

Battle of Didgori: Georgian army under King David the Builder wins a decisive victory over the renowned Seljuk commander Ilghazi

Ottoman troops conquer Otranto in southern Italy after a 15-day siege, killing 12,000, enslaving 5,000, and beheading 800 Christians for refusing to convert to Islam



American inventor Isaac Singer patents his famous sewing machine

Ford Motor Company builds its first Model T car, which Henry Ford himself tests on a hunting trip to Wisconsin and northern Michigan

TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Today, after more than four years of detention in Russia, Robert Gilman is on his way home to be reunited with his family. Mr. Gilman joins over 100 Americans whom President Trump has freed during his second term in office.

@SecRubio

02



Vape shops. Betting shops. Dodgy businesses. If you look at your high street these days and think ‘who asked for this?’, you’re not alone. I’m doing something about it. We’re giving local people and councils more control over what opens, and tougher powers to crack down on businesses that aren’t good for our communities.

@andyburnham

03



Tonight, Europe’s heart is with the people of Colombia after the terrible earthquake in the Chocó region. We have already mobilised Copernicus, our satellite service, to help with rescue operations.

@vonderleyen

04



In the face of the terrible earthquake that has struck Colombia, I extend, on behalf of France, my most sincere thoughts to the Colombian people.

@EmmanuelMacron

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

Europe scrambles for eclipse glasses



Customers line up outside an optical store specializing in behavioral optometry to buy solar eclipse viewing glasses in Paris



AFP | Madrid, Spain

The scramble for protective glasses has reached fever pitch across Europe ahead of today’s rare total solar eclipse, as pharmacies, opticians and other shops struggled to keep them in stock.

In Spain, where parts of the country will be in the path of totality, finding certified protective glasses has become increasingly difficult, with many distribution points reporting they have run out.

A notice posted at the entrance of Madrid’s National Museum of Natural Sciences said its supply of protective glasses was exhausted.

The museum was among 30 science institutions across the country taking part in a campaign organised by the government to distribute two million pairs of glasses for free.

Some pharmacies in central Madrid still had supplies Tuesday, generally selling certified glasses for safely viewing the Sun for between three and four euros (\$4.60) a pair.

But Carles Sisquella, who runs an optical shop in Barcelona, said his store had been out of stock for 10 days.

“There are now a lot of people who obviously won’t be able to

get glasses,” he said.

Doctors warn that looking directly at the Sun during a solar eclipse can damage the retina, potentially harming the cells responsible for sharp central vision.

“I’ve been asking around since Friday, but they’re nowhere to be found,” a woman named Mabel told AFP in Barcelona after another fruitless search.

French supermarket chain Carrefour’s Spanish unit said demand for eclipse glasses has “grown exponentially”, increasing twentyfold in recent days compared with the same period last month.

‘Gone in 30 minutes’

The rush is being repeated across Europe.

In Brussels, where about 90 percent of the Sun will be covered by the Moon, people were also racing to find glasses.

With a seeming majority of opticians and pharmacists out of stock, pastry chef Arno Dosogne, 37, struck gold at a small opticians’ store that received a last-minute shipment Monday afternoon.

“I got some for me, my boyfriend and a couple of friends whose online order got cancelled!” he told AFP.

“It was this or nothing. You

can’t mess around, or you’ll burn your eyes.”

The opticians’ manager Fouad Mehdaoui told AFP he acted on a tip from his pharmacist wife, placing large orders of glasses early on, but even then was outrun by demand and had to order more.

“Two boxes just came in with 100 pairs in total -- they were gone in 30 minutes,” he told AFP as a stream of eclipse enthusiasts filed in the store, by chance or word of mouth, and an employee fielded non-stop phone enquiries.

Philippe Besset, president of France’s Federation of Pharmaceutical Trade Unions, said demand had been far greater than expected.

A few months ago, suppliers had offered pharmacies around 200 pairs each, enough to equip about four million people, he told AFP.

“But obviously more people want to watch the eclipse,” he said.

Marine Tondelier, leader of France’s Greens, accused the government of failing to properly prepare for the eclipse, calling the struggle to secure glasses a “fiasco”.

She contrasted it with the 1999 eclipse, when more than 30 million approved glasses were distributed nationwide.

India-Saudi ties set to reach ‘newer heights’, says India’s ambassador-designate to Saudi Arabia Vipul



On July 31, Indian career diplomat Vipul received his credentials in New Delhi from President Droupadi Murmu as the country’s next ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

TDT | agencies

India-Saudi Arabia relations are poised to reach “newer heights” in the coming years, driven by converging interests, a strong institutional framework and opportunities created by Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 programme, India’s ambassador-designate to the Kingdom, Vipul, has said.

Vipul, who received his credentials from President Droupadi Murmu in late July, is preparing to travel to Riyadh to take charge of India’s diplomatic mission.

“Our relationship is historic, it’s special and, of course, it is strategic,” Vipul told Arab News in his first interview before assuming office. “The interests of both our countries converge.”

He said the relationship had strengthened significantly over the past decade, particularly following the establishment of the Strategic Partnership Council in 2019. The council has since provided an institutional platform for cooperation across political, economic, energy, security and other areas.

Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 has also created new opportunities in technology, infrastructure, renewable energy, minerals, healthcare, tourism, logistics, entertainment and investment.

“Both India and Saudi Arabia are growing economies. There are many opportunities for both our countries to work together,” Vipul said, adding that Indian businesses and workers could benefit

from the Kingdom’s expanding economy and development projects.

He identified trade and investment as key priorities, noting opportunities for Saudi companies and sovereign wealth funds to invest in India, while Indian companies could participate in Saudi Arabia’s large-scale projects.

The ambassador-designate also highlighted potential cooperation in emerging sectors including data centres, power, roads, highways, mining and renewable energy.

Beyond economics, Vipul said bilateral ties now encompass culture, energy, defence, security and technology, with artificial intelligence offering further scope for cooperation.

His appointment comes amid heightened regional tensions. Vipul said stability in the Gulf was crucial for India given its extensive economic and social links with the region.

“It’s very important for us that peace and stability prevail in the region,” he said.

Sports is another emerging area, with Saudi Arabia’s preparations for the Asian Games and the 2034 FIFA World Cup expected to generate opportunities in infrastructure, technology and investment.

Vipul also highlighted the centuries-old people-to-people connection between the two countries, particularly through Hajj.

“I only see our relationship going further, going to newer heights in the coming years,” he said.

Ebola outbreak in DR Congo kills more than 2,000

AFP | Kinshasa, DR Congo

Ebola has killed more than 2,000 people in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the latest outbreak, which is nearing the country’s deadliest ever.

The current outbreak, which has hit the DRC’s conflict-plagued eastern and northeastern regions, was de-

clared on May 15 but is thought to have already been spreading for several weeks.

It is the DRC’s 17th surge of the highly contagious disease and is already considered the largest in the country’s history “and could well become the largest outbreak ever”, Sania Nishtar, chief executive of the Gavi global vaccine alliance, has said.