

## LA wildfires rage on, kill 10

Burn 10,000 structures; curfew declared amid reports of looting

REUTERS, Los Angeles

Wildfires menacing Los Angeles have killed at least 10 people and devoured nearly 10,000 structures, with five fires burning into a third night on Thursday, as dry desert winds fanning the flames again gathered strength.

The Palisades Fire between Santa Monica and Malibu on the city's western flank and the Eaton Fire in the east near Pasadena already rank as the most destructive in Los Angeles history, consuming more than 34,000 acres (13,750 hectares) - or some 53 square miles - turning entire neighborhoods to ash.

The death toll from the blazes rose to 10, Los Angeles County's Medical Examiner said in an update late on Thursday, without providing identities or other details.

Los Angeles County Sheriff

- Two largest blazes consume 34,000 acres
- 180,000 evacuated, 200,000 under warnings

Robert Luna told an earlier press conference he expected the number to grow.

"It looks like an atomic bomb dropped in these areas. I don't expect good news, and we're not looking forward to those numbers," Luna said.

About 180,000 people have had to evacuate and another 200,000 people are under evacuation warnings, the LA County Sheriff's Department said.

At least 20 arrests have been made for looting, and the city of Santa Monica declared a curfew because of the lawlessness, officials said. Officials said they were working to establish curfews for areas affected by mandatory evacuation orders.

California Governor Gavin Newsom has mobilized 400 National Guard troops to assist with the escalating wildfire crisis in Los Angeles County.

## No let-up

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to import 14.81 lakh tonnes of rice as part of efforts to contain domestic prices by increasing stocks.

On January 7, the cabinet committee on purchase also approved 50,000 tonnes of rice import.

Kamal Sarkar, owner of Mirpur Makbul Rice Agency at Mirpur II, said coarse rice has low demand in Dhaka's market, which is why its price has increased slightly.

"The demand for fine rice is huge in the local market, and there is a shortage of this variety in the market. For this, its price has been increasing for the last several weeks. This week, each 50kg sack of fine rice saw a rise of Tk 50."

During visits to several kitchen markets in the capital yesterday, including Karwan Bazar, Mirpur, Kazipara, and Mohammadpur, this newspaper found that the retail price of fine rice rose by Tk 6-8, medium grain rice by Tk 5-6, and coarse rice by Tk 2-3 per kg compared to three weeks ago.

At retail level, Miniket rice was selling at Tk 75-86 a kg, up from Tk 68-78; Nazirshail at Tk 78-92, up from Tk 72-82; BR-28 at Tk 64-66, up from Tk 58-62; and Pajam at Tk 62-65 a kg, up from Tk 55-58.

Besides, the price of coarse rice (Guti Shorna) has risen by around Tk 2.3 per kg to Tk 52-55 in three weeks.

Alamgir Hossain, manager at Krishি Bhandar in Mohammadpur Krishi Market, said rice prices have been rising every week, and this week was no exception.

"On the one hand, we face the customers' wrath, and we have to deal with mobile court drives on the other hand. They fine us despite our repeated explanations that we are not responsible for the price hike," he said, urging the authorities concerned to conduct drives at rice mills to inspect purchasing prices.

Nirod Boron Saha, president of Paddy and Rice Stockists and Wholesalers' Association in Naogaon, a wholesale hub in the north for medium and fine quality rice, blamed the price hike on the shortage of good quality paddy.

"We cannot buy good quality paddy due to supply crunch. Whenever we find some, the farmers are unwilling to sell at lower prices," he said, adding that there is no chance of dropping the fine rice price until the end of winter.

He, however, thinks that rice prices would not rise significantly in the coming weeks due to the government's OMS programme.



Protesters attend a rally against the impeached South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol near his residence in Seoul, South Korea, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Russia attacks Ukraine with 72 drones

Kyiv downs 33 drones; Kremlin says Putin ready for talks with Trump

AGENCIES

Ukraine's air force said yesterday Russia attacked it with 72 drones overnight though it downed 33 of them while 34 others disappeared from radar without reaching their targets.

Five drones struck various buildings in the northern region of Chernihiv, wounding one person, the air force said. One downed drone fell on a building in the capital Kyiv but did not cause casualties.

Video footage filmed by Reuters carried the sound of an explosion and showed a fire burning in the distance in Kyiv during the overnight attack, reports Reuters.

More footage after daybreak showed the charred corner of

a high-rise apartment block in Kyiv with windows blown out and a line of cars parked below suffering damage.

Three people were killed yesterday morning and six wounded by Ukrainian strikes

### Ukraine strikes on occupied Donetsk kill three

on the Russian-occupied part of Donetsk region, officials said.

The Russian-installed regional chief, Denis Pushilin, said that during the morning rush-hour Ukraine struck a square in the region's main city of Donetsk with precision

guided long-range missiles fired by HIMARS rocket launchers, reports AFP.

The strikes on Shakhtarska Ploschcha killed two people and wounded two more, Russia's Investigative Committee told RIA Novosti news agency, accusing Ukraine of deliberately firing on civilian infrastructure.

Meanwhile, the Kremlin said yesterday that President Vladimir Putin was open to talks with Donald Trump, after the incoming US president said a meeting between the pair was being set up.

Trump, who will be inaugurated on January 20, has said he can bring a swift end to the conflict, without presenting a concrete plan.

## Israel strikes Houthi targets in Yemen

AFP, Jerusalem

The Israeli military said yesterday that its air force had struck Houthi targets in Yemen, including a power station and ports on the western coast.

"A short while ago... fighter jets struck military targets belonging to the Houthi terrorist regime on the western coast and inland Yemen," the military said in a statement, adding the strikes were in retaliation for Houthi rocket launches into Israel.

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said the strikes on several targets in Yemen were a "sharp message" to the leaders of the Houthi rebel group, whom he said Israel "will hunt down".

## US announces \$25m reward for arrest of Maduro

AGENCIES

The US has announced an increased \$25m (£20.4m) reward for information leading to the arrest of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro on the day he was sworn in for a third six-year term in office.

The inauguration ceremony was overshadowed by recrimination from the international community and Venezuelan opposition leaders, reports BBC.

Rewards have also been offered for information leading to the arrest and or conviction of Interior Minister Diosdado Cabello.

A new reward of up to \$15 million for Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino has also been offered.

The United States slapped fresh sanctions against eight senior Venezuelan officials, reports AFP.

The US Treasury Department announced it had designated "eight Venezuelan officials who lead key economic and security agencies enabling (President) Nicolas Maduro's repression and subversion of democracy in Venezuela."

Those designated include high-level officials from the military and police, and the presidents of the country's state owned oil company and airline.

## Airlines face 'high risk' flying over Russia says EU aviation agency

AFP, Paris

The downing of an Azerbaijan Airlines airplane shows that flying over Russia poses a "high risk" to civilian flights amid the war in Ukraine, the European Union Aviation Safety Agency said yesterday.

The EASA said in a safety bulletin that the conflict "poses the risk of civil aircraft being unintentionally targeted in the airspace of the Russian Federation, due to possible civil-military coordination deficiencies, and the potential for misidentification".

The agency renewed its recommendation for airlines to avoid flying over western Russian airspace.

Russia has banned EU airlines from flying over its airspace but those from China, Turkey, Gulf states and other countries are still authorised.

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has said the Azerbaijan Airlines passenger jet, which crashed in Kazakhstan on December 25, killing 38 people, was shot at "from the ground" over the Russian city of Grozny where it had been due to land.

## Tamim retires

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"I had been pondering over this issue for a while. Since a big stage such as the Champions Trophy is coming up, I don't want there to be discussions again surrounding me and disturbing the focus of the team," Tamim wrote in a Facebook post.

The veteran opener last donned the Bangladeshi jersey in April 2023, crucially opting out of the ODI World Cup in India that year. He had previously mentioned that he had some conditions for returning to the national team, but, having withdrawn from Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) central contract last year, he felt that discussions regarding a return were unnecessary.

"I didn't want that before [a return to the national team]. That's why I removed myself from BCB's central contract. But many said it in the media that I was the one keeping things hanging... retiring or playing on is something that is the right of any professional sportsman. I gave my time and now I feel the time is right. Skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto was very cordial when he asked me to return, and I discussed it with the selection panel too. I am grateful that they felt I was still capable, but I listened to myself," Tamim wrote further.

Tamim retired from T20Is in 2022, and his international retirement sees him end with 5,134 Test runs from 70 Tests and 8,357 runs from 243 ODIs.

The 2023 World Cup was a big chapter for Tamim, and he said that "what happened prior to the 2023 World Cup was a big shock for me as I did not go out of the side due to cricketing reasons."

"Wherever I went, cricket fans wanted to see me return to the national team, and I considered their love. My home has one such fan. My son never said it to me directly, but he told his mum that he wanted to see his father wear the national jersey again. I am sorry for disappointing the fans. I told my son, 'The day you grow up, you will understand your father,'" Tamim wrote further.

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## 2024 hottest

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"All the groups agree, regardless of how they put the data together, there's no question," said Gavin Schmidt, a senior climate scientist at Nasa. "The long term trends are very clear."

Schmidt said the levels of global heating are pushing humanity beyond its historical experience of the Earth's climate. "To put that in perspective, temperatures during the warm periods on Earth three million years ago - when sea levels were dozens of feet higher than today - were only around 3C warmer than pre-industrial levels," he said. "We are halfway to Pliocene-level warmth in just 150 years."

## Five Reovirus

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Columbia University of the United States, she said.

She also said that reovirus spreads through coughing and sneezing. Symptoms include respiratory problems, fever, headache, vomiting, and diarrhea. In severe cases, it can cause pneumonia or encephalitis (inflammation of the brain).

"When we established the caretaker government through the mass uprising of the 1990s, the caretaker government was not in the constitution at the time. It was included in response to public demand. Elections were held, and then came the law. If we talk about the constitution and the law, even this interim government is illegal, and so are the advisers," Parwar said.

"We cannot buy good quality paddy due to supply crunch. Whenever we find some, the farmers are unwilling to sell at lower prices," he said, adding that there is no chance of dropping the fine rice price until the end of winter.

He, however, thinks that rice prices would not rise significantly in the coming weeks due to the government's OMS programme.

## Sinner favourite as Djokovic eyes elusive record

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International Tennis Integrity Agency cleared him to play and accepted that he had been inadvertently contaminated with an anabolic agent through massages by a member of his support team.

The World Anti-Doping Agency has since lodged an appeal over the judgement with the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Sinner shared 2024's major titles with Spaniard Carlos Alcaraz, who at 21 will look to become the youngest man to complete the career Grand Slam by winning in Melbourne.

Victory for either Sinner or

Alcaraz, the reigning French Open and Wimbledon champion, would back up predictions of an enduring duopoly in men's tennis.

But Novak Djokovic, the last man standing from the golden era of the "Big Three", will hope to rekindle the Melbourne magic and finally clinch the record 25th Grand Slam title he has long coveted.

The 10-times Australian Open champion was beaten by Sinner in last year's semifinals and lost the Wimbledon final to Alcaraz to finish the year without a Grand Slam trophy for the first time since 2017.

Even at 37, however, Djokovic

remains among the very best on tour and turned the tables on Alcaraz to win the Olympic singles gold at Paris.

Motivation has rarely been an issue for Djokovic but Rafa Nadal's retirement last year was another reminder of his tennis mortality following Roger Federer's exit in 2022.

"I still enjoy competing but part of me left with them, a big part of me," Djokovic said last year of his "Big Three" rivals.

He landed in Melbourne after a flat defeat by American Reilly Opelka in the Brisbane International quarterfinals.

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Date: 09-01-2025

## e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) for the procurement of:

Sl No	Package Description	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time	Security Submission Date & Time
01.	e-GP/12/PMP-Road/EE/BRD/2024-2025 (ID- 1058965) Periodic Maintenance Programme (PMP-Roads) Providing Double Bituminous Surface Treatment (DBST) work from Ch:-80+062 to Ch:-93+312 =13.250Km of Bhanga-Bhatiapara-Mollahat-Fakirhat-Noapara Road (N-805) and Double Bituminous Surface Treatment-DBST including other necessary repair works from Ch.20+988m (Majhi Bar) to Ch.32+000m (Katherpool), Ch.47+000m (Tafalbari) to Ch.52+039m (Boghi) and Widening, Strengthening & Surfacing with DBS-Wearing Course works from Ch.32+000m (Katherpool) to Ch.38+470m (Rayenda Bridge Approach) of Signboard-Morelgonj-Rayenda-Shorankhola-Boghi Road (R-773) under Road Division Bagerhat during the year 2024-2025.	09-02-2025 05:00 PM	10-02-2025 12:30 PM	10-02-2025 11:30 PM

This is an Online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration required in the National e-GP System Portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)). The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank branches up to 09 February, 2025 at 05:00 PM. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk