



TRAGEDIES AND REACTIONS
It is a shame that Western leaders engage in narrow geopolitical games
PAGE 15

EBOLA FEARS GROW
Europe, Asia on alert; Sierra Leone declares emergency
PAGE 9

MOHAMMAD RAFI FOREVER
It is his greatness that also lives on along with those beautiful songs
PAGE 11

DEEP-SEA EXPLORATION

Higher gas prices key to woo IOCs

SHARIER KHAN

Bangladesh may not be able to attract international oil companies enough to explore its deep sea waters even after resolving maritime disputes with Myanmar and India unless it revises its model production sharing contract (PSC) by offering higher gas prices. "Policymakers must realise that deep sea exploration and development of a gas prospect is completely different from onshore or even shallow water operation. Deep sea operation is very costly, highly risky and technologically very challenging," said a top PSC expert.

"All of the commercial deep sea gas discoveries in the last five years had between 6 trillion cubic feet (tcf) and 16 tcf reserve.

KEY POINTS

- Bangladesh offers \$4.5 per mmcf in 2008 model PSC.
- Old PSCs put the highest price at \$3 per mmcf
- China buying Myanmar gas at \$10 per mmcf
- ConocoPhillips working in deep-sea asking for revision of PSC to get \$9 per mmcf
- Less than 6 TCF reserve not commercially viable to develop a gas field

Any reserve less than that is not commercially viable for development. Developing one gas field can cost between \$3 billion and \$5b or beyond," he said.

These discoveries were made, among other places, in Mozambique, Tanzania, Ghana and the Caribbean seas.

For Bangladesh, exploring the deep sea especially for gas is the last resort to increase its gas reserve, as there is very little chance of finding a major reserve onshore. Considering huge gas discoveries in the Bay of Bengal by India and Myanmar in the last decade,

the prospect of finding gas in Bangladesh waters is alluring.

According to Petrobangla, the country's gas consumption has enormously increased

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



With a handful of recreational facilities available in Dhaka, people, some with children, crowd in front of the gate of Dhaka Zoo a day after Eid to get in. More on Eid celebrations on page 16.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

A sombre Eid in Gaza after deadly Ramadan

AGENCIES

One of the most joyous days in the Muslim calendar, the holiday of Eid-ul-Fitr was marked by tears and sorrow in the Gaza Strip, left battered by three weeks of merciless Israeli assaults.

Marking the end of the holy month of fasting, Eid is normally a time of feasts and fun, presents and parties, even in this impoverished and isolated Palestinian coastal enclave.

But these are not normal times in Gaza.

"How should a mother feel when she opens her eyes on the day of Eid and does not see her son next to her?" said Abir Shammaly, whose son was killed during heavy Israeli shelling of the Shejaia district in east Gaza last week.

Instead of celebrating with the living, Shammaly sat next to her son's freshly dug grave, joining many other Gazans who were paying their respects to more than 1,000 people, many of them civilians, who have died so far in the fighting.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

Death toll hits 1,422

Israel threatens to crush Gaza tunnels; UN school attacked

AFP, Gaza City

Israel yesterday vowed it would not pull troops out of Gaza until they finish destroying a network of cross-border tunnels, despite sharp United Nations criticism over the Palestinian death toll which reached.

Speaking at a special cabinet meeting in Tel Aviv, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he would not accept any ceasefire that did not allow troops to

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

BB directives defied in fresh loan deals

Tk 1,000cr loan disbursed among fake companies last year

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and SARWAR A CHOWDHURY



The Gulshan branch of BASIC Bank allowed fake and defaulter companies to swindle another Tk 1,000 crore in 2013, defying Bangladesh Bank's instructions to rectify its irregularities in disbursing around Tk 1,300 crore a year ago.

The state-run bank disbursed the amount without following any rules, found the central bank that ran an investigation at the branch for the second time between January and June this year.

"The possibility of getting back Tk 1,000 crore is bleak," said the BB probe report.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



A Palestinian woman and a girl carry flowers to a family grave on Eid day at a cemetery in Gaza City on Monday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

4 killed in 'shootouts'

2 of them accused of killing Tangail cop

STAR REPORT

Four people, two of whom were accused of murdering a police officer, were killed in alleged gun-fights with law enforcers in Tangail, Jhenidah and Rangpur during the Eid holidays.

In Tangail, the killed were Nur Islam Ulka, 26, and Shahed Miah, 27, who were accused in the case filed for murdering assistant sub-inspector Nurul Islam of Tangail Model Police Station.

Mohammad Akhtaruzzaman, officer-in-charge of the police station, said police raided a house in Takiya Kodma village of Mirzapur upazila at around 4:00am on Monday to arrest Ulka and his accom-

plices.

Sensing their presence, Ulka and his accomplices opened fire, prompting the policemen to retaliate.

Ulka was killed on the spot while his cohorts Sagar alias Dollar and Shahed sustained bullets wounds and were rushed to Mirzapur Kumudini Hospital. Later that day, they were shifted to Tangail General Hospital.

The next day, they were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) as their conditions worsened. There, Shahed succumbed to injuries on Wednesday and Sagar was still under treatment, Tangail police said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

HSC results on Aug 13

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The results of this year's Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and its equivalent examinations will be published on August 13.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid would hand over the copy of the results to the prime minister in the morning on that day, Subodh Chandra Dhali, deputy chief information officer of the

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

Tragedy marks Eid holidays

Road accidents, boat capsizes claim 90 lives

STAR REPORT

At least 90 people were killed in road accidents and boat capsizes across the country over the last four days.

Of them, 68 died in road and river mishaps during the three-day Eid holiday between Monday and Wednesday.

Yesterday, the first day after the Eid holiday, road accidents claimed 11 lives while three incidents of boat capsizes took another 11 lives.

Over the last four days, more than 200 people were also injured in road crashes across the country.

About half of those killed in road accidents met their tragic ends when the buses carrying them lost control and fell in roadside water bodies, according to our district correspondents.

Last year, at least 52 people were killed in 122 road accidents across the country during Eid holiday.

In 2012 and 2011, the number of deaths was 42 and 38. In 2010, at least 63 people died and another 203 were injured in road crashes during Eid holiday.

The Daily Star analysis shows the year 2011 saw the lowest deaths over the past five years, as there were fewer accidents.

This year, at least 27 road accidents happened between Monday and Wednesday. On the Eid day alone, 26 people lost their lives in eight mishaps, according to our district correspondents.

In the capital, four people, including three pedestrians, were killed in road crashes in Rampura, Uttara and Mohakhali.

According to Prof Shamsul Hoque, former director of Accident Research Institute of Buet, road accidents increase by 2 to 2.5 times during Eid holidays compared to normal times.

DEATHS THIS EID

ROAD CRASHES

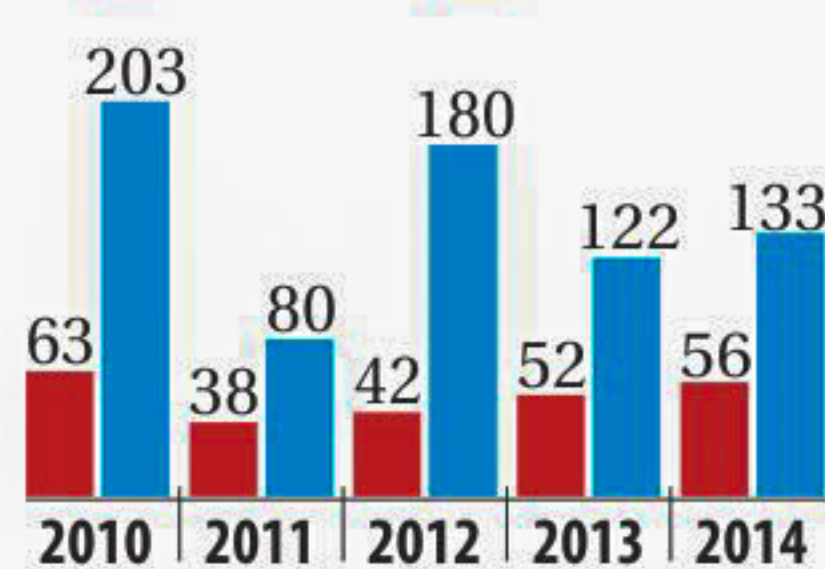
67 (3-day holiday +yesterday)

BOAT CAPSIZE

23 (in 4 incidents since Eid day)

ROAD ACCIDENTS DURING EID-UL-FITR HOLIDAYS

■ KILLED ■ INJURED



Attacks on minorities increased

US religious freedom report 2013 says on Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Hindus and other ethnic and religious minorities in Bangladesh faced increased harassment and physical attacks amid last year's political turmoil, according to a US report.

The 2013 International Religious Freedom Report, released on July 28, said there were reports of societal abuses and discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief or practice.

A large number of arson attacks and looting of minority religious sites and private homes took place across the country, especially against the Hindus.

Members of the Sunni Muslim majority at times harassed and physically attacked members of the Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, and Ahmadiyya Muslim minority groups, said the report, done by the US State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour.

The government and many civil society leaders stated that violence against

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

NOTICE

Star BUSINESS

is not coming out today as the stockmarket was closed yesterday due to Eid-ul-Fitr holidays.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5