### INTERNATIONAL

AFP, The Hague

#### US sanctions 20 in Maldives over IS links

AFP, Malé

Washington has sanctioned 20 citizens of the Maldives for their ties to the Islamic State group, including one man accused of trying to assassinate former president Mohamed Nasheed.

The US Department of Treasury said Abdulla Ali Manik -- currently in custody over the unsuccessful 2021 attack -- had several links to terror plots in the tourist hotspot.

New sanctions unveiled Monday also identified Manik as an associate of known IS recruiter Mohamad Ameen, who was himself sanctioned by the US in 2019.

Ameen is known to have sent dozens of Maldivians to fight in Syria and was the main suspect in a 2007 bomb attack at a public park that wounded 12 Chinese tourists. The US statement said 29 companies, many linked to the lucrative tourism industry, were also sanctioned over their links to IS operatives.

# Nations prepare to evacuate citizens

AFP, Niamey

France and Italy yesterday prepared to fly out their citizens and other Europeans from Niger, six days after a coup that toppled one of the last pro-Western leaders in the jihadist-plagued Sahel and stoked anti-French demonstrations.

President Mohamed Bazoum was overthrown on July 26 by his own guard, in the region's third putsch in as many years following takeovers in neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso.

After hostile crowds gathered on Sunday outside the French embassy and Niger accused France of plotting to intervene militarily, Paris said yesterday it would withdraw its citizens and offered to evacuate other Europeans as well.

"In the face of a deteriorating security situation in Niamey and taking advantage of the relative calm in Niamey, an operation of evacuation by air is being prepared," the embassy said.

The evacuations "will take place very soon in a very limited span of time," it said. The foreign ministry in Paris later said the evacuations would begin later yesterday.

There are an estimated 600 French nationals in Niger. The Italian government said it was putting on a "special flight for those (Italians) who want to leave the country," adding that this was "not an evacuation."

করার ক্ষমতা কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষশ করেন।



Rescue workers in a boat go through a flooded street in a neighbourhood where days of heavy rain from remnants of Typhoon Doksuri cause heavy damage in Beijing, China yesterday. At least 20 people were killed and 19 were missing after heavy rains lashed Beijing and surrounding provinces, state media said yesterday, in downpours that have submerged roads and deluged neighbourhoods with mud.

PHOTO: REUTERS

### Drones target Moscow, Black Sea patrols

Office block in Russian capital's main business district hit; Kremlin slams Ukrainian 'terrorist attack'

AGENCIES

Russia said yesterday it had downed another wave of Ukrainian drones aimed at vessels in the Black Sea and Moscow, as an office block in the capital's main business district was struck for the second time in a few days.

"Two Ukrainian (unmanned aerial vehicles) were destroyed by air defence systems over the territory of the Odintsovo and Narofominsk districts of Moscow region," the Russian defence ministry said.

"Another drone was suppressed by electronic warfare and, having lost control, crashed on the territory of the Moscow City," the capital's main commercial district, the ministry said. In a separate statement, the Kremlin said it had thwarted the "attempted terrorist attack".

On Sunday, Russian defences downed drones in that same district, with debris damaging two office towers, blowing out several windows and scattering documents on the pavement below.

"One flew into the same tower in (Moscow) City as last time," mayor Sergei Sobyanin said yesterday on Telegram. "The facade on the 21st floor was damaged," and a number of windows were smashed, the mayor said.

He added that emergency services had gone to the scene and that there was no information on any casualties.

"We heard a big explosion, there was no

panic," local resident Arkady Metler, 29, told AFP.
"Nobody should be scared... we cannot do anything
but stick together," said Metler.

Other residents were more shaken by the renewed

explosion in their neighbourhood.

Shortly after the drone attack, Moscow's Vnukovo international airport was briefly closed. TASS state

international airport was briefly closed, TASS state news agency reported.

The same airport, to the southwest of Moscow, was briefly closed after Sunday's attack and earlier this

at Vnukovo.

The Russian defence ministry said yesterday it also foiled a Ukrainian drone attack targeting patrol boats

month, a volley of drone attacks disrupted air traffic

in the Black Sea.
"During the night, Ukrainian armed forces tried without success to attack with three drones the 'Sergei

क्रामिन आग्रमन

উদ-মহাব্যবস্থাপক (শিওবা)

Kotov' and 'Vasily Bykov,' patrol boats of the Russian fleet," the defence ministry said in a statement.

The three dropes were trained on the chips

The three drones were trained on the ships, navigating in waters 340 kilometres (210 miles) southwest of Sevastopol, the base of Russia's Black Sea fleet on the annexed Crimea peninsula.

Yesterday's attacks were the latest in a series of drone assaults — including on the Kremlin and Russian towns near the border with Ukraine — that Moscow has blamed on Kyiv.

On Monday, a missile strike on a residential building killed six and wounded dozens in Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's hometown of Kryvyi Rig.

The Kremlin called the recent strikes on the capital an "act of desperation" by Ukraine following setbacks on the battlefield.

Ukraine began its long-awaited counteroffensive in June but has made modest advances in the face of stiff resistance from Russian forces on the frontline.

Meanwhile, a doctor was killed and five medical workers were wounded in Russian shelling of a hospital in Ukraine's southern city of Kherson yesterday, regional

officials said.

"Today at 11:10 (0810 GMT), the enemy launched another attack on the peaceful residents of our community," military administration head Roman Mrochko wrote on the

Telegram messaging app.
Photos posted by officials showed the bloodied floor of a balcony and a gaping hole in a roof with debris strewn over the floor.

Regional governor Oleksandr Prokudin said four medical workers had been wounded in addition to a badly wounded nurse whose injuries were reported

Mrochko said the young doctor had only worked in his job for a few days and that doctors were fighting for the life of the nurse. The surgery department of the facility was also damaged in the shelling, Prokudin said.

Medical charity Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) said it had been working at the hospital supplying medical equipment and providing mental health consultations to people displaced by the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam.

# Akane was the latest target of an arrest warrant in Russia following ICC prosecutor Karim Khan and judge Rosario Salvatore Aitala, who have been investigated since May over the decision to seek Putin's arrest over the Ukraine war. The Russian notice seen by AFP describes the judge as a woman born June 28, 1956 in Japan, and says she is wanted for violating the Russian Criminal Code, without specifically listing the nature of the offence. The presidency of the Assembly of States Parties,

**DOHA MEETING** 

US delegation

on women's

rights

with

Monday.

concern"

AFP, Washington

presses Taliban

US officials denounced the

deteriorating human rights

particularly for women and

girls -- during a meeting

representatives in Doha,

the State Department said

expressed

humanitarian crisis and

needtocontinuesupporting

aid organizations and UN

bodies delivering assistance,

was one of the highest-level

known gatherings of US

and Afghan government

officials in months, with the

Washington team headed

by Special Representative

Thomas West and Kabul's

by Foreign Minister Amir

not, however, identify the

describing

The US statement did

A separate Afghan

foreign ministry statement

issued late Monday did

name Muttagi, and said

his team included finance

ministry and central bank

were discussed and said

the meeting underscored

discussions between the

sides on ending banking

restrictions and sanctions.

been a sticking point in

negotiations over aid and

recognition since the

Taliban swept back to

power in August 2021.

Women's rights have

It noted human rights

representatives

"senior" and

"technocratic

The closed-door meeting

a statement said.

Khan Muttagi.

as

professionals."

representatives.

Afghan

only

The American delegation

Afghan Taliban

regarding

situation in Afghanistan

representing the ICC's member countries, said it was "deeply concerned" by the move and called it a "new attempt to undermine the international mandate" of the court.

It also reiterated "it stands firmly by the Court,

its elected officials, and its personnel" and has "full

confidence" in the court's independence and impartiality.

**ICC slams Russia's** 

The International Criminal Court (ICC) vesterday

condemned Moscow for putting another of its judges on

a wanted list in Russia, after the court issued an arrest

Putin in March for the war crime of allegedly unlawfully

deporting Ukrainian children, as well as for Russia's

presidential commissioner for children's rights Maria

Russian news agency TASS reported last week that

ICC judge Tomoko Ákane issued an arrest warrant for

warrant for the country's President Vladimir Putin.

addition of judge

to wanted list

Lvova-Belova over similar charges.

The warrant against Putin and Lvova-Belova accuse the pair of committing war crimes for having "illegally deported" thousands of Ukrainian children since invading the country in February 2022.

#### Xi appoints new chief of China's nuclear arsenal

**REUTERS, BEIJING** 

Chinese President Xi Jinping, also the military's commander-in-chief, on Monday appointed a new head of the armed force overseeing the nation's conventional - and nuclear - missiles, one day before the anniversary of the People's Liberation Army. Wang Houbin, former deputy commander of the navy, was named the new head of the PLA Rocket Force, and Xu Xisheng, its new political commissar, with both men acquiring the top rank of general, according to state media. Until his move to the PLA Rocket Force, Wang had been deputy commander of the navy since 2020. He was previously also the deputy chief of staff at the Navy. Xu was formerly the deputy political commissar of the Southern Theatre Command. one of the PLA's five theatre commands. State media did not say where the PLA Rocket Force's previous chief, Li Yuchao, was reassigned or state his whereabouts.

### UK launches first postal deliveries by drone

AFP, Kirkwall



Mail on the Scottish isles of Orkney was delivered by drones yesterday, the first regular postal service by the aerial devices in the UK. Letters and packages will be transported from Royal Mail's Kirkwall

delivery office to Stromness, where the drone deliveries will bring them to staff on Graemsay and Hoy for postal workers to carry out their usual delivery routes. "Anything that helps to maintain the universal service, especially in areas of the isles which are more difficult to reach, is something that we should give a chance to support," Alistair Carmichael, the MP for Orkney and Shetland, said in a statement. "Royal Mail remains a critical part of keeping the isles connected — and local knowledge and care are vital to that network." Royal Mail said the drone service was expected to significantly improve service levels and delivery times to Graemsay and Hoy, where weather and geography can cause disruptions to delivery services.

## IS attack on Syria oil convoy kills 7

**AFP,** Beirut

Islamic State group jihadists attacked a convoy of oil tankers guarded by the army in the Syrian desert yesterday, killing seven people including two civilians, a war monitor said.

"Five regime forces and two drivers have been killed in the armed attack by IS militants" in the east of Hama province, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

The attackers used machine guns and rocketpropelled grenades, said the Britain-based monitor, which relies on a wide network of sources inside Syria.

In March 2019, IS lost the last territory it had held in Syria following a military campaign backed by a US-led coalition, but jihadist remnants continue to hide out in the desert and launch deadly attacks.

They have used such hideouts to ambush civilians, Syrian government troops and pro-Iran fighters. Syria's war broke out after President Bashar al-Assad's repression of anti-government demonstrations in 2011 escalated into a conflict that pulled in foreign powers and global jihadists.





জোন) স্বয় বাংলা বাণিজ্যিক জবন (৬৪ জনা), ৬৬, আয়াবাদ, চট্টবামে জয়া দিতে হতে। দবলত হত্য দিন কেল ০২,৩০ খটিকয়ে উপস্থিত দবলতা,দালাভাচনত সম্বাদে কোনা হতে। কোন কৰেল দৰ্শকো বাভিত্যেক যে কোন বা সকল দলতা আলিক জনবা সম্পূৰ্ণ এছণ বা বাভিল