

VOA NEWS

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This is VOA News. I'm Alexis Strobe.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer says it's time for Israelis to elect a new leader, labeling Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu an "obstacle to peace." AP Washington correspondent Sagar Meghani reports.

In an unusually direct appeal, Schumer called for new elections in Israel, saying Netanyahu has "lost his way."

"... by allowing his political survival to take the precedence over the best interests of Israel," which are now being stifled by what Schumer says is "a governing vision stuck in the past."

Senate GOP counterpart Mitch McConnell immediately responded.

"Israel is not a colony of America."

And says the U.S. can either respect Israel's decisions or disrespect its democracy.

At the White House and State Department.

"We know that leader Schumer feels strongly about this. I'll certainly let him speak to it and to his comments."

"These are statements made by Senator Schumer, not by the Biden administration."

Spokesman John Kirby and Matthew Miller tried to stay out of it, noting the administration's focused on making sure Israel can both protect itself and Gaza's civilians.

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has appointed his longtime economic adviser to be the next prime minister in the face of U.S. pressure to reform the Palestinian Authority as part of Washington's post-war vision for Gaza.

Mohammed Mustafa, a U.S.-educated economist and political independent, will head a technocratic government in the Israeli-occupied West Bank that could potentially administer Gaza ahead of eventual statehood.

But those plans face major obstacles including strong opposition from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the [Israeli Hama...] Israel-Hamas war that is still grinding on with no end in sight.

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As the evening prayer sounded across Gaza's rubble, the Abu Rizek family broke [their first] their day's fast with a shared meal on the wreckage of their home, sadly recalling all they had lost in Israel's military campaign since last year's Muslim holy month. Lauren Anthony from Reuters reports.

As the evening prayer echoes across rubble-strewn Gaza, the Abu Rizek family break their day's fast. The Muslim holy month of Ramadan looks very different for them this year. Usually families gather with friends and neighbors to eat, pray and celebrate together. But now the Abu Rizek family sit in the wreckage of their home, having scraped together enough food for iftar, the sunset breakfast after a day without sustenance.

Um Mahmoud Abu Rizek recalls all they have lost in Israel's military campaign.

"Last Ramadan was great but this year it's not. A lot of things are not there any more. My sisters, my family. Our house was destroyed."

The U.N. has warned that at least 576,000 - that's one quarter of the population - are on the brink of famine.

Lauren Anthony from Reuters.

America's first commercial scale offshore wind farm is officially open, a long-awaited moment that helps pave the way for a succession of large wind farms.

Danish wind energy developer Ørsted and the utility Eversource built a 12-turbine wind farm called South Fork Wind east of Montauk Point, New York. New York Governor Kathy Hochul went to Long Island Thursday to announce [the t...] that the turbines are delivering clean power to the local electric grid.

Experts say the nation needs a major build out of this type of clean electricity to address climate change. The Biden administration has approved six commercial offshore wind energy projects.

The United States top military leader is touring U.S. arms plants with GOP lawmakers to show that Ukraine aid boosts jobs here at home. AP's Lisa Dwyer reports.

As they stood before massive rocket launchers built in part by their Arkansas constituents, Republican lawmakers were getting an unambiguous message that a Ukraine aid package that's stalled in Congress will not only help in the fight against Russia, but also support jobs in their districts.

General C.Q. Brown's trip was part of the Pentagon's full-court press to get the House to move forward on a \$95 billion foreign aid package that's key to getting critical munitions for Ukraine flowing again. The bill includes roughly \$60 billion for Ukraine.

I'm Lisa Dwyer.

Doctors at Kenya's public hospitals began a nationwide strike, accusing the government of failing to implement a raft of promises from a collective [*barring] bargaining agreement signed in 2017 after a 100-day strike that saw people dying from lack of care.

The Kenya Medical Practitioners Pharmacists and Dentists Union said they went on strike Thursday to demand comprehensive medical cover for the doctors.

For d... I'm Alexa Strobe, VOA News.