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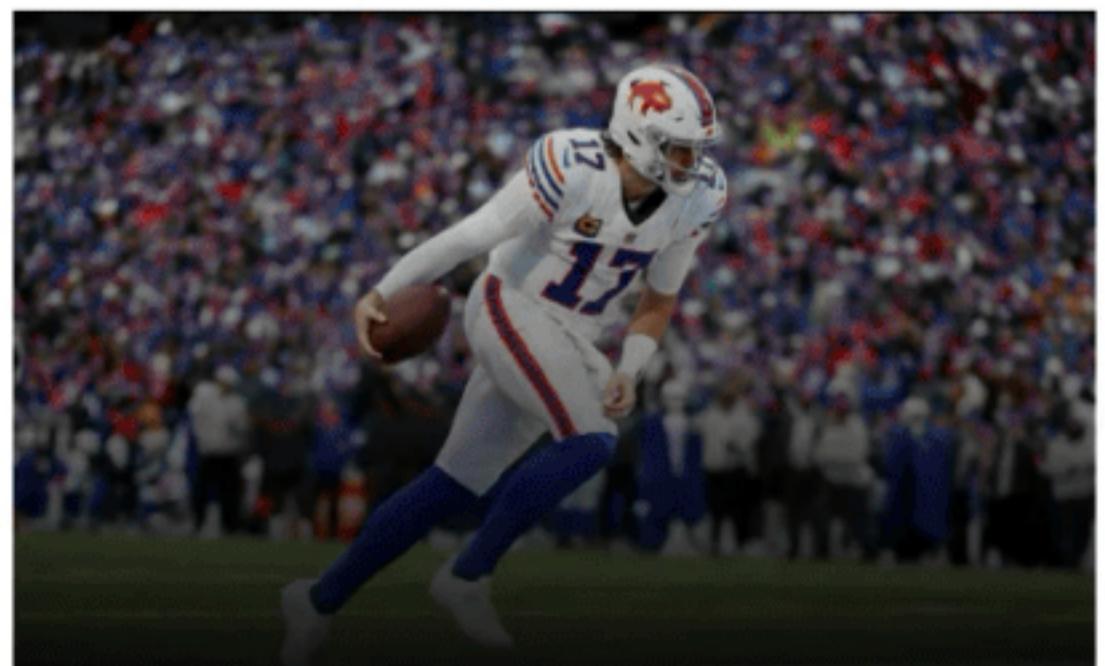
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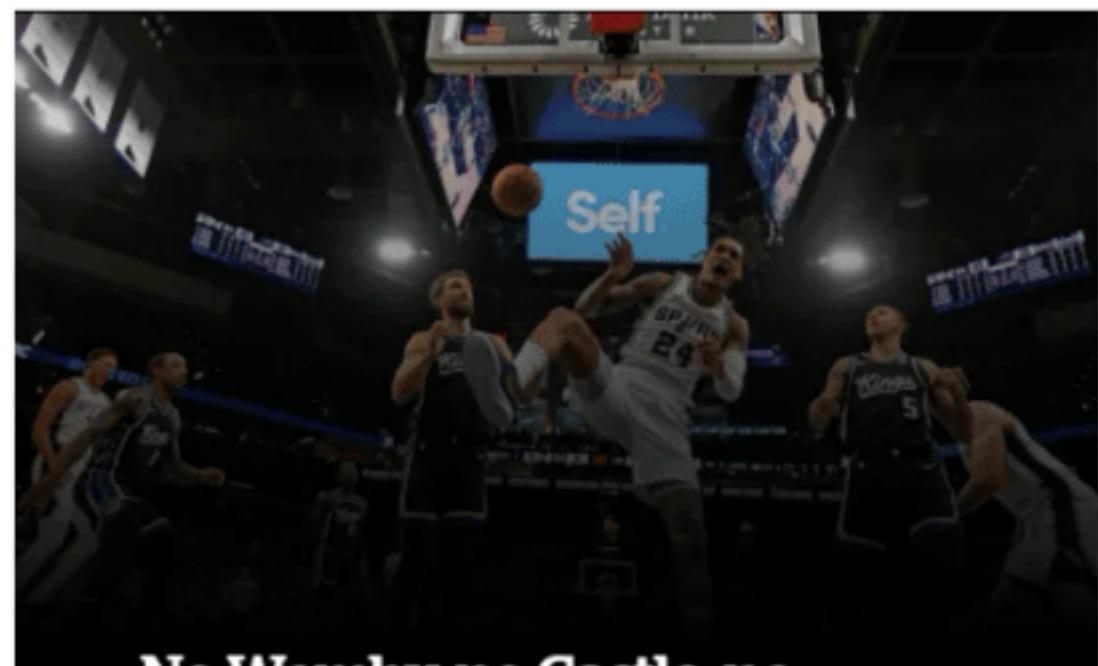

Japan-China spat over Taiwan comments sinks tourism stocks

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Bangladesh: l'heure du verdict pour l'ex-Première ministre Sheikh Hasina

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Japan-China spat over Taiwan comments sinks tourism stocks

Hiroshi HIYAMA and Simon STURDEE

Japanese tourism and retail shares dived on Monday after China warned its citizens to avoid the tourist hotspot in a spat over Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's comments on Taiwan.

Takaichi, seen as a China hawk, suggested this month that close US ally Japan could intervene militarily in any attack on the self-ruled island, which Beijing claims. Asia's two top economies are closely entwined, with China the biggest source of tourists going to Japan -- almost 7.5 million in the first nine months of 2025.

Drawn by a weak yen making shopping cheaper, they splashed out 590 billion yen (\$3.8 billion) in the third quarter -- 28 percent of all spending by foreign tourists, transport ministry data shows.

Japan was also the fourth-most popular destination for Chinese tourists last year, helping the land of Mount Fuji, sushi and geishas set new records for foreign arrivals.

Investors wiped as much as 11.4 percent off Japanese cosmetics firm Shiseido's shares on Monday. Department store group Takashimaya fell six percent and Pan Pacific, behind discount retail chain and tourist magnet Don Quijote,

slid as much as 8.4 percent. Uniqlo owner Fast Retailing -- which has a major presence in China -- fell by close to six percent.

- Xi talks -

Before taking power last month, Takaichi, an acolyte of ex-premier Shinzo Abe, was a vocal critic of China and its military build-up in the Asia-Pacific. If a Taiwan emergency entails "battleships and the use of force, then that could constitute a situation threatening the survival (of Japan), any way you slice it," Takaichi, 64, told parliament on November 7.

Under Japan's self-imposed rules, an existential threat is one of the few cases where it can act militarily. Taiwan sits around 100 kilometres (60 miles) from the nearest Japanese island.

The comments came just days after Takaichi met Chinese President Xi Jinping for an apparently cordial first meeting on the sidelines of an APEC summit. Takaichi, who has visited Taiwan and called for closer security cooperation, also met separately with Taipei's representative at the summit.

Her recent comments have sparked a furore, with a Chinese diplomat stationed in Japan threatening to "cut off that dirty neck", apparently referring to Takaichi.

China and Japan last week



Japan's economy shrank by 0.4 percent in the third quarter

summoned each other's ambassadors, with Beijing then advising its citizens to avoid travelling to Japan and warning Chinese students in Japan there were risks to their safety. Over 100,000 Chinese students were enrolled in educational institutions in Japan last year, according to the Japanese government. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Minoru Kihara told reporters on Monday that the announcement was "incompatible with the broader direction agreed upon by the leaders of the two nations". On Sunday, Chinese coast guard vessels spent several

hours in Japan's territorial waters around the disputed Senkaku Islands, known as the Diaoyu in China, Kihara said.

Beijing insists Taiwan, which Japan occupied for decades until 1945, is part of its territory.

Japanese media reports said that the top official in the foreign ministry for Asia-Pacific affairs headed to China on Monday.

Masaaki Kanai was due to hold talks with his Chinese counterpart Liu Jinsong, the reports said.

- Economic hit -
The diplomatic spat could spell further bad news for Japan's economy, which

shrank by 0.4 percent in the third quarter, official data showed on Monday.

Marcel Thieliant at Capital Economics warned that the tensions risked escalating "into a full-blown trade spat" similar to a previous episode in the early 2010s.

This could include China restricting exports of rare earths or imposing restrictions on Japanese exports.

"Carmakers look particularly vulnerable as they are already under enormous pressure from the ascent of Chinese electric vehicle manufacturers," Thieliant added.

Trump soutient finalement un vote à la Chambre sur la publication du dossier Epstein

Dans une volte-face, Donald Trump a déclaré dimanche qu'il soutenait un vote à la Chambre des représentants américaine pour la publication du dossier du délinquant sexuel Jeffrey Epstein.

"Les républicains de la Chambre devraient voter pour publier le dossier Epstein, parce que nous n'avons rien à cacher et qu'il est temps de mettre ce canular démocrate derrière nous", a écrit sur sa plateforme Truth Social le président, qui était jusque-là opposé à l'idée.

"Le ministère de la Justice a déjà rendu publiques des dizaines de milliers de pages sur +Epstein+, et s'intéresse à plusieurs agents démocrates" concernant leur "relation" avec celui-ci, a ajouté Donald Trump, citant "Bill Clinton, Reid Hoffman, Larry Summers, etc". La Chambre des représentants doit examiner cette semaine une proposition de loi qui forcerait le ministère de la Justice à publier le reste du dossier du riche financier new-yorkais, mort en prison avant son procès.

Donald Trump a été accusé de chercher à empêcher un vote pour dissimuler des éléments l'impliquant dans cette affaire, ce que l'intéressé a démenti. La position qu'il tenait avant son revirement a semé la division dans le camp républicain, habituellement loyal. Le milliardaire a pris ses distances avec de proches alliés issus de son mouvement "MAGA" (Make America Great Again), dont des parlementaires comme Marjorie Taylor Greene, à laquelle il a retiré ce week-

end son soutien pour les élections de 2026. "Certains +membres+ du Parti républicain sont +utilisés+, et on ne peut pas laisser cela se produire", a-t-il lancé.

"La Commission de surveillance de la Chambre peut avoir tout ce à quoi elle a légalement droit, JE M'EN FICHE!", a encore affirmé le président, qui avait promis pendant sa campagne des révélations fracassantes, puis tenté de clore le dossier une fois revenu au pouvoir.

- Révélations d'emails -
L'affaire a été relancée la

semaine dernière par la publication de courriers électroniques de Jeffrey Epstein, que M. Trump a fréquenté quand ils étaient des figures de la jet-set new-yorkaise, avant de se brouiller avec lui.

Avec sa complice Ghislaine Maxwell comme rabatteuse, M. Epstein faisait venir des mineures dans ses résidences notamment à New York et en Floride pour, sous le prétexte de massages, les agresser sexuellement.

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Il est mort en prison en 2019, par suicide selon les autorités. Ghislaine Maxwell purge, elle, une peine de 20 ans de prison pour exploitation sexuelle. Donald Trump "savait à propos des filles" agressées sexuellement et a même "passé plusieurs heures" avec l'une d'elles, affirment des emails de Jeffrey Epstein récemment dévoilés par des parlementaires démocrates.

"Je ne sais rien de cela. (Sinon) cela aurait été dit il y a longtemps", a assuré le président américain vendredi. "Jeffrey Epstein et moi avons entretenu de très mauvaises relations pendant de nombreuses années", a-t-il ajouté. Dans ces courriers électroniques figurent aussi des échanges avec Larry Summers, qui a été conseiller économique de Barack Obama et a présidé la

prestigieuse université Harvard. Bill Clinton a pour sa part fréquenté le financier new-yorkais dans les années 1990 et 2000. Après ces révélations, Donald Trump a réclamé une enquête fédérale contre M. Summers, l'ancien président Clinton et l'investisseur-entrepreneur Reid Hoffman, notamment. En juillet, le ministère de la Justice et la police fédérale (FBI) avaient pourtant

annoncé qu'ils n'avaient "pas découvert de preuves sur lesquelles fonder une enquête contre des personnes jusqu'ici non poursuivies" dans l'affaire Epstein. Les deux institutions avaient aussi jugé qu'il ne serait "pas pertinent" de rendre public le "dossier Epstein", suscitant l'incompréhension, voire la colère, de nombreux partisans "MAGA".



Le président américain Donald Trump s'adresse aux journalistes avant de monter à bord d'Air Force One, le 16 novembre 2025, à l'aéroport international de Palm Beach, en Floride

Allen leads Bills over Bucs while Broncos edge Chiefs

Josh Allen's six touchdowns sparked the Buffalo Bills to a 44-32 victory over Tampa Bay on Sunday while the Denver Broncos edged Kansas City 22-19 for their eighth NFL triumph in a row.

Reigning NFL Most Valuable Player Allen threw for 317 yards and three touchdowns and ran for three more to power the Bills while Denver's Bo Nix threw for 295 yards as the Broncos matched New England for the league's best record at 9-2.

Allen completed 19-of-30 passes and ran six times for 40 yards as Buffalo improved to 7-3, just behind New England in the AFC East division.

Allen became the only player in NFL history to have three rushing and passing touchdowns in a game twice. The only other player to do it once was Otto Graham in 1954.

"I'm doing my job," Allen said. "Things weren't going the way we wanted, just trying to find a way to reset. Trusted my feet and finding completions, we did that better in the second half." Allen scored on a two-yard run in the first quarter and threw scoring passes of 43 yards to Tyrell Shavers, 52 yards to Ty Johnson and 25 yards to James Cook, but the Buccaneers (6-4) led 32-31 with 13:38 remaining.

Undaunted, Allen drove the

Bills 81 yards and had a five-yard touchdown run then capped an 85-yard march with a nine-yard touchdown run with 2:35 remaining. "Turned the ball over three times and somehow found a way to win," Allen said. "That speaks a lot to the resiliency we have.

"We're going to try to use this momentum going forward." Denver's Wil Lutz kicked his fifth field goal, a 35-yarder on the final play, as the Broncos improved to 6-0 at home.

"It was huge," Nix said. "This was a must-win." The Chiefs fell to 5-5, their worst start since 2015, as they try to reach a sixth Super Bowl in seven seasons. "It's going to be tough to get back in the division race," said Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes.

"But our goal is to get back in the playoffs and try to make a run at it and all you can focus on is next week."

At cold and windy Philadelphia, the reigning NFL champion Eagles outlasted Detroit 16-9 as Jalen Hurts threw for 135 yards and ran for 31 yards and a touchdown.

In a showdown of NFC West co-leaders, Matthew Stafford threw for two touchdowns and Los Angeles Rams defenders intercepted four passes in a 21-19 home victory over Seattle.

- Last-play wins - Carolina (6-5) moved within a half-game of Tampa Bay in

the NFC South with a 30-27 overtime victory in Atlanta. Bryce Young threw for 448 yards and three touchdowns while Ryan Fitzgerald kicked the winning 28-yard field goal on the last play. Carlos Santos kicked a 48-yard field goal as time expired to give Chicago a 19-17 victory at Minnesota. Pittsburgh got a 73-yard interception return touchdown from Kyle Dugger and a 34-yard fumble recovery touchdown from James Pierre in a 34-12 rout of visiting Cincinnati.

The Steelers, however, lost 41-year-old quarterback Aaron Rodgers to a left wrist

injury in the second quarter. Pittsburgh safety Jalen Ramsey was ejected for throwing a punch at Cincinnati receiver Ja'Marr Chase after video appeared to show Chase spitting at Ramsey. Jordan Love, threw for 174 yards and two touchdowns, including the game-winner on a 17-yard touchdown pass to Christian Watson, in Green Bay's 27-20 victory at the New York Giants.

Trevor Lawrence threw for one touchdown and ran for another in Jacksonville's 35-6

home rout of the Los Angeles Chargers.

Brock Purdy threw for three

touchdowns and Christian McCaffrey ran for two more in San Francisco's 41-22 victory at Arizona. Matthew Wright's 35-yard field goal on the final play gave Houston a 16-13 triumph at Tennessee. At Madrid, Jack Jones intercepted a Marcus Mariota pass to set up Riley Patterson's 29-yard field goal in overtime, lifting Miami over Washington 16-13 in the NFL's first regular-season game in Spain. Baltimore tight end Mark Andrews ran 35 yards for the winning touchdown with 2:31 remaining in the Ravens' 23-16 victory at Cleveland.



Buffalo's Josh Allen became the only player in NFL history with multiple games of three rushing and passing touchdowns

No Wembanyama, no Castle, no problem as NBA Spurs rip Kings

With Victor Wembanyama out and Stephon Castle lost to a hip injury, the San Antonio Spurs still managed to cruise past Sacramento 123-110 in the NBA on Sunday.

De'Aaron Fox delivered a season-high 28 points with 11 assists, Harrison Barnes added 20 points and Luke Kornet had 13 points, 11 rebounds and three blocked shots in the home triumph. "We did a great job being disciplined in our approach," Kornet said. "Fox asserted himself."

The Kings (3-11) suffered their sixth consecutive loss while the Spurs improved to 9-4.

"Wembanyama" missed his first game for the Spurs this season due to left calf tightness.

The 21-year-old Frenchman is averaging 26.2 points, 12.9 rebounds, 4.0 assists and 3.6 blocked shots a game for San Antonio.

When guard Castle was benched for the second half with a left hip injury, the Spurs kept their poise.

"We handled it well. You want

to come out, hit first and take command of the game," Fox said. "We responded well to both (injuries).

"We still have a talented team out there. When one guy goes down, not just the next man steps up but the whole team steps up... we're able to withstand those type of things."

In other games, Jaylen Brown scored 33 points and 12 rebounds while Payton Pritchard added 30 points to spark the Boston Celtics over the visiting Los Angeles Clippers 121-118.



Devin Vassell of the San Antonio Spurs celebrates after a dunk in an NBA victory over Sacramento

James Harden scored a game-high 37 points for the Clippers but missed a tying three-point shot at the final buzzer.

- Three decided in OT - Houston's Kevin Durant scored 35 points and Turkish center Alperen Sengun added 30 to lead the Rockets to a 117-113 overtime home victory over Orlando.

Sengun blocked a Desmond Bane layup but a bad pass by Durant set up Anthony Black's dunk with 1.7 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter to give Orlando the lead.

Sengun answered with 0.2 of a second to play to send the game into overtime at 102-102.

Durant's jumper with 9.2 seconds remaining in overtime gave Houston a 113-110 lead and the Rockets rebounded Wendell Carter's missed free throw to set up Amen Thompson's clinching free throws with 1.8 seconds remaining.

In Utah, Finnish forward Lauri Markkanen scored 47 points.

But it was Jazz teammate Keyonte George who scored the last of his 34 points on a three-pointer with two seconds remaining in double overtime to give Utah a 150-147 triumph.

Markkanen's free throw with 19 seconds remaining in regulation set up the first overtime at 127-127 and Chicago's Coby White sank a layup with 0.2 of seconds remaining to equalize at 136-136.

Two White free throws with

8.4 seconds remaining in the second extra period tied the game, setting up George's game winner and a three-point miss by Chicago's Vucevic at the buzzer. White led the Bulls with 27 points.

Dallas 18-year-old rookie Cooper Flagg, this year's top NBA Draft pick, scored 21 points while PJ Washington added 21 and Daniel Gafford had 20 in the Mavericks' 138-133 overtime home win over Portland.

Atlanta edged host Phoenix 124-122 as Onyeka Okongwu scored 27 points, Nickeil Alexander-Walker added 26 and Jalen Johnson contributed 25 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists for the Hawks.

Alexander-Walker sank the go-ahead layup with 54 seconds remaining and Atlanta sank free throws down the stretch to secure the victory.

In New Orleans, Golden State's Moses Moody scored 32 points on 10-of-16 shooting, including 8-of-12 from three-point range, in the Warriors' 124-106 romp over the Pelicans.

Brooklyn's Michael Porter had 34 points, nine rebounds and seven assists in the Nets' 129-106 victory at Washington, snapping a four-game losing skid to reach 2-11.

The Wizards slid to 1-12, matching Indiana for the NBA's worst record with an 11th loss in a row.

Bangladesh: l'heure du verdict pour l'ex-Première ministre Sheikh Hasina

La justice du Bangladesh rend lundi son verdict à l'encontre de l'ex-Première ministre en exil Sheikh Hasina, 78 ans, qui risque la peine de mort pour avoir ordonné la répression meurtrière des manifestations qui ont causé sa chute pendant l'été 2024.

En Inde depuis sa fuite en hélicoptère, la "bégum de fer" est jugée en son absence depuis juin par un tribunal de Dacca pour cinq chefs d'accusation relevant des crimes contre l'humanité. En juillet et août 2024, les manifestations antigouvernementales qui l'ont contrainte à quitter le

pays après quinze ans de règne ont fait au moins 1.400 morts, selon l'ONU, pour la plupart des civils.

Le tribunal doit se prononcer sur sa culpabilité et pourrait, dans la foulée, annoncer la peine infligée à Mme Hasina. Dans un pays sous fortes tensions politiques déjà tourné vers les élections législatives prévues dans trois mois, sa décision est très attendue.

La police de la capitale a été placée en alerte et déployée en nombre pour procéder à des contrôles dans toute la ville, a déclaré son porte-parole, Talebur Rahman. "Nous espérons que le tribunal exercera prudence

et sagesse, que justice sera faite et que cette décision marquera la fin des crimes contre l'humanité et servira d'exemple", a souhaité la semaine dernière le procureur en charge du dossier, Tajul Islam.

Au terme des débats, le représentant de l'accusation avait réclamé le mois dernier, sans surprise, la condamnation de Sheikh Hasina à la peine capitale. "Pour un simple meurtre, la peine de mort est la règle. Pour 1.400 meurtres, elle la mérite 1.400 fois", avait-il déclaré devant les juges. "Elle est une criminelle endurcie et n'a fait preuve d'aucun remord pour sa brutalité".

- "Procès politique" - Jusque-là silencieuse, Sheikh Hasina a pris la parole en octobre auprès de plusieurs médias étrangers, dont l'AFP, pour rejeter la "totalité" des charges à ses yeux "infondées" retenues contre elle.

Les enregistrements produits par l'accusation suggérant qu'elle avait autorisé le recours aux "armes létales" contre la contestation ont été "sortis de leur contexte", a jugé l'ex-Première ministre. "Un verdict de culpabilité est préétabli, malheureusement", a-t-elle poursuivi, "il s'agit clairement d'une procédure à motivation politique".

Victorieuse des élections législatives, largement considérées comme frauduleuses début 2024, son parti, la Ligue Awami, a été interdit par le gouvernement provisoire du prix Nobel de la paix Muhammad Yunus.

Dans l'opposition sous le règne de Mme Hasina, le Parti nationaliste du Bangladesh (BNP) est considéré comme le grand favori du prochain scrutin. Interrogée par l'AFP sur un éventuel retour en politique, l'ex-Première ministre a botté en touche en assurant que sa "priorité est le bien-être et la

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stabilité" du pays. Le tribunal doit également se prononcer lundi sur la culpabilité de l'ancien

ministre de l'Intérieur, Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, lui aussi en fuite, et de l'ex-chef de la police, Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun, en détention et qui a plaidé

coupable. Le parcours judiciaire de Sheikh Hasina ne se limite pas à ce procès. Elle fait également l'objet de multiples plaintes pour les

multiples meurtres ou enlèvements dont l'ont accusé, tout au long de ses mandats, ses adversaires politiques et les ONG. Une commission d'enquête a

récemment chiffré à plus de 250 le nombre de disparitions d'opposants ordonnées par son gouvernement.

Leftist, far-right candidates go through to Chilean presidential run-off

Clare BYRNE and Axl HERNANDEZ

Leftist candidate Jeannette Jara and far-right leader Jose Antonio Kast will go head-to-head in Chile's presidential run-off after topping Sunday's first round of voting in an election dominated by fears of violent crime.

With 99 percent of the results counted, Jara, a 51-year-old communist running on behalf of an eight-party coalition, won 26.85 percent, compared to 23.93 percent for Kast, the Servel electoral service said.

The election was dominated by deep concern over a surge in murders, kidnappings and extortion widely blamed on foreign crime gangs.

Kast, 59, has vowed to build walls, fences and trenches along Chile's border with Bolivia to keep out migrants from poorer countries to the north, such as Venezuela. After Sunday's results came in, he vowed to "rebuild" Chile after four years of center-left rule, which he termed "maybe the worst government in Chile's democratic history."

"Chile woke up tonight," the straight-laced, ultraconservative father of nine declared, adding that while he was perhaps "not the most likeable," he felt he had a mandate from 1



Chile's presidential candidate Jeannette Jara, of the Unidad por Chile coalition, shows her ballot before casting her vote

million Chilean voters. The right also secured a majority in simultaneous elections to the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, according to partial results. Jara, who served in the administration of outgoing left-wing President Gabriel Boric, struggled to overcome strong anticommunist sentiment in one of Latin America's most open economies. Her win, by a far shorter margin than polls had predicted, was seen as an ominous sign for the second round and gave little cause

for cheer at her election party. Rodrigo Arellano, an analyst at Chile's University for Development, said it seemed "unlikely" she could win the December 14 run-off. "Not only is her vote count low, but the combined total of the opposition candidates is almost more than double hers," he pointed out, linking her score to strong anti-incumbent and anti-communist sentiment. "Don't let fear harden your hearts," Jara appealed to voters, insisting that the answer to crime was not to

"come up with ideas, each more radical than the next." The vote is seen as a bellwether of support for South America's left, which has lost power in Argentina and Bolivia in the past two years, and faces a stiff challenge in Colombian and Brazilian elections next year. Maverick economist Franco Parisi caused surprise by finishing third, ahead of ultra-right MP Johannes Kaiser, and former conservative mayor Evelyn Matthei, the establishment choice, in fifth. Parisi refrained from backing

either Jara or Kast in the run-off, saying that they both needed to go look for new voters "on the street."

- Iron fist - Chile is one of Latin America's safest countries, but the murder rate has doubled in a decade to exceed that of the United States.

The crime surge has happened in tandem with a doubling of the immigrant population since 2017, now comprising 8.8 percent of the population.

Wall-to-wall news coverage of crime has led to a clamor for a "mano dura" (iron fist). "I hope that some day we'll go back to the way we were before," Mario Faundez, an 87-year-old retired salesman, who voted in the wealthy Santiago district of Providencia, told AFP.

"If we have to kill (criminals), so be it," he added.

A combative Kast told cheering supporters that while the opposition had won Sunday's vote, "the only real victory will be when we defeat crime and drug trafficking, and close our borders."

The ultraconservative father of nine would be the first far-right leader since the 1973-1990 military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet if elected. He has defended Pinochet, whose regime killed thousands of dissidents under the pretext of fighting communism during the Cold War.

Vote attendu du Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU pour autoriser une force internationale à Gaza

Amélie BOTTOLIER-DEPOIS

Le Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU doit se prononcer lundi sur le soutien au plan de paix de Donald Trump à Gaza, en particulier le déploiement d'une force internationale, sous la pression des Etats-Unis qui mettent en garde contre le risque d'une reprise de la

guerre.

Le projet de résolution américaine, plusieurs fois modifié lors de négociations sensibles, "endosse" le plan de Donald Trump ayant permis la mise en place, le 10 octobre, d'un cessez-le-feu fragile entre Israël et le Hamas dans le territoire palestinien ravagé par deux années de guerre provoquée

par l'attaque sanglante du mouvement islamiste palestinien du 7 octobre 2023. Le texte, vu par l'AFP, "autorise" la mise en place d'une "force de stabilisation internationale" (ISF) chargée notamment de l'appui à la sécurisation des frontières en coopération avec Israël et l'Egypte, de la

démilitarisation de Gaza, du désarmement "des groupes armés non étatiques", de la protection des civils, et de la formation d'une police palestinienne. La composition de cette force n'est pas évoquée. Il donne également mandat jusqu'au 31 décembre 2027 à un "Comité de la paix", organe de "gouvernance de

transition" à Gaza jusqu'à la réforme de l'Autorité palestinienne. Selon le plan en 20 points annexé à la résolution, ce comité doit être présidé par Donald Trump.

Contrairement aux premières versions du texte, le projet qui doit être soumis au vote

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lundi à 17H00 (22H00 GMT) évoque l'éventualité d'un Etat palestinien.

Après la réforme de l'Autorité palestinienne et l'avancée de la reconstruction de Gaza, "les conditions pourraient finalement être en place pour un chemin crédible vers une autodétermination palestinienne et un statut d'Etat", dit ainsi le texte. Un avenir clairement rejeté par Israël. "Notre opposition à un Etat palestinien sur quelque territoire que ce soit n'a pas changé", a insisté dimanche le Premier ministre Benjamin Netanyahu.

- Objections russes - La Russie, qui a fait circuler un texte concurrent, a justifié cette initiative notamment par le fait que la résolution américaine n'allait pas assez loin sur ce point, affirmant quant à elle un "engagement indéfectible" en faveur de la

solution à deux Etats. Le texte russe, également consulté par l'AFP, n'autorise ni la création d'un Comité de la paix ni le déploiement d'une force à ce stade, demandant au secrétaire général de l'ONU de proposer des "options" en la matière.

Face à ce qu'ils ont qualifié de "tentatives de semer la discorde", les Etats-Unis ont redoublé d'efforts ces derniers jours pour pousser le Conseil à donner son feu vert.

"Tout refus de soutenir cette résolution est un vote en faveur de la poursuite du règne des terroristes du Hamas ou en faveur de la reprise de la guerre avec Israël, condamnant la région et sa population à un conflit perpétuel", a insisté vendredi l'ambassadeur américain à l'ONU Mike Waltz dans un texte publié dans le Washington Post.



Le secrétaire d'Etat américain Marco Rubio (assis à la table, 3e à d) s'exprime lors d'une réunion ministérielle du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies sur l'Ukraine au siège de l'ONU, à New York, le 23 septembre 2025

Les Américains ont également mis en avant l'ampleur du soutien pour ce texte, publient une déclaration commune avec le Qatar, l'Egypte, les Emirats arabes unis, l'Arabie saoudite, l'Indonésie, le Pakistan, la Jordanie et la

Turquie. Plusieurs sources diplomatiques ont estimé auprès de l'AFP que, malgré les critiques affichées de la Russie, qui a un droit de veto, et les réticences d'autres Etats membres, qui s'inquiètent d'un manque de

clarté dans les mandats du Comité de la paix et de l'ISF, il serait surprenant que le texte américain soit rejeté.

"Les Russes savent que, même si beaucoup de membres du Conseil vont jouer le jeu des Américains, ils partagent des inquiétudes sur le contenu du texte américain et la façon dont Washington a tenté d'accélérer" son adoption, commente Richard Gowan, de l'International Crisis Group, doutant d'un veto russe à une résolution soutenue par les pays arabes.

"Il est plus probable que la Chine et la Russie s'abstiennent, expriment leur scepticisme sur le plan, puis regardent les Etats-Unis se débattre pour le mettre en œuvre", ajoute-t-il auprès de l'AFP.

In reversal, Trump supports House vote to release Epstein files

US President Donald Trump said Sunday he backed lawmakers' efforts to release more files related to sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, despite previous opposition to the measure.

"House Republicans should vote to release the Epstein files, because we have nothing to hide," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform.

The 79-year-old Republican has accused Democrats of pushing an "Epstein hoax" after emails emerged in which the disgraced financier suggested Trump "knew about the girls."

Some critics have accused Trump of trying to conceal details about his own alleged wrongdoing -- something the president denies -- by looking to block the vote.

The issue has divided his typically loyal Republican party and driven a rift between Trump and some of his closest allies within his Make America Great Again (MAGA) movement.

Over the weekend, Trump withdrew his endorsement for Congresswoman and MAGA stalwart Marjorie Taylor Greene's 2026 re-election bid.

Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson has said he would hold a vote this week on a bid to force the Justice Department to release the remaining files relating to the Epstein probe.

"Some 'members' of the Republican Party are being 'used,' and we can't let that happen," Trump said in his post, in reference to lawmakers who backed a call by Democrats to release the files.

- Justice Department probe - After the longest-ever US government shutdown ended last week, lawmakers in the US House of Representatives released a trove of emails obtained from Epstein's estate. In one, Epstein wrote that Trump "spent hours" with one of the victims at his house, and another referred to the president as "dirty." Democrats on the House Oversight Committee said the messages "raise serious questions about Donald Trump and his knowledge of Epstein's horrific crimes." After the email trove's release, Trump demanded Attorney General Pam Bondi and the FBI investigate links between Epstein and ex-



US President Donald Trump has struggled to quell a furor over the handling of the Epstein case

president Bill Clinton, a Democrat, along with former Harvard president Larry Summers, who served as Clinton's treasury secretary. The order for a probe comes even though the FBI and Justice Department said in a memo in July that they had not uncovered evidence that would justify an investigation of uncharged third parties. With the help of Ghislaine Maxwell, who acted as a

recruiter, Epstein brought underage girls to his residences -- notably in New York and Florida -- where they were sexually abused, often under the guise of providing erotic massages. Before Epstein died in prison in 2019 while awaiting trial in a pedophile trafficking case, he had been required to register as a sex offender in Florida after pleading guilty in 2008 to solicitation of

prostitution, including from a minor. Trump's conspiracy-minded supporters have been obsessed with the Epstein case for years and have been furious since the FBI and Justice Department said on July 7 that Epstein had killed himself while in jail, did not blackmail any prominent figures and did not keep a "client list."

Ecuador voters reject return of US military bases

Santiago PIEDRA SILVA

Ecuadoran voters roundly rejected the return of US military bases to the country in a referendum Sunday, a major political blow to Trump-friendly President Daniel Noboa. With three-quarters of the vote counted, about 60 percent of Ecuadorans had voted 'no' to lifting a longstanding ban on foreign bases.

The rejection effectively blocks the US military from returning to an airbase at Manta on the Pacific coast -- once a hub for Washington's anti-drug operations.

It is a serious defeat for Noboa, who has staked his political fortunes on tackling rampant cartel violence and forging an alliance with US President Donald Trump. The vote came against the backdrop of US military airstrikes against alleged drug smuggling boats in the Caribbean and Pacific, a divisive policy which Noboa has backed.

"They wanted to scrap our rights, sell our sovereignty and hand it to Trump so he could install gringo military bases," said Ricardo Moreno, aged 70.

Nearly 14 million Ecuadorans were eligible to cast ballots

on whether to overturn a 2008 ban on foreign military bases.

Voters were also asked three other questions: whether they should end public funding for political parties, reduce the number of lawmakers, and create an elected body that would draft a new constitution.

The early count showed those proposals failing by a large margin, too.

"We respect the will of the Ecuadoran people," Noboa said, accepting the result. Noboa had hoped a new constitution would give him more powers to tackle crime, curb the power of the

judiciary, and reform the economy.

- Unprecedented violence - The result is a shock. Polls had predicted that Noboa would win on all four questions, and he remains popular, having recently won a second term in office.

But Sunday's result carried signs that under pressure from still-high crime rates Noboa's luster may be dimming.

"I had the wrong idea about him. I made a mistake, I voted for him," said 23 year old Andres Delgado, a university student. "I'm celebrating because the nation should not be treated this way by this inept president."

Noboa won on a promise to tackle violence sparked by turf wars between drug trafficking gangs who transport cocaine from Latin America to North America, Europe, and Asia.

He has deployed soldiers on the streets and in prisons, launched dramatic raids on drug strongholds, and declared frequent states of emergency -- criticized by human rights groups. The 37-year-old Porsche-driving millionaire has also posted images of hundreds of inmates, their heads shaved, in orange uniforms being moved to a new mega-prison, echoing moves by El Salvador's Nayib Bukele.

Still, in the first half of this year, there were 4,619

murders -- the "highest in recent history," according to Ecuador's Organized Crime Observatory.

Just as voting began, Noboa announced that the leader of the country's most notorious gang, Los Lobos, had been captured.

The most-wanted drug kingpin known as "Pipo" had "faked his death, changed his identity, and hid in Europe," Noboa said on X.

- Controversial US strikes - Once much safer, Ecuador now has one of the highest homicide rates in Latin America, and some would like to give Noboa freer rein. "It is the only way to toughen the laws a bit and put an end to the insecurity our country is experiencing," Teresa Jacome, 60, told AFP in the crime-ridden largest city of Guayaquil.

Regarding the other questions on the ballot, Noboa argued the current constitution, at 400-plus articles, was too long and has "many errors."

But he had been coy about what parts of the constitution he would like to change, leading to allegations he wants to consolidate power and curb rights.

The body to draft a new constitution would likely be dominated by Noboa's allies, given his approval rating of around 56 percent.



Ecuador's President Daniel Noboa -- seen casting his own ballot -- is seeking to bolster his anti-crime push, as deadly violence soars

Manifestations contre le pouvoir en République tchèque et en Slovaquie

Tchèques et Slovaques protestent contre leurs dirigeants lundi à l'occasion des commémorations de la Révolution de Velours, les accusant de trahir l'héritage de la transition vers la démocratie.

Le 17 novembre 1989, les communistes tchécoslovaques avaient réprimé une marche pacifique dans le centre de Prague, déclenchant une riposte qui a renversé le régime affidé à Moscou, après quatre décennies de dictature.

Cette révolution a restauré la démocratie en Tchécoslovaquie, qui s'est

ensuite scindée en République tchèque et en Slovaquie quatre ans plus tard. Puis les deux pays ont intégré l'Union européenne (UE) en intégrant les acquis communautaires.

Une partie de la population s'oppose au pouvoir actuel du milliardaire tchèque Andrej Babis et du prorusse slovaque Robert Fico.

Elle les accuse de piétiner les valeurs de la transition. "Voulons-nous vraiment vivre dans un État où les politiciens sont au-dessus des lois?", demande l'organisateur du rassemblement dans la capitale tchèque, Mikulas

Minar. **- "Pacte mafieux" -** En 2019, son mouvement avait réuni 250.000 personnes contre M. Babis lors de son premier mandat, dans un pays qui compte 10,9 millions d'habitants. Mais Andrej Babis a remporté les élections une seconde fois en octobre et forme actuellement son gouvernement pour diriger le pays à nouveau.

Cet admirateur du président américain, âgé de 71 ans, est allié au parti d'extrême droite SPD. Il a offert à son responsable, Tomio Okamura, poursuivi pour incitation à la haine, la présidence du parlement.

Anciennement communiste, M. Babis est accusé de fraude aux subventions européennes. Mais il nie tout acte répréhensible, dénonçant une campagne de diffamation.

Selon Mikulas Minar, ce nouveau gouvernement émerge donc sur un possible "pacte mafieux", deux inculpés étant à présent en position de s'offrir mutuellement l'immunité contre la justice.

- "Caste" - En Slovaquie, des manifestations contre Robert Fico se tiennent dans plusieurs localités, dont la capitale, Bratislava. Le Premier ministre "prend

des mesures contraires à la démocratie qui nous ramènent avant 1989", estime un autre organisateur, Marian Kulich. M. Fico, 61 ans, ancien communiste lui aussi, exerce son quatrième mandat également grâce au soutien d'un parti d'extrême droite, le SNS.

"Nos dirigeants appartiennent à la même caste de gens mal formés, qui s'échangent les postes", déplore le retraité Slavomir Chorvat. Il avait "longtemps pensé en vain que ça changerait".

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Sur le modèle de la Hongrie voisine, le nationaliste Robert Fico combat les ONG,

remplace les élites culturelles et sape l'indépendance des médias.

Il a aussi fait renouer la Slovaquie avec la Russie, malgré l'invasion russe de

l'Ukraine, pays qu'il refuse de soutenir.

L'Assemblée rouvre les finances 2025, avec un débat attendu sur la perte de TVA

Les députés s'emparent lundi dans l'hémicycle du projet de loi de fin de gestion (PLFG), texte "technique" ajustant les finances de 2025, mais aussi très politique, avec notamment des débats en vue sur les causes de la

baisse des recettes de TVA. "C'est un texte technique", a assuré en commission des Finances la ministre des Comptes publics Amélie de Montchalin. Sans manquer de se féliciter que la France était "en passe de remplir" son objectif de déficit public

pour 2025 autour de 5,4% (5,8% en 2024). Le texte, dont l'examen débutera à 21H30, prévoit quelques ouvertures de crédits. Certaines relativement consensuelles, comme 190 millions pour des dépenses de sécurité en Outre-mer et contre les incendies estivaux. D'autres moins, à l'instar d'1,1 milliard sur l'écologie, à l'aune de contrats conclus par le passé et d'une "baisse des prix" sur le marché des énergies renouvelables. Un irritant pour le RN : "elles n'ont qu'à se financer toutes seules", a pointé le député Jean-Philippe Tanguy. Côté annulation, on note par exemple 1,6 milliard de moins sur le projet "France 2030", le gouvernement invoquant un surplus de trésorerie. Une baisse des taux directeurs de la Banque

centrale européenne permet aussi d'alléger de 2,9 milliards la charge de la dette. La ministre a tenté en commission de marquer l'importance du texte : sans lui "le gouvernement ne pourra pas verser comme prévu l'Allocation adultes handicapés, et la prime d'activité à tous ses bénéficiaires en décembre" (+ 450 millions d'euros de crédits). Sans convaincre les oppositions, la plupart ayant voté contre le texte, rejeté en commission jeudi. Parmi les griefs importants, la baisse annoncée des recettes de TVA, - 5 milliards d'euros par rapport aux prévisions du budget 2025 pour les caisses de l'Etat. "Le problème est encore plus grave" assure Eric Coquerel, président LFI de la

commission des Finances, arguant que la part de TVA allant à l'Etat pèse pour "la moitié". Le trou total pourrait donc être "de 10 milliards", selon lui.

Et le député LFI d'y voir un " cercle récessif" de la politique macroniste, qui grèverait la consommation des ménages.

"C'est un sujet que nous suivons de très près", a assuré Amélie de Montchalin dans Le Parisien dimanche, même si "d'autres recettes plus dynamiques compensent en 2025" (l'impôt sur les sociétés monte notamment de 5 milliards par rapport aux prévisions).

En commission elle a annoncé une "mission" à Bercy pour comprendre pourquoi l'impôt manquait sa cible, alors que son "assiette" a augmenté de "1,7%". Parmi les pistes soulevées par la ministre, l'essor de la consommation par colis, avec un recouvrement moins efficace.



La ministre des Comptes publics Amélie de Montchalin à l'Assemblée nationale le 8 novembre 2025

Les métallos de Novasco fixés lundi sur leur sort

Isabelle LE PAGE

Le tribunal de Strasbourg scelle lundi matin le sort de l'aciériste en déroute Novasco (ex-Ascometal) et ses 700 salariés, avec comme plus probable scénario une reprise à minima accompagnée d'une lourde casse sociale dans un secteur sinistré.

Le jugement doit être annoncé lors d'une audience de la chambre commerciale du tribunal judiciaire de Strasbourg qui s'ouvre à 9h00.

A la même heure, une assemblée générale est prévue à l'aciérie mosellane d'Hagondange, plus grand site du groupe avec 434 salariés, "pour discuter et voter des actions", indique Yann Amadoro, délégué syndical CGT, à l'AFP.

Car depuis mercredi, ils savent que c'est fini: l'offre favorisée, déposée par un consortium d'investisseurs réunis autour de Julien

Baillon, à la tête de la PME ardennaise Métal Blanc, ne porte que sur l'acquisition de l'usine de Lefrinckoucke, près de Dunkerque, avait indiqué mercredi l'un des avocats du Comité central d'entreprise, Laurent Paté à l'issue d'une audience à huis clos du tribunal.

Les trois autres sites à Saint-Etienne, Custines (Meurthe-et-Moselle) et Hagondange

(Moselle) seraient ainsi promis à la liquidation. Sur un effectif total actuel de 696 salariés, seuls 144 salariés à Lefrinckoucke conserveraient leur emploi, selon M. Amadoro. L'autre candidat, l'industriel français Europlasma, proposait de reprendre tous les sites de Novasco, mais au prix de licenciements massifs à Hagondange où seuls 75

emplois auraient été sauvés sur 450. Son dossier a toutefois "présenté des faiblesses", selon Me Paté.

- "Voleurs" - Novasco, qui fabrique des aciers spéciaux, notamment pour le secteur automobile, en est à son quatrième redressement judiciaire depuis 2014.

Ses déboires ne sont pas uniques en Europe, où l'industrie sidérurgique multiplie les plans de licenciements, souffrant entre autres de la concurrence chinoise, des coûts élevés de l'énergie, ainsi que des difficultés des constructeurs automobiles, gros consommateurs d'acier. L'épilogue est particulièrement douloureux pour les métallos de l'usine de Moselle et tout le département déjà durement éprouvé par la désindustrialisation. Vendredi déjà, près de 200 d'entre eux se sont mobilisés sur place, brûlant des pneus

avant de lancer une opération escargot sur l'A31 entre Metz et le Luxembourg. Des croix jaunes et rouges étaient posées contre le mur de Novasco à Hagondange, avec des pancartes où on pouvait lire "Voleurs", "Menteurs" ou "Que fait l'Etat".

Les salariés se battent désormais afin d'obtenir des conditions de départ améliorées.

L'espoir -tenu- d'une nationalisation s'est envolé après une rencontre jeudi des syndicats avec le ministre délégué à l'Industrie Sébastien Martin qui s'est selon eux montré peu encourageant sur ce point.

- Non-sens - "Le ministre a rappelé qu'il était en contact avec l'actionnaire", le britannique Greybull, "et réitéré son souhait que le site ne soit pas démantelé et, s'il venait à être liquidé, reste prêt à



Des salariés de Novasco bloquent l'accès à l'usine d'Hagondange (Moselle) le 14 novembre 2025

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accueillir un site industriel rapidement", a déclaré son entourage. Mais les représentants du personnel ne se font aucune

illusion sur une éventuelle contribution financière de ce fonds d'investissement qui n'a déjà pas tenu ses engagements pris lors de la reprise du groupe en 2024. "Le ministre a dit qu'il

revenait vers nous lundi ou mardi, mais tout le monde a bien compris qu'il y a peu de chance qu'il revienne avec un chèque de Greybull", a dit M. Amadoro vendredi. Le britannique n'avait injecté

que 1,5 million sur les 90 millions d'euros promis, tandis que l'Etat avait rempli globalement son engagement d'investir 85 millions, selon les syndicats. Pour eux, la disparition de

l'aciérie électrique de Moselle s'apparente à un "non-sens écologique et stratégique" dans un secteur où il est difficile de réduire les émissions de gaz à effet de serre.

Un sommet Choose France dédié aux entreprises tricolores

Maryam EL HAMOUCHI

Le sommet Choose France, grand-messe annuelle habituellement destinée aux investisseurs étrangers, ouvre lundi sa première "édition France", pour mettre à l'honneur les entreprises tricolores qui investissent dans le pays alors que l'incertitude politique continue de peser sur le monde économique. Lors de cette version franco-française de l'événement, plus de 30 milliards d'euros d'investissement français" seront annoncés dont 9,2 milliards d'euros de projets nouveaux, a annoncé Bercy dimanche soir. Ces 30 milliards d'investissements

"concernent 151 projets répartis partout en France", a ajouté le ministère. Avant de prononcer le discours d'ouverture du sommet à la mi-journée, le ministre de l'Economie Roland Lescure se rendra lundi matin avec le ministre délégué chargé de l'Industrie, Sébastien Martin, sur un site du groupe L'Oréal à Gauchy, dans l'Aisne. Le sommet réunira, à la Maison de la Chimie à Paris, 200 entreprises (grands groupes, PME, start-ups, ETI...) mais également des fédérations professionnelles et des organisations syndicales et patronales alors que le climat d'instabilité politique pèse sur les décisions des acteurs

économiques. Selon le baromètre trimestriel Bpifrance Le Lab et Rexecode publié mercredi, 39% des dirigeants de PME et de très petites entreprises (TPE) prévoient d'investir cette année, alors qu'ils étaient 45% à en avoir l'intention en septembre. C'est le niveau le plus faible observé depuis la crise sanitaire. "L'incertitude politique génère de l'incertitude économique. Pour lever cette incertitude, il faut adopter un budget 2026... mais pas à n'importe quel prix", souligne Roland Lescure dans une interview au Figaro publiée dimanche soir. "Les entreprises doivent prendre leur part au

redressement budgétaire. Pour autant, le texte final ne doit pas être un budget "anti-entreprises", ajoute-t-il reconnaissant que cette édition de Choose France doit aussi "permettre d'entendre les préoccupations des dirigeants d'entreprise".

Ces derniers jours, des représentants du patronat se sont élevés contre la "surenchère fiscale" dont font preuve selon eux les députés, ou la suspension de la réforme des retraites, qualifiée d'"erreur fatale" par le président du Medef Patrick Martin.

L'examen du projet de loi de finances 2026 reprend lundi à l'Assemblée, avec le risque d'être transmis au Sénat sans vote sur l'ensemble du texte, comme celui de la Sécurité sociale mercredi, faute de temps.

Ce sort incertain des textes budgétaires au Parlement en toile de fond de Choose France. Le Premier ministre Sébastien Lecornu et la ministre de l'Action et des Comptes publics Amélie de Montchalin participeront ainsi en début d'après-midi à une table-ronde intitulée "Budget 2026 : construire le compromis, pour la stabilité et l'investissement".

- Tous les secteurs concernés

- Les secteurs représentés au sommet vont de l'énergie à l'agroalimentaire, en passant par la santé, la chimie ou le spatial. Des secteurs considérés comme "stratégiques" seront mis en avant: "la transition écologique et énergétique, l'intelligence artificielle, le numérique", notamment. Les investissements annoncés concerneront les 12 derniers mois, une partie ayant déjà été dévoilée par les entreprises. Sur les 30

milliards d'euros d'investissement mis en avant, "21,2 milliards d'euros d'investissements déjà annoncés par les différentes entreprises ces 12 derniers mois", et "9,2 milliards d'euros de projets totalement nouveaux", selon Bercy.

Sanofi annoncera une enveloppe de 700 millions d'euros d'investissements "sur une année glissante" en 2025-2026 concernant des projets "déjà engagés" mais aussi "d'autres à venir". Le groupe industriel français Urgo, marque emblématique du pansement, a annoncé vendredi la construction d'une nouvelle usine dans la Loire, fruit d'un investissement de 60 millions d'euros d'ici à 2029.

Sera aussi mise en avant la construction d'une usine de freins carbone par Safran dans l'Ain, un investissement de plus de 450 millions d'euros à terme. L'entreprise HoloSolis a elle annoncé dimanche avoir sécurisé "plus de 220 millions d'euros" d'investissements publics et privés sur les 850 millions d'euros nécessaires à son projet de "plus grande" usine de panneaux solaires d'Europe, en Moselle.

Le géant agroalimentaire Danone a communiqué vendredi sur ses prévisions d'investissement de 300 millions d'euros et la relocalisation de la production de plus de 45.000 tonnes de produits d'ici 2028. Le lundi après-midi sera consacré à plusieurs tables rondes présidées par des ministres avec des entreprises.

La journée sera clôturée par un dîner à l'Elysée, hors presse.



Un bus Choose France à Ligny-en-Barrois, dans la Meuse, le 19 mai 2025

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Zelensky à Paris en vue d'un "accord majeur" pour défendre le ciel ukrainien

Les présidents ukrainien et français Volodymyr

Zelensky et Emmanuel Macron se retrouvent lundi à Paris pour discuter des besoins militaires de Kiev et de la coopération des industries de défense des deux pays, le dirigeant ukrainien évoquant un "accord majeur en préparation".

Il s'agit selon l'Elysée de "mettre l'excellence française en matière d'industrie d'armement au service de la défense de l'Ukraine" et de "permettre d'acquérir les systèmes qui lui sont nécessaires pour répondre à l'agression russe".

La présidence française a notamment évoqué "la défense du ciel ukrainien", alors que Volodymyr Zelensky a renouvelé samedi son appel pour obtenir davantage de systèmes de défense aérienne, au lendemain de nouvelles frappes russes massives contre son pays.

Le chef de l'Etat français et son homologue commenceront leur journée sur la base aérienne militaire de Villacoublay, au sud-ouest de la capitale.

Le président ukrainien, qui a signé le mois dernier une lettre d'intention en vue d'acquérir 100 à 150 avions de chasse suédois Gripen, se verra présenter l'avion de combat français Rafale et son armement, ainsi que des

systèmes de drones et le système de défense anti-aérienne SAMP-T de nouvelle génération. Celui-ci doit être livré à la France à partir de 2027 et dispose de capacités d'interception étendues contre les missiles par rapport au SAMP-T, dont un exemplaire est déployé en Ukraine.

"Nous travaillons à la livraison de plusieurs systèmes de défense aérienne, au renforcement de notre aviation", a annoncé vendredi dans une vidéo Volodymyr Zelensky, selon

qui "un accord majeur est en préparation avec la France". "Il va être finalisé très rapidement j'en suis sûr, ce sera historique", a-t-il ajouté. - "Force multinationale" - Emmanuel Macron avait annoncé fin octobre la livraison "dans les prochains jours" de missiles antiaériens Aster tirés par le SAMP-T, et d'avions de chasse Mirage 2000 supplémentaires. Kiev a déjà reçu trois des six appareils promis. Les deux dirigeants participeront dans l'après-midi à l'Elysée à un "forum drones franco-ukrainien".

Il s'agit de "mise en contact" et de "renforcer les coopérations avec tous les acteurs de cet écosystème, que ce soit les acteurs industriels ou les acteurs financiers", selon l'Elysée. Kiev entend utiliser cette année plus de 4,5 millions de drones, qui sont responsables de 70% des destructions de matériels ennemis sur le front. Le pays a développé pour cela un agile réseau de production. L'Ukraine utilise également des drones pour abattre les drones Shahed lancés chaque nuit contre elle. Emmanuel Macron et Volodymyr Zelensky se rendront par ailleurs au mont Valérien, à l'ouest de Paris, visiter l'état-major de la "force multinationale Ukraine" que Paris et Londres préparent pour qu'elle puisse être déployée dans le cadre d'un accord de

cessez-le-feu et des "garanties de sécurité" à fournir à Kiev.

Mis en place par la "coalition de volontaires", à laquelle participent, selon l'Elysée, 35 pays en incluant l'Ukraine, cet état-major "fonctionne" et est "dès à présent" capable "de déployer une force dès le lendemain d'un cessez-le-feu", assure-t-on côté français.

Cette coalition de pays, essentiellement européens, soutenant l'Ukraine s'est réunie la dernière fois à Londres le 24 octobre.

Les garanties de sécurité envisagées pour l'Ukraine, échafaudées depuis des mois par cette coalition, comprennent un soutien à l'armée de Kiev et des volets terrestre, maritime et aérien. Mais leur mise en œuvre reste conditionnée à un très hypothétique arrêt des combats.

Cette neuvième visite du dirigeant ukrainien en France depuis le début de l'invasion à grande échelle de son pays par la Russie en février 2022 intervient alors que l'Ukraine est ébranlée par un scandale de corruption ayant poussé deux ministres à la démission et forcé Volodymyr Zelensky à prendre des sanctions contre l'un de ses proches.

"Sur les sujets de la corruption, il faut être extraordinairement vigilant. On l'est et on l'est en particulier dans ce processus d'adhésion à l'Union européenne" entamé par l'Ukraine, a rappelé samedi le ministre délégué chargé de l'Europe, Benjamin Haddad, sur la chaîne LCI.



Le président ukrainien Volodymyr Zelensky (d) est accueilli par le président français Emmanuel Macron lors d'une réunion du Conseil européen qui rassemble les 27 dirigeants de l'UE, à Bruxelles, le 23 octobre 2025

Gauff-led holders USA to face Spain, Argentina at United Cup

Top seeds and two-time champions the United States, spearheaded by Coco Gauff and Taylor Fritz, were drawn Monday alongside Spain and Argentina for their defence of the mixed-teams United Cup in Australia.

Gauff and Fritz, ranked three and six in the world respectively, begin their 2026 season in Perth at the fourth edition of the tournament from January 2-11 ahead of the Australian Open at Melbourne Park later in the

month. Spain are led by Juame Munar and Jessica Bouzas Maneiro. World number one Carlos Alcaraz has opted instead to play an exhibition match in South Korea against Jannik Sinner in preparation for the season-opening Grand Slam. Four-time major winner Naomi Osaka will also start her campaign in Perth, lining up for Japan with 2019 junior Wimbledon champion Shintaro Mochizuki. They were drawn in a tough

group alongside Britain, headlined by Jack Draper and Emma Raducanu, and a Greek team featuring Stefanos Tsitsipas and Maria Sakkari. Italy, France and Switzerland round out the Perth groupings. World number two Iga Swiatek and Hubert Hurkacz lead Poland's quest for revenge after being beaten by Team USA in the final in 2025 and Germany a year earlier. They start in Sydney, pitted

against Alexander Zverev's Germany and the Netherlands. Alex de Minaur and Australia



Australian former players Wally Masur and Jelena Dokic conduct the United Cup draw in Sydney

are in Group D with Casper Ruud's Norway and a Czech Republic team boasting the fast-rising Jakub Mensik. Canada, Belgium and China round out the Sydney action. Each team -- with three men and three women -- will play in a round-robin group stage. Ties comprise one men's and one women's singles and a mixed-doubles.

Group winners in each city advance to the quarter-finals, along with the best runner-

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up.
The semi-finals and final are in Sydney with US\$11 million

in prize money and ATP and WTA ranking points at stake.
Draw for the 2026 United Cup:
Perth

Group A - USA, Spain, Argentina
Group C - Italy, France, Switzerland
Group E - Britain, Greece,

Japan
Sydney
Group B - Canada, Belgium.
China
Group D - Australia, Czech

Republic, Norway
Group F - Germany, Poland, Netherlands

Iran girls kick down social barriers with karate

Majid SOURATI

As the referee's whistle signalled the start of the match, two five-year-old Iranian girls faced off, delivering a closely watched karate bout to a captivated audience -- a sign of the changing attitude toward martial arts in the Islamic Republic in recent years.

The two young opponents, clad in crisp white karategi with coloured belts and protective headgear, circled

each other on the tatami, the floor covering used for practising Japanese martial arts.

Their movements were sharp and deliberate, each kick and block executed with precision and control to the cheers of an all-female audience. At the final whistle, three minutes later, the two opponents shook hands and embraced.

The match was part of an annual regional tournament that saw 230 participants of all ages gathered in Tehran,

lining up in formation before the competition began. That AFP was accorded rare access to film and photograph a competition for women and girls was itself a sign of greater official openness.

"This sport is anything but violent" because it "promotes discipline", said Samaneh Parsa, a 44-year-old mother who has been practising karate for five years with her daughter Helma and son Ilya. "I have observed its positive influence on children's

behaviour," she said at a club in southern Tehran, where AFP was granted a rare access to the prelude to the match.

For her, karate is a way to "release emotions" and "bring serenity during stressful times", even though it was long frowned upon for women to practise the sport in Iran.

All martial arts were temporarily banned for women after the 1979 Islamic Revolution but were later reinstated under stricter dress code regulations.

- 'Strong mindset' - As more women turn to karate, the sport has become a symbol of Iran's changing society, where a young, urban generation is quietly challenging traditional gender roles and societal norms.

Last week, Iranian athlete Atousa Golshadnezhad won another gold medal at the Islamic Solidarity Games in Saudi Arabia.

Women in Iran have, in recent years, been pushing social boundaries more broadly -- defying the Islamic Republic's strict rules, including the mandatory dress code.

The trend has been particularly evident since the September 2022 death in custody of Mahsa Amini, a

22-year-old Iranian Kurd, who had been arrested by the morality police for allegedly violating the dress code.

Afshin Torkpour, head of Kyokushin-Ryu karate in Iran, has similarly noted a shift in recent years, with women turning to sports that "were once considered violent". Women practising the sport are now as, and often more motivated, said Torkpour, noting that they develop "a strong mindset".

Around 150,000 people practise karate in Iran across all genders, says Torkpour, who estimates that the actual figure could be much higher, up to two million.

At the Asian Championships, the national junior women's under-21 team won 11 medals, including six golds. In 2020, two Iranian karatekas participated in the Tokyo Olympics in Japan but did not win any medals.

For Azam Ahmadi, a woman in her 30s who has practised the sport since she was 12, karate teaches essential life skills: "If you fall, you have to get back up, keep going, and never give up."

Mina Mahadi, vice-head of the women's Kyokushin-Ryu karate section in Iran, says it also allows girls to "gain confidence" instead of them "saying yes to anything".



Iranian women are increasingly taking part in martial arts like karate amid tentative steps towards having greater public roles

Paige Greco, championne de cyclisme paralympique, est décédée à 28 ans

La médaillée d'or de cyclisme paralympique australienne Paige Greco est décédée dimanche à l'âge de 28 ans, après un "problème médical soudain", a annoncé sa famille lundi.

Paige Greco avait battu son propre record du monde en remportant la victoire en poursuite individuelle sur 3.000 m dans la catégorie C1-C3 aux Jeux de Tokyo en 2021.

Elle a ensuite ajouté une médaille de bronze dans la course sur route et le contre-



La cycliste paralympique australienne Paige Greco aux Jeux Olympiques de Tokyo 2020, le 25 août 2021

la-montre C1-3, consolidant ainsi son statut de compétitrice de haut niveau à la fois sur piste et sur route.

La jeune femme est décédée dimanche, chez elle, dans la ville d'Adélaïde, dans le sud de l'Australie.

"Bien que nous soyons dévastés par sa perte, nous sommes incroyablement fiers de la personne qu'elle était et de la manière dont elle représentait l'Australie", a déclaré sa mère, Natalie Greco, dans un communiqué publié par la Fédération

australienne de cyclisme (AusCycling).

"Paige cherissait les liens qu'elle avait tissés grâce à son sport, et nous trouvons du réconfort en sachant à quel point elle était aimée."

Paige Greco a remporté de nombreux titres dans des compétitions d'envergure mondiale.

En août dernier, elle avait décroché la médaille de bronze lors du championnat du monde de course sur route paralympique en Belgique.

Bodyline and Bradman to Botham and Stokes: five great Ashes series

England and Australia begin the latest edition of the Ashes in Perth on Friday with the visitors looking to wrestle back the urn for the first time since 2015.

AFP Sport looks at five of the most memorable series between cricket's oldest enemies, a rivalry which stretches back to 1882:

- 2019: Stokes heroics, brilliant Smith - Australia retained the Ashes as holders despite the series being drawn for the first time since 1972, with Steve Smith grabbing headlines on his return from a ball-tampering ban by excelling in the face of taunting English crowds.

He batted on a different level to everybody else, scoring 774 runs in just seven innings at an average of more than 110, including back-to-back centuries in the opening Test at Edgbaston.

Had he not missed three innings after being hit by a Jofra Archer bouncer, he might have got near Donald Bradman's all-time record of 974 runs in a Test series, set in 1930.

But the highlight of the series was England's phenomenal Ben Stokes-inspired win in the third Test at Headingley. With just one wicket remaining and 73 runs needed, Stokes protected tailender Jack Leach to steer his side to 362-9, their highest successful run chase in Tests, with a memorable unbeaten 135.

- 2005: England win thriller - The 2005 Ashes was one of the greatest series in cricket history and saw England

triumph over their fiercest rivals for the first time in nearly 19 years.

It appeared to be business as usual for long-suffering England fans when Australia won the first Test at Lord's by 239 runs.

But when Australia fast bowler Glenn McGrath was ruled out of the second Test at Edgbaston after treading on a ball during practice on the morning of the match, England took charge. England's Andrew Flintoff starred with both bat and ball and when Australia were 175-8, chasing 282 for victory, a home win looked assured.

But Australia edged their way closer before last man Michael Kasprowicz was caught behind off Steve Harmison to give England victory by a mere two runs.

The third Test was drawn and England survived a brilliant four-wicket burst from leg-spin great Shane Warne to win the fourth Test at Trent Bridge.

England, now 2-1 up and needing to avoid defeat in the fifth Test to regain the Ashes, were in danger of losing on the last day at the Oval until Kevin Pietersen's breathtaking 158 and a fine fifty from Ashley Giles rescued a draw.

- 1981: Botham's Ashes - Rarely has one man done as much to win an Ashes as Ian Botham in 1981.

He started the series as England captain, but after defeat in the first Test at Nottingham and the embarrassment of bagging a pair in a draw at Lord's, Botham resigned as skipper. England were in dire straits

after being made to follow-on in the third Test at Headingley, with former England wicketkeeper Godfrey Evans -- who had become an odds-setter for a bookmakers -- making them 500/1 outsiders to win the match.

Botham's astonishing counter-attack innings of 149 not out, however, meant Australia were set a target of 130 before fast bowler Bob Willis's inspired 8-43 saw England to an astounding 18-run win.

Botham's scarcely believable return of five for one in 28 balls at Edgbaston ensured England won the fourth Test by 29 runs.

There were more heroics in the fifth Test when Botham's blistering 118 set up a 103-run victory at Old Trafford to clinch the series 3-1.

- 1948: Australia's 'Invincibles' - An Australia side captained by Don Bradman in his final Test series swept all before them in an undefeated tour during which they won the Ashes 4-0.

Underlining their superiority, Australia were set a seemingly impossible target of 404 on the last day to win the fourth Test at Headingley. They got there for the loss of just three wickets, with Arthur Morris making 182 and Bradman an unbeaten 173.

But the series is best remembered for Bradman's final Test innings at the Oval when, needing four for an average of exactly a hundred, he was bowled for a duck by leg-spinner Eric Hollies and had to make do with a mark of 99.94.

- 1932/33: Bodyline barrage - The most controversial Ashes series of them all was brought about by a desire to curb Bradman's phenomenal run-scoring.

England captain Douglas Jardine's response was to deploy "leg theory" -- bowling short to a packed leg-side field -- with supremely accurate fast bowler Harold Larwood the spearhead of the attack.

It worked to the extent England won the series 4-1, with Bradman's average for the series reduced to 56.57. But the use of what became known as "Bodyline", which saw batsmen having to defend themselves rather than their stumps, was condemned as "unsporting" by Australian officials and almost provoked a breakdown in diplomatic relations.



Australia celebrate retaining the Ashes by drawing the 2023 series in England

Asian markets struggle as fears build over tech rally, US rates

Asian markets struggled Monday on simmering concerns that the Federal Reserve will not cut interest rates as hoped next month, while fears of a bubble continue to weigh on sentiment.

The increasingly risk-averse mood on trading floors also dragged on the crypto sector, with bitcoin erasing all its gains this year -- just over a month after hitting a record

high.

Meanwhile, simmering tensions between China and Japan hit tourism and retail firms on Tokyo's exchange. Stocks have enjoyed a healthy rally since their tariff-fuelled swoon in April, with tech firms leading the way as companies pumped eye-watering amounts of cash into all things linked to artificial intelligence. That has been compounded

by a weakening US jobs market that has fanned expectations the Fed will cut rates.

However, the gains have petered out in recent weeks as investors re-evaluate those two pillars. Fed boss Jerome Powell said a third-straight reduction in borrowing costs was not certain next month, while other officials have hinted they intend to stand pat.

The decision makers said they were concerned that inflation remained stubbornly anchored above the bank's two percent target, overshadowing labour market fears.

Traders are keenly awaiting the release of several reports -- including on jobs and inflation -- that had been held up by the record government shutdown that ended last week.

The winding back of rate cut bets comes amid growing unease about the sky-high valuations in the tech sector and warnings that a bubble has formed that could soon burst.

All eyes are on this week's release of earnings from chip titan Nvidia, which this month became the first \$5 trillion company.

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"Nvidia has been partly responsible for powering the AI rally, but is now facing pressure amid concerns about stretched valuations in the sector," wrote Fiona Cincotta, senior market analyst at City Index. "Worries about an AI bubble have weighed on the sector, and investors are

questioning not only the amount of money companies are spending on the tech relative to the returns they're seeing, but also the circular nature of the spending." After a tepid lead from Wall Street, Asian markets mostly fell.

Hong Kong, Shanghai, Sydney and Singapore all dropped, though Seoul, Manila and Taipei advanced.



Bitcoin has erased all the gains it had made in 2025

Tokyo also sank as figures showed Japan's economy shrank 0.4 percent in the three months to September. Tourism and retail firms were among the worst hit after China advised its citizens not to travel to Japan amid a diplomatic spat over comments by Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi about Taiwan. Cosmetics firm Shiseido dived nine percent, department store group Takashimaya more than five percent and Fast Retailing -- the owner of Uniqlo -- more than four percent. China is the biggest source of tourists to Japan. Takaichi's comments earlier this month were widely interpreted as implying an attack on Taiwan could warrant Tokyo's military support. If a Taiwan emergency entails "battleships and the use of force, then that could constitute a situation threatening the survival (of

Japan), any way you slice it", she told parliament. The two sides last week summoned each other's ambassadors, with China then telling its citizens to avoid travelling to Japan. Bitcoin was also suffering from the uncertain climate on trading floors, with the digital unit briefly dropping to \$92,935.51 -- below the \$93,714 mark it finished at on December 31 -- according to Bloomberg data. The cryptocurrency hit a peak of \$126,251 on October 6. Investors spent most of the year piling into bitcoin after Donald Trump returned to the White House pledging to deregulate the crypto sector. The president's embrace of digital assets has reversed years of US government scepticism towards the industry, with the US House of Representatives passing three landmark cryptocurrency bills in July.

- Key figures at around 0230 GMT -
Tokyo - Nikkei 225: DOWN 0.7 percent at 50,011.53 (break)
Hong Kong - Hang Seng Index: DOWN 0.3 percent at 26,499.22
Shanghai - Composite: DOWN 0.5 percent at 3,971.57
Dollar/yen: UP at 154.57 yen from 154.55 yen on Friday
Euro/dollar: DOWN at \$1.1609 from \$1.1621
Pound/dollar: DOWN at \$1.3157 from \$1.3171
Euro/pound: DOWN at 88.20 pence from 88.22 pence
West Texas Intermediate: DOWN 1.0 percent at \$59.51 per barrel
Brent North Sea Crude: DOWN 0.9 percent at \$63.82 per barrel
New York - Dow: DOWN 0.7 percent at 47,147.48 points (close)
London - FTSE 100: DOWN 1.1 percent at 9,696.47 points (close)

Canada's Carney bets big on budget as govt survival on the line

Canada's parliament is poised to vote Monday on the budget proposed by Prime Minister Mark Carney, who opted to double the G7 country's deficit to kickstart the economy -- a risky move that could upend his minority government.

The Liberal prime minister, who was elected to a full term in April to stare down US President Donald Trump and its protectionist tariffs, must win support from two opposition lawmakers -- or get abstentions -- to see his budget adopted.

If the budget is voted down, it would trigger early elections.

Ahead of the vote, Canada's political parties were still negotiating, with no clear picture of the outcome. Carney, a former central bank chief for Britain and

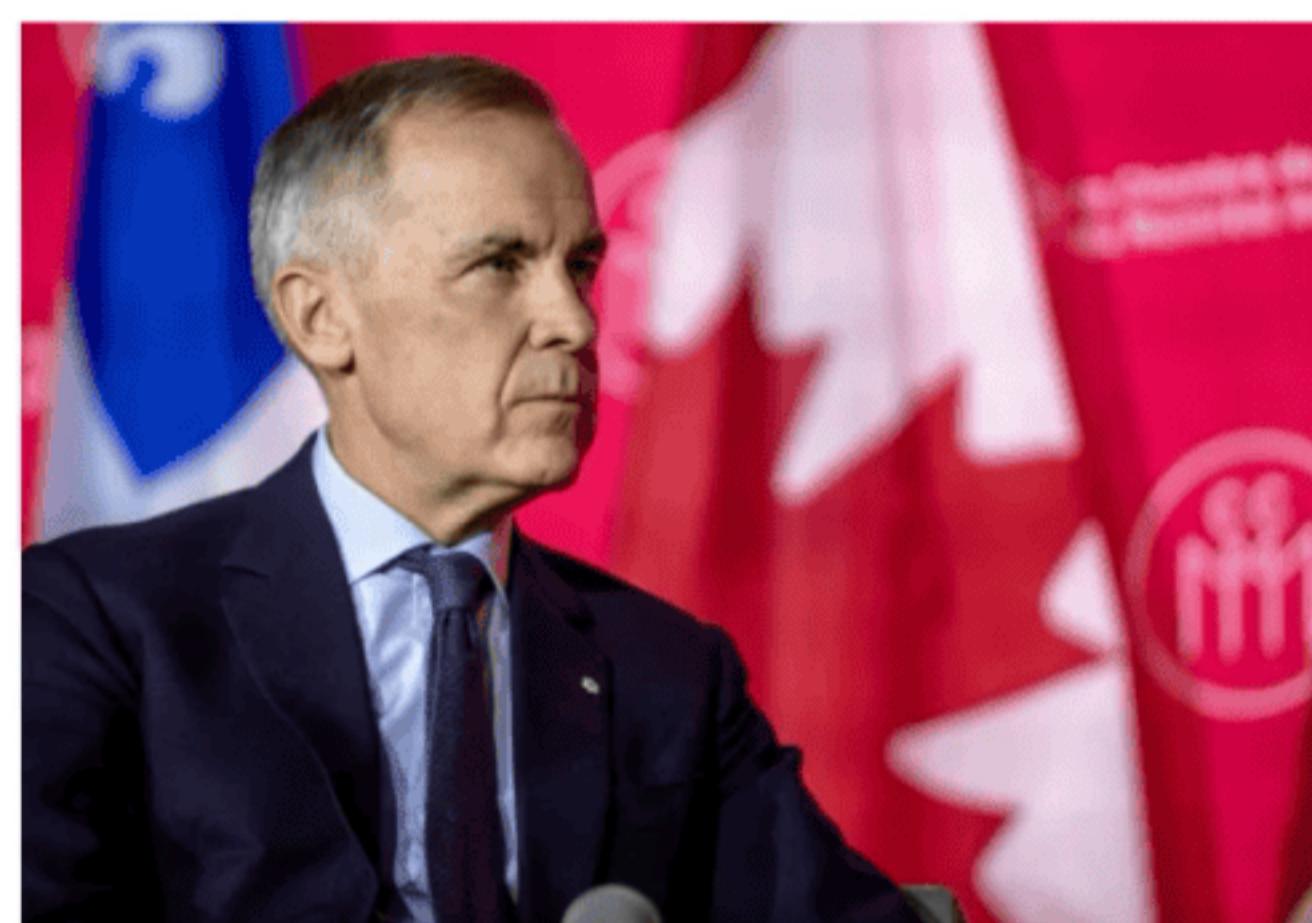
Canada, said his draft budget -- which centers on giant infrastructure projects for America's vast northern neighbor -- was a "bold response" to global economic turmoil and US trade measures.

"Now is not the time to be cautious, because fortune favors the bold," Carney said last week.

"It is a time to get big things done for Canadians, and get them done fast."

The policies of the Trump administration, which has imposed sweeping tariffs on Ottawa and cut off bilateral trade negotiations, have hit Canada hard, driving up unemployment and putting pressure on the auto, aluminum and steel industries.

Carney said estimates indicated that "US tariffs and the associated uncertainty



Former central bank chief Mark Carney led Canada's Liberals to victory in April 2025 elections after longtime prime minister Justin Trudeau resigned

will cost Canadians around 1.8 percent of our GDP." But Conservatives and other opposition parties have sharply criticized the proposed 2025-26 spending plan, which would see Canada's deficit nearly

double from last year, reaching Can\$78.3 billion (US\$55.5 billion). The Conservatives, who hold 144 seats, have said they will vote against the budget. The Bloc Quebecois, which promotes independence for

the French-speaking province, has 22 seats. It called the proposal "a Liberal deficit with Conservative ideas."

The leftist New Democratic Party, which has seven MPs, often has backed minority Liberal governments, but had not yet announced at midday Sunday how it would vote. Interim party leader Don Davies said Carney's proposal "fails to meet the moment."

If the Liberals -- with 170 seats out of 343 -- cannot win two lawmakers over to their side, abstentions could help them win the vote.

Polls show that a majority of Canadians do not want new elections so soon after the last round -- a fact the parties will surely keep in mind.

Australia's 'Dad's Army' ready to show experience counts in Ashes

Martin PARRY

Australia head into the Ashes with an ageing "Dad's Army" group of players and concerns about a lack of depth to follow in their footsteps, but chief selector George Bailey is adamant the team's veteran core still has what it takes.

Of the 15 players in Australia's squad for the first Test in Perth this week just one is under 30 -- all-rounder Cameron Green, who is 26. Usman Khawaja is 38, Nathan Lyon 37, Steve Smith and Scott Boland 36, and Mitchell Starc 35. Josh Hazlewood and Alex Carey are 34 with skipper Pat Cummins a baby at 32. Even Jake Weatherald, who could make his debut opening alongside Khawaja, is 31 while fringe players Josh Inglis, Sean Abbott, Michael Neser and Brendan Doggett have all turned 30.

In contrast, just three of England's squad are over 31 - Ben Stokes, Mark Wood and Joe Root.

- Creaking bowlers - Both Cummins and Hazlewood are injured and will miss the Perth Test in a sobering reminder of the creaking nature of the hosts' attack.

Former captain Steve Waugh is concerned that youngsters

are not getting an opportunity to regenerate the side and Australia risk falling into the same trap as in the past where a slew of top names retire at the same time.

"George Bailey is going to have to make some tough calls and I think in the past he's shown he hasn't really had the appetite for that at times," Waugh said before the squad was announced. "So he's going to have to step up to the plate with the other selectors because it is a time of transition. The bowlers are

in their 30s and some of the batsmen are getting on as well."

Bailey, Tony Dodemaide and Australia coach Andrew McDonald select the national team.

English media predictably picked up on the age of the squad, labelling it "Dad's Army" and "Saggy Greens". Former England captain Michael Vaughan cheekily pointed out that the tourists could add Ian Botham, 69, and David Gower, 68, to their squad and their average age would still be lower than the

Australians.

But Vaughan also cited some compelling numbers that make Australia clear favourites due to their experience.

"England have got 43 wickets in their attack in Australian conditions. Ben Stokes 19, Mark Wood with 17, Joe Root with seven wickets," he said on Fox Sports.

"Australia have got over 700 wickets in their own conditions. That's without Pat Cummins in Perth, and they've got near-on 50 hundreds in these conditions.

"So when people say England have got a 50-50 chance, that's not right. They have a chance, but everything's going to have to go extremely well for them." Vaughan was speaking before Hazlewood was also ruled out of the first Test with

a hamstring strain.

- 'Give respect' - In the wake of Waugh's comments, Bailey defended sticking with Australia's long-time core, saying he was "aware of the age profile of the team", but it was the best available.

"I'm interested when people have that view as to who they would like us to leave out," he said. "Is that Nathan Lyon and Mitchell Starc? Is that just because of their age? "You've got to give due respect that the guys are performing very well and they have the right to be selected."

Hazlewood, who has battled his share of injuries over the years, is similarly unperturbed, pointing to experience within the bowling unit as critical in the cauldron of an Ashes series. "I think the experience, not just red-ball cricket, but through all the formats, you put all the pieces together, you've been in so many situations out in the middle, you've learned a lot over the years, especially as a group," he said.

"There will come a time no doubt, but I don't think it's yet," he added of when the core group would call it quits. In a sign that age is catching up, several of Australia's senior players have lightened their white-ball loads to prolong their Test careers. Smith quit the one-day game this year, while Cummins has played just two ODIs since the 2023 World Cup while Starc has stepped away from T20 internationals.



Australia have an ageing team with a 38-year-old opening batsman Usman Khawaja (left) and the 36-year-old Steve Smith (right)

UN Security Council set to vote on international force for Gaza

Amélie BOTTOLIER-DEPOIS

The UN Security Council is set to vote Monday on a US-drafted resolution bolstering Donald Trump's Gaza peace plan, especially the deployment of an international force, as Washington warns that a failure to act could lead to renewed fighting.

The draft, which has been revised several times as a result of high-stakes negotiations, "endorses" the plan, which allowed for a fragile ceasefire between Israel and Hamas to take

hold on October 10 in the war-wrecked Palestinian territory.

The Gaza Strip has been largely reduced to rubble after two years of fighting, sparked by Hamas's attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. The latest version of the text, seen by AFP, authorizes the creation of an International Stabilization Force (ISF) that would work with Israel and Egypt and newly trained Palestinian police to help secure border areas and demilitarize the Gaza Strip. The ISF also would work on the "permanent

decommissioning of weapons from non-state armed groups," protecting civilians and securing humanitarian aid corridors. In addition, it would authorize the formation of a "Board of Peace," a transitional governing body for Gaza -- which Trump would theoretically chair -- with a mandate running until the end of 2027. Unlike previous drafts, the latest version mentions a possible future Palestinian state.

Once the Palestinian Authority has carried out

requested reforms and the rebuilding of Gaza is underway, "the conditions may finally be in place for a credible pathway to Palestinian self-determination and statehood," the draft says. That eventuality has been firmly rejected by Israel.

"Our opposition to a Palestinian state on any territory has not changed," Netanyahu said at a cabinet meeting on Sunday. The UN Security Council vote is set for 5:00 pm (2200 GMT) Monday.

- Russian objections -

Veto-wielding Russia has circulated a competing draft, saying the US document does not go far enough towards backing the creation of a Palestinian state.

Moscow's text, seen by AFP, asks the Council to express its "unwavering commitment to the vision of the two-state solution."

It does not authorize a Board of Peace or the deployment of an international force for the time being, instead asking UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to offer

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"options" on those issues. The United States has intensified its campaign to earn support for its resolution, hitting out at "attempts to sow discord" among Council members. "Any refusal to back this resolution is a vote either for the continued reign of Hamas terrorists or for the return to war with Israel, condemning the region and

its people to perpetual conflict," the US ambassador to the United Nations, Mike Waltz, wrote in The Washington Post. The US has made known that it has the backing of several Arab and Muslim-majority nations, publishing a joint statement of support for the text signed by Qatar, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Jordan, and Turkey. Several diplomats told AFP

that despite Russian criticism and hesitance on the part of other member states, they expect the US draft to be adopted. "The Russians know that while a lot of Council members will go along with the US plans, they share concerns about the substance of the US text and the way Washington has tried to fast-track it through New York," Richard Gowan of the International Crisis

Group told AFP. He however said he doubts that Moscow will use its veto on a resolution backed by Arab nations. "I think it is more likely that China and Russia will abstain, register their skepticism about the plan and then sit back and watch the US struggle to put it into action," Gowan said.



The United Nations Security Council is set to vote on a US-drafted resolution endorsing President Donald Trump's peace plan for Gaza

McIlroy loses playoff but clinches seventh Race to Dubai title

Rory McIlroy lost the week-long \$10 million DP World Tour Championship on Sunday in a playoff against Matt Fitzpatrick, but did enough to ensure he was crowned the winner of the season-long Race to Dubai champion.

"It's absolutely incredible. I knew I still had a bit of work to do to get over the line in

the Race to Dubai," said McIlroy, who will remain the world No2. McIlroy topped the European tour's season ending rankings for a seventh time, and for the fourth season in a row. He broke a tie with Severiano Ballesteros and is one behind Colin Montgomerie, who achieved the feat eight times.

"It seems within touching distance now," said McIlroy. "I was the first European to win the Grand Slam and I'd love to be the most successful European in terms of winning Order of Merits and season-long races." He added that Ballesteros "was always my dad's favourite player". "When I hear Seve, it just sort

of brings me back through my whole journey in the game, and yeah, it's quite emotional."

Englishman Fitzpatrick made a birdie on the 72nd hole of regulation play to finish with a 66 at the Earth course of Jumeirah Golf Estates. A few minutes later, Northern Ireland's McIlroy sensationally eagled the same hole after a brilliant second shot to 16 feet. On the first playoff hole, McIlroy's drive found the stream that crosses the fairway, and could only make a bogey, leaving Fitzpatrick a third-time winner of the season-ending tournament.

Fitzpatrick, the 2022 US Open champion, kept his nerve for his third DP World Tour

Championship title and a

10th DP World Tour victory in

195 starts.

- 'This means the world' -

Until he finished tied eighth

in the PGA Championship in

May, he did not have a top-

10 for nearly 11 months.

"This means the world," said

Fitzpatrick, who picked up

two-and-a-half points as

Europe won the Ryder Cup in

September.

"Struggled at the start of this year, obviously, and to turn it around in the summer like I did and have a Ryder Cup like I did, it feels like it's hard to top given everything."

"I feel like I really didn't hit one bad shot all day," he said.

Four players - England's

Tommy Fleetwood (67) and

Laurie Canter (67), Sweden's Ludvig Aberg (66) and Denmark's Rasmus Neergaard-Petersen (68) - tied for third at 17-under par total.

McIlroy, the Masters champion, seemed to be motoring along when he made five birdies in his first 11 holes to move ahead by two shots.

A bogey on the 12th hole, where he overshot the green with his approach shot, and another dropped shot on the par-four 16th, where he found a bunker, pulled him back.

After McIlroy's long birdie putt lipped out on the 17th, he was one behind a group of four players.

That became a two-shot deficit when Fitzpatrick made the sixth birdie of his bogey-free round on the 18th.

McIlroy responded with a towering second shot from 234 yards into headwind to 16 feet for his eagle to force the playoff.

England's Marco Penge finished in a tie for 22nd to secure second place in the Race to Dubai.

He led 10 non-exempt players who will get their PGA Tour card for 2026. That list includes Canter, Kristoffer Reitan, Adrien Saddier, Alex Noren, John Parry, Haotong Li, Keita Nakajima, Neergaard-Petersen and Jordan Smith.



Rory McIlroy has now won seven DP World Tour titles, just one behind record-holder Colin Montgomerie

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AFP

Trump signals possible US talks with Venezuela's Maduro

Donald Trump suggested Sunday that future talks with Venezuelan counterpart Nicolas Maduro could be on the table, as a regional US military buildup has whipped up tensions between the nations.

The US president spoke after Washington further upped the ante by announcing plans to designate as a terrorist group a cartel that it claims Maduro runs.

"We may be having some discussions with Maduro, and we'll see how that turns out," Trump told reporters in Florida, adding: "They would like to talk."

Pressed for more details, he replied: "Venezuela would like to talk. What does it mean? You tell me, I don't know... I'd talk to anybody." Earlier Sunday, the US State Department said it would classify Cartel de los Soles (Cartel of the Suns) -- which it claims is headed by Maduro -- as a foreign terrorist organization (FTO).

"Cartel de los Soles by and with other designated FTOs including Tren de Aragua and the Sinaloa Cartel are responsible for terrorist violence throughout our

hemisphere as well as for trafficking drugs into the United States and Europe," Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a statement. The designation, effective from November 24, follows a huge US military mobilization in the Caribbean which Washington states is necessary to prevent drug smuggling into the United States. But Caracas claims it is really

a ploy to overthrow its leftist president Maduro, who the United States considers an illegitimate leader and a drug lord -- a charge that he denies.

- Deadly US strikes - Rubio reiterated an established US stance Sunday that Cartel de los Soles is led by Maduro and other high-ranking officials "who have corrupted Venezuela's military,

intelligence, legislature, and judiciary."

"Neither Maduro nor his cronies represent Venezuela's legitimate government," he added. The US Treasury in July announced sanctions against Cartel de los Soles after it was classified as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist entity for allegedly providing "material support" to other Latin American crime groups.



The US claims that Venezuela's Nicolas Maduro leads a criminal group called Cartel de los Soles

Rubio also said Sunday the United States "will continue using all available tools to protect our national security interests and deny funding and resources to narco-terrorists."

Since launching the anti-trafficking military campaign in September, US forces have killed at least 83 people accused of ferrying drugs in international waters, according to an AFP tally of publicly released figures. The United States has released no details to back up its claims that the people targeted -- in both the Caribbean and eastern Pacific -- in the more than 20 strikes were actually traffickers.

Experts say the deaths amount to extrajudicial killings even if they target known traffickers.

The US military also on Sunday confirmed the USS Gerald R. Ford aircraft carrier was now in the Caribbean Sea for the anti-smuggling campaign -- dubbed "Operation Southern Spear" -- along with two guided-missile destroyers and other support vessels and aircraft. The arrival announcement came a day after the latest US strike in the eastern Pacific, which killed three people.

Australian Paralympics gold medallist Greco dies aged 28

Australian Paralympics gold medal-winning cyclist Paige Greco has died aged 28 after a "sudden medical episode", her family said Monday.

Greco smashed her own world record in storming to victory in the women's C1-C3 class 3,000m individual pursuit at the Tokyo Games in 2021.

She went on to add bronze in the C1-3 road race and time trial, cementing her status as a top competitor across both track and road.

Greco died on Sunday at her

Adelaide home. "While we are devastated by her loss, we are incredibly proud of the person she was and the way she represented Australia," her mother Natalie Greco said in a statement released through AusCycling.

"Paige cherished the connections she made through her sport, and we take comfort in knowing how widely she was loved." Greco also claimed multiple world championship titles, most recently earning bronze in the 2025 world

championship road race at Belgium in August. "Paige was an extraordinary athlete who achieved outstanding accomplishments at the highest levels of our sport," said AusCycling chief executive Marne Fechner. "Much more than that, she touched the lives of everyone around her with her positive spirit and courageous outlook."



Australian paralympic gold medal-winning cyclist Paige Greco has died aged 28

Trump ne ferme pas la porte à des "discussions" avec Maduro

Le président américain Donald Trump a évoqué dimanche de possibles "discussions" avec son homologue vénézuélien Nicolas Maduro, dans un contexte de fortes tensions entre leurs pays.

Le contexte régional s'est considérablement dégradé depuis le déploiement américain d'ampleur au large de l'Amérique latine, officiellement pour y mener une campagne militaire contre le trafic de drogue à destination des Etats-Unis. "Nous pourrions avoir des discussions avec Maduro, et nous verrons comment cela se passe", a néanmoins déclaré Donald Trump à la presse, à l'aéroport international de Palm Beach, en Floride.

"Ils aimeraient discuter", a ajouté le républicain, alors que la justice américaine offre une récompense de 50 millions de dollars pour la capture du dirigeant vénézuélien.

Washington accuse ce dernier d'être à la tête du "Cartel des Soleils", organisation dont des experts doutent de l'existence sous cette forme, décrivant plutôt un système de corruption profitant du crime organisé.

Le secrétaire d'Etat Marco

Rubio a toutefois annoncé dimanche que le "Cartel de los Soles" (le nom espagnol de ce réseau présumé) serait classé groupe terroriste étranger par les autorités américaines, le tenant responsable de "violences terroristes dans notre hémisphère et de trafic de drogue vers les Etats-Unis et l'Europe".

Le responsable a réitéré une affirmation américaine selon

laquelle ce cartel serait dirigé par Nicolas Maduro et d'autres hauts fonctionnaires "qui ont corrompu l'armée, les services de renseignement, le pouvoir législatif et le pouvoir judiciaire du Venezuela".

- Arrivée d'un porte-avions - Les forces de Washington mobilisées en mer des Caraïbes et dans le Pacifique mènent depuis septembre des frappes aériennes dans

les eaux internationales, détruisant une vingtaine de navires présentés comme appartenant à des trafiquants de drogue, sans apporter de preuve. Au moins 83 personnes ont été tuées dans ces opérations qui ont fait grimper les tensions régionales, surtout avec le Venezuela.

M. Rubio a affirmé que les Etats-Unis "continueront à utiliser tous les outils

disponibles pour protéger leurs intérêts en matière de sécurité nationale et priver les narco-terroristes de financements et de ressources", estimant que "ni Maduro ni ses acolytes ne représentent le gouvernement légitime du Venezuela".

Donald Trump, qui a autorisé des opérations clandestines de la CIA au Venezuela, a donné des indications contradictoires sur sa stratégie, évoquant par moments des frappes sur le sol vénézuélien et des jours comptés pour Nicolas Maduro à la présidence, mais écartant aussi l'idée d'une guerre.

De son côté, Caracas accuse Washington de prendre prétexte de la lutte contre le narcotrafic pour "imposer un changement de régime" et tenter de s'emparer du pétrole vénézuélien.

Dimanche, les Etats-Unis ont annoncé l'arrivée en mer des Caraïbes de leur porte-avions Gerald Ford, le plus grand du monde, renforçant nettement leur présence dans la zone. Le Gerald Ford transporte notamment quatre escadrilles d'avions de combat et est accompagné de trois destroyers lance-missiles.



Combo réalisé en 2025 de portraits de Nicolas Maduro (g) et Donald Trump

Zelensky in Paris to seek air defence help for Ukraine

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky visits Paris on Monday in a new bid to secure weaponry to defend his country against increasingly lethal Russian missile and drone attacks.

Zelensky's visit is part of a brief tour of his western allies that saw him seal an energy deal with Greece on Sunday and will include a visit to Spain on Tuesday. The Ukrainian leader has said that "a major deal with France" will be announced soon, but it was not known if that would be finalised in his talks with President Emmanuel Macron.

The French presidency said Macron would "put French excellence in the armaments industry field at the service of

the defence of Ukraine". Paris, he said, would propose ways to allow Ukraine "to acquire the systems that it needs to answer Russian

aggression". Macron's office notably highlighted air defences. Zelensky on Saturday renewed his appeals for



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky will on Monday make his ninth visit to Paris since Russia's invasion

more anti-missile systems, a day after deadly Russian strikes on Kyiv.

Zelensky and Macron will start the day at the Villacoublay air base near Paris for a presentation of France's Rafale fighter jet. They will also look at drones and France's SAMP-T surface-to-air missile system it developed with Italy. The Ukrainian president last month signed a letter of intent that could see his country buy up to 150 Swedish Gripen fighters. Ukraine already has one of the current SAMP-Ts that can counter fighter jets as well as cruise missiles and tactical ballistic missiles. A new-generation, more powerful SAMP-T system should

become available from 2027.

- Drones and missiles - France has already promised more of its Aster missiles that can be fired from the SAMP-T or from aircraft to Ukraine.

"We are also working on deliveries of other advanced air-defence systems and strengthening our aviation -- a major deal with France is in preparation and will be finalised soon -- a historic agreement," Zelensky said in a video released Friday. Zelensky and Macron will then go on to a forum at the Elysee palace on joint production of drones. Ukraine has said it plans to use more than 4.5 million

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drones this year, for frontline attacks and to fight off Russian drones. The two presidents will also visit the headquarters of a Ukraine multinational force

that France and Britain are preparing in the event an international force is deployed in Ukraine after any ceasefire. The headquarters at Mont Valerien, west of Paris, is where countries from the

"coalition of the willing" organised by France and Britain have sent officers to prepare the force. France says that 34 countries and Ukraine have already offered to take part. Zelensky's ninth visit to

France since the Russian invasion in 2022 comes as his government battles a new corruption scandal, this time involving its energy firms. France's Europe Minister Benjamin Haddad said in a television interview on

Saturday that governments had to be "extraordinarily vigilant" about corruption as Ukraine presses its case to join the European Union.

Bangladesh verdict due in ex-PM's crimes against humanity trial

Bangladeshi judges will deliver their verdict on Monday in the crimes against humanity trial of fugitive former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, a highly anticipated ruling before the first polls since her overthrow.

Hasina, 78, defied court orders that she return from India to attend her trial about whether she ordered a deadly crackdown against a student-led uprising that ousted her in August 2024. She faces a possible death penalty if convicted.

Bangladesh has been in political turmoil since the end of Hasina's autocratic rule, and violence has marred campaigning for elections expected in February 2026. The United Nations says up to 1,400 people were killed in crackdowns as Hasina tried to cling to power, deaths that were central to her trial.

"Justice will be served according to the law," chief prosecutor Tajul Islam told reporters when the verdict date was set last week. "We hope the court will exercise its prudence and wisdom, that the thirst for justice will be fulfilled, and that this verdict will mark an end to crimes against

humanity," he said. Prosecutors have filed five charges, including failure to prevent murder, amounting to crimes against humanity under Bangladeshi law. The trial has heard months of testimony in absentia alleging she ordered mass killings. She has called the trial a "jurisprudential joke". Her co-accused include former interior minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal --

also a fugitive -- and former police chief Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, who is in custody and has pleaded guilty. Hasina was assigned a state-appointed lawyer for the trial but she refused to recognise the court's authority and said she rejected all charges. Hasina said in a written interview with AFP in October that a guilty verdict was "preordained", and that she

would "not be surprised when it comes".

- Deepening crisis -

Security forces surrounded the court when the verdict date was set on Thursday, with armoured vehicles manning checkpoints. Dhaka Municipal Police spokesman Talebur Rahman said the force would be on high alert for Monday's verdict, with checkpoints at key intersections across the



Judges in a court in the Bangladesh capital Dhaka will deliver a verdict in the trial of fugitive former prime minister Sheikh Hasina on charges of crimes against humanity

capital. Almost half the city's 34,000 police would be on duty, he said.

Interim interior ministry chief Jahangir Alam Chowdhury told reporters the government was prepared and there was no cause for concern.

Crude bombs have been set off across Dhaka this month, mainly petrol bombs hurled at everything from buildings linked to interim leader Muhammad Yunus's government to buses and Christian sites.

Bangladesh's foreign ministry summoned India's envoy to Dhaka this month, demanding that New Delhi block the "notorious fugitive" Hasina from talking to journalists and "granting her a platform to spew hatred". Hasina remains defiant. She said in October she "mourned all the lives lost during the terrible days" when students were gunned down in the streets. Her comments enraged many who said she had made a ruthless bid to maintain power at all costs.

Hasina also warned that the ban on her former ruling party the Awami League by the interim government was deepening the political crisis in the country of 170 million people before the elections.

Greenpeace says French uranium being sent to Russia

The Greenpeace environment group said Sunday that France was sending reprocessed uranium to Russia for treatment so it can be reused, despite the Kremlin's war in Ukraine.

The group argued that while it was legal, the trade was "immoral" as many nations seek to step up sanctions on the Russian government over its invasion launched in 2022. Greenpeace members on

Saturday filmed the loading of about 10 containers with radioactive labels onto a cargo ship in the Channel port of Dunkirk, the NGO said.

The Panamanian-registered ship, the Mikhail Dudin, is regularly used to carry enriched or natural uranium from France to St Petersburg, according to Greenpeace. But Saturday's consignment was the first of reprocessed uranium to be observed for

three years, it added. "It is not illegal, but it is immoral," Pauline Boyer, the head of Greenpeace France's nuclear campaign, told AFP. "France should end its contracts with Rosatom, a state company that has occupied the Ukrainian nuclear power plant at Zaporizhzhia for three years," she added. French state-controlled energy giant Electricité de France (EDF) signed a 600-

million-euro (\$700 million) deal in 2018 with a Rosatom subsidiary, Tenex, for the recycling of reprocessed uranium. These operations have not been affected by international sanctions over the Ukraine war. Rosatom has the only facility in the world -- at Seversk in Siberia -- capable of carrying out key parts of the conversion of reprocessed uranium to enriched reprocessed uranium.

Uranium can be reprocessed so it can be reenriched and reused. With uranium prices rising again on international markets, it is increasingly worthwhile for power companies to seek reprocessing of spent fuel. Only about 10 percent of the reenriched uranium sent back to France by Russia is used at its Cruas nuclear power plant, in southern

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France, the only one in the country that can use enriched reprocessed

uranium, according to Greenpeace.

France's energy ministry and EDF did not respond to AFP's questions on the

consignment or trade. France ordered the EDF to halt its uranium trade with Rosatom in 2022 when Greenpeace first revealed the

contracts in the wake of Russia's invasion. France said in March 2024 that it was "seriously" looking at the possibility of building

its own conversion facility to produce enriched reprocessed uranium.

A pragmatic communist and a far-right leader: Chile's presidential finalists

Pedro SCHWARZE and Clare BYRNE

A consensus-driven communist and a far-right law-and-order candidate vowing mass migrant deportations will duel for president of Chile after topping a first round of voting on Sunday.

Here is a brief biography of both:

- Reluctant communist - Jeannette Jara is a rare working-class candidate in a country where political leaders are usually drawn from descendants of the European immigrant elite. A former labor minister under outgoing center-left President Gabriel Boric, she grew up in El Cortijo, a deprived neighborhood in northern Santiago.

"For the first time since our return to democracy (after a 1973-1990 military dictatorship), a person coming from a working-class neighborhood could rise to govern," she told AFP in a written interview.

The diminutive 51-year-old swept the boards in a left-wing primary as a reformer who pushed through a reduction of the working week from 45 to 40 hours. She also raised the minimum wage by nearly 50 percent and forced employers to contribute to pension funds for the first time ever.

Jara joined the Communist Party at the age of 14 but insists she is not the party's candidate but that of an eight-party coalition. She has defied Communist Party orthodoxy by criticizing communist-run Cuba and accusing Venezuela's strongman socialist president, Nicolas Maduro, of running a "dictatorship." That didn't stop her opponents from using her communist affiliation as a stick to beat her. The eldest of five children, Jara was born to a mechanic father and a housewife

mother and worked various jobs, including fruit picking, to help pay her way. She studied public administration and law, and became a labor leader before entering politics. Her challenge is to avoid being typecast as weak on crime in a country yearning for the tranquility it enjoyed until a decade ago. "Public safety will be a priority from day one," Jara has assured. She has also vowed to guarantee that "every Chilean family can easily make it to the end of the month."

"She's an ordinary person, and she knows what ordinary people suffer and go through," said Constanza Contreras, a 19-year-old student, during a Jara rally in the port city of Valparaiso. - Chile's Trump - Jose Antonio Kast is the son of a former soldier in Hitler's Nazi army, who emigrated to Chile after the war. He is also the brother of a former minister under late military dictator Augusto Pinochet. The ultra-conservative father of nine, 59, alienated moderate voters in the past

by advocating a ban on abortion in all circumstances, including rape, and opposing same-sex marriage.

But on his third bid for president, he has studiously avoided identity issues.

The white-haired Republican Party candidate instead focused his attacks on illegal migrants, whom he accuses of being responsible for a surge in organized crime. He has called on the country's 330,000 undocumented immigrants to sell up and self-deport -- or be thrown out and lose everything if and when he takes power.

Kast has also vowed to erect walls and fences, and dig trenches, along Chile's border with Bolivia to halt arrivals from poorer countries to the north.

On security, his model -- and that of many Chileans -- is El Salvador, whose iron-fisted President Nayib Bukele has locked up thousands of men without charge as part of a crackdown on gangs.

"Bukele is fabulous, I applaud him," Andres Morales, a 62-year-old right-wing voter said approvingly.

On the campaign trail Kast raised eyebrows by twice addressing rallies behind a pane of bulletproof glass. The move, slammed by Jara as fear-mongering, echoed the measures deployed to protect US President Donald Trump after he survived an assassination attempt on the campaign trail in 2016.



Chilean far-right presidential candidate Jose Antonio Kast believes he will strike lucky on his third attempt for the top office

Portugal, Norway book spots at 2026 World Cup

Neil FULTON

Portugal booked their ticket to the 2026 World Cup with a 9-1 victory over Armenia on Sunday, while an Erling Haaland brace rubber-stamped Norway's place in the global showpiece as they romped to a 4-1 win in Italy.

After being held by Hungary and then stunned by Republic of Ireland last time out, Portugal sealed top spot in Group F at the third time

of asking with a resounding win over bottom-side Armenia.

In the absence of the suspended Cristiano Ronaldo, star midfielders Bruno Fernandes and Joao Neves both scored hat-tricks as the Portuguese ran riot in Porto.

Renato Veiga, Goncalo Ramos and Francisco Conceicao were also on the scoresheet.

"The most important thing was qualifying for the World

Cup," Paris Saint-Germain lynchpin Neves told RTP. "For me, as I always say, the team always comes before the individual. I'm very happy to have scored my first goal for the national team, and my second and third as well."

Portugal will compete in a seventh consecutive edition of the World Cup, a tournament which the Euro 2016 champions are yet to win.

"We're at the World Cup! Let's go, Portugal!" Ronaldo

posted on social media. The striker could miss the start of the tournament depending on whether FIFA extend his suspension beyond the mandatory one-match ban he served against Armenia.

Ireland sewed up the play-off place in the group thanks to Troy Parrott's 96th-minute hat-trick goal handing them a 3-2 win over third-placed Hungary.

Daniel Lukacs gave the hosts the lead in Hungary after

four minutes, before Parrott levelled from 12 yards shortly afterwards.

Barnabas Varga's 37th-minute goal looked to have been enough for Hungary to seal second spot until 23-year-old Parrott notched his fourth and fifth international goals this week.

Parrott was the hero with his brace in Thursday's 2-0 defeat of Portugal, and he struck to equalise again for

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Ireland with 10 minutes remaining in the Hungarian capital. The AZ Alkmaar forward then sparked wild Irish celebrations as he prodded home Liam Scales's knockdown deep into injury time to send Heimir Hallgrímsson's side into March's play-offs. - 'Absolutely insane' - Italy needed a miracle in Milan to pip Norway to first place in Group I due to the visitors' gargantuan goal difference advantage. Pio Esposito scored early at the San Siro to give the home side the faintest of hopes but they were unable to again break down stubborn Norwegian defending as Stale Solbakken's side held firm.

Antonio Nusa levelled just after the hour before Haaland, inevitably, netted twice in sixty seconds to turn the tie on its head. Jorgen Strand Larsen then put gloss on the result in injury time as

Norway romped to an eighth win from eight outings. It will be Norway's first appearance at the World Cup since 1998. "I'm happy, but more relieved. There's a lot of



In the absence of the suspended Cristiano Ronaldo, Bruno Fernandes and Joao Neves (L) both scored hat-tricks as Portugal ran riot against Armenia

pressure and stuff, and I feel it. But it's fun," Haaland, who netted 16 goals across the campaign, told TV 2. "It's indescribable. Absolutely insane. The way we did it is absolutely incredible. It's huge," Martin Odegaard said. Israel beat Moldova 4-1 but finished six points adrift of second-placed Italy, who go into the play-offs. France booked their place in next year's tournament in North America with a win over Ukraine earlier in the week, and a much-changed side concluded their campaign with a 3-1 win in Azerbaijan. Ukraine saw off Iceland 2-0 thanks to two strikes inside the final 10 minutes from Oleksandr Zubkov and Oleksii Hutsuliak to claim second place in Group D. Thomas Tuchel's England

completed a perfect group-stage performance as they won 2-0 against Albania to finish their campaign with a 100 percent record, featuring 22 goals scored and zero conceded -- a European record for a team playing at least six qualifying matches. "I think it's as good (a squad) as we've ever had," Harry Kane, who scored both England goals, told ITV. "I think when you look at the starting 11, you look at the players coming off the bench, we're going to go into the tournament as one of the favourites." With Albania already assured of second place, Serbia beat Latvia 2-1 in a dead-rubber in Group K's other match.

England ready for World Cup after perfect campaign

England wrapped up their flawless World Cup qualifying campaign with a record-setting 2-0 win against Albania on Sunday.

The Three Lions, who took maximum points from their eight games, became the first European team to win every one of their World Cup qualifiers without conceding a single goal in a campaign lasting at least six matches. AFP Sport looks at three key factors that can help Thomas Tuchel's side triumph at next year's tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico:

Tuchel's tactical acumen
After a slow start to his reign, Thomas Tuchel has gradually revitalised England over the last 11 months, with his astute tactical moves proving especially influential.

Tuchel's predecessor Gareth Southgate was often criticised for his cautious game-plan and slow response to situations that demanded substitutes to change the momentum. Southgate's innate conservatism was fatal in England's European Championship final losses to Italy in 2021 and Spain in 2024, as well as the 2018 World Cup semi-final defeat against Croatia.

Tuchel has shown he will not freeze when the pressure is highest, leading Chelsea to Champions League glory in 2021 and winning domestic



England took maximum points from their eight games

titles with Bayern Munich and Paris Saint-Germain. The 52-year-old has brought that big-game experience to England.

In Thursday's 2-0 win against Serbia, he sent on Eberechi Eze and Phil Foden, who combined for the Arsenal forward to score England's second goal.

Then against Albania, it was substitutes Bukayo Saka and Marcus Rashford who provided the assists for Harry Kane's brace.

Tuchel has been equally savvy with his handling of Real Madrid star Jude Bellingham.

Where Southgate seemed to

do everything in his power to accommodate Bellingham, Tuchel has refused to pander to the midfielder, leaving him out of the October internationals and restricting him to a substitute appearance against Serbia. Bellingham was back in the team against Albania with a point to prove, but when he gave a frustrated response to being replaced by Morgan Rogers in the closing stages, Tuchel was quick to lay down the law.

Having already warned Bellingham that he must fight for his place at the World Cup, Tuchel's hardline stance underlined a team-

first ethos that is paying dividends.

England's NFL playbook
In a season notable for numerous Premier League teams using corners, free-kicks and long throw-ins to exploit opposing defences, it was fascinating to hear England captain Kane talk about Tuchel's desire to establish an NFL set-piece playbook.

Kane, a noted fan of American football, said England will go to the World Cup with a list of dead-ball routines that can take advantage of defensive weaknesses.

"I think it is massive, to be

honest," Kane said. "You want to have an NFL playbook in a way, where you look at the opposition and see if they are zonal or man-mark.

"We can pick what we want to do and ultimately, the best team at set-plays normally go on to be the best team in the tournament."

Fittingly, Kane's opening goal against Albania came from Saka's corner -- England's World Cup opponents have been warned.

Strength in depth
Tuchel is blessed to be England manager at a time when there are countless talented options available to him in all areas of the team. England's strength in depth was on full display in Tirana, where Tuchel made seven changes to the starting line-up but was still able to field a team with enough quality to end Albania's eight-match unbeaten run.

With Cole Palmer, Trent Alexander-Arnold, Jack Grealish and Harry Maguire all absent from the squad for the final qualifiers, Nico O'Reilly, Elliot Anderson, Jarrod Bowen, Eberechi Eze, Jarell Quansah and Adam Wharton staked their claims for a seat on the flight to North America.

Tuchel now has a back-up almost as good as the first-choice in most positions.

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Only Bayern Munich striker Kane, who took his England record goal tally to 78, is

irreplaceable. It might give Tuchel a few sleepless nights before he

names his squad for the World Cup, but the German must make the most of

England's latest golden generation.

Présidentielle au Chili: la communiste Jara et l'ultraconservateur Kast en ballotage

Paulina ABRAMOVICH et Clare BYRNE

La communiste modérée Jeannette Jara et son rival d'extrême droite José Antonio Kast s'affronteront au second tour de la présidentielle chilienne, après être arrivés en tête dimanche du premier tour lors d'un scrutin dominé par les inquiétudes liées à la criminalité.

La candidate de la coalition de centre gauche au pouvoir recueille 26,71% des suffrages, contre 24,12% pour son rival ultraconservateur, selon des résultats officiels portant sur près de 83% des bulletins dépouillés. Ils s'affronteront le 14 décembre.

Avant le premier tour, les sondages ont toutefois prédit la défaite de Jeannette Jara au second tour en cas de qualification face à un candidat de droite ou d'extrême droite, en raison du report des voix. Ces résultats "sont une très mauvaise nouvelle pour Jeannette Jara", commente pour l'AFP Rodrigo Arellano, analyste à l'Université du Développement du Chili. "Toutes les projections de son équipe tablaient sur plus de 30%", explique-t-il, soulignant que "l'ensemble des candidats de l'opposition la devancent de près du double".

L'ancienne ministre du Travail a exhorté les électeurs à ne pas laisser la montée de la

criminalité les pousser vers l'extrême droite. "Ne laissez pas la peur endurcir vos coeurs", a-t-elle déclaré. Pour la première fois depuis la fin de la dictature d'Augusto Pinochet en 1990, la droite radicale pourrait revenir au pouvoir. "Nous allons reconstruire" le pays, a lancé José Antonio Kast. L'extrême droite était aussi représentée par le député libertarien Johannes Kaiser, souvent présenté comme la version chilienne du président argentin Javier Milei.

Il recueille 13,93% des suffrages. L'économiste iconoclaste Franco Parisi a créé la surprise en terminant

troisième avec 19,42%, tandis que la candidate de la droite traditionnelle Evelyn Matthei obtient 12,70%.

Bien que le pays, riche en cuivre et en lithium, demeure l'un des plus sûrs du continent, la criminalité y a sensiblement augmenté. Le taux d'homicides a augmenté de 2,5 à 6 pour 100.000 habitants en dix ans et 868 enlèvements ont été recensés l'an dernier, en hausse de 76% par rapport à 2021, selon les autorités.

- "De la poigne" -
Cette poussée de la violence a éclipsé les aspirations de changement qui avaient porté au pouvoir en 2022 le président de gauche Gabriel

Boric et sa promesse, finalement avortée, d'une nouvelle Constitution pour remplacer celle héritée de Pinochet.

L'inquiétude des Chiliens tient notamment à l'arrivée de formes de criminalité organisée "jusque-là inconnues dans le pays, comme les assassinats commandités", note Gonzalo Müller, directeur du Centre d'études politiques du Chili. "Il manque de la poigne au Chili, on est trop laxistes (...) Il faut fermer la frontière et renvoyer tous les sans-papiers", a déclaré à l'AFP Raul Lueiza, un ouvrier du bâtiment de 64 ans, après avoir voté dans un quartier

populaire de Santiago. La campagne a été dominée par les discours sécuritaires, auxquels Jeannette Jara elle-même s'est ralliée, sans vraiment convaincre.

Membre du Parti communiste depuis l'adolescence, l'ancienne ministre du Travail de 51 ans a assuré pendant sa campagne n'avoir "aucun complexe en matière de sécurité", défendant notamment un contrôle migratoire renforcé.

José Antonio Kast, 59 ans, fils d'un ancien soldat allemand qui a servi pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale puis a émigré au Chili, brigue la présidence pour la troisième fois.

Son discours cible les 337.000 étrangers en situation irrégulière, en majorité des Vénézuéliens, dans un contexte d'inquiétude face à l'arrivée de groupes criminels étrangers. Une majorité de Chiliens associe la montée de la criminalité à l'immigration irrégulière.

Il promet des expulsions massives, la construction d'un mur à la frontière, le renforcement de l'armement de la police et le déploiement de l'armée dans les zones critiques.

Plus de 15,6 millions d'électeurs étaient appelés à départager huit candidats, ainsi qu'à renouveler la Chambre des députés et la moitié du Sénat.



Une femme entre dans le centre de vote au stade national Julio Martínez Prádanos à Santiago, le 15 novembre 2025.

World champion Liu wins Skate America women's crown

Reigning world champion Alysa Liu of the United States captured the Skate America women's crown on Sunday while compatriots Madison Chock and Evan Bates took the ice dance title.

Liu scored 140.54 points to win Sunday's free skate in a spellbinding performance at the 1980 Olympic Arena in

Lake Placid, New York. The 24-year-old Californian won the overall title with 214.27 points with Japan's Rinka Watanabe settling for a runner-up spot for the second consecutive year on 210.96 with Georgia's Anastasiia Gubanova third on 204.69. But Liu was somewhat surprised at the judges'

scores, saying she was disappointed in her jumps and confused when she took the lead. "I did not like my performance and when I did it, jump-wise, it did not feel very good," Liu said after claiming her first ISU Grand Prix triumph. Watanabe won the short program but was only third

behind Liu and Gubanova in the free skate. Liu, 20, retired in 2022 but returned for the 2024-2025 season and captured the world title earlier this year in Boston, putting her among the favorites for gold at February's Winter Olympics in Italy. Chock and Bates, who captured Saturday's rhythm

dance, won Sunday's free dance with 127.81 points with Canada's Majorie Lajoie and Zachary Lagha second on 119.74.

In the overall competition, Chock and Bates, who also captured Saturday's rhythm dance, won with a total of 212.58 points with Lajoie and Lagha second on 197.16 and French duo Evgenia Lopareva and Geoffrey Brissaud third on 192.61. The ISU Grand Prix series continues next week in Helsinki.

Haaland's Norway thump sorry Italy to reach first World Cup since 1998

Terry DALEY

Norway qualified for their first World Cup since 1998 after Erling Haaland struck again in a 4-1 thumping of Italy on Sunday which sealed a spot in next summer's finals in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Haaland scored the decisive

brace in the space of seconds at a soaking San Siro for Norway, who completed Group I with a perfect 24 points from their eight qualifying matches. Norway would have had to lose by nine goals or more in order to be overtaken by Italy for the group's only automatic place for next summer's finals in North

America, but Stale Solbakken's side ended their campaign in glorious fashion in front of 70,000 people. However, Solbakken was coy as to his powerful team's chances now that a 28-year weight has come to an end. "Let's see the draw first... I haven't even thought about it. For me, it (tonight) was to go from 99 percent to 100



Erling Haaland is averaging more than a goal a game for club and country this season

percent and now we have done it in a great way," Solbakken told reporters. "Let's see what the draw brings before we go into those questions." Haaland's father Alf-Inge was still an international player when Norway last competed in the World Cup 27 years ago, a tournament won by a Zinedine Zidane-inspired France.

And the Manchester City striker, called a "goal machine" by Solbakken, will be one of the players to watch in North America after smashing in 16 goals during qualifying. The 25-year-old is averaging more than a goal a game for club and country this season and was typically ruthless when presented with his opportunities to both put Norway ahead and then double their lead in the 78th and 79th minutes.

- Norway sink Italy - Pio Esposito opened the scoring for Italy in the 11th minute, but once Antonio Nusa levelled with a thumping strike in the 63rd minute, there was only one team who looked like winning, and Jorgen Strand Larsen's brilliant individual goal completed the rout in stoppage time. Italy will head to the play-offs in March after finishing the group six points behind Norway following two bracing defeats to Solbakken's team, and exited

the San Siro field to a hail of whistles from the few home fans who had stayed until the end.

Coach Gennaro Gattuso apologised to supporters during his short interview with public broadcaster RAI and was clearly concerned about the second half collapse.

"It's worrying, I'd be a liar to say that it doesn't concern me, because when you have nights like this it's much easier if you can stay together, improve the day to day," said Gattuso.

"What worries me is that we'll next see each other in three months' time."

Italy's bid for direct qualification was compromised from their opening match against Norway, a 3-0 defeat which ended Luciano Spalletti's reign as coach.

Since Gattuso took over, the Azzurri have performed better but there is no-one in their team of the class of Haaland, a shame for a country which has produced some of the game's best-ever players.

Italy failed to qualify for the last two World Cups thanks to humiliating defeats in the play-offs to Sweden and North Macedonia, the latter coming less than a year after being crowned European champions in 2021.

Sinner hails 'amazing' ATP Finals triumph over Alcaraz

Jannik Sinner cut a delighted figure on Sunday after he finished a turbulent season in the best possible fashion, seeing off rival Carlos Alcaraz in straight sets to retain his ATP Finals title.

Italian Sinner was roared to a 7-6 (7/4), 7-5 victory by supporters in Turin, who watched their idol cap a landmark season in which he became the first of his countrymen to win Wimbledon.

"It's (an) amazing season... This year making four Grand Slam finals, coming here, winning here, having this big streak in end of the year, it's amazing," Sinner told reporters.

"But mostly I feel to be a better player than last year, I think this is the most

important. It's all part of the process. I always say and believe that if you keep working and trying to be a better player, the results, they're going to come. This year it was like this."

Sinner collapsed to the ground with a mixture of joy and relief after sealing his triumph at the season-ending tournament where he hasn't lost a match since being beaten in the 2023 final by Novak Djokovic.

The win brought to a close a year in which the 24-year-old had to bounce back from a three-month ban, which chopped out a large chunk of his season despite the World Anti-Doping Agency accepting that the Italian was accidentally contaminated with banned substance clostebol in March 2024.



Italy's Jannik Sinner hasn't lost a match at the ATP Finals since being beaten in the 2023 decider by Novak Djokovic

"I was thinking about a lot and at the same time not a lot. There was a lot of tension because if I lost that point we go into a tie-break and then it becomes a different match," added Sinner.

"But in that moment I was probably more relieved about the end of the season. I had a similar feeling last year but it was different. "This year it was a more powerful feeling for a variety

of reasons. It was a really emotional moment."

Sinner's win was his second over Alcaraz this year and a big moment after he lost the year-end world number one spot to the Spaniard, who won eight tournaments this year and took his Grand Slam tally to six.

Alcaraz was left to rue missed opportunities at key moments of a typically tight match between the two best players in the world, with his backhand failing him when he had chances to strike.

"Right now I have some points and some shots on my mind. For example, the backhand volley that I missed. I missed a few of the backhand volleys... which I'm really disappointed in," said Alcaraz.

"I would say that was the key because it was a really important moment that I didn't finish the point with the backhand volley... I think that was a really important shot that I didn't do well today."

Décès de Xavier Emmanuelli, le médecin des exclus, de MSF au Samu social

Elia VAISSIÈRE

Médecin des exclus et pionnier de l'action humanitaire, Xavier Emmanuelli, qui a confondé Médecins sans frontières avant d'inventer le Samu social, une ONG d'assistance aux personnes sans-abri, est décédé dimanche à l'âge de 87 ans.

"Avec lui disparaît un grand humaniste de notre République", a salué le président Emmanuel Macron sur le réseau social X. Ce médecin anesthésiste-réanimateur de formation "a dédié sa vie à l'urgence et à l'action humanitaire", a écrit sa famille dans un communiqué transmis à l'AFP: "Il est mort comme il a vécu, avec des semelles de vent".

Le Samu social international, dont Xavier Emmanuelli était toujours président d'honneur, a rendu hommage "à cette personnalité exceptionnelle pour son engagement sans faille au sein de l'association qu'il a présidée pendant plus de 25 ans et dont il a porté toutes les batailles".

Xavier Emmanuelli "a eu un malaise, probablement

cardiaque" et sa vie "s'est arrêtée brutalement", a précisé à l'AFP le président de l'organisation, Jacques Carles. Il avait fondé en 1993 le Samu social de Paris qui vient, entre autres, en aide aux personnes sans-abri et en grande précarité et les oriente vers un lieu d'hébergement via le numéro d'urgence 115. Avant de créer le Samu social

international en 1998. - "Ça me dérange" - "Ça me faisait chier de voir que les gens sont à l'abandon, que ça fait partie du mobilier urbain et que c'est seulement en hiver qu'on s'en rappelle. Ça me dérange. Comme médecin, je suis assez bouleversé", expliquait-il à propos de la création du Samu social. Pour dénoncer une réduction drastique de financement public, il avait claqué la porte de l'organisation parisienne en 2011, tout en restant au Samu social international. Xavier Emmanuelli a "marqué l'histoire de la solidarité dans le monde", a souligné l'association, expliquant que "plus d'une quinzaine de Samu sociaux" viennent aujourd'hui en aide aux adultes sans abri, enfants des rues, réfugiés et déplacés à travers le monde. D'origine corse, né à Paris le

23 août 1938, Xavier Emmanuelli était le fils d'un instituteur devenu médecin généraliste et d'une institutrice, tous deux résistants, distingués comme "Justes parmi les nations" après avoir caché des juifs pendant la guerre. Anticolonialiste, dessinateur occasionnel pour le magazine Hara-Kiri, il avait cofondé en 1971 Médecins sans frontières, qui a reçu le prix Nobel de la paix en 1999: "C'est mon histoire d'amour, vraiment", racontait-il dans un sourire attendri. - "Grand par l'exemple" - C'est lors de consultations dans un centre d'aide aux sans-abris à Nanterre qu'il avait eu l'idée d'appliquer aux problèmes sociaux les méthodes de l'urgence médicale. "J'ai regardé, cliniquement, ce que cela représentait la grande

exclusion. Le Samu social vient de là", avait-il expliqué. Jacques Chirac, alors maire de Paris, l'avait aidé à créer fin 1993 les premières équipes mobiles du Samu social, chargées d'"aller à la rencontre" des sans-abris. Au début de la présidence Chirac, en 1995, il avait été nommé secrétaire d'État à l'Action humanitaire d'urgence (1995-1997). Pour autant, "je n'ai épousé ni les idées de droite ni celles de gauche", expliquait en 2011 celui qui fut communiste dans sa jeunesse.

Membre du conseil de l'Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides (Ofpra) et de la commission nationale consultative des droits de l'homme, il avait également présidé le Haut comité au logement des personnes défavorisées de 1997 à 2015, rappelle sa famille.

Son décès a déclenché une pluie d'hommages.

"Son engagement a marqué notre pays", a réagi sur X le ministre du Travail et des Solidarités Jean-Pierre Farandou.

"Je garde le souvenir d'un homme de fidélité, à la fois exigeant, fraternel, profondément humaniste, toujours tourné vers l'action concrète. Son rôle fut décisif dans la genèse du droit au logement opposable", a souligné sur le réseau social l'ancien Premier ministre (2005-2007) Dominique de Villepin, saluant "l'une des grandes consciences sociales" de la France.

"Visionnaire, médecin voué aux autres, grand par l'exemple", a salué le leader de LFI Jean-Luc Mélenchon.



Le président du Samu social international Xavier Emmanuelli (droite) discute avec un sans-abri roumain à Bucarest, le 13 octobre 2011

UK govt defends plan to limit refugee status

Peter HUTCHISON

Britain's interior minister on Sunday defended plans to drastically reduce protections for refugees and end automatic benefits for asylum seekers, insisting that irregular migration was "tearing our country apart".

The measures, modelled on Denmark's strict asylum system, aim to stop thousands of migrants from arriving in England from northern France on small boats -- crossings that are fuelling support for the anti-immigrant Reform UK party.

But the proposals are widely seen as an attempt to counter a hard-right surge in popularity. They are likely to be opposed by left-wing lawmakers within Prime Minister Keir Starmer's embattled Labour government and the Refugee Council charity has already branded them "harsh and unnecessary".

The centre-right opposition Conservatives also criticised the measures, their home affairs spokesman Chris Philp saying the government was just "tinkering with the edges".

Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood hit back, telling

BBC television she rejected the idea that the proposals meant Labour was "engaging in far-right talking points. "This is a moral mission for me, because I can see illegal migration is tearing our country apart, it is dividing communities," she said. - 'Block endless appeals' - Presently, those given refugee status have it for five years, after which they can apply for indefinite leave to remain and eventually citizenship.

Mahmood's ministry, the Home Office, said it would cut the length of refugee status to 30 months. That protection will be

"regularly reviewed", and refugees will be forced to return to their home countries once they are deemed safe, it added. The ministry said it now intended to make people granted asylum wait 20 years before applying to be allowed to live in the United Kingdom indefinitely. It said the reforms would make it less attractive for irregular migrants to come to Britain, and make it easier to remove those already in the country. Mahmood's reforms will also include new legislation to make it harder for irregular migrants and foreign

criminals to use the European Convention on Human Rights to stop deportation, the Home Office announced late Sunday. In a statement, Starmer said the reforms would "block endless appeals, stop last-minute claims and scale up removals of those with no right to be here".

Asylum claims in Britain are at a record high, with around 111,000 applications made in the year to June 2025, according to official figures.

- Benefits crackdown - A statutory legal duty to provide support to asylum

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seekers, introduced in a 2005 law, will also be revoked, the Home Office said. That means housing and

weekly financial allowances will no longer be guaranteed for asylum seekers. It will become "discretionary", meaning the government could deny



More than 39,000 undocumented migrants have crossed the Channel to southern England from northern France this year

assistance to any asylum seeker who could work or support themselves but did not, or those who committed crimes.

More than 39,000 people, many fleeing conflict, have arrived on small boats this year -- more than for the whole of 2024 but lower than the record set in 2022, when the Conservatives were in power. French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot welcomed the proposals, saying asylum seekers risked their lives crossing the Channel because the conditions they get in Britain "are more permissive".

"We told the UK it was necessary to align certain conditions they give arriving immigrants with European

standards," he said. However, Enver Solomon, chief executive of the Refugee Council, urged the government to reconsider, warning that the plans "will not deter" crossings.

"They should ensure that refugees who work hard and contribute to Britain can build secure, settled lives and give back to their communities," he said.

- The Danish model - Labour is taking inspiration from Denmark's coalition government -- led by the centre-left Social Democrats -- which has implemented some of the strictest migration policies in Europe. Senior British officials recently visited the Scandinavian country, where successful asylum claims are

at a 40-year-low. Refugees in Denmark are entitled to a one-year renewable residency permit, and are encouraged to return as soon as authorities deem their countries are safe. Family reunions are also subject to strict requirements, including a minimum age for both parents, language tests and guarantees of funds. Labour has trailed Reform, led by firebrand Nigel Farage, in opinion polls for most of this year but its tougher stance on immigration risks losing voters to progressive alternatives such as the Greens.

Mondial-2026: la Norvège empêche son billet, l'Italie encore en barrages

Il n'y a pas eu d'incroyable retournement de situation à Milan dimanche: comme attendu, la Norvège s'est qualifiée pour le Mondial-2026 après sa victoire (4-1) contre l'Italie qui, absente des deux dernières Coupes du monde, devra elle à nouveau passer par les barrages.

La Norvège qui participera pour la première fois depuis 1998 à une Coupe du monde, a terminé, grâce à un nouveau doublé de sa star Erling Haaland, à la première place du groupe I avec un carton plein de 24 points, soit six de plus que l'Italie. La Nazionale a dominé la première période devant les 69.000 spectateurs de San Siro et a ouvert la marque grâce à son grand espoir Francesco Pio Esposito, son troisième but en cinq sélections à 20 ans, sur un tir en pivot (11e).

Changement radical de scénario après la pause: la Norvège, timorée jusque-là, a surclassé l'Italie.

Elle a égalisé sur un raid tout en puissance d'Antonio Nusa (63e), puis Haaland a donné l'avantage à son équipe d'une superbe reprise de volée (78e), avant de mettre KO la Nazionale une minute

plus tard en profitant d'une mauvaise relance (79e). Jorgen Strand Larsen a ajouté un quatrième but dans le temps additionnel (90e+3). Les "Lions" disputeront seulement leur quatrième phase finale de Coupe du monde, après 1938, 1994 et 1998. Ils affichent pour meilleur résultat un 8e de finale lors de leur dernière participation en France, où ils s'étaient inclinés contre l'Italie (1-0). Haaland et ses coéquipiers ont fini leurs éliminatoires avec un impressionnant bilan de huit victoires en autant de matches, grâce notamment aux 16 buts de l'attaquant de Manchester City qui participera l'été prochain aux Etats-Unis, au Canada et au Mexique à son premier tournoi majeur.

- Barrages fatals en 2018 et 2022 - Ils ont fait la différence dans leur duel pour la qualification directe avec l'Italie dès juin avec une démonstration (3-0) sous le pluie d'Oslo (3-0), dont les Azzurri ne se sont jamais remis. Ce camouflet a coûté son poste à Luciano Spalletti, moins de deux ans après sa nomination. Son successeur Gennaro Gattuso a relancé



Le capitaine norvégien Erling Haaland (d), auteur d'un doublé face à l'Italie, et son coéquipier Julian Ryerson, fêtent la qualification pour le Mondial-2026, le 16 novembre 2025 à San Siro

l'équipe avec cinq victoires consécutives, avant cette cinglante défaite. "On doit présenter nos excuses à nos supporters, finir ces qualifications sur une défaite aussi lourde est inacceptable", a réagi le sélectionneur italien. "Mais il faut retenir ce qu'on a fait contre une très bonne équipe norvégienne en première période", a insisté le champion du monde 2006.

L'Italie conservait une chance de se qualifier directement pour la prochaine Coupe du monde, mais elle devait battre la Norvège par neuf buts d'écart. Mais même Gattuso n'y croyait pas et avait présenté samedi ce scénario comme "impensable". Les quadruples champions du monde vont devoir passer fin mars par les barrages qui rappellent forcément des

mauvais souvenirs au foot italien et aux tifosi. C'est en barrages que la Nazionale a chuté, contre la Suède pour la Coupe du monde 2018 (défaite 1-0, nul 0-0), et contre la Macédoine du nord (défaite 1-0), pour le Mondial-2022. L'Italie connaîtra son parcours vers l'Amérique jeudi après un tirage au sort qui pourrait mettre sur sa route la Suède ou l'Ecosse.

Sweden's Grant captures LPGA Annika title

Sweden's Linn Grant fired a five-under par 65 on Sunday to win the LPGA Annika at Pelican title by three strokes over American Jennifer Kupcho.

Grant finished 72 holes at the Belleair, Florida, resort on 19-under 261 to become the first Swede to win the event named for Swedish LPGA legend Annika Sorenstam. "Very satisfying," Grant said. "I mean, we were talking about what a full circle it is, just to win anything, but to stand here and win her tournament."

Grant, 26, captured her only prior LPGA title in 2023 at

Toledo but has taken six triumphs on the Ladies European Tour. She became the 29th different winner of an LPGA event this season and the fourth Swede. Grant led Kupcho by a stroke entering the final round and birdied the second, fifth, par-five seventh and par-three ninth holes to make the turn with a three-stroke lead over Kupcho, who made four birdies and two bogeys on the front nine. "Especially on the first nine, we were going back and forth," Grant said. "I'm glad she was playing well because

that really pushed me to play better."

World number 53 Grant birdied the par-five 14th and 40th-ranked Kupcho answered with a birdie at the par-three 15th, pulling within three with three to play. Grant birdied the par-four 17th and had a comfortable enough margin to bogey 18, her first bogey since her opening hole on Friday, and still make a relaxed tap-in for the title.

Mexico's Gaby Lopez was third on 265 after a closing 65.

England's Charley Hull fired a 63 to share fourth on 266



Sweden's Linn Grant reacts after making her final putt to win the LPGA Annika tournament

with Americans Austin Kim and Lucy Li.

American Brooke Matthews made a hole-in-one at the 140-yard par-three 12th hole with a nine-iron. She shot 65 to finish on 268 for the first ace of her life.

"That was wild," she said. "I just saw it bounce and disappear. I still can't believe it. I blacked out."

Tuchel lays down law to Bellingham after England star's frustration

Thomas Tuchel warned Jude Bellingham to respect his decisions after the England midfielder showed frustration at being substituted during Sunday's 2-0 win against Albania.

Tuchel's side wrapped up a flawless World Cup qualifying campaign as Harry Kane's late double sealed their eighth successive Group K victory.

Bellingham was back in the England starting line-up for the first time since June after Tuchel restricted him to an appearance off the bench in Thursday's win against Serbia. But the Real Madrid star, who had already been booked, was visibly unhappy when Tuchel replaced him six minutes from the final whistle in Tirana. Having seen Morgan Rogers

waiting to replace him on the touchline, the 22-year-old waved his arms in the air just after Kane's second goal. It was the latest flare-up involving Tuchel and Bellingham after the England boss was forced to apologise for revealing his mother found some of the midfielder's on-pitch antics "repulsive". Bellingham's talent is without question but he has long

been a polarising figure amid reports some in the England camp believe he is too self-absorbed.

Tuchel raised eye-brows when he left Bellingham out of the October internationals while claiming the star had been desperate to be involved.

He then told Bellingham he would have to fight for his place in the team at the World Cup because Aston Villa's Rogers had played so well as his replacement. The German was quick to lay down the law to Bellingham after Sunday's incident. "That's the decision, and he has to accept the decision," Tuchel said. "His friend is waiting on the sideline, so you need to accept it, respect it, and keep on going."

"I don't want to make more out of it but I stick to my words. Behaviour is key and respect towards the team-mates who come in."

Asked if Bellingham's reaction showed disrespect for Tuchel's team-first ethos, the England boss said: "I'm going to have to review it. I saw that he was not happy. "I think to a certain degree if you have players like Jude, who are so competitive, they will never like it, but, as you said, my word stands."

"It is about standards and level, and it's a commitment to and respect to each other. We will not change our decision just because someone is waving their arms."

- Constant progression -

Although he shook hands with Tuchel before taking his seat on the bench, Bellingham's frustration will cast a cloud over England until the squad reconvene for a pair of friendlies in March. By then, Tuchel will have seen England's World Cup draw in December as they move closer to the tournament in the United States, Mexico and Canada. Some critics claim the paucity of opposition provided in Group K may have given a false impression of England's quality.

But after a slow start, it has been an impressive first year for Tuchel.

England are the first European country to finish a World Cup qualifying campaign of at least six matches by winning them all without conceding a goal.

Runners-up at the last two European Championship tournaments, they will be among the World Cup favourites as they chase a first major trophy since 1966. "I don't dare to think about a starting eleven at the World Cup because there are so many months to play," Tuchel said.

"I just told the guys, I think we constantly progressed throughout the three camps. This is what we wanted."

"Congratulations to them, it was a pleasure to fight with them and push them from the sidelines."



England star Jude Bellingham was frustrated to be substituted against Albania

US military says aircraft carrier now in Caribbean

A US aircraft carrier is now in the Caribbean Sea to bolster an anti-narcotics campaign, the military announced Sunday -- a move sure to anger Venezuela -- as US forces struck another alleged drug boat in the eastern Pacific.

President Donald Trump has ordered a troop buildup in the Caribbean as part of an

anti-trafficking initiative, but speculation has abounded that Washington may be contemplating military intervention against Venezuelan strongman Nicolas Maduro. The US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), which oversees American forces in Latin America and the Caribbean, had previously said that the USS Gerald R.

Ford Carrier Strike Group had entered its area of responsibility. On Sunday, it announced in a statement that the strike group had entered the Caribbean Sea, saying the move follows Trump's "directive to dismantle Transnational Criminal Organizations and counter narco-terrorism in defense of the Homeland."



The arrival in the Caribbean of the USS Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group greatly increases the US military presence near Venezuela

The strike group includes the most advanced US aircraft carrier, two guided-missile destroyers, and other support vessels and aircraft. It joins several warships already in the Caribbean, with the deployment dubbed "Operation Southern Spear." As part of that operation, Southcom announced that a new strike took place on Saturday in the eastern Pacific, killing three suspects. Since launching the anti-trafficking military campaign in September, US forces have killed at least 83 people accused of ferrying drugs in international waters, according to an AFP tally of publicly released figures. The United States has released no details to back up its claims that the people targeted -- in both the Caribbean and eastern Pacific -- in the more than 20 strikes were actually traffickers. Experts say the deaths amount to extrajudicial killings even if they target known traffickers.

- 'Irresponsible' - Caracas meanwhile views the military buildup as an explicit threat.

The United States does not

recognize Maduro as Venezuela's legitimate president and has issued a \$50 million bounty for his capture to face charges of leading a drug cartel. Amid reports that Trump held meetings with military advisors on potential options for Venezuela, the US president on Friday told reporters he had "sort of" made up his mind on the issue.

"I can't tell you what it is, but we made a lot of progress with Venezuela in terms of stopping drugs from pouring in," he said aboard Air Force One.

He had previously said in a CBS News interview that he doubted the United States would go to war with Venezuela, but that he believed Maduro's days were numbered.

The US military has also been stepping up its presence in Trinidad and Tobago, an archipelago just off Venezuela's coast. US and Trinidadian forces were due Sunday to begin joint training exercises for the second time in less than a month. On Saturday, Maduro blasted the drills as "irresponsible."

Argentina boss Contepomi eyes tour clean sweep after Pumas stun Scotland

Argentina coach Felipe Contepomi was left eyeing the prospect of a first Pumas clean sweep on a UK tour following an astounding comeback win over Scotland at Murrayfield on Sunday.

Scotland seemingly had the game won at 21-0 ahead approaching the final quarter after Jack Dempsey's try was followed by two from Ewan Ashman.

But a loose pass by Scotland fly-half Finn Russell, followed by a yellow card for Blair Kinghorn, helped turn the tide as Argentina won at Murrayfield for the first time in 16 years.

The Pumas ran in five tries in an extraordinary closing 23 minutes, captain Julian Montoya, Rodrigo Isgro, Pedro Rubiolo, Pablo Matera and Justo Piccardo all



Argentina's Santiago Carreras made a major impact in open play and off the kicking tee

crossing Scotland's line. Santiago Carreras, on as a replacement, kicked four conversions. With Argentina having already beaten Wales 52-28 in the Autumn Nations Series, they will now look to

end this trip with victory at Twickenham next weekend over an in-form England, on a 10-game winning streak following their 33-19 defeat of New Zealand on Saturday. "This was a huge challenge for us," said Contepomi.

"When we have come to the UK before, there were a few times when we won two games, but not very often. Every now and then we win one, but we have never won three in a row in the UK." He added: "It will be a different challenge next week against England. The challenge will be huge because they are probably the most on-form team in the world at the moment, bar maybe (world champions) South Africa."

Reflecting on how fortunes had changed for Argentina in Saturday's second half, former Pumas playmaker Contepomi said: "I think when we scored and Scotland had that yellow card, we started playing and suddenly the momentum shifted and the guys accelerated so it was very

good for that." - 'Pounding the rock' - Carreras made a major impact in open play and off the kicking tee with Contepomi, whose side beat both New Zealand and Australia in this season's Rugby Championship. "As a 10 (fly-half), he's the one who has to pull the strings," said Contepomi. "But I think it was all the bench, and also the starters, because it's like pounding the rock... We couldn't break it in the first half, but it broke maybe in the last minute." For Scotland, this loss was arguably even more of a blow than last week's defeat by New Zealand where they levelled the match from 17-0 behind at half-time only to lose 25-17.

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Scotland coach Gregor Townsend, whose position

will come under fresh scrutiny after such a remarkable reverse, said: "I definitely didn't see that

coming." Scotland were booed off the field by their own fans at full-time, with stunned captain

Sione Tuipulotu saying: "As players we're going to have to take a good hard look at ourselves because it's not a

good enough performance from us."

Sinner caps eventful year with ATP Finals triumph over great rival Alcaraz

Jannik Sinner ended a turbulent season in the best possible fashion on Sunday after seeing off Carlos Alcaraz in straight sets, 7-6 (7/4), 7-5, to retain his ATP Finals title in front of delighted fans in Turin.

Italian Sinner brought the house down by winning the championship match tennis fans wanted to see, adding the prestigious year-ending tournament to the Australian Open and a landmark triumph at Wimbledon this season.

The 24-year-old also bounced back from a three-month ban which chopped out a large chunk of his season despite the World Anti-Doping Agency accepting that the Italian was accidentally contaminated with banned substance clostebol last year.

"It has been a really long week... it was a brilliant atmosphere here, it was almost like being at a football match," said Sinner on court to loud cheers.

"I'm really happy to have given something positive to

all of you."

Sinner has now won 31 straight matches on indoor hard courts, a run which stretches back to the 2023 championship match at Turin's Inalpi Arena which he lost to Novak Djokovic. Four more indoor wins would draw him level with

Djokovic's tally set between 2012 and 2015 -- the second-highest in the Open era but some way behind John McEnroe's record of 47. He hasn't dropped a set at the Finals since losing that final to the Serb two years ago, and he was imperious over the week in northern

Italy.

Alcaraz, unlike Sinner, now heads into the Davis Cup after a remarkable individual season in which has won eight tournaments in total and taken his Grand Slam tally to six.

- Sinner winner -

Spaniard Alcaraz had the edge over Sinner over the course of the season, winning four of their six match-ups, which all decided top-level tournaments, and pipping his rival to the year-end world number one spot. "I'm really really happy with the level that I played today, with the performance," said



Italy's Jannik Sinner has now won 31 straight matches on indoor hard courts

Alcaraz.

"I mean I just played against someone that hasn't lost a match indoor for two years now, so that means you know how great player you are," Alcaraz told Sinner. While both Sinner and

Alcaraz breezed into the final, the championship game was an attritional affair, with each player rock-solid on serve until an enthralling tie-break at the end of the first set. Sinner took the lead thanks to a brilliant lob which set up set point, and he made no mistake with a missile of a serve which Alcaraz could only limply send wide. But Sinner immediately handed Alcaraz the advantage in the second set with two double-faults which helped hand his opponent a break of serve at the start of the frame.

Sinner hadn't dropped a service game in the whole tournament up to that point but he broke back in game six to put the crowd on their feet.

And Sinner collapsed to the ground in joy when Alcaraz sent a backhand wide on the first championship point, before heading into the stands to share his joy with his family amid the roars of the crowd.

Portugal qualify for 2026 World Cup by thrashing Armenia

Portugal crushed Armenia 9-1 despite the absence of suspended talisman Cristiano Ronaldo on Sunday to clinch qualification for the 2026 World Cup finals.

Manchester United's Bruno Fernandes and Paris Saint-Germain's Joao Neves both scored a hat-trick as Roberto Martinez's side racked up a huge win in Porto to top Group F.

Renato Veiga got the ball rolling for Portugal, with Goncalo Ramos and Francisco Conceicao also on the scoresheet.

After a draw in Hungary in October and a surprise

defeat in Ireland on Thursday, in which Ronaldo was sent off, Portugal wrapped up qualification at the third attempt in their final group match. They will compete in a seventh consecutive edition of the World Cup, a tournament which the Euro 2016 champions are yet to win.

"We always want to win in the same way -- to be convincing and control the game. It's not always possible, but today we were effective and achieved a good victory," said Fernandes.

With midfielder Fernandes

playing a key role throughout, Portugal made a quick start by scoring in the seventh minute. Fernandes's vicious inswinging free-kick from just outside the left side of the box was pushed onto the post by goalkeeper Henri Avagyan but Veiga was on hand to head home the rebound.

The visitors shocked the hosts by scoring on their first attack to equalise, with Grant-Leon Rano crossing for Armenia captain Eduard Spertsyan to strike. However, Portugal quickly stepped up a gear and racked up an unassailable

lead. Paris Saint-Germain striker Ramos intercepted a back pass and squeezed home his country's second after rounding Avagyan. Portugal put together a tidy move for their third, with Neves blasting home from the edge of the box after being teed up by Fernandes. Neves netted a spectacular second with a free-kick which flew into the top corner, leaving Avagyan with no chance.

Fernandes added the fifth in first half stoppage time with a low penalty after Ruben Dias was fouled.

- 'Now we can truly dream' - The Manchester United

midfielder continued where he left off after the break, slotting home his second after being fed by Ramos. Fernandes completed his hat-trick from the penalty spot after debutant substitute Carlos Forbs was felled.

It was his 28th goal for Portugal, with his strikes taking him past Rui Costa and Helder Postiga and making him Portugal's sixth-highest goalscorer of all time. Neves also completed his treble for Portugal's eighth goal, smashing home after Veiga headed Fernandes's

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cross into his path.

"The most important thing was qualifying for the World Cup," said Neves, after scoring his first goals for his country.

"For me, as I always say, the team always comes before

the individual. I'm very happy to have scored my first goal for the national team, and my second and third as well." Juventus forward Conceicao added the ninth in stoppage time to seal one of his country's biggest-ever victories.

"Now we can truly dream

about the World Cup, I was very pleased with the players' response (after the Ireland defeat)," said Martinez. "We're at the World Cup! Let's go, Portugal!" wrote Ronaldo on social media platform X.

The striker could miss the start of the tournament

depending on whether FIFA extend his suspension beyond the mandatory one-match ban he served against Armenia. Ronaldo is hoping to appear at a record sixth World Cup, having made his debut in the tournament back in 2006. Ireland stunned Hungary

with a late winner to triumph 3-2 in the other Group F match and reach the play-offs, with Troy Parrott following up his midweek brace against Portugal with a hat-trick.

Mondial-2026: le Portugal écrase l'Arménie et se qualifie sans Ronaldo

Sans sa star Cristiano

Ronaldo, suspendue après son expulsion en Irlande, le Portugal s'est qualifié pour le Mondial-2026 en écrasant l'Arménie (9-1), dimanche à Porto, grâce notamment à des triplés de Bruno Fernandes et Joao Neves.

Premier du groupe F avec quatre succès, un nul et une défaite, le Portugal a validé son ticket pour la Coupe du monde de l'été prochain aux Etats-Unis, au Mexique et au Canada, sa neuvième participation à une phase finale.

"Nous sommes à la Coupe du monde ! Allez le Portugal !" a écrit le grand absent du match, CR7, sur X.

Face à une faible équipe arménienne, dernière du



Le milieu portugais du Paris SG Joao Neves, auteur d'un triplé, a contribué à la large victoire du Portugal face à l'Arménie (9-1), qualificative pour le Mondial-2026, le 16 novembre 2025 à Porto

groupe, les Lusitaniens ont démarré fort, avec une ouverture du score dès la 7e minute par le défenseur

Renato Veiga, son premier but en sélection. Une dizaine de minutes plus tard, l'Arménie a créé la

surprise en égalisant grâce à un but de Speratsyan (18e). Privé de Cristiano Ronaldo, exclu jeudi lors de la défaite contre l'Irlande (2-0) à la suite d'un coup de coude, le Portugal a mis un peu de temps à réagir mais tout est ensuite allé très vite. En deux minutes, les deux joueurs du PSG, l'attaquant Gonçalo Ramos (2-1, 28e) et le milieu de terrain Joao Neves (3-1, 30e) ont creusé l'écart.

Juste avant la pause, Neves a marqué à nouveau sur un coup franc magistral laissant Avagyan sans réaction (4-1, 41e).

Quelques minutes plus tard Bruno Fernandes a transformé un penalty (5-1, 45e+3).

En seconde période, Bruno

Fernandes a encore brillé, déclenchant une frappe puissante après un service de Ramos (6-1, 52e).

Bruno Fernandes (7-1, 72e) et Joao Neves (8-1, 81e) ont signé chacun un triplé avant que Francisco Conceicao ne scelle l'éclatante victoire de la Seleçao 9-1, 90e+2).

"Maintenant, nous pouvons vraiment rêver de la Coupe du monde. J'ai été très satisfait de la réaction des joueurs", a réagi le sélectionneur Roberto Martinez.

Deuxième du groupe F, l'Irlande, seule équipe à avoir battu le Portugal durant les qualifications, s'est qualifiée pour les barrages en s'imposant en Hongrie 3-2.

Hakimi, Osimhen, Salah shortlisted for top African award

Moroccan Achraf Hakimi, Nigerian Victor Osimhen and Egyptian Mohamed Salah were shortlisted on Sunday for the 2025 African men's player of the year award, the Confederation of African Football (CAF) announced.

Moroccans Ghizlane Chebbak and Sanaa Mssoudy and Nigerian Rasheedat Ajibade are the contenders for the African women's player of the year title. Currently injured, full-back Hakimi helped Paris Saint-Germain win the UEFA Champions League for the first time and finish runners-up to Chelsea in the final of the expanded Club World Cup.

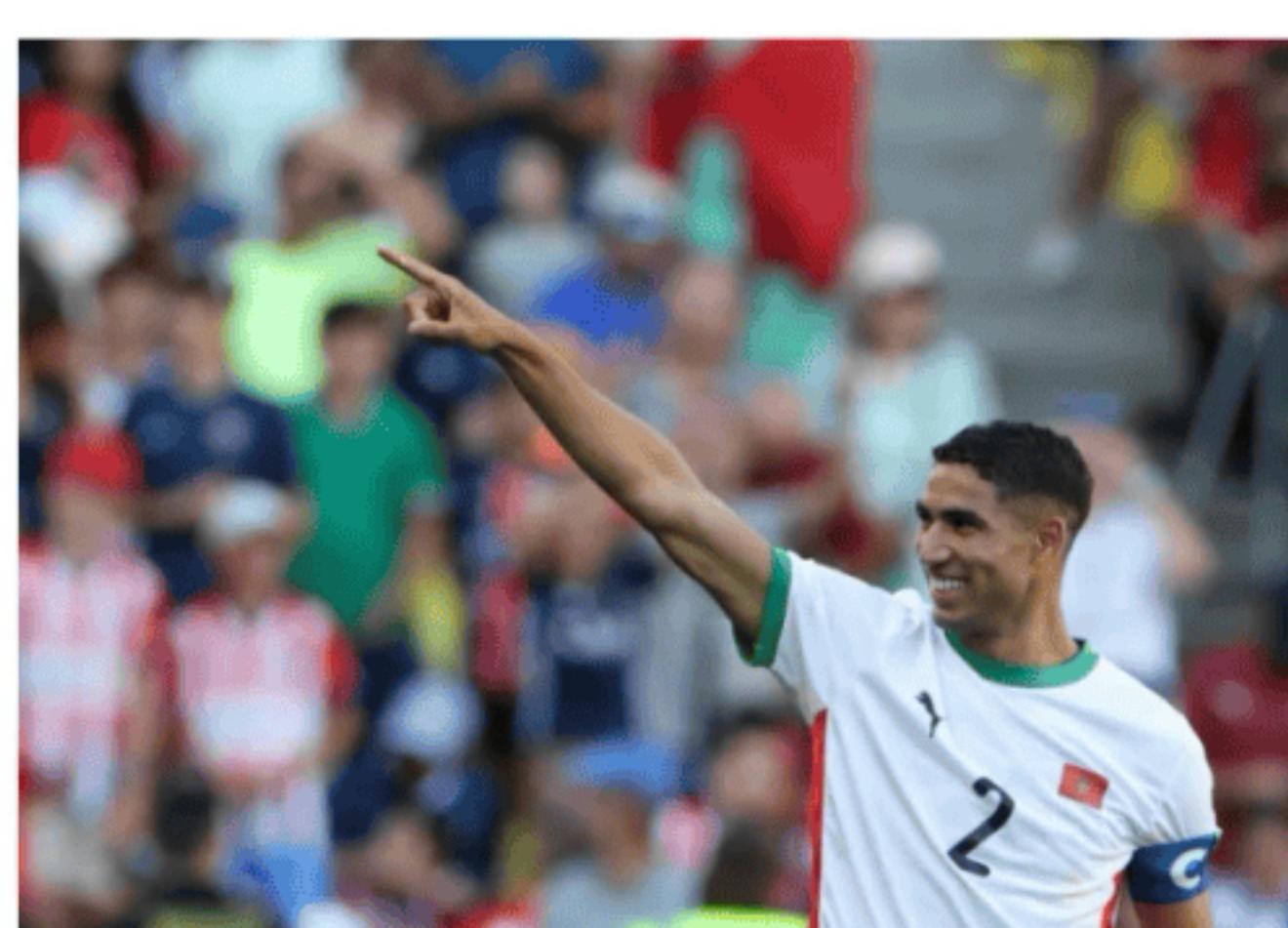
If fit, the 27-year-old will lead hosts Morocco in the Africa Cup of Nations from

December 21 as they seek to win the competition for the first time since 1976. Twice winner of the African award, Salah has been struggling lately after an outstanding contribution to

Liverpool winning the Premier League a record-equalling 20th time last season. The 33-year-old won the 2024-25 Premier League Golden Boot award with 29

goals, six more than Alexander Isak, who has since moved from Newcastle United to Liverpool. Osimhen, from top Turkish outfit Galatasaray, has been outstanding recently for club and country, but some of his achievements will not count as the deadline for the judges was October 15. That rules out a Champions League hat-trick against Ajax in Amsterdam and two goals in a 2026 World Cup play-off victory over Gabon last Thursday.

Paris Saint-Germain star Ajibade was voted the best player at the Africa women's Cup of Nations this year after Nigeria came from two goals behind to defeat hosts Morocco 3-2 in the final. Saudi Arabia-based Chebbak, the daughter of former



Morocco captain Achraf Hakimi helped Paris Saint-Germain win the UEFA Champions League for the first time

Moroccan men's star Larbi Chebbak, was the leading scorer in the competition with five goals.

Another Moroccan forward, Mssoudy has helped make Rabat club FAR one of the strongest in Africa. They won the CAF women's Champion League three years ago and reached the 2025 semi-finals this weekend.

The annual African men's and women's awards ceremony will be staged in Moroccan capital Rabat on Wednesday.

CAF technical and development committee members, coaches, former stars and selected media representatives selected the nominees.

Sinner beats great rival Alcaraz to retain ATP Finals title

Jannik Sinner retained the ATP Finals title on Sunday after beating Carlos Alcaraz 7-6 (7/4), 7-5 and ending a turbulent season with victory over his great rival.

Italian Sinner brought the house down in Turin by winning the championship match tennis fans wanted to see, adding the prestigious year-ending tournament to the Australian Open and a landmark triumph at Wimbledon this season. The 24-year-old also bounced back from a three-month ban which chopped out a large chunk of his season despite the World Anti-Doping Agency accepting that the Italian was accidentally contaminated

with banned substance clostebol last year. Sinner has now won 31 straight matches on indoor hard courts, a run which stretches back to the 2023 championship match at Turin's Inalpi Arena which he lost to Novak Djokovic. Four more wins on indoor hard courts would draw him level with Djokovic's tally set between 2012 and 2015 -- the second-highest in the Open era but some way behind John McEnroe's record of 47. He hasn't dropped a set at the Finals since losing that final to the Serb two years ago, and he was imperious over the week in northern Italy. While both Sinner and

Alcaraz breezed into the final, the championship game was an attritional affair, with each player rock-solid on serve until an enthralling tie-break at the end of the first set. Sinner took the lead thanks to a brilliant lob which set up set point, and he made no mistake with a missile of a serve which Alcaraz could only limply send wide. But Sinner immediately handed Alcaraz the advantage in the second set with two double-faults which helped hand his opponent a break of serve at the start of the frame. Sinner hadn't dropped a service game in the whole tournament up to that point but he broke back in game six to put the crowd on their



Italy's Jannik Sinner has now won 31 straight matches on indoor hard courts

feet. And Sinner collapsed to the ground in joy when Alcaraz sent a backhand wide on the first championship point,

before heading into the stands to share his joy with his family amid the roars of the crowd.

'As good as we've ever had': Kane hails England after flawless campaign

Harry Kane believes that England's current side are "as good as we've ever had" after the skipper wrapped up their record-breaking World Cup qualifying campaign with a 2-0 win against Albania on Sunday.

Bayern Munich striker Kane struck twice in the closing stages in Tirana to give Thomas Tuchel's team a perfect eight successive Group K victories. The 32-year-old has played in England sides that twice finished as European Championship runners-up, as well as reaching the World Cup semi-finals. But Kane believes that Tuchel has assembled the best



England captain Harry Kane (C) has a record 78 goals for his country

group during his 10 years in the national team, labelling them as one of the favourites to win the World Cup next

year. "I think it's as good as we've ever had," Kane told ITV. "I think when you look at the

starting 11, you look at the players coming off the bench, we're going to go into the tournament as one of the favourites.

"We have to accept that. We've been like that now for the last few tournaments, and that's part and parcel of it."

England are the first European team to go through a World Cup qualifying campaign of at least six games and winning every match without conceding a goal. They netted 22 times on the road to the United States, Canada and Mexico as Tuchel found a winning formula after a sluggish start to his reign.

Kane, who has a record 78 goals for his country, knows far sterner tests lie in wait in the tournament proper.

But he expects England to make a serious challenge for their first trophy since the 1966 World Cup.

"We've been building, we've had a great year together with the new coach, and now we look forward to obviously a big 2026," Kane said.

"I think we've set the standard now, especially in the last few camps, and we carried it on into this camp.

"It was an important win. You don't want to finish with a loss at the end of the year and then have to wait until March to play again. We can go away and enjoy this now."

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