VOA NEWS

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From Washington, this is VOA news. I'm Jonathan Jones reporting.

Federal prosecutors have placed terrorism charges against the Uzbek immigrant accused of running down eight people with a truck in New York City.

Sayfullo Saipov, 29 years old, was shot in the stomach by a policeman on Tuesday.

Charges against him include providing material support to a terror group and destruction of motor vehicles. It's not known when he can make his first court appearance.

Saipov allegedly drove a rented truck down a crowded bicycle path in downtown Manhattan Tuesday, running over bike riders and pedestrians. The truck hit a school bus and Saipov jumped out of the damaged truck. He was waiving what turned out to be a paint-ball gun and a pellet gun before he was shot by a New York City police officer.

Investigators who've questioned him in his hospital bed say he planned the attack for weeks. They say he carried out the deadly 20-block drive in the name of the Islamic State and he said he is proud of what he did.

Tempers flared Wednesday as American lawmakers grilled Facebook, Twitter and Google representatives about Russia's use of their platforms to spread disinformation during the 2016 presidential campaign as well as the companies' efforts to prevent a repeat.

Richard Burr, the Republican from North Carolina and chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said, "You must do better to protect the American people and, frankly, all of your users from this kind of manipulation."

Senator Dianne Feinstein, a Democrat from California, said, "What we're talking about is a major foreign power with the sophistication and ability to involve themselves in a presidential election."

This is VOA news.

Recent developments in corruption cases against South African President Jacob Zuma make it increasingly possible his party will ask him to step down before the end of his term. However, Zuma continues to fight for his political life. VOA's Anita Powell has the story from Johannesburg.

The scandals and Zuma's low popularity have raised speculation that the ruling African National Congress party, at its meeting in December, could push Zuma to resign in order to spare the party in the 2019 elections.

But Zuma is not going down without a fight. This week, he asked the nation's High Court to set aside a bombshell report by the public protector's office that said he and the Guptas used the government for their personal enrichment.

Zuma said he would instead appoint a commission to look at the details.

The opposition Democratic Alliance party says it will push back against efforts by Zuma to allow anything short of a full judicial inquiry into the influence-peddling allegations.

James Selfe, who heads the DA's federal executive, says Zuma's saga will not end after he leaves office, whenever that may be.

"Essentially, it is not good enough for the president simply to resign and ride off into the sunset. He needs to be held accountable for his actions, both before he became president and during his term of office as president."

Zuma's spokesman did not answer repeated calls seeking comment from VOA on Wednesday, but Zuma and his office have previously denied all allegations of corruption and said they will continue to fight on.

Anita Powell, VOA news, Johannesburg.

Myanmar is accusing neighboring Bangladesh of delaying the return of Rohingya Muslims forced to flee across the border to avoid a brutal campaign against them by Myanmar's military.

A spokesman for Myanmar's de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi told state media that Bangladesh is waiting to begin the repatriation process until it receives $400 million in international aid earmarked to expand shelter for the 600,000 Rohingya living in crowded refugee camps.

Medics and a Yemeni health official say at least 26 people have died in an airstrike in northwestern Yemen.

The airstrike Wednesday hit a hotel and neighboring market in Saada province, which is located near the border with Saudi Arabia.

Houthi rebels, who took control of Yemen's capital three years ago, blamed a Saudi-led coalition for conducting the airstrike.

Rights groups have accused the coalition of bombing civilian areas since launching its operation in support of Yemen's internationally recognized government in March, 2015.

There is more on these and other late breaking and developing stories, from around the world, around the clock, at voanews.com and on the VOA news mobile app. I'm Jonathan Jones reporting from the world headquarters of the Voice of America in Washington.

That's the latest world news from VOA.