

Migrants tortured in Libya: UN

AFP, Geneva

Migrants stuck in Libya while trying to reach Europe are being systematically tortured and forced into sexual slavery -- a crime against humanity, a United Nations investigation said yesterday.

The probe said it was deeply concerned at the deteriorating human rights situation in the conflict-torn North African country.

"There are grounds to believe a wide array of war crimes and crimes against humanity have been committed by state security forces and armed militia groups," the investigators concluded.

"Migrants, in particular, have been targeted and there is overwhelming evidence that they have been systematically tortured" in detention centres, the UN Independent Fact-Finding Mission on Libya said.

GOVT REFORMS Protest-hit Israel faces general strike

AFP, Jerusalem

The hard-right government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faced more protests and a general strike yesterday against its controversial push to overhaul the justice system.

Netanyahu was due to address the nation later yesterday, a day after sacking his defence minister who had broken ranks over the divisive issue, and following President Isaac Herzog urging an immediate stop to the reform push.

Israeli media speculated that Netanyahu may temporarily back down from the reforms, with Justice Minister Yariv Levin saying he will "accept any decision that Prime Minister Netanyahu makes" on the legislation.

Israel's top trade union chief had yesterday called a general strike over the package, which would weaken the powers of the judiciary and which demonstrators have for months decried as a threat to Israel's democracy.

"I am calling a general strike," Histadrut chairman Arnon Bar-David said in a televised address. "We have a mission to stop this legislative process and we will do it," he added, vowing to "continue to fight".



A woman stands in front of a destroyed building after a deadly strike in the city of Sloviansk, eastern Ukraine yesterday. Russian shelling of the town killed at least two people and wounded more than two dozen others, authorities said.

PHOTO: AFP

POST-COUP MYANMAR No let-up in crackdown, then polls: junta chief Britain targets suppliers to junta in new sanctions

AGENCIES

Myanmar's junta chief, flanked by tanks and missile launchers, vowed no let-up in a crackdown on opponents and said yesterday elections would be held, weeks after the military conceded it did not control enough territory to allow a vote.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the military deposed Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government more than two years ago after making unsubstantiated claims of electoral fraud.

The putsch sparked renewed fighting with ethnic rebels and birthed dozens of anti-junta "People's Defence Forces" (PDFs), with swaths of the country now ravaged by fighting and the economy in tatters.

The military will take "decisive action" against its opponents and ethnic rebels supporting them, Min Aung Hlaing told an audience of around 8,000 service members attending the annual Armed Forces Day parade in the capital Naypyidaw.

"The terror acts of NUG and its lackey so-called PDFs need to be tackled for good and all," he said, referring to the "National Unity Government", a body dominated by ousted lawmakers working to reverse the coup.

The junta would then hold "free and fair elections" upon

the completion of the state of emergency, he said.

The military announced last month a six-month extension of a two-year state of emergency and postponed elections it had promised to hold by August because it did not control enough of the country for a vote to take place, reports AFP.

"Serenity and stability are vital" before any election could go ahead, Min Aung Hlaing told the parade.



Meanwhile, Britain yesterday sanctioned two individuals and a company in Myanmar for supplying equipment used by the country's military junta, reports Reuters.

Those sanctioned include a company and its director supplying Myanmar's air force with aviation fuel and a director at a second company that supplies restricted goods and technology, Britain's foreign office said.

The sanctions bar any financial dealings with UK entities and any travel to Britain.

Armed Forces Day commemorates the start of resistance to the Japanese occupation during World War II. It usually features a military parade attended by foreign officers and diplomats.

Workers made last-minute inspections of the parade ground early yesterday, the hulking statues of three of Myanmar's empire-building kings looming out of the dark.

Planes later trailed smoke in the yellow, red and green of the national flag as Russian-made Yak and Sukoi Su-30 jets made several flyovers.

Marching bands played bagpipes and brass, at times duelling with each other, and state media images showed women lining the streets to garland marching soldiers with flowers.

New junta chief Min Aung Hlaing was inspecting the parade two years ago when troops launched a countrywide crackdown on those protesting against the coup that had ousted Suu Kyi's government.

Around 160 protesters were killed in the violence, according to a local monitoring group, sparking widespread international condemnation.

Rights groups and opponents have since accused the military of torching villages and using air and artillery strikes as collective punishment for opponents.

EU backs fossil fuel car ban, as Berlin lifts veto

AFP, Brussels

The 27 EU member states yesterday approved a deal between Brussels and Germany that lifted Berlin's block on a planned phase-out of sales of new fossil fuel cars by 2035.

A spokesman for Sweden, which holds the EU presidency, said ambassadors backed the agreement. Energy ministers are expected to give the final green light today during a meeting in Brussels.

Germany, one of the world's biggest car manufacturers, had irked its EU partners by blocking a deal that had already been approved under the bloc's standard legislative process.

The ban on internal combustion engines is key to the EU's ambitious push to become a "climate neutral" economy by 2050.

Germany blocked the deal at the 11th hour, calling for an exemption for cars that run on synthetic fuels.

The fuels for which Germany wanted an exemption are still under development and should be produced using low-carbon electricity, but environmentalists oppose them.

'Grim' criminal abuse of ChatGPT is coming: Europol

AFP, The Hague

Criminals are set to take advantage of artificial intelligence like ChatGPT to commit fraud and other cybercrimes, Europe's policing agency warned yesterday. From phishing to disinformation and malware, the rapidly evolving abilities of chatbots will be used not only to better mankind, but to scam it too, Europol said in a new report. Created by US startup OpenAI, ChatGPT appeared in November and was quickly seized upon by users amazed at its ability to answer difficult questions clearly, write sonnets or code, and even pass exams. "The potential exploitation of these types of AI systems by criminals provides a grim outlook," The Hague-based Europol said. Europol's new "Innovation Lab" looked at the use of chatbots as a whole but focused on ChatGPT during a series of workshops as it is the highest-profile and most widely used, it said. Criminals could use ChatGPT to "speed up the research process significantly" in areas they know nothing about, the agency found. This could include drafting text to commit fraud or give information on "how to break into a home, to terrorism, cybercrime and child sex abuse," it said. The chatbot's ability to impersonate speech styles made it particularly effective for phishing, in which users are tempted to click on fake email links that then try to steal their data, it said. ChatGPT's ability to quickly produce authentic sounding text makes it "ideal for propaganda and disinformation purposes, as it allows users... reflecting a specific narrative with relatively little effort."

ROHINGYA REFUGEES Nearly 200 land in Indonesia's Aceh

AFP, Peureulak

At least 184 Rohingya refugees, including many women and children, landed in Indonesia's westernmost province yesterday, officials said, after they were dropped at sea by boat and made to swim ashore.



Thousands of the mostly Muslim Rohingyas, heavily persecuted in Myanmar, risk their lives each year on long and expensive sea journeys, often in poor-quality boats, in an attempt to reach Malaysia or Indonesia.

Locals in the East Aceh town of Peureulak alerted police yesterday morning after discovering the group that officials said included 94 men, 70 women and 20 children.

"There was no boat on the beach when they arrived," Nasri, the head of Peureulak subdistrict who, like many Indonesians, has one name, told AFP.

"There are some refugees who look weak, they probably have not been eating for days."

At least five were taken to hospital, while others were taken to a mosque compound for shelter, food and medical treatment, he said.

An official from East Aceh social affairs agency, Saharani, confirmed the same arrival total to AFP.


A United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) spokesperson said it was still gathering information on the new arrivals.

According to one of the passengers, they were dropped offshore and told to swim to land by the boat's captain.


"After that, the ship we were on immediately left," Rohingya refugee Ali told state news agency Antara. The refugees were trying to reach Malaysia from Myanmar, Ali said.

Local officials are in talks with the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration about shelter for the refugees.

More than 2,000s Rohingya are believed to have attempted the risky journey to Southeast Asian countries in 2022, according to the UNHCR.



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Memo no: 12.01.0000.500.42.201.23-1467

Date: 23-03-2023

E-GP Tender Notice


Tender ID	Brief Description of Goods and Related Service	Tender Publication	Last Selling	Tender Security Submission	Closing & Opening
807133	Supply of Fumigant Aluminium Phosphide 56% in tubes	23-Mar-2023 18:30	09-Apr-2023 12:00	09-Apr-2023 14:00	09-Apr-2023 14:30

The above mentioned tender is an online tender, where e tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline copies will be accepted. To Submit e-Tender register in the e-GP portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd). The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents of the mentioned package from the national e-GP portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank by up to particular date specified on the tender notice. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP portal and e-GP help desk.




23-03-2023
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Memo No-44.01.0000.057.11.049.22/1737/Betar

Date: 27-03-2023.

For the financial year 2022-2023, e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following items.

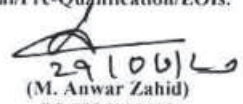
SL	Description	e-Tender ID	Procurement Method	Online Tender Publication Date & Time	Online Tender Closing Date & Time
1.	Power Backup System (Without Battery Backup)	791911	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:00
2.	Purchase of Magnetic Base and Helical Antenna.	791912	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:05
3.	Purchase of Half Inch Foam Helix and RG-8/213 Feeder Cable.	791913	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:10
4.	Purchase of Solar Items.	791915	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:15
5.	Purchase of Parabolic Grid Dish Antenna.	791916	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:20
6.	Purchase of Linking Router, Switch and 12 U Glass Door Rack.	791917	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:25
7.	Purchase of Pack Battery for Motorola VHF DMR XIR P-6620i	807451	OTM	28 March 2023 15:00	27 April 2023 14:30

This is an online Tender. Where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/ hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Systems Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-tender documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (<http://www.helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd>).

The Procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all Tenders/Proposal/Pre-Qualification/EOIs.



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GD-570