

PROCUREMENT OF DRILLING RIG

Bapex likely to sign deal with Chinese co

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company (Bapex) is likely to sign contract with a Chinese company to procure a new drilling rig to expedite its hydrocarbon exploration programme across the country.

According to official sources, a Chinese company - Superstructure - has been selected to supply the drilling rig within one and a half year at a cost of Tk 200 crore plus.

The state oil and gas exploration company has already completed tender procedure to purchase the rig.

"Bapex has completed the bidding process and also issued a letter of intent to the Chinese rig supplier," said Petrobangla Chairman Jalal Ahmed.

Petrobangla is the state hydrocarbon corporation holding the Bapex and other state-owned oil and gas production and distribution companies.

Jalal said the Bapex is going to receive a performance guarantee (PG) from the Chinese supplier before signing the contract in January next.

The proposed drilling rig and its associated equipment will come from Europe and

USA manufacturers.

As per the proposed contract, the Chinese company will supply the new drilling rig by 18 months from the signing of the agreement. This means the Bapex will receive the rig by 2010.

At present, Bapex has got two old rigs - one 22-year-old and another 25-year-old. But both the rigs have lost their performance efficiencies.

Jalal said after procuring the new rig, the Bapex would be able to expedite its hydrocarbon exploration across the country.

"Now it takes six months for Bapex to conduct a drilling. But after having the new rig, the time will be reduced to four months," the Petrobangla chief told UNB.

He said Bapex has a plan to procure a work-over rig next year for use in the already drilled wells for repair works.

The caretaker government has moved to strengthen the Bapex and approved a seven-year plan on hydrocarbon exploration.

A fund of Tk 3,200 crore has been allocated to Bapex to run the exploration work. Of the amount, Tk 900 crore will be spent in next three years under different projects.

Boy drowns in city lake

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An unidentified teenage boy drowned in a lake near late president Ziaur Rahman's grave in the city yesterday evening.

Tejgaon police said one of four boys went missing while they were playing with balloons in the lake.

On information, divers of fire brigade rescued body of the missing boy from the lake after an effort for an hour. His identity could not be known immediately.

Tejgaon police took the body to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital for autopsies.

EU election observers visit Sherpur

UNB, Sherpur

Two-member delegation of European Union Election Observation Mission yesterday visited the district to monitor the pre-election situation.

The delegation comprising Jan G Andersen and Jan Miedema exchanged views with returning officer and Deputy Commissioner Shamsunnahar Begum on the field-level preparation for December 29 parliamentary elections.

Later, they also held separate meetings with district election officer M Abul Kalam Azad and the representatives of Bangladesh Manabdhikar Samannay Parishad.

The delegation members were apprised of different strategies taken by the government for holding the election free, fair and neutral.

British HC closed on Victory Day

METRO DESK

British High Commission in Dhaka and its office in Sylhet will remain closed to the public on December 16 for Victory Day, says a press release.



Attendance was very thin on the first day of office after Eid-ul-Azha. The picture was taken from the head office of Sonali Bank yesterday.

25 victims of Aggyan party hospitalised

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

At least 25 people were hospitalised after becoming the victims of Aggyan party during the Eid holidays.

Members of law enforcement agencies arrested four criminals in this connection and recovered drugs used in the operation.

Barisal Metropolitan Police and Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College and Hospital (SBMCH) sources said a total of 25 water and road transport passengers were rescued and admitted to hospital in a critical condition.

The Aggyan party members looted their all belongings.

Among the victims Sabuj, Sohel, Ali Hossain, Shakil and Al-Amin, passengers of MV Suravi-7, and Mehedi Hassan, a passenger of Suravi Paribahon, were found senseless and admitted to hospital yesterday.

Ali Hossain, 32, who was undergoing treatment at SBMCH, said, "I can only remember that I was going to Barisal from Dhaka by a passenger launch on Wednesday evening."

"When I came round yesterday evening, I found myself lying on the hospital bed. I was carrying Tk 15,000, which is

now missing," he added.

Dr Syed Jahid Hossain, principal of the SBMCH, said most of the victims took foods like juice, coconut juice or biscuits mixed with sedatives.

He said elderly persons having different physical complaints like diabetes can die after taking such drugs.

Kalam, Rubel and Sabuj, three members of Aggyan party, were caught by fellow passengers aboard Suravi-7 when they were trying to loot valuables of a passenger named Al-Amin after making him unconscious.

They were handed over to Barisal police.

Hayatul Islam Khan, assistant commissioner (AC) of Barisal Metropolitan Police, said the arrestees usually mix one kind of sedative having no taste or smell with different kinds of tasty foods like sandwich or juice to feed their targets.

Stressing the need for creating awareness against taking foods from unknown persons while traveling, he said police are on alert and trying their best to check such incidents at the launch terminal.

The AC said several gangs of muggers are now operative as the drugs are available in local markets at cheaper price.

Cattle trader shot dead by BSF

A CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Border Security Force (BSF) of India gunned down a Bangladeshi cattle trader at Harishchandrapur village in Bhulet upazila under the district.

BDR sources said a BSF patrol team of Pipil camp opened fire indiscriminately on the traders when they were returning home after buying cattle from India, leaving Hasan dead on the spot.

Situation is tense in the border area following the incident. The victim was identified as Hasan Ali, 32, son of Fajer Mallik of Harishchandrapur village in Bhulet upazila under the district.

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UP chairman abducted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The joint forces could not trace abducted Union Parishad Chairman Sachitra Chakma as of yesterday, three days after his abduction.

A gang of armed criminals kidnapped Sachitra, also a member of district Awami League, from his house at Khedermara in Baghaichhari upazila on Monday midnight and took him to deep forest, police sources said.

Four die after taking rectified spirit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

At least four people died after taking poisonous rectified spirit in two separate incidents in the district on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The victims were identified as Joynal, 35, and Abdul Kuddus, 42, of Bogra Sadar and Ataur-Rahman, 45, and a 55-year-old beggar of Sariakandi upazila.

Police said Joynal and Kuddus died on Tuesday night while the two others on Wednesday night.

Earlier in last November, a total of 27 people died after taking poisonous alcohol.

Termination of Abul protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different workers' organisations have condemned the termination of labour leader Abul Hossain in a joint statement yesterday.

They termed the government decision a 'conspiracy' that was issued without any prior notice, says a press release.

For the last 3-4 months he had been leading the movement to press home their 10-point demand.

The statement said that Abul Hossain had been working at the Karim Jute Mill at Demra as a labourer for about 31 years and the decision is inhumane.

His family faces uncertainty and it also has an impact on workers of the factories, the labour leaders said.

Dhaka Int'l Book Fair opens Dec 15

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed will inaugurate the Dhaka International Book Fair-2008 at 3:30pm at Dhaka University central playground on December 15.

Cultural Affairs Adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury will address the function as the special guest, a press release said yesterday.

Cultural Affairs Secretary M Sharful Alam will preside over the function.

Nat'l TV English Debate Competition

METRO DESK

Bangladesh Television is regularly organising the National Television English Parliamentary Debate Competition, says a press release.

In the second round Saint Francis Xavier's Green Herald International School beat Faujdarhat Cadet College.

A total of 40 educational institutions from across country are taking part in the competition.

Sixteen winners of the second round will go to the third round that will be held soon.



Debaters of Saint Francis Xavier's Green Herald International School that reached the third round of the National Television English Parliamentary Debate Competition pose for photograph with Director of the competition Hasan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiron, Principal Asha Virginia Gomez and the Moderator of the debating club Syed Nazrul Ahsan.

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