

## Trump pushes US claims to Greenland Territory's leaders lambast US delegation trip

REUTERS, Washington

President Donald Trump on Monday doubled down on his suggestion that the US should take over Greenland as leaders from the semi-autonomous Danish territory criticized a planned trip there this week by a high-profile US delegation.

"I think Greenland is going to be something that maybe is in our future," Trump told reporters after a meeting with officials in his cabinet, saying it was important for US national security.

Greenland's outgoing Prime Minister Mute Egede called plans by the US delegation to visit an American military base and attend



a dog sled race a "provocation", and said his caretaker government would not meet with the group.

Trump said his administration was working with "people in Greenland" who want something to happen, but did not elaborate.

"They're calling us," he said. "We're not calling them."

The US visit, which runs from Thursday to Saturday, will be led by Usha Vance, wife of Vice President JD Vance, and include White House National Security Adviser Mike Waltz and Energy Secretary Chris Wright.

Trump has made US annexation of Greenland a major talking point since his eldest son, Donald Trump Jr, paid a private visit to the vast, mineral-rich island in January.

"Such interference is a breach of our democratic principles and shows a lack of respect for our self-determination," Egede told local broadcaster KNR, adding Greenland's allies needed to be more forceful in their statements.



Rescuers and volunteers evacuate a wounded person from an apartment building damaged during a Russian missile strike, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Sumy, Ukraine. The photo was taken on Monday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Russia hits Ukraine with 139 drones, ballistic missile

Two people hurt, storage facilities in Kyiv region damaged

REUTERS, Kyiv

The Ukrainian air force said yesterday that Russia launched 139 drones and an Iskander-M ballistic missile during an overnight attack that injured two people and damaged storage facilities.

The air force shot down 78 drones and 34 more did not reach their targets, it added in a statement on Telegram without specifying what happened to the remaining 27 drones or the missile.

The overnight attack caused a fire at an enterprise hangar in the Poltava region, injuring two people, and damaged two storage facilities in the Kyiv region, local officials said.

The drone strike also damaged railway power lines and sparked a fire spanning 8,400 square meters around a non-operating enterprise in the town of Izium in the northeastern region of Kharkiv, according to Governor Oleh Syniubov.

He said that two civilian infrastructure

facilities were also damaged but reported no casualties.

Meanwhile, Russia and the United States are analysing the outcome of talks between their officials in Saudi Arabia on Monday, the Kremlin said, declining to give details of the discussions which both sides had said

Ukraine shoots down 78 drones, 34 more did not reach their targets

Russia, US studying outcome of talks on Ukraine in KSA

would focus on a potential naval ceasefire.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters the delegations, who had been looking into the feasibility of some kind of a deal between Russia and Ukraine covering navigation in the Black Sea among other issues, had reported back to their capitals.

"You see, we are talking about technical negotiations that go deep into details. Therefore, of course, the content of these negotiations will definitely not be published. This should not be expected," Peskov said.

"Secondly, I repeat once again, the reports back to the capitals are now being analysed. Only then will it be possible to talk about some understandings."

There was currently no talk of a three-way meeting involving Russia, the US and Ukraine, Peskov said.

He also added that there were no plans at the moment for a further conversation between Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump, but that such a conversation could be promptly organised if needed.

Ukraine's SBU security service said yesterday it had detained a serviceman it accused of helping Moscow attack Ukrainian troops fighting in Russia's Kursk region by giving away their location.

## TRUMP OIL TARIFF THREAT China slams US 'interference' in Venezuela

AFP, Beijing

China yesterday accused the United States of "interfering in Venezuela's internal affairs" after President Donald Trump announced 25 percent tariffs on imports from countries that bought oil and gas from the South American nation.

On Monday, Trump said the new levy, effective from April 2, would apply to all goods entering the United States from countries that buy Venezuelan oil. China is the largest importer of Venezuelan oil, while other buyers include India, Spain, and the United States itself.

"We call on the US to stop interfering in Venezuela's internal affairs (and) abolish the illegal unilateral sanctions imposed on Venezuela," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun told a regular news conference.

He urged the United States to "do more things that are conducive to the peace, stability and development of Venezuela and other countries".

Venezuela has been under US sanctions for years, including a new round in January that increased the rewards offered for information that led to the arrest of President Nicolas Maduro and other government officials.

## ROW OVER PERFUME Pak YouTube star charged with blasphemy

AFP, Lahore

A Pakistani YouTube star has been charged with blasphemy after launching a perfume named after the very law he has fallen foul of, police said yesterday.

Rajab Butt has one of the largest online followings in the Muslim-majority country and has been embroiled in controversy for years, including over his brief custody of a lion cub.

In a recent video, since deleted from his social media accounts, Butt launched his "295" perfume which refers to blasphemy legislation in the penal code. He said it followed a case filed against him last year, over an earlier video deemed blasphemous by Islamists.

His perfume publicity sparked further ire, prompting the leader of the radical Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) to file a complaint late Monday.

"Our religious sentiments have been hurt", said TLP leader Haider Ali Shah Gillani, whose party puts blasphemy as its central concern.



People take part in a protest against President Donald Trump's immigration policies in El Paso, Texas, US, on Monday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

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