



BID TO PROTEST LYNCHING OF 3 JMJB CADRES BY MOB

50 injured as Bangla Bhai's men clash with police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

At least 50 people, including eight policemen, were injured in clashes between police and Bangla Bhai-led Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) at Bagananji in Bagmara yesterday noon.

Reinforcements from the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), the Rajshahi police line and three neighbouring police stations were involved in the clashes, which ensued after police

foiled a JMJB attempt to organise a procession in protest against the lynching of three JMJB men on Saturday night.

Police rounded up 64 JMJB cadres for clashing with police, but did not detain any of the leaders who led the attacks.

Tear gas shells, rubber bullets and brickbats were used during the clashes, police said.

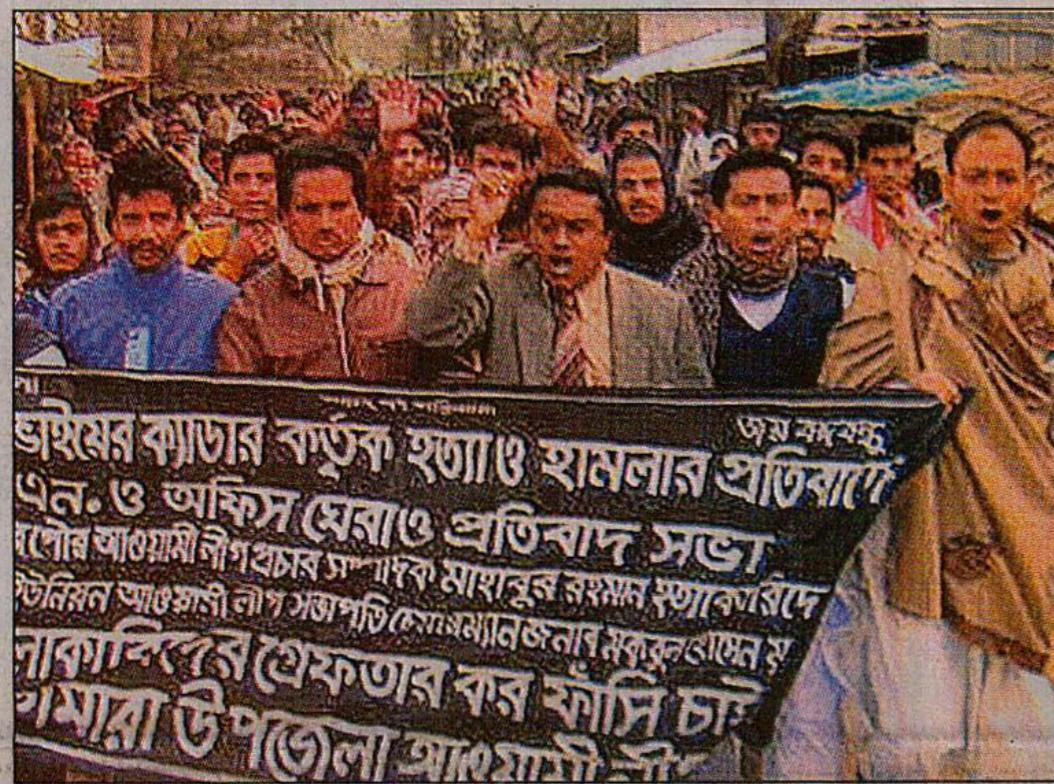
A curfew-like situation now prevails at Bagmara following the

incident, as police and Rab forces patrol the region and the streets remain deserted.

The injured policemen include Golam Kibria, officer in charge of the Bagmara police station, Sub Inspector (SI) Salauddin, SI Mahbub Hossain, SI Sanauddin, SI Monirul, ASI Zahangir, Havildar Poritosh and constable Ershadul.

Since being barred for the first time by law enforcement agencies, JMJB men have started gathering

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Local unit of the Awami League (AL) took out a procession at Bagmara upazila headquarters in Rajshahi yesterday protesting the killing of Taherpur AL leader Mahbubur Rahman and attack on Sreepur Union Parishad Chairman and AL leader Mokbul Hossain Mridha by the cadres of Bangla Bhai on Saturday night.

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UPDF blocks road protesting killing of party leader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) yesterday enforced a six-hour road blockade programme in the district in protest against the killing of party leader Juddhamoni Chakma last week in Nancharupazila allegedly by Parbatya Chattagram Jono Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) cadres.

Vehicular traffic on the Rangamati-Khagrachhari route remained suspended throughout the day. The UPDF activists however removed the barricade from the roads from Rangamati district town to Chittagong, Kaptai, Rajshahi and Chandraghatia after 12:00 noon.

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'Crossfire' kills 5 across country

STAR REPORT

Five people including three alleged criminals, an outlaw and an extremist were killed in 'crossfire' between their accomplices and police in the capital and elsewhere in the country in the last four days.

Of the five, two muggers were killed in Dhaka, an outlaw was killed in Kushtia, a kidnapper in Chittagong and an extremist in Naogaon, police said.

The unidentified muggers were killed in a shootout with police at Shyampur in the capital.

In Dhaka, a taxicab carrying four muggers were heading for Madanpur under Sonargaon Police Station in Narayanganj at around 10:00pm on Friday. The gang stopped their vehicle at Shanir Akhra and posing as passengers took one passenger, Salaiman Hakim.

The muggers then snatched Tk 9,020 from Salaiman at gunpoint.

The victim cried for help and a team of Demra police chased the cab that sped towards south Dhania in Shyampur area.

The muggers suddenly stopped the vehicle, came out of it and

Tangail deaths caused by Nipah virus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Medical experts yesterday confirmed an outbreak of deadly Nipah virus in three villages in Tangail where five people died and 25 more were reported suffering from viral infection since January 5.

The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) in a press release yesterday confirmed the Nipah outbreak.

Police recovered the money with the wallet. They also seized two revolvers and two bullets from the dead bodies.

Solaiman was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and the dead bodies were sent to Midford hospital morgue for autopsy.

Our Staff Correspondent in Chittagong reports: Leader of a gang of kidnappers was killed in crossfire between police and his associates in Rangunia in the early hours yesterday.

The criminal, Kalu Mia alias Kola, hailed from Jaynagar village under Rangunia upazila of Chittagong. According to sources, district police arrested Kola Sunday afternoon from a remote hilly area of Razarhat in Rangunia. During primary inter-

view, he admitted that he is patient Nipah positive.

The deadly virus is transmitted

from animal to human and requires close contact with contaminated tissue or body fluids from infected animals.

The DGHS, in the wake of the CDC report, has taken immediate measures to further investigate the mode of transmission and epidemiology of the virus. It is also collecting more samples to analyse suspected

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started firing on the police team indiscriminately. Police returned fire and two muggers were killed in the encounter. Two others managed to escape.

Sub-inspector Abul Kashem of Demra Police Station and Solaiman were injured in the shootout, police said.

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attackers and beat them to death.

The three were identified as Abdur Rahman, 20, a student of Taherpur Madrasa, Ibrahim Hossain, 18, an SSC examinee from Bhabaniganj High School and Abdul Baki Murad, 22, of Pallapara in Bagerhat.

Locals said the dead were operated by JMJB, an Islamist outfit led by Siddiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai active in the northern region.

Rapid Action Battalion later visited the spot and seized three pistols, two bullets and a bomb from there, said sources.

11 LYNNED IN DHAKA

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11 LYNNED IN DHAKA

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was returning home from Sripur bazaar at 8:30pm.

"The attackers swooped on us and hit Mridha with iron rod, then shot at him," said Yusuf Ali Pramanik, who was accompanying Mridha during the attack.

Hearing the victim's scream, locals chased the attackers who hurled bombs at them, killing one person and injuring at least 30 others. The dead was identified as Mahbub Hossain Dewan, 25, a ward-level AL leader of Taherpur municipality.

Nine of the injured were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

The mob then caught three

A bad day for cattle traders
Prices slump just before Eid

ABDUL KADER

While costs for rearing cattle shot up this year, cattle prices at the eleventh hour of the Eid-ul-Azha went down significantly, causing frustrations among cattle traders in the 16 makeshift markets throughout Dhaka.

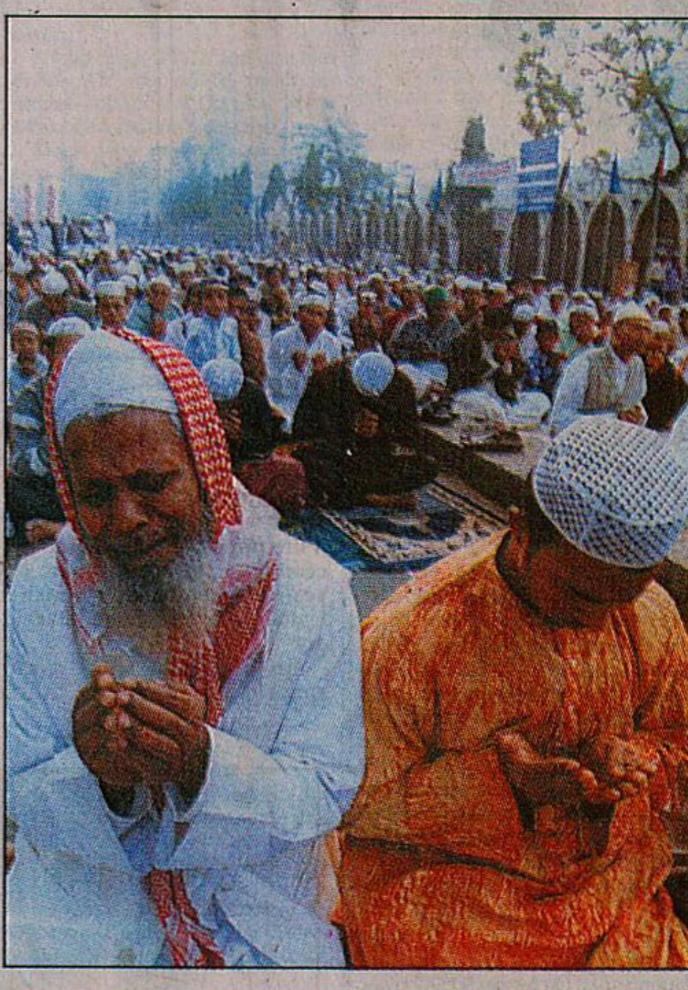
In the final hours of Eid, buyers in Dhaka purchased bulls at much cheaper prices compared to the first 24 hours of selling on January 20. A medium-size bull, which originally sold at Tk 25,000 and Tk 30,000, later fetched only Tk 15,000 to Tk 20,000 at the close of the buying period.

This was a cause of great concern for cattle traders, who hoped to sell cattle at higher prices to make up for increases in rearing costs caused by a rise in the prices of essentials.

They blamed the price-hike of cattle feed on last year's devastating flood, which caused massive damage to paddy production and depleted the main supplies of cattle feed, including straw, bran and broken rice.

Traders coming to Dhaka, from Rajshahi, Kushtia, Jessor, Faridpur and other parts of the country also had to pay extra truck fares, due to an increase in the price of diesel in December.

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The Eid-ul-Azha congregation at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque on Saturday also spreads to the adjacent streets.

Eid-ul-Azha celebrated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muslims across the country celebrated their second biggest religious festival, the Eid-ul-Azha, on Saturday with religious enthusiasm.

Eid-ul-Azha, the festival of sacrifice that marks the end of the annual pilgrimage to the holy city of Makkah in Saudi Arabia is celebrated by the Muslims throughout the world, especially with the sacrifice of animals.

Gathering in thousands at different prayer grounds, mosques and open places, the Muslims of Bangladesh offered Eid prayers seeking divine blessings and peace, progress and prosperity of the Muslim ummah and development of the country.

After the prayers, the devotees embraced each other exchanged Eid greetings.

Muslims slaughtered sacrificial animals that commemorates the willingness of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) to sacrifice his son Ismael (AS) to the wish of almighty Allah some 3,800 years ago.

The main Eid congregation in the capital was held at the national Eidgah (Eid prayer ground) at 8:00am, conducted by the Khanqah of Baitul Mukarram National Mosque Moulana Obaidul Huq.

Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad

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Tanners happy as hides sold at lower prices

STAR REPORT

Tanners and leather exporters are happy this year as they were able to procure hides of sacrificial animals at comparatively lower prices.

They said improved law and order situation has helped them avoid extortion while procuring hides during the Eid-ul-Azha.

Around 45 percent of the total raw materials for the tannery industry is collected during the Eid-ul-Azha season. Hoodlums, extortionists and hide smugglers do a brisk business after the Eid every year.

The tanners said the law enforcement agencies this year took all-out measures to check smuggling of hides of sacrificial animals which were sold at prices 15 to 20 percent lower than those of last year.

"Eid-ul-Azha is our peak season to procure hides and we suffer lot of problems every year. But it was an exception this year as we did not face any muscleman while procuring the hides," said a top leader of Bangladesh Finished Leather, Leather Goods and Exporters Association (BFLLEA).

He said export income from leather sector may rise by around Tk 100 crore to Tk 150 crore as the tanners and exporters were able to buy a huge number of hides.

"So far we don't have any news about hide and skin smuggling. The procurement of hides of the sacrificial animals is satisfactory," Harun Chowdhury, president of Bangladesh Tanners Association (BTA) told The Daily Star yesterday.

Tanners and BFLLEA this year fixed the purchasing prices of hides

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ALLEGED DENIAL OF VISAS
Dhaka regrets Delhi's remark

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka yesterday refuted Delhi's allegations of denial of visas to Indian journalists, terming Delhi's comments 'sweeping and regrettable'.

A foreign ministry spokesman yesterday said some 200 Indian journalists visited Bangladesh last year and 116 in 2003.

The spokesman dismissed the comments made by Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) as 'sweeping and regrettable.'

On January 18, MEA spokesman Navtej Sarna said, "It may be mentioned that Bangladesh routinely denies visas to Indian journalists...." He was explaining why a Bangladeshi columnist, Sadeq Khan was denied Indian visa.

Sarna said Khan was refused visa "taking into account the antecedents of the journalist concerned."

The foreign ministry has already received 82 forms from Indian journalists wishing to cover the upcoming 13th Saarc Summit in Dhaka during February 6-7.

Dhaka, however, has not yet received the particulars of 40 Indian journalists scheduled to accompany Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, the spokesman added.

Six lynched, 7 others murdered in 4 days

STAR REPORT

Six people including three alleged operatives of Jagrata Muslim Janata, Bangladesh (JMJB) were lynched and seven others murdered across the country in the last four days.

A mob beat three JMJB men to death after the Islamist militants killed an Awami League leader of Taherpur municipality and shot at a union parishad chairman in Bagmara upazila Saturday night, our Rajshahi correspondent reported.