

# SOARING PRICES OF ESSENTIALS IN LANKA President admits govt failure

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa admitted his government is "not delivering" as shortages persist of food, medicines and other essential items because of a dire foreign exchange squeeze.

"The people may have a sense of displeasure towards me and the government for not delivering as they expected," Rajapaksa's office quoted him as saying on Sunday.

"I accept that. Not only me, but all ministers and Members of Parliament should accept it," he told troops in a speech marking the 72nd anniversary of the military's founding.

A shortage of foreign currency has hindered the ability of the island nation of 21 million people to import goods, prompting the government to declare a state of emergency and impose rationing.

On Friday, the government removed price restrictions on essential foods in a desperate bid to end hoarding of staples such as rice, sugar, lentils and milk powder.

Within hours of Rajapaksa's remarks on Sunday, the government also announced an 85 percent hike in the price of liquefied petroleum gas used in cooking stoves, which started yesterday.

The prices of wheat flour and cement were also increased by nearly 10 percent.

The state-run Petroleum Corporation said it was asking the government to substantially increase retail prices for all fuels to offset losses of \$350 million in the first eight months of this year.

Private economists and international rating agencies say Sri Lanka's economic woes predate the pandemic.



A security personnel checks the bag of a pedestrian along a street in Srinagar, India yesterday, as suspected militants shot dead five soldiers in Indian-administered Kashmir. Separately two suspected rebels were shot dead in different incidents, authorities said.

PHOTO: AFP

## MORE NEWS

### Iraq arrests IS finance chief wanted by US: PM

Iraq has captured the alleged finance chief of the Islamic State group, Sami Jasim al-Jaburi, who was sought by the United States, in an operation abroad, Iraqi authorities said yesterday. Jaburi, also the suspected former deputy to the late IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, was arrested "in Turkey," a senior Iraqi military source told AFP without elaborating. Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi had earlier announced on Twitter that Jaburi was arrested by the intelligence services "outside the borders" of Iraq, in a "complex external operation," without naming the location. It was not immediately clear if Turkish authorities were involved and there was no immediate reaction from Ankara. The US had offered a reward of up to \$5 million for the capture of Jaburi.

### Tunisia's Saied appoints new govt 11 weeks after power grab

Tunisia's President Kais Saied issued a decree appointing a new government yesterday, 11 weeks after he fired the last one in a controversial power grab amid acute economic and political crises. State television broadcast a swearing-in ceremony of the cabinet headed by Najla Bouden, the North African country's first ever female prime minister. In her first public speech since her nomination, Bouden said yesterday that "the fight against corruption will be the most important aim" of the new government. She also vowed to "raise living standards" of Tunisians and "restore their faith in the state". But Saied has significantly pared back the powers of her office and will technically head the administration



himself. The president on July 25 sacked the previous prime minister, suspended parliament and granted himself judicial powers in moves that opponents have termed a coup. Saied, a former legal academic, has repeatedly criticised the constitution Tunisia adopted in 2014 which brought in a mixed parliamentary-presidential system, three years after a revolution that overthrew veteran dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

### 156 Yemeni rebels killed south of Marib: Saudi-led coalition

More than 150 Huthi rebels have been killed in an operation south of Marib, a major hotspot of Yemen's civil war, the Saudi-led coalition fighting the militants said yesterday. "The targeting process included the destruction of eight military vehicles, and casualties exceeded 156 terrorist elements," a coalition statement said, according to the official Saudi Press Agency. The operation took place in Abdiya south of Marib, the internationally recognised government's last outpost in northern Yemen and key to controlling the region's oil wealth. Yemen has been devastated by a seven-year conflict pitting the Iran-backed Huthi rebels against the internationally recognised government supported by a Saudi-led military coalition. The Shia Huthis renewed their campaign to capture Marib last month. The resulting clashes have left hundreds of rebels and loyalists dead. Tens of thousands of people have been killed since the conflict flared in 2014 when the Huthis seized Sanaa.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

## 'Moment of truth'

UN Biodiversity chief urges action as key summit on conservation opens in China

AFP, Beijing

A key UN summit tasked with protecting biodiversity opened in China and online yesterday, as countries meet to protect ecosystems and prevent mass extinction weeks before the COP26 climate conference.

Beijing, the world's biggest polluter, has sought to position itself in recent years as a world leader on environmental issues after Washington's withdrawal from international commitments under the Trump administration.

The online summit -- setting the stage for a face-to-face meeting in April -- will see parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) discuss new targets for protecting ecosystems by 2030.

Up for debate are the "30 by 30" plan to give 30 percent of land and oceans protected status by 2030 -- a measure supported by a broad coalition of nations, as well as a goal to halve the use of chemicals in agriculture and stop creating plastic waste.

"While there have been some success and progress,

there have not been the breakthroughs needed to halt the ongoing loss of plant and animal diversity on earth," CBD executive secretary Elizabeth Maruma Mrema warned at the opening session in the southwest city of Kunming.



"We must take actions this decade to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and put biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030 the latest."

China has not yet committed to the "30 by 30" plan, despite implementing an "ecological protection red line" system that already puts 25 percent of its territory out of the reach of developers.

This year's COP15 gathering was originally

set for 2020 and postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Around one million animal and plant species are threatened with extinction amid human encroachment on habitats, over-exploitation, pollution, the spread of invasive species, and climate change.

The CBD has been ratified by 195 countries and the European Union -- although not the United States, the world's biggest historical polluter -- with parties meeting every two years.

Beijing is expected to unveil a statement known as the Kunming Declaration to set the tone for its environmental leadership.

Vice Premier Han Zheng said at the opening session that over 11,800 protected areas have been set up, accounting for 18 percent of China's land mass.

But sharp divisions remain over the targets for urgent action over the next decade, casting doubts on whether a 2050 deadline to "live in harmony with nature" can be achieved.

## Taliban to be judged on deeds

Says US after 'candid and professional' talks in Doha; US, UK warn citizens of threat to Kabul hotels

AGENCIES

The US State Department said Sunday that this weekend's talks with representatives of the Taliban in Doha, Qatar -- the first such gathering since the US withdrawal from Afghanistan at the end of August -- were "candid and professional" while emphasizing that the Taliban "will be judged on its actions, not only its words."

"The US delegation focused on security and terrorism concerns and safe passage for US citizens, other foreign nationals and our Afghan partners, as well as on human rights, including the meaningful participation of women and girls in all aspects of Afghan society," a readout from the State Department said.

"The two sides also discussed the United States' provision of robust humanitarian assistance, directly to the Afghan people."

Suhail Shaheen, Afghanistan's ambassador-designate to the UN, said the discussions "went well" in a statement Sunday evening. "Political issues were discussed in detail during the meeting and the Islamic Emirate considered full implementation of the Doha agreement as the best way

of resolving problems and that the humanitarian assistance should not be linked to political issues."

Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid told reporters on Saturday, "We had a detailed discussion with the

US delegation focused on security and terrorism concerns

Taliban considered full implementation of Doha deal as the best way of resolving problems

American delegation in Doha. "During this meeting, discussions were made about the humanitarian assistance as well and this discussion will continue," Mujahid said.

A State Department official had told CNN before the meeting that it was "a continuation of the pragmatic engagements with the Taliban on issues of US vital national interest." The official told CNN that the meeting with the Taliban representatives "is not

about granting recognition or conferring legitimacy."

"We remain clear that any legitimacy must be earned through the Taliban's own actions," they said.

Meanwhile, the United States and Britain yesterday warned their citizens to avoid hotels in Afghanistan, days after dozens were killed at a mosque in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group.

The Taliban, which seized power in August and declared an Islamic emirate, are seeking international recognition and assistance to avoid a humanitarian disaster and ease Afghanistan's economic crisis.

But, as the hardline Islamist group transitions from a rebel army to a governing power, they are struggling to contain the threat from the Afghanistan chapter of IS, reports AFP.

"US citizens who are at or near the Serena Hotel should leave immediately," the US State Department said, citing "security threats" in the area.

"In light of the increased risks you are advised not to stay in hotels, particularly in Kabul (such as the Serena Hotel)," Britain's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office added.

Rescuers help a migrant child to disembark from a Spanish coast guard vessel, in the port of Arguineguin, in the island of Gran Canaria, Spain on Sunday. The photo was released yesterday. Sea-borne migration to Spain has surged this year, with more than 27,000 people having made the crossing as of the end of September, up more than 50% from the same period last year.

PHOTO: REUTERS



## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### OCTOBER 12

1986 - A summit conference between US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev ended in Reykjavik without an agreement on arms control.

1999 - Pakistan's army chief, General Pervez Musharraf, seized power in a bloodless coup after Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif tried to sack him.

2007 - Former US vice president Al Gore and the UN Panel on Climate Change won the Nobel Peace Prize for helping to galvanise international action against global warming.

SOURCE: REUTERS

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**Procurement & Employees Welfare and Transport Department**  
**INTERNATIONAL TENDER NOTICE FOR SUPPLY OF 7,000 REAMS CBSI SECURITY CHEQUE PAPER**

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the bonafide manufacturers or local agents/ representatives on behalf of the foreign principals/manufacturers for supply of CBSI security cheque paper as per specification stated in the tender document.

|     |   |  |
|-----|---|--|
| 1)  | Procuring Entity Name   | Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Procurement & Employees Welfare and Transport Department.  |
| 2)  | Name of Tender  | Procurement of 7,000 (Seven Thousand) reams CBSI security cheque paper   |
| 3)  | Invitation Ref. No. & Date                                      | HO/Procure-396/Part-9(2)/2021-2022/669 10.10.2021  |
| 4)  | Procurement Method  | Open Tendering Method (ICT)  |
| 5)  | Budget & Source of Fund   | Own fund   |
| 6)  | Tender Last Selling Date & Time                                 | 22.11.2021, 4:00 PM  |
| 7)  | Tender Submission Date & Time                                   | 23.11.2021, 11:00 AM   |
| 8)  | Tender Opening Date & Time                                      | 23.11.2021, 11:15 AM   |
| 9)  | Tender Document Selling, Submission & Opening Place             | Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Procurement & Employees Welfare and Transport Department, Head Office (2nd Floor), 83-85, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000.   |
| 10) | Price of Tender Document (TD)                                   | PODD (Non-refundable) of tk. 3000 (Three thousand) in favour of Bangladesh Krishi Bank from any schedule bank in Bangladesh  |
| 11) | Tender Security   | PODD (Irrevocable BG (Refundable) of tk. 4,00,000 (Four lakh) in favour of Bangladesh Krishi Bank issued by any schedule bank in Bangladesh or an internationally reputable bank and it shall have endorsed by correspondent bank located in Bangladesh.   |
| 12) | Amount of Performance Security                                  | Successful tenderer shall have to submit performance security (10% of quoted value), within 28 days of issuing NOA, in favour of Bangladesh Krishi Bank in the form of PO/ DD/ Irrevocable BG (refundable after completion of contract) issued by any schedule bank in Bangladesh or an internationally reputable bank and it shall have endorsed by correspondent bank located in Bangladesh.<br>1) The Tenderer shall have a minimum of 03 (three) years of overall experience in the supply of CBSI cheque paper.<br>2) The satisfactory completion of supply of minimum 3000 (three thousand) reams CBSI cheque papers under 01 (one) contract in the last 01 (one) year. i.e. years counting backward from the date of publication of IFT in the news paper.<br>3) Valid trade licence.<br>4) IRC from Office of CCI & E and Bangladesh Bank.<br>5) Current VAT registration certificate.<br>6) Current income tax paid certificate and TIN<br>7) Bank solvency certificate and other required documents mentioned in TD. |
| 13) | Eligibility of Tenderer & paper to be submitted (Duly attested) |  |
| 14) | Pre-Tender Meeting  | N/A  |
| 15) | Name, Designation & Address of Official Inviting Tender         | Md. Mamunur Rashid, DGM, Bangladesh Krishi Bank, Procurement & Employees Welfare and Transport Dept. Head Office, Dhaka.   |

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.

GD-1820

Md. Mamunur Rashid  
Deputy General Manager

**NO TIME TO DIE**  
**QUIZ CONTEST**  
The Daily Star STAR PRIZES  
10 WINNERS EVERYDAY! 2 PREMIUM TICKETS FOR EACH WINNER  
Email your answer to starquiz@outlook.com by 4.00 pm today with your name, DOB, mobile number and address. The winners of the quiz will be announced tomorrow in this newspaper and through email.  
Winners are requested to follow the instructions given in email

**QUIZ - 04** Who wears the "Noh Mask" in the movie "No Time To Die?"

**WINNERS LIST OF QUIZ - 03**  
1. Tonmoy Mazumder, Gulshan-1.  
2. Md. Anowar Hossain, Dakhingao.  
3. Smita Rani Debnath, Tejgaon.  
4. Md. Easir Arafat, Islampur.  
5. Topon Chowdhury, University Of Dhaka.  
6. Nurun Nahar Pushpo, Dhaka Cantonment.  
7. James Charles Gomes, Tejgaon.  
8. Md Mehrab Hossain, Mirpur-2.  
9. Shahriar Hassan, Mirpur-14.  
10. Foyej Ahmed, New Eskatan Road.

PHOTO: MOVIE POSTER

## COVID-19 DRUG AstraZeneca logs upbeat trial results

AFP, London

British pharmaceuticals giant AstraZeneca yesterday revealed more positive results from a trial of a treatment for Covid-19 symptoms.

The drug, made from a combination of two antibodies, achieved a "statistically significant reduction in severe Covid-19 or death" in non-hospitalised patients with mild-to-moderate symptoms, AstraZeneca said in a statement.

The group's treatment, known as AZD7442, has been undergoing phase 3 or final clinical trials to assess its safety and efficacy.

"With continued cases of serious Covid-19 infections across the globe, there is a significant need for new therapies like AZD7442 that can be used to protect vulnerable populations ... and can also help prevent progression to severe disease," said principal trial investigator Hugh Montgomery.

"These positive results show that a convenient intramuscular dose of AZD7442 could play an important role in helping combat this devastating pandemic."