

# Americans unsafe in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, Apr 9: While Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto is in the United States trying to drum up foreign investment, Americans living in Pakistan have been warned of a possible bomb attack. US officials said Sunday, reports AP.

The US Consulate General in Karachi has received unsubstantiated threat information that unknown persons may be targeting Americans or American interests, possibly using a bomb directed at an American business or office, said a US State Department public announcement made available to The Associated Press on Sunday.

The announcement was issued April 4, the eve of Benazir's departure for the United States.

A US government employee who didn't want to be identified said it was feared that a terrorist group would attack American interests here in an attempt to discredit Benazir.

Benazir in the US seeking US investments in Pakistan and the lifting of sanctions imposed in 1990 after the United States concluded Pakistan was operating a covert nuclear weapons programme.

# No dialogue

eral and apprised him of our position," he said, also referring to his meetings with Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, the leaders of the Left Democratic Front, student bodies and other labour organisations.

Dr. Wajed quoted the BNP leader as having admitted the genuineness of the SKOP demands which include a minimum wage of Taka 1600 for industrial workers, a stop to the government's denationalisation policy and reopening of closed industrial units.

# Tongi model polls

From Page 1

cers, 293 assistant presiding officers, 586 polling officers and 72 additional polling officers will conduct the polls.

These officials have been appointed from among the local people, particularly those who worked for data collection, said Mohammad Khairuz-zaman, assistant returning officer for the Tongi polls.

No government official will be involved in the process, only members of the law-enforcing agencies will be deployed in and around the polling centres.

A *murabbi* committee comprising local aged people will help maintain law and order at the centres.

Besides, a 56-member steering committee, comprising all political parties and local elite has been assisting the EC.

The EC, in cooperation with the steering committee, has formulated a 16-point code of conduct which barred the candidates from setting up election camps, arches, pan-

# Industrial loans

From Page 1

The Sonali Bank sanctioned Tk 404.84 crore, as against an annual target of Tk 700 crore, in industrial loans and disbursed Tk 246.18 crore during the seven month period.

With a target of Tk 650 crore the Agrani Bank sanctioned Tk 457.49 crore and disbursed Tk 316.76 crore while the Janata Bank sanctioned Tk 325.94 crore, against an annual target of Tk 500 crore, and disbursed Tk 114.37 crore in industrial loans during the first seven months of the current fiscal.

The Finance Ministry review was critical about the performance of the public and private sector banks set up to disburse industrial loans. It said that most of these banks have "no visible role" in disbursing industrial credit.

It also noted that BRSR, SABINCO, IPDC, IDLC, ULC, Bangladesh Krishi Bank and Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank have all failed to exceed even 50 per cent of the annualised target of sanctioning industrial loans while their combined disbursement level stood at only 19 per cent during the period.

Five private sector banks, Arab-Bangladesh, IFIC, National, AL Baraka and City Bank, also fell far short of the target while Banque Indosuez, American Express, NCC Bank and IPDC have all failed to sanction any industrial loan during the period, the review noted.

# Cong may split

From Page 1

funds from disinvestments in state-owned enterprises into the companies instead of using the money to finance budget deficits.

Most newspapers said Rao had come out stronger within the Congress despite the losses for the party in recent state elections.

Nonetheless the crisis has led to speculation that general elections might be called early.

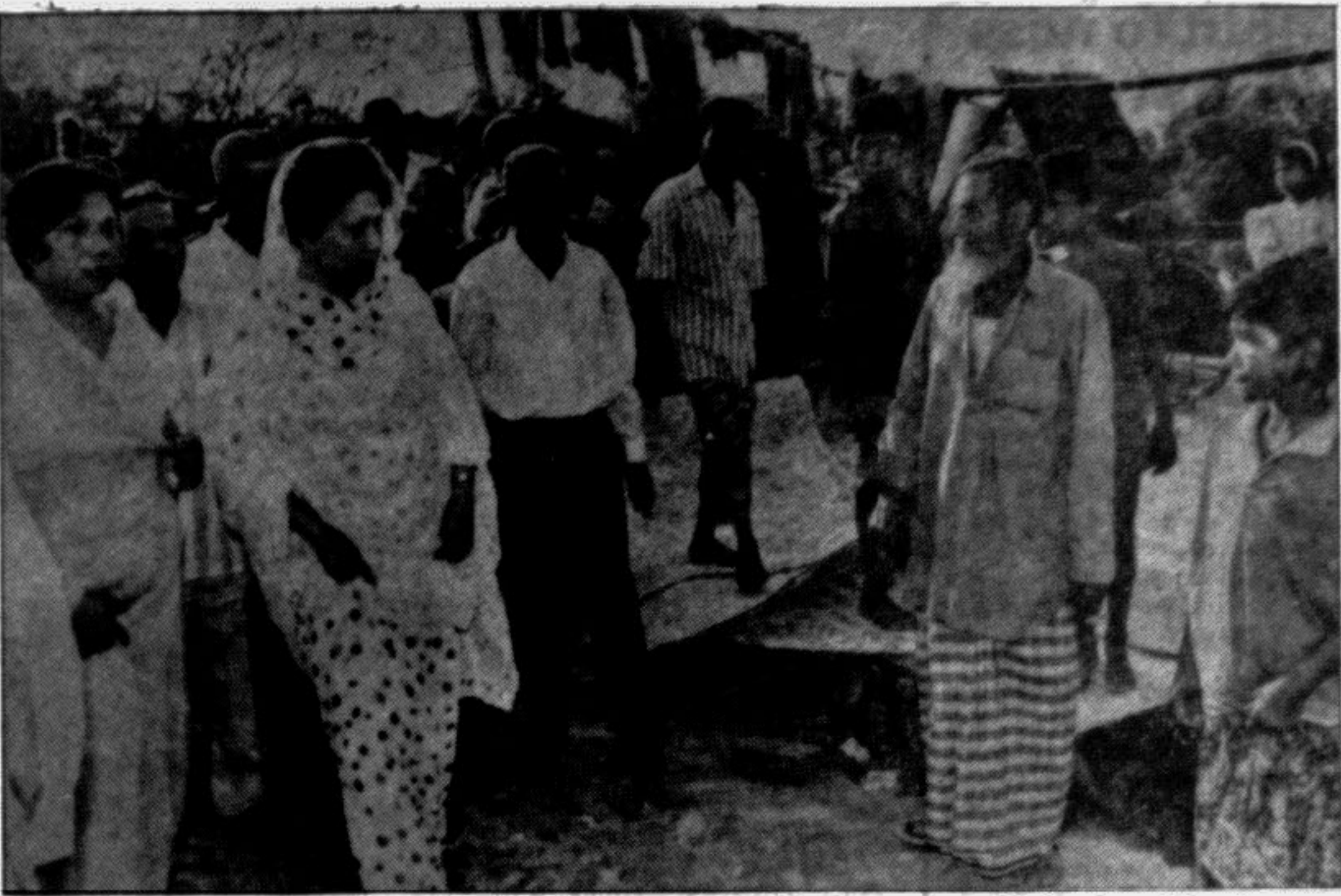
The Asian Age newspaper today quoted unidentified sources as saying Rao was likely to call the polls in February instead of June next year, when they are due.

"Unless something untoward happens, the elections will be advanced, and February appears to be the most likely month," the Age quoted a source as saying.

# Countrywide hartal

From Page 1

The Garment Workers Federation will also enforce a 48-hour strike in the garment factories from tomorrow to press for its 8-points demand including implementation of the Wage Commission Award.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited the tornado-hit area at Malianka of Louhajang thana in Munshiganj district yesterday. —PID photo

# Khaleda

From Page 1

women, apprised the Prime Minister of their plight and requested government assistance in their rehabilitation.

Begum Zia assured the be-moaning people of all possible government cooperation in recouping the losses inflicted by the natural calamity.

Addressing a gathering at Ghotlali Bazar, Begum Zia said the government would provide all possible help and asked the affected people to face the crisis with fortitude.

"When we stand beside the distressed humanity, the opposition leaders at the same time are observing hartal. They never come to the people during disaster," she said.

The Prime Minister said transportation of relief materials and medical teams was impeded by today's hartal.

"It was the moral obligation of the Opposition to call off the hartal after hearing the news of tornado and stand beside the victim and extend cooperation. But they neither withdrew hartal, nor stood beside you," she told the crowd.

Begum Zia said the BNP always stands by the humanity in distress and will continue its service to the people.

Meanwhile, the government has distributed 20 tons of wheat, 100 times of biscuit, 1500 pieces of lungi, 1500 saree, 300 babywears and Tk 50,000 in cash among the affected people of the three thanas.

Authorities have also set up 50 tents as temporary shelters for the homeless. Civil surgeons, physicians and ambulances from three adjacent districts were put on round-the-clock service in the affected areas.

The Prime Minister issued spot instruction to the concerned authorities for distributing adequate relief materials among the victims and set up more tents. She also instructed installation of adequate tubewells in the tornado-hit areas.

Begum Zia also directed ministers, MPs and BNP leaders and workers to provide all-time service to the people.

# Thatcher promoted her son, says book

LONDON, Apr 9: Former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's son Mark made himself a multi-millionaire after a note from his mother gave him an introduction to a Gulf ruler, a new book serialised in a Sunday newspaper here has charged, reports AFP.

"Whether Thatcher intended it or not, the note ... would have been a considerable asset for Mark in any future business dealings in the Arab world, where personal status and influence count for so much," wrote authors Paul Halloran and Mark Hollingsworth in the book 'Thatcher's Gold.'

The book serialised in the Mail on Sunday, said that in November 1980 Margaret Thatcher sent a photograph of herself to Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al-Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates UAE.

An accompanying note read "I have asked my son to convey to you my personal message of warm regards and good wishes."

A few months later Thatcher acted as an intermediary in a 300 million pound (480 million dollar) deal between the Gulf state of Oman and the Cementation International Company in which the UAE was also involved.

# Tornado claims 29

From Page 1

of the district.

At least 50 people of Nazirpur union and 20 of Batamara union were injured in the storm.

Over 300 thatched houses were damaged and a large number of trees were uprooted as the nor-wester along with hailstorm struck the villages around Muladi thana of the district around 6pm Saturday.

Nazirpur Bandar areas were also damaged during the 20 to 30 minutes storm.

When contacted, the Deputy Director of the Agriculture Extension Department, Barisal zone, said that over 1400 tonnes of boro, ufshi and rabi crops worth about Tk 96 lakh in 1,988 hectares of land were destroyed.

The percentage of crop loss was 15.72 in the affected areas, the agriculture official added.

The Prime Minister visited the affected areas in Munshiganj yesterday.

# Hillary

From Page 1

government and non-government levels towards socio-economic upliftment was a major factor for Hillary to undertake the visit to this region.

Her own departure statement is a testimony of her admiration for this country and expectedly, Bangladesh will get a better projection in the United States administration and media following this visit, observed the spokesman.

Asked in what form the visit will benefit this country, he said, relations in all levels will hopefully be enhanced as a fallout of the First Lady's three-day visit.

# Attack on RCC Mayor's home

RAJSHAHI, Apr 9: Some unidentified men lobbed a crude bomb to the residence of city Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu Saturday midnight. None was reported hurt, reports UNB.

Protesting the incident, local BNP unit brought out a procession here this evening. The protesters held the Awami League responsible for the attack.

# Baby killed by falling roof tile

By DMCH Correspondent

A baby girl succumbed to her injuries at the PG hospital in the city yesterday.

Lipi, 2, daughter of Lutfur Rahman, was seriously injured when a roof tile of an apartment of the century Tower at Elephant road, Maghbar, fell on her at around 9 am.

The baby was immediately taken to the hospital where she expired two hours later.



A truck rammed into a park on Airport Road in the city yesterday. —Star photo

# AL: BNP govt

From Page 1

compel the Prime Minister and her cabinet to step down soon, he added.

Regarding the fertiliser crisis, party president member Amir Hossain Amu protested that the Opposition was doing politics over the fertiliser issue by instigating the farmers to go on rampage.

# Hasina thanks people

UNB adds: Awami League president Sheikh Hasina said people demonstrated no-confidence in Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's government through peaceful and spontaneous hartal in the country's five divisional headquarters yesterday.

Our Staff Correspondent in Chittagong says, hartal was observed peacefully in the port city.

However, some 20 to 30 cracker blasts were heard in the morning in the Andarkilla, New Market, Lalkhan Bazar

# Hartal passes off

From Page 1

parties, has also called a country-wide day-long hartal on the first day of the SKOP's strike tomorrow.

The AL, JP and Jamaat brought out separate processions in the city yesterday noon and held rallies in front of the Press Club.

Police and para-military BDR were posted at different points of the city from early morning.

According to Railway sources, all the trains to and from the Kamalapur station maintained schedule.

Zia International Airport sources said, domestic and international flights of Biman and foreign airlines were not affected by the hartal.

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and adjoining areas.

Most vehicles except rickshaws remained off the streets. There was poor attendance in government offices. Many private offices were closed.

Production in the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) and other industrial areas was partially disrupted due to poor attendance of workers.

Inside the jetties, cargo handling was normal but delivery of goods to and from the port was suspended as trucks could not ply on the roads.

Our Khulna correspondent says, all vehicles except rickshaws were off the roads and offices and shops remained closed.

Supporters of the AL, JP and Jamaat brought out separate processions in the town chanting anti-govt slogans.

Production in the jute mills in Khalspur industrial area was disrupted but the operation at the Mongia port was normal.

# British MP quits over sex scandal

LONDON, Apr 9: Prime Minister John Major's scandal-prone government suffered another blow today when Conservative ministerial aide Richard Spring quit over newspaper allegations of a "three-in-a-bed" sex romp, reports Reuter.

It was yet another setback for beleaguered Premier John Major, facing increased pressure on his leadership after the ruling party was humiliated in Scottish local elections.

Spring, a Conservative parliamentarian, resigned from his Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) to Northern Ireland Minister Sir Patrick Mayhew after allegations were published in the News of The World.

# Philippine-Singapore ties hang in balance

MANILA, Apr 9: Philippine-Singapore diplomatic ties hang in the balance after a presidential panel concluded that a Filipina maid may have been wrongly hanged in Singapore, analysts said today.

The commission appointed by President Fidel Ramos called on the Singapore authorities to reinvestigate Flor Contemplacion's case. Ramos now walks a political tightrope as he ponders whether to make good a threat to break diplomatic ties with Singapore, reports AFP.

# Gulf war returnees

From Page 1

the payment of 18,55,00,500.20 US dollars to meet the claims of 43,845 claimants under Category A in 78 countries. Of them, the claims of 4,551 Bangladeshis totalling 1,77,46,000 US dollars were also resolved.

At its November 10, 1994 meeting the UNCC approved 52,95,000 US dollars to meet the claims of 1754 Category B claimants in 35 countries, including 68 from Bangladesh whose dues totalled 2,87,500 US dollars.

On March 23 this year, the UNCC again gave its approval to 13,269 Bangladeshis' Category A claims for 5,15,23,000 US dollars.

The Kuwait-Iraq Repatriated Bangladeshi Association (K-IRBA), however, alleged that due to delay in submission of their compensation forms by the Bangladesh government to the UNCC, they were not getting their money.

When approached, an official in the concerned ministry brushed aside the allegation, saying that there was no lapse on the government's part in submitting the forms.

The official, however, said that due to a UN embargo on the sale of Iraq's oil, UNCC's fund was not buoyant enough for disbursement of the compensation money.

According to a UN statement released in Dhaka last week, the Governing Council of the UNCC has recently expressed its concern over the current financial situation of the compensation fund.

The Manpower Ministry official, however, added that Bangladesh by activating the

# The Midnight File

## Ban on newsmen in Iraq

BAGHDAD, Apr 9: Iraq today banned journalists from contacting the lawyer defending two Americans jailed for entering the country illegally. The Information Ministry also announced that Baghdad-based reporters and Iraqis working for Western news organisations would not be allowed to attend court proceedings when the Americans appeal their conviction later this week, reports AP.

## Philippine-Singapore ties hang in balance

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## Gulf war returnees

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good office of its permanent representative in Geneva — the headquarters of the UNCC — was pursuing the Commission for early disbursement of the compensation awards.

Meanwhile, a high-powered task force was formed on April 1 to look into the problems of over 70,000 Bangladeshis who returned home from Kuwait and Iraq in 1991 to escape the war.

The task force, headed by a joint secretary in the Ministry of Labour and Manpower, will explore possibilities of re-exporting the returnees to foreign countries on a priority basis and will try to realize the compensation awards at the earliest.

Nur Mohammad Siddique, secretary general of the K-IRBA, said so far only 3,500 out of 62,352 returnees have gone back to Kuwait whereas, he claimed, the government had earlier assured them that everyone of them could go back again.

But official sources said over 23,000 returnees have gone back and that priority was given to the rest regarding export of manpower to other countries.

The number of Bangladeshis working in Kuwait was only 62,000 before the Gulf War, whereas now the number has increased to over one lakh, claimed ministry sources.

The K-IRBA has urged the government to seize the opportunity of the forthcoming visit by Kuwaiti's Prime Minister and Crown Prince Shaikh Saad al-Salem al-Sabah to Bangladesh beginning next Wednesday for putting up the issue of compensation claims.

**তিতাস গ্যাস ট্রান্সমিশন এন্ড ডিউরিভিউশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড**  
 (পেট্রোবাংলার একটি সাবসিডিয়ারী কোম্পানী)  
 জরুরী ফোনঃ ৮৬০৫০০, ৮৬০৫৫১ এবং ৮১১৩৭৯ (২৪ ঘন্টা সার্ভিস)

**জরুরী সার্ভিস সংক্রান্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

তিতাস গ্যাস কোম্পানীর সম্মানিত গ্রাহকবৃন্দের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাইতেছে যে :

- তিতাস গ্যাস কোম্পানীর জরুরী গ্যাস নিয়ন্ত্রণ শাখার আওতাধীন গ্যাস হাইতে সুই অপসারণ করা, স্বেইন লাইন লিকের, গ্যাস লাইন ভাংগিয়া যাওয়া, গ্যাসের রেগুলেটর, লক-উইং কক ইত্যাদি লিকের, প্রাকৃতিক দুর্ঘটনের কারণে লাইন ভাংগিয়া যাওয়া ইত্যাদি কারিগরী কাজ সুসম্পন্ন করা হয়য়া থাকে।
- এতদসংক্রান্ত কোন দুর্ঘটনা বা অভিযোগ থাকিলে অথবা গ্যাস সরবরাহে বিঘ্ন ঘটিলে তাহা ৭, মতিঝিল বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, ঢাকাস্থ "জরুরী গ্যাস নিয়ন্ত্রণ কক্ষ" ফোন নং-৮৬০৫৫০ বা ৮৬০৫৫১-তে লিপিবদ্ধ করিয়া একটি অভিযোগ নম্বর সংগ্রহ করিতে হইবে। অভিযোগ ব্যক্তিগতভাবে উপস্থিত হইয়া অথবা টেলিফোন করা যাইতে পারে। ইহার পর জরুরী দল গ্রাহকের আধিনায় উপস্থিত হইবার পর/কাজ সুসম্পন্ন করিবার পর গ্রাহক সংকেত নম্বর উল্লেখপূর্বক "জরুরী মেসামত বিবরণ" ফরমে গ্রাহককে বা প্রতিনিধিকে স্বাক্ষর করিতে হইবে।
- গ্রাহকের আধিনায় জরুরী দল কর্তৃক তাত্ক্ষণিকভাবে কোন মালামাল প্রতিস্থাপন করিবার প্রয়োজন দেখা দিলে-সেই ক্ষেত্রে গ্রাহককে একটি ছাপানো অণীকারণনামায় স্বাক্ষর করিতে হইবে। ইহার প্রেক্ষিতে উক্ত কাজ সুসম্পন্ন করিবার পর পরবর্তী দিন জরুরী গ্যাস নিয়ন্ত্রণ শাখায় কর্তব্যরত কর্মকর্তার সহিত যোগাযোগ করিতে হইবে।
- জরুরী গ্যাস নিয়ন্ত্রণ কক্ষে লিপিবদ্ধ দুর্ঘটনা/অভিযোগের ব্যাপারে যথাস্থি ব্যবস্থা গৃহীত না হইলে অথবা গ্রাহক ব্যক্তিগতভাবে কর্তব্যরত কর্মকর্তার সহিত যোগাযোগ করিয়া সম্ভোজনক জবাব না পাইলে, সেই ক্ষেত্রে গ্রাহক অভিযোগ নম্বর এবং তারিখ উল্লেখপূর্বক অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে ব্যবস্থাপক (জরুরী গ্যাস নিয়ন্ত্রণ)-এর সহিত ফোন নং-৮৬০৫৫২-তে সরাসরি পুনঃঅভিযোগ করিতে পারিবেন। প্রয়োজনে লিখিতভাবে পুনঃঅভিযোগ জমা দেওয়া যাইতে পারে।
- সম্মানিত গ্রাহকবৃন্দকে অপরাপর অভিযোগের জন্য সর্বশ্রী জোন/আঞ্চলিক কার্যালয়/প্রধান কার্যালয়ে যোগাযোগ করিবার পরামর্শ দেওয়া যাইতেছে। সেইক্ষেত্রে প্রধান কার্যালয়ের টেলিফোন নং-পিএবিএক্স ৮১২১৩৫-৪২-তে যোগাযোগ করা যাইতে পারে।
- সম্মানিত গ্রাহকদের ইহাও জানানো যাইতেছে যে, ঢাকা মহানগরীর বাহিরের আঞ্চলিক বিতরণ কার্যালয়ের আওতাভুক্ত গ্রাহকবৃন্দকে নিকটবর্তী আঞ্চলিক কার্যালয়ে জরুরী অভিযোগ প্রাথমিকভাবে জানাইতে হইবে। পরবর্তীতে প্রয়োজন অনুভূত হইলে জরুরী গ্যাস নিয়ন্ত্রণ কক্ষেও অভিযোগ জানানো যাইতে পারে।
- সম্মানিত গ্রাহকদের ইহাও জানানো অপরিহার্য যে, তাহার যেন গ্যাস সংক্রান্ত কোন দুর্ঘটনা বা অভিযোগ কোন টিকাদার বা মিস্ত্রি দ্বারা সম্পন্ন না করান, কেননা ইহা স্বীকৃতিপূর্ণ ও অশ্রেয়। তবে, শুধুমাত্র গ্রাহকের নিজস্ব অনভিজ্ঞতা/জিআই পাইপের লাইন এবং চ্যুর লিকেরে শুধুমাত্র তিতাস গ্যাসের বৈধ টিকাদার দ্বারা মেসামত করা নিয়ম রহিয়ায়ে। উল্লেখ্য, গ্রাহকদের সুবিধার্থে তিতাস গ্যাসের টিকাদারবৃন্দকে বৈধ পরিচয় পত্র বহন করণ।
- জরুরী মেসামত কালে কোন প্রকার আর্থিক লেনদেন না করান জন্য সম্মানিত গ্রাহকবৃন্দকে সতিনয় অনুরোধ জানান যাইতেছে।

**"পাছ লাগান, পাছের পরিচর্যা করুন এবং পরিবেশ বিচালন"** - প্রধানমন্ত্রী

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