

## Morocco earthquake killed young boy as family sat at dinner table

TAFEGHAGHTE, Morocco: Hamid ben Henna had just asked his young son Marouane to fetch a knife to cut a melon for the family's evening meal when Morocco's earthquake hit on Friday night.

With the weekend beginning, they had been enjoying a lamb and vegetable tagine stew and Marouane had been telling his father what materials he would need for the coming school year.

"That's when it struck," Ben Henna said. The room began to shake, the lights went out and rubble started falling from the ceiling of their traditional house in a remote village of the High Atlas mountains.

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## UN envoy urges donor support for Syria

DAMASCUS: The UN special envoy for Syria has urged donors not to reduce their funding as the war-torn country's economic crisis spirals.

Syrian President Bashar Assad's decision last month to double public sector wages and pensions further skyrocketed inflation and fueled ongoing protests that shook the southern Druze-majority province of Sweida and nearby Daraa.

Initially sparked by deepening economic misery, angry residents in greater numbers began to call for the fall of Assad, similar to that of the country's 2011 uprising that turned into an all-out civil war.

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## 68 migrants rescued from Mediterranean

MARSEILLE: The Ocean Viking, a rescue ship chartered by SOS Mediterranee, rescued 68 stranded migrants in international waters off Libya on Sunday, the France-based humanitarian NGO announced.

"The Ocean Viking rescued 68 shipwrecked people from a double-decker wooden boat that left Zouara in Libya last night," the NGO said.

"Several of them are suffering from seasickness and are currently being treated by the medical team of SOS Mediterranee and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) on board the Ocean Viking," it added.

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## **Mossad chief accuses Iran of plotting deadly attacks, vows to hit perpetrators 'in heart' of Tehran**

JERUSALEM: The head of Israel's Mossad spy agency on Sunday said that Israel is prepared to strike "in the heart of Tehran" to track down the perpetrators of what he said were over two dozen Iranian attempts to hit Israeli and Jewish targets around the world.

Speaking at a security conference, David Barnea said that Israel and its allies had foiled 27 attacks over the past year in Europe, Africa, southeast Asia and South America.

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## **A US Navy veteran got unexpected help while jailed in Iran. Once released, he repaid the favor**

WASHINGTON: Michael White had only recently arrived in a grim Iranian jail when a curious fellow prisoner, an English-speaking Iranian, approached him in the courtyard for a conversation.

The American did not reveal much at first, but it was the beginning of an unlikely friendship between White, a Navy veteran imprisoned on spying charges he says were unfounded, and Mahdi Vatankhah, a young Iranian political activist whose positions on social issues had drawn his government's ire.