

Ukraine, Israel in spat over 'stolen' grain shipments

● Israel said that Kyiv had not provided evidence to support its claims

AFP | Kyiv, Ukraine

Ukraine and Israel were yesterday locked in a diplomatic row over allegations Israel had accepted shipments of grain which Kyiv said Russia had "stolen" from parts of occupied Ukraine.

One of the world's largest grain producers, Ukraine has repeatedly accused Russia of illegally exporting agricultural products from territory that Moscow has captured since it invaded in February 2022.

"Another vessel carrying such grain has arrived at a port in Israel and is preparing to unload," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky wrote in a statement on social media.



Representative image. (Courtesy of united24)

"The Israeli authorities cannot be unaware of which ships are arriving at the country's ports and what cargo they are carrying," he added.

Israel said that Kyiv had not provided evidence to support its claims and rejected that the ship had arrived at the port of Haifa.

"The Ukrainian government has not submitted a request for legal assistance... nor has the Ukrainian government provided

evidence for its claims," Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said at a news conference in response to a question.

"The vessel has not entered the port and is yet to submit its documents," he said.

"It's not possible to verify the truth of the Ukrainian claims regarding the forgery of the bill of lading," Saar added, referring to a document showing the details of products being transported.



Hitting out at Ukraine for conducting what he called "Twitter diplomacy", Saar said to Ukraine: "If you have any evidence of theft, submit it through the appropriate channels."

Ukraine alleges Russia stole more than two million tonnes of grain from occupied territory in 2025.

It said it had tracked shipments to Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

Kyiv summoned Israel's ambassador on Tuesday to protest over the alleged shipments.

Israeli army says finds huge Hezbollah tunnel network in south Lebanon

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

The Israeli military said on Tuesday it had discovered a large Hezbollah tunnel network used by elite fighters in south Lebanon, near Israel's northern border.

Troops found "two Hez-

bollah terror tunnels, constructed over approximately a decade" that stretched two kilometres (more than one mile) with shafts "connecting to positions with launchers directed toward Israeli territory", an army statement said.

US forces board ship suspected of heading to Iran port

AFP | Washington, United States

US Marines on Tuesday boarded a commercial ship in the Arabian Sea that was suspected of trying to violate the American blockade of Iranian ports, the US military said.

The M/V Blue Star III was released by US forces "af-

ter conducting a search and confirming the ship's voyage would not include an Iranian port call," Central Command, which is responsible for American forces in the Middle East, said in a post on X.

"So far, 39 vessels have been redirected to ensure compliance" with the blockade, the military command added.

US authorities capture alleged Guatemalan drug kingpin

AFP | Guatemala City, Guatemala

US authorities detained a suspected Guatemalan drug kingpin with a \$10 million bounty on his head, the Central American nation's US embassy announced.

Eugenio Molina-Lopez is accused of heading up a gang called Los Huistas, which allegedly trafficked US-bound cocaine from South America to Mexican cartels.

He was arrested in San Die-



go, California, the US Attorney's Office for the Southern District of California said in a statement, which the embassy in Guatemala City shared on X.

The statement did not specify when the arrest took place.

The 61-year-old known as "Don Dario" pleaded not guilty during a federal court appearance on Friday.

Molina-Lopez is charged with conspiracy to import and distribute cocaine, which carries a possible life sentence.

Trump shooting scare renews 'staged' conspiracy theory

● There is no evidence that the Trump administration orchestrated Saturday's attack.

AFP | Washington, United States

A flood of misinformation exploded online after US President Donald Trump escaped a weekend shooting scare, fueling renewed -- and unfounded -- claims that he has staged assassination attempts to boost his political fortunes.

Trump and his top administration officials were evacuated Saturday from a media gala in Washington after gunfire erupted outside the ballroom, marking the third assassination attempt targeting the Republican in two years.

AFP's fact-checkers identified a series of social media posts from anti-Trump accounts circulating an unsubstantiated theory that the White House staged the shooting to distract attention from unfa-

vorable news, including the unpopular US-Israeli war with Iran.

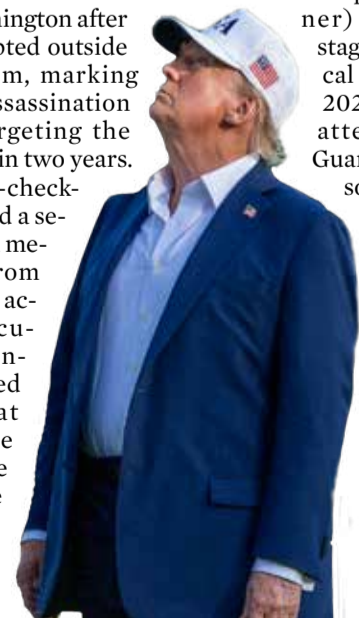
Posts advancing the claim garnered 80 million views on Elon Musk's platform X alone within two days of the shooting, according to the disinformation watchdog NewsGuard.

Many of the same accounts previously claimed that two assassination attempts on Trump in 2024 -- in Pennsylvania and Florida -- were also staged.

The narrative largely emanated from a left-wing conspiracy movement that researchers call "BlueAnon," a play on the right-wing QAnon cult. "Many of the anti-Trump accounts baselessly claiming that the WHCD (White House Correspondents' Dinner)

shooting was staged made identical claims after the 2024 assassination attempts," NewsGuard's Sofia Rubinson told AFP.

"Some viral posts we've seen explicitly cite those earlier incidents as 'evidence' that staging shootings is part of Trump's playbook -- to generate sympathy and distract from unfavorable coverage."



Indian billionaire's son offers home for Escobar's hippos

● Anant Ambani, the son of tycoon Mukesh Ambani, said he had formally requested the Colombian government to stay a decision to kill the animals

AFP | New Delhi, India

An Indian billionaire's son offered yesterday to take hippos descended from those introduced to Colombia by drug kingpin Pablo Escobar, rather than have the animals killed.

Anant Ambani, the son of tycoon Mukesh Ambani, said he had formally requested the Colombian government to stay a decision to kill the animals, which have wreaked havoc on rivers in the South American nation.

Instead, he has asked

to allow the "safe, scientifically-led translocation that would bring the 80 animals to a permanent home" at his Vantara animal centre.

The vast zoo in India's western state of Gujarat bills itself as the "one of the world's largest wildlife rescue, care and conservation centres".

Vantara is already home to hundreds of elephants, as well as 50 bears, 160 tigers, 200

lions, 250 leopards and 900 crocodiles, among other animals, according to India's Central Zoo Authority.

Experts have repeatedly sounded the alarm on Vantara's massive animal intake, including the import of critically endangered and rare species.

Escobar brought hippos -- which are native only to Africa and can weigh up to several tonnes -- to Colombia in the 1980s.

After Escobar's death, hippos from his private zoo made a new life in the lush river banks of the Colombia's Magdalena River -- where they have attacked fishermen, prompting moves to

kill them.

Anant Ambani, son of the billionaire head of the multinational conglomerate Reliance Industries, said he had submitted a detailed plan to give the animals a new home at Vantara.

The animal centre is sited alongside the Reliance Jamnagar Refinery Complex, which the conglomerate says is the world's largest crude oil refinery.

Summers there can get extremely hot, with temperatures soaring above 40C.

Ambani's proposal sets out a veterinary-led capture and transport, as well as the creation of a "purpose-designed naturalistic setting" for the hippos, according to a statement.

"Vantara has the expertise, infrastructure and resolve to support this effort, entirely on Colombia's terms," the statement said.

"These 80 hippos did not choose where they were born, nor did they create the circumstances they now face," Ambani added.



'Unique' 16th century wreck found off Sweden

AFP | Stockholm, Sweden

A 16th century shipwreck providing "unique historical and archaeological information" has been discovered off Sweden's southeastern coast, officials announced on Tuesday.

The ship, which has yet to be identified, is believed to have been built in the late 1500s, which would make it older than Sweden's iconic 17th-century warship "Vasa" on display in Stockholm after being salvaged in the 1960s.

A navy vessel found the wreck during a military exercise in late 2025 in Kalmar Strait, located between Sweden's southeastern mainland and the Baltic Sea island of Oland.

"After dendrochronological



Picture for representation only. (Courtesy of ALL THINGS NORDIC)

analysis of part of the wreck, results indicate that the ship was built in the late 1500s," the County Administrative Board in Kalmar said in a statement, referring to the scientific method of dating wood and trees.



The waters of Sweden hold thousands of remarkably well-preserved shipwrecks, thanks to the cold, low-salinity conditions of the Baltic Sea, which slow down decay and protect wooden vessels.