

Household gas may get costlier

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other sectors too would be increased gradually.

The final decision on the price hike, however, will be taken by the BERC.

Hamid said the government pays Tk 500 as subsidy for each LPG cylinder but people still are not using it.

Plans are there to further increase

the LPG subsidies so that consumers can easily afford it, he added. "On one hand, we are proposing to hike the price of piped gas and planning to increase the LPG subsidies on the other."

Currently, an LPG cylinder costs between Tk 1,300 and Tk 14,00.

According to the state minister, the country's gas reserves now stand at 14.94 trillion cubic feet.

In light of the current pace of consumption, the reserves are enough to supply gas for the next 15 years even if no new gas field is discovered in the meantime.

PM reaches New York

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Obama and 120 other heads of states are expected to outline their visions to stem the impact of climate change today.

The crucial day-long summit will be attended also by leaders from the business and civil societies to mobilise a political will for the universal and a meaningful climate agreement next year.

As per the programme schedule,

Ban Ki-moon will inaugurate the summit at 8:30am (NY time) at the UN General Assembly Hall. Eminent personalities will also speak at the opening session.

Hasina will deliver her speech at the National Action and Ambition Declaration session later.

According to her day-event, the prime minister will hold a bilateral meeting with her Norway counterpart

Ms. Erna Solberg at the UN headquarters at 11:30am (local time).

Later in the evening, Hasina will join the reception to be hosted by Barack Obama and US first lady Michelle Obama in honour of the participating heads of states and governments at the UNGA.

Hasina is expected to deliver her speech at the UNGA on September 27 and return on September 29.

No respite from rain

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the country immense suffering over the last few days, flooding busy thoroughfares and inundating low-lying areas in many parts of the country.

Though yesterday was a hartal day, office-goers suffered the most in the capital as severe water-logging created long tailbacks on the potholed roads and streets, especially in Malibagh, Moghbazar and Satrasta.

"I had to be very careful to drive my CNG-run three-wheeler as the potholes on Malibagh-Moghbazar and Moghbazar-Satrasta roads were covered in rain water, putting us under severe risk," said Amzad Hossain,

driver of a three-wheeler.

Normal life in Rangpur city and its adjacent areas was disrupted due to heavy rainfall since Sunday morning, reports our Rangpur correspondent.

Low-lying areas in the city were inundated while many neighbourhoods including Shalban, Purba Shalban, Mistripara, Nilkantha, Palpara, Guptapara, Kamalkachhna, Babupara Botla, Honumantala, Kamarpara, Sagorpara and Mulatol went under knee-to waist-deep water.

Around 5,000 people have been marooned as heavy rain, compounded by the onrush of water from the Teesta upstream over the last 24 hours,

flooded several villages under Gangachara upazila of the district.

Rangpur Water Development Board sources said the Teesta which had flowed 40 centimetres below the danger level on Saturday, was flowing eight centimetres above the danger level yesterday.

Only a few rickshaws and battery-run auto-rickshaws were found plying the streets, defying the rain.

Rickshaw pullers and drivers of battery-run auto-rickshaws were seen demanding excessive fare from commuters, taking advantage of the bad weather and thin traffic in the city.

Bangladesh among top 3

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second home programme one can get residence permit for five years with other facilities.

Asked if the Bangladeshi nationals also include political figures, the Malaysian envoy smilingly avoided to reply.

According to the Malaysian government rules, to settle there under the MM2H programme, one needs to deposit liquid assets worth at least RM 500,000 (about Tk 1.22 crore) and show offshore income of RM 10,000 (about Tk 2.45 lakh) per month.

Bangladeshis started taking up the offer in 2003 when 32 citizens chose to settle in Malaysia under the programme.

In reply to a question, the high commissioner said there has been minister-level discussion and Malaysia is ready to open up its manpower market for Bangladesh in a number of areas, including construction and "house-manager" (domestic help).

In this context, she said an agreement was reached at the ministerial level of the two countries to recruit Bangladeshi workers for manufacturing and construction sectors apart from plantation sector.

Norlin said a joint task force is work-

ing to figure out the modalities of recruitment of workers for these two new sectors.

Justifying the government-to-government (G2G) process, she said the government has introduced this mechanism only with Bangladesh to discourage the frauds, cheats and mistreatment of the workers.

The envoy said Malaysia recruits workers from 16 countries including India, Nepal, Pakistan, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam but they don't have this mechanism with those countries.

The minimum pay under the G2G recruitment is 900 Ringgit (US\$ 300) with medical and leave facilities.

She informed that at present three million foreign workers are employed in Malaysia, which has a population of 28 million.

In reply to another question, the high commissioner said about half a million Bangladeshis are living in Malaysia; of them 3,20,000 have valid documents. The Malaysian authorities are legalising the undocumented foreign workers.

Asked about the volume of bilateral trade which is heavily tilted towards Malaysia, Norlin said Bangladesh needs to concentrate on making high-

end diversified products to bridge the trade gap with Malaysia.

Bangladesh is the third largest trading partner of Malaysia after India and Pakistan. She said Bangladesh is also the sixth investment destination of Malaysia with biggest investment in telecommunications and power sectors.

Asked about the impact of hartal on overseas investment in Bangladesh, Norlin, who came to the National Press Club defying the BNP sponsored hartal, said Bangladesh has a vibrant democratic process and hartal is part of the democratic process.

She observed that hartal is only one factor but there are other important factors like infrastructure, good transport, power supply and political stability should be in place to attract foreign investment.

Norlin said Bangladesh has a lot of potentials and prospects but unfortunately there is a lack of coordination among different authorities.

General Secretary of the Jatiya Press Club Syed Abdal Ahmad delivered the welcome speech, while senior vice president Kazi Rawnak Hossain chaired the session.

Blast near

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The arrestee is Sushel Chakma, 23, of Maischhari village under Naniachar upazila of the district.

During primary interrogation, the suspect confessed to his involvement in the incident, said Masud Alam Khan, sub-inspector of Kotwali Police Station.

It was primarily speculated as a grenade explosion, said Anwar Hossain, another sub-inspector of the same police station.

"However, we can be sure only after an intensified investigation," he told this correspondent.

On-duty policemen reported a "big explosion" near the office around 3:00am, SI Anwar said, adding that five vehicles parked nearby were damaged in the blast.

Police could not identify who were behind the explosion while none claimed responsibility for the blast that shook the neighbourhood. Police collected splinters from the scene.

Barun Kumar Chakma, special assistant to CHT Regional Council chairman and Jana Sanghati Samity chief Jyotindra Bodhipriya Larma, alleged that anti-CHT peace treaty elements might have carried out the blast.

Chakma demanded immediate arrest and punishment of those responsible for the blast. A case was filed by police with Kotwali police station in this connection.

Obama seeks

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"I think that people are justified in being disappointed about the outcome in Copenhagen," Obama said at the time, lamenting the failure to agree a timetable to reduce emissions over the coming decades.

Five years after that setback, the landscape remains complicated.

"I think that there is some greater sense of perhaps realism as well as ambition among parties than perhaps there was in 2009," said Todd Stern, the United States top climate negotiator.

"I think, at the same time, these negotiations are always difficult," he said in a recent conference call.

In the short term, it remains highly unlikely that the 120 heads of state and government due to attend the one-day meeting in New York will meet the expectations of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, who has called for "bold pledges" to be made.

The White House has said it will not announce its post-2020 goals in New York this week, but rather plans to roll an out ambitious target early next year according to John Podesta, Obama's adviser on climate and energy.

HC orders

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Advocate Manzill Murshid, president of the rights body, also requested the court to direct the government to form an expert committee with health experts, veterinary doctors, nutritionists and high officials of the government to recommend necessary guideline for stopping the use of such steroids.

He told The Daily Star that the HC may hear the petition today.

Yemen deal signed after Shia rebels seize govt HQ

AFP, Sanaa

Rival groups in Yemen have signed a UN-brokered peace deal after Shiite rebels seized the government headquarters and the prime minister resigned following raging violence in the capital.

"A national peace and partnership agreement based on the outcomes of the national dialogue conference was signed this evening at the presidential palace" in Sanaa, state news agency

Saba reported Sunday.

President Abdrabuh Mansur Hadi, United Nations envoy Jamal Benomar and representatives of Yemen's political forces, including the Shiite rebels, attended the signing ceremony, it said.

"We have reached a final deal with which we can overcome this crisis," Hadi said in a speech.

Benomar said the agreement calls for the formation of a new government within one month.

4 revoked, 1 withheld

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certificates of 182 other public servants on the same grounds.

The certificate of former PMO secretary Molla Waheeduzzaman, now chairman of the Privatisation Commission, was withheld because his application was not submitted to Jatiya Muktijoddha Council, the minister said.

He mentioned that the National Security Intelligence (NSI) gave a positive report on Waheeduzzaman's participation in the Liberation War, 1971.

According to sources, the next course of action on his certificate would be decided later.

Meanwhile, the ministry has decided to cancel the certificates of 2,367 members of a special guerrilla force formed by the NAP-Communist Party-Chhatra Union combine in

1971.

Their certificates were not issued in a proper way and many of them even did not apply for those, sources said.

But, following a list provided by the left organisations, a gazette notification on August 4 last year published their names. The then Liberation War affairs secretary Masud Siddiqui was also named in the gazette.

The ministry would issue a circular asking them to apply afresh.

In another development, deadline for applications seeking freedom fighters' certificates has been extended to October 30.

The minister said they had already started scrutiny of 1.02 lakh applications. They had also sent directives to local administration and Muktijoddha Sangsad units asking them to identify fake freedom fighters.

Is this the grave

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Thessaloniki, Greece's second city.

The structure dates back to the late 4th Century BC and the wall surrounding it is 500m in circumference, dwarfing the burial site of Alexander's father, Philip II, in Vergina, west of Thessaloniki.

"We are watching in awe and with deep emotion the excavation in Amphipolis," Greek Culture Minister Konstantinos Tasoulas told the BBC.

"This is a burial monument of unique dimensions and impressive artistic mastery. The most beautiful secrets are hidden right underneath our feet."

Inside the tomb, archaeologists discovered two magnificent caryatids. Each of the sculpted female figures has one arm outstretched, presumably to discourage intruders from entering the tomb's main chamber.

The dig site is protected 24 hours a day by two police officers.

The excavation team has made no statement regarding the identity of the tomb's occupant.

But this has not prevented the media, archaeologists and laypersons alike from becoming embroiled in an often heated guessing game.

Archaeologists agree that the magnificence of the tomb means it was built for a prominent person - perhaps a member of Alexander's immediate family; maybe his mother, Olympias, or his wife, Roxana -or some noble

Macedonian.

Experts have not reached a verdict, but for the few hundred inhabitants of modern-day Amfipoli and Mesolakkia, the two villages closest to the burial site, there is no doubt: interred inside the marble-walled tomb unearthed near their homes is none other than Alexander the Great.

"Only Alexander merits such a monument," says farmer Antonis Papadopoulos, 61, as he enjoys his morning coffee with fellow villagers in a taverna opposite the Amfipoli archaeological museum.

"The magnitude and opulence of this tomb is unique. Common sense says he is the one buried inside."

Archaeologists and the Greek ministry of culture warn against such speculation, especially since Alexander the Great is known to have been buried in Egypt.

"We are naturally eager to learn the identity of the tomb's resident, but this will be revealed in due course by the excavators," Tasoulas, the culture minister, says.

The discovery, made after two years of digging, was announced during a visit to the site last month by Prime Minister Antonis Samaras, who described it as "very important".

The discovery has given rise to a wave of Greek pride and patriotism, and has helped the nation put its economic predicament to one side - temporarily at least.

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