



“Based on the Statement just issued by Hamas, I believe they are ready for a lasting PEACE.”

President Donald Trump

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Israel kills 61 despite Trump's order to stop

World hails as Hamas agrees partially to peace deal; US envoys head to Mideast; Trump warns Hamas against delay

AGENCIES

Dozens were killed in Israeli strikes on Gaza yesterday despite a demand from US President Donald Trump for Israel to stop bombing in response to a declaration by Hamas that it was ready to free hostages under his plan to end the two-year-old war.

Hamas had drawn a welcoming response from Trump on Friday by saying it accepted certain key parts of his 20-point peace proposal, including ending the war, Israel's withdrawal, and the release of Israeli hostages and Palestinian captives.

But the group has left some questions unanswered, such as whether it would be willing to disarm, a key demand from Israel to end the war.

Yesterday, despite the killing of at least 53 Palestinians in Gaza, Trump said he appreciated that Israel had "temporarily stopped the bombing," and he urged Hamas to move quickly on his plan "or else all bets will be off."

"I will not tolerate delay, which



many think will happen, or any outcome where Gaza poses a threat again. Let's get this done, FAST. Everyone will be treated fairly!" Trump said on his Truth Social platform.

Meanwhile, diplomatic efforts intensified following the Hamas announcement.

In Washington, a White House

official yesterday said that Trump was sending his envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner to Egypt to finalise the technical details of the hostage release and discuss a lasting peace deal.

Egypt will also host delegations from Israel and Hamas tomorrow to discuss the anticipated exchange

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'Our mission is to defy the illegal blockade'

Shahidul tells the Star from flotilla; CA lauds his resolve, voices solidarity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Photographer-activist Shahidul Alam, the only Bangladeshi aboard the Gaza-bound Freedom Flotilla, said their mission is not to risk lives but to challenge what he termed "an illegal blockade" and stand in solidarity with journalists and health workers under attack.

"We are not here for martyrdom. We are doing what responsible journalists and medical workers must do for people under siege," he told The Daily Star in an exclusive video interview from the vessel Conscience, the main boat of the Media Flotilla.

"Our goal is to question this blockade and ensure the truth reaches the world," Shahidul added.

The flotilla, organised by the Freedom Flotilla Coalition (FFC), comprises a large boat and 10 smaller vessels carrying journalists, medical professionals, and humanitarian workers. It was about 370 nautical miles from Gaza yesterday morning.

"Had we maintained full speed, we would have reached Gaza by Sunday. But some of the smaller ships are slower, and we didn't want to leave them behind. It was a difficult decision, but we chose to travel together."

He said, "The delay doesn't matter. What matters is when we enter the danger zone, around 200 nautical miles away, the point from

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Will it bring peace at last?

AGENCIES

President Donald Trump has urged Israel to halt its bombing of Gaza after Hamas agreed to release hostages and accepted some key parts of a US peace plan -- a shift that could mean a two-year-old war is finally coming to a close.

Israel announced it would work on "immediate implementation" of the first stage of the plan, which Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu approved during a trip to Washington.

Yet potential pitfalls remain -- the precise timeline for implementing Trump's plan remains unclear, some logistics may prove problematic because of Gaza's devastation, and issues such as Hamas' disarmament and Israel's withdrawal appear unsettled.

Trump has said he is determined to bring an end to the conflict with this 20-point plan, stating in his message on social media on Friday: "This is not about Gaza alone, this is about long sought PEACE in the Middle East."

But this deal follows previous ceasefire attempts -- one shortly after the conflict began in 2023 and another earlier this year -- that lasted only a few weeks before

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Battery rickshaws overrun capital

Experts call for immediate action to regulate them

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and HELEMUL ALAM

Battery-run rickshaws have virtually taken over Dhaka's lanes, alleyways, and even parts of major roads, with their numbers surging since August 5 last year amid lax monitoring and a lack of regulations.

Urban planners and experts warn that though these vehicles offer cheaper and faster transport to city residents and livelihoods to thousands from low-income groups, they could cripple the city's transport network unless regulations are in place and enforced immediately.

Often assembled with unreliable braking systems, these unregulated vehicles can reach unsafe speeds, posing serious safety risks.

Several traffic police officers said drivers of these vehicles frequently ignore traffic signals and cross intersections at high speed, contributing to congestion at key points.

With no central registry or licensing system, the exact number



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

of battery-powered rickshaws remains unknown. However, leaders of two auto-rickshaw associations estimate that nearly five lakh of these vehicles now operate under 50 police stations in the capital -- already outnumbering traditional paddle rickshaws.

Many drivers lack experience in operating motorised vehicles, and

their reckless driving has led to both minor and fatal accidents.

According to Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity, battery-powered rickshaws were involved in about 15 percent of the 315 road accidents in Dhaka during the Eid rush between March 24 and April 7.

"Drivers of battery-run rickshaws

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BNP's seat-sharing math stirs unease among allies

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The BNP's calculations over sharing seats with its allies for the next general election are becoming increasingly complex, with frustration mounting among like-minded parties.

Alliance partners complain that many BNP leaders continue campaigning in constituencies where allies are also in the field. They say the BNP leadership has taken no initiative to rein in grassroots aspirants, heightening their concerns.

The issue has grown more challenging after proposed changes to the Representation of the People Order (RPO), which would bar allies from contesting under the BNP's electoral symbol, the paddy sheaf.

Senior BNP leaders admit it is a difficult balancing act: giving seats to allies with little chance of winning while trying to pacify their own leaders angry about losing nominations.

Two alliance chiefs told The Daily Star that the BNP must clarify its stance soon. "BNP leaders are seeking nomination and campaigning in the same seats where allies are present, so BNP should speak

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BNP leaders say it is difficult to give seats to allies while pacifying own candidates angry about losing nominations.

Commission wants July Charter signed by October 15

Some parties still need a few things ironed out

MD ABBAS

The National Consensus Commission aims to finalise the July Charter, with signatures from all political parties, by October 15 when its extended term ends.

It is set to sit with the parties again today to discuss how the charter will be implemented. Its plan is to complete all talks with the parties today.

However, some parties have said that they still need a few more days to finish discussions with others to come to a common ground.

The commission says it may allow at most one extra day, with another short session possible on October 7 if no consensus on implementation is reached today.

It will finalise the implementation process by October 10 in any case.

Prof Ali Riaz, vice-president of the commission, said if the parties cannot agree on one method of implementation, the commission will compile suggestions from experts and political parties and submit multiple recommendations to the government by October 10.

The July Charter is being prepared with 84 reform proposals agreed upon by the parties, many with notes of dissent.

To decide on the implementation method, the commission started discussions with the parties on September 11, but three days of talks yielded no agreement.

The parties have proposed six ways to implement the charter, including a full or partial referendum, a Special Constitutional Order, and a Constituent Assembly.

The others are implementation through the next parliament, turning parliament into a Constitutional Reform Assembly to include the reform proposals in the constitution, and asking the Supreme Court under Article 106 of the constitution whether an interim government has the authority to implement the charter.

Experts had suggested that a Constitutional Order could be issued on the charter. It would take effect immediately. Then, a referendum could be held on the day of the national election on that constitutional order.

They also said that to make the reform proposals sustainable, a referendum or a Constituent Assembly would be the best option.

The commission will sit with experts again and finalise its recommendations for submission if no consensus is reached among the parties today.

Sources said talks were kept suspended for longer to give parties time to consult internally and build consensus. While

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KHAGRACHHARI Section 144, blockade lifted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Khagrachhari district administration yesterday lifted the nine-day-long restriction under Section 144, which had been imposed following the alleged rape of a schoolgirl. The Jumma Chhatra Janata also called off its blockade programme.

Khagrachhari Deputy Commissioner ABM Iftekharul Islam Khondker announced the withdrawal of Section 144 in Khagrachhari Sadar and municipality through a Facebook post around 9:00pm yesterday.

Confirming the matter, the DC said law enforcement agencies had requested the withdrawal as the situation had returned to normal.

In Bangladesh, Section 144 prohibits the assembly of four or more people or restricts movement and specific activities in cases of apprehended danger, public nuisance, or urgent need for control.

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PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

When Aslam and Nazma, a couple from the capital's Demra area, were admitted to Mugda Medical College and Hospital with dengue fever, they decided to bring along their three-year-old daughter, Ayesha. Aslam was seen feeding Ayesha on his hospital bed yesterday, while Nazma sat next to them.