

# Putin Declares Three-Day Ceasefire in Ukraine War



Recent protests in Canada have taken aim at aggressive rhetoric from U.S. President Donald Trump.

MOSCOW (Reuters) -- Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday declared a three-day ceasefire in May in the war with Ukraine to mark the 80th anniversary of the victory of the Soviet Union and its allies in World War Two.

The Kremlin said the 72-hour ceasefire would run on May 8, May 9 - when Putin will host international leaders including Chinese President Xi Jinping for lavish celebrations to commemorate victory over Nazi Germany - and May 10.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha, in response, said: "If Russia truly wants peace, it must cease fire immediately. Why wait until May 8th?"

A ceasefire should be "real, not just for a parade," he posted on X.

The White House said President Donald Trump wanted a permanent ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine.

Against a background of increasing U.S. impatience, Putin's move appeared aimed at signaling that Russia is still interested in peace - something that Ukraine and its European allies dispute.

"All military actions are suspended for this period. Russia believes that the Ukrainian side should follow this example," the Kremlin said in a statement on the May 8-10 ceasefire.

"In the event of violations by the Ukrainian side, Russia's armed forces will give an adequate and effective re-

sponse."

It was the second unilateral truce announcement that Putin has made in quick succession, following a 30-hour Easter ceasefire that each side accused the other of violating countless times.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who met Trump on the sidelines of Pope Francis' funeral in Rome on Saturday, has said Kyiv would be ready to hold talks with Moscow once a ceasefire deal has stopped the fighting.

Ukraine's Sybiha said Kyiv had been "constantly proposing" a ceasefire for at least 30 days. Russia has said it wants a full settlement, not a pause.

The Kremlin statement said: "The Russian side once again declares its readiness for peace talks without preconditions, aimed at eliminating the root causes of the Ukrainian crisis, and constructive interaction with international partners."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters earlier that the signal for direct talks should come from Ukraine, as it currently had a "legal ban" on negotiating with Putin.

He was referring to a 2022 decree in which Zelensky ruled out such negotiations, after Russia had claimed four Ukrainian regions as its own in an action condemned as illegal by most countries at the United Nations.

## French Muslims Decry Hatred After Mosque Stabbing



People march in La Grand-Combe in memory of the Malian stabbed to death in a mosque in an Islamophobic attack.

PARIS (Guardian) -- French Muslim leaders have said more must be done to counter anti-Muslim hatred in France after a man was arrested on suspicion of stabbing a young worshipper to death inside a mosque in a southern village.

Olivier A, 21, a French national born in Lyon, surrendered to police in Italy on Sunday after three days on the run, French prosecutors announced on Monday morning.

He is suspected of killing Aboubakar Cissé, 22, a Malian man who had trained in France as a carpenter and worked as a volunteer at the mosque in La Grand-Combe in south-eastern France.

Olivier A is alleged to have entered the mosque on Friday morning and stabbed Cissé dozens of times. He

is alleged to have filmed his victim in agony with a mobile phone. In the footage a man can be heard congratulating himself, saying "I did it" and shouting insults at Allah.

Cissé had gone to the mosque alone early on Friday morning to pray. His body was discovered when worshippers began arriving later that morning for prayers.

The incident in the village in provincial France has caused shock.

Mohammed Moussaoui, the head of the French Muslim council, told France Info radio: "A great majority of Muslims in France feel that anti-Muslim hatred is not taken as seriously as other hate."

He said Muslims were worried and

concerned about the current climate and asked why an anti-terrorism inquiry had not been opened into the case.

Abdelkrim Grini, the state prosecutor in the southern city of Alès, told BFMTV on Monday that the alleged attacker had gone to an Italian police station near Florence at about 11.30pm local time (2230 BST) on Sunday night.

Grini said an "anti-Muslim or Islamophobic motive" was the main lead in the investigation, given the nature of the crime and the fact a worshipper had been targeted while praying inside a mosque.

Ibrahim Cissé, the cousin of Aboubakar Cissé, told Le Parisien on Sunday: "My cousin was targeted because he was Muslim."

He said he considered the crime to be terrorism: "It was premeditated, the person knowingly came to kill someone in a mosque ... For us, Aboubakar is the victim of a terrorist attack."

In La Grand-Combe, more than 1,000 people gathered on Sunday for a silent march in memory of the victim, setting out from the Khadija mosque, where the stabbing occurred, to the town hall.

Abdallah Zekri, the rector of a Nîmes mosque, denounced an Islamophobic climate in France. Several hundred people also gathered in Paris on Sunday to protest against Islamophobia.

## Trump Thinks Zelensky Ready to Cede Crimea to Russia

WASHINGTON (AFP) -- U.S. President Donald Trump said he believed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky was ready to concede Crimea to Russia as part of any ceasefire deal, as talks on a truce entered what Washington called a critical week on Monday.

Trump's comments came a day after he met Zelensky during the funeral of Pope Francis, breaking the ice after a major row between the U.S. and Ukrainian leaders at the White House in February.

"Oh, I think so," Trump told reporters in Bedminster, New Jersey, when asked whether he thought Zelensky was ready to "give up" Crimea -- despite the Ukrainian president repeatedly saying he never would.

Trump added that during their talks in the Vatican they had "briefly" discussed the fate of the Black Sea peninsula, which Moscow annexed in 2014.

The 78-year-old U.S. president, who boasted before his inauguration that he could halt the Ukraine war within one day, launched a diplomatic offensive to stop the fighting after taking office in January.

Kyiv and western allies have feared that Trump was pivoting towards Moscow's position.

Russia launched drone and missile attacks the night after the Vatican talks, killing four people in regions across eastern Ukraine and wounding more than a dozen.

"I want him to stop shooting, sit down, and sign a deal," Trump said Sunday when asked what he wanted from Putin. "We have the confines of a deal, I believe, and I want him to sign it."

The White House has said that without rapid progress, it could walk away from its role as a broker. Trump indicated that he would give the process

"two weeks".

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio earlier Sunday stressed the importance of the week ahead.

"We're close, but we're not close enough" to a deal to halt the fighting, Rubio told broadcaster NBC. "I think this is going to be a very critical week."

But there is still U.S. frustration with both sides, as the war, which has devastated swathes of eastern Ukraine and killed tens of thousands of people, drags on.

Ukraine launched a "massive" drone attack on Russia's Bryansk region on Sunday, killing one civilian and injuring another, the regional governor said.

Washington has not revealed details of its peace plan, but has suggested freezing the front line and accepting Russian control of Crimea in exchange for an end to hostilities.

## Canadians Vote in Election Amid Trump's Annexation Musings



Recent protests in Canada have taken aim at aggressive rhetoric from U.S. President Donald Trump.

OTTAWA (Reuters) -- Canadians went to the polls on Monday after an election campaign in which U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs and musings about annexing Canada became the central issue.

Trump's threats ignited a wave of patriotism that swelled support for Liberal Prime Minister Mark Carney, a political newcomer who previously led two G7 central banks.

The campaign ended on a somber note on Sunday after a man rammed an SUV through a crowd at a Filipino community festival in Vancouver, killing at least 11 people and injuring dozens.

Carney briefly paused his campaign, and both he and Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre mentioned the tragedy in their final campaign events.

Carney's Liberals held a 2.7-point lead over Poilievre's Conservatives in national support, according to a CTV News-Globe and Mail-Nanos poll released on Sunday. Nanos pegged the Liberals at 42.6% support and the Conservatives at 39.9%, in the poll.

An EKOS poll on Sunday suggested the Liberals hold a six-point lead, and projected the Liberals to win a majority of seats in the 343-seat House of Commons and not need to rely on a smaller party to govern.

Trump re-emerged as a campaign fac-

tor last week, declaring that he might raise a 25% tariff on Canadian-made cars because the U.S. does not want them. He said earlier he might use "economic force" to make Canada the 51st U.S. state.

"This is probably the most consequential election in my lifetime," said Kelly Saunders, a political science professor at Brandon University. "Everything has been so overshadowed by the threats coming out of the United States."

Carney has emphasized his experience handling economic issues makes him the best leader to deal with Trump, while Poilievre has tapped into concerns about the cost of living, crime and a housing crisis.

Trump, in a social media post on Monday, reiterated his call for Canada to become the 51st state.

"Good luck to the Great people of Canada," he said. "Elect the man who has the strength and wisdom to cut your taxes in half, increase your military power, for free, to the highest level in the World, have your Car, Steel, Aluminum, Lumber, Energy, and all other businesses, QUADRUPLER in size, WITH ZERO TAXES, if Canada becomes the cherished 51st. State of the United States of America. No more artificially drawn line from many years ago."

## Indian Crackdown After Terror Attack Angers Kashmiris



People stand near the razed house of alleged Kashmiri militant Ahsan Ul Haq Sheikh's family house in Murran area of Pulwama district on April 26, 2025.

SRINAGAR (AFP) -- Anger in Indian-run Kashmir escalated on Monday over sweeping detentions in the hunt for the gunmen who carried out a deadly attack last week that New Delhi blames on arch-rival Pakistan.

New Delhi has accused Pakistan of supporting "cross-border terrorism" after gunmen killed 26 people on April 22, the worst attack on civilians in contested Muslim-majority Kashmir for a quarter of a century.

Islamabad has denied any role, calling attempts to link Pakistan to the attack "frivolous" and vowing to respond to Indian action.

Relations between the nuclear-armed rivals have plunged to their lowest level in years, sparking worries by analysts of possible military action.

The attack also sparked a huge manhunt for the gunmen in Kashmir, with Indian security forces blowing up nine homes of suspected rebels, as well as detaining nearly 2,000 people for questioning, a senior police official told AFP.

"Punish the guilty, show them no mercy, but don't let innocent people become collateral damage," Jammu and Kashmir's Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said in a statement.

Aga Ruhullah, a federal lawmaker from Kashmir, said: "Kashmir and Kashmiris are being given a collective

punishment."

Security operations in the search for the gunmen come as India and Pakistani forces have exchanged fire across the de facto border in the rugged and remote high-altitude Himalayan outposts.

India's army said on Monday its troops and Pakistani forces had fired at each other for a fourth night in a row.

Muslim-majority Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since their independence from British rule in 1947. Both claim the territory in full.

Militants in the Indian-run area have waged an insurgency since 1989, seeking independence or a merger with Pakistan.

Indian police have issued wanted posters for three men -- two Pakistanis and an Indian -- who they say are members of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba group, a UN-designated terrorist organisation.

They have announced a two million rupee (\$23,500) bounty for information leading to each man's arrest.

India is also hunting several of its own citizens in connection to the killings, sweeping up those they suspect may have information on the attackers.

The homes of men suspected of having links to the attackers have also been blown up at night.

## News in Brief

COPENHAGEN (Reuters) -- Denmark's King Frederik was set on Monday to begin a visit to Greenland to underscore unity with the semi-autonomous Danish territory in response to U.S. President Donald Trump's interest in taking over the huge Arctic island. The king, who has remained popular in Greenland despite recent strained relations between it and Denmark, was to arrive alongside Greenland Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen, who returned after a three-day visit to Denmark. The visit follows months of tension stirred by Trump's repeated assertions that Greenland should become part of the United States. In December, Greenland's then-premier accused Denmark of historical "genocide" there and then stepped up a push for independence in January. But Nielsen, who assumed office this month, and Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen affirmed their alliance at a joint press conference in Copenhagen on Sunday.

BELING (AFP) -- China and the Philippines on Monday defended their claims to a disputed reef in the South China Sea, after Manila accused Beijing of seeking to "intimidate and harass" with a state media report that suggested the area had been seized. The Sandy Cay reef lies near Thitu Island, or Pag-asa, where the Philippines stations troops and maintains a coast guard monitoring base. Chinese state broadcaster CCTV said Saturday that the country's coast guard had "implemented maritime control" over Tiexian Reef, part of Sandy Cay, in mid-April. The U.S. and Philippine militaries are currently conducting joint exercises that Beijing has said constitute a threat to regional stability. Chinese warships have been spotted in Philippine waters since those bilateral "Baltikatan" exercises kicked off last week, with aircraft carrier Shandong reportedly coming within 2.23 nautical miles (about four kilometers) of northern Babuyan Island.

SEOUL (Reuters) -- North Korea confirmed for the first time on Monday that it had sent troops to fight for Russia in the war in Ukraine under orders from leader Kim Jong Un and that it had helped regain control of Russian territory occupied by Ukraine. The victorious end of the battle to liberate Kursk showed the "highest strategic level of the firm militant friendship" between North Korea and Russia, state news agency KCNA cited the North's ruling party as saying. Russia acknowledged the North Korean deployment for the first time over the weekend and said Ukrainian forces had been expelled from the last Russian village they were holding. Kyiv has denied the claim and said its troops were still operating in some parts of Russian territory. On Monday, Russia's President Vladimir Putin expressed his personal gratitude to North Korea and Kim.

NEW DELHI (AFP) -- India has signed a contract to purchase 26 Rafale fighter jets from France, New Delhi's defense ministry said Monday, with the multi-billion-dollar deal to include both single and twin-seat planes. When delivered, the jets would join 36 French-made Rafale fighters already acquired by New Delhi as part of its efforts to rapidly modernize its military hardware. The jets made by French aerospace company Dassault Aviation are expected to operate from Indian-made aircraft carriers, replacing the Russian MiG-29K jets. "It includes training, simulator, associated equipment, weapons and performance-based logistics" as well as 22 single-seater and four twin-seater jets, said India's defense ministry. "It also includes additional equipment for the existing Rafale fleet of the Indian Air Force (IAF)."

WELLINGTON (Reuters) -- New Zealand will have in place by July legislation regulating operators of ground-based space infrastructure, aimed at deterring foreign interference, the country's Space Minister Judith Collins said. The new regulations, which were flagged at the end of 2024, come after New Zealand's intelligence service raised concerns last September that some foreign entities had tried to establish space infrastructure, which would have "assisted foreign military activity that could have harmed New Zealand interests." Collins said in a statement that the new regulatory regime will start in July and will deter foreign interference in New Zealand's infrastructure that carry out tracking and control of spacecraft, space surveillance and the transfer of data to and from spacecraft. New Zealand is a member of the "Five Eyes" intelligence grouping, along with the U.S., Australia, Canada and Britain.

BERLIN (Reuters) -- Germany's Chancellor-in-waiting Friedrich Merz on Monday named utility executive Katherina Reiche as his likely economy minister and foreign policy expert and ally Johann Wadephul as foreign minister, as part of a raft of first appointments. Merz's CDU/CSU conservatives, who topped February's elections, clinched a coalition deal with the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD) earlier this month as they race to form a new government to deal with an array of international crises. The two parties aim to revive growth in Europe's largest economy just as a global trade war sparked by U.S. President Donald Trump's sweeping import tariffs threatens another recession year, and to ramp up military spending amid strains in the transatlantic NATO alliance. The coalition deal accorded Merz's Christian Democrats (CDU) the economy and foreign ministries, their Bavarian sister party the Christian Social Union (CSU) the interior ministry and the SPD the defense and finance ministries.