

MUSTREAD

Air Canada suspends Toronto-Dubai flights till May 1

Ottawa, Canada: Air Canada has suspended all its Toronto-Dubai flight operations till May 1 amid the escalating tensions in West Asia. The airlines said that they will resume their flight operations when safe passage is ensured. The airlines further said that it will continue to add to its capacity to Delhi to provide travellers with options to Canada. "Due to unrest in the Middle East, our Toronto-Dubai flights are cancelled until at least May 1. We continue to add capacity to Delhi to provide travellers with options to Canada," Air Canada said in a post on X.

US embassy in Iraq's Baghdad hit in missiles attack

Baghdad: The U.S. Embassy in the Iraqi capital Baghdad was hit in a missiles attack, Iraqi security sources told Reuters on Saturday. The attack caused smoke to rise from the embassy's building, the sources said, without providing details on the damage.

Student's death in Balochistan raises questions over Pak's security policies

Balochistan: The killing of an 18-year-old student in Panjgur has drawn strong criticism from Baloch political groups and rights activists, who accuse Pakistani authorities of failing to curb a pattern of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings in Balochistan. The incident has intensified concerns over the security situation in the province. The Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) and several rights organisations condemned the killing of a young resident of the Sardo area in Panjgur. Activists claimed that the teenager was taken into custody on 3 March 2026 from the Tarfees locality of Chitkan before later being found dead.

Animal rights groups protest in Dhaka

Dhaka: Animal rights activists in Dhaka on Friday staged a protest outside the National Press Club, urging the Bangladesh government to take immediate steps to protect stray dogs and halt alleged culling operations in the city. The demonstration was organised by members of the Dhaka University Animal Welfare Club and other activists, who expressed dissatisfaction with what they described as a lack of action by the new administration to safeguard the animals. Rights activist Rubaiya Ahmed said, head of the animal rights group Avayaranny, alleged that authorities had illegally removed and killed dogs that had long lived in neighbourhoods and on university campuses.

China's ethnic unity law draws global rights criticism

Washington: A newly enacted Chinese law aimed at promoting "ethnic unity" has triggered sharp criticism from the World Uyghur Congress (WUC), which warns that the legislation could deepen repression against ethnic minorities, including Uyghurs, Tibetans, and Southern Mongolians. The Law on Promoting Ethnic Unity and Progress was approved during the Chinese Communist Party's annual parliamentary session. In a press release, WUC stated that the law formally embeds long-standing assimilation policies into China's national legal framework, providing authorities with stronger tools to regulate and control minority communities.

Bomb threat reported at University of Virginia's Shannon Library

Charlottesville, US: A bomb threat was reported at the Shannon Library at the University of Virginia (UVA) in the US on Friday, prompting authorities to evacuate the building and nearby facilities, the University's Police Division said on Friday. In a series of posts on X, the police division stated that officers were on the scene investigating the threat and evacuating both Shannon Library and Clemons Library at the university. The first update at around 10:59 am (local time) said that a bomb threat had been reported at Shannon Library and that the facility was being evacuated.

France 'ready' to host Lebanon-Israel ceasefire talks

Paris (UNI)

French President Emmanuel Macron on Saturday has expressed his willingness to host peace talks in Paris between Lebanon and Israel.

In a post on X, Macron said he had spoken with Lebanon's president, prime minister, and parliamentary speaker on Friday, noting that they were receptive to "direct discussions with Israel."

He urged Israel to halt its large-scale offensive and ongoing strikes, while calling on Hezbollah to end its "reckless escalation" of the conflict.

"Israel must seize this opportunity to initiate talks and a ceasefire, work toward a lasting solution, and enable Lebanese authorities to up-



hold their commitments in support of Lebanon's sovereignty," Macron wrote.

The conflict between Israel and Hezbollah continues to intensify as the Israeli military has carried out several waves of air strikes across Lebanon, including the capital Beirut, after the Iranian-backed armed group Hezbollah launched about 200 rockets into northern Israel.

Many Israeli strikes were reported in the south of the country and Beirut's southern suburbs, a Hezbollah stronghold from which thousands of people have fled because of the intense bombardment over the past week.

Iran warns of severe retaliation if US targets new Supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei

Moscow (UNI/Sputnik)

Iran has issued a stark warning to the United States following the appointment of Mojtaba Khamenei as its new Supreme Leader.

The United States will face severe retaliation if it tries to kill Iran's new Supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei, Iranian Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali told Sputnik.

When asked what Iran's response would be if the US and Israel attempted to assassinate Iran's new Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, Jalali said: "You are seeing Iran's response today."

"We want blood revenge for our leader (Ayatollah Ali Khamenei). The people are angry and demand revenge for the bloodshed. Naturally, the Americans have faced and will



face severe retaliation in the future," he explained the potential reaction, citing the example of Iran's killed Supreme Leader.

"White House begging world, including India, to buy Russian crude": Araghchi

Tehran: Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi on Saturday criticised the United States over its stance on Russian oil, claiming Washington was now "begging" countries across the globe, including India, to purchase Russian crude despite earlier pressure to stop such imports.

In a post on X, Araghchi said, "The US spent months on bullying India into ending oil imports from Russia. After two weeks of war with Iran, White House is now begging the world—including India—to buy Russian crude."

The Iranian foreign minister also criticised European countries for backing an "illegal war" against Iran, claiming they expected American support against Russia in return.

North Korea fires over 10 ballistic missiles into sea amid US-South Korea drills

Pyongyang (UNI)

North Korea on Saturday launched more than 10 ballistic missiles into the sea, South Korea's military said, as the US and South Korean forces conducted military drills and US President Donald Trump renewed overtures towards Pyongyang for dialogue.

The Japan Coast Guard announced that at 1:30 pm JST (10 am IST), Saturday, what appeared to be a ballistic missile was launched from North Korea, Japan's public broadcaster NHK reported.

It appeared to have fallen outside Japan's exclusive economic zone, NHK quoted defence ministry sources as saying.

Meanwhile, Japan's PM has issued an "Emergency alert" on social media platform X and said, "north Ko-



rea has launched a suspected ballistic missile. More updates to follow."

The Japanese government has convened an emergency response team consisting of officials from relevant ministries and agencies at the

Trump says US 'totally obliterated' military targets on Iran's Kharg island, warns oil facilities could be next

Washington (UNI)

In a major escalation of tensions in the Middle East, the United States launched powerful bombing raids on Iran's strategic Kharg Island late Friday. President Donald Trump announced that American forces carried out what he described as one of the "most powerful bombing" operations ever conducted in the region. Trump said that the strikes "totally obliterated every military target" on Kharg Island, which he referred to as Iran's "crown jewel," marking a dramatic intensification of the ongoing conflict between the United States and Iran.

The operation targeted Iranian military facilities on Kharg Island, a crucial oil export terminal located in the Persian Gulf. The strikes come as Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has pledged that it will not allow "a litre of oil" through the



Strait of Hormuz as the closure of the key Gulf waterway continues to roil global energy markets during the US-Israeli war on Iran.

President Donald Trump revealed the strike in a post on the platform Truth Social, saying that at his direction, "The United States Central Command executed one of the most powerful bombing raids in the Histo-

ry of the Middle East, and totally obliterated every MILITARY target in Iran's crown jewel, Kharg Island."

He further stated, "Our weapons are the most powerful and sophisticated that the world has ever known, but for reasons of decency, I have chosen NOT to wipe out the oil infrastructure on the island."

Trump said U.S. forces had "completely destroyed" the military targets that were struck and warned Iran that Washington would not hesitate to carry out additional attacks if Tehran continues threatening international shipping routes.

Trump also warned that the decision could change if Iran interferes with shipping routes, saying, "However, should Iran, or anyone else, do anything to interfere with the free and safe passage of ships through the Strait of Hormuz, I will immediately reconsider this decision."

Easing US sanctions on Russian Oil gives Moscow opportunities: Expert



Washington (UNI/SPUTNIK)

The easing of US sanctions on Russian oil amid the Iran conflict creates opportunities for Moscow, Director of the Navigator Principal Investors company Kyle Shostak told RIA Novosti.

On March 11, Kirill Dmitriev, the head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) and Russian special presidential envoy for economic cooperation with foreign countries, met with US officials in Miami for talks addressing the crisis in the

Afghan Taliban carries out drone strikes on Pakistan military positions

Kabul/Islamabad: The Afghan Taliban has said it carried out drone strikes on Pakistani military positions in the Kohat district of the bordering Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The ministry said a drone struck a military fort and a command centre in Kohat. Video footage released by the Taliban appeared to show a drone approaching the reported target sites.

The attack came in response to an overnight strike by Pakistan in Kabul's Pul-e-Charkhi area, which killed four civilians and injured 14 others.

Earlier on Friday, Taliban officials said Pakistani aircraft had carried out air strikes across several Afghan provinces, including Kabul, Kandahar, Paktia and Paktika. In a statement, Taliban officials claimed the attack destroyed several Pakistani military facilities, including command centres, depots and barracks.

Four killed in Russian air attack on Ukraine

Agencies, Kyiv

Russia hammered Ukraine with missiles and drones overnight, killing at least four people and causing damage across five regions of the country, officials said on Saturday.

The main target was energy infrastructure in the Kyiv region, said President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, adding that residential buildings, schools, and businesses were also damaged.

He said the Sumy, Kharkiv, Dnipro and Mykolaiv regions were also targeted in an attack that included around 430 drones and 68 missiles, most of which were downed by air defences.

"Russia will try to exploit the war in the Middle East to cause even



greater destruction here in Europe, in Ukraine," Zelenskyy wrote on X, asking Kyiv's allies to boost production of critical air-defence weapons.

The four fatalities occurred in the Kyiv region, where 15 people were also wounded.

Iran releases pictures of coffins of fallen IRIS Dena sailors

Tehran: The Iranian administration on Friday released pictures of coffins of fallen IRIS Dena sailors who lost their lives in the attack by US forces on the IRIS Dena warship.

In a post on X, the Iranian embassy in India said, "The pure and honoured bodies of the naval martyrs who lost their lives in the terrorist attack by US forces on the IRIS Dena warship."

Earlier, Esmail Baqaei, the Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran, on Tuesday paid tributes to the sailors of IRIS Dena who were killed after the frigate was torpedoed and sunk by a US submarine approximately 40 nautical miles off the coast of Galle, Sri Lanka.

He called the action by the United States a "war crime" and in violation of international laws—further underlining that the Iranian people would not forget it.

Thai parliament to open amid scrutiny over election ballots



Agencies, Bangkok

Thai King Maha Vajiralongkorn formally opened the new parliament on Saturday, as last month's general election result faces court scrutiny over barcodes on the ballots that may have violated the law.

The barcodes might undermine the secrecy of the ballot, said the

country's Office of the Ombudsman, which petitioned the Constitutional Court to consider the case.

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul's Bhumjaithai Party won a clear victory in the February 8 election, but the ombudsman said late on Friday that there had been 21 public complaints that barcodes and QR codes on the ballots could potentially be used to identify which party or candidate a given voter had chosen.

The court annulled a 2006 election on the grounds that the voting process had not been conducted in secret. The Election Commission has said the barcodes were included for security purposes and that identifying a voter would require access to the upper half of the ballots, which were securely stored.

Ship INS Sudarshini arrives in Malta

Valletta, Malta

The Indian Naval Sail Training Ship INS Sudarshini has arrived at the historic port of Valletta, Malta, marking a significant milestone in her landmark transoceanic expedition Lokayan-26, according to an official press release by the Ministry of Defence.

The ship arrived in Valletta on 12 March, underscoring the deep-rooted maritime ties between India and Malta. This visit represents an important leg of the ship's ambitious 22,000-nautical-mile global voyage.

The arrival follows a successful transit through the Suez Canal and a recent port call at Alexandria.

On arrival, the Commanding Officer called on Rachita Bhandari, High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Malta.

The press release stated that the interaction highlighted the role

As part of 22,000-nautical-mile "Lokayan-26" expedition



played by the Indian Navy in strengthening the bilateral relationship between the two nations.

The High Commissioner noted that the presence of INS Sudarshini in Malta serves as a powerful symbol of the vision of MAHASAGAR, rein-

forcing maritime cooperation while fostering people-to-people connections.

During the visit, the ship's crew will engage in professional interactions and courtesy calls with the Armed Forces of Malta, further promoting mutual trust and interoperability.

The press release added that the ship will also host community outreach activities, including a guided "Open Ship" for schoolchildren and members of the Indian diaspora in Malta. INS Sudarshini is currently in the second month of her voyage, which commenced at Kochi on 20 January.