



A member of the public stands next to overturned vehicles and broken trees after flooding caused by a flash flood at the Guadalupe River in Kerrville, Texas, yesterday. Rescuers were desperately searching for at least 20 girls missing from a riverside summer camp, officials said on July 5, after torrential rains caused a "catastrophic" flash flood that killed at least 24 people as it swept through south-central Texas. PHOTO: AFP

## Pak building collapse toll hits 16

AFP, Karachi

Rescue teams in Pakistan worked in searing heat and humidity yesterday to recover residents trapped under the rubble of a building that collapsed, killing 16 people.

Authorities said the building had been declared unsafe and eviction notices were sent to occupants over three years, but landlords and some residents told AFP they had not received them.

Residents reported hearing cracking sounds shortly before the apartment block crumbled around 10:00am on Friday in Karachi's impoverished Lyari neighbourhood, which is considered one of the most dangerous areas in Pakistan.

The death toll stood at 16 yesterday, with 13 injured, according to Summiya Syed, a police surgeon for the provincial health department.

Rescue teams worked throughout the night, and families said that at least eight people were still believed to be trapped.

A senior district government official, Javed Nabi Khoso, said that notices had been served in 2022, 2023 and 2024 to occupants. But Imran Khaskheli, a resident, denied receiving notices.

Many of the victims are believed to be women.

## MASSIVE DRONE ATTACK ON KYIV

# Trump mulls Patriot missiles for Ukraine

Says Putin wants to 'just keep killing people'

REUTERS, Washington/Kyiv

US President Donald Trump said Ukraine would need Patriot missiles for its defences, after speaking with President Volodymyr Zelensky on Friday, and voiced frustration over Russian President Vladimir Putin's failure to end the fighting.

Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One that he had a good call with Zelensky, repeating that he was "very unhappy" about his call with Putin a day earlier, given what he called the Russian leader's refusal to work on a ceasefire.

Asked whether the United States would agree to supply more Patriot missiles to Ukraine, as requested by Zelensky, Trump said: "They're going to need them for defence... They're going to need something because they're being hit pretty hard."

Trump touted the efficacy of the Patriot missiles, calling the weapon "pretty amazing."

Asked about the prospects for a ceasefire, Trump said, "It's a very tough situation... I was very unhappy with my call with President Putin. He wants to go all the way, just keep killing people - it's no good."

Zelensky said he had agreed to work on increasing Kyiv's capability to "defend the sky" as Russian attacks escalate, adding in a message on Telegram that he discussed joint defence production, as well as joint purchases and investments with the US leader.



Ukraine has been asking Washington to sell it more Patriot missiles and systems that it sees as key to defending its cities from intensifying Russian air strikes.

Germany said it is in talks on buying Patriot air defence systems to bridge the gap.

A source briefed on the Trump-Zelensky call told Reuters they were optimistic that supplies of Patriot missiles could resume after what they called a "very good" conversation between the presidents.

Trump said he also spoke with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz about Ukraine's request for Patriot missiles, but that no decision had been made to supply the advanced missiles.

US news outlet Axios reported, citing unnamed sources, that the call lasted around 40 minutes and

that Trump told Zelensky he would check what US weapons due to be sent to Ukraine, if any, had been put on hold.

The conversation came a day after Trump said he had a disappointing call with Putin.

Russia pummeled Kyiv with the largest drone attack of the war across the capital hours after Trump's conversation with Putin on Thursday.

Zelensky called the attack "deliberately massive and cynical."

Kyiv in the past received Patriot batteries and ammunition from the US in the form of aid under then-President Joe Biden.

Trump criticised him for sending weapons to Ukraine without getting anything in return, and since taking office has overseen a dramatic shake-up of relations with Kyiv.

## Myanmar armed groups rebuff junta 'cooperation' plea

AFP, Bangkok

Myanmar's ruling junta yesterday made a rare call for the armed groups it is fighting to cooperate with it ahead of a slated election, an invitation anti-coup forces swiftly rejected.

The unexpected appeal comes as the junta continues to suffer major battlefield reverses to ethnic minority armed groups and pro-democracy "People's Defence Forces" (PDF) that rose up to oppose its seizure of power in 2021.

"If the armed groups... choose to legally establish themselves within the framework of the law and cooperate hand in hand with the government... the government will welcome and accept this," the military said in a statement published by junta media The Global New Light of Myanmar.

The National Unity Government, a body dominated by ousted lawmakers working to reverse the coup, said the junta announcement was "a strategy filled with deception aimed at legitimising their power-consolidating sham election and attempting to divide and weaken" its opponents.

The military ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's elected civilian government in February 2021, triggering mass protests that were met with a brutal crackdown.

Civilians set up PDFs to fight back and ethnic minority armed groups - many of which have fought the military for decades - were reinvigorated, plunging the country into civil war.

## 'I hope to live another 30 or 40 years'

Says Dalai Lama on the eve of his 90th birthday

AFP, McLeod Ganj

The Dalai Lama yesterday said he dreamed of living for decades more, as the Buddhist spiritual leader prayed with thousands of exiled Tibetans on the eve of his 90th birthday.

Thumping drums and deep horns reverberated from the Indian hilltop temple, as a chanting chorus of red-robed monks and nuns offered long life prayers for Tenzin Gyatso, who followers believe is the 14th reincarnation of the Dalai Lama.

Looking in good health, dressed in traditional maroon monk robes and a flowing yellow wrap, he led prayers, days after confirming that the 600-year-old Tibetan Buddhist institution will continue after his death.

"So far, I have done my best and with the continued blessings of Avalokiteshvara (a Buddhist spiritual protector), I hope to live another 30 or 40 years, continuing to serve sentient beings and the Buddha Dharma", he said, referring to the teachings of the



Buddha.

Followers of the Dalai Lama laud his tireless campaign for greater autonomy for Tibet, a vast high-altitude plateau about the size of South Africa.

But speaking at the main temple in the Indian Himalayan town where he has lived for decades - after Chinese troops crushed an uprising in the Tibetan capital Lhasa in 1959 - he offered teachings to a far wider audience.

"In my life, I have encountered people from all walks of life, those with faith in religion and others with no interest in it at all. This is only natural, as individuals have different mental dispositions", he said, speaking in Tibetan.

"Yet, the common desire shared by all, including the Tibetan people, is the wish to avoid suffering and to experience happiness."

He said responsibility for identifying the 15th Dalai Lama "will rest exclusively" with his office, the India-based Gaden Phodrang Trust.



An actor carries a baby, painted red, as they depict the killing of the son of Imam Hussein during a morning ritual at the shrine of Imam Hussein in the holy city of Karbala yesterday, which coincides with the ninth day of the Muslim month of Muharram in the lead-up to Ashura, a 10-day period commemorating the seventh century killing of Prophet Mohammad's (pbuh) grandson Imam Hussein. PHOTO: AFP



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