



Flags flutter at Amalienborg Palace in Copenhagen on the occasion of Princess Isabella's 18th birthday, in Denmark



US Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth speaks to reporters during the White House Easter Egg Roll on the South Lawn of the White House, in Washington, DC



Broken power poles and power lines dangle across the parking lot of Quality Inn in Ada, Okla., after severe weather passed the area



A volunteer of the Edhi Foundation sprays water on a passerby's head to cool off on a hot summer day along a road amid the ongoing heatwave in Karachi

allovertheworld



A general view of atmosphere at the 2025 Coachella Valley Music And Arts Festival in Indio, California

South Korea ex-president back in court for criminal trial

SEOUL: South Korea's former president Yoon Suk Yeol appeared in court Monday for the second hearing of his criminal trial to defend himself against insurrection charges over his short-lived declaration of martial law. Yoon was formally stripped of office earlier this month, after being impeached and suspended by lawmakers over his December 3 attempt to subvert civilian rule, which saw armed soldiers deployed to parliament. He became South Korea's first sitting head of state to be arrested in January in connection with the criminal case against him, although he was later released on procedural grounds. Yoon's court appearance on Monday is the first time media were allowed to film the former president's criminal trial, where he was seated in the defendant's chair before proceedings began.

El Salvador offers to swap US deportees with Venezuela

SAN SALVADOR: Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele offered Venezuela Sunday a trade of 252 Venezuelans deported to his country by the United States for an equal number of political prisoners held by President Nicolas Maduro's regime. The offer followed a broadside from President Donald Trump against US Supreme Court judges who on Saturday ordered a halt to removals like that of the Venezuelans, which the administration has carried out under an obscure wartime law. "I want to propose to you a humanitarian agreement calling for the repatriation of 100 percent of the 252 Venezuelans who were deported," Bukele wrote to Maduro on X. The prisoners would be sent "in exchange for the release and handing over of an identical number from among the thousands of political prisoners that you hold," he added.

Gunmen attack Chinese-owned power plant site in Chile

SANTIAGO: Gunmen attacked a Chinese-owned hydroelectric plant under construction in Chile Sunday, setting fire to dozens of trucks and heavy earth-moving equipment, police said. The Rucalhue power plant is being built by Rucalhue Energia Spa, a unit of China International Water and Electric Corporation (CWE), and is projected to cost \$350 million. It is being built along the Bío-bío, one of Chile's main rivers, and is opposed by Indigenous people who say it will harm the environment. Security guards at the job site said assailants with guns showed up and threatened them. They then "proceeded to burn all the equipment there was at the site," said police chief Renzo Miccono. The attackers burned 45 trucks and five pieces of earth-moving equipment, he said. Two security guards were wounded in the attack on the site, which is 550 kilometres south of Santiago.

Bangladesh's Islamists seek abolition of women's commission

DHAKA: Bangladesh's influential Islamist coalition has demanded the abolition of a government women's commission, a further indication of how hardline, religiously fuelled activism is strengthening after years of suppression. The women's commission is part of efforts to reform systems installed during the iron-fisted rule of Sheikh Hasina, who was overthrown by student-led mass protests in August 2024. Hefazat-e-Islam, a platform of religious seminaries, wants the cancellation of the Women's Affairs Reforms Commission, set up by the caretaker government of Nobel Peace prize winner Mohammed Yunus. Azizul Haque Islamabadi, a senior Hefazat-e-Islam leader, said the group opposed the commission's recommendation for ending discriminatory provisions against women. "Ensuring equality is a Western ideology," Islamabadi told AFP.

Pakistan extends detention for ethnic Baloch activist: lawyer

QUETTA: Pakistan extended the detention of the most prominent rights activist of the Baloch minority for 30 days on Monday after she was charged with "terrorism", "sedition" and "murder", her lawyer told AFP. Mahrang Baloch, 32, has long campaigned for the Baloch ethnic group, which claims it is targeted with harassment and extrajudicial killings. She was detained on March 22 for 30 days but "the government has issued another notification ordering to detain her for 30 days more", her lawyer Imran Baloch said. A dozen UN experts called on Pakistan in March to immediately release Baloch rights defenders, including Mahrang, and to end the repression of their peaceful protests.

China to retaliate with sanctions on US officials, NGO leaders over Hong Kong row

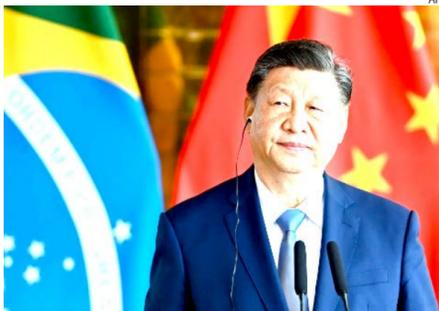
AP, HONG KONG: China will sanction United States officials, lawmakers and leaders of non-governmental organisations who it says have "performed poorly" on Hong Kong issues, the foreign ministry announced.

The US in March sanctioned six Chinese and Hong Kong officials who it alleged were involved in "transnational repression" and acts threatening to further erode the city's autonomy.

The officials included Justice Secretary Paul Lam, security office director Dong Jingwei and former police commissioner Raymond Siu.

In a retaliatory move against Washington, DC, on Monday, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun in Beijing said China strongly condemned the acts, calling them "despicable".

The US has seriously in-



The tit-for-tat sanctions over Hong Kong's human rights issues are the latest sign of rising tensions between Beijing and Washington, which are already locked in a trade war that has rattled businesses on both sides

terfered in the affairs of Hong Kong and violated international law principles, he said.

"China has decided to impose sanctions on US congressmen, officials, and NGO leaders who have performed poorly on Hong Kong-related issues," Guo said, adding the response

was made according to the anti-foreign sanctions law. He did not provide more details about who is being targeted.

Guo also issued a warning about Hong Kong, saying the southern Chinese city's affairs are not subject to US interference. Any actions considered wrong by

the Chinese government that are taken on Hong Kong-related issues will be met with firm countermeasures and reciprocal retaliation, he said.

The tit-for-tat sanctions over Hong Kong's human rights issues are the latest sign of rising tensions between Beijing and Washington, which are already locked in a trade war that has rattled businesses on both sides.

Beijing separately warned other countries on Monday against making trade deals with the US to China's detriment.

The US sanctions on officials in March were not the first related to the former British colony, which returned to Chinese rule in 1997. During Donald Trump's first presidential term, his government imposed sanctions on Hong Kong and Chinese officials for undermining Hong Kong's autonomy.

In 2021, former President Joe Biden's administration slapped more sanctions on officials over Beijing's crackdown on political freedoms in the semi-autonomous city.

Since China imposed a national security law in 2020 to quell the 2019 massive anti-government protests, Hong Kong authorities have prosecuted many of the city's leading activists.

Media outlets known for their critical reports of the government shut down following arrests of their top management. Dozens of civil society groups disbanded.

Over the past two years, Hong Kong authorities have issued arrest warrants for 19 activists based overseas, with bounties of USD 1 million Hong Kong dollars (USD 128,536) for information leading to each of their arrests. Some of them resided in the US.

Pak security forces kill 10 suspected terrorists in Punjab

PTI, LAHORE: Law enforcement agencies on Monday shot dead 10 suspected terrorists of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in Punjab province, police said.

According to a statement, personnel of Punjab police and the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) conducted a joint operation in Makarwal in Mianwali district of Punjab, some 325 kilometres from Lahore, in the early hours of Monday and killed at least 10 suspected terrorists and injured several others.

No personnel were killed or injured in the operation, it added. A citizen was injured in the operation because of the firing of the terrorists, the statement said. Punjab Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Usman Anwar praised the Mianwali police and the CTD for successful operation against the terrorists of TTP.

Yemen's Huthis say US strikes on Sanaa kill at least 12

AFP, SANA'A: Yemen's Huthis said early Monday that US air strikes on Sanaa killed at least 12 people and wounded 30, with a military spokesperson later claiming attacks on US aircraft carriers and Israel.

The Huthi-run Saba news agency cited the ministry as saying the dead and injured had come from overnight strikes "by the American enemy" on a market and a residential zone in Sanaa's Farwa district.

Other raids were reported late Sunday in the central province of Marib, Hodeida in the west and the Huthi bastion of Saada in



People assess the damage caused by a US airstrike in a neighbourhood in the Huthi-controlled Yemeni capital Sanaa

the north, Saba said.

Huthi military spokesman Yahya Saree said the group launched attacks on two US aircraft carriers in re-

sponse to the latest deadly American strikes.

The Huthis also targeted two Israeli locations with drones, he said.

FESTIVAL VOYAGE



Participants pose while riding aboard a traditional dhow boat cruising in the Gulf waters during the handline fishing competition of the Senyar Festival off Sealine south of Doha

Pope Francis died of a stroke: Vatican

AFP, VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis died of a stroke, causing a coma and "irreversible" heart failure, according to his death certificate released by the Vatican on Monday.

The 88-year-old Catholic leader died on Monday morning, almost a month after having been discharged from five weeks in hospital where he nearly succumbed to double pneumonia.

Francis died at 7.35 am in his apartment at the Santa Marta residence in the Vatican. He died of "cerebral stroke, coma, irreversible cardiocirculatory collapse", the death certificate said.

The pontiff had already been affected by a previous episode of acute respiratory



Romanian Catholics attend a religious service in the memory of late Pope Francis at St Joseph Cathedral in Bucharest

failure when he had double pneumonia in hospital, it added.

He had also suffered from arterial hypertension, multiple bronchiectasis and Type 2 diabetes - something that was not previously known.

It was signed by the director of health of the Vatican City State, professor Andrea Arcangeli.

Pope asked for simple, unadorned tomb for final resting place

AFP, VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis revealed his last wishes in his will published Monday, asking to be buried in a simple, unadorned tomb inside his beloved Roman basilica, Santa Maria Maggiore.

"Feeling that the sunset of my earthly life is approaching and with lively hope in Eternal Life, I wish to express my testamentary will only as regards the place of my burial," wrote the pope in his will dated June 29, 2022, that was published Monday by the Vatican.

"I ask that my mortal remains rest awaiting the day of the resurrection in the Papal Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore," wrote the pope, who sought to visit the important Catholic sanctuary before and after

every trip he took as pontiff. In his will, Francis specified the exact spot in the side nave of the basilica for his tomb, even including an attached diagram for clarity, and said the burial expenses had been arranged in advance.

"The tomb must be in the earth; simple, without particular decoration and with the only inscription: Franciscus."

In closing his will, the spiritual leader of the world's Catholics asked the Lord to "give the deserved reward to those who loved me and will continue to pray for me".

"I offered the suffering that became present in the last part of my life to the Lord for world peace and brotherhood among peoples."

One day before Pope Francis' death, Vice Prez Vance meeting him on Easter Sunday



Romanian Catholics attend a religious service in the memory of late Pope Francis at St Joseph Cathedral in Bucharest

AP, WASHINGTON: One of Pope Francis' final encounters before his death was with US Vice President JD Vance, who visited the Vatican over the weekend.

The meeting took place on Easter Sunday. Vance, a Catholic convert, entered the room and reached down for the pope's hand. "Hello," the vice president said. "So good to see you." Francis was sitting in a wheelchair, and his words were inaudible in a video released by the Vatican.

"I know you've not been feeling great, but it's good see you in better health," Vance said. A priest serving as a translator spoke for the pope.

"These are for your children," the priest said as someone presented Vance with chocolate eggs. Next came a tray of additional gifts, including rosaries and a Vatican tie.

"Thank you," Vance said as he held the dark tie. "So beautiful." They posed for a photo, Vance standing to the pope's right before bidding him farewell.

THE RITES AND RITUALS FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF A POPE, HIS FUNERAL AND BURIAL

AP, VATICAN CITY: The death of a pope sets in motion a series of carefully orchestrated rites and rituals well before the conclave to elect his successor begins. They involve the certification of death and public display of his body for the faithful to pay their respects, followed by the funeral and burial. Pope Francis, who died on Monday, revised various rites last year, simplifying the funeral rituals to emphasize his role as a mere bishop and allowing for burial outside the Vatican in keeping with his wishes. But the core elements remain, including the three key moments that must be observed between the death of a pope and his burial. The reforms are incorporated into the slim red volume "Ordo Exsequiarum Romani Pontificis," Latin for "Rite of Burial for Roman Pontiffs."

"I pray for you every day," Vance said. "God bless you."

Vance's visit was not without political sensitivities, and he met with Cardinal Pietro Parolin on Saturday for what the Vatican described as "an exchange of opinions".

The Catholic Church, under Francis' leadership, has championed the rights of migrants, while Vance and

President Donald Trump have advocated for crackdowns.

Vance's office said the vice president and the cardinal "discussed their shared religious faith, Catholicism in the United States, the plight of persecuted Christian communities around the world, and President Trump's commitment to restoring world peace".

Poliovirus detected in all Karachi districts ahead of vaccination drive

PTI, KARACHI: Pakistan's Health Minister Mustafa Kamal on Monday highlighted the urgent need for action to combat polio and said environmental samples detected the presence of the poliovirus in all districts of Karachi. The minister's statement comes a day after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday launched a seven-day nationwide anti-polio campaign aimed at

inoculating millions of children under the age of five, Geo News reported. Kamal said over 44,000 families, with 34,000 in Karachi alone, refused to have their children vaccinated during the previous anti-polio campaign.

Kamal said this time, efforts were being made to convince hesitant parents about the importance of the vaccine.

He also clarified that UNICEF was responsible for procuring the polio vaccine for the country.

Providing a regional perspective, Kamal said anti-polio campaigns were underway across Afghanistan except in Kandahar.

Meanwhile, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Monday officially launched the campaign in Karachi.

He reaffirmed the Sindh government's commitment to eradicating the disease and stressed that protecting children from polio was a collective national responsibility.

Providing details of the vaccination campaign, Shah said that more than 10 million children across Sindh, including over 2.7 million in Karachi alone, would be administered polio drops.