



B1 Home textile exports hit by gas crisis



P11 Onus on girls to extend dominance



P9 The fishbones of Bangladeshi capitalism



P7 Yemen rebels launch fresh Red Sea ship attacks

Govt scales up LNG imports to cope in summer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday approved the procurement of three consignments of liquefied natural gas (LNG) as the authority wants to increase gas supply during the summer.

The development comes at a time when the country has been mired in an acute gas crisis for a couple of months now due to low imports and reduced local production.

The procurement of three consignments at relatively lower prices is part of the government plan to import a total of 13 cargoes of LNG in the first half of this year.

The three LNG consignments -- whose approval was given yesterday by the cabinet committee on government purchase -- will come from two Singapore-based companies: Gunvor and Vitol Asia.

The state-owned Petrobangla will import two cargoes from Gunvor for \$9.85 per metric million British Thermal Units (MMBtu) each, according to the meeting documents.

Each LNG consignment will have 33.60 lakh MMBtu. The third LNG shipment will be imported from Vitol Asia with each MMBtu costing \$9.77.

Earlier on February 1, the government ordered one



Thick smoke billows from factories at the Shyampur industrial area in Old Dhaka, causing sufferings to locals, particularly the elderly and children. The High Court on Tuesday ordered the government to set up an air quality alert system to warn people about unhealthy pollution levels. Dhaka persistently ranks high on the list of cities worldwide with the worst air quality, coming in at number four yesterday morning.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

1,241 BNP-Jamaat men jailed in cases filed in 2012-15

PM tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday told parliament that 1,241 people were sentenced to jail in 1,967 cases filed in connection with BNP-Jamaat's subversive activities between 2012 and 2015.



The premier also said 188 people died and 4,973 others were injured at the hands of BNP-Jamaat terrorists who were waging a so-called democratic movement in the 2012-2015 period and from October 28 last year to this year's January 7 national election.

"A total of 8,105 cases were filed against those involved in the acts of sabotage. Trials of 1,967 cases have been completed," she said after Awami League MP Shajahan Khan wanted to know about the measures taken against BNP-Jamaat men involved in the subversive activities.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



LNG cargo for \$9.93 per MMBtu. This was the first time since the Ukraine war started in February 2022 that the government was able to purchase an LNG cargo for less than \$10 per MMBtu.

The country, which is facing an acute dollar shortage, had to spend up to \$38 per unit in the middle of 2022, compelling the government to suspend LNG purchases from the spot market for seven months from July 2022.

Currently, the national gas supply stands at around 2,600 million cubic feet per day (mmcfd) while the demand is about 3,760 mncfd.

As a result, household consumers in many areas are not getting gas for their cooking while power and industrial production are being seriously disrupted due to gas shortage.

More gas will be needed to produce electricity in the upcoming summer, Nasrul Hamid, the state minister for power, energy and mineral resources, told reporters after the meeting.

"We want to utilise our gas-based power plants at its best," he said, adding that the prices for the spot market are now lower than the long-term contracts.

Bangladesh has long-term LNG deals with Oman and Qatar for \$10 to \$12 per unit.

The purchase committee also approved the purchase and installation of a wellhead compressor for the Sriakail gas field for Tk 178 crore.

"We had low pressure from this gas field and after

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

FIGHTING IN MYANMAR Silent guns unnerving

Lull in battle; 64 more border policemen enter Bangladesh

STAR REPORT

Sixty-four more Myanmar border policemen took refuge in Bangladesh yesterday fleeing an ongoing battle between Myanmar troops and the armed group called Arakan Army.

They walked across a shallow part of the Naf in Whykong area of Teknaf, Cox's Bazar, officials said.

As the area across the border is home to many Rohingya families, a fresh influx may happen in the coming days, said Noor Ahmed Anwari, chairman of Whykong Union Parishad.

In the months following August 2017, thousands of Rohingyas came to Bangladesh amid a violent crackdown by the Myanmar army, and most of them walked across the border to Whykong, he said.

Kamal Hossain, chairman of the Forcibly Displaced Myanmar National Representative Committee (FDMN RC), said, "At least 80 families live there. They may face violence. We asked them to stay there at any cost."

As of yesterday, at least 328 members of Myanmar army, Border Guard Police, police, immigration and other officials

had taken shelter in Bangladesh, said a statement from the Border Guard Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader told reporters that no more Rohingyas will be allowed to enter the country.

The battle seemed less intense as no major explosion or gunshots were heard since Tuesday afternoon.

Noor Ahmed Anwari, the chairman of Whykong union, said locals prevented five Rohingyas from entering Bangladesh on Tuesday.

He urged the government to deploy more BGB men to guard the border to prevent any possible influx.

After an inter-ministerial meeting, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen told The Daily Star that Myanmar

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

HASAN IN INDIA Myanmar issue takes centre stage

STAR REPORT

Dhaka and New Delhi yesterday discussed the ways of working together to deal with current developments in Myanmar and the security implications for the two countries that share borders with the Southeast Asian country.

They also discussed a roadmap for future areas of substantive bilateral cooperation between Bangladesh and India.

Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud, who is on a three-day official visit to India, held a meeting with India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval at the Sardar Patel Bhawan in Delhi in the morning. He also met his Indian counterpart S Jaishankar at the Hyderabad House followed by dinner.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

EVE OF PAKISTAN POLLS 28 killed in blasts near campaign offices

US voices concern over lack of freedom in electoral process

REUTERS, DAWN ONLINE

Two explosions near electoral candidates' offices in Pakistan's southwestern province of Balochistan killed 28 people and wounded dozens yesterday, officials said, raising concerns over security on the eve of a general election.

Pakistan goes to the polls today amid rising militant attacks and the jailing of Imran Khan, the winner of the last national election, who has been dominating the headlines despite an economic crisis and other woes threatening the nuclear-armed country.

Authorities have said they are boosting security at polling booths. The first attack, which killed 18 people, took place at the office of an independent election candidate in Pishin district.

The second explosion in Qilla Saifullah, near the Afghan border, detonated near an office of Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI), a religious party that has previously been the target of militant attacks, according to the province's information minister.

The deputy commissioner of Qilla Saifullah, Yasir Bazai, said that 10 people were killed and 25 wounded

MORE ON PAGE 7

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



It is a recurring sight. Pedestrians and motorcyclists disregarding approaching trains. They often put their lives and those of others around them in danger as their need to hurry along outweighs their concern for safety. The photos were taken recently from the Moghbazar level crossing in the capital.

PHOTOS: PALASH KHAN AND PRABIR DAS

Sunak writes to Hasina, hopes for political amity

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has hoped that Bangladesh can move forward with reconciliation in political life together with progress on rights and freedoms.

"These values are the cornerstone of the Commonwealth family and create vibrant democratic societies which attract the inward investment needed for economic growth," he said in a letter to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

The letter, issued on Tuesday, comes a month after the January 7 national polls that were boycotted by the major opposition BNP and its like-minded parties.

In a statement on January 8, the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office said the Bangladeshi people did not have the fullest range of voting options as all political parties did not take part in the elections.

It also said that the standards of credible,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

WE DEEPLY MOURN
The Death of
The Director of Alliance Properties Ltd

Salma Asghar Rizvi
(1950-2024)

The Alliance Family, including her sons Zaki Rizvi and Razi Rizvi, request all friends, relatives and well-wishers to remember her in prayer for the eternal peace of her soul.

In remembrance and celebration of her life, we invite everyone to join us for Dua Mahfil as we come together in prayer, on 9th February (Friday) after Isha at Gulshan Azad Mosque.

Your presence will be a beacon of hope during these challenging times.