

BUSINESSES

Brought to knees

SARWAR A CHOWDHURY and GAZI TOWHID AHMED

What is typically a bustling part of Dhaka city lay in a sorry state yesterday morning. As if an angry cyclone had hit the capital's commercial hub, leaving a mountain of collateral damage in its wake.

There was nary a roadside shop in sight in Motijheel and Paltan, a part of town which is always buzzing with makeshift stalls and hawkers.

In their place lay a mass of ashes and brickbats, accompanied by wrecked signboards, thanks to the reign of terror that Hefajat-e-Islam unleashed on Sunday night.

The cluster of corporate houses in the area was not spared, either -- the exterior of most of them were badly defaced.

A particularly unforgettable sight was that of a BRAC Bank ATM booth, which was mercilessly ravaged. Thankfully, the mob could not get access to the safe.

"Four other booths of the bank were vandalised, but not as badly as that one. They just had their exterior

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MORE IN STAR BUSINESS



The ATM booth of Brac Bank at Motijheel was vandalised and attempts had been made to loot the cash during Sunday's violence centring on the Hefajat-e Islam rally.

PHOTO:
AMRAN HOSSAIN

A & O-LEVEL EXAMS FROM TODAY

Hostile politics vex students

WASIM BIN HABIB

O- and A-level examinations begin today amid fears that candidates across the country will not be able to take part in all the exams owing to political protests such as hartals or blockades.

These exams are held around the world simultaneously. Some 13,000 Bangladeshi students will take the tests administered by the British Council. Of them, about 11,000 will participate in the examinations at eight centres in the capital.

Talking to The Daily Star, a number of candidates and their parents have expressed concern over the current political situation in Bangladesh. They fear the authorities will fail to hold the tests if political parties enforce consecutive hartals.

The BNP-led 18-party opposition yesterday called daylong hartals for May 8 and 9, protesting what it said was Sunday's genocide following a rally of Hefajat-e Islam.

Hefajat-e Islam, meanwhile, in a press release has asked its activists to remain on the streets until further orders. The Islamist group on Sunday laid siege to Dhaka at several points, demanding a blasphemy law. Following massive violence by its men, law enforcers drove them away in the early hours of yesterday.

This time the examinations will be held in two shifts -- AM session from 11:00am and PM session from 2:00pm.

The British Council has declared its policy to

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TRIAL OF ALIM Martyr's son testifies at war tribunal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A martyr's son yesterday testified that war crimes accused Abdul Alim had refused to release his father and three uncles who were subsequently killed by the Pakistan army and its local collaborators in Joypurhat during the Liberation War.

Mostafizur Rahman, son of

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WARTIME KILLINGS IN CTG Probe body finds Quasem involved

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami leader Mir Quasem Ali was involved in the killing of at least eight people in Chittagong in two separate incidents during the Liberation War, said the investigation agency, designated to probe war crimes.

As the commander of Chittagong Al-Badr, Quasem set up torture cells at three different places where intellectuals, freedom fighters and aides of freedom fighters were brutally tortured and later killed.

The investigation agency found these facts in its 34-month-long probe against the war crimes suspect, now detained in custody.

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Cops remove Gonojagoron Mancha

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police dismantled the Gonojagoron Mancha in the capital's Shahbagh intersection early yesterday.

A contingent of nearly 100 policemen tore down the main stage, media cell and tents at Shahbagh, popularly known as Projonmo Chattar.

Masudur Rahman, deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan

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The wreckage of
parked cars at
House Building in
Motijheel yester-
day. They were all
burnt on Sunday
during the Hefajat-e
Islam rampage
in the area.

PHOTO:
AMRAN HOSSAIN

How could they do it?

*Hawkers, people in Paltan
area reel from Hefajat shock*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hawkers and small entrepreneurs doing business for decades around the Baitul Mukarram Mosque and Paltan had never experienced what happened on May 05, 2013.

Coming back to their business stocks yesterday, all they found was ashes.

During the daylong clashes with law enforcers, Hefajat-e Islam activists burned down around three to four thousand floating shops in the area on Sunday.

Fifty-five-year-old Abdullah, who had been selling books on the footpath in front of Moni Singh-Farhad Smriti Trust Bhaban for 35 years, has witnessed many political commotions in his life.

"When we see trouble we just pack up our goods in polythene and leave it on one side of the footpath. No one has ever looted or set fire to our goods before. This has happened for the first time," he said.

"We had never imagined they would burn our goods," said Mohammad Sirajul Islam, 25, who sells files and

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The Daily Star
Integral Energy Limited
ONLINE POLL
Do you think Hefajat-e Islam's Dhaka blockade programme is leading country to more violence?
Yes (75%)
No (25%)
TOTAL VOTES: 579
TODAY'S POLL
Do you think forming a wage board is well enough to help improve labour standards in Bangladesh?
PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net
YOU MAY ALSO VOTE AT facebook.com/dailystarnews

Workers await salary BGMEA yet to prepare complete list of workers of Rana Plaza factories

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The apparel makers said they would not be able to pay wages to the workers at five garment factories housed in the collapsed Rana Plaza today due to incomplete workers list.

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) said it would need three more days to complete the list. Earlier, they pledged to pay their dues within May 7, today.

The apparel apex body has so far com-

pleted list of workers of two garment factories out of five in the Rana Plaza.

The latest figures in the list put the number of workers at the two factories higher than what the BGMEA directory had earlier noted.

Now, BGMEA said a total of 1,543 employees were working in New Wave Style, while earlier it said the number was 1,073. And the number of workers in New Wave Bottoms is 598 as against 526 stated previously.

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Fakhrul released

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir was released on bail yesterday, two months after he was

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PRAYER TIMING		May 7
Fajr	4-15	4-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Magrib	6-34	6-38
Esha	8-00	8-30

source: Islamic Foundation



A Rapid Action Battalion vehicle burns at Siddhirganj of Narayanganj yesterday during law enforcers' clash with Hefajat-e Islam.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH