

1498

Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama arrives at Calicut, India becoming the first European to reach India by sea



1609

Shakespeare's Sonnets are first published in London, perhaps illicitly, by publisher Thomas Thorpe

1927

Treaty of Jeddah is signed between the United Kingdom and Ibn Saud recognizing the independence of the Kingdom of Hejaz and Nejd, the forerunner of Saudi Arabia

1990

Hubble Space Telescope sends its 1st photographs from space

Rise G7 visit

ia 'war machine'

"Russian diamonds are not forever," said EU Council President Charles Michel. "We will restrict trade."

EU member state Belgium is among the largest wholesale buyers of Russian diamonds, along with India and the United Arab Emirates. The United States is a major end-market for the finished product.

The G7 also said they would step up efforts to prevent circumvention of their existing sanctions regime, "including targeting entities transporting material to the front".

The group held talks yesterday evening on nuclear disarmament and warned of Beijing's rapidly growing nuclear weapons stockpile.

"China's accelerating build-up of its nuclear arsenal without transparency nor meaningful dialogue poses a concern to global and regional stability," they said in a statement that also condemned Russia's "irresponsible nuclear rhetoric".

US sanctions

Earlier yesterday, the United States and other members announced their own new sanctions on Russia, with a senior US administration official saying an-

other 70 entities from Russia and "other countries" would be placed on a US blacklist.

"There will be upwards of 300 new sanctions against individuals, entities, vessels and aircraft," the official said.

London, meanwhile, took aim at Russian copper, aluminium and nickel -- as well as diamonds.

Moscow's invasion of Ukraine 15 months ago has prompted waves of sanctions that have helped plunge Russia into recession and drained the Kremlin's war chest.

The Russian economy contracted 2.1 percent in 2022, a trend that continued early this year.

But Moscow has adapted quickly, introducing strict capital controls, diverting trade to allies like China and reportedly borrowing evasion techniques from much-sanctioned countries like Cuba, Iran and North Korea.

The International Monetary Fund has projected a modest 0.7 percent economic rebound in 2023.

G7 leaders began the day visiting Hiroshima's peace park memorials and museum, where they saw evidence of the suffering and devastation caused by the 1945 atomic bombing of the city.

One billion threatened by cholera: UN

AFP | Geneva

A billion people in 43 countries are at risk of cholera, the United Nations warned yesterday, and though the outbreaks could be stopped, the United Nations said resources were desperately lacking.

The UN health agency said the outlook was bleak, as it seeks \$640 million to fight the infectious disease, but said the longer it takes to ramp up the battle, the worse the situation will get.

The World Health Organization said vaccination campaigns had been severely hampered.

"WHO estimates that a billion people across 43 countries are at risk of cholera," said Henry Gray, the agency's incident manager for the global cholera response.

So far this year, 24 countries have reported cholera outbreaks, compared to 15 by mid-May last year.

Countries that are not usually affected by cholera are being struck, and case fatality rates are far exceeding the typical one in 100.

Gray blamed the rise in cases on poverty, conflict and climate change, and the population displacement they trigger.

"With the increase in the number of countries affected by cholera, the resources that were available for prevention and response are more thinly spread," he said.



A health worker tends to a patient at a temporary cholera centre in Malawi



Cholera is contracted from a bacterium that is generally transmitted through contaminated food or water

Oral cholera vaccine is a case in point: over 18 million doses have been requested this year but only eight million have been made available and so prevention campaigns have been stopped.

Rather than the full two doses, only one is being issued to recipients "to try to spin it out", said Gray.

"The outlook is bleak."

With the increase in the number of countries affected by cholera, the resources that were available for prevention and response are more thinly spread

HENRY GRAY, HEALTH EMERGENCY OFFICER, WHO

WHO wants \$160 million for more than 40 countries over the next 12 months. It is working in coordination with the UN children's agency UNICEF, which wants \$480 million.

Jerome Pfaffmann Zambruni, UNICEF's public health emergency unit chief, noted that back in November, the agency had asked for \$150 million for cholera response -- a figure now eclipsed as the situation has worsened.

illions of life years lost to pandemic: WHO



A person walks by tributes in art made in Brooklyn, New York City

le, with the true figure believed to be closer to 20 million.

The WHO report lays bare how the virus itself and the broader impact of the crisis abruptly cut short the lives of millions of people.

While the WHO officially reg-

istered 5.4 million Covid deaths in 2020 and 2021, its excess mortality data shows around 14.9 million people actually likely died due to the crisis over that period.

Even more striking, perhaps, it said the statistics show that



The statistics show that during 2020 and 2021, Covid resulted in the loss globally of 336.8 million years that otherwise would have been lived

during those two years alone, Covid resulted in the loss globally of 336.8 million years that otherwise would have been lived.

lifted after 7.7-magnitude Pacific quake



People look out toward the seafont from the Vierge du Pacifique in Noumea after an earthquake hit the island

warnings for coastal areas within 1,000 kilometres (620 miles) of the epicentre, which lay east of the French Pacific territory of New Caledonia.

Vanuatu had been identified as the island threatened with the largest waves from the quake.

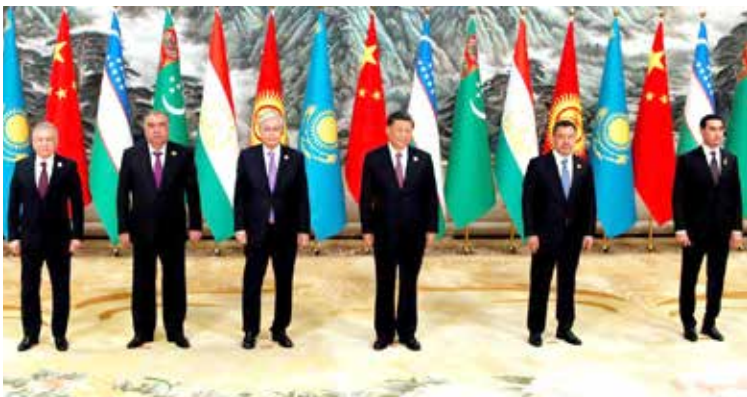
Benie Simo, a local tour oper-

Earthquakes are common along the Pacific "Ring of Fire", an arc of intense seismic activity that stretches through Southeast Asia and across the Pacific basin

ator on Mystery Island in Vanuatu, said he received a government warning via text message to evacuate and moved to higher ground.

The waves, he said, were coming up "really high", describing them as being about one to two metres (three to six feet) tall and noting that so far there were no reports of damage.

Xi says China, Central Asia must 'fully unleash' potential



Chinese President Xi Jinping pose with other leaders for a group photo

AFP | Beijing

Xi Jinping called on China and Central Asia to "fully unleash" their potential in trade, economic and infrastructure cooperation yesterday, as he wrapped up a landmark summit with heads of state from the strategically vital region.

The Chinese leader is hosting the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan at a summit in Xi'an in northern China this week -- a meeting Beijing has said is of "milestone" significance.

Beijing says trade with Central Asia reached \$70 billion in 2022 and expanded 22 percent year-on-year in the first quarter of 2023.

The region is also a crucial link in China's trillion-dollar global infrastructure project, the Belt and Road Initiative.

Speaking to regional leaders, Xi said the countries must "fully unleash the potential of traditional cooperation in economy, trade, industrial capacity, energy and transport," according to a state media readout.

China and Central Asian countries should deepen strategic mutual trust, and always offer clear and strong support for each other on issues of core interests

XI JINPING

He also stressed the need to develop "new growth drivers... such as finance, agriculture, poverty reduction, low carbon, health, and digital innovation".

"China and Central Asian countries should deepen strategic mutual trust, and always offer clear and strong support for each other on issues of core interests."

Belt and Road is a defining geopolitical project for Xi, with Beijing keen to restart cooperation and fill the vacuum left in former Soviet states by Russia's war in Ukraine.

Yesterday, Xi said the region and China must "take the lead" in that project and "deepen strategic mutual trust".

TOP
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TWEETS

01



In coordination with the @G7, Australia, and other partners, the United States is imposing new sanctions on Russia. These sanctions will increase pressure on Russia and degrade Russia's military, its economy, and its ability to fuel its illegal aggression against Ukraine.

@SecBlinken

02



Delighted to be in Hiroshima to participate in the @G7 Leaders' Summit. We have an important agenda that includes scaling up support for low-income and emerging economies in addition to coordinating action to tackle climate change and mitigate its effects.

@KGeorgieva

03



Seven countries, one mission. We meet this year at a time of enormous economic challenge and global instability. We must stand united in the face of threats to global prosperity, security and sovereignty.

@RishiSunak

04



The EU and @G7 will defend the fundamental principles of the UN Charter. For greater peace. And for greater prosperity. #G7 #G7HiroshimaSummit

@CharlesMichel

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