workplace following the rescue operation. Taking advantage of the instability in the North African country, miscreants abduct foreign workers and release them upon taking ransoms, Abbas quoted his son as saying. Replying to a query, he said Asad would call him again at night to give further details about the incident. Asad went to Libya in June last year as a labourer, his father said. Asad's co-worker Shamim Hossain phoned Abbas on Saturday noon to inform him that some unidentified men abducted his son along with another Bangladeshi worker the day before from a kitchen market. Four other Bangladeshis, including Shamim, were at a nearby shop at the time. Shamim, 28, a roommate of Asad, said they informed the local police of the matter immediately after the abduction. HOW THE THREE DIED According to the Bangladesh embassy's Facebook post, army personnel asked the trio to stop when they were going past a military camp at Gowarsha of Benghazi. Frightened, the migrants tried to flee. The army personnel then fired shots at them, suspecting that they were members of a rival group, the embassy said in the post. To avoid such incidents, the embassy asked Bangladeshis staying in the war-ravaged country to limit their movements outside their residences and urged them not to go out at night. It also advised migrants to carry their passports, medical certificates and identity cards provided by the employers to avoid trouble at any checkpoints by the Libyan security forces. Migrants are also advised not to try to run away in fear in any situation. Amid a rise in violence in the North African country, migrants facing any difficulty or danger are requested to contact the embassy on the hotline number +218-916994207. Meanwhile, the deceased have been identified as Abdur Rahim, son of Moslem Beparl Moni from Rajbari; Humayun Kabir, son of Shamsul Haque from Panchagarh, and Md Hasan from Jessore. As many as 50,000 Bangladeshis have been passing a difficult time in Libya, as the security situation worsened due to fighting between factions loyal to the country's two rival governments since 2014.

Authorities said the park had seen a surge of visitors thanks to Easter and the warm spring weather. Some 8,000 were still there when the bomb was detonated in the early evening, park officials said. "The militants went for a softer target because there was tight security for churches in Lahore," said Cecil Shane Chaudhry, executive director of the National Commission for Justice and Peace, a Christian organisation. MOURNING PERIOD There were frenzied scenes at hospitals in the immediate aftermath, with staff treating casualties on floors and in corridors as officials tweeted calls for blood donations. Lahore's top administration official Muhammad Usman said around 100 of the wounded were either treated at the scene or quickly discharged. He said a further 180 had been admitted to hospital. Schools and other government institutions were open yesterday but three days of mourning were announced in Punjab. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif expressed "grief and sorrow over the sad demise of innocent lives". The US labelled the bombing "cowardly" while Russian president Vladimir Putin branded it a "crime".

The Vatican condemned the attack, calling it "fanatical violence against Christian minorities", and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called for Islamabad to protect religious minorities. Pope Francis also appealed for tighter security for religious minorities. Christians make up an estimated 1.6 percent of Pakistan's 200 million people and have long faced discrimination. Twin suicide attacks against churches in Lahore killed 17 people in March last year, sparking two days of rioting by thousands of Christians. The country is still scarred by a Taliban assault on a Peshawar school in 2014 that killed 150 people, most children. A military operation targeting insurgents was stepped up in response. Last year the death toll from militant attacks fell to its lowest since the Pakistani Taliban were formed in 2007. But analyst Imtiaz Gul said despite significant progress in military operations against the Taliban, the group was still able to carry out major attacks. "Even if they are 50 people they can plan an attack of this scale and execute it," he said. "They're all over: they have affiliates, sympathisers and supporters."

### Crisis-ridden Biman

FROM PAGE 1 ministry, civil aviation and tourism ministry, deputy chief of staff of Bangladesh Air Force, Engineer in Chief of the Army, chairman of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh, the managing director and chairman of Biman Bangladesh Airlines would be in the board ex-officio. The prime minister had appointed Jamal the Biman chairman for one year in 2009. A Biman official said Jamal was re-elected chairman by the board members at the annual general meetings every year until the last two years. In the last two years, the elections could not be held as there was no director from the shareholders due to non-release of shares to the public. "For the last two years, Biman chairman has been appointed by the PMO following a proposal from the ministry," said an official. Sources in Biman and civil aviation ministry said Biman's Annual General Meeting was to be held by December 31 last year, but the Biman could not hold it. This irked government high-ups. The situation took a turn for the worse for Jamal Uddin as some key decisions were pending with the board, like appointment of manpower in ground handling and purchasing of equipment. The board could not approve the decisions since its tenure had expired at the end last year. Jamal's chances of becoming the board chairman again significantly dropped after March 8, when the UK banned direct cargo flight to London from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on security grounds. Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh Air-vice Marshal M Sanaul Hoque and Civil

Boom time! FROM PAGE 16 San Francisco to Tokyo and a six-hour flight from Los Angeles to Sydney. According to the simulations, Boom's design is quieter and 30 percent more efficient than the Concorde. It will be split into two single-seat rows, so everybody has a window and an aisle. To reduce weight, the seats are of the standard domestic first-class variety, so no lay-down beds. To cut flight time, Boom's plane will cruise at 60,000 feet, where passengers will be able to see the curvature of the earth, while going 2.6 times faster than other passenger planes. More than a decade after the last flight of the Concorde, Nasa has invested \$2.3million (£1.5million) in eight research projects aimed at reviving the dream of supersonic planes. The projects will look at how to reduce the noise of sonic booms in order to reintroduce the flights, how to improve fuel efficiency and how to limit the impact on the ozone, among other things. Three decades of supersonic travel ended in 2003, when the final Concorde flight landed at London Heathrow Airport on a transatlantic trip from New York. ASK concerned FROM PAGE 3 interrogations and putting pressure is tantamount to harassment," ASK said in a statement. Pointing to media reports, ASK said although seven days have already passed, law enforcement agencies have yet to arrest any person involved in the incident. "Amid this situation, law enforcement agencies have been quizzing Tonu's father, mother and family members throughout the night after picking them up from their village home at midnight," said the statement. "Such treatment of Tonu's family members is inhumane when it was necessary to identify those involved in the heinous killing that took place in a safe area like cantonment and bring them to book," it reads. The statement also said allegations were raised that during the quizzing, pressure was put to mention in the statement that Tonu had a relation with someone in the college, and that other irrelevant questions were asked repeatedly. The release added that a two member team of ASK met Tonu's family on March 27 and while talking to them it seemed that the family members were panic stricken. "We think law enforcement and respective authorities should take effective measures to arrest and bring to book those involved in the killing of Sohagi Jahan Tonu," said ASK. ASK demanded that the government and law enforcement agencies play an effective and responsible role in this regard.

Aviation Secretary Khorshed Alam Chowdhury were removed from their posts after the ban. In January 2015, the civil aviation and tourism ministry reinstated Jamal as the chairman, ending speculation that he was on the way out. Speculation of his removal gained ground following the arrests of three top Biman officials and two others, including Jamal's "godson", in connection with gold smuggling through the airport in November last year. Jamal faced severe criticism from the civil aviation minister after detectives captured them. But he denied having any relation with the so-called godson. In parliament, Jatiya Party MP Kazi Feroz Rashid demanded that the government arrests the Biman chairman. He demanded that Jamal Uddin be summoned before the parliamentary standing committee on civil aviation and quizzed. Jamal Uddin, who was one of the co-accused in the MiG-29 warplane purchase case with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, developed a rift with former Minister GM Quader. The former minister on several occasions had said the Biman's board did not accept the opinion of the ministry. He had also said Biman should be accountable to the ministry and that the ministry needs authority to oversee the much-needed reforms in Biman. The Biman chairman hit back Quader at a press conference later. Quader was later transferred to the commerce ministry. Biman's first foreign managing director Kevin John Steele had earlier told The Daily Star of Biman board's interference. "The Biman Board sometimes interfered even in minor issues," he had said before quitting his job.

### Govt to cut oil prices

FROM PAGE 1 Corporation (BPC) said there have been talks for around a week over the reduction of furnace oil price. The demand for adjusting oil prices on the local market has been getting louder since mid-2014 when petroleum prices started falling on the global market. Oil prices dropped to as low as \$27.65 a barrel in January this year before rebounding recently to \$40 a barrel, putting further pressure on the government to lower domestic fuel prices. But the government has been defiant against adjusting the prices to allow the BPC to repay its loans and recoup the losses it had incurred between fiscal 1999-2000 and 2014-15. Now that the state-run BPC has admitted that all its bank loans have been repaid and that it is counting profits, pressure is on the government to reduce fuel prices. The BPC bucked its five-year losing streak last fiscal year, making a tidy profit of Tk 3,455 crore on the back of sliding global oil prices.

As oil prices on the international market took a freefall last June, both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund pursued the government to deregulate domestic oil prices and introduce a system that makes automatic adjustments of oil prices in line with global market rates. The finance ministry recently sought the energy ministry's opinion on readjusting oil prices. In an effort to reduce its subsidy burden, the government last adjusted the prices by revising it upwards in January 2013, when oil prices hit \$120 a barrel on the international market. Bangladesh consumes 35 lakh tonnes of diesel, 15 lakh tonnes of furnace oil and about four lakh tonnes of petrol and octane a year. Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Akbar Ali Khan, former adviser to a caretaker government, said it is the government's moral responsibility to reduce fuel prices on the local market, as the prices already went down on the global market. A reduction in oil prices would bring benefits to the economy as well as the consumers, said the analyst.

### Child dies

FROM PAGE 16 Officer-in-Charge Moshire Rahman of Ramna Police Station. Although the construction of six floors of the building have been completed, no safety measures has been in place at the construction site since the beginning of the construction work, claimed Saddam. Sub-inspector Jaminur Rahman of Ramna Police Station said no safety measures were in place at the construction site. The OC said they were looking for the owner of the construction firm. City residents blamed recurrent

deaths at construction sites on lax enforcement of law. On March 16, an iron rod fell from the under-construction Moghbazar-Malibagh flyover in the city's Eskaton area, causing the death of a construction worker on the road. Rickshaw puller Sekandar Ali, 25, died on March 7 last year when bricks from an under-construction building fell on him in Khilgaon. Eight-year-old Moddabir Hossain Sabbir died and two other children were injured on July 25, 2013 when bricks from a building fell on them at Uttar Badda.