

Taiwan detects 41 Chinese ships, military aircraft

AFP, Taipei

Taiwan said yesterday it detected 41 Chinese military aircraft and ships around the island ahead of a Hawaii stopover by President Lai Ching-te, part of a Pacific tour that has sparked fury in Beijing.

Beijing insists self-ruled Taiwan is part of its territory and opposes any international recognition of the island and its claim to be a sovereign nation.

To press its claims, China deploys fighter jets, drones and warships around Taiwan on a near-daily basis, with the number of sorties increasing in recent years.

In the 24 hours to 6:00 am yesterday, Taiwan's defence ministry detected 33 Chinese aircraft and eight navy vessels in its airspace and waters.

That included 19 aircraft that took part in China's "joint combat readiness patrol" on Thursday evening and was the highest number in more than three weeks, according to an AFP tally of figures released daily by the ministry.

Syria jihadists, allies enter Aleppo city

AFP, Beirut

Jihadists and their Turkish-backed allies reached Syria's second city of Aleppo yesterday, as they pressed a lightning offensive against forces of the Iranian- and Russian-backed government.

The fighting is some of the deadliest in years, with 255 people killed, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. Most of the dead have been combatants but the toll also includes 24 civilians, most killed in Russian air strikes.

The offensive began on Wednesday, the same day that a fragile ceasefire took effect in neighbouring Lebanon between Israel and Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah.

By yesterday, the jihadists and their allies had wrested control of more than 50 towns and villages in the north, according to the Britain-based Observatory, in the government's biggest loss of territory in years.

Tigresses

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and her game, which shows her improvement in the mental side of things," Nasiruddin said during a press conference in Mirpur on Friday.

Bangladesh's batting had been suffering for a while. Supta's 89-ball 96 was a huge step in terms change in approach, especially as Bangladesh batting often get bogged down at the top. Nasiruddin said the Tigresses wanted to keep on improving their boundary hitting abilities in the remaining games, as he feels that is where the difference usually lies with the big sides.

Bangladesh posted their highest-ever Women's ODI score against Ireland in the first match, and Nasiruddin wanted the team to continue to back themselves in terms of hitting boundaries.

"In these kinds of wickets, it's normal to have a bigger dot-ball ratio. But looking at the 250-plus record, you will see that we hit 27 boundaries for the first time. When we play the big sides, their dot-ball ratio is pretty similar compared to us but where they create the difference is they hit more boundaries. Our boundary options have increased and hope in the next two matches we keep in the same vein," he said.

Ireland's main threat will come from their pacers and Nasiruddin said that the openers' role will be important.

"I think Ireland depends on the swinging deliveries. If we can handle that in the first 10-15 overs, since that's where our concern lies, it will be optimum. Our openers were outstanding," he said about Fargana Hoque and Murshida Khatun's 59-run stand, which laid the platform for a big score.

Malaysia floods displace more than 90,000

REUTERS, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia's Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim yesterday barred his cabinet members from going on leave, after the displacement this week of more than 90,000 people in a growing flood disaster that officials fear could be country's worst in a decade.

"All ministers have been asked to continue their duties and go down to the ground now," Anwar told reporters, according to a video posted online by state broadcaster Bernama TV.



This handout photograph taken and released by the National Police of Ukraine yesterday shows a burning house following a drone attack at an undisclosed location in Odesa region, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

PHOTO: AFP

Gaza in anarchy

Warns UN as public order falls apart amid soaring hunger, rampant looting

AFP, Geneva

The Gaza Strip has descended into anarchy, with hunger soaring, looting rampant and rising numbers of rapes in shelters as public order falls apart, the United Nations said yesterday.

Palestinians are suffering "on a scale that has to be seen to be truly grasped", Ajith Sunghay, head of the UN Human Rights Office in the Palestinian territories, said after concluding his latest visit to the devastated Palestinian territory.

"This time I was particularly alarmed by the prevalence of hunger," Sunghay told a media briefing in Geneva, via video-link from Amman.

"The breakdown of public order and safety is exacerbating the situation with rampant looting and fighting over scarce resources.

"The anarchy in Gaza we warned about months ago is here," he said, calling the situation entirely predictable, foreseeable and preventable.

Sunghay said young women, many displaced



multiple times, had stressed the lack of any safe spaces or privacy in their makeshift tents.

"Others said that cases of gender-based violence and rape, abuse of children and other violence within the community has increased as a consequence of the war and the breakdown of law enforcement and public order," he said.

Sunghay described the situation in Gaza City as "horrendous", with thousands of displaced people sheltering in "inhumane conditions with severe food shortages and terrible sanitary conditions".

He recounted seeing, for the first time, dozens of women and children in the besieged enclave now scavenging in giant landfills.

The level of destruction in Gaza "just gets worse and worse", he added. "The common plea by everyone I met was for this to stop. To bring this to an end. Enough."

SPY CHARGES

China court jails journo for 7 years

REUTERS, Beijing

A Beijing court yesterday sentenced veteran Chinese state media journalist Dong Yuyu to seven years in prison for espionage, his family said in a statement, calling the verdict a grave injustice.

Police detained the 62-year-old former Guangming Daily editor in February 2022 while he was lunching with a Japanese diplomat. He was later charged with espionage.

"Sentencing Yuyu to seven years... declares to the world the bankruptcy of the justice system in China," Dong's family said.

5 Democratic US lawmakers receive bomb threats

REUTERS, Washington

Five Democratic US lawmakers from Connecticut on Thursday said they were targeted with bomb threats at their homes, but no explosive devices had been found, according to social media and local media.

US Representatives Jim Himes, Jahana Hayes, John Larson and Joe Courtney, all from Connecticut, reported the threats in statements on Thanksgiving Day.

"There is no place for political violence in this country, and I hope that we may all continue through the holiday season with peace and civility," said Himes.

Hayes said that on Thanksgiving morning, police told him they received an email "stating a pipe bomb had been placed in the mailbox at my home," but that no bombs or explosives had been found and that the investigation was ongoing.

Local media in Connecticut reported that US Senator Chris Murphy, a Democrat, had also been targeted. The US Capitol Police did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Several of President-elect Donald Trump's cabinet and administration picks were also targeted this week with bomb threats and "swatting."

Swatting is a false report made to police to induce a potentially heavy, armed response by officers at someone's home.

Adani issue a legal matter between pvt firms and US Says Indian ministry

REUTERS, New Delhi

India's foreign ministry said yesterday that bribery allegations against billionaire Gautam Adani is a legal issue between private firms and the US Department of Justice and that New Delhi has not received any request on this case from Washington.

The comments were the first official reaction from the Indian government to the indictment of Adani, the chair of Indian conglomerate Adani Group and one of the world's richest people, and came more than a week after it was unsealed in New York.

US authorities accused Adani, 62, his nephew and executive director Sagar Adani and managing director of Adani Green, Vneet S. Jaain, of being part of a scheme to pay bribes of \$265 million to secure Indian solar power supply contracts, and misleading US investors during fund raises there.

The ports-to-power conglomerate denied the charges as "baseless" and vowed to seek "all possible legal recourse".

Delhi's double standards

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of Bangladesh showed immense restraint and patience even after the brutal murder of lawyer Saiful Islam in Chattogram.

"But India has not stopped expressing unwarranted concerns over the situation in Bangladesh. In India, countless incidents of cruelty against the minority Muslim community continue to take place. They are not embarrassed or remorseful about it.

Numerous brutal incidents continue to occur against the minority Muslim community. Yet, there is no hesitation or remorse about it.

"India's double standard is condemnable and objectionable," reads the Facebook post.

The Indian government and the opposition Congress recently expressed deep concerns over the arrest of Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari, spokesperson of the Bangladesh Shammilito Sanatan Jagaran Jote and a former ISKCON leader.

On Tuesday night, Bangladesh's Ministry of Foreign Affairs reacted to

India's Ministry of External Affairs' statement.

The ministry said Chinmoy was arrested on specific charges and expressed disappointment over the "misrepresentation of the arrest".

"Such baseless statements not only distort the truth, but also go against the spirit of friendship and understanding between the two neighbouring countries," reads the statement.

Chinmoy, who was expelled from ISKCON Bangladesh in July, was sent to prison last Tuesday on sedition charges.

That day, clashes broke out between police, lawyers, and Chinmoy's followers. Amid the clash, lawyer Saiful was hacked to death.

There was a discussion on Bangladesh in Indian parliament on Thursday as well.

In a written answer to a question, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told parliament that India took the incidents of attacks on minorities in Bangladesh seriously and the primary responsibility to protect them falls on Dhaka.

Onion prices

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Sajib Sheikh, proprietor of Matri Bhandar at Karwan Bazar, said a shortage of local onions occurred three weeks ago because hoarders had not released their stock. This led the wholesale prices of local onion to soar to Tk 130 to Tk 140 per kg.

Mohammad Andul Mazed, a wholesaler and importer of onion and also the general secretary of Shyam Bazar Onion Wholesalers Association, said the current supply is abundant, with newly harvested onions now entering the market.

He said the prices may fall further in the next few days as the supply of fresh local onions increases.

Meanwhile, the price of potatoes has increased by Tk 5 per kg compared to last week, with the retail price reaching Tk 80 per kg yesterday.

Although new crops are entering the market, demand for old potatoes remains high due to their superior quality, according to traders.

Mohammad Sabuz, a wholesaler, said there is a shortage of potatoes in cold storage across the country,

leading some traders to raise their prices.

While the government set the cold storage price at Tk 39 per kg, traders are buying potatoes from cold storage for Tk 65 to 67 per kg.

Sukkur Ali, a retailer, said they are not making good profits from potato sales because 5 to 7 percent of the potatoes are wasted.

Police in Georgia arrest dozens in clash with pro-EU protesters

AFP, Tbilisi

Police in Georgia arrested dozens of people overnight and early yesterday in a violent crackdown on protests against the government's decision to delay EU membership talks.

The Black Sea nation has been rocked by turmoil since the ruling party declared victory in October parliamentary elections that the pro-EU opposition decried as falsified.

India takes serious note of attacks

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"Following these attacks, the Government of Bangladesh had issued instructions for providing special security including deployment of Army and Border Guards Bangladesh to ensure peaceful celebrations of Durga Puja," he said.

The Indian minister said the High Commission of India in Dhaka continues to monitor the situation related to the minorities in Bangladesh closely.

"The primary responsibility for the protection of life and liberty of all citizens of Bangladesh, including minorities, rests with the Government of Bangladesh," Jaishankar added.

Meanwhile, Randhir Jaiswal, spokesman for India's Ministry of External Affairs, yesterday said New Delhi is concerned over the "surge of extremist rhetoric and increasing incidents of violence and provocations" in Bangladesh and "this cannot be dismissed as media exaggerations."

During the weekly media briefing in New Delhi, he also said India expects a "fair and transparent" trial of former ISKCON member Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari, who has been arrested on the charge of sedition in Chattogram.

12 arrested

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maintain law and order.

On September 29, a joint forces team, consisting members of the army, police, and Rapid Action Battalion, arrested 35 people, including several suspected drug dealers, and recovered arms and ammunition during a drive at the Geneva Camp.

Another army team raided the camp on October 28 and arrested seven people, including suspected drug dealer Bunia Sohel. Two pistols, 20 bullets and locally made weapons were also recovered from there.

Since the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government on August 5, five people have been killed in clashes between armed groups for control of Geneva Camp.

The camp, also known as Bihari Camp, houses stranded Pakistanis who migrated to then East Pakistan from the Indian state of Bihar during the partition of India in 1947.



Migrants talk near railroad tracks while looking for a chance to get on a train and reach the United States, in Coatzacoalcos, Veracruz state, Mexico on Thursday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Israel will do 'everything' to stop Iran Warns Netanyahu on acquiring nuke weapons as tensions ratchet up

AGENCIES

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said that Israel would do "everything" to stop Iran acquiring a nuclear weapon after Iran's top diplomat warned it could end its ban on developing one if Western sanctions are reimposed.

The renewed war of words between the Middle East foes came as Iran prepares to hold key nuclear talks with European governments yesterday which have been overshadowed by their joining with Washington to have Tehran censured by the UN atomic watchdog.

"I will do everything to prevent it from becoming a nuclear (power), I will use all the resources that can be used," Netanyahu told Israeli broadcaster Channel 14 in an interview on Thursday.

Netanyahu said Tuesday that the ceasefire that went into effect in Lebanon the following day would allow Israel to focus on Iran. He did not elaborate on what action he envisaged.

Iranian diplomat Majid Takht-Ravanchi, the political deputy to Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, was due to represent Iran in yesterday's talks, which follow on from a meeting in New York in September.

The meeting is shrouded in discretion, with the countries' foreign ministries giving away few details on what they will discuss.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has confirmed that Iran plans to install around 6,000 new centrifuges to enrich uranium, according to a report seen by AFP yesterday.

"Iran informed the Agency that it intended to feed" around 6,000 centrifuges at its sites in Fordo and Natanz to enrich uranium to up to five percent, higher than the 3.67 percent limit Tehran had agreed to in 2015.

Meanwhile, Israeli Defence Force (IDF) spokesperson Avichay Adraee said on X yesterday that Lebanese residents are prohibited from moving south to a line of villages and their surroundings until further notice, reports Reuters.