

## Sri Lanka poised

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Murali in the first session on the fourth day.

But even before the Lankans completed a predictable whitewash they had more reasons to celebrate on the third day after champion off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran picked up two wickets to become only the second bowler in the history to cross the 600-wicket mark in Tests after Australian Shane Warne, who has 659 scalps.

Funnily though Bangladesh's wicketkeeper batsman Khaled Masud, who had earlier become Murali's 1000th international victim in the first Test, also emerged as the 600th Test scalp of the great off-spinner.

Murali's two wickets in the second innings after a five-wicket haul in the first also saw him becoming the only bowler to achieve the unique feat of taking fifty wickets against all Test playing nations.

While Murali will remember the Test for all the good reasons, Bangladesh will rue it as a lost opportunity especially after the heroics of their young medium pacer Shahadat Hossain, who picked up two wickets in the morning for his first-ever five-wicket haul.

Shahadat removed two overnight batsmen Lasith Malinga (12) and Upul Tharanga (16) to finish with 5-86 as Sri Lanka resumed the day on 302-8, were bowled out for 316.

A lot was expected when Bangladesh came out to bat for a second time. But it was the same old story of brittle batting where Bashir and Rafique were only exceptions.

Bashir followed up his first-innings 69 with an equally impressive 73 before being unfortunately adjudged leg before. Rafique scored an entertaining 78-ball 64 that contained six fours and three massive sixes. Had he got a little support from the tail-enders the southpaw could have turned his third Test fifty into his second hundred.

But why blame the tail when the top-order failed to cope against a decent attack on a day when Murali was not in his devastating best.

Opener Nafees Iqbal (13) gloved a rising delivery from Malinga behind the wicket while his partner Javed Omar ended his miserable stay peculiarly fending another bouncer on the leg-stump from Dilhara Fernando to wicketkeeper Kumar Snagakkara.

Left-handed Shahriar Nafees (6) became the first victim of Murali while trying a ridiculous slog sweep. Bangladesh stumbled to 71-3 at lunch from where they had never recovered.

Bangladesh's hope of a turn-

around was shattered when Mohammad Ashrafuul slashed a leg break of Malinga Bandara but only to be brilliantly caught by Mahela Jayawardene at slip.

Bashir however was the only batsman who batted with authority, welcoming Murali with a confident four through mid-wicket. Bashir struck another eight boundaries in his flawless 104-ball knock.

Two new ball bowlers Lasith Malinga, who became quickest Sri Lankan bowler to scalps fifty wickets in 13 Tests, and Fernando shared six wickets while Murali took two for 62 and Bandara captured two for 32.

## 2 students

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He was sent back to his father at 11:30 pm on Thursday, Monowara said.

Rab-6 Director Col Shamsul Huda Shams said Sumon, Rumi and Masum were caught following information that they were in possession of illegal arms and the three admitted to their criminal activities.

Col Shams, however, denied torturing them physically.

The matter has been brought to the notice of Rab Director General AbdulAziz Sarker, sources said.

## Gangster killed

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Police, Javed's accomplices opened fire, forcing the law enforcers to retaliate.

Police said Javed was injured by bullets during the "shootout" and was taken to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) where the doctors declared him dead. He was shot in the hand, chest and head, hospital sources said.

Police recovered a revolver and four bullets from the scene.

Javed had a close relation with former officer-in-charge (OC) of Motijheel Police Station Rafiq, police sources said.

Family members said Javed was not supposed to be killed in crossfire; rather a trial could take place as he was an accused in a murder case.

Locals said Javed was an adviser to top terror "Kala" Jahangir.

## Jubo League

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punishment of the 'patrons' of militants and protested price hike of essentials and power, fuel and fertiliser crises.

Chairman of Jubo League Jahangir Kabir Nanak alleged that Iman Ali was killed in a planned way as he protested land grabbing in a Savar village by the cousin of a state minister.

He demanded immediate action against persons responsible for the killing.

He alleged that some high-ups in the ruling alliance are patronising the militants and demanded proper action against them.

Imam Ali's wife Rabeya Khatun read out a written statement at the press conference.

The statement said Rab personnel took Imam away from court on Wednesday when he appeared before it in a 'false case' against him and was 'killed' that night.

Rabeya demanded fair trial of the 'killing' of her husband.

Jubo League General Secretary Mirza Azam MP, Joint Secretary Faruk Hossain and other leaders were present at the press conference.

## Wife of slain

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Police said JMJB activists had been demanding toll for several days and threatened to kill his son if their demand was not met.

He filed a case with Raninagar Police Station against 10 people, following which the police arrested four militants.

However, the police dropped the names of two top associates of Bangla Bhai -- Sariatullah and his deputy Mustafizur Rahman Khaza -- from the charge sheet submitted on February 7.

Jaasim, plaintiff of the case, challenged the charge sheet, which accused 20 people, in a petition expressing his lack of confidence in it.

He said the police dropped the names as they being Bangla Bhai's associates had close connection with political high-ups.

LOCAL JMJB MEMBERS  
Sources said Bangla Bhai held a nightlong meeting with about 25 associates at local JMJB leader Kadir Sheikh's house at Bashbari in Raninagar on November 17. Local leaders Akhter, Habibur, Mukul, Rahman, Dulal and Ismail Sheikh attended the meeting.

Locals told journalists Bangla Bhai dressed as before went to Raninagar with over 10 associates in two microbuses and was seen on November 18 as well.

He finally became one of the most wanted criminals after the prime minister ordered the police to arrest him on May 23.

Bangla Bhai's men used to patrol several localities including Shikdari, Palashi, Goalikandi, Hamirkutsha, Sajuria and Majhgram villages in Bagmara upazila, Rajshahi prior to his visit to the areas.

Villagers alleged JMJB leaders Prof. Lutfar Rahman, Mahtab Khamaru, Atabor, Yasin, among many others, extorted huge money from them.

Sources said JMJB members Abdus Sattar of Sakoa, Mantu of Kalupara, Mamunur Rashid Mamun of Palashi set up houses and bought land after joining the Islamist outfit. Earlier, they could hardly have a square meal a day.

## WHO

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countries to probe outbreaks of bird flu, as well as getting in place measures to slow and stop the spread of the disease.

"The team itself will not be a single standing team," Fukuda said.

"We will develop a roster of people who have developed a great deal of training about what in fact are the containment procedures, what is influenza, what is the nature of the threat."

Concern has been rising over the spread of the highly pathogenic H5N1 strain of avian influenza, which has infected 175 people in seven countries, killing 96 of them, according to WHO figures.

The virus resurfaced in poultry flocks in Asia in 2003 and has since struck in the Middle East, Africa and Europe.

H5N1 can infect people in close proximity to birds, but experts worry that it may mutate to become easily transmissible between humans.

The fear is that it could then spark a human flu pandemic like those which have claimed millions of lives in the past.

Fukuda said that a key role of the taskforce would be to hunt for unexplained human cases of H5N1 -- a possible sign that the virus has turned into a more dangerous form.

Earlier this week, the WHO organised a meeting of experts focussing on plans for coordinated global action in the event of a pandemic.

"It is clear that if we try to contain a pandemic -- and there is no precedent for that -- then there's a very good chance that we will fail," Fukuda said.

"However, there's also a very good chance that if we mount this kind of effort, we may slow down the spread of a pandemic virus early on. And if we do that, and we buy some substantial amount of time -- that means weeks -- then we can really increase the chances for having more vaccine available, more rapidly, and it'll give countries more time to prepare."

The agency has said that the success of any plan would depend on detecting the virus quickly, swiftly mobilising resources including drugs to slow its spread, and getting people to comply with control measures, including possible quarantines.

## KTS burn victims

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"My daughters have grown up. I do not know how I will marry them off," says Salam's worried wife Shamsunnahar.

Noorjahan, 17, from Kalurghat, took the job of a helper at the doomed KTS garment factory six months ago to supplement the income of her father Noor Islam, a boatman who remains jobless throughout the year except for four-five months. "I would get paid Tk 1,700 from which I used to send Tk 1,000 for my family. I don't know if I will be able to go back to work again," says a sobbing Noorjahan.

Her mother Farida who is attending her ailing daughter at the DMCH has other worries. "The fire has burnt her face badly. How will I marry her off?" she asks.

Another victim Farzana Begum went back to her father's family after her husband deserted her a year ago. There she found that her young brothers and sisters worked hard to run the family as their aged father could not work any more. The little kids, however, could not earn even two meals a day. Finally, a desperate Farzana came to Chittagong and joined the garment factory.

A large part of her body, including the face, throat and legs, has burnt in the fire. "Doctors say I will recover, but they keep silent when I ask if I will be able to work again," Farzana says.

The attending doctors told The Daily Star that she may never be able to work again. Farzana who once came out of her home to assist her poor family may now herself

become a burden on her family.

## Foreign ships

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mately 4,500 tonnes of petroleum are being supplied to ships by the vendors every month.

BPC officials admitted the clandestine sale but claimed not more than 10 percent oil can be collected in this way.

"We have asked the Coastguard to step up patrols in the outer anchorage and stop such illegal business," said Mohammad Ishaq, BPC director (marketing), when contacted over telephone.

He claimed this illegal market is not very big and only a meagre amount of fuel is being transacted.

But sources said oil worth no less than Tk 100 crore is annually being supplied through this way to the foreign ships.

As per customs rules, bunkers are treated as bonded store and the shipping agents are required to collect those following the rules.

But in maximum cases shipping agents buy the bunkers from vendors violating the rules and depriving the government of profit.

On the other hand, the shipping agents collect the foreign currencies from the ship owners by supplying fuel.

In most of the cases the money is transacted outside the country. The shipping agents also hardly disclose the actual price of the oil as they collect it from unofficial market.

Around 1,800 ships call at the Chittagong Port a year and each of those take 300-500 tonnes of fuel on an average. The BPC annually sells around 20,000 tonnes of fuel at \$275 a tonne to the foreign ships, said the sources.

## Policy being framed

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non-agricultural or low productive land.

"Upazila and Zila Land Use Committees headed by the UNO and the DC respectively should be formed to consider and recommend land allocation for non-agricultural purposes."

Meanwhile, Agriculture Minister MK Anwar has expressed deep concern at the decrease of farmland at a rate of around one percent a year.

"Theoretically speaking, there would be no cultivable land left in Bangladesh in 50 years if lands are taken away for non-farm purposes at the current annual rate," Anwar said at the 5th annual meeting of the Consortium for Unfavourable Rice Environment (Cure) in the capital on March 6.

Envisaging no increase of cropland in the country, the minister emphasised gearing up agricultural research to raise productivity.

But the BRF-proposed rice policy noted, "It is shocking to find that government expenditure on agricultural research has been steadily declining in Bangladesh."

Farm research expenditure declined to less than 0.2 percent of the agricultural gross domestic product (GDP) in 2002-05 from about 0.3 percent in 1999-2002, the BRF mentioned.

Speaking at a city workshop on 'Diverse Agriculture and Agribusiness for Poverty Alleviation through Promotion of Secondary

Crops' on February 27, the agriculture minister said allocation for agricultural research should be raised to 2.0 percent from 0.2 percent of the agricultural GDP to reduce the dependence on imports.

The BRF has recommended, "The government should take prompt action to allocate more resources to rice research. The allocation should be at least 0.4 percent of the agricultural GDP."

Agriculture ministry officials attributed the fast depletion of rice land to the growing demand for land for non-farm purposes like urbanisation, industrialisation and setting up habitations.

When contacted, Head of Social Science Division of the International Rice Research Institute Dr Mahabub Hossain said investing more on agricultural research is vital for Bangladesh since it is losing cropland quite fast.

Experts pointed out that Bangladesh farmers having an average farm size of only 0.68 acres have already put in their best efforts to produce a huge quantity of food crops during dry season by extensively using shallow pumps.

"Now that yield increase potentials in favourable eco-agricultural zones have largely exhausted, increased food grains have to come from unfavourable farm zones like flood-prone and drought-prone areas as well as areas with salinity," one expert said.

## Sons blame MP

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to be held on AJ Chowdhury College ground at Paschim Patiya in the morning today, the third one will be held on Mohsen Aouliya Mazar premises after the Zohr prayers and the fourth will be held at his village home at Jheori under Anwara Upazila after the Asr prayers today.

Jamal Uddin was abducted on July 24 in 2003 and later was killed.

As the remains of Jamal reached his city residence at Chandgaon Residential Area at noon a heart-breaking scene occurred.

"It took him (Jamal) more than two and a half years to reach home from his business place at Chawk Bazar, which is at best a kilometre away from here. Not alive, not as dead but as a skeleton and that too after a lot of trouble," said Jamal Uddin's wife Najma Akter Khanam in a tone that moved everybody to tears.

Jamal Uddin's elderly mother was seen weeping and striking her own chest cursing Sarwar and Maruf.

Yelling out the name of Sarwar and Maruf's father, Kalu, she said, "Kaula, you were an employee of Jamal's father and now your sons have killed my beloved son."

Meanwhile, Sarwar, Jamal Nizam MP denied the allegations against him and his brother. He termed the allegations as a conspiracy against them.

Members of Jamal Uddin's family after being traumatised for more than 31 months received the DNA report on Thursday, which confirmed that the skeleton Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) had dug up from a remote village in Fatikchahr on August 24 last year is of Jamal Uddin.

Rab had recovered the remains of Jamal from a remote forest on a hill named Sataikanda Tilla under Fatikchahr Upazila, about 40 kilometres from the port city, 25 months after his abduction.

## 14-party

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Urging the people to make the siege programme a success, Jalil reiterated their no-election stance if the opposition's demand of reforms to the caretaker government and the EC was not met.

The meeting also condemned the killing of Juba Leagues leader Haji Masudur Rahman Imam Ali in the name of "crossfire" by the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab). Jalil accused the State Minister for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar for the killing as Imam had protested an occupation of land by Babar's cousin.

Suranjit Sengupta, Obaidul Quader, Akhteruzzaman, Jahangir Kabir Nanak, Mirza Azam also attended the meeting.

The 14-party city unit yesterday also held a preparatory meeting at the Gono Forum office with General Secretary Saidur Rahman Sayeed of Dhaka city unit in the chair.

Coordinator of 14-party city unit Mofazzel Hossain Chowdhury Maya told The Daily Star after the meeting that they have made preparations for the siege programme to succeed.

Maya said they would force the government to meet their demand for reforms in the caretaker government and EC.

Fourteen-party leaders Saifuddin Ahmed Manik, Abdul Kalam, Omar Ali, Haji Mohammad Selim, Shafiqur Rahman, Sheikh Bazur Rahman, Harun Chowdhury were also present in the meeting.

## Hasina

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counter the foreign minister's March 7 briefing, Hasina's Political Secretary Sabur Hossain Chowdhury said it is not so.

"It is social rather than political," he said, adding that the dinner is for greeting the heads of foreign missions as the opposition leader could not meet them on Eid Day due to staying out of country.

On March 7, Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan and State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfuzzaman Babar briefed the heads of foreign missions and international agencies on the recent capture of militants, including Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh chief Abdur Rahman and his deputy Bangla Bhai.

The foreign minister also spoke about the PM's offer for the formation of a bipartisan committee to discuss the opposition's reform proposals.

## Bangla Bhai

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remand for quizzing.

Second-in-command of banned Islamist organisation Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) Bangla Bhai was arrested wounded from a hideout at Muktagechha in Mymensingh on March 6.

Rab members continued drives to net two absconding JMB Majlish-e-Shura members Salahuddin and Khaled Saifullah on information gleaned from detained JMB chief Abdur Rahman.

Rahman is being intensively quizzed at the Task Force Interrogation Cell.

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police Abdur Quayyum yesterday said investigators have not yet found any international link with JMB.

Media reports have helped the law enforcement agencies to arrest criminals and curb crime, the IGP said at a courtesy call on the leaders of Crime Reporters Association of Bangladesh at his office.

The IGP said the bounties that the government announced for the arrest of JMB leaders Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai and other JMB cadres are already to hand.

"We will distribute it soon after Rab submits a report mentioning the names of the receivers."

## Murder of Prof Yunus

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be true, Jamaat's link with JMB will be undeniable," he observed.

Prof Yunus was murdered while on a morning walk on December 24, 2004.

Two eyewitnesses to Yunus murder in statements before a magistrate already confirmed that notorious Shibir cadre Zafar Babu and his accomplice Zillur Rahman were among the group of four that killed the RU teacher.

"The statements seem quite convincing as they were corroborated by other witnesses, documents and circumstantial evidence," a senior police official said, replying to a question.

Police attached all movable properties of Zafar Babu on February 24 last for his implication in the grisly crime.

Sources said Babu, who stands accused in seven cases for murder, blasts and other crimes, was arrested in August 2004 at Katakhal in Rajshahi.

A number of Jamaat leaders including Katakhal municipal administrator Mazedur Rahman, RU syndicate member Siddiq Hussain, and Ward Commissioner Gias Uddin lobbied instantly to get him released.

But as police recovered a revolver following his confession the next day, Jamaat disowned Babu.

He, however, was released on securing bail from the High Court in October 2004.

Rajshahi police included him in their list of most-wanted criminals shortly after Yunus murder. "He escaped several raids. His arrest will help to unravel the murder mystery," said a police source.

Police in 2005 had contacted Babu through a third party and proposed to make him the principal witness in Yunus murder case for his surrender, added the source.

But referring to Rajshahi City Jamaat Ameer Ataur Rahman, Babu said, "Contact him. I will surrender only if he asks me to do so," said a police source quoting from police records.

Police reports to the home ministry cell formed to monitor the sensational cases too said that the clues unearthed so far suggest that a section of a fundamentalist political party was involved in the murder.

Sources at RU and Binodpur said Babu held a meeting at RU TSSC on the night before Yunus murder. Sirajus Salekin, former president of Islami Chhatra Shibir in Binodpur, took part in the meeting

along with a pro-BNP RU teacher's son.

Police had arrested Zillur Rahman, a RU section guard, in connection with the murder, but he too came out on bail.

Zillur during police interrogation said he was with his second wife on the night before the killing. But his wife denied the claim. "Though he came up with some sort of documents supporting his claim, evidence and statements of other witnesses made police sure of his involvement," said sources.

The police had also arrested Sirajus Salekin for suspected links with the murder. They had obtained some vital leads from him.

The other arrestees were Salekin's accomplice Habib, Jubo Maitree and Chhatra Maitree leaders Rabbi Hossain Zia, Mizanur Rahman Rummon, Monirul Islam and Nazibul Islam Bachchu.

Police freed Habib and Zia after interrogation the same day while Salekin, Rummon, Monirul and Bachchu got bail later.

Meanwhile, plaintiff Abdul Halim claimed that his elder brother Yunus had no personal enemies. He was very much active in politics for the last three months preceding his murder. Halim said 'fundamentalist anti-Liberation forces' might be behind the murder.

**PBCP LEAFLET**  
Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) in a leaflet had purportedly claimed responsibility for Yunus murder. But local crime experts question the authenticity of the leaflet as well as the claim.

They say the leaflet, ironically, bears several similarities to a press release of Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of ruling coalition partner Jamaat, and it was different in many ways from the other PBCP leaflets.

**SHIBIR LINK**  
Locals in Binodpur, Dharampur and Kajia areas said photocopies of the PBCP leaflet were mainly in the possession of Shibir activists.

In 1995, Yunus filed a case against 60 people including many Shibir cadres for an attack on him near RU central Shaheed Minar.

He had developed an enmity with Shibir cadre Zillur over shrine affairs in Puthia of Rajshahi.

## Draft coal policy

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domestic demand for energy and if open pit mining is allowed, Nuruddin Kamal, also a member of the Citizens Commission said, adding that this may prove a recipe for disaster and the entire north-western region may get isolated from economic activities.

"Coal, petroleum products, natural gas and hydroelectricity are the main commercial energy sources of the country while electricity is the major secondary energy. So, framing coal policy without linking it with the other energy resources is not practical," Kamal, former chairman of Power Development Board (PDB), added.

The present policy does not offer any direction as to how it will fit into the national energy policy, he said, adding that it has put energy security on the back burner. "Such contradictions need to be removed from the policy."

Termining the dealings in the environmental aspects as 'built-in bias', the paper said the draft policy seems more concerned with opening pit mining as could be observed from different provisions in terms of rehabilitation and reclamation of land.

It said the refilling of the excavated area in the mining sites would make it hard for the ecological issues to return to its near original position in future. "These have not been addressed adequately in the policy," it reads.

Termining the commercial aspects 'too premature', it said fixing the coal

price upfront may not be an ideal way to attract foreign investors. A low return of the six-percent royalty proposed in the policy will be of no use for the country, rather it will make some foreign investors rich, the analysis said.

The draft policy also does not hold the foreign investors liable in case of defaults that may cause national losses, the paper noted suggesting contracts of profit or production sharing, along with royalty.

The provision that the investor will determine the mining method is also wrong, said BEA General Secretary Dr Abul Barkat, adding that the method must be approved by the government.

He noted that the Citizens Commission on Gas, Oil and Coal may consider preparing an alternative coal policy considering the total energy reserve in the country