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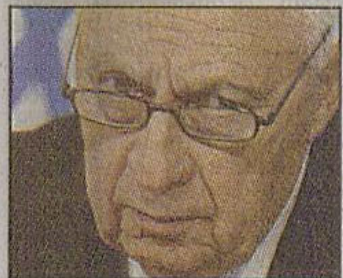
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A university student was crushed under the wheels of a speeding bus near Mouchak Market at the city yesterday morning.

The deceased Nazmul Hossain Rubel, 18, who got admitted at the department of BBA in Stamford University only two days ago, was on his way to attend the first class at the university's Siddheswary campus from his Sutrapur home.

"Rubel got off from his bus near Mouchak Market and was about to cross the road when a speeding bus knocked him down," said Zillur Rahman, witness of the accident.

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Sharon in critical state

AFP, Jerusalem

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was fighting for his life yesterday after suffering a massive brain haemorrhage, throwing the country into turmoil less than three months before a general election.

The 77-year-old Sharon, dubbed "the Bulldozer," underwent seven hours of surgery before doctors were able to halt bleeding in his brain but the prime minister remained in a critical condition.

Doctors called a halt to an initial

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People scramble for scarce Eid tickets

Brokers rule city terminals, railway station

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

City dwellers preparing to go back to their village homes to celebrate the Eid-ul-Azha are facing tremendous difficulties in getting tickets for their home bound journey by bus, train and launch a day or two ahead of the second greatest religious festival of the Muslims due on January 11.

The staffs of bus, train and launch claim that most of the advance tickets for those days have already been sold. But there are widespread allegations that brokers in connivance with a section of the staffs have 'captured' tickets, especially for luxurious buses,

upper classes in trains and launch cabins for earning quick bucks.

A large number of people were seen returning from Kamalapur railway station, major bus terminals and Sadarghat launch terminal yesterday, failing to get tickets for January 8 to 10.

Bangladesh Railway started giving advance tickets for Eid journey on January 1, and all the tickets for January 8 to 10 have been sold. A small number of tickets for January 6-7 are still available, railwaysourcesaid.

Shaon, 20, had queued up at Kamalapur station for four tickets for his family members in the early hours yesterday but went back

disappointed at 11:00 am. "I could not reach the counter even in 10 hours before the advance tickets were sold," he said. His family wanted to go to Dinajpur for celebrating the Eid.

Many passengers alleged that brokers took advantage of the situation as four tickets were sold to each person. Many brokers in the guise of passengers bought huge advance tickets and created an artificial crisis.

The railway has arranged two special trains on Dhaka-Jamalpur and Chandpur-Chittagong route before and after the Eid. It will also operate the regular train services

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POLICE FIRING Palli Bidyut sues 3,000 villagers

UNB, Cnawabganj

About 3,000 people were sued yesterday on charges of damaging property of Palli Bidyut during Wednesday's clash that left two people dead and 90 injured.

The clash erupted when Palli Bidyut subscribers went to lay a siege to Palli Bidyut Samity Office

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Call money rate on rise

Dollar still costlier

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interest rate in the call money market and dollar price in the foreign exchange market are on the rise with the Eid-ul-Azha approaching near.

The peak interest rate in the call money market was 25 percent yesterday, which was 15 percent last week. In the inter-bank foreign exchange market, dollar price was

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RESCUED INFANTS

One given for adoption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parents of one of the two infants rescued Tuesday in the city gave the baby to Jharna Begum for adoption, Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) sources said.

Hakil Bepari, the father of the baby boy aged around 17 days, told some DMCH staff that he gave his son to Jharna of Chhayaneer, Khilgaon, for adoption around a

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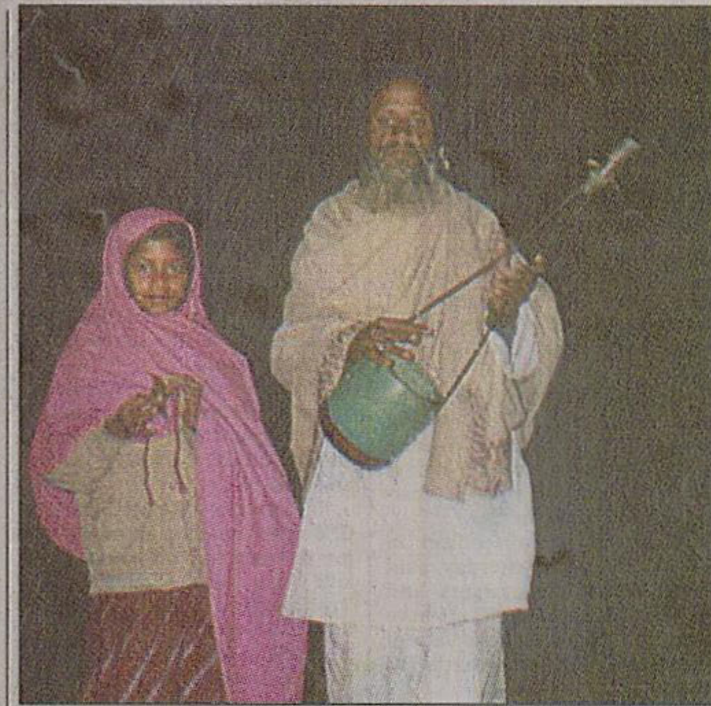


PHOTO: STAR

Baul Ali Azim and his daughter Monira who left home three years ago prefer to stay at the Kuakata sea beach singing spiritual songs.

A baul and the sea

EMRAN HOSSAIN EMON, from Kuakata

In a stoic spring afternoon three years ago, he had left home for Kuakata to see the wide blue sea but its fascinating beauty held him back from returning home.

Baul Ali Azim Khan, 55, along with his nine-year-old daughter Monira, now wanders along the sea beach from evening till midnight, breathing the spiritual ecstasy of his song into the fresh sea breeze.

"I have come here to watch the sea and I wonder I could not finish yet as the sea seems wider than life," said Baul Azim with a beguiling look in his eyes.

"I have been searching the ultimate truth in my songs. Where should I return? I have no home, no address," said a contented Azim playing on Ektara, his only belonging, while Monira played superbly on cymbals standing on the beach

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23 hajj pilgrims die as hotel collapses

AP, Makkah

A hotel outside the Grand Mosque in Islam's holiest city collapsed yesterday as millions of Muslims converged for the annual hajj pilgrimage, and Al-Jazeera TV said at least 23 people were killed and 60 injured.

Rescue teams pulled bodies from beneath the rubble of the five-story Al Ghaza Hotel. Most of the victims were Arabs from Egypt, Tunisia and the United Arab

Emirates, security officials said on condition of anonymity because they were not allowed to speak to

ATN Bangla from Makkah reported no Bangladeshi pilgrims were in the building

the media.

The hotel, named for the district in which it is located, is about 60 yards from the Grand Mosque at the Bab al-Salam, or Gate of Peace. It is surrounded by local markets

that stay open 24 hours during the pilgrimage, a major source of income in the holy city.

The courtyard of the Grand Mosque encloses the Kaaba.

The number of pilgrims to Makkah has increased 11-fold over the past 15 years. During that time, the Saudi government spent billions of dollars to improve accommodations, transportation and medical facilities for the "guests of Allah."

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Pak-SL role at WTO comes under fire

Their diplomats defend opposition to Dhaka's textile quota

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The role of Sri Lanka and Pakistan against LDCs in the Hong Kong Ministerial meeting of the WTO came under criticism at a dialogue yesterday but diplomats of both the countries said Bangladesh would have done the same thing if it were in the similar position.

Gamini Munasinghe, high commissioner of Sri Lanka in Dhaka, said duty-free and quota-

free access to developed countries' market for LDC (the least developed countries) products might have adversely affected Sri Lanka's garment exports.

Around 50 percent of Sri Lanka's total export earning comes from the apparel sector and that's why it expressed its concern over the issue, he explained.

Echoing Munasinghe, Roubina Taufic Shah, commercial secretary

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Mobile courts file cases against 102 outfits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

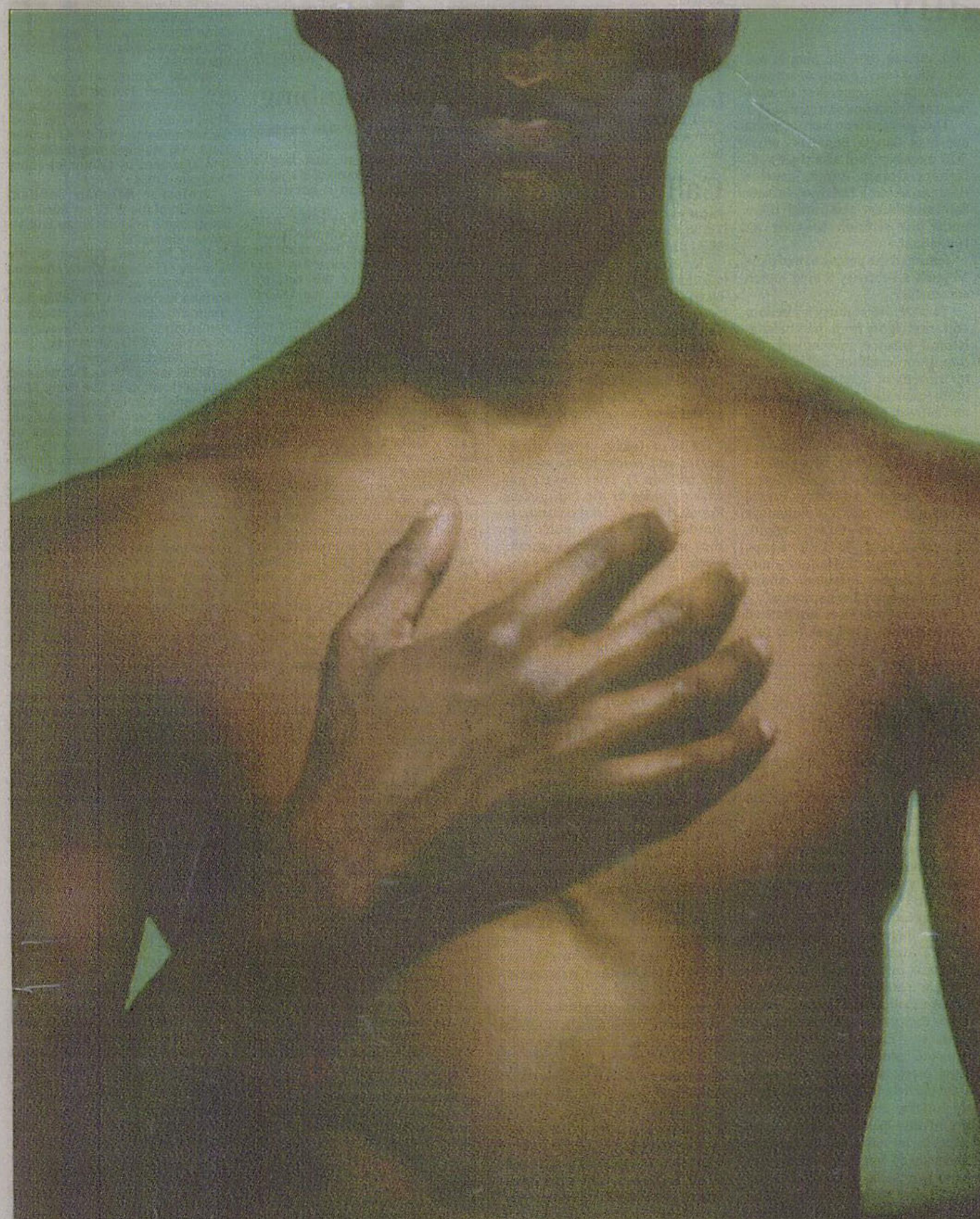
Mobile courts filed cases against 102 diagnostic centres, hotels, restaurants, bakeries and petrol

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Prayer Timing

January 6		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-30	5-35
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation



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