



## The News

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*by Sarah Heath*

French unions are threatening to bring the country to a standstill and those representing the SNCF are calling for a renewable strike from March the 7th to protest against pension reform. After heated debates in the National Assembly, the bill will arrive today in the Senate.

Footballer Achraf Hakimi is under investigation for rape. A 24-year-old woman said she was abused by the Moroccan PSG defender last Saturday, after having met on Instagram in January. The alleged victim does not want to make a formal complaint at this moment.

French citizens will need to be careful with water consumption. Christophe Béchu yesterday called on the préfets to issue water restriction orders. During a trip to the Agricultural Show, the Minister for Ecological Transition said he was "alarmed" by this rare winter drought. Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne announced that there will be a special entity set up from March which will help prepare for the coming months of water shortages.

There was another announcement from Elisabeth Borne yesterday at the Porte de Versailles. The head of the French government wants to set up a plan to develop alternatives for agrochemicals by finding new products which will protect crops, while also preserving biodiversity.

Before his African tour, Emmanuel Macron yesterday gave details of the policy he intends to promote in Africa for the coming 4 years. The Head of State has announced a "visible reduction" in the number of French military personnel across the continent and even a law to return works of art for the benefit of African countries that request it.

And finally, it's one more trophy for Lionel Messi. The Argentine world champion won the title of best player last night in Paris, during the Best Fifa Men's Player Awards. The PSG striker comes in first, ahead of 2 French players - his Parisian teammate, Kylian Mbappé and Real Madrid striker, Karim Benzema.