

Myanmar clashes force thousands to flee to India

AFP, New Delhi

Heavy fighting in war-torn Myanmar has forced nearly 4,000 people to flee into India in the last four days, Indian officials in the northeastern state of Mizoram said yesterday.

The refugees, crossing thick forested routes to neighbouring India, ran from clashes between rival Chin armed groups, Mizoram state home secretary Vanlalmawia, who uses only one name, told AFP.

"Many of the people have relatives on the Indian side, so they are staying with them," he said. "Others are being housed in community halls."

The remote hill state is already hosting more than 30,000 refugees from Myanmar, where a deadly civil war has raged since the military seized power in 2021.

A senior state police officer said "approximately 4,000 people have come in the last four days", speaking on condition of anonymity.

Police said the fighting between the groups -- both of which oppose military rule -- continues for control of the region known as Chinland.

"The situation on the other side of the border remains tense, so we have not asked them to return," the police official said.

India, which has sought to deepen ties with Myanmar as a counterweight to China's growing influence, has shied away from explicitly condemning the military coup.

Mizoram's interior minister K Sapdanga confirmed the new arrivals, but put the number of refugees at 3,000.

"The fighting is beyond our control. People have come in and on humanitarian grounds, we have to provide drinking water, food and shelter," Sapdanga told Reuters.



Migrants speak with authorities at the port of Agia Galini, Greece, on Sunday, after the Greek Coast Guard rescued hundreds of people in separate incidents off the islands of Gavdos and Crete. Sea arrivals from northeastern Libya of migrants trying to cross to Europe have surged in recent months.

PHOTO: REUTERS

TEXAS FLOOD Dozens still missing; 78 confirmed dead

REUTERS, Kerrville

Search teams plodded through mud-laden riverbanks and flew aircraft over the flood-stricken landscape of central Texas for a fourth day yesterday, looking for dozens of people still missing from a disaster that has claimed at least 78 lives.

The bulk of the death toll from Friday's flash floods was concentrated in the riverfront Hill Country Texas town of Kerrville, accounting for 68 of the dead, including 28 children.

The Guadalupe River, transformed by predawn torrential downpours into a raging, killer torrent in less than hour, runs directly through Kerrville.

The loss of life included an unspecified number of fatalities at Camp Mystic, a summer camp where two dozen children remained unaccounted for following Friday's flooding.



NEW UKRAINE REGION Russian forces claim first foothold Transport minister fired by Putin reportedly shoots himself dead

AGENCIES

Russia said yesterday it captured its first village in Ukraine's central Dnipropetrovsk region after grinding towards the border for months, dealing a psychological blow for Kyiv as its worries mount.

Moscow launched a fresh large-scale drone and missile barrage before the announcement, including on Ukraine's army recruitment centres, as part of an escalating series of attacks that come as ceasefire talks led by the United States stall.

The Russian defence ministry said its forces captured the village of Dachne in the Dnipropetrovsk region, an important industrial mining territory that has also come under mounting Russian air attacks.

Russian strikes killed at least four people and wounded more than 30 others across Ukraine early yesterday, spurring evacuations from damaged housing blocs and sending civilians to bomb shelters, reports AFP.

Meanwhile, Russia's former transport minister Roman Starovoi shot himself dead in Odintsovo following his dismissal by President Vladimir Putin yesterday, the pro-government newspaper Izvestia reported, citing unnamed sources.

Starovoi's ouster came after nearly 500 flights were grounded at major Russian airports on July 5-6 due to security threats from Ukrainian drone attacks, reports The Kyiv Independent.

Israel bombs ports, power plant in Yemen

Houthis continue to fire missiles; Iran president says 'no problem' restarting nuke talks with US

AGENCIES

Israel struck Houthi targets at three Yemeni ports and a power plant, the military said early yesterday, in its first attack on Yemen in nearly a month.

The strikes hit the ports of Hodeidah, Ras Isa and Salif, as well as the Ras Qantib power plant on the coast, in response to repeated Houthi attacks on Israel, the military said.

Hours later, Israel said two missiles were



launched from Yemen. Attempts were made to intercept them, though the results were still under review. The Iran-aligned Houthi forces said they had fired missiles and drones at multiple targets in Israel in retaliation for the strikes on Yemen, reports Reuters.

The Israeli ambulance service said it had not received any calls regarding missile impacts or casualties following the launches from Yemen.

Since the start of the offensive in Gaza in October 2023, the Houthis have fired at Israel and at shipping in the Red Sea, disrupting global trade, in what the group says are acts of solidarity with the Palestinians.

Most of the dozens of missiles and drones fired toward Israel have been intercepted or fallen short. Israel has carried out a series of retaliatory strikes.

Israel said its attacks yesterday also targeted

domestically produced surface-to-air missiles".

Israel's military told residents to evacuate the three ports before it launched its attacks. Residents of Hodeidah told Reuters that the strikes on the power station had knocked out electricity. There was no immediate information on casualties.

Meanwhile, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said in an interview released yesterday that his country has "no problem" restarting nuclear talks with the United States, provided that trust can be reestablished between the two countries, reports AFP.

"We see no problem in re-entering the negotiations," Pezeshkian told US media figure Tucker Carlson. "There is a condition ... for restarting the talks. How are we going to trust the United States again?"

MAY CONFLICT Pak army chief rejects Indian allegation of Chinese help

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan's army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir yesterday rejected New Delhi's allegation that his military received active support from longtime ally China in its conflict with India in May.

Indian army's deputy chief Lieutenant General Rahul Singh said last week that China gave Islamabad "live inputs" on key Indian positions.

The "insinuations regarding external support" are "irresponsible and factually incorrect", Munir said in an address to graduating officers of the national security and war course in Islamabad, according to an army statement.

Pakistani officials have previously dismissed allegations of receiving active support from China in the conflict.

Beijing and Islamabad have longstanding close relations, with billions of dollars of Chinese investment in the South Asian nation's energy and infrastructure.

India's relationship with China meanwhile was strained after a 2020 border clash that sparked a four-year military standoff, but tensions began to ease after the countries reached a pact to step back in October.

Trump slams Musk's party as 'ridiculous'

REUTERS, Washington

President Donald Trump on Sunday called Elon Musk's plans to form a new political party "ridiculous," launching new barbs at the tech billionaire and saying the Musk ally he once named to lead Nasa would have presented a conflict of interest given Musk's business interests in space.

A day after Musk escalated his feud with Trump and announced the formation of a new US political party, the Republican president was asked about it before boarding Air Force One in Morristown, New Jersey, as he returned to Washington upon visiting his nearby golf club.

"I think it's ridiculous to start a third party. We have a tremendous success with the Republican Party.

"The Democrats have lost their way, but it's always been a two-party system, and I think starting a third party just adds to confusion," Trump told reporters.

450,000 Afghans left Iran since June 1: IOM

AFP, Kabul

Nearly 450,000 Afghans have returned from Iran since the start of June, the UN's refugee agency said yesterday, after Tehran ordered those without documentation to leave by July 6.

The influx comes as the country is already struggling to integrate streams of Afghans who have returned under pressure from traditional migrant and refugee hosts Pakistan and Iran since 2023.

The country is facing one of the world's worst humanitarian crises after decades of war.

This year alone, more than 1.4 million people have "returned or been forced to return to Afghanistan", the United Nations refugees agency UNHCR said.

In late May, Iran ordered undocumented Afghans to leave the country by July 6, potentially impacting four million people out of the around six million Afghans Tehran says live in the country.



Demonstrators gather during clashes with police at the "Saba Saba People's March," an anti-government protest held in Nairobi, Kenya, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Dozens leave Japan islands after 1,600 quakes

AFP, Tokyo

Dozens of residents have evacuated remote islands in southern Japan that have been shaken by nearly 1,600 quakes in recent weeks, the local mayor said yesterday.

There has been no major physical damage on hardest-hit Akuseki island, even after a 5.1-magnitude quake that struck overnight, said Genichiro Kubo, who is based on another island.

But the almost non-stop jolts since June 21 have caused severe stress to area residents. Of the 89 residents of Akuseki, 44 have evacuated to the regional hub of Kagoshima by Sunday.

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