

# Oil prices surge, markets retreat after Israel's strike on Iran

HONG KONG, June 13 (AP)

OIL prices surged and Asian shares were lower on Friday after Israel struck Iranian nuclear and military targets in an attack that raised the risk of all-out war between them.

US benchmark crude oil rose by USD 3.93, or 5.8 per cent, to USD 71.97 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, increased by USD 3.82 to USD 73.18 per barrel.

In share trading, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 fell 0.9 per cent to 37,834.25 while the Kospi in Seoul edged 0.9 per cent lower to 2,894.62.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng retreated 0.9 per cent to 23,831.48 and the Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.7 per cent to 3,378.76.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 drifted 0.2 per cent lower to 8,547.40.

"An Israeli attack on Iran poses a top ten of our global risk, but Asian markets are expected to recover



quickly as they have relatively limited exposure to the conflict and growing ties to unaffected Saudi Arabia and the UAE," said Xu Tiachen of The Economist Intelligence. On Thursday, US stock indexes ticked higher following another encouraging update on inflation across the country. The S&P 500 rose 0.4 per cent to 6,045.26. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 0.2 per cent to 42,967.62, and the Nasdaq composite gained 0.2 per cent to 19,662.48.

Oracle jumped 13.3 per cent after

reporting stronger profit and revenue for the latest quarter than analysts expected.

That helped markets offset a 4.8 per cent loss for Boeing after an Air India plane crashed Thursday, killing more than 240 people. It was the first crash of a Boeing 787 Dreamliner, and the cause wasn't immediately known.

Stocks broadly got some help from easing Treasury yields in the bond market following the latest update on inflation. Thursday's update said inflation at the wholesale level wasn't as bad last month as economists expected, and it followed a report on Wednesday saying something similar about the inflation that US consumers are feeling.

Wall Street took it as a signal that the Federal Reserve will have more leeway to cut interest rates later this year in order to give the economy a boost.

# India, China agree to speed resuming direct air services

NEW DELHI, June 13 (PTI)

FOREIGN Secretary Vikram Misri held talks with Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong during which the two sides reviewed the developments in India-China bilateral relations and agreed to continue to "stabilise and rebuild ties" with priority on people-centric engagements, the MEA said on Friday.

The meeting took place on Thursday and the two sides also agreed to expedite steps involved in resuming direct air services between the two countries.

Misri had held talks with Sun earlier on January 27 in Beijing.

Sun is on a visit to India from June 12-13, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement. During the meeting on Thursday, "the two sides reviewed the developments in India-China bilateral relations since their last meeting in Beijing



on January 27, 2025 and agreed to continue to stabilise and rebuild ties with priority on people-centric engagements", the MEA said.

The foreign secretary appreciated the Chinese side's cooperation for the resumption of the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra this year. He noted the discussion in the April meeting of the Expert Level Mechanism for coopera-

tion in trans-border rivers for resumption of provision of hydrological data and other cooperation, and hoped for progress on them, the MEA said.

"The two sides agreed to expedite steps involved in resuming direct air services between the two countries. Foreign Secretary hoped for the early conclusion of an updated Air Services Agreement," it said.

# Tens of thousands evacuated in China as Typhoon Wutip approaches

HAIKOU, June 13 (IANS)

TENS of thousands of people have been evacuated to safety in south China's Hainan Province as Typhoon Wutip, the first



typhoon of the year, approaches near. As of 8 p.m. Thursday, the province had evacuated a total of 16,561 people from construction sites, low-lying flood-prone areas, and regions at risk of flash floods. All the province's 30,721 fishing vessels had either returned to ports or taken shelter

elsewhere, with over 40,000 people working on the vessels having been evacuated ashore. As Typhoon Wutip continued to strengthen, the provincial meteorological service maintained a Level III typhoon alert as of 11 a.m. Friday.

# Arab nations condemn Israeli attack on Iran

RIYADH, June 13 (IANS)

SEVERAL Arab countries on Friday issued strong condemnation of Israel's attack on Iran early on Friday, which has significantly escalated tensions in the region and raised the spectre of a broader conflict between the long-standing rivals.

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia expresses its strong condemnation and denunciation of the blatant Israeli aggressions against the brotherly Islamic Republic of Iran, which undermine its sovereignty and security and constitute a clear violation of international laws and norms. While the Kingdom condemns these heinous attacks, it affirms that the international community and the Security Council bear a great responsibility to immediately halt this aggression," read a statement issued by the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The attacks come amid



Firefighters and people clean up the scene of an explosion at a residence compound after Israeli attacks in Tehran. (AP/PTI)

mounting concerns over Tehran's nuclear programme and its perceived threat to Israeli national security.

In a televised statement, Israeli

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed that Israel had initiated a "targeted military operation to roll back the Iranian threat to Israel's very survival."

## Modi stresses early restoration of peace and stability in call with Netanyahu

NEW DELHI, June 13 (PTI)

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called up Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday to brief on the evolving situation in west Asia as the Indian leader emphasized the need for early restoration of peace and stability.

"Received a phone call from PM @netanyahu of Israel. He briefed me on the evolving situation. I shared India's concerns and emphasised the need for early restoration of peace and stability in the region," Modi said on X.

**NETANYAHU SPEAKS TO OTHERWORLD LEADERS: IN**  
A diplomatic push to garner international support for

Israel's attacks against Iran, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke to his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi, among many other world leaders, his office said on Friday.

Beginning last night, Netanyahu has held conversations with world leaders, including German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, Indian Prime Minister Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron, the Prime Minister's Office said in a brief statement.

He is due to speak with US President Donald Trump, Russian President Vladimir Putin and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, it added on Friday.

# Over 200 feared dead in AI plane crash

**London-bound AI Dreamliner crashes into Ahmedabad residential locality minutes after takeoff**

There were 12 crew members, 169 Indians, 53 British, one Canadian and 7 Portuguese nationals onboard

One survivor Vishwash Kumar Ramesh, who was seated on 11A, found

DNA tests will be carried out to ascertain the identities

Unofficial reports said up to 25 people in the medical complex could also have died

Tata Group to give Rs 1 crore to kin of dead

Rescue operation underway after an Air India plane crashed near Ahmedabad airport on Thursday. (PTI)



**Former Guj CM Vijay Rupani among dead**



AHMEDABAD, June 12 (PTI)

FORMER Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani died on Thursday after an Air India aircraft carrying him and 241 others crashed near Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport in Ahmedabad in the afternoon, Union minister C R Paatil said.

"This is a very sad incident. My heart goes out to the victims and their families. We have lost two-time former Chief Minister Vijay Rupani in the crash, which is very sad news for the BJP family," Paatil, the Union Jal Shakti Minister and chief of the party's State unit, told reporters.

Rupani, 68, was CM for two terms from August 7, 2016 to September 11, 2021, after winning the Gujarat Legislative Assembly elections from Rajkot West seat. He was presently the BJP's in charge for Punjab.

Rupani was a student leader who led many agitations. During his college years, he worked as an activist of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad. In 1975, Rupani faced imprisonment for one year in Bhavnagar jail while protesting against the Emergency.

Rupani entered public service in 1987 as a corporator. He was a member of RS between 2006 and 2012.

**T**HE worst aviation disaster in India has left the country numb and shocked. Though official casualty count is yet to be released by the authorities, the number of dead in the horrific crash of Ahmedabad-London Air India Dreamliner is set to be over 200. A few lucky survivors might still come out from the wreckage site, the hostel housing students of medicine, as rescue efforts are still on at the residential area of Ahmedabad. While the dead are being mourned and prayers are going out for the bereaved families and those injured in the plane crash, a strong suspicion of a sabotage

## Accident or sabotage?

is lurking in the mind.

Investigation by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), an attached office of the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), will bring out the details of what went wrong with the Dreamliner to crash within minutes of take-off. However, there are reasons enough to suspect an intentional destruction caused to the Air India flight. Aviation experts are already flagging many points that remain inexplicable, including the sudden failure of both engines within a

minute of take-off. For a wide-body aircraft like the Dreamliner, possibility of a double engine failure is next to none, as per experts. Videos coming out in media also show that the engines were whirring when the plane suddenly lost altitude within a few seconds. There is definitely something that does not meet the eye and a thorough investigation involving top security agencies must be conducted to find out the root cause.

An international flight covering a long distance starts

boarding only after getting clearance from maintenance and engineering departments. The process takes over three hours before the clearance is handed over to the pilots. If the flight to London took off at the right time, then the clearance process must have been completed as per set norms. Whether manipulation was effected in this process by anti-India forces has to be probed in the right earnest. For, the crash has come right after a highly-successful Operation Sindoor which dismantled ter-

ror infrastructure in Pakistan.

Another big reason for the possibility of a sabotage, which simply cannot be taken lightly, is the threats doled out by pro-Khalistani extremist Gurbhag Singh Pannun to Air India flights last October. The Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) founder had threatened international passengers against boarding Air India flights. A series of threat mails to airports across India soon followed. Though all those turned out to be hoax mails, there is now a solid and valid reason to revisit those threats, their pattern, and a possible connection with the AI-171 crash near Ahmedabad airport.

— Editor