

Sudan general ready to talk to Trump for peace

AFP, Port Sudan

Sudan's de facto leader, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, is ready to work with US President Donald Trump to resolve the conflict splitting his country, the foreign ministry said yesterday.

The ministry released a statement after the army chief visited Riyadh as a guest of Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who presented Trump with a proposed peace plan during a Washington visit.

Burhan hailed Trump's "determination to engage in efforts to achieve peace and end the war in the country, with the participation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia."

"He affirmed Sudan's keenness to work with President Trump, his secretary of state, and his envoy for peace in Sudan to achieve this unquestionably noble goal," it said.

EASTERN PACIFIC

US kills 8 in strikes on alleged drug boats

REUTERS, Washington

The USSouthernCommand said on Monday that it carried out strikes on three vessels in international waters, killing eight men.

"Intelligence confirmed that the vessels were transiting along known narco-trafficking routes in the Eastern Pacific and were engaged in narco-trafficking," the military said in a post on X.

The US struck more than 20 vessels in the Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea near Venezuela as part of a military campaign President Donald Trump has launched on drug smuggling from the region.

At least 90 suspected drug smugglers have been killed in the process.

The Trump administration has sought to defend the legality of the strikes, which some legal experts have said amount to unlawful extrajudicial killings.

"Our operations in the Southcom region are lawful under both US and international law, with all actions in compliance with the Law of Armed Conflict," Pentagon Press Secretary Kingsley Wilson told reporters earlier this month.

Thousands of glaciers to melt each year by mid-century: study

AFP, Paris

Thousands of glaciers will vanish each year in the coming decades, leaving only a fraction standing by the end of the century unless global warming is curbed, a study showed on Monday.

Government action on climate change could determine whether the world loses 2,000 or 4,000 glaciers annually by the middle of the century, according to the research.

A few degrees could be the difference between preserving almost half of the world's glaciers in 2100 – or fewer than 10 percent.

"Our results underscore the urgency of ambitious climate policy," said the study published in the journal Nature Climate Change and led by glaciologist Lander Van Tricht.

Researchers usually focus on the loss of mass and area of the world's ice giants, but Van Tricht and his colleagues set out to determine how many individual glaciers could melt away annually in this century.

While the melting of smaller individual glaciers may have less impact on sea-level rise than larger ones, their loss can significantly harm tourism or local culture, the scientists said.

"The disappearance of each single glacier can have major local impacts, even if its meltwater contribution is small," Van Tricht from ETH Zurich and Vrije Universiteit Brussel, told reporters.

Co-author Matthias Huss, also a glaciologist at ETH Zurich, took part in 2019 in a symbolic funeral for the Pizol glacier in the Swiss Alps.



Rescuers work at the site of an apartment building hit by a Russian drone strike, amid ongoing attacks, in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, yesterday. Europe launched an International Claims Commission for Ukraine in an effort to ensure Kyiv is compensated for hundreds of billions of dollars in damage from Russian attacks and alleged war crimes.

PHOTO: REUTERS

FIGHTING ALONG CONTESTED BORDER

Cambodia must announce truce 'first'

Says Thailand, works to repatriate thousands stranded at the border crossing

AGENCIES

Thailand said yesterday that Cambodia must be first to announce a truce to halt fighting between the two nations after more than a week of deadly clashes in a reignited border conflict.

"As the aggressor onto Thai territory, Cambodia must announce the ceasefire first," Thai foreign ministry spokeswoman Maratee Nalita Andamo told reporters in Bangkok, adding that Cambodia must also cooperate in de-mining efforts at the border "sincerely".

Renewed fighting between the Southeast Asian neighbours this month has killed at least 32 people, including soldiers and civilians, and displaced around 800,000, officials said.

Each side has blamed the other for instigating the clashes, claiming self defence and trading accusations of attacks on civilians. Cambodia did not immediately respond to Thailand's statement.

Meanwhile, Thailand is working out how to repatriate up to 6,000 citizens unable to return home through the major border crossing in Cambodia, reports Reuters.

US President Donald Trump, who intervened in the border conflict earlier this year, last week claimed the two countries had



Displaced people eat dinner at a temporary shelter in Thailand's Buriram province yesterday, amid clashes with Cambodia along a disputed border area.

PHOTO: REUTERS

agreed to a ceasefire beginning Saturday night.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet said his country supported the ceasefire initiative of Malaysia, chair of the Asean regional bloc, with Washington's participation, reports AFP.

But fighting has continued daily since December 7, spreading to seven provinces on each side of the border, and Bangkok denied Trump's claim of an agreed truce.

Cambodia, which is outgunned and outspent by Bangkok's military, said Monday that Thai

forces had expanded their attack "deep into" Cambodian territory.

Phnom Penh accused Thai forces of bombing Siem Reap province, home to the centuries-old Angkor temples -- the country's top tourist draw -- for the first time in the latest round of clashes.

The fighting, with artillery, tanks and Thai jets, has killed 16 Thai soldiers, one Thai civilian and 15 Cambodian civilians, according to officials. Phnom Penh had not reported any military deaths in the latest round of fighting.

COUP ATTEMPT

Benin jails around 30 people, mostly soldiers

AFP, Cotonou

Benin yesterday jailed around 30 people, most of them soldiers, accused of links to a thwarted coup attempt earlier this month, legal sources told AFP.

Soldiers appeared on national television on December 7 to announce President Patrice Talon had been deposed but the attempted putsch was swiftly defeated by loyalist army forces with the help of the Nigerian air force and French special forces.

Several people were killed and the alleged coup leader lieutenant-colonel Pascal Tigri and other mutinous soldiers are still on the run.

On Monday, the around 30 accused appeared in front of a special prosecutor for the court for economic crimes and terrorism in the city of Cotonou, the sources said.

They were placed in pre-trial detention the following day at the end of their hearing, they added.

They are being prosecuted for "treason", "murder" and "endangering state security", the sources said.

A heavy security deployment could be seen around the court, an AFP journalist saw.

Pentagon prepares major military reorganisation plan

Washington Post reports

AFP, Washington

US officials are working on a plan for a reorganization of the military requested by Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth that would reduce four-star generals and consolidate some international command centers, the Washington Post reported on Monday.

If adopted, the proposal would mark one of the most significant changes at the military's top ranks in decades, the newspaper reported, citing five sources familiar with the matter.

US Joint Chiefs Chairman Dan Caine was expected to present the plan to Hegseth in coming days, a senior defense official familiar with the discussion told the Washington Post.

A spokesperson for the Pentagon did not immediately respond to AFP's request for comment.

Under the plan, officials would "reduce the prominence" of the US Central Command, US European Command and US Africa Command and put them under control of a new organization known as US International Command, the newspaper reported.

It added it would also cut the number of generals and admirals who report directly to Hegseth.

The changes would have to be approved by both the Pentagon chief and US President Donald Trump to have any effect.

Honduras police disperse election protest, 8 hurt

AFP, Tegucigalpa

At least eight people were injured yesterday when police broke up a demonstration by leftist protesters demanding release of final results from Honduras's election, authorities said.

Outgoing President Xiomara Castro condemned the operation in which protesters from her party were removed from a camp set up in front of the National Electoral Council building.

Images shared on social media showed a man with a bloodied face, as well as tents, mattresses, and other objects scattered on the ground.

Tegucigalpa Mayor Jorge Aldana told AFP that eight people had been injured but were recovering. "They treated us like criminals," Aldana said.

The Central American country has not yet certified results from the November 30 election in which Nasry Asfura, a 67-year-old right-wing businessman backed by US President Donald Trump, holds a razor-thin lead over Salvador Nasralla, a 72-year-old fellow conservative.

Castro has accused Trump of election interference and the candidate from her leftist camp, Rixi Moncada, has called for the election to be annulled.

The latest preliminary results show Asfura in the lead with 40.54 percent of the vote, about 43,000 votes ahead of the center-right Nasralla, who has 39.19 percent of the vote.

Trailing far behind in third place with 19.29 percent of the vote is Rixi Moncada, of the ruling leftist LIBRE party. The tally sheets to be reviewed in the special hand count could easily flip the result standings of the two frontrunners. While voting on election day itself was calm, the subsequent process of tallying and reporting the ballots has been marred by chaos and confusion.



Jana Poczobut, right, daughter of imprisoned journalist Polish-Belarusian Andrzej Poczobut, and Irma Dimitradze, left, representative of imprisoned Georgian journalist Mzia Amaglobeli, pose with European Parliament President Roberta Metsola after the award ceremony for the 2025 Sakharov human rights prize at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, eastern France, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Nepal starts tiger census to track recovery

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal yesterday launched a nationwide tiger census, a key step in conservation efforts to aid the recovery of the big cats that once faced near extinction in the Himalayan nation.

The survey will be conducted in four national parks in Nepal's forested southern plains, covering more than 8,000 square kilometres of protected areas and adjoining forests, officials said.

More than 2,300 motion-sensitive camera traps will be deployed, with over 250 conservation staff mobilised for the operation covering the Chitwan, Banke, Bardiya and Shuklaphanta national parks.

Results are expected by July 2026. Haribhadra Acharya, coordinator of the National Tiger Census Technical Committee, said cameras helped scientists isolate individual animals with their unique stripe.