

Lanka passes landmark law to recover stolen assets

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's government introduced sweeping legislation yesterday to recover stolen assets and pave the way for the prosecution of high-profile politicians from previous administrations, among others.

The Proceeds of Crime Bill was passed unanimously in parliament, where the leftist government of President Anura Dissanayake enjoys a two-thirds majority after elections last year.

"This is a historic day for Sri Lanka," Justice Minister Harshana Nanayakkara told the assembly. "This is the first bill of the new government."

He said the bill had been in the works for nine years, but the new administration had accelerated it to deliver on a promise to pursue politicians who had bankrupted the country.

It allows for the seizure and confiscation of ill-gotten wealth even without a criminal conviction, and it can be applied to unexplained assets accumulated in the past.

The legislation is also in line with an IMF bailout programme that the island nation entered into in early 2023, after declaring bankruptcy.

Sri Lanka defaulted on its \$4 billion foreign debt in April 2022 after running out of foreign exchange to finance even the most essential imports, such as food, fuel and medicines.

Months of street protests led to the resignation of then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa, a younger brother of Mahinda Rajapaksa, who ruled for a decade until January 2015.

Sri Lanka's Supreme Court has ruled that then-president Gotabaya, his then prime minister brother Mahinda and then-finance minister brother Basil were responsible for the economic meltdown.

Several relatives, including two of Mahinda's children, are currently facing criminal proceedings over corruption and money laundering.



Left-wing MPs hold portraits of children of Gaza, who they claim have been killed by Israel's military offensive in Gaza, during a session of questions to the government at The National Assembly, France's lower house of parliament, in Paris yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Trump announces direct nuclear talks with Iran

Iran says deal can be reached if US shows goodwill

AFP, Tehran

Iran's top diplomat yesterday said he believed a new nuclear deal could be agreed with the United States provided Tehran's longtime foe shows sufficient goodwill in talks to begin in Oman yesterday.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran's principal aim remained the lifting of sweeping US sanctions. Their reimposition by President Donald Trump in 2018 has dealt a heavy blow to the Iranian economy.

Trump made the surprise announcement that his administration would open talks with Iran during a White House meeting on Monday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu, whose country is an arch foe of Tehran.

Trump said the talks would be "direct" but Araghchi insisted his negotiations with US Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff on Saturday would be "indirect".

"We will not accept any other form of negotiation," Araghchi told official media.

"The format of the negotiations... is not the most important thing in my view. What really counts is the effectiveness or otherwise of the talks.

"If the other side shows

enough of the necessary willingness, a deal can be found. The ball is in America's court."

Speaking Monday in the Oval Office, Trump said he was hopeful of reaching a deal with Tehran, but warned that the Islamic republic

would be in "great danger" if the talks failed.

"We're dealing with the Iranians, we have a very big meeting on Saturday and we're dealing with them directly," Trump told reporters.

Trump's announcement came after Iran dismissed direct negotiations on a new deal to curb the country's nuclear activities, calling the idea pointless.

The US president pulled out of the last deal in 2018, during his first presidency, and there has been widespread speculation that Israel, possibly with US help, might attack Iranian facilities if no new agreement is reached.

Trump issued a stern warning to Tehran, however.

"I think if the talks aren't successful with Iran, I think Iran's going to be in great danger, and I hate to say it, great danger, because they can't have a nuclear weapon," he said.

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If they
[Iran] don't
make a
deal, there
will be
bombing.

DONALD TRUMP
US president



Since then, virtually every month has been at least 1.5 degrees Celsius hotter than it was before the industrial revolution, when humans began burning massive amounts of coal, oil and gas.

March was 1.6C above pre-industrial times, extending an anomaly so unusual that scientists are still trying to fully explain it.

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Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution PLC	
Emergency Gas Control and Management (Metro Dhaka)	
105, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawranbazar C/A, Dhaka-1215	
Invitation for Tender	
Issue Ref No: 28.13.0000.000.333.35.0010.24; Date: [09.04.2025]	
1 Ministry/Division Power, Energy and Mineral Resources/ Energy and Mineral Resources Division	
2 Agency Bangladesh Oil, Gas and Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla)	
3 Procuring Entity Name Titas Gas Transmission & Distribution PLC	
4 Procuring Entity District Dhaka	
5 Invitation for Procurement of Non-Consulting Services for Gas Leak Detection, Localization & Leak Repair of underground Gas Pipelines in Metro Dhaka & Keraniganj.	
6 Invitation Ref. No 28.13.0000.000.333.35.0010.24	
7 Date 09.04.2025	
KEY INFORMATION	
8 Procurement Method Open Tendering Method (OTM)	
FUNDING INFORMATION	
9 Budget and Source of Funds TGTDPCLC Own Funds	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION	
10 Tender selling Date From 09.04.2025 to 29.04.2025 on all working days	
11 Tender last selling Date and Time Time: 01:00 PM	
12 Tender Submission Date and Time 30.04.2025 Time: 10:00-11:00 AM	
13 Tender Opening Date and Time 30.04.2025 Time: 12:00 PM	
Name & Address of the Office(s)	
14 Selling Tender Document (Principal) Accounts Department, Head Office, Titas Gas T & D PLC, 105, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawranbazar C/A, Dhaka-1215.	
15 Selling Tender Document (Others) 1. Accounts Department, Petrobangla, 3, Kawranbazar, Dhaka-1215; 2. Accounts Department, BAPEX, Bepex Bhaban, 4, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215	
16 Receiving Tender Document 1st Floor, Tender Box, 105, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215	
17 Opening Tender Document Office of GM (Operation), 2nd Floor, 105, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215	
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER	
18 Eligibility of Tenderer 1. The minimum number of years of general experience of the Tenderer in Government / Semi-government / autonomous body or under any project financed/invested by the foreign agencies as Prime Contractor/Sub-Contractor/Third Party shall be 3 (Three) years. 2. Tenderer shall have specific experience as a Prime Contractor/Sub-Contractor under Government / Semi-government / autonomous body or under any project financed/invested by the foreign agencies as Prime Contractor/Sub-Contractor/Third Party shall be 3 (Three) years. 3. Tenderer shall have the legal capacity to enter into the contract under the applicable law. 4. Tenderer shall be enrolled in the relevant professional or trade organizations registered in Bangladesh. 5. Tenderers shall have fulfilled its obligations to pay taxes under the provisions of laws and regulations of Bangladesh. 6. Tenderers shall have specific experience in detecting underground gas pipeline leakage and related services.	
19 Brief Description of Services Procurement of Non-Consulting Services for Gas Leak Detection, Localization & Leak Repair of underground Gas Pipelines in Metro Dhaka & Keraniganj as follows: 1.1 Gas Leakage detection by Laser methane detector. 1.2 Gas leakage point confirmation by Coating detect locator. 1.3 Excavation to expose gas leakage point. 1.4 Gas leakage repair by Gas leakage preparing clamp or welding operation. 1.5 Related services.	
20 Tender Document Price Tk. 5000/- (Taka Five Thousand only) (Non Refundable)	
21 Package No.	Identification Of Package
22 Single Package	Gas leak detection (using any means of mobilization), localization and instant leak repair works of underground Gas Pipelines in Metro Dhaka & Keraniganj
23 Designation of Official Inviting Tender Deputy General Manager (Emergency Gas Control & Management Metro Dhaka)	
24 Contact Details of official Inviting Tender 11th Floor, Head Office, Titas Gas T & D PLC, 105, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. Call 01939-921026, Email: parvez776@gmail.com	
25 Special Instruction a) Tender must remain valid for 120 days after the date of tender submission. b) Due to unavoidable circumstances of the tender cannot be opened on the scheduled date, tender will be received and opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.	
26 The Tender will be conducted and interpreted as per the Public Procurement Regulations-2008 and subsequent amendments	
27 The procuring entity reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever	



GAZA CARNAGE 19 killed in Israeli strikes overnight

AFP, Gaza City

Gaza's civil defence agency yesterday said that Israeli strikes overnight killed at least 19 people across the Palestinian territory, where Israel has resumed its offensive against Hamas.

Civil defence spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP that "19 civilians including several children were martyred" and dozens more wounded in the latest Israeli raids.

Five children and four adults were killed in a strike that hit a home in the central city of Deir el-Balah, while two separate pre-dawn attacks on Gaza City and Beit Lahia in the north left a total of 10 people dead, Bassal said.

Israel resumed intense strikes on the Gaza Strip on March 18, ending a two-month ceasefire with Hamas. Efforts to restore the truce have so far failed.

According to the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory, at least 1,391 Palestinians have been killed in the renewed Israeli operations, taking the overall death toll since the start of the war to 50,752.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian health ministry said Israeli troops killed a 30-year-old woman near the West Bank city of Salfit yesterday after what the army described as an attempted stabbing.

Since the start of the Israeli invasion of Gaza in October 2023, violence has soared in the occupied West Bank. Israeli troops and settlers have killed at least 918 Palestinians in the territory.

French President Emmanuel Macron visited the Egyptian city of El-Arish, a key transit point for Gaza-bound aid, yesterday to call on Israel to lift its blockade of aid deliveries to the war-battered Palestinian territory.