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Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia greeting US Ambassador David N Merrill at a reception at her official residence on Eid Day. — Star photo

Eid celebrated

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Solakia in Kishoreganj district, where about 1.5 million devotees joined the prayer. Eid congregations were held at Eidgahs and mosques throughout the country.
After the congregation, Muslims sacrificed animals to follow the teaching of Hazrat Ibrahim (AS).
The government had earlier declared a three-day Eid holiday beginning on Thursday and chalked out an elaborate programme for the festival. Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar put out special programmes on the day.
Dhaka city wore a festive look on the occasion. Road islands and the main city thoroughfares were tastefully decorated with national flags and bunting reading 'Eid Mubarak' both in Arabic and Bangla. Dhaka City Corporation also erected arches at places.
Earlier, President Shahabuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Opposition Leader Begum Khaleda Zia gave separate messages greeting the people on the occasion, wishing a happy Eid.
On the Eid-day, the President hosted two receptions at Bangabhaban, one for foreign diplomats and the other for local dignitaries which was attended by Chief Justice ATM Afzal, former President Mohammadullah, ministers, judges of the Supreme Court.

MPs. Chiefs of three services, editors, vice chancellors, journalists and high civil and military officials.
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, currently in Saudi Arabia to perform Hajj, celebrated Eid-ul-Azha with Bangladeshi pilgrims there on Thursday last, a message received here said.
BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad Begum Khaleda Zia made a courtesy call on the President at Bangabhaban on Eid day evening. She stayed with the President for sometime and exchanged Eid greetings with him. BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP, was also present.
The BNP chief also hosted a reception at her official Minto Road residence on the Eid day and exchanged greetings with the guests. Heads of diplomatic missions, leaders of different professional groups, leaders and workers of BNP and its front organisations, teachers, former diplomats, lawyers and journalists attended the reception. Besides, Begum Khaleda Zia also visited the Mazar of former President Ziaur Rahman and offered Fataha on the Eid day.
On the Eid-day, improved diets were served to jail inmates, patients in hospital, and in baby homes, child care centres and destitute welfare centres.

Cooperation with Russia discussed

Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan and Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation G B Karasin discussed prospects of cooperation between the two countries, reports BSS.
According to a message received in the city yesterday, the discussion took place during the visit of Farooq Sobhan to Moscow from April 13 to 15 for annual consultations.

Warm reception to Moni in Comilla

COMILLA, Apr 20: Enamul Hoque Moni was accorded a warm reception at local stadium when he visited his village home today, reports UNB.
The 29-year left arm spinner and middle order batsman was given a motorbikes escort from Dhaka-Chittagong highway to the local stadium soon after his pick-up reached the town road.
A large number of people who came to see their hero also participated in the rally that paraded different city roads before ending at the local stadium.
The organiser Comilla Cricketers' Association gave a crest to the 6th ICC winning squad member in the function.

Unika Devi

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Turning to the insurgency problem, Unika said, "We lost huge taxes which were forcibly taken away by Shantibahini at gunpoint from our inhabitants."
Unika informed that she is planning to meet the Prime Minister to request her to restore their full traditional kingship and tribal leadership.
Unika's family of kingship comprising about three lakh inhabitants. Her father Mompure Sain died in 1984 and her mother Queen Nihar Devi in 1991. Of the rest two, Chakma Circle is based in Rangamati while Bomang Circle in Bandarban Hill District respectively.

JP: Dialogue

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party, resignation of party Secretary General Anwar Hossain Manju from the cabinet and democratisation of the party constitution. Their demands also included an end to the women related scandals centering the party chairman.

Maniknagar fire

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shanties were burnt to ashes. Demra Police, quoting the local people, said the miscreants fled the spot soon after setting fire to the slum. Police were yet to arrest any one in this connection last night.
According to UNB, a group of terrorists set fire to the slum after a clash with their rivals leaving some 200 houses gutted. The clash ensued over establishing supremacy in the slum which is a stronghold of phen-sidly traders, said a witness of the incident.
UNB's DMCH correspondent said, three victims of the incident were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in critical condition.
Of them, Kamal Hossain 22, received bullet wounds in police firing while Amjad 15, and Swapan 12, were chopped by lethal weapons.

Holiday mood

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holiday hangover also had its mark on the floor as attendance of brokers was less than normal.
The Motijheel commercial area, the hub of the country's economic activities, wore almost a deserted look.
With a thinner traffic since the holiday began on Thursday, civic life in the capital continued to have some relief from the hustle and bustle.
Meanwhile, the holiday-makers have started returning to the capital. Officials and employees, who work in government and private offices, were seen returning — some with family members by train, bus and launch.

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Mujibnagar Day

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urged them to follow the precedence set by the Mujibnagar government in accommodating different opinions for the onward march of the nation.
President Shahabuddin observed that the prime need of the day is concerted efforts of all irrespective of party and opinion for resolving the national problems.
The function was also addressed by Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Education Minister ASHK Sadeque, State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Kader, State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, State Minister for Women, Children and Cultural Affairs Dr Mozammel Hossain, State Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation Talukdar M Abdul Khaleque and Whip Prof Rafiqul Islam and local MPs.
The day was also observed across the country in befitting manner.
On this day in 1971, the first government of independent and sovereign Bangladesh was sworn in at village Baidyanath-tola in Meherpur district, which was renamed Mujibnagar.
Father of the nation Bangladesh

Hasina
From Page 1
The Prince welcoming the Prime Minister enquired about various matters such as present situation in Bangladesh, Bangladesh's relationship with the neighbouring countries and various steps taken by the Prime Minister for economic development of Bangladesh.
He expressed satisfaction for the strong fraternal relations prevailing between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia and offered assurances of all possible help and cooperation from Saudi Arabia.
Prime Minister extended an invitation to Prince Sultan to visit Bangladesh which he accepted with pleasure. He also mentioned that he would like to visit Bangladesh next year.
The Ambassador of Bangladesh to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Abdul Momen Chowdhury was present during the meeting.
Hasina also visited several Hajj camps of Bangladesh in Mina on Friday.
She enquired about the facilities in the camps and exchanged greetings with the Hajjis. The Hajjis were delighted to see the Prime Minister among them and congratulated her.
Sheikh Hasina talked to the Moallem of the camps and advised them to improve facilities for the Hajjis.
The Prime Minister was accompanied by State Minister for Religious Affairs Mawlana Nurul Islam and Bangladesh ambassador to Saudi Arabia Abdul Momen Chowdhury during the visit.

Gujral's nomination to help improve ties: Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Apr 20: A senior Pakistan government official said today that Inder Kumar Gujral's nomination as Prime Minister of India would be helpful in improving relations between two countries, reports AFP.
Gujral's statements on the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan have so far been "very hopeful," Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Advisor on Information and Culture Mushahid Hussain said.
He voiced the hope that Gujral would take "bold initiatives" to normalise relations, especially resolving the Kashmir issue through dialogue.

Bangabandhu

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were facing the trial while 14 were absconding.
The accused framed in the charge and facing the trial are: Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farooqur Rahman; Lt Col (relieved) Sultan Shabir Rashid Khan; Taheruddin Thakur, former minister of state for information; Lt Col Mohiuddin Ahmed, Acting Director, BNCC, Dhaka; Honorary Capt Abdul Wahab Joarder and Begum Zobeida Rashid, wife of Lt Col (dismissed) A Rashid Khandaker.

Economy on brink of ruination: Mannan Bhuiyan

NARSINGDI, Apr 20: BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan today said the government has brought the country's economy on the brink of ruination within 10 months, reports UNB.
He was addressing a discussion meeting at Bharaterkandi in Shibpur thana of the district.
"The government does not understand anything but the ruling party, it does not understand the difference between party, state and government," Bhuiyan said.
He alleged that public life has been paralysed due to the government's repression on and filing of false cases against political opponents.
The BNP leader criticised the government for what he called resorting to narrow party politics with the country's cricket victory. He said the government and its propaganda machine have already lost their credibility.
He called upon all patriotic people to launch a movement against the 'subservient and autocratic' of the government.
Earlier in the morning, the BNP Secretary General joined a workers' meeting and exchanged Eid greetings with his partymen at South Karar Char.
Bhuiyan also attended a preparatory meeting for a divisional conference of Jatiya atadibi Krishak Dal to held at Shibpur Pilot High School premises on April 30.
BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to attend the conference as chief guest.

Road accidents

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others injured in two road accidents in Choudhagram and Chandina thanas of Comilla district.
Police said, a worker, 25, of a truck, parked at Ramra in Choudhagram, was run over by another truck on Thursday evening while he was standing beside the parked truck. Both the trucks were bound for Chittagong.
Police seized the trucks, but their drivers fled.
In another incident, an unidentified passenger, 25, of a Chittagong-bound bus was killed and 10 were wounded as it skidded off the road while overtaking an autorickshaw and fell into a wayside pond at Gomta in Chandina thana on Friday afternoon.
The injured were given first aid at Chandina Health Complex. Police seized the bus along with the autorickshaw.
Two cases were registered with Choudhagram and Chandina police stations.
In Serajganj, a bicycle rider injured in a collision with another bicycle, succumbed to his wounds on (Sunday), police said.
Witnesses said Habibar Rahman, 45, received serious injuries as he fell into a roadside ditch with his bike after colliding head on with another bicycle Saturday night.
The accident occurred at village Hat Songachha in Sadar thana.
The other rider fled the spot with his bicycle.
Habibar was admitted to

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Employees confine Rupali Bank officials for one hr

Some employees of the Rupali Bank head office kept confined three of its general managers and one deputy general manager for about an hour yesterday protesting transfer order of several officials, reports UNB.
Bank sources said leaders of a bank employees union stormed into the office room of GM ASM Emdarul Haq at about 11 am after GMs Bazulur Rahman and Dr Jadav Chandra and DGM Abdul Hye Talukdar went there to exchange Eid greetings with Haq.
The union leaders closed the room from inside and demanded withdrawal of what they called illegal transfer order on some bank executives. They, however, left the room at about 12 noon.

Retired secretaries allowed to use airport VIP lounge

Star Report
Retired secretaries have been permitted to use the VIP lounge of airports and other entry/exit points and facilities, according to a Cabinet Division circular.
The circular issued on April 8 says, the retired secretaries to the government will fall into the 18th category of the list of persons entitled to use the VIP lounge.

Bomb factory in Tangail unearthed

TANGAIL, Apr 20: A bomb manufacturing factory was unearthed at Aleya Raipara in Sadar thana here today, reports UNB.
Acting on tip-off, a police team raided the house of one Abdur Rahman in the evening and recovered 30 bags of hand-made bombs and seven kilograms of bomb making materials.
Terrorists of different neighbouring districts reportedly collected crude bombs from this house.
The inmates of the house fled away sensing the police raid.
A case against four persons was filed.

Gujral to take oath

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to persuade him to join the government.
Front spokesman Jaipal Reddy told The Associated Press late at night that he was confident that P Chidambaram, a TMC lawmaker who was India's finance minister in the short-lived government, would again head the ministry.
He said the new administration would ensure that the budget and the finance bill pending before Parliament would be adopted without any difficulty.
"We are worried about the markets. We don't want the Sensex to crash," Reddy said referring to the 30-stock index in Bombay's main stock exchange.
Reaction
Influential Indian politicians today welcomed the nomination of Gujral as the 12th premier, saying he had stature, vision and experience.
The Congress (I) party, which renewed its backing to the United Front coalition after it ditched Prime Minister Deve Gowda and fielded Gujral in his place, said it could not fault the choice on any count.
"It is the efficiency of the man which will keep the United Front united," Congress spokesman Ved Prakash said of the 13-party alliance.
"We hope there will be proper coordination between United Front and the Congress."
M Farooqi, a spokesman for the Communist Party of India, a constituent of the centre-left coalition, said Gujral was first among equals.
"He is known all over world and knows four languages. He is the consensus man," he said of the 77-year-old former diplomat and two-time foreign minister.
Farooqi's colleague Atul Kumar Anjan echoed him.
"He has a brilliant track record. He is clean and has a very good background. He will rise to the occasion and the government will last its full term."

Pakistan confirms 39 deaths in Mina fire

ISLAMABAD, Apr 20: Struggling to identify those Hajj pilgrims from Pakistan who died in the tragic fire in Saudi Arabia, Pakistani officials said Sunday they have 39 confirmed deaths, but expect that figure to rise, reports AP.
A fire last Tuesday that ravaged a tent village for Hajj pilgrims to Islam's holiest site at Makkah in Saudi Arabia killed more than 300 people, most of them Indians and Pakistanis.
"When we release a new name we immediately get thousands of calls from worried relatives saying they had a relative at Makkah by that name," said Mian Mohammed Iqbal, an official at an emergency center in Islamabad.
Iqbal said it was likely more Pakistanis died in the blaze, but said it may be another week before their identities were firmly established.
AFP adds from Makkah: A total of 1,537 Hajj pilgrims were injured in an enormous fire which swept through their camp near Makkah, leaving 343 people dead, a Saudi minister said.
Health Minister Ossama Ibn Abdel Majid Shabkashi said 25 of the wounded were still in hospital, some of them in a coma.

Hides & skins

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up to 70 per cent of their loans were disqualified."
Tanners Association members and others concerned said they had met both the Finance Minister and the Industries Minister on April 2 and were assured of sufficient funding to buy hides and skins.
"On April 4, we again met the Bangladesh Bank Governor and Managing Directors of the banks and were assured of the fundings," said Mozaffar. He said only fifteen to twenty tanners were financially strong enough to spend their own money for the procurement.
Others who suffered losses this year were small seasonal investors such as students, butchers and unemployed youths who bought the hides and skins moving from door to door during the Eid. They bought those with high prices but sold at almost half the prices. Mozaffar claimed.

Nine murdered

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Thursday evening.
Later, they dropped the injured police personnel beside the Tejaon rail station in the city. The colleagues of Feroz found him at about 9:45 pm and rushed to DMCH where doctors declared him dead.
A group of armed youths, coming by motorbikes, gunned down Mohammad Shahjahan, 28, a BNP activist while he was passing Mirpur Section 6 area by a rickshaw on the Eid day evening.
Some local people rushed him to DMCH. But doctors declared him dead.
Shahjahan, son of Mazharul Islam, was a resident of 25/A Charanghat at Jigatola.
A young man, Shahadat Hossain, 30, was beaten to death at Rayerbazar on Thursday afternoon. He was a resident of 3/H Rayerbazar Staff Quarter in West Dhanmondi 15.
Harunur Rashid, 11, received bomb injuries when a group of people attacked Kamrangir Char slum in Lalbagh thana on Friday afternoon.
He was admitted to DMCH and later succumbed to his injuries. His father's name is Wajuddin Ahmed.
Unidentified people severely beat up Fayeuddin, 30, at Mohakhali bus terminal on Saturday afternoon. He died on way to the DMCH.
A resident of City Corporation Staff Quarter at Mohakhali in the city, Fayeuddin was son of one Saberuddin.
Mentally retarded Mohammad Ali, 5, was seriously injured when his uncle hit on him the head by a stick at his village at Masampur of Daudkandi thana in Comilla on Thursday afternoon.
He was first admitted to a local hospital and later shifted to the DMCH where the minor boy succumbed to his head wounds at about 8:30 pm on the day.
Mohammad Hanif, 22, was seriously wounded in a mass beating in the city's Kotwali area in the small hours on Thursday. He succumbed to his wounds at Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital (SSMCH).
On Thursday, Zahurul Islam Ripon, 18, was injured by a

N'ganj murder

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of theft and mugging against him.
In another incident one Sagar, 45, gatekeeper of a knitwear company, was allegedly beaten to death early morning Thursday, according to a case lodged by the wife of the victim with Fatullah Police Station. Police also quoted the owner of the knitwear factory as claiming that Sagar jumped from the roof of the building and died.
One Jamaluddin, 40, an alleged member of a gang of dacoits, was killed on Thursday night while he was returning from Gohardi village under Fatullah Police Station, police said. The killing was sequel to an earlier rivalry between two groups of dacoits, police said adding Jamaluddin was wanted in connection with several cases of dacoity.
Samiron Begum, wife of Jamaluddin, lodged a case with Fatulla police.
The body of an unidentified man was recovered by Sadar thana police from Shitalakhyia river near Madhulaghat yesterday morning, police said.
Bodies of all the four deceased were sent to the Narayanjan General Hospital for autopsy, said medical sources.

Accord signed

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The ways and means to strengthen bilateral relations in the fields of trade and investment were also discussed at the talks, officials said.
Thai Deputy Foreign Minister Pitak Intrawithyanunt, who arrived here yesterday on a three-day visit, led his country's delegation while State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury led the home team at the talks.
Presently, Bangladesh-Thailand cooperation is limited to certain sectors, including trade, culture and education.
Describing Dhaka-Bangkok relations as excellent, the State Minister said: "Our government is keen to build a superstructure of political, economic and commercial ties with Thai government on this foundation."
Chowdhury requested Thai government to help Bangladesh play a sectoral partner in ASEAN.
He also asked the Thai government to stop the recurrence of harassment of Bangladeshi tourists and businessmen at Bangkok airport.
The Thai Deputy Foreign Minister appreciated the open market economy and liberal investment policy pursued by the present government of Bangladesh.
He stressed the need for developing close economic cooperation through private sectors.
The proposed Growth Triangle comprising India, Sri Lanka and Thailand figured in the discussion centring Bangladesh's desire to become its member.



A slum in flames at Maniknagar in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Group of terrorists at Shyampur

group of terrorists at Shyampur. He was first admitted to Shyampur Match Factory Hospital and later shifted to the SSMCH where he succumbed to his injuries.
Of the dead, eight bodies were sent to the DMCH morgue while two to SSMCH. Separate cases were filed with police.

Kibria

From Page 1
ister Sirajul Hossain Khan, among others, took part.
Addressing the closing session of the preparatory meeting, State Minister for Planning Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir said the concept of sub-regional grouping was in no way against the spirit of SAARC.