

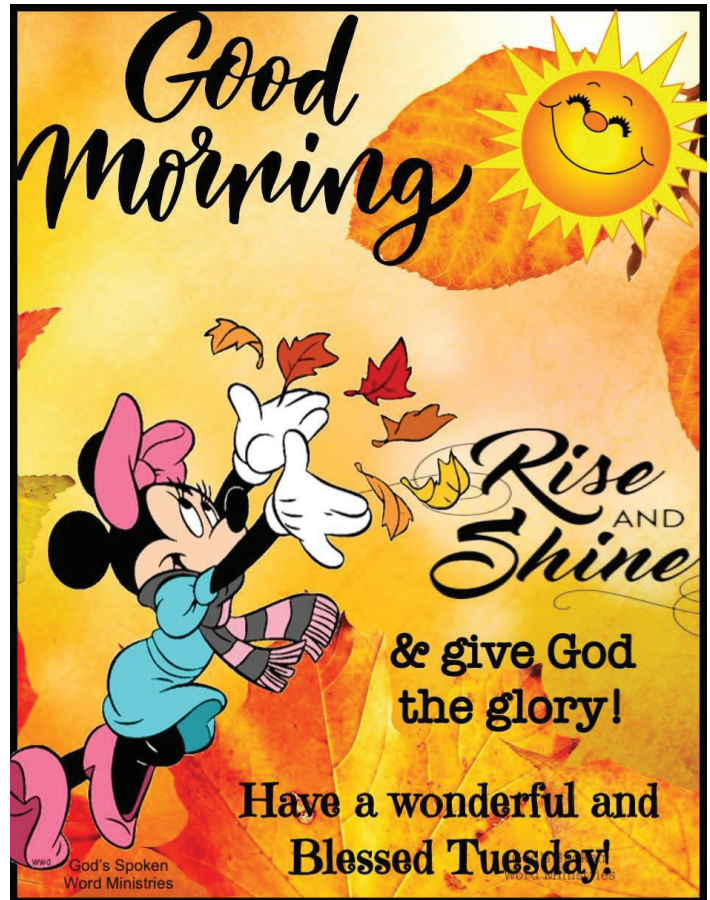
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Tuesday, Oct. 21

Senior Menu: Roast pork, baked potato, cauliflower, whole wheat bread.
School Breakfast: Scones.
School Lunch: Pizza burger, waffle fries.
4th Grade GBB Practice, 3:30 p.m.
5th Grade GBB Practice, 4:14 p.m.
Volleyball hosts Northwestern Area: (Gym: 7th-5, 8th-6; Arena: C-5, JV-6, V-7:15)
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.



Wednesday, Oct. 22

Senior Menu: Hamburger cabbage soup, chicken salad sandwich, Mandarin oranges, oatmeal raisin cookie.

School Breakfast: Breakfast pizza.

School Lunch: Mac and cheese, peas.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Confirmation, 4 p.m.

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

6th Grade GBB Practice, 6 p.m.

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

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1440

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

Amazon's Cloud Crash

A failure in Amazon's cloud computing infrastructure knocked more than a thousand websites and apps offline for hours yesterday morning, with reports of spotty service persisting throughout the day. Platforms affected ranged from apps like Snapchat to Venmo, as well as the British government's website.

Amazon Web Services provides clients with computing power, data storage, and other infrastructure to host web applications—eliminating the need for companies to maintain their own costly physical servers. Yesterday's global outage originated at a data center campus in Northern Virginia, renewing concerns among experts about centralized internet infrastructure. AWS is the world's leading infrastructure provider, with roughly 30% of the market share. Microsoft's Azure and Google Cloud trail at 20% and 13%, respectively.

The AWS outage has drawn comparisons to the July 2024 CrowdStrike outage, which affected about 8.5 million Windows systems and cost Fortune 500 clients over \$5B.

Anybody Want a Peanut?

New food allergies in the US have dropped 36% in 10 years, according to a study published yesterday in Pediatrics. The drop follows a 2015 landmark trial on peanuts and shifting national guidance on early introduction to food allergens.

Researchers analyzed electronic health records for roughly 125,000 children from 48 pediatric practices across the US. They looked at cohorts of children ages 0-3 before and after a 2015 trial found feeding peanut products to babies cut their allergy risk by over 80%. Guidance was updated later that year to encourage early introduction of peanuts to high-risk children; today parents are encouraged to introduce peanuts and eight other common allergens to children as early as four months old, regardless of risk level.

By 2020, an estimated 57,000 fewer children developed food allergies alongside the evolving recommendations, according to yesterday's study, as pediatric practices slowly update their guidance to parents.

NBA Season Tips Off

The 2025-26 NBA season gets underway tonight, starting with the Houston Rockets visiting the Oklahoma City Thunder (7:30 pm ET, NBC/Peacock) in a game featuring superstar Kevin Durant's Rockets debut. The action continues with the Golden State Warriors at the Los Angeles Lakers (10 pm ET, NBC/Peacock).

Top storylines entering the 80th season include Jayson Tatum and Tyrese Haliburton sidelined for the year after tearing their Achilles tendons, shaking up the Eastern Conference. On the rookie front, Dallas debuts No. 1 overall pick Cooper Flagg. Meanwhile, LeBron James begins his record 23rd season chasing a fifth championship while the Thunder look to defend their title.

For the first time in over two decades, the NBA has overhauled its broadcast partners. Prime Video and Peacock replace TNT, while NBC joins ESPN/ABC on a rotating schedule. Fans who want to catch every game online may need multiple streaming services, estimated to cost nearly \$1K.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Toronto Blue Jays clinch ALCS title with 4-3 win over the Seattle Mariners in Game 7, setting up World Series matchup against the Los Angeles Dodgers beginning Friday.

Police say former NFL running back Doug Martin, 36, died after a struggle with officers attempting to detain him during a home break-in Saturday in Oakland, California; no other details were released.

Broadway actors reach tentative labor deal with commercial producers; musicians' union still negotiating to avert strike.

Ticketmaster to ban multiple accounts and shutter resale software in response to federal lawsuit alleging collusion with brokers.

Science & Technology

Federal regulators launch probe into Waymo robotaxis following reports one of the Alphabet-owned company's autonomous vehicles drove around a stopped school bus in Atlanta.

Researchers develop chip implant and glasses that partially restored vision to patients with advanced age-related macular degeneration—first eye prosthesis to give functional sight to those with incurable vision loss.

Scientists discover blood marker of multiple sclerosis present years before symptoms appear, potentially enabling earlier diagnosis and treatment.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher (S&P 500 +1.1%, Dow +1.1%, Nasdaq +1.4%).

Apple shares close at record after iPhone 17 series outsell iPhone 16 in the US and China within first 10 days of availability.

The US and Australia sign critical mineral deal that includes plans for up to \$8.5B in projects.

OpenEvidence—3-year-old startup likened to ChatGPT for doctors—raises \$200M at a \$6B valuation; now reports 15 million consultations per month.

Politics & World Affairs

Colombia recalls its ambassador to the US amid ongoing tensions over drug trafficking allegations and US military strikes.

Bolivia elects centrist as president, ending 20 years of socialist government.

At least six universities reject Education Department compact offering preferential access to federal funding in exchange for adhering to list of commitments, including on international student enrollment, transgender participation in sports.

Supreme Court agrees to consider whether people who regularly smoke marijuana can legally own a firearm (More)

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**Coach Chelsea
Hanson's 200th
Volleyball Win!**
(Photos by Samantha Weber)



Groton Sweeps Langford as Hanson Earns 200th Career Win; Tigers Set for Pink Night Clash with Northwestern

The Groton Area Tigers volleyball team hit the 20-win mark in style Monday night, sweeping Langford Area 3–0 on the road and giving Head Coach Chelsea Hanson her 200th career victory in her 12th season leading the Tigers.

Groton came out firing, dominating the first set 25–9 behind Jaedyn Penning's five kills and an ace serve. Taryn Traphagen added four kills as the Tigers' balanced offense set the tone early.

Langford briefly held a 3–1 lead in the second set before Groton went on a six-point surge to take control. The Tigers never looked back, winning 25–8. Penning again led the attack with four kills and an ace, while Rylee Dunker and Traphagen each had three kills and Traphagen added an assisted block.

In the third set, Groton jumped to a 6–0 lead but Langford battled back, closing within 20–18 before the Tigers held on for a 25–21 win to complete the sweep. Penning finished strong with four kills and two aces in the final frame, while Chesney Weber and Tevan Hanson each tallied four kills.

For the night, Groton recorded 45 kills, 5 aces, and 2 blocks. Individual totals were:

Jaedyn Penning – 13 kills, 4 aces

Rylee Dunker – 9 kills

Tevan Hanson – 8 kills

Taryn Traphagen – 7 kills, 1 assisted block

Chesney Weber – 6 kills

Makenna Krause – 2 kills

Sydney Locke – 1 ace

Langford was led by Brooke Dwight with a block, assist, and ace serve. Paytyn Marlow added four kills, Mariah Tosse one, Emily Olson two kills, two assists, a block, and an ace, while Lizzie Gustafson tallied three kills and a block. The evening also included a special recognition for Alexandria Darling, who recorded her 1,000th career dig for the Lions.

Coach Hanson Reflects on Milestone and Looks Ahead

Following the match, Coach Hanson reflected on the team's balanced performance and the program's progress over the years.

"Forty-five kills in three sets—that's tough to beat," Hanson said. "Their defense actually did a pretty good job on the few that we didn't get down. It's just good for us to come in, try different things, and prepare for games that are a little bit bigger. Obviously, we're excited for tomorrow."

That next matchup comes Tuesday as the Tigers host Northwestern for Pink Night—an annual breast cancer awareness event filled with raffles, a silent auction, and a sea of pink throughout the gym.

"Pink Night in Groton is always a great atmosphere," Hanson said. "The last time we hosted Northwestern for it, it was just a fun, high-energy environment—lots of pink, and a lot of excitement. Honestly, it could feel like a state tournament setting."

Hanson said the key against Northwestern will be limiting errors.

"When we play teams like Northwestern or Warner, they're not going to give you free points," she said. "If we score the ball and don't make mistakes, we'll be competitive. If we make too many errors, they'll win. It's that simple. But I'm really excited to see our girls compete."

With the win, Groton Area improved to 21–4 on the season and will now look to build on its momentum in front of a home crowd Tuesday night.

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Groton City Council Meeting Agenda

October 21, 2025 – 7:00pm

City Hall – 120 N Main Street

(IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CALL IN TO THIS MEETING, PLEASE MAKE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS TO DO SO BY
CALLING CITY HALL 605-397-8422)

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Public Comments - pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1
(Public Comments will offer the opportunity for anyone not listed on the agenda to speak to the council. Speaking time will be limited to 3 minutes. No action will be taken on questions or items not on the agenda.)
3. 2026 Liquor & Wine License Renewals:
 - The Jungle – package off-sale liquor & retail on-sale liquor
 - American Legion Post #39 – package off-sale liquor & retail on-sale liquor
 - Ken's Food Fair – package off-sale liquor
 - Red Horse Inn – retail on-sale liquor
 - Olive Grove Golf Course – retail on-sale liquor
 - Dollar General – retail on-off sale wine & cider
 - MJ's Sinclair – package off-sale liquor
4. Authorize the Recommendation of Grant for Groton Development Corporation through The Groton Community Fund
5. September Finance Report
6. 2025 Swimming Pool Report
7. 2025 Baseball Report
8. 2026 Budget Discussion
9. Minutes
10. Bills
11. Announcement: Downtown Trick or Treat on October 31, 2025, from 4-6pm. Main Street to be Blocked Off.
12. Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)
13. Adjournment

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BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2025, 8:45 A.M.

COMMISSIONER'S CHAMBERS

COURTHOUSE ANNEX - 25 MARKET STREET, ABERDEEN SD

1. Call To Order - Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Opportunity for Public Comment
 - ❖ *Public comment will be limited to 10 minutes or at Boards Discretion. Presentations will be limited to 3 minutes.*
4. Rachel Kippley, Fair/Fairgrounds/Parks Manager
 - a. Bid Opening for Rodeo Stock Contractors
5. First Reading of Ordinances:
 - a. Amended Ord. #302 – Wind Energy Systems
 - b. Amended Ord. #303 – Data Center
6. Consent Calendar
 - a. Approval of General Meeting Minutes for October 14, 2025
 - b. Claims/Payroll
 - c. HR Report
 - d. Claim Assignments
 - e. 2026 BCF Ticket Prices
7. Other Business
8. Executive Session (if requested per SDCL 1-25-2)
9. Adjourn

You can join the Brown County Commission Meeting via **your computer, tablet, or smartphone** at <https://meet.goto.com/BrCoCommission>

You can also dial in using your phone. United States: [+1 \(872\) 240-3311](tel:+18722403311) - Access Code: 601-168-909 #

Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://meet.goto.com/install>

Official Recordings of Commission Meetings along with the Minutes can be found at [Commission Meetings | Brown County](#)

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GT on

Varsity Volleyball
Northwestern at Groton Area
Tues., Oct. 21
7:00 p.m.

Groton Area Tigers Groton, SD

GDILIVE
YouTube
A production of the
Groton Daily Independent
For more info: GDILIVE.COM



GT on

Football
Groton Area at Clark
Thurs., Oct. 23
7:00 p.m.
First Round Playoffs

Groton Area Tigers Groton, SD

GDILIVE
YouTube
A production of the
Groton Daily Independent
For more info: GDILIVE.COM



GT on

Varsity Volleyball
Groton Area at Redfield
Fri., Oct. 24
7:00 p.m.

Groton Area Tigers Groton, SD

GDILIVE
YouTube
A production of the
Groton Daily Independent
For more info: GDILIVE.COM



Death Notice: Mick Sippel

Milton "Mick" Sippel, 82, of Groton passed away October 20, 2025 at Bethesda Home of Aberdeen. Services are pending with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Meet the Wolves with Northern State Basketball on November 9

Aberdeen, S.D. – Join Northern State Athletics and the men's and women's basketball teams on Sunday, November 9 from 4-5 p.m. for Meet the Wolves. The event is free and open to the public with activities planned for all ages.

Attendees will hear from Director of Athletics, Nate Davis, as well as head coaches Paula Krueger and Matt Wilber. Men's and women's basketball student-athletes will be in attendance for autographs, photos, yard games with kids, free popcorn, and more! All attendees can enter the Meet the Wolves raffle which includes two single game chairback tickets, Northern State swag, and an autographed commemorative basketball.

The Wolves open their seasons with exhibition contests this week. The men will travel to Murray State and Wyoming on October 26 and November 3, while the women will host Valley City State on October 23. The regular season home opener for both programs is set for Tuesday, November 25 against Jamestown.

Brookings County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash

Where: SD Highway 30 and 471st Avenue, one mile south of Bruce, SD

When: 6:05 a.m., Sunday, October 19, 2025

Driver 1: 53-year-old male from Arlington, SD, minor injuries

Vehicle 1: 2023 GMC Sierra

Seat belt Used: Yes

Driver 2: 48-year-old female from Brookings, SD, fatal injuries

Vehicle 2: 2007 Ford Edge

Seat belt Used: Under investigation

Brookings County, S.D.- A Brookings woman died early Sunday morning in a two-vehicle crash one mile south of Bruce, SD.

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

Preliminary crash information indicates the driver of a 2007 Ford Edge was traveling north on 471st Avenue. At the same time, the driver of a 2023 GMC Sierra was traveling east on 204th Street. As the GMC approached the intersection with 471st Street, the driver failed to stop at the stop sign, entering the intersection and colliding with the Ford. Both vehicles traveled off the roadway into the northeast ditch.

The driver of the GMC received minor injuries. The driver of the Ford was pronounced deceased at the scene.

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

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



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Gov. Rhoden hires Iowan to lead South Dakota prison system

BY: JOHN HULT-OCTOBER 20, 2025 5:14 PM

An Iowa prison official who's worked in corrections in three states will lead the South Dakota Department of Corrections.

Gov. Larry Rhoden announced that Nick Lamb will serve as the department's new secretary on Monday afternoon. The governor said in a press release that the 31-year veteran of prison systems in Iowa, New Mexico and Illinois was selected after "an extensive interview process and aggressive national search." "We found the right person that will help keep our corrections system strong and safe for both inmates and officers," Rhoden said. "Nick's leadership will ensure strong implementation of rehabilitation services that will reduce recidivism and keep our communities safe."

Lamb is currently the deputy director of institutional operations for the Iowa prison system, overseeing nine facilities, 2,500 employees, and approximately 8,500 inmates. He's also a retired staff sergeant with the U.S. Army National Guard. He served 21 years.

Rhoden also thanked Kellie Wasko, who resigned in a letter sent over Labor Day weekend that announced Oct. 20 as her departure date.

The three and a half years during which Wasko presided over the state's prison system were some of the most eventful – and controversial – in recent memory for the department.

Her resignation came at the same time 20 lawmakers asked her to step down, although Rhoden said Wasko made her decision before those lawmakers went public with their demand.

Three weeks later, at a special session of the state legislature, lawmakers voted to back a plan to build a new, \$650 million men's prison in northeast Sioux Falls. Lawmakers rejected an \$825 million plan to build in southern Lincoln County in February, during the regular legislative session.

Wasko had drawn criticism for her handling of the prison project's controversies over location and funding, and for policy changes she'd instituted during her time in office.

Rhoden said he never lost confidence in Wasko, but also said in September that her departure could help clear a path for a new men's prison.

Wasko came to South Dakota in 2022 from Colorado, where she'd worked first as a nurse and then an administrator for that state's corrections department.

Lamb, her replacement, will begin in mid-November. Brent Fluke, the deputy DOC secretary, will act as interim secretary until then.

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

\$174 million South Dakota battery project signals intent to begin permitting process

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR-OCTOBER 20, 2025 1:45 PM

Last month, utilities regulators voted 2-1 to tell a company that wants to put industrial scale batteries near Watertown that they'll need a permit before they build.

Last week, lawyers for the company behind the \$174 million project signaled plans to do just that.

Crowned Ridge Energy Storage I, LLC, is an affiliate of Florida-based NextEra Energy Resources. The

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company unsuccessfully lobbied the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission for a permitting exemption in August, arguing the project does not meet the legal definition of a facility.

If built, the project would be the first large-scale, standalone battery storage facility of its kind in the state of South Dakota. Documents filed by the company with regulators say it would utilize lithium ion or similar battery storage technology.

The company's lawyers filed a notice of intent to apply for a permit last week, following the ruling against its petition for an exemption. The filing outlines a plan to construct, own, and operate a battery system with a 120-watt capacity in Codington County, about 20 miles northeast of Watertown. The project could store and continuously deliver enough electricity to power tens of thousands of homes for four hours before needing to recharge, the document says.

The batteries would cover roughly 15.4 acres and connect to a nearby Crowned Ridge-owned substation. It would store excess electricity from regional wind generation and release it when demand peaks. When less electricity is being used at night, the batteries can charge, and in the morning, when families flick on the lights, that stored electricity can be used.

Most impacted land is agricultural, and would be leased or bought, the filing says. Construction is expected to employ about 180 workers and result in one or two permanent jobs.

The company anticipates a final permit decision by April 2027. If approved, construction could begin in May, targeting commercial operation in early 2028.

The state's three elected utilities regulators entered uncharted territory when the project appeared on their docket last month.

Commissioner Chris Nelson argued in September that "batteries don't generate electricity" and therefore fall outside the agency's jurisdiction.

Commissioners Kristie Fiegen and Gary Hanson disagreed, saying large-scale storage puts usable electricity into the grid when discharging and should face public review.

Now, Crowned Ridge must secure both a state facility permit. It will also need conditional use and building permits and a road-use agreement from Codington County.

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.

Quality and cost of Medicare coverage vary by state, report finds, with SD ranking 24th

New England and Western states ranked high in the report's rankings, while Southern states landed at the bottom

BY: ANNA CLAIRE VOLLERS-OCTOBER 20, 2025 6:00 AM

The quality and cost of Medicare coverage depend on where you live, according to new research.

The Commonwealth Fund, a research nonprofit focused on health care, on Thursday released a report grading how well Medicare works for people in each state and the District of Columbia. The federally funded health insurance program covers about 68 million Americans who are at least 65 years old, and an additional 7 million with disabilities.

Medicare ostensibly provides the same coverage to all enrollees, but how individuals experience that coverage differs by state, researchers found.

"In some states, beneficiaries can see doctors quickly and afford their prescriptions," Gretchen Johnson, vice president at the Commonwealth Fund, said in a statement. "In others, they face higher costs, delays or red tape."

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Vermont, Utah and Minnesota ranked at the top in the report's rankings, while Louisiana, Mississippi and Kentucky landed at the bottom.

Researchers scored states based on 31 indicators, including demographic data like age and income, as well as factors including having a usual care provider, preventable hospital stays, and the share of beneficiaries with potentially dangerous medication prescriptions.

For example, the share of hospital admissions in West Virginia that could have been avoided with quality outpatient care was more than double the share in Idaho.

Costs vary, too. Because traditional Medicare does not cover prescription drugs, people on Medicare usually purchase separate drug plans or purchase drug coverage as part of a Medicare Advantage plan.

But those out-of-pocket costs differ depending on where a person lives. Older people in North Dakota pay nearly 13% of their drug costs out of pocket, compared with people in New York who pay less than 5%, the report found.

High-performing states such as Vermont and Utah tend to share certain characteristics. Most have Medicare Advantage and prescription drug plans that offer better coverage than plans in other states. They're also more likely to not require prior authorization for preventive services and specialty care.

Higher performing states also tend to have a health care system that performs well for people who aren't covered by Medicare. States at the bottom of the rankings, such as Louisiana and Mississippi, have a much higher share of people who were uninsured or underinsured before they enrolled in Medicare.

"When people are sick coming into Medicare, they tend to be really sick when they're on Medicare," David Radley, a senior scientist at the Commonwealth Fund, told reporters on a press call earlier this week. "So if somebody is un- or underinsured before they age into Medicare, that might mean they have chronic diseases that may not necessarily be getting treated. They may be people that don't get to see the doctor very often because they're un- or underinsured.

"Then, when they age into Medicare, they can be much sicker on average than Medicare beneficiaries in other states."

Stateline reporter Anna Claire Vollers can be reached at avollers@stateline.org.

This story was originally produced by Stateline, which is part of States Newsroom, a nonprofit news network which includes South Dakota Searchlight, and is supported by grants and a coalition of donors as a 501c(3) public charity.

Anna Claire Vollers covers health care for Stateline. She is based in Huntsville, Alabama.

US House Democrats question Trump administration focus on 'patriotic education'

BY: SHAUNEEN MIRANDA-OCTOBER 20, 2025 8:33 PM

WASHINGTON — A group of Democrats on the U.S. House education panel urged the Education Department to withdraw its proposed supplemental priority on "promoting patriotic education" in a letter obtained Monday by States Newsroom.

House Committee on Education and Workforce ranking member Bobby Scott led a handful of his colleagues in writing to Education Secretary Linda McMahon opposing the proposed priority for discretionary grant funding.

The Democrats wrote that while civics education "is a vital component of a well-functioning democracy," the proposal's details "raise serious concerns." The letter was sent Oct. 17 — the last day to submit a comment on the proposed priority. It has not been previously reported.

Joining Scott, of Virginia, were Reps. Frederica Wilson of Florida, Suzanne Bonamici of Oregon, Mark Takano and Mark DeSaulnier of California, Lucy McBath of Georgia, Summer Lee of Pennsylvania and Yassamin Ansari of Arizona.

Dems reject Trump hand in curriculum

The Democrats said the agency's proposal would insert President Donald Trump's administration's "pref-

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ferences of a particular understanding of American history in curriculum, professional development, and educational programs.”

Civics is a branch of social studies that focuses on rights and obligations of citizenship. Though it’s long enjoyed bipartisan support, the subject has found itself engulfed in the education culture wars regarding how and what is taught as America reckons with its complicated history.

The department announced last month it would be prioritizing “patriotic education” when it comes to discretionary grants.

The department’s proposed definition of “patriotic education” calls for a presentation of America’s history that is grounded in an “accurate, honest, unifying, inspiring, and ennobling characterization of the American founding and foundational principles” and “the concept that commitment to America’s aspirations is beneficial and justified.”

But the Democrats found this definition to be “concerning,” saying this framing “creates the potential for schools that teach accurate and complex histories of slavery, Indigenous displacement, the Women’s Suffrage Movement, and the Civil Rights Movement to be limited in their ability to access certain discretionary grants.”

Coalition to promote patriotism

The department’s September announcement came the same day it unveiled a civics education coalition that includes a slew of prominent conservative advocacy organizations, such as the Heritage Foundation and Turning Point USA.

Left out of that initiative are some of the more traditional civics and education groups. Instead, many of the coalition’s groups have promoted Trump’s political agenda and promote a vision of U.S. identity that downplays historical wrongs associated with race and gender and projects the country as an exceptional force for good.

“Some of these groups have expressed contempt for the teaching of history that does not align with the version of history they believe students should learn, and these same groups would prefer to limit children’s access to materials that depict the realities of slavery in America or the Civil Rights Movement,” the Democrats wrote.

The department did not immediately respond to a request for comment Monday.

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

Trump tried to lay off more than 2,000 Interior staff in shutdown plan now on hold

BY: JENNIFER SHUTT-OCTOBER 20, 2025 4:29 PM

WASHINGTON — The Interior Department announced Monday it will pause efforts to lay off 2,050 employees throughout the country, after a federal judge expanded a temporary restraining order late last week.

The new filing provides more information about how the Trump administration plans to reduce the size and scope of a department that oversees much of the country’s public lands.

Rachel Borra, chief human capital officer at Interior, wrote in a 35-page document the layoffs would affect employees at the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service and U.S. Geological Survey, among others.

The National Park Service layoffs would target several areas of the country, including 63 of 224 workers at the Northeast regional office, 69 of 223 at the Southeast regional office and 57 of 198 at the Pacific West regional office.

The Northeast region holds 83 sites throughout Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia and West Virginia.

The Southeast region “has 73 parks across 4 million acres in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Loui-

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siana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.”

The Pacific West region encompasses more than “60 national park sites across California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, parts of Arizona and Montana, and the territories of Guam, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands.”

The layoffs cannot take place under the temporary restraining order that U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California Judge Susan Illston clarified and expanded Friday during an emergency hearing.

The layoffs would be further blocked if Illston, who was nominated by President Bill Clinton, issues a preliminary injunction during a hearing scheduled for later this month.

Advocates and current and former Interior staff members have told States Newsroom that bare-bones staffing during the government shutdown across the department and the U.S. Forest Service already is leaving America’s treasured natural assets vulnerable to lasting damage.

Hundreds proposed for layoffs at Commerce, HHS

The other briefs filed Monday were from the departments of Commerce and Health and Human Services, which said in earlier court documents officials planned to lay off hundreds of federal workers.

Commerce’s latest numbers say it would like to lay off 102 workers, while the Health and Human Services Department told the judge officials plan to get rid of 954 people. Both confirmed those efforts are on hold under the temporary restraining order.

The numbers were different from those included in earlier filings to the court in the lawsuit, which was brought by labor unions representing federal workers.

Those declarations in the earlier filings detailed the below layoff plans:

- Commerce: Approximately 600 employees
- Education: Remained at 466 employees
- Health and Human Services: 982 employees
- Housing and Urban Development: 442 employees
- Homeland Security: 54 employees
- Treasury: 1,377 employees

Federal attorneys wrote in Monday’s court documents that all other departments “have determined, to the best of their knowledge and based on their investigation to date, that they have no additional information to provide in response to the Court’s October 17, 2025, modified TRO, that was not already provided in their October 17, 2025, declarations.”

Energy Department layoffs protested by Dems

The Energy Department wrote in a filing that it didn’t need to declare any planned layoffs to the court since the Reduction in Force notices it had issued didn’t have an effective date. An earlier court filing said the department sent those notices to 179 employees.

Senate Appropriations Committee ranking member Patty Murray, D-Wash., and House Energy-Water Appropriations subcommittee ranking member Marcy Kaptur, D-Ohio, wrote in a letter that the Energy Department’s planned layoffs were “a clear act of political retribution that will hurt communities across the country.”

“These actions, which reportedly affect 179 employees, appear to be part of a broader effort to implement the administration’s budget request without congressional approval—circumventing the appropriations process and undermining congressional intent,” Murray and Kaptur wrote. “The Department’s actions will raise energy prices for American families by disrupting the implementation of key programs that increase supply and reduce costs for hard-working Americans.”

The layoffs are one of the many ways the Trump administration is approaching the government shutdown differently than it did during the last prolonged funding lapse, which took place from December 2018 through January 2019.

White House officials have canceled funding approved by Congress for projects in regions of the country that tend to vote for Democrats. And signaled they may not provide back pay for federal workers placed on furlough, which is authorized by a 2019 law that President Donald Trump signed during his first term.

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Johnson ties shutdown to No Kings rallies

Speaker Mike Johnson, a Louisiana Republican, said during a morning press conference he hopes Senate Democrats vote to advance a stopgap spending bill soon, allowing the government to reopen.

The conclusion of the No Kings protests, he said, could help reduce pressure on Democrats to keep the government shut down.

"Now that Chuck Schumer has had his spectacle, he's had his big protest against America, this is our plea: We're asking, and I think everybody in this room and everybody watching, listening to our voices this morning should be hoping that he is finally now ready to go to work and end this shutdown and stop inflicting pain on the American people," Johnson said.

Kevin Hassett, director of the National Economic Council, told reporters outside the White House he believes moderate Democrats, specifically Sen. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, are ready to end the shutdown.

Shaheen told the New Hampshire Bulletin on Friday that no official negotiations to end the shutdown are happening. She also criticized the administration's multibillion dollar bailout for Argentina that Trump finalized last week as federal agencies remain dark during the funding lapse and as health insurance premiums are set to increase.

But Hassett repeated the argument that Republicans won't negotiate until Senate Democrats vote to reopen the government. He told CNBC Monday morning he believes that will happen "sometime this week."

"If they want to have policy disputes, they could do it through regular order, but just shutting down the government and making 750,000 government workers not get their paychecks, it's just not acceptable," the White House economic adviser said.

The Senate failed for an 11th time later in the day to advance the House-passed stopgap spending bill that would keep the government up and running through Nov. 21.

The 50-43 vote followed a familiar pattern, with Nevada Democratic Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto and Maine independent Sen. Angus King voting with Republicans to advance the bill. Pennsylvania Democratic Sen. John Fetterman, who has been voting to advance the bill, didn't vote. Kentucky GOP Sen. Rand Paul voted no.

Ashley Murray and Shauneen Miranda contributed to this report.

Jennifer covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include congressional policy, politics and legal challenges with a focus on health care, unemployment, housing and aid to families.

Trump isn't sending troops to cities with highest crime rates, data shows

BY: AMANDA HERNÁNDEZ-OCTOBER 20, 2025 3:46 PM

President Donald Trump has argued that he needs to deploy National Guard troops across state lines to protect federal personnel and property or to support overwhelmed local law enforcement in cities he claims are "overrun" by crime.

But a Stateline analysis of U.S. Census Bureau and federal crime data shows that Trump's deployments and proposals have not focused on the nation's most violent cities. Of the 10 cities population 250,000 or more with the highest violent crime rates, Trump has sent National Guard troops to just one: Memphis, Tennessee.

He has proposed action in just three other top-10 cities: Oakland, California; Baltimore; and St. Louis. All, along with Memphis, are Democratic-led cities.

Several other cities with high violent crime rates — including Milwaukee; Albuquerque, New Mexico; and Minneapolis — also are led by Democrats but have not been targeted. Two other Democratic-led cities with high violent crime rates, Cleveland and Kansas City, Missouri, are in states with Republican governors and likewise haven't been targeted.

Instead, the administration has directed more attention toward larger, Democratic-run cities in Democratic-

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led states such as Chicago, Los Angeles and Portland, Oregon, along with Washington, D.C., where violent crime rates are lower than in many other major cities.

In recent months, Trump has pledged strong federal intervention in several cities if, he claims, local officials fail to restore order.

Critics, including Democratic governors and mayors, have challenged his rationale in court, arguing that deployments exceed the president's authority and undermine local control.

Federal courts have issued orders halting troop deployments in several cities while legal challenges proceed. Most recently, deployments were blocked in Chicago and Portland. The Trump administration is appealing those rulings.

Trump also has suggested deploying troops to New York City and San Francisco.

Stateline's data analysis shows violent crime has fallen sharply across the United States, including significant drops in some cities that Trump is threatening with military action.

Some crime experts question whether a heightened law enforcement or military presence in major cities will have a lasting impact on crime.

"In the long term, this can't really be good for public safety," said Nancy La Vigne, a criminal justice researcher and dean of the School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University. La Vigne added that crime may decline in the cities where the Guard is deployed, but that it will likely be an "artificial suppression of crime" because potential victims may avoid downtown areas — an effect that could fade over time.

Violent crime is down

Some Republican governors have welcomed federal support. Tennessee Republican Gov. Bill Lee endorsed the use of Guard troops in Memphis as part of a new citywide anti-crime task force.

Louisiana Republican Gov. Jeff Landry has requested federal funding to activate up to 1,000 Guard members statewide, citing "elevated violent crime rates" in Baton Rouge, New Orleans and Shreveport. Landry also pointed to critical staffing shortages in local law enforcement.

According to local police data through Sept. 6 of this year, however, violent crime in New Orleans is not elevated. It has fallen 16%, with homicides down 20% and property crimes also down 20% compared with the same period in 2024.

Likewise in Baton Rouge, both the overall violent crime rate and the homicide rate declined between 2023 and 2024, falling below 2019 levels, according to a Stateline analysis.

In Shreveport, the overall violent crime rate increased between 2023 and 2024, while the homicide rate fell. Both rates remain higher than in 2019.

The cities with populations of 250,000 or more with the highest violent crime rates were, in order: Memphis, Oakland, Detroit, Baltimore, Cleveland, Kansas City, Milwaukee, St. Louis, Albuquerque and Minneapolis, according to Stateline's analysis of FBI data.

Available national crime data shows that both violent and property crime continue to decline nationwide. These broad national trends, however, don't mean every community is experiencing less crime. Some cities and neighborhoods are still seeing higher rates of certain offenses.

According to the Real-Time Crime Index — a free tool that collects crime data from more than 500 law enforcement agencies — violent crime nationwide was 10.7% lower between January and July 2025 than during the same period the previous year, with homicides down 20% and property crime down 12.4%.

The nonpartisan think tank Council on Criminal Justice's most recent crime trends report shows declines in homicides, gun assaults and carjackings across 42 major cities in the first half of 2025 compared with the same period in 2024. The report shows increases in homicide across five cities.

Although the FBI's findings are a year behind, they align with those numbers. The FBI's 2024 report, released earlier this year, showed that violent crime fell 4.5% and property crime dropped 8.1% nationally compared with the previous year. Homicides alone declined by nearly 15%.

These improvements mark a continued reversal of the pandemic-era surge in violence, when homicides rose nearly 30% in 2020 — one of the largest single-year increases in U.S. history.

But the pace and direction of those declines vary widely from city to city, and public perception of crime

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often diverges from what the data shows.

City-by-city details

Nationally, violent and property crime have fallen sharply since peaking in the 1990s — a trend mirrored in most cities, including the five where Trump has deployed or sought to deploy the National Guard.

There may be variations between national figures and local police data because of differences in data collection methods and how crimes are defined.

In Washington, D.C., where the number of reported homicides spiked in 2023, homicides declined by 32% in 2024. The homicide rate fell from 39 per 100,000 residents in 2023, to 26 in 2024, according to a Stateline analysis of FBI crime data.

Local police data shows that, as of Oct. 15, 2025, homicides are down 25% from last year, along with declines in every other major crime category, including property crime.

Los Angeles recorded similar declines between 2023 and 2024 across nearly all crime types, except for arson, which rose from 179 reported incidents to 410, according to a Stateline analysis. Still, overall violent and property crime fell during that period. The city's homicide rate dropped slightly from 8 per 100,000 residents in 2023 to 7 in 2024.

Los Angeles ranks No. 32 nationally in violent crime among cities with populations over 250,000. FBI data shows a rate of 728 incidents per 100,000 residents, while a Stateline analysis using U.S. Census Bureau population estimates from May shows a slightly lower rate of 715 incidents per 100,000 residents.

As of Oct. 4, 2025, data maintained by the Los Angeles Police Department shows violent crime down 16% and property crime down about 18% compared with the same period last year.

Memphis also reported decreases in most major crime categories between 2023 and 2024, though aggravated assaults increased slightly, according to a Stateline analysis. The city's homicide rate fell from 57 to 40 per 100,000 residents during that same period.

In 2024, Memphis recorded the highest violent crime rate among major U.S. cities with populations over 250,000 — 2,501 incidents per 100,000 residents, according to FBI data. A Stateline analysis using U.S. Census Bureau population estimates from May show a slightly higher violent crime rate of 2,515 reported incidents per 100,000 residents.

Local police data shows homicides during the first eight months of 2025 are at a six-year low compared with the same period in previous years, and overall crime is at a 25-year low.

Chicago, by contrast, recorded increases in rape, aggravated assault, burglary and larceny-theft between 2023 and 2024, according to a Stateline analysis.

While the overall violent crime rate was lower in 2024 than in 2023, the property crime rate rose slightly. The homicide rate declined modestly from 18 to 17 per 100,000 residents. As of Oct. 12, 2025, overall reported crime is down 13% from the same period last year, and murders are down 28%, according to local police data.

In Portland, most major crime categories fell between 2023 and 2024, though larceny-theft and aggravated assault rose, according to a Stateline analysis. Overall violent and property crime rates were lower in 2024 than in 2023, and the homicide rate declined slightly from about 12 to 11 per 100,000 residents.

Between January and August 2025, compared with the same period in 2024, total crime has remained largely unchanged, according to the Portland Police Bureau's crime statistics dashboard. However, reported violent crimes are up 3%, property crime is down 4% and "society" crimes such as prostitution and drug offenses have increased significantly.

Public perception of crime

Despite nationwide declines in violent and property crime, most Americans believe crime is getting worse. A Gallup poll conducted in October 2024 found that 64% of adults thought crime had increased nationally compared with the previous year, while 49% said there was more crime in their local area. A more recent poll from March found that 75% of adults worry about crime either a fair amount or a great deal.

Criminologists and researchers point to several factors behind the gap between public perception and

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actual crime trends. Political rhetoric and media coverage often emphasize violent incidents, and misleading interpretations of crime data can reinforce fear.

"We live in a society now where people want information and don't want to take the time to stop and think, and to also consult alternative viewpoints," said Alex Piquero, a criminology professor at the University of Miami and former director of the federal Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Crime statistics are notoriously difficult to track and understand, in part because much of the data lags behind real-time events. Different sources can also show different trends, depending on how the information is collected.

For example, FBI data relies on voluntary reports from police departments, which may not capture all crimes, while the Bureau of Justice Statistics' victimization survey excludes homicide and is based on respondents' experiences in the six months prior to the survey rather than the year it is released. These differences make it challenging for the public to get a clear, up-to-date picture of crime in their communities.

Public perception is further shaped by visible signs of disorder, such as graffiti, abandoned buildings or homeless encampments, according to experts.

People also tend to remember personal anecdotes or news stories that resonate emotionally, rather than abstract statistics. Experts say that this dynamic can be exploited in political messaging, creating a sense of personal risk even when overall crime is declining.

"Crime is kind of one of those things that doesn't go away in the news cycle because it is relevant to people on a day in and day out basis," Piquero told Stateline.

Law enforcement presence

Ramped-up police and National Guard patrols in cities nationwide have sparked debate over whether such deployments are effective at curbing crime or mostly serve as a show of force.

Research suggests that police and military presence affect crime in very different ways. Targeted policing in high-crime "hot spots" reduces crime in those areas, according to experts.

"Police are one part of an overall crime prevention strategy, and they are very effective at disrupting what we call 'hot spots,'" Piquero said.

The National Guard and other military forces, on the other hand, have historically played a very limited role in crime prevention, according to experts. National Guard troops are typically deployed during civil unrest or natural disasters, rather than as a routine crime-fighting tool.

A 2023 research paper led by Brown University examining Cali, Colombia, suggests that military policing rarely outperforms traditional police in reducing crime. In many cases, crime declines are short lived, and rates often go up once military forces leave.

Military deployments in cities are unlikely to produce the sustained reductions in crime that targeted policing can achieve, in part because the National Guard does not receive the same training as local police officers on when and how to use force or implement crime prevention strategies.

Some experts say that these deployments may be more effective when requested and guided by local officials who can define the need, duration and scope of their support.

Experts also caution that the presence of military personnel can heighten tensions or erode community trust, potentially undermining the relationships local police have built to effectively address crime. Such deployments may also have economic consequences if residents or tourists avoid city centers out of fear.

Stateline reporter Amanda Watford can be reached at ahernandez@stateline.org.

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Amanda Hernández covers criminal justice for Stateline. She has reported for both national and local outlets, including ABC News, USA Today and NBC4 Washington.

Shutdown leaves gaps in states' health data, possibly endangering lives

BY: TIM HENDERSON-OCTOBER 20, 2025 2:35 PM

As the federal shutdown continues, states have been forced to fall back on their own resources to spot disease outbreaks — just as respiratory illness season begins.

The shutdown has halted dashboards and expert analysis from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which monitors indicators such as wastewater to provide early warnings of the spread of COVID-19, influenza, RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) and other infectious diseases.

The pause leaves states with less early warning on disease outbreaks, potentially endangering lives even as child vaccination rates drop amid increased exemptions and hesitancy fed by misinformation. State and local officials can combat outbreaks with targeted advice to get vaccinated and stay home when sick, but they need to know where to do that first. And residents won't know to take precautions if they're unaware when many in their community are falling ill.

Wastewater is particularly crucial to finding outbreaks before people start seeking treatment, said Dr. John T. Brooks, a former chief medical officer for CDC's Emergency COVID-19 Response who retired last year.

"This is one more piece of information to each American citizen to inform their decision, like, 'Do I want to get vaccinated, and is now the time?'" Brooks said. "It really helps protect Americans by identifying communities where you may need to ramp up, raise awareness, remind people about hygiene."

Ericka McGowan, senior director for emerging infectious disease at the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, said the absence of CDC involvement "could be a problem if there's some major issue [states] miss." Generally, states and localities gather their own health information, but many rely on the CDC for analysis and public display.

Washington state's wastewater surveillance program, for instance, uses the CDC's dashboards to display information to the public. Now, only state officials can see the information, and they would have to rethink the system if the shutdown continues, McGowan said.

Caitlin Rivers, an associate professor at Johns Hopkins University who studies infectious disease outbreaks, checked all 50 states for shutdown-related data issues. In a Substack post, Rivers said the result of the shutdown is "DIY surveillance."

Georgia had to pause its influenza report, which would normally start this month, because of missing CDC data. However, health officials are working on a version using only state information, said Nancy Nydam, a spokesperson for the Georgia Department of Public Health. Some hospitals report cases to the state and some directly to the CDC, so there will be some information gaps during the shutdown, she said.

In the meantime, Georgia has its own data on emergency room visits showing cases of suspected COVID-19, flu and RSV declining between August and early October.

Georgia also has its own wastewater surveillance program, which provides early warning of diseases spreading in the population before confirmed cases show up in hospitals. But some states rely on CDC wastewater surveillance.

Michael Hoerger, an associate professor at Tulane University, had to pause his state-by-state wastewater reports on COVID-19 because of the lack of CDC wastewater data and an unrelated pause in data from a private wastewater reporting collective called Biobot, he said. Biobot did not respond to a request for comment.

"The pause means that we won't have a good sense of which states are dealing with elevated transmission [of COVID-19] until the data come back online," Hoerger said. "I can still post useful national estimates and forecasts, but that doesn't really help with states that are outliers from what's happening nationally."

Hoerger's Pandemic Mitigation Collaborative released a report in August on COVID-19 hot spots in California, and the highest state rates for COVID-19 in late September were in Connecticut, Delaware, Nevada and Utah.

For the time being, all Hoerger can do is rely on past forecasts predicting about 499,000 new COVID-19 infections a day as of Oct. 13, the first time it's been under 500,000 since July.

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"We're in a bit of a blackout at the moment in terms of real-time rigorous data," Hoerger said. "Fortunately, at least nationally, we're in a relative lull in transmission."

Like Georgia, many states can monitor wastewater on their own to track COVID-19, flu, RSV and other diseases, according to a list compiled by Hoerger's Pandemic Mitigation Collaborative.

Texas, for example, has not had trouble updating its data during the shutdown, health department spokesperson Chris Van Deusen said. "We do our own surveillance for most metrics," he said. However, the state no longer gets information on new COVID-19 and RSV deaths from the federal government, he said.

North Carolina also gathers its own wastewater data and interprets it with help from the University of North Carolina and local health departments. Normally, the CDC would weigh in with its own guidance and post results on a national dashboard — actions that are paused in the shutdown, said Hannah Jones, a spokesperson for the state health department.

But even if they have their own wastewater data, other state and local health departments may rely on the CDC for analysis and guidance, said McGowan, of the state health officials group.

"Even if you collect the data, you still have to have someone who is an expert to analyze that data to give you some kind of result," McGowan said. "A lot of localities don't have that kind of expertise in house and they rely on the CDC for that type of technical expertise and guidance. So there's a gap there."

Rivers, the Johns Hopkins associate professor, wrote in her post that she sees "clouds on the horizon" in some states. There are more young children, who are most susceptible to RSV, visiting emergency rooms in Louisiana, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia, she wrote, and also more hospitalizations in Texas.

Stateline reporter Tim Henderson can be reached at thenderson@stateline.org.

This story was originally produced by Stateline, which is part of States Newsroom, a nonprofit news network which includes South Dakota Searchlight, and is supported by grants and a coalition of donors as a 501c(3) public charity.

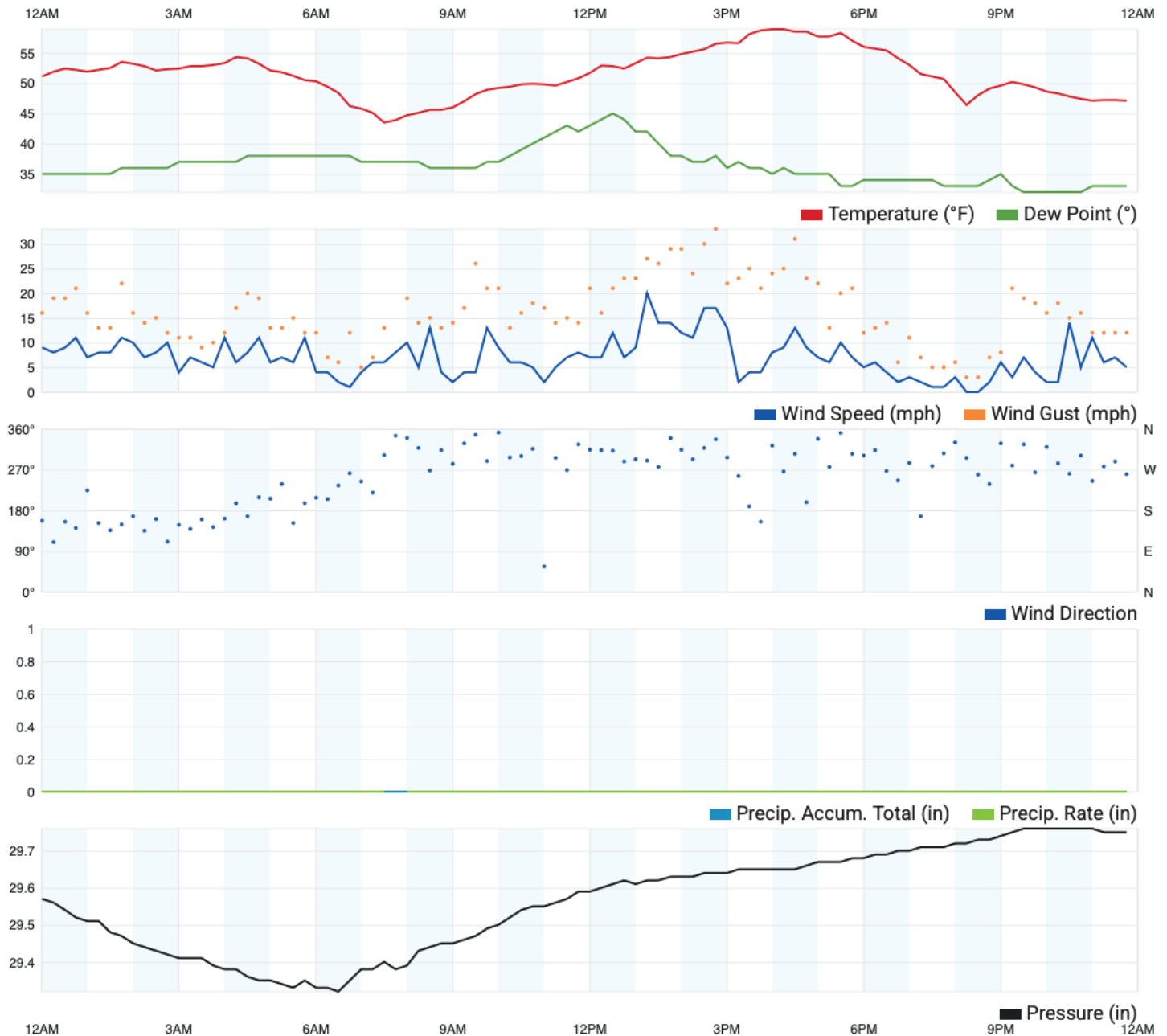
Tim Henderson covers demographics for Stateline. He has been a reporter at the Miami Herald, the Cincinnati Enquirer and the Journal News.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

October 20, 2025



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Tuesday



High: 50 °F

Breezy.
Slight Chance
Showers then
Decreasing
Clouds

Tuesday Night



Low: 27 °F

Mostly Clear

Wednesday



High: 56 °F

Sunny

Wednesday Night



Low: 28 °F

Mostly Clear

Thursday



High: 56 °F

Sunny



**Winds gusting 35 to 45 mph
diminishing to gusts of 25
to 35 mph by mid-afternoon**

 **Cooler
Highs 47 to 54°**



weather.gov/abr

Diminishing Northwest Winds through the Day

Maximum Wind Gust Forecast (mph)

	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm
Aberdeen	39☼	38☼	36☼	31☼	22☼	12☼
Miller	43☼	40☼	36☼	32☼	22☼	12☼
Mobridge	40☼	35☼	30☼	24☼	14☼	7☼
Murdo	38☼	35☼	31☼	29☼	18☼	14☼
Ortonville	39☼	38☼	39☼	36☼	29☼	22☼
Pierre	41☼	35☼	29☼	26☼	16☼	8☼
Sisseton	43☼	43☼	39☼	35☼	28☼	20☼
Watertown	44☼	44☼	39☼	38☼	29☼	20☼

Your winds will be diminishing through the day, with winds out of the northwest gusting 25 to 35 mph by mid-afternoon. Wind Advisories will be coming to an end over central South Dakota early this morning, and over far eastern South Dakota and west central Minnesota early this afternoon. Today will be cooler, with highs near 50 degrees.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 59 °F at 3:58 PM

Low Temp: 43 °F at 7:32 AM

Wind: 34 mph at 2:38 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 86 in 1947

Record Low: 9 in 1987

Average High: 56

Average Low: 31

Average Precip in Oct.: 1.58

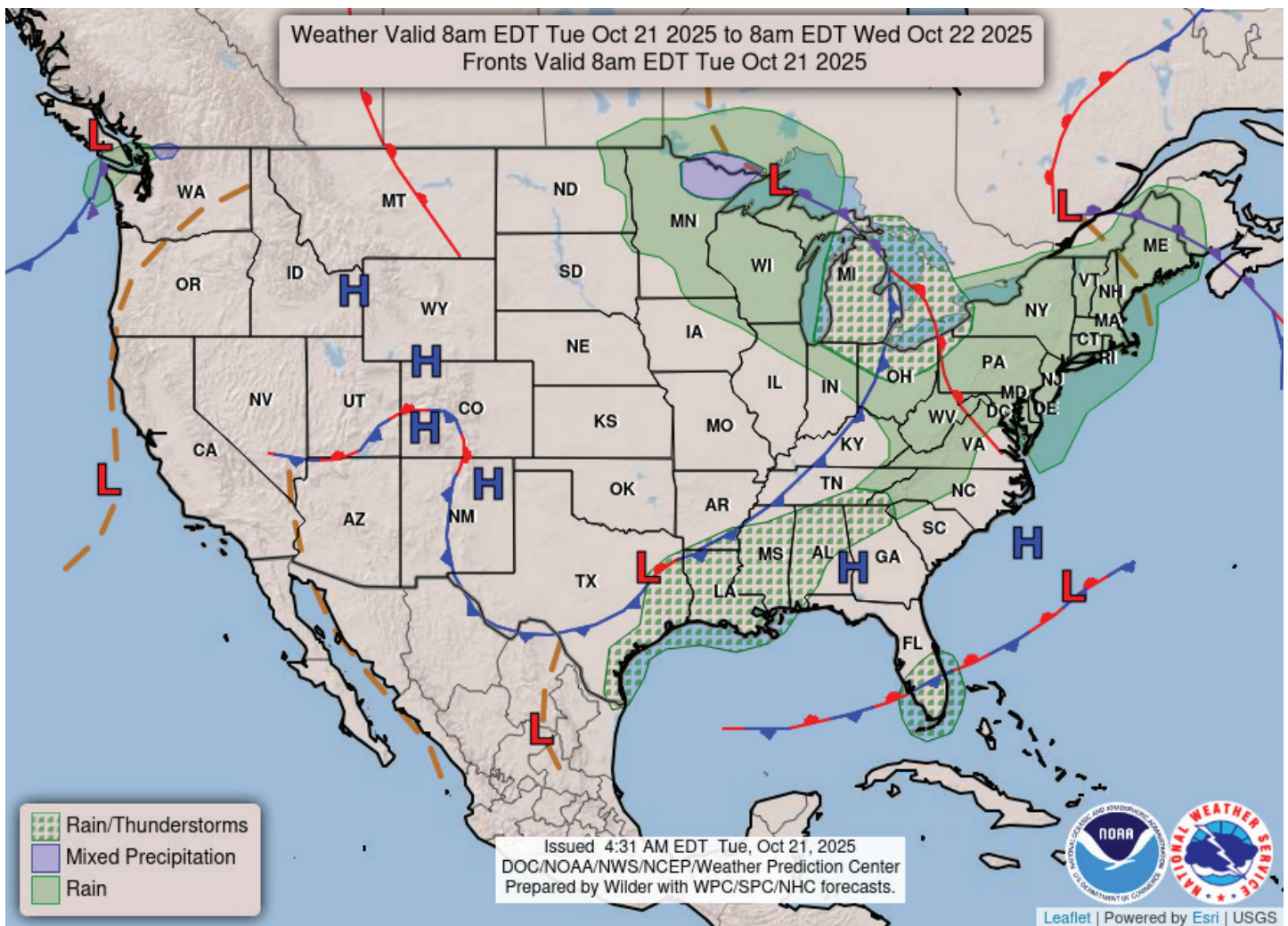
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.48

Average Precip to date: 19.91

Precip Year to Date: 23.40

Sunset Tonight: 6:36 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:58 am



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Today in Weather History

October 21, 1987: Cold arctic air continued to invade the central U.S. Eleven record lows were reported in the Great Plains Region, including lows of 12 degrees at Valentine, Nebraska, and 9 degrees at Aberdeen, South Dakota. Temperatures warmed rapidly during the day in the Southern and Central Plains Region. Goodland, Kansas warmed from a morning low of 24 degrees to an afternoon high of 75 degrees.

1934: A severe windstorm lashed the northern Pacific coast. In Washington State, the storm claimed the lives of 22 persons, and caused 1.7 million dollars damage, mostly to timber. Winds, gusting to 87 mph at North Head, WA, produced waves twenty feet high on the Puget Sound.

1966: An avalanche of mud and rocks buries a school in Aberfan, Wales, killing 148 people, mostly young students. The elementary school was in a valley below where a mining operation dumped its waste. In the days leading up to October 21, there was heavy rain in the area. After five months of investigation and the deposition of more than 100 witnesses, it was determined that the tip had blocked the natural course of water down the hill. As the water was soaked into the tip, pressure built up inside until it cracked, with devastating results. The site of the disaster later became a park.

1957 - The second in a series of unusual October storms hit southern California causing widespread thunderstorms. Santa Maria was drenched with 1.13 inches of rain in two hours. Hail drifted to 18 inches in East Los Angeles. Waterspouts were sighted off Point Mugu and Oceanside. (20th-21st) (The Weather Channel)

1975: Carlton Fisk made history on this day because of a walk-off home run in the 1975 World Series, after rain had postponed it for three days.

1987 - Cold arctic air continued to invade the central U.S. Eleven record lows were reported in the Great Plains Region, including lows of 12 degrees at Valentine NE, and 9 degrees at Aberdeen SD. Temperatures warmed rapidly during the day in the Southern and Central Plains Region. Goodland KS warmed from a morning low of 24 degrees to an afternoon high of 75 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1988: Hurricane Joan, the last hurricane of the season, neared the coast of Nicaragua packing 125 mph winds. Joan claimed more than 200 lives as she moved over Central America, and total damage approached 1.5 billion dollars. Crossing more than 40 degrees of longitude, Hurricane Joan never strayed even one degree from the 12-degree north parallel. After crossing Central America into the Pacific, the cyclone was renamed Tropical Storm Miriam, with the system's dissipation occurring southwest of Mexico.

1989 - Unseasonably cold weather continued to grip the south central and southeastern U.S. Twenty cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Calico AR with a reading of 26 degrees, and Daytona Beach FL with a low of 41 degrees. Squalls in the Great Lakes Region finally came to an end, but not before leaving Marquette MI buried under 12.7 inches of snow, a record 24 hour total for October. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2010: Tornadoes do occur in South America. A tornado rampaged through Poza del Tigre, a northern Argentinean town, leaving at least six are dead and over 100 wounded.

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Daily Devotion

Understood by Jesus

Jesus truly understands our struggles and intercedes on our behalf.

Hebrews 4:14-15: Jesus the Great High Priest

14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven,[a] Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.

We often try to comfort others who are going through a difficult time. But on occasion, our attempts to console create even more pain. Well-intentioned words like “You’re in my thoughts and prayers” or even “I understand” may feel empty to those who are struggling—unless we have endured something similar. We all long to feel understood, and today’s passage reassures us that our Savior truly sympathizes because He experienced struggles like ours.

The writer of Hebrews refers to Jesus as our High Priest. Each year the man serving in this capacity would enter the Holy of Holies and, in God’s presence, offer a sacrifice for sin. The priest was the Jewish people’s bridge to God. Christ not only took on this role, but He Himself also became the sacrifice when He died on the cross. Now He sits at the right hand of the Father in heaven and intercedes on our behalf (Hebrews 1:2-4; Hebrews 7:25).

That is tremendously encouraging, but even more than that, we know Jesus truly understands our pain and our weakness. He faced the very temptations, needs, and hurts we experience.

If you feel alone in the hardships you’re facing, recall Jesus’ trials and hurts. You’ll find comfort knowing that the One who loves you beyond all measure understands exactly how you feel.

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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 10.17.25

9 21 27 48 56 10

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$650,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 42 Mins 38 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 10.20.25

20 32 35 43 51 4

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$5,190,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 15 Hrs 57 Mins 38 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 10.20.25

3 5 23 26 28 9

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 12 Mins 38 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 10.18.25

3 8 9 21 34

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$55,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 12 Mins 38 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 10.20.25

33 48 52 55 68 9

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 41 Mins 38 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 10.20.25

32 38 66 67 69 19

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$320,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 41 Mins 38 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

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News from the **AP** Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Aberdeen Christian def. Webster, 25-20, 25-14, 25-20
Aberdeen Roncalli def. Faulkton, 25-18, 25-19, 25-21
Avon def. Ethan, 12-25, 25-19, 25-21, 23-25, 18-16
Canistota def. Irene-Wakonda, 13-25, 25-23, 25-15, 25-15
Freeman def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-21, 25-14, 25-22
Gettysburg def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-21, 25-15, 25-4
Groton def. Langford, 25-9, 25-8, 25-21
Hanson def. Scotland, 25-7, 25-10, 25-10
Herreid-Selby def. South Border, N.D., 25-9, 25-17, 25-8
Highmore-Harrold def. Lower Brule, 25-16, 25-8, 25-17
Ipswich def. Leola-Frederick High School, 25-16, 25-6, 25-10
Kimball-White Lake def. Gregory, 25-20, 22-25, 27-25, 25-22
Lennox def. Sioux Falls Lutheran, 25-16, 25-14, 25-17
Miller def. Wolsey-Wessington, 25-15, 25-14, 18-25, 25-11
Parker/Marion def. Menno, 25-6, 25-16, 25-11
Tripp-Delmont-Armour def. Platte-Geddes, 24-26, 25-19, 25-18, 25-18
Warner def. North Central, 25-17, 25-14, 25-17
Wilmot def. Tri-State, N.D., 25-17, 23-25, 25-9, 25-16
Yankton def. Beresford, 25-17, 26-24, 25-23

Some high school volleyball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

US Vice President JD Vance arrives in Israel to shore up the fragile ceasefire in Gaza

By MELANIE LIDMAN and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — U.S. Vice President JD Vance arrived in Israel on Tuesday to shore up the fragile U.S.-brokered ceasefire in Gaza that has teetered over the past few days following a burst of deadly violence and questions over how to move forward with the plan for cementing a long-term peace.

Also Tuesday, Israel said it has identified the body of a hostage that was released by Palestinian militants overnight, while the chief Hamas negotiator said the group remains determined to implement the ceasefire agreement to end the two-year war.

Vance, whose visit comes after the arrival of two top White House envoys, is expected to be in the region until Thursday. Accompanied by his wife Usha Vance, the vice president will meet with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

He is to hold a news conference Tuesday evening in Jerusalem and is also expected to meet with families of hostages whose bodies are still being held in Gaza and the living hostages released by the militants last week.

Israel confirmed that Hamas released the body of Tal Haimi, who was killed in the Hamas-led Oct. 7, 2023 attack that ignited the war. He was abducted from Kibbutz Nir Yitzhak on the Gaza border. The 42-year-old was a fourth-generation resident of the kibbutz and part of its emergency response team. He had four children, including one born after the attack.

Under the terms of the ceasefire, Israel is still waiting for Hamas to turn over the remains of 15 deceased hostages. Thirteen bodies have been released since the ceasefire began.

Hamas says it's committed to ending the war

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After trading strikes earlier this week, Hamas negotiators reiterated that the group is committed to ensuring the war "ends once and for all."

"From the day we signed the Sharm el-Sheikh agreement, we were determined and committed to seeing it through to the end," Hamas chief negotiator Khalil al-Hayya, who is in Cairo, told Egypt's Al-Qahera News television late Monday.

He said the Sharm el-Sheikh summit, hosted by Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi and U.S. President Donald Trump, represented "an international will declaring the war in Gaza is over."

Al-Hayya said Hamas received assurances from mediators and Trump that "give us confidence that the war has ended for good."

He said Israel has complied with aid deliveries in the crossings according to the agreement but asked mediators to pressure Israel to deliver more shelter, medical supplies and winterization items before the weather changes.

2 Israeli soldiers and 45 Palestinians are reported killed

On Sunday, Israel's military said militants had fired at troops, killing two Israeli soldiers in areas of Rafah in southern Gaza that are Israeli-controlled, according to agreed-on ceasefire lines.

Retaliatory strikes by Israel killed 45 Palestinians, according to the strip's Health Ministry, which says a total of 80 people have been killed since the ceasefire took effect.

Similar strikes occurred on Monday in Gaza City and Khan Younis, where Israel said militants had crossed the yellow ceasefire line and posed an "immediate threat" to its troops.

The Israeli military said Monday it was using concrete barriers and painted poles to more clearly delineate the so-called yellow line in Gaza where troops have withdrawn to. It said several instances of violence have occurred.

Also on Tuesday, Qatar, a key mediator in the ceasefire, denounced Israel in a speech by its ruling emir. Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani said his nation would continue to serve as a mediator as a ceasefire holds in the Gaza Strip.

Sheikh Tamim specifically called Israel out for its "continued breaches of the ceasefire" in Gaza, as well as its expansion of settlements in the West Bank.

Doctors in Gaza say bodies returned with evidence of torture

A senior health official in the Gaza Strip said the bodies of Palestinians that Israel returned to Gaza as part of the ceasefire deal bore "evidence of torture" and called for an investigation.

Israel returned 150 bodies for Palestinians to Gaza as part of the ceasefire deal, which required the release of all of Israeli hostages — living and deceased — in return for the release of over 1,900 Palestinian prisoners and many bodies of Palestinians.

So far, only 32 of the returned bodies have been identified, according to the Gaza Health Ministry.

Dr. Muneer al-Boursh, the general director of the Health Ministry, said in a post of social media late Monday that some of the bodies had returned with evidence of being bound with ropes and metal shackles, blindfolds, deep wounds, abrasions, burns, and crushed limbs.

"What has happened constitutes a war crime and a crime against humanity," he said, calling for the United Nations to launch an "urgent and independent international investigation."

The Israel Prisons Service denied that prisoners had been mistreated.

"All inmates are held according to legal procedures, and their rights including access to medical care and adequate living conditions are upheld by professionally trained staff," a spokesperson for the prison services said.

Israeli hostages released from Gaza have also reported being bound by metal shackles and harsh conditions, including frequent beatings and starvation.

Thick, hazardous smog blankets New Delhi after Diwali fireworks

By PIYUSH NAGPAL Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Thick smog blanketed India's capital Tuesday, a day after millions celebrated the Hindu festival of Diwali with fireworks that sent air pollution soaring to hazardous levels.

Revelers in New Delhi burst firecrackers late into Monday night, filling the air with smoke and fine particles that mixed with seasonal pollution and stagnant weather conditions. By Tuesday morning, the city's Air Quality Index had climbed above 350 in several neighborhoods, a level considered "severe" and dangerous to breathe, according to the World Health Organization's daily recommended maximum exposure.

Visibility also dropped in some parts of the city as a gray haze enveloped streets, high-rises and historical monuments.

"I have never seen anything like this before. We can't see anything here because of pollution," said Vedant Pachkande, a tourist visiting New Delhi.

India's top court last week eased a blanket ban on firecrackers in New Delhi during Diwali, allowing limited use of "green firecrackers" that emit fewer pollutants. Developed by federal research institutes, they are designed to cut particulate and gas emissions by about 30%. The court had said they could be used during specific hours from Saturday to Tuesday, but like past years the rule was mostly flouted.

New Delhi and its metropolitan region — home to more than 30 million people — routinely ranks among the world's most polluted cities during the winter when widespread Diwali fireworks coincide with cooler weather and smoke from crop residue fires set by farmers in nearby states.

Authorities in New Delhi have implemented a set of measures to curb pollution, which include limits on construction activity and restrictions on diesel generators. But environmentalists say long-term solutions, such as cleaner energy and stricter vehicle-emission controls, are needed to prevent the annual crisis.

Rising pollution also cuts the amount of sunshine India receives, a recent study found.

Indian scientists have found that sunshine hours — the time strong sunlight reaches the Earth — have steadily declined across most of India due to rising air pollution, according to a study published this month in *Scientific Reports*, a journal by Nature Portfolio. The researchers attributed the drop to increasing aerosols — tiny particles from industrial emissions, biomass burning and vehicle pollution.

"We see a greater impact in more polluted regions such as northern India," said Manoj K. Srivastava, a scientist at Banaras Hindu University and one of the study's authors.

Srivastava said the reduction in sunshine can affect the amount of solar power India can generate as well as the country's agricultural productivity apart from impacting local environment and people's health.

Former French President Sarkozy begins a 5-year prison sentence for campaign finance conspiracy

By SYLVIE CORBET and MASHA MACPHERSON Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy arrived at a prison in Paris on Tuesday to begin serving a 5-year sentence for a criminal conspiracy to finance his 2007 election campaign with funds from Libya — a historic moment that makes him the first ex-leader of modern France to be imprisoned.

Sarkozy, 70, was greeted by hundreds of supporters when he walked out of his Paris home hand-in-hand with his wife Carla Bruni-Sarkozy. He embraced her before getting into a police car.

On his way to prison, Sarkozy released a statement on social media declaring that "an innocent man" was being locked up.

Minutes later, the vehicle passed through the gates of the notorious La Santé prison — where Sarkozy will now serve his sentence in solitary confinement.

Sarkozy was convicted last month for criminal conspiracy in a scheme to finance his 2007 election campaign with funds from Libya.

He contests both the conviction and a judge's unusual decision to incarcerate him pending appeal. His lawyers said Tuesday that they filed an immediate request for his release.

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"It's an ominous day for him, for France, and for our institutions, because this incarceration is a disgrace," Sarkozy's lawyer Jean-Michel Darrois told reporters soon after his incarceration.

Solitary confinement

Sarkozy's lawyers said he will be kept away from all other prisoners for security reasons.

Sarkozy told Le Figaro newspaper that he would bring three books — the maximum allowed — including Alexandre Dumas' "The Count of Monte Cristo," in which the hero escapes from an island prison before seeking revenge. His lawyers said he packed a bag with a few sweaters because the prison is cold and earplugs because it's noisy.

Christophe Ingrain, another of Sarkozy's lawyers, denounced "a serious injustice."

"It's a very difficult time, but the president has stood strong," Ingrain said. "He doesn't complain, hasn't asked for anything, no special treatment."

Sarkozy will be allowed to go outdoors one hour per day alone in the prison yard and to get three visits per week from his family, Ingrain said, adding that he is planning to write a book about his prison experience.

An outpouring of support for the ex-president

Sarkozy's journey from the presidential Elysée Palace to La Santé prison has captivated France.

After leaving their home, Sarkozy and his wife walked slowly to join family members, including his children and grandchildren, outside his home.

"I'm very proud to share his name, and very proud of how he's reacting," said his brother, Guillaume Sarkozy. "I'm truly convinced that he is innocent."

Hundreds of supporters applauded and chanted "Nicolas, Nicolas" and sang the French anthem. Two French flags were hung on a nearby fence, with the words "Courage Nicolas, return soon" and "true France with Nicolas."

Parisian resident Virginie Rochon, 44, came in support of Sarkozy, calling it "scandalous" to see "a former president being taken away while still presumed innocent."

Another supporter, Véronique Maurey, 50, said "it's just not possible. And on top of that, calling it a 'criminal conspiracy' kind of makes all of us feel like criminals too because we voted for him. It's not right to say that."

Meeting with Macron

Embattled centrist President Emmanuel Macron hosted the conservative Sarkozy at the presidential palace last week. "I have always been very clear in my public statements about the independence of the judiciary in my role, but it was normal on a human level to receive one of my predecessors in this context," Macron said Monday.

Sarkozy has been retired from active politics for years but remains very influential, especially in conservative circles.

"I'm not afraid of prison. I'll hold my head high, including in front of the doors of La Santé," he told La Tribune Dimanche newspaper last week. "I'll fight till the end."

The Paris court ruled that Sarkozy would start to serve prison time without waiting for his appeal to be heard, due to "the seriousness of the disruption to public order caused by the offense."

In its Sept. 25 ruling, the court said Sarkozy, as a presidential candidate and interior minister, used his position "to prepare corruption at the highest level" from 2005 to 2007, to finance his presidential campaign with funds from Libya — then led by longtime ruler Moammar Gadhafi.

Under the ruling, Sarkozy was able to file a request for release to the appeals court only once behind bars. Judges have up to two months to process it.

Ukraine and EU leaders accuse Putin of stalling and reject land concessions for peace

By The Associated Press undefined

Ukraine's president and European leaders on Tuesday accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of stalling for time in diplomatic efforts to bring his invasion of Ukraine to an end and opposed any move to make Kyiv surrender land captured by Russian forces in return for peace, as U.S. President Donald Trump has on occasion suggested.

Eight European leaders as well as senior European Union officials said in a joint statement they intend to go ahead with plans to use Moscow's billions of dollars (euros) of frozen assets abroad to help Kyiv win the war, despite some misgivings about the legality and consequences of such a step.

The statement expressed support for Trump's peace efforts in Ukraine as he prepares to meet with Putin in Budapest, Hungary in coming weeks. But it also laid down a marker by saying the leaders "remain committed to the principle that international borders must not be changed by force."

Trump last month reversed his long-held position that Ukraine would have to concede land and suggested it could win back all the territory it has lost to Russia. However, after a phone call with Putin last week and a subsequent meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Friday, Trump shifted his position again and called on Kyiv and Moscow to "stop where they are" in the more than three-year war.

On Sunday, Trump said that the industrial Donbas region of eastern Ukraine should be "cut up," leaving most of it in Russian hands.

Trump said Monday that while he thinks it is possible that Ukraine can ultimately defeat Russia, he's now doubtful it will happen.

Ukrainian and European leaders are trying hard to keep Trump on their side.

"We strongly support President Trump's position that the fighting should stop immediately, and that the current line of contact should be the starting point of negotiations," the statement said. "We can all see that Putin continues to choose violence and destruction."

The dynamics of Trump's engagement with Europe's biggest conflict since World War II have zigzagged as he searches for a peace deal.

Russia occupies about one fifth of Ukraine, but carving up their country in return for peace is unacceptable to Kyiv officials.

Also, a conflict frozen on the current front line could fester, with occupied areas of Ukraine offering Moscow a springboard for new attacks in the future, Ukrainian and European officials fear.

The statement by the leaders of Ukraine, the U.K., Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Poland, Denmark and EU officials came early in what Zelenskyy said Monday would be a week that is "very active in diplomacy."

More international economic sanctions on Russia are likely to be discussed at an EU summit in Brussels on Thursday.

"We must ramp up the pressure on Russia's economy and its defense industry, until Putin is ready to make peace," Tuesday's statement said.

On Friday, a meeting of the Coalition of the Willing — a group of 35 countries who support Ukraine — is due to take place in London.

Japan's parliament elects Sanae Takaichi as nation's first female prime minister

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's parliament elected ultraconservative Sanae Takaichi as the country's first female prime minister Tuesday, a day after her struggling party struck a coalition deal with a new partner expected to pull her governing bloc further to the right.

Takaichi replaces Shigeru Ishiba, ending a three-month political vacuum and wrangling since the Liberal

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Democratic Party's disastrous election loss in July.

Ishiba, who lasted only one year as prime minister, resigned with his Cabinet earlier in the day, paving the way for his successor.

Takaichi won 237 votes — four more than a majority — compared to 149 won by Yoshikoko Noda, head of the largest opposition party, the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, in the lower house, which elects the prime minister. Even though her coalition was two seats short of a majority, Takaichi received enough votes to win in the first round. She likely received votes from lawmakers in fringe minority parties from whom she has sought cooperation.

As the results were announced, Takaichi stood up and bowed deeply.

Takaichi, 64, appointed former Defense Minister Minoru Kihara as chief cabinet secretary.

Takaichi appointed her leadership rivals within the party to her government along with other veteran lawmakers. Toshimitsu Motegi, who previously served as both trade and foreign ministers, was named foreign minister. Former Agriculture Minister Shinjiro Koizumi was named defense minister. And former Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi was named internal affairs and communication minister. She also appointed Ishiba's chief trade negotiator, Ryosei Akazawa, as economy and trade minister.

Despite her earlier pledge to drastically increase the number of women in the Cabinet, she appointed only three, all of them supporters in the party leadership vote — former Regional Revitalization Minister Satsuki Katayama as finance minister, Kimi Onoda as economic security minister and Midori Matsushima as the prime minister's aide.

The LDP's alliance with the Osaka-based rightwing Japan Innovation Party, or Ishin no Kai, ensured her premiership because the opposition is not united. Takaichi's untested alliance is still short of a majority in both houses of parliament and will need to court other opposition groups to pass any legislation — a risk that could make her government unstable and short-lived.

The two parties signed a coalition agreement on policies underscoring Takaichi's hawkish and nationalistic views.

Their last-minute deal came after the Liberal Democrats lost its longtime partner, the Buddhist-backed Komeito, which has a more dovish and centrist stance. The breakup threatened a change of power for the LDP, which has governed Japan almost uninterrupted for decades.

Tackling rising prices and other economic measures is the top priority for the Takaichi government, LDP Secretary General Shunichi Suzuki told NHK public television as he apologized over the delay because of the party's internal power struggle since the July election. He said the new coalition will cooperate with other opposition parties to quickly tackle rising prices to "live up to the expectations of the people."

JIP does not hold ministerial posts in Takaichi's Cabinet until his party is confident about its partnership with the LDP, Yoshimura has said.

Takaichi is running on deadline, as she prepares for a major policy speech later this week, talks with U.S. President Donald Trump and regional summits. She needs to quickly tackle rising prices and compile economy-boosting measures by late December to address public frustration.

While she is the first woman serving as Japan's prime minister, she is in no rush to promote gender equality or diversity.

Takaichi is among Japanese politicians who have stonewalled measures for women's advancement. Takaichi supports the imperial family's male-only succession and opposes same-sex marriage and allowing separate surnames for married couples.

A protege of assassinated former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Takaichi is expected to emulate his policies including a stronger military and economy, as well as revising Japan's pacifist constitution. With her potentially weak grip on power, it's unknown how much Takaichi will be able to achieve.

Also an admirer of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Takaichi was first elected to parliament in 1993 and has served in a number of senior party and government posts, including as ministers of economic security and internal affairs, but her diplomatic background is thin.

When Komeito left the governing coalition, it cited the LDP's lax response to slush fund scandals that led to their consecutive election defeats.

The centrist party also raised concern about Takaichi's revisionist view of Japan's wartime past and her regular prayers at Yasukuni Shrine despite protests from Beijing and Seoul that see the visits as lack of remorse about Japanese aggression, as well as her recent xenophobic remarks.

Takaichi has toned down her hawkish rhetoric. On Friday, she sent a religious ornament instead of going to Yasukuni.

US and Australia sign critical-minerals agreement as a way to counter China

By SEUNG MIN KIM and AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese signed a critical-minerals deal at the White House on Monday as the U.S. eyes the continent's rich rare-earth resources at a time when China is imposing tougher rules on exporting its own critical minerals abroad.

The two leaders described the agreement as an \$8.5 billion deal between the allies. Trump said it had been negotiated over several months.

"In about a year from now we'll have so much critical mineral and rare earth that you won't know what to do with them," said Trump, a Republican, boasting about the deal. "They'll be worth \$2."

Albanese added that the agreement takes the U.S.-Australia relationship "to the next level."

Earlier this month, Beijing announced that it will require foreign companies to get approval from the Chinese government to export magnets containing even trace amounts of rare-earth materials that originated from China or were produced with Chinese technology. The Trump administration says this gives China broad power over the global economy by controlling the tech supply chain.

"Australia is really, really going to be helpful in the effort to take the global economy and make it less risky, less exposed to the kind of rare earth extortion that we're seeing from the Chinese," Kevin Hassett, the director of the White House's National Economic Council, told reporters Monday morning ahead of Trump's meeting with Albanese.

Hassett noted that Australia has one of the best mining economies in the world, while praising its refiners and its abundance of rare earth resources. Among the Australian officials accompanying Albanese are ministers overseeing resources and industry and science, and Australia has dozens of critical minerals sought by the U.S. because they are needed in everything from fighter jets and electric vehicles to laptops and phones.

A push for more mines

The agreement could have an immediate impact on rare earth supplies in the United States if American companies can secure some of what Australian mines are already producing, although it will take years — if not decades — to develop enough of a supply of rare earths outside of China to reduce its dominance.

Pini Althaus, who founded USA Rare Earth back in 2019 and is now working to develop new mines in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan as CEO of Cove Capital, said it will be crucial that the contracts to buy materials from Australian mines include price floors, similar to what the U.S. government promised MP Materials this summer, to protect against China manipulating prices.

For decades, China has used the tactic of dumping excess critical minerals onto the market to drive prices down to force mining companies in the rest of the world out of business to eliminate any competition.

"I think taking away that arrow in the quiver of China to manipulate pricing is an absolute crucial first step in Australia and the West being able to develop critical minerals projects to meet our supply chain demands," said Althaus, who has spent nearly a quarter-century in the mining business.

The agreement underscores how the U.S. is using its global allies to counter China, especially as it weaponizes its traditional dominance in rare earth materials. Top Trump officials have used the tactics from Beijing as a rallying cry for the U.S. and its allies to work together to try to minimize China's influence.

"China is a command-and-control economy, and we and our allies will neither be commanded nor controlled," Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said last week. "They are a state economy and we are not going to let a group of bureaucrats in Beijing try to manage the global supply chains."

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The level of investment outlined in the agreement shows how serious the two nations are about addressing the problem.

"The U.S. and Australia will invest over \$3 billion in joint critical minerals projects within six months. That's a somewhat unprecedented speed of capital injection," said Gracelin Baskaran, director of the Critical Minerals Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

But Althaus cautioned that Australia can't supply everything the United States needs, so it is crucial that American continues to invest in the long-term effort to develop other mining and processing projects both at home and in friendly nations. He said central Asia might be one of the most promising places to invest because the region has significant rare earth reserves, and the Soviet Union already did some of the initial development work when it controlled that territory. That could cut years off the time it will take to build a new mine there.

"Keep in mind, China has almost a 40-year head start on us," Althaus said. "We have at least a couple of decades to catch up to China in terms of being able to meet our own supply chain requirements."

Albanese's visit comes just before Trump is planning to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping in South Korea later this month.

The security partnership

Another topic of discussion was AUKUS, a security pact with Australia, the U.S. and the United Kingdom that was signed during U.S. President Joe Biden's Democratic administration.

Trump noted Monday that AUKUS was established "a while ago" but that the agreement now is "moving along very rapidly, very well." Albanese said that "our defense and security partnership with AUKUS is so important for us."

John Phelan, the Navy secretary, said that the U.S. wants to take the original AUKUS framework and improve it for the three signatory countries while clarifying "some of the ambiguity" in it.

"So it should be a win-win for everybody," Phelan said.

In Beijing, the Chinese government reiterated its opposition to the pact, which would help Australia obtain and build nuclear-powered submarines.

"We always oppose creating bloc confrontation, increasing nuclear proliferation risks and intensifying an arms race," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said Tuesday.

The center-left Albanese was reelected in May and suggested shortly after his win that his party increased its majority by not modeling itself on Trumpism.

"Australians have chosen to face global challenges the Australian way, looking after each other while building for the future," Albanese told supporters during his victory speech.

Blue Jays in World Series for first time since before Ohtani was born, while Dodgers seek to repeat

By RONALD BLUM AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — When slugger Joe Carter hit the last World Series pitch thrown in Canada over the left-field wall to win the Toronto Blue Jays' second consecutive title, it was 8 1/2 months before Shohei Ohtani was born.

The Blue Jays are back in baseball's championship round for the first time since 1993 and will host Ohtani and the Dodgers in Friday night's opener as Los Angeles tries to become the first repeat winner in a quarter century.

The previous time the World Series was played north of the border, the Steroids Era was just starting, advanced analytics were science fiction and complete games were thrown about twice a month.

While the Dodgers may be the favorite, Vladimir Guerrero Jr. and the Blue Jays have an entire country behind them after rallying to win the American League Championship Series with a 4-3 victory over Seattle in Game 7 on Monday night.

Until now, Toronto's only World Series appearances resulted in back-to-back titles in 1992 and '93.

"You always feel the weight of the world in decisions you make but when you're kind of feeling a country,

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it kind of gets a little dicey at times," manager John Schneider said early in the postseason. "Sixth inning with the bases loaded and nobody out and Aaron Judge hitting, you feel like people in Nova Scotia want to come murder you."

George Springer and the AL East champion Blue Jays have home-field advantage in the best-of-seven Series because they finished the regular season with 94 wins, one more than the NL West champion Dodgers.

"They just got all their guys rolling. They're scoring seven, eight runs, 10 runs a game, so that's tough to slow down," Los Angeles shortstop Mookie Betts said. "They're doing all three facets of the game."

The Greatest Sho on Earth returns to the World Series

Seeking the franchise's ninth title and eighth since bolting Brooklyn for Los Angeles after the 1957 season, the Dodgers have overrun opponents during the postseason. Ohtani is starring at the plate and on the mound, a performance that would be deemed CGI if not witnessed by thousands in person.

"Sometimes you've got to check yourself and touch him to make sure he's not just made of steel," teammate Freddie Freeman said.

Before his three-homer at the plate and 10-strikeouts, six-scoreless innings mound show last Friday night, Ohtani's bat had been slumping.

He's hitting .220 with five homers and nine RBIs in the postseason and is 2-0 with a 2.25 ERA in a pair of pitching starts, striking out 19 and walking four in 12 innings.

LA tries for a rare repeat

Los Angeles is back in the World Series for the fifth time since 2017 and is seeking its third championship in six years. The Dodgers are the first defending champion to reach the Fall Classic since the 2009 Philadelphia Phillies, who lost to the New York Yankees in six games.

No team has won consecutive titles since the Yankees took three in a row from 1998-2000. The gap is the longest in baseball history, topping the previous high between the 1977-78 Yankees and the 1992-93 Blue Jays.

In other U.S. major leagues, the longest Super Bowl title gap was between the 2004-05 New England Patriots and the 2023-24 Kansas City Chiefs, the longest in the NBA was between the 1968-69 Boston Celtics and the 1987-88 Los Angeles Lakers, and the lengthiest in the NHL was between the 1997-98 Detroit Red Wings and the 2016-17 Pittsburgh Penguins.

"Realizing how hard it is to do last year, realizing how hard it was in '20, it's special," Dodgers catcher Will Smith said. "Trying to get back-to-back is even more special."

Historical ties between the Dodgers and Canada

Toronto pitcher Max Scherzer was on the 2021 Dodgers team that fell short, losing to Atlanta in the National League Championship Series. Hall of Famers Rickey Henderson and Fred McGriff also played for both franchises, along with two-time All-Star Justin Turner.

Dodgers first baseman Freddie Freeman has dual American-Canadian citizenship — his parents were born in Canada.

Blue Jays bench coach Don Mattingly, in the World Series for the first time after a long and successful career in baseball, managed the Dodgers from 2011-15.

The Triple-A Montreal Royals were the Dodgers' top farm team from 1939-60 — Jackie Robinson started his Dodgers career there in 1946, a year before he broke the major league color barrier.

The Dodgers roster has been money well spent

Los Angeles entered the postseason with a big league-high \$341.5 million payroll, according to Major League Baseball's latest tabulation, and is projected to pay nearly \$168 million in luxury tax, easily a record. Counting the \$6.5 million signing bonus in rookie Roki Sasaki's minor league contract, the Dodgers' player cost this year totals \$516 million — with final numbers to be calculated during the offseason.

Including Sasaki's signing bonus, the 13 pitchers on the Dodgers' NLCS roster alone cost \$124.5 million.

Toronto has the fifth-highest payroll at \$252.7 million and is on track to spend \$266 million including just over \$13 million in luxury tax. No small-market team has won the title since the 2015 Kansas City Royals.

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"Before this season started, they said the Dodgers are ruining baseball," manager Dave Roberts shouted to the crowd after Friday night's National League pennant clincher. "Let's get four more wins and really ruin baseball!"

Los Angeles pitchers are 9-1 with a 2.45 ERA in 10 postseason games, including 7-1 with 1.40 ERA for starting pitchers totaling 64 1/3 of 82 innings. Led by Blake Snell and Yoshinobu Yamamoto, Dodgers starters were 3-0 with a 0.63 ERA in the NLCS and their staff held the Milwaukee Brewers to a .118 batting average during the four-game sweep, lowest in a postseason series of at least three games.

Healthy and rested for a deep October run

LA's four postseason starters totaled 73 starts and 372 1/3 innings during the regular season. Their closer threw 36 1/3 innings.

That's because Snell, Tyler Glasnow and Sasaki all hurt their pitching shoulders and Ohtani didn't return to the mound until June 16 after recovering from elbow surgery in 2023.

If the Blue Jays win

Toronto, which started play in 1977, could become the 15th of the 30 teams to win three or more titles. That would be more than Cleveland and Philadelphia, franchises that have existed for longer than a century.

Senate Republicans head to White House amid stalemate on shutdown

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As the government shutdown enters its fourth week, Senate Republicans are headed to the White House on Tuesday — not for urgent talks on how to end it, but for a display of unity with President Donald Trump as they refuse to negotiate on any Democratic demands.

Senate Democrats, too, are confident in their strategy to keep voting against a House-passed bill that would reopen the government until Republicans, including Trump, engage them on extending health care subsidies that expire at the end of the year.

With both sides showing no signs of movement, it's unclear how long the stalemate will last — even as hundreds of thousands of federal workers will miss another paycheck in the coming days and states are sounding warnings that key federal programs will soon lapse completely. And the meeting at the White House appears unlikely, for now, to lead to a bipartisan resolution as Senate Republicans are dug in and Trump has followed their lead.

"I think the president's ready to get involved on having the discussion" about extending the subsidies, said Senate Republican leader John Thune, R-S.D., on Monday. "But I don't think they are prepared to do that until (Democrats) open up the government."

Missed paychecks and programs running out of money

While Capitol Hill remains at a standstill, the effects of the shutdown are worsening. Federal workers are set to miss additional paychecks amid total uncertainty about when they might eventually get paid. Government services like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, known as WIC, and Head Start preschool programs that serve needy families are facing potential cutoffs in funding. On Monday, Energy Secretary Chris Wright said the National Nuclear Security Administration is furloughing 1,400 federal workers. The Federal Aviation Administration has reported air controller shortages and flight delays in cities across the United States.

Still, there has been little urgency in Washington as each side believes the other will eventually cave.

"Our position remains the same, we want to end the shutdown as soon as we can and fix the ACA premium crisis that looms over 20 million hardworking Americans," said Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., on Monday, referring to the expanded Affordable Care Act subsidies that expire in December.

Schumer called the White House meeting a "pep rally" and said it was "shameful" that House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., has kept the House out of town during the shutdown.

November deadlines

Members of both parties acknowledge that as the shutdown drags on, it is becoming less likely every

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day that Congress will be able to either extend the subsidies or fund the government through the regular appropriations process. The House GOP bill that Senate Democrats have now rejected 11 times would only keep the government open through Nov. 21.

Thune on Monday hinted that Republicans may propose a longer extension of current funding instead of passing individual spending bills if the shutdown doesn't end soon. Congress would need to pass an extension beyond Nov. 21, he said, "if not something on a much longer-term basis."

Democrats are focused on Nov. 1, when next year's enrollment period for the ACA coverage begins and millions of people will sign up for their coverage without the expanded subsidy help that began during the COVID-19 pandemic. Once those sign-ups begin, they say, it would be much harder to restore the subsidies even if they did have a bipartisan compromise.

"Very soon Americans are going to have to make some really difficult choices about which health care plan they choose for next year," Schumer said.

What about Trump?

Tuesday's White House meeting will be a chance for Republican senators to engage with the president on the shutdown after he has been more involved in foreign policy and other issues.

The president last week dismissed Democratic demands as "crazy," adding, "We're just not going to do it."

North Dakota Sen. John Hoeven said that Republican senators will talk strategy with the president at Tuesday's lunch. "Obviously, we'll talk to him about it, and he'll give us his ideas, and we'll talk about ours," Hoeven said. "Anything we can do to try to get Democrats to join us" and pass the Republican bill to reopen the government, Hoeven said.

Still, GOP lawmakers expect Trump to stay in line with their current posture to reject negotiations until the government is open.

"Until they put something reasonable on the table to talk about, I don't think there's anything to talk about," said Louisiana Sen. John Kennedy.

Democrats say they believe Trump has to be more involved for the government to reopen.

"He needs to get off the sidelines, get off the golf course," said House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries, D-N.Y. "We know that House and Senate Republicans don't do anything without getting permission from their boss, Donald J. Trump."

Bolivia's first conservative president in 20 years promises warmer US ties

By ISABEL DEBRE and PAOLA FLORES Associated Press

LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP) — Bolivia's first conservative president-elect in 20 years, Rodrigo Paz, injected a sharp note of realism into his plans to tackle an economic crisis Monday, a day after his surprise electoral victory signaled the end of decades of leftist rule in the South American nation.

After years of government antipathy toward the U.S. under the Movement Toward Socialism party, Paz pledged to rebuild relations with Washington — and attract foreign investment to a country long locked out of international markets.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a statement that Paz's victory Sunday "marks a transformative opportunity for both nations" to work on investment, immigration, security and other matters.

"The message from Mr. Trump's administration itself is a very clear and open signal," Paz said at a news conference. "We will have a fluid relationship and commitments to cooperation and joint work between both nations."

In another sign of the dramatic regional shift, Paz held a video call with Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado, who won the Nobel Peace Prize this month. After years of Bolivia aligning itself with Venezuela's increasingly repressive President Nicolás Maduro, Paz told Machado that his country was "here to join in the fight for Venezuela and for Latin American democracies."

"These are very difficult times; here we have achieved a great step," he said of Bolivia's break with

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socialism.

Paz won 54.5% of the vote, according to preliminary results of Sunday's runoff election. He will be inaugurated Nov. 8.

Warming long-frosty ties to the US

Paz defeated right-wing former President Jorge "Tuto" Quiroga after a campaign in which both candidates reached out to Washington, though Quiroga was seen as having warmer ties with the Trump administration.

Quiroga pitched having the International Monetary Fund impose a fiscal shock package to right the economy, an unpopular move with many voters. Sensitive to the country's deep-seated resentment of such international organizations under leftist rule, Paz rejected an IMF bailout.

He did reveal Monday that he was talking to the Trump administration — among "other friendly countries" — to ensure Bolivia would have fuel imports after he takes office.

"The process is underway. We are coordinating in the best way possible so that the much-needed fuel — gasoline and diesel — can arrive, and from that, we can bring calm to the population," Paz said, without elaborating.

The commodities boom of the early 2000s sent money flowing into Bolivia under then- President Evo Morales as natural gas exports surged. But production slumped and, amid profligate spending on subsidies, the central bank has practically run out of U.S. dollars.

Without the cash to pay for imports, fuel lines stretch along the streets of major cities. Year-on-year inflation soared to 23% in September, the highest rate since 1991.

An underdog lures former leftists to the right

Paz — the son of former leftist President Jaime Paz Zamora — was a political unknown in the early stages of the campaign despite his two decades in politics, first as a mayor, then as a senator.

But his pick as a running mate of Edman Lara, a social media-savvy former police captain, transformed his campaign, solidifying his appeal to working-class and rural voters who saw themselves in Lara's own humble origin story and in his public struggles against what they see as a corrupt establishment.

Lara gained fame on TikTok in 2023 after being fired from the police force for denouncing corruption in viral videos.

Lara made populist promises like pension increases and cash handouts for the poor that flew in the face of Paz's grim economic arithmetic, but he helped differentiate Paz from Quiroga and whipped up excitement among many Bolivians who once belonged to the MAS party.

Morales, who governed for 14 years and was barred from this race due to a contentious court ruling on term limits, warned Paz and Lara on Monday that winning the votes of his former followers comes at a price.

"It does not give you a blank check," Morales said. "It is a vote with a mandate ... not to apply neoliberal measures, not to submit to imperialism, not to be repressive, not to criminalize protest."

Saving finances from the brink of disaster

On Monday, Paz spoke soberly about the importance of cleaning house and restoring faith in Bolivia's corruption-riddled institutions before making any splashy promises.

The leader of Paz's economic team, José Gabriel Espinoza, told the AP that cash handouts for the poor were still financially feasible to help cushion the blow of lifting the country's expensive fuel subsidies.

Espinoza said that Congress had already approved a \$3.5 billion loan to be disbursed over the coming months and that Paz is working on another \$600 million to balance the books within the first 60 days of his presidency.

"Today we have a blind subsidy, we subsidize fuel for everyone. So what we'll do is target the subsidy to poorer families through direct cash transfers, while keeping gasoline prices stable for transport workers," said Espinoza.

Putting the house in order

When asked how he would draw foreign investment and take on foreign debt, Paz repeated: "First you put the house in order quickly."

That involves changing Bolivia's Constitution, he said, a prospect that has stirred fears among the country's Indigenous majority who finally found political representation in the 2005 election of MAS party founder

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Morales as the country's first Indigenous president.

Under Morales, a 2009 constitution gave Indigenous and other grassroots groups a bigger role in electoral politics and decision-making after years of being treated as second-class citizens by Bolivia's largely white and mestizo, or mixed-race, minority. The constitution also overhauled the judicial system, making it more vulnerable to political influence.

Paz promised that his government would respect its commitment to the Indigenous majority but prioritize changes in a judiciary that for years has been seen as a political prize to be won rather than a check on government power. He pledged to convene a summit to produce concrete proposals the day after his inauguration.

To contain any frustration at his inability to fulfill his promises in the short term while pushing through difficult reforms, experts say that Paz will need to show the negotiating powers that he boasted of in his campaign.

He appeared aware of that in Monday's news conference, saying that he and Lara "have extended our hand to all political forces in Parliament."

The street may be another matter.

Late Monday, scattered protests against the election result erupted outside the Supreme Electoral Tribunal in Bolivia's capital of La Paz. Scores of Quiroga supporters wrapped themselves in national flags and chanted "Fraud, fraud, fraud!" Local media aired footage of other protests igniting in the prosperous eastern region of Santa Cruz.

"I don't trust it at all," said Shelly Sánchez, 48, one of the protesters in La Paz, explaining that she lost faith in Bolivia's electoral politics after Morales' disputed 2019 reelection that sparked suspicions of fraud and prompted mass protests that led to his ouster under pressure from the military.

"They're all the same."

What to know about the recovery efforts in Alaska following ex-Typhoon Halong

By BECKY BOHRER Associated Press

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) — The mass evacuation by military aircraft of hundreds of residents from Alaska villages ravaged by the remnants of Typhoon Halong is complete, and officials and local leaders are turning attention to trying to stabilize damaged infrastructure and housing where they can before the winter freeze sets in.

The focus of major response efforts following back-to-back storms that battered western Alaska has been the Yup'ik communities of Kipnuk and Kwigillingok, which are near the Bering Sea and have histories of flooding. While more than a dozen communities reported damage from the remnants of Halong earlier this month, Kipnuk and Kwigillingok were devastated by storm surge and water levels that reached record highs.

Homes were swept away, some with people inside. Winds in the region shook and tossed buildings like toys. First responders recounted rescuing people from rooftops. One person died, and two remain missing.

Initial estimates suggest 90% of buildings were destroyed in Kipnuk, with the fresh water supply seemingly contaminated by fuel and sewage, according to a report released Monday by Alaska's emergency management division. About 35% of buildings in Kwigillingok were destroyed, the report states.

An Alaska Native organization seeks additional action

The Alaska Federation of Natives passed a resolution during its annual convention that ended Saturday in support of expansive, urgent and ongoing help for the region.

The group is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska, and its meeting in Anchorage coincided with the temporary relocation last week of hundreds of people to shelters in the city, which is Alaska's largest and about 500 miles (804.7 kilometers) from some of the tiny villages where residents rely heavily on hunting and fishing as part of their culture.

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The resolution, among other things, urges the state and federal governments “to make sustained investments in permanent Alaska Arctic infrastructure and protective measures” and to strengthen ties with tribes “to ensure a consistent federal presence and equitable access to resources for remote communities across the Bering Sea and Arctic regions.”

Funds for community resilience or aimed at mitigating disaster risks have been called into question by President Donald Trump’s administration, with efforts to cancel them being challenged in court. Alaska’s U.S. senators, Republicans Lisa Murkowski and Dan Sullivan, have said they would make the case for the importance of such funds in Alaska, where numerous rural communities face threats from coastal erosion and thawing permafrost that require significant infrastructure updates — and in some cases, relocation.

The Alaska Federation of Natives’ resolution also urged the federal government to establish a regional response hub in the southwest Alaska community of Bethel and to provide funds for village public safety officers to aid in response efforts. And it asks governments at all levels to discourage “any barriers that would inhibit hunting and fishing practices” to replenish fish, moose meat and other subsistence and traditional foods that Native people lost in the storm.

The remoteness of the region requires goods to be shipped in by barge or brought in by air. Hunting and fishing helps supplement food available at local groceries that can be limited and often expensive.

Anchorage welcoming displaced students

On Monday, 65 displaced students began classes in Anchorage schools. Anchorage School District staff over the weekend met with families in the shelters set up in the city and helped register children for school, the district said in a statement.

The district superintendent, Jharrett Bryantt, in a statement last week said school teams would be ready to provide emergency supplies, bus transportation, mental health services, language assistance and other support.

“This transition carries both emotional and cultural weight. Our schools will be places of belonging, healing and hope, where every child feels safe, valued and connected,” he said. “Honoring each student’s culture, language and relationships will be essential to helping them heal and rebuild their sense of home.”

Working against the clock, and winter

Focus by the state has shifted to sending personnel and supplies into communities to help restore damaged infrastructure and assist with emergency home repairs, the report from the emergency management agency said. Tribal organizations and consortiums are coordinating efforts to help dry out, salvage and repair homes.

The Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corp., which is involved in recovery efforts and provides health care in the region, on social media said it anticipates freeze up — when rivers begin to freeze over — within weeks.

Jeremy Zidek, a spokesperson for the state emergency management agency, said there is not yet a date by which officials plan to close shelters that have been set up in Anchorage.

“As we work to return people home or find other accommodation we will assess,” he said by email.

Man who planned to shoot up Atlanta’s airport is arrested in a terminal following a tip, police say

By JEFF MARTIN and KATE BRUMBACK Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Police arrested a man at Atlanta’s bustling airport on Monday after getting a tip from his family that he was planning to shoot up the place, and found an assault rifle and ammunition in his truck outside, the city’s police chief said.

Billy Joe Cagle, of Cartersville, Georgia, had described his plan to shoot up the world’s busiest airport on a social media livestream, Chief Darin Schierbaum said during a news conference.

“The Cartersville Police Department was alerted by the family of Mr. Cagle that he was streaming on social media that he was headed to the Atlanta airport, in their words, to ‘shoot it up,’ and the family stated that he was in possession of an assault rifle,” Schierbaum said, describing Cagle as a “convicted felon.”

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Cagle, 49, arrived at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport in a Chevrolet pickup truck that was parked right outside the doors to the airport terminal. When police went to the vehicle, they found an AR-15 with 27 rounds of ammunition, Schierbaum said.

"We're here today briefing you on a success and not a tragedy because a family saw something and said something," the chief said.

Cartersville police Capt. Greg Sparacio, whose department received the initial tip from family members, said Cagle "had the intention to inflict harm to as many people as he could."

During the news conference, police showed surveillance video that shows Cagle arriving at the airport and body-camera video of his arrest.

A Chevrolet flatbed pickup truck is seen arriving curbside at the airport terminal around 9:30 a.m. and then a man police identified as Cagle is seen entering the airport a few minutes later. He walks over to the TSA security checkpoint and had "high interest in that area," Schierbaum said.

Body-camera footage shows Atlanta police officers, who had a photo of Cagle provided by his family on their phones, approach him and start asking him questions before taking him into custody. As they take him to the ground and put handcuffs on him, Cagle can be heard yelling.

Cagle has been charged with making terroristic threats, criminal attempt to commit aggravated assault, possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony and possession of a firearm by a felon, Schierbaum said.

Cagle was booked into the Clayton County Detention Facility on Monday evening, according to online jail records. Attempts to reach his family and co-workers through multiple phone numbers and emails were unsuccessful. It wasn't immediately clear whether he had a lawyer who could comment on the charges.

Nick Roberts, who has known Cagle since high school, texted his friend Sunday night after being concerned by Facebook posts he had made. He said Cagle was struggling with mental health issues. Cagle had posted on Facebook earlier Sunday that he is schizophrenic and was taking medication.

Roberts said Cagle called him at about 9 p.m. Sunday night and assured him he was OK. Roberts said Cagle loved his two daughters and worked hard hauling hay and doing fencing work.

"I want folks to know that he wasn't some monster," Roberts said. "This was a very big surprise for a lot of us that went to high school with him and know him in the community."

Atlanta police will work with federal authorities to determine how he obtained the gun, "which he was not able to legally possess," Schierbaum said.

Mayor Andre Dickens said "we're thankful to God" that a tragedy was averted.

"We're thankful to God and to good information, and good intel, and good people for this crisis being averted," the mayor said.

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem said in a post on the social platform X, "I am thankful this individual was taken into custody by law enforcement before harming anyone."

ICE would need more money to expand use of bodycams in Chicago crackdown, official says

By CHRISTINE FERNANDO Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Many federal officers assigned to immigration enforcement in the Chicago area have body cameras but Congress would have to allocate more funds to expand their use, officials testified Monday at a hearing about the tactics agents are using in Trump administration's crackdown, which has produced more than 1,000 arrests.

U.S. District Judge Sara Ellis last week ordered uniformed agents to wear cameras, if available, and turn them on when engaged in arrests, frisks and building searches or when being deployed to protests. She held a hearing Monday at which she questioned a U.S. Customs and Border Protection official and a U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement official about the operation and complaints that agents are increasingly using combative tactics.

Kyle Harvick, deputy incident commander with CBP, said Border Patrol agents who are part of Operation

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Midway Blitz have cameras. He said 201 are in the Chicago area.

But Shawn Byers, deputy field office director for ICE, said more money from Congress would be needed to expand camera use beyond two of that agency's field offices. He said no cameras have been worn by ICE agents working at a building in Broadview, outside Chicago, where immigrants pass through before being detained elsewhere. It's been the site of protests that at times have been tumultuous.

Byers also explained that while there are surveillance cameras outside the ICE facility, they record over previous footage every 28 days. Ellis expressed surprise when Byers said that meant footage from before Sept. 18 was gone. The Broadview facility became a focus of protesters after Operation Midway Blitz began in early September.

"All of that needs to be preserved," Ellis said.

Near the end of the hearing, Ellis said she would allow attorneys to question additional federal officials, including Gregory Bovino, the Border Patrol chief who is leading CBP's Chicago operation and also was central to the immigration crackdown in Los Angeles.

The hearing was part of a lawsuit by news organizations and community groups witnessing protests and arrests in the Chicago area. Ellis said earlier this month that agents must wear badges, and she banned them from using certain riot control techniques against peaceful protesters and journalists.

Then last Thursday, she said she was a "little startled" after seeing TV images of street confrontations in which agents used tear gas and other tactics.

Harvick defended the use on tear gas on protesters in a Chicago neighborhood on Oct. 12, saying residents who had gathered "would not allow agents to leave the scene."

"The longer we loiter on a scene and subjects come, the situation gets more and more dangerous," Harvick said Monday. "And that's a safety concern, not just for my brother Border Patrol agents but the detainee and other people who come out to see what's going on."

The government has bristled at any suggestion of wrongdoing.

"The full context is that law enforcement officers in Chicago have been, and continue to be, attacked, injured, and impeded from enforcing federal law," U.S. Justice Department attorney Samuel Holt said in a court filing Friday.

Separately, President Donald Trump's administration has been barred from deploying the National Guard to assist immigration officers in Illinois. That order expires Thursday unless extended. The administration also has asked the Supreme Court to allow the deployment.

US appeals court says Trump can take command of Oregon troops though deployment blocked for now

By CLAIRE RUSH and GENE JOHNSON Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — An appeals court on Monday put on hold a lower-court ruling that kept President Donald Trump from taking command of 200 Oregon National Guard troops. However, Trump is still barred from actually deploying those troops, at least for now.

U.S. District Judge Karin Immergut, a Trump appointee, issued two temporary restraining orders early this month — one that prohibited Trump from calling up the troops so he could send them to Portland, and another that prohibited him from sending any National Guard members to Oregon at all, after the president tried to evade the first order by deploying California troops instead.

The Justice Department appealed the first order, and in a 2-1 ruling Monday, a panel from the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sided with the administration. The majority said the president was likely to succeed on his claim that he had the authority to federalize the troops based on a determination he was unable to enforce the laws without them.

However, Immergut's second order remains in effect, so no troops may immediately be deployed.

The administration has said that because the legal reasoning underpinning both temporary restraining orders was the same, the second one was also invalid, and the majority opinion also said the two TROs "rise or fall together."

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Soon after the ruling Monday, the Justice Department asked Immergut to immediately dissolve her second order, which would allow Trump to deploy troops to Portland. The Justice Department argued that it is not the role of the courts to second-guess the president's determination about when to deploy troops.

"The Ninth Circuit's decision staying the first TRO is a significant change in law that plainly warrants dissolution of this Court's second TRO," the administration's lawyers wrote.

Oregon Attorney General Dan Rayfield, a Democrat, said he would ask for a broader panel of the appeals to reconsider the decision.

"Today's ruling, if allowed to stand, would give the president unilateral power to put Oregon soldiers on our streets with almost no justification," Rayfield said. "We are on a dangerous path in America."

The Justice Department did not return an email seeking comment.

Trump's efforts to deploy National Guard troops in Democratic-led cities have been mired in legal challenges. A judge in California ruled that his deployment of thousands of National Guard troops in Los Angeles violated the Posse Comitatus Act, a longstanding law that generally prohibits the use of the military for civilian policing, and the administration on Friday asked the U.S. Supreme Court to allow the deployment of National Guard troops in the Chicago area,

Mostly small nightly protests, limited to a single block, have been occurring since June outside the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement building in Portland. Larger crowds, including counterprotesters and live-streamers, have shown up at times, and federal agents have used tear gas to disperse the demonstrators.

The administration has said the troops are needed to protect federal property from protesters, and that having to send extra Department of Homeland Security agents to help guard the property meant they were not enforcing immigration laws elsewhere.

Immergut previously rejected the administration's arguments, saying the president's claims about Portland being war-torn are "simply untethered to the facts." But the appeals court majority — Ryan Nelson and Bridget Bade, both Trump appointees — said the president's decision was owed more deference.

Bade wrote that the facts appeared to support Trump's decision "even if the President may exaggerate the extent of the problem on social media."

Judge Susan Graber, an appointee of former President Bill Clinton appointee, dissented. She urged her colleagues on the 9th Circuit to "to vacate the majority's order before the illegal deployment of troops under false pretenses can occur."

"In the two weeks leading up to the President's September 27 social media post, there had not been a single incident of protesters' disrupting the execution of the laws," Graber wrote. "It is hard to understand how a tiny protest causing no disruptions could possibly satisfy the standard that the President is unable to execute the laws."

US man arrested in Scotland and convicted of Utah rape gets at least 5 years in prison

By HANNAH SCHOENBAUM and MEAD GRUVER Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A Utah judge on Monday sentenced a man who appeared to fake his death and flee the United States to avoid arrest on rape charges to anywhere from five years to life in prison.

Nicholas Rossi, 38, is "a serial abuser of women" and "the very definition of a flight risk," District Judge Barry Lawrence said before handing down the sentence.

It was Rossi's first of two sentencings after separate convictions in August and September of raping two women in northern Utah in 2008. He is scheduled to be sentenced in November in the second case.

Utah allows prison sentences to be given as a range rather than a set period of time. A parole board will determine if and when Rossi is released. Five years to life is the entire range of possible prison time under Utah law for rape, a first-degree felony.

Jurors found Rossi guilty of rape in August after a three-day trial in which his accuser and her parents each took the stand.

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Rossi left a “trail of fear, pain and destruction” behind him, the victim in the case told the court shortly before Rossi was sentenced. The Associated Press does not typically identify rape victims.

“This is not a plea for vengeance,” she said. “This is a plea for safety and accountability, for recognition of the damage that will never fully heal.”

Rossi posed a risk to community safety and should be in prison, argued Deputy Salt Lake County District Attorney Brandon Simmons, a prosecutor in the case, before the sentencing. Rossi’s lawyers, meanwhile, urged the judge to give him parole.

Rossi did not testify on his own behalf during the trial. Given a chance to speak before being sentenced Monday, he maintained his innocence.

“I am not guilty of this. These women are lying,” Rossi said in a soft, raspy voice. He appeared in court in a wheelchair and used an oxygen tank.

Utah authorities began searching for Rossi, whose legal name is Nicholas Alahverdian, when he was identified in 2018 through a decade-old DNA rape kit. He was among thousands of rape suspects identified and later charged when Utah made a push to clear its rape kit backlog.

Months after he was charged in that case, an online obituary claimed Rossi died on Feb. 29, 2020, of non-Hodgkin lymphoma. But police in his home state of Rhode Island, along with his former lawyer and a former foster family, cast doubt on whether he was dead.

He was arrested in Scotland the following year while receiving treatment for COVID-19. Hospital staff recognized his distinctive tattoos — including the crest of Brown University inked on his shoulder, although he never attended — from an Interpol notice.

He was extradited to Utah in January 2024 after a protracted court battle. At the time, Rossi insisted he was an Irish orphan named Arthur Knight who was being framed. Investigators say they identified at least a dozen aliases Rossi used over the years to evade capture.

In his first trial, Rossi’s public defender denied the rape claim and urged jurors not to read too much into his move overseas. Even so, the jury convicted Rossi of the rape charge for which he was sentenced Monday.

The victim in the case had been living with her parents and recovering from a traumatic brain injury in 2008 when she responded to a personal ad Rossi posted on Craigslist. They began dating and were engaged within a couple weeks.

She testified that Rossi asked her to pay for dates and car repairs, lend him \$1,000 so he wouldn’t be evicted, and take on debt to buy their engagement rings. He grew hostile soon after their engagement and raped her in his bedroom one night after she drove him home, she said.

She went to police years later, after hearing that Rossi was accused of raping another woman in Utah around the same time.

The victim in that case went to police soon after Rossi attacked her at his apartment in Orem. The woman had gone there to collect money she said he stole from her to buy a computer.

Rossi was convicted in that case in September and sentencing is set for Nov. 4.

Rossi grew up in foster homes in Rhode Island and returned there before he appeared to fake his death and flee the country. He was previously wanted in the state for failing to register as a sex offender. The FBI says he also faces fraud charges in Ohio, where he was convicted of sex-related charges in 2008.

Massive Amazon cloud outage has been resolved after disrupting internet use worldwide

By KELVIN CHAN and BARBARA ORTUTAY Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Amazon says a massive outage of its cloud computing service has been resolved as of Monday evening, after a problem disrupted internet use around the world, taking down a broad range of online services, including social media, gaming, food delivery, streaming and financial platforms.

The all-day disruption and the ensuing exasperation it caused served as the latest reminder that 21st century society is increasingly dependent on just a handful of companies for much of its internet technol-

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ogy, which seems to work reliably until it suddenly breaks down.

About three hours after the outage began early Monday morning, Amazon Web Services said it was starting to recover, but it wasn't until 6 p.m. Eastern that "services returned to normal operations," Amazon said on its AWS health website, where it tracks outages.

AWS provides behind-the-scenes cloud computing infrastructure to some of the world's biggest organizations. Its customers include government departments, universities and businesses, including The Associated Press.

Cybersecurity expert Mike Chapple said "a slow and bumpy recovery process" is "entirely normal."

As engineers roll out fixes across the cloud computing infrastructure, the process could trigger smaller disruptions, he said.

"It's similar to what happens after a large-scale power outage: While a city's power is coming back online, neighborhoods may see intermittent glitches as crews finish the repairs," said Chapple, an information technology professor at the University of Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business.

Amazon blames domain name system

Amazon pinned the outage on issues related to its domain name system that converts web addresses into IP addresses, which are numeric designations that identify locations on the internet. Those addresses allow websites and apps to load on internet-connected devices.

DownDetector, a website that tracks online outages, said in a Facebook post that it received over 11 million user reports of problems at more than 2,500 companies. Users reported trouble with the social media site Snapchat, the Roblox and Fortnite video games, the online broker Robinhood and the McDonald's app, as well as Netflix, Disney+ and many other services.

The cryptocurrency exchange Coinbase and the Signal chat app both said on X that they were experiencing trouble related to the outage.

Amazon's own services were also affected. Users of the company's Ring doorbell cameras and Alexa-powered smart speakers reported that they were not working, while others said they were unable to access the Amazon website or download books to their Kindle.

Many college and K-12 students were unable to submit or access their homework or course materials Monday because the AWS outage knocked out Canvas, a widely used educational platform.

"I currently can't grade any online assignments, and my students can't access their online materials" because of the outage's effect on learning-management systems, said Damien P. Williams, a professor of philosophy and data science at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

The exact number of schools impacted was not immediately known, but Canvas says on its website it is used by 50% of college and university students in North America, including all Ivy League schools in the U.S.

At the University of California, Riverside, students couldn't submit assignments, take quizzes or access course materials, and online instruction was limited, the campus said.

Ohio State University informed its 70,000 students at all six campuses by email Monday morning that online course materials might be inaccessible due to the outage and that "students should connect with their instructors for any alternative plans." As of 7:10 p.m. Eastern, access was restored, the university told students.

Record of past outages

This is not the first time issues with Amazon cloud services have caused widespread disruptions.

Many popular internet services were affected by a brief outage in 2023. AWS's longest outage in recent history occurred in late 2021, when a wide range of companies — from airlines and auto dealerships to payment apps and video streaming services — were affected for more than five hours. Outages also happened in 2020 and 2017.

The first signs of trouble emerged at around 3:11 a.m. Eastern time, when AWS reported on its "health dashboard" that it was "investigating increased error rates and latencies for multiple AWS services in the US-EAST-1 Region." Later, the company reported that there were "significant error rates" and that engineers were "actively working" on the problem.

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Around 6 a.m. Eastern time, the company reported seeing recovery across most of the affected services and said it was seeking a "full resolution." As of midday, AWS was still working to resolve the trouble.

Sixty-four internal AWS services were affected, the company said.

Just a few companies provide most internet infrastructure

Because much of the world now relies on three or four companies to provide the underlying infrastructure of the internet, "when there's an issue like this, it can be really impactful" across many online services, said Patrick Burgess, a cybersecurity expert at U.K.-based BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT.

"The world now runs on the cloud," Burgess said.

And because so much of the online world's plumbing is underpinned by so few companies, when something goes wrong, "it's very difficult for users to pinpoint what is happening because we don't see Amazon, we just see Snapchat or Roblox," Burgess said.

"The good news is that this kind of issue is usually relatively fast" to resolve, and there's no indication that it was caused by a cyberattack, Burgess said.

"This looks like a good old-fashioned technology issue. Something's gone wrong, and it will be fixed by Amazon," he said.

There are "well-established processes" to deal with outages at AWS, as well as rivals Google and Microsoft, Burgess said, adding that such outages are usually over in "hours rather than days."

US envoys visit Israel to bolster truce, and Gaza militants hand over a hostage's remains

By SAM MEDNICK, SAMY MAGDY and WAFAA SHURAFU Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Two of U.S. President Donald Trump's envoys traveled to Israel on Monday to shore up the ceasefire in Gaza, a day after deadly violence gave the fragile deal its first major test.

The truce appeared on track as Israel received the remains of another hostage in Gaza, and Israel allowed aid deliveries to resume to the devastated territory. United Nations spokesperson Stephane Dujarric did not say how much aid was getting in.

Israel on Sunday had threatened to halt shipments of humanitarian aid, and its forces killed dozens of Palestinians in strikes across Gaza after accusing Hamas militants of killing two soldiers. Israel later said it resumed enforcing the ceasefire.

U.S. special envoy Steve Witkoff and the president's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about developments in the region. U.S. Vice President JD Vance and the second lady, Usha Vance, are scheduled to visit Tuesday and meet with Netanyahu, the prime minister said in a speech.

Netanyahu also warned Hamas that any attacks against Israeli forces would be met with "a very heavy price."

Asked about maintaining the Israel-Hamas ceasefire, Trump said the U.S. will give the situation a "little chance" in hopes that there will be less violence. He put the blame on Hamas and said the militant group must behave or face consequences.

"They have to be good, and if they're not good they'll be eradicated," he said.

More than a week of ceasefire

The U.S.-proposed truce aimed at ending two years of war took effect on Oct. 10.

On Sunday, Trump told reporters that Hamas had been "doing some shooting." He also suggested that the violence might be the fault of "rebels" within the group.

Hamas security forces have returned to the streets in Gaza, clashing with armed groups and killing alleged gangsters in what the militant group says is an attempt to restore law and order in areas where Israeli troops have withdrawn.

On Sunday, Israel's military said militants had fired at troops in areas of Rafah in southern Gaza that are Israeli-controlled according to agreed-upon ceasefire lines.

Retaliatory strikes by Israel killed 45 Palestinians, according to the territory's Health Ministry, which says

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a total of 80 people have been killed since the ceasefire took effect.

Hamas, which continued to accuse Israel of multiple ceasefire violations, said communication with its remaining units in Rafah had been cut off for months and "we are not responsible for any incidents occurring in those areas."

The Israeli military said Monday it was using concrete barriers and painted poles to more clearly delineate the so-called yellow line in Gaza to where troops have withdrawn and several instances of violence have occurred.

Earlier in the day, Israel said one of its fighter jets struck and killed several people it said had crossed the yellow line in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, approached troops and "posed an imminent threat." In two similar incidents Monday in a neighborhood of Gaza City, the military said it struck several people who crossed the line there and posed an "immediate threat" to its troops.

Under the terms of the ceasefire, Israel is still waiting for Hamas to turn over the remains of 15 dead hostages. Thirteen have been turned over.

The next stage of ceasefire

The ceasefire's next stage is expected to focus on disarming Hamas, Israeli withdrawal from additional areas it controls in Gaza, and future governance of the devastated territory. The U.S. plan proposes the establishment of an internationally backed authority.

In an interview with CBS' "60 Minutes" news program over the weekend, Kushner said the success or failure of the deal would depend on whether Israel and the international mechanism could create a viable alternative to Hamas.

"If they are successful, Hamas will fail, and Gaza will not be a threat to Israel in the future," he said.

A Hamas delegation led by chief negotiator Khalil al-Hayya was in Cairo to follow up on the implementation of the ceasefire deal with mediators and other Palestinian groups.

Fears the ceasefire may collapse

Palestinians in Gaza fear the deal may fall apart.

Funeral services were held Monday for some of the dozens of people killed by Israeli strikes. Associated Press footage showed mourners lining up for prayers.

"There should be concerns as long as the matters have yet to be settled," said Hossam Ahmed from the southern city of Khan Younis.

A major concern is how much aid Israel is letting into Gaza. To facilitate more aid, mediators are working to ensure the opening of the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza, a senior Qatari official said Monday.

"The opening of the Rafah crossing remains essential to scaling up the delivery of life-saving humanitarian aid into Gaza," Qatar's Minister of State for International Cooperation Mariam bint Ali Al-Misnad told The Associated Press.

In their Oct. 7, 2023, attack on Israel that sparked the war, Hamas-led militants killed around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted 251 people as hostages.

The Israel-Hamas war has killed more than 68,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between civilians and combatants in its count. The ministry maintains detailed casualty records that are seen as generally reliable by U.N. agencies and independent experts. Israel has disputed them without providing its own toll.

Thousands more people are missing, according to the Red Cross.

Comey's lawyers say case against him is driven by Trump's 'personal animus' and must be thrown out

By ERIC TUCKER and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lawyers for former FBI Director James Comey urged a judge Monday to dismiss the case against him, calling it a vindictive prosecution motivated by "personal animus" and orchestrated by a White House determined to seek retribution against a perceived foe of President Donald Trump.

The lawyers separately called for the indictment's dismissal because of what they said was the illegitimate

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appointment of the U.S. attorney who filed the case days after being hastily named to the job by Trump.

The two-prong attack on the indictment, which accuses Comey of lying to Congress five years ago, represents the opening salvo in what is expected to be a protracted court fight ahead of a trial currently set for Jan. 5. The motions challenge not only the substance of the allegations but also the unusual circumstances of the prosecution, which included Trump exhorting his attorney general to bring charges against Comey as well as his administration's abrupt installation of a White House aide to serve as top prosecutor of the elite office overseeing the case.

"Bedrock principles of due process and equal protection have long ensured that government officials may not use courts to punish and imprison their perceived personal and political enemies," wrote Comey's defense team, which includes Patrick Fitzgerald, the former U.S. Attorney in Chicago and a longtime Comey friend. "But that is exactly what happened here."

They said the Justice Department had brought the case because of Trump's hatred of Comey, who as FBI director in the early months of Trump's first term infuriated the president through his oversight of an investigation into potential ties between Russia and Trump's 2016 campaign. Trump fired Comey in May 2017. The two have been open adversaries since, with Comey labeling Trump "unethical" and comparing him to a mafia boss and Trump branding Comey an "untruthful slime ball" and calling for him to be punished because of the Russia investigation.

"The government has singled out Mr. Comey for prosecution because of his protected speech and because of President Trump's personal animus toward Mr. Comey," defense lawyers wrote, adding that such a "vindictive and selection prosecution" violates multiple provisions of the Constitution and must be dismissed.

Comey's defense team had foreshadowed the arguments during his first and only court appearance in the case, where he pleaded not guilty.

Though motions alleging vindictive prosecutions do not often succeed, this one lays out a timeline of events intended to link Trump's demands for a prosecution with the Justice Department's scramble to secure an indictment last month just before the statute of limitations was set to lapse.

Last month, for instance, he complained in a Truth Social post directed to Attorney General Pam Bondi that "nothing is being done" on investigations into some of his foes and called for action, specifically referencing inquiries into Comey, New York Attorney General Letitia James and Democratic Sen. Adam Schiff of California.

"JUSTICE MUST BE SERVED, NOW!!!" part of the message said.

He installed Lindsey Halligan, a White House aide who had been one of Trump's personal lawyers but had no experience as a federal prosecutor, to run the Eastern District of Virginia and replace Erik Siebert, who had resigned as U.S. attorney one day earlier amid administration pressure to charge Comey and James. Comey was indicted days later.

Comey's lawyers argued that that social media post represented an admission that the government was prosecuting Comey for "an impermissible discriminatory purpose."

"For many years, President Trump has sought to prosecute or otherwise punish Mr. Comey because of overt hostility to Mr. Comey's protected speech and because of his personal bias against Mr. Comey," the attorneys said.

"But despite President Trump's yearslong campaign to prosecute Mr. Comey, no career or appointed prosecutor had ever agreed to do so," they added. "Thus, Mr. Trump made clear to his Attorney General that the only way to achieve 'JUSTICE' against Mr. Comey was by ousting Mr. Siebert and installing Ms. Halligan."

The indictment accuses Comey of having misled the Senate Judiciary Committee on Sept. 30, 2020, in response to questions from Republican Sen. Ted Cruz about whether Comey had authorized a news media leak. But Comey's lawyers say the indictment misstates his exchange with Cruz, attributing to Comey statements he did not make.

The defense team says the indictment omits context from Cruz's question that made clear he was asking Comey if he had authorized his deputy director, Andrew McCabe, to serve as an anonymous source to the

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news media. The lawyers say the indictment misleadingly suggests the questioning from Cruz concerned another person, a Columbia law professor and Comey friend named Daniel Richman. An earlier FBI investigation into whether Comey had disclosed classified information through Richman concluded there was insufficient evidence to charge either man.

Defense lawyers in a separate motion argued that the case was “fatally flawed” because Halligan was unlawfully appointed before she signed the indictment late last month.

“The President and Attorney General appointed the President’s personal lawyer as interim U.S. Attorney in violation of a clear statutory command so that the interim U.S. Attorney could indict an outspoken critic of the President just days before the relevant statute of limitations was set to expire,” defense lawyers said.

That motion is expected to be heard by a different judge than the trial judge, Michael Nachmanoff.

Halligan is not the only U.S. attorney facing a court challenge.

A federal appeals court in Philadelphia heard arguments Monday in a case challenging the tenure of Alina Habba as New Jersey’s top federal prosecutor. A panel of judges did not immediately rule but questioned the propriety of maneuvers meant to keep Habba in her job.

Separately Monday, defense lawyers pushed back in court papers on a suggestion by the Justice Department that Fitzgerald might have to step aside from the case.

Prosecutors late Sunday asserted in a court filing that Comey’s “lead defense counsel” had earlier been used by Comey to disclose classified information and might therefore need to be disqualified. The defense team Monday called that allegation “provably false” and defamatory.

George Santos says he’s humbled but dismisses ‘pearl clutching’ critics

NEW YORK (AP) — Freed from the prison where he had been serving time for ripping off his campaign donors, former U.S. Rep. George Santos says he’s humbled by his experience behind bars but unconcerned about the “pearl clutching” of critics upset that President Donald Trump granted him clemency.

“I’m pretty confident if President Trump had pardoned Jesus Christ off the cross, he would have had critics,” Santos said Sunday in an interview on CNN.

Santos, who won office after inventing a bogus persona as a Wall Street dealmaker, pleaded guilty to fraud and identity theft last year and began serving a 7-year sentence in July at a prison in New Jersey. But Trump ordered him released Friday after he’d served just 84 days. Trump called Santos a “rogue,” but said he didn’t deserve a harsh sentence and should get credit for voting Republican.

Speaking on CNN’s “State of the Union,” Santos said he had “learned a great deal” and had “a very large slice of humble pie, if not the entire pie” while in prison.

He also apologized to former constituents in his New York congressional district, saying he was “in a chaotic ball of flame” when he committed his crimes. Santos admitted last year to deceiving donors and stealing the identities of 11 people — including his own family members.

But when asked about fellow Republicans unhappy that Trump freed him so soon, Santos said other presidential acts of clemency had been worse, citing President Joe Biden’s decision to pardon his son, Hunter, for gun and tax crimes.

“So pardon me if I’m not paying too much attention to the pearl-clutching of the outrage of my critics,” Santos said.

As part of his guilty plea, Santos had agreed to pay restitution of \$373,750 and forfeiture of \$205,003. But Trump’s clemency order appeared to clear him of paying any further fines or restitution.

Santos said he has been granted a second chance and intended to “make amends,” but when asked if he intended to pay back the campaign donors he had defrauded, he said only if he had to.

“If it’s required of me by the law, yes. If it’s not, then no,” Santos said.

Santos had appealed to Trump directly for help, citing his loyalty to the president’s agenda and to the Republican Party in a letter published Oct. 13 in The South Shore Press. But he said Sunday that he had no expectations and learned of his commutation from fellow inmates who saw the news on television.

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Revelations that Santos invented much of his life story surfaced just weeks after he became the first non-incumbent openly gay Republican to be elected to Congress in 2022.

Santos had said while campaigning that he was a successful business consultant with a sizable real estate portfolio. But he ultimately admitted to embellishing his biography. He had never graduated from Baruch College, where he had claimed to be a standout player on the Manhattan college's volleyball team. He had never worked at Citigroup and Goldman Sachs. He didn't own property.

In truth, he struggled financially, had drifted through several jobs, including one for a company accused of running a Ponzi scheme, and even faced eviction.

After becoming just the sixth person to be expelled from the House, Santos made hundreds of thousands of dollars selling personalized videos to the public on Cameo. He returned to the service Sunday.

What to know about the Amazon Web Services outage

NEW YORK (AP) — Internet disruptions tied to Amazon's cloud computing service affected people around the world Monday trying to connect to online services used for work, social media and video games.

About three hours after the outage began, Amazon Web Services said it was starting to recover from the problem. But the company later said it was continuing to respond to "significant" errors and connectivity issues across multiple services.

What is Amazon Web Services

Amazon Web Services is a cloud computing provider that hosts many of the world's most-used online services and provides behind-the-scenes infrastructure to many government departments, universities and businesses.

Amazon is the leading provider of cloud infrastructure and platform services, constituting over 41% of the market, according to research group Gartner. Google and Microsoft are the next biggest competitors.

Seattle-based Amazon said the problems were centered in its Virginia-based US-East-1 data center region, one of its oldest and most important cloud hubs around the world. The region is a backbone "for so many services that when things go screwy, domino effects around the internet-as-we-know-it are enormous," wrote John Scott-Railton, a cybersecurity researcher at Citizen Lab, in a social media post.

What happened?

AWS traced the source of the problem to something called the "DynamoDB endpoint in the US-East-1 Region," in a pair of jargon-laden updates.

"DynamoDB isn't a term that most consumers know, but it underpins the apps and services that all of us use every single day," said cybersecurity expert Mike Chapple.

DynamoDB is a centralized database service that many internet-based services use to track user information, store key data and manage their operations, Chapple said by email.

It's "one of the record-keepers of the modern internet," said Chapple, an IT professor at the University of Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business. "It's fast, it's cheap, and it's reliable. But today it stopped working and we saw the effects of that outage ripple across the internet."

Amazon's updates suggest the problem isn't with the database itself, but rather that something went wrong with the records that tell other systems where to find their data, he said.

"Amazon had the data safely stored, but nobody else could find it for several hours, leaving apps temporarily separated from their data. It's as if large portions of the internet suffered temporary amnesia," Chapple said.

Amazon has attributed the outage to a domain name system issue. DNS is the service that translates internet addresses into machine-readable IP addresses that connects browsers and apps with websites and underlying web services. DNS errors disrupt the translation process, interrupting the connection.

Because so many sites and services use AWS, a DNS error can have widespread results.

Who was affected?

Internet users around the world faced widespread disruption because Amazon's problem took down dozens of major online services, including social media site Snapchat, the Roblox and Fortnite video games

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and chat app Signal.

On DownDetector, a website that tracks online outages, users reported issues with Snapchat, Roblox, Fortnite, online broker Robinhood, the McDonald's app and many other services.

Starbucks experienced "a very limited impact for a very short amount of time" to its app, but all stores were serving customers normally, Starbucks Global Communications Director Jaci Anderson said in an email to The Associated Press.

"Our mobile order ahead and pay app is working normally to serve our customers this morning," Anderson said midmorning.

DoorDash said its systems were not directly affected but some of its partners "experienced brief disruptions" affecting deliveries.

Lyft said an outage was "intermittently impacting" the ride-hailing service, while language-learning app Duolingo thanked users for their patience.

The risks of centralized cloud services

Some cybersecurity experts have warned for years about the potentially ugly consequences of allowing a handful of big tech companies to dominate key internet operations.

"So much of the world now relies on these three or four big (cloud) compute companies who provide the underlying infrastructure that when there's an issue like this, it can be really impactful across a broad range, a broad spectrum" of online services, said Patrick Burgess, a cybersecurity expert at U.K.-based BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT.

"The world now runs on the cloud," and the internet is seen as a utility like water or electricity, as we spend so much of our lives on our smartphones, Burgess said.

And because so much of the online world's plumbing is underpinned by a handful of companies, when something goes wrong, "it's very difficult for users to pinpoint what is happening because we don't see Amazon, we just see Snapchat or Roblox," Burgess said.

"The good news is that this kind of issue is usually relatively fast (to resolve)" and there's no indication that it was caused by a cyber incident like a cyberattack, Burgess said.

Has this happened in the past?

This is not the first time a problem with Amazon's key services has caused widespread disruptions.

Many popular internet services and publishers were down after a brief outage in 2023. AWS's longest outage in recent history occurred in late 2021, when companies -- everything from airline reservations and auto dealerships to payment apps and video streaming services -- were affected for more than five hours. Other major outages happened in 2020 and 2017.

Unrelated to Amazon, a faulty software update by cybersecurity company CrowdStrike affecting devices running Microsoft's Windows also rippled across the world to cause massive disruptions in 2024.

Government shutdown imperils dozens of Head Start preschool programs

By MORIAH BALINGIT AP Education Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Head Start programs that serve tens of thousands of the nation's neediest preschoolers are facing a cutoff of federal funding at the end of the month because of the government shutdown, leaving many scrambling to figure out how to keep their doors open.

The early education initiative is funded almost entirely by the federal government, making it particularly vulnerable to funding disruptions. The programs — which are run by schools, local governments and nonprofits — receive new grants annually and are not allowed to carry over unspent money.

With new grants on hold, a half dozen Head Start programs already missed federal disbursements they were expecting on Oct. 1 and are staying open with fast-dwindling reserves or help from local governments. Another 134 programs will not receive federal money that is due Nov. 1 if the government does not reopen, according to the National Head Start Association. All told, more than 65,000 seats at Head Start programs across the country could be affected.

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In Tallahassee, Florida, a Head Start program run by Capital Area Community Action Agency Inc. has been running on "fumes" since it stopped receiving federal money at the start of the month, interim CEO Nina Singleton Self said. It is drawing down reserves, getting an advance on a city grant and taking out a line of credit, but those funds will run dry this week.

To stay open beyond that, Self is asking how many staff members would work without pay. She's also steeling them for financial uncertainty, advising them on how to take loans out from their retirement accounts or apply to programs that would help them pay utility bills. She's asked other nonprofits and philanthropies for help, too.

"We're reaching out for everything that we can," Self said.

Preschool centers count the days they could stay open

Another organization in north Florida that operates eight rural Head Start centers for 365 kids was cut off Oct. 1 and has enough funding to keep its doors open until the end of November.

After that, "I don't really know what to tell you," said Michele Ward, executive director of Suwanee Valley Community Coordinated Child Care.

In Kansas City, Missouri, Mayor Quinton Lucas warned Head Start centers that serve 2,300 children will have to shutter if the federal government remains closed.

"Closing early childhood care for thousands of Kansas City children and families will have devastating effects on thousands of Kansas City families, workplaces and, most importantly, kids," said Lucas, a Democrat.

Rekah Strong, who leads a Vancouver, Washington-based organization that operates Head Start centers, said some likely will have to shut down around Nov. 1, when the organization would normally receive its federal grant. She doesn't see other funding options.

Closing a center even briefly has ripple effects, Head Start leaders warn. The early education program provides two meals a day to students, along with medical screenings and dental care. Many of the children who attend Head Start have parents working in hourly jobs who risk losing work if they do not have child care.

"Every day this shutdown continues, programs are forced to make impossible choices just to keep their doors open. Children cannot wait," said Yasmina Vinci, executive director of the National Head Start Association.

Low-income families that rely on Head Start are facing the prospect of losing other assistance as well. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, better known as WIC, nearly ran out of money because of the shutdown before President Donald Trump's administration provided \$300 million to keep it running temporarily. The Republican president's big tax breaks and spending cuts law also imposes cuts on Medicaid and food stamps.

Head Start faces a string of challenges

Launched six decades ago as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty, Head Start has a history of bipartisan support but has faced calls this year for its funding to be cut back.

A budget document showed the White House weighed shutting down Head Start altogether, a prospect that led to an outcry from both sides of the aisle before Trump's administration backed away from the proposal. Project 2025, a detailed set of policy recommendations authored by the conservative Heritage Foundation, recommended eliminating Head Start.

In January, Head Start operators struggled to access their federal money because of problems with the government's online portal. Some had to shut down temporarily.

The shutdown began when Congress failed to pass a bill to fund the government. In a standoff with the Trump administration, Democrats are insisting on the extension of tax credits that make health insurance cheaper for millions of Americans and the restoration of cuts made to Medicaid. Without the tax credits, more than 20 million Americans on Affordable Care Act plans would see their health care costs rise. Republicans say they won't discuss the health care subsidies, or any other policy, until the government reopens.

Joel Ryan, executive director of the Washington Head Start Association, said he is eager for Congress to end the shutdown. But he said he also knows that many Head Start families and staff members rely on Medicaid and on the Affordable Care Act plans.

"I'm glad that the Democrats are fighting to restore health care access," Ryan said. "I'm also really cognizant of the ramifications of the government shutdown."

Advice to feed babies peanuts early and often helped thousands of kids avoid allergies

By JONEL ALECCIA AP Health Writer

A decade after a landmark study proved that feeding peanut products to young babies could prevent development of life-threatening allergies, new research finds the change has made a big difference in the real world.

Peanut allergies began to decline in the U.S. after guidance first issued in 2015 upended medical practice by recommending introducing the allergen to infants starting as early as 4 months. The rate of peanut allergies in children ages 0 to 3 fell by more than 27% after guidance for high-risk kids was first issued in 2015, and by more than 40% after the recommendations were expanded in 2017.

"That's a remarkable thing, right?" said Dr. David Hill, an allergist and researcher at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and author of a study published Monday in the medical journal *Pediatrics*. Hill and colleagues analyzed electronic health records from dozens of pediatric practices to track diagnoses of food allergies in young children before, during and after the guidelines were issued.

"I can actually come to you today and say there are less kids with food allergy today than there would have been if we hadn't implemented this public health effort," he added.

About 60,000 children have avoided food allergies since 2015, including 40,000 children who otherwise would have developed peanut allergies. Still, about 8% of children are affected by food allergies, including more than 2% with a peanut allergy.

Peanut allergy is caused when the body's immune system mistakenly identifies proteins in peanuts as harmful and releases chemicals that trigger allergic symptoms, including hives, respiratory symptoms and, sometimes, life-threatening anaphylaxis.

For decades, doctors had recommended delaying feeding children peanuts and other foods likely to trigger allergies until age 3. But in 2015, Gideon Lack at King's College London, published the groundbreaking Learning Early About Peanut Allergy, or LEAP, trial.

Lack and colleagues showed that introducing peanut products in infancy reduced the future risk of developing food allergies by more than 80%. Later analysis showed that the protection persisted in about 70% of kids into adolescence.

The study immediately sparked new guidelines urging early introduction of peanuts — but putting them into practice has been slow.

Only about 29% of pediatricians and 65% of allergists reported following the expanded guidance issued in 2017, surveys found.

Confusion and uncertainty about the best way to introduce peanuts early in life led to the lag, according to a commentary that accompanied the study. Early on, medical experts and parents alike questioned whether the practice could be adopted outside of tightly controlled clinical settings.

The data for the analysis came from a subset of participating practice sites and may not represent the entire U.S. pediatric population, noted the commentary, led by Dr. Ruchi Gupta, a child allergy expert at Northwestern University.

However, the new research offers "promising evidence that early allergen introduction is not only being adopted but may be making a measurable impact," the authors concluded.

Advocates for the 33 million people in the U.S. with food allergies welcomed signs that early introduction of peanut products is catching on.

"This research reinforces what we already know and underscores a meaningful opportunity to reduce the incidence and prevalence of peanut allergy nationwide," said Sung Pobleto, chief executive of the nonprofit group Food Allergy Research & Education, or FARE.

The new study emphasizes the current guidance, updated in 2021, which calls for introducing peanuts

and other major food allergens between four and six months, without prior screening or testing, Hill said. Parents should consult their pediatricians about any questions.

"It doesn't have to be a lot of the food, but little tastes of peanut butter, milk-based yogurt, soy-based yogurts and tree butters," he said. "These are really good ways to allow the immune system exposure to these allergenic foods in a safe way."

Tiffany Leon, 36, a Maryland registered dietician and director at FARE, introduced peanuts and other allergens early to her two young sons.

At first, Leon's own mother was shocked at the advice to feed babies such foods before the age of 3, she said. But Leon explained how the science had changed.

"As a dietician, I practice evidence-based recommendations," she said. "So when someone told me, 'This is how it's done now, these are the new guidelines,' I just thought, OK, well, this is what we're going to do."

Purdue's Smith earns unanimous AP preseason All-America honors, joined by Texas Tech's Toppin

By JOHN MARSHALL AP Basketball Writer

Braden Smith played with Zach Edey in the 2024 national championship game and followed his large footsteps by becoming an All-American last season.

The Purdue guard had a chance to leave for the NBA over the summer, but, like Edey before him, decided to return for another chance at a national championship under coach Matt Painter.

Smith's decision earned him another similarity to Edey: unanimous preseason All-American.

Smith earned all 57 votes from a media panel in The Associated Press preseason All-America team released on Monday, a week after the Boilermakers were voted preseason No. 1 in the AP Top 25 for the first time. He was joined on a big man-heavy first team by Texas Tech's JT Toppin (52 votes), Michigan's Yaxel Lendeborg (30), BYU freshman AJ Dybantsa (22) and Florida forward Alex Condon (16).

"That's just how Purdue has always been, how every player has always been," Smith said. "Paint recruits players, recruits the same people and that's how they think, how we think. We always want to be a part of a program like this, a culture like this."

Smith has been one of the nation's most productive guards since his freshman season at Purdue in 2022-23. The heady 6-foot guard played a key role on the Boilermakers' first run to the national title game in 2024, averaging 12 points, 7.5 assists, 5.8 rebounds and 1.6 steals per game while setting a school record for minutes.

Smith was even better as a junior last season, becoming the first player in NCAA history to have at least 550 points, 300 assists, 150 rebounds and 75 steals in a season. Smith averaged 15.8 points, 8.7 assists, 4.5 rebounds and 2.2 steals per game on a team that reached the Sweet 16.

Toppin's impact

Toppin had a superb first season at Texas Tech after transferring from New Mexico.

The 6-foot-9 forward averaged 18.2 points, 9.4 rebounds and 1.5 blocks while leading the Red Raiders to the Elite Eight, where they lost to eventual national champion Florida. Toppin was a second-team AP All-American and the Big 12 player of the year before opting to return to a team ranked No. 10 in the AP preseason poll.

Landing Lendeborg

Lendeborg had a successful stint at UAB, helping lead the Blazers to the 2024 NCAA Tournament. After testing the NBA waters, the 6-9 forward decided he wanted a chance to reach the Final Four, so he stayed in college and transferred to Michigan.

The addition of Lendeborg helped the Wolverines earn a No. 7 ranking in the preseason poll after reaching the Sweet 16 a year ago.

Last season, Lendeborg joined Indiana State's Larry Bird as the only players to have 600 points, 400 rebounds and 150 assists in a season. He averaged 15.8 points and 11 rebounds per game in two seasons at UAB, earning American Conference defensive player of the year honors both years.

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AJ arrives

BYU took a big step in its first season under coach Kevin Young last season by reaching the Sweet 16. The No. 8 Cougars have even higher expectations this season after landing Dybantsa.

The nation's No. 1 recruit had nearly every major program jockeying for his services but chose to play in Provo. The athletic 6-9 forward is an efficient scorer who finishes strong at the rim, has a good mid-range game and is a superb defender — attributes that have him projected as a potential No. 1 overall NBA draft pick.

Condon returns

Condon announced he was heading to the NBA draft after Florida's national championship last season before changing his mind.

The 6-11 Australian averaged 10.6 points and 7.5 rebounds per game while leading the Gators with 49 blocked shots. Condon was superb in the national title game against Houston, finishing with 12 points, seven rebounds and four steals, diving for a loose ball in the closing seconds of the 65-63 win.

Condon returned for a chance to lead the Gators to consecutive national titles and helped them earn a No. 3 ranking in the AP preseason poll.

Supreme Court will consider whether people who regularly smoke pot can legally own guns

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court said on Monday that it will consider whether people who regularly smoke marijuana can legally own guns, the latest firearm case to come before the court since its 2022 decision expanding gun rights.

President Donald Trump's administration asked the justices to revive a case against a Texas man charged with a felony because he allegedly had a gun in his home and acknowledged being a regular pot user. The Justice Department appealed after a lower court largely struck down a law that bars people who use any illegal drugs from having guns.

Last year, a jury convicted Hunter Biden of violating the law, among other charges. His father, then-President Joe Biden, later pardoned him.

Arguments probably will take place early in 2026, with a decision likely by early summer.

The Republican administration favors Second Amendment rights, but government attorneys argued that this ban is a justifiable restriction.

They asked the court to reinstate a case against Ali Danial Hemani. His lawyers got the felony charge tossed out after the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals found that the blanket ban is unconstitutional under the Supreme Court's expanded view of gun rights. The appellate judges found it could still be used against people accused of being high and armed at the same time, though.

Hemani's attorneys argue the broadly written law puts millions of people at risk of technical violations since at least 20% of Americans have tried pot, according to government health data. About half of states legalized recreational marijuana, but it's still illegal under federal law.

The Justice Department argues the law is valid when used against regular drug users because they pose a serious public safety risk. The government said the FBI found Hemani's gun and cocaine in a search of his home as they probed travel and communications allegedly linked to Iran. The gun charge was the only one filed, however, and his lawyers said the other allegations were irrelevant and were mentioned only to make him seem more dangerous.

The case marks another flashpoint in the application of the Supreme Court's new test for firearm restrictions. The conservative majority found in 2022 that the Second Amendment generally gives people the right to carry guns in public for self-defense and any firearm restrictions must have a strong grounding in the nation's history.

The landmark 2022 ruling led to a cascade of challenges to firearm laws around the country, though the justices have since upheld a different federal law intended to protect victims of domestic violence by

barring guns from people under restraining orders.

Trump suggests US will buy Argentine beef to bring down prices for American consumers

By CHRISTOPHER MEGERIAN Associated Press

ABOARD AIR FORCE ONE (AP) — President Donald Trump said the United States could buy Argentine beef in an attempt to bring down prices for American consumers.

"We would buy some beef from Argentina," the Republican president told reporters aboard Air Force One during a flight from Florida to Washington on Sunday. "If we do that, that will bring our beef prices down."

Trump promised days earlier to address the issue as part of his efforts to keep inflation in check.

U.S. beef prices have been stubbornly high for a variety of reasons, including drought and reduced imports from Mexico due to a flesh-eating pest in cattle herds there.

Trump has been working to help Argentina bolster its collapsing currency with a \$20 billion credit swap line and additional financing from sovereign funds and the private sector ahead of midterm elections for his close ally President Javier Milei.

Pope meets with global group of clergy abuse survivors to talk zero tolerance

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Leo XIV met Monday for the first time with an organization of clergy abuse survivors and advocates, who said he agreed to maintain a permanent dialogue as they press for a zero-tolerance policy for abuse in the Catholic Church.

Ending Clergy Abuse is a global organization that has been campaigning to universalize the U.S. church's abuse policy. Among other things, the policy calls for the permanent removal from ministry of a priest based on even a single act of sexual abuse that is either admitted to or established according to church law.

The U.S. policy, first articulated in the 1990s, was publicly adopted at the height of the scandal there in a bid to restore trust and credibility in the U.S. hierarchy after revelations of decades of abuse and cover-up. It is church law in the United States but is not embraced elsewhere.

Leo acknowledged "there was great resistance" to the idea of a universal zero-tolerance law, said Tim Law, ECA co-founder. But Law said he told Leo that ECA wanted to work with him and the Vatican to move the idea forward.

Leo has met before with clergy abuse survivors, and was the point person for listening to victims in the Peruvian bishops conference when he was a bishop there. But history's first American pope acknowledged the significance of meeting with ECA as an activist organization, members told a press conference.

Pope Francis and Pope Benedict XVI before him also met with individual victims but had kept activist and advocacy groups at arm's length.

"He said, 'This is the next historic step: to sit together and talk,'" said German participant Matthias Katsch of Monday's meeting. "He allowed us to stay in contact, to have an open channel of communications."

The audience inside the Apostolic Palace lasted an hour and Leo listened intently, participants said. The Vatican didn't initially list it among Leo's audiences Monday, though subsequent versions of the pope's agenda included it.

Six ECA board members attended from Argentina, Canada, Germany, Uganda and the United States. Also in Rome was ECA member Pedro Salinas, a Peruvian survivor and journalist who knew the former Robert Prevost from their work finding justice for survivors of an abusive Catholic Peruvian lay group.

The survivors began the meeting by describing their key initiatives: the zero-tolerance policy, the convening of a conference on alleged abuses in Opus Dei in Argentina, and helping survivors of abuse in Philippines form a national organization.

"Inspired by your words upon becoming pope, we come as bridge builders, ready to walk together toward

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truth, justice and healing," ECA co-founder Gemma Hickey told Leo.

Ugandan survivor Janet Aguti said Leo seemed to understand the cultural impediments to dealing with the abuse problem in Africa, where church leaders often claim abuse doesn't exist since it isn't spoken of widely in society. She said children in the United States shouldn't be better protected than children in Africa.

"I left the meeting with hope and I know it is a big step for us, and it's a historical moment for me," she said.

Participants said they had sought an audience with Francis starting in 2019. They said they found Leo to be humble, sincere and committed to working to end abuse, though they said he asked them to be patient.

"Today I feel like I was heard," said Evelyn Korkmaz, ECA co-founder and survivor of a residential school in Canada from the Nishnawbe Aski Nation. "I believe he's going to continue this road to reconciliation."

With confidence and support from each other, more women are redefining baldness as beautiful

By CATHY BUSSEWITZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — "Being bald is sexy. It's an attitude. It's a luxury. It's a lifestyle."

That's how Brennan Nevada Johnson, who shaved her head voluntarily 14 years ago, opens the video podcast she launched last November to celebrate the advantages of choosing a bald look.

Sensuous, self-assured and glamorous are not the adjectives typically assigned to women with shorn hair. For centuries, many cultures have viewed long hair as a symbol of femininity, health and fertility. But more women are defying that traditional beauty standard and finding empowerment by baring their heads.

"Once you do it, it brings all this confidence into your life," Johnson, 34, said. "Whenever you see someone who's bald and not wearing a wig, just know that they have fully embraced themselves, and I think that's something that's really challenging to do."

Her initial decision to go baldheaded was practical. Johnson played competitive volleyball in college and found the sweating she did on the court affected the expensive hair relaxing treatments she often had done. Once she started shaving off her hair, though, she was hooked. She was relieved to save money on salon trips.

Johnson now owns a New York public relations firm. "Bald and Buzzed with Brennan," the video podcast she posts on YouTube, was an attempt to fill a void in social media content that affirmed bald people, especially women. She says she always thought baldness was sexy.

"It's such a fashion statement, and it's a really powerful look," Johnson said.

Other women without hair, whether voluntarily or due to medical conditions, also have sought ways to support each other, attending conferences, joining "baldie" groups and swapping grooming and scalp care tips.

"There's a whole community of us out there," said Dash Lopez, a content creator who posts a weekly video series of her shaving routine called "Fresh Cut Friday." "We need to talk about it because we do find comfort and empowerment and beauty in what some people think is weird."

Redefining beauty

Lopez said members of her family praised the long curly hair she had growing up. Some of her friends played with different hair colors and styles, but Lopez said she didn't have the same freedom. And she didn't enjoy detangling her hair or spending long afternoons at the salon.

As soon as she turned 18 and could get a haircut without permission, she chopped her locks into a pixie cut. Then she shaved it all off during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It makes me feel powerful in the sense that I'm able to detach from the things that people place so much emphasis on," Lopez, 29, said. "I'm not sitting here planning, 'Oh my gosh, when am I going to get my next color appointment done? That's gonna cost me \$300. Oh my gosh. I've got to get my hair done before I go to this event.'"

Lopez signed a contract with a modeling agency in 2020, a time when brands wanted to showcase diversity, she said. Back then, being bald worked for her professionally.

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"There was an appreciation for quirks and if you had a gap in your tooth, if you had a bald head, if you had a face full of freckles, that's what casting directors were looking for," Lopez said.

She noticed the tide shifting last year, when her bookings for modeling jobs decreased. "Let's be honest, the odds were stacked against me in the modeling world," Lopez said. "I was 5' 4", 5' 5" on paper, no hair."

A client suggested she wear wigs to land more work. Lopez did not want to do that or grow out her hair. Her modeling contract ended. Since then, she has shared glimpses of her life as a bald woman on Instagram and TikTok, where some of her videos have been watched millions of times.

"I feel powerful in the sense that I'm making my own choices," Lopez said. "I'm doing it for my own self-empowerment, I am doing it from my own self-clarity, for a deeper understanding of what it is that I value, a deeper understanding of what beauty means to me."

Creating community

Many women are confronted with how they define beauty when they lose hair due to health conditions such as alopecia or during chemotherapy treatment for cancer.

Felicia Flores, a flight attendant who lives in Atlanta, was diagnosed in 2001 with alopecia, an autoimmune disorder that causes hair to fall out. Six years later, all her hair was gone. Initially, she wore wigs.

Then she came across a group called The Baldie Movement on Facebook. "The ladies just really inspired me," Flores, 47, said. "They really did help to encourage me and give me strength, ... and they were just so confident."

She eventually decided to stop wearing wigs and embrace being bald in 2015, after a romantic breakup. "I was tired of lying. I felt like I was hiding something. I felt like I wasn't myself," she said.

To help uplift and inspire other women, Flores founded an annual conference called Baldie Con. The fourth one drew more than 200 attendees to Atlanta last month for a fashion show, guest speakers, a jazz brunch and a black tie gala, she said.

Managing reactions

Aicha Soumaoro, who works in Philadelphia as a nurse on weekdays and as a mechanic on weekends, said some of her patients call her "sir" instead of "ma'am," but she doesn't let it bother her. "It's new to them, girls that are bald."

Soumaoro, 27, said that after she shaved her head, her mother told her that most men wouldn't want to marry a woman with no hair. She focuses instead on the compliments she's received while out in public, including "You wear it with confidence" and "Your face is gorgeous."

"Being bald, it's like a boost of confidence out of nowhere," said Soumaoro, who cuts her hair every Sunday. "It's like a new skin, a new layer, a new personality. I just feel fresh. Like I was born again."

She also hikes on Sundays, savoring the feeling of cold breezes on her scalp. "Having that connection with Earth, it feels amazing," Soumaoro said. "I feel like I can hear everything more clearly. It's like I have a clear mindset when my head is bald."

Tiffany Michael Thomas, an Atlanta-based performer who goes by the stage name Amor Lauren, shaved her head in a show of support when her mother was undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer.

After her mother died, Thomas continued receiving compliments from other women. She decided to keep the bald look.

"Once I began to really embrace it, it just made me feel like I was unstoppable," Thomas, 37, said. "There's nothing that I have to hide behind anymore. ... It forced me to deal with all of my insecurities."

If you're thinking about shaving your head, don't hesitate, Thomas advises. Women tell her they're concerned that their head isn't the right shape, or they have a lump or a scar. "Do it without thought," she said. "Do it scared. Everything in life, just do it scared. The best way to get through that fear is to actually do it."

Rodrigo Paz wins presidential runoff, becoming Bolivia's first conservative leader in decades

By ISABEL DEBRE and PAOLA FLORES Associated Press

LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP) — Rodrigo Paz, a centrist senator, will be Bolivia's next president, preliminary results showed on Sunday, paving the way for a major political transformation after almost 20 years of rule by the Movement Toward Socialism party and during the nation's worst economic crisis in decades.

"The trend is irreversible," Oscar Hassenteufel, the president of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, said of Paz's lead over his rival, former right-wing President Jorge "Tuto" Quiroga. Paz won 54.5% of the votes, early results showed, versus Quiroga's 45.5%.

Paz and his popular running mate, ex-police Capt. Edman Lara, galvanized working-class and rural voters outraged over record inflation and an acute dollar shortage that has sapped food and fuel supplies.

But for all their disillusionment with the Movement Toward Socialism, or MAS, party, Bolivian voters seemed skeptical of Quiroga's radical 180-degree turn away from the MAS-style social protections and toward an International Monetary Fund bailout.

"A lot of people are wary of (Quiroga's) shock measures. Paz's appeal is strong in rural areas and among some older voters — the kinds of people who might have supported MAS if it had fielded a real candidate," said Gustavo Flores-Macías, dean of the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland.

Riven by internal divisions and battered by public anger over the economic crisis, MAS suffered a historic defeat in the Aug. 17 elections that propelled Quiroga and Paz to the runoff.

Paz's victory sets this South American nation of 12 million on a sharply uncertain path as he seeks to enact major change for the first time since the 2005 election of Evo Morales, the founder of MAS and Bolivia's first Indigenous president.

Although Paz's Christian Democratic Party has the cushion of a slight majority in Congress, he'll still need to compromise to push through an ambitious overhaul.

Paz plans to end Bolivia's fixed exchange rate, phase out generous fuel subsidies and reduce hefty public investment, redrawing much of the MAS economic model that has dominated Bolivia for two decades.

But he says he'll take a gradual approach to free-market reforms, in hopes of avoiding a sharp recession or jump in inflation that would enrage the masses — as has happened before in Bolivia. Morales' effort to lift fuel subsidies in 2011 lasted less than a week as protests engulfed the country.

Paz basks in victory, for a moment

Paz's supporters erupted into raucous cheers and ran into the streets of La Paz, Bolivia's capital, setting off fireworks and honking car horns. Crowds descended around the downtown hotel where Paz declared victory. Some shouted, "The people, united, will never be defeated!"

"Today, Bolivia can be certain that this will be a government that will bring solutions," Paz said, flanked by his wife and four adult children. "Bolivia breathes winds of change and renewal to move forward."

Shortly after the results came in, Quiroga conceded to Paz.

"I've called Rodrigo Paz and wished him congratulations," he said in a somber speech, prompting jeers and cries of fraud from the audience. But Quiroga urged calm, saying that a refusal to recognize the results would "leave the country hanging."

"We'd just exacerbate the problems of people suffering from the crisis," he said. "We need a mature attitude right now."

For the first time in years, the U.S. State Department congratulated the Bolivian president-elect and said it was looking forward to working with Bolivia to "restore economic stability, expand private-sector growth and strengthen security."

Tensions have simmered between the nations ever since Morales expelled the U.S. ambassador in 2008 and the Drug Enforcement Administration in 2009. Paz has vowed to rebuild Bolivia's relations with Washington.

Paz inherits an economy in shambles

Behind the celebrations, Bolivia faces an uphill battle. To make it through even his first months, Paz must

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replenish the country's meager foreign currency reserves and get fuel imports flowing.

Since 2023, the Andean nation has been crippled by a shortage of U.S. dollars that has locked Bolivians out of their own savings. Year-on-year inflation soared to 23% last month, the highest rate since 1991. Fuel shortages paralyze the country, with motorists often waiting days in line to fill up their tanks.

Vowing to avoid the IMF, Paz has pledged to scrape together the necessary cash by fighting corruption, reducing wasteful spending and restoring enough confidence in the country's currency to lure U.S. dollar savings out from under Bolivians' mattresses and into the banking system.

But Paz's stated reluctance to slam on the fiscal brakes — with promises of cash handouts for the poor to cushion the blow of subsidy cuts — has led to criticism.

"It's just so vague, I feel like he's saying these things to please voters when fiscally it doesn't add up," said 48-year-old Rodrigo Tribeño, who voted for Quiroga on Sunday. "We needed a real change."

An outsider with political experience

Although Paz, the son of former President Jaime Paz Zamora, who was in office from 1989 to 1993, has spent more than two decades in politics as a lawmaker and mayor, he appeared in this race as a political unknown — shooting unexpectedly from the bottom of the polls to a first-place finish in the August vote.

His party swept six of nine regional departments in the country, including the Andean highlands of western Bolivia and the large, coca-producing region of Cochabamba, winning over key swaths of Indigenous Bolivians that once comprised Morales' base.

Paz's slogan of "capitalism for all" appealed to merchants and entrepreneurs who flourished in Morales' heyday of booming natural gas exports but later chafed against his high taxes and regulation as the coffers ran dry.

"We're all so tired of this crisis. We just want things to go back to how they were in the first years of Morales, when we had money — but for the better this time," said Wendy Cornejo, 38, a former Morales supporter selling crackers in downtown La Paz.

Quiroga, by contrast, carried the wealthier eastern lowlands of Santa Cruz, known as the country's agricultural engine.

"There's a very clear class difference. For Quiroga, you have people who've been in politics and in the economic elite for a long time — businesspeople, agro-industrialists," said Verónica Rocha, a Bolivian political analyst. "With Paz, it's the opposite."

An ex-cop shakes up the race

The race looked to be a staid affair until Paz surprised everyone by picking Lara as his running mate. The charismatic young ex-policeman had zero political experience but gained fame on TikTok after being fired from the police for denouncing corruption in viral videos.

Unemployed for months, Lara scraped by selling second-hand clothes and worked as a lawyer helping Bolivians come forward to expose corruption. His humble origins and fiery promises of universal income for women and higher pensions for retirees resonated with many former MAS supporters. But they also frequently forced Paz into damage control, causing tension on the campaign trail.

Lara didn't accompany Paz to the campaign headquarters in La Paz late Sunday, surprising many supporters. But he struck an unusually conciliatory tone in his remarks after learning of their victory.

"It's time to unite, it's time to reconcile," Lara said. "Political divisions are over."

Paz takes office on Nov. 8.

Jewels stolen from the Louvre include imperial crowns and necklaces

PARIS (AP) — The jewels stolen from Paris' Louvre Museum in an extraordinary heist are a window into 19th-century French imperial history.

As investigators hunt for the perpetrators and the landmark remains closed for a second day, here is a look at what was stolen, according to the French Culture Ministry:

— Emerald necklace of Empress Marie-Louise, Napoleon I's second wife

- Emerald earrings worn by Empress Marie-Louise
- Crown worn by Empress Eugenie, wife of Napoleon III
- Brooch of Empress Eugenie
- Crown worn by Queen Marie-Amelie, queen of France 1830-1848, and Queen Hortense
- Sapphire necklace worn by Queen Marie-Amelie and Queen Hortense
- Sapphire earring worn by Queen Marie-Amelie and Queen Hortense
- Reliquary brooch

A cargo aircraft skids off a Hong Kong runway into the sea, killing 2 airport workers

By CHAN HO-HIM and KANIS LEUNG Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — A cargo aircraft skidded off a Hong Kong runway and collided with a security patrol vehicle before both fell into the sea early Monday, killing the two people in the car, authorities said. The plane's four crew members were unhurt.

The Boeing 747, flown by Turkey-based ACT Airlines, was landing at Hong Kong International Airport around 3:50 a.m. from Dubai. The aircraft was being operated under lease by Emirates, a long-haul carrier based in Dubai.

The pilots did not seek help before landing and had taxied about halfway down the runway before skidding off to the left, Steven Yiu, the airport authority's executive director in airport operations, told a news conference.

"The patrol car absolutely did not rush onto the runway. It was the plane that went off the runway and crashed into the patrol car outside the fence," he said.

When rescue crews arrived, the plane was broken into two parts, floating in the sea, and the four crew members were waiting to be rescued at its open door, said Yiu Men-yeung, a fire services official.

Rescuers dove into the sea and found the two security workers trapped in the car after a 40-minute search, Yiu Men-yeung said.

One of three runways remains closed

TV images showed the aircraft partially submerged just off the edge of the airport's sea wall. Its front half and cockpit were visible above water but the tail end appearing to have broken off. Two boats, possibly with search and rescue personnel, were near the aircraft.

The crash occurred on the north runway of Hong Kong's airport, one of Asia's busiest. That runway remained closed, while the two others continued to operate. Steven Yiu said flights would be unaffected.

Weather was suitable at the time the plane landed and the cause of the crash was being investigated, he said.

The Air Accident Investigation Authority classified the case as an accident, with the investigation looking into multiple factors, including the flight's system, operation and maintenance. The cockpit voice recorder and the flight data recorder were being sought.

Emirates said the Boeing 747 freighter was wet leased and operated by ACT Airlines. In wet leases, the company supplying the plane also provides the crew, maintenance and insurance. Emirates said there was no cargo on board. The aircraft was 32 years old, according to Flightradar24.

Emirates' freight operations are performing strongly

Hong Kong International Airport was built on reclaimed land by merging two smaller islands north of Hong Kong's Lantau Island in the South China Sea, at the mouth of the Pearl River. The northern edge of the north runway lies within a few hundred meters (yards) from the water.

Emirates operates a thriving cargo business out of Al Maktoum International Airport at Dubai World Central, the sheikhdom's second airport, where it plans a \$35 billion improvement over the coming decade. The ACT Airlines' flight had taken off from Al Maktoum, known as DWC.

Emirates, owned by a sovereign wealth fund in the city-state, noted in its most-recent annual report that

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it had added two wet-leased Boeing 747s "to serve surging customer demand." Emirates has some 260 aircraft in its fleet, the majority either Boeing 777s or double-decker Airbus A380s.

Monday's crash marked the second fatal incident for ACT Airlines. In 2017, a Boeing 747 flown by ACT Airlines under the name MyCargo crashed as it prepared to land in fog in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, killing all four crew on board and 35 people on the ground. ACT Airlines flew that route from Hong Kong on behalf of Turkish Airlines.

A later report on the crash by Kyrgyz authorities blamed the flight crew for misjudging the plane's position while landing in poor weather. The crew was tired and had a heated exchange with air-traffic control before the crash, the report said.

Today in History: October 21, Pistorius convicted in shooting death

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Tuesday, Oct. 21, the 294th day of 2025. There are 71 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Oct. 21, 2014, Paralympic runner Oscar Pistorius was convicted of culpable homicide for shooting and killing his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp. The conviction was later upgraded to murder; Pistorius was released on parole in January 2024.

Also on this date:

In 1797, the U.S. Navy frigate Constitution, also known as "Old Ironsides," was christened in Boston's harbor.

In 1805, a British fleet commanded by Vice Adm. Horatio Nelson defeated a French-Spanish fleet in the Battle of Trafalgar; Nelson, however, was killed.

In 1940, Ernest Hemingway's novel "For Whom the Bell Tolls" was first published.

In 1944, U.S. troops captured the German city of Aachen (AH'-kuhn) — the first German city to fall to American forces in World War II.

In 1959, the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Guggenheim Museum opened in New York.

In 1966, 144 people, 116 of them children, were killed when a coal waste landslide engulfed a school and some 20 houses in Aberfan, Wales.

In 2013, a seventh grader at Sparks Middle School in Sparks, Nevada, shot and killed a teacher and wounded two classmates before taking his own life.

In 2021, Actor Alec Baldwin was pointing a gun on the set of the Western movie "Rust" in New Mexico when it went off, killing cinematographer Halyna Hutchins and wounding director Joel Souza. Charges of involuntary manslaughter against Baldwin were dropped in July 2024.

In 2024, jury selection began in the trial of a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, Daniel Penny, for placing a man who was acting erratically on a New York City subway train in May 2023 in a deadly chokehold. In December 2024, Penny was cleared of all charges, including criminally negligent homicide.

Today's Birthdays: Rock singer Manfred Mann is 85. TV's Judge Judy Sheindlin is 83. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is 76. Former first daughter Patti Davis is 73. Film director Catherine Hardwicke is 70. Actor Ken Watanabe (wah-tah-NAH'-bee) is 66. Republican Sen. Ted Budd of North Carolina is 54. Actor Will Estes is 47. Reality TV star Kim Kardashian (kahr-DASH'-ee-uhn) is 45. Actor Glenn Powell is 37. Country singer Kane Brown is 32. Singer Doja Cat is 30.