

## Bangla Bhai's men

**FROM PAGE 1**  
 police and the Rab," said a source inside the JMB.

Ordered by their leaders, JMB cadres from different upazilas and even from Naogaon and Natore started gathering in the morning at Sikdari, Hamirkutsa, Talgharia, Gokalandi, Taherpur, Jhikra and Jhargam.

By noon, with their number reaching several thousands, they gathered at the Bhabaniganj Boys' High School field and chanted slogans against the lynching of their three fellows.

"We'll not let the blood of the martyrs go unpunished." The administration should answer for killing our people. "Blood for blood," were the slogans used by the agitating JMB men, sources said.

Police intercepted them using batons as they brought out the procession at the school gate. JMB men retaliated with bricks and stones.

"We asked them not to move for the criminals, but they did not heed us," said OC Kibria, speaking by cell phone. He added that the clashes lasted for half an hour.

He said police lobbed three tear gas shells, several rubber bullets and blank shots to disperse the mob.

In the afternoon, locals said, Rab and police indiscriminately forced bearded youths into the town's saloons, forcing them to shave.

SI Mahubb Hossain of Bagmara PS filed a case after the clashes, accusing the JMB cadres of attacking police and interrupting government work.

Some local villagers, meanwhile, criticised the police for their actions. "Police should take a lesson from the incident that terrorism cannot be eliminated through terrorism," said an area dweller, adding that the police have backed the JMB since its founding on March 31, 2004.

"Yesterday's incident is nothing different from rearing a snake with milk and bananas," commented pro-liberation doctors' association president Dr Sayed Saiful Alam.

Yesterday's clashes resulted from an earlier incident on Saturday night, when a mob lynched three bearded men of the fugitive terrorist Bangla Bhai-led Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh at the Bagmara upazila.

The lynching ensued immediately after a militant group bombed to death a villager and injured 30 others while running away from a foiled attempt on the life of Sreepur union council chairman Mokbul Hossain Mridha, who belongs to the Awami League (AL).

Local AL members called a half-day hartal in the Taherpur municipality on Tuesday and a protest meeting on Wednesday for attacks on AL leaders.

Mokbul Mridha, 48 and vice president of Sreepur union AL, was attacked at approximately 8.30pm on Saturday while walking home with local AL advisor Yusuf Ali Pramanik.

As many as 11 masked men layd them at Kuthibari. "Seven of the attackers swooped down on us and hit Mridha with an iron rod on his head," said Yusuf talking to The Daily Star.

They then fired three shots, one hitting Mridha in the hip as he was jumping into a roadside ditch, said Yusuf. Mridha was later admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH).

The attackers, meanwhile, started to flee as villagers began chasing them. Cornered at Khoira beel, the attackers then hurled a bomb and killed Mahubb Hossain Dewan, 35, the AL publicity secretary at ward no. 9 of Taherpur

injured when a Dhaka bound bus from Barisal fell into a roadside ditch near Purbo Sadardi near Bhanga on Sunday night.

The dead, Sultana Begum, 25 and Liton, 24, of Rajapur, Jhalakati died soon after admission to Faridpur Medical College and Hospital. The injured are now undergoing treatment at the hospital.

Gaibandha: Two pedestrians were killed when a truck hit them on the Bogra-Rangpur Highway at Boalia on Sunday, according to our correspondent.

The deceased are Asitan Bewa, 60 and Rani, 8.

In another accident, Turjo, 10, son of Jahangir Alam of Masterpara of Gaibandha, was killed when a speeding truck dashed a rickshaw from behind in the town yesterday.

Meanwhile, 21 people were injured when a Dhaka-bound passenger coach collided with another bus in Gaibandha town on the same day.

Patakhali: Two girls, identified as Moyna, 8, and Salma, 9, were hit by a Barisal bound bus while they were crossing the road near Moukaran Bridge in Badarpur area of Patakhali town Sunday morning.

Our correspondent reported that Moyna died on the spot while Salma was admitted to Patakhali General Hospital in a critical condition.

Immediately after the accident, locals damaged six buses. Police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

Jessore: Russel, 6, son of Ashraf of Kaliganj Police Station of Jhenidah district, was run over by a bus on Sunday when he was crossing Jhenidah-Magura road near Bahadurpur village in Sadar Police Station, according to our correspondent.

Faridpur: A young man and a woman died and 25 others were

## Eid hangover

**FROM PAGE 12**  
 The government extended the holiday by one extra day as Friday, the weekly holiday, fell during the three-day Eid vacation. However, newspaper offices observed three days of vacation.

The Eid festivities, coupled with the weather, helped slow down the otherwise chaotic pace of life in the capital. Chilly weather forced many city dwellers to remain indoors, where they watched special Eid programmes on television while their children spent their days at the park or the zoo.

The city's notorious traffic was much less chaotic in the last few days, with fewer pedestrians, rickshaws, auto-rickshaws, minibuses and other vehicles visible on the streets. Normally crammed buses even had seats for passengers.

The capital still looked deserted yesterday as most shops and business centres kept their shutters down.

Attendance was very thin yesterday at the Secretariat, the headquarters of ministries and offices of the Republic, with most of the ministers absent on the first day of office opening. Presence in other government offices in the capital was also thin.

Sources said only a few staff members turned up and stayed in their offices. Those who did were seen exchanging Eid greetings and sharing stories about their sacrificial animals and their Eid celebrations.

Secretariat sources said that virtually no business was conducted in the offices, since a good number of officers and employees are on additional leave to spend more time at the village homes of their families. "As they find 4-days-of-holiday not enough".

Rooms of the ministers and secretaries at the Bangladesh Secretariat were opened for all to exchange Eid greetings with officials and staff. Ministers and secretaries meanwhile passed a "very relaxed" day yesterday.

In Motijheel, the country's business hub, business resumed at all insurance companies, semi-government offices, autonomous bodies, multinational companies and the offices of local business complexes, although staff seemed too inadequate to conduct business as usual.

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## Eid-ul-Azha celebrated

**FROM PAGE 1**  
 Jamir Uddin Sircar, Chief Justice Syed J R Mudassar Hossain, Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation Sadek Hossain Khoka, ministers, members of parliament, diplomats, and political and military high ups offered their prayers.

Five separate Eid congregations were held at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque at 7:00am, 8:00am, 9:00am, 10:00am and 11:00am. Besides, 361 Eid Jamaats were held in different parts of the city.

People from all walks of life streamed into the Prodhannantri Bhaban (prime minister's official residence) and exchanged Eid greetings with Prime Minister (PM) Khaleda Zia on the occasion of the Eid-ul-Azha, reports UNB.

Wishing all a very happy Eid, the PM gave directives to her aides to look into the problems and needs of some visitors, which included providing physically handicapped poor with wheelchairs.

LRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Housing and Public Works Minister Mirza Abbas, PM's Political Secretary Harris Chowdhury, Dhaka City Mayor Sadek Hossain Khoka and Mosaddek Ali Falu MP were present.

Earlier, the PM exchanged Eid greetings with ministers, MPs, judges, diplomats, and senior civil and military officials at her Hare Road office.

Chief Justice, former advisors of caretaker government, editors and senior political leaders were also among invited guests at the Hare Road office, the report says.

National flags were hoisted atop government and private buildings. The streets of the capital were decorated with colourful miniature flags inscribed with Eid Mubarak in Bangla and Arabic. In the night, many public and private buildings were colourfully illuminated.

On the day, the government provided improved meals for the inmates of prisons, hospitals, vagrants' homes and other state-run dormitories.

Underprivileged children enjoyed the opportunity to visit the Shishu Park in the city's Shabbagh free of cost.

Before the Eid, especially on Thursday and Friday people in hundreds of thousands left the capital for their village and small town homes to celebrate the day with their near and dear ones.

According to a preliminary estimate, around 50 lakh people left the capital to observe Eid elsewhere leaving the city streets look desolate.

UNB adds: Leader of the Opposition and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina exchanged Eid greetings with people from all walks of life at her Dhanmondi office on Saturday.

She also exchanged greetings with foreign diplomats and representatives of international agencies on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha.

Party activists as well as common people met the AL chief and apprised her of their problems while exchanging greetings.

"It's a day of happiness, but this happiness remains elusive for the poor and low-income groups who are already battered by price-hike. They don't have two square meals a day," Hasina said.

The opposition leader also recalled the tragic deaths of party members including Ivy Rahman in the August 21 grenade attacks on an AL rally.

Later US Ambassador Harry K Thomas, British High Commissioner Anwar Chowdhury and diplomats from Muslim countries envoys met Sheikh Hasina and exchanged Eid greetings.

Senior party leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Amir Hossain Abu, Sajida Chowdhury, Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, Obaidul Kader and Saber Hossain Chowdhury were present on the occasion.

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## Six lynched

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 challenged youth, to death in Shyampur in the capital after he stabbed three people including the imam of a local mosque on the Eid day.

Monir, a third-year student at Jagannath University College and resident of Jurain, came out of his house at 7:00am with a knife and stabbed Mohammad Yunus, imam of Jakirulla Jam-e-Masjid and two others when the imam was preparing for Eid prayers.

A mob caught Monir and beat him severely. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital where doctors declared him dead at 8:00am.

Monir, who was preparing to go abroad for higher studies, got deranged a couple of months ago, his cousin Dipusaid.

In another incident at East Shyampur, locals beat Hariam, 25, another deranged youth, after he stabbed Bilal, 15, and Nowab Miah, 50, at around 12:00noon on the Eid day.

Catching him with a knife, locals beat him with bamboo sticks before police rushed to the place. The police found him dead and sent the body to Mitford Hospital for autopsy.

In Lalbagh, the police recovered the body of Mohammad Babul, 35, an alleged drug addict, on the Eid day evening. It was unclear how he was killed.

KHULNA  
 In Khulna, a mob lynched an alleged robber, Babtra, 30, on Sunday night at Patherbar under Khanjahan Ali thana, our correspondent reported.

The police said they caught Babtra with a revolver from a Jessore-bound passenger bus during routine checking at 11:30pm Sunday night.

As the policemen dragged him down from the bus, angry locals snatched him from the police and beat him mercilessly, said officer-in-charge of Khanjahan Ali Police Station.

Babtra was declared dead when the police rushed him to Khulna Medical College Hospital at 4:30am yesterday.

SATKHIRA  
 Our Satkhira correspondent reports: A gang of miscreants killed Bhola Sheikh, 50, a shrimp cultivator in Jyotindranagar village in the district on Sunday night.

Bhola went to sleep in a hut at his shrimp enclosure on that night but was not found there the following morning, the police said quoting the victim's relatives.

The floor of the hut was stained with blood and the killers took away Bhola's body, according to the police.

JHALAKATHI  
 In Jhalakathi, assailants slaughtered rice trader Abdul Aziz, 55, at South Tarabunia village in Rajapur upazila on the Eid day. The killers intercepted Aziz at around 12:30pm when he was returning home after saying Eid prayers. They stabbed him mercilessly and then slaughtered to confirm his death.

PABNA  
 In Pabna, the slaughtered body of an absconding criminal, Babul, 24, also an operative of outlawed Purna Banglar Communist Party, was recovered from a roadside ditch at Bhitamud village in Faridpur upazila on Sunday morning.

The police suspect Babul's associates slaughtered him following a factional feud.

JESSORE  
 Our Jessore correspondent reports: The villagers of Kashimpur in Sarsha upazila found the body of Kola, 35, who used to drive motorbike for money, on the Eid day.

Locals and police suspect some people hired him and killed him to snatch the motorbike.

GOPALGANJ  
 A UNB report says: A young man died and four others were injured in a bomb explosion on Sunday night in Naiarbari village of Kotlarpur upazila, about 40km east of the town.

Majid Molla, 27, died on the spot at about 11:30pm and the family buried him before the dawn giving rise to suspicion about the cause of the explosion.

Police Super Mirza Abdullah Hil Baqi said they suspect that Majid and his accomplices were making bombs one of which exploded leading to his death.

Identity of the injured was not known.

BANGLADESH CHASE  
**FROM PAGE 1**  
 off one Mashrafe prodigal over. The Narari quick, who gave away just nine runs in his first three overs, conceded 32 in his final three. The free-scoring Chigumbura also struck three mighty sixes including two off occasional bowler Rafin Saleh.

Bangladesh, who lost the first match in Dhaka by 22 runs, started the chase promisingly with local boy Nafees Iqbal hitting his maiden ODI fifty and skipper Habibul Bashar scoring 44 off 62 balls in a 90-run third wicket stand after opener Rajin and Afrab Ahmed fell cheaply.

Nafees entertained the strong 8,000-home crowd with 58 that included five fours in 65 balls. But once both set batsmen fell in successive deliveries of the 30th over, the wheels fell of Bangladesh's cart.

In stark contrast to Zimbabwe's last ten-over assault, Bangladesh crumbled one after another while still needing to score at just over five runs an over, which was very much on the cards considering they had plenty of wickets in hand.

Needing 108 runs from the last 20 overs with six wickets intact, the Tigers suddenly lost the appetite to fight with Manzoorul Islam, Khaled Mahmud and Mohammad Ashraf departing in the space of five runs under self-inflicted pressure.

Khaled Mashud fought a lost battle with 23 not out of 26 balls.

The only high point in a disappointing display was the outstanding bowling of young left-arm spinner Enamul Haque.

Making his one-day debut after his 18-wicket haul in the Test series, Enamul dispatched Hamilton Masakadza and Rogers in successive overs to finish with 2-37 from ten overs.

Identity of the injured was not known.

## Hajj pilgrims embark on return journey

**AFP, Makkah**  
 Hundreds of thousands of Muslim faithful bid Makkah farewell on Sunday as the annual pilgrimage to Islam's holiest sites drew to an end without major incident despite unusual heavy rains.

Having accomplished all Hajj rituals, the pilgrims began on Saturday night the "tawaf" or circling of the Kaaba, a cubic-shaped structure covered by a gold-embroidered black cloth in the direction of which Muslims turn for prayer.

The pilgrims, back in their normal attire after performing Hajj rituals dressed in two-piece seamless white cloths, walk around the Kaaba seven times anti-clockwise either in the courtyard of the sacred edifice or on the two huge circular terraces of the Grand Mosque.

The most zealous jostle to touch the Kaaba or kiss the black stone, which according to tradition was given by the angel Gabriel to Abraham and is set in the edifice.

Most of the 2.5 million faithful, more than 1.5 million of whom came from abroad, were due to leave Makkah on Sunday or Monday.

Before leaving, they were rushing to shops to buy gifts and souvenirs to take back home, with prayer beads topping their shopping list.

This year's pilgrimage, during which Saudi leaders and dignitaries repeatedly stressed that terrorism was totally alien to Islam, went without major incident.

The Saudi press said three pilgrims were killed Saturday during scrambles to "stone the devil" in the Mina valley near Makkah, but there were no tragedies of the scale of the stampede which claimed 251 lives during the same ritual last year.

The Saudi government said it had spent 28 million dollars modernizing the holy site to make it easier for the faithful to throw their pebbles at the "jamarat" and on installing extra cameras to allow the heavy flow to be monitored.

Three pillars symbolizing Satan have been replaced by 25 meter (80 foot) high walls which stones can hit more easily, and the concrete enclosure of the site has been coated with rubber to dampen the shocks.

"Thank God, the Hajj season was a success in every way this year," enthused Mecca's governor Abdul Majid bin Abdul Aziz, cited by the official SPA news agency.

"The improvements introduced on the jamarat path and the efforts of the police made the stoning ritual smoother," he said.

## Cellphone sets worth Tk 78.5 lakh seized

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
 Customs officials seized 975 mobile phone sets worth about Tk 78.5 lakh from two passengers at Zia International Airport (ZIA) on January 20.

Customs men on suspicion challenged Kabir Hossain and Sansul Alam Talukdar, passengers of flight EK-339 that landed at the ZIA from Malaysia when they came to receive their luggage from the conveyer belt.

Following the two's admission of having cell-phone sets, customs officials opened their luggage and found 575 cell-phone sets from Hossain and 400 from Talukdar.

## 'Crossfire' kills 5

**FROM PAGE 1**  
 Aided by Pabna police, Kushtia Islamic University police had arrested Aynal in Bhangura thana of Pabna district on Wednesday.

Acting on his statement, police along with Aynal proceeded towards Balarampur village in search of illegal arms and ammunition.

"As the police team reached Balamur at about 3:00am on Friday, Aynal's accomplices opened fire on it in a bid to take him away, prompting police to fire back," said a member of the police party. Aynal was killed in the 'crossfire'.

The body was taken to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy.

BSS reports: A top extremist, Shaiful Islam, was killed in crossfire between police and his accomplices at Atrai in Naogaon in the early hours of Saturday.

Sub-inspector of police Shaheed Ashraf was critically injured in the shootout, police said.

Shaiful was an absconding accused of the sensational 'six-murder' at Atrai and a charge-sheeted accused in Advocate Sobhan Chowdhury murder case.

Naogaon Superintendent of Police Jamil Ahmed told reporters Shaiful was arrested from Omarhat of Nandigram thana Friday afternoon and taken to police station.

On the basis of his confession, a police team accompanied by Shaiful went to Lalpara Sluice Gate area to recover illegal arms. But accomplices of Shaiful fired on the police team and police also fired shots in self-defence.

Shaiful tried to escape from police custody but he was killed in the shootout.

Police seized one revolver, three revolver bullets and four cartridges from the spot.

Shaiful's body was handed over to his family after autopsy.

## Road accidents kill 25

**FROM PAGE 12**  
 Hanifa, 45, Sufia, 70, and Azizur Rahman, 12. Police and witnesses said the Dhaka-bound bus dashed and smashed the tempo at about 10:30am. Hanifa died on the spot, Sufia on the way to Sadar Hospital and Aziz died at the hospital.

The injured were admitted to hospital.

## Ban on rickshaw

**FROM PAGE 12**  
 Khulna city Mayor Shaikh Tayebur Rahman distributed 1200 blankets and Tk 1 lakh among the fire victims. The mayor has fervently appealed to the affluent people of the city to come forward with financial and material help for the victims.

Khulna city and district Awami League jointly distributed food among the fire victims. Leaders of the BNP Juba Dal and Chhatra Dal also distributed relief goods and winter clothes.

Different NGOs (non-governmental organisations) have also joined relief operation. Over one hundred tents have been provided for the victims for temporary rehabilitation.

Our staff correspondent reported that two small plastic industries were gutted in a fire at Lalbagh in the capital yesterday.

Fire Brigade sources said the fire originated from an electric short circuit at a plastic industry belonging to Alauddin on