

THE SECOND TEST

From today, Tigers have an uphill task against Pakistan

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MAINAMATI

A travel to a place that has significant link with the past

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A GREAT VOICE LOST

Hitchens, who branded Kissinger war criminal for policies on Bangladesh and other countries, dies at 62

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Speed up war trial

Nation celebrates V-Day with the call

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The nation yesterday celebrated the 40th anniversary of independence with utmost honour to the valiant sons of the soil who made the supreme sacrifice to liberate Bangladesh from the Pakistani occupation forces in 1971.

Amid enthusiasm and gaiety, thousands of people, who thronged the National Memorial to salute the martyred heroes, called for expediting the trial of war criminals and formation of political unity to protect national interest through the banners and posters they were carrying.

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Thousands, young and old and dressed in red and green, throng the National Memorial in Savar yesterday to pay homage to the Liberation War martyrs and to celebrate the country's 40th anniversary of independence.

PHOTO: STAR

GENOCIDE IN BANGLADESH

The report that changed history



STAR REPORT

"How many did you get?" Major Rathore asked Major Iftikhar of the 12th Frontier Force Rifles of Pakistan army.

It was April 17, 1971. Rathore of the 9th Division was approaching Chandpur and met his friend Iftikhar.

Iftikhar smiled bashfully listening to the question and said, "Only twelve. And by God we were lucky to get them. We would have lost those, too, if I hadn't sent my men from the back."

The conversation was reported by Anthony Mascarenhas, former assistant editor of Morning News, Karachi, in his article "Genocide," published on June 13, 1971 in The Sunday Times.

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5 abducted, missing for 10 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

The five youths, who were abducted from Maligram Bazar of Bhanga upazila in the district on December 6, remain traceless.

A group of six, claiming themselves as personnel of Detective Branch of Police, picked them up in a white microbus around 2:30pm that day, witnesses said.

The abducted youths are Rubel Kha, 18, Belayet Kha, 23, Kiyum Munshi, 32, Sobhan Kha, 19, and Fayed Hawlader, 23 -- all from Atra Bhasra village of Kala Mridh union. Rubel was a madrasa student while the four others were unemployed, their family members said.

Two days after the abduction, Sobhan's father Anwar Kha filed a case with Bhanga Police Station. Ten days on, police have yet to catch the kidnappers. They, however, arrested two local youths -- Kamal and Faruk -- for interrogation.

Incidents of disappearance, abduction and subsequent killing across the country have risen sharply of late. Over the last few days, Munshiganj police recovered

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Freedom fighters, politicians and human rights activists yesterday said Jamaat-e-Islami's plea for "forgiving them and forgetting what they did" during the Liberation War could be a "new ploy" to stop the war crimes trial and mislead people. The Daily Star's Hasan Jahid Tusher and Wasim Bin Habib talked to eminent people about the plea of Jamaat that opposed the war and committed genocide, rape, arson and looting in collaboration with the Pakistan occupation forces. On Thursday, Jamaat leader Golam Parwar said at a discussion that they want everyone to "forgive them and forget what they did" in 1971 as "every other nation has forgiven and forgotten bad deeds committed in the past."

Even Allah will not forgive

FERDOUSI PRIYABHASHINI

It is clear that Jamaat is now hatching a new plot to escape the trial by asking people to forget what its leaders did and forgive them after 40 long



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No scope to forgive

HARUN-AR-RASHID

There is no scope for forgiving the Jamaat men, who committed heinous crimes during the Liberation War, said former army chief Harun.



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Neither forgivable, nor forgettable

AREFIN SIDDIQUE

The crimes of killing three million people and raping two lakh women are neither forgettable nor forgivable, said Dhaka University Vice-



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Certain crimes can't be forgiven

DR MA HASAN

Jamaat is trying to bury the issues of war crimes and evade trial by saying "forgive and forget," said Dr MA Hasan, convener of War Crimes Fact



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Apologise officially

REASHED KHAN MENON

"If they [Jamaat leaders] sincerely offer apology for their 1971 crimes, and clarify their stance, it is the countrymen that will decide whether to forgive



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Apology so long after is audacity

KAMAL LOHANI

It is audacious for Jamaat to seek forgiveness after such a long time, said veteran journalist Kamal Lohani. "They have no right to live in



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It is Jamaat's another crime

SULTANA KAMAL

Jamaat has committed another crime by asking people to forget the past without offering apology, said human rights activist Sultana Kamal.



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New tactic to foil war trial

AMIR HOSSAIN AMU

Jamaat might have asked for forgiveness in a new ploy to evade the war crimes trial, said Amu, a veteran Awami League leader.



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War heroes stand for challenged children

JU CORRESPONDENT

Ten freedom fighters took the responsibility of 50 special-needs children's education and medical treatment at Atigram in Manikganj yesterday.

Their pledge was made at a programme titled Koruna kingba manobadhiker noy, ashun attar shomporko gorey tuli (Not of pity nor to ensure rights, let's build a relationship with souls).

Friendly Centre for Special Needs Person organised the programme on Sonargaon School premises marking the 40th anniversary of the independence.

Over 50 physically and mentally challenged children were handed over

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Country swept by cold wave

Spell to continue for couple of days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Heavy fog with mild to moderate cold wave, sweeping over the northern and southwestern region for the last few days, killed at least four children yesterday affecting many others.

Enveloping the country's ports and disrupting the key ferry services, the fog of this year's first cold wave has already put life of people in difficulties.

The frigid weather coupling with the cloudy sky is

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HAND CHOPPED OFF People join hands, ask for justice

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Narsingdi

Several hundred people of Narsingdi yesterday formed a human chain protesting Hawa Akther Jui's hand severing by her husband.

The human chain, organised by Narsingdi Debate Forum, was

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ADMISSION IN CITY SCHOOLS

18 kids aspiring, one to be lucky

WASIM BIN HABIB

As many as 18 beginners will try their luck for every seat in grade-I in the city's public schools this year under the lottery system.

The capital has 24 government schools, of which only 13 have Class-I with an accommodation for 1,500 school beginners. Against the seats, some 27,934 forms have been selected for lottery.

Administrator appointment undemocratic Says BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Terming the appointment of district council administrators unconstitutional, BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the government had violated the constitution by appointing unelected persons.

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Waterbus service sinks after start

Lack of right planning, mismanagement blamed

MORSHED ALI KHAN

Sixteen months after its launching, the waterbus service in the rivers Buriganga and Turag is on the verge of collapse due to mismanagement and lack of proper planning.

Moreover, introduction of wrong types of vessels for the existing landing facilities along their route also caused a decline in the number of passengers. The vessels can only have three stoppages instead of six as the existing pontoons or landing facilities are too high for those.

Only two vessels now operate twice a day on the route -- Sadarghat to Gabtoli -- causing a loss of more than Tk 20,000 a day

to Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation which operates the service. The vessels were built at a cost of Tk 1.11 crore with their engines imported from the UK, BIWTC sources said.

On the Sadarghat-Gabtoli road, 105 buses operate daily, carrying thousands of passengers. The journey by bus takes up to three hours at peak time. Water bus covers its route -- about 10 kilometres -- in one hour and 30 minutes, and in a much more comfortable manner.

Moreover, the waterbus service has failed to attract passengers on a route dotted with suburban localities inhabited by Lakhs. People of nearby Basila and

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These waterbuses operate between Sadarghat and Gabtoli incurring a loss of Tk 20,000 a day. Poor planning, mismanagement and improper integration with other facilities has left the service on the brink of collapse. The photo was taken from Sadarghat recently.

PHOTO: STAR