

Israeli drone strike kills three in Gaza

AGENCIES

Three Palestinians have been killed in the southern Gaza Strip in Israel's latest violation of October's ceasefire in its genocidal war on the besieged enclave, according to sources in Gaza.

An Israeli quadcopter drone struck down three Palestinians in Khan Younis yesterday, the sources told Al Jazeera. A Palestinian woman was also wounded by Israeli gunfire in al-Batn al-Sameen area. The attacks came after Israeli army forces carried out air strikes and shelling across several parts of the enclave yesterday.

The three people killed were identified as Wissam Abdullah Salem al-Amour, Mahmoud Subhi Breika and Atef Samir al-Bayouk, the Palestinian news agency Wafa reported.

The Israeli army has killed more than 71,400 people, mostly women and children, and injured over 171,000 in its war, which began in October 2023.



Federal agents spray pepper at a protester holding a sign during an immigration enforcement operation outside the Whipple Building, an ICE facility in Minneapolis, Minnesota, US on Sunday. Hundreds more federal agents were heading to Minneapolis, the US homeland security chief said.

PHOTO: AFP



'I know the pain'

Ex-refugee takes over as UNHCR chief

AFP, Kakuma

Barham Salih has known torture and the wrenching loss of exile. Four decades after his own ordeal, he has taken the helm of the UN refugee agency as it grapples with a funding shortfall and ever-rising needs.

A former Iraqi president, Salih, 65, became the first former head of state to run the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) at the start of the year.

"It is a profound moral and legal responsibility," Salih told AFP during his first trip in the new role -- to Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. "I know the pain of losing a home, losing your friends," he said.

The Kakuma refugee camp, which Salih visited on Sunday, is east Africa's second largest, hosting roughly 300,000 people from South Sudan, Somalia, Uganda and Burundi. It has been in place since 1992.

US will have Greenland 'one way or the other'

Says Trump, warns Russia, China would 'take over' if Washington didn't act; Nato working on 'next steps' to boost Arctic security

AFP, Aboard Air Force One

President Donald Trump said Sunday the United States would take Greenland "one way or the other," warning that Russia and China would "take over" if Washington didn't act.

Trump says controlling the mineral-rich Danish territory is crucial for US national security given increased Russian and Chinese military activity in the Arctic.

"If we don't take Greenland, Russia or China will, and I'm not letting that happen," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One, despite neither country laying claim to the vast island.

Trump said he would be open to making a deal with the Danish self-governing territory "but one way or the other, we're going to have Greenland."

Denmark and other European allies have voiced shock at Trump's threats over the island, which plays a strategic role between North America and the Arctic, and where the United States has had a military base since World War II.

Denmark's Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen on Sunday said her country faces a "decisive moment" in its diplomatic battle with the US over Greenland.

A Danish colony until 1953,



Greenland gained home rule 26 years later and is contemplating eventually loosening its ties with Denmark.

The vast majority of its population and political parties have said they do not want to be under US control and insist Greenlanders must decide their own future -- a viewpoint continuously challenged by Trump.

"Greenland should make the deal, because Greenland does not want to see Russia or China take over," Trump warned, as he

mocked its defenses.

"You know what their defense is, two dog sleds," he said, while Russia and China have "destroyers and submarines all over the place."

Trump waved off the comment saying: "If it affects Nato, it affects Nato. But you know, (Greenland) need us much more than we need them."

Nato chief Mark Rutte said yesterday the alliance was working on ways to bolster Arctic security, as Europe scrambles to deflect Trump's interest in taking over Greenland.

DEADLY CYCLONE Lanka seeks Chinese aid to rebuild key infrastructure

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka asked China to help rebuild key infrastructure damaged by Cyclone Ditwah, which killed at least 641 people and caused extensive damage, the island's foreign minister said yesterday.

Vijitha Herath said he made the request during talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, who stopped in Colombo yesterday after visiting Tanzania and Lesotho.

"I particularly requested the assistance of the Chinese government in infrastructure development, including the reconstruction of identified roads, railways, and bridges that were affected," Herath said. He added that Wang had "assured his personal intervention" to assist Sri Lanka's recovery from the deadly cyclone, which struck in November.

The two sides also discussed advancing cooperation in trade, investment and tourism, Herath said. Sri Lanka's request for Chinese assistance came three weeks after India pledged \$450 million in humanitarian aid for cyclone recovery.

11-party chiefs to meet today to seal the deal

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Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis, seven to the Khelafat Majlis, four to the LDP, three to the AB Party and two to the BDP.

As IAB wants more seats, Jamaat has held several meetings with IAB in the last few days and in the end, after assessing popularity and qualifications, Jamaat may give IAB a few more seats, sources in Jamaat and IAB said.

When the NCP joined the seat-sharing talks, its leaders said they were assured of 30 seats. Although there were discussions about a slight reduction, Jamaat sources indicated the NCP is still likely to receive 30.

Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis, led by Mamunul Haque, had demanded 25 to 30 seats. Jamaat initially discussed offering 13, but sources now say the party may settle on 15.

Jamaat may allocate four to seven seats to the LDP.

LDP President Col (Retd) Oli Ahmed will not contest the election, though his son, presidium member Omar Faruk, plans to run

from Chattogram-14.

The AB Party is expected to get three seats, with Chairman Mujibur Rahman Manju contesting from Feni-2 and General Secretary Asaduzzaman Bhuiyan (Fuad) from Barishal-3.

The BDP may receive two seats, with Chairman AKM Anwarul contesting from Mymensingh-9 and Secretary General Nizamul Haque Naeem from Bhola-3.

Smaller parties such as Bangladesh Khelafat Andolon, Nizam-e-Islam Party and JAGPA may each get one or two seats.

Amid discussions on seat sharing, Jamaat submitted nomination papers in 276 constituencies and IAB in 268. NCP filed in 47 seats, AB Party in 53, Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis in 94, Khelafat Majlis in 68, LDP in 24, Khelafat Andolon in 11, Nizam-e-Islam Party in six, JAGPA in three and BDP in two.

The parties have to finalise the agreement on seat sharing before January 20 -- the last date for withdrawal of nomination papers.

Jamaat holds

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taking an oath to sacrifice their lives?"

The Jamaat leader added that there must be a space for accountability for the chief adviser, the prime minister, and the president as well. "This is a matter of mutual checks and balances, and that must remain in place."

"We will manage all the ministries within the country. But it is these forces that will protect the country's borders. If the borders remain intact, the internal functions will remain in order. If the borders are not secure, internal functions will fall into disarray."

According to him, those who run the state machinery and those entrusted with the responsibility of safeguarding the country must have a clear and to-the-point understanding. "Even a small gap here could harm the country."

CCTV CAMERA

At the meeting, the Jamaat chief said, "Even today, I sat with the chief of the European Union observation team. I told him that we want to see this election as an iconic moment -- just as our chief adviser and the Election Commission have said."

"And if we truly want to see it that way, then we must secure every polling booth. For that, we need

to set up CCTV cameras in every booth. We have been making this demand from the very beginning. But we see the government and the Election Commission remain reluctant."

The people will vote for whom they like. But it is the responsibility of the government and the EC to ensure an environment in which people can cast their votes. So far, that has not happened.

Shafiqur said, "We do not want to see any 'understanding-based' election. There will be no understanding with any authority. The understanding will be directly between political parties and the voters -- no one else."

Maj Gen (retd) Mahbul-ul-Alam and retired army officer Hasinur Rahman also spoke at the programme. Jamaat's Dhaka-16 candidate Abdul Baten delivered the welcome address.

Col (retd) Md Zakaria Hossain conducted the event. Among others, Abdul Halim, assistant secretary general of Jamaat; Ehsanul Mahub Zubayer head of the party's publicity and media department, and central executive council member Mobarak Hossain were present.

Around 350 to 400 former armed forces members attended the event.

Local govt gets more at cost

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Several projects needed new project directors after the incumbents went missing in action or were removed over corruption allegations.

The government is implementing 100 percent of government procurement through the e-GP system.

"This is largely an issue of experience. There was some hesitation, and that is why it is taking time."

But the system has increased competition among contractors, he said.

On average, tenders elicit seven to eight bids, up from two or three previously.

Besides, the system improved project implementation as project directors have to submit progress and evaluation reports every six months and an independent evaluation of projects during implementation.

The policies adopted in the current ADP should be maintained by future governments to preserve the improved quality of development spending, Mahmud said.

"However, if improving quality leads to an overall contraction in development expenditure, that defeats

the purpose. We want both better quality and a larger ADP size."

He termed inflation as another reason behind the reduced ADP size.

To curb inflation, the Bangladesh Bank has kept the policy rate high, resulting in higher interest rates and lower investment.

Some projects have been deliberately slowed down to allow decisions by an elected government, he said, citing the Payra deep-sea port project as an example.

"We have adopted a cautious approach in some cases. We felt certain issues should be resolved by the next elected government."

The adviser also referred to the metro rail projects, saying several new metro rail projects have attracted financing interest from the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, but decisions on those have been left for the next government.

"If all lines are started at once, it would require extensive road excavation across Dhaka and create multiple complexities. We have documented our observations, and the next government will consider

them." Political instability has also contributed to the situation.

"But a smaller ADP does not necessarily mean an economic slowdown. The slowdown is happening because political uncertainty has discouraged investment. If investment were taking place, even a smaller ADP would not be a problem. Increased investment would have created more employment."

The only major positive development is a significant rise in remittance inflows compared to the past.

"So even though ADP spending has fallen, remittances have increased."

He acknowledged that allocations for the education and health sectors have declined but said they are expected to increase from now on.

Explaining the background, he said that since the late 1990s, the education and health sectors largely depended on sector-wide programmes financed by foreign loans and grants.

Donors jointly supported the sectors -- led by the WB in health and

the ADB in education -- along with some domestic financing.

"Over time, foreign assistance declined, but adequate attention was not paid to the fact that projects could come to a halt once donor funding ended."

The ministries were not sufficiently prepared to transition from aid-dependent, sector-wide programmes to domestically financed and domestically planned projects.

As a result, funding for many health projects actually ran out as early as January last year, even though staff continued to work.

"Projects such as family planning and rural health centres formally ended, but doctors, nurses, equipment and family planning materials remained in place."

The ministry failed to identify the issue in time, creating a severe funding gap.

"We must move away from excessive dependence on foreign-funded projects. Full self-reliance may not be possible immediately, but this transition is necessary."

Myanmar

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"Myanmar has denied them their dream, in fact it turned their lives into a nightmare subjecting them to the most horrific violence and destruction one could imagine," according to Jallow.

The predominantly Muslim West African country of Gambia filed the case at the ICJ - also known as the World Court - in 2019, accusing Myanmar of committing genocide against the Rohingya, a mainly Muslim minority in the remote western Rakhine state.

Speaking in The Hague before the hearings, Rohingya victims said they want the long-awaited court case to deliver justice.

Meanwhile, Myanmar's main pro-military party yesterday claimed victory in the parliamentary seat of sidelined democratic leader Aung San Suu Kyi in elections being derided as a ploy to prolong junta rule.

The junta says the current month-long vote -- which has its final phase scheduled for January 25 -- will return power to the people.

With Suu Kyi still held in seclusion and her hugely popular party dissolved, democracy advocates say the vote has been rigged by a crackdown on dissent and a ballot stacked with military allies.



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e-Tender Notice

The following e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of:

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Reference No.	Description of goods/works	Last selling date and time	Closing date and time	Opening date and time
1	1211493	PG-03 FY 25-26	27.11. 0000.304. 26.308.26	Design, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 1300kWp Grid Tied Rooftop Solar PV Net Metering System at Ghorasal Power Station, Palash, Narshingdi, Bangladesh on turnkey basis.	01.02.2026 13.00	01.02.2026 14.00	01.02.2026 14.00

This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

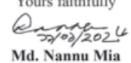
To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

For more details please contact to the PE's Support Desk (01717713020).

Thanking you

Yours faithfully

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