THE PEOPLE SPEAK

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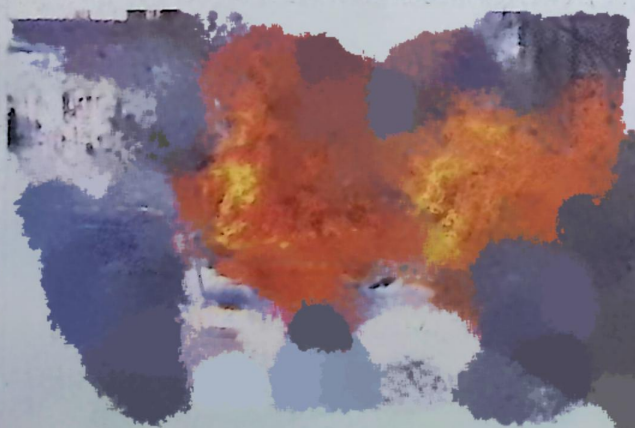
In the past four months Bangladesh has experienced at least 16 nationwide hartals (shutdown). Considered an allowed form of political protest, calling a hartal has unfortunately become synonymous with bringing violence to the streets. In light of the recent intensifying political unrest in the country, *the Star* spoke with citizens about their opinion and concerns not only for the country, but for their lives.

It has escaped no one's attention that the recent hartals called by Jamaat-e-Islami and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) have been particularly violent and destructive to everyday life and the country's stability. An alarming number of people, including policemen, have died and countless others, including journalists, have been injured from being a part of the clashes or being caught in the crosshairs. Students, in school and university, have not been able to attend classes or take exams without risk of being hurt or suspected of being part of the violence. Businesses have been forced to remain closed for days at a time, and this



"My family starves because we don't get any money [during hartal]."

Selim, CNG driver





Private property, namely cars, is often collateral damage during clashes between rioters and the police.

PHOTOS: STAR FILE