

Blinken says Gaza journalists must be 'protected from harm': letter to AFP

PARIS: The United States will always insist on the need to protect journalists reporting from Gaza during the conflict between Israel and Hamas militants, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a letter to Agence France-Presse on Tuesday.

AFP and other international media groups had written to Blinken in late October urging his help in protecting journalists on the ground in Gaza after several were killed since the outbreak of fighting.

Biden points to Gaza hostages when asked about Israeli tunnel flooding reports

WASHINGTON: US President Joe Biden declined to directly answer a question on reports that Israel was pumping seawater into Hamas' Gaza tunnel complex, referring only to assertions that there were no hostages in the areas targeted.

Citing unnamed US officials, the Wall Street Journal reported that Israel had recently begun pumping seawater into Hamas' vast labyrinth of tunnels underneath Gaza, in a process that would likely take weeks.

ABC News later published a similar report and said the flooding appeared limited as Israel evaluates the strategy's effectiveness.

Yemen's Houthis warn ships in Red Sea to avoid travel to Palestinian territories

CAIRO: A senior official from Yemen's Houthis on Tuesday warned cargo ships in the Red Sea to avoid traveling toward the occupied Palestinian territories, after the Iran-aligned group claimed an attack on a commercial tanker earlier in the day.

The Houthis earlier said they hit a Norwegian commercial tanker with a missile in their latest protest against Israel's bombardment of Gaza, underlining the risks of a conflict that has shaken the Middle East.

Israel begins pumping seawater into Hamas' tunnels in Gaza – media

WASHINGTON: The Israeli military has begun pumping seawater into Hamas' tunnel complex in Gaza, the Wall Street Journal and ABC News reported on Tuesday, citing unnamed US officials.

The Journal reported the process would likely take weeks. ABC News reported that the flooding appears to be limited as Israel evaluates the strategy's effectiveness.

Israel's military did not provide comment on the reports. An Israeli defense ministry spokesperson did not respond to a request for comment.

Libya sends illegal migrants home to Egypt and Nigeria

TRIPOLI: Libya on Tuesday repatriated nearly 1,000 migrants from Egypt and Nigeria who had been staying in the North African country illegally, officials and AFP journalists said.

The 664 Egyptians were to be taken by bus to the Emsaed border post with Egypt, nearly 1,400 kilometers (870 miles) east of Tripoli.

General Mohamad Bardaa, who heads the country's anti-immigration body affiliated to the interior ministry, said 300 Nigerians were taken to the airport to be flown home.