



**OUTRAGE...** Demanding justice for madrasa student Nusrat Jahan Rafi, people across the country took to the streets once again yesterday. *Clockwise from top left*, Syed Abul Maksud and Sultana Kamal among others at a human chain on Mirpur Road near Dhanmondi-27. A youth holds a placard saying -- Will you still say the way I dress was responsible -- near Motijheel Rajuk Bhaban. With her granddaughter in her arms, a woman joins the protest in the area. A human chain stretching from Gono Bhaban to Bangabhaban seeks punishment for perpetrators. A part of the rally at Asad Gate where a placard reads -- No more rape -- a sentiment that is reverberating throughout the country.

## JUSTICE FOR NUSRAT Voices ring louder across the country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Overwhelming nationwide protests continued yesterday for the third consecutive day, demanding justice for the gruesome murder of madrasa student Nusrat Jahan Rafi, who was set ablaze allegedly for protesting sexual harassment against her.

Protest from various political parties, student platforms, rights bodies, cultural organisations and people from different walks of life poured in as they formed human chains in the capital and other parts of the country, report our correspondents.

In Dhaka, human chains were formed at different points stretching from the prime minister's official residence Gono Bhaban to the president's official residence Bangabhaban -- passing through Asad Gate, Kalabagan, Science Laboratory, Elephant road, Bata Signal, Kataban, Shahbagh, the High Court and Jatiya Press Club areas.

Different political, socio-cultural organisations including Communist Party of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Nari Pragati, Bangladesh Udichi Shilpi Gosthi, Ghashforing Khelaghbar Ashor, among others, joined the human chain.

The programme continued from 11am to noon.

Rights activist Sultana Kamal, Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman, journalist Syed Abul Maksud, and development activist Khushi Kabir, among other distinguished personalities, joined the protest, said a CPB press release.

At the human chain, Communist Party of Bangladesh Dhaka metropolitan unit General Secretary Shajedul Haque announced to observe "violence against woman and child resistance week" across the country from April 20, to show their strong resistance against any kind of violence against women and children.

He urged people to build resistance against violence towards women and children, like in 1971.

Sultana Kamal said incidents like killing of Nusrat takes place when the state does not properly carry out its

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## Restaurants still flout smoking ban: survey 39pc owners unaware of tobacco act

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Smoking at restaurants, one of the major public places, still continues in different parts of the country although it is prohibited by the existing tobacco control law, finds a recent survey.

The situation has improved significantly in recent times compared to that of the previous years, but the improvement could have been better if restaurant owners were made aware and law violators punished, the survey adds.

Dhaka Ahsania Mission came up with the findings after surveying 372 restaurants in 16 districts.

The survey was carried out

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## Happy Pahela Baishakh to all

President, PM greet nation

STAR REPORT

The nation welcomes the first day of Bangla new year 1426 today amid vibrant pageantry, leaving behind the gloom of the past and upholding the opulent cultural heritage.

On the occasion of Pahela Baishakh, President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday greeted people of the country. The president and prime minister issued separate messages in this regard, reports BSS.

President Hamid, in his message, said Pahela Baishakh is an integral part of Bangalee culture. Bangalees have been celebrating the day as a universal and non-communal festival, he added.

He said Mangal Shobhajatra, an integral part of the celebration, has been recognised as the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by Unesco in 2016. The vibrant and colourful procession is joined by tens of thousands of people from all walks of life.

He wished that the new year would bring happiness, peace and progress for the country.

In her message, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said the nation starts the first day with hope, forgetting all shortcomings and sorrows.

Business communities, especially in rural areas, are ready to open their traditional "Halkhata" (new ledgers), while sweets will be distributed among patrons to mark the day, she said.

The Awami League government has been working relentlessly for the country's development being inspired by the spirit of Liberation War, she said. The incumbent government is completing the unfinished works of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, she added.

In the last 10 years, the country has achieved desired progress in every sector. Bangladesh is now a role model in the world for socio-economic development, she added.

The government has been following a "zero tolerance" policy to eradicate militancy, terrorism and drugs, she added.

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## DHAKA TODAY

### CONCERT

Dalchut at Pahela Baishakh

Venue: BUET

Time: 9pm

### BLOOD DONATION

Free blood testing and donation

Organiser: Bangbandhu

Sheikh Mujib Medical University

Venue: Bottola near Pubali Bank, Shahbagh

Time: 3pm

### PROTEST

Nirob Nagorik Protibad

Organiser: Nagorik Protibad

Venue: National Library, Shahbagh

Time: 9am

### RESTAURANT OPENING

Chef's Table

Venue: Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi

Time: 9am



## Media linkage important for Bangladesh-India relations

Says Riva Ganguly

UNB, Dhaka

Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Riva Ganguly Das yesterday said increasing linkages between the media of India and Bangladesh is an important element in overall growth of bilateral relations between the two countries.

Speaking at an event titled "Connections 2019", organised by Indian Institution of Mass Communication (IIMC) Alumni Association at the Jatiya Press Club, she also spoke about Indian government's initiatives to help Bangladeshi students.

"Media plays an important role in highlighting the immense potential and opportunities that exist for all the stakeholders," the Indian envoy said.

She also said the IIMC Alumni

Rain, thunder showers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thunder showers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Dhaka, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Mymensingh, Sylhet, Khulna, Barishal and Chattogram divisions with hails at isolated places in the next 24 hours. A trough of low lies over West Bengal and Bangladesh, said a Met Office bulletin issued yesterday morning. Day and night temperature may rise slightly over the country.

Rain or thunder showers may increase over northern part of the country in the next 72 hours, added the bulletin.

## Concert at DU cancelled after arson, vandalism

BCL activists behind the attack, witnesses say

DU CORRESPONDENT

cannot be organised in such a situation," said Azam.

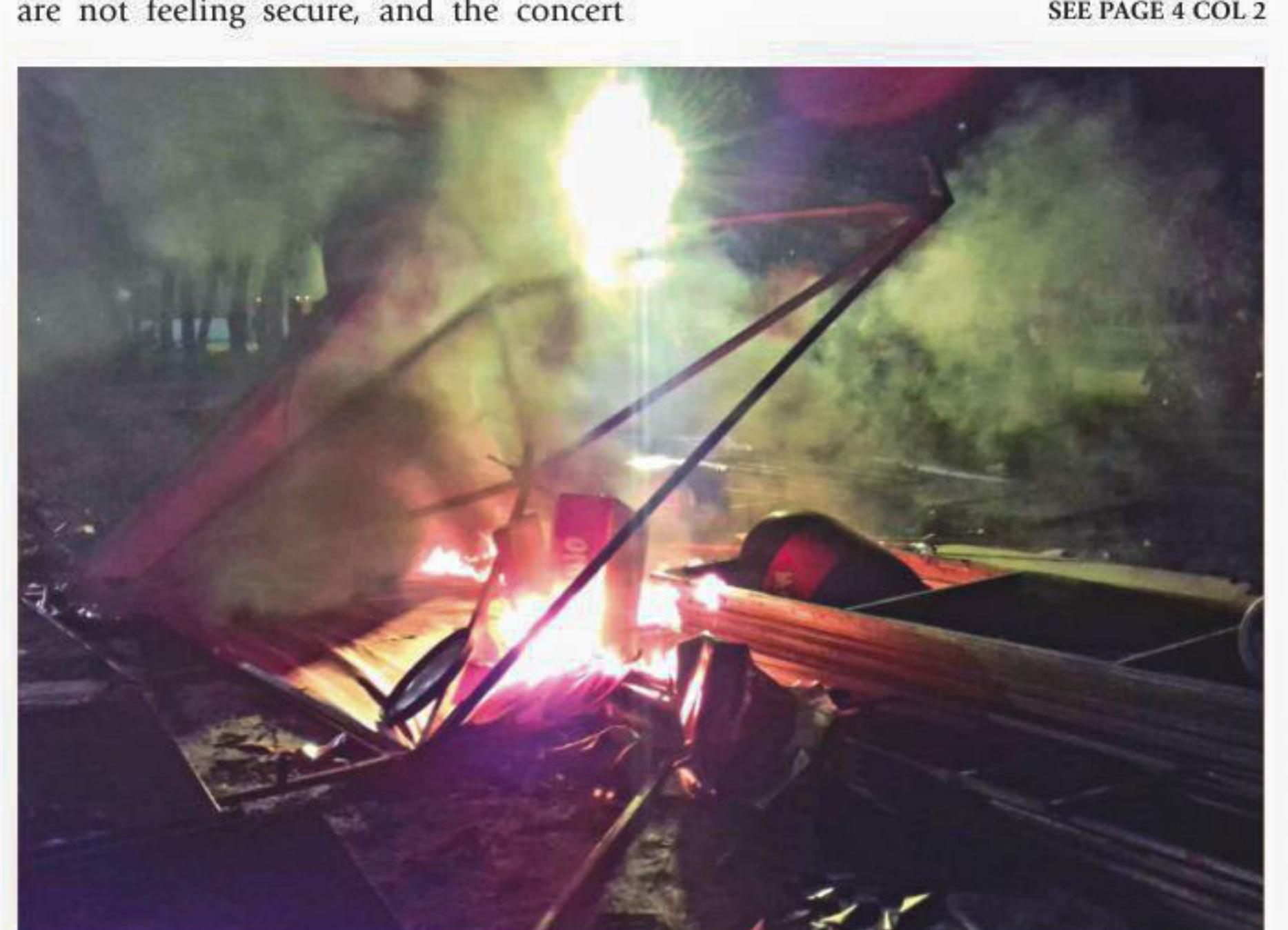
A number of BCL leaders, wishing anonymity, told this newspaper that supporters of BCL president Rezwanul Haque Chowdhury Shovon were behind the incident that occurred between 12:45am and 1am at Mall Chittar.

Witnesses said a group of BCL leaders, including Bangabandhu Hall unit general secretary Al Amin Rahman, Ziaur Rahman Hall unit president Yousuf Uddin Khan, Jashim Uddin Hall unit president Arif Hossain, Amar Ekushey Hall unit president Ehsan Ullah and general secretaries of Muhsin Hall and Sir AF Rahman Hall units -- Mehedi Hasan Sunny and Mahmudul Hasan Tushar respectively -- led the arson and vandalism.

Soon after the incident, followers of BCL DU unit president Sanjib Chandra Das, general secretary Saddam Hussain and BCL central unit general secretary Golam Rabban started to gather at the spot.

The three leaders instructed their

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Miscreants set fire to the concert stage and other materials at Mall Chittar in the early hours of Saturday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Association can play a vital role to take the ties to new heights.

State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury said the friendship that exists between Bangladesh and India is deepening day by day.

The state minister expressed hopes that India will help maintain the friendly relations between Bangladesh and Bhutan.

Zahid Newaz Khan, general secretary of IIMC Alumni Association, Bangladesh said, "Bangladeshis who have graduated from IIMC are among the top journalists in the country. It's something we are proud of."

IIMC Alumni Association Bangladesh President Ihsanul Karim and IIMC Central Alumni President Prasad Sanyal also spoke at the event.