

WEST BANK RAID

Israel troops kill two Palestinians

AFP, West Bank

Israeli troops killed two Palestinians in the occupied West Bank yesterday, in the first deadly raid in the Jericho area for months.

There has been a surge in violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in recent months, marked by raids by Israeli forces as well as deadly attacks by Palestinians and Israelis.

The Palestinian health ministry announced two people were shot in the chest at dawn by Israeli forces "during an attack on Jericho".

The ministry named those killed as Qusay Omar Suleiman al-Walaji, 16, and Mohammed Ribhi Njoom, 25.

The Israeli military said during the raid "suspects fired toward the Israel Border Police, who responded with live fire. Hits were identified."



PHOTO: AFP

French firefighters work at a house destroyed by a wildfire in Saint-Andre, near Argeles-sur-Mer, southern France yesterday. French authorities evacuated more than 3,000 people from holiday campsites near the Spanish border after a fire broke out, officials said.

Myanmar arrests 145 fleeing Rohingyas

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar authorities have arrested nearly 150 Rohingyas suspected of trying to flee the country, an official told AFP yesterday.

The Rohingyas are seen in Myanmar as interlopers from Bangladesh. They are denied citizenship and require permission to travel.

The military launched a crackdown on Rohingyas in 2017, and thousands now risk their lives each year making perilous journeys from camps in Bangladesh and Myanmar to reach Muslim-majority Malaysia and Indonesia.

The 127 Rohingya men and 18 women were arrested on Friday near the village of Wackhami in southern Mon state.

"They have been detained since then and under investigation according to the immigration law," Aung Myat Kyaw Sein, spokesperson for Mon State Administration Council, told AFP.

Myanmar is facing genocide accusations at the United Nations' top court following the 2017 crackdown, which sent hundreds of thousands fleeing to Bangladesh.

Russia air strikes target western Ukraine

Three killed, dozens hurt; Kyiv shoots down 16 missiles

REUTERS, KYIV

Russian air strikes hit two western regions of Ukraine bordering Nato member Poland and other areas yesterday, killing three people and wounding more than a dozen, Ukrainian officials said.

Local media said the attacks were the largest air assault on the Lviv region since the Russian invasion in February 2022.

The fatalities were reported in the northwestern region of Volyn. Officials said an industrial enterprise in the regional capital Lutsk was struck in the overnight attack. Several people were also hospitalised, Governor Yuriy Pohulyaiko said.

Fifteen people were also wounded in the Lviv region, Governor Maksym Kozlytskiy said. Six missiles damaged dozens of buildings and a kindergarten playground in and around the regional capital. Kozlytskiy said the youngest victim was 10-years-old.

Sixteen missiles were shot down, the air force said. Both Volyn and Lviv border Nato member Poland and are hundreds of miles from the front line, where Ukraine's military is fending off Russian troops in the nearly 18-month-old war.

Lviv city had been spared much of Russia's air attacks until July, when seven people were killed by a missile that slammed into a residential building near the historic centre.

The city has generally been seen as a safe haven from the conflict, with some government offices moving there and international NGOs using it as a base. It has also been a transit point for Ukrainian refugees en route to Poland and beyond.

"These are the parts of the country where millions of people are seeking safety and refuge after fleeing the horrors of Russia's invasion," Denise Brown, the United Nations resident coordinator in Ukraine, said in a statement.

"Russia's persistent attacks hitting essential infrastructure in populated areas cause immense human suffering."

At least two people were also wounded in the southeastern city of Dnipro, where Governor Serhij



Lysak said a business enterprise and a sports complex had been hit.

Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said civilian infrastructure including schools and a hospital had been damaged in a total of eight regions in yesterday's attacks, which the air force said involved at least 28 cruise missiles.

Meanwhile, Russian defence minister Sergei Shoigu said yesterday that Ukraine's military resources were "almost exhausted", as Kyiv wages a gruelling counter-offensive to recapture lost territory.

"Despite comprehensive assistance from the West, Ukraine's armed forces are unable to achieve results," Shoigu said at a security conference in Moscow.

"Preliminary results of the hostilities show that Ukraine's military resources are almost exhausted," he said.

He added that there was "nothing unique" about Western weapons and that they were not invulnerable to Russian arms on the battlefield.

Twenty-two Russian diplomats flew out of the Moldovan capital of Chisinau on Monday, leaving behind a skeleton staff as relations between the two countries deteriorated after Moldova last month ordered Moscow to withdraw most of its delegation.

Moldovan officials have said the reduction of staff at the Russian embassy to 25 from 80 will establish parity with Moldova's embassy in Moscow.

Search on for survivors after India landslides kill 65

AFP, Dehradun

Rescuers yesterday searched for people feared missing in floods and landslides that have killed at least 65 in India, including 11 who died in the collapse of a popular temple.

Days of torrential downpours have washed away vehicles, demolished buildings and destroyed bridges in the Himalayas. Flooding and landslides are common and cause widespread devastation during India's treacherous monsoon season, but experts say climate change is increasing their frequency and severity.

At least 52 people have been killed in Himachal Pradesh since Sunday, with thousands more stranded after disruptions to roads, power lines and communication networks.

"The suffering of those affected cannot be relieved with money, but the government will provide all possible help to them in this hour of distress," state chief minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said yesterday.

Sukhu said earlier that up to 20 others were feared trapped under rubble after landslides, and appealed to residents to stay indoors and avoid going near rivers.

BORDER AREAS

China, India agree to maintain peace on the ground

REUTERS, Beijing

China and India agreed to maintain peace and tranquillity on the ground in the border areas, China's defence ministry said in a joint statement on the 19th round of China-India Corps Commander Level Meeting yesterday.

Both sides had a positive, constructive and in-depth discussion on the resolution of the remaining issues along the LAC (line of actual control) in the Western Sector, the ministry said.

They also agreed to resolve the remaining issues in an "expeditious manner" and maintain the momentum of dialogue and negotiations through military and diplomatic channels.

The latest round of corps commander-level talks took place almost four months after the 18th round of military dialogue was held on April 23.

Those talks did not yield any significant breakthrough, with the sides agreeing to stay in close contact, maintain a dialogue through military and diplomatic channels, and work out a mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest.

Despite four rounds of disengagement from the Galwan Valley, Pangong Tso, Gogra (PP-17A) and Hot Springs (PP-15), the Indian and Chinese armies still have tens of thousands of troops and advanced weaponry deployed in the Ladakh theatre, reports Hindustan Times.

Fire at Russian fuel station kills 35

Scores injured

AFP, Moscow

At least 35 people were killed in an explosion that created a huge fire ball at a fuel station in Russia's remote Caucasus republic of Dagestan, spurring condolences from President Vladimir Putin yesterday.

Images distributed by the emergencies ministry showed burnt-out cars silhouetted by the massive blaze and rescue workers in helmets attempting to put out the fire and clear rubble late on Monday.

Government ministries said 35 people had died and 80 had been injured.

The Kremlin issued a statement saying: "President Putin expresses his most sincere condolences to the families and friends of the victims of the tragedy in Dagestan and wishes a speedy recovery to the victims."

The explosion in the city of Makhachkala happened at a fuel station after a fire broke out, the regional branch of the Investigative Committee, which probes major incidents, announced on social media.

"A fire occurred during car maintenance work, followed by a bang, as a result of which people were injured and died," the committee said, adding that nearby buildings and cars were damaged.

A criminal case has been opened to establish the circumstances leading up to the fire, it added.

State-run news agencies TASS and Ria Novosti reported that the fire had been extinguished, citing the ministry.

Makhachkala, a city of over 600,000 on the Caspian Sea, is the capital of Dagestan, a Russian republic bordering Chechnya.

The blast was heard shortly before 10:00 pm (1900 GMT) on Monday, Sergei Melikov, head of the Dagestan administration, announced on social media.



MYANMAR JADE MINE

25 bodies recovered after landslide

AFP, Yangon

Rescuers have recovered 25 bodies while 14 people remain missing after a landslide at an unregulated jade mine in a remote region of Myanmar, emergency workers said yesterday.

Myanmar has been hit with torrential rain and floods in recent days and the landslide occurred Sunday outside northern Kachin's Hpakant township.

Jade mining in Myanmar is a lucrative business but the unregulated industry is plagued with frequent worker deaths including more than 170 fatalities in the same area following a 2020 landslide.

"We found 25 dead bodies in total today," a rescue worker told AFP yesterday, adding that 14 people were still missing and the recovery effort would continue today.

Rescuers had to dig through mud to find bodies, while others were floating in water.

A massive pile of earth about 150-180 metres (500-600 feet) high left behind by mining excavations was loosened by the intense rainfall and collapsed, according to rescuers.

The mine's operations had been suspended during the rainy season, but those caught in the landslide were believed to be locals hoping to find something valuable in the mud.

The jade industry relies on low-paid migrant workers to scrape out a gem highly coveted in neighbouring China.



A handout obtained from the Cypriot government's Joint Rescue Coordination Centre yesterday shows a fishing boat with 60 migrants on board and Arabic writing on its hull after sending a distress signal while sailing off Cape Greco in southeastern Cyprus the night before. The migrants were brought safely to shore and they are expected to be transferred to a migrant reception centre on the outskirts of the capital Nicosia.

PHOTO: AFP

ECUADOR

Another local politician slain

AFP, Quito

A local politician in Ecuador was killed Monday, party officials said, less than a week after a presidential front-runner was gunned down at a campaign rally ahead of this weekend's elections.

Pedro Briones, a member of the Citizen Revolution Party of former president Rafael Correa, and one of the movement's leaders in the province of Esmeraldas on the border with Colombia, was killed by unknown gunmen.

"My solidarity with the family of comrade Pedro Briones, new victim of violence," Luisa Gonzalez, one of the main presidential candidates, said on X, the social media platform formerly called Twitter.

"Ecuador is going through its bloodiest period," said Gonzalez, a close former associate of Correa. She called the government inept and said the country has been taken over by organized crime gangs.

Correa added his condolences on social media.