Pak, Afghan forces trade fire at border

REUTERS, *Kabul/ Karachi*

Pakistani and Afghan forces exchanged fire along their border on Tuesday night, with each side accusing the other of initiating the clash, days after Pakistani airstrikes in Afghanistan strained already tenuous ties.

The incident marks the latest flare-up along the 2,600-km (1,615-mile) border, where tensions have risen since Pakistan's strikes on Saturday and Sunday and threaten a fragile ceasefire following deadly clashes in October.

Mosharraf Zaidi, spokesperson for Pakistan's prime minister, told Reuters the Afghan Taliban authorities had initiated "unprovoked firing" in the Torkham and Tirah sub-sectors along the border.

"Pakistan's security forces responded immediately and effectively, silencing the Taliban aggression," Zaidi said, warning that any provocation would be met "immediately and severely."

Members of a European Union delegation visit a site that Palestinians say was damaged by Israeli settlers, in Susiya near Hebron in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, yesterday. A Ukrainian drone attack on a fertiliser plant in Russia's western Smolensk region killed seven people and wounded 10 others, Russian officials said yesterday.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

RAKHINE STATE

Myanmar junta air strike kills 17

AFP, *Yangon*

A Myanmar military air strike on a village market in the country's westernmost state killed at least 17 people, two local sources said yesterday.

Myanmar has been consumed by civil war since the junta snatched power in a 2021 coup, pitching the military against an array of ethnic minority armed groups and pro-democracy guerrillas.

Armed opposition group the Arakan Army said 17 "innocent civilians" were killed in the strike on Yoe Ngu village market in Rakhine state on Tuesday, while civilian volunteer group the Ponnagyun Youths Association (PYA) put the death toll at 18.

A Myanmar military spokesman could not be reached for comment. "The scene was really bad, four or five buildings were burnt down and many buildings were destroyed," said PYA chairman Pyae Phyo Naing, who arrived at the strike site in its aftermath.

Iran has 'sinister nuke ambitions'

Claims Trump in his State of the Union address; Tehran says deal can be reached as negotiators head to Geneva for talks

AFP, *Paris*

An Iranian delegation headed by its top diplomat set off for Geneva yesterday for talks with the US, as the Islamic republic's president struck an upbeat tone about the prospect of a negotiated agreement to avert fresh conflict.

Donald Trump has repeatedly threatened strikes if Iran fails to cut a deal on its atomic programme, and in his State of the Union address on Tuesday, the US president accused Tehran of "sinister nuclear ambitions" after he ordered a massive military deployment around the Gulf.

But Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian yesterday said that he had a "favourable outlook for the negotiations", after Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and his team left for Switzerland.

"We are continuing the process under the guidance of the supreme leader so that we can move beyond this 'neither war nor peace' situation," Pezeshkian said in a speech.

Trump in his address claimed that Tehran had "already developed missiles that can threaten Europe and our bases overseas, and they're working to build missiles that will soon reach the United States".

But an Iranian foreign ministry spokesman yesterday refuted those claims as "simply the repetition of 'big lies'". The maximum range of Iran's missiles is 2,000 kilometres according to what Tehran has publicly disclosed.

"My preference is to solve this problem through diplomacy but one thing is certain: I will never allow the world's number one sponsor of terror, which they are by far, to have a nuclear weapon," Trump said.

Hours before Trump's speech, Iran's Araghchi declared the two sides had "a historic opportunity", saying a deal was "within reach, but only if diplomacy is given priority".

In recent weeks Trump has deployed two aircraft carrier groups and dozens of other warplanes to the region to back up his threats, and Iran has repeatedly said it would respond firmly to any attack.

Preparations on track for post-uprising polls in Nepal

Says interim PM

AFP, *Kathmandu*

Nepal's interim government has said preparations are on track for parliamentary elections next week, the first since a deadly 2025 uprising, urging voters to exercise their right "without fear".

The Himalayan republic of 30 million people holds elections on March 5, less than six months after youth-led anti-corruption protests toppled the previous government.

The unrest killed at least 77 people. "The government will leave no stone unturned to conduct the election in a clean, fair, fearless, and peaceful manner," Sushila Karki, the interim prime minister, said late Tuesday.

"I urge all citizens to exercise their voting rights with confidence and without any fear."

Violence in September 2025 was the worst since the decade-long civil war ended with a peace deal in 2006.

It was an evil attempt

FROM PAGE 1

the memorial, flanked by uniformed personnel.

The day is observed to mark the Pilkhana carnage, in which 74 people -- including 57 army officers -- were killed at the then Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) headquarters in Dhaka on February 25-26, 2009, when BDR members staged a mutiny.

Among the victims was the then BDR director general Major General Shakil Ahmed.

A one-minute silence was observed in honour of the victims, as members of the armed forces rendered a state salute. A prayer was offered seeking eternal peace for the departed souls of the martyred officers and the wellbeing of the affected families.

Around 10:09am, the president placed a wreath at the graveyard. Two minutes later, the PM followed suit.

Senior officers of the army, navy and air force, as well as family members and close relatives of the slain officers, were present at the graveyard.

Speaking at the Army Multipurpose Hall, Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman said the nation must remain united to ensure that no incident like that of February 25-26 ever recurs, describing it as a "stain" on the country's history.

He said that under a special directive and in the presence of the prime minister, the day is being observed in this manner for the first time, and an iftar has been arranged for the families of the martyred.

On behalf of all present, he thanked PM Tarique, saying his presence instilled confidence and hope among the family members of the soldiers martyred at Pilkhana.

"The Bangladesh Army has always ensured full support for the families of those slain and will continue to do so in the future, Insha'Allah."

Waker noted that the relationship between the Bangladesh Army and Border Guard Bangladesh was forged through sacrifice in the Liberation War. "The Bangladesh Army and Border Guard Bangladesh are working together to protect the country's independence and sovereignty."

Following the Pilkhana tragedy, the BDR was renamed Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB).

Three representatives of the slain army officers' families also spoke at the event, sharing their pain over losing their loved ones 17 years ago. They placed several demands, including ensuring justice for the killings and bringing the masterminds behind the incident to justice.

Later, Tarique joined the families for iftar.

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed; BGB Director General Maj Gen Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman Siddiqi; Chief of Naval Staff Adm Mohammad Nazmul Hassan; Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan; the prime minister's Defence Adviser Brig Gen (retd) ATM Shamsul Islam; and the prime minister's Principal Secretary ABM Abdus Sattar, among others, were present on the occasion.

Tarique's wife Zubaida Rahman and daughter Zaima Rahman were also present.

Withdraw false cases

FROM PAGE 1

environment of the media," read the statement signed by Editors' Council President Nurul Kabir and General Secretary Dewan Hanif Mahmud.

If there are specific, evidence-based allegations against any journalist, those must be addressed under existing laws through a transparent judicial process, the statement added.

"But harassment and motivated cases are not acceptable under any circumstances," it said.

The council said it had repeatedly requested the interim government to withdraw the false and motivated cases and to take effective measures to stop the harassment of journalists.

"They assured us that the cases would be reviewed and that steps would be taken to withdraw the false and harassing cases. But unfortunately, the expected progress in this matter has not been observed," the statement read.

The council strongly urged the newly elected government to give the issue the highest priority and to take swift initiatives to withdraw such cases.

It reiterated that ensuring media freedom and professional security is a fundamental commitment of a democratic state and expressed hope that the government would act accordingly.

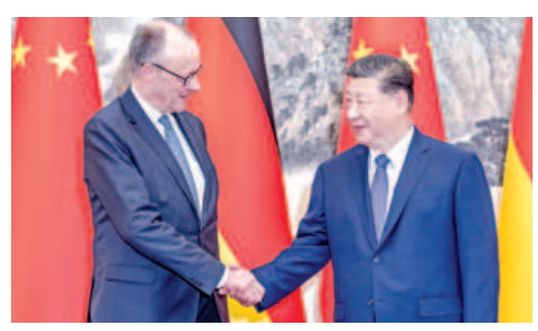
Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission
BTRC Bhaban, E-5/A, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.
www.btrc.gov.bd

INVITATION FOR TENDER

1	Ministry/Division	Posts and Telecommunications Division	
2	Agency	Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC).	
3	Procurement Entity Name	Director, Administration Division, BTRC	
4	Invitation for	Procurement of Office Furniture for BTRC.	
5	Invitation Ref. No & Date	14.32.0000.000.400.07.0023.25.289; 23 February, 2026	
		KEY INFORMATION	
6	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (National)	
		FUNDING INFORMATION	
7	Budget and Source of Funds	Revenue Budget, GoB	
		PARTICULAR INFORMATION	
		Date	**Time**
8	Tender Publication date	25 February, 2026	-
9	Tender Last Selling Date	15 March, 2026	3:00 PM
10	Tender Closing Date & Time	16 March, 2026	2:00 PM
11	Opening Date and Time	16 March, 2026	2:30 PM
12	Name & Address of the office: Selling, Receiving & Opening Tender Document	BTRC, Plot # E-5/A, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.	
13	Eligibility of Tenderer	1. The bidder must have a minimum of 10 (ten) years of general experience in furniture manufacture & supply related work in any government/semi-government/autonomous organization. Previous experience will be considered as the period of calculation from the date of issuance of the tender notice. 2. The bidder must have specific experience as furniture supply work completing successfully at least 02 (two) contracts in any government/semi-government/autonomous organization within the last 03 (three) years and along with the tender, a certificate of experience issued by the organization implementing the contract must be submitted; the contract value of which must be at least Tk 70 (seventy) lakhs only. 3. The minimum amount of financial resources as liquid assets or working capital or credit line(s) or specific credit commitment or in any combination of them, of the Tenderers shall be Tk will be Taka 70 (seventy) lakhs only. 4. The average annual turnover of the bidding company in the last 03 (three) years shall be a minimum of taka 05 (five) crore.	
14	Brief Description of Goods	As per the schedule	
15	Brief Description of Related Services	As per the schedule	
16	Price of Tender Document	Tk. 2,000.00 (Two Thousand Only) (Non-Refundable).	
17	Tender Security Amount	Tk 2,50,000.00 (Two Lakh Fifty Thousand) only	
18	Official Inviting Tender	Name	Mohammmad Rohol Amin
		Designation	Director, Administration Division
		Address	Plot#E-5/A, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
		Contact details	Tel: +88 02 222217120; e-mail: diradmin@btrc.gov.bd
19	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.		
20	All tender activities will be conducted in accordance with the Public Procurement Act, 2006, and the Public Procurement Rules-2025.		

Mohammmad Rohol Amin
Director
Administration Division, BTRC
Phone: +88 02 222217120
e-mail: diradmin@btrc.gov.bd

GD-404



Germany's Merz in China as he seeks reset with Beijing

REUTERS, *Beijing*

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz called for partnership and dialogue with China on a visit to Beijing aimed at resetting relations that have been clouded by a yawning trade deficit with the world's second-largest economy.

On his first visit to China as chancellor, Merz, who was accompanied by a large business delegation, told President Xi Jinping that he wanted to deepen what he called the "comprehensive strategic partnership" with China.

Xi welcomed the comments from Merz, who faces a tough balancing act of redefining an economic relationship that has been increasingly unfavourable to Germany.

"The more turbulent and intertwined the world becomes, the more China and Germany need to strengthen strategic communication and enhance strategic mutual trust," he said.

The German chancellor's visit, following visits by French President Emmanuel Macron and British PM Keir Starmer, came as European leaders have looked to shore up their ties with China following the widening rift with the Trump administration.

Merz, who is due to visit Washington next week, encouraged Chinese firms to step up investments in Germany but said both sides needed to remain clear-eyed.

ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি
শিক্ষাবর্ষ: ২০২৫
গণমাধ্যম ও সাংবাদিকতা বিষয়ে মাস্টার্স

প্রেস ইনস্টিটিউট বাংলাদেশ (পিআইবি) কলেজ কোড-৬৫৬৮

প্রেস ইনস্টিটিউট বাংলাদেশ (পিআইবি) পরিচালিত জাতীয় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধীন ২ (দুই) বছর মেয়াদি গণমাধ্যম ও সাংবাদিকতা বিষয়ে মাস্টার্স প্রোগ্রাম-২০২৫ শিক্ষাবর্ষে ভর্তির জন্য উপযুক্ত প্রার্থীদের কাছ থেকে আবেদন আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

১. আবেদনকারীর যোগ্যতা:
সরকার অনুমোদিত যে কোনো বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় থেকে যে কোনো বিষয়ে স্নাতক (সম্মান/পাস কোর্স) অথবা সমমানের ডিগ্রিপ্রাপ্ত ছাত্র/ছাত্রী উক্ত প্রোগ্রামে ভর্তি হতে পারবেন। তবে কোনো পরীক্ষাতেই তৃতীয় শ্রেণি অথবা সিজিপিএ ৫-এর মধ্যে ২.৫০ অথবা ৪-এর মধ্যে ২.২৫-এর নিচে গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়।
জাতীয় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়/অন্য বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে কোনো শিক্ষা কার্যক্রমে বর্তমানে অধ্যয়নরত কোনো শিক্ষার্থী এ কোর্সে ভর্তি হতে পারবেন না।
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বিস্তারিত জানতে স্ক্যান করুন

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৩. প্রাথমিক আবেদন ফি: ১০০০/-

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ঘ. চাকরির অভিজ্ঞতা সনদ (প্রযোজ্যক্ষেত্রে)
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৭. মোট কোর্স ফি: ৫৫,০০০ (পঞ্চান্ন হাজার) টাকা
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১০. ভর্তি পরীক্ষার ফল প্রকাশ: ২৮ মার্চ ২০২৬
১১. ক্লাস শুরুর তারিখ: ১৫ এপ্রিল ২০২৬
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