

BBC NEWS

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Hello, I'm Chris Barrow with the BBC News.

Diplomats in Tanzania say there's credible evidence at least 500 people have been killed in two days of clashes between protesters and security forces over disputed election results. Tanzania's foreign minister has denied the report, but a senior opposition politician, John Kitoka, told the BBC police and foreign mercenaries were killing with impunity.

"Our own reports indicate that more than 500 people have been killed by the police, but there are also elements that consider it to be mercenaries from a neighboring country who have actually been hired to carry out the massacre. We can provide evidence of dead bodies, we can provide evidence of those perpetrators of human rights violations in the country, but with the internet shut down, how can I be able to do that?"

President Trump has denied reports of imminent military strikes against Venezuela. His secretary of state, Marco Rubio, delivered the same message, dismissing a newspaper report about a U.S. operation as "fake." Washington says forces are there to tackle drug trafficking, accusing the Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, of being a drug cartel leader. Here's Mimi Swaby.

We're seeing an increasing build-up of military equipment in the Caribbean, South Caribbean, in recent months. We've seen fighter jets, warships and thousands of troops amassing in this region, and that presence will significantly expand in the coming weeks with the arrival of Gerald Ford Aircraft Carrier Strike Group. We're seeing more military hardware, more combat capability, as well as more troops there.

Mr. Maduro is taking this incredibly seriously as well. We've seen him mobilize thousands of troops on the Colombian frontier as well as in key port cities, trying to defend what he sees as an imminent invasion of his country. He suggested that Donald Trump isn't after drug traffickers at all, but actually wants to access Venezuela's rich oil reserves.

Several days on from Hurricane Melissa's battering of Jamaica, the situation in the small town of Black River in the west of the country remains desperate. People's homes and possessions are reduced to piles of debris and their livelihoods ruined. They're resorted to scavenging. Jamaica's military and police are helping recovery operations. Nada Tawfik has managed to reach Black River.

When we got here, we were all shocked. When you see the devastation and you understand the power of those 185 mile per hour winds. Locals tell us stories about, for example, an elderly couple that died when their house collapsed on them and that their bodies still haven't been recovered. So when officials talk about unverified reports and fears that the death toll could rise. Some here have no doubt that that will be the case.

The prime minister has actually now given the island an all clear so that those recovery operations can get going much more quickly.

World news from the BBC.

Two federal judges have ruled that the Trump administration cannot suspend food aid for millions of Americans because of the government shutdown. They said the government must use contingency funds to pay for the benefits known as SNAP or food stamps.

A French court has handed jail sentences of up to four years to four Bulgarian men for desecrating a Jewish Holocaust memorial in Paris with red handprints. One of them remains at large. Prosecutors have linked the incident last year to the Russian government and its attempts to "destabilize" Western countries. Andrew Harding reports.

Three unemployed Bulgarian men, one with a swastika tattoo on his chest, admitted painting dozens of red hand marks on a Holocaust memorial in the center of Paris last year. But all claimed they were unwitting pawns in a Kremlin plot, that they'd been duped by friends, that they'd done it for the money or for little more than a bit of excitement.

But in a way, the banality of it is the whole point. The hapless Bulgarians are evidence of Moscow's ever evolving tactics in its hybrid war against the West.

President Trump has stated that Christianity is facing an existential threat in Nigeria and he's adding it to a State Department watch list for countries of particular concern. He posted on social media that thousands of Christians have been killed by radical Islamists in what he called "mass slaughter."

Mr. Trump said the U.S. was ready to save Christians around the world.

Spain's foreign minister has acknowledged the pain and injustice inflicted on indigenous people during the Spanish conquest of the Americas after Mexico renewed calls for an official apology.

José Manuel Albares was speaking at the opening of an exhibition in Madrid of indigenous Mexican art. He said the injustice of the conquest five centuries ago should not be denied or forgotten.

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