

Sanctions must stay in place

Says Suu Kyi

AFP, Berlin

Myanmar's opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi said yesterday that sanctions against the military junta in her country should remain, as the European Union prepares to decide whether to lift the action.

In an interview with German daily Frankfurter Rundschau, the Nobel peace laureate insisted: "Sanctions must remain in place. Sanctions should only be lifted when something has changed here."

The EU is poised to decide in April whether to continue sanctions against the regime for human rights abuses.

Supporters of the trade and financial sanctions say they are the only way to pressure the military rulers since Suu Kyi was freed.



Israeli soldiers detain a blind folded Palestinian man during a military operation at the entrance of the village of Beit Omar village in the Israeli occupied West Bank yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Yemeni parliament approves emergency

AP, Sana'a

Yemen's parliament enacted sweeping emergency laws yesterday after the country's embattled president asked for new powers of arrest, detention and censorship to quash a popular uprising demanding his ouster.

The move escalates the showdown between Ali Abdullah Saleh and the movement that has unified military commanders, religious leaders and protesting youth in demands for his immediate departure.

The state of emergency suspends the constitution, allows media censorship, bars street protests and gives security forces 30 days of far-reaching powers to arrest and detain suspects without judicial process.

"It is the revolution that now decides the future of the nation," said Jamal Anaam, one of the protesters' leaders. We pay no attention to the measures."

The accelerating conflict has raised fears that Yemen could be pushed into even greater instability.

One dead, over 30 hurt in Jerusalem blast

AFP, Jerusalem

One person was killed and more than 30 were wounded when a bomb ripped through a Jerusalem bus yesterday, just hours after militants vowed revenge for two deadly Israeli raids on Gaza.

Police and officials said the bomb had been hidden in a bag at a bus stop near Jerusalem's central bus station at the western entrance to the Holy City.

"There was an explosion around 3:00pm local time near a bus stop where two buses had stopped to pick up passengers," Jerusalem police chief Aharon Franco told reporters at the scene.

"Apparently a bomb was left in a bag next to a public telephone."

Several hours after the blast, a woman who was critically wounded in the attack died of her injuries, Israeli radio and television stations said, citing officials at the Hadassa hospital in Ein Kerem.

US Defence Secretary Robert Gates in Cairo condemned the blast as a "horrible terrorist attack."

Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said 35 people had been wounded in the blast, which was the first major bombing in Jerusalem since September 2004, when a teenager bomber blew herself up killing two at a bus stop in French Hill, a settlement neighbourhood in east Jerusalem.

Of the wounded in yesterday's attack, at least three people were said to be in serious condition, and around five sustained moderate

injuries, medics said, with many suffering from shrapnel wounds.

"Four are very seriously injured and five are in moderate condition, while the rest are less badly hurt," Uri Shacham, a senior paramedic with the Magen David Adom emergency services told reporters at the scene.

The explosion, which shook buildings hundreds of metres away, hit the number 74 bus as it stopped to pick up passengers at a stop between the central bus station and the ICC conference centre.

An AFP correspondent saw people lying on the floor covered in blood, and many cars and buses with shattered windows.

Sirens echoed through the city as dozens of ambulances and police cars raced to the scene, a transit hub through which well over a thousand buses pass every day.

Following the attack, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu delayed by four hours his departure for Moscow where he is due to hold talks with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin.

But he stopped short of cancelling the visit. Ahead of his departure, Netanyahu was holding talks with Chief of Staff Benny Gantz and other top security and defence officials, his office said.

The talks were also believed to focus on Israel's response to an upsurge in rocket fire from the Gaza Strip, where militants yesterday fired two Grad rockets at the southern city of Beersheva.

South Sudan accuses north of air strike

AFP, Juba

South Sudan's army yesterday accused northern forces of bombing two sites south of their border, further escalating tensions as the south gears up for full independence.

"A (northern) Sudanese Armed Forces Antonov aeroplane bombed two areas in the west of Raja county in Western Bahr al-Ghazal state on Monday morning," said Philip Aguer, spokesman for the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

"People were very surprised, because there was no warning, but very fortunately there were no casualties."

A northern army spokesman dismissed the accusation as "completely false."

Rocket attack kills four in Pakistan

AFP, Quetta

At least four people including two traffic policemen were killed and 17 others wounded in a rocket attack in Pakistan's southwestern Baluchistan province yesterday, police said.

Officials blamed the attack on Baluchistan separatist insurgents who are fighting for political autonomy and a greater share of profits from the region's natural resources.

Two other rockets damaged a house but caused no casualties, he said.

INDIAN VOTE-BUYING SCAM

Opposition attacks PM

AFP, New Delhi

India's opposition parties yesterday mounted a united attack on Prime Minister Manmohan Singh after he denied any knowledge of an alleged cash-for-votes scandal.

The opposition targeted Singh after US cables released by WikiLeaks last week said his government had allegedly paid cash to lawmakers to win a key 2008 confidence vote for a nuclear technology deal with the United States.

"The prime minister has to take responsibility (for the scandal), he is the head of the government," said Sushma Swaraj, leader of the main opposition Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party.

"There is a cloud of suspicion, the prime minister should come clear," said Communist Party of India (CPI) lawmaker Gurudas Dasgupta.

The opposition's attack comes at a time when the Congress-led government is already struggling against a mountain of corruption scandals.

US diplomatic messages published by The Hindu newspaper reported that an aide to prominent Congress figure Satish Sharma

allegedly said \$2.5 million had bought the votes of four MPs.

A US embassy staffer in New Delhi was shown "two chests containing cash" and was also told that \$25 million was "lying around" to ensure the government would survive the vote, according to the leaked cables.

The 2008 vote has long been the subject of corruption claims. At the time, opposition MPs in parliament waved wads of money they alleged the government was using to try to bribe them.

"What happened in 2008 was a fraud on India's democracy," said Arun Jaitley, leader of the BJP in the upper house. The party has called for the prime minister to quit over the scandal.

Singh, whose "Mr Clean" image has come into question as he tries to shrug off the corruption scandals, yesterday told parliament that his government and party were not involved in any acts of purchasing votes.

"None from the Congress party or the government indulged in such unlawful acts during the trust vote," Singh said. "We have not been involved in any such transaction and we have not authorised any such transaction to take place."

At least 15 killed in Syrian protest city

AFP, Daraa

Human rights activists said at least 15 people were killed yesterday in the volatile Syrian city of Daraa, the focal point of a week of anti-regime protests.

Activists and residents said security forces opened fire on protesters outside the Omari mosque early yesterday, after hundreds of people had gathered overnight to prevent police from storming it, and that shooting had continued sporadically over the course of the day.

One activist said "at least nine people were killed in the attack on the mosque, including a child, a woman and two members of the security forces," and that six more were killed in attacks on a funeral procession later in the day.

"At least thirteen were killed in the overnight attack on the mosque, and we estimate five or six were shot dead during the funeral procession," said another activist.

Earlier, an AFP reporter saw two bodies being brought into the city hospital shortly after gunfire broke out in the afternoon around the mosque, where activists have been holed up for a week.

An 11-year-old girl was also killed by a stray bullet when security forces allegedly opened fire on a funeral procession for two of those killed overnight, the activist said.

The government of President Bashar al-Assad has promised to probe the Daraa killings.

The governor of Daraa has been sacked, stated a government source.

Thai army chief rejects border observers

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's powerful army chief yesterday said Indonesian observers were not wanted in a disputed area on the Thai-Cambodia border, despite an earlier agreement between the neighbours.

"Regardless of where the observers are from, we don't want them. In the disputed area because it's dangerous and will complicate the problem", General Prayut Chan-O-Cha said.

A simmering border dispute over a small piece of land around an 11th century temple erupted in early February and heavy fighting between the armies of both sides claimed at least 10 lives and displaced thousands.

French-Turkish researchers detect early quake signals

AFP, Istanbul

Franco-Turkish researchers have found that a deadly 1999 earthquake in Turkey was preceded by seismic signals, raising hopes of a predictive system for future tremors as Japan reels from its disaster.

Studying copious data from the period just before the quake hit Turkey's northwestern Kocaeli province on August 17, 1999, the seismologists discovered what they dubbed a "preparatory phase" lasting 44 minutes.

"This is a very special seismic signal, corresponding to a deep and slow sliding of the fault, a vibration that goes on for 44 minutes," said team member Michel Bouchon, research director at the National Centre for Scientific

Research, France (CNRS). "This trend continued until the earthquake, increasing its intensity," he told AFP.

The earthquake, which measured 7.6 on the Richter scale, devastated Turkey's most industrialised region, including some suburbs of Istanbul, and killed some 20,000 people.

"One can say that abnormal activities precede nearly half of major earthquakes, suggesting the presence of a preparatory phase," he said.

An alert 44 minutes prior to a major tremor would be critical to saving lives as it would allow people "to gather in open spaces such as parks or squares in a city like Istanbul," which is poorly prepared for seismic risks, Bouchon said.

Social Development Foundation (SDF)

Flood Restoration and Recovery Assistance Program

HOUSE # 4, ROAD 21, SECTOR 4, UTTARA MODEL TOWN, DHAKA-1230
Tel-880-02-8963946, 8959581, 8959368, Fax-880-02-8961096, E-mail: md@sdfbd.org

IFT No.: PD/Flood/SDF/PS(3)/2011/157

Date: 22/03/2011

Invitation for Tenders

(Goods-Single Lot)

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Finance.		
2	Agency	Social Development Foundation (SDF),		
3	Procuring Entity Name	Project Director, Flood Project, SDF		
4	Procuring Entity Code	Not used at present		
5	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka, Bangladesh		
6	Invitation for	i) Supply and Installation of TV, DVD, Video & Multimedia Projector etc. [Package No. G.7.0 (F)] for Flood Project to be implemented by Flood Project, Dhaka office, under Social Development Foundation (SDF), Dhaka, during the year of 2010-2011.		
7	Invitation Ref No	IFT No.: PD/Flood/SDF/PS(3)/2011/157		
8	Date	22/03/2011		
9	Procurement Method	NCT(Open Tendering Method-OTM)		
10	Budget and Source of Funds	IDA Credit # H. 349-BD		
11	Development Partners	IDA		
12	Tender Package No.	G.7.0 (F)		
13	Tender Package Name	As stated in sl no. 6		
14	Tender Publication Date	24/03/2011		
15	Tender Last Selling Date	10/04/2011		
16	Tender Closing Date and Time	Date	Time	
		11/04/2011	2:00 PM	
17	Tender Opening Date and Time	11/04/2011 2:30 PM		
18	Name & Address of the office(s)	Address		
	- Selling Tender Document	(i) Flood Project Office, Social Development Foundation (SDF), House # 4, Road # 21, Sector # 4, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka-1230.		
	- Receiving Tender Document	Flood Project Office, Social Development Foundation (SDF), House # 4, Road # 21, Sector # 4, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka-1230.		
	- Opening Tender Document	Flood Project Office, Social Development Foundation (SDF), House # 4, Road # 21, Sector # 4, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka-1230.		
19	Place/Date/Time for Pre-Tender meeting	N/A		
20	Eligibility of Tenderer	All Countries except Israel and IDA non-eligible countries		
21	Brief Description of Goods or Works	As stated in sl no. 6		
21	Brief Description of Related Services	Needs after sales services with genuine spare parts including limited warranty (for each package)		
22	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	1000.00 (One thousand only) [Non-Refundable] for each set.		
23	Package No.	Lot No	Identification of Lot	Completion Time in Weeks / Months
	G.7.0 (F)	1	Supply and Installation of TV, DVD, Video & Multimedia Projector etc. with all accessories for Flood Project, SDF.	4 Weeks
			Tender Security Amount (TK)	
			12,000.00	
24	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Nurul Islam Sardar		
25	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Managing Director		
26	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Social Development Foundation (SDF) House # 4, Road # 21, Sector # 4, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka-1230.		
27	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Ph.: 880-02-8963946, 8959581, 8959368 FAX: 880-02-8961096		
28	Special Instructions:	a) Tender Security money must be submitted along with the respective tender through Pay Order/Bank Draft/Bank Guarantee in favor of the Project Director, Flood Project. b) Manufacturer's Authorization must be submitted along with the tender. c) The Tenderer shall have a minimum of 5 years of overall experience in the supply of goods and related services. d) The Tenderer shall have a minimum of 3 years of specific experience in the supply of similar goods and related services. e) The satisfactory completion of supply of similar goods of value stated in the TDS (Tender data sheet) under a single contract in the last five years; and f) Availability of minimum liquid assets or working capital or credit facilities from a Bank, as specified in the TDS(Tender data sheet). g) The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without any reason thereof prior to acceptance.		
		(Md. Nurul Islam Sardar) Managing Director Social Development Foundation (SDF)		

Vacancy Announcement

United Nations Development Programme in Bangladesh announces the vacancy for the following posts for the Strengthening Election Management in Bangladesh (SEMB) Project.

1. Project Coordinator - SC (SB5)
2. National Programme Officer - SC (SB4)

The duration of the Service Contract is one year initially, subject to renewal on an annual basis upon satisfactory performance and availability of funds

For details of the Terms of Reference and instructions to apply, please visit our website: <http://www.undp.org.bd/jobs>. Applications should be received no later than 17:00 pm, 7 April 2011. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Invitation To Bid (ITB)

Procurement of Video & Audio Conference Device

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Bangladesh hereby invites sealed bids from interested bidders for procurement of Video & Audio Conference Device.

Submission of Bids: The envelopes should state "Procurement Video & Audio Conference Device" and marked as 'Confidential'. The selection of Bids will be done based on the UNDP procurement rules and regulations.

All interested firms may collect the bidding Documents (ITB) from the below e-mail address: parvin.akther@undp.org. Bid must be dropped to the Procurement Cluster of UNDP, IDB Bhaban (12th Floor), Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka before 12.30 hrs on 17 April 2011.