



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

AFP



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. His remarks came as the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) announced it was disbanding, an announcement the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) which control swathes of north and northeast Syria has not yet commented on. The PKK's move is "a pivotal moment" for regional stability, Shaibani told a news conference in Ankara with his Turkish and Jordanian counterparts.

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. Kamel Daoud's novel "Houris" - banned in Algeria and awarded France's top literary prize Prix Goncourt last year - tells the story of a child who loses her voice when an Islamist cuts her throat during the 1990s war. Last November, Arbane took the literary world by storm when she announced on Algerian television, using a speech aid, that the novel's main character was based on her experiences without her consent.

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. Six months before voters choose a new head of state, political tensions are running high in the west African country where several opposition figures have been declared ineligible to stand. For months, Tidjane Thiam's campaign for the presidency has been mired in tussles over his nationality.

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.

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. "We're going to equalise," Trump said during a Monday morning press conference. "We're all going to pay the same. We're going to pay what Europe pays."

It's unclear what — if any — impact the Republican president's executive order will have on millions of Americans who have private health insurance. The federal government has the most power to shape the price it pays for drugs



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

covered by Medicare and Medicaid.

The federal government spends hundreds of billions of dollars on prescription drugs, injectables, trans-fusions and other medications every year through Medicare, which covers nearly 70 million older Americans. Medicaid, meanwhile, covers nearly 80 million poor and disabled people in the US.

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 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. "On Saturday, my administration helped broker a full and immediate ceasefire, I think, a permanent one between India and Pakistan, ending a dangerous conflict of two nations with lots of nuclear weapons," Trump said at the start of a press conference in the White House where he announced that he will set 30-day deadline for drugmakers to lower cost of prescription drugs. He started the briefing by describing "the historic events that took place over the last few days" in the Indian subcontinent. India and Pakistan reached an understanding on Saturday to end the conflict after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes. Indian government sources in New Delhi have been maintaining that the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with immediate effect. They said no third party was involved. Trump said that India and Pakistan "were going at it hot and heavy, and it was seemingly not going to stop." "I'm very proud to let you know that the leadership of India and Pakistan was unwavering, powerful, but unwavering in both cases, having these they really were from the standpoint of having the strength and the wisdom and fortitude to fully know and to understand the gravity of the situation," Trump said.

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

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 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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