



Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Manet delivers a speech during the Nikkei Forum 30th Future of Asia in Tokyo



France's Minister Agnes Pannier-Runacher speaks during a meeting at the Ministry of Natural Resources office in Beijing



Ambassador of Japan, Hiroshi Suzuki speaks during a visit to the Auchentoshan Distillery in Glasgow



China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi leaves the podium after signing a document at the signing ceremony of the Convention in Hong Kong

allovertheworld



Irish-Australian actress Genevieve O'Reilly attends PaleyLive "An Evening with Andor" at the Writers Guild Theater in Beverly Hills, California

France's prison population reaches all-time high

PARIS: France's prison population hit a record high on May 1, with 83,681 inmates held in facilities that have a capacity of just 62,570, justice ministry data showed on Saturday. Over the past year, France's prison population grew by 6,000 inmates, taking the occupancy rate to 133.7 percent. The record overcrowding has even seen 23 out of France's 186 detention facilities operating at more than twice their capacity. Justice Minister Gerald Darmanin, who has called the overcrowding crisis "unacceptable", has suggested building new facilities to accommodate the growing prison population.

Afghanistan welcomes upgraded diplomatic ties with Pakistan

KABUL: Afghanistan has welcomed the decision to upgrade diplomatic relations with Pakistan, where the Taliban government's foreign minister is due to travel in the coming days, his office said on Saturday. The move signals easing tensions between the neighbouring countries, as relations between the Taliban authorities and Pakistan – already rocky – have cooled in recent months, fuelled by security concerns and a campaign by Islamabad to expel tens of thousands of Afghans. Pakistan's top diplomat on Friday said the charge d'affaires stationed in Kabul would be elevated to the rank of ambassador, with Kabul later announcing its representative in Islamabad would also be upgraded.

Panama launches maintenance work at contested mine

PANAMA CITY: Panama's government said Friday it would start maintenance work at a major mine forced to shut by protests, but insisted the project was not tantamount to the pit reopening. Central America's biggest copper mine, the Canadian-owned Cobre Panama pit, closed in 2023 following weeks of crippling protests over its environmental impact. Maintenance will be carried out by a subsidiary of Canada's First Quantum Minerals "to prevent environmental damage" from materials stored at the mine. Trade and Industry Minister Julio Molto told a news conference. "This decision (...) does not imply the reactivation of the mine," Molto said.

Transgender teen competes in California high school athletics championships

SAN FRANCISCO: A transgender high school athlete shrugged off scattered protests and heated criticism from President Donald Trump to reach the finals of multiple events at California's state championships on Friday. AB Hernandez, 16, was the top qualifier for Saturday's finals in the girls' long jump and girls' high jump at the California State Track & Field Championships in Clovis, outside of Fresno. Hernandez's participation at the meeting has been the subject of intense controversy, with the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) scrambling to adjust competition rules this week as anger grew on all sides.

Crypto duo faces kidnapping charges in alleged bitcoin theft attempt

ALBANY: The latest crime thriller gripping New York is the alleged kidnapping of a wealthy Italian man whose captors attempted to torture the crypto millionaire into giving up his bitcoin password. It began amid the backdrop of wild parties, immortalized in pop culture through films like "The Wolf of Wall Street", in a posh Manhattan nightclub where the nouveau riche and flashy Wall Street bros congregate. It ended on the morning of May 23, when a man ran to a police officer near Mulberry and Prince streets in the Soho district of Manhattan.

Nigerian military says 60 jihadists killed in raids

KANO: Nigerian military said it has killed more than 60 jihadists, including a senior commander, in aerial and ground assaults in the northeastern epicentre of insurgent violence which has raged since 2009. Early on Friday, troops carried out two separate attacks on Boko Haram and rival Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) camps, killing dozens of militants, the army said. Dozens of Boko Haram militants were killed when troops launched raids on their camp in Bitu village, outside Gwoza town in Borno state, near the border with Cameroon, the army said in a statement.

Hamas says still reviewing US proposal for Gaza ceasefire

AP, DEIR AL-BALAH: Hamas said Friday it was still reviewing a US proposal for a temporary ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, where 27 people were killed in new Israeli airstrikes, according to hospital officials.

The ceasefire plan, which has been approved by Israeli officials, won a cool initial reaction Thursday from the militant group.

US negotiators have not publicised the terms of the proposal. But a Hamas official and an Egyptian official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive talks, said Thursday that it called for a 60-day pause in fighting, guarantees of serious negotiations leading to a long-term truce and assurances that Israel will not resume hostilities after the release of hostages, as it did in March.

In a terse statement issued Friday, Hamas said it is holding consultations with Palestinian factions over the proposal it had received from US envoy Steve

ISRAEL THREATENS HAMAS WITH 'ANNIHILATION' AS TRUMP SAYS GAZA CEASEFIRE CLOSE

AFP, GAZA CITY, PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES: Israel on Friday said Hamas must accept a hostage deal in Gaza or "be annihilated", as US President Donald Trump announced that a ceasefire agreement was "very close". It came amid dire conditions on the ground, with the United Nations warning that Gaza's entire population was at risk of famine. Defence Minister Israel Katz said Hamas must agree to a ceasefire proposal presented by US envoy Steve Witkoff or be destroyed, after the Palestinian militant group said the deal failed to satisfy its demands. "The Hamas murderers will now be forced to choose: accept the terms of the 'Witkoff Deal' for the release of the hostages – or be annihilated." Israel has repeatedly said that the destruction of Hamas was a key aim of the war. Negotiations to end nearly 20 months of war in Gaza have so far failed to achieve a breakthrough, with Israel resuming operations in March following a short-lived truce. In the United States, Trump told reporters "they're very close to an agreement on Gaza", adding: "We'll let you know about it during the day or maybe tomorrow." Food shortages in Gaza persist, with aid only trickling in after the partial lifting by Israel of a more than two-month blockade. Jens Laerke, a spokesman for the UN humanitarian agency, called Gaza "the hungriest place on Earth". "It's the only defined area – a country or defined territory within a country – where you have the entire population at risk of famine," he said.

Witkoff.

While changes may have been made to the proposal, the version confirmed earlier called for Israeli forces to pull back to the positions they held before it ended the last ceasefire.

Hamas would release 10 living hostages and a num-

ber of bodies during the 60-day pause in exchange for more than 1,100 Palestinians imprisoned by Israel, including 100 serving long sentences after being convicted of deadly attacks.

Each day, hundreds of trucks carrying food and humanitarian aid

would be allowed to enter Gaza, where experts say a nearly three-month Israeli blockade – slightly eased in recent days – has pushed the population to the brink of famine.

"Negotiations are ongoing on the current proposal," Qatar's ambassador to

the United Nations, Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani said Friday, referring to talks between her country, the United States and Egypt.

On Thursday, a top Hamas official, Bassem Naim, said the US proposal "does not respond to any of our people's demands, foremost among which is stopping the war and famine."

The uncertainty over the new proposal came as hospital officials said that 27 people had been killed Friday in separate airstrikes. A strike that hit a tent in the southern city of Khan Younis killed 13, including eight children, hospital officials said. The Israeli military did not immediately comment.

Meanwhile, the bodies of 12 people, including three women, were brought to Shifa Hospital on Friday from the nearby Jabaliya refugee camp. The Palestinian Red Crescent Society said the bodies of two others were brought to a hospital in Gaza City.

Trump gives Elon Musk Oval Office sendoff

AP, WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump bid farewell to Elon Musk in the Oval Office on Friday, providing a cordial conclusion to a tumultuous tenure for the billionaire entrepreneur.

COLOSSAL CHANGE

Musk is leaving his position spearheading the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), and he'll be rededicating himself to running his businesses, including electric automaker Tesla, rocket company SpaceX and social media platform X.

Trump credited Musk with "a colossal change in the old ways of doing business in Washington" and said some of his staff would remain in the administration.

Musk, who wore all black, including a T-shirt that said "The Dogefather", nodded along as the president listed contracts that had been cut under his watch.

Swiss glacier collapse offers global warning of wider impact

AFP, DUSHANBE, TAJIKISTAN: The collapse of the Swiss Birch glacier serves as a chilling warning of the escalating dangers faced by communities worldwide living under the shadow of fragile ice, particularly in Asia, experts say.

Footage of the May 28 collapse showed a huge cloud of ice and rubble hurtling down the mountainside, into the hamlet of Blatten.

Ali Neumann, disaster risk reduction advisor to the Swiss Development Cooperation, noted that while the role of climate change in the specific case of Blatten "still needs to be investigated", the wider impacts were clear on the cryosphere -- the part of the world covered by frozen water.

"Climate change and its impact on the cryosphere will have growing repercussions on human societies that live near glaciers, near the cryosphere, and depend on glaciers some-



A Eurocopter AS350 Ecureuil helicopter flies above debris and destroyed houses of the village of Blatten now submerged in the obstructed river Lonza in Wiler

how and live with them," he said.

The barrage largely destroyed Blatten, but the evacuation of its 300 residents last week averted mass casualties, although one person remains missing.

"It also showed that with the right skills and observation and management of an emergency, you can significantly reduce the magnitude of this type of

simulation models, to hazard assessment and to communicating that, the whole chain needs to be strengthened," Uhlenbrook said.

"But in many Asian countries, this is weak, the data is not sufficiently connected."

Swiss geologists use various methods, including sensors and satellite images, to monitor their glaciers.

Asia was the world's most disaster-hit region from climate and weather hazards in 2023, the United Nations said last year, with floods and storms the chief cause of casualties and economic losses.

But many Asian nations, particularly in the Himalayas, lack the resources to monitor their vast glaciers to the same degree as the Swiss.

According to a 2024 UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction report, two-thirds of countries in the Asia and Pacific region have early warning systems.

Pope Leo updates with new Vatican address

AP, LIMA: Pope Leo XIV hasn't forgotten his responsibilities as a Peruvian citizen: He updated his national registration information on Friday with his new Vatican address and a headshot.

Peru's national registry agency said in a statement that the pope updated his information as part of the South American country's efforts to keep track of Peruvian citizens around the world.

Leo was born in the United States but received Peruvian citizenship a decade ago.

Four Peruvian officials met the pope at the Vatican headquarters and collected his fingerprints and signature, according to the statement from the National Registry of Identification and Civil Status.

Miguel Stigler, a public information officer with the registry, told The Associated Press that Leo indicated that he wished to pick up his updated iden-



tity document during a future trip to Peru.

The pope's travel plans to Peru are unknown.

Leo was granted Peruvian citizenship in August 2015, the month before Pope Francis, his predecessor, appointed him bishop of Chiclayo, a city in the country's north.

To qualify, he had to live in Peru for at least two years and pass a civics test.

All adult Peruvians, including naturalised citizens, are required to vote in elections through age 69.

FROM PAGE 1

DEFENCE CHIEF ADMITS INDIA LOST AIRCRAFT IN OP SINDOOR

"I think what is important is not the jets being downed but why they were being downed," added Gen Chauhan who played a key role in mounting India's massive offensive against Pakistan.

Indian Air Force's Director General of Air Operations, Air Marshal AK Bharti, had acknowledged that "losses are a part of combat" and said all IAF pilots returned "home safely". He made the remarks at a media briefing on May 11 in responding to a question on Pakistan's claim of downing Indian jets.

India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7, targeting terrorist infrastructure in territories controlled by Pakistan using long-range weapons such as the Brahmos cruise missile in response to the Pahalgal terror attack.

The strikes triggered four days of intense clashes that ended with an understanding on stopping the military actions on May 10.

India launched a massive counter-attack on early May 10 that hit many of the key Pakistani military installations after the neighbouring country attempted to target Indian bases the previous night.

New Delhi has been maintaining that India's fierce attacks on May 10 forced Pakistan to plead for ending the hostilities.

10 DAYS AFTER FILING COMPLAINT AGAINST TALEIGAO MLA, CECILLE NOW FACES FIR

AAP stated that they will wait till Saturday and plan their next course of action on Monday, by pursuing all available legal remedies to ensure justice is done including approaching the State Police Complaints Authority (SPCA) and the High Court.

Adv Palekar alleged that the police is being used to harass activists. He said that it was ridiculous that the FIR states that Cecille and others obstruct-

ed MLA and panchayat from performing their duties and "Outraged their modesty" by video recording the incident. How can a woman outrage the modesty of another woman?

"When we had come to the police on May 23, we were told that the police were busy due to the visit of the Vice President of India. But police had time to register an FIR against Cecille and two others," he said.

Cecille said, "My complaint documented how Jennifer Monserrate hurled abuses and manhandled me and how Sidney Barreto snatched and smashed a youth's phone and pushed him, among other cognisable offences. We also provided names of other involved persons and witnesses, and cited provisions of law in support of our allegations. It has now been 10 days since we filed that complaint. To our dismay, no FIR has been registered on our complaint till date, nor have the key witnesses' statements been recorded."

Cecille said, "On the contrary, the police registered an FIR against us based on counter-allegation to implicate us as offenders. The FIR is a politically motivated and selective exercise of police power."

The AAP members had come to the police station with FIR copy framed and displayed it as an award on the occasion of Statehood Day.

Earlier, the AAP members refused to leave the police station till FIR was registered.

COVID CASES IN INDIA CROSS 3K

Kerala has 1,336 active cases, Maharashtra 467, Delhi 375, Gujarat 265, Karnataka 234, West Bengal 205, Tamil Nadu 185 and Uttar Pradesh 117.

Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research, Dr Rajiv Behl, on Monday said that genome sequencing of samples in the west and south has shown that the variants fuelling the current rise in cases are not severe and are sub variants of Omicron.

Four sub variants of Omicron -- LF.7, XFG, JN.1 and NB.1.8.1 -- have been found. The first three have been found in more cases, he said.

"We have been closely monitoring the situation. At this moment, overall, we should monitor, be vigilant but there is no cause to worry," Dr Behl said.

VALMIK THAPAR, GREATEST FRIEND TO INDIA'S TIGERS, IS NO MORE

He expressed concern that the report was overly optimistic about the coexistence of tigers and humans.

Thapar argued that for tigers to survive in the long run, certain areas needed to be kept free from human interference. He said that a minimum area should be managed exclusively in its natural form for a tiger.

Thapar wrote or edited more than 30 books on wildlife, including Land of the Tiger: A Natural History of the Indian Subcontinent (1997), and Tiger Fire: 500 Years of the Tiger in India.

He also presented and co-produced several well-known films for channels like the BBC.

One of his more famous works was a six-part series "Land of the Tiger" (1997), which explored the nature and wildlife of the Indian subcontinent.

In 2024, he appeared in the documentary "My Tiger Family," which showcased his 50 years of observing wild tigers in Ranthambore National Park.

Thapar had strong reservations about Project Cheetah, India's initiative to reintroduce African cheetahs into the wild. He argued that India does not have the necessary habitat or prey base to support free-ranging cheetahs and that the authorities lacked experience in managing spotted felines in the wild.

Paying her tributes, conservation biologist Neha Sinha called him "the international voice of Indian tigers for many many years" and urged people to read his influential books such as "Tiger Fire" and "Living with Tigers" as a tribute.

Wildlife conservationist Nirmal Ghosh remembered him as "a giant of tiger conservation" who leaves behind "a lasting legacy as a global spokesman for the tiger."

