

2 major Russian oil refineries hit hours after Trump, Zelenskyy meeting: Ukraine

■ By Hanna Arhirova and
Barry Hatton

KYIV, July 29 (AP)

UKRAINIAN forces hit two of Russia's biggest oil refineries overnight in its latest long-range strikes, officials said, as Kyiv deepened its economic, military and diplomatic pressure on Moscow.

Ukraine's almost daily long-range drone and missile strikes using domestically developed weapons have battered Russian oil facilities for months. The operation has brought a fuel crisis that is embarrassing the Kremlin more than four years after Russia's all-out invasion of its neighbour.

The overnight attacks started



fires at a Lukoil refinery in Russia's Perm region, more than 1,500 kilometres (900 miles) from Ukraine, and a refinery in Ryazan, about 400 kilometres (180 miles) from the border, Ukraine's Security Service and General Staff said in separate statements.

The refineries have a combined annual production capacity of around 30 million tons of

oil, according to Ukraine, and make a vital contribution to Russia's military effort and its Government revenue.

It was not immediately possible to independently verify the claims. Ryazan Gov. Pavel Malkov said only that six people were taken to the hospital after a drone attack. He said drone debris caused fires at unidentified "industrial sites."

Russian online retailer Wildberries, a major supplier likened to Amazon that Ukraine has targeted in recent days, said it evacuated employees from a facility in Ryazan but provided no further details.

Russia has sophisticated air defences, but its vast territory is hard to comprehensively cover.

Indian envoy meets Bangladesh FM

DHAKA, July 29 (IANS)

INDIA'S High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Dinesh Trivedi, held a meeting with the country's Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman on Wednesday, reaffirming New Delhi's commitment to a "positive, constructive and forward-looking partnership" with Dhaka.

"High Commissioner Dinesh Trivedi paid a courtesy call on Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman, reaffirming India's commitment to a positive, constructive and forward-looking partnership with Bangladesh, rooted in mutual interest and mutual benefit, and to deepening people-centric cooperation across all sectors," the High Commission of India in Bangladesh wrote on X while sharing details regarding the meeting. According to the Indian High Commission, Trivedi also held a meeting with Bangladesh's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam with discussions focused on strengthening bilateral ties.

Last week, India extended an invitation to Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman for the BRICS Summit set to be held in New Delhi in September.

Rajnath inaugurates Military Medicine Deptt at Command hospital

LUCKNOW, July 29 (ANI)

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh virtually inaugurated the Department of Military Medicine at Command Hospital, Central Command, in Lucknow on Wednesday.

Addressing the event, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said that the inauguration of the Department of Military Medicine at the Command Hospital marks a new chapter in military medicine and research in Lucknow, adding that it will further strengthen the Indian Armed Forces and bolster the resolve of a developed India.

"Lucknow has always been a witness to our military traditions. Today, with the inauguration of the Department of Military Medicine at Command Hospital, this city is becoming a witness to a new chapter in military medicine and research. This will further strengthen our resolve for a developed India and empowered armed forces," said Singh.

Noting that Indian soldiers are deployed in some of the world's most complex areas and harshest environments, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh stated that troops face diverse challenges such as infectious diseases, heat and cold injuries, and high-altitude illnesses.

He expressed confidence in a new department to develop specialised medical protocols tailored to these operational conditions.

"Our soldiers are deployed in some of the world's most complex areas and harshest climates...our troops have to contend with a wide range of challenges, including infectious diseases, heat and cold injuries, high-altitude illnesses, fatigue, nutritional issues, dehydration, and various other problems. I am confident that this new department will develop medical protocols tailored to all these operational environments...the nature of modern warfare is shifting swiftly, and in the current era, the threat of

weapons of mass destruction persists alongside traditional weaponry, whether it involves chemical agents, biological warfare, or the risk of radiological dispersal devices. This department will serve as a hub for research and development regarding these emerging threats...India is one of the largest military contributors to United Nations peacekeeping missions," added Singh.



Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh virtually inaugurates the Department of Military Medicine at Command Hospital (Central Command) in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, in New Delhi on Wednesday. (ANI)

The inauguration of the Command Hospital (Central Command) in Lucknow marks the establishment of the country's first dedicated academic and operational department exclusively focused on military medicine.

According to the Ministry of Defence, the initiative aims to enhance combat medical readiness, advance research, develop indigenous doctrines and create specialised expertise for future battlefields & humanitarian contingencies. Established under the aegis of the Directorate General of Medical Services (Army), it marks a significant step in strengthening the operational medical preparedness of the Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS).

Seventh Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft 'Machilipatnam' launched

NEW DELHI, July 29 (PTI)

'MACHILIPATNAM', the seventh of eight Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC) being built by Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) for the Indian Navy, was launched on Wednesday.

The ship is equipped for under-water surveillance, anti-submarine warfare (ASW) operations and Low Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO), along with mine warfare capability. The ship will further bolster coastal defence and enhance maritime domain awareness, the Defence Ministry said.

'Machilipatnam' carries deep historical and cultural significance as it derives its name from the historic port city of Machilipatnam in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, known for its rich maritime legacy and flourishing trade along India's eastern seaboard, officials



said. The ship proudly embodies the spirit and legacy of Machilipatnam while reinforcing the Indian Navy's commitment to safeguarding the nation's maritime interests, they said.

'Machilipatnam' (BY 529), the ASW SWC of the Mahe-class, was launched in the presence of Vice Admiral Atul Anand, Additional Secretary of the Department of Military Affairs.

Jordan intercepts 5 Iranian missiles

US knocks down Iranian missile barrage

CAIRO, July 29 (AP)

JORDAN'S air defences intercepted five missiles launched from Iran early Wednesday, the country's military said, hours after the US military said it had knocked down an Iranian missile barrage launched against American forces in the Middle East, shattering a brief pause in fighting.

The Jordanian military said the missiles had been "intercepted and destroyed." Iran's state-run IRNA news agency carried a statement from the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard saying the Guard's Aerospace Force fired ballistic missiles at the Muwaffaq Salti Air Base and the headquarters of the US military's Central Command in Jordan.

Hours earlier, the US Central Command said its forces "remain vigilant and at a high state of

US also worked with Saudi Arabia's forces to strike sites in Iraq that Tehran-backed militias have used to launch attacks in recent days.

readiness," and that they had also worked with Saudi Arabia's forces to strike sites in Iraq that Tehran-backed militias have used to launch attacks in recent days. In announcing the strikes in Iraq, the US warned that further attacks on American troops or Saudi Arabia's energy infrastructure risked additional action.

Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi called an emergency meeting of the country's National Security Council on Wednesday to discuss the strikes.

The United States and Iran had experienced a period of calm, during which neither announced attacks for about three days following weeks of escalation over the strategic Strait of Hormuz, the Persian Gulf waterway and narrow chokepoint through which 20% of the world's traded oil normally flows.

The fighting flared at the end of a month packed with multiple pressure points on US President Donald Trump. In recent weeks, four US troops died during the fighting, while the

Pentagon asked an increasingly sceptical Congress for money to cover the conflict's ballooning costs. "US and Saudi fighter aircraft struck multiple terrorist logistics and weapon sites across eastern Iraq in a strong response to over 30 IRGC-directed aerial drone attacks in the last 72 hours," US Central Command said, using an acronym for Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard. It said the Revolutionary Guard "and its terrorist proxies must cease these attacks to avoid further US military response."

The Saudi Defence Ministry acknowledged the strikes in a post on social media, warning that "the Kingdom emphasises that it does not seek escalation but will respond to any aggression it faces." At least 20 fighters were killed and 32 others wounded in the overnight strikes on its sites in several parts of Iraq.

LS passes anti-paper leak bill



■ The legislation aims at effectively deterring persons, organised groups and institutions from indulging in unfair means, thereby committing offences, adversely impacting the sanctity of public examinations

NEW DELHI, July 29 (IANS)

AFTER an intense and often acrimonious debate spread over two days, the Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, by a voice vote, paving the way for stricter legal measures to combat paper leaks and examination-related malpractices.

The legislation amends the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, and

Din in LS over Rahul Gandhi's 'unparliamentary' language

NEW DELHI, July 29 (PTI)

LEADER of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi's unparliamentary remark pointing towards the Government triggered an uproar in the House, with Speaker Om Birla asking Gandhi to focus on the debate. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju objected to the use of the "unparliamentary" word.

Gandhi said he was attributing the term to a student and was not referring to any member of the House. Birla said unparliamentary expressions would be expunged from the proceedings.

In a no-holds-barred attack, against Home Minister Amit Shah, Rahul said the Home Minister had authorised police excesses and firing against student protesters, triggering a massive uproar.

The BJP hit back, accusing Gandhi of telling a "bundle of lies", and demanded that he apologise for "misusing" the House by making "baseless" allegations.

While targeting Shah, Gandhi also took an oblique dig at the BJP and its core supporters by referring to three categories -- students, those who think they know everything and pretend

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was passed following prolonged discussions that witnessed sharp exchanges between the treasury and Opposition benches.

While the NDA and its allies supported the Bill and called for wider reforms in the examina-

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tion system, Opposition members questioned whether the proposed amendments addressed the fundamental reasons behind recurring examination failures and paper leaks.

The amended law seeks to strengthen transparency, accountability, and integrity in public examinations through tougher punitive provisions while safeguarding the interests of students. Among its major provisions are enhanced penalties,

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SALIENT FEATURES OF THE BILL

■ Empowers all State Governments and Union Territory (UT) Administrations to designate any sessions court to try offences under the proposed law.

■ To provide that the proceedings in such Special Fast Track Courts are continued on day-to-day basis and the trial be completed within a period of three months from the date of filing of the chargesheet.

■ To empower the Central Government to also constitute special task force for investigation of any offence.

■ To provide that the investigations for offences under the legislation are completed within a period of two months.

■ To empower all State

Governments and UT administrations to appoint one or more special public prosecutors for conduct of cases under the legislation.

■ To provide for appeal mechanism as against any judgement, sentence or order to a bench of two judges of the High Court, and for disposal of the same within a period of three months from the date of admission of appeal.

■ Under the new law, individuals involved in paper leaks or unfair means in exams will get jail terms for a minimum of 5 years and a maximum of 10 years, and a fine of up to Rs 50 lakh.

■ For organised crimes, the bill proposes a minimum sentence of seven years and a fine of up to Rs 10 crore.

Harjinder, Gulveer add silver sheen to India's campaign

GLASGOW, July 29 (PTI)

WEIGHTLIFTER Harjinder Kaur and long-distance star Gulveer Singh emerged as India's stand-out performers, pushing themselves to the limit to clinch hard-fought silver medals to guarantee the country more podium finishes at the Commonwealth Games.

Harjinder, standing just 5ft 3in, produced the performance of her career to claim silver in the women's 69kg category. The 29-year-old rewrote the Commonwealth Games record twice each in both the snatch and clean and jerk, upgrading the bronze she had won in the 71kg category at Birmingham four years ago and delivering India's



India's Harjinder Kaur competes in the women's 69kg weightlifting event at the 23rd Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland, on Tuesday night. (PTI)



India's Gulveer Singh scripted history by clinching a sensational silver medal in the men's 10,000m, at the Commonwealth Games 2026 in Glasgow, Scotland. (PTI)

seventh weightlifting medal of the Games. The diminutive Indian lifted like a champion, but even her extraordinary effort was eclipsed by Canada's Charlotte Simoneau, who produced a breathtaking display to dominate the competition.

Harjinder first broke the Games record in the snatch with a 99kg lift before improving it to 101kg with a confident final attempt. She then continued her record-breaking spree in the clean and jerk, successfully lifting 123kg before raising the bar to 126kg for a total of 227kg.

Simoneau, however, proved untouchable, smashing the Games records in every segment with lifts of 108kg in the snatch

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UNSC: India strongly condemns recent attacks on vessels in Strait of Hormuz

UNITED NATIONS, July 29 (PTI)

DESCRIBING the escalation of hostilities in West Asia as "deeply concerning", India has strongly condemned recent attacks on several maritime vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, calling for the restoration of unimpeded navigation and trade through international waterways in the region.

Terming West Asia as a region of "immense importance" to India, Permanent Representative of India to the UN Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish said, "After a brief pause in the ongoing conflict in the region, there has been a worrying resumption of attacks and escalation of hostilities. This

UNSC reform process cannot be held hostage by divisive interests of select few: India

UNITED NATIONS, July 29 (PTI)

INDIA'S envoy to the UN said negotiations on Security Council reform have been through 17 rounds with no concrete result in sight, underscoring that the process cannot be held hostage by the "divisive interests" of a few.

The UN General Assembly on Tuesday decided to "roll-over" to its next session the Inter-Governmental Negotiations (IGN) on Security Council reforms, an annual practice by the 193-member body that now enters its 18th year with no concrete results or end-date so far.

is deeply concerning and India calls for an immediate de-escalation of tensions." Addressing a UN Security Council open debate on the situation in Middle East, Harish voiced India's strong condemnation of attacks on several vessels GFS Galaxy, MT Al Bahiyah and MT Mombasa - during their transit through Strait of Hormuz.

"Several Indian citizens were injured, including some seriously, one Indian tragically lost his life, and one is missing, in these attacks. India has consistently condemned acts of violence targeting seafarers and disrupting free and safe navigation through international waterways like the Strait of Hormuz," he said.