

VOA NEWS

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This is VOA News. I'm Alexis Strobe.

The U.S. response to the killings of three American soldiers in Jordan has started. AP Washington correspondent Sagar Meghani reports.

Hours after President Biden watched in Delaware as the soldiers' remains arrived on U.S. soil, he says America has started striking back for the attack, hitting targets in Iraq and Syria used by Iran and affiliated militants to attack U.S. forces.

Central Command says it's hit more than 80 targets, including command and control centers, missiles and rockets.

In a written statement, the president says the response "will continue." And while the U.S. "does not seek conflict in the Middle East," quote, "let all those who might seek to do us harm know this: If you harm an American, we will respond."

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

A fire caused by a [gl...] gas explosion late Thursday evening in Kenya's capital Nairobi, killed at least three people and injured more than 280. VOA's Nairobi Bureau Chief Mariama Diallo reports.

Firefighters battled the fierce blaze. A flying gas cylinder had set off the fire that burned down the Oriental Godown, a warehouse that deals with garments and textiles. Other vehicles and businesses were damaged by the inferno, too, that started around 11:30 p.m. on Thursday night.

A government spokesman says many residents were likely inside when the fire reached their homes in the Nairobi neighborhood of Embakasi.

At daybreak, the shell of the vehicle believed to have started the explosion was lying on its side.

I'm Charles De Ledesma.

Yemen's Iran-[al...]allied Houthi movement said on Friday it fired ballistic missiles at targets in the Israeli city of Eilat and threatened to keep up military operations until Israel ended its offensive in Gaza.

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A federal judge has postponed former President Donald Trump's March trial on charges of plotting to overturn the 2020 election. AP correspondent Norman Hall reports.

Judge Tanya Chutkan vacated the March 4 trial date in the case brought by Justice Department special counsel Jack Smith but did not immediately set a new date that creates an opening for a separate case in New York, charging Trump in connection with hush money payments to a porn actor to proceed first.

Meanwhile, a federal appeals court has yet to resolve a pending appeal from Trump, arguing that he is immune from prosecution for actions he took in the White House.

It's not clear when the three-judge panel might rule. But a ruling in favor of prosecutors that permits the case to move forward is expected to be appealed by the Trump team, likely resulting in additional delays.

Norman Hall, Washington.

The two 16-year-olds [ki..., uh] convicted killers of a transgender teenager in northwest England nearly a year ago have been given minimum sentences of 20 and 22 years.

Justice Amanda Yip lifted [the re...] the reporting restrictions on naming the killers of 16-year-old Brianna Ghey. They were identified [as] at Manchester Crown Court on Friday as Scarlett Jenkinson and Eddie Ratcliffe.

The horrific murder shocked the nation. Ghey was stabbed with a hunting knife 28 times in her head, neck, chest and back in broad daylight after being lured to a park in the town of Warrington on February 11, 2023.

Ratcliffe was given a minimum sentence of 20 years while Jenkinson must serve at least 22 years in prison.

A new poll of U.S. voters shows half of adults in the U.S. think Israel's war in Gaza has gone too far. AP correspondent Donna Warder reports.

In a new poll by the Associated Press and the NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, 33 percent of Republicans say Israel's military response has gone too far. For independence it's 52 percent and for Democrats it's 62 percent.

In all, 50 percent of U.S. adults now believe Israel's military offensive has gone beyond what it should have, and the poll shows that 31 percent of U.S. adults approve of the Biden administration's handling of the conflict, including 46 percent of Democrats.

Donna Warder, Washington.

A judge in London [has] has acquitted climate activist Greta Thunberg of refusing to follow a police order to leave a protest that blocked the entrance to an oil and gas industry conference last year.

The courtroom gallery erupted with applause on Friday when the judge told [Thunberg that her four co-defendants and her] that Thunberg and her four co-defendants were cleared of the criminal charge of breaching the Public Order Act. The judge cited, quote, "significant deficiencies in the evidence" presented by the prosecutor.

It said the police could have applied less restrictive measures, didn't properly define where protesters should move and gave an order to disperse, quote, "so unclear that it was unlawful."

Individuals who didn't comply, therefore, committed no offense, the judge ruled.

I'm Alexis Strobe, VOA News.