

Hamas, Israel blame each other for truce delay

REUTERS, Dubai

Hamas yesterday accused Israel of imposing “new conditions” that it said were delaying a ceasefire agreement in the war in Gaza, though it acknowledged negotiations were still ongoing.

Israel refuted the allegation, saying it was Hamas that was creating “new obstacles” to a deal.

Indirect talks between Israel and Hamas, mediated by Qatar, Egypt and the US, have taken place in Doha in recent days.

“The ceasefire and prisoner exchange negotiations are continuing in Doha under the mediation of Qatar and Egypt in a serious manner... but the occupation has set new conditions concerning withdrawal (of troops), ceasefire, prisoners, and return of displaced people, which has delayed reaching an agreement,” the Palestinian group said.



Palestinians inspect the site of Israeli bombardment on tents sheltering displaced people from Beit Lahia at a camp in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. The health ministry in Gaza said that 23 people had been killed in the Palestinian territory, taking the overall death toll to 45,361.

PHOTO: AFP

SYRIA, IRAQ Turkish military kills 21 Kurdish militants

REUTERS, Ankara

Turkish military killed 21 Kurdish militants in northern Syria and Iraq, the defence ministry said yesterday.

The ministry reported that 20 Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and Syrian Kurdish YPG militants, who were preparing to launch an attack, were killed in northern Syria, while one militant was killed in northern Iraq.

“Our operations will continue effectively and resolutely,” it added.

The PKK, designated as a terrorist organization by Turkey, the European Union, and the United States, began its armed insurgency against the Turkish state in 1984. The conflict has claimed more than 40,000 lives.

Turkey regards the YPG, the leading force within the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), as an extension of the PKK and similarly classifies it as a terrorist group.

Putin ‘inhumane’ Says Zelensky as Russia pounds Ukrainian energy facilities on Christmas Day; half a million people in Kyiv left without heating

REUTERS, Kyiv

Russia attacked Ukraine's energy system and some cities with cruise and ballistic missiles plus drones yesterday in an “inhuman” Christmas Day assault, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said.

Nearly three years into the war, the strikes wounded at least six people in the northeastern city of Kharkiv and killed one in the region of Dnipropetrovsk, the governors there said.

Half a million people in Kharkiv region were left without heating, in temperatures just a few degrees Celsius above zero, while there were blackouts in the capital Kyiv and elsewhere.

“Today, (Russian President Vladimir) Putin deliberately chose Christmas to attack. What could be more inhuman? More than 70 missiles, including ballistic missiles, and more than a hundred attack drones,” he said.

“The targets are our energy infrastructure. They continue to fight for a blackout in Ukraine.”

Ukraine's air force downed 59 Russian launched missiles and 54 drones.



The Russian Defence Ministry said yesterday it had conducted a “massive strike” on what it said were critical energy facilities in Ukraine that support the work of Kyiv's military-industrial complex.

Russia has intensified attacks on the Ukrainian energy sector since spring of this year, damaging almost half of its generating capacity and causing prolonged blackouts.

Ukraine's air force said Kharkiv was attacked by ballistic missiles. Regional governor Oleh Syniehubov said on Telegram there was damage to civilian non-residential infrastructure, without giving more detail.

Dnipropetrovsk Governor Serhiy Lysak said the fatality there occurred in an attack on regional power facilities.

“Since the morning, the Russian army has been massively attacking the Dnipro region. It is trying to destroy the region's power system,” he said.

Ukraine's Energy Minister German Galushchenko said on Facebook that Russia was massively attacking the power sector and that restrictions on electricity supply were in place.

CHINA MILITARY BUILDUP Japan FM raises ‘serious concerns’

AFP, Beijing

Japanese Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya yesterday raised “serious concerns” over China's military buildup as he met counterpart Wang Yi in Beijing, Tokyo said.

On his first visit to China since becoming Japan's top diplomat earlier this year, Iwaya told Wang that Tokyo was “closely monitoring the Taiwan situation and recent military developments”, according to his foreign ministry.

Meeting with Wang at Beijing's opulent Diaoyutai State Guesthouse, he also “expressed serious concerns over the East China Sea situation, including around the Senkaku Islands (and) China's increasing military activity”, Tokyo said.

Iwaya in addition called for the “swift release” of Japanese nationals detained by Chinese authorities.

“Opaqueness surrounding the anti-espionage law is causing Japanese people to think twice about visiting China,” he warned. But the two ministers also agreed to work towards a visit to Japan by Wang “at the earliest possible timing next year”.

China's foreign ministry said in a statement that the meeting would take place “at an appropriate time”, without mentioning discussions of Beijing's military manoeuvring or detained Japanese nationals.

Israeli air strike hits target in east: Lebanon

Yemen rebels claim ballistic missile attack on Israel

AFP, Beirut

Lebanon's state media said an Israeli air strike targeted the Baalbek region in the east of the country before dawn yesterday, branding it a “violation” of the fragile ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah.

The truce went into effect on November 27 after more than a year of hostilities that began with the outbreak of the Israeli offensive in the Gaza Strip.

Both sides have since accused the other of breaching the ceasefire.

Meanwhile, Yemen's Houthi rebels said yesterday that they had fired a ballistic missile at central Israel, with Israeli forces saying they intercepted the attack.

The missile was aimed at the Tel Aviv area, the Iran-backed Houthis said. Yesterday's Israeli strike near the town of Tarya in Lebanon did not result in casualties, the state-run National News Agency said. A Lebanese security source said the strike targeted “warehouses believed to belong to Hezbollah”.

The war with Israel saw Hezbollah massively weakened but not crushed. A committee made up of the United States, France, Lebanon, Israel and United Nations peacekeepers is tasked with monitoring the ceasefire and ensuring violations are identified and dealt with.

CHRISTMAS ADDRESS Pope calls for ‘arms to be silenced’ across world

AFP, Vatican City

Pope Francis yesterday called for “arms to be silenced” around the world in his Christmas address, appealing for peace in the Middle East, Ukraine and Sudan as he denounced the “extremely grave” humanitarian situation in Gaza.

He used his traditional “Urbi et Orbi” (“to the city and the world”) message to the world's 1.4 billion Catholics to call for talks for a just peace in Ukraine as the country was pumelled by Russian missiles on Christmas morning.

“May the sound of arms be silenced in war-torn Ukraine,” the 88-year-old pontiff said, his voice strained and breathless. “May there be the boldness needed to open the door to negotiation and to gestures of dialogue and encounter, in order to achieve a just and lasting peace.”

In front of thousands of the faithful gathered in front of St Peter's Basilica in Rome, also appealed for a ceasefire in Gaza and for the freeing of Israeli hostages held there by Hamas.

Francis extended his call for a silencing of arms to whole Middle East and to Sudan, which has been ravaged by a ravaged by 20 months of brutal civil war where millions are under the threat of famine.



Illegal migrants from Niger wait during a deportation operation in the Libyan capital of Tripoli yesterday. In the past few years, Libya and Tunisia have turned into North Africa's most popular departure points for migrants from sub-Saharan countries.

PHOTO: AFP

Panamanians protest Trump's threat

AFP, Panama City

Protesters in Panama on Tuesday burned an image of US President-elect Donald Trump following his threat to end control of the country's interoceanic canal be returned to Washington.

Dozens of demonstrators gathered outside the US embassy chanting “Trump, animal, leave the canal alone” and “Get out invading gringo,” as about 20 police officers guarded the compound.

Some in the crowd carried banners reading “Donald Trump, public enemy of Panama.”

“The (Panamanian) people have shown that they are capable of recovering their territory and we are not going to give it up again,” protester Jorge Guzman told AFP.

The canal, inaugurated in 1914, was built by the United States but handed to Panama on December 31, 1999, under treaties signed some two decades earlier by then-US president Jimmy Carter and Panamanian

nationalist leader Omar Torrijos.

“Panama is a sovereign territory and the canal here is Panamanian,” said Saul Mendez, the leader of a construction union that jointly organized the protest.

“Donald Trump and his imperial delusion cannot claim even a single centimeter of land in Panama,” Mendez added. Trump on Saturday slammed what he called unfair fees for US ships passing through the Panama Canal and hinted at China's growing influence.

Impeached South Korean president defies summons


AFP, Seoul

South Korea's suspended President Yoon Suk Yeol refused a summons to appear for questioning on Christmas Day, the second time he has defied investigators' demands in a week.

Investigators probing Yoon had ordered him to appear for questioning at 10:00 am yesterday, a demand he rejected. Yoon also failed to attend a hearing he was summoned to last Wednesday, giving no explanation for his absence.

The conservative leader was stripped of his duties by parliament on December 14, following a short-lived martial law declaration that plunged the country into its worst political crisis in decades.

Yoon faces impeachment and criminal charges of insurrection, which could result in life imprisonment or even the death penalty. The Corruption Investigation Office is expected to decide in the coming days whether to issue a third summons or ask a court to grant an arrest warrant to compel Yoon to appear for questioning.

		KARNAPHULI GAS DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LIMITED (A COMPANY OF PETROBANGLA) CHATTOGRAM, BANGLADESH	
"দেশ প্রেমের শপথ নিম্ন-স্বার্থিতক বিদায় দিন"		তুলসি নিরাপত্তা সর্বোচ্চ আশ্রয়িতার	
INVITATION FOR INTERNATIONAL TENDER			
01. Ministry/Division	:	Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/Energy & Mineral Resources Division.	
02. Agency	:	Bangladesh Oil, Gas and Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla).	
03. Procuring Entity Name	:	Karnaphuli Gas Distribution Company Limited.	
04. Procuring Entity District	:	Chattogram.	
05. Invitation for	:	Procurement of 6" & 8" Turbine Gas Meter with EVC.	
06. Invitation Ref. No.	:	28.15.0000.211.07.002.24	
07. Date	:	17.12.2024	
Key information			
08. Procurement Method	:	Open Tendering Method (OTM).	
09. Budget and Source of Funds	:	KGDCI Own Fund under Cash Foreign Exchange Resource.	
10. Time limit to selling tender document	:	26.12.2024 to 16.02.2025 (Between 09:00 am to 04:30 pm (BST) on all working days).	
11. Tender Last Selling Date	:	16.02.2025	
12. Tender Closing Date & Time	:	17.02.2025 at 11:00 am (BST)	
13. Tender Opening Date & Time	:	17.02.2025 at 11:15 am (BST)	
14. Name & Address of the officer(s) Selling Tender Documents	:	Tender Documents will be available in the following KGDCI offices between 09:00 am to 04:30 pm (BST) on all working days: a) Accounts Department, Head Office, 137/A CDA Avenue Sholashahar, Chattogram, Bangladesh. b) Dhaka Liaison Office, Petrobangla, Petrocentre (13 th floor) 3 Kawan Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215, Bangladesh.	
15. Receiving Tender Document	:	Purchase Department, Karnaphuli Gas Distribution Company Limited Head Office, 137/A CDA Avenue, Sholashahar, Chattogram, Bangladesh.	
16. Opening Tender Document	:	Purchase Department, Karnaphuli Gas Distribution Company Limited Head Office, 137/A CDA Avenue, Sholashahar, Chattogram, Bangladesh.	
17. Pre-Tender Meeting	:	Not Applicable.	
Information for Tenderer			
18. Eligibility of Tenderer	:	The Tenderer shall have a minimum of 05 (five) years of overall experience in the supply of goods and related services.	
19. Brief Description of Goods	:	6" & 8" Turbine Gas Meter with EVC (32 Nos.).	
20. Price of Tender Document	:	USD 42.00 or BDT 5,000.00 (Non- Refundable).	
21. Lot No. Identification of Lot	:	Tender Security Amount	Time for completion of delivery
Single Turbine Gas Meter with EVC	:	USD 3,300.00 or BDT 4,00,000.00	120 (One Hundred Twenty) days from the date of receipt of LC.
Procuring entity details:			
22. Designation of Official Inviting Tender	:	Deputy General Manager (Purchase)	
23. Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	:	Deputy General Manager (Purchase) Karnaphuli Gas Distribution Company Limited. Head Office, 137/A CDA Avenue, Sholashahar Chattogram, Bangladesh. Cell: +8801730-728433, e-mail: dgmpurchase@kgdci.gov.bd	
24. Special Instruction	:	a) Tender must remain valid for 120 days after the date of tender submission Deadline. b) Due to unavoidable circumstances if the tender cannot be opened in the Scheduled date, tender will be received and opened on the next working day at the same time & venue.	
25. The Tender will be conducted and interpreted as per the Public Procurement Regulations-2008 and subsequent amendments.			
26. KGDCI reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.			
GD-1275			