

## 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.

Mosharrif 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. 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 Ponnagayun 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.

## Ukrainian drone strike on Russian plant kills 7

Investigators say; 10 others injured; Zelensky announces Kyiv-Washington talks in Geneva today

AFP, Moscow

A Ukrainian drone attack on a fertilizer plant in Russia's western Smolensk region killed seven people and wounded 10 others, Russian officials said Wednesday.

The plant, just outside the Russian town of Dorogobuzh, lies around 290 kilometres (180 miles) from the Ukrainian border.

Unverified images published on social media purported to show the plant in flames early yesterday, with columns of smoke billowing into the night sky.

"The enemy struck PJSC Dorogobuzh, a civilian plant producing nitrogen fertilizer," Smolensk region governor Vasily Anokhin said in a post on Telegram.

Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said later seven people were killed, updating a previous toll, in what would be one of the deadliest attacks on a Russian industrial site of the four-year war.

Ukraine fired "at least 30 drones equipped with explosive devices," causing "significant damage" it said in a statement.

Rescuers had yesterday morning contained the fires, while authorities were considering evacuating residents from the neighbouring village for their safety, governor Anokhin added.

Meanwhile, lead Ukrainian negotiator Rustem Umerov is due to meet with US envoy Steve Witkoff in Geneva today, Kyiv has announced, ahead of fresh trilateral talks with Russia expected in early March.

"Tomorrow he will meet with American negotiators Witkoff and (Jared) Kushner," Ukrainian President Zelensky told a group of reporters, including from AFP.

He added that the meeting was part of "preparations for a trilateral meeting with Russia, which we believe will take place in early March."

Meanwhile, the first Ukrainian drone production plant has started its operations in Britain, Ukraine's ambassador Valeriy Zaluzhnyi said yesterday.

Zaluzhnyi said the producer, Ukrspesystems, founded in 2014, had proved the efficiency of its drones on the frontline.

"Ukraine is fighting a war amid constant missile strikes, infrastructure destruction and threats to production facilities. Therefore, the launch of production in the UK has a deep strategic logic," Zaluzhnyi said on the Telegram app.

"This is not a shift of the centre of gravity away from Ukraine. It is an expansion of our joint capabilities..." he said.



## 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.

## Germany's Merz hails China ties

Seeks reset with Beijing

REUTERS, Beijing

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz yesterday urged Chinese firms to step up investment in Germany but also called on Beijing to reduce market distortions as he began a visit aimed at resetting relations between the world's second- and third-largest economies.

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 economic ties with China, Germany's largest trading partner last year.

"There are challenges, which we should talk about today, but the framework in which we operate is exceptionally good and we have worked together very well over the past decades," he said.

Xi, who has sought to position China as a reliable partner in an increasingly unpredictable world, welcomed the comments from Merz, who faces a tough balancing act of redefining an economic relationship that is increasingly unfavourable to German interests.

"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.



**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
<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>		
6	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (National)
<b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>		
7	Budget and Source of Funds	Revenue Budget, GoB
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>		
Date		Time
8	Tender Publication date	25 February, 2026
9	Tender Last Selling Date	15 March, 2026
10	Tender Closing Date & Time	16 March, 2026 3:00 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 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: Mohammad 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.	

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



## SOUTH SUDAN Funding gaps threaten lives of 1.9m displaced: UN

AFP, Geneva

The lives of more than 1.9 million displaced people in South Sudan are being put at risk due to aid funding shortages, the UN's migration agency said yesterday.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) said humanitarian needs were dramatically outstripping resources in one of the world's most displacement-affected countries.

"Critical funding shortfalls are putting the lives of over 1.9 million displaced people in South Sudan at risk," the agency said in a statement.

South Sudan, the world's newest sovereign country, has been beset by civil war, poverty and massive corruption since it was formed in 2011.

South Sudan is grappling with new arrivals fleeing the conflict in neighbouring Sudan, while dealing with its own displacement caused by years of conflict, flooding and instability, the IOM said.

The agency said that since the war in Sudan erupted in April 2023, more than 1.3 million people had crossed into South Sudan - two-thirds of them being South Sudanese returnees.

The IOM said this had put "immense pressure" on border communities, and the country's overstretched services and fragile infrastructure.

## Thousands granted amnesty in Venezuela

AFP, Caracas

Thousands of Venezuelans charged or imprisoned for resisting socialist rule have been granted amnesty under a landmark law adopted as part of the post-Nicolas Maduro transition, the national legislature said Tuesday.

Jorge Arreaza, the head of the legislative commission overseeing the application of the amnesty, said 179 prisoners had walked free from prison since it was enacted on Thursday.

He said that 3,050 others who were out on parole had also been cleared of all charges.

"The pace is extraordinary!" he enthused, adding that justice needed to be served "for there to be peace" in the Caribbean nation.



**ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি**  
শিক্ষাবর্ষ: ২০২৫  
গণমাধ্যম ও সাংবাদিকতা বিষয়ে মাস্টার্স

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:  
সরকারি 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-এ-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।

গণমাধ্যম/জনসংযোগ/বিজ্ঞাপনসংশ্লিষ্ট প্রতিষ্ঠানে কর্মরতদের আঙ্গাধিকার। চাকরিরত প্রার্থীদের কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমোদনসহ আবেদন করতে হবে।

২. আসন সংখ্যা: ৫০  
৩. প্রাথমিক আবেদন ফি: ১০০০/-

৪. আবেদন প্রক্রিয়া:  
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খ. দুই কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের সত্যায়িত রসিদ ছবি  
গ. জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি  
ঘ. চাকরির অভিজ্ঞতা সনদ (প্রযোজ্যক্ষেত্রে)  
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৯. ভর্তি পরীক্ষা: ২৭ মার্চ ২০২৬  
১০. ভর্তি পরীক্ষার ফল প্রকাশ: ২৮ মার্চ ২০২৬  
১১. ক্লাস শুরু তারিখ: ১৫ এপ্রিল ২০২৬  
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