

VOA NEWS

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I'm VOA's Joe Ramsey with your worldwide news update.

Israelis in Sderot, a town bordering Gaza, celebrated on Thursday the news of the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar. A woman handed out sweets and a DJ played music in the street while people danced with Israeli flags.

Israel says it killed Hamas's top leader during a strike in Gaza. AP correspondent Sagar Meghani has more.

Yahya Sinwar does not appear to have been the target. Israeli forces discovered his body in the aftermath. But from Jerusalem, where Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says Israel has settled an account with Sinwar (inaudible).

"... a good day for the world."

President Biden says he congratulated Netanyahu and is now more hopeful about a cease-fire.

Sinwar was one of the architects of Hamas's October attack on Israel that set off the Gaza war. Netanyahu, though, says Sinwar's death does not mean the war is over, while White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan says Sinwar was a key obstacle to a cease-fire deal.

Israel's pitching this as a moment for Hamas to surrender and release hostages.

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

The Israeli military released drone video showing what it said were Sinwar's last moments in a room wrecked by shelling. A man sat in a chair, his face covered with a cloth, possibly to hide his identity. The video showed the man with one wounded hand throwing a stick at the drone.

Israeli military spokesperson Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said the military then fired an additional shell at the building, causing it to collapse and killing Sinwar. He said Sinwar was found with a bulletproof vest, grenades and 40,000 shekels, nearly \$11,000.

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Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy pitched his victory plan to the European Union and NATO in Brussels on Thursday. Reuters correspondent Freddy Joyner reports.

"If our partners will not lose their unity, we will not lose."

He got a pledge of continued support from NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte during a joint press conference, but no endorsement from key allies of his call for an immediate NATO membership invitation.

"I look forward to the day that Ukraine is here as a member of this alliance. And until then, we will continue to do all that we can to assure Ukraine prevails."

Zelenskyy has argued that formally inviting Ukraine to join NATO would make clear to Russia that its president, Vladimir Putin, could not win. But NATO has said Ukraine cannot join while at war.

Putin has cited Ukraine's potential NATO membership as a reason for the invasion.

Reuters correspondent Freddy Joyner.

Africa's top public health agency said Thursday the number of mpox-related deaths on the continent has surpassed 1,000 and warned of the continuing threat of cross-border contamination and a lack of rapid test kits.

The Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says there were 50 mpox-related deaths in the past week, bringing the total to 1,100, indicating authorities face a challenge in stemming outbreaks currently affecting 18 of the continent's 55 nations.

An Argentine prosecutor said Thursday former One Direction singer Liam Payne died due to multiple traumas and bleeding caused by a fall, revealing the first official results of the star's autopsy as fans around the world mourn his death. Reuters correspondent Christy Kilburn reports.

This is the 911 call made from the Argentine hotel where British singer and former One Direction member Liam Payne was found dead.

A hotel employee tells the operator that there's a guest intoxicated by drugs and alcohol. They say he's breaking the whole room and that they are afraid he might do something that will put his life at risk.

It was later that evening that police say Payne fell from the third-floor balcony of his hotel room.

The 31-year-old singer rose to fame with One Direction, one of the world's biggest-selling boy bands.

Details surrounding his death remained unclear, though Payne had spoken publicly about his struggles with mental health and using alcohol to cope with the pressures of fame.

Reuters correspondent Christy Kilburn.

That wraps up this update, but the world and news never stop. For additional updates, visit our website. I'm Joe Ramsey, VOA News.