

1407

Lama Deshin Shekpa visits the Ming Dynasty capital at Nanjing and receives the title Great Treasure Prince of Dharma

1858

Big Ben, a 13.76-tonne bell, is recast at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry



1972

US, USSR and 70 other nations agree to ban biological weapons at the Biological Weapons Convention

1998

The Good Friday Agreement (Belfast Agreement) for Northern Ireland is signed by the British and Irish governments



People inspect the remnants of an Iranian missile that landed at the Israeli settlement of Shadmot Mehola in the Jordanian valley, in the northern Israeli-occupied West Bank



Rescuers search under the rubble at the site of an Israeli airstrike that targeted a house in Abbassiye on the outskirts of the southern Lebanese coastal city of Tyre

# Strikes threaten truce

Pakistan hails 'restraint', slams Lebanon strikes ahead of US-Iran talks

## EU says strikes on Lebanon endangering US-Iran ceasefire

AFP | Brussels, Belgium

The European Union yesterday called on Israel to halt its strikes on Lebanon which it said were endangering the US-

Iran ceasefire.

"Israeli actions are putting the US-Iran ceasefire under severe strain.

The Iran truce should extend to Lebanon," the European Un-

ion's top diplomat Kaja Kallas said. "Hezbollah dragged Lebanon into the war, but Israel's right to defend itself does not justify inflicting such massive destruction," she said.

Hezbollah must disarm

"Israeli strikes killed hundreds last night, making it hard to argue that such heavy-handed actions fall within self-defence," she added.

"Hezbollah must disarm, as it agreed to do. The EU supports Lebanon's efforts to disarm" the Iran-backed group, Kallas added.



STRAIT OF HORMUZ  
Two alternative routes imposed by Iran to avoid sea mines

Map data: OSM, JAXA, GEBCO, NASA  
Source: map from Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy released by the Iranian news agency ISNA

## Lebanon's sovereignty and security should not be violated: China

A spokesman for the Chinese foreign ministry said "Lebanon's sovereign-

ty and security should not be violated. The safety of civilian lives and property must be

guaranteed" and that Beijing was urging "a cooling down of the regional situation".

## US Democrats fail in bid to curb Trump's Iran war powers

AFP | Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump's Republicans yesterday blocked an attempt by the opposition Democrats to curb his authority to wage war in Iran, amid mounting frustration in Congress over his handling of the Middle East conflict.

House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries sought to pass a war powers resolution by

"unanimous consent" -- a procedure that bypasses the need to hold a recorded vote, provided no one objects -- but was stopped, as expected, by the Republican majority's presiding officer.

The maneuver, staged during a short procedural session while lawmakers remain out of Washington, was largely symbolic but underscored growing Democratic anger over a conflict that has

not been formally authorized by Congress.

Jeffries had urged colleagues to attend the session and press for immediate action, arguing a recently announced two-week ceasefire was "woefully insufficient" and calling for a permanent end to US involvement in the war.

Republicans, however, showed little appetite to challenge Trump's authority.

## Melania Trump denies any links to Epstein abuse

AFP | Washington, United States

US First Lady Melania Trump yesterday made a surprise statement denying unspecified allegations about her and Jeffrey Epstein, a scandal that her husband President Donald Trump has long downplayed.

The 55-year-old former model's on-camera remarks at the White House came out of the blue, with no explanation for why she would bring up the late sex offender Epstein now.

"The lies linking me with the disgraceful Jeffrey Epstein need to end today," she said. "The individuals lying about me are devoid of ethical standards, hu-



U.S. first lady Melania Trump delivers a statement at the Grand Foyer of the White House

mility and respect." The Slovenian-born first lady gave a categorical denial of any ties to

Epstein, with whom her and her husband had previously been photographed on the New York

social scene.

She said "fake images and statements about Epstein and me" had been circulating on social media "for years now. Be cautious about what you believe: these images and stories are completely false."

The statement will serve to reignite the Epstein scandal just as media attention starts to turn away from Trump's war in Iran.

Epstein died in federal custody in 2019 while awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges involving minors, but the scandal has repeatedly overshadowed Trump's second presidency.

The US Justice Department has over the past year released

huge tranches of files related to Epstein. The president has also denied any link to Epstein's crimes. "I have never had any knowledge of Epstein's abuse of his victims. I was never involved in any capacity. I was not a participant. Was never on Epstein's plane, and never visited his private island," Melania Trump said. "I have never been legally accused or convicted of a crime in connection with Epstein sex trafficking, abuse of minors and other repulsive behavior."

The first lady also urged Congress to hold a public hearing for survivors of Epstein's abuse to "give these victims their opportunity to testify under oath."



TOP  
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TWEETS

01



With the Cabinet approval of the Kamala Hydro Electric Project, we are strengthening India's clean energy ecosystem while advancing integrated development across Arunachal Pradesh with a focus on power, infrastructure and community welfare.

@narendramodi

02



I unequivocally condemn the massive strikes by Israel across Lebanon on 8 April that resulted in hundreds of civilians being killed & injured, including children.

With the announcement of the ceasefire between Iran & the USA, the ongoing military activity in Lebanon poses a grave risk to the ceasefire & the efforts toward a lasting & comprehensive peace in the region.

Hostilities must stop immediately.

International law must be respected.

Civilians & civilian objects must be protected at all times. Attacks against them are unacceptable.

There is no military solution to the conflict.

@antonioguterres

03



I welcome the two-week ceasefire the US and Iran agreed last night. It brings much-needed de-escalation.

I thank Pakistan for its mediation.

Now it is crucial that negotiations for an enduring solution to this conflict continue.

We will continue coordinating with our partners to this end.



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