

1776

US Congress proclaims the Declaration of Independence and independence from Great Britain



1785

Geologist James Hutton publicly reads an abstract of his theory of uniformitarianism for the first time at the meeting of the Royal Society of Edinburgh

1803

The Louisiana Purchase is announced to the American people by President Thomas Jefferson

1934

Hungarian physicist Leó Szilárd patents the chain-reaction design for the atomic bomb

# 69 killed in Gaza strikes

Israeli forces kill at least 69, including 15 in a strike on a school sheltering displaced Palestinians

38 died waiting for aid

Majority of shelter victims were children

Pressure mounts for a ceasefire

AFP | Gaza City

Gaza's civil defence agency said Israeli forces killed at least 69 people yesterday, including 15 in a strike on a school sheltering Palestinians displaced by the war nearing its 22nd month.

Israel has recently expanded its military operations in the Gaza Strip, where its war on Hamas militants has created dire humanitarian conditions and displaced nearly all of the territory's population of more than two million.

Many have sought shelter in school buildings, but these have repeatedly come under Israeli attacks that the military often says target Hamas militants hiding among civilians.

In an updated toll yesterday afternoon, civil defence spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP that 69 people were killed by Israeli strikes, artillery or gunfire across the territory.

They included 38 people waiting for humanitarian aid at three separate locations in central and southern Gaza and a child killed by a drone in Jabalia in the north.

Bassal said 15 people, "the majority of them children and women", were killed and several others wounded in an Israeli air



People walk over debris at Mustafa Hafez school, sheltering Palestinians displaced by the war, following an overnight Israeli strike in Gaza City

strike on a school-turned-shelter in Gaza City.

## Ceasefire pressure

Contacted by AFP, the Israeli military (IDF) said regarding that incident that it "struck a key Hamas terrorist who was operating in a Hamas command and control center in Gaza City".

"Prior to the strike, numerous steps were taken to mitigate the risk of harming civilians, including the use of precise munitions, aerial surveillance, and additional intelligence," it added.

Regarding numerous other strikes across the territory yesterday, it said it could not comment in detail without precise

coordinates and times.

"In response to Hamas' barbaric attacks, the IDF is operating to dismantle Hamas military capabilities," it told AFP.

It said it "follows international law and takes feasible precautions to mitigate civilian harm".

Pressure has risen for a ceasefire to allow sorely needed humanitarian aid into Gaza at scale and permit the release of hostages seized by Palestinian militants during Hamas's October 2023 attack that sparked the war.

US President Donald Trump earlier this week declared a new ceasefire push, aiming for an initial 60-day truce, which he said had Israel's backing.

But Israel's leaders held firm to their aim of crushing Hamas, even as the group said Tuesday it was discussing new proposals for a ceasefire from mediators.

## Strike hits school

At the Gaza City school compound hit yesterday, AFP footage showed young children wandering through the charred, bombed out building, as piles of burnt debris smouldered.

Groups of Palestinians picked through the rubble and damaged furniture that littered the floor.

Umm Yassin Abu Awda, who was among mourners who gathered at the city's Al-Shifa hospital after the strike, said:

The strike on the Gaza City school marks at least the 11th time since early July that a school sheltering displaced civilians has been hit, with over 150 killed in such incidents in recent weeks

"This isn't a life. We've suffered enough."

"For two years, we've been fighting just to get a piece of bread," she told AFP.

"Either you (Israel) strike us with a nuclear bomb and end it all, or people's conscience needs to finally wake up."

Bassal of the civil defence agency reported 25 people killed while seeking aid near the Netzarim area in central Gaza, six others at another location nearby and seven in Rafah, southern Gaza, with scores of people injured.

They were the latest in a string of deadly incidents that have hit people trying to receive scarce supplies.

Across Gaza yesterday, Bassal said artillery shelling in the northern town of Beit Lahia killed three people.

Further south, he said three people were killed in a strike that hit tents housing displaced people in the coastal Al-Mawasi area.

# Trump close to victory on flagship tax bill

AFP | London

US lawmakers teed up a final vote on Donald Trump's marquee tax and spending bill for yesterday morning after bruising Republican infighting nearly derailed the centerpiece of the president's domestic agenda.

Almost 24 hours after debate began, Trump appeared close to victory as Congress edged towards passing his "One Big Beautiful Bill," despite misgivings in his party over a text that would balloon the national debt while launching a historic assault on the social safety net.

The bill would be a major landmark in Trump's political life, sealing his vision of US domestic policy into law -- and coming after he scored recent wins including in the Supreme Court and with US strikes that led to a ceasefire between Israel and Iran.

Speaker Mike Johnson struggled through the night to corral his rank-and-file Republican members after the package scraped through a series of "test" votes in the House of Representatives that laid bare deep divisions in the party.



Members of the House walk up the steps outside the US Capitol during the procedural vote on the One Big Beautiful Bill Act

It was on course for a final vote that would put it on Trump's desk to be signed into law after passing its last procedural hurdle in the early hours of yesterday.

"We feel very good about

where we are and we're moving forward," an upbeat Johnson told reporters at the Capitol.

"So we're going to deliver the Big, Beautiful Bill -- the president's 'America First' agenda -- and we're going to do right by the American people."

## Funds for mass deportation

The timetable could slip however as Democratic minority leader Hakeem Jeffries continued a long speech opposing the bill that delayed proceedings by several hours.

Originally approved by the House in May, Trump's sprawling legislation squeezed through the Senate on Tuesday but had to return to the lower chamber for a rubber stamp of the senators' revisions.

The package honors many of Trump's campaign promises, boosting military spending, funding a mass migrant deportation drive and committing \$4.5 trillion to extend his first-term tax relief.

But it is expected to pile an extra \$3.4 trillion over a decade onto the country's fast-growing deficits, while shrinking the federal food stamps program and forcing through the largest cuts to the Medicaid health insurance scheme for low-income Americans since its 1960s launch.

While Republican moderates in the House are anxious that the cuts will damage their prospects of reelection, fiscal hawks chafed over savings that they say fall far short of what was promised.

Johnson has to negotiate tight margins, and can likely only lose three lawmakers in the final vote, among more than two dozen who had declared themselves open to rejecting Trump's bill.

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TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



Grateful to President Mahama, the people and Government of Ghana for the warmth during my visit. I am confident that together we will create a brighter future for our citizens! @JDMahama'

@narendramodi

02



Nothing wrong with expecting people to pick themselves up by their bootstraps, until you realize that some people have no boots.

@neiltyson

03



It was a joy to meet the teens in this year's IMF Teen Summer Program—curious, thoughtful, and full of questions about the global economy.

@GitaGopinath

04



In 1945, a small group of women helped shape the @UN , making the Charter the 1st international agreement to recognize gender equality as a human right. While women still face barriers to equality today, they continue demanding their rights, building a more just world for all.

@antonioguterres

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