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16 PAGES: TK 15.00



Hospitals strained as dengue cases spike
P3



Mamata blames dam release for flooding
P6



Tackling corruption, inequality, and autocracy
P9



Unrest emerges as a new threat to RMG recovery
WR4

CHT tense as 4 killed in violence

72 injured, several by gunshots; section 144 imposed in Khagrachhari, Rangamati towns; dozens of shops, houses vandalised

STAR REPORT

Four people were killed and at least 72 others injured as violence flared up in Rangamati town and Khagrachhari's Dighinala and Sadar upazilas yesterday.

The authorities imposed section 144, which restricts assembly of three or more people, on Khagrachhari and Rangamati towns.

In Dighinala, Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mohammad Mamunur Rashid said at least 102 shops were burnt down. Of the shops, 72 belong to the indigenous people, and the rest to Bangalees.

No homes were attacked, he added.

However, locals said that on Thursday, several houses were set on fire in Dighinala, and residents fled their villages out of fear.

Yesterday, clashes between Bangalee and indigenous people took place in Rangamati town, spreading fear among locals.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

The clashes began after a group of Bangalee people attacked a procession of the indigenous communities, witnesses said.

People of the town spent the day in panic amid tension between the communities.

Most of the markets and shops were closed in the two district towns and the roads were mostly empty.

Police and hospital sources in Khagrachhari identified three of the deceased as Dhananjoy Chakma, 50, Rubel Tripura, 25, and Junan Chakma, 20.

Hospital sources said Dhananjoy's body bore marks of blunt trauma. He died in Dighinala on Thursday night. The two others got shot in Khagrachhari Sadar Upazila and died around 1:30am yesterday at Adhunik Sadar Hospital.

The Inter Services Public Relations Directorate (ISPR) in a statement yesterday evening said three people were killed and

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



People from indigenous communities demonstrate at the capital's Shahbagh intersection yesterday protesting Thursday's arson attacks in Khagrachhari's Dighinala upazila. They demanded punishment for the attackers and probe into violations of human rights of the indigenous people in the Chattogram Hill Tracts.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

KHAGRACHHARI, RANGAMATI

'Culprits behind violence will be brought to book'
Chief adviser urges all to remain calm

WHAT ISPR SAYS
Three people were killed and several others injured during an exchange of fire as the army retaliated in self-defence when UPDF (main) members fired on an army patrol team in the Swanirvar area of Khagrachhari town on Thursday night.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



The government has made an urgent appeal for peace in the three hill districts, following the recent unrest in Khagrachhari and Rangamati, affirming its dedication to resolving the crisis.

A high-powered probe committee would soon be formed to investigate all incidents of violence, and those responsible would be brought to book, according to a press statement issued from the chief adviser's office yesterday.

Besides, a high-level government delegation, led by the home adviser, is expected to visit Khagrachhari and Rangamati today, the statement said.

The delegation includes the Chittagong Hill Tracts affairs adviser, the local government adviser, and the special assistant to the chief adviser for defence and national solidarity development.

The government is deeply saddened and distressed by the ongoing attacks, assaults, and loss

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

TOFAZZAL'S DEATH IN MOB LYNCHING DU, hall officials failed to take swift action

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Tofazzal Hossain, who was beaten to death by a mob, had been held captive at the Dhaka University's Fazlul Huq Muslim Hall for over three hours, starting at 7:45pm on Wednesday.

According to witnesses, students assaulted him in a guest room of the dormitory and then took him to the dining room to feed him. They then moved him to another guest room where they tortured him again.

While this horrific incident was occurring, house tutors called the hall provost repeatedly, but the provost, who lives on the hall premises, did not respond.

The provost, Prof Shah Md Masum, went to the hall around 8:00am on Thursday and that too only after an assistant proctor had visited his office to discuss the formation of a probe committee.

Proctor Saifuddin Ahmed, the head of a proctorial team responsible for safety and security on the campus, told The Daily Star that he came to know about Tofazzal being taken

to Dhaka Medical College Hospital around midnight on Wednesday.

Instead of moving critically injured Tofazzal straight to a hospital, the mobile team of the proctor's office took him to Shahbagh Police Station around 11:00pm on Wednesday.

The 35-year-old was moved to the hospital around 11:30pm. Doctors pronounced him brought dead around 12:45am on Thursday.

Tofazzal was a familiar face to many resident students of DU. He would often wander about the campus, dorms, and gladly eat if somebody offered him food.

His cousins say he "lost his mind" after the death of his parents and brother and became a drifter.

"Had the university authorities taken prompt steps, Tofazzal Hossain might have survived," Ziaur Rahman, a former DU student, said at a protest rally on the campus yesterday.

Students hailing from Patharghata upazila of Barguna, the home district of Tofazzal, organised the protest at the foot of Aparajeyo Bangla.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

• Six arrested DU students give confessional statements

• Students protest, demand justice

• Protesters question DU admin's role in preventing mob justice

8 JU students sued for killing ex-BCL leader

20-25 unknown people also made accused

A CORRESPONDENT, JU

The Jahangirnagar University authorities filed a case against eight students in connection with the fatal beating of former student and Chhatra League leader Shamim Ahmed.

Sudipta Shaheen, the deputy registrar of the university's security section, lodged the case at Ashulia Police Station on Thursday night, also accusing 20 to 25 unidentified suspects.

The accused students are Ahsan Labib (49th batch) of biotechnology and genetic engineering department, Raju Ahmed (45th batch) and Rajan Mia (46th batch) of government and politics department, Mahmudul Hasan Raifan (50th batch) and Hamidullah Salman (49th batch) of English department, Jubayer Ahmed (44th batch) of history department, Md Atikuzzaman (49th batch) of management department, and Sohag Mia (47th batch) of CSE department.

The university authorities also suspended the eight on Thursday night.

According to the case statement, Shamim, who was the former student

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

MOB VIOLENCE Police warn of tough action

UNB, Dhaka

Police Headquarters said yesterday that stern action would be taken if anyone took the law into their own hands.

Recently there have been alarming incidents of mob violence resulting in the killing of people in various areas.

Such acts of mob attacks are completely unacceptable, said a PHQ media release.

There are established legal procedures for trial if someone commits wrongdoings or crimes. No one has the right to take the law into their hands. People who are engaged in crimes must be handed over to the legal authorities; taking the law into one's own hands is not accepted in any circumstances, it reads.

People have been asked to call by dialling the national emergency service "999" or contact the nearest police station

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Rainwater has flooded homes, roads and fish enclosures in the Rangpur area of Khulna's Dumuria upazila. The only way to get around is by using specially crafted wooden boats, locally known as Donga. The photo was taken on Wednesday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Decision to halt politics at DU undemocratic Say student organisations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Student organisations said the decision to suspend all political activities at Dhaka University is undemocratic and unconstitutional.

They added that suspending student politics and taking away the right to protest and assemble contradict the aspirations of the student-led mass uprising, which toppled the Awami League government.

On Thursday night, the DU authorities in an emergency syndicate meeting decided to suspend political activities by teachers, students, and staffers on the campus until further notice.

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, the pro-BNP student body, described the temporary ban on student politics as undemocratic, unconstitutional, and a violation of fundamental rights.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Nasir Uddin Nasir, general secretary of JCD, said, "The democratic environment at Dhaka University will be destroyed."

He demanded withdrawal of this "ill-conceived" decision, which he said would help increase the activities of banned organisations.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5