

Israeli tourist, local woman gang-raped in India

MUMBAI: (News Desk) A man was killed and an Israeli female tourist and Indian woman were gang-raped by three men in an attack late on Thursday near a popular Unesco World Heritage site in southern India, local police said on Saturday.

The Indian man and two women were stargazing with two other male tourists in the town of Hampi when the three men attacked them following an altercation over money, police superintendent Ram Arasiddi told Reuters over the phone. The assailants pushed the men into a river canal before raping the women, he said. Two of the men, including an American, survived, and the third man's body was recovered on Saturday morning. Police have arrested two of the men accused of the attack and were carrying out further investigations, Arasiddi said. Attacks on women in India gained international attention last year after the brutal rape-homicide of a junior doctor at a hospital in the eastern city of Kolkata, sparking national outrage and protests over a lack of safety for women.

Gaza protesters force their way into Trump's Scottish golf resort

LONDON: (News Desk) US President Donald Trump's prized Turnberry golf resort in Scotland has been vandalised by protesters who sprayed "GAZA IS NOT A SALE" in huge white letters on the lawn.

The activists also damaged greens and sprayed blood-red paint over the luxury resort's clubhouse overnight on Saturday.

The Palestine Action group said it was a "direct response to the US administration's stated intent to ethnically cleanse Gaza".

Trump sparked outrage last month when he suggested the US "take over" Gaza and turn it into the "Riviera of the Middle East", while forcing its Palestinian inhabitants to relocate to Egypt or Jordan.

The activists cited an AI-generated video the US president shared online last week, which showed the razed Palestinian territory rebuilt as a Trump-branded seaside resort.

One scene showed Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sipping cocktails in swimsuits by a pool.

"Whilst Trump attempts to treat Gaza as his property, he should know his own property is within reach," Palestine Action said on social media. Police Scotland said it was investigating after receiving a report of damage at around 0440 GMT on Saturday.

36 soldiers injured as storm batters Australia

LABRADOR: (News Desk) Thirty-six Australian troops were seriously injured on Saturday in a major road crash while responding to ex-Cyclone Alfred, which has battered a swathe of the eastern coast and cut power to more than 330,000 properties.

The former tropical cyclone — now downgraded to a tropical depression — made landfall in the late evening over Bribie Island on the Queensland coastline after lingering for days offshore.

The weather system has whipped up gale-force winds that toppled trees, brought down power lines, and damaged buildings. And it is still creating heavy rainfall, swelling rivers in parts of a 400-kilometre stretch of the coast straddling southeast Queensland and northeast New South Wales, government forecasters said.

Near the flood-prone New South Wales city of Lismore, two Australian Defence Force (ADF) trucks deployed to help the community were involved in a crash, resulting in 36 injuries — some serious, government officials and emergency services said. Patients were transported to four hospitals. Cyclone Alfred whipped up gale-force winds, toppled trees, brought down power lines and damaged buildings.

"Right now our focus is on the welfare of those involved and their families," Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said. "Our ADF heroes were on their way to help Australians in need," he said in a joint statement with the defence minister. A 61-year-old man's body was found earlier in the day after his four-wheel drive pick-up truck was swept off a bridge into a river in northern New South Wales. He had clambered out of the vehicle and tried in vain to cling to a tree branch in the river before disappearing into the rapid waters on Friday, police said. Mass blackouts he prime minister warned people not to underestimate the threat posed by the wild weather. "While it has been downgraded, very serious risks remain so it is important that people do not take this downgrading as a reason for complacency," Albanese said. Utility companies said 295,000 properties in southeast Queensland and another 42,600 in New South Wales were without power, warning that floods could hamper repairs. "That's the largest ever loss of power from a natural disaster in Queensland's history," said the state's premier, David Crisafulli, estimating that about 750,000 people had been impacted since the blackouts began. Although the weather system "stalled and began weakening", the bureau of meteorology warned that intense rain and damaging wind gusts were a risk throughout the weekend. "Rivers are already starting to respond to the heavy rainfall, with many Minor to Major Flood Warnings current," the bureau said in a statement. Evacuation orders had been issued for thousands of people in New South Wales.



PEOPLE console a woman near a damaged residential building following a strike in Dobropillia area in eastern Ukraine, on Saturday.

Trump administration ends Iraq's waiver to buy Iranian electricity

Washington (News Desk) The Trump administration rescinded a waiver on Saturday that had allowed Iraq to pay Iran for electricity, as part of US President Donald Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign against Tehran, a State Department spokesperson said.

The decision to let Iraq's waiver lapse upon its expiration "ensures we do

not allow Iran any degree of economic or financial relief", the spokesperson said, adding that Trump's campaign on Iran aims "to end its nuclear threat, curtail its ballistic missile program and stop it from supporting terrorist groups". Trump restored "maximum pressure" on Iran in one of his first acts after returning to office in January. In his first term, he

pulled the US out of the Iran nuclear deal, a multinational agreement to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. The US government has said it wants to isolate Iran from the global economy and eliminate its oil export revenues in order to slow Tehran's development of a nuclear weapon. Iran denies pursuing nuclear weapons and says its

program is peaceful. For Iraq, the end of the waiver "presents temporary operational challenges", said Farhad Alaaeldin, foreign affairs adviser to Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani. "The government is actively working on alternatives to sustain electricity supply and mitigate any potential disruptions," Alaaeldin.

Syria president calls for unity after reports of mass killings

Damascus (News Desk) Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa called for national unity and peace on Sunday, after more than 1,000 people were reportedly killed in coastal Syria in the worst clashes since the overthrow of Bashar al-Assad.

The violence erupted on Thursday between the new security forces and loyalists of the former government along the

Mediterranean coast in the heartland of the Alawite minority to which Assad belonged.

It has since escalated into the largest challenge to the new government's forces since Sharaa's coalition toppled Assad in December. "We must preserve national unity (and) civil peace as much as possible and, God willing, we will be able to live together in this country," Sharaa said

from a mosque in Damascus.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor has reported that 745 Alawite civilians were killed in Latakia and Tartus provinces.

The Britain-based Observatory said they were killed in "executions" carried out by security personnel or pro-government fighters, accompanied by the "looting of homes and

properties".

The fighting has also killed 125 members of the security forces and 148 pro-Assad fighters, according to the Observatory, taking the overall death toll to 1,018.

The official SANA news agency reported on Saturday that security forces had deployed to Latakia, as well as Jableh and Baniyas further south, to restore order.



FOREIGN Minister Ishaq Dar and his Bahrainian counterpart Abdullah bin Rashid al-Zayani attend the extraordinary session of OIC's Council of Foreign Ministers on March 8, 2025

Canada Liberals to announce Trudeau's successor in midst of US trade war

Toronto (News Desk) Canada's Liberal Party will on Sunday announce Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's successor as both party chief and head of the country's government in the midst of a trade war with the United States that could cripple the Canadian economy.

The next prime minister will have to negotiate

with US President Donald Trump as he threatens additional tariffs on Canada and may soon face the opposition Conservatives in a general election. Trudeau announced in January he would step down after more than nine years in power as his approval rating plummeted, forcing the ruling Liberal Party to run a quick con-

test to replace him.

"Is it ideal in a circumstance of bilateral crisis for us? I suppose not," said Drew Fagan, a professor at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy. "But on the other hand, the process is playing out domestically as it should." Former central banker Mark Carney is the front-runner, with the

most endorsements from party members and the most money raised among the four Liberal candidates.

Around two-thirds of Trudeau's cabinet publicly back Carney, and a Mainstreet poll in late February showed Carney with 43 per cent support among Liberals compared to 31pc for his main rival.

12 injured in Toronto pub shooting

MONTREAL: (News Desk) Twelve people were injured when masked gunmen indiscriminately opened fire at a pub in Toronto, Canadian police said on Saturday, adding they were looking for three male suspects.

Police did not provide a motive for the attack, which took place late on Friday in an eastern part of Canada's largest city. All of the victims were hospitalised but their lives were not in danger.

"Twelve injured, including six with gunshot wounds... Injuries non-life-threatening," Toronto police said on X. "Three male shooting suspects... Deploying all available resources to locate and arrest those responsible." The suspects were armed with an assault rifle and handguns, police told reporters at the scene.

"They walked into the bar. They produced their guns, and they opened fire indiscriminately on the people sitting inside the bar," police superintendent Paul MacIntyre said.

Zelensky seeks more sanctions against Russia amid strikes

DOBROPILLIA: (News Desk) Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Saturday called for more sanctions against Russia as overnight strikes killed at least 14 people and wounded dozens more, days ahead of talks between US and Ukrainian negotiators aimed at securing a truce.

A Russian assault hit the centre of Dobropillia in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region late on Friday, killing 11 people and wounding 30, according to the emergency services. Separately, three people were killed and seven others wounded in a drone attack early on Saturday in the city of Bogodukhiv, the military head of the eastern Kharkiv region, Oleg Synegebov, said.

Russia fired two missiles and 145 drones at Bogodukhiv.

The overnight air raids came after US President Donald Trump threatened new sanctions and tariffs on Russia but said it may be "easier" to work with Moscow than Kyiv on efforts to end the war.

"Such strikes show that Russia's goals are unchanged. Therefore, it is very important to continue to do everything to protect life, strengthen our air defence, and increase sanctions against Russia," Zelensky wrote on Telegram.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio held a call with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha on Friday and told him President Trump was determined to end the Russia-Ukraine war as soon as possible, the State Department said.

US trade tensions with Mexico, Canada will make FIFA World Cup more exciting: Trump

WASHINGTON: (News Desk) Political and economic tensions between the United States and its 2026 World Cup co-hosts Canada and Mexico will make the tournament more exciting, US President Donald Trump said after signing an executive order to create a task force for the event.

Speaking in the Oval Office alongside FIFA president Gianni Infantino, Trump said the task force, which he will chair, would co-ordinate with federal agencies in planning, organising and executing the 48-team global football tournament.

Earlier this week, the Trump administration imposed across-the-board 25% tariffs on goods from Canada and Mexico before announcing on Thursday a one-month reprieve for both countries on goods compliant under a North American trade pact.

When asked about the World Cup in light of the current trade tensions between the three nations, Trump said on Friday, "I think it's going to make it more exciting."

Salah fires Liverpool 16 points clear, Forest beat City

LONDON: (News Desk) Premier League leaders Liverpool needed two Mohamed Salah penalties to beat bottom-of-the-table Southampton 3-1 on Saturday, while Nottingham Forest took a giant step towards the Champions League with a 1-0 win over Manchester City.

Liverpool stretched their lead at the top to a massive 16 points, despite a sloppy first 45 minutes.

Fresh from a smash-and-grab 1-0 Champions League victory over Paris St-Germain, Liverpool boss Arne Slot made just three changes.

However, the Dutchman was forced into making three half-time alterations to kickstart the champions-elect.

Southampton have taken just nine points from 28 games all season, but stunned Anfield when Will Smallbone fired the visitors in front in first-half stoppage time.

Alisson Becker was Liverpool's hero at the Parc des Princes on Wednesday but the Brazilian and Virgil van Dijk got in each other's way to allow Smallbone to roll into an unguarded net.

Slot turned to Harvey Elliott, Alexis MacAllister and Andy Robertson at the break, and the changes had the desired effect with two goals in three minutes before the hour mark.

Darwin Nunez levelled with a sharp near-post finish from Luis Diaz's cross. Nunez was then upended inside the area and Salah converted from the spot.

The Egyptian slotted home a second penalty two minutes from time to take his tally for the season to 32 goals.

Second-placed Arsenal have two games in hand on the leaders, the first of which comes away to Manchester United on Sunday.

But it appears a matter of when not if Liverpool will clinch just their second league title in 35 years.

Earlier on Saturday, Forest pulled four points clear of City in third thanks to Callum Hudson-Odoi's late winner at the City Ground.

The former Chelsea winger fired past Ederson on 83 minutes from Morgan Gibbs-White's pass to spark jubilant scenes of celebration as Forest beat the English champions for the first time since 1997.

OIC adopts Arab alternative to Trump's Gaza plan

JEDDAH: (News Desk) International support grew on Saturday for an Arab counterproposal to US President Donald Trump's plan to take over Gaza and displace its residents, with Islamic nations endorsing it and European governments giving their backing.

Unlike the Trump plan, the Arab proposal aims to rebuild Gaza without displacing the territory's 2.4 million inhabitants, who endured more than 15 months of devastating conflict before a fragile ceasefire took effect on

January 19. The 57-member Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) formally adopted the counterproposal at an emergency meeting in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, three days after the Arab League ratified it at a summit in Cairo.

Britain, France, Germany and Italy gave their backing in a joint statement by their foreign ministers, hailing it as a "realistic path" for rebuilding war-torn Gaza without uprooting its Palestinian inhabitants.

The OIC "adopts the

plan... on the early recovery and reconstruction of Gaza", the Islamic bloc said in a statement. It urged "the international community and international and regional funding institutions to swiftly provide the necessary support".

Trump triggered global outrage when he suggested the US "take over" Gaza and turn it into the "Riviera of the Middle East", while forcing its Palestinian inhabitants to relocate to Egypt or Jordan. Ethnic cleansing, war crime Pakistan stressed

upon the Muslim nations to make it unequivocally clear that any attempt to forcibly relocate the Palestinian people, whether from Gaza or the West Bank, was ethnic cleansing and a war crime under international law. In a statement at the Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said Islamic bloc must categorically reject any proposal that seeks to eject the Palestinians from their own homeland. No exter-

nal force has the right to dictate their future to the Palestinians. They must determine their own future, through an exercise of self-determination. The OIC must stand united against any sinister agenda aimed at altering the demography of the occupied Palestinian territories, he added. Mr Dar presented Pakistan's urgent recommendations, including a full and immediate implementation of the three phases of the ceasefire agreement, which included a permanent cessation of hostilities, the complete

withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, unrestricted humanitarian access, and a comprehensive reconstruction plan. Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty welcomed the OIC endorsement and said he now hoped to gain support from the wider international community, including the United States. "The next step is for the plan to become an international plan through adoption by the European Union and international parties such as Japan, Russia, China and others," Abdelatty said.