

1656

Oldest surviving commercial newspaper, "Weeckelycke Courante van Europa", now known as "Haarlems Dagblad", and still in print, begins publication in Haarlem, Netherlands

1790

First US President George Washington delivers the first State of the Union address



1835

US national debt reaches \$0 for the first and only time in history

1926

Abdulaziz Ibn Saud becomes King of Nejd and Hejaz, forerunner of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

X

TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



In situations as confused & complex as the one we now face in Venezuela, it's important to stick to principles: Respect for the UN Charter. Respect for the sovereignty, political independence & territorial integrity of states.

@antonio\_guterres

02



Glad to speak with my friend, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and convey New Year greetings to him and the people of Israel. We discussed ways to further strengthen the India-Israel Strategic Partnership in the year ahead. We also exchanged views on the regional situation and reaffirmed our shared resolve to fight terrorism with greater determination.

@narendramodi

03



#India has secured a great hat trick for health by raising taxes on tobacco that will 1) mobilize more resources for health, 2) reducing overall health system costs, and 3) targeting a vicious risk factor causing non-communicable diseases like cancer, heart and lung diseases.

@DrTedros

04



Together, we are building a robust security architecture for Ukraine. Ensemble, nous bâtonnons une architecture de sécurité robuste pour l'Ukraine.

@EmmanuelMacron

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

# Saudi strikes Yemen after separatist leader skips talks

The coalition said it had given Aidaros Alzubidi a 48-hour ultimatum

● Alzubidi decided not to join the delegation flying to Saudi Arabia

● On Wednesday, more than 15 air strikes hit Dhale

● STC said it had lost contact with the delegation following its arrival in Riyadh

AFP | Aden, Yemen

A Saudi-led coalition struck the home province of Yemen's separatist leader yesterday, after he failed to show up for talks in Riyadh and was kicked out of the country's presidential body.

The coalition said it had given Aidaros Alzubidi a 48-hour ultimatum to come to Riyadh for discussions, after his Southern Transitional Council (STC) grabbed swathes of territory last month.

They were rolled back by the Saudi-led coalition and allied Yemeni forces in recent days.

But he failed to board the flight carrying his delegation, and the coalition struck his home province of al-Dhale af-



Members of the Southern Giants Brigade aka Al-Amalqa sit in the back of military vehicles deployed in Aden

ter accusing him of mobilising "large forces" there.

Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council, which holds executive power, then announced Alzubidi's removal, accusing him of high treason.

The showdown between Yemen's rival factions has raised fears that its second city, Aden, where the STC insisted its leader was still located, could be drawn

into the violence.

## Lost contact

The separatists said they were open to discussions but warned they had lost contact with their delegation in Riyadh, urging Saudi authorities to guarantee their safety.

Yesterday, more than 15 air strikes hit Dhale, a local official told AFP, killing four people, ac-

cording to two hospital sources.

Alzubidi "fled to an unknown location... after he had distributed weapons and ammunition to dozens of elements inside Aden", coalition spokesperson Major General Turki al-Maliki said in a statement.

The coalition carried out strikes to prevent Alzubidi from "escalating the conflict" and extending it into Dhale governo-

rate, he said.

An STC official told AFP that Alzubidi decided not to join the delegation flying to Saudi Arabia for talks after hearing he would be asked to dissolve his group, which forms part of the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) governing government-held Yemen.

Later, the STC said it had lost contact with the delegation following its arrival in Riyadh, urging Saudi Arabia to "guarantee the safety of its delegation currently in Riyadh".

Alzubidi "continues his duties" in Aden, the group said, calling on the Saudi-led coalition to halt the air strikes.

## Grave crimes

The PLC announced Alzubidi's removal, accusing him of committing several crimes, including "high treason" and "engaging in armed insurgency".

"It has been established that (Alzubidi) has abused the just cause of the South and exploited it to commit grave crimes against civilians in the southern governorates," it said.

A security official in Aden told AFP that the forces loyal to Mahra have been deployed in the streets and government buildings, including the presidential palace.

# Europe faces transport chaos as cold snap toll rises

AFP | Paris, France

Snow, ice and high winds brought transport chaos to swathes of Europe for a third day yesterday, with hundreds of flights cancelled and passengers stranded.

Airports in Paris and Amsterdam were the worst affected, with the Dutch authorities saying more than 1,000 travellers had been forced to spend the night at Schiphol, one of Europe's busiest hubs.

Seven people have died in weather-related accidents as the continent reels from the most bitter cold snap of the winter so far.

Hungary's interior ministry said on Wednesday that a woman had died after a car skidded on ice and crashed into another vehicle, adding to five people killed in France and one in Bosnia since the winter freeze descended on Monday.

With snowfall continuing on Wednesday, skiers and snowboarders enjoyed hurtling down the steep hills of the Montmartre district in Paris.

But the cold snap came as a bitter shock to the French capital's many homeless people.

Guinean teenager Boubacar Camara, who is sleeping in a tent on the city's outskirts, told AFP he had "no choice but to keep



A local town hall employee attempts to tow a stranded vehicle on a snow-covered road near Sebourg, northern France

on going".

"You just have to stay strong, make sure you don't die, you know," said the 19-year-old. "We can't do anything about the cold -- I'm not used to this at all."

Hundreds of schools were closed for a third day across Scotland, and English authorities were warning of a snowstorm across parts of the country in the coming days.

Black ice warning

More than 100 flights were

cancelled on Wednesday at Paris Charles de Gaulle airport and 40 more at the French capital's other main hub, Orly.

Almost half of mainland France was on alert for heavy snow and black ice, and lorries were banned from the roads in some areas, forcing truckers off the road while waiting for permission to get going again.

"It's better to be here than stuck on the road," said driver Carle Bruno, who managed to get to a roadside service station

in the northern port city of Le Havre to wait out the weather.

In the Netherlands, Schiphol Airport said more than 700 flights had been cancelled so far and warned that the number was likely to increase.

Brussels Airport confirmed 40 cancellations on Wednesday, and Budapest Airport in Hungary said 20 flights had been cancelled overnight.

Andras Vaszko, a meteorologist at the Hungarian national weather service HungaroMet,

told AFP it was the heaviest snow in the capital for 15 years.

Forecasters said temperatures could fall to -20C in some places in Hungary, and in neighbouring Austria the mercury plummeted even further to -24C in the Alps overnight.

## Calm prevails

Britain also saw temperatures plunging, with the authorities warned some rural communities in Scotland could be "cut off" by snow. The Eurostar rail service connecting London with continental European cities was also disrupted again on Wednesday, with passengers facing cancellations and delays.

The Balkans region has been hit by heavy snow and floods in recent days and thousands were still without power in Serbia after a snowstorm tore down power lines on Tuesday.

The Albanian port city of Durres was hit by torrential downpours on Tuesday that inundated hundreds of homes and forced around 200 people to flee, though officials said conditions were easing on Wednesday. Nordic countries were also facing snow-related chaos, with officials in eastern Sweden warning that power cuts were "likely" because of heavy snowfall.