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Musharraf pardons Indian on death row for 35 years

AFP, Islamabad  
Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf has pardoned an Indian national who spent 35 years languishing on death row on espionage charges, a minister said yesterday.  
Kashmir Singh was arrested in 1973 and given a death sentence by a military court and has since become "mentally disabled" while held under the Official Secrets Act, human rights minister Anwar Burney said.  
Burney said earlier this month that he had discovered the father of three in the central jail in Lahore after he was tipped off about Singh by the Indian community in London.  
"A mercy petition... has been accepted by President Pervez Musharraf and Singh is to be

Bush admn distancing itself from Musharraf

Fahim may not become Pak premier  
AP, PTI, Washington  
The US's second-ranking diplomat today signalled that the Bush administration was distancing itself from Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf after Opposition victories in last week's elections.  
Deputy secretary of state John Negroponte told senators that the US was supporting Pakistan's people as they chose their leaders after the parliamentary elections. But he made scant mention of Musharraf, who seized power in a 1999 coup, during his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.  
Senior Bush administration officials, including Negroponte, have previously underlined their view that Musharraf has been "indispensable" to the US-led fight against extremists along Pakistan's rugged border with Afghanistan.  
Negroponte testified that "Pakistan has been indispensable" to that fight and said the US looks "forward to working with the leaders who emerge" from the formation of a new government.  
When pressed by a lawmaker about whether the US would continue to back Musharraf, Negroponte acknowledged that "Musharraf is still the President of his country, and we look for to continuing to work with him."  
US lawmakers and Pakistani Opposition leaders have criticised the Bush administration for its steadfast support of the former

Locals take away bricks, artefacts of another Bogra bihar

HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU, Bogra  
An ancient Bouddha Bihar in Kahlaloo upazila of the district is falling into ruin as locals take away bricks and other artefacts from the archaeological site.  
Locally known as Bagoil Dhibi, the Bihar in Razakpur area of the upazila had a civilisation centring it, said archaeologist Mahabubul Alam. The architecture resembles that of the Gupta era, he added.  
The Bihar was larger than the Vasu Bihar in Shibganj upazila, said Badrul Alam, field officer of the Bogra office of Archaeology Department, adding that Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang visited the Vasu Bihar and adjacent areas during 639-645AD.  
Badrul said there was probably a temple on the eastern side of the Bagoil Dhibi Bihar along with other



Locals striped this ancient Bouddha Bihar in Kahlaloo, Bogra. They also took away the bricks from its wall to sell them in the market at throwaway prices.



Book lovers throng the Ekushey book fair at Bangla Academy yesterday, the concluding day of the month-long event. Story on page 1.

'Give Liberation War heroes their due respect'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
The contribution of the liberation war heroes should be recognised with due respect to establish a secular Bangladesh free from exploitation, discrimination and deprivation, said speakers at a meeting yesterday.  
They were speaking at a discussion organised by Bangladesh Muktijoddha Foundation (BMF) at the War Museum Auditorium marking the 24th death anniversary of commander-in-chief of the Bangladesh Armed Forces and the Liberation Forces General MAG Osmani.  
The discussants demanded that the death anniversary of Osmani must be observed with state honour.

Govts since '71 neglected the teachings of history: CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda yesterday said governments since the country's independence in 1971 neglected the teachings of history eventually leading to the change-over of 11.  
"We write the most beautiful things about the worst persons who looted people's money and sent those abroad. But nobody is held accountable," said the CEC while speaking at the ninth reunion of alumni of History Department of Dhaka University (DU) at DU Teacher-Student Centre.  
Dhaka University History Department Alumni Association organised the event with participation of over 700 former students.  
"Country's development was hampered by corruption. Therefore, I am not surprised at the present change," said CEC Shamsul Huda, who obtained master's degree in history from DU in 1964.  
Quoting a sociologist, he said changes in civilisation take place through discontinuity with the past. The culture of politics and economics which has been dominant for long needs time to be changed, he said adding "That process is now underway."  
"We have many achievements, like the language movement and the independence, but those successes have been paled by our misdeeds," he said urging all to learn lessons from the past.  
While speaking to the journalists after delivering the speech, the CEC said the government should not sit with political parties for holding dialogue until the commission completes its talks with BNP.  
The dialogue between the EC and BNP is yet to begin due to internal problems of BNP, he said adding that the EC would first let the government know about the outcome of the dialogue between the commission and political parties.  
When asked about the law adviser's remarks on lifting the state of emergency partially before the city corporation elections, Shamsul Huda said if the government decides to do so, it will surely be very positive.  
Speaker barrister Jamiruddin Sircar, also an alumnus of History Department of the university, reminded those present of the

DELHI MEET Saarc ministers to talk outlines of investment, protection accord

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi  
Broad outlines of an investment promotion and protection agreement among Saarc countries are expected to be discussed at a meeting of South Asian commerce ministers this week.  
Discussions among South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) countries are already on for such an agreement and what the Delhi meeting would do is to take it further forward by deliberating on its contours, official sources said.  
What the commerce ministers would do is to lend a sense of urgency in moving towards finalising the agreement on investment promotion and protection, they said.  
The proposed treaty, which had come up for discussion at a meeting of commerce secretaries in Dhaka in November last year, will address post-investment issues and this week's meeting of commerce ministers would identify measures required to promote cross-border investment in the region, they said.  
Specific sectors of interest to investors in Saarc region would be identified during the meeting and steps to be taken to encourage

Malaysia allows inter-company transfer of Bangladeshis

UNB, Dhaka  
The Malaysian authorities have agreed for the first time to allow transfer of Bangladeshi workers from one company to another.  
Malaysian and Bangladesh embassy officials informed Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury of the latest concession during his brief stopover at Kuala Lumpur on Thursday on way back home from Tokyo.  
The officials told the adviser that a Workers' Welfare Committee had been set up to assist the Bangladesh high commission to tackle the workers problems.  
Besides, a hostel to accommodate 800-1,000 workers has been set up as a shelter for the distressed workers and a microbus is being procured for their transport.  
The foreign adviser was further informed that additional personnel are being hired to strengthen the Bangladesh mission's hands. Discussions were also held about the possibility of 'outsourcing' some critical functions to enhance the mission's effectiveness.  
Iftekhar hoped these measures will have positive impact in dealing with the problems and ensure welfare of the Bangladeshi workers.  
The welfare of Bangladeshi workers abroad must get top priority, he said.  
The Malaysian officials told the adviser that they will help in every possible way and control those Malaysian agents who are responsible for the plight of the Bangladeshi workers.  
So far, 3,10,000 Bangladeshis have gone to Malaysia against the attestation given for 4,30,000.

UN may slap sanction on Iran today

AP, United Nations  
Britain and France said Thursday they expect the Security Council to vote today and approve new UN sanctions against Iran for refusing to suspend uranium enrichment.  
The two countries cosponsored the resolution that would impose a third round of sanctions on Iran. The two previous sanctions resolutions were adopted unanimously, but this one is currently facing difficulties from four non-permanent council members who have raised a variety of concerns.  
Libya, Indonesia, South Africa and Vietnam.  
Britain's UN Ambassador John Sawers said the resolution would have been adopted if it was put to a vote on Thursday. It is supported by the five veto-wielding council members: the US, Russia, China, Britain and France and has more than the nine "yes" votes needed in the 15-member council for adoption.  
But Sawers said France and Britain are holding up putting the resolution in the final form "to go the extra mile" and get the countries with concerns on board. He said a vote will probably be on Saturday.  
Libya's UN Ambassador Giadalla Ettalhi told reporters on

Exhibition of 185 artefacts starts Monday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
The government has organised a weeklong exhibition of 185 artefacts that were supposed to go to Guimet Museum in Paris. The move comes after 42 artefacts, which finally made it to Paris, returned to Bangladesh.  
The exhibition begins Monday at the Nolinikanto Bhattashali Gallery of the National Museum.  
Amid huge protest of art connoisseurs the government tried to send 187 artefacts to Guimet Museum for exhibition but cancelled the move after two Vishnu statues, scheduled to leave

**NOTICE**  
Due to unavoidable circumstances, the literature page could not be published today. It will resume publication on March 8. We deeply regret the inconvenience to our readers.

**Prayer Timing**

March 1		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-15	5-50
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-05	6-10
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

Iraq approves execution of 'Chemical Ali'

AFP, Baghdad  
Iraq's presidency on Friday approved the execution for genocide of Ali Hassan al-Majid, the top hatchet man of Saddam Hussein known to the world as "Chemical Ali" for ordering gas attacks on Kurds in the 1980s.  
The presidency has approved Chemical Ali's execution, a top Iraqi official told AFP on condition of anonymity.  
He said no date had been decided for the execution by the presidency council, which comprises President Jalal Talabani, a Kurd, Shia Adel Abdel Mahdi and Sunni Tareq al-Hashemi.  
Majid was sentenced to death for genocide in June last year along with two other Saddam cohorts Sultan Hashim al-Tal, Saddam's



South Africa skipper Graeme Smith, who was unbeaten on 223 at the end of the first day, square-drives towards backward point as Bangladesh wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim looks on during the second Test at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday. Story on page 1.

SPECIAL TRIBUNAL Trial of Sylhet cases hampered for judge shortage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet  
Trial of 24 sensational cases is being hampered as the Sylhet divisional special tribunal has been short of judge.  
Sylhet Divisional Special Tribunal Judge Dipyoman Sarker was transferred on 27 January without any replacement for him. Since then, District and Sessions Judge Md Abdul Gafur has been in charge of the tribunal. He is compelled to defer dates for decisions in many cases as he has been grappling with the additional charge.  
Sources said trial of the case filed in connection with the grenade attack on the British high commissioner would be delayed further for manifold reasons

The Daily Star Coming out tomorrow - Star Campus

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