MUSTREAD

6 succumb to injuries in SL air force helicopter crash

Colombo: Six military personnel crashed into the Maduru Oya Reservoir in the country's North Central Province on Friday morning, said a spokesperson. Air force spokesperson Eranda Geeganage said 12 people, including two pilots, were on board at the time of the crash, and six of them have succumbed and six of them have succumbed to their injuries, after being sent to regional hospitals. The other six are still in the hospital, Geeganage said. Earlier, Ĝeeganage said that all the 12 on board were safe and had been sent to hospitals for treatment.

Man arrested after slashing another man on street

Tokyo: A man sustained minor injuries after being slashed by another man Friday on a street in Osaka in western Japan, local media reported. At around noon, the man in his 30s was suddenly punched in the face and slashed on the head by the 34-year-old suspect with a knife in Abeno Ward, Osaka, Kyodo News reported. The injured was later taken to hospital, the report said. Police arrested the attacker on suspicion of attempted murder, and were currently investigating the incident.

Putin conveys best wishes to all North **Korean soldiers**

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin had brief converdiers and conveyed best wishes to them after the Victory Parade in Moscow on Friday. "Best wishes to all your fighters," Putin said, addressing North Korean servicepeople who were present at the Victory Parade on Red Square. The president also congratulated the North Korean delegation on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany in World War 2.

Ex-Brazil boss Diniz set for Vasco move

Rio De Janeiro: Former Brazil national team boss Fernando Diniz has reached a deal to take charge of Vasco da Gama, according to widespread media reports. The 51-year-old agreed to a contract that ties him to the Rio de Janeiro club until December 2026, Globo Esporte reported on Thursday. It added that the parties needed to resolve minor contractual details before confirming the appointment publicly. Diniz replaces Fabio Carille, who was sacked on April 27 after the club's poor start to the season.

315 Venezuelans repatriated from Mexico

Caracas: A group of 315 Venezuelan migrants, who were repatriated from Mexico, landed on Thursday in the Venezuelan capital aboard a flight of the state airline Conviasa. The repatriates, consisting of 197 adults and 118 children, arrived in Caracas "to reintegrate into the socioeconomic development" of the country, Venezuela's Ministry of Interior, Justice and Peace said on Instagram. "It should be noted that they joined nearly 4,000 Venezuelans whose safe return has been guaranteed by the Bolivarian government," the ministry said.

Earthquake of magnitude 3.7 jolts Tibet

Tibet: An earthquake of magnitude 3.7 on the Richter Scale jolted Tibet, a statement by the National Centre for Seismology (NCS) said. As per the NCS, the earthquake occurred at a shallow depth of 10km, making it susceptible to aftershocks. In a post on X, the NCS said, "EQ of M: 3.7, On: 08/05/2025 20:18:41 IST, Lat: 29.20 N, Long: 87.02 E, Depth: 10 Km, Location: Tibet."

Taiwan detects hike in Chinese activity around itself

Taipei, Taiwan: Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence (MND) said that 14 sorties of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) aircraft, eight People's Liberation Army Naval (PLAN) vessels and one official ship were detected operating around Taiwan until 6 am (local time) on Friday. Out of the 14 sorties, 12 crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's southwestern ADIZ.

India-Pakistan conflict offers rich intelligence opportunity for China

The conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir offers a potentially rich intelligence harvest for China in its own rivalry with India as it gleans data from its fighter jets and other weapons used in action by

Security analysts and diplomats say China's military modernisation has reached a point where it has the ability to deeply scrutinise Indian actions in real time from its border installations and Indian Ocean fleets as well as from space.

"From an intelligence perspective, this is a rare target of opportuni-ty right on China's borders involving a key potential adversary," said Singapore-based security analyst Alexander Neill.

Two U.S. officials said a Chinese-made J-10 Pakistani jet fighter shot



down at least two Indian military planes - one of them a French-made Rafale fighter. India has not acknowledged the loss of any of its planes while Pakistan's defence and foreign ministers have confirmed the use of J-10 aircraft but not commented on which missiles or other weapons

nity for militaries around the world to study the performance of pilots, fighter jets and air-to-air missiles in active combat, and use that knowledge to prepare their own air forces

Competing regional giants and nuclear powers, India and China are widely seen as long-term strategic rivals, sharing a 3,800 (2,400 mile) Himalayan border that has been disputed since the 1950s and sparked a brief war in 1962. The most recent standoff - that started in 2020 thawed in October as the two sides struck a patrolling agreement.

Security analysts say both sides have taken steps to strengthen their military facilities and capabilities along the border, but it is also from above that China packs an intelligence gathering punch.

Missile Deployments

Chinese military intelligence teams would be eager to garner information on any Indian use of air defences and launches of cruise and ballistic missiles - not just in terms of flight paths and accuracy but command and control information, analysts and diplomats

Any deployment of India's BrahMos supersonic cruise missile - a weapon it developed jointly with Russia - would be of particular interest, some analysts say, given they do not believe it has been used in combat.

China has also beefed up its intelligence gathering at sea. It has been increasingly active in the In-dian Ocean in recent years.

Islamists chop down 200-year-old-banyan tree in Bangladesh due to

'un-Islamic' rituals by locals Dhaka: In another event showcasing the rampant Islamisation of Bangladesh, extremists chopped down a 200-year-old banyan tree on the banks of the Kumar River in

Madaripur as locals were performing what they deemed "un-Islamic" rituals at the base of the tree, like lighting earthen lamps and praying.

The tree was widely believed to possess 'mystical powers' by the locals leading people to light candles and make vows at its base. Deeming the practice "non-Islamic", the ex-

"bid-ah" (innovation). The incident has sparked widespread criticism on social media, with many locals expressing their disapproval.

tremists cut down the tree citing

Many locals were present during the cutting of the tree wishing to protest the act, but kept silent due to fear, according to The Business Stan-

Bangladesh's govt considering banning Awami League



Agencies, Dhaka

Bangladesh's interim government, headed by Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus, is seriously considering banning Sheikh Hasina's Awami League (the oldest existing political party in the country), the interim government said in a statement on Friday.

The government is seriously considering the recent demands from various political parties, organisations and the public to ban the Awami League on charges of dictatorship and terrorist activities", the statement said.

The government has already established contact with political parties in this regard and will decide soon after discussing with

In this regard, the government is taking into consideration the UN report on terrorist activities of Awami League leaders and supporters", the statement said.

21 Palestinians killed in Israeli attacks

At least 21 Palestinians were killed and dozens of others wounded in Israeli attacks across the Gaza Strip on Thursday, the Civil Defense in Gaza

Nine people, including children and women, were killed when Israeli warplanes attacked a residential house in the town of Beit Lahia in northern Gaza, Civil Defense spokesperson Mahmoud Basal told Xinhua. Three young men were killed and

four others wounded in an Israeli airstrike on a Palestinian gathering on the outskirts of the Al-Shati refugee camp west of Gaza City,

Besides, nine people, including a girl and a woman, were killed in Israeli airstrikes and artillery shelling targeting homes, a school, and tents housing displaced persons in Khan



Balah city and the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza, and the Shuja'iyya neighborhood east of Gaza City, the spokesperson added.

The Israeli army has not commented on these incidents yet.

Israel halted the entry of goods and supplies into Gaza on March 2,

following the expiration of the firs phase of a January ceasefire agree ment with Hamas. It resumed attacks on Gaza on March 18, which according to data released by health authorities in Gaza on Thursday, have so far killed 2,651 Palestinians

Amid the Israeli blockade, Khalil Al-Dagran, spokesperson for Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir al-Balah, said Thursday in a statement that many wounded could face "a death sentence" as hospitals in Gaza "are unable to accommodate" them due to "a severe shortage of medicines out of the blockade.

Also on Thursday, the Civil De fense in Gaza said in a press statement that 75 percent of its vehicles have stopped operating due to the depletion of fuel amid the Israeli blockade and attacks, apart from "a severe shortage of generators and oxygen devices."

N-Korean Defense **Minister says Pyongyang** to provide unwavering support for Russian Army

Pyongyang: North Korean Defense Minister No Kwang Chol said that Pyongyang and its armed forces will unwaveringly support the actions of the Russian army aimed at protecting the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of the country, staterun news agency KCNA reported on

On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War, the Russian Embassy in North Korea hosted a reception on the evening of May 8 and invited North Korean officials, including Vice-Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party of Korea Pak Jong Chon, Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui, and Defense Minister No Kwang

Robert Francis Prevost elected Pope Leo XIV

Robert Francis Prevost, the cardinal of the United States, was elected the new pope on the second day of secret ballots in the cardinals' conclave

held in Vatican City.

The name he chose as the new pope was Leo XIV. The College of Cardinals, composed of 133 cardinals, began the secret voting process to elect a new pope on May 7.

The previous pope, Francis, passed away due to illness on April

Meanwhile, leaders of global powers, including the United Kingdom, Italy and the Netherlands, congratulated US Cardinal and Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops Robert Francis Prevost on his election as the

The new pope has taken the name Leo XIV. This is the first pontiff from the United States in history. "I extend my most sincere wishes



to Pope Leo XIV for the beginning of his pontificate. In a time of conflicts and anxiety, his words from the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica are a powerful call for peace, fraternity and responsibility," Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni said on X.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark
Carney expressed hope that Pope
Leo XIV will follow the path of solidarity, compassion and dignity in an
era of global challenges.

PM Modi extends wishes to Pope Leo XIV New Delhi: Prime Minister Naren-

dra Modi has extended wishes to Pope Leo XIV and expressed India's commitment to continued dialogue and engagement with the Holy See to further shared val-ues. He noted that Pope Leo XIV's leadership of the Catholic Church comes at a moment of profound significance in advancing the ideals of peace, harmony, solidari-

In a post on X, PM Modi stated, I convey sincere felicitations and best wishes from the people of India to His Holiness Pope Leo XIV. His leadership of the Catholic Church comes at a moment of profound significance in advancing the ideals of peace, harmony, solidarity and service.

US spends over \$1bln on military operation against Houthis in Yemen

Washington: The United States spent more than \$1 billion on a military operation against Yemen's Ansar Allah movement, also known as the Houthis, the NBC News broadcaster reported, citing two sources in the American administration.

On March 15, US President Donald Trump ordered the US military to take decisive and powerful action against the Houthis in Yemen. The US Central Command noted that the country had launched a large-scale operation to protect American inter-The arsenal expended includes

hundreds of 2,000-pound bombs, least 75 Tomahawk missiles worth about \$1.9 million each, at least 20 AGM 158 cruise missiles worth about \$1.5 million each, and a variety of other munitions, the report noted.

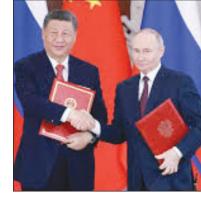
Xi calls on China, Russia to maintain strategic resolve, coordination

Moscow (UNI)

Chinese President Xi Jinping said Thursday that China and Russia should maintain strategic resolve and coordination as the world is entering a new period of turbulence and transformation.

Xi made the remarks during a chat over tea with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the president's office of the Kremlin in Moscow.

As long as China and Russia maintain strategic resolve and coordination, no force can stop the two countries from achieving their respective development and revitalization, no force can shake the strong foundation of long-standing friend-ship between the two peoples, and



no force can hold back the prevailing trend toward a multipolar world and economic globalization, said Xi.

Iran's IRGC unveils underground naval drone base

Tehran: Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) on Thursday unveiled an underground drone base belonging to its Navy, Iran's

IRIB news agency reported. The drone base was unveiled during a tour of the facility by IRGC's Chief Commander Hossein Salami, according to footage released by the IRIB. The narrator in the footage said the base was just one of the dozens of the IRGC Navy's underground drone bases, accommodating un-manned aerial vehicles capable of taking off and landing on clay run-

According to the footage, all the IRGC Navy's drones were equipped with powerful electronic warfare sys-

Ambulance plane crash kills 6

Santiago (UNI)

A small ambulance plane carrying six people that lost contact on Wednesday en route from central to northern Chile has been found crashed with no survivors, local authorities confirmed on Thursday.

"We extend our condolences to the families, friends and all those mourning the loss of these six compatriots," Gonzalo Duran, presidential delegate for the Metropolitan Region, told the press.

The Chilean Air Force (FACH) reported that the wreckage was located in the town of Curacavi, on the outskirts of Santiago

FACH announced that it had deployed personnel and resources immediately after the plane was reported missing and had coordinated closely with other agencies involved



in the search effort.

According to the General Direct torate of Civil Aeronautics, the aircraft was traveling from Santiago to the northern city of Arica when it disappeared from radar on Wednes-

day afternoon.

The public prosecutor's office, along with emergency response teams, is investigating the cause of

Pakistan air traffic severely disrupted as flights get suspended

Flights in Pakistan remain suspended amid its heightened tensions with India, leaving hundreds of passengers stranded in the country's biggest airports. Many people have had their flights cancelled at the very

Airports in Lahore, Islamabad, Karacĥi and Sialkot were particularly affected, as air traffic was halted for several hours due to the hostilities the two countries. How-ever, flight operations at the four airports later resumed on Thursday after temporary suspen-

sions, reports Dawn. The Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) initially said that flight opera-Karachi's Jinnah Inter-nat-ional Airport would remain suspen-ded until midnight, but they resu-med earlier than scheduled. Flight operations at Is-



lamabad, Lah-ore and Sialkot air-

ports resumed by evening.
Reportedly, the PAA had temporarily suspended operations in Karachi, Lahore and Sialkot airports until yesterday noon, citing operational reasons. Islamabad International reasons.

tional Airport also briefly suspended

flights during the day.

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) confirmed that the country's ongoing security situation severely disrupted air operations nationwide.

"In the interest of air safety, some routes have been restricted as a pre-caution, affecting several flights," a

PIA spokesperson said. "The tempo rary closure of air routes has been undertaken to protect the assets of domestic carriers and ensure passenger safety." The airline urged passengers to remain patient and cooperate with airline staff, adding that its call centre was actively contacting affected travellers.

For passengers of diverted flights, PIA said it had made arrangements for meals and accommodation. Passengers were advised to check flight status via the PIA website or helpline before heading to the airport.

As military exchanges between India and Pakistan continue, international and domestic flights have been severely disrupted in Pakistan. This comes as the country recently began its Hajj flight operations, though in light of the recent airspace closure, the operations are all but completely suspended.

DPRK conducts drill to improve nuclear forces' readiness: KCNA

Pyongyang: The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) conducted a joint striking drill on the eastern fronts using long-range artillery and missile systems as its top leader stressed the importance of improving the combat readiness of the country's nuclear forces, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said on Friday.

The exercise was carried out Thursday in response to the United States and its allies conducting a series of nuclear operation drills on the Korean Peninsula and in its vicinity, the KCNA said, describing the moves as a reckless act that aggravates the situation and necessitates the DPRK armed forces to maintain rapid reaction capabilities and a thoroughgoing war posture.













