

Arson attacks take alarming turn

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Around 200 vehicles were torched across the country in the last 11 days, they added.

People had to endure more suffering as the BNP-led alliance enforced a dawn-to-dusk shutdown yesterday on top of the ongoing blockade.

Though vehicular movement in the capital was almost normal, only a few long-route buses left the capital.

Train service, brought down to its knees by acts of sabotage, ran behind schedule, causing untold sufferings to thousands of commuters. River communication, however, was normal.

O-level and A-level examinees had to sit for exams at 7:30pm and 11:45pm yesterday, as their exam schedules were changed due to hartal. After a short recess, they will have to take another test this morning.

In Gazipur, bus helper Tofazzal Hossain, 17, of Sunamganj, was burnt to death while he was asleep inside the bus at Mohishbathan Bot Tola on Dhaka-Tangail Highway.

Driver Selim Mia parked the bus next to his house on the highway around 2:30 am and went home to take a nap, said Rafikul Islam, officer-in-charge of Kaliakoir Police Station.

Tofazzal shut the doors of the bus that carried factory labourers, and slept inside the vehicle. Around 3:30am, locals saw the bus burning, he said.

Fire fighters doused the blaze and recovered Tofazzal's body lying near the door of the bus. Tofazzal might have tried to get out after the bus was set on fire.

The OC said it was not clear how the

bus was set alight.

Khandakar Mofizur Rahman, bus owner and president of Kaliakoir upazila Sramik League, said, "The pro-hartal pickets torched the bus as I spoke against hartal and violence in a rally yesterday [Wednesday]."

In Dhaka, private car driver Abul Kalam, 26, who suffered 33 percent burns in a petrol bomb attack at Moghbazar on Friday night, died at the DMCH around 12:30pm.

Pro-blockade pickets hurled a petrol bomb at the car parked near Celebration Party Centre at Moghbazar, leaving him seriously injured.

As doctors conveyed the sad news to Kalam's family members, they broke down in tears.

Blaming country's violent political culture for his brother's death, Ibrahim Hawlader said, "We don't do politics. We are ordinary people. Why do they attack people like us? ... Could they ever fathom the pain of my brother or the loss of my family?"

In Rangpur, police arrested 17 activists of Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir from Mithapukur upazila for their alleged links with Wednesday's arson attack on a bus which claimed five lives.

None has as yet claimed the body of the child who was burnt to death in Rangpur in Wednesday's attack. The body was kept at Rangpur Medical College Hospital mortuary.

Meanwhile, miscreants hurled two crude bombs in front of the residence of Gowher Rizvi, the prime minister's international affairs advisor, around

8:30pm in the capital, Rafikul Islam, officer-in-charge of Gulshan police station told The Daily Star.

Shahbagh police recovered four crude bombs from the side of a Public Library building in the evening.

In Chittagong, two crude bombs were exploded outside the office of ruling alliance lawmaker Moinuddin Khan Badal in Chandgaon area around 7:20pm. None was hurt.

In another incident in the port city, around 40 to 50 miscreants blockaded two goods-laden trucks and set them ablaze. They also vandalised some other vehicles in Sitakunda upazila last night, said police.

In Habiganj, three persons, who were on a motorbike, suffered burns as alleged blockaders threw a crude bomb at them in front of the police superintendent's residence around 1:00pm.

At least 20 people, including three policemen, were injured in a clash between police and BNP activists on Saifur Rahman road in Moulvibazar around 2:00pm.

In another incident in Natore, pro-blockade pickets torched a Rajshahi-bound cement-laden truck and looted money from its driver in Ahammadpur area early yesterday. Both the driver and helper were injured.

Pro-blockaders torched four trucks and a private car in Dinajpur and Joypurhat on Wednesday night, two trucks at Sirajganj, a bus in Magura and a covered-van in Feni yesterday.

Law enforcers detained 61 Jamaat and BNP men in Sathkira, 55 in Jessore and 25 in Chapainawabganj.

Origami boat

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captained the boat on its maiden voyage.

Weighing in at 220 lbs and measuring six feet wide, the boat was made from 305 feet of paper, 492 feet of sticky tape and two gallons of glue to keep it waterproof.

Engineers selected paper that is stronger and more water-resistant than usual, because the boat was to be in the water for much longer than a normal small-scale version.

They also made modifications to the traditional design.

To ensure it didn't capsize, a keel of wood was added underneath the boat, while a polystyrene block supporting the pyramid of paper was added for safety.

Ridged paper in the base of the boat created a platform strong enough for someone to stand on.

The craft stayed in the water for two hours and is still intact, despite having a soggy bottom -- but no one is sure exactly how long it could survive. It is said to have 'handled like a dream'.

Wilson works as a mechanical engineer for Argent, London. "Engineering runs in my family, and I really want to show young people that this career can open doors to amazing opportunities and adventures," she said.

Doa mahfil

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joined the DMC but a year later was transferred to Mitford Medical College, now Sir Salimullah Medical College, as a professor of Ophthalmology.

He provided technical and logistic support to help establish Islamia Eye Hospital.

In 1967, he was awarded the National Award Sitara-i-Quaid-i-Azam by the Pakistan government for his contribution to furthering treatment of eye diseases and prevention of blindness. However, in March 1971, he formally renounced the award to protest the Pakistani government's policies.

At the end of 1971, he became first Chief Consultant and CEO of Islamia Eye Hospital.

Dr Wadud spearheaded the establishment of the country's first eye bank at the hospital in 1974. He also served as eye doctor for Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members.

From 2010, he served as the chief adviser of Distressed Children and Infants International, a USA-based charitable organisation.

Friends, relatives and well-wishers are requested to attend the doa mahfil.

Hartal can

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government would not engage in dialogue with any party "at gunpoint or in the face of threat of hurling bombs".

Anisul Huq added that the government would take necessary steps for bringing BNP leader Tarique Rahman back to the country so that he can be put on trial. Tarique is facing several cases.

The minister said the government would formulate a new law either in April or May for the appointment of some new Supreme Court judges.

He hoped that the proposed amendment to the relevant law for trying and punishing an organisation for war crimes committed in 1971 would be placed before the cabinet meeting at the end of this month for its approval.

He also said the real killers of journalist couple Sagor Sarowar and Meherun Runi would be identified through the ongoing investigation.

Replying to another question, Anisul said he would take steps against the law enforcers who had tried to enter and "search" the office of English daily New Age at Tejgaon without any valid documents.

Khaleda expresses

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Khaleda's lawyer AM Mahub Uddin Khokon submitted four separate petitions -- two for seeking adjournment of the hearing and two for her non-appearance before it -- to the court yesterday.

After the hearing, Jamadar rejected the adjournment petitions and fixed January 29 for the next hearing in the cases.

The court, however, granted Khaleda's non-appearance on grounds of "her being confined to her office". On January 7, it also excused her from appearing before it for the same reason, but quashed the pleas for adjournment of recording statements.

The BNP chief did not appear before the court on different dates "for security reasons".

Lawyer Khokon also filed two more petitions with the court for reconsidering their appeals, but the court again quashed the adjournment petitions.

The court recorded statements of complainant Harunur Rashid, a dep-

uty director of the Anti-Corruption Commission, for half an hour.

Khokon then expressed no-confidence in the judge, saying they would not get justice from the court, and they would go to the High Court with a no-confidence plea against Judge Jamadar as he turned down their adjournment petitions.

Public Prosecutor Mosharraf Hossain Kajol, who stood for the state, told The Daily Star that the defence lodged repeated no-confidence petitions for "delaying the trial proceedings."

Khaleda had filed two no-confidence petitions with the High Court in October last year, seeking orders on the government to transfer the cases from the Special Judge Court 3 of Dhaka that had Judge Bashude Roy as its head.

On December 18, the government transferred Bashude, who had been holding trial of the cases since the charges were framed against Khaleda on March 19 last year, to the position of a special judge in Patuakhali.

Govt to set up

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Hasina also said the army received accolades at home and abroad for its work in introducing the national ID card and making a flawless voter list ahead of the 2008 elections.

She said she was sure that the army was fully ready to resist any evil force and safeguard the country's integrity and sovereignty.

Two infantry divisions of the army have already been set up in Sylhet and Ramu of Cox's Bazar and a composite brigade has also been set up on the bank of the Padma for the construction and security of the Padma Bridge, she said.

The prime minister said internet facilities had been provided at all stages in the army as part of the greater goal of Digital Bangladesh.

"... Earning people's confidence is very important," she told the army personnel at the programme, reminding them that people were the strength of the country.

She said Bangladesh was the top contributing country in the UN peace missions and her government has been carrying on its continuous effort to increase the numbers of troops in the UN missions. She said the army's contributions in the peacekeeping missions were globally recognised.

After the Darbar, Hasina had lunch with army officials and soldiers there.

ASSAULT EXERCISE

Earlier, Hasina, who also holds the defence portfolio, observed the army's winter exercise titled "Assault River Crossing" on the bank of the Gorai at Sonakanda.

With jet fighters in the sky, and tanks and APCs on the ground, the 55

Infantry Division carried out the assault exercise.

General Officer Commanding of the 55 Infantry Division Maj Gen SM Matiuir Rahman organised the 2014-15 exercise where the army for the first time used a drone to locate enemy position. The army plans to develop its drone technology for use in battle fields.

Two fighter jets heavily pounded targets with bombs, 80 para-troops jumped off two planes of Bangladesh Air Force and 265 commandos made the push to capture the beachhead across the river in the mock battle. Two helicopters were also used.

A total of 8,000 army troops, and 250 para-commandos took part in the exercise that began on December 21 last year.

One of the spokespersons of the 55 Infantry Division, Lt Col Md Iftuqur Rahman, told reporters that this kind of exercise would help boost professionalism in the army and give the troops almost real-life war experience.

During the exercise, the army gave free medical treatment to more than 20,000 people, performed surgeries on several hundred patients, distributed books and gift items among children at schools, and warm clothes among the less fortunate in the locality. It also built roads and renovated mosques and schools.

The Prime Minister's Security Adviser Maj Gen (ret'd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique, Chief of Army Staff Gen Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan, Naval Chief Vice Admiral Muhammad Farid Habib, and Air Chief Air Marshal Muhammad Enamul Bari were present during the exercise.

Dhaka being BGB to use lethal arms

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The conference opened paying deep tributes to legendary master architect Muzharul, regarded as the pioneer of Bangalee modernism in architecture.

Noted architect Shamsul Wares of Bangladesh, who worked under Louis and Muzharul, said Muzharul was a thinker and philosopher who with a deep understanding of Banglaee society, culture, economy and climate founded the grounds for the future generation of architects.

Muzharul advocated that an architect must remain loyal to local history and culture while performing contemporary architecture, he said.

He broke away from the rigidity and static expression of colonial and Islamic architectural style for liberalism, openness and transparency in architectural work, as manifested in his landmark work, the fine arts institute building of Dhaka University.

The conference would help inspire and enrich the practice and thought of architecture in the country, said IAB President Abu Sayeed M Ahmed.

Bengal Foundation Chairman Abul Khair Litu said the foundation would start an Institute for Architecture, Landscapes and Settlements in August which would be directed by Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, currently teaching architecture at Hawaii University in the US.

Renowned British historian and critic of architecture William JR Curtis from France also spoke at the inaugural session.

Apart from Bashirul Haq and Saif Ul Haque from Bangladesh, other world famous architects taking part in the conference include Fumihiko Maki from Japan, Kenneth Frampton, Farooq Ameen and Rahul Mehrotra from the USA, Ken Yeang from Malaysia, Han Tümertekin from Turkey, Kongjian Yu from China, Anupama Kundoo from India, Palinda Kannangara from Sri Lanka and Héctor Fernández Elorza from Spain.

Receiving an overwhelming response with nearly 9,000 participants registering online, the conference ends tomorrow.

injured in the last 10 days since January 6.

Addressing a press conference at the Pikhana headquarters, the BGB chief said everyone should know that the BGB personnel would carry "lethal weapons" during their patrol in a number of districts to tackle blockaders.

"The BGB does not want to kill people. There is no such instruction on the Force. But any kind of attack on the force members or on the people will be resisted. It is the right of a BGB member to use his weapon in self defence," he said. "If blockaders carry bombs or petrol bombs, it can lead to the death of five people, and, if such a scene comes into the sight of any BGB member, it is his responsibility to resist them."

The BNP last night came down heavily on the BGB boss' comments. "We are very much concerned and strongly deplore the BGB director general's comments. Such an instruction is completely out of his jurisdiction and illegal," BNP standing committee said in a press release yesterday.

Eighty five platoons (30 personnel in each) of the BGB have been on a round-the-clock patrol to fend off troubles in 17 districts amid the blockade while 80 more platoons have been kept standby and will be deployed whenever needed, the BGB boss noted at the press conference.

Officials from 35 district adminis-

trations had requested the deployment of BGB. Therefore, the force would be there in the field as long as people felt a "sense of security", the BGB chief said.

The prime duties of the force are to protect border and help civil administration to maintain law and order. The BGB will also form a sniffer-dog squad of 20 dogs soon, he added.

Having been obstructed by police to come out of her Gulshan office to attend a rally, Khaleda Zia on January 5 announced a nonstop blockade till her party's demand was met.

Meanwhile, State Minister for Home Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said the government would do everything possible to resist any kind of violence in the name of BNP-Jamaat's blockade. He was talking to reporters after visiting the burn unit at the DMCH around 8:30pm yesterday.

Answering to a query about the BGB chief's statement on the use of weapons by the paramilitary force, he said Abdul Aziz must have spoken in line with the responsibility given to him.

Dispelling the fear that indiscriminate shooting at the sight of bomb carriers might claim lives of innocent people, the home boss said no such thing would happen.

Govt moves to bring

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Earlier, the foreign ministry a couple of times wrote to the British government to know about Tarique's status.

The ministry informed the UK government that Tarique was wanted by the court and asked the latter to send him back.

But there was no response from the UK government.

During the rule of the army-backed caretaker government led by Fakhrudin Ahmed, Tarique, elder son of late president Ziaur Rahman and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, was granted bail in several cases and allowed to travel to the UK in 2008 for treatment. He has been living there since then.

BNP leaders meet

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with the opposition over a fresh election, diplomats expressed concern over the violence and vandalism during the ongoing blockade and called upon the BNP to stop this.

The BNP delegation insisted that they are not involved in the violence, diplomatic sources and party insiders told The Daily Star.

Besides Moyeen Khan, the delegation included standing committee members Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahubur Rahman, Rafikul Islam Mia, and central leaders Air Commodore (ret'd) Shafiqur Rahman and Ruhul Quddus Talukder Dulu.

The mission chiefs of European Union, Spain, the Netherlands, Australia, France, Norway, Sweden and political consultant of Canada, among others, attended the two-and-a-half-hour meeting from 7:30pm.

Neither side formally briefed the media over the outcome of the meeting.

Earlier on Wednesday, the heads of missions of several countries and the EU held a meeting with Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali and strongly criticised the violence and "shrinking of democratic space in Bangladesh", urging all political parties to engage in dialogues.

At the meeting yesterday, the BNP team briefed diplomats about "the government's oppressions, including attacks and wholesale arrest of opposition leaders, and not allowing the party any political space, not even allow-

ing it to hold a press conference", the sources said.

The delegation pointed to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's confinement at her Gulshan residence, and the January 13 gun attack on her adviser Reaz Rahman, also a former state minister for foreign affairs.

It also mentioned the government's "measures" to control media and the judiciary, law enforcement agencies and other state organs, the sources added.

Amid the party's latest move in diplomatic arena, the countrywide blockade enters 11th day today.


BNP insiders said their high-command yesterday "informally" instructed leaders and activists across the country not to create obstacles to Bishwa Jtama-bound vehicles.

After the end of Jtama tomorrow, the opposition alliance is set to launch an "all out movement" to force the government to meet its demand.

Meanwhile, Reaz Rahman, now under treatment at United Hospital, is recovering from his wounds, according to the hospital sources.

Officer-in-Charge of Gulshan Police Station Rafikul Islam yesterday said they are yet to arrest anyone involved in the attack.

"We have sent two pieces of bullets-like objects for laboratory test. Besides, we are examining video footage of the attack to identify the criminals," he added.



এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড

৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা
ঢাকা-১২০৮।

সংক্ষিপ্ত স্থানীয় দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ইডিসিএল নিম্নোক্ত আইটেমগুলি প্রকৃত স্থানীয় প্রস্তুতকারী / সরবরাহকারীদের (সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যবসার সাথে জড়িত) নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করছে :-

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| ০১। | ইডিসিএল/ক্রয়/লোকাল/টেভার/২০১৫/১৬৫ তারিখঃ ১৪/০১/২০১৫ইং | PVC Film Width: 251 mm (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)। | ৩,০০০.০ কেজি | ২.৫% | টাকা ৭৫০.০০ (সাতশত পঞ্চাশ) মাত্র | ২৬/০১/২০১৫ইং বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা | ২৬/০১/২০১৫ইং বেলা ১২-১৫ ঘটিকা |
| ০২। | ইডিসিএল/ক্রয়/লোকাল/টেভার/২০১৫/১৬৬ তারিখঃ ১৪/০১/২০১৫ইং | Different kinds of printed Blister & Strip Box (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)। | ৩,০৫,০০০ পিস | ২.৫% | টাকা ১,০০০.০০ (এক হাজার) মাত্র | ২৬/০১/২০১৫ইং বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা | ২৬/০১/২০১৫ইং বেলা ১২-১৫ ঘটিকা |
| ০৩। | ইডিসিএল/ক্রয়/লোকাল/টেভার/২০১৫/১৬৭ তারিখঃ ১৪/০১/২০১৫ইং | Different kinds of printed Alu Blister Foil & Strip Foil (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)। | ১০,২৭৫.০ কেজি | ২.৫% | টাকা ১,৫০০.০০ (এক হাজার পাঁচশত) মাত্র | ২৬/০১/২০১৫ইং বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা | ২৬/০১/২০১৫ইং বেলা ১২-১৫ ঘটিকা |

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