

Food supply in Gaza improving, but long way to go
Says UN as winter rains risk spoiling delivered foodstuffs

REUTERS, Geneva

More food supplies are getting into Gaza since the October ceasefire but are still falling short of huge humanitarian needs as winter rains risk spoiling delivered foodstuffs, the UN World Food Programme said yesterday.

"Things are better than before the ceasefire, but we have a long way to go. Sustained support is an important endeavour to help families rebuild their health, their nutrition and their lives," WFP spokesperson Martin Penner told reporters in Geneva via video link from the Gaza Strip.

Hundreds of thousands of people remain in urgent need of food assistance, according to the WFP. In August a global food monitor said at least half a million people were experiencing famine in parts of the coastal enclave.

Earlier this week, Gaza was hit by heavy rain that spoiled and washed away some food supplies that residents had



been storing, senior WFP spokeswoman Abeer Etefa said. It was a sign of the challenges for families as winter sets in, she added.

Since a fragile Israel-Hamas ceasefire took effect on October 10 after two years of war that demolished much of the highly urbanised territory and caused a humanitarian disaster, the WFP has brought 40,000 tonnes of food aid into Gaza.

But it has met only 30 percent of its target for food parcels - reaching around 530,000 out of 1.6 million people, due to logistical issues getting supplies into the enclave earlier this month. However, it said it is now starting to catch up.

Though Gaza's markets are reviving, food prices remain high for Palestinians, many of whom lost their income during the war, with a chicken costing \$25, meaning many are reliant on food aid, the WFP said.

It said a woman had told the WFP in Khan Younis that she did not take her children to the market so they would not see all the food that's available, but unaffordable.

"If they go near the market, she tells them to cover their eyes," Penner stated.

Medecins Sans Frontieres said yesterday that its medical teams in Gaza had treated Palestinian women and children this week for injuries from Israeli airstrikes and gunfire, almost six weeks into a fragile Israel-Hamas ceasefire.



People hold placards during a nationwide shutdown organised by the advocacy group Women for Change, calling on the government to declare gender-based violence and femicide a national disaster, ahead of the G20 summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Negotiate 'now' or lose more territory

Kremlin presses Zelensky on US peace plan requiring concessions to Russia

AGENCIES

The Kremlin yesterday warned Ukraine's leader Volodymyr Zelensky to enter negotiations "now" or lose more territory after the US sent Kyiv a peace proposal heeding to many of Moscow's demands.

"The effective work of the Russian armed forces should convince Zelensky: it is better to negotiate and do it now rather than later," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

"The space for the freedom of decision-making is shrinking for him as territories are lost during offensive actions by the Russian army," he added, while saying Moscow had not officially received the US plan.

Zelensky said after talks with a top US Army official on Thursday evening he was ready for "honest"

- » Ukraine would give up a swathe of eastern territory to Russia
- » Kyiv would pledge to cut army size, never join Nato

work with Washington on the plan to end the war in Ukraine, while European allies pushed back against punishing concessions to Russia.

According to the US-backed plan, Ukraine would give up a swathe of eastern territory to Russia and slash the size of its army under a sweeping 28-point peace plan backed by US President Donald Trump.

Kyiv would also pledge never to join Nato, and would not get the

Western peacekeepers they have called for, although European warplanes would be stationed in Poland to protect Ukraine. A US official told AFP the draft plan includes a powerful security guarantee for Kyiv, modelled on Nato rules.

"This plan was drawn up immediately following discussions with one of the most senior members of President Zelensky's administration, Rustem Umerov, who agreed to the majority of the plan, after making several modifications, and presented it to President Zelensky," a senior US official said. Zelensky, who met US Army Secretary Daniel Driscoll in Kyiv alone, agreed to move quickly towards agreement and the signing of a plan, said Colonel Dave Butler, US army chief of public affairs.

MESSAGE TO MILITARY
Trump floats death penalty for 'seditious' Democrats

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump suggested on Thursday that Democratic lawmakers who urged the military to refuse illegal orders could be executed, calling them traitors and accusing them of "seditious behavior."

Democrats immediately slammed Trump's "absolutely vile" threats against the six senators and representatives, who made the comments in a video posted on X on Tuesday.

"This is really bad, and Dangerous to our Country. Their words cannot be allowed to stand. SEDITIOUS BEHAVIOR FROM TRAITORS!!! LOCK THEM UP???" Trump said on Truth Social.

He then added in a later post: "SEDITIOUS BEHAVIOR, punishable by DEATH!"

The 79-year-old also reposted a message from a user urging him to "hang them" and saying that the first US president, George Washington, would have done the same.

India's anti-terror force raid Kashmir news office

AFP, New Delhi

Indian counter-terrorism units raided the office of The Kashmir Times over its alleged role in a "criminal conspiracy", police said, with the news website calling the accusations "baseless" yesterday.

The State Investigation Agency (SLA) said the search late Thursday was part of an investigation into the Kashmir Times over their alleged involvement in a "criminal conspiracy with secessionist and other anti-national entities operating within and outside Jammu and Kashmir".

Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since their independence from British rule in 1947, and both claim the Himalayan territory in full. The outlet rejected the allegations, and said the office that was raided has been shut for the last four years and "out of operation".

The Kashmir Times, which started in 1954, became an online-only publication after one of its other offices was raided and sealed in 2022.



Yunus, Khaleda BNP in dilemma

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Invitations to Khaleda, BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman, the secretary general and other senior leaders on the occasion of Armed Forces Day.

Professor Muhammad Yunus attended the reception as the chief guest.

Armed Forces Day was observed yesterday with various programmes, commemorating the formation of Bangladesh's Army, Navy and Air Force during the 1971 Liberation War.

Khaleda also attended the Armed Forces Day reception at Senakunja last year, marking her first appearance at the programme in 12 years.

Draft text

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However, it did not specify whether this money would be provided directly by wealthy governments, or other sources.

That may disappoint poorer nations who want stronger guarantees that public money will be spent on this area.

Investments in adaptation - like improving infrastructure to cope with extreme heat, or reinforcing buildings against worsening storms - is often vital for saving lives but offers little financial return, making it difficult for such investments to attract private finance.

The draft deal would also launch a "dialogue" at the next three COP climate summits on trade, involving governments and other actors including the World Trade Organization.

That would be a win for countries including China who have long demanded that trade concerns be part of the world's climate summit. But it may be uncomfortable for the EU, as demands for such discussions have often focused on the EU carbon border levy.

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The BNP leader said that nearly half the population still lacks adequate education, and any referendum question must take that reality into account.

Some leaders argue that campaigning for the "no" vote could make BNP appear opposed to the reforms demanded after the July uprising, and that Jamaat and its partners may use this as a strategy to push for delaying the polls.

Others warn that if the party backs the "yes" vote, it may face complications governing the state if it comes to power in the future.

JAMAAT'S STANCE

Leaders of the Jamaat and its partners said their candidates will campaign

Suspect dies

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Mokter's son, Mridul, said he too had been picked up by DB with his father on Thursday. He was released after his father's death.

"They detained both of us and took us to the conference room of Pallabi Police Station, where they tortured my father," he alleged.

He added that when Mokter was taken to DMCH on Thursday night, doctors advised the cops to bring the patient to the hospital without delay.

"My father fell asleep in DB custody while writhing in severe stomach pain, and later DB members found him dead," he added.

Dhaka Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner (Media) Talebur Rahman said a three-member committee has been formed to investigate the death.

Kibria was shot dead by armed assailants in Dhaka's Pallabi area on Monday. His wife later filed a case with Pallabi Police

for the "yes" vote and the national election together.

Several parties have already begun printing leaflets and preparing online and offline strategies dedicated to promoting the "yes" vote.

Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair, assistant secretary general of Jamaat and head of its publicity wing, said, "If 'yes' wins, the proposals in the July charter will be implemented. We want the people to take the side of 'yes', and we will campaign for it. Other parties in the movement will also do the same."

Maolana Yunus Ahmad, secretary general of Islami Andolan Bangladesh, said, "Our candidates will campaign for the 'yes' vote while conducting election campaigns."

Ensure smooth, festive election

FROM PAGE 2

ready and determined to protect the country's sovereignty from any aggressive external attack," he added.

To this end, he said efforts are underway to modernise the army, navy and air force, enhance training, and integrate modern technology into the forces in line with developed countries.

Recalling the joint operation of the Army, Navy and Air Force on this day in 1971, Prof Yunus said their combined efforts against the Pakistani occupation forces paved the way for Bangladesh's final victory in the Liberation War on December 16, 1971.

He said the contribution

of the Armed Forces during the 1971 Liberation War will be inscribed in bold letters in Bangladesh's history.

Prof Yunus noted that the Armed Forces have always stood by the people - whether during national disasters or the 2024 student-led mass uprising - and continue to support ongoing reconstruction and reform efforts.

"I believe the Bangladesh Armed Forces, loyal to democratic and disciplined leadership, will continue this tradition of sacrifice and service for the nation, combining professional skills with patriotism," Prof Yunus said.

Over the past 37 years, he noted, Bangladesh's

peacekeepers have successfully completed 63 missions in 43 countries.

"At present, our peacekeepers are engaged in 10 missions in different parts of the world," he added.

Prof Yunus also said Bangladesh is now one of the largest contributors of women peacekeepers and has earned global recognition as a responsible and reliable partner in international efforts for peace and security.

He expressed sincere gratitude to members of the Armed Forces and said efforts must continue to provide timely training and necessary equipment to Bangladeshi peacekeepers so they can effectively

operate in challenging and high-risk environments around the world.

He thanked the diplomats stationed in Dhaka and guests from the friendly countries for joining the Armed Forces Day celebration.

"On this occasion, we gratefully recall the contribution of the people of our friendly nations during our War of Liberation. I am also thankful for the excellent training and assistance provided to our Armed Forces by your countries," Prof Yunus said.

"I must mention that it is a unique opportunity and great experience for our troops to work

together with the global peacekeepers under the umbrella of the United Nations," he mentioned.

Prof Yunus assured full support to the United Nations in the global peace efforts by the Armed Forces.

Earlier, the chiefs of the three services paid a courtesy call on the chief adviser on the occasion of Armed Forces Day 2025.

During the meeting, Prof Yunus decorated Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman with the Senabahini Padak (SBP).

On the occasion of Armed Forces Day, he also unveiled the cover of the Bangladesh Armed Forces Training Compendium.

Israel hits

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to seize parts of a key Roman-era archaeological site in the West Bank, reports Al Jazeera online.

Large swaths of Sebastia could be appropriated under a plan announced by Israel's Civil Administration, with the anti-settlement watchdog Peace Now saying the site is about 1,800 dunams (180 hectares or 450 acres) in size.

Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has again reiterated his staunch opposition to a Palestinian state, saying Israel would not shift on the issue even to secure normalisation with Saudi Arabia.

Asked about the prospect during an interview with Israeli news outlet Abu Ali Express, Netanyahu said: "There will be no Palestinian state. As simple as that ... It's an existential threat to Israel."

However, the Israeli leader said he still has "cautious optimism" about potential Saudi normalisation, which he claims was set back by the Gaza war.

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