

INTERNATIONAL

Putin discusses ties, BRICS with Modi in phone call

Says foreign minister to attend G20 in Delhi

AGENCIES

Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed bilateral ties including trade, energy and space cooperation with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi by phone, the Kremlin said yesterday.

The two leaders also discussed the planned expansion of the BRICS group of emerging economies - comprising India, Russia, China, Brazil and South Africa - as well as a summit of the G20 club of major economies that New Delhi will host next month, reports Reuters.

Russia has sought to further strengthen already warm ties with India after its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 triggered sweeping Western sanctions on Moscow. India is a major buyer of Russian oil.

"Topical issues of Russian-Indian relations, which are progressively developing in the spirit of a particularly privileged strategic partnership, were considered (in the call)," the Kremlin said in a statement.

The positive dynamics of trade and



economic cooperation was affirmed," it added.

Last week Modi and Putin both took part in the BRICS summit in South Africa, though the Russian leader attended only via video link because of an International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrant for him over alleged war crimes in Ukraine.

The Kremlin, which strongly denies the ICC allegations, has said Putin will also not attend the G20 gathering in India.

Putin will send Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in his place, a statement from the Indian Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said.

Earlier yesterday, as speculation mounted, Russian envoy to India, Denis Alipov, said a decision on who would represent his country at G20 Summit would be made shortly.

"This is not my prerogative... I would suggest we wait for the official announcement. As regards his (Putin's) participation in the G20 and what format it will be (and) who is going to represent Russia at the summit... I think such an announcement will be made shortly," he was quoted by news agency PTI.

Most suggestions go unheeded

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deal with illegal entry into critical information infrastructure, damage to computers and computer systems, including collection or removal of data, cyberterrorism and hacking.

Mahbub further said the cases already filed under the DSA will remain under it, as a provision was incorporated in the proposed law in this regard.

The Cabinet meeting that approved the final draft was chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office.

Ministry sources said the new bill, once passed into a law, will have safeguards against the filing of cases and arrest without a court order for all but the four cognisable sections.

On August 9, the CSA draft was published on the website of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Department, seeking the views of stakeholders, the deadline of which was August 22.

Abu Sayed Md Kamruzzaman, director general of the Digital Security Agency, told this newspaper that around 900 recommendations were submitted to the ICT ministry, and the new draft was placed before the Cabinet six days after the deadline.

Asked how many of the recommendations were considered while making the changes, he mentioned the four sections that were made bailable.

However, rights organisations had made many recommendations for major changes in the draft law regarding the nature of the offences themselves.

Experts had pointed out that the draft retained all but one offence from the DSA.

Amnesty International in a letter to the ICT ministry had said, "The only changes the CSA makes are related to sentencing, which can be summarised as follows: lowering the maximum applicable prison sentence for eight offences, removing a sentence of imprisonment for two offences, increasing the maximum applicable fine for three offences and removing the higher applicable penalty for all repeat offences."

Multiple organisations had

proposed decriminalisation of defamation, which the August 7 draft still retained.

Meanwhile, section 42 of the CSA is identical to section 43 of the DSA and continues to allow any law enforcement officer to search premises, seize computers and similar hardware, search the body of a person and arrest a person present in that place without a warrant, said Amnesty.

"The police officers must believe that a crime under the act has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur or that any evidence is likely to be lost, destroyed, deleted or altered or made unavailable in any way. They are simply required to record the reasons for such belief."

The human rights organisation called the act overly-permissive and suggested that powers of the police be clearly and narrowly defined.

A civil rights platform called Nagorik pointed out that 14 days is a very limited period for providing any feedback on the draft law.

They recommended the introduction of a legislative measure such as a bill to repeal the DSA, and to safeguard cyber space and internet freedom.

Likewise, another platform -- Forum for Freedom of Expression Bangladesh -- had stated that 11 sections of the proposed act are inconsistent with the constitution, fundamental human rights and the rule of law.

It further said that section 42, which provides for arrest without a warrant, was not much different from section 43 of the DSA. This leaves room for the act to become harassing and restrictive, creating opportunities to undermine internationally recognised human rights.

Furthermore, no stakeholders were invited to preview the final draft before approval at the Cabinet yesterday.

A group of civil society members met Law Minister Anisul Huq on March 30, and submitted a recommendation pointing out that the law is being misused, and that the only solution would be to repeal it and draft a new one.

This group, however, was never called for a follow-up meeting again.

'Bring my son back to me'

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by fire service divers within an hour. However, they halted the operation at 11:00pm and resumed it yesterday morning.

Abdur Razzak, deputy assistant director of Chattogram's Fire Service and Civil Defence, said Yeasin's body was found around 9:10am by Chattogram City Corporation workers while they were cleaning a drain around 10ft from the one he fell into.

Nasreen, 20, and Saddam are still to grasp the truth -- their only child is no longer alive.

The devastated mother was found wailing, repeatedly asking whoever was near her to return her child to her arms.

"How could this happen to me? Where will I find my son? Please bring my son back to me," she repeated over and over.

Visiting the grief-stricken family, this correspondent saw the child's body was kept in their one-bedroom home, where neighbours were trying to console Nasreen.

"All my dreams revolved around my son, but all of them have been shattered with one accident," said Saddam.

They had returned from Brahmanbaria two weeks ago from Nasreen's paternal home as Saddam

was scheduled to fly to the Middle East soon.

"I can only pray that no one else has to endure such a tragic death," he added.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Nasreen's relative Minara Begum said, "Nasreen fed her child around 3:00pm and went to the kitchen to have lunch with others. In that time, Yeasin stepped out of the house and fell into the nearby drain, which was full and open. The family started looking for him everywhere and then called the fire service at one point."

During a visit to the Rangipara area, this correspondent found the drains open with no safety fence on either side.

During heavy rainfall, the drains overflow, which makes it difficult for people to notice them, exposing them to the risk of falling in and drowning.

Abdul Mannan, a resident of the area, told The Daily Star, "People in this area often face such accidents as the CCC has not covered the drains despite repeated requests."

Meanwhile, CCC Councillor Nazmul Hoque Duke, along with other officials, handed over Tk 50,000 to Yeasin's family as compensation for his death.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Duke

claimed "It was an accident", adding the CCC will set up fences around the open drains in the area to avoid such incidents in the future.

Deaths by falling into open drains and unprotected canals in the port city have been reported repeatedly since at least 2017, when a retired government officer, Shilbrata Barua, fell into an open drain.

A year later, on June 9, a child named Al Amin fell into one. On June 30, 2021, three people went missing after an auto-rickshaw fell into an unprotected canal in Sholashahar. Only two bodies were recovered.

In August of the same year, a 50-year-old man slipped and drowned to death in another unprotected canal in the Muradpur intersection. A month later, Sheherin Mahmud, 19, died after falling into an open drain in Agrabab intersection.

Then, on December 7, 2021, a 10-year-old boy's body was recovered three days after he fell into the unprotected canal in Sholashahar.

On April 15 last year, fire service divers rescued a woman from the Osmania canal in the Kalurghat area.

Speaking to The Daily Star on Sunday, CCC Mayor Rezaul Karim Chowdhury said they were trying to cover all the open drains in the city, but "it is a time-consuming task".

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Palestinian schoolgirls ride a cart to a UN school as classes resume in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. But it is unclear if they will be able to complete the year uninterrupted due to a funding crisis at the United Nations' Palestinian refugee agency.

PHOTO: AFP



Trump election trial to start March 4, 2024

US judge rules

REUTERS, Washington

Donald Trump will stand trial on March 4, 2024 in federal court in Washington for trying to overturn his 2020 election defeat, a federal judge ruled yesterday, setting up a crowded schedule for the former president next year as he campaigns to recapture the White House.

The ruling by US Judge Tanya Chutkan means that Trump will likely have to stand trial in at least three separate criminal cases during the thick of the Republican presidential nominating contest.

A trial date in a fourth criminal case has not yet been set.

Trump's lawyers had pressed for an April 2026 trial date, well past the November 2024 presidential election, arguing that they needed time to go through the 12.8 million pages of evidence the government had amassed.

But Chutkan said they did not need that long. "The defense's proposed date of April 2026 is far beyond what is necessary," she said.

Trump's trial is due to start one day before "Super Tuesday," when more than a dozen US states will hold their presidential nominating contests.

Deadly Greek wildfire still 'out of control'

Nearly 500 firefighters backed by 100 vehicles, seven planes trying to douse the flames

AFP, Athens

A monster forest fire that has raged for nine days in the Dadia National Park in northeast Greece, a major European sanctuary for birds of prey, is still spreading, firefighters said yesterday.

"The fire is still out of control," a spokesman for the fire service told AFP, adding that "nearly 500 firefighters backed by 100 vehicles, seven planes and three helicopters are fighting the flames."

The fire is burning across a nearly 10 kilometre (six-mile) front, according to firefighters.

The blaze, which erupted on August 19, is devastating the Evros region near the port city of Alexandroupoli and the border with Turkey, forcing the evictions of some villages.

Twenty people, 18 of them migrants, have perished in the



flames, with the region a regular entry point from neighbouring Turkey. Two of the dead were children.

On Sunday, the EU's Copernicus climate observatory said on social media that "the burnt area has reached 77,000 hectares (190,000

acres) with 120 active hot spots".

The Dadia forest is part of a Unesco World Heritage national park, with vegetation so dense that water from hoses often fails to reach flames at ground level, experts say.

Another dangerous fire is also raging on Mount Parnitha near Athens for the sixth straight day, with 270 firefighters on the scene.

"The risks are still high and the fire service remains on a high state of alert," said government spokesman Pavlos Marinakis yesterday.

Greece has been ravaged by numerous fires this summer which the government attributes to climate change.

"It has been the most difficult summer we have faced in terms of climatic conditions, which makes the work of the authorities much more difficult," Marinakis added.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer

Biswanath, Sylhet

Email: biswanath@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

Date: 28-08-2023

e-Tender Notice

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). For more details, please contact support desk contact numbers.

e-Tender are invited in e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Dr. Md. Deluar Hossain, UH&FPO, Upazila Health Complex, Biswanath, Sylhet for the Procurement of:

Tender ID	Name of goods	Tender/proposal last selling date & time	Tender/proposal closing/opening date & time
808563	Procurement of Medicine for the FY 2023-2024 at Biswanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	12-September-2023 16:00	14-September-2023 16:00
809504	Procurement of Medicine Equipment for the FY 2023-2024 at Biswanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	12-September-2023 16:00	14-September-2023 16:00
809505	Procurement of Gauge, Bandage, Cotton etc. for the FY 2023-2024 at Biswanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	12-September-2023 16:00	14-September-2023 16:00
808609	Procurement of Linen for the FY 2023-2024 at Biswanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	12-September-2023 16:00	14-September-2023 16:00
809506	Procurement of Chemical Reagents for the FY 2023-2024 at Biswanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	12-September-2023 16:00	14-September-2023 16:00
809507	Procurement of Furniture for		