

1661

The Treaty of The Hague is signed whereby the Dutch Republic sells New Holland (Brazil) for 63 tonnes of gold to Portugal

1890

At Auburn Prison in New York, murderer William Kemmler becomes the 1st person to be executed by electric chair

1945

Atomic bomb dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima by the US B-29 Superfortress "Enola Gay"



1991

Tim Berners-Lee releases files describing his idea for the World Wide Web. www debuts as a publicly available service on the Internet

Griner gets jail, Russia to discuss swap with US

White House will 'pursue' Kremlin offer to discuss prisoner swap



WNBA star and two-time Olympic gold medalist Brittney Griner is escorted from a court room after a hearing

Blinken, who spoke to Lavrov about the exchange last Friday, said Washington will be "pursuing" discussions with Russia.

He also said Griner's conviction put a spotlight on the "Russian government's use of wrongful detentions to advance its own agenda using individuals as political pawns".

WNBA player Griner was on Thursday sentenced to nine years in a Russian penal colony and ordered to pay a fine of one million rubles (\$16,590) for possessing and smuggling narcotics.

The two-time Olympic basketball gold medalist and Women's NBA champion was detained at a Moscow airport in February after she was found carrying vape cartridges with cannabis oil in her

luggage.

The Phoenix Mercury player was coming to Russia to play club basketball with UMMC Ekaterinburg during the US off-season -- a common path for American stars seeking additional income.

Griner pleaded guilty to the charges, but said she did not intend to break the law or use the banned substance in Russia.

'Honest mistake'

"I want the court to understand it was an honest mistake that I made while rushing, under stress, trying to recover from post-Covid and just trying to get back to my team," Griner said in her final statement before the verdict.

Griner had testified that she had permission from a US doctor

"We are ready to discuss this topic, but within the framework of the channel that was agreed upon by presidents Putin and Biden. If the Americans decide to once again resort to public diplomacy ... that is their business and I would even say that it is their problem"

RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SERGEI LAVROV

to use medicinal cannabis to relieve pain from her many injuries, and had never failed a drug test.

The use of medical marijuana is not allowed in Russia.

Griner's legal team said they plan to appeal the "unreasonable" verdict.

US President Joe Biden called Griner's conviction "unacceptable" and said Washington would "work tirelessly" to secure her release.

Blinken has said Washington put forward a "substantial proposal" for the exchange of Griner and Whelan.

The highest-profile Russian prisoner in the United States is Victor Bout, a 55-year-old arms trafficker, dubbed the "Merchant of Death", who is serving 25 years in jail.

There is no official confirma-

YOU KNOW WHAT

Lavrov and Blinken were both in Cambodia yesterday for a meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Blinken did not even glance at his Russian counterpart as they took their seats at an East Asia Summit

tion that Washington has offered to exchange him.

Bout's wife Alla yesterday expressed her sympathies to Griner's family, saying she hoped her husband and the US athlete will be able to return home.

"Sympathy has no citizenship and nationality, it is a universal human emotion," she told Russian news agency RIA Novosti, expressing hope that Russia and the US would "come to an agreement".

Russia and the United States have already conducted one prisoner swap since the start of Moscow's Ukraine offensive.

In April, Washington exchanged former US Marine Trevor Reed for convicted drug smuggler Konstantin Yaroshenko.

Blast in Kabul, Afghanistan kills 8; Islamic State claims responsibility



A general view of Kabul Reuters | Kabul

The Islamic State (IS) militant group claimed responsibility for a deadly blast yesterday in a residential area in Afghanistan's capital Kabul.

Police said at least eight people were killed and 18 wounded in the blast. The militant group said in a statement that 20 people were killed and injured in the attack in western Kabul. "The explosion happened in a crowded place," police spokesman Khalid Zadran said.

Video posted on social media purportedly of the blast site showed men rushing to help the injured after the incident.

A senior Taliban security official, who declined to be named, said primary investigations revealed that explosives were placed in a vegetable cart and the blast resulted in the wounding and killing of more than 50 people, including women and children.

"There is a possibility that the death toll will increase because most of the wounded people had critical wounds," he said.



TOP 4 TWEETS

01



As I depart Cambodia, I'm reflecting on the meetings I had with ASEAN Foreign Ministers and other regional leaders. We made progress toward our shared goals, and I leave with optimism about the progress we still can make together toward our vision for the Indo-Pacific region.

@SecBlinken

02



Earlier today, I announced the deployment of up to 225 @CanadianForces personnel to train new Ukrainian Armed Forces recruits. Training is the most valuable contribution we can make to support Ukraine as it fights for its sovereignty and stability.

@AnitaAnandMP

03



Today's jobs report shows that the economy added 528,000 jobs in July. More people are working than at any point in American history. That's no accident, it's results.

@POTUS

04



While the problems we face today are unprecedented, they are not insurmountable. Today I briefed the #UNGA on our work for Our Common Agenda - our plan to unite the international community around solutions for a safer, more resilient & inclusive world.

@antonioguterres

Followers gather for mass prayer in Baghdad



Followers of cleric Muqtada al-Sadr gather during an open-air Friday prayers at Grand Festivities Square

Several people fainted after waiting for hours for the prayer to start and were taken to hospital in ambulances.

Al-Sadr has used his large grassroots following as a pressure tactic against his rivals after his party was unable to form a government despite having won the largest number of seats in federal elections last October. He abandoned efforts to form the next government in June.

His followers gathered facing the Victory Arch, a monument erected during Saddam Hussein's regime to commemorate the Iran-Iraq war and for holding military parades.

stretched for miles, spilling into the streets outside the square.

Erdogan says Turkey-Russia delegation meetings fruitful

Reuters | Istanbul

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said he would discuss developments in Syria with Russian leader Vladimir Putin during his visit to Russia yesterday.

Sitting opposite Putin ahead of their talks in the Black Sea city of Sochi, Erdogan said earlier meetings between Turkish and Russian delegations on politics, economic and trade issues had been fruitful.

Their meeting, less than three weeks since they held talks in Tehran, comes after Turkey helped broker a deal to resume Ukraine's Black Sea grain exports which were blocked by Russia's invasion.

"Our meeting will be completed and open a very different page in Turkey-Russia relations," Erdogan said in comments broadcast on Turkish television.

He did not mention Ukraine. But he said he believed their talks on Syria "will bring further relief to the region".



Russian President Vladimir Putin listens to Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan during a meeting in Sochi

"Our meeting will be completed and open a very different page in Turkey-Russia relations"

TAYYIP ERDOGAN

Erdogan has threatened to order new military operations in Syria to extend 30-km (20-mile) deep "safe zones" on the

border.

Turkey backs fighters in Syria who have fought against President Bashar al-Assad, who is in turn supported by Russia. Ankara's operations in northern Syria have largely targeted a Kurdish militia which it views as a terrorist group.

Earlier, Erdogan's communications director Fahrettin Altun said the international community could not end the war in Ukraine by ignoring Moscow.

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