

## Iran petrol stations hit by cyberattack Says oil minister

REUTERS, Dubai

Iran's Oil Minister Javad Owji yesterday confirmed that ongoing nationwide disruption to petrol stations was caused by a cyberattack.

A hacking group that Iran accuses of having links to Israel claimed it carried out the attack that disrupted services at petrol stations across the country yesterday, Iranian state TV and Israeli media reported.

Owji had earlier told Iranian state TV that services had been disrupted at about 70 percent of Iran's petrol stations and that outside interference was a possible cause. He later said 1,650 petrol stations were operational. The ministry supervises 3,800 petrol stations.

Iran's state TV news said the Predatory Sparrow group had claimed it was behind the disruption. Israeli local media outlets also reported the claim.



Palestinians prepare wood to make fire and cook food, in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday, amid continuing battles between Israel and Hamas. UN officials and aid agencies warn of a humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza - mass starvation and disease - with the majority of the coastal Palestinian enclave's 2.3 million people driven from their homes during the two-month long conflict.

PHOTO: AFP

## Covid cases rise in India's Kerala Karnataka makes masks mandatory for seniors

NDTV ONLINE

The Karnataka government yesterday asked those above 60 years of age, with comorbidities, and symptoms of cough, phlegm and fever to mandatorily wear face masks, in the wake detection of a case of Covid-19 sub-variant JN.I in neighbouring Kerala state.

Increased tests among those with such symptoms and suspected cases, and heightened surveillance in border districts are among the measures that the officials have been instructed to take up, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao told reporters here.

The situation is being continuously monitored, and there is no need for any restriction on movement and gathering of people as of now, he said, adding, the government would come out with an advisory.

Meanwhile, the Indian health ministry yesterday asked all states to maintain a heightened vigil in view of the upcoming festival season like Christmas and New Year.

"There is no need for anyone to worry. We had held a meeting day-before-yesterday and our technical advisory committee headed by Dr (K) Ravi had met yesterday and there was discussion between our officials and experts regarding the measures to be taken," Rao said.

The government would, based on the situation, decide what further measures need to be taken, he said. Along with stepping up surveillance at the border, instructions have been issued to increase testing and those with symptoms and suspicious cases are being asked to compulsorily undergo testing.

"In a couple of days we will get to know if the infections are increasing or not. As we increase Covid tests, if more positive cases are recorded, we will decide on further measures that need to be taken. There is no need for imposing any curbs or restrictions now itself," Rao said.

On whether there will be any restriction on Ayappa pilgrims returning from Kerala, Rao said, as of now there are no curbs on restriction on movement of people and gathering.

"We will not stop any such thing now, because such a situation -- where people should not move or gather -- is not there," he said.

"For those above 60 years of age, those with comorbidities and respiratory issues, wearing masks is good. We will make it mandatory. Advisory will be issued by the government today."

## Israeli govt using 'starvation' tactic Says rights group on Gaza war

REUTERS, Gaza

A global rights group yesterday accused Israel of committing a war crime by starving people in the Gaza Strip who continued to face relentless attacks in the war with Hamas.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed no let-up in the bombardment and siege of the densely-populated coastal enclave, where buildings lie in ruins, hunger is rife, and health authorities say around 19,000 Palestinians have been killed.

Despite rising global pressure to protect civilians, who have nowhere to go, Israel is bent on eliminating the Hamas group, according to Israeli authorities.

US-based Human Right Watch (HRW) said Israeli forces were

deliberately blocking delivery of water, food and fuel, razing agricultural areas and depriving Gaza's 2.3 million people of objects indispensable for their survival.

"The Israeli government is using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare in the occupied Gaza Strip," it said in a report. "World leaders should be speaking out against this abhorrent war crime."

There was no immediate response to the HRW report from Israel, which has denied targeting civilians and says it is trying to facilitate aid to innocents while choking off supplies to thousands of Hamas fighters operating from tunnels.

The HRW report came after Pope Francis accused Israel of "terrorism", deplored the reported killing by the Israeli military of two Christian women in a church complex.



## Security tight as HK security trial for Jimmy Lai opens

REUTERS, Hong Kong

A landmark national security trial for leading China critic Jimmy Lai opened in Hong Kong yesterday amid tight security, with the pro-democracy activist battling charges that he colluded with foreign forces, including the United States.

Queues formed outside the West Kowloon Law Court building the night before, with scores of police deployed. Hong Kong's security chief warned last week any attempts to disrupt proceedings would not be tolerated.

Lai, the founder of now shuttered pro-democracy newspaper Apple Daily and one of the most prominent Hong Kong critics of China's Communist Party leadership, has faced a salvo of litigation under a China-imposed national security law that was enacted in response to a wave of pro-democracy protests in 2019.

The 76 year old, sporting a crew cut and a grey jacket, appeared calm and thinner than in previous court appearances, smiling and waving to the packed court.

"When fundamental rights are engaged, any protection must be interpreted generously in favour of Mr Lai and narrowly for the prosecution," Lai's lawyer, Robert Pang, told the three high court judges.

## EGYPT ELECTION

# Sisi sweeps to third term as president

REUTERS, Cairo

Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has swept to a third, six-year term as Egypt's president, winning 89.6 percent of votes in an election in which he faced no serious challengers, the National Election Authority announced yesterday.

The election took place as Egypt struggles with a slow-burning economic crisis and tries to manage the risk of spillover from the war in Gaza, which borders Egypt's Sinai Peninsula.

Some voters said the eruption of conflict in Gaza had encouraged them to vote for Sisi, who has long presented himself as a bulwark of stability in a volatile region - an argument that has also proved effective with Gulf and Western allies providing financial support to his government.

Voting in Egypt was held over three days on December 10-12, with the state and tightly controlled domestic media pushing hard to boost turnout, which the election authority said had reached 66.8 percent. The election featured three other candidates, none of them high profile.

The most prominent potential challenger halted his run in October, saying officials and thugs had targeted his supporters - accusations dismissed by the National Election Authority.

Egypt's state media body has said the vote was a step towards political pluralism and authorities have denied violations of electoral rules.

## US ARMS SALES TO TAIWAN

# China vows to take countermeasures

AFP, Beijing

China vowed yesterday to "take countermeasures" against companies involved in arms sales to Taiwan after the United States approved a \$300-million deal to beef up the self-ruled island's defences.

China views Taiwan as part of its territory and has pledged to seize it one day, while the US Congress requires the supply of weapons to the self-governing democracy for its defence.

The US State Department last week approved an arms package that both sides said would strengthen Taipei's joint battle command and control system.

Beijing hit back yesterday, saying it would take "resolute and strong measures to defend its national sovereignty and territorial integrity".

"We will take countermeasures against relevant enterprises involved in arms sales to Taiwan," foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said at a regular news briefing, without giving details.

The United States "should stop the dangerous trend of arming Taiwan, stop creating tensions in the Taiwan Strait,

and stop indulging and supporting the separatist forces of Taiwan independence in their quest for achieving independence by force," he added.

"China will eventually reunify, and indeed must reunify."

Beijing has ratcheted up the pressure on Taiwan since independence-leaning President Tsai Ing-wen took power there in 2016.

It regularly sends warplanes and vessels near the island, whose defence ministry recently also reported several sightings of balloons from the mainland.

Both Washington and Taipei have warned Beijing not to seek to influence presidential elections in Taiwan next month.

Meanwhile, two Chinese balloons flew across the sensitive median line separating Taiwan from China, the self-ruled island's Defence Ministry said yesterday, the second time it has reported a sighting this month.

Chinese balloons became a politically fraught topic in February when the United States shot down what it called a spy balloon, but that Beijing said was a civilian airship blown off course.

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Health Services Division

Central Medical Stores Depot (CMSD)

Invitation for Tenders (Goods)

1 Ministry/Division	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
2 Agency	Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS)
3 Procuring Entity Name	Director, CMSD
4 Invitation for	"Meningitis & Influenza Vaccine for Lot-1 & Lot-2"
5 Invitation Ref No. and Date	CMSD/GR-2311/ICT/2023-24/Proc.2/12 Date: 18/12/2023
6 Procurement Method	OTM, ICT
7 Budget and Source of Funds	GOB (Rev.)
8 Tender Package No.	GR-2311
9 Tender Package Name	"Meningitis & Influenza Vaccine for Lot-1 & Lot-2"
10 Tender Publication Date	19/12/2023
11 Tender Last Selling Date	30/01/2024 Up to 4:00 pm
12 Tender Closing Date and Time	31/01/2024 11:00 A.M
13 Tender Opening Date and Time	31/01/2024 11:30 A.M
14 Selling Tender Document (Principal)	Central Medical Stores Depot, 30, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed, Sharani, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
15 Place/Date/Time of Pre-Tender Meeting (Optional)	Central Medical Stores Depot, 30, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed, Sharani, Tejgaon, Dhaka (Conference Room, Room No.-115) Date 02-01-2024, Time: 11:30 A.M
16 Receiving and Opening Tender Document	Central Medical Stores Depot, Conference Room -115, 30, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed, Sharani, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
17 Eligibility of Tenderer	As per tender document
18 Brief Description of goods	Mentioned in schedule of requirement.
19 Price of Tender Document (Tk.)	BDT 4,000/- (Bangladesh Taka Four thousand) or US\$ 50 (fifty) only. The method of payment will be in pay order from any scheduled Bank in Bangladesh.
20 Package No. & Lot	Identification of Package
21 GR-2311 Lot-1	Meningitis Vaccine (A-C- Y-W135)
	Central Medical Stores Depot, 30, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed, Sharani, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
	BDT 14,00,000.00 (Fourteen Lakh) only or USD 12,700.00
	To be delivered on or within 06 (Six) weeks following the date of confirmation of the L/C for delivery from abroad and after signing of the contract for delivery from within Bangladesh.
GR-2311 Lot-2	Influenza Vaccine
	Central Medical Stores Depot, 30, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed, Sharani, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
	BDT 17,00,000.00 (Seventeen Lakh) only or USD 15,500.00
	To be delivered on or within 06 (Six) weeks following the date of confirmation of the L/C for delivery from abroad and after signing of the contract for delivery from within Bangladesh.
22 Name of Official Inviting Tender	Mohammad Hasan Arif
23 Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Director, CMSD
24 Address of Official Inviting	Central Medical Stores Depot, 30, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed, Sharani, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
25 Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Tel. No. 88-02-48115486 e-mail: cmsd@cmsd.gov.bd Web: www.cmsd.gov.bd

The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all the Tenders or annul the Tender proceedings

Mohammad Hasan Arif

Director

Central Medical Stores Depot (CMSD)

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## Office of the Naldanga Pourashava

Naldanga, Natore

Memo No. Nal/Eng: 02/2023/58

### e-Tender Notice No. 01/LGCRP/2023-2024

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the below schemes/packages:

Tender ID	Procurement method	Package No.	Tender document last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time
909249	OTM	Construction of RCC Drain at start from Existing RCC, Drain shop of Shamim Enterprise via Naldanga Bazar area to Mr. Bhutto shop (Ch. 0.00-380.00m) and Brick Drain area (Ch. 0.00-210.00m) Ward No. 03, under Naldanga Pourashava, Natore	02-Jan-2024 Time: 16:00	03-Jan-2024 Time: 16:00

These are 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 System 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 banks branches up to 04.00pm on 02-Jan-2024. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

Md. Arifur Rahman  
Assistant Engineer (IC)  
Naldanga Pourashava, Natore