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Focus on gas exploration

BNP in its 'alternative budget' also asks govt not to raise tax but manage collection system better

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday proposed the government give top priority to gas exploration to increase power. In a pre-budget meet-the-press, first of its kind by any opposition party, Khaleda said the government has been talking of its "grandiose" plans for new electricity generation. "But nothing has happened so far except for the recent initiatives for setting up rental power units, the procurement of which is being done



in violation of established norms." Khaleda expressed concern that the high purchase price of power -- Tk 14-16 per unit -- from the rental plants will hike tariff for users, in the absence of substantial subsidies to the Power Development Board. A broader impact will be on the profitability of industries, especially small and medium enterprises, said the leader of the opposition. On an agreement with Russia on a 1,000MW

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Ratna's wedding at Gonobhaban tomorrow

KAILASH SARKAR and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Sakina Aktar Ratna's marriage will be held tomorrow at Gonobhaban while the marriage date of her younger sister Runa will be fixed after her groom's elder brother returns from abroad, said Prime Minister's Office sources.

Ratna's gaye halud (a wedding ritual) will be held today, Deena Huq, director general of the PMO, told The Daily Star late last night.

Ratna's marriage was scheduled for June 22.

The two girls lost their mother, who had been their only living parent, Thursday night in the Nimtoli inferno along with other family members and relatives.

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Siblings Sagar, left, and Sumaya, who received severe burn injuries in blaze at Nimtoli Thursday night, are now out of dangers, said their doctors yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Come up in JS with budget proposals

PM urges Khaleda
UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged opposition leader Khaleda Zia to place alternative budget proposal in parliament if she has any.

"If the people consider your proposal welfare-oriented they will consider it."

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DRIVE ON IN OLD DHAKA Risky buildings being detected

TAWFIQUE ALI

The Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha on Sunday launched a survey to find out risky buildings in the old part of the city, officials say.

Nine building inspectors have been instructed to do the job in Shankhari Bazar, Gendaria, Nawabpur, Tanti Bazar and Sutrapur under the jurisdiction of Rajuk Zone-1.

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TILTED 7-STORY Rajuk starts demolition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) started knocking down a seven-storey illegal building in the city's east Begunbari yesterday, three days after it tilted.

Three buildings including the seven-storey building, Saturday's tilted five-storey building at Nakhapara and

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A hospital of hope

Nimtoli tragedy transforms burn unit of DMCH into delectably different

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Whereas Dhaka Medical College Hospital earned a bad name for mismanagement and malpractice on its service delivery, the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit of the hospital concentrated its effort on providing dependable medicare to people.

The 50-bed unit with 21 regular doctors and 11 nurses set a shining example for other

DMCH wards by tackling a rush of 300 patients including victims of Nimtoli fire Thursday night.

Many patients at general wards are left uncared in the corridor while victims of the Thursday's blaze along with other burn patients at the unit got beds.

Some 17 male patients are kept in a ward. Women and children are kept in a separate

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1 more dies from burns

Shocked Nimtoli prays for 119 dead

KAILASH SARKAR and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

One more victim of Nimtoli fire died yesterday at Combined Military Hospital (CMH) taking the death toll from the disaster to 119.

Now 37 fire victims have been struggling for lives at

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Coastal belt to get priority in budget

Matia tells The Daily Star

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

INTERVIEW

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury said the government would put highest emphasis on southern areas including the coastal belt in the next fiscal year's budget to increase food production.

In an interview with The Daily Star, Matia Chowdhury on Thursday said, "Coastal areas have many untapped prospects and we will realise those taking various steps like, digging canals and introducing saline-tolerant hybrid crops."



"To increase agricultural produce, use of surface water and quality seeds would get more focus in the next budget"

The country's central zone has already become an industrial zone. With more electricity coverage and presence of land ports, there will be rapid industrialisation in the northern region as well, she added.

"Presence of land ports will allow people to switch over to other professions from agriculture. It's not bad and we welcome it. But the agricultural land is shrinking," the minister observed.

She said there are vast agricultural lands in the southern region. "We want to utilise

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HSC EXAMS Creative set of questions from 2012

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to introduce creative question method in the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and equivalent examinations from 2012.

The method was applied in the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations this year.

A circular issued by the education ministry yesterday said examination of Bangla 1st paper will be held under the new method in HSC and equivalent examinations from 2012.

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PM too finds MPO fakes

Asks edn minister to check adviser's list

HASAN JAHD TUSHER

Controversy over the revised MPO list took a new turn as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina herself yesterday detected 'fake' educational institutions on the list prepared by her education adviser Alauddin Ahmed.

At the weekly cabinet meeting, she found that at least seven institutions got listed for the monthly payment order (MPO) facilities by submitting demand orders (DOs) using forged signatures of one or two ministers and some lawmakers, highly placed sources told The Daily Star.

Even two or three institutions which have no existence are also on the revised MPO list, the premier chairing the meeting held at the Secretariat told her cabinet colleagues.

She directed the education minister to immediately remove

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