VOA NEWS

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VOA news. I'm Jim Randle.

The House Judiciary Committee here in Washington today got a detailed summary of the impeachment case against U.S. President Donald Trump.

Democrats charge abuses of authority and are expected to file formal charges against Mr. Trump this month.

AP correspondent Sagar Meghani reports that once again today, the atmosphere was rancorous.

Lawmakers sparring each other is normal. In this case, top House lawyers went added as the Judiciary Committee met to review the intelligence panel's findings against the president.

GOP counsel Steve Castor and Democratic investigator Daniel Goldman fought over the significance of the president's July phone call with Ukraine's leader.

"To impeach a president who 63 million people voted for over eight lines in a call transcript is baloney."

"That sorely ignores the vast amount of evidence that we collected of a months-long scheme [by the] directed by the president."

The hearing set off a key week before a full House vote on impeachment articles is expected by Christmas.

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

Today's public hearing lasted nine and a half hours.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelenskiy met for the first time today in Paris for discussions on resolving the military conflict in eastern Ukraine.

The fighting has claimed more than 13,000 lives since 2014.

We have a report from AP correspondent Charles De Ledesma.

Both of the leaders are sitting down in the French capital along with the leaders of France and Germany.

The talks focusing on the implementation of a 2015 peace agreement for eastern Ukraine that was brokered by Paris and Berlin but is largely stalled. A major breakthrough at the summit is unlikely and Ukrainian protesters are heaping pressure on Ukraine's leader not to surrender too much to Putin at their first face-to-face meeting.

I'm Charles De Ledesma.

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A New Zealand volcano erupted today while tourists were exploring White Island. Dozens are feared dead.

Authorities say the site was still too dangerous for police and rescuers to search for the missing.

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern: "We know that there were a number of tourists on or around the island at the time both New Zealanders and visitors from overseas. I know there will be a huge amount of concern and anxiety for those who had loved ones on or around the island at the time. And I can assure them police are doing everything they can."

The U.S. Justice Department's inspector general has released his report on the investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election. We get a report from AP correspondent Ben Thomas.

The inspector general's report finds no evidence of the political bias President Trump claims tainted the Russia probe. But a summary of the report obtained by the Associated Press does cite performance failures at the FBI's chain of command and 17 significant errors or omissions in surveillance applications for Trump campaign aide Carter Page.

At the same time, the inspector general says there was no intentional misconduct and the FBI was justified in opening its investigation.

Attorney General William Barr is rejecting that finding, calling the probe "intrusive."

Ben Thomas, Washington.

The report is well short of what President Trump wanted to see as he continued condemning the investigation and the investigators.

"They fabricated evidence and they lied to the courts and they did all sorts of things to have a go their way and this was something that we can never allow to happen again."

Experts continue weighing the chance of U.S. recession. President Trump's reelection chances could very well be affected by which predictions are realized.

AP correspondent Rita Foley.

The nation's business economists think the economy is growing but more slowly. Two point three percent in 2019 they estimate, slowing to 1.8 percent in 2020.

What about a recession? They put the odds of a recession by the end of next year at 43 percent. But the chance of a recession by mid-2021 66 percent, they say.

Half the respondents call trade tensions the number one economic risk through the end of next year.

The survey is from the National Association for Business Economics.

Rita Foley, Washington.

Malaysia has begun a vaccination campaign in a rural town on Borneo island after a 3-month-old boy was confirmed to have polio in the country's first case of the highly infectious virus in 27 years.

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