

1854

French and British forces bombard Sevastopol for the first time during the Crimean War

1907

Guglielmo Marconi's company begins the first commercial transatlantic wireless service between Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, Canada and Clifden, Ireland



1943

Burma railway completed, built by Allied POWs and Asian laborers for use of the Japanese army

1973

OPEC oil ministers use oil as an economic weapon in the Arab-Israeli War, mandating a cut in exports and recommending an embargo against unfriendly states

my base

just under 9,000 Russian troops would be stationed in Belarus as part of a "regional grouping" of forces to protect its borders.

ATTACKS

In the 24 hours to Sunday morning, Russian forces targeted more than 30 towns and villages across Ukraine, launching five missile and 23 air strikes and up to 60 rocket attacks, the General Staff of Ukraine's Armed Forces said on Sunday.

In response, Ukraine's air forces carried out 32 strikes, hitting 24 Russian targets.

Fighting has been particularly intense this weekend in the eastern provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk, and the strategically important Kherson province in the south, three of the four provinces Putin proclaimed as part of Russia last month.

Shelling by Ukrainian forces damaged the administration building in the city Donetsk, capital of the Donetsk region, the head of its Russian-backed administration said yesterday.



Chinese President Xi Jinping speaks during the opening ceremony of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China

China will never renounce right to use force over Taiwan, Xi says

Reuters | Beijing/Taipei

It is up to the Chinese people and China will never renounce the right to use force but will strive for a peaceful resolution, President Xi Jinping said yesterday at the opening of a major party meeting.

Taiwan, which China views as its own territory, responded that it will not back down on its sovereignty or compromise on freedom and democracy.

Tensions between the Beijing and Taipei rose dramatically in August after China staged war games near Taiwan following the visit to Taiwan of US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Those military activities have continued though at a reduced pace.

In a speech opening the ruling Communist Party's 20th party congress in Beijing, Xi said China always "respected, cared for and benefited" Taiwan's people and was committed to promoting economic and cultural exchanges across the Taiwan Strait. "Resolving the

Taiwan issue is the Chinese people's own business, and it up to the Chinese people to decide," he said.

"We insist on striving for the prospect of peaceful reunification with the greatest sincerity and best efforts, but we will never promise to give up the use of force and reserve the option to take all necessary measures."

That option is aimed at "interference" by external forces and a "very small number" of Taiwan independence supporters rather than the vast majority of the Taiwanese people, Xi said.

"The historical wheels of national reunification and national rejuvenation are rolling forward, and the complete reunification of the motherland must be achieved, and it must be achieved!" to added, to a long round of applause.

Taiwan's presidential office said in response that the Republic of China - the island's official name - was a sovereign and independent country.

"Taiwan's position is firm:

no backing down on national sovereignty, no compromise on democracy and freedom, and meeting on the battlefield is absolutely not an option for the two sides of the Taiwan Strait," Xi said in a statement.

"This is the consensus of Taiwan's people," the presidential office said, adding the national security team was keeping a close eye on developments at the congress. In her national day speech on Monday, Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen said war between Taiwan and China was not an option and reiterated her willingness to talk to Beijing, even as she pledged to keep boosting Taiwan's defences.

Speaking to reporters on Sunday, Taiwan Premier Su

Tseng-chang - who China put sanctions on last year, saying he was a separatist - said Xi should focus on his own people.

Referring to rare banners of political protest on an overpass in Beijing on Thursday, Su said, "Xi Jinping should pay attention to the smoke and protest banners on the Sitong Bridge in Beijing, rather than always thinking about using force to deal with Taiwan."

China refuses to speak to Tsai, considering her a separatist.

Beijing has offered Taiwan a "one country, two systems" model of autonomy, the same formula it uses for Hong Kong. But all mainstream Taiwanese political parties have rejected that proposal.



Xi did away with presidential term limits in 2018, clearing the way for him to break with the precedent of recent decades and rule for a third five-year term, or longer.



Zelenskiy said almost 65,000 Russians had been killed so far since the Feb. 24 invasion, a figure far higher than Moscow's official Sept. 21 estimate of 5,937 dead. In August the Pentagon said Russia has suffered between 70,000 and 80,000 casualties, either killed or wounded.

...s killed in blast



inside for 10 days," his father said. "He was going to take an annual vacation."

"His dream was to raise his children. I am devastated," he said.

The sister of another miner killed in the explosion said he too had smelt gas.

Her brief exchange with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Saturday was caught by cameras.

AU calls on Ethiopia rivals to 'recommit' to peace

AFP | Nairobi

The African Union yesterday called on the warring parties in Ethiopia's conflict to "recommit" to peace talks, as violence intensifies in the embattled Tigray region.

The city of Shire in northwest Tigray has been bombarded for several days in a joint offensive by Ethiopian and Eritrean troops, with civilian casualties reported in the push against rebels from the war-torn region.

The International Rescue Committee, an aid organisation delivering relief to stricken Tigray, announced on Saturday that one of its staff was among three civilians killed in an attack in Shire.

UN chief Antonio Guterres has joined the United States and other Western powers in expressing grave concern over the worsening violence and its impact on civilians, and called on both sides to negotiate peace.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's government, and the Tigrayan authorities, have accepted an AU invitation to talk, but nego-



The conflict in the Tigray region erupted in November 2020

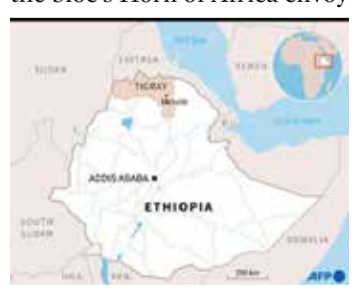
tiations scheduled to start last weekend in South Africa failed to take place.

AU Commission chair Moussa Faki Mahamat said the escalating violence was of "grave concern".

"The Chairperson urges the Parties to recommit to dialogue as per their agreement to direct talks to be convened in South Africa by a high-level team led by the AU High Representative for the Horn of Africa, and supported by the international

community," he said in a statement issued on Sunday, but dated Saturday.

Talks were to be mediated by the bloc's Horn of Africa envoy



Olusegun Obasanjo, South Africa's former deputy president Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and former Kenyan president Uhuru Kenyatta. Diplomats suggested logistical issues were partly to blame for the much-anticipated meeting not going ahead.

The latest fighting came as US special envoy Mike Hammer arrived in Addis Ababa to push for an end to nearly two years of war between Ethiopia, its allies, and rebels led by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF).



TOP
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TWEETS

01



The number of people affected by hunger has more than doubled in the past 3 years. Together, we must move from despair to hope & action, and make nutritious diets available & affordable for all. On #WorldFood-Day, I call on you to be part of the change.

@antonioguterres

02



Financial inclusion and technology are essential for progress. At 11 AM today, 75 Digital Banking Units (DBUs) will be dedicated to the nation. This initiative will have several benefits which will go a long way in transforming lives. <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PMO=3&PRID=1867762>

@narendramodi

03



I cannot imagine an issue that is more serious & urgent than water - including the issue of groundwater. Our immediate & long-term future depend on it.

@UN_PGA

04



Yesterday, I issued an Executive Order directing the Department of Health and Human Services to put a plan on my desk within 90 days finding additional ways to lower prescription drug costs for seniors.

@JoeBiden

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