

French explorer Jacques Cartier claims for France the lands around Gaspé by erecting a 30-foot cross at Pointe-Penouille

Mary, Queen of Scots, is forced to abdicate; her 1-year-old son becomes King James VI of Scotland



Hiram Bingham Discovers Machu Picchu

Benjamin Bonneville leads the first wagon train across the Rocky Mountains through Wyoming's South Pass

American explorer Hiram Bingham rediscovers Machu Picchu, the Lost City of the Incas



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01



The climate crisis is laying waste to lives & livelihoods. We must drastically speed up the reduction of emissions & deliver on global promises: To double energy efficiency & triple renewables capacity by 2030. And to accelerate the transition away from fossil fuel.

@antonioguterres

02



Day after tomorrow, 25th July, I will be in the Maldives at the invitation of the President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu. I am honoured to be taking part in the 60th Independence Day celebrations of the Maldives. This year we also mark 60 years of India-Maldives diplomatic relations. The talks with President Muizzu will certainly add momentum to bilateral ties across diverse sectors.

@narendramodi

03



We want to put our Security & Defence Partnership fully into action. Next year, we will launch the first EU-Japan Defence Industrial Dialogue. Together we can reduce dependencies. And build stronger defence ecosystems, grounded in mutual trust.

@vonderleyen

04



This is a very exciting time for the United States of America, and especially for the fact that we will continue to always have a great relationship with the Country of Japan.

@WhiteHouse

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

# Israel, Ukraine announce ‘dialogue’ on countering Iran

Israel has long accused Iran of developing nuclear weapons

● **Ukrainian**  
described Iran as an  
“existential threat”

● **Kyiv has long**  
accused Tehran of  
supplying military  
hardware to Moscow

AFP | Kyiv, Ukraine

Israel and Ukraine said yesterday they had agreed to start talks on countering the “threat” posed by Iran, in a sign of deepening ties between the two countries.

Both see Iran, a close ally of Russia, as a malign actor on the world stage.

Israel has long accused Iran of developing nuclear weapons, an allegation it denies, while Ukraine is regularly attacked from Russia by Iranian-designed drones.



Ukraine's Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiga (2nd-R) and Israel's Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar (L) walk on a street before a meeting in Kyiv

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiga described Iran as an “existential threat” to global security during a joint press conference in Kyiv with Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar -- the most senior Israeli official to visit Ukraine since 2023.

“Our countries face common security challenges. Today we have decided to launch a separate dialogue on the Iranian

threat,” Sybiga said.

Sa'ar said any effort to curb Tehran's access to weapons and technology contributed to the security of Europe and Ukraine.

“I thank President (Volodymyr) Zelensky and the Ukrainian government for its position that Iran must not have nuclear weapons,” he said.

Ukraine has expressed frustration at Israel's neutral stance

on the Russian invasion, but the two share common interests.

Kyiv has long accused Tehran of supplying military hardware to Moscow.

Last month, Israel launched a surprise bombing campaign against Iran with the stated aim of destroying military and nuclear sites, an action that Kyiv supported.



Iran is home to one of the world's oldest continuous major civilizations, dating back to at least 3200 BCE. The ancient city of Persepolis, once the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire, showcases the country's deep historical roots and architectural grandeur, earning it a UNESCO World Heritage status.

## Retrial opens for S. Korean woman who bit off attempted rapist's tongue

AFP | Seoul, South Korea

A South Korean court reopened a decades-old case on Wednesday after the country's #MeToo movement inspired a woman to challenge her conviction for defending herself against sexual violence 61 years ago.

Choi Mal-ja was 19 when she was attacked by a 21-year-old man in the southern town of Gimhae in 1964.

He pinned her to the ground and forced his tongue into her mouth, court records showed. Choi managed to break free by biting off about 1.5 centimetres (0.6 inches) of his tongue.

In one of South Korea's most contentious rulings on sexual violence, the aggressor received only six months in prison, suspended for two years, for trespassing and intimidation -- but not attempted rape. But Choi was convicted of causing griev-

ous bodily harm and handed a 10-month prison sentence, suspended for two years.

The court said at the time her action had “exceeded the reasonable bounds of legally permissible self-defence”.

Choi's case gained renewed momentum decades later after #MeToo movement, which took off globally in 2017 and inspired her to seek justice.

In South Korea, massive women's rights protests led to

victories on issues ranging from abortion access to tougher penalties for spycam crimes.

Choi filed for a retrial in 2020, but lower courts initially rejected her petition.

After years of campaigning and an appeal, South Korea's top court finally ordered a retrial in 2024. “For 61 years, the state made me live as a criminal,” Choi told reporters outside the Busan District Court ahead of Wednesday's retrial hearing.

# 300kmph kamikaze drones take flight

India's fastest combat UAV built in 60 days by 2 students in Hyderabad hostel room

TDT | agencies

Bomb-dropping Kamikaze drones — 300kmph, radar-proof. Assembled inside a hostel room of BITS Pilani's Hyderabad campus. The Army buys in.

Two 20-year-old engineering students of the institute have stunned India's defence circles by building and selling cutting-edge UAVs to Army units across Jammu, Haryana's Chandimandir, Bengal's Panagarh, and Arunachal Pradesh — all within two months of launching their start-up Apollyon Dynamics. Their mission: reduce India's dependency on imported drones.

Jayant Khatri, a mechanical engineering student from Rajasthan's Ajmer, and electrical



engineering student Sourya Choudhury from Kolkata built their drones with off-the-shelf parts, customised the systems for Indian terrain, and pitched them to Army officers via cold messages on LinkedIn.

“I just started shooting cold

emails to whoever I could find... Luckily, a colonel responded and called us to Chandigarh for a demo,” Khatri said, speaking to TOI on Monday.

What followed was a whirlwind — a live demo of bomb-dropping and rac-

ing drones, followed by more demonstrations to military regiments. Orders began flowing in. The company was born.

Their standout product: a Kamikaze drone that hits a Speed over 300kmph, five times faster than standard commercial UAVs, and delivers 1kg payloads with pinpoint accuracy. “Our drones are not just fast — they can't be detected on radar,” said Choudhury.

The duo insists every UAV is built in-house with a focus on “ruggedness, reliability and adaptability”. “Our shared love of robotics brought us together. We started with a defence-tech club on campus. Then came the orders — that's when we knew we had to go big,” Choudhury

said.

The team now includes six second-year students and is working on next-generation VTOL (Vertical Take-off and Landing) and fixed-wing platforms to boost mission flexibility. They also offer hands-on training to military personnel — even those with no prior flight experience.

“It's heartening to see what they've achieved,” said professor Sanket Goel of BITS Pilani. “Their start-up has already secured multiple orders from the armed forces.” In “3 Idiots”, Joy Lobo's passion for machines died in silence — no support, no takers. In real life, two students built war-ready drones in a hostel room. The Army called back.

## Russia, Ukraine begin talks in Istanbul

AFP | Istanbul, Turkey

Russia and Ukraine began a fresh round of talks in Istanbul yesterday but the Kremlin played down any expectations of a breakthrough after three and a half years of war.

A source in the Ukrainian delegation said the heads of the two delegations held a preparatory meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan ahead of wider talks.

A source close to the Russian delegation said officials from the two sides had a bilateral meeting.

The two sides previously met in the Turkish city in May and June, but managed to agree only on exchanges of prisoners and soldiers' bodies.

US President Donald Trump last week gave Russia 50 days to end the war or face sanctions, but the Kremlin has not indicated it is willing to compromise.

“No one expects an easy road. It will be very difficult,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters when asked about his expectations for the talks.

Ukraine said it hoped the two countries would discuss the release of prisoners and lay the ground for a meeting between President Volodymyr Zelensky and Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin.

“Everything will depend on whether Russia stops speaking in ultimatums and takes a constructive position,” a source in the Ukrainian delegation told AFP.

“This will determine whether results can be achieved at this meeting.”

But Moscow has said a lot of work is needed before even discussions can take place about possible talks between Putin and Zelensky, who last met in 2019.