



US Ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield speaks during a press conference at the American Diplomacy House in Seoul



Police officers stand near a small plane which landed as it lost power near Kapiolani Park in Honolulu, on Tuesday



Apple CEO Tim Cook, left, talks with Indonesian President Joko Widodo during a meeting at the palace in Jakarta, Indonesia, on Wednesday



Activists tape up the entrance to Meta offices in London. They protested against disinformation they allege is on Meta's social network platforms

allovertheworld



A worker from the Tsing Hua Ecological Consulting Company examines wild fish caught for survey sampling at a fish ladder, a structure that facilitates movement of fish from bodies of water, near Bitan in Xindian district, New Taipei City, Taiwan

Denmark sells 24 used F-16 fighter jets to Argentina

BUENOS AIRES: Denmark's defense ministry said Tuesday that the country was selling 24 used F-16 fighter jets to Argentina, as the Nordic country upgrades its air force. The contract, which followed a declaration of intent unveiled in March, was formally signed during a visit by Argentine Defense Minister Luis Alfonso Petri at the Danish Skrydstrup air base. Denmark is in the process of upgrading its fleet to the more modern F-35, and has around forty F-16s, of which around 30 are in operation, according to Danish media. The country has also committed to supplying an unspecified number of aircraft of this type to Ukraine, and has begun training Ukrainian pilots.

Volcano erupts in Indonesia's outermost region, hundreds evacuated

JAKARTA: A volcano erupted several times in Indonesia's outermost region overnight Wednesday, forcing hundreds of people to be evacuated after it spewed lava and a column of smoke more than a mile into the sky. Mount Ruang, a stratovolcano in North Sulawesi Province, first erupted at 9:45 pm on Tuesday (1345 GMT) and twice again in the early hours of Wednesday, the country's volcanology and geological agencies said. There were no reports of any deaths or injuries but more than 800 people were evacuated from two villages on Ruang island to the nearby island of Tagulandang, state news agency Antara reported. The first eruption pushed an ash column two kilometres (1.2 miles) into the sky, with the second eruption pushing it to 2.5 kilometres, Muhammad Wafid, head of the geological agency said in a statement.

Taiwan's air force plunges into underwater survival training

KAOHSIUNG, (TAIWAN): Under strobing lights, a vessel carrying Taiwanese air force lieutenants plunged into an indoor pool with roiling water on Wednesday - simulating adverse weather conditions to train military personnel on survival skills in the event of a crash. Self-ruled Taiwan faces increasing pressures from China - which claims the island as its territory and has not ruled out using force to bring it under Beijing's control. Taiwan's air force held exercises Wednesday at a training centre in the southern city of Kaohsiung, focusing on underwater escape and parachute rescue. As the simulator vessel spun upside down under the water, trainees dressed in orange overalls escaped from the cabin, holding their breath as they shimmied out one-by-one. The crew also learned to disentangle themselves from parachute ropes after they landed in the water.

Kosovo ministers meet to discuss murders of women

PRISTINA, (KOSOVO): The national flag flew at half-mast Wednesday, as Kosovo observed a day of mourning after the recent murders of two women, and ministers discussed how to better protect its citizens. Television channels had been broadcasting classical music since the morning and all public ceremonies were postponed for a day after President Vjosa Osmani declared the official mourning period. Osmani's decision on Tuesday was announced after news that a woman had been murdered that same day in Peja, the second such killing in five days in Kosovo. Only the night before, several hundred people had protested in front of the justice ministry calling for tougher action against gender-based violence following the first murder.

Swiss parliament wants ban on extremist symbols

GENEVA: Swiss lawmakers on Wednesday voted in favour of banning the display of extremist and racist symbols, starting with those of a Nazi nature. The National Council lower house of parliament voted by 133 to 38 in favour of banning the public use of racist, violence-promoting and extremist symbols, such as Nazi symbols. Switzerland, which stayed neutral during World War II, has come under pressure to fall in line with a number of other European countries in banning Nazi symbols. Full bans are in place in Germany, Poland and several other eastern EU nations. The Swiss parliament as a whole is now in favour, after the Council of States upper house voted for such a ban in December.

Record rains paralyse roads, airport in Dubai

At least one person was feared killed after a 70-year-old man was swept away in his car in Ras Al-Khaimah

AFP, DUBAI: Dubai's giant highways were clogged by flooding and its major airport was in chaos as the Middle East financial centre remained gridlocked on Wednesday, a day after the heaviest rains on record. Tailbacks snaked along waterlogged, six-lane expressways after up to 259.5 millimetres (10.2 inches) of rain, the most since records began 75 years ago, fell on the desert United Arab Emirates on Tuesday.

At least one person was killed after a 70-year-old man was swept away in his car in Ras Al-Khaimah, one of the oil-rich country's seven emirates, police said. Power outages were reported around Dubai, which was dotted with flooded areas and submerged and abandoned cars. One road tunnel near the airport was completely flooded to a depth of several metres (yards).

As sunny skies returned on Wednesday, a day after torrential downpours and rolling black clouds, stories emerged of residents stuck in cars and offices overnight. "It was one of the most horrific situations I had ever experienced, because I knew that if my car broke down, it would sink and I would drown with it," said one worker in his 30s, who did not want to give his name, after his 15-minute commute had turned into a 12-hour saga on flooded roads.

"I was very afraid," he added. Schools will remain closed in Dubai until next week, authorities said, underscoring the difficulty of the clean-up. One householder, also requesting anonymity, said he made a small detour on his way home on Tuesday to buy McDonald's for his children, only to get stuck in traffic and finally arrive - empty-handed - six hours later. "I can understand that the country can't deal with rain on this scale, but the lack of transparency and real-time information is disappointing," he said. "Chaos" - Passengers were warned not to come to Dubai air-

port, the world's busiest by international traffic, "unless absolutely necessary", an official said.



Flydubai flights has cancelled all flights departing Dubai



Vehicles sit abandoned in floodwater covering a major road in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on Wednesday

FROM PAGE 1

RAPE & MURDER OF 5-YR-OLD IN VADDEM PINNACLE OF CRIMES AGAINST MINORS

The rising trend started about five to six years ago. But the figures of as early as two years ago are shocking National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), as many as 73 rape cases were reported in the State in 2022, of which 57 victims were minor girls.

Of the 57 minor victims of rape cases registered under Section 376 of IPC in Goa, two are below six years of age, 12 between 6 and 12 years, 26 between 12 and 16 years and 17 between 16 and 18 years of age. In 93.2 per cent of the total rape cases, the accused was known to the victim.

Margao resident Vivek Naik said there is no fear of law enforcement agencies in Goa. "The burglary attempt that was caught on camera in Betalbatim is a glaring proof that there is no fear of law," he said. "A five-year-old girl is raped and murdered and the government doesn't even blink" he said.

People also raised the issue that thousands of migrants enter the State daily, but no record is kept.

"Do you want to make Goa by allowing gambling and bars and alcoholism in the State?" Naik asked.

Convener of Bailancho Ekvott Auda Viegas said that she feels ashamed that Goa is seeing an exponential rise in crime. "Goa has become a place where children are being trafficked, illegally adopted, violated, kidnapped, and raped. We are shocked," Viegas said.

"Rape of a child and murder is downright heinous and shouldn't have happened" she added. "We cannot imagine the pain that the poor girl went through" Viegas said, while speaking regarding the Vaddem incident.

THERE'S A LOT OF HEAT IN THESE ELECTIONS, AND YES IT'S THE WEATHER

Sleepless nights have become common due to the heat, and even brief power outages cause discomfort. The demand for fans, coolers, and air conditioners has surged in the market as people seek relief from the oppressive temperatures.

Expressing his desire to sit in front of cool water to escape the heat, Anand Naik, another local said, "People are flocking to riverside picnic spots to find some respite from the scorching conditions. Discussions about protecting nature and controlling industrial pollution have also emerged amidst the heat-related concerns."

GOA EC NOT SATISFIED WITH MINES DEPT EXPLANATION ON SIGNING LEASE DEED WITH VEDANTA AFTER MODEL CODE KICKED IN

The CEO took up the complaint with the Director of Mines and Geology (DMG) but as the reply provided by the DMG was 'not satisfactory', the complaint has been referred to the Election Commission of India (ECI), New Delhi.

In its complaint, the Goa Foundation has stated that on March 22, 2024, the Government of Goa signed a lease agreement with Vedanta Ltd in connection with the Bicholim Mining Block-1 located at Bicholim.

The signing of the lease agreement has enabled Vedanta Ltd to commence its mining operations on the mining block. The signing of the agreement or MoU after the announcement of the Code of Conduct is per se a violation of the Election Code. Payment of stamp duty on the said transaction was received by the Goa government only on March 26, 2024, the Goa Foundation said.

It has pointed out that the signing of the lease agreement post announcement of the Model Code of Conduct violates the Code of Conduct since the agreement is now being used by the ruling party during the poll campaign to win votes by informing voters that mining has resumed in the State of Goa.

Acting upon the complaint, Assistant Chief Electoral Officer wrote to the Directorate of Mines and Geology asking it to submit a clarification as to how signing of lease deed

after commencement of Model Code of Conduct does not violate para 21 (e) and 21 (f) of ECI instruction.

In its reply, the DMG Director Narayan M Gad submitted that signing of the lease deed with Vedanta Ltd was in continuation of the process of auction initiated on September 9, 2022, and had to be concluded by April 12, 2024. The Goa Council of Ministers in the cabinet meeting held on February 23, 2024, had resolved to sign the Mine Development and Production Agreement and the lease deed with Vedanta Ltd. The signing of the lease deed was authorised by the government on March 19, 2024. The signing of the lease deed was the statutory requirement.

However, not being satisfied with the reply of the DMG, the CEO office has written to Narendra N Butolia, Senior Principal Secretary, Election Commission of India, stating that Mining Lease Deed executed by the DMG though may amount to be part of the same contractual commitment, however it is an independent agreement and since it was executed during the MCC period it was binding on the part of the department to obtain prior permission of Election Commission of India and hence contravenes 21 (f) of the guidelines.

Further, the lease deed clearly speaks at para 2 (2.1) about grant of lease for conducting mining operations for a period of 50 years over a certain area of 478.5206 (Ha). It is to state that though there is no transfer of ownership, there is an allowance of land by way of lease to enjoy certain rights over the land which contravenes 21 (e) of the guidelines.

BJP, SUDIN FACE BACKLASH FROM ANTI-COAL CRUSADERS OVER DOUBLE TRACKING COMMENTS

health will be destroyed? Can this be termed as development? Something that is so disastrous that goes totally against the people of the area," said Alina Saldanha, former Minister and Congress leader, who has been fighting along with Velsao villagers for years now against the double tracking project.

Similarly, members of Goyant Kolso Naka (GKN) and Rainbow Warriors, who have been holding agitations against the project, also slammed the comments made by BJP workers and Dhavalikar.

"During the Supreme Court hearings regarding the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) report rejecting the double tracking project, railway authorities informed the Court that double tracking is for coal. The Supreme Court has made it clear that the government should use existing infrastructure from Krishnapatnam Port on the East Coast. The selection of Pallavi Dempo as a candidate makes it clear that BJP intends to destroy Goa for short-term gains of greedy corporates," said Abhijit Prabhudesai, Founder of Rainbow Warriors, who was a key figure in the historic Chandor protests against double tracking in November 2020.

"BJP and their bedfellows, like Sudin Dhavalikar, only know to behave like sycophants of their Central Government masters, who have brought these destructive projects, like Railway double-tracking for coal transportation, Tamnar power line, Ports Bill, Sagarmala project, etc

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-Felix Furtado, Goyant Kolso Naka member

70 killed as Afghanistan hit by heavy rains



Afghan people wait to cross a flooded area in Spin Boldak district of Kandahar province

AFP, KABUL: Around 70 people have been killed by heavy rains lashing Afghanistan over the past five days, the government's disaster management department said Wednesday.

Afghanistan was parched by an unusually dry winter in which desiccated the earth, exacerbating flash-flooding caused by spring downpours in most provinces.

Disaster management spokesman Janan Sayeg said "approximately 70 people lost their lives" as a result of rains between Saturday and Wednesday.

Fifty-six others have been injured, he said, while more than 2,600 houses have been damaged or destroyed and 95,000 acres of farmland wiped away.

Giving a smaller death toll last week, Sayeg said most fatalities at that point had been caused by roof collapses resulting from the deluges.

Neighbouring Pakistan has also been hammered by spring downpours, with 65 people killed in storm-related incidents as rain falls at nearly twice the historical average rate.

The United Nations last year warned that "Afghanistan is experiencing major swings in extreme weather conditions".

After four decades of war the country ranks among the nations least prepared to face extreme weather events, which scientists say are becoming more frequent and severe due to climate change.

MORE OBITS ON PAGE 10

Obituary for Max Colaco: A Tribute of Love. We deeply mourn the sad demise of our uncle MAX COLACO. Uncle, you are gone, but you will never be forgotten. We may be apart, but your memory will live within us forever. We are only left with your memories to live with now. Fondly remembered by: Winnie, Otilia, Winona & Oswin. May his soul rest in Peace.

THIRD DEATH ANNIVERSARY. In Everloving Memory of ADV. FERNANDO SAVIO RIBEIRO DE SILVEIRA (São Matias-Divar). BORN: 26-08-1973. DIED: 19-04-2021. Three Years Quickly Passed, Your Love Is Our Guide, All Though We Cannot See You, You Are Always By Our Side. There will be an Eucharistic Celebration for the soul of our beloved Fernando Savio on Friday, 19th April 2024 (Tomorrow), at 4.30 pm, at St Mathias Church, Malar, Divar, offered by his sorrowful mother, wife, children and family members. Relatives, neighbours & friends kindly accept this as the only intimation.

LORD I'M COMING HOME. ROSARIO PIEDADE HIGINO SILVA (AMBELIM - NEW AMBELIM). Beloved husband of Afonsinha Consalacao Silva, loving father of Fr. Orville (SJ), Maria/Jerry, Saria/Anthony, doting grandfather of Britney, Rooney, Alanna, Ilianna. Loving brother /brother-in-law of Brito/Gilda, Goretty/Minguel, Mariana/Agnelo, Xaverina/PeterPaul. Brother-in-law of Augusto and Alex. Funeral cortege will leave his residence TODAY, 18th April 2024 at 4.00 p.m. to Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel, Ambelim for Eucharistic Celebration and thereafter to Regina Martyrum Church Cemetery, Assolna for burial. Relatives & friends kindly accept this as the only intimation. Galaxy Advt. 9823244657