

Aid entering Gaza ‘nowhere near’ enough Says WFP chief

REUTERS, Cairo

World Food Programme (WFP) head Cindy McCain said yesterday that the aid currently entering Gaza is “nowhere near” enough to meet the needs of people there, which she added were growing exponentially.

“We need to continue to work together to get safe and sustained access to Gaza at a scale that aligns with the catastrophic conditions facing families there,” McCain said in a statement after visiting the Rafah border crossing through which aid trucks have been entering Gaza.

Qatar, which has played a major role in facilitating humanitarian aid, said it was pushing to resume crossings but no timeline was set.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken briefly stopped over in Cyprus yesterday where a Cypriot proposal to establish a maritime aid corridor to Gaza was discussed.



A Palestinian man reacts, as people search for casualties, at the site of Israeli strikes on houses, amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinian group Hamas, at the Magazi Refugee Camp, in central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Philippines’ Marcos condemns killing of journo, orders probe

REUTERS, Manila

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr yesterday strongly condemned the killing of a Filipino journalist and ordered the police to conduct an investigation to bring the perpetrators to justice.

The journalist, Juan Jumalon, also known as “DJ Johnny Walker”, was shot by unidentified assailants while broadcasting from his home in a southern Philippine town yesterday morning, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) said in a statement, citing initial reports.

“Attacks on journalists will not be tolerated in our democracy, and those who threaten the freedom of the press will face the full consequences of their actions,” Marcos said in a post on X platform.

Media watchdog NUJP also condemned the “brazen killing” which it said was caught on a livestream of Jumalon’s show. Jumalon’s home in Calamba, Misamis Occidental served as his radio station.

Jumalon’s killing brings to four the number of journalists killed since Marcos took office in June 2022, and to 199 since democracy was restored in the Philippines in 1986. That figure included 32 killed in a single incident in 2009.

The Philippines has one of Asia’s most liberal media environments, but it remains one of the world’s most dangerous places for journalists, particularly in its provinces.

Don’t pause ME de-escalation over war

Senior UAE official tells World Policy Conference

AFP, Dubai

Middle East powers should maintain their push to de-escalate the region through trade and economic ties despite the Israel-Hamas war, a senior United Arab Emirates official said.

The sudden flare-up in Gaza follows a period of fence-mending in the region including by the UAE and its neighbouring fellow oil giant, Saudi Arabia.

According to UAE presidential adviser Anwar Gargash, countries should maintain that strategy even though the war is sending shockwaves through the region.

“National actors are basically trying to use economics as a way to de-escalate tension,” Gargash told the World Policy Conference in Abu Dhabi on Saturday.

“I think there is no reason why we should also veer away from that course of action.”

Gargash said the war demonstrated that the UAE and others still had to “work together with other regional actors in order to ensure that regional stability is guaranteed”.



“But I think the other message is also (that) national plans have to move on. I don’t think that national plans have to be on pause, because there will always be a major regional issue that will surprise us.”

The UAE and Gulf ally Bahrain, along with Morocco and Sudan, broke with the long-standing Arab consensus to normalise relations with Israel in 2020.

The UAE has also rebuilt relations with Turkey and was instrumental in Syria’s return to the Arab League after more than a decade on the sidelines over its bitter civil war.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia, the world’s biggest oil exporter, resumed ties with rival heavyweight Iran in March after a seven-year hiatus, and was in talks over a potential normalisation with Israel before the current war broke out.

For the wealthy Gulf countries, the diplomatic and trade drive is part of plans to reduce economic dependence on oil ahead of an expected drop in demand as the world turns to other fuels.

More than 9700 people, most of them children or women, have been killed in Israeli strikes unleashed to crush Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Ukrainian cruise missiles strike Russian shipyard Ship damaged

AFP, Kyiv



Ukraine fired cruise missiles at a shipyard on the east coast of the Russian-annexed Crimean peninsula, damaging a ship and causing debris to fall on a dock, Russia said yesterday. Since launching its counteroffensive against Moscow’s forces this summer, Kyiv has ramped up attacks on the peninsula in a bid to suppress Russia’s Black Sea naval fleet.

“On November 4, the Ukrainian army launched 15 cruise missiles at the B.E. Butoma (Zaliv) shipyard in the city of Kerch,” Russia’s defence ministry said, according to state media. “Air defence systems shot down 13 of the cruise missiles,” the ministry said, adding: “As a result of being hit by an enemy cruise missile, a ship located at the plant was damaged.” It did not say how badly the ship was damaged or name which ship was attacked.

Debris from the downed missiles also fell on a nearby dock, but no-one was injured, Crimea’s Russian-installed governor Sergei Aksyonov said, without providing further detail. The nearby Crimean bridge to the Russian mainland, which has been targeted by Ukrainian forces before, was briefly shut on Saturday for undisclosed reasons.

Smog-ridden New Delhi extends schools shutdown

AFP, New Delhi

Authorities in India’s smog-ridden capital New Delhi yesterday extended an emergency schools closure by a week, with no signs of improvement in the megacity’s choking levels of pollution. New Delhi is blanketed in acrid smog every autumn, primarily blamed on stubble burning by farmers in the neighbouring agrarian states. The city is regularly ranked as one of the most polluted on the planet, with its annual smog blamed for hundreds of thousands of premature deaths each year. “As pollution levels continue to remain high, primary schools in Delhi will stay closed till 10th November,” Delhi state’s education minister Atishi posted on X, formerly Twitter. Secondary schools “are being given the option of shifting to online classes,” added Atishi, who uses only one name, after days of high pollution levels. The Indian capital – which has a population of 30 million – once again ranked as the world’s most polluted city yesterday, according to monitoring firm IQAir. Delhi state annually imposes restrictions on construction activities and orders some vehicles off roads when pollution reaches severe levels. But critics say that governments willfully ignore the agricultural primary source of the public health crisis.



Survivors of a recent earthquake, rest under an open sky near a damaged house in Rukum district, Nepal in the early hours of yesterday. Search and rescue efforts after the earthquake wrapped up yesterday as the focus shifted to providing relief to survivors awaiting food and shelter, officials said.

PHOTO: AFP

Hamburg airport hostage standoff over, suspect arrested

REUTERS, Frankfurt

Police arrested a man and rescued a child at the centre of a hostage standoff at Hamburg airport yesterday, ending a crisis that had forced authorities to close the busy air hub.

A man, who police said was suspected of carrying a gun, and possibly explosives, drove a vehicle through the gates of the airport on Saturday night, officers said.

Police said the 35-year-old man was with his four-year-old daughter and was thought to be involved in a custody dispute.

“The hostage situation is over,” the city’s police force wrote on X, formerly known as Twitter, yesterday afternoon.

“The suspect got out of the car with his daughter.

The man was arrested by the emergency services without resistance. The child appears to be unharmed,” it added.

The airport said it was working to resume operations as quickly as possible. A total of 286 flights with around 34,500 passengers had been scheduled for yesterday, it said earlier.

“I wish the mother, the child and her family a lot of strength to cope with this terrible experience,” Hamburg mayor Peter Tschentscher wrote on X.

The episode raised concerns over security at the airport less than four months after climate activists got onto the runway and blocked planes.

Local media reported that negotiations with the man were conducted in Turkish through a translator, but it is unclear what his connection to the country is.

Russia test fires nuclear-capable missile

AFP, Moscow

Russia said yesterday it had successfully test-launched an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of carrying nuclear warheads from one of its submarines.

The launch of the “Bulava” missile, the first in just over a year, comes as Russia ramps up nuclear rhetoric since revoking its ratification of a key nuclear test ban treaty.

“The new nuclear-powered strategic missile submarine cruiser Emperor Alexander the Third has successfully launched the Bulava sea based intercontinental ballistic missile,” the defence ministry said.

It said it fired the under-sea missile from an undisclosed location in the White Sea on its northwest coast, to a target thousands of kilometres away on the Kamchatka peninsula.

“The missile firing took place in the normal mode from an underwater position,” it said, adding: “The missile heads arrived at the designated area at the appointed time.”

The 12 metre long Bulava missile was designed to be the backbone of Moscow’s nuclear triad and has a range of over 8,000 kilometres.

The West has accused Moscow of using reckless nuclear rhetoric since it launched its offensive against Ukraine last February.

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