

Fire at gasfield
Rly incurs
Tk 15 lakh
loss daily

From Our Correspondent
MOULVI BAZAR, 21: Bangladesh Railway is incurring a loss of Tk 15 lakh every day due to disruption in train compensation on the Dhaka-Chittagong and Dhaka-Sylhet sector following explosion in a gas field at Magurchara.

The Divisional Engineer of Bangladesh Railway told this correspondent today that they are trying to resume the train service as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, the chairman of the Occidental company, now at the explosion site said preparatory work on putting out fire was continuing. He said they are awaiting the arrival of more fire fighting equipment from abroad.

The members of the enquiry committee on the Magurchara gas field explosion today visited the spot and monitored the work of various organisations engaged in putting out the fire.

Seismic survey
needed to restore
rail links with
Sylhet

By Staff Correspondent
A seismic survey will have to be conducted in the area of the rail track which was affected by the fire at the Magurchara drilling site before restoring direct train communication of Sylhet with Dhaka and Chittagong, according to railway officials.

The fire has damaged the rail track between Srimangal and Bhanugach, a distance of about 12 km.

The massive explosion and fire at the drilling site may have caused disruption to the stratigraphic sequences of earth in that area, the sources said. The seismic survey will

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Shibir, BCL stage
demonstrations
on CU campus
defying ban

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, June 21: A tense situation prevailed on the Chittagong University campus today as rival student bodies staged demonstration centring on the issue of naming a girl students hall.

Supporters of Chhatra Shibir held rally and brought out procession seeking change of the name of Pritilata Hall while the supporters of BCL organised the procession demanding not to change the name of the hall, campus sources said.

A large number of police, most of them in riot gear were deployed on the campus to prevent any outbreak of violence.

However, the rival student fronts held processions and rallies defying the ban imposed by the university authorities.

BNP calls hartal
in Sylhet today

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, June 21: The Sylhet district BNP has called a dawn-to-dusk hartal in Sylhet town tomorrow to protest the fiscal measures in the new national budget.

A torch procession was brought out in the town this evening to drum up support for the hartal. Their other demands include ending load shedding and withdrawal of cases against BNP, JCD and Judo Dal workers and leaders.

Announcement
Results of JU admis-
sion test are published
on Pages 7 & 8.

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Budget 1997-98:
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by M Syeduzzaman

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Business

G-7 summit begins

Prices of gold, oil, tea
fall; sugar stable over
the week

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Probe body begins work

No progress in dousing gasfield fire

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, June 21: The foreign experts brought by the Occidental for extinguishing the fire at Magurchara drilling site passed the fourth day today making preparations for their operation.

While visiting the area, this correspondent observed that the flame remained unchanged as it was yesterday.

Dousing of the fire may be delayed by a few days more. While talking to this correspondent, two officials of Occidental said they could not give the exact date for starting the fire fighting operation. They said they are making necessary preparations for extinguishing the fire.

When asked, the Thana Nirbahi Officer of Srimangal said, installation of fire fighting equipment at the site will take some more days and so it is not

possible to say the exact date of starting the fire fighting operation. He said there is shortage of space around the drilling site for keeping the heavy equipment. He however, said the forest department and authorities of the Fulbari tea estate were extending all cooperation to the Occidental.

The high-level enquiry committee formed by the energy ministry visited the site today. TISN Lodi, Director (Operation), Petrobangla along with other members of the committee, S R Osmani, Managing Director, BAPEX, Dr M Ismail, Managing Director, BGFL and Deputy Commissioner of Moulvibazar visited the spot. The committee asked all concerned including those of Occidental to appear before it on Monday.

The team reached Shamshernagar Airport by a Aerobus

and drove to the gasfield.

Two officials of Occidental talking to this correspondent said that they were making preparations for extinguishing the fire but could not say when the fire fighting operation will begin. They however, said that the flame had reduced considerably.

Natural water reservoirs have been developed around the gas field area. The present 'base camp', which is about 500 yards ahead of the gasfield site would be shifted to a new site, about 1000 yards off the present one, officials said. The existing 'base camp' would be turned into a 'drilling pad', they added.

BSS adds: The intensity of fire at No-1 gas well at Magurchara in Moulvibazar has reduced further today. an

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— Star photo by Iqbal Siddiqui

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