

# Biden accuses Hamas of backing away from ceasefire deal in Gaza

Outfit issues strong rebuttal, says his remarks are a greenlight for Israel to continue the war

CHICAGO/DOHA

US President Joe Biden said Tuesday that Hamas was "backing away" from a deal with Israel to agree on a ceasefire in the war in Gaza.

"It's still in play, but you can't predict," he said as he prepared to leave Chicago after a keynote address to the Democratic National Convention. "Israel says they can work it out... Hamas is now backing away."

Hamas condemned claims by US President Joe Biden that it was backing away from a Gaza truce deal, calling his remarks a "green light" for Israel to continue the war.

The "misleading claims... do not reflect the true position of the movement, which is keen to reach a ceasefire" agreement, the Palestinian militant group said in a statement.

It called Biden's remarks an "American green light for the Zionist extremist government to commit more crimes against defenceless civilians".

The statement came as US Secretary of State Antony Blinken was in Egypt on Tuesday for talks on a Gaza ceasefire. Hamas said Biden's remarks reflect a clear "American bias" towards Israel and Washington's complicity in the "war of extermination against defenceless civilians in the Gaza Strip". The group said it is committed to a ceasefire framework outlined by Biden on May 31 which he said had been proposed by Israel.

It described the latest US modifications to that plan as "a



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken meets with Egypt's Foreign Minister Badr Abdelaty in El-Alamein on Egypt's northern coast on Tuesday | AFP

coup against" the previous framework, accusing Washington of "acquiescing" to conditions set by Netanyahu.

"Netanyahu was always the one obstructing an agreement and setting new conditions and demands," Hamas said, calling on "the US administration to reverse its policy of blind bias towards the Zionist war criminals." It called on the "mediators to assume their responsibilities" and oblige Israel to accept the original proposal.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military said on Tuesday it retrieved the bodies of six hostages from a tunnel in Gaza's southern area of Khan Younis after a battle with Palestinian

militants. The hostages were Yagev Buchshtab, Alexander Dancyg, Yoram Metzger, Nadav Popplewell, Chaim Perry, previously announced dead, and Avraham Munder, whose kibbutz of Nir Oz near Gaza announced his death earlier Tuesday.

Their families had been informed following intelligence analysis, the military said in a statement, later adding that the bodies were found on Monday night in a tunnel.

"During the operation, the forces located a tunnel shaft about 10 meters (yards) deep leading to an underground tunnel route where the bodies of the hostages were found," the military said. AFP



# Khaleda Zia party secy gen wants Hasina extradited

DHAKA

BANGLADESH Nationalist Party's Secretary-General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir on Tuesday asked India to extradite Sheikh Hasina to face trial as he accused her of plotting to thwart the country's student-led "revolution".

"It is our call to you that you should hand her over to the government of Bangladesh in a legal way. The people of this country have given the decision for her trial. Let her face that trial," Fakhrul was quoted as saying by the newspaper *Daily Star*.

Talking to reporters after placing a wreath at the grave of former president and BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) founder Zia-ur Rahman in the city, Fakhrul said India is seemingly not keeping its commitment towards democracy by providing shelter to her.

Fakhrul said fascist ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina fled the country in the face of the student-led "revolution". "It is unfortunate that our neighbouring country has

sheltered her. Staying there, Hasina has started a conspiracy to foil the victory of Bangladesh," he was quoted as saying by the state-run BSS news agency.

India has said that it supports a democratic, stable, peaceful and progressive Bangladesh.

The BNP secretary general said the people of this country do not consider her offences as minor.

He said they think her "fascist rule has weakened Bangladesh's independence and hindered the country's progress for the last 15 years".

During her regime, she made a debt burden of Tk 18 lakh crores for the nation and nearly \$100 billion were siphoned off from the country, Fakhrul said, adding that all institutions of the country were destroyed during her misrule.

The main task of this interim government, which was formed through a revolution and mass upsurge, is to hand over the power to the public representatives by holding an election, Fakhrul added. BNP chairperson Zia was sentenced to 17 years in prison for graft.

# Sri Lanka sets first expense cap for poll campaigning

COLOMBO

FOR the first time, Sri Lanka's upcoming presidential election on September 21 will be subject to campaign finance regulations, following the introduction of the Regulation of Election Expenditure Act in January 2023.

According to a gazette notification dated August 16 and published Monday, each candidate is allowed to spend a maximum of Rs 109 per elector for election campaigning activities, totalling Rs 1,868,298,586 (\$5 million) per candidate.

The expenditure limit per candidate has been set at 60% of the total amount, while political party secretaries are allowed 40% for their candidate's election campaign activities.

The parties must submit expenditure reports to the Elections Commission within 21 days of the election results being declared, the notification stated.

A record number of 39 candidates are in the fray for the upcoming presidential election.

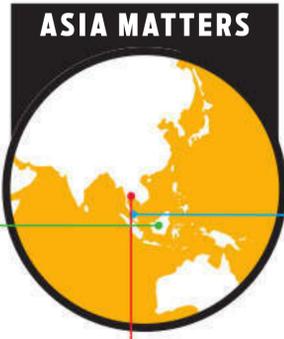
Incumbent president Ranil Wickremesinghe, the main opposition leader Sajith Premadasa, and the leader of the Marxist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna Anura Kumara Dissanayake are the front runners.

The Election Commission consulted various stakeholders to discuss the legislation, gather feedback, and establish the spending limit and implementation strategy in preparation for the upcoming presidential election, *Sri Lanka Mirror* reported. PTI

INDONESIA

## NEW BILATERAL DEFENCE DEAL WITH AUSSIES

A new bilateral defence treaty that will enhance the neighbouring nations' ability to operate their militaries in each other's territory was signed with Australia on Tuesday. The bilateral relationship is becoming increasingly important to Australians in face of growing tensions with China. New Australian prime ministers typically make Jakarta one of their first overseas destinations. The pact will be signed within days, when Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles visits Jakarta. Marles said the successful conclusion of negotiations was significant for both countries' security. AFP



## DIRECT TRAIN TO MALAYSIA

Plans are afoot to revive the direct train service between Bangkok and Butterworth in Malaysia, *Bangkok Post* reported. The State Railway of Thailand (SRT) and KTMB, which operates trains in Malaysia, have agreed in principle on a test run of a service between Bangkok and Butterworth. There would be a joint study into the proposal.

MALAYSIA

## SURVEILLANCE FOR MPOX HEIGHTENED

Authorities are stepping up surveillance at international entry points, and all travellers from countries that have reported mpx cases are required to monitor their health for 21 days after their arrival here, *The Straits Times* reported. The ministry advises people with a history of risky activities or who have symptoms such as rashes and blisters to immediately seek treatment at the nearest health facility and avoid contact with other people to prevent the spread of the virus. The ministry assured the public that there are enough labs for testing and diagnostics.

# Kamala Harris will be a historic president: Biden

CHICAGO

KAMALA Harris will be a "historic president", US President Joe Biden said, as he passed the baton of the Democratic Party to her and made a strong pitch to American voters to vote for her to preserve democracy.

Biden, 81, received an emotional standing ovation when he came on stage at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago on Monday night.

Harris, 59, is scheduled to formally accept the Democratic Party's presidential nomination on Thursday to take on Republican rival Donald Trump, 78, in the November 5 election.

"Are you ready to elect Kamala Harris as the President of the United States of America," Biden said, amidst cheers from thousands of members and leaders of the Democratic Party at its national convention here he urged his countrymen to vote and elect his deputy of four years.

"She'll be a president respected by world leaders because she already is. She'll be a president we can all be proud of, and she will be a historic president who puts her stamp on America's future," he said.

"We need to preserve our democracy. We need you to beat Donald Trump and elect Kamala and Tim as President and Vice President of the United States," Biden said.



Irmgard Furchner

## 99-YEAR-OLD FORMER NAZI SECSY LOSSES APPEAL AGAINST CONVICTION

LEIPZIG: A 99-year-old former Nazi camp secretary on Tuesday lost an appeal against her conviction for complicity in the murder of more than 10,000 people. Irmgard Furchner was handed a two-year suspended sentence in December 2022 for her role in the murder of prisoners at the Stutthof camp in occupied Poland.

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**INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)**

File No-B-I-Home-37/2024 Lr. No. 33015 20th Aug., 2024  
 B-183 Invitation for Bids

**Bid Identification No. C.E.-CUM-ADDL. SECY. (B) - 07 /2024-25**

- The Chief Engineer-cum-Addl. Secretary, Works Dept., Odisha, Bhubaneswar, on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites percentage rate bids in double cover system in ONLINE MODE only, for the work "Renovation of HVAC System such as supply, installation, testing and commissioning of additional 1 No. 400 TR Water Cooled Chiller Plant, 3 Nos. of Cooling towers along with accessories for upgradation of Chiller Plant of (6+ 7) New Building of High Court of Orissa" amounting to Rs.3,35,73,326/- as detailed below.
- Nature of work : HVAC Work
- No. of work : 01 No.
- Bid Cost. : ₹ 10,000/-
- Class of Contractor : Specialized Agency with Associate Electrical Contractor having valid license from ELBO (M.V./H.T./Above).
- Availability of Bid Documents in the website : From dt.23.08.2024 to 17.00 Hours of dt.06.09.2024
- Date of Opening of Bids : dt.06.09.2024 at 17:30 PM.
- The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website : https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only.

Sd/- Chief Engineer-cum-Addl., Secretary,  
 Works Dept., Odisha, Bhubaneswar OIPR- 34117/11/0016/24

# FIRE RAGES AT RUSSIAN OIL DEPOT HIT BY KYIV DRONE

MOSCOW

HUNDREDS of Russian firefighters in the southern Rostov region were battling a massive fire at an oil depot on Tuesday for a third day after it was hit in a Ukrainian drone attack.

Russia has said dozens of firefighters have been injured in the blaze, which has intensified since the fuel storage facility in the city of Proletarsk was struck on Sunday morning.

Around 520 firefighters were now involved in tackling the fire, the state-run TASS news agency reported Tuesday, citing the head of the local administration.

The fire had spread to an area of 10,000 square metres, it added. Videos on social media showed a massive orange flame over an industrial site, with thick dark smoke rising into the air.

A local state of emergency was introduced on Monday.

Kyiv has targeted Russian oil infrastructure throughout the Kremlin's Ukraine offensive and Sunday's strike came in the midst of its incursion into Russia's Kursk region.



This handout photograph shows rescuers trying to extinguish fire on Tuesday | AFP

Proletarsk lies in the Rostov region, some 200 km from the Ukraine border.

Four giant Il-76 planes were also on their way from the regional hub of Rostov-on-Don to help try to put out the fire, TASS quoted city head Valery Gornich as saying.

"The heat is such that fire engines cannot come close," he said. He added that there is no threat of an explosion, no threat to people and there are

no evacuations." Around 20 of the site's 74 storage tanks, each with a capacity of 5,000 cubic metres, were on fire, the RIA Novosti state news agency quoted Gornich as saying.

Rostov Governor Vasily Golubev said Monday that 41 firefighters needed medical attention, with several having moderate to severe burns. No civilians have been reported injured. AFP

# Taiwan conducts missile drills at sensitive test site

TAIPEI

TAIWAN conducted missile drills simulating the interception of enemy fighters and munitions at a sensitive test site Tuesday, as the island seeks to step up "combat effectiveness" against an increasingly assertive China.

Beijing claims self-ruled Taiwan as part of its territory and has stepped up military pressure by sending drones, fighter jets and naval vessels around the island. Taiwan has steadily built up its defence capabilities in recent years, making big-ticket weapons purchases while increasing its defence budget to invest in military reforms and a homegrown arsenal.

On Tuesday, the military fired domestically made Sky Bow III and US-made Patriot II missiles into the sky from its Jiupeng base in southern Pingtung County.

It was the first time in over a decade that reporters were granted access to the base, home to the government-run National Chung-Shan Institute of Science and Technology, which specialises in weapons development.

"All the missiles fired today hit their targets smoothly. So it demonstrates... that the training of our officers and soldiers is very solid," defence ministry spokesman Sun Lifang told reporters. AFP