

## UN denounces army attacks in Myanmar

AFP, Geneva

The United Nations rights office yesterday decried attacks by Myanmar's military despite a ceasefire declared following last month's devastating earthquake, which killed more than 3,600 people.

"At a moment when the sole focus should be on ensuring humanitarian aid gets to disaster zones, the military is instead launching attacks," spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani said in a statement.

UN rights chief Volker Turk, she said, "calls on the military to remove any and all obstacles to the delivery of humanitarian assistance and to cease military operations".

A multi-sided conflict has engulfed Myanmar since 2021, when Min Aung Hlaing's military wrested power from the civilian government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Following reports of sporadic clashes even after the March 28 quake that so far is known to have killed at least 3,645 people, the junta joined its opponents last week in calling a temporary halt to hostilities for relief to be delivered.

But Shamdasani highlighted that since the earthquake, "military forces have reportedly carried out over 120 attacks".



Burning emergency vehicles are seen at the site of a hospital hit by an overnight Russian air strike in the town of Kupiansk in Kharkiv region, Ukraine yesterday. US envoy Steve Witkoff was in Russia yesterday, the Kremlin said, his third visit to the country as Washington pushes for a ceasefire in Ukraine.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Iran vows 'good faith' in nuke talks with US

Trump threatens bombing if talks fail, raising stakes

REUTERS, Dubai

Iran said yesterday it was giving high-level nuclear talks with the United States today "a genuine chance", after President Donald Trump threatened bombing if discussions failed.

Trump made a surprise announcement on Monday that Washington and Tehran would begin talks in Oman, a Gulf state that has mediated between the West and the Islamic Republic before.

The January return to the White House of Trump, who in his first term withdrew the US from a 2015 big-power accord with Tehran, has again brought a tougher approach to a Middle Eastern power whose nuclear programme Washington's ally Israel regards as an existential threat.

At the same time, Iran and allied opponents have been weakened by the military offensives Israel has launched across the region, including air strikes in Iran, after being attacked from Gaza by Palestinian militant group Hamas in October 2023.

The Iranian foreign ministry said yesterday that the US should value the Islamic Republic's decision to engage in talks despite what it called Washington's "prevailing confrontational hoopla".

"We intend to assess the other side's intent and resolve this Saturday [today]," spokesperson Esmail Baghaei posted on X. "In earnest and with candid vigilance, we are giving diplomacy a genuine chance."

US air attacks on Yemen's Houthis, who are aligned with Iran and have hit international shipping lanes in the Red Sea in support of Hamas, have stirred speculation that Washington might be preparing to attack Iran.

Meanwhile, Israel has resumed its devastating military campaign against Hamas, which has also received support from Iran, after several weeks of truce, and its ceasefire with the Iranian-backed Lebanese Hezbollah militia remains brittle.

Iran had rejected direct negotiations with Washington before Trump announced on March 30: "If they don't make a deal, there will

be bombing, and it will be bombing the likes of which they have never seen before."

"Important and practical" Iranian proposals have been prepared in pursuit of "a real and fair" agreement, Ali Shamkhani, an adviser to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said in a post on X.

"If Washington comes to the talks with sincere intentions and genuine will to reach an agreement, the path to a deal will be clear and smooth," Shamkhani added.



Since Trump pulled the US out of the 2015 deal that curbed Iran's uranium enrichment activity, deeming the accord deeply flawed, Tehran has accumulated a stockpile of uranium refined to levels close to what would be suitable for nuclear bomb fuel.

Iran had agreed in the deal, reached during US President Barack Obama's administration, to strictly limit its enrichment activity in return for a lifting of global economic sanctions.

Tehran says its programme is purely for peaceful energy purposes, but the West says it goes far beyond any civilian requirements, and suspects Tehran of developing nuclear weapon capability.

Confusion swirled after Trump announced that the talks between the longtime geopolitical adversaries would be direct, while Iran has insisted they would be indirect, with Oman acting as mediators.

## UN trade chief warns against tariff pain for countries

AFP, United Nations

The top UN trade official on Thursday urged the United States to spare the poorest countries "the pain of tariffs," as the world braces for a possible global trade war unleashed by President Donald Trump.

"When the two main global economies impose tariffs, it will affect everybody, not only the economies engaged in the tariff war," Rebeca Grynspan, head of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), said in an interview with UN News.

"We are already in a 'new normal' of low growth and high debt, and we are worried that the global economy will slow down," she added.

Echoing comments by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, she expressed particular concern about the fate of smaller, vulnerable nations.

"Our emphasis has been to put attention on what can happen to countries that are more vulnerable, such as the Least Developed Countries and small island developing States," Grynspan said.

"What is happening to those countries is what really worries us," she said.

## Trump admin cuts thousands off from Social Security

AFP, Washington

The Trump administration has added over 6,000 immigrants to a database of dead Social Security recipients, effectively cutting off benefits and their ability to work, US media reported Thursday.

Adding the immigrants to the so-called "death file" is "aimed at putting pressure on the undocumented immigrants to leave the country," the Washington Post said, citing a White House official.

The policy aligns with other high-profile anti-immigration measures taken by Donald Trump's White House since his second term began, including sending more than 200 suspected gang members to a notorious prison in El Salvador.

Social Security Numbers (SSNs) are a key identifier for people in the United States, used to report earnings, establish eligibility for welfare benefits and other purposes.

Hundreds of thousands of people who are in the country illegally nevertheless have a US Social Security Number.

Many arrived during the Biden administration, which allowed certain people to enter temporarily as a way of reducing illegal border crossings.

## 2008 MUMBAI-ATTACKS India questions accused after extradition from US

AFP, New Delhi

Indian investigative agencies yesterday questioned a man they extradited from the United States and charged with being a "mastermind" of the deadly 2008 Mumbai siege.

India accuses Tahawwur Hussain Rana, 66, of being a member of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) group, designated by the United Nations as a terrorist organisation.

Rana, a Pakistan born Canadian, has denied all charges -- including waging war against India, conspiring to commit murder and acts of terrorism. He could face the death penalty if convicted.

New Delhi blamed the LeT group for the 2008 Mumbai attacks when 10 gunmen carried out a multi-day siege of the country's financial capital.

## 4 publicly executed in one day in Afghanistan

AFP, Kabul

Four men were publicly executed in Afghanistan yesterday, the Supreme Court said, the highest number of executions to be carried out in one day since the Taliban's return to power.

The executions at sports stadiums in three separate provinces brought to 10 the number of men publicly put to death since 2021, according to an AFP tally. Public executions were common during the Taliban's first rule from 1996 to 2001, with most carried out publicly in sports stadiums.

Two men were shot around six or seven times by a male relative of the victims in front of spectators in Qala-i-Naw, the centre of Badghis province, witnesses told an AFP journalist in the city.

"They were made to sit and turn their backs to us. Relatives from the victims' families stood behind and shot them with a gun," Mohammad Iqbal Rahimyar, a 48-year-old spectator, told AFP.



## Over 100 killed after heavy rain hits India, Nepal

REUTERS, New Delhi

More than 100 people have died since Wednesday after unseasonably heavy rain lashed parts of India and Nepal, officials said yesterday, as the weather department predicted more rain for the region.

The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) warned of multiple weather hazards on Wednesday, with heatwave conditions in the west and thunderstorms in the eastern and central region although the torrential rain associated with the monsoon usually starts in June.

At least 82 people have died in rain-related incidents in Bihar over the last two days, the eastern state's disaster management department said.

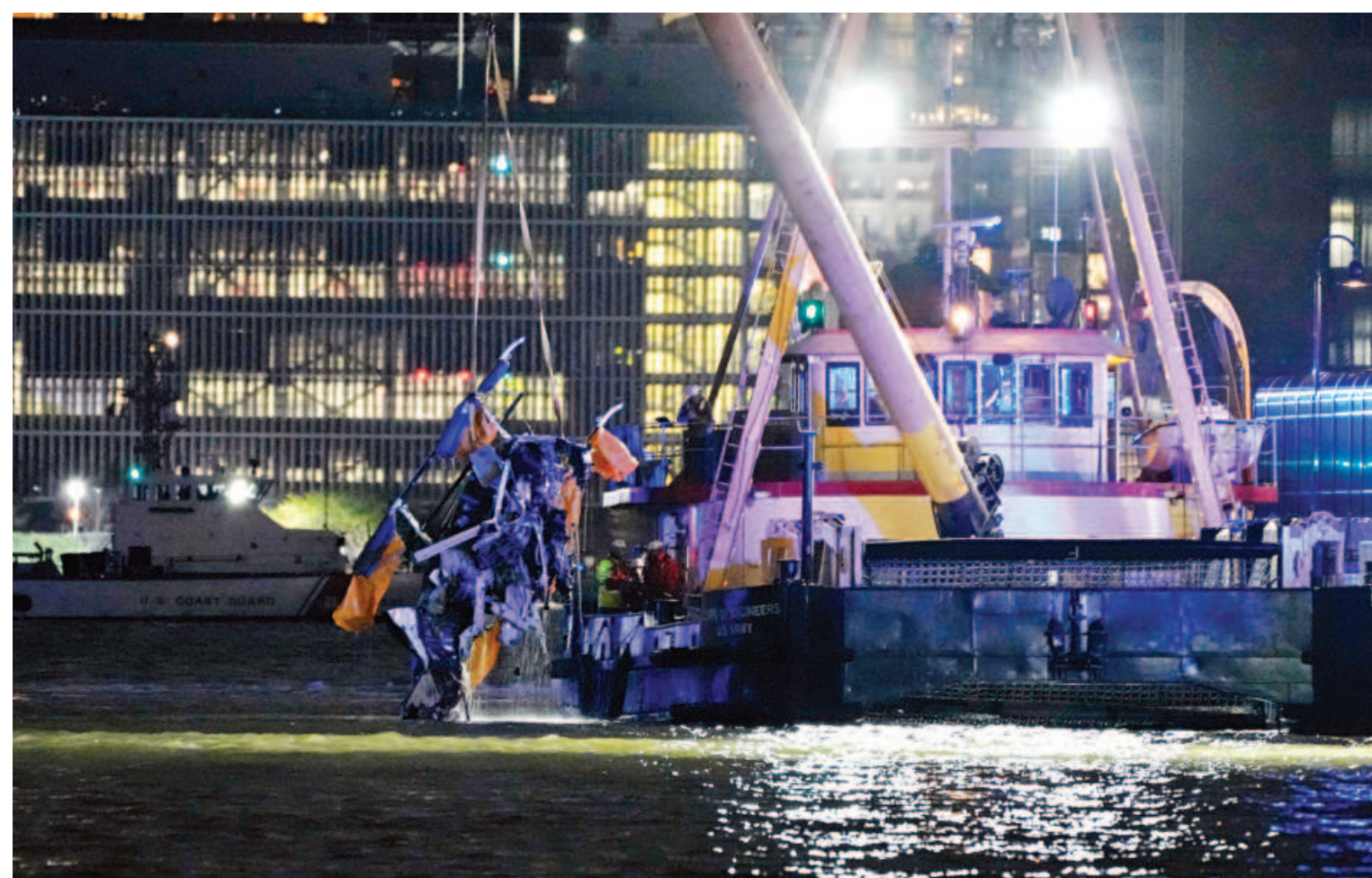
In India's most populous state of Uttar Pradesh, meanwhile, authorities said 18 people had died due to lightning and storm-related incidents.

In neighbouring Nepal, lightning strikes and heavy rain killed at least eight people, National Disaster Authority officials said.

India's weather office expects more rain with thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds over central and eastern India until Monday.

Intense heatwaves in the summer months of the recent past have killed several people.

State-run IMD said last week that India was expected to experience a much hotter April, with above normal temperatures across most of the country.



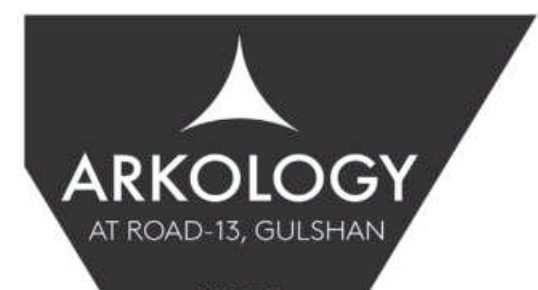
The wreckage of a helicopter is removed from the water after crashing into the Hudson River, in the Newport neighbourhood of Jersey City, New Jersey, US on Thursday evening. Six people including three children were killed after the tourist helicopter plummeted upside down into the river, authorities said.

PHOTO: AFP

“Peace in Ukraine appears to be out of reach in the immediate future.”  
Says German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius

### SENSE OF TRANQUILITY

BESIDE GULSHAN LAKE.













**ARKOLOGY**  
AT ROAD-13, GULSHAN

4 BED APARTMENTS

16769

CELL/WHATSAPP: 01711431450, 0187772246, 01711431448  
www.credencehousingltd.com

MAIN AMENITIES

-  SWIMMING POOL
-  YOGA
-  COMMUNITY SPACE
-  CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA
-  GREEN LAWN
-  RECEPTION LOUNGE
-  PRAYER SPACE
-  BIKE ZONE
-  FURNISHED GM
-  24/7 SECURITY

**CREDESCENCE**  
for the inspired lifestyles