

The total population that Egypt will have by next month, as per officials. The rapid population growth has been identified as a major challenge, adding to the demand for resources and pressure on the job market

TOP OF THE WORLD



George Soros

US Facebook will help Trump get elected: Soros

New York: US billionaire George Soros has hit out at Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg, saying he and COO Sheryl Sandberg should not be in control of the company. "Facebook helped Trump to get elected and I am afraid that it will do the same in 2020," he wrote in an NYT op-ed. He said US President Donald Trump and Zuckerberg realise that "their interests are aligned — the president's in winning elections, Zuckerberg's in making money". Facebook's decision not to require fact-checking for candidates' advertising in 2020 has opened the door for "false, manipulated, extreme and incendiary statements", he added.

UKRAINE US support for Ukraine will not waver: Pompeo

Kiev: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Friday expressed the United States' unwavering support for Ukraine after he met President Volodymyr Zelensky in Kiev. "Today I'm here with a clear message: the United States sees that the Ukrainian struggle for freedom, democracy and prosperity is a valiant one. Our commitment to support it will not waver," Pompeo told a press conference. "The US understands that Ukraine is an important country," Pompeo said in a reference to reports that he had told a US journalist that Americans did not care about the country.

UAE Two Indian sailors killed in tanker fire

Dubai: Two Indian sailors were killed and several others are reported missing after a Panamanian-flagged tanker caught fire off the UAE's coast on Wednesday, a report said Friday. The Federal Authority for Land and Maritime Transport said the fire broke out on board the tanker 21 miles off the UAE coast, and was quickly brought under control by fire-fighters, the Khaleej Times reported. Efforts are on to trace the missing, it said. "Rescue and emergency response teams provided relief to the crew after they received a distress call," the Authority said in a statement.

Death toll rises to 213, total cases of infection crosses 9,800

Beijing tells nations to avoid overreaction, says solidarity important

United Kingdom reports its first two confirmed cases of coronavirus

Virus outbreak a global emergency: WHO

AGENCIES BEIJING, JANUARY 31

AS THE World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the coronavirus outbreak a global health emergency, China has said all countries should behave in a "responsible" manner and avoid overreaction that may result in more negative spillover effects.

China informed the WHO about the coronavirus cases in late December. The death toll in China's novel coronavirus outbreak on Friday climbed to 213 with the number of confirmed cases crossing 9,800. The WHO said there had been 98 cases in 18 other countries, but no deaths. Most international cases are in people who had been to the Chinese city of Wuhan, the epicentre of the epidemic.

China has said all countries should behave in a "responsible" manner and avoid overreaction that may result in more negative spillover effects. "We are still at a very critical stage in fighting the coronavirus. International solidarity is extremely important and for that purpose all countries should behave in an appropriate and responsible manner," China's Ambassador to the UN Zhang Jun said on Thursday.

A Chinese official said that he felt responsible. "Above all, I feel guilty and remorseful and I reproach myself," said Feng Guoqiang, the Communist Party secretary of Wuhan. "I've been constantly thinking that if I'd made the decision earlier to take the kind of strict controls we have in place now, the outcome would have been much better than now."

Britain's chief medical officer, Chris Whitty, said two residents had tested positive for coronavirus, the first known cases in the country. In a statement, Whitty said the patients were members of the same family.



Police stand at a checkpoint at the Jiujiang Yangtze River Bridge that crosses from Hubei province, in China on Friday. Reuters

How countries are responding to outbreak

WITH THE coronavirus growing rapidly, various countries have begun taking measures such as evacuating citizens, imposing travel restrictions and ramping up screening at transport hubs.

Here are the measures taken by some countries:

USA

The US State Department on Thursday night issued a travel advisory telling Americans not to travel to China because of the public health threat posed by the dangerous new coronavirus. The department set the new advisory at Level 4, or red — its highest alert, reserved for the most perilous situations. "Travelers should be prepared for travel restrictions



At Bangkok airport. AP

to be put into effect with little or no advance notice," it said.

PAKISTAN

Pakistan on Friday halted flights to and from China until

February 2 as a precautionary measure. "We have decided to suspend flights to China until February 2," Abdul Sattar Khokhar, Senior Joint Secretary of Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority, told reporters.

GERMANY

Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said on Friday that a German military plane would be leaving for China shortly to evacuate more than 100 German citizens, none of whom are infected with the coronavirus or suspected of having contracted it.

JAPAN

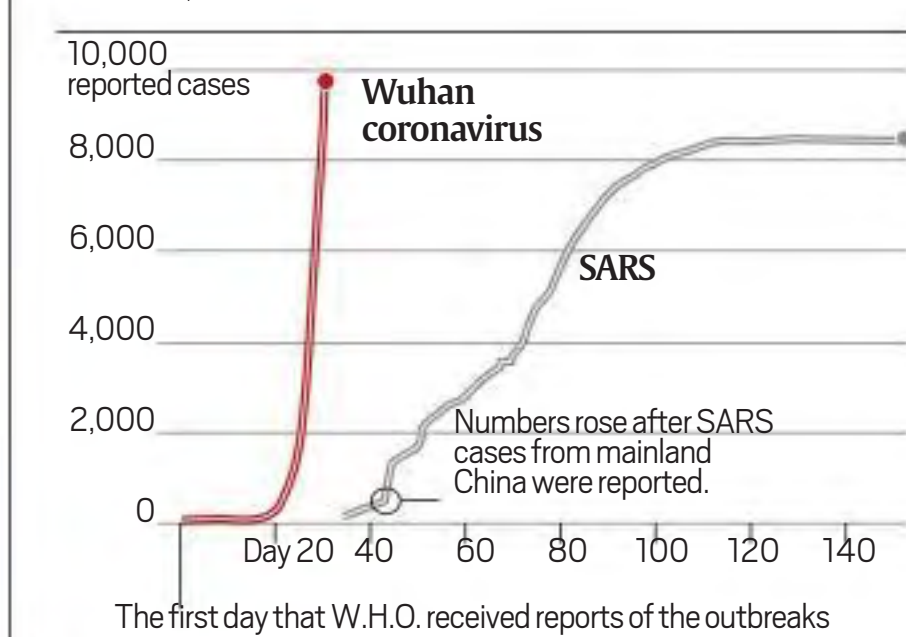
Foreigners who have been to China's Hubei province in the

last two weeks will be refused entry to Japan for the time being. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told a meeting of a governmental taskforce on the new coronavirus on Friday. Unlike other countries, Japan has asked evacuees to "self-quarantine".

SINGAPORE

Singapore on Friday announced a sweeping ban on Chinese visitors and other foreigners who had been to China in the past 14 days. The city-state will also stop issuing all forms of visas to people holding Chinese passports, Lawrence Wong, the minister for national development, said on Friday. WITH AGENCIES

KEY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS



- How contagious is the virus?** It seems moderately infectious, similar to SARS.
 - How deadly is the virus?** It's hard to know yet. The mortality rate is probably less than 3 per cent.
 - How long does it take to show symptoms?** Possibly between 2 to 14 days.
 - How effective will the response be?** The W.H.O. has praised China's efforts, but critics fear lockdown measures may not be enough.
 - How long will it take to develop a vaccine?** A vaccine is still a year away — at minimum.
- Source: NYT

75,800 may be infected in Wuhan: Lancet study

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, JANUARY 31

NEW MODELLING research, published in The Lancet, estimates that up to 75,800 individuals in the Chinese city of Wuhan may have been infected with the coronavirus as of January 25.

Senior author Professor Gabriel Leung from the University of Hong Kong highlighted: "Not everyone who is infected with 2019-nCoV would require or seek medical attention. During the urgent demands of a rapidly expanding epidemic of a completely new virus, espe-

cially when system capacity is getting overwhelmed, some of those infected may be undercounted in the official register."

He explained: "The apparent discrepancy between our modelled estimates... and the actual number of confirmed cases in Wuhan could also be due to several other factors. These include that there is a time lag between infection and symptom onset, delays in infected persons coming to medical attention, and time taken to confirm cases..."

The new estimates suggest that multiple major Chinese cities might have already imported dozens of cases of the virus.

AMID IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS

Trump mocks Democrats, revives border wall promise

GINGER GIBSON & JEFF MASON DES MOINES, JANUARY 31

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump campaigned on Thursday in Iowa — the state that kicks off the presidential nominating race next week — basking in the support of his base while the US Senate trial considering his impeachment continued in Washington.

Reviving some of the most polarising speech lines from his 2016 campaign and mocking his potential Democratic opponents, Trump regaled the crowd with promises including revamping the US healthcare system and continuing to build a wall along the country's southern border with Mexico. "Democrats stand for crime, corruption and chaos, Republicans stand for law, order and justice," Trump said.

He also renewed a 2016 campaign promise to make Mexico pay for a wall along the US-Mexico border.

DEMS MAY FALL SHORT OF VOTES TO CALL WITNESSES

The impeachment trial faces a climactic vote on Friday, when senators will decide whether to call witnesses or swiftly end the proceedings

Senate Democrats have been arguing to hear from witnesses, but they do not appear to have enough support

Republican Senator Lamar Alexander, who was undecided, declared Thursday further evidence is unnecessary.

"Illegal aliens from Mexico are going to pay for the wall... through remittance, 100 per cent," Trump said. REUTERS

Boris hails dawn of new era for UK on Brexit Day

AGENCIES LONDON, JANUARY 31

BRITAIN'S EXIT from the EU is not an end but a new beginning, according to Prime Minister Boris Johnson who is set to deliver a message of unity to mark Brexit Day on Friday when the country finally leaves the bloc, over three years after the landmark Brexit vote.

In a video message recorded in Downing Street on Thursday and to be aired at 2200 GMT on Friday, an hour ahead of the UK's scheduled exit time, the Conservative Party leader who took charge as UK prime minister last year with a "do or die" Brexit pledge will characterise the historic moment as a new beginning for the country.

"This is the moment when the dawn breaks and the curtain goes up on a new act. It is a moment of real national renewal and change," Downing Street said in a read-out of Johnson's address to the nation.

No membership, no perks: EU leaders

European Union leaders



Anti-Brexit protesters in London on Friday. Reuters

sought to put a brave face on Brexit on Friday, saying the remaining 27 countries united can tackle climate change and technological transformation despite losing a member state for the first time.

The EU told Britain it cannot expect "the highest quality access to the single market" unless it adopts EU standards on the environment, workers' rights, tax and state aid. "Without being a member, you cannot retain the benefits of membership," EU leaders including von der Leyen said in an op-ed published by

European media.

Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said on Friday she did not rule out testing the legality of calling a consultative referendum on independence if Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative government continued to oppose another vote.

"Brexit has put Scotland on the wrong road. And the further down it we go, the longer it will take and the harder it will be to get back on the right one. We need to get back on the right road as soon as possible."

Erdogan criticises Arab silence over US Mideast peace plan

REUTERS ANKARA, JANUARY 31

TURKISH PRESIDENT Tayyip Erdogan on Friday criticised Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Arab nations for not speaking out against the US Middle East plan which he said endorsed the Israeli annexation of Palestinian lands.

Erdogan, who has positioned himself as a global champion for Muslim causes, said Arab nations' stance towards Palestinians was pitiable and countries that failed to speak out would be responsible for "grave results".

On Tuesday, US President Donald Trump proposed creating a demilitarised Palestinian state with borders drawn to meet Israeli security needs, granting US recognition of Israeli settlements on occupied West Bank land and of Jerusalem as Israel's indivisible capital.

Turkey dismissed the plan as an attempt to steal Palestinian lands and kill off prospects of establishing a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

"When we look at the stance of countries in the Muslim world

EXPLAINED Fears of violence

AFTER THE US announced its Mideast peace plan, which was met with opposition by Palestinians, some officials have voiced concern that it could lead to further violence. Many had begun protesting Trump's proposal, which is seen to favour Israel heavily, before it was even officially announced in Washington. Fears that the situation would hit Palestinian refugees living in occupied territory grew after a UN aid agency voiced the same concern.

toward this step and the announced text, I pity us. Saudi Arabia mostly, you are silent. When will you speak? The same goes for Oman, Bahrain, the Abu Dhabi leadership," Erdogan said in comments to members of his ruling party in Ankara.

'SHE HAD A VISION ABOUT BRINGING THE DIGNITY OF WORK TO THE WORLD'S MOST VULNERABLE'

Leila Janah, social entrepreneur who employed the poor, dies at 37

RICHARD SANDOMIR NEW YORK, JANUARY 31

LEILA JANAH, a social entrepreneur who employed thousands of desperately poor people in Africa and India in the fervent belief that jobs, not handouts, offered the best escape from poverty, died on Jan. 24 in Manhattan. She was 37.

Samasource, one of her companies, said the cause was epithelioid sarcoma, a rare soft-tissue cancer. A child of Indian immigrants, Ms. Janah traveled to

Mumbai, India, in the mid-2000s as a management consultant to help take an outsourcing company public. Riding through the city by auto rickshaw, she passed an enormous slum. But after arriving at the outsourcing centre, she found a staff of educated middle-class workers. Few, if any, of the nearby poor were employed there.

"Couldn't the people from the slums do some of this work?" she recalled thinking, in an interview with Wired magazine in 2015.

It proved to be a galvanising moment for Janah, who called the

intellect of the poorest people in the world "the biggest untapped resource" in the global economy.

She went on to start Samasource in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2008 — "sama" means "equal" in Sanskrit — with the aim of employing poor people, for a living wage, in digital jobs like photo tagging and image annotation at what she called delivery centres in Kenya, Uganda and India. The workers generate data that is used for projects as diverse as self-driving cars, video game technology and software that helps park rangers in sub-Saharan Africa



Leila Janah died of epithelioid sarcoma, a rare cancer. Reuters/Filip

prevent elephant poaching.

At least half the people hired by Samasource are women, the company says. "Leila had a vision about bringing the dignity of work and the promise of a living wage to the world's most vulnerable," Kennedy Odede, the founder and chief executive of Shining Hope for Communities, a grassroots organisation in Kenya that has worked with Samasource, said by email.

Another venture developed by Janah is LXMI, a luxury cosmetics line. Begun in 2015, it

employs hundreds of poor women along the Nile River Valley, largely in Uganda, to harvest Nilotica nuts and turn them into a butter that is exported to the US for use in skincare products.

Janah said the work done at Samasource underscored her faith in providing decent jobs to poor people. While most of the company's employees hold entry-level positions, some have moved into managerial jobs and others have started their own small businesses.

Janah, who died in a hospital, is

survived by her husband, Tassilo Festetics; her father Sahadev Chirayath and mother Martine Janah; a brother, Ved; and a step-daughter. She had homes in Manhattan and San Francisco.

On her blog in 2018, Janah described the challenges of being a social entrepreneur. "We are fighting the battle of birthing a new venture," she wrote, "while at the same time trying to show the world that we can inject a sense of justice into the business itself, rather than merely trying to rack up profit." NYT