



Mourners gather around the coffins of three Lebanese Civil Defense members who were killed in an Israeli airstrike on the town of Majdal Zoun, during their funeral in the southern city of Tyre yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Israeli strikes kill 4 more in Gaza

REUTERS, Cairo

Israeli strikes killed at least four Palestinians in the Gaza Strip yesterday, health officials said, as Hamas leaders met mediators in Cairo to discuss ways to reinvent a fragile six-month-old US-brokered truce.

Medics said an Israeli strike killed at least three people near the Salahudeen road in the central Gaza Strip, and another killed one person near a hospital in the city of Deir Al-Balah further south. The Israeli military did not immediately comment on either report.

Violence in Gaza has persisted despite an October 2025 ceasefire, with Israel and Hamas blaming each other for truce violations.

At least 800 Palestinians have been killed since the ceasefire took effect, according to local medics. Israel says militant attacks have killed four of its soldiers over the same period.

Yesterday, a Hamas official told Reuters a delegation from the group arrived in Cairo two days earlier for meetings with mediators over US President Donald Trump's Gaza plan.

Sources close to the talks said efforts to push Israel and Hamas into the implementation of a second phase have made little progress.

According to the plan, Israel is meant to pull back further in the second phase as a transitional authority assumes control in Gaza and a multinational security force is deployed. Hamas is supposed to be disarmed, under the plan, as reconstruction begins.

More than 72,500 Palestinians have been killed since the Gaza war began in October 2023, according to Gaza health authorities.

Putin, Trump discuss Iran, Ukraine in phone call

AFP, Moscow

Russian President Vladimir Putin spoke by phone with US counterpart Donald Trump, Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov said Wednesday, adding the two leaders discussed the Middle East war and Ukraine.

The call lasted more than 90 minutes and was "frank and businesslike", Ushakov told reporters, including from AFP, during a phone briefing.

The presidents "paid particular attention to the situation regarding Iran and in the Persian Gulf", Ushakov said.

"Vladimir Putin considers Donald Trump's decision to extend the ceasefire with Iran to be the right one, as this should give negotiations a chance and, overall, help to stabilise the situation."

But Putin also "highlighted the inevitable and extremely damaging consequences not only for Iran and its neighbours, but also for the entire international community, should the US and Israel resort to military action once again", Ushakov said.

He added Russia was "firmly committed to providing every possible assistance to diplomatic efforts" on the Middle East war, and said the call was held at Moscow's initiative.

In Washington, Trump told reporters he had had a "very good conversation" with Putin, though he said it had focused more on the Ukraine war than on Iran.

Trump added that Putin wanted to "help" end the US-Israeli war on Iran but that he had told the Russian leader to end the Ukraine invasion first.

Press freedom at lowest level in 25 years: RSF

AFP, Paris

Press freedom has fallen to its lowest level in a quarter of a century, Reporters Without Borders warned yesterday.

The media rights watchdog cited as examples US President Donald Trump's "systematic" attacks on journalists and Saudi Arabia, which executed a journalist in 2025.

"For the first time in the (RSF) Index's 25-year history, more than half the world's countries now fall into the 'difficult' or 'very serious' categories for

situation in the United States has also been marked by the detention and subsequent expulsion of Salvadoran journalist Mario Guevara, who denounced the arrest of migrants, and by drastic cuts to funding for US international broadcasting, the report said.

"Vladimir Putin's Russia (172nd) has become a specialist in using laws designed to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism to restrict press freedom," RSF warned.

"As of April 2026, the country held



press freedom," a statement said.

"The average score for all countries and territories worldwide has never been so low," it said.

At the same time, the share of the world's population living in a country where the press freedom situation is considered "good" has plunged from 20 percent to less than one percent.

Only seven countries in Northern Europe, led by Norway, fall into this category.

The United States, which had already fallen from a "fairly good" to a "problematic" situation in 2024, the year of Donald Trump's re-election, has dropped a further seven places to 64, it said.

Beyond Trump's attacks on the press — "a systematic policy" — the

48 journalists behind bars".

The steepest decline in 2026 was in junta-led Niger (120th, down 37 places).

That "underscored the wider decline in press freedom in the Sahel region seen in recent years as attacks by armed groups and ruling juntas have suppressed the right to balanced information from diverse sources," RSF said.

Norway held the top spot in the rankings for the 10th year running, said RSF, while Eritrea came last for the third straight year.

The biggest improvement in press freedom had been in Syria following the ouster of Bashar al-Assad in late 2024.

While it climbed 36 places in the rankings to 141 in the rankings, RSF warned that the press freedom situation there remained "very serious".

Mamdani calls on King Charles to return Koh-i-Noor

AFP, New York

New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani called for King Charles to "return" the prized Koh-i-Noor diamond, which the British Empire took from the Indian subcontinent in the 1800s, on the third day of the monarch's state visit on Wednesday.

Before greeting Charles and Queen Camilla at a 9/11 memorial event, Mamdani was asked what he would discuss with the king if he had the chance.

"If I was to speak to the king, separately from that, I would probably encourage him to return the Koh-i-Noor diamond," the leftist mayor said.

It's unclear whether Mamdani followed through and brought up the contentious subject with Charles when the two met.

The monarch was seen laughing with Mamdani and having a brief conversation after they shook hands.

Housed in the Tower of London, the massive 106 carat stone is the star of Britain's crown jewels, adorning the Crown of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

The ownership of the jewel has been contested over the centuries, passing through the hands of Mughal emperors, Iranian shahs and Sikh maharajas before the Kingdom of Punjab gave it to Queen Victoria in 1849 as part of a peace treaty.



Gaza flotilla: 211 activists 'kidnapped' by Israel

AFP, Athens

Organisers of a Gaza-bound aid flotilla yesterday said Israel's army had "kidnapped" 211 activists, including a Paris city councillor, in a raid in international waters off Greece.

Helene Coron, a spokeswoman for the Global Sumud France, told an online news conference that the operation had taken place near the Greek island of Crete, at an "unprecedented" distance from the Gaza coast.

Yasmine Scola, an activist on board the flotilla, said her colleagues had been "kidnapped" by Israel.

Israel's foreign ministry had earlier put the number of those detained at 175.

Coron said those intercepted included Paris Communist local councillor Raphaëlle Primet and another 10 French nationals.

"We don't have the information for the other nationalities, but the boats were mixed in terms of nationality, so there were crew members from all 48 delegations," she said.

Rome, in a government statement, called for the immediate release of "all the unlawfully detained Italians".

The organisers of the latest flotilla of pro-Palestinian activists seeking to break Israel's blockade on Gaza announced early yesterday that their boats had been surrounded by Israeli military ships while off the coast of Crete.



The deployment of US troops in Europe is also in the US interest in support of its global role.

Anitta Hipper
EU spokeswoman

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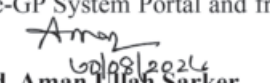
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৩০/০৪/২০২৬ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ

This is to notify all concern that the following tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal.

Sl No.	Tender ID	Brief description of works	Publishing date & closing date time
1	1266481	Establishing 560 Mosque and Islamic Cultural Centers in Zila and Upazila of Bangladesh, S.H. Remaining work for Construction of 4-storied upazila Masjid Complex with 4-Storeyed Foundation at Plain Land for Islamic Foundation (Type-A) one at Jhalakathi Sadar in Jhalakathi District with Civil, Internal Sanitary and Internal Electrification	30-Apr-2026 15:30 14-May-2026-15:30

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and on offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


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GD-968

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation
 BSC Bhaban, Chattogram

Ref. No. 28.03.0000.000.045.01.0004.26 Dated: 30/04/2026

CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

This is to inform all concerned that the following correction has been made in the "Invitation for Enlistment" by this office Ref. No. 28.03.0000.000.045.01.0004.26; Dated 13-04-2026.

Description	As mentioned in Invitation notice and in Application Document	To be replaced as
1	2	3
Application Closing Date, Time	04 May 2026 04.00 PM (BST)	18 May 2026 04.00 PM (BST)

All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged. This corrigendum will form part of the Enlistment Document.


(Mohammad Zahid Hossain)
 General Manager (Commercial & Operations)

GD-973