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Over 300 people buried after huge landslide hits PNG: media

Sydney, (UNI): Local media reported on Saturday that more than 300 people were buried after a massive landslide hit a remote region in northern Papua New Guinea (PNG). Aimos Akem, a member of parliament for the Lagai open electorate in Enga province, confirmed to the PNG Post-Courier that the landslide buried more than 300 people and 1,182 houses in Maip Muritaka Rural LLG. At around 3:00 a.m. local time on Friday, a massive landslide crushed Kaokalam village in Enga province, located over 600 km northwest of PNG's capital Port Moresby. Though the figure has not been confirmed by local authorities, local residents told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation that the death toll rose above 100.

Four missing after mined-out section in China collapses

Hohhot, (UNI): Four people are missing following a ground collapse at a mined-out section in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, local authorities said Saturday morning. The incident occurred around 7:45 p.m. Friday during filling operations at a mined-out area managed by a mining company named Jinyuan in Linxi County, Chifeng City, according to the city's emergency management bureau. Rescue operations are currently underway.

Finland records lowest ever birth rate in 2023

Helsinki, (UNI): The birth rate in Finland declined in 2023 to the lowest level since records began almost 250 years ago, announced the country's statistics agency on Friday. A total of 43,383 babies were born in Finland last year, representing a fertility rate of 1.26 children per woman, according to Statistics Finland. "Regional analysis of birth rates interestingly shows (...) the bigger the municipality, the lower the birth rate," said Juhana Nordberg from Statistics Finland on Friday. The birth rate in Finland has decreased continually in recent years, Nordberg said, with municipalities with a birth rate of more than three children per woman becoming a rarity. The average age of first-time mothers also rose to 30.3 years, and 32.2 years for fathers, in 2023. However, life expectancy increased in 2023 to 79 years for boys and 84.2 years for girls, representing an increase of 0.33 years for boys and 0.4 years for girls compared to 2022.

IDF strikes back after 20 launches from Lebanon

Jerusalem, (UNI): The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said it struck back after 20 launches from Lebanon. "Following the sirens that sounded in northern Israel, approximately 20 launches were identified crossing from Lebanon into different areas in northern Israel. Several falls were identified in the areas of Dovev and Manara and damage was caused. IDF artillery struck the sources of the fire," the IDF said on Telegram. It also said a suspicious aerial target was successfully intercepted by the IDF Aerial Defense Array in the area of Dishon.

Car bomb explosion kills one in Syria

Damascus, (UNI): An explosive device affixed under a car went off in the Syrian capital Damascus on Saturday morning, killing one person, state news agency SANA said. The victim was the owner of the car that exploded in the Mazzeh neighborhood of western Damascus. The blast site is near the Iranian embassy, whose consulate building was demolished in an Israeli missile strike in April. Further details about the incident are still forthcoming.

Biden-Putin talks could help solve Ukraine conflict: US Congressman Massie

Washington, (UNI): Talks between Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Joe Biden could help solve the conflict in Ukraine, and even lower-level discussions between top diplomats could help achieve progress, US Congressman Thomas Massie told Sputnik on Friday.

UNSC adopts resolution on protection of humanitarian personnel

United Nations, (UNI)

The Security Council on Friday adopted a resolution that calls on all states to respect and protect humanitarian personnel and UN and associated personnel. Resolution 2730 won the support of 14 of the 15 members of the council. Russia abstained. The resolution also calls on all states and parties to armed conflict to respect and to ensure respect for applicable international humanitarian law in all circumstances.

It demands that all parties to armed conflict fully comply with their obligations under international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including their obligations related to the respect and protection of humanitarian personnel and UN and associated personnel. It strongly condemns attacks and all forms of violence, including sexual and



gender-based violence, threats, and intimidation, against humanitarian personnel and UN and associated personnel and their premises and assets.

It, in particular, urges parties to armed conflict to respect the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution in the conduct of hostilities and refrain

from attacking, destroying, removing or rendering useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population. It calls on all parties to armed conflict to end immediately and definitively any indiscriminate use of explosive devices in violation of international humanitarian law, and stresses the need to take appropriate measures to mitigate this danger effectively.

The resolution strongly condemns the unlawful denial of humanitarian access and depriving civilians of objects indispensable to their survival. It urges all parties to armed conflict to allow and facilitate full, safe, rapid and unhindered humanitarian access to all civilians in need, and to promote the safety, security and freedom of movement of humanitarian personnel and UN and associated personnel and the safety and security of their premises and assets.

'God's influencer' Italian teen to be first millennial saint



Vatican City, (UNI)

An Italian teenager and computer prodigy who earned the nickname "God's influencer" is set to become the Catholic Church's first millennial saint, as per the Vatican. Pope Francis has recognized a second miracle attributed to Carlo Acutis, a gamer and computer programmer who died from leukemia in 2006 at age 15, a

CNN report said. During his life, Acutis used his technological skills to spread awareness of the Catholic faith, including setting up a website documenting miracles. Born in London 1991, Acutis later moved to Milan, Italy with his family. Although Acutis' parents were not religious, the boy's faith was nurtured by his Polish nanny. Acutis a millennial, as born between the early 1980s and mid-1990s, is remembered by friends and family as enjoying playing video games such as Halo, Super Mario and Pokémon. After his death, his body was moved to the Italian town of Assisi, where it is now displayed in a shrine, alongside other relics linked to him. Prospective candidates for sainthood normally need to have two miracles attributed to them before they can be canonized, the CNN report said.

Indian driver in fatal 2018 Canada crash ordered deported



Ottawa, (UNI)

An Indian lorry driver behind a 2018 fatal crash with a bus carrying a junior ice hockey team that left 16 dead, has been ordered deported from Canada, media reports said. Jaskirat Singh Sidhu, who is originally from India, was released on full parole last year after being sentenced to eight years in prison for dangerous driving. Thirteen others were left injured when Sidhu's lorry collided with the hockey team bus on a rural road in

Saskatchewan. Sidhu's lawyer told the BBC that he plans to fight the deportation order. Lawyer Michael Greene said the Friday morning order at an Immigration and Refugee Board hearing in Calgary, was not a surprise as Sidhu is not a citizen of Canada. Sidhu moved to Canada in 2013. "He is a permanent resident who has been convicted of a serious offence," Greene said, adding that Sidhu "couldn't be more remorseful. He is still plagued by this every day of his life." Ten players on the Humboldt Broncos ice hockey team, aged between 16 and 21, died when their team bus collided with the semi-trailer that Sidhu was driving, the BBC report said. Support staff and the team's head and assistant coaches were also among those killed. A number of players survived the crash but were left with life-altering injuries. In 2019, Sidhu pleaded guilty to 16 counts of dangerous operation of a motor vehicle causing death and 13 of causing injury. It was found that Sidhu ran through a stop sign before colliding with the bus. Some families of the victims have called for his deportation. Greene said that Sidhu's application on humanitarian and compassionate grounds will centre on him being able to remain in Canada with his wife and one-year-old son, both Canadian citizens. If Sidhu were to be deported, his wife and son likely would not be able to follow him to India because the child requires intensive medical treatment for severe heart and lung issues.

Saudi Crown Prince calls up Iranian Interim President, in further thawing of ties

Tehran, (UNI)

Marking a further thaw in relations, Iran's interim president Mohammad Mokhber received a phone call from Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman offering condolences on the tragic death of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian in a chopper crash and underlining that the cordial relations between Tehran and Riyadh will continue. "The incident was very painful for us.

The loss of Mr. Raisi hurt all of us, and the loss of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of



Iran, who was very friendly with our Minister of Foreign Affairs, was also sorrowful," the Saudi crown prince was quoted by Iranian media as telling Mokhber on Friday. Emphasizing the importance of the development of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia for the Middle Eastern region and the Islamic world, bin Salman

said that "Tehran and Riyadh play a pivotal role in the region and the Islamic world, and by expanding relations between them, they can create a bright future for the region."

Bin Salman stressed that Saudi Arabia will continue the path of developing relations with Iran, a goal that he described as being pur-

sued by President Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian. He also announced his country's readiness to expand economic relations with Iran.

Mokhber, in turn, considered the development of relations with neighbours and friendly countries among the successes and important strategies of late President Raisi. The interim president termed the relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia key for the Islamic world, adding that, "Despite the opposition of some powers, today our relations have reached a good level and the region is in dire need of expanding these relations."

Palestinians welcome UN court ruling on halting Israeli operations in Rafah



Ramallah, (UNI)

The Palestinian presidency on Friday welcomed the ruling of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordering Israel to stop its military offensive in Rafah with immediate effect.

It further called on the international community to compel Israel to implement the ICJ rulings, and to respect and implement the resolutions of international legitimacy and international law, the presidency

said in a statement carried by the Palestinian official news agency Wafa. The statement said Israel considers itself a state above international law and cannot be held accountable as a result of the "blind and biased American support." The presidency reiterated its appreciation for countries that have supported Palestinian rights, emphasizing that this international consensus once again proves that Israel stands isolated, along with its allies who provide it with support, protection, and impunity, according to Wafa. Also on Friday, Hamas, the militant group that rules Gaza, welcomed the ICJ decision. In a separate statement, it called on the international community and the United Nations to put pressure on Israel to immediately oblige it to this resolution, and to proceed in a real and serious manner in translating all UN resolutions that urge the Israeli army to stop the war "it has been committing against the Palestinian people for more than seven months."

Australian minister urges Israel to abide by ICJ Rafah ruling

Canberra, (UNI): A senior Australian government minister has urged Israel to abide by an order from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to halt its military offensive in southern Gaza. The ICJ, the top court of the United Nations, on Friday ordered Israel to immediately halt its military assault on the southern Gaza city of Rafah and open the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza to allow aid into the region. In response, Chris Bowen, Australia's minister for climate change and energy and a member of Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's cabinet, said the federal government supported the ruling. He described the situation in Rafah as a humanitarian disaster that has the scope to get worse. "We have been very consistent that Rafah should not be attacked," Bowen said at a press conference on Saturday.

NASA sets June 1 for crewed Starliner flight despite ongoing Helium leak

Washington, (UNI)

NASA has worked through the latest problems that have repeatedly postponed the first crewed flight of the Boeing CST-100 Starliner to the International Space Station (ISS) and has now set June 1 as the next date for its planned launch, the space agency said on Friday.

"The agency is working toward a launch at 12:25 pm, Saturday, June 1, for the first crewed flight of Boeing's Starliner spacecraft to the International Space Station as



part of the agency's Commercial Crew Program,"

NASA said in a statement.

NASA and United Launch Alliance (ULA) engineers and technicians have contained and are monitoring a helium leak on the Starliner after replacing a valve and it poses no significant risk. Boeing Vice President Mark Nappi said the "company can manage the leak so it is not really a safety flight issue. Other launch opportunities are available on Sunday, June 2; Wednesday, June 5; and Thursday, June 6, according to NASA.

Fire guts hundreds of shanties in Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh

Dhaka, (UNI): A devastating fire swept through a camp of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh's southeastern Cox's Bazar district Friday, destroying hundreds of shanties and leaving thousands of people homeless. Shafiqul Islam, station officer at local Ukhiya Fire Service and Civil Defence, told reporters that the fire started at refugee camp No. 13 and spread quickly to surrounding areas. At least 230 shanties and 100 other facilities were gutted in the fire, he said, while over 200 other makeshift shelters were damaged. At least 10 people have reportedly been injured in the blaze. Officials said firefighting units from several stations in the region rushed to the area and brought the blaze under control. More than 1 million displaced Rohingyas from Myanmar are living in Cox's Bazar, some 300 km southeast of the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka.

Death toll from protests in France's New Caledonia rises to 7 - Reports

Paris, (UNI)

One more person has been killed in the ongoing protests against planned electoral reform in the French Pacific territory of New Caledonia, bringing the total death toll up to seven, French broadcaster BFMTV reported on Friday, citing the prosecutor's office in the island's capital of Noumea. The 48-year-old man was shot dead by the police as a group of 15 people attacked a police patrol during an inspection of one of the city's communities, the report said. The prosecutor's office launched an investigation into an "intentional killing by a person in public authority," with the police officer who shot the man detained, the



broadcaster reported. On May 13, a peaceful demonstration against a voting rights bill spiraled into unrest in Noumea, the capital of New Caledonia, and neighboring towns. Protesters, including many minors, looted and set fire to stores, gas

stations, pharmacies, and car centers. On May 16, French lawmakers voted in favor of the bill despite the ongoing unrest. On Thursday, French President Emmanuel Macron vowed to not carry out the electoral reform in New Caledonia

"by force" and gave local political parties several weeks to secure its general approval and calm down the protests. The controversial bill provides for lowering the residency bar for voting rights for people living in New Caledonia to 10 years.

Egypt to work with Palestine to resume sending aid to Gaza: Media

Cairo, (UNI)

Egypt will work out a mechanism with the Palestinian Authority (PA) to resume sending humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip, Al-Qahera News reported on Friday by quoting a "high-ranking" source.

The report said the unnamed source stressed the Rafah crossing is "an Egyptian-Palestinian crossing" and the resume of aid delivery will be conducted through cooperation with the PA. Egypt will also continue to oppose any attempts to liquidate the Palestinian cause or isolate the Gaza Strip from the outside world, according to the report.

Earlier on Friday, Egypt and the United States agreed to send large quantities of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip through the Kerem Shalom crossing.

The decision was made during a phone conversation between Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi and his U.S. counterpart Joe Biden.

According to an Egyptian presidential statement, it would be a temporary procedure until "a legal mechanism is reached" to resume the operation of the Rafah crossing from the Palestinian side.

Egypt previously said it rejected any coordination with Israel on the Rafah land crossing after Israel seized the Palestinian side of the crucial crossing on May 7.

The Israeli government said on Friday that it "will continue to enable the Rafah crossing to remain open for the entry of humanitarian assistance from the Egyptian side "while preventing "terror groups from controlling the passage."