

VOA NEWS

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This is VOA News. I'm Joe Ramsey.

Airstrikes attributed to the U.S. and British coalition hit port cities in a small town in western Yemen on Monday, killing at least 11 people. The strikes come just days after the first civilian fatalities and vessel loss since the Iran-aligned Houthis began attacking commercial shipping in November in solidarity with Palestinians.

The United Nations says at least 20 children in Gaza have died of starvation, and doctors say many more are increasingly suffering. VOA's Heather Murdoch reports.

Children in Gaza haven't been to school since the Israel-Hamas war began, but parents here say, right now, this is the least of their problems.

U.N. figures show more than 12,000 children have died in the war, and 20 of starvation in recent weeks. Another 17,000 have lost or been separated from their parents.

Almost all children in Gaza have been forced to flee their homes, and parents say even the best cared-for are traumatized.

Reporting with Nedal Hamdouna and Amjed Tantesh in Rafah, Gaza, Heather Murdock, VOA News, Istanbul.

The Houthis and Hamas are U.S.-designated terrorist groups.

NATO boss Jens Stoltenberg made clear on Monday he disagreed with Pope Francis's comments that Ukraine should negotiate an end to the war with Russia.

"If we want a negotiated, peaceful, lasting solution, the way to get there is to provide the military support to Ukraine."

The secretary-general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in the interview with Reuters also distanced himself from French President Emmanuel Macron's declaration that Western allies should not rule out deploying troops to Ukraine in their conflict against Russia.

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U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has announced an additional \$100 million to finance the deployment of a multinational force mission to Haiti following a meeting with Caribbean leaders in Jamaica to halt the country's violent crisis. Blinken also announced another \$33 million in humanitarian aid.

Nigerian soldiers, backed by police, the intelligence service, the Air Force and a local vigilante group, are searching for armed kidnappers who abducted nearly 300 students from a school in the northern Kaduna state, a source[s] said. Reuters correspondent David Doyle has more.

Parents say they're waiting for answers from local authorities following the kidnapping last Thursday in the town of Kuriga.

Such mass abductions were first carried out by jihadist group Boko Haram a decade ago. But the tactic has since been adopted by armed gangs seeking ransom.

Families and communities find themselves forced to pool their resources, and sell prized possessions such as cattle and land, to free their children.

Security analysts say President Bola Tinubu has yet to lay out a clear policy on how he intends to make Nigeria safer.

Reuters correspondent David Doyle.

Less than a week after West Africa's three military-led countries of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger said they are forming a joint counterterrorism force, experts say it could do more harm than good as the countries struggle with bad governance and a suspension of international support. Mohammed Yusuf reports from Nairobi.

Millions have been displaced by terror threats and attacks throughout all three countries.

The military leaders in Bamako, Niamey and Ouagadougou say they toppled their civilian-led governments for failing to deal with insecurity, particularly emanating from terror groups.

Since taking power, however, all three nations have seen conflict fatalities from political violence increase by 38 percent and civilian deaths by over 18 percent, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project.

Mohammed Yusuf, VOA News, Nairobi.

Britain's Princess of Wales has apologized for confusion caused by her editing of a family photo released by the palace. The image of Kate and her children was intended to calm concern and speculation about the princess's health, but had the opposite effect.

Several news agencies that initially published the photo, including The Associated Press, withdrew the image over concerns about digital manipulation.

The retraction sent online speculation about Kate's health into overdrive. On Monday, Kate said on social media she occasionally edits photos, and she'd offered an apology for any confusion.

Find more online, including that magical photo, at voanews.com. I'm Joe Ramsey.