



Daily Voice of Masses  
**Independent**

**Haniyeh's murder**

The shocking assassination of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh early on Wednesday in Tehran has plunged the entire Middle East into the unknown, with the threat of a regional conflagration increasingly high.

The Palestinian leader was in Tehran to attend the inauguration of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. While Israel has not accepted responsibility for this grievous provocation, there can be little doubt who is responsible. Only a few hours before Haniyeh's killing, the Israelis had bombed a Hezbollah stronghold in Beirut, apparently to target a top commander.

Following Haniyeh's murder, an Israeli minister 'celebrated' this grim achievement on the social media platform X. The Israelis are playing with fire, and their brinkmanship can push the entire region into a catastrophic maelstrom.

With the assassination, Tel Aviv has thrown the gauntlet at Tehran, and it will be very difficult for Iran not to respond to this grave provocation on its soil. Israel has struck one of Iran's closest allies in the heart of the 'axis of resistance'. Tehran needs to conduct a thorough internal investigation to determine just how such a high-profile individual was targeted. This would not be the first time Israel is believed to have struck inside Iran. Top Iranian nuclear scientists and generals have been targeted in similar fashion.

However, whatever the investigation reveals, security was ostensibly lax, and the Iranians should have strengthened their defences considering the string of previous assassinations. Yet retribution is almost certain. The Iranian supreme leader — who has the final say on all major policy decisions — has asserted, with reference to the Haniyeh killing, that it is "our duty to avenge his blood".

Condemnation of the killing has been pouring in from various quarters. Iran's brothers in arms in the 'axis of resistance' — Hezbollah, the Houthis — have slammed the crime, while Russia has dubbed it an "unacceptable political murder". China, on the other hand, has said it is "deeply concerned" while Pakistan has criticised "Israeli adventurism".

The fact that they have been unable to crush Hamas in Gaza over the last nearly 10 months has led Benjamin Netanyahu and his cabal to destabilise the wider Middle East, violating the sovereignty of Syria, Lebanon and Iran. The only way out of this crisis — and the window for peaceful resolution appears to be closing fast — is for an immediate halt to the massacre in Gaza.

Of course, with the Haniyeh assassination, the prospects of a ceasefire appear to have been buried for the foreseeable future. The US can still prevail upon Israel to wind down its murderous campaign. But in an election year, this will be highly unlikely as both contenders compete for the blessings of the Zionist lobby in Washington. The Middle East will surely be on tenterhooks for the next few days.

**Raining athletes**

**F.S.Aijazuddin**

The opening ceremony of the 2024 Olympics in Paris was like baking a soufflé in the rain. Even French expertise could not make it rise.

The French, defying convention, decided not to hold the inaugural ceremony in a stadium. They used the Seine, its ornate bridges and the iconic Eiffel Tower instead. The French should have consulted the British. In 2012, they ignored the Thames. Rain has ruined many a royal regatta.

A century has passed since Parisians last hosted the Olympics. In 1924, 3,089 athletes took part, of them 2,954 men and 135 women. In 2024, there are 11,040 competitors, half of whom are female.

Athletes compete as countries and also as members of National Olympic Committees. This year, there are 206 such NOCs — an insidious ruse by which the IOC will decide which country to admit and which to punish.

The Olympics imitate the power politics of the UN. In 1964, South Africa was excluded for its apartheid against blacks. In 1972, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) was excluded for its racist policies. In 2000, Afghanistan was excluded from Sydney for its misogynist policies.

In both 2016 and 2020, the IOC banned Russian athletes from competing under their national flag because of 'doping violations'. In 2024, Russia and Belarus have been banned over the war in Ukraine. However, their athletes can still compete as 'individual neutral athletes', under a neutral flag.

Meanwhile, Nato and its allied countries suffer no such strictures. Ukraine — their battleground — has sent 140

competitors. Israel mired in Gaza is fielding 88 competitors, the State of Palestine eight. Even the stateless have been admitted. The IOC has allowed 37 athletes to compete as a Refugee Olympic Team.

It would be a simpleton who still believes that the Olympic motto ('Faster, Higher, Stronger — Together') carries any meaning. The Olympics remain a white man's Coliseum, albeit with an increasing number of black gladiators.

The majority of the Summer Olympics have been held in white countries — in Western Europe, the US, Canada, and Australia. Four Summer Games have been hosted in yellow countries (all in East Asia), three have been hosted in Eastern Europe, and two in Latin America. Black Africa has yet to host any Olympics.

The first black Olympian George Poage won two bronze medals in the St Louis Olympics, 120 years ago. In Berlin 1936, Jesse Owens won four gold medals. Hitler chose not to meet Owens. In 1960, an Ethiopian Abebe Bikila (the son of a shepherd) startled the world by winning the marathon (running barefoot). He repeated his success in Tokyo 1964.

Today, colour is no longer a badge of nationality, nor gender a divisor of sex. (Some liberal Parisians were shocked at the tableau of drag queens performing a parody of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper.) One needed the stamina of an Olympian to watch the opening ceremony (it spanned four hours) until its shimmering finale at the Eiffel Tower, where the Canadian chanteuse Celine Dion sang Edith Piaf's signature L'Hymne à l'Amour. In between, about 10,500 rain-soaked athletes with their supporting team officials

waved national flags in a nautical armada that cruised slowly down the Seine. From its banks, viewers were entertained by Lady Gaga performing Mon Truc en Plumes in a flurry of pink ostrich feathers, reminiscent of the legendary chanteuse Mistinguett.

Other distractions were a frenetic group of Can Can dancers ending with splits, and a team of spirited dancers splashing mindlessly (like the cast of Friends) in a fountain.

Frankly, some of the images were horrific — multiple ones of a de-ca-pitated Queen Marie Antoinette framed in the windows of a public building, or famous portraits half-submerged in the Seine. The surrealist artist Salvador Dali would have loved these.

To be fair, there is only so much you can do with a river of flowing water, just as a Son et Lumière using the flat-faced pyramids at Giza offers limited options.

Pakistan's lean participation in the Olympics is a triumph of private endeavour over public neglect. In 1960, 1968, and 1984, we won the gold in hockey. For the past three Olympics, we failed even to qualify. As in our politics, we no longer play team sports.

This year we have sent seven self-motivated athletes to Paris. The talented javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem (27); the sprinter Faiga Riaz (24); sharpshooters G.M. Bashir (37), Gulfam Joseph (24), and Kishmala Ta-lat (22); and two minor swimmers Jehanara Nabi (20) and Ahmed Durraani (18). They are old enough to compete, and young enough to succeed in future Olympics.

They owe nothing to the state. Over 245 million Pakistanis owe everything to them — for loving our country, despite what it is. — Courtesy Dawn

**Parallel tracks**

**Syed Sheheryar Raza Zaidi**

A highly polarised nation is in the throes of one of its most divisive election campaigns. One candidate is on the wrong side of 70 and the other is backed by the incumbent in power. The candidate mentioned first has not only recently survived an assassination attempt, he has also been convicted on charges of a personal nature that he denies. Yet, most signs point to a victory for this candidate, who has already had one crack at power. At the same time, he is the one who many observers believe caused irreparable damage to his country's international relations when he was in power.

The irony is that this description of the maverick American presidential candidate Donald Trump can very easily apply to Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan. The two men, despite being geographically apart, seem to be on similar trajectories.

When Imran Khan was in power, he and then president Trump had a public spat on the online platform Twitter. Back then, it appeared that Pakistan would be headed in the direction of fractured relations with the US as long as these two men were at the helm of affairs. Yet, we soon saw Trump and Khan give a display of public bonhomie, with the latter visiting the US at the invitation of the former and coming back to loud fanfare, reminiscent of the time when he had lifted cricket's holy grail.

Those were the good old days as far as the two were concerned. Since then, one of them lost a hotly contested election to President Joe Biden, while the other first lost a no-confi-

dence vote, leading to his ouster, and then 'lost' a disputed election, despite the widespread public adulation for him. What stuck on both Trump and Khan, however, was the 'anti-establishment' tag — largely because both individuals have had a hard time accepting their fate and continue to challenge established norms, even if it means calling into question national elections.

Donald Trump at the time of his ascent to power had witnessed an almost meteoric rise. Running on the back of his notorious television appeal and the fanfare associated with it, he built an almost cult-like following of individuals who even today are ready to back him despite all odds, forgive him for the gravest of gaffes and overlook all his faults. All because Trump has carefully cultivated an image of himself as the only saviour who can make his nation great again. Compare this with the high regard that the supporters of Imran Khan hold the PTI leader in. An icon for his supporters, Khan may have enjoyed excellent relations with those at the helm of affairs once, but now stands for all things anti-establishment.

As fate would have it, both found themselves facing various dates in courts, having to defend themselves against charges of misuse of authority, mis-handling of state documents/secrets among others. While legal challenges for opposition leaders is not a new phenomenon in Pakistan, as far as the US is concerned, the barrage of legal challenges faced by Trump is unprecedented. Whether such charges have any basis in reality or are an attempt to undermine a worthy opponent are

questions best left to the courts to answer.

Yet, what sets Trump, the presidential candidate apart from Pakistan's incarcerated former prime minister — notwithstanding the recent favourable court decisions in the latter's case — is his ability to still have his skin in the game. For all of the alleged lobbies in America working overtime against Donald Trump, the former president enjoys the backing of a lopsided supreme court, which has recently ruled in favour of a partial immunity for former US presidents in matters related to the exercise of their professional duties while in office. As such, despite being convicted on 34 charges by a court in New York state, Trump is still legally empowered to run for president.

A lot can be said about the justice system in the US and Pakistan and how Pakistan often finds itself having to face a lot of bad press for the supposedly ineffective way its courts operate. Nothing quite amplifies this like the fate of the two leaders in Pakistan and the US.

One despite being convicted finds himself free to conduct his electioneering, appear on television, take part in debates and ride high on the back of the inflation-hit incumbency of the Democrat presidency.

The other finds himself incarcerated for convictions and allegations, kept so far away from the public's eye that he now captures their imagination.

Whether the two men can come back to power remains to be seen, but that their ideas are here to stay is not for argument anymore. — Courtesy Dawn

*Commerce News*

**Pakistan's huge potential to join G-20 countries: Dar**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar said on Wednesday that Pakistan has huge potential to join G-20 countries through structural reforms in the country's economy.

The government is fully committed to structural reforms in the country's economy by capital market and corporate sector regulation for sustainable economic development, he said.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar said this while addressing the Ground Breaking Ceremony of the Head

Office Building of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), along with Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb here. Deputy Prime Minister said today is a very special day on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of Security and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (PSX) "I still remember that, "We have a huge journey for evolving capital market and corporate sector reforms in the economy from 2013 to 2017 in the country. He said that SECP's



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar delivering remarks at the Ground Breaking Ceremony of the Head Office Building of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan.

**Data regulation, cybersecurity topmost priorities: Shaza Fatima**

ISLAMABAD (Online): Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja said that data regulation and cybersecurity are the topmost priorities of the present government.

She said that Ministry of IT & Telecom is committed for the growth of IT sector, as taking IT exports up to \$25 billion is our target.

She was addressing Roundtable on Open Data Flows & Pakistan's Digital Economy held at Ministry of IT on Thursday.

Managing Director Asia Internet Coalition (AIC) Jeff Paine, Google

**Pak, Ethiopia agree to foster deeper ties**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and Ethiopia agreed to strengthen bilateral relations and explore new collaborations in trade, finance, education and economic reforms, acknowledging the mutual benefits that could be derived from such initiatives.

According to press release issued by finance ministry, Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to Pakistan, Jemal Beker Abdula on Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb.

The Finance Minister extended a warm welcome to Ambassador Abdula and provided an overview of the economic reforms currently underway in

Pakistan. These reforms are part of a broader home-grown agenda aimed at achieving economic stability. The Minister highlighted recent positive developments, including improvements in foreign exchange reserves, state-owned enterprise (SOE) reforms, and advancements in the power sector.

International Rating agencies have started acknowledging the economic stability as a result of government's economic decisions, he said adding country's economic outlook has improved as confirmed by recent Fitch reports and now government aims at achieving economic sustainability.



HYDERABAD: Motorcyclists queue up at PSO, ready to fill their tanks and hit the road with newfound savings after the fuel price drop by Government.

**K-Electric RE Projects garner local, Int'l interest**

ISLAMABAD (APP): K-Electric (KE) completed another significant milestone in its ambitions to enhance its share of renewable energy in its generation mix, envisaged under the company's Power Acquisition Program (PAP).

The company announced the receipt of a total of 15 bids for the first of its ambitious renewable energy initiatives of 150 MW solar projects at Winder and Bela, Balochistan, said a press release issued on Thursday.

Aimed at harnessing 30% renewable energy solutions in its fleet by 2030, KE initiated a competitive bidding

process for multiple renewable energy projects earlier this year following a successful nod of approval from NEPRA.

This transparent approach is a testament to KE's commitment towards sustainable energy solutions. Over the next 5 years, KE aims to add a total of 1300 MW of renewable energy projects, furthering its commitment to sustainable energy solutions. Syed Moonis Alvi, CEO of KE, expressed his enthusiasm about this development, stating, "Garnering 15 bids for the first cohort of the solar energy project is a huge milestone for KE.



ISLAMABAD: The joint meeting of the Sugar Advisory Board and Cabinet Committee on Monitoring Sugar Export was presided over by Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain.

**PQEPC briefs Aurangzeb on company's working, confronted issues**

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, and Minister for Power Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari on Thursday held a meeting with the delegation of Port Qasim Electric Power Company (PQEPC) which was led by CEO Liang.

The delegation briefed the minister about the operations of the power company and certain issues it faced due to overdue receivables, a news release said.

It said that Power-China was a major state-owned Chinese enterprise and key investor in Pakistan's energy market. The company would continue to work with the Government of Pakistan and play its role in the improvement of power sector. The finance minister welcomed the suggestions made by the delegation and stated that Pakistan acknowledged and appreciated the investment made by PQEPC China.

**CPI inflation decelerates further to 11.1% in July**

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation decelerated to 11.1 percent during the month of July 2024 as compared to 12.6 percent recorded during June 2024, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Thursday.

According to PBS data, the CPI based inflation during the same month of last year (July 2023) was recorded at 28.3%.

On month-on-month basis, it increased to 2.1% in July 2024 as compared to an increase of 0.5% in the previous month and an increase of 3.5% in July 2023. On month-on-month basis, it increased to 2.2%.

According to data, CPI inflation Urban, increased to 13.2% on year-on-year basis in July 2024 as compared to an increase of 14.9% in the previous month and 26.3% in July 2023. On month-on-month basis, it increased to 2.0% in July 2024 as compared to an increase of 0.6% in the previous month and an increase of 3.6% in July 2023.

CPI inflation Rural, increased to 8.1% on year-on-year basis in July 2024 as compared to an increase of 9.3% in the previous month and 31.3% in July 2023. On month-on-month basis, it increased to 2.2%.

## Syed Najmi Alam says Livestock deptt should take all possible steps to timely vaccinate animals of cattle owners of Sindh

**Independent Report**  
KARACHI: Advisor to Chief Minister of Sindh on Livestock and Fisheries Syed Najmi Alam has said that the raiding team conducts raids twice a month through its campaign to catch illegal nets from all the coastal areas of Sindh. However, the Livestock Department should take all possible steps to timely vaccinate the animals of cattle owners of Sindh. He expressed this while presiding over two separate high-level meetings of the Marine Fisheries and Livestock Department in his office on Thursday.

In meeting Secretary Livestock and Fisheries Dr. Kazim Hussain Jatoti, Director General Marine Fisher-

ies Dr. Ali Muhammad Mastoi, Director Marine Dr. Asim Karim, Director Red Farm Khaliq Ahmad Soomro, Director Coastal Fisheries Ijaz Ahmed Memon, Managing Director Karachi Fish Harbor Safdar Hussain Rizvi, Director General Livestock Sindh Dr. Hizbullah Bhutto, Director General of Sindh Institute of Animal Health Dr. Nazir Hussain Kalhor, Director General Poultry Production Dr. Manoor Hussain Rana, Director Livestock Animal Breeding Dr. Naubat Khan Khoso, Director Central Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (CVDL) Tando Jam Dr. Madan Lal, Director Poultry Dr. Kabir Ahmed and Project Director Dr. Shah Murad Rand participated.



**FAISALABAD:** People are carrying coffin of stage actor late Sardar Kamal after offering funeral prayers in the city.

## 22 brands of mineral water declared harmful for human consumption

**Independent Report**  
KARACHI: As many as 22 brands of mineral water have been declared harmful for human consumption. Among the mineral waters which have been declared harmful for human consumption are Fijji, BRO-H 20, Koh Noor, Rayaal Silver, Smart, Aqua Qismat, Asha Premium, Drinking Water, Buxton, Cliff Water, Health Drinking Water, Crystal Pure Life, Dream Pure, Neo Health Drinking Water, Oriaf, Faraz Water, Premium Safa, Pure Refined Water, Smart Indus Pure

Water, Splash Water, Still, Starlite Water, Vivo Water Plus Premium Drinking and Masafi. Director General Sindh Food Authority Muzamil Hussain Halepoto has directed the management of the said mineral water to withdraw their products from the market within seven days. He said that action would be taken under the Sindh Food Authority Act against those who didn't follow the orders of Sindh Food Authority. He said that no one would be allowed to play with the health of the people.



**PESHAWAR:** Opposition members and MPAs KP Assembly are participating in the dinner hosted by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi at Governor House.

## Governor KP expresses concern over worsen law and order situation, developmental schemes in province

**PESHAWAR (APP):** Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi has expressed concern over the worsening law and order situation and neglected developmental schemes in the province.

The Governor hosted a dinner in honor of the opposition members of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly at the Governor's House on Wednesday night.

The dinner was

attended by key opposition members including Dr. Ibadullah, Leader of the Opposition in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Parliamentary leader of PPP Ahmed Karim Kundi, Arbab Usman of ANP, Malik Tariq Awan of PML-N, Rehana Ismail of JUI-F and others.

During the event, the discussions focused on the current political, economic, and law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Opposition members expressed grave concerns over the deteriorating security situation in the province, highlighting the recent incidents of terrorism, extortion, kidnapping for ransom, and general unrest in Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan and the merged district of Kurram Parachinar. They voiced their disappointment that the provincial government

## 3 people die, seven injured in rain-related incidents

**LAHORE (APP):** Heavy rain in several parts of the provincial capital on Thursday resulted in loss of three lives and injuries to seven people.

According to a Rescue-1122 spokesman, the roof of a house in a suburban village near Baba Bulleh Shah Interchange at Gajjumata Lahore collapsed, which resulted in one death and injuries to five people.

Another roof collapsed at Shaukat Khanum Chowk, in which two people suffered injuries.

## C&W staff put on high alert during rains: Bharth

**LAHORE (APP):** The Punjab government has put all the field formation of Communication and Works (C&W) Department on high alert during the rains with an aim to avert any difficult situation by storm water. The engineering and field staff under the supervision of executive engineers remained in the field while visiting the important roads, public buildings, particularly hospitals in Lahore and across the province.

The Minister for Communication and Works Sohaib Ahmad Bharth, after Thursday rain, visited various parts of the city and inspected the water disposal operations. He issued instructions to the officers of C & W to visit all hospitals of the province specifically of Lahore and check their rooftop, emergencies and wards to estimate the affected portions of the buildings. Moreover, the minister directed the staff to ensure the timely repair of affected portions of roads.

He also directed officers to submit their detailed reports in regard with effects of rain to the public buildings.

## Minister welcomes WHO collaboration on health initiatives

**LAHORE (APP):** Punjab Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique has expressed gratitude for the ongoing collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO) on various health projects.

The minister made these remarks during a meeting with a WHO delegation at the Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute (PKLI) on Thursday.

Highlighting the provincial government's commitment to enhancing healthcare services, the minister stated, "Under the leadership of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, we are striving to provide better health facilities to the people." He emphasized that raising public awareness is crucial for significantly reducing the prevalence of hepatitis in Punjab. "Teamwork is essential to achieve positive outcomes from our policies, and improving the health system is our top priority," he added. He also mentioned that the scope of hepatitis screening has been expanded throughout the province.

He noted the growing challenge of controlling Pakistan's population and stressed the importance of intensifying screenings for Hepatitis B and C. Dr. Meg Darthy, HIV Global Director from WHO, reaffirmed the organization's commitment to supporting the Punjab Health Department.



**PESHAWAR:** UNICEF Chief Field Officer Mr. Radolslaw Rzehak giving shield to a participant during the Launching ceremony of Global Breastfeeding Month at a local hotel in Provincial Capital city.

## CS inspects drainage work during heavy rain

**LAHORE (APP):** During the heavy rainfall, Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman visited different areas of the city including Services Hospital, Lakshmi Chowk, Qartaba Chowk, Railway Road, Circular Road and other major points. He directed that special measures should be taken for smooth flow of traffic during the rains. He asked the administrative officers to remain in the field and check the underpasses and disposal stations. He said that the relevant departments should be on alert to deal with any situation due to rain. Commissioner Lahore.

# International News

## Calls for revenge at Iran funeral for Hamas chief Haniyeh

**Monitoring Desk**  
TEHRAN: Iran held funeral processions on Thursday amidst calls for revenge after the killing of Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh in a strike in Tehran blamed on Israel.

The Islamic Republic's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei led prayers for Haniyeh ahead of his burial in Qatar, having earlier threatened a "harsh punishment" for his killing. In Tehran's city centre, thousands of mourning crowds carrying posters of Haniyeh and Palestinian flags gathered for the ceremony at Tehran University before a procession, according to an AFP correspondent.

Haniyeh's death was announced the day before by Iran's Revolutionary Guards, who said he and his bodyguard were killed in a strike on their accommodation in the Iranian capital at 2am on Wednesday. It came just hours after Israel targeted and killed top Hezbollah commander Fuad Shukri in a retaliatory strike on the Lebanese capital Beirut, sending fears of a wider regional conflict soaring in the fallout from the Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza. Israel has declined to comment on the Tehran strike.

Iran's state TV showed the coffins of Haniyeh and his bodyguards covered in Palestinian flags during the ceremony attended by senior Iranian officials. President Masoud Pezeshkian and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps chief, General Hossein Salami, were present.

Haniyeh had been visiting Tehran for Pezeshkian's inauguration ceremony on Tuesday.

Senior Hamas figure Khalil al-Hayya, the movement's foreign relations chief, vowed during the funeral ceremony that "Ismail Haniyeh's slogan, 'We will not recognise Israel', will remain an immortal slogan" and "we will pursue Israel until it is uprooted from the land of Palestine".

Iran's conservative parliamentary speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said Iran "will certainly carry out the supreme leader's order [to avenge Haniyeh]". "It is our duty to respond at the right time and in the right place," he said in a speech with crowds chanting "Death to Israel, Death to America!"

The caskets, with a black-and-white pattern resembling a Palestinian keffiyeh scarf, were borne on a flower-bedecked truck through leafy streets where cooling water mists sprayed the flag-waving crowds.

Khamenei, who has the final say in Iran's political affairs, said after Haniyeh's death that it was "our duty to seek revenge for his blood as he was martyred in the territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran".



**Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei performs prayer at the funeral of assassinated Hamas chief, Ismail Haniyeh, in Tehran, Iran.**

## South Korea offers humanitarian aid to flood-hit North Korea

**Monitoring Desk**  
SEOUL: South Korea on Thursday offered to send aid supplies to North Korea to help the country recover from heavy rains and floods that submerged thousands of homes and huge swaths of farmland.

It's unclear whether North Korea would accept South Korea's proposal for help. Antipathy between the war-divided rivals is at its highest in years over the North's growing nuclear ambitions and the South's expansion of combined military exercises with the United States and Japan to counter the North's threats.

South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs, said the South was willing to swiftly provide supplies to address the "humanitarian difficulties" facing North Korean residents following the recent storms. The ministry in a statement urged North Korea's Red Cross to promptly respond to its calls for discussions to determine the types and amounts of South Korean supplies and how to deliver them.

## Israeli strike kills two Al Jazeera journalists

**Monitoring Desk**  
DOHA: Two Al Jazeera journalists were killed on Wednesday in an Israeli strike in Gaza, the Qatar-based channel reported as the crisis rages in the Palestinian territory.

"Al Jazeera Arabic journalist Ismail Al Ghoul and his cameraman Rami Al Refee have been killed in an Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip," the network reported adding the strike "targeted a car near the Aidia area, west of Gaza City".

## Trump attacks Harris' racial identity, says she opted to 'turn Black'

**Monitoring Desk**  
WASHINGTON: Donald Trump suggested on Wednesday that Vice President Kamala Harris had decided to "turn Black" for political gain, as he attacked his Democratic White House rival during a combative interaction with African American journalists in Chicago.

The Republican former president's inflammatory comments marked an escalation of the 78-year-old's vitriol against Harris, whom he falsely accused of having identified as Indian but then, "all of a sudden, she made a turn, and she became a Black person".

Harris, 59, has long identified as Black and graduated from a historically Black university.

"So I don't know, is she Indian or is she Black?" asked Trump during a heated interview at the National Association of Black Journalists conference.

Harris later denounced the attacks as "the same old show" of "the divisiveness and the disrespect" from Trump.

The combative remarks by Trump, who has been eager to improve his performance with Black voters, are likely to send shockwaves through the 2024 White House contest.

They come as the former president, convicted two months ago of felony fraud related to hush money payments to a porn star, struggles to formulate a new strategy less than 100 days before the election.

Later on Wednesday, he held a campaign rally in Pennsylvania, a battleground state where he narrowly survived an assassination attempt earlier this month, and continued the verbal assault on his rival.

## Protesters in Nigeria demonstrate over high cost of living

**Monitoring Desk**  
ABUJA: Police fired tear gas to disperse crowds of protesters in Nigeria's capital city Abuja on Thursday, as thousands rallied against escalating cost of living and governance issues in Africa's most populous nation, according to eyewitness accounts.

Protesters demonstrated in Abuja, the commercial capital Lagos and several other cities to show discontent with economic reforms that have led to rampant inflation and inflicted increasing hardship on ordinary Nigerians. President Bola Tinubu has vowed to pursue the changes that he says are needed to keep the country afloat.

Authorities deployed armed security personnel in an effort to preempt potential violence.

## Ukraine receives first F-16 fighter jets to bolster defenses against Russia, officials tell AP

**Monitoring Desk**  
NEW YORK: Ukraine has received the first F-16 fighter jets that it has sought for months to fight back against an onslaught of Russian missile strikes, a U.S. official confirmed to The Associated Press.

A Ukrainian lawmaker also confirmed Ukraine had received a small number of F-16 fighter jets. The two officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not permitted to speak on the subject publicly. Ukraine has been pushing its Western allies for F-16s for Ukraine for months, saying they were critically needed to fight back against the onslaught of missiles Russia has fired against it. The F-16 is specialized in suppressing enemy air defenses.

## Khaled Meshaal, who survived Israeli assassination attempt, tipped to succeed Haniyeh

**Monitoring Desk**  
CAIRO: Khaled Meshaal, tipped to be the new Hamas leader, became known around the world in 1997 after Israeli agents injected him with poison in a botched assassination attempt on a street outside his office in Amman, the Jordanian capital. The hit against a senior figure of the Palestinian group, ordered by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, so enraged Jordan's then-King Hussein that he spoke of hanging the would-be killers and scrapping Jordan's peace treaty with Israel unless the antidote was handed over. Israel did so, and also agreed to free Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, only to assassinate him seven years later in Gaza. Meshaal, 68, became Hamas's political leader in exile the year before Israel tried to eliminate him, a position that enabled him to represent the Palestinian group at meetings with governments around the world.

## Palestinians detained by Israel subjected to 'torture', says UN

**Monitoring Desk**  
GENEVA: Palestinians detained by Israel during the Gaza conflict have largely been held in secret and in some cases subjected to treatment that may amount to torture, the United Nations said on Wednesday.

Since the October 7 Hamas attacks, thousands of Palestinians — including medics, patients, residents and captured fighters — have been taken from Gaza to Israel, "usually shackled and blindfolded", the OHCHR UN human rights office said in a report. Thousands more have been detained in the West Bank and Israel, it added.

"They have generally been held in secret, without being given a reason for their detention, access to a lawyer or effective judicial review," OHCHR said.

The report was released the day after Israel's military police questioned soldiers arrested on suspicion of sexually abusing a Palestinian detainee. At least 53 detainees from Gaza and the West Bank have died in Israeli detention since the Gaza conflict began, the report found.

Testimonies for the report suggested that Israel had subjected prisoners to "a range of appalling acts, such as waterboarding and the release of dogs on detainees", UN rights chief Volker Turk said.

The report covers October 7 to June 30. It relies primarily on information gathered through interviews with released Palestinian detainees and other victims and witnesses of violations, OHCHR said. The report said there were "reasonable grounds to believe" that since October 7, Israel and Palestinian armed groups had "committed gross violations and abuses."

