



President Iajuddin Ahmed, Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar, Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman and LGRD Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan among others offer Eid prayers at the National Eidgah in the city Friday.

Monju visits Ershad's residence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the two factions of the Jatiyo Party, Hussain Mohammad Ershad and Anwar Hossain Monju, met for the first time in three years on the Eid day at Ershad's Baridhara residence. Jatiya Party (Monju) chief Anwar Hossain Monju made a surprise visit to Ershad's residence. Sources said that during the meeting, Ershad proposed merger of the two factions of the JP. Both Ershad and Monju told The Daily Star that it was purely a courtesy call. But leaders of both the factions of the JP believe that the meeting might mean something for JP politics in the days ahead. The JP was divided on the issue of opposing the then government in April 1999.



Prime Minister Khaleda Zia visits a bomb blast victim at the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital yesterday; a father, right above, breaks down upon hearing the death of his only son in one of the bomb blasts; and an army man, below, stands guard on a near-deserted road in Mymensingh town in the wake of a series of explosions at four movie theatres in the town that killed 17 people.

Eid celebrated

BSS, Dhaka
The holy Eid-ul-Fitr was celebrated across the country on Friday with festivity and religious fervour. The day's programme began with Eid prayers offered by millions of Muslims in mosques, eidgah, and open spaces. They sought divine blessings of Almighty Allah for the peace, progress and prosperity of the country as well as welfare of the Muslim Ummah.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Dec 9		5-12 pm
Dec 10	6-30 am	

Prayer Timings		
Dec 9		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	5-15	5-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	3-45	4-00
Maghrib	5-12	5-17
Esha	7-30	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

In the capital, the main Eid congregation was held at the National Eidgah at 8:00 am at the Supreme Court premises where President Dr Iajuddin Ahmed offered his Eid prayers. Speaker Jamir Uddin Sircar, Chief Justice Mainur Reza Chowdhury and Mayor of Dhaka Sadeque Hossain Khoka also offered their Eid prayers at the National Eidgah. Besides ministers, parliament members, judges, political leaders, journalists, cultural personalities, senior officials and renowned personalities of the city were among thousands of Muslims who offered their Eid prayers at the National Eidgah. Khatib of Baitul Mukarram National Mosque Moulana Obaidul Huq conducted the prayers. A large number of women also offered Eid prayers at the National Eidgah under a separate arrangement.

After the *Munajat*, President Ahmed exchanged Eid greetings with the devotees and embraced them. Thousands of devotees also offered Eid prayers in four congregations held at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque. In Chittagong, Eid was celebrated also with due solemnity and enthusiasm. The biggest Eid congregation was held at the MA Aziz Stadium at 8:30 am organised by Chittagong Central Eid Jamaat Committee. Two other big congregations were held successively at Jamiatul Falah Mosque at 8:30 am and 9:30 am under the auspices of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC). District administration and Chittagong Central Eid Jamaat Committee leaders said a total of 87 Eid Jamaat were held under their supervision while CCC sources said they organised 120 Eid congregations including one main Jamaat at every ward.

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Body recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

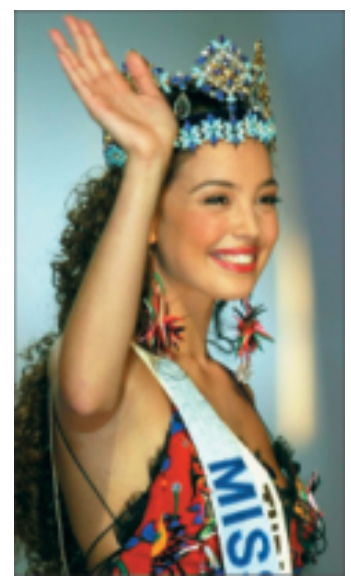
The body of a Jubo Dal activist was recovered from a secret seabeach grave in Sitakundu yesterday. Atikul Karim Tamim, 30, was killed after he was abducted nine days ago. Police arrested four persons in connection with the killing. Additional police forces were deployed in Sitakundu to prevent any outbreak of violence. Police said Tamim was killed by abductors following a dispute over a fish project. Police recovered the body on confessionals of the arrestees. The body of Tamim was sent back home after a postmortem yesterday.

Spl decoration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr this year, the Prime Minister's Office was decorated with something special, a couple of plastic palm trees—one beaming with a red neon and the other green. The decoration had a striking similarity with that of the gates of Wonderland—the popular children's park in the city. Like any other year, the PM's Tejgaon office had dazzling lights. But the pair of plastic trees drew the attention of the people. "The trees even have an illuminated set of coconuts!" noted an eyewitness.

Miss World



Miss Turkey, Azra Akin, waves to well wishers after she was crowned 2002 Miss World on Saturday at the Alexandra Palace, London.

Muggers stab student to death in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers stabbed to death a student of the Jagannath University College at Khilgaon in the city on Thursday. Mohammad Jasim, 28, an MA final year student of management, was a resident of North Jatrabari. The muggers stabbed Jasim in the chest in front of the Khilgaon Community Centre at about 10:30pm upon refusal to give them his valuables. He died on the way to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), doctors said.

Tk 80 lakh swindled out of Sonali Bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Tk 80 lakh was swindled out of the Corporate Branch of Sonali Bank, Khulna on December 4. According to a complaint lodged with police, Cashier of the Southern Sea Foods Ltd. Md. Mushfiqur Rahman and his close relative, one Titas, are involved in the swindle. But Managing Director (MD) of the Southern Sea Foods Ltd. S M Abul Hossain has refuted the charge that his cashier Mushfiqur Rahman was involved in the fraud. He has accused officials concerned of the bank of swindling the amount out of the bank. According to the MD of the Southern Sea Foods Ltd., a fish processing factory, Tk 80 lakh was withdrawn from the current account No. 279 against cheque No. 7317058 which had been missing from the cheque book. On December 3, a general diary was filed in this connection with the

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30 killed in separate road accidents

STAR DESK

At least 30 people were killed and 50 others injured in three road accidents in Jamalpur, Mymensingh and Tangail on Thursday last. In Narayanganj and Barisal, six others died in separate road mishaps during the Eid-ul-Fitr vacation. In Jamalpur, 16 people, including four women and three children, died when a cement-laden truck plunged into a wayside ditch early December 5 morning. The truck, carrying 17 passengers, most of them homebound day-labourers, from Dhaka, lost control when its front tyre burst at Hamidpur in Sadar Upazila, eight kilometres off Jamalpur town at around 5:00am. The passengers were crushed under the truck and cement bags as it went turtle. Most of the 16 victims died on the spot, the rest on the way

to the Jamalpur Sadar Hospital. Local police said the driver might have survived the accident and managed to escape. One nine-year-old child survived the accident and was admitted to the hospital. Deputy Commissioner of Jamalpur M Abdul Hashem told the state-run news agency BSS that the bodies of Shah Alam, 30, and Anisur, 28, were handed to their relatives. The local administration immediately allocated Tk 2,000 for burial of each victim. The deputy commissioner also said the rest of the bodies were to be kept at the morgue of the Sadar Hospital till Friday morning. If any of the bodies remains unidentified, the district administration will arrange for the burial, he said. At around noon, the same day, at

least five people were killed and 20 others injured, six critically, when two passenger buses collided head-on on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at Bharaduba in Bhaluka Upazila. Mymensingh Superintendent of Police Motiur Rahman told the BSS that the accident had taken place at about 12:00 when a Kishoreganj-bound passenger bus rammed into another from the opposite direction. Two passengers died on the spot, two at the Bhaluka Hospital while the other at the Mymensingh Sadar Hospital. Six critically injured passengers are now under treatment at the Mymensingh Sadar Hospital, while others were let go after first aid. Drivers of both the buses managed to escape, the officer-in-charge of Bhaluka Police Station told the BSS.

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90 shops at Karwan Bazar gutted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ninety shops were burnt down and another 30 partially in a fire at the Hasina Kitchen Market of Karwan Bazaar Friday night. Fire-brigade officials said the fire was sparked at 10:25pm by an electric short circuit in a shop and spread to other shops on the eastern side of the Janata Tower. However, no casualty was reported, said sources. A preliminary estimate by the authorities put the loss at over Tk 1 crore. Fire fighters saved properties worth over Tk 2 crore from the devastating fire on the night of the Eid-ul-Fitr. Another source said the properties worth over Tk 10 crore were gutted in the fire.

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Police and army personnel make their way through the rubble and debris of the burnt-down shops at the Hasina Kitchen Market of Karwan Bazaar in the city. A fire sparked by an electric short circuit gutted a large number of shops Friday night.