



UN chief raises concerns on Maldives crisis

AFP, United Nations

UN leader Ban Ki-moon on Thursday called for political dialogue in the Maldives to overcome new tensions in the Indian Ocean state where the former president says he was ousted in a coup.

The secretary general expresses his concern about the continued political tensions in the Maldives, which were manifested today in actions that impeded the opening of the Maldives' parliament," said UN spokesman Martin Nesirky.

Opposition MPs prevented the new president Mohamed Waheed from opening parliament and violent protests erupted outside the building. Ban said the political crisis following the February 7 change of power "must be resolved peacefully through a national process and on the basis of dialogue and consensus."

"The secretary general urges all parties concerned to resume immediately their political dialogue," said his spokesman, "to find an agreeable way forward on the basis of the constitution and without jeopardizing the democratic gains achieved thus far in the Maldives."

Mohamed Nasheed says he was ousted by Waheed in a military-led coup on February 7 and called on its supporters to stage Thursday's demonstration against the new government.

N Korea threatens South despite accord with US

World cautiously welcomes nuke treaty

AFP, Seoul

North Korea yesterday renewed threats to launch a "sacred war" against South Korea, indicating cross-border ties will remain icy despite Pyongyang's surprise nuclear deal with Seoul's close ally Washington.

The North's agreement to freeze some nuclear and missile activities in return for massive US food aid has raised cautious hopes of eased tensions under its new young leader Kim Jong-Un.

In statements released late Wednesday announcing the deal, both Pyongyang and Washington pledged to work for better relations.

But Friday's comments from the North's supreme military command struck a different tone with the South.

The command accused South Korean troops of displaying slogans or placards slandering the North's top leaders at their barracks, shooting ranges and other military facilities.

The soldiers "openly slandered and defamed the dignity of the supreme leadership of the DPRK (North Korea)", it said in a statement on the official news agency.

The command vowed to "mercilessly" wipe out anyone who "slightly insults and defames" the dignity of the North's supreme leadership.

Pyongyang made similar threats last year when South Korean reservists were found to be using pictures of the ruling Kim dynasty as rifle-range targets. The South says that practice has been stopped.

Last Saturday it threatened a "sacred war" over US-South Korean joint military drills, describing them as a "silent declaration of war".

Under the agreement with the United States, the communist state promised to suspend a uranium enrichment programme and declare a moratorium on nuclear and long-range missile tests. It would also readmit UN nuclear inspectors.

The United States said it would provide the impoverished and hungry

country with 240,000 tonnes of food intended for young children and pregnant women.

Analysts said Wednesday's deal could help revive the six-party talks, but many remain sceptical that the North will abandon its nuclear weaponry.

North Korea's pledge to suspend uranium enrichment, as well as nuclear and long-range missile tests, has received a cautious international welcome.

A White House spokesman called it a "positive first step" towards denuclearising the Korean peninsula.

China and Russia also welcomed the move, while Japan said it could "be seen as progress".

China, North Korea's sole ally, has welcomed the deal and pledged to push ahead with efforts to revive the wider nuclear dialogue.

Washington had also called on Pyongyang to improve ties with Seoul, although the State Department made no mention of this in its statement Wednesday.

Sanctions aiding 'Coup in Pakistan was imminent' reforms: Suu Kyi

AFP, Ottawa

Pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi thanked Canada and other countries for maintaining sanctions on Myanmar, saying they were aiding its transition to democracy.



SUU KYI

"Canada has helped us greatly with regard to our movement towards democracy," she said in a speech by video link to Carleton University on Wednesday, according to the Canadian Press.

She added that Myanmar's new civilian leaders were responding to the economic pressure from Canada and other Western powers by agreeing further reforms.

"The way in which you can continue to help us is to keep up your awareness of what is happening in Burma," said Suu Kyi, an international symbol of peaceful democratic protest following years of house arrest.

"Don't be too optimistic. Don't be too pessimistic. Try to see things as they are and try to keep contact with the ordinary people of Burma."

DAWN ONLINE

Mansoor Ijaz, the central character in the memo case, revealed on Thursday that he had helped former Pak ambassador Husain Haqqani by delivering the purported secret memorandum to the then US military chief because he had information about the possibility of a military coup in Pakistan.



MANSOOR IJAZ

During the cross-examination before the judicial commission investigating the case, the Pakistani-American businessman said he had been briefed by at least four intelligence networks of different countries after the killing of Al Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad on May 2, last year.

He said he had obtained the information about actions and reactions of Army Chief Gen Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, President Asif Ali Zardari and the military secretary to the president after the incident, details of foreign visits of the Director General of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and transcripts of conversation between air traffic control staff and the pilots of the US helicopters which raided Osama's compound.

Replying to a question by Salahuddin Mengal, counsel for PML-N lawmaker Gen (ret'd) Abdul Qadir Baloch, Ijaz said the material he had was sufficient for him to believe that a military coup was imminent.

He said the urgency shown by Haqqani had also supported his belief that a military coup was imminent and then he contacted former US national security adviser Gen James Jones for delivering the memorandum to Admiral Mike Mullen.

India now says

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Tako Dabi, a spokesman of Arunachal government, told the media on Wednesday night about "the fall" in water level of the Siang due to either diversion of water in its upper reaches in Tibet, China or any blockade there.

He claimed such a fall in Siang water level has not been seen in the last 50 years.

India also said China assured it of not doing anything that could hurt the interests of lower riparian countries.

"On the question of diversion of water, let me say that India and China have had many exchanges on this subject, even at the highest levels, between the prime ministers of the two countries.

"Our own look into this whole question has also led us to believe that what the Chinese are telling us is correct", said Joint Secretary

(East Asia) Gautam Bambawale.

The Brahmaputra has its source in China's southwestern Tibet region where it is known as the Yarlung Tsangpo, and it enters India in the mountainous, remote northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh.

The 2,900-kilometre river then descends into the plains of adjoining Assam state and ends in Bangladesh in the Bay of Bengal, along the way supplying water to hundreds of millions of farmers and residents.

Yesterday, China denied that a dam it was building on a major river in Tibet was impacting the lower reaches of the waterway in India, reports AFP.

"Our projects have not affected the lower stream regions, including those in India," China's foreign ministry spokesman Hong Lei told reporters when asked of his nation's water usage on the river.

"Overall, the utilisation of the river by the Chinese side is very low."

China pays attention to the impact on the lower stream regions when developing its water resources, Hong said, adding that Chinese officials have briefed India on its development of the Yarlung Tsangpo.

"To satisfy the needs of the Tibet Autonomous Region, China has begun to build the hydroelectric power station of Zangmu in the middle part of Yarlung Tsangpo river," Hong said.

"It does not have a big capacity and does not retain an excessive amount of water. It will not affect the downstream water regulation and environment."

Amar Sonar

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preceding days by the army, no resolution of the crisis would be possible.

Meanwhile, a complete non-violent non-cooperation movement went on in the province, with a call for a hartal or general strike to be observed every day from 6:00am to 2:00pm.

On March 3, the students of Dhaka University continued their agitation in myriad forms. In the rest of the country too, clear demands were being voiced for Bangabandhu to take decisive action over the issue. At Paltan Maidan, the projected national anthem of Bangladesh, Rabindranath Tagore's "Amar Sonar Bangla", was sung at a meeting of the Chhatra League presided over by Nur-e-Alam Siddiqui.

The flag of a free Bangladesh, unfurled at Dhaka University the previous day, was demonstrated before the crowd. The students formally raised the flag and also read out a proclamation announcing the birth of an independent Bangladesh.

Throughout Bangladesh, rebellion was in the air.

All activities were focused on the Dhanmondi residence of Bangabandhu, who constantly exhorted the crowds to be calm as they struggled for their democratic rights. The big question, though, related to what kind of announcement he would make at the public rally of March 7. Rumours and reports of the Bangalee leader going for a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) made the rounds. They had the junta and West Pakistani political circles worried.

NEWS IN brief

Australia names new FM

AFP, Sydney

Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard yesterday named former state premier Bob Carr as foreign minister as she asserted her authority following a leadership challenge.



Carr, the ex-leader of New South Wales, will become the nation's top diplomat after Kevin Rudd suddenly resigned last week in order to take on Gillard and Senator Mark Arbib quit in the wake of Labor Party infighting.

The move follows a period of unprecedented rancour within Labor, with ministers dividing between the two candidates for the party leadership.

Pakistan starts Senate polls

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistani regional lawmakers yesterday began casting their votes for members of the Senate, the indirectly-elected upper house of the federal parliament, officials said.

Each of Pakistan's four provinces will have 23 seats in the 104-member next senate, with four going to the capital Islamabad and eight for the tribal areas in the northwest.

Half the senate's current 100 members retire on March 12 after completing their six-year terms, and the four non-Muslim minority places are an expansion of the chamber being chosen for the first time.

At least nine candidates were elected unopposed, the official said, leaving 45 seats being contested.

Van Rompuy reappointed EU head

AFP, Brussels

EU leaders on Thursday reappointed quiet but canny Belgian politician Herman Van Rompuy as European Union president for a second 30-month term, while also naming him chairman of the 17-nation eurozone.

"It is with pleasure that I accept a second mandate. A privilege to serve Europe in such decisive times; also a big responsibility," said Van Rompuy on microblogging site Twitter.

In his 11 months at the helm of Belgium, the Flemish but francophile politician stabilised a country deeply split between its Dutch-speaking north and poorer French-speaking south, earning the nickname of a Mr Fixit.

India, China agree on maritime cooperation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Opening a new vista in their bilateral ties, nuclear-armed Asian giants India and China have decided to begin a dialogue on maritime cooperation that could include joint operations against pirates and sharing technological knowhow on seabed research.

The maritime cooperation proposal, seen as a major confidence-building move ahead of Chinese President Hu Jintao's visit here this month-end, were made by visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi who held talks with his Indian counterpart SM Krishna here on Thursday.

Briefing the media on the talks between the two Foreign Ministers, Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesman Syed Akbaruddin said the two countries "have agreed to establish and institutionalize a maritime dialogue between the two countries. Both India and China are maritime nations with long coastlines and active navies. The dialogue will aim at promoting cooperation and coordination between the two countries."

He said the details of the dialogue were yet to be fleshed out but sources said it would include the navies and coast guards of the two countries for possible joint anti-piracy operations and sharing of expertise on seabed research.

The dialogue on maritime cooperation assumes significance as China is scaling up its naval presence in the Indian Ocean, one of the busiest sea lanes for international trade and its own energy supply route, and India forges closer defence ties with ASEAN countries straddling the South China sea.

INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH Purchase Department. Block # B, Plot # 16, Aftabuddin Ahmed Road, Bashundhara, Dhaka 1229. Tel: 8401645 - 53. ENLISTMENT OF SUPPLIERS / MANUFACTURERS / CONTRACTORS / SERVICE PROVIDERS. Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) invites application from bona fide suppliers/ manufacturers /contractors / service providers for enlistment of the following items: 1. Computer, Server, Printer and Network Equipment / Accessories... 16. Fuel/Lubricants / CNG for the Generators & Vehicles.

Vacancy Announcement. United Nations Development Programme in Bangladesh announces a vacancy for the post of Capacity Building Officer for "Police Reform Programme (PRP)" project. The duration is until June, 2014. 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 Job Description and instructions to apply, please visit our website: http://www.undp.org.bd/jobs. Applications should be received no later than 17.00 PM, Saturday, 17 March 2012. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Female candidates are particularly encouraged to apply.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার. বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ. পরিচালক (পুলিশ সুপার) এর কার্যালয়. ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল পুলিশ-২, নলজানী প্লট নং-২২৫, চান্দনা চৌরাস্তা, গাজীপুর. দরপত্র আহবান বিজ্ঞপ্তি. ২০১১-২০১২ অর্থ বৎসরের ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল পুলিশ-২, গাজীপুর পুলিশের ৪র্থ কোয়ার্টার (এলিফ হাউস/১২) মাসের (০১) বিএসটিআই কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত উন্নতমানের স্যানিটর তৈরি কন্ট্রোলিংয়ের মাধ্যমে (০২) খালি পুরাতন চট/প্রাচীর বস্তা ক্রয়/বিক্রয় করা দরপত্র আহবান করা যাইবে।