

News in brief

◆ **Millions of mobile** phones across the UK blared a siren sound at the same time on Sunday as part of government efforts to better prepare for national emergencies. The nationwide drill caused England's third ODI cricket match against South Africa to be paused while kick-off for a rugby league match was pushed back to avoid disruption. At 3:00 pm (1400 GMT), phones and tablets emitted the noise and vibrated for about 10 seconds, while users also received a message saying it was just a test. It was only the second test of the country's national emergency alert system following the first in 2023. The government had in recent weeks embarked on a publicity drive to minimise any shock caused, including through announcements at rail stations and signs on motorways.



**UK mobile phones blare in national emergency test**

**Drone attack from Yemen injures man at Israeli airport: army, medics**



◆ **A drone launched** from Yemen injured a man when it fell on Ramon airport in southern Israel on Sunday, Israel's Magen David Adom emergency service said. "Paramedics are providing medical treatment... to a 63-year-old male in mild condition, fully conscious, with shrapnel injuries to his limbs," the service said in a statement. A spokesperson for Israel's airports authority said the drone "hit the arrivals hall" and that operations at Ramon airport had been halted. The Israeli military said the drone was the fourth launched from Yemen within minutes of each other on Sunday.

◆ **Seoul said yesterday** that negotiations with the United States to secure the release of South Korean workers detained in a raid by US immigration officials have been "concluded" and they would soon be freed and flown home. It follows the arrest of more than 300 South Korean workers at a Hyundai-LG battery plant being built in the southern state of Georgia on Thursday. The operation, carried out in the town of Ellabell, was the largest single site raid implemented so far under US President Donald Trump's nationwide anti-migrant drive, catching Seoul officials off guard. "As a result of the swift and united response... negotiations for the release of the detained workers have been concluded," Kang Hoon-sik, chief of staff to President Lee Jae Myung, said on Sunday.

**Seoul says over 300 South Koreans detained in US to be released**



SPOTLIGHT

Microsoft cloud platform hit by cable cuts in Red Sea



AFP | Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Global tech giant Microsoft yesterday said network traffic for its Azure cloud computing platform was experiencing increased delays in parts of the Middle East due to "undersea fibre cuts" in the Red Sea. Microsoft did not provide an explanation for what caused the cuts to the submarine lines but noted its network had been affected since Saturday. "Network traffic that does not traverse through the Middle East is not impacted," the company said in a statement. The internet access monitoring organisation NetBlocks noted that a series of submarine cable outages in the Red Sea has degraded internet connectivity in several countries, including in India and Pakistan. Global internet and telecom cables have followed shipping routes through the Red Sea, but there has been growing

anxiety about the state of the lines after Yemen's Huthi rebels began attacking passing merchant vessels in late 2023, in actions the group said was in solidarity with the Palestinians amid the Gaza war. The laying and operation of underwater cables have long been the preserve of a consortium of large telecoms operators, but internet giants have largely taken over in recent years as they strive to keep up with ballooning flows of data. About 1.4 million kilometres (nearly 900,000 miles) of fibre optic cables are laid on the ocean floor, enabling the provision of essential services such as trade, financial transactions, public services, digital health and education around the world. Damage to submarine cables is not uncommon. According to the International Cable Protection Committee, there are an average of 150 to 200 outages per year worldwide, or around three incidents a week.

Israel warns recognising **Palestinian** state could trigger 'unilateral' action

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israel's foreign minister branded a recent international push to recognise Palestinian statehood a "mistake" yesterday and warned it could trigger an unspecified unilateral response, after reports that Israel plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank. Several countries, including France and Britain, have pledged to recognise a Palestinian state during the UN General Assembly later this month. Israel's relations with France have been particularly strained since President Emmanuel Macron announced his country's plans and and co-hosted a conference in July with Saudi Arabia to call for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Britain said it would recognise a Palestinian state if Israel failed to agree to a truce in the Gaza war, triggered by Palestinian group Hamas's October 2023 attack. Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said such recognition "will destabilise the region" and would make it "harder to get to the peace". "It will push Israel also to have unilateral deci-

**Israel hits another Gaza City high-rise as troops push offensive**

**Gaza City, Palestinian Territories**

Israel's army said it bombed a Gaza City residential tower Sunday after issuing evacuation orders, just hours after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced the military was "deepening" its assault on the Gaza Strip's key urban centre. Israel has not publicly announced the start of a major offensive to seize the city, which Netanyahu's cabinet approved last month, but the military has intensified bombings and operations in the area for weeks,

in a bid to step up pressure on the Palestinian militant group Hamas. "The IDF (Israeli military) struck a high-rise building that was used by the Hamas terrorist organisation in the area of Gaza City," the military said in a statement referring to Al-Roya Tower, saying it had been used "to monitor the location of... troops in the area". Hamas has denied using residential buildings for military purposes. The high-rise was the third such residential tower to be struck in as many

ed. Rasmussen said Denmark does not plan a similar move. "We will never... recognise a Palestinian state which is ruled by Hamas or any other organisation," he said. "And therefore it comes with a lot of preconditions -- a disarmed Palestinian state recognising Israel, transparency, democracy... That is our position." Saar did not specify what Israel's reaction may entail, but his remarks come after the government approved new settlement projects in the West Bank, which Israel has occupied since 1967. A major project just east of Jerusalem, known as E1, would bisect the West Bank, and according to Israel's far-right Finance Minister Bezael Smotrich "bury the idea of a Palestinian state".

sions," Saar said at a joint press conference with his visiting Danish counterpart, Lars Lokke Rasmussen. "States like France and the UK that

pushed the so-called recognition had made a tremendous mistake," he added.



People search for salvage at the mound of rubble at the site of the collapsed Sussi Tower, which was destroyed earlier by Israeli bombardment, in Gaza City



The West Bank is home to around three million Palestinians, as well as about 500,000 Israelis who live in settlements that are illegal under international law.

Israel has annexed east Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, a strategic plateau it captured from Syria, both seized during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

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UK police say almost 900 arrests made at Palestine Action demo

AFP | London, United Kingdom

A total of 890 people were arrested in London during a protest this weekend in support of the banned group Palestine Action, the capital's Metropolitan Police said yesterday. The force said 857 people had been arrested under anti-terror

laws for supporting a proscribed group during Saturday's demonstration, with an additional 33 arrested for other offences including assaults on police officers. "We have a duty to enforce the law without fear or favour. If you advertise that you are intending to commit a crime, we

have no option but to respond accordingly," deputy assistant commissioner Claire Smart said in a statement. The government in July proscribed Palestine Action under the UK's Terrorism Act of 2000 following several acts of vandalism, including against two planes at a Royal Air Force

base, which caused an estimated £7 million (\$10 million) in damage. Critics, including the United Nations, have condemned the ban as legal overreach and a threat to free speech, but ministers insist that people are still able to attend pro-Palestinian marches.