

'Time to Reform Security Council'

# Japan Riot Police Pin G7 Protesters to Ground in Violent Scuffle



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HIROSHIMA (Dispatches) – Violence broke out on the sidelines of the G7 summit in Hiroshima as riot police wrestled people protesting the meeting of world leaders.

Police could be seen pinning protesters to the ground on Sunday after a brawl broke out.

In the minute-long clip, widespread shouting can be heard as a throng of riot police jostle with a protestor angrily lashing out at them.

The G7 comprises the U.S., UK,

Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Japan – and eight other nations have been invited this year. They're meeting to discuss the war in Ukraine and other foreign policy points – including their relationships with China.

The group lurches to one side, as two protesters are eventually pinned down.

One of the pair, a young man, is then filmed angrily talking to the camera after being released.

Protests also took place on Satur-

day, with demonstrators accusing the G7 nations of escalating the war in Ukraine, Japanese broadcaster NHK reported.

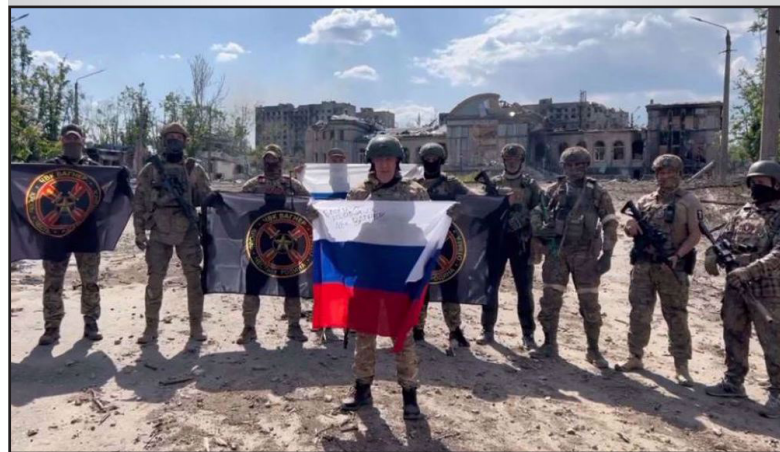
Meanwhile, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Sunday that it was time to reform both the Security Council and Bretton Woods to align with the "realities of today's world".

Speaking at a press conference in Hiroshima, Japan, where the Group of Seven summit meeting had been held, Guterres said both institutions reflected the power relations of 1945 and needed to be updated.

"The global financial architecture became outdated, dysfunctional and unfair," he said. "In the face of the economic shocks from the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, it has failed to fulfill its core function as a global safety net."

Guterres also spoke of how he felt that at the G7 summit there was a growing consciousness among developing countries that not enough was being done to reform outdated institutions or "remove the frustrations" of the Global South.

## Biden Unveils New \$375mn Military Package for Ukraine



Founder of Russia's Wagner military group, Yevgeny Prigozhin, makes a statement as he stands next to Wagner forces in Bakhmut, Ukraine, on May 20, 2023.

HIROSHIMA (Dispatches) – U.S. President Joe Biden announced a new \$375 million package of military aid to Ukraine on Sunday and told President Vladimir Zelensky that the United States is doing all it could to strengthen Ukraine amid the war with Russia.

Meeting with the Ukrainian leader on the sidelines of the G7 summit of world leaders in Hiroshima, Japan, Biden said the military aid package included ammunition, artillery, armored vehicles and training.

"Together with the entire G7, we have Ukraine's back and I promise we're not going anywhere," Biden told Zelensky.

In the meeting, Biden stressed his country's readiness to help build Ukraine's long-term capacity to defend against and deter Russian aggression, the White House said.

To that end, Biden discussed U.S. support for a joint effort with allied and partner nations to train Ukrainian pilots on fourth-generation fighter aircraft such as the F-16, it said.

The U.S. and its Western allies have kept feeding Ukraine with massive amounts of arms since the start of the Ukrainian conflict last year, which according to Russia is the sole reason that the conflict is not coming to an end.

Russia has repeatedly warned the Western governments such as the U.S. and UK against arming

Ukraine and fanning the flames of war.

Apart from sending lethal armaments, the Western countries have supported Ukraine by imposing a raft of sanctions against Russia.

As for the latest developments on the ground, Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday congratulated the Wagner forces and the Russian army for the "liberation" of the eastern Ukrainian city of Bakhmut, which Russia calls by its Soviet-era name of Artyomovsk.

In a statement published on the Kremlin website, Putin said that the battle – the longest and bloodiest of the 15-month war – had ended in a Russian victory, and that all those who had excelled in it on Moscow's side would be given state awards.

"The Head of State congratulated Wagner's assault groups, as well as all members of the units of the Russian Armed Forces who provided them with the necessary support and cover on their flanks, on the completion of the operation to liberate Artyomovsk (Bakhmut)," the statement said.

"All those who distinguished themselves will be presented with state awards," it said.

Ukraine, however, said on Sunday that it was still fighting for control of Bakhmut, after Zelensky had said earlier that the city remained "only in our hearts."

## Battles Rage Hours After Sudan Rivals Agree to Ceasefire

KHARTOUM (AFP) – Residents of Sudan's capital again awoke to heavy clashes Sunday morning just hours after rival generals agreed to an upcoming one-week ceasefire amid ongoing talks in Saudi Arabia.

The ceasefire -- the latest following many successive truces that have been systematically violated -- is set to go into effect at 9:45 pm (1945 GMT) on Monday, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia said in a joint statement.

The ceasefire "shall remain in effect for seven days and may be extended with the agreement of both parties", the statement added after talks in Jeddah.

Multiple truces have been violated since fighting broke out five weeks ago, which the Saudi foreign ministry acknowledged in a statement published by the official Saudi Press Agency early Sunday.

"Unlike previous ceasefires, the Agreement reached in Jeddah was signed by the parties and will be supported by a U.S.-Saudi and international-supported ceasefire monitoring mechanism," it said.

But Khartoum residents -- who for weeks have been sheltering from brutal urban warfare amid desperately low supplies of food and vital resources -- were skeptical that this time would be any different.

"They have announced truces that they have not held to before," said Hussein Mohammed, who remains in Khartoum North, sheltering in



Soldiers of the Sudanese army stand man a checkpoint in Khartoum on May 20, 2023, as violence between two rival generals continues.

place with his sick mother even as their neighborhood became deserted.

"We hope that this time mediators can monitor that the ceasefire is implemented," he told AFP, adding that his mother has been unable to make her regular doctor's appointments since before the conflict erupted on April 15.

The fighting pits the Sudanese army, led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, against the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, led by Burhan's former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo.

Around 1,000 people have been killed and over a million displaced throughout the weeks of intense fighting, leaving millions more with sporadic access to water, electricity or medicine.

Along with the capital, the war-scarred western region of Darfur has seen some of the worst of the fighting.

"We do not trust the warring sides," said Adam Issa, a shop owner in El-Genaina, West Darfur. "Every time they announce a truce and they go back to fighting. We want a permanent ceasefire, not a temporary truce."

The region is still reeling from a conflict that erupted in 2003 when former autocrat Omar al-Bashir unleashed the feared Janjaweed militia -- which formed the basis for the RSF -- to crush a rebellion by ethnic minority groups.

In October 2021, the warring generals collaborated to oust a civilian government, derailing a transition to democracy following Bashir's ouster in 2019.

## Chaos Looming in U.S. as Debt Ceiling Standoff Drags On

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – President Joe Biden on Sunday called the latest Republican offer in talks on lifting the government's debt ceiling "unacceptable".

Before leaving Hiroshima, Japan, after a meeting of G7 leaders, Biden suggested some Republicans in Congress were willing to see the U.S. default on its debt so that the disastrous results would prevent Biden, a Democrat, from winning re-election in 2024.

Less than two weeks remain until June 1, when the Treasury Department has warned that the federal government could be unable to pay all its debts. That would trigger a default that would cause chaos in financial markets and spike interest rates.

Biden said he would speak to top congressional Republican Kevin McCarthy on his flight home and hoped the speaker of the House of Representatives had been waiting to negotiate with Biden directly.

"Much of what they've already proposed is simply, quite frankly, unacceptable," Biden said. "It's time for Republicans to accept that there is no bipartisan deal to be made solely, solely on their partisan terms. They have to move as well."

McCarthy, in an interview on Fox News, said he expected to speak with Biden later on Sunday morning.

"The difficulty is nothing's agreed to at all," McCarthy said on "Sunday Morning Futures With Maria Bartiromo," adding that earlier discussions had seemed promising to reach a compromise and accusing Biden

of reversing course. "We were in a good place, he goes overseas, and now he wants to change the debate."

The talks have grown increasingly heated. Democratic and Republican negotiators said Friday meetings at the Capitol yielded no progress and the two sides did not meet on Saturday. Instead, each has reverted to calling the other's position extremist.

The Democratic president said he believed he had the authority to invoke the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution to raise the debt ceiling without Congress, but that it was unclear that enough time remained to try to use that untested legal theory to avoid default.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen in a television interview on Sunday said June 1 remains a "hard deadline" for raising the federal debt limit, telling NBC News the odds were "quite low" that the government will collect enough revenues to pay its bills through June 15, when more tax receipts are due.

A source familiar with the negotiations said Republicans had proposed an increase in defense spending, while cutting overall spending. The source said the Biden administration had proposed keeping non-defense discretionary spending flat for the next year.

Concerns about default are weighing on markets. The U.S. was forced to pay record-high interest rates in a recent debt offer and worries about the lack of a deal weighed on U.S. stocks on Friday.

## News in Brief

NEW YORK (Ruptly) – More than a thousand tenants and union members have marched across New York's iconic Brooklyn Bridge, calling on elected officials to address the city's housing crisis in the face of skyrocketing rent prices. Brass instruments, banners, and signs with slogans such as "The rent is too damn high" and "Housing could be free" were prominently displayed as huge crowds of demonstrators made their way across the bridge. "Politicians have me sick and disgusted with their lies, their deceit," shouted a protester through a megaphone. "They keep blaming us for violence. They're the ones guilty of violence out here. They're causing us trauma every day," she continued. "I think it's really important that everybody shows up and shows support in this way. To be visible and to show the power of a collective that is in support of housing justice," added a second protester. According to local media, the demonstrators were calling on officials to pass new legislation that would protect tenants from unfair evictions and sudden rent increases. They also demanded a program to provide vulnerable tenants with rental assistance vouchers.

ATHENS (Al Jazeera) – Voting was under way in Greece's parliamentary election on Sunday, the first since the country's economy ceased to be subject to strict supervision and control by international lenders who had provided bailout funds during its nearly decade-long financial crisis. The two main contenders in Sunday's vote were conservative Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, 55, a Harvard-educated former banking executive, and 48-year-old Alexis Tsipras, who heads the left-wing Syriza party and served as prime minister during some of the most turbulent years of the financial crisis. Although Mitsotakis has been steadily ahead in opinion polls, a newly introduced electoral system of proportional representation makes it unlikely that whoever wins the election will be able to garner enough seats in Greece's 300-member parliament to form a government without seeking coalition partners. The winner of Sunday's election will have three days to negotiate a coalition with one or more other parties. If that fails, the mandate to form a government is then given to the second-largest party. But deep divisions between the two main parties and four smaller ones expected to enter parliament mean a coalition will be hard to come by, making a second election likely on July 2.

MEXICO CITY (Reuters) – At least 10 people were killed and nine injured in a shootout at a car show in northern Mexico's Baja California on Saturday, the municipal government reported. The attack occurred during an all-terrain car racing show in the San Vicente area of the city of Ensenada. Around 2:18 p.m. (2118 GMT) people with long guns got out of a gray van and began shooting at participants at a gas station, according to reports of 911 calls. Municipal and state police, the Marines, the Fire Department and Mexican Red Cross, among other agencies arrived at the scene. Mayor Armando Ayala Robles said state Attorney General Ricardo Ivan Carpio Sanchez commissioned a special group to investigate the shooting.

ROME (AP) – Mount Etna, Europe's most active volcano, was erupting on Sunday, spewing ash on Catania, eastern Sicily's largest city, and forcing a suspension of flights at that city's airport. Italy's National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology, or INGV, which closely monitors Etna with instrumentation on the slopes, noted that cloud cover on a rainy day was impeding views of the eruption, which often serves up a spectacular display of flaming lava during the volcano's not infrequent eruptions. The institute said that ash had fallen on Catania and at least one town on Mount Etna's inhabited slopes. Catania airport said due to ashfall, flight operations were temporarily suspended. INGV indicated that monitoring had recorded evidence of a stepping up in tremor activity in recent days. People in the towns of Adrano and Biancavilla reported hearing loud booms emanating from the volcano on Sunday, the Italian news agency ANSA said.

MARSEILLE (AFP) – Three men were shot dead with assault rifles on Sunday in the French port city of Marseille, which has seen a surge of drug-related gang murders, police said. The trio were part of a group of five men in their 20s who left a nightclub shortly after 5:00 am (0300 GMT) and were driving away when their car was attacked by unknown assailants with Kalashnikov rifles, they said. The two survivors were unharmed after the attack in a residential neighborhood of Marseille, France's second-biggest city. One of them fled the scene, as did the shooters, police said. Police found the getaway car burning nearby, a modus operandi consistent with previous drug-related killings in Marseille where the perpetrators often torch their vehicles to destroy evidence. Early indications were that the men who were attacked lived in a council estate with a high incidence of drug trafficking and some of them were known to police, according to departmental police prefect Frederique Camillieri.

LONDON (The Guardian) – Asylum seekers staying at Home Office hotels in and around Liverpool have been harassed, humiliated and subjected to verbal and emotional abuse from senior hotel staff, according to an investigation for the Observer. Sources working for the Home Office subcontractor Serco have described what they believe is a culture of "institutional abuse" at five Merseyside hotels, including the Suites hotel in Knowsley, where violent far-right protests took place in February. Sources include current and former contractors recruited to work in Home Office hotels for Serco. On one occasion, sources said that senior Serco staff chased an asylum seeker diagnosed with schizophrenia into his hotel room, rattled the handle and shouted abuse at him from behind the locked door. It is understood that the managers were aware of his condition. A source said, "You've got someone with paranoid schizophrenia being told: 'If I see you outside, you'd better run', then kicking his door to intimidate him and laughing about it when he got distressed." The source added that they were not aware that any senior managers working at the five hotels had received training in mental health and trauma support, and claimed that the provision of medication, including for the man with schizophrenia, is not carefully managed.

## 14 Killed, Over 36,000 People Displaced by Italy Floods

ROME (AFP) – More than 36,000 people have been forced from their homes by deadly floods in northeastern Italy, regional officials say, as rising waters swallowed more houses and fresh landslides isolated hamlets.

Violent downpours earlier this week killed 14 people, transforming streets in the cities and towns of the Emilia Romagna region into rivers.

And as more rain fell, regional authorities extended the red weather alert to Sunday.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said Saturday she was leaving the G7 summit in Japan early to deal with the emergency.

"Frankly I cannot remain so far from Italy in such a complex moment," she told reporters, thanking the 5,000 people -- from rescue workers to volunteers -- who mobilized to help those hit by the floods.

She also thanked her fellow G7 leaders for their offers of aid.

Meloni was expected to visit some of the worst-hit areas. The authorities in Ravenna on Saturday ordered the immediate evacuation of more at-risk hamlets.

A helicopter involved in attempts to restore electricity crashed Saturday near Lugo, injuring one of the four people on board, the fire service said.

The floods have caused over 305 landslides and damaged or closed over 500 roads in the region.

"The water began to rise at 2:00 pm (on Friday), coming from across the fields," after nearby canals were swollen by flooded rivers, electrician Mauro Lodola told AFP.

"It's difficult. I want it to be over quickly, to be able to go forwards... to pick ourselves up," the 54-year-old said, standing thigh-high in the dirty water surrounding his house.

Lodola choked up as he showed his ruined house, the water lapping around the fridge in the kitchen and against the mattress on his bed, which was piled high with salvaged furniture.

Outside, a white door floated past a shed, where chickens who had been moved to safety clucked nervously.

Bologna's mayor Matteo Lepore said Saturday it would take "months, and in some places maybe years" for roads and infrastructure to be repaired.