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REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XIII No. 279

DHAKA MONDAY OCTOBER 27, 2003

KARTIK 12, 1410 BS

SHABAN 30, 1424 HURI

20 PAGES PRICE: Tk 7.00

www.thedailystar.net

Ramadan begins tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The holy month of Ramadan begins tomorrow as the moon of the lunar month was not sighted yesterday.

The National Moon Sighting Committee at a meeting yesterday said it neither sighted the moon nor received news of any sighting from anywhere in the country yesterday.

Ramadan office hours for government, autonomous and semi-autonomous organisations have already been announced.

From Saturday to Wednesday, office timings will be from 9:30am to 3:30pm while on Thursday from 9:30am to 2:30pm. There will be a 15-minute break for Zohr prayers from 1:15pm to 1:30pm every day.

However, institutions rendering essential public services such as commercial banks, post offices and hospitals will follow their own schedules.

In a statement yesterday, President Iajuddin Ahmed greeted countrymen on the occasion of Ramadan and said its teachings will pave the way for peace and welfare in society.

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5,000 extra personnel to curb crime

Special drive during Ramadan to clear footpaths off iftar shops, traffic jams

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forty mobile courts and as many police checkpoints backed by around 5,000 additional personnel will be set up in the capital to keep close tabs on law and order during Ramadan.

Action will be taken against traders who throw up makeshift shops on footpaths to sell iftar, the home ministry yesterday decided.

The courts and checkpoints will run from the first day of Ramadan.

A home ministry meeting chaired by State Minister Lutfozzaman Babar and attended by

Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka and the home secretary, among others, took the decisions.

The mobile courts to be led by magistrates will work from 10:00am to 4:00pm and also act against adulterated food sellers. The checkpoints will work from 10:00am to 10:00pm.

Teams of police, BDR and ansars will assist the courts. They will also crack down on wrongly parked cars and illegal roadside establishments besides searching through vehicles.

The meeting also decided not to go for fresh road digging or repair

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Vegetable vendors at Motijheel Colony Market have stocked up for Ramadan although high prices still restrict the low-income group to a fraction of their normal purchases.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Essentials market

Control flops as prices spiral

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prices of essentials on the kitchen market are spiralling, despite a number of government steps to put a lid on prices during Ramadan.

A market survey yesterday revealed that the government steps have had a little impact on the prices.

The prices of onion, edible oil,

sugar, red chili, garlic, turmeric and vegetables have shot up over the last two weeks.

"I have bought one litre of soybean oil at Tk 52, which is at least six taka higher than last month," said Shamsuddin, a buyer at Mirpur-1 kitchen market.

"I have bought onion at Tk 32 a kilogram, paying an extra Tk 10 over

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Traders' greed pushes prices high: Ministry

STAR REPORT

A section of traders and importers are making the essentials market unstable ahead of the holy month of Ramadan to make brisk profits, a top-ranking commerce ministry official said.

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AL, CPB rally demanding lid on prices

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) and the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) staged separate demonstrations in Dhaka yesterday in protest against price spiral of essentials.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

US col killed as rockets hit Baghdad hotel

American deputy defence secy survives attack

AP, Baghdad

In a daring strike, insurgents attacked the heart of the US occupation yesterday, unleashing a barrage of rockets against the Al Rasheed hotel where US officials live and where visiting Deputy Defence Secretary Paul Wolfowitz was stay-

ing. Wolfowitz escaped, but an American colonel was killed and 15 people were wounded.

Scores of American officials fled the hotel in pajamas and shorts after the 6:10am assault, which apparently used a makeshift rocket battery on a timer that had been wheeled into a nearby park. More

than a half-dozen holes pockmarked the hotel's concrete facade and windows were shattered in two dozen rooms.

Wolfowitz, who appeared shaken as he addressed reporters at a convention centre across the street where most officials fled, vowed the

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Another man dies in 'cop beating'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gulshan police allegedly tortured a man to death yesterday within 48 hours of the death of an alleged mugger in police beating.

Police claimed Sahibul Islam Saiful, 27, of North Badda was hurt in mob beating, but his relatives alleged he died from police torture.

"A mob beat up Saiful after he shot a guard of a house at Niketan residential area in Gulshan at

around 6:00pm Saturday," Duty Officer of Gulshan Police Station Nazrul Islam said.

"Our force went there on information and rescued him from the mob," he said, adding that they recovered a .22 bore Smith and Wesson revolver with three bullets and a motorbike from Saiful.

But a press release by Dhaka Metropolitan Police said a team of Gulshan police arrested Saiful in a

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Pharaoh mummy returns to Egypt after 140 years

AFP, Cairo

A 3,000-year-old Egyptian mummy believed to be that of King Ramses I has been returned to Egypt after more than 140 years in North America.

The mummy is to be exhibited at Egypt's national museum in Cairo, said Zahi Hawass, the director of the country's Supreme Council of Antiquities.

He said it will then be trans

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Fence off Buriganga, stop grabbers' return

Demand environmentalists

TAWFIQUE ALI

Environmentalists are demanding construction of boundary walls and walkways along the banks of Buriganga, as well as legal action to protect the land reclaimed from encroachers during the recently concluded demolition drive.

The demands will be put forth during a meeting of the Buriganga

Protection Taskforce scheduled for October 29.

A demand for determining land ownership along the riverbanks according to the 1912 CS land survey will also be put forth in the meeting, which will be held in the context of the six-day demolition drive that ended on Saturday.

Bangladesh Inland Water

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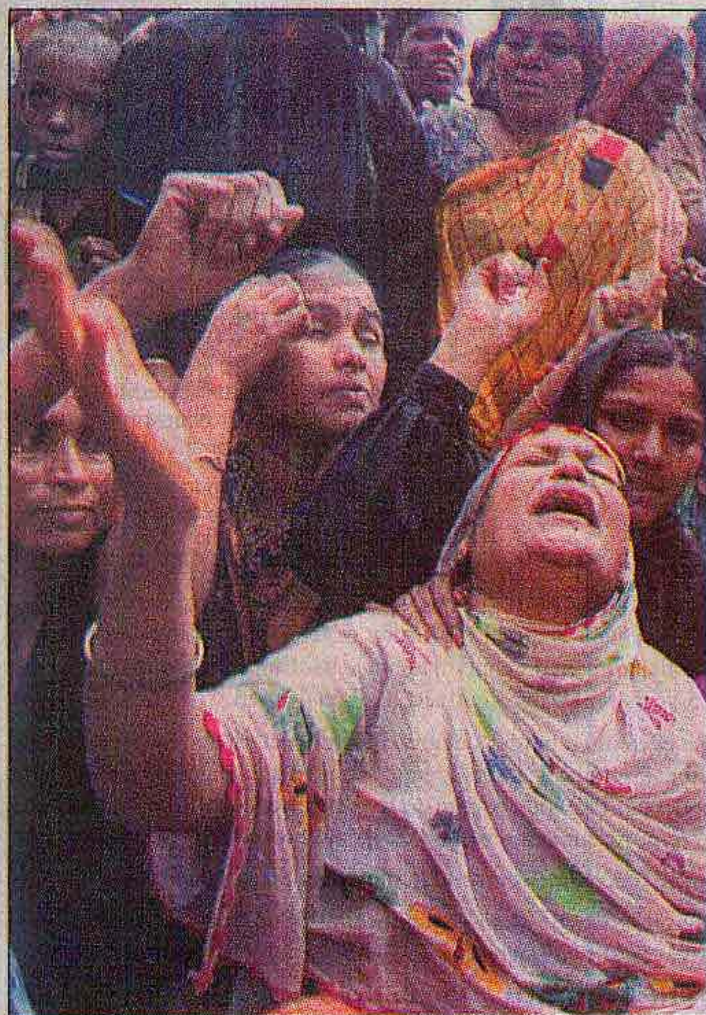


PHOTO: STAR

Nurjahan Begum, mother of Shakil Ahmed Chowdhury Sumon, grieves her son's death allegedly at the hands of police on Saturday evening, as neighbours from Meradia lay siege to Khilgaon Police Station yesterday.

Death in custody Locals lay siege to Khilgaon Police Station

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Angry locals from Meradia hemmed in Khilgaon Police Station yesterday following the death of Shakil Ahmed Chowdhury Sumon in police custody.

Defying heavy showers, over 200 residents of Meradia led a procession to the police station. They laid siege to the police station for about 45 minutes and chanted slogans demanding punishment to the officer-in-charge (OC) and others responsible.

However, no untoward incident took place during the siege, and the Khilgaon police station OC remained in his office during the siege.

Earlier, a few hundred locals crowded the Meradia home of Sumon, 20, when his body was taken

there at about 2:00pm following the post mortem by a three-member board at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday. He was buried in Meradia graveyard after his namaj-e-janaja yesterday.

Medical board sources said that marks of torture were found on his legs and hands. No evidence was found that the young man died from wounds suffered in a jump from the roof of a six-storey building, as suggested by the inquest report.

The inquest report prepared on Saturday by Metropolitan Magistrate Abdur Rouf Khan and Khilgaon police said Sumon was caught along with five others during a robbery at house Kha/20, Malibagh Chowdhurypara on Thursday night.

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Notice

The Daily Star carries the full list of plot allottees in the Rajuk's Purbachal project in phases from today, on page 19.

Notice

The Daily Star publishes Letters to the Editor on page 8 instead of 5 today.

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