

Biden calls for easing of tensions in Asian waters

AFP, Singapore

US Vice President Joe Biden yesterday called on Asian nations to reduce tensions in disputed waters across the region as Washington redoubles efforts to confront China's growing maritime presence there.

In a flurry of diplomacy on the first day of his two-day visit to Singapore, President Barack Obama's number two urged parties to reject bellicose threats in the South China Sea and East China Sea and "quickly" agree on rules to prevent conflict.

China claims nearly all of the strategically vital South China Sea, even waters close to the shores of its smaller neighbours, a regular flashpoint with smaller nations like Vietnam and the Philippines.

Beijing is also locked in an increasingly fractious maritime row with Japan in the East China Sea over a series of disputed islands -- a source of growing concern for Washington which has a defence alliance with Tokyo.

As well as meeting with Singaporean leaders, Biden took the opportunity to hold talks with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who was visiting Singapore on the same day as part of tour of Southeast Asia.

"We each expressed our concern about the rising tensions in the South China Sea," Biden told reporters after a meeting with

Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong.

"The United States urges all parties to reject coercion, intimidation and threats to the use of force," said Biden, who arrived late Thursday from an earlier visit to India.

"We encourage the ASEAN and China to quickly reach agreement on a code of conduct," he added.

Four members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations -- Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam -- are locked in rival claims with China and Taiwan over areas in the South China Sea.

The 10-nation grouping has been urging China to negotiate a legally binding code of conduct aimed at preventing conflict in the sea, but Beijing has said it prefers to deal with individual claimants.

Washington says it has an interest in the freedom of navigation in the sea, which hosts vital shipping lanes.

China in recent years has increasingly taken steps to enforce its claims, sparking the strongest protests from Philippines and Vietnam.

Biden in his remarks did not refer to any particular threats to the use of force or intimidation in the South China Sea.

But in June this year, a powerful arm of China's state-run media accused the Philippines of trying to provoke Beijing and warned it could lead to aggressive Chinese action.

"If the Philippines continues to provoke China... a counterstrike will be hard to avoid," said the commentary run by the People's Daily, the mouthpiece of the ruling Communist Party.

On his meeting with Abe, Biden said both leaders shared the view that the US-Japan alliance plays a central role in regional peace and stability.

"The vice president reaffirmed the US position on the East China Sea, including our alliance commitments," a US statement after the meeting said.

Biden also "highlighted the US view that all sides should take steps to reduce tensions", the statement added.

Biden said he also discussed trade ties, including a US-led initiative called the Trans-Pacific Partnership which aims to establish one of the world's biggest free trade zones.

"We're working hard with Singapore and others to get it done in 2013," Biden said.

Japan joined the talks for the first time this month with 11 other countries already holding negotiations -- Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Vietnam.

Biden said the 12 countries account for 40 percent of world gross domestic product and would form the "core for a stronger global economic growth... in the 21st century".

PRICES OF ESSENTIALS	NOW	A YEAR AGO
	GRAM/ kg	Tk 56-60
CUCUMBER/ kg	Tk 30-35	Tk 35-40
AUBERGINE/ kg	Tk 40-50	Tk 40-50
LENTIL/ kg	Tk 80-130	Tk 75-115
PACKED EDIBLE OIL (5 LITRE)	Tk 635-650	Tk 670-680
GREEN CHILLI/ kg	Tk 70-100	Tk 60-70
EGG (4 PIECES)	Tk 30-32	Tk 34-35
POTATO/ kg	Tk 15-20	Tk 24-26
ONION/ kg	Tk 42-48	Tk 24-35
SUGAR/ kg	Tk 46-48	Tk 55-56

SOURCES: TRADING CORPORATION OF BANGLADESH AND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE MARKETING

Prices of Ramadan

FROM PAGE 1
cucumber at Karwan Bazar every day, but its demand had almost doubled.

He attributed the sliding prices of essentials to a good supply of commodities.

However, sugar and Canadian lentil were still selling at higher prices than the ceiling set by the government. The items were selling at Tk46-48 and Tk 82-85 a kg respectively.

To keep the prices of essentials at tolerable level during the fasting month, the government and business bodies had fixed the maximum prices of six items.

Prices of Iraqi dates, sugar, Canadian lentil, chickpeas, palm oil and loose soybean oil were fixed at Tk 75-85, Tk 45.50, Tk 75-85, Tk 62 a kg, Tk 73-75 and Tk 105-108 a litre respectively.

The items other than sugar and Canadian lentil were selling at prices as fixed by the authorities.

Onion was selling at Tk 42-48 a kg at Palashi kitchen market. A week ago, it sold at Tk 38-42 depending on varieties. The vegetable was priced at Tk 26-34 a month

ago, according to Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB).

The government has banned export of aubergine, cucumber, green chilli and coriander leaves for a month from July 7 to keep their prices stable during the Ramadan. The ban on export of onion and garlic is already in place.

The ban has helped ensuring smooth supply of essentials in the markets, said Md Helal Uddin, vice-president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI).

Traders were now importing 50-70 tonnes of green chilli from India daily as the government has recently withdrawn tax and supplementary duties on this item, he added.

Besides, the FBCCI and different government agencies have beefed up market monitoring since the beginning of the Ramadan, noted the business leader.

"On Thursday, 14 government teams began monitoring markets so that traders can't charge consumers higher prices for Ramadan essentials," mentioned Helal, who is also the convener of the FBCCI's price monitoring committee.

Contacted, Abul Hossain Miah, director general of the Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection, said four vigilance teams from his office regularly monitor kitchen markets in the capital to ensure consumer rights.

Morsi now detained

FROM PAGE 16
leaving 10 people wounded as the two sides traded stones.

Another 15 people were wounded in clashes in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria, the health ministry said. Police broke up the clashes with tear gas, state media reported.

But the overwhelming number of marches remained peaceful, with thousands of Morsi's supporters gathering in a north Cairo square before setting off through the streets.

At Cairo's Tahrir Square, tens of thousands of anti-Morsi supporters gathered in response to a call by the army chief General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on Egyptians to show their support for a security clampdown on "terrorism".

The protesters waved Egyptian flags and held up posters of Sisi, who served as Morsi's defence minister before ousting him.

A leader of Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood, Essam al-Erian, said in a statement Islamists would respond to the detention of their leader with "peaceful marches".

The Brotherhood however reacted angrily to his detention order, saying it smacked of tactics used by the regime of Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's long-time strongman toppled in a popular uprising in 2011.

The accusations against Morsi include conspiring with Palestinian Hamas militants in attacks that killed policemen and prison breaks during the revolt against Mubarak, in which Morsi escaped along with

other political inmates.

He is also accused of "premeditated murder of some prisoners, officers and soldiers, and kidnapping officers and soldiers," state news agency MENA said.

Morsi is suspected of conspiring to "storm prisons and destroy them...allowing prisoners to escape, including himself."

Detention orders of the type ordered by the court are usually followed by moving the suspect to a prison. The military has so far kept his whereabouts secret to avoid attracting protests by his supporters.

Gehad El-Haddad, a Brotherhood spokesman, denounced the detention order, saying Mubarak's regime was "signalling 'we're back in full force'."

A court had on June 23 said Hamas militants facilitated the escape of prisoners during the tumultuous 18-day uprising that forced out Mubarak.

Hamas, an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood which supports the Gaza militant group's fight against Israel, also denounced Morsi's detention.

"Hamas condemns this move since it is based on the premise that the Hamas movement is hostile," spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri told AFP.

Morsi's election victory in June 2012 had been hailed by Hamas as a triumph for Islamists.

He helped negotiate a truce to halt fighting between Israel and Hamas in November on favourable terms for the Islamists, but also oversaw the closing of smuggling

tunnels to Gaza.

The military has reportedly given Morsi's backers until the end of Friday to end sit-in protests they began after the army deposed him.

The Brotherhood and allied Islamist groups for their part have vowed to press their protests until he is reinstated.

Western nations are watching the crisis in Egypt with growing unease, fearing the military's vow to return the nation to democracy may be little more than a fig leaf to mask a prolonged power grab.

The United States has decided not to term the army's overthrow of Morsi a "coup," which would trigger an automatic freeze of some \$1.5 billion in aid, a US official said in Washington on Friday.

But the US did finally send the interim leaders a veiled warning on Wednesday by suspending the delivery of four promised F-16 fighter jets.

"The interim government's strategy clearly consists of politically sidelining the Muslim Brotherhood until the elections," said German Middle East expert Michael Lueders.

London-based rights group Amnesty international criticised Sisi's call for rallies, in a statement Thursday.

"Given the security forces' routine use of excessive force, such a move is likely to lead to yet more unlawful killings," said Hassiba Hadj Sahraoui, Amnesty's deputy director of its Middle East and North Africa programme.

US Arts Academy chief quits over false CV

AFP, Boston

The chief executive of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences has agreed to resign on July 31, the body announced Thursday following reports she had embellished her CV.

The Academy, which counts 50 Nobel laureates amongst its elite membership, did not state the reason for the departure of Leslie Berlowitz but made it clear in a letter to members that she was not receiving a severance payment in relation to her abrupt departure.

She will receive \$475,000 to cover pension entitlement and untaken holidays from her time in office, the letters said.

Berlowitz has been in charge of the 233-year-old Academy, based in the Harvard University town of Cambridge, for 17 years.

Worker

FROM PAGE 1

sent our people [workers] to build a wall there, but the Gulshan Spinning Mill's workers attacked and shot our workers," Shahajada alleged.

SM Faruk Hossain, manager (admin) of Gulshan Spinning Mill, denied the allegation of launching the attack and said the workers of Arif Spinning Mill had forcefully entered his factory with heavy earthmoving equipment that ignited the clash.

Police arrested three security guards of Gulshan Spinning Mill for their alleged involvement in the shooting.

Auction Notice

Station Supply Depot Rajendrapur
Rajendrapur Cantonment

It is hereby notified for the information of all concerned that huge number of serviceable/ repairable/unserviceable barrel, tin, polythene/ nylon/bags, tea chest and other packing materials will be sold by open auction at 1000 hours on 15 Sraban 1420/30 July 2013 at "Station Supply Depot Rajendrapur, Rajendrapur Cantonment". Before the auction, contractor/individual interested to participate in the auction should deposit a Bank Draft/Pay-Order of Tk. 50,000.00 (fifty thousand only) in favour of Officer Commanding, Station Supply Depot Rajendrapur, Rajendrapur Cantonment as security money (refundable). Highest bidder has to deposit 25% of total value in cash on the auction day immediately after the auction. Auctioned packing materials have to be collected within the next 07 days after depositing the remaining 75% of auctioned value. An additional amount of 5% as income tax & 4% as vat on total auctioned value should also be deposited. In case of failure, 25% auction value (deposited during auction) will be forfeited and deposited in the govt. treasury. Other rules and conditions will be intimated at the place of auction. The authority concerned reserves the right to accept or cancel any bid without showing any cause.

ISPR/Army/2013/2006
GD-2793

Officer Commanding
Station Supply Depot
Rajendrapur,
Rajendrapur Cantonment

Zimbabwe's Tsvangirai warns of election fraud

AFP, Harare

Zimbabwe Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai yesterday warned that next week's election was strongly at risk of being rigged, as he condemned the African Union's upbeat assessment of the poll preparations.

"There is clear evidence of manipulation," Tsvangirai told a news conference in Harare. "There is a desperate attempt to subvert the people's will."

The premier also criticised "the militarisation" of the polls, saying military drivers were used to transport ballot papers during an early voting exercise.

His comments came just five days before Zimbabweans vote in the first presidential polls since violence tainted elections in 2008.

Tsvangirai is vying the end of the 33-year-rule of his rival President Robert Mugabe.

The lead-up to the July 31

election has been marred by flawed voter registration, chaotic early polling for security forces, and lopsided campaign coverage on state media.

A special advance vote held on June 15 and 16 for police officers and soldiers saw polling stations open without ballot papers, leaving thousands unable to cast their vote.

Tsvangirai claimed his party had also discovered that some of the ballot papers that were cast then were later thrown in dustbins.

The head of the African Union on Friday expressed confidence that the early problems would be overcome.

"On the whole we got the impression that the preparations were satisfactory," said AU commission chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

"We think they will be able to manage," she said. "They gave us an explana-

tion of why things went wrong. They called it a nightmare but it's a nightmare that's behind them."

Tsvangirai called the claims "misleading".

"It's unfortunate that statement was made because the truth of matter is that I raised a number of issues with her of concern to the MDC," he said, referring to his Movement for Democratic Change party.

"I raised the issue about the chaotic voter registration which has led to thousands if not a million people to be disenfranchised. I raised the issue of chaotic special vote, the way it was conducted.

"I said these are concerns that have implications on the credibility and legitimacy of the election.

"For one to say that none of the principals have raised these issues, it's not only unfortunate but it's downright misleading."

ASYLUM BOAT TRAGEDY

Death toll hits 15 in Indonesia

AFP, Cianjur

The death toll after a boat carrying some 200 asylum-seekers bound for Australia capsized has risen to 15, rescuers said yesterday, adding they did not know if any passengers were still missing.

Three days after the boat sank in the seas off Indonesia, rescue operation chief Rochmali, who goes by one name, said it was "unlikely" any more survivors would be found, as weather conditions deteriorated with strong winds and waves hampering the search.

"We don't know the exact number of people who were onboard. It's possible they're all accounted for, but we've sent a helicopter out

anyway to scan the sea," Rochmali told AFP.

Among the 15 dead are six children, including an 18-month-old baby, and a pregnant woman, Rochmali said.

Police are questioning the asylum-seekers, which include Iranians and Sri Lankans. Some have been handed over to immigration officials and are staying in hotels in West Java's Sukabumi city.

Australian authorities alerted Indonesia of the incident Tuesday evening, just days after Canberra announced that asylum-seekers who arrive by boat would no longer be resettled in Australia even if they secure refugee status.

An AFP reporter who spoke to survivors on

Wednesday said one group of 38, including women and children, had swum in darkness for up to four hours in high seas to reach the shore Tuesday night.

Landslides bury nine in China

AFP, Beijing

Nine people were buried and four missing after landslides hit a Chinese province where at least 95 were killed this week by earthquakes, state media reported yesterday.

Two separate landslides hit Gansu following heavy rains, China's official Xinhua news agency said.

Invitation for Tenders

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Agriculture
Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project (IAPP)
Project Management Unit (PMU)
Sech Bhaban (6th Floor)
22, Manik Mia Avenue, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

Ref No. IAPP/PMU/DAE/GD-01/46/382 Date: 23/07/2013

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh		
1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Agriculture.
2	Agency	Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project (IAPP).
3	Procuring entity name	Project Director, PMU-IAPP.
4	Procuring entity code	5-4331-5380.
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka.
6	Invitation for	Supply and Distribution of Power Tiller.
7	Invitation Ref No.	IAPP/PMU/GD-01/46/382.
8	Date	23/07/2013.

KEY INFORMATION	
9	Procurement method

10	Budget and source of funds	Government of Bangladesh (GOB).
11	Development partners (if applicable)	The World Bank (Supervising Entity).

PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
12	Project/programme code (if applicable)	5-4331-5380.
13	Project/programme name (if applicable)	Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project (IAPP).
14	Tender package No.	Tender package No: GD-01.
15	Tender package name	Supply of Power Tiller.
16	Tender publication date	23/07/2013.
17	Tender last selling date	13/08/2013.

No conditions apply for sale, purchase or distribution of tender documents		
- Receiving tender document	Room # 321(Middle Building), Khamarbari, Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Farmgate, Dhaka-1215.	
- Opening tender document	Room # 321(Middle Building), Khamarbari, Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Farmgate, Dhaka-1215.	
21	Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting (optional)	Office of the Project Director, Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project (IAPP), Sech Bhaban (6 th Floor), 22, Manik Mia Avenue, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
22	Eligibility of tenderer	Manufacturers/sole agents/sole distributors of power tiller having authorization from the manufacturer.		
23	Brief description of goods or works	Supply of Power Tiller (217 Nos.)		
24	Brief description of related services	Items must be provided with a) Origin operation/driver manual. b) manufactures standard tools. c) 1 year replacement warranty should be providing. d) 2 years service warranty should be providing.		
25	Price of tender document (Tk.)	4000/-.		
	Lot No.	Identification of lot	Location	Tender security amount (Tk.)
26	1	Supply of Power Tiller for both dry and wet soil with effective Blade and Power.	Rangpur and Barisal Region of Project area	Tk. 8 lac
27	Name of official inviting tender	Md. Nasiruzzaman.		
28	Designation of official inviting tender	Project Director.		
29	Address of official inviting tender	Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project (IAPP), Project Management Unit (PMU), Sech Bhaban (6 th Floor), 22, Manik Mia Avenue, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.		
30	Contact details of official inviting tender	02-9103924 02-9104664	nasir4834@gmail.com manif_333@yahoo.com	
31	The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender proceedings.			

01/08/2013 11:00pm

Md. Nasiruzzaman
Project Director (Joint Secretary)
Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project (IAPP)
GD-2790

US won't seek

FROM PAGE 16

Holder said in the letter addressed to his Russian counterpart that "the charges he faces do not carry that possibility, and the United States would not seek the death penalty even if Mr Snowden were charged with additional, death penalty-eligible crimes."

Snowden, whom Washington wants to put on trial for disclosing details of massive US surveillance, has been marooned at Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport for more than a month.

He has asked Russia for asylum but his fate remains uncertain.

In the letter dated Tuesday, Holder stressed to Russian Justice Minister Alexander Kononov that Snowden would not be tortured.

"Torture is unlawful in the United States," he wrote.

"If he returns to the United States, Mr Snowden would promptly be brought before a civilian court convened under Article III of the United States Constitution and supervised by a United States District Judge."

Holder said Washington believes "these assurances eliminate these asserted grounds for Mr Snowden's claim that he should be

treated as a refugee or granted asylum, temporary or otherwise."

Holder also said that, despite news reports and Snowden's belief to the contrary, the 30-year-old is able to travel and eligible for a "limited validity passport."

"Despite the revocation of his passport on June 22, 2013, Mr Snowden remains a US citizen," Holder wrote.

"He is eligible for a limited validity passport good for direct return to the United States. The United States is willing to immediately issue such a passport to Mr Snowden."