

1521

Spanish conquistadors led by Hernán Cortés capture Aztec Emperor Cuauhtémoc in Tenochtitlan, bringing the Aztec Empire to an end

1642

Dutch astronomer Christiaan Huygens discovers Mars's southern polar cap



1788

Prussia joins the Anglo-Dutch alliance to form the Triple Alliance to prevent the spread of the Russo-Swedish War of 1788-90

1942

The Manhattan Project commences under the direction of US General Leslie Groves with the aim of developing an atomic bomb

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On #YouthDay we celebrate the creativity & leadership of young people everywhere. By working with them as equal partners, we can use their energy & expertise to tackle some of the defining crises of our time. Together, let's build a future where every generation can thrive.

@antonioguterres

02



American citizenship is not for sale. But elaborate birth tourism rings are profiting off the exploitation of America's laws--coaching foreigners to defraud the U.S. visa system, arranging travel and housing, and even forging documents, all to enable foreign nationals to obtain citizenship for their children.

@SecRubio

03



On World Elephant Day, we celebrate the majestic elephant which has remained an integral part of India's ecological heritage. It is gladdening that India is home to over 60% of the world's wild Asian elephants.

@narendramodi

04



Every parent wants to keep their children safe, and vaccines are among the most powerful tools for doing that, making deadly diseases preventable.

@DrTedros

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

China's C919 jet makes first international commercial flight

AFP | Beijing, China

China's homegrown C919 jet completed its first international commercial flight on Wednesday, a symbolic step towards Beijing's goal of challenging the decades-long aerospace dominance of Boeing



and Airbus. The narrow-body jet has been billed as a potential competitor to Boeing's 737 or Airbus's A320, though the aircraft has yet to receive approval from American or European regulators. Beijing hopes the domestically produced plane will reduce China's reliance on foreign

technology and help it gain a foothold in the global market. The C919 jet, produced by the state-owned Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China (COMAC) and operated by Air China, departed Beijing at 3:17 pm (0717 GMT) on Wednesday. It landed in Mongolia's capital Ulaanbaatar at 4:58 pm (0858 GMT), according to public flight data.

Trump sued over sale of access to Truth Social posts

AFP | New York, United States

Two US media groups yesterday sued President Donald Trump over his move to charge for early access to his often market-moving Truth Social posts.

The lawsuit, filed in New York by The Intercept and Freedom of the Press Foun-

dation, states that the scheme is "extraordinary, corrupt and unconstitutional."

Subscribers to the paid service are supposed to get almost instantaneous access to Trump's messages on Truth Social -- crucial seconds ahead of the general public.

The billionaire US lead-

er often uses the platform to announce huge news, ranging from developments in the Iran war to trade tariffs, all of which can instantly send market values tumbling or soaring.

Early access to the service can cost up to \$100,000 per month, according to yesterday's lawsuit.

Putin threatens retaliatory seizures of European ships

AFP | Moscow, Russia

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday threatened to seize ships belonging to European countries in retaliation for plans to sell off cargo seized from Russian "shadow fleet" vessels.

Several European companies have intercepted ships carrying Russian oil in contravention of European sanctions targeting the vital revenue source.

New sanctions passed last month permit EU members to sell the oil or any other cargo seized from the ships.

Moscow has bristled at the moves, with Putin calling it "piracy and banditry".

"We will be forced to respond in kind," the Kremlin chief said while overseeing naval drills in Russia's Far East.

Moscow would act "wherever we ourselves deem necessary and appropriate -- anywhere," he added.

Swedish court documents obtained by AFP earlier in August



Russia's President Vladimir Putin visits the Russian Navy's guided missile cruiser Varyag as he oversees the final stage of a Pacific Fleet's naval drills on far eastern Sakhalin Island

showed Stockholm will transfer to Kyiv a seized Russian ship suspected of transporting grain from occupied Ukraine.

Putin was speaking aboard the Russian cruiser Varyag off the island of Sakhalin, where Russia's navy was conducting drills.

The exercises come a week

before joint US-South Korean war games, designed to simulate a possible invasion from North Korea.

Tensions are high in the region amid accusations from Kyiv and Seoul that Pyongyang and Moscow are further intensifying their military cooperation.

More than 30 countries condemn Iran executions

Paris, France

More than 30 nations, including France, the United Kingdom and Canada, on Wednesday condemned Iran's use of capital punishment, saying in a joint statement the Islamic republic was executing protesters to "silence dissent".

The countries, joined by the European Union's top diplomat, "condemn in the strongest terms the ongoing executions of protesters and use of the death



Representative picture

penalty" by Iran.

"The use of capital punishment to silence dissent, intimidate communities, and punish individuals exercising their

human rights can never be justified," the statement said.

"The people of Iran must be free to exercise their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly without fear."

After the initial 26 countries and the EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas, "other countries joined this declaration" bringing the number of signatories up to 32, the French foreign ministry told AFP.

Google unveils finder tag, new AI smartphone features



New York, United States

Introducing a finder tag, an upgraded watch that checks for respiratory problems and the latest artificial intelligence superpowers in smartphones, Google unveiled its newest Pixel offerings.

The tech giant has organized a press launch event in New York to present the Pixel Tag, a rival to the AirTag, a tracking device commercialized by Apple since 2021.

The tracking device, which sells for \$29.99 (34.99 euros) can be connected to Android devices and used to locate valuables such as a wallet or luggage.

The new gadget can detect, for example, if keys fall behind a sofa.

"Yeah, it has that level of accuracy," Google product manager Spencer Boone said of such a scenario.

The tech giant is also unveiling Pixel Watch 5, whose functions include monitoring the number of subway stops remaining to destination and pausing an audiobook or

podcast at the exact moment when a listener dozes off.

Earlier Pixel Watch versions could call an ambulance after detecting signs of cardiac trouble. The new version extends this capacity to respiratory problems if someone isn't getting enough oxygen.

The new Pixel 11 incorporates AI advances from Google Gemini and has been "purpose-built to do more for you with less from you," said Google product leader Justin Savich.

The system could automatically respond to a text message asking about when your flight arrives, or place a restaurant reservation based on a conversation. Another function is to translate a jumble of oral commands into a clear and concise text message.

The devices can be ordered starting Wednesday and will be in stores from August 20.

The Pixel 11 smartphone begins at \$899 (999 euros) and is priced up to \$1,899 (1,999 euros). The pixel watch begins at \$399 (419 euros).

Former Chinese premier Zhu Rongji dies aged 97

AFP | Beijing, China

Former Chinese premier Zhu Rongji, whose market reforms helped drive the country's extraordinary economic rise, died Wednesday at the age of 97.

Zhu became premier in 1998 and swiftly lived up to his reputation as a hard-hitting free marketeer.

Among his best-known reforms were a broad programme to privatise unprofitable state-owned enterprises, the privatisation of urban housing and the promotion of home ownership.

He passed away from illness in Beijing late Wednesday morning "after medical treatment failed to save him", state news agency Xinhua said.

"The life of comrade Zhu Rongji was a life of revolution, a life of struggle, a life of glory," an obituary jointly issued by China's top political bodies said, according to Xinhua.

"It was a life dedicated wholeheartedly to serving the people, one given to the communist cause. His pass-

ing is a major loss for the Party and the country."

Reforms under Zhu sparked a boom in real estate and construction, which would soar to become a quarter of China's economy before a crippling debt crisis struck in 2020.

His leadership was credited with helping China avoid the worst of the 1997 Asian financial crisis, bucking a global trend.

And he led negotiations for China's accession to the World Trade Organization in 2001 -- a move seen as consolidating the country's transformation from an isolated economy under Mao Zedong to the marketplace of the world.



Former Chinese premier Zhu Rongji