

BBC NEWS

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BBC News with Chris Barrow.

Kurdish forces in Syria say they'll withdraw from areas east of Aleppo on Saturday and redeploy east of the Euphrates River. The announcement comes after talks with senior U.S. officials.

Earlier the Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa said he was making Kurdish a national language and recognizing the Kurdish New Year as an official holiday. He was speaking on state television.

"Today I'm honored to issue a special decree for our Kurdish people that guarantees their rights and particularities under the law. I also urge everyone who is forced to leave their land to return safely and securely without any condition or restriction other than laying down their arms. I call on you to actively participate in building this homeland, to preserve its safety and unity and to reject anything else."

President Trump has named the members of his Board of Peace that will oversee the second phase of the Gaza peace plan. Among them are the U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Sarah Smith outlines what phase two of the plan entails.

Setting up again an operating health services and school and education services for instance, the building blocks of daily life that have been missing in Gaza for so long, as well as talking about actually rebuilding and reconstructing the province itself. So it is an important moment to be moving into phase two which hopefully will bring some of the reconstruction and make daily life in Gaza a little bit easier. And overseen at the top by a very, very senior crowd of people that Donald Trump has appointed to this which I think gives you an idea of just quite how seriously he takes this process."

The son of the Ugandan opposition leader Bobi Wine says the military and special forces have seized both his parents and taken them to an unknown location. Earlier Bobi Wine said he'd been put under house arrest after complaining of fraud in Thursday's presidential election. Anita Nkonge reports.

On his X account, Solomon Kampala says his parents were abducted by the Ugandan military and special forces and taken to an unknown location. Earlier Bobi Wine's affiliate told the BBC that military officers breached their home through the fence and forcibly took him away using a helicopter. Local police when asked about the incident claim they were not aware.

Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni has taken a commanding lead in Thursday's presidential election well ahead of Bobi Wine who is his main challenger. The final election results are expected to be announced on Saturday.

Reports from the United States say the Justice Department is investigating top Democratic officials over the unrest over the operations of federal immigration agents into the city of Minneapolis. CBS News says the city Mayor Jacob Frey and the state Governor Tim Walz are being investigated for allegedly obstructing law enforcement.

There have been days of protests in the liberal-minded city over the presence of masked and armed federal agents hunting for illegal migrants.

World news from the BBC.

President Trump has justified his support for Venezuela's interim president Delcy Rodríguez using the example of the U.S. experience in Iraq. He has not endorsed the country's opposition leader María Carina Machado despite her giving him her Nobel Peace Prize medal. Mimi Swaby reports.

President Trump has been under pressure to explain why the U.S. is backing Venezuela's interim government, having captured Nicolás Maduro. He's argued that after the U.S. opposed Saddam Hussein in Iraq, people from his administration were all fired. He said they'd gone on to join the militant group Islamic State.

Mr. Trump's remarks come a day after the head of the CIA met Venezuela's interim president in Caracas. It further indicates that his administration considers her to be the most reliable guarantor of short-term stability there.

The mayor of Kyiv says schools in the Ukrainian capital will be closed until February after sustained Russian strikes on energy infrastructure. Vitali Klitschko said Kyiv only had about half the electricity that it needed to cope with the mid-winter period. He said the current energy crisis was the most difficult challenge facing the capital since Russia's invasion.

Reza Pahlavi, the exiled son of the late Shah of Iran, has called on the international community to protect the Iranian people by degrading the regime's capacity for repression. He also appealed for the leadership of the Revolutionary Guards to be targeted after the force played a major role in the violent crackdown on protesters.

Mr. Pahlavi, who lives in the U.S., has emerged as a prominent voice of the opposition, demanding an end to the theocratic regime in Iran.

The first fully professional football league made up of teams from across Oceania kicks off shortly. The opening game sees Bula, who are based in Fiji, take on Vanuatu United. The other clubs taking part are from New Zealand, Australia, Tahiti, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

The organizers of the OFC professional league say there's huge local demand for the tournament.

That's the latest BBC news.