

Sri Lanka polls to be held in 2025

REUTERS, Colombo

Sri Lanka's general election will be held in 2025 and financial provisions for the polls will be provided in next year's budget, a statement from President Ranil Wickremesinghe's office said yesterday.

The presidential election will be held within "mandated period," the statement added.

The election commission is responsible for holding elections, and the government will be communicating with the commission as and when required, the President's Media Division (PMD) said.

Last week, the cabinet of ministers approved a proposal to allocate 10 billion rupees (about \$32 million) for elections to be held in 2024, the government's information department said.

According to the country's constitution, the forthcoming presidential election should be held before October 17, 2024.



Palestinian children wait to receive food cooked by a charity kitchen amid shortages of food supplies in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. South Africa's government said yesterday it had asked the World Court to consider whether Israel's decision to extend its military operations in Rafah required the court to use its power to prevent further breach of Palestinians' rights. PHOTO: REUTERS

ARMY KILLINGS

Indian magazine ordered to delete report

AFP, New Delhi

An Indian news magazine said yesterday that the government had ordered it to delete an online report that implicated soldiers in torture and killing of civilians in Kashmir.

Rights groups say that restrictions on the press are increasingly common in India and particularly onerous in Kashmir, a restive Himalayan region where India has more than half a million troops permanently stationed.

The Caravan, a news and current affairs monthly, last week published a lengthy report on the deaths of three civilians detained by the army in December after a deadly insurgent attack on troops.

The magazine said yesterday that the information ministry had sent it an order demanding the story be taken down within 24 hours.

"The order's content is confidential," the magazine said in a post on X, formerly Twitter. "We will be challenging this order."

Caravan did not respond to AFP's request for comment. The information ministry declined to comment.

Global conflicts herald 'dangerous decade'

British military think-tank warns

AFP, London

The Israel's offensive in Gaza, ongoing fighting in Ukraine and rising tensions in the Indo-Pacific and Africa herald "what is likely to be a more dangerous decade," a British military think-tank warned yesterday.

The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) said in its annual "Military Balance" report that the world has entered "a highly volatile security environment", which is set to endure.

"The current military-security situation heralds what is likely to be a more dangerous decade, characterised by the brazen application by some of military power to pursue claims," the report said.

It also noted "the desire among like-minded democracies for stronger bilateral and multilateral defence ties in response."

The "era of insecurity" is resetting the global defence-industrial landscape, with the US and Europe ramping up production of missiles and ammunition "after decades of underinvestment," the report added.

As the two-year anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine looms, the London-based IISS reported that Moscow had lost around 3,000 battle tanks on the conflict, roughly the same number it had at the beginning of its operation.

The IISS said that Russia had been forced to trade "quality for quantity" in its efforts to replace tanks lost since it invaded its neighbour to the west in February 2022.

"Ukraine, so far, has been able to offset equipment losses through Western donations, upgrading quality in the process," added the think-tank in its yearly assessment of the militaries and defence economics of over 170 countries.

Driven in part by Nato member states response to Russia's invasion, global military spending grew by 9 percent in 2022 to reach a record \$2.2 trillion, it noted.

The report comes days after White House hopeful Donald Trump said he had previously told an unspecified Nato member's leader that he would "encourage" Russia to "do whatever the hell they want" in that country if it had not met its Nato financial obligations.

"You got to pay. You got to pay your bills," Trump recounted at a campaign rally in South Carolina Saturday.



Only 10 members of the Western-led security alliance met the group's target of spending two percent of GDP on defence, although 19 of them increased spending last year, according to IISS figures.

"Russia's actions have reinvigorated Nato, with Finland completing its rapid alliance accession process in April 2023," the report said.

"Russia's border with Nato members is now more than 1,300 kilometres longer," it noted.

'I am ready to serve'

Kamala Harris tells WSJ amid Biden age scrutiny

AFP, Washington

US Vice President Kamala Harris said she was ready to serve as leader, in a Wall Street Journal interview published Monday, as voter concerns mount about President Joe Biden's age in an election year.

The 59-year-old Harris has faced growing scrutiny about her own abilities as the first in line to the presidency should Democrat Biden, 81, be incapacitated or stand down.

"I am ready to serve. There's no question about that," Harris told the newspaper when asked whether voters' concerns about Biden's age meant she must convince them of her credentials.

Everyone who sees her on the job "walks away fully aware of my capacity to lead," said Harris, the first Black, South Asian and female VP in US history.

The interview was carried out two days before a stinging special counsel report portrayed Biden as elderly and forgetful.

Special counsel Robert Hur's probe into Biden's handling of classified documents said the president should not face charges.

Pakistan polls disappoint, add to instability

Say foreign policy analysts

REUTERS, Washington

Pakistan's election has been remarkable in producing a result disappointing to most of its foreign partners and rivals, with little reason for optimism about government that will eventually emerge from it, foreign policy analysts said.

Pakistan's two largest political parties have been wrangling over who will be prime minister after an inconclusive vote last week forced them to join forces and try to form a coalition in a parliament dominated by independents.

Neither former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), nor the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, son of assassinated former premier Benazir Bhutto, won enough seats to form a government alone.

Independent candidates backed by former Prime Minister Imran Khan represent the largest group, with 93 of the 264 parliamentary seats declared. That shocked many, who had expected their showing to be severely dampened by an intense crackdown on Khan and his party.

But Khan cannot become prime minister as he is in jail and his grouping cannot form a government as they nominally ran as independents as his party was barred from standing.

Some foreign policy analysts said the election results likely indicate voters' protest against perceptions of the country's powerful military's involvement in politics. But the military denies it interferes in the country's politics.

That adds to the political instability given the military's strong historic role in the security and foreign affairs of the nuclear-armed nation.

"Pakistan has been on a slippery slope for some time but a mild one. The slope is now much stiffer," said Frederic Grare, a South Asia expert at the Australian National University's National Security College.

"The military will most likely be able to manage the situation for some time but ... the political situation is likely to be less and less stable."

It's a messy scenario no one wanted - not China, Pakistan's main foreign backer, nor India, Pakistan's nuclear-armed neighbour and bitter rival, nor the United States, which has a reduced stake in Pakistan after quitting Afghanistan in 2021, but remains concerned about Islamist militancy as a broader source of instability in the region and beyond, analysts said.

The prospect of a weak, divided government also raises questions about whether Pakistan will be able to undertake reforms needed to secure a vital new International Monetary Fund program later this year. Last week, the US, Britain and the EU separately expressed concerns about Pakistan's electoral process and urged a probe into reported irregularities. Pakistan's caretaker prime minister rejected those allegations.

"MORE CONFUSION AND UNCERTAINTY" Tamanna Salikuddin, South Asia director at Washington's United States Institute of Peace think tank, said that rather than resolving the political crisis Pakistan has been plagued with since Khan was ousted in 2022, the election "has created more confusion and uncertainty."

"This election not only reveals the lack of trust that Pakistanis have in their leaders, but also it is evidence that no institution or leader has a plan to fix the economy, nor do they have the political capital to make any of the very difficult and painful reforms to turn around this failing economy," she said.



Farmers shout slogans during a demonstration against central government over their various demands, in Amritsar, India yesterday. Inset, farmers run for cover amidst tear smoke fired by police to disperse them at Shambhu, a border crossing between Punjab and Haryana states, India. The march is the latest in a series of similar protests which began more than two years ago and comes months ahead of national elections in which Prime Minister Narendra Modi will seek a third term, with farmers forming an influential voting bloc. PHOTO: AFP, REUTERS

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Director Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Dhaka www.dmch.gov.bd

Memo No.- DMCH/Proc-1/2023-2024/11489

Date: 13/02/2024.

e-Tender Notice (OTM)- No: 07/2023-2024


This is to notify all concerned that the following tender has been published through e-GP portal:

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Date of Publishing	Name of Work	Last Selling Date	Closing Date
1.	Tender ID-950142	13-Feb-2024 12:00	Supply of Dry Ration (Rice, Pulses, Flour, spices and oil etc) for the Financial Year 2023-2024	11-Mar-2024 16:00	12-Mar-2024 12:00
2.	Tender ID-950143	13-Feb-2024 12:00	Supply of Chicken Meat, Mutton, Fish & Chicken Egg for the Financial Year 2023-2024	11-Mar-2024 16:00	12-Mar-2024 12:00
3.	Tender ID-950144	13-Feb-2024 12:00	Supply of Vegetables for the Financial Year 2023-2024	11-Mar-2024 16:00	12-Mar-2024 12:00
4.	Tender ID-950145	13-Feb-2024 12:00	Supply of Fruits (Banana, Apple and Orange) for the Financial Year 2023-2024	11-Mar-2024 16:00	12-Mar-2024 12:00
5.	Tender ID-950146	13-Feb-2024 12:00	Supply of Bakery and Confectionary Products for the Financial Year 2023-2024	11-Mar-2024 16:00	12-Mar-2024 12:00

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Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


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