

## India's Amit Shah pledges to evict Bangladeshis from Delhi

NEW DELHI: (News Desk) Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's closest political ally has pledged to rid the capital of "illegal" immigrants if his party wins looming elections, in a forceful appeal to his party's Hindu constituency. Interior minister Amit Shah said every unlawful migrant from neighbouring Bangladesh would be expelled from New Delhi "within two years" if his party succeeded in next month's provincial polls. "The current state government is giving space to illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingyas," Shah told an audience of several thousand at Sunday's rally. "Change the government and we will rid Delhi of all illegals." India shares a porous border stretching thousands of kilometres with Muslim-majority Bangladesh, and illegal migration from its eastern neighbour has been a hot-button political issue for decades. There are no reliable estimates of the number of Bangladeshis living illegally in Delhi, a city to which millions have flocked in search of employment from elsewhere in India over recent decades. Critics of Modi and Shah's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) accuse the party of using the issue as a dog whistle against Muslims to galvanise its Hindu-nationalist support base during elections.

## Cyberattack hits DeepSeek as new users flock to Chinese startup

NEW YORK: (News Desk) Chinese startup DeepSeek said on Monday it will temporarily limit registrations due to a cyberattack after the company's AI assistant amassed sudden popularity. The startup earlier in the day was also hit by outages on its website after its AI assistant became the top-rated free application available on Apple's App Store in the United States. The company resolved issues relating to its application programming interface and users' inability to log in to the website, according to its status page. The outages on Monday were the company's longest in around 90 days and coincides with its sky-rocketing popularity. DeepSeek last week launched a free assistant it says uses less data at a fraction of the cost of incumbent players' models, possibly marking a turning point in the level of investment needed for AI. Hangzhou-based firm shows ability to match capacity of AI base-setters such as Nvidia. Powered by the DeepSeek-V3 model, which its creators say "tops the leaderboard among open-source models and rivals the most advanced closed-source models globally", the artificial intelligence application has surged in popularity among US users since it was released on Jan 10, according to app data research firm Sensor Tower. The milestone highlights how DeepSeek has left a deep impression on Silicon Valley, upending widely held views about US primacy in AI and the effectiveness of Washington's export controls targeting China's advanced chip and AI capabilities.

## Japan's TV bosses resign over assault scandal

TOKYO: (News Desk) The chairman and president of Japan's Fuji Television resigned on Monday, weeks after a celebrity presenter was accused of sexual assault, causing a public relations storm and the mass exit of advertisers. A leading tabloid magazine reported last month that Masahiro Nakai, a J-pop megastar turned TV host, had performed a sexual act without a woman's consent in 2023. The 52-year-old Nakai reportedly later paid the woman 90 million yen (\$570,000) and the pair signed a non-disclosure agreement. Apologising sincerely to the women concerned for failing to provide adequate care due to a lack of awareness of human rights, Kanoh told reporters on Monday. "I apologise to the viewers, advertisers, company members, shareholders for the great concern and inconvenience caused by the network staff were accused of trying to cover up the scandal, dozens of brands, including McDonald's and Toyota, holders for the great concern and inconvenience pulled their advertisements from the private broadcaster. As pressure mounted, Fuji TV said its president Koichi Minato and chairman Shuji Kanoh were stepping down. "I would like to apologise sincerely to the women concerned for failing to provide adequate care due to a lack of awareness of human rights," Kanoh told reporters on Monday. "I apologise to the viewers, advertisers, company members, shareholders for the great concern and inconvenience caused by the series of news reports," he added. Earlier this month, Minato admitted that Fuji TV was aware of the Nakai scandal before it was reported by local media. The company denies claims that its staff were involved in organising Nakai's meeting with the woman, which allegedly took place at the star's home.



GAZA: Tens of thousands of displaced Palestinians, who were forced to flee the relentless Israeli bombardment of northern Gaza, return to their homes via the coastal Al-Rashid Road, on Monday

## Direct flights between Pakistan, Bangladesh to launch soon: Bangladeshi envoy

Dhaka: (News Desk) Bangladesh High Commissioner to Pakistan Mohammad Iqbal Hussain announced on Tuesday that direct flights between the two countries were expected to begin within the next few months. The two countries were once one nation but split following a bloody civil war, which saw the territory previously referred to as 'East Pakistan' seceding to form the inde-

pendent nation of Bangladesh. In the years since the split, Dhaka's leaders — especially the recently ousted regime of Sheikh Hasina — stayed firmly in the Indian camp, preferring to maintain close ties with New Delhi and keeping Islamabad at arm's length. However, ever since a popular uprising that saw Hasina's government toppled in August, there has been a thaw in ties be-

tween the two capitals, with trade and bilateral relations seeing a marked improvement. During a meeting with Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi today, the high commissioner said the announcement was a significant development set to enhance connectivity and foster stronger economic and cultural ties between

the two countries. He further revealed that cargo flights between Dhaka, Karachi and Lahore would also commence soon, further facilitating trade and business exchanges. Hussain highlighted Bangladesh's commitment to strengthening business partnerships with Pakistan, emphasising the ease of obtaining Bangladeshi visas online for Pakistani citizens.

## Trump signs executive orders taking aim at DEI, Covid expulsions and transgender troops

Washington: (News Desk) US President Donald Trump signed a series of executive orders on Monday to remove diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) from the military, reinstate thousands of troops who were kicked out for refusing Covid-19 vaccines during the pandemic and take aim at transgender troops. Earlier on Monday, Pete Hegseth, who narrow-

ly secured enough votes to become defence secretary, referred to the names of Confederate generals that were once used for two key bases during his remarks to reporters as he entered the Pentagon on his first full day on the job. Trump signed the executive orders while flying back from Miami to Washington DC. One of the executive or-

ders signed by Trump said that expressing a "gender identity" different from an individual's sex at birth did not meet military standards. While the order banned the use of "invented" pronouns in the military, it did not answer basic questions, including whether transgender soldiers currently serving in the military would be allowed to stay and, if not, how

they would be removed. Trump's plans have been heavily criticised by advocacy groups, which say his actions would be illegal. "President Trump has made clear that a key priority for his administration is driving transgender people back into the closet and out of public life altogether," Joshua Block, with the American Civil Liberties Union, said earlier on Monday.



US President Donald Trump arrives at the South Lawn of the White House in Washington, US.

## India and China agree to settle economic differences

Delhi: (News Desk) India and China have agreed to work on resolving differences over trade and economic issues, New Delhi has said, as relations continue to thaw after a deadly 2020 border clash. Following a meeting on Monday in Beijing between India's top diplomat Vikram Misri and China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi, India's foreign ministry also said that both sides

would negotiate a framework on the resumption of flights after five years at an "early date". China's foreign ministry confirmed today that flights would resume, and said Wang had told Misri that China and India should commit to "mutual support and mutual achievement" rather than "suspicion" and "alienation". "Specific concerns in the economic and trade areas were

discussed with a view to resolving these issues and promoting long-term policy transparency and predictability," the Indian statement said without going into detail. Analysts say sluggish economies and trade threats from US President Donald Trump are encouraging China and India to work more closely together. Trump has warned he will impose tariffs on China and India

is a large market for China, while New Delhi wants Chinese expertise, components and machinery to fuel exports and the economy, which is coming off recent highs. "Economic headwinds are being faced by both India and China and both have an interest in ensuring the economic relationship continues to be managed in a [mutually beneficial] way," said Harsh Pant.

## Gazans stream home after prisoner breakthrough

CAIRO: (News Desk) Tens of thousands of Palestinians streamed along the main roads leading north in Gaza on Monday, jubilant to be returning home after months of living in temporary shelter but fearing what might remain of their homes amid the bombed-out ruins. Their return, which had been delayed at the weekend, went ahead after Hamas agreed to hand over three Israeli prisoners later this week and Israeli forces began to withdraw from a main corridor across the enclave under the terms of an agreement on a ceasefire in the 15-month-long war. Along a road running by Gaza's Mediterranean shore, a mass of people, some holding infants in their arms or carrying bundles of belongings on their shoulders, trekked north on foot. "It's like I was born again and we were victorious again," said a Palestinian mother, Umm Mohammed Ali, part of the miles-long throng that moved slowly up the coastal road. Witnesses said the first residents arrived in Gaza City in the early morning after the first crossing point in central Gaza opened at 7am (05:00 GMT or 10:00 PKT). Another crossing opened around three hours later, letting in vehicles.

## Israel fires at Lebanese returning home, kills two

BURJ MULUK: (News Desk) Lebanon's health ministry said Israeli fire killed two people on Monday and wounded 17 others in the south, in a second day of violence as residents tried again to return to border villages. The bloodshed, which one analyst said was unlikely to re-spark war between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah, came hours after the extension of a deadline for Israeli forces to withdraw from south Lebanon under a November ceasefire deal. The ministry said Israeli fire killed 24 returnees on Sunday. "Israeli enemy attacks as citizens attempt to return to their towns that are still occupied have led ... to two dead and 17 wounded," the health ministry said in a statement, updating an earlier toll of one dead. It said the wounded included a child and a rescuer from the Risala Scouts association, affiliated with Hezbollah ally the Amal movement. Under the ceasefire deal that took effect on November 27, the Lebanese military was to deploy in the south alongside United Nations peacekeepers as the Israeli army withdrew over a 60-day period, which ended on Sunday. Hezbollah was also to pull back its forces north of the Litani River — about 30 kilometres from the border.

## Champions Trophy tickets go on sale today

LAHORE: (News Desk) The tickets for next month's ICC Champions Trophy featuring top eight cricketing nations will go on sale on Tuesday, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced on Monday. All matches of the event will be held across three venues in Pakistan — Lahore, Karachi and Rawalpindi — from Feb 19 to March 9 except for India's games which will be staged in Dubai. While the PCB announced the prices of the group-stage matches to be held in Pakistan, the rates of the tickets for Dubai's matches, as well as one semi-final and the final have not yet been decided. "Tickets for group-stage matches and the second semi-final to be played in Pakistan will go on general sale on Tuesday, Jan 28, at 13h00 Gulf Standard Time (GST) / 14h00 Pakistan Standard Time (PST)," a PCB statement said on Monday. "Members of the ICC Family will enjoy exclusive early access, with a two-hour priority window to purchase tickets which is open now." General stand ticket prices will start from PKR 1,000, with more premium seating available from PKR 1,500 in different categories including, across the 10 matches taking place in Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi. Physical tickets will also be available for purchase from Feb 3 at designated TCS Express centres across Pakistan, with details to be announced in due course," added the PCB statement.

## Inter sweep Lecce aside to keep pace at top

LECCE: (News Desk) Inter Milan delivered a commanding performance as they cruised to a 4-0 victory at Lecce on Sunday to stay on the heels of Serie A leaders Napoli. The result kept Inter second in the standings with 50 points, three behind Napoli and with a game in hand. Lecce sit fourth from bottom with 20 points. With Napoli having opened up a six point lead following their 2-1 home win against Juventus on Saturday, Inter were determined to close the gap again and started aggressively. Six minutes in, Marcus Thuram evaded a defender with a slick step-over before passing to Davide Frattesi, who volleyed into the net for Inter's first goal. After Inter had two goals disallowed for offside in quick succession, manager Simone Inzaghi was left visibly frustrated and was shown a yellow card for stepping outside his technical area while voicing his displeasure. Lautaro Martinez made it 2-0 for Inter six minutes before the break, firing a left-footed strike from the edge of the box that soared into the top corner. Inter continued to dominate following the interval, with Denzel Dumfries battling his way into a tight position near the goal and slotting the ball into the far bottom corner to make it 3-0. The nightmare deepened for Lecce just three minutes later, as goalkeeper Wladimiro Falcone, rushing out to intercept a through ball, tripped Frattesi's legs in the process. Mehdi Taremi converted the resulting penalty with ease to make it 4-0 in the 61st minute. With the win all but secured, Inzaghi made several substitutions as he opted to take off a number of key players. Inter goalkeeper Yann Sommer denied the hosts a consolation goal when he palmed away Ylber Ramadani's long-range effort to preserve his team's clean sheet. "We approached the match brilliantly and it wasn't easy because we got back at dawn after the match in Prague on Wednesday, we had two days and then another trip down here," said Inzaghi.

## One-China Policy remains unchanged: Foreign Office

ISLAMABAD: (News Desk) The Foreign Office on Monday affirmed that its policy of supporting One-China Policy remains unchanged, dismissing media speculations as baseless attempts to undermine Pakistan-China relations. In a statement, the Foreign Office described the One-China Policy as a consistent cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy, emphasising that the country's stance remains the same. Chinese embassy in Washington reportedly has since raised the issue with its Pakistani

counterpart, expressing concern about the incident. China is Pakistan's strategic partner, the FO reiterated. This relationship is characterised by mutual trust, shared values, support on issues of core concern, and a commitment to regional and global stability. The statement came in response to growing criticism of Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's participation in an event sponsored by the New Federal State of China (NFSC), an anti-China group.

But the FO did not specify the media speculations it was addressing, but reiterated Pakistan's commitment to its strategic partnership with China, calling such allegations baseless and unfounded. Media reports described as 'baseless attempts to undermine ties between the two countries' Mr Naqvi, who faced backlash over his participation in the event, had earlier issued his own clarification, denying that the event was anti-China but stopping short of addressing

claims that it was hosted by NFSC. In contrast, the Foreign Office avoided direct comment on the controversy surrounding NFSC's sponsorship of the event. A diplomatic source, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Dawn that the event in question was organised by Gunster Strategies, a lobbying firm that boasts its connections with US President Donald Trump's allies and family members. NFSC was reportedly one of the sponsors.

Gunster Strategies held the event to celebrate Trump's inauguration, though Mr Naqvi claimed that the event he attended was a youth event. The source revealed that Mr Naqvi's office had coordinated his participation directly, bypassing Pakistan's embassy in Washington. The embassy's involvement was limited to providing transportation for the minister to the event, the source added. The source claimed that Mr Naqvi had a personal liaison in Washington

who handled his connections. The Chinese embassy in Washington reportedly has since raised the issue with its Pakistani counterpart, expressing concern about the incident. China is Pakistan's strategic partner, the FO reiterated. This relationship is characterised by mutual trust, shared values, support on issues of core concern, and a commitment to regional and global stability, it further asserted. Mr Naqvi was contacted for comments, but he did not respond to the request.