

VOA NEWS

July 17, 2024

This is VOA News. I'm Joe Ramsey.

Two U.S. officials said on Tuesday a threat from Iran prompted moves by the U.S. Secret Service to boost protection around Donald Trump before the attempted assassination over the weekend of the former president, which appears unrelated to the original threat.

The additional resources did not prevent Saturday's attack at a Trump rally in Pennsylvania that left Trump's ear injured, killed one rally goer and severely injured two more when a 20-year-old with an AR-style rifle opened fire from a nearby rooftop.

The assassination attempt is generating conversations around guns and gun policy even as President Joe Biden asked the country to cool down. Isabella Dail reports from the White House.

The shocking weekend shooting of former President Donald Trump brings discussions about gun policy back to the forefront as he and President Joe Biden hurdle toward a tense November election.

Biden has repeatedly called for a ban on assault-style weapons. On Monday, the White House told VOA that Biden remains committed to his gun policy, calling him a strong advocate for gun control.

Trump and the Republican Party favor less stringent gun policy. His campaign platform promotes deregulating firearms. And he says he will undo some of Biden's executive actions if elected.

Both men have called for calm and unity in the wake of the shooting.

Isabella Dail, VOA News, the White House.

New York's Manhattan U.S. Attorney Damian Williams announced on Tuesday the conviction of Senator Bob Menendez in a corruption trial.

"This case has always been about shocking levels of corruption - hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes in the form of cash, gold bars, a Mercedes-Benz. This wasn't politics as usual. This was politics for profit."

Menendez was convicted in all 16 criminal counts, including bribery.

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Palestinian health officials said at least 57 people were killed in Israeli bombardments of the southern and central Gaza Strip on Tuesday. Reuters correspondent Zachary Goelman reports.

Footage showed residents carrying bodies of the dead and wounded on donkey carts and in rickshaws to hospitals.

The Israeli military said the strike targeted a senior militant in the Islamic Jihad group, an ally of Hamas. In a statement, the military said, quote, "We are looking into the reports stating that several civilians were injured as a result of the strike."

The Israeli military said in a statement on Tuesday that half of the leadership of Hamas's military wing has been eliminated, with approximately 14,000 fighters killed or captured since the start of the Gaza campaign.

Reuters correspondent Zachary Goelman.

Hamas is the U.S.-designated terrorist group.

The Israeli military will next week begin the process of drafting candidates from Israel's ultra-Orthodox community, the military said on Tuesday. The issue is especially sensitive amid the war in Gaza and related fighting on other fronts that have caused the worst Israeli casualties in decades.

Israelis are bound by law to serve in the military from the age of 18 for 24 to 32 months. Members of Israel's 21 percent Arab minority and ultra-Orthodox Jewish seminary students have largely been exempt for decades.

Nigeria plans to resume local refining of crude oil in early August, ending years of idleness at Nigeria's state owned refineries and analysts say, [*iss] if successfully implemented, could lower fuel prices. Timothy Obiezu reports from Abuja.

The Nigerian National Petroleum Company, or NNPC, made the announcement while addressing an emergency session at the National Assembly. Lawmakers called Monday's session to interrogate central bank authorities, the national economic management team and the NNPC about the country's economic standing.

The chief executive officer of the NNPC, Mele Kyari, said one of the two Port Harcourt refineries in the oil-rich Niger Delta region will begin operations in about two weeks.

Timothy Obiezu, VOA News, Abuja, Nigeria.

At least 23 people were killed and 13 injured in Peru on Tuesday after a bus crashed while traveling through a mountainous area, the country's Interior Ministry said on social media.

The bus skidded off a highway at dusk overturning and plummeting down a slope of about 200 meters, the head of the highway protection division told the state news agency.

Peru's ground transportation superintendent said the bus belongs to a local company and has initiated an investigation.

Deadly bus accidents are common in Peru, where many buses travel on mountain roads and are driven by inadequately trained drivers.

I'm Joe Ramsey.