

BBC NEWS

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BBC News with Gurvinder Gill.

The head of the CIA, John Ratcliffe, has gone to Cuba to say the U.S. is prepared to engage on economic and security issues, but only if Havana makes fundamental changes. Washington has imposed a fuel blockade on the island, leading to shortages and protests. Luis Fajardo reports.

The very unusual announcement of a CIA chief visiting Havana emerged as Cuba continued to face an acute energy crisis ravaging its economy. Cuban officials quoted in state media said they had insisted to the CIA spy boss that their country pose no security threat to Washington.

But back in the U.S., influential Republican politicians continue to call on the Trump administration to intensify the pressure to bring about political change in the communist-ruled island.

As Donald Trump heads into the final day of his trip to China, the two sides are offering different narratives of the visit so far. Chinese state media said President Xi had warned that the issue of Taiwan could bring the U.S. and Beijing into conflict. Mr. Trump later told Fox News that Mr. Xi had offered his help to open the Strait of Hormuz. Here's our North America editor, Sarah Smith.

Looming over the whole thing, of course, is the war in Iran. China could help with that. They're very, very close allies with Tehran. And they did talk about it, but it's fascinating, I think, to compare the readouts we got from the two different governments after that face-to-face meeting.

The American version said that the two leaders had talked about the need to keep the Strait of Hormuz open and that Iran can never have a nuclear weapon. And the Chinese version simply said that they had discussed the situation in the Middle East. No more than that. And that speaks volumes, I think, about the dynamic between these two leaders.

A key rival to replace the British Prime Minister Keir Starmer has confirmed that he will try to re-enter parliament. Andy Burnham, the mayor of Greater Manchester, is seen as the most serious challenger in the Labour Party to Sir Keir, but has to be an MP to run for the leadership.

The U.S. Supreme Court has temporarily preserved mail order access to America's most widely used abortion pill. The ruling allows women seeking to end a pregnancy to get Mifepristone by post without a visit to a doctor. Joel Gunter reports from Washington.

The ban on mail order Mifepristone came into effect earlier this month after the state of Louisiana sued the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, arguing that nationwide postage of the drug interfered with the state's own abortion ban.

The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with Louisiana, but in a 7-2 decision on Thursday, the Supreme Court stayed the ban. The Supreme Court's ruling came after two Mifepristone manufacturers asked the court to weigh in with an emergency decision.

Joel Gunter with that report.

World news from the BBC.

U.S. officials say direct talks between delegations from Israel and Lebanon on Thursday were positive and productive. The talks in Washington are due to continue on Friday. They're taking place days before a nominal ceasefire expires in Lebanon, where Israel is fighting Hezbollah.

The BBC has found that dozens of social media accounts which post content against immigration into Britain are in fact based in countries such as Sri Lanka and Vietnam. Here's our social media investigations correspondent, Marianna Spring.

One Facebook page we found, called Great British People, shows an elderly white British man crying about his pension. It's been viewed 1.3 million times and claims to have been posted by someone in Yorkshire. But we found the account is really run by someone based in Sri Lanka. It's among dozens of interconnected Facebook and Instagram accounts identified by BBC Panorama.

The accounts create and share anti-immigration, AI-generated posts about the U.K. to large audiences. Meta, which runs Facebook and Instagram, told us it took coordinated, inauthentic behavior seriously and had specialized global teams constantly working to identify and disrupt this type of activity.

The emergency services in Ukraine say at least 21 people are now known to have been killed by Russian airstrikes on Kyiv on Thursday. Rescuers are still searching for people at the site of a block of flats that was partially destroyed by a missile. The strike was part of a huge wave of missiles and drone attacks targeting the Ukrainian capital this week.

Violent clashes have broken out in the Bolivian city of La Paz during a protest march by mining groups calling for the resignation of President Rodrigo Paz. Protesters clashed with police as they tried to stop them from entering Plaza Murillo, the city's central square.

Local miners are demanding greater access to explosives and fuel, as well as changes to contracts and the implementation of mining regulations.

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