VOA NEWS

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This is VOA news. I'm Liz Parker.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif issued a warning Thursday as the war of words between the U.S. and Iran intensifies.

AP correspondent Rita Foley reports.

The U.S. says Iran is behind the drone and missile strike on Saudi Arabia's oil facilities over the weekend but Tehran denies it and is warning that any retaliatory attack would lead to "all-out war" with "a lot of casualties" in the words of Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

He says his country doesn't want a military confrontation but warns Tehran won't hesitate to defend itself. He spoke after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called the attack an "act of war."

Rita Foley, Washington.

Pompeo was in the United Arab Emirates' capital Abu Dhabi on Thursday. He met with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The two discussed the recent attack.

U.S. special envoy for Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad set to appear Thursday before a House of Representatives committee to answer questions about now-stalled peace talks with the Taliban and the Trump administration's plans now that the president has called off the negotiations.

Canadian leader Justin Trudeau admitting to an apologizing for wearing brown face makeup at a costume party in 2001.

"I take responsibility for my decision to do that. I shouldn't have done it. I should have known better. It was something that I didn't think was racist at the time, but now I recognize it was something racist to do and I am deeply sorry."

*Time* magazine posted a photo which it says was published in a private school yearbook where Trudeau worked as a teacher before entering politics.

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The leader of Israel's Blue and White party reiterated on Thursday that he wants a unity government. Here is Benny Gantz.

He said in Hebrew here Blue and White under my leadership won the elections. Blue and White is the biggest party.

Gantz's party is in a political deadlock with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's party two days after the country's second election.

Israelis were contending with the prospect of a third election after the unprecedented repeat election and neither Netanyahu nor his rivals hold a clear path to a coalition government.

Earlier Thursday, Netanyahu called for his main challenger to join him in forming a unity government.

The U.S. House Intelligence Committee is holding a closed-door session Thursday with Intelligence Community inspector general Michael Atkinson as lawmakers hope to learn more details of a secret whistleblower complaint that has sparked a legal battle between lawmakers and the Trump administration.

Atkinson's testimony comes as *The Washington Post* reported the complaint involves communications between President Donald Trump and a foreign leader that involved a "promise."

*The Post* said its report was based on two former U.S. officials familiar with the matter.

More than a dozen are dead in Afghanistan Thursday. Dozens more are injured after the Taliban claimed responsibility for a car bomb attack.

AP correspondent ??? reports.

The Taliban, who claimed responsibility for the bombing, have carried out nearly daily attacks since peace talks with the U.S. collapsed earlier this month.

The massive explosion destroyed part of the hospital in Qalat, the capital of southern Zabul province, and left a fleet of ambulances broken and battered.

Hours earlier, a drone attack in eastern Afghanistan's Nangarhar province blamed on U.S. forces killed and wounded as many as 30 people, most of them civilians.

There is no immediate response to a request for comment from the U.S. military in Afghanistan.

I'm ???.

Swedish teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg appeared before a U.S. Congress committee Wednesday. She urged law makers to "listen to the science" and take action on global climate change.

"I don't see a reason to not listen to the science. It's not just such a thing that we should be taking for granted. We listen to the current best-available, united science. It's just something that everyone should do."

The 16-year-old Thunberg has been in Washington since last week. She joined U.S. and indigenous activists for a protest designed to build support for a global climate strike on Friday and put pressure on lawmakers to take action on climate change.

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