

Iran issue warning as protests over woman's death spread

Iran's Revolutionary Guards issue warning over unrest as security forces come under attack

● **US sanctions Iran's morality police**

● **Social media platforms have also been cut off in areas of Tehran and Kurdistan as videos of dissent go viral**

Reuters | Dubai

Iran's powerful Revolutionary Guards called on the judiciary yesterday to prosecute "those who spread false news and rumours", in an apparent bid to take the steam out of nationwide protests over the death of a young woman in police custody.

Protesters in Tehran and other Iranian cities torched police stations and vehicles earlier yesterday as public outrage over the death showed no signs of abating, with reports of security forces coming under attack.

Mahsa Amini, 22, died last week after being arrested in Tehran for wearing "unsuitable attire". She fell into a coma while in detention. The authorities have said they would launch an investigation into the cause of her death.



Protesters chant slogans during a protest over the death of a woman who was detained by the morality police, in downtown Tehran

In a statement, the Guards expressed sympathy with the family and relatives of Amini.

"We have requested the judiciary to identify those who spread false news and rumours on social media as well as on the street and who endanger the psychological safety of society and to deal with them decisively," the Guards, who have cracked down on protests in the past, said.

Pro-government protests are planned for Friday, Iranian media said.

"The will of the Iranian people is this: do not spare the

criminals," said an editorial in the influential hardline Kayhan newspaper.

The United States yesterday imposed sanctions on Iran's morality police, accusing them of abuse and violence against Iranian women and of violating the rights of peaceful Iranian protesters, the US Treasury said.

The Treasury also said it had put sanctions on the heads of the Iranian army's ground forces and of the morality police as well as on Iran's minister of intelligence. It said it held the morality police responsible for the death of Amini.



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A new mobile internet disruption was registered in the country, internet monitoring group Netblocks wrote on Twitter, in a possible sign that the authorities fear the protests will intensify.

A group of United Nations experts, including Javaid Rehman, special rapporteur on human rights in Iran, and Mary Lawlor, special rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, demanded accountability for Amini's death.

"(Amini) is another victim of Iran's sustained repression and systematic discrimination against women and the imposition of discriminatory dress codes that deprive women of bodily autonomy and the freedoms of opinion, expression and belief," the experts said in a statement.

A member of an Iranian pro-government paramilitary organisation, the Basij, was stabbed to death in the north-eastern city of Mashhad on Wednesday, two semi-official Iranian news agencies reported yesterday.

The Tasnim and Fars news agencies reports of the stabbing appeared on Telegram as both their websites were not functioning yesterday. There was no official confirmation of the death.

Khmer Rouge tribunal ends work after 16 years, 3 judgments



Khieu Samphan, right, the former head of state for the Khmer Rouge, sits in a courtroom

AP | Phnom Penh

The international court convened in Cambodia to judge the Khmer Rouge for its brutal 1970s rule ended its work after spending \$337 million and 16 years to convict just three men of crimes after the regime caused the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people.

In its final session, the UN-assisted tribunal rejected an appeal by Khieu Samphan, the last surviving leader of the Khmer Rouge government that ruled Cambodia from 1975-79. It reaffirmed the life sentence he received after being convicted in 2018 of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Busloads of ordinary Cambodians turned up to watch the final proceedings of a tribunal that had sought to bring justice, accountability and explanations for the crimes. Many of those attending yesterday's session lived through the Khmer Rouge terror, including survivors Bou Meng and Chum Mey, who had given evidence at the tribunal over the years.

US appeals court says Trump criminal probe can resume classified records review

Reuters | Washington

The US Justice Department can resume reviewing classified records seized by the FBI from former President Donald Trump's Florida home pending appeal, a federal appellate court ruled on Wednesday, giving a boost to the criminal investigation into whether the records were mishandled or compromised.

The Atlanta-based 11th US Circuit Court of Appeals granted a request by federal prosecutors to block US District

Judge Aileen Cannon's stay barring them from using the classified documents in their probe until an independent arbiter, called a special master, vets the materials to weed out any that could be deemed privileged and withheld from investigators.

The appeals court also said it would agree to reverse a portion of the lower court's order that required the government to hand over records with classification markings for the special master's review.

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Holy Land shipwreck reveals tenacity of ancient traders as empires shifted

AFP | Maagan Michael

An ancient shipwreck found off the shore of Israel and loaded with cargo from all over the Mediterranean shows that traders from the West still came to port even after the Islamic conquest of the Holy Land, researchers say.

A surprise storm? An inexperienced captain? Whatever the reason, the merchant ship made from fir and walnut trees and carrying containers with delights from far-off lands sank in the shallow waters off what is today the Israeli coastal community of Maagan Michael more than 1,200 years ago.

It was around the time the largely Christian Byzantine Empire was losing its grip on this area of the eastern Mediterranean region and Islamic rule was extending its reach.

The shipwreck, dated to the 7th or 8th century AD, is evidence that trade persisted with the rest of the Mediterranean despite the religious divide, said Deborah Cvikel, a nautical archaeologist at the University of Haifa and director of the dig.

"The history books, they usually tell us that ... commerce almost stopped. There was no international commerce in the Mediterranean. We had mainly smaller vessels sailing along the coast doing cabotage," she said.

But this no longer seems to be the case.



An aerial view shows the excavation of a 25-metre cargo ship

"Here we have a large shipwreck, which we think the original ship was around 25 metres (82 feet) long, and...laden with cargo from all over the Mediterranean."

Artefacts on deck show the ship had docked in Cyprus, Egypt, maybe Turkey and perhaps as far away as the North African coast.

The excavation is backed by the Israel Science Foundation, Honor Frost Foundation and the Institute of Nautical Archaeology at Texas A&M University.

Ship graveyard in shallow seas

The coast of Israel is abundant with ships that sank over the millennia. The wrecks are more accessible to study than elsewhere in the Mediterranean because the sea here is shallow

and the sandy bottom preserves artefacts.

A storm might shift the sands and expose a relic, which is what happened with the new discovery at Maagan Michael. Two amateur divers spotted a piece of wood sticking out from the bottom and reported it to authorities.

Eight excavation seasons later, Cvikel's team has mapped out much of the 20-metre-long, five-metre-wide wooden skeleton that remains.

Using underwater vacuums to clear out 1.5 meters of sand, they found over 200 amphoras that still contained ingredients from the Mediterranean diet, like fish sauce, and a variety of olives, dates and figs.

There were sailing tools like ropes and personal items such



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as wooden combs, as well as animals, including the remains of beetles and six rats.

"You have to be very attentive because some of the remains, like fish bones, or rat bones, or olive pits, they are so tiny that it could be lost in a split second," Cvikel said.

Some of the cargo bore symbols of the Christian Byzantine church and others had writing in Arabic.

Researchers hope to find a hall to display the ship in its entirety to the public, otherwise they will cover it with sand and leave it at the sea bottom with the countless other wrecks.

English Daily newspaper

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