

# Pak's Nur Khan base attacked by Afghanistan; 32 soldiers killed

■ Pakistan forces destroy ammunition depot in Afghanistan

KABUL, Mar 2 (IANS)

AFGHANISTAN'S Ministry of Defence announced on Monday that its Air Force had conducted what it described as precise and coordinated aerial operations against multiple Pakistani mili-



tary installations, signalling a sharp escalation in the already worsening security situation

between the two neighbouring countries.

In a statement posted on X, the Afghan Defence Ministry said the strikes were aimed at major Pakistani military facilities, including the Nur Khan Airbase in Rawalpindi, the 12th Division headquarters in Quetta, Balochistan, and the Khwazai Camp in the Mohmand Agency of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

*(Contd on page 5)*

# India, Canada seal landmark uranium deal; set USD 50 bn trade target

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (PTI)

**INDIA** and Canada on Monday sealed key pacts on supplies of Uranium and critical minerals and vowed to soon conclude a comprehensive economic partnership agreement, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Canadian counterpart Mark Carney finalising a new framework to shore up ties including taking bilateral annual trade to USD 50 billion by 2030.

In their wide-ranging talks, the two leaders also pledged to ramp up cooperation in defence, critical technologies, small and modular nuclear reactors, education and renewable energy as Modi said the relations between the two countries are now filled with new energy, mutual trust and positivity.

Canada is set to support India's civil nuclear energy sector under the USD 2.6 billion uranium supply agreement.

The Prime Minister said both sides agreed that terrorism, extremism, and radicalisation are common and serious challenges not only for India and Canada but for all humanity. "Our close cooperation against these is crucial for global peace and stability," he said.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi exchanges a hand-shake with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, at Hyderabad House in New Delhi. (PMO via PTI)

Modi and Carney also deliberated on the precarious security situation in West Asia with PM Modi asserting that India supports the resolution of all conflicts through dialogue and diplomacy.

"The current situation in West Asia is a matter of deep concern for us. India supports the resolution of all disputes through

dialogue and diplomacy. We will continue to work with all countries to ensure the safety of all Indian citizens in the region," the Prime Minister said in his media statement.

The major outcomes of the Modi-Carney talks were their decision to expand trade relations, a move that comes amid  
*(Contd on page 5)*

# Iran's Natanz nuclear facility hit



A man holds an Iranian flag as he looks at a damaged Hospital building in Iran. (AP/PTI)

## Iran operations likely to last 4-5 weeks: Trump

WASHINGTON, Mar 2 (AP)

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump says, Iran operations are likely to last 4 to 5 weeks but that he's prepared "to go far longer than that".

Trump spoke on Monday at a White House ceremony.

He said US forces were determined to destroy Iran's missile capabilities, wipe out its naval capacity, stop the country from obtaining a nuclear weapon and ensure that Iran cannot continue to arm and fund allied groups like Lebanon's Hezbollah, which fired missiles at Israel, drawing retaliatory airstrikes.

"This was our last, best chance to strike -- what we're doing right now -- and eliminate the intolerable threats posed by this sick and



sinister regime," Trump said. The war in the Middle East spiralled further on Monday as Israel and the US pounded Iran. Tehran and its allies hit back against Israel, neighbouring Gulf states, and targets critical to the world's production of oil and natural gas.

DUBAI/VIENNA, Mar 2 (Agencies)

IRAN'S Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency on Monday alleged that airstrikes by the United States and Israel targeted the Natanz enrichment facility in his country. That contradicts an assessment by the UN nuclear watchdog chief, Rafael Grossi, who said that "upto now" the agency has "no indication" that nuclear facilities have been hit in Iran.

"Again, they attacked Iran's peaceful safeguarded nuclear facilities yesterday. Their justification that Iran wants to develop nuclear weapons is simply a big lie," Reza Najafi told reporters at the IAEA headquarters in Vienna, where a special session of the Board of Governors is being held at the request of Russia.

When asked by a reporter which nuclear facility he was referring to, Najafi replied, "Natanz."

The Natanz site, some 220 kilometres (135 miles) south of the capital, is a mix of above- and below-ground laboratories that did the majority of Iran's uranium enrichment.

Addressing the special session of the Board of Governors, IAEA chief Rafael Mariano Grossi said that "up to now" (Contd on page 5)



A plume of smoke rises after a strike in Tehran. (AP/PTI)

- US-Israeli attacks killed 555 people so far in Iran.
- Eleven people have been killed in Israel and 31 in Lebanon.
- Oil tanker hit by unmanned boat off Muscat coast, 1 Indian killed
- Iran attacks oil infrastructure in Gulf states.
- British military base hit in Cyprus.

## Three US jets downed in Kuwait

WASHINGTON/DUBAI, Mar 2 (Agencies)

THREE US F-15E Strike Eagles flying in support of Operation Epic Fury were shot down over Kuwait in what American military officials described as an apparent friendly fire incident, with all six aircrew safely recovered. The incident occurred at 11:03 p.m. ET on March 1, according to a statement issued by CENTCO.

"At 11:03 p.m. ET, March 1, three U.S. F-15E Strike Eagles flying in support of Operation Epic Fury went down over Kuwait due to an apparent friendly fire incident," the release said. The aircraft were operating during active combat conditions.

The US military confirmed that all crew members survived the incident.

### Fire, smoke in US Embassy, Kuwait

FIRE and smoke rose from inside the US Embassy compound in Kuwait after an



A US jet crashed after being hit in Kuwait. The aircrew recovered safely.

Iranian attack on the small Mideast nation on Monday. Video obtained by *The Associated Press* showed the smoke with an alarm wailing.

### Drone attack on US troops in Baghdad

AN Iraqi Shiite militia claimed a drone attack Monday targeting US troops at the airport in

Iraq's capital, Baghdad, further widening the retaliation over the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The group, Saraya Awliya al-Dam, is one of a group of Shiite militias operating in Iraq following the 2003 US-led invasion of the country that toppled Saddam Hussein. The US and Iraq did not immediately comment on the claim. (Contd on page 5)

# UAE, Jordan summon Iranian envoys over 'terrorist attacks'

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (IANS)

THE Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates and Jordan have summoned the Iranian envoys in their respective capitals to deliver strong protests against recent attacks targeting their territories, condemning them as flagrant violations of sovereignty and international law.

In Amman, the Jordanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Affairs summoned the Chargé d'Affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Embassy and conveyed a strongly worded protest message to his government.

The Ministry said the attacks targeted Jordanian territories and those of brotherly Arab countries, "condemning them as a flagrant violation of its sovereignty and the sovereignty of Arab countries, a blatant breach of the rules of international law and the United Nations Charter, and a rejected escalation that threatens the safety of citizens and regional and international security and stability."

The Ministry's spokesperson, Fuad Al-Majali, added, "The Ministry informed the Chargé d'Affaires of the necessity of immediately ceasing the attacks targeting Jordan, respecting its sovereignty and the safety of its territories, and adhering to the rules of international law and the principles of good neighbourliness. Jordan will take all available and necessary steps to protect the safety of its citizens, its security, and its sovereignty."

The UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned Reza Ameri, Iranian Ambassador to the UAE, delivering a strongly worded note of protest over the attacks.

The Ministry said, "The



A plume of smoke rises after a strike in Tehran. (AP/PTI)



Emirates airplanes are parked at the Dubai International Airport after attack in Dubai. (AP/PTI)

Ministry conveyed the UAE's condemnation in the strongest terms of Iran's terrorist attacks and assaults. The Ministry stressed that the targeting of the UAE's territory constitutes a blatant violation of its sovereignty, a threat to its national security, and a clear breach of all international conventions, resolutions, and established norms."

Khalifa Shaheen Al Marar, Minister of State, said, "The UAE categorically rejects any justifications or excuses issued by the Iranian Government regarding the hostile escalation that targeted civilian sites, including residential areas, airports, ports,

and service facilities, thereby placing innocent civilians at risk. This serious and irresponsible escalation disregards the UAE's clear position that it would not permit its territory to be used in any military action against Iran.

He emphasised that these attacks contravene the principles of good neighbourliness and the Charter of the UN, and undermine the path of de-escalation and peaceful solutions that the UAE has consistently pursued with Iran. The minister warned of the serious repercussions on bilateral relations, with direct impact across political, economic and commercial levels.

## Calls for peace and flashes of anger after US, Israel attack Iran

PARIS, Mar 2 (AP)

THREE close allies of the United States said that they are ready to join forces to defend their interests in the Middle East and stop Iran's retaliatory missile and drone strikes following the killing of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, as others around the world raised concerns that the conflict sparked by coordinated US-Israel attacks could spread into a wider war.

Britain, France and Germany said they were prepared to work with the United States.

"We will take steps to defend our interests and those of our allies in the region, potentially through enabling necessary and proportionate defensive action to destroy Iran's capability to fire missiles and drones at their source," their statement said. "We have agreed to work together with the US and allies in the region on this matter."

Massive explosions rocked the Iranian capital for a second day as Israel's military said it was targeting the "heart" of Tehran. Iran pressed on, targeting Israel and US military bases in Gulf states.

## US Embassy in Pak cancels visa appointments, other services after attacks on its consulates

ISLAMABAD, Mar 2 (IANS)

THE US Embassy in Islamabad on Monday announced that visa appointments, as well as American Citizens Services, have been cancelled for the day following the violent protests that unfolded the previous day.

In a post on X, the US Embassy said, "All appointments for US visas and American Citizen Services are cancelled for today, March 2, at the US Embassy in Islamabad and the US Consulates General in Karachi and Lahore." Violent protests took place outside the US Consulate General in Karachi and Lahore, and calls for demonstrations at the US Embassy in Islamabad and Consulate General Peshawar were also made on Sunday.

This came as the members of the Shia community came out in large numbers to demonstrate against Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's assassination in the joint US-Israel strikes.

The US Embassy has also advised American citizens in Pakistan to monitor local news and observe good personal security practices. Meanwhile, at least 23 protesters were killed in clashes across Pakistan, including 10 outside the US consulate in Karachi, and 11 people in the Skardu district of Pakistan-occupied Gilgit Baltistan, where the crowd torched a UN office, while two were killed in Islamabad.

# Operation mission is to destroy missile threat from Iran: US

WASHINGTON, Mar 2 (AP)

US DEFENCE Secretary Pete Hegseth on Monday spoke to widening concerns that the US-Israeli strikes in Iran could spiral into a protracted regional conflict by declaring, "This is not Iraq. This is not endless."

Hegseth, along with Air Force General Dan Caine, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, held the Trump administration's first news briefing since Saturday's strikes. President Donald Trump, while he's conducted a few phone interviews with individual reporters, has not taken questions on camera and only released two videos since the operation began.

Hegseth said the operation had a "clear, devastating, decisive mission" to "destroy the missile threat" from Iran, destroy its navy and "no nukes."

"This is not a so-called regime change war, but the regime sure did change and the world is better off for it," Hegseth said.

The briefing comes as the conflict has intensified into a wider war in the region. Iran and its allied armed groups have launched missiles at Israel, Arab states and US military targets in the Middle East.

Four American troops have been killed in action. Trump on Sunday predicted there would be more US casualties. Caine on Monday said the US expected to have additional losses.

"We grieve with you, and we will never forget you," he said of the family members of those killed. The latest sign of the escalating upheaval came when US ally Kuwait "mistakenly shot down" three American fighter jets during a combat mission as Iranian aircraft, ballistic missiles and drones were attacking.

US Central Command said all six pilots ejected safely from the American F-15E Strike Eagles and were in stable condition.

US officials have not offered any exit plan or offered signs that

the conflict would end anytime soon, and the killing of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei cast doubt on the future of the Islamic Republic and hurtled the region into broader instability.

In laying out a case for the strike, Hegseth pointed to the Iranian regime as having started the conflict from its inception, declaring that for 47 years it has "waged a savage, one-sided war against America."

"Their war on Americans has become our retribution against their Ayatolloah and his death cult," he said.

He did not point to any threat of an imminent nuclear threat from Iran, and he said again that last summer's strikes by the US and Israel "obliterated their nuclear programme to rubble".

Instead, Hegseth pointed to threats from other weaponry such as ballistic missiles and drones that justified the operation.

## China denies deal to sell supersonic anti-ship missiles to Iran

■ By K J M Varma  
BEIJING, Mar 2 (PTI)

CHINA on Monday denied reports of finalising a deal with Iran to sell CM-302 supersonic anti-ship missiles before the joint US-Israeli airstrikes on the country.

If delivered, the missiles would be among the most advanced military hardware to be transferred to Iran by China in recent years, according to media reports.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said that the report of the deal is part of a disinformation campaign.

"The report is not true. As a responsible major country, China always abides by its international obligations. China

opposes ill-intentioned association and the spread of disinformation, and hopes relevant sides will choose the course of action conducive to de-escalating the tense situation," she said.

The report is significant as the US has assembled a flotilla of naval groups, including aircraft carriers, close to Iranian waters to carry out the current military campaign against Iran.

Chinese official media on Monday reported that the US planes crashed after being hit by Iranian missiles. The origin of the missiles is not known.

Iran is one of the biggest oil suppliers to China and shares close defence and strategic ties with Beijing.

# Army Chief Upendra Dwivedi reviews operational logistics in Mumbai HQs

MUMBAI, Mar 2 (IANS)

GENERAL Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), on Monday, reviewed the operational logistics, training architecture and administrative preparedness during a visit to the Headquarters Maharashtra, Gujarat and Goa Area in Mumbai, an official said.

During the briefing, "the formation's readiness in ensuring robust rear area security, integrated logistics and seamless Military-Civil fusion to sustain operations in evolving scenarios was highlighted," an official statement said.

The Army Chief also awarded on-the-spot commendations to four service personnel and com-



mended all ranks for their professionalism and commitment, underscoring the importance of cohesive command and strong support systems in sustaining operational excellence and

troop welfare, the Additional Directorate General of Public Information of Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence (Army) said in a statement.

# India, Canada launch negotiations for FTA

NEW DELHI, Mar 2 (PTI)

INDIA and Canada have launched negotiations for a free trade agreement and look to finalise the pact soon, an official statement said on Monday.

The pact is officially known as the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and the negotiations would cover trade in goods, services and other mutually agreed policy areas. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the agreement were signed by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and his Canadian counterpart Maninder Sidhu here.

It was exchanged in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Mark Carney of Canada

at Hyderabad House here.

“India and Canada launched negotiations for the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) today in New Delhi and decided to finalise it soon,” the Commerce Ministry said.

The ToR of negotiations will provide format, frequency, and approach to the CEPA negotiations. It will serve as a guide to facilitate negotiations in order to conclude an ambitious, balanced and mutually beneficial pact. The launch marks the resumption of negotiations, as the two countries had earlier engaged in a similar exercise, but Canada paused it in 2023. Now they decided to resume talks from the beginning as a lot has changed on the global trade front during these two years.