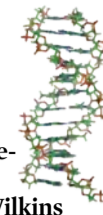


Coronation ceremony of Liu Bang as Emperor Gaozu of Han takes place, initiating four centuries of the Han Dynasty's rule over China

In the Battle of Helsingborg, 14,000 Danish invaders under Jørgen Rantzau are decisively defeated by an equally sized Swedish force under Magnus Stenbock

Francis Crick and James Watson discover the chemical structure of the DNA molecule (double-helix polymer) using X-ray diffraction studies developed by Rosalind Franklin and Maurice Wilkins



Gulf War ends after Iraq accepts a ceasefire following their retreat from Kuwait

# Pakistan bombs Kabul in 'open war' on Taliban govt

Defence minister declares "all-out confrontation" after jets strike Kabul and Kandahar

● Pakistan bombs Kabul, Kandahar, and other cities

● Defence minister declares "open war"

AFP | Islamabad

Pakistan bombed major cities in Afghanistan including the capital Kabul yesterday, with Islamabad's defence minister declaring the neighbours at "open war" following months of tit-for-tat clashes.

Journalists in Kabul and Kandahar heard blasts and jets overhead, as Pakistan launched air strikes on the Afghan capital and southern power base of the Taliban authorities.

Pakistan's latest operation came after Afghan forces attacked Pakistani border troops on Thursday night over earlier air strikes by Islamabad.

Relations between the neighbours have plunged in recent months, with land border crossings largely shut since deadly fighting in October that killed more than 70 people on both sides.

Islamabad accuses Afghanistan of failing to act against militant groups that carry out attacks in Pakistan, which the Taliban government denies.

Several rounds of negotiations followed an initial ceasefire brokered by Qatar and Turkey, but the efforts have failed to produce a lasting agreement.

Both militaries said they killed



A Pakistani armoured vehicle stands at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border in Chaman

dozens of soldiers in the latest round of border violence, which followed multiple Pakistani strikes on Afghanistan and clashes along the frontier in recent months.

"Afghan Taliban defence targets were targeted in Kabul, Paktia (province) and Kandahar," Pakistani Information Minister Attaullah Tarar posted on X, while defence minister Khawaja Asif declared an "all-out confrontation" with the Taliban government.

"Our patience has reached its limit. Now it is open war between us and you," he posted on the social media platform.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said his country's

armed forces can "have the full capability to crush any aggressive ambitions".

## Jets overhead

In the Afghan capital AFP journalists heard jets and multiple loud blasts, followed by gunfire, over a period of several hours.

An AFP reporter in Afghanistan's southern city of Kandahar, where Supreme Leader Hibatullah Akhundzada is based, said he heard jets overhead.

The Taliban government confirmed the Pakistani air strikes, with spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid saying there were no casualties.

Hours earlier, Mujahid an-

nounced "large-scale offensive operations" at the border "in response to repeated violations by the Pakistani military".

The Afghan defence ministry reported eight of its soldiers had been killed in the land offensive.

An Afghan official reported multiple civilians wounded near the Torkham border crossing, at a camp for people returning from Pakistan.

"A mortar shell has hit the camp and unfortunately seven of our refugees have been wounded, and the condition of one woman is serious," said Qureshi Badlun, the information chief in Nangarhar province.

While the border has largely been closed since October,

**YOU KNOW WHAT**

Despite heavy air strikes and hours of explosions reported in Kabul, Taliban authorities said there were no confirmed casualties from the attacks

Afghan returnees have been allowed to cross.

## Months of border violence

Mujahid, the Taliban government spokesman, told AFP that several Pakistani soldiers had been "caught alive", a claim denied by the prime minister's office in Islamabad.

The military operation follows Pakistani strikes on Nangarhar and Paktika provinces overnight into Sunday, which the UN mission in Afghanistan said killed at least 13 civilians.

Both sides also reported cross-border fire on Tuesday, but without casualties.

There has been a series of deadly suicide blasts in Pakistan and Afghanistan in recent months.

They included an attack on a Shiite mosque in Islamabad that killed at least 40 people and was claimed by the Islamic State group.

# Canada PM begins key India visit, seeking to boost trade

AFP | Mumbai

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney arrived in India yesterday for a visit he hopes will reset ties and double trade, offsetting the damage from his country's fracturing relations with the United States.

He arrived in the financial hub of Mumbai, where he is expected to address business leaders before travelling to the capital and meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday, the final day of his visit.

Indian broadcasters showed a police convoy as Carney was whisked through Mumbai.

India's foreign ministry said Carney's visit marked a "significant step in further strengthening India-Canada ties".

"The India-Canada partnership is anchored in shared democratic values, strong people-to-people ties, and expanding cooperation across diverse sectors," ministry spokesman Randhir Jaiswal said in a post on X.



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney greets people after making an announcement in Montreal

Carney's office said discussions would focus on "ambitious new partnerships in trade, energy, technology and artificial intelligence (AI), talent and culture, and defence".

Last year, the two countries agreed to resume negotiations on a proposed free-trade agreement.

Carney has said he wanted to more than double two-way trade with India by 2030, eyeing an annual target of \$51 billion.

## Pivot

India, the world's fastest-growing major economy, is seeking to attract more overseas invest-

ments, and says Canadian pension and wealth funds have already invested \$73 billion.

The world's most populous country with 1.4 billion people, hopes Canada can support its ambitious plan to expand nuclear power capacity.

After India, Carney will travel on to Australia and Japan, part of a broad effort to pivot the Canadian economy away from excessive reliance on its southern neighbour, the United States.

In 2024, before US President Donald Trump returned to office and upended global trade through a flurry of tariffs, more than 75 percent of Canadian exports went to the United States. Two-way trade that year exceeded \$900 billion.

So far Trump broadly adhered to the North American free trade agreement he signed during his first term, and about 85 percent of US-Canada trade remains tariff-free.

But at the same time, Trump has also imposed painful industry-specific tariffs, and there are fears that if he scraps the broader trade deal, the Canadian economy will be hit hard.

Carney has made boosting commerce with Europe and Asia cornerstones of his strategy to backstop Canada's economy, should free trade with Washington collapse.

Carney's hopes for trade growth with Australia and Japan are more modest, but his office said cooperation over critical mineral supply chains will be a priority.

Advanced economies have made a push to deepen critical mineral cooperation, especially in the processing of rare earth elements essential to power many high-tech products.

China currently has dominant control of rare earth supply chains, a concern that Canada highlighted throughout its just-concluded G7 presidency.

X

TOP 4 TWEETS

01

I warmly welcome the ratification of the EU-Mercosur Agreement by Argentina and Uruguay. Together, we are creating the largest free trade area in the world. A decisive step toward open trade, shared prosperity, and stronger ties between our regions.

@eucopresident

02

The President is determined to help the U.N. reach its potential, and I'm determined to help him. Great being at the @AIPAC Congressional Summit.

@USAmbUN

03

"We're going to fight for our young families to own a home, and that's exactly what we've been doing for the past year." — @VP @JD-Vance

@VPPressSec

04

I welcome the IMF Executive Board's approval of a new 48-month EFF for Ukraine, with US\$1.5bn available immediately. This helps reinforce economic stability and move Ukraine forward on its recovery and EU path. The IMF stands with Ukraine and its people.

@KGeorgieva

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stances)