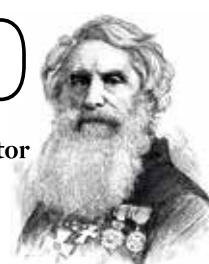


**Battle of the Catalaunian Plains: Roman and Visigoths forces defeat Attila the Hun in north east France, halting Hun invasion of Roman Gaul (exact date disputed)**

**French Revolution: The Third Estate of the French Estates-General swears the Tennis Court Oath at the Palace of Versailles, swearing not to disband until a new constitution is formed**

**American inventor Samuel Morse patents his telegraph**



**1st female PhD from an American University, earned by Caroline Willard Baldwin (in Science) at Cornell University**

# 'progress' in Blinken visit

to stabilise US-China ties in Beijing talks



**The Chinese side has made our position clear and the two sides have agreed to follow through the common understandings President Biden and I had reached in Bali. Two sides have also made progress and reached agreement on some specific issues**

XI JINPING

Away from the cameras, Wang told Blinken that his trip "comes at a critical juncture in China-US relations", according to state broadcaster CCTV.

"It is necessary to make a choice between dialogue and confrontation, cooperation or conflict," he said.

"We must reverse the downward spiral of China-US relations, push for a return to a healthy and stable track, and work together to find a correct way for China and the United States to get along," Wang added.

He also issued a warning on Taiwan, the self-ruling democracy claimed by Beijing.

In the past year, China has launched live-fire military drills twice near the island in anger over meetings between top US lawmakers and Taiwanese leaders.

"On this issue, China has no room to compromise or concede," Wang told Blinken, according to CCTV.

State Department spokesman Matthew Miller called the discussion with Wang "candid and productive".

## 'Quarrelling lovers'

US officials have voiced fears that China in the coming years

will try to seize Taiwan and insist that Washington's sales of weapons to the island are meant only to preserve the status quo.

Tensions between China and the United States have soared in recent years over a host of issues including trade, technology and Taiwan, with both President Joe Biden and his predecessor Donald Trump calling Beijing the most serious threat to long-term US global primacy.

US officials have said they hope Blinken's visit will bring more stability, if not breakthroughs, between Washington and Beijing. On the streets of the Chinese capital, Sun Yi, 26, said she hoped Blinken's trip would improve the relationship and that she wanted to visit the United States.

"I think the two countries right now are like quarrelling lovers. Both sides have their own personalities and interests and are not willing to compromise," she said.

## Hopes for new summit

Xi met Biden in November in Bali on the sidelines of a Group of 20 summit, raising cautious hopes for a thaw.

Blinken abruptly shelved his trip, which was agreed in Bali, in February after the United States said it detected -- and later shot down -- a Chinese spy balloon hovering over the US mainland.

Biden on Saturday said he did not believe the Chinese leadership was aware of the balloon -- suggesting a disconnect with the military, which has been less eager to restore contacts with the United States.

Biden has kept Trump's hard line on China and in some areas gone further, including banning exports of high-end semiconductors to the rising power.

But Biden has also voiced hope for limited cooperation in areas such as climate and for a new in-person meeting with Xi.

## Uganda arrests 20 'collaborators' over horrific school massacre

AFP | Kampala

Ugandan police said yesterday that 20 people had been arrested for suspected collaboration with the notorious militia group blamed for last week's grisly attack on a school near the border with Democratic Republic of Congo.

"Twenty arrests have been made of suspected collaborators, suspected ADF collaborators," police spokesman Fred Enanga told a press conference, referring to the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) based in the DRC.

He said in a separate statement that those arrested included the head teacher and the director of the Lhubirha Secondary School in Mpondwe, western Uganda, that came under attack late on Friday.



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



Be the kind of person who lifts others up. A kind word, a helping hand, or a simple smile can make all the difference in someone's day. Anon.

@DrTedros

02



Had a candid, substantive, and constructive conversation with People's Republic of China President Xi Jinping in Beijing today. We discussed a range of important issues, including the need to manage our relationship responsibly.

@SecBlinken

03



We are in it together, for the long haul. I spoke to @ZelenskyyUa ahead of the London Conference on the reconstruction of Ukraine. We discussed the EU's financial support beyond 2023 and the progress made by Ukraine on its reforms.

@vonderleyen

04



The world must assist to meet the humanitarian needs in #Sudan. In the pledging event co-hosted by the EU, #TeamEurope committed over €500 million, including €190 million by the @EU\_Commission. Unconditional and unhindered access to those in need remains crucial.

@JanezLenarcic

## N. Korea ruling party slams failed satellite launch in key meeting



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (C) attending the 8th Enlarged Plenary Meeting of the 8th Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK)

AFP | Seoul

North Korea's ruling party slammed a recent failed satellite launch in a high-level meeting, state media reported yesterday, "bitterly" criticising the officials responsible.

North Korea attempted to put its first military spy satellite into orbit on May 31, but the projectile and its payload crashed into the sea shortly after launch due to what Pyongyang said was a rocket failure.

In the report from the meeting of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, the ruling party "bitterly criticised the officials who irresponsibly conducted the preparations for satellite launch" and demanded a probe into the "serious" failure, state-run KCNA said.

The committee reiterated a pledge to soon successfully launch its spy satellite, which Pyongyang has previously said it needs in order to counterbalance the growing US military presence in the region.

The May 31 launch was denounced by the United States, South Korea and Japan, which said it violated United Nations resolutions barring the nuclear-armed country from any tests using ballistic missile technology.

Analysts have said there is significant technological overlap between the development of inter-



**The committee reiterated a pledge to soon successfully launch its spy satellite, which Pyongyang has previously said it needs in order to counterbalance the growing US military presence in the region**

continental ballistic missiles and space launch capabilities.

Along with the attempted satellite launch, North Korea has conducted multiple sanctions-defying launches this year, including test-firing its most powerful intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Relations between North and South Korea are at one of their lowest points, with diplomacy stalled and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un calling for increased weapons development, including of tactical nuclear weapons.

South Korea said in recent days it had successfully retrieved a large chunk of the crashed rocket from the seabed.

## Small sub used to tour Titanic wreck is missing: US

AFP | Washington

A submersible vessel used to take tourists to see the wreckage of the Titanic in the North Atlantic has gone missing, triggering a search-and-rescue operation, the US Coast Guard said yesterday.

It was not immediately known how many people are on the vessel, operated by a company called OceanGate Expeditions.

"Yes, we're searching for it," said an official from the US Coast Guard Rescue Coordination Center in Boston.

On its website OceanGate Expedition says an expedition to the Titanic site was "currently underway".

In a statement quoted by CBS News and other media outlets, OceanGate Expeditions said: "Our entire focus is on the crewmembers in the submersible and their families."



ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle) Jason Jr. peers inside Titanic (file photo)

It was not known if any tourists were onboard. The Guardian newspaper said there were five people on the vessel.

OceanGate was not immediately reachable.

In the statement it added that it was "deeply thankful for the extensive assistance we have received from several government agencies and deep sea companies in our efforts to reestablish contact with the

submersible."

The Canadian Coast Guard said it is taking part in the search effort with a fixed wing plane and a ship sent to the search area.

The Titanic hit an iceberg and sank in 1912 during its maiden voyage from England to New York with 2,224 passengers and crew on board. More than 1,500 people died in the tragedy.

## More pay vicar?: Church of England clergy make first wage demand

AFP | London

The blessing of the Lord may bring spiritual wealth, but eternal riches are no consolation for Church of England priests facing an earthly cost-of-living crisis.

Yesterday, clergy and lay officers of the church headed by King Charles III submitted their first demand for a payrise since the church was founded in 1534.

Their union, Unite, said they want a 9.5-percent increase in the annual stipend that priests receive from next year.

"Like all workers, Church of England clergy are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis," said Unite general secretary Sharon Graham.

"While many will argue their work is a vocation, the simple truth is that on their current rewards they are among the



Members of the church attend the Church of England Synod, at Church House, in London

working poor.

"The Church of England has billions in the bank and can fully afford to pay its clergy the modest increase in their stipend they are seeking.

"The clergy deliver a clear message for the Church of faith in the hereafter. Unite is fight-

ing for a better deal for them in the here and now."

Unite's Church of England Clergy and Employee Advocates (CECA) branch will submit proposals to the church's Remunerations and Conditions of Service Committee, which advises on stipends.

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