

Brahmanbaria mayhem

Why destroy public property?

THE mayhem that took place on Tuesday in Brahmanbaria over the death of a madrasa student is of grave concern to us. The student in question seems to have died of injuries sustained during clashes between traders, police and madrasa students. It is unthinkable that an argument over the sale of a mobile phone could erupt into a full scale battle that led to an individual's death and injuries to many others, as well as the destruction of various establishments including a cultural centre, a bank and railway station. The vandals also removed fishplates from the tracks causing immense disruptions in the train schedules. It took four platoons of BGB, 100 rounds of rubber bullets and teargas shells to bring the situation under control.

We condemn the indiscriminate destruction of public and private property in the name of protest. It is reprehensible that the violence was egged on by posts in social media by political parties and their wings. While it is understandable that the death of a fellow student would evoke outrage, there is no excuse for anyone to take the law into their own hands and unleash such terror on a town and its residents. It appears that the students were bent on destruction rather than seeking justice. Acts of vandalism under any pretext cannot be tolerated and have to be handled with stringent measures.

At the same time there is no question that the circumstances under which the madrasa student died have to be revealed. It is encouraging that a probe body of the police has been formed and two officers involved in the incidents have been withdrawn. A thorough, swift investigation is in order and the person(s) responsible must be brought to book.