



PHOTO: STAR
A special exhibition on 'Asian Sites of Conscience' began at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. Organised by the museum, the exhibition will remain open up to September 19.

Plan to resolve gas crisis

UNB, Dhaka

The Energy Ministry yesterday announced a short-to-medium term plan in a bid to resolve the nagging gas crisis and also to ensure supply of gas for next five years.

Under the plan, the state-owned petroleum exploration company Bapex will drill wells in a number of gas fields and the Canadian company Niko will be asked to enhance its production specially for the Chittagong areas where the gas crisis has become acute.

Briefing journalists about the plan, Energy Adviser Tapan Chowdhury said the plan was prepared keeping in view a 7 percent GDP growth.

He, however, admitted that there was huge lack of coordination between the power and energy divisions although both are under one ministry.

"I admit, there was huge mismatch between the power projects and gas projects, which resulted in the problems facing the two sectors now."

Energy Secretary AMM Nasir

Uddin presenting the gas sector plan, said the Bakhraabad-Chittagong gas pipeline and also the ring main line would be cleaned immediately to increase the gas flow in their command areas.

Under the short-term projects, Bapex will be awarded the work of drilling two wells at the fields in Bakhraabad and Meghna aiming to add 40mmcfcd gas to the national gas grid.

Two more wells will be drilled in Niko's Feni fields and another 40mmcfcd gas is expected to come from the project in 2008.

Under the medium-term plan, Bapex will be appointed to develop the Semutang gas field in Khagrachhari at a cost of Tk 65 crore expecting to get 30mmcfcd gas.

In addition, Bapex will operate and develop gas fields in Begumganj, Kapasia, Shahbajpur, Srikail, Sandalpur and Saldanadi to increase the gas supply.

Besides, the international oil companies (IOCs) will conduct operations at gas fields in Magnama, Hatia, and Block 17 and 18.

Nasir said if the gas fields projects

run smoothly, gas will be available for the planned power projects.

The 3rd round international bidding for the offshore gas field will take place by the end of the current year, he added.

Replying to a question, he said there is no specific plan to supply gas to any international company like Tata who wants to invest for setting up different industrial projects.

CSB staffs' appeal to chief adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 400 employees of CSB News, a satellite TV channel of Focus Multimedia Company, yesterday appealed to Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed to allow the channel to resume its transmission on humanitarian grounds.

The government shut down the channel on September 6.

In a statement, the employees said they have nothing to do with the reason cited by the government for the closure of channel, but they have been hard hit and need the jobs at the channel to survive.

British Council chief arrives today

New Chief Executive of British Council Martin Davidson arrives in Dhaka today, says a press release.

He will be making his first visit to Bangladesh, accompanied by Deputy Chairperson Gerard Lemos and Regional Director Dr Morna Nance, for familiarisation with the British Council's work in Bangladesh, following visits to Pakistan and Nepal.

The intensive programme will cover understanding the Council's work in Bangladesh and the region, the operating context, country priorities and key issues as well as meeting with key partners and contacts related to regional and country programmes.

Before leaving London for Pakistan on the first leg of this journey, Martin said, "I am extremely pleased that my first official visit overseas as CE will cover these three countries. This will give me first hand an insight into our work in this very important region. It will also be my first visit to Bangladesh and I am looking forward immensely to learning more about what we do here."

British HC asks IOM to stop new bookings for TB screening

UNB, Dhaka

The British High Commission has asked International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to temporarily stop new bookings for tuberculosis (TB) screening from those seeking Working Holidaymaker (WHM) visas to the UK.

IOM's phone-booking lines will not receive calls, but existing bookings will be honoured, said a press release yesterday.

It added that the WHM scheme is not suspended and the HC would continue processing WHM applications already booked.

"We know that the WHM scheme is very popular but limitless demand for applications creates pressures and risks the viability of the scheme," British High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury said.

"So, we are looking to help applicants by taking advantage of a pause to find the best and most sustainable ways to match capacity to this demand," he said.

Anwar Choudhury said the reported activities of some visa agents in deliberately misinforming applicants and charging high fees on the basis of false promises have apparently compounded demand, at the expense of genuine applicants.

"The message is very simple. Do not use agents," he said.

"No one can guarantee you a visa... Do not believe anyone who says they can. Don't become indebted - get the facts yourself from the British High Commission," he said.



PHOTO: STAR
Playwright Prof Mamtajuuddin receives Dr Syed Mujtaba Ali Award from Prof Kabir Chowdhury at a function at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. The function was organised by Dr Syed Mujtaba Ali Society Literary Award Council to mark the 103rd birth anniversary of litterateur Dr Syed Mujtaba Ali.