



Two Israeli men hold a flag as they pose next to a wagon at the old railway station in Thessaloniki, northern Greece



Brazil's former president Jair Bolsonaro (C) greets supporters upon arrival at a rally in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil



Surrounded by destroyed homes and buildings, Palestinians gather for iftar, the fast-breaking meal during Ramadan in Beit Lahlia, northern Gaza Strip



Runners dressed as a nun and pope take the start of the 30th Marathon of Rome near the Colosseum

allovertheworld



Rescue workers work at the site of the collapse Wilhelmina observation tower in Valkenburg, southern Netherlands. The observation tower on the Heunsberg, a national monument, is a well-known attraction in the South Limburg town

Angolan president calls for DR Congo ceasefire at midnight

LUANDA: Angola's president, who is mediating the conflict in eastern DR Congo between government troops and the Rwandan-backed M23 armed group, on Saturday called for a ceasefire ahead of peace talks he'll be hosting. Joao Lourenco "calls on the parties to the conflict to cease hostilities in eastern DRC as of midnight on March 16, 2025," said a statement issued by Luanda, which is expected to host "direct peace negotiations" between the Congolese government and the M23 group starting Tuesday. "This ceasefire should include all possible hostile actions against the civilian population as well as the conquest of new positions in the conflict zone, with the expectation that these and other initiatives will lead to the creation of a climate of détente conducive to the start of peace talks," the Angolan presidency's text said. Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi has so far refused to attend talks with the M23 group, which, supported by Rwandan troops, has made rapid inroads into eastern DRC since the beginning of the year.

Albania opposition rallies against TikTok ban

TIRANA: Hundreds rallied in Albania's capital Tirana Saturday as the opposition protested a new ban targeting TikTok, arguing the move would have an impact on elections later this year. Earlier this week, Albanian authorities ordered internet providers to block relevant IP addresses and DNS servers linked to the app, implementing a ban ordered by Prime Minister Edi Rama in December. It was still possible however to access the platform as of Saturday afternoon, according to AFP reporters. Rama said the ban followed a confrontation that started on social media and led to the killing of a 14-year-old student near a school in the capital Tirana. The killing sparked a debate about the impact of social networks on young people. Opposition leader Sali Berisha said the ban would undercut their ability to campaign online ahead of May's parliamentary elections.

National blackout leaves Panama in darkness

PANAMA CITY: Panama was scrambling to restore power Sunday after a nighttime blackout plunged the Central American country into darkness. The power cut, which struck shortly before midnight, was caused by damage to a private generator, President Jose Raul Mulino said. Access to drinking water was also suspended as the blackout affected water treatment facilities, the Institute of Aqueducts and Sewers (IDAAN) said. Mulino posted a video on X which he said showed an explosion at a facility southwest of the capital Panama City. "Service will be restored little by little," he wrote, adding that he was asking for a report on the incident.

Greece experiences weather rollercoaster

ATHENS: Greece is riding a weather "rollercoaster", with weekend temperatures spiking to a record high for March just ahead of a forecast bout of snow and frost, meteorologists said on Sunday. The mercury soared to 31.4 degrees Celsius on Saturday in the central town of Livadia - the highest-ever recorded for March, according to National Observatory of Athens' Meteo.gr. Across the country, other weather stations registered temperatures more typical of balmy May than the closing days of winter.

Chinese jet fighter crashes during training mission

TAIPEI (TAIWAN): A Chinese fighter jet crashed during a training mission with the pilot parachuting to safety, state media said. The brief report by Xinhua News Agency stated Saturday that the crash happened near a town on China's southernmost island province of Hainan, home to numerous air force and naval bases, radar stations and other military infrastructure aimed at shoring-up China's claim to the vast, strategic South China Sea. The report didn't provide any further details except that the cause of the accident was under investigation. China's military, the People's Liberation Army, is highly secretive and rarely reports on accidents, despite having the world's largest navy and standing army. China has not fought in an actual war in 35 years, but is expanding its military footprint along with its push to overcome the West in the latest technology.

Russia, Ukraine trade overnight aerial attacks after Putin sets ceasefire terms

AP, KYIV: Russia and Ukraine traded heavy aerial blows overnight, with both sides on Saturday reporting more than 100 enemy drones over their respective territories.

The attacks comes less than 24 hours after 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.

Putin told a press conference on Thursday that he supported a truce in principle but set out a host of details that need to be clarified before it is agreed. Kyiv has already endorsed the truce proposal, although Ukrainian officials have publicly raised doubts as to whether Moscow will commit to such a deal.

Speaking to reporters in Kyiv on Saturday, after virtual talks between Western allies hosted by UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Zelenskyy voiced Ukraine's support for the 30-day full ceasefire proposal to discuss a longer-term peace plan, but said Russia would attempt to derail talks with conditions and "buts".

Starmer has told allies to "keep the pressure" on Putin to back a ceasefire in



A Russian soldier walking along destroyed buildings in Sudzha, Kursk region, amid the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict

Ukraine, hailing Ukraine as the "party of peace". Starmer said Putin will "sooner or later" have to "come to the table".

In a statement earlier on Saturday, Zelenskyy had accused Moscow of building up forces along the border.

"The build up of Russian forces indicates that Moscow intends to keep ignoring diplomacy. It is clear that Russia is prolonging the war," he said.

However, Zelenskyy stressed that if Russia did not agree with the US proposal there would be "specific, harsh and straightforward" response from the administration of US President Donald Trump.

He also said that Kyiv's troops were maintaining

their presence in Russia's Kursk region after Trump said Friday that "thousands" of Ukrainian troops had been surrounded by the Russian military.

"The operation of our forces in the designated areas of the Kursk region continues," Zelenskyy said. "Our troops continue to hold back Russian and North Korean groupings in the Kursk region. There is no encirclement of our troops."

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio spoke Saturday with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. In the call, they discussed next steps to follow up on recent meetings in Saudi Arabia and agreed to continue working towards restoring communication

MACRON SAYS FRENCH-BRITISH BLUEPRINT DOESN'T FORESEE DEPLOYING MASS OF SOLDIERS IN UKRAINE

AP, PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron has fleshed out some possible missions that could be undertaken by a military support force for Ukraine that Paris and London are working to put together with other nations, in a so-called "coalition of the willing" that could deploy after any ceasefire with Russia. Speaking to French media ahead of an online summit that the UK hosted on Saturday, Macron said the French-British



blueprint doesn't aim to deploy a "mass" of soldiers in Ukraine and instead envisages stationing troop contingents in key locations. Macron's office said Sunday that it couldn't provide a recording of the French leader's exchange

with reporters from regional French newspapers on Friday night. But according to La Dépêche du Midi and Le Parisien, the French president spoke of participating nations each deploying several thousand troops to "key points" in Ukraine. Their missions could include providing training and supporting Ukrainian defences, to demonstrate long-term support for Kyiv, the reports quoted Macron as saying.

between the United States and Russia, State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce said in a statement.

Ukraine's air force said Saturday that Russia had launched a barrage of 178 drones and two ballistic missiles over the country overnight. The attack was a mixture of Shahed-type drones and imitation drones designed to confuse air defences. Some 130 drones were shot down, while 38 more failed to reach their targets.

Russia attacked energy facilities, causing signifi-

cant damage, striking energy infrastructure in the Dnipropetrovsk and Odesa regions, Ukraine's private energy company DTEK said in a statement on Saturday. Some residents were left without electricity.

"The damage is significant. Energy workers are already working on the ground. We are doing everything possible to restore power to homes as soon as possible," the energy firm said.

Falling drone debris in Russia's Volgograd region sparked a fire in the

Krasnoarmeysky district of the city, close to a Lukoil oil refinery, according to Gov. Andrei Bocharov, who provided no further details. Nearby airports temporarily halted flights, local media outlets reported. No casualties were reported.

The Volgograd refinery has been targeted by Kyiv's forces on several occasions since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine more than three years ago, most recently in a drone attack on February 15.

FROM PAGE 1

GU TEACHER'S NAME COMES UP IN QUESTION PAPER THEFT SCANDAL

The Agassaim Police said, "We tried to contact the Goa University vice-chancellor but his mobile was switched off. Being a Sunday, the university is closed and we will visit the vice-chancellor tomorrow to conduct any inquiry."

Speaking to mediapersons, Kashinath Shetye alleged, "The matter was brought to the notice of Goa University but no action was taken. The incident was hushed up by the Registrar and Vice Chancellor of the University. We have now filed a complaint demanding that the earlier question paper be cancelled and a fresh examination be conducted."

Despite the gravity of the matter, the university administration allegedly issued only a warning to the accused professor and did not cancel the examination or issue fresh question papers.

Vice Chancellor Prof Menon assured that the university will launch a full-scale inquiry starting Monday and clarified that the administration will not tolerate any action that compromises the integrity of the institution.

Condemning the incident, NSUI Goa demanded that services of the accused be terminated and strict legal action be taken against him.

In a statement NSUI said, "NSUI Goa strongly condemns the shocking incident of question paper leakage at Goa University. A professor caught red-handed breaking academic integrity cannot be let off with just a 'Tambli'. This is a betrayal of students' trust! We demand his immediate termination and strict legal action against all involved. Goa University must stop covering up corruption and ensure fair education for all. NSUI Goa will not stay silent until justice is served!"

HIT BY WATER CRISIS, CURTI LOCALS FILE POLICE COMPLAINT

It may be recalled that the residents had gheraoed PWD AE Kashinath Saraf during their protest at the PWD office at Daag-Ponda and had threatened to stage a rasta roko if water supply was not restored.

The supply was restored for some time, but the problem continued.

The locals from Bethora also marched to the PWD office over the water crisis in their area.

MACEDONIA NIGHTCLUB FIRE KILLS 59, LEAVES 155 INJURED

Health Minister Arben Taravari said 118 people have been hospitalised, adding that he had received offers of assistance from neighbouring countries, including Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia.

"All our capabilities have been put to use, in a maximum effort to save as many lives as possible of the young people involved in this tragedy," Taravari told reporters, at times looking visibly shaken.

This is the worst tragedy in recent mem-

ory to befall the landlocked nation, whose population is less than 2 million.

President Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova visited burn victims at a hospital in Skopje and spoke to parents waiting outside the building.

"It's terrible... hard to believe how this happened," she said, her voice halting with emotion. "We must give these young people courage to continue."

In an online post, Prime Minister Hristijan Mickoski wrote: "This is a difficult and very sad day for Macedonia. The loss of so many young lives is irreparable, and the pain of the families, loved ones and friends is immeasurable."

Family members gathered in front of hospitals and city offices in Kocani, some 115 kilometres east of Skopje, begging authorities for more information.

The club was in an old building that was previously a carpet warehouse and has been running for several years, according to local media MKD.

The fire caused the roof of the single-story building to partially collapse, revealing the charred remains of wooden beams and debris. Police cordoned off the site and sent in evidence gathering teams in an operation also involving state prosecutors.

A State prosecutor, Ljubco Kocovski, said several people were being questioned by police but gave no further details and stressed that the cause of the blaze was still being investigated.

Interior ministry officials said authorities would investigate the venue's licensing and safety provisions, adding that the government had a "moral responsibility" to help prosecute anyone responsible.

Police have arrested one man already, but didn't provide details on the person's involvement.

As they awoke to news of the overnight tragedy, the country's immediate neighbours and leaders from further afield in Europe sent condolences.

The European Union's foreign policy chief, Kaja Kallas, posted on X that she was "deeply saddened" and said the 27-nation bloc "shares the grief and pain of the people of North Macedonia."

North Macedonia is a candidate for EU membership.

Condolences also poured in from politicians across the region, including Albania's Prime Minister Edi Rama, the European Commissioner for Enlargement, Marta Kos, and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

"I wish those who were injured a speedy recovery. Ukraine mourns alongside our (North) Macedonian friends on this sad day," Zelenskyy wrote on X.

Pyrotechnics have often been the cause of deadly fires in nightclubs, including the one at the Colectiv club in Bucharest, Romania, in 2015 in which 64 people died.

DRUG CARTEL BUSTED IN K'TAKA

Authorities discovered MDMA concealed in their trolley bags, alongside four mobile phones, passports, and Rs 18,000 in cash. Police sources indicate that the arrested individuals were allegedly supplying drugs

to Nigerian peddlers operating in Bengaluru and other regions.

Additionally, they are suspected of using forged passports and visas for travel. The investigation is ongoing to trace the larger network behind the illicit drug trade, officials said.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said the operation of the Mangalore City Police in which the largest quantity of drugs was detected in the history of the State in which two accused have been arrested, was commendable.

"By seizing 37 kg of MDMA worth over 75 crores, our police have averted a major danger that was about to face the lives of thousands of young people," he said in a post on X in Kannada.

"Since the first day we came to power, we have been committed to building a drug-free society and have waged a war against drug sales and consumption," he said.

Recalling his visit to Mangaluru a few months ago, he said, "I had promised the people of the district that we would curb the drug menace and create a healthy environment in the district. As part of our ef-

forts, a huge drug network has now been unearthed. Our government's goal is to eradicate the drug network that has spread across the State."

NEW CREW REACHES SPACE STATION, SUNITA WILLIAMS TO BE BACK SOON

"It was a wonderful day. Great to see our friends arrive," Williams told Mission Control.

Wilmore's and Williams' ride arrived back in late September with a downsized crew of two and two empty seats reserved for the leg back. But more delays resulted when their replacements' brand new capsule needed extensive battery repairs. An older capsule took its place, pushing up their return by a couple weeks to mid-March.

Weather permitting, the SpaceX capsule carrying Wilmore, Williams and two other astronauts will undock from the space station no earlier than Wednesday and splash down off Florida's coast.

Until then, there will be 11 aboard the orbiting lab, representing the US, Russia and Japan.

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SAD DEMISE



Born 29/04/1942

Died 16/03/2025

SANTOBARAO K. DESAI

(Ex. DYSP Goa Police Department) (Khadpabandh, Ponda - Goa)

Son of Late Krishnarao S. Desai / Late Durgabai K. Desai.

Husband of Sulakshana S. Desai.

Beloved Father / Father in law of

Nitin Rao Desai / Sweta N. Desai, Bharati / Ajay Jadhav.

Brother of Manik Rao Desai, Hambir Rao Desai.

Grandfather of Jairath, Aaryaman, Sanvi.

Funeral will be held on Monday 17th March 2025 at 1.00 pm at Thane Valpoi Goa.

Relatives and friends kindly accept this as the only intimation