

# INTERNATIONAL

## 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 Kajsa 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



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 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.

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