



A protester holds a sign against Tesla CEO Elon Musk while rallying outside a Tesla store in San Francisco



US Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth (L) with Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba during their meeting at the Prime Minister's office in Tokyo



Flooded households are seen in the village of Gomjenica, near North-Western Bosnian town of Prijedor, after heavy rain fall



Muslim worshippers offer Eid al-Fitr prayer in the mixed Arab Jewish city of Jaffa, near Tel Aviv, Israel

allovertheworld



A seagull flies above the Dome of St Peter's Basilica while the Pope is unavailable due to illness and will not lead the Angelus prayer at the Vatican

Greenland prime minister says US will not get Greenland

NUUK: The prime minister of Greenland pushed back Sunday against assertions by US President Donald Trump that America will take control of the island territory. Greenland, a huge, resource-rich island in the Atlantic, is a self-governing territory of Denmark, a NATO ally of the United States. Trump wants to annex the territory, claiming it's needed for national security purposes. "President Trump says that the United States will not get Greenland. Let me be clear: The United States will not get it. We do not belong to anyone else. We decide our own future," Jens-Frederik Nielsen said in a Facebook post. Nielsen's post comes a day after the US president told NBC News that military force wasn't off the table with regard to acquiring Greenland. In Saturday's interview, Trump allowed that "I think there's a good possibility that we could do it without military force."

Nigerian military says Shiite protesters fired at soldiers

ABUJA: The Nigerian military on Sunday blamed "violent" demonstrators who opened fire at security forces for clashes at a protest in the capital that left 12 dead. The protest, held Friday in Abuja by the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN), saw supporters of the banned Shiite movement gather for Quds Day, which is marked around the world with pro-Palestinian demonstrations. Eleven protesters and one soldier were killed, according to a government intelligence report seen by AFP. Amnesty International's Nigeria branch said soldiers fired live rounds at protesters as a form of crowd control - events the military disputed. "Sadly, in the exchange of fire that ensued as the troops defended themselves, one soldier was killed in action while two were wounded."

Rocket carrying European orbital vehicle crashes after launch

OSLO: The first orbital rocket launched from continental Europe crashed seconds after blast-off Sunday, dealing a blow to the continent's bid to build a new space economy. The Spectrum rocket, developed by German start-up Isar Aerospace, started smoking from its sides, then crashed back to Earth with a powerful explosion just after launching from Norway's Andoya Spaceport in the Arctic, in live video broadcast on YouTube. Orbital rockets are designed to place loads such as satellites into or beyond Earth's orbit. Spectrum's blast-off was the first of an orbital launch vehicle from the European continent, excluding Russia, and Europe's first financed almost exclusively by the private sector. The launch had been repeatedly postponed due to weather conditions, and Isar Aerospace had downplayed expectations.

Morning-after pill to be made free in England pharmacies

LONDON: The "morning-after" pill, a form of emergency contraception, will be made available over the counter for free in pharmacies in England this year, the UK government said Sunday. Currently, women can get the pill for free from sexual health clinics run by the National Health Service (NHS) and most GP surgeries. But it can cost up to £30 (\$38) to get the emergency contraceptive over the counter at pharmacies. Starting later this year, the pill will be available for free at pharmacies, aiming to "reduce inequalities," according to a Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) statement. The move will also help free up GPs by reducing the need for women to make appointments to access the pill, the DHSC said. The government will announce additional details on Monday as part of a "package of investment and reform" for community and retail pharmacies.

Japan issues mid-level volcano warning

TOKYO: Japanese authorities issued a mid-level warning Sunday for a volcano in the southwestern Kyushu region, telling people not to approach and that an eruption "may occur". There was, however, no evacuation order for local residents near the Shinmoedake volcano, part of the Kirishimayama cluster. "Volcano warning issued for Kirishimayama (Shinmoedake) (near crater) (Volcanic alert Level 3; Do not approach the volcano). An eruption may occur. Follow local government's instructions and stay away from dangerous areas;" the disaster management agency said on X. Japan has scores of active volcanoes and sits on the so-called Pacific "Ring of Fire" where a large proportion of the world's earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are recorded.

Iran has rejected direct negotiations with US in response to Trump's letter

AP, DUBAI: Iran's president said Sunday that the Islamic Republic rejected direct negotiations with the United States over its rapidly advancing nuclear programme, offering Tehran's first response to a letter that US President Donald Trump sent to the country's supreme leader. President Masoud Pezeshkian said that Iran's response, delivered via the sultanate of Oman, left open the possibility of indirect negotiations with Washington. However, such talks have made no progress since Trump in his first term unilaterally withdrew the US from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers in 2018. In the years since, regional tensions have boiled over into attacks at sea

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Pezeshkian had left open discussions until Iran's 85-year-old Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei came down hard on Trump in February and warned talks "are not intelligent, wise or honorable" with his administration. The Iranian president then immediately toughened his own remarks on the US. Meanwhile, there have been mixed messages coming from Iran for weeks. Videos from Quds, or Jerusalem, Day demonstrations on Friday had people in the crowds instructing participants to only shout: "Death to Israel!" Typically, "Death to America" was also heard. A video of an underground missile base unveiled by Iran's hard-line paramilitary Revolutionary Guard also showed its troops stepping on an Israeli flag painted on the ground - though there was no American flag as often seen in such propaganda videos. However, Tehran's two recent direct attacks on Israel with ballistic missiles and drones caused negligible damage, while Israel responded by destroying Iranian air defense systems.

and on land. Then came the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip, which saw Israel target militant group leaders across Iran's self-described "Axis of Resistance." Now, as the US conducts intense airstrikes targeting the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels of Yemen, the risk of military action targeting Iran's nuclear programme remains on the table. "We don't avoid talks; it's the breach of promises that has caused issues for us so far," Pezeshkian said in televised remarks during a Cabinet meeting. "They must prove that they can build trust." Iran's position hardens after Trump's letter

Private European aerospace startup completes first test flight of orbital launch vehicle

AP, OSLO: A rocket by a private European aerospace company launched from Norway on Sunday and crashed into the sea 30 seconds later. Despite the short test flight, Isar Aerospace said that it successfully completed the first test flight of its orbital launch vehicle by launching its Spectrum rocket from the island of Andøya in northern Norway. The 28-metre-long Spectrum is a two-stage launch vehicle specifically designed to put small and medium satellites into orbit. The rocket lifted off from the pad at 12:30 pm (10:30 GMT) Sunday and flew for about a half-minute before the flight was terminated, Isar said.

"This allowed the company to gather a substantial amount of flight data and experience to apply on future missions," Isar said in a statement. "After the flight was terminated at T+30 seconds, the launch vehicle fell into the sea in a controlled manner." Video from the launch shows the rocket taking off from the pad, flying into the air and then coming back down to crash into the sea in a fiery explosion. The launch was subject to various factors, including weather and safety, and Sunday's liftoff followed a week of poor conditions, including a scrubbed launch on March 24 because of unfavourable winds, and



Picture shows the start of the "Spectrum" rocket from German space company Isar Aerospace that exploded seconds after launch at Andoya Spaceport in Norway

on Saturday for weather restrictions. "Our first test flight met all our expectations, achieving a great success," Daniel Metzler, Isar's chief executive and co-founder, said in the statement. "We had a clean liftoff, 30 seconds of flight and even got to validate our Flight Termination System."

US carries out strike against IS in Somalia

AFP, WASHINGTON: The US military carried out an air strike Saturday against the Islamic State group in the Puntland region of Somalia, killing several IS operatives, Africa Command said. In a statement, the European-based command said the latest raid was conducted in coordination with the Somali government and hit "multiple ISIS-Somalia targets." The IS group's Somalia operation is relatively small compared to the Al Qaeda-linked jihadists Al-Shabaab, but it has been gaining strength in semi-autonomous Puntland.

"The airstrike occurred southeast of Bosaso, Puntland, in Northeastern Somalia," the AFRICOM statement said. "AFRICOM's initial assessment is that multiple ISIS-Somalia operatives were killed and no civilians were harmed," it said. The latest strike follows a similar operation two days earlier that AFRICOM said complemented "a larger counter-terrorism initiative" under way in Somalia. And it follows US strikes in February, which Puntland authorities said had killed "key figures" in IS, without giving further details.

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SMART CITY: DEATH OF YET ANOTHER DEADLINE

Chrysell Dias, a Panjim resident said, "Smart City work has been abandoned opposite the Head Post Office causing major inconvenience and health issues to residents. No workers have been seen for almost a month. Controversial footpath has been left incomplete without drainage which will result in rainwater accumulation in the parking area. Pavers have been dumped right in front of the "ramp", preventing residents from getting in and out. The cement dust from the abandoned work is causing dust pollution with the "islands" created for landscaping causing severe respiratory issues. Requests to Smart City to finish the work have gone unheeded, despite being in the immediate vicinity of their office." Sanjay Sarmalkar, another resident, said, "I do not know why "unrealistic" deadlines are being set when the Smart City authorities know that the works will take at least three years to complete. They are under pressure and carrying out substandard work." Sangita Parab said, "I do not know when the work will be ready. Roads are being dug, re-dug without informing us. What to do?" On the condition of anonymity, a businesswoman said, "We are fed up with these works. Already there is decline in customers and these works of digging up roads and trenches in front of the shops are adding salt to injuries." Though IPSCDL has not released latest update on the completed and remaining projects under the Smart City Mission, in February this year, the special purpose vehicle had said that in Central Panjim, the roadworks are being carried out in multiple phases and while a total of 3,400 metres of roads have been completed, 3,450 metres are pending. Recently, Union Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Tokhan Sahu had informed the Rajya Sabha that challenges encountered in implementing projects including inter alia, delay in obtaining clearances from different departments, land acquisition, groundwater issues, seasonal rains and others were some of the reasons for the delay in completing the Smart City works in Panjim. In response to a question tabled by MP Sadanand Shet Tanavade, the minister said that besides the above reasons, challenges in vendor and resource availability in the city and the procurement of construction material were the other reasons for the delay. It was informed that as on March 4, 2025, the IPSCDL has been able to claim Central financial assistance of Rs 441 crore under Smart Cities Mission, out of which Rs 411 crore have been utilised. Also IPSCDL has undertaken 51 projects amounting to Rs 1,051 crore, out of which 42 projects amounting to Rs 849 crore have been completed. Nine projects amounting to Rs 202 crore are ongoing.

'NO SCHOOL IN APRIL' SLOGAN REVERBERATES AT LOHIA MAIDAN

He accused the government of blindly copying policies from Delhi without understanding Goa's realities. "They don't even know Goa's seasons. While Goa reels under

extreme heat in April, they push children back into classrooms just because April is pleasant in Delhi." Sardesai questioned why online classes—deemed sufficient during Covid—weren't considered and criticised the proposed school timings as impractical for working parents. He alleged that the government was ignoring public opposition simply because the protest was led by the Opposition. "Just because Cecille Rodrigues and others are leading this, the government has turned it into an ego issue. This is sheer "dadagiri". But we know how to take on such a government," he said. Sardesai also criticised the newly proposed school timings of 8 am to 11 am, arguing that they were unfair to working parents. "How can parents with full-time jobs manage pickups in the middle of their workday? This decision is disconnected from ground reality." Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) Benaullim MLA Venzy Viegas revealed that he had questioned Chief Minister Pramod Sawant in the Assembly, but claimed that the CM failed to provide a proper answer. "The CM relies on officials in air-conditioned rooms who don't grasp how unbearable this will be for students," Viegas stated. He suggested that if parents don't get relief from the court before April 7, they should protest outside schools with placards after dropping their children off. AAP's Velim MLA Cruz Silva recalled how an earlier decision to start the academic year from April 1 was also made suddenly before being reversed after parents petitioned the High Court. He had raised the issue in two Assembly sessions without receiving answers. Silva sought details, including minutes of stakeholder meetings, and noted his own child is still in school. He pointed out that South Indian States modified the NEP to suit their students rather than blindly following it. "If Goa follows everything from the Centre without questioning, it should rename the Goa Board as the Central Board," he remarked. Local activist Pratima Coutinho defended the quality of Goa Board education, countering claims that the calendar change was necessary for academic improvement. She cited ministers, MLAs, former ministers, and successful professionals who had studied under the Goa Board. The meeting culminated in an interactive session where children took the stage to dance and sing along to a resistance anthem, which resonated deeply with the audience as a powerful expression of their determination to fight for their children's rights. PARENTS SUBMIT MEMORANDUM HIGHLIGHTING FUNDAMENTAL FLAWS Parents argue that the previous June start, aligned with Goa's monsoon season, was deliberately chosen after legislative deliberation to avoid health risks like dehydration and heatstroke. The new schedule also disrupts holistic learning, as compulsory classroom hours exceed NCFSE recommendations, leaving no room for optional enrichment programs like sports or skill-building camps—a key NEP objective.

Beyond logistical failures, the memorandum questions the very rationale for the shift. Unlike CBSE/ICSE boards, neither NEP nor NCFSE mandates an April start, and Goa's existing 220+ school days already meet instructional targets. Instead of easing academic pressure, the State has increased syllabi and classroom hours, worsening student stress. With their demands now reaching the Centre through MP Fernandes, parents are now seeking national intervention to protect Goa's children from what they call an ill-conceived, harmful policy. A CLARION CALL TO CHURCHES IN ASIA TO ADDRESS ECOLOGICAL CRISIS The letter also addresses the increasing threat of stronger and more frequent extreme weather events, noting that "the warming of the Pacific Ocean is precipitating frequent and ever-intensified typhoons that have disastrous effects on the Southeast Asian countries facing the Pacific Ocean." These powerful storms, the document states, are "a reminder that our inaction on climate change will only deepen the suffering of our most vulnerable brothers and sisters." Cardinal Ferrão highlighted that these ecological tragedies disproportionately affect "Asia's poorest and most vulnerable communities—coastal families whose homes are washed away, farmers who can no longer grow crops, and children who suffer from polluted air and water." Despite these challenges, the FABC pointed to encouraging developments, including community-led reforestation efforts, diocesan renewable energy projects, youth environmental activism, and interfaith collaborations for climate justice. The call to action focuses on four critical dimensions: mitigation efforts to meet the 1.5°C global goal; adaptation measures to support vulnerable communities; advocacy for stronger environmental legislation; and climate financing rooted in justice, including debt relief for nations struggling to address climate challenges. The letter also encourages local Churches to participate actively in the upcoming COP 30 climate conference in Belém, Brazil, in 2025, and to embrace the Season of Creation (September 1-October 4) as a time for spiritual and ecological renewal. "We must not let fear or apathy paralyse us. Instead, let us walk the Pilgrimage of Hope together, responding with faith and courage," the Cardinal urged. The FABC, representing Catholic bishops across Asia, has positioned this ecological initiative as central to the Church's mission in the region. For parishes in Goa, where Cardinal Ferrão serves as Archbishop, the letter provides a framework for local action, including implementing renewable energy solutions, conducting environmental education programs, and promoting sustainable lifestyle practices among congregations. The pastoral letter was co-signed by Cardinal Pablo David, Vice President of FABC, and Cardinal Isao Kikuchi, Secretary General, demonstrating unified leadership on this crucial issue facing the Church and communities throughout Asia.