

BBC NEWS

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BBC News with Chris Barrow.

The White House has deleted a video clip depicting Barack Obama, America's first black president, and his wife Michelle as monkeys. It spent 12 hours on Donald Trump's social media account while administration officials dismissed outrage over it as fake. Democrats and even members of Mr. Trump's Republican Party condemned it as racist. Tom Bateman is in Washington.

There was rare condemnation from senior Republicans. Tim Scott, the party's only black senator in Congress, said the video was "the most racist thing" he'd seen come out of this White House.

Despite Mr. Trump's press secretary initially defending the post and castigating what she called "fake outrage," it was later deleted after a phone call between the president and Senator Scott.

A White House official blamed it on the erroneous actions of a staff member but the video and the attempt to defend it will add to the sense of exasperation among Mr. Trump's opponents who believe his willingness to use racist tropes or rhetoric has taken place with few consequences.

The Islamic State group says it carried out the suicide bombing that killed more than 30 people at a Shia mosque in the Pakistani capital Islamabad on Friday. Its statement included a name and picture of the alleged attacker. More than 170 people were injured in the bombing, the deadliest in Islamabad in more than a decade.

Moscow has blamed Ukraine for the attempted assassination of General Vladimir Alexeyev, the deputy head of Russian military intelligence. He was attacked in his apartment block by an unknown gunman who then escaped. His condition hasn't been made public. Kyiv has denied involvement. It's the latest in a series of attacks on Russian officers. Steve Rosenberg reports from Moscow.

Several senior Russian military officials have been targeted and indeed killed since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and Moscow has blamed those attacks on Kyiv and since December, 2024 three men of the same rank as Vladimir Alexeyev, lieutenant general, have been killed in and around Moscow.

Financial crimes prosecutors in France say they're investigating the former Culture Minister Jack Lang over his links with the late U.S. child sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. They say they're also investigating his daughter Caroline who recently stepped down as head of French Films Producers Union. Peter Hyatt reports.

The Epstein scandal has already caused political earthquakes in Britain and Norway and now the seismic waves have hit France. Even at the age of 86, Jack Lang is a big figure in French culture and politics. He ran the education and culture departments in various governments for decades and currently heads the Arab World Institute in Paris which seeks to deepen links between France and Arab states.

Now he and his daughter are being investigated on suspicion of laundering the proceeds of tax fraud. He's also been summoned to explain himself to the Foreign Ministry, the institute's main source of funds.

Mr. Lang said this week that he was "as clean as a whistle" and knew little about Epstein.

World news from the BBC.

The United States says it will impose secondary tariffs on any country that imports goods or services from Iran as of Saturday. It did not specify how big the tariffs will be. It's also announced new sanctions to curb Iran's oil exports. The announcements came after a first day of indirect talks between them.

The U.S. attorney general says the FBI has arrested a man suspected of playing a key role in the attack on the U.S. consulates in the Libyan city of Benghazi in 2012 in which four Americans were killed. Pam Bondi said Zubayr Al-Bakoush had been arrested overseas and extradited to the U.S. Sebastian Usher reports.

The attack on the U.S. consulate in Libya's second city Benghazi took place on the anniversary of 9/11 in 2012 almost a year after the Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi was killed in a NATO backed uprising.

U.S. Republicans accused the Obama administration and the then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton of major security failings for not preventing the deadly assault in which the ambassador Chris Stevens was among those killed.

Investigators found that the attack was carried out by Islamist extremists. Two people have previously been arrested and sentenced over their involvement.

The Winter Olympics have officially begun in Italy with the lighting of cauldrons in Milan and Cortina. A colorful tightly choreographed opening ceremony was split across four locations. The main event was in the San Siro Stadium in Milan featuring singers including Andrea Bocelli and Mariah Carey.

The first five gold medals will be won on Saturday.

Shares on Wall Street have risen significantly. The main index the Dow Jones closed up by more than 2 percent, passing 50,000 points for the first time.

Tech and semiconductor companies saw some of the largest advances but Amazon's stock dropped sharply over its plans to spend more than \$200 billion investing in AI.

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