



Italy's Minister of Foreign Affairs Antonio Tajani speaks to the press at Lancaster House in London



Presidential candidate Nicusor Dan gestures during an electoral rally, a week ahead of the second round of election redo in Bucharest



Singer Usher onstage during 2025 Emory University Commencement Ceremony at Emory University in Atlanta



Ernest N'koumou Mobio, interim president of the Democratic Party of Ivory Coast, attends a meeting at the party headquarters in Abidjan

allovertheworld



Britain's King Charles III while attending a ceremony to present the new standards and colours to regiment members of the Life Guards and the Blues and Royals at Windsor Castle, in London

Syria warns Kurds against delay in integrating into state

ANKARA: Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shaibani warned Monday that postponing implementation of an agreement between Syria's new administration and Kurdish-led forces in the northeast would "prolong the chaos" in the country.

Algerian attack survivor vows to be heard in court battle with award-winning author

PARIS: Saada Arbane has lived without a voice since her throat was slit during the Algerian civil war. But now, the 31-year-old woman has vowed to make herself heard after she said a best-selling novel plagiarised her life.

Ivory Coast opposition leader resigns but vows to continue fight for victory

IVORY COAST: Ivory Coast's main opposition leader, who has been barred from standing in an October presidential vote, said Monday that he was resigning as party leader but would still lead the fight to win the election.

Trump issues executive order mandating drugmakers to slash prescription costs within 30 days

AP, WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump on Monday signed a sweeping executive order setting a 30-day deadline for drugmakers to lower the cost of prescription drugs in the US or face new limits over what the government will pay.



US President Donald Trump signs an executive order on prescription drug prices, in the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington

The order calls on the health department, led by Robert F. Kennedy Jr., to broker new price tags for drugs. If a deal is not reached, a new rule will kick in that will tie the price of what the US pays for medications to lower prices paid by other countries.

covered by Medicare and Medicaid.

The federal government spends hundreds of billions of dollars on prescription drugs, injectables, transfusions and other medications every year through Medicare, which covers nearly 70 million older Americans.

Ahead of the signing, the nation's leading pharmaceutical lobby on Sunday pushed back against Trump's plan, calling it a "bad deal" for American

patients. Drugmakers have long argued that any threats to their profits could impact the research they do to develop new drugs.

"Importing foreign prices will cut billions of dollars from Medicare with no guarantee that it helps patients or improves their access to medicines," Stephen J. Uhl, the president and CEO of PhRMA, said in a statement.

"It jeopardizes the hundreds of billions of our member companies are planning to invest in America, making us more reliant on China for innovative medicines."

TRUMP CLAIMS HIS ADMINISTRATION STOPPED 'NUCLEAR CONFLICT' BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

PTI, NEW YORK: President Donald Trump on Monday reiterated his claim that his administration stopped a "nuclear conflict" between India and Pakistan, telling the South Asian neighbours that America will do a "lot of trade" with them if they end hostilities.

Trump's so-called "most favoured nation" approach to Medicare drug pricing has been controversial since he first tried to implement it during his first term.

He signed a similar executive order in the final weeks of his presidency, which called for the US to only

pay a lower price than other countries pay for some drugs — injectables or cancer drugs given through infusions — administered in a doctor's office.

That narrow executive order faced hurdles, with a court order that blocked the rule from

going into effect under President Joe Biden's administration.

The pharmaceutical industry argued that Trump's 2020 attempt would give foreign governments the "upper hand" in deciding the value of medicines in the US.

BALLOON FIESTA



Visitors watch hot air balloons being launched during celebrations to mark Vesak Day at Ngawen Temple complex in Muntilan, Central Java, Indonesia

Poland closes Russian consulate in Krakow over arson accusation

AP, WARSAW: Polish Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski said Monday that he was ordering the closure of Russia's consulate in the southern city of Krakow after Polish authorities said Russia was responsible for a fire that destroyed a shopping centre in Warsaw last year.

The fire broke out May 12, 2024, in the Marywil-ska 44 shopping centre that housed some 1,400 shops and service points, a budget marketplace in a warehouse-like structure in a northern district of Warsaw.

Sikorski announced the closure in a statement published in Warsaw on Monday morning, exactly one year after the fire.

He also addressed the matter during a visit to Britain, telling reporters the decision was taken because the Justice Ministry and Security forces found evidence that Russia had committed arson.

"This was a huge fire of a shopping mall in Warsaw in which, just by sheer luck, nobody was hurt. This is completely unacceptable," Sikorski said.

"So the Russian consulate will have to leave," he added. "And if these attacks continue, we'll take further

action." Russia's Foreign Ministry said Monday that there would be an "adequate response" to the consulate's closure.

"Warsaw is continuing to deliberately destroy relations (between Poland and Russia) and acting against the interests of its citizens," ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova said, as quoted by Russian news outlet Interfax.

Sikorski last year already ordered the closure of the Russian consulate in Poznan, one of three at the time in Poland, in response to acts of sabotage including arson attacks that he said were sponsored by Moscow.

Russian drones attack Ukraine after Kremlin turns down ceasefire proposal but promises talks

AP, KYIV: Russia launched more than 100 Shahed and decoy drones at Ukraine in nighttime attacks, the Ukrainian air force said Monday, after the Kremlin effectively rejected an unconditional 30-day ceasefire in the more than three-year war, but reiterated that it would take part in possible peace talks later this week without preconditions.

There was no direct response from the Kremlin, meanwhile, to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's challenge for Russian leader Vladimir Putin to meet him for face-to-face peace talks in Turkey on Thursday.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Monday refused to say who might travel to Istanbul from the

Russian side. "Overall, we're determined to seriously look for ways to achieve a long-term peaceful settlement. That is all," Peskov said.

The United States and European governments are making a concerted push to stop the fighting, which has killed tens of thousands of soldiers on both sides, as well as more than 10,000 Ukrainian civilians. Russia's invading forces have taken around one-fifth of Ukraine in Europe's biggest conflict since World War II.

In a flurry of diplomatic developments over the weekend, Russia shunned the ceasefire proposal tabled by the US and European leaders, but offered direct talks with Ukraine on Thursday.

Ukraine, along with European allies, had demanded that Russia accept a ceasefire starting Monday before holding peace talks. Moscow effectively rejected that proposal and instead called for direct negotiations in Istanbul.

West increases pressure on Putin

US President Donald Trump insisted that Ukraine accept the Russian offer of talks. Zelenskyy went a step further Sunday and put pressure on Putin by offering a personal meeting.

France added its voice to that offer Monday, with Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot urging Putin to accept — though Barrot repeated the European position that a truce must be in place before

the talks. Russia's failure to join the ceasefire offered by Ukraine would bring further sanctions on Moscow, European leaders say. Germany on Monday reminded Russia of that intention.

"The clock is ticking. There are 12 hours until the end of the day and, if the ceasefire doesn't stand by then, the European side will keep to the agreement" to implement further sanctions, German government spokesperson Stefan Kornelius said.

Peskov, the Kremlin spokesman, said that giving ultimatums to Russia was "unacceptable" and wouldn't work.

"You cannot talk to Russia in this language," he told reporters.

Airstrike in central Myanmar kills up to 22 people at bombed school

AP, BANGKOK: An airstrike by Myanmar's military on a village in the country's central Sagaing region hit a school on Monday, killing as many as 20 students and two teachers, according to a member of a resistance group, an aid worker and media reports.

The morning attack on Ohe Htein Twin village in the region's Tabayin township, also known as Depayin, also wounded dozens of students, they said.

Neither the military government nor state-controlled media have released information about the reported airstrike.

The military has increasingly used airstrikes to counter a widespread armed struggle against its

rule, which began in February 2021 when it seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

More than 6,600 civilians are estimated to have been killed by security forces since then, according to figures compiled by nongovernmental organisations.

A member of the White Depayin People's Defence Force resistance group fighting against army rule told The Associated Press that a fighter jet dropped a bomb directly onto a school, where many students from primary to high school levels were studying after 9 am.

The area is about 115 kilometres northwest of Mandalay, Myanmar's second-largest city.

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Hamas releases Israeli-American hostage in gesture to Trump admin

AP, DEIR AL-BALAH: An Israeli-American soldier held hostage for more than 19 months in the Gaza Strip was released Monday by Hamas in a goodwill gesture toward the Trump administration that could lay the groundwork for a new ceasefire with Israel. The Israeli military confirmed that Edan Alexander was turned over to the Red Cross and then to Israeli forces.

Wearing shirts emblazoned with his name, Alexander's extended family gathered in Tel Aviv to watch the release. They

cheered and chanted his name when the military said he was free. His grandmother, Varda Ben Baruch, beamed. In Tel Aviv's Hostage Square, hundreds of people broke out into cheers.

Alexander was 19 when he was taken from his military base in southern Israel during Hamas' cross-border attack in Gaza.

His release was the first since Israel shattered an eight-week ceasefire with Hamas in March, unleashing fierce strikes on Gaza that have killed hundreds.

Israel has promised to intensify its offensive, including by seizing the territory and displacing much of its population again. Days before the ceasefire ended, Israel blocked all imports from entering the Palestinian enclave, deepening a humanitarian crisis and sparking warnings about the risk of famine if the blockade isn't lifted.

Israel says the steps are meant to pressure Hamas to accept a ceasefire agreement on Israel's terms.

Copenhagen to offer giveaways to eco-friendly tourists

AFP, DENMARK: The city of Copenhagen will offer special rebates and freebies to eco-friendly tourists this summer, including free bike rentals to those arriving by train and staying more than four days.

The CopenPay initiative, which was tested on a smaller scale last year, "is about raising travellers' awareness about travelling more responsibly," Soren Tegen Pedersen, the head of the city's tourism board Wonderful Copenhagen, told AFP.

The emphasis of the initiative is on transport, a highly polluting sector.

Those who make climate-friendly and environmental choices, such as using bikes and picking up trash, will also be offered rebates at museums and tourist sites, as well as free yoga classes and vegetarian meals.

Ninety sites are participating in the campaign, including the National Museum and CopenHill, a synthetic ski slope. The campaign, which

opens on June 17 and lasts until late August, will be advertised on billboards around the city and social media.

Goboat, a hire service for electric motorboats powered by solar panels, said taking part in the initiative last year helped show its commitment to climate solutions.

"Last year, 500 people jumped at our offer of one hour of free boating in exchange for picking up trash in the waters of the port.