



## WORLD THROUGH LENSES

World Press Photo contest at Drik Gallery draws most striking images from across the globe

PAGE 9

## PEACE WITH PAKISTAN?

Pathankot was a signal that Pak army does not want peace with India, Shashi Tharoor writes

PAGE 6

## ZIDANE IN ACTION

He promises to put his heart and soul into managing Real Madrid as its new coach

PAGE 15

PART-1

For 91 days from January 5 to April 5 last year, there was hardly a single day when innocent people were not burnt to death or injured in arson attacks on public transports. Some lost their loved ones, others their lone bread earners during the longest spell of horror allegedly carried out by the BNP-led coalition, protesting the January 5, 2014, elections. At least 95 people were killed and about 1,500 injured. Most of them were ordinary citizens, living from hand to mouth. Another 45 got killed in "shootouts" with law enforcement agencies. About half of them were allegedly involved in arson attacks.

The economic loss from the blockade and shutdown was enormous.

One year on, the overall picture has changed but the ordeals of those injured and the families of those killed have not. The Daily Star visited over a dozen such families.

This newspaper will tell their stories for six days, starting today.

# A mother's light has gone out

Thanks to violent politics, eyes of blind Selina remain hardly dry

WASIM BIN HABIB and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

"O bazan (son), where have you gone, bazan? ... Won't you ever come to see me anymore?"

The feeble body of visually impaired Selina Begum trembled as she bent over her son's grave. Her desperate wails pierced the silence that hung over the large field where the "light of her life" lies buried.

"What a deep sleep you've fallen into that you don't wake up? Tell me, bazan?" she managed to say between her unintelligible wailing. Her questions floated in the air, unanswered.

Sohag Biswas, 19, was killed in a petrol bomb attack last year during the BNP-led coalition's indefinite blockade, which took a heavy toll on people's lives as well as the economy.

Sohag meant everything to the mother, aged about 37, who lost her eye sights at the age of 12 following a mistreatment.

That was only the beginning of her sufferings. At 15, she was married off to a man who remained ill and

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



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PHOTO: RASHED SHUJON

Tears roll down the cheeks of visually impaired Selina Begum at her home in Faridpur. She lost her son Sohag, 19, who was a truck helper, in an arson attack during last year's political turmoil.

## U-19 World Cup on despite Aussie pullout

SPORTS REPORTER

Cricket Australia (CA) have decided not to send its under-19 team to Bangladesh to take part in the Under-19 World Cup, which is due to begin in Chittagong on January 27, on security grounds.

CA's chief executive officer James Sutherland said that the decision was taken after advice from the government stated that the threat to Australian interests in Bangladesh was as high as when the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

"It's unfortunate. The young Australian team has missed a chance of playing at the world stage."

**TOP QUOTE**

STUART LAW  
BANGLADESH UNDER-19S TECHNICAL ADVISOR AFTER AUSTRALIA'S DECISION TO PULL OUT OF THE WORLD CUP

**"Let's find a solution through talks and restore democracy. We don't have any grievances, gripes and grudges against anybody ... we have suffered a lot, but have**

**BNP CHAIRPERSON KHALEDA ZIA**

## Grievances now forgotten

Says Khaleda; asks govt to hold dialogue, elections immediately

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday urged the government to initiate talks with all political parties to find a solution to the "ongoing political crisis and restore democracy" in the country.

She also renewed her party's demand for holding a free, fair and inclusive national election immediately, but didn't announce any agitation programme to press for it.

"Let's find a solution through talks and restore democracy. We don't have any grievances, gripes and grudges against anybody



... we have suffered a lot, but have forgotten it. You [the government] need not be afraid. Be good, be gentle ... and admit that whatever you've done is a mistake," Khaleda said at a huge rally in front of her party's Nayapaltan central office in the capital.

The BNP organised the rally to observe the day as "Democracy Killing Day", denouncing the 10th parliamentary polls held on January 5 in 2014.

Leaders and activists of the party and its front organisations started thronging the venue several hours before the rally began

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## For democracy, no need to kill people

Says Ashraf; urges BNP to return to peaceful politics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bitterly criticising the BNP for its violent agitation last year, the ruling Awami League has called on its political foe to return to peaceful politics.

"Let's move towards peaceful politics," AL Spokesperson Syed Ashraful Islam urged the BNP at a rally on Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday to mark the second anniversary of the January 5 national polls.

At another rally on Sheikh Russell Square on the day that the AL observes as "Victory Day for Democracy", Suranjit Sengupta

asked the BNP to sever ties with Jamaat-e-Islami and shun violence in the name of politics.

At the Bangabandhu Avenue rally, Syed Ashraf came down hard on BNP chief Khaleda Zia for enforcing three month-long shutdowns and blockade last year.

"Why Khaleda Zia waged a movement that took away lives of 65 people, injured over 1,500, torched 700 vehicles, inflicted a loss of Tk 7,015 crore to the economy, and disrupted public examinations? ... For democracy?"

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

**"Let's move towards peaceful politics as we believe in democracy. There will be an election in the country."**

**AL GENERAL SECRETARY SYED ASHRAFUL ISLAM**

## Pakistan asks Bangladesh to recall diplomat

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Pakistan has asked Bangladesh to withdraw its senior diplomat Moushumi Rahman from the country in 48 hours, without citing any reason.

The move appears to be a counteraction from Islamabad following the withdrawal of its diplomat Farina Arshad from Dhaka on December 23 last year after she was accused of terror financing.

Yesterday, the Pakistan foreign ministry summoned Bangladesh High Commissioner to Pakistan Suhrah Hossain in the afternoon and conveyed the message, a highly placed diplomatic source told The Daily Star.

Moushumi is the counsellor (political) and head of Chancery at the Bangladesh mission in Islamabad.

Dhaka, however, will not bring her back and instead will send her to its diplomatic mission in another country.

A highly placed government source told this correspondent last night that Dhaka took the Islamabad action "very seriously" as it had not cited any allegation against Moushumi.

Bangladesh last year asked Pakistan to take back two of its diplomats stationed in Dhaka for their direct involvement in terror financing and circulating fake Indian currency.

A day after Farina flew back home, the Pak foreign ministry twice summoned the Bangladesh envoy in Islamabad to lodge protest against the recent "treatment meted out to its diplomat" in Dhaka.

Farina, who was the second secretary (political) at the Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka, had close



SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

## DEATH FOR WAR CRIMES Verdict today on Nizami's appeal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All eyes are set on the Supreme Court which delivers today the verdict on the appeal filed by war criminal Motiur Rahman Nizami challenging his death penalty.

A four-member SC bench headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha is scheduled to sit at 9:00am and pronounce the judgement at the beginning of today's court proceedings.

This is the sixth time the Appellate Division is going to deliver a verdict on an appeal against a war crimes tribunal's judgement.

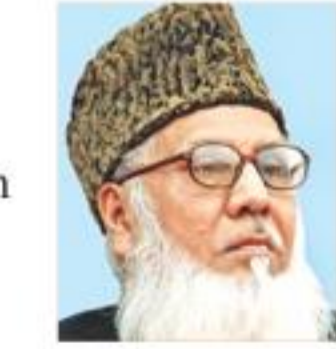
The three other judges of the bench are Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana, Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Hasan Foez Siddique.

Earlier on December 8 last year, a four-member bench of the Appellate

Division had upheld the

death sentence against

Nizami, who was



SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## Riyadh-Tehran crisis widens

Kuwait recalls envoy as Iran lashes out at Saudi Arabia; UNSC urges all to reduce tensions in the region

AFP, Riyadh

The diplomatic crisis surrounding Saudi Arabia and Iran widened yesterday as Kuwait recalled its ambassador to Tehran in the face of growing international concern.

Joining Riyadh and its Sunni Arab allies in taking diplomatic action, Kuwait said it was withdrawing its envoy over a weekend attack on the Saudi embassy in Tehran.

Kuwait's move came after the UN Security Council strongly condemned the attack, carried out by protesters angry over Saudi Arabia's execution of a prominent Shia cleric.

Tensions between Saudi Arabia, the main Sunni power, and Shia-dominated Iran have erupted this week into a full-blown diplomatic crisis, sparking widespread worries of regional instability.

Iran lashed out again at Saudi Arabia for the execution yesterday, with President Hassan Rouhani accusing Riyadh of seeking to "cover its crime" by severing ties.

"One does not respond to criticism by cutting off heads," Rouhani said, referring to the usual Saudi practice of carrying out executions with beheading by the sword.

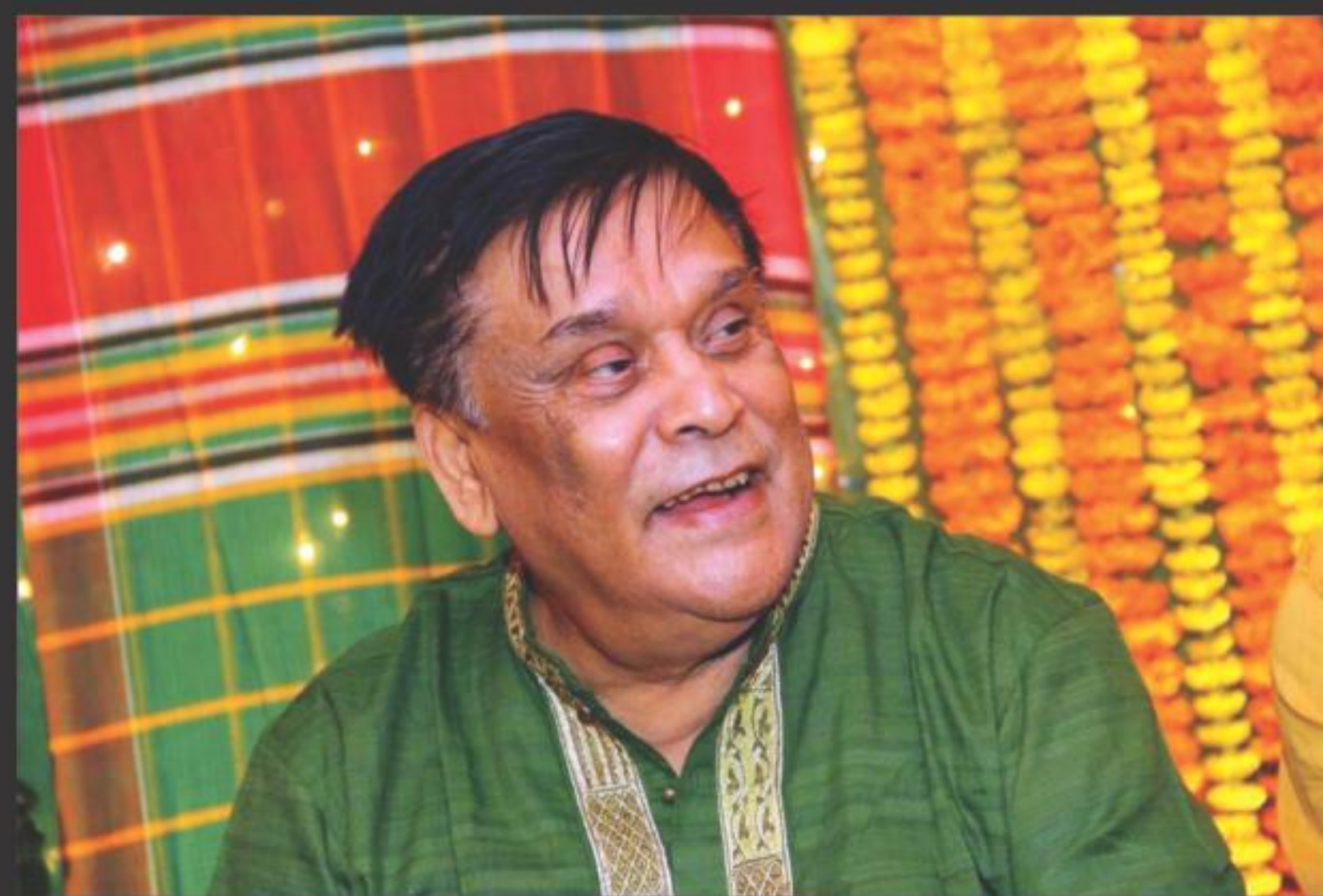
Washington and other Western powers have called for calm amid fears the dispute could raise sectarian tensions across the Middle East and derail efforts to resolve conflicts from Syria to Yemen.

The Security Council joined those calls late on Monday, issuing a statement urging all sides to "take steps to reduce tensions in the region".

The statement by the 15-member council condemned "in the strongest

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## WHEN MEMORIES BECOME TREASURES



**ALHAJ ZAFAR AHMED CHOWDHURY**

2 June 1948–6 January 2015

Devoted father. Loving husband. An inspiration.

Founder, Sponsor and former Chairman, UCBL | Founder and former President, ACCL Club | Sponsor and former Adviser, Janata Insurance | Former President, BAB | Founder and Chairman, Maxim Group of Industries Ltd.

A year ago you left us. Not a moment goes by when we do not feel your absence. But your spirit will always guide us, your memories will live on, as we miss you every single day.

We ask all those whose lives he touched to join us in remembrance and prayer.