

## The University of Agriculture, Faisalabad staged Rana Manzoor Khan, Raja Rustam Khan Memorial Greyhound Derby Championship

Faisalabad(News Desk) FAISALABAD February 03: The University of Agriculture, Faisalabad staged Rana Manzoor Khan, Raja Rustam Khan Memorial Greyhound Derby Championship at the Tent Pegging Ground which remained a centre of attraction for greyhound lovers. It was meant to present the golden moments of rural culture before the participants. In his message, UAF Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Muhammad Sarwar Khan said the University is considered the custodian of rural culture. He said that such competitions not only provide entertainment opportunities but also strengthen the ties between farmers and agricultural scientists. He said that being the first agricultural institution of the subcontinent, UAF is taking all possible steps to address the agrarian problems. He said that by bringing modern agricultural technology at the doorsteps of farming community, the dream of economic development can be fulfilled and food security also be ensured. Dr. Haroon Zaman and Dr Shahid Ibrni Zamir also spoke.

## Car bomb kills 15 in northern Syria in deadliest attack since Assad ouster

Manbij(News Desk) A car bomb killed at least 15 people in the northern Syrian city of Manbij on Monday, the second attack there in three days and Syria's deadliest since Bashar al-Assad was toppled from power in December.

There were no immediate claims of responsibility for the attack in Manbij, located some 30 kilometres from the Turkish border. The civil defence rescue service identified the dead as 14 women and one man and said another 15 women were wounded.

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) condemned the car bombing, accusing Turkey-backed factions of using such bombings and violence to intimidate local residents.

The victims were agricultural workers and the death toll was likely to increase, a civil defence official told Reuters.

Manbij has changed hands numerous times during Syria's 13-year civil war, most recently in December when Turkish-backed groups captured it from the US-backed SDF, which is led by the Kurdish YPG militia. The SDF had taken Manbij from the militant Islamic State group in 2016.

On Saturday, a car bomb in Manbij killed four civilians and wounded nine others, including children, the Syrian state news agency SANA reported.

## India vows to avoid protectionist signals on trade, says top official

Delhi(News Desk) India does not want to give any signal that it is protectionist, the top bureaucrat in the finance ministry said, after slashing import duties on high-end motorcycles, amid US President Donald Trump's moves on tariffs.

Sunday's remarks came a day after Trump ignited a trade war with sweeping tariffs on Canada, Mexico and China. None were aimed at India, although Trump had called it a tariff abuser during his election campaign last year.

"We don't want to give anybody any signal that we would like to be protectionist," Finance Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey told Reuters in an interview after the budget, unveiled on Saturday.

"Our stance is that we don't want to increase protection."

Trade and immigration issues will take centre stage when Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets this month with Trump, whose administration India has sought to placate after his accusations that its tariffs hurt prospects for American firms.

India's budget cut import tariff slabs, reducing average basic customs duties on scores of items such as raw materials for domestic industries like textiles and automobiles, Pandey added.

Average import tariffs on essential goods, mainly items of food and raw material, range from zero to 5 per cent, while those on capital goods range from 7.5pc to 10pc, with about 10 items in higher tax categories, he said.

Trade analysts were not convinced the cuts were sufficient, however. "India's average tariffs are still much higher compared to the United States, Japan and China," said Ajay Srivastava, founder of Global Trade Research Initiative, a think tank based in Delhi.

While India was slashing peak rates of basic customs duties used for international comparisons, it was adding various surcharges on imports, implying that the total tax burden remained high, he said.



Members of the White Helmets work in the aftermath of a car bomb explosion, in Manbij, Syria, February 3.

## Trump announces talks with Canada, Mexico over sweeping tariffs

Washington(News desk) US President Donald Trump said he will discuss the punishing tariffs he has levied on Canada and Mexico with both countries on Monday, after arguing that Americans may feel economic "pain" from the 25 per cent duties but that it will be "worth the price".

Speaking to reporters after he flew back to Washington on Sunday evening

from a weekend in Florida, Trump said he was "speaking with Prime Minister [Justin] Trudeau tomorrow morning, and I'm also speaking with Mexico tomorrow morning". "I don't expect anything very dramatic," he added. Trump has also hit China with a 10pc tariff in addition to levies already in place.

A fervent supporter of tariffs, Trump had always

maintained that their impact would be borne by foreign exporters, without being passed on to American consumers, contradicting the opinion of a broad range of experts.

Earlier on Sunday he acknowledged, in a series of messages on his Truth Social network, that Americans may feel economic "pain" from his tariffs, but argued it would be "worth the price" to secure US in-

terests. China, Mexico and Canada are the top three US trade partners and all have vowed to retaliate when the tariffs take effect Tuesday. "Will there be some pain? Yes, maybe (and maybe not!)" Trump wrote Sunday morning in all-caps on his Truth Social media platform. "But we will Make America Great Again, and it will all be worth the price that must be paid."

## UN says shooting incident at Kabul compound killed one

Kabul(News Desk) Gunshots fired by a member of the Taliban's security forces at the United Nations' largest compound (UN says shooting incident at Kabul compound killed one ) killed one person and injured another in Kabul, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said in a state-

ment on Monday. The incident took place on Sunday, it said.

The person killed was a member of the Taliban-run security forces who was outside the compound, the statement said without adding any details.

The person injured was an international security guard contracted by the UN, it said. "UN-contracted se-

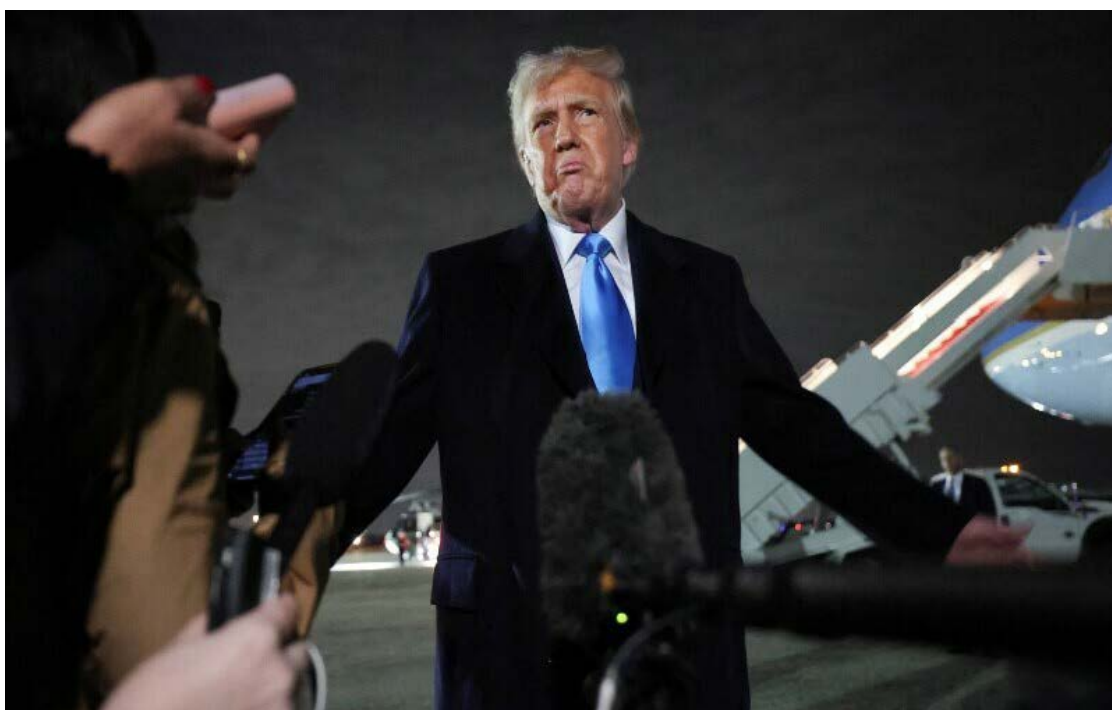
curity guards did not return fire during the incident," it said.

It was unclear what provoked the firing. Both the Taliban and the UN were investigating the incident.

Kabul's interior ministry spokesperson Abdul Mateen Qaniee confirmed that a Taliban guard was killed and one UN contractor suffered injuries.

Taliban authorities halted all movement in and out of the compound following the incident, UNAMA said, but those restrictions have now been lifted.

The compound houses the offices of multiple UN agencies, funds and programmes, and accommodation for UN international staff members.



US President Donald Trump speaks to reporters after stepping from Air Force One upon his return to Washington, at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland, US on February 2

## Swedish court finds man guilty of hate crime over Holy Quran desecrations

Malmö(News Desk) A Swedish court found an anti-Islam campaigner guilty on Monday of hate crimes for staging public desecrations of the Holy Quran, in a ruling handed down five days after another man also being prosecuted over the incidents was shot dead. Salwan Najem, a Swedish citizen, was given

a suspended sentence and fines over the desecrations and derogatory comments he made about Muslims in the 2023 incidents, which led to unrest and inspired anger towards Sweden in Muslim countries. Relations between Sweden and several Middle Eastern countries were strained by the pair's protests. Iraqi protesters

stormed the Swedish embassy in Baghdad twice in July 2023, starting fires within the compound on the second occasion. In August of that year, Sweden's intelligence service Sapó raised its threat level to four on a scale of one to five, saying the Koran burnings had made the country a "prioritised target". His fel-

low campaigner, Iraqi refugee Salwan Momika, was shot dead last week on the day he had been due to receive his verdict in a parallel case. No suspect has been charged yet in that killing; five people were detained but later released. Sweden's prime minister has said a foreign state may have been behind it.

## China to propose restoring 2020 'Phase 1' trade deal with US :report

Hongkong(News Desk) China's initial proposal to tariffs imposed by US President Donald Trump's administration will centre on restoring the "Phase 1" trade deal signed in 2020 during Trump's first term, the Wall Street Journal reported, citing sources.

Other parts of China's plan will include a pledge to not devalue the yuan, an offer to make more investments in the US and a commitment to reduce exports of fentanyl precursors, according to the WSJ report.

On Saturday, Trump imposed 25 per cent tariffs on Mexican and most Canadian imports and 10pc on goods from China over fentanyl, a deadly opioid, and illegal immigration.

China denounced the imposition of tariffs on its imports and pushed back on fentanyl, but left the door open for talks with the US that could avoid a deepening conflict. In contrast, Canada, a long-time ally of the US, slapped retaliatory tariffs of 25pc on Canadian \$155 billion (\$105.17bn) of US goods. The Phase 1 trade deal Trump signed with Beijing in 2020 ended a nearly two-year tariff war at that time. The deal required China to increase purchases of US exports by \$200bn over two years, but Beijing failed to meet the targets as the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

## Qatar sets up air bridge from Jordan to deliver medical supplies to Gaza

Gaza(News Desk) Qatar has launched an air bridge from Jordan to Al-Qarara in Khan Younis to bring vital medical supplies into Gaza, Al Jazeera reports.

The helicopter flights departing from King Abdullah II Air Base complement the land bridge previously set up by the Gulf state.

The launch of the air bridge was attended by a number of Qatari officials, including the Minister of State for International Cooperation Maryam bint Ali bin Nasser Al Misnad.

Separately, Qatar Charity and the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organisation signed an agreement to facilitate the entry of Qatari humanitarian aid via land through Jordan.

In her speech, the minister said Qatar has sent 65 relief trucks through the Jordanian border since the start of the ceasefire. Also Hamas is ready to begin talks on the details of a second phase of the ongoing truce in Gaza, two officials from the Palestinian group told AFP.

"Hamas has informed the mediators, during ongoing communications and meetings held with Egyptian mediators last week in Cairo, that we are ready to start the negotiations for the second phase," one official said on condition of anonymity.

"We are waiting for the mediators to initiate the next round of negotiation," said another.

## Abhishek ton helps India demolish England in final Twenty20

MUMBAI: (News Desk) India's Abhishek Sharma hit a brutal 135 to set up a crushing 150-run win over England in the fifth T20 international and seal the series 4-1 on Sunday.

Opener Abhishek's incredible 54-ball knock, laced with 13 sixes, fired India, who clinched the series in the fourth T20, to 247-9 after being invited to bat first at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium.

The tourists were never in the chase despite Phil Salt's 23-ball 55 as India bowled out the tourists for 97 for their second biggest T20 victory by runs. England slipped to 68-4 as skipper Jos Buttler (seven), Harry Brook (two) and Liam Livingstone (nine) all failed to make an impact.

Shivam Dube, a batting all-rounder who bowls medium pace, removed Salt with the first ball he bowled after he was controversially replaced by fast bowler Harshit Rana as a concussion substitute in the previous match. The rest of the England batting fell quickly with Jacob Bethell, who made 10, the only batter to reach double figures other than Salt. Abhishek turned up with the ball as well and took two wickets with his left-arm spin in the only over he bowled.

## United lose to Palace, Spurs ease pressure on Postecoglou

MANCHESTER: (News Desk) Manchester United slumped to another meek home defeat as Crystal Palace won 2-0 at Old Trafford on Sunday, while Tottenham eased the pressure on Ange Postecoglou by beating Brentford 2-0.

Jean Philippe-Mateta was Palace's hero with both goals in the second half as United suffered a fifth defeat in their last six home league games.

Victory takes the Eagles above the Red Devils in the table as Oliver Glasner's side climb to 12th.

Three consecutive wins for United had lifted the mood around Old Trafford but it was back to square one for Ruben Amorim after another home display lacking in creativity and riddled with defensive lapses.

Amorim's decision to start without a natural striker backfired with both Rasmus Hojlund and Joshua Zirkzee left on the bench.

Midfielder Kobbie Mainoo started in a centre-forward role after scoring in a 2-0 victory over Romanian side FCFSB in midweek.

The England international's scuffed strike came back off the post in United's best effort of a bright opening before their attacking threat fizzled out.

Palace have lost just one of their last seven league games to recover from a miserable start to the season. The visitors missed the creative spark offered by Eberechi Eze for the first hour as an injury meant he was only fit enough for a cameo appearance off the bench.

But Eze made an instant impact as from his free-kick Maxence Lacroix's header came back off the bar and into Mateta's path to fire home.

Worse was to follow for United as Lisandro Martinez had to be stretchered off with what appeared a serious knee injury. Palace showed no mercy to secure the three points when Daniel Munoz charged through the middle of the home side's defence and unselfishly squared for Mateta to knock in his sixth goal in five games.

## OpenAI announces new 'deep research' tool for ChatGPT

Washington(News Desk) US tech giant OpenAI on Monday unveiled a ChatGPT tool called "deep research" that can produce detailed reports, as China's DeepSeek chatbot heats up competition in the artificial intelligence (AI) field.

The company made the announcement in Tokyo, where OpenAI chief Sam Altman also trumpeted a new joint venture with tech investor SoftBank Group to offer advanced artificial intelligence services to businesses.

Altman and SoftBank

founder Masayoshi Son will meet the Japanese prime minister later on Monday and will reportedly announce plans to boost Japan's AI infrastructure. It comes as AI newcomer DeepSeek has sent Silicon Valley into a frenzy, with some calling its high performance and supposed low cost a wake-up call for US developers.

OpenAI, whose ChatGPT led generative AI's emergence into public consciousness in 2022, said its new tool "accomplishes in tens of minutes what

would take a human many hours." "You give it a prompt, and ChatGPT will find, analyse, and synthesise hundreds of online sources to create a comprehensive report at the level of a research analyst," the company said in a statement. On social media platform X Altman said that deep research, which paid "Pro" ChatGPT users can access 100 times a month, was "slow" and required a lot of computing power. But he was more bullish on stage at a business forum in Tokyo. "This is a system

that I think can do — this is just an estimate of mine — but I think can do a single-digit percentage of all economically valuable tasks in the world," Altman said. Crystal ball SoftBank and OpenAI are part of the Stargate drive announced by US President Donald Trump to invest up to \$500 billion in artificial intelligence infrastructure in the United States. Similar steps to build AI data centres and power plants in Japan could be announced when Altman and Son meet Prime Minister Shigeru

Ishiba, the Nikkei newspaper said.

Ishiba is also expected to visit Washington to meet Trump for the leaders' first in-person meeting later this week. At their event for businesses on Monday afternoon, Son announced a new joint venture equally split between the two companies. Holding a purple crystal ball, the Japanese tycoon outlined the services of a new AI product called Cristal, which can crunch firms' system data, reports, emails and meetings. A joint state-

ment said SoftBank would "spend \$3bn annually to deploy OpenAI's solutions across its group companies". The venture "will serve as a springboard for introducing AI agents tailored to the unique needs of Japanese enterprises while setting a model for global adoption", it said. "New kind of hardware" Separately, Altman told the Nikkei he wanted to develop "a new kind of hardware" using artificial intelligence in partnership with Apple's former chief design officer Jony Ive.