

Air India sends plane after US-bound jet stops in Russia

AFP, New Delhi

Air India said yesterday it had sent a relief airplane after a jet from New Delhi to San Francisco had to land in eastern Russia with an engine problem.

The flight with 216 passengers and 16 crew was diverted to Magadan on Russia's eastern coast, over 5,900 kilometres (3,670 miles) from Moscow on Tuesday night.

With "infrastructural limitations around the remote airport", passengers were put up in "makeshift accommodation" in the town, Air India said.

"Our ferry flight AI195 from Mumbai to Magadan, Russia is now airborne," Air India said in a statement, noting it was expected to arrive at 6:30 am yesterday (1930 GMT yesterday).

"The aircraft operating the ferry flight will take all passengers and crew onward to San Francisco", it added.



A view shows a flooded area after the Nova Kakhovka dam breached, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kherson yesterday. Inset, police evacuate local residents from flooded area.

PHOTO: REUTERS

VIOLENCE IN INDIA'S MANIPUR Army steps up security after family burnt alive

REUTERS, Guwahati

Indian security forces stepped up operations to prevent further violence in Manipur state yesterday after a seven-year-old boy, his mother and a relative were burnt alive when a crowd set fire to an ambulance ferrying them to a hospital.

The boy was being rushed for medical treatment on Sunday night after he was shot amidst deadly ethnic clashes between tribal groups and the majority Meitei community in the northeastern state.

The Indian Army yesterday said it had launched operations in hill and valley areas across Manipur "to dominate sensitive areas and recover snatched weapons".

"Locals in possession of such weapons being urged to surrender them to the Security Forces for the sake of peace & harmony," the army said on Twitter.

The ethnic violence in the state began in early May when tribal groups clashed with the Meitei community, worried that the economic quotas and benefits granted to them would also be extended to the Meiteis.

NOVA KAKHOVKA DAM COLLAPSE Ukrainians face disease, homelessness Floodwaters crest across a swathe of south; Ukrainian troops advance in Bakhmut

REUTERS, Kherson

Ukrainians abandoned their inundated homes as floodwaters crested across a swathe of the south yesterday after the destruction of a vast dam on the front line between Russian and Ukrainian forces that each blamed on the other.

Residents waded through flooded streets carrying children on their shoulders, dogs in their arms and belongings in plastic bags while rescuers used rubber boats to search areas where the waters reached above head height.

Ukraine said the flood would leave hundreds of thousands of people without access to drinking water, swamp tens of thousands of hectares of agricultural land and turn more into deserts.

The disaster at the Nova Kakhovka dam coincided with the apparent start of a long-awaited counteroffensive by Ukrainian forces, seen as the next major phase of the war. Each side accused the other of continuing to shell across the floodzone and warned of drifting landmines unearthed by the flooding.

Kyiv said yesterday its troops in the east had advanced by more than a kilometre around the ruined city of Bakhmut in eastern Ukraine, its most explicit claim of progress since Russia reported the start of the Ukrainian offensive this week. Russia said it

had fought off the attack.

Residents in the flood zone in the country's south blamed the bursting of the dam on Russian troops who controlled it from their positions on the opposite bank.

"They hate us," Reva said. "They want to destroy a Ukrainian nation and Ukraine itself. And they don't care by what means because nothing is sacred for them."



Russia imposed a state of emergency in the parts of Kherson province it controls, where many towns and villages lie in lowlands below the dam. Residents there have told Reuters by telephone that Russian troops patrolling the streets in waters were threatening civilians who approached.

Ukraine expects the floodwaters will stop rising by the end of yesterday after reaching around five metres overnight, presidential deputy chief Oleksiy Kuleba said.

Two thousand people had been evacuated so far from the Ukrainian-controlled part of the flood zone, and the water level had reached its highest level in

17 settlements with a combined population of 16,000 people.

"The sheer magnitude of the catastrophe will only become fully realised in the coming days," UN aid chief Martin Griffiths told the Security Council.

Targeting dams in war is explicitly banned by the Geneva Conventions. Neither side has presented public evidence demonstrating who was to blame.

"The whole world will know about this Russian war crime," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said in his nightly address, calling it "an environmental bomb of mass destruction".

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Ukraine had sabotaged the dam to distract attention from a new counteroffensive he said was "faltering".

Washington said it was still gathering evidence about who was to blame, but that Ukraine would have had no reason to inflict such devastation on itself.

"Why would Ukraine do this to its own territory and people, flood its land, force tens of thousands of people to leave their homes - it doesn't make sense," Deputy US Ambassador to the UN Robert Wood told reporters.

Even as the evacuation was under way, Russia shelled Ukrainian-held territory across the river. The governor of the region said one person was killed.

GLOBAL WARMING Arctic summer ice cap to disappear in 2030s Say scientists

AFP, Paris

The Arctic Ocean's ice cap will disappear in summer as soon as the 2030s and a decade earlier than thought, no matter how aggressively humanity draws down the carbon pollution that drives global warming, scientists said Tuesday.

Even capping global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius in line with the Paris climate treaty will not prevent the north pole's vast expanse of floating ice from melting away in September, they reported in Nature Communications.

"It is too late to still protect the Arctic summer sea ice as a landscape and as a habitat," co-author Dirk Notz, a professor at the University of Hamburg's Institute of Oceanography, told AFP.

Decreased ice cover has serious impacts over time on weather, people and ecosystems globally.

"It can accelerate global warming by melting permafrost laden with greenhouse gases, and sea level rise by melting the Greenland ice sheet," lead author Seung-Ki Min, a researcher at Pohang University of Science and Technology in South Korea, told AFP.

FOOD, ENERGY CRISIS 10billion global population 'unsustainable'

AFP, Oslo

US special climate envoy John Kerry told AFP that the world's population will not be tenable in 2050, when it is projected to hit nearly 10 billion, but refrained from asking Americans to give up steaks.

Since November, the global population has officially crossed eight billion, more than three times the figure in 1950. This has already stretched food and energy needs and supplies. UN projections say the figure will balloon to 9.7 billion in the middle of the century.

"I don't think it's sustainable personally," he said in an interview on Tuesday. "We need to figure out how we're going to deal with the issue of sustainability and the numbers of people we're trying to take care of on the planet."

Global warming is exacerbating the problem. The 2015 Paris Agreement calls for capping global warming at "well below" two degrees Celsius and 1.5C if possible.

Producing food for eight billion mouths accounts for over a fourth of greenhouse gas emissions.

"I've been to a number of African countries where they're very proud of their increased birth rate but the fact is, it's unsustainable for life today, let alone when you add the future numbers," Kerry said.



CNN chief Chris Licht is out

CNN ONLINE

Chris Licht, the embattled chief executive and chairman of CNN, whose brief one-year tenure at the network was stained by a series of severe missteps, announced yesterday that he will depart the company. "I met with Chris and he will be leaving CNN," David Zaslav, the chief executive of parent company Warner Bros. Discovery, told CNN employees at the start of the network's daily editorial call yesterday. Licht's departure, which came days after a devastating 15,000-word profile in The Atlantic, capped a tumultuous year for CNN, marked by layoffs, historically low ratings, and rock-bottom employee morale. Zaslav told CNN employees that the company is "in the process of conducting a wide search," both internally and externally, for a new network chief.

2024 WHITE HOUSE BID Trump foe Chris enters race

REUTERS

Former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie on Tuesday launched his 2024 presidential campaign with a withering attack on the Republican front-runner, Donald Trump, calling him a "self-serving mirror hog" and faulting other rivals for avoiding direct confrontation. Christie, 60, was an adviser to Trump's successful 2016 White House campaign but has since become a vocal critic over the former president's false claims that the 2020 election was rigged. A former federal prosecutor, Christie presented himself as the lone Republican contender willing to go toe-to-toe with the bellicose Trump.



Will discuss relook at total ban Says Karnataka CM on cow slaughter

AGENCIES

AMID protests by the BJP over a statement by Indian's Karnataka Animal Husbandry Minister K Venkatesh indicating that the Congress government would amend the stringent cow slaughter Act passed by the previous BJP regime, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah weighed in, saying the matter was on their table.

Speaking to reporters Monday, Siddaramaiah said the Cabinet was yet to discuss the issue and there was "no decision yet", reports The Indian Express.

However, he went on to refer to the version of the Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Act passed in 1964, and pointed out that it did not restrict the slaughter of cattle above 12 years, barren cows and other cows not fit for agricultural purposes.

"They (the BJP) amended it once. We reverted it to the earlier provisions. They have amended it again. We will discuss it in the Cabinet meeting," the CM said.

The BJP held protests in parts of the state Monday against the statement made by Venkatesh last week, responding to media queries, that though the government had not taken a call on the legislation yet, they would discuss it and take a decision.

Under the Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Act, passed in 2020, cattle were designated as "cow, calf of a cow and bull, bullock and he or she buffalo", and their slaughter banned. The only exemptions under the Act are for buffaloes above the age of 13 and certified by a competent authority as fit for slaughter.



Members of Inter University Students' Federation throw stones towards the riot police during an anti-government protest against alleged government efforts to undermine free education by permitting the setting up of private universities, and demand a change to the governance system, in Colombo, Sri Lanka yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

2 dead, 5 hurt in US school shooting

AFP, Washington

Two people were killed and five injured Tuesday during a shooting near a high school graduation in the US state of Virginia, police said, the latest in an epidemic of mass shootings plaguing the country.

The shooting took place around 5:00 pm (2100 GMT) outside a theater in the state capital of Richmond, where students from a local high school were celebrating their graduation. Richmond interim police chief Rick Edwards told reporters.

The deceased included an 18-year-old graduate and a 36-year-old man, he added. Of the five injured, one remained in critical condition. "People scattered, it was very chaotic at the scene," Edwards said.

A nineteen-year-old suspect fled the scene, but was soon arrested and is to be charged with second-degree murder, Edwards said.