

VOA NEWS

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This is VOA News. I'm Joe Ramsey.

White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said on Sunday the U.S. is working to avert an escalation of conflict in the Middle East following a recent exchange of strikes between Israel and Hezbollah.

"We have worked around the clock with partners and allies moving military assets, engaging in intensive diplomacy, both publicly and privately behind the scenes, to avert that outcome."

Hezbollah launched hundreds of rockets and drones at Israel early on Sunday as Israel's military said it struck Lebanon with around 100 jets to thwart a larger attack in one of the biggest clashes in more than 10 months of broader warfare.

Ukraine and Russia on Saturday conducted another prisoner of war exchange. Anna Chernikova reports from Kyiv.

Voice of America attended the 55th exchange of the prisoners of war between Ukraine and Russia, which happened symbolically as Ukraine celebrates its 33rd Independence Day. This is the first prisoner exchange between the two countries since Ukraine began its operation in the Kursk region.

One hundred and fifteen Ukrainian prisoners of war returned home.

According to the Ukrainian Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War, all servicemen are conscripts, including those who were captured in the first months of Russia's full-scale invasion in February of 2022.

Anna Chernikova, VOA News, Kyiv.

Ukraine on Sunday called on Belarus to pull back what it described as significant levels of Belarusian forces and equipment deployed at their common border.

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry warned Belarus against making, quote unquote, "tragic mistakes" while under pressure from Moscow. It said "stop unfriendly actions" and withdraw troops out of the range of the border.

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A suspect in German police custody following a stabbing rampage that killed three people and injured eight is a 26-year-old Syrian man, authority said on Sunday as they looked into his possible links with Islamic State. Reuters correspondent Zachary Goelman reports.

The suspect in German custody after a stabbing rampage in the city of Solingen arrived at the federal prosecutor's office in the city of Karlsruhe on Sunday.

The attack occurred during a festival on Friday, killing three people and injuring eight.

The suspect, who is a 26-year-old Syrian man, turned himself in and admitted to the crime, authorities said.

Police said the case is under, quote, "intensive investigation" and that they are looking into his possible links with Islamic State. Islamic State described the man taken into custody as a, quote, "soldier" of the group, but it did not provide any evidence for this assertion.

The incident, which officials described as, quote, "an act of terror," shocked the city of Solingen. Mourners gathered for a church memorial and paid tribute to the victims.

Reuters correspondent Zachary Goelman.

Pakistani officials say at least 36 passengers have been killed and dozens more injured in two separate bus crashes that occurred hours apart.

The first happened early on Sunday when a bus carrying Shiite Muslim pilgrims returning from Iraq through Iran fell from a highway into a ravine in southwest Pakistan. At least 12 people were killed and 32 others injured.

Twenty-four people were killed hours later when a bus fell into a ravine in eastern Punjab province.

French broadcast media reported on Sunday the founder and CEO of the popular messaging service Telegram has been detained at a Paris airport. AP correspondent Nayan Kim reports.

Pavel Durov, a dual citizen of France and Russia, was placed in police custody after traveling from Azerbaijan. Local sources say the 39-year-old is a subject of an arrest warrant on allegations his platform has been used for drug trafficking, child sexual content and fraud.

Russian state media is reporting the Russian embassy in France has demanded consular access to Durov.

Telegram has nearly a billion active monthly users, with encrypted platform becoming a major source of information and disinformation about the war in Ukraine.

I'm Nayan Kim.

American rapper Macklemore says he canceled an upcoming October concert in Dubai over the United Arab Emirates' role in the, quote, "ongoing genocide and humanitarian crisis" in Sudan.

The UAE has denied arming Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, which have battled Sudan's military since 2023 in a conflict that has left more than 18,000 people dead.

Macklemore's comments reignited the debate over the UAE's role in the war.

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