

BBC NEWS

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

The United States says it seized an oil tanker off the coast of Venezuela for the second time in less than two weeks. The ship has been verified as Panamanian-flagged tanker and was reportedly carrying Chinese-owned cargo. Here's Jacob Evans.

In an eight-minute video posted online by the U.S. Secretary for Homeland Security Kristi Noem, soldiers can be seen descending from a helicopter hovering above a large oil tanker. Ms. Noem said the vessel was last docked in Venezuela and was carrying sanctioned oil used to fund narco-terrorism, but offered no evidence.

On Tuesday, Donald Trump announced a blockade of all sanctioned oil leaving and arriving in Venezuela by sea. Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro has accused Washington of trying to steal his country's oil.

In recent weeks, the U.S. has also been striking smaller boats in the region accused of smuggling drugs, killing dozens of people.

Caracas labeled the seizure a grave act of international piracy and said it would not go unpunished.

There's growing anger among some of Jeffrey Epstein's victims over the restricted number and heavy redactions of files released on Friday by the U.S. Department of Justice. One survivor, Liz Stein, said she wanted all evidence of Epstein's sex crimes made public. Sean Dilley is in Washington.

We know that it's deeply unsatisfying for the survivors of Jeffrey Epstein. The Department of Justice, who had a 30-day notice of their deadline to publish anything that wasn't exempt from publication, haven't done so. They say the volume of documents means that the publication is incomplete. So more accusations of a cover-up to protect a predominantly rich man, more accusations that it's political in the nature of its release. But that's something the White House firmly rejects. They say that President Trump's administration is among the most transparent when it comes to publishing these documents.

It's emerged that a photo of the former Prince Andrew released as part of the Epstein files was taken at Sandringham, a royal residence. He's shown lying across the laps of several women, their faces redacted. Epstein's jailed associate Ghislaine Maxwell stands behind. Here's Noor Nanji.

Ghislaine Maxwell, who was later convicted of sex trafficking, hovers in the background smiling at the former Prince Andrew. Andrew has always denied any wrongdoing. Simply appearing in the photos or documents is not evidence of wrongdoing.

Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor may no longer be a prince, but these disclosures will be an unwelcome distraction for the royal family as they prepare for their traditional Christmas celebrations.

Lawyers for the man accused of murdering the United Healthcare Chief Executive Brian Thompson in New York last year have demanded the U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi recuse herself from the case. They allege she has a conflict of interest because of her prior work as a lobbyist for an agency representing the health insurer's parent company, so prosecutors shouldn't be able to seek the death penalty.

This is the latest world news from the BBC.

President Zelenskyy says he would back a U.S. proposal for rare direct talks between Ukrainian and Russian teams if it unlocked prisoner swaps or paved the way for negotiations between him and Vladimir Putin. But Mr. Zelenskyy said he wasn't convinced such discussions could bring anything new and called on Washington to step up pressure on Russia.

He was speaking as President Putin's special envoy Kirill Dimitrev was due to meet Mr. Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff in Florida. The Russian and U.S. delegations also met on Friday.

Lebanon's prime minister says the country's armed forces are about to complete the disarmament of Hezbollah south of the Litani River. The move is a key demand of the ceasefire the Shia group agreed with Israel just over a year ago. Hezbollah has so far refused to lay down its weapons north of the Litani River.

An engineer from Germany has become the world's first wheelchair user to go into space. Michaela Benthaus took the 10-minute journey on a Blue Origin rocket, the Amazon founder Jeff Bezos's space business. Jonathan Fruin reports.

Michaela Benthaus became paraplegic after a mountain bike accident seven years ago. She works for the European Space Agency and a retired space engineer helped to organize the brief suborbital flight which was sponsored by Blue Origin.

The cost was not revealed but the firm has taken dozens of tourists to space, including the pop singer Katy Perry and William Shatner who played Star Trek's Captain Kirk. The passengers on Saturday's flight experienced a short period of weightlessness and after landing Ms. Benthaus said that you should never give up on your dreams.

The French football star Kylian Mbappe has equalized Cristiano Ronaldo's record of 59 goals for Real Madrid in a calendar year. Mbappe reached the milestone by scoring a penalty against Sevilla on Saturday night. It was his 27th birthday.

The striker said reaching the record was an honor and described Ronaldo as his idol.

I'm Chris Barrow and for now that's the latest World News from the BBC.