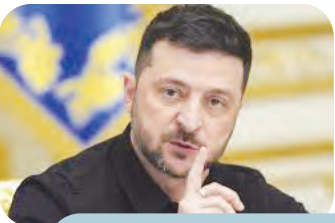


News in brief

Ukrainian President

Volodymyr Zelensky said yesterday he hoped the United States would back the idea of freezing the front line in Ukraine along its current shape at their meeting in Berlin. Zelensky said he was ready for "dialogue" at the latest round of high-stakes talks with US President Donald Trump's envoy and European leaders on ending the war with Russia. "The fairest possible option is to 'stay where we are'. This is true because it is a ceasefire... I know that Russia does not view this positively, and I would like the Americans to support us on this issue," Zelensky told reporters shortly before arriving in Berlin.



Zelensky says will seek US support to freeze front line at Berlin talks

US President Donald

Trump hinted that Republicans could lose the 2026 midterm elections, despite touting the "greatest economy in history," in an interview with the Wall Street Journal published Saturday. The Republican, who returned to the White House in January, has regularly insisted that the US economy is now booming, as he continues to blame inflation on his Democratic predecessor Joe Biden. "I've created the greatest economy in history. But it may take people a while to figure all these things out," Trump said in the interview, which the Journal said was conducted Friday in the Oval Office. "All this money that's pouring into our country is building things right now—car plants, AI, lots of stuff. I cannot tell you how that's going to equate to the voter, all I can do is do my job."

Trump hints at possible Republican loss in midterms

The Israeli military

said it targeted three members of the Iran-backed Hezbollah group in strikes on southern Lebanon yesterday. The Lebanese health ministry said on Sunday that two people had been killed in separate Israeli strikes in the south of the country, which came despite a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah. "Since this morning (Sunday), the IDF (military) has struck three Hezbollah terrorists in several areas in southern Lebanon," the Israeli military said in a statement. "The terrorists took part in attempts to reestablish Hezbollah's terror infrastructure, and their activities constituted a violation of the understandings between Israel and Lebanon," it added, referring to the November 2024 ceasefire. The agreement sought to end over a year of fighting between Israel and Hezbollah, which broke out at the start of the Gaza war in October 2023.

Israel army says struck Hezbollah members in southern Lebanon



SPOTLIGHT

Cardi B goes viral in Saudi Arabia



The rapper -- whose real name is Belcalis Marlenis Almanzar -- was just the latest American to make waves in the Gulf region in recent days.

AFP | Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

US rapper Cardi B has gone viral in Saudi Arabia, where the artist performed in the early hours of yesterday morning and unleashed a torrent of praise for the kingdom in a series of social media videos.

"Everything is brand new, honey. This country looks like it was just opened up yesterday," the artist said in a video posted on Instagram that has been widely shared online.

Cardi B was one of the headline performers at Riyadh's MDLBEAST Soundstorm festival, where she welcomed the thousands in attendance with the traditional Muslim greeting "Salam alaikum" before later stating that "everything is mashallah" in the wealthy Gulf monarchy.

The Arabic word, meaning "God has willed it", is a common term of praise in Muslim countries.

Known for her explicit language, the rapper adopted a more restrained tone during

her set, avoiding her most graphic expressions.

She wore a flowing outfit that covered her from neck to toe, a departure from her usual, often revealing, stage attire.

In the run-up to the performance, the artist posted videos at Riyadh's luxury malls and donned a hijab, while praising the shopping, ranting against paying American taxes and raving over the levels of opulence in the Saudi capital.

"The shopping is great, mashallah!" she added, while gushing over the fame she enjoyed in the kingdom.

"I'm somebody over here," she said.

"I do recommend to come over here for vacation. There's no alcohol, but some of y'all don't need to be drinking and having S-E-X."

Cardi B's appearance in Saudi Arabia also comes just months after she was cleared of an assault charge in a \$24 million civil trial in which the star was accused of slashing a woman's face with her fingernails.

Gunmen kill 11 at Jewish festival on Australia's **Bondi Beach**

Emergency responders rushed at least 29 people to local hospitals



Beach-goers fleeing Bondi Beach after gunmen opened fire, in Sydney

Police declared the shooting a "terrorist incident"

One of the alleged shooters was killed, and second was in a critical condition

Ordinary citizens tackled and disarmed one of the gunmen

AFP | Sydney, Australia

Two gunmen shot and killed 11 people and wounded many others at Sydney's Bondi Beach yesterday in a "terrorist" attack on a gathering for the Jewish festival of Hanukkah.

Emergency responders rushed at least 29 people to local hospitals from the beach, one of the biggest tourist draws in Australia's largest city, said New South Wales police.

One of the alleged shooters was killed, and the second was in a critical condition, they added.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese hailed ordinary citizens who tackled and disarmed one of the gunmen as "heroes".

Police declared the shooting a "terrorist incident" and said they had found suspected "improvised explosive devices" in a vehicle near the beach that was linked to the deceased suspect.

"This is a targeted attack on Jewish Australians on the first day of Hanukkah, which should be a day of joy, a celebration of faith -- an act of evil, antisemitism, terrorism that has struck the heart of our nation," Albanese said.



As the terrorist sprayed bullets at helpless people, a citizen leapt forward, forcing the gun from his hands as more help arrived. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese hailed ordinary citizens who tackled and disarmed one of the gunmen as "heroes".



People cross a street next to police vehicles after a shooting incident

"An attack on Jewish Australians is an attack on every Australian," Albanese said.

The shooting took place during an annual "Hanukkah by the Sea" event at Bondi Beach which police said was attended by over a thousand people.

Israeli President Isaac Herzog condemned the shooting as a

Sydney, which draws huge numbers of surfers, swimmers and tourists, especially at weekends.

"We heard the shots. It was shocking, it felt like 10 minutes of just bang, bang, bang. It seemed like a powerful weapon," Camilo Diaz, a 25-year-old student from Chile, told AFP at the scene.

Emergency services first responded to reports of shots being fired at 6:47 pm (0747 GMT).

'Blood everywhere'

One witness who declined to be named said he saw six dead or wounded people lying on the beach.

The grassy hill overlooking Bondi Beach was strewn with discarded items from people fleeing, including an abandoned children's stroller, an AFP journalist at the scene said.

Paramedics tended to wounded people lying on the grass, images broadcast by public broadcaster ABC showed.

A weapon that appeared to be a pump-action shotgun was lying by a tree by the beach.



Australia has one of the largest Jewish communities in the world, with nearly 100,000 people identifying Judaism as their religion in the 2021 census, concentrated mainly in Melbourne and Sydney -- though the actual number of Jews by ancestry and identity is likely higher.