



PAKISTAN VIOLENCE

Imran says cops surround his house, fears re-arrest

REUTERS, Islamabad

Former Pakistani prime minister Imran Khan said yesterday that police had surrounded his house and that he expected to be rearrested soon, after the government warned him to hand over supporters who it blamed for attacks on the army.

Khan was arrested by the army on May 9 on graft allegations, which he denies, triggering a wave of violence that has deepened political instability in the South Asian nation of 220 million. Pakistan has also been facing its worst ever economic crisis, with a long delay in securing critical IMF funding.

The country's Supreme Court ordered Khan's release on bail last Friday.

But yesterday the government accused him of sheltering aides and supporters wanted over the attacks following his arrest, and warned he had 24 hours to

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This picture taken yesterday shows roofs and buildings damaged by Cyclone Mocha in Sittwe in Myanmar's Rakhine state.

PHOTO: AFP

'ANTI-STATE PROPAGANDA'

Home ministry sends a list of expatriates to missions abroad

RASHIDUL HASAN

The home ministry has prepared a list of Bangladeshi expatriates engaged in spreading "propaganda against the country", and sent it to the Bangladeshi missions abroad for taking necessary steps in this regard.

Foreign ministry officials said this at a meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on foreign affairs yesterday.

There, the officials placed a progress report, which mentioned what role the Bangladeshi missions have been playing to prevent the spread of anti-state propaganda.

In the nine-point progress report, they said the missions are always active in protesting and responding to the propaganda through the foreign ministries of the respective countries.

However, they also said the list prepared by the home ministry carries no specific details.

The foreign ministry officials added that the missions abroad have

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MATARBARI DEEP SEA PORT

It'll boost GDP, create 9 lakh jobs

Claims SANEM study; Japanese envoy says support to continue regardless of who's in power here

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Matarbari deep seaport, which is set to start operation in 2026, will help Bangladesh accelerate its GDP growth by an additional 1.14 percentage points and create nine lakh jobs, says a study.

Bangladesh's first deep sea port in Cox's Bazar and the other related regional connectivity projects can also help the country tackle the challenges of its LDC graduation, it said.

The study was jointly conducted by the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM) and Shillong-based Indian think tank Asian Confluence

Selim Raihan, executive director of SANEM and also an economics professor at Dhaka University, presented the study on the impact of Matarbari port at a policy conference at the capital's North South University (NSU) yesterday.

"The Matarbari deep sea port will significantly reduce the travel time and distance for carrying goods, making trade more viable."

Selim Raihan
Executive Director of SANEM

The Center for Peace Studies (CPS) of the South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG) at the NSU organised the event titled "From the Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal: New Possibilities in the Bangladesh, Japan, India Trilateral Partnership".

During Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent visit to Japan, the countries discussed the creation of industrial value chain and connectivity to the Northeastern India and southeastern Bangladesh centering the Matarbari port. Japan is implementing the port project.

Prof Selim said the Matarbari port will facilitate berthing of ships with a draft of more than 16 metres, compared to those of 9.5 metres in Chattogram Port. This would significantly reduce the travel time and distance for carrying goods, making trade more viable, he added.

He said there are still significant challenges to developing infrastructures for connecting the Northeastern India with Bangladesh and building inland and overland transportation networks.

With the India-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) in operation and Bangladesh planning CEPA with India and Japan, a trilateral free trade zone would eventually emerge in the near future, Selim told the programme.

The SANEM executive director suggested India and Bangladesh scale up the multi-modal connectivity, bring synergy in trade facilitation and build express corridors for transshipment and transit of goods from the Northeast of India to Chattogram and Matarbari and vice versa.

Speaking at the event, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen said Matarbari deep sea port along with the other ports in Payra, Mongla and Chattogram, and other connectivity to India, Nepal, Bhutan and Asean can help Bangladesh achieve 10 percent GDP growth, which is required for the country to become a developed nation by 2041.

Japanese companies are already in the process of investing in the Japan-built special economic zone in Araihaazar of Narayanganj, Masud said.

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RESALE OF RUSSIAN OIL

EU should crack down on India

Says bloc's diplomatic chief

REUTERS

The European Union should crack down on India reselling Russian oil into Europe as refined fuel, including diesel, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said in an interview with the Financial Times published on Tuesday.

India has emerged in the past year as a top buyer of Russian oil following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022. Access to cheap Russian crude has boosted output and profits at Indian refineries, enabling them to export refined products competitively to Europe and take a bigger market share.

Borrell told the newspaper he would raise the issue with India's foreign minister, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, at a meeting in Brussels on Tuesday.

"If diesel or gasoline is entering Europe ... coming from India and being produced with Russian oil, that is certainly a circumvention of sanctions and member states have to take measures," the EU's chief diplomat said.

"That India buys Russian oil, it's normal... But if they use that in order to be a centre where Russian

oil is being refined and by-products are being sold to us... we have to act," Borrell said.

In remarks after the meeting, Borrell said he had brought up Russia's invasion of Ukraine, including the issue of food security, in his talks with Jaishankar, but his remarks did not refer to Russian oil. Jaishankar told a news conference his understanding of EU sanctions rules was that Russian

According to ship-tracking data from Kpler, Reliance Industries (RELI.NS) and Nayara Energy were the key exporters of refined fuels and buyers of Russian oil.

crude substantially transformed in a third country was no longer considered to be a Russian product.

European Commission Vice President Margrethe Vestager said the EU would have a discussion with India on the issue "but it will be with an extended hand and of course not with a pointed finger".

Indian refiners, which rarely bought Russian oil previously due

to high transport costs, imported 970,000-981,000 bpd of it in fiscal 2022/23 (April-March), accounting for more than a fifth of the country's overall fuel imports.

Russia's largest oil producer Rosneft (ROSN.MM) and top Indian refiner Indian Oil Corp (IOC.NS) have also signed a term deal to substantially increase and diversify oil grades delivered to India.

According to ship-tracking data from Kpler, Reliance Industries (RELI.NS) and Nayara Energy were the key exporters of refined fuels and buyers of Russian oil.

No immediate response was available from the companies.

India typically exported an average of 154,000 barrels per day (bpd) of diesel and jet fuel to Europe before Russia's invasion of Ukraine. However, that has increased to 200,000 bpd after the EU banned Russian oil products imports from Feb. 5 this year, data from Kpler shows.

Any mechanism to stem the flow of Russian oil would need to be implemented by the national authorities, Borrell told the FT, suggesting that the EU could target buyers of Indian refined fuels which it believes are derived from Russian crude.

China fines comedy company \$2m over army joke



AFP, Beijing

Chinese authorities yesterday fined a comedy company millions of yuan and threatened further legal action after one of its members made an oblique joke about the People's Liberation Army during a stand-up act.

Li Haoshi, who performs under the name House, referred to a PLA slogan during a show in Beijing on Saturday, according to audio posted on social media network Weibo.

Li was talking about his pet dogs chasing a squirrel when he referred to the slogan "Good style of work, capable of winning battles".

Beijing's Municipal Culture and Tourism Bureau said yesterday it had investigated Li's agency after a report from a member of the public and found the joke had broken the law and "caused a bad social impact".

Xiaoguo Culture Media was fined 14.7 million yuan (US\$2.13 million) and had all its future performances suspended indefinitely in both Beijing and Shanghai.

The space for dissent in China has shrunk dramatically over the past decade under leader Xi Jinping.

BANGLADESH, US TIES

Unaffected by Dhaka's relations with Beijing, Moscow

Says state dept official

BSS, Dhaka

US Deputy Assistant Secretary Afreen Akhter has said Washington DC does not define its relationship with Dhaka taking into account Bangladesh's ties with Russia and China or any other country.

She said this in an interview with the BSS in Dhaka this week.

Afreen said the US has a multi-dimensional relationship with Bangladesh, and it found a lot of synergies as Dhaka recently released its Indo-Pacific Outlook (IPO) that had many elements in common with the US Indo Pacific Strategy (IPS).

"Broadly, we see a lot of synergies between our two documents, our strategy, and your outlook. We both are focused on building economic prosperity in the region and through infrastructure, through our substantial development projects," said the senior state department official.

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PEANUT PARADE! ... Farmers of West Islampur Union in Sylhet's Companiganj upazila sorting through their freshly harvested peanuts. After devastating losses last year due to floods, the farmers are overjoyed with the massive yield this year. The upazila's DAE office said the growers had planted peanuts on 17 hectares of land and got almost 100 percent yield, with seven maunds of nuts harvested from each bigha.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR