

1775

British Parliament declares Massachusetts colony in rebellion

1897

Invasion of Benin City by British Expedition force, the city is burnt and looted, marks the end of Nigerian Kingdom of Benin formed in the 11th century



1904

Japanese torpedo boats make a surprise attack on Russian ships Port Arthur naval base, Manchuria, beginning the Russo-Japanese War.

1943

Japanese troops evacuate Guadalcanal, ending the epic World War II battle on the Solomon Islands in the Pacific

# acknowledges relief effort

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A woman reacts as she sits next to the site of a collapsed building following an earthquake in Kahramanmaraş, Turkey



with people in the aftermath of a deadly

tioned the nation.

Residents in Syrian government-held territory have described the authorities' response as slow, with some areas receiving more help than others. State news agency SANA quoted Hussein Makhoul, minister of local administration and environment, as saying the state had opened 180 shelters for displaced people.

In Jandaris in northern Syria, rescue workers and residents said dozens of buildings had collapsed. Standing around the wreckage of what had been a 32-apartment building, relatives of people who had lived there said they had seen no one removed alive. A lack of heavy equipment to lift large concrete slabs was impeding rescue efforts.

Rescue workers have struggled to reach some of the worst-hit areas, held back by destroyed roads, poor weather and a lack of heavy equipment. Some areas are without fuel and electricity.

A rescue service operating in insurgent-held northwest Syria said the number of dead had climbed to more than 1,280 and more than 2,600 were injured. The Syrian health minister said the number of dead in government-held areas rose to 1,250.

Across the street from an Aleppo apartment building reduced to rubble, 25-year-old Youssef has waited for two days for news of his father, mother, brother, sister and her son. He said he had

## China offers emergency aid of \$4.4 m to Syria

Reuters | Beijing

China will offer emergency humanitarian aid of 30 million yuan (\$4.4 million) to earthquake-hit Syria, its foreign ministry spokesperson, Mao Ning, told a regular news briefing yesterday.

Mao said \$2 million of the emergency aid would be used for cash and urgently needed relief supplies, adding that China would speed up existing food aid projects.

China has already committed to give a first tranche of 40 million yuan in emergency aid to Turkey.

An earthquake rescue team sent by China arrived at Turkey's Adana Airport early on Wednesday, state broadcaster CCTV said.

The 82-strong team brought 20 tonnes of medical and other rescue supplies and equipment, as well as four search-and-rescue dogs, CCTV added.

The team will co-operate with local authorities, China's embassy in Turkey, the United Nations and other agencies on missions such as setting up a temporary command, search and efforts, and providing medical aid, it said.

In addition, civil society rescue teams numbering at least 52, drawn from provinces such as Guangdong, Jiangsu, Jiangxi and Zhejiang, are heading to earthquake-hit areas in Turkey for rescue work, CCTV reported.

heard their voices, and spoken to them, but poorly equipped rescue workers had not been able to reach them.

"I talked to them and heard their voice, but unfortunately as you can see here they're very slow at work and they don't have enough equipment," he said.

## Adult film star Ron Jeremy committed to state mental hospital

Reuters | Los Angeles

Porn star Ron Jeremy was committed to a state mental health hospital after being found incompetent to stand trial on rape and other charges, a spokesperson for the Los Angeles District Attorney said yesterday.

Jeremy can be held for up to two years, said Greg Risling, spokesperson for the district attorney's office. A hearing on Jeremy's progress is scheduled for May 8.

The 69-year-old had been charged with 30 counts of rape and other sexual misconduct stemming from incidents in the Los Angeles area over a 23-year period. He had pleaded not guilty.

In January, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Ronald S. Harris ruled that Jeremy was not competent to assist in his



Adult film star Ron Jeremy, whose real name is Ronald Jeremy Hyatt in talks with his attorney Stuart Goldfarb during an arraignment hearing at Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center in Los Angeles, California, US

defense, according to his attorney, Stuart Goldfarb.

Goldfarb did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Tuesday.

Jeremy was among the big-

gest names in the adult film industry, appearing in more than 2,000 movies starting in the 1970s.

The actor had been in prison since his arrest in 2020.

## US offers support to India's G20 presidency on energy, food issues

Reuters | New Delhi

The United States will support India's G20 presidency including on issues such as food and energy security, the US embassy there said on Tuesday, as New Delhi seeks the backing of its partners ahead of key meetings starting this month.

The presidency has attracted particular interest given India's close ties with both the United States and Russia, from which it has significantly increased imports of oil since the war in Ukraine began nearly a year ago.

Officials from the United States, Europe and China are expected to head to India in late February and early March for



A man holds the flags of India and the US

meetings of finance and foreign ministers. The summit of heads of government is scheduled for September.

"We support India on a range of issues, including addressing current food and energy security challenges and continuing our efforts to build a resilient global economy," a spokesper-

son for the US embassy in New Delhi said in a statement to Reuters.

"We are also working with India in the G20 to continue to support women's economic empowerment. We look forward to deepening our bilateral partnership with India on a range of important regional and global issues in the year ahead."

Russia became the third-largest oil supplier to India in 2022, making up about 15% of its total purchases, from less than 2% before the war.

India has largely kept its trade and defence ties with Russia despite initial calls from the United States and other Western nations against it after the invasion of Ukraine.

## Russia asks Pink Floyd's Roger Waters to speak on Ukraine arms at UN

Reuters | United Nations

Russia has asked Pink Floyd co-founder Roger Waters to speak to the UN Security Council yesterday at a meeting that Moscow requested to discuss the delivery of weapons to Ukraine.

"Russian diplomacy used to be serious. What next? Mr. Bean?" said a UN Security Council diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Waters was criticized by



Pink Floyd co-founder Roger Waters

supporters of Ukraine when he published an open letter on his website in September to Ukrainian first lady Olena Zelenska. He argued against the

Western supply of weapons to Kyiv. "Let's see what he will say. He has a position and you will hear it tomorrow," said Russian UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia, jokingly adding: "Perhaps he will sing to us, too."

The 15-member Security Council has met dozens of times since Russia invaded neighboring Ukraine last Feb. 24. But it is unable to take any action because Russia is a veto power, along with the United States, China, Britain and France.

## Belgium charges nine with trafficking of Chinese sex workers

Reuters | brussels

Belgium charged nine people with human trafficking and money laundering yesterday for their alleged roles in a gang suspected of bringing women from China to be sex workers in Europe.

Some 300 Belgian police detained 27 people in raids across the country on Tuesday and seized bank notes worth about 1.5 million euros (\$1.6 million)

along with 4 tonnes of coins, federal prosecutors said.

Another person was detained in Spain and a further two in Switzerland after similar raids. Belgian investigators want them to be extradited. Belgian prosecutors brought nine of those detained before a judge on Wednesday to be charged and remanded them in custody. The other 18 were released.

Prosecutors said the number

of Chinese sex workers in Belgium has risen in recent years, notably in Brussels. They believe a criminal organisation brought the women to Europe and forced them to become prostitutes.

The women, advertised online, are frequently moved across locations in Europe and have a large proportion of their earnings taken from them, prosecutors said. (\$1 = 0.9305 euros)



TOP  
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TWEETS

01



We are at the highest risk in decades of a nuclear war that could start by accident or design. The so-called "tactical" use of nuclear weapons is absurd. Nuclear-armed countries must renounce the use of these unconscionable weapons - anytime, anywhere.

@antonioguerres

02



Historical milestone achieved towards #AatmaNirbharBharat by #IndianNavy as Naval Pilots carry out landing of LCA(Navy) on @IN\_R11Vikrant. Demonstrates #India's capability to design, develop, construct & operate #IndigenousAircraftCarrier with indigenous Fighter Aircraft.

@narendramodi

03



This afternoon I spoke to @RTERdogan and pledged the UK's steadfast support for the people of Türkiye as they continue to search for their loved ones. A 77-strong British search and rescue team have arrived in Gaziantep today with specialist equipment and dogs ready to help.

@RishiSunak

04



Master Plan 3, the path to a fully sustainable energy future for Earth will be presented on March 1. The future is bright!

@elonmusk

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