

NSA Doval meets UAE President in Abu Dhabi

Holds talks on boosting strategic ties, energy security

ABU DHABI, Apr 26 (ANI)

NATIONAL Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval met with UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Abu Dhabi on Saturday as part of his official visit to the Middle Eastern country. During the meeting, both sides discussed ways to strengthen the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the two countries and enhance cooperation on energy security amid evolving regional developments.

According to a post on X by the Indian Embassy in the UAE, NSA Doval, during his meeting with the UAE President, conveyed greetings from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and also discussed measures to deepen bilateral ties, the regional security situation, and other issues of mutu-



NSA Ajit Doval (L) with UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (C) during a meeting, in UAE on Saturday. (X via PTI)

al interest. "He called on President HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. Conveyed greetings of PM, Narendra Modi. Measures to deepen the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, the regional situation, and other issues of mutu-

al interest were discussed," the Embassy stated in its post.

The UAE state-run news agency WAM further reported on the meeting, stating that Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed received NSA Doval, following which greetings were exchanged

between the leadership of both countries. Doval conveyed PM Modi's greetings and best wishes for the UAE's continued progress and prosperity, while the UAE President reciprocated with his greetings for the Indian leadership and wished further development and prosperity for India and its people, as per WAM.

The discussions also focused on recent developments in the Middle East and their implications for regional and international security and stability, along with global energy security concerns. The meeting was also attended by Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, and Ali bin Hammad Al Shamsi, Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for National Security.

China launches Pak satellite

■ By K J M Varma

BEIJING, Apr 26 (PTI)

CHINA launched a Pakistani satellite from its Taiyuan Satellite Launch Centre in north China's Shanxi Province on Saturday night. The satellite named PRSC-EO3 was lifted off at 8:15 pm (Beijing Time) by a Long March-6 carrier rocket and successfully entered its planned orbit, China's state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

This is the fourth Pakistani satellite launched by China since last year. China launched three Pakistani satellites last year.

China has been launching satellites for Pakistan in the last few years, broadening its all-weather alliance with Pakistan into the space arena.

Separately, two Pakistanis who were selected by Beijing for astronaut training to participate in China's space mission training arrived here on April 24.

The astronauts reached the



Astronaut Centre of China in Beijing on Friday to join training alongside their Chinese peers, the China Manned Space Agency announced.

Upon completing all required training and passing the assessments, one of the two will participate in a space mission as a payload specialist, becoming the first foreign astronaut to board China's Tiangong space station, currently in orbit.

Severe heatwave grips nation; IMD issues alert

NEW DELHI, Apr 26 (IANS)

LARGE parts of India are reeling under an intense heatwave, with temperatures soaring well above normal levels for this time of the year. The national capital, Delhi, has witnessed a sharp spike in temperature, raising concerns over public health and safety.

On Saturday, Delhi recorded a maximum temperature of 44.5 degrees Celsius, the highest so far this season, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). On Sunday, the temperature remained above 40 degrees Celsius, indicating persistent heatwave-like conditions across the city. Several areas also reported hot winds, prompting authorities to issue a 'yellow alert'.

The IMD has warned that heatwave conditions are likely to continue across Northwest and



Central India until April 28.

States such as Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh are expected to remain severely affected, with temperatures ranging between 40 and 45 degrees Celsius. In Central India, regions including Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and

Vidarbha are also experiencing extreme heat.

In Uttar Pradesh, Prayagraj recorded a maximum temperature of 45.2 degrees Celsius, the highest in the state so far. Authorities have issued a severe heat alert in 32 districts.

The IMD also issued a yellow alert for high temperatures in several districts of Kerala for the two days, warning of hot, humid weather across much of the state.

Maximum temperatures are likely to reach around 40 degrees Celsius in isolated places of Palakkad district and 39 degrees Celsius in Kollam district on Sunday and Monday.

Amid the rising temperatures, citizens are advised to avoid direct sun exposure between noon and 3 pm, stay hydrated even if not thirsty, and wear light-coloured, loose cotton clothing.

Iran airspace partially open, more flights coming to India from Gulf

NEW DELHI, Apr 26 (IANS)

IRAN'S airspace is partially open for cargo and chartered flights, but Indian nationals are advised to avoid travelling to the country, and those already there are urged to leave via the land border, with the embassy's support, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Sunday.

So far, the Indian embassy in Tehran has facilitated the movement of 2,445 Indian nationals out of Iran through land border routes, the statement said.

Israel's airspace is open, and limited flight operations have resumed to destinations in the region, which can be used for onward travel to India.

In the UAE, airlines continue to operate limited commercial flights to India based on operational and safety considerations, with around 110 flights expected between the UAE and India on Sunday.

Flights continue to operate from various airports in Saudi Arabia and Oman to destinations in India. With Qatar airspace partially open, Qatar Airways is also operating flights to various destinations in India.

The Kuwait airspace is open. Jazeera Airways and Kuwait Airways have resumed limited flight operations from Kuwait to India. Bahrain airspace is also open, and Gulf Air is operating flights from Bahrain to various destinations in India.

Besides, Iraq's airspace is open with limited flight operations to destinations in the region, which can be used for onward travel to India.

Indian missions remain actively engaged with the Indian community, including the various associations, organisations, professional groups, Indian companies and other stakeholders in the region.

The Government is according

high priority to the welfare of Indian seafarers in the region. Indian missions are extending all assistance to the Indian crew members on vessels in the region, including coordination with the local authorities and agencies, extending consular assistance and facilitating requests to return to India.

Since 28 February, around 12,96,000 passengers have travelled from the region to India.

Indian missions and posts continue to operate round-the-clock helplines and are proactively assisting Indian nationals. They remain in close contact with the local governments.

Updated advisories are being issued regularly, including information on local government guidelines, flight and travel situations and consular services and various welfare measures being undertaken to support the Indian community, the statement added.

India, New Zealand to ink Free Trade Pact today

NEW DELHI, Apr 26 (PTI)

MORE than four months after announcing the conclusion of negotiations on December 22 last year, India and New Zealand are set to sign their free trade agreement on April 27, aimed at doubling bilateral trade between the two countries.

The pact will give India companies duty-free access to the island nation's markets, and bring in USD 20 billion of investment over the next 15 years.

The pact will be signed in the presence of Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Todd McClay, New Zealand's Minister for Trade and Investment, here at Bharat Mandapam, according to the Commerce Ministry.

The pact will give Indian companies duty-free access to the island nation's markets, and bring in \$20 billion of investment over next 15 years

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Iran won't negotiate under pressure: President Pezeshkian

DUBAI, Apr 26 (AP)

IRAN'S President Masoud Pezeshkian said his country won't negotiate while the United States imposes a blockade on its ports. Pezeshkian told Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif during a phone call on Saturday night that the US "should first remove operational obstacles, including the blockade", to allow a new round of negotiations, according to the ISNA and Tasnim news agencies in Iran.

Donald Trump said he told his top envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner not to travel to Pakistan to negotiate with Iran, stating on Fox News that "they can call us any time they want".

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi left Pakistan on Saturday evening, two Pakistani officials told 'The Associated Press'. Iran's state-run *IRNA* news agency said Araghchi is expected back in Islamabad on Sunday.

Pezeshkian reaffirmed Iran's determination to defend its national security, and warned of all possible consequences of any renewed confrontation by the US and Israel for both regional and global stability.

He further emphasised that Iran remains committed to building and strengthening relations with all neighbouring countries,

including those along the southern shores of the Persian Gulf, based on good neighbourliness and mutual respect.

He expressed hope that these

Pezeshkian warns of all possible consequences of any renewed confrontation by US and Israel

Pakistan PM dials Iranian President, discusses evolving regional situation

states will also work collectively to promote regional peace and security, independent of external interference.

Trump said on Thursday that Israel and Lebanon agreed to extend a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah by 3 weeks after talks at the White House.

The meeting was the second

high-level negotiation between the two countries this month.

The initial 10-day ceasefire had been due to expire on Monday.

The Trump administration is placing economic sanctions on a major China-based oil refinery and roughly 40 shipping companies and tankers involved in transporting Iranian oil. The move announced on Friday is part of the administration's threat to impose secondary sanctions on entities doing business with Iran in an effort to cut off Iran's oil exports, which are a key source of its revenue.

Airlines worldwide have begun cancelling flights as the war in the Middle East strains jet fuel supplies and pushes up prices. Experts have offered information to travellers about what to do if a flight is cancelled.

PAKISTAN PM DIALS IRANIAN PRESIDENT, DISCUSSES EVOLVING REGIONAL SITUATION: Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif spoke with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and discussed the evolving regional situation.

During the telephonic conversation on Saturday evening, PM Shehbaz expressed his commitment to serve as a "sincere and honest" facilitator in promoting lasting peace in the region, according to his office.

Trump rushed out of dinner event after shots fired

■ By Sagar Kulkarni
WASHINGTON, Apr 26 (PTI)

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump and other top officials were evacuated unharmed from the annual dinner of White House correspondents after a man armed with multiple weapons fired shots outside the ballroom of the hotel.

The incident took place at around 8:34 PM local time when dinner was served. At that time, Trump was seen having a conversation with Weijia Jiang, the President of the White House Correspondents' Association, and mentalist Oz Pearlman, who was scheduled to present a show at the marquee event at the Washington Hilton here.

Secret Service officials and other security personnel covered the President, First Lady Melania Trump, Vice President JD Vance, and the Second Lady Usha Vance, who were seated at the head table, and escorted them out of the ballroom.

Several guests at the dinner, including leaders across the political spectrum, journalists and other invitees, ducked under the table, apparently as a reflex reaction.



Putting up a brave face, President Trump later announced on Truth Social that the dinner would be rescheduled within 30 days. "Boom, boom, boom, boom is all that I heard, and many guests ducked under the table," a C-SPAN reporter at the dinner said.

Trump said one security officer was shot at but saved as he was wearing a bulletproof vest.

Several protesters had lined up on the road outside the hotel, raising slogans against the Trump

administration and Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth.

A CNN reporter who was outside the ballroom at the Washington Hilton said he saw a gunman opening fire just a few feet away. He was among the dozens of attendees who took cover as Law Enforcement

swarmed the venue.

The suspect, identified as 31-year-old Cole Tomas Allen from California, has been arrested.

Hours later, Trump addressed a press conference at the White House and announced that the security personnel had captured one person who hails from

California. "I heard a noise and sort of thought it was a tray going down. I've heard that many times. It was a pretty loud noise, and it was from quite far away. He (the attacker) hadn't reached the area at all. They really got him," Trump told reporters.

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Relieved President Trump unharmed, says PM Modi

NEW DELHI, Apr 26 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said he was relieved that US President Donald Trump, First Lady Melania Trump and Vice President JD Vance were safe and unharmed after a security incident at the White House Correspondents' dinner in Washington.

Modi said violence has no place in democracy and must be unequivocally condemned.

"Relieved to learn that President Trump, the First Lady and Vice President are safe and unharmed following the recent security incident at a Washington DC hotel. I extend my best wishes for their continued safety and well-being. Violence has no place in a democracy and must be unequivocally condemned," Modi said in a post on X.



Members of Law Enforcement swarm during the White House Correspondents' Dinner, on Saturday in Washington. (AP/PTI)

The suspect, identified as 31-year-old Cole Tomas Allen from California, arrested