

INTERNATIONAL

Can't accept nations as 'world judge'

Says Chinese FM after US captures Maduro

REUTERS, Beijing

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Beijing cannot accept any country acting as the "world's judge" after the United States captured Venezuela's Maduro.

"We have never believed that any country can act as the world's police, nor do we accept that any nation can claim to be the world's judge," Wang told his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar during a meeting in Beijing on Sunday, referring to "sudden developments in Venezuela" without directly mentioning the US.

"The sovereignty and security of all countries should be fully protected under international law," China's top diplomat added, in his first remarks since images of the 63-year-old Maduro blindfolded and handcuffed on Saturday stunned Venezuelans.



Members of the militia group known as "Colectivos" march in Caracas on Sunday, calling for the release of Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro after he and his wife, Cilia Flores, were captured in US strikes on Venezuela. Inset, employees stand near rubble after the US airstrike destroyed a TV and telephone tower in El Hatillo, on the outskirts of Caracas. PHOTO: REUTERS

MYANMAR POLLS
Pro-military party wins in first phase

Official results show

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar's dominant pro-military party won the first phase of junta-run elections, the last released official results showed yesterday, with the USDP taking nearly 90 percent of lower house seats.

The military staged a 2021 coup that ousted the democratic government of Aung San Suu Kyi, but is overseeing a month-long phased election it pledges will return power to the people.

Western diplomats and democracy advocates dismiss the poll as a ploy to rebrand military rule, citing Suu Kyi's jailing, her party's dissolution and a crackdown on dissenters.

The pro-military Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) won 89 of 102 lower house seats included in the first phase, according to an AFP tally of official results released from Friday to yesterday.

The USDP win equates to more than 87 percent of lower house seats included in the first phase of voting on December 28 – the remainder mostly won by a smattering of parties representing ethnic minorities.

TRUMP'S CAPTURE OF MADURO
Concerns grow over potential war with Iran

AGENCIES

Hours after the United States announced the capture of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, Israeli politician Yair Lapid issued a warning to Tehran: "The regime in Iran should pay close attention to what is happening in Venezuela."

The forcible removal of Maduro from power came less than a week after US President Donald Trump met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and threatened to launch new strikes against Iran.

Although Washington's tensions with Caracas and Tehran

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said Jamal Abdi, president of the National Iranian American Council (NIAC).

have different roots and dynamics, analysts say Trump's move against Maduro raises the prospects of war with Iran.

"A new lawlessness makes everything less stable and war more likely," said Jamal Abdi, president of the National Iranian American Council (NIAC).

"Whether Trump becomes enmeshed with 'surgical' regime change, or gives Netanyahu a US imprimatur for similar actions,

it's hard not to see how this gives momentum for the many actors pushing for renewed war with Iran."

He added that Maduro's abduction could prompt Iran "to do something that triggers military action", including developing its own military deterrence or preempting US or Israeli strikes.

Negar Mortazavi, a senior fellow at the Center for International Policy, also said the US actions in Venezuela show Trump's maximalist aims, further dimming the chances of diplomacy.

"What I see and hear from Tehran is that they are not interested in negotiating with the Trump administration the way this administration signals that they want total surrender," Mortazavi

told Al Jazeera.

"So, not much chance for diplomacy at the moment, which then opens the path to the opposite road, that is conflict. Right now, Israel, Iran and the US are on a path to potential conflict."

Abdi echoed that assessment. "This action reinforces every doubt and suspicion about US intentions, and gives more credence to those in Iran who say engaging the US is useless and [that] developing a nuclear deterrent is vital," he told Al Jazeera.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has also been emphasising Maduro's ties to Iran, accusing Caracas, without evidence, of providing the Lebanese armed group Hezbollah a foothold in the Western Hemisphere.



Moderate 5.4 quake hits India's Assam

AFP, New Delhi

A moderate 5.4-magnitude earthquake struck northern India's Assam state early yesterday morning, according to the US Geological Survey.

The shallow quake was centered three kilometres outside of the village of Dhing near India's border with Bhutan and hit around 4:17 am (2247 GMT on Sunday).

The USGS reported strong shaking in the area, but expected a limited population had been affected.

Tremors were felt across Meghalaya and parts of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura and West Bengal, prompting people in several areas to rush out of their homes. Authorities said there were no immediate reports of injuries or damage.

The Himalayan region experiences big earthquakes each year, and has been the site of some of India's largest and deadliest tremors.

A 1950 quake killed about 4,800 people in Assam and Tibet.

The Great Assam Earthquake of 1897 is said to be one of the most powerful to have hit India, leaving hundreds dead in the remote hills.

Income of Amir Khosru

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lower than the amount he lost in the share market last year. A major portion of his recent earnings came from Tk 80 lakh in signing money received from Concord Real Estate.

Listed as a businessman, Khosru is contesting from the Chattogram-11 (Bandar-Patenga) constituency. His wife, also a businessperson, has seen her income rise from Tk 9.1 lakh in 2018 to Tk 37.8 lakh. She too received Tk 7.02 lakh in signing money from Concord.

Khosru's personal expenses, excluding share market losses, amount to Tk 31 lakh annually. He has also invested Tk 32.6 lakh each in expanding his commercial property in Chattogram's Khatungonj and his residence in Kattali.

In Khatungonj, he rents space to a bank and owns 12 shops.

His affidavit shows Tk 36.8 lakh earned in bonus shares from Alpha Securities and Tk 36.3 lakh from bonds and interest. He reported Tk 2 crore in liquid cash last year, while his wife held Tk 1.67 crore. In 2018, his liquid assets were Tk 1.72 crore, while his wife had Tk 3.3 crore.

Khosru declared his vehicle to be worth Tk 7.5 lakh, while his wife's is valued at Tk 40.5 lakh.

The affidavit also notes that Khosru once faced 35 criminal cases. Legal proceedings have eased significantly, with 34 cases either acquitted, exempted, or withdrawn. Only one case remains pending at the Special Sessions Judge Court in Dhaka.

Azad's net wealth

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agricultural land ownership has dropped from 7.25 kathas in 2008 to 1.25 kathas now, he currently owns half of a six-storey, 3,625 sqft building in Dhaka's Rampura, with his wife owning the other half.

The declared market value of his immovable assets stands at Tk 60.9 lakh. He also owns a 2,066 sqft flat in Bashundhara, Dhaka, registered in the name of a minor, valued at Tk 67.43 lakh.

In 2008, he had a 10,900 sqft under construction building in Khilgaon worth Tk 20 lakh.

His income sources have shifted. In 2008, he reported earning Tk 2.98 lakh solely from business. Last year, he earned Tk 14.41 lakh from land sales and Tk 4.73 lakh from rent. Although Azad owns five companies, he didn't declare any revenue from them.

Azad's movable assets are declared at Tk 81.76

lakh, a massive jump from the Tk 9.26 lakh reported in 2008. His current holdings include Tk 47.56 lakh in cash, Tk 10.31 lakh in bank deposits, and Tk 7.26 lakh in shares of nine listed companies.

His wife also holds substantial property, including 25.63 decimals of land with immovable assets valued at Tk 1.16 crore. She has movable assets worth Tk 6.19 lakh and earns Tk 4.73 lakh annually.

The affidavit further reveals that Azad faced 72 criminal cases over the years – 39 of them filed in 2013. He has been acquitted or discharged in 47 cases, while 23 others were withdrawn. One case remains pending before the Appellate Division, and another has been stayed by the High Court.

Azad plans to spend Tk 38.78 lakh for his election campaign, with Tk 20.12 lakh coming from his personal income and the remainder from donations.

Sarjis Alam's

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tax return. While the tax return lists total assets worth Tk 33.73 lakh, the affidavit's breakdown accounts for significantly less.

According to the affidavit, Sarjis holds liquid assets of Tk 5.61 lakh; Tk 3.11 lakh in cash, Tk 1 lakh in banks (without naming institutions or accounts), and Tk 1.5 lakh in electronic goods and furniture.

He also declared 16.5 decimals of agricultural land, noted as "gifted", with an acquisition value of Tk 7,500 and an estimated market value of Tk 5 lakh.

Sarjis paid Tk 52,500 in income tax for the 2025-2026 assessment year.

In his election expenditure statement, Sarjis said he expects to

receive Tk 11 lakh in gifts from four well-wishers who are not his relatives and another Tk 2 lakh in loans from an individual.

According to the document, he is also receiving funds in gifts from his father-in-law, mother-in-law, and paternal and maternal uncles.

However, the exact amount could not be ascertained, as the first digits of the six-digit figures were illegible in the scanned document available on the EC website.

Based on the visible digits, it appears he is receiving at least Tk 1 lakh from each of them. He also listed a contribution of at least Tk 1 lakh from his brother-in-law as a loan.

He faces one criminal case filed in Gazipur.

Govt publishes white paper

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It also includes a set of recommendations aimed at ensuring transparency, accountability, and good governance in the future.

The government hopes the findings and recommendations outlined in the white paper will serve as an important guideline for institutional reforms, strengthening anti-corruption measures, and ensuring more efficient and citizen-friendly services in the telecommunications sector, the statement added.

According to the white paper, Bangladesh's telecom sector is suffering from entrenched corruption, systemic irregularities, and a governance breakdown that has weakened regulatory credibility, distorted markets, and wasted public resources.

Prepared by a seven-member committee headed by Professor Kamrul Hasan of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, the white paper also paints a bleak picture of a sector structurally misaligned, operationally

compromised, and failing to deliver trusted, affordable connectivity.

It found that policy neglect, unchecked favoritism, politicized appointments, and procurement manipulation had accumulated over the years.

The document, based on a forensic review of 10 key entities under the PTD, exposes a systemic "governance capture" that has crippled regulatory authority, bled state-owned enterprises, and defrauded the public.

From the highest regulatory body to project implementation cells, the sector operates on favoritism, bypasses competitive processes, and treats public resources as a vehicle for patronage.

"These structural deficiencies produce systemic risks to meritocracy, institutional credibility, service delivery, and long-term sector reform."

At the heart of the crisis is the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), the agency tasked with regulating the sector. The white paper

found the BTRC itself to be a primary source of irregularity, with its credibility shattered by its own actions.

The commission was accused of "non-competitive recruitment, misclassification of candidates, excessive age relaxations, improper absorption of project-funded staff, re-employment of retirees, and conflicted commissioner appointments."

By blurring the lines between regulator and employer, the BTRC created a self-serving system.

"BTRC's practices have eroded institutional integrity and diminished the credibility of sector oversight," the report said.

The irregularities at the top set a precedent for the entire ecosystem.

The malaise spread through state-owned enterprises like Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Limited and Teletalk, where boards became instruments of governance capture and politicized board-level decision-making.

UK starts ban on junk food ads on daytime TV and online

AFP, London

New regulations come into force yesterday in Britain banning daytime TV and online adverts for so-called junk foods, in what the government calls a "world-leading action" to tackle childhood obesity.

The ban – targeting ads for products high in fat, salt or sugar – is expected to remove up to 7.2 billion calories from children's diets each year, according to the health ministry.

Impacting ads airing before the 9:00pm watershed and anytime online, it will reduce the number of children living with obesity by 20,000 and deliver around £2 billion (\$2.7 bln) in health benefits, the ministry added.

The implementation of the measure – first announced in December 2024 – follows other recent steps, including an extended sugar tax on pre-packaged items like milkshakes, ready-to-go coffees and sweetened yoghurt drinks.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
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Memo No. 35.05.0000.022.07.046.25-1589 Date: 05.01.2026

e-Tender Notice: OTM

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of Goods as stated as below:

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and No offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP Help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Sl. No.	Package No.	Description of Goods	Tender ID No.	Tender Publishing (Date and time)	Tender Last Selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing (Date & Time)
1.	DMTCL/GR-16/2025-26	Supply of Diesel Generator Maintenance materials and related services for the Electrical Department (02 Nos for Uttara Depot, and 09 Nos for Uttara North to Agargaon Station) of DMTCL.	1207061	05-Jan-2026 17:00	25-Jan-2026 16:00	26-Jan-2026 15:00
2.	DMTCL/GR-12/2025-26	Supply of Air Conditioning Items and Related Services for Electrical Department. These items will be used for different buildings of Depot and MRT Stations (Station-3&5) under DMTCL.	1207022	05-Jan-2026 17:00	25-Jan-2026 16:00	26-Jan-2026 15:00
3.	DMTCL/GR-13/2025-26	Supply of Maintenance Items (Consumables, Safety Items and Tools) for Civil & P-Way Department under DMTCL.	1205799	05-Jan-2026 17:00	01-Feb-2026 16:00	02-Feb-2026 15:00
4.	DMTCL/GR-14/2025-26	Supply of Fire Protection Items and Related Services of Electrical Department under DMTCL.	1205923	05-Jan-2026 17:00	01-Feb-2026 16:00	02-Feb-2026 15:00
5.	DMTCL/GR-08/2025-26	Supply of Maintenance Items for Signaling and Telecom Department of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL).	1206214	05-Jan-2026 17:00	01-Feb-2026 16:00	02-Feb-2026 15:00

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