

allovertheworld

AFP



Ang Lee attends the 25th anniversary screening of "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" at the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures, Ted Mann Theater in Los Angeles

Dozens of minors killed in Mexico cartel infighting

MEXICO CITY: Dozens of minors have been killed during months of fighting between two factions of the Sinaloa drug cartel in northwestern Mexico, a local ombudsman said Friday. Nearly 100 minors have gone missing in violence that followed the capture last July of a cartel co-founder, Oscar Loza, president of the Sinaloa State Human Rights Commission, said. "Thirty nine minors have lost their lives in this armed conflict," he told AFP, citing data from the public prosecutor's office. The victims include two girls, aged seven and 12, who died on Monday after being caught in the crossfire between gunmen and security forces. A 12-year-old boy was also wounded along with his parents and two other relatives, authorities said.

US confirms another outage at Newark airport

WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES: US authorities said the overstretched airport of Newark, one of three serving the New York metropolitan area, suffered a new 90-second outage early on Friday. Delays and flight cancellations had already followed an April 28 incident at Newark Liberty International Airport, in which traffic controllers stationed in nearby Philadelphia were unable to communicate with planes. In the latest incident, according to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), there "was a telecommunications outage that impacted communications and radar display" at the same Philadelphia traffic control station that guides aircraft in and out of Newark's airspace. The outage occurred around 3:55 am on Friday and "lasted approximately 90 seconds," a short statement said.

French police bust fake family with 135 kg of cocaine

BORDEAUX, FRANCE: Two adults accompanied by two minors posing as a family were arrested in France after police found 135 kilograms of cocaine in their camping van, prosecutors said Friday. Police stopped the RV coming from Spain overnight Monday to Tuesday at a highway toll around 80 kilometres (50 miles) north of the Spanish border, Bordeaux prosecutors said in a statement. Onboard were a 54-year-old man and a 36-year-old woman, and two minors aged 15 and 17, who were travelling together "to give the image of a family trip", prosecutors said. The seizure confirms an "increasingly intensive use" by criminal networks of roads to import cocaine from southern Europe, an "adaptation" to measures taken to fight drug trafficking at the continent's main northern ports, they added.

Gunmen kill three in Nigeria's southeast: police

LAGOS, NIGERIA: Gunmen blocked a highway in Nigeria's southeastern Imo state this week, killing at least three people and injuring several, police said on Saturday. Imo state police spokesman Henry Okoye told AFP that around 5:00 am (0400 GMT) on Thursday "criminal elements suspected to be members of the proscribed IPOB... came out in their numbers... and blocked the Owerri-Okigwe highway and began to fire sporadically". He said the gunmen fired on "commuters on the road and they were able to set some vehicles ablaze and killed some innocent individuals".

Thousands confined indoors by toxic chlorine cloud in Spain

MADRID: Spanish authorities told more than 160,000 people near Barcelona to stay indoors on Saturday after a fire at an industrial warehouse released a toxic cloud of chlorine over a wide area. The blaze, in the coastal city of Vilanova i la Geltru just south of Barcelona, started at dawn on Saturday in a warehouse storing pool cleaning products, the regional fire service said. "If you are in the zone that is affected do not leave your home or your place of work," the Civil Protection service said on social media. It advised people to keep doors and windows closed in the at-risk area, which stretched across five local districts along the coast, from Vilanova i la Geltru to the village of Calafell, near Tarragona.

33 killed in Sudan strikes blamed on paramilitary RSF

PORT SUDAN: At least 33 people have been killed in Sudan in attacks blamed on the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, at war with the army since April 2023, first responders said Saturday. The attacks came after six straight days of RSF drone strikes on the army-led government's wartime capital Port Sudan damaged key infrastructure including the power grid. On Friday evening, at least 14 members of the same family were killed in an air strike on a displacement camp in the vast western region of Darfur, a rescue group said, blaming the paramilitaries. The Abu Shouk camp "was the target of intense bombardment by the Rapid Support Forces on Friday evening", said the group of volunteer aid workers, which also reported wounded.

Israeli airstrikes kill 23 in Gaza as outcry over aid blockade grows

AP, DEIR AL-BALAH: Israeli airstrikes overnight and into Saturday killed at least 23 Palestinians in Gaza, including three children and their parents whose tent was bombed in Gaza City, health officials said.

The bombardment continued as international warnings grow over Israeli plans to control aid distribution in Gaza as Israel's blockade on the territory of over 2 million people is in its third month.

The UN and aid groups have rejected Israel's aid distribution moves, including a plan from a group of American security contractors, ex-military officers and humanitarian aid officials calling itself the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation.

Among the 23 bodies brought to hospitals over the past 24 hours were those of the family of five whose tent was struck in Gaza City's Sabra district, Gaza's Health Ministry said.

Another Israeli strike



A UN worker and displaced Palestinians stand amid the rubble of an UNRWA aid supply depot and shelter, heavily damaged in an overnight Israeli strike in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip

late Friday hit a warehouse belonging to UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, in the northern area of Jabalia. Four people were killed, according to the Indonesian Hospital, where bodies were taken.

AP video showed fires burning in the shattered building. The warehouse was empty after being hit and raided multiple times during Israeli ground offen-

sives against Hamas fighters over the past year, said residents including Hamza Mohamed.

Israel's military said nine soldiers were lightly wounded Friday night by an explosive device while searching Gaza City's Shijaiyah neighborhood. It said they were evacuated to a hospital in Israel.

Israel resumed its bombardment in Gaza on March 18, shattering a two-month

ceasefire with Hamas. Ground troops have seized more than half the territory and have been conducting raids and searching parts of northern Gaza and the southernmost city of Rafah. Large parts of both areas have been flattened by months of Israeli operations.

Under Israel's blockade, charity kitchens are virtually the only source of food left in Gaza, but dozens have shut down in recent days as food supplies run out. Aid groups say more closures are imminent. Israel has said the blockade is meant to pressure Hamas to release remaining hostages and disarm. Rights groups have called the blockade a "starvation tactic" and a potential war crime.

Israel accuses Hamas and other militants of siphoning off aid in Gaza, though it hasn't presented evidence for its claims. The U.N. denies significant diversion takes place, saying it monitors distribution.

Hamas releases video of two Israeli hostages alive in Gaza

AFP, JERUSALEM: Hamas's armed wing released a video on Saturday showing two Israeli hostages alive in the Gaza Strip, with one of the two men calling to end the 19-month-long war.

Israeli media identified the pair in the undated video as Elkana Bohbot and Yosef Haim Ohana, who were kidnapped during Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel that triggered the war.

The three-minute video released by Hamas's Ezdine al-Qassab Brigades shows one of the hostages, identified by media as 36-year-old Bohbot, visibly weak and lying on

the floor wrapped in a blanket. Bohbot, a Colombian-Israeli, was seen bound and injured in the face in video footage from the day of the Hamas attack. After a video of him was released last month, his family said they were "extremely concerned" about his health.

The second hostage, said to be Ohana, 24, speaks in Hebrew in the video, urging the Israeli government to end the war in Gaza and secure the release of all remaining captives - a similar message to statements made by other hostages, likely under duress, in previous videos released by Hamas.

Thousands join pro-EU rally in Romania's capital as pivotal presidential runoff looms

AP, BUCHAREST: Thousands of people gathered in Romania's capital on Friday for a pro-European Union march. It came a week before the final vote of a closely watched presidential election that pits a hard-right nationalist front-runner against the capital's pro-EU mayor.

Marchers converged in Bucharest in front of the government building, where many waved the blue and yellow flags of Europe. Many chanted slogans such as "We are in Europe" and "Bucharest is not Budapest", referring to Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, a member but also a longtime critic of the EU.

A communist country until 1989, Romania joined the EU in 2007. But last year it was plunged into its worst political crisis in decades when a top court voided the previous election. The far-right outsider Calin Georgescu topped the first

round following allegations of electoral violations and Russian interference, which Moscow has denied.

The rally was held nearly a week after the first round of a presidential election redo that saw hard-right nationalist George Simion, 38, emerge as the front-runner. In second place was 55-year-old incumbent Bucharest Mayor Nicusor Dan.

"We need to develop ... we want to be like the best countries, and we don't have the possibilities on our own," said Stefan Gheorghe, a 23-year-old lawyer. "You need the European Union to help us out. It is very important to us to stay together and to benefit from each other."

A median of polls ahead of the runoff suggests Simion holds a lead in the vote, which will be held between the two staunchly anti-establishment candidates on May 18.

Soviet-era spacecraft plunges to Earth after 53 years stuck in orbit

AP, CAPE CANAVERAL (US): A Soviet-era spacecraft plunged to Earth on Saturday, more than a half-century after its failed launch to Venus.

The European Union Space Surveillance and Tracking confirmed its uncontrolled reentry, based on analysis and no-shows of the spacecraft on subsequent orbits. The European Space Agency's space debris office also indicated that the spacecraft had reentered after it failed to appear over a German radar station.

It was not immediately known where the spacecraft came in or how much, if any, of the half-ton spacecraft survived the fiery descent from orbit. Experts said ahead of time that some if not all of it might come crashing down, given it was built to withstand a landing on Venus, the solar system's hottest planet.

The chances of anyone getting clobbered by spacecraft debris were exceedingly low, scientists said.

Launched in 1972 by the Soviet Union, the spacecraft known as Kosmos 482 was part of a series of missions bound for Venus. But this one never made it out of orbit around Earth, stranded there by a rocket malfunction.

Much of the spacecraft came tumbling back to Earth within a decade of the failed launch. The lander was encased in titanium, according to experts, and weighed more than 495 kilograms.

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