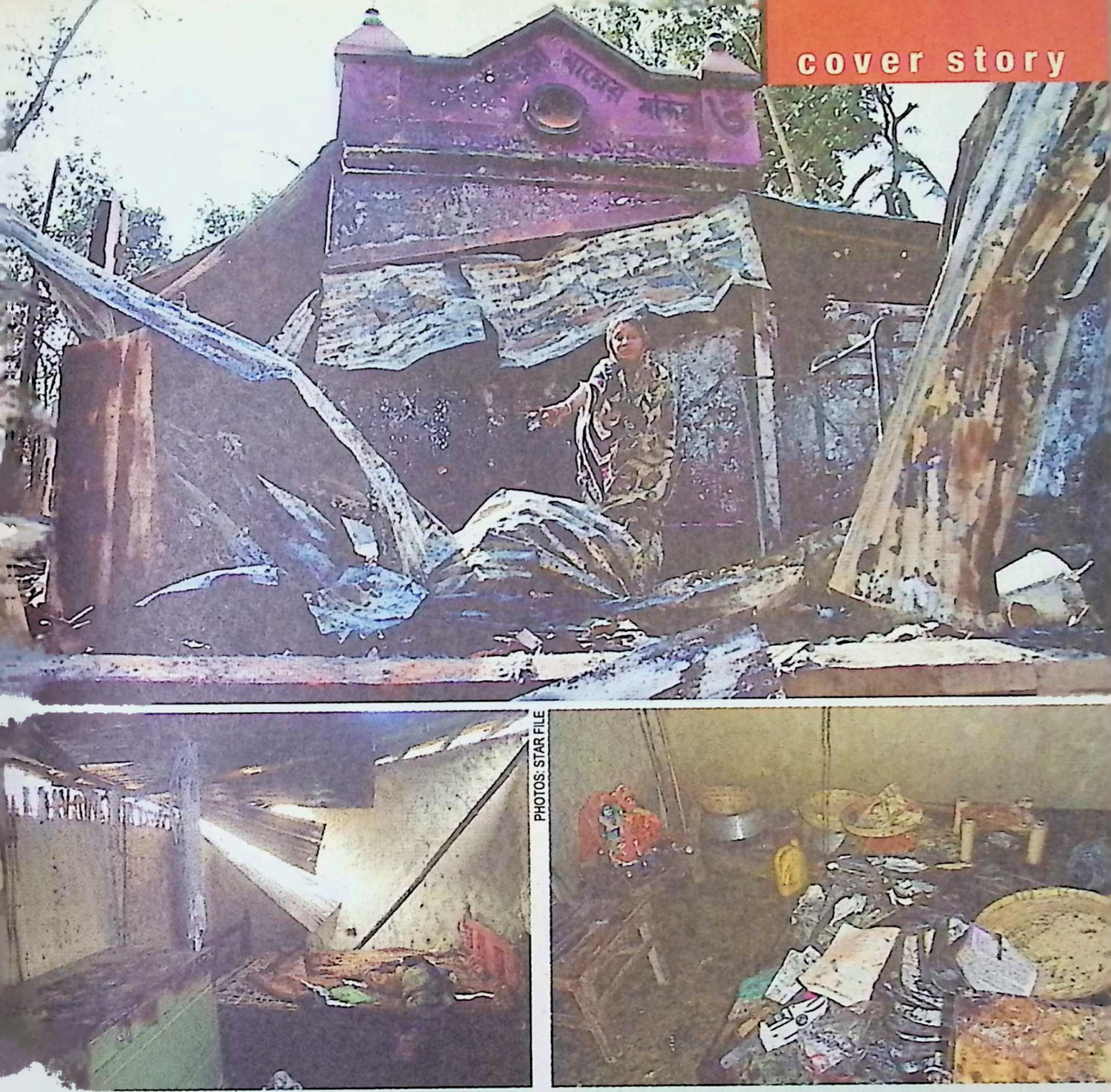


PHOTOS: STAR FILE

Top: **Hathazari February 8, 2012.** *Bottom:* **Dinajpur January 5, 2014.**

Chittagong's Patia in the following days. Law enforcers, however, could not disperse the mobs from attacking Buddhist temples and monasteries in other areas.

Last year on February 28, after the international crimes tribunal-1 sentenced the Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee to death on war crime charges, Jamaat and its followers strongly protested the verdict. The verdict came with a price. Media reports stated that 100 people, including police personnel were killed and many public properties were damaged. But the mayhem of the protest did not end there. Jamaat–Shibir have allegedly unleashed their rage against Hindu minorities by wreaking havoc in about a thousand households, temples and bazaars of 15 districts in the country. More than 100 temples and 1,000 houses have come under attack since the sentencing.

In every incident rumours played a crucial role. Before torching a single hut or temple it was a rumour that instigated people to lash out against the minorities. Salimullah Khan, professor of General Education Department, ULAB elaborates, " As Ranajit Guha puts in his 'Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India (1983)', rumour is not an uncommon mode of transmission or propaganda in peasant rebellions.' All peasant rebellions in modern times, including anti-colonial tribal wars, employed rumours. In Bangladesh today, especially in rural areas, rumours are a kind of manifesto of peasant consciousness."