

Putin-Witkoff talks betray Kremlin's new-found amiable tone towards Washington

AP, MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin met with US envoy Steve Witkoff to discuss details of the American proposal for a 30-day ceasefire in the war with Ukraine, asking him to convey Moscow's thoughts to Washington, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Friday.

Putin asked Witkoff late Thursday to give additional messages to US President Donald Trump, Peskov told reporters, after the Russian leader said at a news conference that he supported a truce in principle but set out a host of details that need to be clarified before it is agreed.

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Ukraine, under severe military pressure on parts of the front line three years after Russia's full-scale invasion, has already endorsed the truce proposal.

Russia's army has gained battlefield momentum, and analysts say Putin likely will be reluctant to rush into a ceasefire while he feels he has an advantage.

The Russian army, backed by North Korean troops, are now close to completely driving Ukrainian forces from their foothold in Rus-

sia's Kursk border region in what would be a major setback for Kyiv.

A possible phone call between Putin and Trump to settle outstanding ceasefire issues could be arranged after Witkoff delivers the messages in Washington, Peskov said. "There is an understanding on both sides that such a call is needed," Peskov said.

"There are certainly some grounds for cautious optimism," Peskov said of the ceasefire proposal. "A lot still needs to be done, but the president has shown solidarity with President Trump's position."

US officials have said Washington was set to discuss technical issues related to a possible ceasefire next week. Given the range of issues on the table, and the sharp differences between what Moscow and Kyiv want, it could potentially take weeks or months for the guns to fall silent.

Trump vowed during his election campaign to settle the war in 24 hours, but in January he changed that timeframe, voicing hope that peace could be negotiated in six months.

Putin's apparently amicable tone toward the White House reflects the remarkable shift in US relations with Russia and Ukraine since Trump returned to office in January. Former President Joe Biden had sought to isolate Putin.

Trump has threatened both Russia and Ukraine

with punitive measures if they don't engage with his peace efforts.

Trump briefly cut off critical military aid and intelligence sharing in an apparent effort to push Kyiv to enter talks on ending the war.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had a tense meeting at the White House on February 28 in which Trump questioned whether Ukraine wanted to halt the war.

Trump has raised the possibility of tightening sanctions on Russia, though his administration has also repeatedly embraced Kremlin positions on the conflict, including indicating that Ukraine's hopes of joining NATO are unlikely to be realised and that it probably will not get back the land that Russia's army occupies, which amounts to nearly 20 per cent of the country.

4 militants arrested in separate operations in Manipur

3 ARRESTED WITH DRUGS IN MANIPUR

PTI, IMPHAL: Three persons were arrested with over 100 kg of WY tablets in Manipur's Thoubal district, police said on Friday. The seizure was made by a joint team of the state police and the Narcotics Control Bureau from near Lilong police station, they said. Two of those arrested were from Assam, they added. The accused were identified as Amaldas Xalxo of Assam's Golaghat, Mahedi Alom of Assam's Morigaon, and Mohammad Khurshid of Lilong Hangamthabi in Thoubal. A truck and a four-wheeler were also seized in the operation, police said

A member of the proscribed United National Liberation Front (UNLF-K) was arrested from near the India-Myanmar border in Tenuogal district. He was identified as Moirangtham Ricky Singh (22) of Khurai Chairenthong in Imphal East district

An active cadre of the banned PREPAK, involved in extorting local businesses, was arrested from Sekmajin Ningolkhong in Kakching district.

He was identified as Laishram Bishorjit Meitei (33).

Another man was ar-

rested for extorting money from vehicles transporting timber, police said.

Yumnam Premjit Meitei (54) was arrested from a furniture shop at Kakwa in Imphal West district. He was associated with the banned Kangleipak Communist Party (Apunba).

19-year-old sharpshooter arrested in Delhi's Rohini

PTI, NEW DELHI: The Delhi Police has arrested a 19-year-old sharpshooter of a gang, who was allegedly planning a murder in the Rohini area, an official said on Friday. The accused, identified as Deepak, was arrested on March 4 when the police received specific input about him arriving near Japanese Park in Rohini armed and prepared for the attack. "Deepak, a resident of Haryana's Sonapat, joined the gang after he came into contact with members of the Naveen Bali-Himanshu Bhau syndicate in Jhajjar in 2023 and inspired by their

lifestyle, he expressed his desire to join their gang," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Amit Kausik said.

He was subsequently recruited and assigned the task of eliminating a member of the rival gang Gogi. The police received intelligence that the gang was planning to avenge the murder of Tilly Tajpuriya and it involved targeted killings in Outer Delhi.

He was apprehended from Rohini on March 4 and found in possession of two firearms and four bullets, he said.

Senior BJD leader alleges involvement of IAS, IPS officers in Odisha mining scam

PTI, BHUBANESWAR: Former Odisha minister Badri Narayan Patra has accused an IAS and an IPS officer of promoting the multi-crore mining and transport scam in Keonjhar district. The senior BJD leader's allegations came after the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the Odisha Crime Branch arrested Biju Yuva Janata Dal (BJD) leader Soumya Shankar Chakra (alias Raja Chakra) for his alleged role in illegal mining operations.

The Economic Offence Wing of the Crime Branch, on Thursday, arrested Biju Yuva Janata Dal state vice-president Soumya Shankar Chakra, alias Raja Chakra, in connection with an alleged multi-crore mining and transport scam.

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Patra, a six-time BJD MLA alleged: "As per my information, the then district magistrate-cum-collector and the superintendent of police, Keonjhar district, provided full protection to Raja Chakra."

"The collector and SP were also part and parcel of such illegal activities. The duo had a share in the loot of minerals, financial irregularities, and kickbacks.

They were in Keonjhar for nearly 5-6 years," the sitting BJD MLA from Ghaspura alleged.

Sources said that one Odisha cadre IPS officer of the 2010 batch was the superintendent of police (SP) of Keonjhar district for a long time, during which Raja Chakra was allegedly involved in illegal mining and transportation activities.

"The IPS officer concerned is also a recipient of three police medals for gallantry from the President of India," a senior official said, adding that the officer was shifted from Keonjhar.

Similarly, Patra took the name of a Maharashtra-born IAS officer of the 2011 batch and said that he had served as the district collector of Keonjhar from

2018 to 2024.

"I am sure these two officers will now also be getting shares from Raja Chakra's illegal earnings," Patra alleged, demanding that all those, including the All India Service officers who supported Raja Chakra in illegal activities be arrested.

He alleged Raja Chakra could undertake all illegal activities due to the protection from the district collector and SP.

"The district administration was in Raja's pocket," he alleged.

Patra, being a senior leader of BJD from the mineral-rich district, further revealed that he had informed the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) during the previous government.

Two Tanzanian nationals arrested in drug trafficking case in Punjab

PTI, KOZHIKODE (KERALA): Two Tanzanian nationals, allegedly key operatives in an inter-state drug trafficking network, have been arrested from Punjab in connection with a major drug case in Kerala, police said on Friday. The accused, identified as David Nteme (22) and Atka Haruna (21), are students at a university in Punjab.

Their arrests followed crucial information provided by two individuals previously arrested in a case registered by the Kunnamangalam police, officials said.

The case first came to light with the arrest of Ibrahim Musamil (27), a native of Manjeswaram, Kasaragod, and Abhinav (24), a resident of Velliparamba, Kozhikode, on January 21, police said.

During their interrogation, investigators took them to Bengaluru on February 4 for evidence collection.

A search was conducted at the lodge where the accused had stayed, and details of their associates

were gathered. Further scientific investigations led officers to their co-accused, police added.

On February 12, police tracked down Mohammed Shamil, the third accused, in Mysuru and took him into custody near a hotel close to Vrindavan Garden.

Further scrutiny of financial transactions revealed that a large sum of money had been transferred to David Nteme's bank account. Investigators found that the money was withdrawn in Noida through an account belonging to Atka Haruna, police said.

Following this lead, officers traced the suspects to Phagwara, Punjab, where they were residing as paying guests near their college.

A special investigation team then reached Phagwara and arrested them from their rented accommodation, police said.

Officials further stated that they would verify the claim of one of the accused that he is the son of a judge in Tanzania.

9 killed in road accidents, 2 drown in UP on Holi

PTI, LUCKNOW: Nine people were killed in road accidents and two boys drowned in Uttar Pradesh on Friday, police said. In Muzaffarnagar, two men were burned to death and another was seriously injured when their car caught fire after it hit a tree. Circle Officer Devvrat Bajpai identified the dead as Mainpal, 35, and Raju, 30. The injured passenger was rushed to a hospital.

In Bhadohi, two cousins died when their motorcycle crashed into a tree after they left their in-laws' place following Holi celebrations. Omprakash (32) and his cousin Mahendra (26) were returning to the Gopalpur village from the Ithara village when the accident occurred near the Manipur village.

Police said the victims, allegedly intoxicated, lost control of their speeding motorcycle.

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Police said the truck was seized and the driver arrested.

In Barabanki, two teenagers drowned in the Ghaghra river when they got into it for a swim after celebrating Holi in the the Tikait Nagar area. Circle Officer Ratnesh Pandey stated that Ravi Verma, 15, and Rishabh, 16, drowned near the Mau Ghat around 2 pm.

RETURN TO THE LORD
CRUZ FERNANDES
:- Palolem, Canacona - Goa :-
Born: 01.08.1958 - Died: 13.03.2025
Son of late Francis Fernandes / Alcina Demelo
Husband of Jorgina. Father / father-in-law of
Claudius (Maggi) / Sandy,
Ashwin (Mario) Fernandes.
Funeral Cortege will leave his residence at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday,
16th March 2025 (Tomorrow) to the St. Theresa of Jesus Church,
Chaudi, for Eucharistic celebration, followed by burial at the
Church Cemetery.
Relatives & friends kindly accept this as the only intimation.
Compld Advtg. & Funeral Service, Mangoo 9823022194

Lord I'm Coming Home
ESTEVAO QUINTINO
LUIS FERNANDES
(Sucorro - Porvorim)
Ex- Pilot - Betim
Born: 21-11-1958 Died: 13-03-2025
Son of late Paolo Carlos/ late Carmelina Fernandes.
Beloved Husband of Olinda M. Rodrigues.
Loving father/father-in-law of Vitorino/ Luisa &
Eusebio Edwin/ Yolanda. Doting grandfather of Olizia &
Lionel. Brother/brother-in-law of Raymond/ Goretty,
JeanGloria/ late Santana, Anthony/ Dalia.
Funeral cortege will leave his residence Today, Saturday
15th March 2025 at 3:00 p.m to Our Lady of Succour
Church, Succour for Eucharistic Celebration
followed by the burial.
Relatives & friends kindly accept this as the only intimation.
GOAN RITES 9822136397

DEATH
Born: 04-01-1945 Died: 14/03/2025
CAETANA DA COSTA
W/o Late Raimund Fernandes
Mother/mother-in-law of Feliciano Fernandes,
Late Pascoal Silveira
Most Loving Grandmother of Raymond,
Cristo, Angelo, Frazer & Canacia Silveira
Sister/Sister-in-law of Joana Maria / Late
Custodio Philip, Late Patolina/Late Rosario,
Magdalena / Floriano, Late Francisco/Eliza,
Lourdinha/John
Sister-in-law of Late Augustino/Carmelina,
Carmelina/Mauris.
Funeral cortege will leave her residence on
15th March, 2025 at 2.45 pm to
St. Joseph Church, Shiroda.
Relatives and friends kindly accept this as the only intimation.

36 Years since I lost you my lovely wife
Magdaline Succour D'souza
I thought of you today
But that is nothing new,
I thought about you yesterday
And the days before that too.
I think of you in silence
And I often speak your name,
All I have now are my memories
And your picture in a frame.
Your memory is a keepsake
From which I'll never part.
God has you in His arms
15-3-2025
And I have you in my heart. Husband: THOMAS

16 YEARS WITH THE LORD
A Tribute of Love & Remembrance
PRECILLA CATHERINE CARDOSO
Ex-Teacher of our Lady of Perpetual
Succour Convent Curchorem
"It has been sixteen years now
We haven't forgotten you.....
We just wanted you to know,
We still miss you very often
in our Victorious and busy life
through Lord Jesus Christ."
Deeply Remembered by
Husband **Caitano Francisco** alias **Peter**,
Daughter/son-in-law **Biniya / Francisco (U.K.)**
Son **Claster**, Grandson **Zephen (U.K) & Mai Brigida**
PETER HOUSE
St. Peter's Triangle, Tilamol - Quepem

SECOND DEATH ANNIVERSARY
BORN 05/08/1930 DIED 15/03/2023
LATE MADAM NEVES D'SOUZA
VASCO
"Do not enter into judgement with Your servant
For in Your sight no one living is Righteous" PSALM 143:2
The Management of Nevsons Education Society along
with the P.T.A., Staff & Students of Mother of Mercy
English High School, Mercers-Vaddem, Vasco, recall with
gratitude the favor of Late Madam Neves for opening, in
1989, THE MERCES MONTESSORI KINDERGARTEN
SCHOOL, that was the inspiration to bring in to
existence the MOTHER OF MERCY ENGLISH HIGH
SCHOOL, under the Management of
Nevsons Education Society, formed in 1992.
All of us wish you Madam Neves Eternal Heavenly rest.
Sandeep Ads 9822133998

CONDOLENCES
A beautiful life full of noble deeds
Helping hand to all in need
Ever so gentle, selfless and kind,
Your eternal reward in heaven you will find.
We deeply mourn the sad demise of
our beloved grandmother
CAETANA DA COSTA
We pray that God grant her soul eternal peace,
and her family the courage to bear this
irreparable loss.
From: **Raymond, Cristo, Angelo,
Frazer and Canacia Silveira.**