

1099

First Crusade: Godfrey of Bouillon is elected the first Defender of the Holy Sepulchre of The Kingdom of Jerusalem

1942

Warsaw Ghetto Jews (300,000) are sent to Treblinka Extermination Camp

1963

Sarawak achieves independence from British colonial rule



2011

Norway is the victim of twin terror attacks, the first a bomb blast targeting government buildings in central Oslo, second a massacre at a youth camp on island of Utøya

# Province's



province, China

in a dozen cities of the province. "Flood prevention efforts have become very difficult," President Xi Jinping said in a statement broadcast by state television. Dozens of reservoirs and dams breached danger levels. Local authorities said the rainfall had caused a 20-metre breach in the Yihetan dam in the city of Luoyang west of Zhengzhou, and that the dam "could collapse at any time". In Zhengzhou itself, where about 100,000 people have been evacuated, the Guojiazui reservoir had been breached but there was no dam failure yet.

## UNESCO strips England's Liverpool of world heritage status

AFP News

The English city of Liverpool has been removed from UNESCO's list of world heritage sites after the United Nations' cultural agency found new buildings, including a football stadium, undermined the attractiveness of its Victorian docks.

Liverpool was named a World Heritage Site in 2004, joining cultural landmarks such as the Great Wall of China, the Taj Mahal, and the Leaning Tower of Pisa. The city is only the third place to be removed from the prestigious list.

After a vote in China by members of its World Heritage Committee, UNESCO said on Twitter that Liverpool should be deleted from the international cultural organisation's list.



The UN heritage body said years of development had caused "irreversible" damage to the historic value of the River Mersey waterfront.

Joanne Anderson, the Liverpool mayor, said the decision was "incomprehensible" and she hopes to appeal.

"I'm hugely disappointed and concerned by this decision to delete Liverpool's World Heritage status, which comes a

decade after UNESCO last visited the city to see it with their own eyes," she said. "We will be working with government to examine whether we can appeal."

The only other sites stripped previously of the title are a wildlife sanctuary in Oman in 2007



The heritage label gives historic sites access to UN conservation funding as well as featuring in tourist guidebooks across the world. The threat of being delisted has hung over Liverpool since 2012 after UNESCO warned that new buildings had changed the city's skyline and was destroying the heritage value of its waterfront.

after poaching and habitat loss and the Dresden Elbe valley in Germany in 2009 when a four-lane motorway bridge was built over the river.

## Israel looking into NSO spyware allegations

Reuters | Jerusalem

Israel has set up a senior inter-ministerial team to look into growing allegations that spyware sold by an Israeli cyber firm has been abused on a global scale, an Israeli source said on Wednesday, while adding that an export review was unlikely.

The team is headed by Israel's National Security Council, which answers to Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and has broader areas of expertise than the Defence Ministry, which oversees exports of NSO Group's Pegasus software, the source said. "This event is beyond the



Israeli cyber firm NSO Group's exhibition stand is seen at "ISDEF 2019", an international defence and homeland security expo, in Tel Aviv, Israel

Defence Ministry purview," the source said, referring to potential diplomatic blowback after prominent media reports this week of suspected abuses of Pegasus in France, Mexico, India, Morocco and Iraq.

On Wednesday, French Prime Minister Jean Castex said French President Emmanuel Macron had called for a series of investigations to be carried out into the Pegasus spyware case.

Macron's phone was on a list of potential targets for possible surveillance on behalf of Morocco in the Pegasus case, France's Le Monde newspaper said on Tuesday.

## Message to N.Korea - US diplomat

largely a result of sides stemming from 1945 colonial historic dispute trade between threatened to un- on on security threat from

North Korea and its nuclear and missile programmes.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in recently decided not to visit the Tokyo Olympics, which open on Friday, for what would have been his first summit with Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga. Japan's vice foreign minister, Takeo Mori, said the trilateral

cooperation with the United States was crucial for the denuclearisation of North Korea.

"North Korea's next move is unpredictable," Mori said.

Choi Jung Kun, South Korea's vice foreign minister, described the North Korea nuclear issue as "a long game" that needed patience.



Japan's Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Takeo Mori (C), South Korea's First Vice Foreign Minister Choi Jong-kun and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman pose for photographs prior to their trilateral meeting in Tokyo

## Notes: Saudi Arabia's 'digital Hajj'



Hajj card



A pilgrim prays in the bottom of Mount Arafat



A man holds an umbrella over the head of his wife as she prays on Mount Arafat

nated Saudis and foreigners who reside in the kingdom have been permitted to participate in the pilgrimage.

In the last pre-covid Hajj, in 2019, some 2.5 million people participated.

This year, Hajj hopefuls had to apply online and obtain special permission.

"Things were completely dif-

ferent before, we got lost on our way for prayers or we arrived late... all of our efforts were in vain," said Ahmed Achour, an Egyptian pharmacist living in Jeddah.

"From the moment I submitted my Hajj request online, everything was smooth. I made the application, it was accept-

ed, I paid and then I printed the authorisation."

This year's Hajj has been held against the backdrop of mounting concern about new variants of the coronavirus.

Saudi Arabia has reported more than 510,000 cases including 8,089 deaths.

### 'Keeping up with the times'

Amro al-Maddah, under-secretary at the Hajj ministry, said at the launch of the hajj cards that he expected "all transactions to be contactless" in the future, with the cards eventually serving as virtual wallets for payments. King Salman too lauded the

"digital Hajj system" during an address on state-run Al-Ekhbariya, saying it was intended "reduce the personnel required to deliver hajj while assuring the safety of pilgrims".

The pilgrimage, usually one of the largest religious gatherings in the world, was seen as a potential Covid super-spreader event and its organisation is a major logistical feat every year.

Deputy Hajj minister Abdulfattah bin Sulaiman Mashat said organisers had sought to "use technology to serve pilgrims".

This year instead of communal water dispensers, an army of robots was deployed to distribute sacred water to the faithful.

"Bottled zamzam water is much better. There are fewer people and there's no need to queue," Pakistani-American Aneela, 37, said.

Egyptian pilgrim Siam said the new technologies meant the hajj was "keeping up with the times".



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



Eid Mubarak! Best wishes on Eid-ul-Adha. May this day further the spirit of collective empathy, harmony and inclusivity in the service of greater good.

@narendramodi

02



20 July 2021 was also the hottest day on records at Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia. With a maximum temperature of 40.6C, it beat its record of 40.5C set 3 years ago. In Russia, first 42C+ of 2021 with as much as 42.4C at Malye Derbeti.

@GretaThunberg

03



@WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom "the world must unite to fight this pandemic. Only a fraction of what is spent on defence is required to fight Covid-19. Vaccine equity is the key. 70% of the global population must be vaccinated by June 2022" The 138th IOC Session .@Tokyo2020

@DrTedros

04



With the expanded Child Tax Credit, we're proving that democracy can deliver for the American people.

@JoeBiden

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stances)