

Richest 1pc gained \$42tn in a decade Says Oxfam

AFP, Paris

The world's richest one percent increased their fortunes by a total of \$42 trillion over the past decade, Oxfam said yesterday, ahead of a G20 summit in Brazil where taxing the super-rich tops the agenda.

Despite this windfall, taxes on the rich had plummeted to "historic lows", the NGO added, warning of "obscene levels" of inequality with the rest of the world "left to scrap for crumbs".

Brazil has made international cooperation on taxing the super-rich a priority of its presidency of the G20.

At this week's summit in Rio de Janeiro, the group's finance ministers are expected to make progress on ways to raise levies on the ultra-wealthy and prevent billionaires from dodging tax systems.

ALASKA ZONE

US, Canada jets intercept China, Russia planes

AFP, Washington

American and Canadian warplanes intercepted two Russian and two Chinese bombers in international airspace near the state of Alaska on Wednesday, the joint US-Canadian North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) said.

"NORAD detected, tracked, and intercepted two Russian TU-95 and two PRC H-6 military aircraft operating in the Alaska Air Defense Identification Zone," it said.

The zone is a perimeter in which air traffic is monitored beyond the border of national airspace to provide additional reaction time in case of hostile actions.

Intercepts of Russian aircraft – in which they are contacted visually by US or Canadian jets – are relatively common in the area.

"Fighter jets from the United States and Canada conducted the intercept," NORAD said, adding that the bombers "remained in international airspace and did not enter American or Canadian sovereign airspace," and that their activity "is not seen as a threat."

Tanker capsizes off Philippines

16 of 17 crew members rescued; authorities battle to contain oil spill

REUTERS, Manila

A marine tanker carrying industrial fuel sank in rough seas off the Philippines yesterday, causing a large oil spill as coast guard rescuers search for a missing crew member, officials said.

Sixteen of the 17 crew members of MT Terra Nova have been rescued, Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista said, after the ship capsized off the coastal town of Limay in Bataan province. A search is underway for the missing sailor.

"There is already oil spill. Right now, we cannot dispatch our resources because of strong winds and high waves," Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista told a situation briefing.

The ship was carrying 1,494 metric tonnes of industrial fuel, Bautista said. Based on accounts of the rescued crew, Bautista said they encountered rough seas before the ship capsized.

Philippine coast guard spokesperson



Palestinian demonstrators display signs against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the offensive in Gaza, on Capitol Hill in Washington DC, US on Wednesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

ASEAN FMS' MEET IN LAOS Russia, China FMs meet as talks get underway

AFP, Vientiane

The foreign ministers of Russia and China met yesterday on the sidelines of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) foreign ministers talks in Laos, Moscow and AFP journalists said.

The three-day meeting of the 10 member Asean bloc started in the capital Vientiane yesterday, with the South China Sea and the conflict in Myanmar high on the agenda.

Sergei Lavrov held talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the sidelines of the meeting, Russia's foreign ministry said.

A schedule for yesterday's meeting seen by AFP showed that Lavrov was due to join Wang for a 40-minute "ministerial meeting". Lavrov left the venue at 7.15 pm local time (12.15 GMT), without commenting on what the meeting had covered.

China is a close political and economic ally of Russia and Nato members have branded Beijing a "decisive enabler" of Moscow's war in Ukraine.

Their meeting came a day after Wang held talks in China with Ukraine's top diplomat Dmytro Kuleba.

Lavrov said before an earlier meeting with the foreign ministers of China and Laos that Asean was "one of the essential elements of a new, more just multipolar world order".

It must "ensure a stable and secure development, outside the

ASEAN FMS' MEET AND RELATED

21-27 JULY 2024, VIENTIANE, LAO PDR



blocs, of the Asia Pacific region," he said.

The foreign ministers of Canada, India and the United Kingdom arrived in Vientiane yesterday to attend the talks as dialogue partners, AFP journalists said.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is also expected to attend.

Asean ministers were thrashing out a common position on the civil war raging in member state Myanmar yesterday, a Southeast Asian diplomat at the talks said.

"Myanmar is not resolved yet but we're almost there," the source said, requesting anonymity in order to speak to the media.

A draft Asean communique seen by AFP said ministers "strongly condemned" the continued violence unleashed by

the military's coup in 2021 that has plunged the country into turmoil.

The junta is struggling to crush armed opposition to its coup and has been barred from high-level Asean meetings over its crackdown on dissent.

It had previously refused to send "non-political representatives" to attend high-level Asean meetings but two senior bureaucrats are representing Myanmar at the talks in Vientiane.

The military's readiness to re-engage diplomatically was a sign of its "weakened position", the diplomatic source told AFP.

An ethnic minority armed group claimed yesterday that its fighters had captured a town and a military regional command in northern Shan state, although the junta denied the claim.

Boeing finalises 737 MAX guilty plea deal

REUTERS

Armando Balilo told a separate briefing a 97-metre coast guard vessel had been deployed to search for the missing crew and combat the oil spill. Smaller vessels are waiting for the weather to clear before they could sail.

An aerial survey by the coast guard

showed an oil slick spreading roughly two nautical miles and being driven by strong waves.

"We are racing against time. We will do our best to contain the fuel," Balilo said. He added the waters where the ship sank is close to Manila

and there is "big danger" the spill could reach the capital. "That's part of the contingencies that we are preparing for," Balilo said.

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. had ordered the environment ministry to assess the damage and the country's environment ministry said its chief was on her way to Limay town.

An investigation is underway if the sinking is related to Typhoon Gaemi.

Typhoon Gaemi hits Chinese seaboard

Sinks freighter off Taiwan; 3 killed

REUTERS, Beijing

Typhoon Gaemi roared into southeastern China yesterday after sweeping across Taiwan, where it killed three people, triggered flooding and sank a freighter before barreling west across the Taiwan Strait.

The typhoon, the biggest to hit China's eastern seaboard this year, made landfall at 7:50 pm (11:50 GMT) in Fujian province, state broadcaster CCTV said.

The storm is forecast to unleash intense rainfall over much of China after fueling severe weather from the Philippines to Japan's Okinawa islands with its giant cloud-bands which spanned most of the Western Pacific Ocean.

In Taiwan, the strongest typhoon to hit the island in eight years packed gusts of up to 227 kmph (141 mph) before weakening as it made its way across the island, according to the Central Weather Administration.

Some parts of southern Taiwan are expected to have recorded accumulated rainfall of 2,200 mm (87 inches) since Tuesday.

Time to pass torch to 'new generation'

Says Biden in a historic Oval Office speech

REUTERS, Washington

President Joe Biden on Wednesday said abandoning his reelection campaign and endorsing his vice president, Kamala Harris, as the Democratic candidate was the best way to unite the country and save democracy, despite his ambition to win a second term.

Biden's announcement to end his presidential bid on Sunday followed a disastrous June debate with Donald Trump, which exacerbated questions about his ability to defeat the Republican candidate, or to serve another four years if he succeeded.

In his address to the nation from the Oval Office, the 81-year-old president said he believed he deserved to be reelected based on his record during his first term.

"But nothing, nothing can come in the way of saving our democracy. That includes personal ambition," he said. "So I decided the best way forward is to pass the torch to a new generation. That is the best way to unite our nation."

In a post on his Truth Social platform, Trump said the speech was "barely understandable and sooo bad!" Shortly before speech, Trump laid into Democratic rival Kamala Harris in his first rally since she replaced Biden atop the ticket, signaling a bare-knuckled campaign ahead of the election.

MYANMAR CONFLICT

Junta, rebels claim control of regional military HQ

REUTERS, Yangon

Myanmar's junta and an ethnic minority armed group both claimed yesterday they were in control of a town and regional military command in northern Shan state following days of clashes.

Fighting has rocked the town of Lashio, home to the military's northeastern command, since July 3 when an alliance of ethnic armed groups renewed an offensive against junta troops.

Local media run by the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) reported the group "fully captured the headquarters of the Northeast Military command in Lashio" yesterday morning and also captured Lashio town, home to around 150,000 people.

MNDAA spokesman Li Jiawen said the group's fighters had captured Lashio, without giving further details. But junta spokesman Zaw Min Tun told reporters the claim was "not true".

"The insurgents infiltrated the outskirts of Lashio so (the security forces) have been following and clearing them," he said, without giving details.

The northeastern command is located in the north of Lashio. A video uploaded to social media with a caption saying it was shot in Lashio yesterday morning showed deserted streets with no soldiers in sight.

AFP reporters geolocated the video to a site in the town around two kilometres (1.2 miles) from the command. Northern Shan state has been rocked by fighting since late last month.

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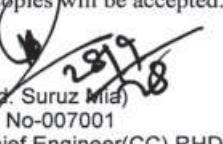
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1	Tender ID No. 1004383. eGP-03/RHD/ACE/RZ/PMP-Roads/ 2024-2025. Periodic Maintenance Program for Surfacing work by DBS-Wearing Course from 395 th (P) Km to 399 th Km, 400 th (P) Km, 401 th (P) Km to 422 th Km, 423 th (P) Km of Dhaka (Mirpur)-Utholi-Paturia-Notakhola-Kashinathpur-Bogura-Rangpur-Beldanga-Banglabandha (N-5) Road under Road Division, Dinajpur during the Year 2024-2025	27-Aug-2024 17:00	28-Aug-2024 11:45	28-Aug-2024 12:00
2	Tender ID No. 1004521. eGP-04/RHD/ACE/RZ/PMP-Roads/ 2024-2025. Construction of Hard Shoulder at 441 th (P), 442 th , 443 th (P) & 452 th (P) to 455 th (P) Km of Dhaka (Mirpur)-Utholi-Paturia-Notakhola-Kashinathpur-Bogura-Rangpur-Beldanga-Banglabandha (N-5) Road under Road Division, Thakurgaon during the year 2024-2025.	27-Aug-2024 17:00	28-Aug-2024 12:00	28-Aug-2024 12:20

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