

VOA NEWS

February 23, 2024

This is VOA News. I'm Alexis Strobe.

The U.S. is preparing new sanctions against Russia over the death of opposition leader Alexei Navalny. AP Correspondent Ed Donahue reports.

President Biden met with Navalny's widow and daughter in San Francisco.

"As to state the obvious, he was a man of incredible courage. And it's amazing how his wife and daughter are emulating that."

The meeting leads up to an announcement of new U.S. sanctions against Russia. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland described them as "crushing," targeting not just those responsible for Navalny's death.

"The vast majority of them, though, are designed to further attrit Putin's war machine to close gaps in the sanctions regime that he has been able to evade."

Nuland says Vladimir Putin believes he can wait out the West on Navalny and Ukraine.

"We need to prove him wrong."

I'm Ed Donahue.

A suspected missile attack by Yemen's Houthi rebels has set a ship ablaze in the Gulf of Aden. VOA's Rick Pantaleo has this report.

Israel said Thursday that it intercepted what appeared to be another Houthi attack near the Israeli port city of Eilat.

Houthi leader Abdul Malik al-Houthi on Thursday said they are escalating attacks on seagoing vessels which are being carried out in solidarity with the Palestinians in the Gaza war.

"The Red Sea, Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden operations are ongoing, escalating, effective and impactful. The enemy has failed to prevent them, and they have been unable to limit or reduce them."

Meanwhile, the Houthis have not immediately claimed Thursday's attack. They typically acknowledge results they conduct hours afterward.

Rick Pantaleo, VOA News.

You'll find expanded coverage of world news and events at voanews.com 24 hours a day. This is VOA News.

In testimony before the U.N. Security Council Thursday, the head of the international medical group, Doctors Without Borders, strongly criticized the United States for its veto this week of a resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza. VOA's Jeff Caster reports.

Doctors Without Borders' Secretary General Christopher Lockyear detailed for the Security Council how Gaza's health system no longer exists as Israel's military has dismantled hospital after hospital while patients continue to face catastrophic injuries, amputations, crushed limbs and severe burns that require sophisticated care and long intensive rehabilitation.

He said an immediate humanitarian cease-fire is desperately needed and slammed the United States for vetoing for the third time a U.N. resolution that would have called for just that.

"We are appalled by the willingness of the United States to use its powers as a permanent Council member to obstruct efforts to adopt the most evident of resolutions: one demanding an immediate and sustained cease-fire.

Three times this Council has had an opportunity to vote for the cease-fire that is so desperately needed and three times the United States has used its veto power, ..."

Jeff Caster, VOA News.

The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization has set a target to further increase aquaculture production to meet rising demand for seafood and to fight global hunger and undernourishment.

A report adopted at the end of a three-day Asia and Pacific regional conference in Sri Lanka's capital on Thursday says the FAO hopes to see 35 percent growth in the aquaculture sector by 2030.

Officials said the world's aquaculture production has increased by 54 percent since 2011.

A judge says a Texas school legally punished a Black student over his hairstyle. AP correspondent Mike Hempen reports.

A state district judge says the Houston area high school's punishment of a Black student for refusing to change his hairstyle does not violate a new state law that prohibits race-based hair discrimination.

Darryl George wears his hair in tied and twisted locks on top of his head.

After just a few hours of testimony, the judge ruled in favor of the [Barber Hills] Barbers Hill School District, saying its ongoing discipline of George over the length of his hair is legal under the CROWN Act. The CROWN Act prohibits race-based hair discrimination and bars employers and schools from penalizing people because of hair texture or protective hair styles.

George, an 18-year-old junior, has not been in his regular classes at [Barber Hills] Barbers Hill High School since August 31.

I'm Mike Hempen.

A group of United States Congress members are praising Taiwan's democracy during a visit to the island. The show of support is certain to draw scrutiny from China, which sees such displays as a challenge to its claim of sovereignty over the self-governing island.

On Thursday, the bipartisan delegation praised Taiwan as a robust democracy following its presidential election in January and called the island a friend of the U.S.

The group's three-day visit to Taiwan is part of a larger tour of the Indo-Pacific.

For additional stories 24 hours a day, visit [voanews.com](https://www.voanews.com). I'm Alexis Strobe, VOA ...