



Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani attends the 2nd ASEAN-GCC Summit after the 46th Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit in Kuala Lumpur



German Chancellor Friedrich Merz speaks during a joint press conference with the Finnish PM at the Nordic PMs' Summer Meeting in Turku, Finland



British citizen Thomas Parker walks towards a district court before he is sentenced for drug offenses, in Denpasar in Bali, Indonesia



The leader of Romania's nationalist sovereign party (AUR) George Simion speaks during the Conservative Political Action Conference at Poland



US youtuber and singer Alex Warren performs onstage during the 51st American Music Awards at the Fontainebleau in Las Vegas, Nevada

France detains over 20 suspects in crypto kidnapping plots

PARIS, FRANCE: France has arrested more than 20 people over two recent kidnapping plots targeting crypto traders in Paris and another attempt in western France, a source close to the case said Tuesday, asking not to be named. The arrests are part of an investigation by France's organised crime office into the May 1 abduction of a crypto-millionaire's father who was later rescued by French police, the May 13 attempted kidnapping this month of a French cryptocurrency entrepreneur's daughter and grandson, and a new plot that was foiled Monday near the western city of Nantes, the source said.

Greece vows 'full transparency' in EU farm subsidy row

ATHENS, GREECE: Greece's agriculture minister on Tuesday promised "full transparency" in the disbursement of EU farm subsidies after a top Greek official was sacked in a fraud probe row with Brussels. Costas Tsiras said the Greek authority for the payment of common agricultural policy aid (OPEKEPE) would enter a "new era with full transparency." Tsiras on Friday fired the head of OPEKEPE, retired judge Nikolaos Salatas, following a raid at the OPEKEPE offices in which EU prosecutors said there was a "lack of sincere cooperation." The European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) in a statement last week said "gathering digital evidence at the headquarters of OPEKEPE proved particularly challenging and was significantly delayed" until the early hours of the morning.

Iran truck drivers continue with rare strike: reports

PARIS, FRANCE: Truck drivers across Iran were on Tuesday pressing the sixth day of a strike rare in its length and magnitude, seeking better conditions in a sector crucial for the economy in the Islamic republic. After starting last week in the southwestern port city of Bandar Abbas, the strike action has spread across the country, according to reports by monitoring groups on social media and Persian-language media based outside Iran. The truck drivers are protesting a rise in insurance premiums, poor road security, high fuel prices and low freight rates, the US-based Human Rights Activists News Agency said. It posted images showing what it said were dozens of stationary trucks in the central city of Isfahan and in Shiraz in the south, while reports also indicated similar actions in Tehran province and Kermanshah in the west.

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Russia seizes four border villages in Ukraine

AP, KYIV: Russian forces have taken four border villages in Ukraine's northeastern Sumy region, a local official said Tuesday, days after Russian President Vladimir Putin said he had issued an order to establish a buffer zone along the border.

Sumy borders Russia's Kursk region, where a surprise Ukrainian incursion last year captured a pocket of land in the first occupation of Russian territory since World War II. The long border is vulnerable to Ukrainian incursions, Putin said, and creating a buffer zone could help Russia prevent further cross-border attacks there.

Meanwhile, a Russian bombing campaign that had escalated in recent days slowed overnight as far fewer Russian drones targeted Ukrainian towns and cities.

Moscow's invasion has shown no signs of stopping



Russian military personal at a border village in Ukraine

despite months of intense US-led efforts to secure a ceasefire and get traction for peace talks.

Since Russian and Ukrainian delegations met in Turkiye earlier this month for their first direct talks in three years, a large prisoner exchange has been the only tangible outcome, but negotiations

have brought no significant breakthrough.

The US special envoy to Ukraine, Keith Kellogg, said Russia has not yet delivered a promised memorandum that he told US President Donald Trump in a phone call on May 19 would outline the framework for a possible peace agreement.

The Kremlin has also ruled out the Vatican as a venue for future negotiations, he said. "We would have liked to have it at the Vatican and we were pretty set to do something like that, but the Russians didn't want to go there ... so I think Geneva may be the next stop," Kellogg said in an interview Tuesday on

Fox News Channel.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said Tuesday that Turkiye was also ready to host a future round of peace talks between Ukraine and Russia.

Between Friday and Sunday, Russia launched around 900 drones at Ukraine, officials said, amid a spate of large-scale bombardments. On Sunday night, Russia launched its biggest drone attack of the 3-year war against Ukraine, firing 355 drones.

From Monday to Tuesday, Russia fired 60 drones at Ukraine, the Ukrainian air force said Tuesday. Russia's Ministry of Defence claimed its air defences downed 99 Ukrainian drones overnight over seven Russian regions.

The weekend surge in Russia's bombardments of Ukraine drew a rebuke from Trump, who said Putin had gone "crazy."

HEAD-Y FEELING



A vendor walks with his hats and beachwear along Ipanema Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Sunday

5 killed, 19 injured, six missing in explosion at chemical plant in China

PTI, BEIJING: Five people were killed and six others reported missing after an explosion rocked one of the largest chemical plants in China on Tuesday, generating a huge fireball and sending plumes of smoke hundreds of feet into the air.

Nineteen people also sustained minor injuries in the accident, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported, quoting the local emergency management bureau.

The explosion took place at the workshop of the state-owned Shandong Youdao Chemical, the world's largest producer of the pesticide chlorpyrifos, located in Shandong province, the report said.

The plant, established in



Firefighters extinguish fires at the explosion site of a chemical plant in Gaomi, in east China's Shandong Province

2019 in Gaomi city, produces around 11,000 tonnes of pesticide a year and has a workforce of over 300 people, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

The explosion, whose cause is yet to be determined, took place around noon.

Videos and photos posted on Chinese social media showed a huge mushroom cloud billowing out of the factory after the explosion.

Emergency teams rushed to the chemical factory following the explosion, official media reported.

The Ministry of Emergency Management immediately dispatched a work team and specialised personnel, including firefighters, medical experts, and workplace safety specialists, to aid rescue efforts, Xinhua reported.

A team of 232 firefighters has been sent to the scene.

Locals said they were shaken by the intensity of the blast, which sent the window panes flying all around.

The provincial and local authorities have established a joint rescue command centre to coordinate efforts, focusing on searching for the missing, treating the injured, comforting families and monitoring the environment.

Ohio deputy fatally shot

AP, MARENGO: An Ohio sheriff's deputy who responded to a domestic violence call at a home was fatally shot by a suspect who was wounded, authorities said.

The Morrow County Sheriff's office said the shooting occurred Monday night in the town of Marengo, about 56 km north of Columbus. The deputy's name has not been released.

In a statement posted on the department's Facebook page, Morrow County Sheriff John Hinton said the deputy was shot shortly after he arrived at the home. The deputy and the suspect were both taken to a hospital, where the deputy was pronounced dead a short time later.

"There are no words to express the pain being felt by our office," Hinton said.

The suspect remains hospitalised in serious condition, Hinton said. No other injuries were reported in the shooting.

The Delaware County Sheriff's Office will lead the investigation into the shooting.

China hopes to collect \$22b in debt from developing nations

PTI, BEIJING: China will

turn from a capital provider to a debt collector of 75 developing countries, including the world's poorest and most vulnerable, this year as they are due to pay back a record USD 22 billion loans owed to Beijing, according to data released by an Australian think tank.

China has become the leading debt collector of developing countries, shifting from a net capital provider, "as bills coming due from its Belt and Road lending surge in the 2010s now far outstrip new loan disbursements", the latest research report of the Australian think tank, the Lowy Institute, said.

In 2025, about 75 of the world's poorest and most vulnerable countries will make "record high debt repayments" totalling USD 22 billion to China as a result of peaks in new loan commitments made from 2012 to 2018, the report said.

China faces a dilemma and growing diplomatic pressure to restructure unsustainable debt besides mounting domestic pressure, particularly from its quasi-commercial institutions, to recover outstanding debts, according to the report prepared by Riley Duke.

Duke said that the research was being published now because China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) lending spree peaked in the mid-2010s, and those grace periods began expiring in the early 2020s – a likely "crunch period" for developing-country repay-

ments to China.

How China's shift to chief debt collector will impact its reputation as a development partner remains to be seen, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post quoted Duke as saying.

On Tuesday, the Chinese Foreign Ministry sought to play down the report, saying that a handful of countries are spreading rumours against Chinese loan assistance to developing countries.

China's investment and financing cooperation with the developing countries is in line with the international common practices, the market principles and the principle of debt sustainability, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing here while commenting on the report.

A handful of countries are spreading the rumours, citing China threat, but they don't talk about the fact that multilateral institutions are the major creditors of developing countries and the source of the debt repayment, she said.

Under its influential BRI initiative, the signature initiative of President Xi Jinping, China has doled out billions of dollars of loans to dozens of infrastructure projects in developing countries to further its global influence.

However, the investments attracted criticism of being debt traps after China acquired Sri Lanka's Hambantota port for a 99-year lease as a debt swap.

Nepalese Sherpa scales Mt Everest for breaks own record 31st time



Nepali climber Tashi Gyalzen Sherpa embraces his son upon his arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu, after he made a record-breaking four summits of Everest in fifteen days

strated his unmatched skills and professional-

ism on the mountain. We are immensely proud of his achievement and the legacy he continues to build."

In the last two years, Kami Rita scaled Mt Everest twice each season taking his successful summits count to 30.

Kami Rita developed a deep passion for climbing from a young age and has been scaling mountains for over two decades, Chhang Dawa Sherpa, Expedition Director at Seven Summit Treks, said.

His mountaineering jour-

ney began in 1992 when he joined an expedition to Everest as a support staff member.

According to Dawa, between 1994 to 2025 Kami Rita also scaled K2 and Mt Lhotse one time, Manaslu thrice, and Cho Oyu eight times.

Hundreds of climbers attempt to climb Mount Everest from the Nepali side each year.

Everest was first climbed in 1953 by New Zealander Edmund Hillary and Nepali Sherpa Tenzing Norgay.