



**Iran 'capable of six months of intense war': IRGC**

**Strikes hit Kuwait airport and gov't building, Bahrain desalination unit, US sites in KSA, UAE, Jordan**

**Four killed in Israeli strike on Beirut hotel**

**US, Israel weigh sending special forces to seize Iran's uranium**

**US embassy in Oslo hit by blast, cause unknown**

**China FM blasts war, urges US to manage ties**

**US starts using UK bases for 'defensive' Iran operations**

**Italy deploys frigate to Cyprus: Meloni**

## Iran picks new supreme leader as strikes mount

Chosen candidate yet to be named; Trump, Netanyahu vow to eliminate new leader; Israeli strikes ignite oil fires in Tehran, black rain falls

### AGENCIES

Residents in Tehran woke to thick black clouds and blackened rain yesterday after overnight Israeli strikes hit oil storage sites in the Iranian capital, while Iran struck vital infrastructure across the Gulf region, hitting fuel tanks at Kuwait's international airport and damaging a desalination plant in Bahrain.

As fighting escalated on the ninth day of the US-Israeli campaign against Iran, Tehran moved closer to naming a new supreme leader after the killing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, with every indication suggesting his powerful son Mojtaba could take charge.

Israel's military threatened to kill any replacement for Khamenei, while US President Donald Trump said the war might only end once Iran's military and rulers had been wiped out.

### BLACK RAIN IN TEHRAN

Thick, choking black smoke hung over Tehran yesterday, after strikes on oil storage facilities had lit up the night sky with plumes of orange flame.

Tehran, a city of nearly 10 million people, experienced rainfall that appeared to be mixed with oil following the attacks. "You can see that the rain, the rainwater, is actually black—also saturated, it appears, with oil," Pleitgen, a CNN correspondent, reported from Tehran.

Iran's foreign ministry spokesperson, Esmail Baghaei, said the large-scale attack marked a "dangerous new phase" of the conflict and amounted to a war crime.

"By targeting fuel depots, the aggressors are releasing hazardous materials and toxic substances into the air, poisoning civilians, devastating the environment, and endangering lives on a massive scale,"

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PHOTO: REUTERS

People stand near a destroyed vehicle as smoke rises in the background after an Israeli strike on Shahrn fuel tanks in Tehran, Iran yesterday.

### HADI KILLING

## Prime accused, associate held in West Bengal

ISPR confirms following statement from Indian task force

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India's West Bengal Police Special Task Force (STF) yesterday arrested the prime accused and an alleged associate in the murder of Inqilab Moncho spokesperson Sharif Osman Hadi from the border area of Bongaon in the Indian state of West Bengal.



Faisal Karim Masud

The arrestees are Faisal Karim Masud, 37, a resident of Patuakhali, and Alamgir Hossain, 34, from Dhaka, according to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

Quoting the STF, the ISPR in a statement last night said the arrests were made in the early hours of March 8 following intelligence that two Bangladeshi nationals involved in serious crimes, including murder and extortion, had fled Bangladesh and illegally entered India.

It said, "An operation was conducted, and during the night of March 7-8, 2026, the two Bangladeshi nationals

### TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED VIOLENCE

## Women survivors forced to navigate a flawed system

### NILIMA JAHAN

The violence was set in motion not by a weapon but by a smartphone.

Nilufa (not her real name), a 32-year-old entrepreneur and mother of two in Bagerhat, was running a tailoring shop without much trouble until a neighbouring shopkeeper took advantage of their familiarity.

He filmed her through a hole in a washroom door and then unleashed a nightmare of blackmail, demanding "undue favours" for his silence.

Gripped by fear of social fallout, Nilufa felt she had no one to turn to. In a desperate bid to protect herself, she isolated herself and pretended to cooperate with her blackmailer.

"I was acting," she recalled, adding that she eventually convinced the blackmailer to share his mobile phone screen with her via a video call to show that the footage was deleted from his smartphone.

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**"For women and girls to be safe online, we need to put in place strong and inclusive laws and coordinated response systems, and ensure that tech companies operate responsibly."**

Abu Sayed Sumon  
UNFPA specialist on gender-based violence

### FUEL RESERVES

- ➔ Diesel: 1,20,000 tonnes, should last about 14 days
- ➔ Petrol: 14,000 tonnes, enough for 14 days
- ➔ Octane: 22,000 tonnes, should cover 24 days
- ➔ More diesel shipments expected soon

## Dhaka stocks log in biggest single-day slide in 6 yrs

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's stock market yesterday recorded its steepest single-day decline in six years amid concerns over energy supply disruptions linked to the escalating conflict in the Middle East.

DSEX, the benchmark index of the country's premier bourse, fell 232 points, or 4.42 percent, to close at 5,008, marking the sharpest single-day fall since March 2020.

In March 2020, investors witnessed three major declines within a span of 10 days as panic gripped investors amid fears over the impact of the global coronavirus pandemic.

Of the traded stocks, the prices of 371 issues declined as investors rushed to sell, while only 10 advanced and the remainder remained unchanged.

"The war is the main reason," said Saiful Islam, president of DSE Brokers Association of Bangladesh.

Initially, investors thought that the conflict would be resolved within a few days.

Now that it has gone on to day 9, investors panicked and sold off their holdings.

Moreover, the war has started to affect people personally via energy shortages.

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India opener Sanju Samson smashes one on his way to a 46-ball 89 in the final of the T20 World Cup against New Zealand at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad yesterday. The in-form Samson, who hit 97 not out and 89 in his previous two innings, helped power the defending champions to 255 for five in 20 overs.

PHOTO: AFP

## Samson powers India to 255-5

### AFP, Ahmedabad

Sanju Samson's blistering 89 off 46 balls helped India rack up a massive 255-5 against New Zealand in the T20 World Cup final in Ahmedabad on Sunday.

The in-form Samson, who hit 97 not out and 89 in his previous two innings, hit five fours and eight sixes to thrill a crowd of over 100,000 at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

India are looking to become the first team to retain the trophy, the first to win it on home soil and the first to claim a third world T20 crown.

Samson's opening stand of 98 with Abhishek Sharma, who hit 52 off 21 balls, laid the platform for the second highest total of this edition as India surpassed their 256 against Zimbabwe in the Super Eights.

Put in to bat first, Abhishek waited for an over before he launched a batting blitz and Samson joined in to flay the opposition attack to all parts of the ground.

India raced to 92 in the first six overs of powerplay when only two fielders are allowed outside the inner circle.

Rachin Ravindra broke the stand with his left-arm spin to send back Abhishek caught behind after the opener reached his second fifty of the tournament.

Samson was joined by Ishan Kishan, who made 54, and the two once again demolished New Zealand's bowling.

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