

SOUTH CHINA SEA ROW

China’s most advanced bombers seen on Paracel islands

REUTERS, Hong Kong

Satellite imagery shows China landed two of its most advanced bombers in the disputed Paracel islands in the South China Sea this month - a gesture that some analysts described as Beijing's latest signalling of its growing military capabilities to rivals.

The deployment marks the first time the long-range H-6 bombers have landed on Woody Island in the Paracels since 2020, and the movement of the now upgraded aircraft comes amid tensions with the Philippines, operations near Taiwan and ahead of the region's biggest defence forum this weekend.

"China's long-range bombers don't need to be on the Paracels so it does appear to be omni-directional signalling by Beijing - against the Philippines and against the US



and other things that are going on," said Collin Koh, a defence scholar at Singapore's S Rajaratnam School of International Studies.

French President Emmanuel Macron is due to open the three-day Shangri-La Dialogue forum in Singapore with a speech today while US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth will outline the Trump administration's approach to the region tomorrow. A British aircraft carrier is expected in the South China Sea on a rare deployment next month, diplomats say.

Satellites captured two H-6 planes flying over the hotly disputed Scarborough Shoal, also in the South China Sea, just ahead of Hegseth's visit to the Philippines in late March, when he reaffirmed the United States' "ironclad commitment" to its treaty ally.

Regional diplomats and analysts say deployments of the jet-powered H-6 are closely scrutinised, given the way its Cold War-era airframe has been modernised to carry anti-ship and land attack cruise missiles, while some of the planes are capable of launching nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles. A potential threat to US bases in the region, H-6 bombers were deployed in wargames around Taiwan in October, and in July flew close to the US mainland for the first time.



A destroyed airplane lies on the tarmac at Sanaa International Airport in Yemen yesterday, following an Israeli military strike. PHOTO: AFP

Musk to exit US govt role after break with Trump

AFP, Washington

Elon Musk on Wednesday announced he was leaving his role in government, intended to reduce federal spending, shortly after his first major break with President Trump over his signature spending bill.

"As my scheduled time as a Special Government Employee comes to an end, I would like to thank President Donald Trump for the opportunity to reduce wasteful spending," he wrote on X.

"The DOGE mission will only strengthen over time as it becomes a way of life throughout the government," he added.

Trump warns Israeli PM off Iran strike

Says he believes US close to reaching a new nuclear deal with Tehran

REUTERS, Washington

US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday he warned Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last week not to take actions that could disrupt nuclear talks with Iran.

"I told him this would be inappropriate to do right now because we're very close to a solution now," Trump told reporters gathered in the Oval Office. "That could change at any moment."

Israel earlier rejected a report in the New York Times that Netanyahu has been threatening to disrupt talks on a nuclear deal between the United States and Iran by striking Iran's main nuclear enrichment facilities.

Citing officials briefed on the situation, the newspaper said Israeli officials were concerned that Trump was so eager to reach a deal with Iran that he would allow Tehran to keep its nuclear enrichment facilities, a red line for Israel.

Israel was particularly concerned about the possibility of any interim deal that would allow Iran to maintain its nuclear facilities for months or even years while a final agreement was reached, the paper reported.

US officials were concerned Israel could decide to strike Iran with little warning and said US intelligence estimated that Israel could mount an attack on Iran in as little as seven hours, the paper reported.

US to crack down on Chinese visas

Beijing condemns 'discriminatory' US plan

AFP, Beijing

Beijing yesterday reacted in fury at the US government's vow to revoke Chinese students' visas, condemning President Donald Trump's crackdown on international scholars as "political and discriminatory".

Trump's administration on Wednesday said it would "aggressively" remove permissions for Chinese students, one of the largest sources of revenue for American universities, in his latest broadside against US higher education.

The US will also revise visa criteria to tighten checks on all future applications from China and Hong Kong, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said.

Blasting the US for "unreasonably" cancelling Chinese students' visas, foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said Beijing had lodged its opposition with Washington.

Rubio had upped the ante after China criticised his decision a day earlier to suspend visa appointments for students worldwide at least temporarily.

Russia proposes new Ukraine talks in Istanbul

AFP, Moscow

Russia said Wednesday it wanted new talks with Ukraine in Istanbul next Monday to present its plan for a peace settlement, but Kyiv said it needed to see the proposal in advance for the meeting to yield results.

Diplomatic efforts to end the three-year conflict have accelerated in recent months, but Moscow has repeatedly rejected calls for an unconditional ceasefire and shown no signs of scaling back its maximalist demands.

The two sides previously met in Istanbul on May 16, their first direct talks in over three years. That encounter failed to yield a breakthrough.

Kremlin yesterday said it was waiting for Kyiv's response to the proposed talks in Istanbul. Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has called on Russia and Ukraine not to "shut the door".

Meanwhile, Russian army had captured three more villages in eastern Ukraine, with its troops pressing on.



France's President Emmanuel Macron and his wife Brigitte Macron visit Borobudur Temple, the world's largest Buddhist monument and a Unesco World Heritage Site, in Magelang, Central Java, Indonesia yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

KSA frees Iran cleric detained ahead of hajj

AFP, Tehran

Saudi authorities have released a well-known Iranian religious figure they detained ahead of the hajj pilgrimage to the Muslim holy places, Iranian media reported yesterday.

"Gholamreza Ghasemian has been released and is on his way to Iran after follow-up by Iranian officials," the ISNA news agency reported.

Iran said it had held consular meetings with the cleric since his arrest on Monday after a video circulated online showing him criticising the Saudi government. Riyadh did not confirm Ghasemian's arrest but Tehran expressed concern about implications for a thaw in ties between the rivals since a 2023 rapprochement deal brokered by Beijing.

CORRUPTION CASE

Sri Lanka’s ex-ministers jailed up to 25 years

AFP, Colombo

A Sri Lankan court yesterday sentenced two former ministers from the government of deposed president Gotabaya Rajapaksa to decades in prison in a landmark corruption case.

Ex-sports minister Mahindananda Aluthgamage and former trade minister Anil Fernando were found guilty by the Colombo High Court of misappropriating 53 million rupees (\$177,000) of state funds.

The pair were also fined \$2,000 for using government money to donate board games -- including 14,000 carrom boards and 11,000 draughts sets -- in an attempt to boost the failed 2015 re-election bid of Gotabaya's elder brother, Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Aluthgamage was sentenced to 20 years in jail. Fernando was sentenced to 25 years.

Aluthgamage is now the most senior member of a Rajapaksa-led cabinet to be successfully prosecuted for corruption.

The cases against both men were



initiated six years ago, when the Rajapaksa brothers were out of power, but the case had been making slow headway until a new government took office last year.

Aluthgamage also faces a separate investigation into allegations that he authorised in 2022 a payment of \$6.09 million to a Chinese supplier for a fertilizer shipment that was never delivered.

He caused a stir in 2020 when he accused Sri Lanka's national cricket team of rigging the 2011 World Cup final in favour of India, triggering an investigation that ultimately failed to substantiate his claims.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH				
Power Division				
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.				
Invitation for Tender (OTM)				
1	Ministry/Division		Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources	
2	Procuring Entity Name		Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources	
3	Procuring Entity Code		Not used at present	
4	Procuring Entity District		Dhaka, Bangladesh	
5	Invitation for		Stationery goods, Desktop Computers, printer, Scanner, DLSR Camera, Printer Toner & Zoom Apps.	
6	Invitation Ref No		27.00.0000.043.07.028.24.264	
7	Date		29.05.2025	
KEY INFORMATION				
8	Procurement Method		OTM	
FUNDING INFORMATION				
9	Budget and Source of Funds		Revenue/GOB	
10	Development Partners (if applicable)		Not Applicable	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
11	Tender Package No.		03 (2024-2025)	
12	Tender Package Name		Procurement of Stationery Desktop Computers printer, Scanner, DLSR Camera, Printer Toner & Zoom Apps.	
13	Tender Publication Date		30.05.2025	
14	Tender Last Selling Date		17.06.2025 Time: 4:00 PM	
15	Tender Dropping Date and Time		18.06.2025	Time: 3:00 PM
16	Tender Opening Date and Time		18.06.2025	Time: 3:30 PM
17	Name & Address of the office(s)		Power Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	
	Selling Tender Document (Principal)		Senior Assistant Secretary (Admin-3), Power Division, Room # 212, Building # 6, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	
	Selling Tender Document (Others)		Accounts officer, Power Division, Secretariat Link Road, Biddut Vabon (level-10), Dhaka.	
	Receiving Tender Document		Senior Assistant Secretary (Admin-3) Power Division, Room # 212, Building # 6, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka	
	Opening Tender Document		Deputy Secretary (Dev-1), Power Division, Room # 208, Building # 6, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
18	Eligibility of Tender		The tenderer should be well experienced with (1) Trade License (2) Income Tax Certificate (IT) (3) Vat Registration Certificate (3) Bank Solvency Certificate (4) Minimum 3 (Three) successful completion Certificate within last 3 (Three) years etc.	
19	Brief Description of Goods		Lot-1 (Stationery goods), Lot-2 (Desktop Computers, printer, Scanner, DLSR Camera) Lot-3 (Printer toner) Lot-4 (Zoom Apps).	
20	Brief Description of Related Services		Not Applicable	
21	Price of Tender Document (Tk.)		Lot (1, 2, 3 & 4) Tk. 1,000/- (Per Lot)	
22	Lot No	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk.)
		Lot-1 (Stationery goods), Lot-2 (Desktop Computers, printer, Scanner, DLSR Camera) Lot-3 (Printer toner) Lot-4 (Zoom Apps).	Power Division Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	Lot-01 for Tk. 30,000/- Lot-02 for Tk. 12,000/- Lot-03 for Tk. 30,000/- Lot-04 for Tk. 6,000/-
23	Name of Official Inviting Tender		Power Division	
	Designation of Official Inviting Tender		Senior Assistant Secretary (Admin-3)	
	Address of Official Inviting Tender		Room # 212, Building # 6, Power Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	
	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender		Tel. 02223390024	E-mail: admin-3@pd.gov.bd
24	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject all or any tender.			
25	Special Condition: This invitation for tender notice will be available at Power Division's Website.			



(Md. Mamun Bhuyan)
Senior Assistant Secretary
Ph: 02223390024

GD-1319