

Petrobangla men

FROM PAGE 1
demand would fall behind the supply growth significantly," said a source.

"Now if we decide on exporting gas, there are a number of issues which we would consider to make it profitable and meaningful for Bangladesh," he added.

"Firstly, Bangladesh will not export gas discovered by its own subsidies because it is very cheap and cost effective for us."

"Gas export under the PSC needs separate agreement. We will seek export fee. We will determine how much gas (10 to 20 per cent of upfront gas share as per other international practice) should be kept for us as export fee or whether we would take the fee in terms of foreign currency."

In addition, Bangladesh will also have its share in the PSC gas export.

The second issue would be what and how gas price would be fixed. Gas price at well-head level (the first point from where gas is being extracted, processed and supplied) would be low.

In dealing with gas price, the oil company must ensure that gas price at well-head must be equivalent to the price at which it is selling gas to us as per PSC. But it may not recover the cost (of investment) from the well-head pricerather it would recover the same from the buyer. Petrobangla will not get any price lower than that as per the PSC's clause on Pricing of Commodity. In addition, Petrobangla must have its production share, as per PSC, in the export.

As a precaution to avoid conflict of interest, the PSC operator should not be allowed to be the pipeline authority. Pipeline company would be separate and it would purchase gas from the oil companies.

From the pipeline company, Bangladesh should get wheeling charge and right of way. It can be generally assumed that PSC gas export would require around 300 km pipeline up to the border. This pipeline would not fall under the purview of the PSCs.

"If all these issues are economically viable for the oil companies and us, we can decide to export gas from designated gas fields of the IOCs. What happens with the gas across the border will not be our headache," said the source.

"We can assume that the IOCs would get a minimum average

border gas sales rate of three dollars per thousand cubic feet (mmcf) as India would not buy gas that costs more than three dollars," he said. "At that price, the IOCs would have to cover all expenses and keep it profitable for us," he said.

Under the first round block bidding for oil and gas exploration in the mid-nineties, Bangladesh signed six Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) for eight blocks 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 22 with Cairn, Occidental, Oakland and UMC through unsolicited negotiations. Under the second round competitive block bidding, the country signed four more PSCs for blocks 5, 7, 9 and 10 with Shell (which took over Cairn's concerns), Unocal (which took over Occidental's concerns), and Chevron-Exxon-Tullow (Tullow took over Oakland's concerns). None of these PSCs have any option to export pipeline gas. However the PSCs under the second round block bidding left room for future export negotiations.

Intending to be a regional energy player, Unocal had been hammering on pipeline gas export to India ever since it came to the local scenario in late '96. Later, Shell joined the campaign.

India has a power demand growth requirement of 10,000 MW per year while it has to depend to a great degree on imported energy source. The ready-made bulk demand for gas in India is a much lucrative option for oil companies working there. On the other hand, energy deprived Bangladesh would need billions of dollars of investment over a long period to build gas and power infrastructure to ensure sale of the gas being developed by oil companies.

In October '99, Shell officially projected that Bangladesh could earn 800 million dollars a year by exporting six trillion cubic feet (TCF) gas to India. The company also pinpointed that cost of gas production by international oil companies (IOC) in Bangladesh was 1.2 dollars per unit and therefore Bangladesh should seek a gas cost above 1.2 dollars per unit to make a profit. Unocal made a similar projection.

Both the companies had hinted at a border gas tariff of three dollars. But it includes transmission cost, export fee and other sharing issues which are internationally practised.

Elected MPs

FROM PAGE 12
any such accounts while meeting the election expenses.

Meanwhile, the EC yesterday asked the winning candidates to submit reports on election expenses in prescribed forms with proper affidavits to the returning officers either through their election agents or in person within 15 days of publication of their names in the official gazette.

It also asked them to send a copy of the report to the EC Secretariat by registered postal service.

The Representation of People Order, 1972 says that if a candidate fails to submit his or her report within the stipulated time, he might be subject to a maximum of seven years in prison with fine or a minimum of two years' rigorous imprisonment.

Although the EC did not make registration of the political parties mandatory, it has asked the parties to submit reports on their election expenses.

"Each of the political party should also submit an attested statement of election expenses including primary balance and closing balance from the time of announcement of the election schedule to the day of election and also the account of the fund collection from different sources," said a EC release.

Water treaty

FROM PAGE 1
flow of the common river aiming to solve water crisis in the country under the impact of Farakka Barrage.

The minister said the people voted the four-party coalition to power to salvage the country from corruption, terrorism and repression. "We'll root out these evils to fulfil the aspiration of the people."

Siddiqui said the four-party government would not serve any particular community. "We'll be always with all the communities, including Hindu, Buddhist and Christian, to protect their interest."

ETV case

FROM PAGE 12
cause notice on ETV Chairman A.S Mahmud and on the secretary to the Ministry of Information asking them to explain why the licensing agreement forged on March 9, 1999 between the private television channel and the ministry should not be declared illegal.

Prof. Chowdhury Mohammad Hossain of the Department of Pharmacy and Prof. Abdur Rob of the Department of Geography at Dhaka University, and President of a faction of the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) Gias Kamal Chowdhury jointly filed the writ petition.

The writ petition said international bids were invited for setting up of a private television channel in the country.

On July 9 1998, the tender evaluation committee, after scrutiny, sent a list of bidders to the Ministry of Information terming the ETV that participated in the bid disqualified. The same day, another list was sent to the ministry showing the ETV on top of the list.

They further alleged that the licensing agreement was forged with A.S Mahmud despite the fact that he did not participate in the bid offers at all. But subsequently, the licence was transferred to the ETV Limited.

The ETV did not obtain any clearance certificate as per the Telegraph Act for functioning as a TV channel, and set up key-point installations (KPI) at the ETV building without permission from the National Security Intelligence (NSI), they also alleged.

One security guard was injured, the ICRC said in Islamabad, Pakistan. ICRC spokesman Mario Musa said the building's roof was marked with a Red Cross insignia.

Witnesses said they also saw several Taliban military trucks near the same area.

The north of Kabul holds four Taliban military bases, a government transport depot and a fuel depot. Fuel and the government vehicles are believed to have been

"There are contrasting views on the issue, but we have to take a decision based on the economic reality," he told officials of the Planning Commission and External Resource Division on Monday.

"No resource is a resource as such, if it remains under the soil and is not properly utilised," the minister told The Daily Star Monday afternoon.

The BNP in its election manifesto made it clear that all necessary measures would be undertaken to increase revenues from oil, gas and other mineral resources to bolster up the economy.

Priority, however, would be given to meeting the domestic need, it said.

AL for reforms

FROM PAGE 1
The rank and file of the party, however, consider reform as an issue 'no too much discussed' within the party. They recalled that the last two councils of AL did not go for much of a change in party leadership and just announced new committees, almost like the previous ones.

Party workers now expect the central leadership to replace leaders with bad public image by a new band of leaders at different levels. They hope that this would further strengthen the party and also boost the morale of party rank and file.

Meanwhile, AL sent teams to all areas of the country yesterday to find facts about 'rigging' that stole 'AL's victory' in the October 1 elections.

Hasina had said earlier that she would present before the nation a 'White Paper' on polls irregularities and 'rigging'.

The party which bagged 62 seats in the election has rejected the polls results alleging 'crude rigging', restrained its MPs-elect from taking oath as lawmakers and demanded a fresh election.

BNP, allies killing AL men

FROM PAGE 1
minister and AL's chief election coordinator SAMS Kibria, AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman, former water resources minister Abdur Razzak, former education minister ASKH Sadique, former state minister for foreign Affairs Abul Hasan Chowdhury, former deputy minister Saber Hossain Chowdhury and former chairman of Privatisation Board and newly elected MP Kazi Zafrullah.

Envoys, charge d' affaires or counsellors from the EU countries, the Australian High Commissioner, the French Ambassador and political heads of the US and UK missions were present, among others. Heads of the World Bank, IMF, UNDP, ADB missions and the NDI Representative in Bangladesh also attended the briefing.

Kibria said BNP has created a terrifying situation following the election.

"In the post-election mayhem and carnage, a sense of total insecurity has been created among AL workers and supporters," he said. BNP and its alliance partner Jammal, he said, have engaged in violent activities jeopardising security of a large section of the people including minorities and women.

Kibria said that since July, some 1500 people have been killed and more than 10,000 injured in pre-

Saifur leaves for Algiers today

UNB, Dhaka

Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman leaves today for Algiers via London and Paris on a 10-day tour to join the Board of Governors meeting of Islamic Development Bank (IDB).

In his first official visit after taking oath as minister, he will lead a 4-member delegation to the meeting to be held during Oct 23-24.

Other members of the delegation are ERD secretary Dr Masihur Rahman, Bangladesh Ambassador to Morocco Maj General Mohammad Anwar Hossain and Finance Minister's PS Kazi Nurun Nabi.

Saifur, who is Bangladesh governor of IDB, is scheduled to return home on October 27.

US gunship pounds target

FROM PAGE 12
military targets in the Kheir Khana section of northern Kabul and two more bombs around the airport, raising a huge cloud of black smoke.

An Associated Press reporter with opposition forces on the Shomali plain north of Kabul could hear huge explosions from the bombardment and the roar or heavy guns.

One bomb struck an International Red Cross warehouse at Kheir Khana, sending Afghan workers running to try to salvage blankets, tents and medicine from the burning building. One guard was injured, officials said.

One security guard was injured, the ICRC said in Islamabad, Pakistan. ICRC spokesman Mario Musa said the building's roof was marked with a Red Cross insignia.

Witnesses said they also saw several Taliban military trucks near the same area.

The north of Kabul holds four Taliban military bases, a government transport depot and a fuel depot. Fuel and the government vehicles are believed to have been

relocated since the US-led strikes started.

Nearby, another bomb injured three farmers working in their fields when the US jets roared overhead, residents said.

Taliban Information Ministry official Abdul Himat said 13 civilians died in the pre-dawn assault at Kandahar. The Taliban also said two people were killed in Tuesday's attack on Mazar-e-Sharif. The claims could not be independently verified.

In Washington, a defense official confirmed the overnight attack was led by an AC-130, marking the first acknowledged use of special-forces aircraft in the offensive, which began on Oct. 7. The official spoke on condition of anonymity.

Previous raids had targeted anti-aircraft artillery sites and other military installations with the aim of making the skies safe for aircraft like the AC-130. The Taliban are believed to still hold an unknown number of shoulder-fired Stinger missiles capable of bringing down aircraft, however.

High-firepower AC-130s typically

election and post-election violence and lawlessness.

The former minister who headed AL's election campaign steering committee accused BNP of entering into an understanding with the caretaker government as the election was held during its tenure.

"The nation", he said, "was horrified to witness the partisan caretaker government bend backward to please the BNP-led alliance."

Kibria alleged that the caretaker government headed by Justice Latifur Rahman initiated the mayhem and carnage. "And what is happening now is the continuation of the violence and intimidation at that time throughout the country."

He claimed that the attacks on Awami League men and minorities were part of a "systematic campaign" to influence the election results.

Govt: Police

FROM PAGE 1
Blaise the situation prior to Durga Puja of the Hindu community in order to capitalise on it.

Cautioning against such "heinous, motivated acts by the vested groups" Altaf Chowdhury made it clear that such "ill efforts would not be allowed to find success."

The minister directed the police to take all necessary steps to make sure that the Hindus can celebrate their greatest religious festival in a secure atmosphere.

Reminding that all is equal to the law, State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfulzaman Babar asked the police "not to be biased to anyone" in their action.

Babar said they would not use police to serve party interest like the previous government.

Assuring the police that there would be no political or administrative interference in curbing terrorism and anarchy, Babar asked the police to take all necessary steps to secure public life across the country.

Among others, Home Secretary Dr Sadat Hossain, IGP Nurul Huda, additional IGPs, DMP commissioner Anwarul Iqbal and senior metropolitan police officials were present in the meeting.

Later, the two ministers visited the directorate of prisons and held a meeting with senior jail officials.

IG (prison) Liaqat Ali briefed them on the situation of prisoners inside jails and other related problems of prison administration. The ministers assured them of solving the problems gradually.

"Terrorists are now ruling us. They are in the government!"

The former finance minister who has been elected to the present parliament said, "What is happening is a staged drama, a planned game."

He said, the home minister uses hyperbolic language. On the one hand, he (home minister) says reports of repression and attacks are "baseless" and on the other he also claims the reports are exaggerated.

"If something is baseless, how can it be exaggerated," Kibria asked.

Zillur Rahman said the ruling party has created "an absolute reign of terror."

He accused BNP of indulging in indiscriminate "violence against women, repression on minorities and torture on women."

The AL General Secretary demanded immediate steps to restore discipline and law and order.

Abdur Razzak demanded that violence by the ruling party must stop. Otherwise, he said, there would be further deterioration of law and order with serious consequences.

"Our people may hit back and this could aggravate the situation," he said.

ASHK Sadique said that terrorism and violence continued to be unleashed by BNP. "If we want to nourish democracy in the parliament, this sort of violence must stop."

"Without the connivance of the ruling party leadership, this cannot happen," he alleged.

He added that if there was limited violence, it could have been ignored.

Abul Hasan Chowdhury in his introductory speech welcomed the diplomats and thanked them for their interest in democracy in Bangladesh. He hoped that they would get a clear picture of the post-election situation from the briefing.

He called upon the diplomats to assess the events following the election.

Saber Hossain Chowdhury made a slide presentation of pictures and clippings from newspapers displaying victims and stories about reported violence by the ruling party in different parts of the country.

Kazi Zafrullah also expressed similar views and said extremist religious elements have been encouraged to resort to violence.

Bangladesh to send relief for Afghan refugees

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh will soon send relief materials for the Afghan refugees, a top official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told the agency yesterday.

Relief goods are to be sent as per decision of the government taken Monday night in response to United Nations call for humanitarian assistance to the Afghan nationals who have become refugees or displaced internally because of war.

Replying to a question, the official said the assistance which will be sent "immediately" includes tea, medicine, jute bag, jute mat and jute blanket. The relief goods would be worth take five crore, he said.

The decision was taken at the first cabinet meeting of the new government with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the chair.

The dispatch of relief goods has become necessary following recent developments in Afghanistan, he added.

Replying to another question, the official said, "We are in the process of intimating the current chairman of NAM about the decision of the government with regard to holding of the next summit."

The government decided not to hold the NAM summit in view of the global political scenario and the country's financial condition.

South Africa is the current chairman of NAM which has brought in its fold 113 countries.

37 ministers

FROM PAGE 1
Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan at 25 Baily Road, Textiles Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury at 24 Baily Road, Jute Minister Major (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed at 30 Minto Road, Fisheries and Livestock Minister Sadeque Hossain Khoka at 20 Park Road, Water Resources Minister LK Siddiqi at 7 Minto Road, Labour and Employment Minister Abdullah Al Noman at 4 Minto Road, and Disaster Management and Relief Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusufat 2 Hare Road.

The 34 Minto Road residence allocated to Food Minister Tarique Islam was reportedly occupied by the supporters of State Minister (technocrat) for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin.

The houses to the rest of the ministers and three advisors with the rank of minister will be allocated later.

In a related development, at least two ministers namely Prof. AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury and Sadeque Hossain Khoka have refused to receive police protocol.

As per a provision, a cabinet minister is entitled to a three-strong police escort.

Meanwhile, the government has decided not to allocate suites in the MP Hostel to those who illegally occupied them earlier. Most of the 24 MPs have already left their forcibly occupied suites following an instruction from the party chief.

A good number of MPs belonging to the BNP occupied suites and rooms immediately after its victory in the October 1 general election.

Saudi national

FROM PAGE 12
Indian and three Saudi passports along with 25 Medical Examination reports and 11 different seals.

The arrested Saudi national had been staying in the guest house since August 6, 2001, the police added.

A case was filed with Gulshan police station in this regard.

Saadat University College closed sine die

UNB, Tangail

Authorities closed Government Saadat University College for indefinite period yesterday amid tensions following a terrorist attack on its principal Muhammad Sultan Mia.

In the face of threat by the terrorists, the teachers of the college on Monday left the campus with police escort and held a meeting at Government Kumudini Women's College in the town where they took the decision.

The angry teachers also decided not to take any examinations to be held from October 18.

A gang of miscreants attacked the Principal at College gate on Monday. The Principal is now undergoing treatment at local general hospital.

Meanwhile, police arrested 17 persons in connection with the attack on the principal.

Minister's son

FROM PAGE 1
activities, the government had earlier ordered the local police administration to arrest Bachchu.

Police raided the Daulatpur residence of the state minister on Monday but failed to arrest his son who reportedly left the house to escape arrest.

Sources said Prime Minister Khaleda Zia got annoyed at the news about Mollah's son during her visit to Saudi Arabia. She ordered the Home Minister and State Minister for Home to take legal action in this regard.

They said the issue was also discussed at Monday's cabinet meeting where the prime minister and other ministers expressed their unanimous views on legal actions against all terrorists irrespective of their party affiliations.

Hunger strike

FROM PAGE 12
ple in the post-polls period, they remarked.

A large number of Hindus fled their homes in Gournadi and Agailjhara due to violence, and took shelter in Gopalganj, they said.

Criticising the inaction on the part of the law-enforcement agencies, they demanded exemplary punishment to the culprits.

They also protested the comments by the home minister on the incidents, and reiterated the demand for proper inquiries into the incidents.

Report on ministry

FROM PAGE 1
Ministry of Labour and Employment and the newly proposed Ministry of Overseas Welfare for Bangladesh expatriates.

Over three million Bangladeshis working abroad annually remit nearly two billion US dollars (Taka 10,000 crore), the single largest source of foreign currency for Bangladesh.

The BNP was committed to the people for the well-being of Bangladeshi expatriates and the government in principle has given priority to look into the interest of the Bangladeshi expatriates as they are one of the major sources of foreign currency for the national economy, the minister said.

He said a lot of Bangladeshis have to suffer miseries in different ways and the proposed ministry will look into their problems and try to remedy the situation.

Complainant

FROM PAGE 1
BNP, was arrested in Dhaka yesterday following the case filed by Zahur Sunday evening complaining that his younger brother was abducted at gun point by cadres of Bachchu Molla and taken to their leader. Bachchu set him free only after written undertaking of presenting Zahur before him within five days.

Majibur Rahman, OC of Daulatpur thana, told UNB by phone that Zahurul Islam seeking to withdraw the case in writing said Monday night that dispute with Bachchu Molla has been settled through reconciliation.

Zahur was not immediately available to confirm the matter. But his family members said the petition to withdraw the case was made under pressure from local BNP musclemen and police.

Police said the petition for withdrawal of the case against Bachchu Molla would undergo legal process. "It does not end automatically on petition. Besides, there are several other criminal cases against him," said a police officer.

PM: Minorities

FROM PAGE 1
Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and Political Secretary to the Prime Minister Haris Chowdhury were present at the meeting.

Khaleda Zia further said that the government would not show any sympathy to lawbreakers even if they were close relatives of ministers, MPs, BNP leaders or activists.

She instructed the authorities concerned to bring the terrorists and anti-social elements to book whatever their political identity or affiliation may be, and take stern actions against them.

The prime minister will hold an important meeting with the secretaries of the government at Bangladesh Secretariat this morning. She will conduct her official duties from the secretariat today.

She will also hold a joint meeting of all the DCs and SPs at the Prime Minister's Office tomorrow morning and give necessary directives regarding government's policy towards development, rule of law and other affairs.

Powell calls for talks

FROM PAGE 1
Islamabad, Pakistani officials said two people were killed in the gunbattle.

India, facing calls at home to fight its own battle against terrorism rather than rely on the United States to take care of the Kashmir problem after routing out militants in Afghanistan, said it had opened fire in self-defence to stop militants crossing the border.

India has long accused Pakistan of sponsoring cross-border terrorism by sending militants to fuel a 12-year separatist insurgency in the Indian part of Kashmir.

Pakistan says it gives only moral support to the militants, whom it describes as freedom fighters.

Washington, fearing instability in Pakistan, has urged Islamabad and New Delhi to cool tensions while it attacks Afghanistan to root out Osama bin Laden, accused of masterminding the September 11 suicide hijack attacks on in the United States.

"Issues must be resolved through peaceful, political and diplomatic means. Not through violence or reliance on force but with a determined respect for human rights," Powell said.

Powell told his Pakistani hosts that he saw improved relations between Washington and Islamabad because of the current crisis over Afghanistan and Pakistan's backing of force against the ruling Taliban there for refusing to hand over bin Laden.

"I also reassured Pakistan of America's support and the support

of the international community as Pakistan joins the international community in this campaign," he said.

Earlier, meeting in Islamabad, Musharraf and Powell agreed any future Afghan government should include the opposition as well as moderate elements of the Taliban.

Powell also said military action would not stop until all objectives had been met, but he hoped it would be short something Musharraf also wanted.

Facing intense opposition from Islamic groups opposed to the US-led attacks, Musharraf is walking a fine line between backing Washington's campaign and a public upset over reports of rising numbers of civilian casualties in Afghanistan.

Another report says, Musharraf promised Powell during his visit to Islamabad that he would hold elections next year as planned, a senior U.S. State Department official said in Delhi yesterday.

Musharraf, who seized power in an army coup on October 12, 1999, has promised to hold elections by the third anniversary of the military takeover. "He said he intended to go forward with the election," the State Department official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "He ... gave a very firm commitment about proceeding with the election a year from now."

The official was briefing reporters as Powell flew to New Delhi on the second leg of a visit to Pakistan and India.

period between October 1 and 10. It is God's mercy and maturity of the citizens that the situation has not been worse.

The home minister has been in change only since Thursday, October 11. In a fluid situation it is difficult to go by calendar dates. Over the years the rural society of Bangladesh has become politically anguished. The reign of terror