

# The Daily Star

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3rd Millennium

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Leaders and activists of the 11-party alliance (left) pay homage to the victims of Saturday's Paltan Maidan explosion during a post-hartal rally at the Mukhtangan yesterday. Earlier, members of the Bangladesh Workers Party brandished posters near the Paltan crossing during hartal hours, urging all to resist "terrorism and conspiracy."

-- Star photo



## Opposition calls nationwide dawn-to-dusk hartal today

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP-led opposition alliance has called a countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal today demanding immediate resignation of the Awami League government and repeal of the Public Safety Act.

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia announced the hartal programme at a rally at Paltan Maidan on January 18 before leading an opposition mass procession from there.

In support of the hartal, BNP and its front organisations brought out torch processions from Alam Super Market at Shyampur, Rampura bridge, Hossain Market at Badda, Azampur bus stand at Uttara, Rokeya Swarni, Mirpur No 10 round square, New Market, Mohammadpur, Tejgaon railgate and Naya Paltan yesterday evening.

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## Textbook scam Distribution starts violating terms of tender

By Mustak Hossain

Pustaka, a concern of Beximco group, yesterday started distribution of an inadequate number of textbooks for secondary level without depositing royalty with the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) and obtaining sale order from it, sources concerned said.

This was a violation of the terms and conditions of the tender for the job.

The NCTB earns a royalty of 10 per cent on textbooks and it is mandatory to deposit the royalty

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Cambodian King Norodom Sihanouk (C) and Queen Monineath (R) greet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh yesterday. Hasina is on her first visit to the South Asian country to take part in the general assembly of the Association of Asian Parliaments for Peace.

-- AFP photo

## Dhaka, Phnom Penh to strengthen trade, economic ties

PHNOM PENH, Jan 21: Bangladesh and Cambodia today agreed to consolidate further cooperation in trade and investment for the economic benefit of both the countries, reports UNB.

On the occasion of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit, a wide-ranging discussion was held here on bilateral relations and ways and means to further consolidate economic, trade and cultural relations.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister

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ment, science and technology would be signed between the two countries later on. This was decided at the official talks between the two governments. Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Cambodian counterpart Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen led their respective sides.

Agreement on trade, invest-

## PM meets Sihanouk Joint approach in combatting calamities proposed

PHNOM PENH, Jan 21: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today proposed that Bangladesh and Cambodia go for joint approach in combatting calamities since both countries experience similar natural disasters, reports UNB.

Referring to recent floods in Cambodia she said: "We had similar floods in 1998 which the people with the help of the gov-

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## Clarification

In our story on PSA case against lawyers published on January 18, the headline was inadvertently given as "PSA case against lawyers stayed". A Division Bench of the High Court comprising Justice Abu Sayeed Ahmed and Justice Khademul Islam Chowdhury, upon a writ petition filed by 16 lawyers and a BNP MP challenging validity of PSA, issued a rule upon the respondents including police not to arrest, disturb or harass them till hearing of the rule. The court did not order any stay of the proceedings. We reported correctly the order in the report but the headline mistakenly contained the word "stay." The error is regretted. We hope this explanation will remove any confusion in public mind about the court order.

## Correction

In our front-page photo caption yesterday, it was inadvertently mentioned that Zohra Tajuddin, wife of late Tajuddin Ahmed, was addressing Saturday's rally of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) at Paltan Maidan in the city. The speaker was Nasima Islam, wife of late CPB leader Tajul Islam. We regret the error.

## CID takes up twin blast cases

# 13 nabbed without clear charge

Staff Correspondent

Police arrested 13 people in connection with Saturday's explosions at a Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) rally at the Paltan Maidan and at the Bangabandhu Avenue in the city.

Nine of them were nabbed for their involvement in the Paltan Maidan incident and the rest, all hawkers by profession, for the Bangabandhu Avenue explosion.

In their forwarding report, police said that the arrested were behind the blast at the Paltan Maidan but didn't explain the basis of their suspicion.

In another development, the government yesterday constituted a three-member committee to probe the twin blasts. Headed by Aftab Uddin, a joint secretary of the home ministry, the commit-

tee has been asked to submit its report in seven days.

Meanwhile, a four-member team, led by an additional Inspector General of Police, has already started investigation into the explosion at the CPB meeting, which left four people killed and at least 50 injured.

Two others died in another blast near the Awami League office at the Bangabandhu Avenue, nearly 30 minutes after the Paltan explosion.

CPB President Manjurul Ahsan Khan lodged a case with the Motijheel police station, saying, in his FIR, that unidentified people set off the bomb during the meeting.

Abdul Karim, a sub-inspector of police, filed

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## Experts suspect link between the blasts

Star Report

With the intelligence and law enforcement agencies clueless about Saturday's explosion at the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) rally, the investigators are tracing a link between the blasts at the Paltan Maidan and Bangabandhu Avenue.

The investigators believe that the bomb at the CPB rally was supplied from a place at the Bangabandhu Avenue, a high official of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police told The Daily Star yesterday.

Requesting anonymity, the DMP official said that if there was a link between the two blasts, the investigators would

be able to ascertain the motive behind the explosion at the CPB meeting. Otherwise, he feared, the case would be shelved like others.

Till yesterday, police could not ascertain the type of bomb used in Saturday's incident. Although army experts collected splinters and other evidences of the explosion, they could neither confirm whether it was a remote-controlled explosive or a plastic bomb.

Four people were killed and at least 50 others injured when a powerful bomb exploded during a

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## Nasim blames Jamaat & its allies for bomb incident

By Staff Correspondent

Home Minister Mohammad Nasim has blamed the fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami and its allies for Saturday's bomb explosion at the CPB rally at Paltan Maidan in the city.

Issuing a statement in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, the Home Minister linked Saturday's incident with a series of subversive activities in the recent past for which the fundamentalists forces and their allies, particularly the main opposition BNP, were blamed.

Referring to the preliminary investigation reports, Nasim told

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Jan 22		5.38 pm
Jan 23	6-42 am	

Prayer Timings		
January 22		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fazr	5-30	6-10
Zohr	12-45	1-20
Asr	4-05	4-20
Maghrib	5-40	5-45
Esha	7-15	7-35
Source: Islamic Foundation		