

# 16 THE WORLD

**TOP OF THE WORLD**



Bill Clinton

**USA**  
**Lewinsky affair was to 'manage anxieties': Clinton**

New York: Bill Clinton said he had an affair with Monica Lewinsky to help him deal with the stress of being president as he opened up in a documentary released Friday about the scandal that led to his impeachment. In the series, Clinton describes his sexual relationship in the 1990s with then 22-year-old White House intern as something he did "to manage my anxieties for years". He said it had been motivated by life's "pressure and disappointments and fears, of what-ever" and said he felt "terrible" that the affair had defined Lewinsky's life. "It was awful what I did," the 73-year-old added.

**PAKISTAN**  
**Verdict against Musharraf's death penalty challenged**

Islamabad: The Pakistan Bar Council has filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging the Lahore High Court's order to quash the death penalty of Pervez Musharraf in a treason case, a report said Friday. A special court in Islamabad on December 17 last year handed down the death penalty. However, on January 13, Musharraf's trial was declared as "unconstitutional" by the High Court. The Pakistan Bar Council on Thursday filed a petition against the Lahore High Court's order.

**TUNISIA**  
**7 killed in suicide attacks near US embassy**

Tunis: Two militants on a motorbike blew themselves up outside the U.S. Embassy in Tunisia on Friday, killing a policeman and injuring several others in the country's most serious attack in months. The explosion took place near the embassy's main gate, where a Reuters journalist saw a scorched, damaged motorbike and a damaged police vehicle lying amid debris as police gathered around and a helicopter whirled overhead. The Interior Ministry said two militants were killed carrying out the attack and five police officers were injured, while a civilian suffered minor injuries. State news agency TAP reported one policeman was killed.

**IRAN WARNS IT COULD USE FORCE TO HALT TRAVEL**

## 'This is not a drill': WHO urges action as global coronavirus cases near 1,00,000

**AGENCIES**  
MARCH 6

THE NUMBER of people infected with the new virus charged toward 1,00,000 Friday, with the global scare upending routines, threatening livelihoods and prompting quarantines in its spread.

The world's leading health official implored international leaders to unleash the full power of their governments to combat the new coronavirus outbreak.

"This is not a drill," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director general of the World Health Organisation. "This is not a time for excuses. This is a time for pulling out all the stops."

The head of the UN's food agency, the World Food Program, warned of the potential of "absolute devastation" as the outbreak's effects ripple through Africa and the Middle East.

Iran on Friday said the new coronavirus has killed 124 people amid 4,747 confirmed cases in the Islamic Republic as authorities warned they may use "force" to limit travel between cities.

Health Ministry spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour offered the figures at a televised news conference. He did not elaborate on the threat to use force, though he



A production line to manufacture masks in Pyeongtaek, South Korea, on Friday. AP

acknowledged the virus now was in all of Iran's 31 provinces.

China reported 143 new cases Friday, the same as a day earlier and about one-third that the country was seeing a week ago. Just a month ago, China was reporting several thousand new cases a day, outnumbering infections elsewhere in the world about 120 to 1.

The second hardest-hit country, South Korea, was also regis-

tering a notable decline in new infections and the WHO's leader said he was seeing "encouraging signs" there. South Korea reported 505 additional cases Friday, down from a high of 851 on Tuesday.

Cases were increasing in Germany and France, but Italy remained the centre of Europe's outbreak, particularly in its north. The country has had 148 fatalities, making it the deadliest

site for the virus outside China.

Australia will spend one billion dollars to fight the spread of the virus, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced on Friday as cases in the country touched 61 on Friday. Morrison said measures to respond to the outbreak would cost "at least" 1 billion Australian dollars and that it would be spread between federal, state and the territory governments.

**GLOBAL FIGURES**

TOTAL DEATHS	CONFIRMED CASES
Mainland China	3,042
Italy	197
Iran	124
South Korea	42
Japan	12
United States	12
	80,552
	4,636
	4,747
	6,284
	1,066
	230

**COUNTRIES REPORT FIRST CASES, DEATHS**

**SERBIA**  
The first case of coronavirus in Serbia has been diagnosed in a man who had been in Hungary, the country's health minister announced on Friday

**CAMEROON**  
Cameroon has confirmed its first case of the novel coronavirus, a French national who arrived in the capital Yaounde in February, the government said on Friday

**VATICAN CITY**  
The Vatican on Friday reported its first coronavirus case, saying it had suspended outpatient services at its health clinic after a patient tested positive for COVID-19

**BHUTAN**  
The country has reported its first case of the coronavirus after a US tourist tested positive, the prime minister said Friday

**NETHERLANDS**  
The Netherlands has recorded its first death in the novel coronavirus outbreak, Dutch health officials said on Friday

## S Korea threatens to retaliate over 'irrational' Japan quarantine move

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
SEOUL, MARCH 6

SEOUL THREATENED to retaliate on Friday over what it called Tokyo's "irrational" plan to quarantine arrivals from South Korea over the coronavirus outbreak, turning the scientific issue into a diplomatic row.

The two countries have close economic ties and are both major US allies, democracies and market economies faced with a rising China and nuclear-armed North Korea. But their relationship continues to be heavily affected by Japan's colonial rule of the Korean peninsula from 1910 to 1945 — a dispute that escalated into a trade and security row last year.

Japanese Prime Minister



Not only unfriendly but also unscientific: Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha

Shinzo Abe on Thursday announced that foreign arrivals who have recently been in China or South Korea would be required to spend 14 days in quarantine.

But it has taken particular issue with Japan's restrictions,

with the presidential office calling the decision "irrational" and contrasting its "scientific and transparent" outbreak control campaign with Tokyo's "opaque and passive" efforts.

The National Security Council agreed to consider "necessary measures based on the principle of reciprocity", the presidential Blue House said in a statement.

Seoul summoned the ambassador to protest, with foreign minister Kang Kyung-wha telling him: "Japan's action this time was not only unfriendly but also unscientific."

Her ministry accused Tokyo of ulterior motives, saying in a statement: "We can't help but question whether Japan has other motives than containing the outbreak."

**EXPLAINED**  
**Degrees of response**

EVEN AS calls to act against the virus grow, signs that governments are acting out of political interests or in an opaque manner has become a cause for worry. Examples of this, as per reports, might be seen in the South Korea-Japan tussle over a quarantine decision, or Trump's response to concerns about the virus as a "hoax". Now, the global response to the WHO's call for action will likely play a key role in deciding how swiftly the outbreak is brought under control.

## Ahead of Modi's Dhaka trip, protests held against CAA

**SHUBHAJIT ROY**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 6

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi's proposed visit to Bangladesh has come under a cloud over massive protests against Citizenship Amendment Act that were held in Dhaka on Friday. One of the protesting outfits gave a call to form a nationwide human chain on March 12 and urged protesters to take to the streets carrying black flag, shoes, brooms and wearing shrouds.

As per *New Age Bangladesh*, protests were organised by Samamana Islami Dalgulo and Islami Andolan Bangladesh. They staged demonstrations at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque premises and adjacent areas.

Modi is scheduled to visit

Bangladesh on March 17 to join the celebrations marking the country's founder Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's birth centenary.

"The Islami Andolan Bangladesh declared to arrange prayer sessions in mosques on March 13 seeking divine blessings for oppressed Muslims in India and to hold demonstrations in the country," the *New Age*, a media outlet said.

Addressing the rally as the chair, Jamiat Ulama e Islam Bangladesh leader and Hefazate Islam's Dhaka city amir Nur Hossain Kasemi announced to form a countrywide human chain on March 12.

He criticised the government, saying it had come to power by snatching people's votes and was not understanding people's sentiments. He said that they would resist Modi's Bangladesh visit at any cost.

## Distorted, misleading: US judge on A-G's handling of Mueller report

**CHARLIE SAVAGE**  
WASHINGTON, MARCH 6

A FEDERAL judge on Thursday sharply criticised Attorney General William P Barr's handling of the report by the special counsel, Robert S Mueller III, saying that Barr put forward a "distorted" and "misleading" account of its findings and lacked credibility on the topic.

Barr could not be trusted, Judge Reggie B Walton said, citing "inconsistencies" between the attorney general's statements about the report when it was secret and its actual contents that turned out to be more damaging to President Trump. Barr's "lack of candour" called into question his "credibility and, in turn, the department's" assurances to the court, Judge Walton said.



William Barr

The judge ordered the Justice Department to privately show him the portions of the report that were censored in the publicly released version so he could independently verify the justifications for those redactions. The ruling came in a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit seeking a full-text version of the report. The differences between the

report and Barr's description of it "cause the court to seriously question whether Attorney General Barr made a calculated attempt to influence public discourse about the Mueller report in favour of President Trump despite certain findings in the redacted version of the Mueller report to the contrary," wrote Judge Walton.

Barr's public rollout of the Mueller report has been widely criticised. Still, it was striking to see a Republican-appointed federal judge scathingly dissect Barr's conduct in a formal judicial ruling and declare that the sitting attorney general had so deceived the American people that he could not trust assertions made by a Justice Department under Barr's control.

A department spokeswoman had no immediate comment. **NYT**

**1ST BIG STRIKE SINCE PEACE DEAL**

## 27 killed in attack on Afghan rally



Personnel check an ambulance near the site of the attack. AP

## Islamic State claims responsibility; crime against humanity, says Ghani

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
KABUL, MARCH 6

GUNMEN OPENED fire Friday at a ceremony in Afghanistan's capital attended by prominent political leaders, killing at least 32 people and wounding dozens more before the two attackers were slain by police, officials said.

The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement on its website.

Militants from IS have declared war on Afghanistan's Shiites, and many of those at the ceremony were from the minority Shiite sect. The Taliban said they were not involved in the attack, which came less than a week after the US and the group signed an ambitious peace deal that lays out a path for the withdrawal of American forces from the country.

Interior Ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi said 32 people were killed and 81 wounded in the attack in the Dasht-e-Barchi neighborhood of Kabul. The Health Ministry gave the same death toll but said 58 were wounded. All of the casualties were civilians, Rahimi said.

Opposition leader Abdullah Abdullah, who is the country's chief executive and was a top contender in last year's presidential election, was among several prominent political officials who attended the ceremony but left before the attack and were unhurt.

Several TV journalists were covering the ceremony inside a walled compound when the gunmen began shooting, and a reporter and a cameraman for a local broadcaster were among the wounded. Karim Khalili, the chief of Afghanistan's high peace council, was delivering a speech when the gunfire interrupted him. He was not hurt and later went on TV to denounce the violence.

"Individuals with military uniforms who were there targeted people, there were casualties, dead and wounded," said witness Ghulam Mohammad, according to Associated Press video.

Another survivor, Noor Mohammad, said: "Everyone was running. Three casualties were on the ground in front of me. I ran out of there to save my life."

After opening fire, the two



Opposition leader Abdullah Abdullah, who was at the event, escaped injury. Reuters

## Taliban could possibly seize power after US leaves: Trump

Washington: President Donald Trump on Friday said the Taliban could "possibly" overrun the Afghan government after the United States withdraws from the country, leaving the US-backed authorities to fend for themselves.

"Countries have to take care of themselves," Trump said at the White House. "You can only hold someone's hand for so long."

Asked if the Taliban could seize power, Trump said it's "not supposed to happen that way but it possibly will". "We can't be there for the next 20 years. We've been there for 20 years and we've been protecting the country but we can't be there for the next — eventually they're going to have to protect themselves," he said.

Trump said the Afghan government's ability to defend itself from the guerrillas after US forces pull out was unknown. "I don't know. I can't answer that question," he said. **PTI**

gunmen holed up in a half-finished apartment building, leading to a five-hour standoff with security forces. They were eventually killed and security forces cleared the building, Rahimi said. The area was cordoned off by dozens of security forces.

**'IT'S IMPORTANT FOR ME TO NOT JUST SAY SOMETHING, BUT TO DO SOMETHING'**

## Jewish cemeteries threatened in France, some step up to guard them

**ADAM NOSSITER**  
WESTHOFFEN, MARCH 6

SOME OF the forgotten tombstones in the old Jewish cemetery look suspiciously whitened. It took vigorous scrubbing to get rid of the swastikas.

The defacing in December of gravestones in the cemetery in Westhoffen, a sleepy village in Alsace, was not isolated. In the absence of actual Jews in the Alsace countryside, their tombs have become easy targets in a region with an uneasy relationship

to a troubled wartime past and a penchant for voting far right.

Last year there were 50 similar incidents targeting Jews in Alsace, a historical cradle of French Judaism, where Jews have lived since the Middle Ages. Cemeteries, schools and village walls were daubed with swastikas or obscure references to the Third Reich.

In Westhoffen's cemetery, 107 tombstones were defaced; in the one in Quatzenheim, a village to the east, 96 were.

Eighty years ago, Alsace was incorporated into Nazi Germany,

and wartime local officials did the Nazis' bidding. The swastika was everywhere. Jews were expelled, deported and killed.

But today's local authorities found intolerable the image of old Jewish graves in contemporary France being defaced with the Nazi symbol.

So they took an unusual step: organising volunteers to patrol Alsace's 67 threatened rural Jewish cemeteries, protecting some of these neglected vestiges of a time when Jews, excluded from the city, were forced to flourish in the Alsatian countryside.



A 200-year-old Jewish cemetery in Wintzenheim. NYT

There are 20 volunteers — retired teachers, farmers, housewives and students. That none are Jewish heightens the interfaith symbolism. Each is equipped with a big badge that reads "Guardians of Memory."

"In the face of these acts, it's important for me to not just say something, but to do something, to act concretely to fight this, to try to stop it, and to pass the message that these acts actually reinforce civil society," said Axel Imhof, a 28-year-old Protestant pastor who has signed up as a Guardian in his village, Lauterbourg.

Even before the official start, some Guardians, a few of them living next to the cemeteries, had already been keeping an eye on them. "I had friends whose parents didn't come back" after the war, said Lise Tornare, 75, on why she and her husband, Robert, are committed to protecting the 200-year-old Jewish cemetery at their doorstep in Wintzenheim.

The patrol is a symbolic effort, flecked with ambiguities. Nobody pretends the volunteers will prevent the next "profanation," as these recurring episodes are referred to by locals. Some of

these vulnerable old cemeteries exist isolated in the middle of the Alsatian forest. The authorities have never found the perpetrators of last year's incidents.

"In some sense, there's a silence in the surrounding population," said Freddy Raphaël of the University of Strasbourg, the dean of historians of Alsace Judaism. "It isn't possible that something like this happens in a village, without somebody knowing."

"It's a silence that I compare, unfortunately, to the silence when the Jews were kicked out in 1940," Raphaël added. **NYT**