

VOA NEWS

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This is the VOA News. I'm Tommie McNeil.

The U.N. Security Council held an emergency meeting to discuss Russia's missile attack on a children's hospital in Kyiv. VOA's Jeff Caster.

A Russian spokesman Tuesday claimed the hospital was struck by a Ukrainian air defense missile, but a U.N. analyst said examination of video footage shows the hospital was hit in a targeted attack by a Russian missile.

Speaking during the Security Council meeting, U.S. U.N. ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield says the attack shows Russian President Vladimir Putin's true intentions.

"As if there was any doubt that this was the case, yesterday's attack makes abundantly clear: Putin is not interested in peace. He is committed to wreaking death and destruction in pursuit of his war of aggression."

U.N. officials noted intentionally directing attacks against a protected hospital is a war crime.

Meanwhile, the Russian U.N. ambassador dismissed the accusations as pro-Ukrainian propaganda.

Jeff Caster, VOA News.

NATO leaders gathered in Washington this week as the military alliance confronts the prospect of the return of NATO skeptic Donald Trump to the White House.

The summit kicked off Tuesday and heads of state are working to shore up transatlantic support for Ukraine in its battle against Russia. More from national security communications adviser John Kirby.

"You're gonna see some announcements on deterrence capabilities, not just with respect to helping Ukraine but - but boosting the alliance. You're gonna see some announcements with respect to the defense industrial base and how to shore up that and make it more resilient and invest in it more, including in our own industrial base here in the United States. And you're gonna see, as I alluded to, some discussion about Ukraine's path to NATO and what that - and what that can look like ..."

Kirby insists really bombardment continues to shake Gaza City. Thousands of fleeing Palestinians are searching for shelter. Medical facilities have been forced to shut down.

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A Russian internet propaganda campaign [back] backed by the Kremlin that spread disinformation in the United States and relied on artificial intelligence has been disrupted. That's according to the U.S. Justice Department, which announced Tuesday that it seized nearly 1,000 bogus social media accounts.

Officials described the operation in this part of an ongoing effort to sow discord in the U.S. through the creation of fictitious social media profiles that purported to belong to legitimate users who are actually designed to advance the aims of the Russian government, including by spreading this information about its war with Ukraine. AP correspondent Charles Ledesma looks at a United Nations report on the Taliban's morality police unit.

The Taliban's morality police are contributing to a climate of fear and intimidation among Afghans, according to a new U.N. report, which underlines that edicts and some of the methods used to enforcement disproportionately impacting women and girls, constitutes a violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Taliban had set up a ministry for the "propagation of virtue and the prevention of vice" after seizing power in 2021.

The U.N. mission in Afghanistan goes on human rights violations as well as the unpredictability of enforcement measures contribute to a climate of fear and intimidation among segments of the population.

I'm Charles De Ledesma.

AP Washington correspondent Sagar Meghani reports the U.S. Federal Reserve's chairman suggests interest rate cuts may be getting closer.

The Fed's benchmark rate is at a two-decade high as the central bank keeps fighting inflation.

"Over the past two years, the economy has made considerable progress."

But at the same time, "Elevated inflation is not the only risk we face."

Chair Jerome Powell tells a Senate panel the Fed is also facing a cooling job market and cutting rates by too little or too late could hurt economic activity and employment.

While that suggests the Fed is nearing a move to cut rates, Powell did not say, but Wall Street investors are anxious to hear any strong indication of when cuts might start.

Economists expect they will begin at the Fed's September meeting.

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has met President Vladimir Putin in Moscow, seeking to deepen the two nuclear powers' relationship as NATO leaders gathered in Washington and Russia launched deadly missile strikes in Ukraine and destroyed the children's hospital.

Modi is on his first trip to Russia since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Kremlin's forces in 2022. He has avoided condemning Russia while emphasizing a peaceful settlement.

Their partnership has been fraught, however, as Russia has moved closer to China.

I'm Tommie McNeil, VOA News.