

1497

Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama rounds Cape of Good Hope on way to first voyage from Europe to reach India

1935

Flying boat "China Clipper" takes off from Alameda, California, carrying 100,000 pieces of mail on 1st trans-Pacific airmail flight

1963

US President John F. Kennedy assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald while riding in an open-topped motorcade in Dallas, Texas



2005

Angela Merkel becomes the first female Chancellor of Germany



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Big voter fraud information coming out concerning Georgia. Stay tuned!

@realDonaldTrump

02



Happy to see Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Mohammed bin Zayed again and discuss the implementation of the Abraham Accords and efforts to counter Iran. The U.S.-UAE relationship is growing in depth and scope and will bring greater stability to the region.

@SecPompeo

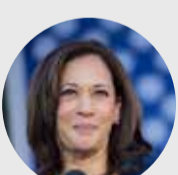
03



Anyone who wants a COVID-19 test should be able to get one. Period.

@JoeBiden

04



Americans deserve leaders that will be there for everyone in times of crisis—doesn't matter whether you're a Democrat or Republican. That's the kind of leadership President-elect @JoeBiden and I will provide.

@KamalaHarris

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

IS-claimed rocket attack on Kabul kills eight

Several rockets hit residential areas in the early rush hour in the Afghan capital

● The explosions, some close to the diplomatic enclave, sent warning sirens blaring from embassies

● The attack came hours before Pompeo was to meet with negotiators from Afghan government and Taliban

AFP | Kabul

At least eight people were killed yesterday when a barrage of rockets struck densely populated parts of Kabul, the latest big attack in a wave of violence that has engulfed the Afghan capital.

The Islamic State (IS) group claimed responsibility for the salvo, which slammed into various parts of central and north Kabul -- including in and around the heavily fortified Green Zone that houses embassies and international firms -- just before 9:00 am (0430 GMT).

The attack came hours before US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was to meet with negotiators from the Afghan government and the Taliban in the Qatari capital Doha amid signs of progress in their peace talks.

The Iranian embassy said on Twitter that its main building had been hit by rocket fragments after one landed on the premises. No one in the compound, located just outside the Green Zone, was wounded.

Despite the IS claim, interior ministry spokesman Tariq Arian blamed the Taliban, saying "terrorists" had fired a total of 23 rockets.

"Based on initial information, eight people were martyred, and 31 others were wounded," Arian said, noting the final toll would change.

Kabul police spokesman Ferdaws Farararz confirmed the same tolls and details.

At least one rocket landed in an office inside the Green Zone, but did not explode.

Several buildings sustained damage to walls and windows, including at the large Sana Medical Complex.

Mariam Rahimi, 26, a nurse at the facility, said she had been thrown off her feet when a rocket struck the hospital.



People inspect a damaged house after several rockets land at Khair Khana, north west of Kabul



Taliban and Afghan government negotiators launched peace talks in Doha in September but progress has been slow and violence has raged across Afghanistan regardless

"The impact broke windows and tables and damaged some parts of a wall. I screamed for help and called other staff members to evacuate the children who were admitted at the hospital," Rahimi told AFP.

"I am scared and have a headache from the shock of the attack. These attackers must die, they don't even spare hospitals."

Recent major attacks in Kabul, including two horrific assaults on educational institutions that killed nearly 50 people, follow a familiar pattern in the aftermath, with the Taliban denying any involvement while the Afghan government pins the blame on them

or their proxies.

The rocket attack in Kabul city has nothing to do with the mujahideen of the Islamic Emirate

TALIBAN SPOKESMAN ZABIHULLAH MUJAHID

"The rocket attack in Kabul city has nothing to do with the mujahideen of the Islamic Emirate," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said, using the insurgents' name for Afghanistan.

The Taliban are under pressure not to attack urban areas, having pledged not to do so under the terms of a US withdrawal deal signed in February.

Any acknowledgement of overt involvement in such incidents could in theory slow the American pull-out, though outgoing US President Donald Trump has made clear he wants US forces out regardless of the situation on the ground.

IS claimed the two attacks on educational centres, but Kabul said the Taliban's ultra-violent Haqqani network was responsible.

The jihadists said on Telegram that their "soldiers of the caliphate" had fired 28 Katyusha rockets in yesterday's attack.

Philippines' Duterte ends overseas travel ban on healthcare workers



Rodrigo Duterte

Reuters | Manila

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has approved ending a ban on deploying the nation's healthcare workers, his labour minister said yesterday, clearing the way for thousands of nurses to take up jobs overseas.

"The president already approved the lifting of the temporary suspension of deployment of nurses and other medical workers," Labour Secretary Silvestre Bello told Reuters.

Bello said the spread of the novel coronavirus was slowing down in the country and conditions were improving, so the government could afford to let its healthcare workers leave.

To ensure the Philippines has enough medical professionals to continue to fight the pandemic at home, only 5,000 healthcare workers will be allowed to leave every year, Bello said.

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"We are starting only with a cap of 5,000 so we will not run out (of medical workers), but this may increase eventually," Bello said.

Remains of two victims of 79 AD volcanic eruption unearthed at Pompeii

AFP | Rome

The remains of two victims of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius almost 2,000 years ago have been unearthed at a grand villa on the fringes of Pompeii, officials at the archaeological site said yesterday.

"Two skeletons of individuals caught in the fury of the eruption have been found," the officials at the Italian site near Naples said in a statement.

The researchers believe the figures are those of a young slave and a richer older man, around 40 and presumed to be his owner, based on the vestiges of clothing and their physical appearance.

The ruined city of Pompeii was submerged in ash after the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. It is now Italy's sec-



The remains of the two men discovered in Pompeii

ond-most visited tourist attraction after Rome's Colosseum, receiving nearly 4 million visits last year.

The massive site that spreads over 44-hectares (110-acres) is what remains of one of the

richest cities in the Roman empire. Layers of ash buried many buildings and objects in a nearly pristine state, including curled-up corpses of victims.

After the latest human remains were uncovered, the



Pompeii officials said the men apparently escaped the initial fall of ash from Mount Vesuvius then succumbed to a powerful volcanic blast that took place the next morning. The later blast apparently invaded the area from many points, surrounding and burying the victims in ash,

bones were analysed and then plaster was poured in, a technique invented by Giuseppe Fiorelli in 1867.

This creates a plaster cast which shows the shapes of the bodies of the two victims, in a supine position, where they fell.

The two skeletons were found, during ongoing excavations at Civita Giuliana, around 700 metres northwest of Pompeii, at a villa overlooking the Bay of Naples where previously a stable and the remains of three harnessed horses had been found.

The two bodies were found in a side room of the "cryptoporticus" a corridor below the villa where the could have gone to seek shelter.

While excavations continue at the Pompeii site, tourism has stopped due to coronavirus measures.