

Groton Daily Independent

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Community Calendar

Tuesday, Sept. 22

FIRST DAY OF AUTUMN

Senior Menu: Beef and bean burrito, Spanish rice, corn, fruit, pumpkin bar.

St. John's Lutheran: Quilting, 9 a.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

JH Football at Webster, 4 p.m.

Volleyball hosts Warner (7th/C @ 5pm, 8th/JV @ 6pm, Varsity to follow)

Groton Daily Independent

PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445

Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460

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Wednesday, Sept. 23

Senior Menu: Chicken bacon ranch pasta, broccoli, fruit, whole wheat bread.

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

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

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, Sept. 24

Senior Menu: Chicken bacon ranch pasta, broccoli, fruit, whole wheat bread.

Boys Golf at Sisseton Invitational, 10 a.m.

Cross Country at Clark, 2 p.m.

Boys Soccer @ James Valley Christian (4pm - theme: Groton Gear

Volleyball hosts Mobridge-Pollock (7th/C @ 4pm, 8th/JV @ 5pm, Varsity to follow) - theme: Camo)

Friday, Sept. 25

Senior Menu: Grilled chicken sandwich, roasted sweet potatoes, California blend, fruit.

Volleyball hosts Langford Area (C team at 5 p.m., JV at 6 p.m. followed by Varsity) - theme: Matching Sets

Saturday, Sept. 26

JV Football at Webster Jamboree, 10 a.m.

Soccer at Dakota Valley (girls at 1 p.m., boys at 3 p.m.) - theme: Groton Gear

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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.

Press Pool Protest

ABC, NBC, CBS, and Fox yesterday suspended TV coverage of presidential events in response to President Donald Trump barring CNN, MS NOW, and Politico from the White House over reporting he characterized as fake news.

The move came shortly after CNN, MS NOW, and Politico filed a lawsuit against Trump, arguing his decision violates the First Amendment. The three banned outlets are members of the White House press pool, alongside ABC, NBC, CBS, Fox, and others. The pool was established in 1937 and has covered every president's daily activities since Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Outlets rotate traveling with the president, sharing footage, photos, and quotes with one another. The White House Correspondents' Association has historically selected the pool, but the Trump administration began exerting greater control last year, restricting wire services such as the Associated Press and adding startup media outlets.

Last night, the White House launched a 24/7 streaming platform called "Trump TV" to broadcast real-time updates and highlights from major events.

UN General Assembly

The United Nations opens the high-level General Debate of its 81st General Assembly in New York City today, with speeches from Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and President Donald Trump. Artificial intelligence headlines the agenda for the first time, with the Security Council holding a high-level meeting on the issue tomorrow.

The conflicts in Ukraine, Gaza, and Iran will also be focal points. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will speak tomorrow, seeking support as Russia's invasion enters its fifth year; Russian President Vladimir Putin is absent for the 11th straight year. On Thursday, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas will speak via prerecorded video after the US denied him a visa for the second consecutive year. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will speak later that day, with his remarks expected to address Israel's actions in Gaza and Iran.

The gathering is Guterres' last as secretary-general. Costa Rican diplomat Rebeca Grynspan has a narrow lead after three informal polls to succeed him and would become the UN's first female secretary-general if selected.

Swallowable Batteries

MIT researchers have developed tiny batteries that can safely dissolve inside the body, potentially expanding the use of ingestible devices. Such devices can monitor vital signs, deliver drugs, or detect medical emergencies, but conventional batteries can pose risks if damaged.

Researchers made two versions: a pencil-eraser-sized disc and a 1-inch-long rectangle. Both are made from magnesium and molybdenum trioxide (metals considered safe for humans in small amounts), gel, and chemically treated paper wrapped in wax to protect them from the gut. In animal tests, the disc powered a small wireless tracking device that transmitted data from the digestive tract up to 5 feet away; the rectangle powered a stomach-stimulating capsule, boosting a hunger hormone by roughly 50% after 20 minutes.

Separately, tests in simulated stomach fluid found the batteries worked for up to three days before gradually losing power and breaking down within weeks. Researchers have also explored other ways to power swallowed electronics, including using stomach acid to generate electricity.

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Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Cindy Crawford's son, Presley Gerber, dies in a rehabilitation facility at age 27; police are investigating his death as a suspected overdose.

Taylor Swift will receive inaugural Artist Director Honors at the MTV Video Music Awards, breaking a tie with Beyoncé to become the most decorated musician in VMA history.

Yu Zidi, a 13-year-old Chinese swimmer, wins two gold medals at the Asian Games, emerging as a potential podium contender in the 2028 Olympics.

Science & Technology

NASA's Perseverance rover finds rocks showing evidence of ancient lakes, groundwater, and hydrothermal fluids on early Mars.

Previous research suggests Mars once experienced massive floods.

Alzheimer's disease is no longer an "untreatable" condition as drugs slow decline and studies reveal promising risk reduction strategies, according to a new report.

Certain areas of the country have more known cases of Alzheimer's.

Female infants spend more time looking at human faces, while male infants spend more time looking at non-human objects hours after birth, suggesting biology—not only culture—influences attention differences.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close up (S&P 500 +1.5%, Dow +0.7%, Nasdaq +2.3%) as tech stocks surge ahead of a White House dinner with AI leaders and Chinese President Xi Jinping Thursday.

Paramount settles antitrust lawsuit with 12 states, clearing final major hurdle for \$111B Warner Bros. Discovery acquisition; agrees to create journalist board, release at least 30 films a year, and invest \$1.5B in film production over five years.

Novo Nordisk shares fall 8% as the drugmaker outlines plan to launch at least five new obesity and diabetes drugs by 2030, two years before patents for Ozempic and Wegovy expire; the two drugs accounted for two-thirds of last year's sales.

Politics & World Affairs

Equipment failure at Philadelphia air traffic control facility halts flights at Newark and Philadelphia airports, with more than 1,000 flights canceled nationwide and over 6,000 delayed.

WHO begins testing existing Ebola vaccine against latest strain driving outbreak in Democratic Republic of the Congo; more than 7,600 cases and 3,670 deaths reported as of this writing.

Vermont man convicted of attempted murder in 2023 shooting of three Palestinian American college students in Burlington; one student was left paralyzed.

Groton Veterans Supper Second Annual

★ HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED ★
Our Community ★ Our Gratitude ★ Always

*Open to all veterans
and their spouses/
significant others*

ALL ARE WELCOME!

SAME
SACRIFICE.
BRIGHTER
TOMORROWS.

★
THANK YOU,
VETERANS.



Where: Groton American Legion Hall



When: Tuesday, September 22



Time: 6 PM



Cost:

FREE



Special Guest: Aaron Walberg,
Brown County Veterans Service Officer

*Veterans
Belong Here.*

★
GOOD FOOD.
GREAT PEOPLE.
LASTING GRATITUDE.

Join us for an evening of food, fellowship, and appreciation.

★ ★ ★
VETERANS ★ FAMILIES ★ COMMUNITY ★ TOGETHER

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Volleyball

Groton Area
hosts Warner

Tues., Sept. 22, 2026



Groton
Area
Tigers
Groton, SD

GDILIVE



A production of the

Groton Daily Independent

For more info: GDILIVE.COM



C match at 5 p.m.
JV at 6 p.m. followed by Varsity

Varsity match sponsors on GDILIVE.COM are: Agtegra, Avantara-Groton, Bierman Farm Service, BK Custom Ts, Blocker Construction, Dacotah Bank, Farmers Union Insurance, Groton Ag Partners, Groton Chamber, Groton Ford, Hanlon Brothers, Heartland Energy, Jacobson Electric, John Sieh Agency, Jungle Lanes & Cafe, Rix Farms / R&M Farms, S & S Lumber, Spanier Harvesting and The Meat House of Andover.

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Groton JV Golf Team took part in the Groton JH/JV Golf Tournament held Monday at the Olive Grove Golf Course.

8th graders L-R Graham Rose, Bentley Ehresmann, Easton Larson, and Rylan Blackwood

6th graders L-R Jack Schuelke, and Hayden Hubbart. (Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)



Groton Team medalist L-R Graham Rose, Bentley Ehresmann, Easton Larson, and Rylan Blackwood .

(Photo courtesy Bruce Babcock)

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Bi-Weekly Soccer Polls

September 21, 2026 - SDHSSCA Bi-Weekly Coaches Poll for Boys and Girls soccer. The Soccer Coaches Association will be releasing our rankings every two weeks during the season.

Boys AA

1. Sioux Falls Lincoln
2. Watertown
3. Sioux Falls Jefferson
4. Aberdeen Central
5. Sioux Falls Washington

Receiving Votes: Rapid City Stevens, Spearfish

Girls AA

1. Harrisburg
2. Pierre T.F. Riggs
3. Rapid City Stevens
4. Yankton
5. Aberdeen Central

Receiving Votes: O'Gorman, Brookings, Watertown, Sioux Falls Washington

Boys A

1. James Valley Christian
2. Vermillion
3. Hot Springs
4. Freeman/Marion/Parker/Viborg-Hurley
5. St. Thomas More/Rapid City Christian

Receiving Votes: Groton Area

Girls A

1. Dakota Valley
2. Sioux Falls Christian
3. West Central
4. St. Thomas More
5. Groton Area

Receiving Votes: Vermillion, Garretson, Lennox

Morehouse is Farm Family of the Year

Aberdeen, SD – September 21, 2026: The Ag Committee of the Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce announced the 2026 Farm Family of the Year Award recipient at the Field to Fork event held on Thursday, September 17th at the Brown County Fairgrounds Clubhouse. The award honors a farm family who represents farming & ranching and the spirit of agriculture in northeastern South Dakota. To be eligible for the award, recipients must be actively engaged in farming or ranching, with the majority of income derived from production agriculture. 2026 nominees were: David and Dick Siefkes and Brad and Diann Morehouse.

The award recipient was Brad & Diann Morehouse. The Morehouse Farm began in 1952 by Ivan and Carolyn Morehouse. It began as a very diversified operation including dairy cattle, sheep, guineas and crops. In 1981 Brad and Diann took over the farm shortly with their kids: Justin, Brent, Jesse and Desiree. Dairy continued to be the main stay while they raised their kids, and Brad learned the art of butchering right out of High School. He butchered beef, pigs, deer and antelope for friends and family. That is when the MeatHouse was born.

In December of 2005, a lot of changes started to take place around the farm. The Holsteins got replaced with beef cows and they built the first feedlot. On top of that they started a trucking business. Fast forward several years to current time. The current operation has expanded greatly. Including thousands of acres of cropland, three small feedlots, a butcher shop and a saddle and tack store. All of Brad and Diann's kids are married and active in the cattle side of the operation as well as other areas. Congratulations to the Morehouse family on this honor.

Past winners have included: 2011 –William & Kathy Roe Family; 2012 – John & Geraldine and Jeff & Rachel Kippley Family; 2013 – David & Janet Nelson Family; 2014 – John & Nicole Ellingson Family; 2015 – Daryl & Lisa Streckfuss Family; 2016 – LeRoy & Janet Weiszhaar Family; 2017 – Kerry & Mara Hart Family; 2018 – Don & Hazel Schaunaman Family; 2019 – John & Stephanie Jung/Lazy J Bar Ranch; 2022 – Craig & Peggy Bieber/Bieber Red Angus; 2023 - Aaron & Nina Vilhauer Family/Vilhauer Ranch; 2024 – Clint & Kelly Brandlee Family/Back Forty Beef; 2025 – Erdmann Angus Ranch.



Brad and Diane Morehouse accept the award from Gail Linde, Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce CEO.

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Northern State University Announces 2026 Gypsy Days Homecoming Week Events

ABERDEEN, S.D. — Northern State University will celebrate its 125th anniversary and annual homecoming week with the 110th Gypsy Day Parade and homecoming football game on Saturday, Sept. 26. This year's homecoming theme, "125 Year Anniversary," brings together Northern State University and the Aberdeen community for a week of celebration honoring the university's rich history and bright future.

The parade will begin at 9 a.m. on Main Street, with more than 130 floats, marching bands and community entries expected to participate. Parade-goers are encouraged to bring chairs and bags for collecting goodies along the route. For everyone's safety, please remain on the sidewalks and ensure children do not approach the floats.

Parade Details

The 2026 Gypsy Day Parade will feature entries from local businesses, organizations, schools and community groups. The parade will start at the intersection of North Main Street and Eighth Avenue Northeast, running south along Main Street until 12th Avenue Southeast. To accommodate the parade, there will be no parking along Main Street from Eighth Avenue Northeast to 12th Avenue Southeast beginning at midnight Friday, Sept. 25.

As the parade marches on, excitement will build for the Gypsy Day football game, where the Northern State Wolves will face off against the University of Mary at 2:30 p.m. in Dacotah Bank Stadium. Tailgating will begin at noon in the Dacotah Bank Stadium parking lot.

Additional Homecoming Events

The parade and game are part of a week of homecoming festivities running from Sept. 21 to Sept. 27, 2026. This year's celebration is especially significant as Northern marks its 125th anniversary with several special events.

Homecoming Royalty

This year's homecoming queen candidates are:

Harley Davis

Tevyn Lutz

Paige Stevens

Kaisha Van Engen.

This year's homecoming king candidates are:

Trey Austell

Isaac Johnson

Kaden St. Pierre.

Schedule of Events

Thursday, Sept. 24

6 p.m. — Queen and King Coronation, Harvey and Cynthia Jewett Theater at the Johnson Fine Arts Center. Burning of the W to follow in the Barnett Center parking lot.

7:30 p.m. — President, Alumni and Friends Musical Show, Harvey and Cynthia Jewett Theater at the Johnson Fine Arts Center.

Friday, Sept. 25

1 p.m. — Investiture Ceremony for President Alan LaFave, Harvey and Cynthia Jewett Theater at the Johnson Fine Arts Center.

2-5 p.m. — Northern State University Open Houses, multiple campus locations.

6 p.m. — Women's Soccer: NSU vs. Minnesota Crookston, Athletic and Recreation Fields.

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Saturday, Sept. 26

7 a.m. — Steps for Shep 5K registration, Barnett Center.

9 a.m. — Gypsy Day Parade, Main Street.

Noon — Gypsy Day Tailgate, Dacotah Bank Stadium parking lot.

2:30 p.m. — Football Game: Northern State University vs. University of Mary, Dacotah Bank Stadium.

Parade Lineup

1. Color Guard Troop 188
2. Exchange Club of Aberdeen
3. NSU Marching Band, Cheer, Dance and Thunder
4. NSU Foundation — Parade Marshals Rick Shamis and Rhonda Rylance
5. NSU Foundation — President Alan and Kari LaFave
6. NSU Foundation — Outstanding Faculty Dr. Darci Bulterma and Dr. Christian Pirlet
7. NSU Foundation — Distinguished Alumni Kelly Weaver and the late David Volk
8. NSU Foundation — Graduate of the Last Decade Daniel Gallagher and Kretchman Coaching Award recipient Arlin Likness
9. NSU Foundation — Hall of Fame inductees Kelsey Chambers, Rob Lewis, Miranda Obaniana, Drew Smith and David Snelling
10. NSU Foundation Alumni Association
11. Gov. Larry Rhoden
12. Mayor Travis Schaunaman
13. NSU Royal Order of Gyps
14. NSU Homecoming Committee
15. NSU Department of Nursing
16. NSU International Program
17. NSU Honors Program
18. NSU Tae Kwon Do and Kumdo Club
19. NSU St. Thomas Aquinas Newman Center
20. Aberdeen Central High School Marching Band
21. Sanford Aberdeen Medical Center
22. Primrose Retirement Communities
23. Kessler's Grocery Store
24. Dacotah Bank
25. Aberdeen Family YMCA
26. Aberdeen Holgate/Simmons Middle School Marching Band
27. The Aberdeen Insider
28. Aberdeen BMX
29. Plains Commerce Bank
30. Brown County Democrats
31. Babcock Family Chiropractic
32. Doeden Investment Group
33. Aberdeen Roncalli Marching Band
34. Avera St. Luke's
35. Driftbusters Snowmobile Club
36. Area Federal Credit Union
37. Harr Motors
38. Legacy Financial Partners
39. Hub City Radio
40. Hoven School Marching Band

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41. Caleb's Aquatics
42. North Highland United Methodist Church
43. Thrivent
44. Crafted Interiors
45. Aberdeen Convention and Visitors Bureau
46. Pierson Ford
47. Northwestern Area School Marching Band
48. Agtegra Cooperative
49. FirePlaceGlo/AdiroStyle
50. Horizon Health
51. RDO Equipment Company
52. Disabled American Veterans
53. Vacant
54. Ipswich School Marching Band
55. Miss Aberdeen Committee
56. The Salvation Army
57. Aberdeen Swim Club
58. Aberdeen American Legion Post 24
59. Aberdeen Post of The American Legion
60. Crawford Trucks and Equipment
61. Eureka High School Marching Band
62. Aberdeen Optimist Club
63. Aberdeen Hockey Association
64. South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
65. Read iTech
66. Lighthouse Preschool
67. SoDak Realty
68. Redfield School Marching Band
69. Miss Rodeo Queens
70. Brown County Fair and 4-H
71. Aberdeen Rural Fire Department
72. Hub City Soccer
73. Merxbauer Maier VanLaecken Dental Center
74. Furreal Pawsibilities
75. Leola School Marching Band
76. Aberdeen Fire and Rescue
77. Scottish Rite
78. South Dakota Snow Queen Festival
79. Aberdeen Police Department
80. Yelduz Shriners
81. The Den Bar and Grill
82. Miller School Marching Band
83. Weinmeister for Sheriff
84. Miss South Dakota Scholarship Organization
85. Vacant
86. Houston Engineering
87. Skateaway
88. Brown County Republicans
89. Frederick Area School Marching Band
90. CC Croal Post 17 Veterans of Foreign Wars
91. Dakota Broadcasting
92. Nikki G for South Dakota
93. Sammy's
94. JGE-Bobcat of Aberdeen
95. B&M Tunes
96. Sully Buttes Marching Band
97. Budget Furniture
98. eXp Realty
99. AARP Aberdeen
100. Jack/Worlie Auction Service and Jark Real Estate
101. House of Glass
102. Modern Woodmen of America
103. Aberdeen Christian School Marching Band
104. 4K Farms/Java Community Club
105. Wild Vines Pumpkin Patch
106. First Interstate Bank
107. Barranco for South Dakota
108. Aberdeen Moose Lodge 590
109. CASA of Fifth Judicial Circuit
- 110. Groton Area Marching Band**
111. First Premier Realty
112. MEGA Construction/Go Green Insulation
113. Aberdeen Wrestling Club
114. Aberdeen Area Chamber of Commerce
115. Twin City Fan
116. Daughters of the American Revolution
117. Watertown High School Marching Band
118. First Reformed Church
119. Kore Cares In-Home Services
120. South Dakota Army National Guard
121. Performance Oil
122. Homestead Construction
123. Abode Chiropractic
124. Sorensen for Sheriff
125. Dacotah Prairie Museum
126. Aberdeen Aqua Addicts Ski Team
127. Jared Pearson State Farm
128. Harbor Freight
129. Transource Truck and Equipment
130. Great Plains Concrete Pumping
131. Hangar 9
132. Titan Machinery

Names Release in Charles Mix County Fatal Crash

What: Single vehicle vs. tractor fatal crash

Where: SD 46 at mile marker 298, 9 miles east of Wagner, South Dakota

When: 6:40 a.m., Thursday, September 17, 2026

Driver 1: Melvin Lee Cap, 58-year-old male from Scotland, South Dakota, no injuries

Vehicle 1: 2010 John Deere 7410 farm tractor

Seat Belt Used: No

Driver 2: Loy G. Nelson, 83-year-old male from Maskell, Nebraska, fatal injuries

Vehicle 2: 2015 Chevrolet Silverado K1500

Seat Belt Used: Yes

Charles Mix County, S.D.- A Nebraska man died Thursday in a single vehicle vs tractor crash near Wagner, South Dakota.

Preliminary crash information indicates Melvin Lee Cap, the driver of a 2010 John Deere farm tractor, was traveling westbound on SD 46 near mile marker 298 while pulling a loaded grain drill. As he was crossing the bridge at the Charles Mix and Bon Homme County line, a 2015 Chevrolet Silverado driven by Loy G. Nelson crested the hill traveling eastbound at the same location. Cap attempted to move the tractor off the roadway into the north ditch. The Chevrolet struck the tractor. Nelson sustained fatal injuries. Cap was not injured.

The investigation is ongoing. All information released is preliminary.

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



Free Movie Showing

7:00pm

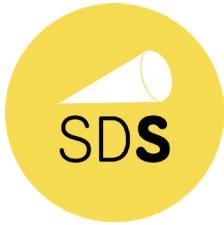
Wednesday, September 23

Groton C&MA Church

706 N. Main St.

Popcorn & Snacks will be provided

***A movie for younger kids will be shown downstairs at the church at the same time.**



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Trump 'can make his own decisions,' governor says after witnessing president's rant about journalism

South Dakota Gov. Larry Rhoden was in attendance for announcement about Medicaid prescription prices

BY JOSHUA HAIAR AND SETH TUPPER

After pledging to protect press freedoms throughout his nearly two years in office, Republican South Dakota Gov. Larry Rhoden found himself standing in front of reporters Friday with President Donald Trump as the president defended a decision to ban three news organizations from the White House.

Rhoden was in the Oval Office for an unrelated reason: to talk about Trump administration efforts to save money on prescription drugs in the federal-state Medicaid health insurance program for people with low incomes.

Earlier that day, Trump announced on social media that he was banning CNN, Politico and MS Now from the White House. Reporters asked Trump about that decision when Trump, Rhoden and several other officials — who were standing behind Trump as he sat at his desk — finished speaking about the prescription drug program.

Trump responded by alleging that the news organizations report "fake news," and he expanded at length on those allegations. The three news organizations have since sued to regain their access.

South Dakota Searchlight asked Rhoden's office Monday for the governor's reaction to Trump's actions and comments. Rhoden's office sent a written statement that said "the president can make his own decisions."

"I've built a strong relationship with all of you by being open and responsive, and you've lived up to my trust," Rhoden said in the statement, referencing journalists in South Dakota. "You've shown me a tremendous deal of respect, and I am grateful for the role you play in helping us serve the people of South Dakota."

Searchlight then asked if Rhoden was implying his office would not be open and responsive to journalists who haven't "lived up" to the governor's trust.

Rhoden's spokesperson, Josie Harms, responded.

"That implication is inaccurate," Harms wrote. "Openness and responsiveness will continue to remain pillars of the Rhoden administration — the governor is simply acknowledging his respect and gratefulness for your reciprocation of that commitment."

The governor's initial statement also said it was "ironic" that the president "was being criticized for being against free speech while Trump was actively taking questions from dozens of media."

Searchlight asked if the governor recognized that three news organizations were losing their access to ask questions of Trump. Harms replied, "As the governor said, 'The president can make his own decisions.'"

Rhoden's past comments on open government

Since becoming governor in January 2025, Rhoden has repeatedly emphasized government transparency and has made improving relations with the press one of his stated goals.

In a 2025 column he sent to media outlets titled "Protecting Our Free Press," Rhoden wrote that "tough, investigative reporting can lead to much-needed policy reforms."

"I'm committed to making my administration the most transparent in our state's history," he wrote.

During the annual NewsMedia Day at the state Capitol earlier this year, Rhoden responded to questions from reporters about open government.

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"We'll always do our best to respond to your questions, and you might not always like the answers you get, but you'll always get a response of some kind," Rhoden said.

Rhoden's opponent in the Nov. 3 election is Democratic nominee Dan Ahlers, a former legislator from Dell Rapids. Ahlers said Trump's strategy since becoming president the first time has been to criticize and belittle reporters when he doesn't like their reporting.

"I don't hold a grudge against the press," Ahlers said. "I don't not communicate with the press when something doesn't go my way."

Trump suggests his face on Rushmore amid healthcare talk

Rhoden's Friday appearance at the White House was for Trump's announcement that all 50 states will join a program providing "Most Favored Nation" pricing to some drugs in Medicaid, with a goal of bringing the price of selected drugs down to prices paid in some other countries.

Rhoden's office issued a press release Friday saying South Dakota has so far identified three drugs that would benefit from the program, saving the state approximately \$750,000 a year. This year's budget for Medicaid in South Dakota is about \$2 billion, and the state's share is about \$715 million.

After Rhoden's comments on the prescription drug program during the Oval Office event, Trump turned to him and made a comment about Mount Rushmore National Memorial that sparked laughter in the room.

"I'm being very nice to him," Trump said of Rhoden, "because maybe he'll get my face on that beautiful wall."

Rhoden jokingly replied, "You want it on Crazy Horse?" He was referencing the other massive mountain carving in South Dakota's Black Hills. The Crazy Horse Memorial, which has been in progress for decades, honors a late Lakota war leader.

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

Departing congressman says voter choices and Trump's 'lost focus' contribute to DC's troubles

Republican Dusty Johnson participates in Q&A with South Dakota audience

BY MAKENZIE HUBER

SIOUX FALLS — Partisan squabbles are keeping Congress from effecting change, and President Donald Trump has made it worse when he has "lost focus," said South Dakota Republican U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson, who added that he finds many of Trump's personal characteristics "lacking."

Johnson, who will leave office in January, aired his frustrations about national politics and celebrated his staff and some colleagues at a Sioux Falls Downtown Rotary Club meeting Monday. During a question-and-answer session, he reflected on his eight years in Congress.

"I won't miss the circus, but I'll miss the clowns," Johnson said.

Afterward, Johnson told reporters he believes the Republican Party is "well positioned" on national policy and is "going to get some much needed wins" by January, before a new Congress convenes. Beyond that, it's more complicated.

The central problem, Johnson said, is voters choosing to vote for "somebody they think is fighting rather than for somebody who is getting things done."

"If the voters don't start voting for thoughtful problem solvers a little more often, then I think we're going to continue to find it hard to get things done quite as often as we should in D.C.," Johnson said.

He said the anger and frustration in politics at all levels will eventually shift and the "fever will break," but that's "clearly not where we're at today."

Johnson chose not to run for reelection to the U.S. House and lost his bid for South Dakota governor in the June Republican primary. He previously served as a member of the state Public Utilities Commission and as chief of staff for former Gov. Dennis Daugaard.

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Johnson did not share specific plans Monday about his future.

"I want my next 20 years to be as impactful as my last 20 years," he said.

The following Q&A is excerpted from the Rotary meeting and has been edited for length and clarity. Questions came from a Rotary moderator and a Rotary member.

Q: You're heading into the final months of your eighth year as South Dakota's lone representative. What was it like coming into the office as a freshman representative and what did you learn in those first few years?

A: I think I was a little surprised. I had run in no small part because I just thought there were too many jerks in politics, and, of course, there are, although the ratio is a lot lower than I expected. In the end, I sort of felt naive. I had done what most people do, which is assume that the 10 or 15 members of the United States House that you can name — your Marjorie Taylor Greenes or your Alexandria Ocasio-Cortezes — are representative of the whole. And they're really not.

So the big surprise for me was how many decent human beings, really successful inventors or nonprofit executives or four-star generals, successful educators, nurses, just really great human beings are there.

I'm not going to try to convince you that we do a good job, for reasons I still don't entirely comprehend. The whole is less than the sum of our parts, but the inputs, the human beings, I was surprised by how decent most of them are.

Q: How have things evolved or how has your approach to tackling issues evolved?

A: I try to be an optimist, but I don't want to just whisper sweet nothings in your ear. I think things are markedly worse in D.C. than when I arrived eight years ago. I don't blame me, but I do think the tribalism is much higher. I think the populist rage and angst is much higher.

All of the incentives in the system reward bad behavior and so most members, of course, they're good people, so they do want to serve, they want to make the right decisions. They also want to survive. But I think they understand that, walking through the field of public policy, there are almost an inexplicably large number of landmines that can just end a career on any given day because you say this about data centers, or you say that about January 6th, or you say this about vaccines or that about Lake Ontario. I think it creates that survival versus serve dichotomy.

I think that there's more tension there than there would have been five years ago and 10 years ago. I think it is a very, very difficult time to serve.

More of my colleagues in the House have lost their primaries for Senate, for governor — not to pick any scabs — or their own House race than at any point that I can recollect. Two dozen of them, which is really unusual.

Normally if you're running for the U.S. House, for your own job or higher office, you're very well positioned. People generally know you, you generally have a campaign team, you know how to raise money, you've got some accomplishments to run on. Now, service of that kind is a pretty substantial albatross around someone's neck.

Fewer and fewer of my colleagues are excited about running, and I think fewer and fewer really decent people are running for the first time. Now, the problem for all of this is that we're getting a barely functional government with great inputs. If we get only mediocre inputs, I'm concerned that we will not even meet the functional standards.

Q: What's the Dusty spin on that?

A: I still think there's tremendous optimism in the American private sector. We're going to cure cancer and we're going to cure Type 1 diabetes and we are figuring out how to do a better job of housing people in an increasingly inflationary environment. Outside of D.C., there's a lot of reason for optimism.

I think city governments in this state are generally run pretty well. Most local governments in this state choose progress over drama, and I think that's true for our state government as well. Always be hesitant when someone wants to centralize more power in Washington, as, unfortunately, more and more in my party seem to want to do. We're the party of federalism and yet we sometimes like big government conservatism. Be wary about centralizing more power into the less functional level of government.

Q: You've experienced three different administrations while you've been in Congress. What was different

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between the three?

A: I would focus on the commonalities between those three, and that is when the administration was focused it was pretty effective and it got good things done — regardless of whether you're talking about Trump 1.0, Biden or Trump 2.0.

I think we do get into trouble when there's a lack of focus, and I try to tell the president and his team that, "If we're talking about the border, middle class tax cuts, a return to common sense and some of the social issues where most Americans believe the pendulum has swung too far, that's where we're going to be able to build. If we are fighting about the reflecting pool and renaming Lake Ontario, we've lost focus. I think that can make it more difficult for your party to do well in November, sir."

Any of those three administrations, when they lost focus and discipline, our country was poorly served.

Q: You've been a close adviser to Speaker Mike Johnson over the past several years. Tell us about how you were tapped for that role and what it's been like to help lead him as he became a new speaker.

A: It really started with Speaker Kevin McCarthy. I went to D.C. and I thought that the lane I was going to carve out was being the dorky little policy guy, which of course I am, but I really was going to be a committee leader not in title but that people knew that if they wanted to understand Title I programs and how they interact with crop insurance or county averages they'd say, "Go to Dusty. He understands the issue."

I was lucky enough to be in the right time and the right place to give the right people counsel. McCarthy said, "Hey, I've got to have you in some of these rooms. We're negotiating the Fiscal Responsibility Act with a Democratic Senate and a Democratic president. We don't want to default on debt, we do need to spend less money, we do need to reform welfare. I need you in the room as part of the negotiating team behind the scenes."

That was like being a backup quarterback. You never know when you're going to get the call, but you go out and understand the playbook and assignments, and you make sure you hit people, run the routes, then you're going to get an opportunity to help the team again.

When McCarthy was thrown out of office, the natural inclination for Mike Johnson is to get rid of the old team because they've just been fired. Mike and I had a pre-existing personal relationship and I was held over in Mike's cabinet. I'm sure everybody here has very legitimate criticisms of Mike Johnson, but I have to tell you it would not be easy to govern in an incredibly dysfunctional time with an incredibly dysfunctional U.S. House. The fact that we haven't defaulted on the debts that we have, I would say the U.S. House has been somewhat more functional than people had any right to expect, and I think Mike Johnson is a huge part of that.

Q: How do you assess the personal character of President Trump?

A: I find many of his personal characteristics lacking. Particularly, as I talked about, the lack of focus can be problematic for our country. That being said, I do think that we're so tribal in this nation anymore. While some are too ready to celebrate his every act, some are too willing to denigrate his every act. I think securing the southern border — that kind of clarity of conviction and willingness to get it done, I think, is the kind of bold leadership that caused his supporters to continue to view him favorably.

Clearly, he is too quick to criticize others, particularly with personal insults. I think he doesn't value our allies and friendships abroad as much as I do, and I don't think he values some of these institutional norms, which I think are part of the American success story.

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan who regularly reports on the intersection of politics and policy with health, education, social services and Indigenous affairs. Her work with South Dakota Searchlight earned her the title of South Dakota's Outstanding Young Journalist in 2024, and she was a 2024 finalist for the national Livingston Awards.

Diesel prices shoot upward as top farm-state GOP senator begs Trump for export embargo

BY ASHLEY MURRAY

WASHINGTON — Diesel prices hit a record average of \$6.51 a gallon Monday, and some in President Donald Trump's own party are breaking their support for the ongoing war in Iran that has driven fuel prices to staggering levels in the United States and across the globe.

Already House Republicans locked in tight races as the November midterms approach have distanced themselves from the president's conflict and his administration's stagnant negotiations with Iran over re-opening the Strait of Hormuz, a vital passage for global petroleum products. Another major vote on Iran support is expected later this week in the U.S. Senate.

The cost of diesel, which fuels the movement of goods through the United States, is up nearly \$1 since last month, and up from just over \$3.69 a year ago, according to AAA.

The national average cost for a gallon of gasoline landed at just over \$4.47 Monday, up more than a dollar from last year's average at \$3.18, according to the motor club's daily monitor.

Trump has an opportunity this week to potentially meet with Iranian officials, as leaders head to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City. Trump told Fox News on Sunday he is "open" to meeting with Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian.

Trump said he is in "deciding mode" about next steps in Iran, and that "big things" will happen in the "not so distant future," he told the network's Trey Yingst.

Grassley wants diesel embargo

Longtime Iowa Republican Sen. Chuck Grassley urged Trump throughout the weekend to embargo diesel fuel exports as costs impact farmers in his largely agricultural state.

"W(ith) diesel \$6.57 in Iowa why doesn't Pres Trump put an embargo on diesel exports like presidents in the 70s put embargoes on (agricultural) products bc food prices were inflated. High diesel prices ARE KILLING FARMERS INCOME," Grassley wrote Saturday on X, followed by two more posts on Sunday urging the president to put "AMERICA FIRST."

The administration does not have plans at this time to ban or restrict diesel exports, according to a White House official Monday.

Seven House Republicans broke ranks last week and voted in support of stopping Trump's war with Iran unless Congress approved further action.

The Republicans included two vulnerable Iowa representatives, Reps. Zach Nunn and Mariannette Miller-Meeks, who are facing tough reelection bids in the fast-approaching midterm elections.

Democratic senators are expected to move on a War Powers Resolution vote this week.

Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., said Wednesday he will force the vote to continue applying pressure on Trump to stop the military campaign that has not been authorized by Congress.

"We're gonna force a vote to end this illegal war every week until we succeed," Kaine said in a video posted to X.

Two Republicans who will not serve in Congress next year, largely due to Trump's public opposition to them, have also spoken out against the Pentagon leadership.

House Republican Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Ky., who has consistently supported War Powers Resolutions on Iran, unexpectedly introduced articles of impeachment last week against Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, citing his leadership during the Iran conflict.

Republican Sen. Thom Tillis of North Carolina told reporters on Capitol Hill Thursday that Hegseth "needs to go." Tillis has voted no on multiple War Powers Resolutions aimed at ending hostilities in Iran.

Energy commodities up 16.3%

Inflation continued a steady march upwards in August, with fuel leading the way, according to the government's latest consumer price index.

The cost of all types of gasoline and fuel oil rose 3.9% from July to August. All energy commodities and

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services, like electricity, shot up 16.3% over the past 12 months, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Trump and his administration officials have downplayed the squeeze on Americans at the pump, and Trump has promised fuel prices will drop “quickly” once the conflict ends.

On Monday he shifted the blame for skyrocketing diesel prices on to Russia’s war in Ukraine.

“Russia has unfortunately lost control of its Diesel Oil Industry due to its War with Ukraine. A large number of their Diesel refineries have been blown up and are, at least temporarily, out of commission. This ridiculous and never ending War with Ukraine must be ended,” he wrote on his platform Truth Social.

Vice President JD Vance told reporters Monday that the administration “is doing everything we can” to reduce energy prices, and suggested that states should suspend gas taxes.

“We’re very cognizant of the fact that because the Iranians are terrorizing international shipping, energy prices are elevated,” he said.

Meanwhile the conflict has expanded in the Middle East as Iran -backed Houthi rebels in Yemen fight for control of the Bab al-Mandab Strait, a key route for Saudi Arabian oil exports.

The State Department issued a safety alert Saturday to U.S. citizens in the Middle East, warning “the security environment remains complex with the potential for unforeseen escalation.”

“Americans currently in the Middle East should exercise heightened vigilance and be aware of potential flight cancellations, airspace closures, and travel disruptions,” according to the warning, which instructs American travelers to make sure cell phones are charged at all times and to “keep a low profile.”

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

CNN, MS Now, Politico sue Trump over White House ban

BY JENNIFER SHUTT

WASHINGTON — The three news organizations that President Donald Trump has barred from entering the White House filed a lawsuit against the administration on Monday.

CNN, MS Now and Politico wrote in a joint statement the suit is intended “to protect our First Amendment rights and defend the principle that the government does not decide what the press reports or publishes.”

“Without notice or process, the White House revoked our journalists’ credentials because it objected to our reporting,” the statement continued. “Left unchallenged, this threatens press freedom and the public’s right to independent journalism free from government interference.”

Trump announced last week on social media that he intended to bar journalists from those three news organizations, airing a years-running grievance that he doesn’t believe their reporting is accurate.

“I am proud to announce that, effective immediately, I am banning Fake News CNN, MSNOW (who recently changed their name from MSNBC due to lack of viewership and credibility!), and Politico (The recipients of an illegal and ridiculous \$8 Million Dollar subscription, an All Time Record, directly from the United States Government, under Crooked Joe Biden, in order to keep them “alive.” Seems like corruption to me!), from the White House as a result of their constant “reporting” FAKE NEWS!” he wrote. “Media Outlets shouldn’t be able to constantly write or report FICTION and LIES when they’re covering the President of the United States, the Trump Administration, or the United States of America. Other Fake News Media Outlets to follow. Thank you for your attention to this matter! President DONALD J. TRUMP”

First Amendment cited

The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, argued the “ban could not be a more direct assault on the First Amendment nor a more blatant violation of our most fundamental constitutional principles.”

The lawsuit says White House reporters from those news organizations had their press passes, which must be scanned to get through a Secret Service screening, deactivated.

The news organizations say the ban violates the due process clause, “retaliates against protected news-gathering and speech in violation of the First Amendment” and that it bars journalists “from a nonpublic forum for unlawful reasons.”

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The president's decision to exclude those reporters from the White House "inflicts irreparable harm to these news organizations," according to the lawsuit.

"The organizations, whose very purpose is to report national news, depend on individual reporters to gather information firsthand at the White House," it states. "As a result of the ban, they have lost the ability to perform essential newsgathering at the seat of the Executive Branch, where critically important newsworthy events occur every day.

"The ban irreparably curtails the organizations' speech—preventing them from being able to publish stories they otherwise would—each day it remains in effect. The ban also impermissibly chills the speech of other news organizations and journalists, who must now balance conducting their constitutionally protected and vitally important work of reporting on the White House against the risk that coverage the President 'dislike[s]' will condemn them to the same fate."

The case was assigned to Judge Timothy J. Kelly, who was nominated by Trump during his first term and confirmed by the Senate in September 2017 following a vote of 94-2.

Kelly scheduled a videoconference hearing for Wednesday to hear arguments over whether to issue a temporary restraining order in the case.

TV network coverage of Trump

Trump wrote on social media on Monday morning that the "White House is not instituting an assault on the Free Press, something which I cherish."

"It is instituting an assault on the FAKE NEWS, something that has grown like Cancer in our beloved United States of America," he wrote. "It is corrupt, purposeful, pervasive, fully coordinated, and totally out of control. It is a threat to our National Security, and must be stopped, NOW! Thank you for your attention to this matter. President DONALD J. TRUMP"

Major television networks don't plan to fill in for CNN as the television pool covering Trump on Monday, according to an email the network obtained from Fox News Washington Bureau Chief Bryan Boughton, who chairs the TV pool.

"This follows the White House's position preventing CNN from fulfilling its assigned pool duties," Boughton wrote, according to the CNN article. "There will be no replacement pool put in place."

The White House pool rotation includes reporters from the country's major news organizations, who attend the president's public events as well as other events that administration staff restrict to only journalists in the pool.

The television pool provides video footage of those events, while the print pooler's reports about the president's comments are emailed to reporters at newspapers and online news outlets.

The limited number of reporters from within the White House press corps who participate in the pool are able to ask the president questions during Oval Office events or other restricted appearances.

States Newsroom's Washington, D.C. Bureau participates in the print pool rotation as part of its membership in the Regional Reporters Association, which represents local news outlets covering the nation's capital.

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

Rural women who got C-sections more likely to be prescribed opioids at home, study finds

BY NADA HASSANEIN

Women giving birth in rural communities were more likely than peers in urban areas to receive oral opioid prescriptions for pain upon leaving the hospital after a cesarean section, according to a new analysis of data from half a million C-sections.

The study was conducted by researchers at Truveta, a health data and analytics company owned and governed by 30 health systems across the nation. Researchers compared pain-management prescriptions from more than 540,000 C-sections between January 2018 and July 2026.

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While hospital pain medication use was consistent across groups, the researchers said it varied after patients were discharged from hospitals: For every 100 women who underwent a C-section, roughly 10 more women living in rural communities received an opioid prescription than women in urban communities. Women in rural communities were also more likely to receive prescriptions for acetaminophen and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen.

About 1 in 3 births across the nation is delivered by C-section. Typically, several types of pain medications are used together.

The researchers evaluated three groups of pain medications including acetaminophen (Tylenol), NSAIDs and opioids, such as oxycodone and fentanyl.

While managing pain for recovery after a C-section is crucial, some hospital systems have been trying to curb opioid prescriptions amid the nation's opioid epidemic to lessen addiction risks. Opioid medications also come with many side effects.

Substance use disorder and mental health conditions are leading underlying causes of maternal death, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. They contributed to more than 1 in 5 pregnancy-related deaths, according to CDC data from 38 state maternal mortality review committees.

The Truveta researchers also examined prescribing by race, ethnicity and documented history of substance use disorder. Unadjusted findings showed somewhat higher opioid prescribing after discharge among Black or African American women and among women with a documented history of substance use disorder. However, the team didn't determine whether these differences were statistically significant or account for other factors that might help explain them.

"The fact that we're seeing kind of more open prescriptions upon discharge, given that recommendation, especially within the context of substance use disorder in maternal health specifically — it does raise a very important question about what's driving that difference in prescribing, and what happens after women are going home," said Madhura Vachon, lead researcher of the analysis and a former epidemiologist at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Stateline reporter Nada Hassanein can be reached at nhassanein@stateline.org.

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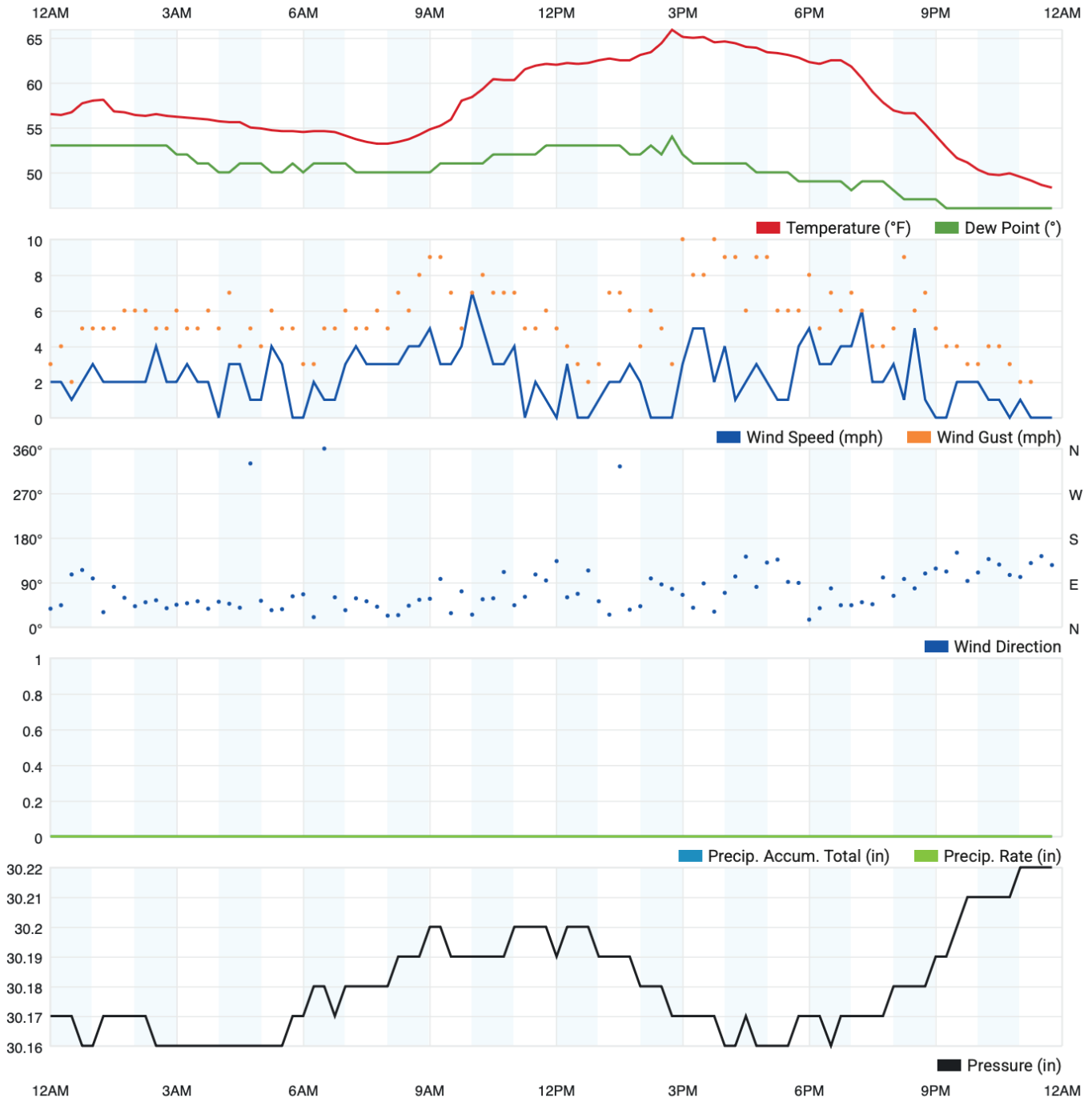
Nada Hassanein is a health care reporter for Stateline with a focus on inequities.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs

September 21, 2026



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Today



High: 63 °F

Mostly Cloudy

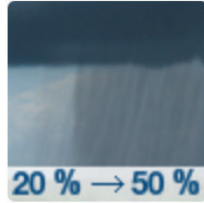
Tonight



Low: 49 °F

Mostly Cloudy

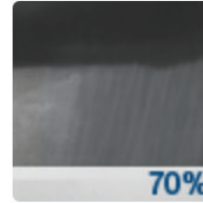
Wednesday



High: 64 °F

Slight Chance
Showers then
Chance
Showers and
Breezy

Wednesday
Night



Low: 54 °F

Showers
Likely

Thursday



High: 71 °F

Partly Sunny



Midweek Outlook

September 22, 2026
2:43 AM



Today

- Mostly Cloudy
- Patchy Morning Fog/Drizzle
- Highs: 59-65°
- Wind: SE 15-30 mph



Wednesday

- Mostly Cloudy
- Chance of Showers and Storms
- Highs: 62-73°
- Wind: SE 20-35 mph



Thursday

- Mostly cloudy
- Morning Showers East
- Highs: 67-75°
- Wind: S/NE 10-20 mph

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Probability of Precipitation (%) Forecast

	9/22 Tue			9/23 Wed						9/24 Thu						
	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm
Aberdeen	5	0	0	0	5	5	20	5	45	20	70	70	25	25	0	0
Britton	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	35	20	90	90	50	50	5	5
Chamberlain	0	0	5	15	55	55	25	25	10	10	35	35	40	40	5	5
Clark	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	10	20	30	80	80	55	55	5	5
Eagle Butte	0	0	20	30	30	35	50	30	15	10	30	30	0	0	0	0
Ellendale	5	0	0	0	0	5	10	25	45	45	90	90	35	35	0	0
Eureka	0	0	5	5	10	15	15	40	75	25	60	60	5	5	0	0
Gettysburg	0	0	5	5	25	20	20	30	40	40	50	40	0	0	0	0
Kennebec	5	5	5	25	55	20	15	15	10	10	50	50	5	5	0	0
McIntosh	0	0	5	5	15	25	50	40	20	30	35	35	0	0	0	0
Milbank	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	5	70	70	90	90	15	15
Miller	0	5	0	5	10	35	25	25	45	30	50	50	15	15	0	0
Mobridge	0	0	0	0	5	20	25	10	50	20	40	40	0	0	0	0
Murdo	20	25	20	35	15	10	5	10	10	15	25	25	0	0	0	0
Pierre	0	0	5	15	40	25	10	15	5	5	30	30	0	0	0	0
Redfield	0	0	0	0	5	10	20	30	45	35	70	70	20	20	0	0
Sisseton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	15	95	95	95	95	5	5
Watertown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	15	25	80	80	85	85	5	5
Webster	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	30	85	85	65	65	5	5
Wheaton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	20	80	80	95	95	15	15

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Probability of Precipitation Forecast (%)

An unsettled weather pattern will persist across the region through the middle portion of the week. A few spots this morning will start off with some patchy fog and/or drizzle. Otherwise, mostly cloudy skies and dry conditions are expected. A few sunny breaks in the afternoon will be possible, especially across northeast SD and west central MN. Another disturbance will move through the region Wednesday into Thursday and deliver another round of showers and a few thunderstorms. Showers will linger across the east Thursday morning, otherwise most of the day looks to be dry. Temperatures will remain near to slightly below normal as southeast winds turn gusty the next couple of days.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 66 °F at 2:49 PM

Low Temp: 49 °F at 11:28 PM

Wind: 11 mph at 2:53 PM

Precip: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 103 in 1936

Record Low: 20 in 1995

Average High: 73

Average Low: 44

Average Precip in Sept.: 1.47

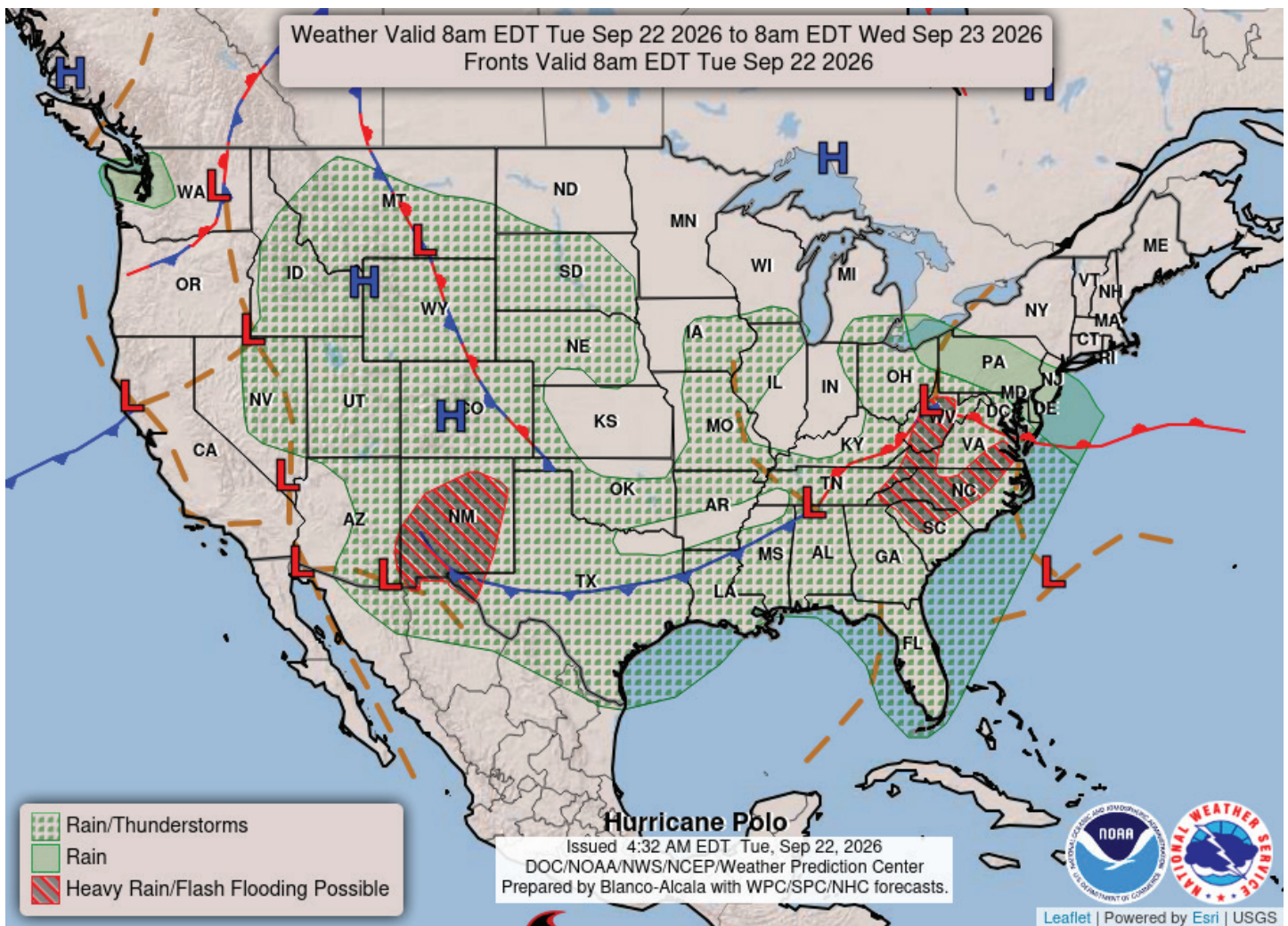
Precip to date in Sept.: 1.80

Average Precip to date: 17.81

Precip Year to Date: 21.66

Sunset Tonight: 7:30 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:20 am



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Today in Weather History

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2006 — The tristate area of Missouri, Illinois, and Kentucky was struck by the worst tornado outbreak in the recorded history during the month of September. One supercell produced a long-track F4 tornado across southeastern Missouri into southwestern Illinois. This tornado traveled 27.5 miles.

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Daily Devotion

God's Response to Sin

God can respond to sin in different ways, but His character never changes.

Genesis 20:1-7: 1 Now Abraham journeyed from there toward the land of the Negev, and settled between Kadesh and Shur; then he sojourned in Gerar.

2 Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." So Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.

3 But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night, and said to him, "Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is married."

4 Now Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, will You slay a nation, even though blameless?"

5 "Did he not himself say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this."

6 Then God said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this, and I also kept you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her."

7 "Now therefore, restore the man's wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."

Yesterday we discussed the origin of sin, and today let's consider how our sovereign God responds to it. His response reveals a great deal about His character.

At times the Lord allows sin to run its full course. After the exodus, He promised Israel blessings if they were obedient; when they persistently disobeyed, He "gave them over to the stubbornness of their heart" (Psalms 81:8-12). God was in control but chose to let them experience the consequences of rebellion.

At other times, God intervened to protect the vulnerable. For example, when Abraham lied about Sarah being his sister, the king of Gerar unknowingly brought her into his household. God stepped in, not to override human will but to shield a man who didn't deserve the fallout of Abraham's deception (Gen. 20:6). And for believers, God promises to limit temptation's effect by providing a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13).

We may not always understand why the Lord allows some sin to play out but intervenes in other situations. However, we can trust that His character never changes (James 1:17) and He always keeps His promises (2 Corinthians 1:20). Though His responses may vary, His goodness does not.

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

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WINNING NUMBERS

MILLIONAIRE FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.21.26

7 14 40 44 51 1

TOP PRIZE:
\$1,000,000/year

NEXT 17 Hrs 10 Mins 39
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.18.26

4 9 24 56 68 1

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$261,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 55 Mins 39
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.21.26

22 23 33 45 49 9

All Star Bonus: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$5,100,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 10
DRAW: Mins 38 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.19.26

4 5 10 14 20

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$63,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 25
DRAW: Mins 38 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.21.26

3 9 16 26 32 2

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 54
DRAW: Mins 39 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
09.21.26

2 7 9 17 58 20

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$332,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 54
DRAW: Mins 39 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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News from the Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-23, 19-25, 25-17, 25-16

Alcester-Hudson def. Canistota, 25-19, 25-23, 25-17

Dell Rapids St Mary's def. Ethan, 25-20, 26-24, 25-10

Ellendale, N.D. def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-14, 25-9, 25-14

Tripp-Delmont-Armour def. Wessington Springs, 21-25, 22-25, 25-17, 15-7, 15-7

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

China's Alibaba unveils new powerful chip and ambitious AI model plans

By CHAN HO-HIM AP Business Writer

HONG KONG (AP) — China's Alibaba unveiled new artificial intelligence chip technologies and plans for more powerful models on Tuesday, including what it said was China's most powerful AI chip, days ahead of a meeting between Chinese and U.S. leaders at which competition to lead on AI technology is expected to be a major theme.

Alibaba's announcement came as U.S. AI leaders, including Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei, are warning that China's development of AI poses a threat to the United States and calling for an overall slowdown on development of the technology.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping is set to arrive in Washington on Wednesday for a state visit and meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump, at which AI, trade and tariffs are expected to be discussed.

At its annual flagship conference in Hangzhou, Alibaba rolled out a new AI chip and described its plans for the next generation of its AI model.

CEO Eddie Wu said the new Zhenwu V900 chip is the "most powerful AI chip in China today" and can deliver three times the performance of the company's previous generation Zhenwu M890 chip.

Such chips power frontier AI model training and "inference," a term for the calculations a trained AI uses to deliver responses to users. Alibaba's Zhenwu chips are used in its data centers, providing computing to the company and its cloud clients.

Alibaba also said it plans to train a new AI model at the scale of five to 10 trillion parameters, a measure of an AI's learning capacity, bringing it closer to the most advanced models from the U.S. Its latest Qwen3.8-Max model, the most powerful of its Qwen AI series models, has 2.4 trillion parameters.

Chinese AI company Moonshot says that its Kimi K3, released in July, is the world's largest open model with 2.8 trillion parameters.

Alibaba also highlighted plans to expand the data centers that power its cloud computing business, citing "exponentially" rising demand for AI computing. The company said it expects to have over 20 gigawatts' worth of computing by 2032.

SpaceX has approximately 1.4 gigawatts of AI computing capacity as of mid-this year and says it aims to reach over 10 gigawatts in 2027.

Recent Chinese advancements in AI are giving Beijing more leverage in its upcoming talks with Washington, some analysts believe, as China steps up its self-reliance push even as U.S.-led export restrictions have barred it from accessing some of the world's most cutting-edge technologies, including AI chips and chipmaking machines.

Open Chinese models, which are often more affordable than cutting-edge closed models from leading U.S. AI labs, have also been making inroads globally, including in the U.S.

Chinese technology giant Huawei last week also unveiled new chip technologies as it looks to challenge

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global leaders like Nvidia. Frontier AI model training in China often rely on Nvidia chips, analysts said, but Chinese-designed chips are gaining ground as Nvidia has been blocked from selling some of its most powerful AI chips to China.

"Using extra computing power to make up for chip limits helps China stay strong locally," said Neil Shah, vice president of Counterpoint Research, a technology market research firm based in Hong Kong.

Counterpoint senior analyst Parv Sharma added that how much the AI and chipmaking gap between China and the U.S. narrows will also depend on other factors including China's ability to advance chip foundries that manufacture them, not just chip design capabilities.

Alibaba is "mobilizing every resource" to meet customers' demand for AI, CEO Wu said in his speech Tuesday.

Global shortages across the AI data center supply chain, for example, "are currently limiting the speed at which we can scale our compute infrastructure" for AI, he added.

Wu also likened AI growth to the industrial revolution and said "machine intelligence" will rapidly outgrow human thinking capacity.

While "machine intelligence today is not a substitute for human intelligence," he predicted that, eventually, machines will be able to produce over 1,000 times more "thinking" than all of humanity combined, up from less than 3% currently.

Fat Bear Week opens for Alaska's heavyweight crown. Can Chunk, the 1,200-pound champ, win again?

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — After a summer spent packing away sockeye salmon, Alaska's heftiest brown bears are ready to throw their weight around.

Online voting began Tuesday for Fat Bear Week, the annual contest that pits the rotund residents of Katmai National Park and Preserve against each other for the title of most oversized ursine.

Last year's winner, Chunk — known officially as Bear 32 — is hungry for a repeat. Chunk's weight in 2025 was estimated at 1,200 pounds, which gave him a narrow victory. This year he's back and facing corpulent competition like Gully — aka Bear 903 — the offspring of two-time champion Grazer.

The contest, which is in its 12th year, celebrates the resilience of the 2,200 brown bears that live in the preserve on the Alaska Peninsula, which extends from the state's southwest corner toward the Aleutian Islands. The animals gorge on the abundant salmon that return to the Brooks River, sometimes chomping the fish in midair as they make their way upstream to spawn.

The event this year features 16 bears facing off in a single-elimination, bracket-style tournament. All voting is done online at www.fatbearweek.org, with the winner declared Sept. 29. The public can watch the bears on explore.org's livestream cameras before deciding on their favorite.

"Fat bears are successful bears," the nonprofit's website says. They gorge on salmon starting in late June in order to accumulate fat reserves to prepare for winter hibernation, when they do not eat or drink and lose one-third of their body weight.

Adult male brown bears typically weigh 600 to 900 pounds (about 270 to 410 kilograms) in midsummer. By the time they are ready to hibernate after feasting on migrating and spawning salmon — each eats as many as 30 fish per day — large males can weigh well over 1,000 pounds (454 kilograms). Females are about one-third smaller.

Voters in the online contest can review before-and-after photos of the bears, lean at the start of summer and fattened at the end. The bears are not actually weighed — imagine that process — and some fans choose their favorite based on their looks or backstory.

To be featured in the contest, the bears must frequent the area around the river.

The live cameras at Brooks Falls captured the moments in 2024 when mother bear 128 Grazer's cub slipped over the waterfall and floated into the fishing spot occupied by Chunk, who attacked and injured the cub. Grazer fought Chunk, but the cub ultimately died. After the dramatic fight, voting fans handed Grazer a victory over Chunk. Then Chunk returned in 2025 to take the title.

Fat Bear Week was started in 2014 as an interactive way to inform the public about brown bears, the coastal cousins of grizzlies.

Russia and Ukraine trade deadly strikes as Zelenskyy prepares to meet Trump

By HANNA ARHIROVA and BARRY HATTON Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia bombarded at least four Ukrainian regions overnight with missiles and drones, killing four people, officials said Tuesday, and Ukraine's forces damaged another Russian oil refinery in their latest long-range strike.

The ongoing exchange of daily aerial attacks, while positions on the battlefield's front line barely change, provided a backdrop to the visit by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to the United States.

Zelenskyy was due to meet other world leaders, including U.S. President Donald Trump, at the U.N. General Assembly in New York. The Ukrainian leader is hoping to recruit their help to end Russia's more than 4½-year-old full-scale invasion of his country.

Russian President Vladimir Putin isn't due to attend the annual event.

The war, which Western officials say has killed more than 500,000 Russian troops, has had global repercussions.

The repeated attacks on Russian refineries, following Moscow's strikes on Ukraine's power grid, have caused international shortages of diesel and price spikes, according to Trump. However, the global crunch also came after the Iran war led to curtailed oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz.

Zelenskyy also wants help to ensure the flow of Ukrainian grain and other farm products to world markets through the Black Sea. Russian attacks on cargo vessels have severely disrupted Kyiv's exports, hurting its economy and threatening global supplies.

Zelenskyy takes de-escalation proposals to New York

French President Emmanuel Macron said Tuesday that his country would provide Ukraine with more radars to help protect its power grid.

He said on social media that he discussed with Trump the possibility of a truce between Moscow and Kyiv on strikes on energy infrastructure and a "moratorium" on Black Sea attacks.

Zelenskyy began his New York visit by meeting with U.S. senators, thanking them for what he called strong bipartisan support for Ukraine and for recently passing a tougher Russian sanctions bill that Trump has signed into law.

Peace and security will be closer once the bill is fully implemented, he said.

Zelenskyy said on social media that he briefed senators on his proposals for de-escalation measures that he intends to discuss with Trump later Tuesday.

The Ukrainian leader also plans to again press Trump to send more U.S.-made Patriot air defense systems that Kyiv desperately needs to stop Russia's ballistic missiles.

Ukrainian special forces say they hit a Russian refinery

Ukraine said that it struck the Kuibyshev oil refinery in Samara, southeast of Moscow, in an overnight attack.

Several drones hit their targets, sparking a large fire at the facility, according to a statement from Ukrainian special forces.

The refinery, owned by Rosneft, is a key fuel supplier for central Russia, producing gasoline, diesel, fuel oil and other petroleum products, the statement said. Ukraine said that it struck the same refinery last June.

One person was killed and four others were wounded in the Samara attack, regional Gov. Vyacheslav Fedorishchev said. He said that "the enemy targeted industrial facilities," but didn't specify which ones.

The Russian Defense Ministry on Tuesday said that its forces downed 297 Ukrainian drones over 14 Russian regions overnight, as well as the illegally annexed Crimean Peninsula.

Russia says it struck missile plant and ammunition factory

Russia's overnight attack on Ukraine included anti-ship missiles, ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and

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more than 200 drones, Ukraine's air force said.

The strikes killed four people in the central Ukrainian city of Dnipro, said Oleksandr Hanzha, head of the Dnipropetrovsk regional military administration.

The strikes across Ukrainian regions damaged homes, businesses and storage facilities, wounding at least five people, authorities said. Five people were wounded in the capital, Kyiv, according to officials.

The Russian Defense Ministry said Tuesday that its forces struck metallurgical and chemical industries, the fuel and energy sector, and the military-industrial complex, as well as port infrastructure facilities in four regions of Ukraine.

They included a Fire Point plant in Kyiv producing components for long-range cruise missiles and a tobacco factory in the central Poltava region used to make small arms ammunition, it said.

Trump and Xi see tensions flare over AI, trade and Iran but still seek stability

By DIDI TANG and E. EDUARDO CASTILLO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — State visits usually occur when two countries are on warm terms, but U.S. President Donald Trump is hosting Chinese leader Xi Jinping in Washington this week as their economic and tech competition is only escalating, especially through an artificial intelligence race.

Neither expects any grand bargain, but the leaders are expected to play nice in their third meeting since Trump returned to the White House to try to steady fragile ties. That is despite the world's two largest economies seeking the upper hand on AI developments and trade, while pushing for leverage in persistent hot spots like Iran and Taiwan.

"The fact that they are meeting, and there's dialogue occurring and building that relationship, is probably as important as outcomes from the meeting," said Sen. Steve Daines, a Montana Republican who advises Trump on China and recently traveled there to lay groundwork for the summit.

Cui Tiankai, a former Chinese ambassador to the U.S., said at a recent forum in Beijing that there are "always problems, sometimes very big problems" between the two countries, but "we'll make our best efforts to maintain overall stability."

Trump and Xi shifted away from sky-high tariffs, but the competition is still intense

Xi's visit to Washington, which begins Wednesday, is his first in 10 years. He and Trump are meeting after their countries climbed down from last year's intense trade war, where they traded tit-for-tat sky-high tariffs that threatened the global economy. China also choked off its world-leading supplies of critical minerals needed in products from electric cars to fighter jets.

The U.S. is not only trying to balance trade but also maintain its tech dominance to protect national security and global leadership. China, which has amassed tremendous economic, technological and military power over the past several years to close gaps with the U.S., is seeking to solidify its place in the global order.

The stability both sides are seeking is "for deeply competitive reasons," said Evan Medeiros, a senior adviser at The Asia Group consultancy. "This is basically two geopolitical strongmen circling each other on the playground, trying to determine what their next move may be."

The countries appeared to be entering a "new normal" of "overall stability" despite blacklisting each other's companies and restricting the flow of high-tech products, said Da Wei, director of the Center for International Security and Strategy at Tsinghua University in Beijing.

The leaders now should produce deals that their governments can carry out, he said, noting that "we need to move fast."

The AI race could strain any cooperation on the technology's advance

Developing AI technology has emerged as a key battleground, with both sides showing little interest in slowing down despite warnings from tech CEOs about threats that rogue AI could pose to humanity. "Whoever wins AI wins," Trump has repeatedly said.

He claimed on social media Monday that the U.S. is leading over China and that he was "not going to stifle Growth, of something that will be bigger than the Industrial Revolution, or the Internet, itself."

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China cannot afford to lose either. In a rare, blunt essay, Chen Yixin, head of China's Ministry of State Security, warned that AI poses a direct threat to Communist Party rule if foreign and hostile forces achieve superior capabilities.

The U.S. is already restricting exports of the most powerful AI chips to China and has accused Chinese developers of tapping into American AI models at an industrial scale to extract their capabilities.

Beijing says the practice, known as distillation, is widely used, including by American companies, and has criticized the U.S. for trying to monopolize the industry.

Beijing also is upset about U.S. efforts to build an alliance that excludes China, so it is seeking to craft new global AI guardrails by appealing to developing nations.

However, the U.S. and China are taking a small step to cooperate on AI.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said Sunday after meeting with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng in New York that the U.S. has proposed a new "notification mechanism" for AI incidents that could affect national security.

"We think that just like any cross-border activity, that moving from opaque to more transparency between the No. 1 and the No. 2 AI powers in the world is very important," Bessent said.

US and China have turned to targeted ways to compete instead of high tariffs

While the U.S. and China have refrained from taking broad, punitive actions that would break their trade truce, they still are blacklisting individual companies and banning specific products.

"What we've seen is kind of testing and probing by both sides to understand what can be done competitively, while still keeping that leader-level rapprochement on track," said Mira Rapp-Hooper, a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution's Center for Asia Policy Studies.

The U.S. has recently targeted Chinese telecommunications and surveillance equipment, companies accused of using forced labor in the ethnic region of Xinjiang, as well as China's advanced robots and drones. The Pentagon also has barred Alibaba, BYD, Baidu and other major Chinese businesses from receiving U.S. defense contracts.

Beijing responded with export controls on drones and related technologies as well as blacklisting six U.S. companies over their support for the punitive measures tied to Xinjiang.

Iran, Taiwan and tariffs are persistent issues

After the Supreme Court struck down Trump's tariffs on trade partners this year, the administration has been trying to impose them in other ways.

The White House in July rolled out a 12.5% tariff on imports from 60 trading partners, including China, ostensibly for failing to do enough to prevent the import of goods produced by forced labor. The U.S. is planning an additional 7.5% tariff on China, accusing it of producing far more goods than it can reasonably consume.

Analysts say the tariff levels are now acceptable to both sides, but any significant uptick could rekindle tensions.

The Trump administration, however, has launched a campaign to isolate Iran from its remaining economic partners, but Beijing has insisted on its right to trade with Tehran.

So far, the Trump administration has done little to punish China, partly to avoid jeopardizing the leaders' summit. But Washington also is losing leverage because China — Iran's biggest oil buyer and its largest trading partner — has been building up a way to make payments outside the U.S.-led financial system, said Alicia Garcia Herrero, an Asia-Pacific economist at the French investment bank Natixis.

Taiwan, a self-governing island that Beijing claims as its own territory, also remains one of the thorniest issues in U.S.-China relations. Trump paused a large weapons package to Taiwan following his May trip to Beijing, but the U.S. is obligated by a domestic law to provide it with sufficient hardware and technology for self-defense.

Analysts say Xi will most likely press Trump to further delay arms sales to sow doubts in Taiwan about Washington's commitment.

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UK to offer Saudi Arabia aerial refueling to counter Houthi attacks

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

ABOARD THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER'S PLANE (AP) — Prime Minister Andy Burnham said Monday that Britain has agreed to provide limited military support to Saudi Arabia to repel attacks by Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen.

Burnham told reporters as he flew to the United Nations General Assembly in New York that he had agreed the Royal Air Force will provide air-to-air refueling of Saudi planes. The agreement is for a matter of weeks, but Burnham said it will be kept under review.

The conflict between the Houthis and Yemen's Saudi-backed government has reignited, with the Houthis aiming missile and drone strikes at Saudi Arabia, including one that targeted Riyadh on Saturday before being intercepted. The Houthis also declared a blockade on Saudi shipping in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and the Red Sea, attacking Saudi-linked vessels and oil facilities inside the kingdom, the world's top oil exporter.

The Houthis advanced inside Yemen earlier this month, seizing the crucial port city of Mokha and key Red Sea islands allowing them to better monitor shipping traffic through the Bab el-Mandeb, through which some 12% of world trade normally passes.

Burnham said he was "acting to secure the interests of Britain and the wider region" at a moment when Saudi Arabia is facing attacks and it is critical to keep passages for oil open.

Britain has condemned the Houthi attacks and said the U.K. will "work with partners to support regional stability, protect civilians and support humanitarian access."

U.K. officials had previously declined to comment on "operational matters" but noted that Britain and Saudi Arabia have a close defense partnership.

The U.S., which bombed the Houthis under the Biden and Trump administrations, has shown no interest in getting involved militarily this time around.

U.K. officials say the agreement will start in the coming days, and involve one RAF Voyager refueling Saudi planes on "defensive" missions.

The Associated Press reported last week that Saudi Arabia has asked its allies, including France, Britain, Pakistan and Egypt to deploy air-defense support to the region to help defend against missiles and drones fired by Houthis and other Iran-backed groups on the kingdom.

European Union strikes a new free trade deal with the Philippines

By SAM McNEIL Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union and the Philippines announced a new free trade deal on Tuesday in the latest bilateral agreement struck by Brussels as it seeks to diversify its economy as tensions persist with traditional trading partners including China, Russia and the United States.

The EU's top trade negotiator, Maroš Šefčovič, said that he and Philippine Trade Secretary María Cristina Aldeguer-Roque structured the deal to grow the nearly 30 billion euros (around \$35 billion) of annual trade between the 27-nation EU and the Southeast Asian nation of 115 million people.

"It also delivers stronger, more diversified supply chains at the moment when resilience has become a strategic priority," Šefčovič said.

Trade is dominated by electronics, with the EU exporting aircraft, pork and pharmaceuticals while importing semiconductors, integrated circuits and industrial machinery manufactured in the Philippines.

The Philippines is the third nation from the ASEAN bloc after Vietnam and Singapore to sign a bilateral trade deal with the EU. Negotiations are ongoing between the European Commission and Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia, while a larger free-trade agreement is hoped for in the long term between ASEAN itself and the EU.

"There is a bigger picture here too," Šefčovič said. "This agreement sends a clear signal that the EU is reinforcing its engagement with the Indo-Pacific."

The EU has sought growth and stability in new trade links from Australia to Argentina as the bloc itself is beset by a geopolitical maelstrom, including conflicts in the Middle East and the war in Ukraine.

The EU also has been dealing with the need to explore alternative energy sources, heightened tensions with the Trump administration, officials from EU member states accusing Russia of hybrid attacks, and China running a gargantuan trade imbalance and a near-monopoly over critical mineral supplies.

The EU deal with the Philippines roughly tracks with the "middle powers" strategy laid out at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, earlier this year by Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney. Last week, he was the guest of honor in the European Parliament in Strasbourg at the annual State of the European Union speech by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

She said then that the EU would forge a new kind of "associated membership" for Canada.

"In this new world, we must urgently reimagine our partnerships," von der Leyen said during her speech.

Andy Burnham seeks common ground with Trump at the UN and pitches the UK as a major AI player

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — British Prime Minister Andy Burnham faces a double test on the world stage Tuesday when he meets U.S. President Donald Trump for the first time and addresses the United Nations General Assembly.

It's a baptism of fire for the neophyte leader, who has gone from mayor of the northwest England city of Manchester to leader of a G7 country in a matter of weeks.

He will urge Trump to step up U.S. support for Ukraine and hopes to avoid U.S. criticism of the U.K.'s decision to ban trade with Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

He also will try to send a message that Britain can play a key role in solving the world's biggest challenges, from conflict in the Middle East to the dizzying evolution of artificial intelligence. And he will attempt to turn the page on a decade of Brexit-driven discord with the U.K.'s European neighbors.

As he flew to New York for the annual gathering of world leaders, Burnham announced he had authorized limited military support for Saudi Arabia to repel attacks from Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen. A Royal Air Force plane will refuel Saudi jets engaged in "defensive" action to shoot down Houthi missiles, he said.

Burnham said he would raise with Trump ways to end the on-off war between the U.S. and Iran, which has choked off oil tankers moving through the Strait of Hormuz and sent global fuel prices soaring. Houthi attacks on Saudi energy infrastructure are making the problem worse while rendering Burnham's pledge to ease cost of living pressure for British voters even harder.

"We want to see an end to the conflict as quickly as possible and we stand ready to play our part," Burnham said.

He also will urge the U.S. president to provide air-defense missiles to Ukraine ahead of another winter of Russian attacks.

Burnham told reporters he would try to find "common ground" with Trump, who has called the center-left U.K. leader "a nice guy" but "unfortunately" a liberal.

The prime minister said he and Trump had "found a connection" in two phone calls since Burnham took office in July.

Burnham plans to strike a note of "hope" in his speech to the General Assembly on Tuesday evening, despite warning the world faces "dark clouds of instability."

Burnham said he would focus on AI, arguing it's possible to be "clear-eyed" about both the benefits and risks of the technology. He will argue the U.K. is well placed to be an "honest broker" in seeking global agreement to guide its development, because London has good relations with both the U.S. and Europe and "a strong dialogue" with China.

He also will say Britain is moving on from the tumultuous decade since the U.K.'s 2016 decision to leave the European Union. He suggested Brexit was a point at which the country took a wrong turn, fueled by misinformation.

The policy of Burnham's Labour Party government is to seek closer relations with the EU without reversing the decision to leave the now 27-nation bloc. Burnham hinted that he could go further at the next

national election, which is due by 2029.

He told reporters that in the past decade, Britain had experienced "the turbulence that comes when outside actors seek to manipulate, distort facts, influence the British democratic process."

"Going into the next decade we need to be clear-eyed about that and stronger and more on the front foot about challenging that," he said.

"We can be hopeful about where we're going," Burnham added. "We can draw a line under the last decade and say, 'This next one's going to be different.'"

Man shot by ICE, detained in Texas with a bullet in his back is back in the hospital, attorney says

By ANNA WILDER and JESSE BEDAYN Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A Venezuelan man shot by a U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer and taken to a detention center in Texas with a bullet still lodged in his back was back in the hospital by Monday night, the man's attorney said.

Wilber Rafael Garces Perez, 28, was making a DoorDash delivery in Austin on Sunday when his car was "sideswiped" twice by ICE officers in an unmarked truck, immigration attorney Kate Lincoln-Goldfinch told reporters earlier Monday. He was shot and taken to a hospital, she said, but was released later Sunday into ICE custody with the bullet still inside him.

Speaking by phone during a news conference, Perez had said doctors didn't remove the bullet because it's near his spine. He said ICE pressed for him to be released quickly from the hospital so it could move him to a detention center. He said he had received no pain medication or treatment there, and had slept on the floor, before eventually being given a "pill" by a nurse on Monday.

By Monday night, Lincoln-Goldfinch said he had been taken to the hospital.

U.S. Rep. Greg Casar, a Texas Democrat, described this as a positive first step.

"Now, we have to make sure he fully recovers, is reunited with his family, and gets to tell law enforcement the full story of how he was shot in the back by ICE," he said.

Perez said earlier Monday that ICE officers didn't ask him to stop or turn on any flashing lights until after they had sideswiped him. He said he did a U-turn and was trying to park when the officers rammed his car and shot him in the back of the neck.

"I am not doing well due to the gunshot wound, and I have not received the medical attention that I require," Perez said, speaking in Spanish over the phone as a member of his attorney's staff translated during the news conference.

Perez had been detained at the South Texas ICE Processing Center in Pearsall, about 130 miles (209 kilometers) southwest of Austin, Lincoln-Goldfinch said. She said Perez told her in a prior phone call that he was being interrogated.

The Department of Homeland Security, which oversees ICE, has released little information and has not said what prompted the shooting. In a statement early Monday, the department said it was investigating the shooting of a Venezuelan man in the U.S. illegally who "had a final order of removal."

Homeland Security did not immediately respond to email messages seeking further comment on the shooting.

Perez entered the U.S. legally in 2024 after using CBP One, a program begun under President Joe Biden that set up appointments with U.S. authorities to be considered for asylum, Lincoln-Goldfinch said. President Donald Trump ended the program on his first day in office.

Perez's attorneys said he was an asylum seeker and had a valid work permit, Lincoln-Goldfinch said. She said a judge issued a deportation order for Perez after he missed a hearing in immigration court because the hearing notice was sent to a former address.

"Not that being out of status would justify any of this at all," Lincoln-Goldfinch said of the shooting in a social media post.

The shooting occurred amid a surge in ICE enforcement across the U.S. during Trump's second term. Dur-

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ing the summer, it reported more than 50,000 monthly arrests in July and August — a first for the agency.

Immigration officers have come under intense scrutiny amid a series of shootings during the crackdown. At least four people have been fatally shot by federal officers during immigration enforcement operations this year.

Local advocates, leaders of the civil rights group the League of United Latin American Citizens and two Democratic congressmen who represent parts of Austin called during the news conference for the creation of an independent body to review use-of-force incidents by ICE and refer suspected crimes to prosecutors.

They also urged Congress to ban ICE officers from making traffic stops, saying the officers are under-trained and too quick to resort to violence.

Austin Mayor Kirk Watson, a Democrat, has said he wants local police to have a role in investigating the shooting. Watson said it wouldn't be appropriate for ICE to investigate on its own.

Protesters gathered outside the Texas Capitol in Austin on Monday night, chanting against ICE and carrying signs that said such things as, "Justice 4 Wilber Perez."

In the area beneath an overpass near the shooting scene, people had left candles, flowers and a sign that read "Justice for Wilber," while concrete pylons were marked with anti-ICE graffiti.

Hurricane Polo grows into a Category 4 storm in the Pacific off Mexico

MIAMI (AP) — Hurricane Polo grew into a Category 4 storm in the eastern Pacific late on Monday and was forecast to bring heavy rain to southwestern Mexico but remain offshore.

It had maximum sustained winds of 130 mph (215 kph) and may intensify further and reach Category 5 strength Tuesday or Wednesday, the U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami said. Category 4 storms have winds of 130-156 mph (210-250 kph) on the Saffir-Simpson scale, and Category 5 hurricanes have winds exceeding 157 mph (250 kph).

Polo was moving east-southeast at 5 mph (7 kph) and was forecast to sharply turn northwest and west-northwest. On that path, Polo would skirt the Mexican coast for a few days without directly making landfall.

A tropical storm watch was issued for part of the coast south of Manzanillo in Colima state to Tecpan de Galeana in Guerrero state, meaning tropical storm conditions were possible in the area within two days. Polo was centered about 330 miles (530 kilometers) south-southeast of Manzanillo as of late Monday.

Heavy rain with the potential for flooding and landslides was forecast for coastal Guerrero and Michoacán states through Thursday. Smaller amounts of rain were possible in coastal portions of Oaxaca, Colima and Jalisco states.

Farther west in the Pacific Ocean, Tropical Storm Odalys was far from land but expected to become a hurricane by midweek. Odalys had maximum sustained winds of 50 mph (85 kph) on Monday.

In the Atlantic Ocean, Tropical Storm Fay had weakened to 40 mph (65 kph) southwest of the Azores and was forecast to be a remnant low by late Tuesday.

No Atlantic hurricanes have formed yet this year, and this year has set a record for the longest a season has begun without a hurricane. The effects of this year's El Nino crush storms before they get going.

A timeline of US President Donald Trump's interest in Greenland

By GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

President Donald Trump's interest in a U.S. acquisition of Greenland, a semiautonomous territory of NATO ally Denmark, first became publicly known in 2019. Here's a timeline of events that led to a crisis between Washington and its European allies.

Aug., 2019: During his first term, Trump expresses interest in buying Greenland for the U.S., but says it's "not No. 1 on the burner." Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen dismisses it as "an absurd discussion." Trump then says he canceled a trip to Denmark because Frederiksen made a "nasty" statement in rejecting his idea.

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Dec. 22, 2024: Weeks before his second term begins, President-elect Trump renews his interest, declaring that "the ownership and control of Greenland is an absolute necessity." Greenland's prime minister, Múte Bourup Egede, says that "we are not for sale and will never be for sale."

Jan. 7, 2025: Trump's son, Donald Trump Jr., visits Greenland. The president-elect says he won't rule out using military force to take control of Greenland.

March 11, 2025: Greenlanders elect a new parliament in a vote that produces a win for the Demokraatit party of Jens-Frederik Nielsen. Shortly afterward, all five parties in the legislature reject Trump's talk of the U.S. taking control.

March 27, 2025: Four of the five parties in Greenland's parliament agree to form a coalition government with Nielsen as prime minister.

March 28, 2025: Vice President JD Vance visits the U.S. Pituffik Space Base in northwestern Greenland and accuses Denmark of underinvesting in the island's security.

March 29, 2025: Denmark's foreign minister scolds the U.S. for the tone of its criticism. Trump says he never takes "military force off the table."

Aug. 27, 2025: Denmark's Foreign Ministry summons the top U.S. diplomat in Copenhagen after a Danish broadcaster reports that at least three people with connections to Trump have been carrying out covert influence operations in Greenland.

Dec. 21, 2025: Trump announces that he is appointing Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry to serve as the U.S. special envoy to Greenland. Landry says it's an honor to serve in the position "to make Greenland a part of the U.S."

Dec. 22, 2025: The leaders of Denmark and Greenland insist that the U.S. won't take over Greenland. The Danish foreign minister says he's summoning the U.S. ambassador.

Jan. 4, 2026: Talk of a U.S. takeover of Greenland flares up again after the U.S. ousts Nicolás Maduro as president of Venezuela.

Jan. 5, 2026: Danish Prime Minister Frederiksen says an American military takeover of Greenland would amount to the end of NATO.

Jan. 6, 2026: Major European leaders join Frederiksen in a statement defending the sovereignty of Greenland. The White House says that "utilizing the U.S. military is always an option" for Trump.

Jan. 8, 2026: Trump says in an interview that he has to possess the entirety of Greenland instead of just exercising a long-standing treaty that gives the U.S. wide latitude to use Greenland for military posts.

Jan. 13, 2026: Greenlandic Prime Minister Nielsen says Greenland chooses Denmark "if we have to choose between the United States and Denmark here and now."

Jan. 14, 2026: The Danish and Greenlandic foreign ministers meet in Washington with Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio. They agree to set up a working group, but Denmark and the White House then offer sharply diverging public views of its purpose. Denmark announces plans to boost the country's military presence in the Arctic and several European allies say they're sending small numbers of troops to Greenland for reconnaissance on Arctic security. Danish media later report that Copenhagen prepared for a real conflict, deploying with explosives and blood supplies.

Jan. 16, 2026: Trump says he may punish countries with tariffs if they don't back the U.S. controlling Greenland.

Jan. 17, 2026: Trump says he will charge a 10% import tax starting in February on goods from eight European nations because of their opposition to U.S. control of Greenland.

Jan. 19, 2026: An exchange of texts with the Norwegian prime minister shows Trump linking his stance on Greenland to not winning the Nobel Peace Prize and saying that he no longer feels "an obligation to think purely of Peace."

Jan. 21, 2026: Hours after saying he wants Greenland "including right, title and ownership," Trump scraps the threatened tariffs against European countries. He says he agreed with NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte on a "framework of a future deal" on Arctic security.

Jan. 28, 2026: Technical talks between the U.S., Denmark and Greenland over an Arctic security deal start.

Feb. 21, 2026: Trump says he will deploy a hospital ship to Greenland, alleging that many people there

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are sick and not receiving care. His post comes after Denmark's military said its forces evacuated a crew member of a U.S. submarine off Greenland for urgent medical treatment. Greenlandic Prime Minister Nielsen says "no thank you" to the hospital ship.

July 7, 2026: Trump renews tensions ahead of a NATO summit, saying that Greenland "should be controlled by the United States, not by Denmark." Frederiksen reiterates that Greenland is "not for sale" and says that Denmark is "ready to defend every inch of NATO including our own territory" in the event of an attack.

Sept. 18, 2026: Trump announces that he has a deal to bolster the U.S. military presence in Greenland. Danish officials are cautiously optimistic, with Frederiksen emphasizing that the planned agreement recognizes Denmark's sovereignty and the Greenlandic people's right to self-determination.

Worsening El Nino threatens Asia with drought, potentially raising food prices globally

By EDNA TARIGAN and ANTON L. DELGADO Associated Press

BANTEN, Indonesia (AP) — All signs are pointing toward a record-breaking El Nino this year, which experts say may cause severe drought in Asia and other extreme weather across the world, threatening food security for millions of people.

El Nino is part of a natural climate cycle of warming ocean temperatures, but this year's is expected to reach new extremes of drought, heat waves, flooding and other climate-related disruptions in South America, Africa and Asia.

Southeast Asia is one of the world's most climate vulnerable regions. It's already beset by an energy crisis triggered by the war in Iran. El Nino is already fueling wildfires across farmland, depleting water supplies for major cities and hurting fish catches in the region.

Asian governments that have been drawing on their financial reserves to mitigate the war's ripple effects of higher energy costs and scarce fertilizer supplies have less capacity to cope with this year's intensifying El Nino, which is forecast to peak in December.

The phenomenon may amplify other crises in Southeast Asia, according to Paul Teng, with Singapore's ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, who said, "El Nino is only compounding all the other problems that we see."

Extreme El Nino may threaten global food security

During El Nino years, sea surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean are warmer than usual. This happens every few years and often alters global weather patterns.

This year, the seas already are hotter than average, with global oceans hitting new temperature records in August as the climate warms, said Kareff Rafisura, chief of the Disaster Risk Reduction Division at the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

This intensifying El Nino may be the "strongest in living memory," according to the United Kingdom's national weather and climate service. Similarly, the U.S.' National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said there is a 69% chance that this will be the strongest recorded El Nino since record-keeping began in 1950.

El Nino's impact will be felt differently across regions, but it is expected to jeopardize food security worldwide. It could push at least 49 million more people into acute food insecurity by the end of 2027, according to the United Nations' World Food Program.

The problem will be worst in parts of Central America and southern Africa, with significant effects also anticipated in eastern Africa and South and Southeast Asia, warned the food agency.

El Nino is already hitting parts of Asia

In Southeast Asia, wildfires are torching forests and peatlands in Indonesia, sending up plumes of toxic haze. The water level of a major reservoir supplying the bustling capital city of Jakarta — the world's biggest metropolis — is dropping inch by inch.

As the lake dries, the ruins of one of 11 villages that had been inundated by the reservoir have emerged, as alarm grows over the need for alternative water supplies for the city of 42 million.

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"I would have rather not moved. There were plenty of livelihood opportunities here," said Hussen, who only uses one name, as he ferried people across the receding reservoir.

This is just the beginning, said Erma Yulihastin with Indonesia's Research Center for Climate and Atmosphere, who warned El Nino has only just begun its "super phase."

Southeast Asia's fisheries brace for drought

Less rainfall and hotter temperatures are putting pressure on Southeast Asia's fisheries, an essential source of protein.

It's a pressing problem along the Mekong, a river basin that flows through six nations and is being disrupted by mining and construction of hydropower dams.

"It's one punch after another," said Zeb Hogan, with the University of Nevada, Reno, who runs the research and conservation project, Wonders of the Mekong. "If the river doesn't catch a break, we will reach a point where it's no longer going to sustain people in the way that it always has."

Lower flows are especially hard on communities along the Mekong that depend on predictable water levels for fishing and farming, said Kongmeng Ly, with the Mekong River Commission, an intergovernmental group for Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam.

Rice and palm oil supplies are at risk

Southeast Asia's wet season generally runs from June to October, when rains usually replenish reservoirs, cool overheated cities and supply water for irrigation ahead of the next planting season.

Drought may force farmers to delay planting, reduce acreage or switch crops entirely, said Rafisura, with the U.N. "Agriculture is definitely on the front line," she said.

Cutbacks in staple crops like rice and palm oil can have global impacts. The world's top three exporters of rice — India, Vietnam and Thailand — are among the nations most likely to be hit hard by El Nino this year.

North of the Thai capital Bangkok, rice farmers like 55-year-old Boonmark Marksuk are already facing tough choices. Apart from pricier fuel and fertilizer because of the war, he's spending most of his days pumping water into his rice fields because he no longer trusts the rain.

El Nino is also bearing down on Indonesia and Malaysia, suppliers of about 85% of the world's palm oil, which is used in everything from cookies and lipstick to toothpaste and laundry detergent.

Malaysia's prime minister has ordered its Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security to find ways to mitigate El Nino's impact, which is forecast to hit Malaysia hardest in November.

In Indonesia, farmers rely on rain to dissolve fertilizers into the soil to avoid burning the plants, explained Eddy Martono, chairman of the Indonesian Palm Oil Association.

"If it doesn't rain, everyone will definitely stop fertilizing," which will hurt national production, he said.

While the total economic fallout of an extreme El Nino is hard to calculate, losses from past events have reached trillions of dollars, according to HSBC's Global Investment Research, which warns the numbers could be even bigger this time.

Analysts at the investment bank Goldman Sachs estimate this El Nino could push global food commodity prices up more than 15%.

"Whatever happens to agriculture really determines whether people stay below or just slightly above the poverty line," Rafisura said. "Coming back to Southeast Asia, whatever happens here, the extent to which countries can protect production levels, will have global impacts."

Flights disrupted across the US Northeast due to technical problems at a key air traffic center

By JOSH FUNK AP Transportation Writer

Damaged communications lines at a key air traffic control facility in Philadelphia had been repaired, allowing airports across the U.S. Northeast to resume operations after hours of disruptions, the nation's transportation secretary said Monday evening.

Hundreds of flights were canceled, including more than 600 into and out of Newark Liberty International Airport, as the outage hit every major airport in the New York City area. Transportation Secretary Sean

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Duffy also said in an online post that "it will take some time to clear all existing delays" despite the repairs.

The primary communications line at the Federal Aviation Administration facility in Philadelphia had failed earlier Monday, while the backup fiber optic line was inadvertently severed by railroad construction workers. The failures left controllers without radar or communications for hours.

The outage brought commercial air traffic to a near-standstill at Newark for much of the day, with no commercial flights landing at the airport from about 9:40 a.m. to just after 5:20 p.m. local time, according to flight-tracking site Flightradar24.

More than 200 flights into and out of Philadelphia International Airport were also canceled, while disruptions hit LaGuardia and Kennedy airports in New York. By Monday evening, flights were resuming at those airports.

Some airlines were allowing customers to change flights without charge. The FAA advised travelers to check the status of their flights before heading to the airport.

The outage occurred just as President Donald Trump and numerous foreign leaders were flying into New York City for the U.N. General Assembly. Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney missed an event Monday on the sidelines of the General Assembly because of the flight disruptions but his office said he had arrived in New York by Monday night.

Cindy Phan said her morning flight from Newark to Minneapolis was repeatedly delayed before she learned around 3 p.m. that it had been canceled and rescheduled for Tuesday, requiring her to find and pay for another night at a hotel.

"We could have had a whole day in New York," Phan said, adding that she wanted to get home to her "two little Chihuahua babies."

Shannon Franke and her husband took a connecting flight from Nashville to Chicago when they found out their final Southwest leg home to Philadelphia was canceled. They had gone to Nashville to see the Philadelphia Eagles beat the Tennessee Titans 24-20 on a touchdown in the last seconds Sunday.

Stuck in Chicago, Franke said, they lucked out finding a hotel room and decided to enjoy some deep-dish pizza.

"We're just making the best of it," Franke said. "If the Eagles would have lost ... it would have been so much worse."

The technical problems stem from the same FAA facility in Philadelphia that caused numerous disruptions at the Newark airport last spring.

Regional control centers like these have two lines that carry radar and communications data in and out: the primary and the backup. The FAA said a circuit on the primary failed Monday morning, and when the system tried to switch to the backup, workers discovered that the fiber optic line had been cut.

Earlier in the day, Duffy said an Amtrak construction crew was to blame. Amtrak, however, pointed to a New Jersey Transit construction crew that was working in the area between Newark and New Brunswick, New Jersey.

FAA administrator Bryan Bedford told reporters earlier the agency had focused on fixing the primary connection as soon as possible by installing a new circuit on the primary line, while also working to repair the backup fiber optic line. Verizon said at the time that its technicians were also working to restore service.

Bedford earlier described the fiber break as "massive," saying it would take several hours to repair, according to a video posted online by a CBS reporter.

The primary circuit that failed is due to be replaced as part of a massive overhaul of the nation's air traffic control system.

Also Monday, the FAA began testing a new computer system that uses AI to help predict schedule conflicts and weather issues to help air traffic controllers reroute traffic. But that system is initially being tested only in the Washington, D.C., area, so it did not appear to be linked to the outages.

War, runaway AI and climate shocks to take center stage as world leaders meet at UN

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Under a global cloud of wars and bitter divisions, world leaders meet at the United Nations this week facing new fears that runaway artificial intelligence could threaten humanity even as climate shocks and escalating prices are already making life much tougher for hundreds of millions of people.

The annual high-level gathering at the U.N. General Assembly will also be consumed with major wars in Iran, Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan, Congo and Myanmar and a persisting question: Can the leaders do anything to end them?

And what can they do about the relentless rise of global warming threatening the future of the planet, the growing inequalities within and among nations, and shocks to the global economy as blocked shipping routes and supply chains increase the cost of living and slow growth?

The future of the United Nations will also definitely be on the agenda. At 81, its powers are still the victorious nations from World War II, not the 21st century's major global players. The U.N.'s 193 member nations have agreed to a wide-ranging reform package that includes updating key institutions such as the powerful U.N. Security Council, where the U.S., Russia, China, Britain and France hold inordinate sway because of their veto power. Reform, however, is easier said than implemented.

Behind the scenes, there will be speculation about who will lead the United Nations next. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' second five-year term ends Dec. 31 and no clear successor has emerged.

This meeting is still pivotal

There is still no question that the U.N. remains THE gathering place for its 193 member nations and their leaders. Some 130 heads of state and government are expected to speak at the General Assembly starting Tuesday along with dozens of ministers.

Among the headliners will be U.S. President Donald Trump and French President Emmanuel Macron. Both will speak Tuesday after Guterres' opening "state of the world" address. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian speak Wednesday.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu — whom New York Mayor Zoran Mamdani wanted arrested for his treatment of Palestinians in Gaza until he learned he has no such authority — will address the assembly on Thursday. For a second year, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas won't be coming to the U.N. because the U.S. has refused to give him a visa. He will nonetheless address the assembly by video the same day.

The United States, under its agreement with the U.N. to host the organization, is required to allow diplomats from all member nations to attend meetings.

Equally telling is who else isn't coming. China's President Xi Jinping is meeting Trump in Washington on Wednesday, yet he is skipping — some diplomats say snubbing — the U.N. gathering and sending a vice president instead. Russian President Vladimir Putin isn't coming either, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has backed out.

France's U.N. ambassador, Jerome Bonnafont, said it is "extremely critical" for world leaders this week to support the U.N. as the place where the world's nations meet — especially at a time of such polarization.

"We believe in multilateralism," he said, "and we believe that the high-level week is the occasion for countries in the world to reaffirm that they prefer cooperation and dialogue to confrontation."

United Nations has not had a great year

There is no doubt it's been a tough year for the world body. It has been pushed to the sidelines when it comes to its key responsibility of ensuring international peace and security and trying to end major conflicts in the Mideast and Ukraine. The U.S. failure to pay billions of dollars in outstanding arrears has left the organization's finances in rocky shape.

But veteran U.N. watcher Richard Gowan, the International Crisis Group's global issues and institutions

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program director, says 2025 was even worse.

A year ago, he said, people were contemplating that Trump would use his U.N. speech to announce that the United States would leave the world organization. Trump didn't announce a pullout last September and the U.N. muddled through the past 12 months with financial troubles that forced cutbacks to its peacekeeping operations and humanitarian aid.

In recent days, the U.S. paid \$725 million of its dues to the U.N.'s regular operating budget for this year, enough to keep the Trump administration from losing its vote in the General Assembly. The payment was a strong indication Trump will keep the U.S. in the United Nations.

The U.N. is no longer "in freefall," Gowan said, but it "is stuck in an open-ended or permanent crisis." Put more graphically, he said, "The U.N. may not be in emergency care like it was last year, but it does seem to be trapped in a trauma center for the foreseeable future."

Former U.N. deputy secretary-general Mark Malloch-Brown, a United Nations Foundation board member, said, "While the world still trusts the U.N., the global public is eager for change."

AI is pushing toward the center of the agenda

The future of artificial intelligence has pushed to the forefront of global concerns, with its speeding advances and the dawning recognition that there are no industry controls, let alone any global guardrails for a technology that has many advantages but also many disadvantages and unknowns.

Days before the global gathering, leaders of three major AI companies warned about the technology getting out of human control and called for a pause, but Trump dismissed their concerns as "a hoax," and urged continued advances to keep the U.S. ahead of China.

The U.N. Security Council added a high-level meeting on AI to its agenda on Wednesday afternoon, a sign of the growing apprehension and need to address the issue. It was already slated to hold a high-level meeting on Ukraine with Zelenskyy on Wednesday morning.

For the U.N. chief, this will be his last assembly meeting with global leaders. He previewed his speech last week, telling U.N. reporters that power is shifting in "an era of deep uncertainty."

"At a time when the world faces three existential threats," he said, "international cooperation is more necessary than ever."

Others will be vying for the spotlight on issues from rising sea levels and funding education to the fight for gender equality. Hundreds of private meetings will also convene in U.N. cubicles, hotels, diplomatic missions and restaurants.

Esther Brimmer, a senior fellow in global governance at the Council on Foreign Relations and former U.S. assistant secretary of state for international organization affairs in the Obama administration, said in-person meetings can help countries hash out ideas that get implemented months later.

She called the situation in 2026 "much more serious and complex than in decades past."

"With that said, I'm also not without hope as well," Brimmer said. "Over the past decades we've learned a lot about international cooperation."

Iran's Revolutionary Guard warns US over escalation, and other Mideast developments

By The Associated Press undefined

Iran's Revolutionary Guard warned Monday that it would "change the geography of the war" if the United States escalates the conflict.

Meanwhile, the British military said an "unknown projectile" struck a tanker as it entered the Strait of Hormuz on Monday, injuring two crew members.

The Israeli military remains on alert as much of the country shuts down for Yom Kippur, the holiest day in Judaism.

Here is the latest news from the Middle East on Monday. Full coverage is available [here](#).

Iran's Revolutionary Guard issues warning if US escalates war

A spokesperson for Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, Hossein Mohebbi, said Monday that "the

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war is not over" and warned that Iran would change its weapons, military tactics and targets if the conflict with the U.S. escalates.

"We will certainly change the geography of the war," Mohebbi said in a statement carried by Iranian state media. "We will certainly bring new weapons with new capabilities into the battle." He said the Guard had prepared for a long-term war.

"Our targets will no longer necessarily be the same as before," he said, according to the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, adding that Iran has targets that have not yet been struck.

UK to offer Saudi Arabia aerial refueling to counter Houthi attacks

Prime Minister Andy Burnham says Britain has agreed to provide limited military support to Saudi Arabia to repel attacks by Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen.

The Houthis and Saudi Arabia have traded strikes as fighting between the rebels and Yemen's Saudi-backed government has reignited.

Burnham told reporters as he flew to the United Nations General Assembly in New York that he had agreed the Royal Air Force will provide air-to-air refueling of Saudi planes. The agreement is for a matter of weeks, but Burnham said it will be kept under review.

Projectile strikes tanker passing through Strait of Hormuz, British military says

The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations Center said a tanker was struck by an "unknown projectile" as it headed into the Strait of Hormuz. Two crew members sustained minor injuries.

The agency said Monday the vessel is reportedly continuing to its next port of call under its own power. No reports indicated any environmental impact at this time.

Some tankers are again traversing the vital strait, but traffic is well below what it once was.

Houthi leader lashes out at Saudis in televised speech

In Yemen, the leader of the Iran-backed Houthi rebels used the anniversary of his group's overthrow of the Yemeni government to lash out at Saudi Arabia.

In a pre-recorded speech aired Monday, Abdul Malik al-Houthi said his group's demands include an end to what he called Saudi "aggression" and the blockade the Saudi-led coalition has imposed on the rebels for about a decade.

"Stop the aggression and end the blockade. Our demands represent the legitimate rights of our people," he said in the speech aired by the Houthi-run al-Masirah channel.

The Houthis descended from their stronghold in northern Yemen, taking over the capital of Sanaa in September 2014 and forcing the country's government into exile in Saudi Arabia.

The following year, Saudi Arabia led a multi-national coalition that entered the war in an attempt to restore the government. The coalition imposed an air and sea blockade on the Houthi-held areas, as part of its war efforts.

164 killed and almost 130,000 displaced in Yemen

U.N. agencies reported that hundreds of people have been killed and wounded and over 130,000 displaced by the renewed fighting in Yemen.

The World Health Organization said Monday in a post on X that 164 people were killed and 516 injured between Sept. 13 and Sept. 18, bringing the toll since Aug. 6 to 674 deaths and 2,998 injuries.

The International Organization for Migration said the same day that the fighting has so far displaced 129,438 people across seven provinces, and some people have already been forced to flee multiple times.

Israeli military on guard on Jewish faith's holiest day

Israel's military remained on alert even as the country woke up to the silence and empty streets of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, considered the holiest day for the Jewish faith.

Streetlights blinked yellow Monday as the faithful walked to the Western Wall in Jerusalem's Old City.

"For the next 25 hours, Israel is offline," the foreign ministry said on X after sundown Sunday. But the military said it bolstered its frontline forces following the killing of an Israeli settler Sunday in the occupied West Bank. The Palestinian suspect was detained after a search.

Trump returns to UN at a moment of anxiety about Iran, AI and the future of world body itself

By AAMER MADHANI Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump is set to address the U.N. General Assembly on Tuesday at a tumultuous moment for the world — and for his presidency.

The global economy has been shaken by his decision to launch a war against Iran. Anxiety about the social impact being wrought by artificial intelligence is surging. And questions linger about the future of the United Nations itself with Trump's scaling back U.S. financial support for the United Nations.

After his speech to the annual gathering of world leaders, Trump is expected to hold talks with new British Prime Minister Andy Burnham, Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and a more informal meeting with Venezuela's acting president Delcy Rodríguez, according to the White House.

He's also set to meet with leaders and senior officials from Gulf Cooperation Council nations — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates — to discuss the way ahead with the war in Iran and growing concern about recent Iran-backed rebels attacks on Saudi Arabia.

The visit to the U.N. comes at a moment when Trump's foreign policy approach — particularly his decision to start a war with Iran — has become a drag on his fellow Republicans' hopes of retaining control of both chambers of Congress during the coming midterm elections. Nevertheless, administration officials signaled Trump will make the case in his address that the world is better off for his leadership.

"We expect the president will highlight how he has and his administration have confronted complex problems head-on around the world," Ambassador Mike Waltz, Trump's chief envoy to the international body, told reporters.

Waltz also suggested that Trump might revisit some of his long-held criticism of the United Nations. The president has criticized the body as being ineffectual on issues of war and peace, has claimed the organization is perpetuating a "con job" by emphasizing the need to address global warming, and has asserted the U.N. has promoted the "invasion" of migrants into Europe.

Iran war to loom large

In last year's address at the U.N., Trump claimed the U.S. had "demolished" Iran's nuclear capabilities after he ordered the June 2025 bombardment of three key facilities.

He returns to the General Assembly nearing the seven-month mark of a new war against Iran that he insists is necessary to address a nuclear threat posed by Iran.

The war has grown more complicated even though strikes by the United States and Israel have killed much of Iran's top leadership and destroyed its air force and navy, while a U.S. blockade of Iranian oil has left Tehran in economic shambles.

The passage of oil from other Gulf countries through the Strait of Hormuz has improved in recent weeks with the help of the U.S. Navy helping guide commercial vessels through the narrow waterway. Still, the flow of oil is significantly below pre-war levels. And Brent crude continues to hover around \$100 per barrel, up from about the \$70 range in the weeks before the start of the war.

But the energy market continues to be spooked. Saudi Arabia shuttered a key pipeline earlier this month that acted as a relief valve for oil blocked in the Gulf. The kingdom made the move after the pipeline came under attack by Iran-backed militants in Iraq.

At the same time, territorial grabs by the Yemen-based Houthi rebels, another Iranian-backed group, near the Bab al-Mandab Strait has now made it treacherous for oil carriers to use that Red Sea shipping lane.

Majed al-Ansari, chief spokesman for the Qatari Foreign Ministry, said Monday that Qatar and other mediators are trying to penetrate a "deep deficit of trust" between the U.S. and Iran and get the sides back to negotiations.

"What we're trying to say is that, 'Listen, this will end at the negotiating table,'" said al-Ansari, speaking at the Concordia Annual Summit, a global affairs forum taking place during the U.N.'s high-level week. "Either we sign a deal now or sign a deal 10 months away. The only difference is the number of dead and destruction that we see."

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The administration will sign a Greenland deal

At last year's General Assembly, Trump touted his record as a peacemaker and claimed that "everyone says that I should get the Nobel Peace Prize" for his administration's efforts mediating several conflicts around the globe.

This year, his administration is set to sign an agreement on the sidelines of the General Assembly with Danish and Greenlandic leaders that aims to set the pathway for the expansion of U.S. military's footprint on Greenland.

The deal, announced last week, came together after Trump repeatedly threatened to "take over" Greenland, a territory of NATO-ally Denmark, by military force if necessary.

Under the deal, Greenland remains Denmark's territory. "I'm looking forward to the meeting tomorrow. I think we have reached a good agreement," Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen told Danish broadcaster TV2 Denmark.

Trump's frustration with Russia-Ukraine war mounts

The president could also touch on Russia's continuing war against Ukraine during the address — a conflict that during his 2024 campaign he predicted would be resolved on Day One of his second term.

The president has routinely expressed frustration about the conflict. He hasn't obscured that his patience is being tested by Ukraine's targeting of Russia's diesel refineries — an issue that's added to oil markets' volatility — and Russia's targeting of Ukraine's energy grid.

Trump last week asserted that he got the two sides to agree to not target each other's energy infrastructure. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he was willing to go along with Trump's plan if Russia abided by it. Russia said it could only go along with Trump's energy truce proposal if Western energy sanctions on Moscow were lifted first.

The two sides have continued carrying out strikes on refineries and other energy infrastructure. Trump on Monday, before departing for New York, expressed his frustration with targeting of energy infrastructure.

"Russia has unfortunately lost control of its Diesel Oil Industry due to its War with Ukraine," Trump posted on social media on Monday. He added, "This ridiculous and never ending War with Ukraine must be ended."

Trump to hold critical talks with UK, Japan and Venezuela leaders

The president is set to hold his first face-to-face meeting with Burnham, the center-left Labour Party leader who became prime minister in July.

With elevated oil prices dragging the British economy, he may also be eager to discuss ways to fully reopen the Strait of Hormuz. He announced on Monday that he would send a Royal Air Force plane to the Mideast to help Saudi Arabia repel attacks from Houthi rebels. The plane will refuel Saudi planes during "defensive" missions.

Trump's meeting with Japan's Takaichi comes as he prepares to welcome Chinese President Xi Jinping later this week to Washington for a state visit.

The historically complicated Japan-China relationship became even more fraught after Takaichi said last year that Japan's military could intervene if China were to take action against Taiwan — a semi-autonomous island democracy that Beijing considers its own territory. The tensions have spilled over into the China-Japan economic relationship.

Trump's engagement with Rodriguez, Venezuela's interim president, will be the first meeting between the two leaders since Trump in January ordered a U.S. military operation to capture former President Nicolás Maduro and swept him off to New York City to face federal narco-terrorism and drug trafficking charges.

Messy, troubled, unpredictable: Diplomats describe a world in turmoil as UN opens annual meeting

By FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — There is not much that diplomats can agree on these days. But if asked about the state of the world ahead of the annual meeting at the U.N. General Assembly, heads of state and government and ministers alike will describe a globe in massive turmoil.

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With two escalating wars raging in Europe and the Middle East, a global economy in flux, and a shifting world order, international leaders are arriving in New York on Tuesday to an outlook that is massively different from this time last year.

"World leaders will be gathering at the United Nations in an era of deep uncertainty," U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres told reporters recently. "At the same time, power is shifting. The world is changing. And our institutions must change with it."

The last nine months alone saw the audacious U.S. military operation that plucked Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro from power before a deadly crackdown took place in Iran after tens of thousands of pro-government demonstrators took to the streets to challenge the country's theocracy. Shortly after, the U.S. and Israel launched a joint attack against Tehran, kicking off an ongoing and spiraling conflict, now involving nearly every country in the region, which has since resulted in the effective closure of a critical waterway.

Meanwhile, the more than four-year war between Russia and Ukraine shows no end in sight as both sides have only ramped up military attacks in recent days while numerous diplomatic efforts to end the conflict have failed to break through.

In May, an outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda raised further questions about the lack of international preparedness for the next pandemic. Deadly earthquakes in Venezuela and Colombia, as well as massive flash floods in Nepal and Tibet, highlighted the worsening impact of human-caused global warming on communities around the world.

In interviews leading up to the annual meeting, current and former ministers, ambassadors and officials from across the world painted a stark picture of the crises plaguing the international community and whether the U.N. and its 193 member states can address them. They spoke to the Associated Press on the condition of anonymity to speak freely about international concerns.

"It is a critical time to try to see if some of these issues can be resolved diplomatically," former U.S. Ambassador Robert Wood, who served at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations under Republican and Democratic leaders, told The Associated Press. "The U.N. is really at an inflection point. There's no doubt about it. It was bad last year. It's not much better this year."

One European diplomat and another official echoed that sentiment, saying that the world is not in a better place than it was this time last year and that things have become even more unstable. The diplomat and the officials, who were granted anonymity to speak freely about concerns, cited the various attacks on international law, the breakdown or lack of mediation efforts, and the continued failure to find global consensus on issues like climate and peace and security.

Beyond closely mining the speeches from headliners like U.S. President Donald Trump, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian, officials are hoping to use the annual gathering to meet with adversaries and allies on the sidelines, seeking to break the logjam on issues like maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz and runaway artificial intelligence, among others.

Asked what they hoped to take away from the week of meetings, one Gulf official said it would be great to go back to a level of predictability on the world stage.

"In international relations, everything is changing: the friendships are changing, and alliances are changing," Tone Kajzer, Slovenia's foreign minister, said. "But what remains constant is the interests and how to align those interests so that we live in peace and not in a permanent conflict."

What's next for Germany's troubled chancellor after a string of state election defeats

By GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Friedrich Merz says he intends to stay on as the leader of Germany and his party after a string of state election defeats. But it's unclear how much room for maneuver the chancellor still has, only 16 months after he took office.

The 70-year-old sought within minutes of polls closing Sunday in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania and

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Berlin to shore up his position in his center-right Christian Democratic Union. He made a highly unusual election evening appearance to insist that he would press ahead with reforms meant to get the sluggish economy moving.

"What has to be done now requires backbone, steadfastness and patience," Merz said. "I will demonstrate that as the CDU party leader and above all as chancellor of our country."

The key is Merz's party

The big question is whether the CDU will support him in that, and for how long.

The party's eight state governors publicly backed him before Sunday's two elections. But Merz's statement on Sunday itself underlined the erosion of his authority in recent weeks, and it remains to be seen whether support from powerful regional leaders and lawmakers will hold.

Merz has one advantage: there's no single obvious successor waiting in the wings. Potential options who have been named include the governors of North Rhine-Westphalia, Hendrik Wüst; Bavaria, Markus Söder; and Hesse, Boris Rhein.

For now, though, no one has signaled any interest in taking over, and Wüst has an election to fight next spring in his own state, Germany's most populous.

It won't be easy to deliver

Survival is one thing, but this month's state elections haven't made it easier for Merz to govern effectively.

Merz already agreed the outline of proposed reforms with his junior governing partners, the center-left Social Democrats. But politicians on both sides of the governing coalition have questioned details of them during these election campaigns, particularly aspects of an overhaul of the pension system, and it's unclear whether he can get them through parliament the way he planned.

The governing coalition has only a 12-seat majority in the 630-seat Bundestag, the national parliament's lower house. It will need to show discipline that it hasn't always mustered to pass the reform plans, which won't be easy if lawmakers grow more nervous. But that thin majority also complicates any plan to replace Merz: any successor would need to get elected in the Bundestag.

Previous chancellors have given up their party's leadership

Merz could, at least in theory, choose to turn over the task of managing his party to someone else and concentrate on running the country.

There is a precedent: Angela Merkel gave up the CDU leadership after a poor state election result in 2018 but remained chancellor until 2021. Her Social Democratic predecessor, Gerhard Schröder, did the same in 2004 after his popularity sank during a drive to reform Germany's welfare system.

But there's no obvious candidate in this case either, and Merz has made clear that he doesn't want to hand over the party leadership.

Merz is a chancellor on probation

Sunday's results have deepened his problems, focusing attention even more closely on his ability to deliver reforms while also keeping the governing coalition and his own party together. And Merz himself said as he insisted on the need for change that "not everything will win quick applause." He also has to keep an eye on the threat from the far-right Alternative for Germany party.

Even if he remains in charge, there's only a seven-month respite until the next round of state elections — though none of those are in Alternative for Germany's eastern heartland. And another setback could quickly revive questions over his leadership.

German leader faces tough time ahead after election defeats, but no sign of leadership challenge

By GEIR MOULSON Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — German Chancellor Friedrich Merz stood by his vow to stay in office Monday after his party suffered two more regional election defeats and was voted out of a state legislature in a humiliating first. But he faces a struggle to keep his reform agenda intact.

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Minutes after polls closed on Sunday, the unpopular Merz said he planned to stay on as leader of both Germany and his center-right party, and said that he would push through reforms to Europe's biggest economy.

Hours later, final results underlined the extent of what Merz conceded was a "disaster" in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, an eastern region on the Baltic Sea coast. His center-right Christian Democratic Union fell just below the 5% of the vote needed to keep seats in the regional parliament, the first time that has happened in 77 years of modern Germany's federal republic, after losing more than half its support. The far-right Alternative for Germany finished as the strongest party.

In Sunday's other election, the CDU dropped to second place in Berlin behind the hard-left Left Party, which is in pole position to lead the next city government — though Merz's party could, depending on how coalition talks go, still retain city hall.

But after days of speculation about Merz's future, there were no prominent public calls Monday for his departure and no sign of a challenge. The chancellor said no one raised any "personnel questions" in party leadership meetings Sunday or Monday.

"It is the historic task of the (governing) coalition here in Berlin and the political center as a whole to make our country fit for the coming years," Merz said. "Extremists suggest that there are easy solutions. But everyone who has ever governed knows there are no easy solutions."

At the same time, he acknowledged that the CDU needs to work on its profile. He said that it "no longer has satisfactory answers to too many questions, and we will and must change that."

A far-right party gains again

Neither of the states that voted Sunday is a political heavyweight. The CDU's 2023 win in Berlin was its only one in the past 25 years in the capital, which has tended to lean left. The party was already weak in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.

But the results added to the headwinds Merz faces after a stinging defeat by the far-right, anti-immigration Alternative for Germany, or AfD, two weeks ago in Saxony-Anhalt, another region in the formerly communist east, damaged his authority and set off speculation that he might be replaced.

While AfD was the strongest party in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, the center-left Social Democrats — the junior party in Merz's national governing coalition — were fairly close behind after a campaign focused squarely on the state governor, Manuela Schwesig, as a bulwark against the far right. That polarization helped squeeze other mainstream parties, including the CDU.

A left-leaning three-party coalition under Schwesig would have a majority in the new regional legislature.

Questions over how Germany should be reformed

Schwesig and others in the governing parties have cast doubt on aspects of the federal government's reform agenda, which is meant to bolster a chronically sluggish economy. The reform plans include a potentially painful overhaul of the creaking pension system and of the healthcare system. A proposal to scrap a rule allowing people who have paid pension contributions for 45 years to retire early without taking a financial hit has drawn particular criticism.

The Social Democrats' national leaders said Monday that they stand by the coalition. But they made clear that they will seek at least some changes to the plans.

Vice Chancellor Lars Klingbeil, who is also the finance minister, said that "saying we will ignore what voters told us in three state elections won't work."

"We need reforms, but these reforms must be fair and they need support in the population," he said. The party's other co-leader, Labor Minister Bärbel Bas, said the plans need a "reality check" and a "fairness check," but that she was optimistic of finding solutions on the pension system reform, the most controversial plan.

"There would be nothing more lethal than letting this coalition break apart over some technical question," Bas said.

Merz said he wouldn't speculate about "where we must make corrections."

There are at least no more electoral tests this year. However, five state elections are scheduled next

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year, three of them in April.

They include one in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany's most populous state, currently led by a prominent CDU figure often cited as a possible successor to Merz, Hendrik Wüst. None of the five elections is in the east, where AfD is strongest.

Looking forward, much will depend on the CDU's influential regional leaders. But there was no sign of a challenge to Merz Monday from them or others.

"You get the feeling that the stronger figures are trying to stay away from Berlin at the moment," Thomas Poguntke, a longtime political science professor at the Heinrich Heine University in Duesseldorf, told Phoenix television.

"Swapping out a leadership figure wouldn't achieve so terribly much now," he added, but the chancellor has made avoidable mistakes in the past, "and the government's handicraft simply must improve."

What to know about USAID and the deadly impacts of US foreign aid cuts

By KRISTEN GELINEAU Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) — The foreign aid landscape has changed dramatically since U.S. President Donald Trump's administration dissolved the United States Agency for International Development, once the world's largest humanitarian donor.

Here's a quick look at USAID, the impacts of its dissolution and what foreign aid looks like today:

USAID's roots and purpose

U.S. President John F. Kennedy and Congress started USAID in the early 1960s. Beyond the belief that the U.S. has a moral obligation to help the world's most desperate, supporters of USAID say the agency was a crucial tool of soft power diplomacy. Supporters say USAID directly benefited the country by engendering immense global goodwill toward the U.S., helping prevent the spread of diseases that could threaten American lives and providing stability in foreign countries that could otherwise pose a threat to U.S. security. The U.S. typically spent around 1% of its federal budget on U.S. foreign assistance.

A study published in The Lancet credited USAID programs with preventing 91 million deaths — including 30 million deaths of children under age 5 — in the first two decades of this century alone.

Critics of the agency, including Trump, say it was wasteful and poorly run.

US foreign aid cuts affect communities worldwide

The U.S. foreign aid cuts have been devastating for millions of the world's most vulnerable people. The Associated Press has documented widespread severe hunger, shortages of lifesaving medicine and spikes in child marriage, kidnapping and trafficking of children — consequences that are all linked to the funding cuts. Experts say the true impact won't be measurable for years, because the repercussions of issues like malnutrition and untreated diseases take time to manifest. And the full extent of the damage may never be known, in part because the funding cuts eliminated the jobs of scores of front line workers who collected mortality data.

Deaths linked to US foreign aid cuts

Despite the U.S. government's repeated insistence that no one has died as a result of its dissolution of USAID, the AP has documented deaths across the world linked to the funding cuts. In Nepal, the AP found that cuts to programs that ensured uneducated, impoverished pregnant women got proper nutrition and prenatal care have led to more babies and pregnant women dying. The AP also found that children in Myanmar, Nigeria and Somalia have died after cuts to food rations and nutrition programs.

Because of global cuts to foreign aid, the Gates Foundation has predicted that 2025 will be the first year this century where child deaths will increase.

US defends its decision

In a statement to the AP, the U.S. State Department said the Trump administration had reinvigorated its assistance programs to focus on efficiency, effectiveness and partnership. The department also said the U.S. spends more on health and humanitarian assistance than any other country.

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"The rest of the world needs to contribute more and share the burden," the department said.
US foreign aid today

The Trump administration's new foreign aid strategy is more limited and is targeted toward initiatives that government officials say will further the United States' interests. With health aid, for example, the U.S. is increasingly bypassing NGOs in favor of bilateral agreements with foreign countries. This means the money goes directly to foreign governments in exchange for concessions to the U.S., such as access to a country's health data, which could be used to help detect outbreaks of infectious diseases. The U.S. says this model is more efficient. But some countries have pushed back, particularly over privacy concerns for their citizens' medical records.

Appeals court favors Trump-backed Missouri congressional map, but Supreme Court will have final say

By DAVID A. LIEB Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — A long-running legal fight over Missouri's congressional map took another turn Monday when a federal appeals panel ruled in favor of new districts backed by President Donald Trump, even though the U.S. Supreme Court has blocked those districts from being used in the November election.

A three-judge panel of the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said Missouri should use the new Republican-drawn U.S. House districts in the November election, just as the state did in its August primary. To revert to its prior districts for the general election would violate the U.S. Constitution, the appeals judges said.

The appeals panel directed a lower court judge to issue a permanent injunction against using anything other than the map favored by Trump. But the ruling has no immediate impact. That's because the panel also ordered the judge to delay the effect of the order for one week to allow time for an appeal. The judge quickly did so.

Opponents of the new map said Monday that they will file an emergency appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court already has twice sided against the Trump-backed map. Earlier this month, it blocked enforcement of a lower court order favoring the new map pending a potential appeal and eventual decision by the high court.

Missouri currently is set to run its November election with the same congressional districts it used in 2024 and 2022, following prior decisions by both the Missouri Supreme Court and the U.S. Supreme Court.

Appeals panel ruling comes amid absentee voting

Local elections officials already have sent absentee ballots to overseas citizens and military voters using the 2022 districts. State law requires absentee ballots to be available to all other voters by Tuesday.

Local elections officials theoretically could scramble to change ballots again and could send replacements for ones already distributed. But if voters already have cast an absentee ballot, they cannot change their vote — even if the district boundaries have changed.

Miller County Clerk Clinton Jenkins said he mailed an absentee ballot Friday to a Missouri voter living in Australia and also sent ballots to other overseas voters. But he suggested that other people "wait a little deeper into the absentee period, just in case" the congressional district boundaries get swapped again.

To try to change districts at this late date would be "practically impossible" and cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, the Missouri Association of County Clerks and Election Authorities had told appeals judges in a legal filing.

But an attorney representing Republicans who sued — including U.S. Rep. Bob Onder and state Sen. Rick Brattin, a congressional candidate — suggested during arguments last Thursday that there still is time to revert to the Trump-backed map.

The appeals panel agreed, pointing to other cases in which courts have ordered changes after absentee ballots already had been distributed to overseas citizens and military voters.

The group People Not Politicians, which spearheaded a referendum petition to put the new map to a

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statewide vote on the November ballot, said it will appeal the latest decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. "Ballots have been printed, and Missourians have already voted. Thousands more will vote before this order seeks to take effect," Richard von Glahn, executive director of People Not Politicians Missouri, said in a statement. "Officials should stop wasting taxpayers' money on pointless legal action and instead focus on administering our elections."

Court ruling highlights constitutional conflict

The 8th Circuit decision puts the federal court at odds with Missouri's top court.

"The Constitution does not permit Missouri to use a different congressional district map in the November 2026 general election than it used in the August 2026 primary election," the appeals panel wrote in its decision.

The panel consists of Judge James Loken, an appointee of former President George H.W. Bush, and two appointees of Trump — Judges David Stras and Justin Smith. Prior to his June appointment, Smith was an attorney who represented Trump as he unsuccessfully appealed a \$5 million jury verdict in a lawsuit filed by the writer E. Jean Carroll to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Earlier this month, the Missouri Supreme Court said the state forbids the use of districts passed last September because opponents submitted thousands of petition signatures in December calling for a statewide vote on the new districts.

Republican Secretary of State Denny Hoskins waited until August — on the same day that the primary was held under the new districts — to reject the petition. He asserted that referendum petitions aren't allowed for congressional redistricting.

The Missouri Supreme Court reversed Hoskins' finding, ruling that the state must use the districts approved in 2022 for the November election. The high court then temporarily held Hoskins in contempt when he directed local election officials to use the 2025 map after a federal district court order favoring it.

Missouri's redistricting targets Kansas City

The new congressional map backed by Trump significantly reshapes a Kansas City-based district held by Democratic Rep. Emanuel Cleaver. Republicans hope the map could help them win seven of the state's eight House seats — one more than they currently hold.

Cleaver was unopposed in the Democratic primary, and Brattin won a multi-way Republican primary. Brattin praised Monday's appeals panel decision, saying that switching districts after the primary "defies common sense and undermines the entire electoral process."

About 59% of the 5th District's potential voters are new under the revised map, which also changes several other districts. All told, more than a million potential Missouri voters, or nearly 1 in 4 voters statewide, are affected by the redistricting, according to an Associated Press estimate.

Missouri's redistricting battle has been the longest and most complex among roughly a dozen states that sought to change their U.S. House districts over the past year. Districts are usually redrawn at the start of each decade, after a census. But Trump spurred a spate of mid-decade redistricting last year when he urged Republican-led states to redraw districts to gain an edge in the midterm elections that will determine control of Congress.

News outlets sue Trump over lost White House access, citing 'blatant violation' of First Amendment

By JOCELYN NOVECK AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — CNN, MS NOW and Politico on Monday sued President Donald Trump's administration days after they were barred from White House grounds, calling the selective ban — based on the content of their coverage — a "blatant violation" of the First Amendment. Trump said on social media that he "cherished" a free press but not "FAKE NEWS."

"White House access is a privilege — not a right," the administration posted on X.

The extraordinary ban of the three news outlets' reporters, which began over the weekend, represented a clear escalation of Trump's long-running efforts — in the courts and through administrative action — to

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restrict news coverage he finds objectionable. They were also the latest test of First Amendment protections in the United States, where the government is constitutionally forbidden from restricting the press.

The Constitution, the banned news outlets said in their lawsuit, "does not allow a president or any other government official to deprive the press of their First Amendment rights and liberty and property interests with no notice or process based solely on his dislike of the content of their reporting."

The three outlets filed the joint lawsuit two days after their reporters were blocked from the White House and prevented from doing their jobs. The reporters' entry badges were disabled Saturday, a day after Trump had suddenly announced he was barring the outlets because of reporting he considered "fake news."

CNN is removed from pool duties, and other outlets take a stand in solidarity

On Monday morning, the banned TV networks were reporting from an intersection just outside the White House complex. CNN, meanwhile, was removed from its pool duties, which are shared by the five major networks. It had been scheduled to cover the president's trip to New York for the United Nations General Assembly. In an email to members, the TV pool said there would be no replacement coverage — and other networks would suspend their own pool coverage indefinitely.

"Effective today, the TV pool will not be covering events designated as pool coverage of the President," said the email, seen by The Associated Press, from the current chair of the pool, Fox's Washington bureau chief, Bryan Boughton. "This follows the White House's position preventing CNN from fulfilling its assigned pool duties."

Other news outlets also took steps in solidarity. The AP joined a number of news organizations, including The Washington Post and The New York Times, in a decision not to publish photographs of presidential events on Monday.

The White House did not respond directly to a request for comment on Monday's lawsuit. But in a news release posted on X, it said of the three banned outlets, "The First Amendment protects their right to publish; it does not entitle them to a hard pass, briefing room seat, or place in the press pool."

On his Truth Social platform, Trump wrote that he was not attacking the First Amendment.

"The White House is not instituting an assault on the Free Press, something which I cherish," the president said in his post. "It is instituting an assault on the FAKE NEWS, something that has grown like Cancer in our beloved United States of America. It is corrupt, purposeful, pervasive, fully coordinated, and totally out of control. It is a threat to our National Security, and must be stopped, NOW!"

Vice President JD Vance, meanwhile, told reporters that the journalism of the three outlets is "effectively far-left propaganda," and said they were still allowed to report — just not to have offices in the White House.

The lawsuit claims a 'direct assault' on the First Amendment

In his second term, Trump and his Republican administration have upped the ante and punished certain media outlets. Trump has also lashed out at individual reporters in person or over social media, sometimes in strikingly personal terms — insulting them in briefings or in his recent speech at the White House Correspondents' Association dinner.

"This morning, we notified the government that we are filing a lawsuit today to protect our First Amendment rights and defend the principle that the government does not decide what the press reports or publishes," the banned outlets said in a joint statement posted early Monday on X. "Left unchallenged, this threatens press freedom and the public's right to independent journalism free from government interference."

In the joint complaint, accompanied by a separate request for a temporary restraining order blocking enforcement of the bans, the outlets said, "This ban could not be a more direct assault on the First Amendment nor a more blatant violation of our most fundamental constitutional principles."

In legal terms, it's known as "viewpoint discrimination" — the government singling out specific media outlets for the content of what they say or publish. That legal principle is at issue in many of the court cases around Trump's treatment of the media and would likely be at play this time.

Jameel Jaffer, executive director of the Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University, called the White House move "an attack both on press freedom and the public's right to independent informa-

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tion about the government.”

“The president’s decision to bar news organizations from the White House for the content of their reporting is a flagrant violation of the First Amendment,” said Jaffer, whose institute is filing a brief to support the lawsuit. The case has been assigned to U.S. District Judge Timothy Kelly, whom Trump nominated during his first term in the White House.

Reporters were barred Saturday from their White House offices

On Saturday, White House reporters from the two cable networks — Betsy Klein of CNN and Akayla Gardner of MS NOW — went live to report they’d been turned away, their press badges deactivated, when arriving for their jobs at the White House.

Soon after, Politico said its White House reporter Cheyenne Haslett was also denied entry and had her badge confiscated.

The WHCA’s president, Jacqui Heinrich, called on the Trump administration to immediately restore the three outlets’ access.

“The implications extend beyond these organizations: a standard used to exclude one news outlet because of its coverage could be applied to any outlet in the future,” Heinrich said.

The current showdown follows the president’s decision last year to bar AP reporters from the Oval Office, Air Force One and some events in retaliation for the news outlet’s decision not to follow his lead in changing the name of the Gulf of Mexico, which lies partially in Mexican and other waters. The AP said it would note when appropriate that Trump had ordered it renamed the “Gulf of America.”

The AP filed suit and the case is ongoing. Since returning to office, Trump has pursued other legal action against a variety of different outlets, including The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal and the BBC. His administration is also involved in a long-simmering confrontation involving ABC over renewal of its broadcast licenses.

It was not known how long the standoff between the White House and some members of the media would continue. But the effects of missing pool coverage were clear later Monday as Trump showed off a new White House helicopter landing pad — with no TV cameras to record the moment or catch what he was saying.

States settle lawsuit over Paramount-Warner merger, clearing key hurdle for \$81 billion deal

By WYATTE GRANTHAM-PHILIPS and MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Twelve states and Hollywood writers challenging Paramount’s buyout of Warner Bros. Discovery agreed to settle their lawsuits on Monday, effectively paving the way for the \$81 billion mega merger to cross the finish line, with some new commitments from the company.

The blockbuster deal will still vastly reshape Hollywood — bringing together two of the “big five” remaining studios, key TV networks like CBS and CNN and streaming platforms HBO Max and Paramount+, as well as decades-old libraries with titles ranging from “Harry Potter” to “Top Gun.”

But among terms of Monday’s agreement announced by California Attorney General Rob Bonta — who led the states’ case — Skydance-owned Paramount pledged to increase film production in the U.S., commit millions of dollars to a fund to support workers displaced by the merger and create new monitoring of the editorial independence of the company’s news operations.

The settlement still needs a final sign-off by a judge.

Paramount CEO David Ellison welcomed the terms reached with both the states and the Writers Guild of America on Monday, which he said marks “complete clearance” for his company’s merger with Warner — reiterating that such a combo will “build a stronger Hollywood.”

Critics, however, decried the settlement terms as too weak and accused the state attorneys general of capitulating to corporate pressure. Many saw the litigation as the last guardrail from keeping a combined Paramount-Warner from becoming a reality.

Talks were contentious for months — and, despite new remedies announced Monday, Bonta and other

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top state prosecutors who sued said that they still didn't think the companies should merge.

Politics have also surrounded much of Paramount's quest for Warner. Many eyes are on the billionaire Ellison family's relationship with President Donald Trump and the future of assets like CNN, which the Republican administration barred from the White House over what Trump called unfavorable coverage.

The states' settlement terms, explained

The coalition of states — which, beyond California, also includes entertainment heavyweight New York — sued to block the merger in July, alleging it would "extinguish competition" and lead to fewer choices for consumers, particularly movie theatergoers and cable customers.

In Monday's agreement, the states said they had secured a handful of "court enforceable" commitments from Paramount — including pledges to increase domestic film production over the next five years by spending at least an additional \$1.5 billion, or \$300 million per year, and commit another \$47.5 million to help fund training and career development for workers displaced by the merger.

Paramount also must make good on its promise to release 30 films each year for the next two years — and 32 films in each of the three years after that. If it fails to do so, the states say it will be required to divest from Miramax Studios and pay \$30 million for each missed film toward health care and retirement trust funds associated with the Writers Guild of America and other industry unions.

When it comes to cable, Monday's settlement orders the company to negotiate deals for current Paramount-owned and Warner-owned basic channels separately for the next five years, which the states say will help keep consumer prices down. The company must also form a "News Editorial Independence Board" monitoring news operations at CBS and CNN.

Bonta said in a news conference in Los Angeles the settlement was about "protecting people's careers, the lives they've built here in California, the livelihoods their families rely on," while maintaining it was not a vote for the merger.

WGA also settles its challenge while warning of 'damage to writers'

The Writers Guild of America, which filed its own lawsuit in July challenging the merger on the grounds it specifically harms Hollywood writers, separately confirmed that it settled its case, too — concluding that it couldn't continue its legal fight alone.

"We continue to believe the merger will cause damage to writers and the industry at large," the WGA said in a statement. The union maintained that as a nonprofit "with no backing from government enforcers," the complex litigation would have cost millions of dollars.

New York Attorney General Letitia James, who helped secure Paramount's commitment to put \$17.5 million in the Writers Guild health care fund, said she will monitor the company's activities "to ensure they are following this agreement and the law."

Paramount previously agreed to delay its transaction well into next year so the challenges could make their way through court. But it soon called for a settlement — notably as it looked increasingly likely that the price tag for Warner could get a lot more expensive. Paramount had promised to pay shareholders "ticking" fee compensation amounting to \$7 million each day the deal was not closed past Sept. 30.

Including billions of dollars in debt, Paramount's buyout of Warner is currently valued at about \$111 billion based on outstanding shares.

Others respond to deal

Over the weekend, a handful of lawmakers including Democratic Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Cory Booker urged the states to keep up their fight. Other critics decried the deal Monday while warning what further consolidation could mean in an industry controlled by just a few major players.

"Today, billionaires have yet again bribed, censored, and bullied their way to the top," Alvaro Bedoya, senior adviser at the American Economic Liberties Project and a former commissioner of the Federal Trade Commission, said in a statement. "Layoffs will follow. People from L.A. to Atlanta will lose their jobs, small businesses will lose their contracts, your cable bill and movie ticket will be even more expensive."

Bedoya claimed Bonta and California Gov. Gavin Newsom caved to pressure — particularly after Paramount reportedly threatened to leave the state amid the antitrust battle.

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But in a statement Monday, Ellison said that the newly combined company would be based in Los Angeles. "We aren't going anywhere. Our history is here and this is where our future is being built," he said. Paramount never publicly commented on a potential move from California, and Monday's settlement doesn't specify that its headquarters stay in the state. But over the summer, Tennessee officials wrote Ellison a letter encouraging Paramount to relocate there.

Newsom said the deal was a win for workers and California's creative economy.

"It protects California jobs while putting a safeguard in place to help preserve editorial independence for two of America's most important news organizations," Newsom said in a statement.

Connecticut Attorney General William Tong, whose state was among those filing suit, said his main goal had been to protect the editorial independence of CNN and CBS News and that he wanted to see a full divestiture of the two news organizations.

A week ago, Tong said, Paramount refused to agree to any editorial independence for the news outlets.

"We wanted to save ethical and independent journalism and news," he said in a statement.

Tong and others stressed that it was an uphill battle after the Trump administration decided against intervening. In June, the U.S. Justice Department released a lengthy statement supporting the merger.

"The complete abdication of the federal government's enforcement role in this fight left states with one arm tied behind our backs," Tong said.

Lindsay Clancy's attorney asks judge to investigate the lone juror who wanted to convict her

MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — A lawyer for Lindsay Clancy is asking a judge to investigate the conduct of the lone juror who wanted to convict the Massachusetts mother of murder in the deaths of her three young children.

In a motion filed Friday but made public Monday, Clancy's lawyer asked the court to question juror Michael Desronvil about his alleged use of a cellphone during deliberations, his truthfulness on a questionnaire that prospective jurors filled out before the trial began and his truthfulness when jurors were questioned by the judge a day before the trial ended.

Among other things, lawyer Kevin Reddington asked the court to obtain a record of any calls or texts Desronvil made between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on each day the jury deliberated. Phone use during deliberations is prohibited in the state.

The judge declared a mistrial Sept. 4 after the jury insisted it couldn't reach a unanimous verdict, despite days of trying. Eleven of 12 jurors were ready to clear Clancy of criminal responsibility, with the majority feeling that she was in the grip of a rare condition called postpartum psychosis when she strangled her kids.

But Desronvil sided with the prosecutors, who had argued that Clancy knew what she was doing.

Desronvil hasn't been accused of any wrongdoing in connection with his service on the jury, though some other jurors complained that he was inflexible in his opinion that Clancy was guilty. In a statement released by his lawyer last week, Desronvil said he "didn't have any doubts."

Prosecutors have yet to say whether they plan on putting Clancy on trial again. She remains charged with murder and is in a psychiatric hospital until her case is resolved.

In another motion on Monday, another lawyer for Clancy, Martin Weinberg, asked the judge to take the unusual step of dismissing the criminal case, rather than putting on a new trial, on the grounds that a mistrial shouldn't have been declared in the first place.

Weinberg argued that the judge should have replaced Desronvil with an alternate during the deliberations after the jury foreperson complained he was refusing to listen to the law on reasonable doubt.

"Contrary to the court's stated belief at the time, it did have viable choices other than declaring a mistrial," Weinberg wrote.

A spokesperson for Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy Cruz would not comment on the motions.

At the trial, jurors heard from psychologists and clinicians who treated Clancy for several months before the killings, when she was suffering from worsening mental health problems that emerged after the birth

of her youngest child. She was released from a psychiatric hospital less than three weeks before she killed her children.

AP Exclusive: ICE hides locations of thousands of detainees with final removal orders

By RYAN J. FOLEY Associated Press

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement has stopped publicly revealing where it is holding thousands of detainees who are subject to final deportation orders, an unannounced move that has made it far more difficult for lawyers and relatives to find them, according to current and former officials familiar with the practice.

ICE removed those detainees from its online detainee locator system on Sept. 15, according to three current and former ICE officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the change. Several lawyers contacted by The Associated Press confirmed their clients vanished from the system this week, and the American Immigration Lawyers Association warned its members about the situation Friday.

The move represents a stark departure from previous practice and highlights the hardline nature of President Donald Trump's immigration crackdown, leaving thousands of detainees exceedingly hard to trace and potentially unable to exercise all of their legal options.

The practice, which applies to detainees who have received final orders of removal from an immigration court, could speed deportations by making last-minute legal challenges harder to pursue, immigration lawyers said. Nearly 16,000 people who were arrested and booked into ICE detention in July were subject to final removal orders, more than a third of the overall bookings, according to ICE data obtained by the Deportation Data Project based at U.C. Berkeley and UCLA.

The practice does not apply to detainees held at a detention facility in Adelanto, California or at temporary holding facilities in Minneapolis, New York City or suburban Chicago, the sources said. Judges have ordered ICE to list detainees in those facilities in the online locator promptly upon their arrival, as part of litigation over their detention practices.

Lawyers and relatives distressed by lack of information on detainees

The effort to hide their locations adds to the ways in which the Trump administration has made life harder for detainees and their families as it has increased pressure on them to waive appeals and agree to deportation.

ICE did not publicize the move and in a statement issued to the AP, the agency did not confirm or deny it. The statement said detainees with final removal orders were being prioritized for deportation, even as ICE faces a "historic number of injunctions" from courts stopping individual removals.

As a result of the change, lawyers and relatives lost track of their clients and loved ones without explanation, which is especially concerning because detainees are frequently moved to new facilities before deportation, said Greg Chen, senior director of government relations at the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

"Families are freaking out because they think the person has been deported and they don't know where the person might be," he said. "On the attorney side, this has serious implications for the ability to contact their client. It certainly has implications about how it will interfere with the attorney-client relationship."

The Department of Homeland Security, ICE's parent agency, has argued that people who are subject to final removal orders have received due process. That usually means an immigration judge has ordered their removal after a hearing, including cases when immigrants fail to show up, and the decision was affirmed on appeal or not appealed.

Detainees with final removal orders still have options to appeal

Still, those detainees have options to challenge their detention and removal, including seeking to reopen the case or by bringing what's known as a habeas petition asking a judge to release them on constitutional grounds. Federal judges have granted thousands of rulings ordering that detainees be released or

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granted bond hearings.

ICE detention facilities held more than 65,000 people as of early July, the most recent available data. Around 30% of them likely have final removal orders, said Michelle Mendez, legal director at the National Immigration Project.

More people have been issued final removal orders after failing to show up for hearings in recent months because the administration's immigration courts have taken steps to make it harder to participate and to reopen such cases, she said.

"To me, it's just another iteration of disappearing people," she said. "Why would we do that in the United States of America? It's something we'd hear about in another country and be concerned about individual rights and due process."

Some with final removal orders also have legal protections against deportation to their countries of origin based on the likelihood they would be tortured or persecuted. Many of them are facing removal to third-party countries where they have no ties and their disappearance in ICE's system will make legal challenges harder, lawyers said.

Lawyers say clients have vanished from ICE locator system

ICE initiated the online detainee locator system in 2010 to allow relatives, lawyers and the public to search for people in custody. Previously they had to call ICE regional offices or individual facilities to try to track them down.

Many advocates and lawmakers have complained that the system updates too slowly and contains too much inaccurate or missing information, allowing ICE to shield the locations of detainees for days or weeks. Minors, people who have been held by U.S. Customs and Border Protection for less than 48 hours, and detainees who are being transported are not in the system, among others.

But the exclusion of detainees with final removal orders has no apparent parallel, several immigration lawyers said. Atenas Burrola Estrada, a deputy program director with the Amica Center for Immigrant Rights, said that "every single one of our clients who has a final order has disappeared from the locator," including 17 in all as of Monday.

Among those disappeared from the locator system are eight Somali men being detained at the U.S. military base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, according to one of their attorneys, My Khanh Ngo, of the American Civil Liberties Union. She said the change could make it "nearly impossible" for people to challenge their removals in some cases.

"If you can't find your client, don't know what's happening to your client, you can't get that information to the court to stop their removal," she said.

Jury convicts Vermont man of attempted murder in shooting of 3 Palestinian students

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and AMANDA SWINHART Associated Press

Burlington, Vt. (AP) — A jury on Monday convicted a Vermont man of attempted murder in the shootings of three Palestinian college students who were walking near his home, rejecting an insanity defense rooted in his claims that he was acting on orders from U.S. and Israeli intelligence agencies.

Jason Eaton faces up to life in prison in the November 2023 attack in Burlington, which paralyzed Hisham Awartani from the waist down and wounded his friends, Tahseen Aliahmad and Kinnan Abdalhamid.

The men, all 20 at the time, had been visiting Awartani's grandmother for Thanksgiving. They were smoking cigarettes and speaking a mix of English and Arabic as they walked near the University of Vermont campus after dusk. Two of them were wearing traditional Palestinian scarves known as keffiyehs.

The jury deliberated for several hours before reaching its verdict after a weeklong trial that saw testimony from the three men, who recounted how their stroll ended in bloodshed, and defense and prosecution psychiatric experts who offered differing views of Eaton's mental health and criminal culpability.

Eaton, 51, stared ahead blankly as the verdict was read, standing alongside his lawyers — public defenders whom he tried to fire last week over his concerns that his defense hadn't been "adequately presented."

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Judge John Pacht, who blocked Eaton's midtrial bid to act as his own lawyer, ordered him jailed pending sentencing, which has yet to be scheduled.

Awartani and Aliahmad watched from the front row of the courtroom gallery, smiling and hugging people around them.

"The verdict cannot undo what happened or erase the trauma our families still carry, but it affirms something fundamental: Jason Eaton is responsible for what he did," Awartani's mother, Elizabeth Price, told reporters afterward.

Eaton claimed he was acting on orders from the CIA and Mossad

Eaton had pleaded not guilty but did not dispute that he was the shooter. He claimed that the CIA and Mossad transmitted their orders via FM radio and that God was commanding him to protect his Jewish neighbors. His lawyers had urged jurors to find him not guilty by reason of insanity, an outcome that would've spared him from prison but could have required that he undergo mental health treatment.

Eaton's lawyers, Margaret Jansch and Joshua O'Hara, said he had struggled with mental health issues his whole life, including diagnoses of attention deficit, post-traumatic stress, bipolar, depression and borderline personality disorders, culminating in a psychotic break after losing his job at a credit union two weeks before the shooting.

Prosecutor Sarah George countered that Eaton was a narcissist but not legally insane. He had a grandiose sense of self-importance and lacked empathy but was fully aware of the criminality of his conduct, George said in a closing argument. He appeared nervous when police arrived at his door, repeatedly asked for a lawyer and hasn't claimed to have received any other messages directing his actions, she said.

Eaton told officers that he had a shotgun in his apartment, but didn't disclose that he had other weapons, including a Ruger .380-caliber handgun that was found in a bedroom dresser and that crime lab testing concluded was used in the shooting, said George, the Chittenden County state's attorney.

Victim's mother says Eaton should've been charged with hate crimes

The shooting, weeks after the start of the Israel-Hamas war, shook Burlington, and reverberated in the West Bank, where the three wounded men grew up and became friends as schoolmates in Ramallah before moving to the U.S. for college. It spawned calls for a hate crime investigation.

But no hate crime charges were filed as questions persisted about whether anti-Palestinian animus, an altered mental state or something else had compelled Eaton to open fire. After the verdict, Awartani's mother said Eaton's hateful rhetoric, aired at the trial, had made it clear why he targeted her son.

Days after the shooting, George said in her closing argument, Eaton had told his lawyers that he wished Awartani's grandmother had warned him that the men were "going to dress up like terrorists" and trek through his neighborhood.

"Or see, if grandma had said to them, you know, maybe now's not a great time to wear that thing on your head," George said, paraphrasing Eaton's remarks. "You know, things are a little tense when you've got American hostages over in Palestine, and we're trying to get them back."

"They were not the words of a man confused about who he shot or why," Elizabeth Price said. "They were the words a man who saw three young men speaking the language of their childhood and wearing what made them feel closer to their far away families and homes and decided to kill them because of his own prejudices."

Victims recounted how a peaceful walk ended in bloodshed

Awartani testified last week that he first noticed Eaton standing on a porch as they approached the apartment house where he lived. Within seconds, Awartani said, Eaton was off the porch and walking toward them. His face was expressionless and he didn't say anything. As Eaton got to about 5 to 10 feet (1.5 to 3 meters) away, "he pulled out a handgun and started shooting at us," Awartani said.

Abdalhamid, a student at Haverford College near Philadelphia, said he fled and hid behind another home after seeing Aliahmad fall to the ground. He said he only realized later when he sat down that he had also been wounded.

Awartani, who was studying at Brown University in Rhode Island at the time, was shot in the chest and the bullet ricocheted off his scapula, causing paraplegia in his spinal cord. Aliahmad, who was a student at

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Trinity College in Connecticut, was struck in the collarbone, and Abdalhamid was shot in the right buttock.

Jacob Pyne, who lived in a different apartment in the same house as Eaton, testified that he heard four to six gunshots, followed by footsteps going up the stairs of the apartment house. He said he ran outside and heard two men speaking, one of whom was more vocal and yelling, "I've been shot, help me." He then brought the men blankets and called 911.

Eaton didn't testify. In an opening statement last week, O'Hara told jurors that Eaton claimed he started receiving messages while listening to a local NPR affiliate. At first, the messages were encouraging and validating, the lawyer said, but subsequent messages turned dark, insisting that Eaton "has to go out and shoot somebody."

Wall Street rallies within 0.4% of its record after oil prices and bond yields ease

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Wall Street climbed to the edge of its all-time high on Monday, and stocks rallied worldwide after oil prices and yields in the bond market surrendered their market-rattling gains from last week.

The S&P 500 jumped 1.5% and pulled within 0.4% of its record set last month. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 366 points, or 0.7%, and the Nasdaq composite leaped 2.3% to its own all-time high as chip stocks and other companies in the artificial-intelligence industry led the way.

Stocks got help from the price for a barrel of Brent oil falling 3.4% to \$100.34. While that's still much higher than its roughly \$72 price from earlier this summer, it's down from the nearly \$110 it touched last week.

Oil prices have been swinging up and down as some crude from the Middle East is able to sail through the Strait of Hormuz to get to customers, though nowhere near as much as the industry would like because of the war with Iran.

With big U.S. companies continuing to deliver strong growth in profits that support their stock prices, Morgan Stanley's Michael Wilson says another leg higher in prices for oil, gasoline and other refined products is the main near-term risk he sees that could keep the U.S. stock market from rising to his forecasted target for the year's end.

The average price for a gallon of regular gasoline across the United States has already climbed to nearly \$4.48, according to AAA. That's up from less than \$4.32 just a week earlier and from \$3.18 a year ago.

Monday's pullback in oil prices helped lower the pressure coming from the bond market. The yield on the 10-year Treasury eased to 4.95% from 5.01% late Friday after crossing above the 5% threshold last week for the first time since 2023.

Yields have been on the rise because of worries about inflation, big debt loads for governments worldwide and other factors. That hurts the economy because high yields make it more expensive not only for the U.S. government to borrow money to pay its bills but also for households and businesses.

Worries remain about how much oil is available for customers worldwide. But ING commodities strategists Ewa Manthey and Warren Patterson wrote in a commentary on Monday that profit-taking by investors after the recent jump in oil prices, together with hopes for discussions at this week's U.N. General Assembly and at a meeting between China's and the United States' leaders, helped improve optimism.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told reporters following talks Sunday with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng in New York that the U.S. had "a very successful engagement" with the Chinese side.

In Beijing, China's Foreign Ministry on Monday confirmed that Xi Jinping will pay a state visit to the United States between Sept. 23 and 25. Experts and policymakers believe trade, tariffs and AI safety are likely among the topics to be on the agenda.

On Wall Street, AI stocks continued to strengthen following their worldwide slide at the start of last week. Leaders of the industry have recently warned a slowdown is needed in the industry's development

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for the safety of humanity.

Even if the industry leans into more measures for safety, some analysts say it will still be hungry for chips to power it all. Advanced Micro Devices rallied 9.9% and saw its total market value hit \$1 trillion, while Nvidia added 2.3%.

Stocks enmeshed in the cryptocurrency industry, meanwhile, rallied after bitcoin's price rose above \$86,000 and returned to where it was in January. Coinbase Global climbed 3.5%, and Robinhood Markets rose 2.9%.

Warner Bros. Discovery leaped 10.8% after 12 states and Hollywood writers challenging its buyout by Paramount agreed to settle their lawsuits. Paramount Skydance fell 2.9%.

All told, the S&P 500 rose 114.20 points to 7,764.70. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 366.19 to 52,048.83, and the Nasdaq composite climbed 599.55 to 27,122.09.

Stock indexes around the world also climbed thanks to the easing of oil prices and bond yields. Indexes gained 0.9% in France, 1.2% in Hong Kong and 1.6% in South Korea.

What to know about Paramount's settlement and its impact on movies

By MAE ANDERSON AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Movie studio Paramount on Monday agreed to settle an antitrust lawsuit filed by 12 states, the last big obstacle blocking the company's \$81 billion acquisition of Warner Bros. Discovery in a deal that would transform the movie industry landscape.

In the settlement, which still needs to be approved by a judge, Paramount agreed to terms including a five-year movie production plan and to invest \$1.5 billion in domestic movies.

State attorneys general say the settlement guarantees investment in domestic movie production and provides worker protection. But analysts say the deal is still likely to lead to less competition in the industry — and higher prices for consumers.

"Where I'm looking at this is through the consumer's point of view and resoundingly consumers are concerned about price hikes and they are preparing for price hikes," said Forrester research director Mike Proulx. "They care less about the theatrical releases and some of the other industry terms. What they care about is how this is going to hit their wallets."

Here's a closer look at the biggest terms Paramount agreed to in the settlement:

Paramount says it will invest in domestic films and independent films

Paramount said it will spend \$1.5 billion over five years, or \$300 million a year — on top of what it spent in 2025 on filming domestically. According to the state attorneys general, currently only about 5% of Paramount's production is in the U.S.

Paramount also said it would create a five-year, \$25 million fund for buying independent films.

The settlement lays out a five-year film production schedule

The movie studio agreed to make 30 films a year in the first two years and 32 films a year in the following three years. It also said it will release at least four independent films each year.

That dovetails with plans Paramount chairman and CEO David Ellison has previously laid out to grow the combined company's movie slate to more than 30 movies a year.

But the agreement includes penalties: If Paramount doesn't produce the required amount, the company will be forced to sell Miramax Studios and pay \$30 million to health care and retirement trust funds associated with worker unions.

The agreement includes a fund for laid-off workers

Paramount has said it would look for ways to save some \$6 billion through job cuts in "duplicative operations" when the deal goes through.

Under the settlement, Paramount will create a \$47.5 million workforce fund for training and career development for laid-off workers. It also agreed to honor previously established collective bargaining agree-

ments and bargain in good faith with unions.

Cablechannels will be negotiated for separately and an independent board will be named

Under the agreement, Paramount won't have to sell cable channels. But the company will have to hold negotiations over basic cable channels under Paramount and Warner Bros. separately for five years. If it doesn't, it might have to sell some channels under the agreement. The agreement also calls for the creation of a board to ensure that Warner-owned CNN and CBS, owned by Paramount, maintain editorial independence.

The main Kremlin party wins tighter control of parliament in Russia's carefully orchestrated vote

By The Associated Press undefined

The main Kremlin party has further strengthened its already overwhelming control of parliament, according to results Monday from Russia's first wartime parliamentary election, a tightly orchestrated vote that excluded virtually any genuine opposition.

With over 95% of the vote counted, the top Kremlin party, United Russia, stands to get more than three-fourths of the seats in the lower house, the State Duma, a record high.

It was the first parliamentary election since President Vladimir Putin launched the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, and the first to include residents of four regions of that country that were seized and illegally annexed by Moscow later that year. At a polling station in the Russian-held part of the Donetsk region, voters dropped their ballots in a box under the gaze of an armed Russian soldier.

Voting also was held in Crimea, which was illegally annexed by Russia in 2014. Kyiv denounced the voting in those regions as illegal.

The government was "able to carry out the campaign and the voting the way it wanted, with the most optimal output," said Tatyana Stanovaya of the Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center in an online commentary.

The election followed a crackdown on dissent

The Kremlin wanted the balloting to underline public support for its military action in Ukraine, and it sought to avoid any political risks by stamping out even the slightest sign of dissent.

A massive state media campaign and tight control over the vote allowed the Kremlin to maintain and even strengthen its political dominance despite economic troubles and long-range Ukrainian drone strikes on oil refineries and warehouses belonging to top online retailers that brought the conflict home for millions.

Preliminary results indicated that United Russia would get 355 out of 450 Duma seats, according to the Central Election Commission. It polled just under 58% of the vote for the 225 seats apportioned by parties, and also won 208 single-seat races filling the other half of the chamber.

Several smaller parties representing the "systemic opposition" that vote in sync with the Kremlin's wishes on all key issues are set to fill most of the remaining seats. Just a handful will go to candidates who ran without a party affiliation.

The balloting was spread over three days from Friday to Sunday to boost turnout, which exceeded 59%, the highest for a parliamentary election in over a decade.

Electronic balloting was available in many regions and encouraged by authorities. Critics argued that it made it easier for the government to control the outcome.

Final results will be announced Friday.

Criticism of the war was silenced

The liberal Yabloko party, the only registered political entity that dared to publicly criticize the war, was removed from the ballot last month by Russia's Supreme Court, and only had a few dozen candidates in the single-seat races.

Additionally, some anti-war politicians were imprisoned or forced to flee abroad ahead of the campaign.

Preliminary results indicated that no Yabloko candidates won a seat. Despite the failure, Yabloko pointed out that five of its candidates in Moscow came second in their races with more than 10% of the vote each. It was a sign that "demands for peace and freedom enjoy significant support," said Ivan Bolshakov, head

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of the party's analytical center.

Yabloko and the Communist Party, which has criticized some aspects of government policy but carefully avoided any criticism of Putin, said many of their observers were turned away from polling stations.

Russia didn't invite observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, with the Foreign Ministry accusing the group of "double standards" for its criticism of the country. OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Pere Joan Pons said the decision was a breach of Russia's commitments as a member of the organization.

The election came amid Ukrainian attacks

The election took place against the backdrop of incessant Ukrainian drone attacks. On Sunday, Russia's Defense Ministry reported that it downed 1,110 Ukrainian drones overnight.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin said 450 drones were downed while approaching the city in what he described as "the largest ever" attack on the capital in a failed attempt to disrupt the vote, which damaged an oil refinery and a residential building.

Three people were killed in the wider Moscow region, Gov. Andrei Vorobyov said, and the Health Ministry reported 38 others were injured and received medical treatment.

Ukraine's long-range drone strikes over the summer pounded oil refineries, triggering a widespread fuel crisis, and set ablaze sprawling warehouses of online retailers Wildberries and Ozon.

"Putin, of course, will interpret United Russia's results as confirmation of the (public) support of the war, even though it is not the case: The overall demand for ending the war is growing," said Stanovaya of the Carnegie Russia Eurasia Center.

"The main question is: What now? There are great concerns about mobilization, new repressions, harsher measures, and escalation," she wrote.

"I partially agree that Putin may perceive the election results as a green light for 'anything for the victory,' but I think the role of the elections here is greatly exaggerated," she added. "Everything depends much more on the military situation, the American factor (I don't believe new negotiations will work out), and the overall picture, where everyone is escalating."

Tiny wild cat newly identified as a species draws curious visitors in Bolivia

COROICO, Bolivia (AP) — A tiny wild cat hidden away in the cloud forests of Bolivia has become an unlikely tourist attraction, drawing a stream of visitors hoping for a glimpse of the animal that scientists have identified as a brand new species.

There is just one problem: Tigrino, as he has been affectionately dubbed, doesn't like the attention.

The small, spotted feline with large, leopardlike spots is easily stressed, so caretakers at the wildlife sanctuary near La Paz keep him out of public view, turning away the crowds eager for a closer look. When The Associated Press visited Sunday, Tigrino cautiously emerged from his shelter, sniffed the air and paced around for a few minutes before slipping back into the foliage.

Tigrino belongs to *Leopardus tilcayo*, the first living wild cat species described by scientists in more than a century. At just 18 inches (46 centimeters) from head to the base of his tail and 3 pounds (1.4 kilograms), he is smaller than the average house cat.

The discovery published Thursday in the journal *Current Biology* set off a flurry of excitement on social media. Visitors from across Bolivia and beyond have flocked to the Senda Verde Wildlife Sanctuary, where Tigrino has lived since 2017, when a family brought him there after trying unsuccessfully to make a house cat of him.

"Tigrino has become, in just a few days, an ambassador for conservation," said sanctuary co-founder Marcelo Levy, adding that the new species designation has helped raise awareness about the need to protect wild cats and their habitat in Bolivia's tropical forests.

"He's such a tiny animal, and he has become something so important," Levy said.

Trump's 'grand conspiracy' probe presses on with subpoenas after the lead prosecutor's exit

By ERIC TUCKER and ALANNA DURKIN RICHER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Before taking over the sprawling Justice Department investigation into foes of President Donald Trump, Joe diGenova decried the lack of progress in bringing indictments.

Five months later, diGenova has left his position without charging a single case, clouding the future of an investigation that has animated right-wing commentators eager to prove an ill-defined theory of a "deep state" conspiracy to take down the Republican president.

Justice Department officials are pressing forward despite diGenova's departure, with a flurry of subpoenas to former law enforcement and intelligence officials expected to yield grand jury testimony in the weeks ahead at the Fort Pierce, Florida, home court of a favored Trump-appointed federal judge.

Yet whether anyone ultimately will be charged, and for what, remains an open question. Investigators face not only legal hurdles and personnel upheaval but an impatient White House after more than a year of fits and starts.

The investigation known familiarly as the "grand conspiracy" case is the clearest example yet of the Trump administration's efforts to leverage law enforcement powers to enact retribution on the president's adversaries. The tumult that has defined the probe exposes a familiar gap between White House demands for speedy action and the Justice Department's ability to craft the president's litany of grievances into a prosecutable case.

DiGenova's departure injects fresh uncertainty into the investigation

The investigation has always been a tough task, aiming to knit together separate FBI probes of Trump — including related to Russian election interference and his retention of classified documents at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Florida — into a coherent narrative of a government conspiracy. Prior efforts to investigate the investigators have failed to uncover the kind of criminal misconduct the conspiracy probe aims to prove.

"The idea of connecting all those different investigations into one single conspiracy, there's no basis for that," retired federal prosecutor Randall Eliason said. "Then, maybe more importantly, there's no basis for an allegation that any one of them was actually a criminal act against Trump. They've all been verified and upheld in one way or another."

If the mandate is unusual, so, too, was the person picked to lead it.

DiGenova, who's 81, was a top prosecutor in President Ronald Reagan's administration but had been out of government for decades. He made headlines in 2020 after he said a cybersecurity official who attested to the legitimacy of the election Trump lost to Democrat Joe Biden should be "drawn and quartered." DiGenova apologized after being sued.

A prominent booster of the theory that Trump was victimized by a "deep state" conspiracy, diGenova was appointed in April shortly after Trump ousted Pam Bondi as attorney general after she struggled to prosecute his foes.

The appointment was heralded by Trump allies who regard the probe as a long-awaited reckoning for former officials they believe wronged the president. Attorney General Todd Blanche, who took the reins of the department after Bondi's firing, also trumpeted diGenova's arrival, writing on social media: "Welcome to the fight, Joe!"

By Sept. 10, diGenova was gone amid Trump administration frustration with the pace and management of the probe. His parting comments suggested he didn't see a pathway for imminent indictments.

"If you want indictments where there's no evidence, you have an ethical problem," he told the New York Post.

DiGenova told The Associated Press those comments were taken out of context, adding: "There's plenty of evidence in all of these cases to prove the theories of prosecution. It just takes time to get there, and some people want to get there a little faster than others — and you can't do that."

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DiGenova was sworn in days after a career national security prosecutor, Maria Medetis Long, was removed from the investigative team after conveying concerns about an investigation into former CIA Director John Brennan.

A lawyer for Brennan has seized on the upheaval, pointing to the departures as proof that prosecutors who have assessed the evidence have been unpersuaded and pushed aside by a Justice Department angling for indictments at all costs.

"I've spent decades in and around the Justice Department. I've never even conceived of a situation like this," attorney Ken Wainstein said, in which the Justice Department is "blatantly trying to frame somebody for a crime that is complete fiction."

He made the comments to a judge last week as he put prosecutors on notice that he intended to attack any indictment of Brennan on the grounds of vindictive prosecution.

The Justice Department has not announced a replacement for diGenova, but a team of prosecutors and agents remains at work, including Kurt Olsen, an attorney who unsuccessfully pushed the Justice Department in 2020 to back Trump's false election fraud claims.

Trump has long cast himself as the victim of a 'deep state' conspiracy

As the Justice Department reeled last year from the bungled handling of the Jeffrey Epstein files, officials eager to change the topic announced a new investigation and a directive from Bondi, then the attorney general, to present evidence before a grand jury.

The topic was hardly a surprise to anyone tracking Trump's grievances.

The president has long been infuriated by a U.S. intelligence community assessment that found that Russia interfered on his behalf in the 2016 election, including by stealing politically damaging Democratic emails and orchestrating their release through WikiLeaks, and spent much of his first term shadowed by an investigation into whether his campaign had colluded with Moscow.

A 2019 Justice Department special counsel report described wide-ranging Russian interference but found insufficient evidence to prove a criminal conspiracy between Russia and the Trump campaign.

Subsequent investigations by an inspector general and Justice Department prosecutors identified errors by FBI agents but found no evidence of criminal wrongdoing by senior law enforcement officials nor proof of an anti-Trump conspiracy.

Frustrated by those outcomes, Trump has amplified his demands for retribution, calls the Justice Department heeded by directing that prosecutors use a grand jury. A team in Florida was assigned to hunt for a conspiracy.

Potential targets of the conspiracy investigation are unclear, though lawyers for Brennan have said they've been informed he's one, with prosecutors examining whether he misled Congress during testimony about the intelligence community assessment. Brennan and his attorneys deny that allegation.

Investigators have drilled into the origins of the Trump-Russia probe, with witnesses asked about the preparation of the intelligence community assessment and what's called the "Steele dossier," a collection of research files about Trump and Russia compiled by a former British spy that included salacious rumors and unproven assertions.

Subpoenas for records or testimony have been issued during the course of the investigation to a broad array of former FBI and intelligence officials involved in the Russia case, including ex-national intelligence director James Clapper and Brennan, who was recently summoned to appear before the grand jury on Oct. 15.

The Justice Department, meanwhile, has sought interviews with law enforcement officials involved in the 2022 FBI search for classified documents at Mar-a-Lago. The search underpinned an indictment of Trump that was ultimately dismissed by Aileen Cannon, a Trump-appointed jurist whose Fort Pierce court is where the Justice Department anchored its investigation — a move Wainstein has called "judge-shopping."

Despite the investigation's turmoil, there's no reason to expect the Justice Department to back down given the political pressures, said John Fishwick Jr., a former U.S. attorney in Virginia.

"President Trump wants action in certain cases, and this seems to be one of them," he said.

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Today in History: September 22, Lincoln issues preliminary Emancipation Proclamation

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Tuesday, Sept. 22, the 265th day of 2026. There are 100 days left in the year.

Today in history:

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

Also on this date:

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

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

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy signed congressional legislation making the Peace Corps a permanent federal agency within the State Department; it became an independent agency in 1981.

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

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

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

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

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

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

In 2018, militants disguised as soldiers opened fire on an annual military parade in southwest Iran, killing at least 25 people and wounding over 60. An Arab separatist movement claimed responsibility for the terror attack, the deadliest on Iranian soil in nearly a decade.

Today's Birthdays: Singer-choreographer-actor Toni Basil is 83. Musician King Sunny Adé (ah-DAY') is 80. Football Hall of Famer Harold Carmichael is 77. Rock singer David Coverdale (Deep Purple, Whitesnake) is 75. Actor Shari Belafonte is 72. Singer Debby Boone is 70. Country singer June Forester (The Forester Sisters) is 70. Singer Nick Cave is 69. Singer Andrea Bocelli (an-DRAY'-ah boh-CHEL'-ee) is 68. Singer-musician Joan Jett is 68. Actor Scott Baio is 66. Actor Bonnie Hunt is 65. Actor Mireille Enos is 52. Soccer player Thiago Silva is 42. Actor Tatiana Maslany is 41. Actor Tom Felton is 39. Actor Curry Barker is 27. Singer Jessie Murph is 21. Olympic gold medal skateboarder Coco Yoshizawa is 17.