

News in brief

- ◆ **Afghanistan's internet** and telecommunications cut has "extremely serious" rights implications, with women and girls especially affected, the UN human rights office said yesterday. Mobile phone signal and internet service in Afghanistan, ruled by the Taliban government, weakened on Monday night until connectivity was less than one percent of normal levels. "Nationwide internet shutdown by (the) Taliban has extremely serious human rights ramifications across the country," the UN rights office said on X. The shutdown has curtailed the free flow of information crucial to everyday activities, including access to essential services from health and education to banking. "Women and girls already excluded from public life are especially affected. "We call for immediate reconnection."
- ◆ **A 6.9-magnitude** quake struck off the coast of central Philippines on Tuesday evening, the US Geological Survey said, with no immediate reports of casualties or damage. The local seismology office warned of a possible "minor sea-level disturbance" and urged residents of the central islands of Leyte, Cebu and Biliran to "stay away from the beach and not to go to the coast". The epicentre of the quake was at sea off the northern tip of Cebu island and near Bogo, a city of more than 90,000 people, according to a Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, adding it expected both damage and aftershocks.
- ◆ **South Africa's ambassador** to France, formerly a long-serving cabinet minister, was found dead on Tuesday outside a Paris hotel after the window of his room in the high-rise building was forced open, prosecutors said. Nkosinathi Emmanuel Nathi Mthethwa, 58, usually known as Nathi Mthethwa, had "reserved a room on the 22nd floor whose secured window had been forced open", the office of the Paris prosecutor told AFP. The body of Mthethwa, a close associate of former South African president Jacob Zuma, was found "directly by the hotel", it added. A source close to the case, who asked not to be named, said the ambassador had depression and his death could have been suicide. An investigation has been opened. Mthethwa had been ambassador since December 2023. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa called his death "untimely" and "a moment of deep grief in which government and citizens stand beside the Mthethwa family".



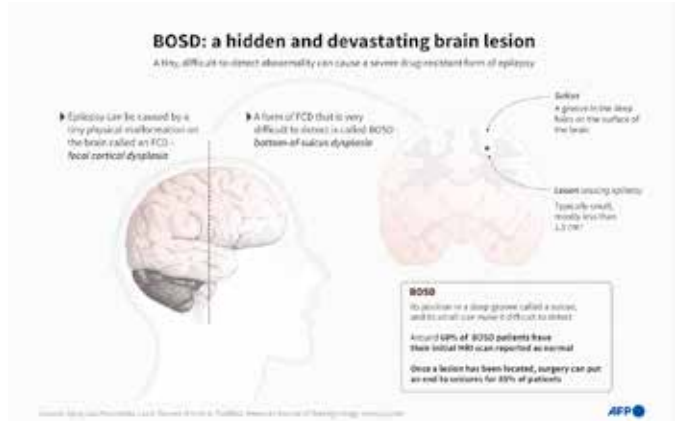
Afghanistan internet cut 'extremely serious' for human rights: UN

South African ambassador found dead outside Paris hotel



SPOTLIGHT

AI tool helps researchers treat child epilepsy



AFP | Tokyo, Japan

An artificial intelligence tool that can detect tiny, hard-to-spot brain malformations in children with epilepsy could help patients access life-changing surgery quicker, Australian researchers said on Wednesday.

It is the latest example of how AI, which can crunch vast amounts of data, is changing healthcare by assisting doctors with diagnoses.

Epilepsy has several different causes, and overall around three in 10 cases are down to structural abnormalities in the brain, experts say.

These are often missed on MRI scans -- especially the smallest lesions, sometimes hidden at the bottom of a brain fold.

A team led by Emma Macdonald-Laurs, a paediatric neurologist at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne,

trained an AI tool on child brain images to find lesions the size of a blueberry or smaller.

"They're frequently missed and many children are not considered as surgical candidates," Macdonald-Laurs told a briefing ahead of the publication of her team's study in the journal Epilepsia.

"The tool doesn't replace radiologists or epilepsy doctors, but it's like a detective that helps us put the puzzle pieces together quicker so we can offer potentially life-changing surgery," she said.

Of the patients who took part, with conditions known as cortical dysplasia and focal epilepsy, 80 percent had previously had an MRI scan come back as normal.

When the researchers used the AI tool to analyse both MRI and another type of medical scan called a PET, its success rate was 94 percent for one test group and 91 percent for another.

Hamas reviewing Trump's Gaza plan

The plan calls for a ceasefire, release of hostages by Hamas within 72 hours



Palestinians gather to receive food portions from a charity kitchen in Nuseirat, in the central Gaza Strip

- Trump unveiled a 20-point plan for an immediate halt to the war in Gaza
- Qatar said the group had promised to study the proposal "responsibly"
- Trump described the announcement of the plan as a "beautiful day"
- The deal would demand Hamas fully disarm, excluded from future roles
- It would also see a phased Israeli withdrawal from Gaza

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

AFP | Hamas was reviewing Donald Trump's plan for Gaza yesterday, while Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the Israeli military would stay in most of the territory after he gave the US president his backing.

The plan calls for a ceasefire, release of hostages by Hamas within 72 hours, disarmament of Hamas and gradual Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, followed by a post-war transitional authority headed by Trump himself.

"Hamas has begun a series of consultations within its political

The plan

Gaza to become a terror-free, demilitarized zone posing no threat to neighbours.

Gaza will be rebuilt for the benefit of its people.

War ends if both sides agree; Israel halts operations and withdraws to agreed lines.

Within 72 hours of Israel's acceptance, all hostages, alive or deceased, will be returned.

Israel to release 250 life prisoners and 1,700 post-Oct 7 detainees; remains exchanged 15:1.

Hamas members disarming and pledging peace get amnesty or safe passage abroad.

Immediate full aid into Gaza: infrastructure, hospitals, bakeries, rubble clearance.

Aid distributed by UN, Red Crescent, and other neutral bodies; Rafah crossing opened.

Temporary technocratic Palestinian committee to run Gaza, supervised by a "Board of Peace" led by Trump and international leaders.

Trump's economic plan: special panel to attract investment, jobs, and redevelopment.

Special economic zone created with preferential trade terms.

No forced displacement; people free to leave or return, encouraged to rebuild Gaza.

Hamas and factions excluded from governance; all tunnels and weapons destroyed under monitors.

Regional partners to guarantee Hamas compliance and Gaza's non-threat status.

International Stabilization Force to deploy, train Palestinian police, and secure borders with Egypt and Israel.

Israel will not annex Gaza; IDF withdrawal tied to demilitarization milestones and ISF readiness.

If Hamas rejects, aid and rebuilding proceed in IDF-ISF controlled terror-free areas.

Interfaith dialogue launched to promote tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

With PA reforms, conditions set for Palestinian self-determination and eventual statehood.

U.S. to lead dialogue between Israel and Palestinians for lasting peace and prosperity.

and military leaderships, both inside Palestine and abroad," a Palestinian source said on condition of anonymity.

"The discussions could take several days due to the complexities."

Qatar, which hosts Hamas's exiled leadership, said the group had promised to study the proposal "responsibly", and also said it would hold a meeting on the plan with Hamas and Turkey later on Tuesday.

"It is still too early to speak about responses, but we are truly

optimistic that this plan, as we said, is a comprehensive one," foreign ministry spokesman Majed al-Ansari said.

On Monday in Washington, Trump described the announcement of the plan as a "beautiful day -- potentially one of the greatest days ever in civilisation".

The deal would demand Hamas fully disarm and be excluded from future roles in the government, but those who agreed to "peaceful co-existence" would be given amnesty.

It would also see a phased Is-

raeli withdrawal from Gaza, after nearly two years of war sparked by Hamas's unprecedented attack on Israel on October 7, 2023.

But in a video statement posted on his Telegram channel after his joint press conference with Trump, Netanyahu said the military would stay in most of Gaza, and also said he did not agree to a Palestinian state during his talks in Washington.

"We will recover all our hostages, alive and well, while the (Israeli military) will remain in most of the Gaza Strip," he said.

Still, Israel's far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, a member of Netanyahu's coalition government, blasted the plan as a "resounding diplomatic failure".

"In my estimation, it will also end in tears. Our children will be forced to fight in Gaza again," he said.

**YOU
KNOW WHAT**

The first Gaza war broke out in 1948, during the Arab-Israeli War, when Egypt took control of the Gaza Strip after fighting with Israel. Gaza then remained under Egyptian administration until the 1967 Six-Day War, when Israel captured it along with the West Bank, Sinai, and Golan Heights.