

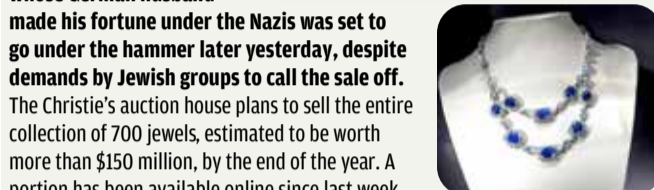
News in brief

Two popes in the Vatican as Francis greets Coptic leader



There were once again two popes at the Vatican yesterday, at least briefly, when Pope Francis welcomed Pope Tawadros II, head of the Coptic Orthodox Church, to his weekly audience. Francis, the 86-year-old head of the global Catholic Church, embraced the Egyptian patriarch in St Peter's Square before the pair took to the stage, where they both addressed the rain-soaked crowds. Tawadros is on a four-day visit to mark 50 years since the historic meeting between pope Paul VI and patriarch Shenouda III in May 1973.

Jewels belonging to an Austrian billionaire whose German husband made his fortune under the Nazis was set to go under the hammer later yesterday, despite demands by Jewish groups to call the sale off.



The Christie's auction house plans to sell the entire collection of 700 jewels, estimated to be worth more than \$150 million, by the end of the year. A portion has been available online since last week, while nearly 100 pieces will be sold in person in Geneva yesterday and another 150 on Friday. The jewellery, including pieces from 20th-century designers such as Cartier, Bulgari and Van Cleef & Arpels, belonged to Heidi Horten who died last year aged 81, with a fortune of \$2.9 billion, according to Forbes.

Jewellery with Nazi links up for auction despite criticism

Canada wildfires slow allowing evacuees to return, but hot, dry weather coming



Cooler temperatures and light rain brought relief that allowed some wildfire evacuees to return home in Canada's Alberta province, but several blazes were still out of control and a coming sharp rise in the mercury could set back efforts to tame the fires. Authorities have lifted evacuation orders for a handful of communities after beating back flames, but suffocating smoke still fills the air -- carried by winds across the continent as far as the Arctic and the US Atlantic coast. The number of wildfires that forced 30,000 people to flee in the past four days has fallen from a peak of 110 to 81, with 24 still listed as out of control. But officials warned that a return to hot and dry conditions was expected by Friday and would persist through the weekend.

CURIOSER & CURIOSER

Australia told to shoot kangaroos before they starve



Kangaroos in Merimbula in Australia's New South Wales state (file photo) AFP | Sydney

Australia's kangaroos could die in "catastrophic" numbers if a population boom is left unchecked, ecologists have warned, while backing the industrial-scale culling of the marsupials.

To outsiders, the kangaroo is an instantly-recognisable symbol of the Australian wilderness, but within the country the native animal poses a major environmental headache.

Kangaroos have a "boom and bust" population cycle -- when fodder is plentiful on the back of a good wet season their numbers can balloon by tens of millions.

Hopping mobs of kangaroos can rapidly strip paddocks bare, but ecologist Katherine Moseby warned they would starve to death in droves when food ran out.

"The last drought we estimated that 80 or 90 percent of the kangaroos in some areas died," she told AFP.

"They are starving to death -- going into public toilets and eating toilet paper, or lying on the road starving while their

**YOU KNOW WHAT**

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joey's are trying to feed," she added, referring to events from the last population boom.

Moseby said the kindest way to save kangaroos from this fate was to shoot them, and harvest the meat, as a way of keeping numbers in check.

"It keeps the numbers down so that when we do get drought we don't get these welfare issues," she said.

"If we saw them as a resource and managed them like that, we wouldn't get the catastrophic deaths that we see."

Pakistan ex-PM Khan in custody after arrest protest

Court rules Imran Khan can be held for questioning for eight days

Army called in to maintain law and order

AFP | Islamabad

Former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan was remanded in custody for eight days yesterday by an anti-graft court as violent nationwide protests over his arrest erupted for a second day.

Khan was arrested on Tuesday during a routine hearing in the capital Islamabad and whisked away to an unknown location overnight before appearing behind closed doors in a specially convened court at police headquarters.

The drama follows months of political crisis during which Khan, who was ousted in April last year, has waged an unprecedented campaign against the country's powerful military.

"If they think that the arrest of Imran Khan will demoralise us, then they are hugely mistaken," said Niaz Ali in Peshawar,



Police (foreground) use tear gas to disperse Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party activists and supporters of Imran Khan during a protest

where several monuments and government buildings have been torched.

"We stand with Imran Khan and will support him till death."

Ali Bukhari, a lawyer for Khan, told AFP by phone that the court had approved eight days of physical remand of Khan demanded by the country's top graft agency.

Afzal Marwat, another of Khan's lawyers, earlier said Khan

was in "good spirits" but had complained of being hit on the back of the head and leg by paramilitary forces who arrested him.

The former cricketing superstar, who remains wildly popular, has previously said the dozens of cases brought against him are part of an effort by the struggling government and military establishment to prevent him from returning to power.

**YOU KNOW WHAT**

Pakistan politicians have frequently been arrested and jailed since the country's founding in 1947, but few have so directly challenged a military that has staged at least three coups and ruled for more than three decades

His arrest has brought thousands of his supporters to the streets in cities across the country, where police have attempted to quell crowds with tear gas.

At least six people have died in protest-related incidents, police and hospitals reported, including one person who died from smoke inhalation after a multi-storey

Trump found liable for sexually abusing writer

AFP | Washington

A New York jury found Donald Trump liable for sexually abusing and defaming an American former magazine columnist and ordered the ex-president to pay her \$5 million in damages.

The nine jurors rejected E. Jean Carroll's accusation of rape but unanimously upheld her other complaints in the closely watched civil trial, following less than three hours of deliberations.

It marks the first time Trump has faced legal consequences over a string of sexual assault allegations dating back decades -- and the former leader immediately rejected the verdict as a "disgrace."

Carroll, 79, sued Trump last year, alleging that he raped her in the changing room of the lux-



Donald Trump

ury Bergdorf Goodman store on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue in 1996.

The former columnist for Elle magazine also claimed that Trump defamed her when he called her "a complete con job" after she went public with the allegation in 2019.

Trump, the 76-year-old front-runner for the Republican nomination in next year's presidential election, called her case a "hoax" and "a lie."

The jury determined that Car-

**YOU KNOW WHAT**

I have absolutely no idea who this woman is. This verdict is a disgrace -- a continuation of the greatest witch hunt of all time

DONALD TRUMP

roll had proved sexual abuse -- effectively sexual contact without consent -- by a preponderance of the evidence and awarded her \$2 million.

The six men and three women on the jury also said Trump should pay Carroll nearly \$3 million for defamation.

Following the verdict, Carroll left the Manhattan federal court smiling but did not speak to reporters.

**YOU KNOW WHAT**

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"We're very happy," said her lawyer, Roberta Kaplan.

Trump slammed the outcome on his social media platform Truth Social.

"I have absolutely no idea who this woman is," he wrote, using all capital letters. "This verdict is a disgrace -- a continuation of the greatest witch hunt of all time."

US woman who wrote book on grief charged with killing husband

AFP | Washington

A US woman who wrote a book on dealing with grief after the death of her husband has been charged with his murder.

Kouri Richins penned "Are You With Me?" in the months after Eric Richins was found dead in their bedroom in Utah in March 2022.

Richins told police she had mixed her husband a drink and taken it to him in bed. When she came back later she found he was "cold to the touch," Fox



Kouri Richins

13 reported Monday.

An autopsy revealed he had died from an overdose of fentanyl, with five times the lethal dosage in his body.

Investigators found Kouri

Richins had asked an acquaintance to get her strong prescription pain medication, specifically "some of the Michael Jackson stuff."

Richins received up to 30 fentanyl pills.

A few days later, Eric Richins "told a friend that he thought his wife was trying to poison him," investigators' documents said, according to Fox 13.

Kouri Richins obtained another batch of fentanyl shortly before her husband died.

Richins' book, which was published almost exactly a year

after her husband died, is described by its blurb as "heart-warming and reassuring."

"Written by a loving mother who personally faced this challenge, this book is designed to offer comfort and solace to young minds.

"Are You With Me' follows the story of a child who has lost their father, but who is reminded that his presence still exists all around them, just like an angel watching over them."

The couple, who had been married for nine years, had three children, all boys.