

# VOA NEWS

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

Hamas released Israeli hostages Iair Horn, Sagui Dekel Chen and Sasha Troufanov in Gaza on Saturday, and Israel freed hundreds of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in exchange after Egyptian and Qatari mediators helped avert a collapse of the fragile cease-fire. Sean Hogan from Reuters reports.

Earlier, the three Israelis were led onto a stage in Khan Yunis flanked by armed Hamas militants. They were then handed over to the Red Cross to be escorted to Israeli forces.

Families watched the live broadcast as the trio was safely released.

Busloads of Palestinian prisoners then arrived in Ramallah in the West Bank.

Nineteen Israeli and five Thai hostages have been released so far. Seventy-three are still in captivity, with around half of them declared dead in absentia by Israeli authorities.

That was Reuters correspondent Sean Hogan.

Russia claims to capture another Ukrainian village. AP correspondent Julie Walker has more.

Russia says its forces captured the village of Berezivka in eastern Ukraine. Kyiv's recent losses coincide with uncertainty over whether the U.S. will keep providing military aid.

Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelenskyy is urging the creation of an armed forces of Europe. Speaking at the Munich Security Conference, "Let's be honest. Now we can't rule out the possibility that America might say no to Europe on an issue that threatens it. Many, many leaders have talked about Europe that needs its own military, an army, an army of Europe."

Speaking at a meeting with Zelenskyy a day before, Vice President J.D. Vance said, "We want the war to come to a close."

President Trump says he wants to meet with Russian President Putin to discuss.

I'm Julie Walker.

This is VOA News.

German police said on Saturday that a 37-year-old woman and her two-year-old daughter died on Saturday from injuries they sustained when a man drove a car into a crowd in Munich on Thursday. VOA's Christina Menenti has more.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz on Saturday visited the site of the car-ramming attack in which over 30 people were injured and now two have died when a 24-year-old Afghan asylum seeker drove a car into a crowd.

"Ladies and gentlemen, it is very depressing to stand here where a terrible attack on peaceful citizens who have been seriously injured in the worst possible way where very many have been affected and all of us as citizens, too. But such things should not happen and that is why it must always be very clear that anyone who does something like that must expect the harshest punishment."

Christina Menenti, VOA News.

Turkey's foreign minister says his country would reconsider its military presence in northeastern Syria if that country's new leaders eliminate a Kurdish militant group designated as a terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States and the European Union.

Hakan Fidan spoke Saturday at the Munich Security Conference alongside Syrian Foreign Minister Hassan al-Shaibani, who did not comment on the remarks. Fidan has expressed such sentiments before.

The Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, has waged an insurgency against Turkey for decades, seeking greater autonomy for Kurds.

The federal agency that enforces workplace anti-discrimination laws now wants to toss out its own lawsuit. AP correspondent Donna Warder reports.

Under the Biden administration, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission had filed a lawsuit against Harmony Hospitality, LLC on behalf of a fired hotel employee in Alabama who identifies as non-binary male and gay.

Now the agency, under the Trump administration, is moving to toss out its own lawsuit, arguing the case conflicts with President Donald Trump's recent executive order that the federal government would recognize only two sexes, male and female.

Just last year, the EEOC updated its guidance, saying that deliberately using the wrong pronouns for an employee or refusing them access to bathrooms corresponding with their gender identity constituted a form of harassment. That followed a 2020 Supreme Court ruling that gay, lesbian and transgender people are protected from employment discrimination.

Donna Warder, Washington.

A 23-year-old man stabbed five passers-by in southern Austria in what police said was a random attack. They left a 14-year-old dead and four others injured.

The suspect was detained Saturday by police. He is a Syrian national with legal residence in Austria.

A police spokesperson told Austria's public broadcaster, ORF, a 42-year-old man who works for a food delivery company witnessed the incident from his car. He drove toward the suspect and helped prevent the attack from getting worse.

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