VOA NEWS

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This is VOA news. I'm Marissa Melton.

Iran put its military capabilities on display Sunday with a series of parades to mark the 39th anniversary of the start of the Iran-Iraq war.

Iran's president is warning that foreign forces are threatening the security of the Gulf after [U.S.] the U.S. said it was deploying troops to the region.

Meanwhile, in an interview with ABC's This Week, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo says he believes President Trump's strategy on Iran is working.

"We are well on our way to forcing the Iranian regime to ultimately make the decision to become a normal nation. That's all we've ever asked."

The September 14 assault exposed the vulnerability of the region's oil facilities to drone and cruise missile attacks.

U.S. President Donald Trump says he did nothing wrong in a telephone conversation with the new president of Ukraine. News reports claim Mr. Trump allegedly urged him to investigate the son of former Vice President and 2020 Democratic presidential hopeful Joe Biden.

Speaking to reporters, President Trump says the whistleblower complaint from an intelligence official feels like the start of another "witch hunt."

"The conversation I had with the president of Ukraine was absolutely perfect, and people better find out who these people are that are trying to subvert our country because here we go again. These are bad people."

Mr. Trump has pushed for an investigation of the Bidens for weeks following news reports that explored whether Ukrainian energy company tried to secure influence in the United States by employing Biden's younger son, Hunter.

World leaders are gathering for their annual meetings at the U.N. General Assembly. The summit will take place tomorrow and involve more than 100 heads of state and government.

Only those who bring dynamic and concrete plans to mitigate the effects of global warming, however, will be invited to speak. That's at the word of U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres.

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Kurdish-led authorities in Syria are allowing hundreds of families linked to the Islamic State group to return home to the city of Raqqa.

VOA's Jim Bertel has more.

In an experimental reconciliation, Raqqa allowed the return of nearly 700 families from a displace camp dominated by former Islamic State group militants.

The city administration argues it's better to bring the families back than leave them stewing in radicalizing. But Raqqa residents deeply distrust the returnees, which the Islamic State ruled with a brutal hand for years and which suffered massive devastation in the fight to drive it out.

The return has been coordinated with Arab tribal sheikhs, who vouch for the returnees, acting as guarantors they will not cause trouble.

Jim Bertel, VOA news.

Protesters in Hong Kong trampled a Chinese flag, vandalized a subway station and set a fire across a wide street on Sunday as pro-democracy demonstrations took a violent turn once again.

The airport including the train terminal which has been a target before by protesters was heavily guarded and only passengers holding valid tickets were allowed to enter the terminal.

This traveler says he stuck right at the middle of it.

"We were aware that there are protests about midnight tonight, yes. That's why we came to the airport early, thinking that we have to ... flight was delayed. The change has bee delayed until tomorrow. So we shouldn't have come out."

The city's government announced new curbs on rail travel ahead of the latest in a series of planned protests targeting the airport.

The European Union will insist that border controls be put up along the Irish border if Britain leaves the bloc without a deal.

Jean-Claude Juncker, the European Commission president, told Sky News the EU will not bear any responsibility for the consequences that might arise from Britain's departure.

"The European Union is not leaving the United Kingdom, the United Kingdom is leaving the European Union."

"So who is responsible?"

"The United Kingdom, because we did not invent Brexit. We were never pleading in favor of any kind of Brexit. That's a British decision."

Britain is scheduled to leave the EU at the end of next month.

The World Health Organization says Tanzania failed to respond to requests about information on suspected Ebola cases. The WHO says it has been made aware of unofficial reports about several possible cases of Ebola in different locations in the east African country.

Officials in east and central Africa are on a high Ebola alert. They're seeking to avoid the spread of the disease that has experienced an outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo. That outbreak has killed more than 2,000 people since August, 2018.

I'm Marissa Melton. You're listening to VOA news.