

BBC NEWS

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BBC News with Sue Montgomery.

Syrians have taken to the streets of the capital, Damascus, to celebrate Donald Trump's decision to lift long-running U.S. economic sanctions. Mr. Trump made the announcement in Saudi Arabia, where he was hosted by the de facto ruler, Mohammed bin Salman. Our chief international correspondent, Lyse Doucet, says it's hugely significant for Syria.

The new leadership which took over after the ousting of the decades-old dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad inherited an economy which is strangled by an extensive web of international and U.S. sanctions. The Europeans have started to lift them. The sanctions have to be lifted if Syria is to have any chance at developing economically. The U.N. says 90% of Syrians are now living under the poverty line.

A big Israeli airstrike on a hospital compound in southern Gaza has killed a large number of people. The Hamas-run civil defense agency said at least 28 died when six devices struck the European Hospital in Khan Younis almost simultaneously.

Dr. Tom Potokar was in the building at the time.

"There was a lot of damage in the corridor, structural damage, cracks in the walls, parts of the ceiling come down, masonry on the floor. Up in the operating theater one of the local nursing colleagues was injured when I went up to the operating theater. They were on a stretcher, blood coming from their head and arm. Fortunately not too badly injured."

According to the Israeli military, numerous steps were taken to minimize civilian casualties. It said the site was a Hamas command center.

The U.N. aid chief has criticized Israel's proposed plan for aid distribution in Gaza, calling it a "cynical sideshow and a deliberate distraction" from continued violence and displacement. Tom Fletcher told the U.N. Security Council no food, water, medicine or tents had entered Gaza for over 10 weeks.

The Palestinian ambassador to the U.N., Riyad Mansour, said urgent action was needed to end the suffering.

"We call on the states represented around this table and on all states represented within these United Nations to consider as a matter of urgency all possible steps, all possible steps, barring none, to break this inhumane siege and to end this violent forced famine."

Israel says it will not allow supplies in until Hamas releases all remaining hostages.

For the first time a U.S. federal judge has ruled that the government can use an 18th century wartime law to speed up deportations of illegal migrants. But the judge in Pennsylvania said migrants must be given 21 days notice and a chance to appeal.

World News from the BBC.

Pakistan has ordered an Indian diplomat to leave the country within 24 hours, declaring them persona non grata. Officials in Islamabad say the staff member at the Indian High Commission in Islamabad was involved in activities not in line with their diplomatic role.

The move comes after India expelled a Pakistani official over spying allegations. Tensions between the two countries remain high.

The American film director, Quentin Tarantino, has officially kicked off this year's Cannes Film Festival, one of the biggest events in the film world.

At the opening ceremony, the veteran actor, Robert De Niro, was honored for his career. He used his moment on stage to criticize President Trump for slashing arts funding, calling him a "philistine."

The first of two semi-final nights in the Eurovision Song Contest has taken place in the Swiss city of Basel. Fifteen countries have competed for 10 of the places in Saturday's grand final.

Among the favorites are Sweden, with a catchy tribute to sauna culture. Charlotte Gallagher was watching them.

They did really well. They are a huge favorite here in Basel. They're also currently the bookies' favorite as well, which is no surprise really, because if there's one thing that Sweden does really well, it's writing a Eurovision banger. It could well be going back to Sweden next year. It's a hugely popular song, it's got this great staging, they're sat in a sauna, so it really catches the eye.

The second semi-final takes place on Thursday.

Tributes have been paid to the former president of Uruguay, "Pepe" Mujica, who has died at the age of 89. During his single term in office, he gave away much of his salary and continued to live in a small farmhouse outside the capital, Montevideo.

And that's the latest bulletin from BBC News.