

Start of the Mesoamerican Long Count calendar, used by several pre-Columbian Mesoamerican civilizations, notably the Mayans



Allies refuse Japan's offer to surrender on the condition that Emperor Hirohito retains his status

Formal peace treaty ends over 7 yrs of fighting in Indochina between the French and the Communist Viet Minh

Al-Qaeda formed at a meeting between Osama Bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri and Dr Fadl in Peshawar, Pakistan

...n school kills 93



ians in Gaza City, following an Israeli strike that

ian group's Lebanese ally Hezbollah called it a "horrific massacre". Iran, which backs both groups and had accused Israel of wanting

US 'deeply concerned'

Washington, United States

The White House said yesterday it was "deeply concerned" about civilian casualties after an Israeli airstrike on a Gaza school housing displaced Palestinians that rescuers said killed more than 90 people.

"We are deeply concerned about reports of civilian casualties in Gaza" following the strike, National Security Council spokesman Sean Savett said in a statement, adding that the US was "asking for further details."

He said the strike, which has sparked international condemnation, "underscores the urgency of a ceasefire and hostage deal, which we continue to work tirelessly to achieve."

to spread war in the Middle East following high-profile killings in Tehran and Beirut, condemned the "barbaric attack".

"Those who were inside the mosque were all killed," said local resident Abu Wassim. "Even the floor above, where women and chil-

dren were sleeping, was completely burned."

Civil defence spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP that "bodies were torn apart. It reminds us of the first days of the war in the Gaza Strip."

With nearly all of Gaza's 2.4 million people displaced at least once during the war, many have sought refuge in school buildings, which have been hit at least 14 times since July 6, according to an AFP tally.

Israel has made similar accusations of armed activities after strikes on school shelters, while Hamas has denied using civilian facilities for military aims.

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Israel's retaliatory military campaign in Gaza has killed at least 39,790 people, according to Gaza's health ministry, which does not give details of civilian and militant deaths.

...nh hold ...on agenda

Wednesday, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met on Vietnam Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, who arrived in India, on Tuesday. Following the meeting, the Vietnamese PM expressed gratitude and thanked India for the warm reception.

The Union Minister of State for External Affairs, Pabitra Mohan Ghosh, welcomed the Vietnamese PM at the airport on Tuesday. In a post on X, Ministry of External Affairs spokesman, Randhir Jaiswal said the visit of the Vietnamese PM will further strengthen the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two nations. In an earlier press release, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said, "India and Vietnam have a long historical and civilizational ties, which were elevated to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership during the visit of the Minister to Vietnam in September 2016. India considers Vietnam as a key pillar of its East Policy and an important partner in its Indo-Pacific vision." (ANI)

India PM vows support after deadly landslide last month



Modi receiving a briefing at the landslide-affected area
AFP | Mumbai, India

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday visited the site of landslides that killed more than 200 people last month, vowing to extend "every possible support" to those who lost homes and loved ones.

Torrential monsoon rains battered the southern coastal state of Kerala and triggered landslides on July 30, burying homes and people in Wayanad district under tonnes of rock and soil.

Many of the landslide victims were workers and their families, who were asleep in brick-walled row houses when they were inundated by a powerful wave of brown sludge.

Modi also visited camps where those who fled the landslides are recovering as well as hospitals.

"Our prayers are with those affected", Modi said.

"I want to assure the families of the deceased that they are not alone," he added, saying funds for relief or rehabilitation work would be provided.

...buying as megaquake fears spread

people injured. At a Tokyo supermarket on Saturday, a sign was put up apologising to customers for shortages of certain products it attributed to "quake-related media reports".

A staff member works as bottles of water (R bottom) with a sign written "bottled water is being rationed, with a cap of one case (six bottles) per each customer" (C) in a supermarket in Sumida district of Tokyo

"Potential sales restrictions are on the way", the sign said, adding bottled water was already being rationed due to "unstable" procurement.

On Saturday morning the website of Japanese e-commerce giant Rakuten showed portable toilets, preserved food and bottled water topping the list of the most sought-after items.

In Tokyo, some residents were ramping up their disaster prepar-

edness. Bar employee Kokoro Takeuchi said she had ordered bottled water online following Thursday's tremor.

"I'm very worried," the 27-year-old told AFP.

"The bar I work at is underground so if a quake happens all of a sudden, there's a good chance we might not be able to escape. So I've been trying to figure out how best to evacuate," she said.

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TWEETS

01



I must call out the flood of fossil fuel expansion we are seeing in some of the world's wealthiest countries. In signing such a surge of new oil and gas licenses, they are signing away our future. Countries must phase-out fossil fuels – fast and fairly.
@antonioguterres

02



Our prayers are with those affected by the landslide in Wayanad. The Centre assures every possible support to aid in relief efforts.
@narendramodi

03



I welcome the swearing in of Dr. Muhammad Yunus to lead the interim government in Bangladesh. The United States supports his call for calm and peace and remains committed to working with Bangladesh as it charts a democratic and prosperous future the people in Bangladesh.
@SecBlinken

04



We have many obligations as a nation, but we only have one truly sacred obligation: to equip those we send into harm's way and care for them and their families when they come home. Two years ago today, we met that sacred obligation when I signed the PACT Act into law.
@POTUS

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stance)

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Feeling the school bus pinch



CAPTAIN MAHMOOD AL MAHMOOD

The comprehensive list of new safety rules issued by the Ministry of Transportation for school buses and vans is an indication that the authorities have been thinking in detail about this very important traffic safety aspect. My only question is: is there enough time for bus owners and schools to comply with all these rules? The school year 2024 will start in just over three weeks and there are hundreds of buses to equip and modify to make them safer.

These changes cost money – even a simple one like fitting the interior and the rear with cameras and fitting the bus with signage is an expensive job if there is a fleet of buses for a school. Undoubtedly, the transportation companies and school management will pass on at least some of the cost to the parents – this transportation fee hike will come at a time when the school supplies for the new school term are already straining the household budgets.

Still, no parent wants to be accused of putting a price limit on their children's safety so either they will pay or resort to dropping off and picking up the children themselves. That will mean traffic snarls on the roads near the schools every day.

I think, along with the sensible and excellent rules for school bus safety, the Ministry of Education should consider split-shift schooling – early morning to mid-morning for senior students and late afternoon to evening for primary school children. Preschool and kindergarten age children can attend a fewer-hours school day in the morning, starting shortly after the seniors. In any case their premises are usually separate. This kind of staggered approach will take many vehicles off the roads during school hours and make driving safer for everybody.

Of course, this means working parents will have to come up with a plan to ensure they have someone responsible to take care of their kids who are at home – but who said we can treat our schools as a babysitting service? The only other alternative is for the government to subsidise school transportation so that parents don't feel the pinch.

(Captain Mahmood Al Mahmood is the Editor-in-Chief of The Daily Tribune and the President of the Arab-African Unity Organisation for Relief, Human Rights and Counterterrorism)

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