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Muralidaran reaches the pinnacle

AFP, Colombo
Sri Lanka spinner Muttiah Muralidaran, the world's leading bowler in Test cricket, on Thursday set a second record when he became the highest wicket-taker in one-day internationals.

The off-spin wizard surpassed former Pakistan fast bowler Wasim Akram's record of 502 wickets during the four one-dayer against India here when he dismissed opener Gautam Gambhir for his 503rd victim.

Muralidaran, 36, also holds the world record in Test cricket with 769 wickets in 125 matches.

The Sri Lankan achieved

DCC hospitals in poor health

Lack manpower, equipment

MAHBUBA ZANNAT
Three hospitals run by Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) are unable to provide proper health service to patients—despite having proper budgetary allocations—because of lack of medical professionals and equipment.

Acute crisis of doctors and nurses has led to very poor service delivery at the Dhaka Mahanagar General Hospital, Dhaka Mahanagar Shishu Hospital and Nazirabazar Maternity Hospital in the capital.

These hospitals were designed to provide

primary and secondary health care service to urban people.

A single patient was seen lying all by himself at a ward (surgery) at the 50-bed Dhaka Mahanagar General Hospital near Chawkbazar, while there were an insignificant number of patients at the other wards.

Dr Mohammad Azmal Hossain, director of the hospital, said that since December last year the hospital has had no surgeon on its payroll, severely hindering service.

"We have managed a paediatric surgeon

2-yr CG rule was 'doctrine of necessity'

Says law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The two-year rule of the immediate past caretaker government was the "doctrine of necessity" for continuing the administration to run the country, said Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Shafique Ahmed yesterday.

That caretaker government at least tried and eventually gave the nation democracy, Shafique said replying to a query at a press briefing at the law ministry yesterday afternoon.

Lanka turns down int'l call for truce

Offers Tigers amnesty on condition of surrender

AFP, Colombo
The Sri Lankan government Wednesday offered an amnesty to Tamil Tiger rebels who surrender, but rejected international appeals for ceasefire talks and vowed to crush those who fight on.

Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayake told parliament that some rebels were ready to lay down their arms as they face imminent defeat in their decades-long battle for an independent ethnic Tamil homeland.

"It is a wise decision and we are ready to welcome them," Wickremanayake said.

The government, however, at the same time

rejected international calls for negotiations to end the fighting, which has triggered global concern for the tens of thousands of civilians caught up in war.

The United States, European Union, Japan and Norway asked the rebels to lay down their arms and take part in a political dialogue to end Sri Lanka's vicious unrest which has claimed an estimated 70,000 lives since 1972.

But Sri Lankan Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse told the Island newspaper that "Nothing could be as ridiculous as this."

"Nothing short of unconditional surrender

Public fund looters to be punished

State minister tells JS about power sector graft during 4-party rule

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The state minister for power and energy yesterday told the Jatiya Sangsad that legal actions should be taken against those who looted public money in the power sector during the immediate past BNP-led alliance government's tenure.

The alliance government spent Tk 13,512 crore in the sector and generated only 565 MW electricity. But the previous Awami League government had spent Tk 8,068 crore and generated 1,570 MW electricity, Shamsul Haque Tuku said.

"It means they (alliance men) looted public money in the power sector," he said replying to lawmakers' queries.

Lawmakers participating in the question-answer session demanded expansion of power supply network in their constituencies as per their election pledge.

In response, the state minister said the government has plans to build new power transmission lines to provide new electricity connection.

As forecast in the power system master plan in 2006, the expected demand for electricity will be 6,066 MW by 2009, 9,768 MW by 2015 and 13,993 MW by 2020.

To meet the urgent demand for electricity, the state minister informed the House, short-term measures are being taken. These include setting up independent power plants in Habiganj for generating 11 MW, in Feni for 33 MW, Ullapara 11 MW, Maona 33 MW, Barokunda 22 MW, Rugganj 33 MW and in Jangalia for 33 MW within this year.

At present production of electricity stands at 4,000 MW



Bus passengers on Satmasjid Road in Dhanmondi, Dhaka, had to endure long wait as a mobile court stopped every bus and confiscated their loud horns yesterday. Inset, confiscated bus horns. PHOTO: SHAFIQUE ALAM

Yunus seeks to open credit unions in US

AFP, Washington

Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus said Wednesday he wants to open credit unions in the United States.

The global financial crisis is an "exciting, great opportunity ... to redo our life, our institutions, our policies," Dr Yunus told a forum in Washington to promote his latest book, "Creating a World Without Poverty".

Books on '71 very few

Children's hours from 11am today

RAKIB AHAMMED

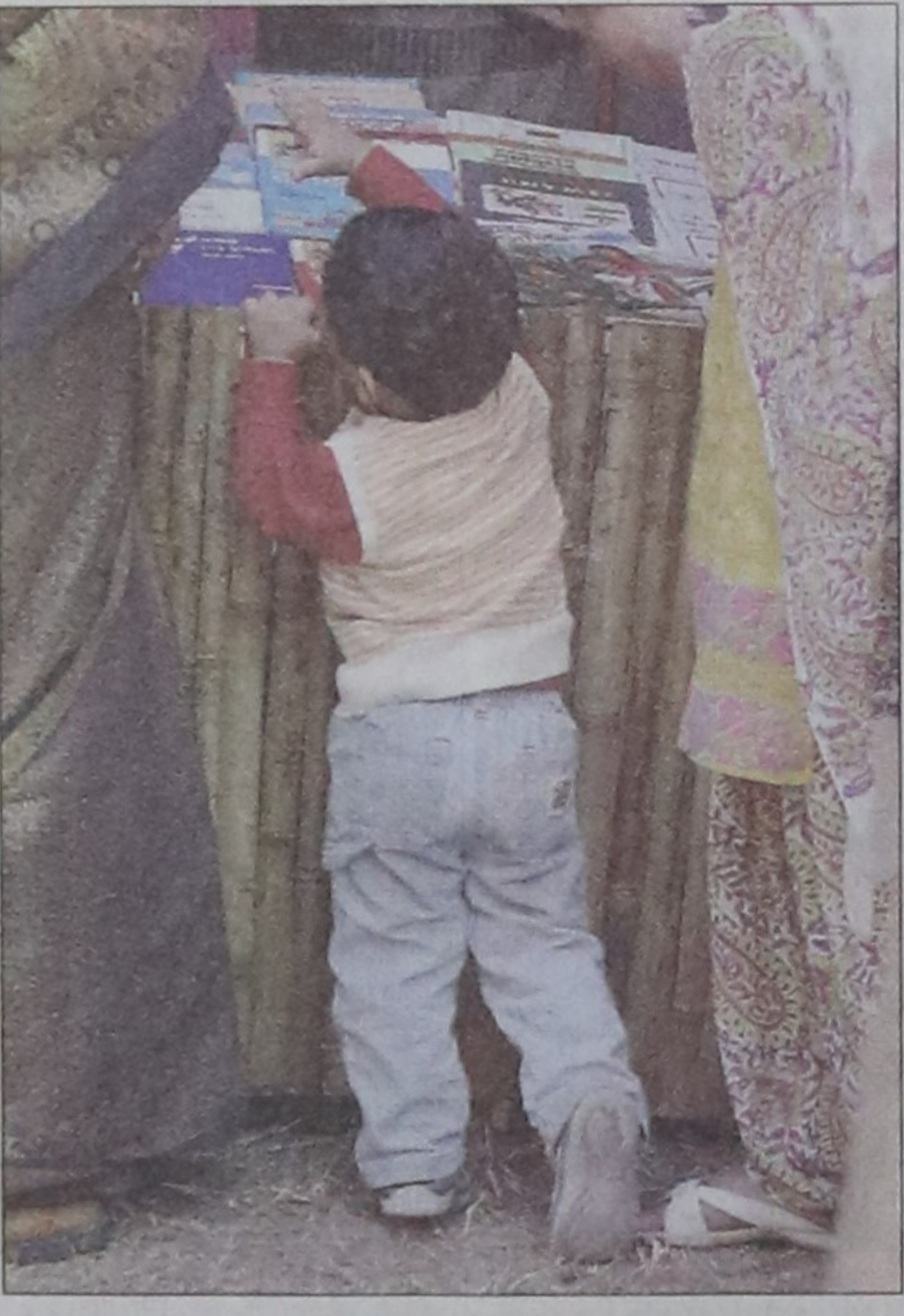
The number of books on the Liberation War brought out at the Ekushey Boi Mela so far this year has been very low.

Only five, out of the 300 books published since the fair started five days ago, has been on the 1971 war.

Some visitors at the fair are disappointed as they were looking forward to books on the war for their collections.

Writers think that most publishers are not interested in bringing out books on the war, as they do not generally sell very well.

"I didn't expect too many new books on liberation war at the fair this year. It's all about business and commerce. Publishers are more keen to bring out new novels by



What he lacks in height he makes up with enthusiasm. The child tries to pick a book at a stall at the Amar Ekushey book fair yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Climate change must be tackled to avert crisis

Says UN chief

AFP, New Delhi

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon warned yesterday that failure to tackle climate change will lead to major economic upheaval, as he appealed to nations to reach agreement on carbon emission cuts.

"Deserts are spreading. Water scarcity is increasing. Tropical forests are shrinking. Our once prolific fisheries are in danger of collapse," said Ban at the start of a three-day conference in New Delhi on sustainable development.

"Failure to combat climate change will increase poverty and hardship. It will destabilise economies, breed insecurity in many countries and undermine our goals for sustainable development."

All countries must strive to reach a "conclusive carbon emissions reduction" deal in Copenhagen in December, he said at the meeting.

The gathering in the Danish capital is set to discuss initiatives aimed at tackling climate change when the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012.

"Copenhagen must clarify commitments of developed countries to reduce their emissions," said Ban, adding: "We must also

Decision on RTI soon

Azad says more satellite TV to be permitted

STUFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is considering ratification of the draft of Information Ordinance promulgated by the immediate past caretaker government, said Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad in parliament yesterday.

"The government will make a decision on it soon," the information minister said responding to a lawmaker's query.

Make draft Tifa public

Demands BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP has demanded that the draft of the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (Tifa) with the USA be made public for proper evaluation.

"We are not opposing the treaty but we want the scope to evaluate the matter. BNP will not have any objection if the pact is signed upholding national interest," BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain said during a press briefing after the party's standing committee meeting last night.

CCC finally scraps plan to build high-rise at school

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) yesterday cancelled its project of constructing a high-rise building on the site of two age-old girls' schools.

The institutions are Aparana Charan City Corporation Girls' High School and Krishna Kumari City Corporation Girls' High School.

At a press conference, CCC acting Mayor SM Iqbal Hossain said they stopped the project, which focused on expanding the schools' education facilities, because the "mised citizens and a few sections" opposed the CCC initiative.

Today is the 11th Death Anniversary of Late Secretary M. Akhtar Ali



Today the 6th February 2009 is the 11th Death anniversary of Late Secretary M. Akhtar Ali. To observe this day of mourning a Milad Mahfil is arranged after the Asar at his residence. All the well wishers and relatives are invited to attend the Milad Mahfil.

We pray for the Salvation of the departed Soul.
Mrs. Akhtar Ali
House # 14/A, Road # 95, Gulshan-2, Dhaka-1212
Tel: 8823232

Somali pirates free Ukrainian arms ship

Over \$3m ransom paid

AFP, Mogadishu

Somali pirates yesterday freed a Ukrainian ship they had held since September with battle tanks and other weaponry on board after receiving a ransom of more than three million dollars.

The release of the ship and its crew of 20 seamen -- a Latvian, two Russians and 17 Ukrainians -- marked the end of one of the longest and most dramatic sea-jackings in recent years.

"We have released MV Faina. There were only three boys remaining on board and they delayed the release for one hour, but now the ship is free," Sugule Ali, a spokesman for the pirates, told AFP by phone.

"The ship and the crew members are in good shape because our boys expended tremendous efforts to protect them. We fed them well."

Pirates in the town of Harardhere, off the coast of which the MV Faina had been held since its capture on September 25, said more

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Prayer Timing		
February 6		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-52	5-56
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation