Metropolitan Magistrate's court. But both the cases bore tell-tale signs of police manipulation and an investigation by The Daily Star found out that none of the accusers used correct addresses in their complaints.

For Shanta, it was a nightmare to think that the police were coming to arrest her. Her family prepared to obtain anticipatory bail from the High Court. In the afternoon of March 24 when police learnt that Shanta and her husband would appear before the High Court from her hideout and obtain the bails in the two cases, another case was filed at the last moment with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court. The police 'thought' they would be able to arrest Shanta with the last minute case of arson and deployed extra forces at the High Court premises. As Shanta emerged from the court with the bails on "extortion" and "theft" cases news of the last minute case was related to the family and lawyers. By then the High Court was about to be closed for the day's business.



Crying for justice: A badly injured Shanta recounts her terrible ordeal.

"The lawyers rushed back to the High Court bench and explained to the Justices about the third case, filed by a bus driver accusing Shanta of setting his bus ablaze. The High Court bench immediately granted the third bail to the relief of the family and well wishers.

At present Shanta is undergoing treatment at an undisclosed clinic, recovering from wounds all over her body. But she lives in terror. She says she has been scarred for life. "I am an admirer of Bangabandhu but I do not do politics. Now I cannot sleep thinking that if the police take me into their custody again, I will not survive this time," she says.

Shanta says she is a diabetic patient and therefore takes long walks as per advice of the doctors, the reason why the was wearing trainers. On the day of the incident, she was near her son's school and took shelter inside the clinic when clashes erupted between the police and the protesters.

"I had nothing to do with the political events of the day," she maintains. ■

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BAILY ROAD
House:133/1
Phone : 8356552
0189 492666

UTTARA
House-1, Road-5
Sector-1
Phone: 8961229

MIRPUR
House 12, Ave.1
Sector 10
Phone : 8061135
Mob : 0189 283962

KHULNA
Tayamun Centre,
House 181,
Khan-A-Sabur Rd
Khulna.Ph:733371

CHITTAGONG
House 83, Road 7
O.R.Nizam Road
Phone: 652543

SYLHET
Raza Manzil
AB Bank Building
1st floor, Dargah Gate
Phone : 719207