

Apple airlifts 600 tons of iPhones from India ‘to beat’ Trump tariffs: report

Washington(News Desk) Tech giant Apple chartered cargo flights to ferry 600 tons of iPhones, or as many as 1.5 million, to the United States from India, after it stepped up production there in an effort to beat President Donald Trump's tariffs, sources told Reuters.The details of the push provide an insight into the US smartphone company's private strategy to navigate around the Trump tariffs and build up inventory of its popular iPhones in the US, one of its biggest markets.

Analysts have warned that US prices of iPhones could surge given Apple's high reliance on imports from China, the main manufacturing hub of the devices, which is subject to Trump's highest tariff rate of 125pc. That figure is far in excess of the tariff of 26pc on imports from India, but which is now on hold after Trump called a 90-day pause this week that excludes China.Apple “wanted to beat the tariff,” said one of the sources familiar with the planning.The company lobbied Indian airport authorities to cut to six hours the time needed to clear customs at the Chennai airport in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, down from 30 hours, the source added.The so-called “green corridor” arrangement at the airport in the Indian manufacturing hub emulated a model Apple uses at some airports in China, the source said.About six cargo jets with a capacity of 100 tons each have flown out since March, one of them this week just as new tariffs kicked in, the source and an Indian government official said.The packaged weight of an iPhone 14 and its charging cable come to about 350 grams, Reuters measurements show, implying the total cargo of 600 tons comprised about 1.5 million iPhones, after accounting for some packaging weight.

Saudi FM in US to prepare for Trump's first foreign visit

RIYADH: (News Desk) Saudi Arabia's top diplomat is in Washington to lay the groundwork for US President Donald Trump's upcoming visit, the first foreign trip of his second term, a Saudi government source said on Wednesday.

Last month, Trump said he may visit Saudi Arabia as early as April in a reprisal of 2017, when the oil-rich, conservative kingdom was the first destination of his first term in office.

Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan arrived in Washington on Tuesday, aiming to “prepare for Trump's visit to Riyadh”, the source close to the Saudi government said.

The source said “developments in Gaza, Yemen and Syria” were also on Prince Faisal's agenda. The official Saudi Press Agency said Prince Faisal was set to meet his US counterpart Marco Rubio to discuss “key regional and international developments”.

In January, Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, promised to pile \$600 billion into US trade and investments.

Trump later said Saudi Arabia had agreed to “spend close to a trillion dollars... in our American companies, which to me means jobs”. Trump forged close relations with Riyadh in his first term and is expected to push Saudi Arabia towards normalising ties with Israel as a major foreign policy objective.

Gloves come off as US State Dept vows to keep cancelling visas

WASHINGTON: (News Desk) A growing wave of visa revocations, detentions, and deportations is sending shockwaves across US campuses, leaving foreign students — particularly those linked to pro-Palestinian activism — facing increasing uncertainty.Days when Israeli military actions in Gaza sparked US-wide protests across American campuses are now a thing of the past. Today, universities face a new reality, where even minor infractions could lead to the cancellation of student visas.Secretary of State Marco Rubio said late last month that he has stripped visas for some 300 people and was doing so on a daily basis.In a recent briefing, State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce indicated that the gloves were off, saying: “[T]he department revokes visas every day in order to secure our borders and to keep our community safe, and we'll continue to do so”.When asked about the cancellation of visas of vulnerable people who had sought refuge in the US, such as citizens of civil war-torn South Sudan, the State Department spokesperson was even more blunt.“Every country must accept the return of its citizens in a timely manner when another country, including the United States, seeks to remove them. South Sudan's Transitional Government has failed to fully respect this principle by not permitting the entry of an individual that they had confirmed and documented as a citizen.”She maintained that her department would restrict the further issuance of visas to South Sudan citizens to prevent their entry into the US. “We will be prepared to review these actions when ... South Sudan is in full cooperation,” she said.On Wednesday, immigration authorities announced they will look at social media accounts and deny visas or residence permits to people who post content considered anti-Semitic by President Donald Trump's administration.



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio shakes hands with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud at Department of State, in Washington, DC, US on April 9, 2025.

‘Extremist fringe group’: Netanyahu slams reservists calling for bombardment to end

Talabib(News Desk) The letter, signed by about 1,000 Israeli current and retired reservists calling for an end to the bombardment in Gaza, is causing an uproar in Israel, Al Jazeera reports.Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has issued a harsh statement calling the signatories “an extremist fringe group

that is trying again to break Israeli society from within”.“This noisy fringe group is mobilised for one goal — to overthrow the government. It does not represent the fighters or the public. The [Israeli army] is fighting — and we are all behind it,” he said in a statement published by his office on X.According

to Israeli media, the letter does not call for a general refusal to serve, but urges Israeli officials to prioritise the release of captives rather than pursuing the bombardment in the Strip, which, they say, “serves mainly political and personal interests, not security interests”. Israeli army releases dozens

of Palestinian prisoners from GazaThe Israeli army has released some 80 Palestinian detainees from the Gaza Strip, Al Jazeera reports citing Anadolu Agency.The detainees were set free at the Israeli-controlled Kissufim crossing in eastern Khan Younis in southern Gaza, the sources added.

Pakistan keeping eye on US tariffs: FO

Islamabad(News Desk) The Foreign Office on Thursday said it was keeping an eye on the issue of tariffs recently imposed by the US on Pakistan, as well as many countries being granted a three-month suspension from them.The development comes as US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that he would pause many of his new tariffs for 90 days, even as he raised them further on imports from China.Trump's sudden re-

versal came less than 24 hours after steep new tariffs kicked in on imports from dozens of trading partners. The new trade barriers have hammered markets, raised the odds of recession and prompted retaliatory responses from China and the European Union.The government on Wednesday said it was set to send a high-level delegation to the US to promote trade relations and discuss a 29 per cent tariff that has been imposed

on goods the US imports from Pakistan.Responding to a question during his weekly press briefing in Islamabad, Foreign Office spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan said that Pakistan was following the issue of tariff imposition by the US and the recent suspension on imports from most of the countries.He added that considering the interconnected nature of global trade, the tariff imposition could have a far-reaching impact and emphasised a

mutually beneficial resolution of the matter.Regarding the discontinuation of the Global Undergraduate Exchange Programme (Global UGRAD) for Pakistani students, the spokesperson said that the decision marked “the end of a 15-year engagement that played a pivotal role in promoting academic and cultural linkages besides strengthening bilateral ties focusing on education, science and technology and people-to-people contacts”.



Police officers detain a demonstrator during a protest, following the arrest by US immigration agents of Palestinian student protester Mahmoud Khalil at Columbia University, in New York City, US on March 11

Iran says it may suspend cooperation with IAEA if external threats continue

Tehran(News Desk) Iran may suspend cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog if external threats continue, an adviser to Iran's supreme leader said on Thursday, after US President Donald Trump again warned of military force if Tehran does not agree to a nuclear deal.

Iranian and American diplomats will visit Oman

on Saturday to start dialogue on Tehran's nuclear programme, with Trump saying he would have the final word on whether talks are reaching a breakdown, which would put Iran in “great danger”.“Continued external threats and putting Iran under the conditions of a military attack could lead to deterrent measures like the expulsion of IAEA

inspectors and ceasing cooperation with it,” Ali Shamkhani, an adviser to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, published on X, referring to the International Atomic Energy Agency.“Transferring enriched material to safe and undisclosed locations in Iran could also be on the agenda,” he wrote. While the US insists that the talks with Tehran will be

direct, Iran has stressed the negotiations will be indirect with intermediation from Oman's foreign minister. During his first 2017-2021 term, Trump withdrew the US from a 2015 deal between Iran and world powers designed to curb Iran's sensitive nuclear work in exchange for sanctions relief. Trump also reimposed sweeping US sanctions.

France may also recognise Palestinian state in June

PARIS: (News Desk) France plans to recognise a Palestinian state within months and could make the move at a UN conference on settling the conflict in New York in June, President Emmanuel Macron said in an interview broadcast on Wednesday.

“We must move towards recognition, and we will do so in the coming months,” Macron, who this week visited Egypt, told the France 5 television channel.“Our aim is to chair this conference with Saudi Arabia in June, where we could finalise this movement of mutual recognition by several parties,” he said.“I will do it as I believe at some point it will be right and because I also want to participate in a collective dynamic, which must also allow all those who defend Palestine to recognise Israel in turn, which many of them do not do,” he added.

Can make ‘fair deals’ with all nations hit by tariffs, says Trump

Washington(News Desk) FOLLOWING his announcement of a 90-day pause in the implementation of wide-ranging tariffs on several countries, US President Donald Trump claimed he could make “fair deals for everybody”, BBC News reported.While speaking to reporters on the South Lawn of the White House, the president was asked if the tariff “pause” was based on the dip in the bond market.“I saw last night where people were getting a little queasy,” he said. The president previously said that there would be no pause in the tariffs, and when quizzed on his U-turn, responded with: “You have to have flexibility”.Despite his belligerent tone and pugnacious attitude towards Beijing, President Trump appeared almost certainty that China will also eventually come to the table.“A deal is going to be made with China,” he told reporters. “A deal is going to be made with every one of them.”A tweet from the White House indicated that it will work with countries that don't impose retaliatory tariffs.“DO NOT RETALIATE AND YOU WILL BE REWARDED,” it posted on social media platform X (formerly Twitter).An official also clarified that the earlier-imposed import tax of 25pc on all steel and aluminium entering the US, even from Mexico, Canada and other allies, would remain in place.

Hamas urges UK court to remove terrorist group designation

London(News Desk) Senior Hamas official Mousa Abu Marzouk on Wednesday submitted a formal legal application on behalf of the Palestinian group to UK Home Secretary Yvette Cooper, calling for her to remove its designation as a terror group, Al Jazeera reports.

Marzouk, the head of international relations and the legal office for Hamas's political bureau, wrote in the filing that Hamas is a “Palestinian Islamic liberation and resistance movement whose goal is to liberate Palestine and confront the Zionist project”.

The more than 100-page filing — which draws on 20 scholars, including former ad hoc judge at the International Court of Justice John Dugard — argues that proscribing Hamas represents a violation of the UK's obligations under international law not to be complicit in genocide.

The filing also argues that the UK's proscription stands in breach of the group's rights to freedom of expression and assembly and is disproportionate.The legal team representing Marzouk, Riverway Law, argued in its own court filing that while Hamas's actions may fit the definition of “terrorism” under UK law, so do the Israeli military's actions, as well as those of Ukraine's army and the UK military.“The client's application situates the significance of bringing such an application in the UK due to the historic and continued role the British government has played in the dispossession of the Palestinian people,” the firm said in a post on X.

Gaza death toll hits 50,846 as Israeli onslaught continues: health ministry

Gaza(News Desk) The health ministry in Gaza has revised upwards to 50,846 the total number of Palestinians killed in Israel's war on the territory since October 7, 2023, Al Jazeera reports.

A further 115,729 people have been injured in Israeli attacks on the enclave during the same period, according to the ministry.

Over the previous 24-hour reporting period, 36 people were killed and transferred to hospitals in Gaza and 41 wounded people were also admitted for treatment.

The latest deaths bring to 1,482 the number of people killed in Gaza since Israel broke a ceasefire on March 18 and renewed attacks on civilians across the Strip.

A further 3,688 people have also been injured in Israeli attacks since the scuttling of the ceasefire agreement with Hamas, Al Jazeera quotes the ministry. Palestinian journalist arrested as Israeli forces raid Old City in Nablus

Well-known reporter Samer Khuwaira was taken from his home in the occupied West Bank's Nablus in the early hours of this morning, as Israel's military carries out a major incursion and home expulsions in the nearby Balata refugee camp, Al Jazeera reports.

Israeli forces have also stormed the Old City in central Nablus, as military vehicles have deployed in front of the Ajaj Mosque and ground forces have been stationed around the Great Salah al-Din Mosque, according to reports.A Palestinian home in the Old City's Aqaba neighbourhood has also been raided, according to local media sources. At least 1 dead following Israeli military attack in central Gazasraeli fighter jets have bombed a tent in the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza, killing at least one person, the Quds News Network and the Palestinian Information Center report.

The strike is the latest deadly attack on Gaza by Israeli forces over recent hours, with dozens of people killed across the besieged enclave, Al Jazeera reports. North, south Gaza under predawn artillery attack by Israeli forcesIsraeli forces have begun intense and continuous artillery shelling in northern areas of Rafah in southern Gaza, Al Jazeera reports, citing local Palestinian media.Heavy Israeli artillery fire has also started in areas to the west of the city of Beit Lahiya in the north of the Palestinian territory.

Trump admin moves to restore some terminated foreign aid programmes

WASHINGTON: (News Desk) President Donald Trump's administration has moved to reinstate at least six recently cancelled US foreign aid programmes for emergency food assistance, according to six sources familiar with the matter.

The quick reversal of decisions made just days ago underscored the rapid-fire nature of Trump's cuts to foreign aid. That has led to programmes being cut, restored and then cut

again, disrupting international humanitarian operations.

Jeremy Lewin, USAID Acting Deputy Administrator, who has previously been identified as a member of billionaire Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency, asked staff in an internal email to reverse the terminations.

He asked to restore awards to the World Food Programme (WFP) in Lebanon, Syria, Somalia,

Jordan, Iraq and Ecuador. The administration also resumed four awards to the International Organisation for Migration in the Pacific region.

“Sorry for all the back and forth on awards,” Lewin said on Tuesday in the internal email.

“There are a lot of stakeholders and we need to do better about balancing these competing interests. That's my fault and I take responsibility,” he added. The Trump administra-

tion ended life-saving aid programmes this week for more than a dozen countries, including Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia and Syria, totalling over \$1.3 billion.

According to Stand Up For Aid, an advocacy group of current and former US officials, WFP contracts cancelled on Lewin's orders last week-end for Lebanon, Syria, Somalia and Jordan totalled more than \$463 million.

Many of the terminated programmes had been granted waivers by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio following an initial round of cuts to foreign aid programmes. The State Department said those did not reflect a final decision.The State Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment about restoring the awards.A ‘death sentence’The decision to restore some aid followed pressure from

inside the administration and from Congress, sources said.The World Food Programme said on Monday that the US notified the organisation it was eliminating emergency food assistance funding in 14 countries, warning: “If implemented, this could amount to a death sentence for millions of people facing extreme hunger and starvation.” The US did not restore aid to Taliban-ruled Afghanistan and to Yemen.