



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

Bangladeshi among two killed in strike in Saudi Arabia

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

Iran picks new leader as war escalates

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

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," he wrote on X.

Shortly after the attack, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said his government would press on with the

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

HADI KILLING Prime accused, associate held in West Bengal

ISPR confirms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India's West Bengal Police Special Task Force (STF) has 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).

It added that the process to repatriate the arrestees to Bangladesh has already begun.

In a statement last night, the ISPR, quoting the STF, said the arrests were made during an operation in the early yesterday (March 8) following intelligence that two Bangladeshi nationals involved in serious crimes, including murder and extortion, had fled Bangladesh and illegally entered India.

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Crisis exposes fragile energy security

Country only has a running buffer of fuel, no strategic stock

ASIFUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh's energy security has once again shown its vulnerability amid the ongoing Middle East war, echoing challenges faced during the 2020 Russia-Ukraine conflict, as it relies heavily on timely fuel imports while maintaining only a short-term stock buffer.

At the same time, refining capacity has remained unchanged for 63 years, forcing Bangladesh to import large volumes of refined petroleum products at higher cost.

Data released in early March by the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) shows the country maintains a narrow fuel buffer. During that period, the stock of diesel, which accounts for around 65 percent of total fuel use, fell close to risk levels.

According to BPC, the country has 27 depots, including 11 riverine, nine railhead, and two barge depots, with storage capacity for 624,189 tonnes of diesel, 53,616 tonnes of petrol, and 37,013 tonnes of octane.

Based on average daily demand, these reserves can meet the country's needs for about 35 to 40 days. However, after the US and Israel attacked Iran on February 28 and Tehran retaliated, diesel stock briefly fell to levels sufficient for just

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

15 days and later dropped further to around 11 days, raising concerns among officials and the public.

With new shipments arriving, diesel reserves rose to about 14 days yesterday, with roughly 1,20,000 tonnes in stock. More deliveries are expected, officials said.

BPC data also shows the country currently has around 14,000 tonnes of petrol, enough

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TECH-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

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 players celebrate with the T20 World Cup trophy after winning the global title of the shortest format of cricket for a record third time following a thrashing 96-run victory against New Zealand in the final at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

India thrash NZ to clinch record 3rd T20WC title

AFP, Ahmedabad

India won a record third T20 World Cup title and became the first team to defend their crown with a 96-run thumping of New Zealand in a lop-sided final on Sunday.

Suryakumar Yadav's India were also the first team to lift the trophy on home soil as over 86,000 fans celebrated at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

England and the West Indies have won two titles each.

India beat both those teams en route to the title, including a clutch victory over the West Indies in their final Super Eights match when defeat would have seen them eliminated.

Sanju Samson's blistering 89 off 46 balls guided the co-hosts to 255-5 and Bumrah starred as New Zealand were bowled out for 159 in 19 overs.

Part-time spinner Abhishek Sharma claimed the final wicket of Jacob Duffy, securing a dominant victory.

Axar Patel struck two early blows, including the dangerous Finn Allen for nine, with his left-arm spin.

Bumrah was again at his mesmerising best, delivering a succession of brilliant slower-ball yorkers to finish with figures of 4-15.

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