VOA NEWS

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From Washington, this is VOA news. I'm Christopher Cruise reporting.

Rescue workers continued to search for survivors Monday after a volcano erupted near Guatemala City, killing at least 62 people and covering nearby villages in thick layers of ash and mud.

Rescuers pulled at least ten people out alive. But the death toll is expected to rise.

Crews work in Escuintla, Sacatepéquez and Chimaltenango provinces.

Associated Press correspondent Mark Stevenson says thousands of Guatemalans have been forced to flee their homes.

The Guatemalan authorities say that they have now evacuated over 3,200 people from the towns and hamlets that lie around the fluxes of Volcan de Fuego.

La Aurora International Airport reopened Monday. It was closed briefly because of the threat to planes from the ash.

Does President Trump have, as he puts it, the "absolute right" to pardon himself? Reporters on Wednesday asked White House press secretary Sarah Sanders that question.

"Thankfully the president hasn't done anything wrong and wouldn't have any need for a pardon."

"But does he absolutely rule out doing that? Does he rule out ever issuing a pardon for himself?"

"Once again, thankfully the president hasn't done anything wrong and therefore wouldn't need one."

The president's lawyer Rudy Giuliani on Sunday said Trump pardoning himself would be "unthinkable and would probably lead to his immediate impeachment."

A suicide bomber blew himself up near a gathering of about 2,000 Afghan religious scholars in Kabul on Monday, killing at least seven people and as many as 14.

The meeting of clerics had been organized in support of the Afghan government's efforts to try to find a negotiated end to the deadly war.

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Ecuador's foreign minister says there is no timetable set to let WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange back on the Internet.

Associated Press correspondent Warren Levinson reports.

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange who has been in Ecuador's embassy in London since 2012 had his access to the Internet cut off in March when he posted comments about the separatist unrest in Catalonia.

"He has agreed or not intervening in internal politics of third-party countries and unfortunately he has not complied with his commitment."

Ecuador's Foreign Minister María Fernanda Espinosa says talks to give Assange back his Internet have been fruitless so far, so have negotiations to have him leave the embassy without being arrested by the UK for bail-jumping or the United States for spilling government secrets.

Warren Levinson, New York.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Monday demanded that the Organization of American States suspend Venezuela from the group until the country restores constitutional order.

He also called for OAS countries to "apply additional pressure on the regime of President Nicolás Maduro, including sanctions and further diplomatic isolation."

In a 7-2 vote, the United States Supreme Court has ruled in favor of a baker who refused to make a wedding cake for a same-sex couple.

Associated Press correspondent Ben Thomas reports.

The decision turned on what Justice Anthony Kennedy described in the majority opinion as the commission's hostility towards Jack Phillips' beliefs, saying it was inconsistent with the First Amendment guarantee that our laws be applied in a manner that is neutral toward religion.

But the court also made it clear it was not deciding the big issue in the case, whether a business can invoke religious objections to refuse service to gay and lesbian people. That, Kennedy wrote, "must await further elaboration."

Ben Thomas, Washington.

Saudi Arabia on Monday issued driver's licenses to ten women. The kingdom is preparing to lift the world's only ban on women driving in three weeks.

But at the same time, some women who had campaigned for the right to drive are under arrest and are facing charges related to their activism.

A government statement said the ten women who were issued licenses already held driver's licenses from other countries, including the United States, Britain, Lebanon and Canada. They took a brief driving test and had an eye examination before being issued the licenses at the General Department of Traffic in the capital, Riyadh.

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That's the latest world news from VOA.