

News in brief

◆ **NATO Secretary-General**

Jens Stoltenberg will end his term as planned in October, a spokesperson for the alliance said, after a newspaper reported a further extension was in the works. "The mandate of Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg has been extended three times, and he has served for a total of almost nine years," NATO spokesperson Oana Lungescu said late on Saturday. "The Secretary-General's term comes to an end in October of this year and he has no intention to seek another extension of his mandate." Earlier, Welt am Sonntag reported Stoltenberg's term was to be extended again as the alliance sought to maintain stability during the war in Ukraine. Stoltenberg, an economist by training and a former leader of Norway's Labour Party, had his NATO term extended last year. He was prime minister of Norway from 2000-01 and 2005-13 before becoming NATO chief the following year. He has also been finance minister and energy minister. Welt said alliance members wanted to give Stoltenberg the opportunity to chair the organisation's 75th anniversary summit in Washington in April 2024. He would also be in a position to become president of the World Bank when David Malpass steps down around the same time, it said.



NATO's Stoltenberg will not seek another extension of his term, spokesperson says

◆ **Cyprus votes for new president in tight run-off election**

close at 6:00 pm (1600 GMT) in the race to succeed two-term conservative President Nicos Anastasiades as head of state and government. Former foreign minister Nikos Christodoulides, 49, faces 66-year-old fellow diplomat Andreas Mavroyiannis after last Sunday's inconclusive first round.

◆ **Cyprus went to the polls yesterday for a tight presidential runoff between two career diplomats seeking the top post in the small EU member state on the divided Mediterranean island. Polling stations**

◆ **Israeli forces kill Palestinian boy in West Bank: ministry**

◆ **Israeli forces** killed a Palestinian teenager Sunday in the occupied West Bank, the Palestinian health ministry said, with the army reporting they came under fire during a raid. The ministry reported 14-year-old Qusai Radwan Waked died "as a result of being seriously wounded in the abdomen by live fire from the occupation (Israel)" in Jenin, a city in the northern West Bank.

CURIOSER & CURIOSER

At Mexico's Chichen Itza site, researchers discover ancient 'elite' residences



Workers of Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) work in the restoration of Chichen Viejo during a media tour at the archaeological site of Chichen Itza, in Piste, Mexico

Reuters | Piste, Mexico

Archaeologists have revealed a group of structures discovered at the famed Mayan Chichen Itza archaeological site in Mexico's Yucatan peninsula, believed to have been part of a housing complex inhabited by the elite of the sacred city founded in the 5th Century AD.

Archaeologist Francisco Perez Ruiz said there were no known residential groups in Chichen Itza, meaning the housing complex would represent "the first residential group where a ruler lived with his entire family."

The area, known as Chichen Viejo, is expected to be integrated in the near future into the visitor area of the Chichen Itza archaeological site, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The newly discovered complex includes the entrance arch, the House of the Snails,

the House of the Moon, and the so-called Palace of the Phalluses.

Researchers from the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) hope that this area and those yet to be uncovered can provide information on what life was like for the people who inhabited the city.

"There must be more residential groups that have not been explored yet. The study of these peripheral groups, around the central part, could tell us about other families, other groups that made up this great city," said archaeologist Jose Osorio Leon.

The area has been under exploration since 1998.

Around 2 million people visit Chichen Itza site in south-east Mexico each year, according to official data.

It was founded as a Mayan pilgrimage center by the Itza, or "water sorcerers."

Teams are searching for Yukon UFO debris, Trudeau says

Reuters | Ottawa/Washington

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said yesterday that investigators are hunting for wreckage of the mysterious flying object shot down by a US fighter jet over Yukon territory the day before.

"Recovery teams are on the ground, looking to find and analyze the object," Trudeau told reporters before departing for a previously scheduled fund-raising event in Yukon.

Trudeau's comments came as US Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer told broadcaster ABC that US officials believe the object destroyed over Canada on Saturday - as well as another flying object shot down near Deadhorse, Alaska on Friday - were both balloons.

He offered few other details, saying only that the objects were much smaller than the first balloon that drifted over US airspace and was shot down over South Carolina last Saturday.

Schumer said American officials were "focused like a laser" on figuring out what the



Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

objects were and what if any threat they posed.

"You can be sure that if any American interests or people are at risk, they'll take appropriate action."

Republican lawmaker Mike Turner, who serves on the US House Armed Services Committee, suggested that President Joe Biden's administration might be overcompensating for what he described as its previously lax monitoring of American airspace.

"They do appear somewhat trigger-happy," Turner told CNN on Sunday.

"I would prefer them to be trigger happy than to be permissive."

BBC chair made 'errors of judgement' over Boris Johnson loan: lawmakers

Reuters | London

BBC Chair Richard Sharp made "significant errors of judgement" in failing to declare his involvement in facilitating a loan for then-Prime Minister Boris Johnson shortly before he was appointed to the role, a committee of lawmakers said yesterday.

Sharp, a former Goldman Sachs banker, has said he introduced Sam Blyth, an old friend who wanted to help Johnson, to a government official in late 2020, but his involvement went no further.

Blyth, who is a distant cousin of Johnson, went on to lend the former prime minister up to 800,000 pounds (\$964,640), a media report has said.

Sharp has said, and reiterated to the committee when he appeared before it on Tuesday, that he was not involved in making a loan or in arranging a guarantee or any financing.

He said after seeking an introduction for Blyth, he had agreed with a senior govern-

ment official to have nothing more to do with the matter to avoid any conflict of interest.

The cross-party parliamentary committee said Sharp's decision not to tell it or the appointment panel about the matter during the appointment process was a breach of the standards expected of individuals applying for such public appointments.

"Such a significant error of judgment meant we were not in the full possession of the facts when we were required to rule on his suitability for the role of BBC Chair," acting committee Chair Damian Green said.

Sharp should consider the impact his omissions would have on trust in him, the BBC and the public appointments process, the committee's report said.

The chair of the broadcaster, which is funded by a licence fee paid by TV-watching households, is appointed on the recommendation of the government.

A spokesperson for Sharp said: "Mr Sharp appreciates that there was information that the committee felt that it should have been made aware of in his pre-appointment hearing. He regrets this and apologises."

Sharp also apologised again to the broadcaster's staff for the distraction caused to the BBC.

The opposition Labour Party said Sharp's position was "increasingly untenable".

Britain's public appointments watchdog is also reviewing Sharp's appointment.

Government minister Andrew Mitchell told the BBC on Sunday: "We need this inquiry to take place but then I think it will be a matter largely for the board of the BBC to make a recommendation to government."



Former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson

Turkish soldier mounts excavation

Antakya, Turkey

A Turkish soldier climbed into the bucket of an excavator on Saturday to search an earthquake-damaged home in Antakya for a cell phone belonging to a 75-year-old woman who feared her son was dead after five days without contact.

The woman, who gave her name as Mama Busra, had asked aid workers to find her phone and was waiting to call her son in a nearby park where tents were set



A satellite image shows collapsed buildings and traffic after an earthquake in Antakya, Turkey, February 9, 2023

Children among the destroyed buildings

● **The girl, named Cudi, had been buried for 147 hours**

● **A man and his five-year-old daughter Emira were also recovered alive**

Reuters

A father and daughter, a toddler and a 10-year-old girl were among survivors pulled from the ruins of collapsed buildings in the southern Turkish province of Hatay yesterday.

Monday's earthquake flattened swathes of towns and cities in parts of Turkey and Syria, killing at least 28,000 people. As rescue efforts enter their sixth day, time for crews to reach trapped victims alive under the rubble is running out, but emergency crews are still finding survivors.

Video released by the Istanbul Municipality showed rescuers in Hatay pulling a 10-year-old girl through a hole in the floor of a



A child is rescued from the rubble after 151 hours in Hatay, Turkey

damaged building before carrying her out on a stretcher.

The girl, named Cudi, had been

Turkish police detain property developer as he tries to flee country

The Daily Mail

Turkish police detained a property developer as he tried to flee the country after his apartment block collapsed during the earthquake.

131 arrest warrants have been issued amid claims that property developers ignored regulations and allowed shoddy construction to encourage a building boom.

Video footage shows the arrest of Mehmet Yasar Coskun at Istanbul Airport on Friday as he tried to leave the country for Montenegro.

Coskun is the contractor of the Ronesans Residence block which collapsed in Antakya.

The video also shows another man, Mehmet Ertan Akay - the property developer of the Ay e Mehmet Polat apartment complex which collapsed in the city of Gaziantep - being detained on Saturday.

Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay said overnight that 131 suspects had been identified



Mehmet Yasar Coskun

as responsible for the collapse of buildings in the 10 provinces affected by last Monday's tremors. 'Detention orders have been issued for 113 of them,' he said in a briefing at the disaster management coordination centre in Ankara.

'We will follow this up meticulously until the necessary judicial process is concluded, pla

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