VOA NEWS

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From Washington, this is VOA news. I'm David Byrd reporting.

A federal grand jury has indicted 12 Russian military officers for conspiring to hack into Democrat campaign computers during the 2016 presidential election.

Deputy Attorney General [Ron] Rod Rosenstein said the defendants attacked Hillary Clinton's campaign accounts as well as Democratic National Committee and other accounts.

"The defendants accessed the email accounts of volunteers and employees of a U.S. presidential campaign, including the campaign chairman, starting in March of 2016. They also hacked into the computer networks of a congressional campaign committee and a national political committee."

The charges come ahead of a highly anticipated summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Helsinki, Finland, on Monday.

Trump said at a press conference Friday he would absolutely ask Putin about Russian interference in the U.S. election.

President Trump is spending the weekend in Scotland after downplaying a newspaper report in which he was critical of British Prime Minister Theresa May.

Sagar Meghani reports for the AP.

A British tabloid newspaper reports the president blasted Theresa May in an interview. He calls it fake news.

"I didn't criticize the prime minister. I have a lot of respect for the prime minister."

But in a joint news conference at her country home said he apologized for the story while noting he said several good things about May and challenged reporters to listen to a recording.

May praised the U.S.-UK bond, which the president says is the strongest ever.

"I would say ... the highest level of special."

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

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U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo says that he "respectfully reinforced" border security when he met with Mexican president-elect Andrés Manuel López Obrador on Friday.

Pompeo said that the two countries are committed to working on trade, security, border and regional issues.

"We share nearly a 2,000-mile border. The United States is committed to making measurable progress that ensures the security on both sides of that border."

During his campaign, President Donald Trump had promised to build a giant wall with Mexico and to make Mexico pay for it.

Pompeo's delegation also met with Mexico's current president, Enrique Peña Nieto, and Foreign Minister Luis Videgaray to discuss the transition of power, trade, migration and border issues.

López Obrador takes office December 1.

A massive suicide bombing of an election rally in southwestern Pakistan killed at least 128 people Friday, including a candidate for a provincial assembly seat. More than 120 others were injured.

The Islamic State's Amaq News Agency claimed that the group was responsible for carrying out the bombing.

Friday's deadly attack in the Baluchistan province has fueled security concerns for heightened country-wide election-related activities ahead of the polls for the national assembly and four provincial legislatures.

The blast occurred just hours after a candidate for the national legislature, Akram Durrani, survived an assassination attempt during an election rally in his native northwestern city of Bannu. That attack killed four people and injured nearly 40 others but Durrani escaped unhurt.

Authorities in Pakistan arrested former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his daughter Maryam shortly after the two landed in Lahore on a commercial flight from Britain Friday.

An anti-corruption court had sentenced Sharif and his daughter in absentia to 10 years and seven years in prison, respectively, for failing to explain how they acquired expensive properties in London.

Tens of thousands of supporters and leaders of Sharif's party flooded the streets of Lahore all day Friday in anticipation of his arrest.

At least 54 people were killed and dozens injured in an airstrike in Syria's Deir el-Zour province late Thursday.

The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the attack killed Islamic State fighters and 28 civilians.

The monitor said it was not immediately clear whether planes from Iraq or from the U.S.-led coalition fighting Islamic State had carried out the raid.

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That's the latest world news from VOA.