

Dhaka to tag strings to allowing gas pipeline

Saifur flies to Delhi; plans to seek Indian transit to carry goods to Nepal, removal of trade barriers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will allow a proposed tri-nation gas pipeline to be drawn from Myanmar through its territory if India lets Bangladesh use its land to transit goods to and from Nepal and removes barriers to trade between the two countries.

told reporters at Zia International Airport yesterday prior to flying off to the Indian capital.

He said he had talks with the prime minister on the issue.

The proposed pipeline will transmit gas from Myanmar to Tripura, from where gas will join the pipeline flow and continue on to eastern Bangladesh through the Brahmanbaria border, exiting in western Bangladesh through the Jessore border and ending in West Bengal.

"We are not against such a proposal in principle, the issue has been discussed with the prime minister and I can say that we do not have a negative attitude towards the issue," the finance minister told journalists.

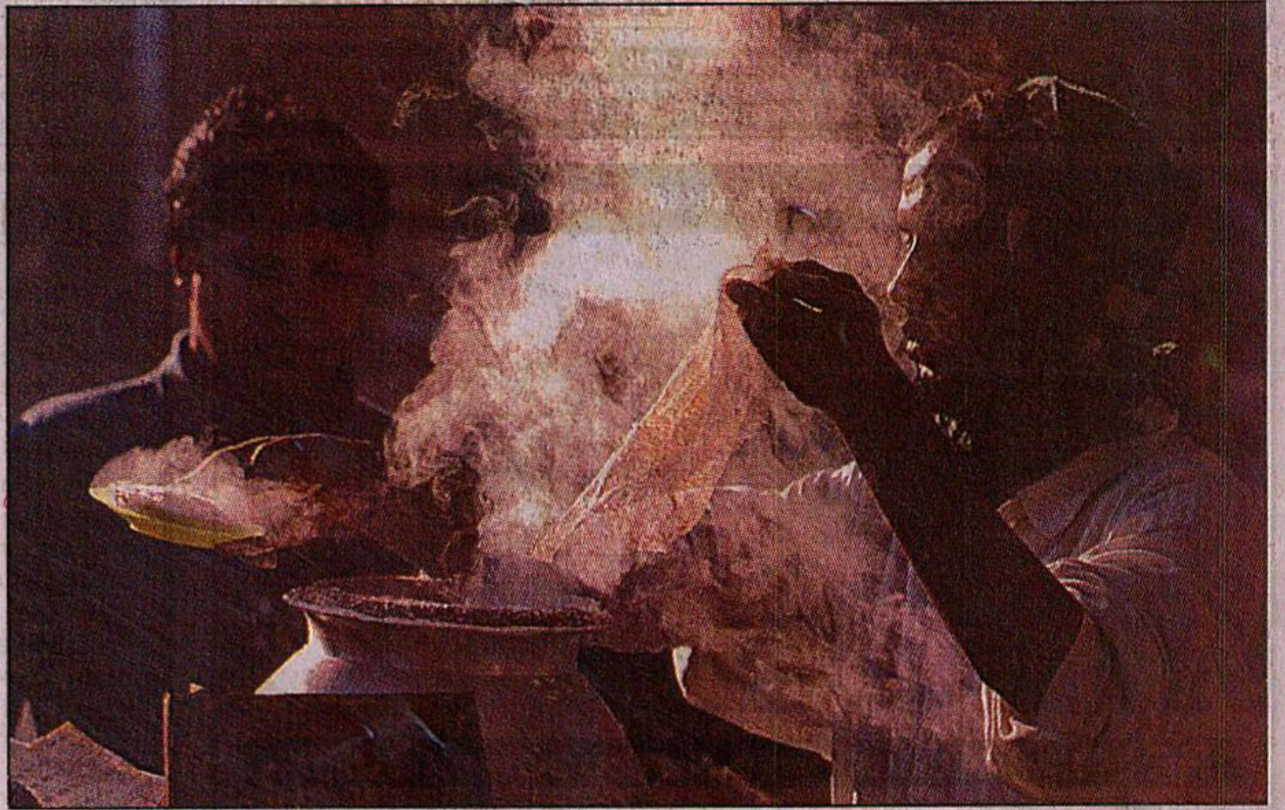
He, however, said both India and Bangladesh will benefit if negotiations on transit for gas pipeline take place under a comprehensive framework.

Saifur said there should be no reservations about with the proposed gas pipeline since many

countries have such arrangements. For instance, he pointed out, oil from Iran is being exported through pipeline going through Iraq, Syria and Turkey, while Russia is exporting gas pipelined through Italy, France and several other countries.

The issue needs to be seen in the light of historic relations between India and Bangladesh. Delhi should remove tariff, non-tariff and administrative hurdles to help Dhaka close a huge trade deficit with it. India

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Truly oven-fresh... a wayside trader serves a customer Bhapa Pittha, a steam-baked winter cake, right from oven on Dhaka University campus yesterday. Priced at Tk 2 a piece, the cake is a favourite with customers in the chilly days.
PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Akheri munajat today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The three-day *Biswa Ijtema* on the bank of Turag River in the suburban town of Tongi is set to end today with *akheri munajat* (final prayer).

More than 30 lakh people including President Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, ministers, lawmakers and political leaders are expected to join in the prayer to be led by Moulana Jobayer Hasan of New Delhi at 11:50am.

The authorities have completed all security measures for the president, the prime minister and other dignitaries in the 160-acre *Ijtema* ground covered by a gigantic canopy.

Thousands of women will also

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CNG CONVERSION Govt limps halfway as deadline nears end

AKBAR HOSSAIN

The government is only halfway to achieving its target of converting over half of its petrol and diesel vehicles into compressed natural gas (CNG) fuelling by December 2004, said sources in the government transport pool.

Some transport pool staff with connivance of a section of employees from different ministries is dragging out the CNG conversion process to keep on having gain through petrol and diesel pilferage, sources added.

The government transport pool, which supervises the government vehicles, has a fleet of about 450

automobiles. At the beginning of the year, the government decided to convert some 230 petrol and diesel run vehicles into CNG-run transports.

Conversion would save the government Tk 10 lakh every month, sources said.

In September this year, the energy and mineral resources ministry reminded different ministries by post of the deadline for the conversion. The energy ministry asked them to submit a monthly progress report on the conversion process as well.

"We have asked different ministries to let us know how many vehicles

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Contempt rule on four dailies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a *suo moto* rule on the editors and five others of four national dailies asking them to explain why it should not draw up contempt charges against them for publishing allegedly contemptuous reports involving an additional judge.

A Division Bench of the HC comprising Justice MA Matin and Justice AFM Abdur Rahman issued the rule more than one month into publication of the reports.

The court asked editors of The Daily Star, New Age, Prothom Alo

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Date with death on the road

BRTA blames it on reckless driving, unfit vehicles; Minister points at lax enforcement of law

MORSHED ALI KHAN

Last year alone 4,749 road accidents claimed nearly 4,000 lives and seriously injured over 3,500 people around the country, according to the Bangladesh Road Transport

Authority (BRTA). But these figures represent only accidents recorded by the police.

The reality is that the number of casualties, particularly injuries, is far greater than what the authorities claim and is sharply rising every

year. The traffic department and the BRTA officials blamed reckless driving, unfit vehicles, and bad roads with wrong road signs account for most road accidents but

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One killed in Rab crossfire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man with criminal records was killed while another person accompanying him injured reportedly in a shootout involving Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Keraniganj in the early hours yesterday.

The shooting, which left Sohrab Hossain, 28, of Sirajnagar dead, took place near a culvert at Sirajnagar under Taranagar union of Keraniganj.

Sohrab stood accused in several cases including those for murders.

Nurul Hoque, 36, a brother-in-law of Sohrab, was shot in the stomach. He was undergoing treatment

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Congratulations

SGS
Kazi & Kazi Tea Estate Ltd.
Presentation of 1st Organic Tea Certification
By SGS to KAZI & KAZI TEA ESTATE LTD, Panchagarh
24th November 2004

We would like to congratulate the management, officers and workers of Kazi and Kazi Tea Estate, Tetulia, Panchagarh, Bangladesh in their great achievement in obtaining the 1st organic tea certification in Bangladesh by SGS International certifying authority.

On behalf of all members of
GEMINI SEA FOOD

All Praises to Almighty Allah

PHP Group awarded "Best IT User"

PHP Group has awarded as the "Best IT User" in Large Corporate Group category for efficient & effective uses of IT solutions & services, provided by local companies (LEADSoft Bangladesh Limited) on 28th November 2004 at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Center. The program jointly hosted by Bangladesh Association of Software & Information Services (BASIS) & SouthAsia Enterprise Development Facility (SEDF), a World Bank wing.

Mrs. Wiwan Tharahirunchote, President of Thailand-based One Asset Management Limited is handing over the award to Mr. Mohd. Anwarul Haque, Director, PHP Group. Mr. Sheikh Abdul Aziz, Managing Director of LeadSoft Bangladesh Ltd. is also seen.

We are grateful to Almighty Allah & state our heartfelt thanks to the organizers, juries & all concerns.

Hosted by: BASIS SEDF

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more than 170 Countries