

1697

Habeas Corpus Act passes in England, strengthening a person's right to challenge unlawful arrest and imprisonment

1703

Saint Petersburg (Leningrad) founded by Russian Tsar Peter the Great



1873

Heinrich Schliemann discovers "Priam's Treasure" a cache of gold and other objects in Hisarlik (Troy) in Anatolia

2006

Earthquake strikes Java, Indonesia at 5:53:58 AM local time (22:53:58 UTC May 26) devastating Bantul and the city of Yogyakarta, killing over 6,600 people

# Advancing Russian forces reach highway from Donbas cities

As Ukrainian forces are retreating amid Moscow's offensive in the eastern Donbas region



Service members of pro-Russian troops inspect an AT4 anti-tank launcher of the Ukrainian armed forces during Ukraine-Russia conflict outside the town of Svitlodarsk in the Donetsk region

Luhansk province under Russian control, a key Kremlin war aim. "Russia has the advantage, but we are doing everything we can" in the battle in the area, said General Oleksiy Gromov, deputy chief of the main operations department of Ukraine's general staff. Serhiy Gaidai, governor of Luhansk province, said around 50 Russian soldiers had reached the highway and "managed to gain a foothold for some time. They even set up some kind of checkpoint there".

they were thrown back. That is to say, the Russian army does not control the route now, but they are shelling it," he said in an interview posted on social media. He hinted at further Ukrainian withdrawals, saying it was possible troops would leave "one settlement, maybe two. We need to win the war, not the battle". "It is clear that our boys are slowly retreating to more fortified positions - we need to hold back this horde," he said.

Western military analysts see the battle for the two cities as a

**"It is clear that our boys are slowly retreating to more fortified positions - we need to hold back this horde"**

SERHIY GAIDAI, GOVERNOR OF LUHANSK PROVINCE

potential turning point in the war, now that Russia has defined its principal objective as capturing the east.

## 'Sobering'

Reuters journalists operating in Russian-held territory further south saw proof of Moscow's advance in the town of Svitlodarsk, where Ukrainian forces withdrew earlier this week.

The town is now under firm control of pro-Russian fighters, who have occupied the local government building and hung a red flag bearing the Soviet hammer and sickle at the door.

Drone footage filmed by Reuters of the nearby abandoned battlefield showed scores of craters pockmarking a green field surrounded by wrecked buildings. Pro-Russian fighters were milling about in trenches.

Russia's recent gains in the Donbas follow the surrender of



**Russia's recent gains in the Donbas follow the surrender of Ukraine's garrison in Mariupol last week, and suggest a shift in momentum on the battlefield after weeks in which Ukrainian forces had advanced near Kharkiv in the northeast**

Ukraine's garrison in Mariupol last week, and suggest a shift in momentum on the battlefield after weeks in which Ukrainian forces had advanced near Kharkiv in the northeast.

"Recent Russian gains offer a sobering check on expectations for the near term," tweeted defence analyst Michael Kofman, director of Russian studies at the US-based CNA think-tank.

Russian troops have broken through Ukrainian lines at Popasna, south of Sievierodonetsk, and are threatening to encircle

Ukrainian forces, he wrote.

"The extent to which this breakthrough at Popasna threatens Ukraine's overall position depends on whether or not Russian forces gain momentum."

Ukrainian interior ministry adviser Vadym Denisenko told a briefing 25 Russian battalions were attempting to surround the Ukrainian forces.

A few weeks ago, it was Ukrainian forces that were advancing, pushing Russian troops back from the outskirts of Kharkiv towards the Russian border. But Moscow appears to have halted its retreat there, retaining a strip of territory along the frontier and preventing Ukrainian troops from cutting Russian supply lines that run east of the city to the Donbas.

Multiple blasts could be heard in central Kharkiv yesterday as Russian forces dug in and maintained control of positions in villages to the north. Governor Oleh Synehubov said shelling had killed four people.

"It's loud here but it's home at least," said Maryna Karabierova, 38, as another blast could be heard nearby. She had returned to Kharkiv after fleeing to Poland and Germany earlier in the war. "It can happen at any time, at night, during the day: this is what life is here."

## Boeing capsule returns to Earth, crewed test mission



Boeing's CST-100 Starliner spacecraft lands at White Sands Missile Range's Space Harbor

**An ill-fated first orbital test flight of Starliner in late 2019 nearly ended with the vehicle's loss following a software glitch that effectively foiled the spacecraft's ability to reach the space station**

Launch Alliance and achieved its main objective - a rendezvous with the ISS, even though four of its multiple onboard thrusters malfunctioned along the way.

Boeing engineers also had to improvise a workaround for a thermal control defect during the

final approach of the capsule to the space station.

Since resuming crewed flights to orbit from American soil in 2020, nine years after the space shuttle program ended, the US space agency has had to rely solely on Falcon 9 rockets and Crew Dragon capsules from billionaire Elon Musk's private company SpaceX.

Previously, the only other option for reaching the orbiting laboratory was by hitching rides aboard Russia's Soyuz spacecraft, an alternative currently less attractive in light of heightened US-Russian tensions over the war in Ukraine.

## Ousted Pakistani PM Khan issues ultimatum after disbanding violent protest march

Reuters | Islamabad

Pakistan's ousted prime minister Imran Khan disbanded a protest march by supporters yesterday after clashes with police outside parliament, but threatened that they would return unless an election was called within six days.

Khan had rallied thousands of supporters to Islamabad, with plans to occupy sensitive parts of the capital until Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif gave in to his demand for new polls, but Khan told his followers yesterday morning to step back, while delivering a fresh ultimatum.

"I'm giving you six days. You announce elections in six days," Khan said from atop a truck after he and thousands of his supporters reached the city.

He said parliament should be dissolved to hold elections in June, and warned the government that he will lead a march on the capital again if it didn't meet his demands.

Khan's attempt to destabilise Sharif's month-old coalition government risks fuelling tensions during an economic crisis that has forced Pakistan to seek urgent help from the International Monetary Fund.



Ousted Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan gestures as he travels on a vehicle to lead a protest march in Islamabad

**"I'm giving you six days. You announce elections in six days"**

IMRAN KHAN

The government convened a joint session of parliament yesterday to discuss the economic crisis following talks with IMF officials in Doha a day earlier.

The IMF said that considerable progress had been made, but emphasized the urgent need

for Pakistan to remove fuel and energy subsidies.

Khan has said that the confidence vote that toppled him last month was the result of a US conspiracy, and he is demanding a fresh election to show he has national support.

He had reportedly fallen out with the country's powerful military before he was removed by a united opposition, that accused him of mismanaging the government, the economy and foreign relations.

Washington and the Pakistan military have denied playing any part in Khan's downfall.



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



As we grieve the children of Uvalde today, we should take time to recognize that two years have passed since the murder of George Floyd under the knee of a police officer. His killing stays with us all to this day, especially those who loved him.

@barackobama

02



Oklahoma enacted an absolutely shameful law banning abortion yesterday. This law, which effectively outlaws abortion from the moment of fertilization and takes immediate effect, is the most extreme state law yet and threatens the fundamental rights of all women.

@VP

03



Congratulations @DrTedros on your re-election as Director-General of @WHO. I look forward to continuing to work together for the health & well-being of people worldwide.

@antoniooguterres

04



If I were to own Twitter, it would be geared towards the middle 80% of the population, so technically the far left and far right would probably be dissatisfied

@elonmusk

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stances)