

News in brief

At least 17 killed in Brazil bus plunge



At least 17 people have died in eastern Brazil after a bus fell 15 metres off a bridge, newspaper Estado de Minas Gerais reports. Twelve people died at the scene while five died in hospital, news portal G1 reported, citing the fire department. Nearly 30 other people were injured in the accident, which occurred near the locality of Joao Monlevade in Minas Gerais state about 1.30pm.

A mudslide in an unlicensed gold mine in Nicaragua trapped at least 10 workers, state-run media reported.

Crews began work to try to rescue the miners after the accident in the La Esperanza region of southern Nicaragua. Vice President Rosario Murillo, who is also the government spokeswoman, did not say how many miners were in the shaft when it collapsed or if there were fatalities.

Mine collapse in Nicaragua traps at least 10



Suspect in deadly 1982 Paris attack extradited from Norway



A suspect in a deadly 1982 attack at a Jewish neighbourhood in Paris arrived in France after being extradited from Norway, airport officials said. Walid Abdulrahman Abu Zayed, 62, landed at around 8:00 pm (1900 GMT) at Paris' Charles de Gaulle airport from Oslo, where he had been living since 1991.

President Donald Trump ventured out

of Washington for his first political appearance since his election defeat to Joe Biden, campaigning in Georgia where two run-off races will decide the fate of the US Senate. The president took the stage at 7:00 pm (0000 Sunday GMT) in the southern city of Valdosta, exactly one month before special January 5 elections. It is just under a month since he was declared the loser in the presidential race.



Trump to appear in Georgia in gamble over control of US Senate

Coal mine accident in China's Chongqing kills 18



Eighteen people have died after being trapped in a mine in China's southwestern city of Chongqing, the official Xinhua news agency said, the region's second such accident in just over two months. The dead were among 24 people trapped underground by excessive levels of carbon monoxide gas at the Diaoshuidong coal mine, the agency said, adding that one survivor had been rescued while search efforts continue.

Trump orders withdrawal of US troops from Somalia

The pullback is part of a larger effort to reduce US troop levels abroad before Donald Trump leaves office in January

The United States has about 700 troops in Somalia

Reuters | Washington

President Donald Trump has ordered nearly all American troops to withdraw from Somalia, US officials said, part of a global pullback by the Republican president before he leaves office next month that will also see him drawdown forces in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The United States has about 700 troops in Somalia focused on helping local forces defeat the al Qaeda-linked al Shabaab insurgency. The mission has received little attention in the United States, but has been considered a cornerstone of the Pentagon's global efforts to combat al Qaeda. In a statement, the Pentagon sought to play down the implications of a withdrawal that experts have said could undermine secu-



US Army Brig. Gen. Damian T. Donahoe, center, talks with service members during a battlefield circulation in Somalia (file photo)

rity in Somalia.

"While a change in force posture, this action is not a change in US policy," the Pentagon said. "The US will retain the capability to conduct targeted counterterrorism operations in Somalia, and collect early warnings and indicators regarding threats to the homeland."

The United States already pulled out of Somalia's cities of Bossaso and Galkayo earlier this

year. As of last month, US troops were still in the southern port city of Kismayo, Baledogle airbase in the Lower Shabelle region, and in the capital Mogadishu.

A US defence official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said nearly all US forces would leave Somalia, although some would remain in Mogadishu.

The Pentagon statement, which was unsigned, said an unspecified number of forces in Somalia

would be moved to neighbouring countries, allowing them to carry out cross-border operations. Others would be reassigned outside East Africa.

A congressional aide, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the withdrawal comes at a difficult time for Somalia, ahead of both parliamentary and presidential elections, and will present an early dilemma for President-elect Joe Biden.



The Pentagon said on November 17 that the number of US forces in Afghanistan would drop from 4,500 to 2,500, while troop levels in Iraq would go from 3,000 to 2,500

14 Indians to return home after 10-month detainment in Yemen



The 14 member group after being freed from their captors

TDT | Manama

After a ten-month long ordeal in Yemen, 14 Indian nationals are on their way back to homeland after being freed by their Houthi captors.

The sailors were part of a crew of 20 including five Bangladeshi nationals and an Egyptian.

The detained group also includes two men from the south Indian state of Kerala, T.K Praveen from Vadakra, and Mustafa from Trivandrum.

Their release came after the intervention of the Indian Embassy in Saana and Indian Foreign Affairs minister.

Sudheer Tirunilath, a Social worker in Bahrain, said, "We knocked several doors for the release of the detained Indian including that of the United Na-

tions. Very happy that they are finally released after tremendous efforts"

He said the group is now on their way back and had reached Dubai Airport.

"UAE embassy officials will receive them at Dubai Airport and will make arrangements for their further travel to India," Tirunilath said.

He said the group would fly to Bombay today and will take a connection flight to Kannur. They are to land in Kannur by 11:30 am today.

Praveen, the Chief Officer of the Ship, thanked Sudeer Thirunilath for his tremendous help.

"Our experience during the first few months were terrible, with us left with only a pair of cloths. They also took away all our money and mobile phones," he said.



TK Praveen and Mustafa

"We knocked at several doors for the release of the detained Indians including that of the United Nations. Very happy that they are finally released after tremendous efforts"

SUDHEER TIRUNILATH

"Mostly the food given was not fit for consumption."

"We only got back our mobile phone after spending five months in captivity."

The crew said they also witnessed the horrors of the war on Yemen during those days where airstrikes are seen through windows.

"We saw a building being reduced to rubble in an explosion," Praveen added.

The crew members were disowned by their Oman-based employer following their arrest after their fleet of three commercial ships carrying 4-wheel vehicles set out from Oman on 3 February and were supposed to reach Saudi Arabia in just over two weeks. However, on 12 February the ships were caught up in rough weather in the Gulf of Aden, causing one of the ships to sink.

The crew then, reportedly, anchored the remaining ships in war-torn Yemen only to end up in the captivity of Yemeni coast guard.

After four days of interrogation, they were then moved to a hotel in Sanaa and were locked up.

COVID-19 Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths
1 USA	14,892,414	287,123
2 India	9,636,741	140,072
3 Brazil	6,536,245	175,990
4 Russia	2,431,731	42,684
5 France	2,281,475	54,981
6 Italy	1,709,991	59,514
7 UK	1,705,971	61,014
8 Spain	1,699,145	46,252
9 Argentina	1,454,631	39,512
10 Colombia	1,352,607	37,467
11 Germany	1,159,194	18,815
12 Mexico	1,156,770	108,863
13 Poland	1,054,273	19,861
14 Iran	1,028,986	50,016

Global tally

66,654,183

Deaths

1,531,480

Recovered:

46,122,983

New cases

+440,850

New deaths

+7,834

Figures as of closing

Middle East

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	117,583		6,732		103,191	7,660
Saudi Arabia	358,526	+190	5,954	+14	348,562	4,010
UAE	175,276	+1,214	589	+3	158,498	16,189
Kuwait	143,917		886		139,148	3,883
Oman	124,329		1,435		115,866	7,028
Qatar	139,783	+140	239		137,060	2,484