



KHASHOGGI MURDER 'US report may single out Saudi crown prince'

REUTERS, Washington A declassified version of a US intelligence report expected to be released soon finds that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman approved the 2018 killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, four US officials familiar with the matter said. The officials said the report, for which the CIA was the main contributor, assessed that the crown prince approved and likely ordered the murder of Khashoggi, whose Washington Post column had criticized the crown prince's policies. President Joe Biden, a Democrat who succeeded the Republican Donald Trump five weeks ago, told reporters on Wednesday he had read the report and expected to speak soon by phone with Saudi Arabian King Salman, 85, father of the crown prince, the country's 35-year-old de facto ruler. The report's release is part of Biden's policy to realign ties with Riyadh after years of giving the Arab ally and major oil producer a pass on its human rights record and its intervention in Yemen's civil war. The 59-year old Khashoggi, a Saudi journalist and Washington Post columnist, was lured to the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on Oct. 2, 2018, and killed by a team of operatives linked to the crown prince. They then dismembered his body. His remains have never been found. Riyadh eventually admitted that Khashoggi was killed in a "rogue" extradition operation gone wrong, but it denied any involvement by the crown prince. Five men given the death penalty for the murder had their sentences commuted to 20 years in jail after being forgiven by Khashoggi's family.

INDO-PAK TIES Militaries agree to stop LoC firing

REUTERS, New Delhi The militaries of India and Pakistan yesterday said in a rare joint statement that they had agreed to observe a ceasefire along the disputed border in Kashmir, having exchanged fire hundreds of times in recent months. The nuclear-armed neighbours signed a ceasefire agreement along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Kashmir region in 2003, but the truce has frayed in recent years, and there have been mounting casualties among villagers living close to the de facto border. "Both sides agreed for strict observance of all agreements, understandings and cease firing along the Line of Control and all other sectors with effect from midnight 24/25 Feb 2021," the joint statement said. The return to a truce was settled by the two armies director-generals of military operations who "agreed to address each other's core issues and concerns which have propensity to disturb peace and lead to violence," the statement said. There has been a significant increase in ceasefire violations since 2014, leading to nearly 300 civilian fatalities, a source in the Pakistan army said. Pakistan reported 253 ceasefire violations in first two months of 2021 while reported 591 violations by Pakistan.



A military supporter points a sharp object as he confronts anti-coup protesters during a military support rally in Yangon, Myanmar, yesterday. A protester is seen injured on the ground.

PHOTO: REUTERS

NEWS IN BRIEF

Biden's CIA pick says China will be his main focus

Veteran US diplomat William Burns, nominated to lead the CIA, pledged Wednesday to keep the agency free of politics and said China would be his main focus if confirmed. Burns also told the panel that China was the main challenge the country faces, echoing views stated by Biden and other top officials of his administration. Burns called Xi Jinping's approach an "aggressive, undisguised ambition and assertiveness" that must be faced down in a long-term effort, in conjunction with allies that Beijing lacks. If approved as expected by the Senate, Burns will be the first career diplomat to lead the CIA.

Xi boasts of 'miracle' in tackling poverty in China

Chinese President Xi Jinping yesterday declared his country had achieved the "human miracle" of eliminating extreme poverty, though questions continue to surround the Communist Party's criteria for making the claim. "No other country can lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty in such a short time," Xi said. "A human miracle has been created that will go down in history." China last year claimed it had achieved its long-trumpeted goal of lifting all of its people above a poverty line of \$2.30 in daily income. The World Bank says China has lifted more than 800 million people out of extreme poverty since turning to market reforms in the 1970s, after decades of state planning and ill-advised Maoist campaigns that had stifled the economy.

US ban on many green card applicants lifted

US President Joe Biden on Wednesday revoked a proclamation from his predecessor that blocked many green card applicants from entering the United States. Former President Donald Trump issued the ban last year, saying it was needed to protect US workers amid high unemployment due to the coronavirus pandemic. Biden said it had prevented families from reuniting in the United States and harmed US businesses. Immigrant advocates had pressed in recent weeks for him to lift the visa ban, which was set to expire on March 31. Biden left in place another ban on most foreign temporary workers.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

WHO warns of long-term Covid

Urges nations to understand health risks posed by post-infection complications on priority basis; Pfizer vaccine 94pc effective on mass trial

AGENCIES A senior World Health Organization official yesterday urged national authorities to make a priority of understanding the long-term consequences of coronavirus infections as some people show worrying symptoms months later. "The burden is real and it is significant. About one in 10 Covid-19 sufferers remain unwell after 12 weeks, and many for much longer," Hans Kluge, regional director for WHO Europe, told a press conference. "It's a clear priority for WHO, and of the utmost importance. It should be for every health authority".

While some studies are beginning to shed light on the illness, it is still unclear why some patients with Covid-19 continue to show symptoms for months, including tiredness, brain fog, and cardiac and neurological disorders. Kluge stressed that those patients "need to be heard if we are to understand the long-term consequences and recovery from Covid-19." WHO Europe called on European countries and institutions to "come together as part of an integrated research agenda," harmonising data collection tools and study protocols. In boost for Covid-19 battle, the

Pfizer vaccine has proven 94 percent effective in a study involving 1.2 million people in Israel, the first peer-reviewed real world research confirming the power of mass immunization campaigns to bring the pandemic to a close. Moderna Inc said on Wednesday it is working with US government scientists to study an experimental booster shot that targets a concerning new variant of the coronavirus. The US biotech company has produced raw material for a booster shot aimed at addressing the virus variant first found in South Africa that may be more resistant to existing vaccines, it said.



Rescue teams conduct a search for miners buried by a landslide at an illegal gold mining operation in the village of Buranga in Parigi Moutong Regency, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia, yesterday. Five women and one man killed in the landslide while some 16 survivors were pulled from the debris.

PHOTO: AFP

Tech giants must pay for news in Australia Parliament passes landmark media reform law; India unveils tougher rules for social media

AGENCIES Facebook and Google will be forced to pay for Australian news under legislation passed yesterday that is being closely watched globally for precedents in the battle between Big Tech and media companies. The world-first law passed easily after the Australian government agreed to water down elements most fiercely opposed by the tech giants, in return for both agreeing to negotiate paid deals with local media. It paves the way for Google and Facebook to plough tens of millions of dollars into struggling local media companies, and could provide a model for resolving tussles with regulators worldwide. Google has already brokered deals worth millions of dollars with Australian media companies, including the two largest: Rupert Murdoch's News Corp and Nine Entertainment. A more reluctant Facebook -- which briefly slapped a site-wide ban on Australian news in protest at the law -- has inched towards a first deal with Seven West, and said more negotiations are on the way. Facebook and Google have each said they will invest around US\$1 billion in news around the world over the next three years. For every \$100 spent by Australian advertisers today, \$49 goes to Google and \$24 to Facebook, according to the country's competition watchdog. Meanwhile, India yesterday announced new rules to regulate big social media firms, such as Facebook and Twitter, the

latest effort by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government to tighten control over Big Tech firms. The rules come after Twitter ignored orders to drop content on farmers' protests, fuelling the government's zeal, dating from 2018, to clamp down on material it regards as disinformation or unlawful.



The new measures will require big social media companies to set up a grievance redressal mechanism and appoint executives to coordinate with law enforcement, the government said in a news statement. The government said the guidelines in its code of digital media ethics were needed to hold social media and other companies accountable for misuse and abuse. A detailed version of the guidelines is to be published later and take effect three months after that, the government said. It did not specify the date, however. On Wednesday, Reuters reported the draft of the rules, which give companies a maximum of 36 hours to remove content after they receive a government or legal order.

Patience on Iran not 'unlimited' Warns US

AFP, Washington

US President Joe Biden's administration said Wednesday that its "patience is not unlimited" with Iran as it renewed an offer for talks on its nuclear program. The United States on February 18 offered to meet with Iran under the auspices of the European Union in a bid to revive a nuclear deal trashed by former president Donald Trump. "This is an urgent challenge for us," State Department spokesman Ned Price said, referring to Iran's steps out of compliance with the deal in protest against Trump's sanctions. "Our patience is not unlimited," Price told reporters. "But we do believe, and the president has been clear on this," Price said, "that the most effective way to ensure Iran could never acquire a nuclear weapon was through diplomacy. That is what we are engaged in now." Iran has said that the United States needs to lift all sanctions before Tehran returns to compliance and talks.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয় মনিটরিং ও রিপোর্টিং শাখা বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা www.moa.gov.bd



আগ্রহ ব্যক্তকরণ প্রস্তাব আহবান বিজ্ঞপ্তি (Request for Expression of Interest-EOI)

পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন ২০০৬ এবং পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা ২০০৮ এর (সর্বশেষ সংশোধনসহ) মোতাবেক গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়ের ২০১৮-১৯ অর্থ বছরে উন্নয়ন বাজেটভুক্ত সমাপ্ত ০২টি প্রকল্প এবং ২০১৯-২০ অর্থ বছরে উন্নয়ন বাজেটভুক্ত সমাপ্ত ০২টি সহ মোট ৪টি প্রকল্পের নিরীক্ষা ও মূল্যায়ন করার লক্ষ্যে সিএ ফার্ম/অডিট সংস্থার নিকট হতে পিলমোহরকৃত খামে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক আগ্রহব্যক্তকরণ প্রস্তাব আহবান করা যাচ্ছেঃ

Table with 4 columns: No., Description, Date/Time, and Remarks. It lists details for various government projects and the deadline for submission of proposals.

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সহকারী সচিব, মনিটরিং ও রিপোর্টিং শাখা, কক্ষ নং-৫২৯, ভবন নং-৪, কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা। ফোন: ৯৫৪৯৬০৭ মেমো: ০১৯১৩-৭৮০৩৩০ ইমেইল: monitoring.reporting@yahoo.com