

allovertheworld



Visitors at the restored Menin Gate (Menenpoort - Porte de Menin) World War I memorial dedicated to British and Commonwealth soldiers, in Ypres. The site has reopened to the public following two years of restoration work, in Belgium

Thai PM hospitalised with high fever after Cambodia trip

BANGKOK: Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra was admitted to hospital with a high fever shortly after returning from an official visit to Cambodia, a government spokesperson said Friday. Paetongtarn travelled to Cambodia this week for a two-day visit, during which she met Prime Minister Hun Manet to discuss cross-border cooperation on issues such as online scams and air pollution. The two leaders also discussed leveraging ASEAN as a platform to negotiate with US President Donald Trump on trade tariffs. "After the prime minister returned home, she had a high fever and went to see a doctor. The doctor advised that she be admitted for a thorough check-up," government spokesperson Jirayu Huang said in a statement released on Friday morning. He added that the prime minister's schedule for Friday would be postponed or delegated to a deputy including planned meeting with e-commerce CEO Chris Feng and former British prime minister Tony Blair.

Alabama executes man who asked to be put to death

WASHINGTON: A 55-year-old man was put to death Thursday in the southern US state of Alabama, after asking to be executed himself for the rape and murder of a woman in 2010. James Osgood was killed via lethal injection at a prison in Atmore, the Alabama Department of Corrections said in a press release. Osgood had been convicted of raping, stabbing and killing Tracy Lynn Brown, 44, with the help of his girlfriend, according to a report in USA Today. The girlfriend, who was related to Brown, is serving a life sentence for the crime, the newspaper reported. The Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), a nonprofit advocacy organization opposing the death penalty, said in a statement that Osgood himself had given up appealing his death sentence and had asked in a letter for his life to be ended.

UN voices concern over latest S Sudan clashes as civilians flee

JUBA: The United Nations said Friday it was "deeply concerned" by clashes between South Sudan's military and opposition forces in a southern state, where displaced civilians told AFP they had been left without food. The world's youngest nation, which is deeply impoverished, has long been troubled by insecurity and instability. But recent fighting between factions allied to President Salva Kiir and his long-time rival Vice-President Riek Machar have sparked worries of renewed war. International observers fear a return to the five-year civil war that cost some 400,000 lives and was ended by a 2018 peace deal which brought the two together in a unity government, but which appears to be unravelling. Clashes between the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (SSPDF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army-in Opposition (SPLA-IO) in neighbouring Morobo and Yei counties in Central Equatoria State "have led to civilian displacement and casualties", the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) said.

Detained Pakistan rights activist launches hunger strike

QUETTA: Detained activist Mahrang Baloch, one of the leading campaigners for Pakistan's Baloch minority, has launched a hunger strike along with other detainees, her sister told AFP on Friday. Mahrang Baloch, 32, was arrested last month on charges of terrorism, sedition and murder. In her native Balochistan, an impoverished province that borders Afghanistan and Iran, security forces are battling a growing insurgency. Rights groups say the violence has been countered with a severe crackdown that has swept up innocent people. Mahrang's hunger strike "is aimed at denouncing the misconduct of the police and the failure of the justice system to protect... prisoners," her younger sister, Nadia Baloch, said. Nadia said the hunger strike was launched on Thursday after the attempted "abduction" of one of the Baloch detainees.

TikTok videos exploit trade war to sell fake luxury goods

PARIS: TikTok abounds with viral videos accusing prestigious brands of secretly manufacturing luxury goods in China so they can be sold at cut prices. But while these "revelations" are spurious, behind them lurks a well-oiled machine for selling counterfeit goods that is making the most of the confusion surrounding trade tariffs. Chinese content creators who portray themselves as workers or subcontractors in the luxury goods business claim that Beijing has lifted confidentiality clauses on local subcontractors as a way to respond to the huge hike in customs duties imposed on China by US President Donald Trump. They say this Chinese decision, of which AFP has found no trace, authorises them to reveal the hidden underbelly of luxury goods manufacturing in China.

Houthi rebels down 7 US reaper drones worth \$200 m

AP, WASHINGTON: Houthi rebels in Yemen have shot down seven US Reaper drones in less than six weeks, a loss of aircraft worth more than USD 200 million in what is becoming the most dramatic cost to the Pentagon of the military campaign against the Iran-backed militants. According to defence officials, three of the drones were shot down in the past week - suggesting the militants' targeting of the unmanned aircraft flying over Yemen has improved. The drones were doing attack runs or conducting surveillance, and they crashed both into the water and onto land, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss military operations.

The US has increased its attacks on the Houthis, launching daily strikes since March 15, when President Donald Trump



Houthis claim to have downed 2nd US drone in 24 hours

ordered a new, expanded campaign.

He promised to use "overwhelming lethal force" until the Houthis cease their attacks on shipping along a vital maritime corridor. The US has done more than 750 strikes on the Houthis since that new effort began.

Another defence official said that although hostile

fire is likely the cause of the drone losses, the incidents are still under investigation. The official noted that the increase in US strikes can add to the risk to aircraft, but said the US will take every measure possible to protect troops, equipment and interests in the region. The official spoke on condition of anonymity

Disgraced US ex-Congressman Santos jailed for seven years

AFP, NEW YORK: Disgraced former Republican lawmaker George Santos, who was expelled from the US Congress for using stolen donor cash to bankroll a lavish lifestyle, was sentenced to seven years in prison Friday.

Republican Santos, 36, had faced at least two years in prison and a maximum of 22 years after pleading guilty to wire fraud and identity theft for his elaborate grifting while a lawmaker.

"He admitted to engaging in a brazen crime spree that took place over a period of years. He stole personal identities and financial information from campaign contributors, made unauthorized transfers of money to his cam-

paign, and to himself personally," said prosecutor John Durham.

"He went so far as to seek out elderly people with cognitive impairment and dementia."

Judge Joanna Seybert in Federal District Court in Central Islip sentenced Santos to seven years and three months.

In August 2024 she had ordered Santos to pay more than \$370,000 in restitution which prosecutors say has gone unpaid.

He emerged from the courthouse flanked by his lawyers, tugging at his collar, but did not speak to reporters.

"Stop the deception," shouted a crowd of local activists as Santos climbed into a white SUV to leave.

Fed reversing termination of legal status for international students around US, says lawyer

AP, WASHINGTON: The federal government is reversing the termination of legal status for international students after many filed court challenges around the US, a government lawyer said Friday. Judges around the country had already issued temporary orders restoring the students' records in a federal database of international students maintained by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE. The records had been suddenly terminated in recent weeks, often without the students or their schools being notified.

A lawyer for the government read a statement in federal court in Oakland that said ICE was manually restoring the student status for

Many of the students whose records were terminated were told that their status was terminated as a result of a criminal records check or that their visa had been revoked

people whose records were terminated in recent weeks.

A similar statement was read by a government attorney in a separate case in Washington on Friday, said lawyer Brian Green, who represents the plaintiff in that case.

Green provided The Associated Press with a copy of the statement that the government lawyer emailed to him.

It says: "ICE is developing a policy that will provide a framework for SEVIS record terminations. Until such a policy is issued, the SEVIS

SILENT SCREAM



Philippine actor Soliman Cruz wearing a business suit stands inside an 8-foot transparent bubble while other activists wearing masks touch the bubble during an anti-pollution protest near a park in Manila. The protest is part of a campaign on Manila's air pollution crisis, due to traffic emissions, fossil fuel and unchecked industrial activity

India hands over Sickle Cell, Thalassemia vaccines to Nepal

PTI, KATHMANDU: India handed over Sickle Cell and Thalassemia vaccines to Nepal in response to the Nepal government's request, a statement said on Friday. Ambassador of India to Nepal Naveen Srivastava handed over the first consignment of vaccines for Sickle Cell Disease and Thalassemia to Minister of Health and Population Pradip Paudel, the statement said.

"The Government of India is providing medicines and vaccines worth USD 2 million for the management of patients with Thalassemia and Sickle Cell Disease in response to a request from the Nepali government," the statement said.

"The first consignment of vaccines/medicines includes Influenzae Vaccine (3100 units), Salmonella Vaccine (1550 units), Meningococcus Vaccine (3100 units),

Haemophilus Influenza Vaccine (4640 units), and Streptococcus Pneumonia Vaccine (4640 units)," it said.

The statement said the contribution from India would help bolster Nepal's efforts in addressing these inherited blood disorders, which pose significant health challenges to affected individuals and families.

"The provision of these vaccines underscores the strong and enduring partnership between the two nations, particularly in the crucial healthcare sector," it said.

The ambassador said the vaccines would be instrumental in enhancing the quality of life for individuals affected by Sickle Cell Disease and Thalassemia in Nepal.

Paudel acknowledged the long-standing collaboration with India and its contributions to Nepal's healthcare system.

Federal judge blocks Trump's voter citizenship mandate

AP, NEW YORK: A judge on Thursday blocked the Trump administration from immediately enacting certain changes to how federal elections are run, including adding a proof-of-citizenship requirement to the federal voter registration form.

President Donald Trump had called for that and other sweeping changes to US elections in an executive order signed in March, arguing the US "fails to enforce basic and necessary election protections" that exist in other countries.

US District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly in Washington sided with voting rights groups and Democrats to grant a preliminary injunction to stop the citizenship requirement from moving forward while the lawsuit plays out.

She also blocked part of the Republican president's executive order requiring public assistance enrollees to have their citizenship assessed before getting access to the federal voter registration form.

The judge's order halts the Trump administration's efforts to push through a proof-of-citizenship mandate that Republicans have said is needed to restore public confidence in elections. Voting in federal elections by noncitizens is already illegal and can result in felony charges and deportation.

Actors with Down syndrome tear down barriers in London show

AFP, LONDON: It's one of Shakespeare's most existential questions "to be or not to be?" Now a group of globe-trotting Peruvian actors with Down syndrome are tackling it head-on, breaking down prejudice and barriers.

Cristina Leon, Jaime Cruz and Manuel Garcia are members of the eight-strong group currently performing William Shakespeare's "Hamlet" at the Barbican centre in London this week until Sunday.

"This play shows that we can be included in everything at work, and in education. There are no barriers, we can do lots of things, and people must open their eyes to the fact that we can do anything they ask us," Leon, 32, told AFP.

The project was launched seven years ago born out of Cruz's dreams of becoming an actor.

He was working as an usher in the Teatro La Plaza in Lima and had never thought that his Down syndrome was an obstacle in life.

"I have always wanted to be an actor. One day there was an event (at the Lima theatre) in which you had to introduce yourself, and I said my name and said I was an actor," the 30-year-old said. He added that he wanted to overcome "prejudices, myths and barriers."

His words inspired the theatre's artistic director Chela de Ferrari, who has now adapted the play for the eight actors and brought it to the land of Shakespeare's birth.

Nepal marks 10 years since devastating 2015 earthquake

AFP, KATHMANDU: Nepal marked on Friday the 10th anniversary of a massive earthquake that killed almost 9,000 people and left millions more homeless.

The 7.8-magnitude quake on April 25, 2015, triggered avalanches and landslides across the Himalayan nation and flattened villages.

Nepal's Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli attended a memorial ceremony at the site of Dharahara tower, one of many buildings that crumbled in the quake.

"We are vulnerable to other natural disasters such as floods, landslides, and are more prone to earthquakes. We need to prepare ahead against natural calamities," Oli said.

The 19th-century, nine-sto-



A group of Scouts, along with other residents, participate in a candlelight vigil to pay homage to victims of the 2015 earthquake to mark its 10th anniversary in Kathmandu

rey Dharahara tower toppled during the earthquake, killing more than 50 people. A replica has been built next to the rubble of the original.

Attendees, including civ-

"I would like to offer my condolences to those who lost their lives," Oli said.

At the historic Patan Durbar Square, people recounted harrowing tales of the day. "Whenever I remember that day, I still feel anxious," Rajshree Maharjan told AFP. "I had just finished my meal when the quake struck. My neighbour's house collapsed, and four people were killed after being buried under the rubble."

Memorials were held in several of the affected districts across the country.

The aftermath of the quake exposed deep cracks in Nepal's disaster response system and the rebuilding efforts were initially hit by political infighting, bureaucracy and confusion.