

## [UN envoy urges Yemeni parties to resume talks](#)

AL-MUKALLA: Hans Grundberg, the UN's Yemen envoy, on Thursday, urged the Yemeni government and the Houthis to return to the negotiating table in order to reach a peace agreement and end the conflict as he and other regional and international mediators intensified their efforts.

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## [UN envoy to Somalia warns of 'heavy' civilian toll](#)

UNITED NATIONS, US: The UN's special envoy for Somalia on Thursday issued a stark warning to the Security Council about a sharp uptick in civilian casualties suffered last year in the violence-wracked Horn of Africa country. Catriona Laing, a British diplomat who took up the UN post earlier this year, said both the insurgency by jihadist Al-Shabab militants and clashes in the breakaway Somaliland region were to blame.

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## [As Israel-Hamas war rages, Israelis can now travel to US for 90 days without getting a visa](#)

WASHINGTON: As the Israel-Hamas war intensifies, the United States Thursday launched a visa waiver program allowing Israelis wishing to visit the United States for 90 days or less to come without applying for a visa. The US announced Sept. 27 that it was admitting Israel into the visa waiver program, adding the country to a select group of 40 mostly European and Asian countries whose citizens can travel to the US for three months without visas.

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## [US military in Mideast faces increasing threats amid Israeli siege](#)

## on Gaza

WASHINGTON: With tensions spiking in the Middle East, US forces in the region are facing increasing threats, as a Navy warship shot down missiles appearing to head toward Israel Thursday and American bases in Iraq and Syria were repeatedly targeted by drone attacks.

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## Iran-backed groups blow up gas pipeline in Syria: monitor

BEIRUT: Iran-backed groups blew up a gas pipeline in Syria's Kurdish-controlled northeast near a US base Thursday, a war monitor said, as regional tensions grew following Israel's war with Gaza-based militants. Iran-backed groups "blew up the gas pipeline near the Conoco gas facility," said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. The Observatory's director Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP the blast had gone off close to a US base.