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Only 2 holiday markets to be allowed in city  
20 spots marked for hawker rehabilitation  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Declaring all but two "holiday markets" closed, Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) decided to rehabilitate hawkers to 20 selected spots in the capital. The markets at these spots would remain open everyday.

The DCC would allow "holiday markets" in front of Matsyha Bhaban and opposite to Motijheel Ideal School on Fridays only, a DCC press release said. The "holiday markets" are temporary markets where hawkers would sit and sell their goods on a specific day and on a specific street.

For the hawkers' temporary markets, the DCC has arranged registration system for hawkers through Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) and the process of providing them with ID cards is ongoing.

The DCC also set some rules for the hawkers. Hawkers will have to run their business in three square foot areas on one pavement leaving the other alone for pedestrians, no hawkers would be allowed to use any bedsheet, erect any kind of

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## BB won't be tough on loan defaulters now

Ducks IMF suggestion to raise bank capital

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh Bank (BB) has decided not to go for implementing an International Monetary Fund (IMF) suggestion at the moment that asked to be tough on loan defaulters and to increase the bank capital.

An IMF team, which visited Dhaka last month, had suggested that the central bank declare a loan as outstanding if it becomes overdue for three months. As per the existing rules, a loan is declared default if it is overdue for six months.

The IMF team also made suggestion to raise bank capital to Tk 500 crore from the existing Tk 100 crore in a bid to make strong capital base of commercial banks.

The government recently amended the Bank Company Act,

1991 through an ordinance, which increased the amount of bank capital to Tk 200 crore, and it will be executed very soon.

Sources said the central bank is considering giving the commercial banks at least two years time for increasing the money.

A BB official observed that implementation of IMF suggestion to raise bank capital to Tk 500 crore is not practical, considering the financial condition of many small banks. Many of them do not even have the capacity to raise the bank capital to Tk 200 crore at the time as per the recent government order, he added.

"So we are thinking about giving them at least two years to raise the bank capital in phases," he said.

BB sources said the central bank itself wanted to redefine default taken out from Palash

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## Durga Puja ends with immersion of idols

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The five-day-long Durga Puja, the greatest of Hindu festivals, ended yesterday with the solemn immersion of Goddess Durga idols in the capital and elsewhere in the country.

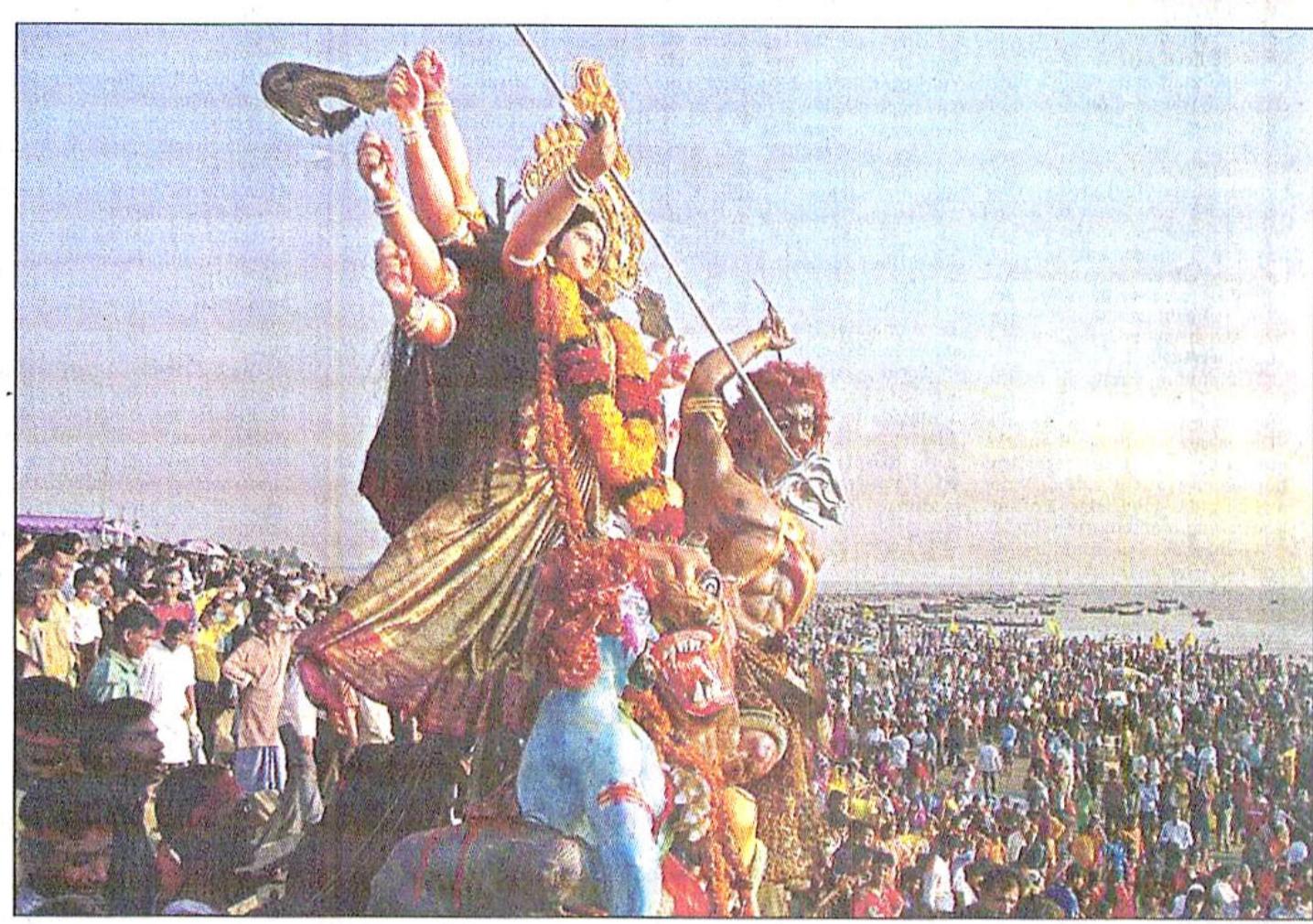
In the morning, devotees celebrated Bijoya Dashami, the last day of the festival, at around 20,000 puja mandaps across the country.

Bijoya Dashami is the special ceremony to reaffirm peace and good relations among the people. Families visited each other to share sweetmeats during the Dashami festivity. Married Hindu women put vermilion [sindur] on each other's forehead on the occasion.

In the evening, the devotees bade solemn farewell to their deity Durga and her children Lakshmi, Saraswati, Kartik and Ganesh through immersion of their idols in the water while inviting her to return to them next year.

In the capital, thousands of men, women and children joined the historical idols immersion procession taken out from Palash

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Thousands of Hindu devotees and onlookers watch as the Durga idol arrives at the Patenga beach in Chittagong yesterday for its immersion into the sea.

PHOTO STAR



Police picked up a number of drug addicts at Jatrabari in the capital yesterday. They allegedly mug people to feed their addiction. They were, however, released later.

GRAFT, IRREGULARITIES  
DU gives its 4 staff 5 days to explain

DU CORRESPONDENT

The authorities of Dhaka University (DU) have asked three of its fourth-class employees to explain their position about the allegations of corruption raised against them in several newspapers recently.

On Saturday, the DU authorities, after being directed by the education ministry, sought the explanation from the three -- Mokhslesur Raham, president of DU Technical Employees' Association, Amirul Islam, president of DU Employees Association and Sanwar Hossain, general secretary of the same association.

"We asked them to respond to the allegations raised against them in some newspapers about their wealth, corruption and irregularities at various levels of the university following a letter from the Ministry of Education sent to the university authorities, asking to verify the news reports," said Syed Rezaul Rahman, acting registrar of DU.

They have been given five days,

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## 35 killed as Kurd rebels clash with Turkish troops

APP, Ankara

Turkey yesterday pledged strong action against Kurdish separatists after 12 Turkish soldiers and 23 rebels were killed in a clash in the southeast of the country.

Sixteen Turkish soldiers were wounded in the fighting near the village of Daglica, in a mountainous region abutting the Iraqi border in Hakkari province.

Clashes were continuing, with helicopters providing air cover, the army said. Troops were monitoring the rebels' escape routes and heavy artillery was pounding 63 likely targets, according to the military.

Hours after the attack, 10 civilians were injured when a mine also blamed on PKK rebels exploded as a minibus drove past near Daglica, sources said.

While he again indicated that there would be no rush to carry out an incursion, the Iraqi parliament in Baghdad passed a motion condemning Turkey's threat to stage a raid in Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region.

The United States is also worried about any action that could destabilize the relatively peaceful northern Iraq.

"With respect to the cross-border operation, we will take all necessary steps within the framework of the authorisation," he said. "We will act in a cool-headed man-

## WB assures Dhaka of continued support

UNB, Dhaka

Appreciating Dhaka's institutional reforms, the World Bank (WB) assured the government of continuing support to its efforts to accelerate economic growth and poverty reduction in the country.

The word of assistance came in a meeting between Graeme Wheeler, the WB's managing director, and Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam in Washington, D.C. Friday, said a government press release.

The WB chief executive also hoped that the ongoing reforms would "contribute significantly to establishing a framework for good governance in Bangladesh".

Wheeler encouraged the government to "robustly" pursue the ongoing reforms so that the bank's assistance could be scaled up and effectively used for the benefit of the poor.

He praised the government's bid to maintain macroeconomic stability and pursue fiscal discipline.

Mirza Aziz, while highlighting the fight against corruption and the separation of the judiciary from the executive, thanked the WB top

official for their continued support and expressed the government's commitment to pursuing institutional and policy reforms.

He cited development in tax reforms and the creation of Better Business Forum as a mark of brightening investment climate in Bangladesh.

"There has been an improvement in the absorptive capacity of aid resources in Bangladesh following various actions taken by the interim government under the leadership of the chief adviser, which justifies more support from the World Bank," he told Wheeler.

The WB chief executive also hoped that the ongoing reforms would "contribute significantly to establishing a framework for good governance in Bangladesh".

The adviser also reiterated the need for continued assistance from the donor agency on sectors that have direct bearings on poverty-reduction efforts along with focus on addressing the challenges emanating from climate change.

On the sidelines of the World Bank-International Monetary Fund meeting, the finance adviser had a detailed meeting with Bangladesh Country Team in the WB.

Mirza Aziz appreciated the Bank's commitment to providing scaled-up budget support following the recent floods in Bangladesh.

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Dr Wazed may meet detained Hasina soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Wazed Miah is likely to meet his detained wife Sheikh Hasina in the sub-jail on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban premises within the next couple of days.

Dr Wazed, who has various medical conditions, applied to the jail authorities on Saturday seeking permission to see Hasina, president of the Awami League, family sources said.

"We heard that he (Wazed Miah) has written a letter to the jail authorities asking for meeting his wife but we are yet to get the letter as the office remained closed for several days," Deputy Inspector General (DIG-Prisons) Maj Shamsul Haider Siddiqui told The Daily Star last night.

"But we will take necessary steps in this regard after going through the letter," he added.

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DR IQBAL'S PROCESSION  
Suspect of 2001 Malibagh killing arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab arrested one of the alleged perpetrators of gunning down four people from a Malibagh procession six years back at Maghbazar in the city Saturday night.

Dulal Mia, 30, was seen on newspaper pictures clutching a gun in action from the procession, led by them Awami League lawmaker Dr HBM Iqbal, on February 13, 2001.

Rab said a plainclothes Rab-3 team arrested Dulal at about 11:30pm following information that a criminal was at Maghbazar to collect tolls, adding that he admitted to having opened fire on police and the deaths of four people.

Besides, he confessed to having

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Khulna jute mill workers abstain from work over arrears

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The production of Star Jute Mills (SIM) and Platinum Jubilee Jute Mills (PJJM) remained suspended yesterday as the agitating workers abstained from work for payment of dues and Eid bonus.

The workers of the two jute mills began work abstention from 7:00am yesterday. They said they would not go back to work until their demands are met.

Angry workers confined Yasin Ali, labour officer of Platinum Jubilee Jute Mills, to his office about 3:00pm.

Meanwhile, Project Director Monowar Hossain has extended the layoff of Alim Jute Mills by 15 days with effect from October 22.

Earlier, the jute mill was laid off for a month from September 21.

## Benazir for outside help to probe blast

AFP, Karachi

Former Pakistani premier Benazir Bhutto called for international help Sunday with police investigations into last week's bomb blasts that killed 139 people in Karachi.

"We want the government of Pakistan to seek the assistance of the international community," she told foreign reporters including AFP.

"They have anti-terrorism experts who have the technical expertise to investigate attacks of this nature," she said.

Pakistani police were questioning three people on Sunday over an attack on former premier Benazir Bhutto's homecoming procession that killed 139 people, an investigator said.

The men were linked to a car from which an attacker threw a grenade in Karachi on Thursday night, seconds before a suicide bomber blew himself up in a crowd of hundreds of thousands of people, he said.

Investigators also quizzed seven militants in jails in Karachi for possible information on the blasts, added the police official, who has

investigated several other attacks in the city.

"Police have taken three people from the south of Punjab province for questioning. They were taken to Karachi for questioning and it can be that they hold clues," the official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

"They were picked up in connection with a suspect vehicle from which one of the attackers is believed to have thrown the grenade," he said.

Several hundred protesters burned tyres in the streets on Saturday and pelted passing vehicles with stones for a second day in pro-Bhutto neighbourhoods, AFP photographers said.

Pakistani authorities were earlier probing a list of three possible suspects that Benazir Bhutto sent to President Pervez Musharraf.

The 54-year-old has blamed militants for the attack and said she did not believe that "the state or government" were involved, but sources in her party said the list included senior army officials, without elaborating.

Earlier Benazir on Sunday

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## US raid on Sadr City kills 49

AP, AFP, Baghdad

Shia militia leader specializing in kidnapping operations for which he sought funding from Iran.

US troops returned fire after coming under sustained attack from automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades from nearby buildings as they began to raid the district, according to a statement, which added that some 33 militants were killed in the firefight. Ground forces then called in airstrikes, which killed some six militants.

US troops were attacked by a roadside bomb and continued heavy fire as they left the area and killed an additional 10 combatants in subsequent clashes.

"All total, coalition forces estimate that 49 criminals were killed in three separate engagements during this operation. Ground forces reported they were unaware

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