

VOA NEWS

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Hi, I'm VOA's Alexis Strobe with your world wide news update.

In a statement released on X on Friday, Israel Defense Forces spokesperson Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari confirmed Israel has started their response to Iranian attacks.

"Right now, the Israel Defense Forces is conducting precise strikes on military targets in Iran. The regime in Iran and its proxies in the region have been relentlessly attacking Israel since October 7 on seven fronts, including direct attacks from Iranian soil. Like every other sovereign country in the world, the State of Israel has the right and the duty to respond. Our defensive and offensive capabilities are fully mobilized. We will do whatever necessary to defend the State of Israel and the people of Israel."

Iranian state media reported the sound of explosions around Iran's capital, Tehran, without immediately elaborating. Iranian state television later identified some of the blasts as coming from air defense systems without offering more details.

VOA asked whether U.S. President Joe Biden has been briefed on the explosions in Iran. In response, National Security Council spokesperson Sean Savett said, "We understand that Israel is conducting targeted strikes against military targets in Iran as an exercise of self-defense and in response to Iran's ballistic missile attack against Israel on October 1. We would refer you to the Israeli government for more information on their operation."

A U.S. defense official told VOA Israel informed the U.S. before taking action in Iran, saying, "We were given a heads-up, but we're not involved."

This is VOA News.

Mozambique's capital was tense on Friday after protests ensued on Thursday in response to the country's ruling party retaining power in the most recent election, a move that extends its five-decade rule in the southern African state. Alice Rizzo from Reuters reports.

Protesters barricaded streets and set tires ablaze to dispute the election results, with the opposition accusing Frelimo of fraud. Frelimo's candidate, Daniel Chapo, is set to succeed President Filipe Nyusi after winning more than 70 percent of votes, according to the Electoral Commission.

His closest challenger, Venâncio Mondlane, backed by the Podemos party, came second, with 20 percent of the vote. Mondlane, who claims he is the rightful winner, called Friday's nationwide protests.

A European Union mission reported irregularities in vote counting and result alterations at local and district levels.

That was Reuters correspondent Alice Rizzo.

A video that purports to show votes for Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump being destroyed in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, was staged, according to Bucks County election officials who were quick to knock down the video, identifying it as fake within three hours after it began going viral.

In a statement, the Bucks County Board of Elections said the envelope and materials depicted in this video were clearly not authentic materials belonging to or distributed by the board.

The FBI later released a statement saying Russian actors made the video.

A NASA astronaut is hospitalized after returning to Earth after nearly eight months on the International Space Station. AP correspondent Jackie Quinn has more.

NASA isn't saying which crew member experienced difficulties and was hospitalized in Pensacola, now said to be in stable condition.

SpaceX broadcast the crew being lifted onto a recovery ship just off the Florida coast in the early morning.

"I can only imagine what it feels like to have to stand up after spending nearly eight months in space."

A trip delayed by Boeing's capsule trouble and by this month's Hurricane Milton.

I'm Jackie Quinn.

Taiwan is making a longshot push to join the International Monetary Fund. The democratically governed island's economy is similar in size to Poland's but absent from global organizations.

Taiwan's de facto embassy in the United States says membership at the IMF would help boost the island's financial resilience.

China, which sees Taiwan as a breakaway province and threatens to annex it by force, has blocked efforts to secure Taiwan's membership in global organizations. Beijing insists it represents Taiwan in international forums.

The Taiwanese effort comes as the IMF and World Bank hold their annual meetings this week.

The U.S. has a policy to advocate for Taiwan membership or observer status in international organizations.

The IMF has no comment.

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