

News in brief

South Korea says to 'move forward' on nuclear subs with US



adding the two countries had agreed to "move forward with building nuclear-powered submarines".

◆ Dozens of Indigenous protesters, some holding babies, peacefully blocked the entrance to the UN climate summit in Brazil yesterday to demand a meeting with President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and discuss their plight in the Amazon. The human barrier of around 60 men and women, most in traditional garb and headdresses, lasted about two hours and prompted the head of COP30, Brazilian diplomat Andre Correa do Lago, to come out to see them. It was the second time this week that Indigenous protesters disrupted the United Nations climate negotiations, which is being attended by tens of thousands of delegates from around the world.

Indigenous protest blocks entrance to UN climate summit



Indonesia landslide kills 2, leaves 21 missing



the national disaster agency, said in a statement yesterday. A search and rescue operation was underway to look for the missing victims, Muhari said.

◆ A landslide killed two people and left at least 21 others missing in Indonesia, a disaster official said yesterday.

The landslide hit three villages in the district of Cilacap, Central Java, on Thursday night, burying and damaging houses. "As of yesterday morning, the joint team has rescued 23 people alive. Two people were found deceased, and 21 others are still being searched for," Abdul Muhari, spokesman of

CURIOSER & CURIOSER

Blue Origin launches NASA Mars mission and nails booster landing



Blue Origin's New Glenn rocket lifts off for its second mission, the NG-2, from Space Launch Complex 36 at the Space Force Station in Cape Canaveral, Florida

AFP | London

Jeff Bezos's Blue Origin successfully launched its New Glenn rocket on Thursday with NASA twin spacecraft destined for Mars aboard, and in a breakthrough nailed the landing of its booster.

The launch was stalled for days over weather both on Earth and in space, but it was worth the wait: in the rocket's second-ever flight, Blue Origin managed to recover the booster for reuse.

Ecstatic cheers rang out at the launch site in Florida's Cape Canaveral as the booster gracefully stuck its landing on a floating platform. Prior to Thursday, only Elon Musk's SpaceX had managed to accomplish such a maneuver with an orbital-class rocket.

Blue Origin's accomplishment comes amid intensified rivalry between the two billionaire-owned private space companies, as the US space

agency NASA recently opened up bids for its planned Moon mission.

"Damn that was exciting!" said Jared Isaacman -- a Musk ally who President Donald Trump recently nominated again to head NASA -- on X, congratulating Blue Origin.

A handful of figures at SpaceX also had praise for their rivals, including Musk himself: "Congratulations @JeffBezos and the @BlueOrigin team!" he said on X.

The launch was repeatedly delayed, on Sunday over weather on Earth, and on Wednesday over weather in space.

The second postponement was over "highly elevated solar activity" that NASA was worried could impact or damage its spacecraft.

And multiple glitches meant delays yet again on Thursday -- hold-ups Blue Origin did not explain. But at 3:55 pm (2055 GMT), New Glenn finally blasted off.

Beijing, Tokyo summon ambassadors in wake of Japan PM's Taiwan remark

● Beijing rebukes Tokyo over Taiwan

● Japan protests envoy's violent remark

● Japan cites long-standing 1972 policy

AFP | Washington

China has summoned Japan's ambassador for a rebuke over the hawkish premier's comments about Taiwan, Beijing said yesterday, as Tokyo insisted its position on the island was unchanged.

But as the diplomatic spat escalated, Japan's foreign ministry said it summoned Beijing's ambassador yesterday after a Chinese consul called to "cut off" Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's neck in a now-removed online post.

Last week, Takaichi told parliament that armed attacks on Taiwan -- which China claims as part of its territory -- could warrant sending troops to the island under "collective self-defence".

If an emergency in Taiwan entails "battleships and the use of force, then that could constitute a situation threatening the survival (of Japan), any way you slice it", she said.

China's Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong summoned on Thursday the Japanese ambassador, Kenji Kanasugi, according to a statement published on Beijing's foreign ministry website.

It said Sun made "serious demarches over Japanese Prime



member of security stands guard at the Japanese embassy in Beijing

Minister Sanae Takaichi's erroneous remarks regarding China".

"If anyone dares to interfere with China's unification cause in any form, China will surely strike back hard," the statement said.

Hours later, Tokyo said it summoned Beijing's ambassador, Wu Jianghao, "and strongly protested against the extremely inappropriate statements" made by Beijing's consul general in Osaka, Xue Jian.

The foreign ministry urged Wu to ensure "the Chinese side takes appropriate measures", it added.

Xue had threatened in a social media post to "cut off that dirty neck without a second of hesitation".

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The diplomatic spat escalated sharply when Japan summoned China's ambassador after a Chinese consul threatened online to "cut off" Prime Minister Takaichi's neck

He did not name Takaichi but quoted a news article about her remarks.

Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi said on Thursday that the now-deleted post was "highly inappropriate".

"We strongly urge the Chinese side to continue taking appropriate measures to ensure that this does not affect the broad direction of Japan-China relations," added Motegi, who was in Canada for a G7 meeting.

Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Minoru Kihara said that his government's position on Taiwan remains unchanged and "is consistent with the 1972 Japan-China Joint Communiqué".

UN rights council orders probe of atrocities in Sudan's El-Fasher

AFP | London

The UN Human Rights Council yesterday ordered investigators to probe alleged atrocities in Sudan's El-Fasher and to seek to identify perpetrators so they can be brought to justice.

The United Nations' top rights body adopted a resolution ordering the UN's independent fact-finding mission on Sudan to urgently investigate violations in El-Fasher.

The text also called on the investigative team to "identify, where possible" suspected perpetrators in a bid to ensure they are "held accountable".

The decision came at the end of a special session called to address the situation in El-Fasher, amid mounting warnings of crimes against humanity and the risk of genocide.

"Bloodstains on the ground in El-Fasher have been photographed from space," UN rights chief Volker Turk warned as he opened yesterday's session.

"The stain on the record of the international community is less visible but no less damaging."

Since breaking out in April 2023, the war between Sudan's army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces has killed tens of thousands of people, displaced nearly 12 million more and trig-



Sudanese people who fled El-Fasher prepare a meal at a camp for the displaced in the northern town of Al-Dabba

gered one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

The violence has escalated dramatically in recent weeks, with the RSF seizing control of the key town of El-Fasher in Sudan's western Darfur region after an 18-month siege and reports of atrocities multiplying.

'Coordinated campaign against civilians'

British ambassador Kumar Iyer, whose country requested

the special session along Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and Norway, insisted that "the scale and severity of the crisis in Sudan can no longer be met with silence".

"The violence in El-Fasher bears the hallmarks of a coordinated campaign against civilians by the Rapid Support Forces," he said, pointing to "credible reports of actively targeted killings, systematic, sexual violence, and the deliberate use of

starvation".

Before yesterday's resolution was adopted, he urged countries to greenlight the text: "without it, accountability will remain out of reach and the cycle of impunity will continue."

The text was adopted by consensus, although several countries, including Sudan, dissociated themselves from the paragraphs broadening the scope of the fact-finding mission's investigation.