STRIKES FOLLOW UKRAINIAN ATTACKS ON CRIMEA BRIDGE, ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE ALSO HIT

Putin wants to end Ukraine war, says Trump even as Russian strikes kill 8

Over 400 drones & 27 ballistic missiles fired: Zelenskyy

Reuters
Washington, Kyiv, November 20

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump said on Friday that Russian President Vladimir Putin wanted to end the war in Ukraine and that the two leaders had held "very good talks" during their meeting in China. His remarks came as Russia launched one of its largest missile and drone attacks on Ukraine, killing at least eight people and striking electricity and transport infrastructure.

"We're having very good talks. I think there's a real good chance that we can get it done," Trump told a White House news conference after his Asia trip, during which he met Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping. Trump said Putin had expressed a desire to end the war.

Russia's overnight assault involved more than 400 drones and over 110 missiles, including 27 ballistic missiles, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said. The strikes targeted energy, logistics and railway infrastructure across the country.



Smoke rises from a building damaged in a Russian missile attack in Kyiv, Ukraine, Friday. AP

Six people were killed in Kyiv, while two others died in an attack on a railway station in the western city of Lviv, Ukrainian officials said.

The attack also hit three bridges in Kyiv spanning the Dnipro River and connecting the two sides of the capital. Residents took shelter in metro stations as dozens of explosions echoed across the city.

"This was one of the largest attacks," Zelenskyy said on Telegram, accusing Putin of launching the assault in a "highly demonstrative manner".

"Russia is trying to compensate for its military and diplomatic impotence with precisely this kind of terror, precisely these attacks on life," he said.

Ukraine's air force said it had shot down 380 Russian drones, 79 cruise missiles and three ballistic missiles. Zelenskyy described the Russian tactics as "vicious", saying missiles arrived in successive waves at intervals of 20 to 30 minutes.

11 European nations hold military drill for potential postwar Ukraine mission

Associated Press
Nowa Deba, November 20

THOUSANDS OF European troops are taking part in an unprecedented military exercise in southeastern Poland to prepare for a potential postwar mission in Ukraine aimed at helping to stabilize the country and rebuild its military once the war ends.

Meanwhile, as the drill was underway, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said a Russian missile had crashed early on Friday near Poland's border with Ukraine, describing it as likely an intentional provocation by Moscow that was timed to the drills.

The crash site of the missile is about 75 kilometers from the exercises. "This was not an accidental event. It was coordinated with our show of force, our show of unity," Polish Defense Minister Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz said.

Led by France and the United Kingdom, the multinational force is a non-NATO military initiative of the so-called Coalition of the Willing, a wider political group of 37 nations supporting Ukraine.

The two-week exercise, which began on November 9, is for the first time checking this coalition's ability to deploy in Ukraine once the war ends.

Leaders from Ukraine and nearly 40 other delegations met in Berlin on Thursday to underline their support for Kyiv and explore Ukraine's postwar security arrangements.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy wants to ensure that Russia doesn't invade again. Moscow wants to keep NATO away from its borders.

Around 2,800 personnel from Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the UK are taking part in the exercise, with Poland providing the logistical backup. Turkey was participating remotely from Istanbul.

Myanmar calls UN court's Rohingya genocide ruling a 'disappointment'

Reuters
November 20

MYANMAR ON Friday criticised a UN court ruling that its security forces conducted state-sponsored genocide against the Rohingya and said refugees from the mainly Muslim minority would only be able to return "when situations permit".

The International Court of Justice Thursday found Myanmar's military killed Rohingya civilians, committed sexual violence on a large scale, unleashed extreme violence against children and attacked fleeing people in Rakhine State in 2017.

It was the fourth time since the Nazi Holocaust that an international court ruled that the legal threshold to prove genocide had been met but the first instance of the court holding a state responsible for the crime.

"This finding comes as a great disappointment to Myanmar," the foreign ministry said in a statement Friday. "It should be noted that the judgment of the court was delivered with dissenting opinions and was therefore not decided unanimously."

While rulings by the ICJ, which settles disputes between states and rules on alleged breaches of international treaties, are final, the court has very limited options to enforce them.

Nuclear arms limits with China, Russia will be very hard to achieve, says Trump

Reuters
Washington, November 20

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump said on Thursday after talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin that a mutual agreement to limit nuclear weapons will be hard to achieve but that he will keep working on it.

"I love the concept of it but in terms of pure negotiation, it's a very hard thing for me as a president to do," Trump told Reuters by phone as he flew back to Washington from his trilateral summit in China.

A top priority for Trump on his Asia trip was to begin three-way talks on nuclear arms control, a topic China is reluctant to address as it mounts a large nuclear buildup to catch up with Russian and American dominance.

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists estimated China had roughly 410 nuclear warheads in 2023, compared with about 3,708 in the United States, according to a separate report. A later Bulletin estimate put Russia's arsenal, the world's largest, at about 5,420 warheads as of March 2026.

China has been rapidly expanding its arsenal, with the Pentagon projecting more than 1,000 operational warheads by 2030. Trump said on Thursday that Xi agrees with him on the concept of limiting nuclear weapons "but at the same time



"...at the same time it's very hard for somebody to say we have 4,000 nuclear weapons, we'll give up half... it should be done, but it's hard to do psychologically"
DONALD TRUMP,
PRESIDENT OF UNITED STATES

it's very hard for somebody to say 'We have 4,000 nuclear weapons, we'll give up half.' It's hard to do."

He said he would keep bringing up the subject "because it should be done, but it's hard to do psychologically."

A joint statement after the talks said that the leaders "reaffirmed that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought" and that they would "conduct a dialogue on reducing nuclear risks and preventing proliferation of nuclear weapons."

UK, EU ink trade, emissions deals, pledge to rebuild ties after Brexit

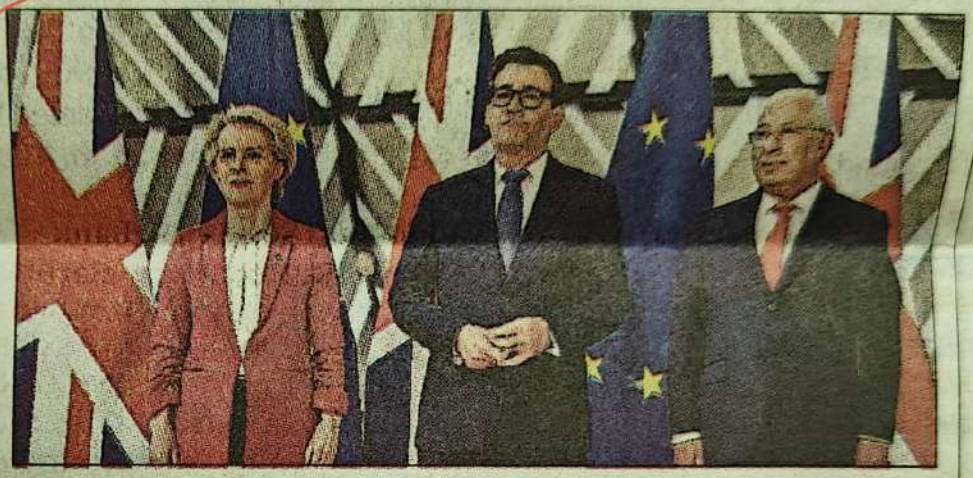
Associated Press
Brussels, November 20

BRITAIN AND European Union agreed deals on trade, carbon emissions and youth movement Friday, and pledged to rebuild ties with an "ambitious and dynamic" post-Brexit relationship.

In a joint statement after a summit in Brussels, the UK and EU confirmed agreements will scrap checks on trade in plant and animal products, link their emissions trading schemes and let 100,000 young adults from each side live and work in others' countries for up to three years.

Other areas remain a work in progress, with the two sides giving themselves six months to reach an agreement on the level of student fees for EU students in the UK and vice versa.

Friday's summit is part of efforts to forge a closer relationship, a decade after Britain voted to leave the EU and six years after the divorce became final.



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen with Britain's PM Andy Burnham and European Council President Antonio Costa at the EU-UK summit in Brussels on Friday. AP

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the deal is "a turning point" in EU-UK relations, and UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham called it a "landmark." "This is a good day for Britain. This is a good day for Europe," he said.

Burnham said the summit was a step toward undoing a decade of damage caused by the divorce. "The Brexit we were given has not worked. We have lost more than we gained," he said this week.

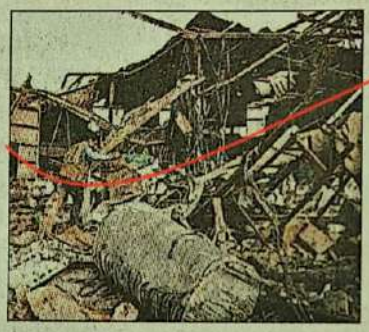
Saudi forces hit Yemen port as Houthis warn airlines

Houthis warn airlines to stay out of Saudi airspace

Reuters
November 20

THE SAUDI-LED coalition fighting Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis said it had struck the Red Sea port of Hodeidah to destroy Houthi capabilities on Friday, as the militants warned airlines to avoid Saudi airspace, pledging new air strikes within hours.

The developments, a day after the group struck the tallest skyscraper in Riyadh, signalled a worsening of a conflict that has brought a humanitarian crisis to Yemen and severe disruption to Saudi Arabia, in parallel with the US-led war in Iran.



People walk through debris at a textile factory hit by an airstrike in Sanaa, Yemen, on Thursday. AP

The Saudi-led coalition said it destroyed operational capabilities at the port that were used in smuggling operations and the transport of weapons and ballistic missiles. The port remains fully operational and the flow of goods will continue, according to Yemen's Information Minister.

There was no comment from the Houthis, who had earlier said they would hit Red Sea ports if the Saudis carried out their own threat to strike the Yemeni port. "We warn all employees, workers, and those in the vicinity of (Saudi Arabia's Red Sea) ports to evacuate them immediately and stay away. We also urge all shipping companies to immediately evacuate their ships from these ports," Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree.

Airlines should avoid Saudi airspace "because it will be the scene of our operations in the coming hours," Saree said, making an exception for airspace near the Muslim holy cities of Mecca and Medina. He also said the group would target a power station at Shuqaiq in southern Saudi Arabia.

The Saudi-led coalition also said it carried out an operation in Yemen's capital Sanaa targeting ballistic missile and drone capabilities and that operations in Saada and Taiz were ongoing.

Since fighting resumed in Yemen in July in parallel with the wider Iran war, the Houthis have rapidly advanced in Yemen, seizing territory from Yemen's internationally recognised government and its allies.

Nepal PM arrives tomorrow on 2-day visit; trade to energy, tech on table

Shubhajit Roy
New Delhi, November 20

NEPAL PRIME Minister Balen Shah will begin a two-day visit to India on Sunday, his first bilateral trip since assuming office in March this year. The agenda for his visit will encompass trade and commerce, development partnership, energy and water, physical and digital connectivity, technology and innovation and sports, among other issues.



This will be the Nepal PM's first foreign bilateral visit

According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), during the State visit, the Nepal PM will call on President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday and hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi the next day. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will also meet the Nepal PM on Sunday.

"Prime Minister Modi will hold bilateral talks with the Prime Minister of Nepal on 23 November to review the full range of India–Nepal relations and exchange views on regional

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Pakistan attending SCO event won't dilute IWT stand: Govt

Denies Claims Of Movement Curbs On Pak Minister Malik, Others

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: As India hosted the first SCO Civilization Dialogue Friday, govt downplayed Pakistan's presence at the event, saying that all SCO member-states had been invited for the inaugural talks proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi last year. The ministry of external affairs also strongly denied that India's position on the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, which was put in abeyance after the Pahalgam terrorist attack last year, had changed.

"This is a multilateral event within the SCO framework, for which invitations have been extended to all members of the SCO, including Pakistan. Observers and Dialogue Partners of the SCO have also been invited to attend the dialogue, which will be inaugurated by the PM," said spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.



TOI

PM Modi with other dignitaries at the SCO event in New Delhi, Friday

Pakistan's Musadik Masood Malik, federal minister for climate change and environmental coordination, is leading the country's delegation. After they became full members of the Eurasian bloc in 2017, India and Pakistan have regularly engaged at the multilateral forum, without letting bilateral differences get in the way. This is the first ministerial visit from Pakistan in over three years and also after the Pahalgam attack.

Indian govt denied that it had placed any restriction on the movement of Malik or any other minister participating in the event. While there was a security issue that may not have allowed him to visit Nizamuddin, official sources said all ministers were free to travel anywhere, including to Taj Mahal and Humayun's tomb.

"I think all our relationships will improve. The region is in flux and the geopolitical landscape is shifting very fast. I am hopeful that we will take a broader view, looking at political and social issues as well as other areas of engagement, and push the regional agenda," said Malik, speaking on the margins of the event.

"Dialogue is between distinct entities. Singularity does not require dialogue; it requires a monologue. Dialogue is about diversity. India, Pakistan, Russia, China and the Central Asian states share historical connections that can be traced through archaeological excavations. This is a welcome dialogue," Malik further said.