

IN BRIEF


Nobel winner biologist Sydney Brenner is dead

LA JOLLA
Sydney Brenner, a Nobel Prize-winning biologist who helped decipher the genetic code and whose research on a roundworm sparked a new field of human disease research, has died. He was 92. Mr. Brenner shared the Nobel Prize in medicine in 2002 for his contribution to work unravelling how genes control cell division. AP


Hackers forced a Tesla to enter the wrong lane

SAN FRANCISCO
Hackers have demonstrated how they could trick a Tesla Model S to enter into the wrong lane by manipulating a machine learning model. The researchers showed that by placing interference stickers on the road, the autopilot system could be fed information that would force it to make an abnormal judgement and make the vehicle change lanes. IANS


Over 40 zoo animals evacuated from Gaza

RAFAH
More than 40 animals, including five lions, were evacuated from a Gaza Strip zoo on Sunday to be taken to Jordan. The Rafah zoo is in the southern Gaza Strip, which has been under an Israeli blockade for over 10 years. AFP

Fungus immune to drugs is secretly sweeping the globe

The rise of *Candida auris* indicates that like bacteria, germs are growing resistance

MATT RICHEL
ANDREW JACOBS

In May, an elderly man was admitted to Mount Sinai Hospital in Brooklyn, U.S., for abdominal surgery. A blood test revealed that he was infected with a newly discovered germ as deadly as it was mysterious. Doctors swiftly isolated him in the intensive care unit.

The germ, a fungus called *Candida auris*, preys on people with weakened immune systems, and it is quietly spreading across the globe. Over the past five years, it has hit a neonatal unit in Venezuela, swept through a hospital in Spain, forced a prestigious British medical centre to shut down its intensive care unit, and taken root in India, Pakistan



Candida auris in a petri dish. It preys on people with a weak immune system. NYT

and South Africa.

Recently *C. auris* reached New York, New Jersey and Illinois, leading the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to add it to a list of germs deemed "urgent threats."

The man at Mount Sinai

died after 90 days in the hospital, but *C. auris* did not. Tests showed it was everywhere in his room, so invasive that the hospital needed special cleaning equipment and had to rip out some of the ceiling and floor tiles to eradicate it.

"Everything was positive – the walls, the bed, the doors, the curtains, the phones, the sink, the whiteboard, the poles, the pump," said Dr. Scott Lorin, the hospital's president. "The mattress, the bed rails, the canister holes, the window shades, the ceiling, everything in the room was positive."

C. auris is so tenacious, in part, because it is impervious to major antifungal medications, making it a

new example of one of the world's most intractable health threats: the rise of drug-resistant infections.

For decades, public health experts have warned that the overuse of antibiotics was reducing the effectiveness of drugs that have lengthened life spans by curbing bacterial infections once commonly fatal. But lately, there has been an explosion of resistant fungi as well, adding a new and frightening dimension to a phenomenon that is undermining a pillar of modern medicine.

Simply put, fungi, just like bacteria, are evolving defences to survive medicines.

For now, the uncertainty around *C. auris* has led to a climate of fear, and sometimes denial. NY TIMES

Swiss protest over global warming

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
GENEVA

Tens of thousands of people demonstrated on Saturday in several Swiss cities against climate change, the Swiss news agency Keystone-ATS reported.

Around 50,000 marched in all, including 15,000 in Zurich and up to nine thousand in the capital Bern and in Lausanne.

"It's about knowing if finally we want to listen to the voice of science," high school student Jan Burckhardt said.

"Save the climate please: it's the last time we ask politely," read one of the placards at the Lausanne demonstration.

The marches were organised by an alliance of activist groups in Switzerland, including Greenpeace, Swiss Youth for Climate and green groups.

2 students dupe Apple by swapping fake iPhones

The firm suffered a loss of \$9,00,000

RICK ROJAS

The con was simple: send a fake iPhone to Apple claiming that the device would not turn on and that it was under warranty, and not long after, a genuine replacement arrived in the mail.

It was a scheme that federal prosecutors said two college students in Oregon, U.S., repeated on such a scale that it amounted to nearly \$9,00,000 in losses for Apple as they sent in hundreds of counterfeit phones.

The two students, identified as Quan Jiang and Yangyang Zhou, would then ship the iPhones overseas where they would be sold for hundreds of dollars and, in return, they would get a cut of the profit, according to court documents.

Similar logo, design

The investigation started two years ago, after customs officials seized shipments coming from Hong Kong containing cellphones from China. The devices appeared to be Apple products, with the logos and design features of an iPhone, but the shipping methods and packaging raised the suspicions of officials, who determined that the phones were counterfeit.

Investigators discovered that the cellphones were bound for Mr. Zhou's mailing address and that they were part of an importing operation that also included Mr. Jiang, Mr. Zhou's neighbour in Oregon.

Records provided to investigators by Apple allowed them to connect Mr. Jiang to 3,069 iPhone warranty claims. All of them indicated "No Power/Wired Charging Issues" as the reason for the claim.



The replaced iPhones were sold overseas for hundreds of dollars. REUTERS

More than 1,500 of the claims were rejected, but nearly just as many were approved, with a new phone sent out. An Apple representative told an investigator, according to court records, that a key element of the scheme's success was that the phones were inoperable, which meant the replacement process would begin before technicians could figure out they were counterfeit.

Mr. Jiang told investigators that he had submitted some 2,000 phones in 2017. He also said that he employed friends and relatives in the U.S. to help swap out the phones. He said that an associate in China who sold the genuine phones paid Mr. Jiang's mother, who lives in China; she deposited the money in a bank account that he could access in the U.S. With each phone costing \$600, the losses for Apple amounted to \$8,95,800, officials said.

Recently, a Lithuanian man pleaded guilty to an effort in which he sought to bilk Facebook and Google out of millions of dollars by submitting fraudulent invoices to the companies. Prosecutors said that from 2013 to 2015, the companies wired more than \$100 million to the man and his associates. NY TIMES

A 'million word gap' for children not read to at home

Parents who read to them five books a day help them build vocabulary ahead of kindergarten

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON

Young children whose parents read them five books a day enter kindergarten having heard about 1.4 million more words than children who were never read to, a study has found.

This "million word gap" could be one key in explaining differences in vocabulary and reading development, said Jessica Logan, assistant professor at The Ohio State University in the U.S.

Even children who are read only one book a day will hear about 2,90,000 more words by age 5 than those who don't regularly read books with a parent or caregiver.

"Kids who hear more



Even children who are read only one book a day will hear about 2,90,000 more words by age 5. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

words are going to be better prepared to see those words in print when they enter school," said Ms. Logan, lead author of the study published in the *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics*.

"The fact that we had so many parents who said they never or seldom read to their kids was pretty shocking to us. We wanted to figure out what that might mean for their kids," she said.

The researchers identified

the 100 most circulated books for both board books (targeting infants and toddlers) and picture books (targeting preschoolers).

They randomly selected 30 books from both lists and counted how many words were in each book. They found that board books contained an average of 140 words, while picture books contained an average of 228 words.

With that information, the researchers calculated how many words a child would hear from birth through his or her 5th birthday at different levels of reading.

They assumed that kids would be read board books through their 3rd birthday and picture books the next

two years, and that every reading session (except for one category) would include one book.

They also assumed that parents who reported never reading to their kids actually read one book to their children every other month.

Based on these calculations, children who have never been read to would have heard 4,662 words by the time they were 5 years old. Those who are read five books a day, hear about 1,483,300 words.

"The word gap of more than 1 million words between children raised in a literacy-rich environment and those who were never read to is striking," Ms. Logan said.

Prince William goes undercover with British spies

To better understand their role in combating terrorism

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LONDON

Prince William has spent three weeks on undercover work placements with Britain's security and intelligence agencies to gain a first-hand understanding of the role they play in combating terrorism.

The 36-year-old, who is second in line to Britain's throne, described the experience of working with the MI5, MI6 and Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) as a humbling one, while the GCHQ said the royal had worked exceptionally hard during his internship.

"William worked exceptionally hard to embed himself in the team and comfortably held his own amongst



Britain's Prince William during a three-week attachment with the country's security and intelligence agencies. REUTERS

some highly skilled analysts and operators. His Royal Highness asked some probing questions and demonstrated a real grasp of our mission," the head of counter-terrorism operations at GCHQ, an anonymous post, said in a statement.

The Duke of Cambridge undertook his workplace at-

tachments last month and concluded his mission on Saturday.

"Spending time inside our security and intelligence agencies, understanding more about the vital contribution they make to our national security, was a truly humbling experience," he said.

Racing ahead



Runners cross the Erasmus bridge as they compete during the 39th Rotterdam Marathon on Sunday. AFP

AI robots may assist soldiers in the future

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
WASHINGTON

Scientists in the U.S. are developing artificial intelligence (AI) systems that could help robots assist soldiers in the battlefield in future.

For the research, published in the journal *Science Advances*, team looked at soldier brain activity during specific tasks for ways to incorporate AI teaming to dynamically complete tasks.

According to Jean Vettel, a neuroscientist at the Army Research Laboratory (ARL), technologies that can predict behaviour of the individual soldier may help create a more optimised team. Scientists are looking at ways the dynamics of human brain may be coordinated to predict such behaviours to optimise team performance.

German birthplace marks Bauhaus centenary with new museum

The art school, which started work in April 1919 under architect Walter Gropius, has inspired modern design forms

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WEIMAR

The German city where the Bauhaus was born a century ago is paying tribute to the school, which is behind a string of modern design icons, with a new museum that opened on Friday to anchor it in its turbulent historical context.

The Bauhaus Museum in Weimar, a functional but elegant concrete cube designed by German architect Heike Hanada, showcases many of the items that blurred the lines between the artistic and the industrial producing some of the precursors of modern mass design and helping make the Bauhaus influential far beyond its relatively brief existence.

Visitors can admire exhibits such as Peter Keler's cradle



Functional design: A visitor standing in front of a sound installation in one of the exhibition halls of the Bauhaus Museum in Weimar, Germany, and Peter Keler's cradle, right, made of a blue circle. AP

dle made of a blue circle, a yellow triangle and red square, produced in 1922 under the direction of artist Wassily Kandinsky; Wilhelm Wagenfeld's domed table lamp of 1924; Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's steel easy chair and stool from 1929, and early precursors of the

fitted kitchen.

But the museum also explores the wider and constantly shifting ambitions of the Bauhaus, which started work in April 1919 under architect Walter Gropius as Germany grappled with its political future after First World War. It reflects the pol-

itical troubles that forced the school to move twice then close down shortly after the Nazis came to power in 1933.

The aim is not just to show off architecture and design but also to see the school and its leading lights "in their diversity, with their contradictions and how they are an-

chored in the 20th century," said Benjamin-Immanuel Hoff, Thuringia State's Culture Minister.

Weimar stands for both the high points of German classical culture and the low points of the country's history. It was home to the poets Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

and Friedrich Schiller and composer Franz Liszt, but later to the Nazis' Buchenwald concentration camp.

The museum offers views toward the historical centre and a tower built as a memorial to Buchenwald. It was built next door to the Gauforum, a monumental Nazi-era administrative complex and parade ground, where a permanent exhibit on Nazi slave labour is to open next year.

Gropius, the first Bauhaus director, left Weimar a collection of 168 Bauhaus objects including ceramics, furniture and rugs that is a mainstay of the museum's collection. It survived the Second World War packed up in a room at Weimar's city palace.

Bauhaus students had to learn a craft in one of 10 Bauhaus workshops.

Africa's richest man withdrew \$10 mn to feel it

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ABIDJAN

Nigerian billionaire Aliko Dangote, known as Africa's richest man, told a forum in Ivory Coast on Saturday how he once took \$10 million in cash out of the bank just to look at it and get it into his head that this was real money, not just figures on paper.

"When you're young, your first million is important, but after, the numbers don't mean much," Mr. Dangote, a manufacturing tycoon with a range of companies spanning cement to flour, told the Mo Ibrahim forum in Abidjan.

"One day, I cashed 10 million, put them in the boot of my car I put it in my room. I looked at them and thought 'now I believe I have money' and took it back to the bank



Aliko Dangote

the next day," he told his audience.

Anecdotes aside, Mr. Dangote said that the two most promising sectors for Africa's future were agriculture and new technologies. But he advised young African entrepreneurs not to get carried away by the first flush of success. "There are ups and downs" in business, he warned.