

News in brief

◆ **China urged Tokyo and Washington yesterday** to withdraw the US-developed Typhon missile system, after it was unveiled in Japan for the first time during joint military exercises. Japan and the United States began the “Resolute Dragon” military drills on Thursday, and they will last until September 25. Tokyo’s defence ministry said on X. Japan’s Self-Defense Forces confirmed to AFP that the missile system had been showcased for the first time in the country over the course of the exercises, though it said the weapon would not be fired. Beijing’s foreign ministry on Tuesday called on the United States and Japan to “promptly withdraw” the missile system. “The United States and Japan, disregarding China’s solemn concerns, have insisted on deploying the Typhon mid-range missile system in Japan under the pretext of joint exercises,” spokesman Lin Jian told reporters at a regular briefing. “China expresses strong dissatisfaction and firm opposition to this,” he added.



China urges US, Japan to withdraw Typhon missile system

◆ **Colombia yesterday** halted arms purchases from the United States after Washington decertified the South American country as an ally in the fight against drugs. Colombian Interior Minister Armando Benedetti told Blu Radio that “from this moment on... weapons will not be purchased from the United States.” On Monday, President Donald Trump denounced his leftist Colombian counterpart Gustavo Petro for not only failing to curb cocaine production, but overseeing its surge to “all-time records.” “Colombia has been a great partner historically. Unfortunately, they have a president now that, in addition to being erratic, has not been a very good partner when it comes to taking on the drug cartels,” Secretary of State Marco Rubio, a harsh critic of leftist leaders in Latin America, said on a visit to Israel. A defiant Petro, who has crossed swords with Trump on the deportation of migrants, hit back, saying that the Colombian military would end its dependence on “handouts” from the United States.

◆ **Donald Trump** filed a \$15 billion defamation lawsuit against The New York Times on Monday, adding to the US president’s growing list of legal attacks on news organizations

Trump sues NYT for \$15 bn in latest attack on media



he accuses of bias against him. Trump, 79, has intensified his long-established hostility toward the media since his return to the White House, repeatedly badmouthing journalists critical of his administration, restricting access and bringing lawsuits demanding huge amounts of compensation. In his suit filed Monday in federal court in Florida, Trump accuses The New York Times of a “decades-long pattern” of smears driven by feelings of “actual malice.”

SPOTLIGHT

Trump heads for landmark state visit with ‘friend’ King Charles



US President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump (L) walk to board Air Force One at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland

London, United Kingdom

US President Donald Trump left for a historic second state visit to Britain Tuesday -- but political controversies, wars and tariffs threatened to cloud the pomp and pageantry. Britain is rolling out its royal family in a bid to woo the mercurial Trump, with security tight as protesters gear up to make their voices heard against the 79-year-old. Trump, whose mother was Scottish and who has long been fascinated by the British monarchy, was full of praise for his “friend” King Charles III as he left Washington. The Republican is the first US president to be invited for two state visits, after previously being hosted by Queen Eliz-

abeth II during his last term in office in 2019. “Charles, as you know, who’s now king, is my friend,” Trump told reporters at the White House before leaving hand-in-hand with First Lady Melania Trump. “He’s such an elegant gentleman and he represents the country so well.” But Trump indicated that embattled Prime Minister Keir Starmer will still have his work cut out as Britain seeks to put the finishing touches on a deal to avoid the US president’s sweeping global tariffs. “They want to see if they can refine the trade deal a little bit,” Trump said. Controversies over sex offender Jeffrey Epstein and free-speech culture wars, and Starmer’s political troubles at home could also make for some awkward moments.

A convoy of Israeli tanks is deployed at Israel’s border with the Gaza Strip



‘Assault’

Israel launches ground assault on Gaza City

UN investigators say Israel committing genocide in Gaza

Geneva, Switzerland

United Nations investigators yesterday accused Israel of committing genocide in Gaza in a bid to “destroy the Palestinians”, accusing Israel’s prime minister and other top officials of incitement. The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI), which does not speak on behalf of the world body, found that “genocide is occurring in Gaza”, commission chief Navi Pillay told AFP. “The responsibility lies with the State of Israel.” The bombshell report, immediately slammed by Israel, marks the first time a UN-mandated investigative body has concluded the country is committing genocide. The UN itself has not labelled the situation in Gaza a genocide,

but Pillay said she believed the facts presented by the commission should prompt “high-level leaders at the United Nations also to call this what it is, the genocide”. After the report was published, UN rights chief Volker Turk said it was up to the courts to determine whether genocide was taking place, but warned: “We see the evidence mounting.” Israel “categorically” rejected Tuesday’s report, with the foreign ministry describing it as “distorted and false” and calling “for the immediate abolition of this Commission of Inquiry”.



During the night, the military unleashed a massive bombardment of Gaza City as Israeli troops moved deeper into the

territory’s largest urban hub. “Last night, we transitioned into the next phase, the main phase of the plan for Gaza City... Forces have expanded ground activity into Hamas’s main stronghold in Gaza, which is Gaza City,” a military official told journalists. “We are moving towards the centre” of Gaza City, he said. The military estimated there were 2,000-3,000 Hamas fighters operating in the area, he added. Defence Minister Israel Katz earlier said Gaza City was “on fire”. “The IDF (Israeli military) is striking terrorist infrastructure with an iron fist,” he said. The military estimated that about “40 percent” of Gaza City residents had left and moved to the territory’s south, the military official said. Witnesses told AFP of relentless bombing in Gaza City, much of which is already in ruins after nearly two years of Israeli strikes. Only huge piles of rubble remained of a residential block in the north of the city hit by overnight bombing. “Why kill children sleeping safely like that, turning them into body parts?” said Abu Abd Zaqout. “We pulled the children out in pieces.”



Smoke billowing amid Israeli bombardment of the besieged Palestinian territory