King Felipe VI of Spain salutes as he attends the Spanish national day army parade in Madrid,



A volunteer organises aid packages to be sent to Lebanon at the **Expo City Dubai amid** increased Israeli strikes on Hezbollah sites



Chinese PM Li Qiang (L) and Vietnamese **Communist party General Secy and President To** Lam shake hands during their meeting in Hanoi



Friedrich Merz, leader of Germany's conservative CDU party, speaks at the congress of the CDU's Bavarian sister party, the CSU, in Germany

UN peacekeepers in Lebanon hit again

Heavy Israeli bombardment continues in northern Gaza

AP. BEIRUT: Palestinians in northern Gaza described heavy Israeli bombardment Saturday in the hours after airstrikes killed at least 22 people, as Israel continued to tell people there and in southern Lebanon to get out of the way of its offensives against the Hamas and Hezbollah militant groups.

In Lebanon, the United Nations peacekeeping force said its headquarters in Naqoura had again been hit, with a peacekeeper struck by gunfire late Friday and in stable condition. It wasn't clear who fired. The shooting occurred a day after Israel's military fired on the headquarters for the second straight day. Israel, which has warned the peacekeepers to leave their positions, didn't immediately respond to questions.

warnings Hunger emerged again as residents in northern Gaza said they hadn't received aid since the beginning of the month. The UN World Food Program said no food aid had entered the north since October 1. An estimated 400,000 people remain there.



Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf waves as he returns to his car after visiting the site of an Israeli airstrike that targeted Beirut's Basta neighbourhood, on Saturday

Israel's military renewed its offensive in northern Gaza almost a week ago while escalating its air and ground campaign against the Iranbacked Hezbollah in Lebanon. Lebanon's state-run National News Agency said an Israeli airstrike hit an apartment building in the Zarout coastal area on the edge of Barja south of Beirut, and the Health Ministry said four were killed. The ministry said another airstrike on the village of Maisra northeast of Beirut killed five.

The total toll in Lebanon over the past year of conflict between Israel and Hezbollah is now 2.255 killed, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry. Hezbollah continued to fire

into Israel. We will keep standing with the Lebanese people during these difficult circumstances and also with the Palestinian people, the speaker of Iran's parliament, Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, said Saturday while touring the scene of an Israeli airstrike in Beirut.

In northern Gaza, resi-

dents told The Associated Press many were trapped in their homes and shelters with dwindling supplies while seeing bodies uncollected in the streets as the bombing hampered emergency responders.

Those who rushed to the scene of the latest deadly airstrikes in the urban refugee camp of Iabaliya found a hole 20 meters deep where a home once stood.

At least 20 bodies were recovered as of Saturday morning, while others likely were trapped under the rubble, emergency service officials said. Elsewhere in Jabaliya, a strike on a home killed two brothers and wounded a woman and newborn baby, the officials said.

Another strike in the afternoon hit a Jabaliya home and killed at least four people including a woman, said Fares Abu Hamza, an official with the emergency service.

Israel's military did not immediately respond to request for comment on the strikes.

Former Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond dead

AP, LONDON: Alex Salmond, the former first minister of Scotland who for decades championed Scotland's independence from the UK, has died. He

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer paid tribute to Salmond, calling him a "monumental figure" of both Scottish and British politics.

"He leaves behind a lasting legacy," Starmer said. "As first minister of Scotland, he cared deeply about Scotland's heritage, history and culture, as well as the communities he represented."

Salmond served as first minister of Scotland from 2007 to 2014, and was leader of the Scottish National Party on two occasions, from 1990 to 2000. and from 2004 to 2014. Salmond, as then leader of the Scottish National Party, led the independence campaign in the referendum in 2014, but lost, gaining 45% of the vote.

Salmond resigned from the SNP in 2018 in the wake of sexual harassment allegations. Former UK Conservative Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said that Salmond was a "huge figure in our politics."

"While I disagreed with him on the constitutional question, there was no denying his skill in debate or his passion for politics," Sunak said on X.

Muhammad Yunus visits temple in outreach attempt

PTI, DHAKA: Muhammad Yunus, the Chief Advisor to the interim govt of Bangladesh, on Saturday visited the centuries-old Dhakeshwari temple amid reports of attack on another prominent Durga Puja celebration in the national capital.

The government wants to build Bangladesh in such a way "where each and every citizen's right will be ensured," Yunus said at a function at the temple.

PANDAL **ATTACK**

A crude bomb was allegedly thrown at a Durga Puja mandap in the Tanti Bazar area of Old Dhaka and although the bomb caught fire, nobody was injured, daily Prothom Alo said, adding, the incident took place on Friday night.

From October 1 onwards till Friday, 17 persons were arrested and about a dozen cases registered after Bangladesh witnessed about 35 untoward incidents related to the ongoing Durga Puja celebrations. The Dhaka Tribune said quoting Inspector General of Police (IGP) Md Moinul Islam.

The festival began with an invocation of Goddess Durga, an occasion called Maha Shasthi on Wednes-The celebrations would conclude with the

Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus speaks at the Dhakeswari Mandir during Durga Puja festival, in Old Dhaka

immersion of Goddess Durga murtis on Sundav.

The minority Hindu population have faced regular vandalism of their businesses, and properties and destruction of temples during and since the student-led violence erupted resulting in the ouster of PM Sheikh Hasina on August 5.

In New Delhi, the Ministry of External Affairs said it has noted with "serious concern" the reported attack on Durga Puja mandaps citing the Tantibazar incident of Friday and the theft of a golden crown at the Jeshoreshwari Kali temple at Satkhira, about 270 km southwest of Dhaka.

Prompted by the latest attack on the Durga Puja mandap, Yunus visited the Dhakeshwari National Temple, one of the prominent shakti peeths, in the old

the earlier announced plan of a Sunday visit.

"During his visit, Yunus exchanged greetings with the members of Hindu community on the auspicious occasion of the Durga Puja, the largest Hindu religious festival in Bangladesh," the staterun Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha, said quoting the chief adviser's press wing.

The Daily Star quoted Yunus as saying during a function at the Dhakeshwari temple that the government wants to build Bangladesh in such a way "where each and every citizen's right will be ensured".

"During the Durga Puja, law enforcement agencies have done the 'tough' task of ensuring public security with sincerity. However, it is a collective failure to seek law enforcement agencies'

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Kamala Harris' doc reports she's in 'excellent health'

Her election campaign wants to a draw contrast with Donald Trump

AP, WASHINGTON: Vice President Kamala Harris is in 'excellent health' and 'possesses the physical and mental resiliency' required to serve as president, her doctor said in a letter released Saturday that summarises

her medical history and status. Dr Joshua Simmons, a US Army colonel and physician to the vice president, wrote that Harris, 59, maintains a healthy, active lifestyle

and that her most recent physical last April was 'unremarkable'. She "possesses the physical and mental resiliency required to

successfully execute the duties of the Presidency, to include those as Chief Executive, Head of State and Commander in Chief," he wrote in a two-page letter. Harris' campaign hopes to use the moment to draw a contrast with Republican Donald Trump, who has released only limited information about

his health over the years, and raise questions about his fitness to serve, according to a campaign aide who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive matters. Trump has released very little

health information, including after his ear was grazed by a bullet during an assassination attempt in July.

Simmons, who said he has been Harris' primary care physician for the

past 3 1/2 years, said the vice presi-

PTI, WASHINGTON: Legendary music composer A R Rahman has

A R Rahman records 30-min

recorded a 30-minute performance video in support of Vice President Kamaal Harris, which is expected to give a big boost to her presidential campaign ahead of the November 5 general elections. Rahman, 57, is the first major in-

ternational artist from S Asia to have endorsed Harris, who is of mixed Indian and African origin.

"With this performance, A R Rahman has added his voice to a chorus of leaders and artists who are

dent has a history of allergies and urticaria, also known as hives, for which she has been on allergen immunotherapy for the past three years.

Simmons said Harris' latest blood

work and other test results were "un-

remarkable. Also in the report: Harris wears contact lenses for mild nearsightedness: her family history includes maternal colon cancer; she is up to date on preventive care recommendations, including having a colonoscopy and

annual mammograms. As Harris' office released the med-

performance giving boost to Kamala standing up for progress and representation in America," said Shekar Narasimhan, chairman of the AAPI

Victory Fund. "This is more than just a musical event, it's a call to action for our communities to engage and vote for the future we want to see," he said after AAPI Victory Fund announced that Rahman, the globally renowned Indian composer and musician, has recorded an exclusive 30-minute performance in support Harris's 2024 presidential campaign.

recent media reports raising questions about Trump's health and mental acuity and his failure to provide information about health status and medical history.

Trump, 78, eagerly questioned President Joe Biden's health when the 81-year-old president was seeking reelection. Since Biden was replaced on the ticket with Harris, Trump's own health has drawn more attention. Last November, Trump marked

Biden's birthday by releasing a letter

from his physician that reported the former president was in "excellent" physical and mental health. ical report, her campaign highlighted

Sahara desert witnesses first floods in 50 years

Meteorologists referred to the phenomenon as an extratropical storm

AGENCY, RABAT: In a rare and dramatic turn of events, parts of the Sahara Desert witnessed severe flooding after two days of torrential rainfall in southeastern Morocco, exceeding the region's yearly averages. Officials from Morocco's meteorology agency reported that the village of Tagounite, located 450km south of the capital, Rabat, recorded over 100mm of rain

Satellite images captured by NASA revealed that Lake Iriqui, a dry lake bed between Zagora and Tata for half a century, was refilled by the deluge. "It's been 30 to 50 years since we've

regions still recovering from an earth-

quake the previous year, according to

in just 24 hours in September.

unprecedented rates in September. had this much rain in such a short space of time," Houssine Youabeb, an official of Morocco's meteorology agency, told the Associated Press. The flooding in Morocco claimed 18 lives last month and extended to

The Guardian. Dammed reservoirs in the southeast reportedly refilled at

The Sahara Desert, spanning over 9 million sqkm across North, Central, and West Africa, faces increasing threats from extreme weather due to global warming. Scientists warn that future storms of this magnitude could become more frequent in the region.

Celeste Saulo, Secretary-General of

the World Meteorological Organisation, said, "As a result of rising temperatures, the hydrological cycle has accelerated. It has also become more erratic and unpredictable, and we are facing growing problems of either too much or too little water. A warmer atmosphere holds more moisture, which is conducive to heavy rainfall. More rapid evaporation and drying of soils worsen drought conditions."