

Far and Wide

Every week we share selection of six news from six continents that we believe will impact our world in the near or distinct future

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Truth Still Matters and can make you pay!

Welcome to our second edition of the newsletter, *Far and Wide*, where we bring a collection of interesting stories from around the world. Our lead story this week is the high-stakes showdown between Dominion Voting Systems and Fox News; hanging in the balance was a \$1.6 billion defamation, now with Fox News agreeing to pay \$787.5 million to settle claims brought by Dominion Voting Systems over the Fox News Coverage of the 2020 American Presidential Election and the purported case of Fox News falsely propagating a lie. Our interest in the story emanates from the fact that we are increasingly living in a world where influencers (News Channels are one of them) are defining our beliefs (at the very least strengthening by pushing news which are actually opinions) and testing limits to what influencers can or cannot do. For commercial organization money matters (sometime more that customers and hence this large payout, and this may not be the end of it for Fox News) and such large settlement can redefine the industry itself. The story highlights four key issues. First, there is limit to freedom of speech in even a staunchly open democracy (which is also enshrined in the US 1st Amendment) and facts matter (even if it takes time). Second, the line between News and Opinions has been increasingly getting blurred in the world we are living in without any consequences – this settlement and perhaps more on the way will make a dent. Third, influencers (including TV Channels) are essentially driven by money (TRPs reflect the measure), and only money (loss of) can perhaps address this behavior; Fourth, will this finally lead to a moment where we will regulate/codify influencers' action, who can play an important role in the social media world but within some bounds as currently many argues media (no longer social media alone) seem to divide us more than unite because truth is no longer important!

We hope you find this edition informative and thought-provoking.

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Stories in Focus



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Fox News settles defamation lawsuit with Dominion voting systems for \$787.5 million over false election fraud claims



Military Technology

Kim Jong Un orders launch of North Korea's first military reconnaissance satellite amidst growing tensions with US and South Korea



Global Trade

Australia and China make progress in restoring relations amid tariff dispute



Clean Tech

Chile's President Gabriel Boric unveils plans to nationalize lithium industry, sparking global rally in prices and concerns for electric vehicle manufacturers



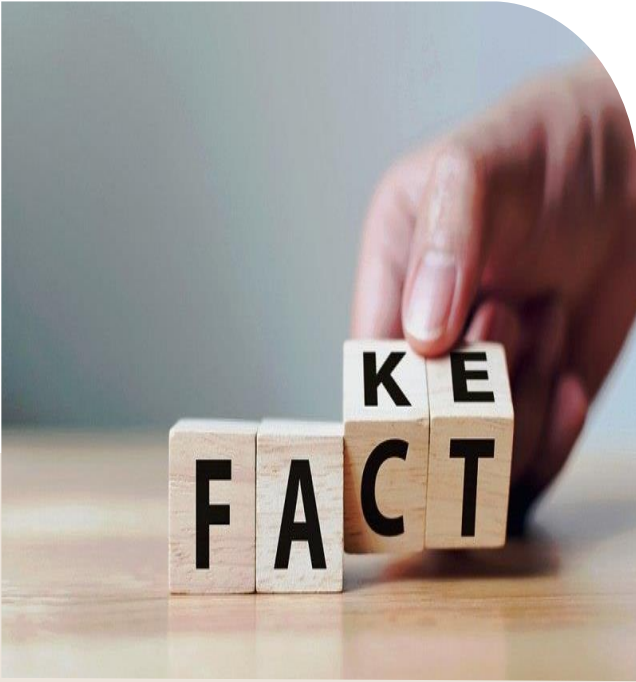
Cybersecurity

Empowering Europe's Cyber Defense: The EU Cyber Solidarity Act unveils ambitious plans for enhanced cybersecurity preparedness and response



GeoPolitics

Sudan in Crisis: Clashes between armed forces and paramilitaries threaten regional stability



Source: NPR

<https://www.npr.org/2023/04/18/1170339114/fox-news-settles-blockbuster-defamation-lawsuit-with-dominion-voting-systems>



North America

Fox news settles defamation lawsuit with Dominion voting systems for \$787.5 million over false election fraud claims

Fox News has agreed to pay \$787.5 million to settle claims brought by Dominion Voting Systems, an election technology firm. Dominion had accused Fox News of knowingly spreading false information about the company after the 2020 election to support the false narrative that the election were in favor of President Joe Biden. The settlement amount is less than half of Dominion's original claim of \$1.6 billion. The settlement is likely a strategic move by Fox News to avoid further scrutiny and potential trial that could expose the inner workings of the network and its top anchors. The Dominion settlement may have broader implications for other lawsuits that Fox News is facing for spreading false information related to the 2020 election.



Asia

Kim Jong Un orders launch of North Korea's first military reconnaissance satellite amidst growing tensions with US and South Korea

North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, has announced plans for the country's first military reconnaissance satellite launch that will take place in the coming days, according to a report from the state-controlled Korean Central News Agency (KCNA). Kim visited the National Aerospace Development Administration (NADA) on April 18 and instructed the organization to establish a preparatory committee to ensure the satellite's launch at the planned (but unspecified) date. The move is seen as part of North Korea's efforts to modernize its military and defense system, citing the need for self-defense capabilities against perceived threats from South Korea and the United States. The international community, particularly the United States, has condemned North Korea's ballistic missile launches, but diplomatic efforts and measures to punish North Korea have been limited.



Source: The Diplomat

<https://thediplomat.com/2023/04/north-korea-heralds-completion-of-its-first-military-reconnaissance-satellite/>



Australia

Australia and China make progress in restoring relations amid tariff dispute



Source: Reuters

<https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/australia-china-agriculture-ministers-meet-amid-diplomatic-thaw-2023-04-18/>

Australia has reaffirmed its commitment to improving agriculture ties with China after a ministerial meeting, signaling progress in restoring trade in barley and potentially resolving the dispute over wine tariffs. The resumption of normal trade is seen as beneficial for both countries, and Chinese officials have shown a "sincere desire for co-operation" to remove punitive tariffs on Australian wine. Tensions between the two countries had escalated since 2018, but have eased in recent months with diplomatic efforts to rebuild relations. Wine exports to mainland China had plunged significantly due to tariffs, but a potential deal could be reached after the recent agreement on barley.



South America

Chile's President Gabriel Boric unveils plans to nationalize lithium industry, sparking global rally in prices and concerns for electric vehicle manufacturers

Gabriel Boric, Chile's President, has announced plans to nationalize the country's lithium industry, the world's second-largest producer of the metal used in electric vehicle batteries. The move would transfer control of Chile's lithium operations from industry giants SQM and Albemarle to a separate state-owned company. Boric stated that lithium contracts in future would only be issued as public-private partnerships with state control. The announcement has sparked a rally in lithium prices in Asia and raised concerns for electric vehicle manufacturers who rely on Chile for lithium supply. The move is part of Chile's efforts to boost its economy and protect the environment and follows similar actions by other countries like Mexico and Indonesia to protect their natural resources.



Source: Reuters

<https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/chile-plans-nationalize-its-vast-lithium-industry-2023-04-21/>



Europe

Empowering Europe's Cyber Defense: The EU Cyber Solidarity Act unveils ambitious plans for enhanced cybersecurity preparedness and response

The European Commission has proposed the EU Cyber Solidarity Act on April 18, 2023, to enhance the EU's preparedness, detection, and response to cybersecurity incidents. The proposal, which has a budget of €1.1 billion, includes the establishment of a European Cybersecurity Shield, which will consist of interconnected Security Operations Centres (SOCs) across the EU. These SOCs will use advanced technology such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data analytics to detect and share warnings on cyber threats, allowing for a more timely and efficient response to major threats. The proposal also includes a comprehensive Cybersecurity Emergency Mechanism to improve the EU's cyber posture, which will support preparedness actions, create an EU Cybersecurity Reserve of incident response services, and facilitate mutual assistance among Member States. The Act is part of the broader EU cybersecurity strategy and aims to strengthen cooperation and coordination across borders and public-private entities to address the increasing threat of cyber attacks.

Source: European Commission
<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/cyber-solidarity>

Africa

Sudan in Crisis: Clashes between armed forces and paramilitaries threaten regional stability

Sudan is experiencing a violent crisis as clashes erupt between the Sudanese armed forces and the paramilitaries of the Rapid Support Force (RSF). At least 185 people have been reported killed, and the fighting threatens to destabilize not only Sudan but also the wider region. The Sudanese armed forces are loyal to Abdulfatah al-Burhan, the present de facto ruler of Sudan, while the RSF, led by former warlord Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, also known as Hemedti, follows a different agenda. The struggle for power emanates from the aftermath of the uprising in 2019 that ousted former dictator Omar al-Bashir, and tensions have been rising in recent weeks. The situation remains fluid and uncertain, with reports of airstrikes, attacks on military bases, and battles in various parts of the country. The Government of India is actively working towards ensuring the safety and security of Indians stranded in Sudan, and closely monitoring the evolving security situation. Coordination is being maintained with various partners, including the Sudanese authorities, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, and the US. Multiple options are being pursued, including positioning two Indian Air Force C-130J on standby in Jeddah and deploying INS Sumedha to Port Sudan.



Source: The Guardian
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/apr/15/heavy-gunfire-amid-military-clash-causes-panic-in-capital-of-sudan>