

Bangladesh requests India

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full control of half the territory of Bangladesh. We also confirm that the Bangladesh government has established effective civil administration over this area, which is functioning smoothly. This development has not merely been welcomed by the broad masses of the people, but the efforts of our government have found spontaneous and overwhelming support in the areas under its control."

HANOI SUPPORTS BANGLADESH STRUGGLE

North Vietnam extended support to the national liberation struggle movement in Bangladesh. This was stated by the Consul General of North Vietnam Col N A Vu at a news conference in New Delhi today.

Col Vu said, "Our sympathy is with the struggle of the people of East Pakistan. We hope that a political solution will be found for a secure return of the refugees from India to East Pakistan."

US PROPOSAL FOR MUTUAL WITHDRAWAL

The US state department in a telegram sent today asked the US ambassador

in India to seek an early appointment with the Indian foreign minister and request him to give "the most careful consideration" to the US proposal for a mutual withdrawal of troops from borders.

The proposal was made, according to the telegram, in the hope that the very substantial movement of men and materiel which has taken place on both sides of the border might be reversed.

The US ambassador in India was also asked to seek India's reaction to Pakistan President Yahya Khan's suggestion that the chiefs of staff on both sides might arrange the mechanics of the pullback.

ON THE WAR FRONT

In the Kushtia-Jashore-Khulna sector, Mukti Bahini ambushed Pakistani troops near Maheshkundi and killed 10 Pakistani soldiers.

In the Rangpur-Dinajpur-Rajshahi sector, Mukti Bahini today ambushed enemy troops in the Ampara area, killing three enemy soldiers.

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A child looks up at fish at SEA LIFE Sydney Aquarium on the venue's first day of re-opening, following an extended closure due to Covid-19 lockdown orders, in Sydney, Australia yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Finnish scientists

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Heikki Aisala, the VTT researcher in charge of evaluating the process, said cups of cellular coffee probably could not pass standard taste tests just yet, but had lots of potential for a multi-billion-dollar global industry.

"Not like of course 100%. It tastes like a combination of different types of coffees. We're not there yet with the commercial variety, but it certainly does resemble coffee at the moment," said Aisala.

VTT Research Team Leader Heiko Rischer said lab-grown cell cultures offered a more sustainable way to make coffee, given that because of high demand, countries were devoting ever larger tracts of land to grow coffee

beans, leading to deforestation.

Rischer said the environmental benefits of lab-grown coffee included reduced use of pesticides and fertilizer and less need to ship coffee beans long distances to markets.

In Europe, lab-grown coffee would need to be approved as "Novel Food" before being marketed.

But will discriminating coffee aficionados drink it?

Satu, a barista at a Helsinki coffee shop, thinks so.

"I think some day we're going that way because of all the natural coffee sources vanishing, so we have to move along...If it tastes good and the aroma is coffee based, so why not? I think it's possible," she said.

More than 150 rebels killed

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the past 48 hours.

Yemen's war began in 2014 when the Huthis seized the capital Sanaa, 120 kilometres west of Marib, prompting the Saudi-led intervention to prop up the government the following year.

Tens of thousands of people have died and millions have been displaced in what the United Nations calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The Huthis began a big push to seize Marib city in February and, after a lull, they have lately re-intensified their campaign.

Tens of thousands of people have been displaced in the province this year, including nearly 10,000 in September alone, the UN's migration

agency told AFP yesterday.

"From January 1 to September 30, IOM recorded more than 55,000 people displaced in Marib governorate in the areas where our displacement tracking and rapid response teams have access," the International Organization for Migration said.

Marib city had between 20,000 and 30,000 inhabitants before the war but its population ballooned to hundreds of thousands as Yemenis fled frontline cities for its relative stability.

But with about 139 refugee camps in the province, according to the government, hosting approximately 2.2 million people, many displaced civilians have become caught in the line of fire once again.

Security beefed up, 100 held

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in the districts. Cumilla Deputy Commissioner Kamrul Hasan yesterday said a three-member committee has been formed and asked to submit a report within three days.

Police said four cases were filed and 41 individuals were arrested in Cumilla.

At least 13 temples, idols in those temples and 40 businesses of Hindus people were vandalised after Wednesday night in five districts. At 95 people were injured during the time.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan after a high-level meeting with the cabinet secretary and heads of different law enforcing and intelligence agencies at the ministry said several individuals were identified in connection with the incident in the Puja Mandap in Cumilla and they will be arrested soon.

The home minister added that those spreading rumours in social media will also be brought to book.

In Bandarban, at least 25 people including 10 policemen were injured in a clash between a mob and law enforcers in Lama kendrio Hori Mandir yesterday. The clash ensued when several hundred religious fanatics attacked the temple around 11:00am.

They also vandalised at least 40 shops owned by Hindu people, said Prashanto Bhattacharya, president of

the temple management committee.

In Noakhali, villagers attacked two temples in Hatiya and one in Begumganj on Wednesday morning. Police have so far arrested five people in connection with the attacks.

In Gazipur city, miscreants attacked at least three temples and vandalised idols in Kashimpur Bazar yesterday. Police later arrested at least 20 people in connection with the attacks.

Human chains were formed in Gazipur and Barishal to protest the attacks in Gazipur and elsewhere.

In Rajshahi's Bagmara upazila, 10 individuals, including a policeman, were injured in a clash between a mob and the police.

There were clashes in Chattogram, Kurigram and Moulvibazar on Wednesday, where Hindu idols and temples were vandalised.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Puja Uddjapan Parishad in a statement yesterday urged Hindu people across the country to observe sit-ins at each Durga Puja mandaps today for three hours from 11:00am in protest of the attacks.

Contacted, Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad General Secretary Advocate Rana Dasgupta expressed grave concerns over the attacks, saying, "We will soon announce programmes protesting the attacks."

Death toll in Philippines storm rises to 19

AFP, Manila

The death toll from a storm that triggered landslides and flash floods across the Philippines has risen to at least 19, authorities said yesterday, linking the extreme rainfall to climate change.

Severe Tropical Storm Kompassu dumped more than a month's worth of rain in two days as it swept across the archipelago nation this week, national disaster agency spokesman Mark Timbal told AFP.

Kompassu -- named after the Japanese pronunciation of "compass" -- intensified the southwest monsoon that had already saturated swathes of

the disaster-prone country.

Provinces on the most populous island of Luzon were hardest hit by the storm, which caused more than a billion pesos (\$20 million) worth of damage to the agriculture sector and damaged hundreds of homes.

Timbal said the rainfall was "even greater than the Ondoy experience", referring to the devastating Typhoon Ketsana, known in the Philippines as Tropical Storm Ondoy, that hit in 2009 and claimed hundreds of lives.

"This only proves the effect of climate change when it comes to the increasing magnitude of these natural hazards," Timbal said.

Now extended further inside int'l border

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powers in the states where it guards the international border.

The 2014 notification had allowed the BSF's jurisdiction in the "whole of the area" comprising the north eastern states of Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland and Meghalaya and federally-administered territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

The latest notification empowers the BSF to take this action under Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), Passport Act and Passport (Entry to India) Act, Customs Act and anti-drug trafficking law, like the police in the states

concerned, the ministry source said.

Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi tweeted: "I strongly condemn the GoI's [Govt of India] unilateral decision to give additional powers to BSF within 50km belt running along the international borders, which is a direct attack on federalism. I urge the Union Home Minister @AmitShah to immediately rollback this irrational decision."

West Bengal Transport Minister and TMC leader Firhad Hakim said, "The Central government is violating the federal structure of the country. Law and order is a state subject but

the central government is trying to interfere through central agencies."

Punjab State Home Minister and Congress leader Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa compared the move to the imposition of "internal emergency."

"It's a very politically sensitive move. The main aim of BSF is to guard borders and stop infiltration. Recent cases have shown they have not been able to guard the delineated line," a senior police official claimed.

According to him, this may also lead to regular confrontations with local police, and also villagers, when searches and seizures are done.

Third phase UP elections on Nov 28

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the last date for withdrawal of candidature is November 11.

The candidates of the municipality elections will follow the same schedule, the EC secretary said.

Asked how the elections will be held on November 28 as teachers and school authorities will remain busy holding annual exams for the secondary students at that time, Humayun hoped that the school

authorities would "adjust" the date.

He said the EC has prepared the polls schedule, keeping in mind the routines of SSC and HSC exams.

This year's SSC and its equivalent examinations will be held from November 14 to 23, while HSC and its equivalent exams will take place between December 2 and 30.

The Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education asked all school authorities to complete annual exams

for classes six to nine students and test exams for SSC candidates of 2022 between November 24 and 30.

During the elections, school buildings are used as polling centres and teachers perform duties as election officials.

Some 848 UPs will go to polls on November 11 in the second phase.

In the first phase, elections were held in 204 UPs on June 21 and 160 UPs on September 20.



Iraqis protest against the results of parliamentary elections in the northern city of Mosul yesterday. The sign in Arabic in the middle reads "No, no to fraud". War-scarred Iraq -- an oil-rich country plagued by corruption and poverty -- on October 10 held its fifth parliamentary elections since the 2003 US-led invasion toppled dictator Saddam Hussein.

PHOTO: AFP

Eating up a Sylhet hillock

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Company for a year. According to the lease agreement, Bashir Company could start extracting stones from April 2005 under 13 conditions including environmental protection, the case statement said.

But upon getting the official order of the lease, the company started extracting stones before the stipulated date while violating all the given conditions, according to the case statement.

The BMD on September 2004 cancelled the lease and ordered Bashir Company to stop extracting stones.

However, Mohammad Ali's company continued extracting stones, ravaging the whole hillock and causing massive environmental damage.

The case statement mentioned that Mohammad Ali ravaged all 137.5 acres of the hillock and extracted 62,88,750 cubic feet of stone and amassing wealth of Tk

252,75,90,000 from it.

ACC filed the case against Mohammad Ali as lone accused under section 420 and 406 of the Penal Code.

In 2009, the High Court issued an order barring Bashir Company from extracting stone from the hillock, but that order was ignored.

In 2017, five stone workers died while extracting stones illegally and the district administration formed a probe body, led by the then Additional District Magistrate Abu Shafayat Muhammad Shahedul Islam, to investigate the incident.

The probe report found involvement of 47 persons, including local council representatives, traders, police, administration and journalists.

However, the illegal stone extraction continued till last year, when the administration imposed a strict ban of stone extraction from the hillock.

Expression of Interest (EOI)

World Food Programme
Prequalification of Retailers and Food Wholesalers for WFP Bhasan Char Island Ref. CXB21NF104EOI

WFP plans to start providing assistance to displaced people through national retailers in Bhasan Char Island of Noakhali district in Bangladesh. WFP beneficiaries receive an entitlement that they can use to purchase a variety of perishable and non-perishable food and non-food items at WFP-designated distribution points.

Retail partners will be responsible for:

- Procurement of food (and some non-food items). WFP contracted retailers will be encouraged to procure fresh and perishable items from local producers in the Noakhali district and other areas across Bangladesh to support the local economy.
- Implementation of a full logistics plan to transport the commodities to the Bhasan Char Island (Noakhali District)
- Running the distribution points in line with the humanitarian principles/code of conduct and in coordination with WFP-designated NGO partners. Strict food quality and safety standards must be implemented and maintained at all stages of the supply chain.

Interested and reputable organizations working in the food retail/wholesale business sector, who have the supply chain capacity to provide the services as mentioned above, are kindly requested to submit their Expression of Interest to the email address coxsbazar.procurement@wfp.org by the mentioned deadline.

Minimum Requirements:

- Meets all legal requirements for a retailer contract with WFP (Legal registration, Trade License, VAT etc.) or has the ability to acquire all required legal licenses needed for companies to trade in Bangladesh.
- Company with a minimum of three years' experience as an established business; (retail business experience is preferred) with good understanding of supply chain of food commodity market in Bangladesh.
- Company accepts WFP's payment terms and conditions.
- Ability to provide staff training on retail operations and in-store services and / or store maintenance.
- Ability to provide store operations manuals (including back office, logistics, etc.) in the required language.
- Ability to meet food quality standards and WFP's monitoring and inspection requirements.
- Readiness to allocate staff to outlet locations as per the demand of operation.
- Willingness to improve service quality by learning and applying data analytics for running the retail business efficiently; maintain uninterrupted food supply, delivering high quality service whilst maintaining cleanliness and hygiene levels.
- Ability and willingness to procure locally produced fresh food (vegetables, eggs, chicken, live fish etc.) from the local farmers.
- Ability to adhere to WFP's humanitarian principles and standards, including no discrimination against beneficiaries, data protection requirements.

Deadline for registration: 31 October 2021 at 16:00 hrs Dhaka time.

India praises

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in Bangladesh with the support of the government of Bangladesh agencies and of course the large majority of the public [in that country]."

He added that the Indian High Commission and consulates in Bangladesh "are obviously in close contact with the authorities in Dhaka and at local levels".

Covid-linked

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2.16 percent. However, the mortality rate remained static at 1.77 percent.

Besides, the recovery rate increased to 97.56 percent, with 695 more patients getting cured during the period.

So far, 1,526,368 people have recovered from the deadly virus infections, the DGHS added.

183 more

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died of dengue infection in the country this year. Among the deaths, 76 have died in Dhaka division, two in Chattogram division and Khulna and one each in Rajshahi and Mymensingh divisions.

Though most of the patients who were hospitalised have so far been released, 906 are still undergoing treatment at hospitals in Dhaka, and 166 outside the capital, according to the DGHS data.

Russia reports record daily virus cases

AFP, Moscow

Russia yesterday reported a pandemic high for both new coronavirus infections and fatalities over 24 hours, with the country's vaccination drive at a snail's pace and few restrictions in place.

Officials registered 31,299 new infections and 986 deaths from Covid-19 over 24 hours, bringing Russia's total fatalities to 220,315 -- the highest toll in Europe.

The surging outbreak has come with just 31 percent of Russians fully inoculated, according to the Gogov website, which tallies Covid-19 data from the regions.

A lack of tough restrictions has allowed the virus to spread, though a number of regions have re-introduced QR codes for access to public places.