

## In sweeping 'America First' shift, US freezes all foreign aid

### The order appears to halt military assistance to Ukraine

**AGENCIES, WASHINGTON:** The United States - the world's largest foreign aid provider - abruptly froze nearly all overseas assistance, with exceptions only for emergency food relief and military funding to Israel and Egypt.

The sweeping order, issued just days after President Donald Trump's inauguration, appears to halt military assistance to Ukraine.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio issued an internal memo instructing all agencies to immediately suspend foreign aid programmes unless explicitly approved by the new administration.

"No new funds shall be

### TRUMP ENDS FAUCI'S SECURITY DETAIL

**AP, FLETCHER, NC:** President Donald Trump has ended the federal security detail for Dr Anthony Fauci, the infectious disease expert who advised him on the Covid-19 pandemic, a person familiar with the matter said.

Fauci is the latest in a string of former Trump aides-turned-critics to see their federal protection cancelled despite ongoing threats to their lives.

Speaking to reporters in North Carolina, Trump said he wouldn't feel any re-

sponsibility if harm befell the former government officials. A person familiar with the matter, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive security issues, said that Fauci's federal security detail was ended on Thursday and that he has since hired private security.

When asked about Fauci and former national security adviser John Bolton, Trump said, "They all made a lot of money. They can hire their own security, too."

obligated for new awards or extensions of existing awards until each proposed new award or extension has been reviewed and approved," said the memo, per AFP. The directive sig-

nals the administration's aggressive pivot toward Trump's "America First" foreign policy, which prioritises domestic interests over international commitments.

The newly inaugurated president issued an executive order shortly after taking office on Monday instructing departments to pause the issuance of foreign aid grants for 90 days

pending a review by the incoming secretary.

But Rubio's guidance today goes further, directing agency heads to stop dispersing aid even to programmes already approved by the US government.

The order caught some department officials off guard, according to Politico. "State just totally went nuclear on foreign assistance," a State Department official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, told the publication.

"Decisions whether to continue, modify or terminate programs will be made following the review" from the secretary," the memo states.

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## CM extends R-Day greetings

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has greeted the people of the State, on the occasion of India's 76th Republic Day.

He paid rich tributes to the great personalities, whose struggle and sacrifices made India a free and

democratic country.

In his message, the Chief Minister said, "Republic Day is celebrated with patriotic dedication all around the country. It honours the enactment of the Constitution of India which came into force on January 26, 1950. As citizens of the largest

democratic country in the world, we always respect our noble Constitution. The Constitution is our pride and our dedication to the Constitution is important as it guides our efforts towards nation-building."

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## BEING INDIAN



Security personnel take part in a 'Tiranga Yatra' at a ski resort ahead of Republic Day, at Gulmarg, in Baramulla district of north Kashmir, on Saturday

## Crypto investment turns sour for Curchorem family, duped of Rs 4.8 cr

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** With Goans still reeling under cash-for-jobs scam and land grabbing cases, now a family from Curchorem has been defrauded by staff of a crypto currency dealing company and website of a whopping Rs 4.8 crore.

The Economic Offences Cell (EOC) has registered a complaint filed by Rupesh Bandekar, a resident of Curchorem that between May 15 and October 10, 2017, the accused persons namely Sukanta Bhowmick, a resident of Kalighat, Kol-

kata, West Bengal and Ajay Dodamani, claiming to be the manager of the Goan Games Online Services Private Limited, Miramar, misrepresented the complainant, his family members and relatives that their company was engaged with crypto trading exchange and offered them highly lucrative and attractive returns.

Rupesh in his complaint stated that through various bank transactions, he and his family members transferred Rs 4.82 crore into the company's bank account.

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## US apex court clears Rana's extradition to India

**PTI, WASHINGTON:** The US Supreme Court has turned down a review petition by terror accused Tahawwur Rana, dismissing his last legal challenge against his extradition to India in connection with the 2008 Mumbai attacks that killed 166 people.

"Petition DENIED," the Supreme Court said. The apex court's order came on January 21, a day after Donald Trump was sworn in as the US President.

Earlier, Rana lost legal battles in several federal courts, including the US Court.

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## Goa's freedom fighter Libia bags Padma Shri

### Centenarian conferred civilian award in the field of social work

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** Libia Lobo Sardesai, 100-year-old freedom fighter who played a pivotal role in Goa's liberation from Portuguese colonial rule has been awarded the Padma Shri.

Lobo Sardesai was conferred Padma Shri in the field of social work. She is also among 113 Padma Shri awardees announced by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Saturday. Lobo Sardesai co-founded the underground radio station 'Voz da



Liberdade (Voice of Freedom)' in 1955, broadcasting anti-colonial and pro-Liberation messages in secret from the jungles, alongside her husband, Padma Shri late Vaman Sardesai, former Ambassador of Angola. She also supported the Indian Army in setting up a transmission centre to transmit messages to Portuguese in India to surrender.

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## Hamas frees 4 Israeli troops in exchange for 200 Palestinian prisoners

**AP, TEL AVIV:** Four female Israeli soldiers who were taken in the attack that sparked the war in Gaza returned to Israel on Saturday after Hamas militants paraded them before a crowd of thousands in Gaza City and handed them over to the Red Cross. Israel later released 200 Palestinian prisoners in the second exchange of a fragile ceasefire.

The four Israelis smiled, waved and gave the thumbs-up from a stage in Palestine Square, with armed, masked militants on either side.

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## Smart City death: Political analyst moves Sessions Court to direct cops to file FIR

Trajano says the death of 21-year-old Ayush Halarankar was solely on account of criminal negligence on the part of the contractor and the official associated with Smart City works

Team Herald

**PANJIM:** After police failed to act on his two complaints, political analyst Trajano D'Mello has approached the Sessions Court to direct the Panjim Police to register FIR against the Imagine Panaji Smart City Development Limited (IPSCDL), contractor M/s Bagkiya Construction, PWD and the Corporation of the City of Panaji (CCP), on account of whose gross and criminal negligence after a 21-year-old youth lost his life on New Year's Day last year.

Trajano had urged the Court to direct the police to immediately conduct independent, fair and proper investigation of the facts stated in his complaints dated January 5, 2024 and February 15, 2024.

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### FIRST TRAGEDY OF 2024

■ On New Year's Day last year, 21-year-old Ayush Halarankar, son of ex-CCP Councillor Rupesh Halarankar died after he plunged into dangerous trench left open by Smart City contractor opposite People's School at Mala



leading to the unfortunate accident

■ The absence of proper barricades or warning signs around the pit proved to be a fatal oversight,

■ The Smart City initiative, aimed at urban development and infrastructure enhancement, inadvertently became the backdrop for this heart-breaking incident

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