

News in brief

◆ **Australian Prime Minister** Anthony Albanese yesterday backed calls to remove Andrew from the royal line of succession amid investigations into the disgraced former prince's ties with Jeffrey Epstein. In a letter to UK counterpart Keir Starmer, Albanese said: "My Government would agree to any proposal to remove him from the line of royal succession". "These are grave allegations and Australians take them seriously," Albanese added. Starmer's official spokesman confirmed the UK government had received Albanese's letter. "We're considering whether further steps are required in relation to Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor and we're not ruling anything out, but given the ongoing police investigation, it wouldn't be appropriate for the government to comment further at this stage," he told reporters.



Australia PM backs removing UK's Andrew from line of succession

◆ **US forces to complete withdrawal from Syria within a month**

◆ **US forces** that led the coalition against the Islamic State group will complete their withdrawal from Syria within a month, three sources said yesterday, as they began leaving a major base. The withdrawal comes as Syria's government expanded its control to the country's northeast, previously controlled by US-allied Kurdish forces, and formally joined the coalition against IS. American forces have already withdrawn from two other bases in the past two weeks, Al-Tanf in the southeast and Shadadi in the northeast. "Within a month, they will have withdrawn from Syria and there will no longer be any military presence in the bases," a Syrian government official said, with a Kurdish source confirming the timeline.

◆ **European Union lawmakers** yesterday put a key trade deal with the United States on hold, demanding clarity after a Supreme Court ruling struck down many of President Donald Trump's tariffs. The move came as Trump warned that countries seeking to "play games" with tariffs risked much higher duties. Uncertainty has gripped markets since the Supreme Court ruled Friday that Trump does not have the authority to impose tariffs under a 1977 law he has relied on -- to which Trump responded by imposing a new 15 percent global duty on a different legal basis. That new threat raised worries in Brussels over its implications for the US trade deal struck last July, since European officials and lawmakers say EU goods could face higher duties than under the terms of the agreement.

EU puts US trade deal on ice after Supreme Court ruling



Israeli minister says **army to occupy Gaza** if Hamas does not disarm

Peace plan also calls for a 20,000-strong peacekeeping force

● **Israel weighing two or three alternatives**

● **Peacekeepers will withdraw upon entry of the Israeli military, minister says**

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israeli far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said yesterday that Palestinian Islamist group Hamas may soon be given a deadline to lay down its weapons.

"We estimate that in the coming days, Hamas will be given an ultimatum to disarm and completely demilitarise Gaza," Smotrich said in an interview with public broadcaster Kan.

"If it does not comply with it, the IDF (Israeli army) will have international legitimacy and American backing to do it itself, and the IDF is already preparing for this and is making plans," said the minister, who is a member of Israel's security cabinet charged with approving large-scale military operations.

Under the first phase of a



Displaced Palestinian families sit at communal long tables as they gather to break the dawn-to-dusk Ramadan fast during Iftar, in the al-Zahara neighborhood, north of the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central of Gaza Strip

US-sponsored ceasefire in Gaza that halted two years of fighting between Israel and Hamas, the Israeli army withdrew to positions behind a so-called Yellow Line, but still controls over half of the territory.

The second phase that officially began last month plans for a gradual withdrawal of the Israeli army and the disarmament of Hamas, which the militant group has vehemently opposed.

"The (Israeli military) will definitely enter and occupy Gaza if Hamas does not disband," Smotrich said.

Asked how the military would do this, he said "there are two or three alternatives right now that we are examining".

The peace plan put forward by US President Donald Trump also calls for the establishment of a 20,000-strong peacekeeping force, called the International

Stabilisation Force (ISF), to which several countries have committed troops. Asked how the Israeli army would operate against Hamas when foreign soldiers are deployed on the ground, Smotrich said the latter would "pull out very quickly and allow the (Israeli military) to enter. This is coordinated with the Americans."

"By the way, I don't yet see them going in that fast," he added of the ISF.

SPOTLIGHT

BBC apologises for 'involuntary' Tourette's racial slur during BAFTA awards

AFP | London, United Kingdom

The BBC apologised yesterday for not editing out a racial slur during the BAFTA awards, saying it was an "involuntary" verbal tic by a Tourette's sufferer who inspired a winning film.

British actor Robert Aramayo triumphed over established stars Timothee Chalamet and Leonardo DiCaprio to win the best actor prize for his portrayal of a man with Tourette's syndrome in "I Swear".



British actor Robert Aramayo poses with the award for Best leading actor and rising star for the film "I Swear"

The film was inspired by the real life story of Tourette's campaigner John Davidson whose life has been irrevocably changed by the condition.

Davidson shouted the N-word as "Sinners" actors Delroy Lindo and Michael B Jordan, who are both black, presented the award for special visual effects.

Actor Alan Cumming, the ceremony's host, apologised for the language viewers may have heard during the broadcast.

But the BBC did not edit the offending language out of its broadcast which was shown on a two-hour delay on Sunday evening. It was edited out of the version on the BBC's streaming service on Monday morning.

"Some viewers may have heard strong and offensive language during the Bafta Film Awards," a BBC spokesperson said.

"This arose from involun-

tary verbal tics associated with Tourette syndrome, and as explained during the ceremony it was not intentional.

"We apologise that this was not edited out prior to broadcast and it will now be removed from the version on BBC iPlayer."

A spokesperson for the charity Tourettes Action said it "deeply" understood the offence and harm caused by racial slurs.

But they said it was "vital that the public understands a fundamental truth about Tourette syndrome -- tics are involuntary. They are not a reflection of a person's beliefs, intentions or character."

"People with Tourette's can say words or phrases they do not mean, do not endorse and feel great distress about afterwards," the spokesperson added.

The charity added it was "incredibly proud" of Davidson and others involved in the film.

India's diplomatic masterstroke as **THESE** countries join hands and 89 nations align to support...

News 24

A few months ago, many believed that India and China could never be friends. But in geopolitics, there are no permanent friends or enemies, only permanent interests. And this time, India has played its cards smartly. China, which once challenged India at the border, is now following India's rules on the global stage. Even neighbours like Bangladesh, which sometimes leaned toward other powers, are now extending a hand of friendship again.

What Changed After the AI Impact Summit?

The turning point came after the AI Impact Summit in Delhi. A declaration issued after the summit was signed by 89 countries and international organisations.

China and Bangladesh were among the signatories. This shows how strong India's leadership has become on the global stage.

India's Vision Wins Global Support

The US and Europe have long treated technology as their monopoly. Their idea was simple: whoever creates technology controls it and earns from it. India presented a different vision, "AI for All." India made it clear that AI should not belong only to rich nations or big tech companies. Everyone in the world should benefit from it. This idea



impressed countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, which feared being left behind in the AI race.

China usually opposes India's global initiatives, whether it is UN reforms or terrorism issues. But this time, China joined India's AI platform. Why?

CPEC and Pakistan Disappointment

China has slowed its massive investments in Pakistan's CPEC project. Terror attacks on Chinese engineers and Pakistan's weak economy made China realise that relying on an unstable partner is risky. The US and Europe have already imposed strict restrictions on Chinese AI and semiconductor companies. China knows that staying out of India-led AI initiatives could isolate it from future global technology systems.

China respects strong markets and economies. India is now one of the fastest-growing major economies. Ignoring India would hurt China's position in global supply chains.

Bangladesh's Support: A Big Diplomatic Win

Bangladesh's support is a major diplomatic success for India. The country recently faced political instability and foreign influence, but when it came to future technology and economic growth, Bangladesh chose India as a reliable partner.

What Bangladesh's Support Means

This shows that India's Neighbourhood First policy is working. Bangladesh knows that to create jobs and build a modern economy, it must be part of India's digital and AI ecosystem.

India's vision respects the sovereignty of smaller nations, which is why Bangladesh is aligning with New Delhi.

Why Did 89 Countries Back India?

The world trusts India because it does not use technology to threaten others or steal data. India promotes secure and reliable AI systems.

Success of Digital India

India's platforms like Aadhaar, UPI, and CoWIN have transformed the lives of millions. Technology in India is not limited to elites—it reaches street vendors through QR codes. India has emerged as a strong leader of the Global South. It assured developing nations that their interests would be protected in global AI rules. That is why many countries lined up behind India.