

RAMPAL POWER PLANT 26,620 tonnes of coal arrive at Mongla port

UNB, Bagerhat

A Chinese ship, carrying 26,620 tonnes of coal for Rampal Thermal Power Plant from Indonesia, arrived at Bagerhat yesterday.

Chinese flag carrying "MV Zhe Hai 526" ship arrived at Harbaria of the Mongla port.

The authorities started unloading the coal from the vessel around 9:40am.

Khandaker Riazul Haque, assistant manager of shipping agent Togi Shipping and Logistic Ltd, Khulna, said the ship carrying the coal left for Mongla on May 27 and anchored at Harbaria-II in Pashur Channel around 5:00am.

The coal will be taken to a coal shed through an automated belt, said Riazul.

On May 16, a total of 30,000 tonnes and 30,500 tonnes of coal arrived at Mongla port by MV Bashundhara Impress and MV Basundhara Majesty, on May 16 and May 29, respectively.



Leaders and activists of Jamaat-e-Islami gathering at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, in the capital ahead of their rally yesterday afternoon. Dhaka (south) city Jamaat held the rally to press home the party's three-point demand, including the next national polls under a caretaker government.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Sudanese capital quiet as ceasefire takes hold

REUTERS, Cairo

The Sudanese capital Khartoum was relatively calm yesterday morning as a US and Saudi brokered 24-hour ceasefire took effect, providing a window for humanitarian assistance and giving the public a break from the intense fighting.

The short ceasefire follows a string of violated truces between Sudan's army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), whose power struggle erupted into violence eight weeks ago, sparking a humanitarian crisis.

The US and Saudi Arabia said they shared "frustration" over the violations in a statement announcing the latest truce, and they threatened to adjourn the talks, which have continued indirectly, if fighting continues.

The fighting has turned the metropolitan area including Khartoum and its sister cities Bahri and Omdurman into a war zone, and led to conflict in the Darfur and Kordofan regions to the west.

Before the start of the truce at 6 a.m. (0400 GMT), residents reported anti-aircraft missiles firing in southern Khartoum and the Sharg el-Nil district across the Nile, which also saw air strikes.

UK politics reels from shock of ex-PM Johnson's departure

AFP, London

Former British prime minister Boris Johnson's angry departure from parliament over Covid lockdown-breaking parties sparked fevered speculation yesterday over his and the current government's future, with allies and enemies trading barbs.

Johnson announced he was leaving as a member of parliament on Friday, claiming he had been forced out in a stitch-up by his political opponents.

The 58-year-old populist politician has been under investigation by a cross-party committee about whether he deliberately lied to parliament over parties when he was in office.

In evidence earlier this year, he insisted he had not. But as the committee prepares to make public its findings, he said they had contacted him "making it clear... they are determined to use the proceedings against me to drive me out of parliament".

The Privileges Committee, which has a majority of MPs from his own Conservative party, has powers to impose sanctions for misleading parliament, including suspension.

Ordinarily, suspension of more than 10 working days leads to a by-election in the MP's constituency.

By quitting, Johnson avoids the consequences of a humiliating fight to remain an MP in his Uxbridge and South Ruislip constituency in northwest London where he holds a slim majority of just over 7,000.

He denounced the committee, chaired by veteran opposition Labour MP Harriet Harman, as a "kangaroo court".

Johnson loyalist Nadine Dorries also quit as an MP, meaning current Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, whom Johnson partly blames for his downfall, faces two by-elections as his party

linguishes in the polls.

Johnson's ability to generate strong feelings of admiration or hate was reflected in the reaction to his shock announcement.

The Daily Mirror likened him to "a criminal who refuses to come to court for his sentencing."

But Johnson's supporters rallied behind him, lauding his achievements in pushing through Brexit and galvanising support for Ukraine.

Conservative-leaning tabloid The Sun hailed his "unique magnetism and historic achievements" which "dwarf those of the pygmies who set out to expel him as an MP and, appallingly, have succeeded".

There was, however, widespread agreement that Johnson will remain a looming presence and a problem for Sunak.

"He may have resigned as MP but he made very clear in his statement that he does not see this as the end of his political career," the Times wrote.

The BBC added that "the ghost of Boris Johnson haunts Rishi Sunak. It is the last thing the prime minister needs".

Johnson led the Tories to a thumping 80-seat majority in the December 2019 general election on a promise to "get Brexit done".

That allowed him to railroad through parliament his divorce deal with the European Union, unblocking years of political paralysis.

But he was undone by his handling of the Covid pandemic, "Partygate" and a succession of other scandals that led to a ministerial rebellion in July last year.

He quit as prime minister and left office in September last year, though rumours persisted that he wanted another shot at the top job.



Big changes on cards with polls in mind Jamaat holds rally after a decade

FROM PAGE 1

from the 22nd batch to the rank of DIG, for 266 SP ranking officers from the 24th batch to the rank of additional DIG, and for 247 additional SPs from the 28th and 29th batches to the rank of SP, reads the proposal.

Once the promotions are given, an additional cost of around Tk 2.33 crore will be required per year, the proposal says.

Of the 34 additional IGP (Grade-II), 14 will get in-situ postings at the PHQ, five at the DMP, four at the special branch, two at police telecom, four each at four police training centres (Tangail, Rangpur, Noakhali, and Khulna), and five additional IGPs each will be posted at Sarda Police Academy, Police Staff College, CMP, Khulna Metropolitan Police and Police Hospital.

As part of the in-situ promotions, at least 10 DIG ranking officials are supposed to get regular promotions.

In the bureaucratic ranks, there has already been a move to promote the 22nd batch cadres, who are now deputy secretaries, to the joint secretary rank. Superior Selection Board (SSB), an administrative body under the public administration ministry that scrutinises the service records of public servants and recommends them for promotion to higher positions, held a meeting in this regard on Thursday. Sources in the ministry said the promotions might be made effective by July.

The government will post around 25 new DCs withdrawing 20 to 22 DCs as most of them have already completed their tenure. Two to three DCs will likely be transferred, said sources.

Most of the DCs will be posted from the 27th batch, whose recruitments were made during the Fakhruddin Ahmed-led caretaker government and appointments were made during the Awami League-led government in 2009.

Some of the DCs will be posted from the 25th batch, said sources. 15 public servants already posted as DCs

are from the 25th batch.

Currently, out of 64 districts, 20 DCs are from the 22nd batch, 29 from the 24th batch and 15 from the 25th batch. DCs from the 22nd batch completed their tenure as DCs.

On May 12, the government promoted 114 joint secretaries to the rank of additional secretary. With that promotion, the total number of additional secretaries stands at 420. Besides, two officers were also promoted to Grade-I.

Most of the promoted officers were from the 17th batch. However, a few of them were from the 15th and some other batches who were left out from the earlier promotion list.

Earlier in April 2022, a total of 94 joint secretaries were promoted to the rank of additional secretary. They were from the 15th and some other batches who also were left out from the promotion list.

Contacted, Md Kamrul Ahsan, additional inspector general (admin) of police headquarters, told The Daily Star yesterday that they sent the proposal for the in-situ promotion of officials and it is now pending with the home ministry.

Asked about the reshuffle, he said that it is a regular process. "Reshuffle will be done following proper procedure," he added.

The Daily Star tried to contact State Minister for Public Administration Farhad Hossain and Mohammed Mezbah Uddin Chowdhury, the ministry's senior secretary, several times, but they could not be reached for comments despite repeated attempts.

Meanwhile, the Gazipur Metropolitan Police (GMP) already got a new commissioner on May 31 while the Rangpur Metropolitan Police will get a new commissioner soon.

Earlier, on August 3 last year, forty districts got new SPs.

A new list for some 20 to 25 SPs has already been finalised for new posting. The officers from the 25th

and 27th batches will get priority for posting, a high PHQ official said.

Recruitment of the 25th batch was made during the BNP-led four party coalition government in 2006.

If the reshuffle is carried out, at least half a dozen SPs will be replaced by the new posts, said sources in the PHQ.

Besides, the PHQ is carefully monitoring some police officers from the 24th and 25th batches, mainly serving as SPs, and some others serving as additional DIGs, as they were found to have links to the BNP.

HARASSMENT PROBE

Indian wrestler accuses govt of silence

REUTERS, Sonipat

An Olympic wrestler yesterday criticised the pace of a police inquiry into sexual harassment accusations against the chief of India's national wrestling body.

Vinesh Phogat, a two-time Olympian who has accused Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh of sexually abusing her, said she has also been hurt by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence on the issue.

Phogat is one of seven female athletes to have lodged a police case against Singh accusing him of sexually harassing them.

Singh, who is also a federal lawmaker from Modi's ruling party, has denied allegations of making sexual advances, groping and threatening female athletes if they refused to meet him alone.

"I have only felt a deep sense of humiliation since I mustered the courage to say that I have been molested by a powerful man," Phogat told Reuters in her first interview since she and fellow wrestlers were forced out of a protest site by the police last month.

2 college students go missing in Padma

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Two college students went missing in the Padma River yesterday while taking a bath in the Rajshahi city's T-Badh area.

They are Sarwar Saim, 17, of Meherchandi area and Riyat Khandaker Ghalib, 17, of Dargahpara area, said Wahedul Islam, deputy director of Rajshahi's Fire Service and Civil Defense.

They went missing around 11:30am, Wahedul said.

They are first-year students of Rajshahi Cantonment Public School and College.

The two friends left home around 11:00am to bathe in the river and their families learnt about the incident at 12:00pm, said Ghalib's aunt Tamina Khatun.

UNB quoting another student, Nasir Hasan, said four friends, including the missing ones, went to the river and none of them knew how to swim.

Two units of six divers and locals are conducting a rescue operation, the fire service official said adding that they couldn't find them till 4:30pm.

Farmer murdered at Mymensingh home

UNB, Mymensingh

The slit-throat body of a 50-year-old farmer was recovered from his house while his wife was rescued in senseless condition from a paddy field nearby in Muktagacha upazila, Mymensingh yesterday.

The deceased was Md Shahjahan of Ghatrui village and his wife is Rashida Begum, 42, said Md Abdul Majid, officer-in-charge of Muktagacha Police Station.

Miscreants stabbed and slit Shahjahan's throat sometime on Friday night, the OC added.

Rashida was sent to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital for treatment and a knife used in the killing was recovered, said police.

An investigation is ongoing but no one was so far arrested in this connection, the OC Majid said.

There had been a dispute between Shahjahan and his brother over ancestral property, and arbitration was scheduled to be held in the morning, Hasmat Ali, a neighbour of the deceased said.

Also, a quack, locally known as Kobiraj, used to visit the house, he was seen going to the house last night, added Hasmat.

Two bodies recovered on Panchagarh road

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Police and firefighters recovered the bodies of two men and a motorbike from the Panchagarh-Tentulia highway at Birajoth Sarenomyile village in Panchagarh Sadar upazila on Friday night.

Sheikh Farid, 32, and Shariful Islam, 25, were from Tetulia upazila.

Family members said Farid along with Shariful started for his in-law's house at Kecherapara village in Sadar upazila on a motorbike Friday evening.

Police believe they might've been killed after a heavy vehicle ran over them.

Panchagarh Police Station OC Abdul Latif Mia said a case was filed in this connection.

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Jamaat holds rally after a decade

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In protest of the trial, Jamaat activists run violent activities in different parts of the country, according to law enforcement agencies.

They were also involved in such activities before and after the 2014 national election that was boycotted by then BNP-led 20-party alliance, said the agencies.

Over the last 10 years, Jamaat and its student body Islami Chhatra Shibir sometimes held unannounced rallies and brought out processions in different parts of the country on different issues.

The government on different occasions alleged that Jamaat, whose registration was scrapped by the

Election Commission, is engaged in subversive activities.

In yesterday's rally, most of the Jamaat leaders said it is a democratic party and carries out all their activities peacefully.

They also thanked police for allowing the rally.

Addressing as the chief guest, Syed Abdullah Mohammad Taber, a nayeb-e-ameer of Jamaat, said the next polls must be held under a caretaker government and the government should talk to political parties how the caretaker government system will be brought back.

He also demanded that party leaders who are in jail are freed.

"We will do everything including waging tougher movement against the government to realise our demand."

The Jamaat leader also stressed the need for a consensus among the government and opposition parties to "save the country and people."

The party first wanted to hold the rally in front of the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque on June 5. A team went to Dhaka Metropolitan Police headquarters to take permission. But police denied it.

The party deferred the rally to June 10 at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh. On some conditions, the DMP verbally allowed the rally, Jamaat sources said.

Rest assured of security at polling stations

FROM PAGE 1

He made the remarks while addressing the mayoral and councillor candidates of the Sylhet City Corporation elections.

Eight mayoral and 360 councillor candidates are competing in the elections slated for June 21.

A total of 487,753 voters are expected to cast their votes using Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) at 190 polling centres in the city.

The CEC urged voters to cast their votes early as voters might not get to exercise their franchise because of time constraints if many of them arrive and overcrowd the polling centres later in the day.

The voting will start at 8:00am and will continue till 4:00pm, without any break.

Asked if results can be influenced in exchange for money, he said, "Don't worry about such unrealistic things; it's impossible. I promise."

"We will monitor the election through CCTV from the centre.

Recent elections have been very good and no notable irregularities were seen. As we will be monitoring, we can take action faster. Now, we expect your confidence in the electoral process," said the CEC.

Regarding the use of banners and posters in plastic wraps, he said that the police can tear them down and there will be no need for a magistrate.

"The climate crisis is a global problem and the use of polythene wrap is a threat to the environment as it is non-biodegradable. For the sake of our future generations, please keep this in mind and do not use polythene wrappers," he urged the candidates.

He urged the candidates to adopt technology in their electioneering.

"Technology is making our life easier. Use your WhatsApp, run campaigns using Facebook, and use artificial intelligence. Why rely on conventional campaigns?" he said.

The CEC said strict actions will

be taken against those who will use or threaten to use muscle power. The EC has given clear instructions regarding this to the district administration and police.

He said the media and the voters are free and should raise their voices if eligible voters fail to vote on the polling day.

"We will definitely take action if any such incident happens," he said. He said the winner of any election should be welcomed and congratulated by everyone.

Sylhet's Divisional Commissioner Muhammad Mosharraf Hossain presided over the meeting where Secretary of the Election Commission Secretariat Jahangir Alam, Sylhet Metropolitan Police Commissioner Illias Sharif, Sylhet Deputy Commissioner Md Mozibor Rahman and Sylhet Regional Election Officer and Returning Officer Faysal Kader was present as special guests.