

Seoul: South Korea's parliament on Tuesday passed a landmark ban on production and sales of dog meat, as public calls for a prohibition have grown sharply over concerns about animal rights and the country's international image. Some angry dog farmers said

they plan to challenge the bill's constitutionality and hold protest rallies, a sign of continued heated debate over the ban. After a three-year grace period, the bill would make slaughtering, breeding and sales of dog meat for human consumption illegal from 2027.



GLOBAL BULLETIN

China, Pak 'Countries of Concern', says US

Washington: The US has designated China, North Korea, Pakistan, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Myanmar as 'Countries of Particular Concern' for having engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced in a press statement. In a press statement, Blinken stated, "Advancing the freedom of religion or belief has been a core objective of U.S. foreign policy ever since Congress passed and enacted the International Religious Freedom Act in 1998. As part of that enduring commitment, I have designated Burma, the People's Republic of China, Cuba, the DPRK, Eritrea, Iran, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan as Countries of Particular Concern," he added.

Spain makes face masks mandatory

Madrid: Face masks will be mandatory in hospitals and healthcare centres in Spain starting on Wednesday due to a surge in respiratory illnesses, the Health Ministry said. The new leftist minority coalition government is imposing the measure despite opposition from most of Spain's 17 autonomous regions. "We are talking about putting on a mask when you enter a health centre and taking it off when you leave," Health Minister Monica Garcia said on Monday. "I don't think it is any drama. It is a basic and simple measure of the first order," she added. Spain's hospitals have come under immense pressure in recent weeks following a spike in cases of flu, Covid-19 and other respiratory illnesses.

3 mistakenly eat laundry detergent

Taipei: At least three people were hospitalised after mistakenly eating colourful pods of liquid laundry detergent that were distributed as a campaign freebie in Taiwan's presidential race, according to Taiwanese media reports. One of the victims said she thought the pods were candy, the Central News Agency reported. The pods came in partially clear packaging with photos of Nationalist Party candidate Hou Yu-ih and his running mate. Writing on the bag says "Vote for No. 3," the place on the ballot for the Nationalist ticket in the three-way race.

UN, US, UK say B'desh polls 'not fair'

PTI/DHAKA

Even as India, Russia, China and several nations from Asia, Africa and South America greeted Sheikh Hasina for securing a historic fourth term as prime minister, the United Nations, the United States and the United Kingdom expressed their reservations terming the polls as "not free or fair." Hasina's Awami League (AL) won 223 seats in the 300-member Parliament on Sunday in the polls boycotted by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), the main opposition. The Bangladesh government had invited a large number of foreign observers from India and other countries, as well as multilateral organisations, to observe the elections.

The US State Department, in a press statement Monday, said that Washington remains concerned by the arrests of thousands of political opposition members and by reports of irregularities on election day in Bangladesh.



Sheikh Hasina's Awami League has won 223 seats in the 300-member Parliament

"The United States shares the view with other observers that these elections were not free or fair and we regret that not all parties participated," the State Department said.

"We encourage the Government of Bangladesh to credibly investigate reports of violence and to hold perpetrators accountable. We also urge all political parties to reject violence," it said.

UN Human Rights Chief Volker Turk called on

Bangladesh's newly elected government to take steps to renew the country's commitment to democracy and human rights, voicing distress that the environment for Sunday's poll was marred by violence and repression of opposition candidates and supporters.

"In the months leading up to the vote, thousands of opposition supporters have been detained arbitrarily or subjected to intimidation. Such tactics are not con-

China congratulates Awami League for victory in Bangladesh polls

China on Tuesday congratulated the ruling Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League party in Bangladesh for winning the general elections, saying it wants to strengthen the bilateral partnership with Dhaka and cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning reacting to a question from the official media about Awami League's "landslide victory," spoke about Beijing's relations with Dhaka, especially its infrastructure projects, but any reference to Prime Minister Hasina was conspicuously absent from Mao's remarks on Bangladesh polls.

Hasina's Awami League won a landslide victory in Sunday's Parliamentary elections that were boycotted by the Bangladesh National Party (BNP), the major opposition party.

ducive to a truly genuine process," Turk said and noted that democracy was "hard-won" in Bangladesh and "must not become cosmetic." Around 25,000 opposition supporters have been arrested, including key party leaders, since October, the UN official said and raised serious concerns about possible torture or harsh conditions of detention as at least 10 oppo-

sition supporters reportedly died - or were killed - in custody in the last two months.

An associate spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Florencia Soto Niño, in response to a question on whether the UN believes the elections were free and fair, said, "We have seen the situation that's unfolding there. The Secretary-General continues to follow what's happening."

Israel takes control of massive weapons site

ANI/TPS /TEL AVIV

Israeli soldiers took control of Hamas's Bureij Battalion headquarters which included a massive underground weapons manufacturing facility - the largest such site found since the beginning of the war, the Israel Defense Forces said on Monday night.

The complex was located in and beneath the densely populated area of Bureij in central Gaza.

Soldiers of the IDF's 188th and Golani brigades uncovered several tunnel shafts reaching a depth of approximately 30m and, following precise intelligence, exposed a terrorist stronghold used to manufacture weapons.

The soldiers also located many other underground production facilities used for the manufacturing of long-range rockets, explosives and

accuracy enhancers for Hamas's mortar shells, light weapons and UAVs. Additionally, the forces killed dozens of terrorists in the area.

In the area, soldiers found components for long-range rockets that could be fired from the Gaza Strip as far as northern Israel, as well as mortar shells, explosives and ammunition. Some of the rockets produced have a range of 100 km.

Fauda actor injured Idan Amedi, star singer and 'Fauda' actor, sustained severe injuries during combat in Gaza and has been air-lifted to Sheba Medical Center at Tel Hashomer, The Times of Israel reported. Currently, he remains sedated and under treatment. His cousin Ayelet took to Instagram to share the update, urging the Israeli public to pray for his recovery.

Lotus-shaped satellite launched by China

PTI/BEIJING

China on Tuesday sent a new astronomical satellite shaped like a lotus into space to observe mysterious transient phenomena in the universe that flicker like fireworks.

The satellite named Einstein Probe, which uses new X-ray detection technology inspired by the functioning of a lobster eye, was launched by a Long March-2C carrier rocket at 3:03 p.m. (local time) from the Xichang

Satellite Launch Centre in southwest China's Sichuan Province.

Weighing about 1.45 tonnes and as large as a full-size SUV, the satellite is shaped like a lotus in full bloom and features 12 petals and two stems, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

The 12 "petals" are 12 modules consisting of wide-field X-ray telescopes (WXT), while the two "stems" consist of two modules of follow-up X-ray telescopes (FXT).

Michelle Obama 'terrified' over 2024 prez poll results

IANIS / WASHINGTON

Former US First Lady Michelle Obama admits she's "terrified" about the potential outcome of the 2024 presidential election with ex-President Donald Trump outrunning incumbent Democrat Joe Biden in the polls despite a mountain of legal cases piled up against him, including one to keep him off the ballot.

Obama said November's 2024 presidential contest is among her top fears that keeps her awake at night, as per a podcast interview released on Monday.

"What's going to happen in this next election? I'm terrified about what could possibly happen, because our leaders matter. Who we select, who speaks for us, who holds that bully pulpit, it affects us in ways sometimes I think people take for granted," she told Jay Shetty in his podcast "On Purpose".

People's Democratic Party wins Bhutan polls

AP / THIMPHU

The People's Democratic Party won the most seats in Bhutan's elections on Tuesday and will form the new govt as residents hope politicians make good on promises to fix the economic crisis in the Himalayan nation.

Latest figures from the Bhutan Broadcasting Serv-

ice, a national broadcaster, showed the PDP had won 30 of the 47 National Assembly seats to return to power, and the Bhutan Tendrel Party had secured 17.

It was the country's fourth general elections since its transformation from a traditional monarchy to a parliamentary form of government in 2008.

Imran Khan arrested over Army HQ attack

Khan is behind bars after being arrested in the Toshakhna and Al-Qadir Trust scandals

PTI / ISLAMABAD

Jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan was on Tuesday arrested in a case related to the attack on the Pakistan Army headquarters in Rawalpindi on May 9 last year, soon after his release warrant was issued in the cipher case.

An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Rawalpindi had summoned the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder, who is already behind bars in cipher and graft cases, in May 9 cases on Tuesday. However, Khan attended the court's proceedings via video link as he could not be produced in the court by Adiala jail authorities owing to

security concerns. Judge Ijaz Asif of the Anti-Terrorism Court Rawalpindi conducted hearings of at least 12 cases linked with the May 9 riots against Khan and others.

During the proceedings, police chief of the Royal Artillery Bazar Police Station, which is in the vicinity of the General Headquarters (GHQ), informed the court that Khan was arrested in the GHQ attack case as he was nominated in the case.

Police also requested for 71-year-old Khan's physical remand but the judge turned down the plea and asked police to meet him at the jail for probe.

NOTICE OF LOSS OF SHARES OF TATA CHEMICAL LIMITED. Includes details of shareholders, share numbers, and company information.

Crossword # 1012. Includes grid and clues for Across and Down words.

FPJ - SUDOKU - 14. Level: Very easy. Includes a 9x9 grid with some numbers filled in.

WHAT TO DO: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Every puzzle has only one correct solution.

YOUR DAY By Vinayak Vishwas Karandikar. Daily horoscopes for Aries, Libra, Taurus, Scorpio, Gemini, Sagittarius, Cancer, Capricorn, Leo, Aquarius, and Virgo.

BAJEL Projects. Financial Results for the Quarter and Six Months Ended 30th September 2023. Includes a table with financial data and company information.

