



WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

SHOUT

EDUCATED
CAREER
WELL BEHAVIOUR
GOOD LOOKING
AGE 20
WHAT??

LET THE TALKS BEGIN

Solution to the current impasse will come only through dialogue

PAGE 7

'GO, IMRAN, GO'

Parents stop the Pakistani politician from entering Peshawar school

PAGE 8

BUS UNDER POLICE PROTECTION ATTACKED IN RANGPUR

5 burnt to death

2 more killed in 2 dists; latest spate of violence takes 20 lives in 10 days

STAR REPORT

Five people, including a child, were burnt to death as alleged blockaders hurled a petrol bomb in a long-haul bus at Jaigirhat in Rangpur early yesterday.

At least 15 others were injured, one of them critically. Of the 15, six suffered burns. All but one of the injured were being treated at Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

The incident took place although the bus, along with some 30 more, was plying under law enforcement agencies' protection.

The attack was made on Rangpur-Dhaka highway on the ninth day of the BNP-led alliance's countrywide nonstop blockade that claimed two more lives in Chittagong and Feni, raising the death toll to 20 since January 5. Yesterday's

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Tasiran Bewa with 96 percent burns at a Rangpur hospital. She later died while being taken to DMCH. PHOTO: STAR

Double blow for a family

MEHEDI HASAN, Rangpur

Al-Amin was mourning his grandmother's death just around a week ago. He had gone to his ancestral home in Kurigram to attend her funeral on January 3.

He could hardly have imagined that his return to his Gazipur home would bring about a disaster that would take the life of a family member and endanger the lives of others.

Yesterday, when he was returning to Gazipur along with 10 of his family members, alleged blockaders hurled a petrol bomb at their bus, killing one and

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

THE COST OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

TRANSPORT SECTOR

For each day's suspended operation, the sector incurs losses of Tk 200 crore, according to FBCCI. At this rate, the total loss from the blockade so far stands at Tk 2,000 crore. This is excluding the cost of about 200 vehicles fully or partially damaged in arson attacks alone.



APPAREL SECTOR

The sector lost about Tk 450 crore in the past 12 days, as daily production fell by 20 percent and many shipments have been cancelled. On a normal day, daily production in the industry is valued at Tk 430 crore.



AGRICULTURE SECTOR

Data on the price farmers are paying because of the blockade is hard to come by. But farmers are at a loss. Many have stopped harvesting their produce as prices have fallen at farm level to such an extent that they do not even cover the production cost.



EDUCATION SECTOR

Most of about 4 crore primary and high school students keep off classes, fearing violence. O-level and A-level students are taking their January session exams at a great risk. About 10 lakh SSC candidates, whose exams begin on Feb 2, are worried about disruption in the routine.



NEWS ANALYSIS

Where are we heading to?

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Suddenly politics seems to be out of every one's hand. And nobody knows how this crisis is going to end. Even the Awami League top guns are short of answers.

Meantime, the nation braces for more bloodshed that has already caused 19 deaths in the last 10 days.

After the January 5 election, a false sense of tranquillity prevailed for a year. The violence that the BNP and Jamaat had started subsided with the election over.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Stop violence, ensure right to expression

EU, US, UK urge calm, political dialogue

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United States, United Kingdom and European Union have come down heavily on the violence and shrinking democratic space in Bangladesh and urged all parties to engage in dialogue.

"We call on all parties to exercise restraint and eschew violence and intimidation, and we urge the government to ensure people can freely exercise their right to peaceful political expression," the US State

Department said in a press statement yesterday.

The heads of mission of the European Union resident in Bangladesh in a meeting with Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali have also expressed concern over the shrinking of democratic space.

"Actions to restore peace and stability should not be at the expense of freedom of assembly, movement and speech," the EU said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

CONTAINING VIOLENCE

PM warns of tougher steps

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday warned the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami again that her government will take even tougher steps if they do not refrain from destructive activities like blockade,



SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

ATTACK ON REAZ RAHMAN AL, BNP blame each other

Hartal curtailed, ends at 6pm today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday opened an investigation into Tuesday night's shooting of Khaleda Zia's adviser Reaz Rahman, with the Awami League and the BNP blaming each other for carrying out the attack.

Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Gulshan Model Police Station, said they were working to identify the gunmen who shot Reaz in his car in the city's Gulshan-2.

The attackers also torched his car before fleeing. Reaz, also former state minister for foreign affairs, was hit

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

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