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Eid-ul-Azha on Jan 11

UNB, Dhaka

The Eid-ul-Azha will be celebrated in Bangladesh on January 11. It was officially announced yesterday following sighting of Jilhajj moon.

The National Moon Sighting Committee announced the date after a meeting held at the Islamic Foundation conference room yesterday evening.

State Minister for Religious Affairs and Chairman of the committee Mosharef Hossain Shajahan presided over the meeting where Religious Affairs Secretary Rafiqul Islam and Acting Director of Islamic Foundation AM Badruddoza were present.

DCC cattle markets set to go to BNP men

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) will issue work orders today to the highest bidders in a controversial tender process for its 14 Eid cattle markets in the city.

A section of ruling BNP activists and some ward commissioners' men allegedly occupied the city corporation office in Nagar Bhaban on December 14 and 15, the dates for sale and submission of tender forms, so that the contracts go mainly to the ruling alliance men.

In absence of City Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, who was abroad for treatment at that time, they virtually took control of the tender box.

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HEARING ON WRITS AGAINST FRESH VOTER LIST TODAY

Enumeration starts amid agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Work for the controversial fresh voter list by the manpower appointed mostly on political consideration began yesterday amid demonstrations by the main opposition Awami League (AL).

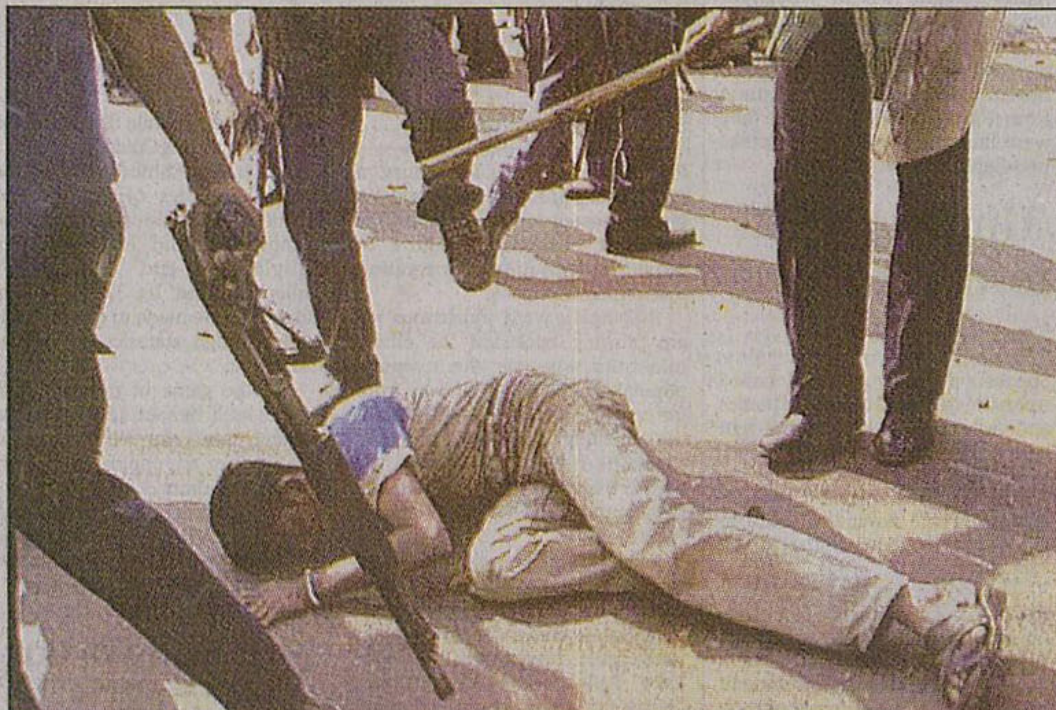
Over two lakh enumerators started collecting information about the prospective voters across the country yesterday while in the capital at least 25 people were

injured in a clash between police and the activists of AL's youth front trying to lay siege to the Election Commission (EC) secretariat.

According to our correspondents from across the country, the first day's business was marked by confusion and lack of coordination among the enumerators. People showed little interest to be on the list of would-be voters while there were hardly any campaign by the commission to generate public awareness to this end.

In some places, up to 40 percent of voters were reported to be enlisted while in many other areas no enumeration staff was found to be in the field. Especially the uncertainty stemming from two writ petitions pending over the preparation of a new list seems to have dampened the enthusiasm of the enumerators. Allegations of

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Police assault an activist of Jubo League while dispersing a procession that tried to proceed towards the EC secretariat in the capital yesterday.

Robber killed in 'crossfire'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

An alleged leader of inter-district robbers' syndicate was killed in "crossfire" during a shootout between his accomplices and the police at Arahaz in Narayanganj early yesterday.

The dead was identified as Motiar Rahman Moti, 38. Arahaz police arrested Moti at Madanpur area Saturday night.

Following his confessional statement the police took him to Mardasadi village to recover illegal firearms and looted valuables. According to police sources when they reached the area, Moti's accomplices opened fire on them, against which police retaliated.

Moti fell in the line of fire and received bullets, the sources said, adding he succumbed to his injuries on the way to Arahaz Thana

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48-hr transport strike in 21 dists from today

UNB, Rajbari

Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Samik Federation has called a 48-hour transport strike in 21 districts of southwestern region from today to press home their five-point demand.

The demands include withdrawal of false case against the transport workers and putting a halt to highway robbery and police harassment.

General secretary of Rajbari Sarak Paribahan Samik Federation Abdul Rashid said that they would continue their strike until their demands are met.

The organisation also demanded legal action against the law enforcers responsible for torturing three transport workers, including Rajbari Sarak Paribahan Samik Union President Abdul Kuddus.

RIGID STANCES ON REFORMS

Caretaker govt to find polls too hot to handle

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The next caretaker government may face an uphill task to conduct the parliamentary election in the wake of the looming political confrontation over electoral reforms.

Hopes of any dialogue to narrow the gap between the ruling coalition and the mainstream opposition have practically faded away due to their rigid stances over the reforms and moves to take control of street politics.

The opposition parties have declared their intention to resist

any election without electoral reforms while the ruling coalition has outright rejected their demand. And the Election Commission (EC) remains silent on the reform issue.

If the situation remains unchanged and the reform issue is left for the interim government to handle, many believe a three-month turmoil is awaiting the caretaker government that will take over late next year.

They said even the formation of the caretaker government may not be as easy as the opposition parties are

demanding reform in the system.

"The caretaker government will face difficulties conducting the general election by resolving the political crisis over the issue of electoral reforms," former adviser to the caretaker government M Hafizuddin Khan told The Daily Star.

"The interim government does not have much time to settle such disputes. So the issue of reforms should be resolved before handing over power to the caretaker government that runs the country for

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JP, CPB men lock in violent clash

One run over by bus; 25 activists injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One person was killed in a road accident during a clash between the Jatiya Party (Ershad) and the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) at Paltan in the capital yesterday, leaving at least 25 activists of both the parties injured.

The young man while escaping from the violence was run over by a bus and died on the spot.

JP President HM Ershad along with his men went to the Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) morgue and identified the person as Kabir Hossain of ward No

27 under Demra thana. The JP men also claimed him as a JP activist.

But police said he was a passer-by and did not belong to any of the two political parties.

Several members of the CPB central committee, including CPB President Manzurul Ahsan Khan, and a number of JP central committee members, including a female member, received minor injuries during the incident.

The JP activists damaged at least a dozen vehicles and set fire to several book stalls. They also ransacked a mobile phone shop and a

Arrested JMB man says he was in Shibir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

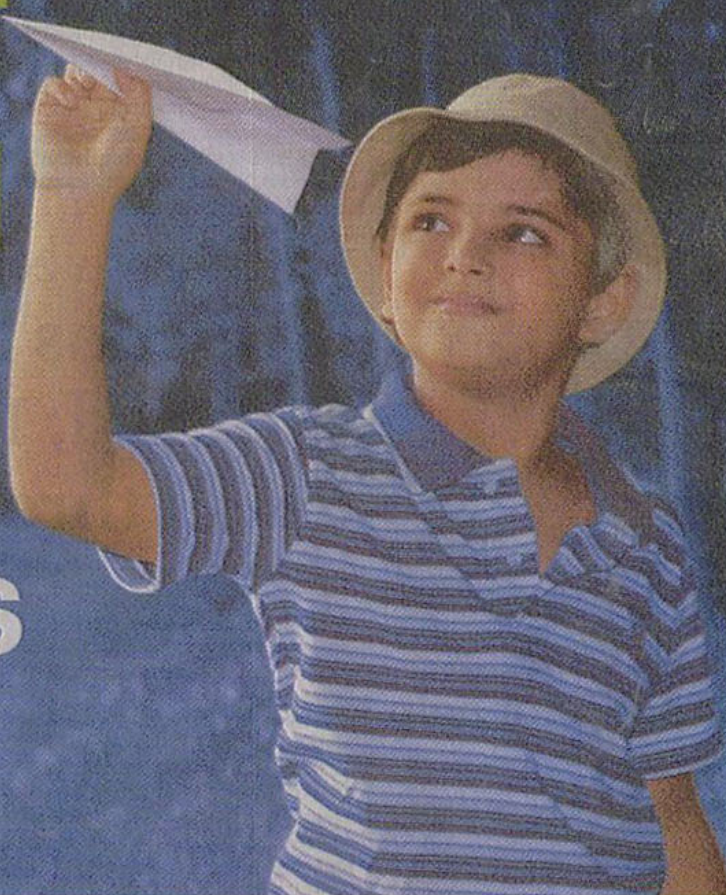
The Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) second-in-command of Khulna district on Saturday night admitted on interrogation that he was an activist of Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) before he joined JMB in 2003.

M Ziaur Rahman Sagor alias Shabbir was arrested under Explosive Substances Act in a case filed with Daulatpur Police Station on Friday night.

The JMB leader told police during interrogation he joined ICS while he was a student of Dastanabad Madrasa in Natore. "I was inspired by the madrasa teachers to join JMB and sacrifice my life for the cause of Islam," police sources quoting Shabbir said. He

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