

A boulder that mysteriously disappeared two weeks ago from a national forest in Arizona is back, and forest officials aren't asking any questions. Prescott National Forest officials said a forest employee noticed that the 1-tonne boulder dubbed "Wizard Rock" had been returned to a site along State Route 89 south of Prescott. The much-admired boulder is black with streaks of white quartz running through it.

TOP OF THE WORLD



PAKISTAN Maryam Nawaz gets bail in money laundering case

Lahore: A Pakistani court on Monday granted bail to Maryam Nawaz, the daughter of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, in a money laundering case. A two-member bench of the Lahore High Court headed by Justice Ali Baqar Najafi granted Maryam bail in the Chaudhry Sugar Mills case of money laundering. The court had reserved the verdict in the case on October 31. Maryam had filed her bail application in the case on "merits and humanitarian grounds". She had pleaded that she wanted to look after her father whose condition is "critical". "The court has granted Maryam bail on merit and not on humanitarian grounds," an LHC official told PTI.

GREECE 41 migrants found alive in refrigerated truck

Thessaloniki: Forty-one migrants were found alive in a refrigerated truck in northern Greece on Monday, said police, who arrested the driver. The migrants, of apparent Afghan origin, were mostly in good condition but seven received first aid in hospital, the police said. "The truck contained men and boys. Identifying their nationality will require a couple of days," a police source said. The truck was stopped by police on the Egnatia motorway between the towns of Xanthi and Komotini. The driver, a man from Georgia, was arrested. Local media reported that police were also seeking a second man from Turkey.

TURKEY 'IS prisoners to be sent home even if citizenship junked'

Ankara: Turkey will send captured Islamic State members back to their countries even if their citizenships have been revoked, Interior Minister Suleyman Soyly said on Monday, criticising the approach of European countries on the issue. Turkey launched an offensive into northeastern Syria against the Kurdish YPG militia last month following a decision by US President Donald Trump to withdraw troops from the region. The move prompted widespread concern over the fate of Islamic State prisoners in the region. "We will send back those in our hands, but the world has come up with a new method now: revoking their citizenships," Soyly said.

KJM VARMA BEIJING, NOVEMBER 4

IN A major breakthrough, China has approved a home-grown seaweed-based drug to potentially cure Alzheimer's and it will be available to Chinese patients from next month, state media reported on Monday. China's National Medical Products Administration has approved the market launch of the drug, GV-971, last Saturday, *China Daily* reported. The drug can treat mild to moderate forms of the disease and improve cognition, it said.

ON ANNIVERSARY OF US EMBASSY CRISIS

Iran doubles number of centrifuges, moving further away from 2015 deal

Tehran says new prototype centrifuge works 50 times faster; anti-US demonstrations across country

NASSER KARIMI & JON GAMBRELL TEHRAN, NOVEMBER 4

IRAN ON Monday broke further away from its collapsing 2015 nuclear deal with world powers by doubling the number of advanced centrifuges it operates, linking the decision to US President Donald Trump's withdrawal from the agreement over a year ago.

The announcement — which also included Iran saying it now has a prototype centrifuge that works 50 times faster than those allowed under the deal — came as demonstrators across the country marked the 40th anniversary of the 1979 US Embassy takeover that started a 444-day hostage crisis.

By starting up these advanced centrifuges, Iran further cut into the one year that experts estimate Tehran would need to have enough material for building a nuclear weapon — if it chose to pursue one. Iran has long insisted its programme is for peaceful purposes, though Western fears about its work led to the 2015 agreement that saw Tehran limit its enrichment of



Protesters attend an anti-US demonstration in Tehran on Monday. Reuters

uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions.

Tehran has gone from producing some 450 grams of low-enriched uranium a day to 5 kg, said Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran. Iran now holds over 500 kg of low-enriched uranium, Salehi said. The deal had limited Iran to 300 kg.

Visiting Iran's underground Natanz enrichment facility, Salehi dramatically pushed a

button on a keyboard to start a chain of 30 IR-6 centrifuges as state television cameras filmed, increasing the number of working centrifuges to 60.

Salehi also announced that scientists were working on a prototype which worked 50-times faster than the centrifuges they currently have.

Meanwhile Monday, demonstrators gathered in front of the former US embassy in downtown

Tehran to mark the takeover. The resulting hostage crisis saw Islamist students seize the post in response to US President Jimmy Carter allowing Iran's autocratic leader, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, to receive medical care in the US. While some hostages found freedom amid the crisis, 52 Americans were held for 444 days until US President Ronald Reagan's inauguration in January 1981. AP

40-YR-OLD CRISIS THAT STILL HOLDS IRAN, US CAPTIVE

Iranian students stormed the US embassy soon after the fall of the US-backed shah in 1979, and 52 Americans were held hostage for 444 days. The two countries have been enemies ever since.

The students' anger stemmed from the 1953 coup that overthrew Iran's elected PM, a putsch organised by the CIA. The hostage crisis ultimately ended on the day President Ronald Reagan was inaugurated in 1981. But it has resulted in the two sides being perpetually distrustful of each other.

Now, their relationship is bad as it ever was, with both sides recently coming dangerously close to war.

McDonald's CEO fired following relationship with an employee

CATHY BUSSEWITZ & DEE-ANN DURBIN NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 4

MCDONALD'S CHIEF executive officer has been pushed out of the company after violating company policy by engaging in a consensual relationship with an employee, the corporation said Sunday.

The fast food giant said former president and CEO Steve Easterbrook demonstrated poor judgment, and that McDonald's forbids managers from having romantic relationships with direct or indirect subordinates.

In an email to employees, Easterbrook acknowledged he had a relationship with an employee and said it was a mistake. "Given the values of the company, I agree with the board that it is time for me to move on," Easterbrook said in the email.

McDonald's board of directors voted on Easterbrook's departure Friday after conducting a thorough review. Details of Easterbrook's separation package will be released Monday in a federal filing, according to a company spokesman. He will also be leaving the company's board. Easterbrook was CEO since 2015.

McDonald's would not provide details about the employee with whom Easterbrook was involved, and an attorney for Easterbrook declined to answer questions.

The board of directors named Chris Kempczinski, who recently served as president of McDonald's USA, as its new president and CEO.

Two weeks ago, McDonald's reported a 2% drop in net income for the third quarter as it spent



Steve Easterbrook

heavily on store remodeling and expanded delivery service. The company's share price has dropped 75% since, though it's still up 9.2% for the year. The burger chain also has been plagued by declining restaurant traffic.

The leadership transition is unrelated to the company's operational or financial performance, the company said in a news release.

McDonald's decision to act may be a sign of progress on workplace issues that have come to light in the #MeToo era, said Carl Tobias, a law professor at the University of Richmond.

"Other companies don't always act on that kind of information or fire their CEO for that, and so it seems like they're trying to enforce a pretty strict policy in this situation," Tobias said.

Among other challenges at its restaurants, McDonald's has faced workplace harassment charges. In May, McDonald's said it was enhancing training and offering a new hotline for workers after a labor group filed dozens of sexual harassment charges against the company. AP

UNREST IN IRAQ



Demonstrators block Al-Sanak Bridge during anti-government protests in Baghdad. Reuters

At least 5 dead as security forces open fire on Baghdad protesters

AHMED ABouleinein BAGHDAD, NOVEMBER 4

IRAQI SECURITY forces killed at least five people when they opened fire on protesters in Baghdad on Monday, a Reuters witness said, as thousands took part in the largest wave of anti-government protests for decades.

A Reuters cameraman saw one man shot dead, his body carried away by fellow protesters, when security forces opened fire with live rounds on demonstrators near Baghdad's Ahrar Bridge. He also saw at least four others killed.

A spokesman for the Prime Minister said a group of protesters had crossed the bridge and set fire to a restaurant, and that law enforcement "dealt" with them. He did not elaborate.

More than 250 Iraqis have been killed in demonstrations since the start of October against

EXPLAINED With consulate attack, protesters vent anger on Iran

IRAQI PROTESTERS attacked the Iranian consulate in the Shia holy city of Karbala on Sunday night, underscoring their anger on the neighbouring country that they accuse of meddling in affairs of their government. Iran wields considerable influence in Iraq and backs the current government, which has overseen rising prices and widespread corruption. A number of powerful militias in Iraq are also backed by Tehran. With the protesters seeking a complete overhaul of Iraq's political system, Iran's Supreme Leader has called for a solution within the present legal framework. This has only added to the feeling among protesters that Iran wields too much influence over Iraq's politicians and that the change they want will not be possible with Iran's continuing interference.

a government they see as corrupt and beholden to foreign interests.

Monday's deaths were in addition to three protesters killed late on Sunday when security

forces who opened fire on a crowd trying to storm the Iranian consulate in the Shia holy city of Karbala, security and medical sources said. REUTERS



Supporters of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam party at an anti-government demonstration in Islamabad on Monday. AP

Pak protest leader calls all-party meet as his deadline for Imran resignation expires

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ISLAMABAD, NOVEMBER 4

PAKISTAN'S FIREBRAND cleric-politician Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Monday convened an all-party conference to discuss the future course of action as the 48-hour deadline set by him for Prime Minister Imran Khan's resignation has expired.

The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) leader, who is leading a huge protest dubbed the 'Azadi March' comprising tens of thousands of his supporters in the national capital, said the movement to oust the Prime Minister "will continue to move ahead and will never be on the back foot".

Rehman on Friday gave Khan a two-day ultimatum to resign, saying the "Gorbachev of Pakistan" must step down without testing the patience of peaceful protesters.

The 66-year-old cleric said that the protest would continue until the Prime Minister steps down.

The JUI-F has convened an all-party conference to discuss the future course of action in consultation with the leaders of other opposition parties, the *Express Tribune* reported.

Rehman's call for the protest has been supported by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party, Qaumi Watan Party, National Party and Awami National Party.

However, *Dawn* reported that PPP chief Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari and PML-N head Shehbaz Sharif may not be able to attend the all-party meeting.

"It was highly unlikely for party chiefs Bilawal and Shehbaz to make it to Islamabad on such a short notice," the report quoted respective party leaders as saying.

Shehbaz was unable to attend due to back pain and other prior engagements, *Dawn* quoted PML-N sources as saying.

Bilawal, who is in Bahawalpur city, about 620 km from here, will not be able to attend the meeting in which final consultations of the Azadi March's future strategy would be held, according to the PPP sources.

Meanwhile, the Lahore High Court has accepted for hearing a petition demanding action against JUI-F chief Rehman for "challenging the writ of government, delivering hate, provocative and seditious speeches against the state", the report said.

TRUMP IMPEACHMENT PROBE

White House witnesses don't turn up to testify

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA WASHINGTON, NOVEMBER 4

A WHITE House lawyer suspected of involvement in the Ukraine scandal refused to testify Monday in the congressional impeachment investigation of President Donald Trump, as three other witnesses were also expected no-shows.

John Eisenberg, Trump's deputy counsel for National Security Affairs, defied a summons to appear before the three House panels conducting the investigation, a sign of renewed stonewalling by the White House as Democrats press to take the inquiry into a new public phase.

Trump said early Monday he felt there was "no reason" for witnesses to answer questions by investigators, in particular about his call with his Ukrainian counterpart that is at the heart of the probe.

"What I said on the phone call with the Ukrainian President is 'perfectly' stated," Trump said on Twitter. "There is no reason to call witnesses to analyse my words and meaning. This is just another Democrat hoax that I have had to live with



Trump said he felt there was "no reason" for witnesses to answer questions by Democratic investigators

from the day I got elected." Eisenberg, who by mid-morning had yet to appear for a scheduled 9 am closed-door deposition, is reported to have been on the July 25 call.

At least four national security officials raised concerns with Eisenberg about Trump's dealing with Ukraine before his call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and immediately after it, the *Washington Post* had reported.

Investigators are seeking greater access to officials with knowledge of Trump's efforts to pressure Ukraine into investigating one of his chief political opponents, Democrat Joe Biden, who is running for president in 2020.

WORLD'S FIRST MULTI-TARGETING, CARBOHYDRATE-BASED DRUG FOR ALZHEIMER'S, CHINA SAYS

China approves drug to cure Alzheimer's; to go on sale from next month

KJM VARMA BEIJING, NOVEMBER 4

IN A major breakthrough, China has approved a home-grown seaweed-based drug to potentially cure Alzheimer's and it will be available to Chinese patients from next month, state media reported on Monday.

China's National Medical Products Administration has approved the market launch of the drug, GV-971, last Saturday, *China Daily* reported.

The drug can treat mild to moderate forms of the disease and improve cognition, it said.

Patients will be able to buy the drug around China from December 29, and more production lines will gradually be put into operation to satisfy the market demand, according to Shanghai Green Valley Pharmaceutical, one of the drug's developers.

The drug is the only Alzheimer's medicine out of more than 320 developed by pharmaceutical companies around the globe to survive clinical trials, despite the investment of hundreds of billions of US dollars over the past two decades, the report said.

Extracted from brown algae,

the orally taken drug is the world's first multi-targeting and carbohydrate-based drug for Alzheimer's, the administration said.

The first production line for the drug, which will meet the needs of two million patients, will begin running this week.

Alzheimer's disease, an irreversible and progressive brain disorder that slowly destroys memory, thinking ability and the capability to carry out simple tasks, affects at least 50 million people worldwide, and the number is expected to increase as populations age.

China has roughly 10 mil-



Preparations are being made for the Alzheimer's drug's clinical trials in the US, its developers said. Reuters file

lion people with Alzheimer's, the highest in the world.

The Chinese Academy of Sciences' Shanghai Institute of

Materia Medica, which jointly developed the GV-971 with Green Valley and Ocean University of China after 22 years of research, said there were previously five medicines with limited efficacy used to treat the disease, which was discovered a century ago.

A phase III clinical trial of the drug involving 818 patients completed in July last year had "proven to continuously and effectively improve cognition among mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease sufferers over a period of nine months," said Geng Meiyu, lead researcher on the drug and a re-

searcher with SIMM. "Addiction and serious toxicity of the therapy haven't been identified in research so far," she said.

Scientists said the drug functions mainly by rebalancing gut microbiota, reducing neuro-inflammation and reducing cognitive impairment. Some doctors from China and abroad, including David Holtzman, chairman of the American Neurological Association, said they believe GV-971 will provide a new medical solution for patients.

Preparations are being made for the drug's clinical tri-

als in the US and international multi-centre research, its developers said, with initial communication with the US Food and Drug Administration already completed.

"Green Valley has established a professional team and hired world-renowned experts in this field as consultants in preparation for initiating clinical trials in the US," said Lyu Songtao, the company's chairman.

"We don't exclude the possibility of collaborating with international research institutions to perform clinical trials in the US," the *Daily Report* quoted Lyu as saying. PTI