

## INTERNATIONAL

## 9 kids, woman killed in Pak air strikes

Says Afghanistan, vows to respond; Islamabad denies claims

REUTERS

Afghanistan's Taliban administration said yesterday that nine children and a woman were killed in Pakistani air strikes and vowed to respond, ratcheting up tensions between the South Asian neighbours.

The bombardment overnight reported by Kabul followed a series of attacks in Pakistan that Islamabad blames on militants based in Afghanistan.

Pakistan denied carrying out any attack. According to state broadcaster PTV, military spokesman Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said: "Pakistan has not attacked Afghanistan."

"Whenever we conduct a strike, it is announced openly and properly," he said. "Pakistan never attacks civilian populations. The allegations of the interim Afghan government are baseless."



Displaced Palestinians gather beside tents in a flooded area during heavy rain in Gaza City yesterday. Cold weather has worsened the plight of children and the elderly amid severe shortages of blankets, winter clothing, and heating.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Israeli strikes killed 127 Lebanese since ceasefire: UN

REUTERS, Geneva

The UN human rights office said yesterday that at least 127 civilians had been killed in Lebanon in strikes by the Israel military since a ceasefire nearly a year ago, and called for an investigation and for the truce to be respected.

"Almost a year since the ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel was agreed, we continue to witness increasing attacks by the Israeli military, resulting in the killing of civilians and destruction of civilian objects in Lebanon, coupled with alarming threats of a wider, intensified offensive," said Thameen Al-Kheetan, spokesperson for the UN human rights office, at a Geneva press briefing.

He said the number included deaths it had verified based on its own strict methodology but that the real level could be higher.

But Kheetan told reporters in Geneva "all the fatalities we have documented as a result of this strike were civilians, raising serious concerns that the Israeli military's

attack may have violated international humanitarian law principles on the conduct of hostilities".

"There must be prompt and impartial investigations into the Ain El-Hilweh strike, as well as all other incidents involving possible violations of international humanitarian law by all parties, both before and after the ceasefire," he insisted.

"Those responsible must be brought to justice." Asked who should carry out the investigations, he said: "When we're talking about strikes conducted by the Israeli military, the Israeli military should investigate its own actions."

"Of course, the Lebanese state has the responsibility to investigate similar violations that can occur from its side."

Kheetan highlighted that continuing Israeli attacks in Lebanon had also destroyed and damaged civilian infrastructure. "They have also severely hampered reconstruction efforts and attempts by internally displaced people to go back to their homes in southern Lebanon," he said.



## Sudan warring factions not yet accepted peace plan Says US envoy

REUTERS, Abu Dhabi

The United States presented the warring Sudanese army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) with a strong text for a peace plan but neither side has accepted it, senior US envoy Massad Boulos said yesterday.

Trump said last week he would intervene to stop the devastating conflict, which broke out in April 2023 and has spread famine and ethnic killings across the country and threatened a split, the second in its history.

Previous efforts led by the United States, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates have failed to bear fruit. The group submitted a proposal to the two forces in early November.

Boulos, U.S. President Donald Trump's advisor for African and Arab affairs, said both Sudan's warring factions had welcomed the U.S. plan but neither had formally accepted the text.

## AI BREAKTHROUGHS

## Trump launches 'Genesis Mission' to speed research

AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump signed an executive order Monday establishing the "Genesis Mission," a national initiative to harness AI for scientific breakthroughs, comparing its scope to the Manhattan Project that produced the atomic bomb during World War II.

The plan is part of the Trump administration's aggressive, low-regulation strategy to boost big tech's race to stay ahead of China on artificial intelligence and cement US dominance in the fast-expanding field.

The White House is also seeking ways to legally stop US states from implementing their own AI regulations and has threatened to rescind federal aid to states that do so.

The order on Monday tasked the Department of Energy with building an integrated AI platform that will combine the nation's supercomputers, federal scientific datasets and research facilities to accelerate discovery in fields ranging from nuclear fusion to semiconductor manufacturing.

## '2029 will be a dangerous time, BJP won't stay in power': Mamata

THE INDIAN EXPRESS ONLINE

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee yesterday predicted that the BJP will not stay in power in 2029, when the next Lok Sabha elections are scheduled, and said that after Bengal's Assembly elections in 2026, she would "tour the nation".



Addressing a rally in Bongaon, a border district with a sizeable Matua population in North 24 Parganas, Banerjee accused the BJP of trying to win Bengal using the Election Commission and the

Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, claiming that, unlike in Bihar, she "understands the game being played".

"2029 will be a dangerous time for you (BJP). Your government will not stay in 2029. Hurting the people of Bengal is hurting me. If you hurt me, I will shake the nation. After the elections, I will tour the nation. Remember, an injured tiger is more dangerous," Banerjee said. She also held a padayatra in the area.

"In the Bihar elections too, you highlighted ghuspaaythiyans (infiltrators). In Bihar, they (Opposition parties) could not catch your game. But we will catch your game here. The BJP will also lose in Gujarat in the next elections," she said.

Banerjee said that the state government would have fully assisted the Election Commission if they "had done SIR properly".

## BNP eyes youth votes with pledge

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development, health, agriculture, women's empowerment, sports, and religious affairs.

They added that the list of pledges in the election campaign is based on the party's 31-point reform plan.

According to sources, several teams composed of BNP's front and associate organisations are preparing to launch field activities soon.

BNP's leaflets will outline a series of promises the party says it will implement if voted to power. These include protecting the environment, introducing 50 lakh family cards for food support, planting five crore trees over the next five years, and launching special measures to curb extortion and corruption in key sectors.

The party will also campaign on its plan to establish a universal healthcare system modelled on the United Kingdom's National Health Service (NHS).

On climate and water security, the

BNP will pledge to restore 20,000 kilometres of rivers and canals, reintroduce community-based irrigation systems, and construct modern Teesta and Ganges barrages.

The party plans to provide a monthly honorarium to imams and muezins facing financial hardship and, if elected, will intensify engagement with minority communities to address their concerns.

If voted to power, the BNP will also introduce major reforms in the education sector. The school-level curriculum will include sports, arts, culture, and technical education, and the government will provide funds to students for setting up small industries.

With campaigning set to begin in full swing ahead of the February polls, the BNP is working to ease tensions stemming from nomination disputes. Party leaders said they are reaching out to those denied party tickets to pacify them ahead of Tariq's expected return to the country.

Under the supervision of Senior Joint

Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, the BNP has rolled out a coordinated strategy to strengthen its outreach across mainstream media, social media, and grassroots supporters. The plan includes forming seven teams, each consisting of seven members, with a designated leader for each team.

Party sources said senior figures are spending more time in their constituencies, identifying weaknesses, and working to address them before the polls.

In constituencies with minimal internal conflict, BNP candidates have advanced their election preparations, training polling agents and preparing backup agents. Banners, festoons, and billboards have been put up across constituencies, highlighting BNP's 31-point promises and its broader state reform outline.

Candidates are also holding meetings and discussions with various professional groups, pledging steps to improve local infrastructure and maintain law and order.

## Tulip's trial 'unfair and contrived'

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during the trial, including being made aware of the charges against her and being able to secure legal representation.

The group, which also includes Cherie Blair KC, Philippe Sands KC, and Geoffrey Robertson KC, said a lawyer appointed by Siddiq had been placed under house arrest and warned that his daughter had received threats.

The signatories argued that the proceedings appear artificial and fundamentally unfair, and that the manner in which the prosecution is being pursued raises serious concerns.

Siddiq and other individuals, including her aunt, mother, brother and sister, have been on trial in Dhaka since the start of August this year.

The Labour MP is accused of influencing Hasina to secure a plot of land in a Dhaka suburb for her mother Sheikh Rehana, who is Hasina's sister.

Siddiq denied the allegations, which she said are politically motivated.

The lawyers expressed deep concern over the criminal proceedings, noting that the Bangladesh interim government's Chief Adviser Prof

Muhammad Yunus, has publicly stressed the importance of the rule of law and justice in Bangladesh.

They wrote, "As she [Siddiq] lives in the UK and is a UK national, she is plainly not a fugitive. She is an elected member of parliament, who can be contacted at the House of Commons, and indeed extradited to Bangladesh to face charges if there are proper grounds for seeking her extradition."

"Not only has Ms Siddiq not been presented with the charges and evidence against her, she has also not been able to obtain legal representation."

The letter added, "A lawyer in Bangladesh she appointed to represent her was forced to stand down, reporting that he had been placed under house arrest, further informing Ms Siddiq that his daughter had been threatened."

"This accords with reports of a pattern of interference and intimidation in the legal system since the interim government took office."

The group also criticised the Anti-Corruption Commission in Dhaka for making repeated media comments about Siddiq's alleged culpability.

"Given all of the circumstances, we have serious concerns that the trial of Ms Siddiq in absentia is unfair, that she does not have a proper opportunity of defending herself, or indeed any opportunity at all, that she is being tried in her absence without justification and that the proceedings fall far short of standards of fairness recognised internationally."

The lawyers urged the Bangladeshi authorities to address these issues so that a fair trial can take place.

After suggestions surfaced in the media that Siddiq had improperly benefited from her aunt's rule, Keir Starmer's independent adviser on the ministerial code, Sir Laurie Magnus, cleared her of wrongdoing in January.

But Magnus had added that it was "regrettable that she was not more alert to the potential reputational risks" stemming from her family ties and her Treasury role.

Siddiq resigned from her roles as economic secretary to the Treasury and City minister, saying the allegations from Bangladesh were proving a distraction for the government.

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**e-Tender Notice: OTM**

Ref No. 35.03.0000.000.004.07.0019.25-870; Date: 25 November 2025

An e-Tender has been invited in e-GP System National Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following goods and related services by Director (Operation), Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), BRTA HQ, Chairmanbari, Banani, Dhaka-1212.

SL No.	Tender ID	Description	Tender publication date & time	Tender document last selling date & time	Tender closing/opening date & time
01	1181170	Procurement of online meeting system and support service for BRTA HQ	25-Nov-2025 09:00 Hours (BST)	09-Dec-2025 16:00 Hours (BST)	10-Dec-2025 15:00 Hours (BST)

This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in National e-GP Portal System (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). No offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on e-GP Portal. Informations and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP helpdesk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)). For further information, visit: <https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>

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