

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Monday, Sept. 22

FIRST DAY OF AUTUMN

School Breakfast: Egg bake.

School Lunch: Hot dogs, chips.

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

Groton Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, potluck at Noon

Cross Country at Deuel, 4 p.m.

3rd-6th GBB Skills, 6-8 p.m.

## Tuesday, Sept. 23

School Breakfast: Muffins.

School Lunch: Chicken nuggets mashed potatoes.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

JH/JV Football at Langford vs. Britton-Hecla. JH at 4:30, JV at 5:30

Volleyball at Warner: (Welke: 7th-5:15, 8th-6:30; Arena: C-5:15, JV-6:30, V-7:45))

## Wednesday, Sept. 24

School Breakfast: Oatmeal.

School Lunch: Pizza crunchers cooked carrots.

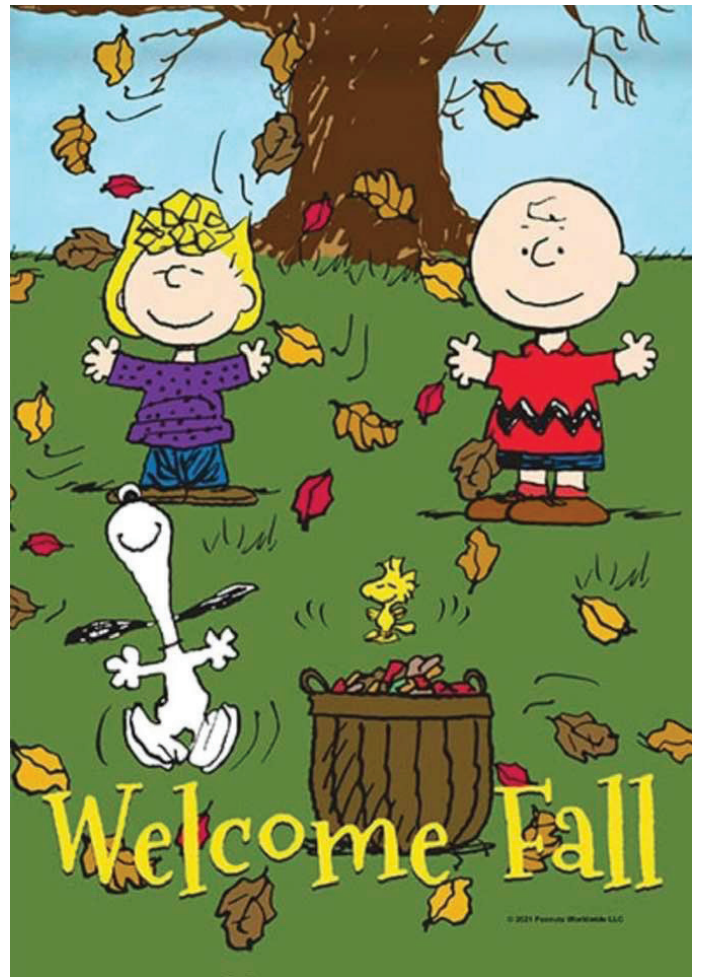
Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.; League 6:30 p.m.

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

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Confirmation, 5:30 p.m.

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

FFA Land and Range Contest at Webster



## Thursday Sept. 25

School Breakfast: Maple French Toast Bake.

School Lunch: Chicken patty cooked broccoli.

Cross Country at Sisseton, 10 a.m.

Volleyball at Tiospa Zina ((7th-4, 8th-5; C-5, JV-6, V-7:15))

Boys Soccer hosts James Valley Christian, 4 p.m.

## Friday, Sept. 26

School Breakfast: Breakfast boats

School Lunch: French bread pizza, green beans.

Football hosts Clark/Willow Lake, 7 p.m.

## Saturday, Sept. 27

C Team/JH Volleyball at Matchbox Tournament, 9 a.m.

Soccer at West Central (Boys at noon, Girls at 2 p.m.)

**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.**

## Charlie Kirk Memorial

An estimated 200,000 people attended a memorial service honoring conservative activist Charlie Kirk yesterday at State Farm Stadium in Glendale, Arizona.

The service was organized by Turning Point USA, the youth organization Kirk cofounded, which is now led by his widow, Erika Kirk. The event included speeches by Christian leaders, conservative activists, and public officials, including Secs. Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Marco Rubio, and Pete Hegseth. Vice President JD Vance credited Kirk with helping to elect the Trump administration. President Donald Trump headlined the event, praising Kirk's impact and legacy. Erika Kirk—in her first major speech as Turning Point USA's CEO—publicly forgave Kirk's shooter, citing her Christian faith.

The service was designated as a Special Event Assessment Rating Level 1 event, the highest designation used for events like the Super Bowl and major marathons. The determination is made by the Department of Homeland Security, allowing extensive federal interagency support.

## Countries Recognize Palestine

The United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia formally recognized a Palestinian state yesterday. The decision breaks from US policy and marks a significant shift for countries like the UK, which had long maintained that statehood should be determined through direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians.

The decision allows the countries to receive a Palestinian ambassador and sign bilateral treaties. The three cited the ongoing war in Gaza—including restrictions on humanitarian aid—as well as expanding settlements in the West Bank for the change. Families of Israeli hostages held by Hamas in Gaza had asked the UK and others to hold off on the decision until hostages were released, citing concerns that recognition could appear to reward Hamas and affect ceasefire negotiations.

Nearly a dozen countries have announced similar plans since last year, with others, including France, expected to make similar announcements today as countries gather for the UN General Assembly. At least 150 of 193 UN member states recognize Palestine as a state.

## Cairo Bracelet Heist

A 3,000-year-old golden bracelet recently stolen from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo was sold for about \$4K and melted down, officials revealed Saturday. A restoration specialist at the museum reportedly confessed to pilfering the artifact.

The bracelet belonged to Pharaoh Amenemope, who ruled during the 21st dynasty in what is known as the Third Intermediate Period. While his nine-year rule was relatively unremarkable, his burial site is one of just three known royal tombs that were discovered fully intact (most having been looted over the millennia). Egypt has strict rules regarding the protection of antiquities—theft of artifacts is punishable by a roughly \$200K fine and life in prison.

The theft comes just weeks before the similarly named Grand Egyptian Museum is set to open near Giza (Nov. 1), due to be the world's largest museum dedicated to a single civilization.

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## Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Las Vegas Aces' A'ja Wilson becomes first player to be named WNBA MVP four times.  
WNBA playoff semifinals kick off; see latest bracket and schedule.  
Bernie Parent, Hockey Hall of Fame goalie, dies at age 80.  
Brett James, Grammy-winning songwriter, dies in plane crash at age 57.  
Sonny Curtis, Rock & Roll Hall of Fame singer-songwriter, dies at age 88.  
Team USA women and men win 4x100m relays to break record for most national gold medals (16) at a World Track and Field Championships.  
Cal Raleigh hits 58th home run to pass Ken Griffey Jr. for the Seattle Mariners franchise record.

## Science & Technology

US health regulators green light accelerated approval for the first treatment for Barth syndrome, an ultrarare condition affecting cells' ability to produce energy.  
New study finds pancreatic alpha cells naturally produce GLP-1, the hormone mimicked by new weight loss drugs.  
Archaeologists uncover 1,600-year-old copper coin stash in underground tunnels in northern Israel, dating to the last Jewish rebellion under Roman rule.

## Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher Friday (S&P 500 +0.5%, Dow +0.4%, Nasdaq +0.7%) with all three indexes reaching all-time highs.  
President Donald Trump announces \$100K fees for new H-1B applicants, up from \$2K to \$5K per applicant; Amazon, Microsoft, Goldman Sachs, and other finance and technology companies use the visa to recruit workers from abroad.  
Rupert Murdoch, Larry Ellison, and Michael Dell are part of the group interested in buying TikTok, President Donald Trump reveals; Ellison's Oracle would handle data and security, Americans will sit on six out of seven board seats.

## Politics & World Affairs

California Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) signs law banning the use of face masks by most law enforcement officers, including federal immigration agents.  
US naval forces lethally strike a fourth vessel accused of smuggling drugs from the Caribbean.  
President Donald Trump says he ousted the US prosecutor investigating New York Attorney General Letitia James (D), nominates a White House aide to replace him.  
A cyberattack targeting check-in systems at European airports causes dozens of flight delays in the UK, Germany, and Belgium

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"Just when I thought I was out, they pull me back in." Michael Corleone's famous line from *The Godfather Part III* feels tailor-made for the Minnesota Vikings this week. After an embarrassing performance last week that had fans questioning everything, the Vikings stormed back on Sunday and absolutely dismantled the Cincinnati Bengals, 48-10. It was the team's biggest victory since 1998, and the kind of statement win that showed just how dangerous this team can be when everything clicks. Even more impressive when you consider that J.J. McCarthy was out of this game due to an injury, and Carson Wentz was filling in, after arriving less than a month ago.

The Vikings received the opening kickoff and drove right down the field to find the endzone thanks to a 12-yard pitch and catch from Wentz to Josh Oliver. On the Bengals' second drive, their backup QB (and former Viking) Jake Browning threw an interception to Isaiah Rodgers, who returned it 87 yards for a touchdown. After 15 minutes, the Vikings led 14-0.

The second quarter is where things started to really go downhill for Cincinnati. Midway through the quarter, after both teams had traded punts and field goals, Isaiah Rodgers forced a fumble and returned it for another TD. On their next drive, Rodgers forced ANOTHER fumble, which was recovered by Jeff Okudah to give the ball right back to Minnesota. Three plays and 52 yards later, Jordan Mason rumbled into the endzone to make the score 31-3. After a third consecutive fumble by CIN, the Vikings tacked on a field goal as time expired in the first half.

The Bengals got the ball to start the second half and went three-and-out. 10 plays and 74 yards later, Mason ran in for another rushing TD. The Bengals threw an INT on their next possession, and the Vikings responded with another long TD drive, this one caught by T.J. Hockenson, and the score was 48-3.

The fourth quarter was irrelevant for the most part, since with such a large lead, the Vikings put in their backups. The Bengals scored another meaningless touchdown, but the final result was never in question, and the Vikings won 48-10.

Carson Wentz completed 14 of 20 passes for 173 yards and two touchdowns. Jordan Mason had 116 yards and two touchdowns on 16 carries. Justin Jefferson had five catches for 75 yards, and T.J. Hockenson had five catches for 49 yards and a touchdown.

Defensively, the Vikings had four sacks (Andrew Van Ginkel x2, Chaz Chambliss, Austin Keys), two interceptions (Isaiah Rodgers, Josh Metellus), five pass breakups (led by Rodgers with two), and nine QB hits (led by Ivan Pace Jr. with three). The Bengals were held to just 171 total yards, 67 of which came in the fourth quarter against the Vikings' backups.

The player of the game is clearly Isaiah Rodgers. Brian Flores targeted him early in free agency as a potential difference-maker in the Vikings' secondary, but even he probably didn't expect this much production. Rodgers was everywhere, forcing fumbles, recovering them, and setting up interceptions. He became the first defensive player in Vikings' history to score two defensive touchdowns in a single game.

Looking ahead, the Vikings will be traveling across the pond for two straight overseas games. First up will be against the Pittsburgh Steelers in Dublin. This offseason, Aaron Rodgers made it clear he wanted to play in Minnesota, but the Vikings decided to roll with McCarthy. Now Rodgers is leading the Steelers, and might have a little bit of revenge on his mind. The game will be on the NFL Network, and the kickoff will be 8:30 a.m. Central time.



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## EARTHTALK

Dear EarthTalk: What are zombie forests?  
-- B. Morgan, Chico, CA

They may look lush and green, but some forests are already on borrowed time. These so-called “zombie forests” are made up of trees that are still alive but no longer capable of reproducing in the changing climate around them. As Stanford biology graduate student Avery Hill puts it, they persist only because of “ecological inertia”—hanging on even though the conditions that once supported them are disappearing.

In short, they’re living out of place and out of time. Scientists call it a vegetation-climate mismatch: when plants that once thrived in a region suddenly find themselves mismatched with a new reality. Rising temperatures, shifting rainfall and increasing drought are all altering the rules of survival.

The Sierra Nevada in California offers a striking case. Towering conifers like ponderosa pine, sugar pine and Douglas fir—giants that have defined these mountains for centuries—are struggling to adapt. Since the 1930s, average temperatures there have climbed just over 1°C. “Our maps and models show that the climate has become too warm and too dry to support conifer forests in the long run,” Hill explains.

The numbers are sobering. In less than a century, conifers have crept about 112 feet upslope, while the climate best suited to them has moved nearly 600 feet higher. That gap leaves them exposed, especially after fire. “The speed of change has outpaced the ability of many conifers to adapt,” Hill says. Research shows roughly 20 percent of Sierra Nevada conifers are already mismatched with their surroundings, a figure expected to double within 77 years—even in the most optimistic climate scenarios.

And fire only makes matters worse. A century of fire suppression has packed forests with fuel, setting the stage for megafires that devastate ecosystems. While smaller, mixed-severity fires once helped recycle nutrients and open space for seedlings, today’s intense blazes leave little chance for regrowth. The result? Forests on the brink of transformation. Some parts of the Sierra Nevada, like Eldorado National Forest, are already giving way to chaparral shrubland after back-to-back blows from wildfire and drought.

Still, experts say there’s room for action. Prescribed burns can lower the risk of catastrophic fire, while climate-niche modeling can help pinpoint the forests most at risk. Community science projects like iNaturalist are also making a difference, with local observers helping researchers track changes in real time. Zombie forests may be a warning sign, but they’re not yet a death sentence. With smart management and community involvement, we still have a chance to keep more of these landscapes from turning into “standing dead.”



**Zombie forests of standing dead trees are on the rise across the Sierra Nevada and elsewhere across the U.S.** Credit: Pexels.com.



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### Belief in education's role in community drove \$33 million gift, donor says

**Mitchell man talks about his motivation for donating to local schools and university**

**BY: JOSHUA HAIAR**

One of South Dakota's wealthiest businessmen says an aspect of economic development often gets overlooked — great public schools.

"If families know their children can get a top-quality education in Mitchell, that makes us more attractive than bigger, busier places," said Roger Musick, who started and sold the telecommunications and software company, Innovative Systems.

In mid-August, Musick devoted \$33 million to education in his hometown of about 15,000 people. That includes a \$15 million endowment for Mitchell Public Schools, another \$15 million for Dakota Wesleyan University, and \$3 million to get program expansions rolling immediately without waiting for the endowment to collect interest.

Bank of America will invest the money. The endowment will earn about 7% annually. Five percent will support programs each year. Two percent will be reinvested to grow the account.

A five-member board will oversee the programs. Members include Mitchell's superintendent, the school board president, one board appointee, Dakota Wesleyan's president and Musick.



**Roger Musick sits next to his wife Vicki at the announcement of their donation to the Mitchell School District and Dakota Wesleyan University on Tuesday, Aug. 19, 2025, in the university's auditorium.** (Adam

Thury/Mitchell Republic)

#### Working parents

Musick has brought a lot of workers to Mitchell over his decades in business. He said it wasn't the Corn Palace, the lake or the city's events that convinced applicants to move. What they wanted was a quality education system for their kids and a safe place to leave them during the workday.

So one of the projects expands Mitchell's "Beginnergarten" program. The class serves children old enough for kindergarten who are not quite ready socially or academically.

The state funds only a half-day Beginnergarten program, which limited access for working parents, Musick explained. The endowment expands Mitchell's program to allow for full-day classes.

Musick said enrollment has already risen 80%, and the goal is to make it so that parents do not have to choose between waiting another year or sending their child unprepared.

After-school programs are also a priority. With the new funding, each public elementary school is hosting its own after-school program, staffed by certified teachers and aides, so parents no longer need to arrange rides to off-site locations.

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"Some kids have great support at home to get their homework done. Some don't," Musick said. "This way, every child gets that help, and they also get experiences they might never have had otherwise."

Students complete homework, receive tutoring, and participate in activities like sports and the arts.

"I hope this becomes a really good workforce recruitment tool," Musick said.

Tressa Wede, director of education and community engagement at Dakota Wesleyan in Mitchell, said demand is high. She said at L.B. Williams Elementary, where she previously taught, about 140 students are already taking advantage of the after-school program.

"The reception has been phenomenal," she said.

At the university, the endowment will pay for teaching scholarships — encouraging more students to pursue careers as educators. Additionally, the fund will pay for Mitchell teachers to pursue their master's degree. Musick said that's all because teachers in South Dakota struggle with low salaries, discouraging people from pursuing the profession. The state ranks 46th nationally for teacher pay.

"Our teachers are far more valuable than that, and we need more emphasis there," Musick said.

Wede said the initiative is making Mitchell's teachers feel valued and she expects more aspiring educators to choose the community to call home. The master's degree program requires scholarship recipients to teach in Mitchell for three years.

"This is probably the most exciting time I have experienced as a teacher," she said. "We go into this because we want to make a positive difference, and here we are being supported in doing that."

## A belief in public education

The public school funding boost in Mitchell comes amid statewide ideological and political battles over education.

Republican lawmakers in Pierre are weighing reallocating more public school funding toward alternatives such as homeschooling or vouchers. Some have leveled allegations that public school teachers are indoctrinating children and passed a bill to "protect students" from "divisive concepts." They debated legislation during the last session requiring the Ten Commandments to be posted and taught in public school classrooms statewide. The bill narrowly failed in the House after passing the Senate.

Musick attended Mitchell's schools and sent his children there. He said public education remains essential and deserves more focus and respect.

"I want to live in a society where everybody is well educated, not just the people that can afford it," Musick said. "I have nothing against private education, but it will typically only be available to people who can afford it. Public education is what we have to have."

Musick said he will track progress through the district's report card and feedback from teachers. He hopes the project inspires other communities and state leaders to put more focus on public education.

"If you look at countries where people are happiest, like Norway and Denmark, education is really valued. Teachers are paid well and thought of highly," Musick said. "That's the kind of culture we need here."

But even if Mitchell's population never grows beyond 15,000, Musick said the gift will still have been worth it, because "we'll have a lot of people who are smarter and more successful because of this focus on education."

*Editor Seth Tupper did not participate in the editing of this story due to conflict-of-interest concerns.*

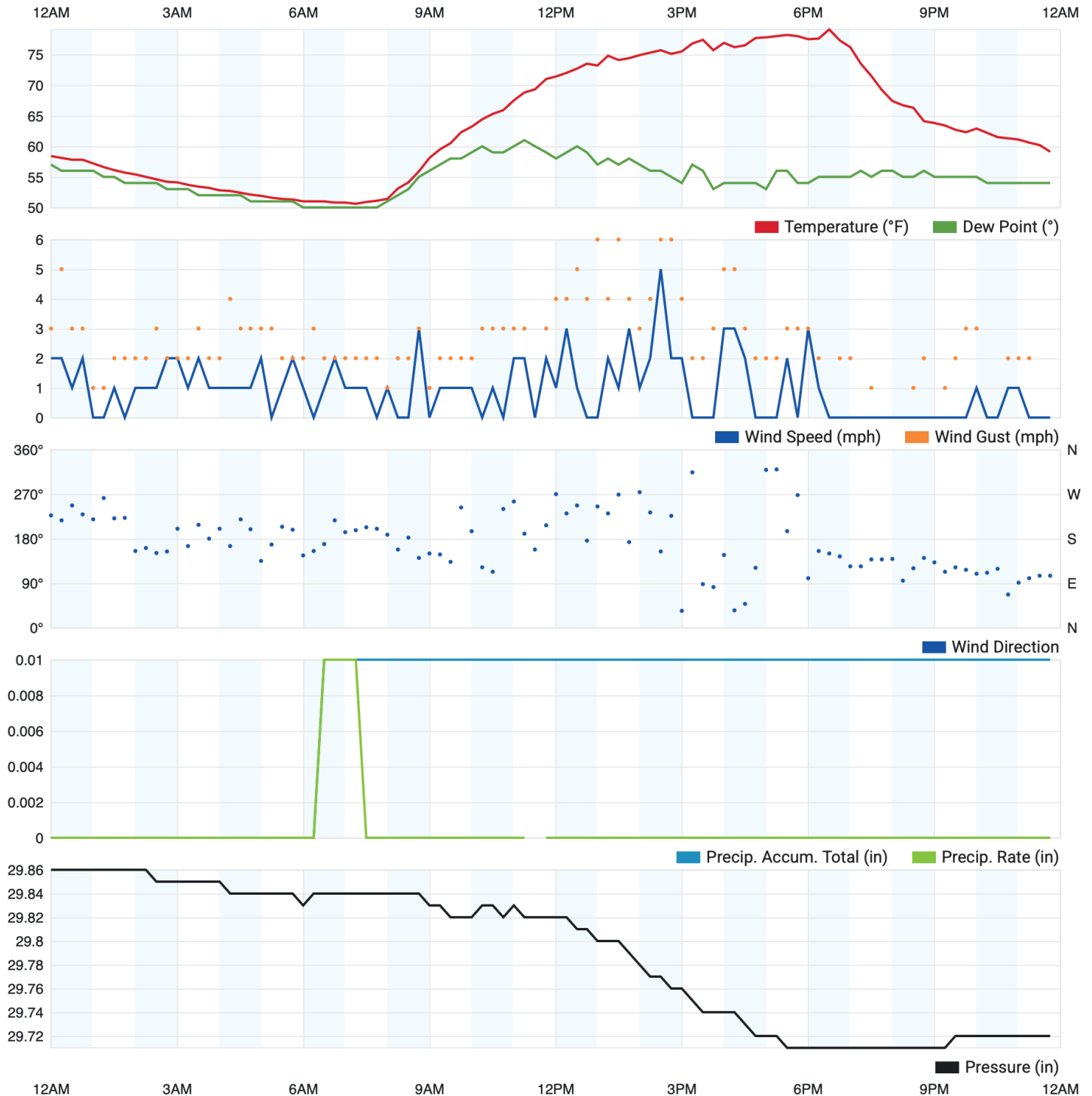
*Joshua Haiar is a reporter based in Sioux Falls. Born and raised in Mitchell, he joined the Navy as a public affairs specialist after high school and then earned a degree from the University of South Dakota. Prior to joining South Dakota Searchlight, Joshua worked for five years as a multimedia specialist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

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

September 21, 2025





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Today



**High: 76 °F**

Patchy Fog  
then Sunny

Tonight



**Low: 53 °F**

Clear

Tuesday



**High: 77 °F**

Sunny

Tuesday Night



**Low: 53 °F**

Mostly Clear

Wednesday



**High: 77 °F**

Sunny



## Early Week Forecast

September 22, 2025

4:08 AM

Slightly above normal temperatures with dry conditions expected

Today



*High:*

**70-80°**

*Overnight Low:*

**50-55°**

*Patchy morning fog possible*

Tuesday



*High:*

**72-78°**

*Overnight Low:*

**50-55°**

Wednesday



*High:*

**72-78°**

*Overnight Low:*

**52-55°**



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

National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

Patchy fog is possible across the region early this Monday morning. Otherwise, expect mostly dry conditions for the beginning of the week with highs in the 70s.

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## Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 79 °F at 6:28 PM

Low Temp: 50 °F at 7:14 AM

Wind: 7 mph at 12:53 PM

Precip: : 0.00

## Today's Info

Record High: 103 in 1936

Record Low: 20 in 1995

Average High: 73

Average Low: 44

Average Precip in Sept.: 1.47

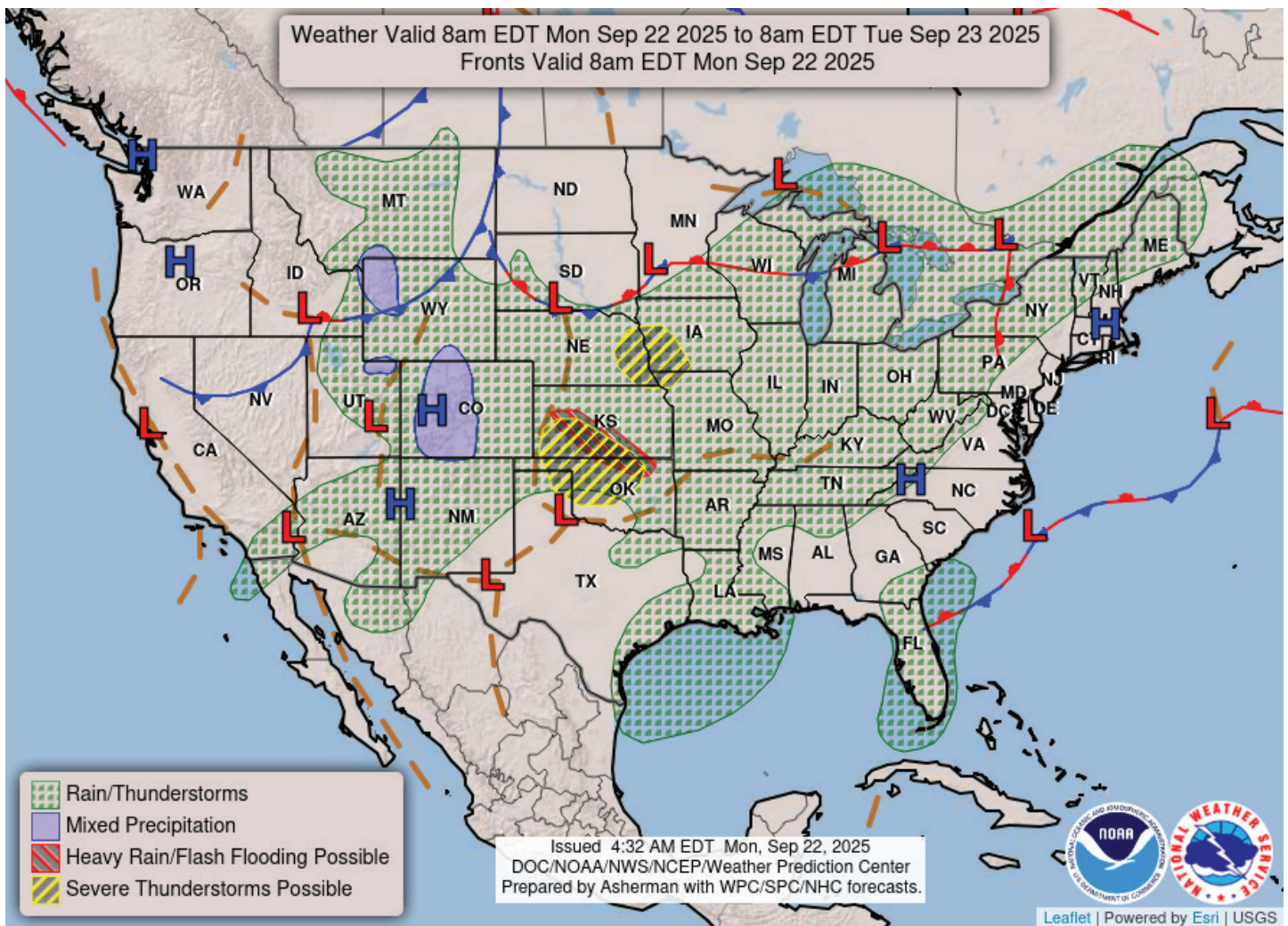
Precip to date in Sept.: 2.62

Average Precip to date: 17.81

Precip Year to Date: 22.92

Sunset Tonight: 7:30 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:20 am





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## Today in Weather History

September 22, 1936: Abnormally warm conditions brought record temperatures to much of central and northeast South Dakota along with west central Minnesota on this day in 1936. Temperatures rose into the upper 90s and lower 100s during the afternoon hours. Pierre and Watertown set record highs of 99 degrees. Mobridge and Sisseton warmed to record highs of 101 degrees. Finally, Kennebec and Aberdeen rose to record highs of 102 and 103 degrees, respectively.

1810: A tornado striking Fernhill Heath had a width between 0.5 to 1 mile; making it the widest path ever in Britain.

1890: A severe hailstorm struck Strawberry, Arizona. Five days after the storm hail still lay in drifts 12 to 18 inches deep.

1913 - Des Moines, IA, experienced their earliest freeze of record. (The Weather Channel)

1961 - Hurricane Esther made a near complete circle south of Cape Cod. The hurricane then passed over Cape Cod and hit Maine. Its energy was largely spent over the North Atlantic Ocean, however, heavy rains over Maine resulted in widespread local flooding of cellars, low roads, and underpasses. (David Ludlum)

1983 - Forty-one cities reported record cold temperatures during the morning. Houston, TX, hit 50 degrees, and Williston ND plunged to 19 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Hurricane Emily, the first hurricane to roam the Caribbean in nearly six years, made landfall over the Dominican Republic late in the day, packing 125 mph winds. Emily killed three persons and caused thirty million dollars damage. A record high of 92 degrees at Miami FL was their fifth in a row. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - An early morning thunderstorm produced baseball size hail at Plainview, in Hale County TX. Late in the evening more thunderstorms in the Southern High Plains Region produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Plainview TX and Crosby TX. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Hurricane Hugo quickly lost strength over South Carolina, but still was a tropical storm as it crossed into North Carolina, just west of Charlotte, at about 7 AM. Winds around Charlotte reached 69 mph, with gusts to 99 mph. Eighty percent of the power was knocked out to Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. Property damage in North Carolina was 210 million dollars, and damage to crops was 97 million dollars. The strongest storm surge occurred along the southern coast shortly after midnight, reaching nine feet above sea level at ocean Isle and Sunset Beach. Hugo killed one person and injured fifteen others in North Carolina. Strong northwesterly winds ushered unseasonably cold air into the north central U.S., in time for the official start of autumn, at 8" 20 PM (CDT). Squalls produced light snow in northern Wisconsin. Winds in Wisconsin gusted to 52 mph at Rhinelander. (Storm Data) (The Nati

2005 - For the first time in the historical record, two hurricanes reached category-5 intensity in the Gulf of Mexico in a single season as Hurricane Rita intensified before making landfall (Katrina and Rita).

2006 - The tristate area of Missouri, Illinois, and Kentucky was struck by the worst tornado outbreak in the recorded history during the month of September. One supercell produced a long-track F4 tornado across southeast

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## DOES SIZE MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Have you ever heard that "bigger is better" or that "smaller is insufficient?" Some think that size makes a difference. And there may be times when both are true.

Psalm 117 provides a significant statement on size. It is the shortest chapter in the Bible. Yet it contains some of the largest themes in the Word of God.

For example, "Praise the Lord, all you nations." The Lord is not limited to any one nation or country. God did not send His Son to be the Savior of one particular group. His Word states that "The Father sent the Son to be the savior of the world..." There is no Biblical basis to believe that our Lord loves some one more than He does every one. The word world includes every continent - from the most God-hating to the most God-honoring.

It also states that His love is not limited: "For great is His love for us." Our God has no favorites. We may question why others are more prosperous than we are or have more of life's goods than we do. But that does not mean that they are loved more than anyone else. God gave them what He did for a particular reason, and He gives us what He did for a particular reason. They, as well as the rest of us, will be accountable to Him for each of His gifts. It is never what He gives us, but how we bless God and others with His gifts that He gives us.

Finally, His "faithfulness endures forever." God is not nice today and spiteful tomorrow. Who He is today He will be tomorrow and throughout eternity. His pledges and promises are predictable. His Word proves that fact.

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for a love that includes all of us and Your faithfulness that will not waver. You truly deserve all our praise! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: – Praise the LORD, all you nations; extol him, all you peoples. For great is his love toward us, and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD. Psalm 117

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



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## The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition Subscription Form

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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 09.19.25

2 22 27 42 58 8

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$451,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 19 Mins  
53 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 09.20.25

2 13 17 36 42 8

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$3,240,000**

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 34 Mins 53  
Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 09.21.25

9 11 14 26 33 11

TOP PRIZE:

**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 15 Hrs 49 Mins 53  
Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 09.20.25

1 5 21 31 35

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$29,000**

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 15 Hrs 49  
Mins 53 Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 09.20.25

2 22 34 57 66 25

TOP PRIZE:

**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 18 Mins 53  
Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 09.20.25

15 29 64 66 67 4

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

**\$113,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 18 Mins 53  
Secs

PREVIOUS RESULTS

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## **Upcoming Groton Events**

08/09/2025 Groton Legion 30th Anniversary Celebration  
08/07/2025 Groton Firemen Summer Splash in the GHS Parking Lot 7:30-8:30pm  
08/11/2025 Vitalant Blood Drive at the Community Center 3:30-6pm  
08/23/2025 Glacial Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course  
09/05/2025 Homecoming Parade 1pm  
09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm  
09/06-07/25 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport  
09/07/2025 Couples Sunflower Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am  
09/07/2025 9th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3-5pm  
10/10/2025 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am  
10/11/2025 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm  
10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm  
10/31/2025 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm  
11/15/2025 Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm  
11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving 11:30am-1:30pm Community Center (Thanksgiving)  
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

### High-tech tax authority helps Greece return to Europe's financial mainstream

By DEREK GATOPOULOS Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — With a pristine white exterior, the Greece tax authority's new headquarters looks out of place on a clogged industrial artery outside Athens. A former shopping mall and ice rink, the building has been overhauled into an ultramodern digital center that has led the rescue of the nation's ailing finance and tax sector.

It is teeming with inspectors who chase down tax cheats with the help of drones, big data and live surveillance feeds from as far as Greece's island ports and remote farming villages.

Analysts at the Independent Authority for Public Revenue monitor millions of transactions in real time and order stings on businesses flagged by algorithms for a high potential of illegal activity. The high tech was on full display during a recent visit as The Associated Press was granted rare access to the authority's headquarters.

Greece's tax system — once a byword for inefficiency — has been rewired by technology.

Now, the country that spent nearly a decade as Europe's financial outcast, drowning in debt, has become one of its best budget performers, with bonds restored to investment grade by all major ratings agencies.

"We worked systematically over the years, with dedication," Giorgos Pitsilis, governor of the revenue authority, told the AP. "We started from a situation of no data to a situation with big data."

From crisis to credit upgrades

Greece was one of just six EU member states that recorded a budget surplus in 2024, after running deficits for decades. Momentum carried into this year, with government revenues shooting past targets through August.

Moody's upgraded Greece's bonds to investment grade in March, praising its large-scale push to digitize the tax system. Jason Graffam, senior vice president at ratings agency Morningstar DBRS, noted that Greece's long-term borrowing costs now sit slightly above Spain's — and below Italy's and France's.

"The Greece of today is indeed very different from a decade ago," Graffam said. "There has clearly been durable change to the country's economic model and its fiscal regime."

During the crisis years, international creditors imposed punishing austerity measures in exchange for three massive bailout packages. Greece's population felt the pain deeply — wages were slashed, companies shut down and the economy bled jobs.

Sustained pressure from lenders forced successive governments to modernize one of Europe's weakest tax systems.

Out went paper files and fax machines. In came cashless, paperless systems powered by algorithms that scour card payments, tax filings, payroll data, customs declarations and bank records — and flag anomalies for inspectors to pursue.

'Saturday Night Fever'

Repurposed smartphones carried by inspectors in the field stream video and audio back to headquarters. There are panic buttons to use when someone feels threatened.

Back at headquarters, screens map ongoing site inspections and drone surveillance feeds from multiple sites: from restaurants and ports to hidden grain silos and fruit delivery trucks — even live readings from ships' fuel tanks.

Tax and customs officials described how the data translates into raids. They spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because of the confidentiality of their work and citing reasons of personal safety.

During a recent nightclub sweep dubbed "Saturday Night Fever," they matched individual table orders against receipts to uncover undeclared sales, mostly of alcoholic drinks.

"We knew the tables were full, but the receipts didn't match," one official said, adding that after inspec-



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tors showed up, the nightclub's reported revenues doubled within days.

Fraud can be detected by cross-referencing mobile phone activity with reported sales as recorded by cash registers and card-payment terminals that by law must be connected to the tax authority.

"If we detect signals from 20 phones inside a store, but see almost no receipts, that's a cue to dispatch a team immediately," another inspector explained.

High cost-of-living persists

The reforms have salvaged Greece's reputation abroad. At home, the windfall has funded 1.6 billion euros in tax cuts recently announced by the center-right government.

Still, opposition parties argue that more efficient tax collection does not offset policies that worsen inequality: The national sales tax rate was hiked during the crisis to 24% — higher than most EU countries.

It hasn't been reduced since, while other austerity-era cuts remain in place and poverty is stubbornly high.

The powerful Greek Communist Party described recent budget figures as a "blood-stained surplus" that is eating further into the spending power of wage earners.

But the revenue is a sorely needed boost for the government, which is facing public anger over a corruption scandal and the cost-of-living crisis.

Tax compliance may also — slowly and grudgingly — build trust in public institutions, revenue agency officials say.

"It's a powerful argument ... being tax responsible is beneficial," said Pitsilis, who has been governor since the tax agency became an independent authority in 2017. "We earn more, and that gives space for tax reform."

Change is visible on the streets too. At a stall north of Athens, Makis Panaretos sells watermelons, tomatoes, cucumbers and oranges. About 70% of his sales are now electronic — all transactions are instantly referred to the tax authority.

"Customers use their cards, phones and watches to pay," he said. "I don't mind it, even though it slows things down when there's a line."

By November, all businesses will be required to accept IRIS, a Greek instant payment system similar to Venmo in the United States, eliminating bank and payment provider fees currently incurred by vendors like Panaretos.

Deeper AI integration

Greece's progress is an example how a crisis can accelerate reforms, observers say.

"Greece has shown how digitalization and institutional independence can translate into real fiscal gains," said Alexandros Kentikelenis, a political economy professor at Bocconi University in Milan.

Further integration of artificial intelligence into the tax authority's systems through 2026 is likely to accelerate this process, according to tax officials.

"The push to modernize tax administration continues, which supports our expectation that tax revenue growth will remain robust over the medium term," Moody's wrote in its report accompanying its ratings upgrade in March.

Finance Minister Kyriakos Pierrakakis, a Harvard- and MIT-trained technocrat, says the shift is irreversible. A supporter of the digital euro, he has tied tax reform to broader plans to digitize the economy.

"Countries change when they change course," he said at a news conference this month. "And that change means we won't be left behind or ever return to the past."

## Russia and Ukraine trade deadly drone strikes as Zelenskyy anticipates intense diplomacy at UN

By ILLIA NOVIKOV Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia and Ukraine swapped accusations of deadly drone strikes on civilian areas of their countries Monday as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy anticipated "a very intense week" of diplomacy at the U.N. General Assembly in New York, where the Security Council was expected discuss the more than three-year war.

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Zelenskyy has tried to give momentum to a U.S.-led peace effort, offering a ceasefire and a summit meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Moscow has taken issue with some of the proposals, however, and an end to the bloodshed appears no closer.

Additionally, international concerns have mounted recently that the fighting could spread beyond Ukraine's borders as European countries rebuked Russia for what they said were provocations. The incidents have included Russian drones landing on Polish soil and Russian fighter aircraft entering Estonian airspace.

Latvian President Edgars Rinkevics said on social media that Russia was testing NATO's political and military response and aiming to reduce Western support for Ukraine by compelling countries to redirect resources toward the defense of alliance countries.

Calibrating how to respond to Russia was not easy, Rinkevics said Sunday. Russia was doing just enough not to cross a red line, but things could still spiral, he added.

Zelenskyy was due to attend the annual high-level gathering at the U.N. General Assembly, where he planned to recruit support for efforts to stop Russia's invasion.

"The schedule already includes nearly two dozen meetings with leaders from different countries, from all parts of the world," Zelenskyy said on Telegram late Sunday.

Zelenskyy said he also planned to meet with U.S. President Donald Trump, whose drive for a peace deal after taking office in January has yielded no progress.

"It is vital that this week strengthen the world's resolve for robust action — for without strength, peace will not prevail," Zelenskyy said.

He said that over the past week Russia fired more than 1,500 strike drones, 1,280 glide bombs and 50 missiles of various types at Ukraine. More than 132,000 foreign components were found in those weapons from dozens of countries, he said.

Ukraine has campaigned for tighter sanctions on Russia.

Meanwhile, at least seven Russian aircraft bombarded the southern Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia overnight, killing three people and wounding two others, according to regional administration head Ivan Fedorov.

The attack started around 4:20 a.m. and lasted about 40 minutes, Fedorov said. Residential buildings, shopping malls, a parking lot and "critical infrastructure" were targeted, he said.

"None of the sites had anything to do with military infrastructure," Fedorov said.

The Ukrainian air force said it stopped 132 out of 141 strike and decoy drones launched by Russian forces overnight.

Russia made similar claims. The Moscow-appointed head of Ukraine's Russia-occupied Crimea peninsula, Sergei Aksyonov, said three people were killed and 16 others were wounded late Sunday by Ukrainian drones that struck the popular vacation resort of Foros.

The Russian Defense Ministry said there are no military facilities there.

In Russia's Belgorod border region, three people were killed and another 10 were wounded by Ukrainian drone attacks on Sunday, according to the regional governor, Vyacheslav Gladkov.

The Defense Ministry said 114 Ukrainian drones were downed early Monday over several Russian regions.

## North Korean leader recalls 'good memories' of Trump, urges US to drop denuclearization demands

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un says he still has good memories of U.S. President Donald Trump and urged Washington to drop its demand the North surrender its nukes as a precondition for resuming long-stalled diplomacy.

Speaking to Pyongyang's rubber-stamp parliament on Sunday, Kim stressed that he has no intention of ever resuming dialogue with rival South Korea, a key U.S. ally that helped broker Kim's previous summits with Trump during the American president's first term, according to a speech published by state media on Monday.

Kim suspended virtually all cooperation with the South following the collapse of his second summit with

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Trump in 2019 over disagreements about U.S.-led sanctions against the North. Tensions on the Korean Peninsula have worsened in recent years as Kim has accelerated his weapons buildup and aligned with Russia over the war in Ukraine.

Kim's comments came as South Korean President Lee Jae Myung departed for New York to attend the U.N. General Assembly, where he is expected to address nuclear tensions on the Korean Peninsula and call on North Korea to return to talks.

Trump is also expected to visit South Korea next month to attend the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, prompting media speculation that he may try to meet Kim at the inter-Korean border, as they did during their third meeting in 2019, which ultimately failed to salvage their nuclear diplomacy.

During his latest speech at the Supreme People's Assembly, Kim reiterated that he would never give up his nuclear weapons program, which experts say he sees as his strongest guarantee of survival and the extension of his family's dynastic rule.

"The world already knows well what the United States does after forcing other countries to give up their nuclear weapons and disarm," Kim said. "We will never lay down our nuclear weapons ... There will be no negotiations, now or ever, about trading anything with hostile countries in exchange for lifting sanctions."

He said he still holds "good personal memories" of Trump from their first meetings and that there is "no reason not to" resume talks with the United States if Washington "abandons its delusional obsession with denuclearization."

Kim has stepped up testing activities in recent years, demonstrating weapons of various ranges designed to strike U.S. allies in Asia and the U.S. mainland. Analysts say Kim's nuclear push is aimed at eventually pressuring Washington to accept the idea of the North as a nuclear power and to negotiate economic and security concessions from a position of strength.

Kim is also trying to bolster his leverage by strengthening cooperation with traditional allies Russia and China, in an emerging partnership aimed at undercutting U.S. influence.

He has sent thousands of troops and huge supplies of military equipment to Russia to help support President Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine. He visited Beijing earlier this month, sharing the spotlight with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Putin at a massive military parade. Experts say Kim's rare foreign trip was likely intended to boost his leverage ahead of a potential resumption of talks with the United States.

There's growing concern in Seoul that it could lose its voice in future efforts to defuse the nuclear standoff on the peninsula, as the North seeks to negotiate directly with the United States. Such fears were amplified last year when Kim declared that he was abandoning North Korea's long-standing goal of peaceful unification with South Korea and ordered a rewriting of the North's constitution to cement the South as a permanent enemy.

## **Israeli drone strike kills 5, including 3 children, in southern Lebanon**

By KAREEM CHEHAYEB Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — An Israeli drone strike in southern Lebanon killed five people Sunday, including three children, Lebanon's Health Ministry said. Two others were wounded, including the mother in the family.

The Israeli military said it was targeting a Hezbollah militant, and that he "operated from within a civilian population." It acknowledged that civilians were killed and that it was reviewing the incident.

Israel frequently says it is targeting Hezbollah militants or infrastructure in the tiny country's battered southern region. Hezbollah has only claimed firing across the border once since the ceasefire, but Israel says the militant group is trying to rebuild its capabilities.

Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri said four of those killed, the three children as well as their father, held U.S. citizenship. The U.S. State Department, however, said none of the five appeared to be a U.S. citizen, but the situation was still "fluid."

Since a ceasefire agreement was reached in November to end Israel's monthslong war with the Hezbollah militant group, Israel has continued to strike southern and eastern Lebanon almost daily.

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Lebanese officials have warned that the ongoing strikes risk the country's recent efforts to disarm the group and could destabilize the country. Hezbollah has maintained that it no longer has a military presence south of the Litani River, and has refused to speak of disarmament without Israel stopping its attacks and withdrawing from southern Lebanese territory.

President Joseph Aoun, who earlier landed in New York ahead of the United Nations General Assembly, condemned the strike and called on the international community to pressure Israel to stop. Aoun, alongside Prime Minister Nawaf Salam, endorsed an agreement last month that would gradually disarm Hezbollah.

The monthslong war between Hezbollah and Israel killed some 4,000 people in Lebanon and displaced residents across southern and eastern Lebanon.

Hezbollah officials say the ongoing strikes justify their refusal to give up their arms, and claim that the ceasefire agreement and monitoring mechanism with the United States, France, and United Nations peacekeeping forces is ineffective.

Under the Washington-brokered ceasefire, both the militant Hezbollah group and Israel were supposed to withdraw their forces from southern Lebanon and halt strikes against each other. Israeli forces have continue to occupy five Lebanese hilltop points by the border.

## Trump officials praise Charlie Kirk's faith and his mark on the conservative movement

By JONATHAN J. COOPER, EUGENE GARCIA, AAMER MADHANI and MEG KINNARD Associated Press GLENDALE, Ariz. (AP) — President Donald Trump praised Charlie Kirk as a "great American hero" and "martyr" for freedom as he and other prominent conservatives gathered Sunday evening to honor the slain conservative political activist whose work they say they must now advance.

The memorial service for Kirk, whom Trump credits with playing a pivotal role in his 2024 election victory, drew tens of thousands of mourners, including Vice President JD Vance, other senior administration officials and young conservatives shaped by the 31-year-old firebrand.

"He's a martyr now for America's freedom," Trump said in his tribute. "I know I speak for everyone here today when I say that none of us will ever forget Charlie. And neither now will history."

Speakers highlighted Kirk's profound faith and his strong belief that young conservatives need to get married, have children and pass on their values to keep building their movement. They also repeatedly told conservative activists, sometimes in forceful tones, that the best way to honor Kirk was doubling down on his mission to move American politics further to the right.

"For Charlie, we will remember that it is better to stand on our feet defending the United States of America and defending the truth than it is to die on our knees," Vance said. "My friends, for Charlie, we must remember that he is a hero to the United States of America. And he is a martyr for the Christian faith."

Kirk's assassination at a Sept. 10 appearance on a Utah college campus has set off a fierce debate about violence, decency and free speech in an era of deep political division.

The shooting has stirred fear among some Americans that Trump is trying to harness outrage over the killing as justification to suppress the voices of his critics and political opponents.

Charlie Kirk's wife forgives suspect

Those close to Kirk prayed and the floors at the home of the NFL's Arizona Cardinals shook from the bass of Christian rock bands, as the memorial started with the feel of a megachurch service before veering into something more akin to a political rally.

Longtime worship leader Chris Tomlin opened the service, and was joined later by other big names in contemporary Christian music, including Brandon Lake and Phil Wickham. Near the end, as Trump took the stage, Lee Greenwood sang a live rendition of the president's campaign walk-on song, "God Bless the U.S.A."

People began lining up before dawn to secure a spot inside State Farm Stadium west of Phoenix, where Kirk's Turning Point organization is based. Security was tight and speakers delivered their tributes from



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behind bullet-proof glass.

The 63,400-seat stadium quickly filled with people dressed in red, white and blue, as organizers suggested.

The mood in the stadium ebbed and flowed throughout a service that stretched more than five hours. Mourners were patient and cordial, even after waiting hours to enter and then an hour or more for food in stadium concession lines.

Kirk's widow, Erika, in her own address said in the midst of her grief she was finding comfort that her husband left this world without regrets. She said she forgives the man who is charged with killing him.

"My husband, Charlie, he wanted to save young men, just like the one who took his life," said Erika Kirk, who is taking over as Turning Point's leader. She added, "I forgive him."

Trump, who closed out the service, remarked that Charlie Kirk "did not hate his opponents" and "wanted the best for them," an attribute he found hard to understand.

"That's where I disagreed with Charlie. I hate my opponent, and I don't want the best for them," Trump said. "I'm sorry, I am sorry Erika."

Comments about Kirk have become a Trump administration target

Trump has blamed the "radical left" for Kirk's death and threatened to go after liberal organizations and donors or others who he feels are maligning or celebrating Kirk's death.

Dozens of people, from journalists to teachers to late show host Jimmy Kimmel, have faced suspensions or lost their jobs as prominent conservative activists and administration officials target comments about Kirk that they deem offensive or celebratory. The retaliation has in turn ignited a debate over the First Amendment.

Some speakers at the memorial said Kirk was battling evil and referred to a vague "they" as the enemy. Others were blunt.

"You have no idea the dragon you have awakened, you have no idea how determined we will be to save this civilization, to save the West, to save this republic," said White House deputy chief of staff Stephen Miller.

Kirk was a provocateur who at times made statements that some called racist, misogynistic, anti-immigrant and transphobic. That has drawn backlash from conservatives who view the criticism as cherry-picking a few select moments to insult the legacy of someone they see as an inspirational conservative leader.

A 22-year-old Utah man, Tyler Robinson, has been charged with killing Kirk and faces the death penalty if convicted of the most serious charges. Authorities have not revealed a clear motive in the shooting, but prosecutors say Robinson wrote in a text to his partner following the shooting that he "had enough" of Kirk's hatred.

Kirk's legacy of conservative political influence

Turning Point, the group Kirk founded to mobilize young Christian conservatives, became a multimillion-dollar operation under his leadership with enormous reach.

The crowd was a testament to the influence he accumulated in conservative America with his ability to mobilize young people.

And the service brought together a veritable who's who of the Republican Party, with numerous current and former lawmakers in the crowd. Elon Musk, the tech billionaire and former top adviser to Trump, was spotted sitting with Trump for part of the service.

Kirk was a MAGA celebrity with a loyal following that turned out to support or argue with him as he traveled the country for the events like the one at Utah Valley University, where he was shot.

Speaker after speaker, including Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, expressed awe at Kirk's ability to go into what many conservatives saw as the lion's den to make the conservative case: college campuses.

"Why don't you start somewhere easier," Rubio recalled thinking when he first heard about Kirk years ago. "Like, for example, communist Cuba?"

## As the world convulses in war and contentiousness, its leaders convene at the UN to figure it out

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — World leaders begin convening Monday at one of the most volatile moments in the United Nations' 80-year history, and the challenges they face are as dire as ever if not more so: unyielding wars in Gaza and Ukraine, escalating changes in the U.S. approach to the world, hungry people everywhere and technologies that are advancing faster than the understanding of how to manage them.

The United Nations itself, which emerged from World War II's rubble on the premise that nations would work together to tackle political, social and financial issues, is in crisis itself. As Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said last week: "International cooperation is straining under pressures unseen in our lifetimes."

Yet the annual high-level gathering at the U.N. General Assembly will bring presidents, prime ministers and monarchs from about 150 of the 193 U.N. member nations to U.N. headquarters. The secretary-general says it is an opportunity that can't be missed — even in the most challenging of moments.

"We are gathering in turbulent — even uncharted — waters," Guterres said. He pointed to, among other specters, "our planet overheating, new technologies racing ahead without guardrails, inequalities widening by the hour."

They gather for a better world, but can they build it?

Guterres said he will use the more than 150 one-on-one meetings he has with leaders and ministers to urge that they speak to each other, bridge divides, reduce risks and find solutions — to conflicts, to keep the planet from increased warming, to put guardrails on fast-expanding artificial intelligence, and to find funding for lagging U.N. goals for 2030 including ending poverty in all countries and ensuring quality education for every child.

He said leaders must make progress, not merely engage in "posturing and promises."

But U.N. watchers say that in a deeply polarized world, with no prospects of ceasefires in Gaza, Ukraine and Sudan, whether the high-level meeting makes any progress remains a big question mark.

Richard Gowan, U.N. director for the International Crisis Group, said he is confident three topics will dominate high-level week — U.S. President Donald Trump's first appearance in his second term, the horrific situation in Gaza, and what's next for the United Nations as it grapples with major funding and staff cuts, mainly due to the cutoff in U.S. payments to its regular and peacekeeping budgets.

Gowan said he expects the nearly two-year war in Gaza to be the central issue, as Israel launches a major offensive in Gaza City forcing thousands to flee and following a report by independent experts commissioned by the U.N. Human Rights Council that accused Israel of committing genocide in Gaza. Israel rejected the allegation, calling the report "distorted and false."

Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian ambassador to the United Nations, has stressed that "Palestine is going to be the huge elephant in this session of the General Assembly."

It will be front and center on Monday at a high-level meeting co-chaired by France and Saudi Arabia on implementing a two-state solution to the nearly eight-decade Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And the spotlight will be even brighter because the Trump administration refused to give a U.S. visa to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to speak at that meeting and the General Assembly.

On Friday, the General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a resolution enabling Abbas to speak by video — as it did in 2022 for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy following Russia's invasion. This year Zelenskyy will be attending in person, and the Security Council is expected to meet on Ukraine on Tuesday.

The assembly voted overwhelmingly earlier this month to support a two-state solution and urge Israel to commit to a Palestinian state. Hours before that vote, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that "there will be no Palestinian state."

More than 145 countries already recognize Palestine as a state, and Mansour told The Associated Press on Sunday that "it's going to be 10 more" announcing their recognition at Monday afternoon's meeting. High-level week is also expected to see a Security Council meeting on Gaza, possibly Tuesday afternoon.

Lots of thorny issues are on the docket

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The high-level meeting starts Tuesday morning in the vast General Assembly chamber. Trump will speak that day shortly after Guterres' opening "state of the world" speech.

Gowan said there is "hope" that Trump will come in a positive mood, touting the international accomplishments that the president says merit the Nobel Peace Prize. Also on the docket: Trump's financial approach to the larger world. "Obviously, most leaders are going to be focusing on what he has to say about tariffs," Gowan said, but also about Russia and China.

Other speakers to watch are interim Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa, making his debut on the international stage following the ouster of former strongman Bashar Assad in December, and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian.

The Iranian leader will be in New York days after the Security Council decided not to permanently lift U.N. sanctions on his country over its escalating nuclear program, but it gave Tehran and key European powers France, Germany and the United Kingdom until midnight Sept. 27 to agree to a delay. That's when the sanctions will automatically "snapback" unless a deal is reached.

High-level week will also see numerous meetings on tackling climate change; on the more than two-year war in Sudan started by rival military and paramilitary generals that has sparked the world's worst displacement crisis; on Somalia, which is home to the extremist group Al-Shabab; and on Haiti, where gangs control over 90% of the capital and have expanded into the countryside .

An event on Monday will commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Beijing women's conference, which adopted a platform to achieve gender equality. The United Nations says that goal is growing more distant and Guterres has said it is 300 years away on the current track.

One of Guterres' major aims this year: to generate support for his plans to reform the United Nations and make it more responsive to the world as it is in 2025. Because of funding cuts by the U.S. and others, the U.N. announced last week that its regular operating budget for 2026 needs to be cut by 15% to \$3.2 billion along with a 19% cut in that budget's staff positions. — 2,681 posts.

Gowan said he doesn't see the United States or other countries running away from the United Nations. But he stressed that it is going through "an extraordinarily difficult period" and will have to shrink and change.

"The U.N.'s resonance on peace and security issues is unquestionably not what it was," he said, "but I think that the organization will continue to muddle through."

## **Dozens arrested and hurt in clashes with police near Philippine presidential palace**

By JIM GOMEZ, JOEAL CALUPITAN and AARON FAVILA Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Philippine police arrested 49 people suspected of hurling rocks, bottles and fire bombs at officers and blocking heavily guarded roads and bridges leading to the presidential palace Sunday while a peaceful anti-corruption rally took place in the capital, officials and witnesses said.

The melee outside the country's seat of power unfolded while more than 33,000 other protesters rallied in a historic park and a democracy monument in Manila. They expressed outrage over a corruption scandal involving lawmakers, officials and construction company owners who allegedly pocketed huge kickbacks from flood-control projects in the impoverished Southeast Asian country that is regularly buffeted by storms and typhoons.

The hourslong rampage by about 100 mostly club-wielding people, some of whom waved Philippine flags and displayed cartoon posters with anti-corruption slogans, wounded about 70 Manila law enforcers, according to the Manila police. Schools were canceled due to the violence.

Police said they lobbed tear gas to try to disperse the attackers, who sprayed graffiti on walls, toppled steel posts, shattered glass panels and ransacked the lobby of a budget inn along a popular road dotted with university campuses, banks and restaurants before dispersing at night.

Hours after the assault, police have yet to identify the attackers, some of whom carried black flags with the caricature of a skull and crossbones. It was also unclear if they had earlier participated in the peaceful protests before heading toward the presidential office. It was not immediately known if President Marcos

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Jr. was in the Malacanang presidential palace during the chaos.

Police said in a statement after the arrests that the situation was "contained" but warned that violence and vandalism would not be tolerated.

Protesting corruption

"I feel bad that we wallow in poverty and we lose our homes, our lives and our future while they rake in a big fortune from our taxes that pay for their luxury cars, foreign trips and bigger corporate transactions," student activist Althea Trinidad told The Associated Press in Manila.

Trinidad lives in Bulacan, a flood-prone province north of Manila where officials said the most flood-control projects were being investigated either as substandard or nonexistent.

"Our purpose is not to destabilize but to strengthen our democracy," Cardinal Pablo Virgilio David, the head of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, said in a statement. He called on the public to demonstrate peacefully and demand accountability.

Marcos first highlighted the flood-control corruption scandal in July in his annual state of the nation speech.

He later established an independent commission to investigate what he said were anomalies in many of the 9,855 flood-control projects worth more than 545 billion pesos (\$9.5 billion) that were supposed to have been undertaken since he took office in mid-2022. He called the scale of corruption "horrible" and accepted his public works secretary's resignation.

Public outrage erupted when a wealthy couple who ran several construction companies that won lucrative flood-control project contracts showed dozens of European and American luxury cars they owned during media interviews. The fleet included a British luxury car costing 42 million pesos (\$737,000) that they said they bought because it came with a free umbrella.

## Miami jumps to No. 2 behind Ohio State in AP Top 25, Oklahoma into top 10

By ERIC OLSON AP College Football Writer

Miami jumped LSU and Penn State into the No. 2 spot behind Ohio State in The Associated Press college football poll on Sunday while Oklahoma climbed into the top 10 for the first time in two years and Indiana and Texas Tech made big moves after lopsided wins over Top 25 opponents.

The Hurricanes have beaten two ranked opponents, and they turned in another complete performance in a 19-point home win over Florida to earn their highest ranking since 2017.

Penn State, which had been No. 2 since the preseason, was idle and slipped to No. 3. LSU fell one spot to No. 4 after an easy win over Southeastern Louisiana of the second-tier Football Championship Subdivision.

No. 5 Georgia and No. 6 Oregon held their positions and were followed by No. 7 Oklahoma, which beat previously ranked Auburn at home and returned to the top 10 for the first time since it started 7-0 in 2023. Florida State, Texas A&M and Texas round out the top 10.

Ohio State had an open date and received 52 of 66 first-place votes from the media panel. Miami got seven first-place votes, four more than a week ago. Penn State had five first-place votes and Oregon and Oklahoma each received one.

Indiana had played one of the softest schedules in the country through three games before raising eyebrows with its 63-10 hammering of then-No. 9 Illinois. The Hoosiers made the biggest move up, climbing eight spots to No. 11.

Texas Tech got a five-rung promotion to No. 12 for its 24-point win at Utah. The Red Raiders won easily despite playing backup quarterback Will Hammond most of the second half in place of an injured Behren Morton.

In and out

No. 24 TCU beat SMU to go 3-0 and earn its first regular-season ranking since it was a fixture in the top 10 the second half of the 2022 season. The Horned Frogs, beaten 65-7 by Georgia in the national title game that season, were No. 17 in the 2023 preseason poll and hadn't been back since.



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No. 25 BYU, which finished last season No. 13, picked up a road win at East Carolina and is ranked for the first time this season.

Utah (16) and Auburn (22) dropped out.

Poll points

\_\_\_ Oklahoma is the lowest-ranked team to receive a first-place vote in a regular season since then-No. 7 Washington got one on Sept. 24, 2023.

\_\_\_ Illinois' 53-point loss at Indiana was the most lopsided in Bret Bielema's five seasons and caused the Illini to tumble from No. 9 to No. 23.

\_\_\_ The last time Miami was ranked as high was in back-to-back polls in November 2017, when Mark Richt's Hurricanes were 9-0 and 10-0. That team lost three straight to end the season.

\_\_\_ Texas Tech has its highest ranking since Kliff Kingsbury's first team was No. 10 following a 7-0 start in 2013.

Conference call

SEC (10) — Nos. 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20.

Big Ten (7) — Nos. 1, 3, 6, 11, 19, 21, 23.

Big 12 (4) — Nos. 12, 14, 24, 25.

ACC (3) — Nos. 2, 8, 16.

Independent (1) — No. 22.

Ranked vs. ranked

No. 4 LSU at No. 13 Mississippi: They've split the last four meetings. Garrett Nussmeier dealt the Rebels a crushing overtime loss last year, throwing the tying touchdown with 27 seconds left in regulation.

No. 6 Oregon at No. 3 Penn State: It's a rematch of last year's Big Ten championship game, a 45-37 Oregon win that made the Ducks 13-0 and the No. 1 seed in the College Football Playoff. Ducks have beaten four overmatched opponents by an average of 41.5 points per game. Penn State's schedule has been even easier.

No. 17 Alabama at No. 5 Georgia: Crimson Tide has won nine of 10 meetings since 2008. The loss was the 2021 season's national championship game. Bulldogs have won 33 straight at home, the nation's longest active streak.

No. 21 Southern California at No. 23 Illinois: Two teams on different tracks. The unbeaten Trojans are averaging 52.5 points per game. The Illini were riding high until they gave up 63 at Indiana. First meeting since the 2008 Rose Bowl.

## **UK, Australia and Canada recognize a Palestinian state, prompting anger from Israel**

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The U.K., Australia and Canada formally recognized a Palestinian state on Sunday, prompting an angry response from Israel, which ruled out the prospect.

The coordinated initiative from the three Commonwealth nations and longtime allies reflects growing outrage at Israel's conduct of the war in Gaza and the steps taken by the Israeli government to thwart efforts to create a Palestinian state, including by the continued expansion of settlements in the West Bank.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who has faced pressure to take a harder line on Israel within his own governing Labour Party over the deteriorating situation in Gaza, said the U.K.'s move is intended "to revive the hope of peace for the Palestinians and Israelis." He insisted it wasn't a reward for Hamas, which was behind the attack on Oct. 7, 2023, in which the militants killed some 1,200 people and abducted 251 others.

"Today, to revive the hope of peace and a two-state solution, I state clearly as prime minister of this great country that the United Kingdom formally recognizes the state of Palestine," Starmer said in a video message. "We recognized the state of Israel more than 75 years ago as a homeland for the Jewish people. Today we join over 150 countries who recognize a Palestinian state also."

The moves by the three countries prompted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to say that the

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establishment of a Palestinian state "will not happen" while Hamas urged the international community to isolate Israel.

Later on Sunday, Portugal said it was recognizing a Palestinian state as well.

Announcement came as no surprise

The British announcement was widely anticipated after Starmer said in July that the U.K. would recognize a Palestinian state unless Israel agreed to a ceasefire in Gaza, allowed the United Nations to bring in aid and took other steps toward long-term peace.

More countries are expected to join the list recognizing a Palestinian state at the U.N. General Assembly this week, including France, which, like the U.K., is one of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

Palestinian and Israeli reactions

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu blasted the three countries for proffering a "prize" to Hamas. "It will not happen," he said. "A Palestinian state will not be established west of the Jordan River."

Netanyahu, who is set to give a speech to the General Assembly on Friday before heading to see U.S. President Donald Trump at the White House, said he would announce Israel's response after the trip.

Netanyahu has threatened to take unilateral steps, including the possibility of annexing parts of the West Bank, in response to world leaders' recognition of a Palestinian state. Such a move would clear the way for Israel to deepen its control over the territory -- and escalate tensions with the international community.

Hamas hailed the decision, calling it a "rightful outcome of our people's struggle, steadfastness, and sacrifices on the path to liberation and return." The Islamic militant group, which is sworn to Israel's destruction, called on the world to isolate Israel.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, whose Palestinian Authority exercises limited autonomy in towns and cities in the West Bank, said the U.K. announcement is an important step toward achieving a "just and lasting peace in the region based on the two-state solution," the official Palestinian news agency Wafa said.

Historical overlay

The U.K. and France have had a historic role in the politics of the Middle East over the past 100 years, having carved up the region following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I.

As part of that carve-up, the U.K. became the governing power of what was then Palestine. It was also the author of the 1917 Balfour Declaration, which backed the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people."

However, the second part of the declaration has been largely neglected over the decades. It noted "that nothing shall be done, nothing which may prejudice the civil and religious rights" of the Palestinian people.

"It's significant for France and the U.K. to recognize Palestine because of the legacy of these two countries' involvement in the Middle East," said Burcu Ozelik, senior research fellow for Middle East Security at London-based Royal United Services Institute. "But without the United States coming on board with the idea of a Palestine, I think very little will change on the ground."

Husam Zomlot, the Palestinian head of mission in the U.K., told the BBC that recognition would right a colonial-era wrong. "The issue today is ending the denial of our existence that started 108 years ago, in 1917," he said. "And I think today, the British people should celebrate a day when history is being corrected."

Diplomatic shift

The U.K. has for decades supported an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel, but insisted recognition must come as part of a peace plan to achieve a two-state solution.

However, the government has become increasingly worried that such a solution is becoming all but impossible. During the past two years, Israel's assault on Gaza has displaced most of its population, killed more than 65,000 people, and caused a catastrophic humanitarian crisis, including a famine in Gaza City.

Last week, independent experts commissioned by the U.N.'s Human Rights Council concluded that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, a charge that Israel rejected as "distorted and false."

Also vexing for the U.K. is that Israel's government has been aggressively expanding settlements in the West Bank, land that Palestinians want for their future state. Much of the world regards Israel's occupation

of the West Bank, which is ostensibly run by the Palestinian Authority, as illegal.

"This move has symbolic and historic weight, makes clear the U.K.'s concerns about the survival of a two-state solution, and is intended to keep that goal relevant and alive," said Olivia O'Sullivan, Director of the U.K. in the World Programme at the London-based think tank, Chatham House.

The creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel is seen internationally as the only realistic way to resolve the conflict for the long-term.

## **Patrons at New Hampshire restaurant shooting prevented worse tragedy with selfless acts, AG says**

By MICHAEL CASEY and PATRICK WHITTLE Associated Press

NASHUA, N.H. (AP) — Patrons at a restaurant acted quickly and selflessly to stop a gunman who opened fire while a wedding was taking place at a New Hampshire country club, averting a worse tragedy, authorities said Sunday.

One person was killed and two others were wounded by gunfire Saturday night before a suspect was taken into custody in a nearby neighborhood not long after the shooting, authorities said.

The gunfire killed Robert DeCesare Jr., 59, at Sky Meadow Country Club in Nashua, said New Hampshire Attorney General John Formella and Nashua Police Chief Kevin Rourke. They said the suspect was Hunter Nadeau, 23, of Nashua, and that he had been arrested and charged with one count of second-degree murder for knowingly shooting DeCesare.

Nadeau was a former employee of the club, Formella said, adding that Nadeau made a number of statements during the shooting and appeared to be attempting to cause chaos in the moment as opposed to showing a hate-based motivation. Witnesses reported that Nadeau said "Free Palestine" during the confusion.

Some witnesses said someone struck Nadeau with a chair in an attempt to subdue him. Formella cited "selfless acts of courage by the patrons in the restaurant who put aside care for their own safety and worked to intervene and stop the shooter."

The shooting happened adjacent to a wedding that was taking place at the club. Wedding DJ Michael Homewood credited the chair strike with preventing an even worse shooting.

"He hit him over the head with a chair, and he probably saved a bunch of lives just doing that," Homewood told WCVB-TV.

Motives of shooter still undetermined

Investigators were working to determine a motive, Formella said. Police did not immediately respond to a question about whether Nadeau is represented by an attorney, and attempts to reach family members of Nadeau were not immediately successful. Authorities said there is no known connection between Nadeau and DeCesare.

Authorities had initially thought there could be two shooters but later said there was only one.

"Additional charges likely will be brought, including for the additional shooting victims," Formella and Rourke said in a statement. They said they expect Nadeau to be arraigned at the Ninth Circuit Court in Nashua on Monday.

One of the surviving gunshot victims was an employee and the other was a patron, Formella said. The employee is hospitalized in critical but stable condition while the other victim's status is unknown, Formella said. He said at least four other people at the scene suffered non-gunshot wounds that were not expected to be life threatening.

In addition to the three gunshot victims, others suffered injuries including lacerations, a broken hand and blunt force trauma, Nashua Fire Rescue said Sunday. The agency said it assisted about 100 people from the scene to a nearby firehouse, mostly on foot.

Gov. Kelly Ayotte said in a statement Sunday that the attorney general's office will assist Nashua police with the investigation and that she and her husband were "praying for the victims and their families."

Nashua is about 45 miles (70 kilometers) northwest of Boston, just across the Massachusetts border.

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## Victim's widow speaks out

Charlene DeCesare, the widow of Robert DeCesare, said in an email that she was "unbelievably traumatized" and was focusing on caring for the couple's children in the aftermath of the shootings.

"Our lives are forever changed in one moment that would be senseless except for the belief that Rob was trying to protect me and my daughter, and maybe others there too. In our hearts, he's a hero," she said.

Charlene DeCesare said in a subsequent email that she and her daughter were closest to the shooter when he walked into the room and that he appeared to target a restaurant employee. "My husband got caught in the fire trying to protect us," she said.

She said her husband loved golf, poker and pickleball and was loved by his family and community. She also asked that the public "beware the speculation and utter nonsense that is being posted about what happened and why" and said it was "only making it harder for everyone involved, including the police who are trying to do their job."

## Witnesses describe chaotic scene

The mother of DeCesare, the man who was killed, had earlier described not being able to find her son after he was shot.

"He went down. My daughter-in-law and granddaughter escaped. ... They saw my son go down and they saw blood," said Evie O'Rourke of Salem, New Hampshire.

Sophie Flabouris told WCVB-TV that someone hit the suspect over the head with a chair to subdue him. Flabouris said the suspect then fled the scene.

"We had just gathered around the dance floor. We were about to do a Greek smashing of the plates and throwing the dollar bills. The bride had just come up to me and gave me the plates to say, 'All right, you give this to my husband.' And all of a sudden we heard 'pop, pop, pop, pop, pop.' Heard five shots," Flabouris said. "All of a sudden heard 'Gun!' Chaos, screaming, and then running."

Emily Ernst said she saw a gunman in all black.

"He had a mask on. We just saw him raise the gun and then we ran," Ernst said. "I ran through the kitchen for my life."

Tom Bartelson of Pepperell, Massachusetts, described a chaotic scene that unfolded near his nephew's wedding.

"Getting together for a dance for the bride and groom and then all chaos went off," he said. "We heard about six shots and everybody ducked for cover and next thing you know, we're rushed into safe spots and things like that."

## French towns fly Palestinian flag despite government orders ahead of state recognition

PARIS (AP) — Some French mayors have defied government orders and flown Palestinian flags on town halls, with more expected to follow suit as France prepares to formally recognize a Palestinian state at the United Nations General Assembly.

It's unclear how many cities will join the initiative on Monday after Socialist leader Olivier Faure's call to fly the flags despite warnings from the Interior Ministry against such displays in a country with both Europe's largest Jewish and Muslim populations.

But the call has been gaining momentum as Palestinian flags have been more and more visible in France over the nearly two-year war in Gaza.

Palestinian banners were on display in demonstrations this week during a big day of protests across the country that criticized several policies by French President Emmanuel Macron and his government.

The Palestinian flag has been flying at the town hall of Malakoff, a suburb of Paris, since Friday. The city mayor, Jacqueline Belhomme, told The Associated Press on Sunday she was ordered to take it down but refused to comply.

"We stand with the Palestinian people; it is something symbolically important, just as we did some time



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ago with the Ukrainian flag when we stood with the Ukrainian people who were under attack by Russia.”

In southwestern France, the communist mayor of Mauléon-Licharre, a town of 3,000 residents, raised a Palestinian flag on Friday but removed it the next day after the case was referred to an administrative court.

“The flag is now in my office. This is an attack on my freedom of thought,” mayor Louis Labadot told local radio station Ici Pays Basque.

The war in Gaza and the broader Israeli-Palestinian conflict are expected to be at the top of the agenda of world leaders at their annual gathering at the U.N. General Assembly starting Monday. The Palestinians had said they hope at least 10 more countries will recognize the state of Palestine, adding to the more than 145 countries that already do.

On Sunday, Canada, Australia and the U.K. all formally recognised a Palestinian state.

In Paris, the Eiffel Tower lit up as the Palestinian and Israeli flags, separated by a dove symbolizing peace, were projected onto the monument.

Mathieu Hanotin, the mayor of Saint-Denis, the Paris suburb hosting the national soccer stadium, said he will fly the Palestinian flag in a solidarity gesture with the Palestinian people.

In western France, the city of Nantes also plans to raise the Palestinian flag on the city hall building, Mayor Johanna Rolland, a Socialist, told France information “For municipalities that wish to join, through a symbolic gesture, France’s recognition of the state of Palestine, I believe it makes sense. I will do so without hesitation,” she said.

In a note sent to the State’s representative in regions, France’s Interior Ministry instructed them to oppose the display of Palestinian flags on town halls and other public buildings, citing the risks of importing an ongoing international conflict onto national territory.

“The principle of neutrality in public service prohibits such displays,” the ministry said, adding that any decisions by mayors to fly the Palestinian flag should be referred to administrative courts.

“The front of a town hall is not a billboard. Only the tricolor flag — our colors, our values — has the right to be represented in what remains, for us, a common home,” Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau said on Saturday.

Ian Brossat, a spokesman for the French Communist Party, accused Retailleau of contradicting France’s official position.

“The interior minister disagrees with French diplomacy. He does not support the recognition of a Palestinian state, unlike the president,” Brossat told BFM TV. “By asserting his personal beliefs instead of upholding the position of the French Republic, which is to recognize a Palestinian state, he is taking France and its diplomacy hostage.”

In June, Nice city mayor Christian Estrosi, who had put on display Israeli flags on the Riviera city’s town hall to show his support for hostages held by Hamas, was forced by a court decision to remove them.

The Socialist mayor of Paris suburb Saint-Ouen, Karim Bouamrane, said he would display both the Israeli and Palestinian flags on the facade of his town hall in a bid to carry a message of peace.

“We are one community, the republican community,” he told RMC radio. “The community I stand for is that of peace: I do not want to pit Muslims against Jews, nor activists against Hamas supporters and those against (Benjamin) Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister.”

## Hall of Famer Bernie Parent, who led the Philadelphia Flyers to two Stanley Cup titles, dies at 80

By DAN GELSTON AP Sports Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Bernie Parent, the Hall of Famer considered one of the great goalies of all time who anchored the net for the Philadelphia Flyers’ only two Stanley Cup championships in the 1970s during their Broad Street Bullies heyday, has died. He was 80.

The Flyers made the announcement Sunday but provided no details. Parent died overnight in his sleep, former teammate Joe Watson said.

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Watson, a star defenseman on the Stanley Cup teams, said by phone that he saw Parent and other former Flyers players at a function Friday night in Delaware.

"Bernie was in such pain, he could hardly walk," Watson said, citing Parent's bad back. "We had a great time, but I felt bad because he was in such terrible pain. To see this happen, it's very sad."

Parent's steel-eyed stare through his old-school hockey mask landed him on the cover of Time magazine in 1975 when the Flyers reigned as one of the marquee teams in sports. He won Stanley Cup, Conn Smythe and Vezina trophies in back-to-back seasons when the Flyers captured the Stanley Cup in '74 and '75, the first NHL expansion team to win the championship.

"The legend of Bernie Parent reached far beyond the ice and his accolades," the Flyers said in a statement. "Bernie had a deep love for Philadelphia and fans of the Flyers. He was passionate about his role as an ambassador for Ed Snider Youth Hockey & Education and inspired an entire generation of hockey fans. He dedicated his time, energy and enthusiasm to not only grow the game, but also to spread joy to anyone he encountered."

After he made his NHL debut with Boston in 1965, Parent was left unprotected by the Bruins in the 1967 expansion draft and was selected by the Flyers. After 3 1/2 seasons, he was traded to Toronto but ended up back in Philadelphia ahead of the 1973-74 season. He won a league-high 47 games that season and led the NHL in wins again the next season with 44.

Parent was accidentally struck in the right eye with a stick in 1979 and was temporarily blinded. He never played again, retiring with 271 wins — 231 of them for the Flyers — over a 13-year career.

"At his unbeatable, unflappable best on the ice when the stakes were highest, Bernie was a warm, gregarious bear of a man off the ice who was venerated in Philadelphia and adored throughout the hockey world," Commissioner Gary Bettman said. "The entire National Hockey League family mourns the passing of this beloved icon and sends its deepest condolences to his wife, Gini, his family, and his countless fans and friends."

The Flyers beat the Bruins in six games to win the Stanley Cup in 1974 and beat Buffalo in 1975. Parent had shutouts in the clinchers each season.

On the flight home from Buffalo, the Flyers plopped the Stanley Cup in the middle of the aisle. For close to 90 minutes, they couldn't take their eyes off hockey's ultimate prize.

"We were able to just sit back, look at the Stanley Cup and just savor it," Parent said in 2010. "It was just a special time."

With Parent the unstoppable force in net, "Only the Lord saves more than Bernie Parent," became a popular slogan in Philadelphia that stuck with him through the decades.

"We used to joke about it in the dressing room. We'd say, 'Bernie, how many goals do you need?' He'd say, 'One, two, that's it, and we'll win the game,'" said Gary Dornhoefer, a winger on the two Cup teams.

Parent, team captain Bobby Clarke and Dave "The Hammer" Schultz all became stars for the Flyers under owner Ed Snider in an era when the team was known for its rugged style of play that earned the Bullies nickname. They embraced their moniker as the most despised team in the NHL and pounded their way into the hearts of Flyers fans. More than 2 million fans packed Philadelphia streets for each of their championship parades.

"We always felt comfortable with Bernie in the net," former Flyers winger and enforcer Bob Kelly said. "He would challenge the guys in practice. He'd stop the puck and throw it back at you and say, 'Go ahead, try and catch this one.' He was the first guy to jump in line to help another teammate if they needed it. He was a real testament to what a team player is all about."

Parent's No. 1 jersey was retired by the Flyers and still hangs in the rafters of their arena. In 1984, he became the first Flyers player inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame. He is still their career leader in shutouts with 50.

Parent remained connected with the team over the years as an ambassador.

"He was so good with people," said Watson, who first met Parent in 1963. "A lot of athletes don't get it or don't give fans the time of day. Bernie gave everyone the time of day. He'd always have his rings on. He'd show them to the people and people loved to see them. This past Friday in Delaware, people were

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coming up, they wanted to see the rings. People were so excited to see him. He had a great sense of humor. Bernie was a funny guy.”

Flyers coach Rick Tocchet, who played 11 seasons over two stints with the team, choked back tears at the New Jersey practice rink as he described Parent’s influence.

“As a young kid, you’re stressed trying to make the team. When he would come in, he’d just break the room up. He really helped me out when it came to that,” Tocchet said. “It seemed like every day was a great day to him. I don’t know if he ever had a bad day. But that (Stanley Cup) group was very close, and Bernie was kind of the glue. Bob Clarke obviously unreal, and Billy Barber and all those guys, they came around a lot. Bernie was one of those guys, he would just, we’d lose three in a row, somehow he’d come in there and loosen us up the Bernie way.”

The final career highlight came in 2011 when Parent was in the net for an alumni game outdoors at the baseball stadium Citizens Bank Park ahead of the NHL Classic. “Bernie! Bernie! Bernie!” echoed throughout the park for the affable goalie, who played 5 minutes, 32 seconds and stopped all six shots. Each save made the “Bernie!” chants return.

“He was a man who was always happy, always laughing and was always fun to be around,” Clarke said. “He did what all great hockey players do: He played for the hockey team. The two years that we won the Stanley Cup, he was the only member of that team that we could not have been without if we were going to win. He was the best goalie in hockey for those two years.”

Parent was the third Hall of Fame goaltender to die this month. Ken Dryden, who helped the Montreal Canadiens win six Stanley Cup titles in the 1970s, died at 78 after a fight with cancer. Ed Giacomin, one of the faces of the New York Rangers’ franchise in the 1960s and ’70s, died at 86 of natural causes.

“They’re big losses,” Kelly said. “They were just prime, super goaltenders.”

## **A Syrian president arrives in New York for UN General Assembly for the first time in nearly 60 years**

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) — Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa arrived in New York on Sunday to take part in the U.N. General Assembly, the first president of Syria to do so in nearly six decades.

The last time a Syrian head of state attended the General Assembly was in 1967. That was before the 50-year rule of the Assad family dynasty, which came to an end in December when then-President Bashar Assad was ousted in a lightning insurgent offensive led by al-Sharaa. Assad’s fall also brought to an end nearly 14 years of civil war.

Since then, al-Sharaa has sought to restore ties with Arab countries and the West, where officials were initially wary of his past ties with the al-Qaida militant group. The rebel group he formerly led, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, was previously designated by the United States as a terrorist group.

Since assuming power, al-Sharaa has preached coexistence and sought to reassure Syria’s minority communities, but the country’s fragile recovery has been threatened by outbreaks of sectarian violence. Fighters affiliated with the new government were also accused of killing hundreds of civilians from the Druze and Alawite religious minorities.

Along with his appearance at the U.N. General Assembly, al-Sharaa is likely to use his visit to push for further sanctions relief for Syria as it attempts to rebuild its war-battered economy and infrastructure.

U.S. President Donald Trump met with al-Sharaa in Saudi Arabia in May and announced that he would lift decades of sanctions imposed on Syria under the Assads’ rule.

He followed through by ordering a large swathe of sanctions lifted or waived. However, the most stringent sanctions were imposed by Congress under the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act passed in 2019 and will require a congressional vote to permanently remove them.

Another topic that will loom large during al-Sharaa’s visit is his country’s relations with U.S. ally Israel. Since Assad’s fall, Israel has been suspicious of al-Sharaa’s government and has seized a formerly U.N.-patrolled buffer zone in southern Syria and launched hundreds of airstrikes on Syrian military sites.

Negotiations have been underway for a security deal that al-Sharaa has said he hopes will bring about

a withdrawal of Israeli forces and return to a 1974 disengagement agreement. While al-Sharaa said last week that a deal could be reached in a matter of days, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in remarks Sunday appeared to downplay the odds of a breakthrough.

"There is some progress" but the deal is "still a vision for the future," he said.

Also on Sunday, Syrian elections officials announced that the country's first parliamentary elections since the fall of Assad will take place on Oct. 5. The members of the People's Assembly will not be chosen via a direct popular vote, however, but through an electoral college system with electoral bodies in each province voting for two-thirds of the seats, while al-Sharaa will directly appoint one third.

Officials have said that holding direct elections at this stage would be too logistically challenging since many Syrians have lost personal documentation or are living as refugees abroad after the nearly 14-year civil war.

## Trump ramps up retribution campaign with push for Bondi to pursue cases against his foes

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

Eight months into his second term, President Donald Trump's long-standing pledge to take on those he perceives as his political enemies has prompted debates over free speech, media censorship and political prosecutions.

From late-night comedian Jimmy Kimmel's suspension to Pentagon restrictions on reporters and an apparent public appeal to Attorney General Pam Bondi to pursue legal cases against his adversaries, Trump has escalated moves to consolidate power in his second administration and root out those who have spoken out against him.

In a post on social media this weekend addressed to Bondi, Trump said "nothing is being done" on investigations into some of his foes.

"We can't delay any longer, it's killing our reputation and credibility," he said. Noting that he was impeached and criminally charged, "JUSTICE MUST BE SERVED, NOW!!!"

Criticizing investigations into Trump's dealings under Democratic President Joe Biden's Justice Department, Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., said Sunday that "it is not right for the Trump administration to do the same thing."

Directive to Bondi to investigate political opponents

Trump has ratcheted up his discussion of pursuing legal cases against some of his political opponents, part of a vow for retribution that has been a theme of his return to the White House. He publicly pressed Bondi this weekend to move forward with such investigations.

Trump posted somewhat of an open letter on social media Saturday to his top prosecutor to advance such inquiries, including a mortgage fraud probe into New York Attorney General Letitia James and a possible threat case against former FBI Director James Comey.

He posted that he had "reviewed over 30 statements and posts" that he characterized as criticizing his administration for a lack of action on investigations.

"We have to act fast — one way or the other," Trump told reporters later that night at the White House. "They're guilty, they're not guilty — we have to act fast. If they're not guilty, that's fine. If they are guilty or if they should be charged, they should be charged. And we have to do it now."

Trump later wrote in a follow-up post that Bondi was "doing a GREAT job."

Paul, a frequent Trump foil from the right, was asked during an interview on NBC's "Meet the Press" about the propriety of a president directing his attorney general to investigate political opponents. The senator decried "lawfare in all forms."

Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., said it was "unconstitutional and deeply immoral for the president to jail or to silence his political enemies." He warned it could set a worrisome precedent for both parties.

"It will come back and boomerang on conservatives and Republicans at some point if this becomes the norm," Murphy told ABC's "This Week."

The Senate's Democratic leader, Chuck Schumer of New York, said on CNN's "State of the Union" that



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Trump is turning the Justice Department "into an instrument that goes after his enemies, whether they're guilty or not, and most of them are not guilty at all, and that helps his friends. This is the path to a dictatorship. That's what dictatorships do."

The Justice Department did not respond Sunday to a message seeking comment.

Appointment of new prosecutor in Letitia James investigation

Each new president nominates his own U.S. attorneys in jurisdictions across the country. And Trump has already worked to install people close to him in some of those jobs, including former Fox News host Jeanine Pirro in the District of Columbia and Alina Habba, his former attorney, in New Jersey.

Trump has largely stocked his second administration with loyalists, continuing Saturday with the nomination of a White House aide as top federal prosecutor for the office investigating James, a longtime foe of Trump.

Trump announced Lindsey Halligan to be the U.S. attorney in the Eastern District of Virginia on Saturday, just a day after Erik Siebert resigned from the post and Trump said he wanted him "out."

Trump said he was bothered that Siebert had been supported by the state's two Democratic senators.

"There are just two standards of justice now in this country. If you are a friend of the president, a loyalist of the president, you can get away with nearly anything, including beating the hell out of police officers," Murphy said, mentioning the defendants in the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol pardoned by Trump as he returned to office. "But if you are an opponent of the president, you may find yourself in jail."

New restrictions on Pentagon reporters

Trump has styled himself as an opponent of censorship, pledging in his January inaugural address to "bring free speech back to America" and signing an executive order that no federal officer, employee or agent may unconstitutionally abridge the free speech of any American citizen.

Under a 17-page memo distributed Friday, the Pentagon stepped up restrictions on the media, saying it will require credentialed journalists to sign a pledge to refrain from reporting information that has not been authorized for release, including unclassified information. Journalists who don't abide by the policy risk losing credentials that provide access to the Pentagon.

Asked Sunday if the Pentagon should play a role in determining what journalists can report, Trump said, "No, I don't think so."

"Nothing stops reporters. You know that," Trump told reporters as he left the White House for Charlie Kirk's memorial service.

Trump has sued numerous media organizations for negative coverage, with several settling with the president for millions of dollars. A federal judge in Florida tossed out Trump's \$15 billion defamation lawsuit against The New York Times on Friday.

Jimmy Kimmel ouster and FCC warning

Perhaps the most headline-grabbing situation involves ABC's indefinite suspension Wednesday of veteran comic Jimmy Kimmel's late-night show. What he said about Kirk's killing had led a group of ABC-affiliated stations to say it would not air the show and provoked some ominous comments from a top federal regulator.

Trump celebrated on his social media site: "Congratulations to ABC for finally having the courage to do what had to be done."

Earlier in the day, the Federal Communications Commission chairman, Brendan Carr, who has launched investigations of outlets that have angered Trump, said Kimmel's comments were "truly sick" and that his agency has a strong case for holding Kimmel, ABC and network parent Walt Disney Co. accountable for spreading misinformation.

"We can do this the easy way or the hard way," Carr said. "These companies can find ways to take action on Kimmel or there is going to be additional work for the FCC ahead."

Sen. Markwayne Mullin, R-Okla., argued that Kimmel's ouster wasn't a chilling of free speech but a corporate decision.

"I really don't believe ABC would have decided to fire Jimmy Kimmel over a threat," he said Sunday on CNN. "ABC has been a longstanding critic of President Trump. They did it because they felt like it didn't meet their brand anymore."

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Not all Republicans have applauded the move. On his podcast Friday, GOP Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas called it "unbelievably dangerous for government to put itself in the position of saying we're going to decide what speech we like and what we don't, and we're going to threaten to take you off air if we don't like what you're saying."

Trump called Carr "a great American patriot" and said Friday that he disagreed with Cruz.

## Israeli strikes kill more than 40 people in Gaza, say health officials, ahead of UN meeting

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Israeli strikes in Gaza City and at a refugee camp killed more than 40 people, including 19 women and children, health officials said Sunday, as several European countries and leading U.S. allies moved to recognize a Palestinian state.

Health officials at Shifa Hospital, where most of the bodies were brought, said the dead included 14 people killed in a strike late Saturday which hit a residential block in the southern side of the city. Health staff said a nurse who worked at the hospital was among the dead, along with his wife and three children.

Another strike that targeted a group of people in front of a clinic in the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza killed at least eight Palestinians, according to the Al-Awda Hospital. The dead include four children and two women, the hospital said. Another 22 people were wounded, it said.

Israel did not comment on the strikes.

Anti-war protests in Israel

The latest Israeli military operation, which began this week, further escalates a conflict that has roiled the Middle East and likely pushes any ceasefire further out of reach. The Israeli military, which has told Palestinians to leave, hasn't given a timeline for the offensive, but there were indications it could take months. Israel says the operation is meant to pressure Hamas into freeing hostages and surrendering.

Ahead of the United Nations General Assembly, peace activists in Israel have hailed the planned recognition of a Palestinian state. On Sunday, a group of more than 60 Jewish and Arab organizations representing about 1,000 activists, including some veteran organizations promoting peace and coexistence, known as It's Time Coalition, called for an end to the war, the release of the hostages and the recognition of a Palestinian state.

"We refuse to live forever by the sword. The UN decision offers a historic opportunity to move from a death trap to life, from an endless messianic war to a future of security and freedom for both peoples," said the coalition in a video statement.

On Saturday night, tens of thousands of people in Israel protested, calling for an end to the war and a hostage deal.

Yet a ceasefire remains elusive. Israeli bombardment over the past 23 months has killed more than 65,000 people in Gaza, destroyed vast areas of the strip, displaced around 90% of the population and caused a catastrophic humanitarian crisis, with experts saying Gaza City is experiencing famine.

Netanyahu says Palestinian state 'will not happen'

On Sunday, Australia, Canada and the U.K. announced formal recognition of Palestinian statehood. British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the move is intended "to revive the hope of peace for the Palestinians and Israelis." Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas welcomed the announcement.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says the establishment of a Palestinian state "will not happen." In an angry statement after the coordinated initiative from the Commonwealth nations was announced, he accused the foreign leaders of giving a "prize" to Hamas.

"It will not happen," he said. "A Palestinian state will not be established west of the Jordan River."

Netanyahu said he would announce Israel's response after a trip next week to the U.S., where he is to meet President Donald Trump at the White House.

Other prominent Western countries are preparing to recognize Palestinian statehood at the gathering of world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly on Monday, including France.

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French President Emmanuel Macron criticized Israel's conduct in its war against Hamas, calling it a "failure" because the group continues to recruit more fighters. In a CBS interview Sunday, Macron said that while Israel has succeeded in killing Hamas leaders, it has been unable to dismantle it during the nearly two-year conflict in Gaza. Macron told CBS that Israel's approach undermines the country's credibility by killing civilians, and that the war creates "an unsustainable framework of security in the whole region."

## Dire humanitarian crisis

In a statement Sunday, the military stated it killed Majed Abu Selmiya, who it said was a sniper for Hamas' military wing and was preparing to carry out more attacks in the Gaza City area, without providing evidence.

Majed was the brother of the director of Shifa hospital, Dr. Mohamed Abu Selmiya, who called the allegations a lie and said Israel was trying to justify the killing of civilians. Dr. Selmiya told The Associated Press that his brother, 57, suffered from high blood pressure, diabetes and had vision problems.

As the attacks continue, Israel has ordered hundreds of thousands of Palestinians sheltering in Gaza City to move south to what it calls a humanitarian zone and opened another corridor south of the city for two days this week to allow more people to evacuate.

Palestinians were streaming out of Gaza City by car and on foot, though many are unwilling to be uprooted again, too weak to leave or unable to afford the cost of moving.

Along the coastal Wadi Gaza route, those too exhausted to continue stopped to catch their breath and give their children a much-needed break from the difficult journey.

Aid groups have warned that forcing thousands of people to evacuate will exacerbate the dire humanitarian crisis. They are appealing for a ceasefire so aid can reach those who need it.

## Pope denounces 'forced exile' of Palestinians

Pope Leo XIV criticized what he described as the "forced exile" of Palestinians from Gaza, saying there was no future for the "martyred" Gaza Strip based on violence and vendetta.

During his Sunday noon blessing, Leo issued another appeal for peace and expressed appreciation for the work of Catholic organizations active in helping Palestinians, which had representatives present in St. Peter's Square.

Families of hostages still held by Hamas have accused Netanyahu of condemning their loved ones to death by continuing to fight rather than negotiating an end to the war.

## Israel in talks with Syria

Netanyahu said at a cabinet meeting that Israel's victories in Lebanon against Hezbollah "have opened a window for the possibility of peace with our neighbors to the north."

"We are holding talks with the Syrians -- there is some progress, but still a vision for the future," he said.

Israel has occupied parts of southwest Syria since the overthrow of then-Syrian President Bashar Assad in December. Relations with the new Syrian government have been tense, with Israel carrying out airstrikes over the summer in what it says were steps to protect Syria's Druze community.

Syria's interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa said in an interview on Syrian state television on Sept. 12 that negotiations with Israel for a security deal are still ongoing. He hopes that Israeli troops will return to where they were before the fall of Assad's government under a disengagement agreement in 1974.

"Israel considered the fall of the regime as Syria's withdrawal from the 1974 agreement, even though Syria showed its commitment from the very beginning," said al-Sharaa.

## Trump reveals Murdochs and Dell could potentially take part in TikTok deal

By ALAN SUDERMAN AP Business Writer

President Donald Trump said prominent billionaires – including media mogul Rupert Murdoch and tech founder Michael Dell – could be part of a deal in which the U.S. will take control of the social video platform TikTok.

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Trump namedropped the 94-year-old Murdoch and his son Lachlan Murdoch, the head of Fox News and News Corp, as part of a group of possible participants in a deal during an interview recorded Friday and aired Sunday on Fox News.

"I think they're going to be in the group. A couple of others. Really great people, very prominent people," Trump said. "And they're also American patriots, you know, they love this country. I think they're going to do a really good job."

Trump's disclosure of the potential involvement of the Murdochs and Dell, the founder and CEO of Dell Technologies, is the latest twist in a fast-moving potential deal to keep TikTok operating in the U.S.

Trump also said Sunday that tech giant Oracle founder and CEO Larry Ellison was part of the same group. His involvement had been previously disclosed. On Saturday, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said Oracle would be responsible for the app's data and security and that Americans will control six of the seven seats for a planned board.

Much is still unknown about the actual deal in the works. Trump discussed the TikTok deal with China's Xi Jinping in a lengthy phone call on Friday. Chinese and U.S. officials have until Dec. 16 to hash out the details, following the latest deadline extension by the Trump administration.

TikTok is a hugely popular app currently owned by a Chinese company, ByteDance. American officials have warned the algorithm TikTok uses to shape what users see is vulnerable to manipulation by Chinese authorities, who can use it to push content on the platform in a way that's difficult to detect.

Congress passed legislation calling for a TikTok ban to go into effect in January, but Trump has repeatedly signed orders that have allowed TikTok to keep operating in the United States as his administration tries to reach an agreement for the social media company's parent company to sell its U.S. operations.

On Sunday, Trump said that he was "a little prejudiced" about TikTok because he credited the app for helping him connect with young voters. Trump said slain conservative activist Charlie Kirk encouraged the president to use the app.

Representatives for Ellison, Dell and the Murdochs could not immediately be reached for comment.

Trump filed a lawsuit against Murdoch and one of his newspapers, The Wall Street Journal, in July after it published a story reporting on the president's ties to wealthy financier and convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

## **Christopher Nolan to lead Directors Guild of America**

By LINDSEY BAHR AP Film Writer

Christopher Nolan has been elected to lead the Directors Guild of America, the organization said late Saturday. The Oscar-winning "Oppenheimer" filmmaker said in a statement that it is, "one of the greatest honors of my career."

The guild represents the interests of some 19,500 film and television directors in the United States and abroad, in addition to hosting the DGA awards annually.

"Our industry is experiencing tremendous change, and I thank the Guild's membership for entrusting me with this responsibility," said Nolan, a well-known champion of the theatrical experience and film stock.

The box office success of "Oppenheimer," which was shot entirely on large-format film ( a combination of 70mm and IMAX ), and made over \$976 million worldwide made many in the industry reconsider the mass audience appeal of a format that not too long ago was in danger of extinction. Just over a decade ago, facing bankruptcy and an industry that seemed to be migrating to digital, Kodak nearly stopped film production. Filmmakers like Nolan, Martin Scorsese and others rallied to keep it going. Earlier this year, Ryan Coogler's "Sinners" helped prove the point again.

Nolan will take over for outgoing president Lesli Linka Glatter, who led the group for four years through the Hollywood strikes of 2023. He said he looks forward to collaborating with Glatter and the board "to achieve important creative and economic protections for our members."

The DGA's current three-year basic agreement with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, which bargains on behalf of studios and streamers about rates and benefits, expires next year. The



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AMPTP congratulated Nolan in a statement and wrote that they "look forward to partnering with President Nolan to address the issues most important to DGA members while ensuring our member companies remain competitive in a rapidly changing industry."

Officers elected to serve alongside Nolan include Ron Howard, Gina Prince-Bythewood, Laura Belsey and former president Paris Barclay. Among the board members are Steven Spielberg and Phil Lord.

Since its founding in 1936 when it was then known as the Screen Directors Guild, presidents have included the likes of Frank Capra, George Stevens, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, Robert Wise, Michael Apted and Martha Coolidge.

Nolan has been a member since 2001 and has served on the DGA's National Board and Western Directors Council since 2015, in addition to chairing the guild's theatrical creative right and artificial intelligence committees. He won the guild's top prize in 2024 for "Oppenheimer," and was previously nominated for "Dunkirk," "Inception," "The Dark Knight" and "Memento."

Nolan's next film, a starry adaptation of Homer's "The Odyssey," opens in theaters July 17.

## Ukrainian and Russian attacks kill 3 civilians as Zelenskyy prepares to meet Trump

By The Associated Press undefined

Ukrainian attacks on Russia's Belgorod border region killed two civilians while Russian shelling of eastern Ukraine left a man dead, officials said Sunday.

Vyacheslav Gladkov, the governor of Belgorod, wrote on the Telegram messaging app that a woman was killed when shelling struck a private home in the border town of Shebekino, while a man died in a drone strike on the village of Rakitnoe.

The Belgorod region, which borders Ukraine, has faced frequent cross-border attacks since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

In Ukraine, a man was killed and residential buildings and infrastructure were damaged by Russian shelling in Kostiantynivka in the Donetsk region, Serhii Horbunov, head of the city's military administration, said Sunday.

The latest round of attacks came after Russia launched a large-scale missile and drone attack targeting regions across Ukraine on Saturday, killing at least three people and wounding dozens. Russia launched 619 drones and missiles during the attack, Ukraine's air force said.

Also on Saturday, Estonia summoned a Russian diplomat to protest after three Russian fighter aircraft entered its airspace without permission Friday and stayed there for 12 minutes, the Foreign Ministry said. It happened just over a week after NATO planes downed Russian drones over Poland and heightened fears that the war in Ukraine could spill over.

Writing on social media site X on Sunday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Ukraine had been targeted by "more than 1,500 strike drones, over 1,280 guided aerial bombs, and 50 missiles of various types" over the previous week.

Noting that "thousands of foreign components" were found in the Russian weaponry, Zelenskyy said Ukraine was "counting on the 19th EU sanctions package to be truly painful, and on the United States to join the Europeans." European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen presented the package of sanctions on Friday.

Zelenskyy expects to meet U.S. President Donald Trump on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly this week, where he has said he hopes to gauge how close Ukraine and its partners are to finalizing long-term security guarantees.

Trump on Sunday morning in an exchange with reporters very briefly addressed the Russian incursion into Estonian airspace.

"We don't like it," Trump said. Asked if the U.S. would back Poland and other Baltic states if they continue to face Russian aggression, Trump responded, "I will."

Russia's Defense Ministry on Saturday denied its aircraft violated Estonia's airspace.

## Airport cyberattack disrupts more flights across Europe

BRUSSELS (AP) — Fallout from a cyberattack that disrupted check-in systems at several European airports extended into a second full day on Sunday, as passengers faced dozens of canceled and delayed flights — and the impact poised to worsen for at least one major airport.

Brussels Airport, seemingly the hardest hit, said it asked airlines to cancel nearly 140 departing flights scheduled for Monday because a U.S.-based software system provider “is not yet able to deliver a new secure version of the check-in system.” The airport said 25 outbound flights were canceled on Saturday and 50 on Sunday.

Starting late Friday, airports in Berlin, Brussels and London were hit by disruptions to electronic systems that snarled up check-in and sent airline staffers trying options like handwriting boarding passes or using backup laptops. Many other European airports were unaffected.

The cyberattack affected software of Collins Aerospace, whose systems help passengers check in, print boarding passes and bag tags, and dispatch their luggage. The U.S.-based company on Saturday cited a “cyber-related disruption” to its software at “select” airports in Europe.

It was not immediately clear who might be behind the cyberattack, but experts said it could turn out to be hackers, criminal organizations or state actors.

The European Commission, the executive branch of the 27-nation European Union, said that aviation safety and air traffic control were unaffected. There was currently no indication of a widespread or severe attack, while the origin of the incident remained under investigation, it added.

Half of Monday’s flights from Brussels Airport canceled

While departure boards for London’s Heathrow and Berlin’s Brandenburg airports were showing signs of smoother arrivals and departures on Sunday, Brussels Airport was still facing considerable issues.

Brussels Airport said in an email Sunday that it had asked airlines to cancel half of the 276 scheduled departing flights on Monday, “because Collins Aerospace is not yet able to deliver a new secure version of the check-in system.” Cancellations and delays will continue as long as manual check-in is necessary, it said.

RTX Corp., the parent company of Collins Aerospace, did not immediately respond to two emails Sunday seeking comment.

On Saturday, the aviation and defense technology company said in a statement that it was working to resolve the issue: “The impact is limited to electronic customer check-in and baggage drop and can be mitigated with manual check-in operations.”

Brussels Airport said it nonetheless was able to maintain 85% of scheduled departures over the weekend thanks to the deployment of extra staff by airport partners “and the fact that self bag drop and online check-in are still operational.”

The cyberattack affected only computer systems at check-in desks, not self-service kiosks, airport spokesperson Ihsane Chioua Lekhli said, and teams were turning to alternative backup systems and pulling out laptop computers to help cope with the impact.

The airports advised passengers to check the status of their flights before traveling to the airports, and using alternative check-in methods.

“Work continues to resolve and recover from Friday’s outage of a Collins Aerospace airline system that impacted check-in,” a Heathrow statement said. “We apologize to those who have faced delays, but by working together with airlines, the vast majority of flights have continued to operate.”

A rolling message Sunday on the Brandenburg Airport’s web page said: “Due to a systems outage at a service provider, there are longer waiting times. Please use online check-in, self-service check-in and the fast bag drop service.”

## As UN climate talks loom in Brazil, many would-be participants fear they can't afford to attend

By MELINA WALLING and SETH BORENSTEIN Associated Press

Pooja Tilwawala knows it's a gamble to use more than \$46,000 of her own savings to help young people get to the United Nations climate summit in Brazil. But she thinks it's a necessary one.

As national delegations, activists and other attendees struggle to find affordable places to stay by November, with some deciding not to go at all, Tilwawala, who lives in London, has spent hours working from afar to find lodging in Belem, negotiate prices and contracts and put down deposits. She did all that to create a housing portal specifically for young people who want to be part of the international conference. If not enough people sign up for the housing she's secured, she might lose some of what she's put down.

"There's always a huge number of fossil fuel company representatives there. And who's going to be there to combat those voices and those negotiating influences?" said Tilwawala, founder and executive director of the global organization Youth Climate Collaborative. "So I was like, 'We need to be here.'"

With less than two months before this year's Conference of the Parties, or COP30, only about 36% of the 196 participating countries have confirmed attendance and paid for accommodations, according to a spokesperson for the conference presidency.

Activists and poorer nations are feeling the crunch as hotel prices have skyrocketed and even private homes, love motels and other makeshift accommodation options are charging a minimum of several hundred dollars a night.

The Brazilian government chose Belem because it's part of the Amazon and to underscore the problems common to growing cities in the developing world, but some prospective attendees are raising questions about how productive the talks will be if they are overshadowed by a big drop in attendance.

Many haven't confirmed housing yet, and the pressure is on

The Brazilian government has taken steps to address the problem. Climate Minister Marina Silva said 10 to 20 rooms have been made available "at accessible prices" for vulnerable countries. The government has also brought in two large cruise ships that can house as many as 6,000 people.

"Everybody will have access to participate in COP30," Silva said at a recent press briefing. "Facing climate change must be done by all of us, by all the parties of the convention and especially by those who are already living the consequences of climate change."

But U.N. Climate Change executive secretary Simon Stiell sent a letter on Sept. 9 asking that agencies in the U.N. system, and related organizations, review how many people they're sending to COP30 and reduce it where possible.

To add to the pressure, a construction workers' strike started Sept. 15 and includes areas being worked on for COP30.

A challenge for a city chosen to illustrate climate realities

Belem was initially excited to host the conference, said Arnaldo Vaz Neto, a Brazilian financial adviser who has been working with an organization called the Young Scholars Initiative as an intermediary between locals and COP30 visitors seeking housing. "It's kind of taught in our childhood to have this behavior of hospitality," he said.

But that was followed by the realization that the United Nations had high international standards for its guests. It was difficult to manage expectations on both sides, Vaz Neto said.

Belem isn't the only city hosting a U.N. climate conference where lodging rates have gone far higher than usual. Silva said it's happened at nearly all such conferences, with prices three or even four times market rates.

"A lot of people here are expecting to charge \$1,000 a night but that's beyond the average," Hugo Pinheiro, a secretary who works for K Pine Mobile in Belem, and has worked to match delegations with housing and to negotiate on prices.

The "accessible" rooms made available by the Brazilian government will rent for between \$200 and \$600 a night, according to a COP30 presidency spokesperson.

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Brazilian officials have expressed confidence that all 196 nations will find housing and come to Belem. In a statement, the presidency said it expects 50,000 participants and Belem currently offers 53,000 beds. That's fewer people than recent COPs, even though the Brazil meeting is considered one of the most important negotiations in years because countries have to update and strengthen their carbon pollution plans.

Hard decisions

Still, housing is making it more difficult for people from some poorer countries and Indigenous groups to attend, as well as for those that traditionally attend COP outside of a country delegation, including activists, NGO and nonprofit groups and youth observers. Some organizations that represent them expect to send fewer people.

Hailey Campbell leads Care About Climate, a youth-oriented NGO that was one of the first of its kind to be accredited to attend COP over 10 years ago. Campbell said her group has "never faced such difficulties with access to accommodation." The group posted about the issue on Instagram with the hashtag "#DontPriceUsOut."

Many individual attendees have already decided they can't come. Others are on the fence. Some who will attend are considering options like camping in a tent.

This year Hikaru Hayakawa said he's heard from more people who have decided not to go than he remembers at this time in years past — already maybe 30 or 40 people, by his estimate.

That's worrisome because many activists from other countries will now miss out on experiencing the strong civil society culture in Brazil, said Hayakawa, executive director of Climate Cardinals, which translates climate information and trains young people.

"It could potentially be lost opportunity to build these global networks," he said.

## The Taliban reject Trump's bid to retake Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan

JALALABAD, Afghanistan (AP) — The Taliban government on Sunday rejected U.S. President Donald Trump's bid to retake Bagram Air Base, four years after America's chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan left the sprawling military facility in the Taliban's hands.

Trump on Saturday renewed his call to reestablish a U.S. presence at Bagram, even saying "we're talking now to Afghanistan" about the matter. He did not offer further details about the purported conversations. Asked by a reporter if he'd consider deploying U.S. troops to take the base, Trump demurred.

"We won't talk about that," Trump said. "We want it back, and we want it back right away. If they don't do it, you're going to find out what I'm going to do."

On Sunday, chief Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid rejected Trump's assertions and urged the U.S. to adopt a policy of "realism and rationality."

Afghanistan had an economy-oriented foreign policy and sought constructive relations with all states on the basis of mutual and shared interests, Mujahid posted on X.

It had been consistently communicated to the U.S. in all bilateral negotiations that Afghanistan's independence and territorial integrity were of the utmost importance, he said.

"It should be recalled that, under the Doha Agreement, the United States pledged that 'it will not use or threaten force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Afghanistan, nor interfere in its internal affairs,'" he said. The U.S. needed to remain faithful to its commitments, he added.

Mujahid did not reply to questions from The Associated Press about conversations with the Trump administration regarding Bagram and why Trump believed the U.S. could retake it.

'Ceding Afghan soil is out of the question'

Earlier Sunday, the chief of staff at the Defense Ministry, Fasihuddin Fitrat, addressed Trump's comments. "Ceding even an inch of our soil to anyone is out of the question and impossible," he said during a speech broadcast by Afghan media.

In August last year, the Taliban celebrated the third anniversary of their takeover at Bagram with a grand military display of abandoned U.S. hardware, catching the eye of the White House. Trump has repeatedly



criticized his predecessor, Joe Biden, for his "gross incompetence" during the withdrawal of U.S. forces after the country's longest war.

Trump last week during his state visit to the United Kingdom hinted that the Taliban, who have struggled with an economic crisis, international legitimacy, internal rifts and rival militant groups since their return to power in 2021, could be game to allow the U.S. military to return.

"We're trying to get it back because they need things from us," Trump said of the Taliban. While the U.S. and the Taliban have no formal diplomatic ties, the sides have had hostage conversations. An American man who was abducted more than two years ago while traveling through Afghanistan as a tourist was released by the Taliban in March.

The Taliban also said they reached an agreement with U.S. envoys on an exchange of prisoners as part of an effort to normalize relations between the United States and Afghanistan.

They gave no details of the detainee swap, and the White House did not comment on the meeting in Kabul or the results described in a Taliban statement. The Taliban released photographs from their talks, showing their foreign minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi, with Trump's special envoy for hostage response, Adam Boehler.

## Man is arrested and charged in New Hampshire country club shooting

By MICHAEL CASEY and PATRICK WHITTLE Associated Press

NASHUA, N.H. (AP) — A gunman opened fire in a New Hampshire country club on Saturday as a wedding was taking place, killing one person and wounding two others, authorities said.

The person who died at the Sky Meadow Country Club in Nashua was a 59-year-old man identified as Robert Steven DeCesare, according to New Hampshire Attorney General John Formella and Nashua Police Chief Kevin Rourke.

Authorities identified the suspect as Hunter Nadeau, age 23, and said he had been arrested and charged with one count of second-degree murder for knowingly shooting DeCesare.

"Additional charges likely will be brought, including for the additional shooting victims," Formella and Rourke said in a statement. They said they expect Nadeau to be arraigned at the Ninth Circuit Court in Nashua on Monday.

Authorities had initially thought there could be two shooters but later said that was mistaken and there was only one. Police said there was no further danger to the public.

Investigators were still working to determine a motive, New Hampshire Senior Assistant Attorney General Peter Hinckley said.

Information on the wounded victims' conditions was not immediately available.

Tom Bartelson of Pepperell, Massachusetts, who was at the country club, described a chaotic scene that unfolded near his nephew's wedding. He said he heard the shooter say "the children are safe" and "free Palestine" and appeared to be targeting someone.

"Getting together for a dance for the bride and groom and then all chaos went off," he said. "We heard about six shots and everybody ducked for cover and next thing you know we're rushed into safe spots and things like that."

He said some people dropped to the ground and attempted to get away from the scene. There was a lot of panic, he said.

"We were trying to keep family members safe," he said. "Keep everybody down and try to find safe spots."

The mother of DeCesare, the man who was killed, had earlier described not being able to find her son after he was shot.

"He went down. My daughter in law and granddaughter escaped ... They saw my son go down and they saw blood," the mother, Evie O'Rourke of Salem, New Hampshire, said.

Emily Ernst, who was at the scene, said she saw a gunman in all black.

"He had a mask on. We just saw him raise the gun and then we ran," Ernst said. "I ran through the

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kitchen for my life.”

Aerial video from WMUR-TV showed multiple emergency responders heading to the scene. Later, Nashua Mayor Jim Donchess said he had faith in police to “get to the bottom of this and bring the perpetrator to justice.”

He added: “I think the message is for every community out there is that no matter how unlikely it seems it can happen where you live.”

U.S. Rep. Maggie Goodlander said in a statement that she was “closely monitoring the tragic reports of a shooting tonight at Sky Meadow Country Club in Nashua” and that her heart was with the victims, their families and the community.

Nashua is about 45 miles (70 kilometers) northwest of Boston, just across the Massachusetts border.

## **Today in History: September 22**

### **Lincoln issues preliminary Emancipation Proclamation**

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Monday, Sept. 22, the 265th day of 2025. There are 100 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Sept. 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, declaring all enslaved people in Confederate states should be freed as of Jan. 1, 1863, if the states did not end the fighting and rejoin the Union.

Also on this date:

In 1776, during the Revolutionary War, Capt. Nathan Hale, 21, was hanged as a spy by the British in New York.

In 1957, Haitian women were allowed to vote for the first time, 153 years after Haiti became an independent country; François Duvalier was elected president.

In 1975, Sara Jane Moore fired two shots in an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate President Gerald R. Ford outside a San Francisco hotel, missing Ford by inches.

In 1980, the Persian Gulf conflict between Iran and Iraq erupted into a full-scale war that would continue for nearly eight years.

In 1985, rock and country music artists participated in “Farm Aid,” a concert staged in Champaign, Illinois, to help the nation’s farmers.

In 1993, 47 people were killed when an Amtrak passenger train derailed and plunged off a bridge into Big Bayou Canot near Mobile, Alabama.

In 2014, the United States and five Arab nations launched airstrikes against the Islamic State group in Syria, sending waves of planes and Tomahawk cruise missiles against an array of targets.

In 2017, as the scale of the damage from Hurricane Maria started to become clearer, Puerto Rican officials said they could not contact more than half of the communities in the U.S. territory, where all power had been knocked out to the island’s 3.4 million people.

Today’s Birthdays: Singer-choreographer-actor Toni Basil is 82. Musician King Sunny Adé (ah-DAY’) is 79. Football Hall of Famer Harold Carmichael is 76. Rock singer David Coverdale (Deep Purple, Whitesnake) is 74. Actor Shari Belafonte is 71. Singer Debby Boone is 69. Country singer June Forester (The Forester Sisters) is 69. Singer Nick Cave is 68. Singer Andrea Bocelli (an-DRAY’-ah boh-CHEL’-ee) is 67. Singer-musician Joan Jett is 67. Actor Scott Baio is 65. Actor Bonnie Hunt is 64. Actor Mireille Enos is 50. Soccer player Thiago Silva is 41. Actor Tatiana Maslany is 40. Actor Tom Felton is 38. Actor Teyonah Parris is 38. Olympic gold medal skateboarder Coco Yoshizawa is 16.