VOA NEWS

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This is VOA news. I'm David Byrd in Washington.

More than 20 top Trump administration officials spent Thursday denying they were the author of an anonymous *New York Times* opinion piece that criticized President Donald Trump's what it called "petty and ineffective" leadership style.

AP's Sagar Meghani reports.

The president calls it "gutless." The vice president says "It's a disgrace." "They ought to do the honorable thing and they ought to resign." Telling WFTV in Florida, the newspaper itself "should be ashamed."

Pence's office says he had nothing to do with the opinion piece and several top administration officials are denying it as well.

Amid an intense and guessing game here in Washington over who did write it, even first lady Melania Trump is weighing in, saying to the writer, "You are not protecting this country, you are sabotaging it with your cowardly actions."

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

U.S. prosecutors on Thursday announced charges against a North Korean computer programmer in connection with a series of cyberattacks in recent years, including the 2014 hacking of Sony Pictures Entertainment and a 2016 attack on the Bangladesh central bank.

Prosecutors identified the hacker as Park Jin Hyok, an alleged member of a hacking team known as the Lazarus Group. The group is accused of engaging in a wide-ranging multiyear conspiracy to conduct computer intrusions and wire fraud around the world while operating out of North Korea, China and other countries.

Tracy Wilkison is an assistant U.S. attorney. "The North Korean-backed conspiracy attempted to crush freedom of speech in the U.S. and the U.K. It robbed banks around the world. And it created indiscriminate malware that paralyzed computers and disrupted the delivery of medical care."

The complaint says the group was also responsible for their ransomware used in the "WannaCry" attack in 2017.

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Brazilian far-right candidate Jair Bolsonaro has undergone successful surgery for injuries suffered in a stabbing.

At a campaign stop on Thursday, Bolsonaro's son, Flavio, said his father was stable after suffering wounded to the liver, lung and intestine.

Social media videos from the rally about 125 kilometers north of Rio de Janeiro show the candidate on supporter's shoulders when he is stabbed in the lower abdomen. He was rushed to a local hospital and underwent emergency surgery.

Police have detained a suspect in the attack.

Bolsonaro is a law-and-order candidate who routinely says Brazilian [p...] police, that is, should kill suspected drug traffickers and other criminals at will. He has openly praised Brazil's military dictatorship and in the past said it should have killed more people.

Britain, France, Germany, Canada and the United States pledged on Thursday to work to disrupt "the hostile activities of foreign intelligence networks" and called on Russia to disclose its nerve agent program.

In a joint statement, the other four countries said they backed Britain's assessment that Russian officers were behind an attack in March on a former Russian spy and his daughter in the English city of Salisbury using the nerve agent Novichok.

Karen Pierce is Britain's ambassador to the U.N. "The UK government has concluded that the two individuals named by the police investigation are in fact officers from the Russian Military Intelligence Service, also known as the GRU. This is a body of the Russian state."

Russia has denied the charges. Vassily Nebenzia is Russia's U.N. ambassador. He said the Russian Federation "categorically rejects all unfounded accusations," regarding its involvement in poisoning with toxic chemicals in March, 2018, in the city of Salisbury of Russian citizens, Sergei and Yulia Skripal, which were once again repeated by Prime Minister Theresa May in Parliament on the fifth of September.

Britain has charged two Russians in absentia with attempted murder.

India's Supreme Court has struck down a 19th century law criminalizing gay sex, bringing to a close a long drawn out battle to overturn a controversial law that was a remnant of the country's colonial past.

Calling the British era law "irrational, indefensible and manifestly arbitrary," Chief Justice Dipak Misra said the consensual sex between adults in a private space "cannot be denied as it is a matter of individual choice."

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