

allovertheworld



Scarlett Johansson attends as the cast of 'Jurassic World Rebirth' appear on SiriusXM's 'The Julia Cunningham Show' at JW Marriott Essex House in New York City

Four die in stampede at ICoast political meeting: official

ABIDJAN: Four people died in a stampede outside a large Ivory Coast ruling party rally at a stadium, a senior party official told reporters Wednesday. Approximately 60,000 people attended Sunday's rally of the Rally of Houphouëtists for Democracy and Peace (RHDP), the party of President Alassane Ouattara, at Abidjan's Ehimpe stadium. The rally saw Ouattara announce he would make a decision "in the coming days" on whether to stand for a fourth term in October's presidential election. "It was as we were returning home, outside the stadium, that there was a stampede," said Amede Koffi Kouakou, chairman of the organising committee for last weekend's party congress. Koffi Kouakou, also minister of equipment and road maintenance, offered "deepest condolences to all the victims" and wished "a speedy recovery to those injured" in the stampede. "Our thoughts go out to the deceased victims," added employment and social protection minister, Adama Kamara, who visited the injured in hospital in Anyama, where the stadium is located.

NGO says baby died due to tear gas during Panama protests

PANAMA CITY: Nonprofit group SOS Children's Villages said a baby died due to tear gas fired by Panamanian police to contain protests against pension reforms in the Central American nation. The girl, aged one year and eight months, died as a result of tear gas fired inside her home during demonstrations in Pueblo Nuevo in the Caribbean province of Bocas del Toro, the international NGO's Panama branch said in a statement posted on social media late Tuesday. It accused the police of "excessive and irresponsible use of force" and vowed to file a complaint so that "this homicide does not go unpunished," without saying when the baby died. Police Director Jaime Fernandez said, however, that there has been "no formal complaint" about the girl's death and accused the NGO of reporting the case "prematurely and without evidence."

Ecuador's most-wanted gang leader 'Fito' captured: President Noboa

QUITO: Ecuador's president announced Wednesday that the country's most-wanted fugitive, Los Choneros gang leader "Fito," had been re-captured over a year after he escaped from prison, triggering a wave of violence. "We have done our part to proceed with Fito's extradition to the United States, we are awaiting their response," Daniel Noboa wrote on X. Jose Adolfo Macias Villamar, known as Fito, escaped custody in Ecuador in early 2024 and American prosecutors charged him, in absentia, with seven counts of cocaine distribution, conspiracy and firearms-related crimes, including weapons smuggling. At the time of his escape, Macias Villamar was also considered a suspect in ordering the assassination of presidential candidate Fernando Villavicencio, who was shot in Quito in August 2023.

South Korea's Lee urges approval of \$22.5 bn extra budget

SEOUL: South Korea's President Lee Jae Myung on Thursday called on parliament to approve a \$22.5 billion supplementary budget aimed at reviving the economy, in his first address to MPs since taking office. Lee was elected in a snap vote this month following the impeachment of his predecessor, Yoon Suk Yeol, over his disastrous martial law declaration in December. The new president's appeal comes as Asia's fourth-largest economy -- heavily reliant on exports -- reels from steep tariffs imposed by US President Donald Trump. In April, the United States slapped a 25 percent tariff on South Korean goods as part of Trump's sweeping global trade measures. The rates were later put on a 90-day hold, giving both sides until July to reach a deal. "Timing is everything when it comes to the economy, and now is the time to act," Lee told lawmakers in the main chamber of parliament. "To overcome the downturn and restore livelihoods,

Global cocaine market hit new record highs: UNODC

VIENNA: Cocaine production, seizures and use all hit record highs in 2023, the UN drug agency said on Thursday, with the illicit drug's market the world's fastest-growing. Illegal production jumped to 3,708 tons, nearly 34 percent more than in 2022, and more than four times higher than 10 years earlier, when it was at a low, the Vienna-based UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) said in its annual report. The current surge is mainly due to an increase in the size of the area under illicit coca bush cultivation in Colombia and updated yield data, it added. Global cocaine seizures, too, recorded a high of 2,275 tons, marking a 68 percent rise in the four years to 2023.

16 dead in Kenya protests

AFP, NAIROBI: Kenya's under-fire government on Thursday condemned protests across the country during which at least 16 people were killed and thousands of businesses ruined as "terrorism disguised as dissent".

The marches on Wednesday were called to mark the one-year anniversary of anti-tax demonstrations that peaked when a huge crowd stormed parliament and dozens were killed by security forces.

The rallies began peacefully but descended into chaos as young men held running battles with police, lit fires and ripped up pavements to use as projectiles. "What unfolded yesterday was not a protest. It was terrorism disguised as dissent," Kipchumba Murkomen, interior cabinet secretary, said in a televised speech.

"We condemn the criminal anarchists who in the name of peaceful demonstrations unleashed a wave of violence, looting, sexual assault and destruction upon our people," he said,



Centre that was vandalized and torched during deadly protests marking one year since the storming of parliament in anti-tax demonstrations in Nairobi

calling events an "attempted coup".

The United Nations meanwhile deplored the violence and called for calm and restraint.

"We are deeply concerned by reports of several deaths of protesters and many more injuries -- of protesters and police officers -- during demonstrations in Kenya on Wednesday," UN human rights office spokeswoman Elizabeth Throssell said in a statement. "We are concerned by

reports that some protesters had gunshot wounds," Throssell added. "Under international human rights law, lethal force by law enforcement officers, such as firearms, should only be used when strictly necessary."

In Nairobi's business district, the epicentre of the unrest, AFP journalists found entire shopping centres and thousands of businesses destroyed, many still smouldering.

At least two banks had been broken into, while

businesses, ranging from supermarkets to small electronics and clothing stores, were reduced to ashes or ransacked by looters.

"When we came we found the whole premise burnt down," said Raphael Omondi, 36, owner of a print shop, adding that he had lost machines worth \$150,000.

"There were guys stealing, and after stealing they set the whole premises on fire... If this is what protest is, it is not worth it."

"They looted everything... I do not know where to start," said Maureen Chepkemoi, 32, owner of a perfume store.

"To protest is not bad but why are you coming to protest inside my shop? It is wicked," she added.

Several business owners told AFP that looting had started in the afternoon after the government ordered TV and radio stations to stop broadcasting live images of the protests.

Amnesty International's Kenya director Irungu Houghton said the death toll had risen to 16.

UK ditches mega green energy supply project from Morocco

AFP, LONDON: The UK government on Thursday announced that it was abandoning a mega-project intended to bring solar and wind energy from Morocco for use by domestic consumers.

Electricity was intended to be brought some 4,000 kilometres (2,485 miles) from north Africa via undersea cables to supply seven million UK households.

But a ministerial statement said: "The government has concluded the project does not clearly align strategically with the government's mission to build homegrown power here in the UK."

It also cited high risks in terms of delivery, operation and security.

British company Xlinks, which is in charge of the project, had sought government support with a 25-year contract guaranteeing a fixed price for the electricity, supplied by solar and wind installations in Tan-tan province in Morocco's south.

Company chairman Dave Lewis said Xlinks was "huge-

“We are now working to unlock the potential of the project and maximise its value for all parties in a different way”

-Dave Lewis, Company chairman

ly surprised and bitterly disappointed" at the government decision to scrap the scheme, which had been deemed a "nationally significant project" in 2023.

"We are now working to unlock the potential of the project and maximise its value for all parties in a different way," he added.

According to Xlinks, the project would have lowered wholesale electricity prices by nine percent and reduced the UK sector's carbon emissions by about 10 percent.

Britain is one of the leading players in renewable energy in Europe due to onshore and offshore wind power but still lags Scandinavian countries, which draw a large part of their electricity from wind and hydroelectric dams.

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GOA'S YOGA GURU NABBED FOR RUNNING DRUG RACKET

"In the name of tourism, people are coming to Goa with criminal intentions, setting up businesses, and using Goa's relaxed ecosystem to launder money, conduct drug trade, or hide from the law," said retired Superintendent of Police Bossuet D'Silva. "Today's policing is lax. Earlier, beat constables were the eyes and ears of police and had excellent contact with locals and hence were able to collect qualitative intelligence."

'TAXI APP'S FUEL SOP MERE LOLLIPOP'

Over 1,000 objections have already been filed, with unions demanding a complete rollback, citing threats to local livelihoods and the traditional taxi ecosystem.

When asked about the app's supposed (re)launch, the Chief Minister claimed he was unaware of any such development.

Tourism Director Kedar Naik clarified to O Herald that the app is not new -- it was originally launched in September 2023. "It is a two-year-old app. Around 1,000 drivers are already registered. To bring in more drivers, we've introduced a scheme offering 25 litres of fuel to new registrants who meet the conditions," he said.

In May, the Goa Transport Department released the draft Aggregator Guidelines, outlining a framework for legalising app-based taxi services. While welcomed by large-scale mobility players and segments of the public, the plan remains a point of contention with local taxi associations.

Despite the resistance, the government appears set on gradual digitisation -- reassuring that national players like Ola and Uber will not be allowed to operate in the state.

BLACK BOX DATA BEING ANALYSED AT AIBB LAB: GOVT

The ministry's statement came on a day when Opposition Congress on Thursday attacked the government over the lead investigator reportedly not being appointed till now for the probe into the Ahmedabad plane crash, saying the delay is "inexplicable and inexcusable".

Air India's Boeing 787-8 aircraft operating flight AI 171 en-route to London Gatwick crashed into a medical hostel complex soon after take-off from Ahmedabad on June 12, killing 270 people, including 241 people who were on-board the plane.

"On the evening of June 24, the team led by AAIIB DG with technical members from AAIB and NTSB began the data extraction process. The Crash Protection Module (CPM) from the front black box was safely retrieved, and on June 25, 2025, the memory module was successfully accessed and its data downloaded at the AAIB Lab," the ministry said.

The AAIB Lab was inaugurated in the national capital in April this year.

"The analysis of CVR (Cockpit Voice Recorder) and FDR (Flight Data Recorder) data is underway. These efforts aim to reconstruct the sequence of events leading to the accident and identify contributing factors to enhance aviation safety and prevent future occurrences," the ministry noted.

Boeing 787 aircraft has two black boxes, each having a CVR and an FDR.

The ministry also emphasised that all actions have been taken in full compliance with domestic laws and international obligations in a time-bound manner.

Both the CVRs and FDRs were recovered within a week after the accident. One was retrieved from a rooftop of the building at the crash site on June 13, and the other from the debris on June 16.

"Standard Operating Procedures were issued for their secure handling, storage, and transportation. The devices were kept under 24x7 police protection and CCTV surveillance in Ahmedabad.

"Subsequently, the black boxes were brought from Ahmedabad to Delhi by IAF aircraft with full security on June 24, 2025. The front black box arrived at AAIB Lab, Delhi, with the DG, AAIB at 1400 hrs on June 24, 2025. The rear black box was brought by a second AAIB team and reached AAIB Lab, Delhi at 1715 hrs on June 24, 2025," the ministry said.

Regarding the probe, the ministry said the multi-disciplinary team has been constituted as per the international protocol.

The team includes "an aviation medicine specialist, an ATC officer, and representatives from National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), which is a government investigative agency from the state of manufacture and design, (USA), as required for such investigations," the statement said.

GVG Yugandhar is the DG of AAIB.

India, as a signatory to the ICAO Chicago Convention (1944), investigates aircraft accidents in accordance with ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) Annex 13 and the Aircraft (Investigation of Accidents and Incidents)

Rules, 2017, the ministry said.

Meanwhile, a high-level multi-disciplinary committee, headed by the Union Home Secretary, is examining the causes that led to the Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad, and also suggest comprehensive guidelines to prevent such incidents in the future.

EXPECTATIONS SURPASSED: SHUKLA ABOARD ISS

A live video link from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) showed the four-member multi-nation crew emerging from the Dragon spacecraft named 'Grace', less than two hours after the sequence of docking with the ISS was completed at 4.15 pm IST. The spacecraft was put into a low-earth orbit by SpaceX's Falcon rocket that was launched from NASA's Kennedy Space Centre in Florida at 12.01 pm on Wednesday.

The seven-member space station crew, who are part of Expedition 73, welcomed Axiom-4 mission commander Peggy Whitson, as she floated into the station soon after the hatch-opening procedures were completed at 5:44 pm.

Whitson, a veteran astronaut, floated into the space station at 5:53 pm followed by Shukla, the mission pilot, with Polish engineer Slawosz Uznanski-Wisniewski, a mission specialist and a European Space Agency project astronaut, and Hungary's Tibor Kapu, a mechanical engineer and the mission specialist, close behind.

The Crew Dragon capsule earlier approached the space station, about 400 km above earth, to complete the docking sequence, 14 minutes after it achieved a soft capture with the Harmony module of the ISS over the North Atlantic Ocean. This was followed by manoeuvres to establish communication, power links and pressure stabilisation.

"The #Ax4 crew -- commander Peggy Whitson, ISRO astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla, ESA astronaut Slawosz Uznanski-Wisniewski, and mission specialist Tibor Kapu -- emerges from the Dragon spacecraft and gets their first look at their home in low Earth orbit," the NASA said in a post on X, as the four astronauts waved to the mission control at Houston.

Whitson handed out astronaut pins to Shukla, Wisniewski and Kapu after they marked their maiden voyage to space.

"I am astronaut 634. It is a privilege to be here," Shukla said.

Shukla said over the next 14 days, he and the other astronauts will conduct scientific experiments and interact with people on Earth.

"This is also a phase of India's space journey. I will keep talking to you. Let us make this journey exciting. I am carrying the tiranga and I am carrying all of you with me. The next 14 days will be exciting."

Shukla said the ride to the space station was wonderful and great and he was overwhelmed by the welcome he received from the crew of the orbital laboratory.

"The minute I entered the International Space Station and met this crew, you just made me feel so welcome, as if you literally opened your doors, like your house doors, for us," he said.

"That is true. It was fantastic. I just feel even better now. Whatever expectations I had of coming here were surpassed by the view, of course, that is a big part of it, but also by you guys."

"So thank you so much. I think this is fantastic, this is wonderful and I am very confident that the next 14 days are going to be amazing, advancing science and research, and working together," he added.

In Shukla's hometown in Lucknow, his parents and relatives, teachers, friends, scores of students and onlookers greeted the successful docking with a standing ovation and let out a collective roar at the City Montessori School.

His family members were also seen joyously holding the tricolour, as 'Bharat Mata ki jai', 'India-India' and 'Hip Hip Hurray' chants intermingled with resounding applause.

"He has reached the ISS; we are over the moon," his sister Suchi Misra told PTI, admitting that it was a moment when the astronaut's family, like the rest of India, felt overwhelmed.

As the Dragon spacecraft circled the Earth before the completion of docking with the ISS, Shukla also shared his experience via a videolink from the capsule to say he was learning to live in microgravity conditions "like a baby" and it was an amazing experience to float in vacuum.

The spacecraft began a slow and measured approach by firing on thrusters to prepare for a rendezvous with the ISS.

It moved swiftly through the intricate manoeuvres, prompting the mission control to skip two halts at "waypoint-1" and "waypoint-2", which advanced the docking by nearly 30 minutes.

Just 20 metres from the space station, the spacecraft made its final approach, using a suite of laser-based sensors and cameras, aligned precisely with the docking port on the Harmony module.

After the soft capture of the spacecraft, the hard-mating was completed when the two orbiting bodies were connect-

ed with 12 sets of hooks with each other and communication and power links were established.

The space station crew performed the mandatory leak checks and hatch-opening procedures to ensure that the pressure inside the Dragon spacecraft was the same as on the ISS -- matching the pressure levels at the sea level on Earth.

A new 'crew' member of the Axiom-4 mission - a toy swan named Joy - was seen floating in the Dragon spacecraft, as astronauts interacted with the mission control via videolink before the docking.

Joy is the zero gravity indicator carried by the astronauts of the Axiom-4 mission which was selected because Shukla's son Kiash's love for animals.

The tradition of flying a toy to mark the moment gravity gives way to weightlessness began with Yuri Gagarin, the first human in space, and has since become a ritual in space missions.

"We are here, not just the four of us, we also have with us our Zero-G indicator - Joy - that started to float with us just when we were injected into orbit. Joy is floating all over the capsule, sometimes we have to find him/ her here with us," Uznanski-Wisniewski said.

Shukla said the swan is a great symbol that symbolises wisdom and also has the ability to discern in the age of distraction.

SOCIAL MEDIA DISCLOSURE NOW MANDATORY FOR US VISAS

The communication continued, "Omitting social media information could lead to visa denial and ineligibility for future visas."

At the weekly media briefing in capital, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal was asked to respond to the statement of the US authorities.

"Visa matters, immigration matters are matters which pertain to sovereign functions of any country, but having said that we have seen the guidelines issued by the US side, the US Embassy here, the US government, regarding providing details of social media identifiers, in visa applications," he said.

Jaiswal continued, "But, it is our belief that all visa applications of Indian nationals should be treated on the basis of merit. And, we remain engaged with the US side on all mobility issues and consular issues to ensure that the legitimate interests of Indian nationals are safeguarded."

On June 23, the US Embassy asked those applying for an F, M, or J non-immigrant visa to switch the privacy settings of their social media accounts to 'public' to facilitate vetting, which it said was necessary to establish their identity and admissibility to the US under law.

The embassy had also said that since 2019, the US has required visa applicants to provide "social media identifiers" on immigrant and non-immigrant visa application forms.

F or M category is for student visas and J category for exchange visitor visa.

In Thursday's communication, the embassy also attached two related digital posters.

"Every US visa adjudication is a national security decision," read the caption on the top of a poster followed by a note.

The note read, "The United States requires visa applicants to provide social media identifiers on visa application forms. We use all available information in our visa screening and vetting."

It comes against the backdrop of an immigration crackdown by the Trump administration in California's Los Angeles recently.

On June 24, the embassy's statement said that the US had increased enforcement of immigration laws, and violators would face detention, deportation and permanent consequences for future visa eligibility.

The US further warned that those entering the country illegally would face jail time and deportation.

The US Embassy in India has issued a series of statements on the subject of visa and immigration this month.

On June 19, the embassy said a US visa was "a privilege, not a right" and its screening did not stop after a visa was issued as authorities might revoke it if one broke the law.

The embassy had also said that using illegal drugs or breaking any of the US laws while on a student or visitor visa could make one ineligible for future US visa.

Earlier this month, the US Embassy in India also issued statements, underlining that while people travelling legally to America were welcome, illegal entry or abuse of visas won't be tolerated by the country.

The United States "will not tolerate" those who facilitate illegal and mass immigration to the US, its embassy said on June 16.

The US Embassy had said the US had "established new visa restrictions" targeting foreign government officials and violators.