

TOPOF THE WORLD



Isabel dos Santos, Africa's richest woman, is a suspect in a fraud case. Reuters

ANGOLA

Warrant likely for dos Santos

Lisbon: Angola could issue an international arrest warrant for billionaire Isabel dos Santos if she fails to cooperate with a fraud investigation in which she has been named as a suspect, its chief prosecutor was quoted as saying. Angola has named dos Santos, the daughter of former President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and reputedly Africa's richest woman, as a suspect over alleged mismanagement and misappropriation of funds while she was chairwoman of state oil firm Sonangol in 2016-2017.

LIBYA

Sole functioning airport targeted

Tripoli: Rocket fire targeted the Libyan capital's sole functioning airport on Wednesday, dealing another setback to peace efforts a day before regional foreign ministers meet in Algeria to discuss the crisis. Tripoli's Mitiga airport was forced to suspend all flights for several hours after it was targeted by six Grad rockets, just nine days after it reopened following a truce. The airport has been hit multiple times since the start of an offensive by forces led by eastern-based commander Khalifa Haftar to seize the capital from the UN-recognised Government of National Accord.

VENEZUELA

Guaido plea: We need your help

Davos: Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido on Thursday issued an emotional plea to political and business leaders at Davos, saying he needed their international help as he could not achieve change alone. Guaido is recognised as Venezuela's interim president by the United States and 50 other countries but has so far failed to shift President Nicolas Maduro from power despite months of struggle and ongoing economic crisis. "We are facing an international criminal conglomerate and we need your help," he told the World Economic Forum (WEF), adding that Venezuela was experiencing an "unprecedented tragedy".

US

Greta told to study economics

Davos: Just when the Swiss mountain spat between U.S. President Donald Trump and Greta Thunberg seemed to have blown over, U.S. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin took a new dig at the young climate activist on Thursday. Asked during a news conference about Thunberg's call to divest from fossil fuels, Mnuchin said: "Is she the chief economist? ... After she goes and studies economics in college, she can come back and explain that to us."

AGENCIES

STEPHANIE VAN DEN BERG & RUMA PAUL
THE HAGUE, COX'S BAZAAR, BANGLADESH, JANUARY 23

THE INTERNATIONAL Court of Justice on Thursday ordered Myanmar to take urgent measures to protect its Rohingya population from genocide, a ruling cheered by refugees as their first major legal victory since being forced from their homes.

A lawsuit launched by Gambia in November at the United Nations' highest body for disputes between states accuses Myanmar of genocide against Rohingya in violation of a 1948 convention.

The court's final decision could take years, and Thursday's ruling dealt only with Gambia's request for preliminary measures. But in a unanimous ruling by the 17 judge panel, the court said the Rohingya face an ongoing threat and Myanmar must act to protect them.

Myanmar must "take all measures within its power to prevent all acts" prohibited under the 1948 Genocide Convention, and report back within four months, presiding Judge Abdulqawi Yusuf said, reading out a summary of the judgment.

Myanmar must use its influence over its military and other armed groups to prevent vio-



Gambia's Justice Minister Abubacarr Tambadou waves at Rohingya representatives at The Hague. Reuters/Eva Plevier

lence against the Rohingya "intended to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part".

Rohingya activists, who had come from all over the world to the Hague, reacted with joy to the unanimous ruling which also explicitly recognised their ethnic minority as a protected group under the Genocide Convention.

"That is something we have been fighting for a long time: to be recognised as humans the same as everyone else," Yasmin Ullah, a Canada-based Rohingya activist said. Majority Buddhist Myanmar generally refuses to describe the Muslim Rohingya

as an ethnic group and refers to them as Bangladeshi migrants.

More than 730,000 Rohingya fled Myanmar after a military-led crackdown in 2017, and were forced into squalid camps across the border in Bangladesh. U.N. investigators concluded that the military campaign had been executed with "genocidal intent".

In camps in Bangladesh where they have fled, Rohingya refugees hovered over mobile phones to watch the judgment.

"For the first time, we have got some justice," said Mohammed Nur, 34. "This is a big achievement for the entire Rohingya community."

EXPLAINED
Final ruling may take years

THE INTERNATIONAL Court of Justice has delivered a binding ruling with no chance of appeal and no means of enforcement. It has exercised its power to ordain provisional measures while it takes its time to consider the broader case in which Gambia claims that Myanmar's military committed genocide against the Rohingya. That ruling could take years. While the ICJ may have no way to enforce the ruling, a verdict against Myanmar may hurt the country's reputation and set legal precedent, considering a slew of legal challenges faced by the nation.

A Myanmar government spokesman and two military spokesmen did not answer calls from Reuters seeking comment.

Gambia's justice minister, Abubacarr Tambadou, hailed the ruling as "a triumph for international justice".
REUTERS



THREE AMERICANS KILLED

FIREFIGHTING PLANE CRASHES IN AUSTRALIA

Three American crew members were killed Thursday when a C-130 Hercules aerial water tanker crashed while battling wildfires in southeastern Australia, officials said. The tragedy brings the death toll from the blazes to at least 31 since September.

Virus toll rises to 18, China puts millions on lockdown

YAWEN CHEN & SE YOUNG LEE
BEIJING, JANUARY 23

CHINA PUT millions of people on lockdown on Thursday in two cities at the epicentre of a coronavirus outbreak that has killed 18 people and infected more than 630, as authorities around the world worked to prevent a global pandemic.

Health officials fear the transmission rate could accelerate as hundreds of millions of Chinese travel at home and abroad during week-long holidays for the Lunar New Year, which begins on Saturday.

Giving details on infections in China, state television said 634 cases had been confirmed. By the end of Wednesday, China's National Health Commission confirmed 17 dead in the central province of Hubei.

Health authorities in Hebei, just south of Beijing, said on Thursday an 80-year-old man infected with the coronavirus had died there, marking the first confirmed death outside Hubei. He died on Wednesday but was not confirmed to have been infected with the virus until Thursday.

The previously unknown virus strain is believed to have emerged late last year from illegally traded wildlife at an animal market in the capital of Hubei province, Wuhan.

Most transport in Wuhan, a city of 11 million people, was sus-



Officials check body temperatures of passengers arriving at Hangzhou from Wuhan, at Hangzhou railway station in Zhejiang province. China Daily via Reuters

pending on Thursday and people were told not to leave. Hours later, neighbouring Huanggang, a city of about 7 million people, announced a similar lockdown.

Chinese state media, citing the Wuhan government's virus task force, said the city would suspend all online car-hailing services on Friday to "cut off the transmission of the virus" on a larger scale.

"The lockdown of 11 million people is unprecedented in public health history," Gauden Galea, the World Health Organization's (WHO) representative in Beijing, said.

The newly identified coronavirus has created alarm because there are a number of unknowns surrounding it. It is too early to know just how dangerous it is and how easily it spreads be-

tween people.

There is no vaccine for the virus, which can spread through respiratory transmission. Symptoms include fever, difficulty breathing and coughing, similar to many other respiratory illnesses.

Three research teams are to start work on developing a vaccine, a global coalition set up to fight diseases said. China's Finance Ministry said it was allocating 1 billion yuan (\$145 million) to the provincial government of Hubei to help contain the outbreak.

Chinese-ruled Hong Kong, which has two confirmed cases, is turning two holiday camps into quarantine stations as a precaution. Taiwan has banned anyone from Wuhan from going to the island.
REUTERS

Queen gives assent as Brexit Bill clears Parliament hurdle

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON, JANUARY 23

QUEEN ELIZABETH II gave her formal assent on Thursday for Britain to end its decades-long involvement in the European Union and seek a more independent but uncertain future at the end of the month.

The head of state's ceremonial approval of the withdrawal legislation allows Britain to leave its closest neighbours and trading partners after years of bickering and three delays.

Two top EU officials in Brussels are expected to sign the separation treaty on Friday and Prime Minister Boris Johnson — the pro-Brexit figurehead of Britain's seismic 2016 referendum — will put his name on it in the coming days.

"At times it felt like we would never cross the Brexit finish line, but we've done it," Johnson said after both houses of the British parliament ratified the withdrawal bill on Wednesday.

"Now we can put the rancour



Anti-Brexit protesters outside Parliament in London. Hollie Adams via AP

and division of the past three years behind us and focus on delivering a bright, exciting future." The January 31 split caps a remarkable political comeback for Johnson at one of the most difficult points in Britain's post-war history. Johnson will celebrate his victory by issuing commemorative coins and chairing a special cabinet meeting in England's pro-Brexit north on January 31. He will now be responsible for defining the terms on which Britain trades and shares everything from data to fishing waters with the remaining 27 EU member states.



Tulsi Gabbard

Tulsi Gabbard sues Hillary over 'Russian asset' remark

Washington: Democratic presidential hopeful Tulsi Gabbard, the first Hindu lawmaker in the US Congress, has filed a defamation lawsuit against former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton seeking USD 50 million in damages, alleging that she tarnished her reputation by suggesting her to be a "Russian asset" and "favourite of the Russians" in the 2020 White House race.

The lawsuit, filed in New York, has claimed that Gabbard suffered an economic loss to be proven at trial. "Hillary calling me a Russian asset is not only intended to smear my reputation and derail my campaign... it's also intended to silence any voice that dares to speak out against the establishment status quo," Gabbard said.
PTI



During the trial in Washington. Senate Television via AP

Schiff accuses Trump of bid to cheat in election

MICHAEL DSHEAR
WASHINGTON, JANUARY 23

THE HOUSE Democratic impeachment managers began formal arguments in the Senate trial on Wednesday, presenting a meticulous and scathing case for convicting President Donald Trump and removing him from office on charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

Rep. Adam Schiff of California, the lead House prosecutor, took the lectern in the chamber as sen-

ators sat silently preparing to weigh Trump's fate. He accused the president of a corrupt scheme to pressure Ukraine for help "to cheat" in the 2020 presidential election.

Trump later tweeted, "The Democrats & Shifty Schiff, whose presentation to the Senate was loaded with lies and misrepresentations, are refusing to state that the Obama Administration withheld aid from many countries including Ukraine, Pakistan, Philippines, Egypt, Honduras, & Mexico. Witch Hunt!"
NYT

'Go outside': Macron berates Israeli security during visit to Jerusalem church

ASSOCIATED PRESS
JERUSALEM, JANUARY 23

FRENCH PRESIDENT Emmanuel Macron on Wednesday lost his temper with Israeli security agents during a visit to a French church in Jerusalem and angrily ordered one of them to leave the premises.

The incident occurred during a spat between Israeli forces and Macron's own security detail as he entered the Church of St. Anne. The church, located in Jerusalem's Old City, is French



Macron at the Western wall, in the Old City of Jerusalem. AP

state property and Macron did not want the Israeli guards leading him inside.

"Everybody knows the rules," Macron said in English as he raised his voice toward an Israeli security

Like Earth doesn't revolve around Sun: Ghani on Imran's Haqqani denial

BARUN JHA
DAVOS, JANUARY 23

AFGHANISTAN PRESIDENT Mohammad Ashraf Ghani on Thursday took a jibe at Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan for denying the existence of the Haqqani network in Pakistan, saying it was like claiming the Earth does not revolve around the Sun.

Ghani said he is yet to see a breakthrough in his talks with Pakistan on this issue, and has only seen some "good statements" coming out from Islamabad so far.



Ashraf Ghani, Imran Khan

During an International Media Council (IMC) interaction here at WEF 2020 on Wednesday, Khan had said the Haqqani network militant group was not operating in his country anymore.

Asked to comment on this claim during his own IMC interaction on Thursday, Ghani said, "One can also very well say that Earth doesn't revolve around Sun."

He added that it was good to see Khan presenting a very good reform agenda here in Davos, but such denials were not good.

"I have not seen a breakthrough. I have seen good statements but the jury is out on the outcome. If Haqqani didn't exist there, then why did Prime Minister Khan take credit for release of hostages," Ghani asked.
PTI

Annabella Sciorra testifies in Weinstein trial: 'He raped me'

JAN RANSOM & ALAN FEUER
NEW YORK, JANUARY 23

THEY MET at a party in Los Angeles. She was an up-and-coming actress at the time. He was a young producer. As they got to know each other over the next four years, there were, she said, some "inappropriate" gestures: a care package of popcorn and Valium, a box of chocolate penises. Then, Annabella Sciorra said

on the witness stand, Harvey Weinstein raped her. Fighting back tears, Sciorra testified in excruciating detail on Thursday to a rapt courtroom about the night she says she was attacked. After shoving his way into her Gramercy Park apartment, she said, Weinstein took her to a bedroom, forced her onto a bed and, as she sought to fight him off, sexually assaulted her.

"I was trying to get him off me," a tearful Sciorra told the jury. "I was punching him, kick-



Harvey Weinstein leaves court in New York. AP

ing him." But Weinstein held her down, she said, adding: "He got on top of me and he raped me."

The searing testimony in State Supreme Court in Manhattan marked the first time that one of Weinstein's numerous accusers took the stand against him at a long-awaited criminal trial that has come to symbolise the #MeToo movement.

Five more accusers are also expected to testify that Weinstein attacked them. One of them, an aspiring actress from Washington

state, has told prosecutors that Weinstein raped her in a Manhattan hotel room in 2013. The second, a production assistant on one of Weinstein's television shows, contends he forced oral sex on her in his apartment in 2006.

Sciorra's complaint is too old to be prosecuted as a rape under New York law, but prosecutors from the Manhattan district attorney's office, plan to use her allegation will help support a charge of predatory sexual assault, which carries a possible life

sentence. To prove that charge, prosecutors must show he committed a serious sexual offense against at least two people.

Weinstein is also charged with two counts of rape and one count of criminal sexual act.

Damon Cheronis, one of Weinstein's lawyers, said during his opening statement that Sciorra had been unable to provide investigators with the exact date of the alleged rape, indicating only a period during the winter months between 1993 and 1994.
NYT