

US STRIKES ON IRAN Hopes for nuke diplomacy shattered

REUTERS, Paris

In a bid to defuse the conflict over Iran's nuclear program, foreign ministers from Europe's top three powers hurried to meet their Iranian counterpart on Friday in Geneva.

Those hopes collapsed on Saturday when US President Donald Trump ordered airstrikes on Iran's three main nuclear sites, in support of Israel's military campaign.

"It's irrelevant to ask Iran to return to diplomacy," Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, visibly angry, told reporters in Istanbul on Sunday, promising a "response" to the US strikes. "It's not time for diplomacy now."

Trump, who said the US airstrikes "obliterated" the sites, warned in a televised speech on Saturday the US could attack other targets in Iran if no



PHOTO: AFP

Palestinian children wait at a food distribution point in Nuseirat, central Gaza Strip, yesterday. The Israeli blockade, imposed in early March amid stalled truce negotiations, has created famine-like conditions across Gaza, according to rights groups.

US military pulled back into Middle East wars

AGENCIES

The US strikes on nuclear sites in Iran are an extraordinary turn for a military that was supposed to be moving on from two decades of forever wars in the Middle East, and they put the United States back on war footing.

Across the region, where more than 40,000 American troops are on bases and warships, the strikes ushered in a period of high alert as the Pentagon braced for almost-certain retaliation from Iran.

President Trump announced on social media that three Iranian sites were hit, including the mountain facility at Fordo. The bombs used in the strikes are believed to include "bunker busters," which are

designed to destroy deep underground bunkers or well-buried weapons in highly protected facilities.

The strikes, whether successful or not, are likely to trigger a fierce response. Tehran has vowed to strike at American bases in the Middle East, and American intelligence agencies confirmed before the strikes took place that Iran would take steps to widen the war and hit US forces in the region.

US officials, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss intelligence, said the strikes against the three nuclear sites were complete. The official said no follow-up attacks were expected, although commanders were ready to respond to any Iranian retaliation, reports New York Times online.

Iran has many ways to retaliate, including naval assets and other capabilities it would need to shut down the Strait of Hormuz, a move that could pin any US Navy ships in the Persian Gulf, American military officials say. Iranian officials have threatened to mine the strait if the United States joined Israel's attack on the country.

Iran would not need much preparation to attack US air and naval bases in the region. The Iranian military has missile bases within easy striking range of Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Indeed, American officials said earlier this week that Iran had prepared missiles and other military equipment for strikes on US bases in the region.

Won't let terror 'drag Syria back to instability'

Says Erdogan after suicide
attack at Damascus church

AFP, Istanbul

Turkey will not allow extremists to drag Syria back into chaos and instability, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said yesterday after a suicide attack killed 22 at a Damascus church.

"We will never allow our neighbour and brother Syria... be dragged into a new environment of instability through proxy terrorist organisations," he said, vowing to support the new government's fight against such groups.

He did not explain what he meant by "proxy" groups but vowed that Turkey would "continue to support the Syrian government's fight against terrorism". The Damascus government blamed Sunday night's shooting and suicide attack — the first of its kind in the Syrian capital since the fall of strongman Bashar al-Assad six months ago — on Islamic State (IS) group militants.

It cast the attack as a bid to "undermine national coexistence and to destabilise the country", which only began emerging from the post-civil war chaos after Assad's ouster six months ago.

POLITICAL, JUDICIAL CRISIS Embattled Thai PM reshuffles cabinet

AFP, Bangkok

Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra yesterday began a cabinet reshuffle as a political and judicial crisis sparked by a leaked phone call threatens to sink her government.

The 38-year-old daughter of controversial former PM Thaksin Shinawatra began handing out ministerial posts vacated when her main coalition partner quit last week — a move that nearly took her government down.

Paetongtarn, in office for less than a year, is hanging on by a thread, and on top of the party horse-trading she now faces a Constitutional Court case that could see her barred from office.

She faced calls to quit or call an election last week as critics accused her of undermining the country and insulting the army during the leaked call with former Cambodian leader Hun Sen, which focused on a festering border dispute.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Climate Resilient Livelihoods Improvement and Watershed Management in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CRLIWM-CHT) Sector Project Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council, Rangamati.

Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)(Firm/NGO) (National) for Consulting Services for Watershed Management Non-Government Organization (NGO) hiring for Khagrachari district

Package No. CRLIWM/SD-39 (ADB Package-CHT/NGO-WSM/KHAG/SD-07) for
Khagrachari District,

- The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council (CHTRC) under the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MoCHTA), has been allocated public fund from the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GoB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) towards the "Climate Resilient Livelihoods Improvement and Watershed Management in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CRLIWM-CHT) Sector Project". A portion of the GoB and ADB fund is intended to be used for payments under the contract for Recruitment of Consulting Firm(s) for which this Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) is being issued.
- The overall objective of the services: The WSM-INGO will support the rehabilitation and sustainable management of Khagrachari watersheds in the CHT by mobilizing local communities, strengthening community-based organizations (e.g., Para Development Committees and Village Common Forest committees), and building their capacity in social, technical, agricultural, forestry, and water management practices. Working under the guidance of the PMO-CHTRC, PISC experts, and Khagrachari DPMO-Khagrachari HDC, the NGO will ensure participatory planning, implementation, and maintenance of watershed interventions. The goal is to enhance ecological resilience, improve livelihoods, and promote inclusive governance of natural resources in alignment with project objectives, as detailed in the Terms of Reference (ToR)
- The main scope of services is the contracted WSM-INGO will provide qualified staff, mobilize communities, and conduct social and technical assessments in prioritized sub-watersheds, ensuring alignment with project safeguards and participatory approaches. It will support implementation of watershed interventions, prepare annual plans and budgets, and coordinate with PMO, DPMO, and PISC for effective execution. The NGO will also handle financial management, reporting, grievance redress, and synergies with other project components while adhering to environmental and social safeguards. Regular progress reports, data collection, and compliance with project guidelines will be maintained to achieve sustainable watershed management outcomes.
- The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council (CHTRC) now invites national eligible consulting firms (NGOs) to submit Expression of Interest (EOI) for providing the required services.
- The consulting firm(s) should be nationally reputed and may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications. No firm should form more than one association or joint venture (JV). If a firm submits more than one EOI forming more than one JV/association, all EOIs submitted by forming JV/association with that firm and also EOI submitted by that firm will be rejected.
- The Consultant will be selected under Consultant Qualitative Selection (CQS) method in accordance with the procedures set out in the ADB Procurement Policy 2017 ("Policy") and the Procurement Regulations for ADB Borrowers 2017 ("Regulations"):

<https://www.adb.org/documents/adb-procurement-policy>

<https://www.adb.org/documents/procurement-regulations-adb-borrowers>

'Short-listing' of the Consulting Firms submitting Expression of Interest (EOI) will be done by Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council (CHTRC) based on the complete information submitted in the Standard EOI form by

the intending Consulting Firms through the Consultant Management System (CMS) as mentioned in sl. 8. Intending Consulting Firms shall have, but not limited to the following competences-

a) Management competence: Firm's management and organizational strength, financial strength, number and capabilities of permanent employees and key staff, etc.

b) Technical Competence:

- Firm's specialization compared with the sectoral focus of the assignment;
- Firm's specific experience the NGO or its consortium/JV must possess demonstrated experience in watershed management, village common forests (VCF), agriculture, and/or community infrastructure development within the specified Hill District, supported by a team proficient in all local ethnic languages to ensure effective communication. The partnership must include at least one women's NGO (unless the lead NGO specializes in gender work) and showcase a minimum of 10 years' development experience in the CHT region, including 5 years specifically in capacity-building projects related to these sectors. Additionally, the consortium must demonstrate the capability to recruit qualified technical professionals (engineers, watershed specialists, and agriculture/forestry experts) while ensuring that at least 70% of project staff are from CHT's ethnic communities, with equitable representation across different groups.;
- Firm's experience in ADB/World Bank funded similar projects will be given priority.

c) Geographic Competence: Experience in similar geographic area (i.e. country experience, regional experience).

- In addition to the above, the list of the experts along with their CVs are required for the Consultants' Qualifications Selection evaluation. For CQS selections, proposed experts during the EOI stage will be evaluated using the Personal Evaluation Sheet template, like (i) General Qualifications, (ii) Project-Related Experience, and (iii) Experiences with international/development partners organizations or in their projects.
- Only EOIs submitted electronically through ADB's CMS using ADB template will be evaluated. EOI submitted using other than ADB templates will not be evaluated. Incomplete EOI will also not be evaluated.
- Interested consulting firms are requested to submit the Expression of Interest (EOI) electronically, using standard EOI template available through ADB's CMS by 11:59 PM (Manila Local Time) and by 09:59 PM (Dhaka Local Time) on or before 22 July, 2025 through the link of <http://csrm.adb.org> [Project Name: Climate Resilient Livelihoods Improvement and Watershed Management in the Chittagong Hill Tracts Sector Project, Package Name: Consultancy Service regarding "Watershed Management Implementation NGO"(Package No: : CRLIWM/SD-39 (ADB Package-CHT/NGO-WSM/KHAG/SD-07) for Khagrachari District]. Please note that only online submission of EOIs in ADB's CMS is allowed. Any offline or manual EOI submission is not permissible and will not be considered.
- Only the first ranked short-listed firm will be invited to submit a "Request for Proposal (RFP) for Technical & Financial Proposals which will be evaluated by the Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) of CHTRC.
- Under no circumstances will ADB or CHTRC, be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by the firm(s) in connection with the preparation or submission of the EOI. Interested consulting firm(s) is/are requested to submit relevant documentary evidences in support of their competence in EOI submission.
- Interested consulting firm(s) may obtain further information including Scope of Works and Terms of Reference (ToR) from the Consultant Management System on the ADB website at <http://csrm.adb.org> or from the office of the undersigned during regular office hours on all working days before deadline of submission. The EOI notice will also be available at the following websites www.cptu.gov.bd.
- The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs received without assigning any reason thereof.

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