



# UN: Up to 345mn People Marching Toward Starvation



The UN has rung the alarm over an increase in the number of acutely hungry worldwide.

UNITED NATIONS (AP) – The UN food chief warned Thursday that the world is facing “a global emergency of unprecedented magnitude,” with up to 345 million people marching toward starvation — and 70 million pushed closer to starvation by the war in Ukraine.

David Beasley, executive director of the UN World Food Program, told the UN Security Council that the 345 million people facing acute food insecurity in the 82 countries where the agency operates is 2½ times the number of acutely food insecure people before the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020.

He said it is incredibly troubling that 50 million of those people in 45 countries are suffering from very acute malnutrition and are “knocking on famine’s door.”

“What was a wave of hunger is now a tsunami of hunger,” he said, pointing to rising conflict, the pandemic’s economic ripple effects, climate change, rising fuel prices and the war in Ukraine.

Since the Ukraine conflict on Feb. 24, Beasley said, soaring food, fuel and fertilizer costs have driven 70 million people closer to starvation.

Despite the agreement in July allowing Ukrainian grain to be shipped from three Black Sea ports that had been blockaded by Russia and continuing efforts to get Russian fertilizer back to global markets, “there is a real and dangerous risk of multiple famines this year,” he said. “And in 2023, the current food price crisis could develop into a food availability crisis if we don’t act.”

The Security Council was focusing on conflict-induced food insecurity and the

risk of famine in Ethiopia, northeastern Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen. But Beasley and UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths also warned about the food crisis in Somalia, which they both recently visited, and Griffiths also put Afghanistan high on the list.

“Famine will happen in Somalia,” Griffiths said, and “be sure it won’t be the only place either.”

He cited recent assessments that identified “hundreds of thousands of people facing catastrophic levels of hunger,” meaning they are at the worst “famine” level.

Beasley recalled his warning to the council in April 2020 “that we were then facing famine, starvation of biblical proportions.” He said then the world “stepped up with funding and tremendous response, and we averted catastrophe.”

“We are on the edge once again, even worse, and we must do all that we can — all hands on deck with every fiber of our bodies,” he said. “The hungry people of the world are counting on us, and ... we must not let them down.”

Griffiths said the widespread and increasing food insecurity is a result of the direct and indirect impact of conflict and violence that kills and injures civilians, forces families to flee the land they depend on for income and food, and leads to economic decline and rising prices for food that they can’t afford.

After more than seven years of Saudi-led war in Yemen, he said, “some 19 million people — six out of 10 — are acutely food insecure, an estimated 160,000 people are facing catastrophe, and 538,000 children are severely malnourished.”

## China to Impose Sanctions on U.S. Companies Over Arms Sales to Taiwan

BEIJING (Xinhua/Reuters) – China has decided to impose sanctions on two senior executives of American firms involved in the latest U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, to defend China’s national sovereignty and security interests, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning said on Friday.

The Chinese government has decided to impose sanctions on Gregory Hayes, chairman and chief executive officer of Raytheon Technologies Corporation, and Theodore Colbert III, Boeing and chief executive officer of Boeing Defense, Space & Security, Mao said.

The U.S. arms sales to China’s Taiwan region seriously violate the one-China principle and the provisions of the three China-U.S. joint communiqués, particularly the August 17 Communiqué. Such moves have severely undermined China’s sovereignty and security interests, as well as China-U.S. relations and peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, Mao said.

“China firmly opposes and strongly

condemns the arms sales,” she told a daily press briefing.

Mao said that China once again urges the U.S. government and relevant parties to abide by the one-China principle and the provisions of the three China-U.S. joint communiqués, cease arms sales to Taiwan and military contact with Taiwan, and stop creating new factors that could lead to tensions in the Taiwan Strait.

China will continue to take all necessary measures to firmly defend its own sovereignty and security interests in light of the development of the situation, she said.

Meanwhile, Chinese President Xi Jinping on Friday called on Russia and other members of a regional grouping to support each other in preventing foreign powers from instigating “color revolutions” - popular uprisings that have shaken former Communist nations - in their countries.

Speaking in Uzbekistan at a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), a security grouping led by China

and Russia, Xi said member countries should support the efforts each other have made to safeguard their own security and development interests.

Xi also said that China will train 2,000 law enforcement personnel from member countries over the next five years and set up a training base focusing on anti-terrorism work.

He invited member countries to sign up to China’s Global Security Initiative, a concept he proposed in April which includes the idea that no country should strengthen its own security at the expense of others.

China will provide 1.5 billion yuan (\$214 million) worth of grain and other emergency aid to developing countries, Xi said, adding that the Chinese economy is resilient and “full of potential.”

China’s economy narrowly escaped a contraction in the April-to-June quarter, hobbled by COVID-19 lockdowns of cities, a deepening downturn in the property market and persistently soft consumer spending.

## CIA Torture Report to Remain Classified for ‘National Security’

WASHINGTON (RT) – A U.S. federal judge ruled that a sprawling congressional report on the CIA’s Terror War torture program will remain classified, claiming citizens have no right to access the controversial document, portions of which were already leaked to the public by a Democratic senator in 2014.

In a decision on Thursday, District of Columbia Judge Beryl Howell said the report “does not qualify as a public record subject to the common law right of public access”, as a previous case concluded it was a “congressional record” and therefore could not be obtained through standard Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

“The Report contains highly classified information about the CIA’s detention and interrogation policies and procedures that would compromise national security if released, far outweighing the public’s interest in disclosure,” the judge wrote in her opinion.

Investigative reporter Shawn Musgrave filed suit for the document, making a ‘right to know’ argument akin to those brought in FOIA litigation, but his case was ultimately dismissed. The journalist’s lawyer, Kel McClanahan, vowed to appeal the decision.

The 6,700-page Senate report details the CIA’s clandestine detention and torture programs launched after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, during which countless foreign suspects were swept up into secretive ‘black site’ prisons overseas and subjected to extreme, and often barbaric, interrogation measures. Few of those cases



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ever resulted in formal charges for the accused, many of whom were apparently held at the agency’s own discretion, well beyond the reach of the American criminal justice system or the international laws of war.

An unclassified summary of the document released by Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein in 2014 presented 20 major findings, including that the CIA’s methods rarely helped to acquire useful intelligence, that it repeatedly lied about the effectiveness of those methods, and that the agency’s interrogations were far more violent than intelligence officials had ever admitted to lawmakers. Some of the so-called ‘enhanced interrogation’ techniques were developed by expert psychologists to maximize suffering

inflicted on suspects, the summary found, also concluding that the torture regime had tarnished America’s reputation around the world.

Commenting on the ruling, Senator Feinstein said that while she agreed with some aspects of the decision, “I also continue to believe the full torture report – with appropriate redactions – should be released at some point.”

“The use of torture by the American government was a dark mark on our history that must never be allowed to happen again. We must continue to learn from our mistakes, and that means eventually releasing the torture report at an appropriate time,” she added, according to Los Angeles Times.

## Putin to Europe: Open Nord Stream 2 If You Want Gas



Russian President Vladimir Putin has denied his country had anything to do with Europe’s energy crisis.

MOSCOW (Reuters/AFP) – Russian President Vladimir Putin has denied his country had anything to do with Europe’s energy crisis, saying that if the European Union wanted more gas it should lift sanctions preventing the opening of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline.

Speaking to reporters after the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Uzbekistan, Putin blamed “the green agenda” for the energy crisis, and insisted that Russia would fulfill its energy obligations.

“The bottom line is, if you have an urge, if it’s so hard for you, just lift the sanctions on Nord Stream 2, which is 55 billion cubic meters of gas per year, just push the button and everything will get going,” Putin said, Reuters reported.

Nord Stream 2, which lays on the bed of the Baltic Sea almost in parallel to Nord Stream 1, was built a year ago, but Germany decided not to proceed with it just days before Russia sent its troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24.

European gas prices more than doubled from the start of the year amid a decline in Russian supplies.

This year’s price surge has squeezed struggling already consumers and forced some industries to halt production.

Europe has accused Russia of weaponizing energy supplies in retaliation for Western sanctions imposed on Moscow over the Ukraine war. Russia says the West has launched an economic war and sanctions have hampered Nord Stream 1 pipeline operations.

Russia has cut off gas supplies to several countries, including Bulgaria and Poland, because they refused to pay in roubles rather than the currency of the

contract.

Russian gas giant Gazprom (GAZPMM) also said earlier this month the Nord Stream 1 pipeline, Europe’s major supply route, would remain shut as a turbine at a compressor station had an engine oil leak, sending wholesale gas prices soaring.

According to the latest developments on the ground, Russia says it has struck several of Ukraine’s positions in the wake of the shelling by the Ukrainian side of spots near Europe’s biggest nuclear power plant Zaporizhzhia.

The Russian Defense Ministry said on Saturday its forces had conducted the strikes in the regions of Kherson, Mykolaiv, Kharkiv and Donetsk.

According to the ministry, Ukrainian forces had carried out an unsuccessful offensive near Pravdyne in Kherson.

The ministry said two incidents of Ukrainian shelling had been recorded near the plant on Saturday, but the radiation situation at the station remains normal. “The Kiev regime has resumed its provocations threatening to create a man-made disaster at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power plant,” said Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov.

“In total, 15 shells were fired from the Nikopol area of the Dnepropetrovsk region. Artillery units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine were suppressed by return fire.”

Earlier this month, Russia accused Ukraine of repeatedly shelling the vicinity of Zaporizhzhia.

Russia took control of the plant in March. It says its armed forces “don’t damage Ukraine’s nuclear safety in any way and cause no obstacles to the plant’s operation.”

## Over 1,000 Flights Cancelled in France Due to Strikes

PARIS (AFP) – Around 1,000 flights to and from France were cancelled Friday as the country’s air traffic controllers went on strike, causing delays across European airspace.

France’s DGAC civil aviation authority said 16 airports were operating a skeleton service, as were traffic control centers guiding planes overflying French territory at high altitude.

But several regional airports were closed and the DGAC warned of “cancellations and significant delays across the country”.

European air traffic body Eurocontrol said it was seeing “significant disruption”, with delays totaling over 500,000 minutes by 8:30 am (0630 GMT).

That was more than three times the level across the whole of last Friday when air traffic was moving normally. Around 21,000 planes are expected to pass through Eurocontrol airspace on Friday, down by around one third.

Air France dropped around half its 800 planned services Friday, while

Europe’s largest airline Ryanair said it had cancelled 420 flights.

The DGAC said it was working with Eurocontrol to divert planes around French airspace.

The SNCTA air traffic controllers’ union said its members are concerned that pay is not keeping up with soaring inflation.

It also warns that recruitment is falling short, risking gaps in the profession’s ranks when large numbers of existing workers retire from the end of this decade.

The union said it had filed notice of a further strike on September 28-30.

“It is inexcusable that passengers who are not even flying to or from France are disrupted,” said Neal McMahon, Ryanair operations director. Ryanair cancelled 420 flights.

“It is time that the EU (European Union) step in and protect overflights so that European passengers are not repeatedly held to ransom by a tiny French ATC union,” McMahon added.

YEREVAN (Dispatches) – U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi arrived in Armenia on Saturday with a Congressional delegation in continuation of Washington’s meddlesome policies. Ahead of the visit, Pelosi’s office claimed that the delegation’s visit is to “highlight the strong commitment of the United States to security, economic prosperity, and democratic governance in Armenia and the Caucasus region.” Speaker Pelosi is the highest-ranking U.S. official to visit Armenia since Secretary of State Hillary Clinton visited there in 2010 and 2012. The visit comes in a show of support for the country, which has been locked in a deadly fight with Azerbaijan. It is the speaker’s latest dramatic foreign trip following her contentious arrival in Taiwan last month. With the midterms approaching — and the possibility that she will lose the gavel if Republicans return to the majority — the belief in Washington is that Pelosi wants to cement her legacy as a so-called ‘champion of human rights’, not only in the United States but around the world.

LONDON (Dispatches) – A British Muslim charity has broken the world record for the largest number of blood donations across six continents in only one day. The world-record effort was led in August by a social justice charity known as ‘Who Is Hussain’, which was trying to rally 50,000 blood donors across six continents. The #GlobalBloodHeroes campaign, supported by the National Health Service (NHS) Blood and Transplant, aims to raise awareness among ethnic minority communities, where blood donation rates are low. The charity also works with one of Britain’s oldest Muslim blood donation organizations known as ‘Imam Hussain Blood Donation Campaign’. As part of the campaign, blood donation centers across the UK — and dozens of other centers in 27 countries including Argentina, Iraq, and Thailand — collected blood from more than 37,000 people. Donations began at a center in New Zealand and concluded in the United States.

OTTAWA (Middle East Eye) – The human rights commission chief for Canada’s Alberta province has been forced to resign after a number of Canadian community organizations called for his removal due to Islamophobic comments he made. Collin May, a lawyer from Calgary, was originally appointed to a five-year term as the head of the province’s human rights commission. He served as a member since 2009. But earlier this week, the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) and nearly 30 other community groups sent a letter to Justice Minister Tyler Shandro calling for May’s resignation over Islamophobic comments he made in 2009. That year, in a book review, May said that Islam was “not a peaceful religion misused by radicals” and instead was “one of the most militaristic religions known to man”. In their letter, the NCCM and the other groups said May had agreed to a dialogue with the Muslim community, but later declined dates to meet and then also sent letters threatening to sue those criticizing him. “In a time where brazen attacks on Muslims in Alberta have been growing, specifically targeting Black Muslim women wearing hijab, Mr. May’s decision to threaten to sue his critics, while simultaneously suggesting outreach with Alberta’s Muslim communities, have been extraordinary and shocking,” the groups said.

ANKARA (Al Jazeera) – Turkey condemned a move by the United States to fully lift its weapons embargo on the divided island of Cyprus starting in 2023, warning it could start an arms race. The foreign ministry said on Saturday the decision would “further strengthen the Greek Cypriot side’s intransigence and negatively affect efforts to resolve the Cyprus issue”. “It will lead to an arms race on the island, harming peace and stability in the eastern Mediterranean,” a ministry statement said, calling on the U.S. to reconsider and pursue a balanced policy towards the two sides. The Mediterranean island has been divided between the internationally recognized Republic of Cyprus and a breakaway state in the north set up after a Turkish invasion launched in 1974 in response to a coup sponsored by the military government then ruling Greece. The U.S. imposed the arms embargo on the whole of Cyprus in 1987 in the hope it could encourage its reunification.

PORT AU PRINCE (AP) – Angry Haitians have protested the sharp increase in fuel prices once again, storming and looting public centers, attacking schools and government buildings across the country. Some protesters gathered in Port au Prince and nearby streets over the weekend, while others attacked the facilities of the United Nations World Food Program, where 1400 tons of food were stored. The WFP condemned the attack on its warehouse in the town of Gonaives, saying the stolen food was intended for school lunches and poor families in Haiti. Its local director, Jean-Martin Coeur, said that the incident cannot be simply passed over. Haitian protesters targeted the National Television building, the National Archives building, and some stores and shopping centers. The protests began when Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry announced last Sunday that the government is facing a cash shortage and can no longer pay fuel subsidies, and therefore, prices must rise. As a result, the price of diesel and kerosene is expected to double in the coming days, going up from 350 to 670 gourdes (US\$3-5.7). Fuel importers in Haiti are having a hard time getting the subsidies they are struggling to get dollars from the central bank, which is why fuel reserves in Haiti are running low.

TOKYO (Reuters) – The Japan Meteorological Agency warned on Saturday of a large and powerful typhoon expected to reach landfall in the southern island of Kyushu on Sunday. The agency said it may issue a “special warning” for Kagoshima prefecture and the northern part of Kyushu, Japan’s southernmost main island, with the possibility of high waves and heavy rains in the regions. Typhoon Nanmadol, the 14th of the season, was near Japan’s southern Minami-Daito Island heading northwest at 20 km (12 miles) per hour on Saturday afternoon. The storm is forecast to curve east and pass over Tokyo on Tuesday before moving out to sea by Wednesday.