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Once there
was a forest
here



Russian forces
hit air defence
HQ in Ukraine's
Dnipro



Haraprasad
Shastri:
An Unusual
Pundit



Tigers'
transition in
Tests continues



Women and children react after a house was hit by Israeli bombing in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Gaza 'seems like a death zone'

Says UN as 700 more killed in 24 hours; int'l concern mounts for civilians as Israeli bombardment continues

AGENCIES

At least 700 hundred Palestinians were killed in Gaza in 24 hours as Israel yesterday stepped up its bombing campaign from air, sea and land across the enclave, which the UN said now resembles a "death zone".

The renewed bombing campaign also comes defying mounting international concerns over the spiralling civilian death toll in Gaza.

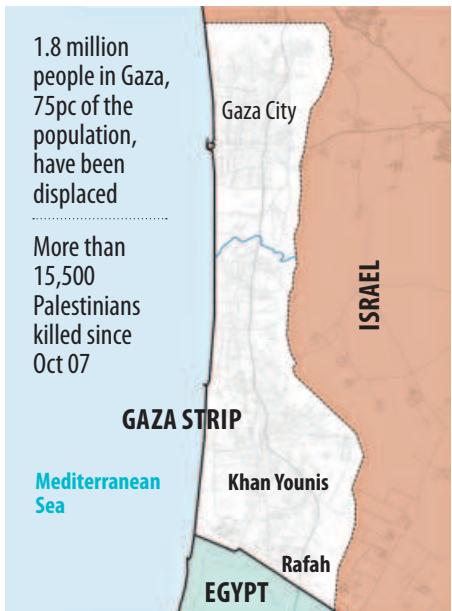
The Director General of the Government Media Office in Gaza told Al Jazeera yesterday at yesterday noon that more than 700 Palestinians have been killed in the last 24 hours.

The bombardment followed the collapse on Friday of a seven-day pause in the fighting between Israeli forces and Hamas fighters to allow an exchange of Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners.

In a new estimate, UN said around 1.8 million people in Gaza, over 75 percent of the population, had been displaced, many to overcrowded and unsanitary shelters.

Overnight and into yesterday, intense Israeli bombing was reported in Khan Younis, Rafah, and some northern parts, according to Reuters.

Gaza residents yesterday said they feared an Israeli ground offensive on the southern areas was imminent. Tanks had cut off the road between Khan Younis and Deir Al-



Everywhere you turn to, there are children with third-degree burns, shrapnel wounds, brain injuries and broken bones.

JAMES ELDER
Unicef's global spokesperson

Balah in central Gaza, effectively dividing the Gaza Strip into three areas, they said.

The Israeli military issued a statement ordering Palestinians to immediately evacuate half a dozen areas in and around Khan Younis. It posted a map highlighting shelters they should go to west of Khan Younis and south towards Rafah, on the border with Egypt.

But residents said that areas they had been told to go to were themselves coming under attack.

Israeli tanks were shelling the eastern sector of Rafah yesterday morning, residents said.

There was hardly any space for more displaced people in the south after hundreds of thousands had fled the Israeli ground invasion in the north of the enclave, the residents said.

"Before, we used to ask ourselves whether we will die or not on this war, but in the past two days since Friday, we fear it is just a matter of time," said Maher, a 37-year-old father of three, who spoke to Reuters by telephone.

"I am a resident of Gaza City, then we moved to Al-Karara in southern Gaza Strip and yesterday we fled to deeper shelter in Khan Younis and today we are trying to flee under the bombardment to Rafah," he said.

UN officials and residents said it was

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Candidature of 202 scrapped or put on hold

Mahi, Mannan among them

MD ABBAS

Returning officers have cancelled the candidatures of some well-known aspirants, including Mahi B Chowdhury and Abdul Mannan of Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh and Mokabbir Khan of Gono Forum.

Two Awami League and several Jatiya Party nominees were among the at least 202 candidates who saw their candidatures get cancelled.

Their candidatures were scrapped on different grounds, including loan and tax defaults. They can appeal against the EC decision between tomorrow and December 15.

Jatiya Party Co-chairman ABM Ruhul Amin Howlader's candidature for Patuakhali-1 was withheld as he had not paid Tk 88.69 lakh in taxes.

Seven other candidates' nominations were also withheld in the district. Four others had their candidatures cancelled.

The nominations of Mahi B Chowdhury for Munshiganj-1 and party Secretary General Major (retd) Abdul Mannan for Noakhali-4 were cancelled as they had defaulted on loan repayments, according to returning officers.

Eight candidates had their nominations cancelled in Munshiganj and seven others in Noakhali.

Gono Forum's Mokabbir Khan of Sylhet-1 was among 14 candidates whose nominations were cancelled in Sylhet.

Mokabbir had his candidature cancelled for failing to

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Due to discharge of effluents from dyeing factories in the area, the water of Kanchpur canal next to the Dhaka-Chattogram highway is dark and smelly. The polluted water flows directly into the Shitalakkhya nearby. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Shorna scripts historic win over SA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Bangladesh leg spinner Shorna Akter spun circles around South Africa batters as her maiden T20I five-wicket haul turned the tide in favour of the Tigresses in a 13-run win in the first T20I in Benoni yesterday. This marked a historic maiden win for the Tigresses against South Africa in their backyard as the Nigar Sultana Joty-led side took a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Shorna kept her wits about, bowling a full quota in the final seven overs of the innings. She took five wickets for 28 runs as her effort was pivotal in restricting the hosts to 136 for eight while chasing a 150-run target set by Bangladesh.

The 16-year-old became the fourth Bangladeshi player to take a five-wicket haul in the format after Nahida Akter, Jahanara Alam, and Panna Ghosh.

South Africa got off to a solid start as openers Anneke Bosch and Tazmin Brits put on a 69-run stand before leg spinner Rabeya Khan removed

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

come together for the Bangladesh Climate and Development Platform (BCDP) are the Asian Development Bank (ADB); World Bank; International Finance Corporation (IFC); Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA); Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB); Agence Française de Développement (AFD); the EU and the European Investment Bank (EIB), as part of Team Europe; the Green Climate Fund (GCF); the government of South Korea; Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); Standard Chartered Bank and the UK.

The partnership takes place in the context of the \$1.4 billion Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) arrangement approved by the IMF in January, the programmatic series of Green and Climate Resilient Development (GCRD) Policy Credits by the WB totalling \$1 billion, and the ADB's ongoing funding for climate projects in Bangladesh.

The ADB is processing a \$400 million policy-based loan to Bangladesh, while about 53 percent of its 2023 project financing (\$1.9 billion) has been allocated towards climate financing so far.

The Manila-based lender is also committed

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\$8b climate fund rolled out for Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a first in Asia, development partners have come together to announce an \$8 billion fund to help Bangladesh mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.

This collaborative approach is being spearheaded by the International Monetary Fund.

"Bangladesh has been at the forefront of those warning about the elevated risks of climate change for vulnerable countries as well as stressing the importance of international collaboration to support those in need," said Kristalina Georgieva, the MD of IMF, in a statement yesterday.

The country has made significant strides to bolster climate resilience, adaptation, preparedness and conservation, she said in a statement released on the sideline of COP28 that is currently taking place in Dubai.

"We commend Bangladesh's steadfast implementation of their climate agenda and their tireless efforts to promote global collective action to address climate change," she added.

The development partners that have



PREMIER
cement

POLITICAL VIOLENCE Another 22 BNP-Jamaat activists jailed

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-two more leaders and activists of BNP and Jamaat yesterday were given different jail terms in four cases filed between December 2012 and September 2018 over political violence in the capital.

The cases were lodged over illegal gatherings, setting fire to vehicles, carrying out vandalism, damaging properties, assaulting police, and obstructing law enforcers from discharging their duties.

Since November 7, at least 446 BNP Jamaat leaders and activists have been jailed in 23 cases filed between December 2012 and October 2018 over political violence in Dhaka.

Yesterday, 11 BNP Jamaat activists were sentenced to 30 months' imprisonment in a case lodged in connection with violence in Bhatara in September 2018.

They are Ali Miah, Mofizur Rahman Maru, Kazi Hazrat Ali, Ataur Rahman, Helal Dhali, Lalor Bepary, Babul Sheikh, Zakir Hossain Bepary, Zakir Hossain Bagmar, Ershad Ali Khan, and Moizul Islam Dorji.

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