



QUOTE
OF THE
DAY

BEING DEEPLY LOVED BY SOMEONE
GIVES YOU STRENGTH, WHILE
LOVING SOMEONE DEEPLY GIVES
YOU COURAGE
LAO TZU

News in brief

◆ **A powerful explosion at an Indian chemical factory killed at least 12 people and injured several others on Monday, turning chunks of the building into rubble, a fire officer said. "We have recovered 12 bodies so far," said B Nageshwar Rao, district fire official at the site of the blast in Sangareddy in India's southern Telangana state. "We are searching through the debris for more bodies." Footage on Indian television showed plumes of black smoke soaring into the sky. Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that the "death of several people has caused great distress".**



**India chemical
factory blast kills at
least 12**

US to revoke visas for Glastonbury band over anti-Israel chant

group Bob Vylan, which led a chant at the Glastonbury festival calling for death to the Israeli military. Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau said that the United States has "revoked the US visas for the members of the Bob Vylan band in light of their hateful tirade at Glastonbury, including leading the crowd in death chants." "Foreigners who glorify violence and hatred are not welcome visitors to our country," he posted on X. President Donald Trump's administration has aggressively revoked visas, mostly of students, over anti-Israel activism. Bob Vylan, a London-based duo combining punk riffs and hip-hop delivery whose lyricism often tackles racism, led a chant of "Death to the IDF," the initials of the Israel Defense Forces, at the celebrated music festival.

◆ **The United States said Monday it was revoking visas for the British punk-rap**

◆ **Iran's judiciary said at least 935 people were killed in the country during its 12-day war with Israel, state media reported yesterday, nearly a week since a ceasefire took hold. "During the 12-day war waged by the Zionist regime against our country, 935 martyrs have been identified so far," the official IRNA news agency quoted judiciary spokesman Asghar Jahangir as saying. The death toll included 132 women and 38 children, Jahangir said. He added that the death toll from an Israeli strike on Tehran's Evin prison has risen to 79, and includes inmates, visiting relatives and administrative staff.**

**Iran judiciary
says over 900
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war with Israel**

German navy to patrol the Arctic

◆ **Germany's defence minister said yesterday the country would send navy ships to patrol Arctic waters, citing the threat from a Russian military build-up in the region. "Maritime threats are mounting... To name but a few, Russia is militarising the Arctic," Defence Minister Boris Pistorius told a press conference. "We are seeing an increasing activity of Russian submarines operating in that area," the minister added, speaking alongside his Danish counterpart, Troels Lund Poulsen. Therefore, "as early as this year, Germany will show its presence in the North Atlantic and the Arctic," Pistorius said.**

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SPOTLIGHT

Snakes on a plane bound for India, again



Representative picture

New Delhi, India

Indian customs officers in Mumbai said they have stopped a plane passenger arriving from Thailand with a wriggling cargo of live snakes, the third such seizure this month.

"Customs officers... foiled yet another wildlife smuggling attempt, 16 live snakes... seized from passenger returning from Thailand," said customs officers in the airport in the Indian financial hub.

The passenger, who arrived on Sunday, has been arrested, the customs agency said in a statement, with "further investigation underway".

The live snakes included reptiles often sold in the pet trade, and were largely non-venom-

ous, or with venom too weak to affect people.

They included garter snakes, a rhino rat snake and a Kenyan sand boa, among others.

In early June, customs officers stopped a passenger smuggling dozens of venomous vipers, also arriving from Thailand. Days later, officers stopped another traveller carrying 100 creatures including lizards, sunbirds and tree-climbing possums.

Wildlife trade monitor TRAFFIC, which battles the smuggling of wild animals and plants, has warned of a "very troubling" trend in trafficking driven by the exotic pet trade.

More than 7,000 animals, dead and alive, have been seized along the Thailand-India air route in the last 3.5 years, it said.

Israel opposition chief calls for **end to Gaza war**

Nearly two-thirds of Israelis now supporting an end to the war



Palestinian children line up to receive a hot meal at a food distribution point in Nuseirat

A Palestinian woman holds a malnourished child at Al-Awda hospital

● **Pressure is mounting on Prime Minister Netanyahu**

● **Public sentiment is shifting**

● **killed over 56,500 people in Gaza and left 49 hostages still held by Hamas.**

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israeli opposition leader Yair Lapid yesterday urged an end to more than 20 months of war in Gaza, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces mounting calls to halt the fighting.

Following the swift conclusion of Israel's war against Iran with a ceasefire last week, foreign leaders such as US President Donald Trump as well as Israeli ex-

prime minister Naftali Bennett have pressed Netanyahu to find a similar off-ramp in the fight with Hamas.

"There is no longer any benefit for the State of Israel from continuing the war in Gaza. Only damage on the security, political and economic level," Lapid told a meeting of lawmakers from his parliamentary group.

"This is also the position of the army," he added.

"Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir appeared before the cabinet yesterday and said that the political echelon needs to decide on the next objective. The meaning of this sentence is, the army has no more objectives in Gaza."

The war in Gaza was triggered by Hamas's unprecedented attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, which resulted in the deaths of 1,219 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally based on Israeli official figures.

Israel has vowed to destroy the Islamist movement, but after

more than a year and a half of devastating war, Hamas is still hanging on in the Gaza Strip.

"Hamas will not be eliminated as long as an alternative government is not brought into Gaza," Lapid said, suggesting enlisting the help of Egypt and other Arab countries.

A public opinion poll published the day after Tuesday's ceasefire with Iran by public broadcaster Kan showed that nearly two-thirds of respondents wanted the Gaza war to end.

Following the Iran ceasefire, Israel's army chief said the military's focus would shift back to Gaza.

Netanyahu said Sunday that the successful Iran campaign had created "opportunities", including for freeing the hostages.

"Of course, we will also have to solve the Gaza issue, to defeat Hamas, but I estimate that we will achieve both goals," he added.

Hamas seized 251 hostages during attack on Israel on October

7, 2023. Of these, 49 are still believed to be held in Gaza, including 27 the Israeli military says are dead.

Israel's retaliatory campaign has killed at least 56,531 people in Gaza, also mostly civilians, according to the Hamas-run territory's health ministry. The United Nations considers these figures to be reliable.



As of June 2025, the Gaza war – which began after Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel – has lasted over 20 months, making it the longest continuous military campaign in Israel's history.

Tel Aviv eyes peace accords with Syria, Lebanon

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israel said yesterday it is "interested" in striking peace agreements with neighbouring Lebanon and Syria, a potentially historic shift in the region after decades of war and animosity.

With Syria under new leadership after the fall of longtime ruler Bashar al-Assad and Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah movement weakened, Israeli Foreign



Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar

Minister Gideon Saar told journalists his government wanted more normalisation agreements with Arab countries.

"Israel is interested in expanding the Abraham Accords circle of peace and normalisation," Saar said of the US-brokered deals that Israel signed with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco in 2020, during US President Donald Trump's first term.

"We have an interest in adding countries such as Syria and

Lebanon, our neighbours -- to the circle of peace and normalisation while safeguarding Israel's essential and security interests," Saar told a news conference in Jerusalem alongside his Austrian counterpart Beate Meinl-Reisinger.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Thursday that Israel's recent "victory" in a 12-day war against Iran "opens the path to dramatically enlarge the peace accords".