

Europeans, Iran hold 'frank' nuclear talks

REUTERS, Istanbul

Iran said it would continue nuclear talks with European powers after "serious, frank, and detailed" conversations yesterday, the first such face-to-face meeting since Israel and the US bombed Iran last month.

Before the meeting in Istanbul, Iran also pushed back on suggestions of extending the UN resolution that ratifies a 2015 deal, nearing expiry, that was designed to curb its nuclear programme.

Delegations from the EU and so-called E3 group of France, Britain and Germany met Iranian counterparts at Iran's consulate for talks that the IAEA said could provide an opening to resume inspections in Iran.

Iranian Deputy FM Kazem Gharibabadi said afterward that both sides had presented specific ideas on sanctions relief.



Protesters burn tyres to block a key road between Babil and Qadisiyah governorates in central Iraq's Hilla city, demanding action over severe water shortages and dried-up rivers.

PHOTO: AFP

Syria arms depot blasts kill 12

Over 100 injured

AFP, Damascus

A series of explosions killed at least 12 people and wounded more than 100 at a weapons depot in northwestern Syria on Thursday, a monitor said.

"Multiple blasts at a weapons and ammunition warehouse belonging to the Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP) killed at least 12 people and wounded more than 100 in Maaret Misrin, in northern Idlib province," said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Those killed included a woman and a child, said the Britain-based monitor, which relies on a network of sources on the ground.

The TIP is a jihadist group active in the Idlib region made up of Uighur fighters who joined the Syrian civil war to fight against former president Bashar al-Assad.

No evidence of massive Hamas theft of Gaza aid

USAID analysis found; state dept disputes findings

REUTERS, Washington

An internal US government analysis found no evidence of systematic theft by the Palestinian group Hamas of US-funded humanitarian supplies, challenging the main rationale that Israel and the US give for backing a new armed private aid operation.

The analysis, which has not been previously reported, was conducted by a bureau within the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and completed in late June. It examined 156 incidents of theft or loss of US-funded supplies reported by US aid partner organisations between October 2023 and this May.

It found "no reports alleging Hamas" benefited from US-funded supplies, according to a slide presentation of the findings seen by Reuters.

A State Department spokesperson disputed the



findings, saying there is video evidence of Hamas looting aid, but provided no such videos. The spokesperson also accused traditional humanitarian groups of covering up "aid corruption."

The findings were shared with the USAID's inspector general's office and State Department officials involved in Middle East policy, said two sources familiar with the matter, and come as dire food shortages deepen in the devastated enclave.

Israel says it is committed to allowing in aid but must control

it to prevent it from being stolen by Hamas, which it blames for the crisis.

The WFP says nearly a quarter of Gaza's 2.1 million Palestinians face famine-like conditions, thousands are suffering acute malnutrition, and the WHO and doctors in the enclave report starvation deaths of children and others.

The UN also estimates that Israeli forces have killed more than 1,000 people seeking food supplies, the majority near the militarized distribution sites of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), the new private aid group that uses a for-profit US logistics firm run by a former CIA officer and armed US military veterans.

The study was conducted by the Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance of USAID, which was the largest funder of assistance to Gaza before the Trump administration froze all US foreign aid in January, terminating thousands of programs.

Indonesia says its poverty rate lowest in two decades

AFP, Jakarta

The number of Indonesians living under the poverty line has hit a record low for the past two decades, the country's statistics bureau said yesterday.

According to the Central Statistics Agency, there were roughly 23.85 million Indonesians living in poverty as of March this year — representing 8.47 percent of the country's total population of 280 million.

BPS categorises people living off Rp 609,160 a month, about \$37, as poor. "The poverty line figure for 2025 is the lowest for the past two decades," the agency's official, Ateng Hartono, said.

However, the agency noted the significant gap between big cities and rural areas, with villages still seeing a higher poverty rate.

Modi announces \$565m credit line for Maldives

REUTERS, Colombo

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a \$565-million credit line and launched free trade talks with the Maldives yesterday during a visit to the Indian Ocean archipelago, where India competes with China for influence.

Modi's two-day trip is aimed at boosting India's development partnership with the Maldives, and he said the credit line was central to that goal.

"This will be used for projects linked to infrastructure development in line with the priorities of the Maldivian people," he said, adding that the two countries would also finalise a bilateral investment agreement.

They will work to deepen cooperation on multiple sectors including tourism, healthcare, and housing, Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu said.

"Looking ahead we are fully committed to further strengthen our cooperation with India across a broad range of sectors through exchange of high-level visits," Muizzu added.

Modi is the first foreign leader to visit Muizzu since he took office in 2023, pledging at the time to end the Maldives' "India first" policy, and taking steps to strengthen ties with China.

Muizzu's moves briefly soured relations with New Delhi, before India helped to prevent the \$7.5 billion economy from defaulting on its debt as the Maldives struggled to get tourists to its white-sand beaches and luxury resorts.

Ukraine secures 3 Patriot systems

REUTERS, Kyiv

Ukraine has received confirmation from partners that they will provide three Patriot missile defence systems and discussions are underway to obtain seven more, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Thursday.

"I have officially received confirmation from Germany for two systems, and from Norway for one. We are currently working with Dutch partners," he told reporters.

President Donald Trump announced earlier this month that billions of dollars of US weapons would go to Ukraine, including Patriot missiles. This set off negotiations around which partners could contribute to the weapons purchasing scheme — a process that will determine the support Ukraine receives.

The Patriot systems have proven effective at destroying Russian ballistic missiles aimed at Ukraine's cities. Russia has intensified its nationwide aerial attacks this summer, forcing Ukraine to adapt to new tactics, including turning to drone interceptors.

Man stabs cops

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provide the information even after 20 minutes, Bidroho said.

Police also questioned why he came to the Saghata Police Station to file a GD when his phone was lost in Gaibandha Sadar upazila.

"He was later given auto-rickshaw fare and sent back home," the police officer said.

CCTV footage provided by police showed a man, purportedly Siju, entering the station at 9:50pm, armed with a knife.

When a constable tried to stop him at the entrance, he snatched a rifle from the policeman and entered the duty officer's room.

As multiple police personnel tried to stop him, the man swung the knife in an attempt to stab everyone.

He then fled the police station, according to Additional SP Bidroho.

Constable Sirajul Islam and Assistant Sub-Inspector Mohsin Ali suffered stab wounds during the incident, the police officer said.

While fleeing the police station, Siju jumped into a nearby pond at Saghata High School, he said.

Siju did not respond when police and locals repeatedly asked him to come ashore, Bidroho said.

Saghata Fire Station Officer Ratan Chandra Sharma said they were called on Thursday night but could not conduct a rescue operation immediately because the pond was extremely deep and there was a lack of light.

Fire service divers recovered Siju's body and handed it over to the police at 9:30am yesterday, Ratan said, adding that "there were no visible signs of injury on Siju's body".

According to Siju's family, he had an argument with the police station's duty officer over the refusal to register the GD.

Additional SP Bidroho said a post-mortem examination of the body was being conducted in the afternoon.

4 cops withdrawn

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had come undone during the assault. When Wadud asked to file a written complaint, he was told there was no one to take it. When he offered to write it himself, he was reluctantly handed a blank sheet but refused a pen despite several lying on the desk.

Eventually, Wadud managed to submit his complaint and was asked to contact ASI Anarul, who was reportedly at a nearby location. Despite repeated pleas to accompany him to the scene — just a short walk away — SI Jasim refused, saying, "Only Anarul handles that area. You should just leave."

Wadud later managed to reach ASI Anarul at a local bus stand. The officer eventually agreed to visit the crime scene, but by the time they arrived — almost 40 minutes after the attack — the suspects were still there.

Wadud identified them from a distance, but ASI Anarul did not approach. Instead, he stood with his hands on his waist as the suspects noticed them and casually walked away. Wadud expressed disbelief and frustration at the officer's inaction.

US lifts sanctions

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the military seizure of power in Myanmar that plunged the country into chaos.

Sit Taing Aung and Aung Hlaing Oo were placed on the sanctions list the same year for operating in Myanmar's defence sector. Tin Latt Min, identified as another close associate of the military rulers, was placed on the list in 2024 to mark the third anniversary of the coup.

The Treasury Department did not explain the reason for the move, and the White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Myanmar is one of the world's main sources of sought-after rare earth minerals used in high-tech defense and consumer applications. Securing supplies of the minerals is a major focus for the Trump administration in

he wrote.

The incident triggered outrage on social media, with many netizens slamming the OC's insensitive remarks and the police's lacklustre response.

OC Ittekkhar did not receive phone calls.

Contacted, Md Ibne Mizan, deputy commissioner of Tejgaon Division, told The Daily Star that a one-member probe committee, led by Alamgir Kabir, additional deputy commissioner (Tejgaon Zone), has been formed to investigate the allegations against the OC.

"He has been asked to submit the report as soon as possible," the DC said. In a Facebook post yesterday, the Bangladesh Police expressed regret over the incident and the subsequent inaction of the police.

Meanwhile, a group of locals in Mohammadpur staged a demonstration in front of the police station, demanding the removal of the OC.

Police station sources said that the protestors arrived around 5:00pm and demonstrated there for an hour.

its strategic competition with China, which is responsible for 90 percent of rare earth processing capacity.

On July 11, Myanmar's ruling military general, Min Aung Hlaing, asked Trump in a letter for a reduction in the 40 percent tariff rate on his country's exports to the US and said he was ready to send a negotiating team to Washington if needed.

"The senior general acknowledged the president's strong leadership in guiding his country towards national prosperity with the spirit of a true patriot," state media said at the time.

In his response to a letter from Trump notifying Myanmar of the tariff to take effect on August 1, Min Aung Hlaing proposed a reduced rate of 10 percent to 20 percent, with Myanmar slashing its levy on US imports to a range of zero to 10 percent.

Gunmen kill 14 in north-central Nigeria market 'ambush'

AFP, Jos

Unidentified gunmen in Nigeria's restive Plateau state killed 14 people in an ambush Thursday as they returned home from a weekly market, local residents and a Red Cross official told AFP.

The north-central state has long been gripped by conflicts over dwindling land and attacks by armed gangs known as "bandits", mostly across rural areas where government presence is sparse and impunity is almost guaranteed.

Following the ambush, two youths were killed in a revenge attack across ethnic lines, residents said.

The gunmen opened fire Thursday evening on vehicles returning from the market in Bokkos town, residents said, near a village called Mangor.

"Some armed men ambushed them, they fired gunshots indiscriminately," Moses Maren, a local youth leader, told AFP Thursday.

State Red Cross secretary Nurudeen Hussaini Magaji confirmed the toll yesterday morning.

"Amongst the dead were males, females and children," he said.

The Bokkos area is known as a major hub for potato farming in Nigeria.

The town's Monday and Thursday markets host traders from as far away as Chad, Benin, Niger and Cameroon.

Insecurity is a major factor in food inflation in Nigeria.

Consultancy SBM Intelligence recently recorded price hikes of rice, onions and pepper seeing hikes by more than 430 percent in neighbouring Bauchi state, blamed on bandit attacks as well as drought. Land used by farmers and herders in central Nigeria, including Plateau, is coming under stress from climate change and human expansion, sparking deadly competition for increasingly limited space.



Migrants on board a rubber boat wait to be assisted by NGO Open Arms rescue boat "Astral" in the international waters of the Maltese Search and Rescue (SAR) zone, in the Mediterranean Sea, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Russian rocket puts Iran satellite into space

AFP, Tehran

A Russian rocket put an Iranian communications satellite into space yesterday, Iranian state media reported, the latest achievement for an aerospace programme that has long concerned Western governments.

"The Nahid-2 communications satellite was launched from Russia's Vostochny Cosmodrome using a Soyuz rocket," state television said.

Weighing 110 kilograms (over 240 pounds), the satellite was designed and manufactured by Iranian engineers, the broadcaster added.

Western governments have long expressed concern that technological advances made in Iran's space programme can also be used to upgrade its ballistic missile arsenal.

The launch was announced shortly before nuclear talks between Iran and

Britain, France and Germany opened in Istanbul.

In December, Iran announced it had put its heaviest payload to date into space, using a domestically manufactured satellite carrier.

In September, Iran said it had put the Chamran-1 research satellite into orbit using the Ghaem-100 carrier, which is produced by the Revolutionary Guards' aerospace division.

Quarter of children

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Nations General Assembly next September.

Earlier, Canada also pressed Israel to seek peace, with Prime Minister Mark Carney condemning its "failure to prevent the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian disaster in Gaza" and reiterating support for a two-state solution.