

# BBC NEWS

July 26, 2025

BBC World News, I'm Tom Dewsbury, hello.

A former U.S. Special Forces colonel who was hired by the U.S. and Israeli-backed group distributing food in Gaza has told the BBC he's never witnessed such indiscriminate brutality against civilians.

Anthony Aguilar worked alongside the Israeli military and American contractors at sites run by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation. He told the BBC he resigned after witnessing desperate crowds being attacked with mortar rounds and tank fire.

"In my entire career have I never witnessed the level of brutality and use of indiscriminate and unnecessary force against a civilian population, an unarmed, starving population. I've never witnessed that in all of the places I've been deployed to war until I was in Gaza at the hands of the IDF and U.S. contractors."

Israel and GHF continue to insist their forces have not targeted civilians.

The British Prime Minister Keir Starmer is facing growing pressure to recognize Palestinian statehood. Two hundred and twenty-one MPs have signed a cross-party letter urging him to grant recognition at a U.N. conference next week. Sir Keir said any recognition of statehood must await a ceasefire.

"Alongside our closest allies, I am working on a pathway to peace in the region, focused on the practical solutions that will make a real difference to the lives of those who are suffering in this war. Recognition of a Palestinian state has to be one of those steps but it must be part of a wider plan which ultimately results in a two-state solution and lasting security for Palestinians and Israelis."

He added that Britain would do everything possible to airdrop aid into Gaza and to evacuate Palestinian children requiring urgent medical assistance.

Cambodia's ambassador to the United Nations says his country wants an immediate and unconditional ceasefire with Thailand after two days of deadly cross-border clashes. The ambassador was speaking after a closed-door meeting of the Security Council in New York. There's been no comment from the Thai side.

President Trump's begun a five-day trip to Scotland where he'll visit two golf clubs he owns and meet British and EU leaders. Speaking on his arrival, he criticized the European approach to immigration, saying they wouldn't have a Europe anymore if they didn't stop what he called this "horrible invasion."

"On immigration, you better get your act together. You're not going to have a Europe anymore. You gotta get your act together. And we, you know, as you know, last month we had nobody entering our country, nobody. Shut it down. And we took out a lot of bad people that got there with Biden. Biden was total stiff and what he allowed to happen, but you're allowing it to happen to your countries."

Turning to trade, he said he was looking forward to meeting the EU chief, Ursula von der Leyen, on Sunday and that there was a 50-50 chance of a trade deal.

World News from the BBC.

President Trump has again denied being told his name appeared in files related to the convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. This puts him at odds with reports in the U.S. media quoting White House officials that the Attorney General Pam Bondi had informed the President his name was in the Epstein files.

Jeffrey Epstein's accomplice, Ghislaine Maxwell, was questioned by Justice Department officials for a second day on Friday. Jeffrey Epstein died in a New York prison cell six years ago.

Britain's criticized the Hong Kong authorities for issuing arrest warrants for pro-democracy activists living in the U.K. The Foreign Secretary David Lammy and the Home Secretary Yvette Cooper described it as an instance of "transnational repression."

The activists are among 19 living abroad who feature in a bounty for information leading to their arrest. They stand accused of national security crimes under Hong Kong's draconian security law imposed by Beijing.

Hundreds of anti-government demonstrators have protested in the Tunisian capital on the fourth anniversary of President Kais Saied's power grab, which saw parliament suspended and rule by decree. Marching in Tunis, they said the country had descended into authoritarianism, with mass arrests and politically motivated trials silencing the opposition.

France's highest court annulled an arrest warrant for the former Syrian leader Bashar al-Assad. It was issued as part of an investigation into chemical attacks during Syria's civil war. The court said it was invalid as presidential immunity covered even alleged war crimes.

But the court's president, Christophe Soulard, said fresh warrants could still be issued.

"The plenary assembly cancels the arrest warrant. However, it points out that since Mr. Bashar al-Assad is no longer in office, new arrest warrants have or could be delivered against him for actions which may constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity."

Mr. Assad denies involvement in the 2013 attacks on Douma and Eastern Ghouta.

BBC World News.