

## 'Cancel leasing of gas blocks'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gono Forum leaders yesterday demanded cancellation of the leases of three offshore gas blocks to the foreign companies and emphasised the need to form a national unity to take the decision in this regard.

They placed the demand at a meeting organised by Dhaka city

unit at the party office, says a press release.

They called for discussing the issue in parliament and follow the competitive modus operandi for approval to explore gas in the offshore blocks in order to ensure transparency in the process. City unit leader Siddiqur Rahman presided over the meeting.



Outgoing Pakistani High Commissioner Alamgir Bashir Khan Babar pays a farewell call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence Jamuna in the city yesterday.

Invest more in Bangladesh  
President urges Pak entrepreneurs

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged the Pakistani entrepreneurs to invest more in Bangladesh as an investment friendly atmosphere is prevailing in the country.

"Pakistani investors can invest in Bangladesh in various sectors," he said when outgoing Pakistani High Commissioner Alamgir Bashir Khan Babar paid a farewell call on him at Bangabhaban.

Zillur also urged the Pakistani businessmen to import world standard products like pharmaceuticals, ceramics and jute goods from Bangladesh considering their competitive prices.

He emphasised on exchange programmes for students, teachers, journalists, artists, cultural activists and sportsmen between the two countries to further strengthen the bilateral relations.

Mentioning the commonalities of traditions and culture between the two countries, Zillur said the bond of fraternity that exists between the two peoples could help elevate bilateral relations to a higher plane.

"Bangladesh values its relationship with Pakistan, a close South Asian neighbour."

He mentioned that the enormous potential for enhancing bilateral trade between the two countries should be harnessed to lessen the widening trade imbalance.

that tilts towards Pakistan.

Describing Bangladesh as a peace-loving country, he said the two brotherly countries could work together to establish peace in this region.

The president, through the High Commissioner, conveyed his personal regards and best wishes to the president of Pakistan and invited him to visit Bangladesh at his convenience.

The outgoing Pakistani High Commissioner apprised the president that several Pakistani trade delegations have already visited Bangladesh to find the potential avenues for investment.

When his attention was drawn about the repatriation of the stranded Pakistanis, Babar said his government is very sincere about resolving the problem.

He also informed the president that Pakistan Airlines (PIA) has increased its flights on Dhaka-Islamabad route and some five flights a week run between the two countries.

## PAKHC MEETS PM

Earlier, Babar accompanied by his wife paid a farewell call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence Jamuna yesterday, when they discussed various issues of bilateral and regional development.

The PM and the envoy expressed the common view that the democratic systems being practised in both the countries "are positive in attain-

ing its people's development".

Both the sides hoped that the existing friendly relations between the two South Asian nations would strengthen further in the days to come.

The PM and the Pak envoy also had talks about bilateral trade, business and investment.

The outgoing envoy thanked Bangladesh government for extending all-out support to him in discharging his duties during the last four years as the High Commissioner of Pakistan.

Staff correspondent adds: Babar also paid a farewell call on Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni at the foreign ministry.

During the meeting, they discussed the 9th session of the JEC to be held at a mutually convenient time and the 5th foreign secretary level consultation to be held in October.

The Dipu Moni wished the High Commissioner good health and success, said a press release.

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BCL demands trial of  
Tarique, Koko for graft

DU CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Dhaka University (DU) unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) yesterday demanded trial of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's two sons Tarique Rahman and Arafat Rahman Koko accusing

them of committing 'massive corruption and extortion' during the last BNP-Jamaat regime.

They made the demand at a rally held at the foot of Aparajee Bangla on DU campus at noon.

The BCL leaders alleged that taking the favour of the then government Tarique and Koko also looted thousands of crores of taka which they siphoned off to foreign countries.

If they [Tarique and Koko] are not produced before the court and given exemplary punishment for their 'crimes' such activities would increase in the country, the leaders observed.

Top leaders of BCL central and DU unit including Mahmud Hasan Ripon, Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Rotan, Sohail Rana Tipu and Sajad Sakib Badsha spoke at the rally.

Later the BCL leaders brought out a procession that marched several campus streets to press home their demand.

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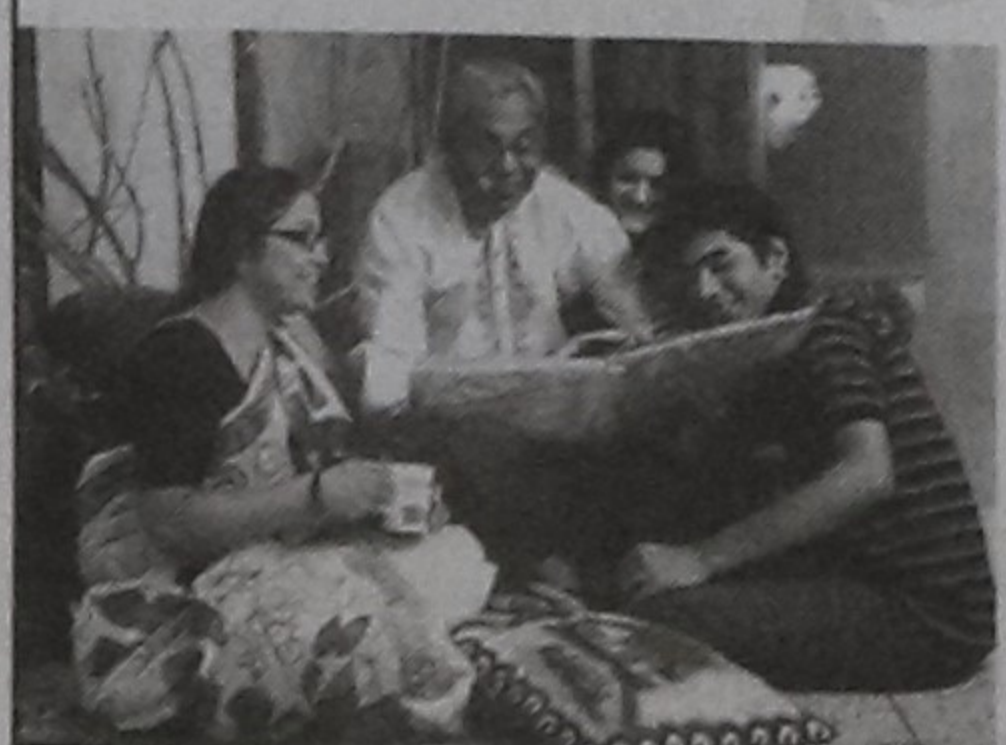
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