

Israel PM calls Turkey's Erdogan 'antisemitic dictator'



Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (R) meeting with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (L) in New York City in 2023 (file photo)

AFP | Jerusalem

The office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday called Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan an "antisemitic dictator" and vowed Israel would "continue to act forcefully against Turkey's attempts to destabilize the region."

It comes days after Syria accused Israel of bombing an air base in the country's north, a short drive from the Turkish border, with Netanyahu later tacitly acknowledging the strike.

Netanyahu had said Turkey was looking to establish a military presence there, but Turkey has denied any visit to

the site.

"Israel has long been unimpressed by Turkey's hypocrisy. Erdogan is an antisemitic dictator who massacred Kurds, supports the massacre of the Hamas terrorist organization, and oppresses his own people," Netanyahu's office said in a statement.

It added that Israel would "continue to act forcefully against Turkey's attempts to destabilize the region and against any threat to its security."

On Tuesday, Syria accused Israel of striking a disused military air base near the north-western city of Aleppo that was damaged during the civil war and has been out of service since 2012.

Trump pledges 'golden age' of space travel

AFP | Washington

President Donald Trump pledged to blast more rockets into space in a push to boost US space travel, including to Mars and the Moon, the White House said.

The United States is competing with China in the race to land astronauts on the Moon before 2030, more than 50 years after humans first walked the lunar surface.

The policy aims to "reinvigorate America's leadership in space transportation," enabling over 1,000 launches and reen-

tries on US soil every year by 2030.

In a memorandum published Thursday, Trump called on US space agency NASA to "facilitate commercial transportation to and from the moon, to facilitate commercial robotic access to Mars, and to explore commercial avenues to send humans to and from Mars."

NASA is already pushing to create a lunar surface base and plans to use robotic vehicles to build infrastructure that future human explorers to the Moon could eventually make use of.

Gandhi notes sell for record \$1.7m in India

AFP | Mumbai

A collection of notes written by Indian independence hero Mahatma Gandhi has sold for \$1.7 million in Mumbai, the highest ever price paid for an Indian historical document.

Mumbai-based auction house Saffronart said the collection was preserved by the family of Gandhi's close associate and freedom fighter Anand T Hingorani.

The 688 notes were written by Gandhi to Hingorani after the death of Hingorani's wife

Vidya, and were compiled into a book titled "A Thought for the Day".

The messages, written between 1944 and 1946, touch upon several subjects including truth, God and non-violence.

"A Thought for the Day... sold for \$1.7 million, setting a world record for an Indian historical document sold at auction," Saffronart said in a statement on Thursday.

The notes were the main attraction of the collection, titled "Gandhi: From the Collection of Anand T Hingorani".

UK forecasts 'biggest' El Nino

● El Niño is forecast to intensify

● Warmth already nearly two degrees above average

● Impacts on food security highlighted

AFP | London

This year's El Nino weather pattern will be the biggest in over a century and could make 2027 the hottest year globally, Britain's national weather agency predicted yesterday.

This year's El Nino weather pattern will be the biggest in over a century and could make 2027 the hottest year globally, Britain's national weather agency predicted yesterday.

An El Nino weather event happens when warming sea surface temperatures in the tropical eastern Pacific trigger worldwide changes in winds, atmospheric pressure and rainfall, as well as higher global temperatures overall.

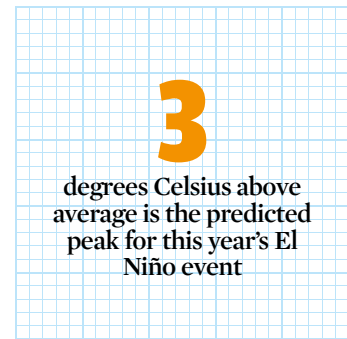
Adam Scaife, head of long-range forecasting at the weather agency, told the BBC: "We are expecting the biggest El Nino for over a century, peaking at something over three degrees -- that is unheard of in modern climate records."

This means Pacific water would heat up more than 3C above the norm in the coming months.

El Nino occurs when water



An aerial view shows a mosque and surrounding buildings in Somang village in Lebak in Indonesia's western Banten province, which was deliberately flooded to make way for the construction and filling of the Karian Dam that opened in 2023 and has now re-emerged due to the El Nino-driven drought



temperatures rise at least 0.5C above the baseline. While it is part of a natural cycle, scientists agree climate change increases its impacts.

A record El Nino would be "adding to the stresses of climate change" following a summer of heatwaves across Europe, the Met Office said in a blog.

Temperatures in the Pacific region are currently running about 2.6C above a rolling 30-year average, according to the Climate Brink dashboard based on data from the US National

Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The dashboard also aggregates forecasts that put El Nino on course to peak at a 3.9C anomaly this November -- well above a 3C anomaly detected in 2015.

"We should be clear that this is an unprecedented event," British scientist Scaife said in a Met Office blog.

If the forecast is accurate, then 2026 "will far exceed our recent experience of El Nino and its worldwide climate influences", said the physicist who specialises in climate modelling.

"I have never seen an El Nino signal this intense in our forecasts," he added, with even a 2C rise considered a "really big event".

El Nino typically results in drier conditions across southeast Asia, Australia, southern Africa, and northern Brazil, and wetter conditions in the Horn of Africa, the southern United States, Peru and Ecuador.

Israel army, settlers kill two Palestinians in separate incidents

AFP | Jerusalem

Israeli forces shot dead a Palestinian man yesterday in the city of Jenin, in the north of the occupied West Bank.

In a separate incident in the southern West Bank, terrorist Israeli settlers fatally shot a 17-year-old, the Palestinian health ministry said.

In Jenin, 58-year-old Fathi Zidan Hazem, "died from injuries sustained after being shot by Israeli forces early Friday," the Palestinian health ministry said in a statement, adding that Israel was withholding his body.

Hazem was a retired colonel in the Palestinian National Security Forces.

In April 2022, after his son, Raad Hazem, carried out a shooting spree in Tel Aviv in which he killed three Israelis and wounded several others, Israeli authorities demanded that Fathi Hazem hand himself in.

His son was shot dead by Israeli forces after a massive



Suad, the wife of 58-year-old Fathi Zidan Hazem, who was killed by the Israeli military as they tried to arrest him, walks outside her home in the northern city of Jenin

manhunt.

A second son, Abdul Rahman Hazem, was killed during an Israeli military raid on the Jenin refugee camp in September 2022.

Footage from the scene yesterday showed a pool of blood and bullets scattered among groceries in the family's home.

A Palestinian eyewitness,

who declined to give her name to AFP, said Israeli occupation forces raided her neighbour's house in the early hours and told Hazem to raise his hands, which he refused to do.

"They shot him seven times in front of his 10-year-old son. They dragged him down the stairs and took him with them," she said.

Several wounded in sword attack at Swedish school: authorities

AFP | Stockholm

Australian police charged a man with foreign interference yesterday for allegedly seeking to pass intelligence about Ukrainian military activities to Russia.

"An assailant armed with a sword has entered Brinellskolan and wounded several people," the Fagersta municipality said in a statement, adding the assailant had been detained by police.

According to police, they received reports of the attack just after 2:00 pm (1200 GMT).

The municipality did not specify the number of wounded but said in a statement that police were still searching the school and that several other schools in the area had been locked down.

Pioneering cancer treatment saves python named Jodie Foster: UK ZOO

AFP | London

A British zoo hailed curing a cancer-stricken python named after Hollywood star Jodie Foster, who became the first snake to receive an innovative treatment combining surgery and electrochemotherapy (ECT).

Chester Zoo, in north-west England, said the 4.5m reticulated python had fully recovered after first undergoing surgery and then receiving ECT following the return of a cancerous tumour in her jawbone.

US charges woman with IS- inspired plot to blow up New York State Capitol

AFP | New York

US authorities charged a woman who allegedly supported the Islamic State group with a terrorism offense after she told an FBI informant she "wanted to destroy" the New York State Capitol buildings, court filings showed.

Located in Albany near the Canadian border, the New York State Capitol is the nerve center of the state government and contains both houses of the state's legislature.

Jessica Bowie, 35, was charged with attempting to provide material support to designated "foreign terrorist organizations" according to court filings.