

VOA NEWS

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

Fire officials say wildfires raging in Los Angeles have killed at least five people and injured many more. Reuters correspondent Jillian Kitchener reports.

Fast moving wildfires are raging out of control in Los Angeles, destroying hundreds of homes and businesses. Tens of thousands of people have been ordered to evacuate, including celebrities.

And on Wednesday, the wildfires turned deadly. Fierce winds were hurting firefighting efforts and fueling the flames, which have grown since they began on Tuesday. Officials said the winds have made it impossible to offer aerial support for the firefighting mission.

Reuters correspondent Jillian Kitchener.

Israel's military says troops have recovered the body of a hostage from Gaza, possibly alongside his son's remains. AP correspondent Donna Warder reports.

Hostage Yosef AlZayadni was believed to still be alive, but Israeli soldiers recovered the body of the 53-year-old man Wednesday in an underground tunnel in southern Gaza. Another set of remains could be those of his 23-year-old son Hamza, one of three of AlZayadni's children who were taken hostage when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel, killing 1,200 people.

AlZayadni was one of Israel's Palestinian minority who have Israeli citizenship.

The mayor of the town where AlZayadni lived, Talal Alkernawi, explained that Yosef and Hamza AlZayadni's names were on a list of hostages still alive, and that they had expected to bring them back.

The Israeli military says it found evidence suggesting that Hamza may have died in captivity.

The discovery comes as Israel and Hamas are considering a cease-fire deal.

I'm Donna Warder.

This is VOA News.

Two U.S. officials say the United States is set to give Ukraine another \$500 million in weapons as President Joe Biden's administration nears an end. AP correspondent Sagar Meghani reports.

The goal is to get Kyiv in a stronger negotiating position for potential talks with Russia before Donald Trump takes office.

"... and President Trump could get the strongest possible deal." :Secretary of State Antony Blinken hours before Pentagon counterpart Lloyd Austin is expected to announce the package in Germany.

The weapons would come straight from the military's existing stocks, and a defense official says the aim is to get them into Ukraine by month's end.

There's now a bit less than \$4 billion left of the money Congress has authorized for a Ukraine aid. Much will likely roll over to the Trump administration, which will decide whether to keep giving Kyiv weapons.

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

Donald Trump has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to intervene just days before the president-elect is said to be sentenced for his conviction stemming from hush money paid to a porn star. Reuters correspondent Freddie Joyner reports.

In a filing made public on Wednesday, Trump's lawyers asked the high court to immediately order a stay in the case, as Trump seeks an appeal to resolve questions of presidential immunity.

Trump, who won another term in the White House and is set to take office January 20, was convicted on 34 felony counts by a New York jury for illegally hiding payments to adult film actor Stormy Daniels, meant to buy her silence about what she says was a sexual encounter with the former reality TV star. Trump has denied the encounter and any wrongdoing.

The hush money case made Trump the first U.S. president, sitting or former, to be charged with a crime and also the first to be convicted.

Since the verdict, his lawyers have made two unsuccessful attempts to have the case tossed.

Reuters correspondent Freddie Joyner.

Former President Jimmy Carter lay in state Wednesday in the heart of the U.S. Capitol building. A state funeral Thursday will bring all of his living successors together under one roof to mourn him. VOA's Anita Powell reports from Washington.

Jimmy Carter died in late December at age 100 after nearly two years in hospice care in Georgia.

President Joe Biden will deliver the eulogy for his fellow Democrat.

"... while we may never see his likes again, we'd all do well to try to be a little more like Jimmy Carter."

Thursday's funeral includes Biden and all living presidents, including his predecessor and successor, Donald Trump.

Anita Powell, VOA News, Washington.

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