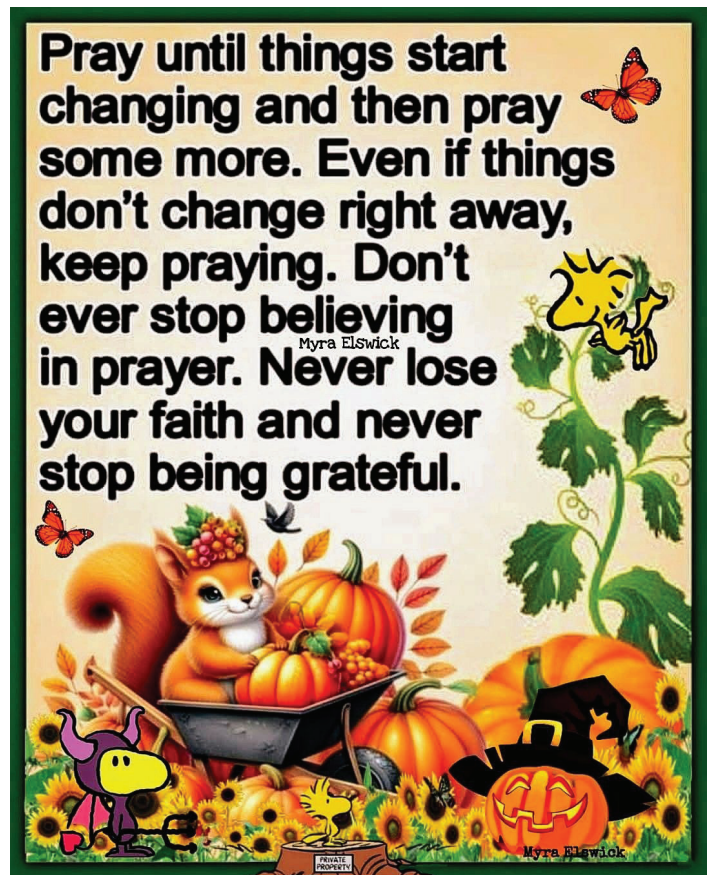


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3rd Grade GBB Practice, 5 p.m.
Football Playoffs

Friday, Oct. 31

St. John's Lutheran: Reformation Day Service, 7 p.m.
United Methodist: Trunk or Treat, 5 p.m.
Downtown Trick or Treat, 4 p.m. to 6 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.

Trump-Xi Meeting

President Donald Trump instructed the Defense Department to resume nuclear weapons testing minutes before meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in South Korea. The meeting was ongoing as of this writing.

Trump had projected optimism going into today's meetup—the leaders' first face-to-face encounter in six years. In advance, the US previewed a framework trade agreement that could see China delay its rare earth export controls, expand US soybean purchases, and crack down on fentanyl-related exports. In exchange, the US could lower tariffs on Chinese imports, settle a deal on TikTok ownership, and reduce export controls on semiconductor chips. Barring a deal, Trump has pledged 100% tariffs on Chinese goods beginning Saturday, Nov. 1.

The meeting comes after Trump met with South Korean President Lee Jae Myung yesterday. While they did not sign a new trade deal, South Korea pledged to invest \$200B in the US, in apparent exchange for keeping tariffs at 15%.

Nvidia Hits \$5T

Nvidia yesterday became the first company to surpass \$5T in market value, fueled by the artificial intelligence industry's surging demand for its processing chips. The milestone came three months after Nvidia became the first \$4T company and less than two years after it reached \$3T.

The California-based company began creating graphics processing units for video games in the late 1990s. Capable of performing thousands of calculations simultaneously, these chips have become the backbone of cloud computing and, more recently, AI systems. Today, Nvidia controls roughly 80% of the market for GPUs used by AI models, eclipsing rivals Advanced Micro Devices, Google, Amazon, and Huawei. Nvidia's stock is responsible for nearly one-fifth of the S&P 500 Index's 17% growth so far this year.

Nvidia's \$5T market capitalization followed news of a \$1B investment in Nokia to develop AI-centric cellular networks and a partnership with Uber to build a fleet of 100,000 autonomous vehicles.

New 'Death Ball' Sponge

Scientists have discovered 30 new deep-sea species, including a predatory creature they are calling a "death ball" sponge.

The findings come from two expeditions, including one in the Southern Ocean, where researchers explored seafloor habitats around Montagu and Saunders islands and the South Sandwich Trench. The sponge, named *Chondrocladia* sp. nov., was discovered at nearly 12,000 feet deep, east of Montagu Island. With white ping-pong-like spheres and tiny hooks, the sponge actively captures and consumes its prey, whereas other sea sponges are typically passive filter feeders. Researchers also discovered glowing blue sea worms as well as new species of sea stars and crustaceans.

In all, researchers collected almost 2,000 specimens, of which they have analyzed under 30%. They expect to confirm more discoveries, potentially including new types of sea pens and black corals.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Toronto Blue Jays lead World Series 3-2 after beating the Los Angeles Dodgers last night, teeing up potential for title-clinching win in Game 6 tomorrow at 8 pm ET.

Paramount to lay off roughly 2,000 employees—about 10% of workforce—as it targets \$2B in cost cuts following acquisition by Skydance in August.

Filmmaker Francis Ford Coppola auctions seven watches—including one valued at roughly \$1M—after \$120M film “Megalopolis” grosses \$14.4M in box office.

Science & Technology

Startup Character.AI to ban minors from engaging in open-ended chats with its chatbots next month after lawsuits from families over child safety.

Researchers determine attention lapses caused by sleep deprivation coincide with fluid flushing from the brain, a process that typically occurs during sleep.

Scientists discover age-related changes in T cells can trigger weaker vaccine responses in adults around age 65, suggesting older adults may need tailored vaccine formulations and treatment schedules.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close mixed (S&P 500 -0.0%, Dow -0.2%, Nasdaq +0.6%) after Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell signals Fed may not cut rates again this year.

Fed lowers interest rates by 0.25 percentage points to 3.75%-4%.

Starbucks reports same-store sales growth in September for first time in nearly two years.

Alphabet tops \$100B quarterly revenue for first time.

General Motors to permanently lay off 1,750 workers in Michigan and Ohio and temporarily lay off 1,550 in Ohio and Tennessee amid slowing EV demand.

Politics & World Affairs

Hurricane Melissa weakens to a Category 1 storm en route to the Bahamas after killing at least 30 people across Jamaica, Haiti, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic.

Sudanese rebel group Rapid Support Forces kills 460 patients at a hospital in el-Fasher, the capital of North Darfur; the group, allegedly backed by the UAE, has reportedly killed over 2,000 people in the three days since capturing the city.

Brazilian police raid on a drug gang in Rio de Janeiro Tuesday kills at least 119 people—the city’s deadliest raid on record.

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Feeding South Dakota Urges Community Support to Provide 500,000 Additional Meals

Sioux Falls, South Dakota (10/29/2025) – As the federal government shutdown continues, thousands of South Dakotans are facing uncertainty— and Feeding South Dakota is calling on the community to help ensure food isn't one of their worries.

The state's largest hunger-relief organization has set a goal to provide 500,000 additional meals to meet an expected rise in need across the state. To do that, Feeding South Dakota needs immediate community support.

"The success of our mission has always been about neighbors helping neighbors," said Dykstra. "Right now, our neighbors need help, and we need food so that we can respond."

The organization has been monitoring its programs and working with agency partners –food pantries, shelters, schools, and hot meal sites - to assess the potential need across the state. The 500,000 meals will allow the food bank to provide food to more people as the uptick in usage begins.

"Every day matters for families who are unsure how they'll put food on the table," said Lori Dykstra, CEO of Feeding South Dakota. "We have the infrastructure, partnerships, and experience to respond quickly — but we need our communities to stand with us to make this possible."

The most powerful way to help right now is with a donation. Gifts will double in impact thanks to matching funds from the Greg and Pam Sands Foundation. Food and volunteer support are also welcome, but monetary donations will help the organization reach families quickly when and where it's needed most.

Feeding South Dakota plans to continue operating as it has been, distributing food through its mobile food distribution, child hunger, and senior hunger programs and offering food inventory to their partners across the state. Their annual Thanksgiving Meal Giveaway will move forward as planned providing groceries for a traditional Thanksgiving meal to 6,000 families in 25 communities across the state in November.

To help Feeding South Dakota reach its goal, visit feedingsouthdakota.org to make a donation. Contributions can also be mailed to:

Feeding South Dakota
4701 North Westport Ave.
Sioux Falls, SD 57107

Names Released in Union County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash
Where: Interstate 29, exit 18 southbound
When: 3:52 p.m., Thursday, October 23, 2025

Driver 1: Paul Adam Winslow, 58-year-old male from Vermillion, SD, fatal injuries
Vehicle 1: 2024 Subaru Outback
Seat belt Used: Under investigation

Driver 2: Zachary J. Vaiskunas, 36-year-old male from Omaha, NE, no injuries
Vehicle 2: 2021 Toyota Tundra
Seat belt Used: Under investigation

Union County, S.D.- A Vermillion man died from injuries sustained in a two-vehicle crash Thursday afternoon on Interstate 29 at exit 18.

Preliminary crash information indicates Paul Adam Winslow, the driver of a 2024 Subaru Outback, was traveling northbound near mile marker 18 when his vehicle left the roadway, crossed the median and went into the southbound lane of traffic. The Outback struck the rear of a southbound Toyota Tundra driven by Zachary J. Vaiskunas, with both vehicles coming to rest in the west ditch.

Winslow was transported to a Sioux City hospital where he died from his injuries. Vaiskunas was treated at the scene and released.

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.

Names Released in Edmunds County Fatal Crash

What: Two vehicle fatal crash

Where: US Highway 12, mile marker 241, eight miles west of Roscoe, SD

When: 8:12 p.m., Thursday, October 23, 2025

Driver 1: Shawna Laree Weishaar, 63-year-old female from Belle Fourche, SD, fatal injuries

Vehicle 1: 2003 Toyota Highlander

Seat belt Used: No

Driver 2: Tacey Dean Miller, 19-year-old male from Webster, SD, minor injuries

Vehicle 2: 2018 GMC Sierra

Seat belt Used: Yes

Passenger 2a: Harvey Torbert Williamson, 19-year-old male from Federalsburg, MD, minor injuries

Seat belt Used: Yes

Edmunds County, S.D.- A Belle Fourche woman died and two others were injured in a two-vehicle crash Thursday evening eight miles west of Roscoe, SD.

Preliminary crash information indicates Shawna Laree Weishaar, the driver of a 2003 Toyota Highlander, was traveling eastbound on US Highway 12 near mile marker 241 when a deer ran into the roadway. Weishaar swerved to avoid the deer but struck it and entered the westbound lane, colliding with an oncoming 2018 GMC Sierra.

Weishaar sustained fatal injuries. Tacey Dean Miller, the driver of the GMC, sustained minor injuries. A passenger in the GMC, Harvey Torbert Williamson, also had minor injuries.

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



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

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Class A - Region 1 Volleyball


#1 - Aberdeen Catholic Schools

 4 Britton-Hecla	13-12	11/4 8:00 PM CT
 5 Redfield	10-16	

#2 - Aberdeen Catholic Schools

 2 Aberdeen Roncalli	16-11	11/4 5:00 PM CT
 7 Milbank	5-23	

#3 - Aberdeen Catholic Schools

 3 Webster Area	14-9	11/4 6:30 PM CT
 6 Sisseton	4-19	

#4 - Groton Area

 1 Groton Area	24-5	11/6 TBD
#1 WINNER		



#5 - Groton Area

#2 WINNER	11/6 TBD
#3 WINNER	



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

'We can't breathe until we know:' One more search planned for missing member of Standing Rock Tribe

BY: JOHN HULT-OCTOBER 29, 2025 2:19 PM

They'd had these conversations, Roxy and her boys.

Morbid conversations, she calls them.

About what they'd do if a death came too soon.

"If one of us goes," they'd say, "we've all got to live for them."

Except Diedra "Roxy" Leaf and her four other sons don't know if Renzo Bullhead — her second son, their brother — is really gone.

On Thursday, a clutch of volunteers pulled together by the family's Standing Rock Sioux Tribe will conduct one more search for him before winter sets in, along the stretch of the Missouri River that separates Bismarck and Mandan, North Dakota.

Seven months have passed since Bullhead, a 20-year-old welding student, a McLaughlin, South Dakota native, took a walk east across the railroad bridge that connects those two North Dakota cities.

Seven months since Snapchat pinged his location on the Bismarck side and didn't budge, sending the girlfriend and brothers who kept in touch through the social media app into fits of worry.

Seven months since Mandan police pinged Bullhead's phone and logged its location on their side of the bridge. They told Leaf their ping was more accurate, she said. That he likely fell in the river.

The police wanted to know if he'd been having problems lately, Leaf said. If he'd fought with his girlfriend.

She doesn't believe he jumped or fell, even after seeing video footage suggesting he could have, but she can't know for sure. And because there's no body, she fears she'll never know.

At this point, she said, her search for answers has stretched beyond the physical plane.

"I'm a grandpa's girl," Roxy said of her deceased grandfather. "Now I pray to him. I tell him, 'Go look for my son. He'll know you. All of them know you. I talk about you all the time.'"

Missing, but not alone

The South Dakota Missing Persons Clearinghouse, which launched in 2020, lists the names of those whose disappearances have been reported to law enforcement. On any given day, the list has at least 100 missing people, though the names shift in real time as people are found or go missing.

On Monday afternoon, Native Americans made up 63% of the 112 listed names. Of missing females, the figure was 70%. The percentages, as compiled periodically by South Dakota Searchlight, typically fall in or near that range.

Around 8.5% of South Dakotans are Native American.

On the national level, 3.5% of the people listed in the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System database in mid-2023 were Native American, according to the Congressional Research Service. Native Americans make up about 1.1 % of the U.S. population.

Remembering Renzo

Renzo Bullhead is now a name on an MMIP list, but Renzo Bullhead the person is a part of the fabric of his McLaughlin community.

The town, a short drive west across the Missouri River from Mobridge, is Standing Rock's most populous on the South Dakota side of its tribal borders, with around 600 people.

Walk into the gas station on Highway 12, and you'll see Renzo's picture near the cash register, with a message urging anyone with information to share it.

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Bullhead, the second of Leaf's five sons, played football for the McLaughlin Mustangs during a standout high school career, Leaf said, and came to be seen as a humble leader.

Classmates voted him homecoming king his senior year, but Leaf said he turned down the crown.

"He didn't like the light," she said.

Lisa Taken Alive, McLaughlin's superintendent, was principal during Bullhead's senior year. She doesn't remember the story about him giving up the crown, but she doesn't doubt it. That wouldn't be out of character for the boy she knew.

Bullhead was easygoing, social, well-liked, a natural leader, Taken Alive said — and protective of classmates who couldn't always stick up for themselves. Taken Alive remembers one boy in particular, a boy with issues who was picked on for having them. Bullhead stood up for him, pushing his friends and classmates to stand down.

"He had every reason to not be that way, but he was," Taken Alive said.

Rear-view mirror

Roxy Leaf last saw Bullhead on March 16. He'd been home for spring break from United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, where he'd gone to pursue his welding degree after a short time working in McLaughlin. He spent the break relaxing and recharging at home, Leaf said, not out partying. He loaded up on his mother's cooking, wolfing down quesadillas and burritos, spaghetti and goulash, just like he and his brothers had for years after school.

"That's our main thing is cooking and making sure that they have what they need," Leaf said. "You know, always asking about how they're doing. What did you learn today?"

After the ride back to North Dakota on March 16 and dropping off his things at his dorm, Bullhead asked his mother for another ride, this time to meet up with two friends in Mandan.

Leaf was a little worried. The young men, McLaughlin natives Leaf had known for more than a decade, weren't students like her son.

"They came up to me, gave me a hug," she said. "I said, 'Hey, you boys behave, you hear me?' They said, 'Yeah, yeah, we're going to. We won't be fighting or anything or doing something weird.'"

Call if you need a ride, she told her son. She and his stepfather would be in Bismarck a while. Bullhead told her not to worry.

"Last thing I remember is looking at him in my rear-view mirror," Leaf said.

Search begins

Bullhead's friends kept in touch with him over Snapchat, which showed his location. That Sunday night, the location got stuck somewhere near the Missouri River, on the Bismarck side of a railroad bridge, and stopped moving.

On Monday, those friends weren't especially concerned. By Tuesday, Bullhead's uncharacteristic silence had them worried. A friend in North Dakota reported him missing.

Leaf doesn't use Snapchat. She didn't know he'd gone silent until Tuesday. She trekked to Bismarck as soon as she did. The school told her he hadn't come back. She filed missing persons reports of her own.

Leaf and a group of family and friends spent the next few days retracing his possible steps. They walked the train tracks in Mandan, where he'd been before his friends back home lost his Snapchat signal. The friends he'd been there with knew he left that night, but not where he'd gone.

Police had begun their work, as well. Officers in Mandan pinged his phone and logged it on their side of the river, so the Mandan Police Department became the lead agency on the case.

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe got involved, offering additional resources for a search. Volunteers helped search, too.

Taken Alive, the McLaughlin superintendent, let students leave to help in those searches. The whole school was on edge, she said, because Bullhead was only a bit more than a year out from his high school graduation, and because he wasn't the kind of person anyone would expect to go missing. But also because three of his brothers were still in school, trying their best to maintain some level of normal.

"We lose people all the time. Unfortunately, bad news isn't something that's rare for us. But this was

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different. This was so shocking," Taken Alive said. "We were on pins and needles waiting to hear if they learned anything."

No news came.

As the months passed, video footage was collected and reviewed. There were hours of video along the bridge and around it, some from the railroad company, but not every foot of the bridge was covered. Some show a young man crossing toward Bismarck on March 16, but not reaching the other side.

Leaf's seen plenty of footage, but she's never been convinced her son landed in the water. She believes he's out there, somewhere.

"He was a fighter," Leaf said.

Final search for 2025

Thursday's search will be the last to comb the Missouri River before the winter freeze sets in.

There have been many searches.

The Mandan Police Department doesn't have a dive crew, but the Burleigh County Sheriff's Office does. That team put in 130 hours searching the Missouri with sonar and water drones, Mandan Police Department Lt. Brent Wilmeth told South Dakota Searchlight by email this week. The Burleigh team worked with a group called North Star Search and Rescue, and Standing Rock had teams out looking.

Police in Mandan and Bismarck have used drones and foot searches, Wilmeth said, and the North Dakota Highway Patrol used aircraft and K-9 bloodhounds. The state's Bureau of Criminal Investigation conducted interviews and helped pull together video footage. The BNSF Railroad Police Team, Wilmeth said, were "crucial in obtaining video for us."

Mandan police won't be part of Thursday's search, but Wilmeth said he wishes the searchers luck.

"The organizers of the civilian search parties have a system for coordinating those searches," he said. "They have done a good job, and we appreciate all the work of the volunteers who commit time looking for Renzo."

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe took the lead in pulling together a volunteer crew for Thursday's sunrise-to-sundown search. Its law enforcement officers and volunteers from other North Dakota tribes' search and rescue teams will work under the direction of Badlands Search and Rescue, a western North Dakota volunteer group founded in 2018 by a former sheriff's deputy named Travis Bateman.

Searches on a body of water like the Missouri are difficult because rivers are "constantly changing," Bateman said. Search teams just have to keep trying if they hope to find what they're looking for.

"It changes from day to night. It changes with your seasons," Bateman said. "They are uber-complex search problems."

Bateman can't predict what's going to happen Thursday, but he knows what he wants for Bullhead's family: closure, which he knows from his experience can only come with certainty about what happened to a loved one.

"I hope, I really hope, that we can get fortunate here and actually find him," Bateman said.

Taken Alive, speaking to South Dakota Searchlight from her office at the high school whose students still want to find out what happened, feels the same way.

Much like Leaf, like Renzo's brothers, like the community as a whole, she said, "we're all holding our breath."

"And we can't breathe until we know," Taken Alive said.

Roxy said her "fingers are crossed," but there's something else on her mind, as well.

"If we don't find anything, then there's still hope. That something may have happened, but hope that he's alive. No parent should have to go through this. Your kids aren't supposed to go first."

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.

Judge slashes jury damages in Greenpeace case to \$345 million

BY: MARY STEURER-OCTOBER 29, 2025 4:16 PM

A North Dakota judge has nearly halved the \$660 million sum Greenpeace was ordered to pay the developer of the Dakota Access Pipeline in March.

A nine-person jury had found the environmental group at fault for harming Energy Transfer during anti-pipeline protests in North Dakota in 2016 and 2017, as well as for publishing false statements to harm the company's reputation.

The jury's award included more than \$200 million of compensatory damages — money to address financial harms — plus about \$400 million in punitive damages.

In a Wednesday order, Southwest Judicial District Judge James Gion reduced the award after finding some of the jury's damages had no legal basis, were duplicative or had exceeded statutory caps on punitive damages. The revised amount is about \$345 million, according to Gion's order.

Greenpeace was one of many activist groups that backed a movement to halt the Dakota Access Pipeline, which years ago drew thousands to rural south-central North Dakota to protest in solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

Energy Transfer filed suit against Greenpeace in 2019, accusing it of orchestrating violent attacks against the pipeline company during the demonstrations and of waging a misinformation campaign to sabotage its business.

Energy Transfer built the Dakota Access Pipeline, also known as DAPL, to move crude oil from wells in North Dakota to refineries farther south.

The case is against three Greenpeace-affiliated organizations: Greenpeace USA, Greenpeace Fund and the Netherlands-based Greenpeace International. All three Greenpeace organizations deny the allegations and have called the lawsuit a ploy to punish them for opposing the pipeline.

In wake of the verdict, Greenpeace asked Gion to reduce the award or throw it out entirely, arguing that the \$660 million figure was unreasonable.

Gion on Wednesday partially granted that request. He eliminated awards related to the claim that Greenpeace had trespassed or encouraged trespassing on land owned by Energy Transfer, for example. He also threw out millions Greenpeace was ordered to award Energy Transfer on claims that the environmental group unlawfully seized and abused its property.

Gion left intact about \$149 million in damages for Greenpeace's alleged on-the-ground harms to Energy Transfer, including for trespassing and nuisance.

Gion found some of the awards handed down for defamation were duplicative and must be eliminated. He also concluded that the jury could not assess punitive damages for defamation.

In all, he reduced the jury's original roughly \$250 million award for defamation down to about \$50 million.

He allowed \$3.5 million in damages for the claim that Greenpeace engaged in a conspiracy to harm the Dakota Access Pipeline, about \$19 million less than what the jury awarded. Gion awarded about \$143 million in damages for the claim that Greenpeace interfered with Energy Transfer's business.

The more than three-week trial earlier this year featured testimony from dozens of witnesses, including current and former Greenpeace employees, Indigenous activists, Energy Transfer representatives and law enforcement.

Gion's memo reducing the award comes more than six months after the jury filed its verdict. He still has yet to enter a judgment in the case, according to the order.

Energy Transfer, in a Wednesday afternoon statement, said it planned to ask the North Dakota Supreme Court to reverse Gion's revisions to the defamation and conspiracy awards.

Energy Transfer said it is still "pleased" that the judge let \$345 million in damages stand, and that this verdict will "send a clear signal to those who choose to deliberately break the laws of the United States of America."

Marco Simons, interim general counsel for Greenpeace's USA affiliate and Greenpeace Fund, said once Gion enters a final judgment, they plan to ask for a new trial. If that request is unsuccessful, they will appeal.

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"We are still analyzing the ruling, and while Judge Gion ruled in our favor in dismissing several claims – and from \$667 million to roughly \$345 million – we still believe that the remaining claims are legally unfounded," Simons said in a statement.

Greenpeace International is also pursuing a separate lawsuit in the Netherlands that accuses Energy Transfer of weaponizing the U.S. legal system against the environmental group.

Editor's note: this story was updated to include statements from Energy Transfer and Greenpeace.

North Dakota Monitor reporter Mary Steurer can be reached at msteurer@northdakotamonitor.com.

This story was originally produced by North Dakota Monitor, 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.

Mary Steurer is a reporter based in Bismarck for the North Dakota Monitor. A native of St. Louis, Steurer previously worked as the local government reporter for the Casper Star-Tribune newspaper in Wyoming.

Food assistance funding cliff approaching as shutdown persists **Thune calls for reopening government instead of funding single programs: 'We're not going to pick winners and losers'**

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA AND JENNIFER SHUTT-OCTOBER 29, 2025 3:17 PM

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senate Democrats urged Republican leaders Wednesday to pass a bill to extend critical food assistance for the most vulnerable Americans during the ongoing government shutdown.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said Wednesday that Democrats would support a standalone bill introduced by GOP Missouri Sen. Josh Hawley. And New Mexico Democratic Sen. Ben Ray Luján attempted to pass by unanimous consent his bill to fund two major nutrition assistance programs.

"Let's end this hunger crisis before it begins," Schumer said on the Senate floor.

But Senate Majority Leader John Thune objected to Luján's proposal, and the government shutdown entered its fifth week with lawmakers of both parties showing no signs of the agreement needed to reopen the government in time to avoid putting 42 million people at risk of losing their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, benefits Saturday.

Beneficiaries of SNAP, which covers low-income people, children and those with disabilities, are supposed to receive payments Nov. 1. But the shutdown and the Trump administration's contention it cannot release contingency funding to cover the cost of November benefits mean many will go without.

Democrats held several press conferences Wednesday, the shutdown's 29th day, raising concerns about the loss of SNAP benefits and slamming the U.S. Department of Agriculture for not tapping into its multi-year contingency fund to approve food assistance for November.

The move has caused states to scramble to provide aid, strained local food banks and has resulted in a lawsuit from dozens of state officials this week to force the agency to release funds for SNAP.

Schumer, a New York Democrat, urged Thune, a South Dakota Republican, to bring Hawley's bill to the Senate for a floor vote. The bill would fund SNAP amid the funding lapse.

Thune declines to bring standalone bills

But Thune has rejected considering bills that fund single programs during the shutdown. He has instead pushed for Democrats to approve a House-passed GOP measure to temporarily reopen the government.

"We're not going to pick winners and losers," he said after objecting to Lujan's bill. "It's time to fund everybody who's experiencing the pain from this shutdown."

Thune said on the Senate floor that he will only call another vote on the House-passed GOP stopgap measure if Senate Democrats "tell me they have enough votes to fund the government."

The Senate this week, for the 13th time, failed to reach the 60-vote threshold to move forward on a measure to extend government funding through Nov. 21.

Democrats have voted against the short-term funding bill in an effort to spark negotiations on tax credits that will expire at the end of the year for people who buy their health insurance through the Affordable

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Care Act marketplace. Republicans have said those talks can begin when the government is funded.

Open enrollment for the ACA marketplace starts Nov. 1 in most states. Democrats have predicted that when people start getting their quotes for health insurance and seeing significantly higher prices for out-of-pocket premiums, it will force Republicans to negotiate on tax credits.

"We are days away from a health care crisis," Schumer said.

Shutdown to become 'very real'

House Speaker Mike Johnson said during a morning press conference the government shutdown "gets very real" Saturday when the federal government will no longer pay out SNAP benefits.

"You're talking about tens of millions of Americans at risk of going hungry, if the Senate Democrats continue this gambit," Johnson said.

The Louisiana Republican, who voted against the stopgap spending bill that ended the 2018-2019 shutdown, repeatedly urged rank-and-file Democratic senators to "do the right thing."

"I think Chuck Schumer and Hakeem Jeffries are irredeemable at this point," Johnson said, referring to the top Democrats in both chambers. "I've given up on the leadership. So we're trying to appeal to a handful of moderates or centrists who care more about the American people and will put the people's interest over their own and do the right thing in the Senate."

Johnson also disparaged a lawsuit filed by Democratic attorneys general that asked a federal judge to require funding for SNAP be paid out during the government shutdown.

"Instead of taking a simple vote to fund the government, which Senate Democrats have now had more than a dozen opportunities to do, Democrat attorneys general are suing the federal government to try to compel SNAP benefits to flow, despite the government being closed and despite the fact that there is no money to do that," Johnson said.

Freeze on SNAP contingency fund questioned

Luján held up a printed out copy of USDA's Sept. 30 shutdown contingency plan during an early afternoon press conference, saying the agency's refusal to tap into its emergency funds for SNAP recipients was nonsensical.

He slammed the agency for removing its own contingency plan from its website, which verifies that in case of a funding lapse, USDA would use its roughly \$6 billion in contingency funds to cover SNAP benefits during a government shutdown.

"This is the bulls-t, taking these plans down to try to lie to the American people and justify why it's okay for people to go hungry," Luján said.

Luján's bill that he tried to get approval through unanimous consent, would have funded SNAP during a government shutdown as well as the USDA's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, or WIC.

Senate Agriculture Committee ranking Democrat Amy Klobuchar, of Minnesota, said that Democrats are ready to support Lujan's bill or Hawley's bill. She added that she and several other Democrats plan to co-sponsor Hawley's bill. So far, Sen. Peter Welch of Vermont is the only Democrat to co-sponsor the bill.

The 10 Senate Republicans who have co-sponsored Hawley's bill include Sens. Katie Britt of Alabama, Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, Bill Cassidy of Louisiana, Susan Collins of Maine, Kevin Cramer of North Dakota, Bernie Moreno and Jon Husted of Ohio, James Lankford of Oklahoma, Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee and John Cornyn of Texas.

Colorado Democratic Rep. Joe Neguse argued during a midday press conference that Trump administration officials have "made a conscious and deliberate choice to suspend SNAP benefits."

"It is outrageous that the Trump administration can come up with \$40 billion to bail out Argentina and refuses to spend the money that Congress has appropriated to feed hungry families in America," Neguse said.

House Agriculture Committee ranking member Angie Craig, D-Minn., said the law regarding SNAP's contingency fund "is clear and unambiguous" and that Trump's "actions display a pattern of callous disregard for America's hungry seniors, children and veterans."

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Craig said the USDA should use the contingency fund to pay most of the November benefits. The department should then use some of the \$23 billion in another account referred to as Section 32 to cover the rest of the cost, Craig said.

Craig also pushed back against criticisms of SNAP, saying it provides about \$6.20 a day for food.

"This does not come close to covering even one trip to the grocery store a month for most American families, especially as this administration has started a trade war that is driving up costs for everyone in our country," Craig said. "So this is exactly the point."

Shutdown projected to hurt economy

Because of the ramifications for federal programs like SNAP and delayed paychecks for federal workers, the ongoing shutdown is expected to have a negative impact on the economy, according to an analysis the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office released Wednesday.

Director Phillip L. Swagel wrote in an eight-page letter to House Budget Committee Chairman Jodey Arrington, R-Texas, that the funding lapse "will delay federal spending and have a negative effect on the economy that will mostly, but not entirely, reverse once the shutdown ends."

The federal government spent \$33 billion less than it would have during the first four weeks of the shutdown. The funding lapse lasting for six weeks would result in a \$54 billion drop in outlays and if it goes on for eight weeks, it would lead the federal government to put \$74 billion less into the economy.

"Those amounts include delayed spending for employee compensation, goods and services, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program," Swagel wrote. "CBO expects that when appropriations resume, the spending that did not occur during the shutdown will be made up."

Swagel cautioned that the projections "are subject to considerable uncertainty."

"The effects of the shutdown will depend on decisions made by the Administration throughout the shutdown, including decisions about which executive branch activities continue and which are halted."

Ariana covers the nation's capital for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include immigration, congressional policy and legal challenges with a focus on how those policies impact the lives of immigrants and migrants coming to the U.S.

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.

Shutdown double whammy: SNAP food benefits ending and federal workers go unpaid

BY: ASHLEY MURRAY-OCTOBER 29, 2025 2:32 PM

HYATTSVILLE, Maryland — Ginette Young lined up with hundreds of furloughed federal workers ahead of a special food bank distribution on Tuesday in a suburb just outside the District of Columbia.

"I'm here because I've had no paycheck for the last two weeks, and a short paycheck for the two weeks prior. I've had to cover bills, and my credit cards have been paying my medical and doctor's appointments. So I just need to restock the pantry a little bit, just to help get us over the hump," said Young, a 61-year-old auditor for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Young, a District resident, was among hundreds of furloughed federal workers hoping to get pantry staples and fresh produce at the event sponsored by the Capital Area Food Bank and No Limits Outreach Ministries in Hyattsville.

Food security took center stage in the shutdown debate this week as hundreds of thousands of furloughed government workers faced another missed paycheck and 42 million recipients of federal food assistance were told they will stop receiving benefits Saturday.

The Trump administration has said it will not tap emergency funds at the USDA to extend the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, despite loud cries from advocates and Democrats who say it's perfectly legal for officials to use the rainy day money.

"The longer the shutdown continues, distributions like this will end up being truly a lifeline for so many,"

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said Radha Muthiah, president and CEO of the Capital Area Food Bank.

"And I worry that we're just going to see double, triple the numbers of people, both federal government furloughed workers, as well as those who are expecting SNAP benefits and being surprised Saturday morning when they don't have it," Muthiah said.

Food bank staff anticipated about 150 households would show up at its first distribution event for federal workers earlier in October. The organization had to quickly double its figures, Muthiah said.

At Tuesday's event, the food bank and No Limits Outreach Ministries brought enough to serve 400 households. Add a complete stop to food assistance to low-income families, and the region's hunger needs will skyrocket, Muthiah said.

"In our entire region, there are about 400,000 SNAP recipients, and on average, they receive about \$330 in SNAP benefits for a family of two people a month. And so if that were to be disrupted at the cost of a meal in our region, that's about 80 meals vanishing from the tables of SNAP recipients across our region," Muthiah said.

"So we are ramping up, purchasing more food to be able to distribute through our partners into the community."

Kale, collard greens handed out

Tracy Bryce, 59, of District Heights, Maryland, unloaded kale and collard greens from the back of a U-Haul truck as hundreds of federal workers, with employment IDs in hand, waited for the noon distribution to open.

Bryce, a retired U.S. Marshal of 34 years, now volunteers with No Limits Outreach Ministries.

"I've been where they are," Bryce said.

Byron Ford, 34, of Hyattsville, sat for hours in a chair he brought that morning, as temperatures hovered in the high 40s.

"I'm just here today trying to get some food, just trying to provide healthy food for the family," said Ford, who has two children ages 4 and 7.

"We're fortunate that we have things like this to provide for people who aren't receiving a paycheck. So we're fortunate, we're still blessed."

A civilian employee who works in finance for the Department of the Navy, Ford is also worried about family members who receive SNAP benefits.

"We're just spending our savings and trying to help," he said.

Young said she remembers what it was like to need SNAP several decades ago.

"I was, you know, trying to work and go to college at the same time, and I had my kid, so yeah, I had SNAP for a little while. It's meant to help people until they get on their feet," she said.

A furloughed government project manager who did not want to provide her full name for fear of losing her job, said "being a political pawn is hard."

"They (lawmakers) get the chance to go home in the middle of all this and not finish with the appropriations, not continue to walk through conversations, because they are choosing to dishonor the position that the people put them in and still get paid while their people suffer," she said.

Grocers, retailers worry over SNAP cutoff

Retailers and grocers, already bracing for losses when Republicans' "big, beautiful bill" SNAP cuts take effect, are also urging lawmakers to reopen the government.

"We urge Congress to move forward now on a path that reopens the government and ensures families relying on SNAP can access their November benefits without interruption or delay," Jennifer Hatcher, The Food Industry Association's chief public policy officer, said in a statement Oct. 21.

The already planned SNAP cuts are slated to cost food retailers hundreds of millions of dollars, industry groups warned.

Food retailers estimate up-front costs of forthcoming new SNAP requirements signed into law by President Donald Trump in July will cost convenience stores roughly \$1 billion, supermarkets just over \$305 million, supercenters such as Walmart an estimated \$215.5 million and small-format stores about \$11.8 million,

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according to an impact analysis last month by The Food Industry Association, the National Association of Convenience Stores and the National Grocers Association.

Ed Bolen, director of SNAP State Strategies at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, said retailers could face “very drastic” losses if SNAP is also completely stopped Nov. 1.

“Just imagine a 100% cut for a month or so,” said Bolen, of the left-leaning think tank.

The United Food and Commercial Workers union sent a letter to USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins Monday requesting the agency spend contingency funding to extend SNAP benefits beyond next week.

“Rising costs at the grocery store already threaten household budgets, especially for low-income families. An interruption in food assistance will only make matters worse, and workers in meatpacking, food processing, and grocery could see a reduction in hours and wages if SNAP dollars aren’t available to be spent in their stores or on their products,” wrote Milton Jones, president of the union that, according to the organization, represents roughly 1.2 million workers.

Ashley Murray covers the nation’s capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include domestic policy and appropriations.

Local leaders rush to help, but can’t fill massive SNAP void **42 million Americans rely on the program now facing disruptions because of the shutdown**

BY: KEVIN HARDY-OCTOBER 29, 2025 9:07 AM

There’s no way his local government can fill the void created by a disruption in the federal food stamp program, but local official Gregg Wright says his Minnesota county had to do something.

“This is pretty much a crisis for families,” said Wright, a member of the Olmsted County Board of Commissioners.

Last week, the board unanimously voted to send up to \$200,000 to a local food bank to help neighbors at risk of losing food assistance because of the federal government shutdown.

Olmsted County, which has a population of about 165,000 and is home to the renowned Mayo Clinic in Rochester, expects to lose about \$1.7 million per month in benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, commonly known as SNAP. It’s a predicament facing leaders across the country preparing for an unprecedented pause in the nation’s largest food assistance program as the shutdown drags on.

While attorneys general and governors from 25 states and the District of Columbia sued the Trump administration on Tuesday to try to force it to pay SNAP benefits next month, the administration says it will not release funds until the congressional budget impasse is resolved.

That leaves food banks, food pantries and local governments scrambling to prepare for an onslaught of demand. States are declaring emergencies, deploying National Guard members and sending millions of taxpayer dollars to local food banks. Nonprofits are bracing for long lines, bare shelves and even panic or civic unrest as some 42 million Americans are expected to lose access to the safety net program in a matter of days.

“The enormity of this issue is almost hard to comprehend,” said Wright, who noted that his county is just one of the more than 3,000 across the country.

The local food bank estimated it could serve SNAP families for one month by spending about \$400,000 on bulk food purchases. Rather than front that whole amount, the county board challenged community members to help raise another \$200,000.

Wright said the county is unable to keep funding food assistance for long.

“We can’t continue to do this without raising taxes, because it isn’t in our budget,” he said. “... Who could plan for this? Who would expect that this would come from the federal government?”

Minnesota is among 10 states where counties administer the food stamp program rather than state governments. Across the country, state and county governments have been redirecting local resources to try to fill the shutdown gap.

California Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom has set aside \$80 million in state funds and deployed members

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of the National Guard to help food banks.

Virginia Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin declared a state of emergency, saying the commonwealth would use its own funds to temporarily help SNAP recipients.

In Louisiana, state leaders are preparing to use \$150 million monthly to help continue SNAP aid, while Nevada plans to funnel \$38.8 million toward local food banks.

Minnesota Democratic Gov. Tim Walz announced the state would divert \$4 million to food shelves across the state.

"This is meant to be a bridge," Walz said during a Monday news conference. "It will not make up and backfill everything."

Food banks across the country are already facing increased demand.

Virginia Witherspoon, executive director of Channel One Regional Food Bank in Rochester, Minnesota, said the phone was "ringing off the hook" last week. The nonprofit distributes food to partners across 14 counties and operates its own food shelf in Rochester. That pantry saw an average of about 450 families per day last month, but by last week was already averaging 550 per day, Witherspoon said.

"I don't blame anyone who is rushing to their local food shelf and stocking up because they're afraid they won't be able to feed their families," she told Stateline. "What I would say is that food shelves in Minnesota — we're here, we're open, we want to serve you. We're doing our absolute best."

Channel One and other operators, though, are concerned about the potential for panic by families scrambling for food.

Witherspoon told the Olmsted County Board of Commissioners her organization has considered asking for a police presence, but wants to be careful about what kind of message it sends to the public. She said even increasing food distribution from once to twice a week could cause people to rush in.

She said it reminds her of the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, when she went on local television to tell people not to worry, though she was privately concerned about running out of food.

"It's tough. On the one hand, I'm in public sounding the alarm to you, to our donors, to our government," she told commissioners. "But on the other hand, we don't want to make the public panic and all come shop at once. It's really not a good situation, and we've never been here before."

Debate over federal funds

The predicament facing nonprofits and local governments is unprecedented: Food stamps have not been disrupted during other government shutdowns. And even the Trump administration previously offered assurance that it would tap into a multiyear contingency fund to continue paying SNAP benefits.

The administration reversed that position on Friday, when the U.S. Department of Agriculture said it would not release funds in November and warned states they would not be reimbursed for spending their own revenues on the food program.

SNAP has about \$6 billion in its contingency fund — short of the roughly \$9 billion needed to cover a full month of the program.

It's unclear what the administration's position means for states that have already begun setting aside their own dollars.

Following Virginia's emergency declaration, the newly created Virginia Emergency Nutrition Assistance program is expected to send money to SNAP beneficiaries starting on Nov. 3.

The governor estimates that about \$37.5 million will be allocated per week to Virginia's roughly 850,000 SNAP recipients, the Virginia Mercury reported.

Neither the governor's office nor the Virginia Department of Social Services responded to Stateline requests for comment.

North Dakota officials said they had enough cash on hand to cover November SNAP benefits, but are unable to load the funds onto people's electronic payment cards, the North Dakota Monitor reported.

State and federal lawmakers, advocates and attorneys general across the country have pushed the administration to release November SNAP funds.

Last week, the chief executive officer of the National Conference of State Legislatures asked the USDA

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to issue clear guidance on states' ability to spend and be reimbursed for ongoing administrative costs.

North Carolina Democratic Attorney General Jeff Jackson, one of the officials who sued the Trump administration Tuesday, said 1.4 million people — including nearly 600,000 children — would lose SNAP aid in his state.

"They have emergency money to help feed children during this shutdown, and they're refusing to spend it."

Contingency plans

In New Hampshire, Republican Gov. Kelly Ayotte announced a state "contingency plan" to help SNAP recipients. Pending approval from other state leaders, the plan would divert \$2 million to the New Hampshire Food Bank to open up to 20 locations for SNAP recipients twice a week over the next five weeks.

Officials in Ayotte's office and the state health department did not respond to Stateline requests for comment.

Elsy Cipriani, executive director of the New Hampshire Food Bank, said the organization is still working out details with the state. She said the group would likely ask to see people's electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards — the debit cards people use to access SNAP benefits at grocery stores — to ensure the state-purchased food goes to SNAP recipients.

"While we don't intend to replace SNAP benefits — because we can't; there is no way that we can replace that — we are hoping to provide some relief," she told Stateline.

In Minnesota, county leaders are working overtime in some areas to respond to questions from SNAP recipients and help find other food assistance.

That additional workload comes without any state or federal reimbursement, said Tina Schenk, the health and human services director in rural Meeker County.

"That's just to respond to our community, because that's our job," she said. "But that's very different work than we normally do."

The reserve funds of Meeker County, home to about 23,000 people, aren't large enough to cover even one month's worth of SNAP benefits, Schenk said. So county staff are instead working with local nonprofits and reaching out to families who will be hardest hit by an interruption in benefits to connect them with other state grant programs.

The sole local food shelf is increasing its orders with a central food bank, Schenk said — but so is nearly every other operation in the state.

"Are they going to have enough to fulfill these orders? That's a question that I don't know the answer to."

Stateline reporter Kevin Hardy can be reached at khardy@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.

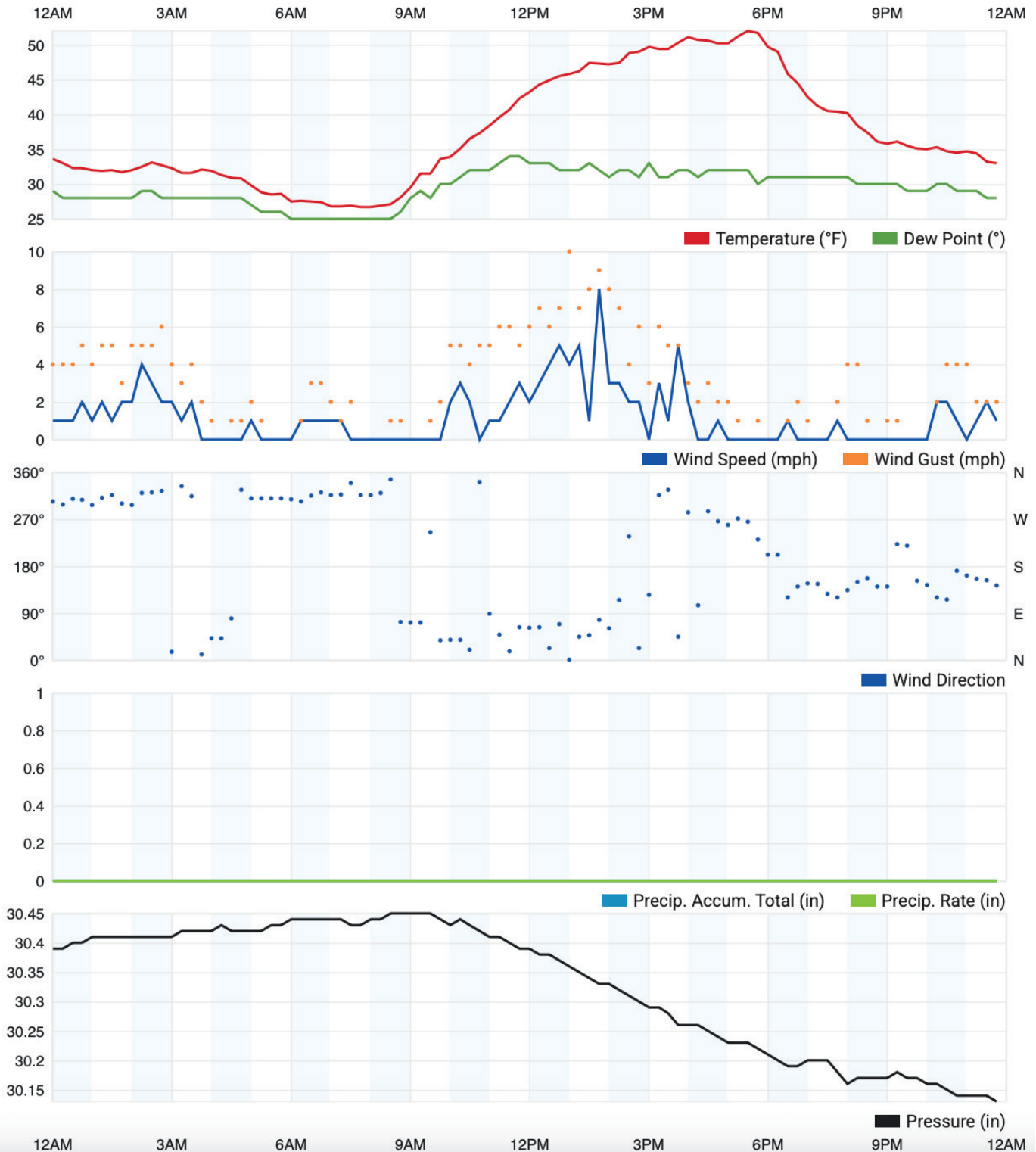
Kevin Hardy covers business, labor and rural issues for Stateline from the Midwest.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

October 29, 2025



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Thursday



High: 55 °F

Becoming
Sunny

Thursday
Night



Low: 32 °F

Mostly Cloudy

Friday



High: 43 °F

Slight Chance
Rain/Snow
then Chance
Showers

Friday Night



Low: 27 °F

Mostly Cloudy

Saturday



High: 46 °F

Mostly Sunny

TRICK OR TREAT FORECAST

5 PM

PRECIP
10-25%

WIND (GUSTS, MPH)
17-28

TEMPS
39-44°

6 PM

PRECIP
10-25%

WIND (GUSTS, MPH)
15-25

TEMPS
38-43°

7 PM

PRECIP
5-15%

WIND (GUSTS, MPH)
14-21

TEMPS
38-42°

8 PM

PRECIP
5-15%

WIND (GUSTS, MPH)
13-18

TEMPS
37-40°

9 PM

PRECIP
5-15%

WIND (GUSTS, MPH)
13-17

TEMPS
36-39°

Here's an hourly forecast for central and northeastern SD into west central MN Halloween evening. The warmest temperatures will be in south central SD and the highest chance of precipitation will be in the Watertown area.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 53 °F at 5:36 PM

Low Temp: 27 °F at 7:50 AM

Wind: 10 mph at 12:56 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 85 in 1950

Record Low: 8 in 1991

Average High: 51

Average Low: 27

Average Precip in Oct.: 2.09

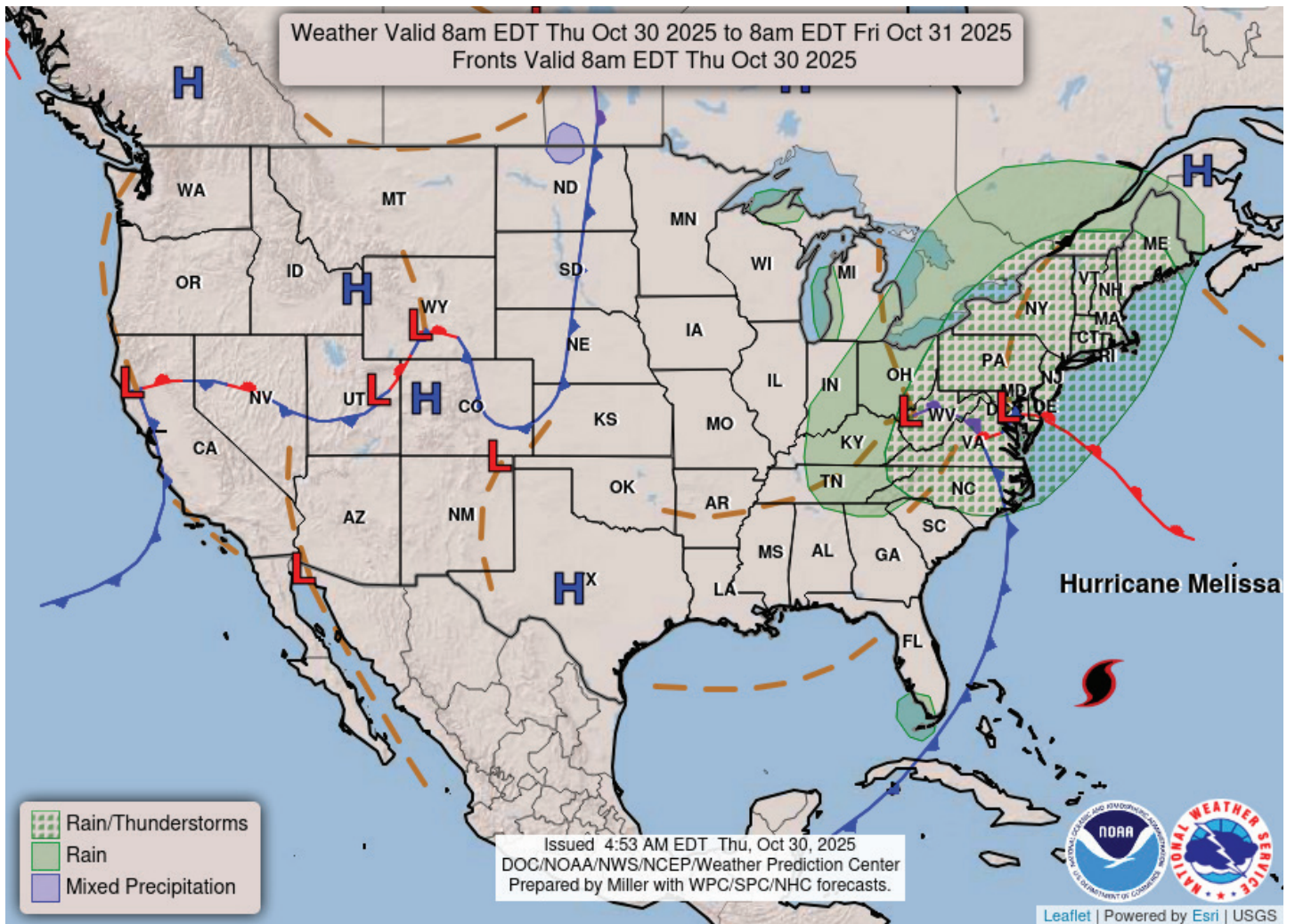
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.52

Average Precip to date: 20.42

Precip Year to Date: 23.44

Sunset Tonight: 6:22 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:10 am



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Today in Weather History

October 30, 1943: Snow fell across much of central and north central South Dakota on this date in 1943. Snowfall amounts of 2 to 7 inches occurred. Snowfall amounts included, 2 inches at Timber Lake, 4 inches at Murdo, 5 inches at Mobridge, and 7 inches at Kennebec and Pierre.

October 30, 1950: Much above normal temperatures occurred across the entire area of central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota. Record highs were mostly in the 80s across the area. The records were 78 degrees at Sisseton, 80 degrees at Wheaton, 85 degrees at Watertown and Aberdeen, 86 degrees at Mobridge, 88 degrees at Pierre, and a hot 91 degrees at Kennebec.

1925 - Nashville, TN, was blanketed with an inch of snow, their earliest measurable snow of record. (The Weather Channel)

1947 - The Donora, PA, smog disaster finally came to an end. For five days an inversion trapped impurities in the lower atmosphere over the Monongahela Valley killing 20 persons, and leaving more than 2000 others sick. (26th-30th) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Severe thunderstorms in Oklahoma produced golf ball size hail and wind gusts to 74 mph near the town of Gould. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed across the central U.S. Temperatures warmed into the 80s from Texas to the Lower Missouri Valley. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Ten cities in the Upper Midwest reported record low temperatures for the date. The morning low of 20 degrees at South Bend IND was a record for October, and lows of 18 degrees at Grand Rapids MI and 20 degrees at Fort Wayne IND equalled records for October. The low of 2 degrees at International Falls MN smashed their previous record for the date by 11 degrees. Syracuse NY received 2.9 inches of snow to establish a record for October with 5.7 inches for the month. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Temperatures soared into the 70s in the northeastern U.S. The record high of 73 degrees at Alpena MI marked their sixth straight day of record warmth. In the western U.S., Klamath Falls OR reported a record low of 19 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1991: The Perfect Storm, also known as the No-Name Storm reached maximum strength on this day with a low pressure of 972 mb and sustained winds of 69 mph.

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Daily Devotion

How God Works

Ask God to help you see the ways He is at work in your life.

Genesis 45:3-8: 3 Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still living?" But his brothers were not able to answer him, because they were terrified at his presence.

4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! 5 And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. 6 For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. 7 But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 "So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt.

Transforming believers into reflections of Jesus can be a long process of small changes, which means God's work may seem slow to us. For example, Abraham was assured he would be the father of nations (Genesis 15:1-5). Nonetheless, he had to wait decades for his son Isaac to be born. Even though God was at work the entire time, Abraham must have wondered if the pledge had been forgotten.

Believers like to share stories about the Lord's dramatic intervention in their life. Knowing that He provides, rescues, or heals is both exciting and reassuring. But He also works in ways that may seem inconsequential. For example, Joseph was just a servant in Potiphar's household—yet this was his first step toward becoming the country's second-in-command (Genesis 39:1-4; Genesis 41:41). It's a good reminder that God has a purpose for everything that comes into our life.

If you want to experience God in action, you don't have to wait for Him to do something big. Be attentive, because every day is an opportunity to see Him at work. Get into His Word so you can understand how He has acted in the lives of others. Then watch for His involvement in your own.

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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paypal.me/paperpaul

Pay with Venmo: @paperpaul Phone Number to Confirm: 7460

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.28.25

2 19 33 53 61 14

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$754,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 24
Mins 53 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.29.25

21 33 40 42 50 5

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$5,870,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 39
Mins 53 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.29.25

3 4 33 36 43 2

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 54 Mins 53
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.29.25

1 16 20 25 27

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$66,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 16 Hrs 54
Mins 53 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.29.25

7 12 24 38 67 26

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 23
Mins 53 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:

10.29.25

4 24 49 60 65 1

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$400,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 23
Mins 53 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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Upcoming Groton Events

08/09/2025 Groton Legion 30th Anniversary Celebration
08/07/2025 Groton Firemen Summer Splash in the GHS Parking Lot 7:30-8:30pm
08/11/2025 Vitalant Blood Drive at the Community Center 3:30-6pm
08/23/2025 Glacial Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
09/05/2025 Homecoming Parade 1pm
09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
09/06-07/25 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
09/07/2025 Couples Sunflower Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am
09/07/2025 9th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3-5pm
10/10/2025 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
10/11/2025 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
10/31/2025 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
11/15/2025 Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm
11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving 11:30am-1:30pm Community Center (Thanksgiving)
11/30/2025 Snow Queen Contest, 4 p.m.
12/06/2025 Olive Grove Holiday Party and Silent Live Auction Fundraiser

News from the **AP** Associated Press

Trump cuts tariffs on China after meeting Xi in South Korea

By JOSH BOAK, CHRIS MEGERIAN and MARK SCHIEFELBEIN Associated Press

ABOARD AIR FORCE ONE (AP) — President Donald Trump described his face-to-face with Chinese leader Xi Jinping on Thursday as a roaring success, saying he would cut tariffs on China, while Beijing had agreed to allow the export of rare earth elements and start buying American soybeans.

The president told reporters aboard Air Force One that the U.S. would lower tariffs implemented earlier this year as punishment on China for its selling of chemicals used to make fentanyl from 20% to 10%. That brings the total combined tariff rate on China down from 57% to 47%.

"I guess on the scale from 0 to 10, with ten being the best, I would say the meeting was a 12," Trump said. "I think it was a 12."

Trump said that he would go to China in April and Xi would come to the U.S. "some time after that." The president said they also discussed the export of more advanced computer chips to China, saying that Nvidia would be in talks with Chinese officials.

Trump said he could sign a trade deal with China "pretty soon."

Xi said Washington and Beijing would work to finalize their agreements to provide "peace of mind" to both countries and the rest of the world, according to a report on the meeting distributed by state media.

"Both sides should take the long-term perspective into account, focusing on the benefits of cooperation rather than falling into a vicious cycle of mutual retaliation," he said.

Sources of tension remain

Despite Trump's optimism after a 100-minute meeting with Xi in South Korea, there continues to be the potential for major tensions between the world's two largest economies. Both nations are seeking dominant places in manufacturing, developing emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, and shaping world affairs like Russia's war in Ukraine.

Trump's aggressive use of tariffs since returning to the White House for a second term, combined with China's retaliatory limits on exports of rare earth elements, gave the meeting newfound urgency. There is a mutual recognition that neither side wants to risk blowing up the world economy in ways that could jeopardize their own country's fortunes.

When the two were seated at the start of the meeting, Xi read prepared remarks that stressed a willingness to work together despite differences.

"Given our different national conditions, we do not always see eye to eye with each other," he said through a translator. "It is normal for the two leading economies of the world to have frictions now and then."

There was a slight difference in translation as China's Xinhua News Agency reported Xi as telling Trump that having some differences is inevitable.

Finding ways to lower the temperature

The leaders met in Busan, South Korea, a port city about 76 kilometers (47 miles) south from Gyeongju, the main venue for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit.

In the days leading up to the meeting, U.S. officials signaled that Trump did not intend to make good on a recent threat to impose an additional 100% import tax on Chinese goods, and China showed signs it was willing to relax its export controls on rare earths and also buy soybeans from America.

Officials from both countries met earlier this week in Kuala Lumpur to lay the groundwork for their leaders. Afterward, China's top trade negotiator Li Chenggang said they had reached a "preliminary consensus," a statement affirmed by U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent who said there was "a very successful framework."

Shortly before the meeting on Thursday, Trump posted on Truth Social that the meeting would be the "G2," a recognition of America and China's status as the world's biggest economies. The Group of Seven and Group of 20 are other forums of industrialized nations.

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But while those summits often happen at luxury spaces, this meeting took place in humbler surroundings: Trump and Xi met in a small gray building with a blue roof on a military base adjacent to Busan's international airport.

The anticipated detente has given investors and businesses caught between the two nations a sense of relief. The U.S. stock market has climbed on the hopes of a trade framework coming out of the meeting.

Pressure points remain for both US and China

Trump has outward confidence that the grounds for a deal are in place, but previous negotiations with China this year in Geneva, Switzerland and London had a start-stop quality to them. The initial promise of progress has repeatedly given way to both countries seeking a better position against the other.

"The proposed deal on the table fits the pattern we've seen all year: short-term stabilization dressed up as strategic progress," said Craig Singleton, senior director of the China program at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. "Both sides are managing volatility, calibrating just enough cooperation to avert crisis while the deeper rivalry endures."

The U.S. and China have each shown they believe they have levers to pressure the other, and the past year has demonstrated that tentative steps forward can be short-lived.

For Trump, that pressure comes from tariffs.

China had faced new tariffs this year totaling 30%, of which 20% were tied to its role in fentanyl production. But the tariff rates have been volatile. In April, he announced plans to jack the rate on Chinese goods to 145%, only to abandon those plans as markets recoiled.

Then, on Oct. 10, Trump threatened a 100% import tax because of China's rare earth restrictions. That figure, including past tariffs, would now be 47% "effective immediately," Trump told reporters on Thursday.

Xi has his own chokehold on the world economy because China is the top producer and processor of the rare earth minerals needed to make fighter jets, robots, electric vehicles and other high-tech products.

China had tightened export restrictions on Oct. 9, repeating a cycle in which each nation jockeys for an edge only to back down after more trade talks.

What might also matter is what happens directly after their talks. Trump plans to return to Washington, while Xi plans to stay on in South Korea to meet with regional leaders during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, which officially begins on Friday.

"Xi sees an opportunity to position China as a reliable partner and bolster bilateral and multilateral relations with countries frustrated by the U.S. administration's tariff policy," said Jay Truesdale, a former State Department official who is CEO of TD International, a risk and intelligence advisory firm.

Haiti, Jamaica and Cuba pick up the pieces after Melissa's destruction

By ARIEL FERNÁNDEZ, ANDREA RODRÍGUEZ, JOHN MYERS JR. Associated Press

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Cuba (AP) — People across the northern Caribbean were digging out from the destruction of Hurricane Melissa on Thursday as deaths from the catastrophic storm climbed.

The rumble of large machinery, whine of chainsaws and chopping of machetes echoed throughout southeast Jamaica as government workers and residents began clearing roads in a push to reach isolated communities that sustained a direct hit from one of the most powerful Atlantic storms on record.

Stunned residents wandered about, some staring at their roofless homes and waterlogged belongings strewn around them.

"I don't have a house now," said a distressed Sylvester Guthrie, a resident of Lacovia in the southern parish of St. Elizabeth, as he held onto his bicycle, the only possession of value left after the storm.

"I have land in another location that I can build back but I am going to need help," the sanitation worker pleaded.

Emergency relief flights began landing at Jamaica's main international airport, which reopened late Wednesday, as crews distributed water, food and other basic supplies.

"The devastation is enormous," Jamaican Transportation Minister Daryl Vaz said.

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Some Jamaicans wondered where they would live.

"I am now homeless, but I have to be hopeful because I have life," said Sheryl Smith, who lost the roof of her home.

Authorities said they have found at least four bodies in southwest Jamaica.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness said up to 90% of roofs in the southwest coastal community of Black River were destroyed.

"Black River is what you would describe as ground zero," he said. "The people are still coming to grips with the destruction."

More than 25,000 people remained crowded into shelters across the western half of Jamaica, with 77% of the island without power.

Death and flooding in Haiti

Melissa also unleashed catastrophic flooding in Haiti, where at least 25 people were reported killed and 18 others missing, mostly in the country's southern region.

Steven Guadard, who lives in Petit-Goâve, said Melissa killed his entire family.

"I had four children at home: a 1-month-old baby, a 7-year-old, an 8-year-old and another who was about to turn 4," he said.

Haiti's Civil Protection Agency said Hurricane Melissa killed at least 20 people in Petit-Goâve, including 10 children. It also damaged more than 160 homes and destroyed 80 others.

Officials warned that 152 disabled people in Haiti's southern region required emergency food assistance. More than 11,600 people remained sheltered in Haiti because of the storm.

Slow recovery in Cuba

Meanwhile, in Cuba, people began to clear blocked roads and highways with heavy equipment and even enlisted the help of the military, which rescued people trapped in isolated communities and at risk from landslides.

No fatalities were reported after the Civil Defense evacuated more than 735,000 people across eastern Cuba. They slowly were starting to return home.

"We are cleaning the streets, clearing the way," said Yaima Almenares, a physical education teacher from the city of Santiago, as she and other neighbors swept branches and debris from sidewalks and avenues, cutting down fallen tree trunks and removing accumulated trash.

In the more rural areas outside the city of Santiago de Cuba, water remained accumulated in vulnerable homes on Wednesday night as residents returned from their shelters to save beds, mattresses, chairs, tables and fans they had elevated ahead of the storm.

A televised Civil Defense meeting chaired by President Miguel Díaz-Canel did not provide an official estimate of the damage. However, officials from the affected provinces — Santiago, Granma, Holguín, Guantánamo, and Las Tunas — reported losses of roofs, power lines, fiber optic telecommunications cables, cut roads, isolated communities and losses of banana, cassava and coffee plantations.

Officials said the rains were beneficial for the reservoirs and for easing a severe drought in eastern Cuba.

Many communities were still without electricity, internet and telephone service due to downed transformers and power lines.

A historic storm

When Melissa came ashore in Jamaica as a Category 5 hurricane with top winds of 185 mph (295 kph) on Tuesday, it tied strength records for Atlantic hurricanes making landfall, both in wind speed and barometric pressure. It was still a Category 3 hurricane when it made landfall again in eastern Cuba early Wednesday.

A hurricane warning remained in effect early Thursday for the southeastern and central Bahamas and for Bermuda.

Hurricane conditions were expected to continue through the morning in the southeastern Bahamas, where dozens of people were evacuated.

Melissa was a Category 2 storm with top sustained winds near 100 mph (155 kph) early Thursday and was moving north-northeast at 21 mph (33 kph) according to the U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami.

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The hurricane was centered about 145 miles (235 kilometers) northeast of the central Bahamas and about 755 miles (1,215 kilometers) southwest of Bermuda.

Melissa was forecast to pass near or to the west of Bermuda late Thursday and may strengthen further before weakening Friday.

Dodgers shuffle their slumping lineup for World Series Game 5, and it doesn't work in Jays' 6-1 win

By GREG BEACHAM AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Los Angeles Dodgers shuffled their slumping lineup for Game 5 of the World Series on Wednesday night, and the changes did absolutely nothing to prevent another dismal offensive performance by a star-studded lineup running out of chances to recapture its October form.

The Dodgers managed just four hits against Toronto rookie Trey Yesavage and his bullpen during the Blue Jays' 6-1 victory. Kiké Hernández's third-inning homer was the Dodgers' only extra-base hit, and they struck out a whopping 15 times — at least once by every member of the reconfigured starting lineup.

Manager Dave Roberts moved slumping Mookie Betts down in the order for the first time in four years and benched Andy Pages in an attempt to jump-start an offense that is on the verge of ruining Los Angeles' bid to become baseball's first repeat champions since 2000.

"Doesn't feel great," Roberts said. "You clearly see (the Blue Jays) finding ways to get hits, move the baseball forward, and we're not doing a good job of it. ... (But) we have that ability. We've got to make some adjustments."

The Dodgers are batting a dismal .202 in the World Series after failing to mount anything of consequence in Game 5. The team that finished second in the majors in runs scored during the regular season has plated only four runs in its last 28 innings of play, including just three in these back-to-back home losses.

Los Angeles went 10 for 61 over the past two games at home, including 0 for 6 with runners in scoring position — a situation that only came up once in Game 5.

"We all know what we're capable of, and we haven't done it for two games," said Game 3 hero Freddie Freeman, who went 0 for 4 with three strikeouts Wednesday. "Maybe a day off will cool them off over there and reignite us."

Will Smith went 1 for 4 in Betts' customary No. 2 spot, contributing only a ninth-inning single. Betts went 0 for 4 with two strikeouts in the No. 3 spot, while slugger Max Muncy went 0 for 3 — and so did Tommy Edman.

Even Shohei Ohtani couldn't contribute, going 0 for 4 in the leadoff spot in his second straight hitless game since clubbing four extra-base hits and reaching base nine times in LA's 18-inning victory in Game 3. Entering Game 5, Ohtani had a 1.182 playoff OPS, while the rest of the Dodgers had a combined .682.

Only the Dodgers' unrelated outfielders named Hernández had an effective approach in Game 5. Kiké's homer was his first of another solid postseason for the Dodgers' career leader in playoff appearances, while Teoscar Hernández went 2 for 4 — but also struck out to end the game.

Roberts made the changes for Game 5 after the defending champions struggled at the plate despite splitting the first four games with the Jays. Los Angeles has only 38 hits in the series — 15 fewer than Toronto — and has relied heavily on eight homers, including seven solo shots, to drive in its 18 runs.

"In the postseason, you've got to be a little bit more reactive than the regular season," Roberts said before the game. "When I netted out the value of what I feel gives us the best chance to win today, that was a decision I made."

Game 5 was the first time since 2021 that Betts started but wasn't in one of the top two spots in Los Angeles' lineup, and the demotion felt necessary.

The eight-time All-Star and three-time World Series champion has been the Dodgers' No. 2 hitter nearly all season behind Ohtani, and Roberts resisted any temptation to move Betts during rough spots in his underwhelming regular season at the plate.

But Betts is 3 for 23 with no RBIs and no extra-base hits in the World Series after going 2 for 16 without

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scoring a run in the last three games at Dodger Stadium. Betts has no homers and just six RBIs in the current postseason, and his career playoff batting average has dropped to .255 after nine career postseason trips with Boston and Los Angeles.

"I think he's pressing," Roberts said. "Hopefully, the off day, (he can) find a way to get away from it, and then go out there and just kind of focus on one game and be good for one game, go out there and compete. But I think you can see there's a little anxiousness in there, but it's not the first time he's struggled. It's not the first time he's faced elimination. And it's not just Mookie. It's everyone that's got to do their part, too."

Smith is 5 for 21 with a homer and four RBIs in the World Series while also catching every inning.

Alex Call went 0 for 2 with a walk while taking the lineup spot of Pages, who is 1 for 15 in the World Series and 4 for 50 with one RBI in the entire postseason. Call played left field while Kiké Hernández moved to center.

Pages had an .828 OPS at the start of July during a first half that inspired All-Star talk around the outfielder, but he dropped off in the second half. Only his defense in center field — and the Dodgers' lack of a serious alternative, given the complete failure of \$17 million outfielder Michael Conforto, who hasn't played in the postseason — likely kept Pages in the lineup this long into his October struggles.

Hurricane Melissa leaves trail of destruction across Cuba, Haiti and Jamaica

By ARIEL FERNÁNDEZ, ANDREA RODRÍGUEZ, JOHN MYERS JR. and EVENS SANON Associated Press SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Cuba (AP) — Hurricane Melissa left at least dozens dead and caused widespread destruction across Cuba, Haiti and Jamaica, where roofless homes, toppled utility poles and water-logged furniture dominated the landscape Wednesday.

A landslide blocked the main roads of Santa Cruz in Jamaica's St. Elizabeth parish, where the streets were reduced to mud pits. Residents swept water from homes as they tried to salvage belongings. Wind ripped off part of the roof at a high school that serves as a public shelter.

"I never see anything like this before in all my years living here," resident Jennifer Small said.

The extent of the damage from the deadly hurricane was unclear Wednesday as widespread power outages and dangerous conditions persisted in the region.

"It is too early for us to say definitively," said Dana Morris Dixon, Jamaica's education minister.

Melissa made landfall Tuesday in Jamaica as a Category 5 hurricane with top winds of 185 mph (295 kph), one of the strongest Atlantic hurricanes on record, before weakening and moving on to Cuba, but even countries outside the direct path of the massive storm felt its devastating effects.

At least 25 people have died across Haiti and 18 are missing, Haiti's Civil Protection Agency said in a statement Wednesday. Twenty of those reported dead and 10 of the missing are from a southern coastal town where flooding collapsed dozens of homes. At least eight are dead in Jamaica.

In Cuba, officials reported collapsed houses, blocked mountain roads and roofs blown off buildings Wednesday, with the heaviest destruction concentrated in the southwest and northwest. Authorities said about 735,000 people remained in shelters.

"That was hell. All night long, it was terrible," said Reinaldo Charon in Santiago de Cuba. The 52-year-old was one of the few people venturing out Wednesday, covered by a plastic sheet in the intermittent rain.

Forecasters expect Melissa, now a Category 2 hurricane, to bring dangerous winds, flooding and storm surge to the Bahamas overnight into Thursday.

Jamaica rushes to assess the damage

In Jamaica, more than 25,000 people were packed into shelters Wednesday after the storm ripped roofs off their homes and left them temporarily homeless. Dixon said 77% of the island was without power.

The outages complicated assessing the damage because of "a total communication blackout" in areas, Richard Thompson, acting director general of Jamaica's Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency

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Management, told the Nationwide News Network radio station.

"Recovery will take time, but the government is fully mobilized," Prime Minister Andrew Holness said in a statement. "Relief supplies are being prepared, and we are doing everything possible to restore normalcy quickly."

Officials in Black River, Jamaica, a southwestern coastal town of approximately 5,000 people, pleaded for aid at a news conference Wednesday.

"Catastrophic is a mild term based on what we are observing," Mayor Richard Solomon said.

Solomon said the local rescue infrastructure had been demolished by the storm. The hospital, police units and emergency services were inundated by floods and unable to conduct emergency operations.

Jamaican Transportation Minister Daryl Vaz said two of the island's airports will reopen Wednesday to relief flights only, with U.N. agencies and dozens of nonprofits on standby to distribute basic goods.

"The devastation is enormous," he said. "We need all hands on deck to recover stronger and to help those in need at this time."

The United States is sending rescue and response teams to assist in recovery efforts in the Caribbean, Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced on X.

St. Elizabeth Police Superintendent Coleridge Minto told Nationwide News Network on Wednesday that authorities have found at least four bodies in southwest Jamaica. One death was reported in the west when a tree fell on a baby, state minister Abka Fitz-Henley told Nationwide News Network.

Before landfall, Melissa had already been blamed for three deaths in Jamaica, three in Haiti and one in the Dominican Republic.

Melissa devastates Haitian town

Hurricane Melissa damaged more than 160 homes and destroyed 80 others in the town of Petit-Goâve, where 10 of the 20 people killed there were children, Haiti's Civil Protection Agency said Wednesday.

Lawyer Charly Saint-Vil, 30, said he saw bodies lying among the debris after the storm as he walked the streets of the small coastal town where he grew up. People screamed as they searched for their missing children, he said.

"People have lost everything," Saint-Vil said.

Although the immediate threat of the storm has passed, Saint-Vil said Petit-Goâve's residents were living in fear about access to medicine, water and food in the coming days given the political instability in Haiti.

"We don't know what will happen tomorrow or the day after tomorrow," he said.

For now, neighbors are helping one another source necessities and find places to sleep. Saint-Vil is hosting a number of friends who lost their homes in his small apartment.

"What I can do, I will do it, but it's not easy because the situation is really complicated for everyone," he said.

Cuba rides out the storm

People in the eastern Cuban province of Santiago de Cuba began clearing debris around the collapsed walls of their homes Wednesday after Melissa made landfall in the region hours earlier.

"Life is what matters," Alexis Ramos, a 54-year-old fisherman, said as he surveyed his destroyed home and shielded himself from the intermittent rain with a yellow raincoat. "Repairing this costs money, a lot of money."

Local media showed images of the Juan Bruno Zayas Clinical Hospital with severe damage: glass scattered across the floor, waiting rooms in ruins and masonry walls crumpled on the ground.

"As soon as conditions allow, we will begin the recovery. We are ready," President Miguel Díaz-Canel wrote on X.

The hurricane could worsen Cuba's severe economic crisis, which already has led to prolonged power blackouts along with fuel and food shortages.

Cuba's National Institute of Hydraulic Resources reported accumulated rainfall of 15 inches (38 centimeters) in Charco Redondo and 14 inches (36 centimeters) in Las Villas Reservoir.

Wednesday night, Melissa had top sustained winds near 100 mph (155 kph) and was moving north-northeast at 21 mph (33 kph) according to the U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami. The hurricane was

centered about 105 miles (170 kilometers) east-northeast of the central Bahamas and about 800 miles (1,285 kilometers) southwest of Bermuda.

Authorities in the Bahamas were evacuating dozens of people from the archipelago's southeast corner ahead of Melissa's arrival. By late Thursday, Melissa is expected to pass just west of Bermuda.

US will share tech to let South Korea build a nuclear-powered submarine, Trump says

By CHRIS MEGERIAN and JOSH BOAK Associated Press

GYEONGJU, South Korea (AP) — The United States will share closely held technology to allow South Korea to build a nuclear-powered submarine, President Donald Trump said on social media Thursday after meeting with the country's president.

President Lee Jae Myung stressed to Trump in their Wednesday meeting that the goal was to modernize the alliance with the U.S., noting plans to increase military spending to reduce the financial burden on America.

The South Korean leader said there might have been a misunderstanding when they last spoke in August about nuclear-powered submarines, saying that his government was looking for nuclear fuel rather than weapons.

Lee said that South Korea's current diesel-powered submarines have limits in tracking other countries' submarine activities. If South Korea was equipped with nuclear-powered submarines, he said, it could help U.S. activities in the region.

Diesel-powered submarines have to surface regularly to recharge their batteries. But nuclear-powered submarines have superior endurance and can stay submerged for a significantly longer period.

Trump said in a separate post that the country would build its nuclear-powered submarine in the Philly Shipyard, which was bought last year by South Korea's Hanwha Group.

It was unclear what the size or cost of the sub project would be, but South Korea had said as part of talks with Trump that it had committed \$150 billion to invest in America's shipbuilding capacity.

U.S. nuclear submarine technology is widely regarded as some of the most sensitive and highly guarded technology the military possesses. The U.S. has been incredibly protective of that knowledge, and even a recently announced deal with close allies the United Kingdom and Australia to help the latter acquire nuclear submarine technology doesn't feature the U.S. directly transferring its knowledge.

Trump's post on social media comes ahead of his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, whose country possesses nuclear submarines, and after North Korea in March unveiled for the first time a nuclear-powered submarine under construction. It is a weapons system that can pose a major security threat to South Korea and the U.S.

As Trump visited South Korea, North Korea said Wednesday that it conducted successful cruise missile tests, the latest display of its growing military capabilities.

Pentagon officials didn't immediately respond to questions about Trump's announcement on sharing the nuclear sub technology with South Korea.

Jurors convict Illinois deputy of killing Sonya Massey but can't agree on first-degree murder charge

By JOHN O'CONNOR Associated Press

PEORIA, Ill. (AP) — A jury on Wednesday convicted an Illinois sheriff's deputy of second-degree murder, a lesser charge, in the shooting death of Sonya Massey, a Black woman who called 911 to report a suspected prowler.

Sean Grayson could be sentenced to up to 20 years in prison or even probation. The jury did not convict him of first-degree murder, a crime that carries a sentence of 45 years to life.

Massey's supporters were angered by the result.

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"I'm fueled by rage right now," said Massey's cousin, Sontae Massey. "You get an officer that says he's going to shoot you in the face, and then he shoots you in the face, and you only get second-degree? The justice system did exactly what it's designed to do today. It's not meant for us."

A call for help and a fatal encounter

Massey's killing raised new questions about U.S. law enforcement shootings of Black people in their homes, and prompted a change in Illinois law requiring fuller transparency on the background of candidates for law enforcement jobs.

Massey's father, James Wilburn, called for the Illinois measure to become law nationally, along with stalled federal police misconduct and civil rights legislation.

"There's a difference in this country when you have my skin color and Grayson's skin color," Wilburn said. "We need serious justice, not a miscarriage of justice."

Grayson, who is white, and another deputy arrived at Massey's home in Springfield early on July 6, 2024, after she reported hearing someone banging on the outside of her house. He shot the 36-year-old woman after confronting her inside about how she was handling a pot of hot water on the stove.

Grayson and his attorneys argued that he fired his gun in fear that Massey would scald him with the hot water, contending at one point that Massey provoked the encounter by threatening to throw the pot at him.

"Anybody who watched the video and thinks that it was partly Sonya's fault is inhumane," Massey's mother, Donna Massey, said after the verdict. "And for them not to give him life, and Sonya got life – and death ... I can't wait until he goes to hell."

Grayson, 31, who was fired upon his indictment, was charged with first-degree murder, but the jury was given the option of considering second-degree murder, which can apply when a defendant faces a "serious provocation" or believes their action is justified even if that belief is unreasonable. He will be sentenced on Jan. 29.

State's Attorney John Milhiser would not comment as he left the courtroom. He was repeatedly praised by Massey's supporters for pursuing a trial that was moved 75 miles (120.7 kilometers) north to the Peoria County courthouse because of intense publicity in Springfield.

Defense attorney Daniel Fultz declined to comment after the verdict.

Officer testified in his own defense

Body camera video recorded by another Sangamon County sheriff's deputy at the scene, Dawson Farley, was a key part of the prosecution's case. It showed Massey, who struggled with mental health issues, telling the officers, "Don't hurt me," and repeating, "Please God."

When the deputies entered the house, Grayson saw the pot on the stove and ordered Farley to move it. Massey jumped up to retrieve the pot, and she and Grayson joked about how he said he was backing off from the "hot, steaming water." Massey then replied, "I rebuke you in the name of Jesus."

Grayson immediately warned her that he would shoot her in the face. He and Farley drew their pistols and yelled at Massey to put the pot down. Grayson, who testified in his own defense, told investigators he thought her "rebuke" meant she intended to kill him and, in the following commotion, fired three shots, striking Massey just below the eye.

Former justice says probation off the table at sentencing

While probation is a possible punishment, former state appellate court Justice David Erickson, a professor at Chicago-Kent College of Law, said it's unlikely.

"There will be no probation because of the killing of an innocent woman," Erickson said. "Obviously, the jury could not find any intent to kill, necessary for murder one."

But Erickson predicted Grayson would get a sentence on the low end of the four- to 20-year range — which comes with day-for-day credit if he behaves behind bars — because Grayson has no criminal record, lacked intent to kill, and believed, mistakenly, that he was in danger.

Despite family members' anger, Antonio Romanucci, one of the lawyers who helped Massey's relatives win a \$10 million settlement from Sangamon County, said, "Make no mistake: Sean Grayson is convicted of murder. He is a murderer now."

Farley testified that Massey didn't say or do anything that caused him to view her as a threat. But under

cross-examination, he acknowledged that he initially reported to investigators that he feared for his safety because of the hot water. Farley did not fire his weapon and was not charged.

Massey's death forced the early retirement of the sheriff who hired Grayson and generated a U.S. Justice Department inquiry that was settled when the Sangamon County Sheriff's Department's agreed to bolster de-escalation training, work with mental health professionals when necessary and generate data on use-of-force incidents.

Sudan's paramilitary forces killed hundreds at a hospital in Darfur, residents and aid workers say

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Sudan's paramilitary forces killed hundreds of people at a hospital, including patients, after they seized the provincial capital of North Darfur over the weekend, according to the U.N., displaced residents and aid workers, who described harrowing details of the atrocities.

The 460 patients and their companions were reportedly killed Tuesday at Saudi Hospital by fighters from the Rapid Support Forces in the city of el-Fasher, said Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the director-general of the World Health Organization.

As part of their assault on el-Fasher, RSF fighters also went from house to house, beating and shooting at people, including women and children, witnesses told The Associated Press. Many died of gunshot wounds in the streets, some while trying to flee to safety, witnesses said.

Two years of fighting for control of Sudan has killed over 40,000 people — a figure rights groups consider a significant undercount — and has created the world's worst humanitarian crisis with over 14 million displaced. The capture of el-Fasher by the powerful Arab-led force raises fears that Africa's third-largest nation may split again, nearly 15 years after oil-rich South Sudan gained independence following years of civil war.

Sudanese residents and aid workers revealed harrowing details of atrocities by the RSF after it seized the army's last stronghold in Darfur following more than 500 days of siege.

Fighters from the RSF "cold-bloodedly killed everyone they found inside the Saudi Hospital, including patients, their companions, and anyone else present in the wards," according to the Sudan Doctors Network, a medical group tracking the war.

"The Janjaweed showed no mercy for anyone," said Umm Amena, a mother of four children who fled the city on Monday after two days, using a Sudanese term for the RSF.

RSF commander Gen. Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, who is sanctioned by the U.S., acknowledged what he called "abuses" by his forces. In his first comments since the fall of el-Fasher, posted Wednesday on the Telegram messaging app, he said an investigation was opened. He did not elaborate.

The Associated Press has not been able to independently confirm the hospital attack and death toll.

'It was a like a killing field'

Mini Minawi, the governor of Darfur, shared a video online that purported to show RSF fighters inside the Saudi Hospital. The minute-long footage shows bodies lying on the floor in pools of blood. A fighter fires a single shot from a Kalashnikov-style rifle into a lone man sitting up, who then slumps to the floor. Other bodies could be seen outside. The AP could not independently verify the date, location or condition under which the video was recorded.

Amena was among three dozen people, mostly women and children, who were detained for a day by RSF fighters in an abandoned house close to the Saudi Hospital in el-Fasher.

The AP spoke with Amena and four others who managed to flee el-Fasher and arrived exhausted and dehydrated early Tuesday in the nearby town of Tawila, around 60 kilometers (37 miles) west of el-Fasher, which already hosts over 650,000 displaced.

The U.N. migration agency said more than 36,000 people have fled el-Fasher, mostly to rural areas around it, since Sunday.

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U.N. refugee agency official Jacqueline Wilma Parlevliet said the new arrivals told of widespread killings motivated by ethnic and political differences, including reports of people with disabilities shot dead because they were unable to flee, and others shot as they tried to escape.

"It was a like a killing field," Tajal-Rahman, a man in his late 50s, said over the phone from the outskirts of Tawila. "Bodies everywhere and people bleeding and no one to help them."

Both Amena and Tajal-Rahman said RSF fighters tortured and beat the detainees and shot at least four people Monday who later died of wounds. They also sexually assaulted women and girls, they said.

In Tawila, a hospital run by Doctors Without Borders received many patients since Oct. 18 suffering from injuries related to bombings or gunshots, according to Giulia Chiopris, a pediatrician at the hospital.

She said the hospital also received a high number of malnourished and severely dehydrated children, many of them unaccompanied or orphaned, who had fled el-Fasher.

"We are seeing a lot a lot of cases of trauma related to the last bombing and a huge number of orphans," she said.

She recalled receiving three young siblings, ranging in age from 40 days old to 4 years, whose family was killed in the city. They were brought to the hospital Monday night by strangers, she said.

Satellite imagery suggest mass killings

In a report late Tuesday, the Yale School of Public Health's Humanitarian Research Lab said that RSF fighters continued to carry out mass killings since they took over el-Fasher.

The report, which relied on satellite imagery from Airbus, said it corroborated alleged executions and mass killing by the RSF around the Saudi Hospital, and at a detention center at the former Children's Hospital in the eastern part of the city. The AP accessed and analyzed the same imagery, seeing objects and red stains on the ground at the sites that the lab identified as blood and bodies.

The lab also said that "systematic killings" took place in the vicinity of the eastern wall, which the RSF built outside the city earlier this year.

Sheldon Yett, the UNICEF representative to Sudan, said in an interview that the situation in el-Fasher, was "an absolute catastrophe," with thousands of children already suffering from disease and famine before the takeover of the city by the RSF.

"Now it's hell on Earth with lots of guns," Yett said.

Aid groups said a death toll has been difficult to determine since RSF overran el-Fasher, given a near communication blackout.

The report from Yale said satellite imagery can't show the true scale of the mass killings, and that an estimated death toll is likely an undercount.

Before the latest bout of violence, some 1,850 civilians were killed in North Darfur, including 1,350 in el-Fasher, between Jan. 1 and Oct. 20 this year, according to U.N. spokesperson Farhan Aziz Haq.

Global outrage

Footage of the attacks triggered a wave of outrage around the world. France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the European Union all condemned the atrocities.

Mohamed Osman, Sudan researcher with Human Rights Watch, said that footage coming out of el-Fasher "reveals a horrifying truth: the Rapid Support Forces feel free to carry out mass atrocities with little fear of consequences."

"The world needs to act to protect civilians from more heinous crimes," he said.

Massad Boulos, the U.S. senior adviser on Arab and African affairs, condemned the attacks.

"The deliberate targeting of vulnerable populations through acts of violence and retribution is both abhorrent and unacceptable," wrote Boulos, a Lebanese-American businessman who is the father-in-law of President Donald Trump's daughter Tiffany.

"We acknowledge RSF leadership's recent statements on civilian protection, humanitarian access and accountability, but words alone will not save lives. These commitments must urgently be turned into concrete actions on the ground to alleviate the suffering of the Sudanese people."

Sen. Jim Risch, chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on Tuesday denounced the RSF attacks on the city, and called for it to be designated as a foreign terrorist organization. "The RSF

has waged terror and committed unspeakable atrocities, genocide among them, against the Sudanese people," he wrote.

Jury convicts California activist who took chickens from Perdue Farms plant

By OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A California animal rights activist who took four chickens from a major Perdue Farms poultry plant was found guilty Wednesday of felony conspiracy, trespassing and other charges and faces several years in jail.

Zoe Rosenberg, 23, did not deny taking the animals from Petaluma Poultry but argued she wasn't breaking the law because she was rescuing the birds from a cruel situation. The trial lasted about seven weeks in Sonoma County, an agricultural area of Northern California.

The Santa Rosa jury took less than a day to find Rosenberg guilty on all counts. The activist with Direct Action Everywhere, or DxE, a Berkeley-based animal rights group, was on trial for two misdemeanor counts of trespassing, a misdemeanor count of tampering with a vehicle and a felony conspiracy charge.

Rosenberg said she does not regret what she did.

"I will not apologize for taking sick, neglected animals to get medical care," Rosenberg said following her conviction. "When we see cruelty and violence, we can choose to ignore it or to intervene and try to make the world a better place. I chose to intervene, and because I did, Poppy, Ivy, Aster, and Azalea are alive today. For that, I will never be sorry."

The group named the birds and placed them in an animal sanctuary.

Rosenberg walked out of court wearing an ankle monitor and briefly spoke to supporters, who were holding signs that read "Prosecute Petaluma Poultry" and "Right to Rescue." She told them she would immediately head to the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office and report animal cruelty at Petaluma Poultry.

"We're going to go now and report Petaluma Poultry and ask them to please finally give justice to these animals," she said.

Rosenberg's attorney, Chris Carraway, said the district attorney's office was ignoring criminal animal cruelty in Sonoma County factory farms and that he plans to appeal the verdict.

"Sonoma County spent over six weeks and hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars to protect a multi-billion-dollar corporation from the rescue of four chickens worth less than \$25," Carraway said in a statement. "No doubt, the District Attorney's office would never have spent a fraction of this time or money if the chickens had been dead in a supermarket meat case."

Rosenberg's sentencing is set for Dec. 3, when she faces a maximum jail sentence of 4 1/2 years, Sonoma County District Attorney Carla Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez said in a statement the verdict affirms no one is above the law.

"While we respect everyone's right to free expression, it is unlawful to trespass, disrupt legitimate businesses, and endanger workers and animals in pursuit of a political or social agenda," she said.

Petaluma Poultry has said that DxE is an extremist group that is intent on destroying the animal agriculture industry. The company says the animals were not mistreated.

"The jury's verdict makes it clear: personal beliefs don't justify breaking the law," Herb Frerichs, general counsel of Petaluma Poultry, said in a statement. "DxE members admitted to planning and carrying out illegal acts — including break-ins, theft of private data, and stealing livestock — under the guise of activism and to gain publicity."

Frerichs said the company supports the right to free speech and lawful protests, but this was not that.

Rosenberg testified she disguised herself as a Petaluma Poultry worker using a fake badge and earpiece to take the birds, and then posted a video of her actions on social media.

Petaluma Poultry is a subsidiary of Perdue Farms — one of the United States' largest poultry providers for major grocery chains.

The co-founder of DxE was convicted two years ago for his role in factory farm protests in Petaluma.

Paris prosecutor says 2 suspects in the Louvre jewel heist acknowledge their involvement

By THOMAS ADAMSON and SYLVIE CORBET Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Two suspects in the Louvre jewel heist on Wednesday were handed preliminary charges of criminal conspiracy and theft committed by an organized gang, according to the Paris prosecutor's office. The prosecutor said they admitted their involvement.

Prosecutor Laure Beccau told a news conference that the two are believed to be the men who forced their way into the world's most visited museum Oct. 19, and that at least two other accomplices are at large. The jewels remain missing.

The two were given preliminary charges and ordered held in custody pending further investigation, the prosecutor's office said in a statement.

They have "partially" admitted their participation in the robbery, Beccau said. She declined to provide details about the suspects' statements to investigators because she said accomplices may listen.

It took thieves less than eight minutes to steal the jewels valued at 88 million euros (\$102 million) on Oct. 19, shocking the world. The robbers forced open a window, cut into cases with power tools and fled with eight pieces of the French crown jewels.

Suspects' DNA was found

The two men arrested on Saturday night "are suspected of being the ones who broke into the Apollo Gallery to steal the jewels," Beccau said.

One is a 34-year-old Algerian national who has been living in France since 2010, Beccau said. He was arrested at Charles de Gaulle airport as he was about to fly to Algeria with no return ticket. He was living in a suburb north of Paris, Aubervilliers, and was known to police mostly for road traffic offenses. His DNA was found on one of the scooters used by robbers to leave the scene, she said.

The other suspect, 39, was arrested at his home in Aubervilliers. "There is no evidence to suggest that he was about to leave the country," Beccau said. The man was known to police for several thefts, and his DNA was found on one of the glass cases where the jewels were displayed and on items the thieves left behind, she added.

Video surveillance cameras showed there were at least four criminals involved, Beccau said.

The four suspected robbers arrived onboard a truck equipped with a freight lift that two of them used to climb up to the museum's window. The four of them left onboard two motor scooters along the Seine River toward eastern Paris, where they had some other vehicles parked, she detailed.

Beccau said nothing suggests that the robbers had any accomplices within the museum's staff.

The jewels are still missing

The jewels have not been recovered, Beccau said.

"These jewels are now, of course, unsellable ... Anyone who buys them would be guilty of concealment of stolen goods," she warned. "There's still time to give them back."

Earlier Wednesday, French police acknowledged major gaps in the Louvre's defenses — turning the dazzling daylight theft into a national reckoning over how France protects its treasures.

Paris Police Chief Patrice Faure told Senate lawmakers that aging systems and slow-moving fixes left weak seams in the museum.

"A technological step has not been taken," he said, noting that parts of the video network are still analog, producing lower-quality images that are slow to share in real time.

A long-promised revamp — a \$93 million project requiring roughly 60 kilometers (37 miles) of new cabling — "will not be finished before 2029–2030," he said.

Faure also disclosed that the Louvre's authorization to operate its security cameras quietly expired in July and wasn't renewed — a paperwork lapse that some see as a symbol of broader negligence.

The police chief said officers "arrived extremely fast" after the theft, but added the lag in response oc-

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curred earlier in the chain — from first detection, to museum security, to the emergency line, to police command.

Faure and his team said the first alert to police came not from the Louvre's alarms but from a cyclist outside who dialed the emergency line after seeing helmeted men with a basket lift.

Faure urged lawmakers to authorize tools currently off-limits: AI-based anomaly detection and object tracking (not facial recognition) to flag suspicious movements and follow scooters or gear across city cameras in real time.

Former bank robber David Desclos has told the AP the theft was textbook and vulnerabilities were glaringly obvious in the layout of the gallery.

Museum and culture officials under pressure

Culture Minister Rachida Dati, under pressure, has refused the Louvre director's resignation and insisted that alarms worked, while acknowledging "security gaps did exist."

The museum was already under strain. In June, the Louvre shut in a spontaneous staff strike — including security agents — over unmanageable crowds, chronic understaffing and "untenable" conditions. Unions say mass tourism and construction pinch points create blind spots, a vulnerability underscored by the thieves who rolled a basket lift to the Seine-facing façade.

Faure said police will now track surveillance-permit deadlines across institutions to prevent repeats of the July lapse. But he stressed the larger fix is disruptive and slow: ripping out and rebuilding core systems while the palace stays open, and updating the law so police can act on suspicious movement in real time.

Experts fear the stolen pieces may already be broken down and stones recut to erase their past.

Protests erupt after police raid in Brazil leaves 119 dead and draws accusations of excessive force

By ELÉONORE HUGHES and DIARLEI RODRIGUES Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — A massive police raid on a drug gang embedded in low-income neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro that left at least 119 people dead drew protests for excessive force Wednesday and calls for the Rio's governor to resign.

Dozens of favelas residents gathered in front of the state's government headquarters shouting "assassins!" and waving Brazilian flags stained with red paint, a day after Rio's deadliest raid and hours after families and residents laid dozens of dead bodies on a street in one of the targeted communities to show the magnitude of the operation.

Questions quickly arose about the death count and the state of the bodies, with reports of disfigurement and knife wounds. Brazil's Supreme Court, prosecutors and lawmakers asked Rio state Gov. Claudio Castro to provide detailed information about the operation.

"This was a massacre," said Barbara Barbosa, a domestic worker from the Penha complex of favelas, one of the two huge communities targeted in the police operation. She said her son was killed in a prior operation in Penha.

"Do we have a death sentence? Stop killing us," said activist Rute Sales, 56. Many residents came Penha in Rio's poor, northern zone to the imposing Guanabara Palace on motorbikes.

The toll of 115 suspects and four policemen killed was an increase over what authorities originally said were 60 suspects dead in Tuesday's raid by about 2,500 police and soldiers in the favelas of Penha and Complexo de Alemão.

Felipe Curi, Rio state police secretary, told a news conference that bodies of additional suspects were found in a wooded area where he said they had worn camouflage while battling with security forces. He said local residents had removed clothing and equipment from the bodies, in what would be investigated as evidence tampering.

"These individuals were in the woods, equipped with camouflage clothing, vests and weapons. Now many of them appeared wearing underwear or shorts, with no equipment, as if they had come through

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a portal and changed clothes,” Curi said.

Earlier Wednesday, in the neighborhood of Penha, residents had surrounded many of the bodies — collected in trucks and displayed in a main square — and shouted “massacre” and “justice” before forensic authorities arrived to retrieve the remains.

“They can take them to jail, why kill them like this? Lots of them were alive and calling for help,” resident Elisangela Silva Santos, 50, said during the gathering in Penha. “Yes they’re traffickers, but they’re human.”

The tally of suspects arrested stood at 113 — up from 81 cited previously, Curi said. The state government said some 90 rifles and more than a ton of drugs were seized.

Police and soldiers had launched the raid in helicopters, armored vehicles and on foot, targeting the Red Command gang. They drew gunfire and other retaliation from gang members, sparking scenes of chaos across the city on Tuesday. Schools in the affected areas shuttered, a local university canceled classes, and roads were blocked with buses used as barricades.

Many shops remained closed Wednesday morning in Penha, where local activist Raul Santiago said he was part of a team that found about 15 bodies before dawn.

“We saw executed people: shot in the back, shots to the head, stab wounds, people tied up. This level of brutality, the hatred that is spread - there’s no other way to describe it except as a massacre,” Santiago said.

Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes ordered Castro to provide information about the police operation and scheduled a hearing with the state governor and the heads of the military and civil police next Monday in Rio.

The Senate’s commission for human rights said it was asking for clarifications from the Rio state government. Meanwhile, Rio prosecutors requested that Castro provide detailed information about the operation and proof that there was no less harmful means of achieving its objectives.

And the federal public prosecutor’s office asked the Forensic Medical Institute to ensure that autopsy reports contain full descriptions and photographic and radiographic documentation of all injuries.

Castro said on Tuesday that Rio was at war against “narco-terrorism,” a term that echoed the Trump administration in its campaign against drug smuggling in Latin America.

On Wednesday, Castro called the operation a “success,” apart from the deaths of the four police officers. Rio’s state government said that the suspects who had been killed had resisted police.

Rio has been the scene of lethal police raids for decades. In March 2005, some 29 people were killed in Rio’s Baixada Fluminense region, while in May 2021, 28 were killed in the Jacarezinho favela.

But the scale and lethality of Tuesday’s operation are unprecedented. Non-governmental organizations and the U.N. human rights body quickly raised concerns over the high number of reported fatalities and called for investigations.

“We fully understand the challenges of having to deal with violent and well-organized groups such as Red Command,” said U.N. Human Rights Spokesperson Marta Hurtado said.

But Brazil must “break this cycle of extreme brutality and ensure that law enforcement operations comply with international standards regarding the use of force,” she said, adding that the body was calling for full-fledged policing reform.

Late on Wednesday, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva said on X that he had instructed the justice minister and director-general of Federal Police to meet Castro for a meeting in Rio.

Brazil cannot accept that organized crime “continues to destroy families, oppress residents, and spread drugs and violence across cities,” he said.

The operation’s stated objectives were capturing leaders and limiting the territorial expansion of the Red Command gang, which has increased its control over favelas in recent years.

Gang members allegedly targeted police with at least one drone. Rio de Janeiro’s state government shared a video on X of what appeared to show a drone firing a projectile from the sky.

Gov. Castro, from the conservative opposition Liberal Party, said Tuesday that Rio was “alone in this war.” He said the federal government should be providing more support to combat crime — in a swipe at

the administration of Lula's leftist administration.

His comments were challenged by the Justice Ministry, which said it had responded to requests from Rio's state government to deploy national forces in the state, renewing their presence 11 times.

Gleisi Hoffmann, the Lula administration's liaison with the parliament, agreed that more coordinated action was needed but pointed to a recent crackdown on money laundering as an example of the federal government's action on organized crime.

Justice Minister Ricardo Lewandowski said it was clearly an extremely bloody and violent operation.

"We should reflect on whether this kind of action is compatible with the Democratic Rule of Law that governs us all," he told journalists on Wednesday.

Criminal gangs have expanded their presence across Brazil in recent years, including in the Amazon rainforest.

Roberto Uchôa, from the Brazilian Forum on Public Safety think-tank, said that criminal gangs have strengthened despite these kinds of operations, suggesting that they are inefficient.

"Killing more than 100 people like this won't help decrease the Red Command's expansion. The dead will soon be replaced," Uchôa said.

Democratic congressional candidate Kat Abughazaleh indicted over ICE protests outside Chicago

By SOPHIA TAREEN and JOHN SEEWER Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — A Democratic congressional candidate in Illinois has been accused of blocking a federal agent's vehicle during September protests outside an immigration enforcement building in suburban Chicago, according to court documents unsealed Wednesday.

The felony indictment, filed last week by a special grand jury, charges Kat Abughazaleh and five others of conspiring to impede an officer.

"This is a political prosecution and a gross attempt at silencing dissent, a right protected under the First Amendment. This case is yet another attempt by the Trump administration to criminalize protest and punish those who dare to speak up," Abughazaleh said in a statement Wednesday.

Protesters have gathered outside the immigration center to oppose enforcement operations in the Chicago area that have led to more than 1,800 arrests and complaints of excessive force.

Greg Bovino, who is leading Border Patrol efforts in Chicago, was ordered this week by U.S. District Judge Sara Ellis to brief her every evening about the operations. But an appeals court blocked the order before he was scheduled to appear Wednesday while it considers an appeal from the Justice Department.

Federal prosecutors accuse Abughazaleh and others of surrounding a vehicle driven by a federal agent on Sept. 26 and attempting to stop it from entering the facility.

Among the others named in the indictment are a candidate for the Cook County Board, a Democratic ward committeeman and a trustee in suburban Oak Park. The charges accuse all six of conspiring to impede an officer.

Abughazaleh is scheduled to make an initial court appearance next week. Her attorney called the charges "unjust."

The indictment said the group banged on the car, pushed against it, broke a mirror and scratched the text "PIG" on the vehicle.

Abughazaleh at one point put her hands on the vehicle's hood and braced her body against it while staying in its way, the indictment says. The agent was "forced to drive at an extremely slow rate of speed to avoid injuring any of the conspirators," it says.

Just a week before that alleged confrontation, she told The Associated Press that during a protest on Sept. 19 she was thrown on the ground by federal agents and hit with tear gas as she stood arm-in-arm with others in front of a driveway, blocking a car. A video of that incident was widely circulated.

A liberal journalist with a big social media following, Abughazaleh announced her run in March, saying most Democrats "work from an outdated playbook."

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She's running in a crowded Democratic primary to replace retiring U.S. Rep. Jan Schawkosky.

Protesting the immigration crackdown around Chicago has emerged as a top issue on campaigns in Illinois' March primary. Elected officials and candidates in the Democratic stronghold have often showed up for demonstrations outside the Broadview federal facility.

"As I and others exercised our First Amendment rights, ICE has hit, dragged, thrown, shot with pepper balls, and teargassed hundreds of protesters, myself included. Simply because we had the gall to say masked men abducting our neighbors and terrorizing our community cannot be the new normal," Abug-hazaleh said.

"I've spent my career fighting America's backwards slide towards fascism, and I'm not going to give up now," she said. "I hope you won't either."

Federal Reserve cuts key rate yet Powell says future reductions are not locked in

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Reserve cut its key interest rate Wednesday for a second time this year as it seeks to shore up economic growth and hiring, even as inflation stays elevated.

But Fed Chair Jerome Powell also cautioned that further rate cuts weren't guaranteed, citing the government shutdown's interruption of economic reports and sharp divisions among 19 Fed officials who participate in the central bank's interest-rate deliberations.

Speaking to reporters after the Fed announced its rate decision, Powell said there were "strongly differing views about how to proceed in December" at its next meeting and a further reduction in the benchmark rate is not "a foregone conclusion — far from it."

The rate cut — a quarter of a point — brings the Fed's key rate down to about 3.9%, from about 4.1%. The central bank had cranked its rate to roughly 5.3% in 2023 and 2024 to combat the biggest inflation spike in four decades before implementing three cuts last year. Lower rates could, over time, reduce borrowing costs for mortgages, auto loans, and credit cards, as well as for business loans.

The move comes amid a fraught time for the central bank, with hiring sluggish and yet inflation stuck above the Fed's 2% target. Compounding its challenges, the central bank is navigating without the economic signposts it typically relies on from the government, including monthly reports on jobs, inflation, and consumer spending, which have been suspended because of the government shutdown.

Financial markets largely expected another rate reduction in December, and stock prices dropped after Powell's comments, with the S&P 500 nearly unchanged and the Dow Jones Industrial Average closing slightly lower.

"Powell poured cold water on the idea that the Fed was on autopilot for a December cut," said Gennadiy Goldberg, head of U.S. rates strategy at TD Securities. "Instead, they'll have to wait for economic data to confirm that a rate cut is actually needed."

Powell was asked about the impact of the government shutdown, which began on Oct. 1 and has interrupted the distribution of economic data. Powell said the Fed does have access to some data that give it "a picture of what's going on." He added that, "If there were a significant or material change in the economy, one way or another, I think we'd pick that up through this."

But the Fed chair did acknowledge that the limited data could cause officials to proceed more cautiously heading into its next meeting in mid-December.

"There's a possibility that it would make sense to be more cautious about moving (on rates). I'm not committing to that, I'm just saying it's certainly a possibility that you would say 'we really can't see, so let's slow down.'"

The Fed typically raises its short term rate to combat inflation, while it cuts rates to encourage borrowing and spending and shore up hiring. Right now it sees risks of both slowing hiring and rising inflation, so it is reducing borrowing costs to support the job market, while still keeping rates high enough to avoid stimulating the economy so much that it worsens inflation.

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Yet Powell suggested the Fed increasingly sees inflation as less of a threat. He noted that excluding the impact of President Donald Trump's tariffs, inflation is "not so far from our 2% goal." Inflation has slowed in apartment rents and for many services, such as car insurance. A report released last week showed that inflation remains elevated but isn't accelerating.

The government recalled employees to produce the report, despite the shutdown, because it was used to calculate the cost of living adjustment for Social Security.

At the same time, the economy could be rebounding from a sluggish first half, which could improve job growth in the coming months, Powell said. That would make rate cuts less necessary.

"For some part of the committee, it's time to maybe take a step back and see if whether there really are downside risks to the labor market," Powell said. "Or see whether in fact that the stronger growth that we're seeing is real."

Two of the 12 officials who vote on the Fed's rate decisions dissented Wednesday, but in different directions. Jeffrey Schmid, President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, voted against the move because he preferred no change to the Fed's rate. Schmid has previously expressed concern that inflation remains too high.

Fed governor Stephen Miran dissented for the second straight meeting in favor of a half-point cut. Miran was appointed by President Donald Trump just before the central bank's last meeting in September.

Trump has repeatedly attacked Powell for not reducing borrowing costs more quickly. In South Korea early Wednesday he repeated his criticisms of the Fed chair.

"He's out of there in another couple of months," Trump said. Powell's term ends in May. On Monday, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent confirmed the administration is considering five people to replace Powell, and will decide by the end of this year.

The Fed also said Wednesday that it would stop reducing the size of its massive securities holdings, which it accumulated during the pandemic and after the 2008-2009 Great Recession. The change, to take effect Dec. 1, could over time slightly reduce longer-term interest rates on things like mortgages but won't have much overall impact on consumer borrowing costs.

Without government data, the economy is harder to track, Powell said. September's jobs report, scheduled to be released three weeks ago, is still postponed. This month's hiring figures, to be released Nov. 7, will likely be delayed and may be less comprehensive when finally released. And the White House said last week that October's inflation report may never be issued at all.

Before the government shutdown cut off the flow of data, monthly hiring gains had weakened to an average of just 29,000 a month for the previous three months, according to the Labor Department's data. The unemployment rate ticked up to a still-low 4.3% in August from 4.2% in July.

More recently, several large corporations have announced sweeping layoffs, including UPS, Amazon, and Target, which threatens to boost the unemployment rate if it continues. Powell said the Fed is watching the layoff announcements "very carefully."

Judges rule some Florida gun laws are unconstitutional. Here's what to know

By KATE PAYNE Associated Press/Report for America

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — A pair of court rulings declaring some of Florida's gun restrictions unconstitutional are creating some confusion in the notoriously firearm-friendly state — and fueling activists' calls for Republican legislators to take action to update state statutes so they abide by the new legal landscape.

Despite Florida's history of being a gun-supporting climate, Florida's GOP-dominated state Legislature took steps to restrict gun laws in the wake of the 2018 mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland. Since the day the measure was signed into law, gun rights advocates have been pushing to unravel it.

Now, activists say recent court rulings are fueling their push to expand gun rights in the state, emboldened by U.S. Supreme Court's updated standards for evaluating gun laws based on the nation's historical

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tradition of firearm regulation.

"Leaving unconstitutional laws on the books creates nothing but confusion," said Sean Caranna, executive director of the advocacy group Florida Carry.

Here's what to know.

Judge finds age restriction on concealed carry unconstitutional

A ruling by a circuit court judge in Broward County, home to Fort Lauderdale, found that Florida's prohibition against people under the age of 21 from carrying a concealed firearm is unconstitutional, at least as it relates to the case in question.

Last week, Judge Frank Ledee tossed out the conviction of 19-year-old Joel Walkes, who was charged with a third-degree felony for carrying a concealed handgun. Florida statutes currently allow people between the age of 18 and 20 to possess a firearm, if they legally receive it as a gift or an inheritance, but they are barred from purchasing guns or carrying them concealed.

Ledee found the state's prohibition is incompatible with the Supreme Court's historical test, and inconsistent with a recent appeals court ruling that found a state law banning the open carrying of firearms is unconstitutional. In his decision, the judge pointed to the Legislature's role in codifying and clarifying the changes.

"Distilling these inconsistencies into a framework of firearm regulations compatible with the guarantee to bear arms pursuant to the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution is best left to the wisdom of legislative debate," Ledee wrote.

Open carry ruling sparks questions

Florida's First District Court of Appeal issued its ruling last month in a case stemming from the July 4, 2022, arrest of a man who stood at a major intersection in downtown Pensacola carrying a visible, holstered pistol and a copy of the U.S. Constitution.

The decision legalizes open carry, though there are preexisting limitations against carrying in a threatening manner or in certain restricted spaces like government meetings, schools and bars. The ruling has prompted some Florida sheriffs to urge caution among gun owners and seek clarity from lawmakers.

Legalizing open carry has long been a major focus of gun rights activists in the state, who oppose the slate of restrictions that Florida's lawmakers implemented in the wake of the Parkland school shooting, which killed 17 people and injured 17 others. Among the law's provisions was raising the legal gun-buying age to 21.

Bob Jarvis, a law professor at Nova Southeastern University, said the recent court decisions put more onus on lawmakers to enact state statutes that line up with recent judicial rulings.

"I would not be surprised if in the next session the Florida Legislature doesn't just take care of this by amending the statute to say, 'clean it up.' And then that'll end all these lawsuits and possible lawsuits," Jarvis said of the age-related prohibition. "And that's really now what should happen."

Advocates push for expanding gun laws

In the years since the 2018 Parkland shooting, lawmakers' efforts to lower the gun-buying age to 18 have advanced in the Florida House but ultimately failed in the state Senate.

Now some advocates say the recent court rulings should force the hand of legislators who have opposed expanding gun rights in the past.

"We've been telling the Legislature since 2010 that this was going to be a problem for them if they didn't act. And they chose not to act," Caranna said.

"I hope that given some of the recent decisions from the United States Supreme Court and the Florida courts, that they will finally see that the Second Amendment is not a second-class right," he added.

Representatives for Florida's House speaker and Senate president did not immediately respond to inquiries Wednesday.

Rozier and Billups will not receive NBA salaries while on leave in gambling cases, AP sources say

By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer

NBA guard Terry Rozier and coach Chauncey Billups will not receive their salaries while on leave for their arrests on federal gambling-related charges, two people with knowledge of the matters told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

Rozier had been due to receive the first installment of a \$26.6 million annual salary with the Miami Heat later this week. That, and future installments, will be held pending resolution of his legal case, said the people, who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because the details were not released publicly.

If Rozier is cleared and allowed to return to the NBA, which placed him on leave hours after his Oct. 23 arrest, he could receive the held payments in full, one of the sources said.

The Heat will not receive any immediate salary cap relief by the NBA's decision, one of the sources said.

There are provisions in the NBA's collective bargaining agreement that allow the league, in certain situations, to place salary withheld from a player in an interest-bearing account.

Billups, the Portland coach who has also been placed on leave by the league after his arrest last week, is having his salary held by the Trail Blazers, one of the sources said. Billups is under contract into at least the 2026-27 season; the team announced that he agreed to a multiyear extension in April.

There was no immediate comment from either the Heat or the Trail Blazers.

The National Basketball Players Association indicated it would file a grievance on Rozier's behalf.

"While we are in agreement with the league that upholding the integrity of the game is of the utmost importance, their decision to place Terry on leave without pay is counter to the presumption of innocence and inconsistent with the terms of our Collective Bargaining Agreement," said an NBPA spokesperson. "We plan to challenge their decision via the proper channels."

Meanwhile, Rozier's attorney said Wednesday that a federal lien filed with regard to the player's tax bill in 2021 was satisfied.

The Internal Revenue Service filed that lien against Rozier in November 2023, showing an "unpaid balance of assessment" of \$8,218,211.70 for the 2021 tax year. But Rozier's attorney, Jim Trusty, said in an email to the AP that the actual amount owed to the IRS at that time was a sliver of that total.

"There was never a debt of \$8 million," Trusty wrote. "Out of his total taxes owed in 2021 (\$8m) he actually owed \$9000. That was paid but the now-defunct lien still needs to be pulled from the local courthouse."

ESPN first reported the lien's existence. The lien is a public record, and there is no publicly available document showing it has been removed.

Officials in Broward County, Florida — where the lien was filed — did not immediately respond to a request for comment. A call seeking information from an IRS revenue officer was unanswered. Revenue officers work for the IRS to collect delinquent taxes.

Rozier owns a home in Broward County and records show his property taxes have been paid in full each year. That property is about 30 miles from where the Heat play their home games.

Rozier was playing for the Charlotte Hornets during that 2021 tax year and is now on the Heat roster. He, Billups and nearly three dozen other individuals were arrested last week on gambling-related charges detailed in two separate indictments.

Billups' attorney, Chris Heywood, has denied the allegations against his client.

Federal officials alleged that Rozier conspired with associates to help them win bets based on his statistical performance in a game when he was with the Hornets on March 23, 2023 — more than seven months before the lien was prepared and nearly eight months before it was formally filed. Rozier played sparingly in that game and gamblers who wagered that he would finish "under" certain statistical totals won those bets.

The charges against Rozier are similar to what former Toronto player Jontay Porter faced before he was banned from the league by Commissioner Adam Silver in 2024.

Rozier did not play in the final eight games of that 2022-23 season, with he and the Hornets citing a

foot injury. The Hornets had several players injured at that time and were already eliminated from playoff contention.

Sportsbooks detected unusual patterns of wagers on the Charlotte game in question — prop bets involving Rozier were flagged and immediately brought to the NBA's attention — and the league probed the matter but did not find enough evidence to conclude that Rozier broke any rules. The NBA, unlike federal law enforcement, does not have subpoena power.

Trusty has said Rozier is "not a gambler" and looks forward to winning the case.

The NBA said earlier this week that it is reviewing how sensitive information like injury reports — which are public and updated hourly — should be handled going forward. Members of the House and Senate have both asked the NBA for more information.

Sen. Ted Cruz, the Republican chairman of the Commerce Committee, and Sen. Maria Cantwell, the top Democrat on that panel, wrote Silver this week seeking detail "about how the NBA investigated and handled these allegations" and why the NBA allowed Rozier to continue playing.

A man who spent 43 years in prison before his conviction was overturned now faces deportation

By MARYCLAIRE DALE Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — After waiting more than four decades to clear his name in a friend's 1980 killing, Subramanyam Vedam was set to walk free from a Pennsylvania prison this month.

A judge in August threw out a murder conviction against Vedam in the death of Thomas Kinser, finding new ballistics evidence that prosecutors hadn't disclosed during his two trials. A lawyer called Vedam the victim of a "profound injustice."

But as his sister prepared to bring him home on Oct. 3, the thin, white-haired Vedam was instead taken into federal custody over a 1999 deportation order. The 64-year-old, who legally came to the U.S. from India when he was 9 months old, now faces another daunting legal fight.

Amid the Trump Administration's focus on mass deportations, Vedam's lawyers must persuade an immigration court that a 1980s drug conviction should be outweighed by the years he wrongly spent in prison. For a time, immigration law allowed people who had reformed their lives to seek such waivers. Vedam never pursued it then because of the murder conviction.

"He was someone who's suffered a profound injustice," said immigration lawyer Ava Benach. "(And) those 43 years aren't a blank slate. He lived a remarkable experience in prison."

Vedam earned several degrees behind bars, tutored hundreds of fellow inmates and went nearly half a century with just a single infraction, involving rice brought in from the outside.

His lawyers hope immigration judges will consider the totality of his case. The administration, in a brief filed Friday, opposes the effort. So Vedam remains at an 1,800-bed U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility in central Pennsylvania.

"Criminal illegal aliens are not welcome in the U.S.," a Department of Homeland Security spokesperson said in an email about the case.

'Mr. Vedam, where were you born?'

Vedam and Kinser were 19-year-old friends with parents on the Penn State faculty when Kinser went missing. Vedam was the last person seen with him. After his initial conviction was thrown out, Vedam faced an unusual set of questions at his 1988 retrial.

"Mr. Vedam, where were you born?" Centre County District Attorney Ray Gricar asked. "How frequently would you go back to India?"

"During your teenage years, did you ever get into meditation?"

Gopal Balachandran, the Penn State Dickinson Law professor who won the reversal, believes the questions were designed to alienate him from the all-white jury, which returned a second guilty verdict.

The Vedams were among the first Indian families in the area known as "Happy Valley," where his father

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had come as a postdoctoral fellow in 1956. An older daughter was born in State College, but "Subu," as he was known, was born when the family was back in India in 1961.

They returned to State College for good before his first birthday, and became the family that welcomed new members of the Indian diaspora to town.

"They were fully engaged. My father loved the university. My mother was a librarian, and she helped start the library," said the sister, Saraswathi Vedam, 68, a midwifery professor in Vancouver, British Columbia.

While she left for college in Massachusetts, Subu became swept up in the counterculture of the late 1970s, growing his hair long and dabbling in drugs while taking classes at Penn State.

One day in December 1980, Vedam asked Kinser for a ride to nearby Lewisburg to buy drugs. Kinser was never seen again, although his van was found outside his State College apartment. Nine months later, hikers found his body in a wooded area miles away.

Vedam was detained on drug charges while police investigated, and was ultimately charged with murder. He was convicted in 1983 and sentenced to life without parole. To resolve the drug case, he pleaded no contest to four counts of selling LSD and a theft charge. The 1988 retrial offered no reprieve from his situation.

Although the defense long questioned the ballistics evidence in the case, the jury, which heard that Vedam had bought a .25-caliber gun from someone, never heard that an FBI report suggested the bullet wound was too small to have been fired from that gun. Balachandran only found that report as he dug into the case in 2023.

After hearings on the issue, a Centre County judge threw out the conviction and the district attorney decided this month not to retry the case.

Trump officials oppose the petition

Benach, the immigration lawyer, often represents clients trying to stay in the U.S. despite an earlier infraction. Still, she finds the Vedam case "truly extraordinary" given the constitutional violations involved.

"Forty-three years of wrongful imprisonment more than makes up for the possession with intent to distribute LSD when he was 20 years old," she said.

Vedam could spend several more months in custody before the Board of Immigration Appeals decides whether to reopen the case. ICE officials, in a brief Friday, said the clock ran out years ago.

"He has provided no evidence nor argument to show he has been diligent in pursuing his rights as it pertains to his immigration status," Katherine B. Frisch, an assistant chief counsel, wrote.

Saraswathi Vedam is saddened by the latest delay, but said her brother remains patient.

"He, more than anybody else, knows that sometimes things don't make sense," she said. "You have to just stay the course and keep hoping that truth and justice and compassion and kindness will win."

Iran isn't actively enriching uranium but movement detected near nuclear sites, UN official tells AP

By FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Iran does not appear to be actively enriching uranium, but renewed movement has been detected recently at the country's nuclear sites, the head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

Rafael Mariano Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said inspectors have been unable to fully access the sites, but have not seen any activity via satellite to indicate that the Islamic Republic has accelerated its production of uranium enriched beyond what it had compiled before the 12-day war with Israel in June.

"However, the nuclear material enriched at 60% is still in Iran," Grossi said in an interview at the U.N. headquarters in New York. "And this is one of the points we are discussing because we need to go back there and to confirm that the material is there and it's not being diverted to any other use." He added, "This is very, very important."

Grossi said, however, that inspectors have seen movement around the sites where the stockpiles are

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stored. Without additional access, the U.N. has had to rely on satellite imagery, which can only show so much, he said.

That stockpile could allow Iran to build as many as 10 nuclear bombs, should it decide to weaponize its program, Grossi warned. He added that it doesn't mean that Iran has such a weapon.

Iran long has insisted its program is peaceful, but the U.N. nuclear agency and Western nations say Tehran had an organized atomic bomb program until 2003.

The Iranian mission to the United Nations did not immediately return a request for comment.

Iran and the IAEA signed an agreement last month in Cairo to pave the way for resuming cooperation, including on ways of relaunching inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities, that has yet to be implemented. The agreement came after Iranian officials suspended all cooperation with the IAEA after the war with Israel in which the U.S. struck several Iranian nuclear sites.

After the U.S. intervened, Republican President Donald Trump expressed certainty that the strikes delivered a knockout blow to Iran's nuclear program, saying the country's facilities were "obliterated."

Soon afterward, a preliminary U.S. intelligence report suggested that U.S. strikes did significant damage to Iran's Fordo, Natanz and Isfahan sites but did not destroy them.

CIA Director John Ratcliffe later told skeptical U.S. lawmakers that American military strikes destroyed Iran's lone metal conversion facility, a setback to the nuclear program that would take years to overcome, and that the intelligence community assessed that the vast majority of Iran's amassed enriched uranium most likely remains buried under the rubble at Isfahan and Fordo.

Israel's surprise attack on Tehran came after the IAEA's board of governors voted to censure Iran over its noncooperation with the agency, the first time in 20 years. Iran accused the IAEA, without providing evidence, of aiding Israel and later the U.S. in their attacks.

Top Iranian officials and Iranian media then called for Grossi to be arrested and put on trial if he returned to the country. As a result, Grossi had to start receiving protection by the Austrian police Cobra unit.

Beyond personal animosity and physical threats, Grossi said the Israel-Iran war set back the IAEA's years of progress with Tehran and happened when the agency was about to be given access to a third enrichment site. He said Wednesday that as of now there is no active operation at the location in Isfahan.

Since the Cairo agreement, a series of U.N. sanctions have been reimposed on Iran over what European parties to the 2015 nuclear deal have deemed the country's lack of compliance with the agency and the breakdown of peace negotiations with the U.S.

The "snapback" of U.N. sanctions has complicated the already tenuous relationship between the IAEA and Iran, but Grossi said inspectors are inside the country as of Wednesday and he remains in "constant contact" with Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

"Does that mean that they are cooperating at the level they should? No," he said. "It would be incorrect to say they are denying us access. And it would be equally wrong to assume that everything is fine."

US determined to prevent the collapse of the Gaza ceasefire after overnight airstrikes

By JULIA FRANKEL Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's intense bombardment of the Gaza Strip this week marked the most serious challenge yet for a fragile, U.S.-brokered ceasefire.

Over 100 Palestinians were killed, including dozens of civilians, according to Gaza health officials. One Israeli soldier was killed in an attack that helped prompt the fierce Israeli strikes.

But by early Wednesday, the ceasefire had been restored almost as quickly as it had unraveled. President Donald Trump defended Israel's actions but also made it clear that the U.S. expects the broader ceasefire, which began Oct. 10, to hold.

The chain of events underscored the fragility of the truce between Israel and Hamas after two years of war, but also showed how intent the U.S. is on keeping it going.

Here are some takeaways from the tense two-day standoff.

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Trump will allow Israel to bomb, but won't let deal collapse

Trump has staked his personal reputation on the success of this deal and poured diplomatic and military resources into making sure it succeeds.

Trump himself flew to the region to usher in the agreement, visiting Israel and then meeting with key Arab and other international leaders in Egypt.

Vice President JD Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio and two senior advisers — White House envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner — have all visited Israel in recent days in a sign of the high priority the U.S. places on the deal. The U.S. is also leading a new international effort meant to coordinate aid shipments into Gaza and to strengthen the agreement.

Speaking to reporters on Wednesday, Trump defended Israel's actions, saying it "should hit back" when its troops come under attack.

Yet he also signaled that he will keep Israel in check, saying he is confident the ceasefire will stick.

Vance also tried to play down the violence, saying Tuesday that "the ceasefire is holding."

"That's doesn't mean there aren't going to be little skirmishes here and there," he said.

Perceived truce violations will yield heavy Israeli response

The Israeli military has a long history of tough responses to enemy attacks, and Tuesday night's airstrikes were no exception.

Israel said it struck dozens of Hamas militants and military sites. Palestinian health officials said that scores of women and children, including a 1-year-old, were killed in the attacks.

Israel's five wars against Hamas, along with recent conflicts with Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group and Hamas, have all been characterized by lopsided death tolls with large numbers of civilian deaths.

During the 12-day war between Israel and Iran earlier this year, for instance, Iran said over 1,000 Iranians were killed. Israel's government said around 30 Israelis lost their lives in Iranian missile attacks.

Israel says it complies with international law and only strikes only military targets, while accusing its enemies of using civilians as human shields. But human rights groups have repeatedly accused Israel of using disproportionate force.

Israel has no trust in Hamas

Since Hamas seized control of Gaza in 2007, Israel has said the Islamic militant group is responsible for all violence emanating from the territory.

That still appears to be the case, even when Hamas denies involvement, as it did in Tuesday's shooting of the Israeli soldier in the southern Gaza city of Rafah.

Increasing the likelihood of further fighting, Netanyahu also faces intense pressure from hard-liners to issue a punishing response to any perceived violation of the truce.

With Israeli critics and media accusing Netanyahu of caving to American pressure, the Israeli leader also has been eager to assert his independence. Vance and other Israeli officials have rejected suggestions that they are controlling Israeli actions.

After it announced the restoration of the ceasefire, the Israeli military said Wednesday it carried out another airstrike in northern Gaza, targeting what it called a site where weapons were being stored for an imminent attack. Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City said it received two bodies from the strike.

The ceasefire is stuck in its initial phases

Trump has presented a 20-point plan for the ceasefire, beginning with the exchange of hostages, both dead and alive, for living and deceased Palestinian prisoners.

The details of the next phase of the deal — disarming Hamas, installing a new government in Gaza and deploying an international security force -- are yet to be hammered out.

For now, the sides remain stuck in phase one. One of the triggers of Tuesday's violence was Hamas' failure to return the remains of a dead hostage, as it had promised.

Instead, it returned some body parts belonging to a hostage whose remains had been recovered by Israel in late 2023. Israeli officials also accused Hamas of staging the discovery of hostage remains on Monday, sharing a 14-minute, edited video from a military drone in Gaza.

With mistrust running deep, and the remains of 13 dead hostages still in Gaza, the potential for additional

bursts of violence appears to remain high.

White House says deal to put TikTok under US ownership could be finalized in South Korea

By BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writer

The Trump administration has been signaling that it may have finally reached a deal with China to keep TikTok running in the U.S., with the two countries finalizing it as soon as Thursday.

President Donald Trump is visiting South Korea, where he will meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping to try to de-escalate a trade war.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told CBS's "Face the Nation" Sunday that the two leaders will "consummate that transaction on Thursday in Korea."

If it happens, the deal would mark the end of months of uncertainty about the fate of the popular video-sharing platform in the United States. After wide bipartisan majorities in Congress passed — and President Joe Biden signed — a law that would ban TikTok in the U.S. if it did not find a new owner in the place of China's ByteDance, the platform was set to go dark on the law's January deadline. For a several hours, it did. But on his first day in office, Trump signed an executive order to keep it running while his administration tries to reach an agreement for the sale of the company.

Three more executive orders followed, as Trump, without a clear legal basis, continued to extend the deadline for a TikTok deal. The second was in April, when White House officials believed they were nearing a deal to spin off TikTok into a new company with U.S. ownership that fell apart after China backed out following Trump's tariff announcement. The third came in June, then another in September, which Trump said would allow TikTok to continue operating in the United States in a way that meets national security concerns.

Trump's order was meant to enable an American-led group of investors to buy the app from China's ByteDance, though the deal also requires China's approval.

However, TikTok deal is "not really a big thing for Xi Jinping," said Bonnie Glaser, managing director of the German Marshall Fund's Indo-Pacific program, during a media briefing Tuesday. "(China is) happy to let (Trump) declare that they have finally kept a deal. Whether or not that deal will protect the data of Americans is a big question going forward."

"A big question mark for the United States, of course, is whether this is consistent with U.S. law since there was a law passed by Congress," Glaser said.

About 43% of U.S. adults under the age of 30 say they regularly get news from TikTok, higher than any other social media app, including YouTube, Facebook and Instagram, according to a Pew Research Center report published in September.

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

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

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

The TikTok recommendation algorithm — which has steered millions of users into an endless stream of video shorts — has been central in the security debate over the platform. China previously stated the algorithm must remain under Chinese control by law. But a U.S. regulation that Congress passed with bipartisan support said any divestment of TikTok must mean the platform cut ties with ByteDance.

American officials have warned the algorithm — a complex system of rules and calculations that platforms use to deliver personalized content to your feed — is vulnerable to manipulation by Chinese authorities, but no evidence has been presented by U.S. officials proving that China has attempted to do so.

Trump scores golden gifts as United States and Seoul advance trade talks

By CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press

GYEONGJU, South Korea (AP) — The United States and South Korea advanced trade talks on Wednesday, addressing details of \$350 billion that would be invested in the American economy, after negotiations and ceremonies that included the presentation of a gold medal and crown to President Donald Trump.

Both were gifts from the country's president, Lee Jae Myung, who dialed up the flattery while Washington and Seoul worked to nail down financial promises during the last stop of Trump's Asia trip.

Although both sides said progress has been made — Trump said things were "pretty much finalized" — no agreement has been signed yet. The framework includes gradual investments, cooperation on shipbuilding and the lowering of Trump's tariffs on South Korea's automobile exports, according to Kim Yong-beom, Lee's chief of staff for policy. The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Kim said the two countries have agreed to keep reciprocal tariffs at 15%, as they have been since August, and further agreed to apply that rate to automobiles and auto parts, South Korea's largest exports to the United States. Autos and parts had been facing a 25% tariff, putting automakers such as Hyundai and Kia at a disadvantage against Japanese and European competitors, which face 15%.

Despite the lack of immediate confirmation from U.S. officials on those points, it was apparent progress had been made on difficult issues after a day of adulation for the visiting American president from his hosts.

There was a special lunch menu featuring U.S.-raised beef and a gold-adorned brownie. A band played Trump's campaign anthem of "Y.M.C.A." when he stepped off Air Force One. Lee told him that "you are indeed making America great again."

Trump can be mercurial and demanding, but he has a soft spot for pomp and circumstance. He was particularly impressed by a choreographed display of colorful flags as he walked along the red carpet.

"That was some spectacle, and some beautiful scene," Trump told Lee during their meeting. "It was so perfect, so flawlessly done."

Earlier in the day, Trump even softened his rhetoric on international trade, which he normally describes in predatory terms where someone is always trying to rip off the United States.

"The best deals are deals that work for everybody," he said during a business forum.

Washington and Seoul have been working on a trade deal

Trump was visiting while South Korea is hosting the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in the historical city of Gyeongju. He previously stopped in Japan, where he bonded with the new prime minister, and Malaysia, where he attended a summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The Republican president has been trying to tie up trade deals along the way, eager to show that his confrontational approach of tariffs is paying dividends for Americans who are uneasy about the job market and watching a federal government shutdown extend into its fifth week.

However, South Korea has been particularly tough to crack, with the sticking point being Trump's demand for \$350 billion of direct investment in the U.S.

Korean officials say putting up cash could destabilize their own economy, and they'd rather offer loans and loan guarantees instead. The country would also need a swap line to manage the flow of its currency into the U.S.

Trump, after meeting with Lee, said "we made our deal pretty much finalized." He did not provide any details.

Oh Hyunjo, a deputy national security director for South Korea, told reporters earlier in the week that the negotiations have been proceeding "a little bit more slowly" than expected.

"We haven't yet been able to reach an agreement on matters such as the structure of investments, their formats and how the profits will be distributed," she said Monday.

It's a contrast from Trump's experience in Japan, where the government has worked to deliver the \$550 billion in investments it promised as part of an earlier trade agreement. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick announced up to \$490 billion in specific commitments during a dinner with business leaders in Tokyo.

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Lee, speaking at the business forum before Trump arrived, warned against trade barriers.

"At a time when protectionism and nationalism are on the rise and nations focus on their immediate survival, words like 'cooperation,' 'coexistence' and 'inclusive growth' may sound hollow," he said. "Yet, paradoxically, it is in times of crisis like this that APEC's role as a platform for solidarity shines brighter."

Trump and Lee swap praise despite disagreements

Lee took office in June and had a warm meeting with Trump at the White House in August, when he praised Oval Office renovations and suggested building a Trump Tower in North Korea.

He took a similar approach when Trump visited on Wednesday. The gold medal presented to Trump represents the Grand Order of Mugunghwa, the country's highest honor, and Trump is the first U.S. president to receive it.

Trump said "it's as beautiful as it can possibly be" and "I'd like to wear it right now."

Next was a replica of a royal crown from the Silla Kingdom, which existed from 57 B.C. to 935 A.D. The original crown was found in a tomb in Gyeongju, the kingdom's capital.

Besides trade disagreements, there have been other points of tension between Washington and Seoul this year. More than 300 South Koreans were detained during a U.S. immigration raid on a Hyundai plant in Georgia in September, sparking a sense of outrage and betrayal.

Lee said at the time companies would most likely hesitate to make future investments unless the visa system was improved.

"If that's not possible, then establishing a local factory in the United States will either come with severe disadvantages or become very difficult for our companies," he said.

Asked Monday about the immigration raid, Trump said, "I was opposed to getting them out," and he said an improved visa system would make it easier for companies to bring in skilled workers.

Trump-Xi meeting is expected Thursday

While in South Korea, Trump is also expected to hold a closely watched meeting on Thursday with Chinese leader Xi Jinping. Washington and Beijing have clashed over trade, but both sides have indicated that they're willing to dial down tensions.

Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One on Wednesday that he expects to lower tariffs targeting China over the flow of fentanyl ingredients.

"They'll be doing what they can do," he said. Trump added that "China is going to be working with me."

Trump sounded resigned to the idea that he wouldn't get to meet North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on this trip. The president previously floated the possibility of extending his stay in South Korea, but on Wednesday said "the schedule was very tight."

North Korea has so far dismissed overtures from Washington and Seoul, saying it won't resume diplomacy with the United States unless Washington drops its demand for the North's denuclearization. North Korea said Wednesday it fired sea-to-surface cruise missiles into its western waters, in the latest display of its growing military capabilities as Trump visits South Korea.

Trump brushed off the weapons test, saying "he's been launching missiles for decades, right?"

The two leaders met during Trump's first term, although their conversations did not produce any agreements about North Korea's nuclear program.

What to know as the annual sign-up window for health insurance arrives

By TOM MURPHY AP Health Writer

Higher prices, less help and a government shutdown all hang over health insurance markets as shoppers start looking for coverage this week.

The annual enrollment window for millions of people to pick an individual plan opens Saturday in nearly all states, and a heavy dose of politics weighs on this year's search.

The federal government shut down earlier this month as Democrats in Congress demanded negotiations to extend enhanced tax credits that have helped people buy coverage the past few years. Republicans

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say they won't negotiate until Democrats vote to reopen the government.

Stuck in the middle are insurance customers, many of whom will be facing the biggest premium hikes they've seen in years and may be forced to consider changing plans.

"It seems overwhelming, but it really is important to shop and consider your choices," said Sara Collins, an insurance expert with the Commonwealth Fund.

Here's how shoppers can respond:

The first deadline is in 6 weeks

Shoppers will have until Jan. 15 in most states to find a plan for 2026, but have to make their choice by Dec. 15 if they want coverage starting New Year's Day.

This is the main chance people with individual coverage have every year to find a plan for the next year. More than 24 million people enrolled in individual plans for 2025, according to KFF, which studies health care issues.

People can buy a new plan with help from income-based tax credits through insurance marketplaces set up in every state. Former President Joe Biden's administration beefed up that help with enhanced tax credits during the COVID-19 pandemic. Those are set to expire this year unless Congress works out an extension.

Shoppers also can find options outside these marketplaces — sometimes for a lower price — but they won't get tax credit help.

You may see price hikes

KFF has said that premiums, or the cost of coverage, will jump around 20% next year on average. But the expiring tax credits could cause coverage costs to more than double for some.

Insurance has become more expensive because care costs are rising, a big worry for Americans. Insurers also set prices assuming the extra tax credits would expire — and that healthy people who paid little for coverage in 2025 might not return because of that.

The higher prices aim to make up for that lost revenue, said Karan Rustagi, a Wakely Consulting Group health actuary who works with insurers.

The higher prices may not change even if Congress restores the enhanced tax credits before the enrollment window ends. It can take insurers weeks to complete rates with regulators and then update their systems and customer handbooks, Rustagi noted.

Help may be harder to find

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in February cut funding by 90% for a federal program that provides navigators who help people find coverage.

That will lead to less free help in more than two dozen states that rely on the federal government to run their health insurance marketplaces. Kaye Pestaina, a vice president with KFF, said help like this is especially important for first-time shoppers who need to predict their income to get tax credit help.

That task can be especially challenging for seasonal workers or others who see their income fluctuate.

"That one-on-one assistance is going to be really important," Pestaina said. "It's not intuitive."

If navigators are not available, health insurance brokers or agents can help. They receive commissions paid by insurers, often a flat fee.

What you can do

Shoppers can get a sense for their options by checking their state marketplace. You can find that by visiting healthcare.gov.

Collins said people should start there, not Google. Search engine results could connect you with someone selling more limited, short-term insurance.

Fill out the application for tax credit help first, said Joshua Brooker, a Lancaster, Pennsylvania-based independent insurance agent.

That will tell you whether any help is available to you now. That assistance will automatically be updated if the enhanced tax credits are renewed.

"Doing that first application is not lost time," he said.

Then pick a plan. Look beyond the premium. Consider any deductibles you may have to pay, what doc-

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tors or hospitals are in the insurer's network and how any prescriptions would be covered.

Don't wait to see whether the extra tax credit debate is resolved. That may not happen during your enrollment window. If it does, you can revisit your choice.

"You do have a mulligan," Brooker said.

Agents say many people procrastinate on insurance shopping. That can make it tougher to find help as sign-up deadlines approach.

"I have people every year either wait until the very last day to enroll or they miss the deadline entirely," said Shayla Teague, an insurance agent based in Anchorage, Alaska. "Make sure you have something in place, ready to go."

Today in History: October 30

Muhammad Ali defeats George Foreman in the "Rumble in the Jungle"

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Thursday, Oct. 30, the 303rd day of 2025. There are 62 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Oct. 30, 1974, Muhammad Ali, 32, knocked out George Foreman, 25, in the eighth round of a scheduled 15-round bout known as the "Rumble in the Jungle," in Kinshasa, Congo (then Zaire), to regain his world heavyweight title.

Also on this date:

In 1912, Vice President James S. Sherman, running for a second term of office with Republican President William Howard Taft, died six days before Election Day. (Taft was defeated by Democrat Woodrow Wilson in the election).

In 1938, the radio play "The War of the Worlds," starring Orson Welles, aired on the CBS Radio Network. The broadcast panicked some listeners in its portrayal of an invasion by Martians.

In 1961, the Soviet Union tested a hydrogen bomb, the "Tsar Bomba," with a force estimated at about 50 megatons (over 3,500 times that of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima). It remains the most powerful nuclear weapon ever detonated.

In 1972, an Illinois Central Gulf commuter train was struck by another train on Chicago's South Side, killing 45 people and injuring about 350.

In 1975, the New York Daily News ran the headline "Ford to City: Drop Dead," a day after President Gerald R. Ford said he would veto any proposed federal bailout of New York City, which was on the verge of bankruptcy. The city ultimately evaded bankruptcy despite weathering a severe fiscal crisis.

In 1995, voters in the province of Quebec narrowly defeated a referendum that called for sovereignty with a new economic and political partnership with Canada.

In 2005, the late Rosa Parks was the first woman to lie in honor in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda; Parks became a civil rights icon by refusing to give up her seat on a segregated bus to a white passenger in 1955.

In 2018, gangster James "Whitey" Bulger was found beaten to death at a federal prison in West Virginia; the 89-year-old former Boston crime boss and longtime FBI informant had been transferred there just hours earlier. (Three inmates entered plea deals and were convicted in Bulger's killing).

In 2023, the United Auto Workers said it reached a tentative deal with General Motors, capping a whirlwind few days in which GM, Ford and Stellantis agreed to terms that would end the union's targeted strikes over six weeks. (UAW members later ratified the contracts).

Today's Birthdays: Author Robert Caro is 90. Football Hall of Fame coach Dick Vermeil is 89. Rock singer Grace Slick is 86. Songwriter Eddie Holland is 86. R&B singer Otis Williams (The Temptations) is 84. Actor Henry Winkler is 80. Broadcast journalist Andrea Mitchell is 79. Country/rock musician Timothy B. Schmit (The Eagles) is 78. Actor Harry Hamlin is 74. Country singer T. Graham Brown is 71. Actor Kevin Pollak is 68. Actor Michael Beach is 62. Musician Gavin Rossdale (Bush) is 60. Actor Nia Long is 55. Actor Matthew Morrison is 47. Business executive and former presidential adviser Ivanka Trump is 44. Olympic gold medal gymnast Nastia Liukin is 36. NBA guard Devin Booker is 29. NHL defenseman Cale Makar is 27.