

JOHNSON-MODI MEET IN DELHI
UK, India to step up trade, defence co-operation

AGENCIES

The United Kingdom and India have agreed to step up defence and business cooperation, with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson indicating a bilateral free-trade deal could be wrapped up by October this year.

On his first visit to the Indian capital since taking office in 2019, Johnson held talks with his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, on ways to boost security ties between London and New Delhi, which buys more than half of its military hardware from Russia.

"We had wonderful talks that have strengthened our relationship in every way," Johnson told a joint news briefing with Modi yesterday, at the end of his two-day trip.

"We have agreed a new and expanded defence and security partnership, a decades-long commitment that will not only forge tighter bonds between us, but support your goal of 'Make in India'," he added, referring to the Indian premier's domestic manufacturing push.

Modi, meanwhile, hailed Johnson's visit - which came as India marks its 75th year of independence - as "historic", reports Al Jazeera online.

"We discussed several regional and international developments and stressed a free, open, inclusive and rule-based order in the Indo-Pacific," he said.



Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson (L) shakes hands with his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi before their meeting at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi, India yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Health crisis looms in Sri Lanka
Hospitals, drug stores running out of essential medicines as economic crisis bites

AFP, Colombo

By the time he reached a third Colombo pharmacy out of stock of the drug his cancer-stricken wife desperately needs, Dawood Mohamed Ghany was distraught.

Sri Lanka has run out of dollars to procure vital imports of food and fuel, triggering weeks of demonstrations demanding the government step down.

But it is in the health sector that the consequences of the crisis are most visceral.

Ghany, 63, was trying to secure supplies of pertuzumab, the monoclonal antibody used to treat breast cancer.

"This is the first time during her cancer treatment that I have not been able to find

her medicine," he said, breaking down.

His 55-year-old wife was "very sick", he told AFP. "What do I do? I am helpless. But I will do whatever I can to save her."

Sri Lanka used to import around 85 percent of its pharmaceuticals but is suffering its worst economic crisis since 1948.

Multiple health workers told AFP that hospitals and chemist stores across the country were running out of essential medicines.

Viraj Jayasinghe, consultant paediatrician at Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children, a state facility in Colombo, said his department normally maintains as much as six months worth of stocks.

"Right now, we are really in short

supply," he told AFP. "And we are worried about patient safety in the future."

He is among hundreds of doctors and health workers who have joined protests demanding urgent deliveries of drugs and medical equipment, including endotracheal tubes to help babies breathe.

Public appeals for help have brought in donations from individuals and organisations, but the Sri Lankan medical fraternity says it is not enough. Jayasinghe said single-patient nebuliser kits were being washed and reused in his department instead of being discarded as normal, raising the possibility of disease transmission. A nationwide group of private hospitals said yesterday that 70 vital drugs were in short supply, including anaesthetics.

Putin to meet with UN chief in Russia Tuesday

AFP, Moscow

Russian President Vladimir Putin will hold talks with United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres in Russia on Tuesday, the Kremlin said yesterday. The announcement was made on the 58th day of Moscow's military campaign in Ukraine, with thousands killed and more than 12 million displaced people, in Europe's worst refugee crisis since World War II. UN confirmed that the secretary-general will meet with Putin in Moscow next week. Guterres also wants to meet Ukrainian leader and seeks to spur dialogue to end the conflict, the UN said. Putin has not taken Guterres's phone calls, or had any contact with him, since the UN chief stated that Russia's military campaign violated the UN charter.

EU eyes deal to tame internet 'Wild West'

AFP, Brussels

The European Union yesterday homed in on new regulation to require Big Tech to remove harmful online content, the bloc's latest move to rein in the world's online giants. The Digital Services Act (DSA) - the second part of a massive project to regulate tech companies - aims to ensure tougher consequences for platforms and websites that



violate a long list of banned content ranging from hate speech to disinformation and paedophilia images. EU officials and parliament members started talks in Brussels to hammer out the deal, hoping to reach an agreement later in the day on legislation in the works since 2020. The text is the companion to the Digital Markets Act (DMA), which targeted anti-competitive practices among tech behemoths like Google and Facebook. The legislation has faced lobbying from the tech companies and intense debate over the extent of freedom of speech. "What's forbidden offline must be forbidden online," tweeted EU internal markets commissioner Thierry Breton, who has previously described the internet as the "Wild West".

'Feast' ends, now it's time for action

FROM PAGE 12

The US report does not reflect the facts and the ministry will also seek explanation on the "discrepancy" of information.

Following a four-day visit to Bangladesh on April 20, US Ambassador at Large for Religious Freedom Rashad Hussain expressed concern over violence against the Hindu community late last year, though he said by and large there is religious harmony here.

Foreign policy analysts say whether Dhaka likes it or not, the recent engagement between Dhaka and Washington clearly suggests that human rights, labour rights and democracy will continue to remain an important agenda for the US in the coming days.

Prof Shahab Enam Khan of Jahangirnagar University's international relations department said the Biden administration will also keep a watch on the national elections next year and the authorities need to take note of it.

"With regard to investments from the US, transparency and accountability are critical. We need more investments and will have more of those when we have a well-governed system and transparency," he added.

Diplomatic sources said Washington asked Dhaka to be careful about the projects being funded by China and Russia.

Dhaka maintains there are a number of mega projects with assistance

from the two countries and those need to be completed before considering any other options.

Bangladesh has a historic relationship with Russia while China is a major development financier and the largest source of military hardware.

Foreign policy analysts say it is clear that Washington wants Bangladesh to move away from the influence of China and Russia. Bangladesh is also a signatory to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

During the April 4 meeting, Blinken sought Bangladesh's partnership to implement its Indo-Pacific Strategy, which analysts say is aimed at countering China. Dhaka invited Washington to invest in the

blue economy and assured of working together for a free, open, inclusive and secure Indo-Pacific.

Since 2019, the US has been seeking to sign two defence deals with Bangladesh - the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) and the Acquisition Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) - to enhance opportunities for defence trade, information sharing, and military-to-military cooperation between the two countries.

About the outcome of the security dialogue on April 6, Foreign Secretary Masud said Dhaka will try to complete the formalities of GSOMIA before the security dialogue next year, but signing ACSA is not a

priority for it now.

"Signing GSOMIA does not mean we are immediately buying defence equipment, but only when we need it in our national interests," he told reporters at the foreign ministry recently.

Prof Shahab said signing defence deals with the US and working together in the Indo-Pacific is more a political decision than diplomatic, and it will have geostrategic implications.

Former foreign secretary Shahidul Haque said when there is a gap in communication, there is a chance of misunderstanding. Now the dialogue began between Dhaka and Washington, and this is the right thing that will help recalibrate

the relationship.

He said Bangladesh maintains a neutral foreign policy and there should not be any problem in signing defence deals with the US as Bangladesh also buys defence equipment from other countries including China and Russia.

Shahidul, also Bangabandhu chair at Delhi University, however, said maintaining balance in diplomacy has become far more difficult now given the new global polarisation.

"It is like sailing a ship in the turbulent water. What we need now is a very strong diplomacy. The Westerners want transparency. We need to say that we will have to maintain relationships with others in our national interests," he said.

Fearing reprisal

FROM PAGE 12

fell to the ground and lost consciousness after a policeman kicked him in the crotch around 10:00pm, an eyewitness earlier told this correspondent.

According to documents at Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital, doctors declared Rabiul dead after he was taken to the hospital around 11:45pm.

Demanding justice, locals blocked the Lalmonirhat Burimari highway's Mahendranagar point for an hour the next day.

They withdrew it after Sub-Inspector Halimur Rahman of Lalmonirhat Sadar Police Station, who led the police team, was closed and attached to the district Police Lines.

Talking to this

newspaper on Thursday, local lawmaker GM Quader, also Jatiya Party chairman, who visited the spot on Monday, said an attempt was made to cover up the incident, but it was foiled as people took to the streets.

"There should be a judicial enquiry into the incident to reveal the truth."

Meanwhile, after visiting the spot on Wednesday, Walid Hossain, additional deputy inspector general of police (Rangpur range), who is leading a three-member probe body, said they started talking to locals, witnesses and family members of the victim.

"We will prepare the probe report shortly and submit it before our higher authorities concerned."

Astronomers find

FROM PAGE 12

entire surface blows up and tiny compared to a supernova that occurs during the death throes of some giant stars.

Micronovae are observed from Earth as bursts of light lasting about 10 hours.

They were documented on three white dwarfs - one 1,680 light years away from Earth, one 3,720 light years away and one 4,900 light years away. A light year is the distance light travels in a year, 5.9 trillion miles.

UN voices concern

FROM PAGE 12

month of deadly violence, as the Jewish festival of Passover overlaps with the holy Muslim fasting month of Ramadan.

The violence has sparked international fears of conflict, one year on since similar unrest led

to an 11-day war between Israel and militants in Gaza.

This week, Palestinian groups in the Gaza Strip have fired rockets at Israel, which has responded by sending warplanes to strike the blockaded and impoverished territory.

Blast rips thru

FROM PAGE 12

"The sight at the mosque was horrifying. All those who were worshipping inside the mosque were either injured or killed," Mohammad Esah, a shopkeeper who helped ferry victims to the district hospital, told AFP.

"I saw 20 to 30 bodies," another local resident said.

Relatives of victims were arriving at hospital to look for their loved ones.

"My son is martyred,"

screamed a man, while a woman accompanied by her four children searched for her husband.

Kunduz police said they were investigating the type of explosion.

Yesterday's blast was one of the biggest attacks since the Taliban seized power in August last year.

In October, a suicide attack at a Shia mosque, also in Kunduz, killed at least 55 people and wounded scores - an attack also claimed by IS.

The Daily Star

FOR ALL LATEST NEWS FOLLOW US

f dailystarnews

in /in/dailystarnews

ig /dailystar_bd

tw /dailystarnews

www.thedailystar.net

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সওজ
চট্টগ্রাম সড়ক বিভাগ, রহমতগঞ্জ, চট্টগ্রাম
ফোনঃ ০৩১-২৮৬৩২৩২
E-mail: eechi@rhd.gov.bd
e-GP দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, সড়ক বিভাগীয় দরপত্র নং- e-GP/66/EE/CRD/RHD/2021-2022 (Tender ID-687668), e-GP/67/EE/CRD/RHD/2021-2022 (Tender ID-687692) ও e-GP/70/EE/CRD/RHD/2021-2022 (Tender ID-689433) গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের e-GP Portal এর মাধ্যমে আধ্বন করা হয়েছে; যা নিম্নলিখিত পোর্টালে পাওয়া যাচ্ছে। e-GP Portal এ নিবন্ধিত যে কোন অগ্রহী ব্যক্তি/ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠান বিস্তারিত জানার জন্য উক্ত ওয়েবসাইট www.eprocure.gov.bd ভিজিট করতে পারবেন।

Tender/Proposal ID	Name of work
Tender ID-687668 e-GP/66/EE/CRD/RHD/2021-2022	Supply of Materials for Routine Maintenance works of Different Road of Chattogram Road Sub-Division under Chattogram Road Division during the year 2021-2022.
Tender ID-687692 e-GP/67/EE/CRD/RHD/2021-2022	Construction of the Fair held on 17-23 March, 2022 on the occasion of "Muktir Utsob and Subarno Jayanti Mela-2022" at the Chattogram Outer Stadium Ground in Chattogram District under Chattogram Road Division during the year 2021-2022.
Tender ID-689433 e-GP/70/EE/CRD/RHD/2021-2022	Supplying of Asphalt Materials for Routine Maintenance Works at Different K.M of (1) Baraiahat-Jorargonj old Section Road (N-123), (2) Mithachara old Section Road (N-124), (3) Mirsarai-Fatikchhari Road (Z-1021), (4) Komoldoha old Section Road (N-126), (5) Choto Darogarhat old Section Road (N-128) & (6) Kumira old Section Road (N-129) under Chattogram Road Division during the year 2021-2022.

রঞ্জন কুমার বিশ্বাস
উপ-সহকারী প্রকৌশলী (অসহাঃ) সওজ
চট্টগ্রাম সড়ক বিভাগ, চট্টগ্রাম

সেখন প্রসাদ বড়ুয়া
পরিচিতি নং-৬০২০৭০
সহকারী প্রকৌশলী (চ.দা.) সওজ
চট্টগ্রাম সড়ক বিভাগ, চট্টগ্রাম

পিটু চাকমা
পরিচিতি নং-৬০২২১৯
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ
চট্টগ্রাম সড়ক বিভাগ, চট্টগ্রাম

ক্রিঃ-১১৭