

TOPOF THE WORLD



He was 76 years old

BRITAIN
Prominent Soviet dissident Bukovsky dead

Moscow: Vladimir Bukovsky, a prominent Soviet-era dissident who became internationally known for exposing Soviet abuse of psychiatry, has died. He was 76. Bukovsky died of cardiac arrest on Sunday after a period of ill-health in Cambridge, England, where had settled after being deported from the Soviet Union in 1976, according to the Bukovsky Centre volunteer organisation. Bukovsky spent a total of 12 years in Soviet prisons or psychiatric hospitals for his fierce criticism of the Communist government, becoming a symbol of Soviet persecution of dissent.

BURKINA FASO
15 killed as armed militants attack village

Ouagadougou: Gunmen killed 15 civilians in northern Burkina Faso over the weekend, security and local sources said Monday, in the latest deadly attack as the impoverished West African country battles jihadist revolt. "On Saturday night numerous armed individuals attacked the village of Pobe-Mengao and kidnapped several residents, ransacked shops and carried away equipment," a local source said. A security source said "the lifeless bodies of 11 people were found on Sunday morning... probably the bodies of those abducted the day before".

BRITAIN
Prince Charles to visit India next month

London: Britain's Prince Charles will visit India on November 13 and 14, his office said in a statement. The statement added that during his visit, he will discuss issues like climate change and sustainable finance. The visit by the heir-to-the-British throne to India will be his second trip in two years and 10th overall. "The Prince of Wales will visit India from November 13 to 14, as part of Their Royal Highnesses' Autumn tour, to celebrate British-Indian connections," Clarence House said in a statement. Charles is the longest-serving heir apparent in British history.

HOW ISLAMIC STATE CHIEF WAS TAKEN DOWN

Baghdadi's killing: Tip, raid, reveal

DEB RIECHMANN & AAMER MADHANI
WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 28

THE HELICOPTERS flew low and fast into the night, ferrying US special forces to a compound where Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was hiding in Syria. The raid was the culmination of years of steady intelligence-gathering work — and 48 hours of hurry-up planning once Washington got word that Baghdadi would be at a compound in northwestern Syria. The night unfolded with methodical precision and unexpected turns. This reconstruction is based on the first-blush accounts of US President Donald Trump and other administration officials eager to share the details of how the US snared its top target, as well observations from startled villagers who had no idea al-Baghdadi was in their midst.

Secret 2-day scramble

Events developed quickly once the White House learned on Thursday there was "a high probability" that Baghdadi would be at an Idlib province compound. By Friday, Trump had military options on his desk. There was no hint of the interior drama as Trump headed to Camp David on Friday night to celebrate the 10th wedding anniversary of daughter Ivanka and son-in-law Jared Kushner. Then he was off to Virginia on Saturday for a round at one of his golf courses.

Pak bars TV anchors from giving opinions

SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, OCTOBER 28

PAKISTAN'S ELECTRONIC media regulator has barred television anchors from giving "opinions" during talk shows and has limited their role to being a "moderator", a media report said on Monday. In an order issued on Sunday, the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) also directed anchors hosting regular shows "not to appear as experts" in shows in their own or other channels, Dawn reported. As per the PEMRA code of conduct, the role of anchors is to moderate the programmes in an objective, unbiased and impartial manner, excluding themselves from their personal opinions, biases and judgements on any issue. "Therefore, anchors hosting exclusive regular shows should not appear in talk shows whether own or other channels as subject matter expert," the order said.

Nobel winner Yunus told to surrender in Bangladesh

ASSOCIATED PRESS
DHAKA, OCTOBER 28

BANGLADESH'S HIGH Court on Monday asked micro-credit pioneer and Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus to surrender to a labour court by November 7 over the firing of three employees by Grameen Communications, where he is chairman.



In this photo provided by the White House, Trump is joined by top aides in the Situation Room of the White House to monitor the operation against Baghdadi. AP

Trump got back to the White House at 4.18 pm. By 5 pm, he was in the Situation Room to monitor the raid. They named it after Kayla Mueller, a humanitarian worker abused and killed by Baghdadi.

Panic, then death

Moments after the White House team had gathered, US helicopters took off from Al-Asad air base in western Iraq. Within hours, Baghdadi was dead. The first inkling that something was afoot came when villagers saw helicopters swooping low on the horizon. "We went out in the balcony to see and they started shooting, with automatic rifles. So we went inside and hid," said an unidentified villager. Next came a large explosion — Trump said soldiers blasted a hole in the side of a building because they feared the

entrance might have been booby-trapped. Baghdadi fled into a network of underground tunnels that snaked through the compound. The stout, bearded militant leader wore a suicide vest and dragged along three children as he fled from the American troops. "He reached the end of the tunnel, as our dogs chased him down," Trump said. "He ignited his vest, killing himself and the three children."

'It was him'

Baghdadi's body was mutilated in the blast, and the tunnel caved in on him. To get to his corpse, troops had to dig through debris. That's when the raid turned into a forensics operation — and the special forces had come prepared. They had brought along samples of Baghdadi's DNA. "It was him," Trump said.



Alberto Fernandez and his running mate and former president Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner greet supporters in Buenos Aires. Reuters

Argentina's Peronists sweep back to power, Macri concedes defeat

NICOLÁS MISCOLIN & ADAM JOURDAN
BUENOS AIRES, OCTOBER 28

ARGENTINA'S PERONISTS swept back into power on Sunday, ousting conservative president Mauricio Macri in an election result that shifts Latin America's No. 3 economy firmly back toward the left after it was battered by economic crisis. Peronist Alberto Fernandez had 47.79% of the vote ahead of Macri's 40.71% with more than 90% of ballots counted on Sunday night, putting the centre-left challenger over the 45% threshold to avoid a runoff and win the election outright. Macri, speaking at his election party, conceded the race and congratulated Fernandez. Fernandez had been the

EXPLAINED Amid severe economic woes, Argentina goes down familiar route

THE ELECTION was dominated by economic issues, and with one in 10 people reported to be unemployed, voters have turned to the pro-working class political movement of the Peronists. Since 1946, Peronists have won nine of 12 presidential elections in which they weren't banned. The movement gets its name from Juan Domingo Perón, who served as Argentine president in the 1940s, '50s and '70s. Cristina Fernández is one of the most popular Peronist leaders of recent years and is known for her social programmes aimed at the poor during her tenure as president. With her as running mate, president-elect Alberto Fernández triumphed over incumbent Mauricio Macri who has presided over rising poverty and inflation.

favourite since winning the primaries in August. He extended that lead in opinion polls. "Alberto has won it and I am

BRITAIN

TRAIN FIRM SEARCHES FOR MISSING RARE VIOLIN

British railway company Southeastern said it was helping renowned violinist Stephen Morris track down a 310-year-old violin he accidentally left on a train. The instrument, worth \$321,000, was made by Roman master craftsman David Techler in 1709. Morris was due to play it in two concerts during the weekend.



The EU's chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier at the EU headquarters in Brussels on Monday. AP

EU agrees to delay Brexit until Jan 31

Johnson decries 'unwanted' extension

JILL LAWLESS & SAMUEL PETREQUIN
LONDON, OCTOBER 28

THE EUROPEAN Union agreed on Monday to delay Brexit by three months until January 31, acting to avert a chaotic UK departure just three days before Britain was due to become the first country ever to leave the 28-nation bloc. The decision was welcomed by politicians in the UK and the EU as a temporary respite from Brexit anxiety — but not by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who said just weeks ago that he would "rather be dead in a ditch" than postpone the UK's leaving date past October 31.

In the end, the choice was not in his hands. The UK Parliament forced Johnson to ask for a delay to avoid a no-deal Brexit, which would hurt the economies of both Britain and the EU. In a letter to European Council President Donald Tusk, Johnson said that under UK law "I have no discretion to do anything other than confirm the UK's formal agreement to this extension." But he called the delay "unwanted" and said it was "imposed on this government against its will". Johnson urged the 27 other

FLEXENSION

THE LATEST Brexit extension, which is the third since the 2016 Brexit vote, has been dubbed a 'flexension'.

THIS WAS because, although the EU has agreed to delay Brexit till Jan 31, Britain could exit the bloc sooner.

UNDER THE terms of the agreement, the UK can leave either on Dec 1 or Jan 1 if the British and European parliaments both ratify a Brexit divorce agreement.

EU countries "to make clear that a further extension after 31 January is not possible". Johnson is now pushing for an early election as a way of breaking Britain's political impasse. He hopes voters will give his Conservative Party a majority, allowing Johnson to push through the divorce deal he struck with the EU and — finally — take Britain out of the bloc. Lawmakers in the House of Commons were voting later Monday on a government motion calling for a general election on December 12. AP

ALLEGED RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFFER US lawmaker Hill, facing ethics probe, resigns

PETE SCHROEDER
WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 28

US REPRESENTATIVE Katie Hill, who is under investigation by the House ethics committee over an alleged relationship with a congressional staffer, said on Sunday that she was resigning from Congress. Hill, a 32-year-old California Democrat who was elected to the House of Representatives in November 2018, posted her resignation letter to Twitter, saying she believed it best for her constituents, community and the country. Hill has admitted to an "inappropriate" relationship with a campaign staffer when she was running for Congress but denied she had a sexual relationship with a staffer in her office, according to media reports. The ethics committee said on Wednesday it was "aware of public allegations... (that Hill) may have engaged in a sexual relationship with an individual on her congressional staff," and said



Katie Hill

it was investigating. Hill, who is going through a divorce, apologised in her resignation letter for "mistakes made along the way" but also lamented a "smear campaign". Hill blamed her husband and said she was pursuing legal options after media outlets published intimate photos that purported to be of the lawmaker. "Having private photos of personal moments weaponised against me has been an appalling invasion of my privacy," said Hill. "It's also illegal." Hill serves on the House Armed Services and Oversight and Reform Committees, where she is also vice chair. REUTERS

REFINING LAB-GROWN MEAT COULD HELP MORE PEOPLE CONSIDER IT AS SUSTAINABLE OPTION, LEAD RESEARCHER SAYS

Researchers find a way to grow meat that doesn't look like mush in a lab

KNVUL SHEIKH
OCTOBER 28

THE ALT-MEAT industry has created quite a sizzle, promising delicious burgers, steaks and even sushi that is grown from animal cells in the lab. But most cellular agriculture still looks like mush. The manufacturing process — which starts with animal muscle and fat grown from stem cells in petri dishes — is fine for making burgers, but it fails to provide the kind of texture needed for more substantial cuts of meat, like steaks. On Monday, scientists at Harvard University reported that

they had found a way to more closely mimic the form and flavour of real meat, by growing the muscle cells of cows and rabbits on a gelatin scaffold. Their research was published in the journal *Science of Food*. "We showed that it can be done," said Luke MacQueen, the Harvard researcher who led the study. "Now we'll keep improving our methods, tweaking the type of scaffold fiber to try even more complex textures, tastes and nutritional profiles." Refining this technique and others like it could help more people, including serious carnivores, consider lab-grown meat as a sustainable, ethical alterna-

tive to meat raised for slaughter, MacQueen said. In the body, groups of cells get physical support from an extracellular matrix, which is made up of water, collagen proteins and various nutrients. The extracellular matrix also provides essential cues for growth, cell orientation and differentiation. "Muscle cells need a structure to grow on, the same way the walls of a building need a steel frame or a house needs a wooden skeleton," said Kevin Kit Parker, a bioengineer at Harvard and also a co-author of the study. To mimic this cellular environment, Parker and his colleagues decided to make scaffold



Currently available alt-meat is fine for burgers, but doesn't provide the texture needed for steaks. Reuters

folds out of different concentrations of gelatin, a protein product derived from collagen. When collagen-rich meat cuts, such as beef chuck, are cooked, the heat naturally melts collagen fibers into softer gelatin, giving meat its succulent texture, Parker said. To make gelatin microfibers, the researchers dissolved commercially available gelatin powder in water and spun it like cotton candy. Rotating the gelatinous slurry at high speeds allowed fibers to form at the bottom of the spinner. Using enzymes, the researchers then cross-linked the fibers to form a strong, woven structure for cells to grow on. Rabbit and cow cells latched

onto the gelatin scaffold, growing until they formed about a square inch of muscle. To test whether the final product resembled the texture and behavior of meat that chefs and home cooks use every day, the researchers performed a variety of food industry analyses: simulating cooking by heating the lab-grown meat on a hot plate, compressing it as if with a meat mallet and measuring the force needed to cut each piece of meat. They found that their lab-grown meat fell in between the springiness of a hamburger and a beef tenderloin. The Harvard scientists are not the only ones testing scaffolds for cell-based meat.

Some researchers have been inspired by the field of regenerative medicine, where scaffolds are used to help grow tissue that may one day be used for repairing organs or replacing grafts. They have transformed spinach leaves into scaffolds by removing the plant's cells and using the empty cell walls as a frame for growing animal tissue. Other groups have modified apples, artichokes and the thread-like roots of mushrooms. Cellular agriculture companies are also devising scaffolds from naturally occurring materials, such as cellulose, starch and alginate, which may be more affordable than engineering scaffolds from scratch. NYT