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KNOW YOUR HISTORY

Two-day competition on Liberation War history ends in Chittagong

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COUNTRIES ON HIGH ALERT

Europe boosts security to thwart " sleeper cell " attacks

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TASKIN DREAMS BIG

Bangladesh's fastest bowler hopes to make a name for himself in the World Cup

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No way out?

Political confrontation intensifies as govt, 20-party rigid on their stances, both taking hardline

- No plan to withdraw nonstop blockade
- Non-cooperation movement 20-party's next plan
- Khaleda to stay at Gulshan office
- Govt to step up crackdown

RASHIDUL HASAN and PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

People's sufferings due to the ongoing political strife seem nowhere near the end as there is hardly any sign of the two major political parties reaching an agreement anytime soon. Already 23 lives have been lost and scores injured across the country since the beginning of the ongoing blockade.

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THE COLLISION COURSE

JANUARY 3

Khaleda's Gulshan office cordoned off



JANUARY 4

DMP bans rally in capital

JANUARY 5

10th national polls anniversary; confined, Khaleda calls indefinite blockade

JANUARY 16

UN rights body urges restraint; Rab DG, police IGP vow tough action against violence; arson attack victim dies

JANUARY 15

BNP leaders meet foreign diplomats; if attacked, BGB to use lethal arms: border force chief

JANUARY 14

Five burnt to death in a bomb attack on bus; EU, UK, US call for dialogue, end to violence

JANUARY 6

Blockade Day 1; buses burnt; cops attacked; innocent man killed; Fakhrul arrested



JANUARY 13

Khaleda's adviser Reaz Rahman shot; 20-party calls nationwide hartal; 14-party decides to form committees to "resist BNP-Jamaat men"

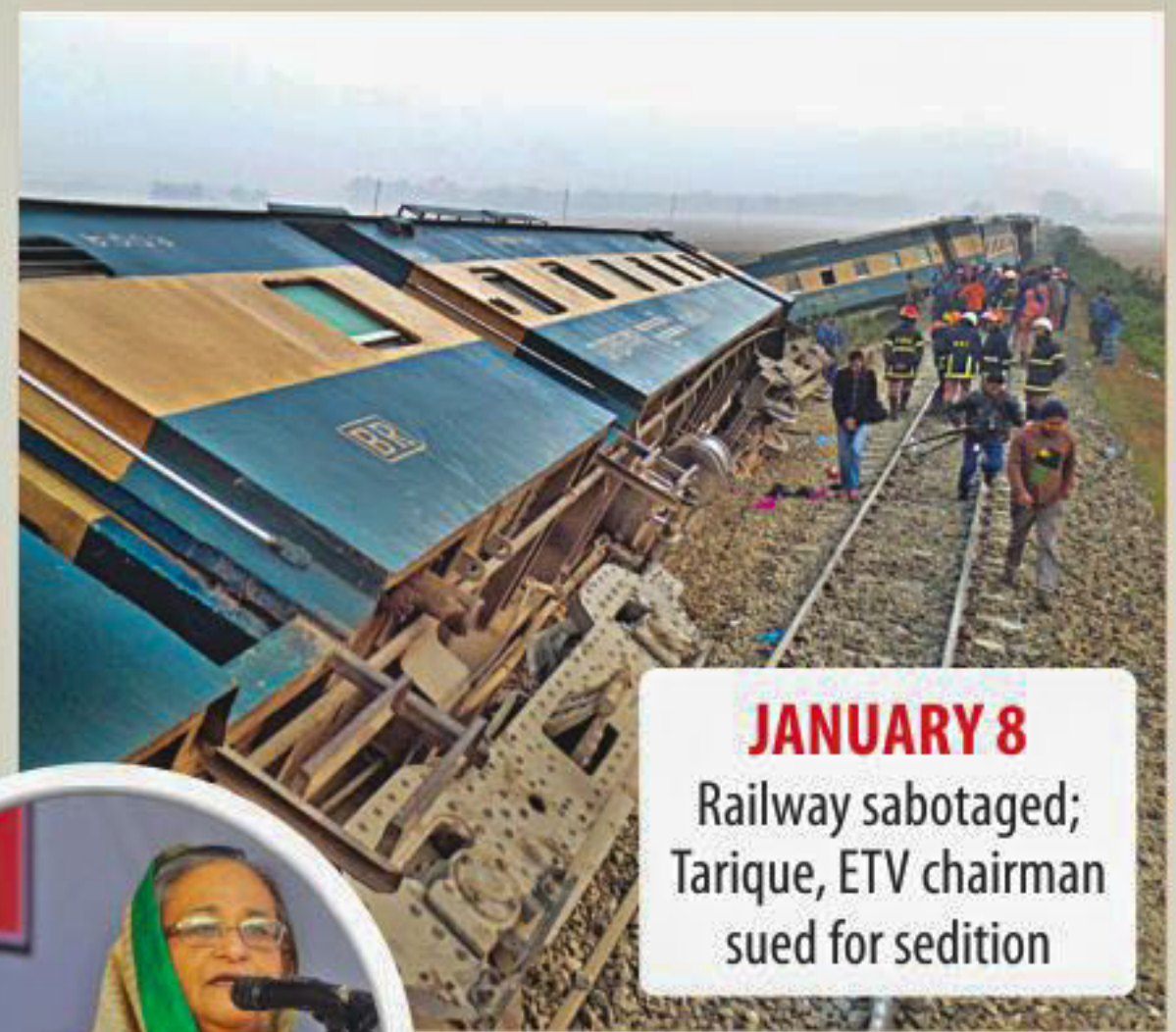
JANUARY 7

Two BNP men shot dead



JANUARY 12

Stop violence: PM at AL rally; DMP ban withdrawn; Khaleda blasts Hasina for comment that she is not confined



JANUARY 8

Railway sabotaged; Tarique, ETV chairman sued for sedition

JANUARY 9

Jubo League leader killed

JANUARY 10

31 vehicles, including that of BNP chief's adviser, torched

JANUARY 11

JCD calls hartal in 14 dists; violence claims two more lives

Bomb attack on police bus

13 cops injured; 5 burnt as bus torched; blockaders clash with cops in Bogra

STAR REPORT

At least 13 policemen and nine others were injured in two arson attacks in the capital last night. Six of them, including a cop, sustained burn injuries.

According to police, miscreants hurled a petrol bomb at a bus carrying around 30 policemen near Matsya Bhaban intersection around 8:15pm.

"The bus was returning to Rajarbagh Police Lines from Shahbagh. When it was crossing the bend in front of Ramna Chinese Restaurant, a petrol bomb flew in through a window behind the driver. The seats instantly caught fire. The driver panicked and went over the central reservation and fell on its side," Constable Bodiar Rahman, who received injuries from the crash, told The Daily Star at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

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Retailers hike diesel price as supply falls

Farmers in the north hit hard

SOHEL PARVEZ and MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

Consumers in many parts of the country are forced to pay more than the government-fixed price for diesel, as retailers have hiked its price taking advantage of supply disruptions due to the ongoing blockade.

End users, especially rice and vegetable growers, in at least 25 districts face diesel shortage, as the blockade continues to hamper supplies to retailers.

Districts in Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions as well as remote and border areas have been the worst hit since the BNP-led alliance's blockade began nearly two weeks ago.

In the northern region, Rajshahi, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Natore, Naogaon, Bogra and Lalmonirhat experience fuel shortage, as supplies from the regional distribution centre at Baghabari in Sirajganj are not reaching fuel stations in those districts.

Sylhet is also not getting adequate supplies because of disruption in train communication, as all supplies to the region are carried through the rail network.

"There is enough stock in government depots. But fuel can't be supplied to the retailers," said Mohammad Nazmul Hoque, president of

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The songsmith who inspired freedom fighters

Govinda Halder (1930-2015)

STAR REPORT

The man whose powerful lyrics kept up the freedom fighters' morale during our Liberation War is no more.

Govinda Halder, best known for penning songs like *Mora Ekti Phulke Bachabo Bole Juddho Kori*; *Ek Sagor Rokter Binimoye Banglar Swadhinata Anlo Jara* and *Purbo Digonte Surjo Uthechhe*, breathed his last at a clinic in Kolkata yesterday.

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Lying on a gurney with blisters all over, bus passengers Abu Taher gets bandaged by a nurse at the Burn Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. Alleged pickets had hurled two petrol bombs at the bus he was travelling on near Dhaka Udyan in Mohammadpur. Alleged blockade supporters hurled a crude bomb at this police bus, top, causing the driver to lose control and go over the central reservation near Matshya Bhaban in the capital yesterday. Two of the injured policemen, bottom, at DMCH.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



Arsonists to face stern actions

PM warns, says hands of arsonists should be burnt to make them feel pain

UNB, Dhaka

Questioning the logic behind the BNP-Jamaat alliance's ongoing blockade, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday issued a fresh warning that stern actions will be taken against those engaged in killing people and torching vehicles across the country.

"We won't tolerate any militant and terrorist acts ... I've not yet found any issue behind their (BNP-Jamaat's) ongoing agitation programmes," she said.

The PM said this while formally inaugurating the construction work on a multi-storey building of the National Security Intelligence in the city's Segun Bagicha through unveiling the plaque of its foundation stone.

Referring to the death of an unborn baby as its mother was critically injured in a petrol bomb attack, Hasina said she got deeply hurt after she came to know about this tragic incident.

"What was the fault of that mother and her unborn baby? ... The hands of the culprits who prepare the petrol bombs

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

They're talking like politicians

20-party slates comments of IGP, Rab chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP-led 20-party alliance yesterday criticised the chiefs of police, Rab and BGB for their "audacious" comments and said they would have been brought to book if a government by the people were in place.

While exchanging views at Mithapukur in Rangpur on Friday, Inspector General of Police AKM Shahidul Haque came down heavily on BNP chief Khaleda Zia for "making the mistake" of not taking part in the

January 5, 2014 election.

He lambasted the alliance saying it had seized schools, colleges and madrasas and had burnt those to stop the national election.

"You [BNP-led alliance] had killed people, presiding officers and had prevented people from voting. Why? You have made the mistake. Why will people pay? What can people expect from the chief of a political party [BNP] if she herself indulges in illegal activities," the police boss said.

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Justice SK Sinha takes over as CJ

Reconstitutes 2 SC benches

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On the first day of his taking office as the chief justice, Surendra Kumar Sinha, known as SK Sinha, yesterday reconstituted two benches of the Supreme Court's Appellate Division.

President Abdul Hamid administered him the oath of office as the 21st chief justice at the Darbar hall of the Bangabhaban in the morning. Cabinet Secretary M Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan conducted the swearing-in.

The chief justice will head the first bench comprising Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana, Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Hasan Foez Siddique as its members.

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ICC opens Palestine war crimes probe

US blasts move to probe Israel as 'tragic irony'

AFP, Washington

The International Criminal Court's prosecutor on Friday opened a preliminary probe into possible war crimes committed against Palestinians, including during last year's Gaza war.

The United States joined Israel in condemning the ICC's decision, blasting it as a "tragic irony".

ICC prosecutor Fatou Bensouda said her office would conduct an "analysis in full independence and impartiality" into

alleged war crimes by Israel, including those committed during last year's Gaza offensive.

Her decision comes after Palestine formally joined the ICC earlier this month, allowing it to lodge war crimes and crimes against humanity complaints against Israel as of April.

Nearly 2,200 Palestinians and 73 Israelis were killed during last summer's war in Gaza.

The US criticized the decision late Friday, saying it opposed actions against Israel at the ICC as "counterproductive to the cause of peace".

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