

S Korea ex-def min attempts suicide after arrest over martial law decree

Seoul: South Korea's previous defence minister was stopped from attempting suicide while in detention over last week's martial law declaration, officials said Wednesday, as President Yoon Suk Yeol's office resisted a police attempt to search the compound. The main liberal opposition Democratic Party is pushing for a new motion to impeach Yoon for his Dec 3 decree. The party said it plans to submit the new motion Thursday to set up a vote Saturday.

Rival North Korea's state media, for the first time, reported on the turmoil. It mostly explained the events, though it called Yoon "a traitor" and his military "gangsters."

Shin Yong Hae, commissioner general of Korea Correctional Service, told lawmakers former defence minister Kim Yong Hyun tried to kill himself the previous night at a detention centre in Seoul. He said correctional officers stopped him and he was in stable condition.

Police tried to search Yoon's office to look for evidence related to the martial law introduction. But failed to enter the office about six hours after their arrival, parliament was told.

Some observers earlier said that the presidential security service won't likely permit searches of Yoon's office, citing a law that prohibits searches of sites with state secrets without approval from those in charge of those areas. AP

'Assad safe in Russia, not to be extradited'

MOSCOW, Dec 11 (IANS)

SYRIA'S former President Bashar al-Assad, who has been granted asylum, is now safe in Russia, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov said.

"In such a situation it would be very wrong for me to elaborate on what happened and how it was resolved, but he is secured," local RIA news agency reported, citing Ryabkov.

Commenting on the possibility of the extradition of al-Assad, the Russian diplomat noted that Russia is not a party to the International Criminal Court Rome Statute, Xinhua news agency reported.

Syrian militant groups waged a major offensive from northern Syria since the end of November, swept southwards through government-held areas, and captured the capital Damascus within 12 days.

Following the offensive, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government collapsed on Sunday. Al-Assad resigned and went to Russia for asylum.

Syria's Military Operations Administration announced Wednesday that it has lifted the curfew previously imposed on Damascus and its surrounding areas, calling on residents to resume their daily activities and return to their workplaces.

26th RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra takes charge

MUMBAI, Dec 11 (PTI)

SANJAY Malhotra on Wednesday took charge as the 26th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India.

Malhotra, a career bureaucrat, arrived at the central bank's headquarters on Wednesday morning, where he was welcomed by senior RBI staffers.

The central bank confirmed Malhotra's appointment through a post on the microblogging site "X" and also shared a few pictures.

Malhotra, who recently served as the Revenue

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RBI will remain alert and agile to meet challenges: New Governor



Assam makes NRC application receipt must to get Aadhaar

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Guwahati: Assam cabinet on Wednesday cleared a stringent standard operating procedure for Aadhaar enrolment verification in the state, which includes mandatory submission of the NRC application receipt number by the applicant. Applications without the NRC application receipt number will be rejected.

CM Himanta Biswa Sarma said, "From today, just applying for an Aadhaar card will not mean getting one... As a result of this SOP, we will be able to create an environment that will prevent doubtful citizens from getting this UID."



The new rule will prevent doubtful citizens from getting Aadhaar cards, CM Himanta Biswa Sarma said. This comes in the wake of some districts showing more Aadhaar card holders than their total populations

Central govt employees having domicile in other states but posted in Assam have been

exempted from this rule.

Sarma had announced in Sept that a more stringent verification process for Aadhaar enrolment would be put in place after it was found that in certain districts with a significant Muslim population, the number of Aadhaar card holders was more than the total population of the districts.

Official data shows that in Barpeta, Aadhaar cardholders are 103.74% of the population, in Dhubri 103.48%, in Morigaon 101.76%, and in Nagaon about 100.86%, raising concerns that suspected foreign nationals may have managed to procure the cards.

India, France & UAE kick off air drill over Arabian Sea

New Delhi: India, France and the UAE on Wednesday kicked off a major air combat exercise called "Desert Knight" over Arabian Sea, strengthening trilateral defence cooperation and enhancing military interoperability, amid the ongoing geopolitical churn, reports **Rajat Pandit**.

IAF deployed several fighters like Sukhoi-30MKIs and Jaguars, backed by IL-78 mid-air refuellers and

AEW&C (airborne early-warning and control) aircraft, from airbases like Jambharganagar on the west coast for the exercise, while Rafale and F-16 jets and other aircraft from France and the UAE operated from the Al Dhafra airbase, sources told **TOI**.

The "large force engagement" with intensive combat manoeuvres was conducted around 350 to 400 km southwest of Karachi over

Arabian Sea.

"The exercise will continue for three days. It is the second such trilateral endeavour this year to build synergy among the three air forces as well as improve combat skills, with multiple aircraft types operating in a realistic scenario," a source said.

The exercise is yet another indicator of the way India is steadily building military interoperability with coun-

tries in the region, especially the Persian Gulf, in conjunction with others like the US, France and Australia.

All such exercises on a bilateral, trilateral or multilateral basis build strategic cooperation with like-minded countries in the crucial Indo-Pacific, a region where China's continued muscle-flexing and expansionist tactics have raised concerns among many nations.