

# 4 burn victims fight for life in hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four persons critically burnt in a fire, which broke out at a city oil storehouse yesterday, are fighting for life in Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Jalal Hossain, 32, Shamsul Haque, 40, and Anisur Rahman, 35, suffered burns over about 90 percent of their bodies while Tajul Islam Rony, 22, had burns over 35 percent of his body, sources at DMCH burn unit said.

The victims were employees of Rony Traders, a tin-roofed one-story diesel storehouse at Dogair Demra, a residential area. It caught fire around 3:25pm yesterday, burning out 9,000 litres of diesel it had stored. The source of the fire could not be detected immediately.

Monir Hossain, assistant director (Dhaka Division) of Fire Service and Civil Defence, told The Daily Star that six units of fire fighters doused the flames at 4:40pm.

In the 8,000 square-foot warehouse, having mud floor, the diesel was kept in tanks and steel,

plastic barrels. A number of steel containers exploded and the tin roof collapsed when fire fighters were trying to put out the flames.

There were fire extinguishers inside the godown, but those were of no use once the fire engulfed the oil storehouse, he said.

The fire created panic among people in the area.

Najmul Islam, an owner of the godown, said there was no direct electricity line to the warehouse. It ran with a generator, and there was no scope of fire originating from an electric short circuit, he said.

During the fire, the four victims were working inside the godown and he took the injured workers to DMCH, he said.

Nurul Muttakin, officer-in-charge (OC) of Demra Police Station, said the owners told him that they had all necessary documents for running the godown legally in the residential area.

He said police were investigating the incident.

# CASE AGAINST TARIQUE, MAMUN Produce new witnesses Court asks ACC lawyer

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday asked the ACC lawyer to produce new witnesses before it on March 29 in a money laundering case filed against BNP Senior Vice Chairman Tarique Rahman and his business partner Giasuddin Al Mamun.

Judge Mohammad Mozammel Hossain of the Special Judge Court-3 issued the order as defence lawyer submitted a petition seeking an adjournment to cross-examine a prosecution witness.

Mamun's lawyer submitted a petition yesterday to the court seeking permission to cross-examine prosecution witness Mir Alimuzzaman, the then inspector of detective branch of police, on the next date.

In the petition, Barrister Fakhru Islam said Khondaker Mahub Hossain, a senior lawyer who would cross-examine the witness, could not appear before the court due to his illness. So, he was praying for adjournment of the hearing.

After hearing both the sides, the court adjourned the hearing till March 29 and asked the Anti-Corruption Commission lawyer Mosharraf Hossain Kajol to produce new prosecution witnesses on the next scheduled date.

# BNP iterates demand for polls under non-party govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday said his party is demanding a non-party neutral government system to ensure a level-playing field for all in the next general elections.

"Awami League knows they will face a debacle if a free and fair election is held under a caretaker government and that is why they have amended the constitution to hold election under their own government," he said while addressing a meeting.

Doctors Association of Bangladesh (DAB), a pro-BNP organisation of doctors, organised the discussion on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the arrest of the party's senior vice chairman, Tarique Rahman.

DAB President AKM Azizul Haque presided over the meeting at Institution of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh in the city.

Tarique was arrested during the military-backed caretaker government in March,

2007 on charge of corruption and released on bail in September, 2008.

Fakhru said they are demanding the caretaker government system as they would go to power with support of the people. "People will not accept election if it is held under a political government," he added.

Mirza Alamgir said they would hold the grand rally on March 12 in a peaceful way. "All the patriotic persons would attend the rally from across the country. None would be able to resist the people's wave towards the capital."

Refuting the allegation of ruling Awami League leaders that BNP is hatching conspiracy to commit sabotage, he said his party does not believe in sabotage and the grand rally would be a peaceful programme.

BNP and its allies would organise the grand rally in the capital on March 12 to mount pressure on the government for restoration of the caretaker government system to hold the next general elections.



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