750mw load shedding as gas pressure drops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Due to a drop in gas pressure in the national grid and a shut down of a major power plant, the country is facing a daily power load shedding of up to 750 megawatts.

Power Development Board (PDB) sources said that against a peak demand of 3550 megawatts (mw), the PDB is now able to generate only up to 2700 mw of power. The PDB claims that it is capa-

ble, during peak conditions of generating up to 3434 mw. But this amount cannot be generated now because of a sharp fall in gas pressure, which has been caused by strains to the system set on by rising demands.

Adding to the problem, a major power plant-- the AES Haripur 360 mw power planthas remained shut down for maintenance since February 8. The plant is very fuelefficient, consuming half the gas needed by older power plants in

Ashuganj to generate the same level of power. The Haripur plant will resume operation at the end of the month,

PDB said. With the current shutdown of the Haripur plant, the PDB had planned to generate equivalent power by augmenting power production at Ashuganj. But Petrobangla is unable to increase gas supplies there accordingly. Petrobangla explained that with

the temperature rising everyday, the demand for power, most of which is gas-generated, has shot up drasti-

cally. "We can supply gas up to 1360 million cubic feet a day (mmcfd). If we must meet the entirety of gas demand for power, we would have to be able to supply more than 1400 mmcfd," said a Petrobangla source. He said the rising demand is causing a drop in the gas flow pres-

sure, adding that lower pressures disrupt optimum power generation. "The demand goes down on

Friday and starts rising from Saturday," he said, adding, "This SEE PAGE 11 COL 5



A Lebanese policeman and civilians are seen at the site of an explosion in Beirut yesterday. The huge explosion set ablaze cars and devastated buildings, leaving smouldering bodies in the streets.

INACTION AGAINST PIRATES

30 fishermen hurt

Cop station attacked,

2 'muggers' lynched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mob lynched two alleged muggers in Keraniganj yesterday. After four muggers snatched

away a mobile phone set and cash from one Mamun at Malancha in Keraniganj at around 6:30am, he SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

			AFP, REUTERS, New D
Prayer Timing			Kathmandu Leading members Nepalese political part
February 15			
	Azan	Jamaat	to India after King seized power formed a yesterday to push for th of democracy at home renewed his talks offer t Following a call by ties, India yesterday as take "immediate steps
Fajr	5-30	6-05	
Zohr	12-45	1-15	
Asr	4-15	4-30	
Maghrib	5-52	5-56	
Esha	7-15	7-45	
Source: Islamic Foundation			multi-party democracy.

Nepal party men unite in India for democracy

diate steps are taken towards the

release of political leaders, journal-

ists and human rights activists;

freedom of media is restored (and)

multi-party democracy is rein-

EU, India put pressure on king; offer for talks with Maoists renewed

Delhi

AFP, REUTERS, New Delhi/

Leading members of seven Nepalese political parties who fled to India after King Gyanendra seized power formed a united front yesterday to push for the restoration of democracy at home while king renewed his talks offer to Maoists. Following a call by Nepali parties, India yesterday asked Nepal to take "immediate steps" to restore

The message was conveyed to Nepal's ambassador to India, Karna stated." the spokesman said. European Union member states Dhoj Adhikari, who called on have recalled their ambassadors Foreign Minister Natwar Singh, an from the Nepalese capital official spokesman said in New Kathmandu for consultations followng the king's power grab there, a "The minister (also) conveyed French foreign ministry spokesman that it would be desirable that imme-

said yesterday. "In light of recent events in Nepal, we have decided -- along with our European partners -- to recall EU ambassadors living in SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

At least 30 people were injured, five with bullets, in a clash between police and fishermen at Tajimuddin upazila headquarters in Bhola yesterday. Witnesses said over 2,000

UNB, Bhola

agitated fishermen, pushed out of the Meghna River by pirates, stormed into the police station as their repeated appeals for protection went unheeded. "The angry fishermen disman-

tled the boundary wall of the police station and ransacked documents. leading to a violent clash between them and the policemen," says a firsthand account of the fighting.

To bring the situation under control, police opened fire that left five of the protestors injured with bullets. They are Sadek, Farooq, Nasir, Rahman and Liton.

Amid the counteroffensive, the fishermen went on the rampage and attacked the residence of the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO).

Eight policemen were also njured during the clash. They are Sub-Inspector Sarwar and constables Altaf, Hanif, Ayub, Hannan Barek, Delwar and Kamal.

The fishermen said they had demanded protection from the attacks of notorious 'Bachchu Bahini' who looted all from them in SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

Govt, WB differ on capital injection amount at Rupali

Economic Management Team

Sadique Ahmed argues that Rupali

Bank needs to be privatised as per

international practice. For this the

bank needs Tk 2,500 crore re-

But the government says the

country's banks follow a central

bank policy on maintaining their

capital and that privatising Rupali

Bank should also follow this. Under

this policy, it needs Tk 500 crore re-

The WB mission also met

capitalisation.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

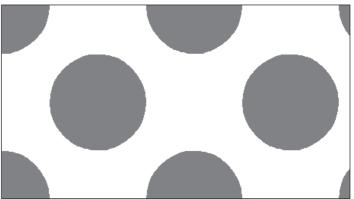
The government and the World Bank (WB) are having difference of opinion on re-injection of capital needed for privatising the stateowned Rupali Bank.

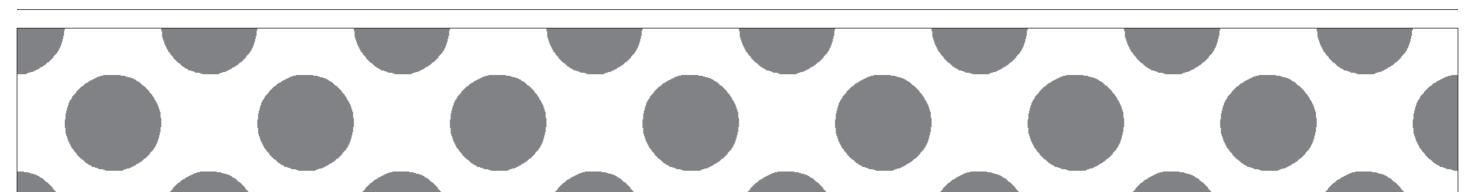
The WB wants the government to pump in Tk 2,500 crore as recapitalisation before privatising Rupali Bank while the government believes Tk 500 crore is enough for this purpose, sources said.

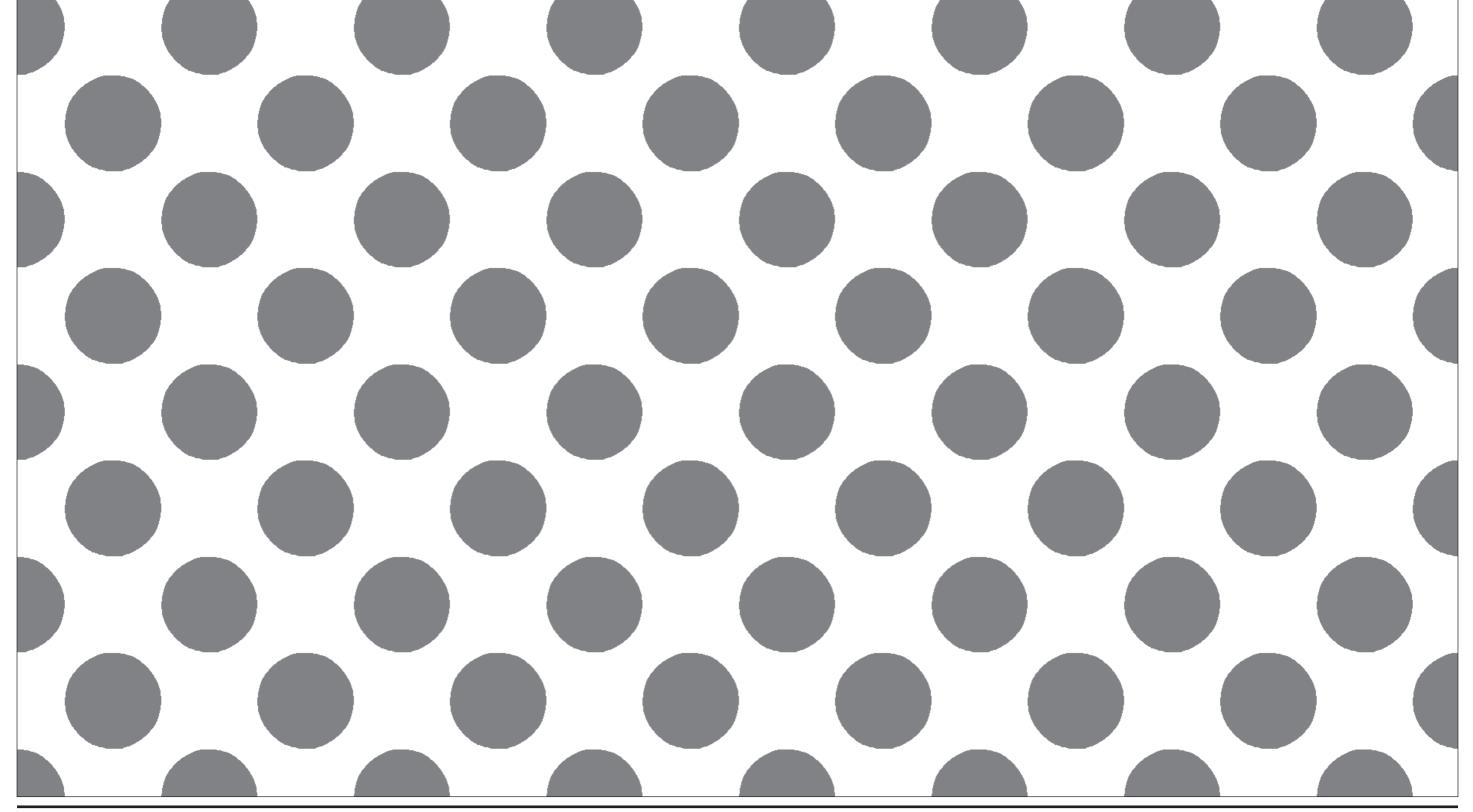
capitalisation. The government and a WB The sides are yet to agree on the mission on Development Support issue. The WB also asked the govern-Credit phase-3 are now discussing this issue among many others on ment to immediately reconstitute the macro-economic framework, finanboard of Rupali Bank. The governcial sector, state-owned enterprise, ment said it is already working in that

power, trade liberalisation, tax line and has appointed an ex-banker, a modernisation and public adminischartered accountant, an economist, tration and governance. among others, to the new board. The WB mission that arrived in the Within a couple of weeks, the capital on February 7 and leaves on government will publish information February 15 is now reviewing the of memorandum for the privatisation of the bank.

progress on several conditions against a development support credit. Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman fall goes well, the WB may provide up to \$300 million loan, sources said. and chiefs of the Bangladesh Bank The WB team headed by Sector National Board of Revenue and Director of Poverty Reduction and some other government agencies.







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