

Cancel deal with Niko, demand AL MPs

UNB, Dhaka

An Awami League (AL) parliamentary team, which visited the Tengratila gas field this week, yesterday demanded cancellation of the agreement with Niko and punishment to the officials involved in the 'inappropriate' agreement process.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid, who led the parliamentary team, made the demand at a press briefing at the party's Dhanmondi office.

Hamid alleged that gas worth Tk 1000 crore has so far been destroyed due to mismanagement and corruption of the government.

The AL leader said Niko got the job to explore gas from Tengratila well without any tender by managing the ruling party leaders. He accused the government of losing moral authority to take officials of the Canadian company to task.

"It was necessary to dig the relief well 700-750 metres away from the affected place, but Niko did it only 100 metres away. They are again arranging to dig the second relief well near the burning well and it may cause another problem," Hamid said.

He criticised the government for being reluctant to take any proper step to control the raging fire in the gas field.

Hamid was also critical about Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, saying that he (Saifur) himself was found vocal recently against misuse of gas putting forward a suggestion

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Geologists, experts for scrapping Niko deal

Suggest taking over its share in Feni gas field as compensation for Tengratila losses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Canadian company Niko's operation at Tengratila gas field must be halted immediately scrapping the controversial agreement with it and the government should take over the company's share in Feni gas field as compensation for the massive loss of gas due to repeated explosions and fire at Tengratila.

Ousted state minister for energy AKM Mosharraf Hossain's role in hammering the deal must be probed

and he should be brought to public trial.

Geological experts, economists and environmentalists yesterday made these demands at a seminar on 'Tengratila gas well blowout: Causes and Consequences' held at the Geology department of Dhaka University, jointly organised by the department and Paribesh Bancho Andolon.

The speakers said there was no ground for awarding the deal to Niko as local Bapex had records of

successfully conducting such operations.

Niko has miserably failed to prevent repeated disasters at Tengratila. It took about six months to begin drilling a relief well after the first blowout and fire at the main well and drilled it only 100 metres away from the spot of previous incident, ignoring Bapex's suggestion, said geology professor Dr Badrul Imam

Presenting a keynote paper, he

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GAS, POWER FOR TATA Economists to help experts fix prices

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will hire renowned economists of the country to assist the government expert team in negotiating the price of gas and electricity with the Tata Group.

Mahmudur Rahman, advisor to the energy ministry, in a meet-the-press with the Energy Reporters' Forum yesterday said, "We are hiring local economists along with

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Arman sent to jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Top criminal Arman Khan was finally sent to jail yesterday on completion of his 31-day remand after his arrest.

Metropolitan Magistrate Nani Gopal Biswas ordered to send Arman, one of the 23 most wanted criminals of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, to Dhaka Central Jail as police did not submit any petition for further remand although he was

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BELAL MURDER Jamaat leader shown arrested

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered to show Shahabuddin Lasker alias Dhira, a Jamaat-e-Islami leader, arrested in connection with the killing of journalist Sheikh Belaluddin in Khulna.

Metropolitan Magistrate Jagannath Das Khokon passed the order when police was produced Dhira before the court after arresting him under Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

The court rejected the bail petition of the accused and directed the authorities concerned to send a custody warrant against Dhira in connection with the killing of Belal.

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Prayer Timing		
July 7		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-10	4-45
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-57	7-00
Esha	8-17	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation



PHOTO: STAR

The army rescue team prepares to haul the DC-10 aircraft of Biman with a flatbed truck onto the runway of Shah Amanat International Airport in Chittagong yesterday.

Court orders trial of Advani for 'razing' of Babri mosque

AFP, New Delhi

An Indian court ordered Wednesday that former deputy prime minister Lal Krishna Advani be tried for his alleged role in the 1992 demolition of a mosque that sparked deadly riots between Muslims and Hindus.

The order by the Allahabad high court in northern Uttar Pradesh state was made after two Muslims challenged a lower court's 2003 acquittal of Advani and others due to lack of evidence.

The Allahabad court said Advani, who is accused of encouraging thousands of Hindu fanatics to demolish the Babri mosque in the town of Ayodhya, and others must

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Violent protests on attack on holy site

AFP, New Delhi

Indian police fired tear gas and water cannon Wednesday as Hindu nationalists staged several violent protests against an attack on a holy site sacred to both Hindus and Muslims.

Security forces were on high alert at religious shrines and key installations nationwide after the opposition Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) called a day of protest.

Demonstrators clashed with police in the central city of Indore, where they stormed an airport, damaged the VIP lounge and

surged onto the runway to prevent a flight taking off, television footage showed.

Clashes also occurred in Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand state and in the national capital New Delhi, where police used tear gas and water cannon to disperse a crowd of about 1,500 attempting to march on parliament.

Peaceful demonstrations were staged in a handful of other states controlled by the BJP, which claimed Hinduism itself was under attack.

The government feared that Tuesday's assault by heavily-armed

militants on the tightly guarded holy site in the northern city of Ayodhya could spark sectarian violence.

The six militants, who gained entry to the temple-mosque complex by blowing up a jeep, were all killed during a two-hour gunbattle with police.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh called for calm and asked all groups to refrain from making political capital out of the potentially explosive situation.

Police Wednesday said extra forces were deployed at New Delhi's metro as well as temples and

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2012 Olympics in London

REUTERS, Singapore

London beat favourite Paris for the right to stage the 2012 Olympic Games on Wednesday in a final showdown after Moscow, New York and Madrid were eliminated from the five-city contest.

International Olympic Committee President Jacques Rogge announced the British capital as the

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