

1685

French King Louis XIV revokes Edict of Nantes cancelling rights of French Protestants

1867

Alaska Purchase: US takes formal possession of Alaska from Russia, having paid \$7.2 million

1931

American gangster Al Capone convicted of tax evasion



James Watson (US), Francis Crick (UK) and Maurice Wilkins (UK) win the Nobel Prize for Medicine for their work in determining the structure of DNA

1962

eruption

most 2,000 buildings on La Palma since the volcano started erupting on Sept. 19.

About 7,000 people have been evacuated from their homes on the island, which has about 83,000 inhabitants and forms part of the Canary Islands archipelago off northwestern Africa. read more

Airline Binter said it had cancelled all its flights to La Palma until 1 p.m. (1200 GMT) on Sunday because of ash from the volcano.

Almost half - 22 out of 38 - of all flights to the island on Sunday have been cancelled, state airport operator Aena said, but the airport there remains open.

Convicted murderer Robert Durst is on ventilator

● Jury found Durst guilty of shooting Berman, 55, in the back of the head at her Beverly Hills home

Reuters

Real estate heir Robert Durst, who was sentenced this week to life in prison for murdering a friend in 2000, has COVID and is on a ventilator, his lawyer told the Los Angeles Times.

Durst, who appeared sickly



Robert Durst appears in court as he was sentenced to life without possibility of parole for the killing of Susan Berman, at Airport Courthouse, in Los Angeles, California

during his sentencing on Thursday, "looked worse than I've ever seen him," lawyer Dick De-

Guerin told the Times.

It was not clear where Durst, 78, is being treated. During his trial, he was being held in the custody of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

Durst's sentencing for the 2000 murder of Susan Berman was long-delayed punishment for a man who mostly evaded the law for more than 39 years.

A multimillionaire whose grandfather founded one of New York City's premier real estate companies, Durst was long a suspect but never charged in the disappearance of his wife Kathleen McCormack, who

went missing in New York in 1982.

Last month a jury found Durst guilty of shooting Berman, 55, in the back of the head at her Beverly Hills home. The jury also found him guilty of the special circumstances of lying in wait and killing a witness, which carry a mandatory life sentence without the possibility of parole.

Evidence from the trial indicated Berman helped provide Durst with a false alibi in McCormack's disappearance. Prosecutors alleged that Durst killed Berman because he feared she would reveal what she knew to authorities.

Proposed F-16 sales in return for investment, Turkey says



A US Air Force F-16 jet fighter takes off from an airbase during CRUZEX, a multinational air exercise hosted by the Brazilian Air Force, in Natal, Brazil

turn for its investment in the F-35 programme and that talks on the issue are ongoing.

"There is the payment of \$1.4 billion we have made for the F-35s and the US had such a proposal in return for these payments," Erdogan said.

"And regarding this, we said let's take whatever steps are needed to be taken to meet the defence needs of our country," he said, adding that the new F-16 jets would help develop its fleet. Ankara had ordered more than

100 F-35 jets, made by Lockheed Martin Corp, but the US removed Turkey from the programme in 2019 after it acquired Russian S-400 missile defence systems.

The decades-old partnership between the NATO allies has gone through unprecedented tumult in the past five years over disagreements on Syria policy, Ankara's closer ties with Moscow, its naval ambitions in the eastern Mediterranean, US charges against a state-owned Turkish bank and erosion of rights and freedoms in Turkey.

Ankara's purchase of the S-400s has also triggered US sanctions. In December 2020, Washington blacklisted Turkey's Defence Industry Directorate, its chief, Ismail Demir, and three other employees.

Since then the US has repeatedly warned Turkey against buying further Russian weaponry. But Erdogan has indicated Ankara still intends to buy a second batch of S-400s from Russia, a move that could deepen the rift with Washington.

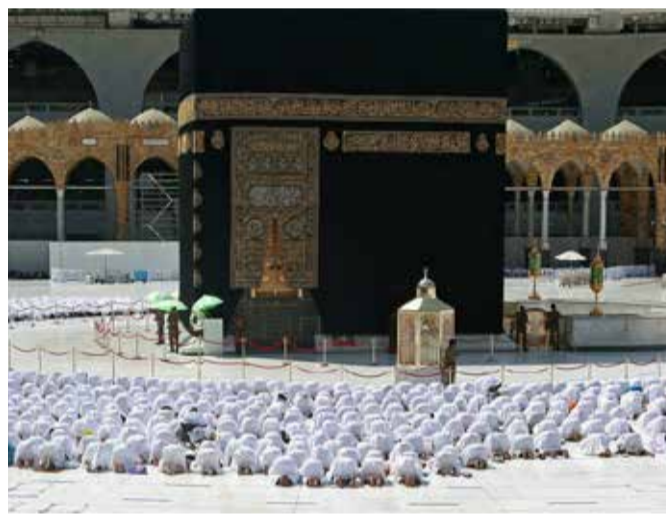
The request for the jets will likely have a difficult time getting approval from the US Congress, where sentiment towards Turkey has soured deeply over recent years.

There is bipartisan support in US Congress to push the Biden administration to put further pressure on Ankara, primarily over its purchase of Russian weapons and its human rights track record.

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TAYYIP ERDOGAN

Grand Mosque in Mecca drops social distancing



Normal service resumes: worshippers pray shoulder to shoulder at the Grand Mosque in the holy Saudi city of Mecca

AFP | Mecca

The Grand Mosque in the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia operated at full capacity yesterday, with worshippers praying shoulder-to-shoulder for the first time since the coronavirus pandemic began.

Workers removed floor markings that guide people to social distance in and around the Grand Mosque, which is built around the Kaaba.

"This is in line with the decision to ease precautionary measures and to allow pilgrims and visitors to the Grand Mosque at full capacity," reported the official Saudi Press Agency.

Pictures and footage yesterday morning showed people praying side by side, making straight rows of worshippers that are formations revered in performing prayers, for the

first time since the Covid-19 pandemic took hold last year.

While social distancing measures were lifted, the authorities said visitors must be fully vaccinated against coronavirus and must continue to wear masks on mosque grounds.

Also, the Kaaba remained cordoned off and out of reach.

Saudi Arabia announced in August it will begin accepting vaccinated foreigners wanting to make the umrah pilgrimage.

The umrah can be undertaken at any time and usually draws millions from around the globe, as does the annual hajj, which abled-bodied Muslims who have the means must perform at least once in their lifetime.

In July, only around 60,000 inoculated residents were allowed to take part in a vastly scaled down form of the annual Hajj.

First movie in space return to Earth after 12-day mission



Astronaut Yulia Peresild is assisted by ground personnel

showed the reentry capsule descending under its para-

chute above the vast Kazakh steppe, followed by ground personnel assisting the smiling crew as they emerged from the capsule.

However, Peresild, who is best known for her role in the 2015 film "Battle for Sevastopol", said she had been sorry to leave the ISS.

"I'm in a bit of a sad mood today," the 37-year-old actor told Russian Channel One after the landing.

"That's because it had seemed that 12 days was such a long period of time, but when it was all over, I



The Soyuz MS-18 space capsule lands in a remote area outside Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan

didn't want to bid farewell," she said.

Last week 90-year-old US actor William Shatner - Captain James Kirk of "Star Trek" fame - became the oldest person in space aboard a rocket-ship flown by billionaire Jeff Bezos's company Blue Origin.

Peresild and Shipenko have been sent to Russian Star City, the home of Russia's space programme on the outskirts of Moscow for their post-flight recovery which will take about a week, Roscosmos said.



TOP 4 TWEETS

01



It is saddening that some people have lost their lives due to heavy rains and landslides in Kerala. Condolences to the bereaved families.

@narendramodi

02



Even before the pandemic, the 22 richest men in the world had more wealth than all the women in Africa. Economic investments must target women entrepreneurs & focus on social protections, education & decent work.

@antonioguterres

03



It's time to build an economy that works for working families. An economy where people from every race, background, and religion can get ahead. Our Build Back Better Agenda will get it done.

@JoeBiden

04



Thank you @WHO Ambassador @GordonBrown for your call for intensified action to rectify the #VaccineEquity crisis facing Africa & other vulnerable settings. I agree vaccine producing countries & manufacturers must do more to save lives & end the pandemic

@DrTedros

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