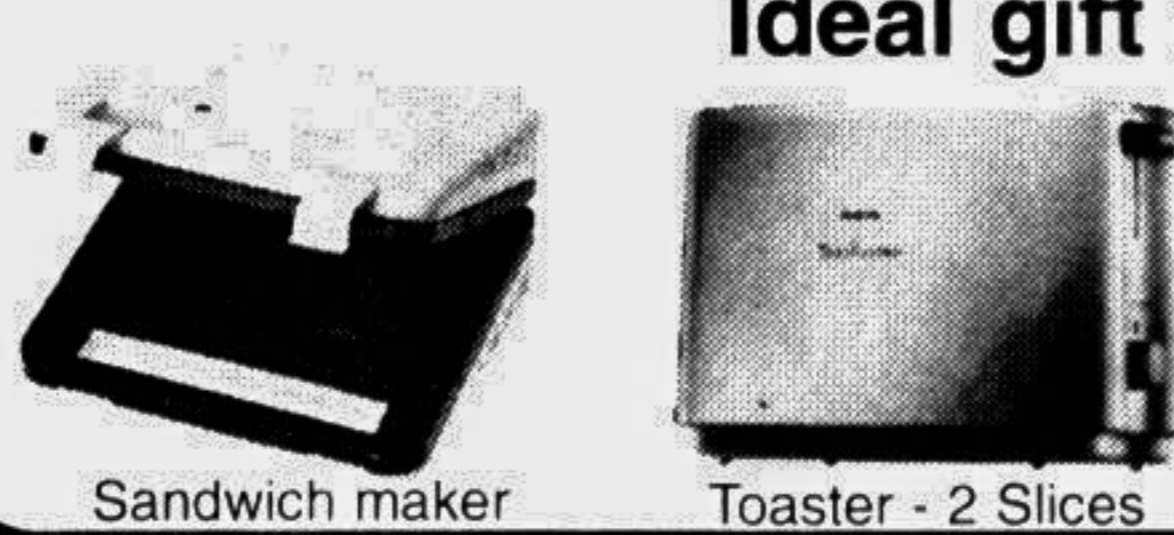


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**PHILIPS**

**Meena tragedy: Only 66 victims identified**

MAKKAH, Apr 11: Families of 118 Hajj pilgrims killed in a stampede at Meena prepared today to bury their dead in the holy city of Makkah, amid accusations that pilgrims failed to heed crowd control warnings, reports AFP.

Two days after Thursday's tragedy during the 'stoning of Satan', religious ritual, authorities have succeeded in firmly identifying only 66 of the dead.

Several pilgrims have already been buried at a cemetery known as Janat al-Ma'ala or heavenly paradise, near Makkah and more relatives are expected to ask for their loved ones to be laid to rest at Islam's most sacred site.

Of the 118, who were trampled or plunged to their death on Thursday, the authorities have identified 24 Indians, nine Pakistanis, nine Turks, seven Algerians, five Saudi nationals, four Moroccans, three Bangladeshis, two Egyptians, two Indonesians and one Kuwaiti.

Muslims believe that those who die performing the Hajj, one of the five pillars of Islam and a duty at least once in a lifetime for all who can afford it, are granted immediate entry to paradise.

The Saudi kingdom traditionally allows the faithful who die during the pilgrimage to be buried at Makkah, the birthplace of the Prophet Mohammed (SM), or Medina, Islam's second most sacred site.

Saudi pilgrimage minister Mahmud Ibn Mohamed Safar told the Al-Sharq al-Awsat newspaper on Friday that the catastrophe was the result of pilgrims failing to heed advice given at the entry and exit to the pillar area.

Zikrur Rahman, the Indian Consul in charge of the Hajj, whose country suffered the heaviest toll, said up to seven Indian pilgrims have already been buried at their families request.

A Turkish official said the nine victims would be buried at Makkah.

Saudi Health Minister Osama Ibn Abdel Majid Shabbakhi said most of the pilgrims injured during the crush had been released from hospital.

Of the 162 injured pilgrims admitted to hospitals in Meena, Makkah and Jeddah after the stampede, only around a dozen are being kept under supervision," he told Al-Riyad newspaper.



BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia presiding over the party Standing Committee meeting at her Minto Road official residence in the city yesterday. —Star photo

**One killed in Barisal clash**

**From Staff Correspondent**  
BARISAL, Apr 11: One person was hacked to death and at least 10 people were injured in a clash between two groups of villagers in Harinathpur Union under Hizla thana today.

The dead was identified as Mohasin.

He was stabbed severely during the clash that erupted at about 11 am in Tunchar village. The clash occurred over a land dispute.

Immediately, Mohasin was rushed to Barisal Medical College Hospital but he died on the way.

**BNP: Double standard**

**From Page 1**  
The meeting said the government, ignoring its assurance of a general discussion on the CHT accord in parliament, has given a notice for introducing a bill in the House to legalise the 'black accord.'

The BNP standing committee protested the government's 'double standard' and demanded realisation of the 4-point agreement.

It called upon the people to observe 'protest day' through rallies and processions at district and thana headquarters on Monday and countrywide half-day hartal on April 15.

The meeting blamed the government for failing in all sectors and making the country's sovereignty at stake by sacrificing national interest to another country.

'Country's sovereignty is at stake due to weak-kneed foreign policy,' said the press release.

It alleged that the government after assuming power sacrificed the country's interest by signing the Ganges water sharing treaty with India.

The government, during its 22-month rule, has created crises in the country instead of resolving the problems, the meeting said.

It said due to inefficiency and wrong policy of the government thousands of workers have become unemployed following closure of hundreds of mills and factories.

Pointing to the grim situation of jute and leather sectors, it said that the price of skin of sacrificial animals was not reasonable during this Eid-ul-Azha.

Many traders could not purchase the hide due to lack of money. The country's leather is smuggled out to India as borders remain open, the meeting said.

On law and order, the meeting said that killing, dacoity, hijack, repression and rape of children and women have become a regular feature.

The government has failed to arrest the real culprits of rape cases including those of minor Tania, Musami and Runa.

The meeting directed the party leaders and workers to make its month-long programme a success.

Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Saifur Rahman, Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder, Oli Ahmed, Khandaker Delwar Hossain attended the meeting among others.

Barrister Nazmul Huda, Shamsul Islam, MK Anwar, Barrister Zamiruddin Sirker and Barrister Ziaur Rahman Khan were present as special invitees.

**CID to probe murder of Panchhari UP chairman**

**From Our Correspondent**  
KHAGRACHHARI, Apr 11: CID police has been given the charge of investigating the recent murders of Panchhari UP Chairman Kusum Priyo Chakma and his companion Pradip Lal Chakma, Deputy Commissioner of Khagrachhari AKM Zafur Hossain told newsmen today.

They were killed by some unidentified people last week at Latiban when they were returning to Panchhari after a meeting with Shantu Larma, chief of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS).

The killings created tension between the two groups of tribesmen in Panchhari. Some former members of Shantibahini are leaving the town in anticipation of trouble.

Following the murders, Ruyayan Dewan, a leader of the PCJSS had demanded security for the former cadres of Shantibahini, the armed wing of the PCJSS.

The DC said a high-level meeting was held at Panchhari to review the law and order situation. The meeting was attended by the SP of Khagrachhari, Lutfar Rahman, high military officials and tribal and non-tribal leaders.

The DC told the meeting that an enquiry committee would also be formed to probe the murders.

A dissident faction of the PCJSS belonging to Pahari Chhatra Parishad (Dipty), Pahari Gano Parishad and Hill Women's Federation staged demonstrations in Panchhari protesting the killings of the tribal leaders.

They handed over a memorandum to the administration demanding arrest of the killers within three days, compensation to the families of the deceased and security of the people.

None has been arrested in connection with the killing.

UNB adds from Khagrachhari: The situation at Bhechhari in Dighinala thana was calm today.

Section 144, clamped following a clash between the tribal and non-tribal people on Thursday, remained enforced in the area.

Local people said, BDR and police were patrolling the area while an army contingent was deployed to help the civil administration prevent further violence.

The situation at Dighinala turned tense on Thursday when a group of armed tribal men attacked a cluster village at Kopakhall following the killing of a boy and his sister on Tuesday.

**Tribals urge govt to ensure all facilities to returnees**

KHAGRACHHARI, Apr 11: A meeting of the cross-section of people at Porachhara today reviewed the facilities extended to the tribals who recently returned home from refugee camps in India, reports UNB.

Presided over by Upendra Lal Chakma, an ex-MP, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Nabin Kumar Tripathy, Jatindra Lal Tripathy, local Awami League leaders Noor Nabi Chowdhury, Mohammad Zahedul Islam, Saleh Ahmed, Maung Marina, Ranjit Kumar Dey and leaders of tribal refugees who returned home.

The speakers pointed to the 20-point pledge for extending various facilities to the refugees on return home and said some of the commitments have not been fulfilled.

They urged the government to provide all facilities committed to the returnees.

**Biju Utsab begins today**

KHAGRACHHARI, Apr 11: Traditional 'Biju Utsab', a religious and social festival of tribesmen in the hill tracts region, begins tomorrow amid great enthusiasm to welcome the Bangla new year, reports UNB.

The festival is observed for three days, the last two days of the Bengali month of Chaitra and the first day of Baisakh, to bid farewell to the old year and welcome the new one.

Although the festival is observed through traditional cultural programmes by three main tribes — Chakma, Marma and Tripura — other tribes also take part in the celebration.

**Many cos unwilling**

**From Page 1**  
also advising them to observe the market for some time before going public, the sources added.

The investors' overwhelming response to a couple of companies, however, generated a little hope among some companies seeking to float shares. Of the two said companies, one was oversubscribed by four times.

'We see a little ray of light in the market now, and are thinking of floating shares soon,' Managing Director of one of the 15 companies that got consent to raise money from the market said. 'We did not take risk to float shares in the depressed market where investors continuously rejected the IPOs.'

Regarding the oversubscription of a company recently, an SEC official said, investors have more confidence in companies with foreign investment.

Investors have lost faith with local companies as many of these listed companies do not pay dividends regularly. On the contrary, joint venture enterprises have a good track record of disbursing dividends in time and because of this the company, despite press reports about concealing information, was oversubscribed,' the official said requesting anonymity.

The SEC official attributed the depression in the market to these issues. 'The problem is that the issuers are looking after the interest of the company than the shareholders.'

Low rates of dividends forces shareholders to off-load shares in the market resulting in a selling spree which depresses the market, and for a new issuer, it becomes risky to float shares, he added.

**Ctg murder**

**From Page 1**  
the Ice Factory, where he was gunned down by the assailants.

Police, aided by local people, rushed Kajo to the hospital where the attending doctors declared him dead.

Another report says, Panchlaish police today arrested Humayun Ahmed, an alleged terrorist, after an exchange of gunfire with his gang. Humayun was wanted in a number of murder and abduction cases.

Police recovered two locally made guns, one cut-rifle and one Chinese rifle from his possession.

Police said the gunbattle took place near Humayun's den behind the government Women's College at Khulshi. Humayun was nabbed but others managed to flee.

**Rape: Condition of 3-year-old girl improving**

**By Staff Correspondent**  
The condition of the three-year-old girl who was raped on Monday at North Bishil under Mirpur thana of the city further improved yesterday, CMH sources said.

The girl, raped by an unidentified person at the toilet of Dargah Government Primary School at Mirpur Section One, was transferred to the Combined Military Hospital from DMCH late Monday night.



The Eucalyptus trees at Khejurbagan roundabout on Manik Mia Avenue in the city are being cut for widening the roads around. —Star photo

**24 stabbed to death in Rwanda**

**KIGALI, Apr 11:** Twenty-four people from two families were stabbed to death overnight in Musambira, central Rwanda, probably by Hutu rebels, the Rwandan information agency reported today, says AFP.

Several of the dead were children who had been decapitated, two people from the same families were reported missing, the agency said.

The report spoke of a large number of assassinations in the attack in Gitarama prefecture. Ten people were killed in the same commune last October.

On Wednesday, suspected Hutu rebels killed 26 people in Buringa, in the same prefecture, after they freed more than 500 prisoners from the local jail.

On Friday, military and medical sources said the army had launched a sweep against Hutu rebels in northern Rwanda after a rebel attack left 33 civilians and 20 rebels dead.

**4 murdered**

**From Page 1**  
lalpur, 5 miles away from here, on Chuadanga-Meherpur Road. Shariuddin Jhonto was shot dead at village Satintola. He is a resident of Mahajampur under Meherpur thana.

Earlier on April 9 two young boys — Asgar, and Osman 20, — both from village Belgachi under Alamdanga thana, were brutally murdered by the armed miscreants. Their beheaded bodies were recovered by the Alamdanga police from a field at Khejurtala.

**Richardson to press**

**From Page 1**  
one working day — Monday — includes meeting Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, followed by a luncheon, and meeting Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad Begum Khaleda Zia in his revised schedule, his courtesy call on the President has been dropped.

Richardson has also sought meetings with Finance Minister SAMS Kibria and Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed, sources said.

He will be accompanied by Karl Inderturth, US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia and Bruce Rifdel, Special Assistant to the US President and Senior Director, Near East and South Asian Affairs, National Security Council. The team will arrive by a special US government aircraft and leave early Tuesday.

Richardson is due to visit a rehabilitation centre in the city where women and children rescued from traffickers are staying. He will address a seminar on 'Making Democracy Work in the Twenty-First Century' at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies on April 13. He will visit a Grameen Bank Micro-credit project the same day at Narayanganj.

Richardson will stay at the residence of the US ambassador during Bangladesh trip.

This is the fourth visit of Bill Richardson to Bangladesh. He came once in 1995 and twice in 1996. On three previous occasions, he came as a US Congressman and member of the House Intelligence Committee. He reportedly played an important role in negotiation process between then government and the opposition parties during the political standoff prior to the last general elections.

Officials said this would be the first ministerial level visit from the US side in many years. Congressman Cunningham would be coming on a short trip to Bangladesh on April 15, a day after the departure of Richardson.

Richardson would now be arriving in Bangladesh from Bahrain on the second leg of his seven nation tour which began yesterday. The other countries are India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Afghanistan.

**Crime: Ctg**

**From Page 1**  
tion.

But the arrest was followed by sporadic gunshots and rampage by BCL supporters, damaging passing vehicles at Nandankanon, Buddhahomondir Road, GEC crossing and Sholoshahar.

During an exchange of fire between BCL supporters and police, a constable was injured.

On April 6, scores of vehicles were damaged both in Agrabad and Chawkbazar areas by activists of BCL and Shibir and police arrested Shibir-backed terrorist Nasir and ring leader of BCL-backed Kader bahini Abdul Kader from the city.

On April 2 and 3, political violence erupted in the city and police and supporters of BNP were locked in clashes in different areas. The city also witnessed a half-day hartal that paralysed normal life.

**Hardliners within N Ireland's biggest party oppose deal**

BELFAST, Apr 11: Hardliners within Northern Ireland's biggest party threatened today to oppose the compromise peace deal accepted by their leader — the first of many expected challenges to the historic accord, reports AP.

Ulster Unionist chief David Trimble — whose pro-British Protestant party opposes Irish unity and is central to making the agreement work — faced rebellion within his ranks the day after agreeing to the accord aimed at ending 30 years of violence.

Trimble went to the Ulster Unionists' downtown Belfast headquarters early today to sell the settlement to the party's 110-member executive committee. While Northern Ireland would remain part of the United Kingdom with a new Assembly, the Protestants and Catholics in this new administration would be required to forge formal links with the rest of Ireland, too.

The Belfast talks chairman, former US Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, won acceptance Friday from all eight participating parties after 22 months of negotiations.

But half of the Ulster Unionists' 10 members in the British Parliament have criticised or condemned outright key aspects of the compromise: early releases for Irish Republican Army prisoners, a role for the IRA-allied Sinn Fein party in the new Assembly, and requirements that this new administration cooperate in a North-South Ministerial Council with the Irish Republic.

Trimble has conceded on almost every point he said he would stand on," said William Thompson, an Ulster Unionist lawmaker who vowed to vote 'no' when the accord is subjected to a referendum May 22 in Northern Ireland.

The IRA and Sinn Fein have

bombed themselves to the negotiating table, and now they can have one of their people sitting on the Assembly's executive. Who would have imagined that could have happened a year ago?" he said.

A veteran Unionist lawmaker, William Ross, said the accord wasn't "a peace deal" but rather "a full-blown surrender to IRA demands." He emphasised that Trimble couldn't set policy for the party.

Such blunt dissent so early is worrying in a land whose only previous attempt to forge compromise was destroyed in 1974 by an Ulster Unionist split and a widespread Protestant strike.

In a BBC interview, Mitchell acknowledged that the accord he worked so hard to achieve faced fundamental obstacles that would only be cleared if Protestant and Catholic politicians engaged in "good-faith working together."

**Koreas hold first round of talks**

BEIJING, Apr 11: Rivals North and South Korea held their first official talks in four years today, ending two hours of initial discussions with an agreement to continue their meetings tomorrow, reports AP.

South Korean officials emerged from the meeting with an upbeat assessment, saying the North appeared willing to work on thorny issues such as the reunions of families divided by the antagonisms between the rival governments.

On both sides there appeared to be a greater willingness to cooperate in resuming official contacts that were suspended after the death of the late North Korean leader Kim Il Sung in 1994.

"North Korea is sending a positive signal to our new government's approach to the North. They are offering to have more cooperation," said South Korean Deputy Unification Minister Jeong Se-hyun, who led his delegation.

At North Korea's request, South Korea offered to provide fertilizer as well as seeds and agricultural equipment to help build up the North's crumbling farm sector and stave off famine.

**Road accidents in two districts kill six**

**By Staff Correspondent**  
At least six persons were killed and more than 50 people were injured in two road accidents in Satkhira and Mymensingh yesterday.

**Our Correspondent from Satkhira reports:** Four persons were killed and 23 people including six women and three children injured when a minibus fell into a roadside ditch at Jugubar under Kalaroa thana on Satkhira-Jessore road yesterday morning.

The minibus was going to Satkhira from Jessore, police said.

The dead are Akbar Ali, 38, and Shahjuddin 32, of village Parmananda Kati under Kalligong thana, Ershad Ali, 40 of village Jhhikra under Kalaroa thana and an unidentified young man aged about 18.

The twenty three injured people have been admitted to Satkhira Sadar Hospital and Kalaroa thana health complex. They are Rafiqul 22, Mahadeb 52, Rizia 32, Monoara 36, Kanak Pal 25, Nurul Islam 40, Rabiul 23, Momena Khatun 30, Ashraf 42, Piltu 10, Rizia Khatun 60, Harendra Nath 65, Sabuj 50, Sattar 60, Nazma 70, Gopal 17, Mintu 7, Joyal 13, Sahabuddin 35, Aditya 14, Shahjahan Ali 27, Murad 21, Benarani 40, and Al-Mamun 28.

Police seized the bus while

**Club official**

**From Page 1**  
para under Sabujbag thana, had not returned home. His relatives said that he had died suddenly and sent the body to his village home at Araihar thana in Narayanganj district.

Jobeda Begum, wife of Abul Bashar, suspected that his husband was murdered and informed police. The body was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy.

Jobeda filed the case after receiving the autopsy report which said that the death was a case of homicide.

**Half-day hartal**

**From Page 1**  
country would remain unchanged. It also called upon the people to participate in the demonstrations at district and thana headquarters.

The date of the hartal was earlier shifted to April 15 from April 13.

Leaders of other partners in the alliance — Jamaat-e-Islami, Jatiya Party (Z-M), Jappa, Democratic League, PNP and NDA — also attended yesterday's meeting.

**Cairn's budget**

**From Page 1**  
development was very competitive in the international market and Cairn used the best possible configuration for cheapest possible price. 'There was no wastage of resources in the development of the Sangu field,' the spokesman noted.

'To purchase equipment and set up the platform for the Sangu and to build the pipeline connecting the gasfield with the national grid, Cairn has gone to all countries of the world to get the best bargain,' he said.

On the other hand, Petro-bangla sources said that Cairn had spent lavishly in the last two years and the budget hike was its reflection.

They said the estimated production cost of Sangu by Cairn would be 14 times more than the gas produced by local BGFCL. 'It is acceptable that off-shore gas would be costlier,' commented an official. 'But to what extent?'

Meanwhile, Cairn is taking preparations for a very costly inaugural ceremony of the Sangu gasfield on April 22 which would be opened by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The ceremony would include a multi-national cultural show among other things. This cost would be recoverable from the gasfield.

'We have inaugurated the Saida gasfield recently without any formality. It is now supplying between 13 to 15 million cubic feet of gas daily,' said an official. 'Why make things costlier and make people pay for nothing?'

**Holiday mood**

**From Page 1**  
ing back to work after the Bangla New Years Day on Tuesday, which is a public holiday. The opposition BNP has called a countrywide hartal on the next day. This will offer an excuse to many to stay back.

Some shops opened for business in the city yesterday. A few vehicles plied on the streets. Even the ubiquitous rickshaws were small in numbers.

The holiday mood also affected the food shops and restaurants.

With the streets suddenly free of traffic gridlock, those who stayed back took the opportunity to visit relations and friends.

Some took their children to the meagre sources of amusement in the Shishu Park, Wonderland, Shishu Mela, Mirpur Zoo, Botanical Garden and whatever open spaces were available amidst the concrete jungle.

But the entrails and effluents, leftover from the sacrifice of thousands of animals on the Eid day, still filled the streets and alleyways.

Despite a soothing rain late Wednesday which cleaned the streets of blood, the stench continued to hang on.

The clogged drains were unable to wash away the filth.

**Nepali Congress trying to win majority support**

KATHMANDU, Apr 11: The Nepali Congress made little headway today in its efforts to form a new government following the resignation of Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa, reports AP.

The policy-making body of the Himalayan state and decided to continue dialogue with all political parties to win majority support, a party spokesman said.

The Nepali Congress with 87 lawmakers needs the backing of at least 103 members in the 205-seat House of Representatives. With the support of 19 National Democratic Party lawmakers, the party hopes to form the next government.

**OBITUARY**

**MRS REZIA HOSSAIN**  
WIFE OF LATE AL-HAJ DR. M. AFZAL HOSSAIN DIED OF CARDIAC FAILURE AT DHAKA ON SATURDAY, 11TH APRIL '98. SHE WAS 75. HER NAMAJE-JANAZA WILL BE HELD ON 12TH APRIL '98 AFTER ZOHR PRAYERS AT BANANI MOSQUE.

**QULKHWANI OF THE**  
DECEASED WILL BE HELD ON 14TH APRIL AFTER ASR PRAYERS AT HER SON'S RESIDENCE AT HOUSE-62, RD-16, BLK-A, BANANI.

FRIENDS & RELATIVES ARE REQUESTED TO ATTEND THE QUL.

**GILPIN, BILQUIS, IVAN, HIDI, MADANI, NIMMI, ETI, SHEILA, BULA & GRAND CHILDREN**

**Editor: Mahfuz Anam**  
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