

BBC NEWS

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BBC News with Sue Montgomery.

The main group campaigning for the release of Israeli hostages in Gaza has said Israel's strike on Qatar proves Benjamin Netanyahu is the only obstacle to their return. The Israeli attack on Hamas leaders on Tuesday has drawn strong condemnation at home and abroad. Olivia Noon reports.

The Hostages and Missing Families Forum said that every time a deal approached, the Israeli Prime Minister sabotaged it. Their statement came in response to Mr. Netanyahu seeking to defend the Qatar strike. He claimed that killing Hamas chiefs there would have helped to release the hostages.

The U.S. Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, is on his way to Israel for what's likely to be difficult discussions. Boarding his plane, he said President Trump was not happy about the attack.

Qatar, a key mediator in the Gaza conflict and U.S. ally, has announced a meeting of regional leaders on Monday to discuss what it's called Israeli "state terrorism."

Romania has reported a Russian drone incursion into its airspace, the second NATO country to do so. Fighter jets were scrambled in response. Romania's defense minister said the breach occurred during a Russian attack on neighboring Ukraine. Poland also deployed aircraft after a second threat of drone strikes in the east of the country.

British police say more than 150,000 people have taken part in a march organized by the far-right in London. At least 25 people were arrested for violence during the "Unite the Kingdom" protest. Elon Musk addressed the [pu...] protesters virtually, claiming free speech was endangered. Here's John Sudworth.

The march was organized by the far-right activist, Tommy Robinson, in support of "free speech," he said. The counter-demonstration was smaller, with marchers saying they were here to stand against hatred.

"We are here for the people, the immigrants are welcome, and we are here to show that ..."

With further clashes in the past few hours, the police say there's been significant aggression from Unite the Kingdom protesters. Having made it clear from the start that they'd take a robust approach, they're being tested.

U.S. officials say they're looking into a prisoner exchange with the Taliban after Washington's special envoy and hostages made a rare visit to Afghanistan. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Adam Boller had gone to Kabul to explore what's possible.

"Our special envoy for people who have been unlawfully detained has been having conversations for a while. I think he went there to explore what's possible. Obviously it will be the president's decision in terms of any trades or any exchanges, but we most certainly want any Americans or anyone who's being unlawfully detained to be released."

According to Washington, Mahmood Habibi is the most high-profile American detainee in Afghanistan.

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The new French Prime Minister, Sébastien Lecornu, says he will drop his predecessor's plans to scrap two public holidays intended to help reduce public debt. It comes after the Fitch ratings agency downgraded France's credit score over concerns that [none] not enough is being done to cut the budget deficit.

Malawi's two main presidential hopefuls have held their final rallies ahead of Tuesday's polling. The incumbent, Lazarus Chakwera, told a crowd in the capital, Lilongwe, that he'd heard and taken to heart complaints.

In the second city of Blantyre, the former president, Peter Mutharika, told supporters he wanted to rescue the country.

The Belgian prime minister says he attended a concert by a German orchestra whose invitation to a Belgian festival was withdrawn because of its association with the new Israeli conductor. Bart De Wever said he travelled to Essen to strongly condemn the decision and to personally thank the conductor, Lahav Shani.

The cancellation of the Munich Philharmonic's planned performance at the Flanders Festival Ghent had prompted accusations of anti-Semitism.

A Nigerian celebrity chef has attempted to make the world's largest pot of Jollof rice, a popular West African dish, as Camilla Mills reports.

Thousands of people, including influencers and celebrities, gathered in Lagos to watch Hilda Baci's latest world record bid.

A crane was used to lift the custom-made pot onto a scale for official verification, but ... it gave way under its own weight and buckled. Fortunately, the massive dish, which included 4,000kg of rice, was salvaged, but it's unclear if the weigh-in will be recognized by Guinness.

After nine hours of cooking, a group of assistants used massive wooden spatulas to dish out the food to spectators.

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