

# BBC NEWS

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BBC News with Danielle Jalowiecka.

World leaders have been congratulating Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi on her decisive election victory. Exit polls indicate her governing coalition won two-thirds of the seats in the lower house of parliament. Ms. Takaichi's decision to call the poll, only four months after taking office, was a gamble that's paid off. Shaimaa Khalil is in Tokyo.

She faces a sluggish economy, she faces persistently stagnant wages and rising prices and that's only at home. Abroad, remember that she's managed to anger Japan's biggest trading partner, Beijing, when she suggested that Japan might get militarily involved if China attacked Taiwan. So how she manages her challenges at home, how she manages public spending, and she's promised big government spending, where that comes from is going to be a big question.

Israel's security cabinet has approved a series of measures set to deepen Israeli control over the occupied West Bank. The decision paves the way for further settlement expansion in the Palestinian territory. Jacob Evans reports.

This latest move will make it easier for Jewish settlers to buy land. Building permits for settlements in some cities will be taken out of Palestinian control and land registries will be made public.

Israel's far-right finance minister, Bezalel Smotrich, said the changes would bury the idea of a Palestinian state. Last year, a number of Western countries, including Britain and France, recognized Palestinian statehood.

According to the U.N., more than a thousand Palestinians, including more than 200 children, have been killed in the West Bank since the Hamas attack on Israel in October, 2023.

A lawyer for the Iranian Nobel Peace Laureate Narges Mohammadi says she's been sentenced to a further six years in prison for what the court said was "collusion to commit crimes." She'll be held for two years in the city of Khosf on a separate account of engaging in propaganda activities.

Her supporters say her health is deteriorating after ending a nearly week-long hunger strike in protest against her imprisonment. Ms. Mohammadi was awarded the 2023 Nobel Peace Prize for her fight against the oppression of women in Iran.

The biggest annual event in U.S. sport, the Super Bowl, is underway in California. The New England Patriots are taking on the Seattle Seahawks in American football's showpiece. The Puerto Rican Grammy Award winner Bad Bunny will headline the halftime show. Over 100 million people in the U.S. are expected to watch the game on TV. Lily Jamali is in Santa Clara.

The game itself has brought a lot of anticipation, but so has the Super Bowl halftime show, which is being fronted by Bad Bunny, the 31-year-old Puerto Rican superstar who is really at the peak of his fame right now. This is somebody who is also very comfortable being political in his art, and his selection has drawn a lot of criticism from the American political right, including from President Donald Trump, who has called that choice "absolutely ridiculous."

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The chief of staff of the British Prime Minister Keir Starmer has resigned. Morgan McSweeney said he took full responsibility for advising the prime minister to appoint Peter Mandelson as British ambassador to Washington. Peter Mandelson was sacked last September because of his association with the convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. Peter Mandelson says he has not acted in any way criminally.

Survivors of the late sex offender Jeffrey Epstein have appeared in a new video calling for more files relating to him to be released. The video features women holding photos of their younger selves. They say releasing only half of the 6 million files held by the U.S. government is not enough.

A mine has collapsed in the south of the Democratic Republic of Congo, killing at least 11 people. According to documents seen by the BBC, the collapse happened early on Saturday morning, trapping a group of illegal miners in Lualaba province. More than 200 people were killed in a similar disaster in the east of the country last month.

A well-known Venezuelan politician, Juan Pablo Guanipa, has been freed. The latest high-profile release after President Nicolás Maduro was removed from power by the U.S. Mr. Guanipa, who was arrested in May last year, is an ally of the opposition leader, Maria Corinna Machado. Our global affairs correspondent, Anbarasan Ethirajan, has more details.

Juan Pablo Guanipa, a former vice president of the National Assembly, went into hiding after being accused of terrorism and treason for challenging the result of the 2024 presidential election. He was tracked down by Venezuelan security forces and detained in May, 2025.

In a social media post, his son Ramón Guanipa said his whole family would soon be able to embrace each other again. He called on the Venezuelan government to immediately release hundreds of people unjustly imprisoned.

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