

Groton Daily Independent

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Wednesday, Nov. 19

Senior Menu: Oven fried chicken, sweet potatoes, green beans, pears, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Omelets.

School Lunch: Soup and sandwich.

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

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Confirmation, 5:30 p.m.; Groton Ad Council, 7 p.m.

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

6th grade GBB practice, 6 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 20

Senior Menu: Baked fish, au gratin potato, 3-bean salad, peach cobbler, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Biscuits.

School Lunch: Turkey gravy and mashed potatoes, dressing.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Praise and Thanksgiving, 1:30 p.m. (Program: Sarah, Hostess: Nigeria)

4th grade GBB practice, 4 p.m.

3rd grade GBB practice, 5 p.m.

State Volleyball at Rapid City

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

Monday, Nov. 17

Senior Menu: Sweet and sour pork, steamed rice, carrot and broccoli medley, corn, honey fruit salad.

School Breakfast: Stuffed bagels.

School Lunch: Chef salad at elementary, build your own salad at high school.

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

Groton Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

1st grade GBB practice, 3:30 p.m.

MS GBB vs. Leola/Frederick at Frederick, one combined game at 5 p.m.

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

Tuesday, Nov. 18

Senior Menu: Meat loaf, baked potato, antigua blend, fruited Jello, whole wheat bread.

School Breakfast: Breakfast sliders.

School Lunch: Pasta with meat sauce.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

5th grade GBB practice, 4:15 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.

Mexico 'Gen Z' Protests

Thousands of people turned out for anti-government protests across Mexico on Saturday. In Mexico City, officials say 120 people were wounded, 100 of them police officers, as a small group of rioters sought to dismantle the barrier protecting the National Palace.

Protesters decried corruption and crime, with many criticizing President Claudia Sheinbaum for failing to contain the country's ongoing drug-fueled violence. The rallies came weeks after the assassination of Carlos Alberto Manzo Rodríguez, the mayor of Uruapan in Mexico's western Michoacán state. Rodríguez was known for being outspoken in his efforts to crack down on drug cartels. He was shot during Day of the Dead festivities Nov. 1; officials identified his suspected killer as a 17-year-old with a methamphetamine addiction tied to organized crime.

Sheinbaum last week accused far-right groups and international actors of using bots to promote the rallies. They are the latest in a wave of Gen Z-fueled demonstrations across the world that have forced regime change in Nepal and Madagascar.

Rhodes Scholars Revealed

The 2026 class of US Rhodes Scholars was announced yesterday, with 32 students selected for the prestigious postgraduate program. The winners will join roughly 70 others from around the world, with full financial support to pursue advanced studies at the University of Oxford.

Placement in the world's oldest international scholarship program is highly competitive, with an acceptance rate of around 1% (almost 2,800 students applied, with 965 advancing to the second round). Twenty-two different schools are represented, with Harvard, MIT, Yale, and West Point each boasting three winners. Participants often enter high-level leadership positions in various fields, with alumni ranging from famed astronomer Edwin Hubble to NFL player-turned-neurosurgeon Myron Rolle.

The program was established in 1902 through the will of Cecil Rhodes, who amassed his fortune during the "Scramble for Africa." He founded the diamond conglomerate De Beers, as well as Northern and Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe and Zambia).

Stolen Statues in Syria

The theft of six Roman-era statues from Syria's national museum was likely the result of an individual, not an organized gang, investigators said last week. Officials have not publicly identified a suspect or motive as of this writing.

The update comes after Syria's ministry of culture posted images of the missing pieces. Each nude statue depicts Venus, the Roman goddess of love, and measures between 6 and 9 inches tall. The museum discovered they were missing early Monday, Nov. 10, when staff found a door had been broken from the inside. The collection is among the museum's oldest and most valuable, though experts maintain the pieces would be difficult to sell on the black market.

The National Museum in Damascus was established in 1919 and also hosts clay cuneiform tablets with the oldest known complete alphabet system. It reopened fully earlier this year after years of partial closure during Syria's civil war.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Americana folk singer-songwriter Todd Snider dies at age 59 after being hospitalized with pneumonia. | Seattle Seahawks safety and Pro Football Hall of Famer Kenny Easley dies at age 66.

Italy's Jannik Sinner tops Spain's Carlos Alcaraz to win ATP Finals title in Turin for second straight year, earning \$5M prize.

"Now You See Me 3" leads the box office, grossing \$75.5M globally in its weekend debut, outpacing "The Running Man".

Science & Technology

NASA to launch Sentinel-6B, the next satellite in a multidecade effort to measure sea level rise across roughly 90% of Earth's oceans; launch window began around 12 am ET.

Mouse study suggests hypertension can cause premature aging in certain brain cells much earlier than expected; may explain link between high blood pressure and increased risk of cognitive impairment.

Researchers use world's fastest supercomputer, "El Capitan" at Livermore National Lab, to create database of 41 million protein folding structures in record-breaking time.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close mixed Friday (S&P 500 -0.1%, Dow -0.7%, Nasdaq +0.1%), with the tech-heavy Nasdaq ending a three-day losing streak.

Former Federal Reserve official Adriana Kugler stepped down in August following an ethics probe into trading violations, new report reveals; senior Fed officials are prohibited from trading individual stocks.

Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway reports building a \$4.9B stake in Google parent company Alphabet.

Politics & World Affairs

US designates Venezuela's Cartel de los Soles as a foreign terrorist organization while its most advanced aircraft carrier arrives in the Caribbean Sea; US military strikes another alleged drug trafficking boat.

Chilean presidential election heads to a Dec. 14 runoff as the two candidates—communist Jeannette Jara and conservative José Antonio Kast—fail to secure more than 50% of the vote.

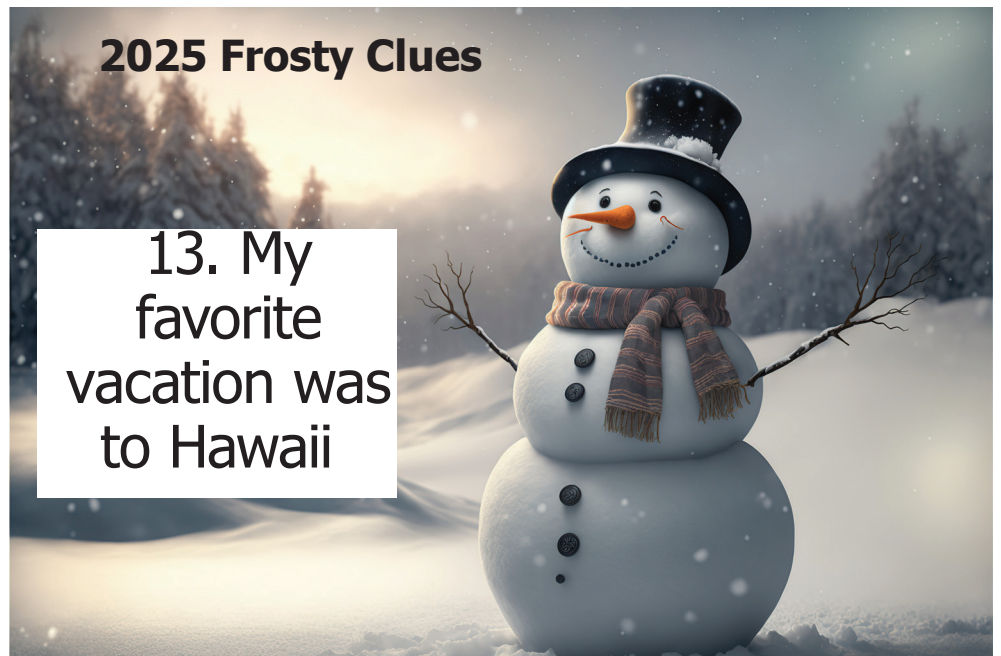
Democratic Republic of the Congo and M23 rebels sign new peace deal framework in Qatar after earlier deal collapses this year.

Frosty is Back!!!

Please check the Groton Daily Independent for daily clues as to who the Groton Area Mystery Frosty is. The unveiling of Frosty will take place at the Groton Area Snow Queen Contest on Sunday, November 30th, at 4:00 pm.

2025 Frosty Clues

13. My favorite vacation was to Hawaii



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The Minnesota Vikings lost to the Chicago Bears 19-17 on Sunday, falling to 4-6 this season and pushing the team farther into the basement of the NFC North. The Vikings were sloppy in all three phases – turnovers and dropped passes on offense, missed tackles and coverage lapses on defense, and miscues on special teams that cost them the game.

The game started slower than a herd of turtles. The two teams combined for four punts on the first four possessions, and the scoreboard was 0-0 until the Vikings kicked a field goal with two minutes left in the first quarter. Despite the slow start, the Vikings seemed to be building some momentum – they had 78 total yards compared to only 20 by the Bears.

Like the first quarter, the second quarter started with both teams trading punts. But this is when things started coming off the rails for Minnesota. Chicago put together a 15-play, 74-yard touchdown drive to take a 7-3 lead. Three plays later, J.J. McCarthy threw an interception, giving the Bears great field position that turned into three points. Five plays later, McCarthy threw another interception with less than a minute left in the first half.

The third quarter belonged to Chicago, which put together two field goal drives, extending its lead to 16-3. Chicago had 109 yards in the quarter, compared to just 21 for Minnesota. Despite being thoroughly outplayed through the first 45 minutes of the game, the Vikings were still in this game. All they needed was another magical fourth quarter. Unfortunately, the only Minnesota magic that happened was making the fans' hopes and dreams disappear.

All kidding aside, the Vikings finally showed some signs of life in the fourth quarter. A great punt return by Myles Price put the Vikings in good field position, which was converted into a 16-yard touchdown run by Jordan Mason. Chicago missed a field goal on their next drive, and after both teams traded punts again, the Vikings got the ball with a little over three minutes left to play and needed a touchdown to take the lead. 10 plays and 85 yards later, McCarthy found Jordan Addison in the endzone, giving Minnesota a one-point lead with only 50 seconds left on the clock. A special teams miscue allowed the Bears to return the ensuing kickoff 56 yards, and four plays later they kicked a field goal as time expired to steal the win.

J.J. McCarthy completed 16 of 32 passes for 150 yards, one touchdown, and two interceptions. Aaron Jones Sr. and Jordan Mason combined for 115 yards and a touchdown on 22 carries. Justin Jefferson led the team with five catches for 61 yards, while Addison added two catches for 20 yards and a TD.

Blake Cashman led the team with 15 tackles. Andrew Van Ginkel and Dallas Turner each had a sack and two tackles for a loss. Turner, who got the start because of Jonathan Greenard sitting this game out due to injury, also knocked down a pass and had three of the team's QB hits.

Looking ahead, the Vikings travel to Green Bay to battle the Packers on Sunday (noon kickoff). Usually, teams would be wary of playing on the road, but the Vikings are 3-2 on the road compared to their 1-4 home record. We'll see if they can complete the trifecta by winning all three divisional road games.

Virtual Reality: A New Frontier in Mental Health Care

The USD School of Health Sciences Complementary and Alternative Medicine research team, in partnership with the South Dakota Human Services Center (HSC), has introduced virtual reality (VR) as a groundbreaking tool in inpatient mental health care.

A pilot study, funded by the South Dakota Community Foundation, was implemented by the research team that reviewed the utilization of virtual reality as an additional tool for inpatient mental health care.

Liminal VR software, designed to increase relaxation and reduce stress and anxiety, was selected and viewed through VR headsets for an immersive experience. The participants attended VR sessions three days per week over the course of four weeks. Baseline measurements related to stress, anxiety and mood were taken prior to starting the course and after finishing each day of VR sessions. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the end of the four-week course. Data was also collected from staff who were involved with the participants.

One of the most compelling aspects of the study was its impact on engagement. Individuals who had previously disengaged from programming found joy and purpose in VR sessions. Notably, a typically reserved patient experienced emotional insight through immersive therapy, highlighting VR's ability to foster self-awareness. Offering tailored experiences such as calm, awe and relief, the technology empowered patients to select sessions best suited to their needs.

With overwhelmingly positive feedback from both patients and staff, this initiative has demonstrated VR's potential to enhance therapeutic outcomes—leading to improved mood and relaxation, and reduction in stress and anxiety.

The success of VR within HSC has inspired life skills staff to explore additional digital interventions, including YouTube-guided visual meditation. Recognizing VR's potential beyond inpatient care, the research team is considering student-focused mental health applications and seeking funding to expand services into health care and educational settings.

Community Impact and Future Considerations

The study bridged service gaps and sparked discussion on alternative mental health approaches. Observing patients eagerly anticipating their sessions reinforced the power of brief interventions in shaping mood. The study encouraged staff to value every patient interaction, however brief, as a meaningful step toward healing.

South Dakota's rural landscape can limit access to traditional mental health services. VR can bridge this gap by providing accessible, personalized mental health support in various settings, reaching more South Dakota residents. Mental health challenges are a growing concern in South Dakota. According to NAMI, 112,000 adults in the state live with mental health conditions and 448,334 South Dakotans reside in communities lacking sufficient mental health professionals. With VR's ability to deepen engagement and enhance therapy, could this technology alleviate provider workloads and shorten hospital stays? Additionally, the use of VR may prove beneficial in addressing substance use disorders, offering new insights into patient behaviors and motivations. Further research into community collaboration and stakeholder feedback could provide valuable data on treatment satisfaction, service quality and long-term patient outcomes.

As mental health care evolves, integrating VR offers a path toward innovation, healing and accessibility—helping individuals not just manage their conditions, but actively reclaim joy in their daily lives.

Author Bios:

Carissa Regnerus, RDH, MA, FADHA, is a faculty member at the University of South Dakota (USD) Department of Dental Hygiene, where she has been shaping future professionals since 2001. As a member of the USD School of Health Sciences Complementary and Alternative Medicine research team, she actively explores innovative approaches to patient care, including the use of virtual reality (VR) in mental health treatment, and is beginning to investigate



Betty Hulse,
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Carissa Regnerus,
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Regan Luken,
RN,
MSNa

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VR's potential to reduce dental anxiety. Carissa teaches public health courses for dental hygiene students and is passionate about fostering community impact through progressive and inclusive healthcare strategies.

Regan Luken, RN, MSN, is a faculty member at the USD Department of Nursing and teaches in the MSN in Nursing Informatics and e-Health program. Leveraging technology in health care improves outcomes by creating a more connected and healthier community.

Betty Hulse, PA-C, MSPAS, associate professor in the USD Physician Assistant Studies Program, has served as clinical education coordinator since 2008. Betty has experience working with psychiatric patients in the hospital setting as well as patients who have substance use disorders in residential treatment. She is a strong advocate for programs that increase access to treatment for mental health and substance use disorders. She is a proponent of the "Let's Be Clear" initiative to saturate South Dakota with naloxone (Narcan) and empower anyone to reverse an opioid overdose and save lives.

Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Tik Tok. Prairie Doc Programming includes On Call with the Prairie Doc®, a medical Q&A show (most Thursdays at 7pm on SDPB, YouTube and streaming on Facebook), 2 podcasts, and a Radio program (on SDPB, Sundays at 6am and 1pm).

Groton Prairie Mixed Bowling League Week #2 Results

Team Standings: Jackelopes 6, Cheetahs 6, Shihtzus 5, Foxes 3, Chipmunks 2, Coyotes 2

Men's High Games: Doug Jorgensen 205, Vern Meyers 171, Brad Larson 167

Women's High Games: Sam Bahr 175 & 161, Darci Spanier 170 & 162, Brenda Waage 149

Men's High Series: Brad Larson 475, Clay Wattier 461, Vern Meyers 452

Women's High Series: Sam Bahr 483, Darci Spanier 479, Brenda Waage 389



Foolish To Rebuild After A Wildfire Or Flood? It Depends...

by Grace Lee

Dear EarthTalk: Isn't it foolish to rebuild millions of homes in areas ravaged by floods or wildfires given the likelihood that this extreme weather will keep occurring? – Mike Aspen, Baltimore, MD

In recent years, the continued global prevalence of climate change has increased the number of weather-related catastrophes. In fact, eight of California's 10 largest wildfires have occurred in the past five years, resulting not only in the loss of lives but also significant property damage. Due to this repeated phenomenon, many climate experts suggest that towns at a high risk of weather-related catastrophes should be abandoned, not rebuilt. Financial, logistical and safety factors indicate that rebuilding in low-hazard areas can be significantly more beneficial than rebuilding in high-hazard areas.

Building new homes in areas at high risk of flood or wildfire contributes up to \$3 billion to disaster-related costs annually. At the current rate, experts predict that some 220,000 homes could be built in locations exposed to high wildfire hazards by 2030, making for unprecedented financial loss from property damage. In the case of Greenville, California, for instance, rebuilding is predicted to cost around \$1 billion, yet most residents do not plan to return, largely because experts think the area could be destroyed again in the next 30 years. "Governments can save billions of dollars each year and keep people safe from disasters by building just a small percentage of new homes away from the highest-risk areas for wildfires and floods," says Ryan Ness, Director of Adaptation at the Canadian Climate Institute.

To make matters worse, the use of fire-resistant material to rebuild is costly and thus not required by law, leading to increased risk. Though urban planners stress the need for fire-resistant design, officials often push for rapid reconstruction, thus waiving environmental permits and zoning regulations.

Beyond the lack of fire-resistant material, the location of rebuilt homes increases the dangers that residents face as the frequency of weather-related disasters such as droughts, floods and wildfires has increased fivefold since 1970 and have led to the deaths of 2 million people globally. Furthermore, wildfires do not just destroy homes—they degrade air quality, water supply and forests, causing permanent detrimental effects.

The Canadian Climate Institute recommends building housing and infrastructure in low-hazard areas, moving away from high-risk zones. Another recommendation is to create, maintain, and make publicly available maps that show where hazardous areas are to warn potential residents. Moreover, the Institute also suggested reforming disaster assistance programs as a way to deter risky urban development.



In cases where fires or floods are likely to pass through again, it might be better to move on to a less risky spot. Credit: Pexels.com.

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We've been working during the nice days to get the Christmas decorations in place. Due to the wind, the inflatables will be down today. The wind looks to go down tomorrow so they should be back up then. Ryan Likness called it the "Paul "Clark Grizwald" Kosel" Christmas.



The blow molds for the nativity scene are given a shower by Jeslyn Kosel.



While working on trying to cut a string, the scissors decides to break.

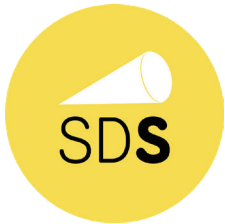


With the tiny blow up, it looks like Julianna, Issac and Evelyn in the Gingerbread family.



Our Mr. Christmas music box decided to die. Jeslyn is dumping out the dirt that has accumulated over the years. There was no fixing it so a new one has been ordered. When we get the new one, the blow molds in the boulevard will be dancing to Christmas music once again.





SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Q&A: 'Creative freedom' from South Dakota education helped scientist earn \$250,000 prize

Former USD kicker led research into 'upcycling' for plastics, better filters for PFAS

BY:JOHN HULT

The son of a Yankton truck driver took the stage last month at the American Museum of Natural History in New York to accept a \$250,000 award for his pioneering work in polymer chemistry.

Frank Leibfarth said his formative South Dakota years helped set him on the path to that stage.

The Blavatnik National Award is the world's largest unrestricted monetary prize — meaning winners can spend the money on whatever they'd like — for the scientific community. The 41-year-old Leibfarth was chosen as a Blavatnik Chemical Sciences Laureate, one of three people 42 and younger awarded the title by an independent jury of scientists. The field of contenders began with 310 people, representing 161 academic institutions, 18 of whom were chosen as finalists. Leibfarth is the Royce Murray distinguished term professor of chemistry at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He and his team have created technology that can turn the planet's most commonly discarded plastics into high-value industrial materials. They've also created a more effective filter for trapping and removing Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances — PFAS, or "forever chemicals" — from municipal water supplies, and put it to use for one of North Carolina's most polluted water sources.

In a recent interview with South Dakota Searchlight, the University of South Dakota graduate and former kicker for the Coyote football team talked about how his upbringing prepared him to step outside the cultural mores of Ivy League research and chase his curiosity as a top-tier scientist.

The following conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

How did you wind up in chemistry?

Neither of my parents have a four-year degree, so their goal was always for me just to go to college. I would say in high school I never found my passion. After my sophomore year in college, I took organic chemistry and really loved it. It answered a lot of the questions I had about biology, those molecular-level questions about why some things happen.

I ended up doing a research project at a National Science Foundation-funded program in New York City, at Columbia University. I feel like I was very presumptuous at the time. I said to my professor, "Hey, I really like this organic chemistry. I would love to do research in it, and I would also love to travel. But my family doesn't have money to let me travel, so I need it to be paid for. Also, I'd like to go out of state."

Luckily, the NSF had programs that allow you to do exactly that. I applied to 10 of them, got rejected by nine of them, but got into the best one.

So the Columbia experience opened the door for a kid from Yankton whose parents didn't go to college to become a Ph.D. working on our PFAS problem?

Yeah, I would say that, but I'm also a product of USD. It's a very good state institution. It allowed me to do lots of different things. I was on the varsity football team, but I also could participate in high-level science. There were people who identified my trajectory early on and gave me quite a bit of individual mentoring.

I contrast that with this world of people who have Ivy League educations, who I interact with now on a day-to-day basis. When you're in that kind of situation early on, you develop a sense for what's allowed and what's not within the academic structure. In some ways, because I was not a part of that, I didn't

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know what unwritten rules I was breaking along the way. It allowed me to have a little more creative freedom. I feel like I was able to follow my gut a little more than some of the people who'd grown up in that atmosphere.

What drew you to PFAS and microplastics, to making new things out of our waste?

I really liked the idea of making things, partially because of my dad. He was a truck driver, but he always had a second job where he would refinish basements and things, because he was also a carpenter. I always worked with him and I enjoyed making things with my hands.

Plastics were great, because I would make things and get to hold them after I was done. I could pull them and push them and see what properties they had. That's what drew me early on. And once I started working in that area, it was very clear to me, and honestly to the whole field, that the sustainability crisis and plastics needed urgent solutions.

Tell us about your work in what you call 'upcycling' plastic.

The key challenge is we're worst at recycling the plastics we make the most of, two related plastics called polyethylene and polypropylene. Polyethylene is like what your milk jug is made out of. Polypropylene is more like the outside of your car, your harder plastic. In two days, we can fill up a football stadium with the amount of these plastics we make in the world. The number and scale of the factories that are already installed to make this stuff is going to be effectively impossible to supplant. So I thought, could we create better recycling technology for that class of plastics? Our idea was to take all the plastic waste that is generated, and to be able to do this chemical process to it, which makes the products of that process more valuable than the original material was. That's why we call it upcycling.

What gives it its higher value? What's it used for?

We can take polyethylene, or a milk jug, and turn it into a really durable material that typically is used for high-end plumbing piping, or the outside of really high voltage wires. If you have a new home, it's the piping that goes from your hot water heater around your house, because copper got too expensive.

We were also able to turn mixed plastic waste into a really tough material that's typically used as the second layer in a golf ball. That material is pretty unique. So again, if you can make it from waste, there's a lot of value there.

The key is to be a revenue stream for recycling centers, because currently, recycling plastic is an economically losing proposition.

What can you tell us about your work with PFAS?

That was born out of problems in North Carolina. It was found in 2017 that the Cape Fear River had really high levels of PFAs, and the Cape Fear River feeds the third largest town in our state, Wilmington, North Carolina. A senator from the state Legislature came to our faculty meeting — which is a very odd thing that never happens — and essentially said, "Hey, we recognize this problem."

I had an idea about how we could remove it from water better than current technologies. I worked on it for two years in our lab, did a small research project, published a paper, and we kind of thought that was going to be the end of it. But when the results came out, we got a call from the state senator. That initiated discussions with a whole group of legislators, and in the 2021-2022 budget cycle, they allocated \$10 million to start what we call the NC Pure Center. Our legislative remit was to develop new materials that remove PFAS from water, scale them up and test them in at least three municipal water treatment plants.

How does the technology work?

What we developed is like what's used in a Brita filter that goes in your fridge. It's a material that you pack in a column and flow water through it. The water going into that column has PFAS in it. Our material adsorbs or soaks up the PFAS, and the water coming out should be clean. You can have the same amount of material, and it'll work 35% longer, compared to current technology.

The EPA set regulations for PFAS about a year and a half ago. It's estimated that there's over 6,000 treatment plants in the country that are going to have to implement treatment. So our technologies are one option.

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What do you plan to do with the proceeds of your award?

The piece of the puzzle we haven't yet put into place is to get what we make in our lab into the hands of real people to make them healthier and able to live more sustainably. I want to use the unrestricted funding to help push that forward, and in the process learn how to do it so I can repeat the process throughout my career and make the largest positive impact possible.

What do you want to see change as a result of what you're doing in this area, 50 years from now?

If my sole job was running a company, my goal would be to run that company well, to make money for the company. And hopefully a byproduct of that would be the sustainability aspect. But since my primary job is in education, my main output is education. If I can educate 50 people, 80 people who can do a similar type of work, that impact can be magnified many times.

Can you talk a little bit about the importance of federal funding for science from that point of view?

The federal government has in the past been really generous with science funding, but also it's a drop in the bucket. A large pharma company spends more per year in research and development than the entire U.S. budget for science. But a lot of the initial ideas for the innovations that come out of the U.S. that support our economy, make better medicines, make our world more sustainable, those start in academia because of the funding provided by these federal organizations. We're the ones who can think 10 years out, 20 years out. A pharma company or a chemical company has to think about their next quarter's profit, their next year, their next two years.

That's always been the balance that has really kept the U.S. at the forefront of innovation. If we compromise that funding on either end, we're going to really compromise this delicate balance. Cutting science funding now is going to hurt our economy tremendously in five or 10 years. There's no way to get around that.

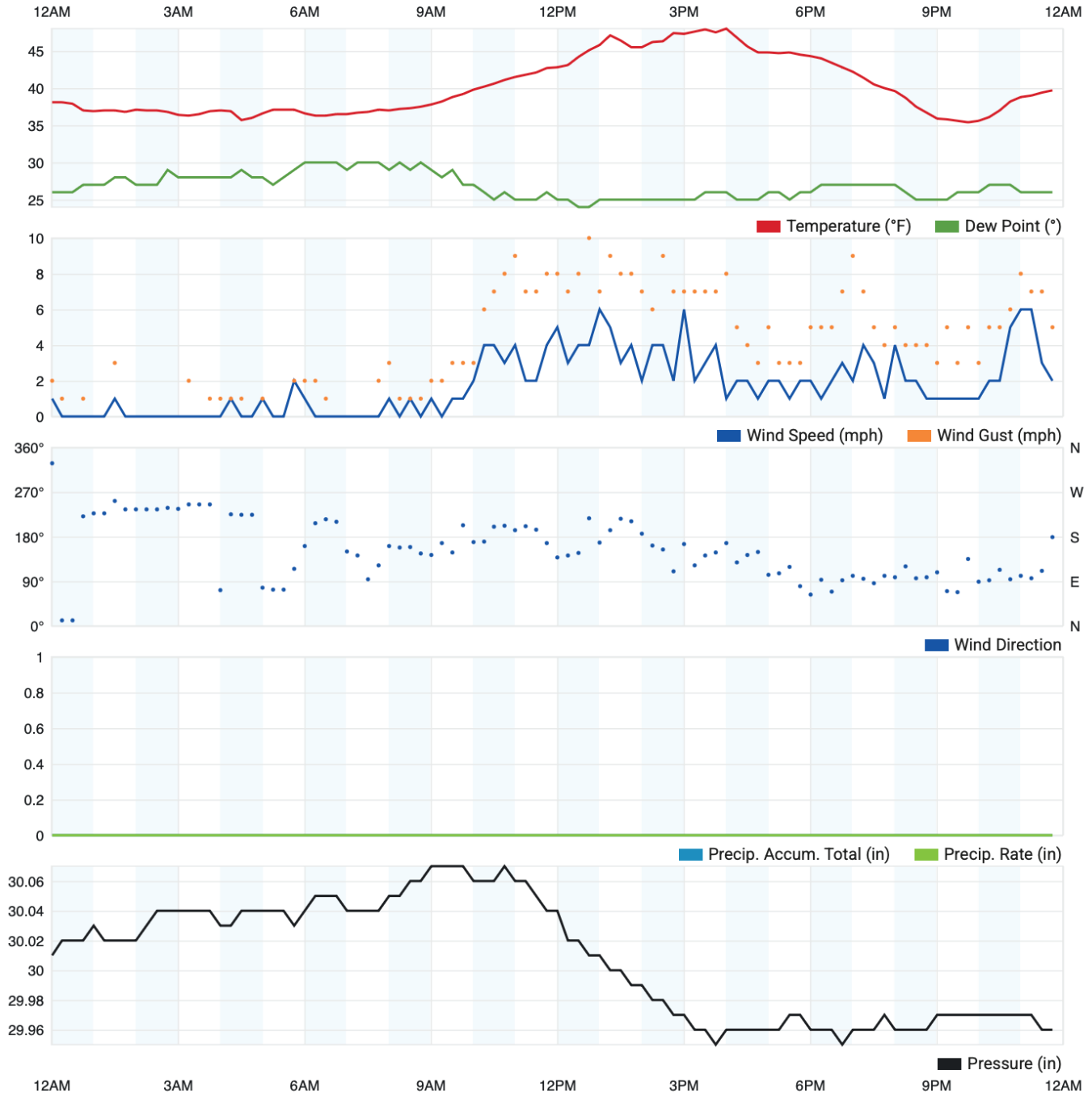
John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

November 16, 2025



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Today

Tonight

Tuesday

Tuesday Night

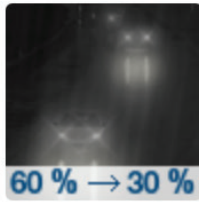
Wednesday



30%

High: 47 °F

Chance Rain



60% → 30%

Low: 32 °F

Rain Likely then Chance Rain



High: 44 °F

Partly Sunny



Low: 32 °F

Mostly Cloudy



High: 50 °F

Mostly Cloudy

Today's Rain/Snow System November 17, 2025 4:02 AM

Precipitation will mainly be rain, but could transition to snow early Tuesday morning.

Key Messages

- Precipitation, mainly in the form of rain, is expected to move into the area this afternoon through Tuesday morning
- **Highest totals are expected over eastern South Dakota**
- Heavier rain from Pierre to Watertown could result in sleet occurring for a bit tonight

Uncertainty

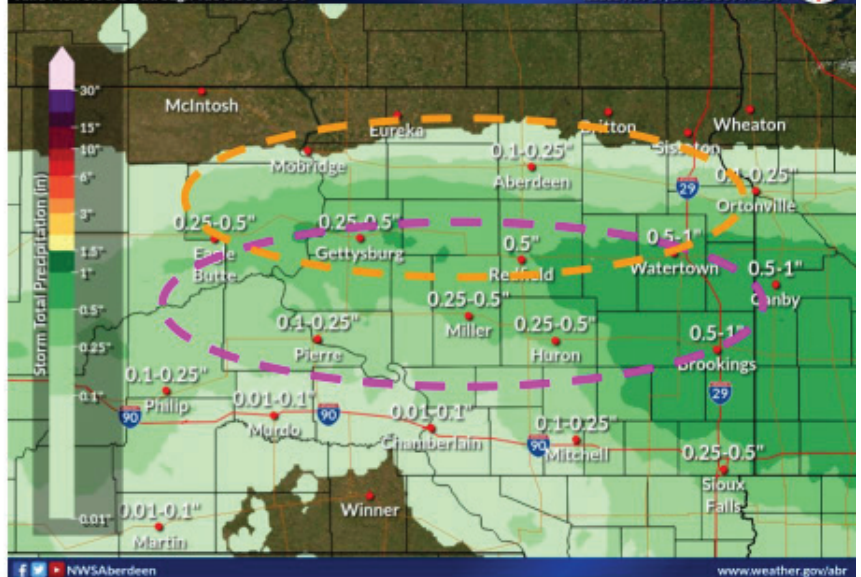
- The area where the highest total precipitation might fall
 - If system is more to the south, then **areas in pink** will see higher totals
 - If the system is more to the north, then **areas in orange** will see more

Storm Total Precipitation

Valid Mon 6:00AM through Tue 6:00AM CST

Weather Forecast Office
Aberdeen/Rapid City/Sioux Falls, SD

Issued Nov 17, 2025 3:56 AM CST



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Precipitation, mainly in the form of rain, will move into central SD this afternoon and move east through the night before turning into snow Tuesday morning. The highest liquid totals are expected over eastern SD, however, this could shift if the system is more north or south. Some sleet will also be possible Monday night from Pierre to Watertown.

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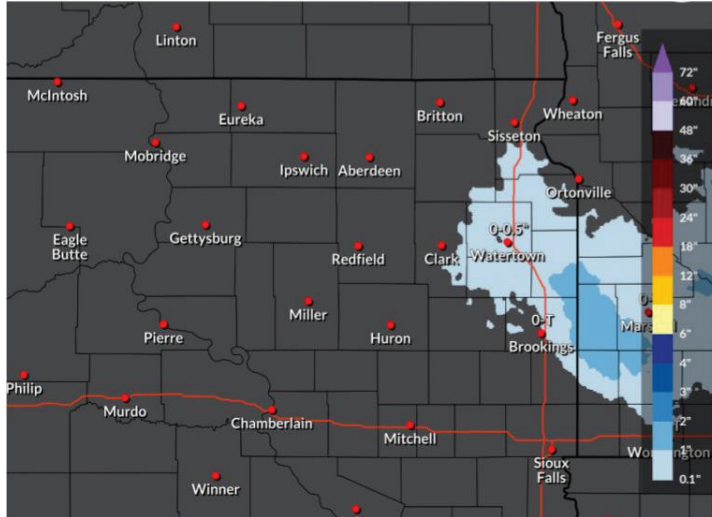
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Tonight's Snow Potential

November 17, 2025
4:13 AM

Current Forecast



- Rain transitions to snow early Tuesday morning
- Snow accumulates mainly on grassy/elevated surfaces
- Could result in some slushy roads

Confidence

- Confidence is low on location of heaviest snow and snowfall totals
- Accumulations may be higher if the band sets up in a more favorable location
- **This is a tricky forecast so keep an eye out for updates**

Worst Case Scenario

- Temperatures drop below freezing earlier than forecast leading to rain transitioning to snow earlier than forecast
- Location of heaviest snow shifts either north or south



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

The current forecast is for up to an inch of snow. However, since this is a banded snow event, confidence is low on the location of heaviest snowfall totals. Amounts may increase if temperatures drop below freezing earlier than forecast. Keep an eye out for updates today.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 48 °F at 3:56 PM

Low Temp: 35 °F at 9:40 PM

Wind: 10 mph at 12:44 PM

Precip: : 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 72 in 1953

Record Low: -8 in 1959

Average High: 42

Average Low: 19

Average Precip in Nov.: 0.47

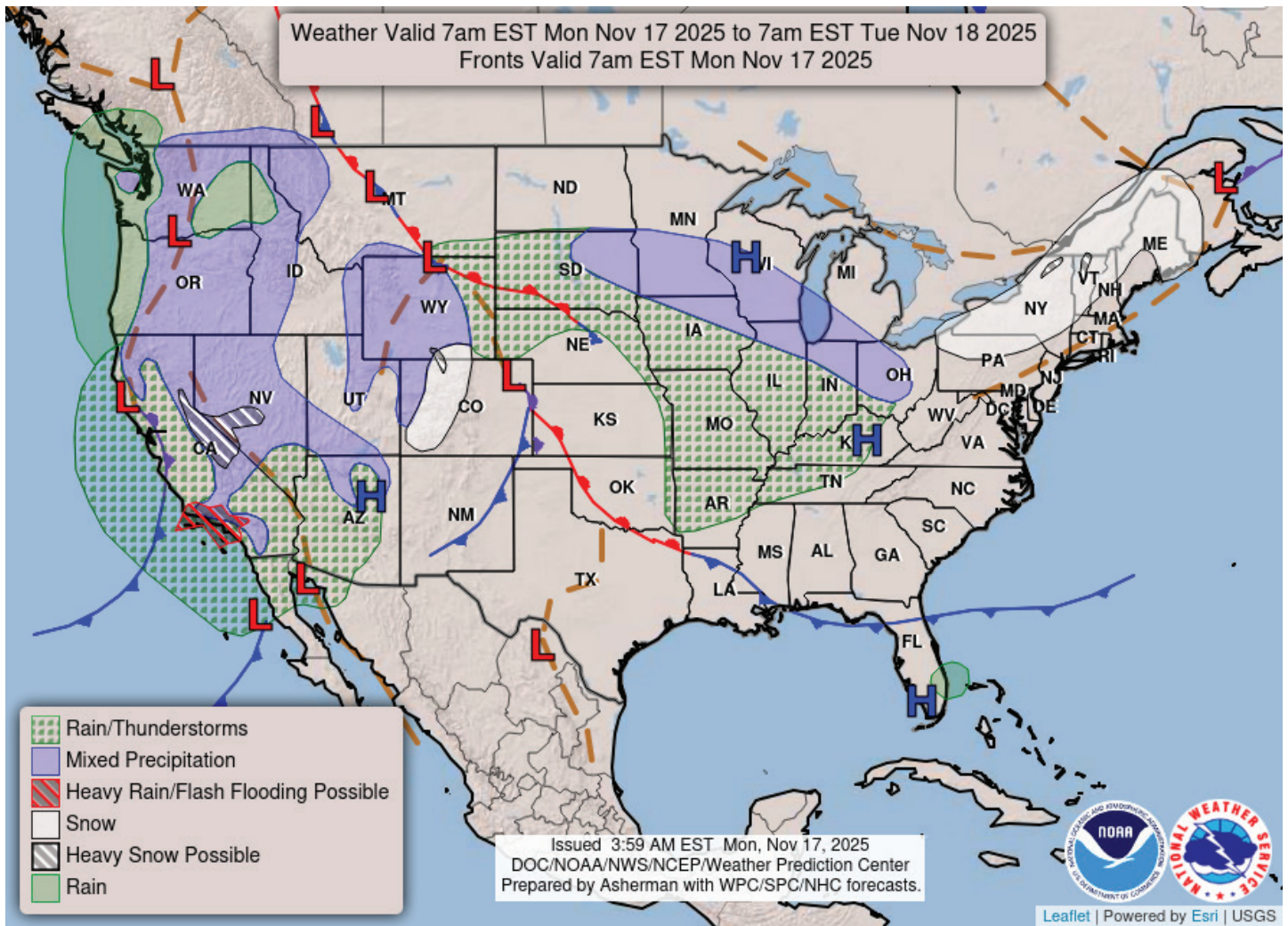
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 20.94

Precip Year to Date: 23.51

Sunset Tonight: 5:00 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:35 am



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Today in Weather History

November 17, 1971: Snow fell off and on from the 16th through the 18th from west central Minnesota to north central Minnesota. A series of weak low-pressure waves moving northeast generally along a Sioux City to Rochester line caused heavy snow of more than 4 inches in a narrow band from Morris to Alexandria; then the snow band widened to 100 miles from Park Rapids northeast into Canada. Milbank, South Dakota received 3 inches of snow, while Wheaton, Minnesota went from no snow on the 15th to reporting eight inches on the morning of the 17th.

November 17, 1986: Three to six inches of snow fell across eastern South Dakota on the 17th and 18th with the heaviest amount reported in Sisseton. Numerous accidents occurred in the southeast part of the state. The slick roads were a factor in the vehicle death of a woman on Interstate 29, near Beresford in Lincoln County. Browns Valley reported four inches of snow, and Milbank received 7 inches.

1869 - Southwest winds of hurricane force swept the Berkshire and Green Mountains of New England causing extensive forest and structural damage. (David Ludlum)

1927 - A tornado cut a seventeen mile path across Alexandria and southeastern Washington, DC, injuring 31 persons. The tornado struck the Naval Air Station where a wind gust of 93 mph was recorded. A waterspout was seen over the Potomac River ninety minutes later. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1953 - The temperature at Minneapolis, MN, reached 71 degrees, their warmest reading of record for so late in the autumn. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A storm in the Rockies produced 21 inches of snow at the Monarch ski resort in Colorado, with 14 inches reported at Steamboat Springs CO. Early morning thunderstorms in the southeastern U.S. drenched Mary Esther FL with 4.43 inches of rain. Gale force winds over the Great Lakes Region gusted to 49 mph at Johnstown PA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Another in a series of storms brought heavy snow to the mountains of the western U.S. Totals ranged up to 17 inches at Bob Scott Summit in Nevada. Winds around Reno NV gusted to 80 mph. The Alta and Sundance ski resorts in Utah received 14 inches of snow. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Freezing temperatures overspread the southeastern U.S. in the wake of the severe weather outbreak of the previous two days. Eight cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Gilbert AR with a reading of 8 degrees. A fast moving storm blanketed the Great Lakes Region and Upper Ohio Valley with snow during the night. Totals ranged up to 12 inches at Pellston MI and Little Valley NY. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2013: An unusually powerful storm system spun up five dozen tornadoes from the Great Lakes to the Tennessee Valley. Two EF4 twisters struck Illinois, hitting the communities of Washington and New Minden.

Living Above Our Circumstances **Problems can distort our perspective, but carrying** **challenges straight to God provides clarity.**

Philippians 1:12-18: Paul's Chains Advance the Gospel

12 Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters,[a] that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard[b] and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. 14 And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.

15 It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. 16 The latter do so out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. 18 But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice,

While under house arrest, Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians. Though he probably lived somewhere more comfortable than a prison, Paul was more than likely chained to a Roman soldier 24 hours a day. And that had been the case for two years. What's more, the future was uncertain.

Under such circumstances, Paul might have thought to ask the Lord to release him. After all, God had called him to preach, to disciple believers, and to reach the Gentiles. But he was stuck in Rome, unable to plant new churches or visit those whom he was nurturing by letter. If anyone had a right to gripe, surely it was Paul. Yet His letter to the church at Philippi is filled with rejoicing (Philippians 4:8).

Problems can look so big and unwieldy that they distort our perspective, but carrying challenges straight to God provides clarity and keeps us anchored in truth. The Lord is bigger than any hardship. With His strength, we rise higher than the difficulty. God invites us to live above our circumstances by fastening our eyes on Him. The trials of this life shrink when compared to our loving, powerful Lord, who exercises His might in defense of His people.

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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Upcoming Groton Events

- 11/15/2025 Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm
- 11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving 11:30am-1:30pm Community Center (Thanksgiving)
- 11/30/2025 Snow Queen Contest, 4 p.m.
- 12/06/2025 Olive Grove Holiday Party and Silent Live Auction Fundraiser

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.14.25

1 8 11 12 57 7

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$50,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 30 Mins 45 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.15.25

14 21 40 43 48 8

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$7,130,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 45 Mins 45 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.16.25

3 11 26 32 45 2

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 45 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.15.25

6 8 16 23 26

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$88,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 45 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.15.25

8 25 46 51 58 19

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 29 Mins 46 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 11.15.25

6 7 12 47 53 21

Power Play: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:

\$570,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 29 Mins 46 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the **AP** Associated Press

Palestinian deaths in Israeli custody have surged. A prison guard describes rampant abuse

By SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — The number of Palestinians dying in Israeli custody surged to nearly 100 people since the start of the war in Gaza, according to a report published Monday by a human rights group that says systematic violence and denial of medical care at prisons and detention centers contributed to many of the deaths it examined.

The picture that emerges from the report by Physicians for Human Rights -Israel is consistent with findings by The Associated Press, which interviewed more than a dozen people about prison abuses, medical neglect and deaths, analyzed available data, and reviewed reports of autopsies. AP spoke with a former guard and a former nurse at one prison, an Israeli doctor who treated malnourished prisoners brought to his hospital, former detainees and their relatives, and lawyers representing them and rights groups.

The former guard at a military prison notorious for its harsh treatment of Palestinians told the AP detainees were routinely shackled with chains and kicked and hit with batons, and that the facility had been dubbed a "graveyard" because so many prisoners were dying there. He agreed to talk to AP to raise awareness of violence in Israeli prisons and spoke on condition of anonymity due to fear of reprisal.

Of the 98 prisoner deaths PHRI documented since the Oct. 7, 2023, attack that ignited the war, 27 occurred in 2023, 50 in 2024 and 21 this year, the most recent on Nov. 2. PHRI says the actual death toll over this timeframe is "likely significantly higher," noting that Israel has refused to provide information about hundreds of Palestinians detained during the war.

Fewer than 30 Palestinians died in Israeli custody in the 10 years preceding the war, PHRI says. But since the war, the prison population more than doubled to 11,000 as people were rounded up, mainly from Gaza and the West Bank. The number of prisoners dying grew at an even faster rate over that period, PHRI data shows.

PHRI documented deaths by interviewing former detainees and prison medical staff, examining reports prepared by doctors who observed autopsies at the behest of dead prisoners' families, and confirming dozens of fatalities through freedom of information requests.

"The alarming rate at which people are killed in Israeli custody reveals a system that has lost all moral and professional restraint," said Naji Abbas, a director at PHRI.

Last year, the head of Israel's prison system, National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, boasted that he had degraded prison conditions to the legal minimum. Under pressure from rights groups, conditions improved slightly.

Israel's Prison Service said it operates in accordance with the law. It declined to comment on the death count and directed any inquiries to Israel's army.

The army said it is aware some detainees have died, including people with preexisting illnesses or combat-related injuries. It said allegations of abuse or inadequate conditions are assessed, and that those who violate the army's code of conduct are punished and sometimes subject to criminal investigations.

Guards told to reduce the number of deaths

Although hesitant at first, the former guard at the Sde Teiman military prison in southern Israel said he eventually participated in beatings of prisoners.

One morning, early in Israel's war against Hamas, the guard arrived at work to see a motionless Palestinian lying on his side in the yard, yet no guards rushed to see what had happened to the man, who was dead.

"It was sort of business as usual with the dead guy," said the guard, who didn't know the cause of death.

Prisoners' arms and legs were always in chains, and they were beaten if they moved or spoke, the guard said, adding that nearly all would urinate and defecate on themselves rather than ask to use the bathroom.

The former nurse at Sde Teiman said chains used to restrain many prisoners' arms and legs caused such severe wounds that some needed their limbs to be amputated. She spoke on condition of anonymity for

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fear of reprisal. During the several weeks she worked there at the start of last year she didn't see anyone die, but she said the staff at times talked about prisoner deaths. She left the job because she didn't like the abusive treatment of the prisoners, she said.

The army said prolonged handcuffing is implemented only in exceptional cases when there are "significant security considerations." Even then, detainees' medical condition is taken into account, it said. Only a few detainees from Gaza are currently being handled this way, it added.

Guards were told by their commanders — who also participated in the beatings -- that they needed to reduce the deaths, according to the Sde Teiman guard, who spent several months there.

Eventually cameras were installed, which helped mitigate the abuse, he said. Twenty-nine prisoners have died at Sde Teiman since the war began, according to PHRI.

Earlier this year, an Israeli soldier was convicted of abusing Palestinians in Sde Teiman and sentenced to seven months in prison, according to the army, which said this shows there is accountability.

But lawyers for prisoners say Israel rarely conducts serious investigations into alleged violence and that this fuels the problem.

In a sign of the public climate, the Israeli military's top lawyer was recently forced to resign after acknowledging she approved the leak of a surveillance video at the center of an investigation into allegations of severe sexual abuse against a Palestinian at Sde Teiman. The leak, meant to defend the decision by her office to prosecute guards for the alleged abuses, instead triggered fierce criticism from hard-line Israeli leaders who sympathized with the guards.

Several soldiers were indicted in that case, which is still pending before the military court.

Medical neglect and abuse

It is difficult to pinpoint with certainty the cause of death for most prisoners. Sometimes, at the behest of prisoners' families, doctors were granted permission by Israel to attend autopsies and provided reports to the families on what they saw.

Eight reports seen by the AP showed a pattern of physical abuse and medical neglect.

In one, a 45-year-old man who died in Kishon detention center, Mohammad Husein Ali, showed multiple signs of physical assault, likely causing brain bleed, according to the report. The potential use of excessive restraints was also noted. His family said he was healthy before he was detained from his home in the West Bank. He died within a week of being imprisoned.

Husein Ali had previously served time in an Israeli prison after being convicted of association with militancy, according to his family. But they said he had no ties with militants when he was arrested last year.

After Husein Ali was taken, his 2-year-old daughter would stare out the window calling for her father, said his wife, Hadeel. "She'd say 'baba, where's baba', but after time she stopped asking," she said, wiping tears from her eyes.

Malnutrition was a contributing factor in at least one death, according to PHRI, leading to a 17-year-old boy dying from starvation.

In September, Israel's Supreme Court ordered that more and better food be served to Palestinian inmates. Rights groups say the situation has slightly improved.

The army said detainees receive three meals a day, approved by a dietitian. It said every detainee is examined by a doctor upon arrival and, for those who need it, monitored with regular checkups.

Former prisoner can't forget what he witnessed

Sariy Khuorieh, an Israeli-Palestinian lawyer from Haifa, said he was detained at the start of the war after Israel accused him of inciting violence through his social media posts. While in Megiddo prison for 10 days, Khuorieh says he saw a man die after repeated beatings.

Khuorieh said the 33-year-old father of four from the West Bank was beaten almost daily. The man, and some of his relatives, had close ties to Hamas, according to a Palestinian security official and someone who knew the family, both of whom spoke on condition of anonymity out of concern for retaliation.

The night before the man died, he screamed in pain for hours while in solitary confinement, said Khuorieh, who choked back tears while recounting what happened. The man had repeatedly called for a doctor, but none came, Khuorieh said.

A spokesperson for Israel's Prison Service wouldn't comment on the case.

A report written about the man's autopsy seen by AP said the cause of death was inconclusive but that

there were signs of old and new bruising, including broken ribs. The report said it could be assumed that violence contributed to his death.

When the guards opened the man's cell they kicked and beat him before summoning a physician who tried to revive him and then pronounced him dead, said Khuorieh, who said he was able to see what was happening through the small window in his cell door.

Once the man was pronounced dead, Khuorieh said one of the officer's laughed and said: there's "at least one less" to care about.

Most of Gaza's schools are destroyed and hundreds of thousands of children cannot go back to class

By WAFAA SHURAFI and KAREEM CHEHAYEB Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Bissan Younis looked dejected as she stood outside a cluster of tents surrounded by rubble and debris, a wasteland that is a common sight across the Gaza Strip. The tiny encampment was yet another makeshift school that has no room for her teenage son Kareem.

"Most of the schools are destroyed," she told The Associated Press. "Every school I go to tells me there is no room."

More than 600,000 Palestinian children in Gaza have missed the past two years of school because of the war between Israel and the militant Hamas group. Instead of studying and socializing, they have been repeatedly displaced, fled airstrikes and shelling and often spent their days scouring for water and food for their families.

With a ceasefire reached last month largely holding, humanitarian officials are now working frantically to reopen dozens of makeshift schools.

John Crickx, a spokesman for the U.N. children's agency UNICEF, said it's critical for children to return to classes as soon as possible, not just because of basic education but also for their mental health.

"In the weeks to come, if we don't offer education," he said, there could be "terrible consequences for an entire generation."

UNICEF estimates that over 630,000 Palestinian children missed out on school during the war. Crickx says that so far, only about 100,000 children have been able to return.

Separately, UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, is providing some education through their contracted teachers — for about 40,000 students. Most of the UNRWA-run schools, which catered to half of the Gaza children before the war, have since turned into shelters for displaced people.

No space for tents

Lack of space is a key obstacle: Dozens of schools were badly damaged or completely destroyed. Many are still being used as shelters for Palestinians who have been repeatedly displaced during the enclave's intense bombardment.

"It's basically tents among the displaced people's tents or it is some prefabs or shelters, said Crickx. "It's very much ... the most basic learning."

At one school — a cluster of tents with the UNICEF logo erected on a patch of land amid bombed-out buildings in the southern city of Khan Younis — children huddled closely in one classroom, eagerly listening to their teacher.

Crickx said that finding a location to put up the tents has been tricky. Another challenge is getting supplies into Gaza, whether concrete to fix damaged schools or simple pencils, erasers and other basic supplies.

Since the Oct. 7, 2023 start of the war with the Hamas-led attack on southern Israel, these items have not been allowed into Gaza. Israel, which controls the flow of goods into the territory, considers them "non-critical, non-life saving," Crickx said.

COGAT, the Israeli military body that coordinates aid to Gaza, had no immediate comment on allowing in school supplies to Gaza.

Even the children who return to makeshift schools were able to enroll carry the psychological burdens that come with war and displacement.

"The level of trauma among the people of Gaza, including children, is horrific," said UNRWA communica-

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tions director Juliette Touma.

U.N. agencies say they are struggling to assess the damages and figure out the costs — with the ceasefire still in its early stages, reconstruction of Gaza has not yet begun and U.N. experts say the process could take years and cost some \$70 billion.

Schools that turned into shelters

Displaced families continue to live in the ruins of damaged schools. UNRWA's Touma says about 75,000 people still shelter in the agency's schools.

One of the displaced, Tahreer al-Oweini says she feels guilty but that she had no choice.

"I live in a classroom that should be in session with a teacher, students, and a blackboard," said al-Oweini. Around her, damaged walls and ceilings are covered with tarp.

Al-Oweini said she is struggling to secure spots for her three daughters and a son who are in elementary and middle school. She even told one school principal that she will search for a chair and desk for her daughter but was still rejected.

"The children forgot everything they learned," she said. "Their life over the past two years has been getting water, running after aid vehicles, war, Hamas, shelling, destruction."

"They have lived in fear or horror," she added.

Even during the most intense fighting, there have been some efforts in displacement camps and communities to keep children from falling behind in school, even as everyone struggled with bombardment, power cuts, and shortages of food, water, and medicine.

But lessons were sporadic, and some families say they kept their children close and couldn't risk letting them attend classes, fearing for their lives.

It's a race against time and UNRWA's Touma warns of a "lost generation" — the longer the children stay out of school, the tougher it will be to someday catch up with their peers elsewhere.

Touma is worried that if children miss out on education, the more likely they are to fall "prey to exploitation, including child marriage, child labor, and recruitment into armed groups."

Al-Oweini, like other families desperate to get their children back to school, is still hopeful.

"I want my children to be like their father who finished university," she said, adding that her daughters want to become doctors or engineers.

"They have ambition," she said. "But if they don't go to school, they will have no future."

Chile's hard-right holds the upper hand as presidential election goes to a tense runoff

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — A hard-right former lawmaker and admirer of U.S. President Donald Trump held the upper hand as Chile headed to a polarizing presidential runoff against a member of Chile's Communist Party representing the incumbent government.

José Antonio Kast, an ultraconservative lawyer opposed to abortion and same-sex marriage, appears to be in pole position after nearly 70% of votes went to right-wing candidates in Sunday's first round, as many Chileans worry about organized crime, illegal immigration and unemployment in one of Latin America's safest and most prosperous nations.

Kast is a surprise front-runner who speaks fondly of aspects of the country's period of dictatorship and broke with the traditional conservative party to found his own Republican Party.

He came in second with nearly 24% of the vote after campaigning on plans to crack down on crime, build a giant border wall and deport tens of thousands of undocumented migrants.

Jeannette Jara, a former labor minister in President Gabriel Boric's left-wing government, eked out a narrower-than-expected lead with 27% of the vote. She wants to expand Chile's social safety net and tackle money laundering and drug trafficking.

Neither contender received more than 50% of the overall vote count, sending the poll to a second round of voting on Dec. 14.

Conservatives sweep in first round of voting

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The mood was ebullient at Kast's campaign headquarters early Monday, where young Chileans wrapped in national flags drank beer and rolled cigarettes as workers took down the stage where Kast had proclaimed a radical transformation in the country's security.

"We needed a safe candidate, someone with a firm hand to bring economic growth, attract investment, create jobs, strengthen the police and give them support," said Ignacio Rojas, 20. "Chile isn't safe anymore, and he'll change that."

The results seemed set to extend a growing regional shift across Latin America, as popular discontent with the economy simmers and right-wing challengers take over from leftist politicians who shot to power in the wake of the pandemic on lofty promises of social change and more equitable distribution of wealth, but largely failed to deliver.

"Economies are not growing, there are no new jobs, and people remember that 10 years ago they used to pay lower prices for almost everything," said Patricio Navia, a Chilean analyst and professor at New York University.

"Voters are upset with governments all over the region," he added.

Conservatives led the pack in Chile's eight-candidate field, with populist businessman and celebrity economist Franco Parisi surprising pundits by securing 20% of the votes and third place. Like Kast, he ran a tough law and order campaign, vowing to plant land mines along Chile's porous northern border to prevent people from crossing.

Another 14% of the votes went to Johannes Kaiser, a libertarian congressman and a former YouTube provocateur who campaigned as an even more radical alternative to Kast.

Chile's traditional center-right coalition landed in fifth place, with establishment candidate Evelyn Matthei winning 12.5% of the vote.

Conservative runners-up endorse Kast

Not all of the divided right is guaranteed to go to Kast. Several Kaiser and Matthei voters interviewed at polling stations on Sunday — including members of the LGBTQ community, women and atheists — said they'd refuse to support Kast, citing his deeply conservative Christian values.

But it's also unlikely that voters who supported Kaiser's plans to deport undocumented migrants to prison in El Salvador, or Matthei's plans to consider bringing back the death penalty, would vote for a lifelong member of Chile's Communist Party.

There were no other left-wing front-runners, as all six parties in Chile's governing coalition threw their weight behind Jara.

After learning of the election results late Sunday, Matthei rushed to Kast's party headquarters to profess her support for her right-wing rival. "Chile needs a sharp change of direction," she said.

Kaiser also promised to back Kast, saying his libertarian party would "ensure that a sound doctrine and defense of freedom are not abandoned."

Parisi voters run the gamut, eschewing elites on the left and right. The political outsider was coy after the results came out, saying, "We don't give anyone a blank check."

"The burden of proof lies with both candidates," he said. "They have to win people over."

The region is trending right

Economic travails and fervent anti-incumbent sentiment appear to have fueled a gradual pendulum swing away from the left-wing leaders who were ascendant across the region just a few years ago.

In Argentina, radical libertarian President Javier Milei, elected in late 2023 on a vow to break with years of left-leaning populism, has dramatically cut public spending, doubling down on his close bond with Trump and reshaping Argentina's foreign policy in line with the U.S.

Elections over the last year in Ecuador, El Salvador and Panama have kept right-wing leaders in office, while in Bolivia, restive voters outraged over a currency crisis punished the Movement Toward Socialism party and elected a conservative opposition candidate for the first time in nearly 20 years.

The right's gains could buoy the U.S. as it competes for regional influence with China, some analysts say, with a new crop of leaders keen for American investment. Chile is the world's largest copper producer and home to vast reserves of other minerals key to the global energy transition.

Like many hopeful leftists four years ago, President Boric, a young former student activist elected on the

heels of Chile's 2019 mass protests over widening inequality, pledged to raise taxes on the rich and adopt one of the world's most progressive constitutions, ran into major legislative opposition.

That won't be the case for Kast if he wins.

As results from parliamentary elections crystalized early Monday, it appeared that right-wing parties would hold a decisive majority in the 155-member lower house of Congress, a body that has skewed left since Chile's 1990 return to democracy.

Mike Pompeo becomes adviser to scrutinized Ukraine defense company that's looking to boost missiles

By SAMYA KULLAB and EFREM LUKATSKY Associated Press

Former U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has joined the advisory board of Ukraine's leading defense company, renowned for its long-range drones capable of striking targets deep inside Russia, as a corruption investigation continues.

In an effort to enhance its international reputation, Fire Point is establishing a new factory in Denmark and bringing prominent industry figures on board. It also aims to expand its operations to produce battle-tested cruise missiles, with plans to more than double its current capacity.

However, public scrutiny remains intense during an ongoing corruption investigation. Fire Point's executives insist they have nothing to hide and are operating under strict martial law protocols, even commissioning an independent audit to appease investigators. Critics, however, question the company's opaque origins and the monopoly of its contracts with the Defense Ministry, and point to alleged links to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's notorious associate Tymur Mindich, who is implicated in a major corruption scandal.

"In general it's good they are working on this," said Iryna Terekh, Fire Point's chief technology officer of the investigation. "We completely support, as a company, the fact that this investigation is happening."

Terekh said Fire Point has commissioned a major international firm to conduct an independent audit of its pricing and production to quell concerns. The investigation by anti-corruption organizations, launched a year ago, is still ongoing, she said. "We will be waiting for the results to come."

The Associated Press was given exclusive access to a factory in Ukraine where its cruise missile, known as the Flamingo or FP-5, is assembled. The AP was given access on the condition the exact location is not named, due the risk of Russian attacks.

Big plans

Fire Point, which rose to prominence after initially being relatively unknown following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, now reports around \$1 billion in revenue this year. It is also constructing a factory in Denmark to manufacture essential rocket propellant.

In the meantime, the company is forging ahead with plans to expand.

The company launched an advisory board and named Pompeo as a member on Nov. 12, executives told AP. "It's a big honor for us," Terekh said, speaking from the factory floor. "We decided that since we are growing into a big international company, we have to ensure we are following the clearest and best corporate standards."

Another three individuals will join the board. "We are rising as a company and we want a wise adviser board to help us establish this work," said Terekh.

U.S. Special Envoy to Ukraine Keith Kellogg also visited one of Fire Point's factories during his last visit, executives said, in a visit that included other Ukrainian defense technology companies as well.

Building on the success of its deep-strike drone, the FP-1, which AP was granted exclusive access to view in August, the company is now planning to ramp up production of its cruise missiles. They are also in high demand among Ukrainian forces as Western missiles remain hard to access in sufficient quantities to debilitate Russian capabilities.

Fire Point has successfully tested Flamingo on the battlefield at least four times, company executives said. In late August it was used to strike an FSB base in Armiansk in the occupied Crimean Peninsula. This week, the missile was used to strike targets in the Russian city of Oryol. The company did not provide its current production capacity, citing security concerns.

Production is going according to plans, company executives said, without elaborating on precise figures

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for security concerns.

On the factory floor, dozens of hollowed hulls of missile frames lay scattered. These are made with carbon fiber, a material better suited to eluding Russian radars than aluminum, Maksym, the head of design told the AP. He spoke on condition that only his first name be used for security reasons.

Fire Point is a significant beneficiary of the so-called Danish model, a financing mechanism spearheaded by Denmark, in which foreign governments directly fund Ukrainian defense companies, rather than procuring weapons from their own industries to send as aid. A factory to produce solid rocket fuel for missiles, including the Flamingo, is being established in Denmark.

"They did a great job helping us to secure production of critical components," Terekh said of Denmark's support. "Our factory in Denmark is dedicated to solve a bottleneck with solid rocket propellant."

Ongoing investigation

But the company's rapid rise has been marred by an investigation by Ukraine's anti-corruption watchdogs.

Authorities are examining whether Fire Point inflated component prices or drone quantities in Defense Ministry contracts for its main weapon, the FP-1 drone, and are also scrutinizing potential links between the company and Mindich.

Anti-corruption agencies have said they were not investigating the Flamingo missile.

Lawmakers raised an issue with Fire Point because of its apparent monopoly over deep strike drones, its ability to garner lucrative contracts despite being relatively unknown, and obscurity over its ownership. Its legally listed owner is Yehor Skalyha, who maintains connections to the entertainment industry, just like Mindich.

Anti-corruption watchdogs have not released the findings of their investigation. Company founder Denys Shtilerman told AP that he is the majority owner, with Skalyha owning 2%.

Shtilerman said he has met Mindich on several occasions, but the company denies the business owner has any links to their company.

Crowdfunding and testing

On Sunday, engineers from the company painted a pink flamingo on one Flamingo cruise missile whose purchase had been made by a crowdfunding campaign by a Czech organization, Weapons to Ukraine. Each missile costs approximately \$500,000.

The amount was raised in two days, said Jan Polak, a member of the organization. The same organization managed to fund the delivery of a Black Hawk helicopter to Ukraine's military intelligence, Polak said. "We feel that they are fighting for us," he said of his organization's reasons for funding the procurement of missiles to strike Russian targets.

The current design of the Flamingo missile is a compilation of old Soviet weapons and new techniques. Engines were sourced from old Soviet jets, for example.

Testing and fine-tuning is a constant process, Maksym said. "As of now we are still doing training launching, because our rockets were manufactured just six months ago. Right now, we are training, but we are training on objects in the territory of Russia and Crimea," he said.

Workers conducted a mock run of a launch with a missile, this one painted black, that will be used in a future mission, he said. Workers drove in a truck that concealed the weapon.

"We are studying, doing all we can to hit targets as far as we can," he said, adding that finding ways around Russian radar systems and electronic warfare remained an ongoing challenge. "We are learning from each launch to work on mistakes."

Trump plans to meet with Mamdani, says he'll 'work something out' with New York City's mayor-elect

By MICHELLE L. PRICE and CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump indicated Sunday that he plans to meet with New York City's mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani and said they'll "work something out," in what could be a detente for the Republican president and Democratic political star who have cast each other as political foils.

Trump has for months slammed Mamdani, falsely labeling him as a "communist" and predicting the

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ruin of his hometown, New York, if the democratic socialist was elected. He also threatened to deport Mamdani, who was born in Uganda and became a naturalized American citizen, and to pull federal money from the city.

Mamdani rose from an obscure state lawmaker to become a social media star and symbol of the resistance against Trump during his mayoral campaign. He campaigned on an array of progressive policies and a message that was stark in its opposition to the aggressive, anti-immigrant agenda Trump has rolled out in his second White House term.

The 34-year-old appealed to a broad cross-section of New Yorkers and defeated one of its political heavyweights, former Gov. Andrew Cuomo, by nearly 9 percentage points.

In his election night victory speech, Mamdani said he wanted New York to show the country how to defeat the president. But the day after, while speaking about his plans for "Trump-proofing" New York once he takes office in January, the incoming mayor also said he was willing to work with anyone, including the president, if it can help New Yorkers.

Representatives for Mamdani did not have an immediate comment Sunday night on the president's remarks, but a spokesperson pointed to the mayor-elect's remarks last week when he said he planned to reach out to the White House "because this is a relationship that will be critical to the success of the city."

Trump expressed a similar sentiment on Sunday.

"The mayor of New York, I will say, would like to meet with us. We'll work something out," Trump told reporters as he prepared to fly back to Washington after spending the weekend in Florida.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt clarified shortly after that Trump was referring to Mamdani and said no date had been set for such a meeting.

"We want to see everything work out well for New York," Trump said.

Trump's comments came as he also said the U.S. may hold discussions soon with Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, after a military buildup near the South American country: "I'll talk to anybody," Trump said.

Trump says US may have discussions with Maduro as aircraft carrier arrives in Caribbean

By BEN FINLEY and CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Florida (AP) — President Donald Trump said Sunday the U.S. "may be having some discussions" with Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, a potential diplomatic avenue as the U.S. further builds up its military presence near the South American country with the arrival of its most advanced aircraft carrier.

Trump didn't offer details about the possible discussions with Maduro, but he said "Venezuela would like to talk."

The U.S. military has been carrying out a series of strikes against vessels suspected of transporting drugs. The arrival of the USS Gerald R. Ford and other warships, announced by the Navy in a statement, marks a major moment in what the administration insists is a counterdrug operation but has been seen as an escalating pressure tactic against Maduro.

When asked Sunday what he meant when he said Maduro wants to talk, Trump simply said: "What does it mean? You tell me, I don't know."

"I'll talk to anybody," he added a few moments later. "We'll see what happens."

Venezuela's government didn't immediately reply to a request for comment. Maduro, who faces charges of narcoterrorism in the U.S., has said the U.S. government is "fabricating" a war against him.

The Ford rounds off the largest buildup of U.S. firepower in the region in generations. With its arrival, the "Operation Southern Spear" mission includes nearly a dozen Navy ships and about 12,000 sailors and Marines.

The carrier's arrival coincided with the military announcing its latest deadly strike on a small boat it claims was ferrying illegal drugs. The military's Southern Command posted a video on X on Sunday showing the boat being blown up, an attack it said took place Saturday in international waters of the eastern Pacific Ocean and killed three men. The military did not immediately respond to a request for more information.

Since early September, such strikes by the U.S. in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific have killed at least

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83 people in 21 attacks.

The carrier strike group, which includes squadrons of fighter jets and guided-missile destroyers, transited the Anegada Passage near the British Virgin Islands on Sunday morning, the Navy said.

Rear Adm. Paul Lanzilotta, who commands the strike group, said it will bolster an already large force of American warships to "protect our nation's security and prosperity against narco-terrorism in the Western Hemisphere."

Adm. Alvin Holsey, the commander who oversees the Caribbean and Latin America, said in a statement that the American forces "stand ready to combat the transnational threats that seek to destabilize our region."

Holsey, who will retire next month after just a year on the job, said the strike group's deployment is "a critical step in reinforcing our resolve to protect the security of the Western Hemisphere and the safety of the American Homeland."

US military holds training exercises in Trinidad and Tobago and Panama

In Trinidad and Tobago, which is only 7 miles from Venezuela at its closest point, government officials said troops have begun "training exercises" with the U.S. military that will run through much of the week.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Sean Sobers described the joint exercises as the second in less than a month and said they are aimed at tackling violent crime on the island nation, which has become a stopover point for drug shipments headed to Europe and North America. The prime minister has been a vocal supporter of the U.S. military strikes.

The exercises will include Marines from the 22nd Expeditionary Unit who have been stationed aboard the Navy ships that have been looming off Venezuela's coast for months.

Venezuela's government has described the training exercises as an act of aggression. It had no immediate comment Sunday on the arrival of the aircraft carrier.

Meanwhile, Army Secretary Dan Driscoll said Sunday that U.S. troops have been training in Panama, underscoring the administration's increasing focus on Latin America.

"We're reactivating our jungle school in Panama. We would be ready to act on whatever" Trump and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth needed, he told CBS' "Face the Nation."

The administration has insisted that the buildup of American forces in the region is focused on stopping the flow of drugs into the U.S., but it has released no evidence to support its assertions that those killed in the boats were "narcoterrorists." Trump has indicated military action would expand beyond strikes by sea, saying the U.S. would "stop the drugs coming in by land."

On Friday, Trump was asked by reporters if he had made up his mind on what he intended to do about Venezuela. He did not offer details but said, "I sort of have made up my mind."

The U.S. has long used aircraft carriers to pressure and deter aggression by other nations because their warplanes can strike targets deep inside another country. Some experts say the Ford is ill-suited to fighting cartels, but it could be an effective instrument of intimidation for Maduro in a push to get him to step down.

Venezuela's government recently touted a "massive" mobilization of troops and civilians to defend against possible U.S. attacks. Maduro and other officials in Venezuela's socialist party also have been attending rallies this weekend to back the creation of neighborhood committees that will be in charge of increasing membership in Venezuela's socialist party, and promoting the party's policies.

US to designate a Venezuelan cartel a foreign terrorist organization

Secretary of State Marco Rubio says the United States does not recognize Maduro, who was widely accused of stealing last year's election, as Venezuela's legitimate leader. Rubio has called Venezuela's government a "transshipment organization" that openly cooperates with those trafficking drugs.

Rubio said in a statement released Sunday evening that the State Department intends to designate Cartel de los Soles, or Cartel of the Suns, a foreign terrorist organization. Rubio said the cartel is headed by Maduro and other high-ranking members of his government and is among those "responsible for terrorist violence throughout our hemisphere as well as for trafficking drugs into the United States and Europe." When the designation takes effect on Nov. 24, it will be a crime to provide "material support" to the cartel or its members.

Trump has justified the attacks on drug boats by saying the U.S. is in "armed conflict" with drug cartels

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while claiming the boats are operated by foreign terrorist organizations.

He has faced pushback from leaders in the region, the U.N. human rights chief and U.S. lawmakers, including Republicans, who have pressed for more information on who is being targeted and the legal justification for the boat strikes.

Senate Republicans, however, recently voted to reject legislation that would have put a check on Trump's ability to launch an attack against Venezuela without congressional authorization.

Experts disagree on whether or not American warplanes may be used to strike land targets inside Venezuela. Either way, the 100,000-ton warship is sending a message.

"This is the anchor of what it means to have U.S. military power once again in Latin America," said Elizabeth Dickinson, the International Crisis Group's senior analyst for the Andes region. "And it has raised a lot of anxieties in Venezuela but also throughout the region. I think everyone is watching this with sort of bated breath to see just how willing the U.S. is to really use military force."

Chile's presidential race heads to a runoff between a communist and a pro-Trump conservative

By ISABEL DEBRE and NAYARA BATSCHKE Associated Press

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — Chile is headed to a tense presidential runoff after a closely fought first-round vote Sunday set up a showdown between a member of the Communist Party and an ultraconservative veteran politician, sharply polarizing the country between the political left and right.

Jeannette Jara, 51, the communist former labor minister and candidate of Chile's center-left governing coalition, won 26.8% of valid ballots with almost 100% of the vote counted, failing to pass the 50% threshold to secure victory in the first round.

José Antonio Kast, 59, a hard-right former lawmaker and devout Catholic opposed to same-sex marriage and abortion, captured almost 24% of the vote, underscoring the appeal of his law-and-order platform as a surge in organized crime rattles one of Latin America's safest nations and foments anti-migrant sentiment among Chileans.

After learning he would advance to the next round, Kast urged the country's fractured right to unite behind him, framing the runoff as an existential struggle for Chile's future.

"It will be the most important election of our generation, a true referendum between two models of society — the current one that has led Chile to destruction, stagnation, violence and hatred," he told fans, interrupted by cheers every few seconds. "And our model, which promotes freedom, hope and progress."

Jara had a very different message.

"This is a great country," she told supporters in downtown Santiago, the capital. "Don't let fear freeze your hearts."

Concern about crime and immigration boost the right

An admirer of U.S. President Donald Trump and Brazil's former President Jair Bolsonaro, Kast has vowed to deport tens of thousands of undocumented migrants and construct hundreds of kilometers of ditches and walls along Chile's northern border with Bolivia to prevent people from crossing, particularly from crisis-stricken Venezuela.

"We want change, and that change today is about security," José Hernández, the 60-year-old owner of an agricultural company said after casting his ballot for Kast.

Although voters gave Jara a slight edge on Sunday, Kast will likely benefit in the second round from a large share of votes that went to three eliminated right-wing challengers who campaigned aggressively on the need to tackle illegal immigration.

The third- and fourth-placed candidates were Franco Parisi, a right-leaning populist economist with a large social media following, with 20% of votes, and Johannes Kaiser, a radical libertarian and former YouTube provocateur elected as lawmaker in 2021, with 13.9%.

Chile's constitution does not allow reelection to consecutive terms, so left-wing President Gabriel Boric, whose presidency ends in March, is not running.

Like her opponents, Jara has called security a top priority, promising plans to deport foreigners convicted of drug trafficking, boost controls along Chile's borders and tackle money laundering.

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"On the question of more jails, more punishments, more imprisonment, closing borders, restricting migrants, there is no debate anymore between the right and left," said Lucía Dammert, a political scientist and Boric's first chief of staff.

"But it's an issue that always enhances the right, everywhere in Latin America."

Winning over wary voters

The race now goes to a second round on Dec. 14. Analysts believe the starkly opposed Jara and Kast will tack to the middle ground in order to broaden their appeal.

"We will definitely see Jara and Kast after today being even more moderate, talking about things that voters care about and trying to compete for the center," said Rodolfo Disi, a political scientist at Chile's Adolfo Ibáñez University.

Over the next month, Jara faces the challenge of winning over voters concerned about her lifelong membership in Chile's Communist Party, which supports authoritarian governments in Cuba and Venezuela. Jara came under fire early on in her campaign for referring to Cuba as a democracy.

"We liked her at first, but that moment was when our opinion shifted, it seemed like a really closed-minded view," Camila Roure, 29, said outside a polling station. But as a woman, Roure said, she wouldn't vote for Kast, citing his history of opposition to divorce and abortion, even in cases of rape.

Kast has sought to deflect attention from his commitment to what he calls traditional family values and his German-born father's Nazi past, both of which mobilized progressive voters against him during his last two failed presidential bids, but he has made it clear that his views remain the same.

"A Kast government wouldn't just be a political shift, it would be a huge step backward," said Macarena Breke, 27, an English teacher who voted for Jara.

Jara promises a social safety net

President Boric, the young, tattooed ex-student protest leader who came to power in 2021 vowing to "bury neoliberalism" on the heels of mass unrest over inequality, has faced criticism from allies and rivals alike that his government failed to fulfill its sweeping promises of social change.

Economic discontent is simmering in one of Latin America's most prosperous nations, with growth sluggish and unemployment up over 8.5%. The country retains its dictatorship-era constitution after voters rejected a government-backed charter that would have transformed Chile into one of the world's most progressive societies.

But Boric's government has several landmark welfare measures to show for itself — many of them thanks to Jara.

As labor minister, she raised the minimum wage, boosted pensions and shortened the workweek to 40 from 45 hours.

"The right is trying to sell this idea that the country is collapsing. But I don't see that," said Loreta Sleir, a 27-year-old who voted for Jara.

To address Chile's cost-of-living crisis, which in 2019 helped fuel the country's most significant social upheaval, Jara proposes a "living" monthly income of around \$800 through state subsidies and minimum wage hikes. She promises to invest in big infrastructure projects and new housing.

Kast promises to shrink the state

Kast proposes quite the opposite.

Taking a page from the playbook of President Javier Milei in neighboring Argentina, he vows to shrink the public payroll, eliminate government ministries, slash corporate taxes and get rid of regulations.

He says he'll make a staggering \$6 billion in spending cuts over 18 months — a bid which, even if far-fetched, appeals to voters disconcerted by Chile's repeated fiscal deficits.

"The money disappears, the left spends it I don't know what, human rights, and I can barely afford rent," said Jorge Ruiz, 48, a cab driver who voted for Kast.

Although the 2% deficit this year pales in comparison to the economic woes elsewhere in the region — such as Argentina, where President Trump recently helped halt a currency crisis — it's rare in a country long hailed as a regional success story for its dedication to extreme laissez-faire economics.

It was Gen. Augusto Pinochet who first established that model, ensuring it lived on decades after the fall of his brutal dictatorship in 1990. Kast, whose brother served as a minister under Pinochet, has defended

aspects of his legacy.

That dark chapter of Chile's history also lives on, experts say, in the nation's anxiety over security. "From the moment that democracy arrived, Chile became fearful of criminal activity and distrustful of institutions, of foreigners," said Dammert, the political scientist. "There was fertile ground for fear to grow."

In reversal, Trump says House Republicans should vote to release Epstein files

By KEVIN FREKING and CHRIS MEGERIAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump said House Republicans should vote to release the files in the Jeffrey Epstein case, a startling reversal after previously fighting the proposal as a growing number of those in his own party supported it.

"We have nothing to hide, and it's time to move on from this Democrat Hoax perpetrated by Radical Left Lunatics in order to deflect from the Great Success of the Republican Party," Trump wrote on social media late Sunday after landing at Joint Base Andrews following a weekend in Florida.

Trump's statement followed a fierce fight within the GOP over the files, including an increasingly nasty split with Georgia Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, who had long been one of his fiercest supporters.

The president's shift is an implicit acknowledgement that supporters of the measure have enough votes to pass it the House, although it has an unclear future in the Senate.

It is a rare example of Trump backtracking because of opposition within the GOP. In his return to office and in his second term as president, Trump has largely consolidated power in the Republican Party.

"I DON'T CARE!" Trump wrote in his social media post. "All I do care about is that Republicans get BACK ON POINT."

Lawmakers who support the bill have been predicting a big win in the House this week with a "deluge of Republicans" voting for it, bucking the GOP leadership and the president.

In his opposition to the proposal, Trump even reached out to two of the Republican lawmakers who signed it. One, Colorado Rep. Lauren Boebert, met last week with administration officials in the White House Situation Room to discuss it.

The bill would force the Justice Department to release all files and communications related to Epstein, as well as any information about the investigation into his death in federal prison. Information about Epstein's victims or ongoing federal investigations would be allowed to be redacted.

"There could be 100 or more" votes from Republicans, said Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Ky., among the lawmakers discussing the legislation on Sunday news show appearances. "I'm hoping to get a veto-proof majority on this legislation when it comes up for a vote."

Massie and Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Calif., introduced a discharge petition in July to force a vote on their bill. That is a rarely successful tool that allows a majority of members to bypass House leadership and force a floor vote.

Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., had panned the discharge petition effort and sent members home early for their August recess when the GOP's legislative agenda was upended in the clamoring for an Epstein vote. Democrats also contend the seating of Rep. Adelita Grijalva, D-Ariz., was stalled to delay her becoming the 218th member to sign the petition and gain the threshold needed to force a vote. She became the 218th signature moments after taking the oath of office last week.

Massie said Johnson, Trump and others who have been critical of his efforts would be "taking a big loss this week."

"I'm not tired of winning yet, but we are winning," Massie said.

The view from GOP leadership

Johnson seems to expect the House will decisively back the Epstein bill.

"We'll just get this done and move it on. There's nothing to hide," adding that the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee has been releasing "far more information than the discharge petition, their little gambit."

The vote comes at a time when new documents are raising fresh questions about Epstein and his associ-

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ates, including a 2019 email that Epstein wrote to a journalist that said Trump "knew about the girls." The White House has accused Democrats of selectively leaking the emails to smear the Republican president.

Johnson said Trump "has nothing to hide from this."

"They're doing this to go after President Trump on this theory that he has something to do with it. He does not," Johnson said.

Trump's association with Epstein is well-established and the president's name was included in records that his own Justice Department released in February as part of an effort to satisfy public interest in information from the sex-trafficking investigation.

Trump has never been accused of wrongdoing in connection with Epstein and the mere inclusion of someone's name in files from the investigation does not imply otherwise. Epstein, who killed himself in jail in 2019 while awaiting trial, also had many prominent acquaintances in political and celebrity circles besides Trump.

Khanna voiced more modest expectations on the vote count than Massie. Still, Khanna said he was hoping for 40 or more Republicans to join the effort.

"I don't even know how involved Trump was," Khanna said. "There are a lot of other people involved who have to be held accountable."

Khanna also asked Trump to meet with those who were abused. Some will be at the Capitol on Tuesday for a news conference, he said.

Massie said Republican lawmakers who fear losing Trump's endorsement because of how they vote will have a mark on their record, if they vote "no," that could hurt their political prospects in the long term.

"The record of this vote will last longer than Donald Trump's presidency," Massie said.

A MAGA split

On the Republican side, three Republicans joined with Massie in signing the discharge petition: Reps. Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia, Nancy Mace of South Carolina and Boebert.

Trump publicly called it quits with Greene last week and said he would endorse a challenger against her in 2026 "if the right person runs."

Greene attributed the fallout with Trump as "unfortunately, it has all come down to the Epstein files." She said the country deserves transparency on the issue and that Trump's criticism of her is confusing because the women she has talked to say he did nothing wrong.

"I have no idea what's in the files. I can't even guess. But that is the questions everyone is asking, is, why fight this so hard?" Greene said.

Trump's feud with Greene escalated over the weekend, with Trump sending out one last social media post about her while still sitting in his helicopter on the White House lawn when he arrived home late Sunday, writing "The fact is, nobody cares about this Traitor to our Country!"

Even if the bill passes the House, there is no guarantee that Senate Republicans will go along. Massie said he just hopes Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., "will do the right thing."

"The pressure is going to be there if we get a big vote in the House," Massie said, who thinks "we could have a deluge of Republicans."

Massie appeared on ABC's "This Week," Johnson was on "Fox News Sunday," Khanna spoke on NBC's "Meet the Press" and Greene was interviewed on CNN's "State of the Union."

Georgia up to No. 4 in AP poll, Sooners back in top 10 and Mean Green ranked for 1st time since 1959

By ERIC OLSON AP College Football Writer

Georgia moved up one spot to No. 4 in The Associated Press poll Sunday, Oklahoma returned to the top 10 and North Texas, ranked for the first time since 1959, is among three Group of Five teams in the Top 25.

Ohio State, Indiana and Texas A&M were the top three teams for the fifth straight week. Georgia earned its highest ranking since the first week of September and Mississippi was back in the top five after spending three weeks there at midseason.

Oregon and Texas Tech were tied for No. 6, and Oklahoma rose three spots to No. 8 following its win

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at Alabama. The Sooners were last in the top 10, at No. 6, the second week of October.

Notre Dame remained No. 9 after a 22-point win at Pittsburgh and Alabama dropped six spots to No. 10 after the Sooners ended its eight-game win streak.

Ohio State, which rolled past UCLA to improve to 10-0 for the fourth time in seven seasons, received 57 of 66 first-place votes. Indiana, which beat Wisconsin to go 11-0 for the first time, got eight first-place votes. Texas A&M, whose comeback from a 27-point deficit to beat South Carolina was its largest ever, got one first-place vote, three less than last week.

Georgia's 35-10 win over Texas was its sixth straight and second over a top-10 opponent. Mississippi, which lost at Georgia a month ago, defeated Florida and is more than 100 points behind the Bulldogs at No. 5.

The Group of Five hadn't had three teams in the Top 25 since four appeared in last season's final poll.

The Sun Belt Conference's James Madison blew out Appalachian State and moved up three spots to No. 21. North Texas is next at No. 22. The Mean Green of the American Conference clobbered UAB 53-24 on the road and have matched their best start in program history.

The last time UNT was 9-1 was in 1959, when the team then known as the Eagles was ranked two straight weeks in November, reaching No. 16. That team lost to New Mexico State in the Sun Bowl to finish 9-2. This year's UNT team already is eligible for a second straight bowl game and is in the thick of the race for the Group of Five's automatic CFP bid.

In and out

— No. 22 North Texas' first appearance in the poll in 66 years ends the longest drought by a Bowl Subdivision team.

— No. 23 Missouri returned after a one-week absence following a win over Mississippi State in which Ahmad Hardy became the first player since 2022 to rush for 300 yards.

— No. 24 Tulane has won two straight since losing to UTSA and is ranked for the first time this season.

— No. 25 Houston, fifth among teams also receiving votes last week and idle, were ranked for one week in October.

Louisville (19), Cincinnati (22), Pittsburgh (23) and South Florida (25) dropped out.

Poll points

— Voters did what the CFP selection committee did last week, jumping Miami over Georgia Tech to make the Hurricanes the highest-ranked Atlantic Coast Conference team. Miami easily beat North Carolina State and moved up two spots to No. 14. Georgia Tech, which needed a field goal in the final seconds to edge one-win Boston College, slipped a spot to No. 15.

— No. 13 Utah has outscored three opponents by a combined 153-49 since losing at BYU and has its highest ranking of the season.

— No. 17 Texas took the biggest plunge, dropping seven spots.

Conference call

SEC (9): Nos. 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 17, 20, 23.

Big Ten (5): Nos. 1, 2, T-6, 16, 18.

Big 12 (4): Nos. T-6, 11, 13, 25.

ACC (3): Nos. 14, 15, 19.

American (2): Nos. 22, 24.

Sun Belt (1): No. 21.

Independent (1): No. 9.

Ranked vs. ranked

No. 16 Southern California (8-2, 6-1 Big Ten, No. 17 CFP) at No. 6 Oregon (9-1, 6-1, No. 8 CFP): Winner strengthens its position for a CFP at-large bid and keeps alive slim hopes of sneaking into the Big Ten championship game.

No. 23 Missouri (7-3, 3-3 SEC) at No. 8 Oklahoma (8-2, 4-2, No. 11 CFP): Sooners did wonders for their playoff resume by knocking off Alabama on the road and now go for a fifth win over a Top 25 opponent.

FAA lifts order slashing flights, allowing commercial airlines to resume their regular schedules

By RIO YAMAT and JOSH FUNK Associated Press

The Federal Aviation Administration said Sunday it is lifting all restrictions on commercial flights that were imposed at 40 major airports during the country's longest government shutdown.

Airlines can resume their regular flight schedules beginning Monday at 6 a.m. EST, the agency said.

The announcement was made in a joint statement by Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy and FAA Administrator Bryan Bedford.

Citing safety concerns as staffing shortages grew at air traffic control facilities during the shutdown, the FAA issued an unprecedented order to limit traffic in the skies. It had been in place since Nov. 7, affecting thousands of flights across the country.

Impacted airports included large hubs in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Atlanta.

The flight cuts started at 4% and later grew to 6% before the FAA on Friday rolled the restrictions back to 3%, citing continued improvements in air traffic controller staffing since the record 43-day shutdown ended on Nov. 12.

The number of flights canceled this weekend was at its lowest point since the order took effect and was well below the 3% cuts FAA was requiring for Saturday and Sunday. Data from aviation analytics firm Cirium showed that less than 1% of all flights were canceled this weekend. The flight tracking website FlightAware said 149 flights were cut Sunday and 315 were canceled on Saturday.

The FAA statement said an agency safety team recommended the order be rescinded after "detailed reviews of safety trends and the steady decline of staffing-trigger events in air traffic control facilities."

The statement said the FAA "is aware of reports of non-compliance by carriers over the course of the emergency order. The agency is reviewing and assessing enforcement options." It did not elaborate.

Cancellations hit their highest point Nov. 9, when airlines cut more than 2,900 flights because of the FAA order, ongoing controller shortages and severe weather in parts of the country. Conditions began to improve throughout last week as more controllers returned to work amid news that Congress was close to a deal to end the shutdown. That progress also prompted the FAA to pause plans for further rate increases.

The agency had initially aimed for a 10% reduction in flights. Duffy had said worrisome safety data showed the move was necessary to ease pressure on the aviation system and help manage worsening staffing shortages at air traffic control facilities as the shutdown entered its second month and flight disruptions began to pile up.

Air traffic controllers were among the federal employees who had to continue working without pay throughout the shutdown. They missed two paychecks during the impasse.

Duffy hasn't shared the specific safety data that prompted the cuts, but he cited reports during the shutdown of planes getting too close in the air, more runway incursions and pilot concerns about controllers' responses.

Airline leaders have expressed optimism that operations would rebound in time for the Thanksgiving travel period after the FAA lifted its order.

Israeli leader insists there can be no Palestinian state, ahead of UN vote leaving that door open

By MELANIE LIDMAN Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed Sunday to oppose any attempt to establish a Palestinian state, a day before the U.N. Security Council planned to vote on a U.S.-drafted resolution on Gaza that leaves the door open to Palestinian independence.

Netanyahu has long asserted that creating a Palestinian state would reward Hamas and eventually lead to an even larger Hamas-run state on Israel's borders. But as the U.S. attempts to push forward with its Gaza ceasefire proposal, he faces heavy international pressure to show flexibility.

The Security Council is expected to vote on a U.S. proposal for a U.N. mandate that would establish an international stabilization force in Gaza despite opposition from Russia, China and some Arab countries.

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Hamas and Palestinian factions warned Sunday against the U.S. proposal, calling it an attempt to impose an international mandate on Gaza that is biased toward Israel and deprives Palestinians of the right to manage their own affairs. In a statement, the groups said the force must not involve Israel and must be under direct U.N. supervision.

The statement also rejected any reference in the U.S. proposal to disarming Gaza. Netanyahu on Sunday noted the proposal calls for Gaza to be demilitarized and Hamas to be disarmed, telling his Cabinet: "Either this will happen the easy way, or it will happen the hard way."

The U.S., under pressure from countries expected to contribute troops to the force, had revised the resolution with stronger language about Palestinian self-determination. It now says that President Donald Trump's plan may create a "credible pathway" to Palestinian statehood. A rival Russian proposal uses even stronger language in favor of Palestinian statehood.

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

Netanyahu's hard-line governing partners have urged him to take a tough stand on the calls for Palestinian independence. Netanyahu said Sunday that Israel's opposition to a Palestinian state has "not changed one bit" and is not threatened by external or internal pressure.

"I do not need affirmations, tweets or lectures from anyone," he said.

That pressure increased during the war in Gaza. In September, after the U.K., Australia and Canada formally recognized a Palestinian state, Netanyahu blasted the countries for proffering a "prize" to Hamas.

Settler attacks on the rise in the West Bank

The Israeli leader also made his first public comments about a surge in attacks by Jewish settlers in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, saying the violence was the work of a small minority. Palestinians and human rights groups say the violence has been widespread and accused the government of turning a blind eye.

Palestinian health officials said Sunday that a 19-year-old Palestinian man became the seventh person to be killed in the West Bank in the past two weeks by Israeli fire. The spike in violence has been accompanied by a surge in settler attacks.

The Israeli military said it was operating in Nablus, in the northern West Bank, early Sunday when the man hurled an explosive device at soldiers, who fired in response.

The military later said its forces had killed someone in the Far'a area of the West Bank who "attempted to harm them," with no details. There was no immediate Palestinian comment.

In addition to Sunday's clashes, the Palestinian Health Ministry in the West Bank said six teenagers — ages 15 to 17 — were shot and killed by Israeli fire in four separate shootings over the past two weeks.

On Sunday, Netanyahu cast settler violence as the work of a few extremists. But Palestinians and rights groups say the violence is carried out by settlers with impunity from Israel's far-right government. Settler leaders and their allies hold top positions in Netanyahu's government, including the Cabinet ministers who oversee the national police force and West Bank settlement policies.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio last week said there's concern that the events in the West Bank "could undermine what we're doing in Gaza."

U.N. Human Rights Commissioner spokesperson Thameen Al-Kheetan has said the U.N. recorded more than 260 attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinians and their property in the West Bank in October, more than in any month since 2006.

More on Gaza

Israel's military said its troops on Sunday killed someone who crossed into territory they control in northern Gaza and "posed an immediate threat to them."

In Khan Younis in southern Gaza, families in the crowded Muwasi tent camp picked their way along flooded streets after winter's first strong rainfall that started on Friday. Water dripped through torn tents onto belongings. Children splashed barefoot or in sandals, or tried to ride bikes.

"Our bathroom is made of fabric. Everything is made of fabric, and it's worn out from the sun, so the rain pours down on us. It's indescribable suffering," said one displaced Palestinian, Abdallah Abu Quta.

Trump's Republican Party insists there's no affordability crisis and dismisses election losses

By STEVE PEOPLES AP National Political Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Almost two weeks after Republicans lost badly in elections in Georgia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Virginia, many GOP leaders insist there is no problem with the party's policies, its message or President Donald Trump's leadership.

Trump says Democrats and the media are misleading voters who are concerned about high costs and the economy. Republican officials aiming to avoid another defeat in next fall's midterms are encouraging candidates to embrace the president fully and talk more about his accomplishments.

Those are the major takeaways from a series of private conversations, briefings and official talking points involving major Republican decision-makers across Washington, including inside the White House, after their party's losses Nov. 4. Their assessment highlights the extent to which the fate of the Republican Party is tied to Trump, a term-limited president who insists the economy under his watch has never been stronger.

That's even as an increasing number of voters report a different reality in their lives.

But with few exceptions, the Trump lieutenants who lead the GOP's political strategy have no desire to challenge his wishes or beliefs.

"Republicans are entering next year more unified behind President Trump than ever before," Republican National Committee spokesperson Kiersten Pels said. "The party is fully aligned behind his America First agenda and the results he's delivering for the American people. President Trump's policies are popular, he drives turnout, and standing with him is the strongest path to victory."

Trump's approval is similar to former Presidents Barack Obama, a Democrat, and George W. Bush, a Republican, at the same point in their terms, however. Their parties had major losses in midterm elections.

Trump insists there is no affordability problem

Since the election, the White House has quietly decided to shift its message to focus more on affordability.

Much of the first year of Trump's second term has been dominated by his trade wars, his crackdown on illegal immigration, his decision to send National Guard troops into American cities and the longest government shutdown in U.S. history.

Trump has talked more about affordability in the days since Election Day. On Friday, he slashed tariffs on beef and other commodities that consumers say cost too much. But Trump's primary message is that the economy is better and consumer prices lower than as reported by the media. It's much the same message that Democratic President Joe Biden and his allies spent years pushing, with little success.

"We have a great economy and the prices are coming down," Trump told reporters Sunday night before boarding Air Force One on his way back to the White House from his Florida resort.

He blamed Democrats for an economy he described as having "the highest inflation in the history of our country. I have it down now to a normal level and it's going down further."

In a social media post Friday, Trump said of the GOP: "We are the Party of Affordability!"

He also has claimed the cost of a Thanksgiving dinner this year will be down 25%, but that number is off. Grocery prices are 2.7% higher than they were in 2024.

Economic worries were the dominant concern for voters in this month's elections, according to the AP Voter Poll.

Republican strategist Doug Heye said Trump's approach is not necessarily helpful for the Republican Party or its candidates, who already face a difficult political environment in 2026 when voters will decide the balance of power in Congress. Historically, the party occupying the White House has significant losses in nonpresidential elections.

"Republicans need to relay to voters that they understand what they're going through and that they're trying to fix it," Heye said. "That can be hard to do when the president takes a nonmetaphorical wrecking ball to portions of the White House, which distract so much of Washington and the media."

"Candidates cannot afford to be distracted," Heye added. "As we saw in the recent elections, especially in Virginia, if you're not talking about what voters are talking about, they will tune you out."

A view from a key governor's race

The reality outside Washington suggests that not every Republican candidate shares Trump's outlook.

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New York Rep. Elise Stefanik, a House Republican leader who began a campaign for governor last week, said there is no question about the top issue for her constituents: affordability. She also played down her party's focus on conservative cultural priorities, including transgender athletes, which was a top Republican focus in the recent Virginia governor's race.

"Certainly I support women and girls sports and protecting them, but as you see in all of our messaging, we're focused on the top issues, which every conversation with voters is about the high taxes and spending, the unaffordability," Stefanik told The Associated Press.

Stefanik offered a nuanced perspective on Trump's leadership.

She was unwilling to criticize any of the president's major policies or governing decisions. But Stefanik, who has fought for Trump's agenda as a GOP leader in Congress, shifted the focus to New York's Democratic governor when asked about the strength of the Republican Party's support for the president.

"My sense is our party is fully united behind firing Kathy Hochul," Stefanik said before highlighting Trump's support from New York voters in recent elections.

While Stefanik said it is important for the governor to have "an effective working relationship" with Trump, she declined to say whether she would support a hypothetical Trump move to send the National Guard to New York City, as he has threatened. "It wouldn't need to happen if there was a Republican governor," she said.

Last year, Stefanik called for the National Guard to help control pro-Palestinian protests on Columbia University.

Defiant talking points

The Republican National Committee, which serves as the political arm of Trump's White House, issued a series of talking points that shrug off the recent election losses as a byproduct of Democratic voter advantage in the states where the top races played out.

The talking points, obtained by The Associated Press, ignore Republican losses in Georgia and Pennsylvania. They also overstate Trump's political strength, claiming that he is more popular than Obama and Bush were at the same time in their tenures.

The claim has been echoed across conservative media in recent days.

An AP polling analysis finds that Trump's approval is not higher than Obama's or of Bush at a similar point in their second terms.

Trump's approval, at 36% in a November poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research is slightly higher than it was at this point in his first term. But both Obama and Bush has approval ratings were in the low 40s at this point in their second terms, according to Gallup polling, which is similar to where Trump landed in Gallup's latest approval poll in October.

For Obama and Bush, their parties had big losses in the midterm elections that followed.

The Republican messaging crafted by Trump's team, however, doubles down on supporting the president and his policies.

The recent elections "were not a referendum on President Trump, Republicans in Congress, or the MAGA Agenda," the RNC talking points state. To win in 2026, "Make America Great Again" voters "will need to show up at the ballot box; President Trump and Republicans are going to make that happen."

Border Patrol official says dozens arrested in North Carolina immigration enforcement surge

SOPHIA TAREEN, BRIAN WITTE and MARYCLAIRE DALE Associated Press

A top Border Patrol commander touted dozens of arrests in North Carolina's largest city on Sunday as Charlotte residents reported encounters with federal immigration agents near churches, apartment complexes and stores.

The Trump administration has made the Democratic city of about 950,000 people its latest target for an immigration enforcement surge it says will combat crime, despite fierce objections from local leaders and downtrending crime rates.

Gregory Bovino, who led hundreds of U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents in a similar effort in Chicago, took to X to document a few of the more than 80 arrests he said agents had made. He also

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posted a highly-edited video of uniformed CBP officers handcuffing people.

"From border towns to the Queen City, our agents go where the mission calls," he posted on X, referring to Charlotte.

The effort was dubbed "Operation Charlotte's Web" as a play on the title of a famous children's book that isn't about North Carolina.

Some welcomed the intervention, including Mecklenburg County Republican Party Chairman Kyle Kirby, who said in a post Saturday that the county GOP "stands with the rule of law — and with every Charlottean's safety first."

Fear and many questions

The flurry of activity prompted fear and questions, including where detainees would be held, how long the operation would last and what agents' tactics — criticized elsewhere as aggressive and racist — would look like in North Carolina. On Saturday, at least one U.S. citizen said he was thrown to the ground and briefly detained.

At Camino, a nonprofit group that offers services to Latino communities, some said they were too afraid to leave their homes to attend school, medical appointments or work. A dental clinic the group runs had nine cancellations on Friday, spokesperson Paola Garcia said.

"Latinos love this country. They came here to escape socialism and communism, and they're hard workers and people of faith," Garcia said. "They love their family, and it's just so sad to see that this community now has this target on their back."

Bovino's operations in Chicago and Los Angeles triggered lawsuits over the use of force, including widespread deployment of chemical agents. Democratic leaders in both cities accused agents of inflaming community tensions. Federal agents fatally shot one suburban Chicago man during a traffic stop.

Bovino, head of a Border Patrol sector in El Centro, California, and other Trump administration officials have called their tactics appropriate for growing threats on agents.

Bovino posted pictures Sunday of people the Trump administration commonly dubs "criminal illegal aliens," meaning people living in the U.S. without legal permission who allegedly have criminal records. That included one of a man with an alleged history of drunk driving convictions.

"We arrested him, taking him off the streets of Charlotte so he can't continue to ignore our laws and drive intoxicated on the same roads you and your loved ones are on," Bovino said.

Residents report activity at churches and apartment complexes

The Department of Homeland Security, which oversees CBP, did not respond to inquiries about the Charlotte arrests. Bovino's spokesman did not return a request for comment Sunday.

Elsewhere, DHS has not offered many details about its arrests. In the Chicago area, the agency only provided names and details on a handful of its more than 3,000 arrests in the region from September to last week. U.S. citizens were detained during several operations. Dozens of protesters were arrested.

By Sunday, reports of CBP activity around Charlotte were "overwhelming" and difficult to quantify, Greg Ascutto, executive director of the community development group CharlotteEast, said in an email.

"The past two hours we've received countless reports of CBP activity at churches, apartment complexes and a hardware store," he said.

City council member-elect JD Mazuera Arias said federal agents appeared to be focused on churches and apartment buildings.

"Houses of worship. I mean, that's just awful," he said. "These are sanctuaries for people who are looking for hope and faith in dark times like these and who no longer can feel safe because of the gross violation of people's right to worship."

DHS says so-called sanctuary policy plays a role in Charlotte operation

Two people were arrested during a small protest Sunday outside a DHS office in Charlotte and taken to a local FBI office, said Xavier T. de Janon, an attorney who was representing them. He said it remained unclear what charges they faced.

DHS said it was focusing on North Carolina because of so-called sanctuary policies, which limit cooperation between local authorities and immigration agents.

Several county jails house immigrant arrestees and honor detainees, which allow jails to hold detainees for immigration officers to pick them up. But Mecklenburg County, where Charlotte is located, does not.

Also, the city's police department does not help with immigration enforcement.

DHS alleged that about 1,400 detainees across North Carolina had not been honored, putting the public at risk.

"We are surging DHS law enforcement to Charlotte to ensure Americans are safe and public safety threats are removed," Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin said in a statement.

Lingering thunderstorms bring flooding risk after atmospheric river drenches much of California

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A powerful atmospheric river had mostly moved through California after causing at least six deaths and dousing much of the state, but lingering thunderstorms brought the risk of mudslides in areas of Los Angeles County that were recently ravaged by wildfire.

Flood advisories remained in place through Sunday afternoon for LA, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties, where localized showers were still possible after heavy downpours on Friday and Saturday.

"Due to the abundant rainfall the past couple of days, it will not take as much rainfall to cause additional flooding/rockslide conditions," the National Weather Service said in a Sunday update.

Authorities on Sunday were still searching for a 5-year-old girl who was swept into the ocean by 15-foot (4.6-meter) waves at a state beach in Monterey County on Friday. The girl's father, 39-year-old Yuji Hu, of Calgary, Alberta, was killed while trying to save his daughter, sheriff's officials said.

In Sutter County north of Sacramento, a 71-year-old man died Friday after his vehicle was swept off a flooded bridge, according to the California Highway Patrol.

Off the coast of San Diego, a wooden boat believed to have been ferrying migrants toward the U.S. from Mexico capsized in stormy seas, leaving at least four people dead and four hospitalized, the Coast Guard said Saturday.

The long plume of tropical moisture that formed over the Pacific Ocean began drenching the San Francisco Bay Area on Wednesday night and then unleashed widespread rain over Southern California on Friday and Saturday. More than 4 inches (10 centimeters) of rain fell over coastal Santa Barbara County as the storm approached Los Angeles. Parts of the Sierra Nevada received more than a foot of snow.

The weather service said scattered rain could continue through Tuesday in the southern part of the state. Another storm was expected to arrive on Thursday.

Ford Motor shows off new high-tech HQ. It has a 'crown jewel' showroom and room for 4,000 employees

By MIKE HOUSEHOLDER Associated Press

DEARBORN, Mich. (AP) — Ford Motor Co.'s new headquarters, the carmaker's first central office since Dwight Eisenhower was president, is double the size of its old one with room for twice as many employees.

The new HQ has seven restaurants as part of a 160,000-square-foot (14,864 square-meter) food hall, office space, design studios and fabrication shops.

And, of course, cars.

The "crown jewel" of Ford's headquarters, according to Ford Land's global design and brand director, is a showroom she likened to a "James Bond villain's lair."

"But it is impressive. When you're in it, you feel like you are in the center of automotive design," Jennifer Kolstad said this past week, after leading a media tour of the new 2.1 million square-foot (195,096 square-meter) HQ.

"Its principal function is decision-making," she said. "It's where we showcase our new product, and our executives make decisions about what we will take to market."

Ford is moving its headquarters for the first time in seven decades, relocating to the newly constructed building 3 miles (4.8 kilometers) away in its longtime home of Dearborn, Michigan.

The new structure is being called "Ford World Headquarters." It is part of a larger campus that will take

the name of the current HQ: Henry Ford II World Center. Henry Ford II was the grandson of company founder Henry Ford and the uncle of Bill Ford, the automaker's executive chairman.

Ford's current headquarters, known as "The Glass House," opened in 1956, and will be demolished. The 122-year-old company expects to complete its move in 2027. It is not disclosing the cost of the project.

"Ford wants a new headquarters building that reflects who they think they are and who they want to be going forward. They don't want to be viewed as the car company from yesterday. They want to be viewed as a car company for tomorrow," said Erik Gordon, a professor at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business. "And they need to attract new kinds of employees. They're competing for software engineers, AI experts. Every company on the planet wants the same people. Those people are used to working in new, very cool offices."

Ford not only is focusing on modern amenities in its new home, it also is prioritizing proximity.

When the new HQ is fully online in two years, it will have more than 14,000 employees within a seven-minute walk and another 9,000 within a nine-minute drive, said Jim Dobleske, Ford Land CEO.

And, unlike The Glass House, where executives are separated from their employees, the new headquarters building is designed to allow for better and more collaboration between teams.

"(Ford CEO) Jim Farley has said in the past: 'When you walk into our existing headquarters building, you're not quite sure if you're walking into Ford or if you're walking into a shampoo company,'" Dobleske said. "This building, you know you are walking into Ford Motor Company."

Some workers already have set up shop inside the new headquarters, which is to be the site of a grand-opening celebration on Sunday.

General Motors also is in the midst of a headquarters move, departing its Renaissance Center home in Detroit for a new downtown office building.

Gordon, the Michigan business professor, said "both companies want a new look."

They "want to be seen as forward-looking companies of the future -- companies that are good at software and AI and things that they haven't been known for in the past," he said.

Iran's foreign minister says the nation is no longer enriching uranium at any site in the country

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's foreign minister said Sunday that Tehran is no longer enriching uranium at any site in the country, trying to signal to the West that it remains open to potential negotiations over its atomic program.

Answering a question from an Associated Press journalist visiting Iran, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi offered the most direct response yet from the Iranian government regarding its nuclear program following Israel and the United States' bombing of its enrichment sites in June during a 12-day war.

"There is no undeclared nuclear enrichment in Iran. All of our facilities are under the safeguards and monitoring" of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Araghchi said. "There is no enrichment right now because our facilities — our enrichment facilities — have been attacked."

Iran says it is threatened over accessing bombed sites

Asked what it would take for Iran to continue negotiations with the U.S. and others, Araghchi said Iran's message on its nuclear program remains "clear."

"Iran's right for enrichment, for peaceful use of nuclear technology, including enrichment, is undeniable," the foreign minister continued. "We have this right, and we continue to exercise that, and we hope that the international community, including the United States, recognize our rights and understand that this is an inalienable right of Iran. And we would never give up our rights."

Iran's government issued a three-day visa for the AP reporter to attend a summit alongside journalists from major British outlets and other media.

Mohammad Eslami, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, also attended the summit and told the gathering that Tehran had been threatened over potentially accessing the bombed enrichment sites. Satellite pictures analyzed by the AP since the attack show that Iran has not done any major work

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at the sites at Fordo, Isfahan and Natanz.

"Our security situation hasn't yet changed. If you watch the news, you see that every day we are being threatened with another attack," Eslami said. "Every day we are told if you touch anything, you'll be attacked."

Iran had been enriching uranium up to 60% purity — a short, technical step from weapons-grade levels — after U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers in 2018. Tehran long has maintained its atomic program is peaceful, though the West and the IAEA say Iran had an organized nuclear weapons program until 2003.

European nations also pushed through a measure to reimpose United Nations sanctions on Iran over the nuclear program in September.

The IAEA's Board of Governors is set to meet this week and could vote on a new resolution targeting Iran over its failure to cooperate fully with the agency.

But Araghchi left open the possibility of further negotiations with the U.S. should Washington's demands change.

He told journalists at the summit that the U.S. administration's approach does not suggest they are ready for "equal, fair negotiations to reach mutual interests."

"What we have seen from the Americans so far has actually been an effort to dictate their demands, which are maximalist and excessive. We see no chance for dialogue in the face of such demands."

Iran summit decries 'aggression'

Iran's Institute for Political and International Studies, affiliated with the country's Foreign Ministry, hosted the summit. Titled "International Law Under Assault: Aggression and Self-Defense," the conference included papers by Iranian political analysts offering Tehran's view of the 12-day war in June, many seizing on comments from German Chancellor Friedrich Merz praising Israel for having done the "dirty work" in launching its attack.

"Iran's defensive response was remarkable, inspiring, historic and above all, pure," wrote Mohammad Kazem Sajjadpour, an international relations professor. "How can one possibly compare Israel's dirty deeds to the noble and clean actions of the Iranian nation?"

Images of children killed by Israel during the war lined the walkway outside the summit, held inside the Martyr General Qassem Soleimani Building, named for the Revolutionary Guard expeditionary leader killed by a U.S. drone strike in 2020.

But Iran finds itself in a difficult moment after the war. Israel decimated the country's air defense systems, potentially leaving the door open to further airstrikes as tensions remain high over the nuclear program.

Meanwhile, economic pressures and societal change continue to challenge Iran's Shiite theocracy, which so far has held off on making decisions about whether to enforce its mandatory hijab laws or raise the price of government-subsidized gasoline, both of which have sparked nationwide protests in the past.

Immigration crackdown inspires uniquely Chicago pushback that's now a model for other cities

By SOPHIA TAREEN and CHRISTINE FERNANDO Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Baltazar Enriquez starts most mornings with street patrols, leaving his home in Chicago's Little Village on foot or by car to find immigration agents that have repeatedly targeted his largely Mexican neighborhood.

Wearing an orange whistle around his neck, the activist broadcasts his plans on Facebook.

"We don't know if they're going to come back. All we know is we've got to get ready," he tells thousands of followers. "Give us any tips if you see any suspicious cars."

Moments later, his phone buzzes.

As an unprecedented immigration crackdown enters a third month, a growing number of Chicago residents are fighting back against what they deem a racist and aggressive overreach of the federal government. The Democratic stronghold's response has tapped established activists and everyday residents from wealthy suburbs to working class neighborhoods.

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They say their efforts — community patrols, rapid responders, school escorts, vendor buyouts, honking horns and blowing whistles — are a uniquely Chicago response that other cities President Donald Trump has targeted for federal intervention want to model.

"The strategy here is to make us afraid. The response from Chicago is a bunch of obscenities and 'no,'" said Anna Zolkowski Sobor, whose North Side neighborhood saw agents throw tear gas and tackle an elderly man. "We are all Chicagoans who deserve to be here. Leave us alone."

The sound of resistance

Perhaps the clearest indicator of Chicago's growing resistance is the sound of whistles.

Enriquez is credited with being among the first to introduce the concept. For months Little Village residents have used them to broadcast the persistent presence of immigration agents.

Furious blasts both warn and attract observers who record video or criticize agents. Arrests, often referred to as kidnappings because many agents cover their faces, draw increasingly agitated crowds. Immigration agents have responded aggressively.

Officers fatally shot one man during a traffic stop, while other agents use tear gas, rubber bullets and physical force. In early November, Chicago police were called to investigate shots fired at agents. No one was injured.

Activists say they discourage violence.

"We don't have guns. All we have is a whistle," Enriquez said. "That has become a method that has saved people from being kidnapped and unlawful arrest."

By October, neighborhoods citywide were hosting so-called "Whistlemania" events to pack the brightly colored devices for distribution through businesses and free book hutches.

"They want that orange whistle," said Gabe Gonzalez, an activist. "They want to nod to each other in the street and know they are part of this movement."

Midwestern sensibilities and organizing roots

Even with its 2.7 million people, Chicago residents like to say the nation's third-largest city operates as a collection of small towns with Midwest sensibilities.

People generally know their neighbors and offer help. Word spreads quickly.

When immigration agents began targeting food vendors, Rick Rosales, enlisted his bicycle advocacy group Cycling x Solidarity. He hosted rides to visit street vendors, buying out their inventory to lower their risk while supporting their business.

Irais Sosa, co-founder of the apparel store Sin Titulo, started a neighbor program with grocery runs and rideshare gift cards for families afraid of venturing out.

"That neighborhood feel and support is part of the core of Chicago," she said.

Enriquez's organization, Little Village Community Council, saw its volunteer walking group which escorts children to school, grow from 13 to 32 students.

Many also credit the grassroots nature of the resistance to Chicago's long history of community and union organizing.

Trump's "border czar" Tom Homan said Chicago area residents were so familiar with their rights that making arrests during a different operation this year was difficult.

So when hundreds of federal agents arrived in September, activists poured energy into an emergency hotline that dispatches response teams to gather intel, including names of those detained. Volunteers would also circulate videos online, warn of reoccurring license plates or follow agents' cars while honking horns.

Protests have also cropped up quickly. Recently, high school students have launched walkouts.

Delilah Hernandez, 16, was among dozens from Farragut Career Academy who protested on a school day. She held a sign with the Constitution's preamble as she walked in Little Village. She knows many people with detained relatives.

"There is so much going on," she said. "You feel it."

A difficult environment

More than 3,200 people suspected of violating immigration laws have been arrested during the so-called "Operation Midway Blitz." Dozens of U.S. citizens and protesters have been arrested with charges ranging from resisting arrest to conspiring to impede an officer.

The Department of Homeland Security defends the operation, alleging officers face hostile crowds as

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they pursue violent criminals.

Gregory Bovino, the Border Patrol commander who's brought controversial tactics from operations in Los Angeles, called Chicago a "very non permissive environment." He blamed sanctuary protections and elected leaders and defended agents' actions, which are the subject of lawsuits.

But the operation's intensity could subside soon.

Bovino told The Associated Press this month that U.S. Customs and Border Protection will target other cities. He didn't elaborate, but Homeland Security officials confirmed Saturday that an immigration enforcement surge had begun in Charlotte, North Carolina.

DHS, which oversees CBP and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, has said operations won't end in Chicago.

Interest nationwide

Alonso Zaragoza, with a neighborhood organization in the heavily immigrant Belmont Cragin, has printed hundreds of "No ICE" posters for businesses. Organizers in Oregon and Missouri have asked for advice.

"It's become a model for other cities," Zaragoza said. "We're building leaders in our community who are teaching others."

The turnout for virtual know-your-rights trainings offered by the pro-democracy group, States at the Core, doubled from 500 to 1,000 over a recent month, drawing participants from New Jersey and Tennessee.

"We train and we let go, and the people of Chicago are the ones who run with it," said organizer Jill Garvey.

Awaiting the aftermath

Enriquez completes up to three patrol shifts daily. Beyond the physical exertion, the work takes a toll.

Federal agents visited his home and questioned family members. A U.S. citizen relative was handcuffed by agents. His car horn no longer works, which he attributes to overuse.

"This has been very traumatizing," he said. "It is very scary because you will remember this for the rest of your life."

Finland's president urges Europe to hold its nerve as he warns no ceasefire likely soon in Ukraine

By EMMA BURROWS AP European Security Correspondent

HALVALA, Finland (AP) — A ceasefire in Ukraine is unlikely before the spring and European allies need to keep up support despite a corruption scandal that has engulfed Kyiv, President Alexander Stubb of Finland told The Associated Press.

Europe, meanwhile, will require "sisu," a Finnish word meaning endurance, resilience and grit, to get through the winter months, he said, as Russia continues its hybrid attacks and information war across the continent.

Stubb also needs that quality as one of the key European interlocutors between U.S. President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. As the leader of one of Europe's smaller countries, but one that shares a 1,340-kilometer (830-mile) border with Russia, he is well aware of what's at stake.

In the 1940s, after two wars with Russia, Finland lost about 10% of its territory to Moscow and agreed to become militarily neutral. But Finland's losses were much less than they could have been as Finnish troops displayed "sisu" and inflicted heavy losses on the Soviet army, despite being vastly outnumbered.

Finland's neutral stance only reversed after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, when the Finns joined NATO. Stubb leverages his good relationship with Trump — the two men have played golf together and speak regularly — to argue the case for Ukraine.

"I can explain to President Trump what Finland went through or how I see the situation on the battlefield, or how do you deal with (Russian President Vladimir) Putin? And then, you know, if he accepts one out of 10 ideas, that's good," he said.

Stubb spoke to AP Saturday at a military base north of the capital Helsinki, where he observed Finnish volunteers take part in defense training. Wearing a jacket with the word "sisu" emblazoned across the back, he watched as volunteers practiced evacuating wounded soldiers from a conflict zone in freezing

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temperatures.

Stubb told AP that Zelenskyy must deal quickly with allegations of kickbacks and embezzlement, saying the scandal plays into the hands of Russia. Nonetheless, he urged European leaders to look at boosting financial and military support for Kyiv, which is also facing creeping gains by Russia on the battlefield.

"I'm not very optimistic about achieving a ceasefire or the beginning of peace negotiations, at least this year," Stubb said, adding it would be good to "get something going" by March.

The three big questions on the road to a ceasefire are security guarantees for Ukraine, rebuilding its economy and coming to some sort of understanding about territorial claims, he said.

To bring peace to Ukraine, Stubb said, Trump and European leaders need to maximize pressure on Russia and on Putin in order to change his strategic thinking. Putin "basically wants to deny the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine," aims that have not altered since the war began nearly four years ago, Stubb said.

To do this, he suggested using tools such as the hundreds of billions of dollars in frozen Russian assets held in Europe as collateral to fund Ukraine, as well as increasing military pressure on Moscow.

Stubb praised Trump for sanctioning the major Russian energy companies Lukoil and Rosneft in October, saying he did "an excellent job," but argued more must be done to give Ukraine the capacity to hit Russia's "military or defense industry."

Last month, Trump denied a Ukrainian request for long-range Tomahawk missiles that would theoretically allow Ukraine to strike deeper into Russia – although Kyiv does not currently have any launchers or platforms from which to fire them.

Ukraine is still negotiating with the U.S. for more firepower, Stubb indicated.

Trump's swings on Ukraine

In mid-October, the White House announced Trump would meet Putin in Budapest before abruptly canceling the meeting less than a week later.

The decision came after a call between U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, where Rubio probably realized that "the Russians haven't moved an inch," Stubb said, and there was "no point in taking President Trump into a situation whereby he doesn't get a deal or anything."

The cancellation was "another example of a strategic mistake by the Russians. They had an opportunity and they blew it," Stubb said.

Trump has swung back and forth between seeking rapprochement with Putin and applying pressure to him, and has done the same with Zelenskyy. Stubb said he deals with any shifts by being "quite patient" and living with "reality."

"You can't have illusions about things that you would like to see happening," the Finnish president said. "I've tried personally to focus on things such as: We need security guarantees for Ukraine. How to build those? We need a ceasefire. How can we get that?"

"It's been a bit of a grind. I guess you need 'sisu' in these types of negotiations as well."

But, he said, the work is paying off and the military options for guaranteeing Ukraine's security once a ceasefire or peace negotiation is reached are now "clear," with various countries having committed resources — although he declined to give more details, citing confidential military planning.

Despite some of Ukraine's missteps, Stubb is unstinting in his praise for Zelenskyy. "I admire a lot of the things that he's doing because to lead a country in a war ... is existential. You learn a lot from other human beings in that situation," he said.

Stubb has Trump's ear

When it comes to dealing with Donald Trump, Stubb is in a better position than many European leaders. In his youth, he studied in the United States on a golf scholarship, and the two spent about seven hours playing a round at Mar-a-Lago in March.

Golf was a "door-opener," and helped him create a bond with the U.S. president, he suggested. While Trump and Zelenskyy have a notoriously tempestuous relationship, Stubb said he and other European leaders can help act as a bridge between them.

"We interpret President Trump to President Zelenskyy and vice versa," he said.

But when it comes to Putin, only one person should negotiate directly and publicly with him and that's

Trump, Stubb indicated, suggesting the European Union is unlikely to open a direct channel of communication with the Russian leader any time soon.

Russian attacks in Europe

At the same time, Trump is leading negotiations with Putin, multiple European countries have faced incursions from Russian drones, suspected or confirmed, as well as fighter jets and an alleged widespread Russian sabotage campaign.

Russia is not only conducting a kinetic war in Ukraine but also a hybrid war in Europe, Stubb told AP.

"The line between war and peace has been blurred," Stubb said

Russia, he said, is trying to destabilize Europe and "cause havoc and panic," with attacks including arson, vandalism and propaganda.

The way to deal with those threats is to "be Finnish," Stubb said.

"In other words, be cool, calm, collected and have a little bit of that 'sisu.'"

UK government poised to overhaul its asylum system as a political storm brews over migration

By BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The British government plans to tighten its asylum system in a series of sweeping changes modeled after Denmark that aims to reduce immigration and quell the political storm over migrants making dangerous English Channel crossings to enter the country without authorization.

The policy changes to be announced by Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood on Monday in the House of Commons are yet another attempt to make the U.K. less attractive to those seeking refuge and easier to remove migrants who don't qualify for asylum.

Mahmood said it was a moral mission to control the borders and reunite a divided country on the flash-point issue that has helped fuel the rise of the hard-right Reform UK Party, though as the daughter of migrants she denied the ruling center-left Labour Party was adopting far-right talking points.

"People can see huge pressure in their communities and they can also see a system that is broken, and where people are able to flout the rules, abuse the system and get away with it," Mahmood told the BBC.

Successive governments have failed to halt the flow of migrants to British shores through a variety of efforts that included the previous Conservative government's plan to send arrivals to Rwanda for asylum processing that never took effect. That policy was scrapped last year when Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who leads the Labour Party, was elected last year and vowed to crack down on migrant smuggling gangs.

More than 39,000 migrants have arrived by boat in the U.K. this year, surpassing the almost 37,000 who arrived in 2024, according to the latest Home Office figures. The number, though, is still shy of the nearly 40,000 who had arrived at this point in the year in 2022, which recorded the highest number ever.

Although the numbers arriving by small boat have risen, they represent a fraction of total immigration, with most people entering the U.K. legally, on visas. Net migration — the number of people entering the U.K. minus those who left — topped 900,000 in the year to June 2023, according to official figures. The surge was driven in part by hundreds of thousands of people fleeing war in Ukraine and China's clamp-down in Hong Kong.

Net migration stood at 431,000 in the year to June 2025, according to the Office for National Statistics, down 49.9% from 860,000 a year earlier.

The issue of migration became more politically volatile this summer as protests that occasionally became violent were held outside hotels housing asylum seekers after a migrant was arrested — and later convicted — of sexual assault for trying to kiss a 14-year-old girl.

The new reforms include revoking the U.K.'s legal duty, introduced under EU law in 2005, to provide support for asylum seekers, allowing the government to withdraw housing and weekly allowances that are now guaranteed. Benefits could also be denied to people who have a right to work but don't and those who break the law, or work illegally.

Refugee status will also be regularly reviewed to see if people can safely be repatriated.

Safe ways will be designated for migrants to claim asylum without having to pack into overcrowded inflatable rafts and risk crossing the choppy channel.

Chris Philp, a Conservative member of Parliament, criticized the policy for “tinkering” at the edges. He said the changes wouldn’t have the impact of the scrapped Rwanda policy and said every migrant entering the country without authorization should be deported within a week.

“I don’t object to it in principle, but it’s not going to work,” Philp told the BBC. “It’s gimmicks. It’s rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. It’s not going to stop people getting on boats.”

The Home Office said the new policy was modeled Denmark’s success at reducing its asylum applications to the lowest point in 40 years and removing 95% of those who sought to settle there.

Denmark was once a haven for refugees. But as Europe and the Western world have struggled to deal with mass migration from people fleeing conflict, famine and poverty, it has imposed strict limits on newcomers that has drawn international criticism for discouraging people seeking refuge.

Goodell praises NFL’s international series and says league plans to return to Spain

By TALES AZZONI AP Sports Writer

MADRID (AP) — NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell praised this year’s international series and said Sunday that the league plans to return to Spain and will continue to study other possible markets.

Goodell spoke before the Washington Commanders faced the Miami Dolphins at Real Madrid’s Santiago Bernabeu Stadium in the seventh — and final — international game of the season, the most ever in one year for the NFL as it continues to expand globally.

“We will be back, we are excited,” Goodell told Spanish media. “This has been a great opportunity for us. We always wait until we get through the games, but we want to be back here in Madrid (and) Spain. I think this is a great market for us.”

There were talks of the league also trying to organize a game in Barcelona.

The NFL this year also played for the first time in Dublin and Berlin. It played in Sao Paulo to start the season in Brazil, and had three more games in London.

“It’s been spectacular,” Goodell told NFL Network. “We’ve never played seven games, Brazil was a great start and finishing here in Madrid it just feels right. This is such a great city. The stadium is remarkable and the partners at Real Madrid and the city have just been amazing.”

The NFL plans to increase the number of international games to a point where each team will get to play a game abroad every year. He said in September that the NFL also wants to play in Asia. Next year, it will go to Australia and add a game in Rio de Janeiro.

“Australia is going to be a big learning and test next year,” he said. “We are excited about that. I think we will be back in a lot of the markets we’ve been this year, but we have a couple more that we’re thinking about right now. So many cities have been reaching out, and that’s a great thing for us.”

Zelenskyy says Ukraine is working on a prisoner exchange with Russia

By SAMYA KULLAB Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine is working to resume prisoner exchanges with Russia that could bring home 1,200 Ukrainian prisoners, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Sunday, a day after his national security chief announced progress in negotiations.

“We are ... counting on the resumption of POW exchanges,” Zelenskyy wrote on X. “Many meetings, negotiations and calls are currently taking place to ensure this.”

Rustem Umerov, Secretary of Ukraine’s National Security and Defense Council, said Saturday he held consultations mediated by Turkey and the United Arab Emirates on resuming exchanges.

He said the parties agreed to activate prisoner exchange agreements brokered in Istanbul to release 1,200 Ukrainians. Moscow did not immediately comment.

The Istanbul agreements refer to prisoner-exchange protocols established with Turkish mediation in 2022 that set rules for large, coordinated swaps. Since then, Russia and Ukraine have traded thousands

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of prisoners, though exchanges have been sporadic.

Umerov said technical consultations would be held soon to finalize procedural and organizational details, expressing hope that returning Ukrainians could “celebrate the New Year and Christmas holidays at home — at the family table and next to their relatives.”

In other developments, energy infrastructure was damaged by Russian drone strikes overnight into Sunday in Ukraine’s Odesa region, Ukraine’s State Emergency Service said. A solar power plant was among the damaged sites.

Ukraine is desperately trying to fend off relentless Russian aerial attacks that have brought rolling blackouts across Ukraine on the brink of winter.

Combined missile and drone strikes on the power grid have coincided with Ukraine’s efforts to hold back a Russian battlefield push aimed at capturing the eastern stronghold of Pokrovsk.

Russia fired a total of 176 drones and one missile overnight, Ukraine’s air force said Sunday, adding that Ukrainian forces shot down or neutralized 139 drones.

On the front line, Russia’s Defense Ministry said Sunday that its forces had taken two settlements in Ukraine’s southern Zaporizhzhia region.

Russia’s bigger and better-equipped army has scaled up its attacks, placing the short-handed Ukrainian military under severe strain. Ukrainian officials said in September that the front line has grown in length to nearly 1,250 kilometers (800 miles).

Russia has paid a high price in casualties and armor for its war of attrition, however, and Ukraine has held it to incremental battlefield gains.

Ukrainian forces struck a major oil refinery in Russia’s Samara region, along with a warehouse storing drones for the elite Rubicon drone unit in the partially Russian-occupied Donetsk region, Ukraine’s general staff said Sunday. Russian officials did not immediately confirm the attacks.

Months of Ukrainian long-range drone strikes on Russian refineries have aimed to deprive Moscow of the oil export revenue it needs to pursue the war.

Russia’s defense ministry said Sunday that its forces shot down 57 Ukrainian drones overnight.

Samsung and other South Korean firms pledge larger domestic investments after US tariff deal

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Samsung Electronics and other major South Korean companies on Sunday announced fresh domestic investment plans at a meeting with President Lee Jae Myung, who hopes the moves will counter concerns that the firms would prioritize U.S. investments under a trade deal.

Lee’s meeting with business leaders came days after his government finalized a trade deal with the United States, in which Seoul pledged to invest \$350 billion in U.S. industries in exchange for averting the Trump administration’s highest tariffs.

Samsung, a global leader in computer chips, said it will invest 450 trillion won (\$310 billion) over the next five years to expand its domestic operations, including building another production line at its Pyeongtaek manufacturing hub to meet surging global semiconductor demands fueled by artificial intelligence.

Samsung said the new line, set to begin operations in 2028, is part of its broader effort to secure additional production capacity in anticipation of rising mid- to long-term demands for memory chips. The company also plans to build AI data centers in the country’s southwest South Jeolla Province and the southeastern city of Gumi to support government efforts to reduce the development gap between the greater Seoul metropolitan area and other regions.

Hyundai Motor Group, South Korea’s largest automaker, said it plans to invest 125 trillion won (\$86.3 billion) from 2026 to 2030 to expand domestic research and development and advance new technologies such as AI, robotics and self-driving cars.

SK Group, another semiconductor powerhouse, and shipbuilders Hanwha Ocean and HD Hyundai also announced plans to increase their domestic investments. Both are central to South Korean commitments to boost the U.S. shipbuilding industry, a sector highlighted by President Donald Trump in negotiations with Seoul.

In his meeting with the companies' chiefs, Lee credited the business sector for helping his government negotiate the trade deal with Washington but urged the companies to maintain strong domestic investments to ease concerns they might cut spending at home to invest more in America. He said his government is exploring various policy steps, including easing regulations, to help create a more favorable business environment for the companies.

SK Chair Chey Tae-won, whose group plans to invest at least 128 trillion won (\$88.3 billion) domestically through 2028 with a focus on AI, said the finalization of trade talks with the United States eases uncertainties and paves way for bolder domestic investment.

The two governments on Friday released the details of the trade agreement, including \$150 billion in South Korean investments in the U.S. shipbuilding sector and an additional \$200 billion in other American industries, which Seoul says will be capped at \$20 billion per year to prevent financial instability.

The United States agreed to reduce tariffs on South Korean cars and auto parts from 25% to 15%, and to apply tariffs on South Korean semiconductors on terms "no less favorable" than those granted to comparable competitors in the future.

Hundreds of thousands rally in Manila against flood-control corruption scandal

By JIM GOMEZ and JOEAL CALUPITAN Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos gathered Sunday in the capital in the largest rally so far to demand accountability for a flood-control corruption scandal that has implicated powerful members of Congress and top government officials.

Various groups have protested in recent months following the discovery that thousands of flood defense projects across one of the world's most typhoon-prone countries were substandard, incomplete or simply did not exist.

Government engineers, public works officials and construction company executives have testified under oath in hearings by the Senate and a fact-finding commission that members of Congress and officials at the Department of Public Works and Highways took kickbacks from construction companies to help them win lucrative contracts and avoid accountability. Most denied the allegations.

About 650,000 members of the Iglesia Ni Cristo, or Church of Christ, joined the start of the three-day rally Sunday in Manila's Rizal Park despite intermittent rains, police said. Many wore white shirts and carried anti-corruption placards. About 2,000 people, including retired generals, held a separate anti-corruption protest late Sunday at the "People Power" monument in suburban Quezon city.

"These thieves have made us very outraged because we pay our taxes and these officials just plunder the treasury and rob us of our future," said Rachel Morte, a 41-year-old resident from northern Pampanga province who joined the huge Manila rally. "We hope we'll get justice and the stolen money will be returned to the people."

Iglesia is an influential group that votes as a bloc and is courted by political candidates during elections.

The police, backed by the military, went on full alert and deployed thousands of personnel to secure the weekend rallies, which were peaceful, Interior Secretary Jonvic Remulla said.

During a Sept. 21 anti-corruption demonstration, a few hundred black-clad protesters threw rocks, bottles and firebombs at police near the presidential palace in Manila, injuring more than 100 officers. Criminal complaints have been filed against 97 protesters.

The presidential palace went on security lockdown over the weekend, with major access roads barricaded by anti-riot police, cargo containers and barbed wires.

National police chief Lt. Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr. ordered law enforcement to exercise "maximum tolerance" in Sunday's rallies.

Marcos promises action

Flood control is an especially sensitive issue in the Philippines, one of the Asian countries most prone to deadly typhoons, flooding and extreme weather. Two typhoons left at least 259 dead this month, mostly from flash floods and landslides, and affected millions of others.

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President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has been trying to quell public outrage and street protests sparked by the scandal, saying on Thursday that many of the powerful senators, members of Congress and wealthy businesspeople who were implicated would be in jail by Christmas.

Marcos said an independent fact-finding commission he created has already filed criminal complaints for graft, corruption and plunder against 37 suspects. Criminal complaints have also been filed against 86 construction company executives and nine government officials for allegedly evading nearly 9 billion pesos (\$152 million) in taxes.

Among those accused are lawmakers opposed to and allied with Marcos, including former House of Representatives Speaker Martin Romualdez, the president's cousin and a key ally; and former Senate President Chiz Escudero. Both have denied any wrongdoing.

Sen. Bong Go, a key ally of former President Rodrigo Duterte, has also been accused of involvement in corruption in flood control and other infrastructure projects. He has denied the allegations.

Duterte, a harsh Marcos critic, was detained by the International Criminal Court in the Netherlands in March on charges of crimes against humanity over his brutal anti-drugs crackdowns.

His daughter, the current vice president, said Marcos should also be held accountable and jailed for approving the 2025 national budget, which appropriated billions for flood control projects.

There have been isolated calls, including by some Duterte supporters, for the military to withdraw its backing for Marcos, but Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. has repeatedly rejected the idea.

"With full conviction, I assure the public that the armed forces will not engage in any action that violates the Constitution," Brawner said. "Not today, not tomorrow and certainly not under my watch."

As nations push for more ambition at climate talks, chairman says they may get it

By SETH BORENSTEIN, ANTON L. DELGADO and MELINA WALLING Associated Press
BELEM, Brazil (AP) — Going into United Nations climate negotiations, the Brazilian hosts weren't looking for big end-of-session pronouncements on lofty goals. This conference was supposed to hyperfocus on "implementation" of past promises not yet kept.

Throw that out the window.

The urgency of climate change is causing some negotiators to push for more big-picture action — on weak plans to cut emissions of heat-trapping gases, on too little money to help nations wracked by climate change, on putting teeth into phasing out coal, oil and gas. Because of that pressure to do more — including from Brazil President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva — the diplomat chairing the talks said Saturday he'll consider a big-picture, end-of-negotiations communiqué, sometimes known as a decision or cover text.

"I think things have changed, which is a very good thing," said veteran observer Jean Su of the Center for Biological Diversity. "So I think there's momentum that we will get some type of decision text, and our hope is that in particular there's going to be some commitment on phasing out fossil fuels."

"I would say that what's at stake now is probably higher than the last several COPs because you're looking at an ambition gap," said former Philippine negotiator Jasper Inventor, international program director at Greenpeace International. "There's a lot of expectation, there's a lot of excitement here, but there's also a lot of political signals that's been sent by President Lula."

"We're at the middle of the COP, and at the middle of COP is usually where the negotiators stare each other eye-to-eye. It's almost like a staring contest," Inventor said. "But next week, this is where the negotiations need to happen, where political decisions are made by the ministers."

Because this process stems from the Paris climate Agreement, which is mostly voluntary, these end statements grab headlines and set global tone but have limited power. The last few COP end statements have made still-unfulfilled pledges for rich countries to give money to poor nations to cope with climate change and the world to phase out fossil fuels.

Decision time

Key among those issues is the idea of telling nations to go back to the drawing board on what experts consider inadequate climate-fighting plans submitted this year.

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In the 2015 Paris agreement, which is being celebrated here on its 10th anniversary, nations are supposed to have submitted climate-fighting, emissions-curbing plans every five years. So far 116 of 193 countries have filed theirs this year, but what they promised isn't much. United Nations and Climate Action Tracker, a group of scientists, calculates that these new pledges barely reduced future projections for Earth's warming.

Even if the world does all it promises, Earth would be about seven-tenths of a degree Celsius (1.3 degrees Fahrenheit) above the Paris goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times, the groups estimated.

So small island nations, led by Palau, asked that this conference confront the gap between what's planned in national pledges and what's needed to keep the world from hitting the temperature danger zone.

That's not on the agenda for these talks. Nor are specific details on how to fulfill last year's pledge by rich nations to provide \$300 billion annually in climate financial aid.

So when nations early on wanted to address these issues, COP President André Corrêa do Lago, a veteran Brazilian diplomat, set up special small confabs to try to decide if the controversial topics should be discussed.

On Saturday, the conference punted the issue to the incoming ministers.

"The parties will decide how they want to proceed," do Lago said at a Saturday evening news conference. Given what countries are saying and past history that usually means a final end-of-COP message to the world, several experts said.

In a casual exchange with a reporter about how the conference is going, COP President do Lago said: "Eh, could be better but not as bad as it could be."

Momentum to phase out fossil fuels

U.N. General Assembly President Annalena Baerbock, the former German foreign minister who has been to 10 of these sessions, told The Associated Press Saturday morning before the evening's session that she saw "new momentum" in Belem.

"We can fight the climate crisis only together if we commit to a strong mitigation target," she said. "This means also transitioning away from fossil fuels, investing into renewable energy."

Two years ago in Dubai, the world agreed to "transition away from fossil fuels," but last year no mention of that was made and there've been no details on how or when to do this.

Baerbock hailed as crucial Lula's call during the Leaders' Summit last week for "a road map for humanity to overcome, in a just and planned way, its dependence on fossil fuels, reverse deforestation, and mobilize the resources needed to do so."

"I think what we have before us are the ingredients of a potential high-ambition package for the outcome of this conference," Iskander Erzini Vernoit, executive director of the Moroccan IMAL Initiative for Climate and Development, said.

Getting Indigenous voices heard

Indigenous groups breached and blockaded the venue twice this week with demands to be further included in the U.N. talks, despite this conference's promotion as the "Indigenous Peoples' COP."

The COP so far "was a testament that unfortunately, for Indigenous peoples to be heard, they actually need to be disruptive," said Aya Khourshid, an Egyptian-Palestinian member of A Wisdom Keepers Delegation, a group of Indigenous people from around the world.

Indigenous people are putting a lot of energy "to be in this space but to not necessarily be given a platform or voice at the decision table with the ministers and those who are in power," said Whaia, a Ngāti Kahungunu Wisdom Keeper.

"There's an imbalance here at COP30," she said. "There's the privileged and the not-so lucky who don't get a say on what's actually going on in their own home."

Fetterman says he's back home after a fall put the Pennsylvania senator in the hospital

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. John Fetterman says he has returned home to his family in Pennsylvania after being hospitalized due to what his office said was a ventricular fibrillation flare-up that caused him to feel light-headed and fall during an early morning walk Thursday.

Fetterman, D-Pa., posted a picture Saturday on X that showed the aftereffects to his nose and forehead, saying "20 stitches later and a full recovery, I'm back home" with his wife, Gisele, and their children.

The smiling Fetterman also said he was grateful for the medical team in Pittsburgh that "put me back together."

"See you back in DC," he concluded.

Ventricular fibrillation is the most serious form of abnormal heartbeat and can lead to cardiac arrest — when the heart suddenly stops beating — and sudden cardiac death, according to the American Heart Association.

Ventricular fibrillation occurs in the heart's lower chambers, and the heart association says its causes include cardiomyopathy, which Fetterman was diagnosed with in 2022. Cardiomyopathy can impede blood flow and potentially cause heartbeats so irregular they can be fatal.

Fetterman, 56, disclosed that he was diagnosed with cardiomyopathy and another type of abnormal heartbeat, atrial fibrillation, after he had a stroke during his 2022 campaign.

Headwinds for Trump in persuading the Saudi crown prince to agree to normalize ties with Israel

By AAMER MADHANI and MATTHEW LEE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has not been subtle about how badly he wants to see Saudi Arabia and Israel normalize relations.

He has talked up his push to extend his first term Abraham Accords — the project that formalized commercial and diplomatic ties between Israel and a trio of Arab nations — as key to his plan for bringing long-term stability to the Middle East as the fragile ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza continues to hold.

The normalization push is expected to be high on the agenda when Trump hosts Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on Tuesday for talks during a pomp-filled White House visit.

"I hope that Saudi Arabia will be going into the Abraham Accords very shortly," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One on Friday as he made his way to Florida for the weekend.

Yet Trump's optimism that a U.S.-brokered deal could come soon is tempered by more sober internal assessments. Saudi Arabia is unlikely to sign on to the accords anytime soon, but there is cautious optimism that an agreement can be sealed by the end of Trump's second term, according to three administration officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

The first Trump administration and its successor, the Biden administration, tried to persuade Saudi Arabia to join the Abraham Accords. But those hopes were dashed first by opposition from the crown prince's father, King Salman, during Trump's first term and then by Prince Mohammed himself after the Hamas attacks on Oct. 7, 2023, against Israel that sparked the Gaza war.

Although the crown prince, widely referred to as MBS, has indicated he may be more flexible than his father on the matter, a guaranteed path to a Palestinian state remains a condition and something that Israel vehemently opposes.

Trump could try to convince Prince Mohammed that the American leader's 20-point Gaza peace plan represents such a path. That, however, risks the ire of the Israelis and their cooperation in the effort, especially if the Republican president were to promise a detailed timeline of benchmarks to be met.

One of the officials said the best outcome for this week's talks, from the U.S. standpoint, might be for the Saudis to acknowledge Trump's plan as the starting point for eventual Palestinian statehood and publicly agree to consider joining the accords.

Saudis want a path toward Palestinian statehood

Trump in recent weeks has predicted that once Saudi Arabia signs on to the accords, "everybody" in the Arab world "goes in." He has asserted that the Saudis will join, given that the Gaza ceasefire is holding.

"We have a lot of people joining now the Abraham Accords, and hopefully we're going to get Saudi Arabia very soon," Trump said in a speech to business leaders this month where Princess Reema Bandar Al Saud, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Washington, was a special guest. Trump jokingly assured the diplomat, "I'm

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not lobbying.”

Trump says his optimism is informed by what he sees as a seismic shift in Middle East dynamics that he believes has created an opening for regional leaders to pursue lasting peace.

Iran, the common nemesis for the Saudis and Israelis, has seen its myriad proxies in Gaza, Lebanon and Yemen diminished after two years of conflict in the Middle East, and Tehran’s nuclear program was set back by U.S. strikes in June. Those factors have helped seed the ground for Saudi Arabia and Israel to come to an agreement, Trump argues.

Nevertheless, Trump’s public confidence remains difficult to square with the Saudi position that any normalization deal requires first establishing a clear path for Palestinian statehood.

Yet the visit could present an opportunity for Trump to ease the crown prince toward his ultimate goal, particularly if Trump can show he is receptive to the need to establish a Palestinian state.

“Trump showing openness and even support for a Palestinian state could go a long way in his hopes of inching MBS toward normalization,” said John Hannah, who served as national security adviser for Vice President Dick Cheney.

But Trump certainly contends with some headwinds in persuading Prince Mohammed to get onboard, at least in the near term.

The searing images of the Israel-Hamas war remain fresh and rebuilding the ravaged territory will be a yearslong effort.

Israel and Hamas are making slow progress on the return of remains of the last hostages in Gaza. But several critical decision points on the horizon — disarming Hamas, establishing international security forces in the territory and establishing an alternative governance structure for a post-Hamas Gaza — could undermine the delicate truce if things go sideways.

Ongoing Israeli settler violence against Palestinians in the West Bank has added to regional distrust toward Israel.

“As long as the scenes on Saudi television continue to be scenes of devastation and misery in Gaza, I think it’s going to be very hard for MBS to move in this direction,” said Jonathan Schanzer, executive director at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, a hawkish Washington think tank. “That said, I also believe that there are things that the Saudis can do, as they’ve done in the past, to advance the process of normalization across the region.”

Fighter jet deal seems unlikely during visit

The crown prince is expected to come to the White House with a wish list that includes receiving formal assurances from Trump defining the scope of the U.S. military protection for the kingdom and an agreement to buy U.S.-made F-35 fighter jets, one of the world’s most advanced aircraft.

But as the White House was wrapping up preparations for the visit, it appeared unlikely that Trump was ready to sign off on a deal for the fighter jets, the administration officials said. But they noted that Trump has a track record for unpredictability and could decide to approve the sales if the crown prince somehow persuades him.

The officials said the administration remains wary about upsetting Israel’s “qualitative military advantage” over its neighbors, especially at a time when Trump is depending on Israeli support for the success of his Gaza peace plan.

Another long-standing concern, which also derailed a potential similar sale to the United Arab Emirates, is that the F-35 technology could be stolen by or somehow transferred to China, which has close ties to both the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

The crown prince’s price for normalization has only risen in the aftermath of Gaza, said Hannah, the former Cheney aide, who is now a senior fellow at the Jewish Institute for National Security of America. But Hannah said it would be unwise for Trump to give up his leverage.

“I think it would be folly not to insist that the ultimate integration of these planes into the Saudi order of battle be tied to normalization and a more fundamental and permanent transformation in Saudi-Israel relations and the regional security landscape,” Hannah said.

In this Brazilian state, a new push to track cattle is key to slowing deforestation

By MELINA WALLING Associated Press

BELEM, Brazil (AP) — Maria Gorete, who just began ranching three years ago, is doing something new with her 76 head of cattle in the Brazilian countryside near the town of Novo Repartimento.

She's piercing their ears.

Their new jewelry — ear tags, actually — will track their movements throughout their lives as part of an initiative aimed at slowing deforestation in the Brazilian state of Para. Depending on how well it works, it's the kind of solution the world needs more of to slow climate change, the subject of annual United Nations talks just a few hours away in Belem.

With about 20 million cattle in Para, it's a mammoth task. Some of them are on big farms closer to cities, but others are in remote areas where farmers have been cutting down Amazon rainforest to make room for their pastures. That's a problem for climate change because it means trees that absorb pollution are being replaced by cattle that emit methane, a powerful planet-warming gas.

Brazil has lost about 339,685 square kilometers (131,153 square miles) of mature rainforest since 2001 — an area roughly the size of Germany — and more than a third of that loss was in Para, according to Global Forest Watch. Para alone accounts for about 14% of all rainforest loss recorded worldwide over the last 24 years.

Gorete, with her small herd, said the tagging hasn't been much of a hassle. And she sees the program as a good thing. It will let her sell her beef to companies and countries whose consumers want to know where it came from.

"With this identification, it opens doors to the world," said Gorete, who before cattle ranching cultivated acai and cacao. "It adds value to the animals."

How the tagging works

Cows can move to several farms in their lifetime — born on one pasture, sold to a different farmer, or two or three or more, until they've grown to their full weight and are sold to a processor, said Marina Piatto, executive director of the Brazilian agriculture and conservation NGO Imaflora.

Tracking those movements effectively can be a way to discourage deforestation. That's where the tagging comes in.

Starting next year, all cattle being transported in Para have to be tagged. Each animal actually gets a tag in each ear. One is a written number that is registered with the government in an official database. The other is an electronic chip that links to the same information as the number registered to the cow — like when and where it was born, where it was raised, the owner, the breed and more. By 2027, all cattle in Para, including cattle born on ranches in the state, have to have tags.

Once a tag is removed, it's broken and can't be put back, a measure to help avoid fraud.

When the cattle moves, owners are required to report those movements and buyers are required to log the transaction. To be able to sell their animals, ranchers must have tags and a clean history. Locations registered with the government where the animals have been can be checked against satellite images to detect illegal deforestation, or against maps that show Indigenous territories that are supposed to be off-limits for cattle.

"The only solution is individual cattle traceability because then you can know for each movement where that cattle has been and if it has been in a place that has been deforested in the past," said José Otavio Passos, the Brazilian Amazon director with The Nature Conservancy.

Mauro Lucio, 60, has 2,600 cattle on his farm in Paragominas about 290 kilometers (180 miles) south of Belem. He said the new tagging program was an easy transition for him because he's been tagging his cattle since 2000. He did it to track his own herd, but he sees the benefit of the government now being involved.

"For me, this is the same tool," he said.

Gorete, the cattle rancher near Novo Repartimento, said she doesn't believe ranchers will be able to skirt the system once it's fully in place.

"The guy who doesn't have identification of his animals is not going to be selling," she said.

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Industry is a participant

The government will pay for the tags for farms with 100 head of cattle or fewer and ranchers with anything beyond that pay by themselves, said Passos, of The Nature Conservancy. Lucio said the last price he paid for tags was just under 9 Brazilian reais (US\$1.70).

JBS, the world's largest meatpacker, is donating 2 million tags to the effort. The company, which is among several that have been fined or faced lawsuits for buying cattle raised illegally on deforested land, said traceability of cattle can help address concerns about deforestation. JBS says it has a "zero-tolerance policy" for illegal deforestation and takes several steps to ensure its supply chain doesn't contribute to deforestation.

Passos said it's important to have industry players on board. "We have never had such a unique window of opportunity where you have all the sectors, the cattle ranchers, the meatpackers, the industry, the government, the NGOs, all hurtling around the same objective," he said.

Even if meat producers are backing a legal system for cattle tracing, though, there will always be ways to get around laws, said Piatto, of Imaflora, because "illegal is cheaper, it's easier."

Christian Poirier, program director at Amazon Watch, an organization focused on rainforest protection, said land clearing is carried out "in a sophisticated way by well-funded crime syndicates, not by small landholders in the majority by any means."

He said it's been easy for those groups to get around current efforts to stop the clearing. He called the new tagging a step in the right direction, but said the most determined people may still be capable of getting around the new rules.

The committee that has been coordinating between government, industry and producers has been working on ways to prevent fraud and use law enforcement most effectively, said Fernando Sampaio, sustainability director of the Brazilian Association of Meat Exporting Industries. For that, they have to know where to look; for instance, if a farm is selling more animals than its size would suggest, that might be a red flag.

Sampaio characterized a small minority of farms as being run by criminal operations.

"These are the guys that need to be excluded from the supply chain," he said.

Today in History: November 17, the NFL's infamous 'Heidi Game'

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Monday, Nov. 17, the 321st day of 2025. There are 44 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Nov. 17, 1968, the last minutes of a tense NFL matchup on NBC between the New York Jets and the Oakland Raiders were preempted by the children's film "Heidi." The network received thousands of calls from angry viewers and formally apologized.

Also on this date:

In 1800, Congress held its first session in the partially completed U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C.

In 1869, the Suez Canal opened in Egypt.

In 1973, President Richard Nixon told a gathering of Associated Press managing editors at a televised news conference in Orlando, Florida: "People have got to know whether or not their president is a crook. Well, I'm not a crook."

In 1989, an estimated 10,000-15,000 Czechoslovakian students demonstrated in Prague against Communist rule; hundreds of thousands joined the protests in the following days. Dubbed the "Velvet Revolution" for its nonviolent nature, the protests led to the resignation of the Communist Party's leadership on Nov. 28 that year.

In 1997, 62 people, most of them foreign tourists, were killed when militants opened fire at the Temple of Hatshepsut (haht-shehp-SOOT') in Luxor, Egypt; the attackers were killed by police.

In 2003, Arnold Schwarzenegger, the Austrian-born actor who had become one of America's biggest movie stars of the 1980s and '90s, was sworn in as the 38th governor of California.

In 2020, President Donald Trump fired the nation's top election security official, Christopher Krebs, who had refuted Trump's unsubstantiated claims of electoral fraud and vouched for the integrity of the vote.

Today's Birthdays: Film director Martin Scorsese (skor-SEH'-see) is 83. Actor-model Lauren Hutton is 82.

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Actor-director Danny DeVito is 81. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Jim Boeheim is 81. "Saturday Night Live" producer Lorne Michaels is 81. Basketball Hall of Famer Elvin Hayes is 80. Film director Roland Joffe is 80. Actor Stephen Root is 74. TV host-entertainer RuPaul is 65. Actor Dylan Walsh is 62. TV host-model Daisy Fuentes is 59. R&B singer Ronnie DeVoe (New Edition; Bell Biv DeVoe) is 58. Actor Rachel McAdams is 47.