



BLOWOUTS

Letter sent to Niko seeking Tk 250cr compensation

UNB, Dhaka

Petrobangla sent a letter to Niko yesterday claiming Tk 250 crore as compensation for the two blowouts this year. Niko chairman, meanwhile, removed president of Niko Resources (Bangladesh) Ltd from his position.

Two separate investigation committees formed by the government held Niko, the Canadian operator of Tengnafila gas field, solely responsible for the two blowouts and determined the losses to seek compensation. The first blow out was on January 7 and

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PM invites 16 parties to talks

14-party rejects, Hasina refuses to receive letter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday sent letters to 16 political parties inviting them to a national dialogue on combating the rising religious terrorism in the country, but the 14-party combine and a number of other opposition line rejected the bid outright.

Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina refused to receive the letter, as the Awami League-led 14-party

dubs the government's offer 'nothing but a farce'.

The prime minister, who left for Makkah yesterday afternoon on a three-day trip to attend an Organisation of Islamic Conferences (OIC) summit, intends to invite some 30 to 35 political parties to the dialogue, said her Political Secretary Harris Chowdhury. "The [invitation] process will be completed in a day or two," he added.

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OIC meets today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The third extraordinary summit of the 57-member Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) begins in Makkah today.

The two-day summit, aiming at restructuring and revitalising the organisation, will adopt a new OIC charter and consider the recommendations made in a report prepared by over 100 Muslim scholars.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia left Dhaka at 1:30pm yesterday to attend the summit to be held at the initiative of Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud.

Khaleda Zia is leading a 37-member Bangladeshi delegation there.

The scholars' report examines

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Fresh voter roll from Jan 1 thru June 1

2 ECs say schedule fixed unlawfully

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) secretariat yesterday declared a timetable for preparing a fresh voter roll with January 1 being the date for starting enumeration and June 1 for publication of the final list.

Two of the three election commissioners, however, alleged that the timetable was fixed unlawfully.

"We don't know anything about it. The election commission did not approve any such schedule for the

voter list. We did not even see any file regarding this," Election Commissioner AK Mohammad Ali told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Preparing a voter list is one the constitutional duties of the election commission. So, every decision in this regard must be taken by the commission. The CEC (chief election commissioner) cannot take such a crucial decision on consulting only the secretariat," he argued.

From the outset Election Commissioners M Munsef Ali and

AK Mohammad Ali have been raising objection to going for a fresh voter list.

CEC MA Aziz on August 6 decided unilaterally to prepare a fresh voter roll, ignoring the opinions of the other two commissioners.

Since then, he has not convened any meeting of the EC. At times, he had forwarded files to the election commissioners, seeking their opinion on different matters pertaining to preparation of a fresh

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GAZIPUR

9kg explosives found at militant's house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gazipur police on Monday night recovered nine kilogram explosives believed to be enough for making around 150 bombs like those used in the two bombing incidents in the district claiming ten lives.

The law enforcers raided the house of Mazarul Islam Masum, a suspected activist of the banned Islamist outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), at South Chhayabithi in Joydebpur, Gazipur, at 9:00pm and seized the explosives and ammonium nitrate.

The police raided Masum's house on information from Enayeturah Ujjal alias Jewel, arrested Monday morning with

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22 Ctg journos, DCs, SPs get death threat

STAR REPORT

Undeterred by the arrests of suspected Islamist militants the banned Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) continues to make death and bomb threats across the country.

It threatened to kill 22 journalists in Chittagong, deputy commissioners (DC) of four districts, superintendent of police (SP) of Sylhet, two upazila nirbahi officers (UNO), and some magistrates, and made a threat to blow up a school yesterday.

Through identical letters sent to the DCs of Kushthia, Sathkhira, Mymensingh and Dinajpur districts yesterday JMB threatened to kill them if arrests of their members are not stopped.

Masum told the police that two months ago, Bangladesh Chhatra



Several thousand leaders and workers of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) block the road adjacent to Muktagong in the capital yesterday as the party holds a rally against bomb terrorism.

Tele-tapping plan evokes fear of harassment

STAR REPORT

The government move to tap telephones for tracing militants might lead to harassment of people and reaping political gains, fear legal experts, rights activists and business leaders.

Alarmed at Monday's cabinet decision to amend telecoms act for allowing law enforcement members eavesdropping on phones, they said that the government should have gone for other measures to combat militant activities.

Some of them also alleged intelligence agencies are persuad-

ing the government to go for such a step to cover up their failures.

Cellphone operators meanwhile anticipate a negative impact on the telecom sector if the proposed amendment compels people to seek permission for subscription from a government agency.

"It will obviously curtail people's rights to privacy and there is a possibility of its misuse," leading jurist Dr M Zahir told The Daily Star yesterday.

Some countries have done this to fight terrorism. But, if the law

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Inauguration

Of

26th Branch

at 191, CDA Avenue, East Nasirabad, Chittagong

Today the 7th December, 2005

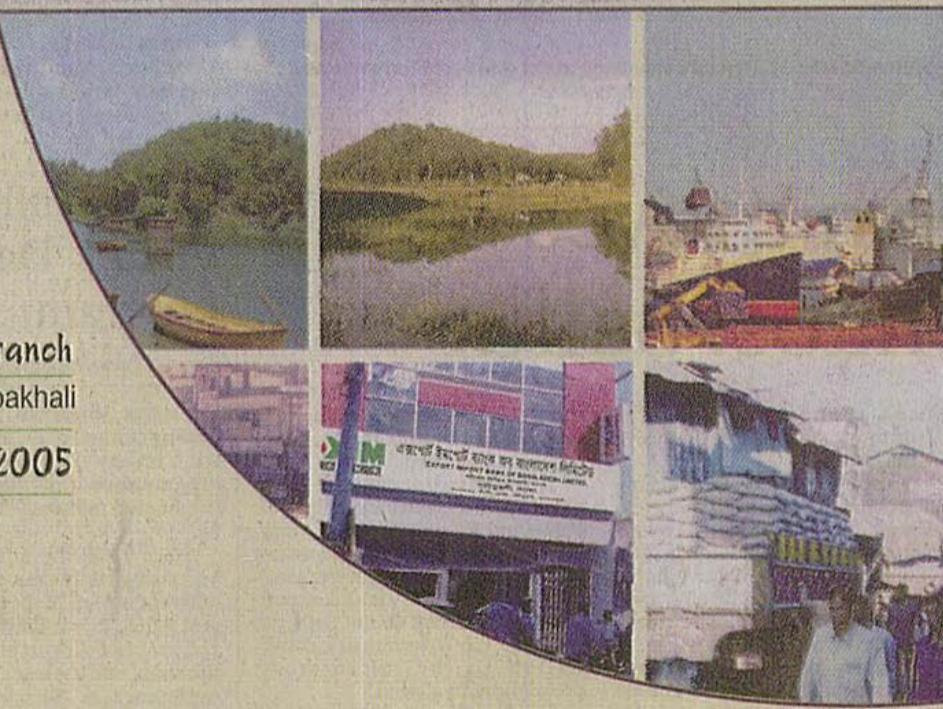
27th Branch

at 60/231, D.B Road, Chowmuhani, Noakhali

Tomorrow the 8th December, 2005



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369 Thanas of 61 Districts



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Charghat, Rajshahi
Raninagar, Naogaon
Sadullapur, Galbanda
Shariakandi, Bogra
Sujanagar, Pabna
Taraganj, Rangpur



Sohel Majumder

