

PRE-POLLS ATTACKS

531 schools damaged

*Uncertainty looms over
classes in new year*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The students of 531 educational institutions got stumbled at the very beginning of the new academic year as their institutions were damaged centring on the just-concluded 10th parliamentary polls.

The anti-liberation forces torched and vandalised the institutions to destroy country's education system in the name of resisting the election, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said yesterday.

"Burning schools is the most inhumane and cruel act. It destroys the confidence of students," Nahid told reporters after visiting Faydabad Government Primary School, at the capital's Abdullahpur.

Of the 531 institutions, 419 are primary schools, 82 high schools, 21 madrasas and nine colleges.

Stating that some of the primary schools were completely gutted, the minister said the government would rebuild the schools soon.

Education and LGED officials have been asked to assess the extent of the damage by January 13 and the government would start repairing them after the assessment, he said.

Educational institutions are used as polling centres only for a day in every five years but they provide education to

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students for year after year, Nahid said adding that destroying them to foil election showed the level of cruelty that befitted the 1971's collaborators of the Pakistani army.

He said most of the institutions came under attack on the night of January 3, two days before the election day.