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ONSHORE GAS

Hardly any unexplored gas left

Nasrul Hamid tells Bangladesh Business Summit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh does not have much unexplored onshore gas that the country can draw upon, said Nasrul Hamid, the state minister of power, energy and mineral resources.

“Once upon a time it was said that there is a lot of gas potential in our country – that is a tale from 2001,” he said yesterday in a session titled “Strategic Approach for Energy Security to Attain Sustainable Growth” at the Bangladesh Business Summit.

During the Awami League government’s tenure, gas production increased, but the demand is much higher.

“This is the main reason why we need to import gas. The sea is one of the potential sources of gas. But we tried to invite international companies to explore there. They didn’t agree due to the low price of gas,” he added.

Hamid’s comments came in response to businessmen’s demand for uninterrupted gas supply and more gas exploration.

“Last year, all of a sudden, we faced a shortage in gas and the reason for the crisis was we did not want to use our local resources,” said Mahabubur Rahman, former

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The state of the Buriganga in the capital's Basila area is so poor that the water has turned pitch black. The water has become so polluted that every vessel leaves a thick foam in its wake. The photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

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No one should hold any post after retiring as president

Says Hamid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Abdul Hamid yesterday said he would not do anything after his retirement that would undermine the dignity and honour of the country and its people.

“No one should hold any post after retirement from the post of the president. Everyone should keep the dignity of this post. I believe that after becoming the president of the country, no matter how tempting it is, it is not right for them to hold any other post. If this is done, it will be an insult to the people of the country,” he said.

Hamid said this to journalists at Durbar Hall of the Bangabhaban where he hosted a dinner in their honour.

He said he tried to do politics honestly for a long time and got a lot of support from journalists.

“I have tried to do politics with honesty throughout my life despite a lot of obstacles. I didn’t receive anything negative from journalists in my 64 years in political career and I am grateful to all journalists.”

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RUSSIAN ASSAULT ON BAKHMUT

Ukraine readies counteroffensive

AFP, Kyiv

The Ukrainian military was preparing for an upcoming counteroffensive yesterday, with a top commander saying his forces’ ongoing defence of Bakhmut in the face of fierce and sustained Russian attacks was necessary to “buy time” for that push.

The remarks came as British intelligence said the frontline had shifted in the fight for Bakhmut – the longest and bloodiest battle of Moscow’s year-long invasion – but that any further Russian advance in the devastated town would be “highly challenging”.

Some military experts have questioned the sense of continuing to hold the city, but the commander of Ukraine’s ground forces, Oleksandr Syrsky, said that it helped win time in preparation for the coming counteroffensive.

“The real heroes now are the defenders who are holding the eastern front on their shoulders, and inflicting the heaviest possible losses, sparing neither themselves nor the enemy,” Syrsky was quoted as saying in a statement on Saturday.

“It is necessary to buy time to build reserves and launch a counteroffensive, which is not far off.”

In a video released on Saturday, Yevgeny Prigozhin, chief of Russian mercenary group Wagner, said that his forces were close to the

The Ukrainian defence ministry on Saturday reported that its forces had repelled “more than 100 enemy attacks” over the last day along the eastern front.

administrative centre of the city.

Standing on the rooftop of a high-rise building in what is said to be Bakhmut, Prigozhin is seen pointing towards a building in the distance.

“This is the building of the town administration, this is the centre of the town,” he said, clad in full military gear.

“It is one kilometre and two hundred metres away.”

Speaking as artillery boomed in the background, Prigozhin said the most important thing now was to receive more ammunition from the army and “move forward”.

Wagner has been spearheading offensives against cities in eastern Ukraine including Bakhmut. Both sides have suffered heavy losses.

The Ukrainian defence ministry on Saturday reported that its forces had repelled “more than 100 enemy attacks” over the last day along the eastern front.

In an interview with the French newspaper Journal du Dimanche, Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Olga Stefanishyna underscored the human cost of Russia’s assault on Bakhmut.

“Thousands of Russian soldiers died at a considerable rate in this battle,” she said. “The human mass of its infantry is a formidable

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Khaleda’s release to be extended by 6 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is set to extend the suspension of BNP Chairperson K h a l e d a Zia’s jail sentence by six more months after Law Minister Anisul Huq gave his opinion in this regard.

“I have sent the relevant file with my opinion for extending the suspension of her jail sentence to the home ministry,” the law minister told The Daily Star yesterday.

“Khaleda will not be able to go abroad and she has to take treatment at her residence,” he added.

Anisul Huq said the government released the BNP chief after suspending her jail sentence as per section 401 (1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Khaleda was freed from jail on March 25, 2020, after the government suspended her jail sentence for six months.

Khaleda landed in jail on February 8, 2017, after

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T-Rex skeleton to go under hammer in Switzerland

AFP, Geneva

A Tyrannosaurus-Rex skeleton dating back 67-million years will be auctioned in Switzerland next month, marking the first such sale in Europe, the auction house said.

The skeleton dubbed Trinity will go under the hammer in Zurich on April 18, the Koller auction house said.

Towering 3.9 metres (12.8 feet) in the air, Trinity has been valued at between six to eight million Swiss francs (\$6.5 8.7million), according to the auction catalogue.

But Christian Link, in charge of natural history memorabilia at Koller, told AFP he believed that was a “very low estimate”.

Trinity is “one of the most spectacular T-Rex skeletons in existence, a well-preserved and brilliantly restored fossil,” the auction house said.

The sale would mark “the first time in Europe and only the third time worldwide (that) a skeleton of an entire T-Rex dinosaur of exceptional quality will be offered at auction”.

Koller pointed to a 2021 study in the scientific

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TK 11.25 CRORE HEIST

Robbers knew which microbus to hit: DB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The robbers, who carried out the Tk 11.25 crore heist in Uttara, waited for a specific cash-carrying microbus in Mirpur DOHS area early in the morning of Thursday, detectives have claimed.

They said the robbers rented a black Toyota Hiace and got into the vehicle in Kurmitola around 5:30 in the morning. They immediately overpowered the driver and tied him up and put him in the back seat.

After the robbery, they went to the 300 Feet area, broke into two trunks, and stashed the money in two sacks and five bags, according to the Detective Branch (DB) of police.

They left behind a bag, two intact trunks, and the driver in the Hiace.

The DB raided Banani and Uttara in the capital and places in Sylhet and Sunamganj yesterday and the day before. It arrested

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Two firefighters trying to douse a fire that broke out in a cotton warehouse of Unitax Group in Sitakunda’s Chhoto Kumira area on Saturday. After nearly 25 hours, the firefighters could tame the blaze around 4:50pm yesterday. About 2,700 tonnes of cotton stored there was destroyed. The photo was taken around 1:00pm yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

EXTORTION CASE

Rab clears 8 students

Says complainant gave ‘incorrect info’

MUNTAKIM SAAD and EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

Rab has cleared eight Mirpur students of any wrongdoing and said the complainant of the extortion case had delivered “incorrect information”.

The students failed to speak up about the false accusation after being arrested, which lead to them being held for so long, claimed Rab-4 Sub-Inspector Monirul Islam, investigation officer of the case, in the final report submitted before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate’s Court of Dhaka on March 6.

The charges are a “matter of factual error”, the case investigation officer mentioned in his report.

The Rab IO also concluded that no evidence was found during investigation to support the accusation.

“The final report was prepared based on recommendations from Rab headquarters,” Monirul told The Daily Star.

The development provided significant relief to the students, who had been subjected to unnecessary harassments over the last one year.

Expressing satisfaction, Nahidul Islam Nirob, one of the accused, yesterday, said, “We have suffered a lot financially, mentally, and socially for this case. Finally, the

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