

1240

Mongols under Batu Khan occupy and destroy Kiev; out of 50,000 people in the city only 2,000 survive

1921

Anglo-Irish Treaty signed; Ireland receives dominion status; partition creates Northern Ireland

1998

Hugo Chávez is elected President of Venezuela



2006

NASA reveals photographs taken by Mars Global Surveyor suggesting the presence of liquid water on Mars



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



I will easily & quickly win Georgia if Governor @BrianKempGA or the Secretary of State permit a simple signature verification. Has not been done and will show large scale discrepancies. Why are these two "Republicans" saying no? If we win Georgia, everything else falls in place!

@realDonaldTrump

02



Our country is in the middle of a dramatic spike in COVID-19 cases. Please wear a mask, keep social distancing, and limit the size of any groups. It's our patriotic duty as Americans.

@JoeBiden

03



46 days until @JoeBiden becomes our 46th president.

@KamalaHarris

04



BIG WIN FOR HONEST ELECTIONS. Antrim County Judge in Michigan orders forensic examination of 22 Dominion voting machines. This is where the untrustworthy Dominion machine flipped 6000 votes from Trump to Biden. Spiking of votes by Dominion happened all over the state.

@RudyGiuliani

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stances)

Russia begins COVID-19 vaccinations in Moscow

Russia is starting its Covid-19 vaccination programme, with clinics in the capital Moscow inoculating those most at risk from the virus

● Russia's own vaccine Sputnik V, which was registered in August, is being used

Reuters | Moscow

Moscow began distributing the Sputnik V COVID-19 shot via 70 clinics yesterday to the most exposed groups, marking Russia's first large-scale vaccination against the disease, the city's coronavirus task force said.

The Russian-made vaccine will first be made available to doctors and other medical workers, teachers and social workers because they run the highest risk of exposure to the disease.

"You are working at an educational institution and have top-priority for the COVID-19 vaccine, free of charge," read a phone text message received by one Muscovite, an elementary school teacher, early yesterday.

President Vladimir Putin has ordered a nationwide voluntary vaccination programme to begin next week. He said Russia will have produced 2 million vaccine doses within the next few days.

The head of the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), Kirill Dmitriev, said in an interview with the BBC on Friday that Russia expects to give the vaccine to about 2 million people this month.

"Over the first five hours, 5,000 people signed up for the jab - teachers, doctors, social workers, those who are today risking their health and lives the most," Mayor Sergei Sobyenin wrote on his personal website on Friday.

Russia has already vaccinated more than 100,000 high-risk people, Health Minister Mikhail Murashko said earlier this week during a separate presentation to the United Nations about Sputnik V.

Among the first people signing up to the Moscow roll-out, Nadezhda Ragulina, an administrator at a Moscow clinic, said she wanted the vaccine as she had witnessed many COVID-19 patients.

"This is my decision... Some people close to me also have had an experience (of COVID-19). That's why I want to protect myself,



Russian medical worker, right, administers a shot of Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine in Moscow



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MOSCOW MAYOR SERGEI SOBYENIN

my relatives, to obtain the immunity," she told Rossiya-24 state TV channel.

Moscow, a city of around 13 million people, has been the epicentre of Russia's coronavirus outbreak. It reported 7,993 new cases yesterday, up from 6,868 the day before and well above the daily tallies of around 700 seen in early September.

The age for those receiving shots is capped at 60. People with certain underlying health conditions, pregnant women and those who have had a respiratory illness for the past two weeks are barred from vaccination.

Russia has developed two COVID-19 vaccines, Sputnik V which is backed by the Russian Direct Investment Fund and another developed by Siberia's Vector Institute, with final trials for the both yet to be

completed.

Scientists have raised concerns about the speed at which Russia has worked, giving the regulatory go-ahead for its vaccines and launching mass vaccinations before full trials to test its safety and efficacy had been completed.

The Sputnik V vaccine is administered in two injections, with the second dose expected to be given 21 days after the first. Deputy Prime Minister Tatiana Golikova said on Friday that the vaccinated should avoid public places and reduce their intake of medicine and alcohol, which could suppress the immune system, within the first 42 days after the first jab.

Moscow closed down all public places including parks and cafes, with exception for delivery, in late March, with police patrolling the streets looking for those violating the rules. Restrictions were eased from mid-June, however.

Russia as a whole reported 28,782 new infections yesterday, its highest daily tally, pushing the national total to 2,431,731, the fourth-highest in the world.

In October, certain restrictions such as remote learning for some secondary school children and a 30% limit on the number of workers allowed in offices were introduced again.

Thousands pay tribute to Thai royals amid calls for reform



Supporters of Thai monarchy during a candle lighting ceremony

Reuters | Bangkok

Thousands of people gathered in Bangkok yesterday to show their devotion to the Thai monarchy on the birthday of King Maha Vajiralongkorn's late father, after months of street protests led by a youth movement demanding reform to royal powers.

King Vajiralongkorn led a candle lighting ceremony in front of the Grand Palace in Bangkok to pay tribute to his father King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who died in 2016 after reigning for seven decades - during which he was seen by many as a symbol of national unity.

The king was joined by thousands of loyalists, wearing the royal colour yellow and waving national flags.

In recent months, the monarchy in Thailand has become a target for a youth-led protest movement that accuses the current king and the government led by a former army chief Prayuth Chan-ocha of expanding royal powers to a level not seen since the absolute monarchy ended in 1932.

The protesters broke long-standing taboos by openly criticising King Vajiralongkorn for taking direct control of two military units and the wealth of the Crown Property Bureau, valued in tens of billions of dollars.

Violence erupts during Paris protest against Macron's security law

Reuters | Paris

Scores of hooded anarchists launched projectiles at riot police, smashed up shop fronts, torched cars and burned barricades during a demonstration in the French capital yesterday against police violence and a draft security law.

The police fired back volleys of tear gas and made repeated charges at groups of troublemakers for close to three hours. One group of anarchists ransacked the branch office of a bank, throwing piles of paperwork onto a fire outside.

It marked the second consecutive weekend of unrest in Paris, provoked by recent episodes of police brutality and President Emmanuel Macron's security plans, which the demonstrators say would restrict



Police officers stand guard near a burning barricade during a protest

civil liberties.

Rallies also took place in Marseille, Lyon, Lille and other French cities.

Thousands of people had begun marching peacefully in Paris, waving banners that read "France, land of police rights"

and "Withdrawal of the security law", when the clashes erupted between police and 'Black Bloc' anarchists.

Paris police said that some 500 "casseurs" - which translates as hoodlums or rioters - had infiltrated the protest, according to



France has been hit by a wave of street protests after the government introduced a security bill in parliament that set out to increase its surveillance tools and restrict rights on circulating images of police officers in the media and online

BFM TV. Thirty arrests had been made by 1700 GMT, the force

added.

France has been hit by a wave of street protests after the government introduced a security bill in parliament that set out to increase its surveillance tools and restrict rights on circulating images of police officers in the media and online.

The bill was part of Macron's drive to get tougher on law and order ahead of elections in 2022. His government also said the police needed to be better protected from online hate.

But the draft legislation provoked a public backlash.

The beating of a Black man, music producer Michel Zecler, by several police officers in late November intensified anger. That incident came to light after closed circuit television and mobile phone footage circulated online.