

## SNAPSHOTS OF EID-UL-AZHA



(1) Thousands of people offer special prayers during an Eid-ul-Azha congregation at National Eidgah on the eid day. (2) Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina takes a child into her arms as she exchanges pleasantries with eid guests at her official residence Gono Bhaban. (3) President Zillur Rahman shakes hands with a foreign diplomat during a reception at Bangabhaban. (4) Leader of the Opposition and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia spends time with children at the capital's Ladies Club on the eid day. (5) Two young kids give each other a joyous eid hug. (6) Some kids enjoy rides with their parents at the capital's Shishu Park on the second day of the eid.

PHOTO: STAR, PID AND FOCUS BANGLA

## Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Ismat Ara Begum, treasurer of Abu Dhabi Women's Association, died of heart

attack at an Abu Dhabi hospital on Sunday morning. She was 53.

She left behind her husband, one daughter, two sons and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn her death, said a press release.

## Sheikh Wahidur Rahman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Sheikh Wahidur Rahman, folk poet and industrialist, died at his residence in the capital on Friday morning. He was 73.

Wahidur Rahman was buried yesterday at his family graveyard in Khasharipara of Sylhet after his second namaz-e-janaza at Beanibazar Government College playground.

Composer of some 2,000 folk songs, Wahid was also a director of Pubali Bank Limited and owner of industries including National Ceramic.

## Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Today is the 13th death anniversary of Iqbal Ansari

Khan, a freedom fighter and social worker, said a press release.

Popularly known as Henry, Iqbal Ansari Khan was a legal practitioner by profession. He was also a writer and a Rotarian.

Vice-president of Jagannath College and Dhaka College students' unions, Iqbal was actively involved in the Language Movement.

## Architect Rafiq Azam wins LEAF award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Bangladeshi architect Rafiq Azam has won the Emirates

Glass Leading European Architects Forum (LEAF) Award 2012 for his SA residence project.

Rafiq's SA residence project, a three-storey building in the shape of a square and made from only cast concrete, won the award in the 'Residential building of the year (multiple occupancy)' category, said a press release yesterday.

The award ceremony was held at the four Seasons Park Lane Hotel in London recently.

"This is great honour for me as well as for my country to receive this prestigious award. The philosophy of Lalor inspired me while designing this building," said Rafiq.

The LEAF Awards programme is an annual event of Leading European Architects Forum.

Other nominations in the category included Studio Daniel Libeskind with Reflections at Keppel Bay, Singapore, Gonzalo Mardones Architecture Studio with Ignacia Apartments at Santiago, Chile and Tabanlıoğlu Architects with Loft Gardens in Levent, Istanbul.

## Awami League, Dr Kamal

FROM PAGE 1

team in the Agartala conspiracy case trial. Bangabandhu had enough confidence in him to make him part of the Awami League team entrusted to negotiate with the Yahya Khan military junta in the critical weeks before the Pakistan army launched a genocide in Bangladesh on 25 March 1971.

Kamal Hossain was arrested by the Pakistan army in early April 1971 and flown to erstwhile West Pakistan where he was in custody, as Bangabandhu was, for the entire duration of the War of Liberation. At the time, quite a good deal of innuendo and insinuation was spread about his "surrender" to the army

and not until we heard that he and his family had arrived in London in January 1972 with Bangabandhu that we were convinced he had not let the Father of the Nation down. Those who had been vocal against Kamal Hossain during the war went silent, for good reason.

It was Kamal Hossain's job, one Bangabandhu happily gave him, to draft the constitution of Bangladesh in early 1972. As the nation's law minister, Kamal did the job with finesse, to a point where the constitution was adopted by the Constituent Assembly in December 1972. Following the country's first general elections in March 1973, Kamal

Hossain took over as foreign minister and in that capacity did a remarkable job of ensuring Bangladesh's entry into the United Nations and other global bodies. His articulation of the new nation's foreign policy abroad did us an immense lot of good and convinced nations abroad of our commitment to a peaceful world.

A further instance of Kamal Hossain's integrity, as an individual and as a politician, came in August 1975 when he refused to be part of Khondokar Moshtaque Ahmed's usurper regime after Bangabandhu's murder. As foreign minister, he had been on a visit to Yugoslavia when the coup occurred. To his credit, he refused to

return home.

In 1981, with the Awami League splintered into a number of factions, it was Kamal Hossain who proposed that Sheikh Hasina, self-exiled elder daughter of the Father of the Nation, be elected president of the party. That was political ingenuity and the Awami League has benefited from the move. In November 1981, a grateful party nominated Kamal Hossain to challenge Justice Abdus Sattar for the presidency. Kamal lost, but emerged with his stature enhanced.

That is Kamal Hossain's story.

Now, to the matter of the 1/11 caretaker administration. The Awami League and many others are surely

correct in believing that the Fakhruddin government did quite a number of unsavoury things in its time. Its move to prevent Sheikh Hasina from returning home from abroad and trying to compel Khaleda Zia to go into exile embarrassed it to no end. Its restrictions on politics and at the same time allowing three individuals to form their political parties under cover of the emergency was a contradiction it could not explain. Its harsh treatment of politicians, academics and students in custody was a blot on our conscience we are yet to leave behind us.

But there is too the positive side to the 1/11 administration. For the first time

in the nation's history, it drove home the lesson that politicians could not do wrong and then expect to get away with it. Law and order was a certainty during its time. It gave shape to a powerful Anti-Corruption Commission and an independent Election Commission. Most importantly, it gave the country a fresh voters' list that was truly a new beginning for citizens.

The BNP's diatribe against the 1/11 administration is understandable, for the state of emergency laid all its plans waste. But when the Awami League chooses to pounce on the Fakhruddin government, supreme irony appears to be at work.

Consider this: the arrival of the 1/11 team drove from office the controversial caretaker government led by President Iajuddin Ahmed, one that was ready to conduct farcical elections on 22 January 2007. The 1/11 men removed the MA Aziz-led Election Commission, which was ready with tens of thousands of false and dead voters to hand a victory to the party it favoured. In the end, despite the bumps and the stumbles, the 1/11 caretaker government did deliver a free and fair election, the chief beneficiary of which was the Awami League.

That is the record. It speaks for itself.

## Supply glut keeps hide prices low

FROM PAGE 1

Exports of finished leather fell by 2 percent during the July-September period of the current fiscal year, according to data from Export Promotion Bureau.

"Due to the shrinking demand in the European and US markets, the tanners have still 60 percent unsold stocks worth around Tk 250 crore," said Shamsul Huda, president of Bangladesh Tanners Association.

Outside Dhaka, a medium-size cowhide was sold between Tk 800 and Tk 1,200 compared to Tk 1,200-Tk 1,500 last year, tanners said.

"This year the tanners predicted 45 lakh to 50 lakh

cows would be slaughtered. But the number rose due to lower prices of cattle," Huda told The Daily Star by phone.

"Many people bought cows instead of goats as the prices were low," Huda said.

They predicted the number of goats to be slaughtered this Eid would be between 17 lakh and 20 lakh this year.

But the target might not be fulfilled, as many people bought cows at the last moment cashing in on lower prices, Huda said.

The tanners collect half of their rawhide during Eid-ul-Azha, he said.

However, Huda feared the hides could be smug-

gled out of the country due to the low prices.

Saiful Islam, a former president of Leathergoods and Footwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association of Bangladesh, said the prices of finished leather declined by 20 percent this year.

Currently, the prices of finished leather hover between \$2 and \$4 per square feet on the international market, he said.

Around 75 percent finished leather and leather goods of Bangladesh go to Europe, Islam said.

The supply of sacrificial animals, especially cows, was abundant this year due to higher imports of

the animals from India, Myanmar and Nepal, said Aftab Khan, president of Bangladesh Hide and Skin Merchants' Association.

Belal Hossain, president of Bangladesh Finished Leather, Leather Goods and Footwear Exporters' Association, said the number of cows rose by 10 percent to around 7 lakh pieces in Dhaka due to the fall in prices, he said.

Hazi Mohammad Delwar Hossain, general secretary of Bangladesh Hide and Skin Merchants' Association, said they have so far collected around 4.5 lakh pieces of cowhide from the city.

The full-scale collection outside the capital would

begin next week, he added.

Rawhide trade during Eid-ul-Azha would be worth Tk 1,500 crore, industry people said. The tanners process more than 250 million sq ft of leather every year.

This year four public commercial banks -- Sonali, Janata, Agrani and Rupali -- disbursed Tk 385 crore in loans, 5.19 percent more than that in last year, to help the tanners buy rawhide.

Our Dinajpur correspondent adds: a piece of cowhide was sold at Tk 1,000-Tk 1,200 against Tk 1,800-Tk 2,000 last year.

Members of Border Guard Bangladesh in Dinajpur said they will

maintain a special vigilance along the bordering areas to check smuggle of rawhide to India.

Our Barisal correspondent adds: Seasonal traders collected a piece of cowhide of 25-30 sft at Tk 1,200-Tk 1,300, which was Tk 1,500-Tk 1,700 last year.

Our Satkhira correspondent adds: Police detained three persons while they were smuggling rawhides into India.

**SALT PRICE**  
The prices of salt, an ingredient to preserve rawhides, almost doubled during this Eid-ul-Azha.

Aftab Khan of Bangladesh Hide and Skin Merchants' Association said a sack having 74kg of

salt is selling at Tk 830-Tk 860 now, up from Tk 420-Tk 450 last year.

The rise in salt prices might affect the quality of hides as many might be tempted to scrimp on the salt use during preservation, according to some traders.

Around two lakh tonnes of salt are needed to preserve rawhide following Eid-ul-Azha, said Paritosh Kanti Saha, former president of Bangladesh Labon Mill Malik Samity (salt mill owners association).

They now sell such salt at Tk 8-Tk 10 each kg at the wholesale market.

The total annual demand for salt is 20-22 lakh tonnes, he said,