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Govt eyes more coal for power

PM asks for assessment on electricity prospect from Barapukuria mine; wants unsolicited power deals in public interest

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday advocated for open pit coal mining in Barapukuria, and instructed the power ministry to assess how much power could be generated from that coal.

At a cabinet meeting, she hinted at the oil, gas and port protection committee's resistance to open pit mining, and said her government is not concerned about "others' criticism". The committee vehemently campaigns against open pit mining, saying it is environmentally disastrous.

Hasina is in favour of a balanced approach for tapping the largely utilised coal resources. A cabinet member quoted the prime

minister as saying, "We are concerned about what would benefit us the most, and how much would it affect the environment."

"Some people suggest it is possible to set up power plants of 10,000 megawatt capacity, some suggest it could be of 15,000 megawatt. The power ministry may make a presentation on exactly what could be done with the Barapukuria coal," the PM was quoted as saying.

Another cabinet member told The Daily Star, the PM is likely to carry out a major reshuffle of all government power agencies very soon to ensure higher efficiency. She feels that many officials are unproductive and unable to give decisions, and they must go.

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EASY TO GET ELECTRICITY

PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

Light bulbs powered by illegal connections hanging over a footpath at Gulistan intersection in the capital yesterday evening. Street vendors in the area light their shops with such illegal power supply. They do not want to say who issues "the bills" or arranges "the service" for Tk 100-150 a month for each light bulb.



Govt asked to form teams to end illegal power use

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday directed the government to form a vigilance team in each city corporation to snap all unauthorised power connections to shops, markets and commercial organisations to stop illegal use and misuse of electricity.

It asked the government to form the team with members of law enforcement agencies, and to submit to it reports on their actions within 30 days.

The HC also ordered a probe into the reported allegation against the deputy commissioner of Rangpur about his playing lawn tennis by using floodlights.

The court asked the establishment secretary to place a report before it in this regard

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Anti-graft body to be kept under control

Cabinet okays proposals for restricting ACC's freedom

HASAN JAHIH TUSHER and EMRAN HOSSAIN

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) would be obliged to take permission from the government prior to initiating a case against any government officials.

This was approved by the cabinet yesterday amid debates triggered by a set of amendment proposals submitted in March last year by a government-formed committee.

The anti-graft watchdog would now also be accountable to the president and would not

remain self-governed anymore.

The cabinet approved the amendments ignoring the anti-graft body's cautions in the last few months that those would mainly diminish its independence and impartial functioning.

The ACC commissioners including its Chairman Ghulam Rahman even met the law minister to request him not to bring the amendments saying those would hamper independent functioning of the commission.

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Bullet-hit body found

Wife claims victim arrested by Rab 12 days ago; Rab denies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The bullet-riddled body of a jhut (garment waste) trader, who was allegedly arrested by Rapid Action Battalion on April 14, was found on the embankment at city's Pallabi yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Shahidullah alias Suman of Kafrul area.

Pallabi police said they

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MUTINY TRIAL AT PILKHANA

44 battalion went on killing spree

Over 30 of the unit murderers, one shot BDR boss dead

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

The 44 Rifle Battalion of Bangladesh Rifles had not only spearheaded the last year's BDR mutiny in Pilkhana, more than 30 of the killers are from this battalion of whom one soldier murdered the then BDR DG Shakil Ahmed.

The information surfaced yesterday during Darbar Hall to kill DG Shakil. Kajal later fired a the submission of the commanding officer of the



Salim Reza

battalion, before the special court-5 set up at the Darbar Hall in Pilkhana.

According to the submission, a group of armed soldiers of this unit led by sepoy Salim Reza swooped on the Darbar Hall to kill the officers.

Sepoy Kajal of 44 Rifle Battalion accompanied Sepoy Moin of 13 Rifle Battalion when he entered the

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BHOLA-3 BY-POLLS

EC to probe allegation of fake voting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission yesterday ordered a divisional top election official to enquire into allegations of casting fake votes at a polling station in the Saturday's Bhola-3 by-election.

The EC secretariat sent a letter to Barisal Divisional Deputy Election Commissioner Monirul Islam to investigate fake voting at

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