



France's Minister of Justice Gerald Darmanin speaks during a session of questions to the gov't at the National Assembly, in Paris



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi attends a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier near the Kremlin wall in Moscow, Russia



Choreographer Wayne McGregor is made a Knight Bachelor by Britain's King Charles III at Windsor Castle, in Windsor, England



A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket with a commercial crew of four lifts off from pad 39A at the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida

allovertheworld

AFP



People receive sacks of flour provided by the Turkish disaster relief agency AFAD, received from a supply centre affiliated with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees (UNRWA) in al-Tifah neighbourhood of Gaza City

US robbers who touted crime on Instagram jailed

LOS ANGELES: Bumbling robbers who left behind a cell phone during a \$2.6 million heist and later boasted on Instagram about being part of a criminal gang have been jailed in California, authorities said Monday.

Taiwan arrests Chinese man in rubber boat off outlying island

TAIPEI: Taiwan's coast guard said Tuesday it had arrested a Chinese man in a rubber boat trying to "illegally" enter one of its outlying islands, as Beijing staged large-scale military drills.

Finland closes last coal-fired power plant

HELSINKI: Finnish energy company Helen said Tuesday it had closed the country's last active coal-fired power plant, ushering in "the end of the era of coal" for the Nordic country.

Pakistan extends deadline for expulsion of Afghans

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has postponed a deadline for hundreds of thousands of Afghans to return to their country due to Eid al-Fitr holidays marking the end of Ramadan, a government official told AFP on Tuesday.

95 arrested for Zimbabwe anti-government protests

HARARE: Zimbabwe police said Tuesday they had arrested 95 people on charges of promoting public violence for taking part in demonstrations that called for President Emmerson Mnangagwa to leave power.

Sirens wail, families mourn at Myanmar disaster site

AFP, MANDALAY: As the sirens wailed outside the ruins of Mandalay's Sky Villa condominium and Myanmar began a minute's silence for its more than 2,000 earthquake dead, Shwe Sin thought of her missing child.

"She was such a good daughter," said the 40-year-old. The last time she saw Chit Yamin Pyae, she told AFP in tears, "she paid homage to me and her father by touching her forehead to my feet".

The 7.7-magnitude earthquake struck at 12:51:02 on Friday, rocking the earth, toppling some buildings and destroying others.

On Tuesday at precisely the same time, it was hearts that were ripped asunder as the nation fell silent to remember the dead.

A farmer in northern Shan state, Shwe Sin had been on a call with her 20-year-old daughter, an accountant at Sky Villa -- among the worst disaster sites in the city -- when the



Earthquake survivors wait to receive medical attention in the compounds of a hospital in Naypyidaw, after an earthquake in central Myanmar.

quake struck.

Her daughter called out to a friend: "Sister Sister! It is an earthquake! I am scared!"

"What happened? What happened, daughter?" her mother asked. "I heard her voice but she didn't hear mine," Shwe Sin told AFP.

Minutes later the tremors reached her 140 kilometres (87 miles) away in the Shan town of Momeik, and the connection was cut.

The Sky Villa block was one of Mandalay's better housing options, with a generator offering 24-hour electricity -- a rarity in war-ravaged Myanmar even before Friday's quake -- as well as a gym and a swimming pool.

Those who could afford its creature comforts would choose to live there, said one onlooker.

For an unknown number -- and the staff who served

them - it has become their tomb. - 11th floor escape - Some sections collapsed completely, each storey pancaking down on to the next. In another area, the top six levels remained twisted and broken but standing on the remains of those below.

Zhu Zhu was with a friend on the 11th floor when the quake hit. "I thought that was the day I would die," the 20-year-old student told AFP. "I thought about my parents. I thought I was going to die soon and kept thinking about my mum and dad. It felt like the end for me."

She ran for the emergency exit and escaped through a hole in the wall.

"In the chaos, people collided with each other. As I was jumping and running through the rubble, the rest of the building collapsed, and many people were trapped underneath," she said.

"I was running blindly, not knowing where I was going. After a while, the dust cleared, and I realised the building had collapsed

Death toll 2,700 even as hopes of finding survivors fade out



Myanmar's rescuers work through rubble of a collapsed building following Friday's earthquake in Naypyitaw, Myanmar

PTI, BANGKOK: Rescue workers saved a 63-year-old woman from the rubble of a building in Myanmar's capital on Tuesday, but hope was fading of finding many more survivors of the violent earthquake that killed more than 2,700 people, compounding a humanitarian crisis caused by a civil war.

The fire department in Naypyitaw said the woman was successfully pulled from the rubble 91 hours after being buried when the building col-

lapsed in the 7.7 magnitude earthquake that hit midday Friday.

Experts say the likelihood of finding survivors drops dramatically after 72 hours.

Death toll numbers forecast to increase The head of Myanmar's military government, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, told a forum in Naypyitaw, that 2,719 people have now been found dead, with 4,521 others injured and 441 missing, Myanmar's Western News online portal reported.

Israel strikes Beirut building in southern killing 4 people

PTI, BEIRUT: The Israeli military struck a building in Beirut's southern suburbs early Tuesday, killing at least four people, as the military said it had targeted a member of the Hezbollah militant group.

The airstrike came without warning days after Israel launched an attack on the Lebanese capital, Beirut, on Friday for the first time since a ceasefire ended fighting between Israeli forces and the Hezbollah militant group in November.

The Israeli military then had warned residents in the crowded suburbs before the attack after two projectiles were launched from southern Lebanon, which Hezbollah denied firing.

At least seven other people were wounded in Tuesday's airstrike, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry.

The Israeli military said in a statement the latest strike targeted a Hezbollah member who had been helping the Palestinian Hamas group in the Gaza Strip in planning an attack against Israeli civilians. It said the airstrike was under the direction of the Shin Bet, Israel's domestic intelligence agency.

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun condemned the airstrike.

We must prevent any vi-

olation of sovereignty from abroad, or from infiltrators within who provide an additional pretext for aggression, Aoun wrote in a statement posted on X.

The former military chief vowed after his election in January that all weapons would be at the hands of the Lebanese state, indirectly referring to Hezbollah's arms.

Among those killed in the airstrike were Hezbollah official Hassan Bdeir and his son, Ali, according to a Hezbollah official who spoke on condition of anonymity because of not being authorised to speak publicly to the media. The official said that the two other people killed were their neighbours: two siblings, a young man and a woman.

Another Hezbollah official denied Israeli military statements that Bdeir was preparing an attack against Israel, adding that one of his jobs was to meet with Palestinian officials. Bdeir was not a senior official within Hezbollah and did not take any precautionary measures, the official said, adding that Bdeir was moving around and residing in his home normally before Tuesday's airstrike.

Senior Hezbollah legislator Ali Ammar said the group does not want war.

Families await news of missing workers at site of Bangkok building collapse



People break down while waiting for news of missing loved ones in Bangkok

PTI, BANGKOK: When the earthquake that hit Myanmar sent its tremors to Thailand, Naruemon Thonglek didn't immediately know it also had collapsed a high-rise building under construction in Bangkok.

Seeing images of the debris on television news later, Naruemon immediately recognised the building where her long-time Burmese partner, his son and four of her friends had worked for the past month.

"My legs gave up. I lost all strength in my hands, she said. After the quake stopped I called him, messaged him, but there was no response. I couldn't contact him. I sent him voice messages and he never read it. Then I knew for sure that he must have been inside."

At least 18 people died in Bangkok, Thailand's capital, more than 800 miles (1,287 kilometers) from the

centre of the magnitude 7.7 quake in Myanmar on Friday, which killed more than 2,000 people there. According to Myanmar state television, the quake has so far killed 2,700 people, with more than 3,900 injured and about 270 missing.

Relief agencies expect those numbers to rise sharply, since access is slow to remote areas where communications are down.

In Bangkok, 78 people remain missing. Thai authorities are racing against time to find anyone left alive under the ruins as the crucial 72-hour mark passes. While the authorities have said they detected possible sounds of life, so far only one person was pulled alive from the rubble.

Tavida Kamolvej, Bangkok's deputy governor, told reporters at the site Monday that crews are speeding up the search.

Every second really

THAILAND RESCUE DOGS DOUBLE AS EMOTIONAL SUPPORT



Safari, a golden retriever from the Thai K9 Rescue unit, is brought to comfort people at the site of building collapse in Bangkok

AFP, BANGKOK: Thailand's search and rescue dogs are taking on the role of emotional support animals for grieving relatives of victims of a Bangkok skyscraper flattened in a deadly earthquake. The 30-storey high-rise under construction collapsed in seconds on Friday when a magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck neighbouring Myanmar, with effects felt as far as the Thai capital. As of Tuesday, 13 people -- thought to be on-site construction workers -- were pronounced dead, with nine injured and more than 70 still believed to be buried in the rubble. Their tearful families waited near the scene of the collapse, watching on with hopes fading as rescue workers and diggers scraped through the mountain of rubble.

counts, she said.

Among those missing are the mother and younger sister of Chanpen Kaewnoi, who had been working at the site for a couple of months.

Chanpen said she couldn't contact them after the quake, but later was told by a survivor that they

had been on the fifth floor of the 30-storey building.

He told me that they ran from the fifth floor, and once he reached the ground, the building just collapsed, she said. He said he couldn't find my mom and my sister. He said it was just a split second and he lost them.

US sanctions 6 officials from China, Hong Kong over rights abuses. Beijing threatens to retaliate

PTI, HONG KONG: The United States sanctioned six Chinese and Hong Kong officials who it alleged were involved in transnational repression and acts that threaten to further erode the city's autonomy.

The six officials included Justice Secretary Paul Lam, security office director Dong Jingwei and police commissioner Raymond Siu.

The sanctions are expected to further escalate tensions between Washington and Beijing, who are already locked in friction over trade tariffs and other issues like Taiwan.

Beijing and Hong Kong officials have used Hong Kong national security laws

extraterritorially to intimidate, silence, and harass 19 pro-democracy activists who were forced to flee overseas, including a US citizen and four other US residents, the US State Department said.

The statement, dated Monday, said the six officials were linked to entities or actions that allegedly engaged in the coercing, arresting, detaining or imprisoning of individuals under the authority of the city's security law, or implementing the law.

Lam said the sanctions would have little impact on him. They do not affect my work; they do not affect my life, he said in a statement, adding that the sanctions



represented blatant tyrannical bullying intended to deter people from participating in safeguarding national security.

The other three affected officials were Sonny Au, the secretary-general for the city's committee for

safeguarding national security, and Dick Wong and Margaret Chiu, both assistant commissioners of the police.

Since Beijing imposed a national security law in 2020 to quell the 2019 massive anti-government

protests, Hong Kong authorities have prosecuted many leading activists in the former British colony, which returned to Chinese rule in 1997.

The crackdown has drawn criticism from foreign governments, especially because the city was promised that its Western-style civil liberties and semi-autonomy would be kept intact for at least 50 years during the 1997 handover. Beijing and Hong Kong governments insist the law is necessary for the city's stability.

Over the past two years, Hong Kong authorities have issued arrest warrants for 19 activists based overseas, with bounties of

1 million Hong Kong dollars (USD 128,536) for information leading to each of their arrests. The affected activists included former pro-democracy lawmakers Nathan Law and Ted Hui. They also cancelled the passports of some of the overseas-based activists under a new security law introduced to the city last year.

The Hong Kong office of China's foreign ministry condemned the sanctions, saying they again exposed the ill-intention of the US to undermine the city's prosperity and contain China's development. It urged Washington to stop interfering in the city's affairs.