

News in brief

**Cargo Ship briefly grounded in Egypt's Suez Canal**



A cargo ship ran aground yesterday in Egypt's Suez Canal before it was quickly refloated without interrupting traffic, the authority in charge of the vital waterway said. The Hong Kong-flagged Xin Hai Tong 23 bulk carrier was refloated after "a sudden malfunction of the machinery" while it was crossing on its way from Saudi Arabia to Egypt, the Suez Canal Authority said. The authority, which oversees the waterway that accounts for about 10 percent of global maritime trade, said three tugboats and a marine rescue team were sent to refloat the vessel. It added that the Xin Hai Tong 23 measures 190 metres (208 yards) in length and 32 metres in width, with a loading capacity of 34,000 tonnes.

A serial sexual predator who used Snapchat to prey on more than 100 children was jailed by a Finnish court yesterday. Most of the 120 underage girls who brought charges against Jesse Erkkonen were aged between 12 and 16. The court in Pirkanmaa in southern Finland heard the 27-year-old used the social media platform to approach young girls, asking them for naked photos and sexual videos.

**Finnish abuser used Snapchat to prey on 120 girls**



**Four 'Bulgarians' shot dead in upmarket Cape Town area**



South African police said yesterday four people believed to be of "Bulgarian descent" were shot dead in a upmarket Cape Town district. Police did not identify the victims, but one of the deceased was believed to be Krasimir Kamenov, a high-profile Bulgarian organised crime figure, according to judicial and government sources in Sofia. The bodies of two women and two men aged between 40 and 50 were discovered with gunshot wounds in Constantia, an affluent suburb of the South African port city, in the morning, police stated in a statement. "The motive for the multiple murders is yet to be determined," police said adding an investigation has been opened.

**South African police said yesterday four people believed to be of "Bulgarian descent" were shot dead in a upmarket Cape Town district.**

CURIOSER & CURIOSER

**Paralysed man walks again via thought-controlled implants**



Gert-Jan walks with his implants during a press conference in Lausanne  
AFP | Paris

A paralysed man has regained the ability to walk smoothly using only his thoughts for the first time, researchers said on Wednesday, thanks to two implants that restored communication between brain and spinal cord.

Now I can just do what I want -- when I decide to make a step the stimulation will kick in as soon as I think about it

GERT-JAN

The patient Gert-Jan, who did not want to reveal his surname, said the breakthrough had given him "a freedom that I did not have" before.

button to move their legs each time.

The 40-year-old Dutchman has been paralysed in his legs for more than a decade after suffering a spinal cord injury during a bicycle accident.

Gert-Jan, who also has the spinal implant, said this made it difficult to get into the rhythm of taking a "natural step".

But using a new system he can now walk "naturally", take on difficult terrain and even climb stairs, according to a study published in the journal Nature.

The latest research combines the spinal implant with new technology called a brain-computer interface, which is implanted above the part of the brain that controls leg movement.

The advance is the result of more than a decade of work by a team of researchers in France and Switzerland.

The interface uses algorithms based on artificial intelligence methods to decode brain recordings in real time, the researchers said.

Last year the team showed that a spinal cord implant -- which sends electrical pulses to stimulate movement in leg muscles -- had allowed three paralysed patients to walk again.

This allows the interface, which was designed by researchers at France's Atomic Energy Commission (CEA), to work out how the patient wants to move their legs at any moment.

**Wagner says handing Bakhmut to Russian army, Japan says**

Yevgeny Prigozhin announces ruined Ukrainian city will be handed over to Russian military

**Wagner forces begin withdrawing from Bakhmut and**

AFP | Washington



Wagner Chief Yevgeny Prigozhin (L) with fighters in Bakhmut

The head of Russia's Wagner mercenary group said yesterday his troops had started transferring their positions in the flashpoint eastern Ukraine city of Bakhmut to the Russian military.

Japan said it had scrambled fighter jets after detecting Russian "intelligence gathering" planes off its coastline, while Moscow announced China's special envoy would discuss Ukraine with Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov today.

In Bakhmut, Wagner said it began pulling out its fighters after claiming to have fully captured the destroyed city at the weekend.

Ukraine, which denies that Bakhmut has fallen to Russia, insisted it still controlled a "micro district" of the ruined city and

said it was still advancing on the flanks.

The battle for Bakhmut has raged for nearly a year, levelling the city and decimating waves of Wagner recruits who have led Russia's assault on the industrial hub.

"We are withdrawing units from Bakhmut today. We are handing over positions to the military, ammunition and

everything," Wagner boss Yevgeny Prigozhin said in a video.

"We pull back, we rest, we prepare and then we will get new tasks," added Prigozhin, who was dressed in tactical body armour and a military helmet.

Earlier this week, he conceded that around 10,000 prisoners he had recruited to fight in Ukraine had been killed on the battlefield. The 61-year-old Kremlin ally

**YOU KNOW WHAT**

Russia subjected Ukraine to a campaign of aerial bombardments on infrastructure including energy facilities during the winter months but these attacks recently diminished

toured Russian prisons last year to persuade inmates to fight with Wagner in exchange for a promised amnesty on their return -- should they survive.

Wagner's announcement came days after Moscow's military said it had deployed jets and artillery on Russian soil against a "sabotage" group that crossed from Ukraine.

In Kyiv, President Volodymyr

**One of last four Rwanda genocide fugitives arrested in S.Africa**

AFP | Johannesburg

Fulgence Kayishema, one of four remaining fugitives sought for their role in the 1994 Rwanda genocide, has been arrested in South Africa, UN investigators said on yesterday.

"Yesterday afternoon, Fulgence Kayishema -- one of the world's most wanted genocide fugitives -- was arrested in Paarl, South Africa in a joint operation," the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (MICT) said in a statement.

Around 800,000 Rwandans, most of them ethnic Tutsis, were slaughtered over 100 days at the hands of Hutu extremists.

Kayishema, a former judicial police in-



Fulgence Kayishema, bottom left, is pictured on a wanted poster

spector, faces charges of genocide, complicity in and conspiracy to commit genocide, and crimes against humanity.

He has been on the run since July 2001, according to the MICT website, which gives

his year of birth as 1961.

He and others allegedly murdered more than 2,000 Tutsi men, women and children who had taken refuge in a Catholic church in Nyange in Kivumu district.

"Kayishema directly participated in the planning and execution of this massacre, including by procuring and distributing petrol to burn down the church with the refugees inside," the statement said.

"When this failed, Kayishema and others used a bulldozer to collapse the church, burying and killing the refugees inside.

"Kayishema and others then supervised the transfer of corpses from the church grounds into mass graves over the next approximately two days."

**DeSantis White House launch plagued by Twitter meltdown**

AFP | Washington

Florida governor Ron DeSantis's long-awaited entry into the 2024 presidential campaign descended into a fiasco on Wednesday as the opening of the live Twitter event intended to announce his candidacy was derailed by glitches.

The conversation repeatedly crashed as the platform's servers were apparently overwhelmed, and many of the 400,000-plus users who were hoping to listen in missed the 44-year-old conservative throwing down the gauntlet to Republican primary frontrunner Donald Trump.

DeSantis finally began speaking after almost half an hour of confusion and chaos -- although what should have been an exultant launch had been thoroughly overshadowed by the time he was able to make his case for the



The live Twitter talk with Elon Musk on a background of Ron DeSantis as he announces his 2024 presidential run on his Twitter page

Republican nomination. "I am running for president of the United States to lead our great American comeback," he told the listeners, although tens of thousands had abandoned Twitter by that point.

As the website struggled to get the event back on track, its owner Elon Musk, performing hosting duties, could be heard noting the "massive number of people online" who had caused the servers to begin "straining

While organizers sought to highlight the event's popularity -- the DeSantis camp said it had raised \$1 million online in one hour -- Biden's team was quick to capitalize on the glitches, tweeting a link to a fundraising page and stating: "This link works."

While organizers sought to highlight the event's popularity -- the DeSantis camp said it had raised \$1 million online in one hour -- Biden's team was quick to capitalize on the glitches, tweeting a link to a fundraising page and stating: "This link works."