

BBC NEWS

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This is Danielle Jalowiecka with the BBC News. Hello.

The authorities in Switzerland believe a fire at a bar which killed 40 people was caused by sparklers on champagne bottles which came too close to the ceiling during New Year celebrations. Investigators have spoken to the French couple who managed the bar in the ski resort of Crans-Montana. Nick Johnson has more details.

They will be looking at a number of factors regarding the environment inside the constellation in terms of its fire safety. So it's going to be looking at the soundproofing material in the ceiling, which was they understand the material that caught fire and we saw spreading so rapidly in those videos online. They're going to be looking at fire exits. How many were there? How accessible were there? Again, we saw videos online of young people squeezing out of these fire exits and they'll be looking at things like fire extinguishers. Was the club over capacity?

Iranian officials have warned the United States against interference. It follows President Trump's comments that the U.S. would come to the rescue if anti-government protesters were killed in Iran. Our chief international correspondent, Lyse Doucet, has more on Mr. Trump's comments.

We do know that he prefers a negotiating stance. He said that again on Monday when he had the visit of Prime Minister Netanyahu. The Iranians keep saying that they would like to negotiate, but everything we have heard about that negotiating process from Iranian officials say that it was an impossible situation for Iran because the Americans just kept making maximalist demands and not really negotiating, not really bringing expertise to the table.

But certainly in a country where there are long standing grievances, where the atmosphere is very febrile now, there is so much political tinder and President Trump has literally lit another match.

UAE-backed separatists in Yemen say 20 of its fighters have been killed in airstrikes as part of an offensive by the Saudi-backed government in the south of the country. The deaths are the first from Saudi coalition fire since the separatists, the Southern Transitional Council, seized swathes of territory in Hadramout and Mahra provinces last month.

The Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has announced a major shake-up of his defense and security officials in changes he described as a "significant reboot." Mr. Zelenskyy said he wanted Mykhailo Fedorov, the current minister for Digital Transformation, to take on the post of defense minister, noting that he was deeply involved with drones.

In his nightly address, Mr. Zelenskyy said the resilience of his country depended on its defense capabilities. "Together with all our military personnel, the command, national arms manufacturers and Ukraine's partners, we must implement defense reforms that truly help. Everything depends on the resilience of Ukrainians. And our resilience requires the right weapons, energy, finances, policies and institutional support."

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The U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres has called on Israel to reverse its ban on several aid groups working in Gaza and the occupied West Bank. His spokesman said the move would exacerbate the humanitarian crisis facing Palestinians.

Thirty-seven organizations have had their licenses revoked, including Doctors Without Borders, the Norwegian Refugee Council and the International Rescue Committee. Israel said they'd failed to comply with the demand to provide staff details.

Argentina's President Javier Milei has signed into law a bill which aims to encourage people to bank billions of dollars stashed in their homes or in offshore accounts. The government estimates Argentines are sitting on around \$250 billion worth of savings outside the banking sector following years of economic crises.

The BBC has paid compensation to an Israeli family who survived the October 7th attacks for filming inside their home without permission. The newspaper, *The Jewish News*, reported that the crew went into the destroyed home on the Gaza border in the days after the Hamas attack. Helena Wilkinson reports.

The crew, led by the BBC's international editor Jeremy Bowen, entered the home of an Israeli family on the Gaza border days after the attacks without their knowledge and filmed inside the property. The newspaper said that the crew filmed personal photographs of the children at a time when many of the family's friends and relatives still didn't know whether they had survived.

A BBC spokesperson said that while they did not generally comment on specific legal issues, they were pleased to have reached an agreement in the case.

More than 250 prisoners are on the run in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil after they were allowed out during Christmas but failed to return. Among them are about 150 gang members linked to the Red Command Group engaged in trafficking drugs and arms. Five are considered highly dangerous.

And that's the latest BBC news.