

BBC NEWS

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Hello, I'm Moira Alderson with the BBC News.

Doctors in Britain have announced that eight babies have been born using a pioneering three-person IVF technique to prevent them from being born with devastating mitochondrial disease. The procedure combines the egg and sperm from the mother and father with a tiny amount of DNA from the egg of a second donor woman.

Bobby McFarland is Professor of Pediatric Mitochondrial Medicine at Newcastle University.

"To see the relief and joy on the faces of the parents of these babies after such a long wait and such fear about the consequences for them from their family histories. It's brilliant to be able to see these babies live, thriving and developing normally."

Syria says its army has begun to withdraw from the mainly Druze city of Suwayda. More than 350 people have died since last weekend, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. Israel says that Syrian forces in Suwayda have been attacking Druze civilians. The U.S. has been putting pressure on all sides to come to an agreement. Our State Department correspondent Tom Bateman is in Washington.

What the Americans have been doing was talking to both countries and other parties involved to try and get this de-escalation. So we now have a statement from Marco Rubio saying that they have agreed steps about taking this forward and that they fully expect both or all parties, they said, to implement these.

The mayor of Moscow says Russian forces have shot down three Ukrainian drones which were targeting the city. There's been no word so far on any casualties or damage. Russia's Defense Ministry said 48 Ukrainian drones had been destroyed on Wednesday evening.

In the southern Russian city of Belgorod, a Ukrainian drone killed one person and injured six others. On Wednesday, a Russian airstrike hit a busy shopping area in the town of Dobropillia near the eastern front line, killing at least one person.

President Trump has launched another personal attack on the chairman of the U.S. central bank, saying Jerome Powell was a "knucklehead" who was doing a lousy job. The president's repeatedly criticized Mr. Powell for not cutting interest rates and there's renewed speculation that he might fire him.

The influential Republican senator John Kennedy had this warning for the president.

"If you fire the chairman of the Federal Reserve, you will see the stock market crash and you will see the bond market crash. It would have a huge impact on us borrowing money to fund government."

The main stage at the popular dance music festival Tomorrowland in Belgium has been destroyed by a fire. The first acts are due to perform in the town of Boom on Friday. The line-up has hundreds of artists, including David Guetta and Swedish House Mafia.

Four hundred thousand people were expected to attend over two weekends. The organizers said no one was hurt and that they're working on a solution ahead of Friday.

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The Togolese government has defended the use of force to quell a series of protests against constitutional reforms that paved the way for the Niasingbe family to extend its five-decade rule. Since June, people have also been angered by the arrest of government critics.

The minister of public administration told the BBC that activists living abroad were instigating violence to destabilize the government.

The Canadian company, Couche-Tard, says it's halting its efforts to buy the Japanese corner shop giants Seven & I, the parent company of 7-Eleven. Couche-Tard offered \$47 billion in a takeover bid, but blamed its withdrawal on what it called a "calculated campaign of obfuscation and delay." There was resistance in Japan to the idea of a foreign company acquiring a chain, which is a part of daily life for many Japanese.

President Trump says Coca-Cola will start using cane sugar in the recipe for its soft drinks for the American market. The exact formula has been a secret, but it is sweetened with high-fructose corn syrup. Arunade Mukherjee has more from Washington.

In a post on his social media platform Truth Social, President Trump says Coca-Cola had agreed to using real cane sugar in the U.S. as a result of his conversations with the company. He told his followers, quote, "You'll see, it's just better."

Mr. Trump's health secretary, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., has voiced concern about corn syrup's health impact. Mr. Kennedy in the past has also been specifically critical of how much sugar forms part of the American diet.

The largest piece of rock from Mars ever known to have landed on Earth has sold at auction in New York for over \$5 million. The 25-kilogram meteorite was found in the Sahara Desert in Niger in 2023. It was dislodged

from the surface of Mars by an asteroid strike in recent years and carried to Earth. Only 400 Martian meteorites have ever been found on Earth.

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