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A Tory MP "was asked" to consider leadership challenge to the UK PM
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Gas outlook gloomy

Petrobangla failing to increase gas supply next year as per forecast; crisis to remain during next election; LNG tender delay, Chevron's gas cut kills hope

SHARIER KHAN

In April last year, Petrobangla made a rosy forecast that by June 2013, it would be able to almost double the country's gas supplies. But now it has drastically revised its prediction, saying the increase would be way less

than one third of last year's projection.

This massive difference would leave the country reeling under a gas crisis like the one in early 2009 -- when the Awami League came to power -- because of a fast growing demand for gas.

It also means the government plan for increasing gas-based cheaper power and helping industries grow further or lowering energy prices will not be a success by the time the country goes for the next national election.

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Industries to get gas link from Oct

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will start giving new gas connections to industries from next month, although production has increased very little since the government stopped providing fresh connections two years ago.

The energy ministry is working to this end in line with the prime minister's instructions, Energy Adviser

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COAL POWER PLANT NEAR SUNDARBANS OPPOSED -- B1



These women at Moghbazar in the capital use clay burners to cook as the area has been suffering from a shortage of gas supply for a week. They do not get gas from 6:00am until 8:00pm. And even if they get the supply at times, it remains insufficient for cooking.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Others beyond Sonali involved in scam

Muhith goes back on his Hall-Mark remark, talks on Padma Bridge, Grameen Bank issues before flying to China

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith yesterday said many from outside the Sonali Bank were involved in the much-talked-about Hall-Mark swindle.

Without mentioning any names, he said those linked to the scandal had been identified following much investigation. And cases would be



filed in this regard "very soon".

Muhith added it was a mistake on his part to say that crores of taka swindled out of a Sonali Bank branch was a petty sum.

"I have acknowledged my mistake, and those who don't admit mistakes lack moral

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Economy on the line

Warn worried experts; say scam-hit public banks in a crisis, central bank's control-cut by govt leading to corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It's not a problem. It's rather a crisis that may badly affect the economy of the country as a whole.

This was how leading experts yesterday expressed their concerns about what is happening in the state-owned banks, particularly the Tk 3,547-crore swindle out of Sonali Bank.

Limiting the central bank's control over government banks by establishing a banking division under the finance ministry has been facilitating

numerous irregularities and corruption in these banks, they observed.

"I'm worried at seeing the government response. At the same time, the finance minister's comment [that Tk 4,000 crore swindled is a petty amount] will encourage the fraudsters," said former Bangladesh Bank governor Salehuddin Ahmed.

"Not only should legal action be taken against those involved in the Tk 3,547-crore embezzlement, but the assets of the culprits should also

be confiscated to recover the money," Salehuddin told a discussion.

The Bangla daily Prothom Alo organised the programme on the theme, "The way the banks run and the way they should", at its offices in the capital.

Khandoker Ibrahim Khaled, chairman of Bangladesh Krishi Bank, criticised the government for establishing a banking division, which according to him was busy transferring

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PHOTO ON PAGE 3

MEDICAL COLLEGES Admission thru' test

Govt informs HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to enrol students at medical and dental colleges through an admission test this year.

Deputy Attorney General Motaher Hossain Sazu yesterday communicated the decision to a High Court bench.

The bench of Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif was hearing a petition seeking

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INTERNET IMPACT Bangladesh 55th among 61 nations

STAR REPORT

Bangladesh has been ranked 55th among 61 countries surveyed by the World Wide Web Foundation on internet's political, social and economic impacts on people.

Bangladesh is the last among the countries in

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Businessman killed in road crash

Mob torches bus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was run over by a speeding bus while he was crossing the road in the capital's Motijheel area yesterday morning.

The deceased Md Abdul Baten, 65, a resident of Iqbal Road in Mohammadpur, owned

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Buet pro-VC finally removed

Students ready to attend classes again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Buet pro-vice chancellor Prof M Habibur Rahman has been removed from his post as part of the education minister's pledges at a meeting with the agitating teachers on Monday last.

The education ministry issued a circular yesterday saying that Prof Rahman had been removed as per the order of President Zillur Rahman, also the chancellor of the university.

From now on, Prof Rahman will perform his duty as a professor in the Civil Engineering Department of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), said university sources.

After the removal of pro-VC, agitating teachers and students yesterday told The Daily Star they are ready to go back to classes.

"I hope the initiative will bring back the congenial academic atmosphere on the campus, and we want to resume classes immediately. But the decision to recommence the classes depends on the authority," said Prof

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Prof Habibur Rahman

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