



Britain's King Charles III presents a Humanitarian Medal to Harriet Fielder, Team Leader UK-MED, for her services in Gaza at the Buckingham Palace in London



Portugal's President Marcelo de Souza (L) and Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva talk before a meeting at Planalto Palace in Brasilia



Russia's President Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting with members of the government via videoconference, in St Petersburg



China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi attends a United Nations Security Council meeting on improving global governance in New York City

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German Chancellor and Social Democratic Party (SPD) main candidate Olaf Scholz (C) visits Volkswagen's (VW) electric fleet production line in Emden, northern Germany on Tuesday during an election campaign event

Leading Myanmar oppn organisation blames resistance group for killing of Catholic priest

BANGKOK: The main organisation coordinating resistance to Myanmar's military government says its forces have arrested 10 members of a local resistance group suspected in the killing of a Catholic village priest last week in the country's northwest. Father Donald Martin Ye Naing Win, 44, is believed to be the first Catholic priest targeted for killing in the civil war that erupted after the army seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi four years ago. He served in a village church in Shwebo township in Sagaing region, a stronghold of the armed resistance. The Home Affairs and Immigration Ministry of the shadow National Unity Government, the leading opposition organisation, said in a statement Monday that the suspects were captured by the Shwebo branch of its armed People's Defence Force and other local resistance groups on Friday, the day of the killing. The statement said an initial investigation found the suspects were members of a local defence force, and the shadow government's Defence Ministry will investigate further. It said nothing about a possible motive for the attack.

4 paramilitary personnel killed in Pak's Kurram; aid convoy attack toll rises to 2

PESHAWAR: Four paramilitary personnel were killed and five others injured when unknown militants attacked their squad in Pakistan's violence-hit Kurram, where an aid convoy was also targeted. According to security officials, the militants ambushed the paramilitary Kurram Militia squad in Lower Kurram's Oshit area late on Monday, where an aid convoy carrying essential supplies was ambushed earlier in the day. The injured and dead were shifted to a hospital, where the condition of one injured was stated to be critical. The military, which typically issues statements in such situations, has yet to comment. The attack on the aid convoy in sectarian violence-hit Kurram district in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province killed a truck driver and injured 15 others. Late last night, another injured succumbed to injuries, taking the toll to two, according to officials.

UN human rights chief accuses Rwanda-backed rebels in east Congo of killing, recruiting kids

DAKAR: The UN human rights chief accused Rwanda-backed rebels who seized a second major city in eastern Congo of killing children and attacking hospitals and warehouses storing humanitarian aid. Volker Turk said in a statement Tuesday that his office "confirmed cases of summary execution of children by M23 after they entered the city of Bukavu last week. We are also aware that children were in possession of weapons." He provided no details or did not refer to specific events, but UN agencies have previously accused both Congolese government forces and the rebels of recruiting children. The United Nations Human Rights Council earlier this month launched a commission that will investigate atrocities, including rapes and killings akin to "summary executions" committed by both sides since the beginning of the year.

Russia, US to name negotiators on ending Ukraine war

AFP, RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA: Russia and the United States agreed Tuesday to establish teams to negotiate a path to ending the war in Ukraine after talks that drew a strong rebuke from Kyiv over its exclusion.

Washington noted European nations would have to have a seat at the negotiating table "at some point", following the first high-level official Washington-Moscow talks since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Some European leaders, alarmed by President Donald Trump's overhaul of US policy on Russia, fear Washington will make serious concessions to Moscow and re-write the continent's security arrangement in a Cold War-style deal.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky slammed his nation's exclusion from the Riyadh gathering, which lasted for more than four hours.

He said that any talks aimed at ending the war should be "fair" and involve European countries, including Turkey - which offered to host negotiations.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov agreed to "appoint respective high-level teams to begin working on a path to ending the conflict in Ukraine as soon as possible", the State Department said.

Washington added the sides had also agreed to "establish a consultation mechanism" to address "irritants" to Russia and



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio (R) shakes hands with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov during their meeting at Diriyah Palace, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on Tuesday

America's relationship, noting the sides would lay the groundwork for future cooperation.

Yuri Ushakov, President Vladimir Putin's foreign policy aide, confirmed the negotiating teams' appointment but said it was "difficult" to discuss a date for a potential Trump-Putin meeting. "Heard each other"

The meeting marks a major diplomatic coup for Moscow, which had been isolated for three years under the previous US administration of president Joe Biden.

Moscow's economic negotiator, Kirill Dmitriev, said Western attempts to isolate Russia had "obviously failed", revelling in the

talks. "We did not just listen but heard each other, and I have reason to believe the American side has better understood our position," Lavrov told reporters.

The veteran diplomat noted Russia opposed any deployment of NATO-nation troops to Ukraine as part of an eventual ceasefire.

European allies publicly diverged this week over the question of whether they would be open to sending truce peacekeepers to Ukraine.

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer said he was prepared to consider committing British soldiers, while German Chancellor Olaf Scholz

Kyiv accuses Trump team of 'feeding Putin's appetite': official

AFP, KYIV, UKRAINE: A senior Ukrainian official on Tuesday criticised US President Donald Trump's team for launching talks with Russia without Ukraine, after officials from Washington and Moscow held their first high-level meeting since the invasion of Ukraine.

"Both (former US presidents Barack) Obama before 2014 and (Joe) Biden before this war talked to Putin about everyone without us, about Europe without Europe," a senior official requesting anonymity told AFP. "Someone in Trump's team led

him in the same footsteps. This will only feed Putin's appetite and Putin's confidence that he will win and America will lose," the source continued.

The source speculated that "it seems there is someone in Trump's team or close to him" who is raising "unrealistic expectations" about what could be achieved from Russia.

They added that Kyiv was counting on a face-to-face meeting with Trump's special Ukraine envoy Keith Kellogg, scheduled to visit Kyiv on February 20, to understand "what is really going on".

said that any debate on the matter was "completely premature".

'How to start negotiations'

The negotiations at Riyadh's Diriyah Palace in Riyadh began without visible handshakes.

Both Russia and the United States had cast Tuesday's meeting as the beginning of a potentially lengthy process and downplayed the prospects of a breakthrough.

Trump has said he wants to end the war in Ukraine, but has thus far presented no concrete plan.

The United States has urged both sides that concessions will have to be made if any talks materialise.

Russia on the eve of the summit said there cannot be even a "thought" on it giving up territory

seized from Ukraine. The Kremlin said Tuesday that Ukraine had the "right" to join the European Union, but not the NATO military alliance.

It also said Putin was "ready" to negotiate with Zelensky "if necessary"

But it again questioned his "legitimacy" -- a reference to his five-year term expiring last year, despite Ukrainian law not requiring elections during wartime.

The Ukrainian leader was in Turkey on Tuesday for discussions on the conflict with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Zelensky was due in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday but pushed back his visit after slamming the US-Russia discussions there.

Chinese navy chopper closes in on Philippines plane over SCS

AP, OVER THE SCARBOROUGH SHOAL (SOUTH CHINA SEA): A Chinese navy helicopter flew within 10 feet of a Philippine patrol plane on Tuesday in a disputed area of the South China Sea, prompting the Filipino pilot to warn by radio: "You are flying too close, you are very dangerous."

The Chinese helicopter was attempting to force a Cessna Caravan turboprop plane belonging to the Philippine Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources out of what China claims is its airspace over the hotly disputed Scarborough Shoal off the northwestern Philippines.

An Associated Press journalist and other invited foreign media on the plane witnessed the tense 30-minute standoff as the Philippine plane pressed on with its low-altitude patrol around Scarborough with the Chinese navy helicopter hovering close above it or flying to its left in cloudy weather.

"You are flying too close, you are very dangerous and endangering the lives of our crew and passengers," the Philippine pilot told the Chinese navy helicopter by radio at one point. "Keep away and distance your aircraft from us, you are violating the safety standard set by FAA and ICAO."

The Philippine Coast Guard and the Bureau of Fisheries said in a statement that they remain 'committed to asserting our sovereignty, sovereign rights and maritime jurisdiction in the West Philippine Sea, despite the aggressive and escalatory actions of China'

The pilot was referring to the standard distance between aircraft required by the US Federal Aviation Administration and the International Civil Aviation Organisation to prevent air disasters.

There was no sign that the Philippine plane had to alter its planned path and altitude to avoid a collision.

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Hamas says it will free 6 hostages, hand over four bodies

AP, CAIRO: A top Hamas leader says the militant group will release six living Israeli hostages on Saturday and the bodies of four others on Thursday, a surprise increase that apparently comes in return for Israel allowing mobile homes and construction equipment into the devastated Gaza Strip.

The six are the last living hostages set to be freed under the ceasefire's first phase. The warring sides have yet to negotiate the second and more difficult phase, in which Hamas says it will release dozens more hostages in exchange for a lasting ceasefire and an Israeli withdrawal.

Hamas leader Khalil al-Hayya, in prerecorded remarks, said the "Bibas family" would be included in the handover of four bodies, apparently referring to Shiri Bibas and her two young sons, Ariel and Kfir, who for many Israelis embody the captives' plight. Israel has not confirmed their deaths, and the prime minister's office urged the public not to distribute "photos, names and rumours".

Israel has said it was gravely concerned about the Bibas family, while Hamas said they were killed in an Israeli airstrike early in the war.

Delta jet flips upside down on snowy Toronto runway

All 80 aboard survive, some have minor injuries



A Delta Airlines plane sits on its roof after crashing upon landing at Toronto Pearson Airport in Toronto, Ontario, on Tuesday

AP, TORONTO: A Delta Air Lines jet flipped on its roof while landing Monday at Toronto's Pearson Airport, but all 80 people on board survived and those hurt had relatively minor injuries, the airport's chief executive said. Snow blown by winds gusting to 65 kph swirled when the flight from Minneapolis carrying 76 passengers and four crew attempted to land at around 2:15 pm. Communications between the tower and pilot were normal on approach and it's not clear what went so drastically wrong when the plane touched down.

Peter Carlson, a passenger travelling to Toronto for a paramedics conference, said the landing was "very forceful."

"All the sudden everything just kind of went sideways and then next thing I know it's kind of a blink and I'm upside down still strapped in," he told CBC News.

Canadian authorities held two brief news conferences but provided no details on the crash. Video posted to social media

showed the aftermath with the Mitsubishi CRJ-900LR overturned, the fuselage seemingly intact and firefighters dousing what was left of the fire as passengers climbed out and walked across the tarmac.

"We are very grateful there was no loss of life and relatively minor injuries," Deborah Flint, CEO of Greater Toronto Airports Authority, told reporters.

Delta CEO Ed Bastian said in a statement that "the hearts of the entire global Delta family are with those affected."

Toronto Pearson Fire Chief Todd Aitken said 18 passengers were taken to the hospital. Earlier in the day, Ornge air ambulance said it was transporting one pediatric patient to Toronto's SickKids hospital and two injured adults to other hospitals in the city.

Emergency personnel reached the plane within a few minutes and Aitken said the response "went as planned." He said "the runway was dry and there was no crosswind conditions."

Hasina's extradition is Bangladesh interim govt's top priority: Spokesman

PTI, DHAKA/ NEW DELHI: Bangladesh interim government chief Muhammad Yunus' office on Tuesday said the extradition of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina from India was Dhaka's top priority.

"This is the government's top priority," Chief Adviser Yunus' press secretary Shafiqul Alam said in a media briefing, adding that Dhaka would continue its efforts to extradite Hasina to hold her trial in person.

He said it was up to the people and political parties of Bangladesh to decide if her "fascist" Awami League would be able

to carry on politics but those allegedly involved in killings, enforced disappearances and other wrongdoings must be brought to justice.

The spokesman said the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights' (OHCHR) fact finding report, released last week, revealed that Hasina committed crimes against humanity during her tenure.

"After the report of the UN and some reports of rights groups were published, pressure has been mounted (on India to return Hasina to Bangladesh)," the

state-run Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha quoted him as saying.

Alam said a survey by an Indian media group showed that 55 per cent Indians wanted her repatriation while a certain per cent want to send her to another country and only 16-17 per cent wanted her stay in India.

Bangladesh's Foreign Office earlier said they sent a diplomatic note seeking her repatriation and New Delhi acknowledged its receipt without any elaboration.

Hasina secretly fled the country for India when her nearly 16-year-long Awami League

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— Shafiqul Alam, Chief Adviser Yunus' press secretary

regime was toppled in a student-led mass uprising on August 5, 2024.

She has been accused of a series of charges like commission of crimes against humanity, mass murders and enforced disappearances by the subsequent interim administration along with many of her senior colleagues in the cabinet and party.

Most of these leaders and officials are now in jail to face trial or

on the run at home and abroad.

Alam's comments came a day after Hasina accused Yunus of turning Bangladesh into a "terrorist" hub, exposing it to a state of lawlessness in a virtual conversation with some of the widows and children of policemen killed during the last year's unrest.

Hasina vowed to return home and "avenge the deaths of our policemen" and added that she

too narrowly escaped death when her government was toppled by the grace of God "who definitely kept me alive to do something good".

The deposed premier earlier on February 5 virtually addressed a meeting of now disbanded Chhatra League, her party's student wing, when her ancestral house and residence of Bangladesh's founding father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was demolished by a mob with a pre-announced declaration as the news of her scheduled meeting broke.

The mob used excavators to level the 32 Dhanmondi house,

which was memorial museum named after the assassinated leader who was killed along with most of his family members in a coup by a group of relatively junior military officers on August 15, 1975.

The mobs also launched a near simultaneous attack on Awami League leaders' houses and establishments across the country that continued for the subsequent three days.

Yunus himself in a media interview earlier asked New Delhi to debar Hasina from speaking out, saying her comments enraged people in Bangladesh.