

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Monday, May 27

Memorial Day  
Groton Legion Memorial Day service at Groton Union Cemetery

## Tuesday, May 28

Senior Menu: Baked turkey crunch with dressing, Italian blend vegetables, carrot bars, corn muffin, fruit.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store open, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The Pantry at the Groton Community Center, hours 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Junior Teeners host Miller, 5:30 p.m., doubleheader

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

## Wednesday, May 29

Senior Menu: Chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes with gravy, oriental blend vegetables, cinnamon apple sauce, whole wheat bread.

Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult Bible Study begins at 7 pm

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour 9:30 a.m.



## Thursday, May 30

Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, corn, garlic toast, fudgey cake squares, fruit.

James Valley Annual Meeting, 11 a.m., GHS Gym/Arena

Story Time at Wage Memorial Library, 10 a.m.

## Friday, May 31

Senior Menu: Breaded chicken on bun, oven roasted potatoes, pea and cheese salad, honey fruit salad.

High School State Tournament at Augusta University through June 1

Junior Teeners at Clark, 5:30 p.m., double header

Groton Legion hosts Aberdeen Smitty's, 4 p.m., double header

**Groton Daily Independent**  
**PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445**  
**Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460**

## **OPEN:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

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## "Early intervention"

It has been a few years since my children were babies! Having spent my youth as a babysitter and a career in pediatrics, I was pretty comfortable in watching the developmental of babies, toddlers and young children. ( Teenagers are another story for another day!!) That isn't always the case for young parents who may not have experience with this age group.



Based on Science, Built on Trust



**Joanie Holm, RN, CNP**

Babies develop in a somewhat predictable fashion. As you think of a newborn, you might think of the poor neck control which changes drastically over the next few weeks to months. Perhaps you think about the cooing, babbling and words that may start in the 8-10 month time frame.

As the parent, grandparent or care provider It is important to know the basic milestones so that you will be aware of a child who may have developmental delays and may need assistance. Early intervention is a system of services that helps babies and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities. Early intervention focuses on helping eligible babies and toddlers learn the basic and brand-new skills that typically develop during the first three years of life, such as:

- physical (reaching, rolling, crawling, and walking);
- cognitive (thinking, learning, solving problems);
- communication (talking, listening, understanding);
- social/emotional (playing, feeling secure and happy); and
- self-help (eating, dressing).

The Grants for Infants and Families program (Part C) awards formula grants to the 50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Department of the Interior, and Outlying Areas to assist them in implementing statewide systems of coordinated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, interagency programs and making early intervention services available to children with disabilities, aged birth through two, and their families. Under the program, states are responsible for ensuring that appropriate early intervention services are made available to all eligible birth-through-two-year-olds with disabilities and their families, including Indian children and families who reside on reservations geographically located in the state.

(Center for Disease Control- CDC- Early Intervention website)

To help monitor a child's developmental milestones, the CDC has put out a free development tracker app. The app offers photos and videos to guide you. This is an excellent way to follow your child's progress and intervene if needed. The earlier the intervention, the better for the child.

If you have concerns about your child's development, speak to your primary care provider who will help you with a referral for services.

*Joanie S. Holm, R.N., C.N.P. is co-founder and president of Healing Words Foundation that supports Prairie Doc® programming. Follow The Prairie Doc® at [www.prairiedoc.org](http://www.prairiedoc.org) and on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show providing health information based on science, built on trust for 21 Seasons, on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.*

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## JAMES VALLEY TELECOMMUNICATIONS 67<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, May 30th  
Groton Area High School Arena  
11:30am Registration & Lunch  
12:30pm Meeting

- Membership Gift
- Lunch will be Ken's Famous Fried Chicken, Potato Salad, Chips, Beverage & Dessert
- Door Prizes, including a \$500 JVT credit
- Our Groton Office will be closed 11am-2pm



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**DISTRICT 1**

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- Pro Family
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PAID FOR BY REDER FOR SD HOUSE



## DEAR SD DISTRICT #1, I AM A NAVY VETERAN,

... AND A DAD, FOUNDER OF THE DTOM 22/0 FOUNDATION,  
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**Ultima™ ZT1 50**  
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## MEMORIAL DAY

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED



### **Groton Post #39 Memorial Day Schedule**

**Hufton at 7:30 a.m.**

**James at 8:15 a.m.**

**Verdon at 8:45 a.m.**

**Bates-Scotland at 9:15 a.m.**

**Ferney at 10 a.m.**

**Andover Catholic at 11 a.m.**

**Groton at Noon**

**Guest speaker at Groton  
is Rod Zastrow.**

**Lunch to follow at the Groton Post #39 home served by the Legion Auxiliary.**

**In the event of inclement weather,  
the ceremony will be held at the  
Post home.**

**Groton Post #39 is sponsoring  
the FREE viewing of the broadcast  
at**

**GDILIVE.COM**

**People in their vehicles can listen  
on the radio at 89.3 FM.**

## EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: What have been the most dramatic effects of global warming on Africa and what do longer-term climate projections foretell for Africa's future?

-- William C., Raleigh, NC

Global warming has already had profound impacts on Africa, which is already grappling with many environmental and socio-economic challenges. The most dramatic effects observed so far include increased temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, and a rise in extreme weather events—all of which have far-reaching consequences for the environment, agriculture and human livelihoods.

Temperatures across Africa have risen significantly in recent decades, with some regions experiencing increases twice the global average rate. This exacerbates existing problems, particularly in arid and semi-arid regions. Prolonged heat waves and severe droughts have become more frequent, threatening water supplies and agricultural productivity.

Changes in precipitation are another significant impact. Some regions have seen decreased rainfall, while others face more intense and erratic rainfall. The Sahel, a semi-arid region south of the Sahara Desert, has experienced both prolonged droughts and intense rainfall, leading to flash floods. These shifts disrupt farming practices, erode soils and reduce crop yields, exacerbating hunger and poverty.

Extreme weather events ever more frequent and severe. Southern Africa, particularly Mozambique, has faced devastating cyclones like Idai in 2019, which caused extensive damage, and displaced or killed thousands. Flooding destroys homes and crops and facilitates waterborne diseases.

Long-term climate projections for Africa paint a grim picture. By the end of the 21st century, average temperatures are expected to increase, leading to more severe heatwaves and droughts. Water scarcity will intensify, particularly in North and Southern Africa, where river flow and groundwater recharge rates are projected to decline. Agriculture, which employs a large portion of the population, faces dire challenges. Staple crops such as maize, sorghum and millet are expected to see reduced yields, a productivity decline that threatens food security and could increase dependence on food imports, straining economies further.

Coastal areas are at risk, too, from rising sea levels. Cities like Lagos, Nigeria and Alexandria, Egypt are particularly vulnerable to coastal erosion and flooding. Mangrove ecosystems, vital for coastal protection and fisheries, are also threatened by sea level rise and changing salinity patterns. Biodiversity loss is another critical concern. Many of Africa's unique ecosystems, such as the Congo Basin rainforests and the savannas, could be drastically altered. Species that cannot adapt to rapidly changing conditions face extinction, disrupting ecological balances and affecting livelihoods dependent on natural resources.

"Africa is responsible for less than 10 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions," says the World Meteorological Organization's Secretary-General Petteri Taalas. "But it is the continent which is the least able to cope with the negative impacts of climate change." Promoting resilient infrastructure, sustainable agriculture and regional cooperation are crucial to a sustainable future for its people.

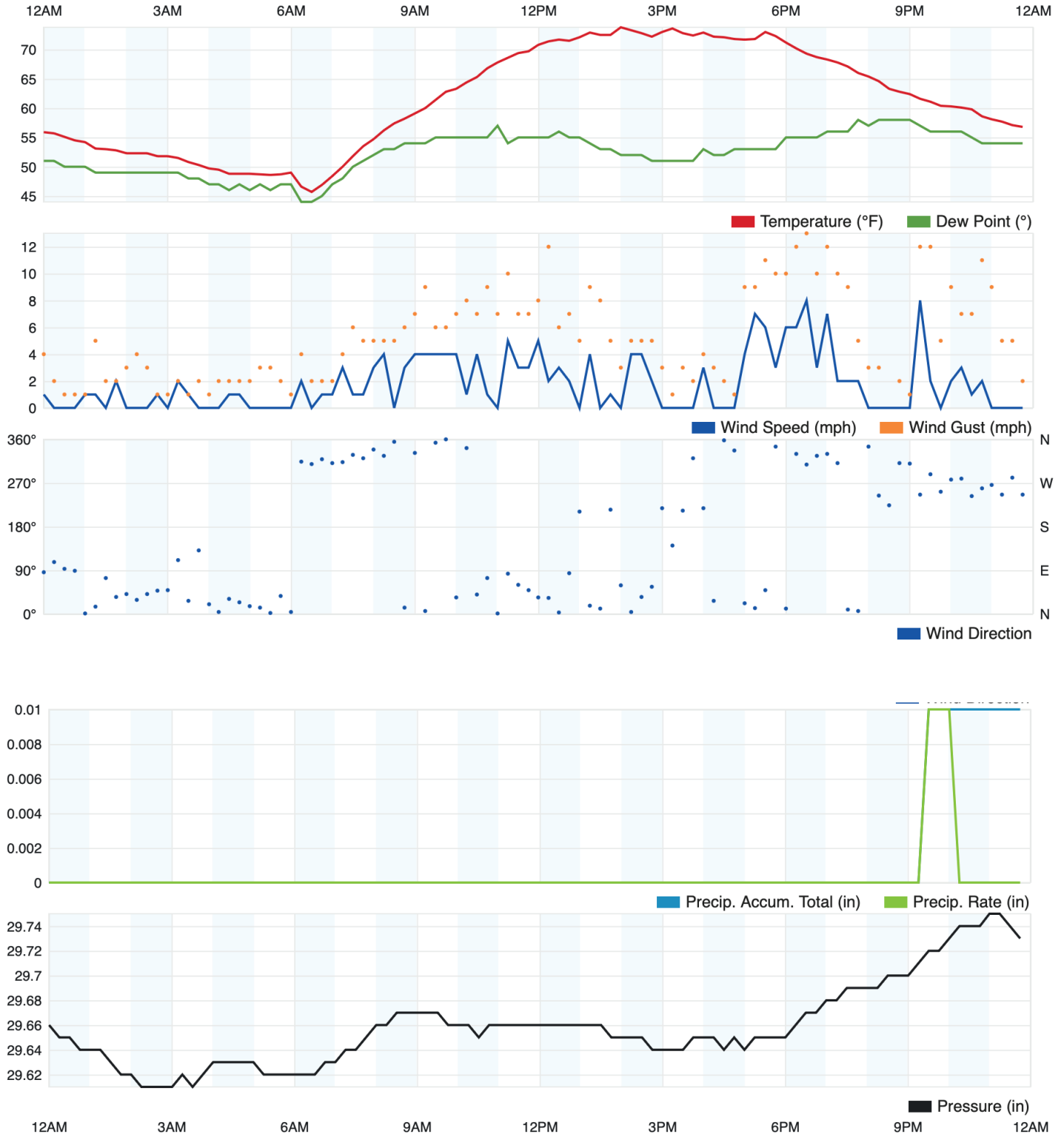


**Global warming may be hitting Africa harder than any other continent despite the fact that emissions generated elsewhere are primarily responsible for it.** Daniel Foster, FlickrCC.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs





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Memorial Day

Tonight

Tuesday

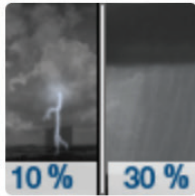
Tuesday Night

Wednesday



High: 70 °F

Chance  
T-storms and  
Breezy



Low: 46 °F

Slight Chance  
T-storms then  
Chance  
Showers



High: 68 °F

Mostly Sunny



Low: 41 °F

Mostly Clear



High: 74 °F

Sunny

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE**  
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

## Memorial Day Forecast

Highs - 65-75°

Northwest winds 10 to 20 mph  
gusts to 30-40 mph

**Isolated thunderstorms possible, mainly east of the Missouri River**

[weather.gov/abr](https://weather.gov/abr)  
May 26, 2024 4:40 PM

Expect gusty winds, but mild temperatures for Memorial Day. Isolated thunderstorms are also possible throughout the day.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 74 °F at 2:05 PM

Low Temp: 46 °F at 6:25 AM

Wind: 13 mph at 5:06 PM

Precip: : 0.01

Day length: 15 hours, 23 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 101 in 2018

Record Low: 28 in 1907

Average High: 74

Average Low: 49

Average Precip in May.: 2.88

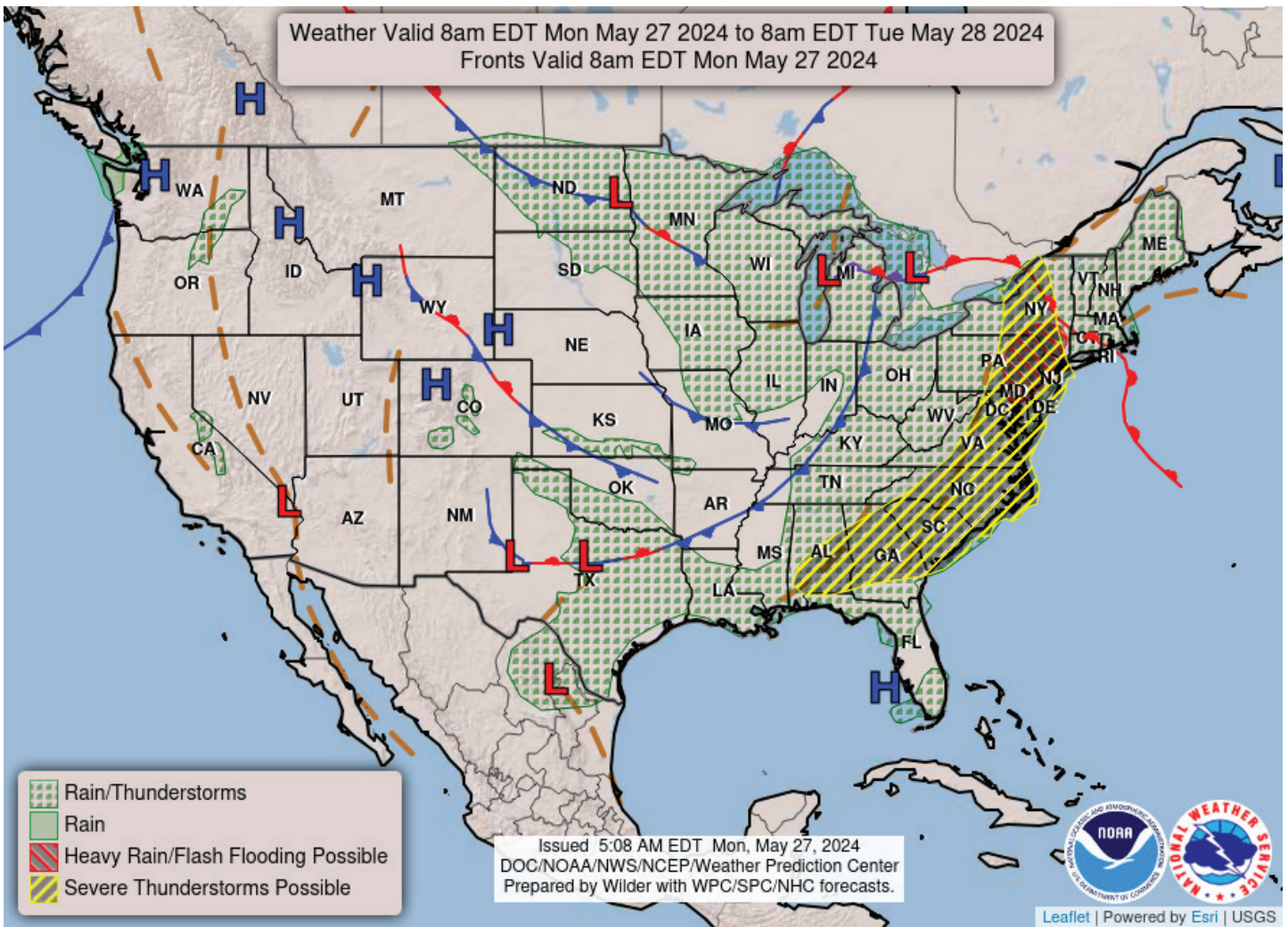
Precip to date in May: 2.08

Average Precip to date: 6.85

Precip Year to Date: 6.62

Sunset Tonight: 9:11:13 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:47:24 am



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## Today in Weather History

May 27, 1942: A short estimated F2 touchdown uprooted 27 trees on the western edge of Bryant in Hamlin County. One barn was destroyed.

May 27, 1996: On May 26th, anywhere from 4 to 6 inches of rain fell in a 24 hour period over the lower Bad River Basin. Also, 3 to 5 inches of rain fell over much of Western South Dakota. This runoff caused the Bad River at Fort Pierre to crest at 26.25 feet or about 5 feet above flood stage late on the 27th before falling back below flood stage on the 30th. The entire length of the Bad River Road from U.S. Highway 83 near Fort Pierre to U.S. Highway 14 near Midland was closed to all except local traffic on the 27th. Twenty-five to 35 volunteers were filling sandbags all day on the 27th around two homes along the river. Most of the damage was associated with flooding of agricultural land and some county roads. One resident along the river said the river was the highest it has been in 32 years.

1771: In Virginia, a wall of water came roaring down the James River Valley following ten to twelve days of intense rain. As water swept through Richmond, buildings, boats, animals, and vegetation were lost. About one hundred fifty people were killed as the River reached a flood stage of forty-five feet above normal. A monument to the flood was inscribed by Ryland Randolph, of Curles, in 1771-72: " ... all the great rivers of this country were swept by inundations never before experienced which changed the face of nature and left traces of violence that will remain for ages."

1896: A massive tornado struck Saint Louis, Missouri killing 306 persons and causing thirteen million dollars damage. The tornado path was short but cut across a densely populated area. It touched down six miles west of Eads Bridge in Saint Louis and widened to a mile as it crossed into East Saint Louis. The tornado was the most destructive of record in the U.S. at that time. It pierced a five-eighths inch thick iron sheet with a two by four-inch pine plank. A brilliant display of lightning accompanied the storm.

1987 - Severe thunderstorms in West Texas produced baseball size hail at Crane, hail up to three and a half inches in diameter at Post, and grapefruit size hail south of Midland. Five days of flooding commenced in Oklahoma. Thunderstorms produced 7 to 9 inches of rain in central Oklahoma. Oklahoma City reported 4.33 inches of rain in six hours. Up to six inches of rain caused flooding in north central Texas. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Sunny and warm weather prevailed across much of the nation to kick off the Memorial Day weekend. Afternoon thunderstorms in southern Florida caused the mercury at Miami to dip to a record low reading of 69 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Unseasonably hot weather prevailed in the southeastern U.S. Ten cities reported record high temperatures for the date as readings soared into the 90s. Lakeland, FL, reported a record high of 99 degrees, and Biloxi, MS, reported a temperature of 90 degrees along with a relative humidity of 75 percent. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from north central Texas to the Central Gulf Coast Region. Severe thunderstorms spawned four tornadoes, and there were eighty-one reports of large hail or damaging winds. Late afternoon thunderstorms over southeast Louisiana produced high winds which injured twenty-seven persons at an outdoor music concert in Baton Rouge, and high winds which gusted to 78 mph at the Lake Ponchartrain Causeway. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1997: An F5 tornado killed 27 people in Jarrell, Texas. Although tornado warnings were issued 30 minutes in advance and local sirens were sounded, there were few places to go for safety. Most homes were on slabs, with no basements. Houses were swept clean off their foundations, with little debris left behind. Total damage was \$20 million. The same thunderstorm complex produced a wind gust to 122 mph at Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio.

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Daily Devotionals

## Seeds of Hope

### WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

The founder of a successful company was being interviewed by a reporter from a large daily newspaper. His first question was, "What does it take to succeed?"

After a moment's thought he replied, "The same thing it took to get started. A sense of urgency and excitement."

That answer is certainly true if one wants to be successful in developing and managing a business. And it is also true if one wants to succeed in the Christian life.

No one has ever expressed this truth any more powerfully than the Apostle Paul. Hear him, "...I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: I am straining to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling me."

God has one goal for everyone - that we will become like Christ! And if we choose to achieve that goal it will take all of our energies just as it took all of Paul's energies.

Paul said that he focused on "this one thing" - this one goal. He had the mind and heart and focus of an athlete in training. And when athletes are in training, they set aside everything that is harmful or hurtful and anything that might distract them or destroy their commitment to their goal of victory.

The Christian formula for success must include urgency and excitement and also dedication and focus.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to make those adjustments in our lives that are necessary if we want to be successful Christians. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. Philippians 3:12-14



We all need the encouragement, comfort, and peace that comes through God's grace. Our daily devotionals, known as Seeds of Hope, have been a means through which thousands of people have experienced this grace. Each devotional comes from God's Word and we pray this good "seed" finds good soil in your heart. Our aim is that the Seeds of Hope will be a great source of daily encouragement to you and that God will use them to draw you near to Him

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## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

### Subscription Form

All prices listed include 6.5% Sales Tax

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.24.24

46 54 56 67 70 16

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$489,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 39  
Mins 5 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.25.24

12 17 27 29 40 10

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$2,650,000**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 54 Mins 5  
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.26.24

2 17 25 26 43 2

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 9 Mins 4  
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.25.24

7 8 10 24 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$119,000**

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 9  
Mins 4 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.25.24

23 25 39 40 47 10

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 38 Mins 5  
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:  
05.25.24

6 33 35 36 64 24

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$131,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 38 Mins 5  
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

## News from the Associated Press

### **EU-Israel relations take a nosedive as Spain, Ireland set to formally recognize a Palestinian state**

By RAF CASERT Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Relations between the European Union and Israel took a nosedive on the eve of the diplomatic recognition of a Palestinian state by EU members Ireland and Spain, with Madrid suggesting sanctions should be considered against Israel for its continued attacks in the southern Gaza city of Rafah.

Israeli Foreign Minister Katz told Spain that its consulate in Jerusalem will not be allowed to help Palestinians.

At the same time, the EU's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell, a Spaniard, threw his full weight to support the International Criminal Court, whose prosecutor is seeking an arrest warrant against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and others, including the leaders of Hamas.

"The prosecutor of the court has been strongly intimidated and accused of antisemitism," Borrell said. "The word antisemitic, it's too heavy. It's too important."

Angry words abounded Monday, with Katz accusing Spain of "rewarding terror" by recognizing a Palestinian state, and saying that "the days of the Inquisition are over." He referred to the infamous Spanish institution started in the 15th century to maintain Roman Catholic orthodoxy that forced Jews and Muslims to flee, convert to Catholicism or, in some instances, face death.

"No one will force us to convert our religion or threaten our existence — those who harm us, we will harm in return," said Katz.

Even though the EU and its member nations have been steadfast in condemning the Oct. 7 Hamas-led attack in which militants stormed across the Gaza border into Israel, killing 1,200 people and taking some 250 hostage, the bloc has been equally critical of Israel's ensuing offensive that has killed more than 35,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

The latest attacks have centered on Rafah, where Palestinian health workers said Israeli airstrikes killed at least 35 people Sunday, hit tents for displaced people and left "numerous" others trapped in flaming debris.

The U.N.'s top court, the International Court of Justice, on Friday demanded that Israel immediately halt its offensive on Rafah, even if it stopped short of ordering a cease-fire for the Gaza enclave.

"Israel has to stop its offensive in Rafah," Spanish Foreign Minister José Manuel Albares said.

Spain, Ireland and non-EU member Norway plan to make official their recognition of a Palestinian state on Tuesday. Their joint announcement last week triggered an angry response from Israeli authorities, which summoned the countries' ambassadors in Tel Aviv to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, where they were filmed while being shown videos of the Oct. 7 Hamas attack and kidnapping.

Albares criticized the treatment of the ambassadors. "We reject something that is not within diplomatic courtesy and the customs of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations," he said.

"But at the same time we have also agreed that we are not going to fall into any provocation that distances us from our goal," he added. "Our aim is to recognize the state of Palestine tomorrow, make all possible efforts to achieve a permanent cease-fire as soon as possible and also, in the end, to achieve that definitive peace."

### **Cyclone floods coastal villages, blows away thatched roofs and cuts power in Bangladesh and India**

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — A cyclone flooded coastal villages, blew away thatched roofs and left hundreds of thousands of people without power Monday in southern Bangladesh and eastern India. At least seven deaths were reported.

Dozens of Bangladeshi villages were flooded after flood protection embankments either washed away

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or were damaged by the storm surge, TV stations reported. Nearly 800,000 people had been evacuated from vulnerable areas in Bangladesh on Sunday.

Authorities have given no casualty figures yet, but Dhaka-based Somoy TV reported that at least seven people died. Two others were missing in a boat capsizing, the station said.

In India's West Bengal state, roofs on thatched houses were blown away while electric poles and trees were uprooted in some coastal districts. There were no immediate reports of deaths. Heavy downpours also inundated streets and homes in low-lying areas of Kolkata city.

Cyclone Remal weakened considerably after making landfall in Bangladesh's Patuakhali district early in the morning with sustained 111 kph (69 mph) winds. The Meteorological Department in Dhaka said the winds were now 90 kph (56 mph) with gusts to 120 kph (75 mph).

The India Meteorological Department said Remal was likely to weaken further throughout the day. It warned of heavy showers over Assam and other northeastern states for the next two days.

The Kolkata airport reopened after being shut Sunday, and Bangladesh shut down the airport in the southeastern city of Chattogram and canceled all domestic flights to and from Cox's Bazar. Loading and unloading in the Chittagong seaport was halted and more than a dozen ships moved from jetties to the deep sea as a precaution.

Volunteers helped Bangladesh's hundreds of thousands of evacuees move to up to 9,000 cyclone shelters. All schools in the region were closed until further notice.

Remal was the first cyclone in the Bay of Bengal ahead of this year's monsoon season, which runs from June to September.

India's coasts are often hit by cyclones, but changing climate patterns have increased the storms' intensity, making preparations for natural disasters more urgent.

## Latest deadly weather in US kills at least 18 as storms carve path of ruin across multiple states

By SEAN MURPHY and JULIO CORTEZ Associated Press

VALLEY VIEW, Texas (AP) — Powerful storms killed at least 18 people, injured hundreds and left a wide trail of destruction across Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas after obliterating homes and destroying a truck stop where dozens sought shelter in a restroom during the latest deadly weather to strike the central U.S.

The storms inflicted their worst damage in a region spanning from north of Dallas to the northwest corner of Arkansas, and the system threatened to bring more violent weather to other parts of the Midwest. By Monday, forecasters said, the greatest risk would shift to the east, covering a broad swath of the country from Alabama to near New York City.

Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear declared a state of emergency early Monday in a post on social media platform X, citing "multiple reports of wind damage and tornadoes."

Seven deaths were reported in Cooke County, Texas, near the Oklahoma border, where a tornado Saturday night plowed through a rural area near a mobile home park, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said at a news conference Sunday. The dead included two children, ages 2 and 5. Three family members were found dead in one home, according to the county sheriff.

Storms also killed two people and destroyed houses in Oklahoma, where the injured included guests at an outdoor wedding, eight people in Arkansas and one person in Kentucky. Tens of thousands of residents were without power across the region.

In Texas, about 100 people were injured and more than 200 homes and structures destroyed, Abbott said, sitting in front of a ravaged truck stop near the small agricultural community of Valley View. The area was among the hardest-hit, with winds reaching an estimated 135 mph (217 kph), officials said.

"The hopes and dreams of Texas families and small businesses have literally been crushed by storm after storm," said Abbott, whose state has seen successive bouts of severe weather, including storms that killed eight people in Houston earlier this month.

Abbott signed an amended severe weather disaster declaration on Sunday to include Denton, Montague,



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Cooke and Collin on a list of counties already under a disaster declaration sparked by storms and flooding in late April.

Hugo Parra, who lives in Farmers Branch, north of Dallas, said he rode out the storm with 40 to 50 people in the bathroom of the truck stop. The storm sheared the roof and walls off the building, mangling metal beams and leaving battered cars in the parking lot.

"A firefighter came to check on us and he said, 'You're very lucky,'" Parra said. "The best way to describe this is the wind tried to rip us out of the bathrooms."

Multiple people were transported to hospitals by ambulance and helicopter in Denton County, also north of Dallas.

No more deaths are expected and nobody was reported missing in Texas, Abbott said, though responders were doing one more round of searches just in case.

Eight people died statewide in Arkansas, Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders confirmed in a news conference Sunday evening. An emergency official said two of the deaths were attributed to the circumstances of the storm but not directly caused by weather, including a person who suffered a heart attack and another who was deprived of oxygen due to a loss of electricity.

The deaths included a 26-year-old woman who was found dead outside a destroyed home in Olvey, a small community in Boone County, according to Daniel Bolen of the county's emergency management office. One person died in Benton County, and two more bodies were found in Marion County, officials said.

In Oklahoma, two people died in Mayes County, east of Tulsa, officials said.

In Kentucky, a man was killed Sunday in Louisville when a tree fell on him, police said. Louisville Mayor Craig Greenburg confirmed on social media it was a storm-related death.

## A DEADLY SERIES OF STORMS

The destruction continued a grim month of deadly severe weather in the nation's midsection.

Tornadoes in Iowa last week left at least five people dead and dozens injured. The deadly twisters have spawned during a historically bad season for tornadoes, at a time when climate change contributes to the severity of storms around the world. April had the second-highest number of tornadoes on record in the country.

Meteorologists and authorities issued urgent warnings to seek cover as the storms marched across the region late Saturday and into Sunday. "If you are in the path of this storm take cover now!" the National Weather Service office in Norman, Oklahoma, posted on X.

Harold Brooks, a senior scientist at the National Severe Storms Laboratory in Norman, said a persistent pattern of warm, moist air is to blame for the string of tornadoes over the past two months.

## HOMES DESTROYED, ROADS BLOCKED

Residents awoke Sunday to overturned cars and collapsed garages. Some residents could be seen pacing and assessing the damage. Nearby, neighbors sat on the foundation of a wrecked home.

In Valley View, near the truck stop, the storms ripped the roofs off homes and blew out windows. Clothing, insulation, bits of plastic and other pieces of debris were wrapped around miles of barbed wire fence line surrounding grazing land in the rural area.

Kevin Dorantes, 20, was in nearby Carrollton when he learned the tornado was bearing down on the Valley View neighborhood where he lived with his father and brother. He called the two of them and told them to take cover in the windowless bathroom, where they rode out the storm and survived unharmed.

As Dorantes wandered through the neighborhood of downed power lines and devastated houses, he came upon a family whose home was reduced to a pile of splintered rubble. A father and son were trapped under debris and friends and neighbors raced to get them out, Dorantes said.

"They were conscious but severely injured," Dorantes said.

## WIDESPREAD POWER OUTAGES

The severe weather knocked out power for tens of thousands of homes and businesses in the path of the storms.

By late Sunday, more than 80,000 customers in Arkansas were without power. In neighboring Missouri,

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more than 90,000 were also without power. Texas reported 27,000 outages while 3,000 were reported in Oklahoma, according to the tracking website poweroutage.us.

Inaccessible roads and downed power lines in Oklahoma also led officials in the town of Claremore, near Tulsa, to announce on social media that the city was "shut down" due to the damage.

## MORE SEVERE WEATHER IN FORECAST

The system causing the latest severe weather was expected to move east over the rest of the holiday weekend.

The Indianapolis 500 started four hours late after a strong storm pushed into the area, forcing Indianapolis Motor Speedway officials to evacuate about 125,000 race fans.

More severe storms were predicted in Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee.

The risk of severe weather moves into North Carolina and Virginia on Monday, forecasters said.

To follow the progress of the storm system, see The Associated Press Tornado Tracker.

## Papua New Guinea says Friday's landslide buried more than 2,000 people and formally asks for help

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — A Papua New Guinea government official has told the United Nations more than 2,000 people were believed to have been buried alive by Friday's landslide and has formally asked for international help.

The government figure is roughly triple the U.N. estimate of 670 killed by the landslide in the South Pacific island nation's mountainous interior. The remains of only six people had been recovered so far.

In a letter seen by The Associated Press to the United Nations resident coordinator dated Sunday, the acting director of the South Pacific island nation's National Disaster Center Luseta Laso Mana said the landslide "buried more than 2000 people alive" and caused "major destruction" at Yambali village in the Enga province.

Estimates of the casualties have varied widely since the disaster occurred, and it was not immediately clear how officials arrived the number of people affected.

The International Organization for Migration, which is working closely with the government and taking a leading role in the international response, has not changed its estimated death toll of 670 released on Sunday, pending new evidence.

"We are not able to dispute what the government suggests but we are not able to comment on it," said Serhan Aktoprak, the chief of the U.N. migrant agency's mission in Papua New Guinea.

"As time goes in such a massive undertaking, the number will remain fluid," Aktoprak added.

The death toll of 670 was based on calculations by Yambali village and Enga provincial officials that more than 150 homes had been buried by the landslide. The previous estimate had been 60 homes.

The office of Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape did not respond Monday to a request for an explanation of what the government estimate of 2,000 was based on. Marape has promised to release information about the scale of the destruction and loss of life when it becomes available.

Determining the scale of the disaster is difficult because of challenging conditions on the ground including the village's remote location, a lack of telecommunications and tribal warfare throughout the province which means international relief workers and aid convoys require military escorts.

At least 26 tribal warriors and mercenaries were killed in a battle between two warring tribes in Enga in February, as well as an unconfirmed number of bystanders.

The national government's lack of reliable census data also adds to the challenges of determining how many are potentially dead.

The government estimates Papua New Guinea's population at around 10 million people, although a U.N. study, based on data including satellite photographs of roof tops, estimated in 2022 it could be as high as 17 million. An accurate census has not been held in the nation in decades.

The landslide had also buried a 200-meter (650-foot) stretch of the province's main highway under debris

6 to 8 meters (20 to 26 feet) deep which creates a major obstacle to relief workers.

Mana said the landslide would have a major economic impact on the entire country.

"The situation remains unstable" due to the shifting ground, "posing ongoing danger to both the rescue teams and survivors alike," Mana wrote to the United Nations.

An excavator donated by a local builder Sunday became the first piece of heavy earth-moving machinery brought in to help villagers who have been digging with shovels and farming tools to find bodies. Working around the still-shifting debris is treacherous.

Mana and Papua New Guinea's defense minister, Billy Joseph, flew on Sunday in an Australian military helicopter from the capital of Port Moresby to Yambali, 600 kilometers (370 miles) to the northwest, to gain a firsthand perspective of what is needed.

Mana's office posted a photo of him at Yambali handing a local official a check for 500,000 kina (\$130,000) to buy emergency supplies for the 4,000 displaced survivors.

The purpose of the visit was to decide whether Papua New Guinea's government needed to officially request more international support.

Earth-moving equipment used by Papua New Guinea's military was being transported to the disaster scene 400 kilometers (250 miles) from the east coast city of Lae.

Traumatized villagers are divided over whether heavy machinery should be allowed to dig up and potentially further damage the bodies of their buried relatives, officials said.

## **China premier agrees on cooperation with Seoul, Tokyo but issues veiled rebuke against their US ties**

By HYUNG-JIN KIM and HUIZHONG WU Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — China's premier agreed Monday to revive three-way cooperation with South Korea and Japan in the face of shared challenges, but issued a veiled rebuke against the two countries' expanding security cooperation with the United States.

Chinese Premier Li Qiang met South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in Seoul in what was their countries' first such trilateral meeting in more than four years.

Many experts say just restarting the countries' highest-level annual meeting and agreeing on the need to improve ties is a positive sign for cooperation among the three Northeast Asian neighbors, as they all face economic uncertainties caused by wars and instability around the world. But how drastically their cooperation will be promoted is unknown as the three countries have a range of long-running complex issues.

In a joint news conference after the meeting, Li said China wants to cooperate with South Korea and Japan on economic issues, especially on supply chains and the restart of talks on a three-way free trade deal.

Yoon said the three leaders agreed to promote people-to-people and cultural exchanges, establish safe supply chain networks and work together to tackle shared environmental, health and other issues. Kishida said the three countries share a big responsibility for regional peace and that Japan will chair the next round of the trilateral leaders' meeting.

Despite the seemingly amicable mood of the meeting, however, Li at one point expressed Chinese uneasiness about Japan and South Korea's moves to beef up their security partnership with the U.S., which Beijing views as an attempt to form a bloc to contain China.

"We need to have honest dialogues to better enhance trust and resolve doubts. We must uphold the spirit of strategic autonomy and maintain our bilateral relations," Li said in comments at the start of the meeting with Yoon and Kishida. "We need to promote multipolarity in the world and oppose the formation of blocs or camps."

China is wary of Japan's plan to deploy 400 U.S. Tomahawk long-range cruise missiles and allow repair and maintenance of U.S. warships in Japan to support their operations in the western Pacific. The expansion of military drills among South Korea, the U.S. and Japan have also drawn protests from China.

The trilateral meeting was also briefly overshadowed by North Korea's abrupt notification to Japan of its

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plan to launch a satellite by early next week, an apparent bid to place its second spy satellite into orbit. The U.N. bans any satellite launches by North Korea, viewing them as disguised tests of the country's long-range missile technology. North Korea has said it needs spy satellites to better monitor South Korea and the U.S. and enhance the precision-attack capabilities of its missiles.

Yoon called for stern international action if North Korea goes ahead with the launch. Kishida urged North Korea to withdraw its satellite launch plan. But Li didn't mention the launch plan as he offered general comments about promoting peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula through a political resolution.

South Korea, Japan and the U.S. have long urged China — North Korea's major ally and economic pipeline — to use its leverage to persuade the North to abandon its nuclear ambitions. But China is suspected of avoiding fully implementing U.N. sanctions on North Korea and sending clandestine aid shipments to its impoverished, sociality neighbor to stay afloat and continue to serve as a bulwark against U.S. influence on the Korean Peninsula.

In a bilateral meeting with Li on Sunday, Yoon asked China to contribute to promoting peace on the Korean Peninsula, while speaking about North Korea's nuclear program and its deepening military ties with Russia.

After meeting with Li on Sunday, Kishida also told reporters that he expressed serious concerns about the situations in the South China Sea, Hong Kong and China's northwestern Xinjiang region. He said Japan was closely monitoring developments on self-governed Taiwan as well.

Kishida referred to China's military assertiveness in the South China Sea, clampdowns on pro-democracy movements in Hong Kong and human rights abuses against minorities in Xinjiang. Last week, China also launched a large military exercise around Taiwan to show its anger over the inauguration of the island's new president who refuses to accept its insistence that Taiwan is part of China.

On Monday, Li still didn't respond directly to the outside accusations against the Chinese actions in the South China Sea or surrounding Taiwan.

"China, Japan and South Korea should appropriately handle sensitive issues and points of difference, and take care of each other's core interests and major concerns," Li said. "And truly construct a real multilateralism."

The three Asian nations together represent about 25% of global gross domestic product, and they are closely linked to one another economically and culturally. But their relations have suffered on-again, off-again setbacks owing to issues stemming from Japan's wartime aggression. China's ambitions of greater global influence and a U.S. push to bolster its Asian alliances have also threatened to hurt ties among the three Asian countries.

The China-South Korea-Japan trilateral meeting was supposed to happen annually following their first meeting in 2008. But the sessions stalled since the last one in December 2019 in Chengdu, China because of the COVID-19 pandemic and often-complicated ties among the three countries.

Experts say the three countries all want better relations. China is the biggest trading partner for both South Korea and Japan. Analysts say China likely thinks any further strengthening of the South Korea-Japan-U.S. security ties would not serve its national interests.

"Washington can trust its allies in their diplomatic efforts with Beijing," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul. "The China-Japan-South Korea trilateral summit is more about reducing frictions than reshaping geopolitics."

## **Military labs do the detective work to identify soldiers decades after they died in World War II**

By JOSH FUNK Associated Press

OFFUTT AIR FORCE BASE, Neb. (AP) — Generations of American families have grown up not knowing exactly what happened to their loved ones who died while serving their country in World War II and other conflicts.

But a federal lab tucked away above the bowling alley at Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha and a sister lab in Hawaii are steadily answering those lingering questions, aiming to offer 200 families per year the

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chance to honor their relatives with a proper burial.

"They may not even have been alive when that service member was alive, but that story gets carried down through the generations," said Carrie Brown, a Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency lab manager at Offutt. "They may have seen on the mantle a picture of that person when they were little and not really understood or known who they were."

Memorial Day and the upcoming 80th anniversary of D-Day on June 6 are reminders of the urgency of Brown's work. The forensic anthropologists, medical examiners and historians who work together to identify lost soldiers are in a race against time as remains buried on battlefields around the globe deteriorate.

But advances in DNA technology, combined with innovative techniques including comparing bones to chest X-rays taken by the military, mean the labs can identify more of the missing soldiers every year. Some 72,000 World War II soldiers remain unaccounted for, along with roughly 10,000 more from all the conflicts since. The experts believe about half of those are recoverable.

The agency identified 59 servicemembers in 2013, when the Offutt lab first opened. That number has steadily risen — 159 service members last year, up from 134 in 2022 — and the labs have a goal of 200 identifications annually.

The labs' work allowed Donna Kennedy to bury her cousin, Cpl. Charles Ray Patten, with full military honors this month in the same Lawson, Missouri, cemetery where his father and grandfather are buried. Patten died 74 years ago during the Korean War, but spent decades buried as an unknown in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii.

"I just I ached. I mean, it hurt. You know, I just felt so bad. Even though I didn't know him, I loved him," Kennedy said.

Patten's funeral was a simple affair with just a few family members. But often when veterans who fought decades earlier are identified, people waving flags and holding signs line the streets of their hometowns to herald the return of their remains.

"This work is important first and foremost because these are individuals that gave their lives to protect our freedom, and they paid the ultimate sacrifice. So we're here holding that promise that we'll return them home to their families," Brown said.

"It's important for their families to show them that we'll never stop, no matter what," she said.

Often there are compelling details, Brown said.

One of her first cases involved the intact remains of a World War I Marine found in a forest in France with his wallet still in his pocket. The wallet, initialed G.H., contained a New York Times article describing plans for the offensive in which he ultimately died. He also had an infantryman badge with his name and the year he received it on the back.

Before leaving France with the remains, the team visited a local cemetery where other soldiers were buried and learned there were only two missing soldiers with the initials G.H.

Brown had a fair idea who that soldier was before his remains even arrived in the lab. That veteran was buried in Arlington National Cemetery and Brown often visits his grave when she is in Washington D.C.

Most cases aren't that easy.

The experts who work at the lab must piece together identities by looking at historical records about where the remains were found and which soldiers were in the area. They then consult the list of possible names and use the bones, objects found with them, military medical records and DNA to confirm their identities. They focus on battles and plane crashes where they have the greatest chance of success because of available information.

But their work can be complicated if soldiers were buried in a temporary cemetery and moved when a unit was forced to retreat. And unidentified soldiers were often buried together.

When remains are brought to the lab, they sometimes include an extra bone. Experts then spend months or even years matching the bones and waiting for DNA and other test results to confirm their identities.

One test even can identify if the soldier grew up primarily eating rice or a corn-based diet.

The lab also compares specific traits of collar bones to the chest X-rays the military routinely took of

soldiers before they were deployed. It helps that the military keeps extensive records of all soldiers.

Those clues help the experts put together the puzzle of someone's identity.

"It's not always easy. It's certainly not instantaneous," Brown said. "Some of the cases, we really have to fight to get to that spot, because some of them have been gone for 80 years."

## **A woman could be Mexico's next leader. Millions of others continue in shadows as domestic workers.**

By MEGAN JANETSKY Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Concepcion Alejo is used to being invisible.

Alejo, 43, touches her face up with makeup on a Tuesday morning, and steps out of her tiny apartment on the fringes of Mexico City. She walks until the cracked gravel outside her home turns into cobblestones, and the campaign posters coating small concrete buildings are replaced with the spotless walls of gated communities of the city's upper class.

It's here where Alejo has quietly worked cleaning the homes and raising the children of wealthier Mexicans for 26 years.

Alejo is among approximately 2.5 million Mexicans — largely women — who serve as domestic workers in the Latin American nation, a profession that has come to encapsulate gender and class divisions long permeating Mexico.

Women like her play a fundamental role in Mexican society, picking up the burden of domestic labor as a growing number of women professionals enter the workforce. Despite reforms under the current government, many domestic workers continue to face low pay, abuse by employers and long hours. It is an institution dating back to colonial times, and some researchers equate the unstable working conditions to "modern slavery."

Now, with Mexico on its way to possibly electing its first female president June 2, domestic workers hope either former Mexico City Mayor Claudia Sheinbaum or former Sen. Xóchitl Gálvez might shift the balance in their favor.

"I've never voted all these years, because it's always the same for us whoever wins. ... When have they ever listened to us, why would I give them my vote?" Alejo said. "At least by having a woman, maybe things will be different."

Born to a poor family in the central Mexican state of Puebla, Alejo dropped out of school at age 14, moving to Mexico City as a live-in nanny with two sisters.

"It's like you're a mother. The kids would call me 'mama'," she said. "I would bathe them, care for them, do everything from the moment I awoke to the moment they slept."

While some domestic workers live separately from families, many more live with families and work weeks, if not months, without breaks and isolated from family and friends.

Alejo said the demands and low pay of domestic work led her not to have children herself. Others told The Associated Press they were fired from their positions after they fell ill and asked for help from their employers.

"When you work in someone else's house, your life isn't your own," said Carolina Solana de Dios, a 47-year-old live-in nanny.

Their help is essential for working women like 49-year-old single mother Claudia Rodríguez, as they continue to fight to enter professional spaces historically dominated by men. In Mexico and much of Latin America, a gap has long divided men and women in the workplace. In 2005, 80% of men were employed or looking for jobs, compared to 40% of women, Mexican government data shows.

That gap has narrowed over time, though large disparities in salary and leadership roles still exist.

Born in a town two hours outside Mexico City, Rodríguez fled an abusive father with her mother and siblings, taking refuge in the capital. Instead of pursuing her dream of professionally dancing, she began to work and study not to "make the same sacrifice" as her mother toiling away in different informal jobs.

She spent years clawing her way up in the IT industry, but took over all the housework when she had

kids with her husband. When her husband left her for another woman six years ago, hiring a live-in domestic worker was the only thing she could do to stay afloat.

Today, she and her nanny, Irma, both wake up at 5 a.m., one making lunch for her two daughters while the other drops them off at school.

"In the case of women in business, we couldn't take it all on alone simply because it's far too much that society expects of you," she said.

Yet a historic number of Mexican women are taking up leadership roles, in part due gender quota laws set on political parties. Since 2018, Mexico's Congress has had a 50-50 gender split, and the number of female governors has shot up.

While neither presidential candidate has spoken explicitly about domestic workers, both Sheinbaum and Gálvez proposed addressing violence against women and closing the country's gender pay gap.

In 2019, the government of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador passed landmark legislation granting domestic workers basic rights like paid leave, limits on working hours and access to health insurance paid by employers.

But failures by the government to enforce those rules left domestic workers unprotected and locked in a "dynamic of power inequality," said Norma Palacios, head of the country's domestic workers union, SINACTRAHO.

"Nothing has changed ... even if on paper we should have more labor rights," Palacios said.

Neither Alejo, the domestic worker, nor Rodríguez, the single mother, say they particularly identify with either candidate on the ballot. Both plan to vote. Even if they see the leaders as more of the same, they echoed Palacios in saying that a woman leader would be an important step.

"It's still a woman who is going to be at the head of a country — a sexist country, a country of inequality, a country of violence against women, a country of femicides," Palacios said.

Meanwhile, workers like Alejo continue down a shaky path.

Alejo is among the 98% of domestic workers yet to enroll in health insurance, according to SINACTRAHO data.

She finally works with a kind family that pays her a fair wage, but she's summoning up the courage to ask the family to pay for her health insurance, worrying that she'll be replaced if she asks for her rights to be respected.

"They don't like that you ask for things," she said. "It's not easy finding work, and if you need to work, you end up accepting whatever they give you."

## **Russian POWs get to make phone calls home. Ukrainians don't. A growing movement wants that to change**

By LORI HINNANT and VASILISA STEPANENKO Associated Press

FAR WESTERN UKRAINE (AP) — Precious few choices are available to Alexander, a 26-year-old Russian soldier, since his capture: Clothes, meals and the hours of his day are rigidly accounted for in the camp for prisoners of war.

But Ukraine allows Alexander to call home to his family in Kursk, a Russian city about 60 miles (100 kilometers) from the Ukrainian border, and he says that has kept him grounded.

It is a lifeline unavailable to Ukrainian POWs. Now, infuriated Ukrainian families are demanding an end to the phone calls imprisoned Russian soldiers get to make.

"To be able to talk to your loved ones is worth a lot. I've already been in prison for almost a year. I'm losing my mind," Alexander told The Associated Press during a recent visit for several news outlets to Ukraine's main POW camp, as he completed his work shift. "People are not made of steel."

He said the brief conversations, closely monitored by his Ukrainian captors, pulled him from the brink of despair — even though for him and all Russian POWs, the calls are growing rarer by the week.

For imprisoned Ukrainians, calls are nonexistent and even letters rare. Families usually learn their fate

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only when comrades freed in exchanges bring back word.

The last such exchange was Feb. 8. In all, 2,988 members of the Ukrainian military have been exchanged for Russian prisoners of war, according to Ukrainian government figures. Neither Ukraine nor Russia has said how many POWs there are in all. Russia's Ministry of Defense did not respond to written requests for comment on its policy toward Ukrainian POWs or the Russians held in Ukraine.

Ukraine has regularly opened its main POW camp to the Red Cross, the United Nations and international journalists. In late April, The Associated Press visited the site in western Ukraine, a full day's journey from the front lines where the men inside were captured. The visit took place on the condition its precise location not be revealed.

Access to Russian sites where Ukrainians are held is severely limited. U.N. reports based on post-release interviews have found that the majority of Ukrainian POWs are subject to routine medical neglect, severe and systematic mistreatment and even torture. The same reports have found isolated reports of abuse of Russian soldiers, mostly during capture or transit to internment sites.

AP did not see any other internment sites. AP could not verify treatment of prisoners generally, or treatment at the main site outside its five-hour visit.

A few Russian POWs talked eagerly and at length with AP journalists, though most refused to speak at all. Guards stayed far from journalists during interviews. Prisoners gave only their first names.

## THE MOVEMENT TO END THE CALLS

Over three weeks, families of Ukrainian POWs gathered more than 25,000 signatures for a petition to stop Russian POWs' calls home and sent it to the government, which quickly rejected the demand in late April. The families, who say their pain is being ignored in favor of keeping Russian prisoners comfortable, are appealing.

Their movement is gaining momentum beyond POWs' immediate families, with protests growing by the week.

Under the Geneva Conventions, POW privileges include regular communication home in the form of letters and cards at least twice monthly. Ukraine has gone beyond that by allowing for the 15-minute calls since the start of the war, in hopes Russia would reciprocate.

In rejecting the families' petition, the government cited the convention but also said the calls can only help protect captive Ukrainians.

The conversations, a government statement said, show Russian soldiers there is nothing to fear by surrendering.

"This will help to increase the number of prisoners of war, which will make it possible to release more defenders of Ukraine who are captive in the aggressor state," the statement said.

Alexander Vlasenko, a spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross in Ukraine, declined to comment on the disparity in access to phone calls for the POWs. The Red Cross organizes much of the communication, but Vlasenko said unlike letters, phone calls are up to "the goodwill of the parties."

The families' anger and the petition rejection come amid widespread reports of mistreatment of Ukrainians in Russian captivity.

## INSIDE THE PRISON

While POWs are far from the fighting, the war still reaches them. Air raid sirens sounded four times during AP's visit. During each, the men lined up in pairs with their hands clasped behind their backs, submitted to a brief pat-down, and trudged with their heads down into basement shelters until the all-clear.

POWs who are not wounded work during the day. Among the tasks: fabricating plastic Christmas trees, building garden sheds, ripping pallets into kindling, and sorting metal in the junkyard. Others are responsible for meals.

When POWs pass guards, their hands must be behind their backs. When they rise from meals, they must shout "Thank you" in Ukrainian in unison. Like many Ukrainians, the guards largely speak and understand Russian, but the prisoners rarely speak or understand the language of their captors.

The calls take place in a small upstairs room overlooking a church and treetops. On the desk is a monitor and small logbook for detainees to write their name, date of the call, location and time elapsed. All the



detainees who spoke to AP said they treasured the brief conversations, even knowing they were monitored.

An injured POW who said he's been in the camp since January told AP about two phone calls – one to his wife, with no answer, and the other to his adult daughter. He wouldn't give an opinion about whether it's fair for the Russians to have access to calls while the Ukrainians don't.

"We're feeling bad here, and they're feeling bad there. Only the leadership is winning in this situation," said the prisoner, whose name AP is withholding for his safety. "We lose every time. We're pawns. Pocket change. Everything they want to do, they do. I can't even have my own opinion."

## FAMILIES' PAIN

For Anastasiia Savova, news of her father hasn't come since December 2022. She last spoke with him eight months earlier, as he and fellow Ukrainians defended Mariupol, the port city seized by Russian forces early in the war.

Through a returning POW, she learned her father's health was deteriorating. But she also heard about how proud he was of her, how certain he'd been that she was fighting for his release. She longs to hear from him directly and said she's furious her government isn't listening to families like hers. She wants the calls to stop if Russia won't reciprocate.

"We thought that this step would help us to connect with our loved ones, that the Russian Federation would make it possible to call them," she said. "But unfortunately, Russia didn't go along with these rules and norms."

Without contact, she said, families are afraid their men will lose hope when they need it most. Some of her deepest fears, though, are more personal: "I am very afraid of forgetting his voice."

## **A synthetic drug ravages youth in Sierra Leone. There's little help, and some people are chained**

By KEMO CHAM Associated Press

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone (AP) — In Sierra Leone, a cheap, synthetic drug is ravaging youth. Trash-strewn alleys are lined with boys and young men slumped in addiction. Healthcare services are severely limited. One frustrated community has set up what it calls a treatment center, run by volunteers. But harsh measures can be used.

The project in the Bombay suburb of the capital, Freetown, started in the past year when a group of people tried to help a colleague's younger brother off the drug called kush. After persuasion and threats failed, they locked him in his room for two months. It worked. He has returned to university and thanked them for setting him free.

"The only time I left the room was when I went to the bathroom," Christian Johnson, 21, recalled. He said he was motivated to kick the drug by thoughts of his family, the fear of becoming a dropout and the abandonment by many of his friends.

The volunteers then expanded the effort and took over an abandoned building. They seize people at families' request and sometimes chain them to prevent them from escaping — an echo of a practice the West African country's only psychiatric hospital previously used. There's little padding against the concrete floor and walls, and little to do beyond confronting their craving.

"We turn parents away for lack of space," said Suleiman Turay, a local football coach who helped launch the center. "The people in the community cooperate and help in their own individual ways. Some bring food, some bring water, doing whatever they can to help." A doctor in the community visits from time to time. Police said they were not aware of the project or the practice of chaining people.

So far, the Bombay Community has treated 70 to 80 people, volunteers said. One showed the chains used in extreme cases, although no one was chained at the time. The youngest held was a 13-year-old boy sent there by his father.

"I was very angry, and I wanted to have nothing to do with him," said the father, Gibrilla Bangura, a college lecturer. "I am very grateful to these men and women for their role in helping my son."

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Sierra Leone's President Julius Maada Bio this year declared a war on kush, calling it an epidemic and a national threat. He has launched a task force on drug and substance abuse, promising to lead a government approach focused on prevention and treatment involving law enforcement and community engagement.

"We are witnessing the destructive consequences of kush on our country's very foundation, our young people," Bio said in April.

People rarely know what they're getting with kush, a derivative of cannabis mixed with synthetic drugs like fentanyl and tramadol and chemicals like formaldehyde. In some communities, civil society workers say, people have dug up graves to grind bones to cut with the drug, seeking chemicals used in embalming.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's director in Sierra Leone, Daphne Moffett, said one challenge in responding to the crisis is the drug's changing composition. "Before appropriate interventions can be developed, we need to know what materials are in Kush," she said in an email.

The drug leaves people lethargic, desperate and ill. While the government does not publish official figures on kush-related deaths or hospital admissions, Ansu Konneh, the director of mental health at the Ministry of Social Welfare, said there had been a sharp rise in people addicted to kush turning up at Sierra Leone's only psychiatric hospital since 2022.

Konneh heads Sierra Leone's first public drug rehabilitation center, which opened in Freetown in February. He said kush has affected Sierra Leone like no other drug.

"It's making young people drop out of college, and it's having a physical effect on their health. You can see they have swollen feet, they have multiple organ failures, they're involved in crimes," he said. "It's a very serious situation. It's creating family disintegration, problems in communities, and they're dying every day."

Prince Bull-Luseni, the director of the West Africa Drug Policy Network, a group that aims to promote policy reforms, said Sierra Leone is the worst-hit country in the region. "Every community in Sierra Leone, not just in Freetown, has been hit by kush and it's tearing them apart," he told the AP, adding that with no treatment or rehabilitation for most users, "there's no way to address it."

The Social Linkages For Youth Development And Child Link, a nonprofit organization that seeks to fight drug use, relies on former users of the drug to help educate young people about its toll. The organization had lobbied the government for years to allocate more resources to fighting addiction.

"Overcoming the addiction wasn't easy. It was one of the hardest steps of my life," said Ephraim Macaulay, a peer educator who came across kush in college and soon was paying less than a dollar for a day's supply. "It's like you trying to get out of water and there's water all around you."

He motivated himself by comparing himself to friends and family. They were clean. He stunk. Gradually, he stopped taking the drug. Now he sometimes feels like crying when talking to peers, reminded of what his life could have been if he hadn't kicked the addiction.

Habib Kamara, the executive director at SLYDCL, said the availability of kush has grown exponentially after suppliers began to manufacture it locally. He said law enforcement needs to do more to target manufacturers at the top of the supply chain instead of chasing buyers and low-level sellers. The government has said it wants to help, not punish, those who use the drug.

"This country has fought two pandemics," he said, listing COVID and West Africa's devastating Ebola outbreak that began a decade ago. Kush has had a similar impact, causing young people to drop out of school, straining the healthcare system and tearing apart families.

"If we cannot have an approach that reduces usage, in the future we will not have people to replace us tomorrow in the workforce," Kamara said.

Some parents are exhausted. Memunatu Kamara, 49, sells smoked fish at a market in Freetown, providing the main income for her family of six. Her husband is an imam. Their son, the oldest, has dropped out of school and stolen the few valuables they owned to buy the drug.

"A very intelligent boy has become a dropout," she said, wiping away tears. "I feel pain seeing him in this condition. I feel shame among my peers. I feel discouraged about his future. I have no idea what else to do about it."

She has put her son on the waiting list for the Bombay Community.

## China has threatened trade with some countries after feuds. They're calling 'the firm' for help

By DIDI TANG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Business is good at “the firm.”

The eight-person team at the State Department is leading Washington’s efforts to ease the economic blowback for countries targeted by China.

It emerged in the scramble to help Lithuania during a spat with China over Taiwan two years ago. Today, “the firm” is helping growing numbers of nations cope with what diplomats call economic coercion from Beijing.

Countries “knock on the door, they call,” Undersecretary of State Jose Fernandez told The Associated Press in a recent interview. “We run a consulting firm that does not have to advertise for clients, as they come.”

Led by State Department senior adviser Melanie Hart, the group reviews vulnerabilities and develops responses for countries that are cut off or fear losing trade with global powerhouse China. Since the group’s launch with Lithuania, more than a dozen countries have approached the Biden administration for assistance, Fernandez said.

The effort comes as Washington is stepping up its campaign to push back at China’s global influence and tensions grow between the rivals.

The Chinese Embassy in Washington took issue with the notion that Beijing is using economic pressure on other countries, calling it “completely unfounded.” The United States, it said, was the one bullying China economically by abusing export controls, treating Chinese companies unfairly and labeling Beijing as a perpetrator of economic coercion.

Fernandez said that is a tactic China “is using over and over. They believe that intimidation works. That’s why we got into the act. The time had come to stop this thing.”

For example, when a Norwegian committee in 2010 awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to a Chinese dissident, Beijing stopped buying salmon from the Nordic country. Two years later, China rejected banana imports from the Philippines over a territorial dispute in the South China Sea. In 2020, Beijing responded to Australia’s call for an investigation into the origin of the COVID-19 pandemic by raising tariffs on Australian barley and wines.

Then came Lithuania. In late 2021 and early 2022, Lithuanian businesses saw their cargo shipments to and from China stranded, and they were warned by major European businesses that Lithuanian-made auto parts would be barred from products for the Chinese market.

That came after Lithuania allowed Taiwan’s de-facto embassy in Vilnius to bear the name Taiwan, instead of Taipei — Taiwan’s capital city — as preferred by Beijing. China considers the self-governed island to be part of Chinese territory and protested the use of Taiwan.

Instead of caving in, the northern European country asked for help. The U.S. and its allies stepped up.

American diplomats sought new markets for Lithuanian goods. The Export-Import Bank in Washington provided Vilnius with \$600 million in export credit, and the Pentagon signed a procurement agreement with the country.

And “the firm” kept at it. The State Department works as the first line of response and can coordinate with other U.S. agencies to reach “every tool that the U.S. government has,” according to a department official who asked not to be named to discuss details of the team.

While it takes years to reorient global supply chains to reduce reliance on countries such as China, the team tries to offer a quicker way to ease a crisis, the official said, comparing the team to ambulance services that “help you get past that scary emergency time.”

For example, the U.S. might try to work with partners to help a country quickly divert agricultural products to new markets, build more cold storage so products can reach farther markets or improve product quality to gain entry into more markets, the official said.

The assistance is confidential, the official said, declining to discuss the tools at the team’s disposal or

name the countries that have sought help.

Shay Wester, director of Asian economic affairs at the Asia Society Policy Institute, said it was "a significant and much-needed initiative."

"China's growing use of economic coercion to pressure countries over political disputes is a significant challenge that requires a concerted response," said Wester, who co-authored an April report on the issue.

The responses from other countries show that demand is high for this kind of support, Wester said.

This month, Lithuania hosted a conference on resisting economic pressure, and Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis said the aim of that action "is to crush the victims by forcing reversal and public renunciation of its policies."

Liu Pengyu, the Chinese Embassy spokesman, said the problem with Lithuania was "a political not an economic one. They were caused by Lithuania's acts in bad faith that hurt China's interests, not China's pressure on Lithuania."

Fernandez, who attended the conference, applauded Lithuania for standing up to China. "Lithuania gave us the opportunity to prove that there were alternatives to the coercion," he said.

## **Forced to rebuild a life at 12, a Haitian girl joins thousands seeking an escape from gang violence**

By DANICA COTO Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — For 12-year-old Juliana St. Vil, life begins every afternoon.

She bounds out of the crowded shelter where she's been sleeping on the concrete floor for 10 months, a smile on her face despite harsh surroundings. Not yet a teenager, Juliana must navigate a Haiti oppressed by gangs that killed her father and drove her family out of their home.

An acting workshop held daily in a big house with a leafy yard is her escape.

"I lived well," Juliana said, remembering her old neighborhood. "I could always eat when I was hungry. I could go to school without a worry."

Millions across Haiti are struggling to rebuild their lives in a country with no president as gangs who want full control of the capital and beyond kill, rape and injure thousands.

The country of more than 11 million people finds itself at a crossroads while preparing for the arrival of thousands of police from Kenya and other countries. The officers are part of a U.N-backed deployment to quell gang violence that exploded after the July 2021 presidential assassination.

Haiti is as fragile as it's ever been: Nearly 2 million people are on the verge of starvation, more than 360,000 have been left homeless by gang invasions, and basic supplies dwindled as the main seaport and international airport closed for months.

Caught in the middle are Haitians of every generation wondering if the country will pull through, and whether they will live to see its future.

'WE HAD A GOOD LIFE'

Juliana lived most of her life in Carrefour-Feuilles, which rebuilt itself after the devastating 2010 earthquake, and was known as a birthplace of young artists.

Located in southern Port-au-Prince, it was home to working-class people and those who had left the rural countryside.

"When we were at home, we were free, we had a good life," Juliana's mother, Baby Gustave, recalled.

They lived in a community called Savane-Pistache, where she met her future husband at a daily prayer group.

"I loved everything about him. He bathed me, cooked for me and went to the market for me," Gustave said, explaining that she suffers from debilitating asthma attacks.

By the time Juliana was born in 2011, gangs already were fighting to control more territory in Carrefour-Feuilles, hacking at each other with machetes they later replaced with high-caliber weapons, targeting rival gunmen and civilians.

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One time, the gunfire was so heavy that Juliana said she fainted at home.

"I have a little heart problem. And when I hear gunshots, I think that I might get shot," she said in a quiet voice.

Gustave decided it was time to leave. Her partner had been shot dead in 2013 as he walked home after a full day's work at a factory.

On a Sunday afternoon in August 2023, Gustave fled home with Juliana and a younger daughter she shares with her new partner. Like many running from gang violence, all she took was their birth certificates and her voting card.

## NOW, A FIGHT SIMPLY TO SURVIVE

Juliana cried when they left. It was the first time she had been uprooted, and she didn't like it. At Savane-Pistache, she would play outside with her friends and lived in a two-bedroom home with beds and mattresses and an outdoor bathroom she didn't have to share with strangers.

Now, she sleeps on the concrete floor of a school converted into a shelter, living in a classroom with nearly a dozen strangers, her clothes stuffed into a suitcase and a big plastic bag that once contained rice. She shares a handful of bathrooms with more than 2,200 people. There's not much room to play because adults, drying clothes and boiling cauldrons filled with soup and rice take up nearly all the space at the shelter, where food is sometimes scarce.

On a recent morning, Gustave boiled bread and added a chunk of butter, stirring continuously until it formed a thick soup. In the background, a radio blared news, with one man declaring, "Haiti is crashing."

Gustave spoon fed the soup to her 3-year-old and set aside leftovers for a thin neighbor who lived with them. Juliana had already eaten breakfast at a friend's house, where she spent the night because she does not get along with her mother's new partner.

By 1 p.m., Juliana was hungry, and she dove into the free meal that she and nearly a dozen other children get daily before the acting workshop. Like others, she ate only half and saved the rest for her family.

Eager to get started, the kids filed barefoot into a room with wooden floors to practice a skit they will present to the public at the end of the two-week workshop. While it doesn't yet have a title, the skit focuses on life at a shelter in Haiti.

Juliana is one of the lead actresses. In one scene, she's a mother seeking permission to live at a shelter with her son, played by a young boy who pretends to cry but most times ends up giggling, making the entire group laugh. In another scene, she's a peacemaker, finding a solution to children fighting because they want to play different games in a crowded shelter.

In one final scene, she reveals her name and her real-life dream: to become a policewoman.

"I like the way they dress, but I would be afraid of dying," she said.

Just a few blocks away from where Juliana and others rehearse, a female officer with Haiti's National Police was fatally shot May 8 as she fought off gang members trying to kidnap her. She was dropping off her child at school.

## A DISTRACTION FROM THE TRAUMA

To build trust, the children in the workshop called "Theater Curbs Violence" organized by BIT-HAÏTI, a street theater group, practice falling backward into someone's arms.

Not all can do it. Some bend backward only slightly, as if warming up for a limbo dance. A handful stand still, waiting for the next exercise.

It involves forming a circle and yelling one at a time. One girl shouts for only a second and then covers her face in embarrassment.

"They have trauma," said Stéphanie François, who helps lead the workshop.

The children have been forced to flee their homes and are exposed to grisly gang violence blamed for more than 2,500 deaths or injuries from January to March alone.

Hundreds of schools have closed, and playtime at crowded and unsanitary shelters is rare.

"They have a need to leave behind the environment of the camp to be together, to tease each other," said Eliézer Guerisme, program director at Haiti's National Theater, who is involved in the workshop.

Juliana misses school. She relishes math classes, especially division. In her free time, when she's not

helping her mother wash clothes or dishes or take care of her sister, she watches cooking shows, enthralled by the process of baking cookies and cakes.

But being in that big house with the leafy yard is the one thing that helps take her mind off being homeless, off leaving her friends and her school, off the violence.

It's an escape few Haitians have.

On a recent afternoon, Juliana and the other children gathered to practice a scene where they speak in unison while living at a pretend shelter: "Even if it's not what we want today, one day everything will be perfect," they said in clear and strong voices.

## Poor neighborhood in Peru's Amazon region hosts film festival celebrating tropical forests

By RODRIGO ABD and FRANKLIN BRICEÑO Associated Press

BELEN, Peru (AP) — In the heart of Peru's Amazon region, a poor neighborhood put aside the trials and tribulations of everyday life and celebrated an international film festival with works from countries with tropical forests.

Many who attended the 10-day event had never seen a movie on the big screen, and the one used for the festival was itself unique due to the area's geography.

"The festival aims to be a tribute to the jungles of the world and its people, to the Indigenous communities, in which we believe lies the answer to the challenges and destruction that forests face now that everyone is talking about climate change," Daniel Martínez-Quintanilla, co-executive director of the festival that ends Sunday, said.

Life in the community of Belén revolves around water. Houses and businesses are built on stilts because rains regularly lead to monthslong floods. Families own canoes to move around, but children who lack one sometimes use large plastic containers instead.

So, members of the Muyuna Floating Film Festival — muyuna in the Quechua language means "a whirlpool formed in mighty rivers" — set the screen on a 10-meter (33-foot) high wooden structure, allowing residents to enjoy the films from their canoes or the windows of their homes.

"For the first time, we are getting to know these settings that are bringing us to this community," said Belén resident Jorge Chilicahua, a 60-year-old farmer who raises chickens and plants cassava, corn and vegetables to meet his family's needs. He has never been to a movie theater.

Much of the population of Belén comes from rural areas of the Peruvian Amazon and are part of various Indigenous groups, including the Kukama, Yagua and Bora, that migrated in search of better economic, educational and health opportunities. Their challenges abound.

People fish by making holes in the wooden floors of their houses, which forces mothers to keep a watchful eye over their children who do not yet know how to swim so that they don't fall into the water and drown. Health authorities have reported malnutrition and diarrhea are common due to lack of drinking water.

Martínez-Quintanilla said the event included films from Thailand, Brazil, Taiwan, Panama and other countries with tropical forests, as well as others made by young Peruvians.

The works screened included the Peruvian animated short film "The Engine and the Melody," which tells the story of an ant that fells Amazonian trees and a cicada that manages to regenerate the forest by playing a prodigious flute — until everything changes when a forest fire occurs.

## Nigeria is emerging as a critical mineral hub. The government is cracking down on illegal operations

By TAIWO ADEBAYO Associated Press

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) — Nigeria's government is cracking down on illegal mining, making dozens of arrests of unlicensed miners since April for allegedly stealing the country's lithium, a critical mineral used in batteries for electric vehicles, smartphones and power systems.

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The recent arrests come as Nigeria seeks to regulate its mining operations of critical minerals, curb illegal activity and better benefit from its mineral resources. The clean energy transition, a shift away from coal, oil and gas and toward renewable energy and batteries has spiked global demand for lithium, tin and other minerals. Illegal mines are rife in the country's fledging industry as corruption among regulatory officials is common and the mineral deposits are located in remote areas with minimal government presence. Officials say profits from illicit mining practices has helped arm militia groups in the north of the county.

In the most recent arrests in mid-May, a joint team of soldiers and police conducted a raid on a remote market in Kishi, in the country's southwestern Oyo State. Locals said the market, once known for selling farm produce, has become a center for illicit trade in lithium mined in hard-to-reach areas. The three-day operation resulted in the arrest of 32 individuals, including two Chinese nationals, local workers and mineral traders, according to the state government and locals. Loads of lithium were also seized.

Jimoh Bioku, a Kishi community leader, said there had been "clandestine searches" for the mineral at remote sites tucked away in the bush in the past years by Chinese nationals before "they engaged people to dig for them and turned the market into a transit point." The community was "particularly worried about the insecurity that usually follows illegal mining and that was why we reported to the state government," he said.

China is the dominant player in the global EV supply chain, including in Nigeria where China-owned companies employ mostly vulnerable people leaving Nigeria's far north — ravaged by conflicts and rapid desertification — to work in mining operations throughout the country. China's nationals and companies are frequently in the spotlight for environmentally damaging practices, exploitative labor and illicit mining. There have been at least three cases of illegal mining arrests involving Chinese nationals in two months.

President Bola Tinubu has repeatedly blamed illegal mining for the worsening conflicts in the country's north and asked the international community for help to stop the problem, which provides armed groups with the proceeds needed to sustain and arm themselves.

The Chinese embassy in Abuja did not respond to an Associated Press request for comment on the arrests and claims of illegal operations. But in a statement last year following a report by The Times of London alleging Chinese miners were bribing militants for access, the embassy said it "always encouraged and urged the Chinese companies and nationals in Nigeria to abide by the laws and regulations of Nigeria."

Nigeria is emerging as a new source of lithium in Africa as the world's largest producers, like Australia and Chile, are unable to fulfill the growing demand worldwide. But illegal activities thrive in Nigeria's extractive sector, denying the government due revenues, said Emeka Okoro, whose Lagos-based SBM Intelligence firm has researched illicit mining and terrorism financing in northern Nigeria.

And the combination of conflict and climate change effects, such as once fertile land rapidly turning into useless arid sand in northern Nigeria, has produced a cheap workforce for mining sites.

The arrests of "both Chinese nationals and young Hausa boys from conflict-affected regions underscore a troubling pattern," Okoro told the AP. "The socioeconomic strain stemming from conflict and the repercussions of climate change has given rise to a vulnerable demographic desperate for survival."

To fight resource theft that causes losses of \$9 billion to the government annually, according to the country's extractive industry transparency watchdog, the West African nation has set up a 2,200-strong "corps of mining marshals" earlier in the year.

While existing law enforcement agencies are still combating the problem, the new corps is geared at curbing "the nefarious activities of illegal miners," said Segun Tomori, spokesperson for the solid minerals ministry.

Before the Kishi raid, the mining corps arrested two trucks laden with lithium on the outskirts of the capital Abuja in April. Later that month, the corps raided a location in Karu, Nasarawa State, near Abuja, leading to the arrest of four Chinese nationals and the seizure of tons of lithium. Tomori said the cases are now in court.

On April 22, a federal court in Ilorin, in the north-central region, convicted two Chinese nationals for illegal mining and sentenced them to a one-year jail term, although with an option of a fine.

Nigeria has long neglected the solid minerals sector, which allows some communities like the northern-central town of Jos — which is tin-abundant — to depend on subsistence mining for their livelihood.

For those communities where livelihood is tied to mining, Tomori said the government is encouraging artisanal miners there to form cooperatives and operate legally.

## Newgarden goes back-to-back at Indy 500 to give Roger Penske record-extending 20th win

By JENNA FRYER AP Auto Racing Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Josef Newgarden once again brought his victorious Team Penske car to a stop on the Yard of Bricks at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. He found that same hole in the fence, climbed through, and was pummeled by fans celebrating his second consecutive Indianapolis 500 triumph.

Everything about his victory Sunday — right down to the last-lap duel, this time with Pato O'Ward — seemed just like last year.

The only difference was the circumstances.

A year ago, Newgarden was the hard-luck driver who had accomplished so much yet never won "The Greatest Spectacle in Racing." On Sunday, he was the superstar winning the race in the shadow of a cheating scandal that kept his race strategist from even being inside the speedway for the rain-delayed race.

Newgarden put the cheating scandal behind him to become the first back-to-back winner of the Indy 500 since Helio Castroneves 22 years ago and give Roger Penske a record-extending 20th win in the biggest race in the world.

The Tennessean passed O'Ward on the final lap to become the first driver to win consecutive 500s since Castroneves did it for Penske in 2001 and 2002. Newgarden also celebrated last year by climbing through a hole in the fence to celebrate with fans in the grandstands.

"I love this crowd. I've got to always go in the crowd if we win here, I am always doing that," said Newgarden, who earned a \$440,000 bonus from trophy-maker BorgWarner for winning consecutive 500s. The award was established in 1995 and only claimed once, by Castroneves.

Penske had been watching the race high above the speedway and pumped his arm in celebration as Newgarden crossed the finish line. He then hugged his wife. It took less than an hour for the placard that designates Penske's parking spot inside the speedway to be changed from "19" to "20."

O'Ward slumped his head over his steering wheel in bitter disappointment. He was trying to become the first Mexican in 108 runnings to win the Indy 500.

It looked as if he had been crying when he finally removed his helmet. He finished sixth in his Indy 500 debut, then fourth and then second in 2022 when he was accused of not being aggressive enough to race Marcus Ericsson for the win.

He refused to back down last year and wound up crashing as he went for the victory. As O'Ward bided his time in the closing laps — he and Newgarden traded the lead several times — he waited to make the winning pass on the final lap.

Newgarden got it right back two turns later.

"It is hard to put it into words — we went back, we went forward, we went back, some people were driving like maniacs," O'Ward said. "We had so many near-race enders. Just so close again. ... I put that car through things I never thought it was going to be able to do. It is always a heartbreak when you're so close, especially when it's not the first time and you don't know how many opportunities you have."

O'Ward has finished second to Newgarden in six different races and was still struggling with his emotions an hour after the race. He said he's battled the flu the last week and barely slept the last five days.

"I'm fine. It's been a tough month, so much goes into this race," O'Ward said. "I think I'm somebody who wears my heart on my sleeve. I don't really hide anything. And it's just, when you come so close, and it just doesn't seem to happen, it's just a lot of emotion."

He said he deliberately took his time getting out of the car and removing his helmet because "I just wanted to calm down. It was wet in there."



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Scott Dixon of Chip Ganassi Racing finished third as the highest-finishing Honda driver and had empathy for O'Ward. Dixon is a six-time IndyCar champion who is considered the greatest driver of his era, and he has one win in the Indy 500.

"It's a privilege to race here, right? I'm in a situation where I'm lucky to have won, but Pato has come close a few times," Dixon said. "It can go in cycles. As I've said many a times, finishing second sucks. It's horrible. You'd rather finish last I think almost at this place and be out of the race early. He'll be fine. He's got plenty of time on his hands."

The win was an incredible rebound for Newgarden, who last month had his March season-opening victory disqualified because Team Penske had illegal push-to-pass software on its cars. Newgarden used the additional horsepower three times in the win, and it took IndyCar nearly six weeks to discover the Penske manipulation.

Roger Penske, who owns the race team, IndyCar, the Indy 500 and the speedway, suspended four crew members, including Team President Tim Cindric. The Cindric suspension was a massive blow for Newgarden as Cindric is considered the best strategist in the series.

Newgarden was thrilled to have the win and put the push-to-pass scandal behind him.

"Absolutely, they can say what they want, I don't even care anymore," he said. "It's always a team win. This win epitomizes a team victory. I'm thankful for Roger Penske, he stood by me. He's the man. He's a legend."

The start of the race was delayed four hours by rain and it ruined NASCAR star Kyle Larson's chance to run "The Double." The delay in Indy made him miss the start of the Coca-Cola 600 at Charlotte Motor Speedway.

Although Larson was decent most of the day, two rookie mistakes led to an 18th-place finish. He was on a helicopter headed to a plane for North Carolina within minutes of the race ending.

"I'm proud to have finished but disappointed in myself," said Larson, who has a two-year deal with Arrow McLaren and Hendrick Motorsports for Indy and could return in 2025.

Dixon was followed by Alexander Rossi, O'Ward's teammate at Arrow McLaren Racing. Chevrolet took three of the top four spots.

A first-lap crash took out Ericsson, the 2022 winner, Tom Blomqvist and Pietro Fittipaldi as three Honda drivers failed to complete a lap. In all, Honda drivers finished in the final seven spots.

## At least 15 dead after severe weather carves path of ruin across multiple states in the South

By SEAN MURPHY and JULIO CORTEZ Associated Press

VALLEY VIEW, Texas (AP) — Powerful storms killed at least 15 people, injured hundreds and left a wide trail of destruction Sunday across Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas after obliterating homes and destroying a truck stop where dozens sought shelter in a restroom during the latest deadly weather to strike the central U.S.

The storms inflicted their worst damage in a region spanning from north of Dallas to the northwest corner of Arkansas, and the system threatened to bring more violent weather to other parts of the Midwest later in the day. By Monday, forecasters said, the greatest risk would shift to the east, covering a broad swath of the country from Alabama to near New York City.

Seven deaths were reported in Cooke County, Texas, near the Oklahoma border, where a tornado Saturday night plowed through a rural area near a mobile home park, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott said at a news conference Sunday. The dead included two children, ages 2 and 5. Three family members were found dead in one home, according to the county sheriff.

Storms also killed two people and destroyed houses in Oklahoma, where the injured included guests at an outdoor wedding, five people in Arkansas and one person in Kentucky. Tens of thousands of residents were without power across the region.

In Texas, about 100 people were injured and more than 200 homes and structures destroyed, said Ab-

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bott, sitting in front of a ravaged truck stop near the small agricultural community of Valley View. The area was among the hardest-hit, with winds reaching an estimated 135 mph (217 kph), officials said.

"The hopes and dreams of Texas families and small businesses have literally been crushed by storm after storm," said Abbott, whose state has seen successive bouts of severe weather, including storms that killed eight people in Houston.

Hugo Parra, who lives in Farmers Branch, north of Dallas, said he rode out the storm with 40 to 50 people in the bathroom of the truck stop. The storm sheared the roof and walls off the building, mangling metal beams and leaving battered cars in the parking lot.

"A firefighter came to check on us and he said, 'You're very lucky,'" Parra said. "The best way to describe this is the wind tried to rip us out of the bathrooms."

Multiple people were transported to hospitals by ambulance and helicopter in Denton County, also north of Dallas.

No more deaths are expected and nobody was reported missing in Texas, said Abbott, though responders were doing one more round of searches just in case.

At least five people were killed in Arkansas. One was a 26-year-old woman who was found dead outside a destroyed home in Olvey, a small community in Boone County, according to Daniel Bolen of the county's emergency management office. One person died in Benton County, and two more bodies were found in Marion County, officials said.

In Oklahoma, two people died in Mayes County, east of Tulsa, officials said.

In Kentucky, a man was killed Sunday in Louisville when a tree fell on him, police said. Louisville Mayor Craig Greenburg confirmed it was a storm-related death on social media.

## A DEADLY SERIES OF STORMS

The destruction continued a grim month of deadly severe weather in the nation's midsection.

Tornadoes in Iowa last week left at least five people dead and dozens injured. The deadly twisters have spawned during a historically bad season for tornadoes, at a time when climate change contributes to the severity of storms around the world. April had the second-highest number of tornadoes on record in the country.

Meteorologists and authorities issued urgent warnings to seek cover as the storms marched across the region late Saturday and into Sunday. "If you are in the path of this storm take cover now!" the National Weather Service office in Norman, Oklahoma, posted on X.

Harold Brooks, a senior scientist at the National Severe Storms Laboratory in Norman, said a persistent pattern of warm, moist air is to blame for the string of tornadoes over the past two months.

Brooks recommended that travelers passing through threatened areas over the Memorial Day weekend have a plan for a weather emergency.

Travelers who have already chosen where to get food and other essentials "probably ought to be thinking about what could I do if there's a dangerous situation to save my life," Brooks said.

## HOMES DESTROYED, ROADS BLOCKED

Residents awoke Sunday to overturned cars and collapsed garages. Some residents could be seen pacing and assessing the damage. Nearby, neighbors sat on the foundation of a wrecked home.

In Valley View, near the truck stop, the storms ripped the roofs off homes and blew out windows. Clothing, insulation, bits of plastic and other pieces of debris were wrapped around miles of barbed wire fence line surrounding grazing land in the rural area.

Kevin Dorantes, 20, was in nearby Carrollton when he learned the tornado was bearing down on the Valley View neighborhood where he lived with his father and brother. He called the two of them and told them to take cover in the windowless bathroom, where they rode out the storm and survived unharmed.

As Dorantes wandered through the neighborhood of downed power lines and devastated houses, he came upon a family whose home was reduced to a pile of splintered rubble. A father and son were trapped under debris, and friends and neighbors raced to get them out, Dorantes said.

"They were conscious but severely injured," Dorantes said. "The father's leg was snapped."

## WIDESPREAD POWER OUTAGES

The severe weather knocked out power for tens of thousands of homes and businesses in the path of the storms.

By late Sunday, more than 80,000 customers in Arkansas were without power. In neighboring Missouri, more than 90,000 were also without power. Texas reported 27,000 outages while 3,000 were reported in Oklahoma, according to the tracking website [poweroutage.us](http://poweroutage.us).

Inaccessible roads and downed power lines in Oklahoma also led officials in the town of Claremore, near Tulsa, to announce on social media that the city was "shut down" due to the damage.

## MORE SEVERE WEATHER IN FORECAST

The system causing the latest severe weather was expected to move east over the rest of the holiday weekend.

The Indianapolis 500 started four hours late after a strong storm pushed into the area, forcing Indianapolis Motor Speedway officials to evacuate about 125,000 race fans.

More severe storms were predicted in Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee.

The risk of severe weather moves into North Carolina and Virginia on Monday, forecasters said.

## Grayson Murray's parents say the two-time PGA Tour winner died of suicide

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

Grayson Murray's parents said Sunday their 30-year-old son took his own life, just one day after he withdrew from a PGA Tour event. The family asked for privacy and that people honor Murray by being kind to one another.

"If that becomes his legacy, we could ask for nothing else," Eric and Terry Murray said in a statement released by the PGA Tour.

Murray, a two-time PGA Tour winner, spoke in January after winning the Sony Open in Honolulu about turning the corner in his life, his golf and battles with alcoholism and mental health. He died Saturday morning.

**EDITOR'S NOTE** — This story includes a discussion of suicide. If you or someone you know needs help, the national suicide and crisis lifeline in the U.S. is available by calling or texting 988. There is also an online chat at [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org).

Murray had to go through the Korn Ferry Tour to get his PGA Tour card back. And then he birdied the last hole at the Sony Open to get into a playoff, and made a 40-foot birdie putt on the first extra hole for an emotional win.

"It's not easy," Murray said immediately after winning. "I wanted to give up a lot of times. Give up on myself. Give up on the game of golf. Give up on life, at times."

Murray tied for 43rd last week in the PGA Championship, which enabled him to hold his position among the top 60 to earn a spot in the U.S. Open next month at Pinehurst No. 2 in his native North Carolina.

He shot 68 in the opening round at Colonial. The next round, he was 5 over and coming off three straight bogeys when he withdrew citing an illness.

PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan said he spoke with Murray's parents about halting play at Colonial and they insisted the golf tournament continue.

Monahan flew to Fort Worth, Texas, to be with players. Many of them wore black-and-red pins on their caps Sunday in honor of Murray. Those are the colors of the Carolina Hurricanes, his favorite NHL team.

"We have spent the last 24 hours trying to come to terms with the fact that our son is gone. It's surreal that we not only have to admit it to ourselves, but that we also have to acknowledge it to the world. It's a nightmare," his parents shared in their statement.

"We have so many questions that have no answers. But one. Was Grayson loved? The answer is yes.

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By us, his brother Cameron, his sister Erica, all of his extended family, by his friends, by his fellow players and — it seems — by many of you who are reading this. He was loved and he will be missed.

"Life wasn't always easy for Grayson, and although he took his own life, we know he rests peacefully now."

Grayson was a raw talent after taking up golf at age 8. He won his age division three straight years at the prestigious Junior World Championship in San Diego. But he struggled to fit in at college, going to Wake Forest, East Carolina and then Arizona State.

His first coach was Ted Kiegel in North Carolina, who like so many others was devastated.

"Words cannot express the tragedy of this moment," Kiegel said in a statement sent to The Associated Press. "Grayson came from something that was ordinary and made it EXTRAORDINARY. ... He burned bright for the 30 years he gave us."

Murray won as a 22-year-old rookie at the Barbasol Championship in Kentucky, and frustration began to set in as he didn't improve as quickly as others whom he routinely beat as amateurs.

He was always open about depression and anxiety, and his bouts with alcohol. One of his darker moments was at the Sony Open in 2021 when he was suspended for an incident in a Hawaii bar. Murray took to social media to say, "Why was I drunk? Because I'm a (expletive) alcoholic that hates everything to do with the PGA Tour life and that's my scapegoat."

He also accused the tour of not giving him proper help, which the tour denied.

Monahan said Saturday at Colonial that he called Murray right after that posting and subsequently spent a lot of time with him.

"I think one of the elements of his legacy is his resiliency," Monahan said. "So you think of going back to 2017, winning the Barbasol Championship, going back and forth between the Korn Ferry Tour and the PGA Tour. ... self-assessing, coming back, becoming in his own eyes a stronger human being, and then winning three times in the past year.

"To me, that's a level of resiliency that is extraordinary."

When he won on the Korn Ferry Tour last year, Murray talked about his parents having "been through hell and back basically for the last six years for me fighting some mental stuff."

"Everyone has their battles," Murray said a year ago. "Sometimes people are able to hide them and function, and sometimes you're not. I think our society now is getting better about accepting that it's OK to not be OK. I've embraced that mentality. I'm not ashamed that I go through depression and anxiety."

He also used social media to reach out to others dealing with similar issues in a sport where losing takes place far more than winning.

Murray said in January after he won the Sony Open that he often felt like a failure who had wasted his talent.

"It was a bad place, but like I said, you have to have courage," he said. "You have to have the willingness to keep going. Lo and behold, that's what I did, and I'm here, and I'm so blessed and I'm thankful."

He saw that Sony Open victory — which got him into the Masters for the first time — as the start of a new chapter. He said he had become a Christian and was engaged to Christiana Ritchie. He said in January the wedding had been planned for late April.

"My story is not finished. I think it's just beginning," Murray said in Hawaii. "I hope I can inspire a lot of people going forward that have their own issues."

## In a north Texas county, dazed residents sift through homes mangled by a tornado

By SEAN MURPHY and JULIO CORTEZ Associated Press

VALLEY VIEW, Texas (AP) — The dazed residents of a north Texas county sifted through their mangled homes on Sunday after seven people there were killed when a tornado ripped through the remote region near the tiny community of Valley View.

Cooke County Sheriff Ray Sappington said there's "just a trail of debris left" in the area bordering Oklahoma where the dead included two children, ages 2 and 5, in Valley View, a town where barely 800 people

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live. The bodies of three family members were found in one residence, the sheriff said.

The county bore the brunt of powerful weekend storms that left 15 people dead across Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. Tens of thousands of residents were without power across the three states.

Kevin Dorantes, 20, was in nearby Carrollton when he learned the tornado was bearing down on the Valley View neighborhood where he lived with his father and brother. He called and told them to take cover in the windowless bathroom, where the pair rode out the storm and survived without injury.

Some of Dorantes' neighbors weren't so lucky.

As he wandered through the neighborhood surveying downed power lines and devastated properties, he came upon a family whose home was reduced to a pile of splintered rubble. A father and son were trapped under debris, and friends and neighbors worked frantically to get them out, Dorantes said.

"They were conscious but severely injured," Dorantes said. "The father's leg was snapped."

He said they managed to put the father on a mattress and carry him to a truck, where he and his son were driven to an ambulance at a nearby convenience store.

Valley View Chief of Police Justin Stamms said the small agricultural community was reeling.

"It's been exhausting and heartbreaking," Stamms said. "I've seen this kind of damage on TV, but never in person before this. It's terrible."

He said most of the town's residents work in farming, or at a local feed store and a postal service facility. Many of its displaced residents are staying at makeshift shelters set up inside area churches, he said.

Cynthia De La Cruz said her family hoped to put some of their possessions into storage while they figure out where they're going to live.

"We're trying to take whatever we can save," she said. De La Cruz described the town about 55 miles (88 kilometers) north of Fort Worth as a tight-knit area of mostly Latino people.

"I know this community really sticks together when bad things happen," she said.

Men were already busy Sunday afternoon putting a new roof on a heavily damaged home. Teams of neighbors and volunteers from a local church helped residents carry furniture and other belongings from inside battered homes into pickups and trailers.

Christopher Landeros, 19, was at dinner in nearby Lewisville when his mom, Juana Landeros, called him and said, "come find us in the truck."

Juana, her husband and their 9-year-old son Larry took shelter in their pickup truck under floor mats in their garage. The garage is now gone. A tree crashed through windows.

"It was horrific. Hellish. I just kept thinking we were going to die," Juana said.

Christopher ran to a neighbor's house two streets over to help pull out an injured man. The man's wife and two kids were killed.

The street into their Valley View neighborhood was lined with twisted sheets of metal, pieces of home siding, chunks of plywood, toppled power poles and trees stripped of limbs and bark.

Two young boys parked their bicycles next to an overturned RV and scampered through the wreckage.

## **Brown University president's commencement speech briefly interrupted by protesters**

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — Protesters briefly disrupted an outdoor commencement address given by Brown University's president on Sunday.

Shortly after Christina Paxson began, her speech was interrupted for several minutes by shouting as she told the graduates, "I would really like to give you your degrees." She eventually resumed with some people continuing to shout.

A group called Brown Alumni for Palestine said in a news release Sunday that it led the disruption at the ceremony, where Paxson and the Brown Corporation were conferring diplomas to the graduating class.

Brown Alumni for Palestine said the group represents over 2,000 alumni who have pledged to withhold donations to the university until the corporation divests from companies contributing to or profiting from the conflict in Gaza.

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Another group, the Rhode Island Coalition for Israel, said it also organized a protest outside the ceremony. It said it had a plane fly a banner supporting Israel and the U.S.-Israel alliance.

Anti-war demonstrations ceased earlier this month at a small number of universities, including Brown, after school leaders struck deals with pro-Palestinian protesters, fending off possible disruptions of final exams and graduation ceremonies.

The agreements at schools including Brown, Northwestern and Rutgers stand out amid the chaotic scenes and campus arrests nationwide since April 17. Tent encampments and building takeovers have disrupted classes at some schools, including Columbia in New York City and the University of California, Los Angeles.

Deals included commitments by universities to review their investments in Israel or hear calls to stop doing business with the longtime U.S. ally. Many protester demands have zeroed in on links to the Israeli military as the war grinds on in Gaza.

Pro-Palestinian protesters agreed to dismantle an encampment at Brown. School officials said students could present arguments for divesting Brown's endowment from companies linked to the war in Gaza.

In addition, Paxson said she will ask an advisory committee to make a recommendation on divestment by Sept. 30, which will be put before the school's governing corporation for a vote in October.

## **Saudi Arabia appoints first ambassador to Syria since 2012**

By KAREEM CHEHAYEB Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Saudi Arabia on Sunday announced the appointment of its first ambassador to Syria since severing ties with Damascus in 12 years, marking an ongoing thawing in relations since the war-torn country was readmitted to the Arab League over a year ago.

Faisal al-Mujfel's appointment as the kingdom's first ambassador to Syria since 2012 was announced by the state-run Saudi Press Agency. It comes over a year after Syria was readmitted to the 22-member Arab League. It remained suspended from the group for more than a decade over President Bashar Assad's brutal crackdown on anti-government protesters in 2011. Riyadh severed ties with Damascus in 2012.

Syrian state media and authorities did not immediately comment on the development.

The uprising turned-civil war in Syria, now in its 14th year has killed nearly half a million people and displaced half of the country's pre-war population of 23 million. It has long remained largely frozen and so have been efforts to find a viable political solution to end it.

A devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake in February 2023 that rocked Turkey and northern Syria was a catalyst for most Arab countries to reinstate ties with President Assad.

In March 2023, Saudi Arabia and Iran agreed to reestablish diplomatic ties after talks in Beijing, marking a major diplomatic breakthrough with an aim to reduce conflict between the two countries.

Iran has been a key political and military ally for the Assad government in Syria and the Lebanese Hezbollah group. In Yemen, Saudi Arabia has led a coalition against the Iran-backed Houthi rebels since 2015 in an attempt to restore the internationally-recognized government. The conflict has turned in recent years into a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman last week met with United States National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan as they edge closer to a wide-ranging security agreement, which Saudi state media said includes ending Israel's war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip, delivering aid to the battered territory, and a two-state solution that "meets the aspirations and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people."

## **EU foreign chief says Israel must respect UN court, control settler violence in the West Bank**

By RAF CASERT and SYLVAIN PLAZY Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union's foreign policy chief insisted Sunday that Israel must abide by the U.N. top court's rulings and end its offensive in the southern Gaza city of Rafah and, at the same time, questioned the possible involvement of authorities in the settler violence against Palestinians in the

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occupied West Bank.

On a day that visiting Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa basked in the attention after two EU nations and Norway pledged to recognize a Palestinian state, Josep Borrell further pressured Israel to take immediate actions to make sure that tax income meant for the Palestinian authorities is no longer stopped.

The demands came at the end of the week that saw the international community put increasing pressure on Israel to fundamentally change the course of the war it wages on Hamas in the Gaza Strip through international court action and diplomatic maneuvering.

Borrell insisted Israel had driven the Palestinians to the edge of a catastrophe because "the situation in Gaza is beyond words. The occupied West Bank is on the brink, risking an explosion any time."

While most of the global attention is centered on Gaza, Borrell said that "we should not forget what's happening in the West Bank," where the seat of the Palestinian Authority is based.

"There we see an intensified spiral of violence. Indiscriminate and punishing attacks by extremist settlers, more and more targeting humanitarian aid heading to Gaza. And they are heavily armed. And the question is, who is arming them? And who is not preventing this attack from happening," Borrell said.

Rights groups and Palestinian residents have said that Israeli forces often provide an umbrella of security to armed settlers attacking Palestinian towns and nomadic communities.

Such settler violence, Borrell said, "is coupled with unprecedented Israeli settlement expansions and land grabbing."

Borrell also countered Israeli threats to hit the Palestinians financially. On Wednesday, Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said he would stop transferring tax revenue earmarked for the Palestinian Authority, a move that threatens to handicap its already waning ability to pay salaries to thousands of employees.

Under interim peace accords in the 1990s, Israel collects tax revenue on behalf of the Palestinians, and it has used the money as a tool to pressure the PA. After the Oct. 7 Hamas attack that triggered the war in Gaza, Smotrich froze the transfers, but Israel agreed to send the money to Norway, which transferred it to the PA. Smotrich said Wednesday that he was ending that arrangement.

"Unduly withheld revenues have to be released," said Borrell, with Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide standing next to him.

Eide was in Brussels Sunday to hand over diplomatic papers to Mustafa ahead of Norway's formal recognition of a Palestinian state, a largely symbolic move that has infuriated Israel.

The formal recognition by Norway as well as Spain and Ireland — which all have a record of friendly ties with both the Israelis and the Palestinians, while long advocating for a Palestinian state — is planned for Tuesday.

The diplomatic move by the three nations was a welcome boost of support for Palestinian officials who have sought for decades to establish a statehood in east Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip — territories Israel seized in the 1967 Mideast war and still controls.

"Recognition means a lot for us. It is the most important thing that anybody can do for the Palestinian people," said Mustafa. "It is a great deal for us."

Some 140 countries — more than two-thirds of the United Nations — recognize a Palestinian state but a majority of the 27 EU nations still do not. Several have said they would recognize it when the conditions are right.

The EU, the United States and Britain, among others, back the idea of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel but say it should come as part of a negotiated settlement.

Belgium, which holds the EU presidency, has said that first the Israeli hostages held by Hamas need to be freed and the fighting in Gaza must end. Some other governments favor a new initiative toward a two-state solution, 15 years after negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians collapsed.

Sunday's handover of papers came only two days after the United Nations' top court ordered Israel to immediately halt its military offensive in the southern Gaza city of Rafah in the latest move that piled more pressure on the increasingly isolated country.

Days earlier, the chief prosecutor for the International Criminal Court requested arrest warrants for Israeli leaders, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, along with Hamas officials.

The war in Gaza started after Hamas-led militants stormed across the border, killing 1,200 people and taking some 250 hostage. Israel's ensuing offensive has killed more than 35,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, and has caused a humanitarian crisis and a near-famine.

## Why did the French Open cancel a farewell ceremony for Rafael Nadal? And why is he unseeded?

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

PARIS (AP) — The French tennis federation put off holding a ceremony to celebrate Rafael Nadal at Roland Garros this year, because he has said this might not necessarily be his final appearance at the tournament he has won a record 14 times.

Tournament director Amélie Mauresmo said Sunday, Day 1 of the clay-court Grand Slam event, that Nadal let officials know he didn't want to close the door on a return before he told the world that at a pre-tournament news conference.

"As you can imagine, we had something planned for him. But ... because he doesn't know if it's going to be his last Roland Garros or not, he wants to leave the door open maybe to come back next year as a player. So we are not going to push him, obviously, to do anything," Mauresmo said.

"It's his decision when he wants to have a proper ceremony, a proper goodbye, a proper farewell. So we're not going to do it this year. That's his wish," she continued. "And even though we were ready to push the button if something happens, we obviously are going to respect what he wants and make sure we are ready whenever he feels he wants to do it. Later this year; next year; anytime he wants."

Nadal, who turns 38 on June 3 and has said previously he expects this to be his last season, will face No. 4 seed Alexander Zverev in the first round on Monday. The match is scheduled to be third in the main stadium, Court Philippe Chatrier, and could start at around 3:30 p.m. local time (9:30 a.m. EDT).

Here are some answers to questions about Nadal and Zverev:

Why are top players like Nadal and Zverev meeting in the first round?

Despite having such a dominant record at the French Open, Nadal was not seeded and so could have been placed anywhere in the bracket and been stuck playing anyone at all, even the very best opponents. Because of injuries, including a surgically repaired hip and problematic abdominal muscle, Nadal has competed little the past two seasons, going only 7-4 in 2024, and so someone who has been ranked No. 1 and spent more than a decade inside the top 10 is now outside the top 250.

Why isn't Nadal seeded?

This is Nadal's first Grand Slam tournament without a seeding since the 2005 Australian Open. The top 32 players in the men's and women's draws are seeded, and the seedings are based on the ATP and WTA rankings, which take into account the most recent 52 weeks of results. In theory, Mauresmo could have opted to circumvent the rules and go ahead and award a seeding to Nadal based on his past performances in Paris. But that was never really considered, she said, in part because "giving protection to some players" would result in "a lot of other issues and problems," and because "it also has to be OK with other Grand Slams and everything."

What difference do seedings make?

Players who are seeded, such as Zverev, are guaranteed to avoid going up against another seeded player any earlier than the third round of a Grand Slam tournament, which have 128-player fields and require seven victories to earn a championship.

What do other players think?

Players tend to agree with Mauresmo's decision, with several saying they believe the seeding system should remain the way it currently is (Wimbledon used to seed players according to their results on grass courts, but has strictly followed the rankings since 2021). "The way that the seedings work, I think it's appropriate. In this case, it's unfortunate how that happened, but I don't know how you gauge where



someone should and shouldn't be seeded based on past or previous success," said three-time major champion Andy Murray. "It'd be quite hard to do that."

Who is Alexander Zverev?

He is a leading player in men's tennis, one who is coming off a title on clay at the Italian Open, won a gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics and was the 2020 U.S. Open runner-up. He reached the semifinals at the French Open each of the past three years, including in 2022, when he played Nadal at that stage but had to stop after tearing ligaments in his right foot during the match. Zverev, a 27-year-old from Germany, is about to face a court proceeding that starts next week in Berlin related to accusations of physically abusing an ex-girlfriend. He does not need to be in court and said he will not be. "At the end of the day, I do believe in the German system. I do believe in the truth, as well. I have to be certain that, you know, I do know what I did, I do know what I didn't do," Zverev said. "That's, at the end of the day, what's going to come out, and I have to trust in that."

Why is Zverev allowed to play during his ongoing court case?

Mauresmo was asked Sunday about Zverev's status and replied: "As long as the trial isn't finished and there isn't a decision, he's considered innocent and so that's why he's allowed to be part of the draw."

## At least 5 dead in Texas after severe weather sweeps across Texas and Oklahoma, authorities say

By KEN MILLER Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Powerful storms across Texas and Oklahoma obliterated homes and struck a highway travel center where drivers had rushed to take shelter, leaving thousands of people without power and a wide trail of damage Sunday. A sheriff said at least five people were dead in one rural community in Texas and many more were injured.

The destructive storms began Saturday night and included a tornado that overturned heavy recreational vehicles and shut down an interstate near Dallas. Officials said multiple people were transported to hospitals by ambulance and helicopter in the Texas county of Denton but did not immediately know the full extent of injuries.

In neighboring Cooke County, Sheriff Ray Sappington told The Associated Press that the five dead included three family members who were found in one home near Valley View, a rural community near the border with Oklahoma.

"We do have five confirmed (dead), but sadly, we think that that number is probably going to go up," Sappington said. "There's nothing left of this house. It's just a trail of debris left. The devastation is pretty severe."

Forecasters had issued tornado and severe thunderstorm warnings for parts of both states, as some heat records were broken during the day in South Texas and residents received triple-digit temperature warnings over the long holiday weekend.

In Arkansas, damaged buildings, uprooted trees and downed power lines were reported across the northwest edge of the state. Tens of thousands of homes and businesses reported power outages. Benton County Judge Barry Moehring confirmed one death.

The destruction continued a grim month of deadly severe weather in the U.S.

Tornadoes in Iowa this week left at least five people dead and dozens injured. The deadly twisters have spawned during a historically bad season in the country for tornadoes, at a time when climate change is heightening the severity of storms around the world. April had the second-highest number of tornadoes on record in the country.

Late Saturday, a tornado crossed into northern Denton County in Texas and overturned tractor-trailer trucks, stopping traffic on Interstate 35, Denton County Community Relations Director Dawn Cobb said in a statement.

The tornado was confirmed near Valley View, moving east at 40 mph (64 kph), prompting the National Weather Service to issue a tornado warning for northern Denton County, Cobb said.

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The storm damaged homes, overturned motorhomes and knocked down power lines and trees throughout the area including points in Sanger, Pilot Point, Ray Roberts Lake and Isle du Bois State Park, Cobb said.

People who suffered injuries in the storm were transported to area hospitals by ground and air ambulances, but the number of injuries in the county was not immediately known, Cobb said, while a shelter was opened in Sanger.

The fire department in the city of Denton, about 37 miles (59.5 kilometers) north of Forth Worth, Texas, posted on X that emergency personnel were responding to a marina "for multiple victims, some reported trapped."

The Claremore, Oklahoma, police announced on social media that the city about 28 miles (45 kilometers) east of Tulsa was "shut down" as a result of storm damage including downed power lines and trees and inaccessible roads.

Earlier Saturday night, the National Weather Service's office in Norman, Oklahoma, said via the social platform X that the warning was for northern Noble and far southern Kay counties, an area located to the north of Oklahoma City. "If you are in the path of this storm take cover now!" it said.

A following post at 10:05 p.m. said storms had exited the area but warned of a storm moving across north Texas that could affect portions of south central Oklahoma.

At 10:24 p.m., the weather service office in Fort Worth posted a message warning residents in Era and Valley View they were in the direct path of a possible tornado and to immediately seek shelter. The Forth Worth office continued to post notices and shelter warnings tracking the movement of the storm through midnight and separately issued a severe thunderstorm warning with "golf ball sized hail" possible.

The weather service office in Tulsa, Oklahoma, warned on X of a dangerous storm moving across the northeast part of the state through 2 a.m. and issued severe thunderstorm notices for communities including Hugo, Boswell, Fort Towson, Grainola, Foraker and Herd.

Excessive heat, especially for May, was the danger in South Texas, where the heat index was forecast to approach 120 degrees Fahrenheit (49 degrees Celsius) in some spots during the weekend. Actual temperatures will be lower, although still in triple-digit territory, but the humidity will make it feel that much hotter.

The region is on the north end of a heat dome stretching from Mexico to South America, National Weather Service meteorologist Zack Taylor said.

Sunday looks like the hottest day with record highs for late May forecast for Austin, Brownsville, Dallas and San Antonio, Taylor said.

Brownsville and Harlingen near the Texas-Mexico border already set new records Saturday for the May 25 calendar date — 99 degrees Fahrenheit (37 degrees Celsius) and 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius), respectively — according to the weather service.

April and May have been a busy month for tornadoes, especially in the Midwest. Iowa was hit hard last week, when a deadly twister devastated Greenfield. And other storms brought flooding and wind damage elsewhere in the state.

The storm system causing the severe weather was expected to move east as the Memorial Day weekend continues, bringing rain that could delay the Indianapolis 500 auto race Sunday in Indiana and more severe storms in Illinois, Indiana, Missouri and Kentucky.

The risk of severe weather moves into North Carolina and Virginia on Monday, forecasters said.

## **Over 670 people died in a massive Papua New Guinea landslide, UN estimates, as survivors seek safety**

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — The International Organization for Migration on Sunday increased its estimate of the death toll from a massive landslide in Papua New Guinea to more than 670 as emergency responders and traumatized relatives gave up hope that any survivors will now be found.

Serhan Aktoprak, the chief of the U.N. migration agency's mission in the South Pacific island nation, said the revised death toll was based on calculations by Yambali village and Enga provincial officials that

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more than 150 homes had been buried by Friday's landslide. The previous estimate had been 60 homes. "They are estimating that more than 670 people (are) under the soil at the moment," Aktoprak told The Associated Press.

Local officials had initially put the death toll on Friday at 100 or more. Only five bodies and a leg of a sixth victim had been recovered by Sunday, when an excavator donated by a local builder became the first piece of mechanical earth-moving equipment to join the recovery effort.

Relief crews were moving survivors to safer ground on Sunday as tons of unstable earth and tribal warfare, which is rife in the Papua New Guinea Highlands, threatened the rescue effort.

Around 250 additional houses have been condemned since the landslide because of still-shifting ground, leaving an estimated 1,250 people homeless, officials said.

The national government meanwhile is considering whether it needs to officially request more international support.

Crews have given up hope of finding survivors under earth and rubble 6 to 8 meters (20 to 26 feet) deep. "People are coming to terms with this so there is a serious level of grieving and mourning," Aktoprak said.

He said the new estimated death toll was "not solid" because it was based on the average size of the region's families per household. He would not speculate on the possibility that the actual toll could be higher.

"It is difficult to say. We want to be quite realistic," Aktoprak said. "We do not want to come up with any figures that would inflate the reality."

Government authorities were establishing evacuation centers on safer ground on either side of the massive swath of debris that covers an area the size of three to four football fields and has cut the main highway through the province.

Beside the blocked highway, convoys that have transported food, water and other essential supplies since Saturday to the devastated village 60 kilometers (35 miles) from the provincial capital, Wabag, have faced risks related to tribal fighting in Tambitanis village, about halfway along the route. Papua New Guinea soldiers were providing security for the convoys.

Eight locals were killed in a clash between two rival clans on Saturday in a longstanding dispute unrelated to the landslide. Around 30 homes and five retail businesses were burned down in the fighting, local officials said.

Aktoprak said he did not expect tribal combatants would target the convoys but noted that opportunistic criminals might take advantage of the mayhem to do so.

"This could basically end up in carjacking or robbery," Aktoprak said. "There is not only concern for the safety and security of the personnel, but also the goods because they may use this chaos as a means to steal."

Longtime tribal warfare has cast doubt on the official estimate that almost 4,000 people were living in the village when a side of Mount Mungalo fell away. The count was years old and did not take into account people who had relocated to the village more recently to flee clan violence that authorities are unable to contain.

Local authorities on Sunday accepted the village population had been substantially more than 4,000 people when the limestone mountainside sheared away, but a revised estimate was not yet available.

Justine McMahon, country director of the humanitarian agency CARE International, said moving survivors to "more stable ground" was an immediate priority along with providing them with food, water and shelter. The military was leading those efforts.

The numbers of injured and missing were still being assessed on Sunday. Seven people including a child had received medical treatment by Saturday, but officials had no details on their conditions.

Papua New Guinea Defense Minister Billy Joseph and the government's National Disaster Center director Laso Mana were flying from Port Moresby by helicopter to Wabag on Sunday to gain a firsthand perspective of what is needed.

Aktoprak expected the government would decide by Tuesday whether it would officially request more international help.

The United States and Australia, a near neighbor and Papua New Guinea's most generous provider of foreign aid, are among governments that have publicly stated their readiness to do more to help responders.

Papua New Guinea is a diverse, developing nation with 800 languages and 10 million people who are mostly subsistence farmers.

## Here's what every key witness said at Donald Trump's hush money trial. Closing arguments are coming

By MICHAEL R. SISAK, JENNIFER PELTZ and JAKE OFFENHARTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — After 22 witnesses, including a porn actor, tabloid publisher and White House insiders, testimony is over at Donald Trump's criminal trial in New York.

Prosecutors called 20 witnesses. The defense called just two. Trump decided not to testify on his own behalf.

The trial now shifts to closing arguments, scheduled for Tuesday.

After that, it will be up to 12 jurors to decide whether prosecutors have proved beyond a reasonable doubt that Trump falsified his company's business records as part of a broader effort to keep stories about marital infidelity from becoming public during his 2016 presidential campaign. He has pleaded not guilty and denies any wrongdoing.

A conviction could come down to how the jurors interpret the testimony and which witnesses they find credible. The jury must be unanimous. The records involved include 11 checks sent to Trump's former lawyer, Michael Cohen, as well as invoices and company ledger entries related to those payments.

Here's a look at key trial witnesses and what they had to say:

### STORMY DANIELS

As Trump sat feet away, the porn actor, writer and director, gave a detailed and at times graphic account of a sexual encounter she says she had with Trump in Nevada in 2006. After they met at a celebrity golf tournament, she said, Trump invited her to dinner but then engaged her in conversation in his hotel room and startled her by stripping to his underwear while she was in the bathroom.

"I felt the room spin in slow motion. I felt the blood basically leave my hands and my feet," Daniels testified. "I just thought, 'Oh, my God, what did I misread to get here?' Because the intention was pretty clear, somebody stripped down in their underwear and posing on the bed, like waiting for you."

Daniels said Trump did not physically threaten her, but "my own insecurities in that moment kept me from saying no." Daniels said she kept in touch with Trump for about a year in hopes of appearing on his TV show "The Apprentice," but it never happened.

Daniels spoke about accepting \$15,000 for a magazine interview in 2011. The story was not printed at the time but ended up on a gossip website without her consent. Her lawyer, in consultation with Cohen, complained and had the story taken down.

In 2016, Daniels authorized her manager to shop her story again but found little interest until the release of the infamous "Access Hollywood" recording of Trump boasting about grabbing women's genitals without their permission.

Daniels told the jury she accepted \$130,000 from Cohen in the final weeks of the election in exchange for a legal agreement to keep the claim to herself.

Trump's lawyers grilled Daniels about her motivation, eliciting testimony that she hates the former Republican president. She pushed back on the defense's suggestion that her story was fabricated, saying if it was fiction, "I would have written it to be a lot better."

Daniels' testimony was among the most awaited in the trial. She had shared her story before, but this was the first time she testified about it in front of Trump. Trump's lawyers objected to much of Daniels' testimony and twice sought a mistrial, arguing that her feelings of a power imbalance with Trump and her blunt answers about the alleged sexual encounter should not have been put before the jury.

### DAVID PECKER

A longtime Trump friend, Pecker was the publisher of the National Enquirer and chief executive of its

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parent company, American Media Inc., during the 2016 presidential campaign.

Pecker told the jury he agreed to be the “eyes and ears” of Trump’s campaign, looking out for damaging stories so they could be suppressed. He said he agreed to the role — and to a plan to publish positive stories about Trump and negative stories about his opponents — at an August 2015 meeting with Trump and Cohen.

“If there were any rumors in the marketplace about Mr. Trump or his family or any negative stories that were coming out or anything that I heard overall,” Pecker said, “I would call Michael Cohen directly.”

He said he told the National Enquirer’s editor at the time, Dylan Howard, “that we are going to try to help the campaign, and to do that, I want to keep this as quiet as possible.”

Pecker testified that the company squashed one potential story by paying \$30,000 to a Trump Tower doorman. It paid \$150,000 to former Playboy model Karen McDougal, to keep her from going public with a claim that she had had a yearlong affair with Trump.

But when Daniels came forward, Pecker said, he told Howard: “I am not a bank, and we are not paying out any further disbursements or monies.”

Instead, he alerted Cohen that Daniels was shopping a story about Trump, and let the lawyer handle it. Trump denies having sex with either McDougal or Daniels.

When The Wall Street Journal reported, just days before Election Day, that the Enquirer had paid McDougal, Pecker said Trump was upset, saying, “How could this happen? I thought you had this under control?”

“Our call ended very abruptly,” Pecker said. “He didn’t say goodbye, which was very unusual.”

KEITH DAVIDSON

A lawyer known for representing people trying to sell celebrity sex tapes or other embarrassing information, Davidson negotiated the hush money deals for McDougal and Daniels. He gave jurors an inside look at the negotiations and helped corroborate Pecker’s testimony.

At first, Davidson said, the National Enquirer was not interested in acquiring McDougal’s story, saying she “lacked documentary evidence.” But the tabloid eventually bought it at Pecker’s behest. Davidson said he understood it would never be published because of “an unspoken understanding that there was an affiliation” between Pecker and Trump and that the National Enquirer would not run the story “because it would hurt Donald Trump.”

Davidson said he dealt directly with Cohen, never with Trump. While Cohen may not have explicitly stated he was working on Trump’s behalf, Davidson said he felt the implication was clear.

Davidson testified that about a month after Trump won the election, Cohen complained in a phone conversation that the president-elect hadn’t yet paid him back for the \$130,000 payment to Daniels.

MICHAEL COHEN

Cohen, a flawed but vital prosecution witness, testified about working with the National Enquirer to suppress negative stories about Trump. Cohen insisted he was working at Trump’s direction when the lawyer helped orchestrate the payments to McDougal and Daniels.

Cohen testified that he kept the detail-oriented Trump updated on the payoffs.

Regarding the decision to pay Daniels, Cohen said Trump felt it was best to buy her silence.

“He stated to me that he had spoken to some friends, some individuals, very smart people, and that it’s \$130,000. You’re like a billionaire. Just pay it. There is no reason to keep this thing out there. So do it,” Cohen said.

“And he expressed to me: Just do it. Go meet up with Allen Weisselberg and figure this whole thing out,” Cohen said, referring to the Trump Organization’s chief financial officer at the time.

Testifying over the course of four days, Cohen told the jury he sought Trump’s approval for the Daniels payment because “everything required Mr. Trump’s sign-off. On top of that, I wanted the money back.”

When it briefly looked like the deal with Daniels might fall apart, Cohen said Trump got “really angry with me,” saying, “I thought you took care of this?”

Cohen used money he borrowed from a bank to make the \$130,000 payment to Daniels. Trump later reimbursed him. How Trump’s company recorded those reimbursements — paid out of a Trump trust and personal accounts — is the core of the prosecution’s case. Cohen said he submitted monthly invoices

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for a year for legal work he never actually performed, pursuant to a purported retainer agreement that he said did not exist.

Cohen said he discussed the reimbursement plan with Trump at the White House in February 2017. He recalled that Trump asked him whether he needed money, then promised a check soon would cover the first two months of invoices, totaling \$70,000.

Jurors also heard a secret recording Cohen made of a meeting he had with Trump in 2016 in which he briefed his boss about the plan to buy McDougal's story.

Trump's lawyers have fought to discredit Cohen, pressing him on his own criminal history, past lies and his recollection of key details. On cross-examination, Cohen admitted stealing tens of thousands of dollars from Trump's company by asking to be reimbursed for money he had not spent. Cohen acknowledged once telling a prosecutor he felt that Daniels and her lawyer were extorting Trump. Cohen also insisted he did not actually commit some crimes to which he pleaded guilty in 2018, including bank fraud and tax evasion. In that case, Cohen also pleaded guilty to lying to Congress and to campaign finance violations.

Cohen is the linchpin of the prosecution case, the only witness to testify that Trump had direct involvement in arranging his repayment. The verdict could hinge on whether jurors believe him.

HOPE HICKS

Trump's former campaign and White House communications director, Hicks testified about the frenetic days after the "Access Hollywood" leak as she and Trump's political advisers tried to contain the fallout. Hicks said she was "very concerned" about the impact of the tape and she subsequently asked Cohen to chase down a rumor about another potentially damaging recording, which turned out not to exist.

Hicks said that after The Wall Street Journal published its article detailing McDougal's hush money deal, Trump was concerned about how his wife, Melania, would take it.

"He wanted me to make sure the newspapers weren't delivered to their residence that morning," Hicks said.

When news of the Daniels payoff started to emerge in 2018, Cohen initially told reporters he made the payment with his own money and without Trump's knowledge. Hicks said Trump also told her "that Michael had paid this woman to protect him from a false allegation, and that Michael felt like it was his job to protect him, and that's what he was doing. And he did it out of the kindness of his own heart."

She said, however, that it was "out of character" for Cohen to take such an action on his own.

"I didn't know Michael to be an especially charitable person or selfless person," Hicks said. "He's the kind of person who seeks credit."

ROBERT COSTELLO

Trump's lawyers called Costello, an attorney and ex-federal prosecutor, as their primary witness in a terse defense case aimed at undermining Cohen's credibility.

After the FBI raided Cohen's home and office in 2018, Costello offered to become his lawyer. He told the jury that during their first meeting, Cohen paced anxiously, saying his life, and his family's life, had been "shattered."

"He said: 'I really want you to explain to me what my options are. What's my escape route?'" Costello said.

Costello said Cohen also insisted that he had made the Daniels deal on his own, that Trump "knew nothing" about it, and that Cohen had no incriminating information about Trump he could offer to federal prosecutors.

"I swear to God, Bob. I don't have anything on Donald Trump," Costello quoted Cohen as saying.

Prosecutors countered that Costello, who was close to Trump ally Rudy Giuliani, cozied up to Cohen to keep him loyal to Trump.

In one email, Costello told Cohen: "Sleep well tonight. you have friends in high places," and relayed that there were "some very positive comments about you from the White House."

Cohen ultimately chose other lawyers.

OTHER NOTABLE WITNESSES

JEFFREY McCONNAY: The Trump Organization's former controller testified about working with Weis-

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selberg to set up payments to Cohen, including reimbursement for the \$130,000 payment to Daniels, a bonus and money for taxes.

**RHONA GRAFF:** Trump's former executive assistant testified about adding McDougal's and Daniels' contacts to Trump's contact list in the company's computer system, the latter listed simply as "Stormy." Graff also said she had a "vague recollection" of seeing Daniels once at Trump Tower.

**DEBORAH TARASOFF:** The Trump Organization's accounts payable supervisor testified about processing the payments to Cohen, including receiving checks that Trump had signed at the White House. Under defense questioning, she acknowledged permission to cut Cohen's checks came not from Trump himself, but from Weisselberg and McConney.

**MADELEINE WESTERHOUT:** Trump's White House secretary from 2017 to 2019 testified about Trump signing checks, saying he sometimes would sign without reviewing them.

## Today in History: May 27, the Golden Gate Bridge opens

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, May 27, the 148th day of 2024. There are 218 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 27, 1937, the newly completed Golden Gate Bridge connecting San Francisco and Marin County, California, was opened to pedestrian traffic (vehicles began crossing the next day).

On this date:

In 1861, Chief Justice Roger Taney, sitting as a federal circuit court judge in Baltimore, ruled that President Abraham Lincoln lacked the authority to suspend the writ of habeas corpus (Lincoln disregarded the ruling).

In 1896, 255 people were killed when a tornado struck St. Louis, Missouri, and East St. Louis, Illinois.

In 1935, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Schechter Poultry Corp. v. United States*, unanimously struck down the National Industrial Recovery Act, a key component of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" legislative program.

In 1936, the Cunard liner RMS Queen Mary left England on its maiden voyage to New York.

In 1941, the British Royal Navy sank the German battleship Bismarck off France with a loss of some 2,000 lives, three days after the Bismarck sank the HMS Hood with the loss of more than 1,400 lives.

In 1942, Doris "Dorie" Miller, a cook aboard the USS West Virginia, became the first African-American to receive the Navy Cross for displaying "extraordinary courage and disregard for his own personal safety" during Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

In 1957, the single "That'll Be the Day" by Buddy Holly's group The Crickets was released by Brunswick Records.

In 1968, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *United States v. O'Brien*, upheld the conviction of David O'Brien for destroying his draft card outside a Boston courthouse, ruling that the act was not protected by freedom of speech.

In 1993, five people were killed in a bombing at the Uffizi museum of art in Florence, Italy; some three dozen paintings were ruined or damaged.

In 1994, Nobel Prize-winning author Alexander Solzhenitsyn returned to Russia to the emotional cheers of thousands after spending two decades in exile.

In 1998, Michael Fortier (FOR'-tee-ur), the government's star witness in the Oklahoma City bombing case, was sentenced to 12 years in prison after apologizing for not warning anyone about the deadly plot. (Fortier was freed in January 2006.)

In 2017, music legend Gregg Allman, whose bluesy vocals and soulful touch on the Hammond B-3 organ helped propel The Allman Brothers Band to superstardom and spawn Southern rock, died at his home near Savannah, Georgia; he was 69.

In 2018, LeBron James reached his eighth straight NBA Finals as the Cleveland Cavaliers beat the Boston Celtics in Game 7 of the Eastern Conference Finals.

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In 2020 protests over the death of George Floyd in police custody rocked Minneapolis for a second night, with some people looting stores and setting fires. Protests spread to additional cities; hundreds of people blocked a Los Angeles freeway and shattered windows of California Highway Patrol cruisers.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Lee Meriwether is 89. Actor Bruce Weitz is 81. Former Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) is 80. Singer Bruce Cockburn (KOH'-burn) is 79. South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster is 77. Singer-actor Dee Dee Bridgewater is 74. Actor Richard Schiff is 69. Singer Siouxsie Sioux (The Creatures, Siouxsie and the Banshees) is 67. Rock singer-musician Neil Finn (Split Enz, Crowded House) is 66. Actor Peri Gilpin is 63. Actor Cathy Silvers is 63. Comedian Adam Carolla is 60. Actor Todd Bridges is 59. Rock musician Sean Kinney (Alice In Chains) is 58. Actor Dondré Whitfield is 55. Actor Paul Bettany is 53. Rock singer-musician Brian Desveaux (Nine Days) is 53. Country singer Jace Everett is 52. Actor Jack McBrayer is 51. Rapper Andre 3000 (Outkast) is 49. Rapper Jadakiss is 49. TV chef Jamie Oliver is 49. Alt-country singer-songwriter Shane Nicholson is 48. Actor Ben Feldman is 44. Actor Michael Steger is 44. Actor Darin Brooks is 40. Actor-singer Chris Colfer is 34. Actor Ethan Dampf is 30. Actor Desiree Ross (TV: "Greenleaf") is 25. U.S. Olympic gold-medal-winning gymnast Jade Carey is 24.