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PHOTO STAR
The crash-landed DC-10 aircraft of Bangladesh Biman is lying beside the Chittagong airport runway as salvage operation is yet to start.

DC-10 CRASH-LANDING

Pilots, flight engineer suspended

Rescue work may start today, domestic flights resume

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday removed Captain Selim from the post of chief of safety after he crash-landed the DC-10 aircraft in Chittagong on Friday and also suspended him, the co-pilot and the flight engineer.

Sources at Biman Bangladesh

Airlines said Captain Selim, First Officer Captain Rezwan and the Indonesian flight engineer have been suspended.

The Biman flight, BG-048, flying from Dubai with 215 people on board belly-landed and skidded off the runway at Shah Amanat International Airport at 8:40am on

Friday "due to technical glitch".

A source said Captain Selim's lack of expertise in landing the aircraft "has been proven". Officials at the flight operation tower in Chittagong had repeatedly told him to correct the position of the aircraft that was not in the right position for

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Outcry for an end to Niko drilling

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

Niko's move to drill a fresh relief well at Tengra gas field while the infirmo at the present one continued for the ninth day yesterday has intensified public demands to immediately halt the Canadian company's operations, and added a new dimension to the agitation against it.

Leaders and activists of Sylhet district and city Awami League (AL), a number of organisations from Dhaka, Sylhet and Sunamganj and locals blamed the government for allowing the 'incompetent' company to destroy the gas resources repeatedly.

They demanded scrapping of the contract with Niko and action

against it for massive destruction of gas and environment, and creating serious health hazards.

Sylhet district and city AL held a rally at the city's court point yesterday to protest 'government failure' to protect the gas field from destruction. The rally also demanded proper compensation to the affected people.

Speakers at the rally alleged powerful quarters within the government are backing Niko although its negligence and inefficiency have caused a national disaster. This is why no action has yet been taken against the company.

They warned of tougher action programmes if the contract with

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Tk 830 crore gas bills unpaid by govt bodies

Finance minister meets with defaulting ministries today

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The finance minister meets high officials of other ministries today to discuss ways to realise Tk 830 crore outstanding gas bills from different ministries and semi-government organisations under them.

Till March this year, the semi-government organisations owed Tk 743 crore and the ministries Tk 87 crore to the gas supply authorities.

In spite of frequent reminders

the defaulting government and semi-government organisations are not paying their gas bills, the energy ministry noted in a report to the finance minister.

As a result, the energy ministry cannot pay its dues to the government as well as to different international oil companies (IOC), the report noted.

Semi-government organisations under the power and energy ministry top the list of defaulters owing Tk

485 crore, followed by those under the industries ministry with around Tk 176 crore outstanding bills.

The organisations under the jute ministry owe Tk 64 crore and those under the textile ministry about Tk 15 crore to the gas suppliers.

Among the ministries, housing and public works ministry tops the defaulters' list with Tk 31.74 crore dues, followed by the home ministry with Tk 10.31 crore bills unpaid.

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Businessman shot dead at workplace

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unknown criminals shot dead an Awami League (AL) leader and businessman inside his Jigatola office in the city yesterday afternoon.

Five youths went to the office of Kamrul Alam on the ground floor of a four-storey building at 2:45pm, gave a visiting card of local Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leader Arif to office peons and sought Kamrul's permission to meet.

"After getting Kamrul's permission, the gang entered his office room and soon we heard seven or

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Parting Thomas calls Bangladesh a moderate country

UNB, Dhaka

US Ambassador Harry K Thomas left Dhaka yesterday, saying that Bangladesh is a moderate country.

"I didn't say Bangladesh is a moderate Muslim country... Bangladesh is a moderate country with Muslim majority," he said at Zia International Airport before flying for home to join his new assignment at the State Department after a two-year stint as US Ambassador to Bangladesh.

Thomas expressed the hope that the next general elections in

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Thomas waves at ZIA

TAX, GAS, POWER PRICING Tata, govt to appoint int'l consultant

JASIM UDDIN KHAN

The government and the Tata Group in the third-round negotiations yesterday decided to appoint an independent international consultant to fix tax holiday facility and gas and power pricing for the proposed \$2.5 billion investment.

Both parties will propose names tomorrow to select the consultant.

"The pricing of gas and power and extension of tax incentive to such a heavyweight industrial conglomerate needs suggestions from an internationally experienced consultant," said a top-level official who attended negotiations prefer-

ring anonymity.

The Indian corporate giant intends to buy 2 TCF (trillion cubic feet) gas from the government, which plans to buy 500-megawatt electricity from Tata's proposed 1000-megawatt coal-based power plant.

Two sides also discussed the government proposal on the land for the proposed Tata steel plant, with the government wanting to allocate wetland at Ruppur in Ishwardi to Tata. But Tata has asked for land in a densely populated area adjacent to Ruppur.

The opening session of the

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