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WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

SHOUT

GARMENT UNREST

About 80 factories in Savar, Ashulia, Gazipur remained closed yesterday

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ME PEACE HOPE FADES

John Kerry pushes for talks as parties dig over settlement issue

PAGE 8

No hope in sight yet

Both AL, BNP talk about hope but act differently

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Both the ruling Awami League and the main opposition BNP remain rigid on their stance on the polls-time government, even after the 120 hours of countrywide hartal enforced by the BNP-led alliance in less than two weeks.

At least 17 people died in the hartal violence that spread even to some remote areas, leaving people gravely worried about their safety in the coming days.

Even so, the ruling and the opposition camps are preparing for a face off in the weeks ahead to establish their supremacy

on the streets in an already volatile political situation.

Having failed to realise its demand through two spells of shutdown, the 18-party alliance under the leadership of BNP chief Khaleda Zia now plans to call a nationwide blockade or another spell of hartal next week. It aims to force the government to install a non-party election-time government.

Asked about the results of the latest agitation, a senior BNP leader told The Daily Star, "The outcome of the 120-hour hartal is 'zero'. The government is moving a h e a d



State minister Tajul resigns

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

State Minister for Liberation War Affairs Capt (ret'd) AB Tajul Islam yesterday became the first minister to hand in his resignation to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to start the process of forming

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BID TO HOLD POLLS UNDER AL FORMULA

Little cheers from small parties

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE and PANKAJ KARMAKAR

The ruling Awami League's plan to convince small parties to contest the next general election may receive a blow as all-party participation has become a major issue for many.

A number of such parties which

are listed to get invitation from the AL for talks have showed their reluctance to contest the election if not participated by all opposition parties.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also the AL president, has a plan to sit with Gono Forum, Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh, Nagarik Oikya, a

citizens' platform, and some other political parties soon, sources say.

Talking to The Daily Star, Gono Forum Executive President Subrata Chowdhury said they would not contest the election if not held with participation of all.

"If the election is held without all the parties, it would deepen the

political crisis. So, we will not contest that election," he said.

BDB Joint Secretary General Mahi B Chowdhury said they had been demanding for a non-partisan poll-time government for long to ensure an acceptable and credible election.

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Hartal ends with arson, vandalism

Last day's clashes leave 100 injured

STAR REPORT

Yet another hartal victim succumbed to his injuries yesterday, two days after he was wounded in a clash in Satkhira.

The last day of the opposition's 60-hour hartal yesterday saw sporadic street clashes, arson, vandalism and blasting of crude bombs across the country, leaving at least 100 injured.

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BDR carnage verdict comes under fire

UN rights chief, Amnesty Int'l issue statements

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay yesterday expressed deep concern over sentencing of 152 people to death over the 2009 BDR mutiny and said it fell far short of international human rights standards.

"The crimes committed during the mutiny were utterly reprehensible and heinous, and my sympathies are with the grieving families, but justice will not be achieved by conducting mass trials of hundreds of individuals, torturing suspects in custody and sentencing them to death after trials that failed to meet the most fundamental standards of due process," she said in a statement.

"The perpetrators of the crimes must be held accountable in compliance with the laws of Bangladesh and the country's international

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A relative sits beside severely burned 14-year-old Monir at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. Monir was inside his father's lorry in Gazipur Monday morning when hartal supporters torched the vehicle leaving him critically injured.

PHOTO: STAR

Barely living, in unbearable pain

Badly burnt Monir feebly calls out for his mother

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the entire body swollen and blackened beyond recognition, Monir is drifting in and out of consciousness at the intensive care unit of Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Doctors say he is fully aware of his pains and can hardly move or speak.

However, yesterday for once the 14-year-old boy fighting more than 95 percent burns called out for his mother in a very feeble voice. But this is scarcely a sign of improvement.

Veteran burn expert Samanto Lal Sen, who examined Monir at the burn unit, could not say anything optimistic about the boy's recovery yesterday.

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Govt opens door to GB destruction

Says Prof Yunus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Grameen Bank founder Muhammad Yunus has strongly protested the changes to the GB law, blaming the government for "opening the door for its ultimate destruction."

Pointing out that the institution was founded as a bank owned and managed by poor women, he said its legal structure did not allow any sort of government interference in the bank, except for regulatory oversight.

"The amendments to the

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GOVT-OPPOSITION DIALOGUE

US still optimistic

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Congressman Steve Chabot expressed hope of a dialogue between the ruling and the opposition parties and said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had not rejected the possibility of talks.

"I met with Opposition Leader Khaleda Zia and conveyed the message to her [PM]

that she [Khaleda] will be willing to meet the prime minister for dialogue. The prime minister did not reject it," he said in a pre-departure press meet.

He expressed the hope of a peaceful solution to the current political crisis through a free, fair, transparent, credible and inclusive election.

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Bangladesh captain Mushfiqur Rahim, who played a good hand with a 29-ball 50, slaps one for a boundary in the one-off Twenty20 International against New Zealand at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. The Tigers came close to recording a loss-free series as they reached 189 for 9 in reply to the tourists' 204 for 5.



PHOTO: STAR

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