

Saudi reopens airport, intercepts ballistic missile



DUBAI, Oct 25 (AP)

SAUDI Arabia reopened its main airport for international flights, more than two weeks after deadly strikes by Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthi rebels knocked the facility out of service.

Earlier Sunday, the Kingdom said it intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile and a drone fired by the Houthis.

The King Khalid International Airport said it has opened ter-

minals 1 and 2 for domestic and international flights, starting Sunday.

The airport announcement came as the Iranian-backed Houthis in Yemen continued to fire drones and missiles toward the Saudi capital.

Saudi military spokesman Maj. Gen. Turki al-Malki said they intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile and a drone fired by the Houthis early on Sunday.

India advises its nationals in Saudi against filming missile interceptions

DUBAI, Oct 25 (PTI)

INDIA on Sunday advised its nationals in Saudi Arabia to abide by local rules and regulations and refrain from filming or publishing information related to missile and drone interceptions. The advisory comes amid escalating tensions in the region due to a series of drone and missile attacks targeting civilian infrastructure by Yemen's Houthis.

"The Indian community residing in Saudi Arabia is requested to abide by local rules and regulations," the Indian Embassy said on social media while reposting the notification issued by the Directorate of Saudi Civil Defence.

"Filming, publishing, or sharing information related to countering missiles and drones and their impact sites exposes you to legal liability," the notification said. The Indian mission also shared an update about the suspension of flights from Air India and Air India Express to and from Riyadh and Dammam.

In early October, Houthi strikes hit a complex housing two other terminals, killing 17 people and wounding over 330. Last week, the Riyadh airport opened to limited domestic flights.

ISRO to have four launch pads by 2029: Narayanan

CHENNAI, Oct 25 (PTI)

ISRO Chairman V Narayanan has said that India will expand its space operations significantly with four functional launch pads by 2029.

He outlined the agency's roadmap, which includes a 2,000-acre dedicated Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) complex at Kulasekarapattinam in Tuticorin district to meet the global demand for satellite deployment.

Clarifying that the national space agency will not be privatised, Narayanan emphasised that partnering with private firms was essential to meet surging global and domestic demands for thousands of satellites.

"To handle this expanding ecosystem, ISRO will handhold startups and private enterprises, transferring technological expertise to foster economic growth and generate thousands of high-tech jobs," he said while speaking at a graduation ceremony at a private university here on Saturday.

"India will expand its space operations significantly with four functional launch pads by 2029, supported by an increasing reliance on private industry partnerships to handle commercial operations," Narayanan said.

The ISRO chief said that the upcoming Kulasekarapattinam spaceport facility will feature crucial infrastructure such as integration buildings, launch pads,

rail-track systems, telemetry, tracking, and command systems. However, he did not elaborate on the other three proposed launch pads. Stating that ISRO plans to conduct the first uncrewed Gaganyaan test within the next two months, followed by two subsequent uncrewed tests before the crewed mission, he said, "These tests will evaluate environmental control, safety systems, crew escape mechanisms, and module interiors under varying pressure, temperature, and humidity conditions."

He said ISRO successfully conducted approximately 8,000 ground-based experiments for the mission, and four astronaut-designates are currently undergoing specialised training.

LG Saxena declares Ladakh India's first 100% organic UT



V K Saxena

LEH/JAMMU, Oct 25 (PTI)

LIEUTENANT Governor V K Saxena on Sunday declared Ladakh "India's first 100 per cent Organic Union territory", months after the administration banned the sale, distribution and use of chemical and synthetic fertilisers for agricultural practices.

"This is a moment of immense pride for Ladakh and the entire nation. Our farmers have demonstrated that environmentally responsible agriculture can flourish even in the

most challenging geographical conditions.

"Becoming a fully organic Union Territory is not merely a milestone; it is a commitment to protecting our fragile Himalayan ecosystem, preserving our traditional farming practices and ensuring better livelihoods for our farmers," the LG said.

In a major policy intervention in July, the LG ordered a complete prohibition on the procurement, distribution, sale, marketing and use of chemical and synthetic fertilisers for agricultural practices across Ladakh. The administration, in March, had also flagged off distribution of organic fertiliser among farmers across villages to ensure timely availability before the sowing season.

Congratulating the farmers and stakeholders, Saxena said, "Our goal is to ensure that the



organic status of Ladakh brings real value to our farmers through better market access, improved price realisation and sustainable livelihoods. We must combine traditional wisdom with scientific support, strengthen organic value chains and protect our natural resources."

A Lok Bhavan spokesperson said the organic transition is expected to create new oppor-

tunities for Ladakh's farmers by improving the value of locally grown organic produce, including apricots, sea buckthorn, buckwheat, barley and vegetables. The official said organic certification, better post-harvest management, value addition, branding and stronger market linkages can help farmers access consumers who increasingly seek authentic, traceable and organically produced food.

Manipur to form committee of all 36 communities: CM

IMPHAL, Oct 25 (PTI)

MANIPUR Chief Minister Y Khemchand Singh said his Government would form a committee with representatives from all 36 communities in the state to promote peace, harmony and inclusive development.

The Chief Minister said the proposal follows a query from Prime Minister Narendra Modi on whether such a committee existed to bring all communities together.

Singh was speaking at an event on Saturday held to felicitate hill chiefs of different tribes at the Chief Minister's Secretariat in Imphal.

The event followed the inauguration of the Hill (Tribal) Chiefs' Guest House at Palace Compound as part of the Mera Hou Chongba Festival.

Singh said all communities have contributed to defending and safeguarding Manipur throughout, as he recalled the Anglo-Manipur War and the Seven Years' Devastation to pay

tribute to the sacrifices made to protect the State's land, identity and heritage.

The Chief Minister expressed

hope that the festival would usher in peace and prosperity and strengthen the spirit of brotherhood.

Manipur violence: Cong seeks CM's resignation; dissolution of Assembly

NEW DELHI, Oct 25 (PTI)

IN THE wake of the recent spate of violence in Manipur, the Congress on Sunday demanded the immediate resignation of Chief Minister Y Khemchand Singh, dissolution of the assembly and holding of State polls immediately so that peace and tranquillity can be restored in the State.

Congress' in-charge of Manipur and MP Saptagiri Ulaka also sought immediate protection of civilians belonging to every community and a time-bound investigation and prosecution in

every case of killing, firing, arson, and destruction of civilian property.

"On 23rd October 2026, thousands protested across five districts, banging drums and utensils and taking to the streets. They marched towards Lok Bhavan but were detained by the police, facing lathi charges and tear gas," Ulaka said at a press conference.

On 19th October, three Meitei civilians collecting firewood in a forest were killed, and several others were injured, he said and added that the people took their bodies to the CM's residence and demanded justice.

PM attends IAF's show 'Wings over Ganga' at Kashi

VARANASI, Oct 25 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday attended the Indian Air Force's air show, 'Wings over Ganga', organised at Namo Ghat in Varanasi as the IAF's premier display teams performed aerial manoeuvres over the Ganga.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath accompanied Modi on the final day of the three-day air show held to commemorate the 94th anniversary of the Indian Air Force (IAF).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi wore a white Air Force cap and dark sunglasses as the IAF's spectacular aerial displays filled the skies above the holy city with the roar of fighter jets. The air show lasted for over an hour.

According to IAF officials, the show featured displays by fighter aircraft, including the Sukhoi-30 MKI, indigenous Tejas and LCH Prachand, and helicopters.

Officials said the highlight of the show was the Kashi formation, in which three Kiran aircraft flew in a V formation, creating a

Bharat Mata Ki Jai and Vande Mataram echoed across the venue



Prime Minister Narendra Modi witnesses the Indian Air Force Aerial Display-2026 'Wings over Ganga', at Namo Ghat, in Varanasi. (PTI)

spectacle in the colours of the Tricolour. The display drew loud cheers from the crowd.

During the Omkar formation, Mi-17 helicopters were seen flying across the sky carrying the national flag. Fighter aircraft, including the Rafale, Sukhoi, Mirage 2000, Tejas, MiG-29 and Jaguar, along with transport aircraft and helicopters, showcased the operational capabilities of

the Indian Air Force, officials said.

The Surya Kiran aerobatic team showcased precision flying and coordinated manoeuvres, while the Sarang helicopter display team enthralled spectators with its aerial stunts.

While the sacred Ganga and the vibrant ghats provided a serene backdrop, the thunderous roar of military aircraft soaring overhead infused the atmos-

phere with excitement as spectators watched Air Force personnel's skill and daring in awe.

Some people waved the Tricolour and chants of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and "Vande Mataram" echoed across the venue. For the people of Kashi, the event was more than just an air show; it offered an opportunity to witness the valour of the Indian Air Force and experience the country's military strength at close quarters, officials said.

Modi's presence at the event generated considerable enthusiasm among residents, with large numbers of people gathering along the route from the police lines to Namo Ghat to welcome the Prime Minister.

BJP workers and residents greeted Modi with rose petals, traditional musical performances and cultural programmes at designated points along the route.

These points, many of them with tents, were erected at the Police Lines main gate, Police Lines crossing, City Railway Station, Gol Gadda crossing, the railway underpass and the CNG station near Namo Ghat.

High security across Europe to prevent violent clashes

- Almost 1,000 people have been arrested in France, with over 40,000 residents taking part in the demonstrations
- In Milan, police detained several minors as a preventive measure
- Protesters try to force entry into Colosseum in Rome
- In Albania, riot police used water cannons on large groups of protesters



A protester confronts the police in Piazza Castello in Turin, Italy on Sunday. (AP/PTI)

MILAN, Oct 25 (Agencies)

THOUSANDS of young people marched on Sunday through the streets of several Italian cities, including Milan, Rome and Turin, as authorities deployed large numbers of police and soldiers in a largely-successful bid to stave off a repeat of the violent clashes and looting that marred similar protests last week.

The demonstration in Milan remained peaceful, but there were brief clashes with police in both Rome and Turin.

In Milan, thousands of young people marched the streets as soldiers were deployed and luxury boutiques were boarded

up, but by late afternoon, most shops had opened, Italian media reported.

Premier Giorgia Meloni announced a raft of measures, including sending an additional 500 soldiers to Milan and tougher penalties for minors, who police said made up a large part of the violent protesters last week. In Milan, police detained several minors as a preventive measure, media reported.

While protests in France have claimed most international attention, large demonstrations also rocked many European cities on Sunday from Milan to Rome to Madrid, Lisbon and Tirana. The protests encompass a broad range of issues from education and corruption to anti-war movements, pensions and housing.

Almost 1,000 people have been arrested in France as another wave of protests took place in the country, with over 40,000 residents taking part in the demonstrations, a report has said.

The majority of the protests took place peacefully. However, clashes erupted between protesters and police in several cities of France, including Marseilles, Rennes, Paris, Lyon, Bordeaux and Toulouse.

Police fired tear gas and charged crowds around Porte de Vincennes in Paris while some of the protesters launched fireworks towards security personnel, as per the report. Police deployed a water cannon to break up protesters and conducted checks of people

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