

1.1m in Rakhine barred from voting

AFP, Yangon

More than 1.1 million voters in Myanmar's western Rakhine state will be disenfranchised in upcoming national polls, according to data released by the election commission Friday, a move experts warned could fuel yet more conflict.

Civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) is widely expected to be returned to power in the November 8 election — only the second since the country emerged from outright military rule.

But with virtually all Rohingya stripped of citizenship and voting rights, many observers had already dismissed the polls as lacking credibility.

On Friday, citing security reasons, the election commission said security reasons meant voting would not take place in areas with hundreds of thousands more people — including more than 800,000 in Rakhine. Over half of the 600,000 Rohingyas remaining in Myanmar live in Rakhine, bringing the total number of disenfranchised in the state to more than 1.1 million, nearly two thirds of the state's population.

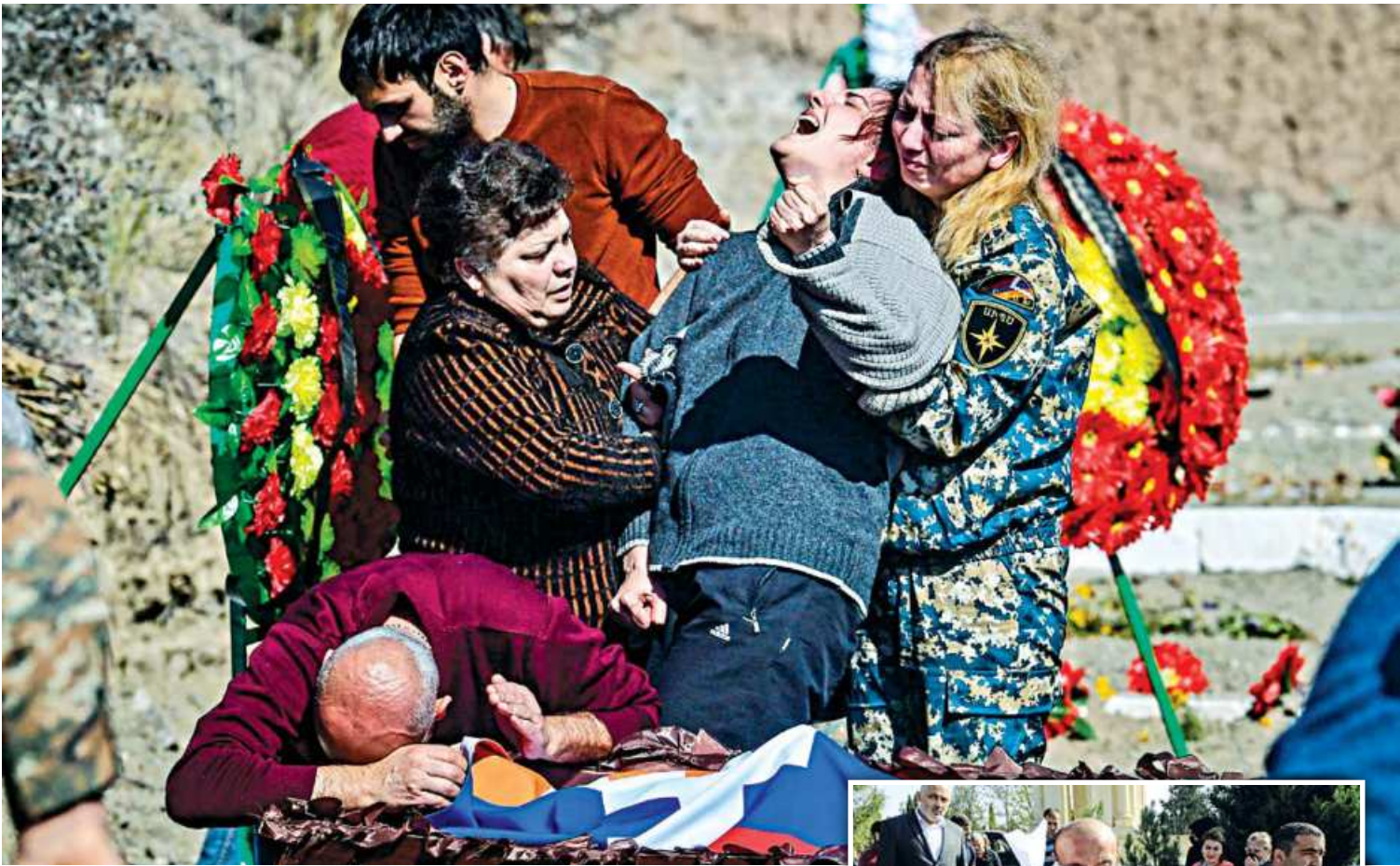
More than one million more stateless Rohingya languish in refugee camps in Bangladesh.

Arakan Army (AA) militants are locked in battle with the military in Rakhine's northern fringes as they fight for more autonomy for ethnic Rakhine Buddhists. The unrest has killed or injured hundreds and forced 150,000 from their homes since the civil war intensified in late 2018.

But the ethnic Rakhine Arakan National Party (ANP) secretary Tun Aung Kyaw said the decision to cancel the vote had been taken for political rather than security reasons.

"Most townships in Rakhine state where elections will not be held are areas the ANP would definitely win, so this is a deliberate ploy," he told AFP, adding it was "discrimination" against ethnic minorities.

Yangon-based analyst Richard Horsey agreed this would likely tilt the election in Rakhine decisively in favour of Suu Kyi's NLD. "There is a very serious risk that this will provoke increased armed conflict and political violence in Rakhine," he said.



A mother mourns over the coffin of her son in Stepanakert during fighting over the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh, yesterday. *Inset*, A man carries the body of his 10-month-old daughter, who was killed with five other relatives, including her mother, when a rocket hit their home in the city of Ganja, Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev yesterday vowed to take revenge on Armenia after a missile strike killed 12 sleeping people in Ganja, a dramatic escalation in the conflict over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region.

PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS



Pakistan ex-PM accuses army chief of ousting his government

REUTERS, Lahore

Former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif yesterday accused the country's army chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa of toppling his government, pressuring the judiciary, and installing the current government of Prime Minister Imran Khan in the 2018 elections.

Sharif was speaking via video link from London to a gathering of tens of thousands of people organised by opposition parties to kick-off a countrywide protest campaign in the eastern city of Gujranwala aiming to oust Khan's government.

"Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, you packed up our government, which was working well, and put the nation and the country at the altar of your wishes," Sharif told the gathering - the largest since the 2018 elections.

The former prime minister also accused the chief of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence spy agency of being involved in conspiring against his government.



Nine major opposition parties formed a joint platform called the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) last month to begin a nationwide agitation against the government.

Sharif was sacked by the Supreme Court in 2017 on corruption charges and left for London last November for medical treatment. He blames generals and judges for what he says were trumped up charges.

Pakistan's powerful military denies meddling in politics.

Maryam Nawaz, the daughter and political heir of Sharif and Bilawal Bhutto, the son of assassinated former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto who heads her Pakistan People's Party (PPP), also addressed the gathering.

Speakers at the gathering called for Khan's resignation and an end to military's interference in politics.

The next general election is scheduled for 2023.



US ELECTION 2020 15 DAYS TO GO



Trump 'is the most flawed person I ever met'

Former White House chief of staff allegedly told his friends; CNN to air warnings from former officials

CNN ONLINE

Former White House chief of staff, retired Marine Gen. John Kelly, has told friends that US President Donald Trump "is the most flawed person" he's ever known.

"The depths of his dishonesty is just astounding to me. The dishonesty, the transactional nature of every relationship, though it's more pathetic than anything else. He is the most flawed person I have ever met in my life," the retired Marine general has told friends, CNN has learned.

The reporting comes from a new CNN special scheduled to air Sunday night, "The Insiders: A Warning from Former Trump Officials," in which former senior administration officials — including former national security adviser John Bolton, former Health and Human Services scientist Rick Bright and former Department of Homeland Security general counsel John Mitnick — explain why they think the president is unfit for office.



Kelly's sentiments about the president's transactional nature and dishonesty have been shared by other former members of the Trump administration who also appear in the special.

Olivia Troye, a former top adviser to Vice President Mike Pence, has said the president knew about the impact the coronavirus pandemic would have on the US by mid-February, but that "he didn't want to hear it, because his biggest concern was that we were in an election year."

Elizabeth Neumann, another former DHS official, had criticized Trump for not condemning White supremacy after the first presidential debate in September.

Trump did say on Thursday during a town hall on NBC that he condemned White supremacy. "I denounce White supremacy, OK?," Trump told NBC's Savannah Guthrie. "I've denounced White supremacy for years."

NY POST REPORT ON BIDENS' GRAFT Twitter backtracks

AFP, Washington

Twitter has altered its policy on hacked content after its decision to block a news report critical of Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden provoked Republican fury.

The social media behemoth — used by hundreds of millions worldwide — said late Thursday it would in future only block stolen information which was posted directly by hackers, and label any other information of questionable provenance.

Senate Republicans earlier said they would subpoena Twitter chief executive Jack Dorsey to testify before two different committees on why the company blocked links to an article in the New York Post alleging corruption by Biden in Ukraine.

Republican senator Ted Cruz called the decision "election interference," while Trump — who trails Biden in polls 19 days before the presidential poll — decried the blockage by both Twitter and Facebook.

The Post's story purported to expose corrupt dealings by Biden and his son Hunter Biden in Ukraine. The newspaper claimed that the former vice-president, who was in charge of US policy toward Ukraine, took actions to help his son, who in 2014-2017 sat on the board of Ukraine energy company Burisma.

But the outlet's source for the information raised questions. It cited records on a drive allegedly copied from a computer said to have been abandoned by Hunter Biden, that Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani gave to the Post.

The Biden campaign rejected the assertions of corruption in the report.



A policeman gives the three-finger salute to pro-democracy protesters from a police bus at Wongwian Yai in Bangkok yesterday, as they continue to defy an emergency decree banning protests.

PHOTO: AFP

Thai protesters return to streets after clashes

AFP, Bangkok

Thousands of Thai pro-democracy protesters massed in multiple locations across Bangkok yesterday, defying an emergency decree banning gatherings for the third consecutive day after confrontations saw riot police use water cannon on peaceful demonstrators.

But the escalation in police tactics has not cowed the burgeoning youth-led movement, which is demanding the resignation of a premier first brought to power in a military coup and reform of the kingdom's powerful monarchy.

"I'm concerned for my safety but if I don't come out, I have no future," said business student Min, 18, equipped with a helmet and gas mask as she arrived in Bangkok's northern Lat Phrao district where more than 2,000 protestors took over a major intersection.

They raised a three-finger salute as passing vehicles honked in support and flashed a thumbs-up at the mostly black-clad protesters. At least 10,000 protesters rallied at different points of the city.

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha announced Friday an emergency decree banning gatherings of more than four people.

The former army chief also rebuffed calls for his resignation.

At least 65 prominent protesters have been arrested since Tuesday.

US charges Mexican ex-defense chief for drug trafficking

AFP, New York

A former Mexican defense minister has been detained in the United States and charged with drug trafficking and money laundering in the latest high-profile arrest linked to the country's powerful cartels.

Salvador Cienfuegos, a key figure in ex-president Enrique Pena Nieto's 2012-2018 government, was detained at Los Angeles airport on Thursday while on a trip with his family.

He is accused of conspiring to produce and distribute "thousands of kilograms" of cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and marijuana in the US between December 2015 and February 2017, documents released by federal prosecutors in New York said.

The 72-year-old retired general nicknamed "The Godfather" allegedly abused his position "to help the H-2 Cartel, an extremely violent Mexican drug trafficking organization," according to the

documents.

"In exchange for bribe payments, he permitted the H-2 Cartel — a cartel that routinely engaged in wholesale violence, including torture and murder — to operate with impunity in Mexico," the indictment said. The prosecution said the evidence included thousands of Blackberry messages between Cienfuegos and cartel members intercepted by the authorities.

The charges are punishable in the United States with a minimum of 10 years in prison and a maximum of life imprisonment. The indictment was filed by the New York City District Attorney's Office in August 2019, but was only released Friday.

The arrest could lead to US authorities pursuing even bigger targets. "Cienfuegos has enough information," a former official told AFP when asked if the investigation could even result in charges against former president Enrique Pena Nieto, who also faces corruption allegations at home.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh			
Ministry of Primary and Mass Education Directorate of Primary Education Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III) 147/F, Green Road, Dhaka-1205			
No. 38.01.0000.191.02.049.17-1042			Date: 12/10/2020
Invitation for Re-Tender			
KEY INFORMATION			
1.	Ministry	Ministry of Primary & Mass Education.	
2.	Agency	Directorate of Primary Education.	
3.	Procuring entity name	Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III).	
4.	Procuring entity code	4112202.	
5.	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.	
6.	Invitation for	Laptop (70 Nos.) & Printer (70 Nos.)	
7.	Invitation Ref. No.	38.01.0000.191.02.049.17-1042.	
8.	Date	12/10/2020.	
KEY INFORMATION			
9.	Procurement method	Open Tendering Method (OTM).	
FUNDING INFORMATION			
10.	Budget and source of funds	Government of Bangladesh (GOB).	
11.	Development partners	N/A.	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
12.	Project/programme code	224010700.	
13.	Project/programme name	Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III).	
14.	Tender package No.	LP 01.	
15.	Tender package name	Laptop & Printer.	
16.	Tender publication date	18/10/2020.	
17.	Tender last selling date	27/10/2020.	
18.	Tender submission date & time	28/10/2020 at 12.00 Noon.	
19.	Tender opening date & time	28/10/2020 at 03.00pm. In presence of tender submitting person (if any).	
20.	Name & address of the office(s)		
Selling tender documents		Office of the Project Director, Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III), 147/F, Green Road, Dhaka-1205.	Director (Pl. & Dev.), Directorate of Primary Education, Mirpur-2, Dhaka-1216.
Receiving tender documents		-Do-	
Opening tender documents		Office of the Project Director, Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III), 147/F, Green Road, Dhaka-1205.	
Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting		Office of the Project Director, Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III), 147/F, Green Road, Dhaka-1205.	
21.	N/A.		
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
22.	Eligibility of quotations	i) The tenderer must be authorized distributor or dealer or manufacturer of the brand. ii) The tenderer shall have a minimum 3 (three) years specific experience in the supply of similar goods in Bangladesh. iii) The tenderer have to submit attested copy of the following documents: a. Valid and up-to-date trade licence. b. Up-to-date income tax clearance certificate with TIN number. c. VAT registration certificate. d. Original and updated bank solvency certificate. e. Experience certificate on similar type of works. f. Photocopy of Treasury Chalan of buying tender documents. iv) All activities in connection with the said work will be guided as per "The Public Procurement Act-2006 & Public Procurement Rules-2010".	
23.	Brief description of goods or works	Supply of Laptop & Printer.	
24.	Brief description of related services	03 (three) years warranty for the system unit supported by the manufacturer website.	
25.	Price of tender documents Taka	Tk 1000/- is to be deposited through Treasury Chalan (non-refundable). (Code No. 1-2431-0001-2366).	
26.	Lot & identification Laptop & Printer	Location 147/F, Green Road, Dhaka	Tender security amounts in Tk 1,00,000/- (one lakh) only
		Completion time in weeks 2 weeks from the signing of contract	
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS			
27.	Name of official inviting tender	Md. Eusuf Ali.	
28.	Designation of official inviting tender	Project Director.	
29.	Address of official inviting tender	Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III), 147/F, Green Road, Dhaka-1205.	
30.	Contact details of official inviting tender	Tel: 9113595, Email: pd.pesp02@gmail.com	
The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.			
<div> Project Director Primary Education Stipend Project (Phase-III)</div>			
GD-1648			