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## Botswana shall open embassy in Moscow, engage with Russia in rare earths and diamonds, minister says



Botswana plans to open an embassy in Moscow to strengthen diplomatic ties with Russia. It has invited Russian investors to cooperate in the rare earth and diamond sectors. The development comes as Russia looks to expand its footprint in Africa amid broader tensions with the West.



## China-Africa Year of People-to-People Exchanges launched at AU headquarters



The 2026 China-Africa Year of People-to-People Exchanges was launched at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, with Wang Yi conveying a message from Xi Jinping emphasizing mutual learning and cultural cooperation. African leaders welcomed the initiative, expressing support for deeper engagement under the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation and the Belt and Road Initiative. Both sides highlighted solidarity, development, and opposition to hegemonism amid growing global instability, pledging to strengthen people-to-people ties and shared development.

## **Somalia, US relations hit low point as Washington pauses aid to government**

Relations between Somalia and the United States deteriorated after Washington paused aid, alleging Somali officials destroyed a U.S.-funded World Food Programme warehouse and seized donor-funded food. U.S. officials said assistance would be suspended pending investigation, though the WFP reported recovering 75 metric tons of supplies. Somalia denied any theft, stating the aid remained under WFP custody despite the warehouse's demolition during port expansion works in Mogadishu.



## **Sudan's government returns to capital after nearly 3 years of war**

Sudan's military-led government has returned to Khartoum after nearly three years in exile in Port Sudan, following the army's recapture of the capital from the Rapid Support Forces. Prime Minister Kamil Idris pledged to restore basic services and declared 2026 a "year of peace," despite widespread devastation and displacement. The civil war, triggered by a power struggle between the army and RSF leadership, has killed at least 150,000 people, displaced millions, and drawn international concern over foreign involvement.



# Somalia ends port deals and security cooperation with UAE



Somalia has annulled all agreements with the United Arab Emirates, including port and defence deals, accusing Abu Dhabi of undermining its sovereignty and political independence. The decision affects partnerships linked to Berbera, Bosaso and Kismayo ports, including investments by DP World in Somaliland. Tensions escalated amid allegations of UAE involvement in regional political affairs, while Somalia said it remains open to cooperation that respects its territorial unity.



# AU Officials Call for Stronger Solidarity As Africa Confronts Rising Security, Political Challenges



At the 51st session of the Permanent Representatives Committee at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, officials stressed unity among member states to address mounting security, political and economic challenges. AUC Chairperson Mahmoud Ali Youssouf and PRC Chair Miguel Cesar Domingos Bembe highlighted ongoing conflicts in regions such as eastern DRC, Sudan, Libya and the Sahel, urging stronger collective action. They also pointed to institutional reforms and the need for greater self-reliance amid global financial pressures, trade barriers and mobility restrictions.



## Kenya strikes preliminary duty-free trade deal with China

Kenya has reached a preliminary trade deal with China granting 98% of Kenyan exports duty-free access to the Chinese market, with a final agreement under negotiation. The move reflects strengthening bilateral ties, following President William Ruto's visit to Beijing and broader tariff reforms announced by China for African partners. Analysts say the deal aligns with WTO rules and may later become reciprocal, giving Kenya time to enhance its competitiveness.



## At least 21 migrant bodies found in Libya mass grave, security sources say



At least 21 migrant bodies were found in a mass grave near Ajdabiya in eastern Libya, while up to 10 survivors showed signs of torture after being freed from captivity during a security raid. Authorities arrested the farm owner, who admitted the grave's presence, as investigations continue into the deaths. Libya, a key transit route for migrants since the 2011 fall of Muammar Gaddafi, remains plagued by trafficking abuses and recurring migrant tragedies.



## South Africa probes Iran's role in BRICS+ naval drills

South Africa has launched a probe into Iran's participation in BRICS+ naval exercises near Cape Town amid reports that President Cyril Ramaphosa sought to limit its role to avoid straining ties with the U.S. The drills also involved Russia and China, drawing concern from Washington as U.S. lawmakers debate South Africa's trade status under AGOA. The defence ministry said the inquiry will clarify whether presidential instructions were misrepresented, as tensions rise over Iran's inclusion in the expanded BRICS grouping.



## **Nigeria's northeast faces worst hunger in a decade as aid cuts hit region, UN says**

The World Food Programme has warned that thousands in northeast Nigeria, particularly in Borno state, face catastrophic food shortages amid deepening aid cuts and ongoing conflict. Across West and Central Africa, about 55 million people are experiencing severe hunger, with Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon and Niger most affected. Reduced international aid and persistent insecurity have worsened malnutrition, with over 13 million children projected to suffer this year.



## **South Africa declares a national disaster over flooding and severe weather**



South Africa has declared a national disaster after torrential rains and flooding killed at least 30 people, mainly in Limpopo and Mpumalanga, and damaged thousands of homes and infrastructure. Flooding has also affected neighboring Mozambique and Zimbabwe, with over 100 deaths reported across the three countries. The disaster forced the closure of Kruger National Park and prompted evacuations, as rescue teams continue searching for missing persons.

## Libya's security authorities free more than 200 migrants from 'secret prison', two security sources say

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Security forces in Libya have freed over 200 migrants from a secret underground prison in Kufra, where they were reportedly held in inhumane conditions for up to two years by a suspected trafficker. The rescued migrants, mainly from Somalia and Eritrea, included women and children. The discovery follows last week's mass grave find in eastern Libya, underscoring persistent trafficking abuses since the 2011 fall of Muammar Gaddafi.




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## Libya signs \$2.7 billion partnership to expand Misurata Free Zone



Libya has signed a strategic partnership to expand the Misurata Free Zone, aiming to attract \$2.7 billion in foreign investment, Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dbeibah said. The project involves Terminal Investment Limited and Doha-based Maha Capital Partners, seeking to position Misurata as a major logistics hub linking Africa, Europe and the Middle East. The initiative is expected to generate about \$500 million annually and reflects Libya's push to modernize infrastructure and boost economic growth through international partnerships.



## **Suspected Boko Haram militants kill seven Nigerian soldiers, capture 13, sources say**

Suspected Boko Haram militants killed seven soldiers and captured 13 others, including a commanding officer, during a patrol in Borno state, northeastern Nigeria. A rescue team recovered the bodies of the slain troops, but the kidnapped soldiers remain missing amid ongoing military offensives in the region. The insurgency, active since 2009 and now including the Islamic State West Africa Province faction, continues to destabilize northeastern Nigeria.

## **Nigeria army rescues 11 kidnap victims on Kaduna–Abuja highway**

Nigeria's army rescued 11 kidnapping victims, including women and children, during a night operation along the Kaduna–Abuja highway after 92 days in captivity. Kidnapping for ransom remains a major security threat in north-west and central Nigeria, particularly along the vital transport corridor. The incident comes amid tensions with the United States over Nigeria's security crisis and reported operations against Islamic State elements in the country.



## New malaria vaccines helped Ghana slash child deaths. Then Trump, others cut aid



New malaria vaccines are helping Ghana move closer to ending child deaths from the disease, with shots developed by GSK and University of Oxford in partnership with the Serum Institute of India boosting prevention efforts. However, Gavi warned that international aid cuts could limit vaccine access across Africa, as it faces a significant funding shortfall despite being the sole buyer of malaria vaccines for the continent.



## **Drone-backed militants attack Nigerian army base, several soldiers dead**

Islamist militants from Islamic State West Africa Province used armed drones to raid an army base in Borno state, northeastern Nigeria, killing several soldiers in a major escalation of violence. The attack on the Sabon Gari base destroyed military equipment before reinforcements regained control. The assault underscores the persistent threat posed by ISWAP and Boko Haram despite ongoing military offensives in the region.



## Suspected jihadists attack airport near Niger's capital



Suspected jihadists attacked Diori Hamani International Airport in Niamey, capital of Niger, injuring four soldiers, killing 20 attackers and leading to 11 arrests, according to authorities. Islamic State claimed responsibility, while junta leader Abdourahamane Tiani thanked Russia for support and accused France, Benin and Ivory Coast of backing the assailants without providing evidence. The attack highlights rising insecurity since the 2023 coup, as Niger deepens ties with Russia and cuts military cooperation with France.





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