

Groton Daily Independent

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Monday, April 28

Senior Menu: Goulash, green beans, fruit, cookie, breadstick.

School Breakfast: French toast.

School Lunch: Corn dogs, baked beans.

School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

Junior High Track at Britton-Hecla, 3:30 p.m.

Groton Senior Citizens Meet, Noon Potluck., Groton Community Center

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

Tuesday, April 29

Senior Menu: Scalloped potato with ham, mixed vegetables, mandarin orange salad, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Scones.

School Lunch: Chicken strips, fries.

Track at Groton Area, 11 a.m.

Elementary Spring Concert, 7 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Wednesday, April 30

Senior Menu: Pork chop, creamy noodles, winter blend, pineapple, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Oatmeal.

School Lunch: Quesadilla, santa fe corn.

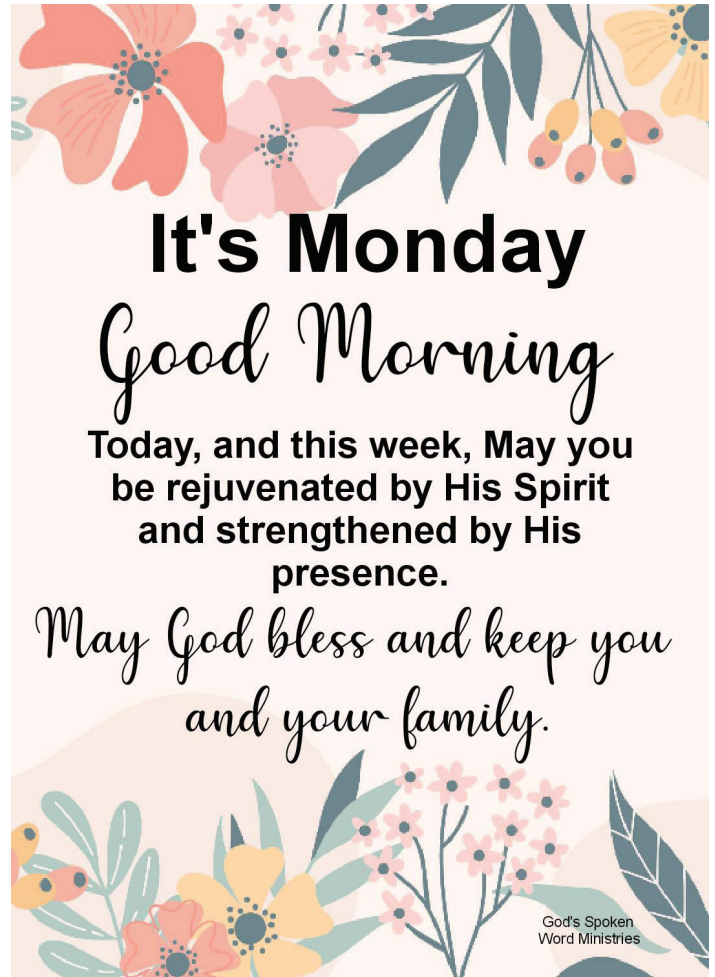
Baseball hosts Sioux Valley, 6 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.

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

St. John's Lutheran: Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.

Groton C&MA: Kid's Club, Youth Group, Adult Bible Study, 7 p.m.



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1440

Why 1440? The printing press was invented around the year 1440, spreading knowledge to the masses and changing the course of history. More facts: In every day, there are 1,440 minutes. We're here to make each one count.

Vancouver Festival Attack

An assailant rammed a car into a Filipino heritage festival in Vancouver Saturday, killing at least 11 people and wounding dozens more. The detained suspect—a 30-year-old man—was known to police and had a history of mental health incidents. Authorities say the attack was a lone incident and have ruled out terrorism as a motive.

Up to 100,000 people attended this year's Lapu-Lapu Day festival. The annual gathering honors Datu Lapu-Lapu—the chief of the island of Mactan who defeated Spanish forces in 1521, later becoming the first Filipino hero. Filipinos are a relatively large immigrant group in Canada, comprising 10% of the country's immigrant population.

The attack took place at 8:14 pm local time when a black SUV plowed into the crowd of festivalgoers. Crowd members captured the suspect, later handing him over to police.

The attack is the latest in a string of deadly car-ramming assaults over the past decade.

Pope Francis Laid to Rest

Hundreds of thousands of mourners gathered in and around Vatican City to bid farewell to Pope Francis Saturday, almost a week after the 88-year-old pontiff passed away following a stroke and subsequent heart failure. Born Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Francis will be laid to rest in a tomb in Rome's Basilica of St. Mary Major.

In the coming weeks, the secretive process to select the next pope, known as a conclave, will begin. Francis' successor must secure a two-thirds majority of 135 voting-eligible cardinals—of whom he appointed 108 during his tenure. Observers say the race is wide-open with no clear front-runner.

Francis was the 266th pope to lead the Catholic Church—not counting about 30 to 40 antipopes—and was the first Jesuit, a Catholic religious order focused on education and social service work.

Canadian Election Day

Canadians head to the polls today for their first federal election in a decade without former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on the ballot. Recent polls show Liberal Prime Minister Mark Carney with a narrow lead over Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre.

Carney has been in power since last month, selected by the Liberal Party to replace Trudeau after his resignation. Poilievre—an ideological ally of US President Donald Trump—campaigns on a nationalist-populist agenda, pledging to put "Canada first" and defund the country's public broadcaster.

Conservatives held a 25-point lead at the start of 2025 but their lead fell as Trump levied steep tariffs against Canada and called for its annexation. The US is the biggest purchaser of Canadian goods, accounting for nearly 80% of its exports. Both candidates have emphasized the need to reach a trade agreement with the US.

All 343 House of Commons seats are up for election. Whichever party (or parties) earns a majority of the seats will select Canada's leader.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

The 2025 NFL Draft wrapped over the weekend; see draft grades for all 32 teams.

QB Shedeur Sanders, son of Hall of Famer Deion Sanders, falls from a predicted first-round pick to the fifth round, one of the biggest slides in draft history.

White House Correspondents' Dinner carries on without comedian headliner after association disinvites Amber Ruffin; Ruffin—a former writer for Seth Meyers—had made comments critical of President Donald Trump.

Ethiopia's Tigst Assefa wins 2025 London Marathon, breaks record for a women's-only race; Kenya's Sabastian Sawe wins the men's race.

Liverpool wins English Premier League, beats Tottenham 5-1.

Science & Technology

Meta's AI-powered "digital companions" can engage in sexually charged conversations even when users identify themselves as minors; some of the avatars were reportedly designed to include "romantic roleplay" behaviors.

Researchers identify antibiotic capable of treating Lyme disease at 1% of the dosage required in current best-in-class drugs; low dosages also decrease the impact on healthy gut bacteria.

Oldest-known ant specimen discovered in Brazil; 113-million-year-old fire ant fossil sheds light on early insect evolution.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher Friday (S&P 500 +0.7%, Dow +0.1%, Nasdaq +1.3%); tech earnings expected to drive markets this week.

Slate unveils electric pickup truck expected to cost \$20K after incentives when it goes to market next year; truck does not have touch screen, stereo.

California surpasses Japan as world's fourth-largest economy, with a nominal gross domestic product of \$4.1T, per report from Gov. Gavin Newsom (D).

Politics & World Affairs

An explosion at Iran's largest port kills at least 40 people and wounds over 1,200 others; local authorities blame a shipment of missile propellant chemicals.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, 89, names close ally as his vice president and likely successor.

Virginia Giuffre, who prominently accused Jeffrey Epstein and Prince Andrew of sexual abuse, dies at age 41; family says she died by suicide.

Black Hawk helicopter pilot ignored calls to change course seconds before colliding with passenger jet near Washington DC airport in January, new report finds; the collision killed 67 people.

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Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

Vikings fans woke up Christmas morning excited to open some gifts. There were only a few under the tree, but that was okay — sometimes it's better to get a few good ones instead of a bunch of small ones. We waited patiently for our turn, finally ripped open the best box with our name on it, and found... socks. Nice socks, sure, and we needed them, but still... socks?

All kidding aside, the Vikings had a lackluster draft — but that doesn't mean it was a bad draft. The team made it a priority to upgrade the trenches this offseason, and that continued Thursday when the Vikings selected Donovan Jackson, an offensive lineman from Ohio State, with the 24th overall pick. Jackson started at left guard for the Buckeyes but stepped in at left tackle when a teammate went down with an injury, helping Ohio State win the National Championship. He will likely be a day-one starter at left guard, completing a full overhaul of the Vikings' interior offensive line.

The Vikings only had one pick on Day Two of the draft, a compensatory pick they received for losing Kirk Cousins in free agency. They traded back slightly, sending picks 97 and 187 to Houston for picks 102 and 142. With the final pick of Day Two, the Vikings drafted Tai Felton, a wide receiver from Maryland. Felton is a speedster who ran the 40-yard dash in 4.37 seconds — the fifth-best time among all wide receivers in the draft. He also forced the fifth-most missed tackles among receivers. Felton will compete for the fourth spot on the depth chart, but his primary value will come on special teams, where he'll be in the mix for kick and punt return duties.

In the fifth round, the Vikings used the 139th overall pick on Tyrion Ingram-Dawkins, a defensive lineman from Georgia. Ingram-Dawkins is an extremely athletic player who is still raw in terms of development. At 280 pounds, he'll play defensive end in the Vikings' 3-4 system. The tools are there, and he has a ton of potential if he can put it all together.

Later in the fifth round, the Vikings traded pick 142 to Seattle for quarterback Sam Howell and pick 172. The Vikings have needed a reliable backup quarterback for a while, and with Sam Darnold signing in Seattle, Howell became available. Originally a fifth-round pick by Washington in 2022, Howell started all 17 games last season, throwing for 3,946 yards and 21 touchdowns. Howell should be a strong backup option — and hopefully, his arrival will finally quiet the Aaron Rodgers-to-Minnesota rumors.

The Vikings then traded pick 172 to the Los Angeles Rams for picks 201 and 202.

With the 201st pick, Minnesota selected Kobe King, an inside linebacker from Penn State. King is a physical, run-stopping linebacker whose strength lies between the tackles. However, NFL players will be even faster than what he faced in college, and King already struggled to keep up with outside runs and in pass coverage. Hopefully he can elevate his game, but it will be a challenge.

Immediately after, with the 202nd pick, the Vikings took Gavin Bartholomew, a tight end from Pitt. Like King, Bartholomew isn't an elite athlete but used his size and strength to win in college. He'll likely need a few years of development before becoming a reliable contributor.

Overall, this was an underwhelming draft for the Vikings. I like the decision to complete the offensive line overhaul, and I like the move to bring in an experienced backup quarterback. Beyond that, we'll need to keep our fingers crossed that some of the other picks can develop into contributors. Still, if even one or two late-round players hit, this class could look a lot better in a few years than it does today.

In addition to the players selected in the draft, the Vikings also signed 19 undrafted rookie free agents: Tyler Batty, OLB, BYU. Silas Bolden, WR, Texas. Max Brosmer, QB, Minnesota. Logan Brown, OL, Kansas. Chaz Chambliss, OLB, Georgia. Oscar Chapman, P, Auburn. Zeke Correll, OL, N.C. State. Dontae Fleming, WR, Tulane. Keenan Garber, CB, Kansas State. Joe Huber, OL, Wisconsin. Austin Keys, LB, Auburn. Robert Lewis, WR, Auburn. Dorian Mausi, LB, Auburn. Bryson Nesbit, TE, North Carolina. Mishael Powell, S, Miami. Tre Stewart, RB, Jacksonville State. Zemaiah Vaughn, CB, Utah. Alex Williams, DL, Middle Tennessee State. Ben Yurosek, TE, Georgia.

"The Golden Rules of Dementia"

Dementia is a progressive condition that results in decline in cognitive function. People with dementia have increasing difficulties with short term memory, thinking, and reasoning. For family members it can be hard to watch the decline in a loved one who is struggling with dementia. Interacting when someone has dementia can be difficult. Following these three Golden Rules can help.

Rule number 1: Do not ask direct questions. Asking someone with dementia if they remember your name or remember what they had for breakfast can be distressing. Someone with dementia may not be able to find the answer you are looking for and can feel put on the spot to come up with an answer.

Rule number 2: Listen to the person with dementia and learn from them. When someone is suffering from dementia, their feelings are more important than facts. My grandmother had dementia for the last 20 years of her life. She was very upset that my aunt had not come to visit her. My aunt had passed away a few years prior. At first, we thought the best thing was to tell her the truth, that my aunt had died. We saw that this was new information each time we told her. She grieved deeply each time she heard that news. It was kinder to tell her that my aunt was away at school and would be home at the next holiday to visit. There was no reason to keep inflicting that trauma on her. We were able to ease her mind. She was worried she had done something wrong to cause my aunt to not visit.

Rule number 3: Do not contradict. The part of the brain that is able to reason is no longer functioning in dementia. Trying to win an argument with logic is not beneficial. Another time visiting my grandmother, she was very anxious that she had not taken lunch out to her husband. She believed he was out working in the field on the family farm. My grandfather had died the year I was born. Rather than contradicting her, I said that I would make sure that he got lunch and would take it out for her. This made her feel better.

These three golden rules can help give the family member with dementia a sense of security and safety. It can also be helpful for family members to interact with the person they love in a new and meaningful way. Meet the person with dementia where they are, instead of trying to force them to be where you are. If you allow them to take the lead, you may learn some beautiful stories from the past and have fond memories for your future.

Jill Kruse, D.O. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices as a hospitalist in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org and on Facebook, Instagram, and Threads featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show, 2 podcasts, and a Radio program, providing health information based on science, built on trust, on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central and wherever podcast can be found.



Jill Kruse, DO

Groton Area Tigers Varsity With Tough Game Against Howard Varsity Tigers

By GameChanger Media

Groton Area Tigers Varsity couldn't keep up with Howard Varsity Tigers and fell 12-2 on Sunday.

Groton Area Tigers Varsity got on the board in the top of the first inning after Howard Varsity Tigers committed an error, and Gavin Englund singled down the left field line, each scoring one run.

Howard Varsity Tigers flipped the game on its head in the bottom of the first, scoring six runs on four hits to take the lead, 6-2. The biggest blow in the inning was a double by Nolan Mentele that drove in two.

Howard Varsity Tigers scored one run in the bottom of the second on a solo home run to right field by Weston Remmers.

Howard Varsity Tigers scored five runs on three hits in the bottom of the third inning. Korbin Shumaker singled, scoring one run, an error scored two runs, an error scored one run, and Owen Feldhaus singled, scoring one run.

Carson Hinker earned the win for Howard Varsity Tigers. The hurler allowed four hits and two runs (zero earned) over five innings, striking out two and walking two. Englund took the loss for Groton Area Tigers Varsity. The starting pitcher went two and two-thirds innings, allowing 10 runs (seven earned) on seven hits, striking out four and walking one.

Englund went 1-for-2 at the plate and led the team with one run batted in. Lincoln Krause, Karsten Fliehs, TC Schuster, and Englund each collected one hit for Groton Area Tigers Varsity.

Mentele, Shumaker, and Feldhaus each collected two hits for Howard Varsity Tigers. Mentele and Feldhaus were tough to handle back-to-back in the lineup, as each drove in two runs for Howard Varsity Tigers. Howard Varsity Tigers turned one double play in the game.

Groton Area Tigers Varsity welcome Sioux Valley on Wednesday for their next game.

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Groton Area Tigers JV Defeated By Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks

By GameChanger Media

Groton Area Tigers JV lost to Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks 4-1 on Sunday.

Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks opened the scoring in the top of the first thanks to three singles. Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks first got on the board when Ashton Warne singled, scoring two runs.

Luke Langland earned the win for Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks. The starting pitcher allowed one hit and zero runs over three innings, striking out three and walking three. Isaiah Scepaniak took the loss for Groton Area Tigers JV. The right-handed pitcher went four and two-thirds innings, giving up four runs on six hits, striking out five and walking six.

Wesley Borg led the team with one run batted in. Lincoln Shilhanek led Groton Area Tigers JV with two hits in two at bats.

Warne drove the middle of the lineup, leading Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks with two runs batted in. The 3-hole hitter went 2-for-2 on the day. Cooper Teske stole two bases. Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks had a strong eye at the plate, accumulating six walks for the game. Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks were sure-handed and didn't commit a single error. Brendin Moe made the most plays with six.

Groton Area Tigers JV play at home on Sunday against Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks in their next game.

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Groton Area Tigers JV With Tough Game Against Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks

By GameChanger Media

Groton Area Tigers JV had trouble keeping up with Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks in a 16-1 loss on Sunday.

Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks jumped out to the lead in the top of the first inning after Damon Uecker tripled, scoring one run, and Brendin Moe doubled, scoring two runs.

Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks added one run in the second. Teagan Moad singled down the left field line, making the score 4-1.

Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks added to their early lead in the top of the third inning when Ashton Warne singled, scoring two runs, Kade Hauck singled, scoring one run, and a wild pitch scored one run.

Landon Hanssen earned the win for Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks. The righty allowed zero hits and one run over two innings, striking out five and walking one. Kason Oswald took the loss for Groton Area Tigers JV. The hurler went three and two-thirds innings, surrendering 14 runs (six earned) on nine hits, striking out four and walking seven.

Braden Fliehs led Groton Area Tigers JV with one run batted in. Zach Fliehs went 1-for-2 at the plate to lead Groton Area Tigers JV in hits.

Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks tallied 10 hits in the game. Uecker led Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks with two hits in three at bats. Moe, Hanssen, and Warne each drove in two runs for Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks. Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks had patience at the plate, collecting nine walks for the game. Koltyn Kissner, Deacon Koomia, and Hauck led the team with two walks each. Cooper Teske stole two bases. Sioux Valley Junior Varsity Cossacks were sure-handed in the field and didn't commit a single error. Moe had the most chances in the field with nine.

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EARTHTALK

Dear EarthTalk: What's up with efforts to restore wild salmon to the U.S. West? – J.D. via email

Over the past century, wild salmon populations on the U.S. West Coast have declined drastically. In Washington State alone, salmon populations have dropped to as little as five to 10 percent of their historical numbers, according to the Recreation and Conservation Office. In response, efforts to restore them have ramped up as concerns grow about their survival.

Salmon play a crucial role in the environment, supporting ecosystems, fishing industries and Indigenous communities that have depended on them for centuries. But between habitat destruction, overfishing and climate change, the numbers really took a hit. In recent years, there's been a big push to restore them, with new projects and funding, though overall progress has been inconsistent in certain areas.

One of the biggest problems is that salmon habitats have changed over time. Dams block their migration routes, making it harder for them to reach the places where they spawn. Some projects, such as those on California's Yuba River, are working on removing barriers or building special passages so salmon can get through easier. Another issue is water temperature—rivers are getting too warm because of climate change and salmon need cold water to survive. In some areas people have been planting more trees along riverbanks to help provide more shade but it's a slow process. Plus, erosion causes too much dirt in the water which can end up burying salmon eggs before they can hatch.

There's been a lot more funding lately to help salmon recover, but this isn't a new effort. Since the 1990s, billions of dollars have been invested in salmon restoration across the Pacific Northwest, with funding from federal, state and tribal governments. In 2023, the U.S. Congress allocated an additional \$60 million to support restoration projects, with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) leading multi-agency federal efforts to improve wild salmon populations. Some hatcheries are also stepping in, raising salmon to release into the wild, though some scientists worry that hatchery fish might not act like real wild salmon and could mess with natural populations.

But even with all these efforts, salmon still have a lot of problems. Climate change is making rivers drier in some places and flooding in others, which totally throws off their migration. Plus, there's still a debate over whether big dams should be taken down to let salmon move freely again. Meanwhile, predators like sea lions have been snatching up more salmon lately, making it even harder for the fish to bounce back.

To help, check to see if seafood is sustainably caught, support policies that protect salmon, and volunteer for local conservation projects. And of course, tackling climate change matters, because without fixing bigger environmental issues, salmon recovery will be an uphill battle. There's a long way to go, but with enough effort, wild salmon could still make a comeback.



2025 was a record year for chum salmon returning to Piper Creek in Seattle. Credit: Roddy Scheer.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Medicine for opioid use saves lives. But SD doctors hesitate to prescribe it, advocates say

Prescriptions to prevent cravings, withdrawal symptoms see growth, but remain a fraction of opioid prescription counts

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - APRIL 27, 2025 11:43 AM

Megan Cantone stumbled out of the hospital in tears from the pain.

She sought treatment for an infection from drug use. Medical professionals at the Denver hospital provided the treatment, but as Cantone recalls, it came with a heavy dose of judgment.

A doctor refused to numb her wound after recognizing it as being from illicit drug use, she said. The pain was supposed to convince her "never to shove a needle in your arm again," Cantone said.

"I told my husband I feel like a complete failure, like a terrible person," Cantone said. "That's almost when a person could kill themselves because you're at the lowest of your low and somebody treats you like that."

Earlier that week, a nurse at a different hospital confronted her while treating another infection. The nurse told Cantone she'd end up killing herself and "pretty much told me I was disgusting," Cantone remembers.

Cantone began experimenting with drugs in high school, but her opioid use started when she attended cosmetology and esthiology school in the Twin Cities. Her use escalated to meth and heroin over the years.

A doctor stepped in to defend Cantone, scolding the nurse. The doctor suggested medication to help her stop opioid use; he said she suffered from a medical disorder that could be treated.

As the opioid epidemic continues in South Dakota, physicians can offer medications for opioid use disorder. But the practice — made possible by a change to federal law in 2022 — is held back in South Dakota because of stigmas attached to it, advocates say. Stigmas like Cantone experienced, and what she still experiences in South Dakota today.

Cantone didn't accept the medication from the emergency room doctor. She grappled with self-loathing. But the doctor's kindness and offer stuck with her.

Months later, after near-death experiences and the realization she was pregnant, Cantone accepted a prescription and delivered a healthy baby girl. The medication straightened a winding path toward recovery.



Buprenorphine tablets, which are used to reduce opioid withdrawal symptoms and cravings. (Makenzie Huber/South Dakota Searchlight)

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The 35-year-old mother and wife, who lives in Sioux Falls, credits her Christian faith and the medication for her recovery. She will celebrate six years of sobriety in May.

Training providers to 'recognize bravery'

Buprenorphine prescriptions in South Dakota tripled in the last five years, increasing from about 2,500 at the start of 2019 to around 7,500 at the end of 2024. The drug reduces opioid withdrawal symptoms and cravings.

Naloxone is available in some public spaces throughout South Dakota, especially in Sioux Falls and Rapid City. It prevents opioid overdoses by blocking receptor cells.

Cantone took a Suboxone prescription for years, which is a drug that contains both buprenorphine and naloxone to treat opioid use disorder. Now she takes buprenorphine.

The increased access to both medications is heartening for Craig Uthe, a family physician at Sanford and local spokesman for the national Opioid Response Network. The Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment Act eliminated a federal waiver requirement for prescribing buprenorphine. But physicians need more education on the prescriptions, he said.

"We didn't have that many people prescribing buprenorphine before, and we still don't," Uthe said. "We have a lot of people still prescribing opioids but not prescribing buprenorphine."

Opioids are prescribed for pain management but can be addictive, especially for patients with chronic pain, Uthe said. South Dakota opioid prescription counts in 2024 stood at 437,431.

Of the top 10 controlled substances prescribed to South Dakota patients in 2024, opioids claimed three spots, according to the state's prescription drug monitoring program data. Two of the three drugs — methylphenidate and oxycodone — moved up in the rankings to fourth and sixth most prescribed controlled substances. Hydrocodone retained its number one spot.

The state and health systems are gathering data to measure how much buprenorphine is prescribed.

"If we see a county with high overdose numbers, we'd like to see a higher amount of buprenorphine prescribed," Uthe said. "How can we, as the state Health Department or as health care systems, try to place a resource where there is the greatest need?"

South Dakota Health Department Secretary Melissa Magstadt said medical providers should make it a "prescribing habit" to prescribe naloxone for each opioid prescription they write. Overdose victims do not always suffer from opioid use disorder, she said.

"I've seen very well-meaning patients who took one too many doses or maybe forgot they took a dose or didn't realize they had two different medications that had opioids in them," Magstadt said.

She said it'll likely take years for prescriber behaviors to change.

In 2023, South Dakota reported the second lowest overdose death rate in the nation at 11.2 deaths per 100,000 residents, according to the latest data available.

Ninety-five South Dakotans in 2023 died from drug overdoses, 47 of which were from opioids. In 2024, 90 South Dakotans died from drug overdoses, 36 of which were from opioids, according to the state Health Department.

Although most overdose deaths are among white residents, Native Americans are disproportionately affected. Native Americans die from overdoses at a rate of 26.6 per 100,000 — more than four times the rate among white South Dakotans, according to the State Unintentional Drug Overdose Reporting System.

Sioux Falls nonprofit Emily's Hope partners with emergency departments. Physicians connect patients with the nonprofit, which works to connect them to medication and other treatment services, said Angela Kennecke, founder and CEO. Kennecke's daughter, Emily, died of a fentanyl overdose, laced in heroin she injected. Her family was planning to enroll her into a treatment program when she died in May 2018.

Medication is the "gold star" for treatment, Kennecke said. Treating opioid use disorder without medication can be more harmful than no treatment, according to a Yale study published in the Drug and Alcohol Dependence journal in 2024.

"That is our first line of defense in getting people to feel better, to reduce cravings and get them the

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help they need," Kennecke said.

Loretta Bryan, a registered nurse focused on clinical improvement within the South Dakota Association of Healthcare Organizations, educates medical providers on opioid use disorder, medications and how to engage with patients.

Her work focuses on "motivational interviewing techniques" to create authentic conversations with patients and improve screening.

"It takes a lot of bravery to walk through those doors and admit you're struggling," Bryan said. "Finding those words to recognize that bravery and having those in your back pocket is helpful."

Expanding opioid use disorder treatment infrastructure

Access to medications for opioid use disorder is growing in clinics across the state, but not as fast as needed, Uthe said. The focus remains in emergency rooms and on harm reduction. Aside from clinics dedicated to behavioral health, Uthe said, family physicians and urgent care doctors should be comfortable prescribing the medications.

"We don't have the infrastructure in place to address that need at the moment," he said.

Lewis and Clark Behavioral Health Services in Yankton runs a telehealth behavioral health program focused on opioid use, with two outreach sites in Pierre and Huron. Rapid City-based Project Recovery is an addiction recovery clinic for opioids, alcohol and stimulant use with satellite clinics in Sioux Falls, Sisseton and Pine Ridge.

State funds to combat opioid use in the state support both programs.

Kendra Joswiak, clinical practice director at Project Recovery, said the organization treated 1,100 people for opioid use disorder in 2024. Of those treated without medication, about 90% will use again, she said, comparing medication for opioid use disorder to insulin for diabetes patients.

"If we had something as good for cancer as we do for opioid use disorder, we'd say we cured cancer," Joswiak said.

Patients continue to face stigma after years of sobriety

Cantone continues to feel judged when she shares her history with medical professionals, pharmacists, friends and family.

She felt "icky" when she first ordered her prescription at a pharmacy when she moved back to South Dakota in 2020. Medication for opioid use disorder isn't as common or well known in South Dakota as it is in Denver, she said.

"They looked at me like I was a drug addict or from Mars," she recalled.

Friends and family have told her she's switching one addiction for another. But medical professionals say the prescription drugs help restore balance to parts of the brain affected by addiction, allowing patients' brains to heal without cravings or withdrawal symptoms.

The doubt and stigma undercut the pride and hard work it took to earn Cantone's sobriety. But she knows people who struggle with substance use disorder are more than what others see.

"As much as we worry about what others think, what matters is you being healthy, getting your life together, staying alive and getting the help you need," Cantone said. "Whether it's medication or counseling or cutting cold turkey. You need to get yourself better and cancel out that noise."

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan who regularly reports on the intersection of politics and policy with health, education, social services and Indigenous affairs. Her work with South Dakota Searchlight earned her the title of South Dakota's Outstanding Young Journalist in 2024, and she was a 2024 finalist for the national Livingston Awards.

Speaking the same language: Opioid programs connect overdose victims with recovered mentors

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - APRIL 27, 2025 11:28 AM

Shame consumed Cameron Nielson as he lay curled and shaking on an emergency room bed.

Nurses shouldn't have to rush to care for him, he thought. Other patients deserved attention more than him. This was his seventh relapse.

His mother drove him to the emergency room with severe withdrawal symptoms from opioids and Xanax last summer after his drugs were stolen from his safe, he said.

"I hated myself," the 27-year-old Sioux Falls resident remembered.

He accepted medication from one of the nurses to stop the withdrawal symptoms. His head was clearer and he could fall asleep, but the shame remained.

Vanessa Needles entered the room after he woke up. She wasn't a nurse, but a peer support specialist meant to connect Nielson to resources. His shame turned to embarrassment, but it soon became gratitude for the medical staff and Needles.

Needles spoke his language in a way the nurses and doctors surrounding him couldn't. She overdosed once herself and struggled with alcohol use, eventually leading to a car crash that killed her coworker in 2017. Needles and Nielson started experimenting with drugs and alcohol around 14 years old. They'd both done things and treated their loved ones in ways they regret. He wasn't alone.

Needles, who is seven years sober, offered Nielson grace.

"When you're trying to get off of it, the littlest thing makes the biggest difference," Nielson told South Dakota Searchlight. "The most valuable thing is having someone understand what you're going through."

Needles is one of nine peer support specialists in eastern South Dakota with Sioux Falls-based nonprofit Emily's Hope. Their work is part of a pilot program overseen by the state Department of Social Services and launched in January 2024 to reduce overdoses by providing "essential supports and strengthening connections" to local resources, according to a statement from the department. Rapid City-based Project Recovery piloted the program in western South Dakota.

The pilots are funded by national opioid settlement dollars, costing \$346,445. The national opioid settlement was reached in 2021 to resolve opioid litigation against the country's three largest pharmaceutical distributors and one manufacturer. More than \$50 billion in settlement funds are being delivered to state and local governments from the companies accused of flooding communities with opioid painkillers even though they allegedly knew how addictive and deadly the drugs were. South Dakota is set to receive \$54 million of settlement funding within the next two decades.

The department plans to continue funding the program with settlement dollars through 2029, based on a plan presented to the opioid advisory council in April.



Cameron Nielson is a 27-year-old Sioux Falls resident in recovery from opioid use disorder. (Makenzie Huber/South Dakota Searchlight)

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What is the program?

The two organizations received a combined 34 referrals since the program's launch and connected with 26 people to provide resources. Between 2016 and 2020, there were more than 2,400 drug-related hospitalizations and 684 drug-related deaths in South Dakota.

Angela Kennecke, founder and CEO of Emily's Hope, said the organization works closely with emergency room departments for referrals. Sometimes the initial contact yields later results. One woman who ended communication with a peer support specialist last year picked communication back up this year to seek help.

"I always say a seed is planted," Kennecke said. "Even if they don't go into treatment immediately or they don't go on medication and get the help they need, a seed has been planted that there is someone there to help them when they're ready."

Kennecke's daughter, Emily, died of a fentanyl overdose, laced in heroin she injected. Her family was planning to enroll her into a treatment program when she died in May 2018.

Project Recovery has found most of its success working with Rapid City's Fusion Center, which is a law enforcement task force. The clinic receives referrals based on overdose data collected by law enforcement. Kendra Joswiak, clinical practice director at Project Recovery, said her response team connected with 82% of activations, 56% of which continue to be engaged in addiction service treatments.

Needles, a 30-year-old mother of two — soon to be three — served as a peer support specialist for years in other capacities before working with Emily's Hope to meet with overdose victims in the emergency room. She's previously talked with people struggling with substance use on the street, and she's shared her story with jail inmates.

The program bridges gaps in South Dakota's behavioral health infrastructure, she said. It also destigmatizes substance use within the medical profession and in the community, and gives a sense of purpose to those in recovery.

"By helping someone stay sober, I stay sober another day," Needles said. "I can stand in front of them and tell them that this is scary and sh—y, but that it's going to get better."

Peer support specialists with Emily's Hope receive a group text when an overdose victim arrives at a Sioux Falls-area hospital. Whoever is available goes, Needles said.

Most of the time, people have already checked out of the hospital before a specialist arrives. She remembers when she overdosed a decade ago, and she left the hospital as soon as she could because she was scared. She needed to cope with her emotions, and the only way she knew how was to use again.

She and other peer support specialists will follow up with patients after they leave the hospital, dropping off bags of fentanyl test strips or medication to prevent overdose. She'll hand them to the patient, parents or spouses — whoever she can find.

'Everybody deserves a little bit of grace'

After Nielson was admitted to the hospital and into a treatment program through Avera Health, Needles joined him each Friday. She checks in on him to see how he's feeling and has taken him to support meetings since he completed treatment. She sent him a coin and card when he reached three months of sobriety late last year.

Nielson is eight months sober. He's taking a Suboxone prescription to eliminate cravings, and he feels more like himself, he said. He started reading again, hasn't missed a day of work and spends time with his 3-year-old son each week. It's something he couldn't have dreamed of a decade ago.

Needles' guidance and support reminds Nielson he's not alone and what he's capable of achieving.

"Besides Vanessa, I don't have another person to talk to regularly who knows what I'm going through or is sober," Nielson said. "It can kind of get lonely after you cut off every friend you had, since they were all part of my addiction."

One relationship isn't a lot, but it's a start, Needles said. She hopes as others learn about medications for opioid use disorder and about efforts to curb overdose deaths in the state, overdose response teams

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will be able to reach more people.

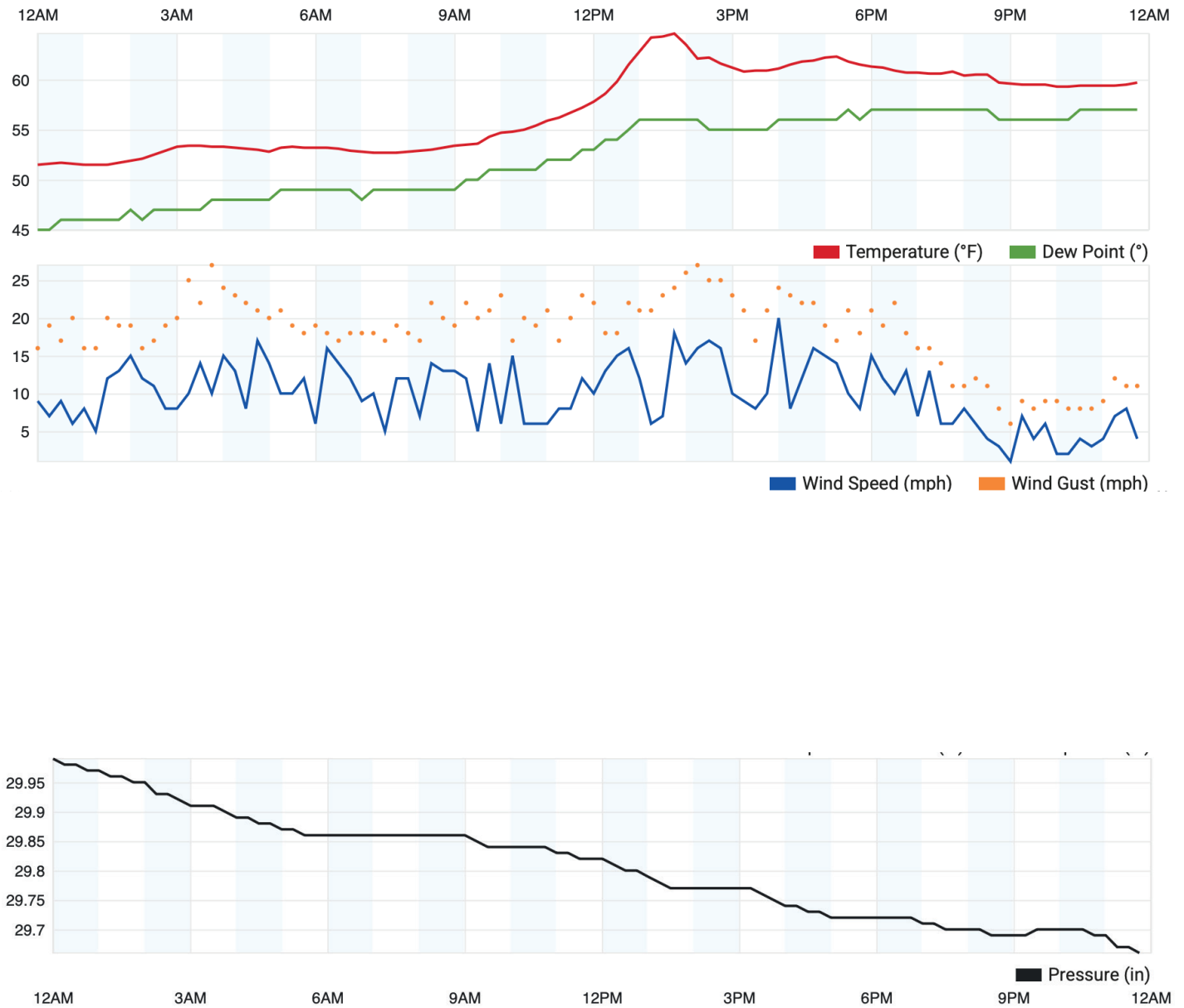
"Everybody deserves a little bit of grace," Needles said. "We're all struggling one way or another."

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan who regularly reports on the intersection of politics and policy with health, education, social services and Indigenous affairs. Her work with South Dakota Searchlight earned her the title of South Dakota's Outstanding Young Journalist in 2024, and she was a 2024 finalist for the national Livingston Awards.

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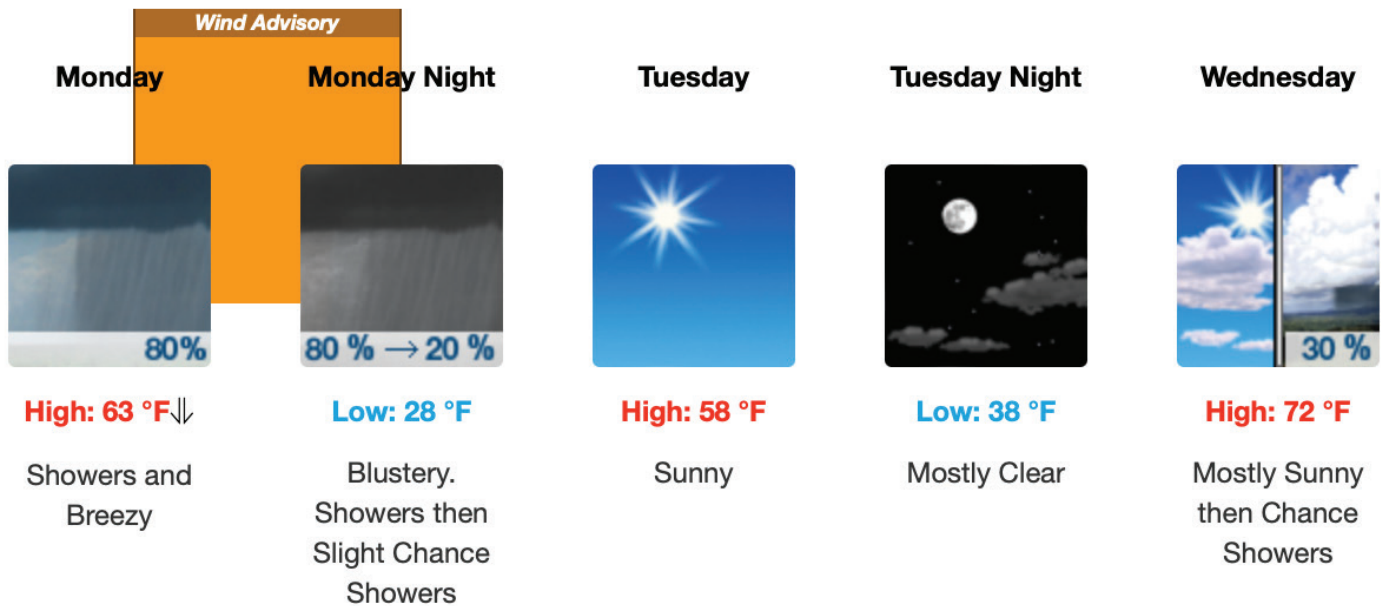
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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THREAT ASSESSMENT

HIGHEST LOCAL RISK

3

WHAT THIS MEANS:
NUMEROUS severe storms *possible*.

TIMING

through 7 AM CDT & Again in the Afternoon.

PRIMARY THREATS



LARGE HAIL



DAMAGING WIND

SECONDARY THREATS

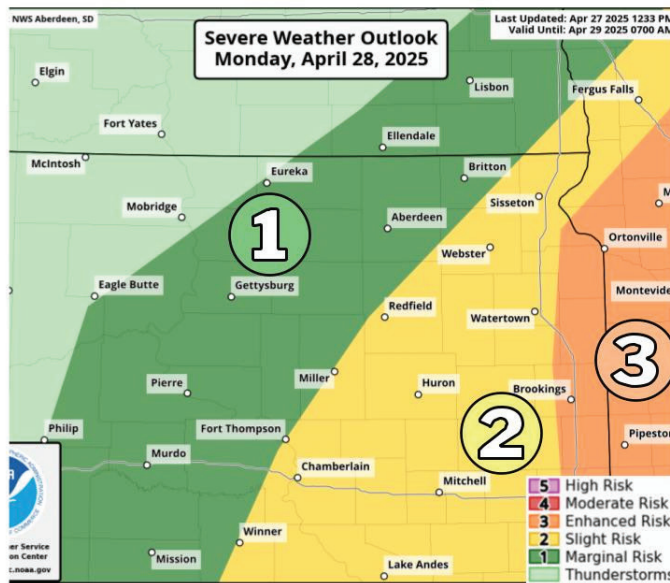


HEAVY RAIN



TORNADO

Scattered SEVERE STORMS Monday



What To Expect

- Ongoing morning storms over far northeastern SD & west central. MN. Additional storms to develop in the afternoon.
- Hail up to 2" in diameter possible for areas in Yellow and Orange.
- Storms to exit into MN Monday night.

What To Do?

- **Stay Weather Aware!**
- Be ready to take shelter indoors when storms approach.
- Have multiple ways to receive warnings.



INDOOR SHELTER



OUTDOOR PLANS?
STAY WEATHER AWARE



MULTIPLE WAYS TO
RECEIVE WARNINGS



There is an Enhanced Risk (3 of 5) over and east of I-29 and into western MN. Tonight's storms will continue into Monday morning and will move east out of the area after sunrise. Storms will then redevelop in the afternoon. The primary threats are large hail and damaging winds, with secondary threats of tornadoes and heavy rain.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 65 °F at 1:43 PM

Low Temp: 51 °F at 1:08 AM

Wind: 27 mph at 3:42 AM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 14 hours, 14 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 90 in 1934

Record Low: 19 in 2008

Average High: 63

Average Low: 36

Average Precip in April.: 1.72

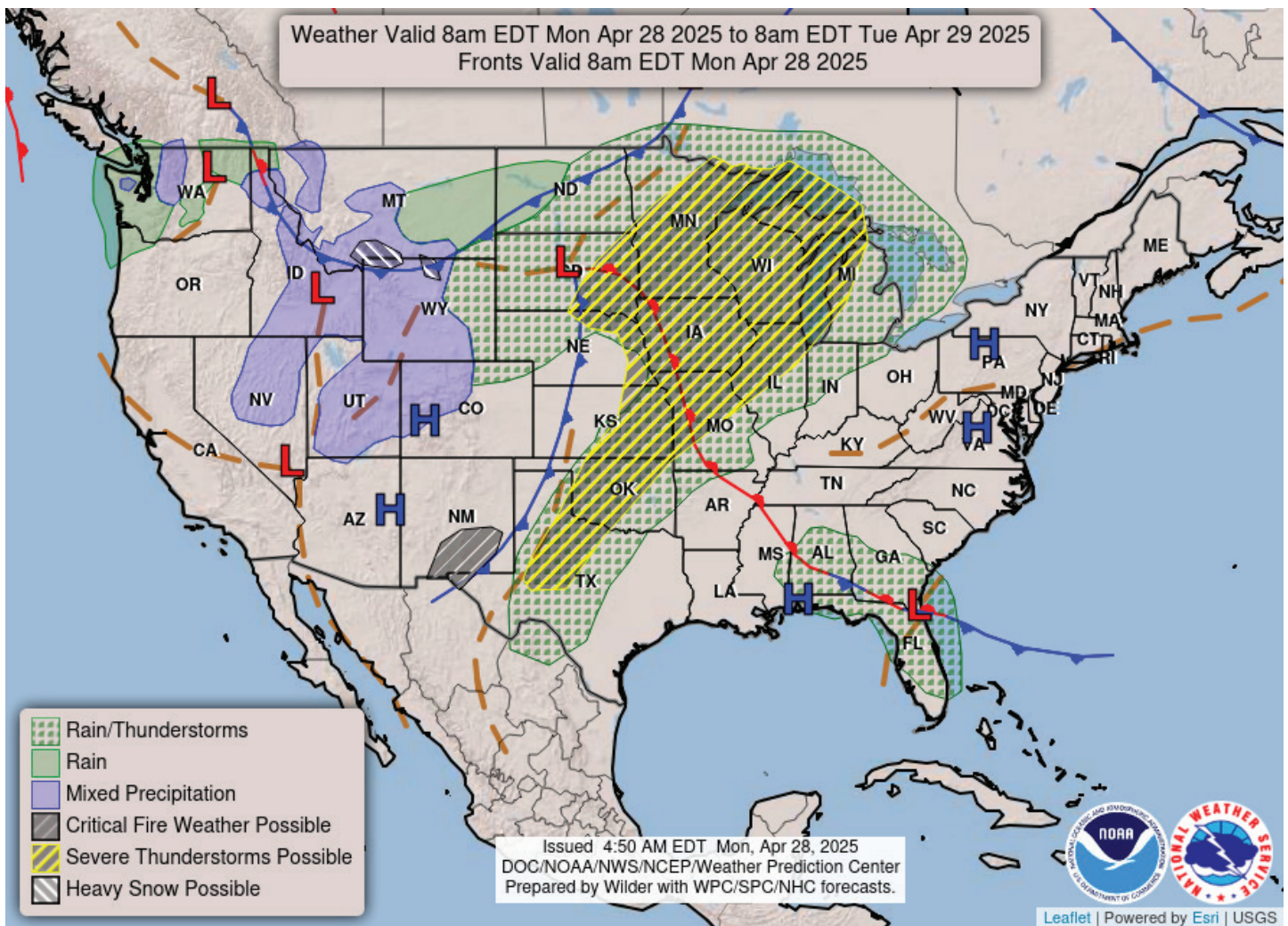
Precip to date in April.: 1.58

Average Precip to date: 3.78

Precip Year to Date: 2.21

Sunset Tonight: 8:37:02 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:21:02 am



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Today in Weather History

April 28th, 1994: Snow accumulated 5 to 12 inches over most of the eastern half of South Dakota, with the 12-inch report from Winner. Ten to eleven inches of snow was reported at numerous places, including Sioux Falls and Platte in the southeast and Summit in the northeast. Numerous accidents were caused by snow and ice, including one that killed a man and injured two women on Highway 12 near Bath, South Dakota. There was some undetermined crop damage, and livestock loss was feared as the late-season cold and snow lowered disease resistance.

1921 - A severe hailstorm in Anson County, NC, produced hail the size of baseballs. Gardens, grain fields and trees were destroyed. Pine trees in the storm's path had to be cut for lumber because of the hail damage. (The Weather Channel)

1928 - A coastal storm produced tremendous late season snows in the Central Appalachians, including 35 inches at Bayard WV, 31 inches at Somerset PA, and 30 inches at Grantsville MD. High winds accompanying the heavy wet snow uprooted trees and unroofed a number of homes. The storm caused great damage to fruit trees and wild life. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Twenty cities in the western and central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Highs of 95 degrees at Houston TX, 95 degrees at Lake Charles LA, and 94 degrees at Port Arthur TX, were April records. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Miami, FL, hit 92 degrees, marking a record eight days of 90 degree heat in the month of April. Squalls produced snow in the Washington D.C. area. Belvoir VA reported a temperature reading of 57 degrees at the time the snow began. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Strong northerly winds and heavy snow ushered cold air into the north central U.S. Snowfall totals in Montana ranged up to 20 inches at Miles City. Thunderstorms produced severe weather from eastern Texas to the Southern Appalachians and the southern Ohio Valley. Hail four and a half inches in diameter was reported at Keller TX and White Settlement TX. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the southeastern U.S. during the day. Severe thunderstorms spawned four tornadoes, including one which injured four persons at Inman SC. There were also more than one hundred reports of large hail and damaging winds, with better than half of those reports in Georgia. Strong thunderstorm winds injured four people at Sadler's Creek SC. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data) Twenty-nine cities in the northeastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date as readings soared into the 80s and lower 90s. Highs of 88 degrees at Binghamton NY, 94 degrees at Buffalo NY, 89 degrees at Erie PA, 90 degrees at Newark NJ, 93 degrees at Rochester NY and 92 degrees at Syracuse NY, were records for the month of April. (The National Weather Summary)

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Daily Devotion

A Special People

Choose to believe what the Bible teaches: You are precious in God's sight.

April 28, 2025

1 Peter 2:9-10: English Standard Version

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Whenever feelings of low self-worth threaten us with discouragement, we need to rely on the truth of God's Word rather than our emotions. Today we are going to examine four phrases that describe how the Lord sees every believer as a member of ...

A Chosen Race. God chose you and me to be part of His kingdom and family because He loves and wants us.

A Royal Priesthood. As believers, we are children of God and part of a royal family. Jesus fulfilled the roles of king and priest. In a similar way, God has also entrusted us with priestly responsibilities of worship and intercession for others.

A Holy Nation. The church—or body of Christ—is a group of people who are holy, which means “set apart” for the purposes of God.

A People for God's Own Possession. We are the personal possessions of God. (See Deut. 14:2; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:9.) Because He sees us as precious, the Father sent His Son to die on the cross in our place so we could belong to Him.

Each of these descriptions shows the high value God places on you. Begin today to demonstrate the truth of Scripture by remembering your real identity and living out your high calling from the Lord.

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 04.25.25

38 40 60 62 70 9

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$70,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 24 Mins
57 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 04.26.25

1 9 14 31 34 2

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$31,600,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 39 Mins 57
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 04.27.25

4 19 35 36 41 5

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 54 Mins 56
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 04.26.25

7 13 14 20 28

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$130,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 54
Mins 56 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 04.26.25

12 20 26 38 40 5

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 23 Mins 56
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 04.26.25

1 12 14 18 69 2

Power Play: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$20,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 23 Mins 57
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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Upcoming Groton Events

03/22/2025 Spring Vendor Fair at the GHS Gym 10am-2pm
03/29/2025 Men's Singles Bowling Tournament at the Jungle 10am, 1pm & 4pm
04/05/2025 Dueling Duo Baseball/Softball Fundraiser at the Legion Post #39, 6-11:30pm
04/06/2025 Pancake Sunday, Historical Society Fundraiser, 10am-1pm, Community Center
04/12/2025 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt at the City Park 10am Sharp
04/12/2025 Groton Firemens Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
05/03/2025 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
05/12/2025 High School Girls Golf Meet at Olive Grove
05/26/2025 Memorial Day Services Groton Union Cemetery with lunch at Legion Post #39, 12pm
06/07/2025 Day of Play
06/13/2025 SDSU 4 Person Scramble at Olive Grove
06/21/2025 Groton Triathlon
06/23/2025 Ladies 2 Person Scramble at Olive Grove
07/04/2025 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/09/2025 Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar at the Groton Legion 11am-1pm
07/11-13/25 2025 VFW 12U Class B State Baseball Tournament
07/13/2025 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm
07/16/2025 Men's Pro Am Golf at Olive Grove
07/25/2025 Ferney Open Scramble Golf at Olive Grove
08/01/2025 Wine on Nine Fundraiser at Olive Grove
08/09/2025 2nd Annual Celebration in the Park/Rib Cook-Off 1-9:30pm
08/14/2025 Family Fun Fest, Downtown Main Street 5:30-7:30pm (2nd Thursday)
08/23/2025 Glacial Tournament at Olive Grove
09/05/2025 Homecoming Parade 1pm
09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
09/07/2025 Sunflower Classic Couples Scramble at Olive Grove
10/10/2025 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
10/11/2025 Pumpkin Fest 10am-3pm City Park
10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1:30pm
12/06/2025 Olive Grove Holiday Party and Silent Live Auction Fundraiser

News from the **AP** Associated Press

Trump says Columbus Day will now just be Columbus Day

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

President Donald Trump made clear Sunday that he would not follow his predecessor's practice of recognizing Indigenous Peoples Day alongside Columbus Day in October, accusing Democrats of denigrating the explorer's legacy as he pressed his campaign to restore what he argues are traditional American icons.

Democrat Joe Biden was the first president to mark Indigenous Peoples Day, issuing a proclamation in 2021 that celebrated "the invaluable contributions and resilience of Indigenous peoples" and recognize "their inherent sovereignty."

The proclamation noted that America "was conceived on a promise of equality and opportunity for all people" but that promise "we have never fully lived up to. That is especially true when it comes to upholding the rights and dignity of the Indigenous people who were here long before colonization of the Americas began."

Trump on Sunday used a social media post to declare, "I'm bringing Columbus Day back from the ashes." He said on his Truth Social site that "the Democrats did everything possible to destroy Christopher Columbus, his reputation, and all of the Italians that love him so much."

The federal holiday, the second Monday in October, was still known as Columbus Day during Biden's term, but also as Indigenous Peoples Day. That's been a longtime goal of activists who wanted to shift the focus from commemorating Columbus' navigation to the Americas to his and his successors' exploitation of the indigenous people he encountered there.

Though Trump has long objected to telling the country's history through a lens of diversity and oppression, the holiday he seeks to restore to its primacy was added to the calendar as a nod to the country's growing diversity.

Columbus' expeditions never landed on the North American mainland, let alone any of the places that would become the 50 states. But the native of Genoa became increasingly commemorated in the United States as Italian immigrants flocked to the country and politicians sought to win their support.

Indeed, it was the lynching of 11 Italian-American immigrants in New Orleans in 1891 that led to the first Columbus Day celebration in the United States, led the following year by President Benjamin Harrison. President Franklin D. Roosevelt designated Columbus Day as a national holiday in 1934.

Trump has long complained about Democrats tearing down statues of Columbus, a complaint he made again in Sunday's post. In 2017, he spoke out against a review of the 76-foot-tall statue of the explorer in New York's Columbus Circle that then-Mayor Bill de Blasio had ordered. It remains in place today, but other statues have been defaced or torn down.

In 2020, Trump's administration paid to restore a Columbus statue in Baltimore that was dumped in the harbor during protests against the police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Suspect arrested in Homeland Security Secretary Noem's purse theft

WASHINGTON (AP) — A suspect has been arrested in connection with the theft last week of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem's purse as she ate at a Washington, D.C., restaurant, officials said Sunday.

Noem's purse was nabbed on Easter Sunday and reportedly contained about \$3,000 in cash, her keys, driver's license, passport and Homeland Security badge. The Homeland Security Department said Noem had cash in her purse to pay for gifts, dinner and other activities for her family on Easter.

A suspect was taken into custody without incident in Washington after an investigation by the U.S. Secret Service and the Metropolitan Police Department, according to Secret Service Washington Field Office Special Agent in Charge Matt McCool.

The suspect was arrested Saturday, the police department said.

Interim District of Columbia U.S. Attorney Ed Martin told NBC News the suspect was in the country illegally.

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In a prepared statement, McCool called the suspect a "serial offender" and said there was no evidence Noem was targeted because of her position.

"There is no indication it was because of that. It was frankly, it was a nice looking purse," Martin told NBC News.

McCool said the investigation revealed evidence of potential device and credit card fraud.

The Metropolitan Police Department said the suspect was connected to two other purse thefts in Washington restaurants earlier this month through video evidence. The suspect was charged with robbery for the other incidents.

The Secret Service is investigating the Noem theft and will present its findings in federal court. There was no indication of criminal charges being filed against the suspect as of Sunday.

The Secret Service referred questions to the U.S. Attorney's office, which did not respond to emails seeking more information.

Noem thanked law enforcement agencies "for finding and arresting the criminal who stole my bag on Easter Sunday as I shared a meal with my family."

"This individual is a career criminal who has been in our country illegally for years," Noem said in a prepared statement. DHS did not immediately respond to an email requesting further detail on the suspect's immigration status.

Martin told NBC another suspect was being sought.

Palestinian envoy tells UN court Israel is killing Gaza civilians. Israel says it's being persecuted

By MOLLY QUELL and MIKE CORDER Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — A Palestinian diplomat told the United Nations' top court on Monday that Israel is killing and displacing civilians and targeting aid workers in Gaza, in a case that Israel criticized as part of its "systematic persecution and delegitimization."

Israel denies deliberately targeting civilians and aid staff as part of its war with Hamas and did not attend the hearing at the International Court of Justice.

In The Hague, Palestinian Ambassador to the Netherlands Ammar Hijazi accused Israel of breaching international law in the occupied territories.

"Israel is starving, killing and displacing Palestinians while also targeting and blocking humanitarian organizations trying to save their lives," he told the court.

The hearings are focussed on a request last year from the U.N. General Assembly, which asked the court to weigh in on Israel's legal responsibilities after the country blocked the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees from operating on its territory.

In a resolution sponsored by Norway, the General Assembly requested an advisory opinion, a non-binding but legally important decision from the court, on Israel's obligations in the occupied territories to "ensure and facilitate the unhindered provision of urgently needed supplies essential to the survival of the Palestinian civilian population?"

Hearings opened as the humanitarian aid system in Gaza is nearing collapse. Israel has blocked the entry of food, fuel, medicine and other humanitarian supplies since March 2. It renewed its bombardment on March 18, breaking a ceasefire, and seized large parts of the territory, saying it aims to push Hamas to release more hostages. Despite the stepped-up Israeli pressure, ceasefire efforts remain deadlocked.

The World Food Program said last week its food stocks in the Gaza Strip have run out, ending a main source of sustenance for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians as many families are struggling to feed their children.

What will happen in the court?

The United Nations was the first to address the court on Monday, followed by Palestinian representatives. In total, 40 states and four international organizations are scheduled to participate.

The United States, which voted against the U.N. resolution, is scheduled to speak on Wednesday.

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The court will likely take months to rule. But experts say the decision, though not legally binding, could profoundly impact international jurisprudence, international aid to Israel and public opinion.

"Advisory opinions provide clarity," Juliette McIntyre, an expert on international law at the University of South Australia, told The Associated Press. Governments rely on them in international negotiations and the outcome could be used to pressure Israel into easing restrictions on aid.

Whether any ruling will have an effect on Israel, however, is unclear. Israel has long accused the United Nations of being unfairly biased against it and has ignored a 2004 advisory ruling by the ICJ that found its West Bank separation barrier illegal.

While Israel was not in court, Foreign Minister Gideon Saar hit back at the case.

"I accuse UNRWA, I accuse the U.N., I accuse the secretary-general and I accuse all those that weaponized international law and its institutions in order to deprive the most attacked country in the world, Israel, of its most basic right to defend itself," he told a news conference in Jerusalem.

On Tuesday, South Africa, a staunch critic of Israel, will present its arguments. In hearings last year in a separate case at the court, the country accused Israel of committing genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza — a charge Israel denies. Those proceedings are still underway.

Israel's troubled relations with UNRWA

Israel's ban on the agency, known as UNRWA, which provides aid to Gaza, came into effect in January. The organization has faced increased criticism from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his far-right allies, who claim the group is deeply infiltrated by Hamas. UNRWA rejects that claim.

On Monday, Amir Weissbrod, a Foreign Ministry official, presented Israel's case against UNRWA. He accused it of failing to act before the war against evidence that Hamas had used its facilities, including by digging tunnels underneath them. The official said UNRWA employed 1,400 Palestinians with militant ties. Israel says some of those employees also took part in Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attacks and Weissbrod said at least three of those employees still worked for the U.N. The presentation included videos, documents and pictures of the alleged employees.

The Oct. 7, 2023, attack in southern Israel killed about 1,200 people and set off the war in Gaza. UNRWA said it fired nine staffers after an internal U.N. investigation concluded that they could have been involved, although the evidence was not authenticated and corroborated.

The Israeli ban doesn't apply directly to Gaza. But it controls all entry to the territory, and its ban on UNRWA from operating inside Israel greatly limits the agency's ability to function. Israeli officials say they are looking for alternative ways to deliver aid to Gaza that would cut out the United Nations.

UNRWA was established by the U.N. General Assembly in 1949 to provide relief for Palestinians who fled or were expelled from their homes in what is now Israel during the war surrounding Israel's creation the previous year until there is a political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The agency has been providing aid and services — including health and education — to some 2.5 million Palestinians in Gaza, the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem, as well as 3 million more in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon.

Israel's air and ground war has killed over 51,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which does not say how many of the dead were civilians or combatants. Israel says it has killed around 20,000 militants, without providing evidence.

Humanitarian needs remain pressing a month after Myanmar's deadly quake

By GRANT PECK Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — The humanitarian needs of hundreds of thousands of survivors remain desperately pressing a month after Myanmar's deadly earthquake, compounded by airstrikes that the military government is reportedly carrying out despite ceasefires meant to aid relief efforts during the country's civil war.

The 7.7 magnitude March 28 quake hit a wide swath of the country, causing significant damage to six regions and states, including the capital, Naypyitaw. Myanmar's Department of Meteorology and Hydrology

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reported Monday there had been 157 aftershocks after the big quake, ranging in magnitude from 2.8 to 7.5.

Quake death toll rises

State-run MRTV television reported on Sunday the quake's death toll had reached 3,769, with 5,106 people injured and 107 still missing. The earthquake left many areas without power, telephone or cell connections and damaged roads and bridges, in addition to tens of thousands of buildings.

In some quake-hit areas, bereaved relatives and friends of the disaster's victims on Monday offered donations to monks, a Buddhist tradition to transfer merit and blessings to the deceased.

Military airstrikes continue

A report released Monday by the Myanmar Witness project of the London-based Centre for Information Resilience said the group had documented 80 post-quake airstrikes by the military across multiple regions, including 65 after the army declared its unilateral ceasefire on April 2, following similar declarations by its battlefield foes.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since the army's 2021 takeover ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi, which led to nationwide peaceful protests that escalated into armed resistance, uniting pro-democracy activists and ethnic minority guerrilla groups that have long been fighting for autonomy.

"Myanmar's population was already on its knees after years of SAC aggression and armed conflict," said Myanmar Witness project director Robert Dolan, referring to the military's ruling State Administration Council. "The layers of suffering are hard to comprehend — we've seen regions wrecked by war and then the earthquake, only to sustain further damage from continued airstrikes."

The shadow National Unity Government, the main opposition group coordinating resistance to military rule, said Saturday in a statement that the post-quake bombings "have primarily targeted civilian areas — markets, residential zones, Buddhist monasteries, and Christian churches — resulting in the deaths of over 200 civilians, including at least 24 children, from March 28 to April 19, 2025."

The military government hasn't directly commented on the airstrikes, but when it extended its ceasefire on April 22, it reserved the right to respond as "necessary" to certain activities by the resistance forces.

Independent evaluation of most war claims by either side is impossible, due to the military's restrictions on reporting and the remoteness of where many incidents take place.

Agencies warn of dire living conditions

U.N. agencies and other humanitarian organizations, meanwhile, stress that living conditions remain dire for earthquake survivors. They note that even before the earthquake, the civil war had displaced more than 3 million people and left nearly 20 million in need.

"Critical needs remain for safe shelter, clean water and sanitation, physical and mental health care, comprehensive protection services and cash assistance," the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said Friday in its latest situation report.

Many who lost their homes are still in makeshift tents with little to protect them from pre-monsoon storms ahead of the months-long rainy season, which normally begins in May, humanitarian services say.

"The delay in removing earthquake debris is increasing the risk of vector-borne diseases, as stagnant water and poor sanitation create breeding grounds for disease-carrying insects," said the U.N. report. "Limited access to safe drinking water and clean sanitation poses a significant threat of waterborne diseases, compounded by the absence of rapid diagnostic tests, which delays the detection of potential outbreaks."

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said in a report released Monday that displaced people were living outdoors in temperatures of up to forty degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit), with an overwhelming fear of further aftershocks.

Reconstruction starts

In Naypyitaw, the damaged buildings of the labor and foreign ministries have been demolished for new construction, said a resident who asked not to be named for security reasons. Debris at markets and schools has been cleaned by municipal workers, while thousands of people, who lost their homes, were still living under tarpaulin sheets, he said.

He said that he was told that the departments and offices of several ministries will be temporarily relocated to Yangon, the country's former capital and largest city, until their offices can be rebuilt.

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A pregnant woman in Gaza under Israel's blockade fears for her baby

By SARAH EL DEEB, MOHAMMED JAHJOUH and LEE KEATH Associated Press

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP) — Nearly seven months pregnant, Yasmine Siam couldn't sleep, living in a crowded tent camp in Gaza and shaken often by Israeli bombardment. She couldn't find proper food and hadn't eaten meat for more than a month. Weak and losing weight, she saw doctors every day. There was little they could do.

One night this month, pain shot through her. She worried labor was starting but was too terrified of gunfire to leave her tent. Siam waited till daybreak to walk to the nearest mobile clinic. The medics told her to go to Nasser Hospital, miles away.

She had to take a donkey cart, jolted by every bump in the bombed-out roads. Exhausted, the 24-year-old found a wall to lean on for the hourslong wait for a doctor.

An ultrasound showed her baby was fine. Siam had a urinary tract infection and was underweight: 57 kilos (125 pounds), down 6 kilos (13 pounds) from weeks earlier. The doctor prescribed medicine and told her what every other doctor did: Eat better.

"Where do I get the food?" Siam said, out of breath as she spoke to The Associated Press on April 9 after returning to her tent outside the southern city of Khan Younis.

"I am not worried about me. I am worried about my son," she said. "It would be terrible if I lose him."

With Gaza decimated, miscarriages rise

Siam's troubled pregnancy has become the norm in Gaza. Israel's 18-month-old military campaign decimating the territory has made pregnancy and childbirth more dangerous, even fatal, for Palestinian women and their babies.

It has become worse since March 2, when Israel cut off all food, medicine and supplies for Gaza's more than 2 million people.

Meat, fresh fruits and vegetables are practically nonexistent. Clean water is difficult to find. Pregnant women are among the hundreds of thousands who trudge for miles to find new shelters after repeated Israeli evacuation orders. Many live in tents or overcrowded schools amid sewage and garbage.

Up to 20% of Gaza's estimated 55,000 pregnant women are malnourished, and half face high-risk pregnancies, according to the United Nations Population Fund, or UNFPA. In February and March, at least 20% of newborns were born prematurely or suffering from complications or malnutrition.

With the population displaced and under bombardment, comprehensive miscarriage and stillbirth figures are impossible to obtain. Records at Khan Younis' Nasser Hospital show miscarriages in January and February were double the same period in 2023.

Dr. Yasmine Shnina, a Doctors Without Borders supervisor of midwives at Nasser Hospital, documented 40 miscarriages a week in recent weeks. She has recorded five women a month dying in childbirth, compared with around two a year before the war.

"We don't need to wait for future impact. The risks are emerging now," she said.

A love story in the tents

For Siam and her family, her pregnancy — after a whirlwind, wartime marriage — was a rare joy.

Driven from Gaza City, they had moved three times before settling in the tent city sprawling across the barren coastal region of Muwasi.

Late last summer, they shared a meal with neighbors. A young man from the tent across the way was smitten.

The next day, Hossam Siam asked for Yasmine's hand in marriage.

She refused initially. "I didn't expect marriage in war," she said. "I wasn't ready to meet someone."

Hossam didn't give up. He took her for a walk by the sea. They told each other about their lives. "I accepted," she said.

On Sept. 15, the groom's family decorated their tent. Her best friends from Gaza City, dispersed around the territory, watched the wedding online

Within a month, Yasmine Siam was pregnant.

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Her family cherished the coming baby. Her mother had grandsons from her two sons but longed for a child from her daughters. Siam's older sister had been trying for 15 years to conceive. Her mother and sister — now back in Gaza City — sent baby essentials.

From the start, Siam struggled to get proper nutrition, relying on canned food.

After a ceasefire began in January, she and Hossam moved to Rafah. On Feb. 28, she had a rare treat: a chicken, shared with her in-laws. It was her last time eating meat.

A week later, Hossam walked for miles searching for chicken. He returned empty-handed.

'Even the basics are impossible'

Israel has leveled much of Gaza with its air and ground campaign, vowing to destroy Hamas after its Oct. 7, 2023, attack on southern Israel. It has killed over 51,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, whose count does not distinguish between civilians and combatants.

In the Oct. 7 attack, militants killed about 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted 251. They still hold 59 hostages after most were released in ceasefire deals.

In Gaza's ruins, being pregnant is a formidable struggle.

It's not just about quantity of food, said Rosalie Bollen, of UNICEF, "it's also about nutritional diversity, the fact that they have been living in very dire, unsanitary conditions, sleeping on the ground, sleeping in the cold and just being stuck in this permanent state of very toxic stress."

Nine of the 14 hospitals providing maternal health services before the war still function, though only partially, according to UNFPA.

Because many medical facilities are dislocated by Israeli military operations or must prioritize critical patients, women often can't get screenings that catch problems early in pregnancy, said Katy Brown, of Doctors Without Borders-Spain.

That leads to complications. A quarter of the nearly 130 births a day in February and March required surgical deliveries, UNFPA says.

"Even the basics are impossible," Brown said.

Under the blockade, over half the medicines for maternal and newborn care have run out, including ones that control bleeding and induce labor, the Health Ministry says. Diapers are scarce. Some women reuse them, turning them inside out, leading to severe skin infections, aid workers say.

Israel says the blockade aims to pressure Hamas into releasing the remaining hostages. Rights groups call it a "starvation tactic" endangering the entire population and a potential war crime.

At Nasser Hospital's maternity ward, Dr. Ahmad al-Farra witnessed things go from bad to worse.

Israeli forces raided the hospital in early 2024, claiming it housed Hamas fighters. Incubators in a warehouse were wrecked. The maternity ward was rebuilt into Gaza's largest and best equipped for emergencies.

Since Israel broke the two-month ceasefire on March 18, the hospital has been flooded with wounded.

Up to 15 premature babies at a time need respirators, but the hospital has only two CPAP machines to keep preemies breathing. Some are put on adult respirators, often leading to death, al-Farra said.

Twenty CPAP machines languish outside Gaza, unable to enter because of the blockade, along with 54 ultrasounds, nine incubators and midwifery kits, according to the U.N.

A lack of cleaning supplies makes hygiene nearly impossible. After giving birth, women and newborns weakened by hunger frequently suffer infections causing long-term complications, or even death, said al-Farra.

Yasmine Zakout was rushed to Nasser Hospital in early April after giving birth prematurely to twin girls. One girl died within days, and her sister died last week, both from sepsis.

Before the war, al-Farra said he would maybe see one child a year with necrotizing pneumonia, a severe infection that kills lung tissue.

"In this war, I treated 50 cases," al-Farra said. He removed parts of the lungs in nearly half those babies. At least four died.

Pregnant women are regularly among the wounded.

Khaled Alserr, a surgeon at Nasser Hospital, told of treating a four months pregnant woman after an April 16 strike. Shrapnel had torn through her uterus. The fetus couldn't be saved, he said, and pregnancy

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will be risky the rest of her life. Two of her children were among 10 children killed in the strike, he said.

The stress of the war

In her sixth month of pregnancy, Siam walked and rode a donkey cart for miles back to a tent in Muwasi after Israel ordered Rafah evacuated.

With food even scarcer, she turned to charity kitchens distributing meals of plain rice or pasta.

Weakened, she fell down a lot. Stress was mounting — the misery of tent life, the separation from her mother, the terror of airstrikes, the fruitless visits to clinics.

"I just wish a doctor would tell me, 'Your weight is good.' I'm always malnourished," she told the AP, almost pleading.

Hours after her scare on April 9, Siam was still in pain. She made her fifth visit to the mobile clinic in two days. They told her to go to her tent and rest.

She started spotting. Her mother-in-law held her up as they walked to a field hospital in the dead of night.

At 3 a.m., the doctors said there was nothing she could do but wait. Her mother arrived from Gaza City.

Eight hours later, the fetus was stillborn. Her mother told her not to look at the baby. Her mother-in-law said he was beautiful.

Her husband took their boy to a grave.

Days later, she told the AP she breaks down when she sees photos of herself pregnant. She can't bear to see anyone and refuses her husband's suggestions to take walks by the sea, where they sealed their marriage.

She wishes she could turn back time, even for just a week.

"I would take him into my heart, hide him and hold on to him."

She plans to try for another baby.

Israeli strikes on Gaza kill at least 27 Palestinians

By WAFAA SHURAF and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip overnight into Monday killed at least 27 Palestinians, according to local health officials. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military.

Israel has carried out daily strikes on Gaza since ending its ceasefire with Hamas last month. It has cut off the territory's 2 million Palestinians from all imports, including food and medicine, since the beginning of March in what it says is an attempt to pressure the militant group to release hostages.

The daily bombardment and widespread hunger is taking a heavy toll on Gaza's most vulnerable residents, including pregnant women and children. The United Nations' highest court began holding hearings on Monday into Israel's obligation to facilitate humanitarian aid to the territories it occupies.

Israel says the International Court of Justice is biased against it. It says enough aid entered during the ceasefire to sustain the population and accuses Hamas of siphoning it off.

Humanitarian workers say supplies are running desperately low, with most people eating one meal or less a day. They say the U.N. closely monitors aid distribution and deny any significant diversion.

Strikes hit three homes

An airstrike hit a home in Beit Lahiya, killing 10 people, including a Palestinian prisoner, Abdel-Fattah Abu Mahadi, who had been released as part of the ceasefire. His wife, two of their children and a grandchild were also killed, according to the Indonesian Hospital, which received the bodies.

Another strike hit a home in Gaza City, killing seven people, including two women, according to the Gaza Health Ministry's emergency service. Two other people were wounded.

Late Sunday, a strike hit a home in the southern city of Khan Younis, killing at least 10 people, including five siblings as young as 4 years old, according to the Health Ministry. Two other children were killed along with their parents, according to Nasser Hospital, which received the bodies.

Israel says it makes every effort to avoid harming civilians and blames Hamas for their deaths because the militants operate in densely populated areas. Palestinians say nowhere in blockaded Gaza is safe.

No end in sight to the 18-month-old war

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The war began when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting 251. Hamas is still holding 59 hostages, 24 of whom are believed to be alive, after most of the rest were released in ceasefire agreements or other deals.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 52,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, according to the Health Ministry, which does not say how many of the dead were fighters or civilians. Israel's bombardment and ground operations have destroyed vast areas of Gaza and left most of its population homeless.

The Health Ministry says 2,151 people, including 732 children, have been killed since Israel shattered the truce on March 18.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to continue the offensive until all the hostages are returned and Hamas is either destroyed or agrees to disarm and leave the territory. He says Israel will then implement U.S. President Donald Trump's proposal to resettle much of Gaza's population in other countries through what the Israeli leader refers to as "voluntary emigration."

Palestinians say the plan would amount to forcible expulsion from their homeland after Israel's offensive left much of Gaza uninhabitable. Human rights experts say it would likely violate international law.

Hamas has said it will only release the remaining hostages in return for more Palestinian prisoners, a lasting ceasefire and a full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, as called for in the ceasefire that Israel ended.

China shrugs off threat of US tariffs to economy, says it has tools to protect jobs

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

China's leaders are downplaying the potential impact from U.S. President Donald Trump's trade war, saying they have the capacity to protect jobs and limit damage from higher tariffs on Chinese exports.

The briefing Monday by several senior officials of different government ministries appeared aimed at shoring up confidence with promises of support for companies and the unemployed, easier lending conditions and other policies to counter the impact of combined tariffs of up to 145% on U.S. imports from China.

It followed a meeting of China's powerful Politburo last week that analysts said had focused on ways to counter keep growth on track despite slowing exports.

"Chinese policymakers are on heightened standby mode," Louise Loo, lead economist at Oxford Economics said in a report. She noted that the policies were similar to earlier pronouncements.

The status of exchanges, if any, between the White House and Chinese leader Xi Jinping remains unclear.

Trump said last week that he's actively negotiating with the Chinese government on tariffs — while U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said talks have yet to start.

Beijing has denied that any such talks were underway, and China has retaliated against Trump's tariffs by putting 125% import duties on products from the U.S., among other measures.

The officials who spoke Monday reiterated China's rejection of what leaders there call bullying.

"They make up bargaining chips out of thin air, bully and go back on their words, which makes everyone see one thing more and more clearly, that is the so-called 'reciprocal tariffs' severely go against historical trends and economic laws, impact international trade rules and order and seriously impair the legitimate rights and interests of countries," said Zhao Chenxin, deputy director of the National Development and Reform Commission, the country's main economic planning agency.

The trade war between the world's two largest economies has the potential to bring on a recession in the U.S., with repercussions across the globe. China has been struggling to recharge its own growth after the job losses and other shocks of the pandemic.

Economists at the International Monetary Fund and some investment houses have downgraded their estimates for growth in China this year, to about 4%. Millions of export oriented jobs are at stake.

Still, Chinese officials say they believe the economy has the momentum to expand at the target rate of about 5% this year, in line with growth in 2024.

Yu Jiadong, a vice minister of Human Resources and Social Security, told reporters in Beijing that a full and objective analysis shows China's "employment policy toolbox is sufficient."

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The government will step up support for companies to help them keep workers and also encourage entrepreneurship among the unemployed, Yu said.

China also can manage without energy imports from the United States, said Zhao, the NDRC deputy director.

"Enterprises reducing or even stopping energy imports from the United States will have no impact on our country's energy supply," he said.

China has been gradually cutting its imports of U.S. grains and other farm products, and Zhao said that stopping such purchases would not compromise the food supply. Most grain purchases were for livestock feed and the international market has adequate stocks to make up for any reduction in imports of corn, sorghum, soy and oil from American suppliers, he said.

A deputy governor of the central bank, Zou Lan, said the People's Bank of China will cut interest rates and relax reserve requirements as needed to encourage lending.

"Incremental policies will be introduced in a timely manner to help stabilize employment, enterprises, markets, and expectations," Zou said.

China can expand domestic demand through various policies including rebates for swapping old vehicles, appliances and factory equipment for new ones, Zhao said, forecasting that demand for equipment upgrades will exceed 5 trillion yuan (\$34.8 billion) a year.

In the longer term, China also is promoting the shift of more people to cities from the countryside, Zhao said.

"Every 1 percentage point increase in the urbanization rate can stimulate trillions of investment demand," he said. "Our country has very real potential and space to expand domestic demand."

Putin thanks North Korea for troop deployment and promises not to forget their sacrifices

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin thanked North Korea Monday for fighting alongside his troops against Ukrainian forces and promised not to forget their sacrifices, hours after North Korea confirmed its deployment for the first time.

The back-to-back Russian and North Korean statements — which illustrate their expanding military partnerships — came two days after Russia said its troops have fully reclaimed the Kursk region that Ukrainian forces seized in a surprise incursion last year.

Ukrainian officials have denied the claim, insisting that the operation in certain areas of Kursk is continuing.

In a statement posted on the website of the Kremlin, Putin praised North Korean soldiers who he said "shoulder to shoulder with Russian fighters, defended our Motherland as their own."

"The Russian people will never forget the heroism of the DPRK special forces. We will always honor the heroes who gave their lives for Russia, for our common freedom, fighting side by side with their Russian brothers in arms," Putin said, using the acronym for the North's official name.

North Korea's first official confirmation of its troops involvement

Earlier Monday, North Korea's Central Military Commission announced that leader Kim Jong Un had decided to send troops to Russia to "annihilate and wipe out the Ukrainian neo-Nazi occupiers and liberate the Kursk area in cooperation with the Russian armed forces." The commission said North Korean troops eventually made "an important contribution" to Russia retrieving the border territory.

It was North Korea's first official confirmation of its troops' deployment to Russia though it has repeatedly expressed its unwavering support of Russia's fighting against Ukraine. U.S., South Korean and Ukraine intelligence officials have said North Korea dispatched 10,000-12,000 troops to Russia last fall in its first participation in a major armed conflict since the 1950-53 Korean War.

Both Putin and Kim said the North Korean deployment was made under a mutual defense treaty that they had signed in June 2024. The treaty — considered the two countries' biggest defense agreement

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since the end of the Cold War — requires both nations to use all available means to provide immediate military assistance if either is attacked.

North Korea and Russia, locked in separate disputes with the U.S. and its allies, have moved significantly closer to each other in recent years.

Beside its dispatch of troops, North Korea has been supplying a vast amount of conventional weapons to Russia. South Korea and the U.S. worry that Russia could reward North Korea by transferring high-tech weapons technologies that can enhance its nuclear weapons program as well as other military and economic assistance.

Pyongyang wants military technologies from Russia

Kim's underscoring of North Korea's role in the retaking of the Kursk region implies his urgent wish to get what he wants from Russia, namely its sensitive military technologies and a solid security commitment to North Korea, said Moon Seong Mook, an analyst for the Seoul-based Korea Research Institute for National Strategy.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Monday that Russia can provide unspecified military assistance to North Korea if necessary, in accordance with the defense treaty, according to Russian state media agencies.

While Russia's claimed recapture of the Kursk region could deprive North Korea of legitimate grounds to maintain its troops in Russia, Moon said that North Korea won't likely pull out its troops from Russia anytime soon as the war is still going on. Moon said that North Korea could provide support to Russian forces in other regions in a different and covert manner.

Kim Yeol Soo, an expert at South Korea's Korea Institute for Military Affairs, said North Korea also likely acknowledged its troops' dispatch because it couldn't hide it any longer and so determined to use it as a propaganda tool to boost internal unity. He said the North Korean announcement could also signal a prelude to Kim visiting Russia to attend ceremonies marking the May 9 Victory Day.

Neither North Korea nor Russia said how many North Korean soldiers eventually came to Russia or how many casualties they suffered. But in March, South Korea's military assessed that around 4,000 North Korean soldiers had been killed or wounded in the Russia-Ukraine war fronts. The South Korean military also said at the time that North Korea sent about 3,000 additional troops to Russia earlier this year.

Kim Jong Un said that a monument will soon be erected in Pyongyang to mark North Korea's battle feats and that flowers will be laid before the tombstones of the fallen soldiers. Kim said the government must take steps to preferentially treat and take care of the families of the soldiers who took part in the war.

North Korean soldiers are highly disciplined and well trained, but observers say they've become easy targets for drone and artillery attacks on Russian-Ukraine battlefields due to their lack of combat experience and unfamiliarity with the terrain. Still, Ukrainian military and intelligence officials have assessed that the North Koreans gained crucial battlefield experience and have been key to Russia's strategy of overwhelming Ukraine by throwing large numbers of soldiers into the battle for Kursk.

South Korea calls for North's immediate withdrawal from Russia

South Korea's Unification Ministry on Monday urged North Korea to withdraw its troops from Russia immediately, saying the North's support of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine poses a grave provocation to international security. Spokesperson Koo Byoungsam also called the North's troops' deployment "an act against humanity" that has sacrificed young North Korean soldiers for their government.

In a Kremlin meeting Saturday, Valery Gerasimov, chief of the general staff for Russia's armed forces, informed Putin of Russia's regaining of the Kursk region. Gerasimov was first to confirm that North Korean soldiers fought alongside Russia to repel Ukrainian troops from the Kursk region and "demonstrated high professionalism, showed fortitude, courage and heroism in battle."

If confirmed, Russia's victory in Kursk would deprive Ukraine of key leverage in U.S.-brokered efforts to negotiate an end to the more than 3-year-old war by exchanging its gains for some Russia-occupied land in Ukraine.

President Donald Trump said Saturday he doubts Putin wants to end the war, expressing new skepticism a peace deal can be reached soon. Only a day earlier, Trump had said Ukraine and Russia were "very close to a deal."

The Vatican closes the Sistine Chapel to the public and prepares for a papal conclave

By VANESSA GERA Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Exit tourists. Enter cardinals.

The Vatican has closed the Sistine Chapel, where cardinals will gather for the conclave to elect the next pope after the death of Pope Francis on April 21 at age 88.

Francis was buried Saturday after a funeral in St. Peter's Square that gathered world leaders and hundreds of thousands of others, and a nine-day period of mourning is continuing before the conclave can start.

But the church is at the same time turning its attention to the next steps.

Key is preparing the Sistine Chapel for the red-robed cardinals who will gather at the Vatican in the heart of Rome to choose the next pope in an ancient process fictionalized in the 2024 film "Conclave."

One key task: installing the chimney where ballots will be burned after votes.

Those visitors who managed to enter on Sunday considered themselves lucky, since there is no telling how long the conclave will last, and how long the gem of the Vatican Museums will remain off-limits.

"I think we felt very lucky to be able to be the last group of visitors to come in today," said Sumon Khan, a tourist from the United States. "You know, our trip would not have been complete without seeing this beautiful place."

According to a schedule determined by church law, the conclave can only begin after the nine-day mourning period. It is expected to start between May 5 and May 10.

When it does, the cardinals will enter solemnly to participate in a secretive process said to be guided by the holy spirit that will result in the selection of the next leader of the 1.4 billion-strong Catholic church. The choice will determine whether the next pontiff will continue Francis' reforms, with his focus on the poor and marginalized and the environment, or whether they will choose a pontiff closer in style to conservative predecessors like Benedict XVI focused on doctrine.

For inspiration, the cardinals will also have the great beauty of the frescoes painted by Michelangelo and other renowned Renaissance artists. The most recognizable is Michelangelo's Creation of Adam, showing God's outstretched hand imparting the divine spark of life to the first man.

The chapel is named after Pope Sixtus IV, an art patron who oversaw the construction of the main papal chapel in the 15th century. But it was a later pontiff, Pope Julius II, who commissioned the works by Michelangelo, who painted the ceiling depicting scenes from Genesis from 1508 and 1512 and later returned to paint the Last Judgement on one of the walls.

When the conclave opens, cardinals will chant the Litany of Saints, the solemn, mystical Gregorian chant imploring the intercession of the saints, as they file into the chapel and take an oath of secrecy. The chapel's thick double doors will close and the master of liturgy will utter the Latin words "Extra omnes," meaning "everyone out."

The secretive process is part of a tradition aimed at preserving the vote from external interference.

The world will then wait for a sign that a successor to Francis has been chosen. Black smoke coming from the chimney in the Sistine Chapel will indicate that they haven't achieved the two-thirds majority for a new pope.

But when a pope is finally chosen, white smoke will rise and bells will toll.

Houthi rebels say alleged US airstrike that hit Yemen prison holding African migrants kills 68

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Yemen's Houthi rebels on Monday alleged a U.S. airstrike hit a prison holding African migrants, killing at least 68 people and wounding 47 others. The U.S. military had no immediate comment.

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The strike in Yemen's Saada governorate, a stronghold for the Houthis, is the latest incident in the country's decadelong war to kill African migrants from Ethiopia and other nations who risk crossing the nation for a chance to work in neighboring Saudi Arabia.

It also likely will renew questions from activists about the American campaign, known as "Operation Rough Rider," which has been targeting the rebels as the Trump administration negotiates with their main benefactor, Iran, over Tehran's rapidly advancing nuclear program.

The U.S. military's Central Command, in a statement early Monday before news of the alleged strike broke, sought to defend its policy of offering no specific details of its extensive airstrike campaign. The strikes have drawn controversy in America over Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth's use of the unclassified Signal messaging app to post sensitive details about the attacks.

"To preserve operational security, we have intentionally limited disclosing details of our ongoing or future operations," Central Command said. "We are very deliberate in our operational approach, but will not reveal specifics about what we've done or what we will do."

It did not immediately respond to questions from The Associated Press about the alleged strike in Saada.

Graphic footage shows aftermath of explosion

Graphic footage aired by the Houthis' al-Masirah satellite news channel showed what appeared to be dead bodies and others wounded at the site. The Houthi-run Interior Ministry said some 115 migrants had been detained at the site.

The rebels' Civil Defense organization said at least 68 people had been killed and 47 others wounded in the attack.

Footage from the site analyzed by the AP suggested some kind of explosion took place there, with its cement walls seemingly peppered by debris fragments and the wounds suffered by those there.

A woman's voice, soft in the footage, can be heard repeating the start of a prayer in Arabic: "In the name of God." An occasional gunshot rang out as medics sought to help those wounded.

African migrants caught in middle of Yemen's war

Ethiopians and other African migrants for years have landed in Yemen, braving the war-torn nation to try and reach Saudi Arabia for work. The Houthi rebels allegedly make tens of thousands of dollars a week smuggling migrants over the border.

Migrants from Ethiopia have found themselves detained, abused and even killed in Saudi Arabia and Yemen during the war. An Oct. 3, 2022, letter to the kingdom from the U.N. said its investigators "received concerning allegations of cross-border artillery shelling and small arms fire allegedly by Saudi security forces, causing the deaths of up to 430 and injuring 650 migrants."

Saudi Arabia has denied killing migrants.

Monday's alleged strike recalled a similar strike by a Saudi-led coalition battling the Houthis back in 2022 on the same compound, which caused a collapse killing 66 detainees and wounding 113 others, a United Nations report later said. The Houthis shot dead 16 detainees who fled after the strike and wounded another 50, the U.N. said. The Saudi-led coalition sought to justify the strike by saying the Houthis built and launched drones there, but the U.N. said it was known to be a detention facility.

"The coalition should have avoided any attack on that facility," the U.N. report added.

That 2022 attack was one of the deadliest single attacks in the yearslong war between the coalition and the Houthi rebels and came after the Houthis struck inside the UAE twice with missiles and drones, killing three in a strike near Abu Dhabi's international airport.

US military says over 800 strikes conducted in campaign so far

Meanwhile, U.S. airstrikes overnight targeting Yemen's capital killed at least eight people, the Houthis said. The American military acknowledged carrying out over 800 individual strikes in their monthlong campaign.

The overnight statement from Central Command also said "Operation Rough Rider" had "killed hundreds of Houthi fighters and numerous Houthi leaders," including those associated with its missile and drone program. It did not identify any of those officials.

"Iran undoubtedly continues to provide support to the Houthis," the statement said. "The Houthis can only continue to attack our forces with the backing of the Iranian regime."

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"We will continue to ratchet up the pressure until the objective is met, which remains the restoration of freedom of navigation and American deterrence in the region," it added.

The U.S. is targeting the Houthis because of the group's attacks on shipping in the Red Sea, a crucial global trade route, and on Israel. The Houthis are also the last militant group in Iran's self-described "Axis of Resistance" that is capable of regularly attacking Israel.

US discusses deadly port strike

The U.S. is conducting strikes on Yemen from its two aircraft carriers in the region — the USS Harry S. Truman in the Red Sea and the USS Carl Vinson in the Arabian Sea.

On April 18, an American strike on the Ras Isa fuel port killed at least 74 people and wounded 171 others in the deadliest-known attack of the American campaign. Central Command on Monday offered an explanation for why it hit the port.

"U.S. strikes destroyed the ability of Ras Isa Port to accept fuel, which will begin to impact Houthi ability to not only conduct operations, but also to generate millions of dollars in revenue for their terror activities," it said.

Meanwhile, the Houthis have increasingly sought to control the flow of information from the territory they hold to the outside world. It issued a notice Sunday that all those holding Starlink satellite internet receivers should "quickly hand over" the devices to authorities.

"A field campaign will be implemented in coordination with the security authorities to arrest anyone who sells, trades, uses, operates, installs or possesses these prohibited terminals," the Houthis warned.

Starlink terminals have been crucial for Ukraine in fighting Russia's full-scale invasion and receivers also have been smuggled into Iran amid unrest there.

A new generation of Maasai warriors is born in Kenya

By NINA SCHWENDEMANN and BRIAN INGANGA Associated Press

OLAIMUTIAI, Kenya (AP) — In the bracing morning cold in the forest highlands overlooking Kenya's Maasailand, 900 teenage boys clad in traditional Maasai shukhas or blankets line up for a cup of hot milk that will sustain them through the day.

In spite of the cold, they have been sleeping on the forest floor. They have gone hungry. And they haven't bathed in a month.

It's all part of learning to be a Maasai warrior.

Handpicked for training

They have traveled to Olaimutiai in Kenya's Narok county from all over the Maasai ancestral lands in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania. All 900 were handpicked to take part in a Maasai warrior training camp, which only happens every 10 to 15 years. It teaches Maasai cultural values, leadership skills — and how to be tough.

Isaac Mpusia, a 16-year-old high schooler, was visited at home last March by a group of boys who asked for and were offered hospitality, and stayed overnight. The next day, they told him to leave with them.

"They didn't tell me (where we were going) and I was worried at first," he says. But he understood the honor of having been chosen, and went.

"When you come here, you learn a lot of things that were done by our parents," Mpusia says. "You have to have discipline."

Changing times

Traditionally, transitioning from child to warrior as a Maasai involved taking part in a one-year warrior camp. Maasai youths would be secluded and learn survival skills, bushcraft — and, if the opportunity arose, how to kill a lion.

All that has changed. Although "Enkipaata" — the official rite of passage that includes warrior training — has been declared a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding, it has been modernized.

The boys now wield long sticks, not blades. No lions are killed. And warrior camp has been condensed

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down to one month, timed to coincide with school holidays.

Education takes precedence

Joyce Naingisa's son is taking part in this Enkipaata, and although she is just 34 years old, this ritual has already changed considerably in her lifetime.

"My husband dropped out of school for a whole year so that he could attend," she says. "But now, they are the leaders, and they know the importance of education. So these boys will undergo this rite of passage, but we still make sure that they go to school."

The role of women

Naingisa is a county minister in Narok North County and took a month off work to be here. One of her traditional responsibilities as a Maasai wife and mother is to help build the homes that make up this temporary settlement.

"We just came to a plain field here, and now you can see a full house. That is the role of women: to build the shelter," she explains.

Having all 900 recruits come with their families would be logistically impossible, so Naingisa feels responsible for all of them.

"The children are brought here from across Kenya and Tanzania, so we are their mothers. They can enter any house. They can all eat. There is no difference between my son, whose mother is here, and the one whose mother is not here."

Sharing and brotherhood

On the day of their graduation, a ceremonial bull is slaughtered and blessed by the elders, before being shared by everyone.

Stanley Naingisa — Joyce's husband and chief of his own age set — explains the importance of the meat-sharing ceremony.

"It teaches them sharing," he says. "It teaches them brotherhood. It teaches them being bound together as a community and as a people. For the Maasai, when you say that somebody is of your age set, these are people that have grown with you, and that you are going to grow old with."

Shrinking lands

This new generation of Maasai leaders faces unique challenges. Kenya's 1.2 million Maasai people are profoundly affected both by climate change and the shrinking of the grazing land available to them, both because of urbanization and agricultural expansion.

"These children will be change-makers," says Mosinte Nkoitiko, a 46-year-old cultural chief who traveled here from Tanzania. "That's the message that we want to send to them. They are the ones facing these challenges, and we want them to know that they are not alone."

Seedlings planted for the new generation

When this temporary settlement was built for the warrior camp, they also planted 150 seeds and 50 seedlings: trees that they hope will grow with their children.

"The trees have been blessed by their fathers and grandfathers, so that they can now have children," says Joyce Naingisa. "They are starting a new generation."

At the graduation ceremony, this new generation was officially given the name "Iltaretu." It will include the thousands of boys of the same age who weren't able to come here in person, but were represented by the 900 boys who were.

"When we meet in future, we shall know each other," says Isaac Mpusia. "Because we come from the same age group."

Vancouver ramming attack suspect charged with murder as hundreds attend vigils for victims

By JIM MORRIS, CLAIRE RUSH and ROB GILLIES Associated Press

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — A 30-year-old man was charged with multiple counts of murder

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on allegations he killed 11 people when he rammed a crowd of people at a Filipino heritage festival in Vancouver, as hundreds attended vigils across the city for the victims and the Canadian prime minister visited the site on the eve of a federal election.

Kai-Ji Adam Lo, 30, was charged with eight counts of second degree murder in a video appearance before a judge on Sunday, hours after he was arrested at the scene, said Damienne Darby, spokeswoman for British Columbia prosecutors. Lo has not yet entered a plea.

Investigators ruled out terrorism as a motive and said more charges are possible. They said Lo had a history of mental health issues.

An attorney for Lo was not listed in online court documents and The Associated Press wasn't immediately able to reach an attorney representing him.

Those killed were between the ages of 5 and 65, officials said. About two dozen people were injured, some critically, when the black Audi SUV sped down a closed street just after 8 p.m. Saturday and struck people attending the Lapu Lapu Day festival. Authorities had not released victims' names by Sunday evening.

Nathaly Nairn and her 15-year-old daughter carried flowers to one of the vigils. They had attended the festival on Saturday, and Nairn recounted seeing the damaged SUV and bodies on the ground.

"Something really dark happened last night," Nairn said, as she and her daughter wiped away tears.

Emily Daniels also brought a bouquet. "It's sad. Really sad," she said. "I can't believe something like this could happen so close to home."

Police Interim Chief Steve Rai called it "the darkest day in Vancouver's history." There was no indication of a motive, but Rai said the suspect has "a significant history of interactions with police and health care professionals related to mental health."

Video of the aftermath showed the dead and injured along a narrow street in South Vancouver lined by food trucks. The front of the Audi SUV was smashed in.

Kris Pangilinan, who brought his pop-up clothing and lifestyle booth to the festival, saw the vehicle enter slowly past a barricade before the driver accelerated in an area packed with people after a concert. He said hearing the sounds of people screaming and bodies hitting the vehicle will never leave his mind.

"He slammed on the gas, barreled through the crowd," Pangilinan said. "It looked like a bowling ball hitting bowling pins and all the pins are flying into the air."

Suspect detained by bystanders before the police arrived

Rai said the suspect was arrested after initially being apprehended by bystanders.

Video circulating on social media showed a young man in a black hoodie with his back against a chain-link fence, alongside a security guard and surrounded by bystanders screaming and swearing at him.

"I'm sorry," the man said, holding his hand to his head. Rai declined to comment on the video.

Prime Minister Mark Carney canceled his first campaign event and two major rallies on the final day of the election campaign before Monday's vote.

"Last night families lost a sister, a brother, a mother, father, son or a daughter. Those families are living every family's nightmare," Carney said. "And to them and to the many others who were injured, to the Filipino Canadian community, and to everyone in Vancouver, I would like to offer my deepest condolences."

Carney joined British Columbia Premier David Eby and community leaders Sunday evening in Vancouver.

"In this incredibly difficult moment, we will comfort the grieving, care for one another, and united in common purpose," Carney posted in French and English on X along with a photo of him lighting a candle at a makeshift memorial near the scene of the attack.

The tragedy was reminiscent of an attack in 2018, when a man used a van to kill 10 pedestrians in Toronto.

Witnesses describe how they leaped out of the way

Carayn Nulada said that she pulled her granddaughter and grandson off the street and used her body to shield them from the SUV. She said that her daughter suffered a narrow escape.

"The car hit her arm and she fell down, but she got up, looking for us, because she is scared," said Nulada, who described children screaming, and pale-faced victims lying on the ground or wedged under vehicles.

"I saw people running and my daughter was shaking," Nulada said.

Nulada was in Vancouver General Hospital's emergency room Sunday morning, trying to find news about

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her brother, who was run down in the attack and suffered multiple broken bones.

Doctors identified him by presenting the family with his wedding ring in a pill bottle and said that he was stable, but would be facing surgery.

James Cruzat, a Vancouver business owner, was at the celebration and heard a car rev its engine and then "a loud noise, like a loud bang" that he initially thought might be a gunshot.

"We saw people on the road crying, others were like running, shouting, or even screaming, asking for help. So we tried to go there just to check what was really actually happening until we found some bodies on the ground. Others were lifeless, others like, you know, injured," Cruzat said.

Vincent Reynon, 17, was leaving the festival when he saw police rushing in. People were crying and he saw scattered bodies.

"It was like something straight out of a horror movie or a nightmare," he said.

Adonis Quita said when he saw the SUV ramming through the crowd, his first reaction was to drag his 9-year-old son out of the area. The boy kept saying "I'm scared, I'm scared," Quita recalled. Later they prayed together.

His son had just relocated to Vancouver from the Philippines with his mother to reunite with Quita, who has lived here since 2024. Quita said he worries the child will struggle to adjust to life in Canada after witnessing the horrific event.

Vancouver Mayor Kenneth Sim said the city had "suffered its darkest day."

"I know many of us are fearful and feel uneasy," said the mayor. "I know it's hard to feel this way right now, but Vancouver is still a safe city."

Vancouver's large Filipino population was honoring a national hero

Vancouver had more than 38,600 residents of Filipino heritage in 2021, representing 5.9% of the city's total population, according to Statistics Canada, the agency that conducts the national census.

Lapu Lapu Day celebrates Datu Lapu-Lapu, an Indigenous chieftain who stood up to Spanish explorers who came to the Philippines in the 16th century. The organizers of the Vancouver event, which was in its second year, said he "represents the soul of native resistance, a powerful force that helped shape the Filipino identity in the face of colonization."

Eby said the province won't let the tragedy define the celebration. He urged people to channel their rage into helping those affected.

"I don't think there is a British Columbian that hasn't been touched in some way by the Filipino community," he said. "You can't go to a place that delivers and not meet a member of that community in the long-term care home or hospitals, childcare or schools. This is a community that gives and gives and yesterday was a celebration of their culture."

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. issued a statement expressing sympathy with the victims and their families.

"The Philippine Consulate General in Vancouver is working with Canadian authorities to ensure that the incident will be thoroughly investigated, and that the victims and their families are supported and consoled," he said.

The Philippine government is coordinating with local police to gather more details about victims and the investigation, while the Vancouver consulate has established a hotline for families, presidential palace press officer Claire Castro told reporters in Manila on Monday.

Mob chased Brooklyn woman after mistaking her for protester at speech by Israeli security minister

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A Brooklyn woman said she feared for her life as she was chased, kicked, spit at and pelted with objects by a mob of Orthodox Jewish men who mistook her as a participant in a protest against Israel's far-right security minister.

The assault, recorded by a bystander, unfolded Thursday near the global headquarters of the Chabad-

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Lubavitch movement in Crown Heights, where an appearance by Itamar Ben-Gvir set off clashes between pro-Palestinian activists and members of the neighborhood's large Orthodox Jewish community.

The woman, a neighborhood resident in her 30s, told The Associated Press she learned of the protest after hearing police helicopters over her apartment. She walked over to investigate around 10:30 p.m. but by then the protest had mostly disbursed. Not wanting to be filmed, she covered her face with a scarf.

"As soon as I pulled up my scarf, a group of 100 men came over immediately and encircled me," said the woman, who spoke to the AP on the condition of anonymity because she feared for her safety.

'I had nowhere to go'

"They were shouting at me, threatening to rape me, chanting 'death to Arabs.' I thought the police would protect me from the mob, but they did nothing to intervene," she said.

As the chants grew in intensity, a lone police officer tried to escort her to safety. They were followed for blocks by hundreds of men and boys jeering in Hebrew and English.

Video shows two of the men kicking her in the back, another hurling a traffic cone into her head and a fourth pushing a trash can into her.

"This is America," one of the men can be heard saying. "We got Israel. We got an Army now."

At one point, she and the police officer were nearly cornered against a building, the video shows.

"I felt sheer terror," the woman recalled. "I realized at that point that I couldn't lead this mob of men to my home. I had nowhere to go. I didn't know what to do. I was just terrified."

After several blocks, the officer hustled the woman into a police vehicle, prompting one man to yell, "Get her!" The crowd erupted in cheers as she was driven away.

The woman, a lifelong New Yorker, said she was left with bruises and mentally shaken by the episode, which she said police should investigate as an act of hate.

"I'm afraid to move around the neighborhood where I've lived for a decade," she told the AP. "It doesn't seem like anyone in any position of power really cares."

Police investigating

A police spokesperson said one person was arrested and five others were issued summons following the demonstration, but did not say whether anyone involved in assaulting the woman was charged.

Mayor Eric Adams said Sunday that police were investigating "a series of incidents stemming from clashing protests on Thursday that began when a group of anti-Israel protesters surrounded the Chabad Lubavitch World Headquarters — a Jewish house of worship — in Brooklyn."

He said police had spoken to a different woman on the pro-Palestinian side of the protest who suffered injuries after she was harassed by counter-protesters. Photos shared online showed that woman with blood streaming down her face.

"Let me be clear: None of this is acceptable, in fact, it is despicable," Adams added. "New York City will always be a place where people can peacefully protest, but we will not tolerate violence, trespassing, menacing, or threatening."

The protest was one of several in recent days against Ben-Gvir, an ultranationalist settler leader who is embarking on his first U.S. state visit since joining Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet three years ago.

Previously convicted in Israel of racist incitement and support for a terrorist group, he has called on his supporters to confront Palestinians and assert "Jewish Power."

The protest against Ben-Gvir's Brooklyn appearance generated condemnations from some Jewish groups, who accused participants of targeting a religious site.

Chabad-Lubavitch denounces incident

The neighborhood around the Chabad headquarters also was the site of the 1991 Crown Heights riot, in which Black residents outraged by boy's death in a crash involving a rabbi's motorcade attacked Jews, homes and businesses for three days.

A Chabad-Lubavitch spokesman, Rabbi Motti Seligson, denounced both the anti-Ben-Gvir protesters and the mob that chased the woman.

"The violent provocateurs who called for the genocide of Jews in support of terrorists and terrorism — outside a synagogue, in a Jewish neighborhood, where some of the worst antisemitic violence in American history was perpetrated, and where many residents share deep bonds with the victims of Oct 7 — did so in order to intimidate, provoke, and instill fear," Seligson said.

"We condemn the crude language and violence of the small breakaway group of young people; such actions are entirely unacceptable and wholly antithetical to the Torah's values. The fact that a possibly uninvolved bystander got pulled into the melee further underscores the point," he said.

How people witnessed the 'darkest day in Vancouver' when a car slammed into a crowded festival

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM and CLAIRE RUSH Associated Press

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — The smells of crispy lumpia, caramelized plantains and other Filipino street foods beckoned attendees of a Vancouver festival as they flooded out of a concert on an unusually sunny spring day in the Canadian city.

As the sun set, lines for food trucks began to wrap around the block. A slow trickle of cars entered the closed street to replenish vendor supplies. Then, one driver hit the accelerator, killing 11 people and injuring dozens at the Lapu Lapu Day festival Saturday night. So far, none of the victims have been identified publicly.

Here is how people witnessed the tragedy.

Like a racecar revving its engine

Clothing vendor Kris Pangilinan recalled hearing what sounded "like an F1 car about to start a race," followed immediately by screams. He said he will never forget the sound of bodies hitting the hood of the black Audi SUV as it rammed into the crowd.

"All I can remember is seeing bodies flying up in the air higher than the food trucks themselves and landing on the ground and people yelling and screaming," Pangilinan said. "It looked like a bowling ball hitting bowling pins and all the pins are flying into the air."

Adonis Quita pulled his 9-year-old son out of the way as the SUV plowed into the line of families waiting for their food.

For the young boy, who had just relocated to Vancouver from the Philippines, the festival celebrating British Columbia's large Filipino population was his first taste of home away from home. But now, his father said the boy cannot close his eyes without seeing flashbacks of bloody bodies, some as young as age 5, hitting the pavement.

The 'darkest day in Vancouver's history'

A 30-year-old Vancouver man was arrested at the scene after initially being apprehended by bystanders. The British Columbia Prosecution Service charged Kai-Ji Adam Lo with eight counts of second degree murder on Sunday and said more charges were possible.

Investigators ruled out terrorism in what Interim Police Chief Steve Rai proclaimed "the darkest day in Vancouver's history." Vancouver Mayor Ken Sim said the suspect has a "significant history of mental health issues."

As Quita rushed his son away from the commotion, he said he was comforted to see festivalgoers circle the SUV and subdue the suspect. Video circulating on social media shows a man in a black hoodie with his back against a chain-link fence, surrounded by bystanders screaming and swearing at him.

"I'm sorry," the man responds, holding his hand to his head.

The victims range in age from 5 to 65, Rai said. Bodies covered in white tarps lined the row of food trucks as ambulances rushed injured people to the hospital.

"Those families are living every family's nightmare," Prime Minister Mark Carney said. The car ramming occurred two days before the country's federal election Monday.

Uncertainty for the injured

Carayn Nulada was in Vancouver General Hospital's emergency room early Sunday morning trying to find

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news about her brother, who was run down in the attack and suffered multiple broken bones. Doctors identified him by presenting the family with his wedding ring in a pill bottle. He was stable but needed surgeries.

Nulada used her body to shield her granddaughter and grandson from the SUV as it barreled by. Her daughter, meanwhile, was struck in the arm and fell down but was able to get up quickly.

Of the more than two dozen injured, some remain in critical condition and others have not yet been identified, Rai said late Sunday.

Emily Daniels, 41, came to lay a bouquet at a vigil in Vancouver Sunday evening that drew hundreds of people. She saw a man who was injured in the attack when she was visiting her uncle at the hospital Sunday morning. The man was being rolled into the intensive care unit and still had blood on his arms, she said.

A scene 'straight out of a horror movie'

Others who attended the festival are struggling to process the trauma.

Mohamad Sariman had been helping at his wife's food truck when he heard a loud boom that he initially thought was an explosion. He looked out the truck's window and saw a disfigured body on the ground. When he and his wife opened the door, they saw another body.

"It was really, really traumatic," Sariman said.

Vincent Reynon, 17, was leaving the festival with his girlfriend after 8 p.m. when he saw fire trucks and police officers rushing to where the festival was being held. They decided to circle back to see what was going on. He said they saw people crying as they approached, then bodies on the ground when they arrived at the scene.

"It was horrible to see," Reynon said. "It was like something straight out of a horror movie or a nightmare."

Lorena Sales, 17, similarly ran back to the festival from the bus stop when she saw ambulances rushing to the scene. She and her friends arrived to find a sea of bodies in the street. The image of a woman who had her skull crushed in the collision is burned into Sales' memory, she said.

A community in mourning

Vancouver's Filipino community had been celebrating Lapu Lapu Day, which honors the Indigenous chieftain Datu Lapu-Lapu, who stood up to Spanish explorers when they arrived in the Philippines in the 16th century. Organizers of the Vancouver event said he "represents the soul of Native resistance."

Community members gathered at Vancouver's Filipino Fellowship Baptist Church on Sunday to mourn those who died in the attack and pray for the injured. Hundreds laid bouquets and lit candles at a vigil later Sunday.

"It hurts, it really hurts to see that someone could do this to a community of mine that's known to be so kind and caring," Sales said through tears.

Nathaly Nairn and her 15-year-old daughter brought flowers to the vigil after attending the festival the night before. She said police had to escort them through the crime scene so they could get back to their car, and that they were shocked by what they saw: a dented and bloodied SUV, and bodies on the ground.

"Now we're just here supporting our community, trying to help my daughter process what we saw yesterday, trying to be there for the Filipino community that has been there for us so much," Nairn said as she wiped away tears.

Canadians are set to vote in an election dominated by Trump's trade war and bluster

By ROB GILLIES Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Canadians will decide Monday whether to extend the Liberal Party's decade in power or instead hand control to the Conservatives. They'll pick either Prime Minister Mark Carney or opposition leader Pierre Poilievre to lead the way forward, but the election is also a referendum of sorts on someone who isn't even Canadian: Donald Trump.

Until the American president won a second term and began threatening Canada's economy and sover-

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eighty, even suggesting the country should become the 51st state, the Liberals looked headed for defeat. Canadians go the polls as the country grapples with the aftermath of a fatal car ramming attack on Saturday in Vancouver. The tragedy on the eve of the election prompted the suspension of campaigning for several hours. Police ruled out terrorism and said the suspect is a local man with a history of mental health issues.

Trump's truculence has infuriated many Canadians, leading many to cancel U.S. vacations, refuse to buy American goods and possibly even vote early — a record 7.3 million Canadians cast ballots before election day. Trump also put Poilievre and the Conservative Party on the back foot after they appeared headed for an easy victory only months ago.

"The Americans want to break us so they can own us," Carney said recently, laying out what he saw as the stakes for the election. "Those aren't just words. That's what's at risk."

Poilievre, a populist firebrand who campaigned with Trump-like bravado, had hoped to make the election a referendum on former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, whose popularity declined toward the end of his decade in power as food and housing prices rose and immigration surged. But then Trump became the dominant issue, and Poilievre's similarities to the bombastic president could cost him.

"He appeals to the same sense of grievance," Canadian historian Robert Bothwell said of the Conservative leader. "It's like Trump standing there saying 'I am your retribution.'"

Foreign policy hasn't dominated a Canadian election this much since 1988, when, ironically, free trade with the United States was the prevailing issue.

Whichever candidate emerges as prime minister will face a litany of challenges.

Canada has been dealing with a cost of living crisis for some time. And more than 75% percent of its exports go to the U.S., so Trump's threat to impose sweeping tariffs and his desire to get the North American automakers to move Canada's production south could severely damage the Canadian economy.

Both Carney and Poilievre said that if elected, they would accelerate renegotiations a free trade deal between Canada and the U.S. in an bid to end the uncertainty hurting both of their economies.

Carney, in particular, has notable experience navigating economic crises, having done so when running Canada's central bank and later after becoming the first non-U.K. citizen to run the Bank of England.

Trump dialed back his talk of Canada becoming the 51st state during the campaign until last week, when he said Canada "would cease to exist as a country" if the U.S. stopped buying its goods. He also said he's not just trolling Canada when he says it should become a state.

"The Liberals ought to pay him," Bothwell said. "Trump talking is not good for the Conservatives."

In response to the threats to Canadian sovereignty, Carney pleaded with voters to deliver him a strong mandate to deal with Trump.

"President Trump has some obsessive ideas, and that is one," Carney said of his annexation threat. "It's not a joke. It's his very strong desire to make this happen. It's one of the reasons why this crisis is so serious."

JB Pritzker calls out 'do-nothing' Democrats for failing to push back against Trump

By JOEY CAPPELLETTI and HOLLY RAMER Associated Press

MANCHESTER, N.H. (AP) — Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker sharply criticized fellow Democrats on Sunday for not doing enough to oppose President Donald Trump, drawing a clear divide between himself and other high-profile Democrats seen as future presidential contenders.

Pritzker delivered the keynote address at the New Hampshire Democratic Party's McIntyre-Shaheen 100 Club Dinner, the latest and most high-profile in a series of speeches this year.

While Pritzker continued to attack Trump, he also focused on what he says are shortcomings in his own party, assailing Democrats for listening to "a bunch of know-nothing political types" instead of everyday Americans. Without naming names, he called out Democrats "flocking to podcasts and cable news shows

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to admonish fellow Democrats for not caring enough about the struggles of working families."

"Those same do-nothing Democrats want to blame our losses on our defense of Black people, of trans kids, of immigrants, instead of their own lack of guts and gumption," Pritzker said.

The second-term governor has yet to say whether he will run for that office again in 2026, but the billionaire Hyatt heir has been laying the groundwork for a potential presidential campaign for years.

Notably, California Gov. Gavin Newsom, another high-profile 2028 contender, said on his podcast recently that the case of Kilmar Abrego Garcia, a Maryland man mistakenly deported to El Salvador and detained at one point in a notorious megaprison, was a "distraction" from issues such as tariffs. Newsom also said on his podcast's inaugural episode that he opposes trans athletes competing in women's sports.

Polling suggests immigration is Trump's strongest issue and that a majority of Democrats also oppose trans participation in women's sports.

Pritzker on Sunday night said it was no time for Democrats to be in despair.

"Never before in my life have I called for mass protests, for mobilization, for disruption, but I am now," he said, stressing that the party "must castigate them on the soapbox and then punish them at the ballot box."

Pritzker has already spoken this year at the Human Rights Campaign's Los Angeles dinner and is scheduled to headline a Minnesota Democratic dinner in June. He drew national attention in February when he used part of his joint budget and State of the State address to draw a parallel between Trump's rhetoric and the rise of Nazi Germany.

On Sunday, Pritzker again invoked his Jewish faith, criticizing Trump's efforts to deport foreign students who participated in pro-Palestinian demonstrations. He called on Trump to "stop tearing down the Constitution in the name of my ancestors," a line that drew a standing ovation from the crowd.

But Pritzker was also adamant in calling out the "do-nothing Democrats," asserting that while the party "may need to fix our messaging and strategy, our values are exactly where they should be." He added, "We will never join so many Republicans in a special place in hell reserved for quislings and cowards."

Lou D'Allesandro, who retired from the New Hampshire State Senate last year after five decades in public service and met Pritzker in Chicago years ago, said the Illinois governor "has all the ingredients to make it to the big time."

"He's very quick on his feet, very gregarious," he said. But any Democrat who wants to win in 2028 has their work cut out for them, he said.

"They've got to reintroduce themselves to the grassroots," he said. "They've got to let people know Democrats care about them, or they're gonna be in big trouble."

Last year's featured speaker at the McIntyre-Shaheen 100 Club dinner was Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, who went on to become his party's vice presidential nominee.

The annual event is especially significant among state Democratic fundraisers given New Hampshire's historic role holding the nation's first presidential primary, though Democrats last year moved South Carolina ahead at the behest of former President Joe Biden.

The first 100 Club dinner was held in 1959 to promote the presidential candidacy of John F. Kennedy. In 2020, speakers included 10 Democratic candidates for president.

Iran's president visits those injured in the port explosion that killed at least 40 people

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran's president on Sunday visited those injured in a huge explosion that rocked one of the Islamic Republic's main ports, a facility purportedly linked to an earlier delivery of a chemical ingredient used to make missile propellant.

The visit by President Masoud Pezeshkian came as the toll from Saturday's blast at the Shahid Rajaei port outside of Bandar Abbas in southern Iran's Hormozgan province rose to 40 dead with about 1,000 others injured.

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While Iran's military sought to deny the delivery of ammonium perchlorate from China, new videos emerged showing an apocalyptic scene at the still-smoldering port. A crater that appeared meters (yards) deep was surrounded by burning smoke so dangerous that authorities closed schools and businesses in the area.

Containers appeared smashed or thrown as if discarded toys, while the burned carcasses of trucks and cars sat around the site.

"We have to find out why it happened," Pezeshkian said during a meeting with officials aired by Iranian state television.

Iran's Supreme Leader, the 86-year-old Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, separately offered his condolences over the blast — and left open the possibility that sabotage caused the explosion.

"It is the duty of security officials and judicial authorities to conduct a thorough investigation to detect if there's been any negligence or deliberate acts that have caused this and to follow this up according to regulations," a statement in his name said. "All officials must know it's their duty to prevent bitter, damaging events."

Fire at Shahid Rajaei port burns through the day

Authorities described the fire as being under control, saying emergency workers hoped that it would be fully extinguished later Sunday. Overnight, helicopters and heavy cargo aircraft flew repeated sorties over the burning port, dumping seawater on the site. Satellite pictures taken Sunday by Planet Labs PBC and analyzed by The Associated Press showed a huge plume of black smoke still over the site.

Provincial Gov. Mohammad Ashouri gave the latest death toll, Iranian state TV reported. Pir Hossein Kolivand, head of Iran's Red Crescent society, said that only 190 of about 1,000 injured remained hospitalized on Sunday, according to a statement carried by an Iranian government website. The governor declared three days of mourning.

Private security firm Ambrey says the port received missile fuel chemical in March. It was part of a shipment of ammonium perchlorate from China by two vessels to Iran, first reported in January by the Financial Times. The chemical used to make solid propellant for rockets was going to be used to replenish Iran's missile stocks, which had been depleted by its direct attacks on Israel during the war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Ship-tracking data analyzed by the AP put one of the vessels believed to be carrying the chemical in the vicinity in March, as Ambrey said.

"The fire was reportedly the result of improper handling of a shipment of solid fuel intended for use in Iranian ballistic missiles," Ambrey said.

Military denies blast involved missile fuel, but offers no explanation for explosion

In a first reaction on Sunday, Iranian Defense Ministry spokesman Gen. Reza Talaeinik denied that missile fuel had been imported through the port.

"No sort of imported and exporting consignment for fuel or military application was (or) is in the site of the port," he told state television by telephone. He called foreign reports on the missile fuel baseless — but offered no explanation for what material detonated with such incredible force at the site. Talaeinik promised authorities would offer more information later.

It's unclear why Iran wouldn't have moved the chemicals from the port, particularly after the Beirut port blast in 2020. That explosion, caused by the ignition of hundreds of tons of highly explosive ammonium nitrate, killed more than 200 people and injured more than 6,000 others. However, Israel did target Iranian missile sites where Tehran uses industrial mixers to create solid fuel — meaning potentially that it had no place to process the chemical.

Social media footage of the explosion on Saturday at Shahid Rajaei saw reddish-hued smoke rising from the fire just before the detonation. That suggests a chemical compound being involved in the blast, like in the Beirut explosion.

Meanwhile on Sunday, Russian President Vladimir Putin deployed several emergency aircraft to Bandar Abbas to provide assistance.

Murder charges filed against suspect in ramming attack on Vancouver street festival that killed 11

By JIM MORRIS, CLAIRE RUSH and ROB GILLIES Associated Press

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Murder charges were filed Sunday against a suspect in a weekend car ramming attack that killed 11 people between the ages of 5 and 65 at a Filipino heritage festival in the city of Vancouver, a tragedy that shook Canada on the eve of a federal election.

The British Columbia Prosecution Service charged Kai-Ji Adam Lo, 30, with eight counts of second degree murder and said more charges were possible. Investigators ruled out terrorism and said Lo had a history of mental health issues.

Lo, a Vancouver resident, appeared in court and remains in custody, prosecutors said. An attorney for Lo wasn't listed in online court documents and The Associated Press wasn't immediately able to reach an attorney representing him.

Dozens of people were injured, some critically, when a man driving a black Audi SUV entered the street just after 8 p.m. Saturday and struck people attending the Lapu Lapu Day festival. He was arrested at the scene. Authorities had not released victims' names by Sunday evening.

"It is the darkest day in Vancouver's history," Police Interim Chief Steve Rai told a news conference.

"The person we have in custody does have a significant history of interactions with police and health care professionals related to mental health," he said.

Hundreds of people gathered Sunday evening for a vigil honoring the victims. "It's sad. Really sad," said Emily Daniels, who brought a bouquet. "I can't believe something like this could happen so close to home."

Nathaly Nairn and her 15-year-old daughter also carried flowers. They had attended the festival on Saturday, and Nairn recounted seeing the damaged SUV and bodies on the ground.

"Something really dark happened last night," she said, as she and her daughter wiped away tears.

Video of the aftermath shows the dead and injured along a narrow street in South Vancouver lined by food trucks. The front of the driver's SUV is smashed in.

Kris Pangilinan, who brought his pop-up clothing and lifestyle booth to the festival, saw the vehicle enter past the barricade slowly before the driver slammed on the gas in an area that was packed with people after a concert. He said hearing the sounds of bodies hitting the vehicle will never leave his mind.

"He slammed on the gas, barreled through the crowd," he said. "And all I can remember is seeing bodies flying up in the air higher than the food trucks themselves and landing on the ground and people yelling and screaming. It looked like a bowling ball hitting bowling pins and all the pins are flying into the air."

Pangilinan said that it would be hard to believe "that someone has some malice against the Filipino people."

Suspect was detained by bystanders before the police arrived

Rai said the suspect was arrested after initially being apprehended by bystanders.

Video circulating on social media shows a young man in a black hoodie with his back against a chain-link fence, alongside a security guard and surrounded by bystanders screaming and swearing at him.

"I'm sorry," the man says, holding his hand to his head.

Rai declined to comment on the video.

Prime Minister Mark Carney canceled his first campaign event and two major rallies on the final day of the election campaign before Monday's vote.

"Last night families lost a sister, a brother, a mother, father, son or a daughter. Those families are living every family's nightmare," Carney said. "And to them and to the many others who were injured, to the Filipino Canadian community, and to everyone in Vancouver, I would like to offer my deepest condolences."

Carney planned to join British Columbia Premier David Eby and community leaders Sunday evening in Vancouver.

In 2018, a man used a van to kill 10 pedestrians in Toronto. Eight women and two men died. Alek Minasian, who was found guilty, told police that he belonged to an online community of sexually frustrated men, some of whom have plotted attacks on people who have sex.

Witnesses describe how they leaped out of the way

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Carayn Nulada said that she pulled her granddaughter and grandson off the street and used her body to shield them from the SUV. She said that her daughter suffered a narrow escape.

"The car hit her arm and she fell down, but she got up, looking for us, because she is scared," said Nulada, who described children screaming, and pale-faced victims lying on the ground or wedged under vehicles.

"I saw people running and my daughter was shaking."

Nulada was in Vancouver General Hospital's emergency room Sunday morning, trying to find news about her brother, who was run down in the attack and suffered multiple broken bones.

Doctors identified him by presenting the family with his wedding ring in a pill bottle and said that he was stable, but would be facing surgery.

James Cruzat, a Vancouver business owner, was at the celebration and heard a car rev its engine and then "a loud noise, like a loud bang" that he initially thought might be a gunshot.

"We saw people on the road crying, others were like running, shouting, or even screaming, asking for help. So we tried to go there just to check what was really actually happening until we found some bodies on the ground. Others were lifeless, others like, you know, injured," Cruzat said.

Vincent Reynon, 17, was leaving the festival when he saw police rushing in. People were crying and he saw bodies on the ground. "It was like something straight out of a horror movie or a nightmare," he said.

Adonis Quita said when he saw the SUV ramming through the crowd, his first reaction was to drag his 9-year-old son out of the area. The boy kept saying "I'm scared, I'm scared," Quita recalled. Later they prayed together. His son had just relocated to Vancouver from the Philippines with his mother to reunite with Quita, who has lived here since 2024. Quita said he worries the child will struggle to adjust to life in Canada after witnessing the horrific event.

Vancouver Mayor Kenneth Sim said the city had "suffered its darkest day."

"I know many of us are fearful and feel uneasy," said the mayor. "I know it's hard to feel this way right now, but Vancouver is still a safe city."

Vancouver's large Filipino population was honoring a national hero

Vancouver had more than 38,600 residents of Filipino heritage in 2021, representing 5.9% of the city's total population, according to Statistics Canada, the agency that conducts the national census.

Lapu Lapu Day celebrates Datu Lapu-Lapu, an Indigenous chieftain who stood up to Spanish explorers who came to the Philippines in the 16th century. The organizers of the Vancouver event — which was in its second year — said that he "represents the soul of native resistance, a powerful force that helped shape the Filipino identity in the face of colonization."

Eby said the province won't let the tragedy define the celebration. He urged people to channel their rage into helping those affected.

"I don't think there is a British Columbian that hasn't been touched in some way by the Filipino community," he said. "You can't go to a place that delivers and not meet a member of that community in the long-term care home or hospitals, childcare or schools. This is a community that gives and gives and yesterday was a celebration of their culture."

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. issued a statement expressing sympathy with the victims and their families.

"The Philippine Consulate General in Vancouver is working with Canadian authorities to ensure that the incident will be thoroughly investigated, and that the victims and their families are supported and consoled," he said.

Chubby Checker, Joe Cocker, Bad Company, Cyndi Lauper and Outkast get into Rock & Roll Hall of Fame

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — First-time nominees Chubby Checker, Joe Cocker and Bad Company will be inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, a class that also includes pop star Cyndi Lauper, the hip-hop pioneers Outkast, the rock duo the White Stripes and grunge masters Soundgarden.

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Salt-N-Pepa, the first female rap act to achieve gold and platinum status, and the late singer-songwriter Warren Zevon will get the Musical Influence Award. The late record producer Thom Bell, pianist Nicky Hopkins and bassist Carol Kaye will each get the Musical Excellence Award.

The late Cocker, who sang at Woodstock and was best known for his cover of The Beatles' "With a Little Help From My Friends," had the backing of Billy Joel, Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top and Pete Thomas, a member of Elvis Costello & The Attractions, who argued that Cocker is "about as rock and roll as it gets."

Soundgarden — with the late Chris Cornell as singer — get into the Hall on their third nomination. They follow two other grunge acts in the Hall — Nirvana and Pearl Jam. Bad Company get in having become radio fixtures with such arena-rock staples as "Feel Like Makin' Love," "Can't Get Enough" and "Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy."

The Ahmet Ertegun Award — given to nonperforming industry professionals who had a major influence on music — will go to Lenny Waronker, a former head of Warner Bros. Records who signed Prince and R.E.M., and had a part in records from Madonna, Randy Newman, the Doobie Brothers, Rickie Lee Jones, Paul Simon and Gary Clark Jr.

Some nominees that didn't get in this year include Mariah Carey, Phish, Billy Idol, Joy Division/New Order, Maná, the Black Crowes and Oasis.

Checker's recording of "The Twist," and subsequent "Let's Twist Again" are considered among the most popular songs in the history of rock 'n' roll. The 83-year-old has expressed frustration that he hadn't been granted entry before, including telling the AP in 2014: "I don't want to get in there when I'm 85 years old. I'll tell them to drop dead, so you better do it quick while I'm still smiling."

Lauper rose to fame in the 1980s with hits such as "Time After Time" and "Girls Just Want To Have Fun" and went on to win a Tony Award for "Kinky Boots." OutKast, made up of André 3000 and Big Boi, have six Grammys and a reputation for pushing the boundaries of hip-hop. The White Stripes — made up of Jack White and Meg White — were indie darlings in the early 2000s with such songs as "Seven Nation Army."

Artists must have released their first commercial recording at least 25 years before they're eligible for induction. The induction ceremony will take place in Los Angeles this fall.

Nominees were voted on by more than 1,200 artists, historians and music industry professionals. The selection criteria include "an artist's impact on other musicians, the scope and longevity of their career and body of work, as well as their innovation and excellence in style and technique."

Last year, Mary J. Blige, Cher, Foreigner, A Tribe Called Quest, Kool & The Gang, Ozzy Osbourne, Dave Matthews Band and singer-guitarist Peter Dinklage all were inducted.

More than 100 immigrants detained at an illegal after-hours nightclub in Colorado

By JOHN RABY Associated Press

More than 100 immigrants suspected of being in the United States illegally were taken into custody early Sunday following a federal raid at an illegal after-hours nightclub in Colorado Springs, Colorado, authorities said.

Video posted online by the Drug Enforcement Administration showed agents announcing their presence outside the building and ordering patrons to leave with their hands up. Other videos showed dozens of people fleeing the building through its entrance after federal agents smashed a window. Later, dozens of suspects were shown in handcuffs standing on a sidewalk waiting to be transported.

During his second stint as U.S. president, Donald Trump's unprecedented campaign of immigration enforcement has pushed the limits of executive power, and he has clashed with federal judges trying to restrain him. The crackdown has included detaining more than 1,000 international college students, some of whom have seen their legal status restored, at least temporarily. The policies have slowed immigration at the southern border to a relative trickle.

On Sunday in Colorado, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement took the club-going immigrants into custody, said Jonathan Pullen, special agent in charge of the DEA's Rocky Mountain Division.

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"Colorado Springs is waking up to a safer community today," he said. The city, Colorado's second largest, lies about 70 miles (113 kilometers) south of Denver.

More than 300 law enforcement officers and officials from multiple agencies responded to the nightclub, which had been under investigation for several months for alleged activities including drug trafficking, prostitution and "crimes of violence," Pullen said at a news conference. Cocaine was among the drugs found, he said.

"When the cops showed up at the door, most of the drugs hit the floor," Pullen said.

An undisclosed number of guns were seized, he said.

Trump posted a link to the DEA video of the raid on his social media site, Truth Social. "A big Raid last night on some of the worst people illegally in our Country — Drug Dealers, Murderers, and other Violent Criminals, of all shapes and sizes," the president wrote.

Pullen estimated more than 200 people were inside the nightclub. Also among those detained were a dozen active-duty military members who either were patrons or working as armed security. Some patrons were arrested on undisclosed outstanding warrants, Pullen said.

Pullen did not specify the countries where the detained immigrants were from.

Earlier this month a federal judge in Colorado temporarily blocked deportations of immigrants who face possible removal under Trump's invocation of an 18th century law known as the Alien Enemies Act.

Russia launches nearly 150 drones against Ukraine as Trump says he doubts Putin's desire for peace

By VOLODYMYR YURCHUK and ELISE MORTON Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia launched a sweeping drone assault and airstrikes across Ukraine early Sunday, killing at least four people, officials said, after U.S. President Donald Trump cast doubt over Russian President Vladimir Putin's willingness to end the war.

Three people died and four were wounded in airstrikes on Kostyantynivka in the Donetsk region of eastern Ukraine, the regional prosecutor's office said. Another person died and a 14-year-old girl was wounded in a drone attack on the city of Pavlohrad in the Dnipropetrovsk region, which was hit for the third consecutive night, Gov. Serhii Lysak said.

The attacks came hours after Russia claimed to have regained control over the remaining parts of the Kursk region that Ukrainian forces seized in a surprise incursion in August 2024. Ukrainian officials said the fighting in Kursk was still ongoing.

Trump said Saturday he doubts Putin wants to end the more than 3-year-old war, expressing new skepticism a peace deal can be reached soon. Only a day earlier, Trump had said Ukraine and Russia were "very close to a deal."

"There was no reason for Putin to be shooting missiles into civilian areas, cities and towns, over the last few days," Trump wrote in a social media post as he flew back to the U.S. after attending the funeral of Pope Francis at the Vatican, where he met briefly with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Trump also hinted at further sanctions against Russia.

On Sunday evening, as he left his golf club in New Jersey, Trump told reporters he remained "disappointed" in Russia's attacks. Trump said of Putin: "I want him to stop shooting, sit down and make a deal."

Asked what he would do if Russia does not stop its attacks, Trump replied: "I have a lot of things that I can do."

The Vatican Trump-Zelenskyy conversation was the first face-to-face encounter between the two leaders since their heated Oval Office meeting at the White House on Feb. 28.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Sunday the coming week would be "very critical," and that the U.S. would need to "make a determination about whether this is an endeavor that we want to continue to be involved in."

Asked on NBC's "Meet the Press" about possible concessions to Russia, Rubio emphasized the need to be "grownups and realistic."

"There is no military solution to this war. The only solution to this war is a negotiated settlement where both sides are going to have to give up something they claim to want and are going to have to give the other side something they wish they didn't," he said.

Russia fired 149 exploding drones and decoys in the latest wave of attacks, the Ukrainian air force said, adding that 57 were intercepted and another 67 jammed.

One person was wounded in drone attacks on the Odesa region and one other was hurt in the city of Zhytomyr. Four people were also wounded in a Russian airstrike on the city of Kherson on Sunday, local officials said.

Russia's Defense Ministry said air defenses shot down five Ukrainian drones in the border region of Bryansk, as well as three drones over the Crimean Peninsula, which was illegally annexed by Russia in 2014.

Five people were wounded when Ukrainian forces shelled the city of Horlivka in the partially occupied Donetsk region, said the Russian-installed Mayor Ivan Prikhodko.

Israeli jets strike Beirut's southern suburbs for the third time since a ceasefire began

By SALLY ABOU ALJOUD Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Israeli jets struck Beirut's southern suburbs Sunday after issuing a warning about an hour earlier, marking the third Israeli strike on the area since a ceasefire took effect in late November.

In a statement following the strike, the Israeli military said it targeted a precision-guided missile storage facility for the militant Hezbollah group. It added that storing such equipment is a violation of the agreement reached to end the Israel-Hezbollah war.

A huge plume of smoke billowed over the area after the strike, which hit what looked like a metal tent situated between two buildings with three bombs, according to an Associated Press photographer on the ground and footage circulating on social media. The photographer saw two burned and destroyed trucks inside the hangar. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

In the warning, the Israeli military said it was targeting Hezbollah facilities in the Hadath area and urged residents to move at least 300 meters from the site before the strike. Two warning strikes followed.

Fighter jets were heard over parts of the Lebanese capital before the strike near the Al-Jamous neighborhood, where gunfire was shot into the air to warn residents and urge them to evacuate, as families fled in panic.

During the last Israel-Hezbollah war, Israeli drones and fighter jets regularly pounded the southern suburbs, where Hezbollah has wide influence and support. Israel views the area, where it has assassinated several of Hezbollah's top leaders, including chief Hassan Nasrallah, as a militant stronghold and accuses the group of storing weapons there.

President Joseph Aoun condemned the Israeli strike on Beirut's southern suburbs, calling on the United States and France, as guarantors of the ceasefire, to "assume their responsibilities" and pressure Israel to halt its attacks. He warned that Israel's continued actions "undermine stability" and risk exposing the region to serious security threats.

U.N. Special Coordinator for Lebanon Jeanine Hennis posted on X that the latest Israeli strike "generated panic and fear of renewed violence among those desperate for a return to normalcy." She urged all sides to halt any actions that could further undermine the ceasefire understanding and the implementation of the U.N. resolution that ended the war.

Sunday's strike follows two earlier attacks on the capital's southern suburbs, the first taking place on March 28, when Israel also issued a warning, and the second on April 1, when an unannounced strike killed four people, including a Hezbollah official.

The leader of Lebanon's Hezbollah group, Sheikh Naim Kassem, has recently warned that if Israel's attacks on Lebanon continued and if Lebanon's government doesn't act to stop them, the group would eventually resort to other alternatives.

Kassem also said that Hezbollah's fighters won't disarm as long as Israeli troops remain in southern

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Lebanon and the Israeli air force regularly violates Lebanese airspace.

Under the U.S.-brokered ceasefire that ended the 14-month Israel-Hezbollah war, Israeli forces were supposed to withdraw from all Lebanese territory by late January, while Hezbollah had to end its armed presence south of the Litani River along the border with Israel.

Earlier on Sunday, a drone strike killed a man in the southern Lebanese village of Halta, according to the Health Ministry. In a post on X that included footage of the strike, the Israeli military said that it had targeted a Hezbollah member, "where he was working to rebuild Hezbollah's terrorist capabilities in the area."

Last week, the Lebanese government said 190 people have been killed and 485 wounded in Lebanon by Israeli strikes since the U.S.-brokered ceasefire went into effect. Israel says it is targeting Hezbollah officials and infrastructure.

The Lebanese military has gradually deployed in the country's southern region, and Beirut has urged the international community to pressure Israel to stop attacks and withdraw its forces still present on five hilltops in Lebanese territory.

Takeaways from Trump's first 100 days: Steamrolling government and strong-arming allies

By The Associated Press undefined

In his first 100 days, President Donald Trump exerted his power in a sweep and scale that has no easy historical comparison.

His actions target the architecture of the New Deal, the Great Society, and the Reagan Republican orthodoxy of free trade and strong international alliances. He has taken direct aim at law, media, public health and culture, attempting to bring all to heel.

Here are some key takeaways from the most consequential start of a term of an American presidency since Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Economy

Trump has tried to bend the U.S. economy to his will. But one force is unbowed: the financial markets.

The president says his tariffs will eventually be "beautiful." So far, it's been an difficult three months with consumer confidence plummeting, stock markets convulsing and investors losing confidence in the credibility of Trump's policies.

He has imposed hundreds of billions of dollars in tariffs, including on America's two largest trading partners, Mexico and Canada. Chinese goods are getting taxed at a combined 145%.

He has rewarded the coal and oil sectors by attacking alternative energy, yet his tariffs pushed up the price of the steel and other materials that the energy industry needs to build out production.

— By Josh Boak

DOGE

Trump promised to take on what he called waste, fraud and abuse in government. He tapped Elon Musk to lead the effort.

Musk turned his plan for a Department of Government Efficiency into one of the most polarizing and consequential pieces of Trump's first 100 days.

The billionaire entrepreneur approached the task with a tech mogul ethos: break things, then see what you want to fix. Firings were widespread and indiscriminate. Programs were eliminated with limited analysis.

It is unlikely that Musk will accomplish his grand-scale goals. His plans for slashing \$1 trillion out of the budget were pared back to \$150 billion.

— By Chris Megerian

Immigration

Cracking down on illegal immigration was the anthem of Trump's campaign, and it is the issue where he has the greatest support.

He has followed through by implementing some of the hardest-line immigration policies in the nation's

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history, even as the promised mass deportations have yet to materialize.

Trump invoked the Alien Enemies Act of 1798 to deport immigrants with limited due process, then used it to send hundreds of alleged Venezuelan gang members to a mega-prison in El Salvador in defiance of a court order.

The administration pledged to end birthright citizenship for people who were born in the U.S., while proposing "gold cards" that would allow foreigners to buy American citizenship for \$5 million.

Illegal border crossings dropped precipitously.

—By Will Weissert

Retribution

Trump entered office pledging to bring "retribution" for his supporters.

He made good on that on his first day and virtually every week since, taking aim at the prosecutors who investigated him and the law firms that employed them. He went after former officials who criticized him or correctly asserted that he had lost the 2020 presidential election to Democrat Joe Biden. And he targeted elite universities whose policies irked him.

Trump ordered the suspension of the security clearances of the more than four dozen former intelligence officials.

The Justice Department fired the prosecutors who investigated him as part of special counsel Jack Smith's team and demanded the names of FBI agents who participated in investigations into the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol.

Executive orders targeted some of the country's elite law firms, in some cases because they employ or once employed prosecutors who investigated Trump.

— By Eric Tucker

Courts, judges and the rule of law

Trump has consistently said he would follow an order from federal judges. But that has not stopped talk of a possible constitutional crisis over defying the courts.

His executive orders reshaping the federal government are facing more than 150 lawsuits on issues from fired federal workers and immigration to transgender rights.

Judges have ruled against the administration dozens of times, blocking parts of his agenda for now. The administration has argued that individual judges should not be able to issue nationwide injunctions.

Trump issued an extraordinary call for the impeachment of a federal judge who ruled against him the case of Venezuelan immigrants accused of being gang members. That prompted a rare rebuke from Chief Justice John Roberts.

— By Lindsay Whitehurst

Diplomacy and international relations

Trump has rejected the post-World War II order that has formed the basis for global stability and security.

He has rejected long-standing alliances and hinted at scaling back the U.S. troop presence in Europe. Longtime allies such as Germany and France have suggested they no longer can depend on Washington.

Trump also pledged a swift end to the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, so far to little effect.

His actions have led allies in Europe, along with Canada, Japan and South Korea, to question their reliance on the U.S.

The president has upended other multilateral organizations. And he has effectively shuttered the United States Agency for International Development, long seen as an example of an effective tool to provide humanitarian aid.

At the same time, he has repeatedly called for the U.S. to annex Greenland, which is a Danish territory, to retake control of the Panama Canal and to make Canada the 51st U.S. state.

— By Matthew Lee

Congress

Congress is proving to be almost no match for this White House.

Trump is testing, challenging and even bullying the Congress in unparalleled ways — slashing govern-

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ment agencies, deporting legal immigrants, investigating perceived enemies and churning the economy -- and all but daring lawmakers to object.

But Trump has shown he does not necessarily want or need Congress to accomplish his goals.

The president has issued almost 10 times as many executive orders as the first five presidents combined, bypassing Congress. DOGE is slashing programs, jobs and entire agencies, including the Department of Education, that by law receive funding under the purview of Congress.

— By Lisa Mascaro

Military

For the past three months the Pentagon has been rocked by the removals of top military leadership, including its only female four-star officers, its Joint Chiefs chairman — a Black general — and its top military lawyers.

The defense chief, Pete Hegseth, has been floundering in controversy.

He was a key participant in the Signal chat set up by national security adviser Mike Waltz, sending details of sensitive military operations over the nonsecure channel. Hegseth also used a second Signal chat to send similar information to a group that included his wife and brother. That was followed by the purge of his top staff.

Trump issued an executive order to remove transgender service members, which has been stalled by the courts. Hegseth ordered the military to eliminate any programming, books or imagery that celebrates diversity.

Social media posts that celebrated military women or cultural diversity are gone.

— By Tara Copp and Lolita C. Baldor

Public health

At the Department of Health and Human Services, 10,000 jobs are gone. Billions of dollars in research sent to scientists and universities was shut off. Public meetings to discuss flu shots and other vaccines have been canceled.

Fluoride in drinking water may be the next to go, according to Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

Kennedy's resistance to launching a vaccination campaign as a growing measles outbreak has worsened, so far infecting hundreds and leaving two young children dead, has elicited concerns from doctors, public health experts and lawmakers.

Those worries deepened after he eliminated thousands of jobs across the nation's public health agencies, including at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration and the National Institutes of Health. The move, department officials projected, will save taxpayers \$1.8 billion.

— By Amanda Seitz

Energy and environment

Trump has reversed Biden's focus on slowing climate change to pursue what the Republican calls U.S. "energy dominance" in the global market.

He created a National Energy Dominance Council, and directed it to move quickly to drive up already record-high U.S. energy production, particularly fossil fuels such as oil and natural gas, and remove regulatory barriers.

Trump withdrew the U.S. from the Paris climate agreement, and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lee Zeldin has announced a series of actions to roll back landmark regulations, including a scientific finding that has long been the central basis for U.S. action against climate change.

While Trump's administration has blocked renewable energy sources such as offshore wind, he has tried to boost what he calls "beautiful" coal.

— By Matthew Daly

Arts and culture

Dana Gioia, a poet and former chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, liked to say that a key to maintaining support for the NEA and other federal organizations was ensuring they backed projects in as many congressional districts as possible.

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It was a bipartisan formula that lasted for some 60 years, through Democratic and Republican administrations, until Trump's second term.

Trump has ousted leaders, placed staff on administrative leave and cut off hundreds of millions of dollars in funding that artists, libraries, museums, theaters and others in the cultural community had long counted on. Acting without congressional authorization, he has declared that institutions ranging from the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to the National Endowment for the Humanities have become fronts for a "woke" agenda that threatens to undermine what he calls "our Vision for a Golden Age in Arts and Culture."

—By Hillel Italie

Media

Many journalists figured a second Trump term would be a challenge for their industry. Few recognized how much.

The new administration has aggressively, even innovatively, waged combat against the press since taking office. It has fought against CBS News and The Associated Press in court, sought to dismantle the government-run Voice of America and sent the Federal Communications Commission after perceived media rivals.

"The Trump administration is on a campaign to do everything it can to diminish and obstruct journalism in the United States," said Bill Grueskin, a Columbia University journalism professor.

The future of Voice of America, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and similar services that for generations have delivered unbiased news to countries where it is in short supply is being haggled over in court.

— By David Bauder

Republicans in the toughest swing districts become hard to find for people angry about Trump

By STEVE PEOPLES and THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press

MECHANICSBURG, Pa. (AP) — Many days over the past two weeks, no one answered the phone at any of U.S. Rep. Scott Perry's four offices.

Perry's team did not share details about the Republican congressman's public appearances until they were over. Even supporters who live in Perry's central Pennsylvania district could not remember the last time he hosted an in-person town hall.

No one opened the locked door at his district office in Mechanicsburg last week when an Associated Press reporter rang the bell. A male voice said through the intercom, "I don't have any public appearance information that I can provide."

The U.S. House is ending a 17-day recess, typically known as a district work period, in which members of Congress return home to focus on their constituents. But some of the most vulnerable Republicans limited their potential exposure to the potential backlash from President Donald Trump's first months in office.

They are embracing the strategy outlined by GOP leaders in Washington who argue there is no benefit to creating more viral moments such as the crowd in Asheville, North Carolina, that booed U.S. Rep. Chuck Edwards and the pointed questions about tariffs and deportations that were directed at U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa.

Perry, who won reelection last fall by about 5,000 votes, is one of the 10 most vulnerable House Republicans, as measured by their margins of victory last fall. They were especially hard to find during the recess, though it was difficult to verify many of the public schedules due to the inconsistent responses from their offices.

None of them, a collection of swing-district conservatives from across Arizona, Colorado, California, Iowa, Nebraska, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, hosted in-person events that were open to the public. Just one planned a telephone town hall. Others favored smaller invitation-only gatherings with local officials promoted only after they were over.

The Republicans' lack of access didn't sit well with some voters.

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"They're publicly elected officials. They ought to be accessible to the public," Republican voter Robert Barton, a 57-year-old civil engineer, said as he waited for his lunch at Italian Delight Pizzeria across the street from Perry's office in Mechanicsburg.

Perry's team did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

Republicans defend their strategy

Veteran GOP strategist Doug Heye argued that interacting with constituents in "planned and controlled ways" is more productive than town halls for members of Congress. "And that's smart for any politician," he said.

The National Republican Congressional Committee, the House Republicans' campaign arm, is not encouraging targeted members to stay out of the public eye, a spokesperson said.

Instead, the NRCC encourages lawmakers to meet with their constituents in public, but to be wary of events that could divert attention from a House member's message and agenda, according to NRCC spokesman Mike Marinella.

"We tell everyone, go out and meet people. You have to be in front of your constituents," Marinella said. "Use every avenue you can."

House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., recently suggested that some of the people attending public meetings with members "do this as a profession, they're professional protesters." He urged lawmakers to consider convening so-called tele-town hall meetings, dial-in conferences where thousands can listen and lawmakers take questions.

In 2010, under pressure over the health care overhaul that became known as Obamacare, a number of House Democrats skipped public events after facing angry town halls the previous summer. Some held tele-town hall meetings instead.

Then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., co-authored an opinion piece referring to some protests as "un-American" and denouncing an "ugly campaign (to) disrupt public meetings and prevent members of Congress and constituents from conducting a civil dialogue."

Just under a decade later, House Republicans trying to repeal that health law were accused of ducking town halls as well. Then-House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., said he would stop holding town halls to limit access for protesters from outside his district.

Both the Democrats in 2010 and the Republicans in 2018 would go on to lose their House majorities.

Democrats step in

The Democratic National Committee, backed by organized labor and other progressive groups in some states, has launched dozens of "People's Town Halls" and "Good Trouble" events in districts where Republicans will not hold public events.

Democrats are betting their strategy will give them an advantage in the 2026 election, when control of Congress will be decided for the last two years of Trump's final term. Historically, the party that holds the White House loses seats in these midterms. And as of now, Republicans would lose the House majority if they lose a net of just two seats.

Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Whatley put it in stark terms during an appearance at the Iowa Faith and Freedom spring fundraiser this month.

"This midterm election cycle is going to determine whether we have a four-year presidency or a two-year presidency," Whatley told an audience of 700 Iowa Republican activists and social conservative leaders. Referring to the 2018 Democratic House takeover, he warned of House investigations and a stalled Trump agenda that "knocked the administration off its feet."

Where are the Republicans?

Mariannette Miller-Meeks is an Iowa Republican who won last fall by 799 votes, the closest U.S. House election won by a Republican in the country last year.

She spoke at the Faith and Freedom fundraiser, but she spent the Easter recess meeting with far smaller groups in more controlled environments: a wheel accessory plant, several business groups in the Des Moines and Davenport areas, a Rotary Club meeting, and a groundbreaking for an eastern Iowa medical center.

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Most of her constituents would have learned of the stops by checking Miller-Meeks' social media accounts after the fact. Miller-Meeks, like her fellow most-targeted Republican House members, offered little if any public notice of her appearances.

Like the other House Republicans in the nation's most-competitive districts, she held no events open to all constituents, nor had any planned for the remainder of the break, which ended Sunday.

Aides to U.S. Rep. Don Bacon, who represents Nebraska's 2nd Congressional District, confirmed that the Republican held no open events nor had plans to before the end of the break. Bacon's X account included a post from last weekend where he appeared to be attending an Easter egg hunt in south Omaha.

On the ground in a key swing district

Back in Perry's Harrisburg-area district, Democrats are optimistic that they are well-positioned to defeat the seven-term Republican, a former chairman of the hard-line conservative House Freedom Caucus.

He defeated Democrat Janelle Stelson, a former local television broadcaster, by 5,000 votes last fall. Stelson expects to start another campaign against Perry in July.

"The title of the job is representative. It's not actually about you, it's about what the people you talk to care about and want you to accomplish for them," she said. "And I don't understand how he can possibly know what that is when he's never out among us."

Some voters have taken notice.

Tim Shollenberger, a Mechanicsburg resident who was a registered Republican until recently, struggled to be heard during Perry's April 2 tele-town hall.

Participants were not allowed to ask questions directly, so the 69-year-old trial lawyer submitted three questions in writing: one about Elon Musk's critical comments about Social Security and two about Perry's lack of public access.

The moderator did not ask any of them.

"If you really care about the views of your constituents, get in a room and face them," Shollenberger said.

As Musk gained power in Washington, his popularity has fallen, an AP-NORC poll finds

By CHRIS MEGERIAN and AMELIA THOMSON-DEVEAUX Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Elon Musk spent years building cachet as a business titan and tech visionary, brushing aside critics and skeptics to become the richest person on the planet.

But as Musk gained power in Washington in recent months, his popularity has waned, according to a poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Just 33% of U.S. adults have a favorable view of Musk, the chain-saw-wielding, late-night-posting, campaign-hat-wearing public face of President Donald Trump's efforts to downsize and overhaul the federal government. That share is down from 41% in December.

"It was a shame that he crashed and burned his reputation," said Ernest Pereira, 27, a Democrat who works as a lab technician in North Carolina. "He bought into his own hype."

The poll found that about two-thirds of adults believe Musk has held too much influence over the federal government during the past few months — although that influence may be coming to an end. The billionaire entrepreneur is expected to leave his administration job in the coming weeks.

Musk is noticeably less popular than the overall effort to pare back the government workforce, which Trump has described as bloated and corrupt. About half of U.S. adults believe the Republican president has gone too far on reducing the size of the federal workforce, while roughly 3 in 10 think he is on target and 14% want him to go even further.

Retiree Susan Wolf, 75, of Pennsylvania, believes the federal government is too big but Musk has "made a mess of everything."

"I don't trust him," she said. "I don't think he knows what he's doing."

Wolf, who is not registered with a political party, said Musk's private sector success does not translate

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to Washington.

"He thinks you run a government like you run a business. And you don't do that," she said. "One is for the benefit of the people, and the other is for the benefit of the corporation."

Much of the downsizing has been done through so-called the Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, which was Musk's brainchild during last year's campaign. Thousands of federal employees have been fired or pushed to quit, contracts have been canceled and entire agencies have been brought to a standstill.

Musk has succeeded in providing a dose of shock therapy to the federal government, but he has fallen short of other goals. After talking about cutting spending by \$1 trillion, he has set a much lower target of \$150 billion. Even reaching that amount could prove challenging, and DOGE has regularly overstated its progress.

He is expected to start dedicating more time to Tesla, his electric automaker that has suffered plummeting revenue while he was working for Trump. Musk told investors on a recent conference call that "now that the major work of establishing the Department of Government Efficiency is done," he expects to spend just "a day or two per week on government matters."

Musk, in his work for the administration, has continued a political evolution toward the right. Although the South African-born entrepreneur was never easy to categorize ideologically, he championed the fight against climate change and often supported Democratic candidates.

Now he criticizes "the woke mind virus" and warns of the collapse of Western civilization from the threats of illegal migration and excess government spending.

Musk's increasingly conservative politics are reflected in the polling. Only about 2 in 10 independents and about 1 in 10 Democrats view Musk favorably, compared with about 7 in 10 Republicans.

In addition, while about 7 in 10 independents and about 9 in 10 Democrats believe Musk has too much influence, only about 4 in 10 Republicans feel that way.

Mark Collins, 67, a warehouse manager from Michigan who has leaned Republican in recent years, said Musk "runs a nice, tight ship" at his companies, "and the government definitely needs tightening up."

"He's cleaning up all the trash," he said. "I love what he's doing."

Republicans are much less likely than Democrats to be worried about being affected by recent cuts to federal government agencies, services or grants. Just 11% said they are "extremely" or "very" concerned that they or someone they know will be affected, while about two-thirds of Democrats and 44% of independents have those fears.

51 deaths reported in Gaza from Israeli strikes, bringing the war's Palestinian toll to over 52,000

By WAFAA SHURAF and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Hospitals in the Gaza Strip received the remains of 51 Palestinians killed in Israeli airstrikes in the past 24 hours, the local Health Ministry said Sunday, bringing the Palestinian death toll from the 18-month-old Israel-Hamas war to 52,243.

Israel ended its ceasefire with Hamas by launching a surprise bombardment on March 18, and has been carrying out daily waves of strikes. Ground forces have expanded a buffer zone and encircled the southern city of Rafah, and now control around 50% of the territory.

Israel has also sealed off Gaza's 2 million Palestinians from all imports, including food and medicine, for nearly 60 days. Aid groups say supplies will soon run out and that thousands of children are malnourished.

The overall death toll includes nearly 700 bodies for which the documentation process was recently completed, the ministry said in its latest update. The daily toll includes bodies retrieved from the rubble after earlier strikes.

Israeli strikes killed another 23 people after the ministry's update.

Eight of them, including three children and two women, were killed in a strike on a tent in the southern city of Khan Younis, according to Nasser Hospital. A strike in the central city of Deir al-Balah killed four

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people, according to Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, and another on a tent there killed four children and a man, the hospital said. A strike hit a coffee shop near the entrance to the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza, killing at least six people, according to al-Awda and al-Aqsa hospitals.

"My son, my son, why did you go out, my son?" one man, Eyad Omar, said in Deir al-Balah as he mourned.

Israeli authorities say the renewed offensive and tightened blockade are aimed at pressuring Hamas to release hostages abducted in its attack on Oct. 7, 2023 that triggered the war. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed to continue the war until Hamas is destroyed or disarmed and all the hostages are returned.

Hamas has said that it will only release the remaining 59 hostages — 24 believed to be alive — in exchange for Palestinian prisoners, a lasting ceasefire and a full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, as called for in the now-defunct ceasefire reached in January.

Hamas-led militants killed around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, in the Oct. 7 attack and took 251 people hostage. Most have since been released in ceasefire agreements or other deals.

Gaza's Health Ministry says women and children make up most of the Palestinian deaths, but doesn't say how many were militants or civilians. It says another 117,600 people have been wounded in the war.

The overall tally includes 2,151 dead and 5,598 wounded since Israel resumed the war last month.

Israel says it has killed around 20,000 militants, without providing evidence. The military says it tries to avoid harming civilians and it blames Hamas for their deaths because the militants operate in densely populated areas.

Israel's offensive has destroyed vast parts of Gaza and displaced around 90% of its population, leaving hundreds of thousands of people sheltering in squalid tent camps or bombed-out buildings.

The FBI mistakenly raided their Atlanta home. Now the Supreme Court will hear their lawsuit

By SUDHIN THANAWALA and LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Before dawn on Oct. 18, 2017, FBI agents broke down the front door of Trina Martin's Atlanta home, stormed into her bedroom and pointed guns at her and her then-boyfriend as her 7-year-old son screamed for his mom from another room.

Martin, blocked from comforting her son, cowered in disbelief for what she said felt like an eternity. But within minutes, the ordeal was over. The agents realized they had the wrong house.

On Tuesday, an attorney for Martin will go before the U.S. Supreme Court to ask the justices to reinstate her 2019 lawsuit against the U.S. government accusing the agents of assault and battery, false arrest and other violations.

A federal judge in Atlanta dismissed the suit in 2022 and the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld that decision last year. The Supreme Court agreed in January to take up the matter.

The key issue before the justices is under what circumstances people can sue the federal government in an effort to hold law enforcement accountable. Martin's attorneys say Congress clearly allowed for those lawsuits in 1974, after a pair of law enforcement raids on wrong houses made headlines, and blocking them would leave little recourse for families like her.

FBI Atlanta spokesperson Tony Thomas said in an email the agency can't comment on pending litigation. But lawyers for the government argued in Martin's case that courts shouldn't be "second-guessing" law enforcement decisions. The FBI agents did advance work and tried to find the right house, making this raid fundamentally different from the no-knock, warrantless raids that led Congress to act in the 1970s, the Justice Department said in court filings starting under the Biden administration.

In dismissing Martin's case, the 11th Circuit largely agreed with that argument, saying courts can't second-guess police officers who make "honest mistakes" in searches. The agent who led the raid said his personal GPS led him to the wrong place. The FBI was looking for a suspected gang member a few houses away.

Martin, 46, said she, her then-boyfriend, Toi Cliatt, and her son were left traumatized.

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"We'll never be the same, mentally, emotionally, psychologically," she said Friday at the neat, stucco home that was raided. "Mentally, you can suppress it, but you can't really get over it."

She and Cliatt pointed out where they were sleeping when the agents broke in and the master bathroom closet where they hid.

Martin stopped coaching track because the starting pistol reminded her of the flashbang grenade the agents set off. Cliatt, 54, said he couldn't sleep, forcing him to leave his truck driving job.

"The road is hypnotizing," he said of driving tired. "I became a liability to my company."

Martin said her son became extremely anxious, pulling threads out of his clothes and peeling paint off walls.

Cliatt initially thought the raid was a burglary attempt, so he ran toward the closet, where he kept a shotgun. Martin said her son still expresses fear that she could have died had she confronted the agents while armed.

"If the Federal Tort Claims Act provides a cause of action for anything, it's a wrong-house raid like the one the FBI conducted here," Martin's lawyers wrote in a brief to the Supreme Court.

Other U.S. appeals courts have interpreted the law more favorably for victims of mistaken law enforcement raids, creating conflicting legal standards that only the nation's highest court can resolve, they say. Public-interest groups across the ideological spectrum have urged the Supreme Court to overturn the 11th Circuit ruling.

After breaking down the door to the house, a member of the FBI SWAT team dragged Cliatt out of the closet and put him in handcuffs.

But one of the agents noticed he did not have the suspect's tattoos, according to court documents. He asked for Cliatt's name and address. Neither matched those of the suspect. The room went quiet as agents realized they had raided the wrong house.

They uncuffed Cliatt and left for the correct house, where they executed the warrant and arrested the man they were after.

The agent leading the raid returned later to apologize and leave a business card with a supervisor's name. But the family received no compensation from the government, not even for the damage to the house, Cliatt said.

Martin said the most harrowing part of the raid was her son's cries.

"When you're not able to protect your child or at least fight to protect your child, that's a feeling that no parent ever wants to feel," she said.

Catholic faithful pay respects to Pope Francis as his tomb opens to the public in Rome basilica

By VANESSA GERA and SILVIA STELLACCI Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Roman Catholic faithful began visiting the tomb of Pope Francis on Sunday, filing past the simple white tomb in St. Mary Major Basilica a day after he was bade farewell by the powerful of the world and a crowd of hundreds of thousands.

A single white rose was placed on the tomb that said "Franciscus" — the pope's name in Latin. A light cast its warm glow over the tomb and a reproduction of the late pontiff's pectoral cross on the wall above it.

Rosario Correale, from Salerno, Italy, said that he experienced "great emotion" at witnessing Francis' final resting place.

"I see all the people are truly moved," Correale said. "He has truly left a mark on us."

People filed past, many crossing themselves or snapping photos with their phones. Ushers urged them to keep moving to accommodate the thousands who flocked to the Rome basilica to see the tomb, forming a long line outside.

Later in the day, a group of cardinals arrived in buses and entered through the church doors to pay homage to Francis at his tomb, and for an evening vespers service.

The tomb was opened on the second of nine days of official mourning for Francis, after which a conclave

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will be held to elect the next pope.

"Pope Francis for me was an inspiration, a guide," said Elias Caravahal.

Caravahal lives in Rome, but was unable to pay his respects to Francis when the body was lying in state in St. Peter's Basilica after his death on Easter Monday at the age of 88. He said that he visited the tomb "to thank him for what he has done."

A special Mass was also celebrated in St. Peter's Square on Sunday by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, until recently the Vatican's secretary of state. Parolin is considered a possible contender to be the next pope because of his prominence in the Catholic hierarchy.

"The shepherd whom the Lord gave to his people, Pope Francis, has ended his earthly life and has left us," Parolin said in his homily, delivered on the first Sunday after Easter. "The grief at his departure, the sense of sadness that assails us, the turmoil we feel in our hearts, the sense of bewilderment: We are experiencing all of this, like the apostles grieving over the death of Jesus."

The Mass was attended by a crowd estimated at 200,000, among them many young people who originally came to Rome for what was supposed to be the canonization of the first millennial saint, Carlo Acutis, during special holy days devoted to teenagers. Many groups of youths, some in scouting uniforms, attended Francis' funeral Saturday and again filled St. Peter's Square on Sunday.

No date has yet been set for the conclave, but it's expected to start between May 5 and May 10. Cardinals who traveled to Rome for Francis' funeral will be meeting regularly this week ahead of the conclave as they start to chart a way forward for the 1.4 billion-strong Catholic Church.

Francis chose his place of burial in St. Mary Major Basilica, near an icon of the Madonna that he revered, because it reflects his "humble, simple and essential" life, the archbishop who administers the basilica said Friday.

"Being able to see the pope and his tombstone today, it was really beautiful," said Amaya Morris, a tourist from Los Angeles. "I thought it was amazing that he wanted to be buried here in this basilica. Out of all of the ones, he chose this one."

'Sinners' bites off a phenomenal 2nd weekend as a 20-year-old Star Wars movie takes 2nd place

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Horror movies are often one-week wonders at the box office, but Ryan Coogler's "Sinners" is defying the odds and proving to be true event cinema.

In its second weekend in theaters, "Sinners" earned \$45 million in ticket sales from theaters in the U.S. and Canada, according to studio estimates Sunday. That's down a miniscule 6% from its Easter holiday launch, the smallest drop in any genre since "Avatar" in 2009. Worldwide, "Sinners" has now made \$161.6 million.

For the industry, the showing proves the film's reach has broadened beyond horror fans to mainstream audiences wanting to see what the hype is about. Last weekend, men made up 56% of the audience. This weekend, the gender divide narrowed to 50/50. Premium large format showings, like the 70mm IMAX screens, are also a big draw. IMAX screens worldwide accounted for some 21% of the second weekend globally, a nearly 9% increase from last weekend.

The original ensemble movie, starring Michael B. Jordan as twins, rode into theaters on a wave of great reviews. And, to be fair, "Sinners" isn't simply a horror film: It blends elements of drama, action and musical into its southern gothic milieu.

"That's one of the lowest second weekend holds for an overperforming wide release ever," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. "It's an absolute phenomenon."

Hollywood expects significant drop off in a movie's second week of release. Even a 50% dip is considered a solid number, baked into the movie math. When it's anything less than that, it's notable.

"You can buy a great opening weekend with marketing, but if a movie doesn't have the goods, it'll drop off," Dergarabedian said. "There's no greater barometer of success than a second weekend hold like this."

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The film was produced by Coogler's Proximity Media and Warner Bros., which handled the theatrical release. After some disappointments earlier in the year, it's the second major win for the studio after "A Minecraft Movie" helped energize the box office earlier this month.

"Sinners" easily topped the biggest new competition this week: "The Accountant 2," a sequel starring Ben Affleck and released by Amazon MGM Studios, which opened in third place with an estimated \$24.5 million in its first weekend. Gavin O'Connor directed the film, which played in 3,610 theaters in North America. Audiences gave it a promising A- CinemaScore.

The film that beat "The Accountant 2" for second place was a 20-year-old Star Wars movie: "Revenge of the Sith." The anniversary re-release took in an estimated \$25.2 million over the weekend, with many sellouts reported, more than doubling last year's release of "The Phantom Menace." Internationally, it earned \$17 million from 34 territories, giving it a \$42.2 million global weekend. It's one of the top grossing re-releases ever.

"A Minecraft Movie" landed in fourth place with \$22.7 million, bringing its domestic total to around \$380 million.

The scary video game adaptation "Until Dawn" also opened this weekend to an estimated \$8 million, rounding out the top five. Sony Pictures released the film, starring Ella Rubin and Michael Cimino, which has earned \$18.1 million globally.

The "Minecraft" and "Sinners" wins have meant a huge boost for the April box office, which is up 102% from April 2024. The annual box office is also up over 10% from last year after running at a double-digit deficit in March. And this is all happening right before the industry's summer movie season kicks off on May 2 with Disney's "Thunderbolts(asterisk)."

"There cannot be a better opening act for the summer movie season than this weekend," Dergarabedian said.

Top 10 movies by domestic box office

With final domestic figures due Monday, the following list factors in estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore:

1. "Sinners," \$45 million.
2. "Revenge of the Sith," \$25.2 million.
3. "The Accountant 2," \$24.5 million.
4. "A Minecraft Movie," \$22.7 million.
5. "Until Dawn," \$8 million.
6. "The King of Kings," \$4 million.
7. "The Amateur," \$3.8 million.
8. "Warfare," \$2.7 million.
9. "Pink Floyd at Pompeii -- MCMLXXII," \$2.6 million.
10. "The Legend of Ochi," \$1.4 million.

White House journalists use annual press dinner to celebrate First Amendment

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

There was no president. There was no comedian. What remained at the White House Correspondents' Association's annual dinner were the journalists and the First Amendment.

The stripped-down festivities Saturday night were a reflection of the somber tone in Washington at the beginning of President Donald Trump's second term, in which he has battled with the press on multiple fronts and wrested from the correspondents' association the power to decide which outlets have the most access to Trump.

Trump's deeper involvement in politics began after then-President Barack Obama roasted the New Yorker's presidential ambitions during the 2011 correspondents' dinner. He skipped the annual gala during his first term, and his absence had been widely expected this year.

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The association scrapped a scheduled appearance at this year's dinner by comedian Amber Ruffin after she referred to the new administration as "kind of a bunch of murderers" on a podcast last month. The organization, a nonprofit that helps White House journalists provide robust coverage of the presidency, decided to forgo the event's traditional levity and focus on celebrating journalism.

Association President Eugene Daniels said in an email to the organization's 900 members last month that the dinner was meant to "honor journalistic excellence and a robust, independent media covering the most powerful office in the world."

The event, which raises money for journalism scholarships, remains a highlight of the Washington social calendar. The ballroom at the Washington Hilton was still packed with journalists, newsmakers and even a few celebrities. Daniels singled out Debra Tice, whose son Austin has not been heard from other than in a video, released weeks after he went missing in Syria in 2012, that showed him blindfolded and held by armed men.

"We've been tested and attacked. But every single day our members get up, they run to the White House — plane, train, automobile — with one mission, holding the powerful accountable," Daniels said.

He later showed a video of past presidents, from Ronald Reagan to Joe Biden, who addressed the dinner, saying that the association invites the president to demonstrate the importance of a free press in safeguarding democracy.

Trump counter-programmed the last dinner during his first term, holding a rally to compete with the event in 2019, before the coronavirus pandemic canceled the 2020 dinner. This year, Trump had just flown back from Pope Francis' funeral in Rome and had no events Saturday night.

The Trump administration has had multiple skirmishes with the press in recent months. The FCC is investigating several media companies, the administration is working to shut down Voice of America and other government-run outlets, and The Associated Press has sued the administration for reducing its access to events because it has not renamed the Gulf of Mexico in line with Trump's executive order.

A federal judge has issued a preliminary injunction ordering the administration to stop blocking the AP from presidential events. In response, the White House adopted a new press policy that gives the administration sole discretion over who gets to question Trump and sharply curtails the access of three news agencies, including AP, that serve billions of readers around the world.

For many years previously, the correspondents' association determined which news organizations had access to limited space events.

Alex Thompson of Axios, who won The Aldo Beckman Award for his coverage of the cover-up of Biden's decline while in office, addressed complaints from some on the right that the press had gone too soft on the Democrat.

"We — myself included — missed a lot of this story, and some people trust us less because of it," Thompson told the room of journalists. "We bear some responsibility for faith in the media being at such lows."

Saturday's dinner also recognized the winners of a number of journalism awards, in addition to Thompson. They included:

—The Award for Excellence in Presidential Coverage Under Deadline Pressure (Print): Aamer Madhani and Zeke Miller of the AP, for reporting on the White House altering its transcript to erase Biden calling Trump supporters "garbage."

—The Award for Excellence in Presidential Coverage Under Deadline Pressure (Broadcast): Rachel Scott of ABC News, for her coverage of the attempted assassination of Donald Trump.

—The Award for Excellence in Presidential News Coverage by Visual Journalists: Doug Mills of the New York Times, for his photograph of Biden walking under a painting of Abraham Lincoln.

—The Katharine Graham Award for Courage and Accountability: Reuters, for its series on the production and smuggling of the deadly narcotic fentanyl.

—Collier Prize for State Government Accountability: AP for its series, "Prison to Plate: Profiting off America's Captive Workforce."

—Center for News Integrity Award: Anthony Zurcher of the BBC for his coverage of the fallout from Biden's handling of the Gaza War.

Pakistani troops kill 54 militants attempting to sneak into Pakistan from Afghanistan

By MUNIR AHMED Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistani security forces overnight killed 54 militants who attempted to cross into the country from Afghanistan, the military said Sunday, marking one of the deadliest such killings in recent years.

The military said in a statement that intelligence reports indicated that the killed militants were “Khwarij” — a phrase the government uses for the Pakistani Taliban.

Without directly blaming anyone, the military said that the slain insurgents had been sent by their “foreign masters” to carry out high-profile attacks inside Pakistan.

The insurgents were spotted and killed near the former stronghold of Pakistan Taliban near North Waziristan, a district in northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province along the Afghan border.

“This is the first time during the ongoing operations against terrorists that Pakistani forces killed terrorists in such a high number in a single day,” Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi told reporters. He praised security forces for carrying out a successful operation against militants and foiling possible attacks by them in the country.

“We had this information that the foreign masters of these terrorists are asking them to enter Pakistan as soon as possible” to carry out attacks. He stopped short of saying that India had urged the militants to enter Pakistan from Afghanistan.

Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif have congratulated security forces for eliminating the insurgents.

The military also said in the statement that the infiltration attempt came “at a time when India is leveling baseless accusations against Pakistan” following a recent deadly assault on tourists in India-controlled Kashmir.

In recent months, Pakistan has witnessed a surge in violence, mostly blamed on the Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan. It’s a separate group, but allied with the Afghan Taliban, which seized power in Afghanistan in August 2021.

Many TTP leaders and fighters have found sanctuary in Afghanistan since then.

Pakistani Information Minister Attaullah Tatar on Sunday told foreign media that New Delhi blamed Islamabad for the tourist attack to distract Pakistan’s security forces from their focus on the war on its western borders.

He said that New Delhi, without presenting any evidence, blamed Pakistan for the assault on tourists in Kashmir “to divert Pakistan’s attention from the western region.” He said that Pakistan had “undeniable evidence” about India’s backing for the Pakistan Taliban and Baloch Liberation Army, which is behind multiple attacks in Balochistan, including one on a train in which more than 30 hostages were killed in March.

Balochistan has been the scene of a long-running insurgency with the separatists seeking independence from the central government in Islamabad. Although Pakistani authorities say they have quelled the insurgency, violence has persisted.

Shedeur Sanders’ dramatic fall to Day 3 of the NFL draft is still baffling

By ROB MAADDI AP Pro Football Writer

Shedeur Sanders’ dramatic fall to Day 3 of the NFL draft baffled fans, analysts and some general managers and coaches.

Sanders was considered a top-five overall pick after finishing his career at Colorado, but he wasn’t even among the first five quarterbacks selected.

He slipped all the way to the fifth round without any obvious explanation, leaving everyone to speculate about his shortcomings and question whether Hall of Fame father Deion Sanders somehow scared teams

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away.

Shedeur Sanders was never involved in any off-field incidents, yet his character was criticized by various media outlets who cited unidentified sources in the weeks leading up the draft.

The Cleveland Browns ended up taking Sanders with the 144th pick after they were thought to be considering him at No. 2 overall. The Browns even selected Oregon QB Dillon Gabriel in the third round at No. 94 but then moved up in the draft to snag Sanders one pick before the Philadelphia Eagles were on the clock.

Though the Eagles have a franchise QB in Super Bowl MVP Jalen Hurts, Browns general manager Andrew Berry worked in Philadelphia with GM Howie Roseman and knows he's not afraid to take the best available player on the board.

That's how Hurts ended up on the Eagles in 2020 when Carson Wentz was already there. That doesn't mean Philly was targeting Sanders, but Cleveland had waited long enough.

"We felt like he was a good, solid prospect at the most important position," Berry said. "We felt like it got to a point where he was probably mispriced relative to the draft. Really, the acquisition cost was pretty light, and it's a guy that we think can outproduce his draft slot."

"I think, obviously, Shedeur has kind of grown up in the spotlight, but our expectation is for him to come in here and work and compete. Nothing's been promised. Nothing will be given."

Sanders, who played for his father in college, said all the right things after he was finally selected.

"Nothing really affected me the last couple of days, just really pushed having faith, understanding God really had me," Sanders said. "I'm blessed. Besides that, it's not really anything that changes. The love of the game is still the same. When you get on the field, it wasn't too much negativity being said. I know I've got to clean up some things in my game for me to be at my best, but that's why I take each offseason one at a time and fix it. So I think that was just outside of football getting in the way, but therefore I have an opportunity now. Then we're about to get on grass really soon."

Three team officials told The Associated Press on Friday they had first-round grades on Sanders. Another team executive said he gave him a second-round grade. All four had starting QBs. Broncos coach Sean Payton and Patriots personnel boss Eliot Wolf both said it was "surprising" to see Sanders drop that far.

Payton watched his pro day and said Sanders was "outstanding." Titans general Mike Borgonzi praised him. So did Steelers coach Mike Tomlin, though Pittsburgh kept passing him and wound up with Will Howard in the sixth round.

So what caused Sanders' unprecedented slide?

The knocks against Sanders' football skills are that he takes too many sacks, isn't athletic enough and doesn't have great arm strength.

Louis Riddick, an ESPN analyst who was a director of pro personnel with Philadelphia and Washington, called that "absurd."

"It's a personal discussion. It's whether or not teams are comfortable with everything that comes along with Shedeur in terms of who he is as a person, all the people that are surrounding him in terms of his inner circle and whether or not teams deem that something they're comfortable with," Riddick said on Saturday's broadcast. "Right or wrong, that's the only conclusion you can come to at this point because, obviously, it's a subjective argument as to what his actual physical skills are on the football field."

"But I think if you are trying to be objective about it, and remove everything else surrounding this young man and everything that comes along with him, he can play the game of football. This is a guy who's extremely accurate. He's extremely mobile. He has a lot of mental horsepower. He played the game at a high level. It's as simple as that, but if you go into this whole evaluation process and you're already biased toward feeling you want to emphasize the negative and I'm not saying that's the case for me, but if you want to emphasize some of the things that really don't have to do with anything on the football field and you get caught up in all the rest of it, it can start skewing your judgment as to what this young man actually brings in terms of value."

Sanders, like his "Prime Time" father, oozes confidence that can be misconstrued as arrogance. He probably made more money off name, image and likeness deals in college than he will in his rookie contract.

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His flash and style could rub some folks — maybe old-school assistant coaches — the wrong way.

But plenty of athletes are confident, bordering on cocky. Cam Ward, the No. 1 overall pick, turned to Tennessee's coaching staff after an impressive throw at his pro day and said: "I'm solidifying it."

Other players have had more controlling dads. Archie Manning forced the Chargers to trade Eli Manning to the Giants in 2004. John Elway refused to play for the Colts in 1983.

ESPN's Mel Kiper, who covered his 42nd NFL draft, had Sanders listed as the top quarterback on his board. He said he was "disgusted" by the free fall and spoke strongly about Sanders several times.

"I think there's a lot of perspective that isn't reality in regards to Shedeur and Deion," Kiper said.

Like him or not, Sanders will get his opportunity to prove the critics and the doubters wrong in the NFL.

Things to know about the US coal industry and proposed changes under the Trump administration

By JOHN RABY and LEAH WILLINGHAM Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — President Donald Trump's administration has proposed several changes that would affect the struggling U.S. coal industry.

Trump issued executive orders this month to allow mining on federal land. He has used his emergency authority to allow some older coal-fired power plants set for retirement to keep producing electricity to meet the rising demand amid the growth in data centers, artificial intelligence and electric cars.

The Republican president also granted nearly 70 older coal-fired power plants a two-year exemption from federal requirements to reduce emissions of toxic chemicals.

Trump's government efficiency team, run by Elon Musk, made plans earlier this year to terminate the leases of 34 U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration offices in 19 states.

Coal's decades-long decline

The coal industry once provided more than half of U.S. electricity production. But it has been in steep decline for decades as operators went out of business and utilities installed more renewable energy and converted coal-fired plants to be fueled by cheaper and cleaner-burning natural gas.

U.S. coal production was at 1 billion tons (907,000 metric tons) in 2014 and fell to 578 million tons (524 million metric tons) by 2023, the latest year available, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Coal employment nationally peaked in the 1920s when there were about 900,000 miners. It was at about 350,000 in 1950 and has declined steadily since 1980. After the coronavirus pandemic, employment rebounded from 2022 to 2023, rising 4.2% to 45,476. West Virginia employed the most miners at 14,000, followed by Kentucky at 5,000. About half of the nation's 560 coal mines are located in West Virginia (165) and Kentucky (112). Despite having just 15 mines, Wyoming was the highest-producing coal state due to mechanization and more accessible coal.

Mining fatalities over the past four decades have dropped significantly. There have been 11 or fewer deaths in each of the past five years, according to MSHA.

Targeting MSHA

MSHA is responsible for enforcing U.S. mine safety laws. It is required to inspect each underground mine quarterly and each surface mine twice a year. The cuts proposed by Musk's so-called Department of Government Efficiency would require MSHA inspectors to travel farther to get to a mine, and that could mean less thorough inspections, said Jack Spadaro, a longtime mine safety investigator and environmental specialist who worked for that agency.

According to the DOGE website, ending the MSHA leases is projected to save \$18 million. It is unclear whether inspectors' positions and other jobs from those offices would be moved to other facilities.

Seven of the MSHA offices set for closing are in Kentucky and four are in Pennsylvania. West Virginia is among the states with two targeted offices. Also under consideration for closure are the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement facilities in Lexington, Kentucky, and Tulsa, Oklahoma, shrinking the national footprint of an agency created during the Carter administration to restore land damaged by strip

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mining, and reclaim abandoned and damaged mine lands.

A recent review of publicly available data by the Appalachian Citizens' Law Center indicates that nearly 17,000 health and safety inspections were conducted from the beginning of 2024 through February 2025 by MSHA staff in the facilities on the chopping block.

What other uses are there for coal?

Industry advocates have long contended that there are other uses for coal, some of which use cleaner technology.

Canonsburg, Pennsylvania-based Core Natural Resources is working to develop a process using West Virginia coal to create a synthetic material that can be used as an anode for lithium-ion batteries, reducing U.S. dependence on countries such as China, according to Matthew Mackowiak, the company's director of government affairs.

Core recently acquired a company that turns coal into carbon foam that produces composite tooling used to make nose cones and plane wings for the U.S. defense industry.

"Whether or not there is any more coal-fired generation in the future, obviously that's something else to talk about in the future," Mackowiak said. "But at the very least, we need to be focused on maintaining our current coal fleet."

Trump's push to save the fading coal industry gets a warm embrace in West Virginia

By LEAH WILLINGHAM and JOHN RABY Associated Press

FAYETTEVILLE, W.Va. (AP) — The winner of this year's West Virginia Coal Festival teen beauty pageant walks among the ruins of a community abandoned 70 years ago and imagines the rusted remains of coal tipples and processing plants coming back to life.

Ava Johnson knows West Virginia coal will not ever be what it once was. But as she makes her way along overgrown railroad tracks near the abandoned Kay Moor mine in the New River Gorge National Park looking for spikes for her collection, the 16-year-old history buff says she has heard people talking with hope about the future of an industry that has brought good-paying jobs to her state for the better part of two centuries.

"You can't appreciate being a true West Virginian unless you realize that people risk their lives every single day to make ours better," she said.

Much of that renewed sense of hope is based on the actions of President Donald Trump, who earlier this month issued new executive orders aimed at reviving an energy source that has long been flagged by scientists as the world's most polluting fossil fuel, one that directly contributes to the warming of the planet.

Trump, who has pledged since his first run for the presidency in 2016 to "save coal," issued orders to allow mining on federal land and to loosen some emissions standards meant to curb coal's environmental impact.

"All those plants that have been closed are going to be opened, if they're modern enough," Trump said at the signing ceremony. "(or) they'll be ripped down and brand-new ones will be built."

The news was met with enthusiasm in West Virginia, where residents like Johnson say the coal industry is misunderstood and that they are tired of feeling unheard by their fellow Americans. But others do not think Trump will be able to fulfill promises he has made to some of his most loyal constituents.

Trump and his allies are "spinning a false narrative," said Tyson Slocum, who teaches energy and climate policy at the University of Maryland Honors College and is the energy program director for the nonprofit Public Citizen. He said market forces have shifted away from coal in ways that cannot be reversed, an opinion widely shared among economists.

"There's nothing that Trump can do that's going to materially impact the domestic coal market," Slocum said in a telephone interview. "The energy markets, the steel markets, have fundamentally changed. And learning how to adapt and how to provide the real solutions to the concerns and fears in coal communities would be a more effective strategy than promising them a return that isn't going to happen."

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At a coal exposition, renewed optimism

That was not the prevailing mood at a recent coal exposition in Charleston, attended by Johnson and many others who found encouragement in the Republican president's words, even if some expressed skepticism about his ability to make coal great again.

"For years, our industry has felt like it's been a little bit of a whipping boy, like a political, sacrificial pawn," said Steven Tate of Viacore, a company that makes an apparatus that helps mine operators limit the amount of coal dust in a mine. "We feel like we're finally starting to get the recognition that our industry deserves."

Some said Trump's orders demonstrated respect for workers who gave their lives in the mines — 21,000 in West Virginia, the most out of any state — and for a resource that helped build America.

"Trump stood his ground all the way through," said Jimbo Clendenin, a retired mine equipment specialist whose grandson started working in coal mining three years ago. "He said he was for coal. And a lot of people — even a couple of them here in West Virginia — said, 'I just think he said that to get into office.'"

"Now, nobody's got any doubt. He's for coal."

In recent decades, the Democratic Party's aggressive push toward clean energy led to the installation of more renewable energy and the conversion of coal-fired plants to be fueled by cheaper and cleaner-burning natural gas.

In 2016, Trump seized on the issue, promising to end what he described as Democratic President Barack Obama's "war on coal" and to save miners' jobs. It helped in West Virginia, where a majority of voters in every county supported Trump in three presidential elections.

Trump did not bring the industry back during his first term. In West Virginia, which employs the most miners of any state, the number of coal jobs fell from 11,561 at the start of his presidency to 11,418 at the end of 2020, perhaps slowing coal's steep decline but not stopping it.

Slocum said Trump can defang the federal Environmental Protection Agency and deregulate mining, but he cannot save coal.

"It's not the EPA, it's not Democrats that declared this war on coal," Slocum said. "It was capitalism and natural gas. And being honest about the reasons for coal's decline is the least we can do for coal-dependent communities instead of lying to them, which the Trump administration is doing. Sometimes people want to believe a lie, because it's easier than facing a hard truth."

A steady decline in jobs

In 2009, the EPA found that planet-warming greenhouse gases put public health and welfare in danger, a determination that new EPA chief Lee Zeldin has urged Trump to reconsider. Scientists oppose Zeldin's push, and Slocum said the endangerment finding and the need to move away from coal dependence "is not a theoretical debate. It is a factual, scientific one, albeit one that does not occur within the current Trump administration."

Still, there is no doubt that the culture of coal is woven into the fabric of West Virginia. A miner can be a coal industry worker, but also a sports team mascot, an image emblazoned on the state flag or the name of a breakfast sandwich at Tudor's Biscuit World.

In the 1950s, more than 130,000 West Virginians worked in the industry, which then had a population of around 2 million. Production peaked in 2008, a year before Johnson was born. But by then, the number of coal workers had dropped to 25,000, mostly due to mechanization.

Heather Clay, who runs West Virginia Coal Festival's beauty pageant and social media, said losing coal jobs — often six-figure incomes — was especially significant in a state with one of the nation's highest poverty rates.

"It's so much more than what people outside of West Virginia understand," she said. "They're always saying, 'Shut down coal,' 'Shut down coal.' So you want to shut down our economy? You want to shut down our families? You want to shut down our way of life? And it has, for a lot of people."

Innovation, not elimination

Trump and coal industry advocates say keeping coal in the U.S. energy portfolio is essential for maintaining the power grid, servicing growing demand from innovations like artificial intelligence centers and keeping America energy-independent.

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But John Deskins, director of the West Virginia University Bureau of Business and Economic Research, said it would take a significant shift in the underlying economics for it to make financial sense for utilities to build new coal-fired plants.

Natural gas is cleaner and cheaper, he said, and it's the direction most utilities are moving in. Earlier this year, First Energy announced plans to convert its two remaining coal-fired power plants to natural gas.

Johnson wears the sash and crown from her pageant victory over a black dress and sneakers as she traipses through the ruins of the abandoned Kay Moor mine. She talks enthusiastically about the industry's past, but also, occasionally, about what she thinks could be a brighter future for coal in West Virginia because of what Trump has done.

"I think that it will positively impact not just the industry," she said, "but people's lives."

It might be Carney vs. Poilievre to lead Canada, but Trump is unofficially on the ballot

By ROB GILLIES Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Donald Trump might as well be on the ballot when Canadians vote for a new government.

The U.S. president's trade war and threats to make Canada the 51st state have infuriated Canadians and led to a surge in nationalism that has helped the Liberal Party flip the narrative heading into Monday's parliamentary election, at least in opinion polls.

"Trump is the campaign," former Quebec Premier Jean Charest said. "The ballot question is who is the person we are going to choose to face Trump. Everything has changed."

Foreign policy hasn't affected a Canadian election this much since 1988, when, ironically, free trade with the United States dominated the political discourse.

Prime Minister Mark Carney, the Liberal leader who was sworn in on March 14 following Justin Trudeau's resignation, led in the polls heading into Monday, marking a dramatic turnaround for a party that seemed destined for a crushing defeat until Trump started launching broadsides at Canada's economy and sovereignty.

"We are in a crisis. President Trump is threatening Canada, he's threatening our companies, he's threatening our workers, he's threatening the savings of our retirees," Carney said Tuesday. "This threat is not only an economic threat, it is an existential threat."

Until a few months ago, Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre was seen as a shoo-in to become the next prime minister by shepherding his opposition faction back into power for the first time in a decade.

Trump's tough talk could hurt his ideological allies abroad

Charest, a moderate who led Canada's French-speaking province from 2003-2012, said if Trump wants to help his ideological allies abroad, he needs to tone down the bluster.

"At what point are the Trump folks going to think this thing through and measure what are the consequences?" Charest said.

"In the White House, they should sit down and think about the effect Trump has in the world," he added.

Carney has accused Trump of severing the close relationship that Canada and the U.S. long enjoyed.

Poilievre, meanwhile, would be "very much in sync" with the "new direction in America," said Alberta Premier Danielle Smith, a Conservative ally.

As such, Poilievre has offered a more muted response to Trump's rhetoric and economic maneuvering, imploring Canadians to deny the Liberals a fourth-straight term after what he described as "a lost Liberal decade."

What will the result of Canada's election mean for the US?

Trump has threatened to slap steep tariffs on Canadian goods, and both Carney and Poilievre said that, if elected, they would accelerate renegotiations of the countries' free trade deal in an effort to end the uncertainty hurting both of their economies.

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Carney plans to diversify Canada's exports and is reviewing the remaining purchase order of U.S. F-35 fighter jets to see if there are other options "given the changing environment." Carney visited Paris and London, not Washington, for his first trips as prime minister.

But almost 80% of Canada's exports go to the U.S.

"Let's be honest, if Canada does a remarkable job — a remarkable job — of diversifying trade, what is that going to look like?" said former Foreign Minister John Baird, noting that even shifting 3% - 5% over five years would be quite an achievement.

"Let's keep our eye on the main ball. They are 78% of our customers so we need to tackle that challenge," said Baird, a Conservative who works as a senior adviser at a law firm.

What do the polls say?

In a mid-January poll by Nanos, Liberals trailed the Conservative Party by 47% to 20%. In the latest Nanos poll, which was conducted during a three-day period that ended April 26, the Liberals led by 4 percentage points nationally and 6 points in Ontario, Canada's most populous province, which has 122 of the 343 seats in Parliament. The January poll had a margin of error 3.1 points, while the latest poll had a 2.7-point error margin.

Today in History: April 28, Abu Ghraib torture images made public

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Monday, April 28, the 118th day of 2025. There are 247 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On April 28, 2004, the world first viewed images of prisoner abuse and torture by U.S. troops at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, via a report broadcast on the CBS television news program "60 Minutes II."

Also on this date:

In 1789, mutineers led by Fletcher Christian took control of the ship HMS Bounty three weeks after departing Tahiti, setting the ship's captain, Lieutenant William Bligh, and 18 other crew members adrift in the Pacific Ocean.

In 1945, Italian dictator Benito Mussolini and his mistress, Clara Petacci, were executed by Italian partisans after attempting to flee the country.

In 1947, a six-man expedition led by Norwegian Thor Heyerdahl set out from Peru aboard a balsa wood raft named the Kon-Tiki on a 101-day, 4,300 mile (6,900 km) journey across the Pacific Ocean to the Polynesian Islands.

In 1967, heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali was stripped of his WBA title after he refused to be inducted into the armed forces.

In 1994, former CIA official Aldrich Ames, who had passed U.S. secrets to the Soviet Union and then Russia, pleaded guilty to espionage and tax evasion, and was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

In 2001, a Russian rocket lifted off from Central Asia carrying the first space tourist, California businessman Dennis Tito, and two cosmonauts on a journey to the International Space Station.

In 2011, convicted sex offender Phillip Garrido and his wife, Nancy Garrido, pleaded guilty to kidnapping and raping a California girl, Jaycee Dugard, who was abducted in 1991 at the age of 11 and rescued 18 years later. (Phillip Garrido was sentenced to 431 years to life in prison; Nancy Garrido was sentenced to 36 years to life.)

Today's Birthdays: Former Secretary of State James A. Baker III is 95. Actor-singer Ann-Margret is 84. Chef Alice Waters is 81. TV host-comedian Jay Leno is 75. Actor Mary McDonnell is 73. Musician Kim Gordon (Sonic Youth) is 72. Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan is 65. Baseball Hall of Famer Barry Larkin is 61. Golfer John Daly is 59. Rapper Too Short is 59. Actor Bridget Moynahan is 54. Actor Jorge Garcia is 52. Actor Penelope Cruz is 51. TV personalities Drew and Jonathan Scott are 47. Actor Jessica Alba is 44. Actor Harry Shum Jr. is 43. Singer-songwriter Melanie Martinez is 30.