

No sign of India tariff relief as US trade mission ends

Delhi(News Desk) India and the United States have agreed to finalise part of a bilateral trade deal by this year but neither side gave indications of any tariff exemptions for the world's most populous nation. Both countries held trade talks in New Delhi this week days out from the start of US President Donald Trump's reciprocal trade tariff regime, which includes punitive import levies against India, from April 2. India's protectionist policies and its trade surplus with the United States leave it open to potential retaliatory tariffs from the Trump administration. Officials from both sides had "broadly come to an understanding on the next steps towards a mutually beneficial, multi-sector Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA), with the goal to finalize its first tranche by fall 2025," India's commerce ministry said in a statement late on Saturday.

Afghan Taliban govt releases 2,463 prisoners ahead of Eid

KABUL: Afghanistan's Taliban government released 2,463 prisoners ahead of Eid, the supreme court said on Saturday. The court said on X that "2,463 prisoners who were eligible for amnesty were released, while 3,152 others received sentence reductions" as per a decree by the Taliban supreme leader. While the exact number of prisoners held by various security bodies in Afghanistan is unclear, the UN has warned of a growing prison population in the country. A spokesman for the Office of Prison Administration claimed that between 11,000 and 12,000 convicted prisoners were in the authority's custody. Around the same number are in detention awaiting trial, sentencing or appeal, he added. The UN Mission to Afghanistan warned of high volumes of arrests and lengthy jail-time sentences putting "unsustainable pressure on prison facilities".

Clashes erupt in India-held Kashmir

SRINAGAR: (News Desk) Four police personnel and two Kashmiri fighters were killed in India-occupied Kashmir during a drawn-out firefight that also left several police wounded, the Indian army claimed on Saturday.

The clashes began in the rugged and forested area of Kathua, in the south of the occupied territory when a police foot patrol was ambushed, leaving four police personnel dead.

A police spokesman alleged the two slain Kashmiri fighters, who "escaped a cordon by security forces" four days earlier, were "from Pakistan", without giving any evidence to back up his claim.

"We will not sleep till we stop such activities of our neighbour," the spokesman said, referring to Pakistan. India has half a million soldiers permanently deployed in occupied Kashmir since 1989. Azad Jammu and Kashmir witnessed violent clashes on Saturday between the police and activists of a rights movement amid a wheel-jam and shutter-down strike across the territory, leaving at least one police official dead and more than 90 others injured, officials said.

Mirpur Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kamran Ali told Dawn.com that Sub-inspector Adnan Qureshi succumbed to a gunshot wound in the chest in the town of Islamgarh where he was deployed along with other police personnel to stop a rally for Muzaffarabad via Kotli and Poonch districts under the banner of the Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC).

The JAAC, which has traders at the forefront in most parts of the state, has been seeking the provision of electricity as per hydropower generation cost in AJK, subsidised wheat flour and an end to the privileges of the elite class.

On Wednesday-Thursday night, around 70 JAAC activists were arrested by police during raids at their residences and those of their relatives in Muzaffarabad and Mirpur divisions, triggering serious clashes in Dadyal on Thursday.

The committee had subsequently announced a shutter-down and wheel-jam strike on Friday, a day ahead of its planned long march towards Muzaffarabad today.

Amid a crippling strike on Friday, fierce clashes between police and protesters were witnessed in different authorities had placed mounds of earth on arteries leading to Muzaffarabad, apart from making more arrests, to prevent people from heading towards the state capital. Witnesses said that Muzaffarabad division and Poonch division observed complete strikes. SSP Yasin Baig said at least one police officer and a young boy were injured as police resorted to teargas shelling and aerial firing in some neighbourhoods after being pelted with stones and bottles by protesters. Kotli SSP Mir Muhammad Abid said in a statement that at least 78 policemen were injured in the district in "attacks of miscreants under the guise of protest". The SSP said 59 policemen, including Deputy Superintendent of Police Ilyas Janjua, and two revenue department officials were injured in Rehaan Galli while another 19 policemen were injured in Sehnsa Baroiyan.



India's PM Narendra Modi visits Smruti Mandir, the memorial of RSS founder Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, in Nagpur's Reshim Bagh on March 29, 2025.

Trump says 'there will be bombing' if Iran does not make nuclear deal

Washington(News Desk) United States President Donald Trump on Sunday threatened Iran with bombings and secondary tariffs if Tehran did not come to an agreement with Washington over its nuclear programme. In a telephone interview with NBC News, Trump said US and Iranian officials were talking but did not elaborate. "If they don't

make a deal, there will be bombing," "But there's a chance that if they don't make a deal, that I will do secondary tariffs on them like I did four years ago." In his first 2017-21 term, Trump withdrew the US from a 2015 deal between Iran and world powers that placed strict limits on Tehran's disputed nuclear activities in exchange for sanctions relief. Trump

also reimposed sweeping US sanctions. Since then the Islamic republic has far surpassed the agreed limits in its escalating programme of uranium enrichment. Tehran has so far rebuffed Trump's warning to make a deal or face military consequences. Iran sent a response through Oman to Trump's letter in which he urged Tehran to reach a new nuclear deal,

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi was cited as saying by the official IRNA news agency on Thursday. Western powers accuse Iran of having a clandestine agenda to develop nuclear weapons capability by enriching uranium to a high level of fissile purity, above what they say is justifiable for a civilian atomic energy programme.

India's PM Modi makes first visit to RSS headquarters in Nagpur since re-election

Delhi(News Desk) India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi made his first visit since re-election to Hindu nationalist group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's (RSS) headquarters in Nagpur on Sunday, local media reported. Several top leaders of Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), including Modi himself, cut their teeth at the RSS, whose millions of members con-

duct paramilitary drills and prayer meetings. The organisation campaigns for India to be declared a Hindu nation — rather than a secular one, as enshrined in its constitution — and critics accuse it of fomenting sectarian divisions. RSS foot soldiers had stepped in to help Modi regain momentum in last year's elections after he faced voter fatigue and some resistance from

a resurgent opposition, before eventually being elected as the premier for the third time. Weeks later, India had lifted a decades-old ban on civil servants being members of the far-right RSS. The visit marks the first time a sitting prime minister has visited the RSS's central base, according to Times of India and The Print. However, Business Standard quoted RSS lead-

er Sunil Ambekar as saying that Modi was not the first prime minister to visit the group's headquarters, as ex-PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee had also done the same during his tenure. NDTV reported the same. Modi began his day by visiting Smruti Mandir, the memorial of RSS founder Keshav Baliram Hedgewar in Nagpur's Reshim Bagh, to mark his birth anniversary.



US President Donald Trump waves as he departs for Florida from the South Lawn of the White House in Washington DC on March 28

Myanmar quake death toll hits 1,700 as aid scramble intensifies

Mayanmar(News Desk) The toll from Myanmar's earthquake continued to rise on Sunday, as foreign rescue teams and aid rushed into the impoverished country, where hospitals were overwhelmed and some communities scrambled to mount rescue efforts with limited resources. The 7.7-magnitude quake,

one of Myanmar's strongest in a century, jolted the war-torn Southeast Asian nation on Friday, leaving around 1,700 people dead, 3,400 injured and over 300 missing as of Sunday, the military government said. The junta chief, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, warned that the number of fatalities could go up and his administra-

tion faced a challenging situation, state media reported, three days after he made a rare call for international assistance. India, China and Thailand are among Myanmar's neighbours that have sent relief materials and teams, along with aid and personnel from Malaysia, Singapore and Russia. "The destruction has been

extensive, and humanitarian needs are growing by the hour," the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said in a statement. "With temperatures rising and the monsoon season approaching in just weeks, there is an urgent need to stabilise affected communities before secondary crises emerge."

Human activity disrupting ocean CO2 absorption

WASHINGTON: (News Desk) Commercial activities that damage sea floors are disrupting the oceans' natural carbon capture capacity, with more research needed on their impact on carbon dioxide absorption, according to a new study on Friday.

Scientists estimate around 30 percent of the carbon dioxide (CO2) released by humans is absorbed by the oceans, playing a crucial role in climate regulation and reducing the rate of global warming. "There's a lot of attention now to marine carbon dioxide removal," said Sebastiaan van de Velde, the lead author of the study published in the journal Science Advances, in an interview. "But we're not asking the question, 'What are we doing already that's maybe not helping or reducing the oceans' capacity to absorb CO2?'" he continued.

Yousuf praises New Zealand for playing exceptional cricket

NAPIER: (News Desk) While expressing his tentativeness regarding a solid bowling combination, Pakistan batting coach Mohammad Yousuf on Saturday lauded New Zealand for playing exceptional cricket which gave them victory over the Green-shirts in the first One-day International in Napier. After being sent in to bat, New Zealand from a precarious 50-3 went on to post a massive 344-9 at McLean Park before dismissing the tourists for 271 in 44.1 overs. Middle-order batter Mark Chapman struck his career-best score of 132 and was backed well by Daryl Mitchell (76) and debutant Mohammad Abbas (52). "It was a good track for bowling in the morning, yet they [New Zealand batters] played very good cricket. Chapman deserves more credit — he stood at the wicket, covered later, and played very well. And [Daryl] Mitchell and finally, the debutant played very good knocks. I think credit goes to them; they have played very well," Yousuf told reporters during the post-match media conference. Answering a question, the batting coach sought to defend his bowlers but at the same time acknowledged that extra runs conceded by the part-time bowlers.

Djokovic reaches Miami Open final, 100th career title in sight

MIAMI GARDENS: (News Desk) Novak Djokovic is one victory away from a 100th career singles title after breezing past Grigor Dimitrov 6-2, 6-3 on Friday to reach the Miami Open final, where he will face unseeded Czech teenager Jakub Mensik.

After being broken to start the match, Djokovic quickly settled in, breaking back in the next game and again for a 4-2 advantage on a mis-hit forehand by 14th seed Dimitrov.

The Serbian pocketed the first set when the Bulgarian's volley sailed long, and he maintained the momentum in the second to race to a 3-0 lead.

Djokovic pounded an unreturnable serve on his second match point to improve to a 13-1 career record against Dimitrov. The fourth seed's serving masterclass in South Florida showed no sign of letting up in the semi-final. He missed just six first serves while pounding five aces to one double fault. "It was very windy today, very difficult to control the ball, changing direction all the time but I had good serves and held my nerves," Djokovic said. "The serve was again the highlight of the match for me. I think it was 84 per cent last game and I thought that would be difficult to beat that but today it was 87pc so I don't know what to say? Hopefully, I can continue in the same fashion because that definitely make my life easier."

Domingo replaces Gough as Lahore Qalandars head coach

LAHORE: (News Desk) South Africa's Russell Domingo was appointed as head coach of Lahore Qalandars for the 10th edition of the HBL Pakistan Super League (PSL) on Saturday, replacing Darren Gough who made himself unavailable due to 'unavoidable personal commitments'.

A highly experienced coach, the 50-year-old Domingo brings a wealth of cricketing expertise at the highest level, having served as head coach of South Africa (2012-17) and Bangladesh (2019-22).

Known for his tactical acumen and ability to nurture young talent, Domingo's appointment aligns perfectly with Qalandars' vision of building a strong and competitive squad.

The Port Elizabeth-born Domingo was excited to take up the job.

"I am really excited to be part of the Lahore Qalandars for the 2025 PSL season. I can't wait to get to work, meet the players and get to know the management and start of preparations for what promises to be an amazingly exciting campaign," he said.

"We know we will have all the support from our faithful supporters and I look forward to making you all proud in the coming weeks." Lahore Qalandars COO Sameen Rana welcomed Domingo to the family of the franchise.

"We are delighted to have Russell Domingo join us as head coach for PSL 10. vast experience at the international level, combined with his ability to strategize effectively, makes him an invaluable asset for the Qalandars. We believe his expertise will contribute immensely to our teams success in PSL 10," Rana said. Qalandars are set to begin their Pakistan Super League 10 campaign with a high-stakes clash against Islamabad United at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on April 11. After securing back-to-back titles in 2022 and 2023, Lahore are determined to reclaim their dominance and chase a historic third PSL trophy.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Saturday decided to postpone the highly-anticipated PSL X exhibition match between Peshawar Zalmi and Quetta Gladiators scheduled for April 8 at the Arbab Niaz Stadium, Peshawar.

Turkiye opposition presses protests as Swedish reporter jailed

Istanbul(News Desk) Türkiye's opposition on Sunday worked to keep up the momentum of the protest movement triggered by the arrest of Istanbul's mayor after a giant weekend rally, with a Swedish reporter the latest detained in a government crackdown.

The arrest on March 19 of Istanbul's opposition mayor Ekrem Imamoglu, on corruption charges his supporters say are false, sparked the most significant anti-government protests in Türkiye in over a decade, in a major test

for President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. After over a week of nighttime street protests, Imamoglu's Republican People's Party (CHP) on Saturday mobilised hundreds of thousands of people for a giant rally in Istanbul calling for the release of Imamoglu, seen as the candidate with the best chance of defeating Erdogan at the ballot box after almost a quarter of a century in power. With Türkiye entering several days of public holiday marking the end of the Ramadan Muslim fasting month, the oppo-

sition has vowed to keep up the protest movement while switching tactics to more focused events. CHP party leader Ozgur Ozel, a former pharmacist who has stepped in as the party's main public flagbearer as Imamoglu languishes in Silivri prison in Istanbul, on Saturday announced that protests would be held in a different one of Türkiye's 81 provinces every weekend and a different district of Istanbul every Wednesday. Strength to defeat him! On Sunday, he launched a campaign to

gather signatures for a petition calling for Imamoglu's release and early elections, beginning the drive in the now-suspended mayor's home Black Sea region in eastern Türkiye. "God is my witness that Ekrem Imamoglu's crime is to be Tayyip Erdogan's rival," Ozel said. "The reason Imamoglu was thrown into jail is that he defeated Mr Tayyip in the past," he said, referring to how Imamoglu thrashed ruling party candidates in 2019 and 2024 elections for the mayor of Istanbul, a post Erdogan himself

once held. "And he (Imamoglu) has the strength and wisdom to defeat him (Erdogan) in the future," Ozel added. The government has responded to the protests with a crackdown that has troubled the NATO member's allies and rights groups, with dozens of young people spending the holiday behind bars, journalists detained, and foreign reporters held or deported. Swedish journalist Joakim Medin, who works for the Dagens ETC newspaper, was arrested on his arrival in Türkiye to cover the

protests Thursday. He is being held on terror-related charges and for "insulting the president", the Turkish presidency said. His newspaper's editor in chief, Andreas Gustavsson, described the accusations as "absurd", telling AFP that "practicing journalism should not be a crime". Turkish authorities have also deported BBC journalist Mark Lowen, who had been covering the protests, after holding him for 17 hours on Wednesday, saying he posed "a threat to public order".