

News in brief

◆ **The head of the U.N.**

nuclear watchdog called for the release of the director-general of Ukraine's Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, saying his detention posed a threat to safety and security. A Russian patrol detained Ihor Murashov on Friday, the state-owned company in charge of the plant said on Saturday, and the International Atomic Energy Agency said Russia had confirmed the move. "IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi expressed the hope that Mr Murashov will return to his family safely and promptly and will be able to resume his important functions at the plant," the agency tweeted late on Saturday. The IAEA has been in contact



**IAEA head seeks release of Ukrainian nuclear plant head**

with relevant authorities seeking clarifications on his temporary detention, which it said had a "very significant impact" on him and nuclear safety and security standards.



**Pope begs Putin to end 'spiral of violence and death', cites nuclear threat**

◆ **Pope Francis made** an impassioned appeal yesterday to Russian President Vladimir Putin to stop "this spiral of violence and death" in Ukraine, saying the crisis there was risking a nuclear escalation with uncontrollable global consequences. In an address dedicated to Ukraine and made to thousands of people in St. Peter's Square, Francis also appealed to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy to be open to any "serious peace proposal".

Francis said he was making an urgent appeal "in the name of God" for an end to the conflict and said it was "absurd" that the world was risking a nuclear conflict. "My appeal goes above all to the president of the Russian Federation, begging him to stop this spiral of violence and death, even out of love for his own people," Francis said.

◆ **Russian Deputy Prime Minister**

Alexander Novak said yesterday that it was technically possible to restore the ruptured offshore infrastructure of the Nord Stream gas pipelines, TASS news agency reported. A total of four leaks were discovered last week on the Nord Stream 1 and 2 pipelines in the Baltic Sea near Denmark and Sweden, with a significant fall in gas pressure leading to the detection of the ruptures. "There have never been such incidents. Of course, there are technical possibilities to restore the infrastructure, it takes time and appropriate funds. I am sure that appropriate possibilities will be found," Novak said.



**Russian Deputy PM says restoration of Nord Stream possible - TASS**

◆ **Israel gave its preliminary nod** yesterday to a draft US-brokered deal demarcating a maritime border with Lebanon that may lead to profit-sharing in a disputed Mediterranean gas prospect. Hoping to defuse one source of conflict

**Israel upbeat on draft Lebanese demarcation deal**

between the enemy countries and prod them toward accommodation, U.S. envoy Amos Hochstein last week submitted a new proposal that would pave the way for offshore energy exploration. Israeli approval of the draft awaited legal review, Prime Minister Yair Lapid told his cabinet at its weekly session.



Military uniform lays next to an abandoned Russian infantry fighting vehicle BMD-4 in the village of Kurylivka

# Ukraine takes back key logistic hub

● **Lyman is key logistics hub in eastern Donetsk region**

● **Capture could aid attacks on neighbouring Luhansk region**

● **Loss triggers Russian criticism, call for escalation**



Ukrainian troops pose for a photo in Lyman, Ukraine

Reuters | Kyiv

Ukraine said yesterday it was in full control of the eastern logistics hub of Lyman, Kyiv's most significant battlefield gain in weeks, which a senior official said could provide a staging post for further gains to the east.

"As of 1230 (0930 GMT), Lyman is fully cleared," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said in a short video clip on his Telegram channel.

There was no comment from the Russian armed forces on Sunday on the status

of the city. The Russian defence ministry said on Saturday it was pulling troops out of the area "in connection with the creation of a threat of encirclement".

The latest stinging setback for Russian President Vladimir Putin came after he proclaimed the annexation of four regions covering nearly a fifth of Ukraine on Friday, an area that includes Lyman.

Kyiv and the West have condemned the proclamation as an illegitimate farce.

Russian forces captured Lyman from Ukraine in May and had used it as a logistics and transport hub for its opera-

tions in the north of the Donetsk region. Losing it is Russia's largest battlefield loss since Ukraine's lightning counteroffensive in the northeastern Kharkiv region last month.

Serhiy Gaidai, governor of the Luhansk region that neighbours Donetsk, said control over Lyman could help Ukraine reclaim lost territory in his region, whose full capture Moscow announced in early July after weeks of grinding advances.

"The liberation of this city in the Donetsk region is one of the key factors for the fur-

ther de-occupation of the Luhansk region," Gaidai wrote on the Telegram messaging app on Sunday.

Zelenskiy on Saturday promised more quick successes in the Donbas, which covers the Donetsk and Luhansk regions that are largely under Russian control.

"Over the past week, the number of Ukrainian flags in Donbas has increased. There will be even more a week's time," Zelenskiy said in an evening address.

The areas Putin claimed as annexed - the Donbas regions and the southern regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia - form a swath of territory equal to about 18% of Ukraine's total surface land area.

**RUSSIAN ANGER**  
The battlefield setbacks have triggered a fresh wave of criticism within Russia of how its military operation is being handled.

Putin ally Ramzan Kadyrov, the leader of Russia's southern Chechnya region, on Saturday called for a change of strategy "right up to the declaration of martial law in the border areas and the use of low-yield nuclear weapons."

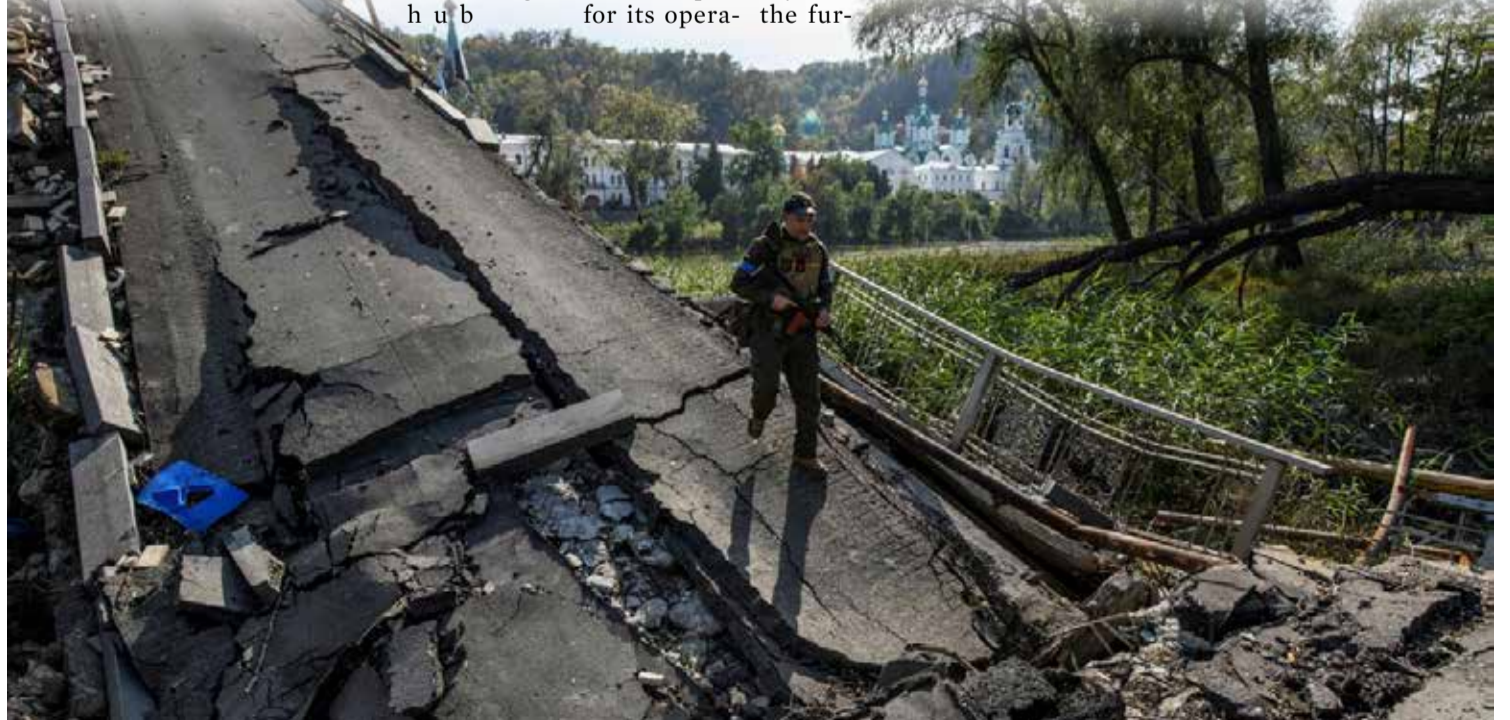
**COVID-19 Countries worst affected**

Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
USA	98,248,623	1,084,891	
India	44,594,487	528,673	Deaths
France	35,437,807	155,112	
Brazil	34,720,437	686,304	6,550,424
Germany	33,386,229	150,064	Recovered:
S. Korea	24,819,611	28,489	
UK	23,672,855	190,317	603,204,369
Italy	22,500,346	177,130	New cases
Japan	21,330,772	44,965	
Russia	21,049,027	387,468	+149,485
Turkey	16,873,793	101,139	New deaths
Spain	13,422,984	114,179	
Vietnam	11,480,518	43,149	+340
Australia	10,240,631	15,221	

Figures as of closing

**Middle East**

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	515,645		24,613		442,182	48,850
Saudi Arabia	816,664	+89	9,355	+2	803,790	3,519
UAE	1,028,333	+400	2,345		1,007,528	18,460
Kuwait	658,520		2,563		655,316	641
Oman	397,993		4,260		384,669	9,064
Qatar	452,533	+858	682		445,932	5,919



A service member of Ukraine's National Guard walks on a bridge over the Siverskiy Donets river destroyed during Russia's attack on Ukraine, in the town of Sviatohirsk, Donetsk region, Ukraine