Humans, not AI, should control nuke arms Biden, Xi agree during **APEC talks in Lima**

REUTERS. Lima

US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed on Saturday that human beings and not artificial intelligence should make decisions over the use of nuclear weapons, according to the White House.

"The two leaders affirmed the need to maintain human control over the decision to use nuclear weapons," the White House said in a statement. "The two leaders also stressed the need to consider carefully the potential risks and develop AI technology in the military field in a prudent and responsible manner."

An official Chinese government summary of the meeting echoed this point.

Xi also vowed to work with the incoming US administration of Trump. "China's goal of a stable, healthy

and sustainable China-US relationship remains unchanged" after Trump's election, Xi said as he met Biden, acknowledging "ups and downs" between the countries. "China is ready to work with the new US administration to maintain communication, expand cooperation and manage differences."

Biden told Xi that the two leaders have not always agreed but their discussions have been "frank" and "candid."

It was not clear whether the statement would lead to further talks. But it marks a first-of-its-kind step between the two countries in the discussion of two issues on which progress has been elusive: nuclear arms and artificial intelligence.

Israeli strikes pound south, central Beirut

Hezbollah media head killed; new salvo of projectiles fired from Lebanon at Israel's Haifa area



AGENCIES

INTERNATIONAL

An Israeli strike on a building in a densely populated district of central Beirut yesterday killed Hezbollah's media relations chief Mohammad Afif, two Lebanese security sources told Reuters, though there was no immediate confirmation from Hezbollah.

The Israeli military declined to comment in response to questions from Reuters. There was no evacuation order for the area published on the Israeli military spokesperson's account on social media platform X before the strike.

The strike hit the Ras al-Nabaa neighborhood where many people displaced from Beirut's southern suburbs by the Israeli bombardment had been seeking refuge.

The security sources said it struck a building where the offices of the Ba'ath Party are located, and the head of the party in Lebanon, Ali Hijazi, told Lebanese broadcaster Al-Jadeed that Afif was in the building.

The broadcaster later also said Afif had been

Earlier, the Israeli air strikes hit the southern suburbs of Beirut yesterday, AFPTV images showed, shortly after the Israeli military warned people to evacuate the area.

Columns of smoke were seen rising over the capital's southern suburbs, where Lebanon's only international airport is located. Further south, Israeli air strikes and shelling hit the flashpoint town of Khiam, the NNA reported.

Following the bombardment, the Israeli army said about 20 projectiles were seen crossing from Lebanon into Israel, and that some of them were intercepted at Haifa Bay.

Israel has escalated its bombing of Lebanon since September 23 and has since sent in ground troops, following almost a year of limited, cross-border exchanges of fire begun by Hezbollah militants in support of Iranbacked Hamas in Gaza.

Indian police battle Maoist rebels

5 killed; 2 cops hurt

AFP, Raipur

Indian security forces have killed five Maoist rebels in jungle clashes, an officer said yesterday, as security forces seek to quash the decades-long insurgency in the central regions.

Gun battles took place in the Abujhmad forests of Chhattisgarh state on Saturday, taking the toll of the conflict in 2024 to around 200, one of the highest in years.

More than people have died in the insurgency against the Maoists -- known as the Naxalite movement, who say they are fighting for the rights of marginalised indigenous people.

"In the gun battle five Maoists have been killed," police officer P. Sunderraj said, adding that two of the rebels were women.

The clash took place in regions bordering Kanker and Narayanpur, with police seizing rifles and ammunition from the corpses. Two officers were wounded in the clash.

India's government has warned the insurgents to surrender, with Amit Shah, the interior minister, saying in September that he expected the rebellion to be defeated by early 2026.

World looks to G20 for breakthrough in COP29 talks

REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Diplomatic tensions over global warming will take center stage at the G20 summit in Brazil this week, as negotiators at UN talks in Azerbaijan hit an impasse on climate finance that they hope leaders of the world's 20 major economies can break.

Heads of state were arriving in Rio de Janeiro vesterday for the G20 summit that will spend today and tomorrow addressing issues from poverty and hunger to the reform of global institutions. Still, the ongoing UN climate talks have thrown a spotlight on their efforts to tackle global warming.

> Baku, is tasked with agreeing a goal to mobilize hundreds billions of dollars for the climate, leaders of the Group of 20 major economies half a world away in Rio are holding the purse strings.

the COP29 summit in

G20 countries account for 85 percent of the world's

economy and are the largest contributors to multilateral development banks helping to steer climate finance. They are also responsible for more than three-

quarters of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. "All countries must do their part. But the G20 must lead," UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres told COP29 last week.

Reaching such an accord may only get tougher with the return to power of US President-elect Donald Trump, who is reportedly preparing to again pull the US out of the Paris climate accord.

Trump is also planning to roll back landmark climate legislation passed by the outgoing Joe Biden, who will become the first US president to visit the Amazon rainforest when he makes a stop there on his way to Rio.

Indo-Bangla ties

"Bangladesh sits at the intersection of most of India's foreign policy decisions. Our peace, progress, and security are interlinked.

Meanwhile, Dr Sreeradha Datta, professor at the Jindal School of International Affairs at OP Jindal Global University, said, "Integration in South Asia can only happen surrounding the India-Bangladesh caucus. That's how important it is."

The relationship between the two countries has been under pressure after former prime minister Sheikh Hasina sought refuge in India following her ouster on August 5.

Indian Foreign Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told the Rajya Sabha on August 6 that Hasina had sought approval to come to India on a "short

that upon crossing the India-

Jamaat-e-Islami, however, opined that

the interim government should be

given the time it requested for reforms.

fulfilled by completing sustainable

reforms and paving the way for an

election. For this reason, the nation

must exercise patience," Jamaat

General Secretary Mia Golam Parwar

He, however, said the timeline for

"It's a good sign that he [Prof Yunus]

the reforms should neither be too long

gave a hint about the election. He has

spoken about holding the election after

carrying out necessary reforms, which

told this newspaper over the phone.

"People's aspirations must be

Bangladesh border, Hasina's exit flight was escorted by two fighter jets. She is must act for itself and not be acted reportedly staying at a safehouse in New Delhi.

The International Crimes Tribunal has asked Interpol to issue a red notice for Hasina's arrest in connection with the deaths of hundreds of protesters during the mass uprising against her in July.

Meanwhile, speakers at the conference also spoke about Indo-Pacific security and prioritising sovereignty.

Responding to a question about how the Chinese-built submarine base in Cox's Bazar's Pekua impacts Indo-Pacific security, the Acting High Commissioner for Australia Nardia Simpson said, "The question isn't about who was involved but about The Indian media had reported whether [Bangladesh's] sovereignty was prioritised."

Reforms should be done in a way so

that a free, fair, and credible election

Ruhin Hossain Prince, general

secretary of Communist Party of

Bangladesh (CPB), said setting a

timeframe for the electoral system

reform and announcing electoral

roadmap are very crucial right now as

various crises may develop otherwise.

the electoral system and chart out

a roadmap for elections. Regarding

other reforms, they [the government]

can create a framework and begin

preliminary work, if able," Prince said.

He said other reforms can start positive outcome...."

"Our first priority is to reform

can be held," said the Jamaat leader.

She went on to say that Bangladesh

Simpson added that security for the Indo-Pacific means a position "where larger country cannot dominate and where all countries' sovereignty is respected."

David Brewster, senior research fellow at the National Security College in Australia, said Bangladesh holds the unique position to stabilise the fractured relations increasingly concerning the Indo-Pacific. "It can check major powers to make sure no one dominates."

He added, "It has long puzzled me why Bangladesh has not been a larger player in the region. Bangladesh has vital interests, but in recent years it has not sought to shape the strategic interests concerning the region in line with its own policy."

determine that these are urgent, and

on discussions and agreements with

interim government can carry out

some reforms in public interest and

rising prices of essentials and the

absence of any indication of resolving

the people's crises, discussions on

other issues are irrelevant. Such

discussions will only be relevant

if there are tangible actions and a

"Decisions must be finalised based

The CPB leader further said the

"But at this moment, given the

it requires certain time.

political parties."

these must be visible.

align with the nation's aspirations. only if political parties collectively

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Ministry of Food Directorate General of Food Procurement Division Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka Website: www.dgfood.gov.bd

No. 13.01.0000.093.46.006.24-393

Date: 17/11/2024

International Tender Notice for Import of Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice (Package-03, FY 2024-2025)

International tender in sealed cover are invited from bonafide traders for supply of 50,000 (Fifty thousand) (5%±) Metric Tons of Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice. The particulars of international tender are furnished below Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

: Ministry of Food

2:	Agency		: Not applicable					
3.	Procuring entity name		: Director Procurement					
4	Procuring entity code		: Not applicable					
5	Procuring entity district		: Dhaka					
6	Invitation for		- 7	Procurement of 50,000 MT (5%±) Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice				
7	Invitation Ref. No. & date			13.01.0000.093.46.006.24-393, Dated: 17/11/2024				
KEY	INFORMATION							
8	Procuring method			International Open Tender Method				
FUN	DING INFORMATION			PERSONNEL VIII				
9	Budget and source of fund		100	: GoB fund				
10	Development partners (if applicable)			: Not applicable				
PAR	TICULAR INFORMATION			Windows and Market Mark				
11	Project/ programme /code (if applicable)		100	Not applicable				
12	Project/programme name (if applicable)	1 :	: Not applicable				
13	Package No.			Package-03				
14	Package name		: Procurement of 50,000 MT (±5%) Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice					
15	Notice publication date			18 November, 2024				
16	Selling of tender schedule			: 18 November, 2024 to 1 December, 2024 up to 4.30pm (BST)				
17	Date and time of closing			: 02 December, 2024, upto Time 1.00pm (BST)				
18	Date and time of opening			02 December, 2024, Time 2.30pm (BST)				
19	Name and address of the office(s):							
80			- 1	: Office Chamber of Director, (Procurement), Room No. 501, Directorate General of Food, 16, Abdu Gani Road, Dhaka.				
	Receiving place of tender Opening place of tender			1) Office Chamber of Director, (Procurement), Room No. 501, Directomate General of Food, 16, Abdi Gani Road, Dhaka. 2) Office Chamber of Joint Secretary, Room No. 114, (1st Floor), Building No. 04, Ministry of Food, Baneladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.				
				Office Chamber of Director, (Procurement), Room No. 501, Directorate General of Food, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka.				
20	Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting (optional)			Not applicable				
INF	ORMATION FOR TENDERER			1995 - 1985 - 2018 - 20				
21	Eligibility of tenderer			Necessary papers to be submitted complying the conditions mentioned in the tender documents				
22	Brief description of goods or works		50,000 (±5%) (Fifty thousand) MT. of Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice at Chattogram (60%) and Mongla (40%) port on CIF Liner Out term. Cost of the Cargo, Insurance and Freight including Stevedoring, Overside Handling and Lightering are on seller's account. Single price per MT is to be quoted in USS.					
23	Brief description of related services	-	Not applicable Not applicable					
24	Price of tender document (Tk.)	-	Tk 5,0	Tk 5,000 (five thousand) or USD 100 (One hundred) non-refundable by Pay Order/Bank Draft drawn is favour of Director General, Directorate General of Food.				
1	Mode of payment			th Letter of Credit (L/C).				
	Crop year	_	2024 o					
- 1	Validity of the offer	_		ember, 2024 upto 5.00pm (BST)				

Quality parameters	Specification	Margin of tolerance with claim for deviation beyond specification	Rejection
Moisture (maximum)	13.5%	14.0%	above 14.0%
Broken grain (Maximum)	5.0% (Rice of size 3/4th and below will be considered as broken and less than 1/4th broken should not be more than 2%)	6.0% (Rice of size 3/4th and below will be considered as broken and less than 1/4th broken should not be more than 3%)	above 6.0%
Foreign matter (Maximum)	0.3%	0.5%	above 0.5%
Dead, damaged & discoloured grains (Maximum)	3% in total	4.0%	above 4,0%
Radio-Activity (maximum)	50 Bq/Kg of 137Cs/134Cs (Relaxable for the crop of SAARC and South-East Asian country)	50 Bq/Kg of 137Cs/134Cs (Relaxable for the crop of SAARC and South-East Asian country)	above 50 Bq/Kg of 137Cs/134Cs

Pack	Identification of shipment	Country of			y and separately. der security amount (US\$)	Shipment period				
No. Pack- 03	50,000 MT (±5%) Non- Basmati Parboiled Rice on CIF Liner out term	Any country of the world except Israel	Chattogram port-60% and Mongla port- 40%	General Parboiled Bank	0,000 in favour of Director of Food for 50,000 MT d rice (±5%) in the form of a Draft/Pay-Order (No Bank e is allowed)	40 (forty) days from the date of opening of the L/C. Note that at least 50% of the total quantity must be shipped within 25 days of opening of the L/C.				
PROC	URING ENTITY DETAILS					A				
26	Name of official inviting to	ender		Md.	Md. Moniruzzaman					
27	Designation of official invi	Designation of official inviting tender				Director (Procurement)				
28	Address of official inviting tender				Office Chamber of Director, (Procurement), Room No. 501, Directorate General of Food, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka.					
29	Contact details of official inviting tender				Phone: +88-02-41050178 E-mail- dproc@dgfood.gov.bd					
30										

participate in the tender for the rest period of the current financial year, whether the money accruing from PG so forfeited is deposited to the

Bad loans hit alarming record

No mention of election roadmap

nor too short.

Around Tk 8,000 crore of loans of another of Hasina's close allies, S Alam Group, with Janata Bank has gone bad during the quarter.

As a result, Janata's bad loans rose to Tk 60,000 crore at the end of September, which is the highest in the banking sector. Two concerns of Bashundhara

Group have defaulted on their loans amounting to Tk 416 crore with IFIC and Rupali. Defaulted loans have increased in

the majority of the banks, including some Shariah-based lenders who saw their boards reconstituted after Ahsan H Mansur took charge as Bangladesh Bank governor in mid-August. One of the reasons behind the

increase in defaulted loans is the central bank's adoption of a new method to calculate bad loans following global best practices, said BB spokesperson Husne Ara Shikha. As per the new method, the grace

period for term loans has been reduced to three months from the previous six months. "We are assuming that this is one of

the reasons behind the increase in bad loans in the July-September quarter." Besides, some entities had filed writ petitions with the High Court about their bad loans. Some of the writ

petitions were vacated recently and

those disputed loans were marked as

Janata has the highest volume of bad loans: Tk**60.000**cr

Bad loans increased by Tk**73,586**cr in just 3 months since June

Some large borrowers including S Alam, Beximco, Bashundhara Group defaulted

Bad loans increased due to lacklustre loans recovery amid economic slowdown

"This could be another reason,"

Husne Ara added. Subsequently, at the end of September, bad loans accounted for 16.9 percent of the total disbursed

loans of Tk 1,682,821 crore. A rise in defaulted loans was expected for several reasons, said Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing cases.

director and chief executive officer of Mutual Trust Bank.

Borrowers were already struggling before July-August due to challenges

such as insufficient electricity and gas supplies, which reduced production and exports. This was further compounded

by the foreign exchange crisis, high inflation and an unfavourable local investment climate. Additionally, the central bank's directive for greater transparency has led banks to disclose more

accurate figures, including previously concealed bad loans, Mahbubur The actual amount of the defaulted loans would have been higher if the other stressed assets, including written-off loans, had been taken into

executive director of the private think tank Centre for Policy Dialogue. "Unfortunately, there is no shortcut to reducing the high amount of bad loans – most of the big defaulters are on the run."

consideration, said Fahmida Khatun,

Fahmida, who was recently appointed a director of the central bank, suggested strengthening the money loan court both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Cases should be filed over the bad loans, she said, adding that the attorney general may form a special bench to settle the large default

GD-970

Md. Moniruzzamai Director rement Division

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