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Chicken Soup
for the Soul

“ASK FOR
WHAT YOU
WANT AND
BE PREPARED
FOR IT.”

-MAYA ANGELOU

It's Girls' Basketball Action on GDILIVE.COM



**Sisseton
Redmen**



VS

Groton Area Tigers

Thursday, Jan. 16, 2020
at the Groton Area Arena

Broadcast Sponsors

**Allied Climate Professionals ~ Blocker Construction
Groton Dairy Queen ~ Jark Real Estate ~ John Sieh Agency
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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.

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Noem Appoints Spring to Game, Fish and Parks Commission

PIERRE, S.D. – Governor Kristi Noem announced today that she has appointed Chuck Spring of Union Center to the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission.

Spring is a lifetime rancher from Union Center and has previously served on the West River Deer Task Force and Depredation Committee with GFP. He runs a cow/calf operation with his three sons, who are the fourth generation on the ranch after his family homesteaded in the area in the late 1800s.

"I am an avid hunter and have always been passionate about the outdoors," said Spring. "I want to preserve and improve that legacy for my kids and grandkids. I hope my ideas and service to the Game, Fish and Parks Commission can make things better for future generations."

Spring and his wife Claireen have been married for 45 years. In addition to the three sons on the ranch, the Springs have a daughter who lives in Spearfish.

Spring replaces Scott Phillips on the commission and will attend his first commission meeting on January 16 in Pierre. His term will expire in 2024.

The GFP Commission serves as the advocate and liaison between the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks and its stakeholders – the people of South Dakota. The Commission consists of eight members, appointed by the Governor for four year terms. For more information on the Commission and the 2019 meeting schedule, please visit gfp.sd.gov/commission.

Johnson Applauds Phase One China Trade Deal

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Representative Dusty Johnson (R-S.D.) released the following statement after the president signed the United States-China Phase One trade agreement today:

"The Phase One U.S.-China trade agreement is a step in the right direction," said Johnson. "Producers want certainty and China needs to play fair - this agreement hits the mark on both fronts. This China agreement paired with the USMCA are the wins our producers need."

Under the agreement, China has committed to purchasing \$200 billion of American goods and services over the next two years, including a commitment to purchase \$40 billion per year in agriculture products. This agreement contains structural provisions to remove trade barriers for U.S. beef, pork, and poultry that have limited access to the Chinese market.

Rounds Attends Signing of U.S.-China "Phase One" Trade Deal at the White House

WASHINGTON—U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds (R-S.D.) today attended the signing of "phase one" of a trade agreement between the United States and China at the White House.

"The 'phase one' deal signed today is great news for South Dakota farmers, ranchers and manufacturers," said Rounds. "Under this agreement, China has agreed to purchase at least \$40 billion of our agricultural products. This will provide some much-needed relief to our farmers and ranchers who have been at the tip of the spear throughout the trade negotiations by reestablishing markets for them to sell their products. We still have more to do to make sure China lives up to its obligations, and phase one is the first step in that process. I thank President Trump for his efforts to make sure our farmers, ranchers and manufacturers are getting a fair deal."

South Dakota Democratic Party Responds to the State of the State

PIERRE, S.D. (January 15th, 2020) – The South Dakota Democratic Party released the following statement in response to the State of the State Address by Governor Kristi Noem:

Similar to 2019, Gov. Noem again reviewed many of the same themes as last year – like strengthening our state for our young people and grandchildren, workforce development, and increasing access to affordable housing – things Democrats have been advocating for many years. Overall there wasn't a lot of detail and no real surprises.

"It was good to hear that there may be more dollars in the budget than expected and that the intent is to apply it to annual funding increases for Kindergarten through 12th grade education, Medicaid providers and state employees. However, this shouldn't be treated as secondary. We need to respect the statute that dictates this increase. It's a top priority for our Democratic members." – Rep. Jamie Smith, Minority Leader

The address made no mention of the nursing home crisis, said little about healthcare issues, and provided no detail for how we'll combat the lack of mental health treatment. These are issues members of the Democratic Party are committed to solving.

"This Session, Democrats will put forth legislation to try to address these issues, along with addressing pre-k education gaps and revisiting the hemp issue. I know that Senate Minority Leader Heinert will be bringing some bills that can positively impact the Native American Community. We look forward to taking these important issues up this session." – Rep. Jamie Smith

For more information, please contact South Dakota Democratic Party Vice Chair Nikki Gronli via email nikki@sddp.org or call (605) 376-3337

Dinger, Meier selected for Middle School All State Band

Congratulations to Getchen Dinger (Flute) and Lydia Meier (Trumpet) for being selected for the 2020 South Dakota Middle School All-State Band!

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Upcoming Events

Thursday, January 16, 2020

6:30 p.m.: Girls' Basketball hosts Sisseton. JV game at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity game.

Friday, January 17, 2020

Silver Bowl Debate at Sioux Falls

No School - Faculty Inservice

5 p.m.: Boys' basketball at Sisseton. C game at 5 p.m. followed by JV and then Varsity

Saturday, January 18, 2020

Silver Bowl Debate in Sioux Falls

10:00am: Basketball: Boys 7th/8th Jamboree @ Groton Area High School

10:00am: Wrestling: Varsity Tournament at Potter County (Gettysburg)

Sunday, January 19, 2020

2:00pm- 6:00pm: Open Gym at GHS Arena

2:00-4:00 PM Grades JK-8 (Students must be accompanied by an adult) 4:00-6:00 PM Grades 6-12

Monday, January 20, 2020

6:30pm: Girls Basketball hosts Langford Area with JV at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity game.

Tuesday, January 21, 2020

4 p.m.: Basketball Double Header with Ipswich here. Girls JV at 4 p.m., Boys JV at 5 p.m., Girls Varsity at 6 p.m. followed by boys varsity game.

4:00pm: Wrestling: Boys 7th/8th Tournament vs. Aberdeen Central @ Aberdeen Civic Arena

GUN SHOW: Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Association 18th Annual ABERDEEN Gun Show. Saturday, February 1, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, February 2, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dakota Event Center on LaMont East. Terry Ennen 701-391-2416.



Winter Weather Threats Timeline

Late Thursday Through Saturday – A system moving across the region will bring a complex array of winter weather hazards.
Focus Areas: Northeast South Dakota & Western Minnesota.
Threats: Snow and strong winds.

	6pm Thursday	Midnight Thursday	6am Friday	Noon Friday	6pm Friday	Midnight Friday	6am Saturday	Noon Saturday	6pm Saturday
Ortonville & Wheaton areas			Low Blowing & Drifting Snow		Moderate Snow		Strong Winds		
Sisseton & surrounding area		Localized Ground Blizzard Conditions			Moderate Snow		Strong Winds Blizzard Conditions		
Watertown & surrounding area		Low Blowing & Drifting Snow			Moderate Snow		Strong Winds		
Aberdeen & surrounding area					Light Snow		Strong Winds Blizzard Conditions		
Miller & surrounding area		Low Blowing & Drifting Snow			Light Snow		Strong Winds		
Pierre & Mobridge areas		Snow			Light Snow		Blowing & Drifting		

Visit www.weather.gov/abr for a detailed local forecast






Updated: 1/15/2020 5:56 PM CT

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Here is a timeline of conditions that we can expect with the next system. South winds ahead of the system will cause some issues, mostly low drifting which will make for difficult but not impossible driving conditions. As the system develops, snow will become more widespread. Heaviest snow is expected from the Sisseton hills into western Minnesota, with lesser amounts west of the James valley. Winds will pick up with another arctic blast of air, with gusts over 50mph. There is some uncertainty west of the James how bad conditions will get with the variable snow cover but along and east of the James travel is expected to become nearly impossible Friday night through the better part of Saturday.

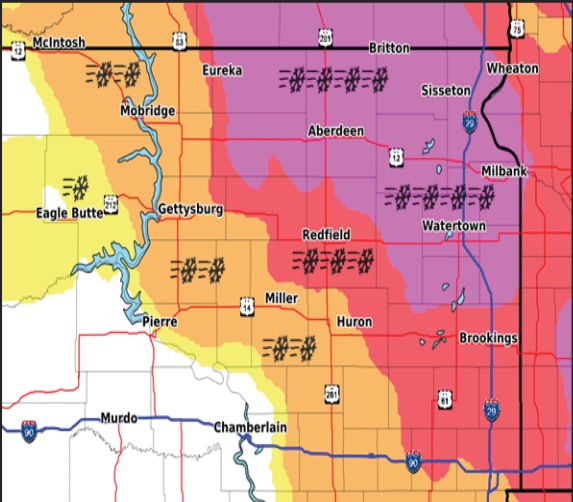
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Wind ...		Winter Storm Watch				
Today	Tonight	Friday	Friday Night	Saturday		
						
Cold	Patchy Blowing Snow and Breezy	Snow Likely and Patchy Blowing Snow	Snow and Blowing Snow	Chance Snow and Blowing Snow then Blowing Snow and Windy		
High: 1 °F	Low: -1 °F↑	High: 28 °F	Low: 1 °F	High: 6 °F		

Blowing Snow Expected

Impact Outlook: Fri Night-Sat, Jan 17-18th



None	No impacts are expected at this time
Minor ☃☃☃	Patchy Blowing Snow with reduced visibilities possible
Moderate ☃☃☃☃	Areas of Blowing Snow with reduced visibilities possible
Significant ☃☃☃☃☃	Widespread Blowing Snow and greatly reduced visibilities possible
Blizzard ☃☃☃☃☃☃	Significant Blowing Snow possible, travel may be impossible

What you should know

Snow will be occurring Friday into early Saturday with 1 to 5 inches from the James Valley and east. This additional snowfall and previous snowfall combined with strong south winds on Friday will bring areas to widespread blowing snow. Even stronger northwest winds Friday Night and Saturday will bring widespread blowing snow with possible blizzard conditions for parts of central and much of northeast South Dakota along with west central Minnesota.

National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD

Updated: 1/16/2020 5:59 AM Central

A strong low pressure system will move across the region Friday and Saturday bringing snowfall along with strong winds. The strong winds are expected to bring areas to widespread blowing snow Friday into Saturday with possible blizzard conditions.

Today in Weather History

January 16, 1967: In Minnesota, a fast moving blizzard brought winds in excess of 75 mph. The snowfall was light to moderate with extensive blowing and drifting snow. Visibility was near zero for an extended period of time. Temperatures fell rapidly during the storm and by the morning of the 18th, many records low were set. Many vehicles went into the ditch. Thousands of motorists and school children found shelter wherever they could as travel came to a standstill. A Wheaton man froze to death. In South Dakota, rain followed by a sudden drop in temperatures of nearly 30 degrees in 2 hours resulted in widespread freezing rain and significant icing on roads and trees. Strong winds of 35 to 45 mph with gusts to 75 mph along with the ice halted most travel. The wind and icing also caused the toppling of a 270 foot radio tower near Aberdeen.

January 16, 1997: An intense Arctic High brought widespread blizzard conditions and dangerous wind chills of 40 to 70 below to central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota. One to 3 inches of snow fell on top of the already deep snowpack of 2 to 5 feet. The blizzard winds brought another round of widespread heavy drifting, blocking area roads and highways. Also, many area schools were closed once again to add to their large number of days missed for the winter season. Fortunately, this blizzard as compared to previous blizzards was short-lived and the people were better prepared.

January 16, 2014: A strong area of surface high pressure building into the region behind an Arctic cold front brought high winds to central and north central South Dakota during the early morning hours of the 16th. Some of the strongest wind gusts include; 69 mph near Whitlocks Bay; 68 mph near Bullhead; 67 mph near Trail City; 66 mph in Foster Bay; 65 mph near Mellette and in Presho; 64 mph near Harrold and in Murdo; and 63 mph in Pierre, Reliance, and Miranda. The strong winds diminished during the late afternoon hours of the 16th. A clipper system passing across the region brought light snowfall and very strong northwest winds gusting in excess of 70 mph at times resulting in blizzard conditions. The highest wind gusts include; 76 mph at the Brown County Landfill; 69 mph in Aberdeen and Cravens Corner; 52 mph near Webster; and 52 mph in Sisseton. Blizzard conditions ended during the late afternoon hours. A no travel advisory was issued in Grant, Codington, Hamlin, and Spink Counties due to poor visibilities. The blizzard led to the cancellation of several area activities and schools and nearly impossible travel conditions.

1990: Heavy snow fell across Prince Williams Sound and the Susitna Valley of southern Alaska. Valdez was buried under 64.9 inches of snow in less than 2 days including a record 47.5 inches in 24 hours. The heavy snow blocked roads, closed schools and sunk 6 vessels in the Valdez harbor under the weight of the heavy snow.

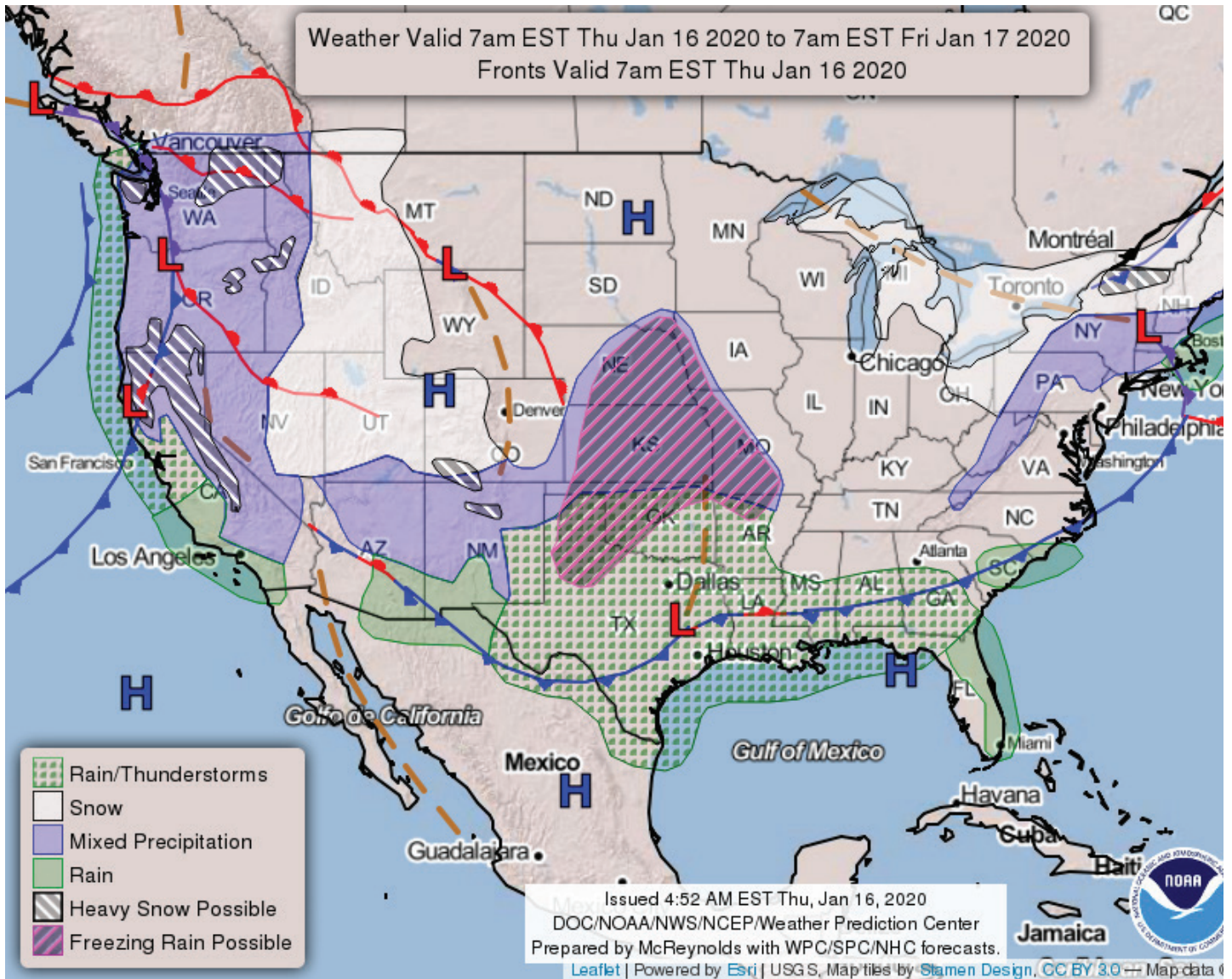
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 3 °F at 12:01 AM
Low Temp: -14 °F at 10:10 PM
Wind: 20 mph at 5:53 AM

Record High: 49° in 1942
Record Low: -30° in 2005
Average High: 22°F
Average Low: 1°F
Average Precip in Jan.: 0.26
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 0.26
Precip Year to Date: 0.00
Sunset Tonight: 5:18 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:09 a.m.



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GRACE THAT IS SUFFICIENT

A pastor was visiting a member of his church who had been hospitalized for many weeks. She was suffering from excruciating pain. After praying with her, he offered her a book and said, "This book brought me much comfort while I was ill a few years ago. You will enjoy it greatly, and it will bring you much peace. It will be most helpful!"

"Thank you," she answered. "I'm well acquainted with its contents."

"Have you read it?" he asked.

"More than that," she replied. "I wrote it."

It is always comforting to be able to talk with someone who has experienced pain or problems that are similar to our own. They have been where we are and know and understand our pain or suffering, sadness or sorrow, fears and doubts, questions and concerns. There is a sense of understanding that brings a closeness or connection, a bond and a blessing.

When we go through difficult times and are comforted by our Heavenly Father, we must realize that "God comforts us that we can comfort others who need comforting." Often the "unwanted gifts" of pain and sorrow come from God as a "special gift" that equips us to understand, care for and help others who "are going through their valley with dark shadows."

Prayer: Help us, Father, to care for others the way You care for us. May we be open and accepting of Your love, mercy, and grace so we can share it with others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: 2 Corinthians 1:3-11 Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer.

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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)
- 04/26/2020 Father/Daughter dance.
- 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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Lotto America

01-11-38-50-51, Star Ball: 9, ASB: 5

(one, eleven, thirty-eight, fifty, fifty-one; Star Ball: nine; ASB: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$7.16 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$103 million

Powerball

39-41-53-55-68, Powerball: 19, Power Play: 2

(thirty-nine, forty-one, fifty-three, fifty-five, sixty-eight; Powerball: nineteen; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$296 million

Shahid, Ward help North Dakota St. beat South Dakota 72-70

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Vinnie Shahid had 21 points and Tyson Ward made a layup with 1.4 seconds to play to help North Dakota State beat South Dakota 72-70 on Wednesday night.

Ward finished with 14 points - 11 in the second half - and five assists. Tyree Eady had a career-high 18 points for North Dakota State (12-6, 3-1 Summit League), which earned its fifth consecutive home victory.

The Coyotes led by as many as 12 points before NDSU used a 25-6 run - including eight points apiece from Eady and Shahid - to take a 41-34 halftime lead.

South Dakota's Stanley Umude made a layup to make it 70-all with 1:09 to play. After Shahid missed a 3-point shot 29 seconds later, Cameron Hunter took a charge to set up Ward's game-winner.

Umude had 23 points and nine rebounds for the Coyotes (11-8, 2-3). Tyler Hagedorn added 21 points. Triston Simpson had 10 points and six assists.

North Dakota State plays North Dakota at home on Saturday. South Dakota takes on South Dakota State at home on Sunday.

For more AP college basketball coverage: <https://apnews.com/Collegebasketball> and http://twitter.com/AP_Top25

Elements of this story were generated by Automated Insights, <http://www.automatedinsights.com/ap>, using data from STATS LLC, <https://www.stats.com>

Wilson scores 22 as South Dakota State beats North Dakota

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Douglas Wilson scored 22 points as South Dakota State romped past North Dakota 87-66 on Wednesday night.

Noah Freidel had 16 points and six rebounds for South Dakota State (14-7, 5-1 Summit League), which won its fifth straight. Matt Mims added 14 points and Alou Dillon had 12 points. The Jackrabbits made 21 of 26 free throws.

Marlon Stewart had 17 points and seven rebounds for the Fighting Hawks (8-11, 2-3). Kienan Walter added 15 points and De'Sean Allen-Eikens had 14 points. North Dakota made 17 of 22 from the free-throw line.

South Dakota State plays at South Dakota on Sunday. North Dakota plays at North Dakota State on Saturday.

For more AP college basketball coverage: <https://apnews.com/Collegebasketball> and http://twitter.com/AP_Top25

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Longest-serving South Dakota chief justice bids farewell

By **STEPHEN GROVES** Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Supreme Court Chief Justice David Gilbertson delivered his final State of the Judiciary address in Pierre on Wednesday, using the speech to push for a justice system that helps people address drug addiction and stay out of prison.

The longest-serving chief justice in state history called drug addiction an “evil” that leads to crimes and requested funding from law enforcement for addiction treatment connected to drug and DUI courts. He will leave the office in January next year due to term-limits.

In preparing for his final address, he looked back to his first as Chief Justice in 2002. “There’s not one thing in that message that I talked about then that’s going to be talked about today,” Gilbertson told the Associated Press.

The difference is addiction, Gilbertson said.

Gilbertson said the number of adults arrested for drug crimes more than doubled from 2008 to 2018, including an “explosion” of female offenders. He said three-fourths of the women in prison at the end of 2018 were convicted of drug-related offenses.

The Legislature will be considering criminal justice reform this session, and Gov. Kristi Noem has requested increased funding for addiction treatment.

Gilbertson used his speech to point to the cost savings of probation over incarceration, saying incarceration is 10 times more expensive. The number of people imprisoned has increased significantly in recent years, and the judge requested funding for seven more court services officers for the probation program.

Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg has argued against the effectiveness of presumptive probation, in which judges are required to grant probation in response to certain nonviolent, lower-level felonies — including drug possession and use — unless there’s a “significant risk” to the public.

This session, Ravnsborg is pushing legislation that would disqualify people from presumptive probation if they don’t cooperate with law enforcement investigations or if they have more than two offenses in a ten-year period.

Gilbertson has served four terms presiding over the state’s highest court and delivered the annual address for 19 years.

He was first appointed as a circuit court judge in 1986 by former Gov. Bill Janklow, presiding over his home community of Sisseton.

Gilbertson joked in his speech that he was the “scum that rose to the top,” referencing an insult he once received from a controversial campaign against the judicial system.

Besides championing addiction treatment and other alternatives to incarceration, Gilbertson also ushered in live-streamed oral arguments for the Supreme Court and digital access to justices’ opinions. He also oversaw the enactment of a requirement for South Dakota attorneys to be tested on Indian law on the state’s bar exam.

For many years, Gilbertson remained a registered Democrat, an outlier in a Capitol usually dominated by Republicans. He said he switched his party affiliation to independent last year after observing a widening political divide at the federal level. He didn’t want to be identified with either political party.

The justices on the state’s Supreme Court will vote to select a new chief justice in the coming year.

Second autopsy granted in Brown County murder case

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota judge has agreed to a defense request for a second autopsy in a murder case, even though the victim's body has already been embalmed.

Jarrett Jones, 48, is in custody on a first-degree murder charge in the Jan. 2 fatal shooting of Jon Schumacher. Brown County court documents say the shooting took place at Jones' business in Bath, about 200 miles (320 kilometers) northwest of Sioux Falls, according to Aberdeen American News.

An autopsy was conducted Jan. 3.

Jones' defense attorney, Marshall Lovrien, requested a second autopsy on Jan. 4, but was informed the body was already at the funeral home.

Lovrien, in a motion, said Jones has the right to an independent evaluation of the body. A magistrate judge approved the motion.

Sioux Falls council passes ordinance denouncing hate, racism

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The Sioux Falls City Council has passed an ordinance denouncing acts of hate and racism after equal rights organizations and others called on the city to do more to respond to racist incidents in the city.

Mayor Paul TenHaken brought what he called an "anti-hate" resolution to the council in order to send a message that Sioux Falls is a welcoming place for all religions, races and sexual orientations.

Councilors took their turns Tuesday night voicing support, according to the Argus Leader. Councilor Janet Brekke said the resolution is a positive step toward driving hate out of the community, but noted that it is just a starting point.

"If we pass this and do nothing more, we have said something and done nothing," Brekke said. "But it is a start and dialogue is where you start and you have to start somewhere."

In September, South Dakota Voices for Peace organized a march in the city after a black teen was subjected to racial slurs in downtown Sioux Falls. Video of what happened was posted on social media and viewed widely.

The vote capped a long meeting filled with discussion about racism as the council earlier in the evening affirmed the city's willingness to accept refugees into the community.

The Sioux Falls Human Relations Commission, which handles complaints about discrimination filed with City Hall, endorsed the resolution. It includes language encouraging anyone who feels like they're the victim of discrimination or a hate crime to contact the city attorney's office.

Sioux Falls man convicted in fatal stabbing

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A jury has convicted a Sioux Falls man who claimed he was protecting his family when he fatally stabbed another man.

The jury returned its verdict Tuesday night in Minnehaha County court, convicting Christopher Lee Adams on two counts of first-degree manslaughter in the death of 38-year-old Ronnie Jerome Baker.

A criminal complaint said the two men had been drinking at Adams' home when they got into an argument last March. The defense argued Adams was protecting his family and his house when he stabbed Baker, But, prosecutors say Baker didn't ever directly threaten Adams or his family.

The Argus Leader says a sentencing date has not been set.

Putin cements power as Russian lawmakers approve his new PM

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian lawmakers on Thursday quickly approved the appointment of a new prime minister, a day after President Vladimir Putin kicked off an unexpected reshuffle of his inner circle that could keep him in power well past the end of his term in 2024.

Mikhail Mishustin, the chief of Russia's tax service, met with lawmakers from various factions in the State

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Duma ahead of the confirmation vote in the Kremlin-controlled lower house.

Mishustin vowed to focus on social issues and improve living standards.

"We have all the necessary resources to fulfill the goals set by the president," he said. "The president wants the Cabinet to spearhead economic growth and help create new jobs. Raising real incomes is a priority for the government."

Mishustin succeeds Dmitry Medvedev, a Putin associate who was Russia's prime minister for eight years. Medvedev resigned hours after Putin proposed sweeping changes to the constitution.

Medvedev served as president in 2008-2012, keeping the seat warm for Putin who continued calling the shots as prime minister when he was forced to step down from the top job due to term limits. Under Medvedev, the constitution was amended to extend the presidential term from four years to six, although it limits the leader to two consecutive terms.

Putin has kept his longtime ally Medvedev in his close circle, appointing him to the newly created post of deputy head of the presidential Security Council.

The 53-year-old Mishustin is a career bureaucrat who has worked as the tax chief for the past 10 years, keeping a low profile and showing no political ambitions. He has won a good reputation among experts who praised him for boosting tax collection and streamlining Russia's rigid tax administration system.

The reshuffle sent shock waves through Russia's political elites, who were left pondering what Putin's intentions were and speculating about future Cabinet appointments.

A constitutional reform that Putin announced in a state-of-the-nation address indicated he was working to carve out a new governing position for himself after his current six-year term ends in 2024, although it remains unclear what specific path he will take to stay in charge.

Putin has been in power longer than any other Russian or Soviet leader since Josef Stalin, who led from 1924 until his death in 1953. Under the current law, Putin must step down when his current term ends.

Putin suggested amending the constitution to allow lawmakers to name prime ministers and Cabinet members. The president currently holds the authority to make those appointments.

At the same time, Putin argued that Russia would not remain stable if it were governed under a parliamentary system. The president should retain the right to dismiss the prime minister and Cabinet ministers, to name top defense and security officials, and to be in charge of the Russian military and law enforcement agencies, he said.

In his address, Putin said the constitution must also specify the authority of the State Council consisting of regional governors and top federal officials.

Putin on Thursday attended a meeting of the working group to draft constitutional amendments, saying they are intended to "strengthen the role of civil society, political parties and regions in making decisions about state development."

Observers speculated that Putin might try to stay in charge by shifting into the prime minister's seat again after increasing the powers of parliament and the Cabinet and trimming presidential authority.

Others suggested that he could also try to continue pulling the strings as head of the council and could even shift into a new position before his term ends.

Another potential option is a merger with neighboring Belarus that would create a new position of the head of a new unified state. That prospect that has been rejected by Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, an autocratic ruler who has been in power for more than quarter century.

Putin said that the constitutional changes need to be approved by a public vote, but officials said it doesn't imply a referendum and it wasn't immediately clear how it will be organized.

Daria Litvinova in Moscow contributed to this report.

3 African countries trying out 1st malaria vaccine in babies

By CARA ANNA and LAURAN NEERGAARD Associated Press

TOMALI, Malawi (AP) — A pinch in the leg, a squeal and a trickle of tears. One baby after another in Malawi is getting the first and only vaccine against malaria, one of history's deadliest and most stubborn of diseases.

The southern African nation is rolling out the shots in an unusual pilot program along with Kenya and Ghana. Unlike established vaccines that offer near-complete protection, this new one is only about 40% effective. But experts say it's worth a try as progress against malaria stalls: Resistance to treatment is growing and the global drop in cases has leveled off.

With the vaccine, the hope is to help small children through the most dangerous period of their lives. Spread by mosquito bites, malaria kills more than 400,000 people every year, two-thirds of them under 5 and most in Africa.

Seven-month-old Charity Nangware received a shot on a rainy December day at a health clinic in the town of Migowi. She watched curiously as the needle slid into her thigh, then twisted up her face with a howl.

"I'm very excited about this," said her mother, Esther Gonjani, who herself gets malaria's aches, chills and fever at least once a year and loses a week of field work when one of her children is ill. "They explained it wasn't perfect, but I feel secure it will relieve the pain."

There is little escaping malaria -- "malungo" in the local Chichewa language -- especially during the five-month rainy season. Stagnant puddles, where mosquitoes breed, surround the homes of brick and thatch and line the dirt roads through tea plantations or fields of maize and sugar cane.

In the village of Tomali, the nearest health clinic is a two-hour bike ride away. The longer it takes to get care, the more dangerous malaria can be. Teams from the clinic offer basic medical care during visits once or twice a month, bringing the malaria shot and other vaccines in portable coolers.

Treating malaria takes up a good portion of their time during the rainy season, according to Daisy Chikonde, a local health worker.

"If this vaccine works, it will reduce the burden," she said.

Resident Doriga Ephrem proudly said her 5-month-old daughter, Grace, didn't cry when she got the malaria shot.

When she heard about the vaccine, Ephrem said her first thought was "protection is here." Health workers explained, however, that the vaccine is not meant to replace antimalarial drugs or the insecticide-treated bed net she unfolds every night as the sun sets and mosquitoes rise from the shadows.

"We even take our evening meals inside the net to avoid mosquitoes," she said.

It took three decades of research to develop the new vaccine, which works against the most common and deadly of the five parasite species that cause malaria. The parasite's complex life cycle is a huge challenge. It changes forms in different stages of infection and is far harder to target than germs.

"We don't have any vaccines against parasites in routine use. This is uncharted territory," said Ashley Birkett, who directs PATH's Malaria Vaccine Initiative, a nonprofit that helped drugmaker GlaxoSmithKline develop the shot, brand-named Mosquirix.

The bite of an infected mosquito sends immature parasites called sporozoites into the bloodstream. If they reach the liver, they'll mature and multiply before spewing back into the blood to cause malaria's debilitating symptoms. At that point, treatment requires medicines that kill the parasites.

Mosquirix uses a piece of the parasite — a protein found only on sporozoites' surface — in hopes of blocking the liver stage of infection. When a vaccinated child is bitten, the immune system should recognize the parasite and start making antibodies against it.

Scientists also are searching for next-generation alternatives. In the pipeline is an experimental vaccine made of whole malaria parasites dissected from mosquitoes' salivary glands but weakened so they won't make people sick. Sanaria Inc. has been testing its vaccine in adults, and is planning a large, late-stage study in Equatorial Guinea's Bioko Island.

And the U.S. National Institutes of Health soon will start initial tests of whether injecting people periodi-

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cally with lab-made antibodies, rather than depending on the immune system to make them, could offer temporary protection during malaria season. Think of them as “potentially short-term vaccines,” NIH’s Dr. Robert Seder told a recent meeting of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene.

For now, only babies in parts of Malawi, Kenya and Ghana are eligible for the Mosquirix vaccine. After the vaccine was approved in 2015, the World Health Organization said it first wanted a pilot roll-out to see how well it worked in a few countries — in real-world conditions — before recommending that the vaccine be given more widely across Africa.

“Everyone is looking forward to getting it,” said Temwa Mzengeza, who oversees Malawi’s vaccine programs. Those eager for the shots include her husband, whom she had to stop from trying to get them, she said.

Mzengeza used to come down with malaria several times a year until she started following her own advice to sleep under a net every night. Unlike many other kinds of infections, people can get malaria repeatedly, building up only a partial immunity.

In the pilot program that began last year, 360,000 children in the three countries are meant to be vaccinated annually. The first dose is given at about age 5 months and the final, fourth booster near the child’s second birthday.

Experts say it is too early to know how well the vaccine is working. They’re watching for malaria deaths, severe infections and cases of meningitis, something reported during studies but not definitively linked to the vaccine.

“To do something completely new for malaria is exciting,” said researcher Don Mathanga, who is leading the evaluation in Malawi.

The rainy season has brought new challenges, making some rural roads impassable and complicating efforts to track down children due for a shot. So far in Malawi, the first dose reached about half of the children targeted, about 35,000. That dropped to 26,000 for the second dose and 20,000 for the third.

That’s not surprising for a new vaccine, Mzengeza said. “It will pick up with time.”

At the health clinic in Migowi in Malawi’s southern highlands, workers see signs of hope. Henry Kadzuwa explains the vaccine to mothers waiting at the clinic. He said there was a drop in malaria cases to 40 in the first five months of the program, compared to 78 in the same period in 2018.

Even though he wishes his 3-year-old daughter, Angel, could receive the vaccine, “it’s protecting my community. It also makes my work easier,” Kadzuwa said. The Migowi area has one of the country’s highest rates of malaria, and a worn paper register in the clinic’s laboratory lists scores of cases.

At the clinic, Agnes Ngubale said she had malaria several years ago and wants to protect her 6-month-old daughter, Lydia, from the disease.

“I want her to be healthy and free,” she said. “I want her to be a doctor.”

And she has memorized the time for Lydia’s second dose: “Next month, same date.”

Neergaard reported from Washington.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute’s Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content

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. STRIKING VISUALS WILL RULE THE DAY Chief Justice John Roberts and House prosecutors will make appearances in the Senate chamber and Roberts will swear in the senators who act as jurors in Trump’s impeachment trial.

2. WHAT GIULIANI ASSOCIATE CLAIMS Lev Parnas tells MSNBC he delivered an ultimatum to the incoming Ukrainian president last year: no senior U.S. officials at his inauguration, and all U.S. aid withheld, if a

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probe into Biden wasn't announced.

3. 'YOU CALLED ME A LIAR' That's what Elizabeth Warren accuses Bernie Sanders of calling her before a national TV audience during a tense, post-debate exchange, according to audio released by CNN.

4. TRUMP POISED FOR ANOTHER TRADE VICTORY One day after signing a new trade deal with China, the Senate is taking up the new North American trade pact.

5. BUTTIGIEG DECISION ON POLICE CHIEF SHADOWS PRESIDENTIAL RUN Lingering criticism over his demotion of a popular black police chief when he was mayor of South Bend, Indiana, raises questions about whether he can attract the support of African Americans, AP learns.

6. WHAT ECOLOGICAL DAMAGE IS 'IRREVERSIBLE' Marine biologists are bemoaning the invasion in the Suez Canal of hundreds of non-native species, including toxic jellyfish and aggressive lionfish.

7. BRITAIN TESTS REAL-TIME FACIAL RECOGNITION The approach is among the more aggressive uses of the technology in Western democracies and raises questions about how it will enter people's daily lives.

8. PHILIPPINE VOLCANO SENDS MORE PEOPLE FLEEING The Taal volcano that erupted last weekend is belching smaller plumes of ash and shuddering continuously with earthquakes, prompting authorities to block access to nearby towns due to fears of a bigger eruption.

9. HONG KONG LEADER: SPECIAL STATUS CAN ENDURE BEYOND 2047 Carrie Lam's comments appear to be an appeal to those in the city who see Beijing as tightening its control over the semi-autonomous territory's civic, economic and political life.

10. 'I BET THOSE DIRTY BIRDS ARE CHEATING' The sign-stealing scheme that the Astros used in 2017 brings back memories for former Brooklyn Dodgers pitcher Carl Erskine, who recalls a spyglass-and-buzzer system the New York Giants rigged up in 1951.

Australia firefighters save world's only rare dinosaur trees

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Specialist firefighters have saved the world's last remaining wild stand of a prehistoric tree from wildfires that razed forests west of Sydney, officials said Thursday.

Firefighters winched from helicopters to reach the cluster of fewer than 200 Wollemi Pines in a remote gorge in the Blue Mountains a week before a massive wildfire bore down, National Parks and Wildlife Service Director David Crust said.

The firefighters set up an irrigation system to keep the so-called dinosaur trees moist and pumped water daily from the gorge as the blaze that had burned out of control for more than two months edged closer.

Firefighting planes strategically bombed the fire front with fire retardant to slow its progress.

"That helped just to slow the intensity of the fire as it approached the site," Crust told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

"The Wollemi Pine is a particularly important species and the fact that this is the only place in the world where they exist and they exist in such small numbers is really significant," he added.

New South Wales state Environment Minister Matt Kean said the operation had saved the stand, although some plants had been singed.

"These pines outlived the dinosaurs, so when we saw the fire approaching we realized we had to do everything we could to save them," Kean said.

The Wollemi Pine had only been seen in its fossilized form and was thought long extinct before the stand was found in 1994.

The fire that threatened it was brought under control this week after razing more than 510,000 hectares (1.26 million acres). The fire also destroyed 90% of the 5,000-hectare (12,400-acre) Wollemi National Park, where the rare trees grow, Crust said.

The exact location of the stand remains a closely guarded secret to help authorities protect the trees.

The Wollemi's survival is one of the few positive stories to emerge from the unprecedented wildlife crisis in southeast Australia.

The fires have claimed at least 28 lives since September, destroyed more than 2,600 homes and razed

more than 10.3 million hectares (25.5 million acres), mostly in New South Wales state. The area burned is larger than the U.S. state of Indiana.

But the fire danger has been diminished by rain this week in several areas. The first green buds of re-growth have already emerged in some blacked forests following rain.

Experts say Med Sea altered by Suez Canal's invasive species

By ARON HELLER and ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — As Egypt marks the 150th anniversary of the opening of the Suez Canal, marine biologists are bemoaning one of the famed waterway's lesser known legacies — the invasion of hundreds of non-native species, including toxic jellyfish and aggressive lionfish.

The canal, which connects the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, revolutionized maritime travel by creating a direct shipping route between the East and the West. But over the years, the invasive species have driven native marine life toward extinction and altered the delicate Mediterranean ecosystem with potentially devastating consequences, scientists say.

The influx has increased significantly since Egypt doubled its capacity in 2015 with the opening of the "The New Suez Canal," raising alarm in Europe and sparking criticism from various countries along the Mediterranean basin. The sharpest criticism comes from neighboring Israel, which once battled Egypt in war alongside the 193-kilometer (120-mile)-long canal.

Bella Galil, an Israeli marine biologist who has studied the Mediterranean for over three decades, said much of the ecological damage is irreversible.

But with the invasive fish and crustaceans buoyed by warming water temperatures and rapidly spreading toward European shores, she argued that urgent action is needed to minimize its long-term impact. Galil, of Tel Aviv University's Steinhardt Museum of Natural History, said the continued widening and deepening of the canal had created a "moving aquarium" of species that, if unchecked, could make coastal waters inhospitable for humans.

Galil said the number of invasive species, currently about 400, has more than doubled over the past 30 years, a phenomenon she called a "historic example of the dangers of unintended consequences."

Already, Israel is coping with an unprecedented wave of toxic jellyfish that has damaged coastal power plants and scared off beach-goers and tourists. Several other venomous species, including the aggressive lionfish, have established permanent colonies, creating a potential health hazard when they end up on plates of beach-side restaurants. Most worrisome has been the arrival of the *Lagocephalus Sceleratus*, an extremely poisonous bony fish commonly known as the silver-cheeked toadfish.

Galil said half of all the Israeli fish intake — and all the crustaceans — are now of the invasive variety.

With the "rolling invasion" now reaching as far as Spain, European countries are increasingly taking note. The issue is set to feature prominently at a United Nations ocean sustainability workshop this month in Venice.

"These non-indigenous organisms present serious threats to the local biodiversity, at the very least comparable to those exerted by climate change, pollution and over-fishing," Galil said.

She said the new species have caused "a dramatic restructuring" of the ecosystem, endangering various local species and wiping out native mussels, prawns and red mullet.

Israel's Environmental Protection Ministry said it was monitoring the process with concern since its coasts were the new species' "first stop" in the Mediterranean. It stressed that Israel could not stop the phenomenon alone but is promoting regulation to protect the most vulnerable marine habitats. With Israel increasingly reliant on the Mediterranean Sea for drinking water, the ministry said protecting the country's marine environment was "now more important than ever."

Lebanese scientists at the American University of Beirut recently wrote that failing to mitigate the ecological risks associated with the expansion of the Suez Canal would place a large part of the Mediterranean ecosystem in jeopardy, an opinion shared by marine scientists across the eastern Mediterranean, from Turkey to Tunisia.

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A relatively simple option for damage control seems to be available in the form of the Qatari-funded desalination plants the Egyptians are building along the canal, the first of which is expected to be opened later this year.

If carried out properly, Galil said the brine output of the plants could be funneled into the canal to recreate a "salinity barrier" that could stem the flow of species from south to north. The Great Bitter Lakes, about 45 kilometers (30 miles) north of Suez, once created such an obstacle. But as the canal widened and Egyptian cities and farms flushed agricultural wastewater into the lakes, that bulwark disappeared.

Egypt, which signed a peace accord with Israel in 1979 and recently signed a massive deal with it to import natural gas, has largely rejected the dire warnings of the Israeli scientists as politically motivated.

"Invasive species is a huge and nonspecific category," said Moustafa Fouda, an adviser to Egypt's environment minister. "They can even be productive, replacing species that are overfished, bringing economic benefits or simply adapting to the new environment."

He estimated that less than 5% of invaders could be regarded as "disruptive" and that most of the shrimp, mollusks, puffer fish and crabs caused no harm. He said even toxic invaders, such as lionfish, were edible if their venomous spines were removed.

Egyptian experts also denied the invasions resulted directly from the Suez expansion. They argue that rising water temperatures brought on by global warming and untreated ballast water discharged by cargo ships spurred the exotic arrivals.

"Invasions are a global trend due to pollution and climate change, the natural result of which is every species struggling to survive and searching for its optimal environment," said Tarek Temraz, a marine biology professor at Suez Canal University, and author of the environmental ministry's impact assessment of the canal expansion.

The Suez Canal Authority, the government agency that operates the canal, claimed environmental concerns over its enlargement have been overstated. It said water volume flowing into the Mediterranean increased by 4%, creating "little impact on water flow and plankton movement."

Canal officials say they are closely monitoring species migration, imposing regulations on ships that unwittingly ferry invasive creatures and curtailing water contamination in hopes of restoring salinity to the lakes.

The canal authority said a recent drive to divert agricultural wastewater away from the Bitter Lakes has successfully raised salinity there by 3% over the past years.

Galil says that's not enough, insisting that salinity must increase significantly to serve as an effective barrier against newcomers.

"One day we will wake up to a compete and irreversible change and know that there was something we could have done about it if only it had been done on time," she said.

DeBre reported from Cairo.

Follow Aron Heller at www.twitter.com/aronhellerap and Isabel Debre at www.twitter.com/isabeldebre

Senate takes over Trump's impeachment after House handoff

By LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a dramatic procession across the U.S. Capitol, House Democrats carried the formal articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump to the Senate, setting the stage for only the third trial to remove a president in American history.

Trump complained anew Wednesday that it was all a "hoax," even as fresh details emerged about his efforts in Ukraine.

The ceremonial pomp and protocol by the lawmakers prosecuting the case against Trump moved the impeachment out of Speaker Nancy Pelosi's Democratic-run House to the Republican-majority Senate, where the president's team is mounting a defense aiming for swift acquittal.

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"Today we will make history," Pelosi said as she signed the documents, using multiple pens to hand out and mark the moment. "This president will be held accountable."

Moments later the prosecutors walked solemnly through the stately hall, filing into the Senate back row as the clerk of the House announced the arrival: "The House has passed House Resolution 798, a resolution appointing and authorizing managers of the impeachment trial of Donald John Trump, president of United States."

The Senate will transform itself into an impeachment court at noon Thursday. The Constitution calls for Chief Justice John Roberts to preside at the trial, administering the oath to senators who will serve as jurors and swear to deliver "impartial justice."

The trial will play out before a deeply divided nation at the start of this election year as Trump seeks a second term and voters review his presidency. Three senators are running for the Democratic nomination.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell pledged to have the Senate "rise above the petty factionalism" and "factional fervor and serve the long-term, best interests of our nation." He called it "a difficult time for our country."

Technically, the House was simply notifying the Senate of its delivery of the articles, with a more formal presentation Thursday. Opening arguments are to begin next Tuesday after the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

Earlier Wednesday, the House voted 228-193, almost entirely along party lines, ending a weeks-long delay to deliver the charges with a tally reflecting the nation's split.

The House impeached Trump last month alleging he abused his presidential power by pressuring Ukraine to investigate Democratic rival Joe Biden, using military aid to the country as leverage. Trump was also charged with obstructing Congress' ensuing probe.

"This is what an impeachment is about," Pelosi said before the vote. "The president violated his oath of office, undermined our national security, jeopardized the integrity of our elections."

Trump's political campaign dismissed the House effort as "just a failed attempt to politically damage President Trump leading up to his reelection."

The top Republican in the House, Kevin McCarthy of California, said Americans will look back on this "sad saga" that tried to remove the president from office with the "weakest case."

The president's team expects acquittal with a Senate trial lasting no more than two weeks, according to senior administration officials unauthorized to discuss the matter and granted anonymity.

That's far shorter than the impeachment trial of President Bill Clinton, in 1999, or the first one, of President Andrew Johnson, in 1868.

As McConnell sets the rules for the trial, Trump has given mixed messages about whether he prefers lengthy or swift proceeding, and senators are under pressure with the emerging new evidence to call more witnesses for testimony.

The seven-member prosecution team was led by the chairmen of the House impeachment proceedings, Reps. Adam Schiff of the Intelligence Committee and Jerrold Nadler of the Judiciary Committee, two of Pelosi's top lieutenants.

"President Trump gravely abused the power of his office," Nadler said. "He did all this for his personal political gain."

Ahead of Wednesday's session, Schiff released new records from Lev Parnas, an associate of Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani, about the Ukraine strategy, including an exchange with another man about surveilling later-fired Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch.

Schiff said the new evidence should bring more pressure on McConnell, who is reluctant to allow witnesses to testify and prefers swift acquittal. The White House has instructed officials not to comply with House subpoenas for testimony and documents.

"The challenge is to get a fair trial," Schiff said in an interview with The Associated Press. "It shouldn't be a challenge — if the senators are really going to live up to their oath to be impartial, they'll want a fair trial. That's obviously not where Mitch McConnell is coming from."

The managers are a diverse group with legal, law enforcement and military experience, including Ha-

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keem Jeffries of New York, Sylvia Garcia of Texas, Val Demings of Florida, Jason Crow of Colorado and Zoe Lofgren of California.

Two are freshmen lawmakers — Crow a former Army Ranger who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, Garcia a former judge in Houston. Demings is the former police chief of Orlando and Jeffries is a lawyer and member of party leadership. Lofgren has the rare credential of having worked on the congressional staff investigation of President Richard Nixon's impeachment — he resigned before the full House voted on the charges — and then being an elected lawmaker during Bill Clinton's.

For the roll call, all but one Democrat, Rep. Collin Peterson of Minnesota, voted to transmit the articles. All Republicans voted against. One former Republican-turned-independent, Rep. Justin Amash of Michigan, joined Democrats.

McConnell faces competing interests from his party for more witnesses, from centrists who are siding with Democrats on the need to hear testimony and conservatives mounting Trump's defense.

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Those or any four senators could force an outcome. Republicans control the chamber, 53-47, and are all but certain to acquit Trump. But it takes just 51 votes during the trial to approve rules or call witnesses. It also would take only 51 senators to vote to dismiss the charges against Trump.

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Associated Press writers Zeke Miller, Alan Fram, Matthew Daly, Andrew Taylor, Mary Clare Jalonick, Laurie Kellman, and Padmananda Rama contributed to this report.

House leaders march Trump impeachment articles to the Senate

By LISA MASCARO Associated Press

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Emphasis on US exports, trade secrets in China trade deal

By KEVIN FREKING and PAUL WISEMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States and China reached a trade deal Wednesday that eases tensions between the world's two biggest economies, offers massive export opportunities for U.S. farms and factories, and promises to do more to protect American trade secrets.

Still, the Phase 1 agreement leaves unresolved Washington's fundamental differences with Beijing, which is relying on massive government intervention in the economy to turn China into a technological power.

President Donald Trump is wanting to show progress on an issue that he has made a hallmark of his presidency and hopes to use in his reelection campaign this year. Wednesday's signing ceremony at the White House gave him the chance to do that just hours before the House voted to send articles of impeachment to the Senate for a trial.

Trump promoted the trade signing as a way of delivering economic justice for American workers he claims have been betrayed by past administrations and their trade policies.

"We mark more than just an agreement. We mark a sea change in international trade," Trump declared during a rambling ceremony in which he made references to former FBI Director James Comey, the impeachment proceedings and a possible visit to Mount Rushmore on July Fourth for a fireworks display.

The Chinese delegation also praised the pact. Chinese leader Xi Jinping said in a letter to Trump that the first-phase deal was "good for China, for the U.S. and for the whole world." He said it also showed the two countries had the ability to "act on the basis of equality and mutual respect." The letter was read by Beijing's chief negotiator, Vice Premier Liu He.

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Some of the president's Democratic critics were unimpressed.

"True to form, Trump is getting precious little in return for the significant pain and uncertainty he has imposed on our economy, farmers, and workers," said former Vice President Joe Biden, one of the Democrats hoping to replace Trump.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., said in a statement that "with the economy losing thousands of manufacturing jobs and Farm Country reeling from the damage caused by President Trump, Americans are left with nothing more than a showy television ceremony to try to hide the complete absence of concrete progress, transparency or accountability in this 'phase one' agreement."

The administration acknowledges the agreement leaves unresolved some U.S. complaints — most notably, the way the Chinese government subsidizes its companies. That was the concern voiced when Trump sparked a trade war by imposing tariffs on Chinese imports in July 2018.

"The Phase 1 deal contains meaningful commitments but by no means lives up to the initial objectives of the administration," said Wendy Cutler, a former U.S. trade negotiator who is now vice president at the Asia Society Policy Institute. Further Chinese concessions would force Beijing to make major changes in its state-dominated economic model, which means "the prospects for a timely conclusion are remote," she said.

The agreement leaves in place tariffs on about \$360 billion in Chinese imports, leverage the administration hopes will generate future concessions.

U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said work on follow-up negotiations will hinge on how China fulfills the commitments it made in the initial phase.

"We have to make sure this is implemented properly," Lighthizer said. "This is the first agreement like this of its kind and we have to make sure that it works."

The agreement is intended to ease some U.S. economic sanctions on China while Beijing is to step up purchases of American farm products and other goods. Trump cited beef, pork, poultry, seafood, rice and dairy products as examples.

U.S. trade officials said the agreement would end a long-standing practice of China pressuring foreign companies to transfer technology to Chinese companies as a condition for obtaining market access. Lighthizer said China has also agreed to combat patent theft and counterfeit products, which would include forfeiting machinery used for making counterfeit products.

The 86-page agreement makes it easier to bring criminal cases in China against those accused of stealing trade secrets. It includes provisions designed to stop Chinese government officials from using administrative and regulatory procedures to ferret out foreign companies' trade secrets and allowing that information to get into the hands of Chinese competitors.

The deal requires China to come up with procedures to "permit effective and expeditious action" to take down websites that sell pirated goods. China also must make it possible for e-commerce sites to lose their licenses for "repeated failures to curb the sale of counterfeit or pirated goods."

China is required to increase its purchases of U.S. manufactured, energy and farm products and services by a combined \$200 billion this year and next. The arrangement means that China is supposed to buy \$40 billion in U.S. farm exports. That would be a windfall for Trump supporters in rural America but an ambitious goal considering that China has never bought more than \$26 billion in U.S. agricultural products in a year.

"It's a strong first step," said Jeremie Waterman, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's vice president for Greater China. "It begins the process of addressing some of the structural concerns, but there's a lot of work left to do. The meat, the core of (U.S. complaints about China's aggressive tech policies) has not yet been addressed. Obviously, that's going to have to wait until Phase 2."

Most analysts say any meaningful resolution of the main U.S. allegation — that Beijing uses predatory tactics in its drive to supplant America's technological supremacy — could require years of contentious talks. Skeptics say a satisfactory resolution may be next to impossible given China's ambitions to become the global leader in such advanced technologies as driverless cars and artificial intelligence.

The U.S. has dropped plans to impose tariffs on an additional \$160 billion in Chinese imports, and it cut in half, to 7.5%, existing tariffs on \$110 billion of good from China.

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Derek Scissors, China specialist at the American Enterprise Institute, said the trade war has already delivered a benefit for Trump, even if it hasn't forced Beijing to make major changes to its economic policy: Trump's tariffs have reduced Chinese exports to the United States and narrowed America's trade deficit with China.

So far this year, the U.S. deficit with China in the trade of goods has declined by 16%, or \$62 billion, to \$321 billion compared with a year earlier. The deficit will narrow further if Beijing lives up to its pledges to buy dramatically more American imports.

AP Business Writer Joe McDonald in Beijing and Associated Press writer Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

Fever chart: Earth had its hottest decade on record in 2010s

By **SETH BORENSTEIN** AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The decade that just ended was by far the hottest ever measured on Earth, capped off by the second-warmest year on record, two U.S. agencies reported Wednesday. And scientists said they see no end to the way man-made climate change keeps shattering records.

"If you think you've heard this story before, you haven't seen anything yet," Gavin Schmidt, director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, said at the close of a decade plagued by raging wildfires, melting ice and extreme weather that researchers have repeatedly tied to human activity.

Schmidt said Earth as a whole is probably the hottest it has been during the Holocene — the past 11,500 years or so — meaning this could be the warmest period since the dawn of civilization. But scientists' estimates of ancient global temperatures, based on tree rings, ice cores and other telltale signs, are not precise enough to say that with certainty.

The 2010s averaged 58.4 degrees Fahrenheit (14.7 degrees Celsius) worldwide, or 1.4 degrees (0.8 C) higher than the 20th century average and more than one-third of a degree (one-fifth of a degree C) warmer than the previous decade, which had been the hottest on record, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The decade had eight of the 10 hottest years on record. The only other years in the top 10 were 2005 and 1998.

NASA and NOAA also calculated that 2019 was the second-hottest year in the 140 years of record-keeping. Five other global teams of monitoring scientists agreed, based on temperature readings taken on Earth's surface, while various satellite-based measurements said it was anywhere from the hottest year on record to the third-hottest.

Several scientists said the coming years will be even hotter, knocking these years out of the record books.

"This is going to be part of what we see every year until we stabilize greenhouse gases" from the burning of coal, oil and gas, Schmidt said.

"It's sobering to think that we might be breaking global temperature records in quick succession," said Georgia Tech climate scientist Kim Cobb. "2020 is off to a horrifying climate start, and I fear what the rest of the year will bring to our doorsteps."

NASA's Schmidt said that overall, Earth is now about 1.2 degrees C (nearly 2.2 F) hotter since the beginning of the industrial age, a number that is important because in 2015 global leaders adopted a goal of preventing 1.5 C (2.7 F) of warming since the rise of big industry in the mid- to late 1800s. He said that shows the global goal can't be achieved. (NOAA and the World Meteorological Organization put the warming since the dawn of industry slightly lower.)

"We have strong human-induced global warming," said Friederike Otto, a climate scientist at the University of Oxford. "What we observe here is exactly what our physical understanding tells us to expect and there is no other explanation."

Other explanations that rely on natural causes — extra heat from the sun, more reflection of sunlight because of volcanic particles in atmosphere, and just random climate variations — "are all much too small

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to explain the long-term trend," Princeton University climate scientist Michael Oppenheimer said.

Scientists said the decade-long data is more telling than the year-to-year measurements, where natural variations such as El Niño, the periodic warming of the Pacific Ocean, come into play.

"Human-caused climate change is responsible for the long-term warming — it's responsible for why the 2010s were warmer than 2000s, which were warmer than the 1990s, etc.," Texas A&M University climate scientist Andrew Dessler said in an email. "But humans are not responsible for why 2016 was warmer than 2015 or why 2019 was warmer than 2018."

NOAA said the average global temperature in 2019 was 58.7 degrees (14.85 C), or just a few hundredths of a degree behind 2016, when the world got extra heat from El Niño. That's 1.71 degrees (0.95 C) higher than the 20th century average and 2.08 degrees (1.16 C) warmer than the late 19th century.

Parts of Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa and South America had record-high temperatures in 2019, as did Alaska, New Zealand and New Mexico, NOAA said. Alaska was 6.2 degrees warmer than average, at 32.2 F. It was the first time in recorded history that Alaska's average annual temperature was above freezing.

The United States, which had only its 34th-warmest year, was nevertheless hit by 14 weather disasters that caused \$1 billion or more in damage last year, according to NOAA.

Globally the past five years stand out as the hottest five on record, nearly 1.7 degrees (0.9 C) warmer than the 20th century average. The last year Earth was cooler than the 20th century average was 1976, before Democratic presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg, French President Emmanuel Macron and Donald Trump Jr. were born.

If you want to know what this means for people and the world, just look at wildfire-stricken Australia, Schmidt and others said.

Global warming is already being seen in heat waves, ice sheet melt, more wildfires, stronger storms, flood-inducing downpours and accelerating sea level rise, said Hans-Otto Portner, who heads the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change team that looks at the impact of climate change.

Sea ice both in the Arctic and Antarctic reached their second-lowest levels in 40 years of monitoring, NOAA reported.

Dr. Renee Salas, a Boston emergency room physician and Harvard professor who studies climate change's effects on health, said "these temperatures are not just statistics but have names and stories," mentioning a construction worker and an elderly man with no air conditioning who were her patients this summer.

"The planet has a fever," Salas said, "and that's its symptom."

Read more stories on climate issues by The Associated Press.

Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter.

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Virginia moves to brink of becoming 38th state to ratify ERA

By SARAH RANKIN Associated Press

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — Virginia on Wednesday moved to the brink of becoming the crucial 38th state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment in what was seen as a momentous victory for the women's rights movement even though it is far from certain the measure will ever be added to the U.S. Constitution.

The state House and Senate approved the proposed amendment with bipartisan support, well over a generation after Congress sent the ERA to the states for ratification in 1972. Each chamber now must pass the other's resolution, but final passage is considered all but certain.

Amendments to the Constitution must be ratified by three-quarters of the states, or 38. But whether this one will go on to become the 28th Amendment may have to be decided in court because the deadline set by Congress for ratification of the ERA ran out in 1982 and because five states that approved it in the 1970s have since rescinded their support.

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Still, the twin votes carried symbolic weight and showed how much once-solidly conservative Virginia, a place that defeated the ERA time and again, has changed.

Del. Jennifer Carroll Foy, a sponsor of the House ERA measure, told her colleagues they were taking "the vote of a lifetime."

"One hundred and sixty million women and girls across this country are waiting and will forever be changed by what happens in this body here today," she said.

ERA supporters had lined up hours in advance to get seats in the gallery. Among those who crowded in was Donna Granski, 73, who wore a purple, white and yellow sash covered in ERA buttons, some from her "antique" collection. Granski said she was shocked when she moved to Virginia in the late '70s and learned it hadn't ratified the ERA. She had been pushing for it ever since.

"We feel like we are marching up to the peak of the mountain," she said.

ERA advocates say it would enshrine equality for women in the Constitution, offering stronger protections in sex discrimination cases. They also argue the ERA would give Congress firmer ground to pass anti-discrimination laws.

Opponents warn it would erode commonsense protections for women, such as workplace accommodations during pregnancy. They also worry it could be used by abortion-rights supporters to quash abortion restrictions on the grounds they discriminate against women.

Virginia has undergone seismic political shifts in recent years because of increasing diversity and the growing activism and political power of women. Democrats retook control of the legislature in November's elections and made passing the ERA a top priority after Republicans blocked it for years.

The ERA had passed the Virginia Senate in previous years with bipartisan support but had never before made it to the House for a floor vote.

It passed there on a 59-41 vote presided over by Del. Eileen Filler-Corn, the first female House speaker in the chamber's 400-year history. Spectators in the gallery erupted in the cheers as she announced the outcome. The Senate then passed it 28-12.

Republican Del. Margaret Ransone, who voted against the ERA, emphasized the missed deadline and said: "I wish I could say that this dedication and hard work has not all been for nothing."

Last week, the U.S. Justice Department issued a legal memo contending that because the deadline has expired, it is too late for states to ratify the ERA now. The only option now for ERA supporters is to try to begin the ratification process all over again in Congress, according to the memo.

The National Archives, which certifies the ratification of constitutional amendments, said it will abide by that opinion "unless otherwise directed by a final court order."

At least two lawsuits have already been filed, one of them brought last month by Alabama, Louisiana and South Dakota to block the amendment and another filed last week to clear a path for its adoption. In the meantime, congressional Democrats are working to pass a measure removing the deadline.

Among those disagreeing with the Justice Department opinion is Erwin Chemerinsky, a prominent constitutional law scholar and dean of the Berkeley School of Law. He said Congress can set a deadline and change one, too.

Douglas Johnson, senior policy adviser with the anti-abortion group National Right to Life, endorsed the Justice Department position and said that if the ERA were to be reintroduced, abortion opponents would probably seek to revise it to specify it could not be used to overturn state restrictions on abortion.

There is precedent for Congress to impose deadlines on the ratification process. But no deadline was set in the case of the 27th Amendment, which is aimed at restricting members of Congress from raising their own pay. It was ratified in 1992, or 203 years after it was submitted to Congress in 1789.

Eleanor Smeal, president of the Feminist Majority and former president of the National Organization for Women, said it was "tragic" that a generation of women missed out on the protections the ERA would have offered.

But Smeal, who was a leader in the push for the ERA in the '70s and '80s, said the long fight has prompted women to run for political office, where they have increasingly made gains across the country.

"Every time they make us fight more, we get stronger," she said.

Associated Press writers Alan Suderman and Denise Lavoie in Richmond and David Crary in New York contributed to this report.

Putin engineers shake-up that could keep him in power longer

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — President Vladimir Putin engineered a surprise shake-up of Russia's leadership Wednesday, proposing changes to the constitution that could keep him in power well past the end of his term in 2024.

Hours after he made the proposals, Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev resigned and Putin named the little-known head of Russia's tax service to replace him.

Putin kept his longtime ally Medvedev in the Kremlin's leadership structure by appointing him to the newly created post of deputy head of the presidential Security Council. But the duties and influence of that position are unclear.

The shakeup sent shock waves through Russia's political elites who were left pondering what Putin's intentions were and speculating about future Cabinet appointments.

Putin's proposed constitutional reforms, announced in a state of the nation address, indicated he was working to carve out a new governing position for himself after his term ends, although the suggested changes don't immediately specify what path he will take to stay in charge.

The 67-year-old former KGB operative, who has led Russia for more than 20 years, often keeps his intentions secret until the very last moment.

Alexei Navalny, the most prominent Russian opposition leader, tweeted that Putin's speech clearly signaled his desire to continue calling the shots even after his presidential term ends.

"The only goal of Putin and his regime is to stay in charge for life, having the entire country as his personal asset and seizing its riches for himself and his friends," Navalny said.

Independent analyst Masha Lipman told The Associated Press: "The goal is for the system to remain stable and for Putin to retain his grip on power and to remain what he has been throughout these 20 years — the most important politician in the country, the ultimate decision-maker, the uncontested unchallenged leader of no alternative."

The Kremlin said Tax Service chief Mikhail Mishustin was nominated to replace Medvedev, who has been prime minister for nearly eight years. Approval by the Duma on Thursday is virtually certain.

Mishustin has no political experience, indicating he will dutifully carry out the Kremlin's wishes as head of the Cabinet.

He is credited with modernizing Russia's tax system. Analyst Gleb Pavlovsky, a former Putin adviser, told the Interfax news agency that Mishustin is "a splendid bureaucrat, in the best sense of the word."

The move is the third time in the Putin era that major leadership changes have come suddenly from the top. Putin came to power in the first one, when he became acting president after Boris Yeltsin's surprise resignation on New Year's Eve 1999.

In 2007, as his second term neared its end, he anointed Medvedev to succeed him. Medvedev then said Putin should be prime minister — moves that critics decried as an imposed job-swap without input from the electorate. Medvedev was president in 2008-12, but Putin, as premier, appeared to be effectively in charge.

Under Medvedev, the constitution was amended to lengthen the president's term from four years to six, although it limits the leader to two consecutive terms.

In televised comments Wednesday, Medvedev said he needed to resign in light of Putin's proposed changes in government.

Putin suggested amending the constitution again to allow lawmakers to name prime ministers and Cabinet members. The president currently holds the authority to make those appointments.

"It will increase the role of parliament and parliamentary parties, powers and independence of the prime minister and all Cabinet members," Putin told an audience of top officials and lawmakers.

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At the same time, Putin argued that Russia would not remain stable if it were governed under a parliamentary system. The president should retain the right to dismiss the prime minister and Cabinet ministers, to name top defense and security officials, and to be in charge of the Russian military and law enforcement agencies, he said.

Putin emphasized that the constitutional changes must be put to a nationwide vote.

Putin has been in power longer than any other Russian or Soviet leader since Josef Stalin, who led from 1924 until his death in 1953. Under the current law, Putin must step down in 2024 after his term ends.

Observers speculated that Putin might try to stay in charge by shifting into the prime minister's seat again after increasing the powers of parliament and the Cabinet and trimming presidential authority.

Political analyst Dmitry Oreshkin said Putin's speech made it clear he was pondering the move to premiership.

"Putin is advancing the idea of keeping his authority as a more powerful and influential prime minister while the presidency will become more decorative," Oreshkin said.

In his address, Putin said the constitution must also specify the authority of the State Council consisting of regional governors and top federal officials.

Tatiana Stanovaya of the Carnegie Moscow Center said it appears as if Putin might try to continue pulling the strings as head of the council and could even shift into a new position before his term ends.

Other possible options include a merger with neighboring Belarus that would create a new position of the head of a new unified state — a prospect that has been rejected by Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko.

Political analyst Kirill Rogov said that Putin intends to stay in charge while redistributing powers between various branches of government.

"Such a model resembling the Chinese one would allow Putin to stay at the helm indefinitely while encouraging rivalry between potential successors," Rogov observed.

In 2017, Chinese leader Xi Jinping had term limits abolished, which would effectively keep him in power for life. Putin appears to favor more intricate ways of staying in charge than abolishing term limits.

Although Putin continued calling the shots during Medvedev's presidency, he wasn't totally happy with all of his ally's actions. He was particularly critical of Medvedev's decision to give the green light to the Western air campaign in Libya in 2011 that led to the ouster and killing of long-time dictator Moammar Gadhafi.

Medvedev's decision to step down and let Putin return to the presidency also sparked massive protests in Moscow in 2011-2012 in a major challenge to the Kremlin. Some of Putin's associates suspected Medvedev's aides of encouraging the protests.

In his speech, Putin emphasized the need to amend the constitution to give it a clear priority over international law.

"The requirements of international law and treaties and decisions of international organs can only be valid on the territory of Russia as long as they don't restrict human rights and freedoms and don't contradict the constitution," he said.

He also said that the constitution must be tweaked to say that top government officials aren't allowed to have foreign citizenship or residence permits.

Also in the speech, Putin vowed to encourage Russia's population growth by offering additional subsidies to families that have children.

He said that Russia would remain open for cooperation with all countries while maintaining a strong defense capability to fend off potential threats.

"For the first time in history, we aren't trying to catch up with anyone," Putin said. "On the contrary, other leading nations are yet to develop the weapons that Russia already has."

Associated Press writers Jim Heintz and Kostya Manenkov in Moscow contributed.

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Grrrrr! Angry herders secure bear ban from France's Macron

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The bears have cute names — Bubble, Feather, Snowflake and the like — and look so soft and huggable when caught on video by remote cameras that study their habits. But to herders high in the Pyrenees mountains of southwest France, the animals are stone-cold killers, ravaging flocks and undermining farming livelihoods.

Pyrenean livestock farmers who raise sheep for meat and famously pungent cheeses are rejoicing after getting an assurance from President Emmanuel Macron that he won't authorize the release into the wild of any more of the bears blamed for a surge in deadly attacks.

"He promised that the re-insertions (of bears) are finished, that he won't release any more," said Jean-Pierre Pommies, who raises sheep and cows. Pommies wore his broad farmer's beret to Tuesday's meeting with the suit-and-tied Macron in Pau, a Pyrenean town with sweeping views of the mountains.

"He was able to understand that it's a big problem for us," Pommies added. "We have reached the bottom, and the situation was ridiculous for Pyrenean herders."

When France's last pocket of brown bears appeared headed for extinction in the Pyrenees in the 1990s, the country began importing animals from Slovenia, where the population is booming. A total of eight were freed into the wild in 1996, 1997 and 2006. Another release of two Slovenian female bears — Claverina and Sorita — followed in 2018, the first full year of Macron's presidency.

The population is now estimated at around 40 bears, doubling its size since 2010 and roaming over a long and expanding swath of the mountains that form the border between France and Spain, stretching from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic.

Bear attacks on livestock have grown, too. Having long been largely stable, mostly between 100 and 200 attacks per year across the Pyrenees, including Spain, France and Andorra, they surged to close to 400 in 2018, according to the most recent official annual report.

Herders who suffered included one of Pommies' friends, whose flock was devastated in an attack last year, he said. The sheep took fright and plunged off a cliff together.

"There were 256 piled up at the bottom," he said. "They had to finish some of them off with their knives. For us shepherds, that is traumatic."

He believes the presence of the predators is simply "incompatible" with the Pyrenean mountain economy that rests largely on herding.

"I love bears. I'm passionate about them as animals. But I love that they live happily in Yellowstone, in Canada, in Romania and Slovenia," he said. In the Pyrenees, "the people who are pro-bear say that it used to work for the old timers, that they used to deal with it. And that is completely false. History shows that men have always killed them."

The Pyrenees are only one of the battlegrounds in Europe over efforts to preserve wild fauna and flora. In France's other major mountain range, the Alps, wild wolves that also prey on flocks are a persistent source of tension between herders and those opposed to the deployment of large dogs to keep wolf packs at bay.

In Germany, wolves have been a source of political friction. The far-right opposition Alternative for Germany party accused the government of failing to defend farmers' interests against the 75 wolf packs counted there in 2018. There is also debate in Belgium about the reappearance of wolves after infrared cameras spotted a pair together in woods and a pregnant wolf was killed in northern Belgium last summer.

Slovenia's brown bear population is so plentiful that authorities are culling the animals that are becoming a headache for farmers, raiding beehives and even attacking people in the small Alpine state. Around 170 bears were shot in 2019, said Damjan Orazem, the Forest Service director.

Herders including Pommies pounced on Macron to talk about the Pyrenees' bears when the French leader turned up at the Tour de France last year on a day when the bicycle race swung through the peaks. Pommies said he threatened to release his animals into the riders' path unless Macron agreed to a meeting. That brief encounter elicited a pledge from Macron that he'd hold talks with them at length at a later

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date, an offer he made good on this week.

Emmanuelle Wargon, a deputy environment minister who attended the meeting, told broadcaster Sud Radio that Macron "reaffirmed that we don't have any plans to reintroduce (more) bears," adding: "It was important to tell them this."

For bear preservationists, herders are greatly exaggerating the risk posed by the predators. Alain Reynes, director of the group Country of the Bear, said he believes the actual number of animals killed by bears is far smaller than the 1,500, mostly sheep, that Pyrenean herders claim they lost last year.

Reynes also said that Macron's moratorium on bear releases can't last, because France is obliged by European law to ensure that the bear population remains viable.

"The president can only speak for the period of his mandate," he said. "There have always been bears. The history in the Pyrenees is one of cohabitation, even if it hasn't always been easy. ... There have been bears in Europe for 250,000 years. This is their space."

Associated Press writers Raf Casert in Strasbourg, France; Dusan Stojanovic in Belgrade, Serbia, and Mike Corder in The Hague contributed to this report.

Video: 20 seconds of terror between missiles in Iran crash

By JON GAMBRELL and EMILY SCHMALL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran's top diplomat acknowledged Wednesday that Iranians "were lied to" for days after the Islamic Republic accidentally shot down a Ukrainian jetliner. The admission came as new surveillance footage purported to show two surface-to-air missiles 20 seconds apart shred the airplane and kill all 176 people aboard.

The downing of the Ukraine International Airlines flight last week came amid heightened tensions between Iran and the U.S. over its unraveling nuclear deal. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani for the first time Wednesday threatened Europe by warning its soldiers in the Mideast "could be in danger" over the crisis as Britain, France and Germany launched a measure that could see United Nations sanctions re-imposed on Tehran.

The crash — and subsequent days of Iranian denials that a missile had downed the airplane — has sparked angry protests in a country already on edge as its economy struggles under crushing American sanctions.

Tensions between Washington and Tehran reached a fever pitch two weeks ago with the American drone strike in Baghdad that killed the powerful Revolutionary Guard Gen. Qassem Soleimani. The general had led Iranian proxy forces abroad, including those blame for deadly roadside bomb attacks on U.S. troops in Iraq.

Iran retaliated with a ballistic missile strike targeting Iraqi military bases housing U.S. forces early last Wednesday, just before Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard shot down the Ukrainian airliner taking off from Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport.

Iran for days afterward insisted a technical fault downed the 3½-year-old Boeing 737-800. It wasn't until Western governments, including Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, went public with their suspicions the plane had been shot down that Iran admitted it fired on the plane.

Not admitting the plane had been shot down "was for the betterment of our country's security, because if we had said this, our air defense system would have become crippled and our guys would have had doubted everything," said Gen. Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the head of the Guard's aerospace program, in television footage aired Wednesday.

Hajizadeh only days earlier apologized on state television and said: "I wish I were dead."

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, speaking at a summit in New Delhi, became the first official to describe Iran's earlier claims as a lie.

"In the last few nights, we've had people in the streets of Tehran demonstrating against the fact that they were lied to for a couple of days," Zarif said.

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Zarif went onto praise Iran's military for being "brave enough to claim responsibility early on."

However, he said that he and Rouhani only learned that a missile had downed the flight on Friday, raising new questions over how much power Iran's civilian government has in its Shiite theocracy. The Guard knew immediately afterward its missile downed the airline.

The Guard is answerable only to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who is expected to preside over Friday prayers in Iran for the first time in years over anger about the crash.

The new surveillance footage obtained by The Associated Press showing the missile fire was filmed off a monitor by a mobile phone. It appears to be taken near the town of Bidkaneh, northwest of Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport.

The two minutes of black-and-white footage purportedly shows one missile streaking across the sky and exploding near the plane. Ten seconds later, another missile is fired. Some 20 seconds after the first explosion, another strikes near the plane. A ball of flames then falls from the sky out of frame.

The footage corresponds with AP reporting, appears genuine and matches geographic features of the area. The date in the upper right-hand corner of the video appears to correspond to Iran's Persian calendar. It also explains how so many people filmed the shoot down: The first explosion drew their attention and their filming mobile phones to the predawn sky.

Amid all of this, Britain, France and Germany on Tuesday launched the so-called "dispute mechanism" pertaining to Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. Iran has been breaking limits of the accord for months in response to President Donald Trump's decision to unilaterally withdraw America from the deal in May 2018.

After Soleimani's killing, Iran announced it would no longer abide by any of the nuclear deal's limits, which had been designed to keep Tehran from having enough material to be able to build an atomic bomb if it chose. However, Iran has said it will continue to allow the United Nations' nuclear watchdog access to its nuclear sites.

Speaking before his Cabinet, Rouhani showed a rarely seen level of anger in wide-ranging remarks Wednesday that included the threat to Europe.

"Today, the American soldier is in danger, tomorrow the European soldier could be in danger," Rouhani said. "We want you to leave this region but not with war. We want you to go wisely. It is to your own benefit."

Rouhani did not elaborate.

European forces have been deployed alongside Americans in Iraq and Afghanistan. France also maintains a naval base in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, while Britain has opened a base in the island nation of Bahrain.

European Commission spokesman Peter Stano told reporters that officials were aware of the threats, but the European Union had no plans to leave Iraq. Italian Defense Minister Lorenzo Guerini told lawmakers his government has plans to increase Rome's troop levels at the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which 20% of all oil passes.

German Defense Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, meanwhile, made an unannounced visit Wednesday to the Azraq base in Jordan, where German troops serving in the fight against the Islamic State group are based. Germany wants to resume training Iraqi forces.

Rouhani also reiterated a longtime Iranian pledge that Tehran doesn't seek the bomb. That pledge comes amid Western fears that the time it would need to have enough material for a nuclear weapon is narrowing. Under the deal, experts estimated Iran needed a year.

Meanwhile on Wednesday, Iranian state media said the British ambassador to Iran, Robert Macaire, had left the country. Macaire departed after being given what the state-run IRNA news agency described as "prior notice," without elaborating. Britain's Foreign Office insisted Macaire's trip to London was "routine, business as usual" and was planned before his arrest and brief detention in Tehran on Saturday. He was detained after attending a vigil about the plane shoot down that turned into an anti-government protest. Britain said he planned return to Iran.

Schmall reported from New Delhi. Associated Press writers Nadia Ahmed and Jill Lawless in London,

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Yuras Karmanau in Kyiv, Ukraine, Lorne Cook in Brussels, Geir Moulson in Berlin and Frances D'Emilio in Rome contributed to this report.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Jan. 16, the 16th day of 2020. There are 350 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 16, 1991, the White House announced the start of Operation Desert Storm to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. (Allied forces prevailed on Feb. 28, 1991.)

On this date:

In 1547, Ivan IV of Russia (popularly known as "Ivan the Terrible") was crowned Czar.

In 1865, Union Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman decreed that 400,000 acres of land in the South would be divided into 40-acre lots and given to former slaves. (The order, later revoked by President Andrew Johnson, is believed to have inspired the expression, "Forty acres and a mule.")

In 1912, a day before reaching the South Pole, British explorer Robert Scott and his expedition found evidence that Roald Amundsen of Norway and his team had gotten there ahead of them.

In 1920, Prohibition began in the United States as the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution took effect, one year to the day after its ratification. (It was later repealed by the 21st Amendment.)

In 1969, two manned Soviet Soyuz spaceships became the first vehicles to dock in space and transfer personnel.

In 1978, NASA named 35 candidates to fly on the space shuttle, including Sally K. Ride, who became America's first woman in space, and Guion S. Bluford Jr., who became America's first black astronaut in space.

In 1987, Hu Yaobang resigned as head of China's Communist Party, declaring he'd made mistakes in dealing with student turmoil and intellectual challenges to the system.

In 1989, three days of rioting began in Miami when a police officer fatally shot Clement Lloyd, a black motorcyclist, causing a crash that also claimed the life of Lloyd's passenger, Allan Blanchard. (The officer, William Lozano, was convicted of manslaughter, but then was acquitted in a retrial.)

In 1992, officials of the government of El Salvador and rebel leaders signed a pact in Mexico City ending 12 years of civil war that had left at least 75,000 people dead.

In 2003, the space shuttle Columbia blasted off for what turned out to be its last flight; on board was Israel's first astronaut, Ilan Ramon (ee-LAHN' rah-MOHN'). (The mission ended in tragedy on Feb. 1, when the shuttle broke up during its return descent, killing all seven crew members.)

In 2004, pop star Michael Jackson pleaded not guilty to child molestation charges during a court appearance in Santa Maria, Calif.; the judge scolded Jackson for being 21 minutes late. (Jackson was eventually acquitted.)

In 2007, Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., launched his successful bid for the White House.

Ten years ago: As precious water and food began reaching parched and hungry earthquake survivors on the streets of Haiti's ruined capital Port-au-Prince, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton met with Haitian President Rene Preval (reh-NAY' preh-VAHL') and promised that U.S. quake relief efforts would be closely coordinated with local officials. Glen W. Bell Jr., 86, founder of the Taco Bell chain, died in Rancho Santa Fe, California.

Five years ago: Anti-terrorism raids across Europe netted dozens of suspects as authorities rushed to thwart more attacks by people with links to Mideast Islamic extremists. The NCAA agreed to restore 112 football wins it had stripped from Penn State and Joe Paterno in the Jerry Sandusky child-molestation scandal and to reinstate the venerated late coach as the winningest in major college football history.

One year ago: As she battled to keep Brexit on track, British Prime Minister Theresa May survived a no-confidence vote in Parliament. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi asked President Donald Trump to postpone

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his scheduled Jan. 29 State of the Union speech, citing concerns about whether the partially-shuttered government could provide adequate security; Republicans said the move was a ploy to deny Trump the stage. (Trump delivered the speech a week later than scheduled.) A suicide bombing claimed by Islamic State militants killed at least 16 people in northern Syria, including two U.S. service members and two American civilians.

Today's Birthdays: Author William Kennedy is 92. Author-editor Norman Podhoretz is 90. Opera singer Marilyn Horne is 86. Hall of Fame auto racer A.J. Foyt is 85. Singer Barbara Lynn is 78. Country singer Ronnie Milsap is 77. Singer Katherine Anderson Schaffner (The Marvelettes) is 76. Country singer Jim Stafford is 76. Talk show host Dr. Laura Schlessinger is 73. Movie director John Carpenter is 72. Actress-dancer-choreographer Debbie Allen is 70. Rhythm-and-blues singer Maxine Jones (En Vogue) is 61. Singer Sade (shah-DAY') is 61. Pop/rock singer-songwriter Jill Sobule is 61. Rock musician Paul Webb (Talk Talk) is 58. Actor David Chokachi (CHOH'-kuh-chee) is 52. Former Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta is 51. Actor-writer-director Josh Evans is 49. Actor-comedian Jonathan Mangum is 49. Actor Richard T. Jones is 48. Actress Josie Davis is 47. Model Kate Moss is 46. Actor-playwright Lin-Manuel Miranda is 40. Country musician James Young (The Eli Young Band) is 40. Rock musician Nick Valensi (The Strokes) is 39. Actress Renee Felice Smith is 35. NFL quarterback Joe Flacco is 35. Actress Yvonne Zima is 31.

Thought for Today: "I have noticed that the people who are late are often so much jollier than the people who have to wait for them." — E.V. Lucas, English writer and publisher (1868-1938).

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