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# The Daily Star

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## ANNA HAZARE ENDS FAST

A Team Anna member says they will form a political party

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Save the Children and The Daily Star organise a roundtable

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## THE RAY OF RABINDRANATH

Excerpts from his autobiographical work "My Life in My Words"

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## WETLAND FILLING

# Ministry goes soft on realtor

## Slashes Tk 45 lakh off Tk 50 lakh fine

TAWFIQUE ALI

The environment ministry has mysteriously waived Tk 45 lakh from a penalty of Tk 50 lakh slapped on the developer of illegal housing scheme Ashiyon City for destroying nature.

In addition, it ordered the Department of Environment (DoE) for a speedy issuance of environmental clearance to the real-estate company.

The DoE fined the realtor, Ashiyon Lands Development Ltd, in November last year for destroying low-lying wetlands, flood plains, aquatic life and ecology on the capital's northeastern fringe.

But Mesbah ul Alam, environment secretary, as an appellate authority, in February set the penalty at Tk 5 lakh only.

Ashiyon City paid the paltry fine in February.

It, however, has not received the environmental clearance as its required documents are not up to date, sources said.

Mesbah said it was mentioned in his order on what ground the penalty was reduced. "We exempted the

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A developer is illegally filling up the Ashkona-Kaola canal in the capital's Dakkhinkhan area and selling plots to people. They care little for the law or the environment.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## Govt moves to destroy Grameen

BNP terms it a personal vendetta against Yunus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Condemning the government's move to amend the Grameen Bank ordinance, the main opposition BNP yesterday said the government has initiated the move to destroy the bank in a planned way.

Expressing its concern over the step, the BNP asked the government to save the institution by rescinding the decision.

"They [govt] have got involved in such a hateful conspiracy for their personal vendetta against the Nobel laureate

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# Dozen fake taka makers active

Gangs find time before Eid ideal for offloading forged currencies

SHUDIPTA SHARMA

At least a dozen of forger gangs are active across the country and using the shopping rush of Eid-ul Fitr to spread fake notes in the market, say detectives.

The gangs use computer technology and chemicals for making fake notes of Tk 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 denominations, said police sources, adding that the counterfeiters usually use their relatives

and poor women for marketing the fake notes.

Eid is the best season for supplying fake notes, as a huge number of people gather in markets during this time and they seldom have the chance to check each and every note they handle.

On Thursday night, the Detective Branch (DB) of police busted three people in the capital's Paltan area and seized counterfeit money worth Tk 6.40 lakh from their possession.

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## Friendship core of swim rivalry

QUAZI ZULQUARNAIN ISLAM, from London

Michael Phelps tiptoed into the press conference, taking exaggerated steps with his massive frame. On the podium, Ryan Lochte who was answering a question, looked at Phelps with a flummoxed expression.

A second later, they both burst out laughing.

It was a wonderful moment partially



Ryan Lochte, left, and Michael Phelps

because not thirty minutes ago, both these guys had gone hell-for-leather against each other in the final of the 200-meter IM at the pool at the Aquatics Center in Olympic Park.

Phelps had won, bagging his first individual gold of these Games and showing that there was fight left yet in the greatest Olympian of all time. Lochte, who had

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## No fish export to Dhaka

Threatens West Bengal business body

UNB, Benapole

Paschimanga Fish Importers Association has threatened to halt exports of all kinds of fish if Bangladesh's ban on hilsa export to West Bengal is not withdrawn immediately.

Atul Das, the association president, said the recent ban on hilsa export from Bangladesh has cast a negative impact on Paschimanga (West Bengal) and other Indian states.

He also said they will halt export of Indian fishes such as rui, katla

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The ban on Hilsa export has significantly increased its supply in local markets. At tolerable prices, Hilsa is no longer a fancy item to many people. The photo was taken yesterday at Fisheryghat in the port city's Firingibazar.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

# Quizzical export

Hilsa Tk 900/kg at market, Tk 480/kg for export

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

Hilsa, which has gone beyond the reach of the common people for its high prices, was being exported to India for less than half the local market price before a ban was slapped on its overseas sales on Tuesday.

The exporting price of hilsa to India is \$6 or Tk 480 a kg, the minimum price fixed by the government. However, at any local retail market, the fish sells for Tk 900 to Tk 1,000 per kg.

This way, Bangladesh is losing a huge amount of foreign currency. In last one month, the loss was estimated to be around Tk 10 crore, said sources at Benapole land port.

Aminul Islam, inspector of Benapole Fish Inspection & Quality Control Centre, the office overseeing fish export and its quality, said 202 metric tons of hilsa was exported to India in July this year. The export quantity and the price were the same during the same period last year.

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## Cops sue 300 JU students over violence

JU CORRESPONDENT

Around 300 students of Jahangirnagar University (JU) were sued yesterday in two cases filed in connection with Thursday's violence on and outside the campus.

Ashulia police recorded one case naming six students and around 100 unnamed on charges of attacking the on-duty policemen and obstructing them in the discharge of their duties during the violence, said Badrul Alam, officer-in-charge of Ashulia Police Station.

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## Pak court scuttles contempt shield

Strikes down new law, clears way for trying PM

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan's top court yesterday struck down a new law exempting members of the government from being tried for contempt, clearing the way for legal proceedings against the prime minister.

Parliament passed the bill last month after the Supreme Court dismissed Yousuf Raza Gilani as prime minister and convicted him of contempt for refusing to

reopen multi-million-dollar corruption cases against President Asif Ali Zardari.

But yesterday, a five-member bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry declared the law "unconstitutional".

New Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf now has until August 8 to indicate whether he will follow a court order to write to authorities in Switzerland, asking them to

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