

## [Maronite patriarch, Christian deputies attend spiritual retreat on Lebanon's presidential elections](#)

BEIRUT: A spiritual retreat on Wednesday was attended by Lebanon's Maronite Patriarch Bechara Al-Rahi and Christian deputies in a bid to resolve a six-month stalemate over the election of a new president for the crisis-hit country.

The gathering in Harissa came as separate meetings between Qatar's Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mohammed bin Abdulaziz bin Saleh Al-Khulaifi and Lebanese officials and political leaders failed to address the ongoing political vacuum.

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## [Israeli police crackdown at Al-Aqsa raises tensions](#)

RAMALLAH: Tensions were rising in the Palestinian territories on Wednesday after Israeli police stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque at dawn, severely beating and arresting dozens of worshippers. Officers reportedly injured about 50 people, destroyed Al-Aqsa Medical Clinic, prevented ambulances from reaching the location to help the injured, and smashed windows and doors at the mosque.

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## [Yemen flooding kills 5, destroys dozens of homes](#)

AL-MUKALLA: At least five people have been killed by flash floods following torrential rains this week in the south, central and western regions of Yemen, local media and officials said.

Three people drowned and two others were rescued after a bus was swept away by floodwaters in the Bayhan district in the southern province of Shabwa. Roads and farms were also destroyed by flooding in the province.

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## [Calls to sack Israel police chief over leaked 'racist' remark about Arabs](#)

LONDON: A leaked recording in which Israel's police chief described Arabs as murderous by "nature" has sparked outrage among Israeli Arab parties.

During a private phone conversation last week, Israel's far-right national security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Police Commissioner Kobi Shabtai discussed plans to establish a national guard, in part to combat allegedly high crime rates in Arab communities, the Times of Israel reported.

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## [Turkiye closes airspace to flights using north Iraqi airport](#)

ANKARA: Turkiye closed its airspace to flights to and from an airport in Kurdish-administered northern Iraq, a top Turkish official announced Wednesday, citing an alleged increase in Kurdish militant activity threatening flight safety.

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Tanju Bilgic said the Turkish airspace has been closed to flights taking off and landing at Suleimaniyah International Airport, in northern Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdish region, since Tuesday.