

Telegram boss free but charged and held in France

AFP, Paris

Telegram chief Pavel Durov was out on bail yesterday after four days of detention in France. However, he has been banned from leaving the country as he faces a possible trial related to illegal content carried on his messaging app.

Russian-born Durov, dressed in black and wearing dark glasses, walked briskly out of the Paris court house late Wednesday into a waiting car after being charged but allowed to go free under judicial supervision.

Durov, 39, was charged on several counts of failing to curb extremist and illegal content on the popular messaging app which now has over 900 million followers but has become increasingly controversial.

His lawyer David Olivier Kaminski said it was “absurd” to suggest Durov could be implicated in any crime committed on the app.

Durov was arrested at Le Bourget airport outside Paris late Saturday and questioned in subsequent days by investigators.

The charges concern alleged crimes involving an organised group, including “complicity in the administration of an online platform to enable an illicit transaction”.

This charge alone could see him jailed for up to 10 years and fined 500,000 euros if convicted.



Israeli soldiers take position during an army operation in Tulkarm in the north of the occupied West Bank yesterday. Israel on Wednesday launched a large-scale operation in the occupied West Bank where the military said it killed Palestinian fighters, as the nearly 11-month-old war on Gaza showed no signs of abating.

PHOTO: AFP

Constructive talks held with China: US

AFP, Beijing

US President Joe Biden is looking forward to talks with Xi Jinping in the “coming weeks”, top White House aide Jake Sullivan told the Chinese leader yesterday as they met for rare talks in Beijing.

Sullivan, the first US national security advisor to visit China since 2016, met Xi as he wrapped up three days of talks in Beijing which also saw him sit down with Foreign Minister Wang Yi and other high-ranking officials.

His visit came as China was embroiled in security rows with US allies Japan and the Philippines.

Sullivan told Xi during a meeting yesterday in Beijing’s ornate Great Hall of the People that Biden “looks forward to engaging with you again in the coming weeks”.

“President Biden is committed to responsibly

managing this consequential relationship to ensure that competition does not veer into conflict or confrontation, and to work together where our interests align,” he said.

Chinese state media said Xi told Sullivan that in spite of “great changes”, China and the US could still enjoy good ties.

“China’s commitment to the goal of stable, healthy, and sustainable development of China-US relations hasn’t changed,” Xi said.

“We hope that the US will work with China to meet each other halfway,” he added, according to CCTV.

Sullivan told reporters at the US embassy that the talks with Chinese officials had lasted for 14 hours, describing the discussions as “constructive, candid, substantive”.

The Ukraine war came up during the talks, but Sullivan said that both sides had not reached “any particular plan”.

“I can’t say that we did make progress on that issue,” he said.

The talks did not touch on the upcoming US election, but Sullivan said that Vice President Kamala Harris wanted to maintain “open lines of communication” with China.

On Wednesday, Sullivan and top diplomat Wang had discussed plans for their leaders to talk in the coming weeks.

They also clashed over China’s increasingly assertive approach in disputed maritime regions.

The officials agreed to hold a call between the two sides’ theatre commanders “in the near future”, a readout from the White House said.

Sullivan also raised the importance of “freedom of navigation” in the South China Sea, where China and the Philippines have clashed in recent months, and “stability” in the Taiwan Strait, Washington said.

‘S Korea’s climate goals not enough’

AFP, Seoul

South Korea’s Constitutional Court yesterday ruled that much of the country’s climate goals were unconstitutional, handing a landmark victory to young environmental activists, who wept for joy on the court steps.

The first such case in Asia, brought by children and teenagers who named an embryo as a lead plaintiff, claimed that South Korea’s legally binding climate commitments were insufficient and unmet, violating their constitutionally guaranteed human rights.

The court ruled that the government’s limited climate targets violate the constitution as they do “not sufficiently protect the basic rights of the people,” the legal representatives of the plaintiffs said after the hearing.

In 2021, South Korea made a legally binding commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 290 million tons by 2030 – and to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. To meet this goal, the country needs to reduce emissions by 5.4 percent every year from 2023 – a target they have so far failed to meet. As a result of the ruling, Seoul will now have to revise its climate goals, said a lawyer for the plaintiffs.

Gujarat floods toll rises to 28

AFP, Ahmedabad

Intense monsoon rains and floods in India’s Gujarat state killed at least 28 people in the past three days, some drowning and others hit by falling trees, government officials said.

The weather department warned more heavy rain is expected yesterday in the western coastal state.

Rivers have burst their banks and more than 30,000 people fled their homes.

The state government said late Wednesday that 13 people had died from drowning and the rest from houses or trees collapsing on them.

The Indian Express newspaper said 35 people had died so far across the state.

Some 1,856 people were rescued by disaster and army officials deployed for relief operations.

Flood raises spectre of diseases

FROM PAGE 1

village, said, “Over the last three days, I’ve developed burning rashes on my hands and feet. I’ve tried applying some generic ointment I bought from a local shop, but to no avail.”

According to the Lakshimpur Civil Surgeon’s Office, 58 patients were hospitalised with diarrhoea across the districts in 24 hours till yesterday.

Our correspondents found similar situations in many places when they visited Noakhali, Lakshimpur, Feni, and Cumilla.

In Feni, many were suffering from diarrhoea and skin diseases in Chhagalnaiya upazila.

As many areas in the upazila were still submerged, the stranded people could not reach health facilities.

Hosne Ara Begum,

a resident of Gopal union, who took his 14-year-old grandson to a temporary health camp at Chhagalnaiya Pilot High School, said there were rashes all over his hands.

“Rashed never had skin diseases. Prolonged exposure to floodwaters gave him the rashes.”

From the same union, twelve-year-old Saima, who also got rashes, could not move to the temporary health camp like Hosne Ara did as her village was still submerged and she had no access to transport facility.

Feni Civil Surgeon Shihab Rana said, “We treated 603 patients with waterborne diseases across the district in the 24 hours till Wednesday.”

In Cumilla, Wahedunnesa, 70, a resident of Isapura who has been in the shelter centre at Borasa High School in Burichang since August 23,

said she has been suffering from diarrhoea and cold for the last four days.

It’s difficult for her to use the toilet, which everyone at the shelter shares.

There were sufficient stocks of oral saline and water purifying tablets at the shelter, according to its in-charge, Monirul Islam, reports our Cumilla correspondent.

According to the Cumilla Civil Surgeon’s Office, 81 patients were hospitalised with diarrhoea across the districts in 24 hours till yesterday. A total of 502 patients were treated for waterborne diseases since August 23.

In addition, 130 patients in Noakhali and 58 in Lakshimpur were treated for diarrhoea in the districts over the last 24 hours.

52 LIVES LOST SO FAR At least 52 people were

killed in flash floods that began on the night of August 22, triggered by heavy rains and an onrush of water from upstream.

Around 10,72,579 families remain stranded in 11 districts, said a press release from the Chief Adviser office, citing the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief.

Of the deceased, 14 died in Cumilla, 17 in Feni, six in Chattogram, three in Cox’s Bazar, eight in Noakhali, and one each in Brahmanbaria, Lakshimpur, Khagrachhari, and Moulvibazar.

Additionally, 54,80,463 people from 492 unions under 68 upazilas in Feni, Cumilla, Chattogram, Khagrachhari, Noakhali, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Brahmanbaria, Sylhet, Lakshimpur, and Cox’s Bazar have been affected by the floods.

Govt to take reform ideas from parties

FROM PAGE 1

for whitening black money and bringing down the cost of performing hajj to a reasonable level.

DRAFTS APPROVED

The advisory council approved in principle the draft of the “Father of the Nation’s Family-Members’ Security (Repeal) Ordinance, 2024” as it decided to repeal the “Father of the Nation’s Family-Members’ Security Act, 2009”.

Once the ordinance is gazetted, Bangabandhu’s family members will not get special security.

The home ministry’s Public Security Division placed the draft of the ordinance before the advisory council after it was vetted by the Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division.

“The context [of repealing the ordinance] is that this [interim] government is an outcome of the Anti-discrimination Movement. The security agencies do not feel that this special security system is needed. Besides, it was considered as a discriminatory law. The law will be repealed on this ground,” Rizwana said.

The Father of the Nation’s Family-Members Security Act was enacted

during the rule of the Awami League in 2009.

In 2015, a gazette was issued in line with the act granting lifelong state security and free utility services to Bangabandhu’s family members.

The advisory council also gave the final approval to the draft of the “Special Security Force (Amendment) Ordinance, 2024” to ensure the security of the chief adviser.

HAIJ PACKAGE

Rizwana said the government is working on bringing down the cost of hajj packages to a reasonable level as there is a syndicate behind the rise in the cost.

Replying to a query, the adviser said, “It is not possible to say how much the cost can be reduced or how much the cost will be. However, our initial assessment indicated that the cost can be cut.”

OTHER DECISIONS

Talking about some other agendas of the advisory council meeting, Rizwana said many export-oriented industries incurred losses due to the ongoing floods. The government has taken some measures to provide assistance to the workers in this sector, she said.

The environment adviser said the government has

already started taking necessary steps to keep the prices of essentials within the affordability of the people.

She said the interim government will inform the media about the activities carried out by the ministries during the first month in office.

Replying to a question about whether actions should be taken against those officials who are still holding important posts after being appointed by the previous Awami League government, Rizwana said good officials are needed to run a government.

“There is no need to take immediate decisions regarding the efficient officials. If there is any specific allegation of corruption against any official, the authorities concerned will take action.”

“How would we proceed with our regular works if we adopted the policy of not retaining any officials who were holding good posts in the administration of the previous government?”

The adviser said the government will give a reception to the Bangladesh under-20 football team for becoming the champions for the first

time in the SAFF under-20 Men’s Championship.

The advisory council also congratulated the national cricket team, the Bangladesh Cricket Board and the other people concerned on the team’s win against Pakistan in the first Test match in Rawalpindi on August 25.

BSEC freezes

FROM PAGE 1

Former state minister Zunaid Ahmed Palak, his wife Arifa Jesmin Konika, Former MP Mohiuddin Maharaj, his wife Umme Kulsum, and his son Sammam Junaid Efti, former land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed, his spouse Rukhmila Zaman Chowdhury, his daughter Zeba Zaman Chowdhury, his relative Zana Zaman, his sister Roxana Zaman Chowdhury and his brother Anisuzzaman Chowdhury had their accounts frozen as well.

The BSEC said the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit decided to investigate the bank accounts of these individuals under the Money Laundering Act of 2012.

These individuals have investments in several stocks and may commit irregularities in the market, hence the BSEC has decided to freeze their BO accounts, it added.

বাংলাদেশ পেট্রোলিয়াম এক্সপ্লোরেশন এন্ড প্রোডাকশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড (বাপেক্স) BANGLADESH PETROLEUM EXPLORATION & PRODUCTION COMPANY LIMITED (BAPEX) (A Company of Petrobangla) BAPEX Bhaban (Level-4), 4 Karwan Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh, web: www.bapex.com.bd	
Invitation for International Tender	
1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/Energy & Mineral Resources Division
2. Agency	Bangladesh Oil, Gas & Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla)
3. Company Name	i) Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Co. Ltd. (BAPEX) ii) Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Limited (BGFL)
4. Procuring Entity Name	i) Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Co. Ltd. (BAPEX) ii) Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Limited (BGFL)
5. Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
6. Invitation Tender No.	BAPEX/ADMIN/INT/TEN-1259/2024, Date: 27.08.2024
7. Invitation for	Procurement of Drilling Works Including Construction of Rig Foundation, Third Party Engineering Works & Supply of Materials for 2 Deep & HPHT (Srikail Deep-1 and Mubarakpur Deep-1) Exploratory Drilling Wells Under BAPEX and 2 Deep & HPHT (Titans-31 Deep and Bakhrabad-11 Deep) Exploratory Drilling Wells Under BGFL on Turn-key basis.
Key Information	
8. Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (ICT), One Stage Two Envelope Tendering Method
Funding Information	
9. Budget and Source of Funds	GOB & Own Fund
Particular Information	
10. Indenting Division/Project Name	3 Exploratory Wells (Srikail Deep-1, Mubarakpur Deep-1 and Fenchuganj South-1) Drilling Project, BAPEX' and ' Drilling of 2 Deep Exploratory Wells at Titans & Bakhrabad Fields Project, BGFL'.
11. Last Selling Date of Tender	03.11.2024
12. Date of selling of Tender Document	Tender document will be available from 05.09.2024 to 03.11.2024 from 10.00 to 14.30 (BST) on all working days.
13. Place of Tender Selling	i) Accounts & Finance Division, BAPEX, 4 Karwan Bazar C/A, Dhaka. ii) BGFL's Liaison Office, Petrocentre (14th Floor), 3 Karwan Bazar C/A, Dhaka. iii) Accounts Department, Titans Gas T&D Co. Ltd, 105 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka.
14. Tender Closing Date & Time	04.11.2024 at 11.00 Hrs. (BST)
15. Tender Opening Date & Time	04.11.2024 at 11.30 Hrs. (BST)
16. Place of Tender Receiving & Opening	Receiving: Foreign Purchase Dept., BAPEX Bhaban, Level-4, 4 Karwan Bazar C/A, Dhaka
Information for Tenderer	
17. Eligibility of Tenderer	i) Minimum general experience of the Prime Tenderer in the Drilling works and all associated third party engineering works in the oil and gas industry as a Prime Contractor or Subcontractor or Management Contractor shall be at least 15 (fifteen) years. ii) The minimum specific experience as a Prime Contractor or Subcontractor or Management Contractor Drilling works and all associated third party engineering works in the oil and gas industry of at least two (02) contracts of similar to the proposed works successfully completed within the last 10 (ten) years with a value of at least USD 60,000,000.00 (United States Dollar Sixty million only). iii) The Tenderer must have 15 years of experience in drilling of oil/gas wells out of which 5 years must be outside the home country and at least 15 (fifteen) wells (vertical/deviated), Tenderer must have experience in drilling of at least 03 (three) wells depth of 6000-meter-deep & HPHT oil/gas wells including having experience of encounter minimum 12000 psi formation pressure and 350 deg F formation temperature. iv) The Tenderer must be a valid member of International Association of Drilling Contractors (IADC) and/or International Well Control Forum (IWCF). v) The Tenderer must have at least 2 (two) own drilling rigs having minimum capacity of 2500 HP or higher that require and mentioned in Section-7 (Employer's requirement) for this operation.
18. Brief Description of Service	i) Procurement of Drilling works including construction of rig foundation, third party engineering works & supply of materials for drilling and completion of 2 (Srikail Deep-1 and Mubarakpur Deep-1) deep & HPHT exploratory wells under BAPEX and 2 (Titans-31 Deep and Bakhrabad-11 Deep) deep & HPHT exploratory wells under BGFL on Turn-key Basis. ii) Out of which 2 vertical deep & HPHT wells will be drilled at Srikail and Mubarakpur locations depth of around 6000 (±100)mTVDSS and another 2 deep & HPHT (one vertical and one deviated) wells will be drilled at Titans and Bakhrabad Gas Field, depth of around 5600(±100)mTVDSS and 4526 (±100) mMD (4360mTVDSS) respectively. Contractor will construct rig foundation at all well locations to be drilled according to design and layout of their rig. Contractor will provide drilling works, all third party engineering works and supply of materials for 4 deep & HPHT wells under BAPEX and BGFL.
19. Price of Tender Document	BDT 10,000.00 or US\$ 95.00 (Non-refundable)
20. Procuring Entity Details	i) General Manager, Administration Division, BAPEX Phone: +880-255011774 Email: purchase.bapex@gmail.com, purchase@bapex.com.bd ii) General Manager, Planning & Development Division, BGFL, Phone: +880-1730317973 Email: gmpd@bgfl.org.bd, bgfldeepdrilling@gmail.com
21. Address of the Official Inviting Tender	BAPEX Bhaban, Level-5, 4 Karwan Bazar C/A, Dhaka
22. Special instruction	i) Tender must remain valid for 180 days from the date of closing of the tender. ii) The tender security must remain valid for 208 days from the date of closing of the tender. iii) Amount of tender security: USD 2,000,000.00 or BDT 23,60,00,000.00 in the form of Bank Guarantee/Pay Order issued by a scheduled bank in Bangladesh or from any reputable foreign bank duly endorsed by a scheduled bank in Bangladesh located in Dhaka with full obligation and liabilities. iv) If tender opening day happens to fall on any holiday or any unavoidable Circumstance tenders shall be opened at the same hours on the first subsequent working day. v) This notice will also be available in www.bapex.com.bd, www.bgfl.org.bd, www.petrobangla.org.bd, & www.cptu.gov.bd
23. This tender will be conducted as per the PPR, 2008 & PPA, 2006.	
24. The Company reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders at any stage without assigning any reasons whatsoever.	
General Manager (Administration)	