

VOA NEWS

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This is VOA News. I'm Joe Ramsey.

The Syrian government on Monday said Israeli airstrikes the night before killed at least 18 people and wounded dozens of others. Reuters correspondent Zachary Goelman reports.

It is the deadliest strike reported by the Syrian government since the Iranian embassy compound in Damascus was hit in April.

Israel has for years been targeting what it described as Iranian or Iran-backed targets in Syria. It has stepped up the campaign since the October 7 Hamas-led assault on Israel from Gaza, after which Iranian-backed Hezbollah fighters began firing rockets into Israel from Lebanon.

A residential building in northern Israel was hit by a projectile on Monday after air raid sirens blared across the border town of Nahairya. Israeli media reported the building was hit by a drone launched from Lebanon.

Reuters correspondent Zachary Goelman.

White House national security spokesperson John Kirby said on Monday Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro needs to release election data from July's disputed election to address global concerns about its validity.

"What needs to happen next is Mr. Maduro needs to heed the call of the international community and quite frankly, the Venezuelan people, and release the data so that the whole world can see what the Venezuelan people, who they voted for and that their democratic aspirations are met."

Opposition candidate Edmundo González has gone to Spain to seek asylum in the wake of the election, Venezuelan and Spanish officials said over the weekend after raising diplomatic tensions.

Ukraine's Foreign Ministry said on Monday it had summoned a senior Iranian diplomat to warn of, quote, "devastating and irreparable consequences for bilateral relations" if reports that Tehran had supplied Russia with ballistic missiles were correct.

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U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump square off Tuesday in the city of Philadelphia for their first presidential debate, and analysts say it could be decisive as they vie for the presidency. VOA's Anita Powell reports from the White House.

In the Republican corner, former President Donald Trump trying to reclaim the title after a four-year break, and in the Democrat corner, Vice President Kamala Harris, the rising challenger who has Americans wondering whether she can go the distance all the way to the Oval Office.

Tuesday evening's presidential debate, with its glossy production values, pre-event taunts and starkly different contenders, feels like a heavyweight bout.

Trump's last debate ended with a knockout just weeks after President Joe Biden's lackluster late June debate performance against Trump. Biden announced he would not seek reelection. Now, with Harris just weeks into running as his replacement, she faces Trump on the debate stage.

Anita Powell, VOA News, the White House.

Germany's government announced plans to impose tighter controls at all the country's land borders in what it called an attempt to tackle irregular migration and protect the public from threats such as Islamist extremism.

The controls within what is normally a wide area of free movement - the European Schengen zone - will start on September 16 and initially last for six months, Germany's interior minister said on Monday.

The government has also designed a program enabling authorities to reject more migrants directly at German borders, she said, without adding details on the controversial and legally fraught move.

Kenya began three days of national mourning on Monday following the deaths of at least 21 students at a boarding school inferno in central Kenya. Juma Majanga reports from Nairobi.

Kenyan authorities say the inferno broke out Thursday in a dormitory housing 156 students, the majority of whom escaped. However, some of the 21 killed were burnt beyond recognition.

Officials say 17 children remain unaccounted following the tragedy, which has devastated the school community. Some parents and relatives have been camping at the school to demand answers.

The Red Cross and Ministry of Health have been offering support to those affected.

Juma Majanga, VOA News, Nairobi.

Pope Francis has indirectly acknowledged their recent abuse scandal in East Timor, involving its bishop and Noble Peace Prize-winning independence hero. He spoke after receiving a raucous welcome on arrival on Monday.

The Vatican says he went there to encourage the country's recovery from a bloody and traumatic independence battle and celebrate its development after two decades of freedom from Indonesian rule.

I'm Joe Ramsey, VOA News.