

EU: Asean must seek change in Myanmar

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

The European Union will not send observers to Myanmar's upcoming election, its top human rights official said yesterday, dismissing the vote as neither free nor fair and urging Southeast Asian nations to "push for change".

"We're calling upon all neighbouring countries, including the Asean countries, to really firmly push for a change of course," EU commissioner Kaja Ollongren told AFP in an interview in the Malaysian capital.

Myanmar junta chief Min Aung Hlaing has touted the December 28 elections as a path to reconciliation in the civil war he sparked by snatching power in a 2021 coup.

But international monitors, including a UN expert and Amnesty International, have dismissed the vote as a ploy to legitimise continuing military rule.

"As long as Myanmar is unstable, as long as it's sort of a source of instability for the whole region, it should be the number one concern... for the Asean countries," she said.



Hamas men stand guard, as heavy machinery operates at the site where searches are underway for the bodies of hostages in Khan Younis of the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Trump to meet Zelensky ahead of Putin summit

Ukraine says talks may focus on Tomahawk missiles

AFP, Washington

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky meets Donald Trump at the White House yesterday, seeking US-made Tomahawk missiles even as the US president readies for a fresh summit with Russia's Vladimir Putin.

Zelensky will be making his third trip to Washington since Trump returned to office, following a disastrous televised shouting match in February and a make-up meeting in August, as the US leader's stance on the war blows hot and cold.

Trump's latest pivot came on the eve of Zelensky's visit. He announced that he would be meeting Putin in Budapest, in a fresh bid to reach a peace deal and end Moscow's invasion of Ukraine launched in 2022.

Ukraine had hoped Zelensky's trip would be more about adding to the pressure on Putin, especially by getting American-made long-range Tomahawk cruise missiles that can strike deep into Russia.

But Trump, who once said he could end the war in Ukraine within 24 hours, appears set on pursuing



a new diplomatic breakthrough to follow the Gaza ceasefire deal that he brokered last week.

Trump said on Thursday he had a "very productive" call with Putin and that they would meet in the Hungarian capital within the next two weeks. He added that he hoped to have "separate but equal" meetings with both Putin and Zelensky but did not elaborate.

Zelensky said as he arrived in Washington on Thursday that he hoped Trump's success with the Gaza deal would bring results to end the war that has left swaths of his own country in ruins.

"We expect that the momentum

of curbing terror and war that succeeded in the Middle East will help to end Russia's war against Ukraine," Zelensky said on social media platform X.

Zelensky insisted that the threat of Tomahawks had forced Moscow to negotiate.

"We can already see that Moscow is rushing to resume dialogue as soon as it hears about Tomahawks," he said.

The Ukrainian leader yesterday said he had met officials from US defense firm Raytheon, which produces the Tomahawk missiles and Patriot systems.

However, Trump cast doubt on whether Ukraine would ever get the coveted weapons, which have a 1,000-mile (1,600-kilometer) range.

Trump told reporters on Thursday that the United States could not "deplete" its own supply. "We need them too, so I don't know what we can do about that," he said.

The US president said the Russian leader "didn't like it" when he raised the possibility of giving Tomahawks to Ukraine during their call.

Israeli forces kill 11-year-old in West Bank

AFP, Ramallah

Israeli forces shot dead an 11-year-old boy in the occupied West Bank, his family and health officials said yesterday, while the army said its troops opened fire at rock throwers.

The Palestinian health ministry said that Mohammad Hallaq was shot dead on Thursday by Israeli soldiers in the town of Al-Rihiya, south of Hebron. The bullet penetrated his pelvis.

Hallaq's uncle told AFP the child was sitting in front of his house when he was shot dead.

The number of children and teenagers shot dead by Israeli forces in the West Bank dramatically increased in 2025.

Since October 7, 2023, when Israel launched its war on Gaza, Israeli troops and settlers have killed at least 986 Palestinians in the West Bank, including many militants, according to health ministry figures.

AFGHAN-PAK BORDER CLASHES Ceasefire extended as Doha talks set to begin

AGENCIES

Pakistan and Afghanistan yesterday mutually agreed to extend their 48-hour ceasefire until conclusion of planned talks in Doha, according to three Pakistani security officials and one Afghan Taliban source.

A Pakistani delegation had already arrived in Doha while an Afghan delegation was expected to reach the Qatari capital today, said the sources, who did not want to be named as they were not authorised to speak to the media.

A temporary truce between the neighbours on Wednesday paused days of fierce fighting that killed dozens and wounded hundreds.

Dozens of soldiers and civilians on both sides have been killed since the clashes began nearly a week ago, with explosions also heard in the Afghan capital Kabul.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz

Sharif said Thursday that for the truce to continue, the ball was "in the court" of the Taliban government.

"If in 48 hours they want to resolve the issues and address our genuine demands, then we are ready for them," Sharif told his cabinet.

Pakistan, facing a rise in attacks on its security forces, has accused Afghanistan of harbouring terrorist groups, mainly Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, a claim that Kabul denies.

Afghans in the frontier town of Spin Boldak -- where the fighting had been particularly intense -- described scenes of normalcy early

yesterday.

"Everything is fine, everything is open," said Nani, 35, told AFP.

"I'm not afraid, but everyone sees things differently. Some say they're going to send their children elsewhere as the situation isn't good, but I don't think anything will happen," said Nani, who did not give a surname.



MPO teachers begin hunger strike

FROM PAGE 12

procession on Dhaka University campus.

Azizi said the number of teachers joining the strike would gradually increase. The work abstention, which began on Monday, would continue at all MPO-listed institutions.

Following a discussion with teacher leaders on Thursday, the government proposed providing a house rent allowance of 5 percent of the basic salary (minimum Tk 2,000) from November 1, but the protesters rejected it and announced that they would continue their demonstration.

On Sunday, teachers across the country joined the protest in front of the Jatiya Press Club and police dispersed their rally, using water cannons, batons, and sound grenades.

They then moved to the Shaheed

Minar, where they protested the police action and announced a countrywide work abstention from the following day.

Azizar Rahman, a 56-year-old teacher at Paschim Phulmati High School in Kurigram's Phulbari upazila, has joined the hunger strike. "No matter how long it takes, I will continue fasting."

Asked what he will do if his health deteriorates, he said, "There's nothing to do. I'm nearing retirement, but I don't want the next generation to struggle to support a family as a teacher. I joined the hunger strike so that teachers can live with dignity in society."

At the entry level, an MPO-listed teacher receives a monthly salary of Tk 12,500, including Tk 1,000 house rent, Tk 500 as medical allowance, and 50 percent of their basic pay as

festival bonus.

Currently, there are over 26,000 MPO-listed non-government institutions across the country, employing around 3.8 lakh teachers and 1.7 lakh staffers.

Asma Akter, a teacher from Khulna who joined the programme, said, "The government has proposed increasing the house rent allowance to Tk 2,000. But can anyone rent a house for that amount these days?"

Meanwhile, the University Teachers' Network has expressed solidarity with the ongoing protest. In a statement yesterday, the organisation also condemned the recent police attack on the protesters.

In a separate statement, the health wing of the National Citizen Party announced that it would provide medical support to the protesting teachers.

Malibagh mall

FROM PAGE 12

alias Shahin, 46; Nurul Islam, 33; Uttam Chandra Sur, 49; and Anita Roy, 31.

Police recovered 190 tolas of gold, some silver, a motorcycle, and Tk 1,77,200 in cash.

Shafiqul said Shahin was first caught in Chattogram, followed by two others in Barishal and one in Dhaka.

According to police, the gang was not new to such crimes. In 2021, they were involved in another gold theft at Chattogram's Karnaphuli Market. After securing bail, they returned to the same trade.

The shop owner claimed that around 500 tolas of gold were stolen, but police have so far recovered 190 tolas. "One suspect is still absconding. We hope to trace the rest of the gold once he is caught," said the DB chief.

Detectives said the recovered gold had not yet been sold, though some had been melted with the shop's tags still attached.

Police break up July Warriors' protests

FROM PAGE 1

At least one of the protesters had a prosthetic limb, a reminder of injuries sustained during the July uprising.

The protester, M Atikul Islam, was seen lying on the ground after being injured in the police action. He left his prosthetic arm behind as he exited the scene.

Witnesses and journalists at the scene said a police vehicle was vandalised during the confrontation. Around noon, protesters also set fire to event furniture near the MP Hostel adjacent to the South Gate. Around 1:45pm, police again fired multiple rounds of tear gas near the hostel to disperse the crowd.

Following the eviction, the demonstrators regrouped and marched towards Dhanmondi.

Around 2:15pm, they gathered in front of Rapa Plaza at Dhanmondi-27 and blocked Mirpur Road, bringing traffic to a standstill.

Witnesses said some of the protesters, armed with sticks, allowed only ambulances to pass while stopping all other vehicles.

Around 2:30pm, police again fired tear gas shells to disperse the group and took positions at the Shukrabad intersection, while the demonstrators scattered into nearby lanes and alleys.

At least 10 people were injured and required medical attention at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said Inspector Md Faruk, officer in charge of the DMCH police outpost. He said they were brought in around 2:00pm.

The injured include Shafiqul Islam, Synthia Mim, Shafiullah, Habib Ullah,

Tanvirul Islam, Saiful Islam, Atikul Gazi, Rakib, and Laily.

"Their condition is stable," he added.

Imaul Haque, OC of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station, said a total of 11 police officers were injured.

A case will be filed against those who took part in assaulting police, vandalising vehicles, setting fire to a control room, and forcibly entering a restricted area.

Gazi, a resident of Uttara, said, "Police suddenly began hitting us to clear the area. We were beaten indiscriminately."

Soheli Tamanna, a student of Mirpur Law College, said she was hurt during the incident.

"When I was at the parliament's south gate in the morning, police suddenly hit me with a baton. My hand is broken. We were peacefully demonstrating to press for our demands," she said.

"I was injured during the mass uprising, and now I am hurt again. The July charter cannot be signed without ensuring rehabilitation, allowances, and proper support for those injured in the movement," Soheli added.

Protesters again regrouped in the vicinity of the parliament around 4:00pm. Over a dozen assembled at the Khamarbari intersection in Farmgate. They chanted slogans, demanding the implementation of the July Protection Act and rehabilitation for those injured during the uprising.

Speaking at the demonstration, Mosad Uddin, a teacher at Banasree Bidyaniketan School, said holding

nearby factories and businesses remained closed for the third straight day.

Many family members, who believe their loved ones are still inside, were seen weeping at the scene.

Several tried to break through a police barricade to enter the gutted "Arian Fashion" garment factory, which caught fire on Tuesday.

They claimed their relatives were not among the 16 bodies taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and

instigated the bodies were still inside.

Tara Begum, one of those trying to enter, said her 14-year-old son Abdul Alim had worked at the factory last month but had not received his salary. He was told to come to the factory on October 14 to collect his pay.

The fire occurred that day, and she has not seen him since.

"None of the bodies at the DMCH morgue looks like my son. I want to go inside. My son's body is still lying there," she said.