

News in brief

Australian police seize record \$104 mln heroin shipment



Australian police said on Saturday they seized the largest heroin shipment ever detected in the country, worth an estimated A\$140 million (\$104 million), and arrested a Malaysian national over the importation of the illicit drug. The 450-kg (990-pound) shipment - as heavy as a grand piano - was detected in a sea freight container of ceramic tiles sent from Malaysia and addressed to a Melbourne business, the police said in a statement.

A former governor of Iran's Central Bank, Valiollah Seif, was sentenced on Saturday to 10 years in prison on corruption charges involving the mismanagement of millions of dollars, the judiciary said.

Seif and two of his deputies, who also received jail terms, were found guilty of "disturbing the foreign exchange market, the country's economic climate and mismanagement," a judiciary spokesman was quoted as saying by state media.

Iran ex-central bank governor gets 10-year jail term



Earthquake of magnitude 4.8 strikes Bali, kills three



An earthquake of magnitude 4.8 struck Indonesia's Bali island on Saturday morning, killing at least three people, Indonesia's search and rescue agency said. The quake affected the Karangasem and Bangli districts on the eastern side of the tourist island and a search has been concluded, the agency said in a statement, but authorities were continuing to monitor situation. A landslide triggered by the quake killed two of the victims, the agency said. A third, a three-year old girl, was killed by falling debris.

The Taliban will announce a framework that allows girls to attend school in Afghanistan "soon," a senior United Nations official said, after four weeks in which Afghan boys have been allowed a secondary education but girls have not.

"The de facto minister of education told us that they are working on a framework, which they will announce soon, that will allow all girls to go to secondary school, and we are expecting that to happen very soon," UNICEF deputy executive director Omar Abdi said at the United Nations in New York.

UN says Taliban to announce plans for girls' education 'soon'



Canadian Arctic city confirms 'exceedingly high levels' of fuel in water supply



The Canadian city of Iqaluit in the country's northern territory said lab results confirmed that fuel had entered its water supply, officials announced on Friday. Analysis of samples from one of the city's water tanks found "exceedingly high levels of various fuel components," Amy Elgersma, Iqaluit's chief administrative officer, said, adding it was likely diesel or kerosene. Residents in Iqaluit, the capital of Canada's northernmost territory Nunavut, which borders Greenland, reported fuel odors in the water over the weekend, but the source was not clear.

COVID-19: Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths
1 USA	45,743,070	743,880
2 India	34,066,738	452,156
3 Brazil	21,627,476	602,727
4 UK	8,404,469	138,527
5 Russia	7,958,384	222,315
6 Turkey	7,630,163	67,437
7 France	7,085,274	117,260
8 Iran	5,773,419	123,876
9 Argentina	5,271,361	115,660
10 Spain	4,984,386	86,974
11 Colombia	4,978,689	126,796
12 Italy	4,715,464	131,517
13 Germany	4,380,253	95,424
14 Indonesia	4,234,011	142,933

Global tally
241,071,578
Deaths
4,908,051
Recovered:
218,296,434
New cases
+266,599
New deaths
+3,903

Middle East

Figures as of closing

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	316,711		17,884		267,355	31,472
Saudi Arabia	547,890	+45	8,760	+2	536,900	2,230
UAE	738,487	+115	2,118		732,142	4,227
Kuwait	412,258		2,455		409,226	577
Oman	304,025		4,103		299,362	560
Qatar	237,867	+69	608		236,341	918

NASA's asteroid hunter Lucy soars into sky with diamonds

NASA launches first space probe to study Jupiter's Trojan asteroids

Spacecraft with name inspired by a skeleton and the Beatles, and with lab-grown gems, starts 12-year quest

AP | Washington



NASA's Lucy spacecraft launches from Pad-41 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Cape Canaveral, Florida

NASA spacecraft named Lucy rocketed into the sky with diamonds Saturday morning on a 12-year quest to explore eight asteroids.

Seven of the mysterious space rocks are among swarms of asteroids sharing Jupiter's orbit, thought to be the pristine leftovers of planetary formation.

An Atlas V rocket blasted off before dawn, sending Lucy on a roundabout journey spanning nearly 4 billion miles (6.3 billion kilometers). Researchers grew emotional describing the successful launch — lead scientist Hal Levison said it was like witnessing the birth of a child. "Go Lucy!" he urged.

Lucy is named after the 3.2 million-year-old skeletal remains of a human ancestor found in Ethiopia nearly a half-century ago. That discovery

got its name from the 1967 Beatles song "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds," prompting NASA to send the spacecraft soaring with band members' lyrics and other luminaries' words of wisdom imprinted on a plaque. The spacecraft also carried a disc made of lab-grown diamonds for one of its science instruments.

In a prerecorded video for NASA, Beatles drummer Ringo Starr paid tribute to his late colleague John Lennon, credited for writing the song that

inspired all this. "I'm so excited — Lucy is going back in the sky with diamonds. Johnny will love that," Starr said. "Anyway, if you meet anyone up there, Lucy, give them peace and love from me."

The paleoanthropologist behind the fossil Lucy discovery, Donald Johanson, had goose bumps watching Lucy soar — "I will never look at Jupiter the same ... absolutely mind-expanding." He said he was filled with wonder about this "intersection of our past, our present

YOU KNOW WHAT

The spacecraft carried a disc made of lab-grown diamonds for one of its science instruments

and our future." "That a human ancestor who lived so long ago stimulated a mission which promises to add valuable information about the formation of our solar system is incredibly exciting," said Johanson, of Arizona State University, who travelled to Cape Canaveral for his first rocket launch. Lucy's \$981 million mission is the first to aim for Jupiter's so-called Trojan entourage: thousands — if not millions — of asteroids that share the gas giant's expansive orbit around the sun. Some of the Trojan asteroids precede Jupiter in its orbit, while others trail it.

New crew docks at China's first permanent space station

AP | Beijing

Chinese astronauts began Saturday their six-month mission on China's first permanent space station, after successfully docking aboard their spacecraft.

The astronauts, two men and a woman, were seen floating around the module before speaking via a live-streamed video.

The new crew includes Wang Yaping, 41, who is the first Chinese woman to board the Tian-gong space station, and is expected to become China's first female spacewalker.

"We'll co-operate with each other, carefully conduct maneuvers, and try to accomplish all tasks successfully in this round of exploration of the universe," said Wang in the video.

The space travelers' Shenzhou-13 spacecraft was launched by a Long March-2F rocket at 12:23 a.m. Saturday and docked with the Tianhe core module of the space station at 6:56 a.m.

The three astronauts entered the station's core module at about 10 a.m., the China



Three Chinese astronauts waves after entering the space station

The new crew includes two veterans of space travel — Zhai Zhigang, 55, and Wang. The third member, Ye Guangfu, 41, is making his first trip to space.

The mission's launch was seen off by a military band and supporters singing "Ode to the Motherland," underscoring national pride in the space program, which has advanced rapidly in recent years.

The crew will do three spacewalks to install equipment in preparation for expanding the station, assess living conditions in the Tianhe module, and conduct experiments in space medicine and other fields.

They are the second crew to move into China's Tian-gong space station, which was launched last April. The first crew stayed three months.

ASEAN excludes Myanmar junta leader from summit in rare move



Flags are seen outside the ASEAN secretariat building

Reuters | Bangkok

Southeast Asian countries will invite a non-political representative from Myanmar to a regional summit this month, delivering an unprecedented snub to the military leader who led a coup against an elected civilian government in February.

The decision taken by foreign ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) at an emergency meeting on Friday night, marks a rare bold step for the consensus-driven bloc, which has traditionally favoured a policy of engagement and non-interference.

Singapore's foreign ministry said on Saturday the move to exclude junta chief Min Aung Hlaing was a "difficult, but necessary, decision to uphold ASEAN's credibility".

The statement cited a lack of progress made on a roadmap to restore peace in Myanmar that the junta had agreed to with ASEAN in April.

US Capitol Police officer charged with telling rioter to destroy evidence

Reuters | Washington

Federal prosecutors on Friday accused a US Capitol Police officer of obstructing a probe into the Jan. 6 attack on the government building by urging a participant to destroy Facebook posts showing him inside, warning that he could be prosecuted.

In a six-page indictment, prosecutors said that Michael



A mob at the US Capitol Building

Riley, a Capitol Police officer for more than 25 years, had be-

come a Facebook friend with the suspect identified as "Person 1" on Jan. 1 and then direct messaged the individual on Jan. 7.

"Hey (Person 1), im a capitol police officer who agrees with your political stance," Riley said in the message. "Take down the part about being in the building they are currently investigating and everyone who was in the building is going to be charged."