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ANGUISH UNENDING

Hours before the opposition's 72-hour blockade came into effect, pickets around 2:00am burn a rice-laden truck and a microbus, *top left*, at Kantakhali in Rajshahi on Dhaka-Rajshahi highway. An armed opposition activist, *top right*, fires at police during their pitch battles near AK Khan Road in Chittagong city. Raising their hands and showing a clipboard, a parent and his son try to make their way to school for an exam, *bottom right*, while opposition activists and police engage in a running battle around them near AK Khan Road. Due to the blockade, a woman and a child gets stranded in Chandra of Gazipur yesterday, *bottom left*, as they had started for the capital from Joypurhat the previous night before the blockade was called. Unable to find transport to get home, *middle right*, people from abroad land straight into trouble at Shahjalal International Airport yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



Talks on behind the scenes Says Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Communications Minister Obaidul Quader has said all the opposition leaders will be released if BNP reaches a consensus with Awami League.

The minister makes the comment at a time when BNP leaders are being arrested and implicated in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Stuck in capital

Blockade forces many to overstay in city as communications with districts cut off

HELEMUL ALAM

Nargis Begum had started from Jessore to attend her stepmother's qulkhani in Noakhali. Due to the abruptly announced opposition blockade, however, she found herself stuck in the capital yesterday.

"I could not also attend her funeral on Tuesday because of the last blockade," said the 45-year-old woman at Sayedabad bus

terminal, trying to hold back her tears. "It is too sad that I could not see her when she passed away."

Nargis reached Gabtoli with her sister and three nephews at 6:00am yesterday and managed to go to Sayedabad. But no inter-district bus left the terminal because of the 72-hour blockade.

She was scouring the terminal even at

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Grave mistake

Bomb hurts boy who thought it to be a ball

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A 14-year-old boy sustained injuries when a crude bomb, which he mistakenly thought was a tennis ball, went off in his hand here in Banskhali yesterday.

Ariful Islam, son of expatriate Nurul Islam of Purbo Dongra village, is a class seven student of Darul Islam Madrasa in the upazila.

"I picked up the object lying on the street at around 11:00am thinking that it

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Railway seeks BGB help for security

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Railway seeks support from Bangladesh Ansar and paramilitary Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) to guard its infrastructure as growing attacks on its network by blockaders threaten rail communications.

Some 2,528 Ansar personnel had already been deployed at 632 risky points, said railway officials. They added BGB jawans would also be deployed if the attacks continued.

Railway has a 1,600-member Government Railway Police (GRP) force and 1,949-member Railway Nirapatta Bahini (RNB). But the number is not adequate to guard the vast network that includes 2,835-kilometre tracks and 456 stations.

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ENGLISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS

Exams put on hold for blockade

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The handful of English medium schools in the capital that held classes and exams during the last opposition-called blockade yesterday suspended all exams.

The school authorities said they had to suspend the exams following indirect pressure from some parents and being concerned over security of the children and school.

"We received phone calls from the guardians who indirectly put pressure on us not to take the exams

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



The ransacked office and room of BNP Joint Secretary General Rizvi Ahmed at the party head office in Nayapaltan after law enforcers stormed it early yesterday to arrest the BNP leader, *inset*, who had virtually been living there. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



DMCH BURN UNIT

It's hard to cope with patients

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Each hartal and blockade over the last month brought with it more arson victims at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The latest of them were 19 people, who were burnt on Thursday evening after a bus was set alight by pickets at Shahbagh. Two of the victims succumbed to their injuries on Friday.

Overwhelmed by the influx of patients to the hospital, the DMCH yesterday formed an 11-member medical board at the burn unit to deal with the workload.

The board, headed by DMCH Director Dr Deen Mohammad, consisted of specialists from ophthalmology, medicine, anaesthesia, surgery, burn and blood transfusion departments, among others, veteran burn expert Dr Samanto Lal Sen told The Daily Star.

When the 19 arson victims arrived at the hospital on

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited

ONLINE POLL

Do you agree with Gonoforum President Dr Kamal Hossain that the people would not accept any election under a partisan government?

Yes (82%) No (18%)

TOTAL VOTES: 487

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think the two major political parties will be able to reach consensus on holding the next general election?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

PRAYER TIMING December 1

Fajr 5:15 5:50 Azan Jamaat 5:15 5:50 Zohr 12:45 1:15 Asr 3:45 4:00 Maghrib 5:19 5:22 Esha 7:00 7:30

Source: Islamic Foundation

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