

SCAM FALLOUT

BASIC Bank reels from aftershock with default loans rising

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UKRAINE 'QUIETER'

Though not over, fighting in the east subsides as ceasefire begins

PAGE 15

AMITABH'S DEBUT

This time Big B turns cricket commentator

PAGE 11



HC slams violent hartal, blockade

Asks govt to take necessary steps, ensure smooth educational activities; issues rule on govt, 20-party to reply in 4 weeks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Questioning the legality of deadly hartal and blockade, the High Court yesterday ordered the government to immediately take steps to prevent violence, terrorism and other subversive acts in the name of such political programmes.

The court directed the relevant authorities to take measures to keep all the educational institutions across the country open during shutdowns and to

"Anyone can call political programmes like hartal or blockade, but no one can compel anyone to observe those."

OBSERVES THE HC

ensure that students can take the SSC exams without any disturbance.

During hearing of two writ petitions, the HC also asked the government to take "serious actions" against those trying to upset the test schedule.

The written order is expected in a few days.

The directives come amid continued hartal and blockade violence that has killed at least 70

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Arson attack on train; 5 vehicles torched

SSC examinee hurt as cops open fire to disperse hartal pickets

STAR REPORT

Sporadic violence marked the first day of the BNP-led alliance's 72-hour fresh shutdown yesterday as hartal pickets set afire two coaches of a train in Narayanganj, torched buses and exploded crude bombs in the

capital and elsewhere.

Two compartments of a local train were set alight at Narayanganj central railway station around 11:00pm.

No one was injured as all passengers had already got down from the train, Manjur

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EXIT TENDULKAR, ENTER KOHLI: Looking up to the heavens after a personal feat was reserved by Sachin Tendulkar for a long time, especially when it came to India's World Cup clash against Pakistan. On Sunday at the Adelaide Oval in Australia, it was India's new sensation Virat Kohli who stepped into the big shoes of the retired 'Little Master' with a methodical 107.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Six in six for India

BISHWAJIT ROY From Adelaide

The status quo remained in the India-Pakistan World Cup rivalry after Sunday's latest bout at the Adelaide Oval. The scores now read India 6, Pakistan 0.

And after yet another demoralising defeat -- this time by a margin of 76 runs -- one might wonder if this is in fact Pakistan's World Cup destiny against India, who launched their title-defence with flying colours in the game's flagship event.

In front of 41,587 spectators, mostly rooting for the men in blue, India produced yet another dominating display in a match dubbed by many as the 'Adelaide final'.

When the two teams last met at Mohali four years ago in a World Cup

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semifinal, it was Sachin Tendulkar who tormented Pakistan. Exit Sachin, enter Virat Kohli. And the impact is the same. The new heartthrob of Indian cricket struck a majestic 107 to irrevocably tip the balance in favour of India.

Pakistan may take heart from the fact that when they lost their World Cup game

down under against India 23 years ago, they went all the way to the title.

But the immediate concern for Pakistan is that they are the only ones to blame for failing to seize an opportunity to end a long-standing jinx, when they dropped centurion and player-of-the-match Kohli twice in the match. Kohli eventually helped India become the fourth team in the Cup to score 300 or more runs after South Africa had successfully defended 339 against

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Dairy farmers dump their produce on a road at Vangura in Pabna yesterday protesting the ongoing blockade and hartals. They have been unable to sell milk at the collection centres of dairy companies who are having trouble shipping it to Dhaka. Story on page 2.

PHOTO: STAR

Withdraw hill restrictions

CHT Int'l Commission asks govt, terms Home directives contradictory to peace treaty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

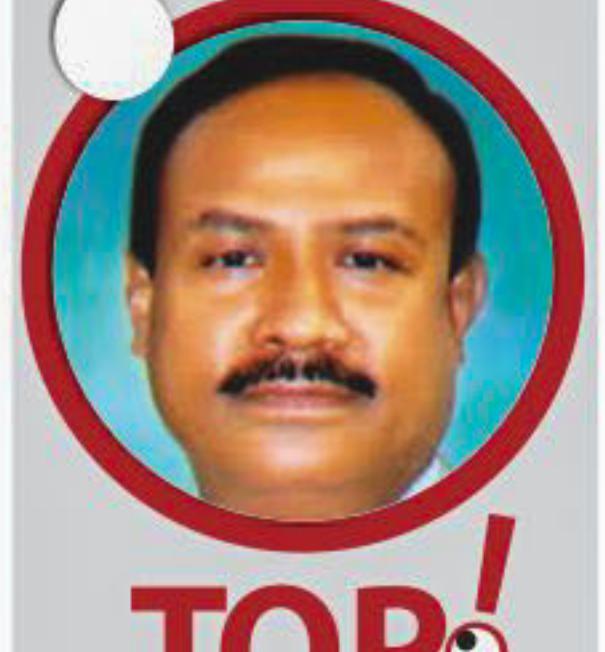
The Chittagong Hill Tracts International Commission has expressed grave concern over the home ministry order banning any unsupervised meeting or talking with the adivasis and restricting foreigners' access to the hill districts.

Terming it unconstitutional, discriminatory and contradictory to the CHT Peace Accord, the commission demanded an immediate cancellation of the ministry order.

Based on the decisions taken at a home ministry meeting on January 7, the fourth and fifth directives of the 11-point order state if anyone with a foreign passport wants to visit Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban, s/he will have to submit an application to the home ministry at least a month before the intended visit.

Besides, any interaction between the adivasis and local or foreign individual or organisation has to be supervised by

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TOP QUOTE

"If you want to kill, kill us -- the ones who are in the administration or in the government politically. But please don't kill the innocents."

STATE MINISTER FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
MUJIBUL HAQUE CHUNNU

Two BNP, Shibir men killed in 'cop, BGB firing'

STAR REPORT

A BNP leader was killed in a "shootout" with police in Magura yesterday, while an Islami Chhatra Shibir man died from the bullet wounds he had suffered during a joint force raid in Dinajpur.

Of the dead, Moshiur Rahman, 40, was organising secretary of Chhohoria ward BNP in Magura. The other one, Motiar Rahman, was president of Shibir's Nasraptur union unit in Dinajpur.

Moshiur's son Kazi Nayon Hossain told The Daily Star last night that locals had seen police chase his father and six other people who were chatting at a tea stall in Chhohoria Bazar.

"At one point, they [locals] heard gunshots and after some time we learned my father was shot," he said over mobile phone from Magura Hospital.

Another bullet-hit, Rafiqul Patwari, was picked up by police, locals claimed. Law enforcers, however, refuted the claim.

Police said a patrol team led by Biplob Kumar Nath, officer-in-charge of Shalikha Police Station, came under attack at Chhohoria village around 6:45pm.

As the law enforcers were crossing the Hazambari



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