

TOP OF THE WORLD



Amsterdam's Schiphol airport is one of Europe's busiest.

NETHERLANDS
Lockdown at airport after pilot accidentally hits hostage alarm

Amsterdam: A pilot accidentally triggered a hijacking/hostage taking alarm in a plane's cockpit, causing a major security lockdown on Wednesday at Amsterdam's Schiphol airport, one of Europe's busiest. An investigation is underway to determine what went wrong, Dutch military police said. "In a plane (set to fly) from Amsterdam to Madrid tonight an alarm was accidentally activated which set off safety protocols at the airport," Spanish-owned Air Europa said. "There was no cause for alarm. All passengers were fine and waiting for the flight to take off."

NETHERLANDS
Congo warlord gets harshest ever ICC sentence

The Hague: The International Criminal Court sentenced Congolese rebel chief Bosco "Terminator" Ntaganda to 30 years in jail for war crimes and crimes against humanity on Thursday, the highest ever penalty issued by the tribunal. Ntaganda was convicted in July of offences including murder, sexual slavery and using child soldiers in a mineral-rich region of the Democratic Republic of Congo in the early 2000s. Most of the charges against Rwandan-born Ntaganda, 46, related to a series of gruesome massacres of villagers carried out by his fighters.

MAURITIUS
Mauritians vote in 1st polls since PM succeeded father

Port Louis: Mauritians are voting in the first election since Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth was installed in the job after his father stepped down in 2017. Jugnauth succeeded his father Anerood Jugnauth as prime minister without a popular vote when the older man stood down two years ahead of schedule. The 57-year-old is asking voters to judge him on his short time in office, pointing to his record on modernising public infrastructure and economic reforms in the former British colony. But he faces two opponents who say his appointment to the island's top job amounted to little more than nepotism.

AUSTRALIA
'Burger bought in 1995 never decomposed'

Sydney: A McDonald's burger bought in 1995 and kept in an Australian shed for years has never decomposed, according to two men who now refer to the quarter-century Quarter Pounder as their "mate". Casey Dean, 39, and Edwards Nits, 38, claim they ordered the Quarter Pounder with cheese from a McDonald's outlet in Adelaide as teenagers — and have hung onto it ever since. Though the burger has shrunk a little from its original size, its shape remains intact, there are no signs of mould, and it doesn't smell.

IMPEACHMENT EFFORTS GATHER STEAM

Trump asked A-G to declare nothing illegal in Ukraine call, he declined

MICHAEL D SHEAR, MICHAEL S SCHMIDT & MAGGIE HABERMAN
WASHINGTON, NOVEMBER 7

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump asked that Attorney General William Barr hold a news conference to declare that he had broken no laws in a telephone call with Ukraine's President that is now at the heart of the Democratic impeachment inquiry, but Barr declined, according to two people with knowledge of the matter.

Trump's request came shortly after the White House released a reconstructed transcript of a July 25 call in which the president pressed President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine to launch investigations into former Vice President Joe Biden and other Democrats. An intelligence whistleblower pointed to the call as evidence that the President had tried to enlist a foreign power to help him in the 2020 presidential election, and House Democrats launched an impeachment inquiry into whether the President's conduct warranted his removal from office.

'NO VALID VISA'

Israel authorities break into home of Indian couple, arrest them, their minor children

HARINDER MISHRA
JERUSALEM, NOVEMBER 7

AN INDIAN couple with two minor children were on Thursday arrested by Israel's immigration authority, just ahead of their planned deportation from the country, according to a media report.

Inspectors of the country's Population and Immigration Authority broke into the home of Tina and Minin Lopez and arrested them along with their children — seven-year-old daughter Eliana and a one-year-old toddler — *Ha'aretz Online* reported.

The family was taken to the Beit Dagan detention facility in central Israel.

Sources at the Indian mission said the family was taken to the hospital for medical check up and then presented in a court for hearing.

The court decided that the family would be deported to India after completing documentation.

The couple reportedly came to Israel to work as caregivers 12 years ago. Eliana, who is a second-grader in a school in Tel Aviv, and her one-year-old sibling were both born in Israel. The couple from Karnataka were allegedly staying in Israel without a valid visa.

Attorney David Tadmor, who represents the family, said, "the Immigration Authority, instead of adhering to instructions by the courts, continues its bullying actions". "This is a scandal. The Immigration Authority has not begun implementing the instructions of the Justice Ministry and the appellate court. It isn't authorised at all to arrest children, and isn't allowed to put out arrest warrants. We will contact the Attorney General and demand that he immediately rein in the authority," Tadmor said. **PTI**



Trump's request to Barr came soon after the release of the transcripts of the US President's call with his Ukrainian counterpart that has become key to the impeachment probe. *Reuters*

Trump, who has aggressively pushed Republicans and administration officials to say he did nothing wrong, has repeatedly said the call was "perfect". In the days after the reconstructed transcript was released to the public, the White House told the Justice Department of Trump's desire for Barr to appear publicly, according to the person who was told of it. The request was first reported by *The Washington Post*.

The President wanted Barr to personally deliver the message to the news media that Trump had done nothing wrong, much as he did in a news conference he held shortly before the release of the report by Robert Mueller, the special counsel who investigated Russia's interference in the 2016 elections, according to a person with knowledge of the events.

A spokeswoman for the Justice Department declined to comment. **NYT**

House Democrats released a transcript of the private testimony by the diplomat, William Taylor, as they named him as the first of several witnesses who will testify publicly next week in a slate of impeachment hearings. They will begin laying out a case that Trump abused his office to secure political favours from Ukraine.

While the transcript of Taylor's testimony did not unearth substantial new information about the Ukraine affair, it made it clear

Giuliani pushed for probe into Dems: Top diplomat

NICHOLAS FANDOS
WASHINGTON, NOVEMBER 7

THE TOP US diplomat in Ukraine identified Rudy Giuliani, President Donald Trump's personal lawyer, as the instigator behind the drive to get Ukraine's president to announce investigations into Trump's political rivals, telling impeachment investigators last month that Giuliani was acting on behalf of the President.

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JAPAN

ZOO: 60 ENDANGERED TURTLES DISAPPEAR

More than 60 endangered turtles have disappeared from a zoo in Japan's southernmost province in a suspected theft, officials said. "We feed them twice a week and a keeper noticed their number was clearly low," said Kozue Ohgimi, an official of the Okinawa Zoo, said. They found cable ties used to secure netting over the enclosure housing the turtles were removed at several spots.



Centrifuge machines at Natanz uranium enrichment facility in central Iran. **AP**

Iran injects gas in new centrifuges as nuclear deal unravels

UN inspector blocked from Natanz site

JON GAMBRELL
DUBAI, NOVEMBER 7

IRAN INJECTED uranium gas into centrifuges at its underground Fordow nuclear complex early Thursday, taking its most-significant step away from its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers.

Tehran, meanwhile, also acknowledged blocking an official from the International Atomic Energy Agency from visiting its nuclear site at Natanz last week, the first known case of a UN inspector being blocked amid heightened tensions over its atomic programme. Iran's representative to the IAEA, Kazem Gharib Abadi, said Tehran had asked the agency never to send the inspector again.

Abadi alleged that the inspector tested positive for suspected traces of explosive nitrates. The IAEA disputed Iran's account, without elaborating.

These latest steps by Iran put additional pressure on Europe to offer Tehran a way to sell its crude oil abroad despite the US sanctions imposed on the country since President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from the nuclear deal over a year ago.

The gas injection began after midnight at Fordow, a facility built under a mountain north of the city of Qom, the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran said. A UN official from the IAEA witnessed the injection, it said. The centrifuges will begin enriching uranium up to 4.5 per cent, which is just beyond the limits of the nuclear deal, but nowhere near weapons-grade levels of 90 per cent.

Fordow's 1,044 centrifuges had spun without uranium gas for enrichment under the deal, which saw Iran limit enrichment in ex-

EXPLAINED
Why West sees latest step as most worrying

THE FORDOW plant, Iran's second uranium enrichment facility, has worried Western powers even before its existence was officially confirmed. Iran disclosed the existence of the facility in 2009, but only after Western intelligence agencies had put it under surveillance. While Iran has always maintained that its nuclear programme was meant for peaceful purposes, the West worried that the secretive and highly fortified Fordow facility was being used to ultimately fuel nuclear weapons.

Under the 2015 nuclear deal, Iran had agreed to stop uranium enrichment at the facility. But over a year after the US pulled out of the deal, Iran has started enrichment again. It says it is enriching uranium to 4.5% at the plant as of now, slightly more than the 3.67% that the nuclear deal allowed Iran to reach at its Natanz facility. But Western powers fear this is a first step towards achieving higher grade uranium that could be used for weapons.

change for the lifting of sanctions. The deal had called for Fordow to become "a nuclear, physics and technology centre". **AP**



MASKED GRADUATION FOR HONG KONG STUDENTS

At a graduation ceremony at the Chinese University of Hong Kong on Thursday. Students, many wearing banned masks, chanted slogans at their graduation, with some holding up banners urging "Free Hong Kong, Revolution Now". A man singing the Chinese national anthem and holding a knife during the graduation ceremony was taken away by security officers. *Reuters*

US prosecutors: Saudis recruited Twitter employees to spy on critics of kingdom

DAISY NGUYEN & BRIAN MELLEY
SAN FRANCISCO, NOVEMBER 7

SAUDI ARABIA, frustrated by growing criticism of its leaders and policies on social media, recruited two Twitter employees to spy on thousands of accounts that included prominent opponents, prosecutors alleged Wednesday.

The complaint unsealed in US District Court in San Francisco detailed a coordinated effort by Saudi government officials to recruit employees at the social media giant to look up the private



Two twitter employees were charged with acting as agents of Saudi Arabia. **AP**

data of Twitter accounts, including email addresses linked to the accounts and internet protocol

addresses that can give up a user's location.

It appeared to link Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the powerful 34-year-old son of King Salman, to the effort.

The accounts included those of a popular critic of the government with more than 1 million followers and a news personality. Neither was named.

The complaint also alleged that the employees — whose jobs did not require access to Twitter users' private information — were rewarded with a designer watch and tens of thousands of dollars funnelled into

secret bank accounts. Ahmad Abouammo, a US citizen, and Ali Alzabarrah, a Saudi citizen, were charged with acting as agents of Saudi Arabia without registering with the US government.

The Saudi government had no immediate comment through its embassy in Washington. Its state-run media did not immediately acknowledge the charges.

The complaint marks the first time that the kingdom, long linked to the US through its massive oil reserves and regional security arrangements, has been accused of spying in America. **AP**

NO GAMING AT NIGHT, ONLY 90 MINUTES AT A STRETCH DURING THE DAY

China imposes curfew on minors in gaming crackdown

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BEIJING, NOVEMBER 7

CHINA HAS imposed a curfew to limit the time spent by children playing games online, in the latest part of a government crackdown on youth gaming addiction.

The regulations will mean those under 18 cannot play games online between 10pm and 8 am, and for only ninety minutes at a time during the daytime.

In addition, the guidelines

will reduce the amount of money minors can spend on-line playing games to 200 RMB (\$28) per month, rising to 400 RMB for those between 16 and 18 years old.

The new rules will also require all gamers to use a real-name registration and details such as a WeChat account, phone number or ID number to sign up.

In the statement published Tuesday, the government also calls for games producers to "modify the game content, functions or rules" to avoid causing addiction in young players.



China is the world's biggest video game market, but the government has been tightening

up on the industry amid concerns about health, worsening near-sightedness in chil-

dren and online addiction. A hashtag about the new rules was one of the most dis-

Last year Beijing announced new controls on the number of games that can be played online, limited new releases and imposed rules on underage players to reduce their screen time. *Reuters*

cussed on China's social media platform Weibo on Thursday with 210 million views.

"This statement just means that teenagers can't play the games, because for most teenagers in China, they need to go to school from 6.30 am and end at 10 pm," one user complained.

"It's a bit of a one-size-fits-all thing," wrote another, saying a graded rating system of games made more sense.

Another claimed that it was easy to obtain fake ID numbers online and that gamers would just

use these to create their accounts.

Last year Beijing announced new controls on the number of games that can be played online, limited new releases, and imposed rules on underage players to reduce their screen time.

Chinese giant Tencent — the planet's biggest game company — announced in March it was implementing new curbs on underage video-game playing.

The gaming group had already launched a real-name identification system for "Honour of Kings" to enforce playtime restrictions on youths.