

Quick Read

Harvard, Yale varsities investigate for possible non-disclosure of foreign money

CAMBRIDGE: The US Department of Education said it has opened an investigation into whether the universities of Harvard and Yale failed to report hundreds of millions of dollars in foreign gifts and contracts as required by law.

Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, may not have reported at least US\$375 million in foreign money over the last four years, the department said in a statement.

"This is about transparency," US Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos said in the statement. "If colleges and universities are accepting foreign money and gifts, their students, donors, and taxpayers deserve to know how much and from whom."

Federal law requires most colleges and universities to report gifts from and contracts with foreign sources that are more than US\$250,000 twice a year.

Education department records over the last three decades show US universities and colleges have reported more than US\$6.6 billion in donations from Qatar, China, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

"This sum may be significantly underestimated," the education department said.

Yale received a request from the department on Tuesday for records of certain gifts and contracts from foreign sources under Section 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, said university spokeswoman Karen Peart. —Reuters

IMF chief sees 'mild' virus impact on global economy

WASHINGTON: It is too early to tell the economic toll from the virus outbreak in China, but the hit to global growth should be "mild", International Monetary Fund chief Kristalina Georgieva said.

The death toll from the new coronavirus epidemic in China has climbed past 1,350, but hopes have risen that the outbreak could peak later this month.

The IMF is expecting a "V-shaped impact", with a sharp decline in activity in China followed by a sharp recovery, meaning there likely will only be a "mild impact on the rest of the world," Georgieva said on CNBC.

But she cautioned: "It is still too early to make projections", and the global economy is "somewhat less strong" than it was when China faced the SARS virus epidemic in 2003. "China was different, the world was different. This virus is clearly more impactful and the world economy then was very strong," she said.

The IMF projects China's economy will grow 6.0 per cent this year, compared to 10 per cent in 2003. US officials likewise are reluctant to provide forecasts but say the impact on the American economy probably will be short-lived. —AFP

COURT NOTICE

In the Court of Muhammad Awaiz Civil Judge Gardian Court Okara

Shazia Anwar D/o Anwar Ahmad Siddiqi R/o W Block Govt. Colony Okara

Versus Public at large etc, Muhammad Waheed-ul-Asrar, Ahtasham-ul-Hassan sons of Anwar Ahmad Siddiqi current residence UAE

The court has called you again and again, but the implementation seems difficult, therefore this ad is being issued for you to appear in this court on 17-02-2020 at 9:00 am yourself or through your lawyer. Otherwise the action would be taken against you and after that no excuse or objection would be accepted.

COURT NOTICE

In the Court of Judge, Banking Court No. LII Old State Bank Building Opp. G.P.O Shahr-e-Quaid-e-Azam Lahore SUIT NO.274/2019.

Faysal Bank Ltd. VERSUS Danish Ameer: Summons U/S 9(5) of the Financial Institution (Recovery of Finance) Ordinance 2001.(Ordinance No: SL VI of 2001) Summons to: Danish Ameer S/o Ameer Ahmad Shahid r/o House No.4 Street No.2L Muhallah Shahdab Colony Road, Ferozpur Road, Lahore, at Das Trading Co. office at G-7 Hussain Complex 18-KM Ferozpur Road, Lahore.

Whereas the aforesaid plaintiff has instituted a suit against you and others for the recovery of Rs. 183,447/61 along with mark up/ interest and cost etc, claimed to be payable by you. Summon u/s 10 of Ordinance no SL VI of 2001 referred to above is hereby issued requiring you to make within 30 days of the service of this summon an application for leave to defend the suit u/s 10 ibid. Take notice that on your failure to file such application within time specified above, the Banking Court shall pass a decree as prayed for in the plaint, in favour of the plaintiff Banking Company. Next date for further proceeding in the case has been fixed on 25-02-2020. Given order my hand and seal of the Court this 28-01-2020

COURT NOTICE

In the Court of Mr Naveed Ahmad Judge Banking Court No II Gujranwala Suit No 366/9

Title HBL versus Muhammad Akbar Hayat deceased sons Aleem Khan through legal heirs Khalida Begum widow Rana Umer Sajjad Rana Shahbaz Akhtar sons Gulshan Hayat Fozia Akbar Nazish Kayat d/o Muhammad Akbar Hayat r/o H No 116 Mohallah Qila Sambeial distt Sialkot wheres the aforesaid plaintiff has instituted a suit against you and others for the recovery of rs 1056602/ along with marks up interest and costs etc claimed to be payable by you a summon u/s 9(5) of ordinance no XLVI pf 2001 referred to above is hereby issued requiring your failyre to file such application within time specified above the banking court shall pass a decree as prayed for in the plaint in the favour of the plaintiff banking company next data further proceedings in the case has been fixed 17-2-2020 given under my hand and the seal if the court this 11-1-2020

Netherlands says it rejects Moscow offer for MH17 prosecution

THE HAGUE: The Netherlands has turned down an offer by Russia to prosecute three men suspected of involvement in the 2014 downing of a passenger jet over eastern Ukraine, the Dutch justice minister said.

Ferd Grapperhaus said Moscow sent a letter in October last year in which it asked whether the Dutch would consider transferring the criminal prosecution of three suspects to Russia.

"The Justice and Security Ministry replied that the transfer of criminal proceedings against the three Russian suspects by the Dutch authorities is not an option and has not been taken into consideration," Grapperhaus said in a letter to parliament.

Four men, three of them Russian, are expected to go on trial in absentia the Netherlands on Mar 9 for their part in downing Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 on Jul 17, 2014, killing all 298 on board.

An international investigation found that the Boeing 777 was shot down by a BUK missile, fired from rebel-held territory in the war-torn eastern Ukraine.

A criminal Joint Investigation Team of five countries led by the Dutch in September 2016 said they had "irrefutable evidence" that the BUK missile came from the "territory of the Russian Federation".

The Netherlands and Australia then said that they held Russia responsible for the shooting down of MH17.

Russians Igor Girkin, Sergei Dubinskiy and Oleg Pulatov, and Ukrainian Leonid Kharchenko have been charged with murder. All are linked to the separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine.

They will go on trial from Mar 9 in the Netherlands at a high-security courthouse near Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport.



However it is unlikely that any of the men will be present at the trial as neither Russia nor Ukraine allows its citizens to be extradited.

The Dutch government however "in the context of preventing impunity" has asked Moscow whether it would be willing to "ex-

plere in consultation the possibilities of transferring a judgement handed down to the Russian authorities," Grapperhaus said.

This would mean that the suspects - if convicted - would serve their sentences in Russia, the minister said.

The trial of the four men "is an important step in finding the truth and justice for all 298 victims of flight MH17 and their relatives," Grapperhaus said.

"The government has full confidence in the independence and quality of Dutch justice." —AFP

US health authority ships faulty coronavirus test kits across country

WASHINGTON: A number of test kits sent out by United States health authorities to labs across the country to diagnose the deadly novel coronavirus are faulty, a senior official said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) began shipping 200 test kits nationwide on Feb 5 to speed up the diagnosis of US cases of COVID-19, which currently number at 13.

But the labs reported that while performing a verification procedure they realised the kits were returning inconclusive results, meaning neither positive nor negative, said senior CDC official Nancy Messonnier.

"We think that the issue at the stage, can be explained by one reagent that isn't performing as it should, consistently," she said, referring to one of the substances used in the kit. "And that's why we are re-manufacturing that reagent."

It was not clear how many kits were flawed. Of six US state health departments that responded to Reuters' requests for comment, half of them, including California and



Georgia, said they were waiting for a replacement component for kits to make them work.

Other states, such as Illinois, said kits had produced accurate results and they were now doing their own testing. The test issues came up as scientists from the United States and other countries tried to get access to data to validate reports suggesting the number of new cases of the virus in China has been dropping.

Since late January, the CDC has rushed to distribute the kits to allow

states to do their own, faster testing rather than ship all samples to CDC headquarters in Atlanta.

Accelerating the speed of tests, which can be delayed by days if sent to Atlanta, is important given the agency's expectation the virus at some point is likely to start spreading within US communities.

Messonnier cautioned that at some point the US was likely to see community spread of the virus.

She told reporters that authorities "should be prepared for this new virus

Fires contained in hard-hit Australia state, but now floods threaten

SYDNEY: All the blazes in Australia's hard-hit state of New South Wales have been brought under control, firefighters said, signalling the end of a "black summer" that claimed 33 lives nationwide.

But heavy rains that helped extinguish the blazes that have raged along the east coast since September are causing flash floods in parts of the state, posing new problems for some residents.

"Not all fires are out, there's still some fire activity in the far south of the state but all fires are contained so we can really focus on helping people rebuild," the state's fire service deputy commissioner Rob Rogers said on Twitter. The Australian bushfires raged for months, devastating tens of thousands of hectares.

"It is very good news," a Rural Fire Service spokesman told AFP.

Bushfires scorched more than 10 million hectares in the country's east and south, killing at least 33 people and an estimated one billion animals, while destroying more than 2,500 homes.

The crisis cloaked major cities including Sydney in smoke for weeks on end, saw towns cut off and prompted the deployment of the military to rescue stranded citizens.

Beleaguered volunteer firefighters have fought the blazes day-in-day-out in what has been described as Australia's "black summer".



The fires were exacerbated by prolonged drought and worsened by climate change in the country's hottest and driest year on record.

Days of recent rainfall have extinguished the largest fires and brought those that remain under control.

In the Australian Capital Territory around Canberra firefighters are still trying to bring one blaze under control, but it was not said to be threatening. Attention has now turned to tackling flash flooding expected in the coming days following the heaviest rains in 30 years. On Thursday dams near Sydney overflowed after days of torrential rain, a spectacular reversal from months of drought.

The Nepean dam was just a third full less than a week ago, but on Thursday video footage showing water cascading over the dam wall.

Hundreds of people have been rescued from floodwaters in recent days. Wild weather is set to ramp up again from Friday, with the Bureau of Meteorology forecasting ex-Tropical Cyclone Uesi would bring "damaging to destructive winds" and heavy rainfall to remote tourist destination Lord Howe Island. Senior meteorologist Grace Legge said storms were also expected for Queensland and New South Wales -- with areas still recovering from bushfires likely to be hit again. —AFP

Mad cow fright keeps EU cautious on food rules

BRUSSELS: The spectre of the 1990s mad cow crisis means the European Union is likely to reject US demands it ease strict food safety rules, even with President Donald Trump threatening car tariffs if EU countries do not start importing more US farm products.

With European food and farming exports to the United States worth up to US\$12 billion a year more than imports, US Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue told the EU last month it should adapt its food regulations to reflect "sound science".

Europeans who remember bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), nicknamed mad cow disease, will not accept any lowering of food standards and no politician could support a trade deal perceived as doing so, said Johan Bjerckem, trade specialist at the European Policy Centre.

"On top of that, you're negotiating with Trump, for

whom not many Europeans have great sympathy," he said. "Combine these things and it will be very difficult to accept a deal on those issues."

Trump, who has long complained that the EU's position on trade is "worse than China", said on Monday he was training his sights on Europe, raising the prospect of a new trade war. The EU bans imports of meat treated with growth hormones or poultry washed with peracetic acid, often dubbed "chlorinated chicken". Both are standard US farming practices. Washington points to inconsistencies - EU salad leaves are regularly washed with chlorine - and says EU rules are a smokescreen for protectionism. They undoubtedly do benefit EU farmers.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has concluded that the various washes are not a safety concern, but do not replace the need for good hygienic practices during processing of poultry carcasses. —Reuters

Dams overflow as Australia braces for more floods



SYDNEY: Dams near Sydney overflowed after days of torrential rain, as Australia braced for more storms expected to bring dangerous flash flooding to the country's east.

Wild weather is set to ramp up again from Friday, with the Bureau of Meteorology forecasting ex-Tropical Cyclone Uesi would bring "damaging to destructive winds" and heavy rainfall to remote tourist destination Lord Howe Island.

Recent downpours have brought relief to areas ravaged by bushfires and drought - as well as chaos and destruction to towns and cities along the eastern seaboard.

"Once in a century" floods hit north-east Australia

On Thursday, Nepean Dam south of Sydney was at full capacity and spilling over, with video footage showing excess water cascading over the dam wall and downstream.

Two other dams in New South Wales, Tallowa and Brogo, were also overflowing and more dams could

reach capacity in the coming days, a WaterNSW spokesman told AFP.

Sydney's dams have seen water levels spike dramatically - the Nepean was just a third full less than a week ago - though many inland areas are facing severe water shortages missed out on the flows.

A devastating months-long bushfire crisis that killed 33 people has effectively been ended by the downpours, with just one blaze yet to be brought under control in New South Wales.

Hundreds of people have been rescued from floodwaters in recent days.

Police said a man's body was discovered in a flooded river on Queensland's Sunshine Coast on Thursday, though the cause of his death was not immediately clear.

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Forget a 'new normal': Experts say Australia's worst bushfires still lie ahead

Senior meteorologist Grace Legge said storms were also expected for Queensland and New South Wales - with areas still recovering from bushfires likely to be hit again.

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"Any showers and thunderstorms that do develop are falling on already saturated catchments, so there is a risk with severe thunderstorms of flash flooding," she said.

Emergency services have Police said a man's body was discovered in a flooded river on Queensland's Sunshine Coast on Thursday, though the cause of his death was not immediately clear. warned residents in affected areas to be cautious in the dangerous conditions. —AFP