

# BBC NEWS

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Hello, I'm Neil Nunes with the BBC News.

President Emmanuel Macron has announced that France will officially recognize a Palestinian state, making it the first major Western power to do so. Hamas has called it "a positive step." Israel said the planned move rewarded terrorism. Here's Lyse Doucet.

France had hinted for months it would recognize Palestinian statehood. Now it joins nearly 150 other countries which have previously done so. But it's first in the G7 group of industrialized nations to take this step.

President Macron called for a demilitarized state of Palestine which would fully recognize Israel. There was no alternative, he said.

Palestinian officials were quick to welcome his move. But the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said a Palestinian state would be a launchpad to annihilate Israel.

The United States has joined Israel in recalling its negotiators from the Gaza ceasefire talks in Doha. The U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff accused Hamas of showing a lack of desire to reach a deal and of failing to act in good faith. Hamas has expressed surprise, saying it was keen to continue negotiations. This assessment from Tom Bateman.

I think, in part, this is a pressure tactic because they know that Hamas regarded this as their final response to the current proposal on the table. Clearly the Israelis are not happy with it. My sense is, and in the build-up to this announcement by Mr. Witkoff, it was clear the Americans were gonna do something that they hoped would shift the dial. So I think they're still in this process, even though they're pulling their team out of Doha. They are saying that otherwise they will pursue an alternative without these talks.

The U.S. Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche has interviewed Ghislaine Maxwell, the former girlfriend of the late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. She's serving a 20-year prison sentence in the U.S. state of Florida for sex trafficking. A BBC correspondent in Washington says Mr. Blanche may be seeking information from her about other people who had committed crimes against Epstein's victims.

Five Canadian ice hockey players have been found not guilty of sexually assaulting a woman in a hotel room in Ontario in 2018. The details from Arunade Mukherjee.

The judge pointed to irregularities in the woman's testimony. She said that her statements reflected an uncertain memory and that it did not line up with the evidence that had been presented by the prosecution.

Now, the woman's lawyer said her client was very disappointed and added that when a person summons the courage to disclose their story, it's the worst possible outcome when someone is disbelieved. Now, this woman had testified that she was intoxicated and felt fearful of the men, and they've argued that the woman did not have a motive to fabricate the story.

World News from the BBC.

The former leader of the British Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, is launching a new political party. He said it would be grassroots-led, based on communities, trade unions and social movements.

The launch statement called for a mass redistribution of wealth and power. The new party marks a further fragmentation in Britain's traditional two-party political landscape.

Peruvian customs officials have seized a huge consignment of mercury, which they believe was due to be used for illegal gold mining in Bolivia. It's believed to be the biggest seizure of mercury in the region.

There's been a surge in small-scale gold mining across the Amazon in response to a sharp rise in the value of the metal.

Jorge Gallo is from Customs Control.

"The finding of this stone with mercury, with a total weight of 20 metric tons, represents one of the heaviest blows in our fight against illegal mining. We identified a shipment that came from Mexico bound for Bolivia, with many indications that made us think the cargo they were declaring wasn't correct, or that a product was added that was risky for the country."

The human resources boss of a U.S. tech firm who was caught on camera embracing the company's chief executive at a Coldplay concert has resigned. The clip of Kristin Cabot and Andy Byron turning away from the camera in shock has been viewed online worldwide. Both are married to other people.

The U.S. jazz musician and band leader Chuck Mangione has died. He was 84. Mangione was best known for his 1970s instrumental hit "Feels So Good."

During a long career based on his dazzling fugal performances, he won two Grammy Awards and recorded 30 albums. The jazz great Dizzy Gillespie was a family friend.

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