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GAS CRISIS No end to plight anytime soon

ASIFUR RAHMAN and SUKANTA HALDER

The acute gas crisis, which has been plaguing the industrial sector and households, is unlikely to see a drastic improvement anytime soon.

A part of the transport sector that heavily depends on gas has also been hit hard with the filling stations struggling to supply gas to CNG-run vehicles.

Officials put it down to a huge gap between the supply and demand for gas.

The situation started getting worse in July when the government decided to stop purchase of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the international spot market due to a massive price hike.

It forced the authorities to ration the available gas to domestic and commercial consumers.

On October 16, state-run Petrobangla could supply



“Our production has dropped by 55 percent, and we don’t know when the situation will return to normal. We are at risk of losing our buyers.”

Md Khorshed Alam
Chairman of Ashulia-based Little Star Spinning Mills Ltd

2,621 million cubic feet (mmcf) of gas per day to the national grid against a demand for 3,760 mmcf. The average shortfall in gas supply has been around 1,000 mmcf per day over the last few months, according to its production data.

Meanwhile, the arbitrary rationing has aggravated the sufferings.

Take, for instance, the plight of Jummatul Bida, a domestic gas user, in the capital’s Gandaria area.

“For the last two months, we are not getting any gas from 8:00am till 7:00pm. I have to wake up at 5:00am to prepare breakfast as well as lunch before the gas supply stops,” said Bida.

She further said the crisis has upset her daily routine such as taking her children to school on time.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Attendants of patients sleeping inside mosquito nets on the premises of the Shishu Hospital in the capital. The sharp rise in dengue cases and deaths in recent times has increased people’s vigilance against the mosquito-borne virus. The photo was taken around 1:00am on Tuesday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Bridge gap between EC, field officials

Suggest former commissioners

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Former election commissioners and top EC officials yesterday stressed the need for coordination between the Election Commission and its field-level officials to hold a free and fair parliamentary election.

Speaking at a views-exchange meeting, they also called for reducing the gap between the commission and the field administration.

They made the recommendations a week after the EC held the local administration and presiding officers responsible for polling irregularities in the Gaibandha-5 by-election which ultimately led to the suspension of the polls.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

GAIBANDHA BY-POLLS Police, magistrates played silent roles

Some polls officials say they didn’t get enough co-operation to stop irregularities

MOSTAFA SHABUJ

Some polling officials yesterday alleged they did not get enough cooperation from law enforcers and magistrates to stop irregularities during the Gaibandha-5 by-election on October 12.

The police and magistrates watched on as the Awami League men stormed polling centres and cast fake votes, they alleged.

Election Commission Additional Secretary Ashok Kumar Debnath yesterday recorded statements of 40 presiding officers and 278

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Independent journalism to face more pressure

Editors’ Council on critical info infrastructure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The gazette declaring 29 government agencies and institutions as “critical information infrastructure” will create new pressure and obstacles in pursuing independent journalism, Sampadak Parishad (Editors’ Council) has said.

In a statement yesterday, the council voiced concerns over the gazette published in this regard, urging the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

KHULNA RALLY Bus owners threaten strike

BNP vows to defy obstacles

STAR REPORT

Just three days ahead of the BNP’s scheduled protest rally in Khulna, district bus owners’ association and a labour union yesterday announced that buses would not operate on Friday and Saturday if their demand for taking locally-made three-wheelers off roads was not met by today.

Even though they claimed that the announcement of the suspension of bus services had nothing to do with the BNP’s rally on Saturday, BNP leaders alleged that it was a conspiracy by the government to foil their protest.

BNP leaders said they have asked the party men to reach Khulna by tomorrow for joining the rally at the city’s Sonali Bank intersection. Senior party leaders are expected to join the event.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

West Indies, Ireland turn it around

REUTERS

Alzarri Joseph led West Indies’ inspired fast bowling display with a four-wicket haul to help them beat Zimbabwe by 31 runs in the T20 World Cup in Hobart on Wednesday and keep the twice former champions in the hunt to qualify for the Super 12 stage.

Joseph bowled with pace and precision to cause damage to Zimbabwe at the start and then returned in his second spell to snuff out the remaining fight from the African side to register career-best figures of 4-16 in T20 internationals.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



During a 31-run victory after posting 153 for seven, West Indies’ Jason Holder celebrates the second of his three dismissals, of Zimbabwe’s Ryan Burl (L), during the two Group A sides’ T20 World Cup encounter at the Bellerive Oval in Hobart yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



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