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A MARTYRED FATHER

Sadi and Shibli, celebrity sons of Shaheed Salimullah, talk to Star

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THE MISSING LINK

Syed Badrul Ahsan reads five books dealing with sub-continent's history

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EMBATTLED, OUT OF RACE

Susan Rice, US envoy to the UN, pulls out of secretary of state bid

Dhaka to seek access to MCA

\$600m US anti-poverty fund hinges on reducing corruption, resolving Grameen Bank issue

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Apart from improving its record on corruption, Bangladesh has to resolve the Grameen Bank issue in an acceptable manner and ensure that no new law hampers operation of NGOs in the country to qualify for US funds to fight poverty.

The two new issues were included in the first Bangladesh-US Partnership Dialogue in Washington in September, which would be crucial for Bangladesh's access to the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), said government officials.

"On Bangladesh's repeated insistence on access to the MCA, the US delegation

remarked that improvement on three issues -- namely corruption perception index, Grameen Bank and the proposed NGO law could enable Bangladesh access to the MCA," according to a report that the foreign ministry prepared on the dialogue.

Bangladesh made an attempt to get the MCA fund during the tenure of the last caretaker government but it failed.

Asking not to be named, a finance ministry official said they will again apply for the MCA fund early next year.

If Bangladesh manages to meet all requirements of the MCA, it may get \$600 million in aid in two phases.

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PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

From left, Riyadh Ali, managing director of Butterfly Park Bangladesh; Namal Rajapakse, chief financial officer of Kenpark Bangladesh Apparel; Ashit Ranjan Paul, divisional forest officer of Tangail Forest Division; AH Md Maqsood Sinha, executive director of Waste Concern; Shitangshu Kumar Sur Chowdhury, deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank; Food Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, Andrew Tilke, CEO of HSBC Bangladesh; Muqeet Majumdar Babu, chairman of Prokriti O Jibon Foundation; Rokia Afzal Rahman, president of Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Niaz Rahim, chairman of Rural Services Foundation, and Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, pose at the HSBC-The Daily Star Climate Awards ceremony in Dhaka yesterday.

BISHWAJIT MURDER



2 more held

3 other arrestees remanded; Sutrapur OC transferred; Family demands justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives yesterday arrested two more people in connection with the gruesome murder of Bishwajit Das.

Of the arrestees, Saiful Islam was arrested from Dhaka and Rasheduzzaman Shaon from Sylhet, said Gazi Rabiul Islam, assistant commissioner (media and community service) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

According to The Daily Star's own findings, the two are both fourth-year history students at Jagannath University belonging to the group led by Sirajul Islam, general secretary of the campus BCL.

Photographs and video footage of the December 9

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BCL embarrasses AL, its associates

Leaders believe troublemakers must be punished to restore image

HASAN JAHIID TUSHER

Top leaders of ruling Awami League and its associated bodies feel embarrassed at Bangladesh Chhatra League's criminal activities, including the Bishwajit murder.

As the much-talked-about killing has made the government and AL high-ups furious, party leaders believe the time has come to take "strict decision" against BCL.

At least four top leaders, who include two senior ministers, didn't even want to talk about BCL, when The Daily Star approached them for comments.

A few others said they feel embarrassed after Bishwajit was hacked to death by a group of Chhatra League brutes in broad daylight during the December 9 opposition blockade.

They think much of their "achievements in recent

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Top criminal Bikash freed on bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Top terror Bikash Kumar Biswas was secretly released from Kashimpur jail-2 yesterday upon a bail order.

Jail sources told The Daily Star last night that Bikash, 46, was released around 9:00am.

A resident of Mirpur, Bikash and his brother Prokash Kumar Biswas, also a top terror, are accused of several murders in the capital, especially in Mirpur and Agargaon areas.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

HSBC-Star honour climate heroes

4 pvt organisations, 1 govt dept awarded for contributions to environment conservation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A government department and four private organisations yesterday received the country's top environment awards for their eco-friendly efforts and mitigation of climate change impacts through sustainable business activities, community-based programmes and awareness campaigns.

The "HSBC-The Daily Star Climate Awards", now in its third year, was jointly organised at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel in the capital by one of the world's leading bank HSBC and the most-read English language daily of the country The Daily Star.

Riyadh Ali, managing director of Butterfly Park Bangladesh Ltd; Niaz Rahim, chairman of Rural Services Foundation (RSF); Namal Rajapakse, chief financial officer of Kenpark Bangladesh Apparel (Pvt) Ltd; Muqeet Majumdar Babu, chairman of Prokriti O Jibon Foundation; and Ashit Ranjan Paul, project director and divisional forest officer of Tangail Forest Division, received the awards from Food Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque on behalf of their organisations.

The award ceremony started with a

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MORE ON PAGE 2

BNP, Jamaat leading nation to civil war

Says Syed Ashraf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Syed Ashraf Islam yesterday alleged that the BNP-Jamaat alliance was trying to push the country towards a civil war in a bid to save war criminals.

"The war crimes trial is going on and so is the conspiracy against it. In the name of hartal, they [the opposition alliance] are carrying out masked attacks. They want to push the country towards a civil war," he said.

The minister was talking to reporters after

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People queue up at Rayerbazar Mausoleum yesterday morning to pay homage to the intellectuals and professionals massacred by the Pakistan army and its collaborators on the eve of the country's independence. More on page 5 and 8.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

No conspiracy can stop war crimes trial

PM tells discussion on Martyred Intellectuals Day

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated that the war crimes trial would surely be held on the country's soil although many conspiracies were going on to foil it.

"The trial of the war criminals will surely be held defying all sorts of conspiracies," she said at a discussion meeting marking the Martyred Intellectuals Day.

Awami League organised the meeting at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital.

Hasina said those who had helped the Pakistani occupation forces and are now trying to implement their agenda after the Liberation War, would definitely hatch conspiracies against the trial.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

Rapid changes in China

Fast urbanisation, industrialisation wiping off poverty; 80 villages disappearing every day as cities trigger migration

SHARIER KHAN, back from China

In 1988, Beijing -- the capital of China which was witnessing its first wave of reforms -- had only two private cars with the second one just brought in by a Chinese scholar from the USA. The world's most populated city was swarmed with millions of bicycle riding commuters.

Now, the city of 30 million people has five million cars. There are 10 metro rail services and various city bus services operating on thousands

of kilometres of its road network.

Welcome to the new face of China. If you go to any affluent village around, say, Nanning -- the capital of Guangxi autonomous province -- expect to see farmers driving posh cars. As in most European and American villages, the villagers live in duplex houses and enjoy all modern amenities in the rural setting.

These changes are signs of China's progress in poverty alleviation and its becoming the world's second largest economy.

For a nation of 1.3 billion people, poverty alleviation had been a very hard task. To come up to the present level of progress, this nation had to find its own way and work hard for more than three decades with a clear vision of what it wanted to achieve.

From the eighties, China followed a model of rapid urbanisation facilitated by a huge infrastructure and industrial powerhouses for its poverty alleviation.

"But as a result of this policy, 80

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5 killed in Sirajganj bus crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Five passengers were killed and 27 others injured when a bus turned turtle on the western approach road of the Bangabandhu Bridge in Sirajganj yesterday evening.

Two of the deceased were identified as Abdur Rahim, 55, and Karim Molla, 33, of Gabtoli area under Bogra district.

The identity of the

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

27 killed in US school shooting

AFP, New York

At least 27 people, 18 of whom are children, were killed in a shooting yesterday at a Connecticut elementary school, reported US media citing law enforcement officials.

Connecticut State Police spokesman Lieutenant Paul Vance could not confirm the death toll, but said there had been "several fatalities" among staff and students at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown.

He said that the shooter had died within the building during the police operation, and that the scene was secure

and the public safe, but gave few details of the latest in a series of recent gun massacres to rock America.

If confirmed, the toll would be the second highest death toll in a US school shooting, exceeding the 15 killed in the 1999 Columbine High School massacre that triggered a fierce but inconclusive debate about the United States' liberal gun control laws.

CBS News cited law enforcement sources as saying that 27 people were killed, including 18 children.

"I was in the gym at the time... we heard

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