

Algeria sends official to Niger for talks after coup

ALGIERS: Algeria said it sent a high-ranking official to Niger on Thursday as part of its diplomatic push in the aftermath of a military coup in the neighboring country.

The Algerian Foreign Ministry's secretary-general, Lounes Magramane, "will be visiting" Niger, the ministry said on X, formerly known as Twitter.

It comes a day after Algerian Foreign Minister Ahmed Attaf began a tour of West African countries in a bid to find a solution in Niger, where Algiers opposes any military intervention following the coup.

Jordanian cyclist on a mission to cross GCC countries to promote tourism

BEIRUT: A Jordanian globetrotter, who in July embarked on a cycling trip to spread a message of love among Arab Gulf states and promote tourism, has reached Qatar after traveling from Saudi Arabia.

Cyclist Issa Al-Qazaqza told Arab News on Thursday: "This personally initiated cycling trip is to spread love and peace amongst Arab brothers in the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) and promote Jordanian hospitality and tourism.

"I entered Saudi Arabia on July 18, and visited Tabuk and Madinah."

Turkish central bank unleashes big interest rate hike in another sign of an economic shift

ANKARA: Turkiye's central bank raised its key interest rate by an aggressive 7.5 percentage points on Thursday, a larger-than-expected hike that further signaled a return to more traditional economic policies under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The bank increased its policy rate to 25 percent as it continued to backtrack from the previous rate-cutting course set by Erdogan, which is blamed for fueling a cost-of-living crisis that left many households struggling to afford rent and basic goods as inflation surged.

At least 90 Yemenis die in lightning strikes in 2 months

AL-MUKALLA: Lightning strikes killed 45 people in Yemen in July, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization said, while local media reported almost the same number of lightning-related deaths this month.

In a routine agrometeorological alert issued on Wednesday, the FAO reported that intense lightning activity and thunderstorms last month killed 45 people and large numbers of livestock, mainly in Yemen's highland provinces.

Beirut airport staff voice safety fears in wake of helicopter crash

BEIRUT: Poor visibility caused by fog or a technical malfunction are being blamed for a Lebanese army helicopter crash that killed two crew members and injured a third.

Investigators said they had been told by eyewitnesses that the helicopter appeared unstable in the air shortly before crashing near the Hammana military barracks, 33 km east of Beirut, late on Wednesday.

Capt. Joseph Hanna and First Lt. Richard Saab died instantly. A third crewman, First Adjutant Mohammed Sidah, was badly injured.