



CONTAINER TERMINALS CPA signs deals with foreign firms to run Laldia, Pangaon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) yesterday signed two agreements to outsource the operations of Laldia Container Terminal and the Pangaon Inland Container Terminal to two foreign companies, a move it says will bring world class technology, efficiency, and global best practices to Bangladesh's port system.

In the morning, CPA signed a 30-year deal with Danish APM Terminals for the development and operation of Laldia terminal in the upper estuary of the Karnaphuli river. It also signed a 22-year concession agreement with Switzerland-based logistics firm Medlog SA to manage and operate the Pangaon terminal on the Buriganga in Keraniganj.

Under the Laldia agreement, APM Terminals will design, finance, build, and operate the new terminal, with a possible 15-year extension based on performance.

Speaking at the signing ceremony at a hotel in Dhaka, CPA Chairman Rear Admiral SM Moniruzzaman said the terminal is crucial for meeting rising cargo demand.

"We are seeing 11 percent annual growth, and by 2030, we must handle an additional 1.5 million TEUs. This terminal is arriving at a time when we urgently need both capacity and efficiency," he said.

The event was chaired by Public-Private Partnership Authority (PPPA) CEO Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun.

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Hundreds of lesser whistling ducks land and gather over a wetland near Rajshahi University yesterday. As winter begins to set in, large flocks of migratory ducks are arriving in the area, joining the resident populations across the region.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Perform or be withdrawn

Yunus tells DCs next polls
will be unlike any other

STAR REPORT

Directing the deputy commissioners to perform their duties with utmost honesty, neutrality, and dedication in the upcoming polls and referendum, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said this election is not a conventional one; rather, it is an election to save the country.

Yunus also warned the DCs that those who cannot carry out their duties properly in the field will be withdrawn, while those who do well will be rewarded.

He advised that if anyone feels hesitant about taking on the challenge of such an election, they should say so now and step aside. "A quality election is our commitment to the people's uprising. There is no room for compromise here."

Yunus was addressing 50 newly appointed DCs, along with administrators from all 64 districts.

According to the chief adviser's press wing and participating officials, he said that the election would be particularly significant, as it includes a national referendum, making it distinct from past polls.

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VERDICT AGAINST HASINA UN welcomes accountability but regrets death sentence Amnesty condemns, ICG critical

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations said yesterday that former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's sentencing for crimes against humanity marked "an important moment for victims", but stressed that she should not



have been given the death penalty.

"We have been calling for perpetrators -- including individuals in positions of command and leadership -- to be held accountable in accordance with international standards," UN Human Rights Spokesperson Ravina Shamdasani said in a statement.

However, she stressed that the office had also "consistently advocated for all accountability proceedings -- especially on charges of international crimes -- to unquestionably meet international standards of due process and fair trial".

"This is particularly vital when, as was the case here, the trials have been conducted in absentia and led to a capital punishment sentence."

"We ... regret the imposition of the

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COP30 climate talks enter final week

Delegates dig into toughest issues as UN's climate chief urges
ministers to avoid any "stonewalling"

AGENCIES

Government ministers from around the world were preparing for a final few fraught days of talks at the UN climate summit as they bid to secure a deal that demonstrates global resolve amid increasing assertiveness from developing nations.

The job will not be easy. Countries are now digging into some of the toughest issues -- many of which have been left off the formal agenda to ensure the talks keep moving even if one issue gets hung up.

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is also expected to arrive on Wednesday to help rally consensus among parties at the summit in the Amazon city of Belem ahead of Friday's final scheduled session.

The UN's climate chief yesterday urged ministers to avoid any "stonewalling" and speed up negotiations, reports AFP. "There is a huge amount of work ahead for ministers and negotiators. I urge you to get to the hardest issues fast," UN climate Simon Stiell told the gathering. "I urge you to get to the hardest issues fast."

New dynamics in climate diplomacy have seen China, India and other developing nations flex more muscle this year, while the European Union is hobbled by weakening support back home and the once-dominant United States has skipped out altogether.

Asked if there was any one issue



dominating the talks, COP30 President Andre Correa Do Lago replied: "Everything, everything. It's very complicated."

Brazil's top goal for COP30 is to deliver an agreement that reaffirms the 2015 Paris Agreement, while acknowledging its shortcomings by laying out clear plans for future climate action, reports Reuters.

The summit's work is "dry, it's complicated, it's anguished, it's tiring -- and it's absolutely necessary," said

Britain's energy minister, Ed Miliband.

Over the last week negotiators had a chance to air their differences on three key issues: climate finance, unilateral trade measures, and planned emissions cuts that don't go nearly far enough.

The Paris treaty's central goal, to prevent warming beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, will be missed.

Current emissions trends have the world warming by at least 2.3 degrees Celsius, which Norway's climate minister said parties agreed would need to be addressed.

"It is a must-have to be able to talk about how we close the gap going forward," the minister, Andreas Bjelland Eriksen, told Reuters.

A bloc of developing countries is also seeking a payment schedule to ensure wealthy countries follow through on promises made at last year's COP29 to annually deliver \$300 billion in climate finance by 2035. The United States -- absent from COP30 -- has reneged on past commitments.

China's growing role in the UN climate talks follows decades of Beijing representing developing country interests at the talks while growing its own green technology sector.

"It's not that China set out with a brilliant new strategy; it just happened," said Li Xing, a professor at the Guangdong Institute for International Strategies.

Arson, crude bomb attacks continue after ICT verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Arson and crude bomb attacks continued as at least eight vehicles and two schools were torched in five districts, on the day the International Crimes Tribunal-1 sentenced deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her former home minister to death yesterday.

The Awami League had also called a two-day "complete shutdown" till yesterday.

With the latest, more than 50 arson and crude bomb attacks were reported nationwide over the last week, leaving at least three people dead.

In Kishoreganj, a masked person set fire to the Jashodal branch of Grameen Bank early yesterday. According to locals, who quickly doused the flames, the perpetrator chanted "Joy Bangla" while setting the fire.

Around 4:30am, an ambulance parked at the district Civil Surgeon's Office was torched. Three hours earlier, a group had blocked the Kishoreganj-Pakundia Road by felling a litchi tree. They also reportedly chanted "Joy Bangla".

Police are investigating all three incidents.

In Netrakona, miscreants set two schools on fire around 3:00am.

Three classrooms and a teachers' room at Monang Government Primary School were left charred, while the fire at Sajjura Mofila Foyez Ideal High School was brought under control before major damage, confirmed Kazi Shahnewaz, OC of Netrakona Sadar Model Police Station.

In Chattogram, a passenger bus in the Patenga area, and the signboard of the Metropolitan Sadar Circle Land Office in the Chatteswari area, were set on fire between 1:40am and 3:00am on Monday, police and fire service officials confirmed.

At least six buses were set ablaze in and around Dhaka, with three in Savar alone.

An Alif Paribahan bus in Birulia and a D-link bus in Dhamrai were torched late Sunday. Another minibus was torched in Ashulia early yesterday. All vehicles were empty and parked.

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Astronomers detect planet-threatening star explosion

CNN ONLINE

For the first time, astronomers say they have spotted a giant explosion released by a star beyond our solar system.

The eruption was similar in some ways to those unleashed by our sun, such as the solar storms that graced the night skies with auroras last week on Earth, but

at a much grander -- and ominous -- scale.

Rather than triggering colourful northern lights, this powerful explosion was more likely to have potentially devastating consequences for any nearby planet, according to new research.

The star, named StKM1-1262, is a red dwarf star about 130 light-years from Earth.

A coronal mass ejection, or a CME, was the likely cause of the explosive event. In our solar system, this phenomenon is a large cloud of ionized gas, called plasma, and magnetic fields that erupts from the sun's outer atmosphere.

When such outbursts are large enough to reach Earth, they can cause space weather, or major disturbances of our planet's magnetic field.

Astronomers have never been able to detect a coronal mass ejection releasing from another star -- until now. Researchers described the groundbreaking finding in a study published Wednesday in the journal Nature.



Palestinians wait to buy bread at a distribution point in Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip, yesterday, amid a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Ex-UP chairman dies after falling ill in prison

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Jafar Howlader, 55, a former union parishad chairman and local Awami League leader, died at Patuakhali General Hospital yesterday after suddenly falling ill inside the Patuakhali District Jail, prison authorities said.

He was arrested from his home on November 11 during a special operation in a previous case over vandalism of the local BNP office.

Jafar was a former chairman of Boro Bighai union parishad and former general secretary of the union unit of the Awami League.

According to jail officials, Jafar was rushed and admitted to the hospital at 1:40pm after he became sick around 1:30pm yesterday.

Doctors performed an ECG, but he passed away during treatment at 2:18pm.

Dr Ziaur Rahman, assistant surgeon of the Civil Surgeon's Office associated with Patuakhali District Jail, said Jafar was suffering from cardiac complications. "He had to be rushed to the hospital after his condition became serious."

His niece, Ruma, said the family had no prior information about any health issues. "My uncle was healthy. We did not know he had fallen sick. We only learned about it after his death," she said.