

North Korea's Kim accuses US of stoking tension Warns of nuclear war

REUTERS, Seoul

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has accused the United States of ramping up tension and provocations, saying the Korean peninsula has never faced a greater risk of nuclear war, state media KCNA said yesterday.

The comments came amid international criticism over increasingly close military co-operation between Pyongyang and Moscow, and assertions that North Korea sent more than 10,000 troops to Russia to support its invasion of Ukraine.

Previous negotiations with Washington have only highlighted its "aggressive and hostile" policy toward North Korea, Kim said in a speech at a military exhibition in Pyongyang, the capital, the KCNA news agency said.

"Never before have the warring parties on the Korean peninsula faced such a dangerous and acute confrontation that it could

N Korea sent more than 10,000 troops to Russia to support its invasion of Ukraine

escalate into the most destructive thermonuclear war," he said on Thursday.

"We have already gone as far as we can on negotiating with the United States," he said, adding that the talks had only shown its aggressive and hostile policy toward North Korea could never change.

North Korean state media have not yet publicly mentioned the re-election of Donald Trump, who held three unprecedented meetings with Kim during his first term, in Singapore, Hanoi, and at the Korean border, in 2018 and 2019.

But their diplomacy yielded no concrete outcome due to the gap between US calls for North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons and Kim's demands for sanctions relief.

Trump has long touted his ties with Kim, saying last month the two countries would have had "a nuclear war with millions of people killed", but he had stopped it, thanks to his ties with the North's leader.

Hong Min, a research fellow at the Korean Institute for National Unification in Seoul, said Kim could be trying to underscore the North's nuclear capabilities ahead of Trump's second term, while leaving the door open for diplomacy.

"He might be suggesting Trump should show his 'willingness to co-exist' before re-opening any talks and calling for a change in the U.S. hostile attitude," Hong said.

Potato price

FROM PAGE 12
unusually high, or even gone up, despite the start of the harvest season. The current price hike has further destabilised the market.

"The price of potatoes at the supplier level is high on one hand; we are not getting the required supply on the other hand. We have a daily demand of 1,5000kg of potatoes, but we can only purchase 1,0000kg from the cold storage," Mohammad Sabuj, a wholesaler at Karwan Bazar kitchen market, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Sabuj said he had neither bought nor did he sell potatoes at such high prices over his four decades in the trade.

"Brokers of cold storage used to lobby us to buy potatoes, but we are now compelled to lobby them to collect the item," he added.

Traders usually purchase potatoes from Munshiganj, Rangpur, Rajshahi, Bogura, but the supply from Bogura and Rajshahi is declining, said Sabuj.

Though the rate fixed by the government is Tk 39 per kg at the cold storage level, wholesale traders yesterday purchased it at almost double the price - Tk 65 per kg.

Last year, the highest price per kg potato at the cold storage level was



Congress party workers holding placards shout slogans during a protest march against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and billionaire businessman Gautam Adani, calling for the tycoon's arrest due to corruption allegations made by the US, in Kolkata, India yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Record 281 aid workers killed in 2024: UN

Majority of deaths involve local staff working with NGOs, UN agencies

AFP, Geneva

A staggering 281 aid workers have been killed around the world so far this year, making 2024 the deadliest year for humanitarians, the UN aid chief said yesterday.

"Humanitarian workers are being killed at an unprecedented rate, their courage and humanity being met with bullets and bombs," said Tom Fletcher, the United Nations' new under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator.

The majority of deaths involve local staff working with non-governmental organisations, UN agencies and the Red Cross Red Crescent movement, Fletcher's office said.

With more than a month left to go of 2024, the "grim milestone was reached", Fletcher said, after 280 humanitarians were killed across 33 countries during all of 2023.

"This violence is unconscionable and devastating to aid operations," Fletcher said.

Israel's devastating offensive in Gaza was driving up the numbers, his office



said, with 333 aid workers killed there - most from the UN agency supporting Palestinian refugees, UNRWA.

"States and parties to conflict must protect humanitarians, uphold international law, prosecute those responsible, and call time on this era of impunity," Fletcher said.

Aid workers were subject to kidnappings, injuries, harassment and arbitrary detention in a range of countries, his office said, including Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, and Ukraine.

"Violence against humanitarian personnel is part of a broader trend of harm to civilians in conflict zones,"

Fletcher warned.

"Last year, more than 33,000 civilian deaths were recorded in 14 armed conflicts -- a staggering 72 per cent increase from 2022."

The UN Security Council adopted a resolution last May in response to the surging violence and threats against aid workers.

The text called for recommendations from the UN chief -- set to be presented at a council meeting next week -- on measures to prevent and respond to such incidents and to increase protection for humanitarian staff and accountability for abuses.

Meanwhile, a senior official of the main UN aid agency in Gaza, UNRWA, said yesterday that a humanitarian disaster in Gaza is being deepened by a total breakdown in law and order and the conflict between Israel and Hamas is rendering the enclave uninhabitable.

UNRWA official Natalie Boucly also said arrest warrants issued against senior Israeli politicians as well as a leader of Hamas by an international tribunal meant there would be a reckoning for the suffering inflicted on millions.

What's next for Adani after US bribery charges?

REUTERS

Gautam Adani, the billionaire chair of Indian conglomerate Adani Group and one of the world's richest people, could face a long road to trial in the US on criminal charges over his alleged role in a multi-billion-dollar fraud and bribery scheme. Here's a look at what's next for Adani.

WHAT IS HE CHARGED WITH?

The indictment alleges Adani and his co-defendants agreed to pay more than \$250 million in bribes to Indian officials to obtain solar contracts worth an estimated \$2 billion over 20 years.

Adani is charged with foreign bribery, securities fraud, securities fraud conspiracy and wire fraud conspiracy.

HAS ADANI BEEN ARRESTED?

No. If Adani is in India, US prosecutors would need to ask the Indian government to extradite him under the terms of the two countries' extradition treaty.

That process would be handled by a court in India, which would need to consider several factors including whether the crime he was charged with in the US is also a crime in India.

HAS ADANI ENTERED A PLEA YET?

No. Adani has not been arrested and his whereabouts are unknown, though he is believed to be in India. He could not immediately be reached for comment.

CAN ADANI DISPUTE THE CHARGES?

Yes, but until he appears in US court, Adani's lawyers could only challenge the indictment on procedural grounds, for example by claiming US prosecutors do not have the authority to charge him.

After Adani appears before a US judge, his lawyers could attack the substance of the indictment by arguing the charges are legally deficient or unsupported by the facts.

WHEN COULD A TRIAL HAPPEN?

A trial could still be a long way off even if Adani is extradited or surrenders in the US.

Adani's lawyers would be entitled to litigate the admissibility of evidence and other legal questions before a trial could begin, as would lawyers for his seven co-defendants, who could seek separate trials.

PENALTIES

If convicted, Adani could face decades in prison as well as monetary penalties, though any sentence would ultimately be up to the judge overseeing the case.

Adani faces up to five years in prison for foreign bribery and up to 20 for securities fraud, wire fraud, obstruction of justice and conspiracy charges. A jury of 12 would need to unanimously vote to convict Adani, and he could appeal a verdict against him.



Firefighters work at a site of a residential area hit by a Russian drone strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Sumy, Ukraine yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

WI go slow after Tigers opt to field

FROM PAGE 12
Taskin didn't take long to take his second scalp as he made Carty give a leading edge towards mid-on where Taijul Islam, who was one of the two players alongside Miraz playing his 50th Test, took a regulation catch to send the batter back to the pavilion.

Although the hosts were pretty slow with their scoring rate, the second session saw only one wicket fall - that of Kevan Hodge (25 off 63) who perished through a run-out. Louise (71 not out of 166 deliveries) and Alick Athanaze (13 not out of

49 deliveries) steadied the ship since Kevam's fall.

For the game, Bangladesh have gone with three pacers -- Taskin, Shoriful Islam, and Hasan Mahmud -- and two spinners -- Miraz and Taijul -- along with six genuine batters. The hosts, meanwhile, have four frontline pacers -- Alzarri Joseph, Shamar Joseph, Kemar Roach, and Jayden Seales -- in their eleven.

The two match series is Bangladesh's last assignment in the ongoing ICC World Test Championship 2023-25 cycle.

I did not know

FROM PAGE 2

He claimed that he gave money to Ruhul Amin to drop his name from the case.

"I came to know that Ruhul Amin was involved in the filing of the case. His son, who claimed himself to be a coordinator of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, demanded the accused pay Tk 2 lakh each to have their names dropped from the case. Eventually, I, accused, including myself, paid Tk 17 lakh to Ruhul Amin," Liaqat said.

FROM PAGE 12

railway lines, which caused traffic congestion on the surrounding streets. Around 1:00pm, the police asked them to leave the area. However, the drivers continued to protest.

A chase and counter-chase between the drivers and the police ensued, leading to a brief clash. The police dispersed the drivers by firing teargas canisters and charging truncheons.

Shafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Shyampur Police Station, said the police initially tried to persuade the demonstrators to quit the area. But as the protesters were unwilling to listen, police chased them away, he

added.

Mohammad Anwar Hossain, station master at Kamalapur Railway Station, said rail communications between Dhaka and Narayanganj, Rajshahi, and Khulna were disrupted from 11:20am.

Two trains that were supposed to leave Dhaka for Narayanganj and two that were supposed to enter Dhaka from the neighbouring city were delayed.

The Nakshi Katha train going to Khulna from Dhaka, and Dhaka-bound Modhumoti Express from Rajshahi were delayed.

The lines were cleared around 3:10pm, said the station master.

On Tuesday, the HC directed the government to take necessary steps to stop the operation of battery-run rickshaws in Dhaka within three days. The following day, drivers took to the streets in protest of the order.

Hundreds of drivers blocked road and rail lines in Dhaka, including at Mohakhali, Agargaon, and Mirpur-10, on Thursday, bringing traffic to a halt for more than five hours. Rail communications between Dhaka and most of the country were suspended for around six hours from 9:45am after a group of drivers blocked the Mohakhali level crossing.

Drivers block Jurain level crossing