

News in brief

◆ **At least 15 people** were killed Tuesday when a landslide triggered by torrential rains hit a passenger bus in northern India's Himachal Pradesh state, authorities said. The rescue workers and local villagers at the accident site were digging for survivors from under heavy boulders and mounds of earth. The incident happened at night in Bilaspur, about 60 miles (100 kilometres) from Shimla, the capital of the picturesque Himalayan state. "15 deaths have been confirmed so far," the local government said in a statement. State Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu "expressed deep sorrow and anguish over the tragic bus mishap," the statement added. "Three children have been rescued alive and were being treated" at a local hospital, and the rescue operations were ongoing.



**Landslide kills at least 15 bus passengers in northern India**

◆ **Britain's financial** regulator yesterday proposed that lenders pay consumers £8.2 billion (\$11 billion) in compensation after some car loans were deemed unlawful. "Many motor finance lenders did not comply with the law or the rules. Now we have legal clarity, it's time their customers get fair compensation," the Financial Conduct Authority's chief executive Nikhil Rathie said in a statement. The regulator said payouts on "an expected 14 million unfair motor finance agreements could start next year, under an industry-wide compensation scheme proposed by the FCA". Individuals would receive an average £700 in compensation, it added.

**UK regulator proposes £8.2 bn compensation for bad car loans**

◆ **President Donald Trump** struck a friendly tone with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney yesterday, hailing progress towards a trade deal but offering few concrete concessions on steep US tariffs. Trump repeatedly showered praise on "great leader" Carney, who was under pressure at home to show progress from his second visit to the White House since taking office in April. "I think they're going to walk away very happy," Trump told reporters as he sat alongside Carney in the Oval Office. "And I think we've come a long way over the last few months, actually, in terms of that relationship." Trump said that the North American neighbors had "natural conflict" over business as their manufacturers were competing for the same market but said there was "nothing wrong with it." Carney said he was confident that Canada would "get the right deal" from the United States, his country's main economic partner.

**Trump talks up Canada deal chances with visiting PM**



**Macron urged to quit to end France political crisis**

◆ **President Emmanuel Macron** was yesterday under pressure even from allies to find a rapid solution to France's political deadlock, after his first prime minister and one-time ally urged him to resign for the sake of the country. Macron, president since 2017, has been battling the worst domestic political crisis of his presidency after the shock resignation on Monday of his seventh prime minister, Sebastien Lecornu. Macron gave Lecornu until Wednesday evening to thrash out a compromise for a sustainable coalition government but it is far from certain these efforts can succeed. If this fails, one option is for Macron to dissolve parliament and hold snap legislative elections in the hope of having a more workable make-up in the legislature.

SPOTLIGHT



**Shhhh! California bans noisy TV commercials**

Los Angeles, United States

Noisy TV commercials were banned in California on Monday, with a new law that demands pitchmen turn the volume down. Viewers in the United States have long complained that advertisements can be much louder than the program they are streaming. One minute they are engrossed in a peaceful nature documentary and the next they are scrambling for the remote to quieten a man shouting about a new treatment for his flatulence. Now a new law in America's most populous state says commercials cannot be any louder than the content they interrupt. "We heard Californians loud and clear, and what's clear is that they don't want commercials at a volume any louder than the level at which they were previously enjoying a program," Governor Gavin Newsom said after signing the bill into law. The legislation rewrites outdated laws that only regulated broadcast and cable providers to now include streamers.

**Trump says 'real chance' of Gaza peace deal**

Trump said that US negotiators were involved in the talks

◆ **World leaders** yesterday urged Hamas to release the Israeli hostages, on the second anniversary of the attack which sparked the war in Gaza.

AFP | Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump said yesterday there was a "real chance" of a Gaza peace deal, as Hamas and Israeli negotiators held indirect talks on the second anniversary of the October 7 attack.

"We are very close to making a deal on the Middle East that will bring peace to the Middle East," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office alongside Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney.

Trump said that US negotiators were involved in the talks now taking place in Egypt. The White House said on Monday that Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff and son-in-law Jared Kushner would play a role.

"There's a real chance that we could do something," Trump said. "I think there's a possibility that we could have peace in the Middle East. It's something even beyond the Gaza situation. We want a release of the hostages immediately."

"Our team is over there now, another team just left, and other countries, literally every country in the world, has supported the plan."

Trump added that the United States would to "everything possible to make sure everyone adheres to the deal" if Hamas and Israel do agree on a ceasefire to end the war.

**Hamas: 'Historic response' -**

Hamas insisted that the October 7 attack was a "historic response" to Israel's actions against the Palestinian people.

"We reaffirm that the Al-Aqsa Flood on October 7 was a historic response to attempts to eradicate the Palestinian cause," Fawzi Barhoum, a senior Hamas official, said in a televised speech.

**Spain: 'End genocide' -**

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, one of the most vocal critics in Europe of Israel's offensive in the Palestinian territory, decried the Hamas attacks and demanded Israel end the "genocide of the Palestinian people".

"It is a day to reiterate our strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms, to call for the immediate release of the Israeli hostages," the Socialist leader wrote on X.

"And to demand that (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu stop the genocide of the Palestinian people and open a humanitarian corridor," he added.

**UK: protests 'disrespectful' -**

Besides calling for the hostages' release, British Prime Minister

**Qatar says Israel should have already ceased fire under Trump plan for Gaza**

Doha, Qatar

Qatar's foreign ministry spokesman said yesterday that Israel should have ceased operations in Gaza already in line with US President Donald Trump's peace plan.

"Regarding the ceasefire, this question should be directed first to the Israeli occupation government. It was supposed to actually cease fire if the statements made by the prime minister there regarding adherence to the Trump plan were true," Majed al-Ansari told reporters in Doha.

Ansari was cautious on the Egypt peace talks.

"I have no doubt that this round of negotiations is a process in which all parties are strongly committed to reaching a consensus, but there are many details to consider," he said. He said the plan's clauses "require practical interpretation on the ground, which of course requires communication with all parties".

He said it was still "early" to discuss the future of Hamas's political bureau in Doha, after Israel hit the group's leadership in the Qatari capital last month. The Hamas bureau, which Qatar hosts with US blessing, has helped Doha mediate in the conflict, he said, adding: "As long as there is a need for a channel (of communication with Hamas), there is a need for this".



British Prime Minister Keir Starmer



Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez



French President Emmanuel Macron

tober 7 "one of the darkest days in history".

But she also said that the current peace plan for Gaza "offers an opportunity that must not be wasted to achieve a permanent cessation of hostilities, bring home the hostages still in Hamas's hands, and begin a process toward peace and security throughout the Middle East."

**France: 'Never again'**

French President Emmanuel Macron said: "I reiterate France's call: the release of all hostages and a ceasefire must take place without delay." "Such an abomination must never happen again. Let us unite all our strength to fight antisemitism everywhere and to build peace."

**Germany: 'antisemitism returns' -**

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz insisted that "all the hostages must be released immediately" and warned of a "new wave of antisemitism" in the country.

Merz said that "as part of the post-war generation that grew up with the promise of 'never again', I am deeply concerned".

"Go out and approach our Jewish citizens... show that we stand by their side and that together we will do everything possible to ensure that Jews can live here in Germany without fear."

**Dubai airshow bars Israeli companies from exhibiting**

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Israeli defence companies have been barred from the upcoming Dubai Airshow after a "technical review", its organiser said yesterday, without providing further details, two years into the devastating Gaza war.

Registrations were withdrawn for all six Israeli defence companies that were due to take part, said Tim Hawes, managing director of Informa Markets, which organises the show. "The (Israeli) exhibitors that were previously coming won't be participating," said Hawes, on the sidelines of a press conference to announce details of the exhibition.

"There was a technical review which we do of all companies that take part in the show," he said, adding the decision had been taken by the airshow's technical committee.

Hawes did not elaborate on the reasons for the decision. The next edition of the biennial airshow, one of the world's biggest, takes place in November. Israel's inaugural participation in 2023 was overshadowed by the start of the Gaza war. Israeli defence exhibitions were empty and understaffed at the start of the show. Tuesday marks the two-year anniversary of the October 7, 2023 attacks by Hamas that triggered the war, which has left tens of thousands dead and much of Gaza in ruins.

**UN chief demands end to Gaza hostilities, immediate release of hostages**

Geneva, Switzerland

The United Nations chief yesterday demanded the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages held in Gaza, and an end to hostilities in the war-ravaged Palestinian territory, Israel and the region.

Speaking on the second anniversary of the Hamas October 7, 2023 attack on Israel that sparked the war in the Gaza Strip, Antonio Guterres de-



cried a "humanitarian catastrophe on a scale that defies comprehension".

"I have said it time and again, and I am repeating it today with even greater urgency: Release the hostages, unconditionally and immediately," he said in a statement.

"End the suffering for all... Put an end to the hostilities in Gaza, Israel and the region now. Stop making civilians pay with their lives and their futures."

"After two years of trauma, we must choose hope. Now."

ister Keir Starmer suggested pro-Palestinian protests planned for the anniversary of "that awful day" were disrespectful.

"This is not who we are as a country," the under-fire premier wrote in The Times.

"It's un-British to have so little respect for others. And that's before some of them decide to start chanting hatred towards Jewish people all over again."

Italy: Peace opportunity

Far-right Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni called Oc-



Israel's retaliatory military campaign in Gaza has killed at least 67,160 people, according to the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory, figures the United Nations considers credible.