

News in brief

'Invasion Day' rallies mark divisive national holiday in Australia

Thousands protested



Australia's increasingly divisive national day yesterday as the public debates whether the country's Indigenous population should be recognised in the constitution. Australia Day on January 26 has traditionally celebrated the arrival of European settlers at Sydney Harbour in 1788, and has typically been observed with beach parties and backyard barbecues. But in recent years, it has also become a day of national protest, with some Australians calling it "Invasion Day" and saying it was the start of a cultural genocide by European colonisers.

Spanish police have arrested a 74-year-old man on suspicion of sending letter bombs to high-profile targets, including the country's prime minister. The man was reportedly taken into custody in the north of Spain and is due to appear in court later this week. In total six bombs were sent to addresses across Spain including PM Pedro Sánchez's official residence and the US and Ukrainian embassies. Most were defused but an Ukrainian embassy worker was slightly injured. Letter bombs were also sent to the ministry of defence, an air force base and a weapons manufacturer - all linked to Spain's support for Ukraine in its defence against Russian aggression.

Elderly man held over Spain letter bombs



Donald Trump to be allowed back on Facebook after 2-year ban

Facebook parent Meta said Wednesday it will restore former



President Donald Trump's personal account in the coming weeks, ending a two-year suspension it imposed in the wake of the Jan. 6 insurrection. The company said in a blog post it is adding "new guardrails" to ensure there are no "repeat offenders" who violate its rules, even if they are political candidates or world leaders. "The public should be able to hear what their politicians are saying - the good, the bad and the ugly - so that they can make informed choices at the ballot box," wrote Nick Clegg, Meta's vice president of global affairs. Clegg added that when there is a "clear risk" to real-world harm, Meta will intervene.

CURIOSER & CURIOSER

Archaeologist hails possibly 'oldest' mummy yet found in Egypt



A general view inside a tomb after the announcement of the discovery of 4,300-year-old sealed tombs in Egypt's Saqqara necropolis, in Giza, Egypt
Reuters | Cairo

Egyptologists have uncovered a Pharaonic tomb near the capital Cairo containing what may be the oldest and "most complete" mummy yet to be discovered in the country, the excavation team leader said on Thursday.

The 4,300-year-old mummy was found at the bottom of a 15-metre shaft in a recently uncovered group of fifth and sixth dynasty tombs near the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, Zahi Hawass, director of the team, told reporters.

The mummy, of a man named Hekashepes, was in a limestone sarcophagus that had been sealed in mortar.

"This mummy may be the oldest and most complete mummy found in Egypt to date," Hawass, one of Egypt's former ministers of antiquities, said in a statement.

Among other tombs found was one belonging to Khnumdjedef, an inspector of officials, a supervisor of nobles

The Saqqara site is part of a sprawling necropolis at Egypt's ancient capital of Memphis that includes the famed Giza Pyramids as well as smaller pyramids at Abu Sir, Dahshur and Abu Ruwaysh. The ruins of Memphis were designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in the 1970s

and a priest during the reign of Unas, last pharaoh of the fifth dynasty. It was decorated with scenes of daily life.

Another tomb belonged to Meri, "keeper of the secrets and assistant to the great leader of the palace".

Numerous statues were found among the tombs, including one representing a man and his wife and several servants, the statement said.

Deadly Russian missiles hit Ukraine power facilities

AFP | Kyiv

Russian forces fired dozens of missiles at Ukraine yesterday in a blistering wave of strikes targeting energy infrastructure a day after Germany and the United States pledged modern tanks for Kyiv.

The latest wave of attacks came as the Kremlin said Moscow perceived the tank deliveries "as direct involvement in the conflict" and Ukraine conceded it was facing mounting pressure from Russian troops on the eastern front line.

Leopard tanks pledged by Berlin will arrive in "late March, early April", German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius said.

Training of Ukrainian troops on German Marder infantry fighting vehicles will start in the next few days, he added, and "a little later" for the Ukrainian soldiers who will be trained on the Leopard.

Russian missiles killed one person and wounded two more in the capital, Kyiv mayor Vitali Klitschko said on social media.

The 55-year-old man was killed by fragments of a missile that was shot down by Ukrainian air defence systems, Kyiv city officials said.

Ukrainian energy operator DTEK said it was instituting



Ukrainian tanks move in Donetsk region, eastern Ukraine (file photo)



We expect more than 30 missiles, which have already started to appear in various territories. Air defence systems are working

UKRAINIAN MILITARY SPOKESMAN YURIY IGNAT

emergency power cuts around Kyiv and also in the southern Odessa and Dnipropetrovsk regions.

Russia has launched regular waves of aerial attacks targeting Ukraine's energy infrastructure since last October.

Those assaults have crippled

the electricity grid with temperatures near zero degrees Celsius (32 degrees Fahrenheit) as winter deepens.

Yesterday, two critical infrastructure facilities in the Odessa region on the Black Sea were damaged, the head of the regional military administration said.

Ukrainian military spokesman Yuriy Ignat announced the fresh missile salvo, telling local media that several Russian Tu-95 bombers had launched the attack from northern Murmansk region.

"We expect more than 30 missiles, which have already started to appear in various territories. Air defence systems are working," Ignat said.

US Republicans probe art sales by Biden's son

AFP | Washington

The matter of who buys artwork produced by Joe Biden's son, a former lawyer with a troubled past, is taking center stage on Capitol Hill -- where Republicans have vowed to use their new House majority to aggressively investigate the president's family.

The chairman of the powerful House Oversight Committee on Wednesday demanded a New York art gallery produce a list of who has bought artwork made by Hunter Biden.

"Your arrangement with Hunter Biden raises serious ethics concerns and calls into question whether the Biden family is again selling access and influence," Republican James Comer of Kentucky said in his letter.

Comer requested the gallery's owner, Georges Berges, testify before his committee next month.

Hunter Biden is a favorite



Hunter Biden painting



Why would anyone pay Hunter Biden top dollar for artwork that is arguably worthless? He's no Pablo Picasso

JAMES COMER

target of Republicans, particularly over his prior work with foreign firms.

He is the president's second



Some of Hunter Biden's paintings exhibited by the New York gallery have price tags up to \$225,000

of four children, though his older brother died of cancer in 2015, and he has publicly discussed struggles with addiction.

The Republicans suggest that wealthy influence seekers may buy Hunter Biden's artwork with the aim of winning favor at the White House.

According to Comer, some of the paintings exhibited by the New York gallery have price tags up to \$225,000.

8 dead, including 6 Chinese nationals, after ship sinks near Japan

Reuters | Seoul

Eight people are dead, including six Chinese nationals, after a ship sank in waters off the coast of Japan, a Chinese diplomat said yesterday.

The Jin Tian, carrying crew from China and Myanmar, sent a distress signal on Tuesday evening from a position around 110 kilometres (68 miles) west of the remote and uninhabited Danjo Islands in far southwestern Japan.

The ship's captain used a satellite phone to tell the South Korean coast guard that he and the crew would abandon the sinking ship in the early hours of Wednesday morning, the



Members of South Korea coast guard conduct a search operation in waters between South Korea and Japan

Jeju coast guard said.

Multiple vessels and aircraft from Japan's coast guard and

military have also been involved in the search, which retrieved 13 crew members.

Ex-kickboxer Andrew Tate says Romanian prosecutors have no evidence against him



Andrew Tate answers questions from the media while being escorted by police officers

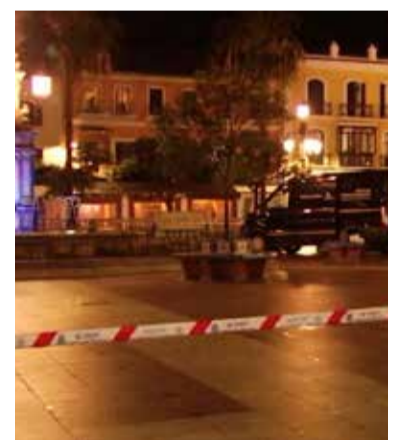
Reuters | Bucharest

Divisive internet personality Andrew Tate said on Wednesday there was no justice in Romania and that the case file against him in a criminal investigation for alleged human trafficking and rape was empty.

Tate, his brother Tristan and two Romanian female suspects have been in police custody since Dec. 29 pending an ongoing criminal investigation on charges of forming a criminal gang to sexually exploit women, accusations they deny.

Yesterday, a Romanian court extended their detention until Feb. 27. Prosecutors have said the Tate brothers recruited their victims by seducing them and falsely claiming to want a relationship or marriage.

One dead in 1 attack on Spain



Police officers stand guard at the scene of an attack on Spain
Reuters | Madrid

Spanish authorities said they were investigating what they called a possible "terrorist" incident after a machete-wielding man attacked several people at two churches in the southern port city of Algeciras, killing at least one person.

The man attacked clergymen at two different churches - San Isidro and Nuestra Senora de La Palma, around 300 metres (1,000 feet) apart - just after 8pm on Wednesday evening in downtown Algeciras, a spokesperson for the city said. A source at Madrid's High Court said the incident was being investigated as terrorism.

Police said the attacker had been arrested, and a police source shared footage showing two officers escorting a man in a hooded