



The destroyed house in the capital's Jatrabari after a hydrogen gas cylinder of balloon vendors exploded, killing two people yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## 2 balloon

FROM PAGE 16  
Hossain, 14, -- are also from the same district, said Anisur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Jatrabari Police Station. The OC added that the explosion took place inside a tin-shed room. Abdul Hannan, an official of the Department of Explosives, after visiting the spot, said, "The cylinder was old, rusty and had no history of safety tests or any device attached to indicate the pressure inside."

He added that his department, which authorises the procurement and use of all kinds of gas cylinders, had no idea from where the cylinder was bought.

"It seemed that the victims attempted to create Hydrogen gas inside the cylinder through an exothermic reaction between caustic and aluminium. The cylinder exploded due to excessive gas produced from the reaction," Hannan told The Daily Star.

Such explosions, which often cause fatalities, are all too common across the country, the official added.

"While the Department of Explosives regulates the sales and use of gas cylinders, law enforcement agencies should check unauthorised and risky use of gas cylinders," he said.

Witnesses and neighbours said a man named Anisur Rahman, aged about 50, had been running a business of gas balloons from his rented tin-shed room for the last three years.

Kulsum, a tenant of a tin-shed room there, said she heard a loud bang around 10:45am and saw a cloud of dust all over the place.

"After the dust cleared, I saw Anisur's room and two adjacent rooms were badly damaged. Parts of human body and the cylinder had flown in all directions in the neighbourhood," she said.

Kulsum added that Anisur ran his business with his son Waliullah and other staff who sold inflated balloons on the streets.

Police said Anisur was not in the room at the time of the explosion and that he had fled.

On October 1 last year, a balloon vendor was killed while inflating balloons on Road 25/A at the capital's Banani.

At a Victory Day programme in Khagrachhari town last year, five people, including two policemen, suffered burns as a gas cylinder exploded when a vendor was inflating balloons.

## For 5 months

FROM PAGE 2  
"He gets honey between 80kg and 90kg in the five months," Badal said. "I distribute a portion of the honey among my neighbours, relatives and friends, keep some at my house and sell the rest in the market," he said.

## Lawyer denied

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phone at his Nayapaltan chamber at about 7:58pm on February 2.

In the case statement, Sohag said Khorshed, his son and others went to the chamber and beat him mercilessly and snatched away his cell phone. They beat him bringing allegation that he (Sohag) posted a statement where he requested all the lawyers not to cast votes for Khorshed.

## Condolences

FROM PAGE 5  
Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Bangladesh National Awami Party (NAP-Mozaffar), United National Awami Party (UNAP) expressed deep shock at his death. Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee, Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, Sammito Samajik Andolon, Kabi Chandraboti Foundation and Gonotri Party also expressed condolences.

## Rays of hope

FROM PAGE 16  
"He [Tofazzel] sent me the copies of their prescriptions and documents via email on Saturday, and I have already forwarded those to the hospital," Nur said, adding, "The officials of the institute will hold a teleconference with the family members and me within a few days to settle all issues."

Fifty-five-year-old Tofazzel, who runs a grocery shop in Meherpur town, has already lost everything in his desperate attempt to save his sons Sabur Hossain, 24, Raihanul Hossain, 13, and grandson Sourav Hossain, 8.

The three have been suffering from a rare disease, muscular dystrophy, for years and he cannot bear their medical expenses anymore.

On January 19, Tofazzel wrote to the deputy commissioner in the district, requesting him either to give permission to have the three euthanised or take the responsibility for their treatment.

Muscular dystrophies are a group of genetic conditions characterised by progressive muscle weakness and loss of muscle mass. The symptoms mainly begin in childhood. The victims, in most cases, lose the ability to walk. Some may have trouble breathing or swallowing.

Sabur showed symptoms when he was just 11 and a class-IV student. Raihanul had it at five. Sourav got it three years ago.

Tofazzel took Sabur to India for treatment but the physicians there told him the disease was not curable. Some doctors at the National Institute of Homeopathy in India said the disease is partially treatable, he said.

Sabur is now fully paralysed while Raihanul and Sourav may face the same fate, Tofazzel wrote in the letter. Such a stress rendered his wife Shirina Begum mentally imbalanced, he added.

After his letter, the district administration and the local municipality mayor gave him Tk 50,000. The three were given the government allowance for the disabled. However, the financial help is not enough for their treatment.

Tofazzel's appeal hogged head-

## Accused mayor

FROM PAGE 1  
Wahiduzzaman, additional deputy commissioner (Tejgaon division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Miru, who won the mayoral race with Awami League ticket, allegedly shot fires during a factional clash in Shahzadpur on Thursday.

Shimul, a reporter of the daily Samakal who was covering the clash, was hit by several bullets and later died from his injuries on Friday on his way to Dhaka for better treatment, police and family members said.

The incident sparked a nationwide protest by journalists and drew condemnation from various quarters.

Shimul's wife filed a case accusing Miru, his two brothers and 15 others on Friday night.

Police earlier arrested eight other suspects including Miru's two brothers -- Habibul Haque Mintu and Habibul Haque Pintu. Their role in the shooting is not yet clear.

Meanwhile, Shahzadpur upazila AL at an emergency meeting yesterday suspended Miru from the party and recommended that the district AL expel him and his close aide KM Nasir Uddin from the party.

"The upazila Awami League made the recommendation because the two violated the party rules," local lawmaker Hasibur Rahman Swapan told journalists after the meeting.

But Abdul Latif Biswas, president of Sirajganj district AL, said they had no power to expel Miru because he also holds the post of the district AL's organising secretary.

"The central committee of the party will make that decision," he told The Daily Star.

Miru started his political career with Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, and joined the

lines of local and international media. UK-based newspaper The Guardian ran an AFP's report on the issue which drew attention of the officials of the institute.

"They contacted me via email and phone as I commented in the report and requested me to help them reach out to this family," Nur said.

Nur said Avantika Patil, an official of the hospital, wrote him that they offer a ray of hope to such families through their unique combination of stem cell therapy and neurorehabilitation for incurable neurological disorders.

"This is a noble cause and I believe that together we can make a difference in the lives of these children. We will arrange for their free treatment and travel," Nur Khan quoted from Avantika's message to him.

"We want them to know that there is always hope and they do not need to go to the horrifying extremes of mercy killing. We will do all we can with a little help from you," Avantika wrote.

Nur Khan said, "It's commendable that an Indian hospital comes forward for this noble cause. But we as well as the government should do something for the family."

Contacted, Tofazzel told The Daily Star that Nur Khan informed him about the offer.

"I am ready to go anywhere for my children," he said, adding that one local journalist told him that a Chinese team, now visiting Dhaka, could also help.

"I am going to Dhaka tomorrow [Sunday] to meet them," he added.

## Robbers shoot

FROM PAGE 2  
The Friend's Club ground at sector-3 in Uttara, said Bidhan Tripura, deputy commissioner (Uttara division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

The muggers shot them, took away the money and rode away, the DC said.

The injured mother and daughter were later taken to a private hospital.

Police said they were trying to arrest the culprits, using CCTV footage of the incident.

AL in the early 1990s.

A video, apparently filmed on a mobile phone, of the clash shows him with a firearm. In the two-minute clip obtained by The Daily Star, Miru is seen wearing a brown blazer and white pyjamas. He is also seen walking with the gun behind a group of people who were chasing their rivals with sharp weapons.

The Daily Star could not independently verify the footage.

Primary investigation suggests the bullet that eventually killed Shimul may have been fired from Miru's house.

Lawmaker Swapan also held the mayor responsible for Shimul's death.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Mohammed Nasim visited Shimul's family on Saturday night and expressed his condolence.

He also assured Shimul's widow that he would help her get a job.

**PROTEST CONTINUES**  
Journalists continued to protest the shooting in different parts of the country.

At a rally at Samakal's office at the capital's Tejgaon, Shimul's colleagues demanded justice for his death.

Its Editor Golam Sarwar said, "Shimul was a member of the Samakal family. We lost our brother. Justice must be done."  
Journalists in Rajshahi, Pabna, Chapainawabganj, Lalmonirhat, Narayanganj, Patuakhali, Brahmanbaria, Khagrachhari, Chittagong, Comilla and Jahangirnagar University also held protest rallies.

[Our correspondents from Pabna, Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Narayanganj, Lalmonirhat, Patuakhali, Brahmanbaria, Khagrachhari, Chittagong, Comilla and JU contributed to this report]

## Inhuman

FROM PAGE 16  
On information, police rescued her and arrested her brother-in-law Shipu Miah, 22, yesterday afternoon.

Sumi, daughter of Jolhat Miah of Tarabo Dakkhin Para, is the second wife of Korban Ali, son of Arab Ali of Tarabo area. They were married six months ago.

Since then, her husband and in-laws including Ali's first wife Maya Begum, uncle Selim and Shipu had been torturing her for Tk 1 lakh dowry.

A number of arbitrations were arranged to settle the matter. Her in-laws confined her to a room and kept torturing her, sources said.

They tied Sumi's hands and legs yesterday morning and hung the shoes around her neck to humiliate her in public.

The torture was recorded and found in Shipu's mobile phone. At one stage, her hair was cut and she was beaten up with sticks.

Hearing about the incident, Sumi's mother Taslima Begum informed the police of the matter. A team led by sub-inspector Monirul Islam later rescued her. Officer-in-Charge of Rupganj police Ismail Hossain said they had arrested Shipu, but others had fled sensing the presence of law enforcers.

Sumi, who has been receiving treatment at Rupganj Upazila Health Complex, filed a case against her in-laws, he added.

## For gaining

FROM PAGE 16  
were killed and 224 injured in 13 incidents of internal clashes last month.

And at least 54 AL men were killed and nearly 3,700 injured in 349 incidents of internal clashes in 2015-16.

The ASK statistics are based on newspaper reports and its own investigation.

**REASONS**  
Factions often get locked in clashes over establishing supremacy in respective areas and controlling extortion and tender business, party insiders say.

Infightings become unavoidable due to the lack of chain of command, row between former and incumbent lawmakers and among party leaders, absence of organisational activities and widening gap between the central body and the grassroots.

In many cases, AL central leaders fail to resolve conflicts at the grassroots level.

During last year's election of local bodies, intra-party feuds at the grassroots level took a turn for the worse when dissidents contested the race defying the high command's order.

Many dissidents were expelled from the party but the punitive actions could not contain them.

In many areas, AL men appeared as the main challenger of party nominated chairman candidates. Their supporters got engaged in clashes.

The ASK report does not include casualties in polls violence.

An AL central leader on Saturday said the party is not only embarrassed but also concerned over the incidents of infighting across the country.

"We have taken many initiatives to stop intra-party feuds but all went in vain. We actually don't know what to do now," the leader told The Daily Star, wishing anonymity.

In many cases, local units suspended errant leaders, and as per the party constitution, they send the decision to the central committee for approval. But the central committee rarely approves the unit's decision, insiders say.

This is why, errant leaders don't correct themselves and cause trouble, again.

Contacted yesterday, AL Joint General Secretary Abdur Rahman said they are aware of the party infighting and taking initiatives to resolve the problems.

"We already have taken decision to make organisational tour across the country to contain internal disputes. We have set a target to end intra-party feuds within this year and make the party united keeping in mind the 2019 national elections," he said.

Rahman also warned that if the internal conflicts still cannot be contained, the party would go for tough action against errant leaders and activists.

Shantanu Majumder, a teacher at Dhaka University political science, on Saturday said the ruling Awami League is now unchallenged in absence of a strong opposition.

"The situation would have been different, if there were one or two strong opposition parties to challenge the Awami League," he added.

Nur Khan Lito, acting executive director of ASK, yesterday said that on several occasions, ruling party leaders and activists were seen using licensed firearms in illegal activities. This is very much alarming.

When democratic space shrinks, political opponents become weak and do not get necessary environment to play due roles. This situation is prevailing in the country now, he added.

In the absence of strong opponents, leaders and activists of the ruling party get involved in an unethical competition among themselves. To be benefited economically, they want to establish supremacy inside the party and also in their localities, leading to intra-party feud, said Nur Khan.

## Appeals court rejects

FROM PAGE 1  
"This is the first time I try to travel to America. We were booked to travel next week but decided to bring it forward after we heard," said a Yemeni woman, recently married to a US citizen, who boarded a plane from Cairo to Turkey yesterday to connect with a US-bound flight. She declined to be named for fear it could complicate her entry to the United States.

In a brief order, the US appeals court said the government's request for an immediate administrative stay on the Washington judge's decision had been denied. It was awaiting further submissions from Washington and Minnesota states, and from the government today.

Reacting to the court's statement, Iraqi government spokesman Saad al-Hadithi said: "It is a move in the right direction to solve the problems that it caused."

Trump's Jan 27 travel restrictions have drawn protests in the United States, provoked criticism from US allies and created chaos for thousands of people who have, in some cases, spent years seeking asylum.

In his ruling in Washington state on Friday, Judge James Robart questioned the use of the Sept 11, 2001 attacks on the United States as a justification for the ban, saying no attacks had been carried out on US soil by individuals from the seven affected countries since then.

For Trump's order to be constitutional, Robart said, it had to be "based in fact, as opposed to fiction".

The 9/11 attacks were carried out by hijackers from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Lebanon, whose nationals were not affected by the order.

In a series of tweets on Saturday, Trump attacked "the opinion of this so-called judge" as ridiculous.

"What is our country coming to when a judge can halt a Homeland Security travel ban and anyone, even with bad intentions, can come into US?" he asked.

Trump told reporters at his private Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida: "We'll win. For the safety of the country we'll win."

But the Washington court ruling was the first move in what could be months of legal challenges to his push to clamp down on immigration.

The Justice Department appeal criticized Robart's legal reasoning, saying it violated the separation of powers and stepped on the president's authority as commander-in-chief.

The appeal said the state of Washington lacked standing to challenge the order and denied that the order "favours Christians at the expense of Muslims."

The US State Department and Department of Homeland Security said they were complying with Robart's order and many visitors are expected to start arriving starting from yesterday, while the government said it expects to begin admitting refugees again today (Monday).

Iraqi Fuad Sharef, his wife and three children spent two years obtaining US visas. They had packed up to move to America last week, but were turned back to Iraq after a failed attempt to board a US-bound flight from Cairo.

Yesterday, the family checked in for a Turkish Airlines flight to New York

from Istanbul. "Yeah, we are very excited. We are very happy," Sharef told Reuters TV. "Finally, we have been cleared. We are allowed to enter the United States."

Rana Shamasha, 32, an Iraqi refugee in Lebanon, was due to travel to the United States with her two sisters and mother on Feb. 1 to join relatives in Detroit until their trip was cancelled as a result of the travel ban.

She is now waiting to hear from U.N. officials overseeing their case. "If they tell me there is a plane tomorrow morning, I will go. If they tell me there is one in an hour, I will go," she told Reuters by telephone in Beirut, saying their bags were still packed. "I no longer have a house here, work, or anything," she said.

An official at Beirut airport said three Syrian families had left for the United States via Europe yesterday morning.

Airline sources in Cairo said 33 people from the seven affected countries had been allowed to board US-bound flights since Saturday.

## Rab recovers

FROM PAGE 2  
acting on a tip-off, raided Keruntoli village around 3:00am and arrested Selim and Ershadullah.

Later, as per their statements, Rab men recovered 12 locally made arms, 85 bullets and 106 bulletshells from a house.

According to Rab, Selim stands accused in 12 cases, including three for murder, and Ershadullah in six cases.

## Condemned

FROM PAGE 16  
intersection when he was taking a cup of tea at a roadside stall, said Sudarshan Roy, assistant superintendent of Magura police.

Enamul, son of Imarat Hossain of Katli village in Magura's Shalikka, joined Rab-11 just six days before the murders.

He had been hiding in the district's rural areas for months, the police official said, adding that he was trying to catch a bus to go to Dhaka yesterday.

A Magura court sent Enamul to jail after police produced him before it. He would be sent to Narayanganj after completing all legal procedures, police said.

On April 27, 2014, seven people, including then Narayanganj City Corporation panel mayor Nazru Islam and senior lawyer Chandan Sarker, were abducted from Dhaka-Narayanganj link road. Later, their bodies were found floating in the Shitalakkhya river.

On January 16 this year, Narayanganj District and Sessions Judge's Court found 35 people, including 25 former Rab men, guilty of abduction and murder of seven people and destroying evidence.

The court also handed down death penalty to 26 people, including Enamul and 15 other former Rab men, and jailed nine other accused for various terms, from seven to 17 years.

Of the 35 convicts, 24, including Enamul, are in jail now and 11 others are still on the run.

## Dhaka seeks help

FROM PAGE 16  
He spelled out the relocation plan and rejected foreign diplomats' argument that the char land is uninhabitable.

Already, a small number of people have begun living in the island, AH Mahmood said.

The government plans to build necessary infrastructures including shelters, schools, hospitals/health centres, mosques, roads etc. The relocation will take place only after the development works are completed, the minister said.

He also expressed the hope that he would take diplomats on a visit to the island once the infrastructures are in place.

Asked whether the government received any instant assurance of funds for relocation, another foreign diplomat replied in the negative.

However, according to a foreign ministry press release, representatives of the diplomatic community in general expressed their readiness to help implement the plan once it is finalised.

They expressed the hope that the new arrangements will improve the living condition of Rohingyas, but at the same time acknowledged the ultimate solution lies in their repatriation to Myanmar, the ministry said in the release, claiming to have received an assurance from foreign diplomats of their full support in this regard.

Earlier, the government said several countries offered assistance while others asked the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to help Bangladesh take care of the Muslim refugees during the OIC foreign ministers' meet in Malaysia on January 19.

HT Imam, adviser to the prime minister; State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam, the cabinet secretary, principal secretary to the PM, foreign secretary and other high officials of the government attended the

briefing.

According to an UN report, around 66,000 people have fled from the Muslim-majority northern part of Rakhine State to Bangladesh since Myanmar's military launched a security operation in response to attacks on police border posts on October 9 last year. The UN humanitarian office has recently put the figure at 69,000.

Gang rapes, killings, including those of babies and young children, disappearances and other serious human rights violations by Myanmar's security forces in a sealed-off area north of Maungdaw in northern Rakhine State have been detailed in the new UN report based on interviews with victims across the border in Bangladesh.

However, Myanmar's own probe into the unrest denied that the security forces had carried out a genocidal campaign against Rohingyas.

The Myanmar's government led by Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi said the allegations were invented, in efforts to resist the mounting international pressure to protect the minority community.

Rohingyas are currently living in different camps -- Nayapara, Leda and Kutupalang in Teknaf and Ukhaia -- apart from other parts of the country. At yesterday's briefing, the government said two camps in Cox's Bazar can actually accommodate 30,000 people but more than three lakhs are living there in inhuman condition, which have a negative impact on environment and local society and pose a serious security threat.

This is why the government has in principle decided to relocate the Rohingyas.

According to officials, the number of documented, undocumented and newly arrived Rohingyas may be more than 400,000.