

News in brief

Court rejects Netanyahu's call to postpone graft trial hearings



Israel's 12-day war with Iran. The Jerusalem district court said in a judgment published online that "in its current form (his request) does not provide a basis or detailed justification for the cancellation of the hearings".

**The death toll from a recent landslide near the Colombian city of Medellin has risen to 16, authorities said Thursday, with the search continuing for more missing.** The landslide occurred Tuesday in a mountainside area of Bello, near Colombia's second-biggest city, after heavy rains caused a nearby stream to overflow. Andres Julian Rendon, governor of the Antioquia department, said on X that the death toll had risen to 16 with eight people still missing.

**An Israeli court yesterday rejected Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's request to postpone giving testimony in his corruption trial, after United States President Donald Trump said the case should be cancelled.** Netanyahu's lawyer on Thursday asked the court to excuse the leader from hearings over the next two weeks, saying he needed to concentrate on "security issues" after

Colombia landslide death toll rises to 16



Cambodia's Hun Sen accuses Thai PM of 'insulting king'



"An insult to a regional commander is an insult to the Thai king because it is only the king who issued a royal decree to appoint him."

**Cambodia's influential ex-premier Hun Sen yesterday accused Thailand's prime minister of insulting the Thai king, as tensions between the neighbouring countries intensified.** He said Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra's comments about her military commander - who she labelled an "opponent" - in a leaked phone call with the veteran leader over a border dispute were "an insult to the king". In a livestream on his official Facebook page, Hun Sen said:

SPOTLIGHT

Japan executes 'Twitter killer' who murdered nine



A court sketch shows Takahiro Shiraishi (C), on trial

AFP | Tokyo

Japan yesterday executed a man dubbed the "Twitter killer" who murdered and dismembered nine people he met online, in the nation's first enactment of the death penalty since 2022.

Takahiro Shiraishi, 34, was hanged for killing his young victims, all but one of whom were women, after contacting them on the social media platform now called X.

He had targeted users who posted about taking their own life, telling them he could help them in their plans, or even die alongside them.

Justice Minister Keisuke Suzuki said Shiraishi's crimes, carried out in 2017, included "robbery, rape, murder... destruction of a corpse and abandonment of a corpse".

"Nine victims were beaten and strangled, killed, robbed, and then mutilated with parts of their bodies concealed in boxes, and parts discarded in a garbage dump," Suzuki told reporters in Tokyo.

Shiraishi acted to satisfy "his own sexual and financial desires" and the murders "caused great shock and anxiety to so-

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**Takahiro Shiraishi lured his victims, who had expressed suicidal thoughts online, to his home and then attempted to hide dismembered body parts using cat litter in coolers and toolboxes**

ciety", Suzuki said.

"After much careful consideration, I ordered the execution."

Japan and the United States are the only two G7 countries to still use capital punishment, and there is strong support for the practice among the Japanese public, surveys show.

There was one execution in 2022, three in 2021, three in 2019 and 15 in 2018, the justice ministry said.

62 killed in Gaza strikes

Israeli forces reportedly kill 62 in Gaza, including 10 waiting for desperately needed aid

GHF aid sites under scrutiny

MSF reports 190% bullet wound surge

AFP | Gaza City

Gaza's civil defence agency said that Israeli forces killed at least 62 people yesterday, including 10 who were waiting for aid in the war-ravaged Palestinian territory.

The reported killing of people seeking aid marks the latest in a string of deadly incidents near aid sites in Gaza, where a US- and Israeli-backed foundation has largely replaced established humanitarian organisations.

Civil defence spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP that 62 Palestinians had been killed yesterday by Israeli strikes or fire across the Palestinian territory.

When asked by AFP for comment, the Israeli military said it was looking into the incidents, and denied its troops fired in one of the locations in central Gaza where rescuers said one aid seeker was killed.

Bassal told AFP that six people were killed in southern Gaza near one of the distribution sites operated by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), and one more in a separate incident in the centre of the territory, where the army denied shooting "at all".

Another three people were killed by a strike while waiting for aid southwest of Gaza City, Bassal said.

The health ministry in the Hamas-run territory says that since late May, more than 500 people have been killed near aid centres while seeking scarce supplies.

GHF has denied that fatal shootings have occurred in the



Palestinian civil defence first responders and other people inspect the remains of a burnt-down classroom after extinguishing a fire following an Israeli strike at the UNRWA's Osama bin Zaid school in the Saftawi district in western Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip

immediate vicinity of its aid points.

'Slaughter'

Medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) yesterday slammed the GHF relief effort, calling it "slaughter masquerading as humanitarian aid".

It noted that in the week of June 8, shortly after GHF opened a distribution site in central Gaza's Netzarim corridor, the MSF field hospital in nearby Deir el-Balah saw a 190 percent increase in bullet wound cases compared to the previous week.

Aitor Zabalgogeoaskoa, MSF emergency coordinator in Gaza, said in a statement that under the way in which the distribution centres currently operate: "If people arrive early and approach the checkpoints, they get shot."

"If they arrive on time, but there is an overflow and they jump over the mounds and the

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**Since the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation began operations in late May, at least 549 Palestinians have died while seeking food near aid sites, with over 4,000 injured and dozens still missing**

wires, they get shot".

"If they arrive late, they shouldn't be there because it is an 'evacuated zone', they get shot," he added.

Meanwhile, Bassal said that

ten people were killed in five separate Israeli strikes near the southern Gaza city of Khan Yunis, east of which he said "continuous Israeli artillery shelling" was reported yesterday.

Hamas's armed wing, the Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades, said they shelled an Israeli vehicle east of Khan Yunis yesterday.

The Al-Quds Brigades, the armed wing of Hamas-ally Palestinian Islamic Jihad, said they had attacked a group of Israeli soldiers north of Khan Yunis in coordination with the Al-Qassam Brigades.

Bassal added that thirty people were killed in six separate strikes in northern Gaza yesterday, including a fisherman who was targeted "by Israeli warships".

He specified that eight of them were killed "after an Israeli air strike hit Osama Bin Zaid School, which was housing displaced persons" in northern Gaza.

US envoy leaves Russia as detente faltering

AFP | Moscow

The US ambassador to Russia, Lynne Tracy, is departing Moscow, leaving Washington without a top envoy in the country as a rapprochement being pushed by US President Donald Trump falters.

Moscow earlier this week accused Washington of not being "ready" to take steps to restore the normal functioning of their embassies, hobbled by years of tit-for-tat restrictions and expulsions of diplomats.

Trump has not yet nominated a successor to Tracy, the first woman to hold the post and who was appointed by ex-President Joe Biden and is leaving after two-and-a-half years in the role.

Trump has overhauled Biden's policy of isolating Vladimir Putin over his Ukraine offensive, holding several calls with the Kremlin chief and raising the prospect of boosting bilateral ties.

"I am proud to have represented my country in Moscow during such a challenging time," Tracy



Foreign diplomats, including the US ambassador to Russia Lynne Tracy, lay flowers at the monument for the victims of political repressions in front of the FSB security service (former KGB) headquarters in Moscow

said in a message posted by the embassy on social media.

She also quoted lines from a poem by Alexander Pushkin, Russia's famed national poet.

Diplomats from the two countries have held several rounds of negotiations under Trump on issues ranging from the Ukraine

conflict and prisoner exchanges to normalising embassy operations.

But on Wednesday the Kremlin accused Washington of being "not yet ready" to remove barriers to the work of their respective diplomatic missions.

Trump has shown increasing

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**Despite Trump's push for warmer ties, Putin has escalated attacks in Ukraine and rejected ceasefire calls since the US election, deepening the diplomatic divide**

frustration with Putin over his refusal to end Moscow's three-year offensive on Ukraine.

Since the Republican returned to the White House, Putin has repeatedly rejected calls for an unconditional ceasefire, demanded Kyiv cede more territory, urged his troops to keep advancing and escalated deadly missile and drone attacks on Ukraine.