

BBC NEWS

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BBC News with Eileen McHugh.

Severe weather is continuing to disrupt events in the United States being held to mark the 250th anniversary of America's independence from Britain. The flagship "Salute to America" gala in the capital, Washington D.C., has been delayed with attendees evacuated as our correspondent there Rich Preston told us.

We are being evacuated. My team here behind me having to pack up. The U.S. Secret Service has told us to get off the press risers. That's because despite the terrible heat that we've had today. There's now a warning of a huge thunderstorm incoming. So everyone around us is being told to get to a safe area including the press, of course. So we're having to pack up and who knows whether the events tonight will go ahead.

The influential head of Venezuela's National Assembly Jorge Rodríguez has insisted that search and rescue operations are still ongoing to find survivors of last month's twin earthquakes. But as our correspondent in Venezuela, Yogita Limaye, told us hopes of finding survivors are fast fading.

Search and rescue teams in northern Venezuela are running operations to extract dead bodies from the rubble of collapsed buildings as there is now barely any possibility of finding survivors. Diggers and heavy machines are being used to clear the debris but the scale of the destruction is so massive that there isn't enough equipment or manpower to conduct operations at all of the collapsed sites. And so, families who are worried that their loved ones might never be found are trying to dig through the rubble themselves using basic tools like pickaxes and spades and in some cases their bare hands.

The Kremlin says President Vladimir Putin has spoken by phone with Donald Trump hours after the U.S. president held a similar call with the Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelenskyy to mark U.S. Independence Day.

A Kremlin aide said Mr. Putin briefed his U.S. counterpart on the situation on the battlefield and that Mr. Trump offered to find a solution.

France have become the second team to reach the quarterfinals of the men's football World Cup after beating Paraguay 1-0 in their last 16 clash in Philadelphia. Our correspondent John Bennett was watching.

In extreme heat in Philadelphia, France dominated the ball first half but struggled to break down an extremely organized Paraguay. It was only the third World Cup knockout game since 1966 to not have a single shot on target before half-time. After the break, Manu Kone finally tested the Paraguay keeper, then sub Désiré Doué was brought down in the box and after a VAR check, France finally had their chance to make a breakthrough. Captain Kylian Mbappé made no mistake and he's now level with Lionel Messi as tournament top scorer on seven goals.

Earlier, Morocco also progressed after beating the co-host Canada 3-0.

I'm Eileen McHugh and you are listening to the latest world news from the BBC.

Iranian state media says senior representatives from Hezbollah and Hamas have attended the first official day of mourning for the country's former supreme leader. They were among vast crowds of Iranians loyal to the Islamic Republic who have been paying their respects to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in Tehran.

The Greek authorities have issued evacuation alerts near the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki where a wildfire is spreading out of control, threatening homes and businesses. It's the latest fire to break out in Europe which in recent weeks has struggled with searing temperatures. Metta Tsikrika has the latest details.

The fire broke out on Saturday evening in an area with low vegetation and dry grass ??? Oreokastro northwest of Thessaloniki but spread rapidly driven by strong winds.

Reports in the Greek media say the blaze has destroyed homes and industrial premises with multiple explosions heard from the buildings. At least one factor is engulfed in flames.

The authorities have also evacuated a care home moving the residents to alternative accommodation as a precaution. More than 75 firefighters have been operating in the scene. Two have been injured fighting the blaze and have been transferred to hospital.

France's health minister says a doctor who tested positive for Ebola after arriving in France from the Democratic Republic of Congo has recovered and left hospital. The Congolese doctor had been in the DRC's eastern province of Ituri responding to the major Ebola outbreak there. His was the first confirmed case of the virus in France.

Officials in Egypt have announced the discovery of an ancient city in the province of New Valley in the western desert. They say the well-preserved settlement at the Dakhla Oasis dates back more than 1600 years when Egypt was part of the Byzantine Empire.

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