

BBC NEWS

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This is the BBC News with Fiona MacDonald.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy says Ukraine is prepared to join Russia in observing an Easter cease-fire, but insists that Moscow's forces are still attacking. This comes a day after Donald Trump threatened to abandon U.S. efforts to broker a peace deal unless he saw progress soon.

In a message issued a few hours after the cease-fire was due to begin, Mr. Zelenskyy said Vladimir Putin could not be trusted. Here's James Waterhouse.

Russia has announced short last-minute cease-fires in the past, notably at the start of 2023 during the Christmas holidays. We reported from a frontline city of Bakhmut back then, and there was no lull in fighting. And Bakhmut would eventually be captured by invading Russian forces. So this has happened before. I don't think you're suddenly gonna see both sides downing weapons and planning for the long-term future, as much as the White House would like that to happen. But this is the first lull in fighting, broadly, we've seen pretty much since 2014. But it's incredibly early days.

Thousands of protesters have taken part in rallies across the United States to denounce the Trump administration's policies on a range of issues. Demonstrators at hundreds of events complained that democracy and the rule of law were under threat.

Some chanted their backing for migrants who'd been deported. Others denounced threats to remove funding from universities.

This protester said Mr. Trump was not fit for office.

"I'm here to call for the removal of Trump and this fascist regime. He's defying the courts, he's kidnapping students, and this is fascism. It's not just a greedy billionaire. This is about consolidating a police state. He's threatening immigrant communities, millions of immigrants who do the hard work. He's threatening them with jail or torture prison in El Salvador. This is unacceptable and illegitimate. I don't care if he was elected or not, what he's doing is illegitimate."

The United States and Iran have spoken positively about a second round of talks on limiting Tehran's nuclear program. A senior U.S. official said very good progress was made during the meeting in Rome.

Iran's foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, also struck a positive tone.

"It was a good meeting and I can say that the negotiations are moving forward. This time we managed to reach a better understanding on a series of principles and goals. The negotiations needed to continue and enter the next phase before the expert meetings could begin."

Oman, which has mediated at the talks, said it would host a third round next Saturday.

The Israeli prime minister says his government has no choice but to continue its war in Gaza. In his first comment since Hamas rejected an Israeli cease-fire proposal, Benjamin Netanyahu said the conflict was at a critical stage.

Protesters demanding an immediate halt to the war clashed with police in Mazor in central Israel, which Mr. Netanyahu was due to visit.

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The Israeli military says a soldier killed in Gaza on Saturday is the army's first fatality there since the end of the cease-fire with Hamas last month. Israel says the 35-year-old sergeant major was killed in an ambush near the northern city of Beit Hanoun by Hamas fighters who had been hiding in a tunnel.

Tanzania's main opposition party says its leader, Tundu Lissu, has been moved to a maximum security prison a day after concerns had been raised as to his whereabouts.

Mr. Lissu, who is CHADEMA's presidential candidate in elections due later this year, has been charged with treason after calling for changes to the voting system.

His supporters say he is now being held in isolation in order to intimidate him.

Officials in Benue state in central Nigeria say suspected armed herdsmen are now known to have killed at least 56 people on Thursday and Friday. The violence is the latest involving farmers and nomadic cattle herders who often clash over land use.

The state government has condemned the killings. It urged communities not to take matters into their own hands.

NASA's oldest serving astronaut is on a return journey to Earth from the International Space Station. The American, Don Pettit, is due to land in Kazakhstan early on Sunday morning along with two Russian cosmonauts. ??? reports.

Don Pettit will arrive back on Earth on his 70th birthday. The Soyuz descent module carrying Mr. Pettit and his fellow crew members will land on the step in Kazakhstan, where initial medical checks will be carried out. The three will then begin their readjustment to gravity after seven months in space.

Mr. Pettit is not the oldest person to take part in a space mission. John Glenn, the first American to orbit the Earth, came back from retirement to fly on a space shuttle at the age of 77.

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