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Holiday

The offices of *The Daily Star* will remain closed for four days from today to Dec 18 on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr and Victory Day.

Therefore, there will be no issue of the newspaper on Dec 16, 17, 18 & 19.

Supplement 13-16

Today's issue of *The Daily Star* contains a 4-page special supplement on 'Victory Day 2001'

Eid tomorrow if moon sighted today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eid-ul-Fitr, the greatest festival of Muslims, may be celebrated in the country on Sunday if the Shawal moon is sighted today.

If the moon is not sighted today, the Eid will be held on Monday.

The National Moon Sighting Committee will sit this evening with State Minister for Religious Affairs Mosharef Hossain Shajahan in the chair. It will receive reports from different parts of the country whether the Shawal moon has been sighted and decide when the Eid will be observed.

Meanwhile, the mad rush for Eid shopping in city has disappeared as thousands of people have left for home to celebrate the festival with their dear and near ones.

The unbearable traffic jam on city roads is one the wane. But shopping centres and market places still remain crowded till late night.

Though a three-day public holiday for the Eid and the Victory Day begins on Sunday, exodus from the city began on Thursday last as it was a public holiday. Government servants can take optional holiday today (Saturday), the last working day before the Eid vacation.

Taking chance of the heavy rush of home-goers, transport owners are realising fare almost twice the normal.

The government has drawn up a programme to celebrate the Eid. The programme includes illuminating all important public buildings with kaleidoscopic lights and hoisting the National Flag atop those.

President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina have given separate messages on the occasion.

The President in his message urged the rich to extend

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Victory Day tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Victory Day is back again with the memory of supreme sacrifices of millions for independence of the motherland.

The nation will celebrate tomorrow the 30th anniversary of its independence earned through a nine-month bloody war against the Pakistani occupation forces in 1971.

A grateful nation will pay homage to the three million martyrs and pledge afresh to build a prosperous Bangladesh free of hunger, poverty, illiteracy and deprivation as dreamt by them.

The day is a public holiday. A 31-gun salute will herald the day. The National Flag will be hoisted atop all public and public buildings.

President AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will lead the nation in

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Who did this?

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People visiting the memorial at the Rayerbazar killingfield yesterday became agitated to find the National Flag flying atop the pole although it was the Martyred Intellectuals Day.

Sources said, those gathering at the memorial site in the early morning to pay respect to the intellectuals butchered on December 14, 1971 by Pakistani occupation forces and their local collaborators

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Delhi blames Pakistan-based militants for parliament attack

AP, New Delhi

The Indian government yesterday said it had evidence that a Pakistan-based Islamic militant group carried out the suicide attack on Parliament which claimed 13 lives.

Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh said India demanded that Pakistan's government prove its commitment to fighting international terrorism by halting the activities of two Islamic militant groups, arresting their leaders and freezing their funds.

Five gunmen armed with AK-47s and explosives stormed the red sandstone Parliament complex in a suicide attack Thursday, killing six security force personnel and a gardener.

There has been no claim of responsibility.

"We have made a demarche that India has technical evidence that yesterday's terrorist attack on Parliament House was not just against the symbol of Indian democracy and the sovereignty of the

Indian people, that it was the handiwork of a terrorist organization based in Pakistan, the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba," Singh said.

India demanded that Pakistan act against that group, and the Jaish-e-Mohammed, accused of carrying out a massive suicide bombing against the Jammu-Kashmir state legislature on Oct 1. That assault claimed 40 lives.

"Pakistan has asserted that it is with the rest of the international community in combatting terrorism and that it does not promote terrorism," Singh said. "We expect that Pakistan will abide with what it says itself."

India has been skeptical of Pakistan's new role as a key ally in the US-led global war on terrorism

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More news on page 11

Transport workers unions demand 'toll' from owners

STAR REPORT

Different transport workers unions have demanded 'toll' from inter-district bus owners associations on the plea of raising funds for unemployed and other distressed workers ahead of the Eid festival.

Two unions sent letters to Bangladesh Bus-Truck Owners Association office at Gabtoli in the city demanding a toll of Tk 200 for each trip through Faridpur, to be paid in advance.

The Daily Star obtained copies of two such letters.

Faridpur Motor Workers Union at Goalchamat in the district said in a letter that on December 7, a meeting of the union decided to help unemployed union members on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr. For this, it decided to take Tk 200 and Tk 100 respectively from long distance

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Bangladeshi battery India finally to impose anti-dumping duty

MONJUR MAHMUD

Despite request from Bangladesh government, Indian commerce ministry has approved a notification imposing anti-dumping duty on lead acid battery import from Bangladesh.

The move will seriously discourage Bangladeshi exporters, a local battery manufacturer said. "New exporters would think twice before deciding to enter the Indian market."

The notification approved by Indian commerce ministry on December 7 would come into effect after gazette notification. Indian importers would then have to pay as high as 135 percent duty on lead acid battery import from Bangladesh.

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Nation pays tribute to martyrs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation observed the Martyred Intellectual Day yesterday recalling the supreme sacrifice of the worthy sons of the soil for the motherland at the fag end of the War of Independence.

On December 14, 1971, two days before surrender of the Pakistani occupation forces, noted intellectuals, journalists, teachers, doctors and other renowned personalities were taken out of their city resi

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Sehri, Iftar timing

Ramadan	Dec	Sehri	Iftar
29	15		5-17
30	16	5-09	5-18