

IN BRIEF

**Endangered turtle dies; only 3 left in the world**

BEIJING

The only known female member of one of the world's rarest turtle species has died at a zoo in southern China. The animal was one of four Yangtze giant softshell turtles known to be remaining in the world. The Suzhou zoo, where the female turtle lived, also houses a male Yangtze giant softshell turtle. The other two live in Vietnam. AP

**Egypt unveils colourful Fifth Dynasty tomb**

CAIRO

In a major archaeological discovery, Egypt unveiled the tomb of a Fifth Dynasty official adorned with colourful reliefs and well preserved inscriptions. The tomb, near Saqqara, belongs to an official named Khuwy, who is believed to have been a nobleman during the Fifth Dynasty, which ruled Egypt about 4,300 years ago. AFP

**'Brains may connect to cloud networks in future'**

LOS ANGELES

Our brains may someday be able to connect to cloud-computing networks in real time, allowing us to gain a Matrix-style access to world's knowledge by thinking about a specific topic, according to a study published in *Frontiers in Neuroscience*. PTI

World's largest plane makes first test flight

Stratolaunch is designed to carry and deploy satellites in space

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

The world's largest aeroplane – with two fuselages and six Boeing 747 engines – made its first test flight on Saturday in California.

The mega jet, called Stratolaunch, carried out its maiden voyage over the Mojave desert.

It is designed to carry into space, and drop, a rocket that would in turn ignite to deploy satellites.

It is supposed to provide a more flexible way to deploy satellites than vertical take-off rockets because this way all that is needed is a long runway for takeoff.

The aircraft is so big that its wing span is longer than a football field, or about 1.5 times that of an Airbus A380.

Specifically, the wing span is 117 metres while it is just under 80 metres for an



Big leap: Stratolaunch during its historic test flight from the Mojave Air and Space Port in California. •AFP

Airbus A380.

The plane flew for about two-and-a-half hours, the company said. Until now, it had just carried out tests on the ground.

It hit a top speed of 304 km per hour and reached an altitude of 17,000 feet (5,182 metres).

"What a fantastic first flight," said Jean Floyd, CEO

of Stratolaunch. "Today's flight furthers our mission to provide a flexible alternative to ground launched systems," he added.

Stratolaunch was financed by Paul Allen, a co-founder of Microsoft as a way to get into the market for launching small satellites. But Allen died in October of last year.

FB, Instagram, WhatsApp back after brief outage

ASSOCIATED PRESS
CALIFORNIA

Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp were temporarily down on Sunday. All three social media platforms, including Facebook Messenger, were affected by the outage.

Downdetector.com, a site that monitors site outages, indicated that Facebook was down on Sunday in much of the world, with thousands of reported outages concentrated in the northeastern U.S., Europe and the Philippines. It was disrupted for most users from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. (IST).



Users around the world took to Twitter to complain about the outage. •AP

Users took to Twitter to complain about the outage.

The hashtags #Facebook-Down, #instagramdown and #whatsappdown were trending on Twitter globally.

Facebook acquired Instagram in 2012 and WhatsApp in 2014.

Oil consuming bacteria found below ocean

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON

Scientists have discovered a unique oil eating bacteria in the Mariana Trench, the deepest part of the earth's oceans, a finding that may pave way for sustainable ways to clean up oils spills.

In an expedition, organised by marine explorer and film director James Cameron, researchers collected samples from the trench. In the samples, they found microorganisms that eat compounds similar to those in oil and then use it for fuel.