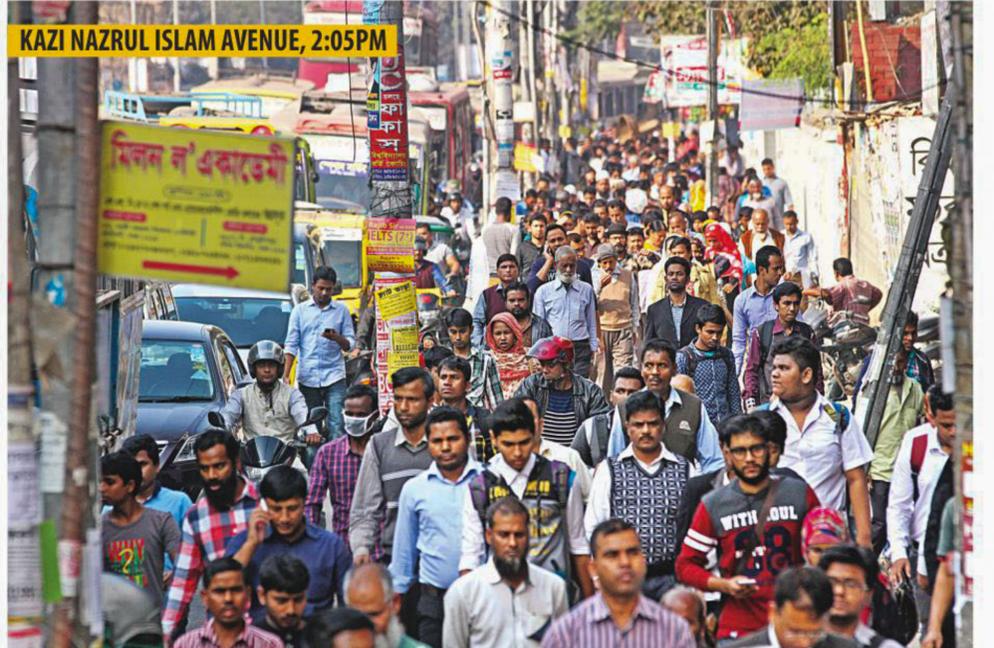




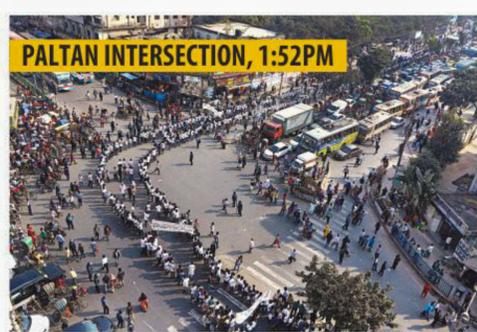
SHAHBAGH, 2:30PM



KAZI NAZRUL ISLAM AVENUE, 2:05PM



NEAR SCIENCE LAB, 2:15PM



PALTAN INTERSECTION, 1:52PM



FARMGATE, 2:20PM



PALTAN, 1:20PM



FARMGATE, 2:14PM



NEAR SCIENCE LAB, 2:28PM

TOP ROW FROM LEFT ... Processions of Bangladesh Chhatra League men come together at Shahbagh intersection. People, many of whom had ditched their transports, walk on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. MIDDLE ROW FROM LEFT ... Standstill traffic on a street in Science Lab area. A Chhatra League procession blocks the Paltan intersection. City dwellers and commuters wait for buses at Farmgate. A rickshaw puller falls asleep in his vehicle stuck in a jam. BOTTOM ROW FROM LEFT ... A woman with a tired child waits for a bus at Farmgate. A patient inside an ambulance stuck near Science Lab.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ, PALASH KHAN, PRABIR DAS

Quader asks BCL men to stay off controversy

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday advised leaders and activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League to steer clear of controversy. Obaidul, a former BCL president, said, "You have to stay above controversy to keep Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina above controversy. We want Chhatra League to be free from infiltrators and parasites that are key impediments to BCL's progress." The AL general secretary was addressing the inaugural ceremony of pro-AL student body BCL's 69th founding anniversary in front of Aparajeyo Bangla on Dhaka University campus. Speaking before a huge turnout of BCL activists, he urged them to put emphasis on quality, rather than on

quantity. Obaidul asked BCL leaders to form all committees with genuine students. "Don't include parasites and controversial candidates in the committees. The party and the government are being defamed by their activities." Warning against infighting, he asked BCL leaders and activists to earn respect of general students by promoting merit, competency and good character within the organisation. Obaidul also urged education minister to create a democratic atmosphere by facilitating student union elections at all colleges and universities including the DU. Criticizing recent closure of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology and Comilla Medical College due to BCL infighting, he said, "It's an overall failure on part of the

BCL fest causes gridlocks in city

FROM PAGE 1 Police in some cases halted traffic to make way for the processions, witnesses said. Major thoroughfares -- Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Mirpur Road, and Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Road -- were clogged with vehicles for several hours, causing spillover into adjacent streets. "The situation was horrible. Unable to bear it anymore, I walked to work," said distraught Ahmed Shuvo while walking down Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue towards Farmgate around 1:30pm. He said he had started from his Mohakhali home around 1:30pm to go to Shahbagh. He got on a bus only to get stuck near the Prime Minister's Office. "I waited for around 40 minutes inside the bus and then got off along with other passengers," he said. "We do not oppose political gatherings but we don't want programmes that make people suffer." A businessman from Uttara said he had to get off his car near the Prime Minister's Office and walk nearly a kilometre to reach work in Farmgate. "My driver reached Farmgate two

and half hours after I reached there," he said. They had started from Uttara around 10:30am. Those opting to walk found it difficult to get through Shahbagh intersection as buses and trucks, which had taken the BCL activists there, were randomly parked on the streets. "I started for Panthapath from Jatiya Press Club on foot but I had to take a detour from my easiest route via Shahbagh as there was literally no space to walk there," said Dil Afrose Jahan. Those on public transports remained stuck in Shahbagh, Farmgate, Mohakhali, Tejgaon, Paltan, Gulistan, Motijheel, Moghbazar, and Malibagh areas. Vehicular movement in these areas was almost stopped until afternoon. It took a lawyer at Dhaka judge court more than three hours to reach Farmgate. The journey from the court, in old part of the city, usually takes about an hour. "Whatever you do, do it at a certain place. I request all political parties not to choke city life," the lawyer said.

The people who suffered the most were patients going to hospitals. Jasim Uddin, a farmer from Kishoreganj, was admitted to National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases with severe breathing difficulties on Tuesday. The doctors there referred him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). His brother-in-law Mizan Miah hired a CNG-run three-wheeler to take him to DMCH but they were stuck at Farmgate for an hour. "Despite taking some detours, it took us two hours to reach the hospital. He [Jasim] was restless and had asked the driver to turn off the engine several times as it was noisy. I was worried," said Mizan. Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury could not attend a press conference of Association of Buet Alumni at Dhaka Reporter's Unity. Stuck in jam, he delivered his speech over phone. "After finishing a meeting in Mirpur, I started for the DRU. But I could not reach Bangla Motor even in two hours due to the huge traffic jam," he said in his speech. Masudur Rahman, a businessman, posted on his Facebook page, "Would it be a great loss if the day was

announced a public holiday? It took more than one and half hours to get to Bangla Motor from Mohammadpur on a motorcycle ... when will I reach Motijheel?" The traffic mess also had an impact on the earnings of people of low income group. Jamal Mia, a rickshaw puller, said he usually earns Tk 500 to Tk 600 by lunch. "But until now, I have earned only Tk 200 as I got stuck in jams at different places, including Bangabazar and Chankharpool," he said around 2:30pm. Manika Debnath, a university student, sarcastically said, "All the pains of the bodies will end as all are walking. It is good [for health]!" A journalist said he started for work in Farmgate on a CNG-run three-wheeler from his Bashundhara home around noon. "It took less than five minutes to reach the Kuril flyover. Then I faced the jams. I was stuck inside the vehicle for around an hour," he said. He got off the vehicle, walked to Mohakhali, and got on a rickshaw and used the alleyways to reach Farmgate. He reached work at 3:15pm.

HASINA'S VISIT TO INDIA New date to be finalised soon

Says Indian state minister for external affairs OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi Dhaka and New Delhi are hopeful of negotiating new dates for Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India, India's Minister of State for External Affairs MJ Akbar said yesterday. Replying to a question about the possibility of Hasina's visit to India, Akbar told a press conference in Delhi that when he had met Hasina in Dhaka in December last year, she had spoken "of certain scheduling problems." "She [Hasina] found that between the Victory Day [December 16] and the fog in Delhi, the actual time would be very squeezed and she would not be able to do the things she wanted to do in Delhi and this included her dialogue [with Indian leadership] and a visit to Ajmer Sharif," he said. However, "we hope new dates for

Killers won't be spared

FROM PAGE 1 through videoconferencing from the Gono Bhaban. People from Gaibandha, Panchagarh, Dinajpur and Lalmonirhat joined the programme, reports UNB. The programme was arranged as part of the government's nationwide campaign against terrorism and militancy. The PM said Liton had been vocal against Jamaat-Shibir and had put up resistance against them. The lawmaker had provided security to the people of his neighbourhood, she added. She said Jamaat-Shibir men and criminals had carried out mayhem and vandalism over the January 5, 2014 national polls. They had torched hundreds of houses and offices, beaten policemen to death, vandalised and torched the house of a female vice-chairman. "But Liton at that time stood against those crimes." Hasina also called upon all to stay alert so that terrorism and militancy can never take root in Bangladesh. "Everybody will have to be vocal against terrorism and militancy as

such activities can never bring peace. Islam is a religion of solidarity and peace, and there is no place for terrorism and militancy in Islam." She sought cooperation from people, public representatives and the administration so that the ongoing development projects can be completed smoothly. Blasting the former BNP-Jamaat government for closing community clinics, the premier said no one would be able to shut those in future. About the drive to attain Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the PM said her government was making special efforts so that development can be ensured from the grassroots for a sustainable progress. The PM enquired about the progress of the cases filed in connection with the killings of four policemen during the BNP-Jamaat's agitation in 2013. She alleged that BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia had tried to oust the current government in 2015 as she announced that she would not return home without unseating the

government. Hasina elaborated various development programmes being implemented by her government across the Rangpur division. She said Monga has already been stamped out from the country's northern region. Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid, Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu, Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan and lawmakers of Rangpur division were present at the Gono Bhaban. Meanwhile, speaking at a joint meeting of the Awami League Central Working Committee and its Advisory Council at her official residence in the afternoon, the PM reiterated that Liton's killers must be hunted down. She alleged that Khaleda like her husband always pampers criminals and patronises them. She urged people to remain alert against the BNP's motives and moves. About her government's three years in power, Hasina said it is running the country very successfully and the development has been

under progress. She said the AL would prepare topics for its January 11 meeting with President Abdul Hamid on the formation of the Election Commission. BSS adds: Hasina also criticised a section of the media for "helping Jamaat-Shibir shape their ploy to kill Liton through their constant move to portray him as a rude person". Jamaat-Shibir had been making constant attempts to kill him as he put up resistance against the evil force when they unleashed a reign of terror in the area following the trial of the war criminals, she said. "Instead of focusing on the danger and repeated attempt on his life, the media branded him as a naughty person centering on an incident of firing by him to save his life but unfortunately injuring a nine-year-old boy at Sundarganj in 2015," she said. "At that time, Jamaat-Shibir men were lying in ambush to kill him. But he luckily survived by firing in self-defence. But the media never focused on the fact," the prime minister added.

ATTACK ON TEACHER Students continue protest for 2nd day

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh Protesting the attack on their teacher by a union parishad member, students of Panchgoan Sunrise High School in Bhaluka upazila continued boycotting their classes for the second consecutive day yesterday. They also brought out a procession inside the school premises, demanding immediate arrest and exemplary punishment to the attacker. The students said they will not return to their classes until the UP member is arrested. Harun-or-Rashid, member of Panchgoan ward in Dhakatia union of Bhaluka, allegedly assaulted Hafiz Uddin, an assistant teacher of Panchgoan Sunrise High School, when the teacher was in his class on Tuesday, school sources said. Talking to this correspondent, Hafiz said he looks after the school funds. Harun, also a member of the school managing committee, was demanding money from the funds, he alleged. As the school authorities did not respond to his illegal demand, Harun misbehaved with some teachers and

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