

Ukraine warns of fresh 'provocations'

Ukraine Mayor says Russian shelling near occupied nuclear plant

● **Russia says Ukraine behind shelling**

Reuters | Washington

Ukraine's defence intelligence agency warned of fresh Russian "provocations" yesterday at an occupied nuclear plant in southern Ukraine, while the exiled mayor of the town where the plant is located said it had come under fresh shelling.

Enerhodar mayor Dmytro Orlov, who evacuated to Kyiv-controlled territory in April, wrote on Telegram that local residents had informed him of fresh Russian shelling in the direction of the town's industrial zone and the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant yesterday. It was not clear if any shells hit the grounds of the plant.

Local Russian-installed official Vladimir Rogov wrote on Telegram that Ukrainian forces were shelling the plant.

"According to witnesses, ex-



a general view of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Station

plosions can be heard again in the town," Rogov said, adding that shells had landed in the vicinity of the power station, without specifying if it had hit the plant's territory.

Ukraine and Russia have traded accusations over multiple recent incidents of shelling at Europe's largest nuclear power plant, while the G7 group of nations have called on Moscow

to withdraw its forces from the power station.

Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak accused Russia of "hitting the part of the nuclear power plant where the energy that powers the south of Ukraine is generated."

"The goal is to disconnect us from the (plant) and blame the Ukrainian army for this," Podolyak wrote on Twitter.

“(Russia’s) goal is to disconnect us from the (plant) and blame the Ukrainian army for this

UKRAINIAN PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER MYKHAILO PODOLYAK

Earlier yesterday, Ukraine's defence intelligence agency said Russia was preparing new "provocations" at the plant, saying Russian troops had parked a Pion self-propelled howitzer outside the nearby town and put a Ukrainian flag on it. The agency shared a photo appearing to show the cannon in question.

The agency also said that Thursday's strikes on the territory of the Zaporizhzhia plant, which Ukraine says damaged water-pumping infrastructure and a fire station, had been conducted from the Russian-controlled village of Vodiane, about seven kilometres east of the plant.

FBI seized top secret documents at Trump's home; Espionage Act cited

Reuters | Washington

FBI agents in this week's search of former US President Donald Trump's Florida home removed 11 sets of classified documents including some marked as top secret, the Justice Department said on Friday, while also disclosing it had probable cause to conduct the search based on possible Espionage Act violations.

The bombshell disclosures were made in a search warrant approved by a US magistrate judge and accompanying documents released four days after agents searched Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence in Palm Beach. The Espionage Act, one of three laws cited in the warrant application, dates to 1917



An aerial view of former President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate

and makes it a crime to release information that could harm national security.

Trump, in a statement on his social media platform, said the records were "all declassified" and placed in "secure storage."

"They didn't need to 'seize' anything. They could have had it anytime they wanted without playing politics and breaking

into Mar-a-Lago," the Republican businessman-turned-politician said.

The search was carried out as part of a federal investigation into whether Trump illegally removed documents when he left office in January 2021 after losing the presidential election two months earlier to Democrat Joe Biden.

Although the FBI on Monday carted away material labeled as classified, the three laws cited as the basis for the warrant make it a crime to mishandle government records, regardless of whether they are classified. As such, Trump's claims that he declassified the documents would have no bearing on the potential legal violations at issue.

Taliban violently disperse rare women's protest in Kabul

AFP | Kabul

Taliban fighters beat women protesters and fired into the air yesterday as they violently dispersed a rare rally in the Afghan capital, days ahead of the first anniversary of the hard-line Islamists' return to power.

Since seizing power on August 15 last year, the Taliban have rolled back the marginal gains made by women during the two decades of US intervention in Afghanistan.

About 40 women — chanting "Bread, work and freedom" — marched in front of the education ministry building in Kabul, before the fighters dispersed



Women running away after Taliban fighters fired gunshots into the air, during a protest by women in Kabul

them by firing their guns into the air, an AFP correspondent reported.

Some women protesters who took refuge in nearby shops were chased and beaten by Taliban fighters with their rifle

Some women protesters who took refuge in nearby shops were chased and beaten by Taliban fighters with their rifle butts.

The protesters carried a banner which read "August 15 is a black day" as they demanded rights to work and political participation.

"Justice, justice. We're fed up with ignorance," chanted the protesters, many of them not wearing face veils, before they dispersed.

North Korea lifts mask mandate after Covid 'victory'



North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un greets health workers AFP | Seoul

North Korea has lifted a mask mandate and eased other virus restrictions, state media said yesterday, days after leader Kim Jong Un declared "victory" over Covid-19.

The announcement comes after Pyongyang earlier this week blamed Seoul for causing the Covid-19 outbreak in the North and threatened to "wipe out" the South Korean authorities, if necessary.

Virus restrictions were eased as "the public health crisis created in the country was completely defused and its whole territory was turned into a clean one free from the malignant virus in the shortest period," Pyongyang's official Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) reported.

"The step for obligatory mask-wearing was lifted in all areas except frontline areas and borderline cities and counties, given that the whole country was turned into an epidemic-free zone," KCNA said.

News in brief

Wind, thunderstorms expected around contained French wildfire

◆ French firefighters were keeping a



wary eye on a huge blaze that appeared to be contained in the country's southwest, with thunderstorms and strong wind gusts expected in the area overnight. The 40-kilometre (25-mile) fire front in the Gironde and Landes departments around Bordeaux "did not significantly progress overnight. Firefighters are working on its periphery," police said in a statement. But officials said it was premature to say that the blaze -- which has already reignited once -- was under control.

◆ **A shooter killed at least 11 people including two children in a mass shooting in Montenegro's central city of Cetinje, officials said, in one of the deadliest violent incidents to rock the Adriatic nation.**

"Eleven people were killed in Cetinje today," Andrijana Nastic, a government prosecutor helping oversee the investigation into the incident, told reporters, saying the shooter was among the dead. "Two children are among the victims," she added. A police officer, who spoke on condition of anonymity, also confirmed the figure.

At least 11 killed in Montenegro shooting



Broad swathe of China swelters in high temperatures

◆ Several regions of China including the major southwestern city of Chongqing



baked in temperatures exceeding 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) yesterday, while the country's national observatory continued its red alert for extreme heat. In Zhejiang, home to many factories and exporters, a meteorological official said that the eastern province has broken its previous record for high temperature days this year, with 31 days above 35C and 16 days above 38C.

◆ **Sierra Leone's president, Julius Maada Bio, said that**

Sierra Leone president says protests aimed to overthrow the government

this week's anti-government protests, which led to the deaths of six police officers and at least 21 civilians, were an attempt to overthrow the government.

On Wednesday, police officers used tear gas and in some cases guns to disperse large crowds of protesters throwing rocks and burning tyres in the capital Freetown and several towns in the opposition's northern heartland. Several residents told Reuters the protests were driven by frustration with the worsening economic situation and a perceived failure by the government to cushion the impact of rising prices.



Odinga ahead in Kenya's presidential race, official results show

◆ Veteran opposition leader Raila

Odinga led Kenya's presidential race, official election results showed on Saturday, pushing Deputy President William Ruto into second place. With just over 26% of votes counted, Odinga had 54% and Ruto had 45%, according to results provided by the Kenyan election commission and displayed on a large screen at a national tallying center in the capital, Nairobi. East Africa's wealthiest nation and most vibrant democracy held presidential, parliamentary and local elections on Tuesday.

COVID-19: Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
1 USA	94,643,632	1,062,151	594,472,637
2 India	44,239,372	526,996	
3 France	34,213,094	153,064	Deaths
4 Brazil	34,148,131	681,317	6,452,886
5 Germany	31,535,343	145,698	Recovered:
6 UK	23,420,826	186,087	566,749,779
7 Italy	21,480,076	173,982	New cases
8 S. Korea	21,236,355	25,566	+523,989
9 Russia	18,852,976	383,071	New deaths
10 Turkey	16,295,817	99,678	+1,028
11 Japan	15,278,668	34,763	
12 Spain	13,294,139	111,667	
13 Vietnam	11,364,355	43,097	
14 Australia	9,780,286	12,828	

Middle East

Figures as of closing

	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	515,645		24,613		442,182	48,850
Saudi Arabia	811,853	+105	9,269	+3	798,698	3,886
UAE	1,003,929	+800	2,339		982,660	18,930
Kuwait	655,854		2,562		652,250	1,042
Oman	397,231		4,260		384,669	8,302
Qatar	418,622	+583	681		412,123	5,818