

Groton Daily Independent

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Aug. 1-5: Legion State B Tourney at Milbank
Aug. 8-10: State Jr. Legion at Milbank
Aug. 8-10: State Jr. Teener at Volga

**Groton Locke Electric will advance to the state tournament.
We'll have details in tomorrow's edition.**

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

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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.

New Tariffs Announced

President Donald Trump signed an executive order yesterday imposing new tariffs on imports from 68 countries and the 27-member European Union, set to take effect at 12:01 am ET on Aug. 7. The new deadline replaces an original one that had been anticipated for today, when dozens of countries had been warned to strike trade deals or face steep tariff hikes.

The latest batch of levies will range from 10% on countries where the US exports more goods than it receives (and for trading partners that are not listed in the executive order) to as high as 41% for countries deemed to have unbalanced trade relationships with the US.

Separately, the Trump administration increased tariffs on Canada to 35% from 25% (expected to take effect today), while Mexico struck a temporary deal with the US to maintain current 25% rates for another 90 days.

Earlier in the day, a federal appeals court weighed Trump's tariff authority. Trump is the first president to use the International Emergency Economic Powers Act to levy tariffs, citing fentanyl trafficking and long-standing trade deficits as justification. The 1977 law allows presidents to issue economic sanctions to counter exceptional threats.

Piprahwa Gems Reclaimed

The Piprahwa Gems have been returned to India after 127 years, India's government has announced. The collection is considered sacred by Buddhists and is believed to be linked to the Buddha himself.

The discovery dates back to 1898, when British estate manager William Claxton Peppé excavated an ancient monument in Piprahwa, northern India, near the Buddha's birthplace. He unearthed a chest containing nearly 1,800 pearls, rubies, sapphires, and other gems and gold pieces alongside bone fragments and an urn attributing the remains to the Buddha. Peppé relinquished most of the relics to the colonial Indian government but retained over 300 pieces.

Peppé's descendants planned to auction the collection through Sotheby's this year before the Indian government threatened legal action. Sotheby's says it negotiated a sale of the collection to Mumbai-based conglomerate Godrej Industries Group for an undisclosed sum. The jewels will go on permanent display in India.

World's 'Oldest' IVF Baby

A baby boy born in Ohio on July 26 has set a world record as the oldest baby ever born from a frozen embryo. Thaddeus Daniel Pierce was conceived from an embryo created and cryopreserved in 1994 by Linda Archerd during an in vitro fertilization cycle.

Now 62, Archerd donated her remaining embryos after menopause through a process known as embryo adoption, in which donors have input on where embryos are placed and which are often handled by Christian agencies. Lindsey and Tim Pierce adopted the embryo, which had been stored for over 30 years in a slow-frozen plastic vial. Archerd previously gave birth to a daughter from the same IVF procedure—that daughter is now 30 and has a 10-year-old child.

Since the first IVF baby was born in 1978, over 13 million babies worldwide have been born through IVF or similar technologies. In the US, about 2% of babies—one in every 42—are born using IVF.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Pro Football Hall of Fame to induct 2025 class tomorrow featuring Antonio Gates, Sterling Sharpe, Eric Allen, and Jared Allen.

ESPN cut ties with Shannon Sharpe after Sharpe settles sexual assault lawsuit.

Justin Timberlake reveals Lyme disease diagnosis, which left the singer dealing with nerve pain and fatigue while in the middle of his world concert tour.

Sean "Diddy" Combs requests conviction be overturned ahead of his October sentencing.

UFC star Conor McGregor loses appeal in civil sexual assault case; McGregor was found liable for sexually assaulting a woman in 2018.

Science & Technology

Google DeepMind unveils AlphaEarth Foundations, combining its AI models with observational data from satellites; platform allows researchers unprecedented detail in monitoring changes on the planet's surface.

Modern potatoes originated from a chance cross-pollination between ancient tomato plants and a related plant species; event occurred roughly 9 million years ago near the Andes Mountains, per study.

Neuroscientists pinpoint brain region that helps distinguish between solid objects and viscous fluids; findings shed light on how the brain evolved to interact with the physical world.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close down (S&P 500 -0.4%, Dow -0.7%, Nasdaq -0.0%).

Core personal consumption expenditures price index, which measures costs consumers pay across a wide range of items, excluding food and energy, rose 2.8% year over year in June; figure matches May's upwardly revised rate.

Figma shares more than triple in NYSE debut, valuing design-software maker at roughly \$48B.

Reddit shares rise over 10% in after-hours trading after better-than-expected Q2 results.

Apple reports largest revenue growth since December 2021.

OpenAI reaches \$12B in annualized revenue; reports 700 million weekly active users for its ChatGPT products.

... and will build its first European AI data center in Norway.

Politics & World Affairs

Ukraine's parliament passes legislation restoring the powers of two anticorruption agencies after domestic protests; the new bill reverses a move last week to sideline the agencies over allegations they were filled with Russian agents.

US Northeast braces for torrential rain and possible flash flooding, with states of emergency declared in New Jersey, New York City.

Texas' Kerr County emergency management director tells state lawmakers he was out sick, asleep when the Guadalupe River began seeing catastrophic flooding early last month.

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**Help Lead a Cause that
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COMMON CENTS THRIFT STORE

**is Seeking a Volunteer
Manager + Assistants!**

Are you passionate about community, organizing, and helping others? Common Cents is looking for **A Volunteer Manager and Volunteer Assistants** to help lead our team and keep the store running smoothly.

Positions Available:



Volunteer Store Manager – Help coordinate volunteers, organize donations, and oversee daily operations.



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209 N MAIN STREET, GROTON, SD
Need more info? Call 605-216-2350

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Dive Team sweeps bottom of pool looking for glass

The Groton Dive Team got wind of the situation at the Groton Swimming Pool and came to the rescue in helping in a search mission for glass in the deep end. Earlier this week, a swimmer was wearing goggles that contained glass and when he jumped in the water, the goggles shattered sending chunks of glass to the deep end. For safety concerns, the deep end was then blocked off. Groton lifeguards worked diligently going to the bottom looking for glass each day. The dive team from the Groton Fire Department of Michael Dunbar, Cody Bonn and Tom Bentz offered their services to search for glass at the bottom of the pool. All they came up with was two pieces of glass (and a gem!). Pool Manager Kami Lipp said, "Our kids did great looking for glass." The services of the dive team was greatly appreciated.



The dive team did find two pieces of glass at the bottom of the pool.

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The Groton Dive Team of Tom Bentz, Cody Bonn and Michael Dunbar were getting ready for a search mission of glass at the bottom of the Groton Swimming Pool. (Courtesy Photos)

2ND ANNUAL CELEBRATION IN THE PARK

SAT, AUG 2ND

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

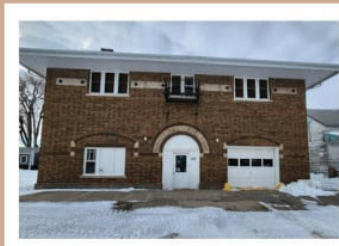
- 8AM RIB TEAM CHECK-IN
- 9:30AM RIB TEAM RULES MEETING
- 1PM LIONS START SERVING LUNCH
- 1PM CORNHOLE REGISTRATION
- 2PM CORNHOLE TOURNEY
- 1-3PM HUB CITY RADIO LIVE BROADCAST
- 1-4:30PM KIDS ACTIVITIES
 - WATER BALLONS AT 4:30PM
- **5PM RIB TASTING \$1/RIB (LIMIT 10 PER PERSON) WHILE SUPPLIES LAST**
- 6-9PM B&M TUNES KARAOKE



Enjoy karaoke and a chance to win—two split pot drawings will be held!

Groton City Park

FUNDRAISER EVENT DAY
SATURDAY, AUGUST 9TH, 2025
RESTORE OUR HERITAGE



Municipal Building

Join us for a fun-filled day at our **Municipal Building Restoration Fundraiser**! Participate in a poker run, enjoy delicious food from a food truck, listen to live music from two local bands, and bid on amazing items at our live auction. Your support helps preserve our community's heritage and brings us one step closer to restoring our beloved building. Come make a difference! Support our community and have fun!

EVENT SCHEDULE

2:30pm - Poker Run Registration at Conde Park (ATV, UTV, Motorcycle, Car, Golf Cart, Bicycle...Whatever you want to ride!)

Ride begins at 3:00pm and ends at 5:00pm with 4 stops in town

2:30pm - 12:30am - Food Truck (Burgers, Roast Beef Sandwiches, Brats, Hot Dogs, Potato Salad, Macaroni Salad and Chips served by Trixy Schwabe)

6:00pm - 8:30pm - Music by Bob Styles

9:00pm - 12:00am - Music by The Barstool Prophets



****The Live Auction will be held at 8:30 ****



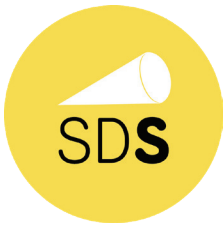
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Walking Taco and a drink
Free Will Donation
Proceeds go to Groton's Angel Tree
15 N Main, St. #103
Groton Daily Independent
Suggested Donation: \$5

Family Fun Fest -Thursday, Aug. 7 ~ 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

SD election office publishes voter list labeling thousands as public assistance applicants

Information is included in newly required free version of statewide registration spreadsheet

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - JULY 31, 2025 4:16 PM

Thousands of South Dakotans have been publicly labeled as applicants for government assistance and thousands more have had their email address and phone number exposed, due to a new state law and the way the state's election office is implementing it.

Although the legislation creating the law received some Democratic votes, it's a product of the Republican-dominated Legislature. Republican Gov. Larry Rhoden signed it into law and Republican Secretary of State Monae Johnson is carrying out its provisions.

Several legislators, both Democrats and Republicans, are now telling South Dakota Searchlight they did not intend for the law to expose sensitive information — especially the identity of public assistance applicants.

"This is what happens when you put the wrong people in charge," said state House Minority Leader Erin Healy, D-Sioux Falls, who voted against the bill. "We talk a lot about freedom and privacy in this state, so it's a shame that this legislation led to this type of breach."



A Sioux Falls resident votes in the city and school board election at Southern Hills United Methodist Church on April 9, 2024.

(Makenzie Huber/South Dakota Searchlight)

About the new law

The legislation passed in March. It requires the Secretary of State's Office — which oversees elections — to make the state's entire voter registration list freely available online, after the list was previously available only for a \$2,500 fee.

Activists who favor the hand-counting of ballots, oppose the use of vote-counting machines and deny the legitimacy of the 2020 presidential election were among those who promoted the legislation as an "election integrity" measure.

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When the law took effect July 1, the Secretary of State's Office made the statewide voter registration list freely available on its website, containing information about 668,419 registered voters.

South Dakota Searchlight downloaded the list and found it included information such as each voter's name, political party and address. It additionally included phone numbers and email addresses, if voters provided those two pieces of optional information while filling out their voter registration form, or if the information was automatically included when voters registered through another government form, such as an application for a driver's license.

There was also a column identifying where and how voters registered, such as at a driver's exam station, a disability services office, a military recruitment center, or while applying for assistance from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, or the Women, Infants and Children program.

In all, 7,186 people were labeled as having registered to vote while applying for some form of public assistance, according to a Searchlight analysis.

Past practice called into question

After the initial publication, the Secretary of State's Office updated and replaced the older version of the spreadsheet. The newer version no longer includes columns devoted to how a voter registered, but the information still appears under the "County" column for some voters.

A spokesperson for the office told South Dakota Searchlight in an emailed statement that the free spreadsheet contains the same information that was "traditionally" available by paying the \$2,500 fee. The office has not responded to further questions from Searchlight.

The South Dakota Democratic Party regularly purchased the information in the past. Executive Director Dan Ahlers, a former legislator, said past spreadsheets did not identify voters as having registered while applying for public assistance.

"I think the trust between South Dakotans and the state government has certainly been damaged here," Ahlers said. "I think leadership has to answer for it. This is something the secretary of state will need to answer to the Legislature about: why this happened and how it can be avoided."

Former secretary of state and current Public Utilities Commissioner Chris Nelson, a Republican, said lists compiled by his staff while he was secretary of state from 2003 through 2010 did not disclose how voters registered.

"It wasn't a data item where you could go through a whole list and sort voters by how they registered to vote," Nelson said.

Possible lawsuit predicted

Samantha Chapman, advocacy manager for the American Civil Liberties Union of South Dakota, said the release of confidential information could open the state up to a lawsuit.

She said the state is essentially forcing public assistance applicants to avoid registering to vote if they want their application to remain private.

"But those who register to vote now have to consent to having that information open to the public," Chapman said.

The National Voter Registration Act requires public assistance agencies to facilitate voter registration, and to relay that voter information to county auditors and the Secretary of State's Office. But multiple federal laws protect the confidentiality of individual public assistance records.

Additionally, a state law says any record concerning an applicant or recipient of public assistance through the Department of Social Services is confidential. There are exceptions for "inspection by any person duly authorized by this state or the United States in connection with the person's official duties," and "for the purpose of fair hearings as provided by law."

When asking public assistance applicants if they'd like to register to vote, the state Department of Social Services economic assistance application says "information regarding the office to which the voter

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registration form was submitted will remain confidential and be used only for voter registration purposes.”

In response to Searchlight questions about the legality of the state’s actions, South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley said he is appointing lawyers from his office to discuss the matter with the Secretary of State’s Office.

The ACLU of South Dakota sent a letter Thursday to the Secretary of State’s Office asking it to:

Remove copies of the statewide voter registration file from its website.

Remove from the file all data about the method by which a person registered to vote.

Notify all South Dakota registered voters whose confidential information was exposed.

Update language on its website clarifying what registration information is public and clarifying that voter registrations completed through a public assistance office will remain confidential.

Rapid City Republican Rep. Heather Baxter was the main sponsor of the legislation requiring free publication of the voter registration list. She said this week it wasn’t her intention to publicize how voters registered. She only wanted information necessary to verify South Dakota’s voter rolls and to contact voters about their registration’s accuracy.

The bill’s lead Senate sponsor, Rapid City Republican John Carley, expressed similar motivations.

“All the bill did was make the voter registration file available at no cost to the public,” Carley said. “The source information wasn’t included in the voter registration file before this law and it shouldn’t be there after.”

Legislators are all included in the spreadsheet, because they have to be registered to run for office. That means their address — and their phone number and email address, for those who provided them — are available to the public, even though legislative leaders removed lawmakers’ addresses from the legislative website last month. The decision was motivated by safety concerns after the shootings of two legislators and their spouses at their homes in Minnesota.

Complaints extend to list’s accessibility, impact on campaigns

Carley is also upset with the Secretary of State’s Office for the way it’s publishing the list. The office initially posted it as a simple download link. Since then, the office has added an online form that has to be filled out first. After filling out the form — which requires information including a name, address, phone number and email — the website auto-generates an email containing download links.

Carley said the form hinders transparency and invades privacy.

“This is public information the taxpayer is paying for, so there shouldn’t be a mechanism to track individuals,” he said.

Lincoln County Auditor Sheri Lund said privacy concerns are causing more people to submit new voter registration forms without the optional phone number and email address, so that those pieces of information won’t be publicly available.

Lund has been informing voters about the matter since lawmakers passed the bill in March.

“I think people are concerned about it and don’t know what the benefit of doing it was,” Lund said. “I don’t understand. There is no control over whoever is downloading that information.”

Lund said she’s not opposed to the information being available at no cost, but she’d rather have the request go to county auditors and “not be available for anybody to go through online.”

Campaigns are the typical users of the phone numbers and email addresses, Lund said, but she expects that to become more difficult as more voters file new forms to retract the information.

“It’s going to be harder for people running for positions to talk to voters if they want to call or text,” Lund said. “Otherwise, they’ll just reference the list for mailing information. There’ll be more mailers, so the post office should be happy.”

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.

Sisseton-Wahpeton leader calls lawmaker's now-deleted social media post 'inflammatory'

Freshman Rep. Logan Manhart represents parts of Lake Traverse Reservation

BY: JOHN HULT - JULY 31, 2025 6:57 PM



J. Garret Renville, chairman of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate, speaks to visitors from the State-Tribal Relations Committee about the tribe's artifacts on July 31, 2025. (John

Hult/South Dakota Searchlight)

AGENCY VILLAGE — The chairman of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate said Thursday during a meeting of South Dakota's State-Tribal Relations Committee that an earlier social media post from one of his district's state representatives was "inflammatory" and "racially charged."

Chairman J. Garret Renville's tribe hosted the meeting at its headquarters in Agency Village. Earlier in the day, he helped guide some members on a tour of the tribe's 25-bed, under-construction jail, and joined them for a lengthy visit with the tribe's historian in a room filled with artifacts, many of which had been repatriated back to the tribe from museums.

Renville's comments during the afternoon meeting came in response to a now-deleted July 4 social media post from Rep. Logan Manhart, R-Aberdeen, that read "it's white boy summer and the boys are back in charge #MAGA."

Manhart's district, District 1, includes parts of the Lake Traverse Reservation, home to the Sisseton-Wahpeton tribe.

The post drew criticism from state Democrats, who said the phrase "white boy summer" is used by white supremacist organizations. The post also drew criticism from some members of Manhart's own party, though House Majority Leader Scott Odenbach rejected calls by Democrats to "address" the issue with "the seriousness it demands."

Odenbach is a member of the State-Tribal Relations Committee, but attended Thursday's meeting virtually.

A copy of a South Dakota Searchlight article on Manhart's post, reprinted in the Mitchell Republic, was pinned to a bulletin board outside the tribe's education office on Thursday. A reference to his status as a lawmaker with Lake Traverse constituents was underlined in black pen.

Remarks from Renville

Renville welcomed the lawmakers at the start of the meeting and thanked them for offering a forum for discussions on relations between the state and its sovereign tribal nations. After the meeting, he handed the members a blanket as a gift from the tribe.

"This committee represents one of the few formal venues in South Dakota where tribal voices are not only heard, but are central to the discussion," Renville said.

Before ending his opening remarks, however, he said he wanted to address comments that "do not reflect the diversity or the values of District 1." It was a reference to Manhart's Instagram post.

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"I typically don't lend weight to inflammatory or racially charged remarks. Often, I know they are intended to distract or appeal to the lowest instincts in politics, and history has taught us that those strategies rarely produce progress," Renville said, reading from prepared remarks. "It certainly doesn't reflect the kind of leadership that we needed here."

Renville then thanked Sen. Mike Rohl, R-Aberdeen, who represents part of the reservation and sits on the committee, for "his willingness to communicate and stay engaged" in spite of disagreements on policy.

"Despite these disappointments and comments made by one of the district reps, I still believe in the promise of public service," Renville said. "I believe there's always hope, hope that other leaders, such as yourselves, will continue to lead by example."

Response from lawmakers

The committee's chairman, Pierre Republican Rep. Will Mortenson, told Renville the committee "shares your sentiments to a large extent."

"I want to assure you that those are not reflective or commonplace with this Legislature," said Mortenson, a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe. "This committee doesn't associate ourselves with it."

Manhart did not respond to a message seeking comment on Thursday.

Odenbach, who wrote an email in July to his colleagues in response to Democrats' criticisms of Manhart, did not speak during the Thursday committee meeting. Odenbach's July email said it's not for him to divine the underlying meaning of legislators' social media posts, and rejected what he described as Democrats' "insinuation that South Dakota is a state founded by racist oppressors, or that our great citizens of today are the cause" of continued harm to Native Americans and other marginalized groups.

The majority leader did not respond to a message seeking comment on Renville's remarks.

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.

Technical college board endorses \$49 million state budget request

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - JULY 31, 2025 3:15 PM

The governor-appointed board overseeing the state's technical colleges endorsed a \$49 million state budget request for fiscal year 2027 on Thursday, which includes requests for increased student support and infrastructure funding across South Dakota's four technical colleges.

The vote came during the South Dakota Board of Technical Education's meeting at Western Dakota Technical College in Rapid City. Board Executive Director Nick Wendell presented the priorities, which he said were developed in collaboration with the state's technical college presidents. It now heads to the governor's administration for consideration during the state budget process.

The state's four public technical colleges are Lake Area, Mitchell, Southeast and Western Dakota. The board is responsible for setting policy, approving budgets, and advocating for resources that support career-focused education and workforce development. The board is composed of nine members appointed by the governor and confirmed by the state Senate.

The approved request of \$49 million is up \$2 million from the previous fiscal year.

About \$41 million would go toward the per-student allocation, raising it to \$6,992 (up \$158) per pupil. The funds help cover the basic costs of running the technical colleges, including instruction, equipment and campus operations. The per-student increase accounts for a 2.5% inflation adjustment and a request to allocate \$3 million for equipment funding into the ongoing budget, rather than relying on one-time requests year after year.

The board also approved a request to nearly double maintenance and repair funding, bringing it to \$3.84 million from \$1.8 million. Wendell said the request aims to restore the state's original 2018 plan to match

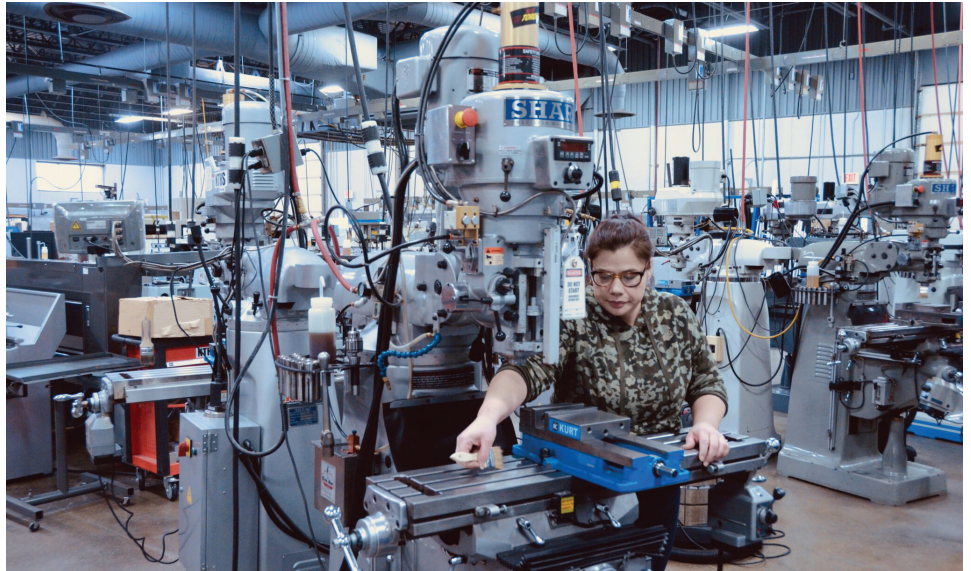
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1% of the total replacement value of technical college facilities, with the system contributing the other 1% to meet a shared 2% investment goal.

The state's fiscal year budget proposal will be developed by the governor and considered by legislators during the upcoming winter legislative session.

Joshua Haiar is a reporter based in Sioux Falls. Born and raised in Mitchell, he joined the Navy as a public affairs specialist after high school and then earned a degree from the University of South Dakota. Prior to joining South Dakota Searchlight, Joshua worked for five years as a multimedia specialist and journalist with South Dakota Public Broadcasting.



Kimberlee Browne uses a brush to clear metal shards from the cutting deck of precision machining equipment at Lake Area Technical College in Watertown on Jan. 20, 2023. Browne was demonstrating the capabilities she learned in a state Department of Corrections program supported by four of the state's technical colleges. (J.T. Fey/for South Dakota Searchlight)

Trump's big proposed cuts to health and education spending rebuffed by US Senate panel

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA AND SHAUNEEN MIRANDA - JULY 31, 2025 3:42 PM

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations Thursday largely rejected Trump administration proposals to slash funding for education programs, medical research grants, health initiatives and Ukraine security assistance.

Instead, senators from both parties agreed to increase spending in the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education spending bill for fiscal year 2026, as well as the Defense bill, and rebuked the White House's move to dismantle the Department of Education.

The pushback against President Donald Trump was significant as Congress heads toward a possible standoff and partial government shutdown when the fiscal year expires on Sept. 30.

In response to the Trump administration's separate cancellation of grants and freezing of funds approved by Congress, senators also included language in the Labor-HHS-Education spending bill to create deadlines for formula grants to be released to states on time.

Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Susan Collins, Republican of Maine, said the bill to fund the departments of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education "prioritizes funding to make Americans healthier and supports life-saving medical research through targeted funding."

The measure provides \$116.6 billion for HHS, an increase of \$446 million in discretionary funding over the previous fiscal year. Included is a \$150 million increase for cancer research and a \$100 million increase for Alzheimer's disease research, as well as a ban on an administration cap on indirect costs at the National Institutes of Health, according to a summary from Democrats. The cap on how much NIH pays research universities and medical schools for indirect costs is the subject of a permanent injunction in an ongoing lawsuit.

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Trump's budget proposal also cut funding for the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to \$4.2 billion, but senators voted to instead allocate \$9.1 billion for the agency.

Also included is \$8.8 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant and nearly \$12.4 billion for Head Start.

The top Democrat on the committee, Sen. Patty Murray of Washington state, said that while the bill rejects many of the funding cuts from the Trump administration, it's "only half of the equation."

"We have an administration right now that is intent on ignoring Congress, breaking the law, and doing everything it can without any transparency, to dismantle programs and agencies that help families," she said. "There is no magic bullet that will change that unfortunate reality."

Murray also expressed her disappointment that the bill did not fund the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Trump sent what is known as a rescissions request to Congress, approved by both chambers, that yanked \$1.1 billion in previously approved funding over the next two years for the agency, which funds NPR and PBS.

The Labor-HHS-Education spending bill for fiscal year 2026 passed out of the Senate committee with a bipartisan 26-3 vote.

Senators also passed the Defense appropriations bill for fiscal year 2026 on a 26-3 vote.

Dismantling of Education Department spurned

The bill text tightens requirements so that Education Department staffing levels must be sufficient to carry out the agency's missions, and its work cannot be outsourced to other agencies or departments to fulfill statutory responsibilities, according to Sen. Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin, the top Democrat on the spending panel dealing with Labor-HHS-Education spending.

The agency saw a reduction in force, or RIF, earlier this year that gutted more than 1,300 employees and hit wide swaths of the department. The Supreme Court cleared the way earlier in July for the agency to temporarily proceed with those mass layoffs.

The bill also provides \$5.78 billion for School Improvement Programs — which support before- and after-school programs, rural education, STEM education and college and career counseling, among other initiatives.

Trump's fiscal 2026 budget request had called for \$12 billion in spending cuts at the Education Department but the committee allocated \$79 billion in discretionary funding.



U.S. Senate Appropriations Chair Susan Collins, a Maine Republican, left, and the top Democrat on the committee, Sen. Patty Murray of Washington state, at a committee markup on Thursday, July 31, 2025. (Photos from committee webcast)

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Education Secretary Linda McMahon defended Trump's sweeping proposals while appearing in June before the Senate Labor-HHS-Education subcommittee.

During Thursday's markup, Murray called the president's proposal to defund the Department of Education "absurd."

"I still hope we can do more when it comes to demanding accountability, transparency, and that this administration actually follows our laws," Murray said. "We all know President Trump cannot dismantle the Department of Education or ship education programs to other agencies. Authorizing laws prevent that."

The agency has witnessed a dizzying array of cuts and changes since Trump took office, as he and his administration look to dramatically overhaul the federal role in education and dismantle the department.

The bill maintains the same maximum annual award for the Pell Grant from the previous award year at \$7,395. The government subsidy helps low-income students pay for college.

Trump's budget request had called for cutting nearly \$1,700 from the maximum award.

Health spending

Baldwin said the overall bill is a "compromise." She pointed to how Republicans and Democrats agreed to increase funds for the 988 Suicide hotline by \$2 million and by another \$20 million for substance abuse recovery.

The spending bill will also provide \$1.6 billion for State Opioid Response grants, which is a formula-based grant for states to address the opioid crisis.

Senators rejected the Trump administration's request to cut National Institutes of Health research by 40% and instead included a more than \$400 million bump in funding for a total of \$48.7 billion.

Georgia Sen. Jon Ossoff said that he was grateful that the committee worked on a bipartisan basis to reject major Trump cuts for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in his home state.

"I made (it) very clear that I would not accept the destruction of the CDC," Ossoff said. "I am grateful that Republicans and Democrats on this committee are coming together to defend this vital institution based in the state of Georgia."

Advocates for medical research praised the legislation.

"Chair Collins and Vice Chair Murray deserve special recognition for their leadership in making this a priority. Thousands of ACS CAN volunteers from across the country have been writing to their lawmakers on this issue and it's deeply encouraging to see their voices have been heard loud and clear," Lisa Lacasse, president of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, said in a statement.

AmeriCorps, Job Corps funding sustained

Trump's budget request also proposed \$4.6 billion in spending cuts at the Department of Labor.

The spending bill also maintains funding for Job Corps, a residential career training program for young adults, at \$1.76 billion.

Trump's budget request sought to eliminate the program entirely.

The administration says the program is "financially unsustainable, has an exorbitant perparticipant cost, risks the safety of young adults, and has often made participants worse off," according to a summary of the budget request.

The spending bill also includes \$15 billion for the Social Security Administration, an increase of \$100 million from the president's budget request, to address staffing shortages.

The administration also proposed the elimination of AmeriCorps.

However, senators kept funding for AmeriCorps for fiscal year 2026 at \$1.25 billion.

Defense spending also increased

The Defense appropriations spending bill for fiscal year 2026 that senators worked on represented an increase from the president's budget request.

"I think not only the prior administration, but this administration as well, have underestimated the level

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of challenge that we have," said Sen. Mitch McConnell, chairman of the Defense appropriations panel.

The Kentucky Republican said the bill provides \$851.9 billion for fiscal year 2026.

He said the topline is higher than the president's budget request because "we cannot seriously address these challenges while artificially constraining our resources" — challenges such as the war in Ukraine and conflicts in the Middle East.

The bill also rejects the Trump administration's effort to slash funding to aid Ukraine in its war against Russia.

"Shutting off engagement with Ukraine would undermine our military's efforts to prepare for the modern battlefield," McConnell said.

During the markup of the defense spending bill, Sen. Dick Durbin, Democrat of Illinois, introduced an amendment to require the Department of Homeland Security to reimburse costs to the Department of Defense for immigration enforcement.

As the Trump administration aims to carry out its plans for mass deportation of people without permanent legal status, it's intertwined the U.S. military and immigration enforcement, ranging from deploying the National Guard to quell immigration protests in Los Angeles to housing immigrants on the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba military base.

Durbin said that so far, DHS has cost the Defense Department \$900 million, from personnel costs to housing immigrants on military bases.

Durbin said the cost to house 180 people on Guantanamo Bay cost the Department of Defense \$40 million over three months.

His amendment failed on a 14-15 vote.

Ariana covers the nation's capital for States Newsroom. Her areas of coverage include politics and policy, lobbying, elections and campaign finance.

Shauneen Miranda is a reporter for States Newsroom's Washington bureau. An alumna of the University of Maryland, she previously covered breaking news for Axios.

State suicide prevention efforts are lacking amid federal cuts

BY: NADA HASSANEIN, STATELINE - JULY 31, 2025 9:18 AM

Only a dozen states have laws establishing suicide prevention offices or coordinators, and just 11 have task forces or committees dedicated to suicide prevention efforts, according to a new report.

The report comes amid sweeping cuts at federal agencies that offer mental health support. They include significant slashes in staffing and funding at the nation's largest mental health and substance use agency, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, or SAMHSA. U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. wants to fold SAMHSA into his new Administration for a Healthy America.

Released last week, the report was conducted by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials with support from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The analysis is part of an online resource breaking down details of suicide prevention efforts at the state level.

As of Jan. 1, just a dozen states had offices or state coordinators focused on suicide prevention: Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Vermont and Virginia. Some states have these offices mandated by law and others were established through executive orders.

Eleven states (Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Oregon, Utah and Washington) plus Puerto Rico have laws requiring a task force, commission or advisory group focused on suicide prevention.

The report notes prevention efforts are most effective when they are focused on higher-risk populations, areas, age groups and occupations. Suicide risk is higher among rural residents, older adults, American Indian and Alaska Native people, people with disabilities, veterans and groups that identify with a sexual minority. The federal administration recently pulled the plug on LGBTQ+ specialized supports under the

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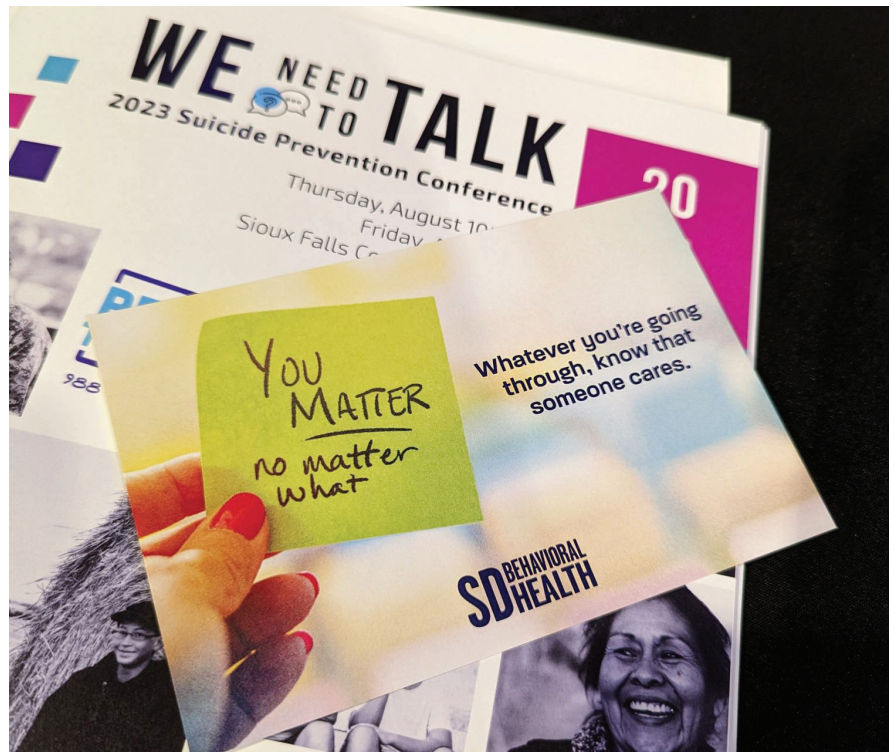
national suicide hotline, 988.

About 60% of states — 29 states and Washington, D.C. — have laws that establish some form of fatality review committees that specifically include suicide deaths in reviews. Areas of focus varied among the states. Some had statewide teams and others were on the local level, according to the report.

The report notes that another 11 states assign prevention responsibilities within other offices. Minnesota law, for example, assigns such tasks to the state commissioner of health, rather than toward a special suicide prevention office or coordinator.

In 2023, the nation saw 49,000 deaths by suicide, according to the CDC. Firearms are involved in more than half of suicides.

Nada Hassanein is a health care reporter for Stateline with a focus on inequities.



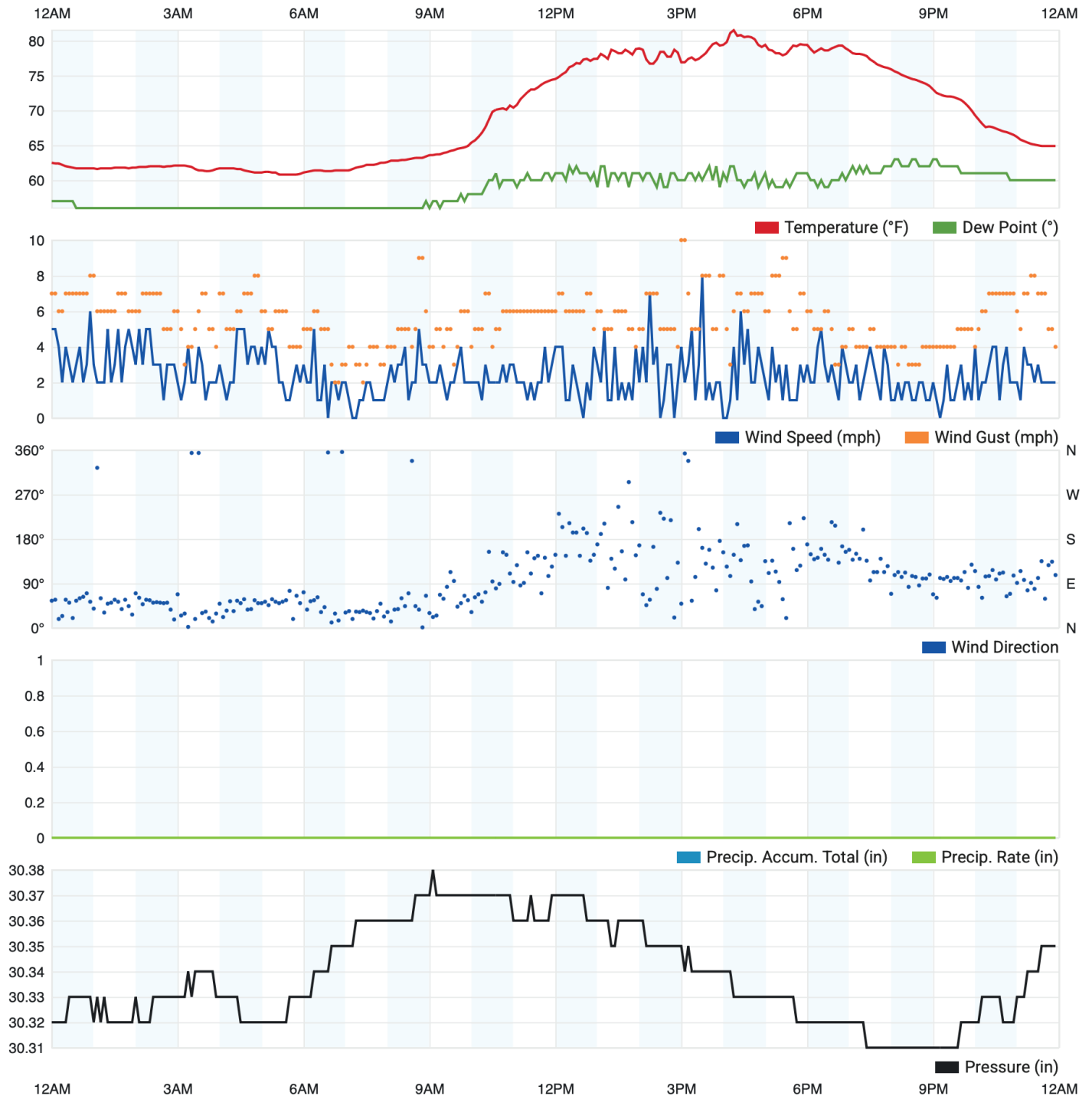
A postcard and agenda on display at the South Dakota Suicide Prevention Conference, held Aug. 10-11, 2023, in Sioux Falls. (John Hult/South Dakota Searchlight)

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

July 31, 2025



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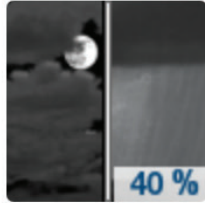
Today



High: 78 °F

Areas Smoke

Tonight



Low: 60 °F

Mostly Cloudy
then Chance
Showers

Saturday



High: 75 °F

Chance
Showers

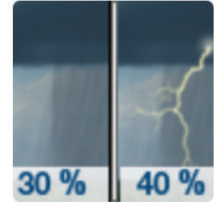
Saturday Night



Low: 61 °F

Chance
T-storms

Sunday



High: 75 °F

Chance
Showers then
Chance
T-storms

THREAT ASSESSMENT

HIGHEST LOCAL RISK

2

WHAT THIS MEANS:
SCATTERED severe storms
possible

TIMING

6pm through Midnight

PRIMARY THREATS



DAMAGING
WIND GUSTS



LARGE
HAIL

SECONDARY THREATS

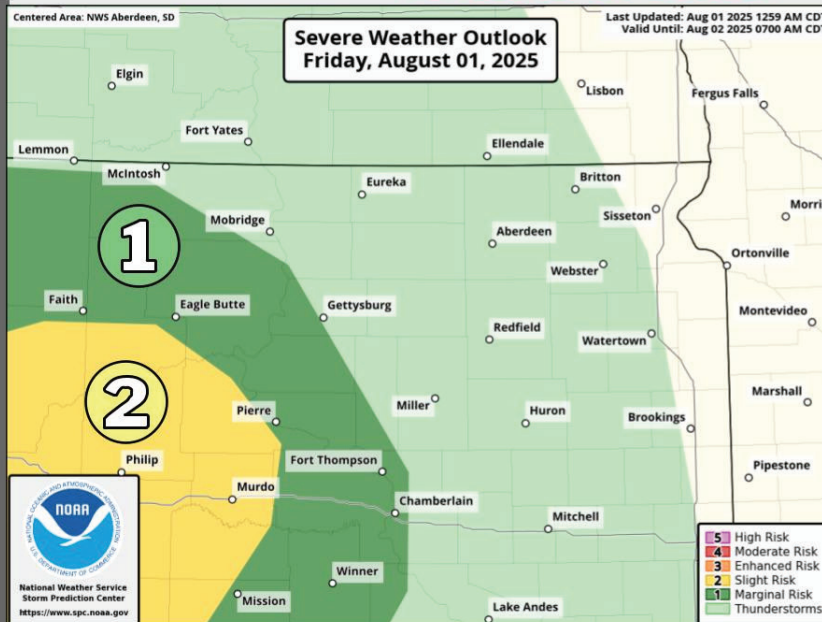


ISOLATED
TORNADO



HEAVY
RAIN

Scattered SEVERE STORMS Tonight



What to Expect:

- Winds to 60 mph and hail up to 1 inch in diameter will be possible

Timing:

- Storms will develop in western SD this afternoon and move east into central SD by late afternoon into this evening.

How to be
Prepared:



INDOOR SHELTER



OUTDOOR PLANS?
STAY WEATHER
AWARE



MULTIPLE WAYS TO
RECEIVE WARNINGS



Another disturbance rolling through the region later today into tonight will lead to another round of showers and thunderstorms. Some storms could be severe with damaging winds and large hail along with a tornado or two and locally heavy rainfall.

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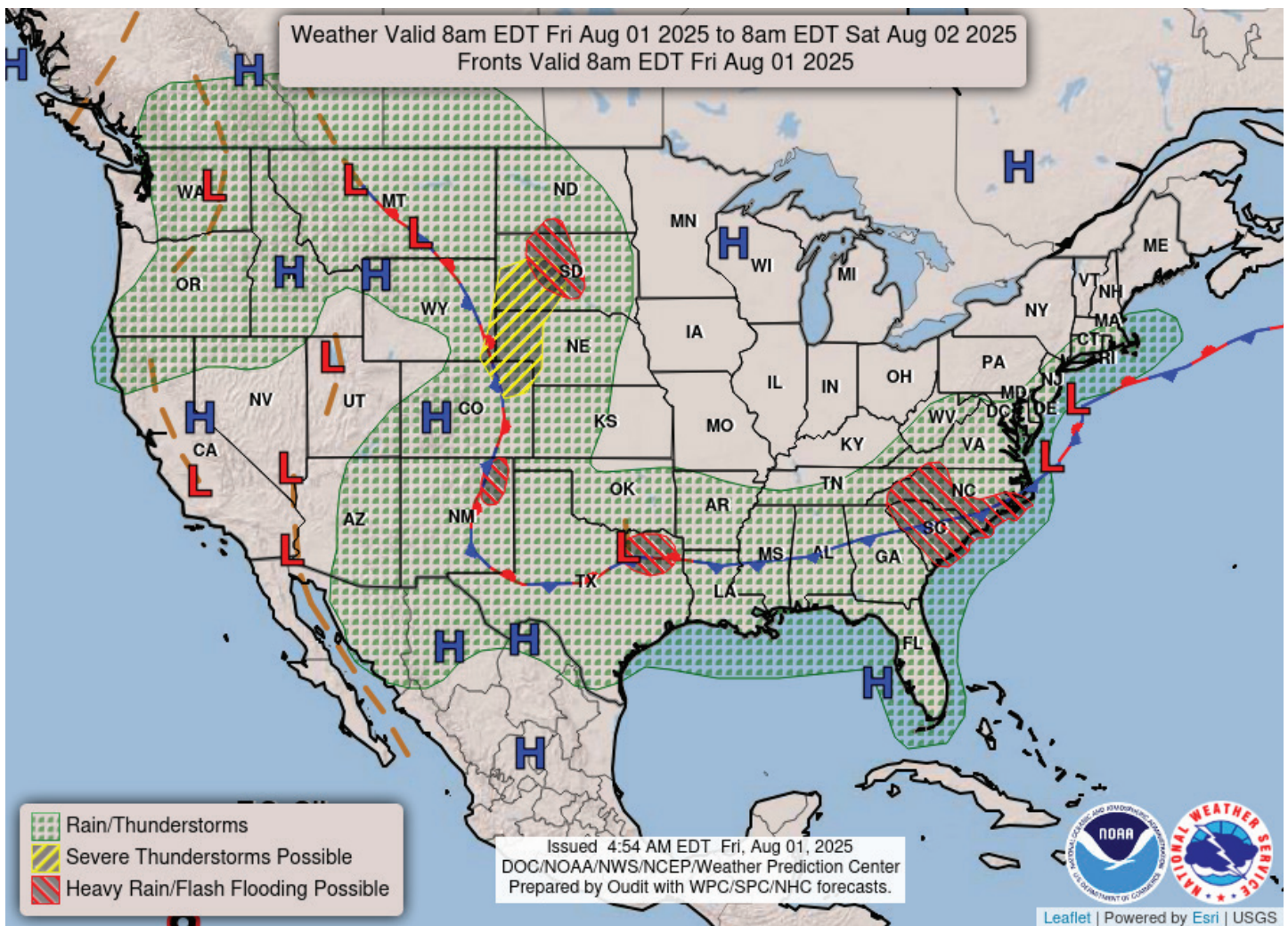
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 82 °F at 4:14 PM
Heat Index: 82 °F at 4:15 PM
Low Temp: 61 °F at 5:48 AM
Wind: 10 mph at 2:57 PM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 14 hours, 46 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 111 in 1900
Record Low: 44 in 1948
Average High: 85
Average Low: 59
Average Precip in August.: 0.08
Precip to date in August: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 14.18
Precip Year to Date: 15.07
Sunset Tonight: 9:01:50 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:16:46 am



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Today in Weather History

August 1, 1978: A severe thunderstorm developed in west-central Beadle County during the afternoon hours and moved southeast. High winds near 80 mph and hail up to golf ball size pelted several counties along the storm path. Hail piled up to six inches deep and up to three feet in ditches. Hail remained visible in some areas up to thirty-six hours after the storm passed. Approximately 480,000 acres of crops were severely damaged or destroyed. Damage to crops and personal property were estimated to be nearly four million dollars.

August 1, 2000: A severe thunderstorm produced large hail up to golf ball size and damaging winds estimated at 90 to 110 mph across northeastern Wyoming and western South Dakota during the evening hours. The northern foothills of the Black Hills and the communities of Spearfish and Sturgis received the brunt of the storm. Considerable F0 and F1 wind damage (90 to 110 mph) occurred in and around Spearfish. The strong winds blew down trees, business and road signs, and damaged tents for the 60th Annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, destroying vendor merchandise and mobile homes.

1976 - A stationary thunderstorm produced more than ten inches of rain which funneled into the narrow Thompson River Canyon of northeastern Colorado. A wall of water six to eight feet high wreaked a twenty-five mile path of destruction from Estes Park to Loveland killing 156 persons. The flash flood caught campers, and caused extensive structural and highway damage. Ten miles of U.S. Highway 34 were totally destroyed as the river was twenty feet higher than normal at times. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1983: During the early afternoon hours, a strong microburst swept across Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, D.C. Although the base anemometer was not calibrated at extreme wind speeds, the peak gust hit 149 mph. It was reported that Air Force One, with President Reagan on board, landed less than 10 minutes before the peak gust.

1986: A powerful thunderstorm produced 100 mph winds and large hail in eastern Kansas and southwestern Missouri causing 71 million dollars damage, and injuring 19 persons. It was one of the worst thunderstorms of record for Kansas. Crops were mowed to the ground in places and roofs blown off buildings along its path, 150 miles long and 30 miles wide, from near Abilene to southeast of Pittsburg.

1986 - The temperature at Little Rock, AR, soared to 112 degrees to establish an all-time record high for that location. Morrilton, AR, hit 115 degrees, and daily highs for the month at that location averaged 102 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - The deadliest tornado in 75 years struck Edmonton, Alberta, killing 26 persons and injuring 200 others. The twister caused more than 75 million dollars damage along its nineteen mile path, leaving 400 families homeless. At the Evergreen Mobile Home Park, up to 200 of the 720 homes were flattened by the tornado. (The National Severe Storms Forecast Center)

1987 - Afternoon highs of 106 degrees at Aberdeen, SD, and 102 degrees at Ottumwa, IA, and Rapid City, SD, established records for the date. It marked the seventh straight day of 100 degree heat for Rapid City. Baltimore, MD, reported a record twenty-two days of 90 degree weather in July. Evening thunderstorms produced golf ball size hail at Lemmon, SD, and wind gusts to 80 mph at Beulah, ND. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Twenty-one cities in the north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Sioux City, IA, with a reading of 107 degrees. The reading of 105 degrees at Minneapolis, MN, was their hottest since 1936. Pierre and Chamberlain, SD, with highs of 108 degrees, were just one degree shy of the hot spot in the nation, Palm Springs, CA. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Overnight thunderstorms soaked eastern Kansas and western Missouri with heavy rain. Four and a half inches of rain was reported at Nevada, MO. Evening thunderstorms in Oklahoma produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Covington. Six cities in the north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Williston, ND, with a reading of 105 degrees. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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Help us, Lord, to speak words of hope, help and healing from hearts that are clean, kind and caring. May we bless others with the words of Your hope. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

My brother-in-law, Wayne, was a people person. He enjoyed being with people and making them laugh. People also enjoyed being with him too, because he always brought smiles and encouragement wherever he went.

Wayne also had some unusual habits. One was brushing his tongue repeatedly. During a conversation he would often say, "Excuse me, please" and walk away. After a few moments he would return and begin the conversation precisely where it had ended. People were puzzled and did not feel comfortable asking where he went or what he did.

Finally, the suspense got the best of one of his friends and he asked, "Wayne, why do you walk off in the middle of a conversation?"

Where do you go and what do you do?"

"Oh," he replied with a smile. "I go to the bathroom and brush my tongue. The tongue, you know, has more germs than our teeth, and if not brushed carefully and repeatedly, can cause a stink."

But, the story of the tongue does not end there.

"The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit," wrote Solomon.

I am rather certain that each of us have experienced both parts of that verse. We all need words of encouragement and healing from hearts that are caring and kind. But, a deceitful tongue coupled with intent to harm others, does indeed squeeze the life from a person—often when a person's spirit is threatened. We need to be healers, not harmers!

Today's Prayer: Help us, Lord, to speak words of hope, help and healing from hearts that are clean, kind and caring. May we bless others with the words of Your hope. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Today's Scripture: "The soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit." Proverbs 15:4

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: 07.29.25

17 30 34 63 67 11

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$140,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 12 Mins 48 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.30.25

9 13 26 43 51 4

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$3,740,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 27 Mins 48 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.31.25

14 25 33 39 40 10

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 42 Mins 49 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.30.25

2 8 10 25 28

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$75,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 42 Mins 49 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.30.25

13 32 65 66 68 7

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 11 Mins 48 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.30.25

4 15 35 50 64 8

Power Play: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$410,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 11 Mins 48 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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Upcoming Groton Events

CANCELLED: Wine on Nine Fundraiser at Olive Grove

08/02/2025 2nd Annual Celebration in the Park/Rib Cook-Off 1-9 pm

08/07/2025 Family Fun Fest, Downtown Main Street 5:30-7:30pm

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

Teacher who admitted to killing couple on a hike with their kids in Arkansas to appear in court

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — A teacher who authorities say admitted to fatally stabbing a couple he didn't know who were hiking with two of their children in an Arkansas state park is expected to have his first court appearance Friday.

Andrew James McGann, 28, has been charged with two counts of capital murder in the killing Saturday of Clinton David Brink, 43, and Cristen Amanda Brink, 41. He is being held without bond and is expected to appear at the Washington County Detention Center.

Arkansas State Police Col. Mike Hagar said authorities are trying to determine a motive for the attack at Devil's Den, a 2,500-acre (1,000-hectare) state park near West Fork, about 140 miles (220 kilometers) northwest of Little Rock, the state capital. Its trails have been closed to the public since Saturday.

State Police arrested McGann on Wednesday at a barbershop in Springdale, about 30 miles (50 kilometers) north of the park, said Maj. Stacie Rhoads, commander of the department's criminal investigation division.

Washington County prosecutor Brandon Carter said he did not know if McGann has a lawyer or will need a public defender. The Associated Press has left messages at numbers listed for McGann, who has no criminal record.

Officials said the husband was stabbed first, about half a mile (0.8 kilometers) into the park, then the mother ushered her children to safety before returning to help her husband. She was also stabbed to death.

Authorities have not said if the girls — ages 7 and 9 — witnessed both their parents being killed. They were not hurt and are being cared for by family members, authorities said.

McGann was cooperative during the arrest and admitted to killing the couple soon after, Rhoads said. Police also matched his DNA to blood found at the crime scene. The case is distressing even to the police.

"In my 27 years that I've been with the State Police, this is probably one of the most heinous that we've had, especially the aspect of just how random it was," Rhoads said.

Police flooded with tips

McGann was arrested after a five-day search and hundreds of tips.

The State Police collected photos and videos from other hikers who didn't witness the attack but were on the trails at around the same time. Police also released a composite sketch and a photo that showed a person of interest from behind.

The police then narrowed down the suspect's vehicle, which had tape over the license plate, using surveillance footage from homes and businesses near Devil's Den.

Within an hour of McGann being identified as a suspect, he was caught at the barber shop.

Carter indicated the state would give a jury the option to sentence McGann to the death penalty.

Suspect taught in other states before Arkansas job

McGann has active teaching licenses in Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma, according to each respective government certification website. No infractions or suspensions are noted on his public state licensures in any of those states. The Associated Press has reached out to all three state education agencies.

McGann was placed on administrative leave in spring 2023 while he was employed at Donald Elementary School in Flower Mound, Texas, "following concerns related to classroom management, professional judgment, and student favoritism," according to a spokesperson for the Lewisville Independent School District.

Sierra Marcum, whose son was in McGann's fourth grade class, said the teacher came across as "pretty cold" and "disinterested in his students." Marcum said her son had come home from school upset about some of McGann's behavior, which she reported to the school's principal.

McGann resigned from the Lewisville posting in May 2023, the district said in a statement.

He also taught at a small Oklahoma school district from the summer of 2024 until May this year. He resigned to take a job in another state, according to a statement from Sand Springs Public Schools, near

Tulsa. The district said McGann passed all background checks.

Law enforcement hasn't contacted Sand Springs Public Schools regarding the investigation, district spokesperson Lissa Chidester said.

McGann had not yet started his new job in Arkansas at Springdale Public Schools, said Jared Cleveland, the district superintendent. He said the district could not provide more information, citing the investigation.

The victims had just arrived in Arkansas

The Brinks and their three daughters had recently moved from South Dakota to the small city of Prairie Grove in northwest Arkansas.

Clinton Brink was supposed to start working as a milk delivery driver on Monday, according to Hiland Dairy, his employer. Cristen Brink had been licensed as a nurse in Montana and South Dakota before moving to Arkansas.

The Brink family said the couple died "heroes protecting their little girls."

Investigators to wrap up public hearings into fatal midair crash between Army chopper and airplane

The National Transportation Safety Board on Friday enters its third and final day of public testimony over the fatal midair crash between an Army helicopter and commercial jet in January.

Two previous days of testimony underscored a number of factors that likely contributed to the collision that left all 67 people aboard both aircrafts dead, sparking Board Chairwoman Jennifer Homendy to urge the Federal Aviation Administration to "do better" as she pointed to warnings the agency ignored years earlier.

Some of the major issues that have emerged so far include the Black Hawk helicopter flying above prescribed levels near Ronald Reagan National Airport as well as the warnings to FAA officials for years about the hazards related to the heavy chopper traffic there.

It's too early for the board to identify what exactly caused the crash. A final report from the board won't come until next year.

But it became clear this week how small a margin of error there was for helicopters flying the route the Black Hawk took the night of the nation's deadliest plane crash since November 2001.

The January collision was the first in a string of crashes and near misses this year that have alarmed officials and the traveling public, despite statistics that still show flying remains the safest form of transportation.

Worry over military helicopters

The board focused on air traffic control and heard Thursday that it was common for pilots to ask to use visual separation or relying on their eyesight just as the Army Black Hawk's pilots, who were wearing night vision goggles, agreed to do the night of the crash.

FAA officials also said controllers relied heavily on pilots using visual separation as a way to manage the complex airspace with so many helicopters flying around Washington D.C.

But Rick Dressler, an official with medevac operator Metro Aviation, told the board it is difficult to identify other aircraft in the night sky around Ronald Reagan National Airport, especially if a key onboard locator system was switched off, as Army choppers routinely did.

Dressler said that he and other civilian helicopter pilots in the area have long been concerned about the Army and Air Force helicopters flying around Reagan airport.

"I don't like saying this. I'll say it again on the record," Dressler, a former Army aviator and retired Air Force officer, said. "I'm speaking for my group there. We are all very uncomfortable when those two units are operating."

The Department of Defense referred questions about Thursday's testimony to the Army, which did not immediately respond. Army officials at the hearing did ask Dressler to elaborate on his concerns and consider visiting the Pentagon to share them.

Dressler said part of what worries him is the relative lack of experience of the military pilots who may have only been in the area a short time and don't understand the complex airspace around Washington D.C.

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"They don't get the seasoning here to really, truly understand how the airspace works," said Dressel, who also complained that the Army helicopter unit no longer participates in regular meetings with all the other aviators in the area to discuss issues.

The Air Force also did not immediately respond to questions about Dressler's remarks.

The American Airlines jet arrived from Wichita, Kansas, carrying, among others, a group of elite young figure skaters, their parents and coaches, and four union steamfitters from the Washington area.

Final moments

Testimony covered much ground, including the final audio communications from pilots aboard the Army chopper.

The Black Hawk's crew had been communicating with the airport's control tower, although the helicopter pilots did not fully hear the controller's instructions.

The Black Hawk pilots told the tower twice in the minutes before the crash that they had the American Airlines passenger plane in sight and would maintain proper separation. But when the controller instructed the pilots to "pass behind" the jet, the crew didn't hear that instruction because the Black Hawk's microphone key was pressed at that moment.

Just before the collision an instructor pilot aboard the helicopter asked the pilot at the controls to come left. But it wasn't clear if the pilot had time to maneuver the helicopter before the crash.

"Kinda come left for me ma'am," the instructor said.

The pilot responded: "Sure."

Concern about distances between planes and helicopters

John Cox, an aviation safety expert and retired airline pilot, said the hearings are headed in the right direction to determine what happened and to prevent similar accidents.

His main concerns focus on the Black Hawk helicopter, including why it was above the 200-foot (61 meters) elevation limit for that particular helicopter route. Another question is why the Black Hawk wasn't closer to the east bank of the Potomac River, where it would have been further away from landing airplanes.

"I've passed helicopters underneath me over the east bank of the Potomac a lot of times," said Cox, who flew commercial airliners for 25 years. "And there's always been plenty of separation. It's not a lot because the space is so constrained. But you're dealing with professional pilots and it's not been a problem."

Investigators said Wednesday the flight data recorder showed the helicopter was actually 80 feet to 100 feet (24 to 30 meters) higher than the barometric altimeter the pilots relied upon showed they were flying.

South Korea's jailed ex-leader Yoon resists questioning by taking off prison uniform

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea's jailed ex-President Yoon Suk Yeol again refused to attend questioning by investigators Friday, using a new method to resist: He took off his prison uniform and lay down on the floor at his detention room.

Yoon, removed from office in April over his ill-fated imposition of martial law, was sent back to prison last month as he stands a high-stakes trial over rebellion and other charges. Yoon, a conservative, faces investigations into other criminal allegations that are not related to his Dec. 3 martial law decree but target him, his wife and others.

On Friday, Min Joong-ki, a special counsel named by his liberal rival and new President Lee Jae Myung, sent investigators to retrieve Yoon from a detention center near Seoul after the former president twice defied requests to attend questioning. Min's team is tasked with delving into allegations surrounding Yoon's wife Kim Keon Hee, including that she and her husband exerted inappropriate influence on the then-ruling party's election nomination process in 2022.

Min's team had a court-issued detention warrant that authorized them to bring Yoon out of his detention facility by force, but said they were hoping for his voluntary cooperation.

"Without wearing his prison uniform, the suspect lay down on the floor and strongly resisted his detention," assistant special counsel Oh Jeong-hee told a televised briefing.

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Justice Minister Jung Sung-ho separately told lawmakers that Yoon took off his shorts and short-sleeved shirt and put them back on after investigators left.

Oh said her team members refrained from using physical means out of safety concerns, but notified Yoon that they would execute the warrant next time. She urged Yoon to cooperate as the Korean people are closely watching whether the enforcement of law is applied to everyone equally.

Yu Jeong-hwa, a lawyer for Yoon, accused the special counsel team of trampling on Yoon's dignity and honor by discussing his dress in prison, according to local media reports.

Yoon's defense team earlier said Yoon was unable to attend his trial and undergo questioning by investigators because of health problems. They said in a statement Thursday that Yoon has cardiovascular, autonomic nervous system and eye issues. They cited an unidentified hospital as saying that Yoon faces the risk of blindness because he failed to receive medical treatment for the past three months.

Yoon's imposition of martial law, which brought armed troops into Seoul streets, lasted only several hours before lawmakers voted down his decree unanimously.

Yoon has argued his decree was a desperate attempt to draw public support of his fight against the "wickedness" of Lee's Democratic Party, then the main opposition party which had obstructed his agenda, impeached top officials and slashed the government's proposed budget.

The Latest: US trade partners around the world react to Trump's new tariffs

U.S. trade partners reacted Friday to President Donald Trump's executive order that would introduce new tariffs on many of them in seven days, as the global economy and alliances face another test from the president's trade agenda.

Trump's order issued Thursday night came after a flurry of tariff-related activity in recent days as the White House announced agreements with various nations and blocs before a deadline set by the president for Aug. 1.

Trump ordered a 35% tariff for goods from Canada, effective from Friday, citing a lack of cooperation on illicit drugs. He also said Thursday that he would extend trade negotiations with Mexico for 90 days.

Here's the latest:

Swiss pharmaceutical Novartis reacts to 39% tariff

Swiss pharmaceutical company Novartis said in a statement that it was reviewing U.S. President Donald Trump's executive order that imposes a 39% tariff on Switzerland.

"We remain committed to finding ways to improve access and affordability for patients," it said.

Thailand says 19% rate reflects 'close partnership' with US

Thailand's finance minister says the 19% tariff rate imposed by the U.S. "reflects the strong friendship and close partnership" between the two countries.

Thailand's new rate of 19% was reduced from 36%, similar to other rates imposed on Southeast Asian nations, such as Vietnam, Cambodia and the Philippines.

Finance Minister Pichai Chunhavajira wrote in a social media post on Friday that it would "maintain Thailand's competitiveness on the global stage" and opens the "door to economic growth," but also acknowledged it would pose problems for some sectors of the economy and said that "comprehensive support measures have been prepared."

Speaking to reporters at a news conference in Bangkok later Friday, Pichai said that the deal will still need more time to be hammered out in details.

Pakistan welcomes 19% tariffs under US trade deal

Pakistan on Friday welcomed a new tariff arrangement with the United States that sets a 19% duty on Pakistani exports, calling it a positive step that could boost trade and economic growth.

The new rate is lower than the 29% tariff initially announced by U.S. President Donald Trump and below the 25% currently imposed on neighboring India.

The Finance Ministry said the agreement reflects a "balanced and forward-looking approach" by U.S.

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authorities and will help keep Pakistani goods competitive in the American market compared to other South and Southeast Asian countries.

The ministry said the revised tariff is expected to benefit key export sectors, particularly textiles, which remain the backbone of Pakistan's export economy. The ministry said that Pakistan will continue to engage closely with Trump and the U.S. administration to promote the shared goals of economic development and mutual prosperity.

Norway wants 'zero tariffs'

Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre told newspaper VG that he believes the Scandinavian country should have "zero tariffs."

Gahr Støre, following the White House's announcement, said Norwegian officials are still in talks with Washington in the hopes of eliminating the duties altogether.

Norway got hit with an expected 15% tariff.

Switzerland hit with 39% tariff and will try to negotiate

The land of luxury watches, pharmaceuticals and secretive financial services was reeling Friday, Switzerland's National Day, upon learning it had been slapped with a 39% tariff, although U.S. President Donald Trump had proposed a 31% rate in April.

The Swiss government said officials will continue to seek a negotiated solution.

"The Federal Council notes with great regret that, despite the progress made in bilateral talks and Switzerland's very constructive stance from the outset, the US intends to impose unilateral additional tariffs on imports from Switzerland," the government said in a post on X.

Trump orders 35% tariff on Canadian goods

U.S. President Donald Trump has raised the tariff rate on U.S. imports from Canada to 35% from 25%, effective Friday, citing a lack of cooperation on illicit drugs.

The announcement from the White House late Thursday said that Canada had failed "to do more to arrest, seize, detain, or otherwise intercept drug trafficking organizations, other drug or human traffickers, criminals at large, and illicit drugs."

Trump earlier had threatened to impose the higher tariff on Canada if no deal was reached by Friday, his deadline for reaching trade agreements with dozens of countries.

Canada wasn't included in Trump's updated list of tariff rates on other countries announced late Thursday. Those import duties are due to take effect on Aug. 7.

Malaysia hails 'significant achievement' in 19% tariff rate

Malaysia's Trade Ministry said Friday that the U.S. tariff reduction from 25% to 19% was a "significant achievement" as the deal was struck without compromising key national interests.

"The 19% rate roughly tracks the rate of other countries in the Southeast Asian region," the ministry said in a statement. "Most importantly, Malaysia had stood firm on various 'red line' items, and the 19% tariff rate was achieved without compromising the nation's sovereign right to implement key policies to support the nation's socio-economic stability and growth."

The ministry said that Malaysia's economy remains resilient despite global headwinds, citing strong domestic demand and ongoing structural reforms.

The statement didn't give further details, but officials previously said that nontariff barriers such as halal certification, which affects U.S. beef and poultry exports, along with digital trade and government procurement were sticking points. It's unclear what concessions Malaysia made.

Cambodia will impose zero tariffs on all American goods

Cambodia's deputy prime minister, who led trade talks with the U.S., thanked U.S. President Donald Trump for setting the tariff rate on Cambodian goods at 19% and said the government would impose zero tariffs on all American goods.

When Washington originally posted its list of notional "reciprocal" tariffs, the rate for goods from Cambodia was 49%, one of the highest in the world. It had estimated that Cambodian tariffs on U.S. imports averaged 97%.

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Deputy Prime Minister Sun Chanthol also said Cambodia would purchase 10 passenger aircraft from Boeing in a deal they hoped to sign later this month. Several other nations had already announced similar aircraft purchase deals as part of their trade packages.

Trump had threatened to not conclude a deal with reduced tariffs if Cambodia and Thailand didn't stop a recent armed conflict over border territory. The two nations agreed on a ceasefire beginning Tuesday that appears to be holding.

Cambodia publicly celebrated Trump's peace initiative, suggesting he deserved a Nobel Prize for his intervention. Sun Chanthol said Friday that Cambodia would nominate him for the honor.

Australia says 10% rate gives country competitive advantage

Australian Trade Minister Don Farrell says gaining the minimum 10% U.S. tariff on exports including beef, lamb, wine and wheat gave Australia a competitive advantage over some competitors.

Farrell told reporters Australia did not introduce tariffs on U.S. goods at any point, and added, "I haven't seen any case or any example where the retaliatory imposition of tariffs has resulted in a country being in a better position."

Farrell argues that no U.S. tariffs can be justified because Australia imposes no tariffs on its bilateral free trade partner. The United States has enjoyed a trade surplus with Australia for decades.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has been criticized for failing to secure a face-to-face meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump to discuss trade.

Japan welcomes Trump's signing of executive order

Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi welcomed U.S. President Donald Trump's signing of the executive order setting Japan's new reciprocal tariffs as a step that would reduce uncertainty of the U.S. trade policy and its negative impact on the global economy, including that of Japan.

Hayashi, however, said Japan still needs to closely examine the measures and continue urging prompt implementation by the U.S. government to carry out the agreement, including reduction of tariffs on automobiles and auto parts.

Hayashi acknowledged that Japan's new tariff rate of 15% is a "major reduction" from the initially imposed 25%, but his government will continue to watch and mitigate its impact on Japanese exports, including by providing financial assistance for small and medium-sized businesses.

New Zealand looks to lobby for lower tariff rates

New Zealand officials said they would lobby the administration for a change to the 15% tariff announced for the country's exporters to the U.S. It's an increase from the original 10% baseline announced for New Zealand in April.

"We don't think this is a good thing. We don't think it's warranted," Trade Minister Todd McClay told Radio New Zealand Friday. He said New Zealand appeared to have been targeted for a larger levy because the country sells more to the U.S. than it imports, but that the gap of about half a billion dollars each year was "not significant or meaningful."

Neighboring Australia dodged an increase to remain at 10%, but it buys more from the U.S. than it exports, McClay added.

The United States in January overtook Australia to become New Zealand's second-largest export partner, behind China. New Zealand exports are largely made up of meat, dairy, wine and agricultural machinery.

Taiwan president says final tariff negotiations yet to come

Taiwan President Lai Ching-te said Taiwan had yet to engage in final negotiations with the U.S. owing to scheduling difficulties and that he was hopeful the final tariff rate would be reduced even further after a final round of talks.

The Trump administration hit Taiwan with 32% tariffs, and lowered it to 20% on Thursday. Taiwan was notified on Thursday by the administration of the lower rate.

"Twenty percent from the beginning has not been our goal. We hope that in further negotiations we will get a more beneficial and more reasonable tax rate," he told reporters in Taipei on Friday.

Lai also linked trade talks to security issues, as the U.S. is Taiwan's largest ally even though it does not formally recognize the island. "We want to strengthen U.S. Taiwan cooperation in national security, tech,

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and multiple areas," he said Friday.

The U.S. is Taiwan's most important export market and strategic ally, Lai said in an earlier statement Friday morning.

Cambodia prime minister thanks Trump for dropping tariff rate

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet expressed his thanks to U.S. President Donald Trump for the dropping of tariffs from 36% to 19% and he called the reduction "good news" for Cambodia.

Posted on his social media platform, Hun Manet said Trump hadn't only helped broker a ceasefire between Cambodia and Thailand forces after nearly a weeklong clash, but also assisted Cambodia's economy by lowering tariffs.

"This is good news for the people and economy of Cambodia to continue developing the country," Hun Manet said.

Thailand successfully negotiates lower tariff rates

Thailand's government spokesperson Jirayu Hongsakul said Thailand says the U.S. agreed to reduce the tariffs rate from 36% to 19%, a rate similar to those imposed on many other Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam and the Philippines.

"It's one of the major successes of Team Thailand in a win-win approach, to secure the country's export base and economic security in a long run," he said in a statement. He didn't immediately say what was the latest offer Thailand made to the U.S.

The agreement came days after a ceasefire between Thailand and Cambodia to halt the nearly weeklong clashes that killed at least 41 people. It was brokered with U.S. pressure as President Donald Trump said he wouldn't move forward with trade agreements if the conflict continued.

World shares retreat after Trump's order imposing new tariffs on 68 countries and the EU

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — World shares retreated Friday after President Donald Trump issued a new set of import duties that will apply to dozens of countries as of Aug. 7.

U.S. futures fell 0.9% after Trump announced tariff rates of up to 41% for imports from 68 countries and the European Union. He also said the tariff for products from Canada would rise to 35%, effective Friday.

Investors were looking ahead to U.S. payrolls data due out later in the day.

The order pushed back the tariff deadline earlier set for Aug. 1 and injected a new dose of uncertainty in an already unpredictable process that has been rattling markets since Trump returned to the White House in January.

This is not the end of the story, Stephen Brown of Capital Economics said in a commentary, adding that "this is unlikely to be the final word, as it still seems likely that some other countries will reach their own deals with the U.S., while there is a chance that the U.S. courts will eventually strike down these tariffs.

In early European trading, Germany's DAX fell 1.7% to 23,651.26. Britain's FTSE 100 dropped 0.7% to 9,063.50. In Paris, the CAC 40 shed 1.8% to 7,632.72.

The futures for the S&P 500 and Dow Jones Industrial Average were down 0.9%.

Asian markets also declined, with South Korea's Kospi tumbling 3.9% to 3,119.41 as Samsung Electronics Japan's Nikkei 225 slid 0.7 % to 40,799.60 as Japanese officials said they were watching closely for details and progress on implementing an agreement calling for 15% tariffs on exports to the U.S.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index shed 1.1% to 24,507.81, while the Shanghai Composite slipped 0.4% to 3,559.95. The status of China's trade talks with the United States remains unclear, but are separate from Trump's announcement late Thursday.

Australia's S&P ASX 200 shed 0.9% to 8,662, India's BSE Sensex lost 0.4% to 80,837.19 and Taiwan's TAIEX slid 0.5% to 23,434.38.

"Trump's new tariff directive, signed behind closed doors just ahead of the Aug. 1 deadline, slaps a new floor under global trade costs: a 10% minimum rate for nearly all partners, with surcharges of 15% or higher for surplus nations," with Canada drawing particular ire, Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management

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said in a commentary.

"This wasn't just an update — it was a structural rewrite. The average U.S. tariff jumps from 13.3% to 15.2%, a seismic shift from the 2.3% average before Trump retook office. This reshapes the cost calculus for everything from semiconductors to copper pipes," he added.

Trading on Wall Street on Thursday brought more losses after an early big tech rally faded and a health care sector pullback led the market lower.

The S&P 500 fell 0.4%, its third straight decline. The benchmark index, which is just below the record high it set Monday, notched a 2.2% gain for the month of July and is up 7.8% so far this year.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 0.7% and the Nasdaq composite closed less than 0.1% lower.

Roughly 70% of stocks in the S&P 500 lost ground, with health care companies accounting for the biggest drag on the market.

Health care stocks sank after the White House released letters asking big pharmaceutical companies to cut prices and make other changes in the next 60 days. Eli Lilly & Co. fell 2.6%, UnitedHealth Group slid 6.2% and Bristol-Myers Squibb dropped 5.8%.

In other dealings early Friday, U.S. benchmark crude oil shed 52 cents to \$68.72 per barrel, while Brent crude, the international standard, gave up 47 cents to \$71.23 per barrel.

The U.S. dollar fell to 150.46 Japanese yen from 150.77 yen. The euro slipped \$1.1406 from \$1.1417.

Kyiv mourns after a Russian attack that killed 31 people, including 5 children

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The Ukrainian capital Kyiv observed an official day of mourning Friday, a day after a Russian drone and missile attack on the city killed 31 people, including five children, and injured more than 150, officials said.

The youngest victim in Thursday's strikes was 2 years old, and 16 of the injured were children, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

It was the highest number of children killed and injured in a single attack on Kyiv since aerial attacks on the city began in October 2022, according to official casualty figures reported by The Associated Press.

The death toll rose overnight as emergency crews continued to dig through rubble. The Russian barrage demolished a large part of a nine-story residential building in the city, while more than 100 other buildings were damaged, including homes, schools, kindergartens, medical facilities and universities, officials said.

Russia has escalated its attacks on Ukrainian cities in recent months, ignoring calls from Western leaders including U.S. President Donald Trump to stop striking civilian areas after more than three years of war.

Russian forces are also pressing on with their grinding war of attrition along the 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line, where incremental gains over the past year have cost the lives of thousands of soldiers on both sides.

Ukraine wants more sanctions on Russia

Zelenskyy said that in July, Russia launched over 5,100 glide bombs, more than 3,800 Shahed drones, and nearly 260 missiles of various types, 128 of them ballistic, against Ukraine.

He repeated his appeal for countries to impose heavier economic sanctions on Russia to deter the Kremlin, as U.S.-led peace efforts have failed to gain traction.

"No matter how much the Kremlin denies (sanctions') effectiveness, they are working and must be stronger," Zelenskyy said.

His comments Friday appeared to be a response to Trump's remarks the previous day, when the Republican president said the U.S. plans to impose sanctions on Russia but added, "I don't know that sanctions bother him," in reference to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Ukraine also called for an urgent U.N. Security Council meeting to be convened Friday, Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said, in an effort to push Putin into accepting "a full, immediate and unconditional ceasefire."

Russian forces bear down on a key eastern Ukrainian city

Meanwhile, Ukrainian forces are under heavy pressure in the strategic hilltop city of Chasiv Yar, in the

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eastern Donetsk region where Russia is making a concerted push to break through defenses after some 18 months of fighting.

Zelenskyy said that Russian claims of capturing Chasiv Yar on Thursday were "disinformation."

"Ukrainian units are holding our positions," Zelenskyy said in his daily video address on Thursday evening. "It is not easy, but it is the defense of Ukrainians' very right to life."

Even so, the Institute for the Study of War said that Ukraine's hold on the key city is weakening.

"Russian forces will likely complete the seizure of Chasiv Yar in the coming days, which will open several possible avenues for Russian forces to attack Ukraine's fortress belt — a series of fortified cities that form the backbone of Ukraine's defensive positions" in the Donetsk region, the Washington-based think tank said.

Ukraine has tried to pressure the Russian army by striking rear areas with long-range drones that target rail networks, oil depots and arsenals.

Russia's Defense Ministry said Friday that air defenses shot down 60 Ukrainian drones overnight. More than half were destroyed over Russia's Belgorod region on the country's border with Ukraine, it said. Belgorod Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov said that one person was injured.

Trump's new tariffs give some countries a break, while shares and US dollar sink

BANGKOK (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump's new tariff rates of up to 41% on U.S. imports from dozens of countries drew expressions of relief Friday from some countries that negotiated a deal or managed to whittle them down from rates announced in April. Others expressed disappointment or frustration over running out of time after hitting Trump's Aug. 1 deadline for striking deals with America's trading partners.

The new rates are due to take effect on Aug. 7, but uncertainty over what Trump might do next remains. The way ahead for China, which runs the largest trade surplus with the U.S., is unclear after talks earlier this week in Stockholm produced no deal. Trump has yet to say if he'll extend an Aug. 12 pause on painfully high import duties on Chinese products.

The reaction from financial markets was muted. Benchmarks fell in Asia, with South Korea's Kospi dropping nearly 4% after the tariff rate for the U.S. ally was set at 15%. The U.S. dollar weakened against the Japanese yen, trading at more than 150 yen per dollar.

For Canada and Switzerland, regret and disappointment

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said his government was disappointed by Trump's move to raise the U.S. tariff on goods from America's northern neighbor to 35% from 25%, effective Friday. Goods transhipped from unspecified other countries face a 40% import duty.

Trump cited what he said was a lack of cooperation in stemming trafficking in illicit drugs across the northern border. He also slammed Canada's plan to recognize a Palestinian state and has expressed frustration with a trade deficit largely fueled by U.S. oil purchases.

"Canada accounts for only 1% of U.S. fentanyl imports and has been working intensively to further reduce these volumes," Carney said in a statement.

Many of Canada's exports to the U.S. are covered by the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement and face no tariff. But steel, lumber, aluminum and autos have been subject to still higher tariffs.

Switzerland was reeling after Trump ordered a 39% tariff rate for the land of luxury watches, pharmaceuticals and financial services. That was up from his original proposal of a 31% duty.

"The Federal Council notes with great regret that, despite the progress made in bilateral talks and Switzerland's very constructive stance from the outset, the U.S. intends to impose unilateral additional tariffs on imports from Switzerland," the government said in a post on X. It said it would continue to seek a negotiated solution.

Still working on it

New Zealand officials said Friday they would keep lobbying Trump to cut the 15% tariff he announced for their country's exports to the U.S., up from the original 10% baseline set in April.

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"We don't think this is a good thing. We don't think it's warranted," Trade Minister Todd McClay told Radio New Zealand. The exporter of meat, dairy, wine and farm machinery ran a \$1.1 billion trade surplus with the U.S. in 2024, according to U.S. Trade Representative data.

McClay said New Zealand exporters had reported they could absorb a 10% tariff or pass it on to U.S. consumers through increased costs. A further increase would "change the equation," he said.

Neither New Zealand nor its neighbor Australia have struck tariff deals with the Trump administration. Australian steel and aluminum exports have faced a steep 50% tariff since June.

Australian Trade Minister Don Farrell said the 10% overall tariff on Australia's exports to the United States was a vindication of his government's "cool and calm negotiations." But he said even that level was not justified. The U.S. exports twice as much to Australia as it imports from its bilateral free trade partner, and Australia imposes no tariffs on U.S. exports.

Objecting to a 15% tariff rate, Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre told the newspaper VG the Scandinavian country should have "zero tariffs." He said talks were continuing.

Japan watches, while Taiwan keeps trying for a deal

Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi was cautious in welcoming Trump's executive order setting Japan's tariff at 15% after the two sides worked out an agreement, much to Tokyo's relief.

"We believe it is necessary to carefully examine the details of the measure," Hayashi said. "The Japanese government will continue to urge the U.S. side to promptly implement measures to carry out the recent agreement, including reducing tariffs on automobiles and auto parts."

Taiwan's President Lai Ching-te said the self-ruled island had yet to engage in final negotiations with the U.S. side owing to scheduling difficulties and that he was hopeful the final tariff rate would be reduced even further after a final round of talks.

The Trump administration lowered its tariff for Taiwan to 20% from the originally proposed 32%. Taiwan is a key supplier of advanced semiconductors needed for many products and technologies.

"20% from the beginning has not been our goal, we hope that in further negotiations we will get a more beneficial and more reasonable tax rate," Lai told reporters in Taipei Friday.

The U.S. is Taiwan's largest ally even though it does not formally recognize the island. "We want to strengthen U.S. Taiwan cooperation in national security, tech, and multiple areas," Lai said.

For some trading partners, relief that tariffs are lower than they might be

Cambodia's Deputy Prime Minister Sun Chanthol, who led his nation's trade talks with the United States, thanked Trump for setting the tariff rate on Cambodian goods at 19% and said his country will impose zero tariffs on American goods.

The rate for Cambodia that Trump proposed in April was 49%, one of the highest in the world. He said the U.S. estimated average Cambodian tariffs on U.S. exports at 97%.

Cambodia has agreed to up purchases of U.S. goods. Sun said it would purchase 10 passenger aircraft from Boeing in a deal they hoped to sign later this month. Several other nations had already announced similar aircraft purchase deals as part of their trade packages.

Trump had threatened to withhold trade deals from Cambodia and Thailand if they didn't end an armed conflict over border territory. The two nations agreed on a ceasefire that began Tuesday.

Thailand also is subject to a 19% tariff, a rate that its Finance Minister Pichai Chunhavajira said "reflects the strong friendship and close partnership between Thailand and the United States." That was down from 36% proposed earlier.

"The outcome of this negotiation signals that Thailand must accelerate its adaptation and move forward in building a stable and resilient economy, ready to face global challenges ahead," he said.

Pakistan welcomed a trade deal that sets a 19% duty on its exports, lower than the initial plan for 29%, saying in a government statement that it was a "balanced and forward-looking approach" that could boost trade and economic growth.

For Bangladesh, a new 20% tariff warded off an earlier threat of a 35% import duty for the South Asian exporter of garments and other light manufactured goods. "That's good news for our apparel sector and the millions who depend on it," said Khalilur Rahman, the country's national security advisor and lead

negotiator.

"We've also preserved our global competitiveness and opened up new opportunities to access the world's largest consumer market" Rahman said. "Protecting our apparel industry was a top priority, but we also focused our purchase commitments on U.S. agricultural products. This supports our food security goals and fosters goodwill with U.S. farming states."

Why not enough food is reaching people in Gaza even after Israel eased its blockade

International outcry over images of emaciated children and increasing reports of hunger-related deaths have pressured Israel to let more aid into the Gaza Strip. This week, Israel paused fighting in parts of Gaza and airdropped food.

But aid groups and Palestinians say the changes have only been incremental and are not enough to reverse what food experts say is a "worst-case scenario of famine" unfolding in the war-ravaged territory.

The new measures have brought an uptick in the number of aid trucks entering Gaza. But almost none of it reaches U.N. warehouses for distribution.

Instead, nearly all the trucks are stripped of their cargo by crowds that overwhelm them on the roads as they drive from the borders. The crowds are a mix of Palestinians desperate for food and gangs armed with knives, axes or pistols who loot the goods to then hoard or sell.

Many have also been killed trying to grab the aid. Witnesses say Israeli troops often open fire on crowds around the aid trucks, and hospitals have reported hundreds killed or wounded. The Israeli military says it has only fired warning shots to control crowds or at people who approach its forces. The alternative food distribution system run by the Israeli-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation has also been marred by violence.

International airdrops of aid have resumed. But aid groups say airdrops deliver only a fraction of what trucks can supply. Also, many parcels have landed in now-inaccessible areas that Palestinians have been told to evacuate, while others have plunged into the Mediterranean Sea, forcing people to swim out to retrieve drenched bags of flour.

Here's a look at why the aid isn't being distributed:

A lack of trust

The U.N. says that longstanding restrictions on the entry of aid have created an unpredictable environment, and that while a pause in fighting might allow more aid in, Palestinians are not confident aid will reach them.

"This has resulted in many of our convoys offloaded directly by starving, desperate people as they continue to face deep levels of hunger and are struggling to feed their families," said Olga Cherevko, a spokesperson for the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, or OCHA.

"The only way to reach a level of confidence is by having a sustained flow of aid over a period of time," she said.

Israel blocked food entirely from entering Gaza for 2 ½ months starting in March. Since it eased the blockade in late May, it allowed in a trickle of aid trucks for the U.N., about 70 a day on average, according to official Israeli figures. That is far below the 500-600 trucks a day that U.N. agencies say are needed — the amount that entered during a six-week ceasefire earlier this year.

Much of the aid is stacked up just inside the border in Gaza because U.N. trucks could not pick it up. The U.N. says that was because of Israeli military restrictions on its movements and because of the lawlessness in Gaza.

Israel has argued that it is allowing sufficient quantities of goods into Gaza and tried to shift the blame to the U.N. "More consistent collection and distribution by U.N. agencies and international organizations = more aid reaching those who need it most in Gaza," the Israeli military agency in charge of aid coordination, COGAT, said in a statement this week.

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With the new measures this week, COGAT, says 220-270 truckloads a day were allowed into Gaza on Tuesday and Wednesday, and that the U.N. was able to pick up more trucks, reducing some of the backlog at the border.

Aid missions still face 'constraints'

Cherevko said there have been "minor improvements" in approvals by the Israeli military for its movements and some "reduced waiting times" for trucks along the road.

But she said the aid missions are "still facing constraints." Delays of military approval still mean trucks remain idle for long periods, and the military still restricts the routes that the trucks can take onto a single road, which makes it easy for people to know where the trucks are going, U.N. officials say.

Antoine Renard, who directs the World Food Program's operations in Gaza and the occupied West Bank, said Wednesday that it took nearly 12 hours to bring in 52 trucks on a 10-kilometer (6 mile) route.

"While we're doing everything that we can to actually respond to the current wave of starvation in Gaza, the conditions that we have are not sufficient to actually make sure that we can break that wave," he said.

Aid workers say the changes Israel has made in recent days are largely cosmetic. "These are theatrics, token gestures dressed up as progress," said Bushra Khalidi, Oxfam's policy lead for Israel and the Palestinian territories.

"Of course, a handful of trucks, a few hours of tactical pauses and raining energy bars from the sky is not going to fix irreversible harm done to an entire generation of children that have been starved and malnourished for months now," she said.

Breakdown of law and order

As desperation mounts, Palestinians are risking their lives to get food, and violence is increasing, say aid workers.

Muhammad Shehada, a political analyst from Gaza who is a visiting fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, said aid retrieval has turned into the survival of the fittest. "It's a Darwin dystopia, the strongest survive," he said.

A truck driver said Wednesday that he has driven food supplies four times from the Zikim crossing on Gaza's northern border. Every time, he said, crowds a kilometer long (0.6 miles) surrounded his truck and took everything on it after he passed the checkpoint at the edge of the Israeli military-controlled border zones.

He said some were desperate people, while others were armed. He said that on Tuesday, for the first time, some in the crowd threatened him with knives or small arms. He spoke on condition of anonymity, fearing for his safety.

Ali al-Derbashi, another truck driver, said that during one trip in July armed men shot the tires, stole everything, including the diesel and batteries and beat him. "If people weren't starving, they wouldn't resort to this," he said.

Israel has said it has offered the U.N. armed escorts. The U.N. has refused, saying it can't be seen to be working with a party to the conflict – and pointing to the reported shootings when Israeli troops are present.

Uncertainty and humiliation

Israel hasn't given a timeline for how long the measures it implemented this week will continue, heightening uncertainty and urgency among Palestinians to seize the aid before it ends.

Palestinians say the way it's being distributed, including being dropped from the sky, is inhumane.

"This approach is inappropriate for Palestinians, we are humiliated," said Rida, a displaced woman.

Momen Abu Etayya said he almost drowned because his son begged him to get aid that fell into the sea during an aid drop.

"I threw myself in the ocean to death just to bring him something," he said. "I was only able to bring him three biscuit packets".

El Salvador approves indefinite presidential reelection and extends terms to 6 years

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP) — The party of El Salvador President Nayib Bukele approved constitutional changes in the country's Legislative Assembly on Thursday that will allow indefinite presidential reelection and extend presidential terms to six years.

Lawmaker Ana Figueroa from the New Ideas party had proposed the changes to five articles of the constitution. The proposal also included eliminating the second round of the election where the two top vote-getters from the first round face off.

New Ideas and its allies in the Legislative Assembly quickly approved the proposals with the supermajority they hold. The vote passed with 57 in favor and three opposed.

Bukele overwhelmingly won reelection last year despite a constitutional ban, after Supreme Court justices selected by his party ruled in 2021 to allow reelection to a second five-year term.

Observers have worried that Bukele had a plan to consolidate power since at least 2021, when a newly elected Congress with a strong governing party majority voted to remove the magistrates of the constitutional chamber of the Supreme Court. Those justices had been seen as the last check on the popular president.

Since then, Bukele has only grown more popular. The Biden administration's initial expressions of concern gave way to quiet acceptance as Bukele announced his run for reelection. With the return of U.S. President Donald Trump to the White House in January, Bukele had a new powerful ally and quickly offered Trump help by taking more than 200 deportees from other countries into a newly built prison for gang members.

Figueroa argued Thursday that federal lawmakers and mayors can already seek reelection as many times as they want.

"All of them have had the possibility of reelection through popular vote, the only exception until now has been the presidency," Figueroa said.

She also proposed that Bukele's current term, scheduled to end June 1, 2029, instead finish June 1, 2027, to put presidential and congressional elections on the same schedule. It would also allow Bukele to seek reelection to a longer term two years earlier.

Marcela Villatoro of the Nationalist Republican Alliance (Arena), one of three votes against the proposals, told her fellow lawmakers that "Democracy in El Salvador has died!"

"You don't realize what indefinite reelection brings: It brings an accumulation of power and weakens democracy ... there's corruption and clientelism because nepotism grows and halts democracy and political participation," she said.

Suecy Callejas, the assembly's vice president, said that "power has returned to the only place that it truly belongs ... to the Salvadoran people."

Bukele did not immediately comment.

Bukele, who once dubbed himself "the world's coolest dictator," is highly popular, largely because of his heavy-handed fight against the country's powerful street gangs.

Voters have been willing to overlook evidence that his administration like others before it had negotiated with the gangs, before seeking a state of emergency that suspended some constitutional rights and allowed authorities to arrest and jail tens of thousands of people.

His success with security and politically has inspired imitators in the region who seek to replicate his style.

Most recently, Bukele's government has faced international criticism for the arrests of high-profile lawyers who have been outspoken critics of his administration. One of the country's most prominent human rights group announced in July it was moving its operations out of El Salvador for the safety of its people, accusing the government of a "wave of repression."

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Heavy rain pummels the East Coast and sparks isolated flash flooding

Strong rain storms lashed the East Coast Thursday, delaying flightstthroughout the region and prompting emergency rescues of motorists trapped in deep water on busy highways from the Philadelphia area to New York City.

In New York, flash flooding briefly closed sections of major roadways and flooded train stations across the metropolitan region as the evening rush hour approached.

Commuters captured video of water pouring over a train on a platform in Manhattan's Grand Central Terminal and water pooling on the floor of a city bus as it pushed through a flooded Brooklyn street.

Riders of one Long Island-bound commuter train were evacuated by firefighters as floodwaters rose. Other commuter rail lines on Long Island and New Jersey were suspended or severely delayed.

Amtrak officials announced Thursday evening that trains between Philadelphia and Wilmington, Delaware were stopped because of severe storms sending high water over the tracks.

"Once a route is available, anticipate residual delays," company officials posted on X.

Traffic cameras and social media posts on a highway in the New York City borough of Queens showed motorists at one point standing on the roofs of stranded vehicles and a tractor-trailer nearly fully submerged. Police said they pulled cars carrying two people from the flooded stretch before the waters receded and traffic slowly resumed.

New York City Mayor Eric Adams and other local officials pleaded with people to stay off the roads and urged residents in basement apartments to move to higher locations as rain was expected to fall through Friday afternoon.

In Pennsylvania, National Weather Service warnings of up to 3 inches (7.6 centimeters) of rain in an hour produced flooding in Reading, a city about 60 miles (96 kilometers) northwest of Philadelphia.

Photos and videos online showed parked cars nearly underwater and water pouring down a narrow city street. Other videos from Reading showed emergency vehicles blocking off some streets or underpasses as flood waters had rendered them impassable.

In Maryland, emergency responders rescued multiple people from flooded vehicles in communities northeast of Baltimore.

Officials there also preemptively closed roads prone to flooding, shuttered schools and libraries early and opened emergency shelters as more thunderstorms were expected across Maryland. Flood watches and warnings were issued across the state.

Airports in New York, New Jersey and Philadelphia all reported scores of flight delays and cancellations into Thursday evening.

Tornado warnings in New Jersey came and went with no reports of twisters, though more than 14,000 electricity customers were without power as of Thursday evening.

States of emergency were declared in New Jersey and New York City, though flash flood and severe thunderstorm warnings were lifted in New York City by Thursday night.

Flood watches and severe thunderstorm watches posted in other locations remained in effect into Friday morning, with 4 to 6 inches (10 to 15 centimeters) of rain possible in some areas of the East Coast.

The weather service warned flooding was possible in small creeks and streams and along highways, streets, underpasses and places with poor drainage. Some areas could also see high wind gusts and hail.

Judge blocks Trump administration from ending protections for 60,000 from Central America and Nepal

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A federal judge ruled on Thursday against the Trump administration's plans and extended Temporary Protected Status for 60,000 people from Central America and Asia, including people from Nepal, Honduras and Nicaragua.

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Temporary Protected Status is a protection that can be granted by the Homeland Security secretary to people of various nationalities who are in the United States, preventing from being deported and allowing them to work. The Trump administration has aggressively been seeking to remove the protection, thus making more people eligible for removal. It's part of a wider effort by the administration to carry out mass deportations of immigrants.

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem can extend Temporary Protected Status to immigrants in the U.S. if conditions in their homelands are deemed unsafe to return due to a natural disaster, political instability or other dangerous conditions. Noem had ruled to end protections for tens of thousands of Hondurans and Nicaraguans after determining that conditions in their homelands no longer warranted them.

The secretary said the two countries had made "significant progress" in recovering from 1998's Hurricane Mitch, one of the deadliest Atlantic storms in history.

The designation for an estimated 7,000 from Nepal was scheduled to end Aug. 5 while protections allowing 51,000 Hondurans and nearly 3,000 Nicaraguans who have been in the U.S. for more than 25 years were set to expire Sept. 8.

U.S. District Judge Trina L. Thompson in San Francisco did not set an expiration date but rather ruled to keep the protections in place while the case proceeds. The next hearing is Nov. 18.

In a sharply written order, Thompson said the administration ended the migrant status protections without an "objective review of the country conditions" such as political violence in Honduras and the impact of recent hurricanes and storms in Nicaragua.

If the protections were not extended, immigrants could suffer from loss of employment, health insurance, be separated from their families, and risk being deported to other countries where they have no ties, she wrote, adding that the termination of Temporary Protection Status for people from Nepal, Honduras, and Nicaragua would result in a \$1.4 billion loss to the economy.

"The freedom to live fearlessly, the opportunity of liberty, and the American dream. That is all Plaintiffs seek. Instead, they are told to atone for their race, leave because of their names, and purify their blood," Thompson said.

Lawyers for the National TPS Alliance argued that Noem's decisions were predetermined by President Donald Trump's campaign promises and motivated by racial animus.

Thompson agreed, saying that statements Noem and Trump have made perpetuated the "discriminatory belief that certain immigrant populations will replace the white population."

"Color is neither a poison nor a crime," she wrote.

The advocacy group that filed the lawsuit said designees usually have a year to leave the country, but in this case, they got far less.

"They gave them two months to leave the country. It's awful," said Ahilan Arulanantham, an attorney for plaintiffs at a hearing Tuesday.

Honduras Deputy Foreign Minister Antonio García told The Associated Press, "The judge recognized the need of the (TPS holders) to be able to work in peace, tranquility and legally."

He recalled that during the first Trump administration, there was a similar legal challenge and the fight took five years in the courts. He hoped for a similar outcome this time that would allow the Hondurans to remain in the U.S.

"Today's news is hopeful and positive and gives us time and oxygen, hopefully it will be a long road, and the judge will have the final word and not President Trump," he said.

Meanwhile in Nicaragua, hundreds of thousands have fled into exile as the government shuttered thousands of nongovernmental organizations and imprisoned political opponents. Nicaragua President Daniel Ortega and his wife and co-President Rosario Murillo have consolidated complete control in Nicaragua since Ortega returned to power two decades ago.

In February, a panel of U.N. experts warned the Nicaraguan government had dismantled the last remaining checks and balances and was "systematically executing a strategy to cement total control of the country through severe human rights violations."

The broad effort by the Republican administration's crackdown on immigration has been going after

people who are in the country illegally but also by removing protections that have allowed people to live and work in the U.S. on a temporary basis.

The Trump administration has already terminated protections for about 350,000 Venezuelans, 500,000 Haitians, more than 160,000 Ukrainians and thousands of people from Afghanistan and Cameroon. Some have pending lawsuits at federal courts.

The government argued that Noem has clear authority over the program and that her decisions reflect the administration's objectives in the areas of immigration and foreign policy.

"It is not meant to be permanent," Justice Department attorney William Weiland said.

Key things to know about how Elon Musk has boosted hard-right figures in Europe

ROME (AP) — Elon Musk may have tumbled from political grace in Washington, D.C., but as he seeks to build a new political party, his power on X — where he commands the most popular account — remains unchecked.

Musk is a kingmaker on the platform he acquired in 2022 for \$44 billion. He has used his influence to cultivate hard-right politicians and insurgent activists across Europe. A retweet or reply from Musk can lead to millions of views and tens of thousands of new followers, according to an Associated Press analysis of public data.

That fact has not been lost on influencers who have tagged Musk persistently, seeking a reply or a retweet. It has also fueled concerns in Europe about foreign meddling -- not from Russia or China, but from the United States.

"Every alarm bell needs to ring," Christel Schaldemose, a vice president of the European Parliament who works on electoral interference and digital regulation, told AP.

The Associated Press analyzed more than 20,000 posts, which were compiled by Bright Data, over a three-year period from a sample of 11 European figures who had significant interactions with Musk and frequently promote a hard-right political or social agenda.

These case studies are not meant to be representative of a broad universe; rather they showcase the ways in which Musk's engagement can have an impact on local influencers that share his views.

Musk has sweeping power to direct attention on X

Since acquiring Twitter in October 2022, Elon Musk's followers have more than doubled, to over 220 million. No other large account has shown such high or consistent growth.

The result: If Musk's X account is his megaphone, it has gotten a lot bigger since he took over -- a change that has global implications.

The accounts Musk has been promoting are part of a growing global alliance of nationalistic parties and individuals united in common cause to halt migration, overturn progressive policies and promote an absolutist vision of free speech, which has rattled the foundation of a trans-Atlantic bond that guided U.S. and European relations for over eight decades.

Several of the accounts AP analyzed belong to people who have faced allegations of illegal behavior in their own countries. Tommy Robinson, an anti-immigrant agitator in the U.K., was sentenced in October to 18 months in prison for violating a court order blocking him from making libelous allegations against a Syrian refugee. Bjoern Hoecke, a politician from Germany's Alternative for Deutschland (AfD) party, was convicted last year of knowingly using a Nazi slogan in a speech.

Italian vice premier Matteo Salvini was acquitted in December of allegations he illegally detained 100 migrants aboard a humanitarian rescue ship

Among the others examined by AP: Alice Weidel, who helped lead Germany's Alternative for Deutschland (AfD) party to its best electoral showing this year; Eva Vlaardingerbroek, a Dutch influencer known as the "shieldmaiden of the far-right"; Naomi Seibt, a German activist dubbed the "anti-Greta Thunberg" now living in what amounts to political exile in Washington DC; Rubén Pulido and Foro Madrid, both associated with Spain's populist Vox party; and Fidiás Panayioutou, a politician from Cyprus who has also advocated

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for Musk's companies.

These accounts collectively gained roughly 5 million followers from the time Musk took over Twitter in October 2022 through January of this year. Most saw triple-digit percentage increases in their followers -- as high as 920%, or in one case of a tiny account exploding over that time, topping 6,000%. Even some accounts that grew more steadily on their own saw their follower counts sharply begin rising once Musk started interacting with them. Similarly, on days Musk interacted with a post, the number of views the account got soared — in most cases, accruing two to four times as many views, with a few seeing boosts 30 or 40 times their normal daily viewership.

More established players in Musk's orbit -- like Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, whose ruling Brothers of Italy party has neo-fascist roots — benefit less when Musk interacts with them on X, AP found.

Attention seekers know that getting Musk to engage can be transformative

Musk's dominance creates a strong incentive for people to get Musk to engage with their content.

Naomi Seibt, a German climate skeptic, pinged Musk nearly 600 times over the past three years. Musk finally engaged in June 2024, when he asked her to explain why the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party is so controversial in Germany.

Since then, Musk has replied to, quoted or tagged Seibt more than 50 times, and her followers have grown by more than 320,000 since Musk took over the platform. On days Musk interacted with Seibt, her posts, on average, got 2.6 times as many views.

"I didn't intentionally 'invade' Elon's algorithm," Seibt told AP. "Obviously Elon has a lot of influence and can help share a message even with those who are usually glued to the legacy media, particularly in Germany."

Musk's online influence has real-world political and financial impact

Alice Weidel, who helps lead the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, saw her daily audience surge from 230,000 to 2.2 million on days Musk interacted with her posts on X. After Musk hosted a livestream with Weidel on X, vice president JD Vance broke protocol and met her in Munich. Weidel's party, which is fighting a lawsuit to block the German government's decision to designate it as an extremist group, went on to secure its best electoral showing ever.

Musk has also used X to advocate for the leader of Italy's hard-right League party, Matteo Salvini. On days Musk interacted with Salvini's account, average views were more than four times higher than usual. Now serving as vice premier, Salvini has urged his government to move ahead with controversial contracts for Starlink and pushed back against European efforts to regulate content on X.

And Musk has a friend in Brussels: Fidias Panayiotou — a 25-year-old social media influencer from Cyprus. Before winning a surprise seat in the European Parliament last year, the Cypriot spent weeks on a quest to get Elon Musk to hug him. In January 2023, his wish came true. Their embrace went viral. Since taking office, Panayiotou has praised X on the floor of the European Parliament, pushed back against regulations that impact the platform, and credited Musk with sparking his call to fire 80% of EU bureaucrats.

Musk, evidently, was pleased. "Vote for Fidias," he wrote on X. "He is smart, super high energy and genuinely cares about you!"

The endorsement has been viewed 11.5 million times.

Dozens of countries with no deals face new tariffs as trade deadline looms

WASHINGTON (AP) — Numerous countries around the world are facing the prospect of new tariffs on their exports to the United States on Aug. 7, a potential blow to the global economy, because they haven't yet reached a trade deal with the Trump administration.

President Donald Trump had threatened to impose the tariffs on Aug. 1 but delayed the deadline by a week just hours before they were supposed to take effect.

Some of the United States' biggest trading partners have reached agreements, or at least the outlines of one, including the European Union, the United Kingdom, and Japan. Even so, those countries face much higher tariffs than were in effect before Trump took office. And other large trading partners — most notably

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China and Mexico — received an extension to keep negotiating, but they will likely end up paying more.

Trump intends the duties to bring back manufacturing to the United States, while also forcing other countries to reduce their trade barriers to U.S. exports. Trump argues that foreign exporters will pay the cost of the tariffs, but so far economists have found that most are being paid by U.S. companies. And measures of U.S. inflation have started to tick higher as prices of imported goods, such as furniture, appliances, and toys rise.

Countries without an agreement face duties ranging between 10% and 40%, according to Trump's executive order signed on Thursday. That includes large economies such as Taiwan and India, as well as many smaller countries like South Africa, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and even tiny Lesotho.

Will the deadline hold this time?

Trump's original April 2 "Liberation Day" announcement threatened to impose import taxes of up to 50% on nearly 60 countries and economies, including the 27-nation European Union. Those duties, originally scheduled for April 9, were then postponed twice, first to July 9 and then Aug. 1.

On Wednesday, Trump said on his social media platform Truth Social, "THE AUGUST FIRST DEADLINE IS THE AUGUST FIRST DEADLINE — IT STANDS STRONG, AND WILL NOT BE EXTENDED."

As of Thursday afternoon, White House representatives — and Trump himself — had insisted that no more delays were possible.

But when Trump signed the order Thursday night imposing new tariffs on 68 countries and the European Union, the start date of the punishing import taxes was pushed back seven days so that the tariff schedule could be updated. The change — while potentially welcome news to countries that had not yet reached a deal with the U.S. — injected a new dose of uncertainty for consumers and businesses still wondering what's going to happen and when.

Which countries have a trade agreement?

In a flurry of last minute deal-making, the Trump has been announcing agreements as late as Thursday, but they are largely short on details.

On Thursday, the U.S. and Pakistan reached a trade agreement expected to allow Washington to help develop Pakistan's largely untapped oil reserves and lower tariffs for the South Asian country.

And on Wednesday, Trump announced a deal with South Korea that would impose 15% tariffs on goods from that country. That is below the 25% duties that Trump threatened in April.

Agreements have also been reached with the European Union, Pakistan, Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, and the United Kingdom. The agreement with the Philippines barely reduced the tariff it will pay, from 20% to 19%.

And which countries don't?

Of the 68 countries, along with the EU, that appear in Trump's executive order, the majority do not have deals. That includes Algeria, now facing a tariff of 30%; Iraq at 35%; Syria at 41%, Switzerland at 39% and Taiwan at 20%.

In some cases, the tariffs were lowered from April, as was the case for Cambodia, which went from 36% to 19%. But others saw their tariffs go up, like New Zealand, from 10% to 15%.

Trump had already slapped large duties on Brazil and India even before the August deadline was reached. In the case of Brazil, Trump signed an executive order late Wednesday imposing a 50% duty on imports, though he exempted several large categories, including aircraft, aluminum, and energy products. Trump is angry at Brazil's government because it is prosecuting its former president, Jair Bolsonaro, for attempting to overturn his election loss in 2022. Trump was indicted on a similar charge in 2023.

While Trump has sought to justify the widespread tariffs as an effort to combat the United States' chronic trade deficits, the U.S. actually has a trade surplus with Brazil — meaning it sells more goods and services to Brazil than it buys from that country.

Late Wednesday, Trump said that India would pay a 25% duty on all its exports, in part because it has continued to purchase oil from Russia.

On Thursday, the White House said it had extended the deadline to reach a deal with Mexico for another 90 days, citing the complexity of the trade relationship, which is governed by the trade agreement Trump

reached when he updated NAFTA in his first term.

For smaller countries caught in Trump's cross hairs, the August deadline is particularly difficult because the White House has acknowledged they aren't able to negotiate with every country facing tariff threats. Lesotho, for example, a small country in southern Africa, was hit with a 50% duty on April 2, and even though it was postponed, the threat has already devastated its apparel industry, costing thousands of jobs. On Thursday, the country faced a 15% tariff.

"There's 200 countries," the president acknowledged earlier this month. "You can't talk to all of them."

Mourners honor the NYPD officer killed in the attack at the NFL headquarters building

NEW YORK (AP) — Mourners packed a New York mosque on Thursday to honor a Bangladesh-born police officer who embraced the job of protecting his adopted city and gave his life for it when a gunman opened fire in an office building this week.

Officer Didarul Islam "did believe in the American dream, not as something handed down but as something built with your own hands," Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch told Islam's family and friends as his fellow officers lined up rows deep outside the Bronx house of worship.

Dignitaries and members of the New York's thriving Bangladeshi community also paid tribute to the fallen officer during a memorial that emphasized the importance he placed on his family, background and service to the city.

A married father of two with a third child on the way, the 36-year-old was working a New York Police Department-approved private security detail, in uniform, when he and three other people were killed Monday at the Manhattan skyscraper that houses the NFL's headquarters and other corporate offices.

"To our family, he was our world. To the city, he was a proud NYPD officer who served with compassion and integrity. He lived to help others," Islam's widow said in a statement that a relative read on her behalf at the service at the Parkchester Jame Masjid mosque.

With officers stationed on surrounding rooftops for security, fire trucks used their ladders to hold a huge American flag over a nearby street. A flatbed truck carried a digital billboard showing photos of Islam and a commemorative message from his union.

White House sends condolences

After coming to the United States, Islam began building a career in the nation's largest police force. He described policing as "a blanket of the community, there to provide comfort and care," the police commissioner said.

Islam served as a school safety agent before becoming a patrol officer less than four years ago, and he was promoted posthumously Thursday to detective.

"He could have gone into any other occupation he wanted, but he wanted to put on that uniform, and he wanted to protect fellow New Yorkers. And he wanted to let us know that he believed in what this city and what this country stood for," Mayor Eric Adams, a Democrat, told the gathering. "That's the greatest symbol of what we know we are as a country."

In Washington, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt began her daily briefing by expressing President Donald Trump's condolences to Islam's family, saying he "made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of his fellow New Yorkers."

A 'humble, steady, and reliable' officer

Like others who spoke, Imam Zakir Ahmed highlighted the officer's immigrant background and Muslim faith. But said Islam "lived at a time when people like him are too often feared, vilified and made to feel like outsiders."

"It's time for New York and America to give back — to see us, to hear us, to protect our dignity, the way Officer Islam protected yours," Ahmed said.

The eldest of several siblings, Islam supported his parents in Bangladesh, as well as his wife and two young sons in the Bronx, the imam said. The police commissioner said Islam worked a long day at a pa-

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rade Sunday, then picked up private security hours Monday at the office building.

Deputy Inspector Muhammad Ashraf, the commander of the busy Bronx precinct where Islam worked, said he was a "humble, steady and reliable" officer.

"He knew what it meant to protect the place that gave him a new beginning, and in return, he gave everything back," Ashraf said at Thursday's service.

After the service, the streets filled with people, mostly men, kneeling in prayer. Some Muslim officers took part, as colleagues stood in formation behind them and looked on.

Later, officers saluted as Islam's casket, draped in U.S. and NYPD flags, was brought to a hearse for burial at a cemetery in Totowa, New Jersey.

Other shooting victims laid to rest

Mourners also gathered Thursday for the funeral of investment firm executive Wesley LePatner, 43, a married mother of two who was shot in the building's lobby.

"There's a huge gaping Mount Everest-size hole in my life right now," her husband, Evan LePatner, said during his eulogy at Central Synagogue in Manhattan.

More than 500 people attended the funeral, the New York Post reported. LePatner was one of Blackstone's top executives, specializing in real estate.

Another victim, real estate firm worker Julia Hyman, 27, was mourned at an emotional service Wednesday at the same synagogue located just blocks from where the shooting happened.

Funeral arrangements for the fourth shooting victim, security guard Aland Etienne, have not yet been finalized.

Governor praises officer for saving lives

Police identified the gunman as Shane Tamura, a 27-year old former high school football player who most recently worked in a Las Vegas casino's surveillance department. Authorities say he believed he had a brain disease linked to contact sports and accused the NFL of hiding the dangers of playing football.

On Thursday, police said they found more than 800 rounds of ammunition in Tamura's car and had recovered 47 shell casings in the building's lobby and the office floor where Hyman was killed.

Police said Tamura had a history of mental illness, but they haven't elaborated other than to say they found psychiatric medication prescribed to him at his residence in Las Vegas.

Officials said he was heading for the NFL's office but took the wrong elevator and went by mistake to another floor. The gunfire seriously injured an NFL employee in the lobby.

Islam "saved lives. He was out front," Gov. Kathy Hochul, a Democrat, said at Thursday's service. "Others may be alive today because he was the barrier."

Trump signs order imposing new tariffs on a number of trading partners that go into effect in 7 days

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Thursday signed an executive order that set new tariffs on a wide swath of U.S. trading partners to go into effect on Aug. 7 — the next step in his trade agenda that will test the global economy and sturdiness of American alliances built up over decades.

The order was issued shortly after 7 p.m. on Thursday. It came after a flurry of tariff-related activity in the last several days, as the White House announced agreements with various nations and blocs ahead of the president's self-imposed Friday deadline. The tariffs are being implemented at a later date in order for the rates schedule to be harmonized, according to a senior administration official who spoke to reporters on a call on the condition of anonymity.

After initially threatening the African nation of Lesotho with a 50% tariff, the country's goods will now be taxed at 15%. Taiwan will have tariffs set at 20%, Pakistan at 19% and Israel, Iceland, Norway, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana and Ecuador among the countries with imported goods taxed at 15%. Switzerland would be tariffed at 39%.

Trump had announced a 50% tariff on goods from Brazil, but the order was only 10% as the other 40%

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were part of a separate measure approved by Trump on Wednesday.

The order capped off a hectic Thursday as nations sought to continue negotiating with Trump. It set the rates for 68 countries and the 27-member European Union, with a baseline 10% rate to be charged on countries not listed in the order. The senior administration official said the rates were based on trade imbalance with the U.S. and regional economic profiles.

On Thursday morning, Trump engaged in a phone conversation with Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum on trade. As a result of the conversation, the U.S. president said he would enter into a 90-day negotiating period with Mexico, one of the nation's largest trading partners. The current 25% tariff rates are staying in place, down from the 30% he had threatened earlier.

"We avoided the tariff increase announced for tomorrow and we got 90 days to build a long-term agreement through dialogue," Sheinbaum wrote on X after a call with Trump that he referred to as "very successful" in terms of the leaders getting to know each other better.

The unknowns created a sense of drama that has defined Trump's rollout of tariffs over several months. However, the one consistency is his desire to levy the import taxes that most economists say will ultimately be borne to some degree by U.S. consumers and businesses.

"We have made a few deals today that are excellent deals for the country," Trump told reporters on Thursday afternoon, without detailing the terms of those agreements or the nations involved. The senior administration official declined to reveal the nations that have new deals during the call with reporters.

Trump said that Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney had called ahead of 35% tariffs being imposed on many of his nation's goods, but "we haven't spoken to Canada today." Trump separately on Thursday amended a previous order to raise the fentanyl-related tariff on Canada from 25% to 35%.

Trump imposed the Friday deadline after his previous "Liberation Day" tariffs in April resulted in a stock market panic. His unusually high tariff rates, unveiled in April, led to recession fears — prompting Trump to impose a 90-day negotiating period. When he was unable to create enough trade deals with other countries, he extended the timeline and sent out letters to world leaders that simply listed rates, prompting a slew of hasty deals.

Trump reached a deal with South Korea on Wednesday, and earlier with the European Union, Japan, Indonesia and the Philippines. His commerce secretary, Howard Lutnick, said on Fox News Channel's "Hannity" that there were agreements with Cambodia and Thailand after they had agreed to a ceasefire to their border conflict.

Going into Thursday, wealthy Switzerland and Norway were still uncertain about their tariff rates. EU officials were waiting to complete a crucial document outlining how the framework to tax imported autos and other goods from the 27-member state bloc would operate. Trump had announced a deal on Sunday while he was in Scotland.

Trump said as part of the agreement with Mexico that goods imported into the U.S. would continue to face a 25% tariff that he has ostensibly linked to fentanyl trafficking. He said autos would face a 25% tariff, while copper, aluminum and steel would be taxed at 50% during the negotiating period.

He said Mexico would end its "Non Tariff Trade Barriers," but he didn't provide specifics.

Some goods continue to be protected from the tariffs by the 2020 U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, which Trump negotiated during his first term.

But Trump appeared to have soured on that deal, which is up for renegotiation next year. One of his first significant moves as president was to impose tariffs on goods from both Mexico and Canada earlier this year.

U.S. Census Bureau figures show that the U.S. ran a \$171.5 billion trade deficit with Mexico last year. That means the U.S. bought more goods from Mexico than it sold to the country.

The imbalance with Mexico has grown in the aftermath of the USMCA, as it was only \$63.3 billion in 2016, the year before Trump started his first term in office.

Trump injects new dose of uncertainty in tariffs as he pushes start date back to Aug. 7

WASHINGTON (AP) — For weeks, President Donald Trump was promising the world economy would change on Friday with his new tariffs in place. It was an ironclad deadline, administration officials assured the public.

But when Trump signed the order Thursday night imposing new tariffs on 66 countries, the European Union, Taiwan and the Falkland Islands, the start date of the punishing import taxes was pushed back seven days so that the tariff schedule could be updated. The change — while potentially welcome news to countries that had not yet reached a deal with the U.S. — injected a new dose of uncertainty for consumers and businesses still wondering what's going to happen and when.

Trump told NBC News in a Thursday night interview the tariffs process was going "very well, very smooth." But even as the Republican president insisted these new rates would stay in place, he added: "It doesn't mean that somebody doesn't come along in four weeks and say we can make some kind of a deal."

Trump has promised that his tax hikes on the nearly \$3 trillion in goods imported to the United States will usher in newfound wealth, launch a cavalcade of new factory jobs, reduce the budget deficits and, simply, get other countries to treat America with more respect.

The vast tariffs risk jeopardizing America's global standing as allies feel forced into unfriendly deals. As taxes on the raw materials used by U.S. factories and basic goods, the tariffs also threaten to create new inflationary pressures and hamper economic growth — concerns the Trump White House has dismissed.

Questions swirl around the tariffs despite Trump's eagerness

As the clock ticked toward Trump's self-imposed deadline, few things seemed to be settled other than the president's determination to levy the taxes he has talked about for decades. The very legality of the tariffs remains an open question as a U.S. appeals court on Thursday heard arguments on whether Trump had exceeded his authority by declaring an "emergency" under a 1977 law to charge the tariffs, allowing him to avoid congressional approval.

Trump was ebullient as much of the world awaited what he would do.

"Tariffs are making America GREAT & RICH Again," he said Thursday morning on Truth Social.

Others saw a policy carelessly constructed by the U.S. president, one that could impose harms gradually over time that would erode America's power and prosperity.

"The only things we'll know for sure on Friday morning are that growth-sapping U.S. import taxes will be historically high and complex, and that, because these deals are so vague and unfinished, policy uncertainty will remain very elevated," said Scott Lincicome, a vice president of economics at the Cato Institute. "The rest is very much TBD."

The new tariffs build off ones announced in the spring

Trump initially imposed the Friday deadline after his previous "Liberation Day" tariffs in April resulted in a stock market panic. His unusually high tariff rates unveiled then led to recession fears, prompting Trump to impose a 90-day negotiating period. When he was unable to create enough trade deals with other countries, he extended the timeline and sent out letters to world leaders that simply listed rates, prompting a slew of hasty agreements.

Swiss imports will now be taxed at a higher rate, 39%, than the 31% Trump threatened in April, while Liechtenstein saw its rate slashed from 37% to 15%. Countries not listed in the Thursday night order would be charged a baseline 10% tariff.

Trump negotiated trade frameworks over the past few weeks with the EU, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and the Philippines — allowing the president to claim victories as other nations sought to limit his threat of charging even higher tariff rates. He said on Thursday there were agreements with other countries, but he declined to name them.

Thursday began with a palpable sense of tension

The EU was awaiting a written agreement on its 15% tariff deal. Switzerland and Norway were among the dozens of countries that did not know what their tariff rate would be, while Trump agreed after a

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Thursday morning phone call to keep Mexico's tariffs at 25% for a 90-day negotiating period. The president separately on Thursday amended an order to raise Canada's fentanyl-related tariffs to 35%.

European leaders face blowback for seeming to cave to Trump, even as they insist that this is merely the start of talks and stress the importance of maintaining America's support of Ukraine's fight against Russia. Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney has already indicated that his country can no longer rely on the U.S. as an ally, and Trump declined to talk to him on Thursday.

India, with its 25% tariff announced Wednesday by Trump, may no longer benefit as much from efforts to pivot manufacturing out of China. While the Trump administration has sought to challenge China's manufacturing dominance, it is separately in extended trade talks with that country, which faces a 30% tariff and is charging a 10% retaliatory rate on the U.S.

Major companies came into the week warning that tariffs would begin to squeeze them financially. Ford Motor Co. said it anticipated a net \$2 billion hit to earnings this year from tariffs. French skincare company Yon-Ka is warning of job freezes, scaled-back investment and rising prices.

It's unclear whether Trump's new tariffs will survive a legal challenge

Federal judges sounded skeptical Thursday about Trump's use of a 1977 law to declare the long-standing U.S. trade deficit a national emergency that justifies tariffs on almost every country on Earth.

"You're asking for an unbounded authority," Judge Todd Hughes of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit told a Justice Department lawyer representing the administration.

The judges didn't immediately rule, and the case is expected to eventually reach the Supreme Court.

The Trump White House has pointed to the increase in federal revenues as a sign that the tariffs will reduce the budget deficit, with \$127 billion in customs and duties collected so far this year — about \$70 billion more than last year.

New tariffs threaten to raise inflation rates

There are not yet signs that tariffs will lead to more domestic manufacturing jobs, and the U.S. economy now has 14,000 fewer manufacturing jobs than it did in April.

On Thursday, one crucial measure of inflation, known as the Personal Consumption Expenditures index, showed that prices have climbed 2.6% over the 12 months that ended in June, a sign that inflation may be accelerating as the tariffs flow through the economy.

The prospect of higher inflation from the tariffs has caused the Federal Reserve to hold off on additional cuts to its benchmark rates, a point of frustration for Trump, who on Truth Social, called Fed Chair Jerome Powell a "TOTAL LOSER."

But ahead of Trump's tariffs, Powell seemed to suggest that the tariffs had put the U.S. economy and much of the world into a state of unknowns.

"There are many uncertainties left to resolve," Powell told reporters Wednesday. "So, yes, we are learning more and more. It doesn't feel like we're very close to the end of that process. And that's not for us to judge, but it does — it feels like there's much more to come."

Virginia Giuffre's family expresses shock over Trump saying Epstein 'stole' her

The family of Virginia Giuffre, who was among Jeffrey Epstein's most well-known sex trafficking accusers, said that it was shocking to hear President Donald Trump say the disgraced financier "stole" Giuffre from him and urged that Epstein's former girlfriend, Ghislaine Maxwell, remain in prison.

Giuffre, who had accused Britain's Prince Andrew and other influential men of sexually exploiting her as a teenager trafficked by Epstein, has been a central figure in conspiracy theories tied to the case. She died by suicide this year.

Her family's statement is the latest development involving Epstein, who took his own life in a New York jail in 2019 while facing federal sex trafficking charges, and the Republican president, who was his one-time friend. Trump denied prior knowledge of Epstein's crimes and said he cut off their relationship years ago, but he still faces questions about the case.

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Trump, responding to a reporter's question on Tuesday, said that he got upset with Epstein over his poaching of workers and that Epstein had stolen Giuffre from his Palm Beach, Florida, club.

"It was shocking to hear President Trump invoke our sister and say that he was aware that Virginia had been 'stolen' from Mar-a-Lago," the family's statement said.

"We and the public are asking for answers; survivors deserve this," it continued.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt noted the president was responding to a reporter's question and didn't bring up Giuffre himself.

"The fact remains that President Trump kicked Jeffrey Epstein out of his club for being a creep to his female employees," she said.

The family's statement comes shortly after the Justice Department interviewed Maxwell, who was convicted in 2021 on sex trafficking and other charges and is serving a 20-year sentence in Tallahassee, Florida. Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche interviewed Maxwell in a Florida courthouse, though details about what she said haven't become public.

Maxwell's lawyers have said she testified truthfully and answered questions "about 100 different people." They have said she's willing to answer more questions from Congress if she is granted immunity from future prosecution for her testimony and if lawmakers agree to satisfy other conditions.

A message seeking comment about the Giuffre family's statement was sent to Maxwell's attorney on Thursday.

In a CNN interview Thursday evening, Giuffre's family also spoke out.

"She wasn't stolen, she was preyed upon at his property, at President Trump's property ... stolen seems very impersonal. It feels very much like an object, and the survivors are not objects, women are not objects," said Sky Roberts, Giuffre's brother. "She was preyed upon, and it certainly makes you kind of ask the question, you know, how much he knew during that time?"

A Trump administration official said the president is not currently considering clemency action for Maxwell.

Giuffre said she was approached by Maxwell in 2000 and eventually was hired by her as a masseuse for Epstein. But the couple effectively made her a sexual servant, she said, pressuring her into gratifying not only Epstein but his friends and associates.

Giuffre said she was flown around the world for appointments with men including Prince Andrew while she was 17 and 18 years old.

The men, including Andrew, denied it and assailed Giuffre's credibility. She acknowledged changing some key details of her account.

The prince settled with Giuffre in 2022 for an undisclosed sum, agreeing to make a "substantial donation" to her survivors' organization.

The American-born Giuffre lived in Australia for years and became an advocate for sex trafficking survivors after emerging as a central figure in Epstein's prolonged downfall.

Her family's statement said she endured death threats and financial ruin over her cooperation with authorities against Epstein and Maxwell.

US envoy arrives in Israel to monitor Gaza food distribution as humanitarian crisis worsens

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff arrived in Israel on Thursday to discuss the worsening humanitarian situation in Gaza, as the death toll of Palestinians waiting for food and other aid continued to climb.

Witkoff and U.S. Ambassador Mike Huckabee will inspect food distribution in Gaza on Friday, the White House said.

At least 91 Palestinians were killed and more than 600 wounded while attempting to get aid in the past 24 hours, the Gaza Health Ministry said Thursday. The victims included 54 people killed while awaiting food in northern Gaza near the Zikim crossing on Wednesday, the ministry said. The toll is expected to rise further as many of those killed or wounded were brought to isolated, undersupplied hospitals in northern

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Gaza and have not yet been counted.

Israel's military said Palestinians surrounded aid trucks and the Israeli military fired warning shots into the crowd, but reported no awareness of injuries resulting from Israeli fire.

A security official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity in line with military regulations, said the gunfire came from within the crowd and resulted from altercations between Palestinians attempting to access aid.

Scramble for airdropped food

Scenes of desperation and chaos played out again on Thursday as scores of Palestinians ran toward food aid dropped from the air in Zawaida, a city in central Gaza. Aid providers have turned to the skies as border crossings remain closed amid severe food insecurity across the Gaza Strip.

The drops have set off stampedes and skirmishes as hungry crowds scream, fight and jostle for the parcels.

Eslam al-Telbany, a displaced woman from Jabaliya, said she was carrying a bottle of cooking oil and a sack of flour when she was attacked and bitten, ultimately dropping the items and returning home without aid.

"I went and my children prayed that I'd return with food. They haven't eaten or drank anything for two days," she said as she wept.

Ahmed al-Khatib said someone stole a bag of flour from him, and he broke a tooth in the struggle.

Rana Attia, another displaced woman, said people felt more dignified receiving text messages telling them where to collect aid rather than randomly chasing falling parcels under the scorching heat. "We don't want them to help us that way," she said.

'Worst-case scenario'

Despite the airdrops, the amount of aid getting into Gaza remains far lower than the 500 to 600 trucks per day that aid organizations say are needed.

The Israeli defense body in charge of coordinating humanitarian aid in Gaza said 270 trucks of aid entered Gaza on Wednesday, and 32 pallets of aid were airdropped into the Strip.

Under heavy international pressure, Israel announced a series of measures over the weekend to facilitate the entry of more international aid to Gaza. The international community has heaped criticism on Israel over the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza.

International organizations said that Gaza has been on the brink of famine for the past two years, but that recent developments, including a complete blockade on aid for 2 1/2 months, mean that the "worst-case scenario of famine is currently playing out in Gaza."

Israel criticised by allies

German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul arrived in Israel on Thursday on a two-day trip that will also take him to the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Germany, traditionally a staunch ally of Israel, has been increasingly critical recently of Israel's actions in Gaza. It has insisted that Israel must do more to increase aid supplies and pushed for a ceasefire.

Berlin hasn't joined major allies France, Britain, and Canada in saying it will recognize a Palestinian state in September. But in a statement ahead of his departure Thursday, Wadephul underlined Germany's position that a two-state solution is "the only way" to ensure a future in peace and security for people on both sides.

"For Germany, the recognition of a Palestinian state stands rather at the end of the process. But such a process must begin now. Germany will not move from this aim," Wadephul said.

A diplomatic push

Witkoff, Trump's special envoy, arrived in Israel on Thursday afternoon and met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about the humanitarian situation and a possible ceasefire, according to an official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive matters.

It was the first meeting between Witkoff and Netanyahu since both Israel and the U.S. called their negotiation teams home from Qatar one week ago. Witkoff said at the time that Hamas "shows a lack of desire" to reach a truce.

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"The fastest way to end the Humanitarian Crises in Gaza is for Hamas to SURRENDER AND RELEASE THE HOSTAGES!!!" Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform Thursday morning.

Trump sent Witkoff to the region "in an effort to save lives and end this crisis," White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said, calling the president "a humanitarian with a big heart."

The war started when Hamas attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing around 1,200 people and abducting 251 others. They still hold 50 hostages, including around 20 believed to be alive. Most of the others have been released in ceasefires or other deals.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed more than 60,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. Its count doesn't distinguish between militants and civilians. The ministry operates under the Hamas government. The U.N. and other international organizations see it as the most reliable source of data on casualties.

Ukraine's Parliament approves law restoring independence of anti-graft watchdogs following backlash

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine's Parliament on Thursday overwhelmingly approved a bill presented by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that restores the independence of two of the country's key anti-corruption watchdogs, reversing his contentious move last week that curbed their power and brought an outcry.

Last week's measure by Zelenskyy to place the watchdogs under the oversight of the prosecutor-general prompted rebukes from Ukrainians, the European Union and international rights groups. It raised fears that the government could meddle in investigations and potentially shield its supporters from scrutiny.

Fighting entrenched corruption is crucial for Ukraine's aspirations to join the EU and maintain access to billions of dollars of vital Western aid in the nearly 3½-year all-out war. It's also an effort that enjoys broad public support.

Zelenskyy said he signed the bill into law less than two hours after its approval — an unusually speedy procedure for legislation.

"It guarantees normal, independent work for anti-corruption bodies and all law enforcement agencies in our state," Zelenskyy said of the new law. "A truly productive day with real impact for the people."

Zelenskyy has been the international face of Ukraine's determination to thwart Russia's invasion. The anti-graft changes that he backed last week tarnished his image abroad and put a question mark over his country's efforts to meet standards set by the EU for membership.

"Ukraine's move to restore powers of anti-corruption bodies demonstrates its resolve to quickly get back on course when European democratic values are at stake," EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said on social media.

EU Enlargement Commissioner Marta Kos, who called last week's legislative changes "a serious step back," welcomed approval of the bill, saying lawmakers had "corrected last week's damaging vote."

"Today's law restores key safeguards, but challenges remain," Kos, who monitors the record of countries that are candidates to join the bloc, wrote on X. "The EU supports (Ukrainian) citizens' demands for reform. Upholding fundamental values & fighting corruption must remain the priority."

Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said that Ukraine "is committed to reforms and the fight against corruption," and that Zelenskyy "demonstrated a principled approach."

"We got it fixed," he wrote on X.

At the start of a livestream of the parliamentary session, which was the first to be broadcast in real time since the start of the war, two lawmakers could be seen exchanging punches. Although the reason for the scuffle wasn't known, it occurred amid a tense atmosphere in the chamber where the speaker's podium is flanked by Ukrainian and EU flags.

The backlash against Zelenskyy's measures brought street protests across the country, the first major demonstrations since Russia's full-scale invasion began on Feb. 24, 2022. Though the protests didn't call for the president's removal, the controversy threatened to undermine public trust in their leaders at a critical time.

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Russia's bigger army is accelerating its efforts to pierce Ukraine's front-line defenses and is escalating its bombardment of Ukrainian cities. There is also uncertainty over how much additional weaponry Ukraine's Western partners can provide and how quickly.

The Ukrainian branch of Transparency International also criticized last week's legislation, saying it weakened one of the most significant reforms since what Ukraine calls its Revolution of Dignity in 2014.

Zelenskyy said his goal had been to speed up prolonged investigations, ensure more convictions and remove Russian meddling in investigations, which he didn't detail.

He said he had taken note of the protests and decided to present a new bill to Parliament underscoring that the prosecutor general and his deputies cannot give orders to anti-graft agencies or interfere in their work.

Lawmakers in the Verkhovna Rada, the Ukrainian Parliament in Kyiv, approved Zelenskyy's new proposal with 331 votes and nine abstentions on Thursday, official figures showed.

MLB trade deadline tracker: Astros reunite with Carlos Correa, Padres swing several deals

Major League Baseball's trade deadline brought plenty of chaos Thursday, with dozens of deals capping a frenetic 24 hours as teams sought to improve their rosters ahead of the postseason.

Among the highlights: All-Star shortstop Carlos Correa is reuniting with the Houston Astros, the San Diego Padres went on a trading spree that brought in hard-throwing closer Mason Miller, and the New York Yankees grabbed two-time All-Star reliever David Bednar.

In other moves, outfielder Cedric Mullins was dealt to the New York Mets while former Cy Young Award winner Shane Bieber is joining the Toronto Blue Jays.

The recent swaps are on top of several deals over the past few days — including the Mariners landing slugger Eugenio Suárez — and the final hours saw a whirlwind of activity as teams made trades right up to the 6 p.m. EDT deadline.

New deals were still rolling in as the deadline passed. Here are some highlights from Thursday:

Astros reunite with Carlos Correa, giving the club a familiar veteran

Correa returned to Houston in a deal with the Minnesota Twins, giving the franchise a boost as it tries to stay atop the AL West.

Correa spent his first seven years in Houston, where he became one of the most beloved players in franchise history, helping the team to six playoff appearances, three American League pennants and its first World Series title in 2017 — a championship tainted by a sign-stealing scandal.

Minnesota is also sending \$33 million to offset the \$103.4 million left on Correa's contract, which runs through 2028. The Twins will receive minor league pitcher Matt Mikulski in return.

Correa has exclusively played shortstop in his 11-year MLB career but will almost certainly move to third base with shortstop Jeremy Peña close to returning from the injured list. The Astros need help at the hot corner with All-Star Isaac Paredes out indefinitely with a hamstring injury.

The 30-year-old Correa has had a down season by his standards, batting .267 with seven homers and 31 RBIs. He's under contract through 2028.

Houston also got outfielder Jesús Sánchez from Miami for righty Ryan Gusto, infielder Chase Jaworsky and outfielder Esmil Valencia.

Active Padres add All-Star Mason Miller and others

The Padres made several bold moves, adding hard-throwing closer Mason Miller from the Athletics and All-Star first baseman Ryan O'Hearn from Baltimore while swinging five total deals for seven major league players.

San Diego general manager AJ Preller picked up Miller and left-hander JP Sears while shipping four solid prospects to the A's. The Padres then got catcher Freddy Fermín from Kansas City before acquiring O'Hearn and outfielder Ramón Laureano from the Orioles. San Diego also added left-hander Nestor Cortés from Milwaukee and utility infielder Will Wagner from Toronto.

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Preller was his usual voracious self at the deadline, sending out 14 players and acquiring eight. The biggest loss for San Diego's farm system was shortstop Leo De Vries, one of the top prospects in baseball, who was used to acquire Miller, one of the majors' most dynamic relievers.

The Padres entered Thursday in the NL's final wild-card spot at 60-49 after sweeping the New York Mets on Wednesday for their fifth consecutive win. San Diego trails the defending World Series champion Dodgers (63-46) by just three games in the NL West, and Preller clearly believes his veteran core has World Series potential.

Mets get needed boost in center field with Baltimore's Cedric Mullins

Mullins give the Mets an upgrade in center field, where Tyrone Taylor was playing terrific defense but providing little offense. The 30-year-old Mullins — who was an All-Star in 2021 — is batting .229 with 15 homers, 49 RBIs and 14 stolen bases.

Versatile veteran Jeff McNeil has also been getting starts in center because of his bat, but he has much more experience at second base and the corner outfield spots.

The last-place Orioles received right-handers Raimon Gómez, Anthony Nunez and Chandler Marsh.

Yankees add to bullpen, acquire Bednar from Pirates, Bird from Rockies

Looking to fortify their bullpen for the stretch run, the Yankees agreed to acquire Bednar from Pittsburgh, Camilo Doval from San Francisco and Jake Bird from Colorado. They also added utilityman José Caballero from Tampa Bay.

New York was set to send catcher/first base prospect Rafael Flores, catcher Edglen Perez and outfielder Brian Sanchez to the Pirates in exchange for Bednar.

The Yankees sent infielder Roc Riggio and lefty Ben Shields to the Rockies for Bird, outfielder Everson Pereira to the Rays, and four minor leaguers to the Giants, including catcher Jesús Rodríguez, right-hander Trystan Vrieling, infielder Parks Harber and left-hander Carlos de la Rosa.

The 30-year-old Bednar struggled early in the season and spent some time in the minors but has been dominant since his return. He joins a bullpen that already has Luke Weaver and Devin Williams. Bird has a 4.73 ERA and 62 strikeouts over 53 1/3 innings.

The 28-year-old Doval has 15 saves and a 3.09 ERA.

The Yankees have made more than a half-dozen trades since last Friday. They obtained third baseman Ryan McMahon from Colorado on Friday, reserve infielder Amed Rosario from Washington on Saturday and reserve outfielder Austin Slater from the Chicago White Sox on Wednesday.

Shane Bieber off to Blue Jays, nearing MLB return

Bieber is headed to the AL East-leading Blue Jays in a deal with the rebuilding Cleveland Guardians.

Bieber, who is working his way back from April 2024 Tommy John surgery, has made five rehab starts. His most recent outing was Tuesday for Double-A Akron, in which he allowed one run on three hits and struck out seven in four innings. His next rehab start was scheduled for Sunday.

The Guardians are getting right-hander Khal Stephen from the Blue Jays.

Toronto also got righty reliever Louis Varland and first baseman Ty France from Minnesota for rookie outfielder Alan Roden and minor league starter Kendry Rojas.

Bieber had spent his entire career in Cleveland, including winning the AL Cy Young Award in 2020. He has a career record of 62-32 with a 3.22 ERA and 958 strikeouts in 136 games, with 134 starts since his debut in 2018.

He agreed to a one-year, \$14 million contract last fall with a \$16 million player option for 2026.

Rangers fortify pitching by adding starter Merrill Kelly, reliever Phil Maton

The Texas Rangers acquired right-hander Merrill Kelly from the Arizona Diamondbacks, adding a veteran starter with postseason experience to help rotation at the trade deadline.

The D-backs received three minor league pitchers: left-handers Kohl Drake and Mitch Bratt and right-hander David Hagaman.

The 36-year-old Kelly has spent all of his seven major league seasons leagues with the Diamondbacks. He was the only Arizona pitcher to beat the Rangers in the 2023 World Series, throwing seven dominant innings in Game 2.

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Kelly is 9-6 with a 3.22 ERA and 121 strikeouts over 128 2/3 innings this season.

The Rangers also added right-hander Phil Maton from the St. Louis Cardinals in exchange for a pair of minor leaguers — right-hander Skylar Hales and lefty Mason Molina — and international bonus pool money. The 32-year-old Maton has a 2.35 ERA and 48 strikeouts over 38 1/3 innings.

Finally, the Rangers added left-handed reliever Danny Coulombe from the Twins in exchange for minor league left-hander Garrett Horn.

Phillies stay aggressive, add OF Harrison Bader in deal with Twins

The Phillies got outfielder Harrison Bader in exchange for two minor leaguers. It was the team's second deal with the Twins in two days after landing closer Jhoan Duran.

The 31-year-old Bader, a 2021 Gold Glove winner, remains a strong defender at all three outfield spots and has 12 home runs, 38 RBIs and a .778 OPS in 96 games. He also has postseason experience, playing in five playoff series with the Cardinals, Yankees and Mets with a .809 OPS and five career homers.

The Phillies sent minor league outfielder Hendry Mendez and right-hander Jeremy Vitoria to the Twins for Bader.

Tigers get closer Kyle Finnegan from Nationals, also add Charlie Morton, Paul Sewald

AL Central-leading Detroit acquired Kyle Finnegan from Washington for two prospects. The 33-year-old Finnegan was an All-Star in 2024 but his velocity has been down this season. He has 20 saves with a 4.38 ERA in 2025.

The Nats received minor league pitchers Josh Randall and R.J. Sales, Detroit's third- and 10th-round draft picks from 2024, respectively.

The Tigers also added right-hander Paul Sewald in a deal with the Guardians and minor-league righty Codi Heuer in a trade with the Rangers. Finally, they added 41-year-old starter Charlie Morton and cash from the Orioles in exchange for minor league lefty Micah Ashman.

The 35-year-old Sewald is eligible to return from the injured list on Sunday after being shut down with a strained right shoulder. He is 1-1 with a 4.70 ERA in 18 games this season, averaging more than one strikeout each inning.

Cubs add two more pitchers and an infielder

One day after acquiring right-handed starter Michael Soroka from the Washington Nationals, the Cubs added righty reliever Andrew Kittredge from Baltimore, lefty Taylor Rogers from Pittsburgh and utilityman Willi Castro from Minnesota.

The 35-year-old Kittredge was an All-Star in 2021 and has a 3.44 ERA over nine seasons. He has a 3.45 ERA in 31 games this season. He signed a \$9 million, one-year deal with Baltimore last offseason that includes a \$9 million club option for 2026 with a \$1 million buyout.

Rogers remains an effective left-handed option out of the bullpen at 34. The 10-year veteran, an All-Star with Minnesota in 2021, is 2-2 with a 2.45 ERA in 40 appearances with the Reds this season. Pittsburgh acquired him Wednesday from Cincinnati for third baseman Ke'Bryan Hayes.

The 28-year-old Castro has played every position except first base and catcher this season and is hitting .245 with 10 homers. He was an All-Star in 2024 after an impressive first half of the season, but his bat has cooled since.

Royals beef up roster with Yastrzemski, Falter

The Royals stayed active at the deadline, adding lefty Bailey Falter from the Pirates for first baseman Callan Moss and lefty Evan Sisk. They also acquired veteran outfielder Mike Yastrzemski from the Giants in exchange for minor league right-hander Yuniur Marte.

The left-handed Falter, 28, is having the best season of his five-year career, posting a 7-5 record with a 3.73 ERA for the last-place Pirates. The 34-year-old Yastrzemski is batting .231 with eight homers.

Other deals, notes

— The Rays got shutdown righty reliever Griffin Jax from the Twins for righty starter Taj Bradley. They also acquired catcher Hunter Feduccia from the Los Angeles Dodgers in exchange for right-handed pitcher Paul Gervase, catcher Ben Rortvedt and left-handed pitcher Adam Serwinowski.

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— The Rays got righty starter Adrian Houser from the White Sox for infielder Curtis Mead and righties Duncan Davitt and Benjamin Peoples.

— The Red Sox acquired right-hander Dustin May from the Dodgers in exchange for minor league outfielders James Tibbs III and Zach Ehrhard.

— The Dodgers acquired outfielder Alex Call from the Nationals for minor leaguer right-handers Eriq Swan and Sean Paul Liñan.

— The Angels took infielder Oswald Peraza from the Yankees for minor league outfielder Wilberson de Peña and international bonus pool money.

— The Reds acquired utility player Miguel Andujar from the Athletics in exchange for right-hander Kenya Huggins.

— The Orioles put right-hander Zach Eflin on the injured list with lower back discomfort. Eflin was a potential trade target, but has made only 14 starts this year and is on an expiring contract.

Rural Texas county's top leaders were asleep, out of town during initial hours of flood crisis

KERRVILLE, Texas (AP) — Two top leaders in a rural Texas county were asleep and a third was out of town in the initial hours of a catastrophic flood that came barreling through the region, causing widespread destruction and killing more than 130 people earlier this month.

Kerr County's sheriff and its emergency management director both acknowledged Thursday during a legislative hearing that they were asleep in the early morning hours of July 4, even after emergency calls were coming into county dispatchers and it became apparent that a major flood event was unfolding. Moreover, Judge Rob Kelly, the top executive of Kerr County, was out of town on the day of the flood.

Their testimony, which came during a joint House and Senate panel of lawmakers who visited the hard-hit Texas Hill Country, was the first indication of the whereabouts of the trio of men who were charged with preparing for the impending weather and dispatching resources to rescue those affected. It also revealed a lack of on-duty leadership in the key initial moments of the flooding that killed at least 136 people, including 27 youths and counselors at an all-girls camp.

Public records requested by The Associated Press seeking their communications, schedules and other materials that could shed light on the flooding response have been rejected or remain pending, and the three have not replied to repeated interview requests.

County leaders were asleep, out of town

William "Dub" Thomas, Kerr County's emergency management coordinator, told lawmakers that he was sick the day before the flooding occurred and missed two calls with Texas Emergency Management officials. Kerr County Sheriff Larry Leitha and Thomas both acknowledged being asleep as a crisis was unfolding.

Kelly, who holds a position in Texas that functions as the county's chief executive officer, testified that he was out of town at Lake Travis, located near Austin about 100 miles (160 kilometers) away, on the morning of the flood and woke up around 5:30 a.m.

Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick expressed his frustration.

"I'm not pointing a finger. I'm not blaming you. I just want to set the record straight," he said in comments directed toward Kelly, prompting applause from those in the audience. "Everyone was here that day working their ass off, and you were nowhere to be found."

Thomas said that on the morning of July 4, he was first awakened by his wife around 5:30 a.m., about two hours after emergency rescue operations were underway, and quickly drove to the sheriff's office.

"There was no visible flooding on my drive into the office, but it quickly became clear that the situation was escalating," he said.

Officials say better warning needed

In other testimony, local officials said they needed but lacked an updated warning system, when flash flooding swept away homes and vehicles and left families begging for rescue on the roofs of their homes earlier this month.

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Others who testified Thursday before an audience of hundreds of people — some who wore green ribbons in memory of the victims — called for urgent improvements for better flood warnings and flood mitigation.

Over the last decade, an array of Texas state and local agencies missed opportunities to fund a flood warning system, repeatedly failing to secure roughly \$1 million for a project to better protect those who spend time along the Guadalupe River, the AP previously reported. The plan, which would have installed flood-monitoring equipment near Camp Mystic, cost about as much as the county spends on courthouse security every two years, or 1.5% of its annual budget.

Kelly said residents had virtually no warning of the impending weather catastrophe until it was too late. "We need stronger communications and better broadband so we can communicate better," he said, adding that poor cell service did not help those along the river. "What we experienced on July 4 was sudden, violent and overwhelming."

Sheriff lays out timeline

Leitha presented a timeline of events to lawmakers and said emergency responders realized they had an "all-hands-on-deck" situation as early as 3:30 a.m., when dispatchers received a call from a family stranded on their roof requesting air evacuation. But Leitha acknowledged that he was not alerted of the flooding until about an hour later, at around 4:20 a.m.

Rep. Ann Johnson, a Democrat from Houston, asked Leitha whether the county should have a protocol in place for when three of the top county officials are not available during an emergency.

"Yes, ma'am, we can look at that real hard," Leitha said. "Yes, I can look and maybe they can call me earlier."

Local residents caught off guard

Residents along the Guadalupe River have said they were caught off guard and had no warning when rainfall struck. Kerr County does not have a warning system along the river after several missed opportunities by state and local agencies to finance one.

The hearing comes as authorities have begun publicly releasing records and audio — including 911 calls — that have provided new glimpses into the escalating danger and chaos in the early hours of the July Fourth holiday. They include panicked and confused messages from residents caught in trees as well as families fleeing with children from homes with water creeping up to the knees.

"People are dying," one woman tells a 911 operator in call logs released by nearby Kendall County. She says she had a young relative at a church camp in Kerr County who was stranded along with his classmates because of the high waters.

"I don't want them to get stuck in a low-water crossing. And what are they going to do? They have like 30 kids," the woman says.

Appellate judges question Trump's authority to impose tariffs without Congress

WASHINGTON (AP) — Appellate court judges expressed broad skepticism Thursday over President Donald Trump's legal rationale for his most expansive round of tariffs.

Members of the 11-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit in Washington appeared unconvinced by the Trump administration's insistence that the president could impose tariffs without congressional approval, and it hammered its invocation of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act to do so.

"IEEPA doesn't even mention the word 'tariffs' anywhere," Circuit Judge Jimmie Reyna said, in a sign of the panel's incredulity to a government attorney's arguments.

Brett Shumate, the attorney representing the Trump administration, acknowledged in the 99-minute hearing "no president has ever read IEEPA this way" but contended it was nonetheless lawful.

The 1977 law, signed by President Jimmy Carter, allows the president to seize assets and block transactions during a national emergency. It was first used during the Iran hostage crisis and has since been invoked for a range of global unrest, from the 9/11 attacks to the Syrian civil war.

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Trump says the country's trade deficit is so serious that it likewise qualifies for the law's protection.

In sharp exchanges with Shumate, appellate judges questioned that contention, asking whether the law extended to tariffs at all and, if so, whether the levies matched the threat the administration identified.

"If the president says there's a problem with our military readiness," Chief Circuit Judge Kimberly Moore posited, "and he puts a 20% tax on coffee, that doesn't seem to necessarily deal with (it)."

Shumate said Congress' passage of IEEPA gave the president "broad and flexible" power to respond to an emergency, but that "the president is not asking for unbounded authority."

But an attorney for the plaintiffs, Neal Katyal, characterized Trump's maneuver as a "breathtaking" power grab that amounted to saying "the president can do whatever he wants, whenever he wants, for as long as he wants so long as he declares an emergency."

No ruling was issued from the bench. Regardless of what decision the judges' deliberations bring, the case is widely expected to reach the U.S. Supreme Court.

Trump weighed in on the case on his Truth Social platform, posting: "To all of my great lawyers who have fought so hard to save our Country, good luck in America's big case today. If our Country was not able to protect itself by using TARIFFS AGAINST TARIFFS, WE WOULD BE "DEAD," WITH NO CHANCE OF SURVIVAL OR SUCCESS. Thank you for your attention to this matter!"

In filings in the case, the Trump administration insists that "a national emergency exists" necessitating its trade policy. A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of International Trade, a specialized federal court in New York, was unconvinced, however, ruling in May that Trump exceeded his powers.

The issue now rests with the appeals judges.

The challenge strikes at just one batch of import taxes from an administration that has unleashed a bevy of them and could be poised to unveil more on Friday.

The case centers on Trump's so-called "Liberation Day" tariffs of April 2 that imposed new levies on nearly every country. But it doesn't cover other tariffs, including those on foreign steel, aluminum and autos, nor ones imposed on China during Trump's first term, and continued by President Joe Biden.

The case is one of at least seven lawsuits charging that Trump overstepped his authority through the use of tariffs on other nations. The plaintiffs include 12 U.S. states and five businesses, including a wine importer, a company selling pipes and plumbing goods, and a maker of fishing gear.

The U.S. Constitution gives Congress the authority to impose taxes — including tariffs — but over decades, lawmakers have ceded power over trade policy to the White House.

Trump has made the most of the power vacuum, raising the average U.S. tariff to more than 18%, the highest rate since 1934, according to the Budget Lab at Yale University.

The attorney general for one of the states suing Trump sounded confident after the hearing, arguing that the judges "didn't buy" the Trump administration's arguments. "You would definitely rather be in our shoes going forward," Oregon Attorney General Dan Rayfield said.

Rayfield said that Trump's tariffs — which are paid by importers in the United States who often try to pass along the higher costs to their customers — amount to one of the largest tax increases in American history. "This was done all by one human being sitting in the Oval Office," he said.

Russian missile and drone attack on Kyiv kills at least 13 people and injures more than 130

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russian missile and drone attacks overnight on Ukraine's capital city killed at least 13 people, including a 6-year-old boy, and wounded 132 others, authorities said Thursday.

A 5-month-old girl was among 14 children wounded, Ukraine's Emergency Service said. It was the highest number of children injured in a single attack on Kyiv since the start of Russia's invasion three years ago, according to public records consulted by The Associated Press.

A large part of a nine-story residential building collapsed in the attack, City Military Administration head Tymur Tkachenko said. Rescue teams searched for people trapped under the rubble.

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Yana Zhabborova, 35, a resident of the damaged building, woke up to the sound of thundering explosions, which blew off the doors and windows of her home.

"It is just stress and shock that there is nothing left," said Zhabborova, a mother of a 5-month-old infant and a 5-year-old child.

Russia fired 309 Shahed and decoy drones, and eight Iskander-K cruise missiles overnight, the Ukrainian air force said. Ukrainian air defenses intercepted and jammed 288 strike drones and three missiles. Five missiles and 21 drones struck targets.

Russian troops also struck a residential 5-story building in the eastern Ukrainian city of Kramatorsk, according to the head of Donetsk regional military administration Vadym Filashkin. He said one person was killed and at least 11 more injured.

At least 27 locations across Kyiv were hit by the attack, Tkachenko said, with the heaviest damage seen in the Solomianskyi and Sviatoshynskyi districts. More than 100 buildings were damaged in Kyiv, including homes, schools, kindergartens, medical facilities and universities, he said.

Russia's Defense Ministry said Thursday that it had shot down 32 Ukrainian drones overnight.

A drone attack had caused a fire at an industrial site in Russia's Penza region, local Gov. Oleg Melnichenko said. He didn't immediately give further details other than to say that there were no casualties.

In the Volgograd region, some trains were also halted after drone wreckage fell on local railway infrastructure, state rail operator Russian Railways said.

Russia's Defense Ministry also said that its forces took full control of the strategically important city of Chasiv Yar in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region.

Russian and Ukrainian troops have battled for control of Chasiv Yar for nearly 18 months. It includes a hilltop from which troops can attack other key points in the region that form the backbone of Ukraine's eastern defenses.

Victor Trehubov, a Ukrainian military spokesperson, denied Russia's claim.

"Just a fabrication, there wasn't even a change in the situation," he told The Associated Press.

A report on Thursday from Ukraine's Army General Staff said there were seven clashes in Chasiv Yar in the past 24 hours. An attached map showed most of the town as being under Russian control.

DeepState, an open-source Ukrainian map widely used by the military and analysts, showed early Thursday that neighborhoods to the south and west of Chasiv Yar remained as so-called gray zones, or uncontrolled by either side.

The attack targeted the Kyiv, Dnipro, Poltava, Sumy, Mykolaiv regions, with Ukraine's capital being the primary target, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy wrote on Telegram.

"Today, the world once again saw Russia's answer to our desire for peace with America and Europe," Zelenskyy said. "New demonstrative killings. That is why peace without strength is impossible."

He called on Ukraine's allies to follow through on defense commitments and pressure Moscow toward real negotiations.

U.S. President Donald Trump on Tuesday gave Russian President Vladimir Putin a shorter deadline — Aug. 8 — for peace efforts to make progress, or Washington will impose punitive sanctions and tariffs.

He said Thursday that his special envoy Steve Witkoff will travel to Russia after his current stop in Israel.

Trump has grown increasingly critical of Russia. "I think it's disgusting what they're doing," he said after the latest attacks. He said the United States is ready to impose sanctions, but "I don't know that sanctions bother him," referring to Putin.

Western leaders have accused Putin of dragging his feet in U.S.-led peace efforts in an attempt to capture more Ukrainian land.

Hulk Hogan's cause of death was a heart attack, medical examiner says

Professional wrestler Hulk Hogan's death last week was caused by a heart attack, according to a Florida medical examiner's report released Thursday.

Hogan, 71, whose real name was Terry Bollea, previously had leukemia and atrial fibrillation, an irregular heart rhythm, the report from the District Six Medical Examiner said.

To honor the "Hulkster," Gov. Ron DeSantis said, flags will be flown at half-staff at all official buildings Friday, which he declared "Hulk Hogan Day in Florida."

"He was a true Floridian through and through," the Republican governor wrote in a memo Thursday.

Hogan was pronounced dead at a hospital less than 90 minutes after medics arrived at his home in Clearwater to answer a call about a cardiac arrest on the morning of July 24, police said. The report said the cause of death was "natural."

"He had been dealing with some health issues, but I truly believed we would overcome them," Hogan's wife Sky Daily posted on Instagram.

"This loss is sudden and impossible to process," she added. "To the world, he was a legend... but to me, he was my Terry."

Hogan was perhaps the biggest star in WWE's long history, known for both his larger-than-life personality and his in-ring exploits. He was the main draw for the first WrestleMania in 1985 and was a fixture for years, facing everyone from Andre The Giant and Randy Savage to The Rock and even WWE co-founder Vince McMahon.

Hogan's daughter Brooke Bollea Oleksy, better known by her stage name Brooke Hogan, memorialized her father in a recent social media post.

"I am so grateful I knew the real version of him. Not just the one the world viewed through a carefully curated lens," she wrote on Instagram.

Funeral plans have not yet been publicly announced.

Sean 'Diddy' Combs asks judge to throw out guilty verdicts or grant him a new trial

Sean "Diddy" Combs has asked a judge to throw out his guilty verdicts on prostitution-related counts or grant him a new trial, saying such convictions are without precedent.

"This conviction stands alone, but it shouldn't stand at all," the Wednesday filing said.

Combs' lawyers argue that his two felony convictions were a unique misapplication of the federal Mann Act, which bars interstate commerce related to prostitution,

"To our knowledge, Mr. Combs is the only person ever convicted of violating the statute for conduct anything like this," a Wednesday filing from Combs legal team said.

Combs, 55, was convicted in a New York federal court of two counts of transportation to engage in prostitution for flying people around the country, including his girlfriends and male sex workers, for sexual encounters, while he was acquitted of more serious charges. He could get up to a decade in prison at his sentencing set for Oct. 3.

His lawyers argued that none of the elements normally used for Mann Act convictions, including profiting from sex work or coercion, were present here.

"It is undisputed that he had no commercial motive and that all involved were adults," The filing said. "The men chose to travel and engage in the activity voluntarily. The verdict confirms the women were not vulnerable or exploited or trafficked or sexually assaulted."

The lawyers said that Combs, "at most, paid to engage in voyeurism as part of a 'swingers' lifestyle" and argued that "does not constitute 'prostitution' under a properly limited definition of the statutory term."

Combs was acquitted of racketeering conspiracy and sex trafficking, charges could have put one of hip-hop's celebrated figures in prison for life.

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The new motion asks Judge Arun Subramanian to vacate the jury's verdict, or to order a new trial whose evidence is limited to matters related to the Mann Act counts, because of "severe spillover prejudice from reams of inflammatory evidence" related to the more serious counts.

Prosecutors insisted during the eight-week trial that Combs had coerced, threatened and sometimes viciously forced two ex-girlfriends to have sex with male sex workers to satisfy his sexual urges. They cited multiple acts of violence he carried out against them as proof that they had no say.

A day earlier, Combs' team asked the judge to free him on a \$50 million bond while he awaits sentencing in October after a jury found him not guilty of the most serious federal charges he faced earlier this month.

His lawyer argued that conditions at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn are dangerous, noting that others convicted of similar prostitution-related offenses were typically released before sentencing.

Subramanian previously denied a request that Combs be released on bail while he awaits sentencing, citing a now-infamous video of Combs beating a former girlfriend and photographs showing injuries to another ex-girlfriend.

The judge has not yet ruled on either of this week's motions.

The Latest: Trump envoy arrives in Israel for talks with Netanyahu

U.S. President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff arrived in Israel on Thursday to discuss the disintegrating humanitarian situation in Gaza, as the U.S. imposed new sanctions on officials from the Western-backed Palestinian Authority.

Witkoff met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about Gaza and a possible ceasefire, according to an official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive matters.

It was the first meeting between Witkoff and Netanyahu since both Israel and the U.S. called their negotiation teams home from Qatar a week ago. Witkoff said at the time that Hamas "shows a lack of desire" to reach a truce.

Conditions remain dire in Gaza, where the health ministry said 91 Palestinians were killed and more than 600 wounded while attempting to get aid in the past 24 hours. The leading international authority on hunger crises has said that Israel's military offensive and blockade have led to the "worst-case scenario of famine" in the territory.

— Josef Federman in Jerusalem

Here's the latest:

Trump envoy and US Ambassador will inspect food distribution in Gaza

The White House said Witkoff and U.S. Ambassador Mike Huckabee will inspect food distribution in Gaza on Friday.

Egypt backs Canada's recognition of Palestine

In a statement released Thursday, Egypt's government called on other countries that have not yet "recognized the State of Palestine to expedite this step, standing on the right side of history."

Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney announced Wednesday that his country will recognize a Palestinian state in September, joining Britain, France and other Western countries in a symbolic statement that is part of a broader global shift against Israel's policies in Gaza.

Sanctioned Palestinian officials barred from travel to the US

Palestinian officials linked to the Palestinian Authority and the Palestine Liberation Organization will no longer be able to travel to the U.S. after their visas were revoked Thursday, marking a further deterioration of their relations with the United States.

The U.S. State Department's decision to impose new restrictions comes as Palestinian leaders gain momentum in their campaign for the recognition of statehood, winning support from countries including France, Canada and Australia.

The State Department said senior Palestinian Authority officials had violated longstanding agreements not to undermine the peace process or internationalize the conflict through courts like the International Court of Justice. It accused them of inciting violence, glorifying terrorism, and supporting convicted at-

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tackers and their families.

The department did not specify which officials would be sanctioned, but similar actions taken during President Donald Trump's first term led the group to shutter its Washington-based office in 2018.

Cyprus' top diplomat: Work underway to re-activate aid shipments to Gaza

The foreign minister of Cyprus says authorities are working out the logistics to re-activate a sea route to ship humanitarian aid to Gaza.

Constantinos Kombos said after talks with his French counterpart Jean-Noël Barrot on Thursday that he's hopeful of announcing the reopening of the Cyprus maritime corridor "very soon."

He said before shipments can begin, work still needs to be done to ensure that it's secure to deliver the aid to the Palestinian territory and that the distribution network is operational.

There are currently 1,200 tonnes of aid in storage in Cyprus ready to be shipped once all the details are worked out, he added.

Cyprus was the staging point for some 2,200 tonnes worth of aid shipments to Gaza last year.

Trump uses Canada's recognition of Palestinian state in trade talks

Trump said Canada's announcement it will recognize a Palestinian state "will make it very hard" for the U.S. to reach a trade agreement with its northern neighbor.

The threat, posted in the early hours Thursday on Trump's social media network, is the latest way he has sought to use his trade war to coerce countries on unrelated issues. It's a swing from the ambivalence he has expressed about other countries making such a move.

"Wow! Canada has just announced that it is backing statehood for Palestine," Trump said in his post on Truth Social around midnight. "That will make it very hard for us to make a Trade Deal with them. Oh Canada!!!"

The Republican president said this week that he didn't mind British Prime Minister Keir Starmer taking a position on the issue of formally recognizing Palestinian statehood. And last week, he said that French President Emmanuel Macron's similar move was "not going to change anything."

France to conduct 4 air drops of aid to Gaza starting Friday

France's foreign minister says his country will conduct four air drops each delivering 10 tonnes of humanitarian aid to Gaza starting on Friday.

Jean-Noël Barrot said after talks with his Cypriot counterpart Constantinos Kombos Thursday that the flights will be carried out in coordination with Jordanian authorities.

Barrot also called for an end to the work of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, describing it as a "militarized distribution system" of humanitarian help that has "generated a bloodbath in distribution lines in Gaza." He called it "a scandal, which is shameful and which has to stop."

The French minister said there are 52 tonnes of humanitarian aid that has been sitting in the Egyptian town of El-Arish, a short distance from Gaza.

Fireflies are lighting up summer skies. But the glowing bugs are still on the decline

NEW YORK (AP) — Fireflies are lighting up summer evenings across the U.S. Northeast, putting on dazzling shows in backyards and city parks.

There's no official count, but experts say a particularly wet spring may have created the ideal conditions for young fireflies to grow into adults to set summer nights aglow.

Fireflies light the night everywhere: There are over 2,000 known species across the globe. They use their characteristic flashes to communicate and find the perfect mate.

In New York City, the lightning bugs are out in the five boroughs, sparkling once the sun goes down in places like Central Park and Prospect Park. The summer months are ideal to spot them as they start to dwindle throughout the month of August.

While northeastern nights may seem brighter this summer, the bugs are still on the decline and they're waning at a faster rate than ever before.

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"It would be a mistake to say firefly populations are high this year, therefore there's no decline," said Matt Schlesinger with the New York Natural Heritage Program, who is part of an effort to count fireflies in state parks.

Some firefly species could be doing well this year, Schlesinger said, while others are still on the decline.

Habitat loss, pesticide use and light pollution are responsible. In cities, blaring lights from billboards, cars and storefronts can drown out the bugs' glow, making it harder for them to find their kin and pass their genes onto the next generation.

Fireflies are part of the story of summer, said entomologist Jessica Ware with the American Museum of Natural History. Her children grew up seeing them flash in her backyard, but the bugs started to disappear once her kids hit their teenage years.

In the past few months, her family has seen the fireflies come back. Their return made her think about all the kids who are glimpsing the glowing bugs for the very first time.

"It shouldn't be new," Ware said. "It should be something that is a universal part of summer."

To look out for fireflies, consider turning the lights off at night and avoid spraying front lawns with insecticides.

"We still need to do some work ourselves, to change our behavior, to really make sure that large populations can continue to stay large," Ware said.

Fewer Americans see discrimination as anti-DEI push gains traction, AP-NORC poll shows

WASHINGTON (AP) — Slightly less than half of U.S. adults believe that Black people face "a great deal" or "quite a bit" of discrimination in the United States, according to a poll. That's a decline from the solid majority, 60%, who thought Black Americans faced high levels of discrimination in the spring of 2021, months after racial reckoning protests in response to the police killing of George Floyd.

Significant numbers of Americans also think diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, also known as DEI, are backfiring against the groups they're intended to help, according to the survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, including many people who belong to those groups.

The findings suggest Americans' views on racial discrimination have shifted substantially since four years ago, when many companies launched efforts to promote diversity within their workforces and the products they sold.

Since then, many of those companies have reversed themselves and retreated from their diversity practices, a trend that's accelerated this year under pressure from President Donald Trump, a Republican who has sought to withhold federal money from schools and companies that promote DEI.

Now, it's clear that views are changing as well as company policies.

Claudine Brider, a 48-year-old Black Democrat in Compton, California, says the concept of DEI has made the workplace difficult for Black people and women in new ways.

"Anytime they're in a space that they're not expected to be, like seeing a Black girl in an engineering course ... they are seen as only getting there because of those factors," Brider said. "It's all negated by someone saying, 'You're only here to meet a quota.'"

Reversal in views of racial discrimination

The poll finds 45% of U.S. adults think Black people face high levels of discrimination, down from 60% in the spring of 2021. There was a similar drop in views about the prevalence of serious discrimination against Asian people, which fell from 45% in the 2021 poll — conducted a month after the Atlanta spa shootings, which killed eight people, including six women of Asian descent — to 32% in the current survey.

There's no question the country has backtracked from its "so-called racial reckoning" and the experiences of particular groups such as Black people are being downplayed, said Phillippe Copeland, a professor at Boston University School of Social Work.

Americans' views about discrimination haven't shifted when it comes to all groups, though. Just under half of U.S. adults, 44%, now say Hispanic people face at least "quite a bit of discrimination," and only 15%

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say this about white people. Both numbers are similar to when the question was last asked in April 2021.

Divisions on the impact of DEI on Black and Hispanic people

The poll indicates that less than half of Americans think DEI has a benefit for the people it's intended to help.

About 4 in 10 U.S. adults say DEI reduces discrimination against Black people, while about one-third say this about Hispanic people, women and Asian people. Many — between 33% and 41% — don't think DEI makes a difference either way. About one-quarter of U.S. adults believe that DEI actually increases discrimination against these groups.

Black and Hispanic people are more likely than white people to think DEI efforts end up increasing discrimination against people like them.

About 4 in 10 Black adults and about one-third of Hispanic adults say DEI increases discrimination against Black people, compared with about one-quarter of white adults. There is a similar split between white adults and Black and Hispanic adults on assessments of discrimination against Hispanic people.

Among white people, it's mostly Democrats who think DEI efforts reduce discrimination against Black and Hispanic people. Only about one-quarter of white independents and Republicans say the same.

Pete Parra, a 59-year-old resident of Gilbert, Arizona, thinks that DEI is making things harder for racial minorities now. He worries about how his two adult Hispanic sons will be treated when they apply for work.

"I'm not saying automatically just give it to my sons," said Parra, who leans toward the Democratic Party. But he's concerned that now factors other than merit may take priority.

"If they get passed over for something," he said, "they're not going to know (why)."

About 3 in 10 say DEI increases discrimination against white people

The poll shows that Americans aren't any more likely to think white people face discrimination than they were in 2021. And more than half think DEI doesn't make a difference when it comes to white people or men.

But a substantial minority — about 3 in 10 U.S. adults — think DEI increases discrimination against white people. Even more white adults, 39%, hold that view, compared with 21% of Hispanic adults and 13% of Black adults.

The recent political focus on DEI has included the idea that white people are more often overlooked for career and educational opportunities because of their race.

John Bartus, a 66-year-old registered Republican in Twin Falls, Idaho, says that DEI might have been "a good thing for all races of people, but it seems like it's gone far left." It's his impression that DEI compels companies to hire people based on their race or if they identify as LGBTQ+.

"The most qualified person ought to get a job based on their merit or based on their educational status," Bartus said.

Bridger, the Black California resident, objects to the notion that white people face the same level of discrimination as Black people. But while she thinks the aims of DEI are admirable, she also sees the reality as flawed.

"I do think there needs to be something that ensures that there is a good cross-section of people in the workplace," Bridger said. "I just don't know what that would look like, to be honest."

With growing urgency, more US Jews urge Israel to ensure ample food deliveries to Gaza

For most Jewish Americans, whatever their political persuasion, support for Israel has been a bedrock principle. Thus it's notable that a broad swath of U.S. Jews — reacting to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza — have been urging the Israeli government to do more to ensure the delivery of food and medicine.

There is no overwhelming consensus. On the left, some U.S. Jews contend that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government is guilty of genocide. On the right, some conservative Jewish news outlets have suggested that the widely verified food crisis in Gaza is a hoax.

What is clear is that the ranks of American Jews alarmed by the current conditions in Gaza have swelled

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and now include major organizations that customarily avoid critiques of Israeli policies.

What are major Jewish organizations saying?

The American Jewish Committee — a prominent advocacy group that strives to broadly represent Jews in the U.S. and abroad — stressed in its statement that it “stands with Israel in its justified war to eliminate the threat posed by Hamas.”

“At the same time, we feel immense sorrow for the grave toll this war has taken on Palestinian civilians, and we are deeply concerned about worsening food insecurity in Gaza,” said the AJC, urging Israel and other key parties “to increase cooperation and coordination in order to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches Palestinian civilians in Gaza.”

The Rabbinical Assembly, a New York-based organization representing rabbis of the Conservative Movement, sounded a similar note.

“Even as we believe Hamas could end this suffering immediately through the release of the hostages and care for its civilian population, the Israeli government must do everything in its power to ensure humanitarian aid reaches those in need,” the assembly said. “The Jewish tradition calls upon us to ensure the provision of food, water, and medical supplies as a top priority.”

Rabbi Moshe Hauer, executive vice president of the Orthodox Union, told The Associated Press he and his colleagues “are proud, sad, and angry.”

“We remain proud of Israel and its army, the only moral fighting force in the region striving to abide by internationally accepted laws of war,” he said via email. “We are genuinely sad about the mounting human costs which — as intended by Hamas — this war is inflicting on Israelis and innocent Palestinians. And we are angry at those who only ascribe to Israel the worst intentions and all responsibility while ignoring Hamas’ inhumanity.”

A spokesman for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the staunchly pro-Israel group better known as AIPAC, welcomed Israel’s latest moves to boost aid to Gaza.

“The true key to improving the humanitarian conditions is for Hamas to surrender power and free all 50 hostages, including the 2 Americans,” Marshall Wittmann said via email.

Of major nationwide organizations, perhaps the most vehement statement came from the Reform Jewish Movement, which represents the largest branch of Judaism in the U.S.

“Hamas has repeatedly demonstrated its willingness to sacrifice the Palestinian people in its pursuit of Israel’s destruction, but Israel must not sacrifice its own moral standing in return,” the Reform statement said.

“No one should be unaffected by the pervasive hunger experienced by thousands of Gazans,” it continued. “Nor should we accept arguments that because Hamas is the primary reason many Gazans are either starving or on the verge of starving, that the Jewish State is not also culpable in this human disaster.”

Rabbis share their thoughts

Over the past few weeks, as images and reports of starvation and violence in Gaza dominated the news cycle, Rabbi Jon Roos felt a shift in how the Israel-Hamas war is discussed in Jewish circles.

“There was a real change in the tone of the conversation, but also in the depth and content of it,” said Roos, who leads Temple Sinai, a Reform synagogue in Washington, D.C. “I felt it from members of the congregation. I’ve felt it in the Jewish communal world.”

The clergy of Temple Sinai signed onto a letter with more than 1,000 Jewish clergy calling on the Israeli government to “allow extensive humanitarian aid” to enter Gaza. It stated that “we cannot condone the mass killings of civilians ... or the use of starvation as a weapon of war.”

Roos said the Jewish community can hold two truths at once: that Oct. 7 was deplorable and so is the situation in Gaza.

“One of the critical parts of Judaism is that we really value that ability to hold nuance and two truths, even if they’re both incredibly challenging and self-critical,” Roos said.

Rabbi Aaron Weininger in Minnetonka, Minnesota, also signed the clergy letter. He leads Adath Jeshurun, a Conservative Jewish congregation.

“Zionism is big enough and strong enough to care about the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of Israelis and

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Palestinians. Naming their suffering doesn't weaken Zionism nor does calling on members of the government not to occupy Gaza. Signing the letter honors Zionism as compassionate and just," he wrote in an email.

The response of his community has been largely positive, with some disagreement — "both with the idea of publicly disagreeing with the Israeli government and with the characterization of suffering in Gaza," he wrote. "But taking moral stands and holding disagreement have always been part of what it means to be a faith community."

Voices of protest

On Tuesday, more than two dozen rabbis were arrested in the office of the Senate majority leader, John Thune, R-S.D., while demanding action by Congress to provide food aid for Gaza.

"All life is sacred, but Palestinian lives are not treated as such, and that is a blot on our collective humanity," said one of the protesters, Alissa Wise, who is founding director of Rabbis for Ceasefire. "We are here to insist on the sanctity of life of every Palestinian, of every Israeli, of all of us."

Also arrested was a New York-based rabbi, Andrue Kahn. He is executive director of the American Council for Judaism, which rejects the concept of Zionism.

In an email, Kahn said an increasing number of U.S. Jews, including rabbis, are now more willing to speak out about Gaza's plight and demand policy changes from Israel.

"The horrors of starvation of so many people ... has led to the dam bursting for many people, and the political spectrum of those speaking out has broadened," he wrote.

Defenders of Netanyahu's policies

A Jewish member of Congress, Rep. Randy Fine, R-Fla., incurred criticism after suggesting in a post on X last week that the reports of a Gaza food crisis were false.

"Release the hostages. Until then, starve away. (This is all a lie anyway. It amazes me that the media continues to regurgitate Muslim terror propaganda)," his post said.

Two U.S.-based Jewish news outlets also have depicted the food crisis as exaggerated.

"The reality is clear — food and medicine are entering Gaza, but Hamas seizes them for its own purposes. The international community's fixation on blaming Israel ignores this fundamental truth," said an article in The Jewish Voice.

Supplementing its news articles making similar points, the Jewish News Syndicate on Wednesday ran a column by Mitchell Bard, executive director of the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise.

"True supporters of Israel are not fair-weather friends who abandon their ally out of fear of what their friends will think of them or the need to feign moral superiority," he wrote. "Israelis are not children in need of a public scolding from the Diaspora. They need solidarity, not sanctimony."

Suárez to Mariners, Durán to Phillies as MLB trade market heats up before Thursday's deadline

The Seattle Mariners acquired slugger Eugenio Suárez, the Philadelphia Phillies dealt for hard-throwing reliever Jhoan Durán and identical twin relievers Tyler and Taylor Rogers got traded on the same day, capping a busy Wednesday as the Major League Baseball trade deadline approaches on Thursday.

Suárez — who had 36 homers and 87 RBIs this season for the Arizona Diamondbacks — was widely considered one of the top prizes of the trade deadline. A person familiar with the transaction confirmed it to The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity because it had not been announced.

The 34-year-old Suárez spent the 2022 and 2023 seasons with the Mariners, hitting 53 homers.

The 27-year-old Durán has a 2.01 ERA and 16 saves this season, striking out 53 over 49 1/3 innings for the Minnesota Twins. The Phillies gave up two top prospects, catcher Eduardo Tait and right-hander Mick Abel.

Tyler Rogers and Ryan Helsley are headed to the New York Mets, who are fighting for first place in the NL East with the Phillies. The accomplished relievers join Edwin Díaz in the bullpen to give the Mets multiple late-inning options.

The durable Rogers — who has a distinctive submarine delivery — has made 53 appearances this sea-

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son with a 1.80 ERA, four walks and 38 strikeouts for the San Francisco Giants. The Mets sent the Giants right-handers José Buttó and Blade Tidwell, along with outfielder Drew Gilbert.

Helsley has a 3.00 ERA, 21 saves and 41 strikeouts over 36 innings this year for the St. Louis Cardinals, where he's spent the past seven seasons. New York dealt St. Louis three minor leaguers, including infielder Jesus Baez and right-handers Nate Dohm and Frank Elissalt.

Even after Suarez was dealt, many of the trade deadline's biggest names remained on the market, setting up a potentially fascinating 24 hours.

Pittsburgh right-hander Mitch Keller and Cleveland outfielder Steven Kwan were among the potential season-altering additions that teams were pursuing ahead of Thursday's 6 p.m. EDT deadline.

In other moves Wednesday, the New York Yankees added veteran outfielder Austin Slater, the Cincinnati Reds acquired Gold Glove third baseman Ke'Bryan Hayes and the Chicago Cubs traded for right-handed starter Michael Soroka.

The 32-year-old Slater gives the Yankees a dependable right-handed batter for the final two months of the season. He's hit .236 with five homers and 11 RBIs in 51 games with the White Sox this season and has an .859 OPS against left-handed pitching.

The White Sox acquired minor league pitching prospect Gage Ziehl in the trade.

The Reds acquired Hayes from the Pirates in exchange for Taylor Rogers, who unlike his brother throws lefty — and overhand. Pittsburgh also got shortstop prospect Sammy Stafura and cash from Cincinnati.

The swap gives the Reds an elite defender at third with a manageable contract. The 28-year-old Hayes, a Gold Glove winner in 2023, has four-plus years left on the extension he signed with Pittsburgh in 2022.

He will make \$7 million in 2026 and 2027 and \$8 million in 2028 and 2029, with a club option for \$12 million in 2030. He's hitting .236 with two home runs and 36 RBIs this season.

The 27-year-old Soroka is off to Chicago, a person familiar with the deal told The Associated Press. He was an All-Star in 2019 and has 3-8 record with a 4.87 ERA for the Washington Nationals this season.

Washington received two minor leaguers — infielder Ronny Cruz and outfielder Christian Franklin.

Suárez returned to the Diamondbacks' lineup on Wednesday and went 1 for 4, two days after an injury scare. The slugger was hit on the right index finger by a pitch against the Detroit Tigers on Monday.

The D-backs have turned into sellers at the deadline after dropping eight of their last nine games and falling to 51-58. Right-handed pitchers Merrill Kelly and Zac Gallen are among the other Arizona players who could be dealt.

In other moves on Wednesday:

— The Red Sox acquired lefty Steven Matz from the St. Louis Cardinals in exchange for minor league first baseman Blaze Jordan.

— The Reds traded for right-hander Zach Littel from the Tampa Bay Rays in a three-way deal involving the Los Angeles Dodgers and Tampa Bay Rays.

— The Los Angeles Angels acquired relievers Andrew Chafin and Luis García from the Nationals for left-hander Jake Eder and minor league first baseman Sam Brown.

— The Atlanta Braves acquired veteran reliever Tyler Kinley from the Colorado Rockies for minor league pitcher Austin Smith.

— The Seattle Mariners agreed to add left-handed reliever Caleb Ferguson from the Pittsburgh Pirates, giving their bullpen another arm as they make a playoff push. The Pirates received right-handed pitching prospect Jeter Martinez.

Today in History: August 1, America gets its MTV

Today is Friday, Aug. 1, the 213th day of 2025. There are 152 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On August 1, 1981, MTV began its American broadcast; the first music video aired on the new cable TV network was "Video Killed the Radio Star," by The Buggles.

Also on this date:

In 1876, Colorado was admitted as the 38th state in the Union, less than a month after the US Centen-

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nial (earning it the nickname "the Centennial State").

In 1907, a week-long boys' camping event began on Brownsea Island in southern England, organized by Robert Baden-Powell; the event is now marked as the beginning of the Scout Movement.

In 1936, Adolf Hitler presided over the opening ceremonies of the Summer Olympics in Berlin .

In 1944, an uprising broke out in Warsaw, Poland, against Nazi occupation; the revolt lasted two months before collapsing.

In 1957, the United States and Canada announced they had agreed to create the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD).

In 1966, Charles Joseph Whitman, 25, went on an armed rampage at the University of Texas in Austin that killed 14 people, most of whom were shot by Whitman while he was perched in the clock tower of the main campus building.

In 1971, The Concert for Bangladesh, an all-star benefit organized by George Harrison of The Beatles and sitar player Ravi Shankar, was held at Madison Square Garden in New York.

In 2001, Pro Bowl tackle Korey Stringer, 27, died of heat stroke, a day after collapsing at the Minnesota Vikings' training camp on the hottest day of the year.

In 2004, the Ycuá Bolaños supermarket fire in Asuncion, Paraguay killed more than 400 people.

In 2007, the eight-lane Interstate 35W bridge, a major Minneapolis artery, collapsed into the Mississippi River during evening rush hour, killing 13 people.

In 2014, a medical examiner ruled that a New York City police officer's chokehold caused the death of Eric Garner, whose videotaped arrest and final pleas of "I can't breathe!" had sparked outrage.

In 2023, former President Donald Trump was indicted by a federal grand jury on conspiracy and obstruction charges related to his alleged attempts to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Giancarlo Giannini is 83. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Roy Williams is 75. Blues musician Robert Cray is 72. Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum is 69. Rock singer Joe Elliott (Def Leppard) is 66. Rapper Chuck D (Public Enemy) is 65. Actor John Carroll Lynch is 62. Rock singer Adam Duritz (Counting Crows) is 61. Film director Sam Mendes is 60. Actor Tempestt Bledsoe is 52. Football Hall of Famer Edgerrin James is 47. Actor Jason Momoa is 46.