





25 May 2024 **National & International News**

Ferroptosis	Context: • Research by Columbia University has revealed that ferroptosis, a specific form of cell death, occurs in the lungs of severe COVID-19 patients.
	 Key points: This discovery sheds light on the previously unclear cause of extreme lung damage leading to conditions such as pneumonia, inflammation, and acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS). Published in Nature Communications, the study found that ferroptosis, which involves the collapse of outer fat layers in certain cells, is the primary mechanism behind COVID-19 lung disease. This form of cell death, distinct from the more common type involving the breakdown of internal cell molecules, was first identified by Professor Brent Stockwell in 2012. Stockwell's lab has demonstrated that while ferroptosis plays a role in normal bodily processes, it can also attack healthy cells in neurodegenerative diseases. The study suggests that halting ferroptosis with therapeutic drugs could improve outcomes for severe COVID-19 patients. Additionally, inducing ferroptosis might be beneficial for treating diseases characterized by uncontrolled cell growth, such as cancer. This research offers new potential treatment avenues for combating COVID-19 lung disease, with Professor Stockwell emphasizing its importance in improving health outcomes and reducing mortality.
ASMPA Missile	 Context: France has successfully tested the updated ASMPA supersonic missile, capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. Defence Minister Sébastien Lecornu announced the successful test. This test underscores France's commitment to maintaining a robust nuclear deterrence capability.













	 Key points: The ASMPA, developed by MBDA France, has been a crucial component of France's defense strategy since its initial development in 1986. The missile has undergone several upgrades, with the latest modernization program, ASMPA-R, launched in 2016. The recent test, using a strategic Rafale fighter jet, demonstrates the missile's reliability and France's readiness. The Durandal military exercises, running from May 13 to June 14, focus on nuclear deterrence and military readiness. This successful test coincides with increased military activities in Russia's Southern Military District, amid escalating nuclear rhetoric from President Vladimir Putin.
Neanderthals	 Context: A recent analysis of two Neanderthal skeletons has uncovered traces of three viruses: adenovirus, herpesvirus, and papillomavirus. These findings suggest that Neanderthals, who lived around 50,000 years ago, were infected with these viruses, making them the oldest known human viruses, surpassing the previous record by 20,000 years.
	 Key points: The research team, by extracting DNA from the skeletons found in the Chagyrskaya cave in Russia, identified viral sequences by comparing them to modern viruses and ruled out contamination from modern humans or predators. The identified viruses are akin to those causing cold sores, genital warts, and cold-like symptoms in humans today. This study supports the theory that viruses may have played a role in the extinction of Neanderthals around 40,000 years ago. Understanding these ancient viruses can provide insights into the evolution of modern diseases and potentially inform the development of new vaccines and antiviral treatments. Despite the intriguing possibility of resurrecting ancient viruses, experts like Sally Wasef caution against it due to the complexities involved in reconstructing damaged viral DNA. As the field of ancient virology grows, more discoveries are expected to enhance our understanding of past and present diseases.

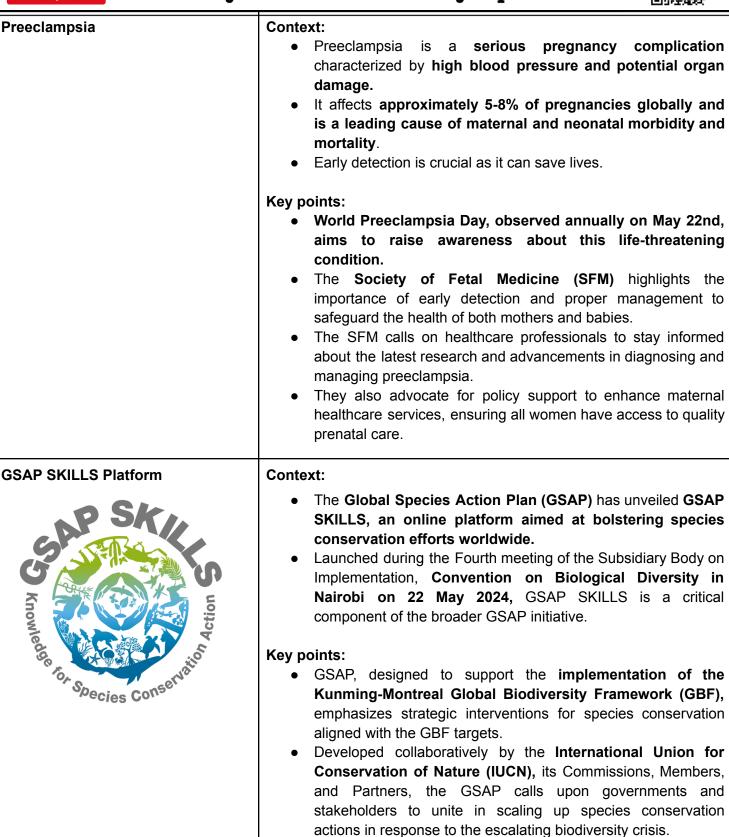






















 The GSAP SKILLS online platform serves as a
comprehensive resource hub, offering tools, training
support, and technical guidance to assist governments
and stakeholders worldwide in effectively implementing the
main species outcomes of the GBF.
• It aims to prevent extinctions, reduce extinction risks, and
maintain or increase the abundance of native wild species.
About:
• Managed proactively by IUCN, the GSAP SKILLS platform is
responsive to the needs of governments and stakeholders for
effective species conservation actions.
• The platform's development has been principally supported
by the Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea, with
additional resources from the Tech4Nature Initiative
launched by IUCN and Huawei in 2020.

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