

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Friday, June 20

Senior Menu: Meatloaf, baked potato, California blend, peaches, whole wheat bread.  
Legion at Milbank Tourney  
Jr. Teeners host Redfield, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

## Saturday, June 21

U8 Youth Baseball Tournament  
Groton Triathlon  
Legion at Milbank Tourney  
U12 at Webster Tourney  
U8 Groton Tourney

## Sunday, June 22

Emmanuel Lutheran worship 9 a.m.  
St. John's Lutheran: Worship at St. John's, 9 a.m.; at Zion 11 a.m.  
United Methodist: Worship at Conde, 8:15 a.m.; at Groton, 9:30 a.m.; at Britton, 11:15 a.m.; Coffee Hour, 10:30 a.m.  
Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS

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



Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.

Legion at Milbank Tourney

## Monday, June 23

Senior Menu: Parmesan chicken breast, rice pilaf, Italian blend, blushing pears, whole wheat bread.

Jr. Legion hosts Aberdeen Smitty's 16U, 6 p.m.

U12 B&W hosts Britton, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

U10 R&B hosts Milbank, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

U8 R&B at Columbia, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

Softball: U12 at Milbank, 6 p.m. (DH)

Olive Grove: Women's 2-Person Scramble

Community Blood Drive, Noon t 6 p.m., Groton Community Center

Senior Citizens meet at Groton Community Center with potluck at noon.

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

## Central Africa Deal

Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo agreed this week on a draft agreement to end fighting in eastern DRC. The deal—mediated by the US and Qatar—is due to be signed next week in Washington, DC.

The two countries have engaged in decades of conflict, since an estimated 2 million Hutus fled to eastern DRC following the 1994 Rwanda genocide and the rise of the Tutsi government. The most recent flare-up centers on M23, a Congolese rebel group widely believed to be backed by Rwanda. The group captured two cities this year—Goma in January and Bukavu in February. Over 7,000 people have been killed and more than 7 million displaced in the latest bout of conflict; over 6 million people have been killed since the 1990s.

The deal comes amid reports the US is pursuing a minerals deal with the DRC. The resource-rich country has the world's largest cobalt reserves, used in electric vehicles' lithium-ion batteries, among other key resources.

## Geneva Meeting

Iran's foreign minister heads to Geneva today to meet with counterparts from Germany, France, and the UK. The developments come amid ongoing strikes between Israel and Iran, with Iran striking a hospital in the southern Israeli town of Be'er Sheva and Israel striking Iran's Arak heavy water reactor and other nuclear-related facilities.

Europeans hope to secure concessions on Iran's nuclear program, after a UN watchdog report last month found the country had enriched 400 kilograms of uranium to 60% purity. The three European countries, known as the E3, participated in a censure of Iran over its nuclear program, the first such reprimand since 2005 and a potential first step to reimpose UN sanctions. The snapback process for sanctions—part of the 2015 Iranian nuclear deal the countries are still party to—expires in October.

## 'Jaws' Turns 50

Today marks the 50th anniversary of "Jaws," the pop culture phenomenon widely regarded as the first summer blockbuster, passing \$100M at the box office. It marked the second theatrical release from a young Steven Spielberg, propelling him to fame at the age of 28.

Located on the fictional Amity Island (and shot in Martha's Vineyard), the plot revolves around a police chief (Roy Scheider), a researcher (Richard Dreyfuss), and a grizzled captain (Robert Shaw) hunting a bloodthirsty great white. The star was arguably Bruce, a nickname for each of three 25-foot, 1,200-pound mechanical sharks. In addition to the on-screen action, the theme—a two-note score referred to as "da, duh"—has become synonymous with imminent danger.

The film more than tripled its \$3M budget and went two months over schedule, but ultimately grossed an inflation-adjusted \$1.56B.

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## Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Indiana Pacers top Oklahoma City Thunder 108-91 to even NBA Finals series at 3-3 with decisive Game 7 set for Sunday (8 pm ET, ABC).

Men's College World Series finals set; LSU to take on Coastal Carolina in best-of-three series for NCAA baseball title.

Los Angeles Dodgers deny ICE agents entry to Dodger Stadium parking lot ahead of tonight's game; Department of Homeland Security denies ICE presence, says federal agents were parked at the stadium for reasons unrelated to operations.

Justin Baldoni's legal team granted access to private text messages between Blake Lively and Taylor Swift amid legal battle over Lively's allegations Baldoni sexually harassed her on "It Ends With Us" set,

## Science & Technology

SpaceX Starship explodes on launch pad ahead of 10th test flight; official cause of blast under investigation, company cites "major anomaly."

Engineers develop method to double the tensile strength of carbon fiber-reinforced composites; materials are lighter than aluminum but stronger than steel, have applications in aerospace and vehicles.

Study suggests life persisted during "Snowball Earth"—a period around 700 million years ago when the planet was covered in ice—by living in shallow pools of near-freezing water.

## Business & Markets

Oil prices rise nearly 3% as Israel vows to intensify attacks on Iran while the US response to the conflict remains uncertain.

America's millionaire population grew by 379,000 last year to a total of 23.8 million, the most of any country, per new UBS report.

Switzerland's central bank slashes key interest rate by a quarter percentage point to 0% amid deflationary pressures.

## Politics & World Affairs

Federal appeals court allows President Donald Trump to retain control of National Guard in Los Angeles while Gov. Gavin Newsom's (D) lawsuit proceeds.

Trump extends cutoff for ByteDance to sell TikTok by 90 days; third extension brings new deadline to Sept. 17.

Hurricane Erick makes landfall in Oaxaca, Mexico, as a Category 3 storm, with winds of up to 125 miles per hour—the first major hurricane of the 2025 Eastern Pacific season.

Heat wave estimated to affect 255 million people across the US.

South Africa opens investigation into the 1985 kidnapping and killing of anti-apartheid activists known as the Cradock Four.

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## Groton Jr. Teeners 14U's Lincoln Shilhanek Takes Hit Streak Into Game Against Redfield Flickertails

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U's Lincoln Shilhanek takes a 10-game hitting streak into their matchup against Redfield Flickertails on Friday in Groton. It's set to be a double header starting at 5:30 p.m. Shilhanek has gone 13-31 during the streak with one extra base hit.

### Last Time Out:

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U fell to Clark Area 14U 8-3. Redfield Flickertails fell to Clark Area 14U 19-9.

### Player Highlight:

Gavin Hanten has played 17 innings at right field. Hanten has an on-base percentage of 0.417 this season thanks in part to a 0.222 average and three walks.

### About Groton Jr. Teeners 14U:

Groton Jr. Teeners 14U has a 6-5 record this season. TC Schuster's 1.434 OPS leads Groton Jr. Teeners 14U. The right-handed hitter has a 0.615 OBP and a 0.818 slugging percentage this season. Schuster leads Groton Jr. Teeners 14U with 10 and two-thirds innings pitched. The starting pitcher has a 0.66 ERA this season. Keegan Kucker leads Groton Jr. Teeners 14U with 87 total fielding chances this season. Kucker's primary position is catcher.

### About Redfield Flickertails:

Redfield Flickertails has four wins against four losses this season. Redfield Flickertails's Tate Neuharth and Tate Neuharth are tied for the team lead in OPS at 1.250 this season. Grady Hulscher leads Redfield Flickertails with nine innings pitched. The right-handed pitcher has a 3.89 ERA this season. Gentry Puffer leads Redfield Flickertails with 32 total fielding chances this season. Puffer's primary position is catcher.

## Groton Legion Post 39's Gavin Englund Takes Hit Streak Into Game Against 2025 Lake Norden/Badger Legion

Groton Legion Post 39's Gavin Englund takes a 5-game hitting streak into their matchup against 2025 Lake Norden/Badger Legion on Friday. Englund has gone 5-15 during the streak. The game set for 11 a.m. at the Milbank Tournament.

### Last Time Out:

Groton Legion Post 39 defeated Castlewood Post 250 5-2. 2025 Lake Norden/Badger Legion beat Badgers 2025 8-6 at Ortonville.

### Player Highlight:

Korbin Kucker hits and pitches for Groton Legion Post 39. Kucker primarily plays second base on the field. Kucker has hit for power this season with three triples and eight doubles among Kucker's 18 hits. Kucker has induced 10 groundballs on 21 balls in play this season.

### About Groton Legion Post 39:

Groton Legion Post 39 has played well lately, going 7-3 in their last 10 games. They have a 10-3 record overall. Kucker's 1.218 OPS leads Groton Legion Post 39. The right-handed hitter has a 0.491 OBP and a 0.727 slugging percentage this season. Englund leads Groton Legion Post 39 with 21 and two-thirds innings pitched. The starting pitcher has a 3.23 ERA this season. Karsten Fliehs leads Groton Legion Post 39 with 83 total fielding chances this season. Fliehs's primary position is catcher.

### About 2025 Lake Norden/Badger Legion:

2025 Lake Norden/Badger Legion has a 3-4 record this season. Kamden Keszler's 1.238 OPS leads 2025 Lake Norden/Badger Legion. The left fielder has a 0.571 OBP and a 0.667 slugging percentage this season. Turner Stevenson leads 2025 Lake Norden/Badger Legion with 13 and two-thirds innings pitched. Evan Schultz leads 2025 Lake Norden/Badger Legion with 40 total fielding chances this season. Schultz's primary position is catcher.

## Groton Legion Post 39 Claim Victory Over Castlewood Post 250

By GameChanger Media

Groton Legion Post 39 were triumphant over Castlewood Post 250 5-2 on Thursday.

Groton Legion Post 39 got on the board in the first inning after Korbin Kucker lined out, scoring one run.

Groton Legion Post 39 added to their early lead in the bottom of the second inning after Karsten Fliehs walked, and Teylor Diegel singled to center field, each scoring one run.

Gavin Englund stepped on the mound first for Groton Legion Post 39. The starter surrendered three hits and two runs (zero earned) over six innings, striking out nine and walking two. Kolby Davis led things off on the mound for Castlewood Post 250. The hurler allowed three hits and three runs over three innings, striking out three and walking five.

Nick Morris, Braxton Imrie, and Diegel each collected one hit for Groton Legion Post 39. Diegel went 1-for-2 at the plate and led the team with one run batted in. Fliehs led Groton Legion Post 39 with two walks. Overall, the team had a strong eye at the plate, tallying eight walks for the game. Imrie and Diegel each stole multiple bases for Groton Legion Post 39. Groton Legion Post 39 ran wild on the base paths, amassing eight stolen bases for the game.

Kaden Nedved, Nolan Eidson, and Quincy Thu each collected one hit for Castlewood Post 250. Eidson led Castlewood Post 250 with one run batted in. The right fielder went 1-for-3 on the day. Jarin Eidson stole two bases. Castlewood Post 250 stole four bases in the game.

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## Lawrence County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash  
Where: US Highway 14A, mile marker 40, Deadwood, SD  
When: 10:35 a.m., June 19, 2025

Driver 1: 73-year-old male from Lead, SD, fatal injuries  
Vehicle 1: 2011 Honda Ridgeline  
Seat belt Used: Yes

Driver 2: 59-year-old male from Deadwood, SD, no injuries  
Vehicle 2: 2022 Ford F-550  
Seat belt Used: Yes

Lawrence County, S.D.- A Lead, SD man died in a two-vehicle crash this morning on Highway 14A in Deadwood, SD.

The names of the persons involved have not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates the driver of a 2011 Honda Ridgeline was traveling west on US Highway 14A near mile marker 40 when the vehicle crossed the center line and collided with the driver of an eastbound Ford F-550. Both vehicles came to rest in the eastbound lanes.

The driver of the Honda was pronounced deceased at the scene. The driver of the Ford was not injured.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol is investigating the crash. All information released so far is only preliminary.

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

## Meade County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle injury crash

Where: Junction Avenue and exit 32, I-90 westbound off-ramp, Sturgis, SD

When: 1:51 p.m. Monday, June 16, 2025

Driver 1: 60-year-old female from Newcastle, WY, fatal injuries

Vehicle 1: 2015 Harley Davidson motorcycle

Helmet Used: Yes

Driver 2: 96-year-old female from Sturgis, SD, no injuries

Vehicle 2: 2014 Ford Taurus

Seat belt Used: Yes

Meade County, S.D.- A motorcyclist died June 18th as a result of a two-vehicle crash Monday afternoon in Sturgis, SD.

The names of those involved have not been released pending notification of family members.

Preliminary crash information indicates the driver of a 2015 Harley Davidson motorcycle was traveling west on Interstate 90 on the Exit 32 off-ramp near its intersection with Junction Avenue. A Ford Taurus was traveling north on Junction Avenue near the off-ramp. As the motorcycle entered the intersection, it collided with the Taurus, and the rider became separated from the motorcycle.

The motorcyclist was taken to a nearby hospital with life-threatening injuries and died Wednesday from those injuries. The driver of the Taurus was not injured.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol is investigating the crash. All information released so far is only preliminary.

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

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**People were coming and going during the Groton Community Transit Fundraiser held Thursday at the Groton Community Center.**





## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### **Prison group stuck between local opposition and limited space** **Mitchell and Worthing residents voice concerns as attention focuses on them following rejection of Lincoln County site**

**BY: JOHN HULT - JUNE 19, 2025 9:24 AM**

On June 3 in Pierre, a gaggle of Mitchell city leaders delivered an unambiguous message to the state's prison construction work group.

The city council, mayor, county commission, sheriff and various economic development officials were all in agreement: a patch of land south of Mitchell could easily host a new prison for 1,500 or more inmates, and their community would reap the benefits.

That wall of official support has since cracked under the weight of fierce public opposition.

A sea of people in red T-shirts – red for “stop,” like a stoplight – have greeted city council members and county commissioners during the public comment portions of recent meetings in Mitchell.

The Davison County sheriff withdrew his support within days. Mitchell's mayor pulled back shortly thereafter. Both men said their backing was provisional and subject to change by the will of the community.

About 50 of the people on hand for an informational session Tuesday night at Mitchell Technical College wore red T-shirts.

To hear Dwight and Barbara Stadler of Mitchell tell it, support for a prison in their town had never extended beyond leadership offices. Neither of them wore red T-shirts on Tuesday, but both are firmly in the anti-prison camp.

“They didn't tell us about it until after the fact,” Barbara Stadler said of Mitchell's initial pitch to the Project Prison Reset task force.

The opposition in Mitchell mirrors what state officials already faced in rural Lincoln County – and are beginning to face in Worthing – as they try to find space for a men's prison. The facility would ease overcrowding in the correctional system and replace the oldest parts of the Sioux Falls penitentiary, a facility that dates to the late 1800s.

#### **Other sites see pushback**

The selection of land for a new men's prison south of Harrisburg in late 2023 spurred the creation of a nonprofit organization whose activism contributed first to that \$825 million project's legislative defeat in February, then to the removal earlier this month of the land set aside for it from the list of possible sites for any future prison.

Neighbors Opposing Prison Expansion (NOPE) also sued the state in hopes of forcing it to abide by local zoning rules. A Lincoln County judge rejected that argument; the state Supreme Court is considering an appeal, though its ruling would now matter for future state-local disputes, not the dispute over that specific prison site.

No one in Mitchell has sued – the state hasn't decided to do more than study the land as an option – but community members have launched a Facebook group called “NO Davison County,” whose page is populated with skeptical dialogue about the prison idea.

The group had 1,200 members as of Wednesday afternoon.

#### **Prison group narrows options**

That Mitchell became a focal point at all is an outgrowth of a choice made at the June 3 meeting in Pierre.

The Project Prison Reset group, convened by Gov. Larry Rhoden to find solutions for overcrowding after the initial prison plan's legislative loss, left four locations on the table at the end of its meeting that day, culled from a list of more than a dozen: Mitchell, a separate Lincoln County site in Worthing, Springfield

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and Sioux Falls.

The latter two options would involve building on land the state Department of Corrections already owns, even though no tract of that land would be large enough for a prison the size of the one shot down by lawmakers in February. The request for proposals sent in April sought potential sites with more than 100 acres.

In Springfield, the state would need to build within the footprint of Mike Durfee State Prison, which is less than 70 acres altogether. In Sioux Falls, it could mean building another floor onto the penitentiary complex's Jameson Annex, on land adjacent to the penitentiary (less than 30 acres), or on land west of town currently used to house juvenile offenders (68 acres).

In addition to its vote to narrow down possible prison sites, the group opted to cap the price of any new prison at \$600 million – far less than the \$2 billion a consulting group called Arrington Watkins had suggested the state would need to spend on new facilities to address overcrowding over the next decade.

Members of the NOPE group were celebratory on social media over the removal of the initial Lincoln County site from consideration. Since then, the group has shifted the focus of its activism to Worthing, where task force members are considering a site off Interstate 29 that's not far from the original Lincoln County site.

The NOPE group discussed the Worthing site at a meeting in Canton on Tuesday. Today, the group will participate in an informational session at Worthing Elementary School.

Seven days ago, Worthing Mayor Crystal Jacobson came out against a prison near her city.

Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken said in 2023 that he'd prefer a new prison be built outside the city.

He was more measured at the first Project Prison Reset meeting in early April. At that point, TenHaken testified that he wasn't going to advocate "for a specific location," but predicted that the task force would face the kind of pushback that's since appeared from the neighbors to any site large enough to hold a new prison.

"No matter where you decide, you're going to have a fight on your hands," TenHaken said.

## **Less fight – but little space – in Springfield**

The second project prison reset meeting was in Springfield, and included testimony from residents who told the task force that the prison was a positive force for the town.

Lt. Gov. Tony Venhuizen and Corrections Secretary Kellie Wasko both took time at the end of the meeting to assure residents that the state's commitment to the Mike Durfee facility is solid.

The mayor of Springfield, Scott Kostal, was on hand for Tuesday's meeting in Mitchell and told residents not to fear a prison. The medium security facility in his town, once a university, has been a good neighbor, Kostal said, hasn't forced the city to pay more for public safety or infrastructure, and hasn't affected property values.

Kostal said he's been surprised at how much his town's property is worth.

"If there's a problem with property values going down because of the prison, will somebody please call the Bon Homme County Assessor's Office and let them know?" Kostal said Tuesday.

Springfield can't address the state's full slate of needs though, Kostal told South Dakota Searchlight in a Wednesday interview. There isn't enough space on the Durfee campus to build a 1,500 or 1,700-bed facility, which is what the most recent consultant's report suggests is needed to address overcrowding.

There is some green space inside the fence and a parking lot that could hold a few hundred more inmates, according to a previous consultant's report, but Kostal says anything more substantial would put vocational and educational programming at risk.

"The only way you could remotely do that would be to remove those buildings or eliminate those programs," Kostal said.

*John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.*

## South Dakota Legislature removes lawmaker addresses from website after Minnesota shootings

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - JUNE 20, 2025 6:00 AM

South Dakota legislative leaders recently ordered the removal of lawmakers' home addresses from the Legislature's website in response to the shootings of two lawmakers and their spouses in Minnesota.

The decision is about personal safety, said state Senate President Pro Tempore Chris Karr, R-Sioux Falls.

Legislative staff removed addresses, cities of residence and ZIP codes from lawmakers' profile pages and from a downloadable list of legislators. Lawmakers' cities of residence are still viewable on the "historical listing" section of the website, and Karr said the cities of residence could eventually be restored on the profile pages.

With so many other modern methods of communication, Karr said he doesn't see a reason why a constituent needs home addresses of legislators. He views that removal as permanent.

"Access is important to us, and I believe in our citizen legislature," Karr said, "but I think there are plenty of points of access that are easier than knocking on my door and scaring my family just in the hope that I'm here."

Other state legislatures have taken similar actions since the shootings. North Dakota, Idaho and Maine are among the states that have removed lawmaker addresses from their legislative websites. Colorado temporarily took down its public campaign finance database after dozens of elected officials requested their information be removed.

Some states, including Georgia and Louisiana, passed laws in recent years preventing their secretary of state from publishing residential addresses of people involved in political campaigns. Oregon lawmakers passed a bill the day before the Minnesota shootings to conceal addresses of elected officials and candidates.

South Dakotans can reach lawmakers by calling their Capitol phone number, by emailing their legislative address, by sending them mail at the Capitol address, or by personal phone for those that include their number on their profile page. About one-third of lawmakers don't list a personal phone number.

Karr said he has had angry constituents visit his home. Other lawmakers have had constituents approach their families or children, sometimes with verbal attacks, he said.

People who take the initiative to knock on a lawmaker's door about an issue are "usually upset and not the most conducive to conversing, discoursing and solving a problem," Karr added.

"We deal with people who get very upset and angry at us and like to blame us," Karr said. "I think you have to be aware and cognizant of that and not naive. There are people who take it too far."

*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.*

### COMMENTARY

## Political leaders too often enable violence after saying they condemn it

by Seth Tupper

South Dakotans should be grateful they're not represented by the likes of Mike Lee.

When the Republican U.S. senator from Utah heard about Saturday's murder of a Minnesota Democratic state representative and her husband, along with the wounding of a Democratic state senator and his wife, Lee's instinct was to politicize it.

On his personal X page (formerly Twitter), Lee described the shootings as a "Nightmare on Waltz Street," in an apparent attempt to connect the tragedy to Minnesota Democratic Gov. Tim Walz, whose name Lee

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misspelled. Lee also posted, "This is what happens when Marxists don't get their way," apparently implying that people with views on the far left side of the political spectrum deserved the blame.

Widespread criticism of the grossly false and inflammatory posts caused Lee to remove them on Tuesday. Yet he did not remove other posts with similar language about the shootings, including one that said "Marxism kills."

Unlike Lee, South Dakota's all-Republican congressional delegation responded humanely. Senate Majority Leader John Thune was "horrified" by the shootings, Sen. Mike Rounds was "disturbed," and Rep. Dusty Johnson was "appalled." All three condemned political violence in their public statements. South Dakota's legislative leaders also released a joint, bipartisan statement condemning the attacks.

I am grateful for that. But I'm also frustrated. I'm frustrated by politicians who condemn violence some of the time, and then enable it at other times with their silence and their votes.

Earlier this year, Thune, Rounds and Johnson stood by as President Trump pardoned or released from prison about 1,500 people who violently stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. None of the three men forcefully condemned the pardons, presumably because doing so would've harmed their standing with Trump and his supporters. At the time, all three of their staffs ignored multiple emails from me seeking a comment.

But they could not duck the questions forever. Thune had the toughest time dodging reporters, due to his leadership role. When a pack of journalists confronted him in a D.C. hallway, he avoided criticizing the pardons. "We're not looking backwards," Thune said. "We're looking forward."

Rounds went a little further, but not much, telling NBC News, "The president made that decision. You'll have to ask him. I will not defend it."

Johnson told South Dakota News Watch in February that "we shouldn't be condoning violence," but he did not directly condemn Trump for doing precisely that. Then Johnson pivoted to criticize former President Joe Biden's pardon of his son, Hunter Biden.

Republican legislators in South Dakota, meanwhile, have spent years enabling gun violence by eliminating every common-sense gun restriction our state ever had. Last winter, they passed laws allowing concealed handguns on college campuses and in bars.

Not every Republican has always fallen in line with their colleagues in the Legislature's super-majority party. Some have defended the decades-old societal consensus that there are places guns don't belong. Two examples leap to mind from the legislative session that ended in March.

Rep. Jim Halverson, a Republican from Winner and a former Highway Patrol trooper, spoke out against guns on college campuses.

"I have a really bad feeling about people in dorms with weapons," he said. "It feels to me like a recipe for disaster."

Rep. Steve Duffy, a Republican from Rapid City, spoke out against guns in bars while noting that he grew up in a family that owned a bar.

"This is crazy," he said. "When you mix booze and guns, I don't know how you can expect anything good to happen. Sooner or later, there's going to be trouble."

Halverson and Duffy didn't just condemn violence. They each voted against the bill they criticized, at great risk to their electoral fortunes in a party that's heavily influenced by gun lobbyists.

We need more of that if we're ever going to turn back the modern tides of gun violence and political violence. Having better sense than Mike Lee is a start, and issuing condemnations when it's the easy and obvious response is even better. But we also need condemnations when it's politically risky, and we need votes along with voices.

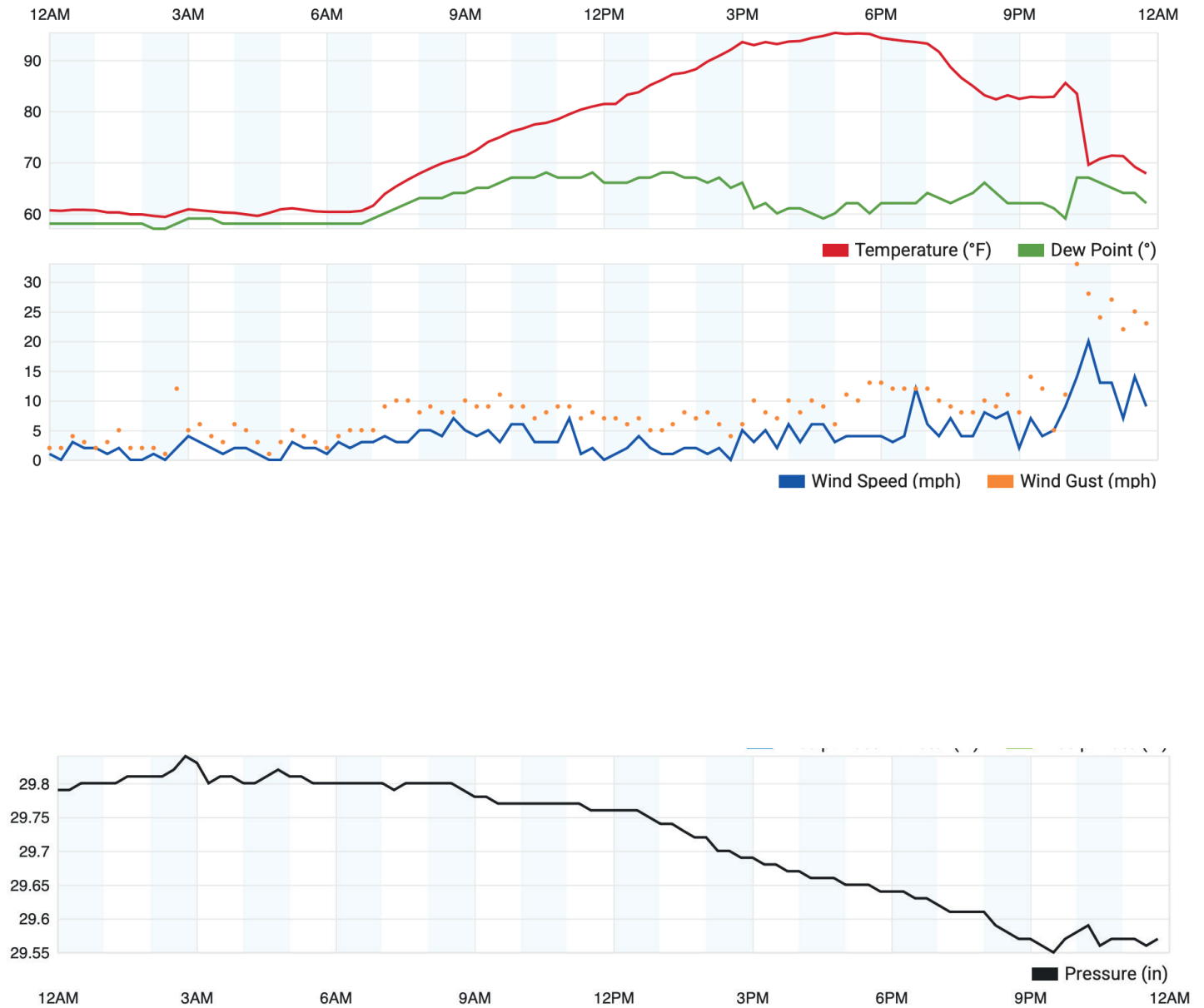
*Seth is editor-in-chief of South Dakota Searchlight. He was previously a supervising senior producer for South Dakota Public Broadcasting and a newspaper journalist in Rapid City and Mitchell.*



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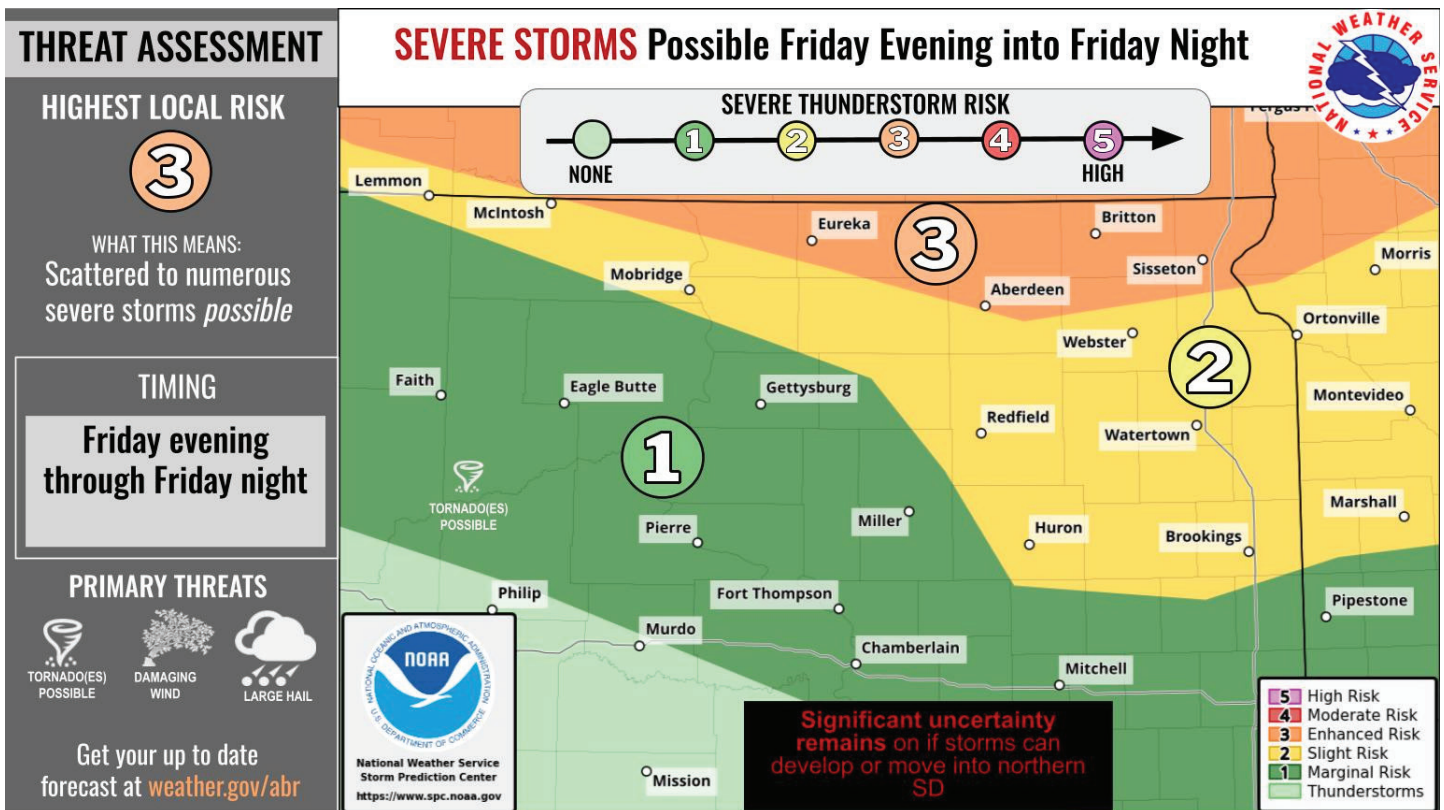
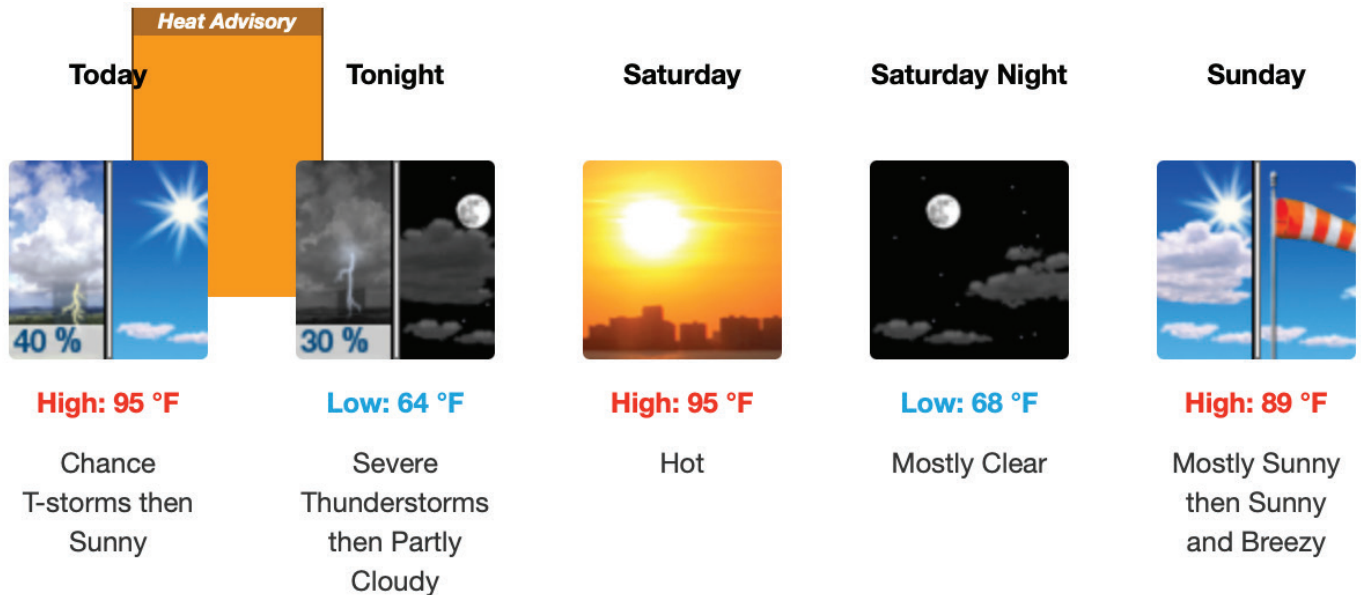
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Along and north of a warm front, scattered to numerous severe storms are possible Friday evening through Friday night. However, **SIGNIFICANT UNCERTAINTY REMAINS**. Why? It all depends on if the ingredients can come together to erode the warm air aloft (aka the capping inversion) to create a conditionally hazardous atmosphere. If the cap can break, supercells would be the main threat Friday evening, with tornadoes possible and large hail (up to tennis ball size), changing into more of a damaging wind threat (up to 70

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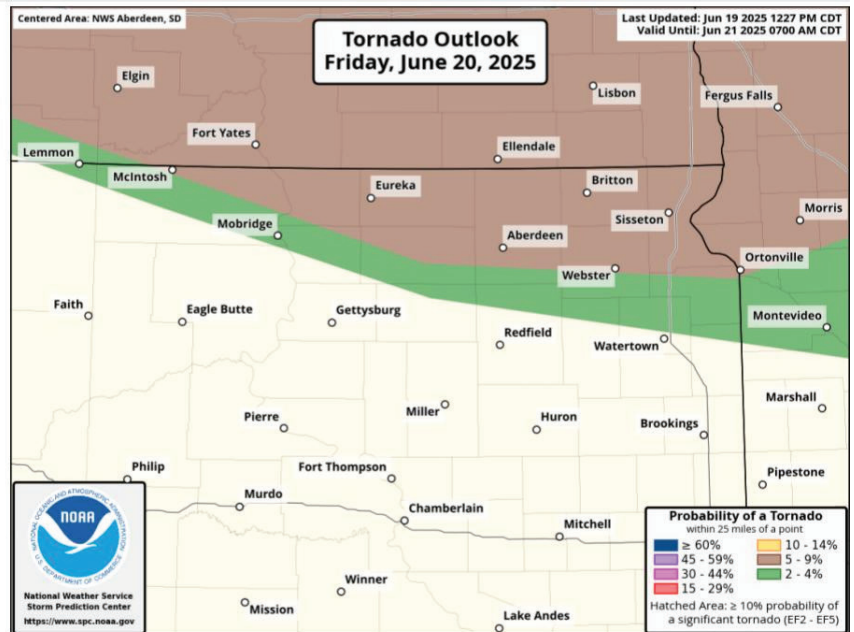
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## Tornado Risk Friday Evening

June 19, 2025  
4:53 PM

- Supercells may develop along and north of Highway 12 Friday evening north of the warm front
  - **Significant uncertainty remains on if these storms can develop**
- With any supercells that form, tornadoes will be the main threat
  - **Along and north of a line from McIntosh to Ortonville**
- Be Prepared: Monitor the weather for any changes to the forecast and know where to take shelter if storms impact your area



National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce

National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

## Heat Risk for Friday and Saturday

### Risk of Heat-Related Impacts

**Little to None**

- Little to no risk from expected heat

**Minor**

- This level of heat affects primarily those individuals extremely sensitive to heat, especially when outdoors without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.

**Moderate**

- This level of heat affects most individuals sensitive to heat, especially those without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.
- Impacts possible in some health systems and in heat-sensitive industries.

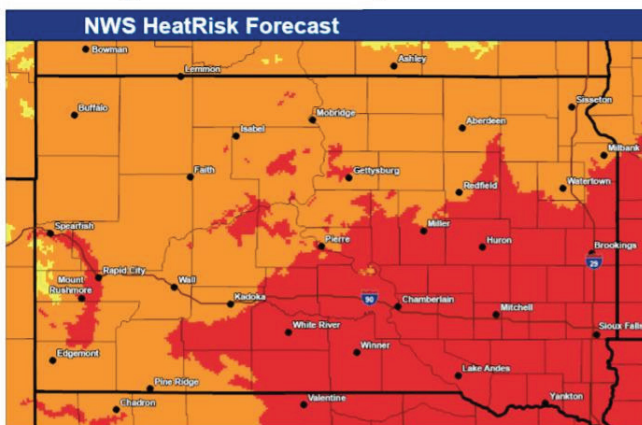
**Major**

- This level of heat affects anyone without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.
- Impacts likely in some health systems, heat-sensitive industries and infrastructure.

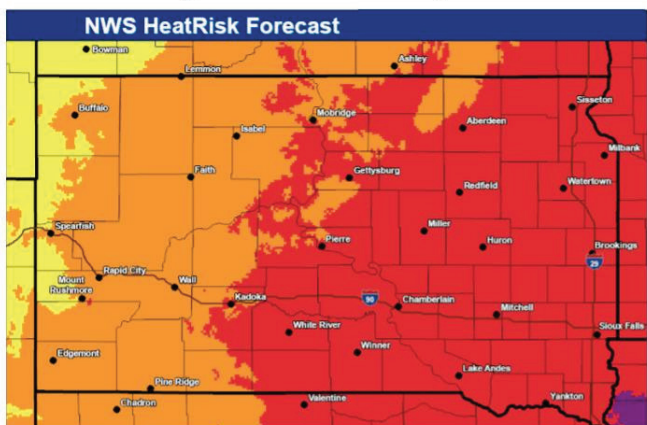
**Extreme**

- This level of rare and/or long-duration extreme heat with little to no overnight relief affects anyone without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.
- Impacts likely in most health systems, heat-sensitive industries and infrastructure.

### Friday- moderate to major Heat Risk



### Saturday- moderate to major Heat Risk



June 19, 2025 5:07 PM



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 95 °F at 5:02 PM**

**Low Temp: 59 °F at 2:22 AM**

**Wind: 33 mph at 10:12 PM**

**Precip: : 0.00**

Day length: 15 hours, 44 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 101 in 1988

Record Low: 34 in 1969

Average High: 82

Average Low: 56

Average Precip in June.: 2.42

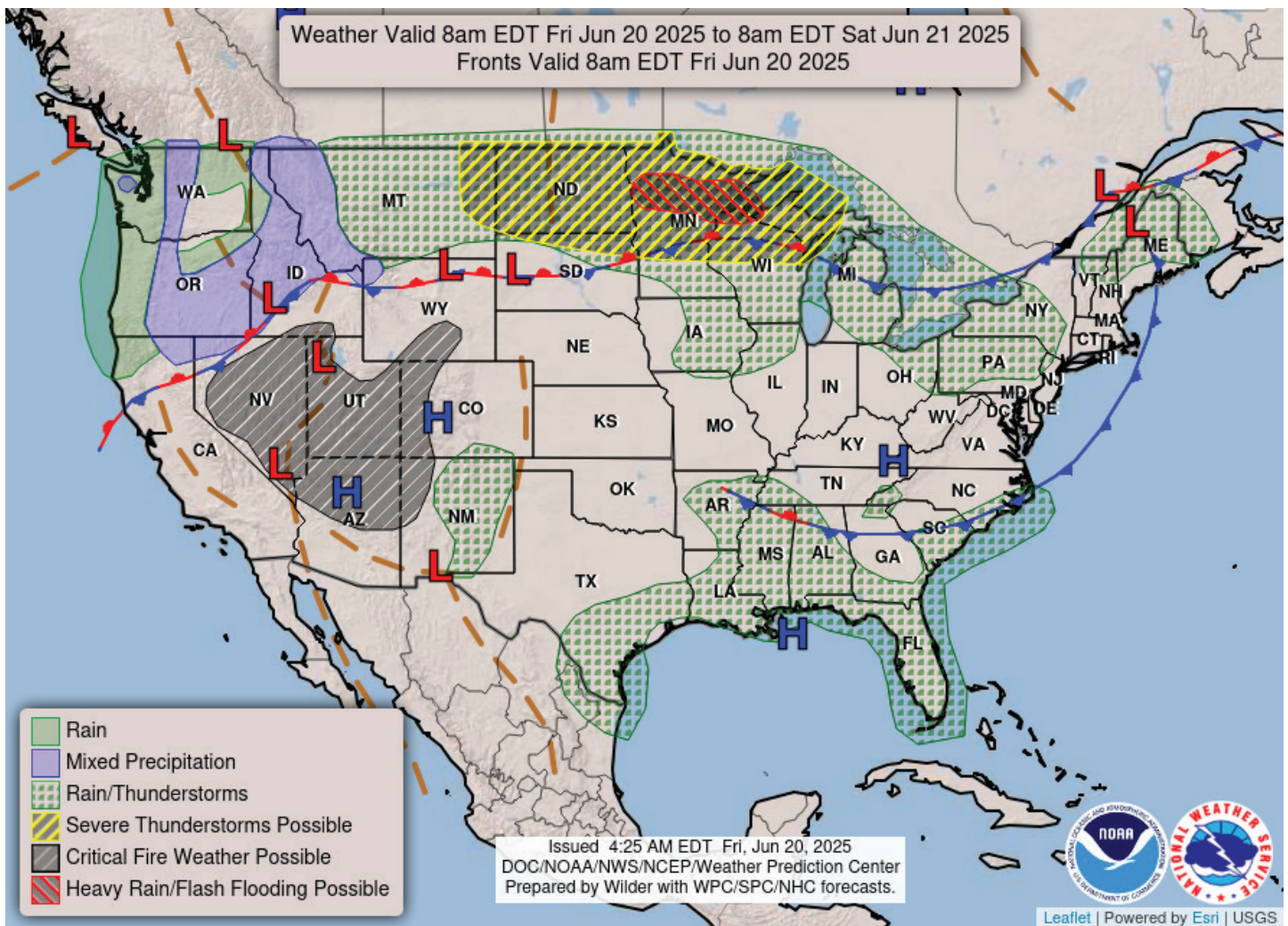
Precip to date in June: 2.54

Average Precip to date: 9.67

Precip Year to Date: 8.59

Sunset Tonight: 9:26:15 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:42:12 am





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## Today in Weather History

June 20th, 1957: An F2 tornado moved ENE from near Rockham to near Athol and Ashton. The storm destroyed a mobile home near the start of the path, killing one person. Four barns were damaged, and one house was unroofed.

Also on this day, an F5 tornado cut a swath through Fargo, North Dakota, killing 10 and injuring at least 103 people. The tornado was the northernmost confirmed F5 until the Elie, Manitoba tornado on June 22nd, 2007.

June 20th, 1989: A meteorological "hot flash" hit Pierre. Descending air from collapsing thunderstorms caused the temperature to warm from 86 degrees at midnight to 96 at 1 a.m. and 104 at 2 a.m. Pierre's record high for the date was 105 degrees in 1974.

1682 - A major tornado ripped through southwestern Connecticut, passing through Stratford, Milford, and New Haven, and then into Long Island Sound. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1921 - Circle, MT, received 11.5 inches of rain in 24 hours, a record for the state. The town of Circle received a total of 16.79 inches of rain that month to establish a rainfall record for any town in Montana for any month of the year. (The Weather Channel)

1928 - A farmer near Greensburg, KS, looked up into the heart of a tornado. He described its walls as rotating clouds lit with constant flashes of lightning and a strong gassy odor with a screaming, hissing sound. (The Weather Channel)

1964 - A squall line producing large hail swept through central Illinois. A second squall line moved through during the early morning hours of the 21st, and a third one moved through shortly after dawn. The series of hailstorms caused nine million dollars damage. Hailstones as large as grapefruit caused heavy damage to trees, utility lines, crops and buildings. The thunderstorms also produced as much as five inches of rain in an eight hour period. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Thunderstorms prevailed east of the Rockies, producing severe weather in the Central High Plains Region. Thunderstorms spawned four tornadoes in Colorado, and produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Goodland, KS. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thirty-eight cities in the central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Afternoon highs of 97 degrees at Flint, MI, and 104 degrees at Chicago, IL, equalled records for the month of June. Thunderstorms in North Dakota produced baseball size hail near Kief, and wind gusts to 100 mph near McGregor. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - An early morning thunderstorm produced wind gusts to 61 mph at Pierre, SD, and the hot thunderstorm winds raised the temperature from 86 degrees at midnight to 96 degrees by 1 AM, and 104 degrees by 2 AM. Butte, MT, and Yellowstone Park, WY, reported snow that afternoon. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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"How much more?" is a familiar phrase.

As in, "How much more do you want from me..." or "How much more of this do you think I can take..." or "How much more is there in life..." or "How much more can be done..." And the list could go on and on.

Those three words appear four times in the Book of Proverbs and the words, "How much less" appear twice. There are several lines of thought about their meaning: Some think they are too good to be true; some think they are overly simplistic; some think their promises are vastly overstated while others think they apply to the spiritual realm alone and are completely "future-oriented."

"If the righteous receive their due on earth, how much more the ungodly and the sinner," writes Solomon. Is there a simple message in these few words that we may try to complicate for the sake of discussion? Perhaps.

There is a popular opinion among many that some sins are not bad, or that they can sin and "get away with it." But that opinion is not supported by Scripture. Besides, when we want to know what sin is, where it comes from, and what to do about it, we do not go to psychologists or philosophers: We go to God's Word!

As far as riches and righteousness, sin and unholy living go, Solomon has some advice: "The righteous do receive their due on earth; how much more the ungodly!"

Jesus said: "What a man sows he will reap." Sow righteousness – reap God's blessings. Sow evil – reap suffering!

God will reward each of us for the way we live -now and in the life to come.

Prayer: Please, Lord, give me a desire to live a righteous life — a life that is worthy of Your unending blessings! May I walk in Your paths and always follow You! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Today's Scripture: "If the righteous receive their due on earth, how much more the ungodly and the sinner!" Proverbs 11:31

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

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.17.25

16 23 39 46 55 12

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$302,000,000**

NEXT 15 Hrs 51 Mins 50  
DRAW: Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.18.25

11 18 25 29 32 9

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$2,250,000**

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 6 Mins  
DRAW: 50 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.19.25

2 5 8 18 45 1

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT 15 Hrs 21 Mins 51  
DRAW: Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.18.25

8 15 23 25 28

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$32,000**

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 21 Mins  
DRAW: 50 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.18.25

13 15 17 36 66 10

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 50 Mins  
DRAW: 50 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 06.18.25

23 29 50 64 67 11

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$118,000,000**

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 50 Mins  
DRAW: 50 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  
09/6-7/25 Fly in/Drive in at Groton Municipal Airport  
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  
11/30/2025 Snow Queen Contest, 4 p.m.  
12/06/2025 Olive Grove Holiday Party and Silent Live Auction Fundraiser

## News from the **AP** Associated Press

### **A week into their war, Israel and Iran launch new strikes even as diplomatic effort gets underway**

By SAM MEDNICK, JON GAMBRELL and DAVID RISING Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Israel and Iran exchanged strikes a week into their war Friday as President Donald Trump weighed U.S. military involvement and new diplomatic efforts got underway.

Trump has been weighing whether to attack Iran by striking its well-defended Fordo uranium enrichment facility, which is buried under a mountain and widely considered to be out of reach of all but America's "bunker-buster" bombs. He said he'll decide within two weeks whether the U.S. military will get directly involved in the war given the "substantial chance" for renewed negotiations over Tehran's nuclear program.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi appeared to be en route to Geneva for meetings with the European Union's top diplomat and counterparts from the United Kingdom, France and Germany. A plane with his usual call sign took off from the Turkish city of Van, near the Iranian border, flight-tracking data from FlightRadar24 showed. Iran typically acknowledges his departure hours afterward.

Britain's foreign secretary said he met at the White House with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and envoy Steve Witkoff to discuss the potential for a deal that could cool the conflict.

Before his flight, Araghchi said on Iranian state television that his country was "not seeking negotiations with anyone" as long as Israel's attacks continued, underscoring the diplomatic challenges ahead. He also accused the U.S. of collaborating with Israel, noting that Trump regularly used "we" in social media posts and interviews talking about the attacks on Iran.

"It is the Americans who want talks," he said in comments Thursday that were broadcast Friday. "They've sent messages several times — very serious ones — but we made it explicitly clear to them that as long as this aggression and invasion continue, there is absolutely no room for talk or diplomacy. We are engaged in legitimate self-defense, and this defense will not stop under any circumstances."

He added that he expected the Switzerland talks to focus only on Iran's nuclear program, and that Iran's missile capabilities were "for defending the country" and not up for discussion.

French President Emmanuel Macron said top European diplomats in Geneva will make a "comprehensive, diplomatic and technical offer of negotiation" to Iran, as a key response to the "threat" represented by Iran's nuclear program.

"No one can seriously believe that this threat can be met with (Israel's) current operations alone," he told reporters on the sidelines of the Paris Air Show, saying some plants are heavily fortified and nobody knows exactly where all uranium enrichment is taking place.

"We need to regain control on (Iran's nuclear) program through technical expertise and negotiation."

Iran had previously agreed to limit its uranium enrichment and allow international inspectors in to its nuclear sites under a 2015 deal with the U.S., France, China, Russia, Britain and Germany in exchange for sanctions relief and other provisions.

After Trump pulled the U.S. unilaterally out of the deal during his last term, however, Iran began enriching uranium to higher levels and limiting access to its facilities.

Israel says air campaign will target more sites

Israel said it conducted airstrikes into Friday morning in Iran with more than 60 aircraft hitting what it said were industrial sites to manufacture missiles. It did not elaborate on the locations. It also said it hit the headquarters of Iran's Organization of Defensive Innovation and Research, known by its acronym in Farsi, SPND. The U.S. in the past has linked that agency to alleged Iranian research and testing tied to the possible development of nuclear explosive devices.

It also carried out airstrikes targeting the areas around Kermanshah and Tabriz in western Iran, where the military said 25 fighter jets struck "missile storage and launch infrastructure components" Friday morning. There had been reports of anti-aircraft fire in the areas.

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Iran did not immediately acknowledge the losses, and has not discussed the damage done so far to its military in the weeklong war.

"We are strengthening our air control in the region and advancing our air offensive," Israeli military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin told reporters.

"We have more sites to strike in Tehran, western Iran and other places."

Israeli airstrikes also reached into the city of Rasht on the Caspian Sea early Friday, Iranian media reported. The Israeli military had warned the public to flee the area around Rasht's Industrial City, southwest of the city's downtown. But with Iran's internet shut off to the outside world, it's unclear just how many people could see the message.

Damage from missiles in southern Israel

In Israel, the paramedic service Magen David Adom said Iranian missiles struck a residential area in southern Israel causing damage to buildings, including one six-story building. They have provided medical treatment to five people with minor injuries such as bruises, smoke inhalation, and anxiety, it said.

This comes a day after at least 80 patients and medical workers were wounded in a strike on the Soroka Medical Center in the southern city of Beersheba.

On Thursday, Israel's defense minister threatened Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei after the Iranian missile crashed into the hospital. Israel's military "has been instructed and knows that in order to achieve all of its goals, this man absolutely should not continue to exist," Defense Minister Israel Katz said.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he trusted that Trump would "do what's best for America." Speaking from the rubble and shattered glass around the hospital, he added: "I can tell you that they're already helping a lot."

The war between Israel and Iran erupted June 13, with Israeli airstrikes targeting nuclear and military sites, top generals and nuclear scientists. At least 657 people, including 263 civilians, have been killed in Iran and more than 2,000 wounded, according to a Washington-based Iranian human rights group.

Iran has retaliated by firing 450 missiles and 1,000 drones at Israel, according to Israeli army estimates. Most have been shot down by Israel's multitiered air defenses, but at least 24 people in Israel have been killed and hundreds wounded.

Iran has long maintained its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes. But it is the only non-nuclear-weapon state to enrich uranium up to 60%, a short, technical step away from weapons-grade levels of 90%.

Israel is widely believed to be the only Middle Eastern country with a nuclear weapons program but has never acknowledged it.

The Israeli air campaign has targeted Iran's enrichment site at Natanz, centrifuge workshops around Tehran, a nuclear site in Isfahan and what the army assesses to be most of Iran's ballistic missile launchers. The destruction of those launchers has contributed to the steady decline in Iranian attacks since the start of the conflict.

## UK lawmakers begin crunch debate on allowing terminally ill adults to end their lives

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British lawmakers began a crunch debate on Friday a bill to help terminally ill adults end their lives in England and Wales, before a vote that could be one of the most consequential social policy decisions they will ever make.

The vote, which is due to take place around 2:30 p.m. (1330 GMT), is expected to be extremely close, with those on both sides of the issue voicing confidence.

As things stand, proponents of so-called assisted dying have the edge. When Members of Parliament, or MPs, last voted on the issue in November, those backing assisted dying won by 330 votes to 275.

Since then, the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill has been scrutinized, leading to some changes in the proposed legislation, which is being shepherded through Parliament by Labour lawmaker Kim Leadbeater rather than the government.

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Divisive issue

In opening the debate, Leadbeater relayed how she had heard hundreds of stories from people who saw their loved ones die in traumatic circumstances.

"Not supporting the bill today is not a neutral act. It is a vote for the status quo," she said. "And it fills me with despair to think MPs could be here in another 10 years' time hearing the same stories."

Proponents of the bill argue those with a terminal diagnosis must be given a choice at the end of their lives. However, opponents say the disabled and older people could be at risk of being coerced, directly or indirectly, into ending their lives to save money or relieve the burden on family members. Others have called for improvements in palliative care and greater investments in hospices to ease suffering as a better and more moral alternative.

Diane Abbott, a veteran left-wing Labour lawmaker, urged MPs to "speak up for the voiceless one more time, because there is no doubt that if this bill is passed in its current form, people will lose their lives who do not need to, and they will be amongst the most vulnerable and marginalized in our society."

Passions were running high outside of Parliament where hundreds of people gathered to make their voices heard.

Supporters were dressed in clothing emblazoned with the phrase "Campaign for Dignity in Dying," while opponents held up banners urging lawmakers not to make the state-run National Health Service the "National Suicide Service."

The vote is potentially the biggest change to social policy since abortion was partially legalized in 1967.

What lawmakers are voting on

The Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill would allow terminally ill adults aged over 18 in England and Wales, who are deemed to have less than six months to live, to apply for an assisted death.

The terminally ill person would have to be capable of taking the fatal drugs themselves.

Proponents of the bill say wealthy individuals can travel to Switzerland, which allows foreigners to legally end their lives, while others have to face possible prosecution for helping their loved ones die.

How the vote may go

The outcome of the vote is unclear, as some lawmakers who backed the bill in the fall only did so on the proviso that there would be changes made. Some who backed the bill then have voiced disappointment at the changes, while others have indicated Parliament has not been given enough time to debate the issues.

The vote is a free one, meaning lawmakers vote according to their conscience rather than on party lines. Alliances have formed across the political divide.

If 28 members switched directly from backing the bill to opposing it, while others voted exactly the same way, the legislation would fail.

Timeline if the bill passes

Friday's vote isn't the end of the matter. The legislation would then go to the unelected House of Lords, which has the power to delay and amend policy, though it can't overrule the lower chamber.

Since assisted dying wasn't in the governing Labour Party's election manifesto last year, the House of Lords has more room to maneuver. Any amendments would then go back to the House of Commons.

If the bill is passed, backers say implementation will take four years, rather than the initially suggested two. That means it could become law in 2029, around the time that the next general election must be held.

Changes to the bill

Plenty of revisions have been made to the measure, but not enough for some.

Perhaps the most important change was to drop the requirement that a judge sign off on any decision. Many in the legal profession had objected.

Now any request would be subject to approval by two doctors and a panel featuring a social worker, senior legal figure and psychiatrist.

Changes also were made to ensure the establishment of independent advocates to support people with learning disabilities, autism or mental health conditions and the creation of a disability advisory board.

It was already the case that doctors wouldn't be required to take part, but lawmakers have since voted



to insert a new clause into the bill extending the provision to anyone.

The wording means "no person," including social care workers and pharmacists, is obliged to take part in assisted dying and can therefore opt out.

Government stance

There is clearly no consensus in the cabinet about the measure.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer has indicated he will back the bill on Friday. His health secretary, Wes Streeting, is opposed, but said he will respect the outcome.

There are also questions about how it would impact the NHS, hospice care and the legal system.

Nations where assisted dying is legal

Other countries that have legalized assisted suicide include Australia, Belgium, Canada and parts of the United States, with regulations on who is eligible varying by jurisdiction.

Assisted suicide is different from euthanasia, allowed in the Netherlands and Canada, which involves health care practitioners administering a lethal injection at the patient's request in specific circumstances.

## Food rations are halved in one of Africa's largest refugee camps after US aid cuts

By EVELYNE MUSAMBI Associated Press

KAKUMA, Kenya (AP) — Martin Komol sighs as he inspects his cracked, mud-walled house that is one rain away from fully collapsing. Nothing seems to last for him and 300,000 other refugees in this remote Kakuma camp in Kenya — now, not even food rations.

Funding for the U.N. World Food Program has dropped after the Trump administration paused support in March, part of the widespread dismantling of foreign aid by the United States, once the world's biggest donor.

That means Komol, a widowed father of five from Uganda, has been living on handouts from neighbors since his latest monthly ration ran out two weeks ago. He said he survives on one meal a day, sometimes a meal every two days.

"When we can't find anyone to help us, we become sick, but when we go to the hospital, they say it's just hunger and tell us to go back home," the 59-year-old said. His wife is buried here. He is reluctant to return to Uganda, one of the more than 20 home countries of Kakuma's refugees.

Food rations have been halved. Previous ration cuts led to protests in March. Monthly cash transfers that refugees used to buy proteins and vegetables to supplement the rice, lentils and cooking oil distributed by WFP have ended this month.

Each refugee now receives 3 kilograms (6 pounds) of rice per month, far below the 9 kilograms recommended by the U.N. for optimal nutrition. WFP hopes to receive the next donation of rice by August. That's along with 1 kilogram of lentils and 500 milliliters of cooking oil per person.

"Come August, we are likely to see a more difficult scenario. If WFP doesn't receive any funding between now and then, it means only a fraction of the refugees will be able to get assistance. It means only the most extremely vulnerable will be targeted," said Colin Buleti, WFP's head in Kakuma. WFP is seeking help from other donors.

As dust swirls along paths between the camp's makeshift houses, the youngest children run and play, largely unaware of their parents' fears.

But they can't escape hunger. Komol's 10-year-old daughter immerses herself in schoolbooks when there's nothing to eat.

"When she was younger she used to cry, but now she tries to ask for food from the neighbors, and when she can't get any she just sleeps hungry," Komol said. In recent weeks, they have drunk water to try to feel full.

The shrinking rations have led to rising cases of malnutrition among children under 5 and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers.

At Kakuma's largest hospital, run by the International Rescue Committee, children with malnutrition are

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given fortified formula milk.

Nutrition officer Sammy Nyang'a said some children are brought in too late and die within the first few hours of admission. The 30-bed stabilization ward admitted 58 children in March, 146 in April and 106 in May. Fifteen children died in April, up from the monthly average of five. He worries they will see more this month.

"Now with the cash transfers gone, we expect more women and children to be unable to afford a balanced diet," Nyang'a said.

The hospital had been providing nutrient-dense porridge for children and mothers, but the flour has run out after stocks, mostly from the U.S., were depleted in March. A fortified peanut paste given to children who have been discharged is also running out, with current supplies available until August.

In the ward of whimpering children, Susan Martine from South Sudan cares for her 2-year-old daughter, who has sores after swelling caused by severe malnutrition.

The mother of three said her family often sleeps hungry, but her older children still receive hot lunches from a WFP school feeding program. For some children in the camp, it's their only meal. The program also faces pressure from the aid cuts.

"I don't know how we will survive with the little food we have received this month," Martine said.

The funding cuts are felt beyond Kakuma's refugee community. Businessman Chol Jook recorded monthly sales of 700,000 Kenyan shillings (\$5,400) from the WFP cash transfer program and now faces losses.

Those who are hungry could slip into debt as they buy on credit, he said.

## What to know about BTS as the K-pop group returns from military service

By MARIA SHERMAN and JUWON PARK Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — It's official. All seven members of the massively popular K-pop group BTS have completed South Korea's mandatory military service.

Rapper Suga was the last of the bandmates to be released Wednesday from his duties as a social service agent, an alternative to serving in the military that he reportedly chose due to a shoulder injury.

This marks the official return of all seven members from their enlistment duties.

The six others, RM, V, Jimin, Jung Kook, Jin and j-hope, served in the army.

Earlier this month, four members of BTS — RM, V, Jimin and Jung Kook — were discharged from South Korea's mandatory military service.

Jin, the eldest BTS member, was discharged in June 2024 as was j-hope in October.

BTS is expected to reunite later this year. Ahead of that highly anticipated homecoming, here's what you need to know about the group.

The rise of BTS

BTS — short for Bangtan Sonyeondan, or "Bulletproof Boy Scouts" in Korean — debuted in June 2013 under the company Big Hit Entertainment, now known as HYBE. The seven-member group consists of RM, Jin, Suga, j-hope, Jimin, V and Jung Kook.

The group launched in 2013 with the hip-hop heavy single album "2 Cool 4 Skool," releasing three full-length projects before really gaining momentum with their 2016 album "Wings."

Their global breakthrough came in 2017 when "DNA" entered the Billboard Hot 100, making BTS the first Korean boy band to achieve such a feat. The song's success was followed by a performance at the American Music Awards, further fueling their international fan base.

The band is largely credited with bringing K-pop to the international stage, and with good reason.

Across their discography, BTS broke boundaries and records: In 2020, they released the five-time platinum "Dynamite," their first all-English single, which debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 — a first for an all-South Korean musical act.

At the height of their popularity, BTS was not only the biggest K-pop group on the planet, but the big-

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gest boy band overall.

Global appeal

In fact, they've been certified platinum many times over, according to The Recording Industry Association of America. Their platinum successes include:

- 2018's "Mic Drop;"
- 2020's "Map of the Soul: 7," "Love Yourself: Answer," and "Idol;"
- 2021's "Be," and song of the summer "Butter;"
- and high-profile collaborations "My Universe" with Coldplay and "Boy With Luv" featuring Halsey.

BTS has also been nominated for five Grammy Awards. Their first, for "Dynamite" in the best pop duo/group performance category, marked the first time a K-pop act received a Grammy nod.

As their global popularity grew, the septet also became international advocates for social justice.

Their 2018 address to the United Nations General Assembly launched the "Love Myself" campaign in partnership with UNICEF to combat violence, abuse and bullying while promoting self-esteem among young people.

The group's commitment to human rights activism continued in 2020 when they donated \$1 million to the Black Lives Matter movement, denouncing racial discrimination and violence. Their fan base, known the world over as ARMY, responded by matching the donation within 24 hours.

Their dual impact on music and social causes culminated in 2022 when they were invited to the White House to discuss anti-Asian hate crimes with President Joe Biden.

BTS' mandatory military service stirs debate

In South Korea, all able-bodied men aged 18 to 28 are required by law to perform 18-21 months of military service under a conscription system meant to deter aggression from rival North Korea.

The law gives special exemptions to athletes, classical and traditional musicians, and ballet and other dancers if they have obtained top prizes in certain competitions and are assessed to have enhanced national prestige.

K-pop stars and other entertainers aren't subject to such privileges.

However, in 2020, BTS postponed their service until age 30 after South Korea's National Assembly revised its Military Service Act, allowing K-pop stars to delay their enlistment until age 30.

There was heated public debate in 2022 over whether to offer special exemptions of mandatory military service for BTS members, until the group's management agency announced in October 2022 that all seven members would fulfill their duties.

Break allows time for solo projects

BTS tiered their enlistments, giving ample time for its members to focus on solo projects while the group was on a break.

Jin released two EPs, "Happy" in 2024 and "Echo" in May of this year. Suga dropped his debut solo album, "D-Day," in 2023 under his moniker Agust D.

Also in 2024, RM released his second solo album, the elastic, experimental "Right Place, Wrong Person," and j-hope released an EP, "Hope on the Street Vol. 1." Earlier this year, j-hope embarked on his first solo tour.

Jimin released two projects, 2023's "Face" and 2024's "Muse." V's debut album, the smooth alt-R&B "Layover," arrived in 2023, as did Jung Kook's retro-pop debut, "Golden."

## Mexico assesses damage from Hurricane Erick as rising rivers leave at least 1 dead

By FABIOLA SÁNCHEZ and LUIS ALBERTO CRUZ Associated Press

ACAPULCO, Mexico (AP) — Authorities in southern Mexico were still assessing damage and watching rising rivers as rain from the remnants of Hurricane Erick doused the region.

Torrential rains over steep coastal mountains and the landslides and flooding they could generate became ongoing concern for officials after Erick dissipated following a landfall early Thursday on a sparsely

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populated stretch of coast.

At least one death was confirmed late Thursday, a 1-year-old boy who drowned in a swollen river.

Erick came ashore down southern Mexico's Pacific coast in the morning as a Category 3 major hurricane, but it landed between the resort cities of Acapulco and Puerto Escondido.

Authorities reported landslides, blocked highways, downed power lines and some flooding as coastal residents, above all in Acapulco, took the storm seriously with memories of the devastating Hurricane Otis in 2023 still fresh in their minds.

With a steady rain falling on Acapulco, residents and remaining tourists emerged to walk outside or visit businesses opening gradually as the remnants of Hurricane Erick scraped by just inland of the resort.

In Puerto Escondido, fishermen searched for and inspected storm-tossed boats and residents cleared downed trees and other debris.

The threat of heavy rain remained in the mountains that rise abruptly behind Acapulco's famed beaches. Erick spent the day dragging through the coastal mountain range, dropping torrential quantities of rain.

It was expected to dissipate Thursday night over the mountains in Michoacan state.

Erick once had Category 4 strength

The U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami said Erick was centered about 155 kilometers (95 miles) north-northwest of Acapulco Thursday night. Its maximum sustained winds were 45 kph (30 mph), degrading it to a low pressure area. It was moving northwest at 20 kph (13 mph).

Erick had strengthened to a Category 4 storm as it approached the coast but weakened before making landfall to a Category 3.

Having doubled in strength in less than a day, Erick churned through an ideal environment for quick intensification. Last year, there were 34 incidents of rapid intensification — when a storm gains at least 55 kph (35 mph) in 24 hours — which is about twice the average and causes problems with forecasting, according to the hurricane center.

One death reported

President Claudia Sheinbaum said Thursday "the people have reacted very well so far."

But authorities warned the heavy rain would now become the problem.

Forecasters expected up to 40 centimeters (16 inches) of rain could fall across Oaxaca and Guerrero, with lesser totals in Chiapas, Michoacan, Colima and Jalisco states. The rainfall threatened flooding and mudslides, especially in areas with steep terrain.

Late Thursday, Guerrero state Civil Defense Director Roberto Arroyo said that a 1-year-old boy had died in San Marcos, an inland community southeast of Acapulco in the path of Erick. The child's mother had tried to cross a swollen river while carrying the child, but he slipped from her arms and drowned.

Residents venture out

Restaurants, shops and supermarkets gradually reopened in Acapulco, but schools were to remain closed across Guerrero on Friday as authorities continued to assess damage, clear debris and monitor rising rivers.

"Many of us were frightened, but now it has passed," said Juan Carlos Castañeda, a 49-year-old security guard at an Acapulco condominium complex. He said the "tragedy of Otis marked all of us."

Despite the rain, Castañeda decided to go out for a walk.

Down the coast in the fishing village of Barra Vieja, the wind-whipped surf battered the shore and heavy rain kept residents sheltered indoors.

Perla Rosas, however, was among the few who ventured out, umbrella in hand, to get to her job at a convenience store. "I feel more relaxed now, so I decided to come to work."

Acapulco still scarred by Otis

Acapulco residents had braced for Erick's arrival with more preparation and trepidation because of the memory of the devastation two years earlier.

The city of nearly 1 million was hit in October 2023 by Hurricane Otis, a Category 5 hurricane that rapidly intensified and caught many unprepared. At least 52 people died in Otis and the storm severely damaged almost all of the resort's hotels.



## Appeals court lets Trump keep control of National Guard troops deployed to Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES (AP) — An appeals court on Thursday allowed President Donald Trump to keep control of National Guard troops he deployed to Los Angeles following protests over immigration raids.

The decision halts a ruling from a lower court judge who found Trump acted illegally when he activated the soldiers over opposition from California Gov. Gavin Newsom.

The deployment was the first by a president of a state National Guard without the governor's permission since 1965.

In its decision, a three-judge panel on the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously concluded it was likely Trump lawfully exercised his authority in federalizing control of the guard.

It said that while presidents don't have unfettered power to seize control of a state's guard, the Trump administration had presented enough evidence to show it had a defensible rationale for doing so, citing violent acts by protesters.

"The undisputed facts demonstrate that before the deployment of the National Guard, protesters 'pinned down' several federal officers and threw 'concrete chunks, bottles of liquid, and other objects' at the officers. Protesters also damaged federal buildings and caused the closure of at least one federal building. And a federal van was attacked by protesters who smashed in the van's windows," the court wrote. "The federal government's interest in preventing incidents like these is significant."

It also found that even if the federal government failed to notify the governor of California before federalizing the National Guard as required by law, Newsom had no power to veto the president's order.

Trump celebrated the decision on his Truth Social platform, calling it a "BIG WIN."

He wrote that "all over the United States, if our Cities, and our people, need protection, we are the ones to give it to them should State and Local Police be unable, for whatever reason, to get the job done."

Newsom issued a statement that expressed disappointment that the court is allowing Trump to retain control of the Guard. But he also welcomed one aspect of the decision.

"The court rightly rejected Trump's claim that he can do whatever he wants with the National Guard and not have to explain himself to a court," Newsom said. "The President is not a king and is not above the law. We will press forward with our challenge to President Trump's authoritarian use of U.S. military soldiers against citizens."

The court case could have wider implications on the president's power to deploy soldiers within the United States after Trump directed immigration officials to prioritize deportations from other Democratic-run cities.

Trump, a Republican, argued that the troops were necessary to restore order. Newsom, a Democrat, said the move inflamed tensions, usurped local authority and wasted resources. The protests have since appeared to be winding down.

Two judges on the appeals panel were appointed by Trump during his first term. During oral arguments Tuesday, all three judges suggested that presidents have wide latitude under the federal law at issue and that courts should be reluctant to step in.

The case started when Newsom sued to block Trump's command, and he won an early victory from U.S. District Judge Charles Breyer in San Francisco.

Breyer found that Trump had overstepped his legal authority, which he said only allows presidents can take control during times of "rebellion or danger of a rebellion."

"The protests in Los Angeles fall far short of 'rebellion,'" wrote Breyer, who was appointed by former President Bill Clinton and is brother to retired Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer.

The Trump administration, though, argued that courts can't second guess the president's decisions and quickly secured a temporary halt from the appeals court.

The ruling means control of the California National Guard will stay in federal hands as the lawsuit continues to unfold.



## 10 years after Europe's migration crisis, the fallout reverberates in Greece and beyond

By DEREK GATOPOULOS, LEFTERIS PITARAKIS and RENATA BRITO Associated Press

LESBOS, Greece (AP) — Fleeing Iran with her husband and toddler, Amena Namjoyan reached a rocky beach of this eastern Greek island along with hundreds of thousands of others. For months, their arrival overwhelmed Lesbos. Boats fell apart, fishermen dove to save people from drowning, and local grandmothers bottle-fed newly arrived babies.

Namjoyan spent months in an overcrowded camp. She learned Greek. She struggled with illness and depression as her marriage collapsed. She tried to make a fresh start in Germany but eventually returned to Lesbos, the island that first embraced her. Today, she works at a restaurant, preparing Iranian dishes that locals devour, even if they struggle to pronounce the names. Her second child tells her, "I'm Greek."

"Greece is close to my culture, and I feel good here," Namjoyan said. "I am proud of myself."

In 2015, more than 1 million migrants and refugees arrived in Europe — the majority by sea, landing in Lesbos, where the north shore is just 10 kilometers (6 miles) from Turkey. The influx of men, women and children fleeing war and poverty sparked a humanitarian crisis that shook the European Union to its core. A decade later, the fallout still reverberates on the island and beyond.

For many, Greece was a place of transit. They continued on to northern and western Europe. Many who applied for asylum were granted international protection; thousands became European citizens. Countless more were rejected, languishing for years in migrant camps or living in the streets. Some returned to their home countries. Others were kicked out of the European Union.

For Namjoyan, Lesbos is a welcoming place — many islanders share a refugee ancestry, and it helps that she speaks their language. But migration policy in Greece, like much of Europe, has shifted toward deterrence in the decade since the crisis. Far fewer people are arriving illegally. Officials and politicians have maintained that strong borders are needed. Critics say enforcement has gone too far and violates fundamental EU rights and values.

"Migration is now at the top of the political agenda, which it didn't use to be before 2015," said Camille Le Coz Director of the Migration Policy Institute Europe, noting changing EU alliances. "We are seeing a shift toward the right of the political spectrum."

A humanitarian crisis turned into a political one

In 2015, boat after boat crowded with refugees crashed onto the doorstep of Elpiniki Laoumi, who runs a fish tavern across from a Lesbos beach. She fed them, gave them water, made meals for aid organizations.

"You would look at them and think of them as your own children," said Laoumi, whose tavern walls today are decorated with thank-you notes.

From 2015 to 2016, the peak of the migration crisis, more than 1 million people entered Europe through Greece alone. The immediate humanitarian crisis — to feed, shelter and care for so many people at once — grew into a long-term political one.

Greece was reeling from a crippling economic crisis. The influx added to anger against established political parties, fueling the rise of once-fringe populist forces.

EU nations fought over sharing responsibility for asylum seekers. The bloc's unity cracked as some member states flatly refused to take migrants. Anti-migration voices calling for closed borders became louder.

Today, illegal migration is down across Europe

While illegal migration to Greece has fluctuated, numbers are nowhere near 2015-16 figures, according to the International Organization for Migration. Smugglers adapted to heightened surveillance, shifting to more dangerous routes.

Overall, irregular EU border crossings decreased by nearly 40% last year and continue to fall, according to EU border and coast guard agency Frontex.

That hasn't stopped politicians from focusing on — and sometimes fearmongering over — migration. This month, the Dutch government collapsed after a populist far-right lawmaker withdrew his party's ministers

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over migration policy.

In Greece, the new far-right migration minister has threatened rejected asylum seekers with jail time.

A few miles from where Namjoyan now lives, in a forest of pine and olive trees, is a new EU-funded migrant center. It's one of the largest in Greece and can house up to 5,000 people.

Greek officials denied an Associated Press request to visit. Its opening is blocked, for now, by court challenges.

Some locals say the remote location seems deliberate — to keep migrants out of sight and out of mind.

"We don't believe such massive facilities are needed here. And the location is the worst possible — deep inside a forest," said Panagiotis Christofas, mayor of Lesbos' capital, Mytilene. "We're against it, and I believe that's the prevailing sentiment in our community."

A focus on border security

For most of Europe, migration efforts focus on border security and surveillance.

The European Commission this year greenlighted the creation of "return" hubs — a euphemism for deportation centers — for rejected asylum seekers. Italy has sent unwanted migrants to its centers in Albania, even as that faces legal challenges.

Governments have resumed building walls and boosting surveillance in ways unseen since the Cold War.

In 2015, Frontex was a small administrative office in Warsaw. Now, it's the EU's biggest agency, with 10,000 armed border guards, helicopters, drones and an annual budget of over 1 billion euros.

On other issues of migration — reception, asylum and integration, for example — EU nations are largely divided.

The legacy of Lesbos

Last year, EU nations approved a migration and asylum pact laying out common rules for the bloc's 27 countries on screening, asylum, detention and deportation of people trying to enter without authorization, among other things.

"The Lesbos crisis of 2015 was, in a way, the birth certificate of the European migration and asylum policy," Margaritis Schinas, a former European Commission vice president and a chief pact architect, told AP.

He said that after years of fruitless negotiations, he's proud of the landmark compromise.

"We didn't have a system," Schinas said. "Europe's gates had been crashed."

The deal, endorsed by the United Nations refugee agency, takes effect next year. Critics say it made concessions to hardliners. Human rights organizations say it will increase detention and erode the right to seek asylum.

Some organizations also criticize the "externalization" of EU border management — agreements with countries across the Mediterranean to aggressively patrol their coasts and hold migrants back in exchange for financial assistance.

The deals have expanded, from Turkey to the Middle East and across Africa. Human rights groups say autocratic governments are pocketing billions and often subject the displaced to appalling conditions.

Lesbos still sees some migrants arrive

Lesbos' 80,000 residents look back at the 2015 crisis with mixed feelings.

Fisherman Stratos Valamios saved some children. Others drowned just beyond his reach, their bodies still warm as he carried them to shore.

"What's changed from back then to now, 10 years on? Nothing," he said. "What I feel is anger — that such things can happen, that babies can drown."

Those who died crossing to Lesbos are buried in two cemeteries, their graves marked as "unknown."

Tiny shoes and empty juice boxes with faded Turkish labels can still be found on the northern coast. So can black doughnut-shaped inner tubes, given by smugglers as crude life preservers for children. At Moria, a refugee camp destroyed by fire in 2020, children's drawings remain on gutted building walls.

Migrants still arrive, and sometimes die, on these shores. Lesbos began to adapt to a quieter, more measured flow of newcomers.

Efi Latsoudi, who runs a network helping migrants learn Greek and find jobs, hopes Lesbos' tradition of helping outsiders in need will outlast national policies.

"The way things are developing, it's not friendly for newcomers to integrate into Greek society," Latsoudi said. "We need to do something. ... I believe there is hope."

## **Pacers roll past Thunder 108-91 to send the NBA Finals to a deciding Game 7**

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Season on the line, the Indiana Pacers did what they've done time and time again. They bucked the odds.

And the NBA Finals are going to an ultimate game.

Obi Toppin scored 20 points, Andrew Nembhard added 17 and the Pacers forced a winner-take-all Game 7 by rolling past the Oklahoma City Thunder 108-91 on Thursday night.

The first Game 7 in the NBA Finals since 2016 is Sunday night in Oklahoma City.

"The ultimate game," Pacers coach Rick Carlisle said.

Pascal Siakam had 16 points and 13 rebounds for Indiana, while Tyrese Haliburton — playing through a strained calf — scored 14 points. The Pacers started slowly and then turned things into a blowout.

Game 6 was a microcosm of Indiana's season in a way. The Pacers started the regular season with 15 losses in 25 games, have had five comebacks from 15 or more down to win games in these playoffs, and they're one win from a title.

"We just wanted to protect home court," Haliburton said. "We didn't want to see these guys celebrate a championship on our home floor. Backs against the wall and we just responded. ... Total team effort."

TJ McConnell, the spark off the bench again, finished with 12 points, nine rebounds and six assists for Indiana.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 21 points for the Thunder, who pulled their starters after getting down by 30 going into the fourth. Jalen Williams added 16.

"Credit Indiana," Thunder coach Mark Daigneault said. "They earned the win. They outplayed us for most of the 48 minutes. They went out there and attacked the game."

Good news for the Thunder: home teams are 15-4 in finals Game 7s. Bad news for the Thunder: Cleveland won at Golden State in the most recent of those and one of the three other home-team losses was in 1978 — by Seattle, the franchise that would move to Oklahoma City three decades later.

Indiana missed its first eight shots and got down 10-2. The arena, roaring just a few minutes before at the start, quieted quickly. Hall of Famer Reggie Miller, sitting courtside in a Jalen Rose Pacers jersey, was pacing, kneeling, generally acting more nervous than he ever seemed as a player.

No need.

After the slow start, the Pacers outscored the Thunder 68-32 over the next 24 minutes. An Indiana team that hadn't led by more than 10 points at any time in the first five games — and that double-digit lead was brief — led by 28 early in the third quarter. The margin eventually got to 31, which was Oklahoma City's second-biggest deficit of the season.

The worst also came in these playoffs: a 45-point hole against Minnesota in the Western Conference finals. The Thunder came back to win that series, obviously, and now will need that bounce-back ability one more time.

"Obviously, it was a very poor performance by us," Daigneault said.

The Thunder, desperate for a spark, put Alex Caruso in the starting lineup in place of Isaiah Hartenstein to open the second half. There was no spark. In fact, there was nothing whatsoever — neither team scored in the first 3:53 after halftime, the sides combining to miss their first 13 shots of the third quarter.

And the outcome was never in doubt.

## Erick turns rainmaker after hitting Mexico's Pacific coast as a strong hurricane. 1 dead

By FABIOLA SÁNCHEZ and LUIS ALBERTO CRUZ Associated Press

ACAPULCO, Mexico (AP) — With a steady rain falling on Acapulco, residents and remaining tourists emerged Thursday evening to walk outside or visit the few open businesses as the remnants of Hurricane Erick scraped by just inland of the resort.

Erick came ashore down southern Mexico's Pacific coast in the morning as a Category 3 major hurricane, but it landed in a sparsely populated stretch of coastline between resorts Acapulco and Puerto Escondido.

Authorities reported landslides, blocked highways, downed power lines and some flooding, and late Thursday one death as coastal residents, above all in Acapulco, took the storm seriously with memories of devastating Hurricane Otis in 2023 still fresh in their minds.

In Puerto Escondido, fishermen searched for and inspected storm-tossed boats.

The threat of heavy rain remained in the mountains that rise abruptly behind Acapulco's famed beaches. Erick spent the day dragging through the coastal mountain range dropping torrential quantities of rain. It was expected to dissipate Thursday night over the mountains in Michoacan state.

Erick once had Category 4 strength

The U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami said Erick was centered about 95 miles (155 kilometers) north-northwest of Acapulco Thursday night. Its maximum sustained winds were 30 mph (45 kph), degrading it to a low pressure area. It was moving northwest at 13 mph (20 kph).

Erick had strengthened to a Category 4 storm as it approached the coast but weakened before making landfall to a Category 3.

Having doubled in strength in less than a day, Erick churned through an ideal environment for quick intensification. Last year, there were 34 incidents of rapid intensification — when a storm gains at least 35 mph in 24 hours — which is about twice as many as average and causes problems with forecasting, according to the hurricane center.

Storm moves south on approach

At first light Thursday, Acapulco awoke under ominous dark clouds. Rain started later in the morning with the arrival of stronger winds. There was light traffic in the streets.

Some residents shopped in the few open stores, fishermen went to the shore to check their boats and a few people took advantage of the calm for a quick swim.

The storm tore into a stretch of coastline near the border of Oaxaca and Guerrero states, where agricultural fields outnumbered tourists. Erick then weakened rapidly as it crashed into the coastal mountains of southern Mexico.

The storm moved northwest just inland up the coast through midday, bringing heavy rain to the resort. But Acapulco had dodged the worst at least in terms of Erick's strong winds.

One death reported

President Claudia Sheinbaum said Thursday "the people have reacted very well so far."

But authorities warned the heavy rain would now become the problem.

Forecasters expected up to 16 inches (40 centimeters) could fall across Oaxaca and Guerrero, with lesser totals in Chiapas, Michoacan, Colima and Jalisco states. The rainfall threatened flooding and mudslides, especially in areas with steep terrain.

Late Thursday, Guerrero state Civil Defense Director Roberto Arroyo said that a 1-year-old child had died in San Marcos, an inland community southeast of Acapulco in the path of Erick. The child's mother had tried to cross a swollen river carrying the child, but he slipped from her arms and drowned.

Guerrero Gov. Evelyn Salgado urged residents of her state Thursday to not grow complacent after Erick made landfall in neighboring Oaxaca.

"In Guerrero we continue on maximum alert, Erick is still a danger with the intense rains, it could drop on our state in the coming hours," she said.

Acapulco still scarred by Otis



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Acapulco residents had braced for Erick's arrival with more preparation and trepidation because of the memory of the devastation two years earlier.

The city of nearly 1 million was hit in October 2023 by Hurricane Otis, a Category 5 hurricane that rapidly intensified and caught many unprepared. At least 52 people died in Otis and the storm severely damaged almost all of the resort's hotels.

On Thursday morning, Marcial Gallardo, a 60-year-old waiter stepped into the water of Acapulco's bay for a quick swim with his son. He said he takes a dip every day. Gallardo said he had tied down everything ahead of Erick after Otis had torn apart his home, and so far had fared well.

In Acapulco Thursday, there was a strong presence of National Guard and police in the streets, but most visible were trucks from the national power company. Crews worked to clear drainage canals and brush.

## Juneteenth celebrations across the US commemorate the end of slavery

By HOLLY RAMER Associated Press

PORTSMOUTH, N.H. (AP) — Juneteenth celebrations unfolded across the U.S. on Thursday, marking the day in 1865 when Union soldiers brought the news of freedom to enslaved Black people in Texas and attracting participants who said current events strengthened their resolve to be heard.

The holiday has been celebrated by Black Americans for generations, but became more widely observed after being designated a federal holiday in 2021 by former President Joe Biden, who attended a Juneteenth event at a church in Galveston, Texas, the holiday's birthplace.

Biden said he was proud to sign the law making Juneteenth a federal holiday because "all Americans should know the weight and power of this day."

"Some say to me and you that this doesn't deserve to be a federal holiday. They don't want to remember what we all remember, the moral stain of slavery," he said.

The celebrations come as President Donald Trump's administration has worked to ban diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, or DEI, in the federal government and remove content about Black American history from federal websites. Trump's travel ban on visitors from select countries has also led to bitter national debate.

In Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Robert Reid waved a large Juneteenth flag at the city's African Burying Ground Memorial Park, where African drummers and dancers led the crowd in song and dance. Reid, 60, said he attended in part to stand against what he called Trump's "divide and conquer" approach.

"It's time for people to get pulled together instead of separated," he said.

Jordyn Sorapuru, 18, visiting New Hampshire from California, called the large turnout a "beautiful thing."

"It's nice to be celebrated every once in a while, especially in the political climate right now," she said. "With the offensive things going on right now, with brown people in the country and a lot of people being put at risk for just existing, having celebrations like this is really important."

Juneteenth's origins and this year's celebrations

The holiday to mark the end of slavery in the U.S. goes back to an order issued on June 19, 1865, as Union troops arrived in Galveston at the end of the Civil War. General Order No. 3 declared that all enslaved people in the state were free and had "absolute equality."

Juneteenth is recognized at least as an observance in every state, and nearly 30 states and Washington, D.C., have designated it as a permanent paid or legal holiday through legislation or executive action.

In Virginia, a ceremonial groundbreaking was held for rebuilding the First Baptist Church of Williamsburg, one of the nation's oldest Black churches.

In Fort Worth, Texas, about 2,500 people participated in Opal Lee's annual Juneteenth walk. The 98-year-old Lee, known as the "grandmother of Juneteenth" for the years she spent advocating to make the day a federal holiday, was recently hospitalized and didn't participate in public this year. But her granddaughter, Dione Sims, said Lee was "in good spirits."



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"The one thing that she would tell the community and the nation at large is to hold on to your freedoms," Sims said. "Hold on to your freedom and don't let it go, because it's under attack right now."

Events were planned throughout the day in Galveston, including a parade, a celebration at a park with music and the service at Reedy Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church that Biden attended.

During a Juneteenth speech in Maryland, Gov. Wes Moore announced pardons for 6,938 cases of simple marijuana possession, which can hinder employment and educational opportunities and have disproportionately affected the Black community.

Moore, a Democrat who is Maryland's first Black governor and the only Black governor currently serving, last year ordered tens of thousands of pardons for marijuana possession. The newly announced pardons weren't included in that initial announcement because they'd been incorrectly coded.

In New Hampshire, Thursday's gathering capped nearly two weeks of events organized by the Black History Trail of New Hampshire aimed at both celebrating Juneteenth and highlighting contradictions in the familiar narratives about the nation's founding fathers ahead of next year's 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

"In a time when efforts to suppress Black history are on the rise, and by extension, to suppress American history, we stand firm in the truth," said JerriAnne Boggis, the Heritage Trail's executive director. "This is not just Black history, it is all of our history."

What Trump has said about Juneteenth

During his first administration, Trump issued statements each June 19, including one that ended with "On Juneteenth 2017, we honor the countless contributions made by African Americans to our Nation and pledge to support America's promise as the land of the free."

When White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt was asked during her Thursday media briefing whether the president would commemorate the holiday this year, she replied, "I'm not tracking his signature on a proclamation today."

Later Thursday Trump complained on his social media site about "too many non-working holidays" and said it is "costing our Country \$BILLIONS OF DOLLARS to keep all of these businesses closed." Most retailers are open on Juneteenth, while federal workers generally get a day off because the government is closed.

New Hampshire, one of the nation's whitest states, is not among those with a permanent, paid or legal Juneteenth holiday, and Boggis said her hope that lawmakers would take action making it one is waning.

"I am not so sure anymore given the political environment we're in," she said. "I think we've taken a whole bunch of steps backwards in understanding our history, civil rights and inclusion."

Still, she hopes New Hampshire's events and those elsewhere will make a difference.

"It's not a divisive tool to know the truth. Knowing the truth helps us understand some of the current issues that we're going through," she said.

And if spreading that truth comes with a bit of fun, all the better, she said.

"When we come together, when we break bread together, we enjoy music together, we learn together, we dance together, we're creating these bonds of community," she said. "As much as we educate, we also want to celebrate together."

## Trump says he'll decide whether US will directly attack Iran within 2 weeks

By SAM MEDNICK, NATALIE MELZER and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

BEERSHEBA, Israel (AP) — President Donald Trump said Thursday he will decide within two weeks whether the U.S. military will get directly involved in the conflict between Israel and Iran given the "substantial chance" for renewed negotiations over Tehran's nuclear program, as the two sides attacked one another for a seventh day.

Trump has been weighing whether to attack Iran by striking its well-defended Fordo uranium enrichment facility, which is buried under a mountain and widely considered to be out of reach of all but America's

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"bunker-buster" bombs. His statement was read out by White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt.

Earlier in the day, Israel's defense minister threatened Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei after Iranian missiles crashed into a major hospital in southern Israel and hit residential buildings near Tel Aviv, wounding at least 240 people. Israel's military "has been instructed and knows that in order to achieve all of its goals, this man absolutely should not continue to exist," Defense Minister Israel Katz said.

As rescuers wheeled patients out of the smoldering hospital, Israeli warplanes launched their latest attack on Iran's nuclear program.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he trusted that Trump would "do what's best for America." Speaking from the rubble and shattered glass around the Soroka Medical Center in Beersheba, he added: "I can tell you that they're already helping a lot."

A new diplomatic initiative appeared to be underway as Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi prepared to travel Friday to Geneva for meetings with the European Union's top diplomat and counterparts from the United Kingdom, France and Germany.

Britain's foreign secretary said he met at the White House with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and envoy Steve Witkoff, to discuss the potential for a deal that could cool the conflict.

"A window now exists within the next two weeks to achieve a diplomatic solution," Britain's David Lammy said in a social media post after Thursday's meeting.

The open conflict between Israel and Iran erupted last Friday with a surprise wave of Israeli airstrikes targeting nuclear and military sites, top generals and nuclear scientists. At least 657 people, including 263 civilians, have been killed in Iran and more than 2,000 wounded, according to a Washington-based Iranian human rights group.

Iran has retaliated by firing 450 missiles and 1,000 drones at Israel, according to Israeli army estimates. Most have been shot down by Israel's multitiered air defenses, but at least 24 people in Israel have been killed and hundreds wounded.

Many hospitals have transferred patients underground

Israel's Home Front Command asserted that one of the Iranian ballistic missiles fired Thursday morning had been rigged with fragmenting cluster munitions. Rather than a conventional warhead, a cluster munition warhead carries dozens of submunitions that can explode on impact, showering small bomblets around a large area and posing major safety risks on the ground. The Israeli military did not say where that missile had been fired.

At least 80 patients and medical workers were wounded in the strike on Soroka Medical Center. The vast majority were lightly wounded, as much of the hospital building had been evacuated in recent days.

Iranian officials insisted they had not sought to strike the hospital and claimed the attack hit a facility belonging to the Israeli military's elite technological unit, called C4i. The website for the Gav-Yam Negev advanced technologies park, some 3 kilometers (2 miles) from the hospital, said C4i had a branch campus in the area.

The Israeli army did not respond to a request for comment. An Israeli military official, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with regulations, acknowledged that there was no specific intelligence that Iran had planned to target the hospital.

Many hospitals in Israel, including Soroka, had activated emergency plans in the past week. They converted parking garages to wards and transferred vulnerable patients underground. Israel also has a fortified, subterranean blood bank that kicked into action after Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack ignited the ongoing war in the Gaza Strip.

Doctors at Soroka said the Iranian missile struck almost immediately after air raid sirens went off, causing an explosion that could be heard from a safe room. The strike inflicted the greatest damage on an old surgery building and affected key infrastructure, including gas, water and air-conditioning systems, the medical center said.

The hospital, which provides services to around 1 million residents, had been caring for 700 patients at the time. After the strike, the hospital closed to all patients except for life-threatening cases.

Iran rejects calls to surrender or end its nuclear program

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Iran has long maintained its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes. But it is the only non-nuclear-weapon state to enrich uranium up to 60%, a short, technical step away from weapons-grade levels of 90%.

Israel is widely believed to be the only country with a nuclear weapons program in the Middle East but has never acknowledged the existence of its arsenal.

The Israeli air campaign has targeted Iran's enrichment site at Natanz, centrifuge workshops around Tehran, a nuclear site in Isfahan and what the army assesses to be most of Iran's ballistic missile launchers. The destruction of those launchers has contributed to the steady decline in Iranian attacks since the start of the conflict.

Israeli airstrikes reached into the city of Rasht on the Caspian Sea early Friday, Iranian media reported. The Israeli military had warned the public to flee the area around Rasht's Industrial City, southwest of the city's downtown. But with Iran's internet shut off to the outside world, it's unclear just how many people could see the message.

On Thursday, anti-aircraft artillery was audible across Tehran, and witnesses in the central city of Isfahan reported seeing anti-aircraft fire after nightfall.

Trump's announcement of a decision in the next two weeks opened up diplomatic options, with the apparent hope Iran would make concessions after suffering major military losses.

But at least publicly, Iran has struck a hard line.

Iran's supreme leader on Wednesday rejected U.S. calls for surrender and warned that any U.S. military involvement would cause "irreparable damage to them."

Parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf on Thursday criticized Trump for using military pressure to gain an advantage in nuclear negotiations. The latest indirect talks between Iran and the U.S., set for last Sunday, were cancelled.

"The delusional American president knows that he cannot impose peace on us by imposing war and threatening us," he said.

Iran agreed to redesign Arak to address nuclear concerns

Israel's military said its fighter jets targeted the Arak heavy water reactor, some 250 kilometers (155 miles) southwest of Tehran, to prevent it from being used to produce plutonium.

Iranian state TV said there was "no radiation danger whatsoever" around the Arak site, which it said had been evacuated ahead of the strike.

Heavy water helps cool nuclear reactors, but it produces plutonium as a byproduct that potentially can be used in nuclear weapons. That would provide Iran another path to the bomb beyond enriched uranium, should it choose to pursue the weapon.

Iran had agreed under its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers to redesign the facility to alleviate proliferation concerns. That work was never completed.

The reactor became a point of contention after Trump withdrew from the deal in 2018. Ali Akbar Salehi, a high-ranking nuclear official in Iran, said in 2019 that Tehran bought extra parts to replace a portion of the reactor that it had poured concrete into under the deal.

Israel said strikes were carried out "in order to prevent the reactor from being restored and used for nuclear weapons development."

The International Atomic Energy Agency has said that due to restrictions imposed by Iran on inspectors, the U.N. nuclear watchdog has lost "continuity of knowledge" about Iran's heavy water production — meaning it could not absolutely verify Tehran's production and stockpile.

## Trump is silent about Juneteenth on a day he previously honored as president

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump honored Juneteenth in each of his first four years as president, even before it became a federal holiday. He even claimed once to have made it "very famous."

But on this year's Juneteenth holiday on Thursday, the usually talkative president kept silent about a day

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important to Black Americans for marking the end of slavery in the country he leads again.

No words about it from his lips, on paper or through his social media site.

Asked whether Trump would commemorate Juneteenth in any way, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters: "I'm not tracking his signature on a proclamation today. I know this is a federal holiday. I want to thank all of you for showing up to work. We are certainly here. We're working 24/7 right now."

Asked in a follow-up question whether Trump might recognize the occasion another way or on another day, Leavitt said, "I just answered that question for you."

On Wednesday, Black community leaders from across the country, senior Trump administration officials and other individuals met at the White House to discuss improving coordination between the leaders and federal, state and local partners, according to a senior White House official. Housing Secretary Scott Turner and Lynne Patton, director of minority outreach, were among those who attended, said the official, who insisted on anonymity to discuss a private gathering.

The Republican president's silence was a sharp contrast from his prior acknowledgement of the holiday. Juneteenth celebrates the end of slavery in the United States by commemorating June 19, 1865, when Union soldiers brought the news of freedom to enslaved Black people in Galveston, Texas. Their freedom came more than two years after President Abraham Lincoln liberated slaves in the Confederacy by signing the Emancipation Proclamation during the Civil War.

Trump's quiet on the issue also deviated from White House guidance that Trump planned to sign a Juneteenth proclamation. Leavitt didn't explain the change. Trump held no public events Thursday, but he shared statements about Iran, the TikTok app and Fed chairman Jerome Powell on his social media site.

In the evening, Trump complained on the site about "too many non-working holidays" and said it is "costing our Country \$BILLIONS OF DOLLARS to keep all of these businesses closed." But most retailers are open on Juneteenth while most federal workers get a day off because the government is closed.

He had more to say about Juneteenth in yearly statements in his first term.

In 2017, Trump invoked the "soulful festivities and emotional rejoicing" that swept through the Galveston crowd when a major general delivered the news that all enslaved people were free.

He told the Galveston story in each of the next three years. "Together, we honor the unbreakable spirit and countless contributions of generations of African Americans to the story of American greatness," he added in his 2018 statement.

In 2019: "Across our country, the contributions of African Americans continue to enrich every facet of American life." In 2020: "June reminds us of both the unimaginable injustice of slavery and the incomparable joy that must have attended emancipation. It is both a remembrance of a blight on our history and a celebration of our Nation's unsurpassed ability to triumph over darkness."

In 2020, after suspending his campaign rallies because of the coronavirus pandemic, Trump chose Tulsa, Oklahoma, as the place to resume his public gatherings and scheduled a rally for June 19. But the decision met with such fierce criticism that Trump postponed the event by a day.

Black leaders had said it was offensive for Trump to choose June 19 and Tulsa for a campaign event, given the significance of Juneteenth and Tulsa being the place where, in 1921, a white mob looted and burned that city's Greenwood district, an economically thriving area referred to as Black Wall Street. As many as 300 Black Tulsans were killed, and thousands were temporarily held in internment camps overseen by the National Guard.

In an interview with The Wall Street Journal days before the rally, Trump tried to put a positive spin on the situation by claiming that he had made Juneteenth "famous." He said he changed the rally date out of respect for two African American friends and supporters.

"I did something good. I made it famous. I made Juneteenth very famous," Trump said. "It's actually an important event, it's an important time. But nobody had heard of it. Very few people have heard of it."

Generations of Black Americans celebrated Juneteenth long before it became a federal holiday in 2021 with the stroke of President Joe Biden's pen.

Later in 2020, Trump sought to woo Black voters with a series of campaign promises, including establish-



ing Juneteenth as a federal holiday.

He lost the election, and that made it possible for Biden, a Democrat, to sign the legislation establishing Juneteenth as the newest federal holiday. Shortly after being sworn in for his second term in January, Trump signed an executive order ending diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives across the federal government, calling them "illegal and immoral discrimination programs."

Biden issued annual Juneteenth proclamations during his four years in office, and observed some of the holidays with large concerts on the South Lawn. Biden's final observance in 2024 featured performances by Gladys Knight and Patti LaBelle. Vice President Kamala Harris danced onstage with gospel singer Kirk Franklin.

Biden spent this year's holiday in Galveston, Texas, where he spoke at a historic African Methodist Episcopal church.

## **Zelenskyy calls for more pressure on Russia after deadly missile strike in Ukrainian capital Kyiv**

By JUSTIN SPIKE and ILLIA NOVIKOV Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — A Russian missile strike on a nine-story Kyiv apartment building was a sign that more pressure must be applied on Moscow to agree to a ceasefire, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Thursday, as Moscow intensifies attacks in the war.

The drone and missile attack on Kyiv early Tuesday, the deadliest assault on the capital this year, killed 28 people across the city and wounded 142 others, Kyiv Military Administration head Tymur Tkachenko said.

Zelenskyy, along with the head of the presidential office, Andrii Yermak, and Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko, visited the site of the apartment building in Kyiv's Solomianskyi district on Thursday morning, laying flowers and paying tribute to the 23 people who died there after a direct hit by a missile brought down the structure.

"This attack is a reminder to the world that Russia rejects a ceasefire and chooses killing," Zelenskyy wrote on Telegram, and thanked Ukraine's partners who he said are ready to pressure Russia to "feel the real cost of the war."

### **Intensifying attacks**

Tuesday's attack on Kyiv was part of a sweeping barrage as Russia once again sought to overwhelm Ukrainian air defenses. Russia fired more than 440 drones and 32 missiles in what Zelenskyy called one of the biggest bombardments of the war, which began on Feb. 24, 2022.

As Russia proceeds with a summer offensive on parts of the roughly 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line, U.S.-led peace efforts have failed to gain traction. Russian President Vladimir Putin has effectively rejected an offer from U.S. President Donald Trump for an immediate 30-day ceasefire, making it conditional on a halt on Ukraine's mobilization effort and a freeze on Western arms supplies.

Meanwhile, Middle East tensions and U.S. trade tariffs have drawn away world attention from Ukraine's pleas for more diplomatic and economic pressure to be placed on Moscow.

In recent weeks, Russia has intensified long-range attacks that have struck urban residential areas. Yet on Wednesday, Putin denied that his military had struck such targets, saying that attacks were "against military industries, not residential quarters."

Putin told senior news leaders of international news agencies in St. Petersburg, Russia, that he was open to talks with Zelenskyy, but repeated his accusation that the Ukrainian leader had lost his legitimacy after his term expired last year — allegations rejected by Kyiv and its allies.

"We are ready for substantive talks on the principles of a settlement," Putin said, noting that a previous round of talks in Istanbul had led to an exchange of prisoners and the bodies of fallen soldiers.

### **Prisoners exchanged**

A new round of such exchanges took place in Ukraine's Chernihiv region on Thursday, involving the repatriation of Ukrainian prisoners of war who, according to Ukraine's Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War or KSHPPV, were suffering from severe health issues caused by injuries

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and prolonged detention.

The exchange was confirmed by Russia's Defense Ministry, which released a video of Russian servicemen at an exchange area in Belarus after being released in the prisoner swap.

Commenting on the exchange, Zelenskyy wrote on Telegram: "We are working to get our people back. Thank you to everyone who helps make these exchanges possible. Our goal is to free each and every one."

Many of the exchanged Ukrainian POWs had spent over three years in captivity, with a large number captured during the defense of the now Russian-occupied city of Mariupol in 2022, according to the KSHPPV, which added that preparations for another prisoner exchange are ongoing.

In St. Petersburg on Wednesday, Putin praised Trump's push for peace in Ukraine. But Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha wrote on X on Thursday that it was his country that had "unconditionally accepted" the U.S. proposal for a ceasefire, and said that Russian claims of willingness to end the war were "manipulations."

"It has been exactly 100 days since Ukraine unconditionally accepted the U.S. peace proposal to completely cease fire, put an end to the killing, and move forward with a genuine peace process ... 100 days of Russia escalating terror against Ukraine rather than ending it," Sybiha wrote.

"Ukraine remains committed to peace. Unfortunately, Russia continues to choose war, disregarding U.S. efforts to end the killing," he added.

Overnight on Wednesday, Russia fired a barrage of 104 Shahed and decoy drones across Ukraine, according to the country's air force. Of those, 88 were intercepted, jammed, or lost from radars mid-flight.

There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage caused by the attack.

## Federal immigration agents asked to leave Dodger Stadium parking lot, team says

By DOUG PADILLA and OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Los Angeles Dodgers organization said Thursday that it asked federal immigration agents to leave the Dodger Stadium grounds after they arrived at a parking lot near one of the gates.

Dozens of federal agents with their faces covered arrived in SUVs and cargo vans to a lot near the stadium's Gate E entrance. A group of protesters carrying signs against U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement started amassing shortly after, local media reported.

"This morning, ICE agents came to Dodger Stadium and requested permission to access the parking lots. They were denied entry to the grounds by the organization," the team said in a statement posted on X.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement posted on X that its agents were never there.

Tricia McLaughlin, a spokesperson for the Department of Homeland Security, said the agents were with Customs and Border Protection and that they were not trying to enter the stadium.

"This had nothing to do with the Dodgers. (Customs and Border Protection) vehicles were in the stadium parking lot very briefly, unrelated to any operation or enforcement," she said in an email.

The team said the game against the San Diego Padres later Thursday will be played as planned.

Television cameras showed about four agents remained at the lot Thursday afternoon while officers with the Los Angeles Police Department stood between them and dozens of protesters, some carrying signs that read "I Like My Ice Crushed" and chanting "ICE out of LA!"

Councilmember Eunisses Hernandez arrived at the stadium and said she had been in communication with Dodger officials and the mayor's office.

"We've been in communication with the mayor's office, with the Dodgers, with Dodgers security, about seeing if they can get them moved off their private property," she told KABC-TV. "Public property is different. Private property -- businesses and corporations have the power to say, 'Not on my property,' And so we're waiting to see that movement happen here."

Protests began June 6 after federal immigration raids arrested dozens of workers in Los Angeles. Protesters blocked a major freeway and set cars on fire the following days, and police responded with tear gas, rubber bullets and flash-bang grenades.

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The team has yet to make a statement regarding the arrests and raids. The Dodgers' heavily Latino fan base has been pushing for the team to make a public statement and ignited a debate online about its stance on the immigration crackdown happening in Los Angeles.

The Dodgers had been expected to issue a statement of support toward Los Angeles-area communities affected by immigration enforcement, but no statement had been released by 5 p.m. Thursday.

"Because of the events earlier today, we continue to work with groups that were involved with our programs," Dodgers President Stan Kasten told a small group of reporters. "But we are going to have to delay today's announcement while we firm up some more details."

The Trump administration has activated more than 4,000 National Guard members and 700 Marines over the objections of city and state leaders. Dozens of troops now guard federal buildings and protect federal agents making arrests.

The demonstrations have been mostly concentrated downtown in the city of around 4 million people. Thousands of people have peacefully rallied outside City Hall and hundreds more protested outside a federal complex that includes a detention center where some immigrants are being held following workplace raids.

Despite the protests, immigration enforcement activity has continued throughout the county, with city leaders and community groups reporting ICE present at libraries, car washes and Home Depots. School graduations in Los Angeles have increased security over fears of ICE action and some have offered parents the option to watch on Zoom. \_\_\_\_

Rodriguez reported from San Francisco.

## **SpaceX rocket being tested in Texas explodes, but no injuries reported**

By The Associated Press undefined

A SpaceX rocket being tested in Texas exploded Wednesday night, sending a dramatic fireball high into the sky.

The company said the Starship "experienced a major anomaly" at about 11 p.m. while on the test stand preparing for the tenth flight test at Starbase, SpaceX's launch site at the southern tip of Texas.

"A safety clear area around the site was maintained throughout the operation and all personnel are safe and accounted for," SpaceX said in a statement on the social platform X.

It marked the latest in a series of incidents involving Starship rockets. On Jan. 16, one of the massive rockets broke apart in what the company called a "rapid unscheduled disassembly," sending trails of flaming debris near the Caribbean. Two months later, Space X lost contact with another Starship during a March 6 test flight as the spacecraft broke apart, with wreckage seen streaming over Florida.

Following the back-to-back explosions, one of the 403-foot (123-meter) Starship rockets, launched from the southern tip of Texas, tumbled out of control and broke apart on May 27. SpaceX had hoped to release a series of mock satellites following liftoff, but that got nixed because the door failed to open all the way. Then the spacecraft began spinning and made an uncontrolled landing in the Indian Ocean.

At the time, SpaceX CEO Elon Musk called the launch "a big improvement" from the two previous demos and promised a much faster launch pace moving forward, with a Starship soaring every three to four weeks for the next three flights.

SpaceX said Wednesday night's explosion posed no hazards to nearby communities. It asked people not to try to approach the site.

The company said it is working with local officials to respond to the explosion.

## Trump extends TikTok ban deadline for a third time, without clear legal basis

By BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Thursday signed an executive order to keep TikTok running in the U.S. for another 90 days to give his administration more time to broker a deal to bring the social media platform under American ownership.

Trump disclosed the executive order on the Truth Social platform Thursday morning.

"He's making an extension so we can get this deal done," White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters on Thursday. "It's wildly popular. He also wants to protect Americans' data and privacy concerns on this app. And he believes we can do both at the same time."

It is the third time Trump has extended the deadline. The first one was through an executive order on Jan. 20, his first day in office, after the platform went dark briefly when a national ban — approved by Congress and upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court — took effect. The second was in April when White House officials believed they were nearing a deal to spin off TikTok into a new company with U.S. ownership that fell apart after China backed out following Trump's tariff announcement.

It is not clear how many times Trump can — or will — keep extending the ban as the government continues to try to negotiate a deal for TikTok, which is owned by China's ByteDance. While there is no clear legal basis for the extensions, so far there have been no legal challenges to fight them. Trump has amassed more than 15 million followers on TikTok since he joined last year, and he has credited the trendsetting platform with helping him gain traction among young voters. He said in January that he has a "warm spot for TikTok."

TikTok praised Trump for signing an extension Thursday.

"We are grateful for President Trump's leadership and support in ensuring that TikTok continues to be available for more than 170 million American users and 7.5 million U.S. businesses that rely on the platform as we continue to work with Vice President Vance's Office," the company said in a statement.

As the extensions continue, it appears less and less likely that TikTok will be banned in the U.S. any time soon. The decision to keep TikTok alive through an executive order has received some scrutiny, but it has not faced a legal challenge in court — unlike many of Trump's other executive orders.

Jeremy Goldman, analyst at Emarketer, called TikTok's U.S. situation a "deadline purgatory."

The whole thing "is starting to feel less like a ticking clock and more like a looped ringtone. This political Groundhog Day is starting to resemble the debt ceiling drama: a recurring threat with no real resolution."

That's not stopping TikTok from pushing forward with its platform, Forrester analyst Kelsey Chickering says.

"TikTok's behavior also indicates they're confident in their future, as they rolled out new AI video tools at Cannes this week," Chickering notes. "Smaller players, like Snap, will try to steal share during this 'uncertain time,' but they will not succeed because this next round for TikTok isn't uncertain at all."

For now, TikTok continues to function for its 170 million users in the U.S., and tech giants Apple, Google and Oracle were persuaded to continue to offer and support the app, on the promise that Trump's Justice Department would not use the law to seek potentially steep fines against them.

Americans are even more closely divided on what to do about TikTok than they were two years ago.

A recent Pew Research Center survey found that about one-third of Americans said they supported a TikTok ban, down from 50% in March 2023. Roughly one-third said they would oppose a ban, and a similar percentage said they weren't sure.

Among those who said they supported banning the social media platform, about 8 in 10 cited concerns over users' data security being at risk as a major factor in their decision, according to the report.

Democratic Sen. Mark Warner of Virginia, vice chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said the Trump administration is once again "flouting the law and ignoring its own national security findings about the risks" posed by a China-controlled TikTok.

"An executive order can't sidestep the law, but that's exactly what the president is trying to do," Warner added.



## ICE raids and their uncertainty scare off workers and baffle businesses

By PAUL WISEMAN AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Farmers, cattle ranchers and hotel and restaurant managers breathed a sigh of relief last week when President Donald Trump ordered a pause to immigration raids that were disrupting those industries and scaring foreign-born workers off the job.

"There was finally a sense of calm," said Rebecca Shi, CEO of the American Business Immigration Coalition. That respite didn't last long.

On Wednesday, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security Tricia McLaughlin declared, "There will be no safe spaces for industries who harbor violent criminals or purposely try to undermine (immigration enforcement) efforts. Worksite enforcement remains a cornerstone of our efforts to safeguard public safety, national security and economic stability."

The flipflop baffled businesses trying to figure out the government's actual policy, and Shi says now "there's fear and worry once more."

"That's not a way to run business when your employees are at this level of stress and trauma," she said.

Trump campaigned on a promise to deport millions of immigrants working in the United States illegally — an issue that has long fired up his GOP base. The crackdown intensified a few weeks ago when Stephen Miller, White House deputy chief of staff, gave the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement a quota of 3,000 arrests a day, up from 650 a day in the first five months of Trump's second term.

Suddenly, ICE seemed to be everywhere. "We saw ICE agents on farms, pointing assault rifles at cows, and removing half the workforce," said Shi, whose coalition represents 1,700 employers and supports increased legal immigration.

One ICE raid left a New Mexico dairy with just 20 workers, down from 55. "You can't turn off cows," said Beverly Idsinga, the executive director of the Dairy Producers of New Mexico. "They need to be milked twice a day, fed twice a day."

Claudio Gonzalez, a chef at Izakaya Gazen in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo district, said many of his Hispanic workers — whether they're in the country legally or not — have been calling out of work recently due to fears that they will be targeted by ICE. His restaurant is a few blocks away from a collection of federal buildings, including an ICE detention center.

"They sometimes are too scared to work their shift," Gonzalez said. "They kind of feel like it's based on skin color."

In some places, the problem isn't ICE but rumors of ICE. At cherry-harvesting time in Washington state, many foreign-born workers are staying away from the orchards after hearing reports of impending immigration raids. One operation that usually employs 150 pickers is down to 20. Never mind that there hasn't actually been any sign of ICE in the orchards.

"We've not heard of any real raids," said Jon Folden, orchard manager for the farm cooperative Blue Bird in Washington's Wenatchee River Valley. "We've heard a lot of rumors."

Jennie Murray, CEO of the advocacy group National Immigration Forum, said some immigrant parents worry that their workplaces will be raided and they'll be hauled off by ICE while their kids are in school. They ask themselves, she said: "Do I show up and then my second-grader gets off the school bus and doesn't have a parent to raise them? Maybe I shouldn't show up for work."

The horror stories were conveyed to Trump, members of his administration and lawmakers in Congress by business advocacy and immigration reform groups like Shi's coalition. Last Thursday, the president posted on his Truth Social platform that "Our great Farmers and people in the Hotel and Leisure business have been stating that our very aggressive policy on immigration is taking very good, long time workers away from them, with those jobs being almost impossible to replace."

It was another case of Trump's political agenda slamming smack into economic reality. With U.S. unemployment low at 4.2%, many businesses are desperate for workers, and immigration provides them.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, foreign-born workers made up less than 19% of employed workers

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in the United States in 2023. But they accounted for nearly 24% of jobs preparing and serving food and 38% of jobs in farming, fishing and forestry.

"It really is clear to me that the people pushing for these raids that target farms and feed yards and dairies have no idea how farms operate," Matt Teagarden, CEO of the Kansas Livestock Association, said Tuesday during a virtual press conference.

Torsten Slok, chief economist at Apollo Global Management, estimated in January that undocumented workers account for 13% of U.S. farm jobs and 7% of jobs in hospitality businesses such as hotels, restaurants and bars.

The Pew Research Center found last year that 75% of U.S. registered voters — including 59% of Trump supporters — agreed that undocumented immigrants mostly fill jobs that American citizens don't want. And an influx of immigrants in 2022 and 2023 allowed the United States to overcome an outbreak of inflation without tipping into recession.

In the past, economists estimated that America's employers could add no more than 100,000 jobs a month without overheating the economy and igniting inflation. But economists Wendy Edelberg and Tara Watson of the Brookings Institution calculated that because of the immigrant arrivals, monthly job growth could reach 160,000 to 200,000 without exerting upward pressure on prices.

Now Trump's deportation plans — and the uncertainty around them — are weighing on businesses and the economy.

"The reality is, a significant portion of our industry relies on immigrant labor — skilled, hardworking people who've been part of our workforce for years. When there are sudden crackdowns or raids, it slows timelines, drives up costs, and makes it harder to plan ahead," says Patrick Murphy, chief investment officer at the Florida building firm Coastal Construction and a former Democratic member of Congress. "We're not sure from one month to the next what the rules are going to be or how they'll be enforced. That uncertainty makes it really hard to operate a forward-looking business."

Adds Douglas Holtz Eakin, former director of the Congressional Budget Office and now president of the conservative American Action Forum think tank: "ICE had detained people who are here lawfully and so now lawful immigrants are afraid to go to work ... All of this goes against other economic objectives the administration might have. The immigration policy and the economic policy are not lining up at all."

## Some US restaurants and servers oppose Republicans' 'no tax on tips' budget proposal

By DEE-ANN DURBIN AP Business Writer

Some segments of the U.S. restaurant industry don't support President Donald Trump's proposal to eliminate federal taxes on tips, saying it would help too few people and obscure bigger issues in the way tipped workers are paid.

The Independent Restaurant Coalition, which represents nearly 100,000 restaurant and bars, has appealed to Congress to reconsider the proposal, which is part of the president's spending bill. Even some workers who rely on tips say they oppose making them tax-deductible.

"I think there's a huge hole in this concept of 'no tax on tips' because a lot of restaurant workers aren't receiving tips in the first place," said Elyanna Calle, a bartender in Austin, Texas, and president of the Restaurant Workers United union. "It's not helping most kitchen workers, and oftentimes those are the people who are being paid the least."

Tips included in sprawling tax cuts package

For now, making tips tax-free appears to have broad support among lawmakers. Both Trump and his Democratic rival in last year's U.S. presidential election, former Vice President Kamala Harris, campaigned on the concept.

The House included it in a tax cuts package approved last month. The bill would eliminate federal income taxes on tips for people working in jobs that have traditionally received them as long as they make less than \$160,000 in 2025.

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The Senate Finance Committee passed a modified version on Monday. Senators capped deductions at \$25,000 and want to phase them out for individuals whose income exceeds \$150,000. Eligibility would be based on earnings as of Dec. 31, 2024.

Both the House and Senate committee measures would apply through the 2028 tax year. The Finance Committee specified that "cash tips" qualify but said the term applied to tips paid in cash, charged to credit cards or received from other employees under a tip-sharing arrangement.

Main industry trade group supports tax-free tips

Wary of wading into politics, many restaurant chains contacted by The Associated Press about tax-free tips didn't respond or referred questions to the National Restaurant Association, including Waffle House, The Cheesecake Factory, First Watch and the parent companies of Olive Garden, Applebee's and Chili's.

The National Restaurant Association, a trade organization that represents nearly 500,000 U.S. restaurants and bars, applauded the House's passage of Trump's spending bill and said it wants to see tax-free tips. The association estimates the measure would benefit more than 2 million servers and bartenders.

But the U.S. restaurant industry has more than 12 million workers, including dishwashers and chefs, according to government data. The Independent Restaurant Coalition says the "no tax on tips" proposal leaves out too many of those workers.

A push to eliminate taxes on service charges

The coalition wants Congress to eliminate taxes on service charges, which are being used to compensate employees at an increasing number of restaurants. Around 15% of U.S. restaurants add some form of service charge to customers' bills, according to the National Restaurant Association.

George Skandalos, a pizza restaurant owner in Moscow, Idaho, was tired of seeing servers count out hundreds of dollars of tips at the end of the night while people in the kitchen scrubbed the floor on their hands and knees. So he started experimenting with different compensation models.

Skandalos tried pooling servers' tips and distributing them but ran into rules preventing that. He tried raising his menu prices and explaining that a percentage of each order was going to employee compensation, but customers didn't understand and kept tipping.

Skandalos now has a gratuity-free policy at his restaurant, Maialina. He charges a 20% service fee that is distributed to all employees and helps pay for benefits like paid vacation and parental leave. The vast majority of customers appreciate the effort, he said.

Skandalos said "no tax on tips" doesn't acknowledge restaurants like his that are trying to distribute pay more equally. He would like to see service charges exempted from taxes.

"This bill is a very good start in terms of trying to leave more money in people's pocketbooks, but now let's finish what we started and make it a great thing for the restaurant industry overall," he said.

Tipped workers seek higher wages

But Ted Pappageorge, the secretary-treasurer of the Culinary Workers Union Local 226 in Las Vegas, said restaurants should just pay their kitchen workers more to compensate for servers earning tips.

"No tax on tips" is an opportunity for Republicans and Democrats to deliver something to working class folks," he said.

Pappageorge wants Congress to take up a separate bill introduced by Nevada Democrat Steven Horsford that would eliminate taxes on tips but also require restaurants to pay workers at least the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. In 43 states, restaurants are currently allowed to pay tipped workers as little as \$2.13 per hour.

Yolanda Garcia, a barista at Resorts World in Las Vegas and a member of the Culinary Workers Union, also supports Horsford's bill. Garcia said she makes \$33,000 a year, including up to \$600 per month in tips. Tips are never guaranteed, she said, but if they were tax-free, it would help make up for that uncertainty.

"It would help me get more groceries. Right now, the price of everything has gone up," Garcia said.

Calle, the Austin bartender and union leader, said she also benefits from tips, but they're inconsistent. She suspects tipping would decline if the tax-free provision passes, because customers will resent it.

For Calle, the underlying problem that must be solved is low base pay.

"I think that if we continue to make the shift into relying on tips for people, it gives incentives for companies to not raise wages," she said.

## Who will have the 2025 song of the summer? We offer some predictions

By MARIA SHERMAN AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — What makes a great song of the summer? Is it an up-tempo pop banger? Something with an earworm chorus? Does it need to feature the words "summer," "sunshine," or another synonym — "California" — in the title? How could anyone attempt a song of the summer after the late, great Beach Boy Brian Wilson composed them so expertly, anyway?

It very well may be subject to the eye (well, ear) of the beholder, but The Associated Press views the song of the summer as the one that takes over those warm months between June and August, the kind that blasts out of car speakers and at beach barbecues in equal measure. And that means many different things for many kinds of listeners.

So here are AP's 2025 song of the summer predictions across categories, with past victors for reference. Find your song of the summer and then listen to our Spotify playlist, [here](#).

Song of the summer that inexplicably came out in January: "NUEVAYoL," Bad Bunny

A song of the summer doesn't actually have to arrive in summer, or even in spring. History has proved this time and time again, lest anyone forget Olivia Rodrigo's "drivers license" hit at the top of the year in 2021. But this summer, like every summer, is about Bad Bunny. On his latest album, "Debí Tirar Más Fotos," Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio pulls from Puerto Rico's rich musical history and hybridizes it. He does so from the very opener, "NUEVAYoL," which samples the fittingly named 1975 salsa hit from El Gran Combo, "Un Verano en Nueva York" ("A Summer in New York").

Past champion: "Boy's a Liar PT. 2," PinkPantheress, Ice Spice (2023)

Song of the summer for the chronically online: "Tonight," PinkPantheress

An internet hero releases another super hit: PinkPantheress' "Tonight" is an undeniable good time; all bassline house meets hyperpop vocals with a naughty chorus. The 24-year-old British singer-songwriter has proved she's got so much more to offer than a few viral hits — but her huge songs that blow up online? They tend to stay. That's more than can be said about past winners in this category.

Past champion: "Million Dollar Baby," Tommy Richman (2024)

Breakup song of the summer: "What Was That," Lorde

Lorde's first new single in four years recalls the clever synth-pop of her 2017 album "Melodrama," casting aside the folk detour of 2021's "Solar Power." "What Was That" is reserved revelation, introspective electropop that takes a measured look at a relationship's dissolution. It feels good, and bad, which is the point.

Past champion: "How Can You Mend a Broken Heart," Bee Gees (1971)

Song of the summer for the girls and all those who love them: "Gnarly," KATSEYE

KATSEYE, the global girl group born out of K-pop development techniques, are "Gnarly," and they'd like you to be, too. The song is asymmetrical pop with a cheerleading cadence and extensive, expensive product placement. You're here for the girls, or you're not. Gnarly!

Past champion: "Bills, Bills, Bills," Destiny's Child (1999)

Song for singles ready to mingle this summer: "WASSUP," Young Miko

Flirting is central to these hot months; no other season has a fling named after it. Puerto Rican rapper Young Miko knows this better than most, and her track "WASSUP" is all about charisma — and it doesn't hurt that it interpolates "Lollipop" by Lil Wayne featuring Static Major and "Chulin Culin Chunfly" by Voltio featuring Residente.

Past champion: "Buy U a Drank (Shawty Snappin')," T-Pain featuring Yung Joc (2007)

Song of the summer for those who love British boy ballads performed by an American: "Ordinary," Alex Warren

Last year brought Benson Boone's glossy soft pop-rock; this year, Alex Warren's "Ordinary" is inescapable.



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A big, inoffensive ballad with loosely religious themes, it is meticulously designed to pull at heartstrings. And it does — the song hit No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100.

Past champion: "Beautiful Things," Benson Boone (2024)

Song of the summer for when you lose the beef but still have fight left in ya: "Nokia," Drake

For the last year, Drake has mostly made headlines for his rivalry with Kendrick Lamar, one of the biggest beefs in modern rap music history. He was no victor, but on "Nokia," he's certainly a winner. The song is a return to what Drizzy knows best: a massive rap-R&B-pop song for the ages, one that will live inside the minds of listeners for the whole year. Just, you know, replete with the nostalgic sounds of a Nokia ringtone.

Past champion: The difference here, of course, is that Drake won his beef with Meek Mill. But nonetheless: "Back to Back," Drake (2015)

The TikTok-approved, blast-of-dopamine song of the summer: "Boots on the Ground," 803Fresh

Social media is the wild west and inevitably sources its own song of the summer. Usually, there's an element of humor in the track — like 2023's "The Margarita Song" by That Chick Angel, Casa Di & Steve Terrell. This year is a bit different: 803Fresh's "Boots on the Ground" is an organic hit that centers a kind of soulful line dance — it's country-pop with trap hi-hats and fun for the whole family.

Past champion: "The Spark," Kabin Crew & Lisdoonvarna Crew (2024)

Song of the summer for it girls: "Fame Is A Gun," Addison Rae

Charli xcx fans, fear not. Addison Rae's debut album is stuffed with bejeweled, hypnotic pop songs for the post-"BRAT" crowd. Best of all is the Grimes-esque "Fame Is a Gun," a sunglasses-in-the-club banger with synthetic vocal textures and an unignorable chorus. For fashionable listeners, and those who aim to become more fabulous.

Past champion: "Bad Girls," Donna Summer (1979)

Song of the summer of revenge: "Manchild," Sabrina Carpenter

Does it sound strikingly similar to "Please, Please, Please" at times? Sure. But has Sabrina Carpenter cornered the market on country-tinged, satirical pop songs about heterofatalism, an internet neologism for those who find heterosexuality embarrassing and hopeless? Also, yes. But you know, with a wink, vengeance and a danceable quality. Amen, hey men!

Past champion: "Before He Cheats," Carrie Underwood (from her 2005 debut album, but released as a single in 2006)

Biggest song of the year, and therefore the default song of the summer: "Luther," Kendrick Lamar and SZA

Is a song released in November too dated to qualify for song of the summer? Perhaps. But here's the rub: Kendrick Lamar and SZA's "Luther" held the No. 1 spot on the Billboard Hot 100 for 13 weeks in 2025 — over half the year so far. Popularity makes the contender. It doesn't hurt that "Luther" is also one of the best songs of both this year and last, a tender R&B ballad that samples Luther Vandross and Cheryl Lynn's 1982 rendition of "If This World Were Mine." "Luther" has since been dethroned on the charts, but no other song has come close to its run this year.

Past champion: "Last Night," Morgan Wallen (2023)

Country crossover song of the summer: "What I Want," Morgan Wallen and Tate McRae

If terrestrial country radio is your leading metric for selecting the song of the summer, then Morgan Wallen's "I'm The Problem" is likely your pick. But a catchier track with true country crossover appeal is "What I Want" with Wallen and pop singer Tate McRae. It is the first time Wallen has featured a female vocalist on one of his songs. It's a rare embrace for the chart topper, who historically prefers to buck country duet tradition and double down on his vocal style — warm, muscular, masculine.

Past champion: "You're Still the One," Shania Twain (from her 1997 album, but released as a single in 1998)

Song of the summer released half a decade ago: "party 4 you," Charli xcx

The data doesn't lie and what is old is new is old is new again. In the year after "BRAT" summer, desire for more Charli xcx is still strong. As a result, fans have dug up a cut from her 2020 album, "How I'm Feeling Now," and turned it into their own summer anthem ... five years later. So much so, in fact, that Charli released a music video for it in May.

Past champion: "Cruel Summer," Taylor Swift (released in 2019, crowned song of the summer in 2023)

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Song of the summer with a canine-themed title: "Mutt," Leon Thomas

Look, "Mutt" also arrived in 2024, but in 2025 — bolstered by a deluxe release and a recent Chris Brown remix — makes "Mutt" an easy song of the summer pick for some listeners. It's difficult to hear that chorus and not sing along: "She said, 'Take your time, what's the rush?' / I said, 'Baby, I'm a dog, I'm a mutt.'"

Past champion: "Bird Dog," The Everly Brothers (1958)

## Hackers say they wiped out \$90 million from Iran cryptocurrency exchange

By GABE LEVIN Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Hackers with possible links to Israel have drained more than \$90 million from Nobitex, Iran's largest cryptocurrency exchange, according to blockchain analytics firms.

The group that claimed responsibility for the hack leaked on Thursday what it said was the company's full source code. "ASSETS LEFT IN NOBITEX ARE NOW ENTIRELY OUT IN THE OPEN," the group wrote on its Telegram account.

The stolen funds were transferred to addresses bearing messages that criticized Iran's Revolutionary Guard, Blockchain analytics firm Elliptic wrote in a blog post. It said the attack likely was not financially motivated as the wallets the hackers had poured the money into "effectively burned the funds in order to send Nobitex a political message."

The hackers group, Gonjeshke Darande — "Predatory Sparrow" in Farsi — accused Nobitex of having helped Iran's government to evade Western sanctions over the country's rapidly advancing nuclear program and transfer money to militants, in a post on X claiming the attack.

Nobitex appeared to have confirmed the attack. Its app and website were down as it assessed "unauthorized access" to its systems, it said in a post on X.

The theft spanned a range of cryptocurrencies, including Bitcoin, Ethereum, Dogecoin and more, said head of national security intelligence at Chainalysis Andrew Fierman. The breach is "particularly significant given the comparatively modest size of Iran's cryptocurrency market," he added.

The hack appears to be motivated by escalating tensions in the Israel-Iran conflict, which broke out last week when Israel struck Iran's nuclear sites and military officials, drawing Tehran's response with barrages of missiles. It came after the group said it had destroyed data in a cyberattack against Iran's state-controlled Bank Sepah on Tuesday.

Elliptic said that relatives of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei were linked to the exchange and that sanctioned Revolutionary Guard operatives had used Nobitex. It shared evidence that the exchange had sent and received funds from cryptocurrency wallets controlled by Iranian allies including Yemen's Houthis and Hamas.

Gonjeshke Darande has previously claimed responsibility for other high-level cyberattacks against Iran, including a 2021 operation that paralyzed gas stations and a 2022 effort against a steel mill that sparked a large fire.

Israeli media have widely reported that Gonjeshke Darande is linked to Israel but the country's government has never officially acknowledged ties to the group.

U.S. Senators Elizabeth Warren and Angus King last year raised concerns about Iran's use of cryptocurrencies to evade sanctions.

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## Today in History: June 20

### Muhammad Ali convicted of draft evasion

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Friday, June 20, the 171st day of 2025. There are 194 days left in the year. Summer begins today.

Today in history:

On June 20, 1967, boxer Muhammad Ali was convicted in Houston of violating Selective Service laws by refusing to be drafted and was sentenced to five years in prison. (Ali's conviction would ultimately be overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court).

Also on this date:

In 1782, the Continental Congress approved the Great Seal of the United States, featuring the emblem of the bald eagle.

In 1837, Queen Victoria acceded to the British throne following the death of her uncle, King William IV.

In 1893, a jury in New Bedford, Massachusetts, found Lizzie Borden not guilty of the ax murders of her father and stepmother.

In 1943, race-related rioting erupted in Detroit; federal troops were sent in by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to quell the violence that resulted in more than 30 deaths.

In 1947, gangster Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel was shot dead at the Beverly Hills, California, home of his girlfriend, Virginia Hill, likely at the order of mob associates.

In 1972, three days after the arrest of the Watergate burglars, President Richard Nixon met at the White House with his chief of staff, H.R. Haldeman; the secretly made tape recording of this meeting ended up with a notorious 18 1/2-minute gap.

In 2002, in the case *Atkins v. Virginia*, the Supreme Court ruled in a 6-3 decision that executing people with intellectual disabilities qualified as cruel and unusual punishment and was therefore in violation of the Eighth Amendment.

Today's Birthdays: Filmmaker Stephen Frears is 84. Singer Anne Murray is 80. TV personality Bob Vila is 79. Musician Lionel Richie is 76. Actor John Goodman is 73. Rock bassist Michael Anthony (Van Halen) is 71. Rock bassist John Taylor (Duran Duran) is 65. Actor Nicole Kidman is 58. Filmmaker Robert Rodriguez is 57. Actor Josh Lucas is 54. Sen. Eric Schmitt, R-Mo., is 50. Actor Christopher Mintz-Plasse is 36.