

# VOA NEWS

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This is VOA News. I'm Alexis Strobe.

Hand-held radios used by Hezbollah detonated on Wednesday across Lebanon's south and in the Beirut suburbs, further stocking tensions with Israel a day after similar explosions by the group's pagers. Reuters correspondent Christie Kilburn reports.

The death toll from Tuesday's pager explosions rose to 12, including two children, with nearly 3,000 injured.

At a funeral for four of those killed by the exploding pagers, Hezbollah official Hashem Safieddine promised a response.

"This aggression inevitably has its own punishment. It has its own retribution. This punishment will come, God willing. We will not talk much as tomorrow the talk will be for the master of the resistance."

A senior Lebanese security source said the explosives were planted months earlier by Israel's spy agency, Mossad. Israel's military has declined to comment on the blasts.

Reuters correspondent Christie Kilburn.

White House national security spokesperson John Kirby said on Wednesday the U.S. remains involved in intensive diplomatic efforts to prevent an escalation of the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

"All I can tell you is we're still putting our shoulder to the wheel to get the hostages home and get a cease-fire in place. As daunting as that is today, and we are still involved in intensive diplomacy to try to prevent a second front from opening up on that border with Lebanon."

The handheld radios used by Lebanese armed group Hezbollah that detonated on Wednesday across Lebanon's south, killing several people and wounding hundreds that further stoked tensions with Israel a day after the similar explosions by the group's pagers.

Kirby said the U.S. was "not involved" in the devices and the device blasts.

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Gisèle Pélicot, [the] who was drugged and raped by dozens of men recruited by her husband, called the men standing trial "degenerates" on Wednesday while attempts from some defense lawyers to question her [credibility] caused outrage in the courtroom. Reuters correspondent Emma Jehle reports

Dominique Pélicot and 50 other men stand accused of drugging and raping Gisèle over nearly a decade, including recording and disseminating sexual images.

The case has also triggered protests across France in support of Gisèle, who has become a symbol of the fight against sexual violence.

On Tuesday, Dominique admitted to orchestrating the mass rape of his then wife, saying "I am a rapist" before asking for forgiveness and expressing hope to ultimately win back his former partner.

Gisèle Pélicot insisted on a public trial in an attempt to expose her former husband and the other men.

Her lawyer, Stéphane Babonneau, said on Wednesday that Pélicot's desire for a public trial was a challenge, but it was a challenge that's as important as the stakes.

Emma Jehle from Reuters.

Some Brazilian users have regained access to X despite a nationwide ban put in place by the country's Supreme Court. It's the result of the social network apparently changing the way its servers are accessed.

Associated Press journalists were among those who had regained access.

Experts examining X's IP addresses say there are indications the company has begun routing users through the servers of Cloudflare, a content delivery network, en route to its own.

The United States military has acknowledged that Yemen's Houthi rebels shot down two MQ-9 Reaper drones. AP correspondent Charles De Ledesma has more.

Yemen's Houthi rebels have shot down two American MQ-9 Reaper drones in under a week, further highlighting the regional spread of the Israel-Hamas war.

The U.S. military says the Houthis shot down the first Reaper on September 10, and the second just on Monday. Online video showed the downing and the flaming wreckage on the ground afterward in Yemen's Dhamar province.

As the one-year anniversary of the war approaches, the Houthis continue a campaign to target ships traveling through the Red Sea as U.S.-led airstrikes pound their positions in Yemen. That's imperiled a waterway that typically sees \$1 trillion worth of trade pass through it.

I'm Charles De Ledesma.

The Federal Reserve cut its benchmark interest rate by an unusually large half point, a dramatic shift after more than two years of higher rates that helped tame inflation but also made borrowing painfully expensive for consumers.

The rate cut the Fed's first in more than four years reflects its new focus on bolstering the job market.

Coming just weeks before the presidential election, the Fed's move also has the potential to scramble the economic landscape just as Americans prepare to vote.

The policymakers signaled that they expect to cut their key rate by an additional half point in their final two meetings this year in November and December.

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