

VOA NEWS

July 19, 2024

This is VOA News. I'm Joe Ramsey.

There is a renewed push in the U.S. on Thursday from top Democrats to get President Joe Biden to forego his reelection bid. AP correspondent Sagar Meghani reports.

Sources say former President Obama has privately expressed concerns to Democrats about his former running mate's campaign and ex-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's privately warned the president Democrats might not win the House if he stays in.

Congress's top two Democrats have also shown concerns.

"Democrats are in a dark place."

And strategist Nathan Daschle says they cannot unite with the president to top the ticket.

The Biden campaign rejects reports the president may be softening to the idea of leaving the race.

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

Donald Trump is preparing to accept the Republican presidential nomination in what aides said will be an unusually reflective speech on Thursday night.

The 78-year-old has basked all week in praise at the Republican National [conventi...] Convention in the U.S. City of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, after surviving Saturday's assassination attempt at a rally.

Trump's acceptance speech offers him a chance to try to lay out his vision for a second White House term before a national television audience.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said on Thursday the most important topic for the European Union is defending its democracy after her reelection by the European Parliament for a second five-year term.

"Our democracy is under attack from inside and from out. And therefore it is crucial that the democratic forces stand together to defend our democracy."

Von der Leyen will now assemble her team, known as a "college." The 27-member group includes a commissioner from each EU country proposed by the national government.

This is VOA News.

Britain let down its citizens by leaving the nation ill-prepared for the COVID-19 pandemic. That's what a public inquiry concluded in a scathing report on Thursday. Reuters correspondent Emma Jehle reports.

Former judge Heather Hallett served as the inquiry chair.

"In 2019, it was widely believed in the United Kingdom and abroad that the U.K. was not only properly prepared, but was one of the best prepared countries in the world to respond to a pandemic. This belief was dangerously mistaken."

Meanwhile, the nation's finances are still suffering. Hallett's report found there was a "lack of adequate leadership," with "groupthink" clouding expert advice.

Reuters correspondent Emma Jehle.

Leaders from across Europe are gathering at a country mansion in Britain for a summit of the European political community. The focus is on migration and Ukraine. But the meeting on Thursday was clouded by worries about whether the United States will remain a reliable ally if Donald Trump wins a second presidency.

Newly elected British Prime Minister Keir Starmer welcomed around 45 national leaders. Starmer aims to use the conference to help restore relations between its European Union neighbors in the wake of Brexit.

Kenya's acting head of police justified a ban on protests in central Nairobi, saying criminal groups were planning to take advantage of the unrest. Reuters correspondent David Doyle has more.

Some activists have since been sharing calls for people to gather with camping gear at Uhuru Park next to the central business district.

A Reuters reporter said there was a heavy police presence in the city on Thursday morning.

Responding to the protest ban, activist Boniface Mwangi wrote on social media that the police and President William Ruto "have no power to suspend rights guaranteed by the constitution."

Activists are saying they want Ruto to resign and are calling for systemic changes to clean up corruption and address poor governance.

Reuters correspondent David Doyle.

Media reports from Bangladesh on Thursday said 19 more people have died in clashes between police and student protesters attempting to impose a, quote, "complete shutdown" of the country following days of violent confrontations during demonstrations over a system of allocating government jobs.

Students have been demonstrating for weeks against a quota system for government jobs they say favors allies of the ruling party. But the protest escalated since violence broke out between protesters, police and pro-government student activists on the campus of Dhaka University on Monday.

With the latest toll, the number of deaths has reached at least 25 since Tuesday when six others lost their lives in violence.

I'm Joe Ramsey, VO...