

MORE NEWS

UN urges moratorium on AI tech that threatens rights

The UN yesterday called for a moratorium on artificial intelligence systems like facial recognition technology that threaten human rights until “guardrails” are in place against violations. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet called for assessments of how great a risk various AI technologies pose to things like rights to privacy and freedom of movement and of expression. She said countries should ban or heavily regulate the ones that pose the greatest threats. But while such assessments are under way, she said that “states should place moratoriums on the use of potentially high-risk technology”.



US gen secretly called China doubting Trump’s sanity: book

The top US general was so worried in early January that Donald Trump was out of control that he took secret action to prevent the outgoing president from sparking a war with China, according to a new book. Joint Chiefs Chair General Mark Milley ordered aides to not act immediately on any move by Trump to use US nuclear forces, and he called a Chinese general to reassure Beijing, presidential chronicler Bob Woodward and co-author Robert Costa wrote in their soon-to-be-released book “Peril”. Milley called Chinese counterpart General Li Zuoqiang twice, on October 30 just before Trump’s election defeat, and on January 8, two days after Trump supporters attacked the US Capitol, to reassure him that the Republican president’s anti-China rhetoric could not translate into military action. “Peril” will go on sale on September 21.

Californians vote to keep Democratic governor

Californians voted overwhelmingly to keep their Democratic governor Tuesday, roundly rejecting a Republican attempt to unseat him in a special recall vote spurred by mask mandates and Covid lockdowns. Gavin Newsom handily survived a confidence vote that could have seen him replaced by a Republican with only minority support in one of the most liberal parts of the United States. With more than 60 percent of the votes tallied, NBC, CNN and Fox News said Newsom was set to prevail, with two thirds voting against the effort. Newsom acted quickly as the pandemic took hold of California, ordering people to stay home and shuttering schools, in moves praised by scientists. But entrepreneurs blamed him for suffocating their businesses.

Sri Lanka prison minister quits after gun-toting claims

Sri Lanka’s prisons minister stepped down yesterday over allegations he tried to force a confession from a Tamil inmate at gunpoint, and drunkenly threatened to execute others. The controversy raged as the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva urged Sri Lanka to either prosecute or release 78 Tamils incarcerated for decades without being charged — some of whom were involved in the incidents. Ratwatte allegedly made the threats at Anuradhapura prison, north of Colombo, on Sunday. Pro-government outlet Derana TV reported the junior minister took eight inmates out of their cell and made them kneel before him and then he placed his pistol on an inmate’s head thrice and threatened him.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

‘Time for Europe to step up to the next level’

EU chief lays out plan to make bloc more independent, announces defence summit

AGENCIES

The European Union’s chief executive yesterday set out plans to make the 27-nation bloc more independent in areas from defence to global trade, and urged other countries to join it in accelerating the fight against climate change.

Europe will seek to boost its own military capacity after the collapse of the US-backed government in Afghanistan, Ursula von der Leyen said yesterday, announcing a defence summit.

“It is time for Europe to step up to the next level,” von der Leyen told the European Parliament, in her annual State of the European Union address.

France’s President Emmanuel Macron will convene the “summit on European defence” during France’s six-month presidency of the bloc, starting at the New Year, she said.

Paris has been leading the push for the 27-nation union to develop more autonomous military capacities alongside the Western alliance, which is traditionally led by the US.

One month after the Taliban took control in Afghanistan, von der Leyen called on EU states to build forces that can intervene militarily abroad without US support.

“What has held us back until now is not just shortfalls of capacity, it is a lack of political will,” said the former German defence minister, whose country has been reluctant to deploy troops into combat around the world.

In the short term, the EU chief pledged an additional 100 million euros (\$118 million) in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan as the bloc grapples with the immediate fall-out of the Taliban’s takeover.

While US-led Nato has long shouldered the military burden in Europe, China’s rise, a more aggressive Russia and U.S. calls for Europe to do more for its own security are pushing the EU to develop a more forceful foreign policy.

Echoing calls by predecessor Jean-Claude Juncker, von der Leyen said the EU needed a “defence union” that would cement joint military action, going beyond its traditional soft power as the world’s largest trading bloc.

She proposed waiving value-added tax on weapons developed and sold in the bloc by EU governments, establishing a joint situational awareness centre to improve intelligence-sharing, and better defences against cyber attacks.

She also pledged to increase financial support



EU chief pledges extra 100m euros in aid for Afghanistan

Vows 200m more vaccine doses to low-income countries

Pledges 4 billion euros more in climate funds

Bans forced-labour products in tougher China stance

to help poorer countries fight climate change and adapt to its impacts by an additional 4 billion euros (\$4.73 billion) until 2027.

Warning against “a pandemic of the unvaccinated”, she said the pace of Covid-19 vaccination must be quickened. She announced a donation of 200 million vaccine doses for third countries by mid-2022, on top of a previous commitment for 250 million shots.

Von der Leyen, during her speech, also said the EU is looking to impose an import ban on products made from forced labour, in a move seen aimed at China over its treatment of its Uyghur population.

The stance underlined a hardening Western approach to China, which has become an economic powerhouse that competes with the US and EU while eschewing their democratic and social values.

She also said the European Commission is to propose a law to fight violence against women before the end of the year after a rise in cases during the Covid-19 pandemic.

“Women must be able to live freely and self-determinedly again,” she told the European Parliament in her annual State of the European Union address in Strasbourg.

“During the pandemic, too many women were deprived of this freedom” to express themselves, live their identity and to “love who you want,” she said.



New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jagmeet Singh makes an election campaign visit in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, on Tuesday. A relatively large number of Canadians -- almost one in five eligible -- voted early in hotly contested upcoming elections on September 20, Elections Canada said.

PHOTO: REUTERS

UK CABINET RESHUFFLE

PM Johnson rejigs his top team

REUTERS, London

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson yesterday demoted his foreign secretary in a major reshuffle, removing his more under-fire colleagues to refocus the government on raising living standards after covid-19.

After months of criticism of several of his top team for missteps and gaffes, Johnson finally started a process some say he wanted to do many weeks earlier, to make the changes he feels he needs to press on with his “levelling up” agenda.

Johnson has made tackling regional inequality a priority, part of an agenda set in 2019 when he won the biggest Conservative Party parliamentary majority since Margaret Thatcher but which has been eclipsed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Dominic Raab, who has faced calls to resign since he went on holiday in Crete as the Taliban advanced on the Afghan capital, Kabul, lost one of the so-called great offices of state in the foreign office to become justice minister.

To soften the blow, Raab was also appointed deputy prime minister, a role he played in all but name when he stepped in to lead government when Johnson was fighting for his life in hospital with Covid last year.

Liz Truss was promoted from trade to the foreign office, becoming only the second woman to hold the position in Britain. Michael Gove, seen as a key player in the Johnson government, was moved to housing from his position in the cabinet office, a department at the centre of government which drives the implementation of policy.

Raab’s and Gove’s moves followed the sackings of three others: Gavin Williamson as education minister, Robert Buckland as justice minister and Robert Jenrick as the housing minister.

Critics accused Johnson of choosing Wednesday to overshadow the opposition Labour Party’s planned vote in parliament on the government’s decision to scrap extra support for low-income families. But some Conservative lawmakers said it had been simply long overdue.



Dominic Raab

Koreas conduct duelling missile tests

REUTERS, Seoul

Both North Korea and South Korea test fired ballistic missiles yesterday, the latest volley in an arms race that has seen both countries develop increasingly sophisticated weapons while efforts to get talks going on defusing tension prove fruitless.

South Korea tested a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM), becoming the first country without nuclear weapons to develop such a system.

South Korea President Moon was attending that test firing when word came of the North Korean launches, its first ballistic missile tests since March. North Korea fired a pair of ballistic missiles that landed in the sea off its east coast, according to officials in South Korea and Japan, just days after it tested a cruise missile that is believed to have nuclear capabilities.

North Korea has been steadily developing its weapons systems amid a standoff over talks aimed at dismantling its nuclear and ballistic missile arsenals in return for US sanctions relief. The negotiations, initiated between former US president Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in 2018, have stalled since 2019.

The US military’s Indo-Pacific Command said North Korea’s missile launches did not pose an immediate threat to U.S. personnel, territory, or allies, but highlight the destabilising impact of its illicit weapons programme.

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga called the missile launch “outrageous” and strongly condemned it as a threat to peace and security in the region.

China’s foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a daily briefing that China hoped “relevant parties” would “exercise restraint”.

Quotes of the day



“The Taliban hold all of Afghanistan and if they can sort of now work towards an inclusive government, get all the factions together, Afghanistan could have peace after 40 years. But if it goes wrong and which is what we are really worried about, it could go to chaos. The biggest humanitarian crisis, a huge refugee problem.”

PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER IMRAN KHAN

AGRANI BANK LIMITED

Establishment & Engineering Division

Head Office

9/D Dilkusha C/A

Dhaka.

Invitation for Tenders

1	Procuring Entity Name	Agrani Bank Limited, Establishment & Engineering Division, Head office (7th floor), 9/D, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000.	
2	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka	
3	Invitation for	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of CCTV System on Agrani Bank Limited, Farmgate Branch & New Eskaton Branch, Dhaka	
4	Invitation Ref No	ABL/E&ED/Eng/Mecha-177/2021	
5	Date	14/09/2021	
Key Information			
6	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method.	
Funding Information			
7	Budget and Source of Funds	Own fund of Agrani Bank limited.	
Particular Information			
8	Tender Publication Date	14/09/2021	
9	Tender Last Selling Date	30/09/2021	
10	Tender Closing Date and Time	Date 03/10/2021	Time 3.00PM
11	Tender Opening Date and Time	03/10/2021	3.30PM
12	Name & Address of the Tender Document Selling Office	Agrani Bank Limited, Establishment & Engineering Division, Head Office (7th Floor), 9/D, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000.	
13	Receiving Tender Document	Agrani Bank Limited, Credit Policy and Credit Risk Division, Head Office (4 th Floor), 9/D, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000. Time: 10:00AM to 3:00PM, Date: 03/10/2021	
14	Place of Tender Opening	Tender Opening will take place at the Primary Place	
Information For Tenderer			
15	Brief Eligibility and Qualification of Tenderer	<u>Tenderers who have:</u> a. Not been prevented by order of any judicial court from entering into and/ or singing contract with the procuring entity. b. Tenderers shall have at least 03 (Three) years of overall business experience in similar works preceding the date of publication of IFT. c. Bidder must be the sole agent/commercial distributor of the proposed brand CC Camera of the contract and he/she must submit its all supporting documents. d. Certificate by the bidder stating that he/she had successfully completed CCTV installation, testing and commissioning works at Govt/Semi-Govt Autonomous organizations/ Reputed Limited Company. e. No joint venture company is allowed.	
16	Tenderer to attach copies of the following Documents	i) Up to date valid Trade license ii) Up-to-date income tax paid certificate iii) Valid VAT registration certificate iv) TIN Certificate v) Minimum amount of liquid asset i.e. working capital or line of credit certificate of the Tenderer shall be Tk. 5,25,000.00 (Five Lac and Twenty Five thousand) only. vi) Main Catalogue/ Brochure. vii) The minimum specific experience as Supplier in supply of similar Goods of at least 2 contract(s) successfully completed within the last 3 years, each with a value of at least Tk. 4,20,000/ viii) Affidavit/Declaration of legal ownership/ Certificate of incorporation. ix) Tender Submission Letter (Form PG3-1) x) Bio-data of key personnel employed by the contractor to carry out the functions stated in the schedule. xi) Bidder must be the sole agent/commercial distributor of the proposed brand CC Camera of the contract and he/she must submit its all supporting documents. xii) International Standard Conformity Certificate and Every other documents mentioned in TDS.	
17	Brief Description of Goods	CCTV system with complete accessories. (Camera, 8-SATA port hybrid DVR, Monitor, UPS etc.)	
18	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	500/- (Tk Five Hundred Only) Non-refundable pay-order from any branch of Agrani Bank Limited in favor of Agrani Bank Limited, Head Office, Dhaka.	
19	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Md. Nurul Islam	
20	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Deputy General Manager	
21	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Agrani Bank Limited, Establishment & Engineering Division, Head Office (7th Floor), 9/D, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka-1000.	
22	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	01552475489, 029561674 eedmechanical@agrانبank.org	
23	a) The Tenderer shall furnish Registration certificate and evidence of being managed by Bangladeshi nationals in original and certificates of satisfactory completion of previous work for proposed brand CC Camera of above magnitude from the owner at the time of dropping the Tender documents. b) If communication is disrupted on the date of receiving and opening the Tender(s), the same will be received at the same time on the day after next working day. c) Furnishing of any false, misleading documents may result in rejection of tender and may lead to action under Reg. 127 of PPR 2008. d) The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons whatsoever. No claims will be entertained in this regard.	(MD. Nurul Islam) Deputy General Manager Agrani Bank Limited Establishment & Engineering Division Head Office, Dhaka	