



5 Indian-origin men sentenced to jail, canned over brawl at Singapore hotel



Table with weather forecasts for various cities including Beijing, Colombo, Dhaka, Dubai, Houston, Istanbul, London, Los Angeles, Melbourne, Moscow, New York, Singapore, Toronto, and Washington.

Need clarity on security guarantees, draft mineral deal not final: Ukraine

Full agreement could hinge on talks in Washington as early as Friday, says Zelenskyy

KYIV

A framework economic deal with the United States is ready, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Wednesday...



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy speaks to journalists during press conference in Kyiv on Wednesday | AP

President Donald Trump said Zelenskyy will visit the White House on Friday to sign the deal that will closely tie the two countries together for years to come.

The agreed upon framework deal is a preliminary step toward a comprehensive agreement that will be subject to ratification by Ukraine's parliament, Zelenskyy said during a news conference in Kyiv.

Ukraine needs to know first where the United States stands on its continued military support, Zelenskyy said. He said that he expects to have a wide-ranging conversation with US President Donald Trump during a visit to Washington.

"This (economic) agreement may be part of future security guarantees, but I want to understand the broader vision. What awaits Ukraine?" Zelenskyy said.

skyy said.

Since returning to office last month, Trump let Ukraine know that he wanted something in return for tens of billions of dollars in US help to fend off the full-scale invasion that Russia launched just over three years ago on February 24, 2022. The agreement, seen by The Associated Press, says that the United States "supports Ukraine's efforts to obtain security guarantees needed to

establish lasting peace."

"Participants will seek to identify any necessary steps to protect mutual investments as defined in the ... agreement," it says. A White House official made clear again Wednesday after Zelenskyy spoke that accepting the agreement was a necessary precondition of Trump's invitation to Zelenskyy to meet on Friday. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the

invitation.

"This agreement may either be a great success or quietly fade away," Zelenskyy said. "And I believe success depends on our conversation with President Trump." "I want to coordinate with the US," Zelenskyy said.

Trump has abruptly ditched some previous Washington policies. He scrapped efforts to isolate Russian President Vladimir Putin and cast doubt on US support for its European allies.

That has brought momentous geopolitical shifts that could reset the war's path this year.

Zelenskyy said the main topics that he wants to discuss with Trump are whether the US plans to halt military aid and, if so, whether Ukraine would be able to purchase weapons directly from the US.

He also wants to know whether Ukraine can use frozen Russian assets for the purchase of weapons and investments and whether Washington plans to lift sanctions on Russia.

Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal confirmed that Ukraine and the US have reached preliminary agreement on a broad economic deal that includes US access to rare earth minerals. AP

US flight cancels landing at last minute to avoid hitting another jet on runway

WASHINGTON

PILOTS on a Southwest Airlines flight attempting to land at Chicago's Midway Airport were forced to climb back into the sky to avoid another aircraft crossing the runway on Tuesday morning.

Airport webcam video posted to X shows the Southwest plane approaching a runway just before 9 a.m. Tuesday before its nose abruptly pulls up. A smaller jet is seen crossing the runway that the passenger plane was set to use.

Southwest Flight 2504 safely landed "after the crew performed a precautionary go-

around to avoid a possible conflict with another aircraft that entered the runway," an airline spokesperson said in an email. "The crew followed safety procedures and the flight landed without incident."

Audio recording of communication between the smaller jet and the control tower recorded its pilot mistating instructions from a ground tower employee, who repeated that the pilot should "hold short" of a runway. About 30 seconds later, the ground tower ordered the pilot "hold your position there."

The tower employee is then heard saying: "FlexJet560, your

instructions were to hold short of runway 31 center."

Separately, a recording of communication between the Southwest crew and another ground tower employee captured its pilot reporting "Southwest 2504 going around" and following directions to climb back to 3,000 feet.

Seconds later, the audio captures the pilot asking the tower: "Southwest 2504, how'd that happen?"

The second plane, described as a business jet, entered the runway without authorization, according to the Federal Aviation Administration. Flexjet, the plane's owner, said the company is aware "of the occurrence in Chicago." AP



EXPRESS READ

iPhone bug suggests 'Trump' for 'racist'

London: Apple is fixing a bug within the dictation feature on some iPhones that briefly suggests the word 'Trump' when a word with an R consonant is spoken, including 'racist'.

N Korea opens doors to group of Chinese tourists

A small group of Chinese tourists has visited North Korea in the past week, making them the first international travellers to enter the country in five years except for a group of Russian tourists who went to the North last year.



Donald Trump

Don asks govt agencies to draw plans for major job cuts

WASHINGTON

FEDERAL agencies must develop plans to eliminate employee positions, according to a memo distributed Wednesday by President Donald Trump's administration that sets in motion what could become a sweeping realignment of American government.

The memo expands the Republican president's effort to downsize the federal workforce, which he has described as an impediment to his agenda. Thousands of probationary employees have already been fired, and now his administration is turning its attention to career officials with civil service protection. "We're cutting down the size of government. We have to," Trump said during the first Cabinet meeting of his second term. "We're bloated. We're sloppy. We have a lot of people that aren't doing their job."

Agencies are directed to submit by March 13 their plans for what is known as a reduction in force, which would not only lay off employees but eliminate the position altogether. The result could be extensive changes in how government functions.

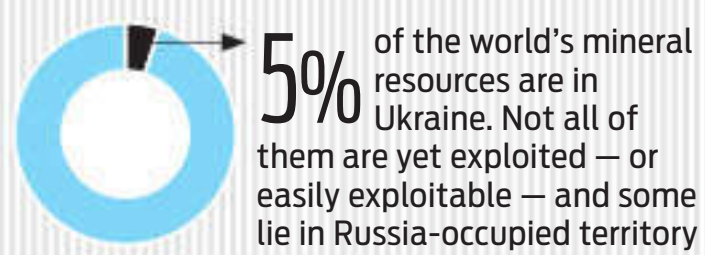
More plans are due on April 14, when agencies are expected to outline how they will consolidate management, become more efficient and potentially relocate offices to parts of the country that are less expensive than Washington.

The memo said agencies should implement their plans by September 30. Administration officials framed their effort as a cost-saving measure but with a clear ideological goal.

"The federal government is costly, inefficient, and deeply in debt. At the same time, it is not producing results for the American public," said the memo from Russell Vought, director of the White House's Office of Management and Budget, and Charles Ezell, acting director of the Office of Personnel Management, which functions as a human resources agency. "Instead, tax dollars are being siphoned off to fund unproductive and unnecessary programs that benefit radical interest groups while hurting hard-working American citizens." AP

UKRAINE'S MINERAL PROFILE

KYIV AND WASHINGTON HAVE AGREED A DEAL TO GIVE THE UNITED STATES ACCESS TO UKRAINIAN MINERAL RESOURCES. A LOOK AT UKRAINE'S RESOURCE PROFILE



This agreement may either be a great success or quietly fade away. And I believe success depends on our conversation with Trump



8th The country is the world's eighth largest producer of manganese, according to World Mining Data. It is 11th largest producer of titanium

SIX DEPOSITS Kyiv said "rare earth metals are known to exist in six deposits" and that \$300 million would be needed to develop a deposit at Novopoltavske

HAMAS SAYS WILL HAND OVER 4 ISRAELI HOSTAGES' BODIES IN PRIVATE

JERUSALEM

HAMAS will forgo its usual handover ceremony when it returns the bodies of four Israeli hostages on Wednesday night, with Israel expected to free more than 600 Palestinian prisoners in exchange, the militant group said.

The swap will be the final one under the first phase of a Gaza ceasefire deal that went into effect on January 19.

Mediator the United States said efforts were underway to secure a second phase of the deal, whose complexity and drawn-out implementation have highlighted its fragility.

Hamas's armed wing said Wednesday that under the "framework of the deal, the Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades has decided to hand over the bodies of four hostages tonight".

A Hamas official told AFP that in return, Israel would release 625 Palestinian prisoners.

The official also said the return of the four bodies "will take place without public presence to prevent the occupation from finding any pretext for delay or obstruction".



People watch a live broadcast from the funeral of slain hostages Shiri Bibas and her two children, Ariel and Kfir, at the Hostages Square in Tel Aviv | AFP

Israel confirmed the handover was set for Wednesday night. "In accordance with Israeli demands, an agreement was reached with the mediators: our four fallen hostages will be returned tonight... without Hamas ceremonies," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said. Past handover ceremonies have been held in public spaces,

with hostages paraded on stage, given certificates and gift bags, and often made to speak in front of crowds. The spectacles had drawn outrage in Israel, which halted the planned release of prisoners during last week's exchange to protest what it called the "humiliating ceremonies". The International Commit-



Trump posts AI-generated clip of Gaza 'beach resort'



Video posted online by Donald Trump shows skyscrapers along a beach

WASHINGTON

AMERICAN President Donald Trump's official social media accounts posted an apparently AI-generated video depicting war-ravaged Gaza rebuilt into a seaside resort, replete with a towering golden statue of himself.

The video, which racked up more than 15 million views on Instagram and was shared thousands of times on Trump's Truth Social network by Wednesday morning, prompted some commentators to question whether the president's accounts had been hacked.

The 33-second clip remained on Trump's accounts without denial or retraction hours after the initial posting on Tuesday night. The video "Gaza 2025 What's

Next?" opens with people on a rubble-strewn street emerging from a tunnel onto a beach with palm trees and yachts.

Trump has floated the idea of a US takeover of Gaza under which its Palestinian population would be relocated — a proposal met with global condemnation.

He later appeared to soften his plan, saying he was only recommending the idea, and conceding that the leaders of Jordan and Egypt — the proposed destinations for relocated Gazans — had rejected any effort to move Palestinians against their will.

In the social media clip, the soundtrack includes lyrics such as "Donald's coming to set you free, bringing the light for all to see", and "Feast and dance, the deal is done, Trump Gaza number one". AFP

Asset Reconstruction Company (India) Ltd., (Arcil) PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE THROUGH ONLINE E-AUCTION IN EXERCISE OF THE POWERS UNDER THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002 (SARFAESI ACT) READ WITH RULES 6, 8 & 9 OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002