



'IT WILL HAUNT ME FOREVER,' SAYS RAMI MALEK AFTER NICOLE KIDMAN'S UNINTENTIONAL SNUB AT THE GLOBES



QUEEN ELIZABETH HANDS OVER TWO 'PATRON' ROLES HELD BY HER FOR DECADES TO DUCHESS MEGHAN

# As talks with Dems collapse, Trump warns of emergency

Prez Storms Out Of Meeting On Shutdown, Mexico Wall

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Washington: The United States is heading towards declaration of a national emergency that will draw its military into a domestic political wrangle after talks between the ruling executive and the opposition Democratic leadership broke down over funding a southern border wall, taking an already difficult impasse into gridlock territory.

President Trump walked out of a White House meeting with Democratic leaders Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi on Wednesday after they refused to meet his demands for \$5.7 billion to build a section of a border wall, saying they will not negotiate on the matter until he agrees to end the partial shutdown of the government by accepting their funding on everything except the wall. "Just left a meeting with Chuck and Nancy, a total waste of time. I asked what is going to happen in 30 days if I quickly open things up, are you going to approve Border Security which includes a Wall or Steel Barrier? Nancy said, NO. I said bye-bye, nothing else works!" he tweeted soon after talks on resolving the twin issue of the wall and the shutdown collapsed in acrimony.

Several accounts based on leaks by those present at the meetings said Trump



TRUMP HEADS TO BORDER: US President Trump is headed to the US-Mexico border where he is likely to meet Border Patrol officials who are being forced to work without pay because of the funding impasse

Will decide on 2020 prez run soon, says Kamala Harris

Kamala Harris, the first Indian-origin US Senator, has said she will soon decide on her 2020 presidential bid and believes that the American people are ready for a woman of colour to hold the highest office in the country. "I will make my decision soon, not at this very moment," she said in an interview. Harris added that she was, however, definitely certain on one point that the US is "absolutely" ready for a woman of colour to be president. "I'm not saying that about myself, but I am saying that about the capacity of the American public," she said.

had lost his cool and banged the table before storming out, but the President denied there was any temper tantrum, saying because he knew the media would make up such a story "after Nancy said no to proper Border Security, I politely said bye-bye and left, no slamming!"

Trump won't reply to Mueller queries any more: Lawyer

Lawyers for US President Trump have told special counsel Robert Mueller that he will not answer any more questions in the probe of Russia's meddling in the 2016 election, Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani said on Thursday. Trump submitted written answers to questions from Mueller in November. Giuliani said Mueller raised the possibility of follow-up questions but the president's outside legal team told him that Trump would not respond. "They could try to subpoena him if they want. But they know we could fight that like hell," he said.

The deadlock, with or without the table slamming, makes it almost certain that the President will use provisions of a national emergency declaration to press ahead with

building the southern wall or steel barrier as he calls it now. Trump is scheduled to visit the city of McAllen in Texas, in a district which abuts the Mexican border. Trump has painted a terrifying picture of illegal immigrants pouring into the US and indulging in wanton crime, including rapes and murders, even though official figures and studies show that such traffic is at an all time low and immigrants commit less crime than native-born Americans.

Both Trump and his Republican cohorts and the opposition Democrats believe they have painted the other side into a corner amid signs the government shutdown, which will enter a record 21st day on Friday, could extend into next week. Some 800,000 workers, including in such crucial departments as Transportation Security Administration and Internal Revenue Service, will go without a paycheck on Friday, the bi-weekly payday.

Prospects of the president declaring a national emergency, which will allow him to draft the military and its budget to build the wall, is increasing by the hour as Democrats refuse to budge on the matter. Trump told reporters he "may go that route" if he was unable to work out a deal with Democrat, saying, "I have the absolute right to do national emergency if I want. My threshold will be if I can't make a deal with people that are unreasonable." The National Emergency will not involve suspension of civil liberties as it happened in India, but many critics say it is a slippery slope, and once the military is drawn into a political spat, the consequences are unpredictable.

Full report on www.toi.in

Pak forex stash won't support even 2 mths of imports: Report

Omer Farooq Khan | TNN

Islamabad: Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves are worth less than two months of goods and services imports, a report by Moody's said, indicating the failure of the Imran Khan government to resolve the ongoing economic crisis by borrowing from allies.

The country does not have enough foreign exchange reserves to pay its public and private external debt due over this year, the Moody's report revealed. "Foreign exchange reserves are low, and gross borrowing requirements are large in Pakistan and Sri Lanka, threatening the ability of these governments to refinance debt and fund deficits affordably," Moody's Investors Service said. The forex crunch will make Pakistan vulnerable on the external front and push it again to a default-like situation that it had averted in recent months with Saudi Arabia's help. Pakistan's foreign reserves have declined due to persistent current account deficit.

Full report on www.toi.in

Taliban kill 30 Af troopers amid peace efforts

Kabul: The Taliban launched a series of attacks on security checkpoints in four Afghan provinces early on Thursday, killing 32 members of the security forces and pro-government militias, provincial officials said.

The latest Taliban attacks came in the northern provinces of Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar, and Badghis in the west. Ahmad Fahim Qarluq, the chief of the Qala-e-Zal district in Kunduz, said a large number of Taliban attacked security checkpoints in the early hours, killing 10 soldiers and police and wounding 11. Qarluq said 25 Taliban fighters were killed.

In neighbouring Baghlan and Takhar provinces, the Taliban killed 16 members of pro-government militias in attacks on outposts, officials said. They also said the Taliban suffered heavy casualties. To the west, in Badghis province, a spokesman for the governor said six members of the security forces were killed. A Taliban spokesman claimed responsibility for the attacks.

China takes India envoy on trip to Uighur camps

New Delhi: Indian envoy in Beijing was among a select group of diplomats to be taken, in a first, by China to the Xinjiang province where many ethnic Uighurs and other Muslim minorities have been interned in re-education camps apparently meant to de-radicalise them. Chinese officials here said the visit was meant to familiarise senior diplomats, including the Pakistan envoy, with social and economic progress in the province.

In all, 12 envoys, mostly from Muslim majority nations, travelled to Xinjiang's capital Urumqi and the cities of Kashgar and Hotan late last month. Xinjiang's regional government invited diplomatic envoys as well as representatives of envoys from Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Afghanistan, Thailand, and Kuwait, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. The envoys visited markets, mosques, factories, as well as vocational education and training centres.

LA judge dismisses Judd's claim against Weinstein

Los Angeles: A federal judge in Los Angeles on Wednesday dismissed actress Ashley Judd's sexual harassment claim against movie producer Harvey Weinstein but said she could proceed with a defamation claim against him.

Judd had accused Weinstein of defaming her in 1998 after she refused what she said were his sexual advances a year earlier. In her lawsuit, filed in April 2018, the actress accused Weinstein of smearing her reputation by discouraging director Peter Jackson from casting her in his blockbuster movie franchise "The Lord of the Rings".

Judd, one of the first women in October 2017 to accuse Weinstein of sexual misconduct, had accused the Hollywood movie mogul of sexual harassment in violation of a California law barring such conduct by a person in a "business, service or professional relationship" with another.

In a footnote to his ruling, US District Judge Philip Gutierrez said he was not determining whether Judd was sexually harassed by Weinstein "in the colloquial sense of the term". But Gutierrez said Judd's relationship as an actress with the film producer was not covered under



SETBACK: Ashley Judd

the California statute she had sued under, nor under a 2019 amendment.

"We have said from the beginning that this claim was unjustified, and we are pleased that the court saw it as we did. We believe that we will ultimately prevail on her remaining claims," Weinstein's lawyer, Phyllis Kupferstein, said.

Judd's attorney, Theodore J. Broutris Jr, said this ruling does not end her complaint. "Nothing about today's ruling changes that Ms. Judd's case is moving forward on multiple claims," Broutris said. "We look forward to pursuing the three claims for relief that the court has already ruled can move forward," he said. Weinstein is to stand trial in May in New York on five charges, including rape, involving two other women.

Nepal woman, 2 kids die in 'menstrual hut'

Kathmandu: A woman and her two sons suffocated to death in Nepal after she was forced to sleep in a windowless shed during her period, police said on Thursday, the latest victims of an age-old Hindu practice that was banned more than a decade ago.

Amba Bohara, 35, and her sons, aged 12 and nine, had lit a fire on Tuesday night to keep warm in the freezing mud and stone hut, but were discovered dead the next morning by her father-in-law in western Nepal's Bajura district, police said.

The practice of "chhaupadi" banishes menstruating girls and women to animal sheds or huts for the duration of their period, when they are thought to be impure. "They died of suffocation because there was no ventilation and they had made the chamber airtight to beat the cold," police official Uddhav Singh Bhat said.

The ancient tradition was outlawed in 2005, yet it

The practice of 'chhaupadi' banishes menstruating women to animal sheds or huts during their period, when they are thought to be 'impure'

remains prevalent in Nepal's remote west. The monthly exclusion leaves women at risk of snake bites, attacks by wild animals and rape.

Some communities fear misfortune, such as a natural disaster, if menstruating women and girls are not sent away.

They are barred from touching a range of items — including milk, religious idols and cattle — and must eat frugally.

Human rights activists say the government's efforts to end the practice have been inadequate and urged tighter monitoring.

Gaga to shun R Kelly over 'misconduct'

Los Angeles: Lady Gaga has vowed to remove a duet she recorded with R&B singer R. Kelly from streaming services and never collaborate with him again.

Her comments, in a lengthy Instagram post, followed a new TV documentary in which multiple women accuse Kelly of sexual misconduct, sometimes with minors. Kelly, 52, singer and record producer best known for hit song 'I Believe I Can Fly', has repeatedly denied accusations in recent years of abuse, including those made in the new documentary.

Gaga said she believed the women and found the documentary "absolutely horrifying". "I stand behind these women 1000 percent, believe them, and know they are suffering and in pain, and feel strongly that their voices should be heard and taken seriously," she said in her post. Gaga in 2013 released a duet with Kelly called 'Do What U Want (With My Body)'.

Greece probes 'terror' envelopes sent from India

Athens: Envelopes mailed from India to a dozen Greek universities prompted an anti-terrorism investigation on Thursday after tests found an industrial irritant that triggered an allergic reaction in members of the staff.

The envelopes were addressed to 12 university rectors across Greece, from its islands to the mainland and capital Athens, and some had a printed note of "Islamist content" inside, written in English, a police official said, without elaborating.

The General Secretariat for Civil Protection said an irritant, used in the production of adhesives and printing ink, was likely deliberately added to the envelopes. Police sources said the anti-terrorism unit of police was conducting an inquiry.

Seven people reported a respiratory reaction after coming into contact with an envelope addressed to the rector of the University of the Aegean on the island of Lesbos. Some letters were intercepted before reaching the recipients.

# Bezos split could reshape wealth ranking, make wife richest woman

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Quoting sources with direct knowledge, tabloid website TMZ reported that the division of assets between Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and his wife MacKenzie will be incredibly complicated. "Aside from cold hard cash, the former couple is hardcore baronial — they own 400,000 acres of property, making them two of the biggest landholders in the country," TMZ said. The Bezos have four children.

"A divorce could reshape the global wealth ranking. If the couple split their fortune

Twice-divorced Trump wishes Bezos luck

US President Trump wished Amazon founder Jeff Bezos luck in his divorce from his wife MacKenzie, predicting the proceedings will be "a beauty". "I wish him luck," the twice-divorced Trump said as he departed for a trip to the US border with Mexico. "It's going to be a beauty."

equally, it could leave MacKenzie, 48, with \$69 billion, making her the world's richest woman. It could also make Microsoft Corp co-founder Bill Gates, currently worth \$92.5 billion, the planet's richest person once again. Bezos eclipsed Gates in October 2017, "reported Bloomberg.

Lauren Sanchez, whom Bezos is reportedly dating, did small parts in Hollywood hits like 'The Longest Yard', 'The Day After Tomorrow' and 'Fight Club'. "Sanchez and Hollywood talent agent

## TOP 10 COSTLIEST DIVORCE SETTLEMENTS

Jeff Bezos and wife MacKenzie are divorcing. Jeff, 54, is worth \$137 billion and if the couple split their fortune equally, it could leave 48-year-old MacKenzie with \$69 billion, making her the world's richest woman. Here's a list of the world's most-expensive divorces:

1 ALEC WILDENSTEIN AND JOCELYN WILDENSTEIN French-American businessman and art dealer Alec Wildenstein divorced his wife of 21 years Jocelyn Wildenstein in 1999. Jocelyn got \$2.5 billion and \$100 million for each of the next 13 years, totalling to a \$3.8 billion

2 RUPERT MURDOCH AND ANNA TORV Media mogul Rupert Murdoch and journalist Anna Maria Torv were married for 31 years. They separated in 1998, with Anna reported to have walked away with \$1.7 billion

3 BERNIE ECCLESTONE AND SLAVICA RADIC Formula One executive Bernie Ecclestone divorced Croatian model Slavica Radic in 2009, a settlement estimated at \$1.2 billion

4 STEVE AND ELAINE WYNN Las Vegas casino moguls Steve and Elaine Wynn were married to each other twice, from 1963 to 1986 and from 1991 to 2010. Their second divorce settlement is estimated to have cost Steve \$1 billion

6 ADNAN KHASHOGGI AND SORAYA KHASHOGGI Saudi Arabian arms dealer Adnan Khashoggi in 1961 married a British woman named Sandra Daly, who converted to Islam and changed her name to Soraya. They divorced in 1974 and the settlement totalled \$874 million — equivalent to over \$2 billion today

7 DMITRY RYBOLOVLEV AND ELENA RYBOLOVLEV Russian oligarch Dmitry Rybolovlev was accused of "serial infidelity" by wife Elena Rybolovleva. She filed for divorce and the courts initially awarded Elena a whopping \$4.5 billion in the settlement in 2014, but after a 6-year legal battle, she walked away with \$604 million

9 MEL GIBSON AND ROBYN MOORE Mel Gibson and Robyn Moore initially split after 26 years of marriage but did not divorce until five years after that. The settlement in 2009 totalled half of Mel's networth at the time

10 BOB JOHNSON AND SHEILA CRUMP JOHNSON Bob Johnson and Sheila Johnson, married in 1969, cofounded a television network and became the first African-American billionaires. Sheila walked away with \$400 million after their 2002 divorce

Patrick Whitesell wed in 2005 and have two young children. She also has a teenage son from her first marriage to former NFL star Tony Gonzalez," wrote celebrity

news website pagesix.com. Whitesell's clients include megastars like Matt Damon, Christian Bale, Kevin Costner and Hugh Jackman. "Last year in September,

Bezos and MacKenzie were spotted celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary at LIV nightclub in Miami," reported pagesix.com. (With inputs from websites)

# B'desh jails man for morphing Hasina, Manmohan pics

Dhaka: A 35-year-old Bangladeshi man has been sentenced to seven years in prison for circulating photoshopped images of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and other politicians, including former Indian PM Manmohan Singh, amid criticism that the government is using tough internet laws to silence dissent.

Monir Hossain from Tangail was jailed by Bangladesh Cyber Tribunal judge Mohammad As-Shams Joglu Hossain on Wednesday. Mo-

Pak cyberstalker gets 24 years in jail

A anti-terrorism court in Pakistan has sentenced a cyberstalker to 24 years in jail for blackmailing 200 lady doctors and nurses through their social media accounts — the maximum punishment awarded to a convict in the offence related to social media crimes in the country's history. In addition to this, Abdul Wahab, a resident of Punjab's Layyah district, was slapped with a fine of Rs 7 lakh. The convict introduced himself as an official of the "military intelligence (MI)" and extorted money from them by threatening them that he would upload their objectionable pictures on their Facebook accounts.

nir had been on bail and appeared in court for the verdict, bdnews24.com reported.

Alamgir Hossain and Subrata Shil — two others accused in the case started un-

der the the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act — were acquitted as charges against them were not proved, the report said.

Monir used to run 'Monir Telecom' shop at Tangail's Nagarpur. He had sent doctored images of Hasina, late president Zillur Rahman and Manmohan Singh to cell-phones of users in 2013, said the verdict. Sattaria Police arrested Alamgir after finding out that he was showing around the vulgar "photosh-

opped images" on his phone. Alamgir was arrested and told police that he got the images from Monir Telecom.

Rights groups have criticised the government for using the ICT laws to silence criticism. The ICTs have lashed out at the government for cracking down on free speech and an increasingly authoritarian rule. Some the recent strengthening of defamation laws with a new Digital Security Act has spread a climate of fear.

## AROUND THE WORLD



ELVIS EXPRESS: Elvis Presley may have 'left the building' four decades ago, but his spirit was alive and well at Sydney's station on Thursday, as hundreds of fans boarded trains to an outback festival celebrating their idol. The Elvis Express and Blue Suede Express trains left Sydney on Thursday morning for the annual Parkes Elvis festival 365km away. Dressed in colourful sequined jumpsuits, blue suede shoes and having used copious amounts of hairspray, lookalikes sang and danced to hits belted out by tribute artists. "He was just a gorgeous guy and I just loved all the music and his love songs," one fan said

Poser for Trudeau: Will you push Trump off cliff for a beer?

Canadian PM Justin Trudeau fielded an unusual question Wednesday: would he accept a beer in exchange for pushing Donald Trump off a cliff? The question during a town hall event in British Columbia came from a man Trudeau identified as an "enthusiastic bearded fellow in gray." Referring to the US president, the man breezily asked whether Trudeau would "just push him off a cliff? We're good. Like, really. I'll buy you a beer." Awkward laughter rose through the crowd before Trudeau rebuffed the man's

question. "I wasn't expecting a threat of violence against our closest ally," Trudeau said. "The relationship between Canada and the US goes far deeper than who happens to be prime minister and who happens to be president."

Blistering barnacles! Boy hero Tintin turns 90

Jumping jellyfish! Tintin may be 90 years old on Thursday. The first Tintin cartoons appeared in the conservative Belgian Catholic journal 'Le Petit Vingtieme' on January 10, 1929. A book featuring the daring young journalist and his dog Snowy, "Tintin in the Land

of the Soviets", appeared the following year, making its creator Herge a star.

Women in Oz hold topless stir to back Saudi runaway

Four women held a topless protest in Sydney on Thursday to support runaway Saudi woman Rahaf Mohammed Alqunni, as Australia began considering her bid to settle in the country as a refugee. Alqunni, fleeing alleged abuse by family, was detained in Bangkok en route to Australia. In Sydney on Thursday, four women, dressed only in jeans and calling themselves the Secret Sisterhood, protested outside the building housing the Saudi Consulate, calling on Australia to grant Alqunni residency.