



Tajikistan Prez Emomali Rahmon (L) & Chinese Prez Xi Jinping after their meeting on the sidelines of the China-Central Asia Summit in Astana, Kazakhstan



Protesters chant slogans while holding Palestinian flags during a pro-Palestinian protest outside the Israeli consulate in Istanbul, Turkey



The Valley Grove Assembly of God, twisted and moved from its foundation by floodwaters, in Valley Grove, West Virginia



Mark Ruffalo attends the premiere of Netflix's 'A King Like Me' at the IFC Center in New York

allovertheworld



A burning motorbike is seen during a protest in Nairobi. Hundreds of men armed with whips and clubs attacked groups of protesters in Kenya on Tuesday, as they demonstrated against the recent killing of a man in police custody, AFP journalists saw. Tensions have risen as the east African country approaches the first anniversary of massive Gen Z-led protests sparked by tax rises, which the government has been desperate to avoid this year

EU presses to cut defence red tape in rush to rearm

BRUSSELS: The European Union on Tuesday unveiled a raft of proposals to slash red tape in the defence sector as the bloc pushes to rearm in the face of Russia. Europe is looking to ramp up its production of weaponry, spurred on by Moscow's war on Ukraine and fears on the reliability of the United States under President Donald Trump. "The only way to ensure European peace is to make sure we are ready to defend ourselves credibly and quickly," EU defence commissioner Andrius Kubilius said. "With this package, we are putting forward ambitious proposals to cut red tape." As part of the drive, Brussels says it wants to reduce the time needed for permits from the years it can take now to just 60 days.

Over 700 foreigners flee Iran to Azerbaijan, Armenia

BAKU, (AZERBAIJAN): More than 700 foreign nationals have crossed from Iran into neighbouring Azerbaijan and Armenia since Israel began striking the country last week, government officials in Baku and Yerevan said Tuesday. The Caucasus countries border Iran's northwest, with the closest crossing into Azerbaijan around 500 kilometres (310 miles) from Tehran by road. "Since the start of the military escalation between Israel and Iran, more than 600 citizens of 17 countries have been evacuated from Iran via Azerbaijan," a government source told AFP on Tuesday. The evacuees, who crossed the border via the Astara checkpoint on the Caspian Sea coast, are being transported to Baku airport and "flown to their home countries on international flights", the source said.

Vietnam's Vietjet orders 100 Airbus A321neo planes

LE BOURGET, (FRANCE): Vietnamese carrier Vietjet has ordered 100 single-aisle A321neo jets from Airbus, the European plane maker said Tuesday in the latest deal announced at the Paris Air Show. The deal would be worth almost \$13 billion under 2018 catalogue prices. It includes an option for Vietjet, Vietnam's largest private airline, to buy a further 50 of the jets at a later date. "This new agreement marks a significant milestone in our strategic partnership with Airbus," said Vietjet chairwoman Nguyen Thi Phuong Thao. "These modern and efficient aircraft have been instrumental in Vietjet's growth, helping us make air travel more accessible and affordable for millions, while strengthening our role as a connector for economic development, cultural exchange and global connectivity," she added.

Sweden's 'Queen of Trash' jailed over toxic waste scandal

STOCKHOLM: A court in Sweden on Tuesday convicted 10 people of illegally dumping toxic waste, including a former stripper who once described herself as the "Queen of Trash", in the country's biggest environmental crime trial. The five central figures in the case were handed prison sentences ranging from two to six years. Waste management company Think Pink was found guilty of dumping or burying some 200,000 tonnes of waste from the Stockholm area at 21 sites from 2015 to 2020, with no intention of processing it correctly. In a 692-page verdict, the Sodertorn district court sentenced Think Pink's former chief executive Bella Nilsson to six years behind bars for 19 counts of "aggravated environmental crime". Nilsson worked as a stripper and managed a sex club in Stockholm in the 1990s, getting convicted for accounting crimes in 1998.

Two arrested over Indonesia murder of Australian: Police

DENPASAR: Two suspects allegedly involved in the murder of an Australian man at a villa on the popular Indonesian resort island of Bali have been arrested after a days-long manhunt, police said Tuesday. Authorities have been searching for two men after the shooting of Zivan Radmanovic, a 32-year-old Australian national, on Saturday. He was killed when two people burst into his villa in the tourist hub of Badung and at least one opened fire. A second man, 34-year-old Sanar Ghanim, was seriously wounded in the attack. One of the suspects was apprehended in the capital Jakarta while a second was to be returned from abroad, national police chief Listyo Sigit Prabowo told reporters, without identifying the country or giving details about the suspects.

"We know where Khamenei is hiding... won't kill him now": Trump

AP, WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump said Tuesday the US knows where Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is hiding during the Israel-Iran conflict but doesn't want him killed "for now."

Trump urged, in a social media posting, Iran's "UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER" as the five-day conflict continues to escalate.

"We know exactly where the so-called Supreme Leader is hiding," Trump added. "He is an easy target, but is safe there - We are not going to take him out (kill!), at least not for now. But we don't want missiles shot at civilians, or American soldiers. Our patience is wearing thin."

Trump's increasingly muscular comments towards Tehran come after urging Tehran's 9.5 million residents to flee for their lives as he cut short his visit to an international summit to return to Washington for urgent talks with his national security team.

Trump arrived at the White House early Tuesday at a moment of choosing in his presidency. Israel, with five days of missile strikes, has done considerable damage to Iran and believes it can now deal a permanent

blow to Tehran's nuclear programme - particularly if it gets a little more help from the Republican president.

But deepening American involvement, perhaps by providing the Israelis with bunker-busting bombs to penetrate Iranian nuclear sites built deep underground or offering other direct US military support, comes with enormous political risk for Trump.

Trump, as he made his way back to Washington, expressed frustration with Iranian leaders for failing to reach an agreement. He said he was now looking for "a real end" to the conflict and a "complete give-up" of Tehran's nuclear programme.

"They should have done the deal. I told them. Do the deal," Trump told reporters on Air Force One. "So I don't know. I'm not too much in the mood to negotiate."

Iran has insisted that its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes only, and US intelligence agencies have assessed that Tehran is not actively pursuing a bomb.

Trump, who planned to meet with advisers in the Situation Room, appears to be gradually building the public case for a more di-



Smoke rises from the building of Iran's state-run television after an Israeli strike in Tehran, Iran

ISRAEL STRIKES IRANIAN STATE TV AFTER MISSILE ATTACK KILLS 8

AP, TEL AVIV: Israel struck Iran's state-run television station Monday during a live broadcast, forcing a reporter to run off camera following an explosion, after Iran fired a new wave of missiles at Israel that killed at least eight people. In other developments, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the Israeli strikes have set Iran's nuclear program back a "very, very long time." He added that Israel is not attempting to topple the Iranian government, but he said he would not be surprised if that happened as a result of the strikes. "The regime is very weak," Netanyahu told a news conference. He also said he is in daily touch with U.S. President Donald Trump. As he spoke, large numbers of explosions were heard in Tehran.

rect American role in the conflict. His shift in tone

comes as the US has repositioned warships and mil-

ARTISTIC DIVINITY



An work by Belgian visual artist Hans Op de Beeck entitled 'Zhai-Liza (angel)', 2024 is on display at the gallery Templon during the Art Basel fair for Modern and contemporary art, in Basel. The fair, features over 290 leading galleries and more than 4,000 artists from five continents

Trump may extend deadline for TikTok sale

AP, WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump suggested on Tuesday that he would likely extend a deadline for TikTok's Chinese owner to divest the popular video sharing app. Trump had signed an order in early April to keep TikTok running for another 75 days after a potential deal to sell the app to American owners was put on ice.

"Probably yeah, yeah," he responded when asked by reporters on Air Force One whether the deadline would be extended again.

Trump also said he thinks Xi would "ultimately ap-

prove" a deal to divest TikTok's business in the United States. He indicated in an interview last month with NBC that he would be open to pushing back the deadline again. If announced, it would be the third time Trump has extended the deadline.

The first one was through an executive order on January 20, his first day in office, after the platform went dark briefly when the ban approved by Congress - and upheld by the US Supreme Court - took effect.

The second was in April, when White House officials believed they were

nearing a deal to spin off TikTok into a new company with US ownership that fell apart after China backed out following Trump's tariff announcement.

It is not clear how many times Trump can - or will - keep extending the ban as the government continues to try to negotiate a deal for TikTok, which is owned by China's ByteDance.

Trump has amassed more than 15 mn followers on TikTok since he joined last year, and he has credited the trendsetting platform with helping him gain traction among young voters.

Pope Leo resumes papal tradition, escapes Rome's summer heat to nearby Castel Gandolfo

AP, VATICAN CITY: Pope Leo XIV will resume the papal tradition of taking a summer break outside Rome, the Vatican announced on Tuesday. Leo will transfer to the papal retreat of Castel Gandolfo, south of Rome, from July 6-20 "for a period of rest" and again for a few days over the Catholic Assumption feast day in August, the Vatican said. Leo visited the papal summer palace last month, raising speculation that he would resume a tradition that goes back centuries. Pope Urban VIII built



the palace in 1624 to give popes an escape from the sweltering Roman summer. It was enlarged over succeeding pontificates to its present size of 55 hectares (136 acres), bigger than Vatican City itself.

Pope Francis, who died just after Easter, was

known as a workaholic homebody who never took a proper vacation during his 12-year papacy, staying at the Vatican even during the hot summer months.

Both of Francis' immediate predecessors, John Paul II and Benedict XVI, spent time at Castel Gandolfo, interspersed with visits to the northern Italian Alps.

Benedict was especially fond of Castel Gandolfo, closing his papacy out there in 2013.

Partly to offset an economic downturn in the local town due to the papal

Dutch suggest social media ban for under-15s

AP, THE HAGUE: The Dutch government Tuesday advised parents to forbid children under 15 from using social media apps like TikTok and Snapchat, the latest country to propose curbs over mental health concerns.

The advice, which is non-binding, comes after Australia and New Zealand proposed social media bans for under-16s, and several European countries have issued similar guidelines.

absence, Francis opened the palazzo's gardens to the public in 2014 and later turned part of it into a museum.

In what will be a boon to the local community, Leo is resuming the traditional Angelus blessing to the faithful gathered in front of Castel Gandolfo on July 13 and July 20, and again on Aug 15 and Aug 17, when he returns for a short stay over Italy's most important summer holiday.

Public and private audiences at the Vatican will be suspended for most of July, resuming on July 30.

Nine dead, 26 injured in China fireworks factory blast

AFP, BEIJING: An explosion at a fireworks factory in central China killed nine people and injured 26 others, state media said Tuesday, as challenging on-site rescue work continued a day after the incident.

The blast occurred shortly before 8:30 am Monday at a factory in a village outside Changde, a city in Hunan province, state-run China National Radio (CNR) said.

As of 9:00 am on Tuesday, nine people were dead and 26 injured, CNR said citing a rescue command centre. Rescue work at the scene was ongoing, CNR reported, noting a "complicated" situation and the risk of additional explosions ham-

Rescue work at the scene was ongoing, CNR reported, noting a 'complicated' situation and the risk of additional explosions hampering response efforts

pering response efforts. Adding to the challenge, the site was in a "mountainous area with no large water source", it added.

"During more than 20 hours of uninterrupted and continuous rescue, the rescue team used remote-controlled water cannons to extinguish the fire," the report said.

State news agency Xinhua also said Tuesday that the Ministry of Emergency Management had sent a

working team to Hunan to oversee the rescue.

"Efforts must be made to ascertain the cause of the explosion as soon as possible and to hold those responsible accountable," the ministry said, according to Xinhua.

Industrial accidents are fairly common in China due to vague regulations and lax safety standards.

Last month, an explosion at a chemical plant in the eastern province of Shandong killed at least five people.

In 2015, blasts at warehouses containing flammable chemicals in the port city of Tianjin killed more than 170 people and injured 700 others.

Indian-origin suspects among 18 held in Canada towing racket

PTI, TORONTO: Eighteen people, most of them believed to be of Indian-origin, have been arrested and assets worth over 4.2 million Canadian dollars seized after police dismantled an organised criminal network linked to the towing industry in Canada's Ontario province, officials said. The arrests were made by Peel Regional Police as part of a Joint Force Operation with local and provincial law enforcement partners, it said in a press release on Monday. "More than \$4.2 million in assets" were recovered from the possession of the 18 accused, following the dismantling of an organised criminal network linked to the towing industry", the release said.

Although the release did not mention the nationalities of the accused, the names suggest that most of them are of Indian-origin.

As of June 10, Haleh Javady Torabi, a 37-year-old woman from King City, and 17 men from Brampton have been arrested and charged in connection with the investigation, police said.

The men were identified

as Inderjit Dhami, 38; Paritosh Chopra, 32; Gurbinder Singh, 28; Kulwinder Puri, 25; Parminder Puri, 31; Inderjit Bal, 29; Varun Aul, 31; Ketan Chopra, 30; Norman Tazehkand, 32; Pawandeep Singh, 25; Dipanshu Garg, 24; Rahul Verma, 27; Karan Boparai, 26; Mankirat Boparai, 22; Simar Boparai, 21; Jovan Singh, 23; and Abhinav Bhardwaj, 25.

The accused face a total of 97 criminal charges related to criminal organisation, extortion, fraud, firearms, and more, police said.

"Three individuals were charged and released to attend court at a later date, while 15 were held for a bail hearing at the Ontario Court of Justice in Brampton. Of the 18, almost half were on a form of judicial release at the time of arrest," it said.

Peel Regional Police Chief Nishan Duraipah said, "Nearly half of those arrested were already on some form of judicial release at the time - once again raising serious concerns about repeat offenders and the urgent need for bail reform."