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Confusion over, Mori coming

By Diplomatic Correspondent

Ending four days of 'uncertainty' and 'confusion', the government has finally announced, "it would be happy to welcome" Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori to Bangladesh on a two-day official visit from August 19.

At a hurriedly called press briefing yesterday noon, Foreign Secretary Shafi Sami said the Japanese Prime Minister "will be warmly welcomed" to Bangladesh when he arrives on August 19.

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Star Magazine

Dhaka's Hazaribagh is a veritable hell. Thanks to polluting tanneries the area is plagued by horrible smells and toxic chemicals. This week's cover story of the Star Magazine focuses on how these tanneries are wreaking havoc with people's health.

Inside Today

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After the Kashmir Ceasefire: Reviving the Peace Process
Pratul Bidwai writes from New Delhi
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Unocal working on proposed Ashuganj-Delhi pipeline

7.2 TCF gas to be exported to India in 20 years: Unocal chief

HOUSTON, Texas, Aug 16: US oil company Unocal is working on a proposal to build a 1,000-mile Ashuganj-Delhi pipeline for export of Bangladesh gas to India, reports UNB.

The five-year pipeline development project will involve US \$1.7 billion, Unocal chairman Roger Beach told a visiting group of Bangladeshi journalists at his office here on Monday.

Under the PSC commercialisation process, the US exploration and production company

will submit a gas utilisation feasibility study to Petrobangla next month or in October.

Unocal experts are designing a "potential export project" for exporting about 7.2 trillion cubic feet (TCF) of gas from Bangladesh to India in two phases in 20 years. Measures to face consequences of any deficit in production during this period will have to be worked out.

The pipeline (approximately 36 inches in diameter) project

envisages two years for negotiating agreement and obtaining financing, and three years for constructing pipeline and developing field for phase 1.

Unocal officials said Bangladesh would earn gross revenue of US \$500 million every year and net revenue of 275 million per year.

Bangladeshi experts hold a different view, however, saying the lion's share of the gross revenue will go to the producer and builder of the pipeline.

Chuck Pierce, Vice-President of the company, said Bangladesh has sufficient gas to meet domestic consumption for many years and to export to India.

Unocal estimates country-wide reserve base at 40-50 TCF, including existing fields and future exploration potential.

The officials said they opted for natural gas pipeline project as export of LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) from Bangladesh is not feasible.

Gas price raised by 15 pc, oil prices up

Star Report

The government has sharply raised prices of petroleum products and gas.

Prices of kerosene and diesel were raised by about 20 per cent while those of petrol and octane by 9.5 and 9 per cent, respectively with effect from yesterday. The gas price was raised by 15 per cent with effect from September 1.

As per a Cabinet decision made on Monday, the price per litre of diesel and kerosene was raised by Tk 2.5 while that of petrol and octane by Tk 2 per litre.

The domestic consumers will now be paying Tk 333.50 as against Tk 290 for double burner and Tk 212.75 as against Tk 185 for single burner.

A release of the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources yesterday said that the price was refixed against the backdrop of devaluation of taka against US dollar, international oil price spiral and the difference between buying and selling prices of gas.

The release said that despite the price hike, gas price in the country will still be lower than the prices of the same in countries like India, Thailand and Malaysia.

This is the second price hike of gas since Awami League came to power in June 1996. The last time gas price saw an increase, also by 15 per cent, was in December 1, 1998.

The government decided to

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Contempt case against PM: Hearing Monday

By Special Correspondent

A contempt petition against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was filed with the High Court on Wednesday by President of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) Barrister Maimul Hossain, accusing her of making derogatory remarks on the Judiciary.

The petition seeking a rule upon the PM asking her to show cause why contempt proceedings shall not be drawn against her was accepted for hearing on its admissibility on Monday by a Division Bench of the HC.

The Bench comprised Justice Mohammad Mojaumil Huq and Justice Abdur Rashid.

The petitioner said his move followed remarks by the PM in an interview with the BBC's Bangla service last month, in which she said criminals were repeating crimes after getting bail from courts. The Lawyers and the Judges should be accountable for that.

The PM's remarks were criticised by the SCBA executive committee and also by a group of 11 leading lawyers including Barrister Syed Ishtiaque Ahmed and Dr Kamal Hossain. They also met the PM on Monday to discuss the issue. After the meeting, Maimul Hossain claimed

that they were expecting a statement from the PM and would wait for it.

But the PM's office said she never stated that she would issue a statement on the issue.

Barrister Hossain said, "In the face of repeated attacks on the Judiciary, the lawyers feel duty bound to show at this hour of crisis unflinching solidarity with the judges in discharging their constitutional duty of protecting people's fundamental rights and do justice without

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MPs to file case Monday

By Staff Correspondent

The opposition lawmakers will now file a contempt petition on Monday against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her remarks on the judiciary.

As per the previous schedule, the lawmakers were to file the petition with the High Court yesterday.

Pro-opposition lawyers were earlier scheduled to file a similar petition on Sunday. But they

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AL leader gunned down in city

By Staff Correspondent

Gunmen shot and killed an Awami League leader, who is also a businessman in the old part of the city, at Armanitola Tuesday night, police and hospital sources said.

Kamal Hossain, 30, was a resident of Noor Baksh Lane and senior vice-president of ward 67 unit of Awami League.

Police arrested Jubayed Mohammed Adel son of Jahangir Mohammad Adel, a Jatiya Party leader, and Pappu for their alleged involvement in the killing.

Kamal along with some of his friends was in conversation in front of a shop near his residence at about 11:45 pm on

Tuesday when gunmen led by Jubayed and his brother Tarek, Pappu and four others suddenly appeared there and gunned down Kamal on the spot.

Zahir Ahmed, a rickshaw-puller, also received bullet wounds during the incident, witnesses said.

Witnesses said Kamal had protested hoisting of national flag of Pakistan by Jubayed, Tarek and others at the residence of Jahangir Mohammad Adel on the night of August 14, Pakistan's National day. They suspected that the incident might have led to the killing.

Police believe the killings is a sequel to previous enmity between Kamal and Jubayed over their stakes at the managing committee of Mahuttuli Free Primary School.

Nagir Hossain, brother of the victim, filed a case with Kotwali police station in this regard. A tense situation was prevailing in the area.



President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina offering munajat after placing wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi in the city on August 15. — PID photo

Homage to Bangabandhu

By Staff Correspondent

The nation paid homage to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on Tuesday, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his death.

Thousands of mourners thronged the Bangabandhu Museum at Road No 32 in Dhan-

mondi Residential Area and paid rich tribute to the slain leader. They carried banners demanding execution of the verdict in Bangabandhu Murder Case.

The High Court is hearing the death reference of the 15 convicted in the murder case.

Bangabandhu along with most of his family members was killed in a military putsch on the fateful night of August 15, 1975.

The day was a public holiday. Black flag was hoisted atop public and private build-

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The curtain goes up

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