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Anivita attends "Little Thomas" premiere during The 2025 New York Indian Film Festival at Village East Cinema in New York City

Risk of genocide in Sudan 'very high': UN

Geneva: The risk of genocide in Sudan's devastating civil war remains "very high," amid ongoing ethnically motivated attacks by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, a top UN official warned Monday. Since April 2023, Sudan has been torn apart by a power struggle between army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and RSF commander Mohamed Hamdan Daglo. The fighting has killed tens of thousands and displaced 13 million, including four million who fled abroad, triggering what the United Nations has called the world's worst humanitarian crisis. "Both parties have committed serious human rights violations," said Virginia Gamba, a UN under secretary-general and acting special advisor to UN chief Antonio Guterres on the prevention of genocide.

Embattled Thai PM reshuffles cabinet as crisis rages

BANGKOK: Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra began a cabinet reshuffle on Monday as a political and judicial crisis sparked by a leaked phone call threatens to sink her government. The 38-year-old daughter of controversial former PM Thaksin Shinawatra began handing out ministerial posts vacated when her main coalition partner quit last week -- a move that nearly took her government down. Paetongtarn, in office for less than a year, is hanging on by a thread, and on top of the party horse-trading she now faces a Constitutional Court case that could see her barred from office. She faced calls to quit or call an election last week as critics accused her of undermining the country and insulting the army during the leaked call with former Cambodian leader Hun Sen, which focused on a festering border dispute.

Spain publishes NATO letter to back spending exemption claim

MADRID: Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has insisted Madrid will not have to ramp up defence spending at the same rate as other NATO countries, publishing a letter from the alliance chief ostensibly confirming as much. Sanchez said Sunday that Spain would not need to hit the headline figure of five percent of GDP demanded by US President Donald Trump, setting up a potential clash at a two-day NATO summit starting on Tuesday in The Hague. NATO diplomats have disputed Madrid's view that it was granted an exception. But Sanchez backed up his claim by posting on X a letter from NATO chief Mark Rutte dated June 22.

Beijing issues weather warning for hottest days of year

BEIJING: Beijing residents sought shade and cooled off in canals on Monday as authorities issued the second-highest heat warning for the Chinese capital on one of its hottest days of the year so far. China has endured a string of extreme summers in recent years, with heatwaves baking northern regions even as parts of the south have seen catastrophic rain and flooding. Authorities in the city of 22 million people urged the public to take precautions, with temperatures expected to peak at around 38 degrees Celsius (100 degrees Fahrenheit) on Monday.

Shubhranshu Singh in Forbes 'World's Most Influential CMOs' List

Team Herald

PANJIM: Shubhranshu Singh, currently serving as Chief Marketing Officer of Tata Motors Commercial Vehicles, has been named in the Forbes World's Most Influential CMOs List for 2025 at Cannes.

This annual list honors the world's most impactful marketing leaders. The ranking is based on a rigorous evaluation of, digital engagement, campaign effectiveness, brand and community engagement, media visibility and business impact.

Singh has led transformative campaigns that have positioned Tata Motors as a



future-facing, trusted name in commercial mobility. Earlier this week, Shubhranshu Singh also joined the inaugural board of the Effie LIONS foundation, global marketing apex organisation, incorporated as a not for profit 501(c)3 organisation based in New York.

Putin slams attack on Iran but offers no support to key ally

AFP, MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday slammed attacks on Iran as "unprovoked" and "unjustified" in a meeting with Tehran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, but did not announce any concrete support to his key ally in the Middle East.

Moscow is a crucial backer of Iran, but has not swung forcefully behind its partner even as the United States launched strikes on its nuclear facilities over the weekend.

"This absolutely unprovoked aggression against Iran is unjustified," Putin said in televised remarks to Araghchi at the start of their meeting.

The Kremlin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov downplayed the exchange after the talks by saying "they were unlikely to be effective" during such a "heated moment".



Russia's President Vladimir Putin and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi during a meeting at the Kremlin in Moscow

Araghchi later said the meeting was "very good" and that Russia's stance on the issue remained "firm", noting its role in the UN Security Council. He did not provide further details on the talks with the Russian leader.

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov said revealing details of the Putin-Araghchi meeting would have been "irresponsible" and that Russia

and Iran were working on "many directions" when asked if Tehran requested military aid from Russia.

Since Israel launched its wave of strikes on June 13, triggering Iran to respond with missiles and drones, Russia has not publicly offered military help to Tehran.

Russia was "making efforts to help the Iranian people", Putin said in the meeting, without elaborating.

Asked what specific support Russia might offer, Peskov told reporters: "It all depends on what Iran needs. We have offered our mediation services."

Putin has pitched himself as a mediator between Iran and Israel, an idea rejected by US President Donald Trump last week.

Peskov also said the strikes on Iran would not affect bilateral relations between Moscow and Washington -- with the Kremlin seeking a rapprochement with the United States since Donald Trump returned to power -- saying they were "different issues".

Russia had called on the US not to take military action against its ally -- with Moscow-Tehran ties massively boosted during Russia's Ukraine offensive -- and speculation has grown about how the Kremlin would react.

EU, Canada sign defence and security deal to confront Russia

AFP, BRUSSELS: Canada and the European Union on Monday signed a defence and security pact as the transatlantic partners seek to better confront Russia, with worries over US reliability under President Donald Trump.

The deal was announced after a summit in Brussels between Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and EU chiefs Ursula von der Leyen and Antonio Costa. "While NATO remains the cornerstone of our collective defence, this partnership

will allow us to strengthen our preparedness... to invest more and to invest smarter," Costa, who heads the European Council representing EU member states, told a press conference.

"It opens new opportunities

for companies on both sides of the Atlantic."

The pact seeks to bring Canada's defence industry more closely into European efforts to revamp the domestic industrial base.

It opens the door for Ottawa to join common procurements

under a recently approved 150-billion-euro (\$174-billion) loan programme backed by the EU's central budget to boost rearmament.

It also paves the way for Canadian defence firms to tap into the scheme, although

that requires the signing of a separate deal.

The EU said the pact would deepen cooperation in areas including crisis management, defence industry collaboration, hybrid threats and military mobility.

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HC ORDER A HAMMER BLOW TO UNCHECKED LAND CONVERSION

During the hearing, Justice Satish Chandra Sharma reportedly cautioned the State's counsel, saying, "Please don't turn Goa into a concrete jungle."

Calangute Constituency Forum (CCF) President Prem-anand Diukar welcomed the ruling, saying, "We have not yet received the order. The High Court has said that there can be no construction based on approvals given under the ODPs by the NGPDA and the TCP department. There were many constructions and what will happen to them we will have to see after reading the High Court directions."

Calangute Sarpanch Joseph Sequeira noted that around five to six projects had received approvals under the disputed ODPs and said he would comment in detail after reviewing the court's order.

The controversy over the ODPs has spanned more than a decade. In 2016, the Calangute Village Panchayat filed a petition against its inclusion in the North Goa Planning and Development Authority (NGPDA), although the case was later withdrawn in 2017. A new petition was filed in 2022 following a change in the panchayat body. Around the same time, the Goa Foundation also filed a PIL challenging the government's actions.

The latest legal battle began when the government notified the ODPs on December 15, 2022. Shortly afterward, all five villages were de-notified as planning areas under the TCP Act, rendering the ODPs null and reverting land use to the Regional Plan 2021. However, the government subsequently issued a circular on December 22, 2022, instructing the TCP Department to continue granting approvals based on the withdrawn ODPs.

That circular was challenged and stayed by the High Court in a detailed judgment dated December 14, 2024. In an apparent attempt to bypass the court's ruling, the State government introduced Section 19(3) into the TCP Act via an ordinance on February 28, 2024. This move was again contested, and in May 2024, the High Court stayed the operation of the two ODPs.

IRAN LAUNCHES MISSILE ATTACKS ON US BASES IN QATAR, IRAQ

Al Udeid is also home to the Combined Air Operations Center, which provides command and control of air power across the region as well as the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, the largest expeditionary wing in the world.

The retaliation came a day after the US launched a surprise attack Sunday morning on three of Iran's nuclear sites.

Just before the explosions, Iranian President Masoud-Pezeshkian wrote on the social platform X: "We neither initiated the war nor seeking it. But we will not leave invasion to the great Iran without answer."

CONG WINS NILAMBUR; AAP RETAINS 1 SEAT EACH IN PUNJAB, GUJARAT

The byelection was necessitated following the death of AAP MLA Gurpreet Bassi Gogi in January.

Thanking the voters for the wins, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal called the bypolls a "semi-final to 2027" and a clear sign that voters would reject both the BJP and the Congress.

Gujarat and Punjab will face assembly elections in 2027. "Both the parties, Congress and BJP, contested the elections together in both places. Both of them had the same objective - to defeat AAP. But people rejected both these parties in both the places," Kejriwal said in a post on X.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said the result is a clear indication that the people of the state are "extremely happy" with the government's work. "We are working day and night with complete honesty and without any discrimination for the progress and prosperity of Punjab," he said.

BJP's Rajendra Chavda bagged the Kadi seat of Mehana district in Gujarat, reserved for the Scheduled Caste candidates, by a margin of 39,452 votes over Congress' Ramesh Chavda.

The Kadi seat fell vacant in February following the death of BJP MLA Karsan Solanki.

Gujarat Congress president Shaktisinh Gohil resigned from his post, taking moral responsibility for the defeat of the party's candidates in Kadi and Visavadar assembly

constituencies.

In Kerala, the Pinarayi Vijayan-led LDF government received a setback as the opposition Congress-led UDF wrested the Nilambur assembly constituency from it by a margin of 11,077 votes.

Congress' Aryadan Shoukath, the son of the late Congress stalwart Aryadan Muhammed, defeated CPI(M) state secretary member M Svaraj in the fiercely fought byelection.

It is the fourth byelection defeat for the Marxist party-led Left Democratic Front during the ongoing tenure of the second Pinarayi Vijayan government. The LDF earlier lost in Puthuppally, Palakkad and Thirikkakara Assembly segments.

The ruling CPI(M) said it accepted the people's ruling. Significantly, it is the first time the LDF has lost a seat held by it to its political rivals.

The Nilambur seat fell vacant after LDF-backed independent and two-time MLA P V Anvar resigned, setting off a heated political contest in the forest-fringe constituency. Svaraj said the LDF would closely examine the results but rejected suggestions of anti-incumbency against the Left government.

Shoukath said the outcome was expected. "It was a victory anticipated by the people of Kerala -- a major win against the LDF government," he said.

Independent candidate and two-time legislator P V Anvar delivered a strong performance in the Nilambur by-election, surprising both the UDF and the LDF.

For the Congress-led UDF, a win here would provide a much-needed boost ahead of the Assembly polls next year.

In West Bengal, the ruling Trinamool Congress candidate Alifa Ahmed won from the Kaliganj Assembly seat by a landslide margin of 50,049 votes over her nearest BJP rival Ashish Ghosh, bettering the 2021 winning margin of her father Nasiruddin Ahmed, whose demise in February this year necessitated the byelection.

After the final 23rd round of counting, Alifa bagged 1,02,759 votes compared to Ghosh who finished the race with 52,710 votes, according to figures posted by the Election Commission on its website.

The Left-supported Congress candidate Kabil Uddin Shaikh came in third with 28,348 votes.

Alifa, a 38-year-old engineer who quit her corporate job at an IT firm in Kolkata to foray into politics, attributed her victory to "people's love" and thanked them for "reposing faith in Mamata Banerjee's development politics".

In a post on X, CM Mamata Banerjee said, "People of all religions, castes, races and walks of life in the area have blessed us immensely by exercising their right to vote in the by-elections to the Kaliganj Assembly constituency. I humbly express my gratitude to them."

"The main architects of this victory are 'Maa, Mati, and Manush'. My colleagues from Kaliganj have worked tirelessly for this..."

TRAIN PASSENGER THRASHED FOR REFUSING SEAT TO BJP MLA

A non-cognisable report (NCR) was lodged by Singh on June 20. In his complaint, the legislator alleged that while travelling with his wife and son, a co-passenger behaved indecently, and later called others at Jhansi station who also acted abusively.

Following the uproar, the Uttar Pradesh BJP issued a show-cause notice to the Babina MLA. In the letter dated June 22, party general secretary Govind Narayan Shukla stated, "From social media and the media, information has been obtained about your behaviour in a train. Your behaviour has had an adverse effect on the image of the party, which comes in the category of indiscipline."

"As per the instructions of the state (BJP) president, a show cause notice is being issued to you. You can submit your clarification at the BJP state office within seven days. If there is a delay in getting the clarification and in case of not getting a satisfactory answer, the party will take stringent action," Shukla warned.

DGCA REJECTED NAVY SURVEY, BUT DABOLIM HIGH-RISES UNDER LENS AFTER AIR TRAGEDY

The order stated: "It is established that details of 104 obstacles forwarded by Officer-in-charge, Dabolim airport, Goa for initiating action as per the aircraft (Demolition of obstructions caused by Buildings and Trees etc) Rules,

Russian attacks on Ukraine kill over 10

AP, KYIV: Russian drones and missiles killed at least 10 civilians in Ukraine in nighttime attacks, local officials said Monday, with seven deaths reported in the capital, Kyiv, where emergency crews raced to find people believed trapped under the rubble of a partially collapsed apartment building.

Russia fired 352 drones and decoys overnight, as well as 11 ballistic missiles and five cruise missiles, Ukraine's air force said. Air defences intercepted or jammed 339 drones and 15 missiles before they could reach their targets, a statement said.

The strikes came nearly a week after a combined Russian attack on Ukraine last Tuesday killed 28 people in Kyiv, 23 of them in a residential building that collapsed after sustaining a direct missile hit.

Russian forces have for several months been trying to drive deeper into Ukraine as part of a renewed summer push along

the roughly 1,000-kilometre front line, though the Institute for the Study of War said their progress has been limited.

"Russian forces have failed to make significant gains during this period of intensified offensive operations, however, due in part to the fact that Russian forces are largely relying on poorly trained infantry to make gains in the face of Ukraine's drone-based defence," the Washington-based think tank said late Sunday.

At the same time, Russia has pounded civilian areas with long-range strikes in an apparent attempt to weaken public morale.

Zelenskyy said Ukraine's defence and new ways to pressure Russia will be the two main topics in his visit to the United Kingdom on Monday. Zelenskyy was to meet with Prime Minister Keir Starmer in London ahead of this week's NATO summit in The Hague, Starmer's office said.

