

# Abe ‘most stupid man in history’

North Korea blasts Japan PM, warns of ‘real ballistic missile’

AFP, Seoul

North Korea yesterday warned Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe that he could soon see a “real ballistic missile” while excoriating him as the “most stupid man ever known in history”.

The colourful condemnation comes two days after the isolated state tested what it called a “super-large multiple launch rocket system”, with South Korea reporting that two projectiles came down in the Sea of Japan, also known as the East Sea.

In the wake of the launch, which was supervised by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, Abe termed the fired weapons “ballistic missiles” that violated UN resolutions.

“It can be said that Abe is the only one idiot in the world and the most stupid man ever known in history as he fails to distinguish a missile from multiple launch rocket system while seeing the photo-accompanied report,” a foreign ministry official said in a statement.

“Abe may see what a real ballistic missile is in the not distant future and under his nose... Abe is none other than a perfect imbecile,” it added.

It was best for the North to avoid dealing with Abe, the official went on, adding that doing so with a “political dwarf” would bring “disgrace”.

The criticism of the Japanese leader is the second of its kind by Pyongyang this month. The North had slammed him as an “idiot and villain” and warned he will never set foot in Pyongyang after he condemned the North’s weapons test days earlier.



Feminist activists take part in a choreographed performance against gender violence and patriarchy in Santiago on Friday.

## 164 nations to speed up landmine clearing

The 164 signatory countries to the Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) agreed Friday to accelerate the work to achieve the goal of a “mine-free” world in 2025, Norway’s foreign ministry said. “Countries have now agreed that it is necessary to speed up mine clearance over the next five years,” Norway’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Ine Eriksen Soreide said in a statement following a meeting in Oslo. According to Landmine Monitor, an annual report by the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, 6,897 people were killed or injured by mines and other explosive remnants of war in 2018 and the report noted that it was the fourth year in a row with “exceptionally high numbers of recorded casualties.” Of those, 3,789 were victims of so called improvised mines, the highest recorded number to date.

## China bans ‘fake news’ created with AI, bots

China has issued new rules banning online video and audio providers from using artificial intelligence (AI) and virtual reality technologies to produce “fake news.” The regulation published Friday by China’s cyberspace authority said that both providers and users of online video news and audio services are “not allowed” to use new technologies such as deep learning and virtual reality to create, distribute and broadcast “fake news.” “Fake news” has been generalised to mean anything from a mistake to a parody or a deliberate misinterpretation of facts. The rules come into effect on January 1, 2020. Failure to follow them could be considered a criminal offence, the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) said, without offering details on punishments.

## Suriname president gets 20 years for 1982 killings



A military court in Suriname sentenced President Desi Bouterse to 20 years in prison Friday over the executions of political opponents when he was the South American country’s dictator in the 1980s. Bouterse, 74, is on a state visit to China and will appeal the judgement when he returns next week, his lawyer Irvin Kanhai said. A two-time coup leader, two-term president and convicted drugs-trafficker, Bouterse has dominated Suriname’s politics since taking power in a 1980 military coup. Friday’s judgement, delivered by a three-member court martial, relates to the executions of 15 regime opponents in December 1982. Bouterse has always denied involvement, saying the victims had been held for plotting a counter-coup with the help of the CIA, and had been shot while trying to escape.

SOURCE: AFP

# ‘The best of us’

Acts of heroism emerge after London Bridge terror attack

CNN ONLINE

Bystanders took a stand against the London Bridge terror suspect Usman Khan, tackling him to the ground while wielding a fire extinguisher and an apparent narwhal tusk, as stories emerged of individual acts of bravery.

Dramatic videos of the attack show the heroic actions despite Khan -- who is suspected of killing two people in the terrorist attack -- wearing a fake bomb strapped to him.

In the standoff on the north side of London Bridge, the convicted terrorist was sprayed with liquid from the extinguisher, while the man wielding the long tusk prodded it in the direction of the attacker.

At least one of the several men who subdued the attacker was reported by British media as an ex-prisoner, who served time with Khan.

The group wrestled him to the ground in a video, and one of the bystanders appeared to have disarmed Khan of one of two knives he is believed to have strapped onto his hand. Armed police shot Khan dead after the bystanders had moved away.

A man and woman were killed in the attack on Friday, police said. Three others,

a man and two women, were injured and remained hospitalized. None of the victims have been named.

The attack began just before 2 pm at an event in Fishmonger’s Hall, on the north side of London Bridge, organized by the University of Cambridge’s Institute of Criminology.

The event, attended by Khan, was scheduled for alumni celebrating the five-



year anniversary of the Learning Together Network.

According to PA news agency, the 28-year-old had threatened to blow up the building just before 2 pm.

“We believe that the attack began inside before he left the building and proceeded onto London Bridge,” Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner Neil Basu said.

Eyewitness Amy Coop tweeted about the incident, saying the man holding the million-dollar tusk had taken it off the wall of the historic Fishmonger’s Hall.

“A guy who was with us at Fishmongers Hall took a 5’ narwhale tusk from the wall and went out to confront the attacker. You can see him standing over the man (with what looks like a white pole) in the video. We were trying to help victims inside but that man’s a hero #LondonBridge,” she wrote on Twitter.

Tom Gray, a tour guide who tried to apprehend the suspect, told CNN affiliate ITV that the attacker was “wielding two knives, one was duct taped to his hand.”

Lloyd Griffiths, 35, who was on a bus on the bridge, said he saw the attacker had a large blade.

“I saw a shine on a knife or metal blade, it was startling. It was large blade, it wasn’t small, and then I was locked on the bus, people tried to tackle to man trying to fight him, ordinary people jumping out of the car, trying to fight him,” Griffiths said.

The Archbishop of Canterbury called the members of the public who tackled the attacker “astonishingly brave” and London mayor Sadiq Khan calling them “the best of us”.

## KNIFE ATTACK IN THE HAGUE

# Hunt on for suspect after three stabbed

AFP, The Hague

Dutch police kept up a huge manhunt yesterday for an assailant who stabbed three youths in The Hague’s main shopping area.

Officials said they were keeping an open mind about the motive for the attack, which came as shoppers hunted bargains on Black Friday.

The incident caused panic in The Hague as it happened just hours after two people were stabbed to death in London allegedly by an ex-prisoner convicted of terrorism offences.

The male attacker ran off after the stabbings at a department store in the city centre’s Grote Marktstraat, The Hague’s main shopping area.

“We haven’t arrested a suspect yet. So we are currently very busy trying the find the suspect,” police spokeswoman Marije Kuiper told AFP.

“It’s a little too early to speculate about that kind of thing,” she said when asked about a possible terrorist motive, adding that investigators were still looking at several possible scenarios.

Police forensics officers were seen examining a knife found at the scene overnight.

The victims were a 13-year-old boy from The Hague, a girl of 15 from Alphen aan den Rijn and a 15-year-old girl from Leiderdorp, the ANP news agency said, quoting police. They did not know each other, police said.

They were all allowed to go home from hospital overnight.

## NEWSIN brief

### Israel raids Gaza after rocket fire

AFP, Jerusalem

An Israeli warplane attacked a Hamas position in the Islamist-run Gaza Strip on Friday after a rocket was fired from the enclave at the Jewish state, a military statement said. It was the third rocket to be fired from the Palestinian territory at Israel in as many days and came two weeks after a deadly flare-up between Islamic Jihad and Israel which killed 36 Palestinians.

### Smog in Iran shuts schools, universities

AFP, Tehran

Air pollution forced the closure of schools and universities in parts of Iran yesterday, including Tehran, which was cloaked by a cloud of toxic smog, state media reported. The young and elderly and people with respiratory illnesses were warned to stay indoors and sporting activities were suspended for the start of the working week in the Islamic republic.

### Indian Bishop goes on trial for nun’s rape

AFP, Kottayam

A Roman Catholic bishop went on trial in southern Indian state of Kerala yesterday accused of repeatedly raping a nun. While the Catholic church has been rocked by sexual assault and abuse cases in many countries, Franco Mulakkal is the first Indian clergy to go on trial. The bishop is charged with raping the nun several times between 2014 and 2016, while head of the Missionaries of Jesus order. Mulakkal has denied the accusations in the run-up to the trial. He faces a maximum sentence of life in jail if found guilty.

# Mexico will not allow US ops against cartels

AFP, Mexico City

Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador warned Friday that he would not allow cross-border armed US operations against drug cartels in the country.

“We are not going to allow armed people to act in our territory. Armed foreigners cannot intervene in our territory. We will not allow that,” Lopez Obrador said.

US President Donald Trump said Tuesday he planned to designate the Mexican cartels as terrorist organizations, after earlier saying he would help Mexico tackle the drug gangs.

Trump called for a “war” on the drug cartels in early November when nine women and children from an American Mormon community in northern Mexico were killed in a hail of gunfire.

In Mexico, scourged by spiraling drug gang violence, the comments have been taken as amounting to a threat of armed cross-border operations.

Mexico deployed its army to fight drug trafficking in 2006, but experts blame the so-called “drug war” for the violence between fragmented cartels and the military, which has led to more than 250,000 murders.

Trump made his controversial comments in a radio interview with conservative media personality Bill O’Reilly that was posted online.

“Are you going to designate those cartels in Mexico as terror groups and start hitting them with drones?” O’Reilly asked. “I will be designating the cartels... absolutely. I have been working on that for the last 90 days,” said Trump.



Protesters light candles as they participate in a candle light procession calling for justice following the recent rape and murder case of a 27-year-old veterinarian in Hyderabad, in Siliguri, West Bengal, yesterday.

# Bolsonaro claims DiCaprio paid for Amazon forest fires

AL JAZEERA ONLINE

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has accused, without providing evidence, Hollywood actor and environmental activist Leonardo DiCaprio of financing nonprofit groups that he claimed are partly responsible for fires in the Amazon rainforest this year.

The far-right leader appeared to be commenting on social media postings claiming that the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) environmental organisation had paid for images taken by volunteer firefighters that it then used to solicit donations, including a \$500,000 contribution from DiCaprio.

The WWF has denied receiving a donation from DiCaprio or obtaining photos from the firefighters.

“This Leonardo DiCaprio is a cool guy, right? Giving money to torch the Amazon,” Bolsonaro said on Friday during brief remarks in front of the presidential residence.

DiCaprio’s environmental organisation Earth Alliance has pledged \$5m to help protect the

Amazon after a surge in fires destroyed large parts of the rainforest in July and August.

The unsubstantiated accusations against DiCaprio and the criticism of environmental activists follows a police raid at the headquarters of two nonprofit groups in the Amazonian state of Para earlier this week. Local police also arrested four volunteer firefighters and said they were investigating them for allegedly igniting fires to obtain funding from sympathetic donors.

The volunteer firefighters denied any wrongdoing and a judge ordered their release.

Politicians and other NGOs fiercely criticised the arrests, saying they were part of a concerted attempt by

Bolsonaro’s government to harass environmental groups.

Federal prosecutors say their investigations point to land grabbers as primary suspects for fires in the area, not nonprofits or firefighters.

Cattle ranchers, farmers and illegal loggers have long used fire to clear land in the Amazon.

# FB corrects post under S’pore disinformation law

AFP, Singapore

Facebook published a correction on a user’s post yesterday following a demand from Singapore, the first time a tech giant has complied with the city-state’s law against misinformation.

Authorities had ordered the social media giant to correct a post promoting an article on a fringe news site containing “scurrilous accusations” of election rigging, ramping up their use of a controversial law against misinformation.

The law gives ministers powers to tell platforms to put warnings next to posts they deem false, but that activists fear could be used to curb free speech.

A post by Alex Tan -- who runs anti-government website the States Times Review -- had a correction notice placed below it after a government request, Facebook confirmed.

On Thursday authorities had ordered Tan to put up a correction next to his November 23 post on elections.

But Tan -- who is based overseas -- refused, saying he is an Australian citizen and would not comply with requests from a “foreign government”.

But after authorities ordered Facebook to put a correction next to the post, the social media giant said it had complied.

The item now appears with a label below it, stating: “Facebook is legally required to tell you that the Singapore government says this post has false information”.

It also contains a link to the government’s own fact-checking website.

The government’s fact-checking website said that Tan’s article, which claims elections are rigged in Singapore to ensure the ruling party stays in power, contained “false statements of fact” and “made scurrilous accusations”.

# Iraqis keep up demos despite PM vows to quit

AFP, Nasiriyah

Iraqis kept up anti-government protests in Baghdad and the south yesterday, unsatisfied with the premier’s vowed resignation and insisting on the overhaul of a system they say is corrupt and beholden to foreign powers.

Protesters have hit the streets since early October in the largest grassroots movement Iraq has seen in decades, sparked by fury at poor public services, lack of jobs and endemic government graft.

The decentralised demonstrations were met with violence from security forces and armed groups, leaving more than 420 people dead and 15,000 wounded according to an AFP tally compiled from medics and an Iraqi rights commission.

The toll spiked dramatically this week, when a crackdown by security forces left dozens dead in Baghdad, the Shia shrine city of Najaf and the southern hotspot of Nasiriyah -- the birthplace of Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi.

Facing pressure from the street and the country’s top Shia cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, Abdel Mahdi announced on Friday that he would submit his resignation to parliament, due to meet on Sunday.

But demonstrations have not subsided, with crowds in the capital and across the Shia-majority south sticking to their weeks-long demand of complete regime change.

Teenager protesters also held their ground in Baghdad, staring down security forces positioned behind concrete barriers to protect government buildings.

“We won’t leave our barricades until the regime falls, until we get jobs, water, electricity,” one protester said.