



PHOTO: STAR
Children fill used plastic bottles with water for sale among unsuspecting people, posing a potential health risk when waterborne diseases rampage through much of Bangladesh.

40pc Bangladeshis in Britain unemployed

Work visas for them slammed as 'incomprehensible'

AFP, London
A British scheme offering temporary work visas to 10,000 Bangladeshis was criticised yesterday as "incomprehensible" by a conservative think-tank in London that focuses on immigration issues.
Migrationwatch said the scheme, administered by the Home Office, flies in the face of government figures which show that more than 40 percent of young Bangladeshis already in Britain were unemployed.
According to the 2001 national

census, there were just under 25,000 Bangladeshi men aged 16 to 24 in the United Kingdom, of whom 10,000 were unemployed, the conservative think-tank said.
"It is incomprehensible that when there are large numbers of young Bangladeshis already here who are unemployed it should be thought necessary to issue work permits to many thousands more," its chairman Sir Andrew Green said.
"Surely the people already here should be offered these jobs, or should be

trained to do them, before we add still further to immigration. It simply defies logic."
The Home Office's "sector-based scheme" allows unskilled immigrants to come to Britain for up to a year, to fill vacancies in industries with jobs available such as agriculture and hospitality.
A Home Office spokeswoman in London said the scheme was led by employers' need for workers.
"It only allows people into the UK who will contribute by filling vacancies which can't be taken by resident
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SIACHEN GLACIER India, Pakistan start demilitarisation talk

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA,
from New Delhi
The defence secretaries of India and Pakistan yesterday held talks in the Indian capital on military de-escalation on Siachen Glacier, the world's highest and coldest battlefield, after a break of seven years.
The two-day talks began with a 30-minute one-to-one meeting between Indian Defence Secretary Ajai Vikram Singh and his Pakistani counterpart Hamid Nawaz Khan. This was followed by delegation-level talks.
There was no official word from either side on what transpired at

yesterday's meeting but sources said a joint statement is likely at the end of the talks today.
The talks on the 23,000-foot high Siachen Glacier would be followed by India-Pakistan parleys on the issue of Sri Creek, a marshy land near Arabian Sea demarcating India's Rann of Kutch in Gujarat state and Pakistan's Sindh province.
The defence secretary-level talks are part of the composite dialogue between nuclear-powered India and Pakistan.
Ahead of the defence secretary-level meeting, Indian cabinet committee on security held a 90-minute
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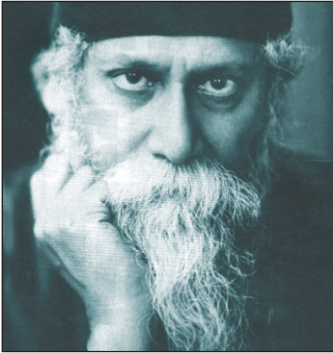
Verdict in tax case against Ershad adjourned

COURT CORRESPONDENT
A Dhaka court yesterday adjourned the judgment in the income tax corruption case against former president HM Ershad.
Judge Rezaul Karim Khan of the Special Court for Dhaka Division adjourned the judgment following a time petition filed by the defence.
Earlier Sheikh Serajul Islam, the defence counsel, filed the time petition. As a rationale behind the petition, he said Ershad could not appear before the court, as he was busy distributing relief in the flood-hit areas.
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Marooned but not broken

RAFIQ HASAN, back from Comilla
They are very poor, their homes are submerged for weeks, crops damaged in the fields, daily income stopped, and still they are not ready to accept relief.
A group of women standing in knee-deep water in Ramchand-rapur, a remote village about 60 off Comilla town, said they did not go anywhere for relief as they are the members of Grameen Bank.
"We did not go to the government for relief because we are the members of the Grameen Bank," said Kalpana Rani. Others nodded in agreement.
The women gathered at a Grameen Bank mobile camp set up at a makeshift house and stood in knee-deep water finding no higher ground in the entire area.
The flooding marooned them in submerged houses and forced the men members of their families, stopped from an income, to go fishing in floodwaters abound with fish from local fisheries.
The Grameen Bank extended its helping hand to such members reeling from weeks of monsoon flooding. The members would repay the loan after the flooding eases and they rebuild life.
"Since I became a member of the bank 12 years back, I did not know what poverty is," said Geeta Rani Barman of Jelepura under Ramchandrapur union. "We are in hardship, we need some assistance to overcome this crisis, but we don't need relief."
Most women took loan from Tk 5,000 to Tk 1,00,000 to set up small-scale businesses and they now earn good

sums of money a month selling dried fish, garments, ornaments and iron tools.
Although flood stopped their activities, they are not worried much as the bank suspended taking weekly installments when flooding began last month.
Deputy Managing Director of the bank Depal Chandra Barua went to the area along with other high officials and gave assistance to flood affected members in the union under Muradnagar in Comilla on Wednesday. The assistance packet contained 10 kg of rice, one kg of pulses, five packets of oral saline and four water purification tablets.
The bank has allocated Tk 60 crore for providing such assistance to its over 13.05 lakh members who have been affected by the current flood.
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Tagore's 63rd anniversary of death today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The 63rd death anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore will be observed today to flash back to a
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Oil prices race higher again

AFP, London
Oil prices resumed their upwards march yesterday as supply fears persisted despite a lifeline for Russian energy giant Yukos and efforts by OPEC to reassure markets it still has spare output capacity.
Brent North Sea crude oil for September delivery rose 55 cents to 40.25 dollars a barrel in the first few minutes of trading in London.
The contract had tumbled by 94 cents on Wednesday, just hours after setting a record of 40.99 dollars a barrel.
New York's benchmark contract, light sweet crude for delivery in September, climbed 40 cents to 43.23 dollars in pre-opening electronic deals Thursday.
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9 cops die in raid on Kashmir camp

AFP, Srinagar
Nine Indian policemen were killed and eight injured in an attack on their camp by one or more Kashmiri militants in the summer capital of insurgency-hit Indian Kashmir, police said yesterday.
The nine were killed during fierce fighting through the night that ended when security forces just after 8:00 am (0230 GMT) Thursday gunned down a militant who had stormed the camp in the Raj Bagh area of Srinagar about 12 hours earlier, Kashmir's police chief Gopal Sharma told reporters at the scene.
Four of the injured policemen were critical, doctors said.
"The operation has ended and we have recovered the body of a militant," the spokesman for India's Border Security Force (BSF) Neeraj Sharma told AFP.
Security forces were searching the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) camp in case more than one militant had been involved in the attack.
Shashi Nayak, a cook at the camp, and a rifleman were rescued by BSF troopers and police from the second floor of a concrete building around 7:00 am.
"It was a horrifying experience all through the night," a pale and visibly shaken Nayak told AFP.
"The two of us bolted the door from the inside. But he (the attacker) continued to fire at the door but couldn't open it," he said, as he watched his colleagues trying to defuse a hand grenade recovered from the rebel.
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Prayer Timing		
August 6		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-20	4-55
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-47	6-50
Esha	8-15	8-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		