

Groton Daily Independent

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OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

Groton Area posts 3-0 win over Leola-Frederick

The Groton Area Tigers improved to 17-4 with a 3-0 win over Leola-Frederick. The volleyball match was played in Groton. The match was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Allied Climate Professionals, Bahr Spray Foam, BaseKamp Lodge, DeHoet Trucking, Groton Auto Works, Hanlon Brothers, John Sieh Agency, Milbrandt Enterprises, Professional Management Services.

The first game was tied once and that was at three. The Tigers scored 10 straight points to take an 11-3 lead. Stella Meier had the game winning kill as Groton won, 25-14.

Okay, now in the stats, I have a new one - it's called successful saves. It is when the player has successfully saved the ball on the first touch. During the match, I kept calling them digs, but boy, was I wrong on that. So with that in mind, those having successful saves in the first game were Indigo Rogers Eliza Wanner with eight each, Payton Colestock seven, Nicole Marzahn and Kaylin Kucker with five each, Stella Meier with three and Madeline Flihs had one. Those will kills were Marzahn with five, Wanner four, Meier three and Flihs one. Ace serves went to Kucker with three and Colestock with one.

Groton Area had the early lead, but nearly gave up half of the Leola/Frederick points on missed serves. Groton Area won the second game, 25-11, with five missed serves. Those with successful saves were Kucker and Glover with six each, Marzahn and Wanner with five each, Rogers had three, Meier and Colestock two each and Flihs had one. Wanner had five kills followed by Marzahn with four, Meier and Rogers each had two and Flihs had one. Kucker and Colestock each had one ace serve.

Groton Area won the third game, 25-12. Wanner had nine successful saves followed by Colestock with seven, Marzahn had five, Rogers and Kucker each with three, Meier had two and Glover had one. Rogers led the way with kills in the third game with six while Marzahn, Wanner and Kucker each had one. Marzahn and Colestock each had two ace serves in the third game.

Marzahn finished the match with 11 kills while Kucker had four ace serves, 27 assists and 14 digs. Wanner had eight kills and 17 digs, Rogers had seven kills, Colestock had two ace serves and Meier had one block. Avery Wolff led the Titans with nine assists, six kills and one ace serve. Anna Lapka and Jocelyn Ellwein each had 15 digs.

Groton Area also won the junior varsity match, 25-14 and 25-15.

The Tigers will have some time off before traveling to Agency Village on Tuesday to play Tiospa Zina. That match was originally suppose to be played on Thursday, but a scheduling conflict arose after the schedules were printed and the date had to be changed.

- Paul Kosel



Kaylin Kucker was honored Tuesday night for her career of 1,000 assists. She is currently in the top four in South Dakota in all three classes. Groton Area senior players presented her with a banner on her achievement. Pictured are Payton Colestock, Eliza Wanner, Tadyn Glover, Nicole Marzahn and Indigo Rogers - all are seniors. Kaylin Kucker's parents also came on the court - Chris and Amy Kucker. (Photo by Paul

Kosel)

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Volleyball

The latest regional volleyball ranking and state football ranking.

| Region 1 | Seed Points | W-L |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------|
| 1 Aberdeen Roncalli | 43.348 | 17-6 |
| 2 Groton Area | 43.333 | 17-4 |
| 3 Redfield | 42.200 | 14-6 |
| 4 Webster Area | 40.545 | 14-8 |
| 5 Tiospa Zina | 40.063 | 10-6 |
| 6 Milbank | 37.944 | 7-11 |
| 7 Sisseton | 37.190 | 5-16 |

Class 11B

Top 16 teams, based on seed points, qualify for playoffs

| School | Seed Points | W-L |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|-----|
| 1 Winner | 46.143 | 7-0 |
| 2 Bridgewater-Emery/Ethan | 46.000 | 6-0 |
| 2 Webster Area | 46.000 | 6-0 |
| 4 McCook Central/Montrose | 44.167 | 5-1 |
| 5 Mobridge-Pollock | 43.667 | 5-1 |
| 6 Mt. Vernon/Plankinton | 43.333 | 4-2 |
| 7 St. Thomas More | 43.167 | 5-1 |
| 8 Sisseton | 43.000 | 5-2 |
| 9 Elk Point-Jefferson | 42.000 | 3-3 |
| 10 Garretson | 41.000 | 3-3 |
| 10 Sioux Valley | 41.000 | 3-3 |
| 12 Beresford | 40.500 | 3-3 |
| 13 Groton Area | 40.143 | 4-3 |
| 14 Stanley County | 39.857 | 3-4 |
| 15 Chamberlain | 39.714 | 4-3 |
| 16 Lead-Deadwood | 39.429 | 3-4 |

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Groton Coffee Cup League

10-8-19

Team Standings: Biker Chix 12, James Valley 11, Ten Pins 9, Kens 8

High Scores: Nancy Radke 183, 183; Joyce Walter 181; Vicki Walter 180

High Series: Nancy Radke 468, Vicki Walter 467, Joyce Water 444

Conde National League

10-7-19

Team Standings: Mets 13, Cubs 12, Pirates 10½, Tigers 10, Braves 7½, Giants 7

Men's High Games: Russ Bethke 241, Larry Frohling 219, Lance Frohling 192

Men's High Series: Russ Bethke 584, Larry Frohling 542, Lance Frohling 540

Women's High Games: Joyce Walter 171, Michelle Johnson 168, Vickie Kramp 158

Women's High Series: Michelle Johnson 457, Vickie Kramp 446, Joyce Walter 427

President Trump Approves Third South Dakota Disaster Request

PIERRE, S.D. – Governor Kristi Noem today announced that President Trump has approved the State's request for a third Presidential Disaster Declaration, covering the damage done by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding that occurred June 30-July 21.

The declaration will allow federal money to be used to help local government entities recover from infrastructure damage in Butte, Gregory, Kingsbury, Lawrence, Meade, and Tripp counties, as well as the Cheyenne River and the Lower Brule Indian Reservations. A preliminary assessment of the damage was estimated to be \$2.5 million.

"Many counties have been plagued by heavy rainfall and flooding time and time again this year," said Noem. "I appreciate that the President and FEMA continue to understand the impact these storms and heavy rains have had on South Dakota and are willing to help us recover."

In her request for a disaster declaration, Noem told the President that many areas had experienced record rainfall which resulted in flooding of roads and other infrastructure. Confirmed tornadoes and high winds caused property damage in other areas. She said two of the state's major industries, agricultural and tourism, have been impacted.

"As you can see, South Dakota has been battered by storm after storm that continue to further erode our valuable public infrastructure," wrote the Governor.

This is the third federal disaster declaration for South Dakota this year. South Dakota received a federal disaster declaration in June for severe winter storms and flooding that occurred March 13-April 26 and that affected 58 counties and three reservations. A second disaster declaration for the period of May 26-June 7 was approved in September for flooding and storms that occurred in 25 counties and two reservations.

FEMA officials are now in South Dakota working on the first two federal disaster declarations and will continue to work on the third. More details on the process for the third disaster declaration will be announced at a later date.

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Trick or Treat on Main Street!

Bring the kids down on Main Street, Groton,
for trick or treating fun!

Thursday, Oct 31 - 4pm-6pm

MANY downtown Groton businesses will be open late
and handing out Halloween Goodies to the kids!



Businesses participating:

Main St- City Hall, Bahr Spray Foam/Next Level Nutrition, Professional Management Services, Olde Bank N' Café, Midwest Masonry, The Fitness Project, The Groton Independent, Jungle Lanes & Lounge, Cheri's on Main, Bierman Farm Service, Groton American Legion, Farmer's Union Insurance, Dakota Press, Base Kamp Lodge, Elementary PAC/RC Roosters Lodge, Johnson Agency, Kolker Law Office, Karma Salon & Boutique, Wells Fargo (4-5pm use NE Door)
1st Ave- J. Simon Photography, James Valley
Railroad Ave- LW Sales, Krueger Bros

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*Adults and Students . . . come
learn what social issues are
involving our youth
in our community.*

GOSPEL | Solutions

to

Social Issues

TODAY AT GROTON C&MA CHURCH

SPONSORED BY GROTON CHURCHES

Light Meal at 5:45 p.m.

Seminar begins at 6:30 p.m.

Guest Speakers

Speaker-Lisa Heth has worked in the field of domestic violence and sexual assault for over 27 years on the Crow Creek reservation at Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. (Helping Families) a 501c3 non-profit organization. Ms. Heth received the prestigious 2015 National Victims of Crime Award from the Department for her work in the field for serving victims of crime. In 2015 Ms. Heth founded Pathfinder Center, a long term shelter for victims of human trafficking.

Speaker- Kasey Cadwell has worked in the field of domestic violence and sexual assault for eight years. Ms Cadwell is the Victim Coordinator for Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. Ms Cadwell specializes in working with youth in schools providing education and awareness on teen dating violence, sexual assault, child sexual abuse and by-stander intervention.

Final Seminar:

November 6 at Emmanuel Lutheran Church: Suicide and Bullying

Light Meal at 5:45 p.m.

Seminar begins at 6:30 p.m.

Please RSVP how many people would like to come for the dinner at 605-377-0709.

GROTON'S 4TH



Saturday, October 12, 2019

10am-3pm

~~Groton City Park~~

Groton Community Center

109 N 3rd Street

**Free Pumpkins, Hayrides, Train Rides,
Face Painting, Pumpkin Painting**

Lunch Served 11am-1pm

Thanks to our many sponsors!!

Alternate Date: October 13, 2019

Winter Storm Watch Until Saturday at 1:00 AM

...MAJOR WINTER STORM TO AFFECT THE AREA...

...WINTER STORM WATCH NOW IN EFFECT FROM THURSDAY AFTERNOON THROUGH LATE FRIDAY NIGHT...

* WHAT...Heavy mixed precipitation possible. Total snow accumulations of 3 to 6 inches and ice accumulations of around one tenth of an inch possible. Winds could gust as high as 45 mph.

* WHERE...Portions of central, north central and northeast South Dakota.

* WHEN...From Thursday afternoon through late Friday night.

* IMPACTS...Travel could be very difficult. Patchy blowing snow

FLU SHOT CLINIC RESCHEDULED FOR 11/4/2019 BETH GUSTAFSON








The annual influenza vaccination clinic for students previously scheduled for October 17th during parent/teacher conferences is rescheduled to Monday, November 4 due to a delay in the clinic in receiving the vaccine. At this time, we do not know a specific time schedule for the day but anticipate the clinic to begin mid-morning.

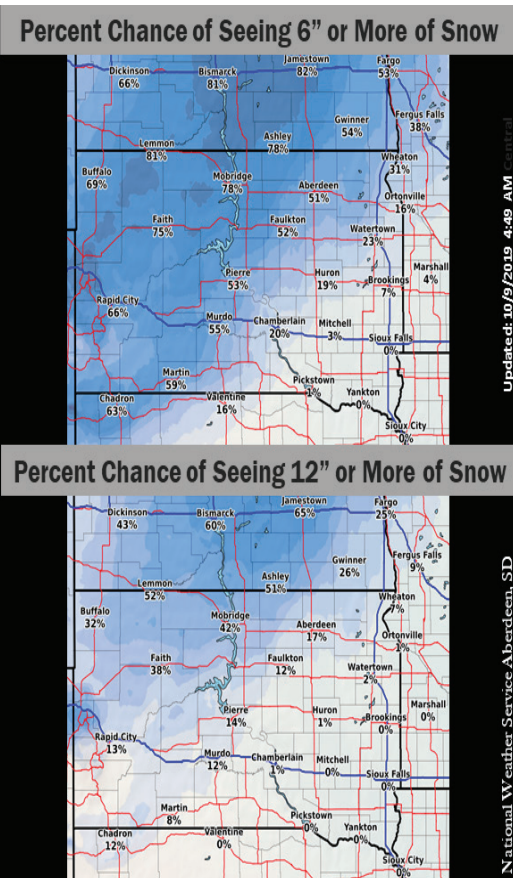
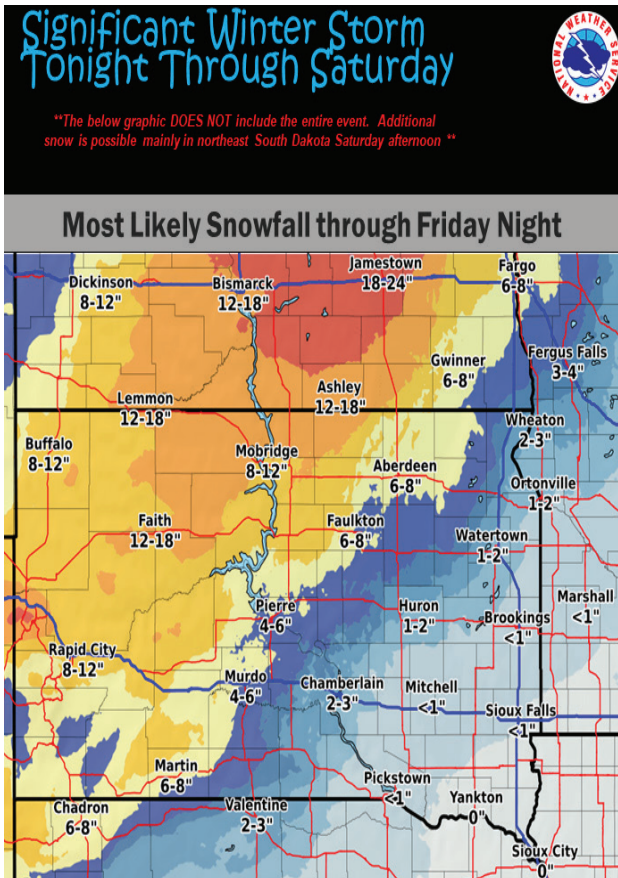
Groton Area Boys lose to Vermillion

Groton Area hosted the first round of the soccer playoffs on Tuesday. Groton Area lost, 5-1. Piet Solling scored Groton's lone goal on a penalty kick with 18:12 to go in the first half. The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by BK Custom T's & More, C & B Operations, Farmers Union Insurance - JR Johnson, Groton American Legion Post #39, Groton Vet Clinic, Milbrandt Enterprises, Inc., Olde Bank Cafe 'n More, Olson Development, Professional Management Services, Weber Landscaping.

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| Today | Tonight | Thursday | Thursday Night | Friday | Friday Night | Saturday |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Partly Sunny | 90% Showers | 90% Rain/Snow and Breezy | 80% Wintery Mix and Patchy Blowing Snow | 80% Snow Showers and Patchy Blowing Snow | 60% Snow Showers Likely and Patchy Blowing Snow | 60% Snow Likely and Areas Blowing Snow |
| High: 69 °F | Low: 36 °F | High: 36 °F ↓ | Low: 28 °F | High: 32 °F | Low: 28 °F | High: 33 °F |



A significant early season winter storm remains on track to affect the region tonight through Saturday. Rain will enter the region from west to east this evening before turning to snow in north central South Dakota tonight. The rain/snow line will gradually work its way east Thursday before finally turning to mostly snow Thursday night. Final snow totals are partially dependent on when this transition occurs.

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Today in Weather History

October 9, 1964: Record cold occurred on this day in 1964 across parts of central and northeast South Dakota with temperatures falling into the mid-teens to around 20 degrees at many locations. Sisseton had a record low of 20 degrees; Watertown had a record low of 16 degrees, with Kennebec recording the lowest temperature of 13 degrees on this day in 1964. Although not a record low, Aberdeen fell to 14 degrees.

October 9, 1980: On this day in 1980, hot air streamed across central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota with highs mostly in the 80s. Record highs were established at Watertown with 86 degrees and both Wheaton and Sisseton with 87 degrees. One of the warmest temperatures across the area was 89 degrees at Kennebec.

1804: The famous Snow Hurricane moved ashore near Atlantic City on this day. After briefly passing through Connecticut and into Massachusetts, cold air was entrained in the circulation with heavy snow falling between New York to southern Canada. Berkshires Massachusetts and Concord New Hampshire record two feet of snow with this hurricane. This storm produced the first observation of snow from a hurricane, but not the last. Hurricane Ginny of 1963 brought up to 18 inches (400 mm) of snow to portions of Maine.

1903 - New York City was deluged with 11.17 inches of rain 24 hours to establish a state record. Severe flooding occurred in the Passaic Valley of New Jersey where more than fifteen inches of rain was reported. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1981 - The temperature at San Juan, Puerto Rico, soared to 98 degrees to establish an all-time record for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Eighteen cities in the southeastern U.S. and the Middle Atlantic Coast Region reported record low temperatures for the date. Asheville NC dipped to 29 degrees, and the record low of 47 degrees at Jacksonville FL marked their fourth of the month. A second surge of cold air brought light snow to the Northern Plains, particularly the Black Hills of South Dakota. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Ten cities in the northeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Hartford CT with a reading of 28 degrees. Snow continued in northern New England through the morning hours. Mount Washington NH reported five inches of snow. Warm weather continued in the western U.S. Los Angeles CA reported a record high of 102 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Unseasonably cold weather continued in the Upper Midwest. Thirteen cities in Ohio, Michigan and Indiana reported record low temperatures for the date, including Marquette MI with a reading of 20 degrees. Unseasonably warm weather continued in the western U.S. as the San Francisco Giants won the National League pennant. San Jose CA reported a record high of 91 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

2001: An unusually strong fall outbreak of tornadoes spawned at least 23 twisters across parts of Nebraska and Oklahoma. Hardest hit was the town of Cordell, OK, but a 22 minute lead time led to an amazingly low casualty count: only nine injuries and no fatalities.

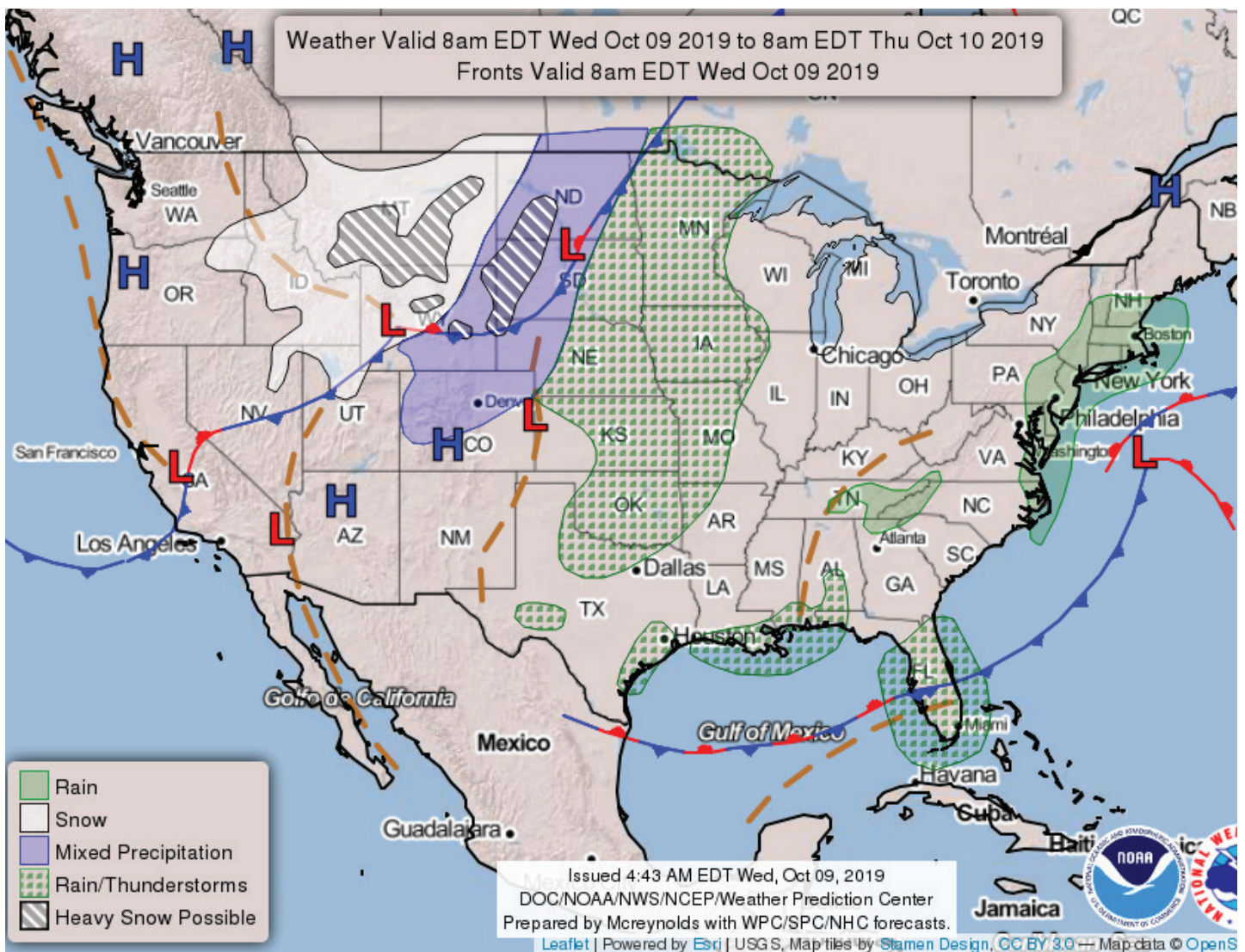
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 70 °F at 4:11 PM
Low Temp: 48 °F at 12:23 AM
Wind: 28 mph at 10:47 AM
Day Rain: 0.00

Record High: 87° in 1936
Record Low: 9° in 1895
Average High: 62°F
Average Low: 36°F
Average Precip in Oct.: 0.54
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.38
Average Precip to date: 19.02
Precip Year to Date: 25.40
Sunset Tonight: 7:01 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:42 a.m.



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FROZEN ASSETS

Years ago a fire destroyed a large warehouse that contained many tons of ice. Although the firemen had tens of thousands of gallons of water available to extinguish the fire, they could not be used. The ice was in "cold storage" and beyond reach. The building burned to the ground even though it was full of "frozen water."

God has given each one of us unique gifts and talents, skills and abilities, to do His work. We all are as different as our fingerprints and designed to do things that honor Him. Too often we imagine that what He wants us to do is beyond our capabilities.

We tend to see problems and issues that would require massive amounts of money or large numbers of people to bring change. We look beyond the immediate to the distant, even unimaginable, and find excuses not to do what God places before us.

If you recall the beginning of the earthly ministry of Jesus, He invited ordinary men to join Him in His extra-ordinary work. They had no special training but they did have a special commitment. We know that they were committed because we read that "they spent time with Jesus." These "ordinary men" put aside their personal interests and began to see life through His eyes. He taught them to see the spiritual needs of others and how to meet those needs.

If we are willing to "spend time with Jesus," follow Him closely, listen to Him carefully, and pray to Him sincerely, we will be able to do the same.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to always be alert for opportunities to tell others of Your love, salvation, and hope. If we love You, we will follow You and serve You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Matthew 4:19 Jesus called out to them, "Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!"

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2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 09/07/2019 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 09/08/2019 Sunflower Classic at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 09/12/2019 St. John's Lutheran Luncheon
- 09/20/2019 Presbyterian Luncheon
- 09/28/2019 Granary Living History Fall Festival
- 10/11/2019 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/12/2019 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/31/2019 Trunk or Treat/Halloween on Main (Halloween)
- 11/09/2019 Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 12/07/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course Holiday Party
- 12/07/2019 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
- Bingo: every Wednesday at the Legion Post #39

2020 Groton SD Community Events

- 01/26/2020 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
- 04/04/2020 Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt, 10 a.m. Sharp (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 04/25/2020 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 05/02/2020 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
- 06/8-10/2020 St. John's VBS
- 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
Groton Hosting State B American Legion Baseball Tournament
- 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
- 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest
- 10/31/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat (Halloween)
- 11/14/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)

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News from the Associated Press

2 men killed when car crashes into lagoon in Huron

HURON, S.D. (AP) — Two men have died in a crash into a wastewater lagoon in Huron.

Police say the men were in a car that veered off a road, went into a ditch, crashed through a fence and into the lagoon. The vehicle was discovered Monday when someone noticed the fence was damaged.

The Argus Leader reports authorities say the victims, 29-year-old Mauricio Lopez-Morales and 23-year-old Francisco Artemio Lopez-Ramos, were last seen Saturday. Investigators say alcohol and speed appear to be factors in the crash.

Information from: Argus Leader, <http://www.argusleader.com>

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Tuesday:

Mega Millions

05-08-10-17-48, Mega Ball: 23, Megaplier: 3

(five, eight, ten, seventeen, forty-eight; Mega Ball: twenty-three; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$55 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$80 million

Tuesday's Scores

By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Webster, 10-25, 25-16, 22-25, 25-22, 15-8

Alcester-Hudson def. Baltic, 25-19, 25-21, 12-25, 26-28, 15-8

Arlington def. Deuel, 25-8, 25-18, 25-20

Bennett County def. Red Cloud, 25-19, 25-21, 17-25, 25-13

Beresford def. Flandreau, 25-16, 25-18, 25-17

Brookings def. Mitchell, 25-22, 28-26, 18-25, 23-25, 15-11

Burke def. Avon, 20-25, 25-16, 27-25, 25-16

Canistota def. Menno, 25-15, 25-18, 25-14

Chester def. Tri-Valley, 25-17, 25-27, 25-16, 25-10

Crow Creek def. Marty Indian, 25-13, 25-16, 25-21

Deubrook def. Milbank Area, 25-23, 25-16, 10-25, 25-18

Estelline/Hendricks def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-13, 25-14, 25-14

Faith def. Belle Fourche, 25-14, 25-17, 23-25, 25-23

Faulkton def. Ipswich, 25-20, 19-25, 25-19, 25-11

Flasher, N.D. def. McIntosh, 25-11, 25-6, 25-14

Freeman def. Bon Homme, 25-15, 25-16, 25-16

Freeman Academy/Marion def. Bridgewater-Emery, 25-15, 25-16, 25-16

Garretson def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 19-25, 25-19, 25-18, 25-14

Gayville-Volin def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-15, 25-21, 25-20

Great Plains Lutheran def. Clark/Willow Lake, 25-23, 25-10, 25-22

Groton Area def. Leola/Frederick, 25-14, 25-11, 25-12

Hamlin def. Sioux Valley, 23-25, 27-25, 25-23, 19-25, 17-15

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Hanson def. Centerville, 25-12, 25-13, 25-18
Harding County def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-16, 25-21, 14-25, 25-20
Harrisburg def. Brandon Valley, 25-5, 26-24, 25-21
Highmore-Harrold def. Sully Buttes, 25-20, 15-25, 25-14, 25-17
Huron def. Pierre, 22-25, 25-21, 25-13, 25-13
James Valley Christian def. Oldham-Ramona/Rutland, 23-25, 25-15, 25-11, 25-20
Lemmon def. Timber Lake, 25-19, 25-20, 25-20
Madison def. Tea Area, 25-21, 25-15, 25-21
McCook Central/Montrose def. Howard, 25-19, 25-14, 25-15
Miller def. Mt. Vernon/Plankinton, 25-21, 25-12, 27-25
Northwestern def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-10, 25-6, 25-9
Parker def. Lennox, 25-20, 25-18, 25-19
Parkston def. Platte-Geddes, 26-24, 16-25, 25-19, 25-16
Rapid City Central def. Douglas, 25-10, 25-16, 25-12
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 25-19, 25-17, 25-8
Sioux Falls Christian def. Canton, 25-6, 25-12, 25-16
Sioux Falls Washington def. Aberdeen Central, 27-25, 25-20, 25-18
St. Francis Indian def. Lower Brule, 22-25, 25-22, 25-22, 24-15
Vermillion def. Dell Rapids, 20-25, 25-16, 25-16, 22-25, 15-12
Wagner def. Scotland, 25-7, 25-8, 25-15
Warner def. Hitchcock-Tulare, 25-9, 22-25, 21-25, 25-9, 15-7
Watertown def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 24-26, 25-23, 25-12, 31-29
Waubay/Summit def. Britton-Hecla, 25-12, 25-15, 25-15
Winner def. Gregory, 25-6, 25-11, 25-8
Wolsey-Wessington def. Iroquois/Doland, 25-20, 25-11, 25-4

Swedish teen urges youth to demand climate change action

FORT YATES, N.D. (AP) — A 16-year-old Swedish environmental activist was joined by another teen activist on a North Dakota Indian reservation to urge young people to demand action on climate change.

Greta Thunberg told students at Standing Rock High School Tuesday that “lots of indigenous communities are at the front line, and you are the true warriors.”

Next to her was Tokata Iron Eyes, who is among Standing Rock youth fighting the Dakota Access Pipeline. The Bismarck Tribune reports she invited Thunberg to visit the reservation after the two struck up a friendship.

Thunberg earlier traveled to South Dakota, visiting the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and Rapid City.

Thunberg traveled to the U.S. in August on a sailboat to promote her climate change campaign. She garnered international attention when she scolded world leaders at the United Nations.

Information from: Bismarck Tribune, <http://www.bismarcktribune.com>

National University to become Sanford National University

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota billionaire philanthropist T. Denny Sanford will have San Diego-based National University renamed in his honor.

Sanford and the university announced Tuesday the school will be renamed Sanford National University. A formal launch is planned for July.

Forbes reports Sanford has pledged \$350 million to National University. The private, nonprofit school plans to dedicate the money to lowering the cost of college education for working adults, among other goals.

Started in 1971, National University offers both online and campus-based programs for adult learners and has about 28,000 students.

Sanford previously donated \$150 million to National University System to expand programs that include helping children learn skills in cooperation, communication and tolerance and helping teachers inspire students.

In 2015, National University's school of education was renamed Sanford College of Education.

Lawmakers move to legalize hemp over governor's objection

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota lawmakers are writing a bill to legalize industrial hemp in 2020, despite the governor's stated plan to veto it because law enforcement can't differentiate between hemp and marijuana.

The legislative Hemp Study Committee is working from a failed 2019 bill, the Argus Leader reported.

The committee met Monday for the first time since early September, when Gov. Kristi Noem wrote a Wall Street Journal column saying she would veto the legislation.

Noem said that Texas prosecutors have dropped marijuana cases after its hemp law went into effect, but Rep. Lee Qualm of Platte handed out a document from Texas' top officials invalidating her claim.

The 2019 hemp bill could have passed if it hadn't included CBD oil, Qualm said. He was initially skeptical of it, but now he knows of too many people who benefit from products containing CBD. CBD can be extracted from marijuana and hemp but does not cause a high and is often sold as a dietary supplement.

Hemp grown for fiber has oil, and the state will suffer have a "huge pushback" if legislators leave out CBD, Rep. Oren Lesmeister of Parade said. Legislators must to allow citizens to grow it and let federal agencies regulate it, Lesmeister said.

Qualm said the committee will finish the bill after the U.S. Department of Agriculture releases its hemp program guidelines. The 2018 Farm Bill places hemp regulation under the department's oversight.

The bill would require owner-operators to secure state permits and undergo background checks before they can grow hemp. Possession of hemp without a permit can lead to a felony charge. The bill will also require a minimum number of acres to grow hemp in the state, but the number has not been decided.

Information from: Argus Leader, <http://www.argusleader.com>

Winter-like weather forecast for South Dakota

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Forecasters say a winter-like storm with unseasonably cold temperatures could deliver 6 inches of snow to western South Dakota.

A cold front moving in overnight Tuesday will bring slowly falling temperatures Wednesday. Precipitation is expected to change to all snow late Wednesday and could become heavy at times through Thursday.

The National Weather Service issues a winter storm watch from Wednesday evening through Friday morning.

2 plead guilty to selling drugs to earn casino points

MOBRIDGE, S.D. (AP) — Two people have pleaded guilty to federal charges of selling prescription drugs to a casino employee in South Dakota in exchange for reward points.

Fifty-eight-year-old Meinrad Medicine and 65-year-old Carlene Cloke entered the pleas to felony distribution charges Monday. Cloke admitted selling the painkiller hydrocodone more than once to an employee at Grand River Casino near Mobridge between December 2016 and March 2017. Cloke admitted her player points were adjusted as a result, which she redeemed for cash. Medicine acknowledged sending others to the employee, Candance Crow Ghost, and received points as a finder's fee.

Aberdeen American News says Crow Ghost has also admitted to her role in the case and will be sentencing Nov. 18. Investigators found that Crow Ghost purchased pain medication from as many as 10 people and adjusted their reward points.

Information from: Aberdeen American News, <http://www.aberdeennews.com>

Speeds top 100 mph in pursuit of teen driver

BOX ELDER, S.D. (AP) — Sheriff's officials say a 16-year-old girl who stole a car and led deputies on a chase was injured when she crashed the vehicle in Pennington County.

Authorities say speeds reached in excess of 100 miles per hour before the girl crashed on Interstate 90 near Box Elder Monday after deputies laid down stop sticks to deflate the tires. The vehicle landed on its side with its roof torn off.

The Rapid City Journal says the girl was taken to the hospital to be treated for her injuries. Officials say she stole the car in Hutchinson County.

'How will we cover up this shame?': The priest and the girl

By NICOLE WINFIELD and RODNEY MUHUMUZA Associated Press

SAMBURU, Kenya (AP) — When Sabina Losirkale went into labor, her sister Scolastica recalls, priests and religious sisters filled the delivery ward waiting to see the color of the baby's skin — and if their worst fears had come to pass.

Scolastica and dozens of villagers peered in from behind the clinic fence, as well.

A nun screamed. The boy was white — "a mzungu child," Scolastica said, using Kiswahili slang.

"How will we cover up this shame?" the sisters fretted, she recalled.

The shame that brought this baby into the world: An Italian missionary priest, her family alleges, impregnated this Kenyan girl when she was just 16. But the nuns need not have worried about the scandal spreading.

The priest — who to this day denies paternity — was transferred, and a Kenyan man was found for Sabina to marry. He would be listed as the father on the boy's birth certificate.

The church's efforts to conceal what is alleged to have happened here would stretch over three decades — a testament to the extraordinary ways in which church officials have dealt with accusations that priests in the developing world have had sex with girls and young women. Here, the Catholic Church's sexual abuse crisis is just beginning to force a reckoning.

The boy who was born to Sabina Losirkale on that day in 1989 has been an outcast of sorts for all of his life. Tall and light-skinned, with wavy hair, Gerald Erebon, now 30, looks nothing like the dark-skinned Kenyan man who he was told was his father, or like his black mother and siblings.

"According to my birth certificate, it is like I am living a wrong life, a lie," he said. "I just want to have my identity, my history."

Amid the torrent of sex abuse accusations that have rocked the priesthood, little attention has been paid to the pregnancies resulting from those illicit acts. And nowhere is this a more glaring issue than in Africa.

While there are no official statistics, experts point to a "culture of silence and compromise" that has allowed abuses of all kinds to fester in African society, said Augusta Muthigani, in charge of education for the Kenyan bishops' conference.

"Matters of sexuality are not discussed openly," she said.

The continent has long lagged behind the United States, Europe and Australia in confronting the problem of priests having sex with children, given the church's priorities here have focused on fighting poverty, conflict and traffickers who sell children off to war or work.

Recently, East African bishops established regional child protection standards and guidelines to prevent child sexual abuse. And in parts of Francophone West Africa, the Catholic Church has launched safeguarding programs for society at large.

Those initiatives, though, are relatively new, scattershot and underfunded. And eight months after Pope Francis summoned bishops from around the world for a summit to insist that clergy sexual abuse preven-

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tion be a priority for the universal church going forward, African bishops made no mention of it in their final declaration after a continent-wide assembly in July. All in a region where advocates say Catholic clergy routinely violate their vows of celibacy, including with children.

The Rev. Mario Lacchin encountered Sabina Losirkale when she was a student at the Gir Gir Primary School in Archer's Post, a dusty town on the highway to Ethiopia. The school was established by the Consolata Missionaries religious order, which had come to Archer's Post to spread the faith to the semi-nomadic tribes of Kenya's northern Rift Valley.

Growing up in the 1970s and '80s, the Losirkale girls and two cousins were often left on their own; their parents were poor shepherds and spent days away from home, seeking pasture in the bush for their animals.

Starting about a year before she turned 16, Sabina skipped afterschool sports to go to the priests' quarters to do housework, cooking and cleaning for the parish priests. Scolastica recalls she would sometimes see Sabina and Lacchin hugging as they said goodbye.

Other times, Scolastica said, Sabina would come home from Lacchin's house crying and asking for Scolastica to fetch water so she could bathe. Some nights she didn't come home at all.

At the time, the priest was in his early 50s.

"I think Father Mario was taking advantage of my sister," said the 45-year-old widow, looking through family photos in her one-bedroom, mud-brick home. "He bribed her with gifts, food, clothes. He was even buying us books. My sister used to come with books, pens, all we needed."

One night, Sabina vomited. It was the first indication that she was pregnant.

Their parents were shocked and angry. They demanded to know who the father was.

Lacchin was quietly transferred to a nearby mission; his driver and a catechist at Archer's Post, Benjamin Ekwam, was chosen to marry Sabina.

Nevertheless, people talked.

"You know, it was very shameful in the community," Scolastica said. "If someone wanted a child, a girl, they just married. So this was just an embarrassment to the whole community."

Sabina was just 16 when she gave birth March 12, 1989. She had conceived a few weeks after her 16th birthday. In Kenya, the legal age of consent was and is 18.

The Vatican doesn't publish statistics about the number of priests who have fathered children. The Holy See only publicly admitted that it's a problem this year, and only then because it was compelled to acknowledge that it had crafted internal guidelines to deal with it.

The man behind the disclosure was Vincent Doyle, an Irish psychotherapist and son of a priest who in 2014 launched an online resource, Coping International, to help children of priests.

Doyle has been a thorn in the side of the Vatican ever since, seeking to raise awareness through the media about the plight of these children, who often suffer emotionally and psychologically. He has also begun advocating for their mothers, some of whom were just girls when they conceived.

In recent months, he has forwarded three such cases to the Vatican: those of Erebon and of children born of a 17-year-old in Cameroon and a 15-year-old in the United Kingdom.

All told, Doyle believes priests' children number in the thousands, given the 415,000 Catholic clergy alive today and church teaching that forbids artificial contraception and abortion. Doyle estimates that about 5% of these births are the result of sex between a priest and a minor, though he has only anecdotal evidence.

The Rev. Stephane Joulain, a leading expert in clergy sex abuse prevention in Africa, said the majority of cases of sexual abuse of minors in Africa involve foreign missionary priests. But he said there is a significant problem of local African priests fathering children, including to young mothers, because of cultural norms: "You become a man only when you have fathered children."

Many priests cite this pressure from family or tribe to explain why they have had offspring. Other priests, Joulain said, rationalize their behavior by saying celibacy is an imported "Western" tradition that has no place in Africa, where girls are often considered adult once they reach puberty, irrespective of the law.

The flouting of celibacy vows among African clergy is no secret to the Vatican. Nearly every time a group

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of African bishops visited the Vatican during the papacy of Pope Benedict XVI, he would remind them of the need to train their priests to "embrace the gift of celibacy," a reminder not often given to other bishops' conferences, according to a review of his speeches to more than a dozen African bishops' conferences.

Decades ago, as in Erebon's case, it was common for bishops and religious superiors to relocate an offending priest and try to find a man who would accept the woman and child as his own, Joulain said. If the mother was lucky, the order would provide financially for them.

"Congregations were all dealing the same way with the same problem," he said.

Gerald Erebon grew up devoted to the Consolata Missionaries who employed his mother and her husband and, along with an Italian order of nuns in Archer's Post, paid for his education. An altar boy, he entered the minor seminary after graduating from Gir Gir Primary School, hoping to join the order as a priest.

He knew well he was different from his dark-skinned siblings and the rest of the Samburu and Turkana people of the region. His half-sister Lina Ben, 27, recalled her siblings teased Erebon mercilessly, as did the family of the man he knew as his father. They called him "bastard." Even Erebon's last name was different, belonging to his maternal grandfather.

When Lina was 14, she asked her mother why Gerald didn't look like her other children, and why his friends often referred to him as "mtoto was padre" — "child of the priest."

Her mother initially pushed her away, but eventually told her that "Dad to Gerald is a priest called Father Mario and he is not here."

Scolastica said her sister finally told her the secret in 2012, two weeks before she died.

"Now that my days are over," her sister told her, she could reveal all: "When Gerald will ask you who's his father, just tell him: Father Mario."

In fact, neighbors took Erebon's heritage for granted. "The people of Archer's knew it was Father Mario. The people knew that the priest was responsible. Because even the boy — he resembled the priest when he was born," said Alfred-Edukan Loote, who taught Erebon in primary school.

Young Erebon often got into fights, raging at the children who teased him. He eventually was expelled from the minor seminary after he smashed a plate of hot food on the head of a boy who had called him son of a white man.

After his mother's death, Erebon asked Scolastica the question he never had the courage to ask his mother. She remembers hearing him cry over the phone when she told him.

In mid-2013, Erebon reached out to Lacchin, sending him a series of emails over the span of two months, hoping to establish a relationship following his mother's death. By now, the two men looked strikingly alike, tall and lanky with sharp cheekbones.

"Ever since I knew you as my real biological father, I could not stop asking myself questions as to why I was born the way I was born, which consequently had put hate in me against you," Erebon wrote.

But he said he had since had a change of heart and now forgave him. "I love you father," he wrote. "Let us not allow the past to affect our present and future." He signed the email "Your son, Gerardo" — the Italian name that appears on his birth certificate.

After Erebon received no response, he said he tried to meet Lacchin in person in Marsabit, where Lacchin was working as a church administrator. Erebon said Lacchin brushed off his overture. Told by the priest to take his complaint to the bishop, he did not.

Five years later, Erebon — by then a student studying education at Catholic University of Eastern Africa, his tuition partially paid for by an anonymous donor — reached out to Doyle, the Irish psychotherapist.

Doyle immediately contacted the Rome-based superior of the Consolata Missionaries, the Rev. Stefano Camerlengo, who sent a top official to investigate. The order arranged three meetings over the past year between Erebon and Lacchin in Nairobi, in what Camerlengo told Doyle was an effort at facilitating dialogue between the two.

According to minutes of a Jan. 15 meeting prepared by a Consolata priest who attended, Lacchin denied paternity. He refused to take a DNA test "since it would mean that he is possibly the father, whereas he knows that he is not the father."

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The Rev. James Lengarin, the Consolata's deputy superior who investigated the case and hails from a town not far from Archer's Post, said the order felt it could not compel Lacchin to take the DNA test, and that a slow process of reconciliation was the best course.

"We didn't feel that he should be constrained by obedience, by force of obedience, to do it," Lengarin said, noting that Lacchin is now 83.

He added that there was no reference in the Consolata's archives to any problem with Lacchin in Archer's Post, though an official history of the order in Kenya makes a cryptic reference to him in an entry about scandals involving some missionaries.

After months of impasse, Doyle went directly to the Vatican and Interpol after acquiring the birth certificates of both Erebon and his mother, which showed that she had just turned 16 when she conceived.

There are no known criminal proceedings against Lacchin in Kenya as a result of Doyle's report to Interpol.

While the birth certificates don't prove a canonical crime of sexual assault of a minor — in 1988, the church's internal code didn't consider a 16-year-old a minor in sex abuse cases — Sabina's sister and other villagers allege the two were engaged in a sexual relationship well before she turned 16.

In many countries nowadays, such documented information would lead to the immediate removal from ministry of the priest pending a canonical investigation that could result in defrocking. Lacchin has continued in ministry, preaching at the Resurrection Gardens church in Nairobi as recently as this summer.

Lengarin said the order had planned to continue its investigation and hoped Lacchin would be persuaded to accept a paternity test, but is now awaiting orders from the Vatican office that handles religious orders on how to proceed.

The Vatican confirmed the office is investigating Lacchin, but declined further comment.

Efforts to reach Lacchin for comment were unsuccessful. He didn't respond to email, text message and phone calls. After witnessing him celebrate Mass at his Resurrection Gardens parish in July, the AP went back to the church and was told this week that he was visiting a sick sister in France and would take a period of leave at least through the end of October.

In an Aug. 2 reply to Doyle, the undersecretary at the congregation for religious orders, the Rev. Pier Luigi Nava, criticized Doyle and asked for further information, saying it wasn't clear what Erebon wanted, or if he intended to launch a criminal case in Kenyan or church courts.

Erebon said he wants Lacchin's help to obtain Italian citizenship for himself and his two children. But more than that, he wants a life that is based on the truth.

"They created something which is not my real identity," he said. "I just want to have my identity, my history, so that my children can also have what they really are: their heritage, history and everything."

Nicole Winfield reported from Rome. AP producer Khaled Kazziha contributed from Nairobi.

3 win Nobel in Chemistry for work on lithium-ion batteries

By DAVID KEYTON and JAMEY KEATEN Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Three scientists won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry on Wednesday for their work developing lithium-ion batteries, which have reshaped energy storage and transformed cars, mobile phones and many other devices — and reduced the world's reliance on fossil fuels that contribute to global warming.

The prize went to John B. Goodenough, 97, a German-born engineering professor at the University of Texas; M. Stanley Whittingham, 77, a British-American chemistry professor at the State University of New York at Binghamton; and Japan's Akira Yoshino, 71, of Asahi Kasei Corporation and Meijo University.

Goodenough is the oldest person to ever win a Nobel Prize.

The three each had a set of unique breakthroughs that cumulatively laid the foundation for the development of a commercial rechargeable battery.

Lithium-ion batteries — the first truly portable and rechargeable batteries — took more than a decade to develop, and drew upon the work of multiple scientists in the U.S., Japan and around the world.

The work had its roots in the oil crisis in the 1970s, when Whittingham was working on efforts to develop

fossil fuel-free energy technologies. He harnessed the enormous tendency of lithium — the lightest metal — to give away its electrons to make a battery capable of generating just over two volts.

By 1980, Goodenough had doubled the capacity of the battery to four volts by using cobalt oxide in the cathode — one of two electrodes, along with the anode, that make up the ends of a battery.

But that battery remained too explosive for general commercial use and needed to be tamed. That's where Yoshino's work in the 1980s came in. He substituted petroleum coke, a carbon material, in the battery's anode. This step paved the way for the first lightweight, safe, durable and rechargeable commercial batteries to be built and enter the market in 1991.

"We have gained access to a technical revolution," said Sara Snogerup Linse of the Nobel committee for chemistry. "The laureates developed lightweight batteries with high enough potential to be useful in many applications — truly portable electronics: mobile phones, pacemakers, but also long-distance electric cars."

"The ability to store energy from renewable sources — the sun, the wind — opens up for sustainable energy consumption," she added.

Speaking at a news conference in Tokyo, Yoshino said he thought there might be a long wait before the Nobel committee turned to his specialty — but he was wrong. He broke the news to his wife, who was just as surprised as he was.

"I only spoke to her briefly and said, 'I got it,' and she sounded she was so surprised that her knees almost gave way," he said.

In a statement from SUNY-Binghamton, Whittingham said: "I am overcome with gratitude at receiving this award, and I honestly have so many people to thank, I don't know where to begin."

"It is my hope that this recognition will help to shine a much-needed light on the nation's energy future," he added.

The trio will share a 9-million kronor (\$918,000) cash award. Their gold medals and diplomas will be conferred in Stockholm on Dec. 10 — the anniversary of prize founder Alfred Nobel's death in 1896.

On Tuesday, Canadian-born James Peebles won the Physics prize for his theoretical discoveries in cosmology together with Swiss scientists Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz, who were honored for finding an exoplanet — a planet outside our solar system — that orbits a solar-type star.

Americans William G. Kaelin Jr. and Gregg L. Semenza and Britain's Peter J. Ratcliffe won the Nobel Prize for advances in physiology or medicine on Monday. They were cited for their discoveries of "how cells sense and adapt to oxygen availability."

Two Nobel literature laureates are to be announced Thursday — one for 2018 and one for 2019 — because last year's award was suspended after a sex abuse scandal rocked the Swedish Academy. The coveted Nobel Peace Prize is Friday and the economics award will be announced on Monday.

Keaten reported from Geneva. Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark, and Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo contributed to this report.

Read more stories on the 2019 Nobel Prizes by The Associated Press at <https://www.apnews.com/NobelPrizes>

Kurds mobilize in Syria as Turkey poised for imminent attack

By LEFTERIS PITARAKIS and BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

AKCAKALE, Turkey (AP) — Warning of a "humanitarian catastrophe," Syrian Kurdish forces who are allied with the United States issued a "general mobilization" call on Wednesday in northeastern Syria, along the border with Turkey, as Ankara threatened an imminent invasion of the area.

The Turkish operation would ignite new fighting in the war-ravaged country's eight-year-old war, potentially displacing hundreds of thousands of people.

Turkey has long threatened an attack on the Kurdish fighters in Syria whom Ankara considers terrorists allied with a Kurdish insurgency within Turkey. A Syrian war monitoring group, the Britain-based Syrian

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Observatory for Human Rights, reported Wednesday that people were fleeing the border town of Tal Abyad.

AP journalists on the Turkish side of the border overlooking Tal Abyad saw Turkish forces crossing into Syria in military vehicles Wednesday, though there was no official statement from either side that the offensive had begun.

Expectations of a Turkish invasion rose after President Donald Trump on Sunday abruptly announced that American troops would step aside ahead of the Turkish push — a shift in U.S. policy that essentially abandoned the Syrian Kurds, longtime U.S. allies in the fight against the Islamic State group in Syria.

But Trump also threatened to “totally destroy and obliterate” Turkey’s economy if the Turkish push into Syria went too far.

Turkey has been massing troops for days along its border with Syria and vowed it would go ahead with the military operation and not bow to the U.S. threat over its plans against the Kurds.

A senior Turkish official said Wednesday that Turkey’s troops would “shortly” cross into Syria, together with allied Syrian rebel forces to battle the Kurdish fighters and also the Islamic State group.

Trump later cast his decision to pull back U.S. troops from parts of northeast Syria as fulfilling a campaign promise to withdraw from the “endless war” in the Middle East. Republican critics and others said he was sacrificing a U.S. ally, the Syrian Kurdish forces, and undermining American credibility.

Fahrettin Altun, the Turkish presidency’s communications director, called on the international community in a Washington Post op-ed published Wednesday “to rally” behind Ankara, which he said would also take over the fight against the Islamic State group.

Turkey aimed to “neutralize” Syrian Kurdish militants in northeast Syria and to “liberate the local population from the yoke of the armed thugs,” Altun wrote.

Turkey’s defense Hulusi Akar told state-run Anadolu Agency that Turkish preparations for the offensive were continuing.

In its call for mobilization, the local civilian Kurdish authority known as the Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria, also urged the international community to live up to its responsibilities as “a humanitarian catastrophe might befall our people” in the region.

“We call upon our people, of all ethnic groups, to move toward areas close to the border with Turkey to carry out acts of resistance during this sensitive historical time,” it said. The statement said the mobilization would last for three days.

The Kurds also said that they want the U.S.-led coalition to set up a no-fly zone in northeast Syria to protect the civilian population from Turkish airstrikes.

Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov accused Washington of playing “very dangerous games” with the Syrian Kurds saying that the U.S. first propped up the Syrian Kurdish “quasi state” in northeastern Syria and is now withdrawing its support.

“Such reckless attitude to this highly sensitive subject can set fire to the entire region, and we have to avoid it at any cost,” he said during a visit to Kazakhstan. Russian news said Moscow has communicated that position Washington.

Earlier on Wednesday, IS militants targeted a post of the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces in the northern Syrian city of Raqqa, which was once the de facto IS capital at the height of the militants’ power in the region.

The Kurdish-led SDF, which is holding thousands of IS fighters in several detention facilities in northeastern Syria, has warned that a Turkish incursion might lead to the resurgence of the extremists. The U.S. allied Kurdish-led force captured the last IS area controlled by the militants in eastern Syria in March.

In Wednesday’s attack, IS launched three suicide bombings against Kurdish positions in Raqqa. There was no immediate word on casualties. Raqqa is being Silently Slaughtered, an activist collective that covers news in the northern city, reported an exchange of fire and a blast.

The Observatory said the Raqqa attack involved two IS fighters who engaged in a shootout before blowing themselves up.

Also Wednesday, Iranian state television reported a surprise military drill with special operations forces

near the country's border with Turkey, in Iran's Western Azerbaijan province. The TV didn't mention the expected Turkish offensive into Syria or elaborate on the reasons for the drill.

The head of the Arab League, Ahmed Aboul Gheit, said he is alarmed at Turkey's planned military offensive, adding in a statement that such an invasion would be a "blatant violation of Syria's sovereignty and threatens Syria's integrity."

Aboul Gheit said the planned incursion also threatens to inflame further conflicts in eastern and northern Syria, and "could allow for the revival" of the Islamic State group.

Mroue reported from Beirut. Associated Press writers Suzan Fraser in Ankara, Turkey; Mehmet Guzel in Akcakale, Turkey; Nasser Karimi in Tehran, Iran, and Nataliya Vasilyeva in Moscow contributed to this report.

Louisiana becomes new hub in immigrant detention under Trump

By NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

WINNFIELD, La. (AP) — Tucked away in the dense forest of rural Louisiana is a barbed wire-ringed prison that has quickly grown into a major detention center for immigrants detained at the border.

The Winn Correctional Center is one of eight Louisiana jails that have started housing asylum seekers and other migrants over the past year, making Louisiana an unlikely epicenter for immigrant detention under President Donald Trump. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement says it's now holding about 8,000 migrants in Louisiana out of 51,000 nationally.

These new facilities, a mix of old state prisons and local jails, are several hours away from New Orleans and other major cities in the region, far from most immigrant rights' groups and immigration lawyers. Migrants complain of mistreatment and prolonged detention.

"I knew they would detain us, but I never thought it would be for this long," said Howard Antonio Benavides Jr., an 18-year-old from Venezuela who has been at Winn for three months.

The surge in migrant detention has occurred against the backdrop of a criminal justice overhaul in Louisiana that has reduced the state's prison population and threatened the economies of the small towns that rely on the jails.

ICE has stepped into the void. At Winn, which started detaining migrants in May, employee salaries have risen from \$10 an hour to \$18.50. Local officials have signed contracts that guarantee millions in payments to the local government, the state, and a private prison company based in the state, while still allowing ICE to detain migrants at a daily cost well below its national average.

ICE refused several requests to comment on why it focused on Louisiana. In a statement, it said it identifies "contracts that can be modified to accommodate increased agency needs."

ICE and the private prison company operating the facility, LaSalle Corrections, allowed The Associated Press to visit Winn for three hours in September and take photos and video under the condition that migrants' faces not be shown.

The AP was not allowed to speak to any detainee besides Benavides, who agreed to an interview through his lawyer. As a large group of migrants held in one tier started shouting "come here," in Spanish, jail officials prevented observers from approaching the immigrants and directed them outside. The men continued to shout from the windows.

Nearly 1,500 migrants are being held at Winn, where they sleep on twin beds in long, narrow units with barred gates. Formerly a medium-security prison, Winn has a dining hall, outdoor soccer fields, a gymnasium, and a chapel built by former inmates.

During the AP's visit, a group of migrants played soccer, with others refereeing the game and keeping score. Around 200 people sat in the chapel listening to another detainee — a Pentecostal preacher — speak of God and Jesus.

Most of the detainees appeared to be Spanish speakers. Others spoke Hindi and wore orange coverings wrapped around their heads.

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A few classrooms have been turned into virtual courtrooms with video teleconferencing equipment where migrants can appear before immigration judges based in New Mexico. Nurses and medical staff provide check-ups at a clinic on site.

Detainees are required to walk from site to site with their hands clasped behind their backs, as if they are handcuffed. Most employees don't speak Spanish or Hindi and communicate with migrants using hand signals or a few words of English that one person can translate to others.

Benavides said he was sent here earlier in the year after he and his father sought asylum in June at an official port of entry in El Paso, Texas. The two were detained together in Texas and Mississippi, then taken to separate jails in Louisiana. They haven't been allowed to speak to each other since.

In interviews, migrants and their families said officials sometimes used a solitary confinement cell to hold detainees accused of violating rules. To Winn's Spanish speakers, it is known as a "pozo," meaning a well or a hole.

ICE says it complies with its own rules on segregating inmates, which say detainees can be confined alone for "presenting a clear threat to the security of the facility," and insisted in a statement that it is "committed to ensuring that those in our custody reside in safe, secure and humane environments and under appropriate conditions of confinement."

Authorities at Winn say there's been little trouble so far, as immigrants are better behaved and easier to oversee than convicts.

"When you have convicted felons, they act a lot different," said Keith Deville, the facility's warden.

The 51,000 immigrants that ICE is holding across the country is just short of an agency record set earlier this year and is several thousand more than authorized by Congress. The number of detainees has remained above 50,000 even as border crossings have fallen in recent months and the Trump administration has enacted new asylum restrictions and programs to tamp down on migration, including forcing tens of thousands of people to wait in Mexico while immigration courts review their cases.

Advocates blame the administration for detaining legitimate asylum seekers who could otherwise be released with future court dates. They say the jails in Louisiana epitomize the problem.

A federal judge recently ruled that ICE was unlawfully refusing to release asylum seekers in Louisiana under its authority to grant parole. Lawyers say very few people are granted parole from Winn or other facilities in the state. Without it, detainees must request bond from an immigration judge, which can take months.

The relatives of one migrant detained at Winn provided the AP with a typewritten list of conditions for release they said was posted inside the jail, weeks after the judge's ruling. The four conditions were pregnancy, being underage, critical illness such as Stage 4 cancer, or being a witness in a federal criminal case.

Luz Lopez, a lawyer with the Southern Poverty Law Center, said she has heard many reports of migrants being given the list, which she said appears to violate ICE's own guidelines for granting parole.

ICE said reports about the list were "false" and added that it decides whether to release inmates on a case by case basis.

Pedro Cordoves Diaz, a 26-year-old from Cuba, was released from Winn in late September, the same day the AP visited the facility. He was released on \$10,000 bond, paid by relatives in New Jersey.

"I stayed in my bed waiting for the moment to leave to arrive," he said.

Immigration detention has become increasingly controversial during the Trump administration, which separated thousands of families as part of a "zero-tolerance" policy at the U.S.-Mexico border.

ICE has expanded its presence in Louisiana as other states have told the agency to stay out.

California and Illinois have banned private immigration jails altogether, and even in conservative Texas, the Republican-led government in Williamson County voted to end ICE detention at a 500-bed jail.

There's no such resistance in Winn Parish or other rural Louisiana communities.

Winnfield is the largest city in the parish at 4,400 people — down from 5,700 two decades ago — and the

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birthplace of legendary Louisiana Gov. Huey Long. Its tiny downtown has as many empty storefronts as it does open shops. Timber trucks carrying chopped logs from surrounding forests roll down the highway. Sheriff Cranford Jordan says that aside from lumber, the area's two biggest job engines are the schools and the prison.

A decline in prison population could eventually have led to the prison closing, Jordan said.

"It would be devastating," he said. "You'd see people moving, bankruptcy. It would be like an automobile plant closing."

Jordan, ICE, and LaSalle Corrections, which was already running the prison, agreed in May to a five-year contract, with an option to add five more.

ICE pays around \$70 per day for each inmate, Jordan said, more than double what the state was paying to house convicts. That is still well below what ICE pays nationally, which it estimated at around \$133 per day in 2017.

Jordan said he supported ICE coming in and called the influx of immigrant detainees a "blessing" of jobs and funding.

As ICE detention has grown in the state, so has the role of LaSalle Corrections, a privately held company based in Ruston, Louisiana.

LaSalle operates six of the eight converted jails that have opened since last year. In August, LaSalle hired the former acting director of ICE's enforcement and removal division in New Orleans as a development executive. LaSalle also made a \$2,000 contribution to the sheriff's campaign in March.

It has faced criticism at its prisons before.

LaSalle was sued after an inmate died in 2015 at its jail in Texarkana, Texas. A federal magistrate judge this year found that jail staff failed to do daily checks and violated "basic nursing standards" in their treatment of the inmate.

Four former guards at the Richwood Correctional Center in Louisiana, which also is operated by LaSalle, were sentenced to federal prison terms after a 2016 incident in which inmates were pepper-sprayed while kneeling and handcuffed. Richwood became an immigration detention facility this year.

LaSalle declined to comment on complaints about mistreatment or about how immigration detention factors into its business.

The facilities are spread out across Louisiana, connected by rural roads winding through forests and farmland. To advocates, the isolation is a serious problem for immigrants.

"Just the fact that you're detaining people in such rural, isolated places makes it not only difficult for the person themselves to fight their case, but it even makes it nearly impossible for them to get attorneys to represent them," said Homero López, executive director of the New Orleans-based Immigration Services and Legal Advocacy.

One of the few people to visit most of the facilities across Louisiana is Alex Melendez, who with his son runs a taxi service to pick up immigrants.

For rates starting at \$100, he drives immigrants to the long-distance bus station or airport in Alexandria, just over an hour away from Winn, or sometimes to New Orleans or Houston, each four hours away.

Calls for pickups have surged in the last year, sometimes with calls from four separate jails in one day.

Melendez says he listens to the migrants' stories about why they fled their homes or what it was like for them inside. Some Spanish speakers are confounded by grits, a Southern staple not commonly found outside the United States, and refer to them as "arroz sin sabor" — tasteless rice.

Sometimes, they get emotional.

It happened recently when Melendez drove up to another detention facility to pick up someone who had just been released.

"He just knelt down," he said. "He praised the Lord. He thanked the Lord he was free."

Invasion of northeast Syria carries gain and risk for Turkey

By SUZAN FRASER Associated Press

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ANKARA, Turkey (AP) — Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has long threatened to send troops into northeastern Syria to clear the border region of Syrian Kurdish fighters whom Turkey considers a serious security threat.

A Turkish invasion looks more likely after President Donald Trump's sudden announcement that U.S. troops, who had fought alongside the Kurds against Islamic State group, would withdraw from the area.

Here is a look at what Turkey wants to achieve in the area, and the risks and challenges it faces by getting even more deeply involved in the Syrian crisis.

WHAT DOES TURKEY WANT?

Turkey wants to create what it calls a "safe zone" in a stretch of territory along its southern border with Syria that is currently controlled by Syrian Kurdish fighters, known as the People's Protection Units, or YPG.

Turkey considers the YPG as terrorists affiliated with the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, which has waged a 35-year-long battle against the Turkish state. Ankara also views the YPG-controlled zone as an "existential threat."

The YPG denies that it is a terror organization but says it aspires to the ideals of the PKK's founding leader, Abdullah Ocalan.

Erdogan has demanded a "safe zone" that is 30 kilometers (20 miles) deep and stretches more than 480 kilometers (300 miles) toward the Iraqi border. He initially had hoped to do it in collaboration with the United States but grew frustrated with what he considered to be delaying tactics by the U.S.

Once secured, Turkey wants to resettle the area with 2 million Syrian refugees who fled to Turkey due to the conflict in their home country. How such a massive resettlement would be carried out is unclear. Human rights groups have warned that any escalation of fighting in the area could displace hundreds of thousands more people.

Erdogan has spoken of plans to build towns, villages, hospitals and schools but also says Turkey, which has already spent some \$40 billion on the refugees, cannot afford to do it alone. He has said he will convene a donors conference to help meet the cost and has called on European nations to share the burden, warning that Turkey could be forced to open the "gates" for an influx of migrants to Western nations.

KURDS VOW TO FIGHT BACK

Turkey has carried out two previous incursions into northern Syria in recent years with the help of Syrian rebels. In the first offensive in 2016, Turkey pushed back Islamic State group militants west of the Euphrates River. In the second operation last year, Turkey captured the Syrian-Kurdish controlled enclave of Afrin. Those regions are currently administered by Turkish-backed opposition groups who run them as virtual Turkish-administered towns.

Analysts say this operation would likely be more complicated. Unwilling to let go of an area they wrested from the Islamic State group, the battle-hardened Kurdish fighters — trained and equipped by the U.S. — have vowed to fight the Turks until the end.

"It's a huge area for the Turkish military to go into and clearly there will be resistance on the part of the (Syrian Kurdish forces)," said Bulent Aliriza, of the director of the Turkey Project at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Aliriza suggested the operation may be a limited one that does not stretch all the way to the Iraqi border. "That's what we are going to look at first. How deep and how broad is it, whether it's all the way across from the Iraqi border to the Euphrates, or just limited to two or three penetration points."

Critics of Trump's decision fear a Turkish operation could have destabilizing consequences for the region, while both Democrats and Republicans have warned that a Turkish attack could lead to a large number of fatalities among the Kurds, who are holding thousands of captured IS fighters and their families.

WHAT ABOUT THE FIGHT AGAINST THE ISLAMIC STATE GROUP?

One of the big question marks surrounding Turkey's plans is whether fighting the Syrian Kurdish forces would allow IS to make a comeback.

Turkey insists that the global battle against the militants won't suffer, and points to its 2016 incursion, which drove away IS from another border region.

But Kurdish officials have warned that they would have to divert their forces away from guarding IS prisoners in case of a Turkish assault. Kurdish authorities run more than two dozen detention facilities, scattered around northeastern Syria, holding about 10,000 IS fighters.

The White House has said Turkey will take over responsibility for the imprisoned fighters, but it is unclear how that would happen, if it all.

Erdogan says Turkey and the United States are working separately on plans to repatriate foreign fighters held in Kurdish prisons.

White House and Democrats fight over rules for impeachment

By JONATHAN LEMIRE, JIM MUSTIAN and MIKE BALSAMO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Constitution gives the House "the sole power of impeachment" — but it confers that authority without an instruction manual.

Now comes the battle royal over exactly what it means.

In vowing to halt all cooperation with House Democrats' impeachment inquiry, the White House on Tuesday labeled the investigation "illegitimate" based on its own reading of the Constitution's vague language.

In an eight-page letter, White House counsel Pat Cipollone pointed to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's failure to call for an official vote to proceed with the inquiry as grounds to claim the process a farce.

"You have designed and implemented your inquiry in a manner that violates fundamental fairness and constitutionally mandated due process," Cipollone wrote.

But Douglas Letter, a lawyer for the House Judiciary Committee, told a federal judge Tuesday that it's clear the House "sets its own rules" on how the impeachment process will play out.

The White House document lacked much in the way of legal arguments, seemingly citing cable TV news appearances as often as case law. And legal experts cast doubt upon its effectiveness.

"I think the goal of this letter is to further inflame the president's supporters and attempt to delegitimize the process in the eyes of his supporters," said Stephen Vladeck, a law professor at the University of Texas.

Courts have been historically hesitant to step in as referee for congressional oversight and impeachment. In 1993, the Supreme Court held that impeachment was an issue for the Congress and not the courts.

In that case, Walter Nixon, a federal district judge who was removed from office, sought to be reinstated and argued that the full Senate, instead of a committee that was established to hear testimony and collect evidence, should have heard the evidence against him.

The court unanimously rejected the challenge, finding impeachment is a function of the legislature that the court had no authority over.

As for the current challenge to impeachment, Vladeck said the White House letter "does not strike me as an effort to provide sober legal analysis."

Gregg Nunziata, a Philadelphia attorney who previously served as general counsel and policy adviser to Republican Sen. Marco Rubio, said the White House's letter did not appear to be written in a "traditional good-faith back and forth between the legislative and executive branches."

He called it a "direct assault on the very legitimacy of Congress' oversight power."

"The Founders very deliberately chose to put the impeachment power in a political branch rather than the Supreme Court," Nunziata told The Associated Press. "They wanted this to be a political process and it is."

G. Pearson Cross, a political science professor at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, said the letter appeared to act as nothing more than an accelerant on a smoldering fire.

"It's a response that seems to welcome a constitutional crisis rather than defusing one or pointing toward some strategy that would deescalate the situation," Cross said.

After two weeks of a listless and unfocused response to the impeachment probe, the White House letter amounted to a declaration of war.

It's a strategy that risks further provoking Democrats in the impeachment probe, setting up court chal-

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enges and the potential for lawmakers to draw up an article of impeachment accusing President Donald Trump of obstructing their investigations.

Democrats have said that if the White House does not provide the information, they could write an article of impeachment on obstruction of justice.

It is unclear if Democrats would wade into a lengthy legal fight with the administration over documents and testimony or if they would just move straight to considering articles of impeachment.

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff, D-Calif., who is leading the Ukraine probe, has said Democrats will "have to decide whether to litigate, or how to litigate."

But they don't want the fight to drag on for months, as he said the Trump administration seems to want to do.

A federal judge heard arguments Tuesday on whether the House had undertaken a formal impeachment inquiry despite not having taken an official vote and whether it can be characterized, under the law, as a "judicial proceeding."

The distinction matters because while grand jury testimony is ordinarily secret, one exception authorizes a judge to disclose it in connection with a judicial proceeding. House Democrats are seeking grand jury testimony from special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation as they conduct the impeachment inquiry.

Mustian reported from New York. Associated Press writer Eric Tucker contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

1. WHITE HOUSE CEASES COOPERATION WITH DEMOCRATS

The U.S. Constitution gives the House "the sole power of impeachment," leaving Democrats and the Trump administration to fight over what that means.

2. KURDS PREPARE TO RESIST IMMINENT TURKISH INVASION

Kurdish officials in northeastern Syria issue a "general mobilization" call along the Syrian border with Turkey as Ankara masses troops to cross into its southern neighbor.

3. SHE WAS 16, HE WAS A PRIEST -- AND A MAN SAYS HE'S THEIR SON

Thirty years after his birth, a Kenyan man seeks confirmation that his father was an Italian missionary priest, an allegation the Vatican is investigating.

4. CALIFORNIANS FACE INTENTIONAL POWER OUTAGES

Pacific Gas & Electric plans to shut off power to 800,000 customers in 34 northern, central and coastal counties to reduce the chance of wildfires.

5. WHERE DETENTION CENTERS ARE RISING

Louisiana jails have started housing asylum seekers and other migrants over the past year, making the state an unlikely epicenter for immigrant detention under Trump.

6. NO SOLUTION IN SIGHT FOR IRAQ'S UPRISING

The latest confrontations have killed more than 100 people in less than a week as security forces shot at young Iraqis demanding jobs, electricity and clean water and an end to corruption.

7. WHO IS FACING SHARPER SCRUTINY

Elizabeth Warren's rapid rise in presidential primary polls is being accompanied by heightened criticism -- from both Trump and her Democratic opponents.

8. NOBEL AWARDED FOR CHEMISTRY

Three scientists -- John B. Goodenough, M. Stanley Whittingham and Akira Yoshino -- are acknowledged for the development of lithium-ion batteries.

9. ALABAMA CAPITAL MAKES HISTORY

Montgomery, a city once known as the cradle of the Confederacy and later the birthplace of the civil

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rights movement, elects its first African American mayor.

10. RAYS FORCE DECIDING GAME IN ALDS

Tampa Bay, led by Willy Adames and Tommy Pham, chase Justin Verlander early in beating the Houston Astros 4-1, tying the playoff series at two games apiece.

Better polling means sharper scrutiny. Is Warren ready?

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

CARSON CITY, Nev. (AP) — When Elizabeth Warren campaigned in Nevada in February, Abbie Peters was there. Energy and enthusiasm for the Massachusetts senator was not.

"It was early, and she wasn't as popular," said Peters.

Nearly eight months later, Peters, a retiree from California, was back again to see Warren. The message hadn't changed. But she felt like she was watching a different messenger. The crowd swelled with enthusiastic supporters, and Warren's status near the top of the Democratic presidential field was affirmed.

"She gave pretty much the same speech, but it's a good one and it's authentic," Peters said.

Still, Warren is quickly finding that her rapid ascent is accompanied by heightened scrutiny and criticism, from President Donald Trump and her Democratic opponents. Her political allies and foes alike say Warren has appropriately sharp elbows and isn't afraid to throw them — something she'll likely increasingly have to do during the Democratic primary and in Twitter combat with Trump.

The latest examples came this week, when Warren was forced to defend a critical portion of the biographical story she tells on the campaign trail and a top Democratic challenger said that her health care plan would potentially alienate half the nation's population.

With less than four months until the first votes in the Democratic nominating process are cast, Warren can anticipate that those criticisms will sharpen and accelerate.

"It's a new phase for her, but if you're the front-runner, all that means is everybody's behind you and they want to be in front of you," said Bill Miller, a longtime Texas political strategist who has worked for Republicans and Democrats. "You get their best shots, and you get the most shots."

Former Vice President Joe Biden, Warren's chief competitor atop the primary polls, has seized on Warren's support for "Medicare for All" universal health insurance, noting that she "has not indicated how she pays for it."

So has Pete Buttigieg, the mayor of South Bend, Indiana, who notes that the plan would eliminate choice for Americans who might prefer to stick with private insurance plans.

"I'm also committed to the idea that we can be bold and unified," Buttigieg told The Associated Press. "But I also think that boldness doesn't require jamming half of the American people."

Buttigieg unveiled a prescription drug cost reduction proposal in a Monday op-ed in The Boston Globe, Warren's hometown newspaper. He said voters should expect him to continue to make the contrast, likely at an influential union forum coming up in Iowa on Sunday, as well as at next week's Democratic debate in Ohio.

"I've got a job to do to make sure that people understand the differences," Buttigieg said.

Colorado Sen. Michael Bennet, meanwhile, questioned the legality of Warren's signature wealth tax, which she's planning to use to help pay for many of her most ambitious proposals if elected, including Medicare for All and expanded Social Security benefits.

"She's talked about the wealth tax, but that's been assigned so many different possible things and it's not clear that it's constitutional," Bennet said in an interview Tuesday.

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders is competing with Warren for the most liberal wing of the Democratic Party and has refused to go after Warren, but some of his highest-profile supporters have. Actress Susan Sarandon noted that her candidate was "not someone who used to be a Republican," reminding some of Warren only becoming a Democrat in 1996, when she was in her 40s.

Republicans have willingly joined in.

Warren's taking a DNA test last year to show Native American ancestry backfired — while it showed

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distant tribal ancestry, it also sparked a rebuke of Warren from some Native Americans for attributing tribal membership to genetics. The controversy nearly derailed her campaign before it got started, and she apologized for her past claims. Trump had derided her with the ethnic slur "Pocahontas" during his 2016 campaign and continues to do so.

On Tuesday, Warren stood by her account of being fired from a New Jersey teaching position five decades ago because she was pregnant. She was put on the defensive after a 2007 video surfaced — and was widely shared in conservative circles — in which she seemed to describe the change in her career more as a choice and without the claim that her pregnancy led to the loss of her job.

Others note that the "Two Income Trap," the 2004 book Warren wrote with her daughter, argued in favor of allowing parents more freedom to choose the public schools they send their children to rather than being limited to their neighborhood, saying families overreaching to move into more expensive ZIP codes was a key driver for the insurmountable debt many took on. That's a different kind of "school choice" than the voucher programs that use public funding for private and religious schools cheered by many conservatives — but is a distinction some may miss.

A national audience got a glimpse of Warren's fighting skills during the Democratic debate in July. After former Rep. John Delaney of Maryland spent much of the evening criticizing Warren and Sanders about using "fairytale economics," Warren shot back: "I don't understand why anybody goes to all the trouble of running for president of the United States just to talk about what we really can't do."

There were also flashes while Warren was running for the Senate in 2012 against Republican incumbent Sen. Scott Brown, who two years earlier won a seat controlled for decades by Ted Kennedy.

Warren had just been denied a job running the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. She was packing up her apartment in Washington when Stephanie Schriock, president of EMILY's List, stopped by and spoke to her for hours about running for office. Schriock recalled at the time that, for any Democrat challenging Brown, "this was not going to be a simple slam dunk."

"I know folks now look back and go, 'Massachusetts was an easy race.' That was not the case in the moment, in that environment," said Schriock. "We were dealing with the situation where we'd just lost Kennedy's seat. Scott Brown was this attractive, charismatic Republican senator. Mitt Romney is getting ready to run for president."

Brown tried to paint his opponent as an elitist from Harvard, calling her "Professor Warren" and arguing that she saw the Senate as a consolation prize.

"We knew that, running as a Republican in a state as blue as Massachusetts, you have to not only make voters like your candidate, you have to give them active reason to dislike your opponent," said Colin Reed, who was Brown's campaign spokesman. "It was a hard-fought race."

Warren ultimately won by 7-plus percentage points.

Jeremy Hasson, a 26-year-old high school career counselor in New York, said Warren's steady climb from also-ran to formability may leave her in a better position to fend off criticism.

"She's so good at addressing root causes and not feeding into people's traps," said Hasson, who attended a Warren rally last month in Washington Square Park. "Even if she's in the lead, she still has an underdog message where she can say, 'I was behind once and I got here.'"

Associated Press writers Thomas Beaumont in Des Moines, Iowa, and Hunter Woodall in New London, New Hampshire, contributed to this report.

China demands US lift tech curbs, will 'safeguard' interests

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — China demanded Washington lift sanctions on Chinese tech companies and warned Wednesday it will "resolutely safeguard" the country's interests.

The Ministry of Commerce criticized curbs imposed on sales of U.S. technology to a group of Chinese companies as interference in the country's affairs. American officials say those companies provide technol-

ogy used to repress Muslim minorities in the northwestern region of Xinjiang.

"We strongly urge the United States to immediately stop making irresponsible remarks on the issue of Xinjiang, stop interfering with China's internal affairs and remove relevant Chinese entities from the Entity List as soon as possible," said a ministry statement. "China will take all necessary measures to resolutely safeguard Chinese interests."

The ministry gave no details of possible retaliation.

Despite the spike in tension, the ministry said Tuesday a trade delegation was going ahead with a trip to Washington this week for talks aimed at ending a tariff war.

Asked whether the talks might be disrupted, a foreign ministry spokesman repeated China's demand for Washington to "withdraw the relevant decisions" but gave no indication plans for negotiations might change.

"We hope the United States can work together with China to meet each other halfway and promote progress in consultations," said the spokesman, Geng Shuang, at a regular briefing.

The sanctions announced Monday restrict sales of U.S. technology to a group of Chinese companies working on facial recognition, artificial intelligence and other advanced products. Those technologies are part of the ruling Communist Party's industry development plans.

The U.S. government and independent researchers say as many as 1 million Muslims in Xinjiang have been sent to detention camps. The government says those facilities are job training centers and its activities are aimed at thwarting terrorism and radicalism.

Beijing has tried for decades to suppress sentiment in Xinjiang in favor of independence or more autonomy for the territory. Chinese authorities say scattered incidents of violence blamed on radicals are part of an international Islamic terrorist movement, but independent researchers say they see no evidence to support that.

Iraq's uprising an open crisis with no known path forward

By ZEINA KARAM and QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Iraq has been plunged into a new cycle of instability that potentially could be the most dangerous this conflict-scarred nation has faced, barely two years after declaring victory over the Islamic State group in a war that left much of the country in ruins and displaced tens of thousands.

The latest bloody confrontations have killed more than 100 people in less than seven days. But this time, the clashes do not pit security forces against Islamic extremists, the country's Sunnis against Shiites, or insurgents against occupation forces.

Instead, Iraqi security forces have been shooting at young Iraqis demanding jobs, electricity and clean water — and an end to corruption.

It's still unclear why the government chose to exercise such a heavy-handed response to a few hundred unarmed demonstrators who first congregated last week on social media to hold a protest. But analysts say the violence has pushed Iraq toward a dangerous trajectory from which it might be difficult to pull back.

As the spontaneous protests — with no apparent political leadership emerging — continued to clash with security forces in Iraq cities and towns, the government appeared unapologetic and failed to offer solutions to entrenched problems, raising fears that yet another Arab nation will be mired in a long-term crisis without a path forward.

"The use of force coupled with cosmetic concessions will work to temporarily ease pressure but will not end the crisis," wrote Ayham Kamel, Middle East and North Africa head at Eurasia Group. "This cycle of protests could be contained, but the political system will continue to lose legitimacy."

In their demands for better services and an end to corruption, the protesters are no different from those who rioted in the southern city of Basra over chronic power cuts and water pollution last summer. Or in 2016, when angry demonstrators scaled the walls in Baghdad's highly secured Green Zone and stormed Iraq's parliament, shouting "thieves!"

But unlike in 2016 when the protests were led by populist Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, today's protests have not been co-opted by any political party. Most are young men in their twenties. They do not have

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a clear list of demands or a program, nor do they have a spokesman to speak on their behalf. Some are teenagers or fresh university graduates unable to find jobs in a corruption-plagued country that sits on some of the world's biggest oil reserves.

Their movement — if it can be called that — has no clear contours, nor any quick solutions. The protesters say they are fed up with the entire post-2003 political class which profiteers on kickbacks, nepotism and corruption while ordinary Iraqis drink polluted water and endure massive unemployment.

And most strikingly, the protests are predominantly Shiite demonstrations against a Shiite-led government. Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi has promised to address protesters' demands. But the 77-year-old premier began his tenure last year facing a raft of accumulated challenges, including high unemployment, widespread corruption, dilapidated public services and poor security, and he has told protesters there is no "magic solution for all that."

The crisis erupted on Oct. 1 after protesters who had organized on social media staged a demonstration calling for their rights. They were met with water cannons, tear gas and bullets. The demonstrations were partially triggered by anger over the abrupt removal of a top Shiite military who led battles against Islamic State militants and was largely seen as a non-corrupt, respected general. But the protesters carried a long list of grievances.

The protests come at a critical moment for Iraq, which had been caught in the middle of escalating tensions between the United States and the regional Shiite power Iran — both allies of the Baghdad government. Iraq's weak prime minister has struggled to remain neutral amid those tensions.

Adding to the nervousness, mysterious airstrikes blamed on Israel had for weeks targeted military bases and ammunition depot in Iraq belonging to Iran-backed militias, which vowed revenge against American troops stationed here.

The protests, when they started, quickly spread from Baghdad to the Shiite heartland in the south, including the flashpoint city of Basra. The government imposed a round-the-clock curfew and shut down the internet for days, in a desperate attempt to quell the protests.

Interior Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Saad Maan said Sunday that at least 104 people have been killed and more than 6,000 wounded in the unrest. He said eight members of the security forces were among those killed and 51 public buildings and eight political party headquarters had been torched by protesters.

The massive crackdown appears to have succeeded in whittling down the number of protesters for now, although sporadic clashes between demonstrators and security forces continue on a smaller scale, including an hours-long gunbattle Monday night near the volatile Baghdad neighborhood of Sadr City.

But among Iraqis and country observers, there is consensus that a dam has been broken and that with so many killed, the protest movement is likely to return, and become better organized next time — whenever that may be.

In a country awash with weapons, there are concerns the violence would lead some protesters to arm themselves, similar to what happened in Syria. There is also worry that some of the hard-line militias loyal to Iran could enter the fray and exploit the chaos.

Muqtada al-Sadr, Iraq's influential cleric who has a popular Shiite support base and the largest number of seats in parliament, has called on the government to resign because of the large number of people killed. He also suspended his bloc's participation in the government until it comes up with a reform program.

If al-Sadr joins the protest movement, it will give it much more momentum and potentially lead to even more violence.

Ali Al-Ghoraifi, an Iraqi blogger, said the government may have succeeded in putting a lid on the situation for the time being.

"But it will be like a coal ready to ignite at any time and place," he wrote in a post. "And when it does, it will burn everyone."

Rays chase Verlander early, beat Astros 4-1 to even ALDS

By FRED GOODALL AP Sports Writer

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ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — The Tampa Bay Rays never doubted themselves, even with Justin Verlander looking to end their season.

Willy Adames homered and made a sensational relay throw from shortstop, and the Rays chased the Houston ace early in beating the Astros 4-1 Tuesday night to even their AL Division Series at two games apiece.

With their second victory in two days over one of baseball's best pitchers, the Rays believe the rest of the country is finally getting a taste of what they're capable of accomplishing.

"Hey, I hate to say it: About time, because we have a really good team over here," Tommy Pham said.

"To win 96 games in this division (the AL East) with New York and Boston is an impressive feat," he added. "All year, we've been getting talked down. And now, with the last two games, the way we played, the whole world has seen how good of a team we are and how well-rounded we are."

The series shifts back to Houston for a deciding Game 5 on Thursday night. Astros star Gerrit Cole is scheduled to pitch for the heavily favored AL West champs, who led the majors with 107 wins this season and have one more chance to close out the feisty Rays. Tyler Glasnow is expected to start for Tampa Bay.

The winner plays the New York Yankees in the AL Championship Series.

Pham homered for the second time this postseason and Ryan Yarbrough combined with five other pitchers on a six-hitter for Tampa Bay. Cy Young Award winner Blake Snell came out of the bullpen for his first career relief appearance, holding off Houston in the ninth inning to earn the save.

Verlander, starting on short rest after dominating the wild-card Rays in Game 1, looked uncomfortable on the mound at Tropicana Field and was pulled in the fourth after giving up four runs.

Verlander, whose eight career ALDS victories are a major league record, yielded three runs in the first. Adames homered leading off the fourth to make it 4-0, and the eight-time All-Star didn't make it through the inning.

"A good approach for those guys in the first, and then honestly, I need those infield singles to be caught. When you don't have it, you need the balls that are put in play to go your way, and they didn't," said Verlander, who only started on short rest three other times during his career, including the 2011 ALDS, when he started Games 1 and 3 after Game 1 was suspended in the second inning.

"Obviously, not the way you would script it," he added. "It sucks."

The Rays helped themselves by playing stellar defense, especially with the Astros threatening to cut into their three-run deficit in the fourth.

With speedy Jose Altuve on first base, Yordan Alvarez hit a long double that short-hopped the center field wall. Two-time Gold Glove winner Kevin Kiermaier quickly grabbed the ball and fired to his cutoff man, Adames. He turned and executed a perfect relay home just in time to nail Altuve trying to score.

"That was probably the most incredible relay throw from an infielder I've ever seen," Kiermaier said. "That was such a huge moment for us, huge momentum shift, and it just doesn't get any better than that."

Avisaíl García had four hits for Tampa Bay, and Pham added three.

Rays opener Diego Castillo struck out the first three batters and went 1 2/3 innings. He was followed by Yarbrough, who worked two scoreless innings to get the win. Nick Anderson handed off to Colin Poche, who gave up an eighth-inning homer to Robinson Chirinos.

Emilio Pagan and Snell finished up for the Rays, who have rebounded from losing the first two games of the series on the road to Verlander and Houston's other main headliner, Cole.

"A lot of credit to them for their preparation and putting themselves in this position," Cole said. "I certainly think they've earned it. ... They've played calm, cool and collected."

Altuve drew a one-out walk and Alex Bregman singled to help the Astros bring the potential tying run to the plate in the ninth.

Snell, who started Game 2, entered and struck out Alvarez before retiring Yuli Gurriel on a sharp grounder up the middle — exactly where the Rays were playing him — to end the game.

Charlie Morton, who helped Houston win the World Series two years ago, began the Rays' comeback by beating his former team 10-3 on Monday.

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Needing one win to reach the ALCS for a third straight year, the Astros opted to start Verlander on just three days of rest in hopes of closing out the Rays, who have won three elimination games in a week to stay in the running for their first trip to the ALCS since 2008.

Houston manager AJ Hinch said it was an easy decision to go with Verlander, who was 8-0 in 12 ALDS appearances, including 11 starts, before Tuesday night.

Verlander limited the Rays to one hit over seven scoreless innings in Game 1, and it looked as though Tampa Bay might be in for another long night when he fanned Austin Meadows to begin the bottom of the first.

What transpired over the next six batters — beginning with Pham's 408-foot shot to left-center that got a yellow flag-waving, boisterous crowd of 32,178 into it — could fuel some second-guessing if Houston doesn't win Game 5.

"In the postseason, you ask somebody to do something that's not normal, it's always a little nerve-racking," Hinch said.

"I understand with the results, it's tough," he added. "I felt it was the best chance to win the series — JV today and Gerrit in Game 5 if we needed it. We're going to test the latter part of that in Game 5."

Four of the next five Rays also reached base, building the lead to 3-0. Travis d'Arnaud hit an RBI single and Joey Wendle lined a double into the right-field corner to drive in another run.

"I always say when we score early, we're very, very dangerous," Kiermaier said. "Three runs in the first inning, you couldn't draw it up any better. We wanted him to throw as many pitches as possible. We wanted to get him out of the game quick, and we did just that."

PACKED HOUSE

Seating capacity at Tropicana Field was reduced to 25,025 this year, but the Rays removed the tarps covering a portion of the upper deck to allow more fans an opportunity to buy tickets for Games 3 and 4 of the ALDS.

After drawing 32,251 on Monday, more than twice the club's AL-worst season average of 14,734 per game, attendance was announced as 32,178 on Tuesday night.

"Certainly, players like to play in front of a lot of fans. Everybody recognizes that," manager Kevin Cash said. "But when it mattered, when it counted ... they showed up."

CROWDED AISLE

Astros SS Carlos Correa returned to the lineup for the ALDS after missing the final seven games of the regular season due to back tightness that flared up during a flight to Seattle. He said Tuesday he's 100 percent healthy and isn't placing any limitations on himself in the playoffs. He also revealed what he's doing to try to avoid his back tightening up again during a plane ride.

"I'm laying on the aisle," Correa said, adding he "felt awesome" when he arrived in Florida before Game 3.

"Got my sleep, got my rest," he explained. "Just happy to be back with the team and on the field once again."

More AP MLB: <https://apnews.com/MLB> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Irish border residents worry about future if no-deal Brexit

By DAVID KEYTON Associated Press

GREENORE, Ireland (AP) — The small ferry moves gently across the calm waters of Carlingford Lough, connecting the picturesque hamlet of Greencastle in Northern Ireland with the village of Greenore, a mile and a half away in the Republic of Ireland.

It began sailing a little more than two years ago, saving farmers, commuters and tourists an hour-long drive inland to the nearest bridge.

The service is another sign that the border has all but vanished since the Good Friday Agreement was signed in 1998, ending decades of sectarian violence and creating a quiet sense of normality that older generations cherish and younger people may take for granted.

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But if the U.K. leaves the European Union on Oct. 31 without a Brexit divorce deal, this local boat could find itself plying an international border.

"We don't know what to expect," said Paul O'Sullivan, the ferry company's managing director. "Brexit has resulted in chaos for our company."

With both in the EU, the border barely resonates. As members, both the U.K. and Ireland have to abide by the rules of the club — the free movement of goods, services, capital and people.

In a no-deal Brexit, that all goes and the border — the only land border between the U.K. and the EU — will resonate once again.

Little wonder then that it's been the most intractable issue in the Brexit negotiations over the past three or so years since the U.K. voted to leave the EU in June 2016.

With little more than three weeks to go before the scheduled Brexit date of Oct. 31, the two sides have failed to agree on a plan to ensure the border remains open, without the checkpoints that were magnets for violence during three decades of conflict. More than 3,500 people died during "The Troubles."

"People in their 40s and 50s and older, we remember The Troubles very well," said 51-year-old Patrick Robinson, a member of Border Communities Against Brexit. "What started off as border troubles exactly like what is going to happen now escalated into what became known effectively as the civil war in Northern Ireland."

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said that the U.K. as a whole, including Northern Ireland which voted to remain in the EU during the referendum, has to leave on the scheduled Brexit date — with or without a deal. Not doing so, he says, would undermine faith in democracy.

That stance has raised concerns that a physical border will return and threaten the fragile peace process in Northern Ireland and the economic opportunities it has created.

No one really knows what will happen even though political leaders on all sides keep insisting the border will stay open. People are worried about the long-term impact of the potential changes.

Like many businesses, the Carlingford Lough Ferry has received little guidance: Will farmers carrying hay from the south need to declare their goods? Will there be forms? Customs officers with clipboards? And then there's the question of whether the ferry will be allowed to operate at all.

Back in the days of hard borders, trade between North and South was impeded. It took truck drivers hours to get cleared and cross to the other side. Lush rolling hills were marred by guard towers, soldiers and checkpoints. Criss-crossing the border several times a day was challenging.

The inability to no longer move freely is likely to hurt the smallest operators the most.

"The economic shock will be so great that there is no way to mitigate against the risk," warned Daniel Donnelly, a spokesman in Northern Ireland for the Federation of Small Businesses.

Even low tariffs in the event of a no-deal could wipe out the profits that small businesses with low margins make, he added.

People here just don't see any point in going back to the past. Piloting the ferry across Carlingford Lough, 31-year-old Shane Horner remembered the border checks and troops that were deployed along the border when he was a child. Crossing was slow and intimidating, he said, but "once that stopped it was grand, you could come and go as you pleased."

Today, farmers from the Republic take the new ferry service to sell silage and hay from the lush fields of County Louth to customers north of the border. Wedding parties from the North use it to cross for events in the medieval Carlingford.

It's a bus service on the water — not a stronghold between nations.

"There is a cross-community dimension," said O'Sullivan, who remembers meeting some northerners taking the ferry on their first journey across the border. "If there is a hard Brexit, it almost certainly will have an adverse impact."

Follow AP's full coverage of Brexit and British politics at <https://www.apnews.com/Brexit>

Irish prime minister says big gaps remain in Brexit talks

LONDON (AP) — Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar said that big gaps remain between Britain and the European Union as they try to secure a Brexit deal by next week.

Varadkar said Ireland can't accept a deal at any cost as Britain seeks to renegotiate plans intended to ensure there is no hard border between the Republic of Ireland and the U.K.'s Northern Ireland. Both sides are seeking to reach an agreement before an EU summit next week.

"I think it's going to be very difficult to secure an agreement by next week, quite frankly," Varadkar told Irish broadcaster RTE late Tuesday after a 40-minute phone call with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

"Essentially what the United Kingdom has done is repudiate the deal that we negotiated in good faith with Prime Minister (Theresa) May's government over two years and have sort of put half of that now back on the table and are saying, 'That's a concession'. And, of course, it isn't really."

The comments contradicted Johnson's office, which said Tuesday that EU intransigence had led to a breakdown in negotiations.

The U.K. said, however, that it still hopes to strike a deal. Johnson and Varadkar are expected to meet in person later this week.

Johnson says Britain will leave without a negotiated settlement if a deal can't be reached by the Brexit deadline of Oct. 31. The Times of London reported Wednesday that five Cabinet ministers are threatening to resign if the Conservative government adopts a no-deal Brexit as its central policy.

Follow AP's full coverage of Brexit and British politics at <https://www.apnews.com/Brexit>

This story has been corrected to show that the Irish prime minister's last name is Varadkar, not Varadkhar.

Recuperating Sanders says he may slow down campaigning pace

By **WILSON RING, STEVE PEOPLES and WILL WEISSERT** Associated Press

BURLINGTON, Vt. (AP) — Bernie Sanders began reintroducing himself to the 2020 campaign on Tuesday, venturing outside his Vermont home to say that he doesn't plan on leaving the presidential race following last week's heart attack — but that he may slow down a frenetic pace that might have contributed to his health problems.

"We were doing, in some cases, five or six meetings a day, three or four rallies and town meetings and meeting with groups of people. I don't think I'm going to do that," Sanders told reporters when asked what his schedule may look like going forward. "But I certainly intend to be actively campaigning. I think we're going to change the nature of the campaign a bit. I'll make sure that I have the strength to do what I have to do."

Pressed on what that meant, Sanders replied: "Well, probably not doing four rallies a day."

Sanders' campaign has said he will be at next week's Democratic presidential debate in Ohio. But it hasn't commented on if or when he'll resume campaigning before that — or what his next steps will be. NBC News announced it would air an "exclusive" interview with Sanders, his first since the heart attack, on Wednesday.

His health problems come at a precarious time, since Sanders was already facing questions about being the oldest candidate seeking the White House, and he has seen his recent poll numbers decline compared to 2020 rival Elizabeth Warren, his chief competitor for the Democratic Party's most-progressive wing.

Sanders, a Vermont senator, also recently shook up his campaign staff in Iowa and New Hampshire, which kick off the presidential nominating process.

"I must confess, I was dumb," Sanders said in front of his house, speaking in soft, calm tones with his wife, Jane O'Meara Sanders, looking on behind him. "Thank God, I have a lot of energy, and during this campaign I've been doing, in some cases, three or four rallies a day all over the state, Iowa, New Hampshire, wherever. And yet I, in the last month or two, just was more fatigued than I usually have been. And I should have listened to those symptoms."

Supporters privately conceded that the timing of the heart attack — which came just as the impeachment inquiry against President Donald Trump was escalating — helped limit the political fallout. But they also acknowledge that he will have to more directly address lingering health concerns then, if not before.

And they hinted changes would be coming to better keep their candidate healthy.

“We’re going to look at everything — the whole campaign in its totality — and make adjustments where necessary,” said national campaign co-chair Nina Turner, who spoke with Sanders at length on Tuesday during a call with his four national co-chairs. “But make no mistake: Sen. Bernie Sanders is as committed — more so, even more now than he always has been, if that’s even possible.”

Last week began on a high note when Sanders announced that he’d raised \$25.3 million during the year’s third quarter, more than Warren and any other Democratic presidential hopeful. But word of that was overshadowed hours later Tuesday, when Sanders was at a campaign event in Nevada, experienced chest discomfort and was taken to a hospital, where he was diagnosed with a heart attack.

Doctors inserted two stents to open up a blocked artery in his heart. Sanders left the hospital on Friday and flew home to Vermont the following morning.

“It wasn’t a major heart attack. He had a minor heart attack. The stents will be extremely helpful in terms of blood flow. I assume he’ll be far more vigorous,” said RoseAnn DeMoro, a Sanders’ confidante and former executive director of National Nurses United. “Heaven help the opposition.”

His campaign noted that he had \$33.7 million in cash on hand in the quarter that ended last month and, on Monday, he released a plan to impose stricter campaign finance limits. The plan was in the works for weeks before Sanders took ill, advisers say, but they declined to comment on the effectiveness of campaigning via press release — simply issuing policy statements without a candidate out there campaigning to back them up. Surrogates have taken Sanders’ place on the campaign trail in the meantime, including Carmen Yulín Cruz, mayor of San Juan, Puerto Rico, who visited New Hampshire on Saturday.

Sanders has been active in recent days communicating with his staff and broader network of longtime supporters. Those who have spoken to him say he is quick to shout down questions about his health, insisting that he’s fine — and that he vowed to remain committed to the 2020 race in a Monday conference call with his entire campaign staff.

Supporters also say the campaign has seen a surge in fundraising while he recuperates — though it hasn’t released figures to quantify that.

Sanders said Tuesday that he would be meeting with the cardiologist on a regular basis and getting some checkups, but that his main doctor is in Washington, meaning he didn’t have a physician in Vermont, “let alone a cardiologist.” He previously promised to release his medical records and reiterated that, saying, “We will release them at the appropriate time.”

Peoples reported from New York. Weissert reported from Washington.

Hong Kong’s undercover medics reveal hidden toll of protests

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — As riot police fought anti-government demonstrators on the streets of Hong Kong over the weekend, two photos popped into the encrypted inbox of a group of volunteer medics who call themselves the “Hidden Clinic.”

The images showed the nastily swollen left arm of a 22-year-old protester who had been beaten and were accompanied by a message from the sender that said, “I suspect his bone is broken.”

After exchanges through the night via the Telegram messaging app that arranged an off-the-books X-ray, the protester was diagnosed with a displaced fracture of the ulnar bone.

With Hong Kong’s summer of protests now stretching into the fall and clashes becoming increasingly ferocious, medical professionals have quietly banded together to form the Hidden Clinic and other networks to secretly treat the injuries of many young demonstrators who fear arrest if they go to government hospitals.

The person who messaged the network on the injured protester’s behalf later explained the youth’s

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wariness by saying, "Many of his friends have been detained when seeing doctors."

The Hidden Clinic says it has clandestinely treated 300-400 protesters with an array of injuries: broken and dislocated bones, gaping wounds and exposure to tear gas so prolonged that they were coughing up blood. It also says the severity of the injuries has increased sharply in the past week, with hard-core protesters and police increasingly tough on each other.

A practitioner who specializes in traditional Chinese medicine and is not affiliated with Hidden Clinic says she alone has treated 60-80 patients, some with multiple wounds from tear-gas canisters and other riot-control projectiles. The woman, who spoke on condition of anonymity because she fears reprisal during her frequent trips to the mainland, uses acupuncture to ease their pain and doesn't charge for her services.

This behind-the-scenes doctoring, outside of government hospitals, suggests that the official toll of 1,235 injured protesters treated in public hospitals since June 9 significantly undercounts both the number and full extent of those hurt in the more than 400 demonstrations tallied by the government.

Hong Kong's chief executive, Carrie Lam, says the casualty count includes injuries to more than 300 police officers. The government tally, compiled by the Hospital Authority, only counts patients who visited 18 public Accident and Emergency departments in the territory of 7.5 million people, not those treated privately.

The protests were triggered in June by a now-abandoned measure that would have allowed criminal suspects to be extradited for trial in Communist Party-controlled courts in mainland China. They've flared into sustained fury against Lam's government, testing commitments from Communist leaders in Beijing not to interfere in the internal affairs of Hong Kong, a semi-autonomous hub for international trade and finance that reverted to Chinese rule in 1997.

The full scope of the clandestine efforts to treat protesters isn't clear, because both the injured and the medics want to protect themselves in the atmosphere of deep distrust that has put Hong Kong on edge. But interviews by The Associated Press with four practitioners and with protesters treated outside the government health system show it is extensive, underscoring the support that the demonstrators enjoy.

One trainee doctor, who wouldn't give her full name and asked to be identified only as Wong for fear she would damage her career, said her supervisor at a major public hospital doesn't know of her involvement with Hidden Clinic.

After her regular shifts, she spends her nights dealing with a steady stream of injured protesters, giving them quick, initial diagnoses via text message and photo, and dispensing advice. She then reaches out to the network's behind-the-scenes doctors, arranging more extensive consultations and treatment — and even help with any costs.

When the protests began, Wong said she used her medical skills on the front lines. She helped assemble Hidden Clinic at the end of July because "I realized the injuries are getting more severe," she said.

Its name reflects its low profile — its Telegram logo is a bear wearing an identity-concealing surgical mask — but also the many unreported injuries its volunteers see.

"Data published by the government aren't really accurate anymore, and there are a lot of hidden injuries," Wong said.

With many distrustful of Lam's government, and by extension its hospitals, "patients would rather endure the pain and not get arrested," she said.

For some injuries, Hidden Clinic dispenses temporary treatment that allows protesters to wait a few days before going to an Accident & Emergency facility, so they can lie more convincingly that they weren't recently hurt in violence.

"You can just say that, oh, you got injured while playing football or something," Wong said.

Early Monday, when police again battled black-clad protesters after peaceful rallies that drew tens of thousands of marchers, Hidden Clinic's cases included a protester who messaged a photo of a gruesome neck-wound — round, the size of a plum, dark at the edges and seemingly caused by a rubber bullet. The victim, in his 20s, said he was having difficulty swallowing.

"It was quite alarming," Wong said. They quickly found a private surgeon who treated him in his own clinic. The man then asked Hidden Clinic to delete any record of their Telegram interactions.

Wong also arranged treatment for the 22-year-old with the broken arm, as well as two other people with wounds that needed suturing. The appeals began arriving from 9 p.m. or 10 p.m. Sunday, and she finished about 4 a.m., before dealing with more cases later in the day, she said.

Asked about protesters' fears of public wards, the Hospital Authority said in a statement to AP that it "upholds the importance of patient confidentiality, which is the cornerstone of patient confidence" and "has also reminded law enforcement departments to be mindful of the respect for patient data privacy in hospitals."

The protesters aren't convinced.

"Government hospitals have police," said a 19-year-old who came prepared for trouble at Sunday's protest, wearing a metal shield on his left arm, a hardened helmet with full-face reflective visor, protective pads on his knees, elbows and shoulders, a gas mask, a walkie-talkie and a black jacket reeking of tear gas.

Struck under his right armpit by a rubber bullet in a previous skirmish, the student said he used Telegram to find free treatment from a private clinic that diagnosed bruising but no broken ribs. He identified himself only as John, for fear of retaliation.

In a detention that seemed to confirm the concerns of protesters that government clinics aren't safe, a pregnant 19-year-old detained Monday was being watched over by two policewomen in the maternity ward of the Tuen Mun Hospital, according to the hospital.

An 18-year-old who was struck on the head by a tear-gas canister on Oct. 1, when Hong Kong shook with protests, rioting and the police shooting of a protester, said she turned to Hidden Clinic to treat dizziness, vomiting and headaches because "I may be arrested if I go to the government hospital." She refused to give her name.

"I can't believe the government," she said. "The government will use any ways to find out the protesters."

Clandestine doctors say they feel compelled to help.

"These kids are striving for a whole era's freedom," said the Chinese medicine practitioner who devotes one evening per week to treating protesters, seeing as many as a dozen each time. "For those of us who don't dare go out, the very least we can do is treat their wounds."

White House spurns House impeachment probe as illegitimate

By ZEKE MILLER and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House declared it will halt any and all cooperation with what it termed the "illegitimate" impeachment probe by House Democrats, sharpening the constitutional clash between President Donald Trump and Congress.

Trump attorneys on Tuesday sent a lengthy letter to House leaders bluntly stating White House refusal to participate in the inquiry that was given a boost by last week's release of a whistleblower's complaint that the president sought political favors from Ukraine.

"Given that your inquiry lacks any legitimate constitutional foundation, any pretense of fairness, or even the most elementary due process protections, the Executive Branch cannot be expected to participate in it," White House counsel Pat Cipollone wrote.

That means no additional witnesses under administration purview will be permitted to appear in front of Congress or comply with document requests, a senior official said.

The White House is objecting that the House has not voted to begin an impeachment investigation into Trump. It also claims that Trump's due process rights are being violated.

House intelligence committee Chairman Adam Schiff tweeted in response that Trump's refusal to cooperate with the inquiry signals an attitude that "the president is above the law."

"The Constitution says otherwise," he asserted.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has insisted the House is well within its rules to conduct oversight of the executive branch under the Constitution regardless of a formal impeachment inquiry vote.

"Mr. President, you are not above the law," Pelosi said in a statement Tuesday night. "You will be held accountable."

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The Constitution states the House has the sole power of impeachment, and that the Senate has the sole power to conduct impeachment trials. It specifies that a president can be removed from office for "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors," if supported by a two-thirds Senate vote. But it offers little guidance beyond that on proceedings.

The White House letter marks the beginning of a new all-out strategy to counter the impeachment threat to Trump. Aides have been honing their approach after two weeks of what allies have described as a listless and unfocused response to the probe.

The president himself is sticking with the same Trump-as-victim rhetoric he has used for more than a year. "People understand that it's a fraud. It's a scam. It's a witch hunt," he said on Monday. "I think it makes it harder to do my job. But I do my job, and I do it better than anybody has done it for the first two and half years."

Early Tuesday, Trump escalated his fight with Congress by blocking Gordon Sondland, the U.S. European Union ambassador, from testifying behind closed doors about the president's dealings with Ukraine.

Sondland's attorney, Robert Luskin, said his client was "profoundly disappointed" that he wouldn't be able to testify. And Schiff said Sondland's no-show was "yet additional strong evidence" of obstruction of Congress by Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo that will only strengthen a possible impeachment case.

The House followed up Tuesday afternoon with subpoenas for Sondland's testimony and records.

Trump is also bulking up his legal team.

Former Republican Rep. Trey Gowdy is being brought on as outside counsel, according to an administration official. Gowdy, who did not seek reelection last year, led a congressional investigation of former presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and the terrorist attacks in Benghazi, Libya.

The whistleblower's complaint and text messages released by another envoy portray U.S. Ambassador Sondland as a potentially important witness in allegations that the Republican president sought to dig up dirt on Democratic rival Joe Biden in Ukraine and other countries in the name of foreign policy.

Pelosi said thwarting the witness testimony on Tuesday was an "abuse of power" in itself by the president.

The White House letter to Pelosi, Schiff and other House committee chairmen, though asserting a legal argument that Trump and other officials cannot cooperate, would not be likely to win respect in court, said Stephen Vladeck, a law professor at the University of Texas.

"This letter reads to me much more like a press release prepared by the press secretary than an analysis by the White House counsel," he said.

The White House is claiming that Trump's constitutional rights to cross-examine witnesses and review all evidence in impeachment proceedings extend even to House investigations, not just a potential Senate trial. It also is calling on Democrats to grant Republicans in the House subpoena power to seek evidence in the president's defense.

Elsewhere in Washington, a federal judge heard arguments Tuesday in a separate case on whether the House has actually undertaken a formal impeachment inquiry despite not having taken a vote and whether the inquiry can be characterized, under the law, as a "judicial proceeding."

That distinction matters because while grand jury testimony is ordinarily secret, one exception authorizes a judge to disclose it in connection with a judicial proceeding. House Democrats are seeking grand jury testimony from special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation as they conduct their impeachment inquiry.

"The House under the Constitution sets its own rules, and the House has sole power over impeachment," Douglas Letter, a lawyer for the House Judiciary Committee, told the court.

Associated Press writers Eric Tucker and Michael Balsamo contributed to this report.

Follow Miller on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/zekejmilller> and Colvin at <https://twitter.com/colvinj>

2 suspects in custody, 1 sought in cop trial witness slaying

By JAKE BLEIBERG and JAMIE STENGLE Associated Press

DALLAS (AP) — Three Louisiana men are suspected in the killing of a witness who testified at the murder trial of a former Dallas police officer, authorities said Tuesday, cautioning that the killing had nothing at all to do with that trial or case.

One of the suspects, Michael Mitchell, 32, was arrested by federal deputy marshals Tuesday night in Marksville, Louisiana, the Dallas Police Department said in a statement. Mitchell's nephew, 20-year-old Jacquarious Mitchell, was in critical condition in a Dallas hospital with a gunshot wound. The third suspect, Thaddeous Green, 22, was still at large.

Investigators believe the three men were in Dallas to buy drugs from Joshua Brown, Assistant Chief Avery Moore said at a news conference earlier Tuesday. Moore said Jacquarious Mitchell told police that Brown shot him in the chest after Green and Brown began fighting during the drug deal, and that Green then shot Brown twice.

Green left with Brown's backpack and gun, police said. Authorities confiscated 12 pounds (5.4 kilograms) of marijuana, 149 grams of THC cartridges and more than \$4,000 in cash during a search of Brown's home.

It is unclear how the three men came into contact with Brown or why they would have driven more than 300 miles (483 kilometers) from central Louisiana to purchase marijuana in Texas.

The police announcement comes after rampant speculation regarding Brown's death, which happened two days after a jury sentenced the white former police officer to 10 years in prison for killing her black upstairs neighbor in a case that sparked fierce debate over race, politics and policing.

Amber Guyger fatally shot Botham Jean in September 2018 in his fourth-floor apartment and testified that she mistook it for her own unit one floor below. She was arrested on a manslaughter charge three days after the killing, prompting criticism that the original charge was too lenient, but a grand jury later decided on the more serious charge of murder.

Brown, who was black, was one of several neighbors who were called by prosecutors to testify at the trial. The conspiracy theories surrounding his death underscored the distrust that some Dallas residents have for their police department.

"I have no reason to believe that their conclusions so far in the investigation are unreliable, but I believe ... some members of the community will have a difficult time accepting it because of their association ... with the Amber Guyger trial," said Lee Merritt, attorney for the families of Brown and Jean.

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund Inc. previously requested an independent investigation into Brown's death, calling it "deeply alarming and highly suspicious" in a news release. And Merritt urged the department to hand off the investigation into Brown's death to another law enforcement agency as a way to bolster trust.

But Moore, the assistant police chief, said Tuesday that it was reckless for people to speculate as to the circumstances surrounding Brown's death, adding that it undermined the public's faith in the department.

"As you know, there's been speculation and rumors that have been shared by community leaders claiming that Mr. Brown's death was related to the Amber Guyger trial and somehow the Dallas Police Department was responsible," Moore said. "I assure you that is simply not true and I encourage those leaders to be mindful of their actions moving forward because their words have jeopardized the integrity of the city of Dallas as well as the Dallas Police Department."

The tensions between Dallas police and community activists erupted in shouting and shoving at the first meeting of a new Community Police Oversight Committee. The disturbance happened when the committee adjourned without taking public comment. Police Chief U. Renee Hall intervened and opened the floor to comment, much of it critical of the department and mistrustful of the committee's intentions.

Brown, who lived on the same floor as Jean, testified that on the night Jean was killed, he heard what sounded like "two people meeting by surprise" and then two gunshots. He said he had met Jean, a 26-year-old accountant from the Caribbean island nation of St. Lucia, for the first time earlier that day.

Merritt previously said Brown had had reservations about testifying in such a high-profile trial because

he had been wounded in a shooting outside of a Dallas strip club last year. Police Major Max Geron said Tuesday that investigators have no evidence linking that shooting to Brown's death.

Since the shooting, elected leaders have asked the public to refrain from speculating about the circumstances of Brown's death. Mayor Eric Johnson on Tuesday thanked "everyone who demonstrated patience and responsibly reserved their judgment while" police investigated.

The Rev. Michael Waters, pastor of Joy Tabernacle African Methodist Episcopal Church in Dallas, who has pushed for police reform in the city, said the speculation around Brown's death is driven by "generations" of mistrust for the police that's grown out of wrongful convictions and abuse.

"There is cause for the community to be skeptical," Waters said. "There is a lack of credibility that the Dallas Police Department currently has and, frankly, it's not just among brown and black communities."

California faces historic power outage due to fire danger

By **OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ** and **JANIE HAR** Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Millions of people were poised to lose electricity throughout northern and central California after Pacific Gas & Electric Co. announced Tuesday it would shut off power in the largest preventive outage in state history to try to avert wildfires caused by faulty lines.

PG&E said it would begin turning off power to 800,000 customers in 34 counties starting after midnight Wednesday amid forecasts of windy, dry weather that create extreme fire danger. To the south, Southern California Edison also said Tuesday that more than 106,000 of its customers in parts of eight counties could face power cuts.

Outages are planned in more than half of California's 58 counties, although not everyone in those counties will have their power cut.

The news came as residents in the region's wine country north of San Francisco marked the two-year anniversary of deadly wildfires that killed 44 and destroyed thousands of homes. San Francisco is the only county in the nine-county Bay Area where power will not be affected.

The utility had warned of the possibility of a widespread shut-off Monday, prompting residents to flock to stores for supplies as they prepared for dying cellphone batteries, automatic garages that won't work and lukewarm refrigerators.

Flashlights, batteries and propane tanks for barbecues were in high demand as people prepared for an outage that PG&E said may last "several days."

"We sold out of lanterns this morning. The shelf is completely empty," said Howard Gibbs, the manager at Ace Hardware in the town of Lafayette, 20 miles (32 kilometers) east of San Francisco. "We've got just a few flashlights left, and we're down to our last couple propane tanks, too."

Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf asked residents Tuesday not to clog 911 lines with non-emergencies and urged people to be prepared. The city canceled all police officers' days off in preparation for the outages.

"We all know the devastation that fires can cause," she said.

In 1991, a grass fire torched the Oakland Hills, killing 25 people and destroying more than 3,000 homes.

PG&E said it was informing customers by text and email about where and when the power would be cut. But its website, where it directed people to check whether their addresses would be affected, was not working most of the day Tuesday after being overloaded with visitors.

Gov. Gavin Newsom said PG&E had no choice given that it would have faced liability for fire damage but he said customers are right to feel outraged. The utility needs to upgrade and fix its equipment so massive outages aren't the norm going forward, he said.

"No one is satisfied with this, no one is happy with this," he said.

The outage will also affect portions of the agricultural Central Valley, the state's northern and central coasts and the Sierra Nevada foothills where a November wildfire blamed on PG&E transmission lines killed 85 people and devastated the town of Paradise.

Jennifer Siemens, who lost her home in Paradise, rents a house in the nearby town of Oroville and said she was bracing for a third blackout in a month.

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Siemens had her car gassed up, had stocked up on bottled water and flashlights and made sure all the family's electronic devices were fully charged.

"What's wrong with the power lines that they have to do this so much?" asked Siemens. "We don't want any more fires, obviously, but I feel like they are going a little overboard."

Winds can knock down live wires and power poles or drive trees and other vegetation into contact with them — and some of California's most destructive blazes in recent years were started by PG&E power lines.

But the planned outages will not be limited to fire-prone areas because the utilities must turn off entire distribution and transmission lines to much wider areas to minimize the risk of wildfires.

San Francisco-based Pacific Gas & Electric sought bankruptcy protection in January, saying it could not afford an estimated \$30 billion in potential damages from lawsuits stemming from recent wildfire. As part of ongoing bankruptcy litigation, last month the company agreed to pay \$11 billion to a group of insurance companies representing claimants from deadly Northern California wildfires in 2017 and 2018.

In Southern California, the largest numbers of potentially affected customers were in Los Angeles County and to the east in San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

Public agencies throughout the region were urging people to prepare by buying water and non-perishable food, getting a full tank of gas, having cash at hand and parking vehicles outside garages or making sure they know how to manually open their garage doors.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention said it increased staffing in preparation for extreme fire weather and what was expected to be the strongest wind event so far this fire season.

"With some of the most destructive and deadliest fires occurring October through December, we need Californians to not be complacent," said Cal Fire Chief Thom Porter in a news release. "Residents need to be ready to evacuate at a moment's notice in the event of a wildfire."

At the Dollar General store in Paradise, people were buying candles, gas cans, ice, flashlights, batteries and canned food and the store ran out of ice chests Tuesday morning, said manager Ben Humphries.

Humphries, who moved to Oroville with his family after losing his home in Paradise, said his family lost power two times already in the last month and he was making sure they had enough fuel for their generator and plenty of ice in coolers.

But he said there was a sense of irony to PG&E's aggressive action in the area now, after the company opted not to turn off the power ahead of the Nov. 8 fire that wiped out Paradise.

"I understand their concerns but in my opinion it's too little too late, we already had our town burned to the ground," Humphries said.

White House vows total halt to impeachment probe cooperation

By ZEKE MILLER and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House declared Tuesday it will halt any and all cooperation with what it termed the "illegitimate" impeachment probe by House Democrats, sharpening the constitutional clash between President Donald Trump and Congress.

Trump attorneys sent a lengthy letter to House leaders bluntly stating White House refusal to participate in the inquiry that was given a boost by last week's release of a whistleblower's complaint that the president sought political favors from Ukraine.

"Given that your inquiry lacks any legitimate constitutional foundation, any pretense of fairness, or even the most elementary due process protections, the Executive Branch cannot be expected to participate in it," White House Counsel Pat Cipollone wrote.

That means no additional witnesses under administration purview will be permitted to appear in front of Congress or comply with document requests, a senior official said.

The White House is objecting that the House has not voted to begin an impeachment investigation into Trump. It also claims that Trump's due process rights are being violated.

House intelligence committee Chairman Adam Schiff tweeted in response that Trump's refusal to cooperate with the inquiry signals an attitude that "the president is above the law."

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"The Constitution says otherwise," he asserted.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has insisted the House is well within its rules to conduct oversight of the executive branch under the Constitution regardless of a formal impeachment inquiry vote.

"Mr. President, you are not above the law," Pelosi said in a statement Tuesday night. "You will be held accountable."

The Constitution states the House has the sole power of impeachment, and that the Senate has the sole power to conduct impeachment trials. It specifies that a president can be removed from office for "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors," if supported by a two-thirds Senate vote. But it offers little guidance beyond that on proceedings.

The White House letter marks the beginning of a new all-out strategy to counter the impeachment threat to Trump. Aides have been honing their approach after two weeks of what allies have described as a listless and unfocused response to the probe.

The president himself is sticking with the same Trump-as-victim rhetoric he has used for more than a year.

"People understand that it's a fraud. It's a scam. It's a witch hunt," he said on Monday. "I think it makes it harder to do my job. But I do my job, and I do it better than anybody has done it for the first two and half years."

Early Tuesday, Trump escalated his fight with Congress by blocking Gordon Sondland, the U.S. European Union ambassador, from testifying behind closed doors about the president's dealings with Ukraine.

Sondland's attorney, Robert Luskin, said his client was "profoundly disappointed" that he wouldn't be able to testify. And Schiff said Sondland's no-show was "yet additional strong evidence" of obstruction of Congress by Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo that will only strengthen a possible impeachment case.

The House followed up Tuesday afternoon with subpoenas for Sondland's testimony and records.

Trump is also bulking up his legal team.

Former Republican Rep. Trey Gowdy is being brought on as outside counsel, according to an administration official. Gowdy, who did not seek reelection last year, led a congressional investigation of former presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and the terrorist attacks in Benghazi, Libya.

The whistleblower's complaint and text messages released by another envoy portray U.S. Ambassador Sondland as a potentially important witness in allegations that the Republican president sought to dig up dirt on Democratic rival Joe Biden in Ukraine and other countries in the name of foreign policy.

Pelosi said thwarting the witness testimony on Tuesday was an "abuse of power" in itself by the president.

The White House letter to Pelosi, Schiff and other House committee chairmen, though asserting a legal argument that Trump and other officials cannot cooperate, would not be likely to win respect in court, said Stephen Vladeck, a law professor at the University of Texas.

"This letter reads to me much more like a press release prepared by the press secretary than an analysis by the White House counsel," he said.

The White House is claiming that Trump's constitutional rights to cross-examine witnesses and review all evidence in impeachment proceedings extend even to House investigations, not just a potential Senate trial. It also is calling on Democrats to grant Republicans in the House subpoena power to seek evidence in the president's defense.

Elsewhere in Washington, a federal judge heard arguments Tuesday in a separate case on whether the House has actually undertaken a formal impeachment inquiry despite not having taken a vote and whether the inquiry can be characterized, under the law, as a "judicial proceeding."

That distinction matters because while grand jury testimony is ordinarily secret, one exception authorizes a judge to disclose it in connection with a judicial proceeding. House Democrats are seeking grand jury testimony from special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation as they conduct their impeachment inquiry.

"The House under the Constitution sets its own rules, and the House has sole power over impeachment," Douglas Letter, a lawyer for the House Judiciary Committee, told the court.

AP writers Eric Tucker and Michael Balsamo contributed.

Follow Miller on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/zekejmilller> and Colvin at <https://twitter.com/colvinj>

Johnson & Johnson, Risperdal maker hit with \$8B verdict

Associated Press undefined

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — A Philadelphia jury on Tuesday awarded \$8 billion in punitive damages against Johnson & Johnson and one of its subsidiaries over a drug the companies made that the plaintiff's attorneys say is linked to the abnormal growth of female breast tissue in boys.

Johnson and Johnson immediately denounced the award after the jury's decision in the Court of Common Pleas, saying it's "excessive and unfounded" and vowing immediate action to overturn it.

The antipsychotic drug Risperdal is at the center of the lawsuit, with the plaintiff's attorneys arguing it's linked to abnormal growth of female breast tissue in boys, an incurable condition known as gynecomastia.

Johnson & Johnson used an organized scheme to make billions of dollars while illegally marketing and promoting the drug, attorneys Tom Kline and Jason Itkin said in a statement.

Kline and Itkin said that Johnson & Johnson was "a corporation that valued profits over safety and profits over patients." Thousands of lawsuits have been filed over the drug, but the attorneys said this was the first in which a jury decided whether to award punitive damages and came up with an amount.

Johnson & Johnson said in a statement on its website it was confident that the award would be overturned, calling it "grossly disproportionate" with the initial compensatory damage award and "a clear violation of due process."

Johnson & Johnson said the court's exclusion of key evidence left it unable to present a meaningful defense, including what they said was a drug label that "clearly and appropriately outlined the risks associated with the medicine" or Risperdal's benefits for patients with serious mental illness. They also said the plaintiff's attorneys failed to present any evidence of actual harm.

"This decision is inconsistent with multiple determinations outside of Philadelphia regarding the adequacy of the Risperdal labeling, the medicine's efficacy, and findings in support of the company," Johnson & Johnson said. "We will be immediately moving to set aside this excessive and unfounded verdict."

Trump shifts tone on Turkey in effort to halt Syria invasion

By ROBERT BURNS, MATTHEW LEE and DEB RIECHMANN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a span of 24 hours, President Donald Trump moved from threatening to obliterate Turkey's economy if it invades Syria to inviting its president to visit the White House.

But Trump did not back away Tuesday from a plan to withdraw American troops from Syria as he tried to persuade Turkey not to invade the country and attack the U.S.-allied Kurds — a needle-threading strategy that has angered Republican and Democratic lawmakers and confused U.S. allies.

"This is really dangerous," House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said.

Trump tweeted that while U.S. forces "may be" leaving Syria, the U.S. has not abandoned the Kurds, who stand to be destroyed if Turkey follows through with its planned invasion. The Kurds lead a group of Syria fighters who have been steadfast and effective American allies in combating the Islamic State in Syria. Turkey, however, sees the Kurds as terrorists and a border threat.

Joseph Votel, a retired Army general who headed Central Command's military operations in Syria until last spring, wrote on The Atlantic website Tuesday that mutual trust was a key ingredient in the U.S. partnership with the Kurds.

"The sudden policy change this week breaks that trust at the most crucial juncture and leaves our partners with very limited options," Votel wrote.

Jonathan Schanzer, a Syria scholar at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, said even a limited

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Turkish incursion into northern Syria could quickly escalate.

"The president is doubling down on this — seems to be reversing course," Schanzer said. "He's trying to convey to the American people that he's made the right decision. Of course, (Turkish President Recep Tayyip) Erdogan is going to see this as a green light."

The confusion began Sunday when the White House issued a late-night statement saying U.S. forces in northeastern Syria would step aside for what it called an imminent Turkish invasion. The statement made no mention of U.S. efforts to forestall the invasion, leading many to conclude that Trump was, in effect, turning a blind eye to a slaughter of Kurds.

On Monday, amid criticism from some of his staunchest Republican supporters, including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, Trump suggested he was washing his hands of the Syria conflict, saying in a tweet that "it is time now for others in the region ... to protect their own territory." But he also threatened to "totally destroy and obliterate the Economy of Turkey" if its military action in Syria went too far.

Administration officials argue that Trump is employing strategy in response to Erdogan's insistence during a phone call Sunday with Trump that he was moving ahead with a military incursion into Syria. Erdogan seemed to have rejected a joint U.S.-Turkish plan, already being carried out, to create a buffer zone on the Syrian side of the border to address Turkey's security concerns. The execution of that plan included dismantling some Kurdish defensive positions on the Syrian side of the border.

Without initially saying his administration was still trying to talk Erdogan out of invading, Trump ordered the 50 to 100 U.S. troops inside that zone to pull back for safety's sake. He then emphasized his desire to withdraw from Syria entirely, although no such broader pullout has begun.

U.S. military leaders have recommended keeping U.S. troops in Syria to ensure a long-term defeat of IS. Pentagon officials said Tuesday that Defense Secretary Mark Esper and the new Joint Chiefs chairman, Gen. Mark Milley, participated in Trump's phone call with Erdogan on Sunday, contrary to some reports that Pentagon leaders had been blindsided by the decision to pull troops back. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal matters.

According to U.S. officials, Turkish troops on Tuesday were massed along the border in apparent preparation for an incursion across the border. But they said that so far there have been no signs of an actual assault beginning.

The officials, who were not authorized to discuss details of military intelligence, said there are between 5,000 and 10,000 Turkish troops along the border apparently ready to go. The officials said they expect the Turks to begin with airstrikes, followed by barrages from heavy artillery along the border and the movement of ground troops into Syria.

Kurdish forces have some air defenses, such as shoulder-launched surface-to-air missiles, but would be outgunned by the Turks.

Trump has boasted about U.S. success in defeating the so-called Islamic State, but his critics now accuse him of abandoning a U.S. ally, setting the Kurds up to be killed. They also worry that if the Kurds end up fighting Turkish forces, they won't be able to guard detention centers in Syria that house thousands of captured IS fighters.

Trump supporters say the president's threat of sanctions could make Erdogan second-guess his planned incursion or perhaps limit it so as not to be slapped with financial penalties that would hurt the Turkish economy. Trump on Monday said he was fulfilling a campaign promise to withdraw from "endless war" in the Middle East, and he warned Turkey that he would ruin its economy if any American personnel are harmed.

Striking a notably friendlier tone, Trump on Tuesday said Erdogan will visit the White House on Nov. 13. He defended Ankara as a big U.S. trading partner, saying it supplies steel for F-35 fighter jets. In fact, the Trump administration removed Turkey from the F-35 program last summer because the Turks refused to cancel the purchase of a Russian air defense system that is incompatible with NATO forces. As part of that process, the U.S. will stop using any Turkish supplies and parts by March 2020.

Trump said Turkey understands that "any unforced or unnecessary fighting by Turkey will be devastating to their economy and to their very fragile currency."

Turkey's vice president said his country won't bow to threats in an apparent response to Trump's warning to Ankara about the scope of its planned military incursion into Syria.

Fuat Oktay said in a speech Tuesday that Turkey is intent on combatting Kurdish fighters across its border in Syria and on creating a zone that would allow Turkey to resettle Syrian refugees there.

"Where Turkey's security is concerned, we determine our own path, but we set our own limits," Oktay said.

Associated Press writer Lolita C. Baldor contributed to this report.

Asian stocks slip as tensions flare before US-China talks

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

Shares slipped in Asia on Wednesday as tensions between the U.S. and China flared ahead of talks aimed at resolving the trade war between the world's two biggest economies.

An overnight sell-off on Wall Street added to the gloom. Technology companies, banks and health care stocks bore the brunt of the selling after the U.S. blacklisted a group of Chinese companies, claiming that their technology plays a role in the repression of China's Muslim minority groups.

Japan's Nikkei 225 index lost 0.7% to 21,448.21 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong dropped 0.7% to 25,716.77. The Shanghai Composite index edged 0.1% lower to 2,909.53. The Sensex in India picked up 0.1% to 37,567.37 while shares in Taiwan and Southeast Asia declined. South Korean and Malaysian markets were closed for holidays.

China demanded Washington lift the sanctions on Chinese tech companies and warned Wednesday it will "resolutely safeguard" the country's interests.

The Ministry of Commerce criticized the curbs imposed on sales of U.S. technology to a group of Chinese companies as interference in the country's affairs.

"The US tactics are undoubtedly a high risk, seeking to pressure the Chinese trade delegation before the main event really gets underway," Jeffrey Halley of Oanda said in a commentary.

U.S. stocks closed broadly lower, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average giving up more than 300 points in the last hour of regular trading.

Envoys from the U.S. and China are scheduled to meet in Washington on Thursday for another round of trade talks. The bouts of added conflict are denting hopes that Washington and Beijing will find a resolution to their long-running and painful tariffs war.

"The rhetoric on both sides, whether it's the U.S. putting certain Chinese technology companies on a blacklist, or China vowing to retaliate with a 'stay tuned', it just keeps upping the temperature in the room and creating greater uncertainty for businesses, for consumers and for investors," said Sameer Samana, senior global market strategist at Wells Fargo Investment Institute.

The S&P 500 index lost 1.6% to 2,893.06. The Dow slid 1.2% to 26,164.04 and the Nasdaq, which is heavily weighted with technology companies, dropped 1.7%, to 7,823.78.

Smaller company stocks were also big decliners, sending the Russell 2000 index down 1.7%, to 1,472.60.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury fell to 1.53% from 1.55% late Monday, a signal that investors are favoring lower-risk investments amid the trade war turmoil. Utilities and real estate companies, both safe-play sectors, held up better than the rest of the market, though they also ended the day in the red.

The latest escalation in U.S.-China tensions adds yet another worry for investors already anxious over a bevy of political and economic concerns. Last week, the S&P 500 posted its first back-to-back losses of 1% this year as surprisingly weak numbers in surveys of manufacturing and service industries showed the U.S.-China trade war is threatening U.S. economic growth.

Benchmark crude oil dropped 18 cents to \$52.45 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It fell 12 cents to settle at \$52.63 a barrel on Wednesday. Brent crude oil, the international standard, slid 21 cents to \$58.03 a barrel.

While the price of U.S. crude is up just under 9% so far this year, it remains off by more than 27% from a year ago. That slide in prices over the past 12 months has weighed on energy stocks this year.

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The dollar rose to 107.17 Japanese yen from 107.07 yen on Tuesday. The euro weakened to \$1.0964 from \$1.0956.

AP Business Writers Damian J. Troise and Alex Veiga contributed.

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Oct. 9, the 282nd day of 2019. There are 83 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 9, 1967, Marxist revolutionary guerrilla leader Che Guevara, 39, was summarily executed by the Bolivian army a day after his capture.

On this date:

In 1776, a group of Spanish missionaries settled in present-day San Francisco.

In 1910, a coal dust explosion at the Starkville Mine in Colorado left 56 miners dead.

In 1914, the Belgian city of Antwerp fell to German forces during World War I.

In 1930, Laura Ingalls became the first woman to fly across the United States as she completed a nine-stop journey from Roosevelt Field, N.Y., to Glendale, Calif.

In 1936, the first generator at Boulder (later Hoover) Dam began transmitting electricity to Los Angeles.

In 1940, rock-and-roll legend John Lennon was born in Liverpool, England. (On this date in 1975, his son, Sean, was born in New York.)

In 1958, Pope Pius XII died at age 82, ending a 19-year papacy. (He was succeeded by Pope John XXIII.)

In 1974, businessman Oskar Schindler, credited with saving about 1,200 Jews during the Holocaust, died in Frankfurt, West Germany (at his request, he was buried in Jerusalem).

In 1985, the hijackers of the Achille Lauro (ah-KEE'-leh LOW'-roh) cruise liner surrendered two days after seizing the vessel in the Mediterranean. (Passenger Leon Klinghoffer was killed by the hijackers during the standoff.)

In 2001, in the first daylight raids since the start of U.S.-led attacks on Afghanistan, jets bombed the Taliban stronghold of Kandahar. Letters postmarked in Trenton, N.J., were sent to Sens. Tom Daschle and Patrick Leahy; the letters later tested positive for anthrax.

In 2006, North Korea faced a barrage of condemnation and calls for retaliation after it announced that it had set off a small atomic weapon underground; President Bush said, "The international community will respond." Google Inc. announced it was snapping up YouTube Inc. for \$1.65 billion in a stock deal.

In 2012, former Penn State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky was sentenced to 30 to 60 years in prison following his conviction on 45 counts of sexual abuse of boys.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama won the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize for what the Norwegian Nobel Committee called "his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples."

Five years ago: Six U.S. military planes arrived in the Ebola hot zone with more Marines as West African leaders pleaded for the world's help in dealing with what Sierra Leone President Ernest Bai Koroma described as "a tragedy unforeseen in modern times." French novelist Patrick Modiano was named the recipient of the Nobel Prize in literature. Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Carolyn Kizer, 89, died in Sonoma, California.

One year ago: President Donald Trump and U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley announced that Haley would be leaving the administration at the end of the year; no reason was given for her departure. Brett Kavanaugh took the bench for the first time as a Supreme Court justice in a jovial atmosphere that was at odds with the rancor that surrounded his confirmation. After starting the week with a rare political post on social media. Taylor Swift captured four honors at the American Music Awards to become the most decorated woman in the show's history. Police at the Orlando, Florida airport removed a passenger who refused to get off a flight to Cleveland after she was found carrying a squirrel she had described as an

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emotional support animal.

Today's Birthdays: Retired MLB All-Star Joe Pepitone is 79. Former Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., is 78. C-SPAN founder Brian Lamb is 78. Rhythm-and-blues singer Nona Hendryx is 75. Singer Jackson Browne is 71. Nobel Peace laureate Jody Williams is 69. Actor Gary Frank is 69. Actor Richard Chaves is 68. Actor Robert Wuhl is 68. Actress-TV personality Sharon Osbourne is 67. Actor Tony Shalhoub is 66. Actor Scott Bakula is 65. Musician James Fearnley (The Pogues) is 65. Actor John O'Hurley is 65. Writer-producer-director-actor Linwood Boomer is 64. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer Mike Singletary is 61. Actor Michael Pare is 61. Jazz musician Kenny Garrett is 59. Rock singer-musician Kurt Neumann (The BoDeans) is 58. Country singer Gary Bennett is 55. Movie director Guillermo del Toro is 55. Former British Prime Minister David Cameron is 53. Singer P.J. Harvey is 50. Movie director Steve McQueen (Film: "12 Years a Slave") is 50. World Golf Hall of Famer Annika Sorenstam is 49. Actress Cocoa Brown is 47. Country singer Tommy Shane Steiner is 46. Actor Steve Burns is 46. Rock singer Sean Lennon is 44. Actor Randy Spelling is 41. Christian hip-hop artist Lecrae is 40. Actor Brandon Routh is 40. Actor Zachery Ty Bryan is 38. Actress Spencer Grammer is 36. Comedian Melissa Villasenor (TV: "Saturday Night Live") is 32. Actor Tyler James Williams is 27. Country singer Scotty McCreery (TV: "American Idol") is 26. Actor Jharrel Jerome is 22.

Thought for Today: "I think everyone should go to college and get a degree and then spend six months as a bartender and six months as a cabdriver. Then they would really be educated." — Al McGuire, American Basketball Hall of Fame coach (1928-2001).

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