

Heavy fighting, internet disruption as Ethiopia conflict rages



Tigrayans rush to stock up on supplies amid fears of conflict
AFP | Addis Ababa

Ethiopian forces battled overnight to repel an assault by Tigray rebels in the Afar region, a humanitarian source said yesterday, with reports of an internet blackout in the north of the country.

Rebels in the northern Tigray region seized local airports and launched attacks into the neighbouring states of Afar and Amhara this week, saying they were once again in a “full-blown war” with the federal government.

Locals fear a repeat of the telecoms blackout and supplies blockade imposed on Tigray during the last civil war in 2020-2022 that killed an estimated 600,000 people.

Online monitor Net-blocks said there was an “internet disruption in northern Ethiopia corresponding to reports of a telecoms blackout in Tigray”.

Nepal PM says floods ‘a warning to the world’ about climate change

AFP | United Nations

Nepal’s catastrophic flooding last month “was a warning to the world” about the rising dangers of climate change, Prime Minister Balendra Shah told the United Nations on Thursday, urging countries to step up to help his country adapt.

Addressing the General Assembly in sunglasses during its high-level week, Shah said a warming climate was “destabilizing the fragile Himalayan ecology,” melting permafrost and glaciers and accelerating hazards.

The nation suffered one of the worst catastrophes in its history late last month when a tsunami-like flood, triggered by a high-altitude glacial mountain collapse along the Nepal-China border, cut a swathe of destruction.

More than 1,400 people died, 6,000 are still missing, and the economic devastation runs in the billions of dollars.

Netanyahu attacks allies and enemies in fiery UN speech

Dozens of envoys walk out as the Israeli leader addresses the UN

● Netanyahu criticizes Britain and France sharply

● Targets Iran’s leadership

● Faces tight October reelection race

AFP | United Nations

Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, facing a difficult reelection campaign at home, delivered a fiery UN speech assailing enemies and allies alike -- and sparking uproar in the chamber.

Locked in a tight race to stay in power in October 27 elections, Netanyahu used the global platform at the UN General Assembly to attack everyone from the leaders of Iran to New York’s first Muslim mayor and partners Britain, France and Turkey.

Dozens of envoys from across the world walked out, some jeering and booing, while Netanyahu’s own team stood and applauded, and the speaker of the session shouted for order.

“If there are any other moral cowards who haven’t left this hall, please do so now,” Netanyahu told those turning their backs on him.

He lashed out at New York’s popular, leftist Mayor Zohran Mamdani as “antisemitic” and claimed that “since you were elected mayor of this city, many Jews no longer feel safe.”

Mamdani had threatened to execute an ICC arrest warrant against Netanyahu, before conceding he did not have the authority.

The Hague-based International Criminal Court (ICC) said in 2024 it had reasonable grounds to believe Netanyahu was responsible for war crimes in the Gaza campaign, which responded to Hamas’s deadly October 7,



Some delegates leave as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses the 81st United Nations General Assembly

2023 attacks. Netanyahu denies the ICC claims.

“Netanyahu used his speech to repeat baseless lies meant to sanitize his genocide of Palestinians,” Mamdani said in response. “Yet no lie can change the fact that he remains the subject of an International Criminal Court arrest warrant alleging war crimes and crimes against humanity.”

One of Netanyahu’s fiercest critics, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, was unable to attend the UN gathering after the Trump administration refused him a visa.

In a video message played ahead of Netanyahu’s speech, Abbas said, “We reject these unlawful punitive measures, and we reject the accusations and justifications on which they were based.”

Netanyahu attacks Britain, France

Britain and France, historic partners of Israel that have become increasingly outspoken in

77 delegations walked out during Netanyahu’s UN speech, according to reports from the General Assembly hall

their criticism, were also in Netanyahu’s firing line.

The two European nations have both imposed limited sanctions on Israeli exports from the occupied West Bank.

And French President Emmanuel Macron drew Israel’s ire for claiming in his own UN speech that Hamas was not active in the West Bank. Hamas’s stronghold has traditionally been Gaza.

Netanyahu attacked Britain and France for their past colonial empires during his turn at the lectern.

“They accuse Israel, tiny Is-

rael, of colonialism -- some colonialism. And who’s accusing us? Among them are people in Britain and in France. For God’s sakes, they invented the term,” he said.

Netanyahu already had poor relations with Macron, who led a push by Western nations at last year’s UN General Assembly to recognize a Palestinian state.

Iran’s ‘murderous dictatorship’

Netanyahu had especially harsh language on Iran, calling it a “murderous dictatorship.”

He said the war in which Israeli and US forces have attacked Iran for close to seven months had stopped Tehran from being able to develop nuclear weapons.

“I vowed to prevent Iran’s murderous dictatorship from developing atomic bombs, nuclear weapons aimed at destroying Israel, nuclear weapons that could threaten the entire world,” he said.

He said the fall of Iran’s leadership, whose UN envoy displayed



Netanyahu held up a pager and asked “Remember the beepers?” referencing Israel’s September 2024 operation that detonated explosive devices distributed to Hezbollah operatives in Lebanon

a portrait of slain Quds Force commander Qasem Soleimani on their vacant desk, was not “far.”

Despite the onslaught, Iran’s government has retained control and continues to defy the United States by effectively blocking the Strait of Hormuz.

Pager bombs

During his speech, Netanyahu brandished a pager device like those that Israeli intelligence reportedly engineered with explosives before having them shipped to operatives of Iran-backed Lebanese militant group Hezbollah.

They were later detonated, maiming hundreds of Hezbollah operatives but also civilian bystanders.

He accused Turkey of backing Iran-backed Islamist group Hamas, going on to call the country’s leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan a “tyrant.”

Burhanettin Duran, the Turkish presidency’s communications director, dismissed the comments as “baseless accusations” that were “incompatible” with UN ideals, state-run news agency Anadolu reported.

Netanyahu is only making a whirlwind stop in New York before rushing back to Israel, where the election campaign is in full swing. He is not scheduled to meet any top US leaders.

Hollywood stars among 100 arrested in NY anti-Netanyahu protest

AFP | New York

Movie star Susan Sarandon and “Hacks” actress Hannah Einbinder were among a reported 100 people detained by police in New York as they broke up a protest against the Israeli prime minister.

Footages showed NYPD officers leading away cuffed “Thelma & Louise” star Sarandon at the demo in the city as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was readying to address the United Nations General Assembly.

The New York Post reported



Protesters hold images of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump during a demonstration in New York

Einbinder had also been frogmarched from the demonstration organized by Jewish Voice for Peace, where protesters held banners that read “Stop Arming Israel” and “End the Genocide.”

A spokesperson for the NYPD said officers had responded to reports of an “unscheduled demonstration” where people were blocking an intersection.

“Members of the NYPD Community Affairs Bureau issued... warnings, advising participants that they should leave,” the spokesperson said.

“They continued to block the

intersection. Multiple individuals who didn’t comply were taken into custody,” she said, without providing the number of people arrested.

Jewish Voice for Peace said on social media that over 100 people had been arrested.

“Over 400 people held a mass sit-in outside the UN demanding an end to the genocide and an end to US military funding to Israel,” the organization said on X.

“We refuse to stand by while war criminals are given a platform to speak and while our government spends billions on war.”