

Chinese fleet commander Zheng He sets sail to the Spice Islands on his first major expedition, leading 208 vessels, including 62 treasure ships with 27,800 sailors

Pope Clement VII excommunicates England's King Henry VIII



English poet John Keats writes "In the Cottage Where Burns is Born," "Lines Written in the Highlands," and "Gadfly"

Franklin Roosevelt announces that he will run for a fourth term as President of the United States



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TWEETS

01



Meeting of the Coalition of the Willing. Today's format was expanded – for the first time, representatives of the United States took part in our meeting, including General Kellogg, Senators Graham and Blumenthal.

@Zelenskyyua

02



You can cut & paste your entire source code file into the query entry box on <http://grok.com> and @Grok 4 will fix it for you! This is what everyone @xAI does. Works better than Cursor.

@elonmusk

03



Interacted with MPs from Namibia after my address to their Parliament. Their positivity towards India is clearly visible!

@narendramodi

04



We stand firmly with Ukraine amid the devastating Russian attacks. With SAFE, Europe is mobilising urgently needed military support. And with the Coalition of the Willing we keep up the pressure, to bring Russia to the negotiating table.

@vonderleyen

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

Houses made from rice

Kyrgyzstan's eco-friendly revolution

● Made of 60 percent rice husks

● 31.4 million tons of rice husks fill landfills

● Nursultan Taabaldyev is one of the pioneers of the technology in Central

AFP | Kyzyl-Kiya, Kyrgyzstan



A view of the production facility of rice construction blocks, made mostly of rice husks - a byproduct of rice processing, in the Batken region in southern Kyrgyzstan



Farmer Abdimamat Saparov is pictured at the processing facility of his rice farm in the Batken region in southern Kyrgyzstan



That is about to change. Several initial studies from various countries have highlighted the potential economic and environmental benefits of using rice blocks in construction. Crucially, they require less cement, which is responsible for approximately eight percent of global carbon dioxide emissions, according to 2023 figures from the World Economic Forum. In her village in a mountainous and arid region, Ykhval Bo-

riyeva has also opted for rice blocks, praising their insulating qualities.

Her house remains "warm in winter and cool in spring" thanks to its low thermal conductivity.

"We save on coal. The walls retain heat and coolness well," she said. The material is also well within reach, with the Batken region producing a third of Kyrgyzstan's rice crop.

"Rice waste is thrown into the

Next up 'crushed reed'

Farmer Abdimamat Saparov is another who has welcomed Taabaldyev's innovative approach, pointing at the mounds of rice waste.

"After harvesting and drying the rice, about 40 percent of waste remains, which we have no way of processing," said Saparov. Such abundance makes the blocks cheaper than ordinary building bricks -- another crucial factor in southern Kyrgyzstan, where the average monthly salary is around \$230.

Cement is more expensive in Kyrgyzstan than anywhere else in Central Asia and the government is mulling adding it to a list of socially sensitive products, alongside bread and oil, that would allow it to dampen surging prices.

Ten rescued after deadly Huthi ship sinking off Yemen

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Ten people have been rescued after Yemen's Huthis sank a cargo ship, an EU naval force said yesterday, with three killed and 12 missing in one of the rebel group's deadliest Red Sea attacks.

Three Filipino crew and a Greek member of the Eternity C ship's onboard security team were plucked from the sea overnight, "bringing the total number of those rescued to 10", the European Union's Operation Aspides naval task force posted on X.

On Wednesday, the Iran-backed Huthis said they had "rescued" an unspecified number of the Eternity C's crew and taken them to a safe location. The US embassy for Yemen accused the rebels of kidnapping the survivors.

The deadly attack was the rebels' second assault on a commercial vessel in the Red Sea in recent days and threatened a May truce with the United States that ended weeks of air strikes on Huthi targets.

Rebel leader Abdel Malek al-Huthi said both ships belonged to companies serving Israeli ports.

He said the attacks would continue "as long as the (Israeli) aggression and siege of Gaza persist".



EU chief von der Leyen comfortably survives confidence vote

AFP | Strasbourg, France

EU chief Ursula von der Leyen yesterday comfortably saw off a no-confidence vote in the European Parliament -- but the rare challenge has exposed frictions between her backers and complaints about her leadership style.

Lawmakers in Strasbourg rejected the censure motion -- launched by the far-right over the European Commission president's handling of Covid vaccine contracts -- by 360 to 175 in a widely expected result.

"In a moment of global volatility and unpredictability, the EU needs strength, vision, and the capacity to act," von der Leyen, who wasn't at the parliament for the vote, wrote on X afterwards.