

Chattogram Port work stoppage enters sixth day; shipping adviser holds emergency talks

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Dhaka: The work stoppage at Chattogram Port, called in protest against the government's decision to lease the New Mooring Container Terminal to Dubai-based operator DP World, has entered its sixth day, bringing port operations to a complete standstill for the third consecutive day.

As a result, all activities at the country's principal seaport remain suspended, leaving more than 11,000 export-laden containers stranded and causing growing concern among traders and exporters, according to media reports.

In an effort to resolve the crisis, Shipping Adviser Brigadier General (ret'd) Sakhawat Hossain held an emergency meeting with key stakeholders and senior port officials at the port building at 10:00am on Thursday.

The port workers and employees initially began the protest last Saturday, observing an eight-hour work stoppage each day from 8:00am to 4:00pm. However, following what labor leaders described as the authorities' failure to respond to their demands—and alleged attempts to suppress the movement by fast-tracking the contract signing and transferring union leaders—the agitation escalated.

After three days, the Port Protection Movement Council announced a 24-hour shutdown starting Tuesday morning, followed by an indefinite strike starting Wednesday.

On Wednesday afternoon, business leaders in Chattogram held an emergency meeting with labor representatives, expressing moral support while urging them to seek alternative forms of protest. However, labor leaders rejected the proposal, maintaining their stance on continuing the work stoppage.

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