

January Article



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Life OutSide

Amruta Aradwad



A lot of us have probably wondered, is there extraterrestrial life out there? Many conspiracy theories lead people to believe that life outside of Earth or even our Solar system is a strong possibility. Researchers at Arizona State University found something like a 1996 study showing the possibility of fossilized alien microbes on a Martian meteorite, then the announcement of Earth-like exoplanets found within the habitable zones. A writing published by The New Yorker showed how a Canadian scientist spotted an asteroid traveling at four times more speed. It was supposed to have a

very unique shape and it didn't completely behave like our "normal" asteroids, which again might open onto different opinions and views. These can also steer a lot of questions like how so? Or Where? In the end, curiosity can get the best of us and make us attain more about life outside.

Source:

<https://www.nbcnews.com/mach/science/discovery-alien-life-might-not-bring-response-you-d-expect-ncn-a849046>

Capitol Hill Riots

Sanjita Suryadevara



January 6th, 2021. It was the day that Congress had congregated in Capitol Hill to count the electoral votes from the 2020 Presidential Election, formalizing the results. There were many who questioned the legitimacy of the votes and the victory of President-Elect Joe Biden, some of whom were prominent congresspeople and politicians. Others were the protesters gathered around the building, aggressively calling for the government to “Stop the Steal”, implying the election results were somehow fraudulent. Yet the joint representatives walked past the protesters waving Confederate and Pro-Trump flags, donning military-style clothes, screaming opposition to the turn-out of the election. Their goal was to address their concerns and fairly count the votes representing the choice of the people. It was still another job to do, and another day in history. Now, we wonder where it all went wrong. When the supposedly peaceful protests turned into violent riots. When this day went down in history for all the wrong reasons.

Around 1:42 PM EST, the first clashes between the Capitol Hill Police and the riled up protesters sparked. Only a small group of riot police were stationed outside the back of the Capitol building and were soon overwhelmed by the angry and aggressive hundreds who began to swarm the area. As the rioters climbed the side of the building and the back of the balcony, the police forces slowly retreated. Metal fences were being broken through. Amidst all of this, representatives were still debating about objections to the Electoral College votes. They were unaware of the chaos stimulated just outside their office. At 2:15 PM EST, the congressional staff was alerted that no entry or exit was allowed, due to an “external security threat”. Only fifteen minutes later, legislators were forced to abandon their sessions as the Capitol was put on lockdown. Rioters now flooded the Statuary Hall. Some of them carried weapons. It was around this time that police deployed tear gas in the rotunda of the Capitol. The disorder soon transformed into something much more precarious. Shots were fired. A woman who was with the protesters, now identified as Ashli Babbitt, later died of her wounds. Four others also died as a result of the riots, one of them a police officer. 60 other Capitol Police officers were injured. Among the violent rioters were QAnon conspiracy theorists and the Proud Boys, known for expressing disinterest with the government and the turnout of the election. Petty thefts, accessing federal emails, and taking photo-ops in the Senate were other outcomes of the raid. At 3:43 PM EST, the National Guard was finally deployed. Around 2 hours later, the crowd begins to disperse, as the 6 PM EST curfew nears. The FBI and National Guard secure the Capitol Hall as the last of the rioters exit the scene. At 8:16 PM EST, the joint session of Congress resumes. “Let’s get back to work,” Mike Pence, the sitting vice president and president of Congress,

stated. At 3:40 AM EST, Congress completes the count of the Electoral College votes, and at last, confirms Joe Biden as the winner of the 2020 Election.

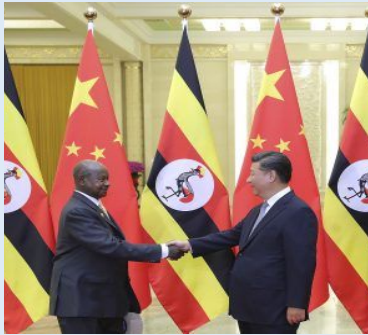
The riot on the Capitol sent the world into a shock, as one of the most prominent universal symbols of democracy was abused and the lives of legislators endangered. However, as the wave of terror recedes, many can't help but wonder if the danger could have been prevented and if the damage runs deeper than just a broken building. The people who inflicted terror on the Capitol didn't represent people who wanted a fair election, at least not for the most part. They represented the white supremacy that runs deep in American society. They represented the deception that changes reality for the common people. They represented the effect faulty leadership has on a country. They represent how devastating the ever-growing division between Americans truly is. The riot on January 6th wasn't just a few people who woke up and chose to be aggressive. They were the outcome of thousands of Americans going to sleep with lies and aggression planted in their beliefs for the past four years, and maybe even long before. "Now the prevailing environment is one of sharp partisan polarization and something called negative partisanship, which is that one side succeeds by making the other side fail. And I think that is a dynamic that paralyzes the institution. Recognizing that and facing that reality front-on is something that President Biden is going to have to do pretty early on in his term." Adam Jentleson, a former Senator's staff stated. We've built the road to the sinkhole that is dragging people and the foundation of America with it. Our tolerance and patience are running thin, and we wonder how much longer until we can walk past this tragedy together, or how much longer it will take until we finally break.

Source:

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/parish/capitol-hill-riots-addressed-homilies-some-us-catholic-churches>

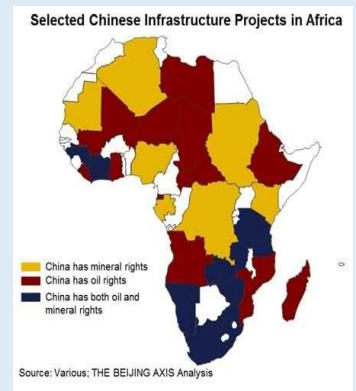
The uncertain, and undignified relations between China and Africa

Ayemhenre Isikhuemhen



In 2001 China took a keen interest in the African continent in hopes of diving into the African market in order to expand their global influence, and access to raw resources. Sparking many trade and financial aid, emerging as Africa's number one trading and investment partner; with currently about 60 billion dollars poured into the African countries around the continent such as Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, and many more. The base idea from these negotiations was that the Chinese companies and management would spearhead many infrastructure projects such as roads, railways, and ports, which help with the allocation of resources and business throughout these countries and ports that are used to not only facilitate trade between these countries, but with the global market. As collateral, these projects would provide jobs for local Africans with a huge bill for the service, which African Countries can pay for with Chinese loans. Though in recent times, many calls to question China's generous deeds in Africa, reevaluating its situation as China's feint exploit naive or corrupt African officials to extract resources such as minerals, wood, and oil while putting Africans in debt traps to claim ownership of these valuable infrastructures, and finally using the Africans as a market for their own products, much similar to tactics of British dealings with India. With many reports of Chinese racism towards Africans, as there have been many viral video recordings of such incidences, such as a Chinese manager using monkey slurs on Kenyans, or a Chinese filming a class of Ethiopians repeating foul phrases of themselves in Chinese. Although many would argue this is only propaganda from the "west" in order to keep China from growing its influences. These uncertainties have been amplified in the new era of Covid-19, which has led to more social problems between Chinese and Africans.

Source: Lintao Zhang, Associated Press

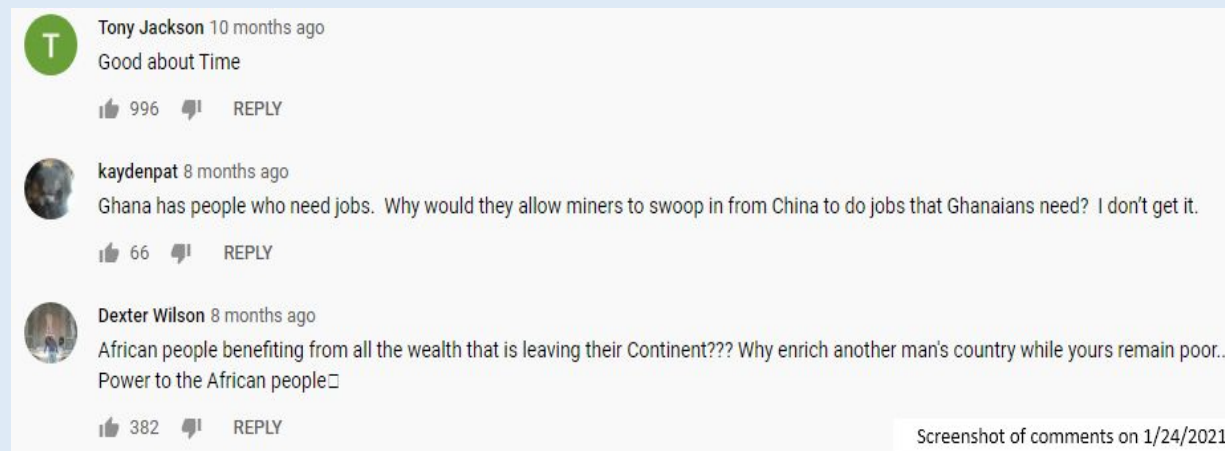


In times of Coronavirus



Recently there has been much prejudice against many groups of people since the outbreak of the coronavirus. In China particularly since their attempt to reopen in March 2020, they were hit with a second wave of Coronavirus, and instead of believing the new wave came from the reopening, it was speculated that foreigners were bringing it back into China. Unfortunately, there has been a lot of prejudice against foreigners as a result, and in the city of Guangzhou, an online rumor had started about Africans being the source, as result many Africans were evicted from services or locations while being evicted

from their housing, the picture, you can see a group of Africans sleeping outside because of this. This of course was spread around social media and points a negative direction towards how Africans view Chinese, now believing more than ever that China has been exploiting them economically, and looked down upon them. Which inspired more attacks on the many Chinese in Africa. Not too long ago there was a video covering the topic of Chinese discrimination in Africa such as the seizing of Chinese mining communities in Ghana, so attacks of Chinese small business ownerships even result in two deaths. In the comments provided below, you would find no remorse for such discrimination, believing that it is for the greater good of the good of Africans. I am certain that there will be more incidents and changes in African opinion on China, pushing for more incentives against China, and which could allow for other nations like Japan or the United States to try to fill in the role of China; but I doubt that anyone could do so, which would potentially slow down both China and Africa's development.



Learning on The Road

Ashley Harshaw



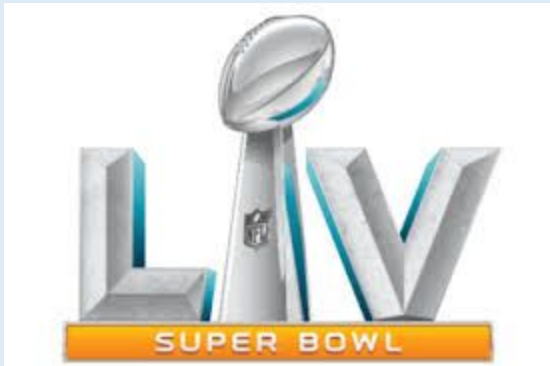
Melody Warnick’s article “Homeschooling” is a hot topic in the pandemic. In road schooling next,” it describes families who buy an RV and travel while teaching their children. They buy workbooks and learning apps so they can keep learning the basics. Karen and Sylvester Akpan think the day dictates what they learn. For example, if they see a snake, their children will learn about where a snake lives and eats. Many families learn by going to museums and national parks. The children decide what they learn that day.

I don’t think learning on the road would be beneficial to the children. Some of the kids are too young to decide what to learn. They need structure before they start deciding what to do. Also, how would they do grades and how would colleges see what they know? I like the idea of being independent but for young students, it would make them fall behind. Kids love it though.

Source: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2020/10/05/roadschooling-rv-families-covid/>

Super Bowl 55

Avyukt Bhattu



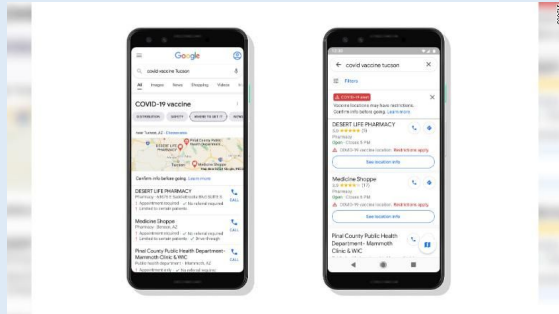
With the conference championship out of the way we 1 week left till the Super Bowl is underway. This year’s matchup is between the Kansas City Chiefs vs. the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. This is going to be one of the most exciting matchups because these two teams have the best offenses in the league so expect a high-scoring game. The Bucs have an amazing defense but in this day and age that doesn’t mean anything. I say that because I still stand by the fact that defense does win championships if they have an offense that can score to assist them, otherwise there isn’t even a chance. I can say that from the experience of my favorite team dealing

with that problem for multiple years. Mahomes and his receivers/tight end are dangerous and can score at will easily, but this is the best defense they will have faced the whole year so I do see a struggle in the first half. Brady and the Bucs are on their way to win him his 7th ring and they get a home-field advantage which is great because that’s more of their fans. With being balanced on both sides of the ball (Bucs) going against a powerhouse offense (chiefs) I see a very close and interesting game. I picked the Buccaneers to sneak away with a 35 - 30 upset.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Super_Bowl_LV

Google Maps upcoming feature

Kaushya Bhattu



As new vaccines have been handed out this month, Google Maps has announced a new feature where it will be displaying covid-19 vaccination sites. Along with this new feature, Google Maps has also said to show how critical covid-19 is in a particular area. To find out where current vaccination sites are, users will simply have to type the words “Vaccines near me” into the app. As of a couple of weeks, the first four states to receive this

new feature are Arizona, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. To make this new feature a relevant source, Google states to be working with “authoritative sources” such as local governments and retail pharmacies. This new feature seems like a very important step because 60% of Americans have stated, according to a survey, that they have no idea how to or where to get a vaccine. Although these features are not currently out, these will be implemented in the next couple of weeks. I do believe this will be very helpful to those that are looking to get a vaccine.

Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/25/tech/covid-vaccine-google-maps/index.html>