

Israel proposes pause in fighting as part of hostage deal: report

AFP, Washington

Israel has proposed to Hamas via Qatari and Egyptian mediators a pause in fighting of up to two months as part of a deal to free all the hostages being held in Gaza, the US news site Axios reported Monday.

The report, citing unnamed Israeli officials, said the deal would take place in multiple stages, the first of which would see the release of women, men over 60 and those in critical medical condition.

Subsequent phases would involve the release of women soldiers, civilian men, male soldiers and bodies of dead hostages.

The officials said the deal would also see the release of an as yet undetermined number of Palestinian prisoners being held in Israel, but not all of them.

The proposal does not include promises to end the offensive, but it would involve Israeli troops reducing their presence in major cities in Gaza and gradually allowing residents to return to the territory's devastated north.

The officials said the deal was expected to take around two months to implement.



Children stand outside tents at a makeshift tent camp housing displaced Palestinians in Rafah near the border with Egypt in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday, as Israel expands ground offensive in the Palestinian enclave.

PHOTO: AFP

SURRENDER TO REBELS Myanmar junta arrests six high-ranking military officers

AFP, Yangon

Six high-ranking Myanmar junta officers who handed over a strategic town to ethnic minority fighters and surrendered with hundreds of troops have been taken into custody, a military spokesman and others told AFP yesterday.

Junta troops in Laukkai near the China border this month surrendered to an alliance of armed ethnic minority groups following weeks of clashes sparked by a surprise offensive against the military.

Around 2,000 troops surrendered and were later allowed to leave the town with their families, sparking further criticism of the junta leadership by its supporters after a string of battlefield losses.

The six brigadier-generals who led troops in the Laukkai region have been taken into custody, a military source told AFP.

It was not clear what they could be charged with, or if all would be charged, said the source, who requested anonymity as he was not authorised to speak to the media.

Under Myanmar's military law leaving a post without permission can be punished by the death penalty.

There was "no sentence for the six brigadier-generals yet", junta spokesman Zaw Min Tun told AFP yesterday.

Some of the six were considered close to junta chief Min Aung Hlaing, said another military source who also requested anonymity.

Laukkai is the largest town seized by the alliance -- made up of three armed ethnic minority groups -- since it launched attacks in October.

Min Aung Hlaing made a name for himself in 2009 when, as a regional commander, he expelled one of the alliance groups, the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), from the town.

The military then installed a militia that got rich producing drugs and selling a potent cocktail of gambling and sex to visitors from across the Chinese border.

Famine looming in Gaza

WFP says 70pc of requests to deliver food to the Palestinian enclave rejected by Israeli authorities

AFP, Geneva

The food situation in the Gaza Strip is slipping deeper into catastrophe, with the risk of famine rising by the day, the UN's World Food Programme warned yesterday.

A study conducted between November 24 and December 7 found that all 2.2 million people living in the Palestinian territory were in a crisis level of acute food insecurity, or worse.

The situation has only deteriorated since then, said Abeer Etefa, the WFP's senior Middle East spokeswoman.

"The situation in Gaza is of course slipping every day into a much more catastrophic situation," with "a looming threat of famine", she told a press briefing in Geneva, via video-link from Cairo.

"The risks of having pockets of famine in Gaza is very much still there.

"More than half a million people in Gaza are facing catastrophic food insecurity levels and the risk of famine increases each day, as the conflict is limiting delivery of life-saving food assistance to people in need."

Etefa said that around 70 percent of requests to deliver food to northern Gaza were rejected by the Israeli authorities.

The last deliveries to the north were around January 11 and 13, carrying 200 tonnes of food for 15,000 people.

"That's really very, very small numbers," the spokeswoman said. "This is why we're seeing people becoming more desperate," as they have no confidence that the trucks will come again.

In January so far, over 730 trucks carrying

more than 13,000 tonnes of food have crossed into Gaza, the WFP said.

Israel's offensive in Gaza has displaced about 75 percent of Gaza's 2.3 million people and triggered a major humanitarian crisis, said the UN.

Mariam Abu Haleeb and her family were on the move again on Monday, the seventh time they had been displaced in less than four months of Israeli offensive.

She and other Gazans, their cars and donkey carts piled high with belongings, fled what they said was a terrifying night at the al-Aqsa university in the west of Khan Younis, where they had taken shelter after being told again it was risky to stay put.

They had no idea where to go next. "What hurts me most is that my old mother is under siege. My siblings and their children are besieged. Everyone, everyone. All of Khan Younis needed help yesterday," she said.

"This is the seventh time I've been displaced, or maybe even more.

Torture, torture, torture," she said, weeping. Mohammad Abu Haleeb said many people had pitched their tents at the university after the Israeli military warned them to move from other areas as they stormed through the southern Gaza city, where they now say Hamas leaders are hiding.

"In the evening, gunfire started - shelling and air strikes from every direction. I couldn't move with my nine children at all. There was a building inside that we all entered and we stayed there until the morning. No one was able to leave."

"There were injured and martyred people that no one was able to reach," he said.

Russian strikes kill 7 across Ukraine

Dozens injured

AFP, Kyiv

A wave of Russian missiles hit Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities yesterday, killing seven people and wounding dozens, setting ablaze and toppling apartment blocks and creating new panic among exhausted residents.

Rescue workers in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city that is near Russia's border, hauled wounded residents from the scene of an attack where smoke rose from smouldering piles of rubble, AFP journalists on the scene in the aftermath reported.

The regional governor said five residents were killed in the overnight barrage and another 51 had been wounded, as medical workers treated one wounded man with blood smeared across his face.

In Kyiv, AFP reporters heard air raid sirens echo over the capital, followed by a series of loud blasts -- thought to be air defence systems responding to the incoming aerial onslaught.

They also saw residents of a housing block -- decorated with a mural of a girl with butterflies -- remove glass shards from a window blown out during the attack.

Ukrainian army chief Valery Zaluzhny said Russian forces had fired 41 missiles -- including cruise, ballistic and surface-to-air missiles -- as part of the barrage, adding that his forces had shot down 21.

HOUSING CRUNCH

Canada to cap int'l student permits by one-third

AFP, Montreal

Canada will temporarily cap new international student permits by one-third this year compared to 2023, the country's immigration minister announced Monday. The measure is aimed in part at easing soaring demand for housing and social services, with the number of international students set to triple from a decade ago. Under the cap approximately 364,000 international students are expected to receive study permits this year, or a 35 percent net decrease from 2023. The 2025 limit will be assessed at the end of the year. The cap is meant to "improve program integrity, set international students up for success, (and) to maintain a sustainable level of temporary residence in Canada," Immigration Minister Marc Miller said. "It would be a disservice to welcome international students in Canada knowing not all of them are getting the resources they need to succeed and having them return home disillusioned and disappointed in Canada's education system," he added. The cap will not apply to master's and doctoral students, nor elementary and secondary school students. Miller said the government will also restrict foreign students' eligibility to receive work permits and crack down on private colleges.

Pakistani father kills son over political party flag

AFP, Peshawar

A father killed his son after the pair disagreed about which political party flag to display in the lead-up to Pakistan's general election, police said. The argument broke out when the son, who recently returned from working in Qatar, hoisted the flag of former prime minister Imran Khan's PTI party at the family home on the outskirts of Peshawar in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. "The father prohibited his son from hoisting the PTI flag at home, but the son refused to take it down and abandon PTI," said district police official Naseer Farid. "The argument escalated, and in a fit of anger, the father fired a pistol at his 31-year-old son, before fleeing the house." The son died on the way to hospital. Police are searching for the father.

Trump seeks to sew up nomination in New Hampshire

AFP, Manchester

Donald Trump aims to steamroll his way toward the Republican presidential nomination Tuesday in the New Hampshire primary, making short work of his only surviving opponent, former UN ambassador Nikki Haley. In his convention-smashing mission to take revenge against President Joe Biden and win a second White House term, Trump has defied the fallout from two impeachments, four criminal trials awaiting him and lawsuits for fraud and sexual assault. While Haley has warned that another Trump presidency would bring "chaos," polls indicate her candidacy will provide little more than a bump in the road in New Hampshire. "If you want a losing candidate who puts America last, vote for Nikki Haley," Trump said in his closing arguments at a lively rally in the village of Laconia. "But if you want a president who puts America first every single time, you're going to vote for Donald J. Trump." New Hampshire is seen as a more Haley-friendly electorate than any she will encounter further down the line and pressing on into February will be a tough sell without a win or very close defeat.

We urge the Houthis and those who enable them to stop these illegal and unacceptable attacks.
UK PM Rishi Sunak warns Yemeni rebels amid Red Sea shipping crisis

এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস্ কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
৩৯৫-৩৯৭, ভেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা
ঢাকা- ১২০৮।

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ইউসিসিএল নিম্নোক্ত আইটেমটি প্রকৃত প্রস্তুতকারী/সরবরাহকারীদের (সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ ব্যবসার সাথে জড়িত) নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করছেঃ-

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সিকিউরিটি/ আনেষ্ট মানি	দরপত্র শিডিউলের মূল্যে (অফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
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সকল কার্যদিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে উপরোক্ত কার্যালয় হতে শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলীসহ দরপত্র শিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাবে।
উল্লেখ্য যে, যাদের ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন নাই তাদের দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণ করার প্রয়োজন নাই।
দরপত্র খোলার দিনে কোন দরপত্র শিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হবে না।

মহাব্যবস্থাপক
প্রকিউরমেন্ট
পক্ষেঃ ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক।

সাইজ- ৪" x ৪ কলাম

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Rangpur
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Memo No. 35.01.8549.467.07.000.24-280 Date: 23-1-24

Invitation for e-GP Tender

This is to notify all concerned that e-Tender has been invited in the e-GP Portal <http://www.eprocure.gov.bd> for procurement of works. Interested person/firms can see details by visiting the www.eprocure.gov.bd.

SL No.	Tender	Tender Ref. No.	Description of works	Tender/ proposal document last selling date & time	Last date & time for tender / proposal security submission	Tender/ proposal opening date & time
1	939189	e-GP-31/EE/RHD/RANG/LTM/2023-2024	Construction of RCC U-Drain at Ch. 354th (P) (Taragonj Bazar) km of Dhaka (Mirpur)-Utholi-Paturia- Natakhol- Kashinathpur- Bogra-Rangpur-Beldanga- Banglabandh (N5) Road under Road Division, Rangpur during the FY 2023-2024.	06-Feb-2024 within 17.00	07-Feb-2024 within 13.00	7-Feb 2024 at 14:00
2	939190	32/EE/RHD/RANG/LTM/2023-2024	Protective work by RCC Palisading of Rangpur Gangachara Road (Z-5023) under Road Division, Rangpur during the FY 2023-2024.	06-Feb-2024 within 17.00	07-Feb-2024 within 13.00	07-Feb2024 at 14:00
3	939191	e-GP-33/EE/RHD/RANG/LTM/2023-2024	Bullah Palisiding work at Ch. 38th (P) km of Sadullahpur (Gaibandha)- Pirgonj- Nababgonj (Dinajpur) (Z-5075) Road under Road Division, Rangpur during the FY 2023-2024.	06-Feb-2024 within 17.00	07-Feb-2024 within 13.00	07-Feb 2024 at 14:00

This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline and hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

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GD-121