



'I MAY BE THE LAST'

The Dalai Lama says he realises he is perhaps the last to hold the title

PAGE 8

HANDSET SALES RISE

Sales of smartphones soar, driven by low-cost devices

PAGE 1

BATTLE OF MINDS

Read about this year's finale in today's issue of



OIL SPILL in SUNDARBANS

Impact study with no fund

Forest dept starts work, selects 36 spots; UN experts likely to arrive soon

PINAKI ROY

The forest department has launched a field study in the affected Chandpai range of the Sundarbans to assess impacts of the oil spill on the mangrove forest.

The government, however, is yet to allocate funds for the study which would help the department take necessary steps to tackle the crisis.

Meanwhile, an official of the environment ministry said a UN team of experts is expected to visit Bangladesh very soon to assist the government in the clean-up of the oil spill.

A joint team of experts from the forest department, research cell of Khulna University and the Institute of Forest Research began working near

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

NEWS ANALYSIS

Govt could not care less

INAM AHMED

The numbers tell the story aptly well.

Over 70km is the spread of the oil spill in the Sundarbans. Two hundred is the number of locals employed to manually collect oil from water. Two is the number of trawlers deployed to spray clean the oil from plants. And Tk 2 lakh allocated for the clean-up operation. None of the money has actually reached the authorities.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



Workers hired by the forest department remove oil-covered plants from the bank of the Shela river in the Sundarbans yesterday. Many environmentalists believe it is a ploy to cover up the impact of the Southern Star-7 disaster.

PHOTO: COURTESY

WB okays \$1.1b loan

Funds for education, nutrition, disaster shelters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank has approved approximately \$1.1 billion for three projects to improve quality of primary education, build multipurpose shelters and promote child nutrition in Bangladesh.

The projects will benefit about 3.6 crore people by improving the standard of primary education, building coastal communities' resilience to natural disasters, and increasing the nutrition and cognitive development of poor children, the Washington-based lender said in a statement yesterday.

The projects are \$300 million for the Income Support

Programme for the Poorest (ISPP), \$400 million in additional financing for the Third Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP3) and \$375 million for the Multipurpose Disaster Shelter Project (MDSP).

"These three projects weave a strong story of complementarity in the World Bank's efforts to create opportunities for the poor -- by using cash transfers for mothers to promote better nutrition at home, helping children take advantage of pre-primary education under the primary education programme and providing school infrastructure in vulnerable coastal zones," said Johannes Zutt, World Bank country director for Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

SCHOOL ATTACK Survivors tell of chaos, terror

BBC ONLINE

The scene outside the Army Public School is deathly quiet, like the Cantonment graveyard opposite the school in Pakistan.

Outside the main gate, a solitary light shines on a TV correspondent doing a live broadcast. Nearby, a weary TV crew waits in a couple of cars parked at the roadside.

It's dark and quiet all along the boundary wall that brings up the eastern face of the sprawling campus. There are no neighbours visible.

There are no shouting and grieving parents - by now they have discovered their fate, and those who lost their children are preparing the funerals.

The scene at the city's Lady Reading Hospital (LRH) is also an understatement of what happened.

Some people still hang around outside the emergency unit and inside one emergency room where the comparatively more serious patients from the school are still being kept, the rest having been moved to regular wards, or sent home after first aid. There are more media people on the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Pakistan mourns massacre victims



Pakistani students pray for victims of Tuesday's Taliban attack. PHOTO: AFP

REUTERS, Peshawar

Pakistan woke up to a day of mourning yesterday after Taliban militants killed 132 students at a school in the city of Peshawar in a grisly attack which shocked the nation and put pressure on the government to do more to tackle the insurgency.

In all, 148 people were killed in the attack on the military-run Army Public School.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Country gets first female combat pilots

HASAN JAHID TUSHER, back from BAF Base, Jessore

In a momentous feat, two female officers of Bangladesh Air Force yesterday became the first-ever combat pilots of the country.

Flight Lieutenant Nayma Haque and Flying Officer Tamanna-E-Lutfi went down in history when they landed their Bell 206 helicopters at the BAF Base Bir Shrestha Matiur Rahman in Jessore at 1:19pm and 1:21pm respectively after successfully completing their 15-minute solo flying.

"It was a dream-come-true experience for me,"

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Tamanna and Nayma, right, in front of their Bell 206 helicopter. They have become the first female combat pilots of the Bangladesh Air Force. The photo was taken after they had completed their solo flying test at BAF base Bir Shrestha Matiur Rahman in Jessore.

PHOTO: HASAN JAHID TUSHER

PALESTINIAN STATE European Parliament backs recognition

AFP, Strasbourg

The European Parliament overwhelmingly backed the recognition of a Palestinian state "in principle" yesterday, following a series of votes on the issue in EU nations that have enraged Israel.

Lawmakers approved the motion by 498 votes to 88 with 111 abstentions, although it was a watered down version of an original motion which had urged EU member states to recognise a Palestinian state unconditionally.

The motion said the parliament "supports in principle recognition of Palestinian statehood and the two state solution, and believes these should go hand in hand with the development of peace talks, which should be advanced".

The vote came hours after a European court ordered the EU to drop the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas from its terrorism blacklist on technical grounds.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

3 trampled to death by wild elephants

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A herd of wild elephants trampled three people to death at Keochia union in Satkania upazila of Chittagong yesterday.

The incident occurred when enthusiastic locals surrounded and agitated the herd of around 14 wild elephants in Temuhuni Beel, a vast arable field where the herd came down from the hills south-east of the area.

The dead are Mahbulul Alam Talukder, 45, son of Abul Hossain Talukder of Keochia union, Md Shakil, 13, son of Md Forkan of Kaliais union and Md Shahadat, 30, son of Amir

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

ইসলামী ব্যাংকের ২৯৪তম ধোলাইখাল শাখা

মফিজ উদ্দিন ম্যানশন, ৩০/১, লাল মোহন সাহা স্ট্রিট ধোলাইখাল, গুয়ারী, ঢাকা

শুভ উদ্বোধন

১৮ ডিসেম্বর ২০১৪, বৃহস্পতিবার

ইসলামী ব্যাংক বাংলাদেশ লিমিটেড
ইসলামী শরী'আহ মোতাবেক পরিচালিত