



### Nazrul's death anniversary today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
National Poet Quazi Nazrul Islam's 27th death anniversary will be observed today.  
Nazrul Islam was recognised as a rebel poet for his poems and songs and became a source of inspiration for the colonised people of his time.

# Economy still in torpor: MCCI

STAR REPORT  
In spite of a mild recovery, the economy still reels under recession during January-July, 2003, observed the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) in its Economic Review.  
Economic activities remained subdued in January-July this year, compared to the same period of the previous year. The deceleration was reflected in the growth of manufacturing sector, which was lower than last year, the MCCI said in the Review released yesterday.  
"The latest available data period shows that the quantum index of

production (QIP) of all industry in April 2003 increased by 4.76 per cent compared to the increase of 6.88 per cent in April 2002. The QIP for the manufacturing sector increased by 4.44 per cent compared to 5.93 per cent increase in the previous year," the MCCI said.  
The recession is manifested most in the manufacturing sector, particularly in those industries that serve the domestic demand. This is validated by a fall in imports of intermediate goods, depressed growth of the QIP, lower growth in VAT collection and slower off-take of credit by private sector, it said.  
A number of leading companies in the pharmaceuticals, electronics and agro-inputs sectors have reported a drop in sales. The companies put the drop down largely to erosion of purchasing power, particularly in the rural areas caused by low prices of jute, slow procurement of Aus and Boro crops in the wake of bumper production, the Review said.  
Industries faced with such demand contraction are in serious jeopardy because of high interest rate, which the MCCI termed a practical problem for business growth. High lending rates are the result of rates now offered by COM

## People will avenge murder: Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna  
Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina has accused the BNP-Jamaat alliance of institutionalising anarchy instead of democracy during the last 22 months of its rule.  
She accused the ruling party leadership of systematically eliminating AL district level leaders and potential election candidates with a view to winning the next elections.  
The opposition leader was addressing a largely attended condolence meeting for the slain Khulna city AL President Monzurul Imam at Shahid Hadis Park yesterday morning.  
Imam was killed in a spray of bullets and bomb blasts by assail



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina comforts the wife and son of murdered Khulna city AL president Monzurul Imam at their residence yesterday.

## 25 political murders in Khulna in last 10yrs

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna  
Khulna city has witnessed at least 25 political killings in the last 10 years.  
The latest victim of political vendetta is Advocate Manzurul Imam, city Awami League (AL) president.  
The crimes originated by and large from intra-party and inter-party rivalries. Members of the outlawed extremist groups were used as hired killers in some cases. But they could not be brought to justice.  
On the evening of March 25, 1992, Chhatra Shibir leader Aminul Islam Biman was beaten to death by the activists of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) who were in a procession of the Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee.

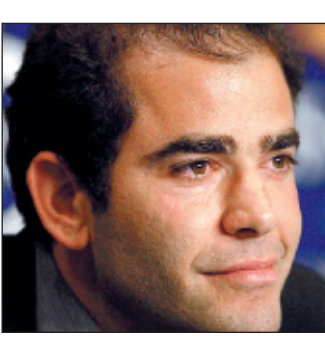


PHOTO: STAR  
Helal, seated left, and Mostaq, right, the two brothers who masterminded the kidnap of Simon and Sanjoy, with accomplices, standing, after arrest in Chittagong yesterday.

# FBCCI dances to the tune of power politics

STAR REPORT  
In the second phase of two-tier election to the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), power brokers and politicians have been drawn onto the scene through holding backstage parleys.  
As per an agreement coming out from the negotiations, a proposal will be placed before the FBCCI election board by 10:00am today proposing the name of Abdul Awal Mintoo as president of the FBCCI along with names of two vice-presidents.  
However, negotiations were on and the names of the probable vice-presidents could not be known till 9:30pm when this report was filed.

According to the proposal to be placed by government nominated director SM Nazrul Islam of Khulna Chamber, 13 nominated directors have extended support to Mintoo who already has 12 elected directors from his panel.  
The proposal will be sent for voting with the support of 25 candidates but Mintoo needs 20 votes to gain simple majority in the 38-member executive committee.  
Support of the 14 government nominated directors who have already made their way by virtue of the changed electoral system has become key to deciding the next leadership of the apex trade body.  
The lone director who is not going to support Mintoo is M A Awal



## Sampras quits tennis

REUTERS, New York  
Pete Sampras walked away from tennis on Monday with peace in his heart and with nothing left to prove.  
The winner of a record 14 Grand Slam titles said the competitive juices that drove him to 64 titles and allowed him to amass more than 43 million dollars in prize money no longer flowed.  
"I am retiring because I have nothing to prove to myself. My biggest challenge was last year. Once I did that I felt really it is time," he said referring to last year's US Open triumph following two barren years.  
"I am content. I am 100 per cent content with what I have done."

# Mumbai cops link blasts to militants, Gujarat riot fallout

AFP, Mumbai  
Indian officials yesterday blamed radical militant groups for the Mumbai car bombings which killed at least 52 people and said they could be revenge for anti-Muslim riots in Gujarat state last year.  
Police and government officials in India's commercial capital said Monday's bomb attacks appeared to be the work of local Islamic militants working with the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba group.  
Chhagan Bhujpal, deputy chief minister of Maharashtra state, also said there was "no doubt" the attacks were linked to religious rioting in the eastern state which left some 2,000 people dead, mostly Muslims.  
One of the bombs was detonated close to a Hindu temple in the old city where mainly Hindu Gujaratis

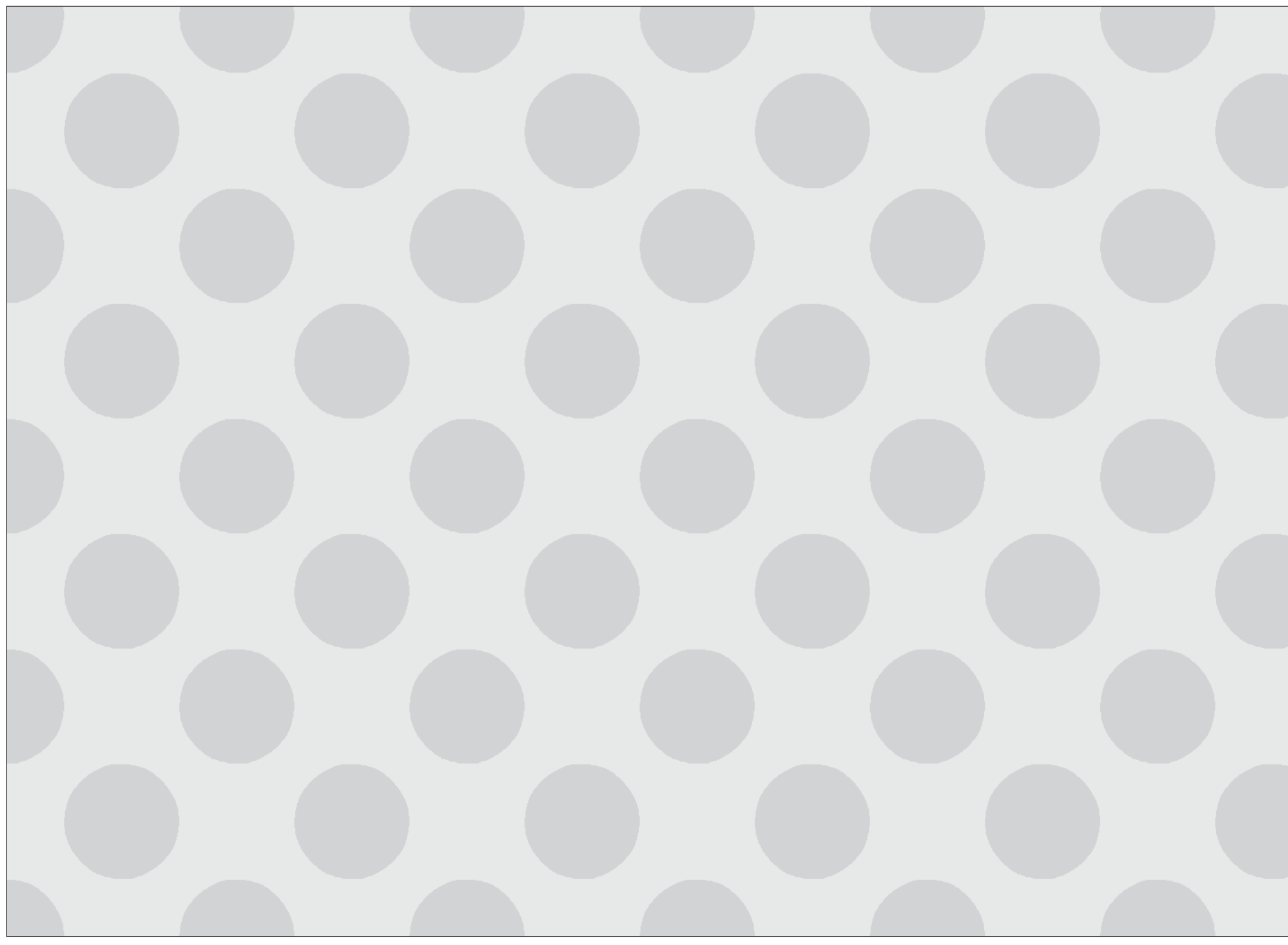
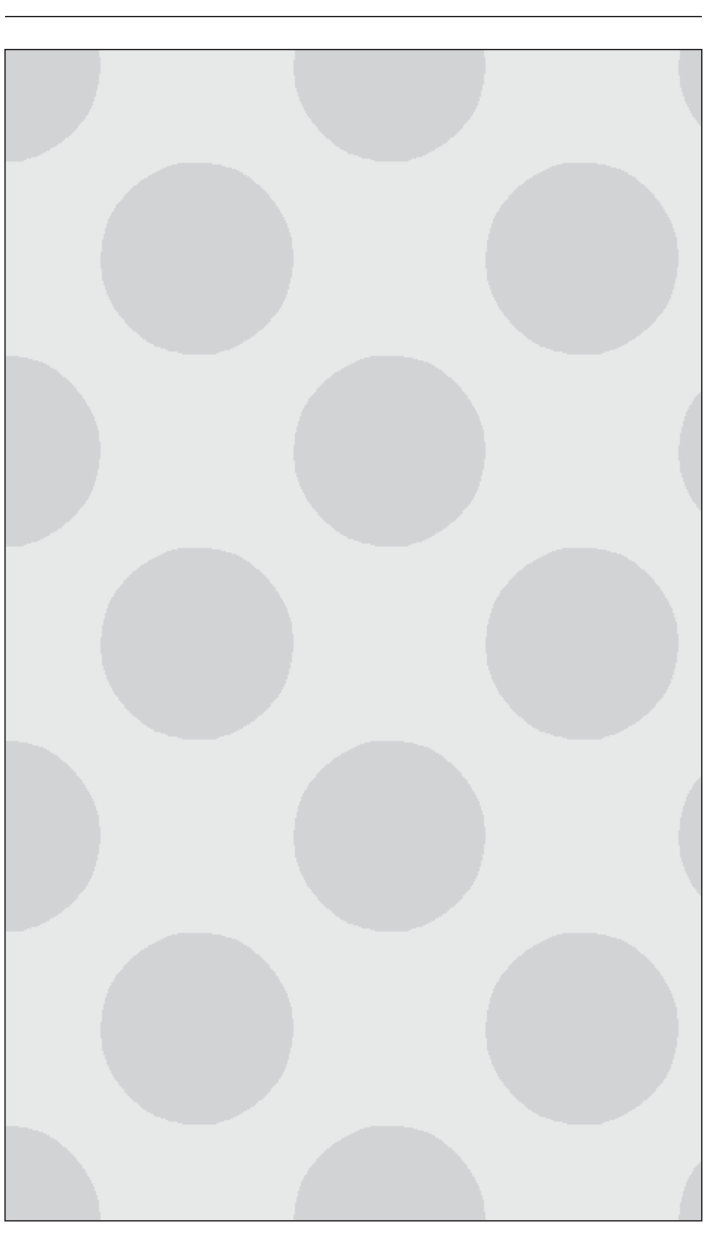
run gold and diamond shops. Another bomb exploded close to the colonial Gateway of India monument.  
"It is true that the blasts have taken place in Gujarati populated places," Bhujpal told NDTV television, referring to a string of bombs which have rocked Mumbai in the past seven months.  
He blamed a splinter group of Lashkar-e-Taiba for the bombings, which also left some 150 people injured.  
Asked whether there was clear evidence as to who was behind the attacks, he said, "It seems so -- Pakistan-based groups working with locals."  
He then named al-Hadees, a splinter group of Lashkar which India accuses of being behind an attack on its parliament in

## Skygazers await Mars encounter

STAR DESK  
Mars and earth are about to pass closer together than at any time in almost 60,000 years.  
Today at 3:51pm (0951 GMT) the two planets will be

# Cancun meet 6 civil society bodies urge LDC trade ministers to unite

BSS, Dhaka  
Six global level civil society organisations have called upon trade ministers of all least developed countries (LDCs) to maintain unity at the forthcoming fifth WTO ministerial conference in Cancun.  
They also cautioned them to remain vigilant against the stalemate created by the developed countries in negotiations to frustrate the positive gains of the LDCs and the developing countries.  
A letter from them was handed over to WTO Coordinator for LDCs and Bangladesh Commerce



Prayer Timings August 27

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-30	6-34
Esha	8-00	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation