

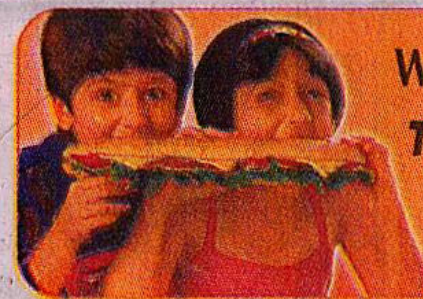
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ACUTE GAS CRISIS

Many BSCIC units cut production by 70-80pc

AKBAR HOSSAIN

The ongoing gas crisis has forced many factories in the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) estate in Tongi to cut production by up to 80 percent.

The gas-run factories in the Tongi BSCIC area have been facing the shortage of gas for the last six months. But with the coming of winter the problem has been com-

pounded, as there is a huge shortfall in production of gas against the increasing demand.

The spiralling cost of production due to the gas crisis had forced many of the factory owners to cut production by 70 to 80 percent.

Factory officials in Tongi BSCIC area alleged that they had informed the Titas Gas Limited of their crisis several times but to no effect.

Some factories in the area have already suspended their production

while some are considering suspending the production.

"We cannot pay our workers wages regularly as we had to cut our production by 70 percent," said Abul Hossain, factory manager of National Glass Industry.

"For the last two weeks, there has virtually been no supply of gas other than on Fridays," said Abul Hossain.

Currently the gas supply has dropped to two pounds per square

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Expatriates remit a record \$ 3.54b

RAFIQ HASAN

Manpower export and remittance earning hit a record last year with 2.72 lakh Bangladeshis getting overseas employment and remittance totalling \$3.54 billion from January to December.

Sources at the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment said the previous record was 2.68 lakh Bangladeshis

getting jobs abroad in 1998. The number was 2.54 lakh in 2003 and it rose by 7.308 per cent last year.

The expatriate Bangladeshis sent home \$ 3.54 billion in remittance last year, 11.42 percent higher than the previous year's \$3.17 billion.

Manpower export to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), the biggest importer of Bangladeshi workforce, however declined by 12

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GAS LEAKAGE CONTINUES Probe body visits Tengrtila, mum on findings

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The energy ministry enquiry committee that visited the Tengrtila Gas Field site yesterday declined to say anything about their findings to the reporters while leakage of gas in bubbles at several points in the field area under Doarabazar upazila of Sunamganj district continued till yesterday.

The committee members

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

Palestinian militants defy Abbas

6 Israelis among 9 killed in bombing, attack in Gaza

REUTERS, Gaza

Palestinian militants killed six Israelis in a bombing and shooting attack at the main commercial crossing into Gaza, mounting their strongest challenge yet to President-elect Mahmoud Abbas and his call for non-violence.

Israeli troops killed three gunmen in an ensuing exchange of fire at the Karni border terminal between Israel and Gaza, the army said. Militants said the men blew themselves up after infiltrating the heavily guarded compound late on Thursday.

Three militant groups claimed the attack: Hamas, the Popular Resistance Committees and al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, an armed wing of Abbas's Fatah movement.

"We will continue to chase you and disrupt your sleep until you leave the land you occupied," the groups said in a statement on Friday. "The attack affirms the consensus of the resistance factions on the choice of Jihad (holy struggle)."

Hours after the incident, there was no comment from Abbas, while Israel signaled it would weigh its response to the operation carefully to avoid weakening a leader it has said it could do business with after years of shunning Yasser Arafat.

Israeli Transport Minister Meir

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

2 GIs, Iraqi polls official killed in attacks

AFP, Baghdad

Two US marines were killed Thursday in Iraq's violence-ravaged western al-Anbar province, the US military said.

"Two Marines assigned to First Marine Expeditionary Force were killed in action on January 13, while conducting security and stability operations in the Al-Anbar

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

European space probe makes call from Titan

REUTERS, Pasadena

The European-built space probe Huygens entered the atmosphere of Saturn's largest moon, Titan, yesterday in the last lap of a historic voyage to unveil the secrets of the moon's fog-shrouded surface.

Huygens began its two-hour descent to Titan's surface at about 2 a.m. PST (5 a.m. EST), aided by a parachute, and began

transmitting a signal to scientists monitoring its progress at the European Space Agency's Space Operations Center in Darmstadt, Germany and Nasa's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena.

The team of ESA and Nasa scientists in Darmstadt cheered with relief on receiving confirmation of the carrier signal from the JPL at about 2:30 a.m. PST (5:30 a.m. EST), and gathered around a

monitor at the Space Operations Center.

"There is a signal coming back from Titan," ESA scientist John Dodsworth said. "This is a tremendously exciting moment."

Dodsworth said the probe at that point was "busy taking data" about 37.3 miles above the moon's surface.

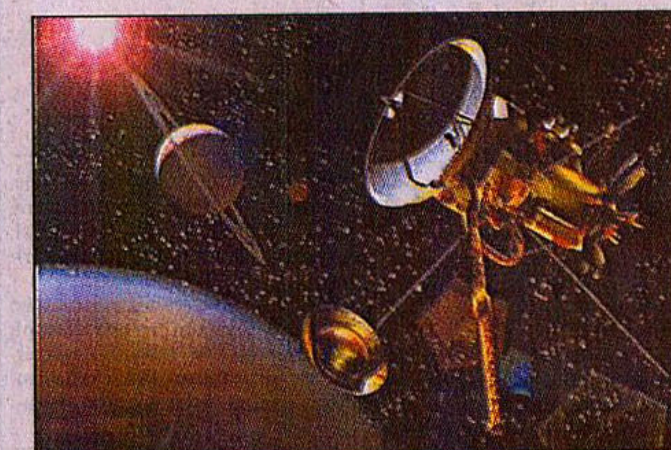
"It looks like we heard the baby crying," mission manager Jean-Pierre LeBreton said. "It tells us that the probe is alive. The entry is successful and we are on the parachute."

Scientists believe the organic chemical reactions taking place on Titan resemble the processes that gave rise to life on Earth 4 billion years ago. Its atmosphere is mostly nitrogen, like Earth's, but its surface temperatures of about minus 292 F make it inhospitable to life.

The saucer-shaped probe was designed to rotate on its way down, snapping the first-ever high-definition, panoramic images of Titan's thick, smoggy atmosphere and its landscape.

Along with its six scientific instruments that measure the components of Titan's atmosphere, Huygens carries a sound

SEE PAGE 11 COL 8



An artist's concept of the European Space Agency's Huygens probe en route to Saturn's moon Titan after release from Nasa's Cassini orbiter spacecraft.

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Ctg Rab being equipped for 'full-scale action'

NURUL ALAM, Chittagong

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Chittagong will soon build up a high frequency signal network with sophisticated devices and get equipped with more modern weapons and vehicles to launch a 'full-scale operation' for tracking down criminals, official sources said.

A consignment of 200 high-powered wireless sets imported from Belgium will be handed over to

Chittagong Rab soon.

Talking to The Daily Star, Commander of the Rab Chittagong unit Col Kazi Emdadul Huq said, "We are going to get high-powered wireless sets, and we will then build up a strong signal network for efficient communication to step up our operation... We plan to launch a massive drive after about one month to nab the listed and most wanted criminals in Chittagong."

He mentioned that the Rab is yet to start its operation in Chittagong in full scale due to lack of signal equipment and other logistics. Rab now depends on cellular phones for communication among its members during operational activities.

"With the installation of a strong signal network and receipt of all logistics, we hope to go for our targeted drive to make Chittagong crime-free," he added.

The elite anti crime force

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Prayer Timing		
January 15		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-36	5-40
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

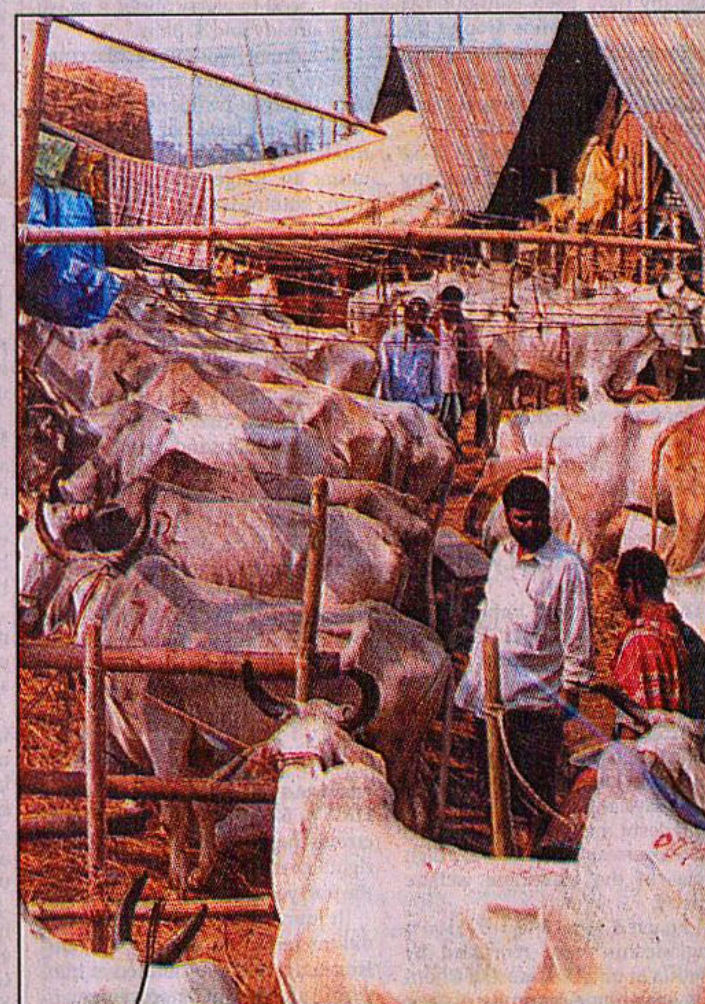


PHOTO: STAR

A week away from the Eid-ul-Azha, traders at the city's Gabtoli cattle market have herded in a large number of sacrificial animals. But the buying spree is yet to peak.

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24th January	2nd ODI	Chittagong (Day)
26th January	3rd ODI	Chittagong (Day)
29th January	4th ODI	Dhaka (Day/Night)
31st January	5th ODI	Dhaka (Day/Night)

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(1) Company Secretary: (Position Vacant : 01)

The incumbent should be capable of preparing Board's minutes, managing corporate secretarial issues independently, liaison with the group Chairman and the CEO, correspond with various relevant governmental and legal agencies, foreign partners etc. and dealing with matters relating to company legal issues.

Strong command over English both oral and written is required with computer skills. He/She requires having practical experience in the relevant fields for at least 7 years. He/She should have sufficient knowledge in Company Law. Educational background should be a Master's Degree preferably in Business.

(2) Manager, Marketing: (Position Vacant : 01)

The incumbent will be required to lead, administer, and monitor a professional team of young and dynamic marketing executives. He/She is required to prepare marketing strategies, plan marketing activities and implement them as a leader of the marketing team. Educational background should be a Master's Degree preferably in Business.

(3) Executive, Marketing: (Positions Vacant : 03)

(4) Executive, Procurement: (Position Vacant : 01)

(5) Executive, Sales: (Position Vacant : 01)

The incumbents should be MBA, major in marketing and should have practical experience in the relevant fields. Should be energetic and able to work in a team as well as independently. Strong command over English both oral and written and computer skills are essential. He/She should have very good skills in interpersonal relationship and communications. Should also be innovative, creative, thoroughly conversant with marketing and procurement mechanism in service sector. For Procurement Executives, MBA with an engineering background is preferable. After recruitment the candidates are expected to undergo training at home and abroad. Candidates with fresh degrees having outstanding results are encouraged to apply.

(6) Financial Controller: (Position Vacant : 01)

The incumbent should be a Chartered Accountant/Cost Accountant. Should have experience of at least 10 years in the relevant fields. He/She should be capable of independently dealing with the entire financial affairs of the company/s, reporting, budgeting, analysis and establishment of Financial MIS.

(7) Manager, Public Relations & Protocol: (Position Vacant : 01)

He/She should be a master in Public Relations/International Relations/Business Administration from a reputed university. Should have practical experience in the relevant fields for at least 5 years. Fluency in English and computer skills is a must.

General Conditions: Candidates should apply on time. Recommendation and solicitations are discouraged. Qualifications and personality are the only consideration. Resume should be supported with attested photocopies of degree, diploma, certificate wherever necessary. Emoluments are negotiable and will be commensurate with qualifications, skills and capabilities.

Instructions to Apply: Interested persons having dynamism, strong personality and confidence and looking forward to a challenging and interesting career path may apply. Send a cover letter (addressed to the CEO), a resume with current address and contact information and one recent passport size photograph before 26th January, 2005.

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