

News in brief

◆ **US President Joe Biden** and Chinese President Xi Jinping will meet on November 15 in the San Francisco area to try to "stabilize" relations after recent tensions between the two superpowers, US officials said. The meeting, which had not previously been confirmed, is not expected to produce major outcomes but is aimed at avoiding conflict between China and the United States, said senior administration officials. Biden and Xi will also discuss pressing global crises such as the Israel-Hamas war and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, as well as tensions over the flashpoint island of Taiwan. The two leaders have not met for a year since their last encounter in Bali in November 2022, and relations between Beijing and Washington have plunged into the deep freeze since then. "President Biden will indeed meet with President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China in the San Francisco Bay area of California on November 15," a senior US official told reporters Thursday in embargoed comments.



Xi, Biden to meet next week to 'stabilize' ties, US says

Russia says sent 25 tonnes of aid for Gaza



◆ **Russia said yesterday** it had sent 25 tonnes of humanitarian aid to Egypt to be delivered to the Gaza Strip, which has been under near-total siege and relentless bombardment. About 500 aid trucks have been allowed into the territory from Egypt over the past month, a number that had been the daily average before the war. "A special aircraft of the Russian Emergencies Ministry delivered 25 tonnes of humanitarian aid to the Arab Republic of Egypt," Russia's emergency services said on social media. It published images of staff loading cargo onto an Il-76 plane in an airport in the central Russian city of Kazan, saying the shipment contained food and hygiene products, as well as clothing and portable cookers.

◆ **Five Bulgarian nationals** in custody in the UK will face a four-month trial next year on charges that they spied for Russia, a judge ruled on Friday. Orlin Roussev, Bizer Dzhambazov, Katrin Ivanova, Ivan Stoyanov and Vanya Gaberova are alleged to have been part of a "network" conducting surveillance for Russia "with another person known as Jan Marsalek and others unknown". Marsalek is the Austrian former chief operating officer of payments firm Wirecard, who became a wanted man in Germany over fraud allegations. He has not been charged in the British case. Roussev, 45, Dzhambazov, 42, Ivanova, 32, Stoyanov, 31, and Gaberova, 29, appeared at the Old Bailey court in central London via video link.



Five Bulgarians face Russia spy plot trial in UK

CURIOSER & CURIOSER

Prince Harry wins latest round in legal battle with UK newspapers



Britain's Meghan, Duchess of Sussex and Britain's Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, attend a children's event

London, United Kingdom

The publishers of two UK newspapers on Friday lost a bid to have a case for unlawful information gathering brought against them by Prince Harry and others thrown out of court, opening the way for a possible trial. King Charles III's younger son made headlines earlier this year when he flew in from California to make an unexpected in-person appearance at the High Court in London for the case. The prince and six other high profile figures including pop star Elton John launched the legal action last year after becoming aware of "compelling and highly distressing evidence that they have been the victims of abhorrent criminal activity and gross breaches of privacy" by Associated Newspapers Limited (ANL).

Other claimants are John's husband David Furnish, the actors Liz Hurley and Sadie Frost, politician Simon Hughes, and Doreen Lawrence, whose son Stephen was killed in a racist murder in 1993. Lawyers for ANL -- publishers of the Daily Mail and Mail on Sunday -- had argued the claims against them had been brought too late. But in a written ruling, judge Matthew Nicklin disagreed and said the case could go ahead. The ruling is the latest chapter in Harry's turbulent relationship with the press, whom he holds responsible for the death of his mother Princess Diana in a 1997 Paris car crash as she fled paparazzi. ANL had "not been able to deliver a 'knockout blow' to the claims of any of these claimants", the judge said in his 95-page ruling.

Indonesian clerics issue fatwa boycotting Israel-linked firms

Jakarta, Indonesia

Indonesia's top Islamic clerical body issued a fatwa on Friday calling for a boycott of goods and services from companies that support Israel in a show of solidarity with the Palestinians. The religious edict by the Indonesian Ulema Council, or MUI, said Muslims in the country must support the Palestinians' struggle against "Israeli aggression", while also declaring that support for Israel or its supporters is "haram", or against Islamic law. "MUI call on every Muslim to avoid as much as possible transactions and use of Israel products and those that affiliated with Israel, as well as those who support colonialism and Zionism," Asrorun Niam Sholeh, an executive of the council, told reporters Friday. "We cannot support the party that is at war with Palestine, including using products whose proceeds actually support acts of murder of the Palestinians." Fatwas have no legal force and are aimed at encouraging the devout in world's most populous Muslim-majority country against taking a certain course of action.

Israel must not lose chance for peace with Arab world: Germany

Berlin, Germany

Israel must not lose a "historic opportunity" for peace with Arab states due to its war against Hamas, Germany's foreign minister said Friday as she embarked on a trip to the region. Annalena Baerbock is making her third visit to the Middle East since Hamas launched its October 7 attack from the Gaza Strip, which sparked a conflict with Israel. One of her stops will be the United Arab Emirates, which was among countries that normalised relations with Israel in 2020. She will also visit Saudi Arabia, which had been in talks over a potential normalisation with Israel, until they were paused when the current war broke out. In addition, Baerbock will visit Israel. "In this almost unresolvable turmoil, it is crucial not to lose sight of the big picture," she said. "Israel's historic opportunity for peace with its Arab neighbours must not be lost -- because that is precisely the goal of the terrorists. "And even in our efforts to secure the release of the hostages, humanitarian access to Gaza or the prevention of a regional spillover of violence -- we only have a chance of success if we pull together with the Arab Gulf states."

Blinken ends mara 'more needs to be

● **Gaza health system has reached 'point of no return': Red Cross**

● **Lebanon's Hezbollah says Israeli fire kills 7 fighters**

AFP | New Delhi, India

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken wrapped up a marathon diplomatic push yesterday in India after a whirlwind Middle East trip and G7 talks, saying Israel's pauses in its Gaza offensive would "save lives" but more was needed. "Far too many Palestinians have been killed," Blinken said in New Delhi, his last stop before heading home, where he repeated US support for ally Israel but was firm that more aid had to reach civilians in Gaza. Blinken's trip has included South Korea, a G7 foreign min-



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, India's External Affairs Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and his Indian counterpart Rajnath Singh arrive for a family photo ahead of their bilateral meetings, at Sushma Swaraj Bhavan in New Delhi

isters' meeting in Japan -- which sought to find common ground on the Gaza conflict -- and the Middle East, where he visited Israel and the occupied West Bank. Israel announced on Thursday pauses in its battle against Hamas to formalise an arrangement that has already seen tens of thousands of Palestinians flee devastation in northern Gaza, steps Blinken said "will save lives". "I think some progress has been made," Blinken said. "But I was also very clear that much more needs to be done in terms



Palestinians families fleeing Gaza City and other parts of northern Gaza towards the southern areas, walk along a road

UN's Palestinian refugee agency says over 100 staff killed in Gaza

Geneva, Switzerland

The head of the United Nations agency supporting Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) said yesterday that more than 100 of its staff had been killed in the war in Gaza. "Devastated. Over 100 UNRWA colleagues confirmed killed in one month. Parents, teachers, nurses, doctors, support staff," UNRWA head Philippe Lazzarini said on X, formerly Twitter. "UNRWA is mourning, Palestinians mourning, Israelis mourning. Ending this tragedy needs (a) humanitarian ceasefire now", he added. The UN agency said in a video message that 101 of its employees had been killed since the war between Israel and Hamas erupted on October 7. "They were teachers, school principals, engineers, doctors, a psychologist, support staff, sanitation and tech workers," it said. UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths said he was "heartbroken by this deeply tragic news". "These colleagues were flames of hope and humanity," he said on X, formerly Twitter. "Our thoughts remain with their families and all our brave UNRWA colleagues."



More than 1,400 people, mostly civilians, were killed in the attack, according to Israeli officials. Vowing to destroy Hamas, Israel has retaliated with relentless bombardment and a ground campaign that the Hamas-run health ministry in Gaza says has killed more than 11,000 people, mostly civilians and many of them children.

Iran says e

AFP | Tehran, Iran

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said yesterday that expansion of the Israel-Hamas war has become "inevitable", amid widespread concern in the region and beyond that the conflict could spread. "Due to the increasing intensity of the war against the civilian

International me

AFP | Paris, France

Major international media outlets have strongly denied that their Gaza photographers had prior knowledge of the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, following allegations taken up by the Israeli government. Denials have been published by US media outlets *The New York Times* and *CNN*, as well as global news agencies *AP*, *Reuters* and *AFP*. The controversy started with an online post by *HonestReporting*, an organisation that highlights media coverage considered unfavourable to Israel. *HonestReporting* said the speed with which certain Palestinian photojournalists in Gaza responded to the attack, and their degree of access to the violence, raised "ethical questions". Its claims were taken up by the Israeli government. "These journalists were accomplices in crimes against humanity; their actions were contrary to professional ethics," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Thursday on X (formerly Twitter). Danny Danon, a former Israeli