

NEWS IN brief

Boy, militants killed in Kashmir gunfight

A teenage boy and two militants were killed in a firefight with government forces in Indian-administered Kashmir yesterday that brought hundreds of local villagers out onto the streets in defiance of police orders.

Palestinian female MP arrested by Israel

A female member of the Palestinian parliament has been arrested by Israeli forces, Palestinian and Israeli security sources said yesterday.

Fire at Guatemala shelter kills 22 girls

A fire tore through a home for abused teenagers and children in Guatemala, killing at least 22 girls on Wednesday after some residents set mattresses ablaze following an overnight attempt to escape from the overcrowded center.

Maldives deny atoll sale to Saudis after protests

The Maldives government on Wednesday denied it was selling a cluster of small islands to Saudi Arabia, following opposition protests against such a deal.



Activists take part in a rally to support ethnic Madhesi and condemning killing protesters in Rajbiraj, during a demonstration in Kathmandu, Nepal, yesterday.

All options are on the table

Says US at UNSC meet, rebuffs China's appeal for talks with Pyongyang

AFP, United Nations

The United States on Wednesday rebuffed China's appeal for talks with North Korea, saying leader Kim Jong-Un was behaving irrationally and that it was reassessing its approach to dealing with Pyongyang.

China, Pyongyang's main ally, earlier called on North Korea to suspend its nuclear and missile activities in exchange for a halt to the annual US-South Korean military drills.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi said in Beijing that the proposal could help bring the United States and North Korea back to negotiations and avert what he termed a "head-on collision".

After a closed-door meeting of the UN Security Council, US Ambassador Nikki Haley said North Korea's actions called for a different response.

"We are not dealing with a rational person," Haley told reporters. "If this were any other country, we would be talking about that and it wouldn't be an issue."

She described Kim as a "person who has not had rational acts, who is not thinking clearly."

"We are re-evaluating how to handle North Korea going forward," she added. North Korea fired at least four missiles toward Japan on Monday, three of which splashed down in waters near Japan.

The US ambassador said "all the options are on the table" and did not rule out talks completely but she made clear that North Korea must first show a willingness to seek a diplomatic solution.

Her comments came as US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson prepares to visit Japan, South Korea and China starting next week, his first trip to the region, with talks to focus on North Korea.

US polls 'farce' Says China

AFP, Beijing

Beijing yesterday accused American politicians of corruption and hypocrisy in its yearly rebuttal to US criticisms of China's human rights record.

"In 2016, money politics and power-for-money deals controlled the presidential election, which was full of lies and farces. There were no guarantees of political rights," Beijing's report said.

"Waves of boycotts and protests fully exposed the hypocritical nature of US democracy," it added, without mentioning restrictions on freedom of speech in China.

The report was issued by China's cabinet in response to the US State Department's annual survey of human rights in 199 countries released Friday.

Human rights are a longstanding source of tensions between China and the US, which imposed sanctions after the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in Beijing left hundreds, by some estimates more than 1,000, dead.

More than 20,000 seek refuge across border

Says China as rebels fight security forces in north

REUTERS, Beijing

More than 20,000 people from Myanmar have flooded into border camps in neighbouring China, seeking refuge from bitter fighting between ethnic groups and security forces in the country's north, China said yesterday.

Thousands of people have crossed China's border in recent months to escape the conflict, which threatens Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi's top goal of reaching peace with minorities.

This week, about 30 people were killed in an attack by ethnic Chinese insurgents in Laukkai, the capital of Myanmar's restive region of Kokang, about 800 km northeast of the commercial hub Yangon.

China is providing humanitarian assistance while taking steps to ensure peace and

tranquillity in the border region, Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said.

He reiterated a call for all sides involved to "exercise restraint and immediately cease fire" to keep clashes from escalating.

"China supports Myanmar's peace process and hopes all sides can use peaceful means to resolve their differences via dialogue and consultation," Geng told a regular news briefing.

Stray shells and bullets had fallen into China territory, injuring one Chinese person living there and causing some other damage, he

added, but did not elaborate.

Suu Kyi's nearly one-year-old government is increasingly besieged by ethnic rebels, grappling with an alliance of militias in Myanmar's north and a new insurgency by Rohingya rebelling against decades of persecution in the northwest.

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN INDIA

BJP ahead in four states

Show exit polls

THE HINDU, New Delhi

Results of various exit polls released yesterday showed the BJP doing well in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and even Manipur, with the Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party locked in a tough contest in Punjab.

However, the numbers given by the exit polls varied widely.

In Uttar Pradesh, five polls -- India News MRC, Times Now VMR, ABP Lokniti CSDS, India TV-C Voter and India Today Axis -- showed that the BJP was leading the race.

The exit polls showed Punjab witnessing a tight contest between Aam Aadmi Party and the Congress, with India Today Axis poll showing the Congress ahead with 62-71 out of 117 seats and India TV-CVoter showing AAP ahead with 59-67 seats.

All polls showed a huge defeat for the Shiromani Akali Dal-BJP combine in the State.

In Uttarakhand, three polls showed the BJP winning the State.

According to the India TV-CVoter poll, the BJP was surging ahead of the Congress in Manipur, where the Congress has ruled for 15 years. It showed the BJP winning 25-31 of the 60 seats with the Congress trailing at 17-23 seats.

KIM KILLING ROW Malaysian UN workers leave North Korea

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

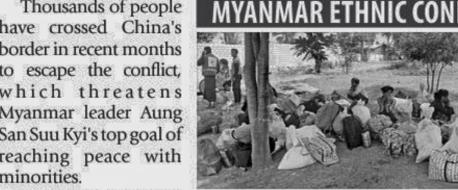
The UN's World Food Programme said two of its Malaysian staff left North Korea yesterday after Kuala Lumpur and Pyongyang banned each other's citizens from leaving their countries in a row over the murder of Kim Jong-Nam.

"The staff members are international civil servants and not representatives of their national government. They work on WFP's programmes in DPR Korea," the UN agency said in a statement, adding that they had arrived in Beijing.

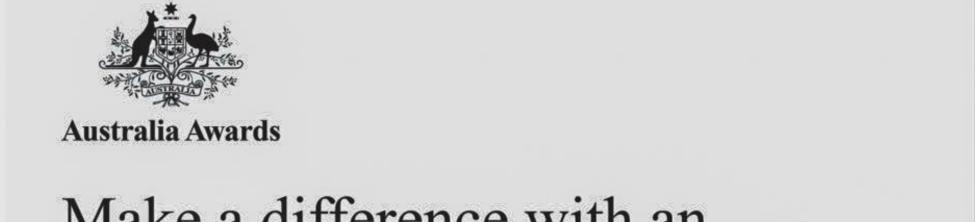
North Korea and Malaysia Tuesday banned each other's citizens from leaving their countries, with Kuala Lumpur saying its nationals were effectively being held "hostage".

N KOREA MISSILE LAUNCH Kim Jong-Un behaving irrationally: Nikki Haley

Tillerson prepares to visit Japan, S Korea, China next week



MYANMAR ETHNIC CONFLICT



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More Information Applications for Australia Awards Scholarships commencing in January 2018 will open on 1 February 2017 and close on 30 April 2017.

For more information on how to apply visit: www.australiaawardsbangladesh.org

Table with columns for 'উন্নয়নের অঙ্গিনেত্রন রাজ্য' and 'জনকল্যাণে রাজ্য'. It lists various government services and their status for 2016-17 and 2017-18.