

OFF-SHORE SANGU FIELD

Cairn to install compressors to keep gas flow steady till 2011

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As gas production from the off-shore Sangu field may become uneconomic by the year-end, British oil company Cairn and its joint venture partners have started a project to install compressors that will keep the gas flow steady till 2011 for Chittagong region.

pression project implemented at the Sangu gas terminal in Chittagong. Construction and site preparations are underway with 50 local contract workers involved in preparing the site for the arrival of the two 30-tonne compressor packages.

The field has produced in excess of 440 billion cubic feet since production started in 1998. Sangu has been a major discovery for Bangladesh that stimulated an international interest in the nineties for investment in the country's energy sector.

The partners in the Sangu field are Cairn, Santos and HBR Energy.

Proceedings against Jamaat leader Razzaq, his wife Saleha stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday stayed for a month the proceedings against Jamaat leader barister Abdur Razzaq Siddiq and his wife Saleha Razzaq Siddiqina case filed by the police on charges of criminal intimidation to on-duty police and trespass.

Boost bilateral ties to build stronger Saarc

Says Saarc secretary general

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The visiting Secretary General of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) Dr Sheel Kant Sharma yesterday said stronger bilateral ties among the member countries could help build a stronger Saarc.

titled 'Empowerment of Women' and 'Maternal and Child Health' under the auspices of the Saarc Development Fund. The 'Maternal and Child Health' project would be implemented initially in Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal.

She said, "To resolve power crisis, sub-regional initiatives like building mega-power project could be undertaken." The minister also laid emphasis on removing non-tariff barriers in the sphere of trade and commerce among the Saarc countries.

FBI to continue to help probe BDR mutiny

Says US envoy

UNB, Dhaka

US Ambassador James F Moriarty said FBI would continue to work with its counterparts in Bangladesh to investigate the bloody BDR mutiny, an onerous task that takes extra time and effort, as the American intelligence agency completed initial phase of their collaboration.

3 Ashuganj power units inoperative

due to machinery and technical faults at different times.

Sources said all eight units of the power station are dilapidated. So, any one of the units may be halted any time.

According to APSCL, power generation came down to 472 MW yesterday. When contacted, Md Abdul Khaleque, managing director (MD) of APSCL, said the engineers and technicians of the station are working round the clock to resume production of the units.

Unit-1 might go into operation in a day or two, while production of the remaining two units -- GT and ST -- might resume by the first week of the next month, he said.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Khoka Roy, district leader of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), passed away due to a cardiac arrest at Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital yesterday at the age of 57.

He left behind his wife, three sons, one daughter and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

Leaders of different political parties and student organisations paid their last respect to the CPB leader at his Akcha village under Sadar upazila and conveyed sympathy to members of the bereaved family.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Sultana Parvin placed wreaths on his coffin before cremation.

He was cremated at his Akcha village crematorium yesterday.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK

Today is the fifth death anniversary of Lion Aminul Islam Miah, former chairman of Bangladesh Lions Foundation and a retired assistant inspector general (AIG) of police, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at Lions Bhaban at Agargaon at 7:00pm today.

Mainul Islam

METRO DESK

Today is the first death anniversary of Mainul Islam (Shapon), member of the board of directors of Brothers Ltd, Brothers Garments Ltd, SP Chemicals Ltd, Dhaka Bank Ltd and Dhaka Phone Ltd, says a press release.



TIB Trustee Board Chairman Prof Muzaffer Ahmad speaks at a roundtable at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. On his left are Dr Iftekharuzzaman and Md Rafiqul Islam. (Story on Page 16)

Two-day SCBA polls begin today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The two-day polling of the annual election to the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) for its 14 executive posts, including president and secretary, will begin today.

The polling will take place from 10:00am to 5:00pm today and tomorrow. More than 1,800 lawyers will cast their votes in the country's prime bar association polls.

The SCBA authorities have taken all preparations for holding the election, sources said. Advocate Abul Kashem Fazlul Haque will lead the seven-member election sub-committee to conduct the SCBA polls.

According to the sources, the main contest in the election will take place between the panel of ruling Awami League-backed Bangladesh Sammilita Ainjibi Samannaya Parishad (BSASP) and the opposition BNP-backed Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Oikya Parishad (BJAOP).

Three senior lawyers AFM Mesbahuddin (BSASP), Khondokar Mahub Hossain (BJAOP) and Mohammad Zakir Hossain (independent) are contesting for the post of president. Other candidates of BSASP are Kazi Md Sazawar Hossain and Syed Haider Ali (for vice president), SM Rezaul Karim (for secretary), Md Habibul Gani (for treasurer), Mohammad Ali and Md Badruzzaman Badal (for assistant secretary) and Md Nurunnabi Bulbul, Md Enamul Huq Mollah, Dilhad Niaz Mannan, Anzuman Ara Begum Ranu, Md Shahid Ullah, Joya Bhattacharya and Md Nurul Islam Matubbar (for member).

BJAOP's candidates are Md Ibrahim Mollah and Golam Mostafa (for vice president), Md Helaluddin Mollah (for secretary), Mohammad Abdul Baset (for treasurer), Shirin Afroz and Md Abul Kalam Azad (for assistant secretary) and Monir Hossain, Md Jalal Uddin, Golam Rahman Bhuiyan, Shahidul Islam, Shabanara Begum Sanu, Md Abul Kashem Sarkar and Md Shahidul Islam (for member).

Meanwhile, an 11-member Indian team, led by Additional Secretary of India's road, transport and highways ministry Vijay Chhibber, came to Dhaka and held a meeting with a Bangladesh team led by Shipping Secretary Masud Elahi yesterday.

On behalf of the governments, Vijay and Masud will represent their sides in the negotiation and sign the deal on 'Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade'.

Masud said the bilateral agreement scheduled to expire on March 31 would be renewed for the use of the

Govt urged not to always highlight militant issue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) Anisul Huq yesterday urged the government not to always highlight the militant issue, as it would have an impact on the country's image.

As a result, business people, students and workers could have difficulty obtaining visas of other countries, he said.

The FBCCI chief said some responsible ministers and government officials

have been talking about the militant issue in such a manner as if there are militants everywhere in the country.

But the business community does not want to believe that the situation is so bad, Huq said at a pre-budget discussion at the FBCCI Bhaban.

Many people think that the militant issue might have been one of the reasons behind the cancellation of 55,000 visas of Bangladeshi workers by the Malaysian government, he said.

Renewal of Indo-Bangla water transit treaty today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and India will renew the bilateral agreement on inland water transit today with a view to enhancing the inland water trade between the two neighbouring countries for the next two years.

Meanwhile, an 11-member Indian team, led by Additional Secretary of India's road, transport and highways ministry Vijay Chhibber, came to Dhaka and held a meeting with a Bangladesh team led by Shipping Secretary Masud Elahi yesterday.

On behalf of the governments, Vijay and Masud will represent their sides in the negotiation and sign the deal on 'Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade'.

Masud said the bilateral agreement scheduled to expire on March 31 would be renewed for the use of the

waterways for commerce keeping the river routes navigable within each territories.

The inland water transit protocol was first signed in 1972 under the bilateral trade agreement which was renewed in every two years, he added.

"No new issue will be incorporated in the renewal agreement," said Masud, adding that both the countries allow transit for cargo through eight routes, adding that Indian government provides Tk 2 crore for the navigability of the route.

The two countries now allow each other four water points as ports of call to ferry their goods. The ports are Narayanganj, Mongla, Khulna and Sirajganj for India, while Kolkata, Haldia, Karimganj and Pandu for Bangladesh.

Operation of ACC notice against BNP lawmaker Hasina stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday stayed for a month the operation of the notice issued by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) asking Hasina Ahmed, a BNP lawmaker, to submit her wealth statement to ACC.

Upon a writ petition filed by Hasina, an HC bench of Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana and Justice Md Rezaul Haque also issued a rule upon the ACC to explain within four weeks why the notice should not be declared illegal.

The ACC, on March 17, served the notice to Hasina, wife of former BNP state minister for communications Salahuddin Ahmed, for submitting a statement on her wealth within a week to the ACC.

Hasina, lawmaker from Cox's Bazar-1 constituency, yesterday filed a writ petition with the HC challenging the legality of the notice.

She stated in the petition that earlier her husband Salahuddin submitted statements on the properties of all of family members, including Salahuddin and Hasina to the ACC.

The ACC filed a case against Salahuddin and Hasina in connection of the wealth statement. In this case Salahuddin was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment and Hasina got released, the petitioner said, adding that the ACC cannot issue a notice further to her (Hasina).

Barrister Rafique-Ul Huq appeared for the petitioner, while Advocate Khursiduzzaman Khan for ACC.

Woman found dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The police recovered the body of an unidentified woman from Mirpur embankment in the city and sent it to Dhaka Medical College morgue yesterday.

Local people could not identify the victim, aged around 22, the police said.

Morgue sources said the body bore marks of torture and a scarf was wrapped around her neck.

Police suspects that criminals might have killed her elsewhere and dumped the body at Diyabari Beribadh.

Road crashes kill one, injure 82

METRO DESK

A man was killed and 82 people, including two members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), were injured in separate road accidents in Netrakona, Narail and Dhaka yesterday.

Our correspondent in Netrakona reports: A man was killed and 50 others were injured in a road accident on Netrakona-Mymensingh highway at Jhoushi in Netrakona Sadar.

The accident occurred at about 12:30pm when two passenger buses collided head-on. Meanwhile, two buses while trying to overtake the colliding ones collided head-on themselves.

The dead was identified as Shariful Islam, driver of one of the buses.

A correspondent in Narail adds: Thirty people were injured in a road accident on Narail-Jessore highway near Sitarampur.

The accident occurred at about 2:30pm when a Narail-bound passenger bus from Jessore skidded off.

The injured were rushed to Narail Sadar Hospital while ten were released after they were given first aid.

Our staff correspondent adds: An assistant superintendent of police of Rab-10 and his driver were injured in a road accident in the city's Khilkhet area.

The injured were identified as ASP Mohammad Nurul Amin Hawlader and driver Sepoy Mohammad Jamal.

Locals rushed both the injured to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), which referred Jamal to Combined Military Hospital (CMH).

The accident occurred at around 12:30pm when a Mohakhali-bound bus from Gazipur overturned on the Airport-Mohakhali road at Khilkhet while trying to overtake the car.

Police removed the bus and the car from the road, which interrupted traffic movement for half an hour.

WEATHER TODAY logo with sun and cloud icons.

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

There are chances of rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind at one or two places over the regions of Mymensingh and Sylhet, Met Office said.

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:11pm today and rises at 5:58am tomorrow.

Highest temperature 35.2 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sitakundu and lowest 17.5 degrees Celsius at Srimongal.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Table with columns: City/Town, Temperature in Celsius (Max, Min), Humidity in percentage (Morning, Evening). Rows include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar.

Bus helper shot dead in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A gang of unidentified criminals shot dead a bus helper at Shyampur in the city yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Mohammad Sohag, 22, son of Kamal Hossain of West Dhulalpur in the city.

Quoting locals, Shyampur police said the criminals fired point-blank at Sohag in his head around 12:30pm, leaving him seriously injured at Saban Factory Lane in West Shyampur.

He succumbed to his injuries on the way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, the police said.

Victim's father Kamal told The Daily Star that his son went out of his house after receiving a cellphone call.

Local people who rushed Sohag to hospital told this correspondent that he was involved in drug peddling in the area and that he might have been killed over drug peddling.

DHAKA TODAY section listing various events: Discussion (Liberation War Museum), Workshop (Unnayan Shamannay), Seminar (Bangladesh Insurance Association), IUB Seminar (Centre for Health, Population and Development), Workshop (UNV Programme), Seminar (Sheikh Russell Shishu Sangsad), Cultural programmes (Nazrul Institute), Workshop (Traidcraft Exchange).