

News in brief

Burkina Faso coup leader Damiba sworn in as president



◆ **Burkina Faso's military leader Paul-Henri Damiba** was sworn in as president on Wednesday, weeks after leading a successful coup, and he promised to deal with the mounting insecurity that helped oust his predecessor. Damiba led a military junta that on Jan. 24 overthrew President Roch Kabore, citing Kabore's inability to curb an Islamist insurgency that has killed thousands of people and forced more than one million people to flee their homes in the West African country.

◆ **An influential cardinal opened a Vatican symposium on the priesthood Thursday** apologising for "unworthy ministers" and the cover-up of child sexual abuse by Catholic clergy, before an audience that included Pope Francis. Canadian Cardinal Marc Ouellet acknowledged that "we are all torn and humbled by these crucial questions that every day question us as members of the Church", with Francis at his side in the Vatican's vast Paul VI Hall.

Cardinal slams abuse cover-ups at Vatican priest forum



Sydney beaches close after first fatal shark attack in 60 years



◆ **Several Sydney beaches, including the iconic Bondi and Bronte,** were shut down yesterday after a swimmer was killed in a shark attack, the first such fatality at the city's beaches in nearly 60 years. Drum lines, which are used to bait sharks, have been set up near the attack site while drones have been deployed as officials search for if the shark is still in the area.

A Bulgarian nationalist MEP gave a Nazi salute in the

Bulgarian MEP gives Nazi salute in European Parliament



◆ **chamber of the European Parliament in Strasbourg on Wednesday, sparking outrage after he spoke during a debate on the rule of law in Poland and Hungary.** Going up the steps that lead to the exit of the hemicycle, Angel Dzhambazki of the eurosceptic ECR group can be seen on a video of the debate turning around and extending his right arm in front of him for a few seconds before leaving.

Bill Gates visits Pakistan to discuss polio eradication with PM Khan



◆ **Microsoft Corp co-founder turned philanthropist Bill Gates visited Pakistan yesterday, meeting with Prime Minister Imran Khan to discuss polio eradication in one of the last two countries of the world where the virus is endemic.** "This is the final, and hardest, phase of the eradication effort, but by keeping up the momentum and staying vigilant, Pakistan has an opportunity to make history by ending polio for good," Gates said in a statement. "Pakistan's commitment to ending polio is inspiring."

War imminent, says US

Biden says war appears imminent after shelling on front line

● **Zelenskiy calls shelling 'big provocation'**

● **Kremlin says it is seriously concerned**



An interior view shows a kindergarten, which according to Ukraine's military officials was damaged by shelling, in Stanysia Luhanska in the Luhansk region, Ukraine

War drums are beating louder and louder on the Ukraine front-line, with Kyiv and its Western allies fearing an assault soon as reports emerge of shelling across the Ukraine front line.

US President Joe Biden said yesterday there was now every indication Russia was planning to invade Ukraine.

He accused Moscow of carrying out a false flag operation to justify invasion after Ukrainian forces and pro-Moscow rebels traded fire.

Moscow, for its part, ejected the number two official from the US embassy and released a strongly worded letter to the United States accusing Washington of ignoring its security demands.

"We have reason to believe they are engaged in a false flag operation to have an excuse to

go in. Every indication we have is they're prepared to go into Ukraine and attack Ukraine," Biden told reporters as he departed the White House.

Biden ordered Secretary of State Antony Blinken to change his travel plans at the last minute to speak at a United Nations Security Council meeting on Ukraine.

"The evidence on the ground is that Russia is moving toward an imminent invasion. This is a crucial moment," US Ambassador to the United Nations, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, told reporters.

"We see them fly in more combat and support aircraft. We see them sharpen their readiness in the Black Sea," Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said at NATO headquarters



Russia denies planning to invade its neighbour and said this week it was pulling back some of the more than 100,000 troops it has massed near the frontier. Washington says Russia is not withdrawing, but in fact sending more forces.

in Brussels. "We even see them stocking up their blood supplies."

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said the pro-Russian forces had shelled a kindergarten, in what he called a "big provocation".

Builders find 2,000-year-old Roman cemetery in Gaza

Reuters | Gaza



A 2,000-year-old Roman cemetery containing at least 20 ornately decorated graves has been uncovered near the shoreline in the northern Gaza Strip, with the antiquities ministry calling it the most important local discovery of the

Alexander the Great as well as a Mongol invasion.

Twenty Roman graves have been located so far and the team expect to unearth 80 in total within the 50-square-meter cemetery. Only two graves have been opened, one contained skeletal remains and some clay jars.

Ruins discovered there include the remains of a siege by

Bahraini press frameworks on Biden's Iran p

Dr Nooh Khalifa highlights the importance of America's tender

● **The strategic frameworks highlighted the importance of the early solidarity between the Biden Administration and the Gulf States to preserve global Arab national security**

TDT | Manama

In his scientific study 'Bahrain Land America: Developments of the Alliance in Security and Peace Issues Between the Reigns of Joe Biden and Ronald Reagan', researcher Dr Nooh Khalifa highlighted the importance of America's control of the Iranian regime's multiple wars in the Arab region, which aim to protect Iran's escalating nuclear military ambitions.

Dr Nooh indicated that the extensive coverage of Bahraini newspapers on US President Joe Biden's policies towards the Iranian threats in the region formed

a fertile field of effect that adheres to the course of long-standing historical Arab-American relations of solidarity in addition to requirements of major powers in the region - which include undermining developments of the Iranian nuclear program and transgressions.

"The press materials that highlighted the Iranian expansionist and missile chaos formed factors that pushed the direction of security solutions towards new alternatives," stated Dr Khalifa.

"These materials recorded a percentage close to the percentage registered for content highlighting nuclear negotiations - which occupied the top position - and included attempts to influence the course of President Biden's policies."

"The majority of press material published in Bahraini newspapers on Iranian threats during President Joe Biden's era focused on the negotiations of the nuclear program as a major focus for changing America's policies in the region - with a percentage of 41.3%."



Dr Nooh Khalifa

"The content that focused on Iranian threats - which formed factors tending towards new alternatives for security solutions - occupied the second rank with a rate of 34.9%."

Dr Khalifa also added that content focused on lifting sanctions ranked third as determinants of confidence in Washington's policies at 23.8%.

According to Dr Khalifa, the study revealed that 49.2% of the press material published in Bahraini newspapers about America's policy towards Iranian threats - under US President Joe Biden -

The responsibility frameworks elicited an anticipated security commitment from President Joe Biden and made undermining Iran's terrorism a priority

employed strategic frameworks to highlight the importance of an early reciprocal pace of solidarity between the Biden Administration and the Gulf states.

He added that this preserves the intertwined national security interests between both nations who are historically linked by economical and security interests.

"This became evident as the newspapers highlighted President Joe Biden's tendency to consult with allies and put additional restrictions after returning to the nuclear agreement," added Dr Khalifa.

Iran nu enrich

Delegates say much o

● **Measures to be implemented in phases, diplomats say**

● **First phase includes Iran suspending enrichment above 5%**

● **Unfreezing Iranian cash, releasing prisoners also at start**

Reuters | Vienna

A US-Iranian deal taking shape to revive Iran's 2015 nuclear agreement with world powers lays out phases of mutual steps to bring both sides back into full compliance, and the first does not include waivers on oil sanctions, diplomats say.

Envoys from Iran, Russia, China, Britain, France, Germany, the European Union and United States are still negotiating details of the draft accord amid Western warnings that time is running out before the original deal becomes obsolete. Delegates say much of the text is settled but some thorny issues remain.

The broad objective is to return to the original bargain of lifting sanctions against Iran, including ones that have slashed its crucial oil sales, in exchange for restrictions on its nuclear activities that extend the time it would need to produce enough enriched uranium for an atomic bomb if it chose to.

COVID-19: Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
1 USA	79,808,643	952,603	419,414,571
2 India	42,754,315	510,441	
3 Brazil	27,812,210	640,868	
4 France	21,976,290	135,855	5,874,157
5 UK	18,499,058	160,221	
6 Russia	14,840,502	343,173	Recovered: 342,931,119
7 Turkey	13,266,265	91,646	
8 Germany	13,065,825	121,341	New cases +1,454,073
9 Italy	12,323,398	152,282	
10 Spain	10,778,607	97,710	New deaths +5,657
11 Argentina	8,783,208	124,765	
12 Iran	6,894,110	134,420	
13 Colombia	6,031,130	137,586	
14 Netherlands	5,963,238	21,449	

Figures as of closing

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	461,299		23,519		393,254	44,526
Saudi Arabia	735,958	+1,569	8,978	+1	704,896	22,084
UAE	872,210	+895	2,290	+1	811,632	58,288
Kuwait	607,952		2,524		575,803	29,625
Oman	372,060	+1,440	4,225	+4	349,666	18,169
Qatar	352,894	+447	660	+2	345,636	6,598