VOA NEWS

October 28, 2019

This is VOA news. I'm Jim Bertel.

A U.S. official has confirmed with VOA that the U.S. military conducted an operation in Syria resulting in the death of Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

Reuters David Doyle has more.

Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi has been killed in a U.S. military operation, according to sources in Syria, Iraq and Iran as U.S. President Donald Trump prepares to make a major statement later on Sunday.

The offensive reportedly took place after midnight in Syria's northwestern Idlib province.

A commander of one the militant factions there said it involved helicopters, warplanes and a ground clash in the village of Barisha near the Turkish border and that Baghdadi was believed to have been killed.

A U.S. official speaking on condition of anonymity said Baghdadi was targeted in an overnight raid but was unable to say whether the operation was successful.

That is Reuters David Doyle reporting.

Turkey's army says an attack by Kurdish fighters in northeast Syria has killed one of its personnel and wounded five others. This springs Turkey's military death toll to 11 since the launch of its operation.

Despite that cease-fire and a second brokered by Russia, occasional skirmishes have continued.

Russia says its military police and Syrian border guards will "facilitate the removal" of the Kurdish from within 30 km of the border.

Hundreds of Iraqi demonstrators are continuing their anti-government protests Sunday in Baghdad's Tahrir Square. More than 60 protesters have been killed in clashes with police since the demonstrations began last week.

Iraq's elite Counter-Terrorism Service says it has been deployed to the area. It has been instructed to use all necessary measures to end the protests.

An Afghan politician confirms U.S. peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad is in Afghanistan's capital for the first visit since talks between the U.S. and Taliban collapsed last month.

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Afghan officials say the results of last month's presidential election will be announced on November 14.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says he wants a broad national unity government amid political deadlock over forming a government following last month's elections.

Speaking to his cabinet, he says such a coalition is essential for Israel to face what he said were mounting security challenges around the region.

Netanyahu's challenger, former army chief Benny Gantz, is currently trying to form a government after Netanyahu failed at his attempt.

The two are set to meet on Sunday.

Hong Kong police say anti-government protesters set fire to shops and hurled gas bombs on Sunday. This happened after riot police fired tear gas and water cannon to disperse thousands in the harbor-front hotel district.

The protesters had gathered to denounce perceived police brutality during more than four months of often-violent unrest in the Chinese-ruled city.

Police in Vietnam took hair and blood samples on Sunday to get DNA from relatives of people feared to be among the 39 who died in the back of a truck near London last week.

British police have been trying to identify the bodies.

Initially, British police believed the victims were Chinese but later sought help from the Vietnamese community. Chinese and Vietnamese officials are both working closely with British police.

Boris Johnson's Conservatives stepped up pressure on British lawmakers on Sunday to back the prime minister's bid to hold an early election and break Britain's Brexit impasse.

But with the main opposition Labor Party waiting for the European Union to grant a Brexit delay and two other parties launching their own bid for an even earlier election, observers say the government's bid [for] so far looks set to fail.

A senior U.S. diplomat on Saturday offered what Democrats characterized as corroborating testimony in the impeachment inquiry against President Trump.

Philip Reeker, the acting assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs, met with the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs, Intelligence and Oversight committees behind closed doors at the U.S. Capitol.

The Democratic-led impeachment investigation of President Trump continued Saturday with testimony of about eight hours.

California is bracing for "extreme" and "potentially historic" winds today as state officials in northern California ordered the evacuation of at least 50,000 more people with a nearby wildfire continuing to burn.

In addition, millions more will face power outages as the utility company, Pacific Gas & Electric, begins mass power shutoffs to a large number of customers.

And repeating our top story, a U.S. official has confirmed with VOA that the U.S. military conducted an operation in Syria resulting in the death of Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

I'm Jim Bertel, VOA news.