

News in brief

◆ **Australia's Labour Party will form the country's next government today as unprecedented support for the Greens and climate-focused independents ended nearly a decade of rule by the conservative coalition. Centre-left Labor remains four to five seats short of a majority of 76 in the 151 seat lower house with about a dozen electorates too close to call, television channels reported on Sunday. Labor may need the support of independents and smaller parties to return to power for the first time since 2013. Labour leader Anthony Albanese said he will be sworn in as the 31st prime minister on Monday along with four senior party members, before heading to Tokyo to attend a "Quad" summit on Tuesday with U.S. President Joe Biden and the prime ministers of Japan and India.**



Australia's Labour to retake power after 9 years

◆ **Powerful storm rips through Ontario, killing at least two**



◆ **A thunderstorm that nearly packed the power of a tornado rolled through Ontario on Saturday killing at least two people and left parts of Canada's most populous province without power, authorities said. Emergency crews**

were inundated with calls after the storm uprooted many trees, disrupting traffic and damaging homes. Police said one person died and two others were injured after a tree fell on their camping trailer in Brant County, in southern Ontario, while a woman in her 70s died after being hit by a tree during the thunderstorm.

◆ **The Russian-appointed head of the occupied Ukrainian town next to Europe's largest nuclear power plant was injured in an explosion yesterday, a Ukrainian official and a Russian news agency said. Andrei Shevchuk, who was appointed mayor of Enerhodar following the Russian army's occupation of the town, was in intensive care following the attack. Russia's RIA news agency reported, citing a source in the emergency services. "We have accurate confirmation that during the explosion the self-proclaimed head of the 'people's administration' Shevchuk and his bodyguards were injured," Dmytro Orlov, who Ukraine recognises as mayor of the town said in a post on the Telegram messaging app.**

Russia-backed mayor of Ukraine nuclear plant town wounded by explosion

◆ **Finnish President Sauli Niinisto said on Saturday he had held "open and direct" talks with Turkey's President Tayyip Erdogan to discuss Finland's bid for NATO membership. Erdogan has publicly questioned whether**

◆ **Finland's president held "open and direct" talks with Turkey's Erdogan**



Finland and Sweden should be allowed to join the military alliance. "I stated that as NATO allies Finland and

Turkey will commit to each other's security and our relationship will thus grow stronger," Niinisto tweeted after the call. "Finland condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Close dialogue continues."

WHO expects rise of monkeypox

Key facts

- ◆ Monkeypox is caused by monkeypox virus, a member of the Orthopoxvirus genus in the family Poxviridae.
- ◆ It is a viral zoonotic disease that occurs primarily in tropical rainforest areas of Central and West Africa and is occasionally exported to other regions.
- ◆ Typically presents clinically with fever, rash and swollen lymph nodes and may lead to a range of medical complications.
- ◆ Usually a self-limited disease with the symptoms lasting from 2 to 4 weeks. Severe cases can occur. In recent times, the case fatality ratio has been around 3-6%.
- ◆ Transmitted to humans through close contact with an infected person or animal, or with material contaminated with the virus.
- ◆ Transmitted from one person to another by close contact with lesions, body fluids, respiratory droplets and contaminated materials such as bedding.
- ◆ The clinical presentation of monkeypox resembles that of smallpox, a related orthopoxvirus infection which was declared eradicated worldwide in 1980. Monkeypox is less contagious than smallpox and causes less severe illness.
- ◆ Vaccines used during the smallpox eradication programme also provided protection against monkeypox. Newer vaccines have been developed of which one has been approved for prevention of monkeypox.
- ◆ An antiviral agent developed for the treatment of smallpox has also been licensed for the treatment of monkeypox.



Reuters | London

The World Health Organisation said it expects to identify more cases of monkeypox as it expands surveillance in countries where the disease is not typically found.

As of Saturday, 92 confirmed cases and 28 suspected cases of monkeypox have been reported from 12 member states that are not endemic for the virus, the U.N. agency said, adding it will provide further guidance and recommendations in coming days for countries on how to mitigate the spread of monkeypox.

"Available information suggests that human-to-human transmission is occurring among people in close physical contact with cases who are asymptomatic", the agency added.

"What seems to be happening

now is that it has got into the population as a sexual form, as a genital form, and is being spread as are sexually transmitted infections, which has amplified its transmission around the world," WHO official David Heymann, an infectious disease specialist, told Reuters.

Heymann said an international committee of experts met via video conference to look at what needed to be studied about the outbreak and communicated to the public, including whether

WHO surveillance

Suspected case:

An acute illness with fever >38.3 degree C, lymphadenopathy, back pain, myalgia at three days later by a progressively dense (most dense) and then spreading elsewhere on the face, palms of hands.

Probable case:

A case that meets the clinical case definition and has an epidemiological link to a confirmed case.

Confirmed case:

A clinically compatible case that is laboratory confirmed.

there is any asymptomatic spread, who are at most risk, and the various routes of transmission.

He said the meeting was convened "because of the urgency of the situation". The committee is not the group that would suggest declaring a public health emergency of international concern, WHO's highest form of alert, which applies to the COVID-19 pandemic.

He said close contact was the key transmission route, as lesions typical of the disease are

Reduce the risk of zoonotic transmission

Over time, most human infections have resulted from a primary, animal-to-human transmission. Unprotected contact with wild animals, especially those that are sick or dead, including their meat, blood and other parts must be avoided. Additionally, all foods containing animal meat or parts must be thoroughly cooked before eating.



Human monkeypox was first identified in humans in 1970 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in a 9-year-old boy in a region where smallpox had been eliminated in 1968. Since then, most cases have been reported from rural, rainforest regions of the Congo Basin, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and human cases have increasingly been reported from across Central and West Africa.

Since 1970, human cases of monkeypox have been reported in 11 African countries: Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and the United States.

COVID-19 Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
1 USA	84,984,459	1,028,902	527,380,611
2 India	43,136,371	524,413	
3 Brazil	30,780,028	665,657	Deaths
4 France	29,337,985	147,780	
5 Germany	26,085,508	138,712	6,300,088
6 UK	22,238,715	177,977	
7 Russia	18,293,450	378,350	Recovered:
8 S. Korea	17,957,697	23,965	
9 Italy	17,229,263	165,918	497,341,739
10 Turkey	15,061,376	98,921	
11 Spain	12,238,073	105,947	New cases
12 Vietnam	10,708,887	43,075	
13 Argentina	9,135,308	128,776	+385,940
14 Japan	8,587,421	30,292	
			New deaths
			+330

Figures as of closing

Middle East

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	515,645		24,613		442,182	48,850
Saudi Arabia	763,042	+467	9,130	+2	747,492	6,420
UAE	904,830	+364	2,302		888,584	13,944
Kuwait	632,474		2,555		629,392	527
Oman	389,473		4,260		384,669	544
Qatar	367,099	+147	677		365,415	1,007

Newly appointed French minister denies rape accusations

Reuters | Paris

Damien Abad, France's newly appointed minister for Solidarity and the Disabled, strongly denied he raped two women, following accusations published on Sunday by the Mediapart website in an article based on interviews with the women.

The women quoted by Mediapart said Abad had forced them to have unwanted sexual relationships with him. The actions happened in late 2010 and early 2011, they said.

One of the women filed a complaint to the police against Abad in 2017 which was closed without further action, Abad and Mediapart said.

"I contest with the greatest force these accusations of



Member of Parliament Damien Abad

sexual violence," he said in a statement sent to Reuters. "The sexual relations that I have had throughout my life have always been by mutual consent."

Abad said his disability, a disorder called arthrogyposis that affects all four of his limbs, made it physically impossible for him to commit the acts he was accused of.

Abad joined the government formed on Friday after President Emmanuel Macron's re-election.

Asked to comment on the accusations against Abad, Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne said she was not aware of them when he joined the government.

"I will be very clear: on all these subjects of harassment, sexual assault, there can be no impunity and we must continue to act so that women who may be victims of assault, harassment, can speak freely," she said.

Borne said her government would bear the consequences of appointing Abad, "if there are new elements and a new case is opened." She did not give more details.

Biden in Japan to

Reuters | Tokyo

President Joe Biden arrived in Japan yesterday to launch a plan for greater US economic engagement with the Indo-Pacific, facing criticism even before the programme is announced that it will offer scant benefit to countries in the region.

On the second leg of his first Asia trip as president, Biden is to meet with leaders of Japan, India and Australia, the "Quad," another cornerstone of his strategy to push back against China's expanding influence.

Biden meet with Japanese business leaders, including the president of Toyota Motor Corp (7203.T), at the ambassador's residence in Tokyo shortly after arriving, said a person familiar