

10 THE WORLD



AUSTRALIA HEAVY RAIN BRINGS RELIEF, NEW DANGERS

A four-day downpour across Australia's east coast has brought relief after months of devastating bushfires and years of drought, but also widespread storm damage and forecasts of more wild weather to come. It represented the biggest sustained run of rainfall in Sydney for 30 years, dousing some bushfires and replenishing depleted dams across New South Wales.

TOP OF THE WORLD



Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer

GERMANY Merkel's party in crisis as successor quits

Berlin: German Chancellor Angela Merkel's designated successor unexpectedly threw in the towel Monday, plunging her conservative party into deeper crisis as it struggles to agree on its future political direction after losing votes to the far right. Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer told leading members of the Christian Democratic Union that she won't be seeking the chancellorship in next year's election, upending Merkel's plans to hand her the reins after more than 15 years in power. Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert told reporters in Berlin that Germany's long-time leader stood by her decision not to run for a fifth term in 2021, despite the latest development.

PAKISTAN Deposed cleric agrees to vacate mosque after deal with govt

Islamabad: Deposed cleric of Pakistan's Lal Masjid Maulana Abdul Aziz, who occupied the state-owned mosque here and asserted his claim to be its prayer leader, has agreed to vacate it by Tuesday after striking a deal with the government. Aziz was removed from the post on the orders of the court in 2004 following a fatwa he issued against the army and the operation against terrorists in Waziristan. However, he was reinstated after his release from prison in 2009, but he stirred another controversy in 2014 after he openly extended support to the perpetrators of the Army Public School attack in Peshawar.

RUSSIA Leftist activists jailed for 18 yrs

Moscow: A Russian court on Monday imposed 6-18 year jail terms against seven left-wing campaigners after finding them guilty of terrorism charges, a ruling decried by the Kremlin's critics who said the activists had been framed and some tortured. The men, aged 23 to 31 and mostly from the provincial city of Penza, were accused of planning attacks against the 2018 soccer World Cup and presidential election as part of an underground anarchist group called "the Network". Other charges included drug dealing and weapons possession.

AUSTRALIA Ex-MasterChef judge's eatery empire collapses

Sydney: The restaurant empire of former Australian MasterChef judge George Calombaris was placed into voluntary administration Monday, a year after a wages scandal at his eateries and his exit from the globally popular show. Calombaris posted the news on Instagram, expressing "deep sadness and regret" over a move which hands control of the MADE Establishment restaurant group to administrators, who will decide the future of the business.

CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK: DEATH TOLL RISES TO 908

Xi tours Beijing after 97 die in one day in China

WHO experts arrive in Beijing

THE NEW YORK TIMES
FEBRUARY 10

XI JINPING, China's powerful but recently aloof leader, toured several public places in Beijing on Monday afternoon to oversee efforts to contain the coronavirus outbreak, according to a flurry of reports in the state media.

Xi, whose most recent public appearance came during a meeting with Cambodia's Prime Minister last week, travelled first to a neighbourhood roughly five miles north of his residence near the Forbidden City and toured a local government office.

He later visited a city hospital, where he took part in a video conference with officials and workers at a hospital in Wuhan, the city at the centre of the outbreak more than 600 miles to the south.

China Central Television and the Xinhua News Agency both said Xi's goal was to access the "front line" of Beijing's efforts to prevent an epidemic and ensure the adequate supply of "basic necessities." They later reported that he expressed his concern for all medical workers on the front lines.

Ninety-seven people died from the coronavirus Sunday, a new daily record since the new coronavirus was first detected in December, as the death toll rose to 908, China's National Health Commission said Monday.

The number of confirmed infections in the country rose to 40,171, and 3,062 new cases were recorded in the preceding 24 hours, most of them in Hubei province, the heart of the outbreak.

An advance team of experts from the World Health Organization arrived in Beijing on Monday evening, nearly two weeks after the organization's director general met with Xi and praised the country's handling



China President Xi Jinping with Beijing residents on Monday. AP

The number of confirmed infections in China rose to 40,171, and 3,062 new cases were recorded in the preceding 24 hours

of the coronavirus epidemic. The team will be led by Bruce Aylward, a Canadian physician and epidemiologist who has previously overseen international campaigns to fight Ebola and polio, the organisation's director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, announced Sunday in Geneva.

Since Tedros' trip to Beijing in January, the organisation has sought to dispatch a team, but until now the Chinese government had balked.

The delay raised questions about China's sensitivity to international assistance in combating the epidemic, though a spokeswoman said it was simply a matter of "sorting out arrangements."

65 new cases on board Japan cruise ship; Indians among passengers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
TOKYO, FEBRUARY 10

AN UNSPECIFIED number of Indians were among the nearly 3,000 passengers and crew members on board a cruise ship quarantined off Japan due to diagnosis of coronavirus cases, the Indian Embassy here said on Monday.

Cruise ship *Diamond Princess*, carrying 3,711 people, arrived at the Japanese coast early last week and was quarantined after a passenger who de-boarded last month in Hong Kong was found to be the carrier of the novel virus on the ship.

Around 65 people tested positive of the virus on Monday, taking the total number of those infected on the ship to 135. Authorities had initially tested nearly 300 people when the ship



arrived at the Japanese coast.

Indian Embassy in Tokyo on Monday tweeted the information about the Indians on the ship.

"Many Indian crew & some Indian passengers are on board the cruise ship *Diamond Princess* quarantined off Japan due to Coronavirus (nCoV)," it tweeted, without giving a specific number of Indians on the ship. "In this context, any query please contact First Secretary (Consular) @IndianEmbTokyo at fscns.tokyo@mea.gov.in @CPVIndia @MEAIndia @PMOIndia," it said.

Five Turkish soldiers killed by Syrian regime fire in Idlib

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ANKARA, FEBRUARY 10

FIVE TURKISH soldiers were killed on Monday by Syrian regime artillery fire in the north-western province of Idlib, the last major rebel bastion, Turkey's defence ministry said.

Another five soldiers were wounded in the "intense assault that targeted our elements sent as reinforcement to the region with an aim to prevent clashes in Idlib, ensure our border security and stop migration and human tragedy," the ministry said in a statement.

The Turkish army retaliated, it added, "destroying targets".

"The developments are closely watched and the necessary measures are being taken," it added.

The UK-based Syrian



Turkish military vehicles on the move in Idlib, Syria, on Monday. Reuters

Observatory for Human Rights said Turkish soldiers were killed and injured by regime forces shelling Taftanaz airport, north of Saraqeb town. But the war monitor did not give a toll.

This is the second such incident in a week after eight Turkish military personnel were killed in regime shelling last Monday.

Taiwan scrambles jets to intercept Chinese planes, tensions spike

BEN BLANCHARD & YIMOU LEE
TAIPEI, FEBRUARY 10

TAIWAN'S AIR force scrambled for a second day in a row on Monday to intercept Chinese jets that approached the island claimed by Beijing as its own, as tensions between the two took on a potentially dangerous military dimension.

Taiwan's Defence Ministry said Chinese jets, accompanying H-6 bombers, briefly crossed an unofficial mid-line in the Taiwan Strait that separates the two, prompting its air force to rush to intercept and give verbal warnings to leave.

The Chinese aircraft then withdrew to the western side of the line, the ministry added, without identifying the jets.



An H-6 bomber of Chinese PLA Air Force flies near a Taiwan F-16. Reuters

The H-6s were on a training mission in the Pacific having passed through the Bashi Channel that separates Taiwan from the Philippines, the ministry added.

According to Taiwan's official Central News Agency, the F-16s scrambled on Sunday carried live missiles. REUTERS

92ND ACADEMY AWARDS

Parasite makes history; Zellweger, Phoenix win top acting awards

JILL SERJEANT
LOS ANGELES, FEBRUARY 10

PARASITE, a dark social satire from South Korea, won the Oscar for best picture on Sunday, making history as the first film in a language other than English to claim the movie industry's highest honour.

Parasite, about the gap between rich and poor in modern Seoul, won a total of four Oscars, including best director and original screenplay for Bong Joon Ho and best international feature film. No film had ever won both international feature film and best picture at the Oscars.

When Bong got his first Oscar of the night — for best original screenplay — he gazed at the golden statuette in amazement.

He later paid tribute to his four fellow director nominees, saying, "I would like to get a Texas chainsaw and split the Oscar into five and share it with all of you."

The ceremony, held without an official host, was peppered with jokes and sarcastic commentary about the exclusion of women from the directing category and the list of 20 acting nominees that included just one person of colour.

The acting Oscars went as expected. Joaquin Phoenix won best actor for playing a failing clown who finds fame through violence in the dark comic-book tale *Joker*, and Renee Zellweger was named best actress for her performance as an ageing Judy Garland in the musical biopic *Judy*.

Phoenix, a strict vegan, gave a long, impassioned acceptance speech about climate change and animal rights but concluded on a personal note.

"I've been selfish, cruel at times and hard to work with, and I'm grateful that so many people in this room have given me a second chance," he said.

World War One movie *1917*, from Universal Pictures, had been seen as the film to beat but won just three of its 10 nominations. They came for its stunning "one-shot" feel cinematography, for visual effects and for sound mixing.

AND THE WINNERS ARE...



Best Picture: **Parasite**
Best Director: **Bong Joon Ho** (*Parasite*)



Best Actor: **Joaquin Phoenix** (*Joker*)



Best Actress: **Renee Zellweger** (*Judy*)



Best Supporting Actor: **Brad Pitt** (*Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood*)



Best Supporting Actress: **Laura Dern** (*Marriage Story*)

Original Screenplay: **Bong Joon Ho and Han Jin Won** (*Parasite*)
Adapted Screenplay: **Taika Waititi** (*Jojo Rabbit*)
Animated Feature Film: **Toy Story 4**
Documentary Feature: **American Factory**
Original Score:

Hildur Gudnadottir (*Joker*)
Original Song: **(I'm Gonna) Love Me Again** (*Rocketman*)
Cinematography: **1917**
Film Editing: **Ford v Ferrari**
Sound Editing: **Ford v Ferrari**

South Korea erupts in celebration over Academy Awards recognition

HYUNG-JIN KIM & JUWON PARK
SEOUL, FEBRUARY 10

SOUTH KOREANS reacted with rare collective joy Monday after director Bong Joon Ho's *Parasite* won the Oscar for best picture and three other awards, good news that came as their country struggles to guard against a new virus.

The movie's wins made history in both the Hollywood and South Korean film industries. The class satire is the first non-English-language film to win best picture in the 92-year history of the Academy Awards, and is the first South Korean movie to ever win an Oscar.

"Can you believe that *Parasite* won the Academy best picture?"



Film club members celebrate in Seoul. AP

South Korea's biggest newspaper, *Chosun Ilbo*, said in a headline, "It rewrote the Academy's 92-year-old history."

South Korean social media were overwhelmed with congratulatory messages. Bong, *Parasite* and other Oscar-related news also dominated search terms throughout Monday at

major internet portal sites, which had been preoccupied with the outbreak of a virus in China that has killed more than 900 people and sickened tens of thousands of others, mainly in China.

But the concerns about the virus and political warfare eased Monday to celebrate Bong's wins.

"It's happy news, like welcome rain, to the Republic of Korea, which is depressed, stagnant and thrown into despair due to Wuhan pneumonia," the main opposition Liberty Korea Party said in a statement.

President Moon Jae-in tweeted that he is proud of Bong and his staff and "particularly grateful to them for giving courage and pride to our people who are overcoming difficulties." AP

Israel officials accused of torturing Palestinians after fatal bombing

MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH & JOSEPH KRAUSS
RAMALLAH, FEBRUARY 10

ONE OF the men was hospitalised with kidney failure and 11 broken ribs. Another was nearly unrecognisable to his wife when he was wheeled into a courtroom. A third was stitched up after being attacked by a security dog.

Then the three Palestinians were returned to their Israeli interrogators. They had been swept up in a sprawling manhunt launched after a roadside bomb killed a 17-year-old Israeli girl and wounded her father and brother as they hiked down to a spring last August in the occupied West Bank.

The allegations are the most serious to come to light in yrs against Israel

The attack raised fears of a sophisticated militant cell that might strike again, and Israeli interrogators appear to have treated it as a ticking time-bomb scenario. Israeli and Palestinian rights groups say there is strong evidence that they tortured several detainees in violation of Israeli and international law.

The allegations against Israel are the most serious to come to light in years, and the rights groups say they point to a loos-

ening of constraints two decades after the Israeli Supreme Court outlawed most forms of torture.

Lawyers and family members of the three main suspects say they were tortured to the point of being hospitalised. Several other Palestinians swept up by Israel's Shin Bet internal security agency say they were threatened, beaten, forced into painful stress positions and denied sleep.

A landmark 1999 Israeli Supreme Court ruling forbids such torture. But the law allows interrogators to defend the use of force when there is fear of an imminent attack. Rights groups say interrogators routinely make use of the loophole, knowing they will face few consequences, if any. AP

ALEXANDER BURNS & NICK CORASANITI
HOOKSETT, FEBRUARY 10

SENATOR BERNIE Sanders of Vermont and former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana, clashed throughout the day Sunday in a combative display of their determination to treat the upcoming New Hampshire primary as a two-person race, with former Vice President Joe Biden continuing to struggle.

After a year when Biden and Senator Elizabeth Warren dominated the campaign at different stages, Sanders and Buttigieg have arrived in New Hampshire with the greatest momentum, according to public polling and a consensus of Democratic strategists in the state. A one-two finish for



Democratic presidential candidates Bernie Sanders and Pete Buttigieg at campaign events in New Hampshire. Reuters



Sanders and Buttigieg here, after their near-tie in Iowa, could reorder the race and hasten a reckoning among Democratic leaders about which man would be the stronger nominee against President Donald Trump.

For all its divisions, the Democratic field has been united for a year around the goal of defeating Trump, and even as attacks flew Sunday the candidates pledged they would work together in the general election. NYT

EXPLAINED New Hampshire becomes crucial

NEW HAMPSHIRE hosts the first primary in the race for the Democratic nomination, coming after the chaos of the Iowa caucuses. Sanders won the state by a big margin in 2016, so anything other than a win this time would be a big blow to his campaign. Buttigieg will be keen to maintain the momentum he picked up in Iowa, while Warren and Biden need a strong showing to keep their campaigns from fading early.