

News in brief

◆ **Russia's ruling United Russia party, which supports President Vladimir Putin, won an emphatic parliamentary majority after its most vociferous critics were prevented from contesting an election that opponents said was marred by large-scale fraud.** Russian President Vladimir Putin thanked Russians for their trust after the ruling United Russia party that supports him won an emphatic parliamentary majority in an election that opponents said was marred by large-scale fraud. "Special words of thanks, of course, I want to address to the citizens of Russia, to thank you for your trust, dear friends," Putin said on state television.



Putin thanks Russians for their 'trust' after United Russia election win

◆ **Lebanon's parliament began a session yesterday that is scheduled to discuss the new cabinet's policy programme and hold a vote of confidence, after nearly one-hour delay caused by a power cut.**

Parliament session on Lebanon cabinet begins late after power cut



Lebanon is battling a deep depression, with worsening fuel shortages translating into few or any hours of state-backed power a day and most Lebanese relying on private generators for electricity. The session had been scheduled to start at 11 a.m. local time (0800 GMT) but the lights went out in the building now housing the parliament. When it began, Prime Minister Najib Mikati read out the cabinet's draft policy programme. "From the heart of the suffering of Beirut ... our cabinet was born to light a candle in this hopeless darkness," Mikati told parliament.

◆ **Syria's defence minister visited Jordan on Sunday to discuss stability on their mutual border, the first such meeting since the Syrian conflict erupted a decade ago when the two neighbours supported opposing factions, officials said.** The meeting follows a major army offensive to retake the last rebel bastion in southern Syria, and after reestablishing control this month over Deraa, a city south of Damascus, in a Russian brokered deal that averted an all-out military assault led by Iranian-backed units of the army. Jordanian army head Lieutenant General Yousef Hunaiti met Syrian Defence Minister and Chief of Staff Ali Ayyoub over the Deraa situation and to discuss issues such as the fight against terrorism and drug smuggling in the area, Jordan's army said.



Syrian military chief makes rare visit to Jordan to discuss border security

◆ **A Chinese robotic resupply cargo spacecraft successfully docked with an orbiting space station module on Monday in the fourth of 11 missions needed to finish building China's first permanent space station by the end of next year.** A Long March-7 rocket carrying the Tianzhou-3, or "Heavenly Vessel" in Chinese, blasted off at 3:10 p.m. Beijing time (0710 GMT) from the Wenchang Space Launch Center on the southern island of Hainan, state media reported. It successfully docked with the core Tianhe module of the space station at 1408 GMT.

Tianzhou-3 cargo spacecraft docks with China space station module

US will re-open to international travelers with vaccine requirements

Reuters

The United States will re-open to air passengers from China, India, Britain and many other European countries who have received COVID-19 vaccines in early November, the White House said Monday, rolling back tough pandemic-related travel restrictions that started early last year.

The United States currently bars most non-U.S. citizens who within the last 14 days have been in Britain, the 26 Schengen countries in Europe without border controls, Ireland, China, India, South Africa, Iran and Brazil.

There will be some exceptions to the vaccine policy, officials said, including for children not yet eligible to be vaccinated. The new rules do not yet apply to travelers crossing land borders with Mexico and Canada.

The White House said in July it had concerns about the highly infectious coronavirus Delta variant and a rising number of U.S. COVID-19 cases.

India to restart COVID vaccine exports to COVAX, neighbours



A ground staff walks past a container kept at the Cargo Terminal 2 of the Indira Gandhi International Airport, which according to the officials will be used as a COVID-19 vaccine handling and distribution center

Reuters | New Delhi

India will resume exports of COVID-19 vaccines in the October quarter, prioritising the global vaccine-sharing platform COVAX and neighbouring countries first as supplies rise, the health minister said on Monday.

India, the world's biggest maker of vaccines, stopped exports of COVID shots in April to focus on inoculating its own population as infections exploded.

The country's monthly vaccine output has since more than doubled and is set to quadruple to over 300 million doses next month, minister Mansukh Mandaviya said, adding that only excess supplies would be exported.

Thousands flee as volcano Spanish island, homes

● 5,000 people evacuated as lava flows toward coast

● Some 100 houses destroyed, no fatalities

● Island still open to tourism, minister says

Reuters | La Palma, Spain



Lava flows behind houses following the eruption of a volcano in the Cumbre Vieja national park at Los Llanos de Aridane, on the Canary Island of La Palma

The Canary Islands' first volcanic eruption in 50 years has forced the evacuation of about 5,000 people, including around 500 tourists, and destroyed about 100 houses, officials said yesterday.

The volcano erupted on Sunday, shooting lava hundreds of metres into the air, engulfing houses and forests, and sending molten rock towards the Atlantic Ocean over a sparsely populated area of La Palma, the most northwestern island in the Canaries archipelago.

No fatalities have been reported but the volcano was still active on Monday. A Reuters reporter saw heavy smoke coming from the volcano and houses burning.

Officials said they were hopeful they would not need to evacuate any more people.

Despite the destruction, Tourism Minister Reyes Maroto told Canal Sur radio the eruption

should be seen as an opportunity to entice visitors to the island.

"The island is open, if your hotel is affected we will find you another one," she said. "Make the most of this opportunity to enjoy what nature has brought us."

Volcanologist Nemesio Perez said there were unlikely to be fatalities as long as no-one be-

haved recklessly. La Palma had been on high alert after thousands of tremors were reported over a week in Cumbre Vieja, which belongs to a chain of volcanoes that last had a major eruption in 1971 and is one of the Canaries' most active volcanic regions. One man was killed in 1971 as he took photographs near the lava flows.

Volcanologist Nemesio Perez said there were unlikely to be fatalities as long as no-one be-



UK's Princess Beatrice gives birth to baby girl



Tennis - Wimbledon - All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, London, Britain - July 8, 2021 Britain's Princess Beatrice and her husband Edoardo Mapelli Mozzi in the royal box on centre court after Australia's Ashleigh Barty won her semi final match against Germany's Angelique Kerber

Reuters | London

Britain's Princess Beatrice, Queen Elizabeth's granddaughter, has given birth to a baby girl, her first child with husband Edoardo Mapelli Mozzi, Buckingham Palace announced on Monday.

The baby, who weighed 6 pounds and 2 ounces (2.78 kg), was born at London's Chelsea and Westminster Hospital on Saturday.

Beatrice, the tenth-in-line to the throne and the eldest daughter of Prince Andrew and Sarah, Duchess of York,

married property developer Mapelli Mozzi in July 2020.

"The new baby's grandparents and great-grandparents have all been informed and are delighted with the news. The family would like to thank all the staff at the hospital for their wonderful care," the statement said.

"Her Royal Highness and her child are both doing well, and the couple are looking forward to introducing their daughter to her big brother Christopher Woolf."

The baby is the 12th great-grandchild for Britain's 95-year-old monarch.

US removes migrants from Texas border camp, begins flights to I



Reuters | Del Rio, Texas, Ciudad Acuna, Mexico

US border agents began expelling plane-loads of mostly Haitian migrants from a large makeshift camp they had set up after wading across the Rio Grande separating Mexico and the United States, with repatriation flights arriving in Haiti on Sunday.

The sprawling camp under the international bridge attracted more than 12,000 migrants at one point and marked a

COVID-19 Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
1 USA	42,900,906	691,880	229,406,840
2 India	33,478,419	445,165	
3 Brazil	21,239,783	590,786	
4 UK	7,429,746	135,203	Deaths
5 Russia	7,294,672	198,996	4,707,689
6 France	6,955,333	116,030	Recovered:
7 Turkey	6,847,259	61,574	206,072,756
8 Iran	5,442,232	117,526	New cases
9 Argentina	5,239,232	114,428	+139,537
10 Colombia	4,941,064	125,895	New deaths
11 Spain	4,929,546	85,783	+2,589
12 Italy	4,636,111	130,310	
13 Indonesia	4,192,695	140,634	
14 Germany	4,151,810	93,585	

Figures as of closing

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	296,929		16,970		250,304	29,655
Saudi Arabia	546,612	+63	8,667	+6	535,602	2,343
UAE	733,003	+313	2,077	+2	724,855	6,071
Kuwait	411,180		2,439		407,908	833
Oman	303,459	+36	4,093		293,957	5,409
Qatar	235,626	+139	604		233,454	1,568