

Unocal asked to develop Moulvibazar gas field

Petrobangla's move to cope with increasing domestic demand

Future requirements & deficit scenario



Year	Projected Demand	New Gas Source Requirement
2004	1,207mmcf	35mmcf gas from Moulvibazar
2005	1,291mmcf	60mmcf gas from Moulvibazar
2006	1,302mmcf	No additional source
2007	1,478mmcf	98mmcf gas from Bibiyana
2008	1,582mmcf	122mmcf from Bibiyana
2009	1,692mmcf	199mmcf from Bibiyana
2010	1,811mmcf	249mmcf from Bibiyana
2014	2,374mmcf	126mmcf deficit
2020	3,562mmcf	1,967mmcf deficit

SHARIER KHAN

Petrobangla has asked Unocal to develop the Moulvibazar gas field, discovered in 1999, to deal with an impending gas crisis in the country.

The US oil company, which has been pressuring Bangladesh to allow gas export to India on the ground that the local gas market was saturated, is yet to respond to the proposal.

Petrobangla projects that a minimum of 35 million cubic feet per day (mmcf) gas will be required from the Moulvibazar field in 2004 and 60mmcf in 2005 to stay even with the domestic demand. By 2007, it would need gas from Unocal's

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Morshed to take up immigration issue with Powell

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Morshed Khan yesterday said he would take up the tricky issue of restrictive American immigration measures against Bangladesh with US Secretary of State Colin Powell.

"I am going to take up the matter with Secretary of State Colin Powell through diplomatic channel... We're in constant touch with the US administration through our embassy in Washington and will do whatever is possible to overcome it," he told UNB.

In reply to a question, he said the government is assessing the situation and trying to get feedback from other countries affected by the US decision, which left all stunned over

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

US immigration registration Grace period for those missing deadlines

AP, Washington

Males age 16 and older from 18 countries who may have missed earlier deadlines to register with US immigration authorities will get another chance to do so without fear of penalty, the government announced Thursday.

The decision to provide a grace period, from January 27 to February 7, comes as the Immigration and Naturalization Service expanded the registration programme to add men and boys from Indonesia, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait and Bangladesh. The post-Sept. 11 programme has drawn strenuous protests as too harsh.

The grace period will apply to long-term male visitors from five countries—Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan and Syria—who missed a Dec. 16

deadline, according to an INS notice published Thursday in the Federal Register.

The extra time also will apply to those from Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Eritrea, Lebanon, Morocco, North Korea, Oman, Qatar, Somalia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen who missed a January 10 deadline.

Related stories on page 9

INS officials believe fear of arrest or deportation, lack of knowledge about the programme and large crowds at local offices might have prevented many of the affected people from registering earlier.

Inclusion of the five latest countries in the programme will affect thousands more long-term male visitors to the United States, the

largest group since the programme began last fall, officials said.

Under a programme enacted by Congress in response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, males 16 and older from 25 countries are required to visit local INS offices to be photographed and fingerprinted and show certain documents. Some countries included are considered potential havens for terrorists.

Different deadlines have been imposed for different countries. The biggest group to this point is the 14,000 men and boys from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan who must register by February 21.

Hundreds of people, mainly Iranians, were detained in Southern California last month when the registration deadline arrived for the

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Hosts to face India in semis today

SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts Bangladesh take on India in one of the two SAFF (South Asian Football Federation) Championship semifinals at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

The match is scheduled for a 6 pm start after Pakistan face Maldives in the first semifinal at 3pm.

Bangladesh Television will telecast both the semifinals live while Bangladesh Betar will provide running commentary.

Bangladesh advanced to the last four as Group B champions winning all three first round matches against Nepal (1-0), Maldives (1-0) and Bhutan (3-0).

Defending champions India, on the other hand, finished second in Group A with a win, a draw and a defeat which is against Pakistan, who topped the group with maximum points.

Maldives finished second behind Bangladesh with two victories against a defeat.

The final of the eight-team competition takes place on Monday. See details on Page 13.

Tofail released

Three days over, HC order to free Saleem yet to reach jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League Presidium Member and former industries minister Tofail Ahmed was released from jail yesterday after more than one month's detention.

He was freed three days after the High Court declared his detention illegal.

Released from Kushtia Central Jail, Tofail reached the capital last night and placed wreath at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi.

He also met Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina at her residence at Dhanmondi.

The High Court, on January 14, declared illegal the detention of Tofail Ahmed and journalist Saleem Samad.

Tofail was released after the court order reached the jail authorities yesterday.

Defying a court order not to arrest Tofail without any specific charge, police arrested him on



Tofail Ahmed

December 8 at Zia International Airport when he returned home from Singapore.

After his arrest under Section 54 of the CrPC, a court gave him one month's detention and sent him to Dhaka Central Jail. He was later taken to Kasimpur jail and then to Kushtia jail.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Terror-risk list Hasina blames govt for foreign policy failure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina yesterday blamed the government's foreign policy for the US decision to put Bangladesh on its terror-risk list.

The AL President alleged that the government's failures were responsible for the US government's decision to include Bangladesh in the list of countries to face stricter restrictions in the US immigration process.

Giving her reaction to the development, Hasina said the government owed an explanation to the nation after it was treated so disgracefully. "The nation has been humiliated, and the government should resign," she added.

Hasina gave her reaction yesterday evening at her Dhanmondi residence.

"The government has to bear the responsibility of its ineffectual foreign policy for which people of the country in general, and the businessmen and Bangladeshi nationals residing in the USA in particular, will have to suffer a lot," Hasina added. "My government built up a positive image of Bangladesh in the outside world, but the alliance government has tarnished it in 15 months."

She termed inclusion of Bangladesh in the terror-risk list as unfortunate, humiliating and disgraceful.

In this regard, Hasina recalled how her government had successfully developed Bangladesh's ties with the US and attracted one billion dollars of US investment in the country during her time, compared

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

A curious coincidence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The US decision to include Bangladesh in the 'terror-risk list' coincides with the deadline set by the US government and American oil company Unocal to decide on gas export by December 2002.

According to a report published in The Statesman, an Indian newspaper, on December 3, both the US government and Unocal set the year-end as the deadline for Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to decide on gas export.

Dhaka has been warned that a negative response would result in a drastic fall in American aid and investment in Bangladesh, The Statesman added.

Last year, US Ambassador Mary Ann Peters repeatedly said at public programmes that Bangladesh should urgently decide on gas export or miss the "window of opportunity" to export to India.

Because of the pressure, the government was more or less ready to announce gas export, according to some top-level policymakers. Even, in the first week of December, these policymakers had indicated to The Daily Star that the gas export issue was just awaiting a mere announcement.

However, baseless and untrue statements of Indian politicians and media reports portraying Bangladesh as a "haven of terrorists" held back the announcement, they said. Bangladesh officials dismissed the statements and reports as baseless.

The gas export issue was apparently shelved following the Mymensingh bomb blasts on December 8. When a couple of Indian 'spies' were arrested in

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1



PHOTO: STAR

Sister of Nurul Islam, vice-president of the ward No. 5 Jubo League, breaks down upon hearing the killing of her brother by armed assailants in the city's Pallabi area yesterday.

Jubo League leader shot dead in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Armed assailants gunned down a Jubo League leader in the city's Pallabi area yesterday.

Nurul Islam, 40, vice president of ward no. 5 of the Jubo League, a front organisation of the Awami League, was the owner of a stationery shop in the area.

Police said, quoting locals, that Islam was murdered for his 'involvement' with the joint forces during the anti-crime drive. They also said it was a revenge killing.

The incident took place when Islam was taking tea at a tea-stall near his house at Road No. 6, block-E, at about 6:30am. When a gang of about 10 in 'police uniform'

appeared there, Islam could sense their motive and made an attempt to escape.

Witnesses said that Najir alias Islam and Sumon alias Bush caught Islam and shot him in the head and left chest point blank. During the indiscriminate firing, Abdur Rashid, 45, a rickshawpuller was also hit by a bullet in his left leg. Leaving the victims in a pool of blood, the gang fled the scene.

Minutes before the attack, BNP cadre Faruq alias Falan and Najira went to Islam at the tea-stall and asked him to go with them to meet a local influential leader.

The victim was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Ansars-robbers shootout on launch: 20 hurt

A CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Twenty persons were injured, six of them critically, during a shootout Thursday night between robbers and on-duty security personnel on board a Bholā-bound double-decker launch from Dhaka after the robbers swooped on launch passengers.

Sources said a group of robbers boarded the Bholā-bound Karnaphuli-3, which left Dhaka at about 6:00pm Thursday. As the launch reached near Munshiganj, the robbers swooped on the passengers and started to beat them and take away their cash and valuables.

As the robbery was in progress,

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



Selina Hayat Ivy

N'ganj pouro polls 4 AL-backed ward commissioners, two of BNP

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Opposition Awami League-backed candidates got four of the nine ward commissioner posts and ruling Four Party Alliance-backed candidates bagged two.

Independent candidates reportedly inclined to BNP got two posts. One post went to a Jatiya Party candidate.

Returning Officer and ADM Tinnatul Huq declared the official results at the conference room of the district commissioner at 4:30 pm.

AL-backed Dr. Selina Hayat Ivy was unofficially declared elected chairman of Narayangani municipality on Thursday.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2