

INTERNATIONAL

Afghans fear further escalation

Blasts followed by continuous detonations as stored munitions catch fire

REUTERS, Kabul

Pakistani air strikes hit a weapons depot on the western outskirts of Kabul overnight, triggering hours of secondary explosions that rattled homes across the Afghan capital and left residents fearing further violence.

Video verified by Reuters showed thick plumes of black smoke rising above Darulaman, a residential neighbourhood in western Kabul that also houses several government and military compounds, as a blaze engulfed part of the depot and repeated flashes lit up the night sky when ammunition ignited inside.

Residents said the bombardment began



An injured Pakistani girl receives treatment at a hospital in Bajaur, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Pakistan, yesterday, following overnight cross-border fighting between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

PHOTO: AFP

What's behind Pakistan's attack on Afghan Taliban?

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan has been the Afghan Taliban's closest friend for decades. It was Islamabad that helped give birth to the Taliban in the early 1990s – as a way to give Pakistan "strategic depth" in its rivalry with India. What's gone wrong?

Pakistan carried out air strikes on Afghanistan's major cities overnight, officials in Islamabad and Kabul said yesterday, escalating months of border clashes between the Islamic neighbours.

The escalating conflict is a long way from Islamabad's historic support for the Taliban. The key questions:

WHY ARE THE NEIGHBOURS AT ODDS?

Pakistan welcomed the return to power of the Taliban in 2021, with then-prime minister Imran Khan saying that Afghans had "broken the shackles of slavery". But Islamabad soon found that the Taliban were not as cooperative as it had hoped.

Islamabad says that the leadership of militant group Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and many of its fighters are based in Afghanistan, and that armed insurgents seeking independence for the southwestern Pakistani province of Balochistan also use Afghanistan as a safe haven.

Militancy has increased every year since 2022 with attacks by the TTP and Baloch insurgents growing, according to Armed Conflict Location & Event Data, a global monitoring organization.

Kabul for its part has repeatedly denied allowing militants to use Afghan territory to launch attacks in Pakistan. The Afghan Taliban say Pakistan harbours fighters from



its enemy, Islamic State, a charge Islamabad denies.

Islamabad says the ceasefire did not hold long due to continued militant attacks in Pakistan from Afghanistan, and there have been repeated clashes and border closures since then that have disrupted trade and

movement along the rugged frontier.

WHAT SPARKED THE LATEST CLASHES?

The day before last weekend's strikes, Pakistani security sources said they had "irrefutable evidence" that militants in Afghanistan were behind a recent wave of attacks and suicide bombings which targeted Pakistani military and police.

The sources listed seven planned or successful attacks by militants since late 2024 that they said were connected to Afghanistan.

One attack last week that killed 11 security personnel and two civilians in Bajaur district was undertaken by an Afghan national. This attack was claimed by the TTP.

WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN NEXT?

Pakistan is likely to intensify its military campaign, analysts say. On paper, there is a wide mismatch between the military capabilities of two sides. At 172,000, the Taliban have less than a third of Pakistan's personnel. The Taliban do possess at least six aircraft and 23 helicopters but their condition is unknown and they have no fighter jets or effective air force.

Pakistan's armed forces include more than 600,000 active personnel, more than 6,000 armoured fighting vehicles and more than 400 combat aircraft.

Ukrainian missiles hit energy sites in Russia's Belgorod

REUTERS

Ukrainian missiles struck the Russian town of Belgorod near the border, inflicting serious damage on energy installations and disrupting power, water and heating, the regional governor said early yesterday.

The attack on Belgorod, 40 km (25 miles) from the Ukrainian border, and the surrounding district, was the second in five days to cause serious damage.

The area has been a frequent target of Ukraine's military in the four years since Russia invaded its smaller neighbour. "Serious damage has occurred with energy infrastructure," Vyacheslav Gladkov wrote on Telegram. "As a result, there have been disruptions to supplies of power, water and heating."

About 50,000 people were left without power. There was no comment from Ukrainian officials.

Gladkov said the extent of the damage would be assessed at first light. Pictures posted on unofficial Telegram channels showed residential areas in darkness and skies lit up with explosions.

Along with the neighbouring Kursk region, parts of which were seized by Ukraine in a surprise attack in August 2024 and held for many months, Belgorod has borne the brunt of Ukrainian cross-border strikes since the start of the war.

Shelling and blackouts have made the war a daily reality that is impossible to ignore - in contrast with the rest of Russia, where opinion polls suggest many are trying to get on with their lives while tuning out news from the battlefield.

SEPT 2025 PROTESTS Nepal's ex-police chief ordered lethal force: BBC

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's former police chief ordered the use of lethal force during the September 2025 anti-corruption protests, a BBC investigation revealed.

At least 77 people were killed in the September 8-9 protests, the deadliest unrest since the end of the 2006 civil war, which ultimately forced the government to collapse. No one has been held accountable for the deaths as yet.

The report, which aired on Thursday, comes ahead of the March 5 elections, in which major parties from the coalition government toppled by the uprising are seeking to return to power.

Nepal's police did not immediately respond to AFP request for comment yesterday.

The BBC reported that police said they had been "faced with an overwhelming situation where we had to respond to multiple incidents simultaneously".



shortly after midnight. "We were asleep when we heard the sound of a plane," said Tamim, a taxi driver who lives near the depot. "It came and dropped two bombs, then flew away again. After that, we heard explosions."

He said the initial blasts were followed by continuous detonations as stored munitions caught fire. "The ammunition inside the depot kept exploding on its own," he said. "Everyone, in panic, ran down from the second floor of the house."

Tamim said the fire burned until about 6:00 am, when it was brought under control. His family escaped injury, but doors and windows were damaged and glass shattered from the force of the blasts.

"The blaze was very intense," he said. Danish, a 35-year-old pharmacist who lives about 10 minutes from the depot, said he had been awake following news of rising tensions.

UN CDP discusses Bangladesh's

FROM PAGE 12

The recommendation will then be forwarded to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and subsequently to the UN General Assembly for the final consideration.

The assessment will examine whether Bangladesh is facing a crisis arising from unanticipated and uncontrollable factors that could justify deferment, said Debapriya.

When asked whether the CDP will recommend a deferment as per Bangladesh's plea, Debapriya said, "It can only be said after the end of the review process of the application."

Bangladesh, along with Nepal and Lao PDR, is scheduled to graduate in November 2026. However, only Bangladesh has formally sought a three-year extension.

In a letter sent to CDP Chairperson José Antonio Ocampo on February 18, Economic Relations Division Secretary

Md Shahriar Quader Siddiqui said the five-year preparatory period had been "severely disrupted" by overlapping global and domestic shocks.

The government cited the lingering effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war and its impact on global energy and food markets, tightening financial conditions, sluggish trade recovery, instability in the Middle East, and growing uncertainty in the global trade regime.

Domestically, it referred to financial sector irregularities, the July 2024 political upheaval that led to a change in government, and the continued burden of Rohingya repatriation, which requires significant fiscal support.

According to the letter, these shocks have contributed to macroeconomic instability, slower GDP growth, high inflation, declining investment, pressure on foreign exchange reserves, a falling tax-to-GDP

ratio, reduced imports of capital machinery and raw materials, weak job creation, and setbacks in poverty reduction.

The banking sector and capital market have also faced governance challenges.

The government argued that an extension until 2029 would provide critical policy space to stabilise the macroeconomy, consolidate reforms, and complete priority actions under the Smooth Transition Strategy for LDC graduation.

Bangladesh was originally set to graduate in November 2024 but received a two-year extension until November 24, 2026, due to the severe fallout of Covid-19, after meeting all three graduation criteria in consecutive triennial reviews.

Business leaders have long urged the government to seek deferment, citing the lingering impact of the pandemic, global inflation, high interest rates,

currency volatility, and geopolitical disruptions.

The businesspeople and a section of economists argue that the country is not prepared to tackle challenges of graduation, including discontinuation of lower duty facilities for LDCs by the developed nations, especially those in the European Union, a large market of Bangladesh's main export product garment.

Studies suggest that, upon graduation, Bangladesh could lose around 14 percent of its exports – roughly \$8 billion annually – as preferential trade benefits expire. Exporters would also forgo nearly \$1 billion in annual government incentives.

Despite earlier cabinet decisions to graduate on schedule, the newly formed BNP-led government has now formally sought additional time, arguing that a smoother transition is essential to safeguard economic stability and competitiveness.

US tells its citizens to leave Israel

FROM PAGE 12

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi yesterday said that "success in this path requires seriousness and realism from the other side and avoidance of any miscalculation and excessive demands".

Following the talks, Araghchi told state TV the negotiations "made very good progress and entered into the elements of an

agreement very seriously, both in the nuclear field and in the sanctions field".

He said the next round would take place in "perhaps less than a week", with technical talks at the IAEA to begin in Vienna on Monday.

Trump said in his State of the Union address this week that Iran was working on missiles that could reach the United States and

accused Iran of "pursuing sinister nuclear ambitions".

Iran has always insisted its nuclear programme was peaceful and called the claims "big lies".

Trump's accusations were delivered in the same forum in which then-President George W Bush laid out the case for the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Washington already had more than a dozen

warships in the Middle East, including another aircraft carrier, before deploying the Gerald R Ford.

The UN rights chief Volker Turk said he was "extremely alarmed" at the risk of a regional escalation around Iran and raised concerns over domestic issues in Iran, where protests have resumed.

"I hope the voice of reason prevails," he said.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

উপজেলা নির্বাহী অফিসারের কার্যালয়

ভোলা সদর, ভোলা।

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"ফেরি/খোয়াঘাটের ইজারা বিজ্ঞপ্তি"

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট ফেরি/খোয়াঘাটের পেশাদার পাটনী ও সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্যে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ভোলা জেলাধীন ভোলা সদর উপজেলার নিম্নোবর্ণিত ফেরি/খোয়াঘাট ১৪৩৩ বঙ্গাব্দের জন্য (১লা বৈশাখ হতে ৩০ শে চৈত্র পর্যন্ত) একসন ইজারা প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে সিডিউল সপথে সংযোজিত শর্ত সমূহের ভিত্তিতে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে সীলপালাযুক্ত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্রম নং	ফেরি/খোয়াঘাটের নাম	ইউনিয়নের নাম	বাংলা ১৪৩৩ বঙ্গাব্দের জন্য ধার্যতা	দরপত্র মূল্য
১	রাজাপুর- রামদাসপুর (বঙ্গের চর) ফেরিঘাট	রাজাপুর	১,৭৭,০৪২/-	১০০০/-
২	বিশ্ব রোড তালতলী- মাঝের চর খোয়া	ইলিশা	১৬,৫৫২/-	৫০০/-
৩	কাঠিরমাথা- মাঝের চর খোয়া	কাঠিয়া	৫৬,০৬৯/-	৫০০/-
৪	ভেদুরিয়া- চটকীমারা খোয়া	ভেদুরিয়া	৬,০৫,৬৩২/-	২,০০০/-

১ম বিজ্ঞপ্তি	সিডিউল বিক্রির তারিখ	দরপত্র দাখিল ও খোলার তারিখ	সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণের তারিখ	মন্তব্য
	ফাল্গুন ১২ হতে ২৭ ফাল্গুন, ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ	ফাল্গুন ২৯, ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ	ফাল্গুন ২৯, ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ	
	২৫/০২/২৬ হতে ১২/০৩/২৬ খ্রিঃ	১৪/০৩/২০২৬ খ্রিঃ	১৪/০৩/২০২৬ খ্রিঃ	

২য় বিজ্ঞপ্তি	চৈত্র ০১ হতে ১০ চৈত্র, ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ	১৫/০৩/২৬ হতে ২৪/০৩/২৬ খ্রিঃ	চৈত্র ১১, ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ	১ম দরপত্রে যে সমস্ত ফেরি/খোয়াঘাটের কাঙ্ক্ষিত ইজারামূল্য পাওয়া যাবে না ২য় দরপত্রে সে সমস্ত ফেরি/খোয়াঘাটের দরপত্র আহবান করা হবে।
	১৫/০৩/২৬ হতে ২৪/০৩/২৬ খ্রিঃ	২৫/০৩/২০২৬ খ্রিঃ	২৫/০৩/২০২৬ খ্রিঃ	

৩য় বিজ্ঞপ্তি	চৈত্র ১৪ হতে ২২ চৈত্র, ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ	চৈত্র ২৩, ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ	চৈত্র ২৩, ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ	১ম ও ২য় দরপত্রে যে সমস্ত ফেরি/খোয়াঘাটের কাঙ্ক্ষিত ইজারামূল্য পাওয়া যাবে না ৩য় দরপত্রে সে সমস্ত ফেরি/খোয়াঘাটের দরপত্র আহবান করা হবে।
	২৮/০৩/২৬ হতে ০৫/০৪/২৬ খ্রিঃ	০৬/০৪/২০২৬ খ্রিঃ	০৬/০৪/২০২৬ খ্রিঃ	

আগ্রহী দরপত্র দাখিল উপরে বর্ণিত ডাকের সম্মুখে উল্লেখিত সিডিউল বিক্রির তারিখ সমূহে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে (১) নিম্নাধিকারকারীর কার্যালয় (২) উপজেলা ভূমি অফিস, ভোলা সদর (৩) জেলা প্রশাসক, ভোলা এর কার্যালয়, হতে দরপত্র-সিডিউল নির্ধারিত মূল্যে (অফেরতযোগ্য) সংগ্রহ করতে পারবেন। ডাকের সম্মুখে উল্লেখিত দরপত্র দাখিল ও খোলার তারিখ দিনগুলোতে সকাল ৯.০০ টা হতে দুপুর ১.০০ টা পর্যন্ত নিম্নাধিকারকারীর কার্যালয়, উপজেলা ভূমি অফিস, ভোলা সদর, এবং জেলা প্রশাসক, ভোলা এর কার্যালয়ে রক্ষিত বাজ্রে সীলপালা যুক্ত খামে দরপত্র দাখিল করা যাবে এবং ঐ দিন দুপুর ২.০০ টায় উপস্থিত দরপত্র দাখিলের (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) সম্মুখে নিম্নাধিকারকারীর কার্যালয়ে রক্ষিত বাজ্রে প্রাপ্ত দরপত্র নিম্নাধিকারকারী কর্তৃক, উপজেলা ভূমি অফিস, ভোলা সদর এর রক্ষিত বাজ্রে প্রাপ্ত দরপত্র সহকারী কমিশনার (ভূমি), ভোলা সদর কর্তৃক এবং জেলা প্রশাসক, ভোলা এর কার্যালয়ে রক্ষিত বাজ্রে প্রাপ্ত দরপত্র সমূহ জেলা প্রশাসক, ভোলা মহোদয়ের মনোনীত প্রতিনিধি কর্তৃক খোলা হবে। এ ছাড়াও অন্যান্য বিস্তারিত তথ্য শর্তাবলী দরপত্র জমাদানের তারিখ পর্যন্ত নিম্নাধিকারকারীর কার্যালয়ে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে জানা যাবে। দরপত্রের সঙ্গে বিস্তারিত শর্তাবলী লিপিবদ্ধ রয়েছে।

এ বিজ্ঞপ্তি স্থানীয় সরকার পল্লী উন্নয়ন ও সমবায় মন্ত্রণালয়ের স্মারক নং প্রজ্ঞাই-২/ফ-১/২০০৩/২৬২ (৫১৭২), তারিখ ১৯-০৪-২০০৩ খ্রি. এর আলোকে জারী করা হলো।

(মোঃ আরিফুল্লাহ)
উপজেলা নির্বাহী অফিসার
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