

## Key Bangladesh party warns over unrest after buildings smashed

Dhaka(News Desk) The Bangladesh National Party (BNP) has spoken out publicly for the first time against the interim government after a surge of unrest and a sweeping security crackdown. Police have arrested more than 1,500 people nationwide since Saturday as part of "Operation Devil Hunt", targeting groups allegedly connected to ousted premier Sheikh Hasina, who was toppled in a student-led revolution in August. Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, BNP secretary-general, met interim leader Mohammed Yunus late on Monday to "raise concerns over the incidents that have swept across the country". Protesters smashed buildings connected to Hasina's family using excavators — including a museum to her late father, Bangladesh's first president — on February 5, six months to the day since she fled as crowds stormed her palace in Dhaka. Police stood by as protesters torched the building. "It all happened in front of law enforcement agencies, so the government cannot avoid its responsibility," Alamgir said.

## India to buy combat vehicles, fighter jet engines from US

Delhi(News Desk) NEW DELHI: India is in talks with the United States for the purchase and co-production of combat vehicles as well as finalising a fighter jet engine deal, people familiar with the matter said, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets President Donald Trump this week. The world's biggest arms importer, India traditionally relies mainly on Russia. Last month, Trump asked Modi, who heads to Washington on Wednesday for a two-day visit, to buy more US-made security equipment and move "toward a fair trading relationship". India and the United States have been in protracted talks over the co-production of Stryker combat vehicles made by General Dynamics and also used by the US Army. They are also working to wrap up contract talks on co-production of fighter jet engines in India for the Indian Air Force, a deal agreed in 2023, said two sources. "We certainly wish to expedite the transaction which we would like to have with the United States," Defence Production Secretary Sanjeev Kumar told reporters on Sunday, adding that such efforts were underway. But he did not elaborate. Officials of India's state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) are set to meet in coming weeks with US officials and the aerospace unit of General Electric, maker of GE-414 engines, for talks to finalise the deal by March, the sources said. New Delhi has started talks with the Trump administration on a plan to buy Stryker vehicles after they were demonstrated late last year for the Indian Army, two other sources said. The plan envisages that India will acquire a few hundred Strykers with a mounted anti-tank guided missile system, they added, and later co-produce them through a state-run firm, the sources said.

## World may have entered era of 1.5C warming, scientists say

PARIS: (News Desk) Last year's record-breaking temperatures could be a sign that the world is entering a new era above 1.5C of global warming, scientists say, one never before faced by modern humans. The Paris Agreement threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels is a small-sounding number with big implications for people and nature. It is a marker of risk, with more warming from planet-heating emissions linked to worsening floods, heatwaves and storms, as well as gradual effects like sea level rise and species extinctions. "Every fraction of a degree beyond this level translates into more extreme weather, biodiversity loss, and human suffering," said William Ripple, Professor at Oregon State University. But when can we say 1.5C is officially crossed? That is the focus of two studies published on Monday in the journal Nature Climate Change. Scientists sought to square the long-term Paris goals with the extraordinary heat seen in 2024, the first full calendar year above 1.5C, according to the World Meteorological Organisation. A single year above the limit does not mark a beach of the Paris deal, which is measured as a rolling average over 20 or 30 years, to smooth out year-on-year temperature variability. By that measure the world has so far warmed roughly 1.3C, warmer than it has been for the last 125,000 years, scientists say. Call to action: One team based in Germany and Austria used observational data and computer modelling to assess whether crossing 1.5C over one year might represent an "early warning" that the long-term limit at risk. They found that historical patterns suggested the first single year that crosses a particular temperature threshold tends to fall within the longer-term 20-year period where that global warming level is reached. "The calendar year of 2024 was announced as the first above 1.5C warming and, therefore, it signals that most probably Earth has already entered a 20-year period at 1.5C warming," the authors said. An official breach of the Paris goal would happen at the mid-point of the period — so within the next 10 years — unless "stringent" efforts are made to slash greenhouse gas emissions, they said.



Emergency crews respond after a midsize business jet skidded off the runway while landing and collided with another jet that was parked at the municipal airport in Scottsdale, Arizona, US on February 10.

## At least one dead as business jets collide at US airport

Washington(News Desk) At least one person died when a business jet smashed into another plane after landing at a US airport Monday, authorities said, the latest in a string of deadly aviation accidents in the United States. One person remained trapped inside one of the planes at Scottsdale Airport in Arizona, with three others taken to hospital.

Pictures from the scene showed a jet appeared to have slammed into the back of a larger plane, with emergency vehicles on hand. "A Learjet 35A veered off the runway after landing and crashed into a Gulfstream 200 business jet on the ramp at Scottsdale Municipal Airport in Arizona," a spokesperson for the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) said.

"We do not know how many people were on board. The FAA is temporarily pausing flights into the airport." Dave Folio, of the Scottsdale Fire Department, said units were on the runway trying to free one person. "I can tell you that we have five souls, one dead on arrival at hospital, two immediate that have been transported to local trauma centers," he told a press

conference. One other person whose condition he described as stable was also taken to the hospital. The crash was the latest in a series of aviation tragedies that have rocked the United States. On January 30, a passenger jet collided in midair with a US Army helicopter in Washington, killing all 67 people aboard both aircraft.

## Iran pardons journalists who reported woman's death that triggered unrest

Tehran(News Desk) Iran's top judicial authority has pardoned two journalists who uncovered the death of a young woman in police custody that triggered nationwide protests in 2022, the judiciary's news outlet Mizan said on Tuesday. Niloofar Hamedani and Elaheh Mohammadi had been sentenced to 13 and 12 years in prison respectively by an Irani-

an Revolutionary Court in October 2023 for their coverage of the death of Mahsa Amini, a Kurdish-Iranian woman in the custody of the morality police for allegedly violating Iran's strict dress code. "Following the approval by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei of a list of pardons that was prepared by the judiciary's head, these individuals

were pardoned," Mizan said, adding that the pardons were applied on the occasion of the 46th anniversary of the 1979 Islamic revolution. Last year, both journalists were temporarily released after 17 months in prison, and later acquitted of the charge of "collaboration with the US" in an appeal court. Other charges such as "colluding against nation-

al security" and "propaganda against the regime" remained, but have now been cleared by the pardon and the journalists' judicial case is now closed. Protests that followed Amini's death led to the worst unrest in Iran since the revolution. The authorities blamed the United States for fomenting the demonstrations, which Washington denied.



Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei reacts during a meeting with Army Air Force officers in Tehran, Iran on February 7.

## Suicide bomber kills five outside bank in Afghanistan: police

Kabul(News Desk) A suicide bomber killed five people including Taliban security forces on Tuesday in an explosion outside a bank in northern Afghanistan, police said. Seven people were also wounded in the attack which targeted a queue of people waiting to collect their salaries from a bank in the

city of Kunduz, the capital of Kunduz province. "A suicide bomber, who had improvised explosive devices, detonated himself," said Jumadin Khaksar, police spokesman for Kunduz province. He said civilians, civil servants and members of the Taliban security forces were among those killed. "The

Kunduz Province Police Command is working with relevant organisations to find the perpetrators of the incident and bring them to justice." In March last year, a suicide bomber killed at least three people when he detonated a bomb outside a bank in the southern city of Kandahar, in an attack claimed by the regional

chapter of the Islamic State (IS). There was no immediate claim of responsibility for Tuesday's attack. The number of bomb blasts and suicide attacks in Afghanistan has markedly declined since the Taliban ended their insurgency after seizing power in August 2021, ousting the US-backed government.

## Trump aims to bring Iran 'to its knees': Pezeshkian

TEHRAN: (News Desk) Iran's president accused his US counterpart Donald Trump on Monday of seeking to bring the Islamic republic "to its knees" as the country marked the 1979 revolution that toppled the shah. The revolution removed a pro-US government in Iran, and the subsequent hostage-taking of American diplomats in Tehran ushered in decades of hostility between the United States and Iran. This year's celebrations carry additional weight following Trump's return to the White House. During his first term, Trump pursued a policy of "maximum pressure" against the Islamic republic. In the morning, people gathered in public spaces across Iran, accompanied by pop songs and patriotic ballads, to celebrate the anniversary of the overthrow of shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. In Tehran, they headed to the symbolic Azadi tower, whose name means "freedom" in Persian, and which is in a square formerly named in honour of the shah. Thousands gather across country as Tehran marks anniversary of 1979 overthrow of Reza Pahlavi. "Trump says, 'we want to talk,' and... (then) he signs in a memorandum all the conspiracies to bring our revolution to its knees," Pezeshkian told the crowd, referring to Trump's reinstatement of sanctions against Tehran.

## Fast bowlers need more discipline than speed, says Naseem

KARACHI: (News Desk) Fast bowlers will need to rely on discipline rather than sheer speed to be effective in conditions at play in the ongoing tri-nation series and the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy, Pakistan pacer Naseem Shah said. Pakistan are the hosts of both tournaments, with the Champions Trophy to start on Feb 19. The tri-nation series — involving South Africa and New Zealand along with the hosts — meanwhile, is to feature two more matches; Pakistan's clash against the Proteas on Wednesday and the final on Friday. If Pakistan are to make it to the final, they have to bounce back strongly after receiving a 78-run thrashing from New Zealand in the tournament opener. The fixture saw Pakistan's premium pacers Naseem and Shaheen Shah Afridi leak 70 and 88 runs respectively, raising questions over their status as the team's fast bowling spearheads. Both players have been subjected to criticism over their fitness issues and dropping bowling speeds. For Naseem though, it isn't all about pace on Pakistan's surfaces. "If you look at the last match, I still bowled around 140, which is normal in one-day cricket," Naseem said during a press conference ahead of Pakistan's training session here at the National Bank Stadium on Monday. "If you look at bowlers around the world, only a few bowl consistently at 145-150.

## Guardiola challenges City to show they are still 'special' against Real

MANCHESTER: (News Desk) Pep Guardiola has challenged his Manchester City side to prove they are still "something special" in their blockbuster Champions League tie against Real Madrid despite a turbulent season for the Premier League champions. The two clubs meet in Europe's elite competition for a fourth consecutive season but this time much earlier in the tournament as both under-performed in the new league phase. City sneaked into the next round in 22nd place in the 36-team table by winning their final game against Club Brugge, while defending champions Real finished 11th. Guardiola admitted at Monday's pre-match press conference that his team, European champions in 2023, were "not even close" to finishing in the top eight, which meant automatic qualification for the last 16. Real Madrid, European champions a record 15 times, secured a seeding for the knockout play-offs, meaning they host the second leg of the tie, which the City boss admitted was an advantage. "When you finish 22nd [out of 24] you cannot ask any favour, you cannot ask anything that you didn't win," Guardiola said ahead of Tuesday's first leg at the Etihad. "Always I believe what happens in football, normally you have to deserve it and we didn't deserve it."

## PFF NC sees change at helm, rules Pakistan out of Asian Cup qualifiers

KARACHI: (News Desk) The Pakistan Football Federation Normalisation Committee will have a fourth different chairman at its helm with Saud Azim Hashmi now tasked to complete the long, drawn-out process of elections of the country's football governing body. The FIFA appointed PFF NC on Monday released a short statement — which was later deleted — that Saud will replace Haroon Malik as the chairman with the other members — Shahid Khokhar and Haris Azmat — remaining unchanged. Haroon will step down on Feb 15, which was the the deadline for the eighth extension given to the PFF NC since its appointment in September 2019. The mandate of the PFF NC was further extended to July 31 after the PFF was suspended by FIFA following the refusal of the PFF Congress to accept the constitutional amendments proposed by the global football body ahead of the presidential election. Saud, who follows Humza Khan, Munir Sadhana and Haroon as the NC chairman, will now be tasked with convincing the congress members into accepting the constitutional amendments and finally holding the PFF elections. The holding of the elections are conditional to the suspension being lifted but in a surprising move, the PFF NC announced that Pakistan will be unable to feature in the final round of qualifying for the 2027 AFC Asian Cup. The Asian Football Confederation had told the PFF that Pakistan would be "considered to be withdrawn from the competition should the suspension on PFF not be lifted by March 4." Pakistan are due to face Syria in their opening Group 'E' match on March 25. The PFF NC's announcement of immediate withdrawal, stating Pakistan "will be unable to participate", points to deeper issues with FIFA having suspended funding due to an audit issue since last year. Last month, a FIFA spokesperson told Dawn that the world's football governing body was "in contact with the PFF normalisation committee on the matter".

## Trump floats Ukraine 'may be Russian someday' ahead of Zelensky-Vance meeting

Washington(News Desk) US President Donald Trump floated the idea that Ukraine "may be Russian someday", as his Vice President JD Vance gears up to meet Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky later this week. Pushing for an end to the nearly three-year war with Russia, Trump discussed the conflict in an interview with broadcaster Fox News that aired on Monday. "They may make a deal,

they may not make a deal. They may be Russian someday, or they may not be Russian someday," he said. Trump also emphasised reaping a return on investment with US aid to Ukraine, suggesting a trade for Kyiv's natural resources, such as rare minerals. "We are going to have all this money in there, and I say I want it back. And I told them that I want the equivalent, like \$500 bil-

lion worth of rare earth," Trump said. "And they have essentially agreed to do that, so at least we don't feel stupid." Trump also confirmed on Monday that he will soon dispatch to Ukraine his special envoy Keith Kellogg, who is tasked with drawing up a proposal to halt the fighting. Trump is pressing for a swift end to the conflict, while Zelensky is calling for tough security guarantees from Washington

as part of any deal with Russia. Kyiv fears that any settlement that does not include hard military commitments — such as membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (Nato) or the deployment of peacekeeping troops — will just allow the Kremlin time to regroup and re-arm for a fresh attack. Zelensky's spokesman Sergiy Nikiforov told AFP that the Ukrainian president will meet with Vance this

Friday on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference. A source in Zelensky's office said Kellogg would arrive in Ukraine on February 20, without detailing where in the country he would visit. His trip would come just days before the three-year anniversary of Russia's invasion on February 24. Zelensky called on Monday for "real peace and effective security guarantees" for Ukraine. "Security of peo-

ple, security of our state, security of economic relations and, of course, our resource sustainability: not only for Ukraine, but for the entire free world," he said. "All of this is being decided now," Zelensky added in a video address published on social media. Trump meeting - Trump has said he wants to broker an end to the war but has not outlined a detailed proposal to bring the two sides to the negotiating table.