

## Russia wants 'fair' US-Iran nuclear deal

Putin tells Iranian president

AFP, Moscow

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday told his Iranian counterpart Masoud Pezeshkian that Moscow wants a "fair" nuclear deal between the United States and Iran and was ready to help advance talks, the Kremlin said.

The Russian side confirmed its readiness to contribute to the promotion of this dialogue with the goal of reaching a fair agreement based on the principles of international law," the Kremlin said in a readout of a call between the leaders.

The latest round of talks between Tehran and Washington, initially set for May 3, was postponed, with Oman citing "logistical reasons" for the delay.

The two countries have held three rounds since April 12, their highest-level contact since US withdrew from deal with Iran in 2018.

## ARMED CONFLICT

### Myanmar junta calls new ceasefire after quake

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar's junta declared a new post-earthquake truce yesterday, days after the expiry of a previous humanitarian ceasefire it was accused of violating with a continued campaign of air strikes.

The March 28 magnitude-7.7 quake near the city of Mandalay killed nearly 3,800 and has left tens of thousands homeless as the summer monsoon season approaches. Monitors say junta aerial bombardments breached the first truce in April.

A statement from the junta information team yesterday said the new armistice "to continue the rebuilding and rehabilitation process" would last until the end of May.



Firefighters work at the site of the Barabashovo market hit by Russian drone strike in Kharkiv, Ukraine yesterday. Ukrainian officials said at least two people were killed in the country by Russian attacks.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## UN warns of 'unsettling' dev slowdown in 2024

AFP, United Nations

head Achim Steiner.

Humanity recorded an unexpected and "unsettling" slowdown in development in 2024 as the global post-pandemic recovery began losing steam, well before President Donald Trump dramatically cut US international aid, the UN warned yesterday.

The world had rebounded from the shock of the Covid-19 pandemic by 2023, as measured by the UN's Human Development Index (HDI), which charts living standards, health and education.

But that rebound appears to be losing momentum, according to the United Nations Development Programme's annual report, released yesterday.

If that "unsettling" slowdown becomes the new normal, achieving levels of human development once hoped for by 2030 "could slip by decades -- making our world less secure, more divided, and more vulnerable to economic and ecological shocks," warned UNDP

Recent drastic cuts to international aid announced by several countries -- most notably the United States, where Trump has slashed programs and dismantled USAID, the country's main foreign development arm -- will exacerbate the issue, Steiner told AFP in an interview.

UNDP report shows post-pandemic recovery slowing, with 2030 human progress goals at risk of slipping by decades.

If wealthy countries stop funding development, "this will ultimately impact economies, societies, and yes, I think it will also register maybe a year or two down the line in the Human Development Index, lower life expectancy, declining incomes, more conflicts," Steiner said.

UNDP experts are not yet certain

of the underlying causes of the slowdown observed in 2024.

But they have identified one of the driving forces as a slackening of progress in life expectancy, perhaps linked to the side effects of Covid, or to the wars that are multiplying around the world.

There is a potential glimmer of hope: artificial intelligence could create the conditions for kickstarting development, the UNDP suggested.

AI "is perhaps the greatest potential pivot in putting development of individual economies, but also of maybe poor people, wealthy people, on a different trajectory. It will change virtually every aspect of our lives," Steiner said.

The report stressed that it would come down to how people use the technology, however.

There are risks. Access to AI in poorer countries is not the same as in wealthier ones, and cultural biases could influence the way the tools are developed, it said.

## Ukraine fires 100 drones on Moscow Flight restrictions imposed at a dozen airports

AFP, Moscow

A barrage of Ukrainian drones forced Russian airports, including in Moscow, to restrict flights yesterday -- three days before the Kremlin will hold its grand military parade on Red Square to mark the defeat of the Nazis.

Flight restrictions were introduced at more than a dozen airports, including four in Moscow, Russian news agencies reported.

Ukrainian officials said at least two people were killed in the country by Russian attacks yesterday. Emergency services said one person was killed in the southern Odessa region.

## Merz elected German chancellor after initial shock defeat

REUTERS, Berlin

German conservative leader Friedrich Merz was elected chancellor by parliament yesterday in a second round of voting after his new alliance with the centre-left Social Democrats was dealt a surprise defeat in the first attempt.

Merz's failure to win parliamentary backing at the first time of asking was a first for post-war Germany and an embarrassment for a man who has promised to revive economic growth at a time of global turbulence.

His CDU/CSU alliance won February's federal election and secured a coalition deal with the center-left Social Democrats.

Their deal has mapped out plans to revive growth, such as reducing corporate taxes and lowering energy prices. It is also promising strong support for Ukraine and higher military spending.

Merz, 69, who began his political career as a European lawmaker in 1989, has yet to demonstrate his leadership abilities in the political executive as his appointment marks his first time holding a government office.

## Trump admin freezes future grants to Harvard Orders curb on virus research

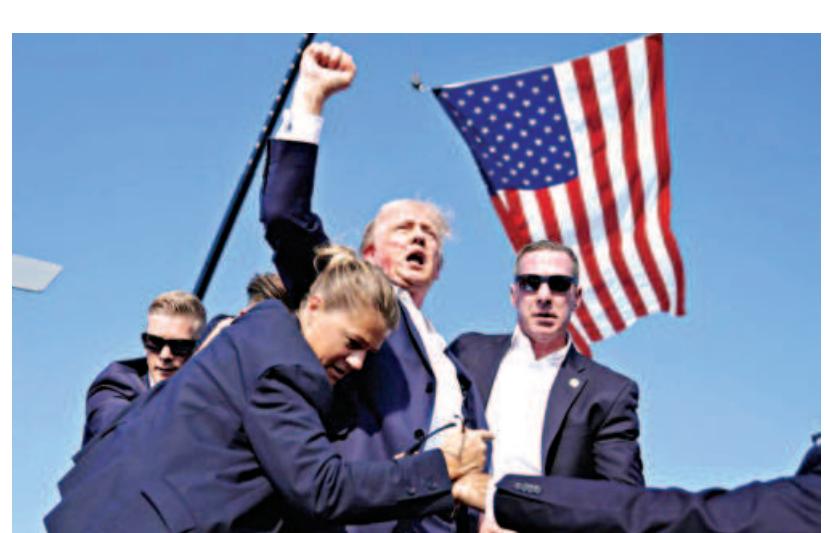
REUTERS, Washington

The US Department of Education informed Harvard University on Monday that it was freezing billions of dollars in future research grants and other aid until the nation's oldest and wealthiest college concedes to a number of demands from the Trump administration, a senior department official said.

In a letter to Harvard, US Education Department Secretary Linda McMahon said the university must address concerns about antisemitism on campus, school policies that consider a student's race, and complaints from the administration the university has abandoned its pursuit of "academic excellence" while employing relatively few conservative faculty members.

Meanwhile, Trump on Monday ordered new limitations on a form of biological research his administration says caused the Covid-19 pandemic through a lab leak in China.

The United States will halt funding in certain countries for so-called "gain-of-function" experiments -- aimed at enhancing the properties of pathogens -- according to an executive order Trump signed Monday at the White House.



## Pulitzers honour coverage of Trump assassination attempt, Gaza war

AFP, New York

Coverage of the wars in Gaza and Sudan, and the attempted assassination of US President Donald Trump, dominated the Pulitzer Prizes announced Monday at Columbia University in New York.

Considered one of the most prestigious awards in US journalism, the Pulitzers also recognise literature, drama and music.

The core issues of the 2024 US presidential campaign took centre stage at the awards, which recognised coverage of Trump and his bloodied ear after a July 13 assassination attempt, as well as the loss of abortion rights for women in the United States.

The Washington Post staff won in the category of breaking news reporting for the paper's "urgent and illuminating" coverage of the gunshot that wounded Trump during a rally in Pennsylvania.

The prize for public service reporting went to ProPublica's reporting on the deterioration of US women's access to abortion and reproductive health care, which profiled pregnant women who died after doctors delayed urgently needed care for fear of violating "vague" rules in "states with strict abortion laws," the committee wrote.

In September, ProPublica reported on the 2022 death of 28-year-old Amber Thurman in a Georgia hospital, attributing it to a lack of care under the state's restrictive abortion laws.

Her death was later discussed by presidential candidate Kamala Harris, who blamed the rollback of women's rights on the Supreme Court and its conservative majority.

Reuters news agency won in the investigative journalism category for its "boldly reported exposé" of lax fentanyl regulation in the United States and abroad.

## Israeli air strikes hit Yemen airport, power stations

Four killed, 35 others injured

AFP, Sanaa

Israeli air raids struck Yemen's main airport and power stations in the Sanaa area yesterday, Houthi media and Israel's military said, the latest retaliation for a missile attack by the Iran-backed rebels.

AFP correspondents in the rebel-held Yemeni capital Sanaa reported hearing several strikes and seeing plumes of smoke rising from areas including the airport.

An Israeli military statement said that "fighter jets struck and dismantled Houthi terrorist infrastructure at the main airport in Sanaa" and hit "several central power plants" in the area of the capital.

An earlier raid on Monday killed at least four people and wounded 35 others, according to Houthi, when Israel hit a cement factory and the lifeline port of Hodeida.

Yesterday's raids hit several locations including Sanaa airport, three power stations in and around the capital, and a cement factory in Amran, rebel media said.

They follow the Iran-backed Houthi's missile attack on Israel's main airport on Sunday, which for the first time penetrated the perimeter, leaving a large crater near a car park.

Just before yesterday's attacks, Israel's military urged Yemeni civilians to "immediately" evacuate the airport and "stay away from the area".

"Failing to evacuate may put you at risk," military spokesman Avichay Adraee posted on X in Arabic.

The latest exchanges come as regional tensions soar anew over Israel's plan to expand operations in Gaza and displace much of its population.

The Houthi blamed Israel and its ally the United States for the latest strikes. While Israel claimed responsibility, an American official denied any US involvement in Monday's raids.

There was no immediate US comment yesterday.



Housing & Building Research Institute  
120/3 Darus-Salam, Mirpur, Dhaka-1216.

Memo No: HBRI/SRE(Procure)/2024-25/06

Date: 06-05-2025

### Invitation For Tender for Non-Consultant Services (NCT - OTM)

01	Organization/Agency	:	Housing and Building Research Institute (HBRI), Dhaka			
02	Procuring Entity	:	Director General, Housing and Building Research Institute (HBRI), Dhaka			
03	Invitation for	:	Supply of security guard for Housing & Building Research Institute (HBRI), Dhaka for period 01 July, 2025 to 30 June, 2026			
04	Source of Fund	:	GoB			
05	Tender Reference No	:	HBRI Memo No- 25.44.2600.000.11.018.09.24-25/17, Dated: 05.05.2025			
06	Tender Document last Selling Date & Time	:	03/06/2025, Time: 05:00 p.m.			
07	Last Date & Time for Tender Submission	:	04/06/2025, Time: 02:30 p.m.			
08	Officer & Office Selling and receiving Tender Document	:	Md Ibnul Warah, Senior Research Engineer (A.C.), HBRI, Dhaka, Room No- 102.			
09	Tender Opening Date & Time	:	04/06/2025, Time: 03:00 p.m.			
10	Eligibility of Tenderer in brief (Details can be seen in Tender Data Sheet)	:	(i)- Experience as service provider of non-consultancy service shall be at least 6 (six) years in any Government/ Semi-government/ autonomous institutions in Bangladesh. (ii)- Minimum specific experience as prime contractor having satisfactory completion of providing security service of at least 1 (one) contracts within the last 3 (Three) years, with a value of at least Tk. 35.00 lacs (Taka Thirty five Lacs) in any Government/ Semi-government/ autonomous institutions.			
11	Brief description of Services	:	Supply of manpower (security guard) for providing security of all buildings, gates, lands and other properties situated in the premises of Housing and Building Research Institute			
12	Tender Document Price (Taka)	:	Tk. 1,000/00 (Taka One thousand)			
13	Lot No	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount (Taka)	Start Date	Completion date
01	Supply of Outsourcing Manpower (security guard) for Housing and Building Research Institute, Dhaka for the period 01 July, 2025 to 30 June, 2026.	Dhaka	Tk. 1,00,000 (One lac) only	01/07/2025	30/06/2026	

N.B. Procuring Entity (PE) reserves the right to reject all Tenders or annul / cancel the Tender proceedings

John  
06-05-25

( Md Ibnul Warah )  
Senior Research Engineer (A.C.)  
Housing and Building Research Institute (HBRI), Dhaka.

GD-1086