

Tengratila fire now 'out of Niko hand'

Human chain, rally demand its ouster

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

The raging fire at Tengratila gas field continued for the fifth day yesterday with the roaring flames leaping more than 350 feet and the pressure of burning gas leaking through various points further intensified.

Part of the rig base at the gas field fell into the burning relief well with a big bang at about 2:30pm yesterday, Niko sources said.

Seeking anonymity, they admitted they have 'nothing to do' to tame

the blaze. "We simply have to wait for it," one source said.

JS body to assess eco damage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliamentary standing committee on forest and environment ministry yesterday formed a sub-committee to assess the

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Meanwhile, local environmentalist forums and other organisations formed a 'human chain' and held a rally near the gas field area yesterday, demanding immediate scrapping of the contract with Niko and compensation for the damage of gas and environment.

The rally held the Canadian company responsible for repeated destruction of gas resources.

The government-formed probe committee headed by Dr

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PHOTO: STAR

King Rajendra's temple in Jaintapur, Sylhet, is facing ruination as the 200-year-old archaeological site remains uncared-for.

NBR may revise SIM, corporate taxes, money whitening step

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) is likely to revise its budget proposals on whitening black money, the Tk 1,200 VAT and supplementary duty on mobile SIM card and the hike in corporate tax of non-listed companies.

Sources said the NBR may propose tightening the options for whitening black money and reducing the SIM card tax. Besides, it is likely to withdraw the budgetary proposal for increasing corporate tax of non-listed companies.

The NBR will submit its revised plan to the finance minister by today or tomorrow, the sources said. The budget is scheduled to be passed in parliament tomorrow.

Amid widespread criticism of the provision for whitening black money, the NBR is now considering imposing 10 to 15 percent tax on it. Its earlier proposal offered black money holders the option to legalise their undeclared income by paying 7.5 percent tax.

The criticisms came specially when the finance minister, before

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OIC wants permanent UNSC seat

FMs' meet opens in Sanaa

AFP, Sanaa

Foreign ministers of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference opened a meeting here yesterday with a call for a Muslim permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

OIC secretary general Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu urged a greater role for Muslim countries in world affairs and demanded a 'permanent representation for the Islamic world on the UN Security Council'.

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US official stresses protection for Ahmadiyyas

Says they are increasingly being 'victims of persecution'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia John A Gastright yesterday stressed the need for ensuring protection for the Ahmadiyyas as they are increasingly being 'victims of persecution' across the country.

The deputy assistant secretary also said he believes the Bangladesh government is capable of taking tougher measures in this regard.

"We are deeply concerned about 19 incidents of attacks on the Ahmadiyyas in last 21 months and

we know that the government has the ability to protect them (Ahmadiyyas)," Gastright said, after a meeting with Ahmadiyya leaders in Dhaka.

On visiting Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat Bangladesh's (AMJB) headquarters, he said he is anxious for the Ahmadiyyas after learning from the newspapers about the 'terrible atrocities on them'.

"We feel the government needs to uphold the rights of all people including the Ahmadiyyas, and the United States will keep a close watch

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GD against Ershad over life threat to Bidisha's sister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Trisha Rahman, younger sister of Bidisha, yesterday filed a complaint with Uttara Police Station against Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad where she said Ershad threatened to kill her and her family if Bidisha stays at her house.

Ershad dismissed the allegation made in the general diary (GD) as "absurd" and said he did not go to

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Jute ministry wants to borrow from banks to salvage closing mills

Workers call general strike on July 16

REAZ AHMAD

As the government has stopped financing the jute sector, the jute ministry in its last ditch effort to keep the state-owned mills running has sought the finance ministry's approval to borrow from banks.

Following the jute ministry's repeated pleas for allocating Tk 200 crore to buy raw jute to keep the mills running, the finance ministry said in May that it was not possible for the government to finance the jute sector because of the govern-

ment's commitment to multilateral donors not to finance the loss-making state-owned enterprises (SoEs).

The finance's refusal to fund BJMC came at a time when 15 out of a total 22 state-run jute mills have already been shut down due to scarcity of raw jute and mill workers have been staging street agitation demanding their arrears for the last eight months.

Officials both at the finance and jute ministries now fear that if the

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