

INTERNATIONAL

Preparations underway for Putin's India visit: Kremlin

REUTERS, Moscow

The Kremlin said yesterday it was "actively preparing" for President Vladimir Putin to visit India before the end of the year and hoped it would be a substantive trip.

Putin is due to visit India in December according to the Kremlin. He last went there in December 2021, just a few months before ordering troops into Ukraine in February 2022.

"We are currently actively preparing for Putin's visit to India," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters in Moscow.

Peskov declined to give any details about agreements that might be reached during the trip.

US President Donald Trump has repeatedly called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi for India to stop buying oil from Russia. India is one of the biggest purchasers of Russian oil.

India and the US have signed a deal to expand defence cooperation over the next 10 years.



Health and civilian workers conduct a mass burial of Palestinians at a cemetery in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. The Gaza health ministry said it had received the bodies of 15 Palestinian prisoners under a US-brokered ceasefire exchange deal.

PHOTO: AFP

SEPT PROTESTS Nepal police arrest more than 400

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's police have arrested 423 people accused of crimes ranging from murder to vandalism during a deadly mass uprising in September that toppled the government, according to police data released yesterday.

Suspects also face charges that include the illegal possession and use of weapons, as well as theft and indecent behaviour, the data showed.

"A team is looking into the incidences and we are working to collect information," Nepal police spokesman Abi Narayan Kalte said.

Youth-led protests that rallied under the loose umbrella title of "Gen Z", referring to those aged under 28, erupted on September 8 after a government ban on social media.

Thailand suspends Cambodia peace deal

Says border landmine wounds two Thai troops; Cambodia defence ministry pledges 'unwavering commitment' to peace

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand announced yesterday it was suspending the implementation of a peace agreement with neighbouring Cambodia after a landmine blast injured two Thai soldiers near the border.

The deal, overseen by US President Donald Trump, was meant to secure a lasting end to hostilities following border clashes in July that killed at least 43 people and displaced more than 300,000 civilians on both sides.

The Royal Thai Army said in a statement that the mine explosion in Sisaket province left one soldier with a severe leg injury, while pressure from the blast caused another to withstand chest pains.

Thai government spokesman Siripong Angkasakulkiat said Bangkok would cease

The deal, overseen by US President Donald Trump, was meant to secure a lasting end to hostilities following border clashes in July that killed 43 people

"the follow-up to the joint declaration", meaning the accord with Cambodia inked in Kuala Lumpur in late October, months after the two sides had agreed a ceasefire.

The next steps planned as part of the agreement's implementation included the release of 18 Cambodian soldiers detained in Thailand.

Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul told a news conference that "we thought that the security threat had

ceased, but it has not actually decreased".

Cambodian authorities did not immediately comment on the incident, but have in the past denied Thai accusations of planting new landmines along the border.

Cambodia's defence ministry pledged in a statement yesterday an "unwavering commitment" to peace.

The Southeast Asian neighbours have a dispute over parts of their border dating back more than a century, but July's fighting was sparked by Thailand's claims that Cambodia planted landmines that wounded its troops.

Thailand and Cambodia agreed an initial truce in late July after intervention by Trump, as well as Chinese diplomats and Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, who chairs the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) bloc.

Jamaat, allies gear

FROM PAGE 12

"Not thousands, but hundreds of thousands will join the rally," he said.

He said the July charter and its implementation order are two separate issues, but BNP is treating them as one. He said although parties had worked together for nine months in the consensus commission to draft the charter, actions by some parties delayed the process.

Azad also said the door to dialogue remains open to resolve the current crisis. "The government or political parties can take such an initiative. But there is no scope to tamper with the July National Charter. Discussions, however, can be held on its implementation to find a way out of the crisis," he said.

When asked if today's rally would cause public inconvenience, he said it would be held from 2:00pm to 4:00pm and efforts would be made to end it on time. "If the traffic system works properly, there will be no major congestion," he added.

US strikes on alleged drug boats kill six more people

AFP, Washington

The US military has killed six more people in strikes on what it claims were drug-running boats. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said yesterday, bringing the total death toll in the series of attacks to 76.

Hegseth, in a post on X, said the US had carried out the strikes on Sunday in international waters in the eastern Pacific, targeting two boats "carrying narcotics" with three people on board each.

"All 6 were killed. No US forces were harmed," he said.

As in previous strikes, which began under President Donald Trump's administration in September, US officials did not release the identities of those killed, or offer evidence that they were smuggling narcotics or posed a threat to the United States.

Experts say the strikes, which have taken place in both the Pacific and Caribbean, amount to extrajudicial killings even if they target known traffickers.

Stop 'lamenting', seek 'solutions'

FROM PAGE 12

change, addressed the gathering of ministers and high-ranking officials from nearly 200 countries, in a stark portrayal of the price of failure on the climate crisis.

The two weeks of talks, hosted by Brazil in the Amazonian city of Belém, will focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, setting a path for the transition away from fossil fuels, and providing the finance needed to protect poor countries against extreme weather.

Temperatures have already surpassed the 1.5C threshold agreed under the 2015 Paris treaty for the last two years, but only if that continues for several more years will the rise be judged permanent and a breach of the treaty, reports The Guardian online.

Some scientists argue it could

still be possible to bring down temperatures to the threshold again, or close to it, by measures such as cutting the powerful greenhouse gas methane, and by a rapid switch to low-carbon technologies.

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva told the opening of UN climate talks yesterday that it was time to defeat climate change deniers. "Climate change is no longer a threat of the future. It is a tragedy of the present," said Lula, slamming those who reject scientific evidence and "spread fear, attack institutions, science, and universities."

"It's time to inflict a new defeat on the deniers," he said, adding that it was far cheaper to fight to protect the climate than to wage war.

Simon Stiell also told the opening meeting of the summit: "When

climate disasters decimate the lives of millions, when we already have the solutions, this will never, ever be forgiven."

"Not one single nation among you can afford this, as climate disasters rip double digits off GDP," he warned. "To falter whilst mega droughts wreck national harvests, sending food prices soaring, makes zero sense, economically and politically. To squabble while famines take hold, forcing millions to flee their homelands, this will never be forgotten, as conflicts spread."

Some including Brazil have suggested that countries focus on smaller efforts that don't need consensus, after years of COP summits that have celebrated lofty promises only to leave many unfulfilled.

BNP faces new hurdle ahead of elections

FROM PAGE 12

not nominated to remain patient, assuring them of "due respect and responsibility" within the party.

According to party insiders, the nomination list was made after five surveys conducted by Tarique's own team. Then the senior leaders met with the aspirants and held talks. The BNP high command also held a meeting with thousands of grassroots leaders at the chairperson's office in Gulshan in September where all pledged to follow party's decision.

Political analysts say the unrest has grown due to a lack of a fair and transparent nomination process, warning that failure to control it could harm the party's election performance.

Prof Al Masud Hasanuzzaman of Jahangirnagar University said poor coordination and weak communication between the top leadership and grassroots organisers worsened the situation.

"Since Tarique Rahman is not in Dhaka and is communicating with leaders virtually, the outcome has not been satisfactory, as face-to-face discussions are crucial in such matters," he said.

He said the party also ignored RPO provisions, fuelling further resentment.

A BNP standing committee member, speaking anonymously, said the party is reviewing controversial

➔ **BNP announced nominees for 237 constituencies on Nov 3**

➔ **Grassroots unhappy in nearly three dozen constituencies**

➔ **Clashes, protests reported in 26 districts**

➔ **Party reviewing some nominations, began talks**

nominations and will take action after completing the process. BNP leaders are also engaging with agitating local leaders to restore unity.

"The party is continuing talks with district leaders where protests have erupted, and we have already reviewed several applications seeking changes to nominees. We will calm the situation soon and take strict action against anyone who defies the party's decision," he said.

In Satkhira, protests continued for a fourth consecutive day after the announcement, with local activists demanding that the party replace its nominated candidate for the Satkhira-3 seat with Shahidul Alam, a member of the BNP's central executive committee.

Protesters blocked roads and highways and even observed a half-day strike on November 4.

Similar demonstrations occurred in Madaripur, Tangail,

Cumilla, Meherpur, Mymensingh, Chattogram, and Natore.

In Mymensingh's Gauripur upazila, a local Chhattr Dal activist died of a heart attack, and at least eight others were injured in clashes between supporters of BNP nominee M Iqbal Hossain and Tyabur Rahman Hiron, who did not get nomination; five leaders were expelled.

In Cumilla, ten people were injured in clashes between supporters of Abul Kalam and Samira Azim Dola during a political event.

In Gaibandha, authorities imposed Section 144 to prevent a showdown between rival factions led by nominee Faruk Alam and local leader Nahiduzzaman Nishat. In Chattogram, supporters of Aslam Chowdhury blocked both the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway and the railway line at Sitakunda over party leader Kazi Salah Uddin's nomination for Chattogram-4.

Malaysia steps up search for missing Rohingya boats

At least 21 dead; fate of 230 remains unclear

REUTERS, Langkawi

Malaysian maritime patrols scoured coastal waters in the Andaman Sea yesterday in search of dozens of missing members of Myanmar's persecuted Rohingya minority who police believe were on a boat that capsized and sank, killing at least 21 people.

Hundreds of Rohingyas boarded a vessel towards Malaysia two weeks ago, before being split into groups and sent to two boats on Thursday, said Khairul Azhar Nuruddin, police chief on Malaysia's northern Langkawi island, from where search operations are continuing across 255.7 square nautical miles.

There were around 70 people in the vessel that sank near Langkawi, while the fate of the other boat carrying 230 passengers remained unclear. They have found 13 survivors and seven bodies.

In Thailand, authorities have recovered four bodies, including two Rohingya girls. Over 5,100 Rohingyas boarded boats to leave Myanmar and Bangladesh between January and early November this year, says data from the UN Refugee Agency.

SPEECH EDIT BBC News says it received legal threat from Trump

REUTERS, London

BBC News said yesterday the broadcaster had received a letter from US President Donald Trump threatening legal action over the edit of a documentary broadcast a week before the US presidential election.

The BBC has acknowledged the Trump speech edit gave a misleading impression and should have been handled more carefully. The documentary broadcast last year had spliced together two parts of a Trump speech so he appeared to be encouraging the Capitol Hill riot of January 2021. "We will review the letter and respond directly in due course," a BBC spokesperson told Reuters.

Samir Shah, the chairman of the publicly-funded broadcaster, said in an interview with BBC News that it was "considering" how to respond to Trump's communication. When prompted about whether Trump would be suing the BBC, Shah said: "I do not know that yet, but he's a litigious fellow, so we should be prepared for all outcomes."

Medical college

FROM PAGE 12

Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum and Saidur Rahman, the special assistant to the chief adviser for health, had both said some substandard medical colleges would be shut down or merged with others. But the move could not be implemented due to fears of backlash and possible protests, sources said.

GOVT COLLEGES

According to official documents, the health ministry reduced a total of 355 seats across 14 government medical colleges, though new allocations elsewhere brought the net cut to 280 seats.

Twenty-five seats each were slashed at medical colleges in Dhaka, Chattogram, Mymensingh, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Netrokona, Naogaon, Magura, Chandpur, MAG Osmani in Sylhet, Sher-e-Bangla in Barishal, and Sir Salimullah in Dhaka.

Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College lost five seats, while Habiganj Medical College saw the largest cut of 50 seats.

At the same time, the government added 75 seats across three institutions – 20 each at Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College in Gazipur, Tangail Medical College, and Patuakhali Medical College, officials said.

PRIVATE COLLEGES

The authorities also reduced 367 seats across 12 private medical colleges, including two where enrolment has been suspended.

The other 10 private colleges facing seat cuts are Shaheed Monsur Ali Medical College Hospital, Dhaka (15 seats), Dhaka Central International Medical College (15 seats), President Abdul Hamid Medical College, Kishoreganj (45 seats), Diabetic Association Medical College, Faridpur (40 seats), City Medical College, Gazipur (30 seats), MARKS Medical College, Dhaka (20 seats), Delta Medical College, Dhaka (15 seats), Shahabuddin Medical College, Dhaka (15 seats), Dr Sirajul Islam Medical College, Dhaka (50 seats), and MH Samorita Medical College, Dhaka (15 seats).

In addition, four private medical colleges will remain barred from new admissions as before for failing to comply with the relevant regulations. They are Aichi Medical College and Northern International Medical College in Dhaka, Northern Private Medical College in Rangpur, and Shah Makhdam Medical College in Rajshahi.

Nearly 75% CEPZ

FROM PAGE 12

take corrective action."

Fire Service officials, meanwhile, said their probe committee has already updated fire safety data for all industrial establishments in Chattogram and will recommend stronger enforcement measures, especially for factories operating in export zones and industrial parks.

Several other structures inside the export processing zone were constructed without maintaining the required spacing between buildings, in violation of fire safety standards, they said.