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People's Right to Know

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Eid holiday extended by a day

Hajj on Jan 19

AGENCIES, Dhaka/Riyadh

The government yesterday announced a four-day general vacation (including a Friday) starting from January 20 on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha.

Holiday on January 20 as announced earlier will be in force, said an official press release yesterday, in addition to holidays on January 22 and January 23 on account of Eid-ul-Azha.

With the weekly holiday on Jan 21, the Eid vacation this time will be four days.

Reuters from Riyadh adds: Saudi

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Gas pipeline deal to be inked by April

Dhaka wants trade corridor, power transit from Delhi at the same time

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Yangon, Dhaka and New Delhi are set to sign a transnational deal by April on an overland pipeline project involving a private sector consortium to transmit Myanmar gas through Bangladesh to India.

At the same time, Dhaka and Delhi are expected to ink a bilateral agreement granting Bangladesh access to the low-cost hydroelectric

ity of Nepal and Bhutan using India's power grid and a trade corridor to the Himalayan kingdoms through Indian territory. The accord will also provide for measures to reduce trade imbalance between the two neighbours.

"Without this bilateral treaty, we will not sign the trilateral one," said State Minister for Energy AKM Mosharraf Hossain yesterday on his return from the tri-nation energy

talks in Yangon, where the three countries agreed to co-operate in gas exploration and the transnational gas pipeline.

"I have met Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and she has directed me to take the necessary steps to make it happen," he added while talking to the press.

Earlier, in December, a cabinet committee turned down a similar

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Policy decision needed to combat religious extremism

Says Asma Jahangir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The governments will have to take a policy decision to combat religious extremism, which has emerged as a major problem in South Asia and elsewhere in the world, international human rights activist Asma Jahangir said yesterday.

"Only putting the religious extremists behind the bar will not solve the problem. The policy decision will have to be executed through proper co-ordination among different ministries," the Pakistani lawyer told a meeting in the capital.

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11 die after gang causes bus to crash into gorge

Victims include lawyers and their family members; six more die in other road mishaps

UNB, Faridpur

Eleven people, including four lawyers of Kushtia Bar and their family members, died and 35 others were injured in a deadly accident as a bus swerved off the Dhaka-Barisal highway into a ditch at Nowpara in Bhanga upazila early yesterday.

The dead are Special Public Prosecutor (PP) Moghul Hossain, 55, and his wife Jotsna Khatun, 45; Assistant Public Prosecutor (APP) Masuduzzaman Chhoton, 42, and

his wife Beauty Khatun, 35, son Ovi, 8, and daughter Suvra, 12; Advocate Shamsuzzaman, 35, and his wife Advocate Hosne Ara Naznin Hira, 30; Hasanur Rahman, 8, son of Advocate SM Abul Hashem; Bristi, 7, daughter of Advocate Khandaker Sirajul Islam and Kushtia Bar clerk Ashrafur Islam, 24.

Of the injured, 18 were admitted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital where condition of eight was stated to be 'critical'.

The critically injured victims are

Advocate Abdul Majid, Advocate Mozaffar Ahmed, Advocate Kutubuddin, Advocate Moked Ali, Mukta, Mitu, Rubayet and police constable Zamil.

UNB Faridpur and Kushtia correspondents quoted police as saying two buses, carrying a picnic party of the Kushtia Bar Association, were returning to Kushtia from Kuakata beach of the Bay in Patuakhali district when the picnickers fell prey to highway robbers at about 2:30am.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4



Bangladesh spinner Enamul Haque goes over the moon after he became the youngest-ever bowler to take seven wickets in a Test innings with the fall of Zimbabwe's Mpofu at Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Huge security net planned for Saarc

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All preparations for the 13th Saarc Summit were switched back into top gear yesterday, with plans already underway for a 'massive security net' of 12,000 personnel and meetings resuming for preparation committees, following Friday's announcement of February 6-7 as the summit's new dates.

Reaz Rahman, foreign ministry adviser and chief national coordinator of the summit, yesterday presented Saarc member envoys in Dhaka with a detailed draft of the two-day summit's new programme during meeting at the foreign ministry.

"With one day curtailed from the

usual 3-day summit, we're working hard to fit all the substantial programmes in the squeezed schedule of two days," Rahman told reporters at his office yesterday.

All envoys attended the meeting except that of the Maldives, which does not have a high commissioner here.

The envoys will send Dhaka's proposed draft of the summit programme to their respective capitals, whose responses are expected by Tuesday.

Rahman said that Dhaka wants to make the summit more effective and result-oriented, as it was tasked with doing at the 7th Saarc summit.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Muggers shoot 2, snatch Tk 4.6 lakh in Uttara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Armed muggers shot two staff of a private organisation at Uttara in the capital and snatched Tk 4.6 lakh from them yesterday.

Firoz Jaman Mollah, 35, in-charge of Dakkhin Khan depot of Akiz Corporation Limited received bullet in the abdomen while peon Javed Iqbal, 25, sustained stab and bullet wounds in the left hand.

Eyewitnesses said three motor-bike riders stopped Firoz and Iqbal at Dakkhin Khan Bazar crossing at 10:15am when they were going on foot to deposit the money to Janata Bank, some 200 yards from the depot.

"A criminal stabbed in the left

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

2 killed, 60 hurt in bomb attacks on Jatra shows

STAR REPORT

Bomb attacks on jatra (a folk theatre form) shows at two remote villages in Bogra and Natore districts on Friday night and early Saturday left two men dead and at least 60 people injured.

In Bogra, a rickshaw-van driver was killed and 40 others wounded as unidentified miscreants hurled two powerful bombs at a jatra audience at Laxmikola village under Shahjahanpur upazila in dead of the night Friday.

A similar incident at Boroigram village in Natore in the early hours Saturday killed a middle-aged man and left 20 others injured.

BOGRA
Our Bogra correspondent reports: Shafigul Islam, 36, was killed on the spot and 40 people including some women received various degrees of injury as two powerful bombs exploded near-simultaneously at the show of a jatra titled Chabuker Jabab in Laxmikola Shah Roushan Jalal High School ground.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

ACC to ask Bac staff to proceed with graft cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) has once again decided to ask the Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) officers to go ahead with the proceedings of the previous graft cases, but it will remind them that they still

are reserved employees of the government.

Sources said the ACC will send letters today to the district anticorruption officers asking them to preserve the records and documents of more than 5,500 cases filed

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Zim hit back with Hondo

AL MUSABIR SADI

Medium-pacer Douglas Hondo captured six wickets as Zimbabwe snatched the initiative from Bangladesh on the second day of the second and final Test at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

A persevering Hondo sent the home side reeling on 169-8 at stumps with a career-best 6-45 after his captain Tatenda Taibu hit a brave unbeaten 85 in what promised to be a crucial first-innings total of 298 on a rapidly deteriorating wicket.

For Bangladesh it was a familiar batting collapse after a perfect first Test in Chittagong, which they won last week by 226 runs for their maiden Test triumph.

Bangladeshi batsmen put up a pathetic display to spoil a good start followed by a fantastic feat by young left-arm spinner Enamul Haque. The 18-year-old finished with 7-95 to become the youngest bowler to take seven wickets surpassing former Pakistan fast bowler Waqar Younis. Enamul, who took the last three Zimbabwe wickets on Saturday after bagging four on the first day, is also the only Bangladeshi bowler to take seven wickets in an innings.

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