

Quote of the day



“Shut your mouth! You are creeps! You practice rogue journalism, which doesn't help at all.”

BRAZILIAN PRESIDENT JAIR BOLSONARO SLAMS PRESS FOR QUESTIONING HIS FREQUENT REFUSAL TO WEAR A MASK



“You can choose: you get the vaccine or I will send you to jail.”

PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT RODRIGO DUTERTE TELLS PEOPLE WHO REFUSES TO TAKE JABS



“It's not a problem to criticise the Hong Kong government, but if there is an intent to organise activities to incite the subversion of the government then that is, of course, a different thing.”

HONG KONG CHIEF EXECUTIVE CARRIE LAM REPLIES WHEN ASKED ABOUT PRESS FREEDOM IN THE CITY



Aymara indigenous people take part in the celebration of the Aymara New Year in Tiwanaku, Bolivia on Monday. Bolivia resumed celebrations of the Andean New Year on the winter solstice marking the year 5529. PHOTO: AFP

POST-COUP MYANMAR

Army, militia clashes kill 6

AFP, Yangon

Four protesters and at least two officers were killed as Myanmar soldiers battled an anti-junta civilian militia with small arms and grenades in the country's second city yesterday, military sources said.

Fighting has flared across Myanmar since the February coup as people form "defence forces" to battle a brutal military crackdown on dissent, but clashes have largely been restricted to rural areas.

Acting on a tip-off, security forces raided a house in Mandalay's Chan Mya Tharsi township in the morning, the junta's information team said in a statement, and were met with small arms fire and grenades.

Two officers were killed during the raid, military sources told AFP, and at least ten were wounded. Four "terrorists" were killed and eight arrested, it added.

Since the mass uprising against the military putsch, a brutal crackdown has killed more than 870 civilians, according to reports.

SECURITY CHAOS AFTER WESTERN TROOPS WITHDRAWAL

Taliban capture key port

UN warns of regional threat as insurgents seize 87 districts since May

AGENCIES

The UN yesterday warned of regional chaos as the Taliban captured Afghanistan's main border crossing with Tajikistan, with security forces abandoning their posts and some fleeing across the frontier.

The seizure of Shir Khan Bandar, in the far north of Afghanistan, about 50 kilometres (30 miles) from Kunduz city, is the most significant gain for the Taliban since the US began the final stage of its troop withdrawal in May.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid confirmed the insurgents had seized the crossing, across the Pyanj River.

The crossing is marked by a 700-metre US-funded bridge that opened in 2007 with the aim of boosting trade between the central Asian neighbours. It is a sprawling dry port capable of handling up to

1,000 vehicles a day. The loss of the port would be a huge financial blow to Kabul.

Since early May, the Taliban have launched major offensives targeting government forces across the rugged countryside, and claim to have seized at least 87 of the country's 421 districts. Fierce fighting between the Taliban and Afghan government forces has taken place on the outskirts of three provincial capitals in the northern provinces of Faryab, Balkh and Kunduz provinces in recent days, officials said.

Many of their claims are disputed by the government, and independent verification is difficult -- especially in areas that frequently change hands.

Afghan government forces, however, said they would soon launch a massive offensive to retake lost territory.

Peace talks in Doha have largely stalled, officials say, though there have

been meetings in recent days and the Taliban say they are committed to talks.

The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan Deborah Lyons urged the Security Council to do all it could to push the parties back to the negotiating table.

"Increased conflict in Afghanistan means increased insecurity for many other countries, near and far," she said. The United States began withdrawing troops on May 1 and has handed some bases over to the Afghan government, which has since given up some areas to the Taliban without a fight.

The government admits the Taliban have captured a number of districts and security forces have made "tactical retreats".

"Fighting has fiercely increased in recent weeks and now our main focus is to hold strategic areas and not to further stretch our forces," he said.

NEWS IN brief

Catalan separatists pardoned

Spain cabinet yesterday pardoned nine jailed Catalan separatists behind a failed 2017 independence bid in a bid to break the deadlock over the political crisis in this wealthy northeastern region. The separatists were convicted over a banned referendum in October 2017 that was marred by police violence and followed by a short-lived declaration of independence, sparking Spain's worst political crisis in decades. Several fled abroad but 12 others were tried and convicted, with three-quarters of them handed prison terms of nine to 13 years.

Grave concerns raised about China at UN rights council

More than 40 countries led by Canada yesterday voiced grave concerns at the UN Human Rights Council about China's actions in Xinjiang, Hong Kong and Tibet -- triggering a fierce backlash from Beijing. The widely anticipated joint statement had been in the pipeline for several days and was delivered on day two of the 47th session of the council in Geneva. China denies mistreating the. In a move that was bound to further enrage Beijing, which decries what it says is the interference by foreign powers in its internal affairs, the statement added the group's concerns over the deterioration of fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong and the human rights situation in Tibet. The representative of Belarus read another joint statement on behalf of 64 countries, supporting China and stressing that Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet were Chinese internal affairs.



More than 8,500 children used as soldiers in 2020

More than 8,500 children were used as soldiers last year in various conflicts across the world and nearly 2,700 others were killed, the United Nations said on Monday. UN chief Antonio Guterres' annual report to the Security Council on children and armed conflict covers the killing, maiming and sexual abuse of children, abduction or recruitment, denial of aid access and targeting of schools and hospitals. The report verified that violations had been committed against 19,379 children in 21 conflicts. The most violations in 2020 were committed in Somalia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan, Syria and Yemen. It verified that 8,521 children were used as soldiers last year, while another 2,674 children were killed and 5,748 injured in various conflicts.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



Russian President Vladimir Putin lays flowers at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to mark 80th anniversary of German invasion into the Soviet Union, in Moscow, Russia yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

US has 'wrong' expectation for dialogue: Kim's sister

AFP, Seoul

The influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un yesterday said that Washington had "wrong" expectations for dialogue with Pyongyang and was facing "greater disappointment", state media reported.

Kim Yo Jong's comments came after US national security advisor Jake Sullivan described her brother's first reaction to Washington's recent review of its approach to the North as an "interesting signal".

The Biden administration has promised a practical, calibrated approach, including diplomatic efforts, to persuade the impoverished North to give up its banned nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes.

In response, the North's leader Kim last week said Pyongyang must prepare for both dialogue and confrontation.

Washington considered his comments as interesting, Sullivan told ABC News, adding the administration "will wait to see whether they are followed up with any kind of more direct communication to us about a potential path forward".

But Kim Yo Jong -- a key adviser to her brother -- appeared to dismiss the prospects

for an early resumption of negotiations.

The US seemed to be seeking "comfort for itself", she said in a statement reported by Pyongyang's official KCNA news agency.

It harboured expectations "the wrong way", she added, which would "plunge them into a greater disappointment".

Kim's comments came with the top US diplomat in charge of North Korea negotiations on a five-day visit to Seoul, where he said Monday that Washington was ready to meet with Pyongyang "anywhere, anytime, without preconditions".

Just hours before Pyongyang released Kim's statement, US envoy Sung Kim met with the South's unification minister, reiterating Washington's willingness to talk with the North.

The North at the weekend admitted it was tackling a food crisis, sounding the alarm in a country with a moribund agricultural sector that has long struggled to feed itself.

It is now under self-imposed isolation to protect itself against the coronavirus pandemic, and as a result trade with Beijing -- its economic lifeline -- has slowed to a trickle while all international aid work faces tight restrictions.



- JUNE 23**
- 1956** - Gamal Abdel Nasser was elected president of Egypt.
 - 1995** - Jonas Salk, who developed the first vaccine against polio, died.
 - 2001** - The fugitive Peruvian spy chief Vladimiro Montesinos, Latin America's most wanted man, was captured in Venezuela.
 - 2013** - Full moon, also referred to as a "Super Moon" rises.
 - 2016** - Britain votes to leave EU in historic referendum.

SOURCE: REUTERS

#MeToo movement rocks Sri Lanka press

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's government yesterday ordered an investigation into sexual harassment in the media after a string of #MeToo allegations from female newsroom staff.

The flood of claims began after journalist Sarah Kellapatha tweeted last week that a male colleague had threatened to rape her while working at an unnamed newspaper from 2010-17.

Other women journalists have since taken to Twitter in a campaign reminiscent of the #MeToo movement that began in the United States in 2017.

One was journalist Sahla Ilham who said she was sexually abused by a "famous editor" at a now-defunct paper who had pressured her family to keep quiet.

US journalist Jordana Narin, who had been an intern at a Sri Lankan newspaper, said a senior colleague had subjected her to a campaign of sexual harassment before the chief editor forced him to resign.

Another, Kavindya Thennakoon described how a senior colleague tried to kiss her against her will.

Mohiuddin Ahmed no more

FROM PAGE 1

bringing international recognition for the industry.

An editor and founder of University Press Limited (UPL), a leading publisher, Mohiuddin passed away early yesterday at the age of 77, creating a big void in the publication sector.

He breathed his last at 12:59am, according to his daughter Mahrukh Mohiuddin, director of UPL.

"He has been a brave survivor of Parkinson's disease for nearly 20 years, fought a strong battle with Covid and survived," she wrote in a Facebook post.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has expressed profound shock at the death.

The Emeritus Publisher was laid to rest at the capital's Banani graveyard following his namaz-e-janaza at Gulshan Azad mosque after Zuhr prayer yesterday, said a source close to his family.

Born in Feni, Mohiuddin got involved with publishing early in his life. While a student at Notre Dame College, he was the managing editor of Blue and Gold, a college magazine.

After graduating from Dhaka University and earning a degree in Mass Communication

and Journalism, he studied journalism at Punjab University with a Pakistan Council Scholarship. There, he worked as the editor of the Punjab University Chronicle.

After completing his MA, he joined Pakistan Times as an apprentice journalist.

Within the first two months at the job, he got an offer to join the Department of Journalism, Punjab University, as an assistant lecturer in Mass Communication and Public Relations.

Mohiuddin worked as "Editor for Pakistan" at Oxford University Press (OUP) from 1969 to 1972.

On his return to independent Bangladesh, he served as the chief executive officer of OUP Dhaka branch for two years.

In 1975, when the Dhaka office of OUP was closed down, Mohiuddin decided to start UPL.

Under his leadership, UPL won the National Book Centre Award 16 times since 1981.

In May 1988, he was awarded a cultural doctorate in publishing management by World University's international secretariat at Benson, Arizona, USA. Later, Bangladesh Academic and Creative Publishers' Association bestowed upon him the title

Emeritus Publisher. He was also a bold activist against copyright infringement.

Mohiuddin was among the 17 publishers from around the world who were invited to Norway by the country's prime minister in recognition of their work on environmental issues.

Meanwhile, Bangla Academy expressed deep sadness at his death and consoled his bereaved family members.

In a press release, signed by acting director general of Bangla Academy AHM Lokman, Bangla Academy mentioned him as a legend in the world of publication. Through UPL, Mohiuddin Ahmed played a pivotal role in propagating quality books of Bangladesh to the world, read the release.

Commemorating Mohiuddin Ahmed's contribution to the publishing industry, Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), a rights body, said that his demise was an irreversible loss for the country.

The industry of the country sands upon the dedication and talent of some people. Mohiuddin Ahmed was one of them.

In a press release, Workers Party of Bangladesh said the death of the UPL founder has created a big hollow in the publication sector.

BAW 16 SEATS LIGHT BUS 2019 MODEL
Office/ School/ Other Commercial Transportation

Official design from TOYOTA Motor Co. Japan, Engine 2.7 Gasoline / Petrol, G4BA/3RZ Toyota EFI Engine Luxurious Interior with many features.

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