

## Tk 3.03 lakh Hajj package announced

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (HAAB) yesterday announced that their minimum package this year is Tk 3,03,440 for each person interested to perform Hajj under private management.

The price excludes the sacrificial animal usually offered by the faithful on Eid-ul-Azha [the festival following the pilgrimage], said HAAB's president Jamal Uddin Ahmed at a press conference held at its office.

"Interested pilgrims will have to deposit their money by June 20 to accounts of banks listed under religious affairs ministry," he said.

Those who deposit money to middleman instead of accounts of Hajj agencies will not be able to perform Hajj, he said adding that many people in the last few years failed to perform Hajj due to this reason.

Jamal Uddin Ahmed said the government and HAAB will publish names of legal Hajj agencies.

## Ring leader Gama killed

UNB, Bagerhat

Zulfikar Ali Gama, kingpin of notorious gang 'Gama Bahini', died in an encounter with police in Mongla yesterday.

Sagar, 30, a constable of Mongla Police Station, was bullet-hit during the encounter that took place from 3:30 pm to 4:00 pm at Narkelbari of the Sundarbans East Zone in Mongla upazila.

Acting on secret information that Gama built a dwelling house at Narkelbari and was hiding there along with some of his cohorts, a team, led by Mongla thana officer Nikhil Chandra Mandal, raided the house at 3:30 pm.

Gama made a vain attempt to flee by firing from his pistol at the advancing police force, triggering a gunfight which lasted for about 30 minutes.

At one stage, police stormed into the house overpowering Gama and his gang, and arrested him in injured condition. His cohorts managed to escape.

Constable Sagar received bullet wound in the line of fire and was rushed to Mongla Hospital.

Bagerhat Superintendent of Police Khandakar Rafiqul Islam said Gama succumbed to his multiple bullet wounds at the hospital at 9:00 pm.

Gama, 36, was the son of Rashid Hawlader of Sonatala village of Mongla.

A foreign-made 9mm pistol and five bullets were recovered from Gama's possession.

## Contempt rule

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Teknaf in Cox's Bazar, who had been convicted in a murder case.

Delivering its ruling, the court yesterday asked the home secretary to explain by April 8 why appropriate action should not be taken against him for disobeying its previous order. The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Sheikh Md Zakir Hossain also fixed the day for the hearing of the rule.

A Cox's Bazar court on June 8, 1989 sentenced Sarwar to 10 years in jail in a murder case.

Following an appeal, the HC on September 3, 1992, reduced his sentence to eight years and directed him to surrender before the trial court.

On April 12, 1993, Sarwar was granted presidential clemency following a mercy petition submitted by him.

The trial court of Cox's Bazar on June 30, 1997 issued an arrest warrant against Sarwar as he had not surrendered before it as per the HC order.

In response to a review petition, the HC on October 29, 1997 stayed the trial court order, granted Sarwar bail, and issued a rule upon the government to explain why the presidential clemency to him should not be executed.

Hearing the 1997 rule the HC on March 15 this year ordered the home secretary to produce by yesterday the record of the presidential clemency to Sarwar but the home secretary did not comply with the order.

Barrister SM Zafar Sadik appeared for Sarwar while Assistant Attorney General Gazi Mamunur Rashid represented the government.

## No sunglasses

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Doctors, however, could not ascertain the reason of the death instantly and said they would be able to confirm it after receiving the autopsy report.

According to police, locals and the university authorities, the clash began around 2:30 pm when six JNU students belonging to the pro-Awami League student body Bangladesh Chhatra League was locked into an altercation with Imran Hossain, 20, an employee of Nur Optics located on the ground floor of Nurul Haque Tower in the capital's Patuati area.

Imran resisted the students when they attempted to take away six sunglasses without paying for them, they added.

Kazi Jan-e-Alam, a spectacles trader, said, "At one stage of the altercation the Chhatra League cadres stabbed Imran in the abdomen. They also stabbed Mithu, 25, a customer who stepped up to save the salesman."

He said traders of the market rushed the injured to Mitford Hospital while the attackers escaped the spot. Imran was later shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital as his condition turned critical.

Soon after this, all traders and employees of Patuati, shutting down their shops, came out on the streets and staged angry demonstrations.

Witnesses said the agitated traders at one stage swooped on the university and vandalised furniture and windows, indiscriminately beat up students with iron rods and bamboo sticks, pelted bricks and vandalised several vehicles.

They also set fire to tyres and other materials on the road.

At this, general students of the university retaliated with brick chips and sticks. Chases and counter chases took place at that time. The students also damaged some 20 shops of the market.

Traffic movement from Sadarghat to English Road

remained suspended during the clash while business establishments were shut down to avert further damage.

Police initially stood by as onlookers for around an hour as they were small in number, said JNU Vice-Chancellor Mejbah Uddin Ahmed, who added that soon as reinforcements arrived they charged batons and lobbed teargas shells to disperse the clashing people. Sunil Ghosh died at that time.

Sanjay Ghosh, a son of the deceased, told reporters that his father was there around 3:30 pm to make some photographs.

"He [Sunil] fell sick due to the tear gas and sat down on the ground holding his chest and soon fainted," said Sanjay, adding that when his father was rushed to Mitford Hospital, doctors declared him dead.

Khurshid Hossain, deputy commissioner of Lalbagh division, told The Daily Star that additional forces had been deployed in the area to avert further clashes. None had been arrested yet in connection with the violence, he added.

Meanwhile, in an immediate move, the JNU authorities suspended the six students who allegedly ignited the whole tragedy at the spectacles shop. They are Jalal and Imran of sociology department, Himel of geography department, and Rocky, Sohel and Binoy Sarkar, whose departments could not be known immediately.

All classes and examinations scheduled for Thursday have also been suspended, said VC Mejbah Uddin Ahmed.

Talking to The Daily Star, he said suspension of the six students was only an initial move. Punitive measures would be taken against them following the report of a probe body, which is likely to be formed today.

The JNU proctor said the university would file a case over the vandalising of the property of the university.

## Saudi govt

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capture the men behind the heinous crime," she told her Saudi counterpart Prince Saud Al-Faisal.

Khalaf Al Ali, an official at the Saudi Embassy in Dhaka, was killed by unknown assailants at Gulshan in the capital on March 6.

Dipu Moni, now on a five-day visit to Riyadh mainly to apprise the Saudi government of the progress of investigation into the killing of Khalaf, had a meeting with the Saudi foreign minister yesterday. She informed him about the investigation procedure in great detail.

In response, Prince Saud Al-Faisal expressed great appreciation of the Saudi people and the government for the drive and described it as a "commendable effort" and "source of great consolation" for the members of the bereaved family.

He hoped that the process would be able to bring the perpetrators to justice in due course.

According to a foreign ministry press release, Dipu Moni expressed that a team of Saudi experts should come to Bangladesh to work hand in hand with the Bangladeshi investigators.

The Saudi foreign minister

welcomed the idea adding that his government has full trust and confidence in the commitment of the Bangladeshi authorities concerned.

During the hour-long talks, they discussed a wide range of issues covering areas such as cooperation in the fields of manpower, trade, Saudi assistance and mutually beneficial engagement in diplomatic arena.

Dipu Moni handed over a letter from the prime minister to the King of Saudi Arabia.

In response to an invitation to visit Bangladesh, the Saudi foreign minister expressed his interest in seeing Bangladesh during its "beautiful monsoon".

Recognising the improvements made by Bangladesh in the recruitment and migration of workforce into the international labour market in recent time, the Saudi foreign minister showed interest in enhanced cooperation in the field.

He also acknowledged the great contribution made by Bangladeshi workforce in the Kingdom's economic development.

Dipu Moni lauded the initiatives taken by Saudi Arabia to ensure peace in the Middle East and the Arab world.

## Cops submit

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probing the journalist couple Sagar-Runi murder case.

Sagar Sarwar, news editor of private channel Maasranga Television, and his wife Mehrun Runi, senior reporter of TV channel ATN Bangla, were killed in their West Rajabazar home in the city on February 11.

Monirul Islam, deputy commissioner (DC) of the Detective Branch (South) and also the spokesman for Dhaka Metropolitan Police, told The Daily Star that they had submitted the report to Altaf Hossain, deputy attorney general of the HC, in the afternoon.

Sources in the police said the investigation officer of the case submitted the report to the DC, DB (South), who forwarded it to the police headquarters. The headquarters then conveyed it to the deputy attorney general of the HC.

DC Monirul, however,

declined to disclose the content of the progress report.

"We have submitted the report a day ahead of the deadline fixed by the HC," he said.

The HC bench of AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim on Tuesday directed the inspector general of police (IGP) to submit the progress report by March 22.

On February 28, the same bench issued a rule asking the home secretary and the IGP to explain within two weeks as to why they should not be directed to find out the motive of the double murder and bring the killer(s) to justice.

But police failed to comply with the rule within the timeframe. This prompted the HC to give police a new deadline, March 22.

Earlier, the Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh had filed a writ petition with the HC as no visible progress was made in the murder probe.

## JOURNO ASSAULT 6 JU students suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jahangirnagar University (JU) authorities have suspended six students for their involvement in beating up a campus correspondent of a national daily over a trivial matter, a press release said yesterday.

After the news spread, a group of students brought out a procession in protest against the decision and blocked Dhaka-Aricha highway. They also assaulted an assistant proctor and an official.

Of the accused, four were suspended for six months. They are Md Nahid Hossain and Mohammad Majed Simanto of accounting and information system, Mohammad Mashur Rahman Rojel of archaeology department and Md Rashedul Haque Pias of government and politics department.

The two others are Md Shamim Hossain of geology department and Mohammad Manirul Islam of management studies. They were suspended for three months.

All the six were also fined Tk 5,000 each for the same offence, the statement said.

All the accused students were directly involved in the beating of Daily Janakantha's Ahmed Riyad, a geography department student, at the university's central playground on November 22 last year, said the statement, signed by Registrar Abu Bakar Siddique.

The decision came from a Syndicate meeting on March 10 following a probe report, it added.

The victim journalist yesterday claimed that the accused were activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League.

Contacted, Vice Chancellor Sharif Enamul Kabir denied the allegation and said they were supporters of neither Chhatra League nor Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal.

Meanwhile, students, led by self-declared Chhatra League activist Mithun Kundu, started demonstration demanding withdrawal of the decision.

They also physically harassed Assistant Proctor Md Saiful Islam and Nahidur Rahman Khan Sagor, an administrative official of the university.

Later, Proctor Sukollan Kundu brought the situation under control.

## Jamaat leader

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on different dates in 2010 and 2011 in connection with torching and vandalising vehicles, assault on policemen and preventing them from discharging their duties.

Azhar and the other six accused were arrested on September 19 last year and had been charged in five other cases filed with Ramna and Paltan police stations. However, the High Court granted them bail in all the cases.

Deputy Commissioner Monirul Islam of the Detective Branch of Police said last Tuesday they arrested Azhar again as he walked out of Dhaka Central Jail on High-Court bail and that they had not disclosed the arrest that day.

Showing the seven arrested in the eight assault-on-police cases, the DB produced the arrestees before a Dhaka court yesterday seeking a 10-day remand in the case filed with Ramna Police Station.

Metropolitan Magistrate Assaduzzaman Nur, however, granted a three-day remand of the arrestees.

In an assault-on-police case filed with Motijheel Police Station, the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Hasibul Haque placed them on a one-day remand.

The same court yesterday granted them bail in two other cases filed with Paltan and Motijheel police stations and fixed April 2 for hearing on a remand prayer in the remaining four cases.

The six others, who were shown arrested in the eight cases following appeals submitted by the investigation officers, include Abul Kashem, Ashrafuzzaman, Mohammad Redwan, Nasir Ullah, Abul Mannan and Asif Hossain.

## Regulators

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agencies concerned seem to care little to prevent such calamities.

Many of these accidents happened either because the launches were unfit or overloaded or due to collision. Nobody was reported to have been punished till date, experts say.

Between January 2001 and December 2011, the government formed more than 200 probe bodies following some major river mishaps. Of them, only five to seven probe reports were made public, an official of the shipping department told The Daily Star last night.

More strikingly, almost all the recommendations made by those committees towards putting an end to such loss of lives remain unimplemented.

Without mentioning the number of casualties, government statistics say around 440 launch accidents took place from January 2001 to December last year.

But the Nou, Sarak O Rail Khat Rakha Jatiya Committee, a non-government body on waterway, road and railway safety, recorded 477 accidents, at least 2,687 deaths and more than 700 missing during the period.

The year 2003 saw the highest number of casualties. At least 1,105 people lost their lives in three major river accidents that year, the committee said.

Over the years, various probe committees recommended strict monitoring to stop plying of unfit launches, increasing the number of ship surveyors and inspectors in the shipping department, bringing all the inland vessels under marine insurance, arrangement for formal training for the drivers and modernisation of the Inland Shipping Ordinance, 1976.

But the government has yet to implement most of them, experts said.

The investigations in many cases focussed on wrong issues instead of the main reasons behind the accidents, they added.

"The probe bodies have been more concerned about finding out a 'culprit'. They did not pay heed to identifying ways to prevent those," said Abdur Rahim, a noted naval architect and former associate professor of naval architecture and marine engineering at Buet.

The Department of Shipping, which regulates waterways transport, cannot check the plying of unfit and overloaded vessels owing to a lack of manpower.

During a visit to the Meghna tragedy spot in Mughshiganj, Shipping Minister Shahjahan Khan admitted to reporters that staff shortage was indeed crippling the department's monitoring work.

At present, only five surveyors are posted to verify the fitness of 12,275 registered vessels -- 2,188 of them passenger carriers, department sources said. The government plans to increase the number of surveyors to 24.

Currently, around 35,000 registered and unregistered vessels ply rivers across the

## Criminals kill 2 in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A group of criminals armed with sharp weapons killed an Awami League union-level leader, a tailor, and injured a villager at Kazipara of Birkedar union in Bogra last night.

Officer-in-Charge of Kahu Police Station Mozammel Haq told The Daily Star that the criminals attacked the three when they were travelling on a motor-bike around 9:15 pm near Khorshed's Rice Mill in the union.

Kahalu Police Station sources said Khorshed Alam, 50, president of Birkedar union Awami League unit, died on the spot while Monsur Ali, 51, an Awami League supporter and a tailor by profession, died while he was being rushed to Bogra for treatment. Villager Balu Pramanik sustained serious injuries in the attack and was admitted to Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College in Bogra.

country, according to documents obtained from Bazlur Rahman, former director general of the shipping department.

In most cases, the passenger launches carry insufficient lifebuoys and no life jackets at all, thus causing a higher death toll, experts said.

Under the terms of an ordinance of the shipping department, passenger vessels should keep as many life jackets as passengers and at least one lifebuoy for every four passengers. But this provision has never been implemented.

"The riverine transport sector continues to remain chaotic because of the mismanagement and utter failure of the authorities," said noted columnist and activist Syed Abul Maksud.

When it comes to compensating the victims' families, the amount is "too small a price for a life to pay," experts added.

There is no specific rule for compensation, but the amount ranges from Tk 5,000 to Tk 30,000. In the Munshiganj tragedy, the government has announced Tk 30,000 in compensation for each victim. And if a family has more than one victim, it will get Tk 45,000.

Last week, the shipping minister told reporters that the government had moved to set up a naval police force aimed at ensuring safety on the rivers and reducing accidents.

"We'll keep strong vigilance so that no vessel can ply by violating rules. We'll also keep rescue teams at four or five spots on river routes round the clock to minimise casualties," Shamsuddoha Khandaker, chairman of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority, told The Daily Star.

## All eyes

FROM PAGE 1

from 2pm by Neo Cricket and BTv.

The Tigers have found themselves on the crest of a wave, following on from their spectacular twin victories over World Cup champions India and finalists Sri Lanka in respective games. The wins propelled the Tigers, ahead of their neighbours, into the final of a tournament that has long been considered the most prestigious for Bangladesh.

But while the Asia Cup might have lost some of that lustre, there is no doubt that Bangladesh, till now, have never performed as well in a tournament of this repute containing such top class opposition.

The closest the Tigers came to replicating such was in 2009 when they qualified for the finals of a three-team tournament at home which included both Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka. Following on from that, they also blanked a hapless New Zealand 4-0 in 2010 but until Tuesday the watching world had not stood up to take notice.

The crucial difference has been the approach of the Tigers which has seen them move into winning positions against all three teams in the tournament. But while they failed in their first game against Pakistan to close out what should have been a regulation win, it seems that crucially (and finally) the Tigers have started learning from their mistakes.

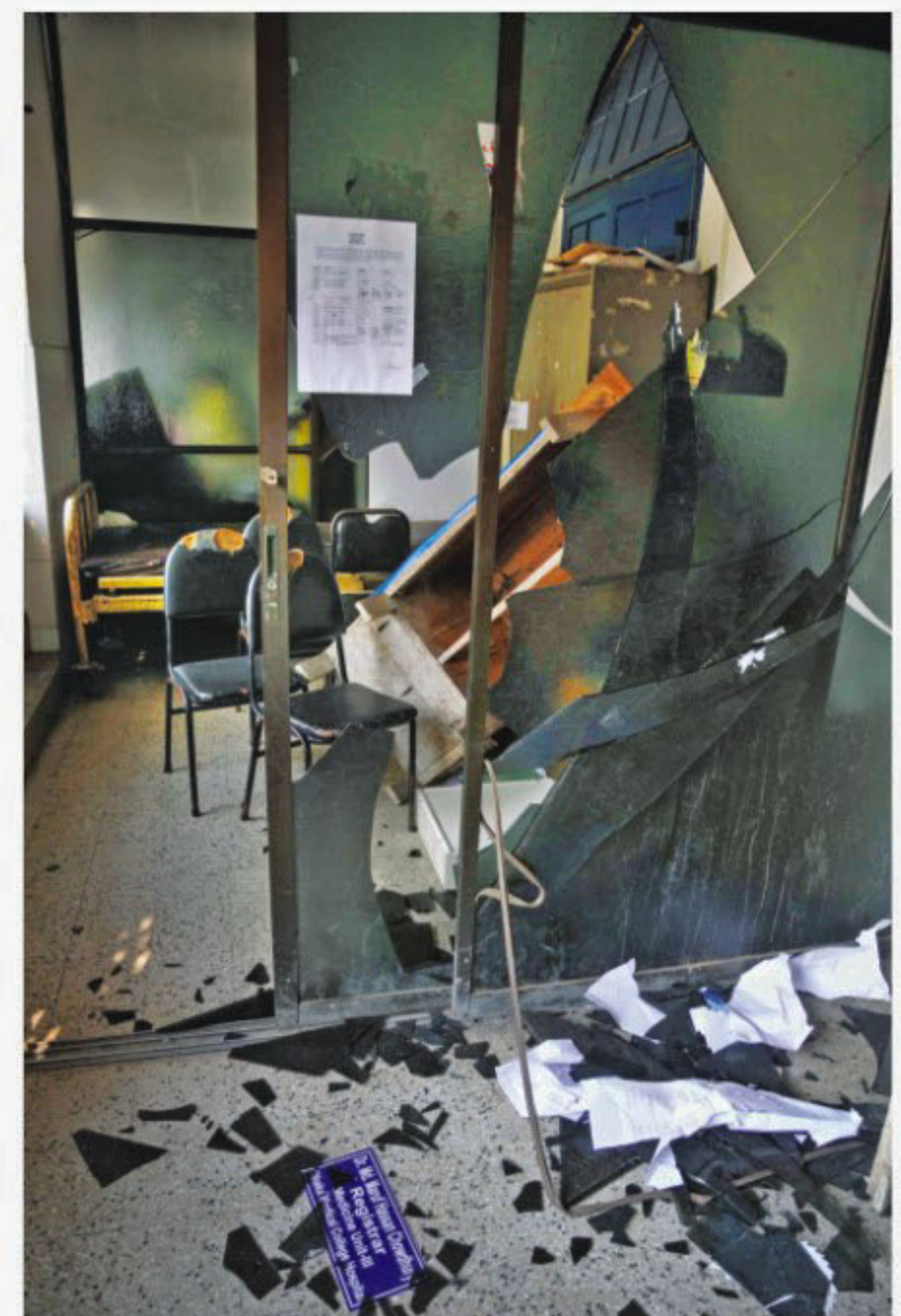
The evidence was there for all to see when the Tigers first upset the Sachin Tendulkar appalcart on the day of his hundredth birthday. And if there was any doubts about that being a flash in the pan, the Tigers dismissed that comprehensively by dispatching a spirited Sri Lanka despite a difficult Duckworth & Lewis equation.

The qualification for the final sparked joyous celebrations across the country as people thronged to the streets to celebrate a historic moment. But to borrow from Australian coach Stuart Law's mantra, the Sri Lanka win will fade into the memory if Bangladesh fail to beat Pakistan in today's final.

The saying goes that history is written by the winners. The Tigers, Mushfiqur Rahim and 160 million Bangladesh will hope that they end the day in that position.

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Advocate TH Khan appeared for the petitioners.



A vandalised cubicle of a doctor in Medicine Ward Unit-3 at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Patients at the country's largest hospital were witness to two factions of the pro-ruling party doctors' organisation slugging it out inside the hospital yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

## Docs clash

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iron rods, wooden sticks and sharp weapons, witnesses said.

At least two rooms including the registrar's one were vandalised while another doctor's room was put under lock during the clash.

Panic gripped the patients and their attendants during the one-hour-long chase and counter chase inside the country's largest hospital.

Dr Murad Hossain, an intern doctor, was hacked on his right hand while Dr Abdullah Tareq, medical officer of Directorate General of Health, was hacked on his head. They took treatment at the hospital and were out of danger, said Brig General Md Mostafizur Rahman, the DMCH director.

Dr Tareq, a former emergency medical officer of DMCH, came to the hospital to meet his former colleagues.

A group of doctors backed by Assistant Professor Dr Mazharul Haque Tapan, also executive member of the hospital's SCP convening committee, engaged into a heated argument with some members of SCP in the room of registrar of Medicine Department (Unit-3) around 1:30 pm, said a doctor, who witnessed the incident.

At one point, they vandalised the registrar's room on the first floor of the hospital.

Dr Tapan is also the treasurer of DMC Teachers' Association. Following this, the rival group gathered and shut the room of Dr Tapan at the Department of Blood Transfusion Medicine.

The two groups locked in a fresh clash around 2:30 pm with sharp weapons on the ground floor of the emergency block, when the two doctors were hacked by the supporters of Dr Tapan, said witnesses.

A police constable at the DMCH camp also received minor injury during the clash.

Sources said the clash ensued as a group of SCP members placed complaints to another SCP leader against Dr Tapan for his alleged involvement in the transfer and posting process of the doctors.

Contacted, Dr Tapan, however, denied all allegations

## Block all

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government to explain in four weeks why it should not be directed to punish those who are responsible for publishing such contents on the website.

Secretaries to the ministries of home affairs and information, inspector general of police, director general of Rapid Action Battalion, and chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission have been made respondents to the rule.

The HC bench of Justice Mirza Hussain Haider and Justice Muhammad Khurshid Alam Sarkar came up with the rule following the petition jointly filed by Batool Sarwar, a teacher of Dhaka University, and M Nurul Islam, principal of Dhaka Centre for Law and Economics.

According to the petition, some pages, links and uniform resource locators of Facebook are showing cartoons and pictures hurting the religious sentiment of Muslims which is against the constitution of the republic.

Advocate TH Khan appeared for the petitioners.

against him and his involvement in the clash. Two groups of junior doctors locked into the clash over posting, he claimed.

The two groups, however, flanked by the SCP leaders resolved the issue through discussion with the hospital authority in the evening.

Sirajul Islam, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station, told The Daily Star that law enforcers arrived at the scene after hearing of the clash.

"But the police did not take any steps since the hospital and the college authorities settled the issue through discussions," he added.

DMCH Director Brig Gen Mostafizur told The Daily Star that the hospital authority would form a high-power probe committee to investigate into the matter. "We will take action against those responsible as per the recommendation of the committee," he added.

The SCP has also decided to take action against those responsible, he added.

## CNG stations

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9:00 pm, Power Secretary Abul Kalam Azad told journalists after the meeting convened to evaluate the overall power situation and its distribution.

In 2010, the government first decided to keep CNG stations closed for six hours to tackle electricity crisis. The period was reduced by two hours in December the same year following agitation by the CNG Filling Station and Conversion Workshop Owners' Association.

It was again raised to six hours for a month last year to increase power supply during the Ramadan, but was cut by two hours in November.

Government statistics show that 556 CNG stations are in operation in the country. They sell nearly 2,000 million cubic feet of gas, 6 percent of the country's average production a day.

The government has to ration gas as the country faces a supply shortfall of 500 million cubic feet per day.

The energy ministry decided to put all power plants in operation to generate 6,000 megawatts of electricity today to avoid load-shedding during the Asia Cup cricket final between Bangladesh and Pakistan.