

VOA NEWS

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This is VOA News. I'm Joe Ramsey.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Monday Israel has agreed to a U.S.-backed proposal for a cease-fire with the Hamas terrorist group. AP correspondent Sagar Meghani reports.

Blinken says the agreement came after he met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on an agreement to bridge differences, holding up a cease-fire and hostage release in Gaza.

"The next important step is for Hamas to say 'yes,' and then in the coming days, for all of the expert negotiators to get together to work on clear understandings on implementing the agreement."

Blinken says he will head to Egypt, which is in contact with the militant group. He did not say if the agreement addresses the issues that have long led to the talks stalling.

His latest trip to the region comes amid fears the conflict could spiral into a deeper regional war.

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

Protesters on Monday night broke through a fence set up by police near the site of the Democratic National Convention.

U.S. city of Chicago officials said they were committed to keeping the demonstrations peaceful as protesters took to the streets to voice their opposition to the war in Gaza.

Protesters said their plans have not changed since President Joe Biden left the race and the party quickly rallied behind Vice President Kamala Harris, who will formally accept the Democratic nomination this week.

United States envoy for Sudan Tom Perriello said on Monday peace talks were in progress in Switzerland days after the announcement of the reopening of the country's Adre crossing with Chad.

"... this model is working. We are actively moving forward in conversation with the army and with the Rapid Support Forces ..."

This is a long-awaited move that aid agencies say will help a region threatened with famine.

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Civilians were seen with small children in their arms and lugging heavy suitcases as they fled Ukraine's eastern city of Pokrovsk on Monday, where the Russian army is bearing down fast despite a lightning Ukrainian incursion into Russia's Kursk region.

Local authorities said Russian forces are advancing so quickly that families must leave the city and other nearby towns and villages by Tuesday. Around 53,000 people still live in Pokrovsk, officials say, and some decided to get out while they could as Russia's army menaces.

Police in Nigeria are searching for 20 medical students who were kidnapped by gunmen last Thursday. Timothy Obiezu reports from Abuja.

The Benue state police command Monday told VOA it has launched an investigation into the abduction of the medical students and deployed tactical teams on a rescue mission. But they said the teams have not reported any success.

Twenty medical students from Universities of Jos and Maiduguri and medical doctor traveling with them were taken in Benue state on their way to a conference in eastern Enugu state.

Timothy Obiezu, VOA News, Abuja, Nigeria.

British tech magnate Mike Lynch is among those missing after a luxury superyacht sank off the coast of Sicily early on Monday, according to Italian authorities. AP correspondent Karen Chammas reports.

The superyacht known as the Bayesian had a crew of 10 people and 12 passengers. So far, over a dozen people have been rescued and one body has been found.

British tech magnate Mike Lynch, who was acquitted in June in a big U.S. fraud trial, was among those who remain unaccounted for after their chartered sailboat capsized off Porticello near Palermo.

The ship sank when a tornado over the water, known as a waterspout, struck the area overnight, according to officials.

Police divers were trying to reach the hull of the ship underwater where those unaccounted for were believed to be.

I'm Karen Chammas.

U.S. intelligence officials said on Monday they're confident Iran was responsible for the hack of Donald Trump's presidential campaign, casting the cyber intrusion as part of a brazen and broader effort by Tehran to interfere in American politics and to undermine faith in democratic institutions.

Although the Trump campaign and private sector cybersecurity investigators had previously said Iran was behind the hacking attempts, it's the first time the U.S. government has assigned blame for the attack.

The joint statement from the FBI and other federal agencies also indicates Iran was responsible for attempts to hack Vice President Kamala Harris's campaign.

I'm Joe Ramsey.