

# THE DAILY Star ON FRIDAY



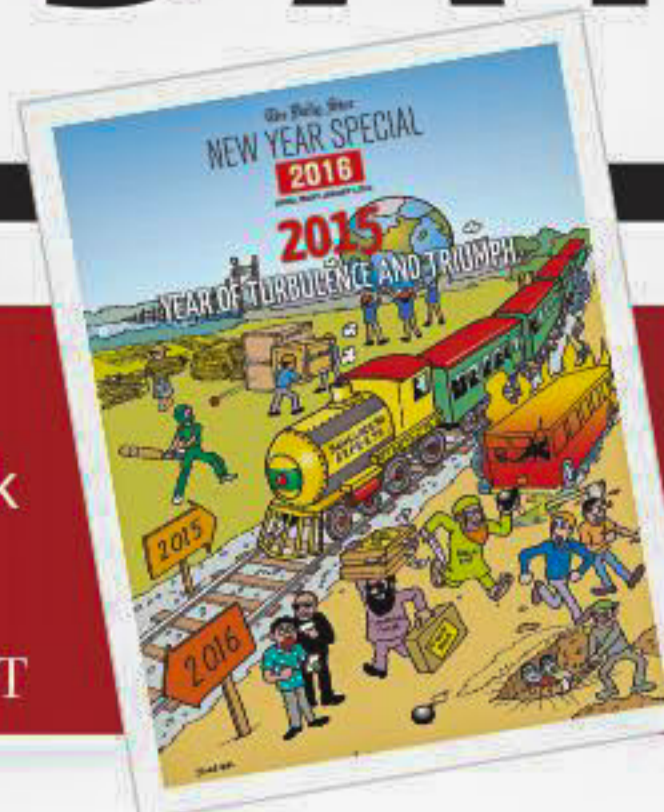
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## 'OUT OF THEIR MINDS'

Obama says 'a pretty sizeable percentage' of world leaders are so

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## NEW YEAR SPECIAL

As we usher in 2016, the Star looks back at the triumph & turbulence of 2015

SEE SUPPLEMENT

BLOGGER RAJIB MURDER

# 2 get death; 6 others jailed

Ansarullah Bangla Team chief among the convicts in the first verdict in blogger murder

CHATANYA CHANDRA HALDER and TUHIN SHUBRA ADHIKARY

A Dhaka court yesterday handed down death penalty to two people and different jail terms to six others, including the chief of banned Islamist outfit Ansarullah Bangla Team, for the killing of blogger Ahmed Rajib Haider almost three years ago.

Rajib was an activist of Shahbagh movement and used to write against Jamaat-Shibir and war criminals on different blogs under the pseudo name of Thaba Baba.



He was hacked to death near his Mirpur house in the capital on February 15, 2013. The 32-year-old architect was the first secular blogger to have been killed in Bangladesh.

“Undoubtedly, it was a planned and brutal murder,” said Sayeed Ahmed, the judge of Dhaka Speedy Trial Tribunal-3, as he delivered the first ever verdict over blogger killings that has taken a serious turn lately.

“I didn't find any ground to acquit any of

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It's not enough

Verdict disappoints father of Rajib

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It was a long battle of a father.

His son was brutally killed almost three years ago. To get justice for the murder, he had to endure threats and tremendous pressure from different quarters.

On many occasions, Nazim Uddin had to go to the court secretly, taking different routes and sometimes with others. But nothing could deter him from seeking justice.

Yesterday, his hopes were dashed when the



Nazim Uddin

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# GOODBYE, WELCOME

SYED ASHFAQUL HAQUE

As we say goodbye to 2015 and ring in 2016, the last thing we want to see this year is poisonous politics taking lives and wrecking welfare of people.

The year 2015 passed with all its happenings -- the good, the bad and the ugly. But the beginning could not have been any uglier. Bangladesh experienced the grisliest and the longest ever spell of horror starting five days into the New Year.

After hibernating for a year over literally an Awami League-ally election, the BNP-led coalition started an extremely destructive out-governance agitation since January 6: Blockade every day and hartal on weekdays.

There was hardly a single day till April 4 when innocent people were not burnt to death or injured in arson attacks on public or private transport. At least 95 people were killed and close

to 1,500 maimed for life. Ironically, they were mostly ordinary citizens, who lived from hand to mouth and had no link with politics whatsoever.

And the economic loss in 91 days' shutdown is estimated at around Tk 3,00,000 crore, with which Bangladesh could have built at least seven Padma bridges.

The AL government then failed to protect people's life and the country's economy but gradually gained success in controlling the situation through a short-cut formula: around 45 alleged arsonists were killed in "shootouts" with law enforcers.

We neither want death in mindless politics nor in extra-judicial measures. We want an end to this cancerous culture right away. And politicians must initiate a reform in politics, which should work only for people's welfare.

The most shocking event that

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## GREETINGS

The Daily Star wishes its valued readers, patrons, well-wishers and advertisers

A HAPPY NEW YEAR 2016

# Kids rejoice at results

Girls fare better than boys as pass rates rise to 98pc in primary terminal, 92pc in Junior School Certificate exams of 2015



IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE: Students of Rajuk Uttara Model College rejoice at their results of Junior School Certificate exams yesterday. Over 92 percent students of class eight came out successful in last year's exams.

## Primary terminal exams

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After a downslide in 2014, class V students fared better in Primary Terminal Examination (PTE) 2015, registering a slight rise in both pass rates and number of GPA-5 scorers.

The success rate in PTE 2015 stood at 98.52 percent, up by 0.6 percentage points from 2014.

The number of students securing highest grade points, GPA-5 (Grade Point Average), rose to 2,75,980 from 2,24,411 in 2014, according to the results published yesterday.

Officials and teachers attributed combined effort of all to the success. They said better care by teachers and guardians, and awareness of students about rising competitiveness contributed to the achievement.

According to the statistics provided by the ministry of primary and mass education, students did well in all six subjects, especially in English and mathematics, which pushed the results up.

The pass rate in English was 99.18 percent while the rate in mathematics was 99.36 percent.

The students also performed outstandingly well in religious and moral education with a success rate of 99.91 percent.

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## Junior school exams

WASIM BIN HABIB

Class-VIII students have done better than ever in Junior School Certificate (JSC) examination, taking the success rate to a new height.

With more students achieving the highest grade, the pass rate hit a record high of 92.31 percent, 2.46 percentage points higher than that of 2014.

A total of 1,87,502 students under eight general education boards across the country secured GPA-5 in the test for 2015, up by 50,557 in 2014, according to the results published yesterday.

Students took the test that started on November 1.

They have consistently been doing well in the exam since its introduction in 2010, when the pass rate was 71.34 percent. A steady uptrend has been marked in the results over the last six years.

This time, girls outshone boys in terms of pass rate and GPA-5 (Grade Point Average) achievers.

Officials and teachers attributed the success to students' better performance in maths.

In 2014, students could not perform well in maths as the government introduced the creative system in the

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## MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS 2015

### AL jubilant over polls victory

Leaders see BNP joining polls as positive sign

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The ruling Awami League is really happy with the just concluded municipality polls.

According to AL leaders, the BNP's participation in the polls and its unwillingness to go for any street agitation programmes to protest the polls results was the cherry on top of their "landslide victory".

AL chief Sheikh Hasina last night met her party leaders at the Gono Bhaban and congratulated them on the victory. Sweetmeats were distributed there.

Sources at the meeting quoted her as saying that the BNP

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### BNP sees good signs despite polls defeat

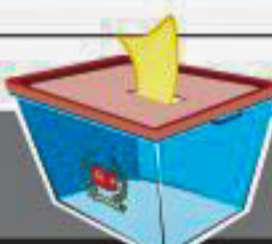
RASHIDUL HASAN

The BNP gained huge political mileage contesting the municipality polls as the polls have "exposed that this government and the Election Commission cannot hold free and fair elections", sources in the BNP said quoting party chief Khaleda Zia.

The party decided to go for softer agitation programmes rather than hartals which often usher in violence.

"Elections pave the way for organising the party as well as create opportunity for many of our leaders and activists, who remained inactive or went into hiding since early this

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The Address hotel burning after a huge fire ripped through the luxury hotel near the world's tallest tower in Dubai last night.

## Fire engulfs Dubai hotel

16 injured

BBC ONLINE

A huge fire engulfed a high-rise hotel in central Dubai ahead of a New Year's Eve fireworks display last night.

Burning debris could be seen falling from the 300m-tall (1,000ft) building as firefighters tackled the blaze.

Officials later said 16 people were injured and the fire was under control. There is no word on the cause.

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## DHAKA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR 2016

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