

Russia says it's making inroads into Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region

AFP, MEZHHOVA, UKRAINE: Russia said Sunday it was advancing into Ukraine's eastern industrial Dnipropetrovsk region for the first time in its three-year invasion – a significant territorial escalation amid stalled peace talks.

Ukraine's top political and military leaders did not immediately respond to the claim, which would be a symbolic and strategic blow to Ukraine's forces after months of battlefield setbacks.

Moscow, which has the initiative across much of the front, has repeatedly refused calls by Ukraine, Europe and US President Donald Trump for a full and unconditional ceasefire even as it holds talks with Kyiv on a possible settlement to the war.

Russia's defence ministry said forces from a tank unit had "reached the western border of the Donetsk People's Republic and are continuing to develop an offensive in the Dnipropetrovsk



Police experts work on a crater at a children's railway near the central park of Kharkiv following an aerial attack, in Kharkiv

region".

Although there was no response from leaders in Kyiv to the claims, Ukraine's southern army command said Russia "does not give up its intentions to enter the Dnipropetrovsk region, but our fighters are bravely and professionally holding their section of the front-line."

Dnipropetrovsk is not one of the five Ukrainian regions – Donetsk, Kherson,

Lugansk, Zaporizhzhia and Crimea – that Moscow has publicly claimed as Russian territory.

In a set of peace demands issued to Ukraine at negotiations in Istanbul on June 2, Moscow demanded formal recognition that these regions were part of Russia – something Kyiv has repeatedly ruled out.

At a first round of talks last month, Ukraine said

Russia threatened to accelerate and expand its offensive if Kyiv did not capitulate.

Tens of thousands have been killed in Russia's three-year war, millions forced to flee their homes and cities and villages across eastern Ukraine devastated by relentless air attacks and ground combat.

Russia's ex-president Dmitry Medvedev, now deputy chairman of the na-

RUSSIA AWAITS UKRAINE'S CONFIRMATION ON PLANNED EXCHANGE OF DEAD FIGHTERS, OFFICIALS SAY
AP, MOSCOW: Russian officials said Sunday that Moscow is still awaiting official confirmation from Ukraine that a planned exchange of 6,000 bodies of soldiers killed in action will take place, reiterating allegations that Kyiv had postponed the swap. On the front line in the war, Russia said that it had pushed into Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region. Russian state media quoted Lt. Gen. Alexander Zorin, a representative of the Russian negotiating group, as saying that Russia delivered the first batch of 1,212 bodies of Ukrainian soldiers to the exchange site at the border and is waiting for confirmation from Ukraine, but that there were "signals" that the process of transferring the bodies would be postponed until next week. Citing Zorin on her Telegram channel, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova asked whether it was Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's "personal decision not to take the bodies of the Ukrainians" or whether "someone from NATO prohibited it."

tional security council, said the fresh advance was a warning to Kyiv.

"Those who do not want to recognise the realities of the war at negotiations, will receive new realities on the ground," he said on social media.

Russia's army posted photos showing troops

raising the Russian flag over the village of Zorya in Ukraine's Donetsk region, close to the internal border.

A Ukrainian lieutenant colonel, 60-year-old Oleksandr, told AFP that Russians entering the region would not change the dynamics of the battle.

Colombian senator shot at Bogota rally

AP, BOGOTA: Colombian Sen Miguel Uribe Turbay, a possible candidate in the country's presidential election next year, was shot and wounded at a campaign rally in Bogota on Saturday, authorities said.

His conservative Democratic Center party released a statement calling it "an unacceptable act of violence."

The attack took place in a park in the Fontibon neighbourhood when armed assailants shot him from behind, said the right-wing Democratic Centre which was the party of former President Alvaro Uribe. The men are not related.

Images circulating on social media showed Uribe Turbay, 39, covered in blood being held by several people. A medical report from the Santa Fe Foundation hospital said the senator was admitted in critical condition and is undergoing a "neurosurgical and peripheral vascular procedure."

"Miguel is fighting for his life," his wife, Maria Claudia Tarazona, wrote on the senator's X ac-

count, urging Colombians to pray for him.

The Attorney General's Office, which is investigating the shooting, said the senator received two gunshot wounds in the attack, which wounded two others. The statement from the office said a 15-year-old boy was arrested at the scene with a firearm.

Colombia's government said it was offering a reward for the capture of all those responsible.

"Respect life, that's the red line," President Gustavo Petro said in a message posted on his X account. Shortly after making the post, Petro cancelled a planned trip to France "due to the seriousness of the events," according to a presidential statement.

Uribe Turbay is the son of a journalist who was kidnapped and killed in 1991 during one of the country's most violent periods. Colombia will hold a presidential election on May 31, 2026, marking the end of the current term of Petro, Colombia's first leftist president. The senator announced his presidential bid in March.

Chad announces suspension of visas to US citizens in response to Trump travel ban

AP, N'DJAMENA (CHAD): Chad's President Mahamat Idriss Deby has announced that his country will suspend the issuing of visas to US citizens in response to the Trump administration's decision to ban Chadians from visiting the United States.

President Donald Trump on Wednesday resurrected a hallmark policy of his first term when he announced the visa ban on 12 countries including Chad, accusing them of having "deficient" screening and vetting, and historically refusing to take back their own citizens who overstay in the United States.

The new ban targets Afghanistan, Myanmar, Chad, the Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Haiti, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen.

There will also be heightened restrictions on visitors from seven others in the new travel policy, which takes effect Monday

TRAVEL BAN MAY SHUT DOOR FOR AFGHAN FAMILY TO BRING NIECE TO US FOR BETTER LIFE
AP, IRMO (US): Mohammad Sharafoddin, his wife and young son walked at times for 36 hours in a row over mountain passes as they left Afghanistan as refugees to end up less than a decade later talking about their journey on a plush love seat in the family's three-bedroom suburban American home. He and his wife dreamed of bringing her niece to the United States to share in that bounty. Maybe she could study to become a doctor and then decide her own path. But that door slams shut on Monday as America put in place a travel ban for people from Afghanistan and a dozen other countries. "It's kind of shock for us when we hear about Afghanistan, especially right now for ladies who are affected more than others with the new government," Mohammad Sharafoddin said, referring to the country's Taliban rulers.

at 12:01 am.

In a Facebook post, Chad's president on Thursday said he is directing his government to suspend visas to US citizens "in accordance with the principles of reciprocity."

"Chad has no planes to offer, no billions of dollars to give but Chad has his dignity and pride," Deby said, referring to the USD

400 million luxury plane offered to his administration as a gift by the ruling family of Qatar.

The new travel policy has triggered varied reactions from Africa, whose countries make up seven of the 12 countries affected by Trump's outright visa ban with some exemptions.

In the Republic of Congo, government spokes-

person Thierry Moun-galla said he believes the country was among those affected because of a "misunderstanding" over an armed attack in the US with the perpetrators "mistaken" to be from the Republic of Congo.

"Obviously, Congo is not a terrorist country, is not home to any terrorist, is not known to have a terrorist vocation. So we think that this is a misunderstanding and I believe that in the coming hours, the competent diplomatic services of the government will contact the American authorities here," he said in the capital of Brazzaville.

In Sierra Leone, among countries with heightened travel restrictions, Information Minister Cherno Bah said the country is committed to addressing the concerns that prompted the ban.

"We will work with US authorities to ensure progress," he added.

Iran claims without evidence that it took Israeli nuclear files

AP, DUBAI: Iran's intelligence minister claimed without offering evidence Sunday that Tehran seized an "important treasury" of information regarding Israel's nuclear programme, ahead of a week in which the Islamic Republic likely will face new diplomatic pressure over its own programme.

The remarks by Esmail Khatib follow Iranian state television claiming Saturday that Iranian intelligence officials seized documents, again without any evidence.

Israel, whose undeclared atomic weapons programme makes it the only country in the Middle East with nuclear bombs, has not acknowledged any such Iranian operation targeting it – though there have been arrests of Israelis allegedly spying for Tehran amid the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

Convicts ineligible for presidential pardon illegally released: Sri Lankan police

PTI, COLOMBO: Investigations revealed that convicts ineligible for presidential pardon have been illegally released in the past, Sri Lankan police said on Sunday.

Article 34 (1) of the Sri Lankan Constitution says the president can pardon convicted prisoners. A list of inmates recommended for pardon is forwarded for approval by the president after a review by the Ministry of Justice.

The police in a statement said it would investigate all such officers, including prison officials, who abused the power of presidential pardon of convicts by unscrupulously releasing the undeserved.

Investigations so far revealed there had been actions in the past that convicts ineligible for releases under presidential amnesty had been released

illegally, the statement said.

"The crime investigation department has commenced investigations into previous releases of convicts illegally," the statement said.

It comes as President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Saturday ordered a police probe into the release from prison of a convicted criminal under a purported pardon from him.

The Presidential Secretariat said a serious irregularity may have occurred as the list of those to be pardoned did not include the name of W.H. Athula Tilakaratne, who was released under the presidential pardon granted on Vesak 2025, despite his name not being among 388 inmates recommended for amnesty.

The opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) in parliament raised the

matter on Friday, saying the convict was granted a presidential pardon under dubious circumstances.

Commenting on the fraudulent release of the convict, Minister of Public Security Ananda Wijepala said the convict had been released outside the list of inmates approved by the president.

The Commissioner General of Prisons was questioned by the CID for over five hours on Sunday over the incident, the police said, adding the official would be questioned again.

In 2023 and 2024, the courts ruled that Dissanayake's predecessors, Maithripala Sirisena and Gotabaya Rajapaksa, had erred in cases of presidential pardons during their terms.

The highest court had ordered the reversal of such pardons.

Australia seeks stronger trade ties after 'unjustified' US tariffs

AFP, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA: Australia will push to expand free trade agreements with other countries to reduce its reliance on the United States, Trade Minister Don Farrell said Sunday, slamming President Donald Trump's "unjustified" tariffs.

Australia is a close US ally but has been slugged with a blanket 10 percent tariff on goods exported to the United States, rising to 50 percent on steel and aluminium, as part of Trump's sweeping

global duties.

"I'm hopeful that those countries around the world who do believe in free and fair trade can reach an agreement to extend free trade agreements across the globe, so that irrespective of what the Americans might chose to do, we have a greater diversity of trading partners," Farrell told Sky News.

He was speaking after talks last week in Paris with the World Trade Organization, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and other countries which he said had focused on preventing "protectionism" and encouraging free and fair trade.

Trade between Australia and the United States is worth an estimated Aus\$100 billion (US\$65 billion) a year, with Australia buying more from the United States than it is selling, Farrell said.

He said he had protested the duties last week to his US counterpart Jamie-

son Greer. "The position I've put to Jamieson Greer is that the tariffs that the United States have imposed on Australia are unjustified," Farrell said.

"We want all of the tariffs removed, not just some of them."

FROM PAGE 1

MONEY LAUNDERING TRAIL LEADS TO WASHING MACHINE IN GOA

TGANB has indicated that the seized amount is only a fragment of a larger hawala system run by Nigerian drug cartels with local Indian collaborators. A team has been dispatched to Delhi for further investigation into the financial trail.

MAN BOOKED FOR OPENING AIRCRAFT EXIT FLAP AT DABOLIM

The Dabolim Airport Police have registered a case against Divyesh under Section 125 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023. Section 125 deals with acts that endanger human life or personal safety through rash or negligent behaviour. In cases no harm has been caused the act is punishable with imprisonment up to 3 months, a fine of Rs 2,500, or both. PSI Akanksh Dessai is conducting investigations.

SEVEN DAYS AFTER BRUTAL BASTORA ASSAULT, KEY SUSPECTS STILL AT LARGE

What began as a verbal altercation quickly turned into a violent assault, leaving both of them physically injured and emotionally scarred.

Married for just over a year after eight years of courtship, the Shirodkars are now grappling with not only their injuries but also the psychological aftermath of the attack.

So far, the police have arrested three individuals – Ranganath Shetye (55), Vinod Shetkar (47), and Kaushal Tulshidas Shetye (32), all residents of Tambdi Matti, Pirozone, Moira. Two vehicles allegedly used by the attackers have also been seized.

But according to the victims' family, five other suspects – including the alleged main instigator – remain unarrested.

Amar Mandrekar, Vivek's brother-in-law, said, "It's been seven days. Out of eight people involved, only three have been arrested. One of them is even an advocate. The police need to act faster."

Political leaders have begun to speak out. Goa Pradesh Mahila Congress president Dr Pratiksha Khalap issued an ultimatum to the state government, demanding the arrest of all suspects within 15 days. She strongly criticised the State's law and order situation, not only for failing to prevent the incident but also for the sluggish response when the couple tried to file a complaint.

"Goa is no longer the Goa we knew. Is this governance or Gundaraj?" said Dr Khalap. "Only three suspects are in custody. The main person and his son are still free. Why is the system protecting them?"

Calling for immediate formation of a Special Investigation

Team (SIT), she added, "We want justice, not delays. This is not just physical violence. The trauma faced by Shruti, who is pregnant, is unimaginable. Who will be held accountable if anything happens to her or the un-born child?"

She concluded with a warning: "The chief minister, who also holds the Home portfolio, must take responsibility. We are giving the government 15 days to arrest all those involved. No woman should have to suffer this way."

The state assembly, which has a tenure till 2027, has been put under suspended animation.

MANIPUR PROTESTS CONTINUE DESPITE CURFEW

Prohibitory orders have been clamped in Imphal West, Imphal East, Thoubal, Bishnupur and Kakching districts, while internet and mobile data services, including VSAT and VPN facilities, have been suspended in these valley areas since Saturday night after violent protests erupted over the arrests of leaders of the Meitei outfit Arambai Tenggol.

Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla on Sunday held a security review meeting with senior officials in the wake of the demonstrations across the state.

A Raj Bhavan statement said the governor also met a delegation of MLAs who apprised Bhalla of the current law and order situation in the northeastern state.

"Today, a group of MLAs called on Governor of Manipur, Ajay Kumar Bhalla, at Raj Bhavan during which the MLAs apprised the governor of the current law and order situation in the state and requested his intervention to help find an amicable solution," the Raj Bhavan state-ment said.

The governor told the delegation that all "necessary steps are being taken to address the concerns and to restore normalcy", it said.

The delegation of at least 20 legislators comprised those of the BJP and the Congress.

After the meeting with the governor, one of the MLAs said that altogether five people were arrested in connection with earlier incidents of violence, which triggered widespread protests in the northeastern state since Saturday.

Among the five arrested people, one was apprehended by the CBI, said BJP legislator K Ibomcha, who was part of the delegation.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said it has arrested a member of Arambai Tenggol at Imphal Airport on Sunday for his alleged involvement in various criminal activities related to Manipur violence in 2023, while the police did not disclose details of the four others.

He has been brought from Imphal to Guwahati and would be produced before the competent court for police remand, a CBI statement said.

Ibomcha, the Lamlai constituency legislator, said, "During

the meeting, we were informed that five people were arrested, and of them, one Kanan Singh, was arrested by the CBI in connection with a case. We appreciate the roles the Arambai Tenggol have taken during the recent flood."

On Saturday, protesters torched tyres and old furniture on roads in Kwakeithel and Uripok, demanding the release of the Meitei leaders. clashed with security forces at different places in the state capital on June 7 night. A mob also set a bus on fire at Khurai Lamlong in Imphal East district.

Security forces fired several rounds of tear gas shells to disperse the protesters in front of Kangla Gate, nearly 200 metres away from the Raj Bhavan here. Security has been strengthened along the roads leading to the Raj Bhavan with additional deployment of central forces.

In view of the protests in the restive northeastern state, an order issued by the district magistrate of Imphal West stated that the "superintendent of police in Imphal West... has reported serious breach to peace, disturbance to public tranquillity, riot or affray in the area, and grave danger to human lives and properties due to unlawful activities of anti-social elements."

The district administration banned the assembly of five or more people and the carrying of sticks, stones, or sharp weapons under sub-section 2 of Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

Similar preventive measures were clamped in Thoubal and Kakching districts, the police said.

In Imphal East and Bishnupur districts, people have been prohibited from stepping outside their residences from 10 pm on Saturday, until further orders under sub-section 1 of section 163 of the BNSS.

"Violent protests broke out after the arrests of the leaders of Arambai Tenggol. Three people have been injured in the clash between the agitators and personnel. All preventive measures are in place," a police officer said.

Internet services have also been suspended in the five valley districts for five days from 11.45 pm on Saturday.

An order, issued by Commissioner-cum-Secretary (Home) N Ashok Kumar, said, "...in view of prevailing law and order situation especially in Imphal East, Imphal West, Thoubal, Kakching and Bishnupur districts, there is apprehension that some anti-social elements might use social media extensively for transmission of images, hate speech and hate video messages inciting the passion of the public which might have serious repercussions of law and order situation in the state. Any person found guilty of violating the order will be liable for legal actions, it said.

Notably, more than 260 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in the ethnic violence between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo groups since May 2023. The Centre had on February 13 imposed the President's rule in the northeastern state after Chief Minister N Biren Singh resigned.

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