

7 THE WORLD



USA DAREDEVIL DIES IN ROCKET CRASH

A self-styled daredevil died Saturday after a rocket in which he launched himself crashed into the ground, a colleague and a witness said. "Mad" Mike Hughes died after the homemade rocket crashed on private property near Barstow, California. In March 2018, Hughes, who believed the Earth is flat, propelled himself about 1,875 feet into the air before a hard landing in the Mojave Desert.

TOP OF THE WORLD



Thich Quang Do

VIETNAM Dissident monk, a Nobel nominee, dies at 93

Hanoi: Thich Quang Do, a dissident Buddhist monk who has effectively been under house arrest since 2003 and was nominated multiple times for the Nobel Peace Prize, has died aged 93. Head of the banned Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV), the vocal patriarch was born in 1928 in Thai Binh province and spent most of his life advocating for religious freedom and human rights in communist-run Vietnam. His staunch activism landed him under what was effectively house arrest in Ho Chi Minh City in 2003, where he was under constant surveillance.

PAKISTAN Pak inaugurates 1st-ever Afghan transit cargo train service

Karachi: Pakistan Railways has inaugurated the first ever freight train service that will transport cargo from port city of Karachi to Kandahar in Afghanistan. Pakistan Railways Chairman Habib-ur-Rehman Gilani inaugurated the train on Saturday which departed from the Pakistan International Container Terminal in Karachi with 35 containers on board for the country's southwest Chaman city bordering Afghanistan. From there, the goods will be shifted across the border via road.

FRANCE Da Vinci fans pull Louvre all-nighters

Paris: It's a half hour after midnight, and a huge crowd is massed in front of the illuminated glass pyramid at the Louvre for a rare night-time visit to the museum's most ambitious show in years, a landmark collection of works by the Renaissance master Leonardo da Vinci. Since Friday, the Louvre has opened its door for three nights of free visits to the exhibition before it wraps up Monday. The 30,000 tickets were snapped up in just three hours when they were made available online earlier this month.

CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

S Korea on virus high alert; Italy, Iran take drastic steps

Number of cases triple over the weekend to 602 in S Korea

AGENCIES CODOGNO, SHANGHAI, FEB 23

SOUTH KOREA went on high alert Sunday following a sharp jump in coronavirus cases, and Italy and Iran took their own drastic containment steps as an epidemic that has killed nearly 2,500 people in China continued a relentless global expansion.

South Korea is raising the nation's alert to its "highest" level, President Moon Jae-in said on Sunday after the number of infections more than tripled over the weekend to 602.

Led by an outbreak cluster in a religious sect in the southern city of Daegu, South Korea now has the most infections outside of China apart from the *Diamond Princess* cruise ship docked in Japan, which has seen more than 600.

South Korea reported 169 new cases and three deaths on Sunday, taking the countrywide toll of fatalities to six.

More than 300 cases have been linked to the Shincheonji Church of Jesus sect in Daegu — whose founder claims the mantle of Jesus Christ and vows to take 144,000 people with him to heaven on judgement day.

Italy, Iran shut schools

Elsewhere, Italy and Iran began introducing the sort of con-



Ambulances carrying patients infected with COVID-19 arrive at a hospital in Daegu, South Korea, on Sunday. AP

tainment measures previously seen only in China, which has put tens of millions of people under quarantine lockdown in the epicentre province of Hubei.

More than 50,000 people in about a dozen northern Italian towns near the business hub of Milan were urged by authorities to stay home, while shops and schools were shuttered.

With 132 cases, Italy on Friday became the first European country to report one of its nationals had died from the virus, followed by a second death Saturday.

Iran ordered the closure of schools, universities and cultural centres across 14 provinces from Sunday following five deaths and 43 confirmed cases in the Islamic Republic — the most out-

side East Asia.

Meanwhile, Iran on Sunday announced a 42% turnout in its parliamentary election, the lowest rate since the 1979 Islamic revolution, while its top leader said Tehran's enemies played up the new coronavirus threat to dissuade people from voting. "Their media did not miss the tiniest opportunity for dissuading Iranian voters and resorting to the excuse of disease and the virus," Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said.

China reported another 97 deaths in its daily update Sunday, taking its total to 2,442, plus 648 new infections. Nearly 80,000 people have been infected worldwide, the vast majority in China.

4 more Indians on board cruise ship test positive

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA TOKYO, FEBRUARY 23

FOUR MORE Indian crew members on board a cruise ship moored off the Japan coast have tested positive for the coronavirus and those who are not found to be infected would be facilitated to travel back home once all the results are declared, the Indian embassy said on Sunday.

With the fresh infections, the total number of Indians infected with the virus on the vessel rose to 12, the embassy said.

Passengers showing no signs of the deadly disease started disembarking the ship, *Diamond Princess*, after the quarantine period ended last week.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said that over 1,000 passengers and crew will remain on board.

On Saturday, around 100 more passengers, who were in close contact with the infected people on board, were allowed the disembark the ship.

"Unfortunately, results received as of 1200 JST (Japan Standard Time) include 4 Indian crew members having tested positive," the Indian embassy tweeted.

Amid fears, Moscow targets Chinese with raids

ASSOCIATED PRESS MOSCOW, FEBRUARY 23

BUS DRIVERS in Moscow kept their WhatsApp group chat buzzing with questions this week about what to do if they spotted passengers who might be from China riding with them in the Russian capital.

"Some Asian-looking (people) have just got on. Probably Chinese. Should I call (the police)?" one driver messaged his peers.

"How do I figure out if they're Chinese? Should I ask them?" a colleague wondered.



Medical workers at a railway station in Moscow

The befuddlement reflected in screenshots of the group exchanges seen by The Associated Press had a common source — in-

structions from Moscow's public transit operator Wednesday for drivers to call a dispatcher if Chinese nationals boarded their buses, Russian media reported.

A leaked email that the media reports said was sent by the state-owned transportation company Mosgortrans told dispatchers who took such calls to notify the police.

The email, which the company immediately described on Twitter as fake, carried a one-word subject line: coronavirus.

Since the outbreak of the new virus, Russia has reported two cases.

Both patients, Chinese na-

tionals hospitalised in Siberia, recovered quickly.

Russian authorities nevertheless are going to significant — some argue discriminatory — lengths to keep the virus from resurfacing and spreading.

Moscow officials ordered police raids of hotels, dormitories, apartment buildings and businesses to track down the shrinking number of Chinese people remaining in the city.

They also authorised the use of facial recognition technology to find those suspected of evading a 14-day self-quarantine period upon their arrival in Russia.

US to start enforcing regulation that could deny Green Cards to immigrants on benefits

LALIT K JHA WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 23

THE UNITED States on Monday will begin enforcing a regulation that could deny green cards or legal permanent residency to legal immigrants who seek public benefits like food stamps.

The move might affect a number of Indians who are on H-1B visas and are in long queues to get permanent legal residency.

The decision follows the Supreme Court's ruling on Friday which lifted the final remaining injunction on the "public charge" regulation.

"As a result, the Department

EXPLAINED South Asians could be among worst hit

A LARGE number of South Asians, especially Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Indians, seek work and permanent residency in the US. According to a Migration Policy Institute Report from 2018, 61% Bangladeshi families, 48% Pakistani families and 11% Indian families in the US receive public benefits, PTI reported. This means a big percentage of South Asians could be affected by the rule.

of Homeland Security will be able to implement its regulation on Monday," said White House Press Secretary Stephanie Grisham.

The final rule published on Aug 14, 2019 was originally scheduled to come into effect on Oct 15, 2019, but could not be implemented due to various court rulings.



US Democratic presidential candidate, Senator Bernie Sanders, addresses his first campaign rally after the Nevada Caucus, in El Paso, Texas, on Saturday. Reuters

2020 DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES

Sanders wins Nevada caucuses, strengthening his primary lead

JONATHAN MARTIN & ALEXANDER BURNS LAS VEGAS, FEBRUARY 23

SENATOR BERNIE Sanders claimed a big victory in the Nevada caucuses that demonstrated his broad appeal in the first racially diverse state in the presidential primary race and established himself as the clear front-runner for the Democratic nomination.

In a significant show of force, Sanders, a liberal from Vermont, had a large lead over his nearest rivals with 50% of the precincts reporting, and *The Associated Press* named him the winner Saturday evening.

His triumph in Nevada, after strong performances in Iowa and New Hampshire, will propel him into next Saturday's primary in South Carolina, and the Super Tuesday contests immediately thereafter, with a burst of momentum that may make it difficult for the still-fractured moderate wing

NEVADA RESULTS: 60% PRECINCTS COUNTED				
Candidate	Sanders	Biden	Buttigieg	Warren
Total CCDs*	3,523	1,496	1,172	773
Pct.	46%	19.6%	15.3%	10.1%

*Candidate totals are county convention delegates (CCDs) won, which are derived from caucus vote tallies and determine the number of pledged delegates each candidate receives. Source: NYT

of the party to slow his march.

Sanders, speaking to jubilant supporters in San Antonio, trumpeted what early results suggested would be a landslide victory.

"We have just put together a multigenerational, multiracial coalition, which is not only going to win in Nevada it's going to sweep the country," he said.

As results were being counted Saturday night, former Vice President Joe Biden, former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana, Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, billionaire investor Tom Steyer and Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota were competing for what would be a distant second-place finish. **NYT**



Houses are reduced to rubble after an earthquake hit villages in Baskale in Van province, Turkey. AP

Nine dead in Turkey after earthquake at Iran border

IREM KOCA & JONATHAN SPICER ISTANBUL, FEBRUARY 23

NINE PEOPLE died and hundreds of buildings collapsed in southeastern Turkey on Sunday after a magnitude-5.7 earthquake struck near the border with Iran, injuring dozens in villages and towns in both countries, government officials said.

Three of those killed were children and 37 Turks were injured, including nine critically, Turkey's health ministry said.

The shallow tremor caused more than 1,000 buildings to collapse in Turkey, prompting a brief rescue effort to find those trapped under rubble.

The quake damaged buildings some 90 km to the west in the Turkish city of Van, and to the east in dozens of villages in Iran, where state TV said 75 people were injured including six in hospital, though there were no fatalities.

Crisscrossed by major fault lines, Iran and Turkey are among the most earthquake-prone countries in the world.

TV footage showed people digging with shovels and their hands in the rubble, as well as furniture and belongings strewn on cracked, snowy roads. In one village the ground cratered under several buildings, while in others residents were wrapped in blankets outside homes with crumbled exterior walls, fallen metal roofs and twisted wiring. **REUTERS**

Sri Lanka to announce withdrawal from UN resolution on war crimes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA COLOMBO, FEBRUARY 23

SRI LANKAN Foreign Minister Dinesh Gunawardena will officially announce Colombo's withdrawal from co-sponsoring a 2015 UN Human Rights Council resolution on accountability for war crimes during his address at the council's session on Wednesday, according to his office.

Sri Lanka co-sponsored the resolution along with 11 other countries, including the US and Britain, calling for an investigation into alleged human rights violations during the island nation's civil war, which ended in 2009.

Gunawardena will make the announcement on Wednesday during his address at the 43rd Session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva.

Sri Lanka decided to withdraw from co-sponsoring the resolution after the US imposed travel restrictions on Army chief Lt Gen Shavendra Silva and his immediate family members over alleged gross violations of human rights during the final phase of the island nation's Civil War in 2009.

70TH BERLIN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL: DAY 3

Time to Hunt: Pacy South Korean thriller set in a dystopian future



SHUBHRA GUPTA FEBRUARY 23

BLAME IT on *Parasite*. The lines for South Korean actioner *Time to Hunt* stretch all the way down two floors out of the Cinemaxx theatre, one of the main screening venues at the Berlinale. The press line is the buzziest it has been: finally it feels like a hot film at one of the biggest film festivals.

The film is a pacy thriller, focusing on three young men try-

ing to hack a life in the near-future, which is, of course, dystopian. The frames are kinetic and stylish as it tracks the three friends, one who has just been released from prison, and has thought of a last job before they take off to a warm tropical island. Part heist, part chase, the film has shades of the *Terminator* movies; and the on-the-run bits, in which the trio is chased by a bigger gang, puts you in the mind of *Mad Max*.

Those are the influences director Yoon Sung-hyun admits to while making *Time To Hunt*, which comes nine years after his debut coming-of-age feature, *Bleak Night*. At the journalist's roundtable post-screening, the 'dystopia' question comes up first. Does he think the future is all dystopic?

Yoon, speaking through his interpreter, comes back with a "no". His film is not a prediction of the future, he says. It is a metaphorical expression of contemporary South Korean society. "I wanted to capture the emotions of the young people around me, the ones who are struggling to make sense of the economic downturn." The elements of the movies he has loved, which also includes Spielberg's 1971 *Duel*, found their way into his own, which evolved into a genre film.

I ask him a double-barrelled question. Is violence the answer to the world's troubles? Also, post-*Parasite*, with its staggering sweep at the Oscars, does he think the South Korean film industry will change in any way?



Time to Hunt director Yoon Sung-hyun says the physical violence in the movie is meant to represent and visualise the psychological violence within society

The South Korean brand of cinematic violence, the visceral sort we've seen in such films as *Old Boy*, which is very different from the contemplative kind in

Memories of Murder, have had a great deal of impact on action movies around the world, including Bollywood. (*Old Boy* was officially remade by Sanjay

Gupta, as *Zinda*, starring Sanjay Dutt and John Abraham).

Yoon says he uses violence only as a tool to tell his stories. It is neither an answer nor a solution. The physical violence is meant to represent and visualise the psychological violence within the society. But the stylishness of the violence is also numbing and alienating — in a way it keeps you from feeling. Is he aware of how dangerously seductive it can be? That's why for him emotions are so important, he says. Family and friendship are key.

Which is what you see on screen. It is a bromance. The young men are close, with deep ties that bind them, not just their criminal activities. And they are not scared to show their feelings,

in a new kind of masculinity.

Yoon says he thinks that there will be a lot of change in Korean filmmaking after *Parasite*. Before, it was kind of passive. Bong Joon Ho is a master, and he has paved the way for us, the younger generation will now have the courage to do new story-telling, and not just repeat old story and styles, he says.

Is there any pressure to better Bong? He smiles, and demurs. Bong is a legend. I have just begun. Good answer.

And immediately after, I'm in a film which I predict will come away with a win. Kelly Reichardt's *First Cow* is a lovely, delicate rumination on many things: about being an outsider, longing to belong, male friendship. The film is a

Western with a difference; no gun-toting cowboys brandishing lariats, but fur-trappers who are also looking for their patch of land in America, in the beginning of the 19th century.

An unlikely relationship is struck between a Chinese immigrant who shows up in a rough-and-ready camp in Oregon, and a man who loves to bake. And as they navigate the terrain, untouched, beautiful, they come across dangers they haven't anticipated. How they deal with these, and make their way past them, forms the bulk of this film. It takes a little while to get into it, but the submission to its quietly observed joys brings the kind of happiness a really good film does.