

Russian attack in Kyiv sets fire to centuries-old religious site

■ By **Hanna Arhirova**

KYIV, June 15 (AP)

RUSSIA fired hundreds of drones and dozens of missiles at Ukraine's biggest cities in a night-time bombardment that killed at least 11 people and set fire to a renowned centuries-old religious site, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and other officials said Monday.

The attacks on the capital, Kyiv, and the second-largest city, Kharkiv, came after Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin spoke separately by phone with US President Donald Trump on Sunday. The exchange suggests Washington hasn't given up on its diplomatic efforts to stop the fighting that followed Moscow's all-out invasion of its neighbour in February 2022.

The war in Ukraine is also set to feature in talks on Tuesday between G7 leaders at a summit in France. Zelenskyy and Trump are due to attend the gathering, as the Ukrainian leader pushes to keep the war on leaders' minds



Rescue workers try to put out a fire at the Dormition Cathedral of thousand-year-old Monastery of Caves, also known as Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, following a Russian strike on Monday. (AP/PTI)

while the Iran war diverts international attention from Ukraine's plight. "This is how Russia shows the world its intention to continue the war," Zelenskyy said in a post on X, referring to the overnight attack.

"It is very important that there be a response from the G7 countries... And that this response be decisive and substantive; more

pressure on the aggressor and more support for Ukraine's air defence, especially anti-ballistic capabilities," the Ukrainian leader said.

Children are among the wounded in Kyiv: Zelenskyy said that the Russian strikes killed 11 civilians and emergency workers and wounded 53 across Ukraine.

More measures likely to attract foreign capital: FM

NEW DELHI, June 15 (PTI)

FINANCE Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday said the measures announced by the RBI and Government to boost foreign fund inflows are the “first step” to bring back foreign capital and indicated that more steps could be in the offing.

Sitharaman also said that there is a need to be prepared for exigencies arising out of the evolving global situation as the Indian economy is facing “severe strain” from import of key raw materials, as well crude oil and fertilisers. Speaking at the Mindmine Summit 2026, Sitharaman said an

analysis by the RBI and the Government has shown that the bond market can be a “very good magnet” to absorb foreign capital. Accordingly, to reduce compliance burden for foreign investors in Government Securities (G-Secs), the Government on June 5 expanded the list of specified securities under the Fully Accessible Route (FAR) to also include new issuances in G-Secs.

Besides, income tax exemption was given to income from interest and capital gains made by FPIs from investments in G-Secs. Sitharaman said these measures are the “first step”

towards drawing foreign capital back. “Although at the moment it’s confined to the bond market, certainly that’s not the end of the story.

There will be more. We recognise, we need more foreign capital to come in,” Sitharaman said. The RBI on June 5 had allowed banks to access the RBI’s swap facility for Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) (FCNR(B), deposits with maturities ranging from 3-5 years till September 30.

The facility would allow banks to swap US dollar deposits with the RBI, and manage currency risks. Further, to shore up foreign capital inflows.

Kashmiris protest outside UK Parlt over crackdown in PoK by Pak forces

LONDON, June 15 (PTI)

THOUSANDS of British Kashmiris gathered at Parliament Square to march up to Trafalgar Square in London to protest against a crackdown by Pakistani forces in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. The demonstrators raised concerns over civilian deaths, injuries, harassment of women and use of force against peaceful protesters in the region.

The crowds waved banners and chanted slogans in favour of a "revolution" against the Pakistani forces in the region. They demanded human rights in support of the Joint Awami Action Committee in PoK and action against "terrorism" being propagated in the region.

Slogans of "Pakistan forces out" among others echoed at the protest.



British Kashmiris in London protest against a crackdown by Pakistani forces in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir. (AP)

The protesters also raised concerns over alleged civilian killings, harassment of women and the use of force against peaceful protesters in PoK.

Calls for "justice" rang out as

demonstrators waved placards to highlight recent unrest reported from the region. The protests follow similar demonstrations outside the Pakistani Consulate in Bradford earlier this week.

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) is among the organisations to express serious concerns about the so-called regional Government's decision to proscribe the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) under anti-terrorism legislation.

Several civilians and policemen were killed during recent clashes between police and JAAC activists in PoK's Rawalakot.

India maintains that Pakistan has been in illegal possession of Indian territory in the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Reiterating its position, India has said the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are integral and inalienable parts of India by virtue of the "complete, legal and irrevocable accession" of Jammu and Kashmir to India in 1947.

Won't withdraw from land seized in Lebanon, Syria, Gaza: Israel

TEL AVIV, June 15 (AP)

ISRAEL'S Defence Minister said on Monday that Israel won't withdraw from land seized in Lebanon as the interim deal between Iran and the United States is pending.

Israel Katz's remarks were the first official Israeli comments after the announcement of the interim deal. Katz said Israel plans to stay "indefinitely" in lands it holds in Lebanon, as well as Syria and the Gaza Strip.

Iran has tied the interim deal over the war to halting Israel's attacks on Lebanon. Katz also threatened that if Iran attacks Israel over Israeli strikes in Lebanon, Israel will strike Iran with "great force."

Global crude oil prices tumble up to 5 per cent on US-Iran deal

NEW DELHI, June 15 (IANS)

GLOBAL crude oil prices declined by nearly 5 per cent on Monday after the United States and Iran reached an agreement and announced the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, easing concerns over disruptions to global energy supplies.

The international oil benchmark Brent crude fell as much as 4.90 per cent to \$83.05 per barrel in early trade, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude plunged 5.74 per cent to around \$80 per barrel.

According to market experts, Asian equities

surged at the start of the week as progress towards a US-Iran peace deal boosted global risk appetite, while US futures also traded firmly higher.

“Meanwhile, Brent crude oil declined sharply by more than 4 per cent towards the \$83-per-barrel mark, easing inflation concerns and providing additional support to market sentiment,” they said. US President Donald Trump announced on Truth Social that a deal with Iran had been completed. “The Deal with the Islamic Republic of Iran is now complete,” according to him.

India, Slovakia upgrade ties to comprehensive partnership

BRATISLAVA, June 15 (PTI)

INDIA and Slovakia on Monday elevated their ties to a comprehensive partnership and firmed up 11 agreements to expand the bilateral cooperation in a range of areas such as migration, digital technology and defence following talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Slovak counterpart Robert Fico.

The two leaders also agreed to work towards the "earliest" implementation of the India-European Union free trade agreement that is expected to significantly shore up the bilateral economic engagement.

Modi is in Bratislava as part of his week-long visit to Europe. It is the first visit to the European nation by an Indian Prime Minister.

"We have decided to elevate



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his Slovakian counterpart Robert Fico during a visit to Bratislava castle, Slovakia. (PTI)

our relations to the status of a Comprehensive Partnership. This symbolises our shared beliefs, shared priorities, and shared future," he said in his media statement.

The Prime Minister said he and Fico discussed ways to give a "new direction" to the ties.

Modi and Fico also agreed to

enhance cooperation in the energy sector with a view to promoting energy security, sustainability and resilience through diversification of energy sources, including nuclear energy and geothermal power. In his remarks, PM Fico hailed the India-EU FTA, describing it as one of the "most ambitious"

PM Modi receives Slovakia's highest award

BRATISLAVA, June 15 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi was on Monday conferred with Slovakia's highest national award, The Order of the White Double Cross (1st Class).

President of Slovakia Peter Pellegrini conferred the award on PM Modi at a ceremony in Bratislava. "Honoured to receive The Order of the White Double Cross (1st Class) in Bratislava this evening. My grat-

trade pacts ever signed.

Earlier Modi received a warm welcome upon his arrival in Bratislava, Slovakia. Marking his landmark visit to the European nation, members of the Indian

itude to the people and Government of Slovakia for this honour, which belongs to the 140 crore people of India. I dedicate this award to the enduring friendship between India and Slovakia," Modi posted on social media.

The Order of the White Double Cross (1st Class) is the highest civilian and military state decoration awarded exclusively to foreign citizens by Slovakia.

diaspora gathered in large numbers to welcome him, while the team of celebrated Lucnica Ensemble presented a special rendition of the national song 'Vande Mataram'.

Peace deal between Iran-US to be signed on 19th

Trump said the deal would reopen the Strait of Hormuz and end the US naval blockade on Iranian ports

Iran confirmed the agreement but said Iran would not start implementing it until it was signed

WASHINGTON/ISLAMABAD, June 15 (PTI)

PRESIDENT Donald Trump has announced that the US and Iran have finalised a deal to end their 107-day war, which triggered a global energy crisis.

The peace agreement is scheduled to be signed on June 19 in Switzerland, according to Pakistan Prime Minister



Destroyed buildings stand in a village in southern Lebanon as seen from northern Israel, on Monday. Israel has refused to return land seized in Lebanon, Syria, Gaza. (AP/PTI)

PM Modi welcomes West Asia deal

NEW DELHI, June 15 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Monday welcomed the understanding reached between the United States and Iran on ending the conflict in West Asia, and hoped the implementation of the pact will help restore peace in the region and ensure the freedom of navigation.

"I welcome the understanding reached between the United States and Iran on ending the conflict in West Asia, which has caused serious economic disruption across the world and led to loss of life in many countries. India hopes that the implementation of this understanding will help restore peace and stability in the region and ensure the freedom of navigation and commerce," Modi said in a post on X.

Shehbaz Sharif. "The Deal with the Islamic Republic of Iran is now complete. Congratulations to all," Trump said in a post on Truth Social on Sunday evening, easing pressure on the global energy markets.

He said the deal would reopen the Strait of Hormuz and end the US naval blockade on Iranian ports.

"I hereby fully authorise the

toll-free opening of the Strait of Hormuz and, simultaneously, authorise the immediate removal of the United States Naval blockade. Ships of the World, start your engines. Let the oil flow!" Trump said.

However, in a subsequent post, Trump said the Strait of Hormuz will open on Friday after the official signing of the

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