has resulted in not only personal financial losses but a dent in the economy's trajectory. Hartals cost the country an estimated $200 million every day, according to International Chamber of Commerce Bangladesh. *The Daily Star* reported last weekend that this translates into $3 billion lost since December, a sum that would finance the construction of the Padma Bridge.

The political turmoil that erupted last month when one of Jamaat's leaders, Delwar Hossain Sayedee, was given the death penalty for war crimes committed in the 1971 Liberation War has featured in the international news. Commentators fear this will only add to the existing reasons foreign investors might have to be concerned about bringing their business to currently unstable Bangladesh. For local people at both ends of the social spectrum, however, their fears are personal and immediate.



"They think of themselves and their politics and not of the people."

Subrata Chowdhury, assistant professor

"I'm obviously worried, everyone is. No one wants this situation." says Subrata Chowdhury, an assistant professor at a private university. "During hartals my family try to remain home because it's not safe in Dhaka city. Going out is difficult. Classes are postponed at my university but we still have to come because we are employees."



Recent consecutive hartals have resulted in loss of life, grievous injury, and substantial losses to the public.



PHOTOS: STAR FILE

