# Study Abroad

## Japanese judge Yuji Iwasawa appointed ICJ president THE HAGUE: (News Desk) The International Court

of Justice on Monday appointed Yuji Iwasawa as its new president, replacing Nawaf Salam, the new prime minister of Lebanon.

The 70-year-old will head the court until Salam's term was due to expire on Feb 5, 2027, the ICJ said in a statement. Iwasawa has been a member of the court since June 2018. Before joining the ICJ, he was professor of international law at the University of Tokyo and chair of the United Nations Human Rights Committee.

Often dubbed the "world court", the ICJ, which sits in the Peace Palace in The Hague, rules in disputes between nations. It is the UN's highest court. It is sometimes confused with the International Criminal Court, also based in The Hague, which tries individuals for the world's worst crimes including suspected war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The ICJ is currently dealing with several especially high-profile cases. It is weighing on a case brought by South Africa that Israel is allegedly committing genocide in its Gaza offensive.

#### UN rights chief worried about 'direction' of US policy

GENEVA: (News Desk) The United Nations rights chief expressed deep concern on Monday about a "fundamental shift in direction" by the United States under President Donald Trump, warning that divisive rhetoric is being used to deceive and polarise people. "We have enjoyed bipartisan support from the US on human rights over many decades ... I am now deeply worried by the fundamental shift in direction that is taking place domestically and internationally," the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Turk, said in a speech which did not mention Trump by name. "Policies intended to protect people from discrimination are now labelled as discriminatory ... Divisive rhetoric is being used to distort, deceive and polarise. This is generating fear and anxiety among many," he saidTurk's speech to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva — a body which Trump disengaged from in February — are his strongest remarks so far on the impact of the new US administration's policies. Since taking office on Jan 20, Trump has issued a series of executive orders aimed at dismantling diversity, equity and inclusion programmes across the federal government and the private sector. USAID programmes were also paused for 90 days, while his administration reviews if they align with its 'America first' policy.

#### Walesa blasts Trump over communist-style Zelensky grilling

WARSAW: (News Desk) Poland's freedom icon Lech Walesa and several other communist-era dissidents on Monday slammed Donald Trump over his clash with Volodymyr Zelensky, comparing the US president's actions to "communist

In their Oval Office meeting on Friday, Trump berated Zelensky, telling him to be more "thankful" for US support against the invading Russian army in the three-year war and that without US assistance, Ukraine would have been conquered

In a letter addressed to the US president, Walesa and around 40 other Polish former dissidents said they had watched Trump's conversation with Zelensky "with horror and disgust". "The atmosphere in the Oval Office during this conversation reminded us of the hearings by the Security Service and in the communist courtrooms," former Polish president Walesa and fellow dissidents said in the

"We find your expectations of respect and gratitude for the material aid provided by the United States to Ukraine, which is fighting against Russia, offensive," they told Trump. Walesa is feted as an icon of freedom as he led a 1980 shipyard workers' strike, forcing the then-authorities to recognise the communist bloc's first and only free trade union, Solidarity. find your expectations of respect and gratitude for the material aid provided by the United States to Ukraine, which is fighting against Russia, offensive He and several other top dissidents were arrested after martial law was imposed in 1981. find your expectations of respect and gratitude for the material aid provided by the United States to Ukraine, which is fighting against Russia, offensive He then won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983. After the fall of communism, find your expectations of respect and gratitude for the material aid provided by the United States to Ukraine, which is fighting against Russia, offensive Walesa in 1990 became Poland's first democratically elected president since World War II. Poland is a staunch ally of its neighbour Ukraine and has advocated ramped up military aid to the war-torn country. On Friday, following the heated exchange in the White House, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, in a show of support to Zelensky, assured Ukrainians they were "not alone".



A SIGNAGE showing 6G is on display during the exhibition

## Small-budget sex worker romp Anora bags best picture, four other Oscars

HOLLYWOOD: (News Desk) Independent film Anora — the tale of a sex worker whose marriage to the son of a Russian oligarch quickly unravels — was the big winner at the Oscars on Sunday, scooping five awards including best picture.Sean Baker's black comedy also took home the Academy Awards for best director, best editing, best original

tress for 25-year-old star Mikey Madison. "This is a dream come true," said Madison."I grew up in Los Angeles, but Hollywood always felt so far away from me. So to be here standing in this room today is really incredible." A shellshocked Madison later told reporters backstage she was still processing a win that looked set to open career

doors — even though she had no idea what was next. "I just know that tonight I'm going to go home to my new puppies and probably clean up their mess," she laughed. Her win was something of an upset, as she bested 1990s megastar Demi Moore, who had been the odds-on favorite to cap a late career flourish with a golden statuette for body-horror flick The Sub-

stance. Baker used one of his four acceptance speeches to urge support for independent movies.Brazil wins its first Oscar for I'm Still Here, and Latvia's Flow adjudged the best animated film"I want to thank the Academy for recognising a truly independent film. This film was made on the blood, sweat and tears of incredible indie artists," he

#### Israeli-Palestinian film wins Oscar

LOS ANGELES:(News Desk) No Other Land, a film about Israeli displacement of a Palestinian community, won the documentary feature film Oscar on Sunday, and its directors appealed to the world to help end the conflict and accused the United States of blocking a solution.

The film's co-directors, Palestinian activist Basel Adra and Israeli journalist Yuval Abraham, spent five years making the film, which shows Israeli soldiers tearing down homes and evicting residents to create a military training ground and the encroachment of Jewish settlers on the Palestinian community. The documentary highlights the parallel realities in which the two  $friends\ live -- Abraham$ with his yellow Israeli number plate that lets travel anywhere,

Adra confined to a territory that only ever gets smaller for Pales-

"No Other Land reflects the harsh reality that we have been enduring for decades and still resist as we call on the world to take serious actions to stop the injustice and to stop the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people, No Other Land reflects the harsh reality that we have been enduring

for decades and still resist as we call on the world to take serious actions to stop the injustice and to stop the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people," Adra said on taking the stage." Adra said on

taking the stage. Standing beside his co-director, Abraham added: "We made this film, Palestinians and Israelis, because together our voices are stronger."



FORENSIC experts work on the car which drove into a crowd in Mannheim, Germany, on Monday.

#### Pope suffers two episodes of 'acute respiratory failure'

ROME: (News Desk) Pope Francis suffered two new breathing attacks on Monday, requiring two separate bronchoscopies, the Vatican said, as the 88-year-old pontiff struggles to recover from pneumonia.

"Today, the Holy Father experienced two episodes of acute respiratory failure, caused by a significant accumulation of endobronchial mucus and consequent bronchospasm," it said in a statement on Pope Francis's 18th day in hospital, the longest of his papacy. The Argentine pope was admitted to Rome's Gemelli hospital on Feb 14 with bronchitis, which developed into pneumonia in both lungs,

sparking alarm across the

globe. The Vatican said in its nightly medical bulletin that two bronchoscopies were performed on the pope in order to "aspirate abundant secretions". It said the pope had resumed "non-invasive mechanical ventilation" in the afternoon — the use of an oxygen mask - noting that he was "alert, focused and cooperative." As it has

since the start of the pope's hospitalisation, the Vatican said Pope Francis's prognosis remains "reserved," an indication that doctors cannot predict the likely outcome of his condition.

On Sunday evening, the Vatican had said the pope's condition was stable, after he suffered a breathing crisis on Friday.

# Israeli fire kills two Palestinians in Gaza

CAIRO: (News Desk) Israeli fire killed at least two people in Rafah and wounded three others in Khan Younis in the south of Gaza.

At least two people were killed by Israeli drone fire in Rafah, and three people were wounded by a helicopter that fired on Khan Younis, medics said.

Residents said Israeli tanks stationed near the eastern and southern borders of Gaza intensified gunfire and tank shelling into the outskirts throughout the night. A Palestinian official with a group allied to

Hamas said a state of alert had been declared among fighters.

In a statement, the Israeli military alleged its forces fired at a motorboat in the coastal area of Khan Younis violating security restrictions in the area and posing a threat. The military said in another incident in southern Gaza, its forces identified two suspects who were moving towards them and posing a threat. Israeli forces "fired at the suspects to eliminate the threat and identified casualties," it

Stabbing in coastal city of Haifa kills one person Separately, a stabbing in Israel's coastal city of Haifa killed one person on Monday and ended with the Israeli Arab assailant dead, in the country's first fatal attack since the Gaza ceasefire began in late January. The stabbing came one day after Israel blocked aid to the Gaza Strip during an impasse over extending the truce

Monday's attack happened at a bus and train station in Haifa, a coast-

in the Palestinian territo-

al city in northern Israel home to a mixed Jewish and Arab population. "A terrorist exited a bus, stabbed multiple civilians, and was subsequently neutralised by a security guard and a civilian at the scene," police said.

Israel's Magen David Adom emergency service said they pronounced dead a man aged around 70, and treated four other wounded people. Police identified the assailant as a member of Israel's Druze Arab minority.

Attacks by members of the Arabic-speaking

Druze community are rare, however. Food prices surge The Hamas-run Gaza

interior ministry called on residents to provide information about merchants raising food prices in the wake of the new blockade. Tamer al-Burai, a Gaza businessman, said that with shops suddenly empty, the price of a sack of flour had risen to 100 shekels (\$28) from 40 shekels. Prices for cooking oil, fuel, and vegetables had also surged.

"It is catastrophic and things might become worse if the ceasefire isn't resumed or there is no intervention by the local authorities against greedy merchants," he said via a chat app.

Israel raised the stakes on Sunday by imposing a total blockade on all supplies, including food and fuel, meant to sustain the 2.3 million Gazans living among the ruins after the 15-month conflict. Salama Marouf, head of the Gaza government media office, urged Gazans not to panic, saying there was enough food in markets for at least two weeks

#### Royal Society of top scientists faces calls to expel Musk

LONDON: (News Desk) Britain's Royal Society will hold a crunch meeting this week following calls to expel the world's richest man, technology billionaire Elon Musk, from the prestigious institute of scientists. Founded in 1660, the Royal Society describes itself as a "fellowship of many of the world's most eminent scientists" and is a key voice in the global scientific community. Past members have included Albert Einstein, Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin, Dorothy Hodgkin, Benjamin Franklin and Stephen Hawking.But after members raised concerns about X owner Musk, who was elected a fellow in 2018, the organisation said it would now discuss "the principles around public pronouncements and behaviours of fellows". Nobel prize winners were among more than 3,000 people who signed an open letter published last month arguing that Musk had broken the Society's code of conduct by promoting "unfounded conspiracy theories".

# Clock ticking down to Trump tariffs on Canada, Mexico, China

WASHINGTON: (News Desk) Time is running short for Canada, Mexico and China to avert sweeping tariffs announced by US President Donald Trump with the planned levies to take effect on Tuesday over what he deems an "unacceptable" flow of drugs. Trump unveiled — then paused — blanket tariffs on imports from his country's major trading partners Canada and Mexico in February, accusing them of failing to stop illegal immigration and drug trafficking. The halt is due to expire on Tuesday.

But sweeping levies of up to 25 percent will likely snarl supply chains for key sectors like automobiles and construction materials, risking a hike in consumer prices. This could complicate Trump's efforts to fulfil his campaign promises of lowering the cost of living for households.

Trump has also threatened a further 10-pc tariff on Chinese goods, piling on an additional 10-pc rate that has already taken effect. "There's no doubt that the administration is trying to solve the long-standing fentanyl and immigration challenges, and these tariffs have given the administration leverage as we've seen with the response so far by Canada and Mexico," said Ryan Majerus, a former US trade of-

#### Two killed, several hurt as car hits crowd in Germany

MANNHEIM: (News Desk) A driver struck a crowd in southwest Germany on Monday, killing two people and seriously hurting several more, authorities said, adding that a 40-year-old German suspect was arrested at the scene.Armed police shut down and evacuated the inner city of Mannheim after a car was driven through a pedestrian shopping area, with authorities saying they were working to determine the "perpetrator's motivation". Two car ramming attacks in other German cities since December have killed eight people, while Mannheim was the scene of a stabbing attack at an anti-Islam rally last May that killed a policeman and wounded five other people.German Chancellor Olaf Scholz condemned the incident as a "senseless act of violence". "Once again we mourn with the relatives of the victims of a senseless act of violence and fear for the injured," Scholz said in a post on X, adding: "We cannot accept this." Security was a major theme in last month's general election, which was won by the centre-right CDU/CSU under Friedrich Merz. The incident "is a stark reminder to us: we must do everything we can to prevent such crimes... Germany must become a safe country again," Merz wrote on X.

## AI, trade tensions and EU's slow 5G mark opening of mobile industry's show

BARCELONA: (News Desk) The highly anticipated Mobile World Congress (MWC) Barcelona 2025 officially kicked off on Monday at the Fira Gran Via, with excitement over AI's potential to transform gadgets clashing with concerns over trade tensions fuelled by the United States, and a call for the European Commission to do more to back the highspeed mobile internet technology. The MWC drew around 100,000 attendees in

Barcelona, the day before fresh American tariffs come into force on Chinese goods. A dense crowd packed the halls between stands blazing with screens from early Monday morning, hunting out the latest devices and innovations from manufacturers or set to participate in debates about the future of the industry.

Many exhibitors at the MWC hail from China, whose products will be hit by an additional 10-per cent import tariff on top of the 10pc already imposed by President Donald Trump since he took office in January.

Higher costs for trade could impact the entire global tech and smartphone market if Trump keeps the China tariffs in place and extends them to other major tech and smartphone market if Trump keeps the economies like the European Union, as he has threatened.

Renate Nikolay, the European Commission's deputy director-general for communications networks, said that the "challenging geopolitical context" means "it's crucial for Europe to ensure our tech sovereignty and our strategic autonomy in critical sectors".

The GSMA global telecom industry body says that around 30pc of European mobile connections were via 5G by the end of 2024.