

World News

Russia and the US agreed to work toward ending the war in the Ukraine [1]. This comes as Russia continues to pressure the Ukraine. Case in point, on February 22, Russia launched an estimated 267 drones into the Ukraine [2]. On February 25, Russian missiles were detected in western Ukraine [3]. On February 28, Ukraine President Zelenskyy got into a live broadcast heated debate in the White House [4]. As a consequence, President Trump suspended military aid to the Ukraine [5]. Additionally, the US cut off providing the Ukraine with intelligence information [6].

In the Congo, reports that the Rwanda-backed rebels, M23, are advancing toward a third city, Butembo (a city of 150,000 people) [7]. Elsewhere in Africa, in the Sudan, reports indicate the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) executed 200 villagers [8].

In Asia, China is demonstrating its military might. For instance, in a live five exercise near New Zealand, Chinese warships demonstrated advanced weapons [9]. The three Chinese warships conducted live fire exercises much further south than before; offering only hours' notice [10]. Airline pilots were in the air and had to divert flights because of the Chinese live fire [11]. This comes as China announced plans to increase its military budget by 7.2% [12]. One report indicates Elbridge Colby, the nominee for undersecretary of defense for policy, warned we must prepare for a conflict with China over Taiwan [13].

1. Lee, Matthew, & Litvinova, Dasha, AP, *Russia and US agree to work toward ending Ukraine war in a remarkable diplomatic shift*, February 18, (Continued on page 2)

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Middle-East War

The ceasefire between Israel and Hamas continues to hold. For example, Hamas returned the bodies of four hostages [1]. Meanwhile, there are still 59 hostages held by Hamas [2]. In response, President Trump is taking a more direct approach to settling the conflict [3]. Reports indicate he has entered into direct negotiations with Hamas [4].

The situation in Syria remains volatile. Case in point, approximately 130 people were killed in two days of fighting between

Syrian and Assad's Alawite sect forces [5]. The Syrian forces are accused of killing civilians from the Alawite religious minority [6]. One report puts the number of dead people above 1,000 [7].

1. Krever, Mick, et. al., CNN, *Hamas hands over bodies of four Israeli hostages, said to include Bibas children and their mother*, February 20, 2025.
2. Cramer, Philissa, The Jerusalem Post, *These are the 59 Israeli hostages still being held in Gaza*, March 6, 2025.
3. Ravid, Barak, Axios, *Exclusive: U.S. holding secret talks with Hamas*, March 5, 2025.
4. Magid, Jacob, The Times of Israel, *Trump defends direct US-Hamas talks as Israel seethes, attempts to sabotage them*, March 7, 2025.
5. Ashawi, Khalil, et. al., Reuters, *Scores killed as Syrian forces seek to crush Alawite insurgency*,

(Continued on page 2)

Special points of interest:

- Tariffs
- 4.1% Unemployment Rate

Middle-East War

(Continued from page 1)

March 7, 2025.

6. Aikman, Ian, BBC, *Syrian security forces accused of killing hundreds of civilians*, March 8, 2026.
7. Mroue, Bassem, & El Deeb, Sarah, AP, *Death toll in violence on Syrian coast rises to more than 1,000, war monitor says*, March 8, 2025.

Peace is not absence of conflict, it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means.—Ronald Reagan

(Continued from page 1)

- 2025.
2. Brennan, David, ABC News, *Russia launches 267 drones into Ukraine, setting new record ahead of invasion's anniversary*, February 23, 2025.
3. Brennan, David, ABC News, *Poland scrambles military aircraft as Russian missiles target western Ukraine*, February 25, 2025.
4. Weissert, Will, et. al., AP, *Zelensky leaves White House without signing minerals deal after Oval Office blowup*, March 1, 2025.
5. Kullab, Samya, AP, *Ukrainians wake up to Trump's pause on all military aid*, March 4, 2025.
6. Landay, Jonathan, & Banco, Erin, Reuters, *US cuts intelligence sharing for Ukraine, adding pressure for Russia peace deal*, March

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- 5, 2025.
7. McMakin, Wilson, AP, *Residents say Rwanda-backed rebels are advancing on a third city in eastern Congo*, February 18, 2025.
8. Booty, Natasha, BBC, *Villagers killed execution-style in Sudan, activists say*, February 18, 2025.
9. Gan, Nectar, CNN, *Live-fire drills by 'extremely capable' Chinese warships rattle New Zealand and Australia*, February 24, 2025.
10. Graham-McClay, Charlotte, AP, *Here's why Chinese warships near Australia and New Zealand have prompted alarm*, February 24, 2025.
11. Barrington, Lisa, Reuters, *Exclusive: Airline pilots surprised by Chinese live-fire warning near Australia, messages show*, February 28, 2025.
12. Bodeen, Christopher,

- AP, *China will increase its defense budget 7.2% this year*, March 4, 2025.
13. Gertz, Bill, The Washington Times, *Pentagon policy nominee says U.S. must act or risk losing war with China*, March 4, 2025.

Terrorism

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), an Islamist group of Ugandan origin, are considered responsible for approximately 70 decapitated bodies that were discovered in a Protestant church [1].

In Mulhouse, France, a 37-year-old Algerian man was arrested for killing at least one person in an Islamic inspired knife attack [2].

In Pakistan, at least six people were killed in a suicide attack at an Islamic seminary [3]. In Haifa, Israel, a terrorist with a knife killed at least one person [4].

Sometimes terrorists attacks are stopped. Case in point, in Melbourne, Australia, a 17-year old, dressed as a worker, breached airport security and entered a passenger plane with

a loaded shotgun; where he was overpowered by passengers [5].

1. King, Jordan, Newsweek, *70 Christians Beheaded in Church: What We Know*, February 20, 2025.
2. Clarke-Billings, Lucy, & Schofield, Hugh, BBC News, *One dead and police hurt in knife attack in France*, February 23, 2025.
3. Armstrong, Kathryn, & Atiq, Sarah, BBC, *Six killed in blast at Pakistan's 'University of Jihad'*, February 28, 2025.
4. Norman, Greg, Fox News, *Terror attack in Haifa, Israel leaves 1 dead, 4 wounded*, March 3, 2025.
5. Syme, Pete, Business Insider, *A 17-year-old with*

a gun boarded a flight and was overpowered by passengers and crew, police say, March 6, 2025.

*An eye for an eye only ends
up making the whole
world blind.—Mahatma
Gandhi*

Economy

The stock market indexes remained high. For instance, on February 18 and 19, the S&P 500 closed at a new record high [1,2]. However, the unemployment rate for February increased to 4.1% [3].

President Trump imposed tariffs on goods from Canada and Mexico [4]. This effort has caused stock market disruption [5].

1. Friar, Karen, et. al., Yahoo Finance, *Stock market today: S&P 500 notches record close with late-session leap*, February 18, 2025.
2. Evans, Brian, & Singh, Pia, CNBC, *S&P 500 closes at another record Wednesday as investors look past Trump tariff fears: Live updates*, February 19, 2025.
3. Schafer, Josh, Yahoo Finance, *February jobs report: US labor market adds 151,000 jobs, unemployment rate ticks up to 4.1%*, March 7, 2025.
4. Pettypiece, Shannon, NBC News, *Trump puts tariffs on thousands of goods from Canada and Mexico, risking higher prices*, March 4, 2025.
5. Norman, Greg, FOX Business, *Automakers get 1-month tariff exemption, White House says*, March 5, 2025.

*If you want peace, you
don't talk to your friends.
You talk to your enemies.—
Desmond Tutu*
