

1693

1st women's magazine "Ladies' Mercury" published in London, England

1950

General Chiang Kai-shek elected president of Nationalist China



1957

Mao's famous speech to the Supreme State Conference "On Correct Handling of Contradictions Among People" expounding Maoist ideals

2012

Wikileaks begins disclosing 5 million emails from private intelligence company Stratfor

Over 300 girls kidnaped in Nigeria school raid

The abduction of at least 317 girls from school in Zamfara state



A police vehicle is seen near a college in Nigeria (file photo)

Boys were kidnapped from a school in Kankara, in President Muhammadu Buhari's home state of Katsina, while he was visiting the region.

The boys were later released but the incident triggered outrage and memories of the kidnappings of schoolgirls by jihadists in Dapchi and Chibok that shocked the world.

One teacher told AFP "more than 300 are unaccounted for" after yesterday's attack, while another teacher had a higher estimate.

"Out of the 600 students in the school only around 50 have been accounted for. The rest have been abducted. It is possible some of them managed to escape, but we are not sure," the second teacher said.

A parent said he had received a phone call about the incident. "I'm on my way to Jangebe. I received a call that the school

was invaded by bandits who took away schoolgirls. I have two daughters in the school," said Sadi Kawaye.

Angered, horrified

"We are angered and saddened by yet another brutal attack on schoolchildren in Nigeria," UNICEF representative in Nigeria Peter Hawkins said in a statement.

"This is a gross violation of children's rights and a horrific experience for children to go through -- one which could have long-lasting effects on their mental health and well-being."

The UN agency called on those responsible to "release the girls immediately" and on the government "to ensure their safe release and the safety of all other schoolchildren in Nigeria."

The charity Save the Children said it was "horrified" about the news of the abductions.

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UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE IN NIGERIA PETER HAWKINS

"It is unacceptable that attacks on schools and students has become a recurring scenario in Northern Nigeria," said Mercy Gichuhi, Save the Children's Nigeria director.

"These attacks... puts (the children) at risk of never returning to school, as they or their parents think it's too dangerous."

Amnesty International Nigeria said the abductions was "a serious violation of international humanitarian law."

"Nigerian authorities must take all measures to return them to safety, along with all children currently under the custody of armed groups," the rights group said on Twitter.

The federal government has not yet commented on the latest kidnappings.

"Guernica" tapestry long on view at UN, no longer is



A man walks past the tapestry AFP | Washington

A large tapestry depicting Pablo Picasso's fabled "Guernica" that hung outside the UN Security Council chamber for decades to remind diplomats of the risks of war has returned to its owner, Nelson Rockefeller, Jr., officials said.

Commissioned in 1955 by Nelson Rockefeller and woven by the French workshop Jacqueline de La Baume-Dürbach, the tapestry had been on loan to the world body since 1984.

Presidents, prime ministers, ambassadors and diplomats attending Security Council meetings passed by it on the way to the chamber of the most important UN body responsible for peace in the world.

The United Nations did not explain why the Rockefeller family wanted to take the tapestry back.

The Rockefeller Foundation had no immediate comment.

On Thursday, the wall on which the tapestry hung -- depicting the bombing of the Spanish city of Guernica on April 26, 1937 by Nazi Germany and fascist Italy -- was empty.

News in brief

Israeli-owned ship hit by explosion in Gulf



The US defence official said in Washington that the ship was hit by a blast above the water line that ripped holes in both sides of its hull.

An Israeli-owned ship, the MV HELIOS RAY, was hit by an explosion in the Gulf of Oman overnight and a US defence official said the blast left holes in both sides of the vessel's hull. The cause was not immediately clear. The vehicle-carrier ship is owned by a Tel-Aviv based company called Ray Shipping through a company registered in the Isle of Man, according to a UN shipping database.

A US Navy warship operating in the Middle East has a dozen cases of the novel coronavirus, while another warship in the region is investigating whether some of its members are also infected.

The USS San Diego which has the confirmed cases is at port in Bahrain. It sails with about 600 sailors and Marines aboard. The guided-missile cruiser USS Philippine Sea, which carries some 380 sailors, is expected to pull into port for further testing. The port was not disclosed.

US Navy warship in the Middle East has COVID-19 cases



Tiger Woods transferred to Los Angeles hospital for further treatment



A Los Angeles medical facility for further treatment, according to a statement from the hospital where he underwent surgery for serious leg injuries after his car crash. "Mr. Tiger Woods was transferred to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center for continuing orthopedic care and recovery," said Anish Mahajan, CEO of the hospital where Woods was first taken.

Golf superstar Tiger Woods has been transferred to

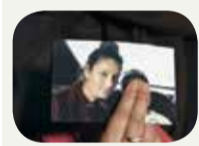
Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis hit back at accusations that he tried to cover up a sex abuse scandal involving a top theatre director appointed by his government.

Speaking in parliament, Mitsotakis said the opposition and supporting media were dragging public discourse through a "swamp" and spreading "poison". The debate took place as the former artistic director of Greece's national theatre, Dimitris Lignadis, appeared before a magistrate to answer allegations of raping minors, including migrant children.

Greek PM hits back at sex scandal cover-up claims



UK Supreme Court rejects IS bride's legal bid to return



Britain's highest court rejected a bid by a woman who was stripped of her UK

citizenship for joining the Islamic State group to return to challenge the decision. Five judges at the Supreme Court gave a unanimous decision in the case of Shamima Begum, whose legal battles have come to be seen as a test of how Britain treat nationals who joined the jihadists. They found her right to a fair hearing did not override considerations such as public safety, and that the decision to block her return should remain until she can participate "without the safety of the public being compromised"

Russian diplomats use hand-pulled trolley to cross N Korea border

AFP | Seoul

Eight Russian diplomats and family members -- the youngest of them a three-year-old girl -- have arrived home from North Korea on a hand-pushed rail trolley due to Pyongyang's coronavirus restrictions.

Video posted on Russia's foreign ministry's verified Telegram account showed the trolley, laden with suitcases and women, being pushed across a border railway bridge by Third Secretary Vladislav Sorokin, the only man in the group.

They waved and cheered as they approached their homeland, the culmination of an expedition that began with a 32-hour train trip from Pyongyang, followed by a two-hour bus ride to the border.

"It took a long and difficult journey to get home," the ministry said in the post late Thursday, speaking of the final stretch.

"To do this, you need to make a trolley in advance, put it on the rails, place things on it, seat the children -- and go," it said.

"Finally, the most important part of the route -- walking on foot to the Russian side."

Sorokin was "the main 'engine' of the non-self-propelled railcar", it said, and had to push



The Russian diplomats push the trolley on the train tracks

it for more than a kilometre.

Once on Russian territory, they were met by foreign ministry colleagues and were taken by bus to Vladivostok airport.

"Don't leave your own behind", the ministry added as a hashtag.

North Korea imposed a strict border shutdown in January last year to try to protect itself from the coronavirus that first emerged in neighbouring China and has gone on to sweep the world.

The shutdown has cancelled all flights in or out of the nuclear-armed, sanctions-hit country,

and cross-border trains.

With staff and supplies unable to enter, the restrictions have severely hampered the activities of diplomats and aid workers, and several Western embassies have pulled out their entire staff.

But Russia has close relations with the North and maintains a significant diplomatic presence.

Yesterday, the Kremlin said the journey out of North Korea demonstrated that diplomatic service is no walk in the park.

"It seems very pleasant and elegant but in reality this is very

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The group of eight, including a child as young as 3, travelled 32 hours by train and two hours by bus from Pyongyang just to reach the Russian border

complex, rigorous and demanding work," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov, himself a trained diplomat, told reporters.

"Things like this can happen too," he added.

Stalin's Soviet Union played a key role in the North's foundation after it and the US decided to split the peninsula into two zones either side of the 38th parallel following the World War II surrender of Korea's colonial overlord Japan.

Moscow still has a grand embassy in a prime spot in central Pyongyang, close to the North Korean leadership compound.

COVID-19 Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
1 USA	29,072,562	521,343	113,785,596
2 India	11,079,094	156,970	
3 Brazil	10,393,886	251,661	Deaths
4 Russia	4,223,186	85,304	
5 UK	4,163,085	122,415	2,523,840
6 France	3,686,813	85,582	
7 Spain	3,188,553	69,142	Recovered:
8 Italy	2,888,923	97,227	
9 Turkey	2,683,971	28,432	89,371,349
10 Germany	2,431,820	70,277	
11 Colombia	2,241,225	59,396	New cases
12 Argentina	2,093,645	51,795	
13 Mexico	2,069,370	183,692	+246,247
14 Poland	1,684,788	43,353	
			New deaths
			+5,420

Figures as of closing

Middle East

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	180,051		10,495		139,072	30,484
Saudi Arabia	376,723	+346	6,483	+3	367,691	2,549
UAE	385,160	+3,498	1,198	+16	377,537	6,425
Kuwait	189,046	+1,022	1,072	+5	177,133	10,841
Oman	140,588		1,562		131,684	7,342
Qatar	162,737	+469	257		152,807	9,673