

## WAR ON DRUGS IN PHILIPPINES

# Duterte says he is 'responsible'

ICC takes him into custody

AFP, Rotterdam

Former Philippines president Rodrigo Duterte said he was prepared to accept responsibility as the International Criminal Court took him into custody Wednesday to face charges over his war on drugs.

The ICC, based in The Hague, believes there are "reasonable grounds" to charge Duterte with murder as a crime against humanity, as an "indirect co-perpetrator" during the anti-drug campaign that rights groups estimate killed tens of thousands.

"I am the one who led our law enforcement and military. I said that I will protect you and I will be responsible for all of this," Duterte said in a video posted to his and a close advisor's Facebook page.

"I have been telling the police, the military, that it was my job and I am responsible," said the 79-year-old, the first Asian former head of state to appear before the ICC.

A spokesman confirmed Duterte was in court custody after he arrived in Rotterdam by private jet.

A vehicle thought to be carrying Duterte drove into the ICC detention centre in The Hague past a crowd of dozens of supporters, some shouting: "Bring him back" and waving national flags.

"There has been no due process," said caregiver Duds Quibin, 50. "This is kidnapping. They just put him on a plane and brought him here," he told AFP.

The centre, located close to the North Sea coast, offers each prisoner an individual cell equipped with a computer to work on their case, along with an outdoor exercise area.

Duterte will be held there until an initial court appearance, likely in the coming days.

Speaking to AFP outside the ICC, Gilbert Andres, a lawyer representing victims of the drug war, said: "My clients are very thankful to God because their prayers have been answered."

"The arrest of Rodrigo Duterte is a great signal for international criminal justice. It means that no one is above the law," Andres added.

Before her father's departure, the Philippines' Vice President Sara Duterte said he was being "forcibly taken to The Hague", labelling the transfer "oppression and persecution".



Syrian security forces inspect the site of an Israeli air strike on a building in Damascus in an area where Palestinian leaders are known to reside yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## ADOPTION OF CONSTITUTIONAL DECLARATION Syria leader hails 'new history'

AFP, Damascus

Syrian leader Ahmed al-Sharaa yesterday hailed the start of a "new history" for his country, signing into force a constitutional declaration regulating its five-year transitional period and laying out rights for women and freedom of expression.

The declaration comes three months after Islamist-led rebels toppled Bashar al-Assad's repressive government, leading to calls both inside and outside the country for an inclusive new Syria that respects rights.

The new authorities repealed the Assad-era constitution and dissolved parliament.

Interim President Sharraa yesterday said he hoped the constitutional declaration would

mark the beginning of "a new history for Syria, where we replace oppression with justice... and suffering with mercy", as he signed the document at the presidential palace.

The declaration sets out a transitional period of five years, during which a "transitional justice commission" would be formed to "determine the means for accountability, establish the facts, and provide justice to victims and survivors" of the former government's misdeeds.

The declaration enshrines women's right to participate in work and education. It maintains the requirement that the president of the republic must be a Muslim, with Islamic jurisprudence set out as "the main source" of legislation.

It also stipulates the "absolute separation of powers".



Children create signs during a rally in the Hart Auditorium in support of the Department of Education and School at the U.S. Capitol yesterday in Washington, DC. Earlier this week, the House passed a continuing resolution that would cut over \$1 billion from DC's budget, potentially leading to layoffs and reduced public safety, school, and transportation services.

PHOTO: AFP

## New graft scandal roils EU parliament

AFP, Brussels

A new graft scandal rocked the European Parliament yesterday after police carried out several raids in Belgium and Portugal, detaining multiple suspects as part of a probe into corruption masqueraded as lobbying.

The new investigation comes more than two years after the "Qatargate" scandal, in which a number of EU lawmakers were accused of being paid to promote the interests of Qatar and Morocco -- something both countries have firmly denied.

None of those held for questioning yesterday were EU lawmakers, a police source told AFP.

Belgian newspaper Le Soir and investigative website Follow the Money (FTM) said the probe was linked to Chinese tech giant Huawei and its activities in Brussels since 2021.

The Belgian federal prosecutor's office said several people were taken in for questioning over their "alleged involvement in active corruption within the European Parliament, as well as for forgery and use of forgeries".

The prosecutor's office gave no details about the individuals or companies involved.



## G7 FOREIGN MINISTERS' SUMMIT Canada rallies against Russian 'aggression'

AFP, Charlevoix

"We all want to see just and lasting peace in Ukraine," she said.

Rubio has said that he wants the G7 to avoid "antagonistic" language toward Russia, saying it would hinder diplomacy that could end a war that has killed tens of thousands of people.

Since Trump took over from Joe Biden, US statements often speak of the "Russia Ukraine conflict" rather than Russia's "invasion" of its neighbour in 2022, which was the previous nomenclature.

Once broadly unified, the G7 -- Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States -- has been rattled since the return of Trump, who has reached out to Russia and slapped punishing trade tariffs on close allies and competitors alike.

Before the full talks, Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly met separately with Secretary of State Marco Rubio, the highest-level US official to visit since the return of Trump, who has taunted the United States' northern neighbor as the "51st state."

Rubio and Joly exchanged pecks on the cheek and shook hands before sitting next to US and Canadian flags. They did not respond to questions.

Joly, opening the formal session of the G7, said that she hoped to find ways in which the powers "continue to support Ukraine in the face of Russia's illegal aggression."



**Bangladesh Bank**

Department of Currency Management  
Head Office, Dhaka  
Website: [www.bb.org.bd](http://www.bb.org.bd)

Date: 12/03/2025

### Invitation for Tender Through Web

Tenders through Electronic Media (e-Tenders) are invited from the Bonafide Contractor/Firm/Authorized Suppliers for their Local Agent/Distributors/Reputed Manufacturers for supply of 6000 (Six thousand) Kg or 750 Roll of Note Strapping Tape for Note Strapping Machine for the Cash Department of Bangladesh Bank, Motijheel Office, Dhaka-1000. Necessary information is given below:

1	Procuring entity	:	Department of Currency Management, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka-1000.
2	Sources of fund	:	Bangladesh Bank's own fund.
3	Tender No.	:	DCM/IAS/2025-1202 Dated: 12/03/2025
4	Method of procurement	:	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
5	Bidders eligibility	:	This Tender is open to all eligible Manufacturers/Suppliers of Bangladesh who have: i) Business experience at least 05 (Five) years and satisfactorily completed at least 1 (One) similar nature of work of supplying any strapping tape. (Work completion certificate must be submitted). ii) Work completion certificate is needed for Minimum Taka 20.00 (twenty) lac. in a single contract by supplying any Note strapping/Banding Tape in any Govt./Semi-Govt./Autonomous organizations or Banks and Financial Institutes of Bangladesh during the last 5(Five) years. iii) Minimum liquid assets/credit facilities shall be Taka 50.00 (Fifty) lac only. In case of credit facilities Bank ensures that the abovementioned credit limits will be given if the said work is awarded to the contractor. iv) Tenderers shall have to fulfill the qualification criteria stipulated in the Tender Data Sheet & other Terms and Conditions of the Tender Documents otherwise Tender should be considered as non-responsive.
6	Website address	:	Submit in <a href="https://etender.bb.org.bd">https://etender.bb.org.bd</a>
7	Address	:	To Director, Department of Currency Management (28th floor of 30-storied Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka.
8	Last date and time for submission of tender document through web	:	24/04/2025 up to 03:00pm.
9	Date, time and place for tender opening	:	All Tenders will be opened at Department of Currency Management (28th floor of 30-storied Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka on 24/04/2025 at 03:30pm. (Intending Tenderers or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend the tender opening with authorization letter).
10	Specification of the machine	:	Type: Strapping Machine-Brand: Tay-Chian, Model-TC-400, Country of Origin: Taiwan.
11	Brief specification of Note Strapping Tape	:	Supply of 6,000 Kg/750 Roll Heat sealable polypropylene Note Strapping Tape made of virgin resin material for Note strapping Machine with Bangladesh Bank Logo.
12	Time for completion of the work	:	Maximum 90 (Ninety) days from the date of issuing Award of Contract.
13	Tender Security	:	Taka 2,00,000.00 (Taka Two lac) only in the form of BG.
14	Special Instructions	:	i) The Tenderer should submit tender and scanned copy of documentary evidence through Bangladesh Bank Website (e-Tendering) & must have valid E-mail address for participation through e-Tendering. ii) Original BG as Tender Security along with Tender submission letter as per format PG3-6 must reach at Director, Department of Currency Management within stipulated date and time mentioned in TDS. iii) Tenderer should provide all documentary evidence (original or attested whichever necessary) when requested, failing which may be considered as non-responsive. iv) Tenderer shall duly fill in the (Form PG3-1) Tender Submission Letter and Form PG3-4 (Tenderer Information) as format given in Tender document. v) Form PG3-1 should be completed and signed by the Authorized Signatory on the Letter Head Pad attached by Scanning during submitting tender and original should be sent to the Director, Department of Currency Management, within scheduled time as per TDS. vi) Collect Sample from Department of Currency Management, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka. vii) Minimum 02(Two) Roll (Note Strapping Tape) have to be submitted as sample to this Department (DCM) before submitting tender. Furnishing of any false, misleading documents may result in rejection of tender and may lead to action under Rules 127 of PPR 2008. viii) All sorts of security & safety measures must be carried out by the Manufacturers'/Suppliers during execution of the work. ix) Bangladesh Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any or whole tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

সূত্র নং ডিসিপিঃ ৪৮/২০২৫-৭৫  
তারিখঃ ১৩/০৬/২০২৫

GD-660

বাংলাদেশ আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিবুলি  
কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

## Azerbaijan, Armenia peace deal 'ready for signing'

AFP, Baku

Azerbaijan and Armenia yesterday said that they had wrapped up peace talks aimed at resolving the Caucasus neighbours' decades-long conflict, both sides having agreed the text of a possible treaty.

A deal to normalise ties would be a major breakthrough in a region where Russia, the EU, the United States and Turkey all jostle for influence.

Baku and Yerevan fought two wars for control of Azerbaijan's Armenian-populated region of Karabakh: at the end of the Soviet Union and again in 2020, before Azerbaijan seized the entire area in a 24-hour offensive in September 2023.

Both countries have repeatedly said a comprehensive peace deal to end their long-standing animosity is within reach, but previous talks had failed to reach consensus on a draft agreement.

## 'Many will die' due to US aid cuts: UN

AFP, United Nations

Cuts to US foreign aid under President Donald Trump have caused a "seismic shock" to global humanitarian work, a UN agency head said, warning that "many will die" as a result.

Tom Fletcher, head of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), estimated that 300 million or more people are in need of humanitarian support worldwide, and that "the pace and the scale of the funding cuts that we've faced are, of course, a seismic shock to the sector."

Since Trump returned to office in January, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has been in the crosshairs of his administration's quest to slash government spending, with ripple effects already felt around the globe.