

Around The WORLD

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IRELAND

Celtic dictionary in the works



Researchers at a Welsh university have begun work on the first comprehensive dictionary of the ancient Celtic languages spoken in Ireland and Britain. The three-year project, led by Dr Simon Rodway at Aberystwyth University, will compare linguistic evidence from across the islands dating back from about 325BC to 500AD. The dictionary will range from Julius Caesar's account of his conquest of parts of northern Europe to ancient memorial stones.



UK

Crackdown on visa misuse

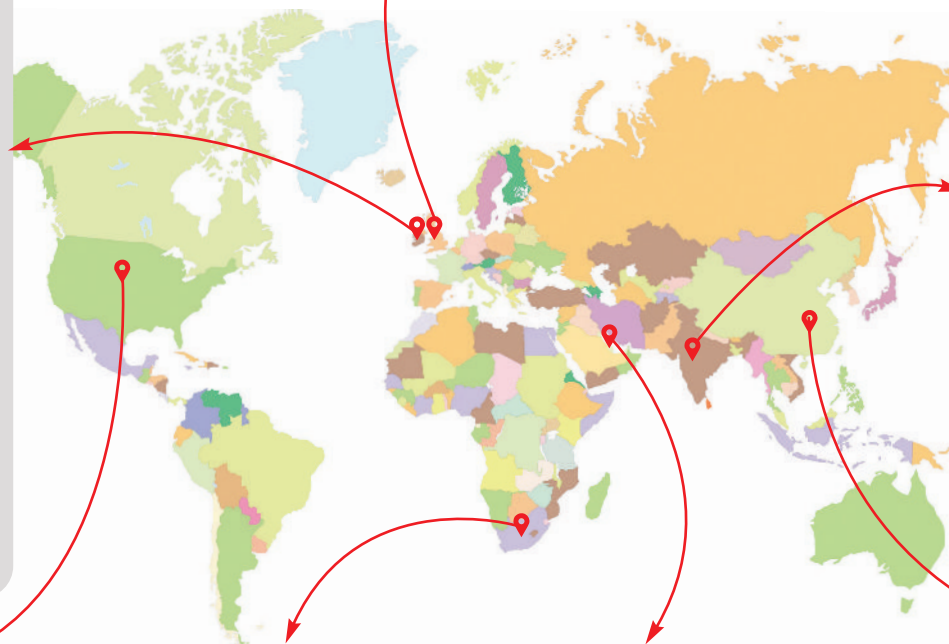
Several universities, including Chester and Wolverhampton, have paused or restricted admissions for students from Pakistan and Bangladesh. The move follows new rules from the UK home office requiring universities to keep student-visa refusal rates below 5% (down from 10%). But visa refusal rates for Pakistani and Bangladeshi applicants stood at around 18% and 22% respectively, putting universities at risk of sanctions. The restrictions come after a surge in asylum claims by students and rising concerns about misuse of the student-visa route.



INDIA

Indigo no-go

Air travel across the country has been in chaos over the past fortnight after the largest airline, IndiGo, was forced to cancel flights, stranding thousands of passengers at airports. The airline, which operates about 2,200 flights a day, has been facing pilot shortages after it failed to adapt to the new pilot rest and duty rules. Mass cancellations of flights have caused a public outcry, forcing the government to intervene. The airline has been granted exemptions from the new rules, but the disruption laid bare the risks of duopoly of Air India and IndiGo.



USA

WB bidding frenzy

In one of the biggest deals, Netflix has agreed to acquire Warner Bros. Discovery's film studio and HBO assets, including the streaming service, for 82.7 billion USD. It outbid Paramount and Comcast. Now, Paramount has made a 108.4 billion USD hostile bid for the entire company, challenging Warner Bros. Discovery's board and Netflix's narrower deal. The transaction awaits federal antitrust approval.



SOUTH AFRICA

Penguins die of starvation

More than 60,000 penguins have starved to death because of disappearing sardines, a new paper has found. From 2004 to 2011, more than 95% of the African penguins on Dassen Island and Robben Island died. Researchers said they probably died during the moulting period - annual event of replacing all their feathers. Researchers blamed overfishing and climate crisis for the decline in sardine population.



UAE

Norris wins F1 world title

A tearful Lando Norris won his first F1 drivers' championship by securing third place in the season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. Max Verstappen won the race but fell short of a fifth consecutive championship win, with Norris securing the title by two points. Norris is the 11th British driver to take the world title, finally ending McLaren's championship drought that stretched back to 2008 when Lewis Hamilton last won the title.



CHINA

Trade surplus hits 1tn USD

Despite its trade war with the US, the country amassed a surplus of 1.08 trillion USD in just 11 months. That's a record high for any single year and higher than its 992 billion USD surplus in 2024. Exports returned to growth, rising 5.9% from a year earlier. While shipments to the US plummeted 29% - the eighth month of double-digit declines - strong growth in sales to regions like the EU and Africa more than offset the slump.