



Thailand's Minister of Defence Phumtham Wechayachai during the fifth plenary session at the Shangri-La Dialogue Summit in Singapore



Britain's Defence Secretary John Healey speaking on the BBC's 'Sunday with Laura Kuenssberg' political television show in London



Kim Moon-soo, the presidential candidate for South Korea's conservative People Power Party, speaks during an election campaign event in Seoul



Former president of Poland Lech Walesa speaks to the media outside a polling station in Gdansk, Poland, during the second round of the presidential elections

At least 31 Palestinians killed while heading to Gaza aid hub

AFP, RAFAH (GAZA STRIP): At least 31 people were killed and scores were wounded on Sunday as they were on their way to receive food in the Gaza Strip, according to health officials and multiple witnesses. The witnesses said Israeli forces fired on crowds around a kilometer (1,000 yards) away from an aid site run by an Israeli-backed foundation.

The army released a brief statement saying it was "currently unaware of injuries caused by (Israeli military) fire within the Humanitarian Aid distribution site. The matter is still under review."

The foundation said in a statement that it delivered aid "without incident" early on Sunday and has denied previous accounts of chaos and gunfire around its sites, which are in Israeli military zones where independent access is limited.

The Gaza Health Ministry said 31 people were killed and 170 others were wounded, updating an earlier toll.



People inspect the damage at the site of an Israeli strike that targeted a house in the Nuseirat camp for Palestinian refugees in the central Gaza Strip

Hours earlier, officials at a nearby field hospital run by the Red Cross said that at least 21 people were killed and another 175 were wounded, without saying who opened fire on them. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to reporters.

An Associated Press

reporter saw dozens of wounded people being treated at the hospital.

The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation's distribution of aid has been marred by chaos, and multiple witnesses have said Israeli troops fired on crowds near the delivery sites. Before Sunday, at least six people had been killed and more

than 50 wounded according to local health officials.

The foundation says the private security contractors guarding its sites have not fired on the crowds, while the Israeli military has acknowledged firing warning shots on previous occasions.

The foundation said in a statement that it distributed 16 truckloads of aid

early Sunday "without incident," and dismissed what it referred to as "false reporting about deaths, mass injuries and chaos."

Thousands of people headed toward the distribution site hours before dawn. As they headed toward the site, Israeli forces ordered them to disperse and come back later, witnesses said. When the crowds reached the Flag Roundabout, around 1 kilometer (1,000 yards) away, at around 3 am, Israeli forces opened fire, the witnesses said.

"There was fire from all directions, from naval warships, from tanks and drones," said Amr Abu Teiba, who was in the crowd.

He said he saw at least 10 bodies with gunshot wounds and several other wounded people, including women. People used carts to ferry the dead and wounded to the field hospital. "The scene was horrible," he said.

Ibrahim Abu Saoud, another eyewitness, provided a nearly identical account. He said the military fired

from about 300 metres (yards) away.

Abu Saoud said he saw many people with gunshot wounds, including a young man who he said had died at the scene. "We weren't able to help him," he said.

Mohammed Abu Teima, 33, said he saw Israeli forces open fire and kill his cousin and another woman as they were heading toward the distribution site. He said his cousin was shot in his chest and died at the scene. Many others were wounded, including his brother-in-law, he said.

"They opened heavy fire directly toward us," he said as he was waiting outside the Red Cross field hospital for word on his wounded relative.

The AP reporter arrived at the field hospital at around 6 am and saw dozens of wounded, including women and children. The reporter also saw crowds of people returning from the distribution point. Some were carrying boxes of aid but most appeared to be coming back empty-handed.

Trump withdrawing Musk ally as nominee to head NASA

AP, WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump announced late Saturday that he is withdrawing the nomination of tech billionaire Jared Isaacman, an associate of Trump adviser Elon Musk, to lead NASA, saying he reached the decision after a "thorough review" of Isaacman's "prior associations."

It was unclear what Trump meant, and the White House did not immediately respond to an emailed request for an explanation.

"After a thorough review of prior associations, I am hereby withdrawing the nomination of Jared Isaacman to head NASA," Trump wrote on his social media site. "I will soon announce a new Nominee who will be Mission aligned and put America First in Space."

Trump announced in December during the presidential transition that he had chosen Isaacman to be the space agency's next administrator. Isaacman, 42, has been a close collaborator with Musk ever since buying his first chartered flight on Musk's SpaceX company in 2021.

He is the CEO and founder of Shift4, a credit card processing company. He



also bought a series of spaceflights from SpaceX and conducted the first private spacewalk. SpaceX has extensive contracts with NASA.

The Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee approved Isaacman's nomination in late April, and a vote by the full Senate was expected soon.

Musk appeared to lament Trump's decision after the news broke earlier Saturday, posting on the X site that "It is rare to find someone so competent and good-hearted."

SpaceX is owned by Musk, a Trump campaign contributor and adviser who announced this week that he is leaving the government after several months at the helm of the Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE.

BLOOMING PUP



A dog sculpture titled "Sumpfdackel" made of daffodil flowers is pictured during the Daffodil Festival in Altaussee, Austria

Poles begin voting for new president in pivotal runoff election

AP, WARSAW: Poles began voting Sunday in a decisive presidential runoff that could set the course for the nation's political future and its relations with the European Union.

The contest pits Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski, a liberal pro-EU figure, against Karol Nawrocki, a conservative historian backed by the right-wing Law and Justice party.

The outcome will determine whether Poland continues along a nationalist path or pivots more decisively toward liberal democratic norms. With conservative President Andrzej Duda completing his second and final term, the new president will have significant influence over whether Prime Minister Donald



A man prepares to cast his ballot at a polling station in Warsaw, Poland

Tusk's centrist government can fulfill its centrist agenda, given the presidential power to veto laws.

Voting began at 7 am local time and will end at 9 pm, when an Ipsos exit poll is expected. Final results are likely to be announced Monday. The runoff follows a tightly contested first round on May 18, in which

Trzaskowski won just over 31 per cent and Nawrocki nearly 30 per cent, eliminating 11 other candidates.

Katarzyna Malek, a 29-year-old voter in Warsaw, cast her ballot in the first round for a left-wing candidate but went for Trzaskowski on Sunday, viewing him as more competent and more likely to pursue

stronger ties with foreign partners and lower social tensions.

"I hope there will be less division, that maybe there will be more dialogue," she said.

The campaign has highlighted stark ideological divides. Trzaskowski, 53, has promised to restore judicial independence, ease abortion restrictions and promote constructive ties with European partners. Nawrocki, 42, has positioned himself as a defender of traditional Polish values, sceptical of the EU and aligned with US conservatives, including President Donald Trump.

Nawrocki's candidacy has been clouded by allegations of past connections to criminal figures and participation in a violent street battle.

Bangladesh tribunal indicts former PM Hasina on mass murder charges

PTI, DHAKA: Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal on Sunday indicted former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and two others on several charges, including mass murder, for their alleged role in the violent crackdown on student-led protests last year.

Sunday's proceedings marked the start of Hasina's trial in absentia nearly 10 months after the ouster of her government following the protests.

"We do hereby take into cognisance the charges," the three-judge ICT-BD bench led by Justice Golam Mortuza Majumdar said after a prosecution team formally accused them of attempting to tame the protests using brutal force.

The tribunal, after hearing a 145-page excerpt during the indictment proceedings,

BANGLADESH'S SUPREME COURT RESTORES JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI'S PARTY REGISTRATION

PTI, DHAKA: Bangladesh's Supreme Court on Sunday ordered the Election Commission to restore the rightwing Jamaat-e-Islami's party registration, nearly eight months after the interim government lifted a ban on it, clearing the way for its participation in future elections. Court officials said the SC's Appellate Division, led by Chief Justice Syed Rezaul Karim, directed the commission to restore the party's registration. The apex court, at the same time, said it was up to the Election Commission (EC) to decide if Jamaat could contest polls using its traditional "scale" symbol. The EC scrapped the registration of Jamaat, which was opposed to Bangladesh's 1971 independence from Pakistan, in December 2018 in line with a High Court ruling.

simultaneously issued a fresh arrest warrant against Hasina and then home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal.

The third accused, the then inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdul Al-Mamun, is in custody to stand trial in person.

The prosecution charged Hasina with exercising absolute authority to ruthlessly suppress the uprising. The two others were accused of provocation, complicity, abatement, instigation and facilitation.

"Upon reviewing the evidence, we concluded that it was a coordinated, widespread and systematic attack," ICT-BD chief prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam told the court.

All three were accused of superior command responsibility for the crimes.

The prosecution said they would submit video, audio, and forensic evidence during the trial and listed 81 people to appear as witnesses.

The tribunal's investigation agency on May 12 in its report to the chief prosecutor's office named Hasina as the instigator of the killings during the uprising that ousted her government.

The chief prosecutor urged the court to treat the Awami League as a criminal organisation since the crimes were committed on a partisan basis.

Hospital fire in Germany kills three, injures dozens

AFP, BERLIN, GERMANY: An overnight blaze that broke out in a room in a hospital's geriatric ward in Hamburg, Germany, killed three people and injured about 50 others, police said on Sunday.

The three casualties were aged between 84 and 87 years old, while three others were between life and death, authorities said.

The fire in the Marienkrankenhaus facility began around midnight and threatened to spread to the first floor.

"Several elderly people with reduced mobility had to be evacuated along the corridors," said fire service spokesman, Lorenz Hartmann.

China says Hegseth touting Cold War mentality in calling it a threat

AP, BEIJING: China on Sunday denounced US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth for calling the Asian country a threat, accusing him of touting a Cold War mentality as tensions between Washington and Beijing further escalate.

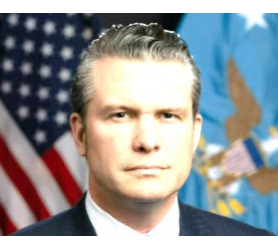
The foreign ministry said Hegseth had vilified Beijing with defamatory allegations the previous day at the Shangri-La Dialogue, a global security conference. The statement also accused the United States of inciting conflict and confrontation in the region.

"Hegseth deliberately ignored the call for peace and development by countries in the region, and instead touted the Cold War mentality for bloc confrontation," it said, referring to the post-World War II rivalry between the US and the former Soviet Union.

"No country in the world deserves to be called a hegemonic power other than the US itself," it said, alleging that Washington is also undermining peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific.

Hegseth said in Singapore on Saturday that Washington will bolster its defences overseas to counter what the Pentagon sees as rapidly developing

"We are not going to sugarcoat it — the threat China poses is real. And it could be imminent — Pete Hegseth, United States Secretary of Defense"



threats by Beijing, particularly in its aggressive stance toward Taiwan.

China's army "is rehearsing for the real deal," Hegseth said. "We are not going to sugarcoat it — the threat China poses is real. And it could be imminent."

The Chinese statement stressed that the Taiwan question is entirely China's internal affair, saying the US must "never play with fire" with it. It also alleged Washington had deployed offensive weaponry in the South China Sea, was "stoking flames and creating tensions in the Asia-Pacific" and "turning the region into a powder keg."

In a Facebook post on Saturday, China's Embassy in Singapore said Hegseth's speech was "steeped in provocations and instigation."

The US and China had reached a deal last month to cut US President Donald Trump's tariffs from 145 per cent to 30 per cent for 90 days, creating time for negotiators from both

sides to reach a more substantive agreement. China also reduced its taxes on US goods from 125 per cent to 10 per cent.

But it's uncertain if a trade war truce will last. Trump in a social media post on Friday said he would no longer be "nice" with China when it comes to trade and accused Beijing of breaking an unspecified agreement with the US.

Tensions escalated anew after the US said on Wednesday it would start revoking visas for Chinese students studying there.

FDA approves Moderna's new lower-dose COVID-19 vaccine

AP, WASHINGTON: The US approved a new COVID-19 vaccine made by Moderna late Friday but with limits on who can use it — not a replacement for the company's existing shot, but a second option.

The new vaccine, mNex-spike, is a step toward

next-generation coronavirus vaccines. It's made in a way that allows for a lower dose — a fifth of the dose of its current COVID-19 vaccine, Spikevax — by refining its immune target.

The approval "adds an important new tool to help protect people at high risk

of severe disease from COVID-19," Stephane Bancel, Moderna's CEO, said in a statement Saturday.

The Food and Drug Administration approved the new vaccine for use in all adults 65 and older, and for people age 12 to 64 who have a least one health condition that

puts them at increased risk from the coronavirus.

That's the same limit that the FDA set in licensing another COVID-19 vaccine option from competitor Novavax.

Those restrictions are a departure from how the US has handled COVID-19 vac-

cines until now, reflecting skepticism about vaccines from Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and other Trump officials.

Moderna's existing vaccine doesn't face those limits and has long been used for anyone ages 6 months and older.

