

CHEMICAL CASTRATION OF REPEAT OFFENDERS

Pakistan passes anti-rape bill

CNN ONLINE

Sex offenders convicted of multiple rapes could face chemical castration in Pakistan after lawmakers passed new anti-rape legislation that aims to speed up convictions and impose tougher sentences.

The bill passed on Wednesday in response to a mass public outcry over a recent surge in rapes against women and children in the country, and growing demands to ensure justice for victims of sexual assault.

The bill states that Pakistan's government must establish special courts nationwide to expedite rape trials and ensure sexual abuse cases are decided "expeditiously, preferably within four months."

Those found guilty of gang rape will be sentenced to death or life in prison.

Chemical castration is the use of drugs to reduce libido or sexual activity. It is a legal form of punishment in countries including South Korea, Poland, the Czech Republic and in some US states.

Amnesty International said the penalty of chemical castration was "cruel and inhuman" in a statement last December, when the bill was announced.

"Instead of trying to deflect attention, the authorities should focus on the crucial work of reforms that will address the root causes of sexual violence and give survivors the justice they deserve," Amnesty said.

Fewer than 3 percent of sexual assault or rape cases result in a conviction in Pakistan, Reuters reported last December, citing Karachi-based non-profit War Against Rape.

In a landmark ruling in January, virginity tests on sexual assault survivors were outlawed in Pakistan's most populous province, Punjab.



PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS

Migrants aiming to cross into Poland camp near the Bruzgi-Kuznica border crossing on the Belarusian-Polish border, on Wednesday. Inset, A migrant at the border poses for a picture. G7 foreign ministers yesterday urged Belarus to end a migrant crisis on its border with Poland, accusing it of callously engineering the stand-off and putting lives at risk.

REGIONAL EFFECT OF ECONOMIC CRISIS IN AFGHANISTAN

'Risk of extremism' rising

Warns UN envoy, says IS now appears present in all Afghan provinces

AGENCIES

The UN envoy to Afghanistan on Wednesday delivered a bleak assessment of the situation following the Taliban takeover, saying that an affiliate of the Islamic State group has grown and now appears present in nearly all 34 provinces.

UN Special Representative Deborah Lyons told the UN Security Council that the Taliban's response to Islamic State-Khorasan Province's (ISKP) expansion "appears to rely heavily on extrajudicial detentions and killings" of suspected ISKP fighters.

"This is an area deserving more attention from the international community," she said.

Her comments came hours after the group claimed responsibility for two blasts that killed at least one person and wounded six others in a heavily



Shia Muslim neighborhood of Kabul.

The Taliban, she said, has been unable to stem ISKP's growth.

"Once limited to a few provinces and the capital, ISKP now seems to be present in nearly all provinces, and increasingly active," Lyons said, adding that the number of the group's attacks have increased from 60 strikes in 2020 to 334 this year.

While the Taliban is making "genuine efforts to present itself as a government" since seizing Kabul in August after a 20-year war with the United States, they continue excluding representatives of other sectors of society and curtailing the rights of women and girls.

The UN mission regularly receives credible reports of house searches and the "extrajudicial killings" of former security personnel and officials, she said.

Lyons warned anew of a humanitarian catastrophe as winter looms due to a failing economy and drought. She implored the international community to find ways to fund the salaries of healthcare workers, teachers and humanitarian workers, saying humanitarian aid is insufficient.

China lobbies for Myanmar junta to join regional meet

Say diplomatic sources; Asean states object

REUTERS

A Chinese envoy has lobbied Southeast Asian nations to let Myanmar's military ruler attend a regional summit being hosted by China's president next week but has met stiff opposition, diplomatic sources said yesterday.

Myanmar's standing as a member of the 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) has been thrown into the spotlight by a February 1 coup, when its military ousted the elected government of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, sparking bloody turmoil.

Several Asean members, dismayed by the return of crisis and the suppression of democracy in Myanmar, have sought to press its generals by excluding them from Asean meetings.

In an unprecedented decision last month, Asean leaders blocked Myanmar's military chief, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing,

from an Asean summit after he failed to honour pledges to allow an Asean envoy to meet lawmakers overthrown in the coup.

Instead, Asean leaders said a non-political figure from Myanmar should be asked to attend. In the end, Myanmar was not represented.

Four diplomatic and political sources in the region said Indonesia, Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore wanted Min Aung Hlaing to be banned from a November 22 China-Asean meeting being hosted by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

China's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to requests for comment but on Tuesday, its spokesman, Zhao Lijian, said China supported all parties in Myanmar in seeking political settlement through dialogue and would work with the international community on efforts to restore stability and resume democratic transformation.

Quotes of the day



China has no law enforcement rights in and around these areas. They must take heed and back off."

THE PHILIPPINES FOREIGN SECRETARY **TEODORO LOCSIN JR.** AFTER CHINESE COAST GUARD VESSELS USED WATER CANNON ON FILIPINO RESUPPLY BOATS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA



Russia has an interest in everybody in Europe. ... Finally (they are) coming to their senses and stopping considering Russia the culprit of all troubles.

KREMLIN SPOKESMAN **DMITRY PESKOV** ON CRISIS IN UKRAINE AND POLAND



Men of honor admit when they're wrong. I was wrong for entering the Capitol. I had no excuse. I'm not an insurrectionist. I'm certainly not a domestic terrorist.

US CAPITOL RIOT 'SHAMAN' **JACOB CHANSLEY** TELLS COURT AFTER JAILED FOR 41 MONTHS

MORE NEWS

Taiwan commissions advanced new F-16s

Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen yesterday lauded military cooperation with Washington as she commissioned the first combat wing of F-16 fighters upgraded with US help to bolster the island's defences during rising tensions between Taipei and Beijing. Tsai told a ceremony at an air base in the southern Taiwanese city of Chiayi to unveil the first squadron of its most advanced F-16s, the F-16V, that the project showed the firm commitment of the Taiwan-US partnership. The United States has no official diplomatic ties with Taiwan but is the island's main international backer and arms supplier, to Beijing's fury.

US drug overdoses top 100,000 in pandemic year

US annual drug overdose deaths surged to more than 100,000 for the first time during the Covid-19 pandemic, a crisis driven mainly by fentanyl and exacerbated by a flood of fake online pills, officials said Wednesday. Experts say people with substance use disorders have been hit hard by daily life disruptions, while authorities are seizing record numbers of counterfeit and sometimes deadly medicines from Mexico. Between April 2020 and April 2021, the country saw 100,306 fatal overdoses, an increase of 28.5 percent compared to the same period the previous year -- equal to one death every five minutes.

Pakistan, India reopen Kartarpur corridor for Sikh pilgrims

Sikh pilgrims have begun to arrive in Pakistan to visit one of their holiest shrines before the birth anniversary of the religion's founder after India gave them the green light to cross the border. The Kartarpur corridor is a visa-free crossing allowing Indian Sikhs to visit the temple just 4km inside Pakistan where Guru Nanak died in 1539. The corridor first opened in 2019 for Nanak's 550th birth anniversary but was closed last year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Google agrees 5-year deal to pay AFP for online content

Google and Agence France-Presse on Wednesday said they had signed a "pioneering" five-year deal under which the world's biggest internet search company will pay an undisclosed sum for content in Europe. The agreement, following 18 months of negotiations, is the first by a news agency under the 2019 European directive on so-called neighbouring rights, at the heart of multiple disputes between web giants and the media over payment for use of online news and other content.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

9 'militants' killed in J&K

Probe ordered into shooting of 'civilians'

AGENCIES

Indian troops have killed seven suspected militants in Kashmir this week, including a district commander, in an offensive following recent killings by militants, police said on Wednesday.

Security forces said they had also killed two others suspected of helping the militants, but relatives said the two dead men were "innocent civilians" and held a candle-light protest in Kashmir's main city, Srinagar.

Kashmir Police Chief Vijay Kumar said five militants believed to belong to a group named The Resistance Front (TRF), which claimed recent killings of migrants in the disputed territory, had been killed on Wednesday in two gun battles south of Srinagar.

He said two other suspected militants and two men believed to have assisted them had been killed in a shootout in Srinagar, reports Reuters.

The two men's families denied they had any links with militants and said the bodies had not been handed over for burial. Police said they had buried all four men north of Srinagar.

Meanwhile, authorities yesterday ordered a probe into the killing of the two men, after police violently broke up a protest demanding the bodies be returned to their families. Their families accused security forces of murdering the pair in "cold blood", denying police claims that the pair were associated with militants, reports AFP.

Manoj Sinha, a New Delhi appointee serving as Indian Kashmir's top administrator, said the government would take "suitable action" as soon as a report into the incident was completed.



Fresh protests after 15 killed in Sudan

AFP, Khartoum

Street clashes again shook Sudan's capital yesterday a day after security forces shot dead 15 protesters in the bloodiest day since the military's October 25 takeover.

Police fired tear gas to disperse dozens of anti-coup protesters who had stayed on the streets of north Khartoum overnight, braving an intensifying crackdown that has drawn international condemnation, witnesses said.


Police tore down makeshift barricades the protesters had erected the previous day.

Later in the day, dozens of protesters returned to rebuild them and police again fired tear gas in a bid to clear the streets, witnesses said.

"Protesters responded by hurling stones at the police," one witness said.

On October 25, top general Abdel Fattah al-Burhan -- Sudan's de facto leader since the April 2019 ouster of longtime president Omar al-Bashir -- detained the civilian leadership and declared a state of emergency.

The move upended Sudan's fragile transition to full civilian rule, drawing international condemnation and a flurry of punitive measures and aid cuts.



ASIAN UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN

Project Director for AUW Campus Construction

Asian University for Women (AUW), an independent international university with students drawn from 19 countries across Asia and the Middle East, is seeking a professional civil engineer with at least **15 years of experience in complex construction projects in Bangladesh** to serve as the Project Director for AUW Campus Construction. Based in Chittagong, this position will be responsible for overall planning, coordination, and execution of a two-million square feet construction project to be completed in eight successive phases. It is expected that a combination of private, multilateral and bilateral funding will be deployed to construct this visionary university facility master planned by Moshe Safdie.


See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrsqHwy7BYo> for Master Plan presentation.

We seek a leader with an unimpeached record of project management and technical achievement who demonstrates an unerring adherence to personal and institutional integrity. The Project Director will work in concert with Project Architect and Project Financial Controller under the direction of a trustee-appointed Campus Construction Committee. Candidates with experience with construction in hilly areas will likely be more attuned to the particular challenges of the AUW campus site.

Compensation is competitive and commensurate with experience.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for further follow-up. Interested candidates are urged to submit a cover letter and detailed cv and list of major construction management project experience to: Hildi.Gabel@asian-university.org

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