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Magurchhara gasfield

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 Singapore, has already reached the site, the sources added.
 Once dousing operation starts, the fire will be extinguished within 24 to 48 hours, according to sources concerned. Fire of a gas drilling site is less hazardous than that of an oil field. The fire at Magurchhara is smaller than that of Kuwait after the Gulf War, the sources said.

Regarding the fire fighting operation an expert observed, "After the fire is extinguished, they have to kill the well and plug the holes. Otherwise there will be danger of gas coming out of the fishers," he added.

UNB adds: The loss caused by the accident at Magurchhara gasfield may shoot up to Tk 20,000 crore as the whole upper structure of the gasfield is on fire.

Situated in Surma basin which is rich in liquid hydrocarbon, the Moulvibazar well-1 in block 14 blew up early Sunday, opening a gas reserve of approximately 700 billion cubic feet, the current price of which is estimated at more than Tk 20,000 crore.

A local geologist and a drilling engineer told UNB on condition of anonymity that the accident was caused by "human error and carelessness."

Experts dismissed the idea that the accident had occurred at "a pocket reserve of gas."

They said gross thickness of the upper zone of the gas field is around 80 metres and is expected to encounter after 800 metres. The gross thickness of the lower zone is around 100 metres and is expected to encounter at around 2150 metres.

The blow up took place as the Occidental drilled up to 840 metres and gas encountered in the upper zone could not be balanced which resulted in the accident, they said.

Explaining further, they said a diameter of 17.5 inch of drilling hole, which is bigger considering the soft formation, of the Surma basin due to shall-

BNP's popularity has increased: Mannan Bhuiyan

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday said the popularity of BNP has increased in last one year despite repression by the ruling party, reports UNB.

He was talking to Ishwardi Pourasava Chairman and Ithana BNP general secretary Mokhesur Rahman Bablu, who called on the BNP secretary general in the morning, after his recent release from jail on bail.

Bhuiyan alleged that the ruling party wanted to stop the forward march of BNP by killing and arresting its leaders and workers, unleashing torture, and filing false cases against them.

"But BNP's organisational strength and popularity have increased in the last one year," he said.

The BNP leader blamed the government for what he said, increasing sufferings of the people by imposing new taxes.

Textiles and leather industries are now under threat while both mill owners and workers are becoming jobless due to the "wrong policy" of the government, he said.

Bhuiyan said Awami League, during its one-year rule, has "given nothing but talk and the politics of slavery."

Down to Earth Of Pathological Laboratories

By ASM Nurunnabi

According to recent press report, pathological test facilities at city's private laboratories are dismally poor. There are other aspects of this sad situation. A sample survey of such labs in the city reveals that patients pay 20 to 50 per cent extra charge for various pathological tests at the private pathology centres.

This is believed to be the outcome of what is generally known as a physician's self-referral. In other words, this means sending patients to facilities in which the physician has a financial interest. At present it is widely felt that self-referral has spread quietly into many areas of medicare, including physical therapy and rehabilitation, X-rays, ultrasoundogram, etc.

Self-referral operates on a simple principle. The more patients doctors refer, the more money they make. The practice has made many physicians rich, while potentially undercutting patient-doctor trust. Although many doctors do not participate in self-referral, no one knows for sure how many do. It is difficult to uncover all the doctors who invest in joint ventures, because they try to hide it.

It is a fair guess that, across the country, many of the clinical labs and physiological labs are wholly and partly owned by referring physicians. Many doctors justify self-referral by saying it helps assure quality care. In the opinion of independent observers, that is not just true.

It has been observed that self-referral entrepreneurs usu-

ally offer limited partnerships in joint ventures—so called, because many doctors have ownership shares. The amount the doctor invests may be ridiculously small, because the owners do not want the doctor's money. They want his patients.

Owners choose physicians selectively, concentrating on specialties guaranteed to produce a high volume of patient referrals. The more patients a doctor has, the more desirable he or she is for self-referral.

Self-referral mostly preys on patients attacked with a serious illness or people who trust in their doctors to make decisions for them. Money, of course, is the obvious reason. The money is not earned from any service performed by these doctors. It is just a kickback for referring patients.

Among other things found deplorable is that it is anti-competitive. That is why, in many cases, self-referrers charge prices that are often higher than they should be. Self-referrals also run up profits by another method—ordering expensive tests and procedures for questionable medical reasons.

The practice of self-referrals potentially bring about erosion of patient-doctor trust which is bad for medicare and bad for patients. There is little reason for self-referral other than the doctor's business interest. This may be avoided if conscientious doctors are careful not to allow commercialism to encroach on the practice of medicine.

The allegation of charging for tests at rates higher than the actual costs was made in a study, as reported, made by

Population Council, a New York-based international research organisation. Another study on Testing facilities and Quality Assurance in Private Pathology Centres also found that test charges are not uniform in all the centres. The difference in charges is reported to have often led to confusion among people about the reliability of the reports of the cheaper centres.

The most concerning feature of the existing situation is said to be the lack of skilled technical manpower like pathologist, technician, etc. In this context, there seem to be reasons for holding the view that the number of non-qualified technicians is more than the qualified technical hands by a large margin.

There are also reportedly snags in many testing labs in the matter of disposal of solid wastes. The common method of solid waste disposal is said to be simply throwing them in the municipal dustbins, while the liquid wastes are said to be disposed of by flushing with running water without any neutralising agent.

There are also allegations of the widespread practice of disposal of used syringes and needles through questionable ways. There was a recent press report on this behalf about such harmful methods of disposal followed by some quarters in the city's whole-sale medicine market.

The bottom line on the subject is that the existing aberrations from the medical point of view need to be tackled with strict regulations for the pathological laboratories.

Rebels form body to amend JP constitution

By Staff Correspondent

The rebel faction of Jatiya Party yesterday formed an 11-member sub-committee to propose necessary amendments to the party constitution in its council session scheduled for June 30, a party press release said.

The committee, headed by Prof Nurul Islam Milon, would propose amendments seeking changes in the autocratic as well as undemocratic provisions of the JP constitution with a view to building the party as a 'real democratic organisation'.

The heads of the district level units of the Jatiya Party have been requested to send their proposals to the sub-committee by June 27, the press release added.



THE SAME OLD STORY: A four-wheeler and a rickshaw negotiate their way on the flooded Outer Circular Road at Rajarbagh in the city after rains yesterday. — Star photo

PM flies to coastal areas today

CHITTAGONG, June 20: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will fly to the country's coastal areas tomorrow to initiate a seed spreading programme to create a green-belt there, reports UNB.

Sheikh Hasina will spread seeds of different saplings from a helicopter covering the region from Chittagong to Cox's Bazar from 9:30 am to 11:30.

Another death

From Page 1 details about the accident. They suspected that the 'earthing of a pole' might have been electrified after the rains.

The body of Nargis was sent to her village home in Faridpur. People raised Tk 8,000 including contributions from the garments factory for her funeral. Nargis, who was unmarried, used to share a shanty at Pearabagh with her younger sister. Also a garments worker, who took the body home.

City slum dwellers

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A senior official of the LGED said until the land issue is resolved, implementation of the project may suffer a serious blow. If things go smoothly, work on the project is likely to start in January next, he added.

The ADB team leader said that they were now working on the main components, especially about site selection for the 'new communities'. The terms and conditions had been completed, except for a few minor changes which would be done shortly.

According to the LGED sources, the project includes micro-credit scheme, income generating activities, non-formal education, water supply and sanitation, garbage collection, installation of street lights, construction of footpath and drains and health education. In most cases, the beneficiaries themselves would get the opportunity to take part in the construction work.

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Let's make things better
PHILIPS



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina addressing a mammoth public meeting at the Laxmipur Government College ground in Laxmipur yesterday. — PID photo

Hasina

From Page 1

"The government is determined to build a terrorism-free society and the law enforcing agencies must take action against the terrorists and killers."

Being briefed on the law and order situation of the district, where political killings and clashes are much more than other areas of the country, she said it is the duty of the law enforcing agencies to nab the terrorists.

"The condition can be changed if their will," Hasina told them to find the roots of terrorism in the district and launch a comprehensive operation in Laxmipur and Noakhali districts to root out terrorism and restore peace.

Hasina warned that the law will not also spare those who are giving protection to the terrorists from the capital.

"We have a commitment to the nation to remove terrorism from the society, we have to fulfill that," she said urging all to take strong and united stand against the terrorists.

2 accords likely

From Page 1

ment protection will be initiated during the PM's Tokyo visit, the sources said.

Besides, Bangladesh is likely to seek Japanese financial assistance for the construction of the proposed Ganges barrage. An expenditure of Tk 18,000 crore has been estimated for the construction of the barrage for storage of water.

Japan, the largest bilateral donor of Bangladesh, has been extending financial support to a large number of big projects in various sectors, including communication, health, rural development, energy, industry, construction of cyclone centres and social infrastructure.

Dist MLCs

From Page 1

money loan suits and not with any other cases civil or criminal.

The sources said that the proposal also suggested consolidating the laws relating to recovery of loan given by financial institutions.

The World Bank has also given green signal for setting up of separate MLCs to streamline loan recovery and performance of financial institutions, the sources said.

Earlier, it was reported in The Daily Star that the Law Commission had suggested setting up of separate money loan courts and enactment of tougher laws providing for civil prisons for loan defaulters and stringent conditions for appeal to higher court.

Shima's death

From Page 1

sheet in the rape case had sparked off a furor. Many human rights and women's organisations raised their voice for proper probe into the death.

An official of the Parliament Secretariat The Daily Star yesterday that the committee members would hear policemen who had picked up the girl first, the doctor and other officials of Chittagong Jail, one doctor of Chittagong Medical College Hospital and Abdul Hafiz provided he is made available at the Circuit House today.

Prof Khaleda Khanam, a ruling party MP and also a member of the probe body, told this correspondent yesterday that the committee would try to prepare its report immediately after today's visit to Chittagong.

BNP lawmaker and another member of the committee Salahuddin Kader Chowdhury told The Daily Star that the first visit of the committee members to Chittagong on March 1 last was not a fruitful one. "Except visiting some places, the real task of the committee did not progress much. Let's see what progress can be made this time."

Earlier, in its autopsy report the Forensic Department of Chittagong Medical College Hospital said Shima died of typhoid. A two member enquiry committee comprising two magistrates found negligence on the part of jail authorities in providing Shima with proper and timely treatment. Similar view was expressed by a three-member committee, formed by the Chittagong district administration, in its report on February 13 last.

RU student commits 'suicide'

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, June 20: Jakir Hussain, a Masters examinee of Social Work Department of Rajshahi University allegedly committed suicide by hanging at his room in Shah Mokhdum Hall today.

According to sources, Jakir's roommate found his body hanging from the grill of the window with a gamcha (a sort of towel).

Jakir hailed from Saikupa thana of Jhenidah district. The cause of the death could not be known immediately.

Some sources in the residential hall said he was an accused in a case filed with his local police station while Rajshahi police suspected that the death may not be a suicide.

The body was sent to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) for autopsy. Vice Chancellor of RU Prof M Abdul Khaleque and Proctor Prof M Mukhlesur Rahman visit the spot.

A case of unnatural death has been lodged with Mothihar thana in this connection.

One stabbed as rival AL groups clash in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, June 20: An AL activist was severely stabbed in a clash between the two rival groups of Awami League at Khalishpur today.

Eyewitnesses said both Ashraf and Ibne Zaman groups of Khalishpur unit of AL traded gun-shots and exploded hand-bombs during the clash. The injured activist, Kamal Hossain, 24, belongs to Ashraf group. He was admitted to KMC hospital in critical condition.

Police later arrested four activists belonging to Zaman group and recovered one revolver and two razors from them.

Owners of electronic shops to stage sit-in Monday

The owners of electronic shops will keep their shutters down for one hour from noon on Monday.

This was decided in Thursday's meeting of the National Association of Shop Owners in Bangladesh.

The shop owners are demanding withdrawal of VAT on electronic goods.

During the token strike, the owners of electronic shops across the country will also stage a sit-in on the road near their shops, says a press release of the association.

PM distributes lands among 5 landless families in Laxmipur

RAMGATI (Laxmipur), June 20: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today started a land distribution programme for the landless by handing over five deeds to five distressed families of Char Abdullah, reports UNB.

She handed over the deeds of lands to the families of Sekandar Huq, Rezaul Huq, Latu Mia, Shamsul Huq and Amulya Kumar Sheek at a rally at Char Alexander college ground.

Some 106 acres of land will be distributed among 70 landless families in the first phase of the programme.

Speaking on the occasion, the prime minister said improving the living standard of the poor and creating jobs for them is one of the main targets of the government.

For many years, the people were deprived of their rights, Hasina said adding "we want to ensure that the people are not being deprived of their rights."

Homes for the homeless, economic emancipation and service to the people are the only objective of the government, said the prime minister calling upon all to work for the poor and distressed people of the country.

BMET project

From Page 1

ily proved. Faults with three cheques through which Tk 8 lakh was misappropriated have been proved finally by both of the probe bodies.

These three forged cheques were signed by the then director of IBA and the Director of Accounts of the DU.

The money was misappropriated by putting additional figures on the left hand side of the original amounts in the cheques. The additional figures were also put in words. The amounts were drawn from the Sonali Bank, DU branch.

The number of the three cheques, date, original amounts and the forged amounts are as follows: A) 056864, 26.09.87, Tk 237.36, Tk 1,00,237.36, B) 977802, 05.01.88, Tk 4,608.00, Tk 1,04,609.00, C) 077872, 26.06.88, Tk 1,960.00, Tk 6,01,960.00.

The total amount put in the cheques is Tk 6,805.36 and the total amount drawn Tk 8,06,805.36.

The Syndicated probe body said that general rules of writing cheques were violated in the case of these three cheques.

Vice-Chancellor of the Dhaka University Prof Abul Kalam Azad Chowdhury when contacted said the action could be taken against any person proved guilty by any committees. "We have requested the Anti-corruption Bureau to investigate into the incident," the VC said.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
 জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড
 ঢাকা

■ প্রদেয় কর যথাসময়ে পরিশোধ করুন এবং অর্থনৈতিক কর্মকাণ্ডে আপনার অবদান রাখুন।

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