

## MORE NEWS

## Suspected rebels kill 3 civilians in Kashmir

Assailants have separately shot and killed three men in Indian-administered Kashmir, police said, blaming the rebels fighting against the Indian rule in the disputed region for the string of attacks. In the first incident, police said rebels fired at a prominent chemist, Makhan Lal Bindroo, at his pharmacy in the region's main city of Srinagar late on Tuesday. Within an hour, a street food vendor, identified as Virendar Paswan from Bhagalpur district in India's eastern state of Bihar, was shot point-blank in another neighbourhood in Srinagar, killing him on the spot, police said. In the third incident on Tuesday night, gunmen fatally shot a taxi driver Muhammad Shafi in Bandipora district.

## US has 3,750 nuke warheads

The US State Department published on Tuesday the number of nuclear warheads the country stockpiles for the first time in four years, after former president Donald Trump placed a blackout on the data. As of September 30, 2020, the US military maintained 3,750 active and inactive nuclear warheads, down by 55 from a year earlier and by 72 from the same date in 2017. According to a January 2021 tally by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the United States had 5,550 warheads, compared to 6,255 in Russia, 350 in China, 225 in Britain, and 290 in France. India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea have together around 460 nuclear warheads, according to the institute.

## Australia, PNG to end asylum seeker offshore processing

A longstanding deal that saw Australia detain asylum seekers in an offshore camp in Papua New Guinea will be scrapped, the two countries announced yesterday. Under Australia's hardline immigration policies, migrants attempting to reach the country by boat have for years been sent to detention centres on Papua New Guinea's Manus Island and the Pacific nation of Nauru. Yesterday, Australia and PNG announced their so-called "regional resettlement arrangement" would officially end on December 31. But it does not spell an end to Canberra's much-criticised approach to migrants who arrive by sea, after Nauru last month committed to continuing to accept Australia's asylum seekers.

## Russia sees record Covid deaths

Russia reported a record high number of daily coronavirus deaths yesterday as the country struggles with stubbornly high infection rates and regions beyond Moscow cautiously bring back pandemic restrictions. A government tally recorded 929 Covid-19 deaths in the past 24 hours, Russia's highest daily virus death toll since the outbreak of the pandemic. As of Wednesday, just under 30 percent of Russia's 146 million population had been fully vaccinated. Authorities said earlier this week that death rates were high among unvaccinated Russians.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



A Taliban soldier carrying a weapon speaks to Afghans gathered outside the passport office after Taliban officials announced they will start issuing passports to its citizens again, following months of delays that hampered attempts by those trying to flee the country after the Taliban seized control, in Kabul, Afghanistan, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

COUP IN MYANMAR  
Asean may bar junta chief from summit

AFP, Brunei

Southeast Asian nations are discussing whether to exclude Myanmar's junta chief from a summit due to slow progress on a plan to address turmoil after a coup in the country earlier this year, a top diplomat said yesterday.

But members of the The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) have voiced disappointment over the Myanmar junta's reluctance to abide by a five-point plan reached by the group's leaders in April to resolve the turmoil.

This prompted Malaysia and other countries -- during a video call by Asean foreign ministers Monday -- to raise the possibility of not inviting the junta leader Min Aung Hlaing to a summit this month.

"I can say that we are now deeply in discussion on this matter," said Brunei's Second Foreign Minister Erywan Yusof, who was chosen as the special envoy in August after months of negotiations.

## Tensions 'highest in decades'

Says minister, warns Beijing may launch invasion in 2025

AFP, Taipei

Military tensions between China and Taiwan are at their highest in four decades, the island's defence minister warned yesterday, adding Beijing would be in a position to launch a full-scale invasion in 2025.

Taiwan lives under the constant threat of invasion by China, which views the self-ruled democratic island as its territory to be seized one day, by force if necessary.

Defence Minister Chiu Kuo-cheng offered his assessment after around 150 Chinese warplanes -- a record number that included nuclear-capable bombers -- made incursions into Taiwan's air defence zone starting Friday.

"For the military, the current situation is the grimmest in the more than 40 years since I joined the service," Chiu told parliament.

He warned that even "slight carelessness" or "miscalculation" could

spark a crisis, and that China would be able to launch an invasion of the island in four years.

"It is capable now but it has to calculate what it would cost, and what kind of outcome it wishes to achieve," Chiu said. "After 2025, the cost and losses would be lowered to a minimum," he added, without providing further details.

## TAIWAN-CHINA STANDOFF

Chinese President Xi Jinping, who has called the seizure of Taiwan "inevitable", also described relations with Taipei as "grim" in a letter to the island's newly elected main opposition leader last week.

Beijing has ramped up military, diplomatic and economic pressure since Tsai Ing-wen became Taiwan's president in 2016, as she views the island as "already independent" and

not part of "one China".

Tsai said recently that Taiwan will "do whatever it takes" to defend against threats, but seeks peaceful coexistence with China.

The Chinese flights have also prompted criticism by Washington. When asked about the situation, President Joe Biden told reporters Tuesday that he had discussed Taiwan with Xi. "We will abide by the Taiwan agreement. That's where we are and we made it clear that I don't think he should be doing anything other than abiding by the agreement," he said.

US officials later clarified the president was not referring to a new conversation. Biden and Xi spoke last month and discussed a range of issues in their call.

Biden appeared to be referring to the US policy in place since Washington switched diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing in 1979.

## PANDORA PAPERS

## Lanka president orders probe into niece's assets

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka President Gotabaya Rajapaksa yesterday ordered a probe into his niece's overseas wealth after she and her husband were alleged in the Pandora Papers to have millions of dollars stashed abroad.

The opposition immediately cried foul, saying that the investigation would amount to a cover-up by the Rajapaksa family which have been powerful in the island nation for decades.

Cabinet spokesman Dulles Alahapperuma said the president asked the main anti-graft body to issue a report on the assets of Nirupama Rajapaksa and her husband Thirukumar Nadesan "within one month".

Nirupama Rajapaksa, 59, was a legislator in the previous governments of another uncle, Mahinda Rajapaksa, the current prime minister, between 2004 and 2015 and was a junior minister for five years.

The couple's names were among dozens of prominent personalities worldwide featured in roughly 11.9 million documents leaked from financial services firms that managed their wealth. The Pandora Papers were obtained by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ).

The ICIJ said that according to its analysis of a Nadesan trust's financial statements, Nirupama Rajapaksa and Nadesan had offshore holdings worth about \$18 million in 2017.

Holding assets offshore or using shell companies is not illegal in Sri Lanka, but it must be declared to the local tax authorities.



An activist walks on the ramp with a banner that says "Overconsumption = Extinction" as she crashes the designer Nicolas Ghesquiere Spring/Summer 2022 women's ready-to-wear collection show for fashion house Louis Vuitton during Paris Fashion Week in Paris, France, on Tuesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Germany inches closer to Scholz-led govt

Blow to Conservatives as Greens say eyeing coalition with SPD, liberals

AFP, Frankfurt

Germany's Greens and the liberal FDP party yesterday said they wanted to try to form a coalition government with the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD), dealing a blow to Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives.

The move brings the Social Democrats' Olaf Scholz a step closer to the chancellery after 16 years of Merkel's centre-right-led government.

The political upheaval in Europe's biggest economy was unleashed by last month's general election which Scholz's party won with 25.7 percent, followed by Merkel's CDU-CSU bloc at 24.1 percent.

For either party to head the next German government it would need the support of the centre-left Greens



SPD.

But the CDU-CSU is "still ready to hold talks," he said.

CSU leader Markus Soeder however gave a more sobering assessment, saying the possibility of a CDU-CSU government had essentially been "rejected".

The conservative bloc must now prepare itself for a stint in opposition after four Merkel-led coalitions, he said.

"This will change our country," Soeder said, adding: "The conservatives will enter a new era too."

Recent surveys suggest most Germans want Scholz, who is also finance minister and vice chancellor, to become the next leader of Europe's top economy.

and the pro-business Free Democrats (FDP), which came third and fourth.

Despite leading the conservatives to their worst-ever election result, beleaguered CDU leader Armin Laschet insisted he still has a shot at the top job.

Speaking to reporters, Laschet said the conservatives "respect the decision" by the two kingmaker parties to pursue a coalition with the

## IPO ROADSHOW FOR INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERING OF ISLAM OXYGEN LIMITED UNDER BOOK BUILDING METHOD

All eligible Investors (EIs) as per Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (Public Issue) Rules- 2015 (amended) are invited to participate in the Road Show for the forthcoming Initial Offering (IPO) of Islam Oxygen Limited under Book Building Method.

ELIGIBLE INVESTORS	SCHEDULE OF ROADSHOW
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merchant Bankers and Portfolio Managers;</li> <li>Asset Managers;</li> <li>Mutual Funds &amp; Collective Investment Scheme (CIS);</li> <li>Stock Dealers;</li> <li>Banks;</li> <li>Financial Institutions;</li> <li>Insurance Companies;</li> <li>Fund Managers;</li> <li>Alternative Investment Funds;</li> <li>Foreign Investors having an account with any Securities Custodian registered with the Commission; Recognized Provident Funds, approved Pension Funds and approved Gratuity Funds; and;</li> <li>Any other category as approved by the Commission;</li> </ol>	<p><b>Date:</b> Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2021</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 7:00 PM</p> <p><b>Venue:</b> Grand Ball Room Lobby Level Radisson Blu Water Garden Dhaka Cantonment Airport Road Dhaka-1206</p>
ISSUE MANAGER	REGISTRAR TO THE ISSUE
 <b>Janata Capital and Investment Limited</b> 48, Motijheel C/A, Level- 3, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh	 <b>SONALI INVESTMENT LIMITED</b> (A Subsidiary of Sonali Bank Limited) Borak-Biz Center (1st Floor & 2nd Floor) 70, Dilkusha, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000
ISSUER COMPANY	
 <b>ISLAM OXYGEN LIMITED</b> Corporate Office: Anora Manjil, 23/3 Begumgonj Lane, Doyagonj New Road, Gandaria, Dhaka 1204, Bangladesh Factory Address: 11/1 Tarabo, Ruppogonj, Narayagonj, Bangladesh. Website: www.iol.com.bd	

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

OCTOBER 07

**1737** - A cyclone causes 40 foot waves that are believed to have killed 300,000 in Kolkata, India.

**1959** - The far side of the moon was photographed for the first time by the Soviet Union's Luna 3 spacecraft.

**2001** - US invasion of Afghanistan starts with an air assault and covert operations on the ground. Raids killed the 10-year-old son of Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar.

SOURCE: WEBSITES

## Iran 'concerned' by Israeli 'presence' in the Caucasus

Expects nuclear talks in Vienna to restart 'soon'

AFP, Moscow

Iran yesterday said that it has "serious concerns" about Israel's presence in the Caucasus, as tensions mount between Iran and Azerbaijan over Baku's ties with Israel, a major arms supplier.

The comments came a day after unconfirmed reports in Azerbaijani media said Iran has closed its airspace for Azerbaijani army aircraft.

"We certainly will not tolerate geopolitical change and map change in the Caucasus," Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian told reporters in Moscow.

"We have serious concerns about the presence of terrorists and Zionists in this region."

Since mid-September, tensions have soared between Iran and Azerbaijan, which share a 700-kilometre (430-mile) border.

Israel is a major arms supplier to Azerbaijan, which last year won a six-week war with neighbour Armenia over the

disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region.

On Friday, Iranian ground forces began manoeuvres near the frontier, a move criticised by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev.

The day before the drills were launched, Amir-Abdollahian told his Azerbaijani counterpart that Iran would not tolerate Israel's presence or activity "next to our borders" and vowed to take any necessary action.

Aliyev said Tuesday that Baku "will not leave unanswered" Tehran's "baseless" accusations of an Israeli military presence on its soil.

In a separate development, Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian yesterday said in Moscow that he expects negotiations on the Iran nuclear deal to restart in Austria soon.

"We are now finalising consultations on this matter and will soon restore our negotiations in Vienna," he told reporters after talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.