

TITAS GAS LEAKAGE
Canadian expert likely to submit report today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

The Canadian gas well blowout prevention consultant is likely to submit his detailed analysis on the third well of Titas Gas Field today to Petrobangla in Dhaka.

The consultant, Robert Din Bob Grace, arrived at the troubled third well in Brahmanbaria on April 20.

High officials of Petrobangla, Bangladesh Gas Field Company Limited (BGFCL) and Bapex along with the consultant will later have a meeting and discuss over the findings of the report for deciding the next course of action.

After receiving relevant survey reports on the third well, Grace went to the site on April 20 and conducted a number of tests to gather latest readings. He later returned to Dhaka to analyse the data on hand.

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LOW REVENUE COLLECTION

Motor registration, land valuation fees to go up

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government plans to raise land valuation used for property transfer and vehicle registration fees in the upcoming budget, addressing itself to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) concerns over low revenue collection.

Finance ministry sources also said that the Bretton Woods institution has made a number of recommendations of late for the government to perk up the state revenue.

The Fund submitted a report to

the government last week after reviewing the economy and implementation status of the programmes supported by Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF).

The report followed discussions in the light of Article IV of the Fund's Articles of Agreement.

It suggested the government should reconfirm that granting new tax holidays will stop in June 2008, as announced in the budget for fiscal 2006.

The mission thinks increasing non-fuel excises and adjusting the

domestically-produced natural gas prices will help the state gain higher dividends.

According to its observations, the government is depriving itself of a large amount of revenues by encouraging the use of CNG, as domestically produced gas prices remain substantially below international price levels.

Energy sector reforms would be incomplete and distortionary if gas prices remain out of sync with the

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GRAFT CASES

Charge-framing against Harris, Mamun today

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court today will frame charges against controversial businessman Giasuddin Al Mamun, close friend of BNP Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, and Harris Chowdhury, political secretary to former prime minister Khaleda Zia, in connection with two graft cases.

Judge Momin Ullah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court will frame the charges in presence of Mamun. Harris is absconding.

On April 5, Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) Deputy Director Abu Sayeed filed the case against Harris and the commission's Assistant Director SMM Akhter Hamid Bhuiyan lodged the case against Mamun for not submitting their wealth statements to the commission within the stipulated time.

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Windies shine in Lara's final match

STAR SPORT MONITOR

Brian Lara's final hurrah ended in the most unexpected of circumstances when he was run out for 18 in the World Cup Super Eights match between West Indies and England at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados on Saturday.

However West Indies looked set for a huge total as they piled up 251-4 at the end of 40 overs with Marlon Samuels (47) and Shivnarine Chanderpaul (25) the unbeaten men at the crease.

Samuels will however be remembered for different reasons as he was the man responsible for Lara's dismissal.

Pushing firmly down to mid-on, Samuels immediately called for the single before changing his mind the next instant.

Lara was left stranded after backing up a bit too much and was comprehensively run out via a direct

hit from mid-on by Kevin Pietersen in the 31st over of the innings with the West Indies on 173.

It bought to an end one of the most celebrated careers in international cricket and Lara was rightfully given a standing ovation by the Kensington Oval crowd and all the players on the field.

Lara, who was given a guard of honour by the England team when he came out to bat, left fighting back tears.

Aside from Lara's dramatics, the match was a quite exciting spectacle as the Caribbean cricketers belatedly decided to come to the party.

Chris Gayle and Devon Smith set up a 131 run opening partnership with Gayle especially severe on the England bowlers as he racked up 79 off 58 balls with 10 fours and three sixes. He reached

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Advisers for demolishing Rangs Bhaban

UNB, Dhaka

The Council of Advisers yesterday gave unanimous opinion in favour of demolishing the multi-storey Rangs Bhaban at Bijoy Sarani crossing in the capital.

Adviser for Housing and Public Works, Law and Information ministries Mainul Hossain told the news agency that he placed the matter before the meeting of the Council of Advisers where consensus was reached that the 20-storey building should be demolished.

However, he said, a final decision will be taken by the works ministry.

Pointing out legal complications, he said a case on the disputed building was pending with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. The decision will be taken in consultation with the attorney general who is now out of the country.

Rare fish caught in Ctg pond

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Locals caught a rare fish believed to be originated from Amazon Basin of South America from a large pond at Kuwaish under Hathazari upazila of the district on Friday.

The small fish belonging to the catfish family is noted for its

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PHOTO: STAR

A rare species of fish was netted at a pond in Hathazari in Chittagong yesterday.

9 SMALL POWER PLANTS

Tenders cancelled, fresh ones ordered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Advisory Committee on Purchase yesterday cancelled the two-year old tenders for nine small Independent Power Projects (IPPs) totalling a capacity of 190 megawatt and asked the authorities to float a fresh tender and complete the process within next three months.

The meeting headed by Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam also decided to reorganise all procedures to call fresh tenders for

awarding IPPs with transparency.

The tenders were cancelled as questions arose about the transparency in the process. Energy Adviser Tapan Chowdhury said after the meeting held at secretariat.

The tenders were floated in late 2005, but the bids dragged on for long.

These gas-fired plants had proposed to sell electricity to the government at a price range

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13 JMB suspects held in Kurigram

A CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram

Police yesterday morning arrested 13 suspected activists of the outlawed Islamist militant organisation Jama'atul Mujahideen

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Prayer Timing		
April 22		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-25	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-27	6-31
Esha	8-00	8-30
Source: Islamic Foundation		

BBC DIALOGUE

AL, BNP leaders talk of party reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two senior leaders of Awami League (AL) and BNP, an ex-army official and a civil society representative yesterday viewed that a national government can be formed in the country after the next election on consensus among the major

political parties.

Any attempt to establish Pakistani form of democracy will not be acceptable to the people of Bangladesh, they said at the BBC Bangladesh Sanglap, a discussion programme at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference

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