



**Former Alaska Gov Sarah Palin leaves Manhattan federal court, after testifying in her defamation trial against the NY Times, in New York**



**City Mayor Alfred Romualdez talks during an interview with AFP in Tacloban City, province of Leyte, a day after the death of Pope Francis**



**Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange during morning trading on in New York City**



**Brazilian Prez Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva (R), with Chile's Prez Gabriel Boric during a welcoming ceremony at Planalto Palace in Brasilia, Brazil**

allovertheworld



**Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer (L) and New Zealand's Prime Minister Christopher Luxon (R) talk with New Zealand troops involved with land mine training, during a visit to a British army base in the west of England, where they saw the training of Ukrainian forces by the UK and New Zealand military as part of Operation Interflex**

**Taliban change tune towards Afghan heritage sites**

**GOWARJAN, (AFGHANISTAN):** In March 2001, the Taliban shocked the world by dynamiting the giant Buddhas of Bamiyan. Two decades later, they are back in power and claim to be making strides to preserve Afghanistan's millennia-old heritage, including pre-Islamic relics. Even months before their takeover in 2021 the Taliban called for the protection of ancient artefacts in the country, sparking scepticism among observers. "All have an obligation to robustly protect, monitor and preserve these artefacts" and sites in Afghanistan, the Taliban authorities declared in February that year. They are "part of our country's history, identity and rich culture". Since their return to power and decades of war ended, archaeological finds - particularly related to Buddhism - have proliferated, with discoveries publicised by the authorities.

**US Supreme Court to hear case against LGBTQ books in schools**

**WASHINGTON:** The conservative-dominated US Supreme Court is slated to hear a case on Tuesday about whether parents have the religious right to pull their children from classes when books containing LGBTQ-related content are read or discussed. The court will review an appeal filed by parents against a Maryland public school district where, in 2022, books aimed at combating prejudice and discussing homosexuality and gender identity were introduced to the curricula of kindergarten and elementary school students. The schools had initially offered parents the chance to opt out of controversial coursework, but later retracted the option, saying: "These opt-outs were unworkable. Some schools, for example, experienced unsustainably high numbers of absent students." Parents are suing because the opt-outs were canceled. They say the schools' inclusive curriculum choices infringe on their Christian and Muslim faiths and First Amendment rights.

**UAE urged to remove dissidents from terrorist list**

**BEIRUT:** The United Arab Emirates has designated several political dissidents and their relatives terrorists, Human Rights Watch said Tuesday, urging the wealthy Gulf country to repeal the decision. Eleven people and eight British-based companies were added to the terrorist list in January over links to the Muslim Brotherhood political movement that is banned in the UAE, official media said at the time. At least nine of the 11 are political dissidents or their relatives, and the companies are owned or previously owned by exiled Emirati dissidents or their families, Human Rights Watch said. "The move represents an escalation of the United Arab Emirates' transnational repression, targeting not only dissidents but also their family members," the rights group said in a statement.

**Myanmar rebels prepare to hand key city back to junta, China says**

**YANGON:** A Myanmar ethnic minority armed group is preparing to hand a captured city back to the military in a Beijing-brokered deal, China's foreign ministry said Tuesday, as residents reported junta troops already returning. The Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) ousted Myanmar's military from the city of Lashio in August 2024, capturing their northeastern command and a key trade route to China. Analysts say it was the worst strategic loss the military suffered since seizing power in a 2021 coup that sparked a civil war pitting the generals against anti-coup fighters and long-active ethnic armed groups. But Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun told reporters the MNDAA is set to relinquish the city to the military without firing a shot.

**Twelve children and teens drown in I.Coast boat capsizing: minister**

**ABIDJAN:** A boat overturned during a church outing for Easter on a lagoon near the city of Abidjan in Ivory Coast, killing 12 children and teenagers, a government minister told AFP Tuesday. "Twelve bodies have been recovered and are being taken to the morgue," said Sports Minister Adje Sillas Metch, who went during the night to the site of the accident late Monday. The bodies are "of children and adolescents", he added, saying one was a youngster who was not from the church but had joined the boat crossing. "Four people were rescued," he said. Young people from the village of Tiaha had gone to another village to take part in the "Galilee" event to mark the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The outing was organised by a Methodist church in Tiaha, about 60 kilometres (40 miles) from the economic capital, Abidjan, Gerard Gbato, deputy chief of the Dabou police district, told AFP.

# World leaders set to converge at Pope Francis's funeral

**AFP, PARIS:** Numerous world leaders have announced they will travel to Rome for Pope Francis's funeral on Saturday, which is expected to draw a huge crowd in the square in front of St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.

US President Donald Trump and his wife Melania will attend. Trump said in a social media post: "We look forward to being there!" President Javier Milei of Argentina, where the pope was born in 1936, will attend, his office said. The pope had a delicate relationship with politics in his homeland, but Milei hailed his "wisdom".

Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will attend with his wife Janja, his government said. Lula has said Francis "vigorously criticised the economic models that have brought so much injustice to humanity".

United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres will attend the funeral, his office said.

EU Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen and Antonio Costa, head of the European Council, will both travel to Rome.



**Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin, left, prays in front of the body of Pope Francis laid out in state inside his private chapel at the Vatican**

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer will attend, and Prince William will also go to represent head of state King Charles III.

Ireland's President Michael Higgins and his wife will travel to Rome for the ceremony, his office said, along with Prime Minister Micheal Martin.

Spain's King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia will attend, the royal palace said. Felipe called the pontiff "an enormous ethical beacon of our world, of our time".

French President Emmanuel Macron, who cut short a visit to the Indian Ocean region after the pope's death, told reporters: "We

will attend the pope's funeral as we should."

Germany's outgoing Chancellor Olaf Scholz is also expected, along with President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who will lead Germany's delegation.

Incoming chancellor Friedrich Merz will not attend. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who said Francis had "prayed for peace in Ukraine", will attend with his wife, Olena Zelenska.

Russian leader Vladimir Putin, who is subject to an International Criminal Court arrest warrant over his invasion of Ukraine, will not attend, the Kremlin

said. Belgium's Prime Minister Bart De Wever will attend, as will King Philippe and Queen Mathilde.

Poland's President Andrzej Duda, who declared a national day of mourning for Saturday, will be among the mourners with his wife.

Portugal's President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa and Prime Minister Luis Montenegro will lead a delegation to the ceremony.

Hungary's President Tamas Sulyok confirmed his attendance, as did Austria's Chancellor Christian Stocker, and Slovenian President Natasa Pirc Musar, who will be there with Prime Minister Robert Golob.

The presidents of all three Baltic states will attend: Gitanas Nauseda of Lithuania, Edgars Rinkevics of Latvia and Alar Karis of Estonia.

Monaco's royal family announced three days of mourning and a palace source said Prince Albert II and Princess Charlene would go to the funeral.

Other European countries sending leaders include the Czech Republic, Moldova, Romania and Slovakia.

## Pope's Vatican family pays tearful respects



**Ecuador's Foreign Minister Gabriela Sommerfeld greets Monsignor Andrés Carrascosa as she arrives to sign the book of condolences for the late Pope Francis at the apostolic nunciature in Quito**

**AFP, VATICAN CITY:** In the chapel of the Vatican's Santa Marta residence, where Pope Francis lived and died, a nun prayed Tuesday with tears in her eyes before the pontiff's wooden coffin.

Swiss guards in their brightly coloured uniforms stood either side of the casket laid out for Vatican staff, officials and dignitaries to pay their respects before a public lying-in-state starts Wednesday.

The pontiff, who died on Monday aged 88, was dressed in his papal vestments -- a red chasuble, white mitre and black shoes, with rosary beads laced around his fingers.

Before being granted access to the chapel, mourners waited in a marble-tiled hall, where only the faint sounds of whispers punctuated the silence.

In keeping with the humility he preached, Francis chose to live in the Santa Marta residence after becoming pope in 2013, preferring its simplicity and the company of others over the isolated opulence of the Apostolic Palace.

And it was in the residence that the privileged few were invited to pay their respects, away from the prying eyes of the public or the press, before the coffin is transferred to St Peter's Basilica on Wednesday morning.

## B'desh rejects India's allegation over Hindu leader's death

**PTI, DHAKA:** Bangladesh has rejected New Delhi's charge that the recent killing of a Hindu leader was part of a "pattern of systematic persecution" of minorities in that country. Body of Hindu community leader Bhabesh Chandra Roy, 58, a resident of Basudebpur village of Dinaipur district in north Bangladesh, was recovered on Thursday night. His son has claimed Roy was allegedly abducted from his home in the village, about 330 kilometres north-west of Dhaka, and beaten to death.

## Sri Lanka police to probe panel report on 2019 Easter Sunday suicide bomb attacks

**PTI, COLOMBO:** Sri Lankan police on Tuesday said that a four-member committee has been appointed to study and investigate the presidential commission report of 2021 on the 2019 Easter Sunday suicide bomb attacks. It is to be headed by a senior deputy inspector general along with the heads of police's terrorism and criminal investigation brass. Police spokesperson Superintendent Bud-

dika Manatunga said four sub-committees have also been appointed. "New investigations will be based on the new evidence carried in the commission report," he said.

President Anura Kumara

ra Dissanayake on Sunday said he had referred the report to the police's CID for further action.

However, Dissanayake did not make the statement as expected by the Catholic church.

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**TERROR GRIPS KASHMIR**

Union Home Minister Amit Shah briefed Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is on a visit to Saudi Arabia, and left for Srinagar soon after to hold an urgent security review meeting with all agencies.

"I strongly condemn the terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. I pray that the injured recover at the earliest. All possible assistance is being provided to those affected," the prime minister said on X.

"Those behind this heinous act will be brought to justice... they will not be spared! Their evil agenda will never succeed. Our resolve to fight terrorism is unshakable and it will get even stronger," he added.

Eyewitnesses painted a chilling picture of gunfire breaking the calm of a regular Tuesday afternoon with scores of people enjoying their day out. Cries for help were heard as lifeless bodies lay motionless in pools of blood.

Some put the number of attackers at five. "My husband was shot in the head while seven others were also injured in the attack," a woman survivor told PTI over phone.

The woman did not identify herself but pleaded for help in evacuating the injured to hospital.

As gunshots rang out, there was panic and tourists ran for cover but there was no place to hide in the wide, open space, said another woman tourist.

A woman said terrorists first asked the name before shooting down the victims. The tourists gathered at Baisaran were from several states, including Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat. Among those killed was Karnataka businessman Manjunath Rao, who was from Shivamogga.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah condoled the death and called a meeting of officials. A team of officials from Karnataka left for Kashmir, an official statement said.

With Baisaran accessible only by foot or horses, choppers were deployed to evacuate the injured. The families of those killed and injured were taken to the government-owned Pahalgam Club under tight security.

The entire district administration and police force was mobilised and ambulances pressed into service. Some of the injured were brought down from the meadow by local people on their ponies.

Army, CRPF and local police rushed to Baisaran, much sought after by filmmakers in the 1980s, after initial news came in of gunshots being heard, officials said.

A massive anti-terrorist operation has been launched to hunt down the assailants and security forces have fanned out in all directions, they said.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration set up 24x7 emergency control rooms in Anantnag and Srinagar. "The death toll is still being ascertained so I don't want to get into those details. They will be officially conveyed as the situation becomes clearer. Needless to say this attack is much larger than anything we've seen directed at civilians in recent years," Abdullah said in a post on X.

"I'm shocked beyond belief. This attack on our visitors is an abomination. The perpetrators of this attack are animals, inhuman and worthy of contempt. No words of condemnation are enough. I send my sympathies to the families of the deceased," he said.

The office of Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha said anti-terror ops had been launched to neutralise terrorists. "Entire nation is angry & blood of our forces is boiling.

I want to assure the nation that perpetrators of Pahalgam attack will have to pay a very heavy price for their heinous act. My heartfelt condolences to bereaved families," the statement read.

Altaf Ahmad Wani, National Conference MLA from Pahalgam, described the attack as "cowardly" and said targeting innocent persons is against the teachings of Islam.

"The attack was very painful and unfortunate and took place at an unexpected location which is about five kilometres from Pahalgam (bus stand). It is used for trekking and the people go there on horses," he told reporters.

Pahalgam town, which was teeming with tourists this morning, went into complete silence. Tourists began leaving in droves.

The incident comes when Kashmir is witnessing a surge in tourist arrivals after reeling under militancy for years. Baisaran, a campsite for trekkers who then move further up to the Tullian lake, is accessible from Pahalgam either on foot or on horses. It offers a panoramic view of Pahalgam town and the Lidder valley.

**BHOMA TENSE AS VILLAGERS CONFRONT NH OFFICIALS**

They questioned the feasibility of widening the road to six lanes within 25 metres and asked why a 60-metre acquisition was needed at all.

The villagers said Union Minister Nitin Gadkari should clarify that the road would be 25 metres wide, and they called on local government representatives to provide accurate information.

Babusao Zalmi, the priest of the Sateri Temple, stated, "All deities originated in Bhoma, with the anthills serving as evidence." He appealed to the government to preserve Bhoma, its culture, and its environment.

The villagers emphasised their unity and dismissed any rumours of division among them.

Sanjay Naik, a local leader, stressed, "The issue extends beyond just a few houses and concerns the preservation of the entire village and its temples from destruction." The villagers called on the government to construct a bypass through the fields.

Locals also questioned why Khajan land was destroyed at Bhoma if NH widening through the fields wasn't feasible. Putu Gaude, a resident, questioned the government's plan to build the Borim Bridge using Khazan land at Loutolim, asking, "How does this align with the desire to protect Khazan land at Bhoma?"

**SHARP DECLINE IN VOCATIONS BEHIND MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY LEAVING PANJIM**

Most of the women who had been residing in the Panjim home will be cared for in the three other houses of the Missionaries of Charity in Goa i.e. in Quepem, Carambolim and Cotto-de-Fatorpa. The sisters in Carambolim, which is not far from Panjim, will continue to reach out to the poor who had been served by the sisters in Panjim. With much gratitude, we are returning the Panjim house to Assistentia Goa, Sr Joseph stated.

Meanwhile, Assistentia Goa president Neville Monteiro told O Heraldo that he will speak to his committee members and appeal to the Missionaries of Charity to stay put. He also clarified that the property housing the Missionaries of Charity home falls under institutional zone and that

it will not be put for commercial use.

Reacting to the decision of the Missionaries of Charity to vacate the premises, Monteiro said, "We are shocked to receive a letter from the Missionaries of Charity sisters dated March 22, 2025 stating that they have decided to return the home and the entire premises back to Assistentia, Goa."

According to Monteiro and other managing committee members, the letter was received when the talks to lease out part of the land on a long lease basis for the activities of the Missionaries of Charity, were nearing finalisation.

Given the poor condition of the building and premises, it was proposed that they jointly reconstruct the same with one Storey building for which an agreement was signed between the Assistentia Goa and the Missionaries of Charity and approved in 2014. The plans were submitted and duly approved by the North Goa Planning and Development Authority (NGPDA). However, the same did not materialise till date.

The managing committee members disclosed that they wanted to give 60 per cent of the property to the Missionaries of Charity and retain the remaining 40 per cent with them. This was decided to assist the Missionaries of Charity with running the Asylum.

Monteiro said that after the news published by O Heraldo, three NGOs approached them with a request to run the centre. He denied the allegation made by Director of Caritas Goa Fr Maverick Fernandes that the Assistentia Goa were harassing the Missionaries of Charity. "Fr Maverick is misinformed," he said. On the other hand, Fr Fernandes said, "If what the Assistentia Goa members are telling is genuine and truthful then they should go back to the Missionaries of Charity and request them to come back. Panjim needs them."

NGO Bailancho Saad convenor Dr Sabina Martins said, "It is unfortunate that Missionaries of Charity are vacating when there is dire need of shelter homes in the State and especially in Panjim. I remember the Sisters admitted and took care of a woman who was beaten by her husband besides taking care of other inmates. Missionaries of Charity admitted destitutes and unwed women from all communities and took their good care."

**PI, CONSTABLE ARRESTED FOR ACCEPTING BRIBE**

Albuquerque said, "We will be placing a formal demand for the suspension of both accused officers."

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said that the PI of the Konkani Railway Police will be suspended from duty.

Speaking to reporters at Mantralaya at Porvorim, the Chief Minister said, "Anyone found guilty will be caught in such a way. He (PI) will now face permanent suspension."

It may be recalled that there was a case in the past involving the now-discharged Israeli national David Driham, also known as Dudu, wherein Gudler was implicated in a conspiracy that involved fabricating charges against him.

However, a local court had acquitted him and passed strictures against CBI for casual investigation. It was alleged that Gudler who was then working as a police sub inspector was caught on camera selling drugs to foreign national girls. One of the girls was allegedly seen holding charas in the said camera footage which was broadcast by media on local cable network news channel in the state in January 2011. Both the accused have been remanded to five days police custody.