

Police use a water canon to disperse protesters during the 50th day of anti-government protests demanding the resignation of Sri Lanka's President Gotabaya Rajapaksa over the country's crippling economic crisis, in Colombo, Sri Lanka, yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

TEXAS SCHOOL TRAGEDY

# Trump bats for guns ât NRA

Police admits 'wrong decision' not to breach door during shooting

AGENCIES

Former US president Donald Trump rejected calls for tightened gun controls Friday following the Texas school massacre, saying decent Americans should be allowed the firearms they need to defend themselves against "evil."

"The existence of evil in our world is not a reason to disarm law-abiding citizens... The existence of evil is one of the very best reasons to arm law-abiding citizens," he told members of the National Rifle Association.

Trump's remarks came as he headlined an NRA event in Houston, three days after a gun

massacre at a Texas elementary school reignited the tinderbox debate about US gun

An 18-year-old gunman, Salvador Ramos, with a legally-bought AR-15-style rifle killed 19 children and two adults at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde,

Texas. on Tuesday, marking the deadliest school shooting in the state's history.

During the shooting, frantic children called 911 at least half a dozen times from the Texas classrooms, pleading for police to intervene, as some 20 officers waited in the hallway nearly an hour before entering and killing the gunman, authorities said on Friday.

"He's in room 112," a girl whispered on the phone at 12:03 pm, more than 45 minutes before a US Border Patrol-led tactical team finally stormed in and ended the siege

The on-site commander, the chief of the school district's police department in Uvalde, Texas, believed at the time that Ramos was barricaded inside and that children were no longer at immediate risk, giving police time to prepare, according to Colonel Steven McCraw, director of the Texas Department of Public Safety.

"From the benefit of hindsight where I'm sitting now, of course, it was not the right decision," he added. US firearms makers produced over 139 million guns for

the commercial market over the two decades from 2000, according to a new government report. The US racked up 19,350 firearm homicides in 2020.

## IMRAN KHAN'S MARCH TO PAK CAPITAL Why it ended so abruptly



DAWN ONLINE

Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan's surprise decision about not going ahead with the sit-in at the end of the long march left almost everyone baffled — foes and allies alike - but there is convergence on one thing — the manner in which it all ended, at least for now, carried clear indications of who made it happen.

The government had attempted to prevent the convoy from reaching the capital by shutting down all entry and exit points around the city, but was forced to allow in protesters by an emergency Supreme Court order.

Since being removed from power through a no-confidence vote last month, cricket star turned politician Khan has heaped pressure on the country's fragile new coalition rulers by staging rallies, touting a claim he was ousted from office in a "foreign conspiracy".

The general perception, though most shy away from saying that openly, is that the military had to ultimately play its role to prevent things from getting out of control.

Pakistan's former National Security Adviser retired Lt Gen Naeem Khalid Lodhi candidly admits that he too agrees with this. "There is a strong possibility of positive interference by the military to prevent chaos and seek a return of semblance of political stability so that the process for resuscitating the economy could begin.

Another retired general, on the condition of anonymity, said there was a realisation in the top brass that no one at the helm of affairs would be

able to escape responsibility if matters were to go in a wrong direction.

The biggest challenge for the military, a source claimed, was to open up communication channels with Imran Khan, especially in view of their frayed relations. But, as the former prime minister proceeded with the long march plans, a sense of urgency was felt everywhere and multiple channels were employed to bring him around.

The source said those who acted as a gobetween included a former chief justice, a leading businessman, and a retired general.

"It was not an easy task given Khan's obstinacy and the fact that he had invested a lot of effort into it," the source privy to the negotiations said.

Khan agreed to go back, without staging the planned sit-in, on the assurance that the date for the dissolution of the assemblies and elections would be given in June. He too in his speech, in which he announced the end of the long march, had said: "I'm giving you six days. Announce elections within six days, announce elections in the month of June ...'

Khan was also asked to consider the return of PTI to the National Assembly by withdrawing the resignations of his party's legislators so that it could be part of the consultations on the interim setup — as per the Constitution — under whose watch next elections will be held.

The PTI chief, it is said, held on to the opportunity seeing that he was not able to pull out the numbers that he had expected, especially from Punjab — the government's crackdown notwithstanding.

#### Samoa signs China agreement amid South Pacific push

AFP, Apia

Samoa signed a bilateral agreement with China yesterday, promising "greater collaboration" as Beijing's foreign minister continues a tour of the South Pacific that has sparked concern among

The deal's details are unclear, coming midway through a Chinese delegation's eight-nation trip -- but an earlier leaked draft agreement sent to several Pacific countries outlined plans to expand security and economic engagement.

The mission has prompted Western leaders to urge regional counterparts to spurn any Chinese attempt to extend its security reach across the region.

A press release from the Samoan government confirmed that Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Samoan Prime Minister Fiame Naomi Mata'afa had met and discussed "climate change, the pandemic and peace and security".

The release said that China would continue to provide infrastructural development support to various Samoan sectors and there would be a new framework for future projects "to be determined and mutually agreed".

The Chinese delegation has already visited the Solomon Islands and Kiribati this week.

It arrived in Samoa on Friday night before flying on Saturday afternoon into Fiji, where Wang will attend a group meeting of foreign ministers from Pacific countries.

Other stops are expected in Tonga, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and East Timor.

## UNSC fails to agree on Myanmar text

AFP, United Nations

The UN Security Council has failed to agree on a statement aimed at pushing Myanmar's junta to take steps toward a peaceful solution to the country's ongoing crisis, diplomats said. China and the United Kingdom, which drafted the text, blamed each other for the failure of the day-long negotiations, which followed a closed-door Council meeting on Myanmar in the morning. For London, China was asking "too much," which led to the collapse of the negotiations. The original text proposed that the Security Council express deep concern over "limited progress" in implementing a five-point plan on ending the crisis, which was set out more than a year ago by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean). It also called for action to implement the roadmap.

### Palestinian teen killed in West Bank

AFP, Jerusalem

A Palestinian teenager was shot by Israeli troops Friday near the town of Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank

and died of his wounds, the Palestinian health ministry said. Zayd Mohammed Ghouneim was shot in the back and neck and died in hospital, a ministry statement said. Contacted by AFP, the Israeli army said that 'suspects hurled rocks

and Molotov cocktails" at its soldiers during a routine patrol in the Al-Khader district south of Bethlehem. Nineteen

people, mostly Israeli civilians -- including 18 inside Israel and a Jewish West Bank settler have been killed in attacks in Israel by Palestinians and Israeli Arabs since late March. Thirty-five Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank during this time.

This is not a matter of money. This is a matter of will. If the United States has \$40 billion to send to Ukraine, we can do this.... As the age-old saying goes, the only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun.

Former US president Donald Trump

# UN rights chief defends China visit after uproar

The UN rights envoy yesterday said her contentious visit to China was "not an investigation", and insisted she had unsupervised access during meetings in Xinjiang, where Beijing is accused of widespread human rights abuses.

Michelle Bachelet's long-planned trip this week has taken her to the far-western region, where Beijing is accused of the detention of over a million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities, forced sterilisation of women and coerced labour.

The US has labelled China's actions in Xinjiang a "genocide", allegations vehemently denied by Beijing.

Bachelet has come under fire from rights groups and Uyghurs overseas, who say she has stumbled into a six-day Communist Party propaganda tour.

Speaking at the end of her trip while still inside China, Bachelet framed her visit as a chance for her to speak with "candour" to Chinese authorities as well as civil society groups and academics.

"This visit was not an investigation," she told

reporters.



সাত মসজিদ রোড শাখা এখন নতুন নামে



বৃহৎ পরিসরে আধুনিক ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানের প্রত্যয় নিয়ে আমাদের সাত মসজিদ রোড শাখা আজ ২৯ মে ২০২২ রবিবার নতুন ঠিকানায় স্থানান্তরিত হয়ে ধানমতি শব্দ নামে ব্যাংকিং কার্যক্রম শুরু করছে।

সম্মানিত গ্রাহকবৃন্দকে নতুন ঠিকানায় ব্যাংকিং সেবা গ্রহণের আমন্ত্রণ জানানো হচ্ছে।







হোন্ডিং # ৩৯/এ, সড়ক # ২৫ (পুরাতন), ১৪/এ (নতুন) সাতমসঞ্জিদ রোড , ধানমণ্ডি, ঢাকা।