Air pollution spikes 200 times above WHO limits in Delhi during Deepavali

Data missing from several monitoring stations at the peak of air pollution during the intervening night of Nov. 8 and 9; AAP accuses BJP govt. of 'data fraud', the latter hits back alleging stubble burning 'conspiracy' by AAP-governed Punjab, which recorded 1,152 stubble burning incidents on Sunday

Nikhil M. Babu
NEW DELHI

As Delhiites burst firecrackers well past the 10 p.m. deadline set by the Supreme Court for Deepavali night, air pollution shot up to over 150-200 times World Health Organisation (WHO) limits in parts of the city, but fell through the early morning hours of Monday due to better weather conditions, show official data.

At the peak of pollution, following the bursting of firecrackers on Sunday night, crucial air quality data were missing from several monitoring stations managed by government authorities. Experts say missing data on peak values of air pollution will artificially show better air quality than the reality.

Though the Supreme Court allowed only green firecrackers during fixed windows on November 7 and 8, traditional firecrackers, which are more polluting, were also available in the markets of Delhi.



Worrying trend: Rashtrapati Bhavan was shrouded in thick smog during the early morning hours of Monday after Deepavali celebrations in New Delhi. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

As per the Delhi government's Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) data, the level of PM2.5 (a major pollution) in Patparganj of East Delhi was 2,597 micrograms per cubic metre at 1 a.m. on Monday – about 173.13 times the WHO permissible limit of 15 micrograms per cubic metre for a 24-hour period.

Similarly, the level of PM2.5 on NSUT West Campus was 3,008.4 micrograms per cubic metre at 5 a.m. on Monday – about 200.5 times the WHO permissible limit. PM2.5 (Particulate matter 2.5) are fine inhalable particles, which can get into lungs and bloodstream and lead to a range of respiratory and other diseases.

Favourable wind

Gufran Beig, chair professor, National Institute of Advanced Studies, said though the air pollution spiked around 12 midnight on Sunday to 5 a.m. on Monday due to bursting of firecrackers on Deepavali, both wind direction and speed were very favourable for faster dispersion of air pollution.

"The wind direction was earlier north westerly, originating from stubble burning areas in Punjab and Haryana. But around Sunday afternoon, it changed to easterly and south easterly and also picked up speed by Sunday evening. The reversal of wind direction led to almost negligible effect of stubble burning in Delhi," said Mr. Beig, who is also the founder-director of the Central government's SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting Research).

The 24-hour average overall Air Quality Index (AQI) of Delhi stood at 344 ("very poor") at 4 p.m. on Monday, lower than 376 ("very poor") a day earlier, according to the CPCB's daily bulletin, which is considered the day's AQI. A higher AQI means worsening of air quality. The overall AQI of Delhi which stood at 370 (very poor) at 9 a.m. on Monday, improved through the day to reach 344 by 4 p.m.

Meanwhile, both the AAP and the Congress attacked the BJP government over the missing data, with the former alleging that it was "data fraud". Hitting back, Delhi Labour Minister Kapil Mishra alleged there was a "conspiracy" by AAP-governed Punjab to set stubble on fire on Sunday evening.

Every winter, air pollution spikes in Delhi-NCR and many parts of the larger Indo-Gangetic Plains, mainly due to meteorological factors such as lower wind speeds and a drop in temperature. Also, pollution from stubble burning during October and November and bursting of firecrackers during the festive season add to existing pollution from vehicles and dust, worsening the air quality.

Stubble burning

Meanwhile, Punjab recorded 1,152 stubble burning incidents on Sunday – the highest this paddy harvest season, according to the Indian Agricultural Research Institute's (IARI) daily bulletin. But it dropped to 198 on Monday, taking the total this harvest season to 4,657, the second lowest since 2020 (till November 9), the data show.

The contribution of stubble burning in neighbouring States to PM2.5 (a chief pollutant) in Delhi on Sunday was 5.1%, according to the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences data.

SHASHY SSB TRG (8368104597)

DESPITE RESTRICTIONS ON SALE, USE OF FIRECRACKERS, VIOLATIONS ACROSS CAPITAL ON DIWALI DAY

Delhi logs most polluted Diwali in 5 years, little respite day after

PM 2.5 reading at one station over 83 times the national 24-hour safe limit

Sophiya Mathew
New Delhi, November 9

DELHI RECORDED its worst Diwali-day air since 2021, with the average Air Quality Index (AQI) touching 376 Sunday, according to data maintained by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). This was higher than the corresponding Diwali-day readings in the past four years: 345 in 2025, 328 in 2024, 218 in 2023 and 312 in 2022.

The pollution build-up continued into Monday, with the city's average AQI showing 370 at 9.05 am, with eight monitoring stations recording readings above 400, in the 'Severe' category.

Real-time station data from the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) showed that the highest hourly PM 2.5 (fine particulate matter) reading on Sunday was recorded at Jahangirpuri: 4,985 µg/m³ between 7 pm and 8 pm — over 83 times the national 24-hour safe limit of 60 µg/m³ and more than 330 times the WHO's 24-hour guideline of 15 µg/m³.

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



A smoggy Monday morning in Delhi's Bhajanpura area. PRAVEEN KHANNA

RELATED REPORTS, PAGE 4

EXPLAINED

Challenges remain

With the national capital's AQI the worst since 2021 on Diwali day, it underlines the immense challenges that authorities face: firecracker restrictions were widely violated, with at least 430 FIRs registered in 10 police districts. Meanwhile, a 10-year-old boy lost his life after a firecracker burst in his hands.

7-fold rise in Punjab farm fires on Diwali, Delhi minister claims plot

Anju Agnihotri Chaba, Kanchan Vasdev & Devansh Mittal
Jalandhar, Chandigarh, New Delhi, November 9

PUNJAB'S EFFORTS to curb paddy stubble burning suffered a major setback on Diwali day, with the state recording 1,152 active farm fire events Sunday — the highest single-day spike of the ongoing season.

The farm fires detected on November 8 marked a seven-fold rise over the 163 recorded on November 7. The number was also almost double the previous highest single-day count of 584 this season, on November 3.

The Diwali cases pushed the cumulative count of farm fires in Punjab to 4,459 on November 8, against 3,622 on the corresponding date in 2025 — an increase of 23.1 per cent.

The tally, however, remained below the 6,029 recorded on the same date in 2024.

The numbers are based on district-wise satellite data for active fire events during the kharif paddy season, with the

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

SHUBHAM SAINI TRG (8368104529)

Most polluted Diwali

Other key stations such as Anand Vihar saw PM10 (particulate matter) peak at 3,450 µg/m³ during midnight, and RK Puram saw a similarly high at 1,698 µg by 5 am Monday. PM2.5 peaked at Patparganj at 2,597 µg/m³ by 1 am, Monday, whereas at Nehru Nagar it was 2,808 µg/m³ at 3 am, Monday.

On the CPCB's network, the highest uncapped average PM2.5 reading reported Sunday was 998.90 µg/m³ at the North Campus (Delhi University) AQI station.

The increase was not limited to particulate matter. Hourly averages of several gaseous pollutants such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide, too, rose during the evening and night, indicating a broader rise in combustion-related emissions, although these readings alone cannot establish how much came from fireworks alone.

According to the Decision Support System (DSS) for Delhi, farm fires remained a relatively minor contributor to Delhi's pollution despite a sharp uptick in stubble-burning incidents in neighbouring Punjab. The DSS estimated their contribution at 3.5% on Sunday, declining to roughly 2.9% by Monday. In contrast, the transport sector remained the largest contributor, accounting for 19 per cent of the city's pollution on Sunday.

The DSS, developed by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), is a modelling tool used for identifying pollution sources and air quality forecasts. It excludes fireworks from its emissions counts.

Despite restrictions on the sale and use of conventional firecrackers in Delhi, and a stipulated 10 pm deadline for bursting permitted green crackers, violations continued across the capital, with residents seen bursting firecrackers well past midnight.

At least 430 FIRs were registered across 10 police districts for flouting the restrictions.

Police officers told *The Indian Express* that personnel had taken action at several locations wherever violations came to their notice, including attempting to stop people from bursting crackers and counselling residents about the restrictions in place.

Delhi's two main government hospitals, meanwhile, treated over 170 Diwali-related burn injuries, most of them caused by firecrackers. In a separate case, a 10-year-old boy died after a firecracker burst in his hands in Outer Delhi's Narela area, the police said.

Although Monday's average AQI moved to the 'Very Poor' category at 344, it was the third-lowest post-Diwali AQI recorded since 2015. Historically, the post-Diwali average AQI has never been lower than the AQI recorded on Diwali day, except once, during the pandemic year of 2022. The improvement can be attributed to an increase in wind speed, with southwesterly winds reaching up to 15 kmph, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD).

This Diwali also saw higher-than-seasonal temperatures, the IMD said. The maximum temperature across Delhi ranged between 29 and 31 degrees Celsius, up to three degrees above normal. Warmer surface temperatures, along with improved wind speeds, aid the dispersion of pollutants and reduce the likelihood of them getting trapped near the surface.

Delhi Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa said the shifts for mechanised road-sweeping machines (MRSM) have been increased in the aftermath of the pollution spike. "More MRSM machines will also be deployed in the coming days. All water sprinklers that are taking rounds in different key localities ... their shifts have been

SHAURYA SABHARWAL (2565104529)

Climate meet begins, report says 2026 among warmest years ever

Amitabh Sinha
New Delhi, November 9



Outside the COP31 venue in Antalya, Turkiye, Monday. AP

THE ANNUAL year-ending climate meeting opened in the Turkish city of Antalya on Monday with another sobering reminder from the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) about the steadily worsening climate situation. In its latest State of the Climate Report, released on the opening day of COP31 climate meeting, the WMO said the year 2026 could end up as one of the warmest ever, almost certainly as among the top four warmest years.

The average global temperature between January and September this year was 1.47 degree Celsius higher than pre-industrial times (the average of 1850-1900 period), the WMO report said. It is higher than the full-year averages in 2025 and 2023, and only slightly lower than 2024 which remains the warmest year on record.

The remaining months are unlikely to bring down the average so far this year, considering the prevailing El Nino conditions. Thus, it is very likely that 2026 ends up as the second warmest year after 2024.

The State of the Climate Report, an annual publication from the WMO which is considered one of the most authoritative assessments of global climate change, also revealed that greenhouse gas emissions were still going up, and had reached new record levels in 2025. Measurements from benchmark monitoring stations indicate a continued increase in 2026 as well.

Even after three decades of global discussions, international legal arrangements, and allocation of resources, the world has not even begun reducing its emissions.

For the climate negotiators assembled in Antalya for the two-week conference, this is no new information. But the negotiators are now more helpless than ever in changing the situation in any significant manner in the short term at least.

COP31 is one of the most low-key climate conferences in years. No major decisions or outcomes are expected. Most of the discussions are likely to be focused on finding ways to speed up the implementation of climate actions that have been promised. But that too runs into a familiar stalemate — the need for more money. The recent case of Nepal, which has been promised US$ 20 million from the Loss and Damage Fund against a requirement of at least US$ 2 billion for recovery and reconstruction following the devastating flash floods in August, shows the huge gap that exists between what is required to be done, and what the world as a whole is able to come up with to meet the challenge.

A similar gap exists in climate action as well. The world has to collectively reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 43 per cent from 2019 levels by 2030 to give itself the slimmest chance of keeping global temperature rise within 1.5 degree Celsius of pre-industrial times. But at the current rate of climate action, even a 2 per cent reduction seems unlikely. As the latest State of the Climate Report points out, the emissions have not even begun to reduce.

That's the reason two reports by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) earlier this year concluded that the 1.5 degree Celsius target had now gone firmly out of reach. This was the first such assessment by any scientific assessment. Until now, all climate assessments always used to offer a narrow window of opportunity, however unrealistic, of meeting the 1.5 degree Celsius target set by the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Simon Stiell, executive secretary of UN Climate Change, said COP31 needed to "supercharge" the global efforts to tackle climate change, but was also realistic in what it could deliver.

"No COP is a silver bullet. No single conference can bridge the chasm between science and reality. We must deal with the world as it is, not as we might wish it to be. Every recent COP has delivered strides forward. This one must too," he said.

Like all previous COP hosts, Turkiye has decided to launch a few voluntary initiatives to create a momentum for greater climate action, the most important of which is seeking to increase the share of electricity in global energy consumption to at least 30 per cent by 2035 from the current 20 per cent. It is not very evident but even today electricity serves only a small fraction of the world's energy needs. Most of the energy consumption happens in non-electric forms, like oil and gas.

But newer and cleaner sources of electricity, like solar, wind or nuclear, can be consumed only in the form of electricity. That means all the processes that currently use oil or gas or other non-electric forms of energy due to a variety of reasons need to get electrified. Turkiye has proposed a global coalition to make efforts to achieve at least 30 per cent electrification. But this is a voluntary initiative that countries can choose to join if they wish to. This is not a decision that will come out of the negotiated COP process.

SHAUN/ASST/TRG/(3010/2026)

A case for Nepal: suing major carbon emitters for floods



Manoj Kumar Sinha

V-C of Dharmasashtra National Law University, and president of Indian Society of International Law (ISIL)



Anwar Sadat

Associate Professor in international environmental law at ISIL

The catastrophic floods in Nepal which resulted in the deaths of thousands of people in August 2026, is overwhelmingly attributed to climate change. This is yet another worst-case climate change scenario from South Asia, after the floods in Pakistan in 2022.

A debate that has not drawn much attention so far in this part of the world is that there is scope to explore and establish the flood victims as victims of climate wrongs. The case for the Nepalese people needs to be analysed from the prism of climate litigations used by plaintiffs in many jurisdictions of Europe and the U.S. in the last two decades.

These plaintiffs, who were exposed to climate-related risks, have brought claims against state and private corporations on the ground of serious risks to life, well-being, health, property, privacy and disruption of family life. Though the plaintiffs have not turned out to be winners in these proceedings every time, the challenge itself has been eye-opening.

Legal reasoning

In a strict legal sense, it is extremely difficult to establish causation between a defendant's (such as a state or private corporation living miles away) failure to take appropriate measures restricting the emission of Greenhouse Gases (GHG) and the flood victims in those districts of Nepal bordering Tibet.

While climate wrongs harm society, they do not harm specific individuals or a group of individuals in a sufficiently direct and proximate way. The logic that is widely accepted now is that the failure to take appropriate measures by an entity makes an incremental contribution to global cumulative GHGs, which diffuse and leave global and lingering effects on the likelihood of adverse physical events. The impact of such events is itself dependent on extraneous factors such as exposure, vulnerability and resilience.

While climate wrongs harm society, they do not harm individuals in a sufficiently direct and proximate way

The identification of the victims exposed to risks in contrast to the general population is needed to describe that specific group as victims of climate change. This gives them the standing to sue – to justify their invocation of individual or group rights and consider claims for compensation.

The people living in the Tibet-Nepal border area, specifically those living in the Trishuli and Bhote Koshi river basins area of Nepal, have been exposed to Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) over the last three decades. Scholarship focusing on the Tibetan Autonomous Region is of the view that since 2010 both the area and the number of glaciers is retreating at a faster rate than before. Climate scientists predict that the mountain glaciers will lose most of their volume by the end of the 21st century, placing alpine ecosystems and human population at risk. These climate-linked physical events, which were present prior to the flood, could possibly fulfil the normative threshold of the imminence of a catastrophe.

Holding emitters accountable

The case that merits attention in this context is the *Lliyua vs RWE* case which established that it is possible to causally link the GHG emissions of one large emitter to a concrete risk of life and property in a country that is 5,000 miles away. In the case, Lliyua, a Peruvian national, sued RWE (a German energy provider company headquartered in Germany) under a German private nuisance law on the ground that the company's past and present coal-fired power generation is responsible for huge quantities of CO_2, which reduced the stability of glaciers near his home.

In an important judgment, the Higher Court of Appeal in Hamm on May 28, 2025 ruled that RWE can be held legally responsible in principle, though the specific claim was dismissed due to inadequate proof of an imminent risk. The court accepted that past individual climate harms can proportionally contribute to climate risks and it also upheld that German civil law can apply to transboundary climate harms. This, in effect, amounts to saying that long distance and global scale do not automatically shield a corporation from liability.

In *Milieudefensie et al vs Royal Dutch Shell* (November, 2024), the Dutch Court of appeal confirmed under Dutch tort law principles that companies which contribute significantly to climate change and have it within their power to contribute to combating it, have an obligation, as per the general duty of care under Dutch law and human rights standards, to limit GHG emissions to counter climate change.

The climate lawsuit brought by four Indonesian islanders against Holcim, a Swiss building material giant, in the Swiss Cantonal Court of Zug (*Asmania vs Holcim*) is also quite relevant. Here, the plaintiffs sought a reduction of GHGs as well as compensation for present and future damages against Holcim's excessive CO_2 emissions.

Although there is no rule of binding precedent, it is still advisable for the flood victims of Nepal to use the channel of litigations against major GHG emitters, as there is growing judicial awareness of the duties owed by large emitters in responding to the threat of climate change.

SHAURYA SSIL (8368164529)

Hasina seeks new passport; Dhaka firm on extradition

London-based law firm seeks new documents for the ousted leader; Acting Foreign Minister of Bangladesh calls Hasina a 'terrorist', says India should hand her over under the extradition treaty

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Hours after a legal team representing deposed Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina sought a new passport for her, the Government of Bangladesh asserted on Monday that Ms. Hasina can return to Bangladesh through an "acceptable prisoner exchange" programme under the India-Bangladesh extradition treaty.

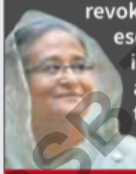
A source in Dhaka told *The Hindu* that Ms. Hasina has requested the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through a London-based legal firm, for a new passport and a National Identity Card.

The official said the Ministry is verifying the letter and will take a decision after internal consultations.

Document push

Bangladeshi officials were verifying a request for a fresh passport and a National Identity Card for the former PM

Sheikh Hasina had announced in August this year that she may return to her country in December despite facing serious legal challenges



Hasina's passport was revoked after she escaped to India in August 2024 after an uprising that toppled her government

A passport will be needed in case India has to consider Hasina's extradition to Bangladesh

Bangladesh will seek the return of Sheikh Hasina through an acceptable prisoner exchange process

HUMAYUN KABIR, Acting Foreign Minister

Ms. Hasina's passport was revoked after she escaped to India in August 2024 after an uprising toppled her government.

She had announced in a press conference in August this year that she may return to her country in December despite facing serious legal challenges.

Speaking to the media in Dhaka, the country's Acting Foreign Minister Humayun Kabir described Ms. Hasina as a "terrorist" who had fled to India after committing crimes.

"Bangladesh will not issue a passport to any terrorist; there is no provision for such an action. Bangladesh will seek the return of Sheikh Hasina through an acceptable prisoner exchange process," Mr. Kabir said, adding that India should hand over Ms. Hasina under the extradition treaty.

The External Affairs Ministry is yet to respond to Mr. Kabir's remarks, but a source familiar with the Indian stance on the matter told *The Hindu* that the Bangladeshi position of not issuing a passport to Ms. Hasina will further complicate the matter, as a passport will be needed if India were to consider her extradition.

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CHAURASIA & SB (9368104529)

Hasina seeks passport, Dhaka wants extradition

The Acting Foreign Minister of Bangladesh added that Ms. Hasina and several of her colleagues from her Awami League party are responsible for violent crimes and financial fraud, and need to be brought to justice.

The Awami League confirmed that she has formally requested the Bangladesh High Commission in New Delhi to issue her a new passport and identity card.

The Bangladeshi official, who spoke to *The Hindu*, said over the phone, "We have received an email from Matrix Chambers, a law firm in London, seeking a new passport for Sheikh Hasina. We are currently examining the contents of the letter and will take an appropriate step after internal consultation."

Bangladesh High Commission press secretary Md. Saidur Rahman said the Bangladesh authorities are "not sure if the request is genuine". "There is no way for us to verify whether the request was actually made on behalf of Sheikh Hasina, as the email sent by the law firm did not include any authorisation letter or supporting documents proving that the firm was authorised by her to make such a request," he said.

SHAURYA SSB (IRG/18561/4529)

Extradition requests

India had earlier acknowledged receiving Bangladesh's extradition requests for Ms. Hasina but has not announced any decision on handing her over. The External Affairs Ministry had said the requests are being examined as part of its established processes.

A number of Awami League leaders, who fled to other countries after the uprising, have said on social media that preparations were underway for Ms. Hasina's return to her home country. *(With PTI inputs)*

Trilateral meet with Putin, Xi likely next week, says Trump; Ukraine, Iran set to be on agenda

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

U.S. President Donald Trump has said he will likely meet Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin in a rare trilateral leaders' meeting on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) gathering in Shenzhen next week.

Beijing said on Monday it was "in communication with relevant parties" over the meeting, not ruling out the possibility as leaders gather for the APEC summit in the southern Chinese city on November 18 and 19. Mr. Trump on Sunday indicated to presspersons that a deal on the Russia-Ukraine war, the Iran issue, and nuclear arms control would be on the agenda. "One of the meetings will be with President Putin and President Xi, and that will be interesting. We are talking a lot of things, including denuclearisation... We are trying to end the war in Iran," Mr. Trump was quoted as saying. Mr. Trump and Mr. Xi will meet bilaterally next week for the third time this year, following the U.S. President's visit to Beijing in May and the Chinese President travelling to Washington in September.

They will meet once again at the end of the year at the G20 in Miami, marking an unusual four meetings in a year.



Xi Jinping and Donald Trump will meet for the third time this year during the APEC meet in China next week. FILE PHOTO

Asked about his remarks, China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun on Monday did not rule out the prospect of a meeting, saying that China was in communication with relevant parties regarding the meeting between the Chinese, Russian and U.S. Presidents.

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SHAURYA SSB TRG (9681045291)

Meeting with Putin, Xi likely next week: Trump

Both countries have sought to inject more stability in relations and pursue what they call "a constructive relationship of strategic stability", even as they have exchanged blows on issues including trade tariffs, restrictions on semiconductors, rare earths and Taiwan.

Chinese analysts have sought to play down the significance of a possible trilateral summit, just as they also played down Mr. Trump's remarks in Beijing earlier this year of a "G2".

Russia was "most enthusiastic" among the three, Su Liuqiang, a scholar at the Centre for American Studies at the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies, said in an interview with state media, adding that an informal exchange was likelier than a more structured, formal trilateral summit.

"On the one hand, there is substantial political resistance in the U.S. Anti-Russia sentiment remains strong in both the U.S. and among its European allies, with opposition to negotiating with Moscow while bypassing Ukraine and Europe. On the other hand, the three countries have differing priorities. Russia's core concern is negotiations on a ceasefire in Ukraine, the U.S. is interested in the Russia-Ukraine conflict and non-proliferation, China supports peace talks but must also balance its relations with the U.S., Russia, Europe and Ukraine. In this context, a low-profile trilateral meeting is the more realistic option," he said, adding that practical outcomes could emphasise stabilising global energy supplies.

While China preferred "multilateralism" over ideas such as the G2 or a U.S.-China-Russia triumvirate, Mr. Su said a meeting would still be significant in suggesting that while structural competition between big powers would still continue to define global geopolitics, there was increasing interest in "managing that competition and preventing it from escalating or spinning out of control".

SHAURYA SSB TPG (6308104629)

Nvidia initiates probe into its CEO amid reports China spied on him

Tech firm opens inquiry into reports that Jensen Huang was 'the target of a foreign intelligence effort'; U.S. officials believe the woman Huang acknowledged having affair with was spying for China; Beijing dismisses claims as a smear campaign

Agence France-Presse
NEW YORK

AI chip behemoth Nvidia was plunged into turmoil on Monday after its CEO Jensen Huang acknowledged having an affair, with reports saying U.S. officials believe the woman was spying for China.

Beijing denied the claim but Nvidia's board opened an inquiry into the reports that Mr. Huang was "the target of a foreign intelligence effort."

Late last month, *The New York Times* reported that U.S. intelligence officials determined that Alice Huang, a Chinese executive linked to a Singapore-based data centre company, Megaspeed, had been funnelling information to Beijing. The executive, also known as Huang Le, developed a close relationship with the Nvidia chief, the *Times* said.



Courting controversy: Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang seen with Alice Huang, a Chinese executive, in Taiwan, in this 2024 photo. REUTERS

Nvidia's board announced on Sunday that it had opened a probe "in light of recent reporting that company's chief executive and co-founder has been the target of a foreign intelligence effort."

Jensen Huang is a huge figure in the AI revolution and a close informal adviser to U.S. President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly spoken out against regulating the industry so as not to let China gain the upper hand in the AI race.

"I was unfaithful to my wife," Mr. Huang said in a message to company employees. "My actions hurt her and our children. There is no excuse for what I did. I am deeply sorry."

AI insights

The *Times* said Alice Huang's relationship with the Nvidia chief could have given her insights into Mr. Trump's thinking around AI.

Mr. Trump was briefed on the findings about Mr. Huang's relationship roughly a year ago and chose not to act on the information, the *Times* said.

China rejected the spying allegations, with Foreign Ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun telling a regular briefing on Monday that "the narrative of a so-called Chinese spy is entirely baseless vilification and smearing."

The issue of AI is likely to arise during Mr. Trump's planned talks with President Xi Jinping later this month at a summit in China.

Nvidia shares dropped roughly 5% in pre-market trading early Monday.

Iran war 'highly unlikely' to resume if talks progress: U.S.

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump cast doubt on renewed fighting with Iran, telling CNN it was "highly unlikely," ahead of a meeting with mediator Qatar's Prime Minister on Monday.

Mr. Trump has threatened to resume strikes in recent weeks, with U.S. media reports suggesting that hostilities could restart after last Tuesday's midterm elections.

The President told CNN on Sunday that renewed fighting was "highly unlikely," but warned that his decision "depends on whether or not they sign a very strong agreement."

"I would if necessary, but we hit them really hard. I hit them so hard. You don't know how hard I hit them," he said.



Donald Trump

Mr. Trump is scheduled to meet Qatar's Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani at the White House on Monday. The meeting will be Mr. Trump's first with a foreign leader since a massive midterm loss that saw his Republican Party lose control of Congress.

Political fallout

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi suggested on Sunday that peace talks had been paused while the political fallout of the vote was being assessed. "For the past few days, there has been no travel (by mediators), and the reason for this is the shock that the election results in the U.S. have caused to everyone," Mr. Araghchi said.

"We now have to see how long it will take for them to digest these results, in order to determine how we are going to move forward," he added.

Mr. Trump has acknowledged that the war with Iran was at least partially responsible for the Republicans' defeat.

In his CNN interview, Mr. Trump once again suggested that the economic pressure Iran is under will force its leaders into accepting the Washington's terms.

SHURYA SSB TRG (8368104859)