

US REPORT ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Covid has created 'ideal environment'

AFP, Washington
The United States said that the coronavirus pandemic has created an "ideal environment" for human trafficking to thrive as governments divert resources to the health crisis and traffickers take advantage of vulnerable people.

The State Department's "2021 Trafficking in Persons Report" released Thursday also downgraded several countries and upgraded others for their efforts to combat the scourge of human trafficking.

Releasing the annual report, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said nearly 25 million people worldwide are estimated to be victims of human trafficking.

"Many are compelled into commercial sex work," Blinken said. "Many are forced to work in factories or fields or to join armed groups. It's a global crisis," he said. "It's an enormous source of human suffering."

The report ranks countries around the world based on their compliance with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000.

Six countries were downgraded from Tier 1 -- the highest ranking -- to Tier 2: Cyprus, Israel, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal and Switzerland.

Tier 2 countries do not "fully meet" the TVPA's minimum standards "but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance."

Two nations -- Guinea-Bissau and Malaysia -- were added to the Tier 3 list of worst offenders, a list that already included Afghanistan, Algeria, China, the Comoros, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran, Myanmar, Nicaragua, North Korea, Russia, South Sudan, Syria, Turkmenistan and Venezuela.

Four countries -- Belarus, Burundi, Lesotho and Papua New Guinea -- were removed from Tier 3.

The United States may restrict foreign assistance to Tier 3 nations subject to presidential approval.



A man reacts as he attends an impromptu vigil at an event titled "No Pride in Genocide" in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, on Thursday. Canada's national holiday Thursday was marked by a grim reckoning over its colonial history, after more than 1,000 unmarked graves were found near former boarding schools for indigenous children. PHOTO: REUTERS

NEWS IN brief

Six killed in J&K unrest

Five suspected rebels and a soldier were killed yesterday in the latest of a series of clashes in Indian Kashmir that have left 17 dead in two weeks, police said. The six died in a gunfight in the Rajpora area of the Kashmir valley that started Thursday night. Police said the five militants were members of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba group. The military said on Thursday that 61 suspected rebels have been killed this year so far. India has also been on the alert since the first known drone attack in Kashmir damaged a small building and injured two personnel at an air base inside the main airport at the southern city of Jammu.

China's new ICBM silo report 'concerning' US

The United States expressed concern on Thursday over a report that China is building more than 100 new silos for intercontinental ballistic missiles. The Washington Post, citing a study of commercial satellite images by a California-based group, reported on Thursday that the silos were being built in a desert near the northwestern city of Yumen. "This buildup, it is concerning," State Department spokesman Ned Price said when asked about the report. "It raises questions about the PRC's intent."



Tycoons' space race

Call it a space race for billionaires: British mogul Richard Branson one-upped rival Jeff Bezos on Thursday, announcing that he too will blast beyond Earth's atmosphere -- as many as nine days ahead of the Amazon founder. The announcement follows Bezo's proclamation in early June that he and his brother would be part of the crew on the first manned flight aboard his company Blue Origin's New Shepard launch vehicle. Virgin Galactic announced Branson would be aboard the SpaceShipTwo Unity, which will go to space as early as July 11, "pending weather and technical checks." Bezos said he would travel to space on July 20.

'Lone wolf' stabs HK cop

A 50-year-old man who died after stabbing a Hong Kong police officer was a "lone wolf" attacker who had been politically "radicalised", the city's security chief said yesterday. Footage of Thursday evening's attack was caught by a local journalist's livestream. It showed a man in a dark t-shirt stabbing an officer in the back. Police said the man -- who has not been publicly identified by authorities -- then stabbed himself in the chest and later died of his wounds.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

Quotes of the day



"I'll hand over the presidential sash to whoever wins the election cleanly, not with fraud."

FORMER US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP



"We can't allow the pandemic to rob children of their education and development."

HANS KLUGE, WHO'S EUROPE DIRECTOR



"Eventually the public pressure was too much. So you (leaders) started to act (on climate). But acting as in role-playing."

GRETA THUNBERG

War looms as US quits Bagram base

US close to end its longest war in Afghanistan amid fierce Taliban offensive

REUTERS, Kabul

American troops pulled out of their main military base in Afghanistan yesterday, leaving behind a piece of the World Trade Center they buried 20 years ago in a country that the top US commander has warned may descend into civil war without them.

"All American soldiers and members of Nato forces have left the Bagram air base," said a senior U.S. security official on condition of anonymity.

Though a few more troops have yet to withdraw from another base in the capital Kabul, the Bagram pullout brings an effective end to the longest war in American history.

The base, an hour's drive north of Kabul, was where the US military has coordinated its air war and logistical support for its entire Afghan mission. The Taliban thanked them for leaving.

"We consider this withdrawal a positive step. Afghans can get closer to stability and peace with the full withdrawal of foreign forces," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told Reuters.

Other Afghans were more circumspect: "The Americans must leave Afghanistan and there should be peace in this country," said Kabul resident Javed Arman. "We are in a difficult situation. Most people have fled their districts and some districts have fallen. Seven districts in Paktia province have fallen and are



now under Taliban control."

It was at Bagram, by a bullet-ridden Soviet-built air strip on a plain hemmed in by the snow-capped peaks of the Hindu Kush, that New York City firefighters and police were flown to bury a piece of the World Trade Center in December, 2001, days after the Taliban were toppled for harbouring Osama bin Laden.

It was also here that the CIA ran a "black site" detention centre for terrorism suspects and subjected them to abuse that President Barack Obama subsequently acknowledged as torture.

Later it swelled into a sprawling fortified city for a huge international military force, with fast food joints, gyms and a cafe serving something called "the mother of all coffees". Two runways perpetually roared. Presidents flew in and gave speeches; celebrities came

and told jokes.

An Afghan official said the base would be officially handed over to the government at a ceremony today.

The US defence official said General Austin Miller, the top US commander in Afghanistan "still retains all the capabilities and authorities to protect the force" stationed in the capital, Kabul.

Earlier this week, Miller told journalists in Kabul that civil war for Afghanistan was "certainly a path that can be visualised", with Taliban fighters sweeping into districts around the country in recent weeks as foreign troops flew home.

Two other US security officials said this week the majority of US military personnel would most likely be gone by July 4, with a residual force remaining to protect the embassy. That would be more than two months ahead of the timetable set by Biden, who had promised they would be home by Sept. 11, the 20th anniversary of the attack that brought them here.

Washington agreed to withdraw in a deal negotiated last year with the Taliban under Biden's predecessor Donald Trump, and Biden rejected advice from generals to hang on until a political agreement could be reached between the insurgents and the US-backed Kabul government. In exchange for the US withdrawal, the Taliban have promised not to allow international terrorists to operate from Afghan soil.



A boat in distress tries to escape from the Libyan Coast Guard in the Maltese search and rescue zone on Wednesday. Since 2014, more than 20,000 migrants and refugees have died at sea while trying to reach Europe from Africa. More than 17,000 of those have been on the Central Mediterranean which is described by the UN as the most dangerous migration route in the world. PHOTO: AFP

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A quiet 2nd day of strict

FROM PAGE 1
The fact that it was a rainy weekend was also the reason why people mostly stayed indoors.

Fewer people were penalised for violating the rules yesterday than the day before.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police detained 320 people. Seven others were detained in Barishal and one in Rajshahi, according to Police Headquarters.

At least 550 individuals were detained by police the day before yesterday.

The detainees failed to give acceptable reasons as to why they defied the stay-at-home order.

Police also fined 208 individuals. At least 219 motorists were fined Tk 5.45 lakh.

Officials said police accompanied 1,891 mobile courts across the country. At least 248 vehicles were seized and Tk 27.78 lakh was fined.

Rab teams conducted 166 patrols and set up 145 check posts across the country, said another statement.

Fifty-nine mobile courts accompanied by Rab fined 213 people a total of Tk 2.15 lakh.

Very few cars and some rickshaws were seen around Farmgate, Green Road, Tejgaon, Gulshan, Badda, Banani, Mohakhali, Paltan, Matsya Bhaban, Gulistan, Motijheel and on Dhaka-Aricha highway.

But the picture was different inside neighbourhoods, especially in Old Dhaka. Many residents went to mosques where maintaining social distance is a challenge.

At Karwan Bazar, private company employee Ratan Sarker said, "I didn't find some essential items in any other market. That's why I had to come here."

Most of the shops and markets on the thoroughfares were closed.

Traffic Sergeant Rafiqul Islam, who was at Jahangir Gate, said when the rain stopped

for a few hours, the pressure of traffic slightly increased.

"Some of the people we stopped said they were going to the airport, others said they were going to hospitals," he told The Daily Star.

Several rickshaw-pullers in Farmgate said there were not enough passengers.

"I got only two passengers between 10:00am and 1:00pm," said rickshaw-puller Nazib Ullah in Farmgate.

Outside Dhaka, law enforcers were seen on roads and highways in and around the cities and towns.

In Rajshahi on Thursday, an assistant commissioner (land) in Bagmara upazila broke the arm of a college teacher by beating him with a stick during a mobile court, reports our staff correspondent.

The teacher's wife said the officer later visited her house and apologised yesterday.

Contacted, Assistant Commissioner Mahmudul Hasan said it was a misunderstanding.

The main streets in Rajshahi city were almost empty yesterday, but people were seen in the alleys and at the kitchen markets in the morning.

In Rangpur and Dinajpur, the main roads were almost empty, but there were crowds at kitchen markets.

In Barishal, the metropolitan police organised a Coronavirus Awareness Vehicle procession around noon, reports our correspondent.

Traffic was very thin on Dhaka-Mymensingh and Dhaka-Tangail highways.

Our Munshiganj correspondent reports that there were hardly any travellers at Shimulia-Banglabazar ferry terminals. Only trucks and ambulances were crossing the Padma.

The "strict lockdown" will end at midnight on July 7.



JULY 03

1904 - Theodor Herzl, Hungarian-born Zionist leader, died. In 1897 he became first president of the World Zionist Organisation.

1928 - John Logie Baird transmitted the world's first colour television pictures in London.

1962 - President de Gaulle of France declared Algeria independent.

1971 - Jim Morrison, lead singer with the American rock group The Doors, died in Paris.

1988 - The American warship Vincennes shot down an Iranian Airbus A300 over the Gulf in the last weeks of the Iran-Iraq war, killing all 290 aboard.

2013 - Egyptian president Mohamed Mursi is overthrown by military.

SOURCE: REUTERS



Sonali Bank Limited

Information Technology Division

(IT Procurement & Maintenance)

Head Office, Dhaka

Memo No. HO/ITD (IT P&M)/purchase/

Date: 29/06/2021

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following package:

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Name of tender	Last date and time of tender security submission	Tender closing date & time
1.	588121	Procurement of Laptop for Sonali Bank Limited.	15/07/2021 3.00pm	15/07/2021 3.15pm
2.	578643	Procurement of Offline-UPS for Sonali Bank Limited.	15/07/2021 12.00pm	15/07/2021 12.15pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no office/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to respective time schedule.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

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