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NEWS BRIEFS

Biswas attends Fahd's reception

MEENA, June 1: President
Abdur Rahman Biswas Tuesday
attended a reception hosted by
King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz of
Saudi Arabia in honour of
heads of state and government,
ministers and other high digni-
taries at the royal palace here.
President Biswas exchanged Eid
greetings with the King on be-
half of the Bangladeshi pilgrims
and members of his entourage.

Jamaat PP meets today

The Jamaat-e-Islami parlia-
mentary party will hold a meet-
ing at its Sangsard Bhaban room
at 5 pm today. Jamaat secretary
general and parliamentary party
leader Matur Rahman Nizami
will preside, reports UNB.

Britain, China talks open

HONG KONG, June 4: Bri-
tain and China reopened talks
Friday on US \$10.6 billion
airport for Hong Kong, after a
seven-month break caused by
friction over the transfer of the
colony to Chinese rule. The
negotiators gave no indication
whether they made progress on
financing the ambitious Chep
Lak Kok airport plan.

Khomeini's death anniversary

TEHRAN, June 4: Iran mar-
ked the anniversary of Ayatollah
Khomeini's death today by
vowing to stick to his revolu-
tionary path and inflict "absol-
ute defeat" on the United
States. Vast crowds of black-
clad men and women packed
the golden-domed shrine at
Khomeini's tomb south of
Tehran, beating their breasts in
mourning. Several thousand
Muslims from other countries,
especially from former Soviet
republics, have gone to Iran for
week-long ceremonies.

Security Council okays heavily armed troops for Bosnia

UNITED NATIONS, June 4: The Security Council voted today to send heavily-armed troops to protect six Muslim enclaves in Bosnia-Herzegovina despite scepticism by several members that the plan would stop Serb offensives, reports Reuter.

European sponsors of the resolution hope at least 5,000 additional troops, backed by air power, can be found to guard the capital of Sarajevo and the towns of Tuzla, Zepa, Srebrenica, Gorazde and Bihac. The vote was 13-0 with two abstentions, Pakistan and Venezuela.

The vote was larger than Europeans had expected after a week of bitter debate. But the abstention of Pakistan is em-

barrassing to sponsors of the resolution as it holds the chairmanship of the Islamic group at the United Nations and has offered 3,000 troops for Bosnia. Bosnia's UN Ambassador Muhamed Sacirbey bitterly attacked the plan and its backers, the United States and Russia, Britain, France and Spain.

"What motivates at least some of the co-sponsors is a diplomatic cover to mitigate the need and responsibility for more resolute and comprehensive measures," he said.

He called Srebrenica an "open concentration camp" where disease, hunger and despair "have replaced shells and bullets as the tool of genocide." Currently 9,000 UN troops

are in Bosnia, some of whom will be redeployed to the safe areas, aimed at guarding Muslim civilians and curbing Bosnian Serb gains.

The resolution authorises the new troops to operate under a wide-reaching mandate that would enable them to use force, backed by air power, to protect the safe areas.

The UN Protection Forces (Unprofor) in Bosnia would be allowed in self-defence "to take the necessary measures, including the use of force."

The plan also allows members or regional organisations, such as NATO, to back the operation with air strikes. The United States wants to limit its air participation to retaliation for Serb attacks on peacekeep-

ers themselves while the European and others say the resolution allows for a broader use of air power if the safe areas are attacked.

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, whose own staff said the plan would not work without a ceasefire, is to report to the council in a week on how the operation could be implemented.

New Zealand Ambassador Terence O'Brien, who has also been critical of the plan but supported the resolution, warned that "the use of air power is imminent unless the Serbs desist right now, straight away."

Nevertheless, there is no guarantee the plan will be carried out.

Repatriation of Chakma refugees begins June 8

Repatriation of Chakma refugees from Tripura, India will begin from June 8, an official handout said in Dhaka Tuesday night, reports BSS.

The first batch of two hundred Chakma refugee families will arrive at Ramgarh on June 8 morning.

It has been agreed upon that batches of two hundred families each will be repatriated on every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday with the total number of 600 Chakma families to be repatriated per week.

This agreement was arrived at a meeting of a district administration - level committee held on Tuesday at Ramgarh. In the meeting the Bangladesh side was led by the DC Khagrachhari, Yar Mohammad

while the Indian side was led by District Magistrate of South Tripura, Y P Singh, the hand-out added.

An earlier report from Chittagong adds: In the meeting the Indian side handed over a list of 24,609 refugees of three camps comprising 5,164 families. The Bangladesh side, after proper verification, will submit an approved list of refugees to the Indian authorities by June 6 for their return to their homes in the hill tracts.

The Deputy Commissioner of Khagrachhari said that it was decided in the three-hour talks that repatriation would take place on Saturdays, Tuesdays and Thursdays every week. In case of failure of See Page 12 Col 8

Shantibahinimen kill soldier

CHITTAGONG, June 4: One security personnel was killed and another was injured when tribal insurgents opened fire on the members of the Bangladesh security forces at Baghachhari under Dighinala thana of Khagrachhari hill district yesterday, official sources said here tonight, reports BSS.

The sources said that members of the outlawed Shantibahini opened fire on security forces on patrol from an ambush killing Mohammad Nazimuddin, an artillery gunner, on the spot. The injured Nayek Abdus Salam, shot at his chest, was admitted to the Combined Military Hospital here.

The insurgents who fired over 50 rounds of bullets left the place immediately, the sources said.

Rallies around JS banned

Processions, gatherings and demonstrations have been restricted in certain areas of the capital city from midnight tonight for peaceful holding of the Jatiya Sangsad session beginning Sunday, reports UNB.

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner has also imposed a ban on carrying of arms, explosives and other dangerous materials around the Sangsad Bhaban.

The ban will be enforced from Old Airport to Sonargaon level crossing from Panthapath-Green Road crossing to Farm Gate, from Shyamoli Cinema Hall at Mirpur Road to the crossing of Road No 27, Dhanmondi, Agargaon Link road, from the crossing of Agargaon link and Rokeya Sharani to Parjatan crossing, restricted areas of Jatiya Sangsad and all roads and lanes of the areas.

Environment Day today

World Environment Day will be observed in the country today as elsewhere in the world, reports UNB.

The day is observed annually on June 5 to create awareness among the people about pollution control and the protection and management of environment.

It also marks the anniversary of the opening of the UN Conference on the Human Environment Programme in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972. The conference, some 21 years ago, led to the establishment of the UN Environment Programme, currently based in Nairobi.

In a message on the occasion, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has called for making the environment protection and development efforts a social movement.

She said this year's theme of the day - "Poverty and the Environment: Breaking the Vicious Circle" - is very significant for the third world countries, including Bangladesh.

Environment and Forest Minister Abdullah-Al-Noman and State Minister for Environment and Forest Goyeshwar Roy, in separate messages, also wished success of the day.

Different socio-cultural organisations and the Environment Directorate have planned elaborate programmes to observe the day.

The Environment Directorate will organise a procession from Shishu Park to Shishu Academy today at 7:30 am to be led by Environment Minister Abdullah-Al-Noman.

The Directorate will also hold a seminar on the day at Osmani Memorial Hall at 10:30 am. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will be the chief guest at the seminar.

Forest Department will distribute saplings among the people on the occasion.

Bangladesh 2000 in cooperation with the UN
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'Nabajug' will need major repairs

By Asiuzzaman

Last month's accident caused major structural damages to Biman's DC-10 aircraft "Nabajug" which will require thorough overhauling, local engineers and experts from the manufacturer company said Friday.

There have been damages also to the engines which will be sent to Rome, Italy, for overhauling," one senior Biman official told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

He said that the "black box" of the aircraft had already been sent to Singapore for decoding and all the three engines were dismantled from the fuselage.

The report from Singapore on the conversation between the cockpit crew and the

Dhaka control tower just before the troubled landing, contained in the "black box", will be available within a week, the official said.

Michael Majuras, the expert from the manufacturers McDonnell Douglas, who arrived in the city a day after the accident, had earlier told The Daily Star that the damage was "reparable".

Speaking over telephone he, however, declined to elaborate.

Biman's DC-10 aircraft, on a flight from Jeddah, overshoot and skidded off the runway with 123 passengers and 12 crew while landing in stormy weather at the Zia interna-

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Morning Sun office ransacked

By Staff Correspondent

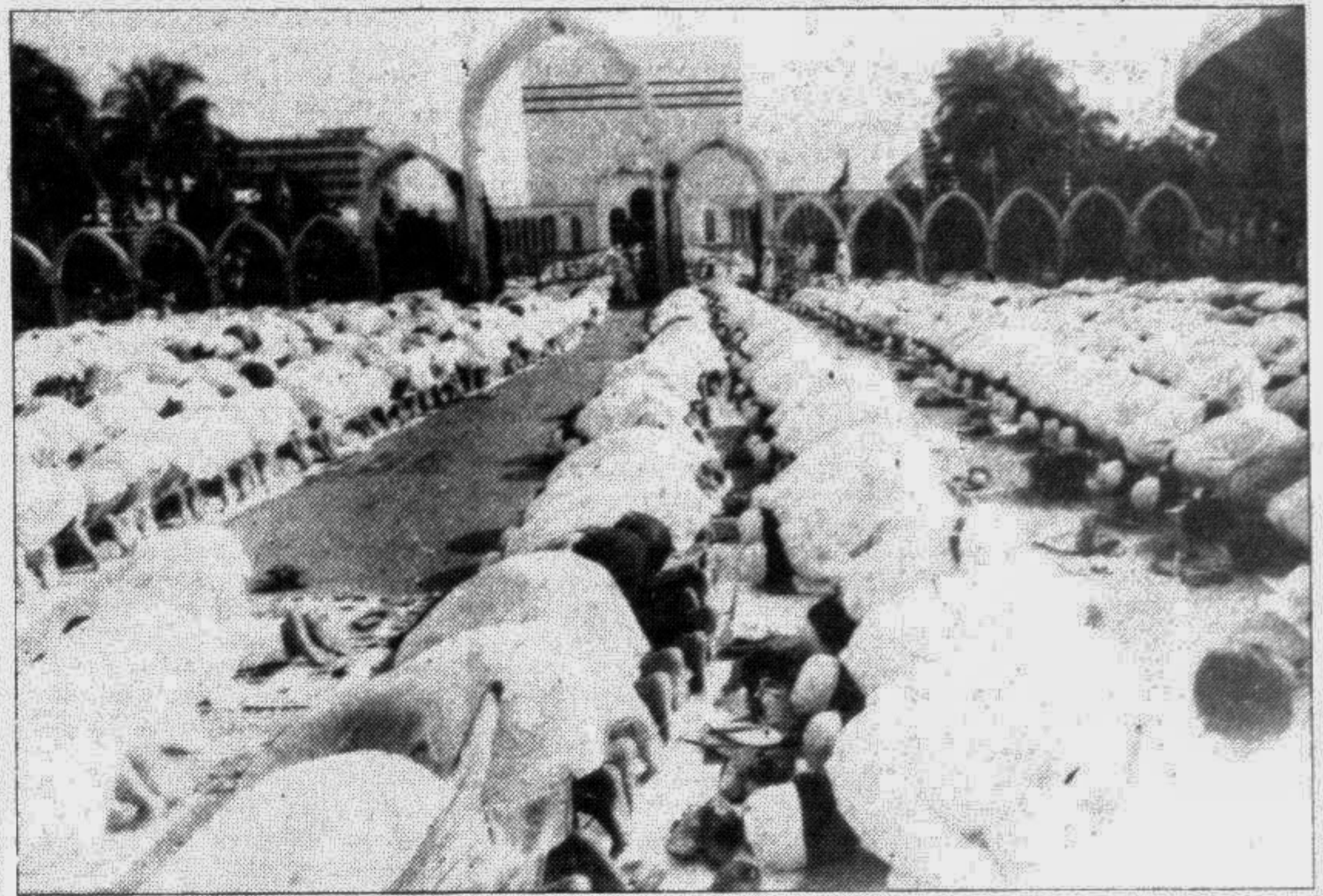
Armed hooligans, in an hour-long rampage at The Morning Sun newspaper office at South Kamalapur in the city Thursday night, damaged equipment and goods worth about taka 43 lakh.

A security guard of the daily newspaper, who was on duty during the incident, said that five armed men had barged into the compound and ransacked the ground and first floors of the four-storeyed building.

They damaged five computer terminals, an image writer and a laser printer, an off-set camera and a unit of the paper's printing plant, the guard said.

The newspaper office was closed for the holy Eid-ul Azha

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Eid-ul Azha prayers at the Baitul Mukarram mosque Wednesday.

— Star photo

ADP utilisation increases

By Inam Ahmed

The utilisation of Annual Development Programme (ADP) allocations rose to 51 per cent against the revised ADP during the July-April period this fiscal year, showing a "positive trend" over last year's performance, Planning Commission sources said.

Last year, the figure was about 44 per cent for the same period.

"Though the implementation rate is still below the desired level, it is obvious that the taka amount spent from the ADP has increased," a high official of the Planning Commission said on condition of anonymity. He pointed out

that this year's revised ADP of Tk 8121 crore was higher by about Tk 1000 crore from the revised ADP.

Meanwhile, the ECNEC has already okayed several stern measures to improve ADP utilisation of fiscal 1993-94.

From the next fiscal year, both the individual ministries and the Planning Commission will review monthly reports of project implementation.

During the exercise, problems hindering implementation will be pinpointed and immediate actions will be taken to remove them, sources said.

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Eid-ul-Azha celebrated

The holy Eid-ul-Azha was celebrated throughout the country Wednesday, reports BSS.

The main Eid congregation in the capital city was held at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque.

Speaker Sheikh Razaque Ali and cabinet members among others offered their prayer at the Baitul Mukarram Mosque.

Besides, Eid congregations were also held in different city mosques.

The government had announced a three-day public holiday on the occasion beginning on Tuesday. Special prayers were offered at all Eid congregations seeking divine blessings for the continued peace, progress and prosperity.

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Call to go slow on turtle exports

By Sharier Khan

Indiscriminate export of turtles and crabs will harm the ecological balance of the country and will threaten these species if the government does not intervene soon, fears the Wildlife Society of Bangladesh.

According to Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) statistics, export of turtles, tortoises and crabs are booming.

Turtles and crabs are internationally recognized as protected species.

In nine months since July '92, export of crabs fetched Tk 11.19 crore while Tk 5.95 crore was earned from turtles.

Earlier export records show that crabs fetched Tk 5.56 crore in '91-92 while turtle exports brought Tk 5.07 crore in '87-88.

The Wildlife Society of Bangladesh observed that the crabs and turtles were caught without any regard to the species' conservation in the country.

The exporters also more or less share the society's views. When contacted, an exporter said, "Although turtle exports have increased remarkably, it can not be continued much longer due to a lack of turtle and crab culture in the country."

Professor of the Zoology Department of the Dhaka University and leading organiser of the Wildlife Society Kazi Zaker Hossain, said that most of the crabs and turtles were caught during their mating and egg-laying seasons.

"For this reason the reproduction of these species is being threatened," the Professor said. "And soon one day you will find these species on the brink of

extinction, as happened in the case of frogs."

He said that he found egg-bearing turtles being sold in Mirpur and added that the meat is sold after disposing off the eggs of the slain turtles.

The species are mostly caught from the Sundarbans, Barisal, Satkhira and Faridpur. Only five to 10 per cent of the total exports are being hauled from the Bay of Bengal.

The country exports these mostly to Hong Kong and Singapore. In the international market, the species are priced at around 6 US dollars per kg, equivalent to Tk 240.

The exporters who mostly sell the spotted turtles and mud crabs, commonly available in the country, are, however, not happy with the internal market situation.

"There is no stability of turtle and crab prices" one exporter remarked. The price of crabs ranges between Tk 20 and Tk 160 a kilo and the price of turtles between Tk 45 and Tk 110 per kg.

The Wildlife Society has urged the government on several occasions to restrict such exports.

"The government can at least restrict crab and turtle poaching during their breeding season and encourage farming for sustainable export of the species without disturbing the ecological balance," Society members argue.

Bangladesh started turtle export from 75-76 (total export earnings Tk 17,000) and crabs from 77-78 (total export earnings Tk 23,000) in those initial years.

Not enough animals for 'qurbani'

By Staff Correspondent

Many devotees failed to offer 'qurbani' on Eid day because of an unexpected shortage of cattle and goats in the city cattle markets on the eve of this year's Eid-ul-Azha.

Buyers were frustrated after they could not find any cattle or goats, even at exorbitant prices, especially from Tuesday late afternoon.

Till Monday, supply of sacrificial animals was reportedly plenty and sales at the 17 temporary city cattle markets were rather poor.

Cattle sellers at various markets said that a sudden rush of buyers from Tuesday morning, just after the heavy downpour, cleared the markets of almost all the animals. During the rush, prices of a Tk 5,000-6,000 cow or bull went up to as high as Tk 8,000 to 10,000 and goats which would normally have fetched about Tk 1,500 went for Tk 3,000 or more. With too many buyers for too few animals, there were even reports of quarrels and scuffles among them at certain markets.

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King Fahd blasts fundamentalists

MAKKAH (Saudi Arabia), June 4: King Fahd of Saudi Arabia Tuesday made his strongest ever attack on Muslim extremism accusing militant groups of resorting to the 'law of the jungle', reports AFP.

"Islam can never lead to confrontation, violence and extremism," he told heads of official delegations following the annual pilgrimage, or Hajj, to the religion's holiest sites in Makkah. He said fundamentalist violence, which has caused hundreds of deaths in Egypt and Algeria, was the result of "thoughtless and unorganised reactions to abnormal situations, and mistaken interpretations (of Islam) which must be corrected."

The King said no social wrongs could justify "resorting to force, destruction and the law of the jungle... or the elimination of the state's authority and attacks on the security of citizens and the nations."

It was the strongest ever attack by the Saudi leader on extremism in the Islamic world.

However, he accused the West of blowing it up out of proportion, presenting Islam as "a force which will destroy human civilisation and turn humanity back to the middle ages."