

1184 BC

Trojan War: Troy is sacked and burned, according to calculations by Eratosthenes

1776

Continental Congress creates committee to draft a Declaration of Independence with Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston as members

1963

US President JFK says segregation is morally wrong and that it is "time to act"



1978

Margaret Thatcher is 1st British Prime Minister in 160 years to win a third consecutive term

vows to fight 'extremism' ruling

ei Navalny's political organisations 'extremist'



uring a court hearing (file photo)
Russia's most prominent opposition leader, who is in a penal colony outside Moscow, acknowledged supporters would now have to alter their strategy.

'We will not retreat'

"But we will not retreat from our goals and ideas. This is our country and we have no other," the 45-year-old said on Instagram.

The European Union yesterday condemned the court ruling as the latest effort to "suppress" the opposition.

"It is an unfounded decision that confirms a negative pattern of a systematic crackdown on human rights and freedoms which are enshrined in the Russian constitution," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said in a statement on behalf of the 27 member states.

UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab had described the ruling as "perverse" and "Kafka-esque," while the United States called on Moscow to end the crackdown and release Navalny.

US President Joe Biden has

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Navalny's foundation, started 10 years ago, has relentlessly targeted senior government officials with colourful and widely watched videos that detail corruption allegations against them. One of its latest productions, which has received 117 million views on YouTube, claimed that a lavish palace on the shores of the Black Sea was built for Putin through an elaborate corruption scheme. The Kremlin has denied any links to Putin

promised to raise the issue of human rights with Putin when the two meet next week for a summit in Geneva.

The spokeswoman for Russia's foreign ministry said the international outcry suggested Navalny was working with foreign governments.

"This means that they are politically involved in the story," Maria Zakharova said, adding that Washington, with its response, was exposing "agents".

Explosions shake Yemen's Marib city centre

Reuters | Sanaa

Three big explosions shook the Yemeni city of Marib on yesterday and a local official blamed the blasts on missile and drone strikes by Houthi forces trying to seize the gas-rich region.

Two residents reported the blasts and said they heard the sound of ambulances. The local official told Reuters the Houthis had fired a missile and an armed drone at the city.

There was no confirmation from the Iran-aligned movement, which has launched an offensive to take the internationally recognised government's last stronghold in the north of the Arabian Peninsula country.

It was not immediately clear if there were any casualties from the explosions.



a destroyed vehicle at the scene of a missile strike at a petrol station in Yemen's city of Marib

Earlier this month at least 17 people were killed in an explosion near a petrol station in Marib. The government said it was caused by a Houthi missile, but the group said it had only hit a military camp.

Yemen has been mired in violence since the Houthis

oust the Saudi-backed government from the capital, Sanaa, in late 2014, prompting a military coalition led by Saudi Arabia to intervene months later.

The United Nations, backed by the United States, is pressing for a nationwide ceasefire.

Yemen Houthis gear up for Sanaa airport reopening

Reuters | Sanaa

Yemen's Houthi administration has started renovating Sanaa airport, two industry sources said, as the group that controls most of northern Yemen prepares for a possible reopening of the facility under UN-led peace efforts.

A Saudi Arabian-led coalition has controlled Yemen's air space since 2015, when the alliance intervened against the Iran-aligned Houthi movement that ousted the internationally recognised government from the capital, Sanaa.

The coalition's spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment on whether it had agreed to reopen air space and allow the airport to resume regular operations.

The industry sources told Reuters that construction work had begun in some parts of the airport, which has been closed since 2015 with the exception



A cargo plane carrying relief supplies is pictured through a broken glass after it landed at Sanaa airport in Sanaa

of UN flights.

It has been targeted dozens of times by coalition air strikes over the last six years. The military alliance says the facility is used for arms smuggling, something the Houthis deny.

Airport director Khaled al-Shayef said in a Twitter post on Wednesday that he met Yemenia airlines to discuss maintenance and equipment at the airport, and also held talks with the Yemen Oil Company on fuel supplies for aircraft.

Diplomatic efforts have intensified this week. UN envoy Martin Griffiths held talks in Iran with the country's foreign minister on a two-day visit, the second one this year, his office tweeted on yesterday.

Oman, a main regional backer of peace efforts which hosts several Houthi officials, sent a delegation to Sanaa to push the peace deal with Houthi officials. Oman's foreign minister arrived in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday for talks.

Macron tells court he defied France's decay



French President Emmanuel Macron gets slapped by a member of the public

greet a small crowd of onlookers after visiting a professional training college during a trip to take the country's pulse as it emerges from the pandemic and ahead of presidential elections in 2022.

Macron reached out Tarel who was standing behind a security barrier, Tarel then shouted "Down with Macronia" ("A Bas La Macronie") and slapped Macron on the left side of his face.

He could also be heard shouting "Montjoie Saint Denis", the army's battle cry when France was still a monarchy.

US to donate 500 million Pfizer doses to poor nations

Reuters | Washington

The United States will spend \$3.5 billion to buy and donate 500 million doses of the Pfizer coronavirus vaccine to some of the world's poorest countries, it said yesterday, urging other G7 nations to follow suit.

The vaccine donation - the largest ever by a single country - was announced before US President Joe Biden meets leaders of the Group of Seven advanced economies in western England.

The 500 million doses are destined for the world's 100 poorest countries. A senior Biden administration official described the gesture as a "major step forward that will supercharge the global effort" with the aim of "bringing hope to every corner of the world." "We really want to underscore that this is fundamentally about a singular objective of saving lives," the official said, adding that Washington was not seeking favours in exchange for the doses.

The Biden administration expects other G7 members to come up with contributions as



Empty vials of the Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus disease (COVID-19) vaccine are seen at The Michener Institute, in Toronto, Canada

part of a comprehensive road map to end a pandemic that has killed more than 3.9 million people, the official added.

US drugmaker Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech had earlier said they would provide 200 million doses in 2021 and 300 million doses in the first half of 2022.

The shots, which will be produced at Pfizer's US sites, will be supplied at a not-for-profit price.

"Our partnership with the US government will help bring hundreds of millions of doses of our vaccine to the poorest countries around the world as quickly as possible," said Pfizer Chief Executive Albert Bourla.

'Drop in the bucket'

Anti-poverty campaign group Oxfam called for more to be done to increase global production of vaccines.

"Surely, these 500 million

Our partnership with the US government will help bring hundreds of millions of doses of our vaccine to the poorest countries around the world as quickly as possible

Pfizer Chief Executive Albert Bourla

vaccine doses are welcome as they will help more than 250 million people, but that's still a drop in the bucket compared to the need across the world," said Niko Lusiani, Oxfam America's vaccine lead.

"We need a transformation toward more distributed vaccine manufacturing so that qualified producers worldwide can produce billions more low-cost doses on their own terms, without intellectual property constraints," he added in a statement.

Biden has backed calls for a waiver of some vaccine intellectual property rights but there is no international consensus on how to proceed.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



I believe we are at an inflection point in history. A moment where it falls to us to prove that democracies will not just endure — they will excel as we rise to seize the enormous opportunities of this new age.

@POTUS

02



To end this pandemic, each and every one of us has a role. Go get vaccinated.

@VP

03



Ahead of the #G7UK meeting, a new report shows that no major G7 stock index is aligned with the #ParisAgreement. This must change. Governments must incentivize ambitious science-based #ClimateAction.

@antonioguterres

04



As the Myanmar junta keeps piling criminal charges on Aung San Suu Kyi, it's important to keep in mind a key possible motive: a conviction could bar her from running for office if the junta ever decides to hold an election again.

@KenRoth

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