



## The News

**December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 6pm ©**

*by Emma Phillips*

The wait is almost over – at 6.30pm today, the Elysée Secretary General Alexis Kohler is expected to announce the lineup of the new government. François Bayrou has now selected his ministers, ten days after being appointed prime minister. Mr Bayrou has gone right down to the wire in trying to persuade the Républicains to make party representatives available for the government.

The announcement of the new government was pushed back from this morning as at 11am today, flags were flown at half-mast and a moment of silence was held in memory of the victims of cyclone Chido in Mayotte. So far, at least 35 people have been confirmed dead and 2,500 injured.

To address the situation in Mayotte, a crisis meeting was held today at the ministry of the interior, while on the ground, cell phone network coverage is gradually improving, with the two main operators on the island now stating that 60% coverage has been restored. In Mozambique, which was also devastated by the cyclone, the death toll has risen, with at least 120 dead and almost 900 injured.

In Germany, the authorities have pledged to conduct an investigation into any potential errors that may have allowed the attack on Magdeburg Christmas market. At least five people were killed and 200 others injured when a car drove into crowds on Friday. Saudi Arabia has reportedly requested the extradition of the main suspect, a 50-year-old from Saudi Arabia who has been living in Germany since 2006.

And finally to the Vendée Globe, at the head of the round-the-world sailing race, skipper Yoan Richomme is once again ahead of Charlie Dalin by just two nautical miles. They continue to extend their lead over 3rd-placed Sébastien Simon and are expected to round Cape Horn during the night.