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Plan to sell gas to India shelved on flak fear

SHARIEF KHAN and REZAUL KARIM

The government has decided to shelve the move to sell gas to India during its tenure in view of high political risks.

Two influential government policymakers said gas export would have left an immediate positive impact on the investment scenario, but the government took public opinion and opposition political parties' reactions into consideration.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia exclusively consulted top ministers

on the issue last week as State Minister for Energy Mosharraf Hossain sent her a note to approve gas export by mid-August.

She then concluded that the issue ran high political stakes and should be left alone, said an influential policymaker.

"At a meeting on Thursday, the prime minister expressed her displeasure at the state minister and asked him who gave him the authority to send a note to her seeking a decision on gas export with a deadline," said the policymaker.

The senior BNP leader who was present at the meeting said the

premier, who holds the energy portfolio, instructed him not to send him such notes in future.

Some senior ministers also reprimanded the state minister for telling the press that the government would decide on gas export by August 17.

Another policymaker said gas export was certainly necessary for the country on economic grounds, but it will be a political disaster if the government did not seek a consensus on the issue.

"The Awami League and the left-leaning parties will not spare the government if it took such a deci-

sion," the policymaker was quoted as telling the premier.

Intelligence reports also clearly state that the political consequence will be disastrous for the government as there is an overwhelming opposition against the export.

"The Awami League itself initiated the process to export gas. It signed six production sharing contracts (PSCs) and its fifth-five year plan included export," State Minister Mosharraf told the press yesterday.

"Now the Awami League is using the issue to build up an anti-

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Police-politics link SC expunges part of HC observation

UNB, Dhaka

The Supreme Court yesterday expunged part of a High Court Division judgement in a bail petition, which blasted the police and the executive for implicating political rivals in criminal cases.

A High Court Division Bench granted bail on March 17 to Shahid Iqbal Beethar, an Awami League activist accused in the Khulna industrial fair explosion case. The bench comprising Justice Syed Amirul Islam and Justice Mirza Hossain Haider had observed:

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Govt takes U-turn on DAP projects

Decision to cost country Tk 100cr more a year than fertiliser import

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government took a U-turn on its decision to ditch the di-ammonia phosphate (DAP) fertiliser projects when it approved them at a meeting of the cabinet committee on economic affairs yesterday.

In August last year, the government cancelled DAP-1 and 2 projects under Japanese and Chinese

supplier's credit citing that these would put a huge financial burden on the exchequer.

An industries ministry survey also revealed that production of DAP would cost the country Tk 100 crore more a year than its import.

The DAP-1 project was undertaken in 2001 on Chinese supplier's credit at a cost of Tk 392.97 crore

with 3 per cent interest rate. DAP-2 was initiated on Japanese supplier's credit at Tk 451.70 crore with 1.95 per cent interest rate.

The meeting over, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman told journalists that the government had to face embarrassing situations after cancelling the projects.

He said international laws stipu-

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Charges pressed against 19 for killing Alam, 3 maids

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police yesterday pressed charges against 19 people for killing industrialist Mohammad Alam and his three maids in January last year.

The chargesheeted accused are Alam's two sons-in-law Motur Rahman alias Motin and Mohammad Ali Babul Hasan alias Babu Jamat, and Mohammad Kabir, Sohag Bepari, Mohammad Sohel, Yusuf Miab, Abdul Latif Khan, Jahanara Begum, Farida, Haji Mohammad Rafiquddin Khan, Sheul Akhter, Barkat Ali alias Bachchu, Abdur Rahman, Asma Rahman, Rehana Parvin, Babul, Al Amin, Dulal, and Alauddin.

Investigation Officer (IO) M A

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PSC prefers to wait on question leakage

Examinees demonstrate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Public Service Commission (PSC) will clarify shortly its position on the reported leakage of questions for the preliminary test of the 24th BCS examinations held Friday, PSC Chairman ZN Tahmida Begum said yesterday.

"Some members of the commission are now outside Dhaka and we will meet to discuss the matter after their return", she said.

The PSC chairman however did not comment on widespread allegations of leakage of questions.

Earlier, the preliminary test held on February 28 was cancelled as the questions were leaked out.

In related developments, a number of candidates who sat for the test on Friday and activists of different student bodies demonstrated in

Dhaka and some other places in the country yesterday, demanding cancellation of the test again.

Leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the Awami League, demanded resignation of the PSC chairman for the alleged question leakage.

Left-leaning Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF) demanded proper investigation into the allegations and exemplary punishment to the persons responsible.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Yeahia Mollah, a PSC member who was in charge of the test, said, "I heard the allegation of leak out of questions at about 6:30pm on Friday, eight hours after the test. The allegation of question leakage from the PSC is not true."

He added, "Keeping in mind the

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Outages to go on for 4 more days as Desa fixes glitch

STAR REPORT

Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (Desa) will take three to four days to repair the glitch in the major power distribution cable of Ulan substation, a high official said yesterday.

The glitch in the distribution line is responsible for plunging many parts of the city into power outages since Wednesday.

Desa experts believe that irreversible road digging at Malibagh level crossing by Dhaka Wasa tore the distribution cable leading to the collapse of the 132 kV Ulan Substation.

The British company that installed the underground cable 16 years ago is sending experts to repair the cable network. "It's a sensitive

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With traditional dance and music performances, Bangladesh Adivasi Forum and other organisations observed the World Indigenous People's Day yesterday at the Central Shaheed Minar.

Indigenous people want equal rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is keeping its eyes closed to the issues of indigenous people, which is affecting their lives and livings, said speakers at a rally in the city yesterday.

The rally, organised to mark the International Day for the Indigenous People, indigenous people demanded equal rights and an end to encroaching development on their lands.

Around 6,000 tribesmen and women attended the programme at the Central Shaheed Minar. Jyotirindrio Bodhipriyo Larma, chairman of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Regional Council, chaired it.

As indigenous people are part of the country's population, no level

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Jatiyo Samajtantrik Dal backed Chhatra League activists yesterday form a human chain in protest at alleged leakage of BCS exam question papers.

Cancel 45 JS standing bodies, demands AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League (AL) yesterday demanded cancellation of 45 parliamentary standing committees.

Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shahid called on Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar yesterday at his office at the Sangsad Bhaban and lodged the protest.

In a letter submitted to the Speaker, Abdus Shahid alleged that 45 standing committees were formed violating the constitution and the Rules of Procedure of the Jatiya Sangsad.

Thirty-nine committees on various ministries and six on the Jatiya Sangsad were formed without the participation of AL lawmakers in the seventh and eighth sessions of the Jatiya Sangsad.

The speaker dismissed the allegation and said all the standing committees were formed as per the Rules of Procedure.

He also asked the opposition chief whip to nominate deputies for the committees and make the parliamentary bodies functioning.

The Speaker and the opposition chief whip gave contra-

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GOVT SHOWCAUSED Writ challenges college entry on GPA basis

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday issued a rule upon the government to show cause why its decision to allow admission of students to colleges on the basis of grade point average (GPA) instead of written test should not be declared illegal.

The rule came upon a writ filed by Father Benjamin D'Costa, Principal of Notre Dame College, challenging the legitimacy of the government circular issued on August 3.

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BJP plans 'no work, no pay' rule for MPs

IANS, New Delhi

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has planned a "no work, no pay" rule for MPs as the Indian Parliament ended another week wasted through disruptions and adjournments at a huge cost to the taxpayer.

Closing the week with practically no legislative business getting past the first two hours of noisy disruptions and walkouts, the ruling and opposition MPs blamed each other for the impasse that costs the exchequer about Rs 13,000 a minute --

much more than an average middle class family earns in an entire month.

"We have asked that a no work, no pay rule be enforced for Parliament so that the democratic process is not misused," BJP chief whip Vijay Kumar Malhotra told IANS.

Malhotra recalled that the rules of business had been amended so that MPs disrupting the house for rushing to the well, or the centre of the house, on any pretext would be automatically suspended for the

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Two beaten to death inside Shyampur warehouse

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two men were beaten to death inside a factory warehouse at Shyampur yesterday.

Shyamol, 35, and Rafiq, 30, who lived at Shyampur RAJUK School at road No. 4, were beaten to death with iron rods Friday night, police said.

Mohammad Shoeb, owner of packaging company Standard Manufacturing, phoned police that his staff had caught two thieves.

Police went to the factory warehouse at around 6:00am but came back as they found the gate locked.

Later, police went to the factory as Shoeb made another phone call around noon. This time, police forced the factory staff to break open the warehouse.

The bodies bearing marks of grievous injury were found lying inside on two rickshaws.

Security guard Hatem Howladar has been absconding. The factory owner filed a case against Hatem for killing the two men.

Cabinet body okays Rupali Bank sell-off

STAR REPORT

The cabinet committee on economic affairs yesterday approved a finance ministry proposal for reforming the management of three nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) and privatising the Rupali Bank.

The approval came from a meeting of the body at the secretariat with Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman in the chair.

"An advisor will be appointed for evaluating the net worth of the Rupali Bank and a set of local as well as foreign advisors will be engaged to put the NCBs on a strong footing," Saifur told reporters emerging from the meeting.

According to the proposal, the government will appoint an expert body, comprising a chief executive officer (CEO) and seven advisors for a three-year stint to reform the state-owned Agrani Bank. If necessary, the tenure of the body may be extended by one year.

The body will work to improve the management and financial health of the bank and prepare it for partial or full disinvestment.

A Bangladesh citizen will hold the post of the CEO, but the advisors may be foreigners.

Under the supervision of a government appointed board of directors, the CEO will enjoy executive power.

The advisors will be assigned with the tasks of credit, loan portfolio management, human resources, MIS, accounting, internal audit and asset or liability management of the bank.

The government is also planning to assign a financial advisor for restructuring the Rupali Bank.

The advisor will be given seven months for the structural reforms and preparation of a plan for the privatisation of the bank.

In order to add dynamism and skills to bank management, six or seven local or foreign advisors will be appointed to both Sonali and Janata banks.

Sweat + Bacteria = Body Odour

WHAT CAUSES BODY ODOUR?

Sweat + Bacteria = Body Odour
Underarm wetness is the main cause of body odour. We primarily have Apocrine Glands in our underarms, which secrete a certain type of protein. When bacteria decompose these proteins, bad odour is easily produced.

DOES EVERYONE HAVE BODY ODOUR?

Of course! But, most people believe they don't have body odour themselves, because they get used to their own smell over time. Interestingly, everyone does notice body odour in other people.

CAN POWDER OR PERFUME PREVENT BODY ODOUR?

No! Powder and perfume mask body odour for a while only, they don't prevent it. As a result, active bacteria continue to decompose sweat proteins, and within a few hours body odour becomes prominent once again.

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