

Gas crisis in city mounts

Kerosene stoves back in kitchen, prices of LP gas, cookers rise

HELEMUL ALAM
The ongoing gas crisis in the capital has intensified since last week, forcing thousands of city dwellers to adopt a change in their lifestyle by using kerosene stoves or other alternative ways for cooking.
"My wife has to prepare breakfast, lunch and dinner all between 5:00am and 9:00am every day," said Babul, a resident of Gandaria.
Anwara, a resident of Moghbazar, said there is no gas supply to her home for about 12 hours from 9:00am every day. She has to prepare all meals using a kerosene stove, which has increased her family expenditure besides causing sufferings.
Many like Arabinda of Madrasa Road in Mohammadpur have had to buy LP gas cylinders. Parts of Moghbazar, Mirpur, Uttara, Mohammadpur, Mugdapara, Basabo, Gandaria, Jatrabari, Azimpur, Nilkhet, Shekherket, Golapbagh, Begumbazar, Nababpur, Mirerbagh, Gopibagh and Dakkhin Khan have been without gas supply for six-12 hours a day.
Many businessmen have banked on the

situation and increased prices of stoves and LP gas cylinders.
Golam Kibria, a shopkeeper in Kaptan Bazar, said sale of kerosene stoves increased three times over the last week. Its price has also increased by Tk 20-50 from Tk 140-160 in retail markets as a result of huge price increase in wholesale markets, he said.
Nuruddin, who sells LP gas cylinders, said the price of Jamuna gas rose to Tk 1,080 per cylinder from Tk 1,010 within a week while that of Total gas rose to Tk 1,020 from Tk 880 within a month.
The government initiative to keep city CNG filling stations shut for two days a week has meanwhile frustrated many owners, who complained that they are already facing huge trouble in running their business because of the ongoing gas crisis.
They were forced to keep their stations shut for 10-12 hours because of the low pressure of gas, said officials of different filling stations in the city.
Mir Rezaul Karim, an official of Dhaka Refilling and Servicing Centre at south
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The wood-burning stove of this kitchen in the city's Mugdapara seems to mock the gas cooker that has been useless since the gas supply stopped around 9:00am. For the last few months, thousands of Dhaka residents have been suffering from gas shortage. The photo was taken around noon Wednesday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Move to curb graft in cause list of courts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The Supreme Court authorities have taken an initiative to put an end to corruption regarding cause lists of the courts.
Chief Justice Md Tafazzul on Thursday issued a notification asking the lawyers concerned to submit their criminal cases to the courts by January 10, so hearings could be held serially.
SC Registrar Shawkat Hossain, who signed the notification, said the chief
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Govt warns of stern action to stop chaos

No mercy for unlawful activities in the name of student politics, religion, says Syed Ashraf

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The government will take stern action against any person involved in unlawful activities in the name of student politics and religion, LGRD Minister Syed Ashraf Islam said yesterday.
"All criminal activities in the name of student politics, and chaos and provocation in the name of religion must be stopped," Ashraf said at a crowded news conference at Awami League President Sheikh Hasina's political office in Dhanmondi.
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The AL general secretary's warning came in the wake of recent violence at Rajshahi Polytechnic Institute between Bangladesh Chhatra Moitree and pro-AL student body Bangladesh Chhatra League. A Moitree leader was killed in the incident.
Ashraf said the government is determined to punish such offenders.
He blamed former military dictators Ziaur Rahman and HM Ershad for destroying the nature of student politics in Bangladesh and
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Hectic schedule set for PM's India trip

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi
A hectic schedule awaits Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina who reaches New Delhi tomorrow for a three-day official visit, the first since assuming power a year ago.
She will reach New Delhi at 9:30pm. On January 11, she will be accorded a ceremonial reception in the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan at 9:00am after which Indian External Affairs Minister SM Krishna will call on her at the Presidential Suite of Maurya
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India keeps some 'surprises' in store

Hasina leaves for Delhi tomorrow

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT
India is most likely to make some surprising offers to Bangladesh during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's state visit to India that begins tomorrow, diplomatic sources said.
The two countries are likely to sign three major deals during the visit and a few memorandums of understanding (MoU).
The sources hinted that one such surprise element could be handing over of 20 notorious fugitive criminals, who were arrested and are in different Indian jails, including two accused in
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the August 21 grenade attack case.
A diplomatic source in India told The Daily Star yesterday that this is a reciprocal gesture and added that the transfer is likely to take place in the same manner some "arrested" insurgents were "handed over" to India at the border last month.
The two countries have already finalised drafts of three crucial accords on counter-terrorism and security cooperation, which will be signed during Hasina's visit. They are: Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in
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Khaleda blames govt for BM Bakir's death

UNB, Dhaka
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia has held the government responsible for the death of BM Bakir Hossain, joint secretary of Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal, in police custody and termed it "clear violation of human rights and against the rule of law."
"The mysterious death of Bakir without treatment is not acceptable at all. The present government can't avoid the responsibility of this death. It's a clear violation of human rights and against the rule of law," Khaleda said in a statement yesterday.
She further said, "None is safe from the inhuman torture unleashed on the nationalist forces across the country during the tenure of the present government."
She demanded judicial inquiry into Bakir's "unnatural death" and hoped that the government would take immediate steps in this regard.
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Bangladesh batsman Rokibul Hasan cuts through point during his sedate knock of 43 in their Idea Cup clash against Sri Lanka at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.
PHOTO: STAR

Sri Lanka outclass Bangladesh

SPORTS REPORTER
In the previous two defeats there was at least something to cheer about. But things turned very sour for the Tigers in their third encounter of the Idea Cup tri-nation tournament as Sri Lanka outclassed them with a massive nine-wicket victory at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.
Twin tons from Mahela Jayawardene and Upul Tharanga made the 250-run target look small and Sri Lanka easily maintained their hundred percent successes in the tournament as well as confirmed a final berth in grand style. For the Tigers, the third defeat in a row all but confirmed their elimination.
The runs came thick and fast as the unbeaten Lankans achieved their target (252-1) with 7.1 overs to spare.
It was a nightmare scenario for the local bowlers on a flat track, especially in the second session, as the two openers executed shots all over the park with consummate ease. Bangladesh however managed to avert their third 10-wicket defeat against the Lankans, thanks to spinner Nayeem Islam who got an edge of Jayawardene to wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim.
They might have survived from the humiliation of a ten-wicket defeat but the truth is that Sri Lanka virtually faced no resistance from Jamie Siddons' charges in the match as Bangladesh's batting also lost its gel after two impressive performances.
Jayawardene, who smashed thirteen boundaries during his 117-ball 108, flew in for the injured Tillakaratne Dilshan and made an immediate impact in the team as the stylish right-hander slammed his twelfth one-day hundred while Tharanga continued his rich vein of form with an unbeaten 126-ball 118 that contained 18 boundaries.
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Condition of Jyoti Basu still critical

INDO ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, Kolkata
There was no significant improvement in the condition of Marxist patriarch Jyoti Basu, on partial ventilator support in a hospital here with pneumonia, a medical bulletin said yesterday.
A day after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh offered to arrange for expert doctors for Basu's treatment, the AMRI
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Muggers stab policeman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A band of muggers stabbed a policeman and snatched his cellphone and wallet in the city's Moghbazar yesterday afternoon.
Constable Mujibur Rahman, 27, of protection unit at Rajarbagh Police Lines, was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), with stab wounds in the abdomen.
Lying on a DMCH bed, Mujibur told reporters that four people stopped him near Ad-din Hospital around 2:00pm while he was on his way to the police lines from his Moghbazar residence. "As I tried to resist, the muggers stabbed me and took away my
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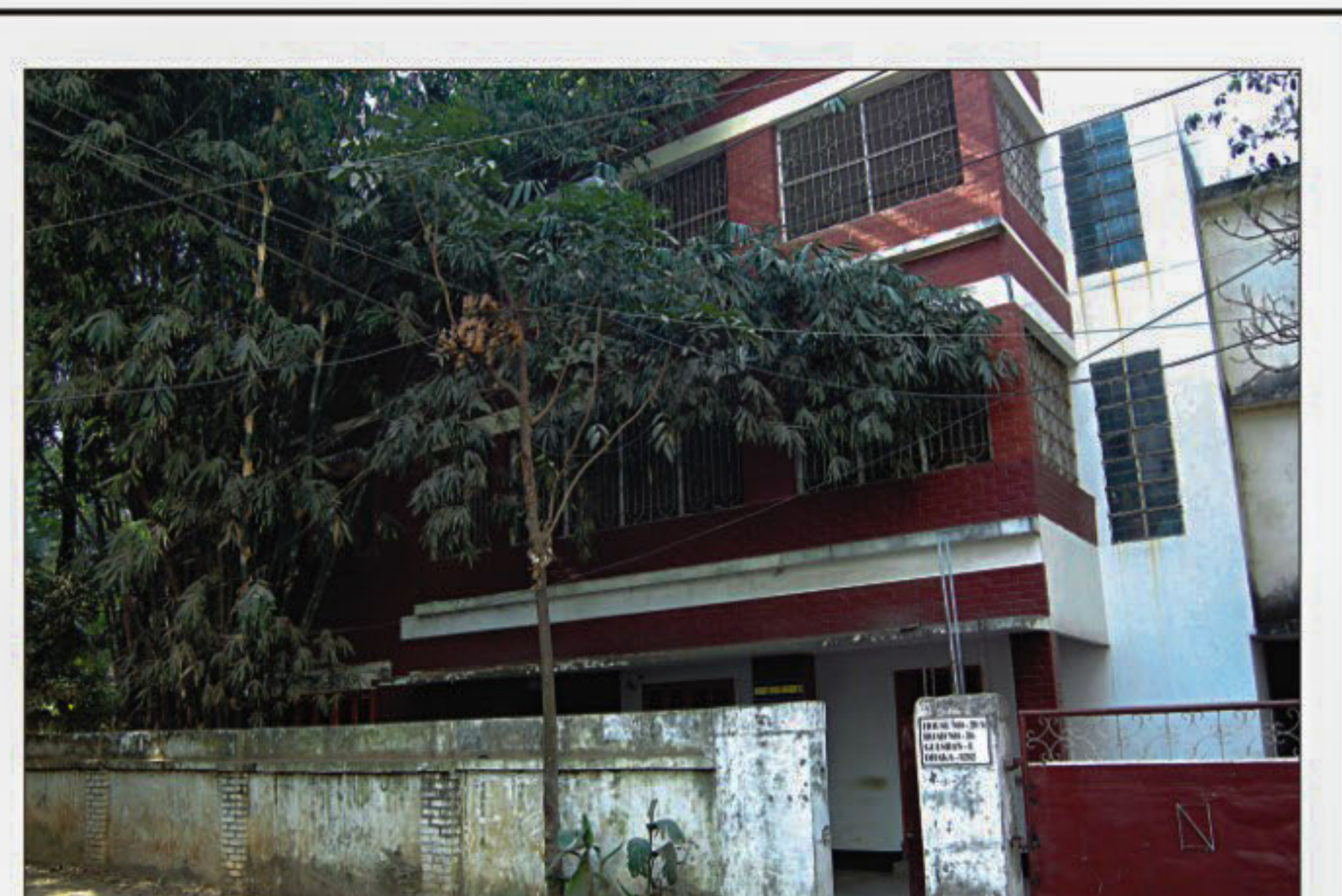
SEA BOUNDARY TALKS WITH MYANMAR Dhaka wants equitable demarcation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
Bangladesh proposed demarcation of the maritime boundary on the basis of equity in the two-day talks between Bangladesh and Myanmar that began yesterday in the port city.
Two teams with 13 members each from both the countries are participating in the meeting in efforts to resolve the dispute over maritime boundary. Yesterday's session started at 9:30am at Hotel Agrabad.
Deputy Foreign Minister of Myanmar U Maung Myint was heading the Myanmar delegation while Additional Foreign Secretary of United Nations Convention on Law of the Seas (UNCLOS) Rear Admiral (ret'd) Md Khurshed Alam of the Bangladesh team.
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"Bangladesh wants to demarcate the maritime boundary on the basis of equity while Myanmar insists on equidistance method," Khurshed Alam told journalists.
"We hope the talks would help resolve the dispute," said the Bangladesh delegation leader.
Myanmar delegation leader U Maung Myint said, "The negotiation is going on and we are yet to reach the stage for drawing conclusion".
Bangladesh needs to file claims for its maritime boundary to the International Seabed Authorities as per UNCLOS. In accordance with the UN Convention on Law of the Seas, Bangladesh must demarcate its boundaries by July 27, 2011 while India by June 29, 2009 and Myanmar by May 21, 2009.
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Bid to grab house, owner threatened

TAWFIQUE ALI
A gang of frauds is out to dislodge an elderly journalist from his Gulshan house by threatening him with life in order to grab his property allegedly with the backing of a ruling party lawmaker.
Shahjahan Mollah, Shahjahan Siraj and Enamul Haq accused in a case in this connection threatened the property owner Abdur Rahim with death on the premises of additional chief metropolitan magistrate court on December 30 last year.
Rahim, a former executive
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Former executive editor of the Bangladesh Observer, Abdur Rahim, has been living in this three-storey building at Gulshan for four decades. A gang of frauds, allegedly backed by a ruling party lawmaker, is trying to dislodge the veteran journalist from his house. PHOTO: STAR