

The Trump administration claims white people face discrimination in South Africa

White Afrikaners

White people make up some 7 percent of the population but own more than 70 percent of the land :



‘They’ll be back’: White Afrikaners leave South Africa to be refugees in US:

Trump administration welcomes first batch of white Afrikaners while US cuts off refugee programmes to other countries.

By Qaanitah Hunter

Johannesburg, South Africa – On a chilly Sunday evening in Johannesburg, OR Tambo International Airport was filled with tourists and travellers entering and exiting South Africa’s busiest airport. On one side of the international departures hall, a few dozen people queued – their trollies piled with luggage, travel pillows and children’s blankets – as they waited to board a charter flight to Washington Dulles International Airport in the United States. Dressed casually and com-



The first group of Afrikaners from South Africa arrive for resettlement in the US [Saul Loeb/AFP]

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The Life And Legacy Of Abdurauf Fitrat P 4

ICC Page 8

ICC prosecutor to step aside over alleged sexual misconduct

News Backpage

Ukraine and Russia far apart in direct talks, but prisoner swap agreed



The Overcrowded Parliament: A Battlefield Of Politics Instead Of Nation-Building

I. Introduction

Parliament serves as the bedrock of governance, tasked with crafting laws that shape the nation’s progress. Ideally, it should function as a forum for rational debate, evidence-based policymaking, and collective problem-solving. However, when a legislative body becomes overcrowded with members from numerous political parties, particularly radical youth factions, it can transform into a battleground of verbal warfare, ideological rigidity, and self-serving power struggles. Instead of national building, excessive political diversity often leads to stalled reforms, biased decision-making, and legislative gridlock. The consequences of this dysfunction are not merely theoretical. Across various African and European nations, parliamentary sessions have devolved into chaos, with members resorting to physical altercations when ideological clashes escalate. This article critically examines the dangers of overly

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Russia demanded Ukraine cede more territory at Turkey talks, Ukrainian source says

Europe



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Stop Superficial Reactions: Address Banditry and Cattle Rustling by Tackling the Livestock Economy That Fuels the Menace

Kenya



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US says ‘deal’ reached with China after trade talks “Trade deal”

US-China



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Libyan protesters demand prime minister quit as three ministers resign

At least three ministers resigned in sympathy with the protesters

Africa



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On International Day Of Families, A Powerful Appeal Urges Family Members To Rally Around GBV Victims

Nguvu Change Leader Valerie Aura says, family support is critical for survivors as they begin their healing journey and cope with post-traumatic stress

By: Rachel D'souza
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Worth Noting:

- As the world marks the International Day of Families (May 15), Nguvu Change Leader Valerie Aura is intensifying her efforts against GBV and underlining the crucial role family support can play in helping survivors to feel less isolated, understood and accepted. But emotional support alone isn't enough.
- According to Physicians for Human Rights, survivors also need access to quality mental health care - yet many health facilities either lack trained professionals or are simply out of reach for survivors due to cost, distance, or limited operating hours. It is therefore also important that this service gap is bridged at the community level.

The Africa Data Hub, in its 'Silencing Women – Tracking and Humanising Femicide Cases in Kenya' report, described 2024 as the worst year on record. The platform, in collaboration with data studio Odipo Dev and media outlet Africa Uncensored, also highlighted the lack of consolidated data needed to present a clear picture of the crisis. However, over the past two years, they carefully reviewed news reports and court records, compiling over 930 cases of female homicides between January 2016 and December 2024. Among these cases, there has been a disturbing increase in murders committed by intimate partners. This situation demands a more coordinated response from policymakers, local leaders, and grassroots organisations. Change leaders working to prevent gender-based violence (GBV) are also stressing the importance of strong family ties, as families are often the first line of emotional support and security for individuals. As the world marks the International Day of Families (May 15), Nguvu Change Leader Valerie Aura is intensifying her efforts against GBV and underlining the crucial role family support can play in helping survivors to feel less isolated, understood and accepted. But emotional support alone isn't enough. According to Physicians for Human Rights, survivors also need access to quality mental health care - yet many health facilities either lack trained professionals or are simply out of reach for survivors due to cost, distance, or limited operating hours. It is therefore also important that this service gap is bridged at the community level.



Valerie Aura Achieng- Nguvu Change Leader

policies guaranteeing mental health care for survivors, the reality on the ground is a far cry from what's promised. "What's needed now is not just political will, but measurable action; budgets, staffing, and monitoring. We are losing too many GBV survivors to suicide, and that should concern us all. Families can play a seminal role in helping them recover," she concludes.

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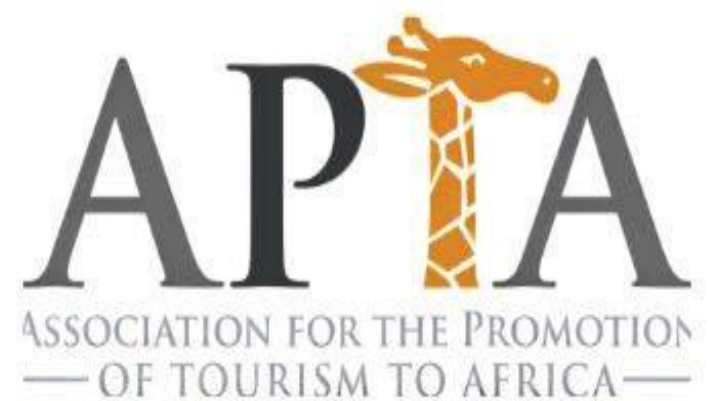
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Legacy

The Life And Legacy Of Abdurauf Fitrat



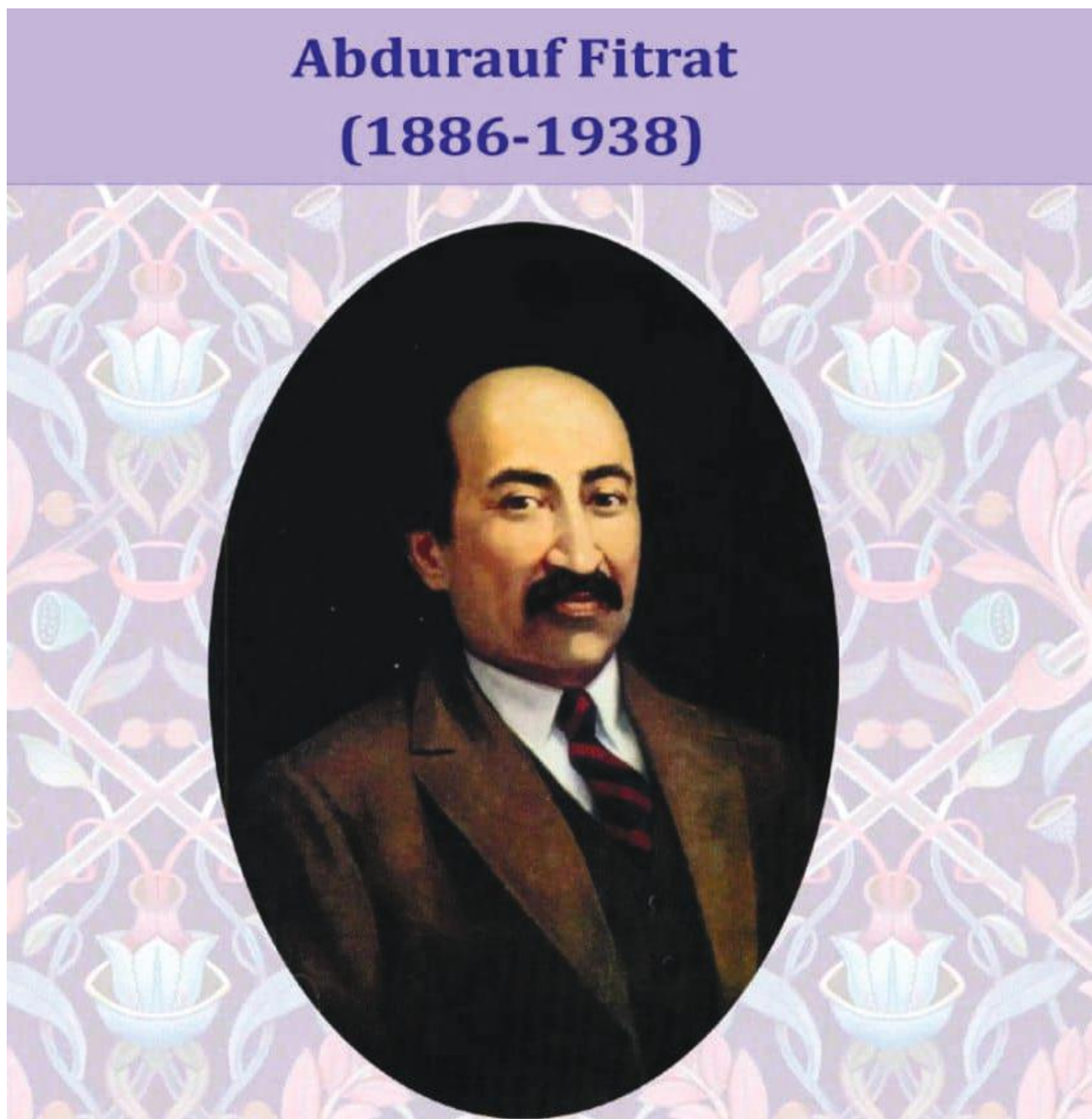
By: Halimova Nilufar
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Worth Noting:

• During World War I and its aftermath, Fitrat broadened his influence. He founded and edited the newspaper Hurriyat ("Freedom") in Samarkand, joined the "Young Bukharians" party, and wrote dramas and essays such as "True Love" (Chin Sevish), "The Indian Revolutionaries" (Hind Ihtilolchilari), and Abu Muslim, works that celebrated liberty, critiqued colonial oppression, and articulated a vision of national liberation. • In 1918, Fitrat established the "Chagatai Circle" (Chig'atoy Gurungi), the first local scholarly society dedicated to Uzbek language, literature, and folklore, laying the foundation for today's Writers' Union and the Academy of Sciences. Although later sidelined to Moscow's Oriental Institute and ultimately executed during Stalin's purges, his legacy endured.

Abdurauf Fitrat (1886–1938) was one of the most influential intellectuals of early 20th century Central Asia and a driving force behind the Jadid reform movement, which aimed to modernize education, literature, and politics across Turkestan. Born into a merchant family, Fitrat received a traditional Islamic education in Bukhara before traveling widely to Turkey, India, Arabia, and even Moscow on a non-conventional pilgrimage route that exposed him to progressive ideas and the "new method" schools emerging throughout the Muslim world.

Initially skeptical of Jadidism, Fitrat's encounter with reformist ideals during his studies in Istanbul (1910–1914) transformed him into one of its most dynamic advocates. His earliest prose works, "Debate" (Munozara) and "The Statement of an Indian Traveler" (Bayonoti Sayyohi Hindiy), published in Istanbul, along with his poetry collection "The Outcry" (Sayha), electrified young Bukhara intellectuals and challenged conservative clerics who labeled modern education heretical. Through spirited debate and the clandestine distribution of his writings, Fitrat helped reopen Jadid schools in Bukhara, cementing his reputation as a fearless champion of enlightened learning. During World War I and its aftermath, Fitrat broadened his influence. He founded and edited the newspaper Hurriyat ("Freedom") in Samarkand, joined the "Young Bukharians" party, and wrote dramas and essays such as "True Love"



("Chin Sevish"), "The Indian Revolutionaries" (Hind Ihtilolchilari), and Abu Muslim, works that celebrated liberty, critiqued colonial oppression, and articulated a vision of national liberation. His plays became foundational works of modern Uzbek theater, while his political writings condemned both Emirate autocracy and

Bolshevik tyranny. In 1918, Fitrat established the "Chagatai Circle" (Chig'atoy Gurungi), the first local scholarly society dedicated to Uzbek language, literature, and folklore, laying the foundation for today's Writers' Union and the Academy of Sciences. Although later sidelined to Moscow's Oriental Insti-

tute and ultimately executed during Stalin's purges, his legacy endured. Fitrat's unwavering belief in education, cultural renewal, and political emancipation continues to inspire Uzbekistan's intellectual life a testament to his conviction that the true salvation of the nation lies in knowledge and self-determination.

Halimova Nilufar,
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Kenya forms team to investigate aircraft accidents in South Sudan and Somalia

By: Laban Wanambisi
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Long-serving pilot Captain Peter Maranga and Fredrick Kabunge from the Ministry of Transport have been appointed to co-chair an investigation team tasked with reviewing all preliminary accident reports involving Kenyan-registered or -operated aircraft, as submitted by South Sudan and Somalia over the past five years.

According to a gazette notice issued on Friday, the team will conduct interviews and engage with relevant industry stakeholders to establish facts and gather information in support of its mandate.

“In carrying out its mandate, the team may examine, evaluate, analyse, or test any information, data, material, or substance to validate any conclusions or assumptions made in the submitted reports,” reads the Gazette Notice dated March 27.

Transport Cabinet Secretary Davis Chirchir stated that the seven-member team will serve for a period of three months.

Fredrick Aggrey Opot will serve as the vice-chairperson.

Other members of the team include Capt. Nduati Herman Njama, Rtd.



Energy Cabinet Secretary Davis Chirchir/FILE

Lt. Col. Mike Mulwa, Ephantus Kamau, Capt. Valentine Wendoh, and James Mwangi.

Brenda Mwango, Mathias Ombasa, and Albert Mwangeka have been named as the joint secretaries.

The team is expected to prepare and submit to the Cabinet Secretary a comprehensive report of its findings, along with recommendations to address any safety concerns identified, for appropriate action by Kenya’s aviation industry.

The establishment of the investigation team follows reports that a Kenyan pilot flying a cargo aircraft was killed in a Sudanese military airstrike.

His aircraft, a Boeing 727 under the control of the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), was struck by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) on the morning of May 3, 2025, at Nyala Airport in South Darfur.

Chad

Former Chad PM arrested over alleged links to deadly clash

By: BBC
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Chad’s former prime minister and opposition leader, Succès Masra, has been arrested over alleged links to a clash which took place on Wednesday in the south west of the country, a public prosecutor has said.

He is suspected of spreading hateful messages on social media linked to the violence in which at least 42 people died, Oumar Mahamat Kedelaye said.

Masra’s Transformers party said he had been “kidnapped” by military officers in the early hours of the morning” and denounced his detention, which it says was “carried out outside of any known judicial procedure”.

Masra is a fierce critic of President Mahamat Déby and claimed to have defeated him in elections last year.

Masra said his victory had been stolen “from the people” although the official results said Déby had won with 61% of the vote.

Wednesday’s clash broke out in the village of Mandakao, in Logone Occidental province near the Cameroonian border.

“Messages were circulated, notably on social networks, calling on the population to arm themselves against other citizens,” Mr Kedelaye said.

It is not entirely clear what caused the violence, but one source told the AFP news agency that it is believed it was triggered by a land dispute between farmers from the Ngambaye community and Fulani herdsmen.

There has been a troubling recent pattern of violence between local farmers and herders, with the farmers accusing the latter of grazing animals on their land.

More than 80 others have also been detained in connection with the clashes.

Masra briefly served as interim prime minister of the transitional government between January and May 2024.

His party boycotted legislative polls last December due to concerns over the transparency of the electoral process.

The Déby family has ruled Chad for more than three decades.

The military installed Déby as Chad’s leader after his father, Idriss Déby Itno, was killed by rebels in 2021.



Chad’s former prime minister and opposition leader, Succès Masra

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ICC prosecutor to step aside until probe into alleged misconduct ends

ICC says Karim Khan will take a leave of absence pending the conclusion of UN-led investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct, which he denies.

The chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Karim Khan, has taken a leave of absence pending the conclusion of UN-led investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct against him.

Khan's office said on Friday that he had informed colleagues he would step aside temporarily until the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) wraps up its probe. The OIOS has been conducting the external investigation since December, following complaints raised with the ICC's oversight body.

The ICC said that Khan would remain on leave until the inquiry concludes, though a timeline for its completion remains unclear. During his absence, the court's two deputy prosecutors will assume his responsibilities.

Lawyers for Khan said he rejected all claims of wrongdoing and had only stepped aside temporarily due to intense media scrutiny, which had made it difficult for him to carry out his work effectively.

"Our client remains the prosecutor, has not stepped down and has no intention of doing so," UK-based law firm Carter-Ruck said in a state-

ment.

Khan's decision to step aside temporarily follows months of growing pressure from human rights groups and some court officials, who had urged him to withdraw while the investigation was ongoing.

"Stepping aside helps protect the court's credibility and the trust of victims, staff, and the public. For the alleged victim and whistleblowers, this is also a moment of recognition and dignity," said Danya Chaikel of human rights watchdog FIDH.

The court has not confirmed when the OIOS investigation will conclude, but the case comes at a time of rising global scrutiny of the ICC's role and credibility.

High-profile investigations

The decision comes as the court is pursuing high-profile investigations, including into Russia's assault on Ukraine and Israel's war on Gaza. Khan requested arrest warrants for Russian President Vladimir Putin for the alleged unlawful deportation of Ukrainian children, and for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant for alleged



International Criminal Court Prosecutor Karim Khan [Piroshka van de Wouw/Reuters]

war crimes in Gaza.

The United States, a vocal critic of the court's recent moves, imposed sanctions on Khan over his pursuit

of Israeli officials. ICC leadership has since warned that such political attacks could endanger the institution's survival.

Source: Al Jazeera and news agencies

US

Moody's strips US government of top credit rating

Moody's Ratings has stripped the United States government of its top credit rating, citing successive governments' failure to stop a rising tide of debt, a surprise move that could complicate President Donald Trump's efforts to cut taxes and send ripples through global markets.

On Friday, Moody's lowered the rating from a gold-standard Aaa to Aa1. "Successive US administrations and Congress have failed to agree on measures to reverse the trend of large annual fiscal deficits and growing interest costs," it said as it changed its outlook on the US to "stable" from "negative".

But, it added, the US "retains exceptional credit strengths such as the size, resilience and dynamism of its economy and the role of the US dollar as global reserve currency."

Moody's is the last of the three major rating agencies to lower the federal government's credit rating. Standard & Poor's downgraded federal debt in 2011, and Fitch Ratings followed in 2023.

In a statement, Moody's said, "We expect federal deficits to widen, reaching nearly 9 percent of [the US economy] by 2035, up from 6.4 percent in 2024, driven mainly by increased interest payments on debt, rising entitlement spending, and relatively low revenue generation."

Extending President Donald Trump's 2017 tax cuts, a priority of the Republican-controlled Congress, Moody's said, would add \$4 trillion over the next decade to the federal primary deficit, which does not include interest payments.

White House communications director Steven Cheung reacted to the downgrade via a social media post, singling out Moody's economist, Mark Zandi, for criticism. He called Zandi a political opponent of Trump.

"Nobody takes his 'analysis' seriously. He has been proven wrong time and time again," Cheung said.

Stephen Moore, former senior economic adviser to Trump and an economist at Heritage Foundation, called the move "outrageous".

"If a US-backed government bond isn't triple A-asset, then what is?" he told Reuters.

The Department of the Treasury did not immediately respond to a request for comment from the Reuters news agency.

Bond market rout concerns

A gridlocked political system has been unable to tackle the huge deficits that the US has accumulated. Republicans reject tax increases, and Democrats are reluctant to cut spending.



Moody's said extending US President Donald Trump's tax cuts would add trillions to the US debt burden [File: Alex Brandon/AP Photo]

On Friday, House Republicans failed to push a big package of tax breaks and spending cuts through the Budget Committee. A small group of hard-right Republican lawmakers, insisting on steeper cuts to Medicaid and President Joe Biden's green energy tax breaks, joined all Democrats in opposing it – a rare political setback for the Republican president.

Since his return to the White House on January 20, Trump has said he would balance the budget while his Treasury Secretary, Scott Bessent,

has repeatedly said the current administration aims to lower US government funding costs.

Trump's attempts to cut spending through Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency have fallen far short of its initial goals. And attempts to raise revenue through tariffs have sparked concerns about a trade war and global slowdown, roiling markets.

Left unchecked, such worries could trigger a bond market rout and hinder the administration's ability to pursue its agenda.

The downgrade, which came after market close, sent yields on Treasury bonds higher, and analysts said it could give investors a pause when markets re-open for regular trading on Monday.

"Very surprising. This is big – markets were not expecting this at all," said Tom di Galoma, managing director of rates and trading at Mischler Financial in Utah.

Source: News Agencies

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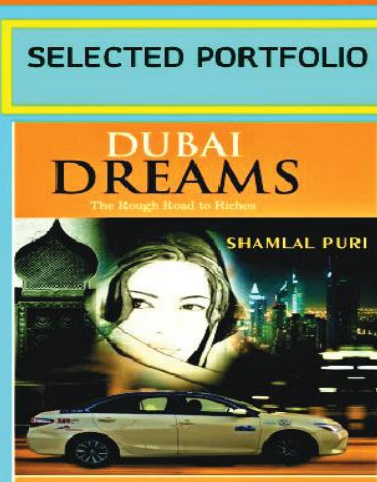
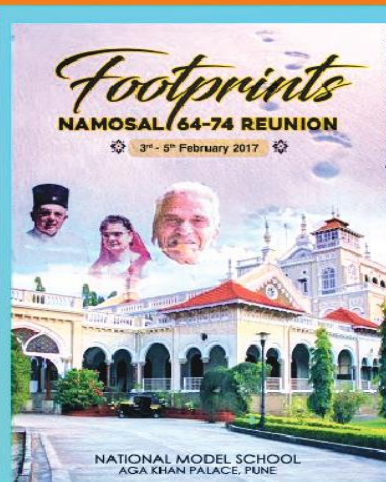
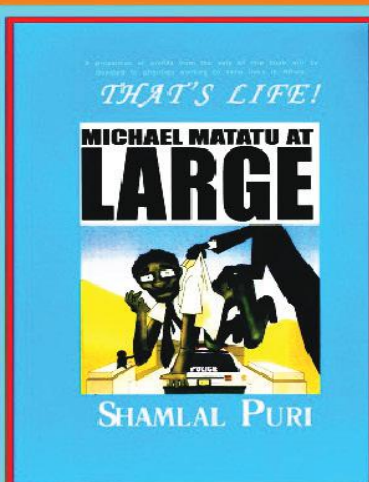
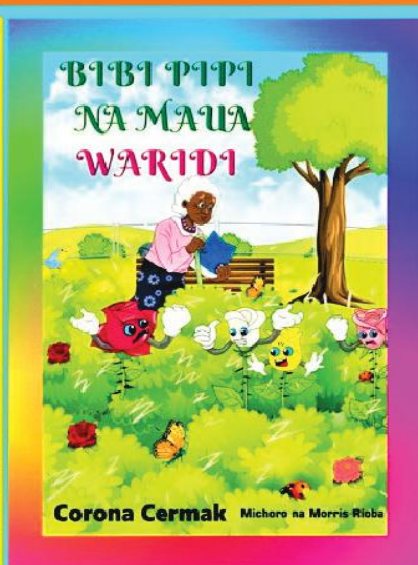
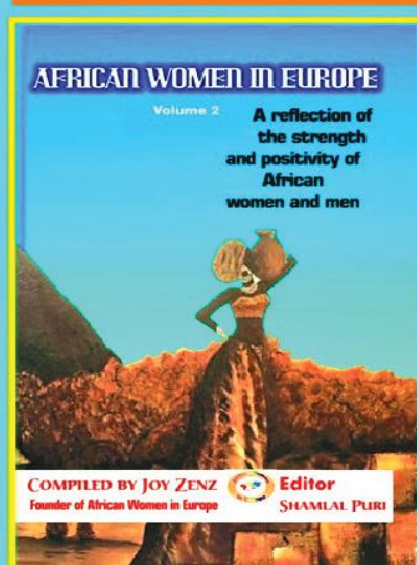
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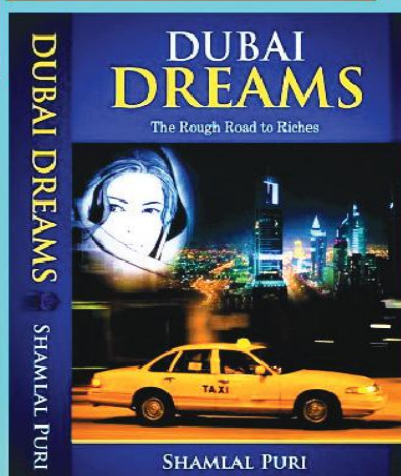
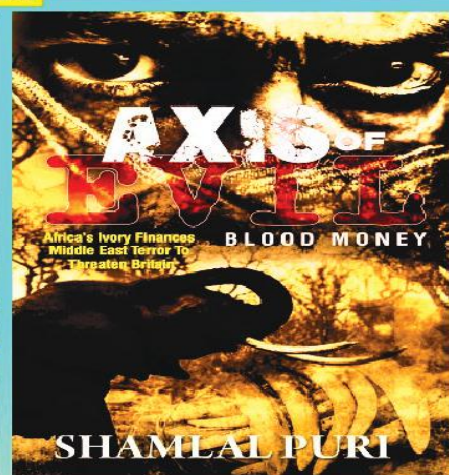
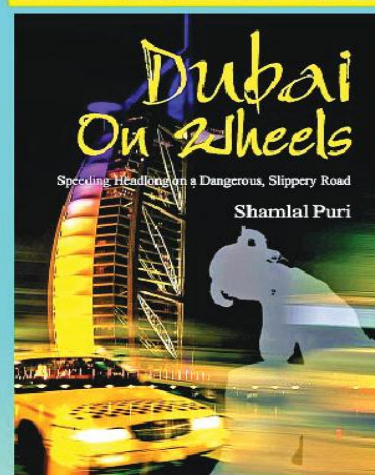
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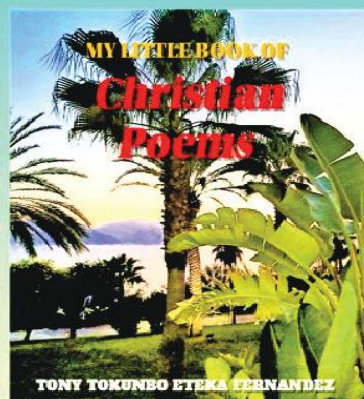
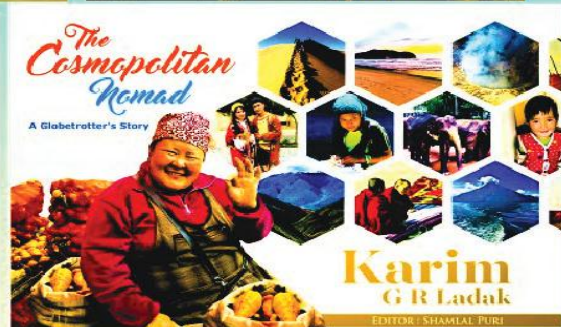
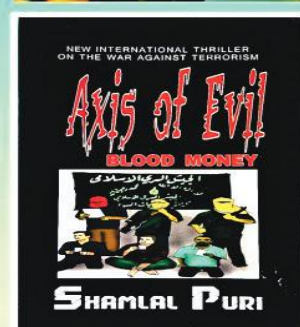
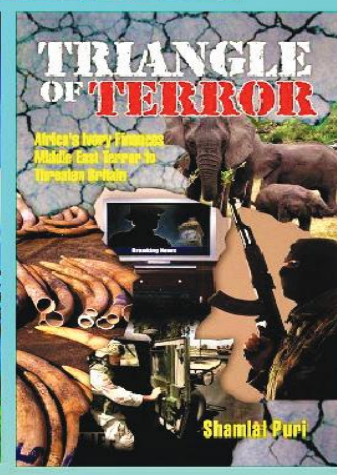
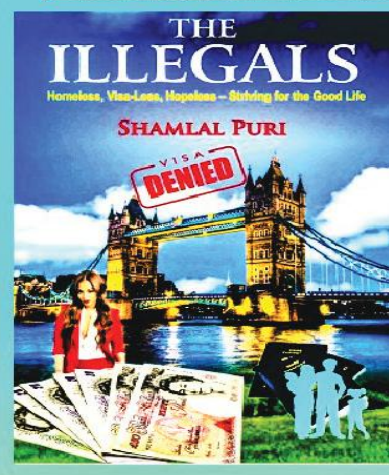
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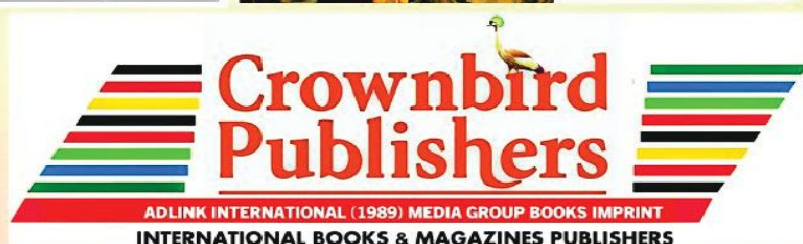


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US News

‘They’ll be back’: White Afrikaners leave South Africa to be refugees in US:

Trump administration welcomes first batch of white Afrikaners while US cuts off refugee programmes to other countries.

By: Qaanitah Hunter
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US Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau, right, greets Afrikaner refugees from South Africa, Monday, May 12, 2025, at Dulles International Airport [Julia Demaree Nikhinson/AP]

Worth Noting:

- The Trump administration claims white people face discrimination in South Africa – a country where they make up some 7 percent of the population but own more than 70 percent of the land and occupy the majority of top management positions.
- “I want you all to know that you are really welcome here and that we respect what you have had to deal with these last few years,” US Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau told Kleinhaus and the others when they landed at the Dulles International in Virginia.
- “We respect the long tradition of your people and what you have accomplished over the years,” he said on Monday.
- Speaking to a journalist at the airport, Kleinhaus said he never expected “this land expropriation thing to go so far” in South Africa.

fortably for the 13-hour journey that would follow, the group – most young, all white – talked among themselves while avoiding onlookers. Although they blended into the bustling terminal around them, these weren’t ordinary travellers. They were Afrikaners leaving South Africa to be refugees in Donald Trump’s America. When Charl Kleinhaus first applied for refugee resettlement in the US earlier this year, he told officials he had been threatened and that people attempted to claim his property. The 46-year-old, who claimed to own a farm in Limpopo, South Africa’s northernmost province, was not required to present proof of these threats or provide details regarding when the alleged incidents occurred. On Sunday, he joined dozens of others accepted by the Trump administration as part of a pilot programme granting asylum to people from the Afrikaner community – descendants of mainly Dutch colonisers that led the brutal apartheid regime for nearly five decades. The Trump administration claims white people face

discrimination in South Africa – a country where they make up some 7 percent of the population but own more than 70 percent of the land and occupy the majority of top management positions. “I want you all to know that you are really welcome here and that we respect what you have had to deal with these last few years,” US Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau told Kleinhaus and the others when they landed at the Dulles International in Virginia. “We respect the long tradition of your people and what you have accomplished over the years,” he said on Monday. Speaking to a journalist at the airport, Kleinhaus said he never expected “this land expropriation thing to go so far” in South Africa. He was referring to the recently passed Expropriation Act, which allows the South African government to, in exceptional circumstances, take land for public use without compensation. Pretoria says the measure is aimed at redressing apartheid injustices, as Black South Africans who make up more than 80 percent of the population still own just

4 percent of the land. South African officials say the law has not resulted in any land grabs. There is also no record of Kleinhaus’s property being expropriated. Kleinhaus was unaffected by any threats and the government was unaware of anyone who might have threatened his property, Minister in the Presidency Khumbudzo Ntshavheni told Al Jazeera. “The people of South Africa have not been affected by the expropriation of land. There’s no evidence. None of them are affected by any farm murders either,” the minister emphasised. Discredited ‘genocide’ claims In February, when Trump signed an executive order granting refugee status to Afrikaners, he cited widely discredited claims that their land was being seized and that they were being brutally killed in South Africa. On Monday, Trump again claimed that Afrikaners were victims of a “genocide” – an accusation South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and other experts maintain is based on lies. “Farmers are being killed,” Trump told reporters.

“White farmers are being brutally killed, and the land is being confiscated in South Africa.” Ramaphosa has also debunked claims that the group who left this week faced any persecution at home. “They are leaving because they do not wish to embrace the democratic transformation unfolding in South Africa,” he said. For 60-year-old Sam Busa, watching Kleinhaus and the 48 other South Africans leave to be resettled in the US was a hopeful moment. Busa, who has also applied for asylum, is waiting in anticipation for an interview that would qualify her for resettlement. She has begun selling excess household items in anticipation of her new life in the US. The semi-retired businesswoman has been at the forefront of efforts – through a website called Amerikaners – encouraging Afrikaners to take an interest in the US offer to grant refugee status on the grounds that they face racial persecution in South Africa. When asked how she has experienced persecution because of her race, Busa recounted an incident where

she was held at gunpoint at her home in Johannesburg – the commercial capital of South Africa and one of the most dangerous cities in the world. She later moved to KwaZulu-Natal on the country’s east coast, where she ran a business that provided services to the government. When asked whether she believed she was targeted because of her race or if she was simply a victim of common crime, Busa asserted it did not matter. She didn’t feel safe, she said. “I am not overly sensitive. When I watch Julius Malema singing about killing the Boer, it is extremely terrifying.” Malema, the far-left leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) political party, often sings a famous anti-apartheid song, Kill the Boer (Boer meaning farmer in Afrikaans), which the courts have ruled is not hate speech or an incitement to violence. ‘Persecution’ For Busa, much like Kleinhaus, new legislation passed

Contd Page 11

GAZA News

'They'll be back': White Afrikaners leave South Africa to be refugees in US:

Trump administration welcomes first batch of white Afrikaners while US cuts off refugee programmes to other countries.

By: Qaanitah Hunter
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Contd from Page 10

Worth Noting:

- In February, when Trump signed an executive order granting refugee status to Afrikaners, he cited widely discredited claims that their land was being seized and that they were being brutally killed in South Africa.
- On Monday, Trump again claimed that Afrikaners were victims of a "genocide" – an accusation South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and other experts maintain is based on lies.
- "Farmers are being killed," Trump told reporters. "White farmers are being brutally killed, and the land is being confiscated in South Africa."
- Ramaphosa has also debunked claims that the group who left this week faced any persecution at home.
- "They are leaving because they do not wish to embrace the democratic transformation unfolding in South Africa," he said.
- For 60-year-old Sam Busa, watching Kleinhaus and the 48 other South Africans leave to be resettled in the US was a hopeful moment.



Demonstrators hold placards in support of US President Donald Trump's stance against what he calls racist laws, land expropriation, and farm attacks, outside the US Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa, February 15, 2025 [Siphiwe Sibeko/Reuters]

to bolster racial transformation, which includes having specific hiring targets for employment equity, has been "the straw that broke the camel's back". "Expropriation without compensation is a huge issue, along with the amendment to employment equity," she said, restating her belief that white people don't have a future in South Africa. "It's coming hard and fast, and it's becoming clear to [white] South Africans that we struggle with fears of home invasion. I don't live on a farm, but there are massive fears because of the constant threat of crime. It has become clear to white South Africans; it's not disguised," she claimed. The narrative of fear is prevalent among those engaged in the refugee programme despite the fact that several experts have debunked the assertion that they were victims of racially motivated attacks and not common crime. South Africa sees about 19,000 murders a year. According to data from the police, most victims of rural crime are Black, with evidence showing that white farmers are not disproportionately being killed. Meanwhile, many participants in the US's Afrikaner refugee resettlement programme do not even live

on farms; many are urban dwellers, according to Minister Ntshavheni. Katia Beedan, who lives in Cape Town, is also anticipating resettlement in the US. She told Al Jazeera that refugee hopefuls do not have to prove racial persecution but simply articulate it. "For me, it's racial persecution and political persecution," she said about her reasons for wanting to leave South Africa. The copywriter-turned-life coach pointed to racial transformation laws targeting employment equity and land expropriation, which she believes the government is "overwhelming us with," as a key reason for her desire to flee. However, many other South Africans see sections of the Afrikaner community – including their right-wing lobby groups like AfriForum that first pushed the false narrative of a "white genocide" – as struggling to exist equally in a country where they were once considered superior because of their race. "I think AfriForum is struggling with the reality of being ordinary," social justice activist and South Africa's former public protector, Thuli Madonsela, told local TV channel, Newzroom Afrika, in March. "The new South Africa re-

quires all of us to be ordinary, whereas colonialism and apartheid made white people special people. "I think some white people ... [are] seeking to reverse the wheel and find reason to be special again. They seem to have found an ally in the American president," she said. 'Absurd and ridiculous' In February, as Trump expedited efforts to resettle Afrikaners in the US, he was closing off his country's refugee programme to other asylum seekers from war-torn and famine-stricken parts of the world. For Loren Landau from the African Centre for Migration and Society at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, the Afrikaner refugee relocation is "absurd and ridiculous". "They have not been welcomed as tourists or work permit holders, but as refugees. The idea of a refugee system is to protect those who cannot be safeguarded by their own states and who fear persecution or violence because of who they are or their membership in a social group. Can Afrikaners make that case?" he asked. Although "there are people in South Africa who discriminate against them," and Afrikaners now "have less privilege and protection

than during the apartheid era", it cannot be said that this is indicative of state policy, he said, adding that many different people are robbed, killed, and face discrimination in South Africa. "Are they [Afrikaners] specially victimised because of who they are? Absolutely not!" Landau added. He said all statistics on land ownership, income, and education levels indicate that South Africa's white population far outstrips others: "They are still by far in the top strata of South African society. No one is taking their land. No one is taking their cars." Even fringe groups that may have called for land grabs have done little to enact their threats, observers note. However, for Busa, that doesn't matter. "I fear for my children. You never know when the EFF decides they want you dead. It's not a country I want to live in," she said. The EFF has said those who decide to leave South Africa should have their citizenship revoked. Confronted with the implications of this situation, the government is considering whether those who exit as refugees could easily return to the country. Ramaphosa is expected to discuss the ongoing matter with Trump at a meeting in the US next week.

Meanwhile, for the Afrikaners now in the US, most will settle in Texas, with others in New York, Idaho, Iowa and North Carolina, while the government helps them find work and accommodation. They will hold refugee status for one year, after which they can apply for a US green card to make them permanent residents. At the same time, the Afrikaner resettlement programme remains open to others who want to apply. When Kleinhaus and his group arrived in the US on Monday, they had smiles on their faces as they met officials and waved US flags. Yet, for South Africa's president, their resettlement in the US marks "a sad moment for them" – and something he believes may not last. "As South Africans, we are resilient. We don't run away from our problems," he said at an agricultural exhibition in Free State province on Monday. "If you look at all national groups in our country, Black and white, they've stayed in this country because it's our country. "I can bet you that they [the Afrikaners who left] will be back soon because there is no country like South Africa."

Source: Al Jazeera

Russia -Ukraine

Russia demanded Ukraine cede more territory at Turkey talks, Ukrainian source says

Russian negotiators at peace talks in Istanbul demanded Ukraine pull its troops out of all the Ukrainian regions claimed by Moscow before they would agree to a ceasefire, a senior Ukrainian official familiar with the talks told Reuters

By Reuters
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Worth Noting:

* The withdrawal of Ukrainian troops from the Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson and Luhansk regions of Ukraine, only after which there can be a ceasefire. The regions are largely or partially controlled by Russian forces, but Ukrainian troops are still fighting to hold on to the remaining parts of the regions. There was no such demand in the draft deal prepared by the United States.

* International recognition that five parts of Ukraine -- the Crimea peninsula annexed in 2014, as well as the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions -- are Russian. The U.S. draft had proposed only U.S. de jure recognition for Crimea, and U.S. de facto recognition for Russian-controlled parts of the other regions.

* Ukraine becomes a neutral state, has no weapons of mass destruction, and Kyiv's allies will not station any of their troops on Ukrainian soil. This demand was absent from the U.S. proposal.



Servicemen of 39th Separate Coastal Defence Brigade of the Ukrainian Armed Forces fires a 2S1 Gvozdika self-propelled howitzer towards Russian troops in a front line, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Kherson region, Ukraine March 23, 2025. REUTERS/Ivan Antypenko/File Photo

Russian negotiators at peace talks in Istanbul demanded Ukraine pull its troops out of all the Ukrainian regions claimed by Moscow before they would agree to a ceasefire, a senior Ukrainian official familiar with the talks told Reuters.

That demand, along with others the Ukrainian official said were made at Friday's talks, went beyond the terms of a draft peace deal that the United States proposed last month after consultations with Moscow.

The talks in Istanbul, the first direct contacts between the two sides in three years, ended with agreement for a prisoner exchange but failed to agree to a ceasefire. A Ukrainian source had said on Friday the Russians had

made conditions he described as "non-starters", without giving details.

At a briefing with reporters on Saturday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was asked about the terms that, according to the Ukrainian official, Moscow put forward, but he declined to comment, saying the discussions need to take place behind closed doors.

The Ukrainian official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to reveal details of the talks, said Russian proposed the following terms for a peace deal:

* The withdrawal of Ukrainian troops from the Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson and Luhansk regions of Ukraine, only after which there can be a cease-

fire. The regions are largely or partially controlled by Russian forces, but Ukrainian troops are still fighting to hold on to the remaining parts of the regions. There was no such demand in the draft deal prepared by the United States.

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their troops on Ukrainian soil. This demand was absent from the U.S. proposal.

* All sides in the conflict renounce their claims to receive compensation for war damages. The U.S. proposal had stipulated that Ukraine receives compensation.

According to the Ukrainian official, Russian negotiators transmitted those demands verbally, and did not share any document containing their terms.

Ukraine has already said the Russian negotiating position in Istanbul showed it was not serious about peace. Kyiv's European allies are now pressing U.S. President Donald Trump to impose new sanctions on Russia.

The head of the Russian delegation at the talks ex-

pressed satisfaction with the meeting, and said Moscow was willing to keep talking to Kyiv.

The U.S. draft peace proposal from April was prepared after Trump envoy Steve Witkoff flew to Moscow for rounds of talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Kyiv and European allies drafted an alternative proposal, which stated there should be a ceasefire first so negotiations could start, and deferred any discussion of territory until later.

Hamas says new Gaza truce talks under way as Israel expands ground assault

Israel and Hamas confirm indirect talks being held in Qatar as Israel expands ground offensive, killing dozens.

Worth Noting:

- Taher al-Nono, the media adviser for the Hamas leadership, confirmed to the Reuters news agency that a new round of indirect talks had begun without any conditions.
- “The Hamas delegation outlined the position of the group and the necessity to end the war, swap prisoners, the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, and allowing humanitarian aid and all the needs of the people of Gaza back into the Strip,” he added.
- Medical sources told Al Jazeera that at least 70 Palestinians were killed in Israeli attacks on Saturday, as Israel launched a new offensive in Gaza.
- Israel’s army said on social media that it was intensifying attacks and exerting “tremendous pressure” on Hamas across Gaza, and wouldn’t stop until the captives are returned and the armed group is dismantled. Katz said that Operation Gideon Chariots was being led with “great force.”



Smoke rises following Israeli strikes, in Jabalia, northern Gaza Strip, May 17, 2025 [Mahmoud Issa/Reuters]

Israel and Hamas have confirmed a new round of Gaza truce talks is under way in Qatar as the Israeli military expanded its ground offensive on the besieged Palestinian territory, despite growing international calls for a ceasefire.

Israel Defence Minister Israel Katz said in a statement on Saturday that the Hamas delegation in Doha returned to negotiations “on a hostage deal”.

Israel had entered the talks without any conditions, according to Katz. Taher al-Nono, the media adviser for the Hamas leadership, confirmed to the Reuters news agency that a new round of indirect talks had begun without any conditions.

“The Hamas delegation

outlined the position of the group and the necessity to end the war, swap prisoners, the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, and allowing humanitarian aid and all the needs of the people of Gaza back into the Strip,” he added.

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The new offensive comes

after Israel escalated its air attacks on Gaza, killing hundreds of Palestinians in the past three days. Many of the victims were killed in northern Gaza, including in Beit Lahiya and Jabalia, which have received forced displacement orders by the Israeli army in recent days. As leaders of the Arab League held a Gaza-focused summit in Iraq’s Baghdad and called for international funding to rebuild Gaza on Saturday, Hamas urged the international community to impose sanctions on Israel. In a statement on its Telegram channel, the armed group described the situation in Gaza as a “full-blown genocide committed before the eyes of a world that stands helpless, while more than two and a half million

people are being slaughtered in the besieged Strip”.

The group also reported continued fighting with invading Israeli forces, claiming on Saturday that its fighters killed and wounded two Israeli soldiers using machineguns in the Shujayea neighbourhood of Gaza City in the northern part of the enclave.

United Nations chief Antonio Guterres said he was “alarmed” by Israel’s expanded offensive in Gaza and called for an immediate ceasefire.

UN relief chief Tom Fletcher said a joint plan by the United States and Israel to replace international aid mechanisms in Gaza was a “waste of time” as more than 160,000 pallets of aid are “ready to move” at the bor-

der, but blocked by Israel.

Germany voiced alarm over Israel’s expanded assault in Gaza, saying it was a “cause for deep concern.”

“A large-scale military offensive also entails the risk that the catastrophic humanitarian situation for the population in Gaza and the situation of the remaining hostages will continue to deteriorate and that the prospect of an urgently needed long-term ceasefire fades,” the foreign ministry said in a statement.

Source: Al Jazeera and news agencies

WORLD

The Overcrowded Parliament: A Battlefield Of Politics Instead Of Nation-Building

Parliament serves as the bedrock of governance, tasked with crafting laws that shape the nation's progress.



By: Silas Mwaudasheni Nande
@themtkenyatimes

Contd from Page 1

fragmented parliaments, exploring how unnecessary debates obstruct nation-building efforts. It argues for structured reforms to ensure parliaments remain effective in their law-making responsibilities.

2. The Role of Parliament in Nation-Building

The primary responsibility of a parliament is to legislate laws that facilitate economic, political, and social stability. Effective governance relies on constructive discourse, where representatives engage in meaningful discussions to forge policies that benefit the nation. Parliament is meant to be the voice of the people, ensuring policies align with national interests rather than partisan agendas.

Successful governance depends on discipline, collaboration, and strategic decision-making. In a functional parliament:

- Lawmakers debate policies based on their merit, rather than personal biases.
- Parliamentary discussions focus on long-term national goals.
- Political differences do not obstruct legislative progress.

When parliament members, especially young radicals, prioritize political competition over national interests, law-making transforms into an endless struggle for dominance instead of constructive reform.

3. The Impact of an Overcrowded, Politically Divided Parliament

A parliament with an excessive number of parties can lead to governance instability. The larger the ideological spectrum, the more difficult it becomes to establish consensus, resulting in uncoordinated debates and inefficient legislative outcomes. Radical youth factions exacerbate these tensions, contributing to disruptive discussions that stall decision-making.

Examples from various nations illustrate this issue:

- Kenya's Parliament: Frequent political feuds between opposing parties have delayed legislative processes, affecting economic policies.
- South Africa's Parliament: Heated confrontations between ruling and opposition party mem-

bers have led to disorderly conduct and interruptions in critical decision-making.

- Ukraine's Parliament: Disputes among multiple political parties have resulted in physical altercations, undermining democratic values.

The presence of too many conflicting political ideologies makes governance difficult. Instead of policy refinement, parliamentary sessions become arenas for ideological grandstanding, creating barriers to effective governance.

4. Unproductive Debates and Legislative Stalemates

Parliamentary debates are intended to foster insightful discussions that enhance policy development. However, excessive arguments driven by personal interests delay the passage of critical laws, harming governance efficiency.

In deeply divided parliaments:

- Laws stagnate: Parties block legislation to weaken opposing factions, delaying necessary reforms.
- Public confidence declines: Citizens lose trust in the system when representatives engage in endless disputes instead of passing meaningful policies.
- Governance weakens: Political infighting diverts attention from national priorities, causing legislative inefficiencies.

For instance, in Nigeria, prolonged political disputes delayed the passage of economic recovery bills, leading to financial instability. In Italy, policy gridlock caused setbacks in tax reforms due to ideological disagreements. The failure to resolve legislative stagnation compromises national progress.

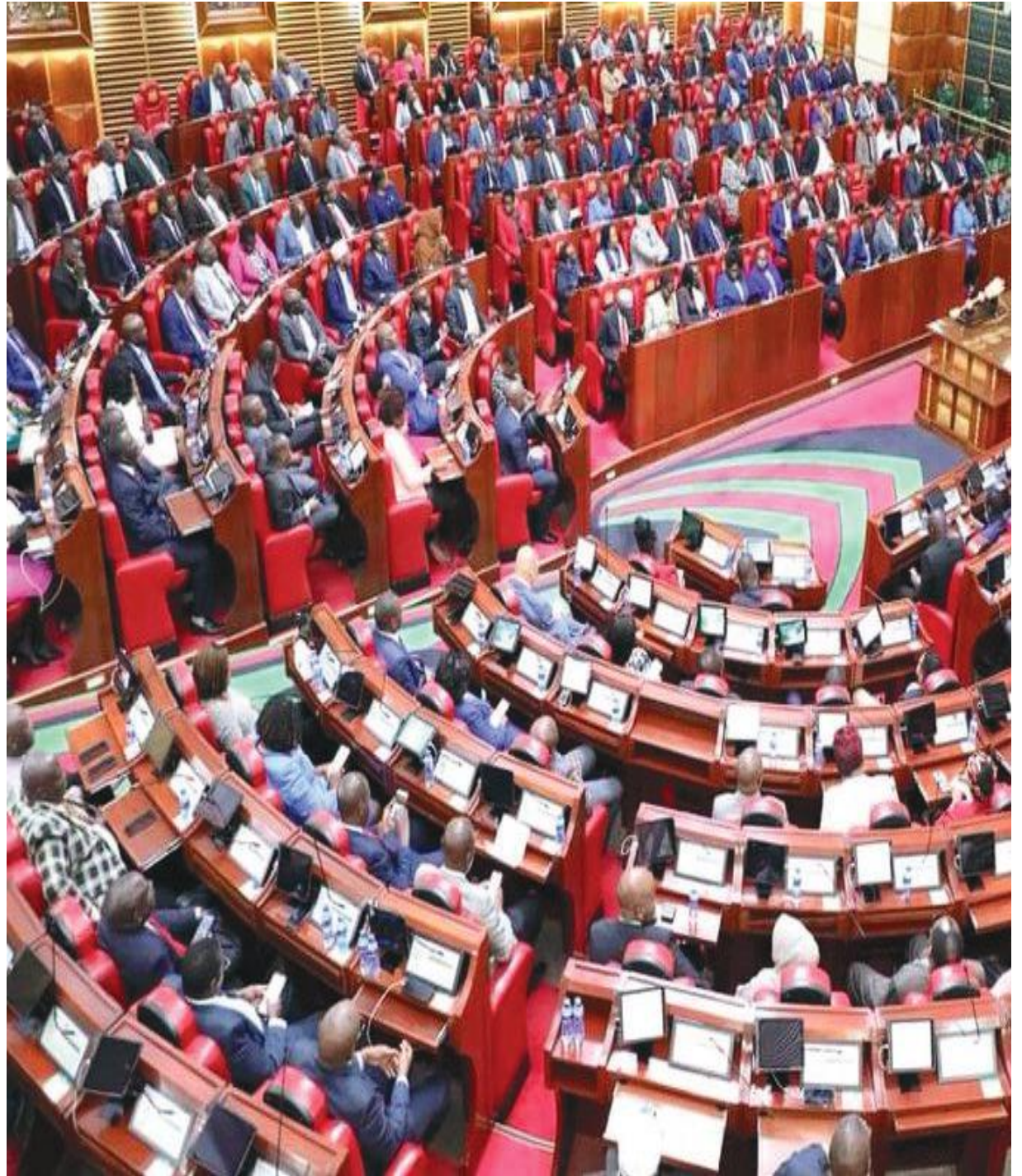
5. Political Bias, Power Struggles, and Vote-Driven Agendas

An overcrowded parliament encourages factionalism, with lawmakers prioritizing political survival over national welfare. When politicians focus solely on gaining votes, policymaking becomes a tool for securing personal advantage rather than fostering economic and social development.

Key problems arising from vote-driven politics include:

- Short-term promises instead of long-term planning.
- Biased policymaking favoring party agendas over national interest.
- Conflicts over political supremacy rather than governance efficiency.

For example, in Ghana, ruling party members often prioritize party loyalty over pragmatic legislation, creating governance instability. Similarly, in Spain, election-driven policymaking has obstructed economic reforms, hindering long-term devel-



Parliament of Kenya

opment strategies.

Without structured governance, political competition weakens national progress instead of strengthening it.

6. The Extreme Cases: Physical Fights in Parliament

Political tensions sometimes escalate beyond verbal exchanges into outright physical altercations. Some parliaments, particularly in regions with high political polarization, have witnessed lawmakers engaging in physical fights during disagreements.

Notable incidents include:

- Uganda: Lawmakers were seen exchanging blows over constitutional amendments.
- South Korea: Legislative disagreements turned into violent confrontations.
- Taiwan: Political disputes erupted into physical brawls on multiple occasions.

Such events damage the credibility of democratic institutions and signal governance failure. Instead of fostering solutions, lawmakers re-

sort to aggression, further polarizing political spaces. The inability to maintain parliamentary discipline reflects poorly on the nation's political integrity.

7. Possible Solutions and Recommendations

To restore parliamentary effectiveness, nations must implement structural reforms. Key recommendations include:

- Reducing excessive political fragmentation: Establishing limitations on the number of parties represented ensures focused debates.
- Enforcing parliamentary discipline: Strict policies against disruptive behavior prevent unnecessary conflicts.
- Encouraging policy-driven legislation: Shifting focus toward governance outcomes instead of political competition.
- Enhancing youth involvement: Educating young politicians about constructive engagement to prevent radicalized disruptions.

Governments must prioritize parliamentary reforms to ensure legislative bodies remain effective in their role.

8. Conclusion

Parliaments should serve as platforms for national development, but excessive political diversity and youth radicalism often transform them into theaters of ideological warfare. Overcrowded parliaments hinder governance efficiency by fostering unnecessary debates, delaying legislation, and prioritizing party agendas over national interests. For nations to advance, legislative bodies must focus on constructive policymaking rather than political survival. Governments must undertake structural reforms to prevent the erosion of parliamentary integrity and ensure that law-making remains central to nation-building.

India asks IMF to reconsider Pakistan programme over 'terror funding'

By: KBC Digital

Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Friday the International Monetary Fund (IMF) should reconsider a one billion dollar loan to Pakistan, alleging Islamabad was "funding terror".

India and Pakistan last week clashed in the worst military violence in decades, killing around 70 people before agreeing a ceasefire that began Saturday.

The confrontations were sparked by an attack on tourists by gunmen in Indian-administered Kashmir last month that New Delhi accused Islamabad of backing — a charge it denies.

"I believe a big portion of the \$1 billion coming from IMF will be used for funding terror infrastructure," Singh told troops at an air force base in western India.

"I believe any economic assistance to Pakistan is nothing less than funding terror."

Despite India's objections, the IMF last week approved a loan programme review for Pakistan, unlocking a \$1 billion payment which the state bank said has already been received.

A fresh \$1.4 billion loan was also approved under the IMF's climate resilience fund.

India — which also represents Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh

on the IMF board — abstained on the review vote, a statement from its finance ministry voicing "concerns over the efficacy of IMF programmes in case of Pakistan given its poor track record".

Pakistan came to the brink of default in 2023, as a political crisis compounded an economic downturn and drove the nation's debt burden to terminal levels before being saved by a \$7 billion bailout from the IMF which sparked further crucial loans from friendly nations.

— Removed from watchlist — Pakistan, which has long battled militancy within its borders, has faced scrutiny over its ability to combat illicit financing, including to militant organisations and in 2022 was put on an international money-laundering watchlist.

However, the Financial Action Task Force removed Pakistan from it so-called grey-list in 2022 after "significant progress" which included charges being filed against suspected militants accused of being involved in the 2008 attacks in India's Mumbai.

Singh claimed it was "clear that in Pakistan, terrorism and their government are hand in glove with each other."

"In this situation there is a possibility that their nuclear weapons could



Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

get their way into the hands of terrorists. This is a danger not just for Pakistan but the entire world," he said.

Singh on Thursday called for Pakistan's nuclear arsenal to be put under the surveillance of the UN's atomic energy agency, with Islamabad firing back that the international community should investigate a nuclear "black market" in India.

Britain's Foreign Secretary David Lammy met with his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar in Islamabad on Friday, where the two discussed the

ceasefire, according to a statement from Pakistan's foreign ministry.

It came as the government also held ceremonies across the country to celebrate the military.

"Pakistan's Armed Forces remain fully prepared and resolutely committed to defending every inch of our territory. Any aggression will be countered," Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said while visiting troops on Thursday.

The disputed Muslim-majority region of Kashmir has been at the heart of several wars between the

two neighbours, who administer separate portions of the divided territory.

Militants stepped up operations on the Indian side of Kashmir from 2019, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist government revoked the region's limited autonomy and imposed direct rule from New Delhi

US-China

US cuts tariffs on small parcels from Chinese firms like Shein and Temu

By: BBC

President Donald Trump has slashed the tariff on small parcels sent from mainland China and Hong Kong to the US, just hours after the world's two biggest economies said they would cut levies on each other's goods for 90 days.

The new tariffs on small packages worth up to \$800 (£606) have been cut from 120% to 54%, according to a White House statement.

The flat fee per item will remain at \$100 for shipments sent after 2 May, while a \$200 charge due to apply from 1 June has been cancelled.

Chinese online retail giants Shein and Temu had previously relied on the so-called "de minimis" exemption to ship low-value items directly to customers in the US without having to pay duties or import taxes.

The duty-free rule for was closed by the Trump administration earlier this month.

The latest rates came after the US and China released a joint statement announcing they would temporarily reduce their tit-for-tat tariffs and start a new round of trade negotia-

tions.

Share markets jumped on Monday after Trump said weekend talks had resulted in a "total reset" in trade terms between the two countries, a move that went some way to ease concerns about a trade war between the two countries.

Under the agreement, the US will lower those tariffs from 145% to 30%, while China's retaliatory tariffs on US goods will drop to 10% from 125%.

Trump told reporters, that, as some of the levies have been suspended rather than cancelled altogether, they might rise again in three months time, if no further progress was made.

But the president said he did not expect them to return to the previous 145% peak.

"We're not looking to hurt China," Trump said after the agreement was announced, adding that China was "being hurt very badly".

Trump added that he expected to speak to Chinese President Xi Jinping "maybe at the end of the week".



America

Stop Superficial Reactions: Address Banditry and Cattle Rustling by Tackling the Livestock Economy That Fuels the Menace

By: Kinyuru Munuhe
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Worth Noting:

- In just the first quarter of 2025, official security reports indicate that cattle rustlers killed 21 people—including eight civilians, a police officer, and 12 bandits—compared to 58 deaths during the same period in 2024. The number of livestock theft cases also declined from 263 in early 2024 to 167 in early 2025. Nevertheless, 4,935 animals were stolen—down from 8,557, but still alarmingly high.
- Such statistics underscore a persistent crisis. The 2012 massacre of over 46 Kenya Police and Reservists in a botched recovery operation, blamed on leaked intelligence and leadership failure, was a grim lesson. So was the Kapedo ambush, where 21 officers were slaughtered and their vehicle set ablaze. In Suguta Valley, 19 Administration Police officers and three civilians were killed, and over 2,000 bullets stolen. The 2015 incident in Nadome, where former Deputy Inspector General Grace Kaindi’s delegation narrowly escaped a deadly ambush, further highlights the scale of the threat.



The late former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan is famously remembered for asserting, “There is no development without peace, and there is no peace without sustainable development.” His words remain a powerful reminder of the interdependence between peace and progress—an idea that aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, which advocates for peace, justice, and strong institutions, underpinned by the Human Security Paradigm outlined in the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report. This paradigm shifts focus from state-centric security to individual well-being. The two concepts—sustainable development and human security—are inextricably linked, and any serious attempt to end the cycle of violence in Kenya’s restive regions must consider both. Interior Cabinet Secretary Kipchumba Murkomen recently acknowledged the need for a policy shift in tackling banditry across 23 marginalised counties. His call to move beyond outdated frameworks, particularly the Sessional Paper No. 10 of

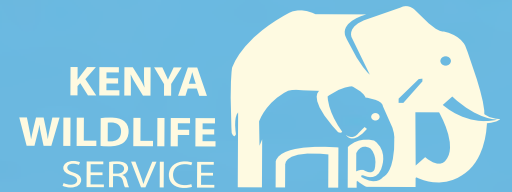
1965 which designated these regions as low-potential areas, is a welcome admission of policy failure. That colonial-era classification continues to haunt development and security planning. While other African nations align their national priorities with Agenda 2063 and the SDGs to foster inclusive and sustainable development, Kenya must not be left behind. In just the first quarter of 2025, official security reports indicate that cattle rustlers killed 21 people—including eight civilians, a police officer, and 12 bandits—compared to 58 deaths during the same period in 2024. The number of livestock theft cases also declined from 263 in early 2024 to 167 in early 2025. Nevertheless, 4,935 animals were stolen—down from 8,557, but still alarmingly high. Such statistics underscore a persistent crisis. The 2012 massacre of over 46 Kenya Police and Reservists in a botched recovery operation, blamed on leaked intelligence and leadership failure, was a grim lesson. So was the Kapedo ambush, where

21 officers were slaughtered and their vehicle set ablaze. In Suguta Valley, 19 Administration Police officers and three civilians were killed, and over 2,000 bullets stolen. The 2015 incident in Nadome, where former Deputy Inspector General Grace Kaindi’s delegation narrowly escaped a deadly ambush, further highlights the scale of the threat. These incidents reveal that disarmament alone is not enough. The menace has mutated into an organised, militarised and commercially driven conflict. Banditry in northern and northwestern Kenya is deeply rooted in multiple factors: the livestock economy, illegal arms proliferation, political interference, climate-related resource scarcity, poverty, unemployment, and outdated cultural practices like high bride prices. In many pastoral communities, livestock is not only a source of income but also a symbol of social status. While cattle rustling may have cultural origins, it has evolved into a violent, profit-driven enterprise. The commodification of stolen livestock and the influence

of a shadowy war economy—possibly financed and protected by local elites—sustain this criminal ecosystem. The presence of sophisticated weaponry and the lack of timely police response—often blamed on rough terrain and poor logistics—exacerbate the situation. Repeated disarmament campaigns have largely failed to dismantle this entrenched system. The scale, frequency, and brutality of attacks suggest that the problem goes far beyond tradition or territory. Addressing this crisis requires a multi-pronged approach: targeted disarmament, culture change, and economic empowerment. But perhaps more importantly, we need a governance model that centres the role of community leaders, elders, religious figures, and local administrators in peacebuilding. Strengthening community policing, fostering inter-community dialogue, and leveraging the National Government Administration Officers (NGAOs)—County Commissioners, Deputy County Commis-

sioners, Sub-County Commissioners, and Chiefs—is essential. These officials are embedded within communities and uniquely positioned to act as bridges between citizens and the security apparatus. Through them, the government can establish platforms for sustained engagement, promote intelligence sharing, and build trust with communities. Only through such integrated collaboration can we dismantle the criminal networks and social conditions that fuel banditry. Superficial interventions and knee-jerk security operations have failed us before. It’s time to deal with the real oxygen feeding the fire: the political economy of livestock, systemic neglect, and lack of inclusive development.

The author is a PhD student at the University of Nairobi and a specialist in Diplomacy, Foreign Policy and Communications.
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Diaspora

US says ‘deal’ reached with China after trade talks

Both China and the United States have said they have made progress at trade talks between the two countries in Switzerland.

By: BBC
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Worth Noting:

- Bessent said the US and China had made “substantial progress” on de-escalating the trade war, while Vice Premier He said the talks were “of great significance to the two countries but also have an important impact on the stability and development of the global economy”.
- Vice Premier He said the two sides had reached a series of major consensuses, and had also agreed to establish an economic and trade consultation mechanism.
- Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, inspector general of the World Trade Organization, called the talks “a significant step forward” and urged both countries to “build on this momentum”.
- Stocks in mainland China and Hong Kong rose on Monday, while US stock markets are also expected to open higher when trading starts later. The Chinese currency, the yuan, strengthened against the US dollar.



Both China and the United States have said they have made progress at trade talks between the two countries in Switzerland.

The US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent described the discussions as “productive and constructive,” while China’s Vice Premier He Lifeng said the talks were “in-depth” and “candid”. The White House called it a “trade deal” but gave no further details. A joint statement with full details is expected on Monday.

The pair were engaged in secretive closed-door discussions all weekend, in the first meeting since US President Donald Trump levied steep tariffs against China on its goods entering America in January.

The talks were the first face-to-face meetings between the two countries since President Trump imposed a 145% tariff on Chinese imports, with Beijing responding with a 125% levy on some US goods.

The huge tariffs caused turmoil in the financial markets and sparked fears of a global recession.

Following the conclusion of the two-day talks in Geneva, US trade representative ambassador Jamieson Greer

said “the deal we struck with our Chinese partners” would help reduce the US’s \$1.2tn (£901bn) trade deficit.

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Frank Lavin, former undersecretary for international trade at the US Department of Commerce, told the BBC’s

Business Today programme he expected the two countries to cut tariffs although they would remain “way above historical norms”.

Andrew Wilson, the deputy secretary general of the International Chamber of Commerce, said the current tariff levels needed to be reduced substantially.

While he said the comments from the weekend were “very positive”, if tariffs remained above 20% that would “still be severely disruptive to international trade flows”.

“I think we need to be setting 30% as a benchmark, ideally going down towards 20%.”

Deborah Elms, head of trade policy at the Hinrich Foundation, said the so-called reciprocal tariffs “could be addressed, but probably not”.

“I think mostly what I expect is an agreement to keep talking,” she said on the BBC’s Newsday programme.

On Saturday, following the first day of talks Trump had praised the “total reset” on the relationship between the two countries.

In a social media post, the US president described the talks as being “very good” and said change had been “negotiated in a friendly, but

constructive, manner”.

“We want to see, for the good of both China and the U.S., an opening up of China to American business. GREAT PROGRESS MADE!!!” Trump added.

On Friday, before the talks began, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said Washington would not lower tariffs unilaterally, and China would need to make its own concessions.

Both sides issued various other warnings ahead of the meeting, with Beijing saying the US must ease tariffs while Bessent stressed that the focus was on “de-escalation” and this was not a “big trade deal”.

Chinese state media reported that Beijing had decided to engage with the US after fully considering global expectations, the country’s interests and appeals from American businesses.

Last month, the BBC found that Chinese exporters were struggling with the US’s tariffs – one company, Sorbo Technology, reported that half of its products were normally sold to the US and were now sat in boxes in a warehouse in China.

Meanwhile, the US economy shrank in the first three months of the year – con-

tracting at an annual rate of 0.3% – as firms raced to get goods into the country.

The trade war between China and the US intensified last month after President Trump announced a universal baseline tariff on all imports to the United States, on what he called “Liberation Day”.

Around 60 trading partners, which the White House described as the “worst offenders”, were subjected to higher rates than others. The list included China and the European Union.

Trump said this was payback for years worth of unfair trade policies for the US.

He also separately announced a 25% import tax on all steel and aluminium coming into the US, and a further 25% tariff on all cars and car parts.

It was announced last week that the US and UK had agreed a deal, in which the 25% tariff will be cut to 10% for a maximum of 100,000 UK cars – matching the number of cars the UK exported last year.

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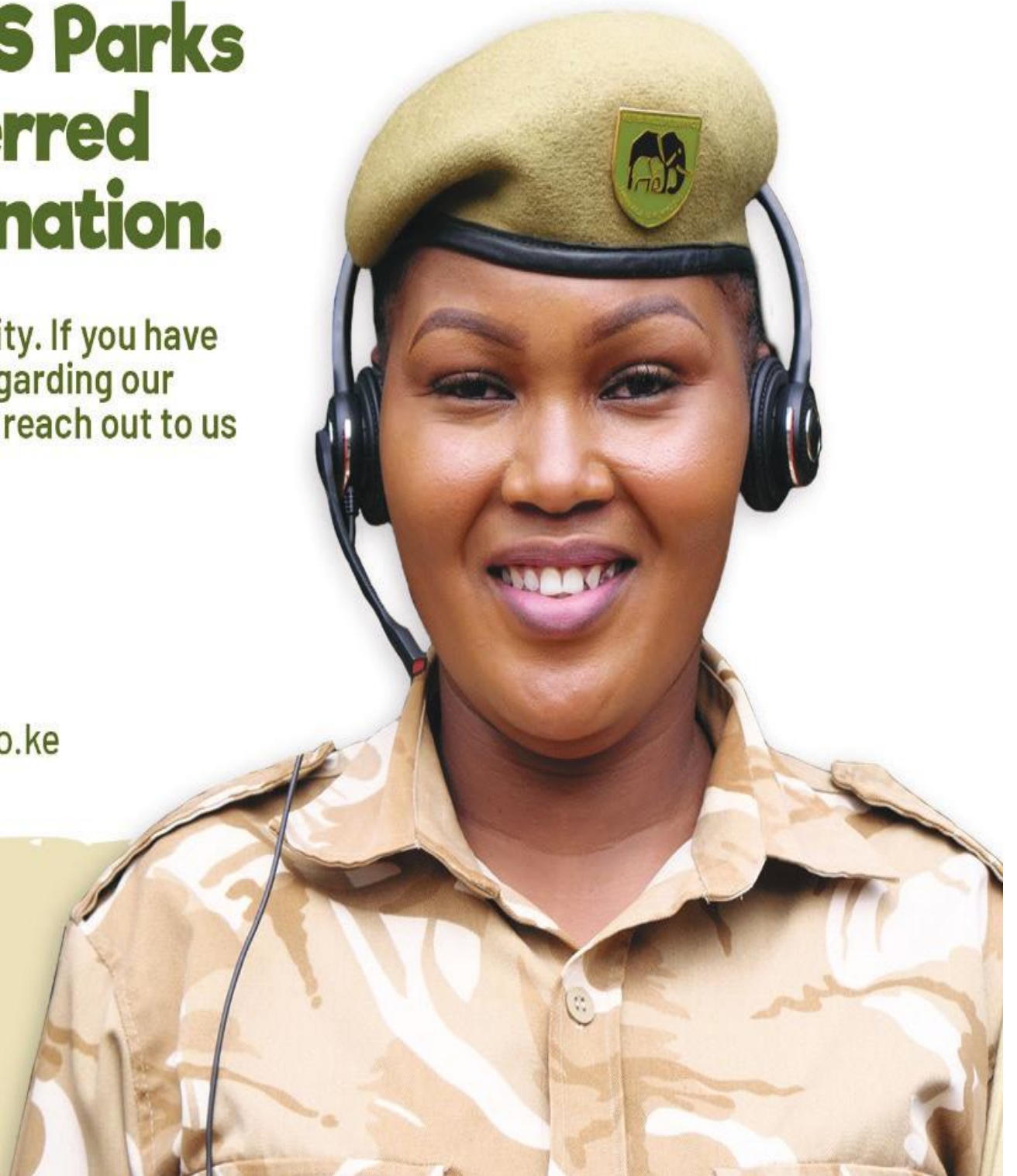
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Diaspora

Libyan protesters demand prime minister quit as three ministers resign

Hundreds of Libyan protesters called on Friday for the ouster of the internationally recognised prime minister and his government, said one security force member was killed when some protesters tried to storm his office.

By: Reuters
xxxxxxxxxxxxx



Demonstrators demand the overthrow of the Libya's Government of National Unity headed by Abdulhamid al-Dbeibah, in Martyrs' Square in Tripoli, Libya. May 16, 2025. REUTERS/Ayman al-Sahili

Worth Noting:

- Dbeibah, who leads the divided country's Government of National Unity, came to power through a UN-backed process in 2021. Planned elections failed to proceed that year because of disagreements among rival factions, and he has remained in power.
- The government media platform said in a statement that one security member of its building protection force was killed, posting video footage showing the building's fence destroyed with rocks on the ground.
- "Security forces thwarted an attempted storming of the Prime Minister's Office by a group embedded among the demonstrators," it said in the statement.
- On Friday, businessman Wael Abdulhafed said: "We are (here) today to express our anger against Dbeibah and all those in the power for years now and (who) prevent elections. They must leave power."

Hundreds of Libyan protesters called on Friday for the ouster of the internationally recognised prime minister and his government, said one security force member was killed when some protesters tried to storm his office.

At least three ministers resigned in sympathy with the protesters, who want Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dbeibah to quit.

The demonstrators gathered in Martyrs' Square in Tripoli, chanting slogans such as "The nation wants to topple the government" and "We want elections."

They later marched to the main government building in the city center. "We won't leave until he leaves," one protester said.

The demonstrators carried pictures of Dbeibah, national security adviser Ibrahim Dbeibah and Interior Minister Emad Tarbulsi with their

faces crossed out in red.

State-oil firm NOC said in a statement that its operations at oil facilities are proceeding as normal, with oil and gas exports operating regularly. National oil output in the past 24 hours was at 1,376,415 barrels.

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On Friday, businessman Wael Abdulhafed said: "We are (here) today to express our anger against Dbeibah and all those in the power for years now and (who) prevent elections. They must leave power."

Calls for Dbeibah to resign increased after two rival armed groups clashed in the capital this week in the heaviest fighting in years. Eight civilians were killed, according to the United Nations.

Violence flared after the prime minister on Tuesday ordered the armed groups to be dismantled. Demonstrators have accused Dbeibah of failing to restore stability and of being complicit in the growing power of armed groups.

Economy and Trade Minister Mohamed al-Hawij,

Local Government Minister Badr Eddin al-Tumi and Minister of Housing Abu Bakr al-Ghawi resigned on Friday.

Militia leader Abdulghani Kikli, widely known as Ghaniwa, died in the clashes, which calmed on Wednesday after the government announced a ceasefire.

The United Nations Support Mission in Libya expressed its concern over the escalation of violence in Tripoli, calling on parties to take the appropriate measures to protect civilians and public property.

Libya has had little stability since a 2011 NATO-backed uprising ousted longtime autocrat Muammar Gaddafi. The country split in 2014 between rival eastern and western factions, though an outbreak of major warfare paused with a truce in 2020. While eastern Libya has been dominated for a de-

cade by commander Khalifa Haftar and his Libyan National Army, control in Tripoli and western Libya has been splintered among numerous armed factions.

The main oil facilities in the major energy exporter are located in southern and eastern Libya, far from fighting in Tripoli. Engineers at several oil fields and export terminals told Reuters output remained unaffected by the clashes.

Diaspora

India and US at odds on Kashmir truce: analysts

US President Donald Trump's claim to have helped end fighting between arch-rivals India and Pakistan has driven a wedge between him and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, analysts say.

By: KBC Digital
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Worth Noting:

- Fighting began when India launched strikes on May 7 against what it called "terrorist camps" in Pakistan following an April militant attack in Indian-administered Kashmir that killed 26 people.
- New Delhi blamed Islamabad for backing the militants it claimed were behind the attack, which Pakistan denies.
- Trump announced the truce after four days of missile, drone and artillery attacks from both sides, killing about 70 people, including dozens of civilians, and sent thousands fleeing.
- He later boasted about bringing India and Pakistan "back from the brink", telling Fox News on Friday it was "a bigger success than I'll ever be given credit for".
- New Delhi however shrugs off these claims, which go against decades-long Indian policy that opposes foreign mediation in conflicts with Islamabad.
- India and Pakistan claim the currently divided Kashmir in full. New Delhi considers the Himalayan region an internal matter, with politicians long viewing external mediation as a sign of weakness.



India PM Modi and US President Trump

US President Donald Trump's claim to have helped end fighting between arch-rivals India and Pakistan has driven a wedge between him and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, analysts say.

A week since Trump announced a surprise truce between India and Pakistan to end a brief but intense conflict, New Delhi and Washington differ about the way it was achieved.

The US administration thought "an intervention at this stage might give them some basic benefit in terms of highlighting Trump's role," Indian foreign policy expert Harsh V. Pant told AFP.

"That... became the driver and in a sense the hurry which with Trump announced the ceasefire," said Pant from the New Delhi-based Observer Research Foundation (ORF) think tank.

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Modi's first speech since the ceasefire did not mention US involvement and his government has since insisted that talks with Pakistan are "strictly bilateral".

India was also quick to dis-

miss Trump's suggestion that trade pressures has-tened a truce.

"The issue of trade did not come up" in discussions with US officials, the Indian foreign ministry said this week.

– 'Upstaged' –

According to ORF fellow Manoj Joshi, Trump's rhetoric is "irritating" for India — whose strategic location and massive market size have made the country an important ally for the United States.

But India is being "very cautious" because it is in negotiations for a trade deal with Washington to avoid steep tariffs, he said.

"We (India) would like the agenda to go in a different direction," said Joshi.

It is also a thorny matter domestically.

Main opposition Congress party said Trump's announcement had "upstaged" the Hindu nationalist leader's "much-delayed address". It also demanded an all-party meeting to ask whether India is changing its policy on "third-party mediation" for Kashmir, disputed between Pakistan and India.

The two South Asian rivals had in the 1970s agreed to settle "differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations".

– 'Irritating' –

Modi has previously poked fun at former Congress governments for "weak" responses against Pakistan in various skirmishes.

"So India would obviously respond to that and deny that... about as politely as they feel they can get away with," said South Asia researcher Pramit Pal Chaudhuri of political consultancy Eurasia Group.

Trump's claimed mediation was welcomed by Islamabad, which "needed an American intervention to give them the off-ramp they needed to get out of a conflict", Chaudhuri added.

On Thursday, Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar reaffirmed that "where Pakistan is concerned, our relations, our dealings with them will be bilateral, and strictly bilateral."

But the same day, speaking from Qatar, Trump repeated claims of brokering a ceasefire and using trade as a tool.

"(I said) let's do trade instead of war. And Pakistan was very happy with that, and India was very happy with that," Trump said in his speech.

It has been a decade since Modi last met a Pakistani leader. Since then, relations have deteriorated, coming to a head when India unilaterally revoked Kashmir's limited autonomy in 2019.

According to Joshi, "the hyphenation of India and Pakistan" is also "irritating" for New Delhi, which has tried to carve out a separate identity on the global stage.

"The optics of Trump hammering it day after day... is politically damaging for Modi," Sushant Singh, a former Indian soldier and South Asian studies lecturer at Yale University, wrote on X.

"(Modi) can't personally counter Trump, and despite attempts by India's big media to play it down, social media amplifies Trump," Singh said.

Peng Liyuan and Brazil’s first lady visit NCPA in Beijing, vow to deepen cultural exchange

The National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in Beijing on Tuesday welcomed Peng Liyuan, wife of Chinese President Xi Jinping, and Rosangela Lula da Silva, wife of Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

By: CGTN
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Worth Noting:

- In recent years, China and Brazil have collaborated on a range of cultural exchange initiatives, including the China-Latin America Cultural Festival and film programs among BRICS nations.
- Brazilian cultural icons, such as adorable capybaras, bossa nova music, samba dance and capoeira, have gained widespread popularity in China. Meanwhile, traditional Chinese celebrations like the Spring Festival and cultural treasures such as traditional Chinese medicine are becoming increasingly familiar and appreciated in Brazil.
- In 2022, the City of Rio de Janeiro designated September 28 – widely recognized as Confucius’ birthday – as Mandarin Day, reflecting the deepening cultural ties between China and Brazil. Additionally, in the state of Rio de Janeiro, the Spring Festival, or Chinese New Year, has been officially recognized as a public holiday.
- Bilateral cultural and people-to-people exchanges between China and Brazil were further strengthened in 2024 as the two countries celebrated the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations.



Peng Liyuan, wife of Chinese President Xi Jinping, and Rosangela Lula da Silva, wife of Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, visit China’s National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, China, May 13, 2025. /Xinhua

The National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in Beijing on Tuesday welcomed Peng Liyuan, wife of Chinese President Xi Jinping, and Rosangela Lula da Silva, wife of Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Rosangela is accompanying the Brazilian president on his state visit to China. Peng and Rosangela appreciated the centre’s interior architecture and viewed “Stage of Glory,” an exhibition on the achievements of the NCPA, which has played a major role in China-Brazil and China-Latin America cultural and people-to-people exchanges in recent years.

They also learned about the work of the NCPA in promoting international cultural exchange and art popularization. For example, in 2023, the NCPA launched its artists’ first South American cultural exchange tour in Brazil and Argentina. In 2024, a special concert was held at the NCPA to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Brazil.

Noting that both China and Brazil are major cultural countries, Peng said that people-to-people and cultural exchange between the two sides has been active in recent years, and that mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of the two countries have deepened.

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Marking the occasion, they signed an agreement to issue 10-year multiple-entry visas for their citizens in January, facilitating business, tourism and family visits, and boosting economic and commercial ties. In April, Air China also resumed its Beijing-Madrid-Sao Paulo route, enhancing connectivity between the two nations.

A total of 76,000 Chinese tourists visited Brazil in 2024, an increase of 79 percent compared to 2023, according to Embratur, also known as the Brazilian Tourist Board.

Next year, the China-Brazil Year of Culture will be held to enhance bilateral cooperation in fields such as culture, education, tourism and media and to facilitate personnel exchanges between the two countries.

Looking ahead, Peng expressed the hope that both sides will maintain this good momentum and bring the two peoples closer.

Appreciating Peng’s arrangements, Rosangela spoke highly of China’s development and splendid culture. She also expressed her willingness to actively promote people-to-people and cultural exchanges between the two countries, and to continue contributing to the deepening of friendship between Brazil and China.

The Maddening Mind: Adusdus

To be honest, the coined term peaked most of my interest. And I swear, I’m not even mad about the political undertones; it’s the sheer creativity of the term that’s got me hooked.

By: The Dibbie
xxxxxxxxxxxx

Worth Noting:

- That little detail about your weekend side hustle? It’s now “proof” you’re not focused on the job. Your complaint about the broken coffee machine? Suddenly, you’re “negative” and “not a team player.”
- Before you know it, the Adusdus is out, and Wantam is somehow getting a pat on the back from the dinosaurs upstairs.
- What’s wilder? Wantam thrives. While the Adusduses are dropping like flies, this guy’s getting promotions, bonuses, and probably a reserved parking spot. Why?
- Because Wantam plays the game. You know, office politics—that shadowy chess match they don’t teach you about in school. They’ll tell you it’s optional, but let’s be real: if you don’t play, you’re out. Checkmate.
- Me? I’m allergic to the game. My maddening mind – bless its overactive nose and overthinking neurons – can’t



Heee, Kenyans! Eti Wantam .
To be honest, the coined term peaked most of my interest. And I swear, I’m not even mad about the political undertones; it’s the sheer creativity of the term that’s got me hooked.
From the streets to the timelines, Wantam is the vibe of the now.
And trust me, in my office? We’ve got our own version of Wantam, and it’s a whole soap opera.
Our workplace is like a museum of dinosaurs—sorry, I mean, C-Suite executives. These folks didn’t climb the corporate ladder with degrees, skills, or even a sprinkle of competence.
Nope.
Their secret weapon? Age.
Just pure, unfiltered years on Earth. You hit a certain birthday, and boom, you’re handed a corner office and a fancy title.
Meanwhile, anything new—be it software, ideas, or, God forbid, young people — is

dismissed as “childish.”
Flexibility?
That word sends shivers down their spines like you’ve suggested they try yoga in a boardroom.
Enters Adusdus.
These are the fresh-faced, bright-eyed newbies—usually young, always eager—who waltz into the office thinking they’re about to change the world.
The oldies, though? They’re out here setting traps like they’ve been training for the Hunger Games their whole careers.
It’s like the moment an Adusdus steps through the door, the C-Suite smells blood.
A few weeks in, and the poor Adusdus is either running for the exit or getting “restructured” out of a job.
It’s a ritual, I tell you.
A corporate rite of passage.
And then there’s Wantam, the ferryman. Oh, you thought Powder Flower was the ultimate office villain? (If you don’t know Powder

Flower, umekua wapi? Start this blog from the beginning, hapo chini, and thank me later.)
Wantam is a different breed. Not your garden-variety, loudmouth schemer. No, no. This guy is strategically psychopathic, a ferryman. Ferrying Adusduses across their one terms.
Picture a colleague who slides up to every new Adusdus like they’re auditioning for Best Supporting Actor in a Nollywood drama. “Ati, these people? They’re not your friends,” he’ll whisper, leaning in like he’s sharing state secrets. “They’re already gossiping about why I’m talking to you. They want you to fail, but me? I’m here to help you settle in, my friend.”
The Adusdus, starry-eyed and desperate for an ally, falls for it. Hook, line, and sinker.
They spill their life story — where they went to school, their dreams, their favorite chai spot. Wantam nods,

smiles, takes mental notes like he’s writing a CIA dossier.
Plot twist!!
That little detail about your weekend side hustle? It’s now “proof” you’re not focused on the job. Your complaint about the broken coffee machine? Suddenly, you’re “negative” and “not a team player.”
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Me? I’m allergic to the game.

My maddening mind – bless its overactive nose and overthinking neurons – can’t stand the stench of it.
The moment I smell those political shenanigans, I’m halfway out the door, drafting my resignation letter in my head.
I’d rather sniff out a good story or a fresh mandazi than navigate that corporate swamp.
But Wantam? He’s the ferryman, rowing his boat through the murky waters of office politics, ferrying Adusduses from hope to despair while somehow keeping his own ship afloat.
And the craziest part? He makes it look easy. And that should make your Maddening mind boggle.
The Maddening Mind is an attempt to scribble my life, specifically through my experiences in the different work spaces I have been in, with some lessons, somewhere in the stories.

Ukraine and Russia far apart in direct talks, but prisoner swap agreed

More than three years into Europe’s deadliest war since 1945, there was a small step forward for diplomacy on Friday.

By: BBC
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Worth Noting:

- There were no handshakes, and half the Ukrainian delegation wore camouflage military fatigues – a reminder that their nation is under attack.
- The room was decked with Ukrainian, Turkish and Russian flags – two of each – and a large flower arrangement – a world away from the shattered cities and swollen graveyards of Ukraine.
- Turkey’s Foreign Minister, Hakan Fidan, told the delegations there were two paths ahead – one road leading to peace, and the other leading to more death and destruction.
- The talks lasted less than two hours and sharp divisions soon emerged. The Kremlin made “new and unacceptable demands”, according to a Ukrainian official. That included insisting Kyiv withdraw its troops from large parts of its own territory, he said, in exchange for a ceasefire.



More than three years into Europe’s deadliest war since 1945, there was a small step forward for diplomacy on Friday.

Delegations from Ukraine and Russia came face-to-face for talks for the first time since March 2022 – one month after Moscow’s full-scale invasion of its neighbour. The setting was an Ottoman- era palace on the shores of the Bosphorus in Istanbul.

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Pressure and encouragement from Turkey and the US helped get the warring parties there.

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While there was no breakthrough on the crucial issue

of a truce – as expected – there is news of one tangible result.

Each side will return 1,000 prisoners of war to the other.

“This was the very good end to a very difficult day,” said Ukraine’s Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Serhiy Kyslytsya, and “potentially excellent news for 1,000 Ukrainian families.”

The swap will take place soon, said Ukraine’s Defence Minister Rustem Umerov, who led his country’s delegation. “We know the date,” he said, “we’re not announcing it just yet.”

He said “the next step” should be a meeting between Zelensky and Putin.

That request was “noted” according to the head of the Russian delegation, Vladimir Medinsky – a presiden-

tial aide.

He said the Russian delegation was satisfied with the talks, and ready to continue contacts.

That was a change from Thursday when Russia’s Foreign Ministry called President Zelensky “a clown and a loser.”

But there are fears – among Ukraine and some of its allies – that Russia is engaging in diplomacy simply to buy time, to distract from international pressure for a ceasefire, and to try to stave off the 18th round of European sanctions. The EU says they are already in the works.

And while the two sides have now sat around the table, President Trump has said the only talks that count will be those between him and President Putin.

He announced on Thursday, mid-flight on Air Force One, that “nothing’s going to happen until Putin and I get together.”

It’s unclear when that meeting will be. The Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov says top-level talks are “certainly needed,” but preparing a summit will take time.

Whenever those talks happen, President Zelensky is unlikely to be invited.