

PM Modi arrives in Cyprus on first leg of 3-nation tour



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed upon his arrival at Larnaca International Airport, in Larnaca, Cyprus on Sunday. (PTI)

NICOSIA, June 15 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Cyprus on Sunday for a two-day visit during which he will hold talks with President Nikos Christodoulides to strengthen bilateral ties.

In a special gesture, President Christodoulides welcomed PM Modi on his arrival at the Larnaca International Airport. Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Cyprus in over two decades.

"Landed in Cyprus. My gratitude to the President of Cyprus, Mr. Nikos Christodoulides for the special gesture of welcoming me at the airport. This visit will add significant momentum to India-Cyprus relations, especially in areas like trade, investment and more," Modi posted on X. Modi arrived here on the first leg of his three-nation tour.

"A trusted partnership underpinned by shared values & aspirations. PM @narendramodi has landed in Cyprus. As a special gesture, reflecting deep-rooted his-

toric ties, President @Christodoulides and FM @ckombos received PM on arrival at the airport," Ministry of External Affairs spokesman Randhir Jaiswal said in a post on X. "Extensive discussions to further deepen bilateral ties lie ahead," he added.

The Cypriot President, welcoming PM Modi, said it is a "historic visit" and a "new chapter in a strategic partnership that knows no limits".

"Welcome to Cyprus Prime Minister @narendramodi! Here, at the EU's south-eastern frontier and gateway of the Mediterranean. A historic visit. A new chapter in a strategic partnership that knows no limits. We make a promise to advance, transform, prosper more. Together," Christodoulides posted on X.

Upon his arrival at the hotel, Prime Minister Modi was greeted by the members of the Indian diaspora who chanted 'Vande Mataram' and 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai'.

Larry Ellison becomes world's 2nd richest person

■ Surpasses Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg and Amazon founder Jeff Bezos

NEW DELHI, June 15 (IANS)

ORACLE Corporation's Co-founder and Chairman, Larry Ellison, has now become the world's second richest person, overtaking Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg and Amazon founder Jeff Bezos.

This big jump in his ranking comes after a strong earnings report from Oracle, which pushed the company's share price higher.



According to Forbes' real-time billionaire rankings updated on June 15, Ellison's net worth rose to \$258.8 billion, putting him just behind Tesla CEO Elon Musk, who remains the world's richest person with a net worth of

\$410.8 billion.

Just two months ago, in Forbes' annual billionaire list released in April 2025, Ellison was in the fourth spot with a net worth of \$192 billion.

This means he has gained around \$66.8 billion in only two months, mainly due to the rise in Oracle's stock.

The company's stock saw a big jump on June 13 after it reported strong financial results.

Oracle posted earnings of \$1.70 per share on revenue of \$15.9 billion. The shares closed at \$200 each.

Oracle has recently played a key role in the United States government's push for AI develop-

ment under President Donald Trump's Project Stargate, alongside OpenAI and SoftBank.

Ellison has been vocal about Oracle's AI vision, even suggesting that AI will bring a new era of monitoring, where technology will help improve public behaviour through constant recording and reporting.

At 80, Ellison still serves as Oracle's Chairman and Chief Technology Officer. He founded the company in 1977 and served as its CEO until 2014.

Under his leadership, Oracle has grown through several major acquisitions, including the \$28.3 billion purchase of health tech company Cerner in 2021.

Iran will pay 'very heavy price' for targeting Israeli civilians: Netanyahu

■ By Harinder Mishra
JERUSALEM, June 15 (PTI)

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday warned that Iran will pay a "very heavy price" for targeting civilians in Israel. He made the comments while visiting the site of an early morning Iranian missile strike in the city of Bat Yam, close to Tel Aviv. At least seven people were killed and several dozen others wounded in the strike.

"Iran will pay a very heavy price for the murder of civilians - women, children - that it carried out deliberately. We will achieve our objectives, and we will strike them with overwhelming force," the Prime Minister's Office quoted Netanyahu as saying.

Israel launched Operation Rising Lion early Friday, target-



A protester holds a portrait of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei during a protest against Israeli attacks on multiple cities across Iran, at a bridge leading to the fortified Green Zone where the U.S. embassy is located in Baghdad, Iraq on Saturday. (PTI)

ing Iran's nuclear, missile and military infrastructure. Iran later launched retaliatory strikes on Israel, which has threatened

Trump said 'no' to Israeli plan to kill Iran's supreme leader Khamenei

WASHINGTON, June 15 (AP)

PRESIDENT Donald Trump vetoed a plan presented by Israel to the US to kill Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, according to a US official familiar with the matter.

The Israelis informed the Trump administration in recent days that it had developed a credible plan to kill Khamenei. After being briefed on the plan, the White House made clear to Israeli officials that Trump was opposed to the Israelis making

the move, according to the official who was not authorised to comment on the sensitive matter and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The Trump administration is desperate to keep Israel's military operation aimed at decapitating Iran's nuclear programme from exploding into an even more expansive conflict and saw the plan to kill Khamenei as a move that would enflame the conflict and potentially destabilise the region.

even greater force after some Iranian missiles struck buildings in the heart of the country. Several

dozen people were injured in an attack on the city of Rehovot, but there were no fatalities.

G7 leaders gather in Canada for summit overshadowed by Middle East crisis, Trump's tariffs

■ By Rob Gillies and Jill Lawless

BANFF, June 15 (AP)

LEADERS of some of the world's biggest economic powers will arrive in the Canadian Rockies on Sunday for a Group of Seven summit overshadowed by a widening war across the Middle East and US President Donald Trump's unresolved trade war with allies and rivals alike.

Israel's strikes on Iran and Tehran's retaliation, which appeared to catch many world leaders unawares, is the latest sign of a more volatile world as Trump seeks to withdraw the US from its role as world police-

man.

Speaking on a flight to Canada to attend the summit, British PM Keir Starmer said he had discussed efforts to de-escalate the situation with Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as well as other world leaders.

Britain is sending Royal Air Force jets and other military reinforcements to the Middle East. "We do have longstanding concerns about the nuclear program Iran has. We do recognise Israel's right to self-defense, but I'm absolutely clear that this needs to de-escalate. There is a huge risk of escalation for the region and more widely," Starmer said.



Israeli security forces inspect a destroyed building that was hit by a missile fired from Iran, near Tel Aviv, Israel on Sunday. (AP/PTI)

Israel, Iran trade strikes for third day as nuclear talks called off

DUBAI, June 15 (AP)

ISRAEL unleashed airstrikes across Iran for a third day on Sunday and threatened even greater force as some Iranian missiles evaded Israeli air defences to strike buildings in the heart of the country. Planned talks on Iran's nuclear programme, which could provide an off-ramp, were cancelled.

Israel's strikes have killed at least 406 people in Iran and wounded another 654, according to a human rights group that has long tracked the country, Washington-based Human Rights Activists. Iran's Government has not offered

At least 14 people killed in Israel in Iranian strikes

overall casualty figures.

The region braced for a protracted conflict after Israel's surprise bombardment Friday of Iranian nuclear and military sites killed several top generals and nuclear scientists. Neither side showed any sign of backing down.

Iran said Israel struck two oil refineries, raising the prospect of a broader assault on Iran's heavily sanctioned energy industry that could affect global markets.

2 oil refineries in Tehran hit in Israeli strikes

The Israeli military, in a social media post, warned Iranians to evacuate arms factories, signalling a further widening of the campaign.

Israel, the sole though undeclared nuclear-armed state in the Middle East, said it launched the attack to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. The two countries have been adversaries for decades.

Explosions shook Iran's capi-

tal, Tehran, around noon and again around 3:30 P.M. Sirens went off across much of Israel around 4 P.M., warning of Iran's first daytime assault since fighting began.

Israel said 14 people have been killed there since Friday and 390 wounded. Iran has fired over 270 missiles, 22 of which got through the country's sophisticated multi-tiered air defences, according to Israeli figures. Israel's main international airport and airspace remained closed for a third day. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said if Israel's strikes on Iran stop, then "our responses will also stop." Iran's

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