

VOA NEWS

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

The U.S. State Department says Secretary of State Antony Blinken pressed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in talks on Tuesday to capitalize on the killing of Hamas's leader by securing the release of the October 7 attack hostages and ending the war in Gaza. Reuters correspondent Freddie Joyner reports.

During his talks with Netanyahu on Tuesday, Blinken spelled out U.S. hopes that the death of Yahya Sinwar, Hamas's leader, will provide a new opportunity for peace. But Netanyahu's office has made no mention of any potential cease-fire yet.

For its part, Hamas has refused to free scores of hostages seized on October 7 of last year without an Israeli pledge to end the war and pull out of the territory.

Hours ahead of Blinken's visit, air raid sirens sounded in Tel Aviv, signaling incoming rockets from Lebanon. Hezbollah later claimed responsibility for Tuesday's attack, as well as a drone attack on Netanyahu's holiday home on Saturday, adding that there would be no negotiations while fighting continues.

Reuters correspondent Freddy Joyner.

U.S. State Department spokesman Vedant Patel said if North Korea sent troops to Russia, it would mark a dangerous and highly concerning development.

"We are, of course, going to continue to consult with our allies and partners on the implications of such a dramatic move. Certainly, if true, it would be another reckless and dangerous action both on the side of Russia, but of course on the side of the DPRK as well."

South Korea's spy agency said last week that North Korea sent 1,500 special operations forces to Russia this month, and South Korea Tuesday warned it could consider supplying weapons to Ukraine in response to allegations that North Korea dispatched troops to Russia.

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The Kremlin said Tuesday that Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping discussed Ukraine and other global issues during a meeting on the sidelines of a BRICS summit in the Russian city of Kazan. Reuters correspondent Alex Cohen has more.

Russian President Vladimir Putin called Chinese President Xi Jinping his "dear friend" as he praised the relationship between their countries and welcomed Xi to Russia for the opening of the BRICS summit.

Xi told Putin that chaos reigned internationally, but that Beijing's strategic partnership with Moscow was a force for stability amid the most significant changes seen in a century.

In May, the two leaders pledged a new era of partnership between the most powerful rivals of the United States, which they cast as an aggressive nation sowing chaos around the world.

A Kremlin spokesperson said Putin and Xi discussed Ukraine, their partnership and ways to cooperate in the future.

Reuters correspondent Alex Cohen.

U.S. intelligence officials warned Russia and Iran may encourage violent protests in the United States after next month's election.

According to a newly declassified memo, Russian military intelligence sought to recruit an American to organize protests in the U.S. Iran has also covertly supported protests in the U.S. over the war in Gaza.

The memo released on Tuesday says both countries may seek to organize or encourage violent protests as a way of undermining trust in election results and eroding national unity following a contentious campaign.

Fears that America's adversaries could seek to fan the flames of polarization have increased since the January 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.

Residents in Acapulco, Mexico, are struggling to rebuild their lives, one year after Hurricane Otis killed dozens of people and caused widespread destruction. Reuters correspondent ??? has more.

Entrepreneur Joaquin Salgado says residents are still struggling.

"We are still living with the impact, we have not overcome it economically or psychologically. It has had quite an impact on us. Acapulco, as everyone knows, was pretty much devastated, everyone had losses."

According to the Guerrero state government, over 220,000 homes were damaged.

Compounding the disaster for the city and Guerrero state was Hurricane John in September. Local media say[s] at least 18 people were killed when the storm hit, many due to landslides that crushed homes.

Reuters correspondent ???.

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