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## Eid tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eid-ul-Azha, the second biggest festival of the Muslims, will be celebrated in the country tomorrow.

Muslims will sacrifice animals commemorating Prophet Ibrahim's great sacrifice of his son Prophet Ismail to the will of Almighty Allah.

They will offer Eid prayers in the morning seeking divine blessings for continued peace, progress and prosperity of the nation and Muslim Ummah.

They will visit the relatives and friends exchanging Eid greetings, embrace each other, and offer sweets and delicious dishes to the visitors. Wealthy Muslims will donate generously to the poor on the occasion.

The city streets will be decorated with colourful flags, festoons

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## Rush home mired in fog, logjam

### Thousands stuck at Paturia ferry terminals, chill kills 16 more in two days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A blanket of fog disrupted road and river communications severely yesterday, playing havoc on thousands of people, especially those who are from southwestern districts, going to their villages to celebrate the Eid-ul-Azha.

A shivering cold wave, first in this winter, also paralysed normal

life in the northern and southwest regions, claiming at least 16 lives -- seven in Thakurgaon, five in Rangpur and four in Gaibandha -- in the last two days.

The chilly weather has emerged as a disaster to the day labourers of the northern districts who could not sell their labour for the last three days.

The weathermen forecast that

the fog situation is unlikely to improve in a day or two, even it may deteriorate further. This could delay the homebound journey of thousands of people, many of whom may not reach home before Eid.

Met office sources said the cold wave has been persisting in Rajshahi, Chuadanga, Jessore and

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The Daily Star wishes its readers, patrons, advertisers and well-wishers a very happy Eid.

### HOLIDAY

The offices of The Daily Star will remain closed for three days from today on the occasion of the Eid-ul-Azha. Therefore, there will be no issue of the newspaper on January 11, 12 and 13.

## FOREX CRISIS

# Govt loans from foreign banks to import oil

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Since neither the central bank nor the nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) are able to meet the energy ministry's demand for foreign currencies to import oil, the ministry is resorting to borrowing up to \$800 million from foreign banks.

The ministry requires about \$2.0 billion this fiscal year to import oil. It has assurance of \$1.2 billion as loans from two NCBs and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) leaving it with a shortfall of \$800 million.

According to energy ministry adviser Mahmudur Rahman, two foreign banks have proposed to cover the shortfall. It is now considering a proposal of \$250 million commercial loan from the Standard Chartered Bank (SCB).

The ministry at first was reluctant to borrow from foreign banks due to higher interest rates and was trying to persuade the NCBs to arrange the total required amount of foreign currencies.

To find a solution to the crisis, the ministry yesterday held a meeting with the BB and the two NCBs,

Janata and Agrani banks. It proposed the BB to provide the Janata and Agrani banks with fresh supply of dollars so that they may provide the ministry with larger loans.

Officials of both Janata and Agrani said they are unable to provide more than \$500 million.

The central bank officials told the energy advisor that it may provide partial amounts as overdraft (OD) to the NCBs from time to time, that too after getting the governor's consent. Since the forex reserve is frequently inadequate in

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## FRESH VOTER LIST

# Decision-maker a mystery?

SHAKHAWAT LITON

It remains a mystery as to who in fact decided to prepare a fresh voter list since the High Court's (HC) January 4 judgement says neither the Election Commission (EC) nor the chief election commissioner (CEC) took any such decision.

"We find that although a recommendation for a new list was made but neither chief election commissioner nor the two other members were specific about a new list," the HC said in its judgement, disposing

of two writ petitions challenging the legality of preparing a fresh roll decided unilaterally by the CEC.

However, there was a general agreement between them [CEC and two election commissioners] that a list should be prepared, the HC noted.

But it is not clear who decided the mode of the task of preparing a fresh list for the next parliamentary election.

Meanwhile, the work of preparing a new roll that began on January 1 amid controversy continued till

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## 14-party alliance asks president to remove CEC

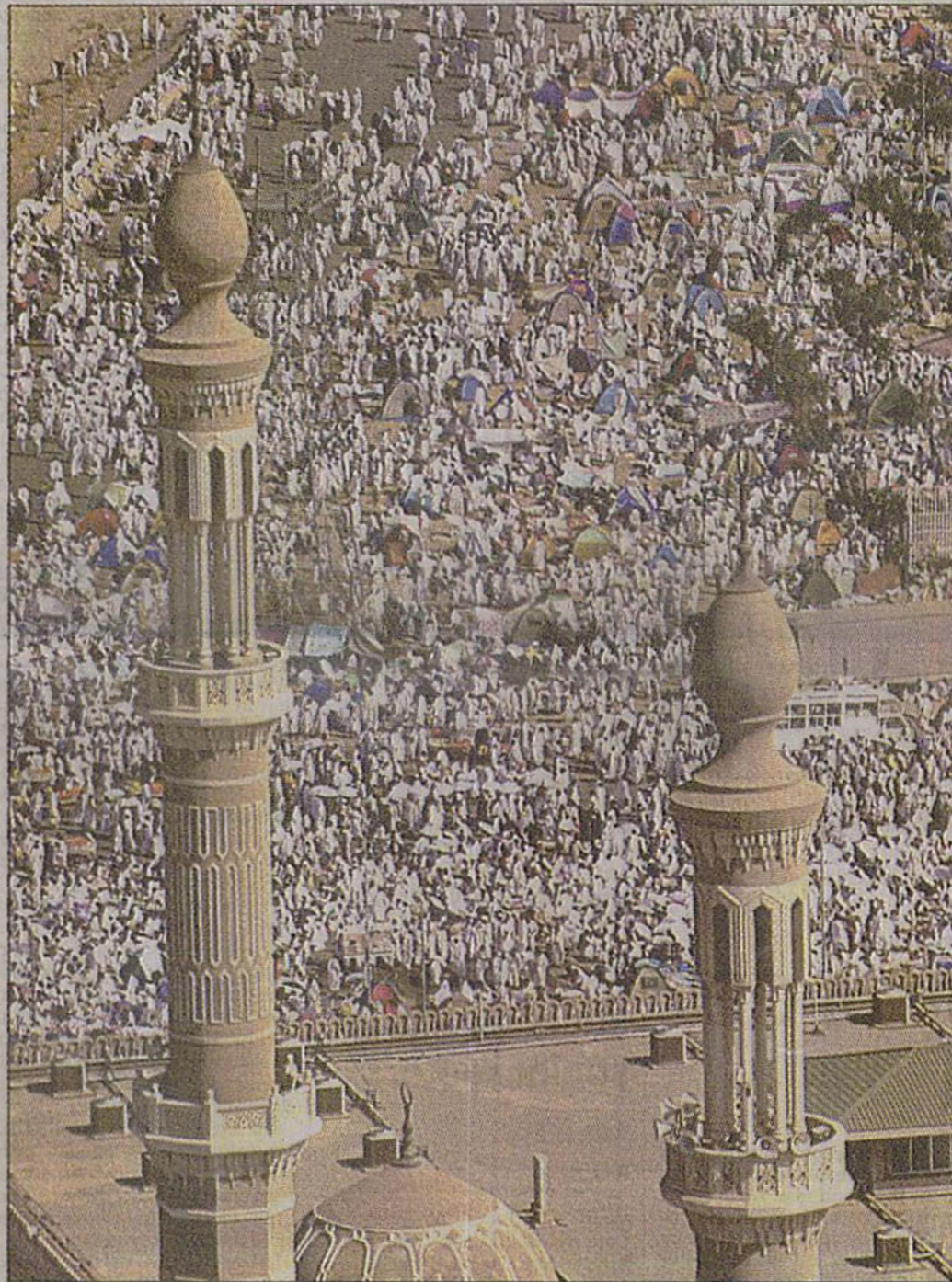
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League (AL) led 14-party alliance urged the president yesterday to remove the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) for 'violation of a High Court order' regarding preparation of a fresh voter list.

"We are requesting the president to remove MA Aziz and appoint a new CEC after consulting all the parties," 14-party Coordinator and AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil said after a meeting of the alliance.

The meeting which was held at AL's Dhanmondi office last night also demanded punitive step against the CEC for violating the

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Hajj pilgrims climb the plains of Arafat near Makkah yesterday tracing the journey of Prophet Mohammad (SM) made over 1,400 years ago. Standing on Arafat before sunset is the high point of the Hajj. (Story on page 9)

# JMB arms, ammo seized in Gazipur graveyard

UNB, Gazipur

Police recovered huge arms, ammunition and bomb-making materials from a depository of outlawed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) in Dakkhin Khan village on Sunday.

The cache seized in Gazipur includes three kilograms of gunpowder, one pistol, two country-made shooter guns, one foreign-made shooter gun, 16 bullets, five cartridges and three knives.

Sources said following confessional statement of suspected JMB commander Enayetullah alias Enayet alias Jewel alias Walid, Gazipur police conducted a raid on a graveyard and found the arms around 11:00pm.

"In a novel way, the weapons were buried in an abandoned grave," says a spot account of the discovery.

The arms haul was made in the wake of reports on arms build-up by the militant outfit around the capital.

# 16<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary

DATE: 10<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 1990

We deeply mourn the death of our beloved mother Late "Masuda Begum" wife of late Mr. Abul Khair, founder of Abul Khair Group (Abul Co.). Today with due respect, we remember her works, ideals and memories and pray to almighty for her divine blessings.

We request all our relatives and well-wishers to pray for her eternal peace.

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**AKTEL** CLEARLY AHEAD

A world without stains or stench, without waste, want, greed, or wrath. May your hearts and lives be as pure and clean this Eid-ul-Azha. Eid Mubarak.