



A farmer touches his horse in front of his damaged household in Majske Poljan village after an earthquake in Croatia, yesterday. Fresh tremors shook Croatia on Wednesday as the Adriatic country was still picking up the pieces of a deadly earthquake that claimed seven lives and reduced buildings to rubble the day before.

PHOTO: REUTERS

NEWS IN BRIEF

China jails 10 Hong Kong democracy activists

A Chinese court yesterday jailed 10 Hong Kong democracy activists for up to three years over a bid to flee the city by speedboat to Taiwan, as a crackdown on dissent in the territory intensifies. The group were arrested by the Chinese coastguard on August 23 en route to the self-ruled island, which has quietly opened its doors to Hongkongers seeking sanctuary. The sentencing follows the imposition of a sweeping new security law in Hong Kong this year that has given the government broad powers to prosecute political dissidents.

Iran to pay \$150,000 to Ukraine plane victims' families



Tehran will pay \$150,000 to each family of the 176 victims killed when a Ukrainian passenger plane was mistakenly shot down by Iran in January, the presidency said yesterday. Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 crashed shortly after taking off from Tehran's airport on January 8, killing all on board. The Islamic republic admitted three days later that its forces accidentally shot down the Kiev-bound Boeing 737-800 plane after firing two missiles, amid heightened US-Iran tensions. Tehran's air defences had been on high alert at the time in case the US retaliated against Iranian strikes hours earlier on American troops stationed in Iraq, which in turn had been in response to the US assassination of Iran's top commander, General Qasem Soleimani.

Biden picks first female deputy defense secretary

President-elect Joe Biden yesterday nominated Kathleen Hicks to be deputy secretary of defense, making her the first woman to hold the number two position in the Pentagon if she is confirmed by the Senate. Hicks, who is heading Biden's transition team at the Pentagon, served in the Defense Department under former president Barack Obama, including as deputy undersecretary of defense for strategy, plans, and forces. She is currently at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank in Washington. Biden has nominated a retired general, Lloyd Austin, to be defense secretary.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

Indonesia bans popular, hardline Islamist group

REUTERS, Jakarta

Indonesia has banned the controversial and politically influential hardline group the Islamic Defender's Front, the chief security minister announced yesterday.

Minister Mahfud MD said the group, widely known by its acronym FPI, was prohibited with immediate effect. "The government has banned FPI activities and will stop any activities carried out by FPI," Mahfud said. "The FPI no longer has legal standing as an organisation."

The ban follows the November return of the group's spiritual figurehead, Rizieq Shihab, from three years of self-exile in Saudi Arabia, which was celebrated with events attended by thousands.

Rizieq's return to the world's largest Muslim-majority country had fuelled concern within government that he could be angling to harness opposition forces. The 55-year-old cleric was arrested this month and charged with violating health protocols and remains in custody, while a clash between police and his supporters – in which six of his bodyguards were shot dead – is being investigated by the national human rights body.

The deputy justice minister, Edward Omar Sharif Hiariej, said the FPI was outlawed because nearly 30 of its leaders, members and former members had been convicted on terrorism charges, and because the group conflicted with the nation's state ideology, Pancasila, which emphasises unity and diversity.

Formed soon after the 1998 fall of former strongman Suharto, the FPI were notorious for raiding bars and brothels and intimidating religious minorities. It is also known for offering assistance during natural disasters.

Yemen airport blasts kill 26

AFP, Aden

At least 26 people were killed yesterday as explosions rocked Yemen's Aden airport moments after a new unity government flew in, in what some officials charged was a "cowardly" attack by Iran-backed Huthi rebels.

Although all government ministers were reported to be unharmed, more than 50 people were wounded, medical and government sources told AFP in the southern city, with the casualty toll feared likely to rise.

Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said it was preparing a "mass casualty medical response plan".

As smoke billowed out of the airport terminal from an initial blast, with debris strewn across the area and people rushing to tend to the wounded, a second explosion took place.

Video footage shot by AFP appears to show missile-like ordnance striking the airport and exploding into a ball of intense flames.

It was not immediately clear what had caused the explosions. Sporadic gunfire was heard soon after. Yemen's internationally recognised government



and southern separatists formed a power-sharing cabinet on December 18, forging a joint front against the Huthi rebels who have seized the capital Sanaa and much of the north.

Both Yemeni Information Minister Moammar Al-Eryani and Prime Minister Moeen Abdulmalik Saeed said that all the members of the government were safe.

Yemen's government spokesman Rajih Badi called for an international investigation into the "terrorist" attack he said targeted "all members of the cabinet".

Meanwhile, UN envoy Martin Griffiths condemned the attack on Twitter, calling it an "unacceptable act of violence".

The cabinet members arrived in Aden days after being sworn in by Yemeni President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi in Saudi Arabia, which leads a military coalition against the insurgents.

Tens of thousands, mostly civilians, have been killed and millions displaced in Yemen's grinding five-year war, which has triggered what the United Nations has called the world's worst humanitarian disaster.

Final hurdles to Brexit clear

EU leaders sign trade deal as UK MPs approve ratification

AFP, London

Britain and the EU signed a post-Brexit trade deal yesterday, setting their seal on a drawn-out divorce just hours before the UK brings its half-century European experiment to an end.

EU chiefs Ursula von der Leyen and Charles Michel, the heads of the European Commission and European Council, smiled at a brief televised ceremony to put their names to the 1,246-page Trade and Cooperation Agreement in Brussels.

"It has been a long road. It's time now to put Brexit behind us. Our future is made in Europe," von der Leyen said.

The hefty document, bound in blue leather, was then flown by the Royal Air Force to London for Prime Minister Boris Johnson to add his signature, as the UK parliament began a rushed debate on the deal before the looming deadline.

Johnson gave a thumbs up after inking what he called "the beginning of what will be a wonderful



relationship between the UK and our friends and partners in the EU".

"It's an excellent deal for this country but also for our friends and partners," he said in 10 Downing Street.

Britain will leave the European single market and customs union at 11:00 pm (2300 GMT) today.

The lower House of Commons voted overwhelmingly by 521-73 to back the deal, despite serious opposition misgivings, and the bill was expected to pass the House of Lords later in the day in an unusually rapid procedure.

Alarm as new Covid-19 strain spreads worldwide

US, LatAm report first cases; India races to find UK arrivals to contain virus; Germany to extend curbs

AGENCIES

The US and Chile yesterday reported their first cases of the more contagious variant of Covid-19 after several European and Asian countries confirmed its presence.

The novel coronavirus has killed at least 1,791,033 people since the outbreak emerged in China last December. More than 81,933,390 cases of coronavirus have been registered. Over Tuesday, 14,973 new deaths and 752,217 new cases were recorded worldwide.

In Germany, daily coronavirus death toll crossed 1,000 for the first time yesterday, with politicians predicting an extension of the county's partial lockdown beyond the current January 10 deadline.

Latin America and the Caribbean on Tuesday became the second region after Europe to top half a million deaths from Covid-19, according to an AFP count based on official tallies.

Meanwhile, the US state of Colorado has recorded what is reportedly America's first case of the particularly infectious coronavirus variant that emerged recently in Britain, the governor said Tuesday.

In India, authorities yesterday were trying to track down tens of thousands of people who entered the country from Britain in recent weeks as cases of the new coronavirus strain more than doubled in 24 hours.

They have launched efforts to locate around 33,000 people who flew to India in



US Vice President-elect Kamala Harris receives a dose of Moderna vaccine in Washington, on Tuesday. PHOTO: REUTERS

the last month from the UK after 20 people tested positive for the new, more virulent strain -- up by 14 cases since Tuesday.

India yesterday also extended the ban on flights to and from Britain by a week to January 7 in a bid to combat the new strain that British authorities say is no more deadly, but which spreads more easily.

More than 3,000 cases of the variant have already been reported in the UK and dozens of countries in Europe and around the world.

Chile's health authorities said on Tuesday they had detected a case of the new coronavirus strain, the first such confirmed infection in Latin America. The case was found in a Chilean woman who returned to the country on December 21 from Madrid, having also traveled to Britain and Dubai.



Anti-abortion demonstrators react after the senate passed an abortion bill, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, yesterday. Argentina Wednesday became one of only a handful of South American nations to legalize abortion, a landmark decision in a country where the Catholic Church has long held sway. PHOTO: REUTERS

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EVERY YEAR MORE THAN
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2,170 migrants died trying to reach Spain

AFP, Madrid

Nearly 2,200 migrants died trying to reach Spain by sea this year, the vast majority of them on their way to the Canary Islands, a migrant rights group said Tuesday.

Migrants arrivals in the archipelago have increased this year as they looked for alternative routes to reach Europe due to increased patrolling off the Mediterranean coast of southern Spain, posing a logistical strain for authorities in the Canaries.

A total of 2,170 migrants perished in attempts to get to Spain by boat this year, compared to 893 in 2019, according to the report by the NGO Caminando Fronteras. The shortest route to the islands is more than 100 kilometres from the Moroccan coast, but it is notoriously dangerous because of the strong currents in the Atlantic.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
সরঞ্জাম নিয়ন্ত্রক (পূর্ব) এর দপ্তর
বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, সিআরবি, চট্টগ্রাম

নং-সিওএস/সেইল/টেন্ডার নোটিশ/০১৬-১৭

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সংশোধনী বিজ্ঞপ্তি

অত্র দপ্তর হতে জারিকৃত আন্তর্জাতিক দরপত্র বিক্রয় বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-২০২০-২১/০৪ তাং-০৮-১২-২০২০ইং এর অন্তর্ভুক্ত ক্রমিক ১ হতে ৯ এর দরপত্র খোলার সময় অনিবার্য কারণবশতঃ আদিষ্ট হয়ে নিম্নবর্ণিত ভাবে সংশোধন করা হলো।

| সংশোধনী বিবরণী | যা হইবে | পরিবর্তে |
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| দরপত্র দিলি ক্রয়ের তারিখ ও সময় | ১৪-১২-২০২০ হতে ১২-০১-২০২১ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত (সকল কর্মদিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে)। | ১৪-১২-২০২০ হতে ০৬-০১-২০২১ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত (সকল কর্মদিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে)। |
| দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময় | ১৪-১২-২০২০ হতে ১২-০১-২০২১ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত (সকল কর্মদিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে) এবং ১০-০১-২০২১ইং তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত। | ১৪-১২-২০২০ হতে ০৬-০১-২০২১ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত (সকল কর্মদিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে) এবং ০৭-০১-২০২১ইং তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত। |
| দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময় | ১৩-০১-২০২১ইং তারিখ বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা। | ০৭-০১-২০২১ইং তারিখ বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকা। |

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।

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