

BBC NEWS

November 9, 2025

BBC News with Sue Montgomery.

Senators in the United States have held a rare Saturday session to try to find a solution to the record-breaking government shutdown. Republicans have rejected an offer by Democrats to pass the current funding bill in exchange for a one-year extension to health care subsidies, a move condemned by the Senate minority leader, the Democrat Chuck Schumer.

"This is not negotiating in a shutdown. It's simply agreeing to maintain current funding levels. A one-year extension is something many Republicans themselves have said they want. It's something a great many Americans support. Fifty-five percent of Trump supporters support it after all. So it's alarming that Republicans even refuse to acknowledge we have an immediate crisis right now that needs fixing."

But the Senate majority leader, Republican John Thune, said talks over the last 24 hours had been positive.

The Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa has arrived in the U.S. for a landmark visit that will see him hold talks with President Trump in Washington. Mr. Sharaa, the former leader of an Islamist militant group who once had a \$10 million U.S. bounty on his head, will be the first Syrian president to visit the White House as Tom Bailey reports.

President al-Sharaa arrived in the U.S. from Brazil, where he'd been among world leaders attending the U.N.'s latest climate change summit. His latest activities on the global stage are being seen as further evidence of a push for Syria to play an active role in the international community after decades in the wilderness under the former President Bashar al-Assad.

During his Washington visit, Mr. al-Sharaa, a former Islamist fighter himself, is widely expected to commit to a U.S.-led coalition against Islamic State. His arrival came just hours after his government announced a series of raids on IS targets across several Syrian provinces.

Bolivia and the United States are restoring diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level after a 17-year break. The announcement was made by the new center-right Bolivian President Rodrigo Paz and the visiting U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau. Mr. Paz was sworn in on Saturday.

Ukrainian engineers have been working to restore power supplies after Russian attacks on energy infrastructure caused blackouts in many areas. James Landale is in Kyiv.

The main target was all in energy infrastructure and I think that is where the Russians are really focusing their attentions right now. They want to try and shut down Ukraine. They want it to stop working so that it can't actually look after itself. This is not just about damaging Ukrainian morale by making it hard for people to live in cold apartment blocks. This is about doing everything that Russia can to try and shut down Ukraine's economy by basically reducing the amount of electricity this country has.

BBC News.

The Federal Aviation Administration in the United States has issued an order prohibiting the flight of McDonnell Douglas MD-11 cargo planes after last week's deadly crash in Kentucky. The FAA said its directive had been prompted by the accident in which the left-hand engine and its pylon detached during take-off. As a result, it ordered that planes must be grounded until they had been inspected and any corrective action taken.

Saudi Arabia has promised to build more mid-range tourist accommodation after years of focusing on the luxury market. Hotel rooms in the current's main Red Sea resorts currently cost around \$2,000 a night. The government has now acknowledged cheaper options are necessary.

Archivists at Lincoln Cathedral Inn in England have discovered a handwritten dinner invitation from the author Lewis Carroll. It's addressed at the cathedral's then choir master, one of several guests believed to have inspired scenes and characters in Carroll's famous children's tale, "Alice in Wonderland." Ella Bicknell reports.

"Come, come, my dear. Don't you care for tea?" "Why, yes, I'm very fond of tea."

Whether it's the Disney animation, Tim Burton's dark re-imagining or Lewis Carroll's original tale, the Mad Hatter's Tea Party remains one of literature's most famous gatherings. Now a newly uncovered handwritten invitation is bringing Carroll's own social gatherings to life.

The letter dates back to 1875 and was found carefully folded and laid on red velvet. The cathedral's curator, Fern Dawson, has called the discovery a "hidden gem."

In tennis, Elena Rybakina has won the season-ending WTA Finals after defeating the world number one Aryna Sabalenka in straight sets in Saudi Arabia. She secured a winner's check of \$5.2 million.

BBC News.