



US gives \$100m more in aid to Turkey and Syria
 Washington

The US will provide an additional \$100 million in aid for the earthquake response in Turkey and Syria, on top of the previously announced \$85 million, the State Department said yesterday, while the Secretary of State assured Ankara that the "US is here."

President Joe Biden intends to authorise \$50 million in Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Funds (ERMA) and \$50 million in humanitarian assistance through the State Department and USAID.

"This humanitarian assistance will target vulnerable earthquake-affected populations in Turkey and Syria and be available to support international and nongovernmental organisations providing assistance," the State Department said in a statement.

Israeli strike kills 15 in Damascus
 Damascus

An Israeli air strike killed nearly yesterday 15 people including two Syrian civilians and badly damaged a building in a Damascus district housing state security agencies, a war monitor said.

The strike targeted a meeting that included Syrian regime officers and was "the deadliest Israeli attack in the Syrian capital" since the civil war began, said Rami Abdel Rahman of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Tunisia intercepts over 400 migrants
 Tunis

The Tunisian coast guard said yesterday it had intercepted overnight more than 400 migrants trying to reach Europe by sea in 16 separate operations off the North African country's coast.

"During the night between February 18 and 19, coast guard units in the center, north and south managed to thwart 16 attempted crossings and rescue 423 people," the agency said in a statement posted on its official Facebook page.

Bahrain keen to develop 'smart oil economy'

TDI | Manama

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, emphasised the importance of continuing to develop strategic initiatives that reposition Bahrain as a smart oil economy to achieve quality opportunities and long-term sustainable growth.

He highlighted the important role of the oil and gas sector in supporting the Kingdom's comprehensive development, led by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa



HRH Prince Salman holds talks with Neff

Al Khalifa.

HRH Prince Salman was speaking as he met yesterday with the President of Chevron International Exploration and Production, Clay Neff, at Riffa Palace.

His Royal Highness noted the importance of conferences and forums focusing on the oil sector's development and strategic goals, and commended the outcomes of the Middle East Oil and Gas Conference (MEOS), held in Bahrain, in fostering innovative solutions in the sector.

His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Representative of His Majesty the King for Humanitarian Work and Youth Affairs, Chairman of the Oil and Gas Holding Company (nogaholding), HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Minister of Finance and National Economy, Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, and the Minister of Oil and Environment, Dr Mohammed bin Mubarak Bin Daina, attended the meeting.

Highest nuclear uranium levels

Iran inspectors detect 84% purity making it closer to potential bomb material

Vienna

International atomic monitors in Iran last week detected uranium enriched to levels just below that needed for a nuclear weapon, according to two senior diplomats, underscoring the risk that the country's unrestrained atomic activities could prompt a new crisis.

The International Atomic Energy Agency is trying to clarify how Iran accumulated uranium enriched to 84 percent purity — the highest level found by inspectors in the country to date, and a concentration just 6 percent below what's needed for a weapon. Iran had previously told the IAEA that its centrifuges were configured to enrich uranium to a 60 percent level

of purity.

Inspectors need to determine whether Iran intentionally produced the material, or whether the concentration was an unintended accumulation within the network of pipes connecting the hundreds of fast-spinning centrifuges used to separate the isotopes. It's the second time this month that monitors have detected suspicious enrichment-related activities.

The development comes as Iran is increasingly isolated from the West and nuclear talks with world powers remain suspended. The country has also faced widespread condemnation for its deadly crackdown on major protests and the US and European Union have tight-



Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant in southern Iran

ened sanctions on Iran over its military support for Russia's war on Ukraine.

The IAEA is preparing its quarterly Iran safeguards re-

port ahead of a March 6 Board of Governors meeting in Vienna, where the Gulf nation's nuclear work will figure prominently on the agenda.

Iran has not submitted required forms declaring its intention to raise uranium enrichment levels at two facilities near the towns of Natanz and Fordow, according to one diplomat.

Even if the detected material was mistakenly accumulated because of technical difficulties in operating the centrifuge cascades — something that has happened before — it underscores the danger of Iran's decision to produce highly enriched uranium, the other diplomat said.

The IAEA has repeatedly said levels even at just 60 percent are technically indistinguishable from the level needed for a nuclear weapon. Most nuclear power reactors use material enriched to 5 percent purity.

F1 Bahrain GP 2023

Roaming musicians to set festival-like atmosphere

TDI | Manama

The incredible line-up of off-track family entertainment at the Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2023 will feature performers coming from all over the world, among whom are an eclectic mix of roaming musicians who will be setting the lively and festival-like mood at Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) in Sakhir.

The Piano a Pieds, Prima Band, Parkel Drums and Tribal Batucada each have a unique style in their act, but all of them will be bringing smiles to



Prima Band

race-goers this 3 to 5 March at "The Home of Motorsport in the Middle East".

The Piano a Pieds boasts a huge handmade keyboard installed on the floor and played with the feet by two incredibly talented dancers.

An innovative show that combines music and dance, it generates a great impact and the audience is completely involved. Following the performance, everyone is welcome to play some tunes on the Piano or to just have a musical walk on the keyboard.

Prima Band turns the street into a real stage where — between gags, choreography, juggling, acrobatics and much more — the audience becomes an integral part of the show.

The repertoire also touches different musical genres, from folk to jazz, classical music to soundtracks and from pop to tango. With their funny looks, cool moves, and engaging rhythms, the Prima Band engages the audience as only they can do.

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