

BIGGEST ATTACK

Russia launches barrage of 99 drones, missiles on Ukraine's energy system

KYIV, Mar 29 (AP)

MOSCOW launched a large-scale attack on Ukraine's energy infrastructure on Friday, with a mass barrage of 99 drones and missiles hitting regions across the country, Ukraine's armed forces said.

Air raid warnings across the country continued through the night as the strike targeted 10 separate regions, Ukraine's Interior Minister, Ihor Klymenko, said in a statement on Telegram.

The Ukrainian air force reported that 60 Shahed drones and 39 missiles of varying types were seen across the country, of which 58 drones and 26 mis-



siles were ultimately shot down by air defenses.

Ukraine's state-owned grid operator, Ukrenergo, said that the attack deliberately targeted energy infrastructure, including thermal and hydro-

electric power plants across central and western regions.

DTEK, Ukraine's largest private electricity operator, also said on Friday that three of its thermal power plants had been damaged in the attack.

Elsewhere, five people were wounded during the attack in Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region, said local governor Serhii Lysak. The injured included a 5-year-old girl.

The bombardment in the west of Ukraine caused the Polish Armed Forces to scramble its own aircraft, the country's operational command said on social media.

Last week Warsaw demanded an explanation from Moscow, after one of its missiles strayed briefly into Polish airspace during a major missile attack on Ukraine, prompting the NATO member to activate F-16 fighter jets.

India, US Navy warships undertake 'Exercise Tiger Triumph'

ANDHRA PRADESH, Mar 29 (ANI)

THE Indian Navy and US Navy amphibious warships on Friday undertook operations in the Kakinada region of Andhra Pradesh as part of the ongoing India-US joint exercise 'Tiger Triumph 2024.'

In the India-US joint exercise, the integral craft onboard the ships were deployed to undertake various operations, according to an official statement.

Additionally, Cross Deck helicopter operations were also undertaken between the ships of the Indian Navy and the US Navy off Kakinada.

The seamless conduct of multifaceted co-ordinated operations is indicative of the



joint planning and execution, reaffirming the high degree of interoperability between the Armed Forces of the two nations.

The Sea Phase of Exercise Tiger Triumph 2024 commenced on Wednesday, with Indian Navy and US Navy ships sailing out together.

This phase in Visakhapatnam will witness service personnel from both countries going through various facets of amphibious operations, including co-ordinated HADR and MEDEVAC.

Exercise 'Tiger Triumph 2024' is a bilateral, tri-service exercise between India and the US being held from March 18-31.

The opening ceremony of the exercise took place onboard INS Jalashwa on March 19.

Earlier on Sunday, a pre-sail conference was conducted at Visakhapatnam to discuss the nuances of the upcoming sea phase of Exercise Tiger Triumph 2024.

The plans were presented to the commanders, with the

commanding officers of participating units of the United States Navy and Indian Navy in attendance.

Notably, the exercise is aimed at developing interoperability for conducting HADR operations and refining Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to enable rapid and smooth co-ordination between forces of both countries.

"Indian Navy ships with integral helicopters and landing crafts embarked, Indian Navy aircraft, Indian Army personnel and vehicles and Indian Air Force aircraft and helicopters, along with the Rapid Action Medical Team (RAMT), would be participating in the exercise," the Ministry of Defence said in a press release.

'Storage capacity in main reservoirs drop to 36 pc'

NEW DELHI, Mar 29 (PTI)

THE live storage capacity in India's 150 primary reservoirs has dropped to 36 per cent of their total capacity while the southern states like Karnataka face a significant shortfall in water storage compared to the previous year and the ten-year average, according to official data. Cities like Bengaluru have been grappling with water shortage, which can be attributed to rain deficiency in Karnataka during last year's monsoon, a decline in reservoir level, and the loss of lakes due to rapid urbanisation.

The Central Water Commission, in its weekly bulletin, said the total live storage capacity of 150 reservoirs is 178.784 BCM (billion cubic metres) which is about 69.35 per cent of the live storage capacity of 257.812 BCM, which is estimated to have been cre-



ated in the country.

As per reservoir storage bulletin released on Thursday, live storage available in these reservoirs is 64.606 BCM, which is 36 per cent of total live storage capacity of these reservoirs.

"However, last year the live storage available in these reservoirs for the corresponding period was 76.991 BCM and the average of last 10 years live storage was 66.644 BCM," it said. Thus, the live storage available in 150 reservoirs as per the bulletin is 84 per cent of the live storage of the corresponding period of last year

and 97 per cent of storage of the average of the last ten years.

Ahead of the summer season, a week-on-week decline has been noted in the reservoir capacity. According to last week's bulletin, the live storage capacity was 38 per cent or 67.591 BCM.

In the week of March 7-14, the live storage capacity was recorded at 40 per cent or 70.746 BCM and the week prior to that it was 41 per cent or 73.297 BCM.

In the northern region, comprising states like Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Rajasthan, the total live storage available in the monitored reservoirs stands at 32 per cent of their total capacity.

This figure, at 6.290 BCM, is notably lower than the storage levels observed during the corresponding period last year and falls short of the ten-year average.

UK Navy ships to undergo maintenance at L&T Shipbuilding's TN facility



CHENNAI, Mar 29 (PTI)

FOR the first time, two ships of the United Kingdom's Royal Navy, owned by the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, have arrived at Larsen and Toubro's Shipbuilding facility at Kattupalli near here for scheduled maintenance activities.

RFA 'Argus' and RFA 'Lyme Bay' arrived at the shipyard located in Ennore, North of Chennai for 'Assisted

Maintenance Period' and Self Maintenance Period, respectively, a press release from L&T Shipbuilding said on Friday.

"The successful collaboration between the Royal Navy and L&T Shipbuilding exemplifies the spirit of partnership and is a direct result of the logistics-sharing agreement signed between the United Kingdom and India in 2022," L&T Member of Executive Council

of Management and Advisor to CMD J D Patil said.

"This is the first instance that Royal Navy ships are undergoing scheduled maintenance routines in India. This move signifies a step towards India-UK 2030 roadmap and reflects a shared understanding of the global security challenges in the Indian Ocean Region," British Deputy High Commissioner Oliver Ballhatchet said.

Afspa extended in 4 Assam dists by 6 months

Guwahati: Assam govt has extended imposition of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (Afspa), 1958, in its four districts — Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Charaideo and Sivasagar — for six months from April 1, reports **Prabin Kalita**. These districts continue to be considered as “disturbed areas”, a govt notification stated.

According to the state home and political department notification, Assam Police HQ submitted a report showing improvement of law and order situation in Assam, barring the four districts where one militant organisation is still active. The police recommendation to continue imposition of Afspa in the “disturbed area” has been approved by the MHA.

Road to U'khand village on LAC with China by year-end: Govt

Pankaj.Sharma@timesgroup.com

Dehradun: The under-construction road connecting Dumak and other villages in Chamoli district along the Indo-China border in Uttarakhand, which has been delayed time and again even 17 years after the project was launched, will be completed before the year ends, authorities promised in a written statement on Thursday.

Taking cognizance of a report published in TOI on Thursday, which highlighted how the 250-odd voters in Dumak have decided to boycott LS polls after being fed up of constant delays on the road construction, Uttarakhand Rural Roads Development Agency CEO Kamrendra Singh issued

YOU READ IT HERE

No road, no vote, says village in U'khand bordering China

Present CEC Had Vowed In 2022 To Look Into The Issue



The road is under construction in the U'khand area, which is bordering China.

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March 28 2023

a statement saying the pending work will be completed in the next eight months. He claimed that the delay was due to "change in alignment because of landslides in the area."

The statement, signed by CEO and the agency's chief engineer Ravi Singh, stated that construction on the first 20.5km stretch & the 23 to 29km stretch have been completed, with work on four connecting lanes ongoing. However, construction of a bridge in the middle of the two has been delayed due to it being in a landslide zone.

Officials added that landslides in 2018 and 2021 necessitated changes in the alignment. However, there was disagreement among villagers over the proposed changes.

In bid to check wheat hoarding, govt asks traders to declare stock

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Centre has asked traders, wholesalers, retailers, processors and large chain stores in all states and UTs for "mandatory declaration" of wheat stock position at a specified portal from April 1, and thereafter every Friday till further orders.

The move is aimed at preventing hoarding to ensure overall food security in the country. It will stop unscrupulous speculation at a time when the central wheat stocks fell to a 16-year low of 7.73 million tonne (as on March 24).

"All respective legal entities ensure stocks are regularly and correctly disclosed on the portal," said the ministry



A CLOSE WATCH

of food and public distribution in a statement on Friday.

It said the department of food and public distribution is maintaining a "close watch" over the stock position of wheat and rice to control prices and ensure easy availability across the country.

Rice stock declaration by all categories of entities is already in-place. "Any entity, not

registered on the portal, may register themselves and start disclosing wheat and rice stock every Friday," it said.

The last time wheat stocks fell below the present level was way back in 2008 when it had dipped to 5.8 million tonne. Govt has set a conservative procurement target in the range of 30-32 MT for the 2024-25 Rabi marketing season (March-April), as against the actual procurement of 26.2 MT in the previous year.

Agriculture ministry had last month projected wheat production at a record 112 MT for the 2023-24 crop year (July-June) — estimating it to be nearly 1.5 MT higher than the previous record high of 110.5 MT in the 2022-23 crop year.

MILESTONE GCF successfully tests three Dhanush guns

By Ashish Rajput
JABALPUR, Mar 29

IN ANOTHER milestone for the defence installation of the city, three more Dhanush guns successfully passed through

EXCLUSIVE

Integrated Firing Check at Long Proof Range (LPR) Khamaria on Friday. The state-of-art guns will contribute around Rs 100 crore to the annual production



Members of Dhanush Project seen with Dhanush Gun fielded for IFC at LPR Khamaria.

target of Gun Carriage Factory Jabalpur (GCF) for the next financial year 2024-25. The three Dhanush guns will soon be handed over to the Indian Army.
Dhanush 155-mm/45-Calibre Gun System was indigenously developed by Gun Carriage Factory in Jabalpur and was inducted in the Indian Armed Force after rigorous trials. Indigenous Dhanush Gun System is the most advanced, reliable and robust gun system in the world which has longest

firing range upto 38-kilometres with efficient accuracy. It can fire 3 round in per 13-seconds and 42 rounds in an hour.
Till now, GCF has supplied around 30 guns since its induction into the Indian Army. Even after facing several challenges of delay in material input and technical hurdles, GCF has succeeded in conducting integrated firing check of three guns in a day.
Dhanush Project is the
(Contd on page 5)