

# BBC NEWS

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BBC News with Chris Barrow.

There are reports of loud explosions in the Afghan capital, Kabul, amidst an upsurge of fighting between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Both sides say dozens have been killed in the latest clashes. This report from Sanjay Dasgupta.

Pakistan said it had launched retaliatory strikes across the border in areas like Chitral, Khyber, Mohmand, Kurram and Bajaur. The Taliban authorities in Afghanistan had earlier announced that they had attacked Pakistani military positions.

Afghan sources are being quoted as saying at least 10 Pakistani soldiers have been killed and 13 border posts captured. Pakistan said more than 70 Afghan combatants were dead and seven Taliban border posts had been taken. It denied any Pakistani outpost had fallen but did not comment on the Taliban statement that Pakistani soldiers had been killed in the fighting.

The former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has described her [desp...] deposition to a congressional committee investigating the Epstein files as "very repetitive."

The meeting was held behind closed doors but Mrs. Clinton spoke to the media afterwards. "We returned to answer questions repetitively, literally over and over again. I don't know how many times I had to say 'I did not know Jeffrey Epstein. I never went to his island, I never went to his homes, I never went to his offices.' So it's on the record numerous times."

Mrs. Clinton added that any dealings her husband had with Jeffrey Epstein ended several years before he was charged with criminal activities. The former President Bill Clinton is due to testify on Friday.

The Iranian foreign minister has described talks with the United States in Geneva as some of their "most serious" negotiations yet. Abbas Araghchi said both sides reached a close understanding but the differences remain. He said Iran had clearly expressed its wish for U.S. sanctions to be lifted. Washington has always insisted this will only happen if Tehran makes big concessions on its nuclear program. Lyse Doucet is in Geneva.

A reprieve. That's how one diplomatic source here in Geneva described to me a short time ago. In other words, diplomacy is still in play. They've already set a date for the next round of talks. It'll be as soon as next week. And significantly the head of the world's nuclear watchdog, the IAEA, Rafael Grossi, was very involved in today's discussions, which means that the talks are very detailed and substantive about Iran's nuclear program.

The head of the artificial intelligence company Anthropic says it will not give the U.S. military unrestricted use of its technology despite pressure from the Pentagon. Dario Amadei said he was particularly concerned about the development of fully autonomous weapons and the potential use of AI for the mass surveillance of U.S. citizens. The Defense Department has threatened to remove Anthropic from its systems.

World news from the BBC.

Cuba says the 10 men on board a U.S.-registered speedboat it intercepted on Wednesday were trying to infiltrate the country with terrorist aims. Officials in Havana said they seized assault rifles, Molotov cocktails and other military-style gear from the boat. Will Grant is our Cuba correspondent.

Some of the details emerging from both Havana and Washington appear to confirm each other. On the Cuban side, the deputy foreign minister told journalists that the 10 people intercepted in a vessel in Cuban waters were engaged in an attempted infiltration for terrorist purposes and named all 10 men, four of whom were killed and six captured.

On Washington's side, a U.S. official confirmed at least part of the Cuban's version of events. Specifically they said that the boat's owner had alleged it was stolen by an employee and that at least two of the men involved were U.S. citizens, one of the dead and one who was injured. Others may be legal permanent residents, the official added.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said the next meeting between Ukraine, the U.S. and Russia is likely to take place in the United Arab Emirates at the beginning of March. His comments came after Ukrainian officials held talks in Geneva on Thursday with two U.S. envoys.

A special congressional committee in Brazil has approved an investigation into the bank accounts of the eldest son of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Police are investigating accusations that Fábio Luiz da Silva benefited from a pension fraud scheme which took more than a billion dollars from state pensions with possible collusion from Brazil's social security agency. He's denied any connection to the fraud and his supporters insist he's not under formal investigation.

A genetic study has shed new light on interbreeding between early humans and Neanderthals. By examining the X chromosome, scientists found that when interbreeding did occur, it generally involved a Neanderthal male and a human female. They don't know if this was the result of choice or if violence and coercion were involved.

That's the latest BBC news.