

News in brief

◆ **Tesla (TSLA.O) chief** Elon Musk said yesterday he aimed to get the electric auto maker's self-driving technology ready by year-end and hopes it could be in wide release in the United States and possibly in Europe, depending on regulatory approval. Speaking at an energy conference in Norway, Musk said his attention was currently focused on his SpaceX Starship spacecraft and self-driving Tesla electric cars. "The two technologies I am focused on, trying to ideally get done before the end of the year, are getting our Starship into orbit ... and then having Tesla cars to be able to do self-driving. "Have self-driving in wide release at least in the U.S., and ... potentially in Europe, depending on regulatory approval," Musk told the audience.



Elon Musk: focused on getting self-driving Teslas in wide release by year-end

◆ **Taiwan says 12 Chinese fighters crossed Taiwan Strait median line**

◆ Twelve Chinese fighter jets crossed the Taiwan Strait median line, which normally serves as an unofficial barrier between the two sides, on Monday, Taiwan's defence ministry said, as China continues its military activities near the island.

◆ **European Union foreign ministers, meeting in Prague today and Wednesday, may agree tightening the issuance of visas for Russians**



EU may agree tightening visas for Russians, discuss training of Ukraine troops

and start debate on a wider ban on tourist visas though there is no agreement on that, EU officials said. The six-month-old war in Ukraine remains a foreign policy priority for the European Union and a visa ban for Russians pushed by some mainly eastern member states will be at the top of the agenda. The bloc's defence ministers, also meeting in Prague on Monday and Tuesday, will also discuss options for setting up an EU military training mission for Ukraine. Several EU countries have been training Ukrainian troops for a while, mainly enabling them to operate weapons Western nations are delivering to Ukraine to help its fight against Russia's invasion. It is not clear yet where an EU training programme could be based and what mandate it might have, EU diplomats told Reuters ahead of the defence ministers' meeting.

◆ **Russia has shipped a battery of S-300 anti-aircraft missiles from Syria to a Russian port near Crimea, according to an Israeli satellite imaging company, in an apparent attempt to bolster its air defences in the war with Ukraine.** ImageSat International (ISI) captured pictures showing the presence of the S-300 anti-aircraft battery at Masyaf, Syria in April, and the empty site left behind on Aug. 25 after the hardware was shipped to the port of Tartus. Separate images showed the battery components on a dock at Tartus between Aug. 12 and 17. By Aug. 20 they had gone, and ISI concluded they had been transferred to a Russian vessel, the Sparta II, which left Tartus for the Russian port of Novorossiysk. Data from Refinitiv Eikon show the Sparta II is currently in Novorossiysk, having arrived via Turkey's Dardanelles Strait.

Russia ships S-300 air defence missiles out of Syria

Iraq's Sadr says he quits politics, fuelling uncertainty



Reuters | Baghdad

Iraq's powerful Shi'ite Muslim cleric Moqtada al-Sadr said yesterday he was quitting politics and closing his institutions in response to an intractable political deadlock, a decision that could fuel instability.

"I hereby announce my final withdrawal," Sadr said in a statement posted on Twitter, criticising fellow Shi'ite political leaders for failing to heed his calls for reform.

He did not elaborate on the closure of his offices, but said that cultural and religious institutions would remain open.

Sadr has previously announced withdrawals from politics or government and the disbanding of militias loyal to him but retains widespread control over state institutions and still has a paramilitary group with thousands of members.

He has often returned to political activity after similar announcements, although the current political deadlock in Iraq appears harder to resolve than previous periods of dysfunction

NASA postpones Artemis

The NASA rocket was set to

Reuters

An engine problem forced NASA on Monday to postpone for at least four days the debut launch of the colossal rocketship it hopes will one day fly astronauts back to the moon, more than a half-century after Apollo's last lunar mission.

The US space agency cited a problem on one of the Space Launch System (SLS) rocket's main engines, as launch teams began a test that would have cooled the engines for liftoff. One of them would not cool as expected.

The delay was called at 08:35 a.m. EDT (1235 GMT), two minutes after

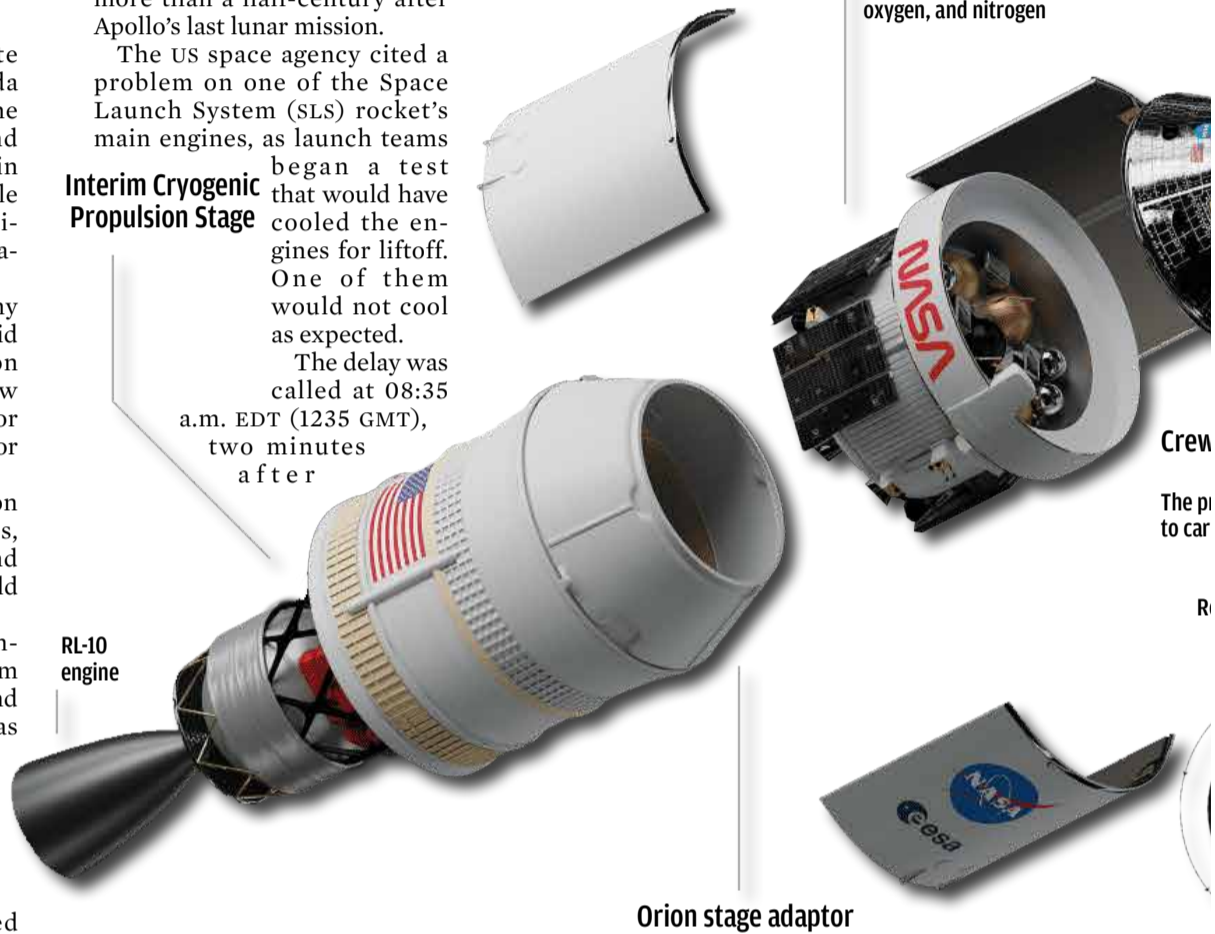
the targeted launch time, as the 32-story-tall, rocket and its Orion capsule awaited liftoff from the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida.

The mission, dubbed Artemis I, calls for a six-week, uncrewed test flight of Orion around

the moon and back to Earth for a splashdown in the Pacific.

Service Module

Provides propulsion, thermal control, electrical power generated by solar arrays and life support systems including water, oxygen, and nitrogen



Interim Cryogenic Propulsion Stage

RL-10 engine

Orion stage adaptor

Ukraine says it has begun counter-offensive to retake Russian-held

● Suggests greater Kyiv confidence as Western arms arrive

● UN inspectors to visit Ukraine reactor complex this week

● UN watchdog's director-general Grossi heading mission

● Moscow says team must give politically neutral assessment

● Russia says it shot down Ukrainian drone at nuclear plant

Reuters | Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine/Kyiv



Ukrainian servicemen patrol following recent Russian shelling, as Russia's attack in Ukraine continues, in Vasiukivka, in Donetsk region, Ukraine

Ukraine announced yesterday the start of a long-awaited counter-offensive to retake territory in the south seized by Russian forces since their invasion six months ago, a move reflecting Kyiv's growing confidence as Western military aid flows in. The news came as a team from the UN nuclear watchdog headed to Ukraine to inspect the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant - captured

COVID-19 Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	Total deaths	Global tally
1 USA	96,011,855	1,069,132	606,127,730
2 India	44,415,723	527,799	
3 France	34,478,797	153,857	
4 Brazil	34,384,747	683,548	6,488,790
5 Germany	32,041,348	147,104	
6 UK	23,492,875	187,761	Recovered: 581,648,944
7 S. Korea	23,026,960	26,618	
8 Italy	21,814,856	175,407	New cases: +316,048
9 Russia	19,445,581	384,160	
10 Japan	18,506,515	39,005	New deaths: +717
11 Turkey	16,671,848	100,400	
12 Spain	13,332,976	112,454	
13 Vietnam	11,405,711	43,113	
14 Australia	10,005,856	13,760	

Figures as of closing

Middle East

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases
Egypt	515,645		24,613		442,182	48,850
Saudi Arabia	813,284	+98	9,292	+3	800,481	3,511
UAE	1,014,387	+522	2,341		993,204	18,842
Kuwait	657,042		2,563		654,002	477
Oman	397,846		4,260		384,669	8,917
Qatar	428,147	+584	681		423,259	4,207

Rare Mickey Mantle card sells for \$12.6m



Memorabilia from New York Yankees legend Mickey Mantle is auctioned in New York

Reuters

A Mickey Mantle baseball card in mint condition sold for \$12.6 million on Sunday, becoming the most valuable piece of sports memorabilia to be sold at an auction.

The rare Mantle card, sold by Heritage Auctions, surpassed a record of \$9.3 million set in May for the shirt worn by Diego Maradona, when he scored the contentious 'Hand of God' goal at the 1986 World Cup.

"An eight-figure auction result in the sports market was the stuff of fantasy just a decade ago," Chris Ivy, director of sports auctions at Heritage, said in a statement.

"We always knew this card would shatter records and expectations. But that doesn't make it any less of a thrill."

Where the water once flowed



An aerial view shows a branch of the Loire River as a historic drought hits France, in Loireauxence, France



A boat sits on the dried basin of the La Boca dam as more than half of Mexico faces moderate to severe drought conditions, in Santiago, Mexico



An aerial view shows pagodas on an island that usually remain partially submerged in the water of Poyang