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2020 Sturgis Rally Vehicle Counts

STURGIS, S.D. – Vehicle traffic counts from the South Dakota Department of Transportation for vehicles entering Sturgis for the 80th annual Sturgis motorcycle rally Aug. 7-16, 2020, are available and will be updated daily.

Traffic counts at nine locations entering Sturgis for the 2020 Rally are as follows:

Friday, August 7:	49,835 entering – down 4.3% from Friday last year
Saturday, August 8:	54,804 entering – down 8.0% from Saturday last year
Sunday, August 9:	56,149 entering – up 1.1% from Sunday last year

3-day total:

2020: 160,788	2019: 167,222	down 3.8 percent over last year
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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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**Allyssa Locke: Defensive MVP
Pictured with Coach Matt Locke**

**The varsity GBB (finally)
held its awards ceremony
for the 2019-20 season.**



**Gracie Traphagen: Third-Team
Northeastern Conference (NEC)
and the Hustle and Heart Award
Pictured with Coaches Trent
Traphagen and Matt Locke**



**Kaycie Hawkins: Coaches
Award, Tiger Award, Class A
Academic All-State.
Pictured with Coaches Trent
Traphagen and Matt Locke**



**Alyssa Thaler: Offensive MVP
Pictured with Coaches Trent
Traphagen and Matt Locke**

Thanks to Deb Gengerke for these photos!

Seven have opted for remote learning

Superintendent Joe Schwan reported that seven students have opted for remote learning instead of in-person education at the school. Five are in the elementary school and two in the middle/high school.

There was more discussion on the COVID-19 situation and how it can affect the school year. Athletics was discussed and Board Member Deb Gengerke basically compared it to a stop light - Green - Yellow - Red. The options are full fan support, a ticketing system, and parents only in attendance. A lot will be based on the new guidance from the Department of Health. Schwan said districts are still waiting for the DOH to launch the cases by school districts. Until then, the district has to go by Brown County COVID-19 cases which means a Tier 2 of limited fan support at events. Schwan said he anticipates full fan support if the district-wide COVID-19 case numbers are used.

There will be no two-courts for volleyball this year. The junior high will have their own nights for matches.

There was discussion on the state implementing random testing for school districts; however, Schwan said he was not sure of the value of the proposed system. In Groton, only one random staff per week would be tested. If there is a positive test, the 10-day isolation would begin from the day of the test and it could take 4-7 days before the test results are available. That would mean the staff member would be in isolation for just a few days. "It sounded like a great idea, but with only 1 test a week, I'm not sure it's that great of an idea," Schwan said.

There have been some other changes since the last school board meeting. If someone is in isolation due to a positive test, they can be released after 24 hours of being fever-free without medication. It was 72 hours. And just because someone has close contact does not mean they have to be quarantined. In addition, just because there is a positive case in the school does not mean the school will automatically be shut down.

There was discussion on the classification of school personnel. Schwan said all school staff members should be considered essential. The Associated School Boards of South Dakota (ASBSD) board is working on a policy to deal with essential staff members.

There are more decisions coming from the SDHSAA and the ASBSD and there will likely be a special school board meeting before the first day of school.

The bus routes are mostly longer this year. Route 1 has 16 extra miles. Route 2 is up six miles. Route 3 is up nine miles. Route 4 is down 5 miles. Route 5 is down 5 miles, but only because an extra route (Route 8) was created to pick up the students in the Bath area resulting in 32 extra miles. Route 6 is up one mile and Route 7 has no change.

The resignation of Sarah Dennert was approved. She was a special education paraprofessional for three years in the elementary school.

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#169 in a series

Covid-19 Update: by Marie Miller

Things are looking up. I'll be convinced if this trend holds into tomorrow, and I hope it does. We're at 5,097,800 cases, having added 45,700 today, a 0.9% increase. At the moment, we have just nine states and territories showing a 14-day increase in new cases. There have been 497 new deaths reported today, a 0.3% increase to 162,959. This is a lot of funerals, but if the downward trend continues, I'll be pleased.

In a flash of what we can only call the blindingly obvious, the WHO has declared Covid-19 "has demonstrated no seasonal pattern."

Despite remaining questions about reporting after a major systems problem, California hospitalizations and ICU admissions, on a different system so unaffected by that problem, are down nearly 20% and 15% respectively.

Here's some good news: New cases have gone down 11.5%. Deaths have declined by 7%. This is the second time in four days that week-over-week numbers have declined for both. Test positivity rates (the percentage of tests that come back positive) have decreased from 8% to 6.6%. This means we're at a point that looks like decline. I'll hope it continues. On the other hand, we hit 20 million cases worldwide and nearly three-quarters of a million deaths; this is mind-boggling.

Here's an unsettling news flash: At least 97,000 children tested positive for Covid-19 in the last two weeks in July. That's more than a fourth of the 338,000 children who've been identified since we started this thing. Hard telling whether this is because more children are actually being infected or we're finally just now getting around to testing children on a wider basis; but that's a lot of kids. The highest increases in child infections were seen in Alaska, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, Oklahoma, and Missouri. The lowest increase in child infections was in the Northeast. The rare inflammatory disease that's showed up in children, Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in children (MIS-C), was reported in 570 children, most of whom were healthy before the infection. A huge proportion of these cases were seen in people of color: 40% were Hispanic or Latino, 33% were black, and 13% were white. Very few children are dying of this infection, even compared to their relatively lower numbers of infections compared with any other age group. A complicating factor, though, is that children tend to be asymptomatic. While that's great for the kids, it's bad for contact tracing because it means children don't show up as infected even though they do transmit infections. If we doubted that, there is unsettling news from Israel. In the school outbreak there which we talked about a week or two ago, contact tracing has confirmed there is a child who transmitted the virus to 25 teachers at one school. Not only can children transmit the infection, they can serve as super-spreaders. That certainly puts a kink in the works.

That kink is amplified by this from the Washington Post: "Medical history tells us that children's role in infectious diseases is not always what we first assume. In 1960, in response to significant deaths among the elderly during the 1957-1958 influenza pandemic, the surgeon general recommended flu vaccines for people 65 and older. It wasn't until decades later that studies showed that mortality among older people could be reduced by vaccinating the young. In 2002, the CDC recommended flu shots for infants and in 2008 expanded that to school-age children."

And on the subject of kids, the Cherokee County, Georgia, school district has a problem. Forty-two teachers and 826 students have been quarantined after 12 staff members and 38 students have tested positive for Covid-19. And then there's that high school also in Georgia, whose student posted photos online of hallways crowded with unmasked students and has now reported nine positive test results—six students and three staff. They are going to online instruction for a couple of days while they disinfect and consider their situation. The school is recommending, but not requiring, masks; when asked why they don't just require them, the district superintendent said, "there is no practical way to enforce a mandate to wear them." Which has me wondering whether these are the same schools that hand out detentions like candy bars for having your shirt tail hanging out or wearing a billed cap or taking your backpack to class.

A new study indicates a change may be needed in our view of incubation periods for Covid-19. We've been thinking the median incubation period is around 5 days, with some as short as 2 days and nearly all

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cases showing up by 11 days. This study indicates the pre-symptomatic period may be longer than thought with a median around 7.75 days instead. This changes our understanding about relevant time periods for contact tracing and quarantine. This study looked at a much larger sample which makes its conclusions more credible than those of earlier studies. Researchers also concluded we may be underestimating the outside limits of the incubation period. We've been working with a 14-day quarantine period, and that may be too short. This study stretches that out as long as 20 days.

I listened to an interview with a coronavirus expert at the University of Texas Medical Branch, Vineet Menachery. He says there's a chance we'll be living with this virus forever, that it will never completely go away, even with a vaccine. Don't freak out; chances are that doesn't mean we'll be the way we are now forever. He thinks the virus will eventually slow down due to herd immunity—if we're lucky, from vaccine because achieving herd immunity through natural infection would be ugly, indeed. He says he'll be surprised "If we're still wearing masks and 6-foot distancing in two or three years." And he thinks over that time, the virus could become no bigger deal than the common cold—like several other coronaviruses.

He points out that we're not very good at eradicating viruses; smallpox is really the only one we've managed to do that with. We're close with poliovirus, but we're not there yet. And that's pretty much it. So if you were banking on it just disappearing, you're probably going to be disappointed. Even viruses that appear to have stopped circulating often lurk in the shadows just waiting for their opportunity.

We don't yet know how long immunity to this virus will last: It could be relatively short, less than a year, as with the common cold coronaviruses; or it could be longer, a few years, as with SARS and MERS. But it seems likely we'll keep adding immune individuals to the population through a combination of vaccination and natural infection, and as this happens, transmission will slow. And SARS-CoV-2 might become less serious. There is a theory afloat that this is what happened with at least one of the four common cold species of coronavirus, one called OC43; according to the theory, it started out causing severe disease and then after a few years moderated its effects. That would be nice.

Of course, as always, I'll point out there is much we don't know, and what you don't know can hurt you. We'll just wish researchers like Dr. Menachery well.

Something to consider as we look forward to a potential successful vaccine candidate is which people will experience greater or lesser benefits from it, and one group we haven't really addressed is the obese. We know most vaccines are less effective in individuals with obesity, and we know this group is also more likely to develop serious disease if they have Covid-19. As a result, there is every reason to expect the Covid-19 vaccine would not necessarily work well in those with obesity just as is true for other vaccines. More than 107 million Americans have obesity, and many experts expect a vaccine will not be very protective for them. Highest risk are those with body mass index (BMI) of 40 or more, about 9% of American adults. There is still a very high risk to those with BMI of 30 or more, and this category gets us to 42% of adults. That's a lot.

We know obesity interferes with normal immune responses because it is associated with chronic mild inflammation due to chemicals produced by fat cells. That chronic inflammation messes with all kinds of responses, including the response to a vaccine. We've known about this for more than 30 years, but haven't altered medical practice very much as a result. There are scientists pushing for more attention to the issue. Just as we've produced influenza vaccines tailored to the weakened immune responses of the elderly, it should be possible to design vaccines for the weakened responses of people with obesity. This would be a good time to get that project underway.

As vaccines move into phase 3 clinical trials, we're better able to project a possible timeline for getting something licensed and on its way to market. Here's what we have:

Moderna is currently enrolling participants in its phase 3 trial, which started enrollments and vaccinations on July 27; the goal is 30,000. They now have around 4500, which sounds like they're in trouble; but they had only 54 of their 89 sites operating by Friday. As the other sites get going, things should progress at a faster pace; so they may well meet their goal of completing enrollment in September. Pfizer is also enrolling phase 3 participants, expecting to meet their 30,000 goal in early September. They're both vaccinating

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as they enroll people, so that's underway.

Let's say both meet those enrollment targets in mid-September and have everyone vaccinated in the second half of the month. Both vaccine candidates are two-dose vaccines, so we have to wait 28 days before the second dose can be administered; so now we're up to mid-to-late October. Then it takes about two weeks for the vaccine to elicit a fully-effective immune response, which brings us to early November. Once we're at that point, we wait to see who gets infected, gather the data, analyze what we have, and submit paperwork to the FDA to initiate the approval process.

Remembering that each vaccine needs around 150 participants to get sick before we can establish a statistical probability that the vaccine is 50% effective (the FDA's minimum) in decreasing the number of infections or reducing their severity, we're probably looking at late November at best and more likely some time in December by the time we have sufficient data to make a call. The FDA has promised (and no one doubts) they will fast-track the approval process, so a vaccine can get licensed maybe (best-case) before Christmas if the trials go well, and then doses can flood the market.

I'm still thinking we're into the first couple of months of 2021 before we have a vaccine education and administration effort in progress. And then comes the slow work of showing these vaccines are effective without causing serious harm. It is quite remarkable we are where we are; but we have a ways to go yet.

Florence Rigney is an operating room nurse at Tacoma General Hospital in Tacoma, Washington: She helps to get the patient into the room, puts the monitors on, prepares the patient for surgery; she does instrument counting and sponge counting. At least she did. Until the pandemic. Now, her employer says it's too risky for her to work and won't let her come in, even though she really wants to and her co-workers all say they miss her. She calls every now and then, asking to come back; in fact, she called this week. "I had thought maybe I would go back in the month of August. But it seems as though the COVID cases are increasing in our area. And they didn't feel that it was a particularly good idea." They say it's too risky on account of her age, Florence explained to Scott Simon of NPR. "I tell people I'm 59."

She was kidding though. She's really 95, and she's the oldest working nurse in the United States—at least, she'd like to be if she can just get back to work. She's been working for nearly 74 years, mostly in the operating room. She has had to back away from some of the jobs she did when she was younger, "But I'm busy." Rigney really misses work and the people. "I will say that the days go by quickly. I have done continuing education classes since I've been at home. I do those on the computer. But it isn't like being there. And I'd rather be there and be busy."

I just thought we could all use a little Florence Rigney in our lives.

Take care. We'll talk tomorrow.

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Area COVID-19 Cases

	July 29	July 30	July 31	Aug. 01	Aug. 2	Aug. 3	Aug. 4
Minnesota	52,281	52,947	53,692	54,463	55,188	55,947	56,560
Nebraska	25,157	25,422	25,766	26,211	26,391	26,702	26,956
Montana	3,475	3,676	3,814	3,965	4,081	4,193	4,233
Colorado	45,314	45,796	46,204	46,809	47,267	47,727	47,968
Wyoming	2,136	2,172	2,217	2,259	2,297	2,333	2,364
North Dakota	6141	6227	6301	6468	6602	6660	6785
South Dakota	8492	8641*	8685	8764	8867	8955	9020
United States	4,352,304	4,427,493	4,495,224	4,566,275	4,620,502	4,667,957	4,718,249
US Deaths	149,260	150,716	152,075	153,391	154,449	154,860	155,478
Minnesota	+478	+666	+745	+771	+725	+759	+613
Nebraska	+258	+265	+344	+445	+458	+311	+254
Montana	+94	+201	+138	+151	+116	+112	+40
Colorado	+749	+482	+408	+605	+458	+460	+241
Wyoming	+64	+36	+45	+42	+38	+36	+31
North Dakota	+155	+86	+74	+167	+134	+58	+125
South Dakota	48	+149	+44	+80	+103	+88	+65
United States	+57,534	+75,189	+67,731	+71,051	+54,227	+47,455	+50,292
US Deaths	+1,204	+1,456	+1,359	+1,316	+1,058	+411	+618
	Aug. 5	Aug. 6	Aug. 7	Aug. 7	Aug. 9	Aug. 10	Aug. 11
Minnesota	57,162	57,779	58,640	59,185	60,101	60,898	61,516
Nebraska	27,178	27,489	27,821	28,104	28,245	28,432	28,696
Montana	4,314	4,429	4,602	4,757	4,889	4,952	5,017
Colorado	48,394	48,988	49,436	49,893	50,324	50,660	51,039
Wyoming	2,392	2,424	2,449	2,490	2,498	2,533	2,565
North Dakota	6933	7057	7177	7327	7508	7596	7713
South Dakota	9,079	9168	9273	9371	9477	9605	9663
United States	4,768,083	4,818,328	4,883,657	4,945,795	4,998,802	5,045,564	5,094,565
US Deaths	156,753	157,930	160,104	161,456	162,430	162,938	163,465
Minnesota	+602	+617	+861	+545	+916	+797	+618
Nebraska	+222	+311	+332	+283	+141	+187	+264
Montana	+81	+115	+173	+155	+132	+63	+65
Colorado	+426	+594	+448	+457	+431	+336	+379
Wyoming	+28	+32	+25	+41	+8	+35	+32
North Dakota	+148	+124	+120	+150	+181	+88	+117
South Dakota	+59	+89	+105	+98	+106	+129	+59
United States	+49,834	+50,235	+65,329	+62,138	+53,007	+46,762	+49,001
US Deaths	+1,275	+1,177	+2,174	+1,352	+974	+508	+527

* The July 29, 2020, daily update includes cases reported to the South Dakota Department between Monday, July 27 at 1 p.m. and Tuesday, July 28 at 7 p.m. due to a delay in the daily data extraction.

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August 10th COVID-19 UPDATE

Groton Daily Independent from State Health Lab Reports

The numbers in South Dakota really dropped today to just 59 positive cases, which is great news. Hand County got a case so they have been dropped from the fully recovered list. There were no deaths in South Dakota and one in North Dakota. The positivity rate for today in South Dakota is 5.4 percent and in North Dakota it's 10.0 percent. Brown County had one positive case and Spink County picked up an additional case. There are 50 active cases in Brown County and 8 in Spink County.

Brown County:

Total Positive: +4 (446) 6.2%
Recovered: +3 (393)
Active Cases: +1 (50)
Total Tests: +65 (5917)
Ever Hospitalized: +1 (21)
Deaths: 0 (3)
Percent Recovered: 88.1% (-0.1)

South Dakota:

Positive: +59 (9663 total) 5.4%
Total Tests: 1,091 (153,507 total)
Hospitalized: +6 (882 total). 63 currently hospitalized (up 8 from yesterday)
Deaths: No Change (146 total)
Recovered: +37 (8371 total)
Active Cases: +21 (1,146)
Percent Recovered: 86.6 -.1
Staffed Hospital Bed Capacity: 3% Covid, 44% Non-Covid, 53% Available
ICU Bed Capacity: 3% Covid, 59% Non-Covid, 39% Available
Ventilator Capacity: 5% Covid, 12% Non-Covid, 83% Available

Counties with no positive cases report the following negative tests: Harding (53)

Fully recovered from positive cases (Lost Hand): Bon Homme 13-13, Jerauld 40-39-1, Jones 2-2, Haakon 1-1, Hyde 3-3, Perkins 4-4, Potter 1-1, Stanley 14-14, Tripp 20-20.

The following is the breakdown by all counties. The number in parenthesis right after the county name represents the number of deaths in that county.

Aurora: 2 active cases
Beadle (9): +1 positive (21 active cases)
Bennett: 1 active cases
Bon Homme: Fully Recovered
Brookings (1): +2 positive, +1 recovered (27 active cases)
Brown (3): +4 positive, +3 recovered (50 active cases)
Brule (1): 5 active cases
Buffalo (3): 8 active cases
Butte: +1 positive (8 active cases)

Campbell: 2 active cases
Charles Mix: +1 positive (11 active cases)
Clark: 2 active cases
Clay: +2 positive, +2 recovered (17 active cases)
Codington (1): +4 positive (29 active cases)
Corson: +1 positive (10 active cases)
Custer: +1 positive (13 active case)
Davison (1): (16 active cases)
Day: 2 active cases
Deuel: 3 active cases
Dewey: 15 active cases
Douglas: 3 active cases

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Edmunds: +1 positive (6 active cases)
 Fall River: +1 recovered (5 active cases)
 Faulk (1): +1 positive (3 active cases)
 Grant: +1 positive (7 active cases)
 Gregory: 1 active case
 Haakon: Fully Recovered
 Hamlin: +1 positive (8 active cases)
 Hand: +1 positive (1 active case)
 Hanson: 4 active cases
 Harding: No infections reported
 Hughes (2): 13 active cases)
 Hutchinson: 5 active cases
 Hyde: Fully Recovered
 Jackson (1): 3 active cases
 Jerauld (1): Fully Recovered
 Jones: Fully Recovered
 Kingsbury: 3 active cases
 Lake (2): 16 active cases
 Lawrence: +5 positive, +1 recovered (32 active cases)
 Lincoln (2): +4 positive, +4 recovered (107 active cases)
 Lyman (1): 9 active cases
 Marshall: 2 active cases
 McCook (1): +1 positive (6 active cases)
 McPherson: 2 active cases
 Meade (1): +2 recovered (24 active cases)
 Mellette: 1 active case
 Miner: +2 recovered (2 active cases)
 Minnehaha (68): +15 positive, +9 recovered (391 active cases)
 Moody: 5 active cases
 Oglala Lakota (2): +1 positive, +2 recovered (23 active cases)

Pennington (32): +5 positive, +6 recovered (121 active cases)
 Perkins: 1 active cases
 Potter: Fully Recovered
 Roberts (1): 15 active cases
 Sanborn: Fully Recovered
 Spink: +1 positive (8 active cases)
 Stanley: Fully Recovered
 Sully: 1 active case
 Todd (5): 3 active cases
 Tripp: Fully Recovered
 Turner: +1 positive, +3 recovered (9 active cases)
 Union (4): +2 positive (33 active cases)
 Walworth: 1 active cases
 Yankton (2): +3 positive, +1 recovered (19 active cases)
 Ziebach: 11 active cases

North Dakota Dept. of Health Report COVID-19 Daily Report, August 10:

- 4,590 tests (1,167)
- 7,713 positives (+117)
- 6,434 recovered (+79)
- 113 deaths (+1)
- 1,166 active cases (+37)

AGE GROUP OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Age Range	# of Cases	# of Deaths
0-19 years	1229	0
20-29 years	2126	2
30-39 years	1885	6
40-49 years	1444	7
50-59 years	1424	17
60-69 years	857	25
70-79 years	377	24
80+ years	321	65

SEX OF SOUTH DAKOTA COVID-19 CASES

Sex	# of Cases	# of Deaths
Female	4769	75
Male	4894	71

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County	Positive Cases	Recovered Cases	Negative Persons	Deceased
Aurora	38	36	377	0
Beadle	594	564	1868	9
Bennett	6	5	537	0
Bon Homme	13	13	760	0
Brookings	139	111	2701	1
Brown	446	393	4432	3
Brule	45	40	739	0
Buffalo	109	98	634	3
Butte	18	9	790	1
Campbell	3	1	96	0
Charles Mix	104	93	1285	0
Clark	16	14	385	0
Clay	130	113	1313	0
Codington	137	107	2834	1
Corson	34	24	448	0
Custer	36	23	791	0
Davison	97	80	2348	1
Day	23	21	631	0
Deuel	11	8	403	0
Dewey	48	33	2080	0
Douglas	17	14	400	0
Edmunds	16	10	408	0
Fall River	22	17	971	0
Faulk	27	23	188	1
Grant	27	20	711	0
Gregory	7	6	390	0
Haakon	2	2	291	0
Hamlin	22	14	637	0
Hand	8	7	286	0
Hanson	21	17	209	0
Harding	0	0	53	0
Hughes	93	78	1715	2
Hutchinson	29	24	893	0

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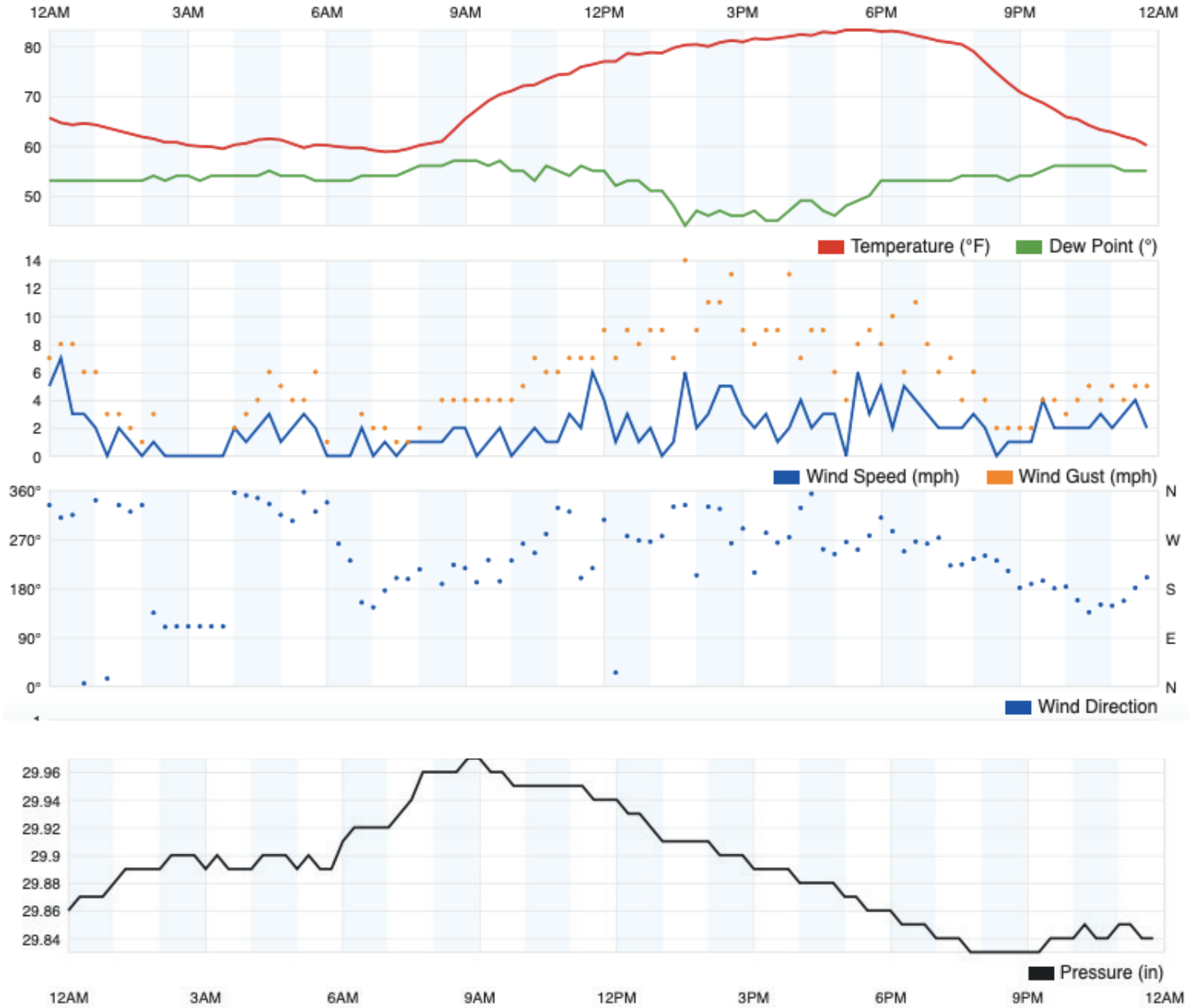
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Hyde	3	3	132	0
Jackson	11	7	481	1
Jerauld	39	38	269	1
Jones	2	2	59	0
Kingsbury	14	11	556	0
Lake	94	76	922	2
Lawrence	60	28	2106	0
Lincoln	642	533	6788	2
Lyman	90	79	947	2
Marshall	9	7	455	0
McCook	29	22	633	1
McPherson	8	6	215	0
Meade	94	69	1981	1
Mellette	24	23	383	0
Miner	15	13	253	0
Minnehaha	4437	3978	27310	68
Moody	32	27	630	0
Oglala Lakota	156	131	2930	2
Pennington	896	743	10945	32
Perkins	6	5	182	0
Potter	1	1	286	0
Roberts	80	64	1787	1
Sanborn	13	13	219	0
Spink	26	18	1141	0
Stanley	14	14	253	0
Sully	3	2	72	0
Todd	69	61	2085	5
Tripp	20	20	607	0
Turner	52	43	915	0
Union	216	179	1907	4
Walworth	18	17	691	0
Yankton	117	96	3066	2
Ziebach	35	24	296	0
Unassigned	0	0	7708	0

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



Sunny

High: 88 °F

Tonight



T-storms
Likely

Low: 64 °F

Wednesday



Chance
T-storms then
Mostly Sunny

High: 87 °F

Wednesday
Night



Chance
T-storms

Low: 70 °F

Thursday



Partly Sunny
then Chance
T-storms

High: 89 °F

SLIGHT RISK of Severe T-Storms

ISSUED: 5:21 AM - Tuesday, August 11, 2020

WHEN

Morning strong thunderstorms possible. Severe storms possible late this afternoon into the overnight.

WHAT

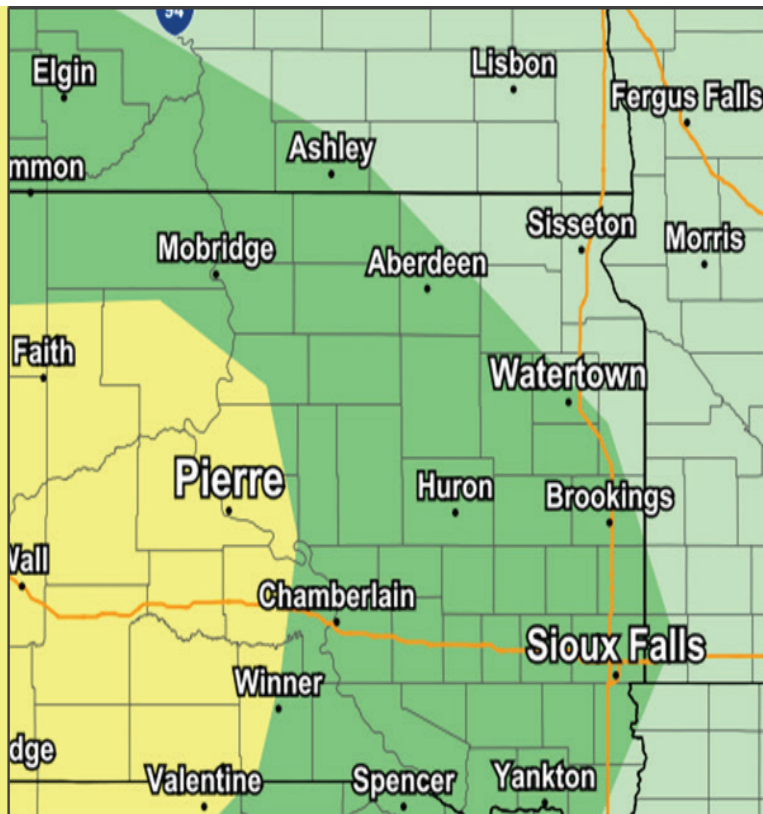
Isolated to scattered severe thunderstorms possible. These storms could produce **wind gusts up to 70 mph and large hail**.

WHERE

Slight risk for much of central South Dakota including Pierre. Marginal risk of severe storms elsewhere.

ACTION

Monitor the weather and have a plan of action if severe weather approaches your area.



NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

MARGINAL

Isolated Severe Storms Possible

SLIGHT

Scattered Severe Storms Possible

ENHANCED

Numerous Severe Storms Possible

MODERATE

Widespread Severe Storms Likely

An upper level low pressure trough will bring thunderstorms to the region today and tonight. Some of the storms could be severe mainly in central South Dakota.

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Today in Weather History

August 11, 1975: A line of thunderstorms raced across portions of central and eastern South Dakota during the early morning hours. Winds gusted to 70 mph, causing considerable damage to trees. At Canton, in Lincoln County, the winds were estimated as high as 70 mph. In Sioux Falls, the peak wind gust measured 69 mph. Wind damage was also reported in Miller and Ree Heights in Hand County, as well as in Selby and Mobridge in Walworth County.

August 11, 1985: Lightning set off eleven fires in the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation area. Twenty acres of grassland were burned two miles northeast of Bear Creek. About 600 acres of grassland were burned 8 miles southwest of Lantry. About 3,000 acres of grassland burned near Eagle Butte.

August 11, 2011: Severe thunderstorms brought hail up to the size of ping pong balls and damaging winds up to 90 mph to parts of central South Dakota. Jones and Lyman Counties received the brunt of the strong winds with eighty mph winds downing several grain bins along with knocking a few semis off of Interstate-90 near Murdo. The winds also downed some power lines and poles along with destroying a hanger. The two planes in the hanger were damaged at the Murdo Airport. Near Kennebec in Lyman County, eighty mph winds took shingles off the house and also damaged the deck. A barn was also destroyed with a horse being injured. Many tree branches were also downed.

1940: A Category 2 hurricane struck the Georgia and South Carolina coast. A 13-foot storm tide was measured along the South Carolina coast, while over 15 inches of rain fell across northern North Carolina. Significant flooding and landslides struck Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia during the system's slow trek as a weakening tropical storm, and then as an extratropical cyclone, through the Southeast. The landslides which struck North Carolina were considered a once in a century event. Damages relating to the storm totaled \$13 million (1940 USD), and 50 people perished.

1999: An F2 tornado touched down in the metropolitan area of Salt Lake City. The tornado lasted ten minutes and killed one person, injured more than 80 people, and caused more than \$170 million in damages. It was the most destructive tornado in Utah's history and awakened the entire state's population to the fact that the Beehive State does experience tornadoes.

1940 - A major hurricane struck Savannah, GA, and Charleston, SC, causing the worst inland flooding since 1607. (David Ludlum)

1944 - The temperature at Burlington, VT, soared to an all-time record high of 101 degrees. (The Weather Channel) The Dog Days officially come to an end on this date, having begun the third day in July. Superstition has it that dogs tend to become mad during that time of the year. (The Weather Channel)

1980 - Clouds and moisture from Hurricane Allen provided a brief break from the torrid Texas heatwave, with daily highs mostly in the 70s to lower 90s. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - An early evening thunderstorm in Wyoming produced hail up to two inches in diameter from Alva to Hulett. Snow plows had to be used to clear Highway 24 south of Hulett, where hail formed drifts two feet deep. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Moisture from what remained of Tropical Storm Beryl resulted in torrential rains across eastern Texas. Twelve and a half inches of rain deluged Enterprise TX, which was more than the amount received there during the previous eight months. Philadelphia PA reported a record forty-four days of 90 degree weather for the year. Baltimore MD and Newark NJ reported a record fourteen straight days of 90 degree heat. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - One of the most severe convective outbreaks of record came to a climax in southern California after four days. Thunderstorms deluged Benton CA with six inches of rain two days in a row, and the flooding which resulted caused more than a million dollars damage to homes and highways. Thunderstorms around Yellowstone Park WY produced four inches of rain in twenty minutes resulting in fifteen mudslides. Thunderstorms over Long Island NY drenched Suffolk County with 8 to 10 inches of rain. Twenty-three cities in the southeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date. It was, for some cities, the fourth straight morning of record cold temperatures. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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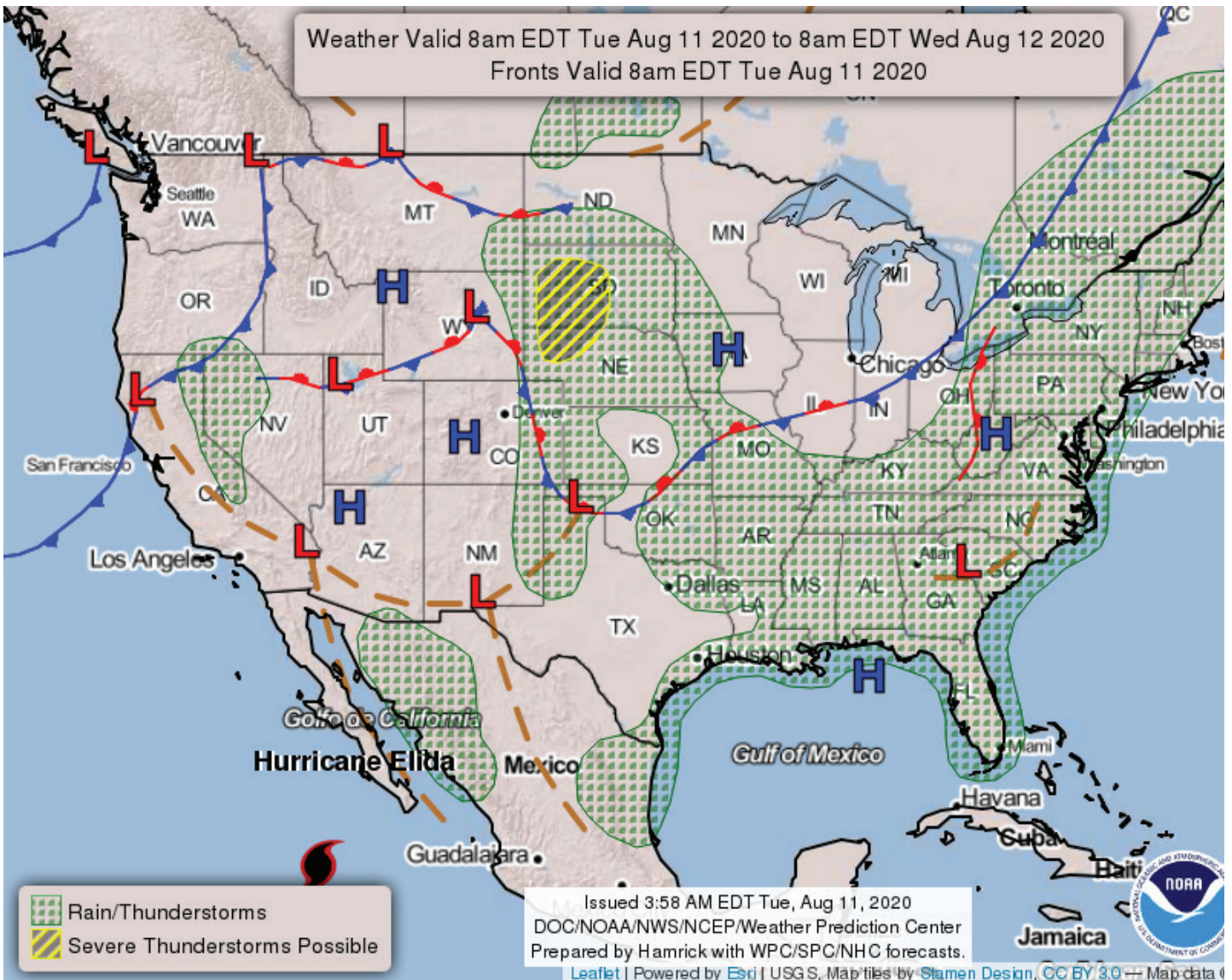
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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 83 °F at 5:42 PM
Low Temp: 59 °F at 7:13 AM
Wind: 14 mph at 1:45 PM
Precip: .00

Today's Info

Record High: 103° in 1988, 1965
Record Low: 34° in 1902
Average High: 83°F
Average Low: 58°F
Average Precip in Aug.: 0.79
Precip to date in Aug.: 0.45
Average Precip to date: 14.65
Precip Year to Date: 10.96
Sunset Tonight: 8:46 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:32 a.m.



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NEVER LEFT ALONE

A flight attendant noticed an elderly lady having a difficult time buckling her seat belt. Recognizing her anxiety and obvious fear, the flight attendant went to the captain and explained what she had seen. Graciously, he accompanied the attendant to the lady, and he asked, "May I help you, Ma'am?"

"Oh, yes," she replied. "This is my first flight. I must admit that I am rather frightened. Tell me, Sir, will you bring me back down safely?"

As he fastened her seat belt, he smiled politely and said, "Yes, Ma'am. I've flown hundreds of thousands of miles and never left anyone up there."

In the closing verse of Matthew, Jesus made one final, eternal promise to His disciples: "And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Have no doubt about Me!

What a precious and powerful promise: "I am with you always." But what does it mean? Would his memories be with us? Would his teachings be with us? Would His imprint on history be with us? Of course. But that is only the beginning.

"I am with you" leaves no doubt that after Jesus ascended into heaven, He would be with us through the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The Holy Spirit, available and active in our lives, is Jesus' presence within us and working through us. Jesus was with His disciples then, and today the Holy Spirit is with us now, always will be, and will never leave us. Ever.

Jesus said, "I am going away, but I will come back to you again!" And He did – through the Holy Spirit. And because of God's power through Christ, He continues to be with us today.

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for the assurance of Your presence in our lives. We are comforted to know that whatever comes into our life, You are there to protect us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Matthew 28:20

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2020 Groton SD Community Events

- **CANCELLED** Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt - City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- **CANCELLED** Dueling Piano's Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion
- **CANCELLED** Fireman's Fun Night (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- **POSTPONED** Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip
- **CANCELLED** Father/Daughter dance.
- **CANCELLED** Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, (1st Saturday in May)
- **CANCELLED** Girls High School Golf Meet at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services
- 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
- 07/16/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Golf Tourney
- 07/24/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Ferney Open Golf Tourney
- 07/25/2020 City-Wide Rummage Sales
- **CANCELLED** State American Legion Baseball Tournament in Groton
- 08/07/2020 Wine on Nine Event at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
- 09/13/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Couples Sunflower Classic
- 10/09/2020 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/31/2020 Downtown Trick or Treat
- 10/31/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat
- 11/14/2020 Groton Legion Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 11/26/2020 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center
- 12/05/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Tour of Homes & Holiday Party
- 12/05/2020 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services

News from the Associated Press

States strain to carry out Trump order on unemployment aid

By ALAN SUDERMAN, AAMER MADHANI and CHRISTOPHER RUGABER Associated Press

RICHMOND, Virginia (AP) — Governors and state labor department officials were scrambling Monday to determine whether they could implement President Donald Trump's executive order to partially extend unemployment assistance payments to millions of Americans struggling to find work in the pandemic-scarred economy.

Trump's order allocates \$44 billion in federal dollars from FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund to boost unemployment aid for the jobless and calls on states to kick in roughly \$15 billion. The Trump administration says states can pull from federal coronavirus relief funds already distributed to states earlier in the crisis.

But some states have already fully allocated that money for other critical needs.

Trump's actions on unemployment insurance and other relief aid were another expansive flexing of presidential authority that could usurp Congress's power to approve federal spending.

The order extends additional unemployment payments of \$400 a week to help cushion the economic fallout of the pandemic. Congress had approved payments of \$600 a week at the outset of the outbreak, but those benefits expired Aug. 1 and Congress has been unable to agree on an extension.

Many Republicans have expressed concern that a \$600 weekly benefit, on top of existing state benefits, gives people an incentive to stay unemployed. The White House described the \$400 level as an appropriate compromise, and top administration officials including Vice President Mike Pence on Monday urged governors in a private call to pressure Democratic lawmakers to come to a deal.

But Democrats have dismissed Trump's executive order as a hollow political gesture — not to mention legally questionable — that could ultimately leave millions of Americans without much-needed aid. Several governors said their states simply couldn't afford to chip in a quarter of the cost, even with the relief money previously approved by Congress.

That share would cost California \$700 million a week, Gov. Gavin Newsom said Monday. The state has already allocated 75% of the money that came from an earlier congressional package.

"There is no money sitting in the piggy bank," Newsom said. "It simply does not exist."

As Democrats grumbled that Trump's executive order was unworkable, top administration officials contended that Trump was taking action while House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., were sitting on the sidelines — even though the president has not taken any active role in the negotiations.

Trump also took to Twitter on Monday to ridicule Sen. Ben Sasse, calling him a "RINO" — a Republican in name only — after the Nebraska Republican called Trump's use of executive orders "unconstitutional slop."

White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany, meanwhile, asserted that the orders were "entirely within the executive capacity of the president" and pointed to statutes she said supports the legal justification to reallocate funding in times of emergency.

Some state officials, both Democrats and Republicans, said Trump's order could prove to be difficult to implement for technical reasons.

In Virginia, secretary of finance Aubrey Layne said that timing of the distribution of funds could be an issue. He noted FEMA often takes several months to reimburse emergency costs due to a hurricane, but have reimbursed personal protective equipment-related costs in several weeks.

Andrew Stettner, senior fellow at The Century Foundation and an expert on unemployment aid, said that it could take several weeks for jobless claimants to see the enhanced benefit given the states' difficulties in updating their unemployment systems.

"No one's getting a payment from this in August. If they're lucky, they'll get it in September," he said.

The \$44 billion that the Trump administration has set aside for the unemployment aid would run out in five or six weeks, Stettner added.

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State unemployment agencies struggled badly this spring and summer under the crush of tens of millions of applications, and in most cases took weeks to implement the extra \$600 payment after it was first approved.

For many jobless Americans, the enhanced benefit has been the difference-maker in keeping their heads above water financially.

"If I did not have (the \$600), I probably would not have been able to make it the past two months," said Rosa Howell-Thornhill, 62, a freelance audio technician from South Orange, New Jersey, who has seen work opportunities dry up.

In Ohio, the benefit might not take effect for weeks as officials sort out guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor for implementing it, said Dan Tierney, a spokesman for Gov. Mike DeWine, a Republican. Tierney said software changes may be required for the state's unemployment compensation computer system.

Many states also questioned whether they could afford the additional \$100 per week in the face of sharply reduced tax revenue.

McEnany told reporters that the statute requires 25% of the unemployment benefit be provided by states. Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin reiterated the 25% requirement in a White House call with governors Monday, but also sought to assure governors that the Trump administration would find a way to cover money that states allocate for unemployment through future legislation.

"We realize that some of you want to use those funds for other things," said Mnuchin, according to audio of the call obtained by The Associated Press. "And as part of legislation, if you do use those funds for UI, we will agree to make you whole."

In North Carolina, officials questioned whether it was sound policy to use FEMA funds set aside for natural disasters like hurricanes and tornadoes at a moment when forecasters are predicting a busy hurricane season.

"States shouldn't be forced to choose which disaster victims to help," said Dory MacMillan, press secretary for Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper.

Democratic governors said Trump was attempting to skate around the difficult work of negotiating — something the president as a candidate touted as a natural skill from his real estate career.

Maine Gov. Janet Mills, a Democrat, said the orders "appear to subordinate real relief for unemployed Americans to partisan gamesmanship, making Maine families a pawn in a cruel political game."

Officials in several Republican-leaning states praised Trump for working around Congress to try to help their state's workers, but some said they were still trying to figure out if the executive order will be workable.

Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, a Republican, said it would cost an estimated \$265 million and "would be challenging and would take some time" to sort out. The North Dakota Job Service, which handles unemployment claims, said in a statement that it had yet to determine "how or when we might be able to implement the actions outlined in the Executive Order and are awaiting further details."

In Georgia, GOP Gov. Brian Kemp praised Trump for taking action amid the congressional gridlock.

But Kemp, a Trump ally, offered no details on whether Georgia will contribute state funds toward the \$400 weekly unemployment payment.

"We're digging in on that issue," said Kemp, who said his office is in talks with Georgia's labor department and budget planning office.

Madhani reported from Chicago, and Rugaber reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Mike Catalani in Trenton, New Jersey; Brian Witte in Annapolis, Maryland; Stephen Groves in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Russ Bynum in Savannah, Georgia; Paul Weber in Austin, Texas; John Hanna in Topeka, Kansas; David Sharp in Portland, Maine; Andrew Welsh-Huggins in Columbus, Ohio; Andrew DeMillo in Little Rock, Arkansas; and Don Thompson in Sacramento, California, contributed to this report.

Authorities ID 33-year-old Rapid City man as stabbing victim

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have released the name of a 33-year-old Rapid City man who was

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fatally stabbed last week.

Police on Monday identified the victim as Lance Baumgarten. Police were called Thursday morning about a man found lying in the grass in Rapid City. Officers began life-saving measures, and the victim was taken to a hospital where he was pronounced dead.

A 29-year-old suspect from Box Elder was arrested Friday near Wanblee on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation by Oglala Sioux police on a federal warrant. The man was taken to the Pennington County Jail.

Dozens more positive coronavirus cases in South Dakota

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The number of coronavirus cases continues to climb in South Dakota for the third day in a row.

The South Dakota Department of Health said Monday the state has 59 new positive cases for a total of 9,663. Thirty-seven additional people have recovered from COVID-19 as of Monday for a total of 8,371 total recovered cases in South Dakota.

The death toll remains at 146.

Sixty-three additional people are currently hospitalized with the virus, an increase of eight since Sunday. A total of 111,814 people have tested negative, and increase of 522 from Sunday.

Two dead in motorcycle, car crash in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls police have identified the two victims who died in a traffic crash in Sioux Falls Sunday night.

Police spokesman Sam Clemens said a motorcycle collided with a van killing the drivers of both vehicles.

Clemens says the motorcycle operated by 31-year-old Franklin Griffith, of Parker, was attempting to make a turn when he collided with the van driven by 75-year-old Eldon Guericke, of Sioux Falls.

After speaking with several witnesses, police said they believe speed may have been a factor in the crash.

Global coronavirus cases top 20M as Russia registers vaccine

By NICOLE WINFIELD, ELAINE KURTENBACH and MARK STEVENSON Associated Press

ROME (AP) — The number of confirmed coronavirus cases worldwide topped 20 million, more than half of them from the United States, India and Brazil, as Russia on Tuesday became the first country to register a vaccine against the virus.

Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the registration at a government meeting and added that one of his two adult daughters had already been inoculated. "She's feeling well and has high number of antibodies," he said.

Russia has reported more than 890,000 cases, the fourth-most in the world, according to a Johns Hopkins University tally that also showed total confirmed cases globally surpassing 20 million.

It took six months or so to get to 10 million cases after the virus first appeared in central China late last year. It took just over six weeks for that number to double.

An AP analysis of data through Aug. 9 showed the U.S., India and Brazil together accounted for nearly two-thirds of all reported infections since the world hit 15 million coronavirus cases on July 22.

Health officials believe the actual number of people infected with the virus is much higher than that tally kept by Johns Hopkins University, given testing limitations and that as many as 40% of those with the virus show no symptoms.

In Europe, countries that appeared to have gotten their outbreaks under control during nationwide lockdowns and lifted many public restrictions worked to prevent a resurgence of the virus. Finland joined France and Germany in announcing it would test travelers from at-risk countries upon arrival.

Spain, which along with Italy was hardest hit when the virus first exploded on the continent, now has the most confirmed cases in western Europe at nearly 323,000. The number of new cases have risen steadily in Spain since its strict, three-month lockdown ended on June 21, reaching 1,486 on Monday.

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In Greece, which imposed strict lockdown measures early and kept its reported cases low during the height of the European epidemic, the government announced new measures Monday to prevent an outbreak. It ordered bars, restaurants and cafes in several regions to shut between midnight and 7 a.m.

Outside Europe, infection rates are exponentially higher.

The number of new cases reported daily continues to rise in India, hitting a rolling seven-day average of 58,768. In the U.S., which so far has more than 5 million confirmed cases, the daily average has decreased since July 22nd, but remains high at over 53,000.

South Africa has more than a half-million cases. In the country with the world's largest number of HIV-positive people, the virus has disrupted the supply of antiretroviral drugs that a United Nations agency says could lead to 500,000 additional AIDS-related deaths.

In the 45 days it took reported coronavirus cases worldwide to double to 20 million, the number of reported virus deaths climbed to 736,191 from 499,506, according to the Johns Hopkins count, an average of more than 5,200 a day.

About one-fifth of reported deaths, or more than 163,000, have been in the U.S., the most in the world.

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said Tuesday that authorities found four cases of the coronavirus in one Auckland household from an unknown source, the first cases of local transmission in the country in 102 days.

Caseloads are still rising quickly in many other countries, including Indonesia and Japan.

In Mexico, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, like Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro and U.S. President Donald Trump, seldom wears a mask and has resisted calls for a strict lockdown, saying Mexicans should be convinced to observe social distancing, not forced to do so by police or fines.

With nearly 500,000 cases and more than 50,300 deaths, Mexico has struggled with how to curb outbreaks given that just over half its people work off the books with no benefits or unemployment insurance.

A full lockdown would prove too costly for people with little savings and tenuous daily incomes, said Assistant Health Secretary Hugo López-Gatell, the president's point man on the epidemic.

"We do not want a solution that would, in social terms, be more costly than the disease itself," he said.

Mexico's relatively high death rate results partly from the country having one of the world's highest rates of obesity and diabetes. There has also been relatively little testing. Of all tests done, 47% are positive, suggesting that only seriously ill people are getting tests. That has hindered contact tracing.

India reported 53,601 new cases Tuesday as its count of total infections neared 2.3 million. Its reported case mortality rate, at 2%, is much lower than in the U.S. and Brazil.

In Japan, where outbreaks have been widening as officials urge people to consider this year's summer holidays "special" and stay home, the rate of positive tests in Tokyo, the country's worst hit region, has been climbing but remains at 7%.

Vietnam went from having reported no confirmed deaths and very few cases to battling fresh outbreaks that emerged in the seaside city of Danang.

Meanwhile, outbreaks in mainland China and semi-autonomous Hong Kong declined, with the number of new community infections in China falling to 13, all in the northwestern region of Xinjiang. Hong Kong counted 69 new cases.

Similar to many other Asian countries, China requires testing and a two-week quarantine of all new arrivals and has barred most foreigners from entering the country.

Border closures, masks, lockdowns and infection data are now the new way of life for much of the world, not the politically combustible topics they are in the U.S.

A review by the Kaiser Health News service and The Associated Press found that at least 49 state and local public health leaders have resigned, retired or been fired since April across 23 states. The list has grown by more than 20 people since the AP and KHN started keeping track in June.

Kurtebach reported from Mito, Japan. Stevenson reported from Mexico City. Associated Press journalist Nicky Forster in New York contributed to this report, as did other AP journalists from around the world.

Belarusian challenger leaves the country amid protests

By YURAS KARMANAU Associated Press

MINSK, Belarus (AP) — The top opposition candidate in Belarus' presidential vote, who refused to concede her defeat amid a massive police crackdown on protesters, said Tuesday she has left the country and is now in Lithuania.

Looking tired and distressed, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, a former teacher and political novice, apologized to her supporters in a video statement and said it was her own choice to leave the country.

"It was a very hard decision to make," she said. "I know that many of you will understand me, many others will condemn me and some will even hate me. But God forbid you ever face the choice that I faced."

In another video statement later, she urged her supporters to respect the law and avoid clashes with police.

The unexpected move led some of her supporters to speculate that she may have been acting under duress. Tsikhanouskaya's husband is in prison in Belarus.

Tsikhanouskaya previously dismissed the official results of Sunday's election showing authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko winning a sixth term by a landslide. Thousands of opposition supporters who also protested the results met with a tough police crackdown in Minsk and several other Belarusian cities for two straight nights.

On Monday, a protester died amid the clashes in Minsk and scores were injured as police used tear gas, flash-bang grenades and rubber bullets to disperse the demonstrators. The Interior Ministry said the victim intended to throw an explosive device, but it blew up in his hand and killed him.

The ministry said Tuesday that more than 2,000 people were detained across the country for taking part in unsanctioned protests on Monday evening and overnight. It added that 21 police officers were injured in clashes with protesters, and five of them were hospitalized.

The previous day, the Interior Ministry reported more than 3,000 detentions and said that 89 people were injured, including 39 law enforcement officers.

Lukashenko, who has led the ex-Soviet nation of 9.5 million with an iron fist since 1994, derided the opposition as "sheep" manipulated by foreign masters and vowed to continue the tough crackdown on protests despite Western rebukes.

Election officials said Lukashenko won a sixth term in office with 80% of the vote, while Tsikhanouskaya got 10%.

When asked on Monday if she was planning to go abroad to avoid being arrested, Tsikhanouskaya said she had no such plan and saw no reason why she would be arrested.

But after submitting her formal demand for a recount to Belarus' Central Election Commission, she told her allies: "I have made a decision, I must be with my children."

Speaking in the video statement from Lithuania, she emphasized that "children are the most important thing in our lives" and conceded her weakness.

"I thought that the campaign had tempered me and make me so strong that I could resist anything," said Tsikhanouskaya, her face haggard and her voice breaking. "But it appears that I have remained the same weak woman that I was before."

She had previously sent her children to an unspecified European country after receiving threats.

Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Linkevicius was the first to announce Tsikhanouskaya's departure, saying on Twitter that she is now "safe" in Lithuania.

"She has the right to make any choice," Tsikhanouskaya's campaign spokeswoman, Anna Krasulina, told The Associated Press Tuesday. "She has done great things for the country. She has woken up the Belarusians."

Another aide, Olga Kovalkova, said that Tsikhanouskaya was driven out of the country by the authorities after spending hours at the election commission. "We don't know what kind of pressure she was subjected to and how they tried to break her," she told the AP.

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She said that Tsikhanouskaya left the country with her campaign chief, Maria Moroz, who was detained over the weekend. Several other campaign aides have remained in custody.

Tsikhanouskaya, a 37-year-old former English teacher without any prior political experience, entered the race after her husband, an opposition blogger who had hoped to run for president, was arrested in May. She has managed to unite fractured opposition groups and draw tens of thousands to her campaign rallies — the largest opposition demonstrations in Belarus since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

“We don’t agree with (the election results), we have absolutely opposite information,” Tsikhanouskaya told the AP on Monday. “We have official protocols from many poll stations, where the number of votes in my favor are many more times than for another candidate.”

Economic damage caused by the coronavirus and Lukashenko’s swaggering response to the pandemic, which he airily dismissed as “psychosis,” has fueled broad anger, helping swell the opposition ranks. The post-election protest, in which young demonstrators — many of them teenagers — confronted police, marked a previously unseen level of violence.

Rumors that Tsikhanouskaya had left the country began circulating among the protesters as they confronted police overnight, but the news didn’t discourage them from continuing their resistance.

“She had a clear choice: to be in a Belarusian jail or to remain free in Lithuania,” said 21-year-old protester Kirill Kulevich. “Tsikhanouskaya has called herself a symbol of change, but they are forcing us to continue living as before.”

Another protester, 20-year-old Anna Vitushko, said that protests will continue.

“People are protesting against the crude falsifications, and her departure doesn’t mean anything,” Vitushko said. “If Lukashenko won 80%, why does he need riot police, rubber bullets and water cannons? They can cheat a few percent of the population, but they can’t cheat the entire country.”

Scores were detained as police relentlessly dispersed scattered groups of protesters in Minsk overnight.

The police crackdown on protesters drew harsh criticism from the European Union and the United States and will likely complicate Lukashenko’s efforts to mend ties with the West amid tensions with his main ally and sponsor, Russia.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement that the election was not “free and fair,” and added: “We strongly condemn ongoing violence against protesters and the detention of opposition supporters.”

The European Union condemned the police crackdown and called for an immediate release of all those detained.

In a joint statement, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell and the EU commissioner responsible for relations with Europe’s close neighbors, Oliver Varhelyi, lamented that “the election night was marred with disproportionate and unacceptable state violence against peaceful protesters.”

Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow and Liudas Dapkus in Vilnius, Lithuania, contributed to this report.

The Latest: Virus reemerges in New Zealand after 102 days

By The Associated Press undefined

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern says that authorities have found four cases of the coronavirus in one Auckland household from an unknown source, the first cases of local transmission in the country in 102 days.

Ardern said Auckland, the nation’s largest city, will be moved to Alert Level 3 from midday Wednesday, meaning that people will be asked to stay at home and bars and many other businesses will be closed.

She said the rest of the country will be raised to Alert Level 2.

Director-General of Health Ashley Bloomfield said the infections were confirmed after a person in their 50s went to their doctor on Monday with symptoms and was swabbed twice, testing positive both times. Six other people in the person’s household were then tested, with three more positive results.

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HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE VIRUS OUTBREAK:

- Russia clears virus vaccine despite scientific skepticism
- Global coronavirus cases top 20 million, doubling in 45 days
- Virus surge makes U.S. weak link in global economic recovery
- New York's true nursing home death toll cloaked in secrecy

Follow AP's pandemic coverage at <http://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

HERE'S WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING:

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — The confirmed number of coronavirus cases in the world has reached 20 million. That's according to the tally kept by Johns Hopkins University.

Health officials believe the actual number is much higher, given testing limitations and the fact that as many as 40% of all those who are infected have no symptoms.

The U.S., India and Brazil have together accounted for nearly two-thirds of all cases since the world hit 15 million on July 22.

BEIJING — The number of new community infections reported in China fell to just 13 on Tuesday, while the semi-autonomous city of Hong Kong saw a further decline to 69 new cases.

The mainland also saw 31 new cases brought by Chinese travelers from abroad arriving at eight different provinces and cities. China requires testing and a two-week quarantine of all new arrivals and has barred most foreigners from entering the country.

All new locally transmitted cases were in the northwestern region of Xinjiang, whose main city, Urumqi, has been at the center of the country's latest major outbreak.

China has reported a total of 4,634 deaths from COVID-19 among 84,712 cases. Hong Kong has been bringing numbers of new cases down since its latest outbreak last month, partly by mandating mask wearing in public settings and stepping-up social distancing restrictions. The territory has reported 4,148 cases and 55 deaths.

LONDON -- P&O Cruises, the U.K.'s largest cruise line, has pushed back the restart of its operations by a month until November.

It said this was due to the British government's decision to advise people to avoid cruises as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Sailings, which had been due to resume on Oct. 15, have been canceled until Nov. 12.

Two trips with longer itineraries due to begin in January — Aurora's Caribbean and South America Adventure and Arcadia's World Cruise — have also been suspended.

The industry faces a particularly uncertain future after many passengers tested positive for the virus in the early days of the pandemic in February and March.

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — Travelers from so-called risk countries will be tested upon arrival in Finland after a large group of people arriving on a plane from North Macedonia over the weekend tested positive for the coronavirus.

Krista Kiuru, Finland's minister for Family Affairs and Social Services, said late Monday the Nordic country will introduce the mandatory testing as soon as possible.

Whether they will carry out random sampling "or test everyone who comes across borders, is still unclear" she said.

Mika Salminen of Finland's National Institute for Health and Welfare said a large part of the world's countries are considered risk countries.

Tests will be made on anyone arriving from a country with more than 8 to 10 new COVID-19 cases per

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100,000 inhabitants in the past 14 days.

On Saturday, a plane from Skopje, North Macedonia, with 157 passengers landed in Turku, western Finland, and 24 turned out positive during voluntary tests, authorities said.

Salminen said that "on the whole the situation is relatively calm in Finland." The Nordic country has seen a total of 7,601 cases and 333 deaths.

ISLAMABAD -- Pakistan's planning minister is warning his countrymen that their "victory" against the coronavirus could be reversed if they stop adhering to social distancing rules.

Asad Umar praised people on Tuesday for cooperating with the government since March, when a nationwide lockdown was enforced amid increasing COVID-19 deaths and infections.

His warning comes a day after Pakistan eased almost all restrictions on businesses. Schools have still not been reopened.

It also comes a day after the incoming president of the United Nations General Assembly, Volkan Bozkir, during a visit to Islamabad praised Pakistan for quickly containing the coronavirus, saying the South Asian nation's handling of the pandemic is an example for others.

Pakistan reported its first confirmed case in February and witnessed a peak in deaths and infections in June. Since then, it has experienced a steady decline in fatalities.

On Tuesday it reported 15 fatalities from the coronavirus in the past 24 hours, raising its total COVID-19-related fatalities to 6,112.

JAKARTA, Indonesia -- Indonesia has started the third phase of clinical trials for a COVID-19 vaccine in Bandung, West Java. State-owned company Bio Farma is running the trial in partnership with Chinese coronavirus vaccine developer Sinovac Biotech.

Twenty volunteers were injected Tuesday at Padjadjaran University's Medical Faculty, with President Joko Widodo attending. The first and second clinical phases were conducted earlier in China.

"We hope that this third clinical trial will be completed in six months. Hopefully we can produce in January, and if production is ready, vaccinate all people in the country," Widodo said.

A total of 120 volunteers will participate in the initial trial group. The next will be held in the third week and fourth week of this month and involve 144 volunteers. In early September, 408 more volunteers will receive vaccine tests. The injection and monitoring of the trial participants will be conducted until the third week of December.

On Tuesday, Indonesia announced 1,693 new COVID-19 cases, bringing its confirmed total to 128,776. The National Task Force for COVID-19 Mitigation reported that 59 people died in the last 24 hours, taking the death toll to 5,824.

NEW DELHI, India — India reported 53,601 new coronavirus cases on Tuesday as its total confirmed infections near 2.3 million.

The Health Ministry said fatalities reached 45,257 on Tuesday after 871 new deaths were recorded.

India has been posting an average of around 50,000 new cases a day since mid-June.

The Indian Council of Medical Research, India's top medical research body, said about 25 million tests for the virus have been conducted in the country.

Health experts say the country needs to test more people given its high population. A country of 1.4 billion people, India has been conducting a little less than 18,000 tests per million population.

India has the third-highest caseload in the world after the United States and Brazil. It has the fifth-most deaths but its fatality rate of about 2% is far lower than the top two hardest-hit countries.

Powerful derecho leaves path of devastation across Midwest

By RYAN J. FOLEY and SETH BORENSTEIN Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — A rare storm packing 100 mph winds and with power similar to an inland

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hurricane swept across the Midwest, blowing over trees, flipping vehicles, causing widespread property damage and leaving hundreds of thousands without power as it moved through Chicago and into Indiana and Michigan.

The storm known as a derecho lasted several hours Monday as it tore from eastern Nebraska across Iowa and parts of Wisconsin and Illinois, had the wind speed of a major hurricane, and likely caused more widespread damage than a normal tornado, said Patrick Marsh, science support chief at the National Weather Service's Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Oklahoma.

In northern Illinois, the National Weather Service reported a wind gust of 92 mph near Dixon, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) west of Chicago, and the storm left downed trees and power lines that blocked roadways in Chicago and its suburbs. After leaving Chicago, the most potent part of the storm system moved over north central Indiana by late afternoon.

"It ramped up pretty quick" around 7 a.m. Central time in Eastern Nebraska. I don't think anybody expected widespread winds approaching 100, 110 mph," Marsh said.

A derecho is not quite a hurricane. It has no eye and its winds come across in a line. But the damage it is likely to do spread over such a large area is more like an inland hurricane than a quick more powerful tornado, Marsh said. He compared it to a devastating Super Derecho of 2009, which was one of the strongest on record and traveled more than 1,000 miles in 24 hours, causing \$500 million in damage, widespread power outages and killing a handful of people.

"This is our version of a hurricane," said Northern Illinois University meteorology professor Victor Genisini. He said Monday's derecho will go down as one of the strongest in recent history and be one of the nation's worst weather events of 2020.

Several people were injured and widespread property damage was reported in Marshall County in central Iowa after 100 mph winds swept through the area, said its homeland security coordinator Kim Elder.

Elder said winds blew over trees, flipped cars, downed power lines, ripped up road signs and tore roofs off buildings, some of which caught fire.

"We had quite a few people trapped in buildings and cars," Elder said, adding that the extent of injuries was unknown and no fatalities had been reported. "We're in life-saving mode right now."

Marshalltown Mayor Joel Greer declared a civil emergency, telling residents to stay home and off the streets so that first responders could respond to calls.

MidAmerican Energy said nearly 101,000 customers in the Des Moines area were without power after the storm moved through the area. Reports from spotters filed with the National Weather Service in Des Moines had winds in excess of 70 mph.

Roof damage to homes and buildings was reported in several Iowa cities, including the roof of a hockey arena in Des Moines. Across the state, large trees fell on cars and houses. Some semi-trailers flipped over or were blown off highways.

Farmers reported that some grain bins were destroyed and fields were flattened, but the extent of damage to Iowa's agriculture industry wasn't immediately clear.

MidAmerican spokeswoman Tina Hoffman said downed trees made it difficult in some locations for workers to get to power lines. In some cases, power line poles were snapped off.

"It's a lot of tree damage. Very high winds. It will be a significant effort to get through it all and get everybody back on," Hoffman said. "It was a big front that went all the way through the state."

Cedar Rapids, Iowa, had "both significant and widespread damage throughout the city," said public safety spokesman Greg Buelow. Tens of thousands of people in the metro area were without power.

"We have damage to homes and businesses, including siding and roofs damaged," he said. "Trees and power lines are down throughout the entire city."

Cedar Rapids on Monday night issued a 10 p.m. curfew that will continue until further notice, as crews worked to clean up fallen debris.

What makes a derecho worse than a tornado is how long it can hover in one place and how large an area the high winds hit, Marsh said. He said winds of 80 mph or even 100 mph can stretch for "20, 30,

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40 or God forbid, 100 miles.”

What happened Monday morning was the result of unstable, super moist air that had parked for days over the northern plains and finally ramped up into a derecho.

“They are basically self-sustaining amoebas of thunderstorms,” Gensini said. “Once they get going like they did across Iowa, it’s really hard to stop these suckers.”

Dereches, with winds of at least 58 mph, occur about once a year in the Midwest. Rarer than tornadoes but with weaker winds, dereches produce damage over a much wider area.

The storms raced over parts of eastern Nebraska before 9 a.m. Monday, dropping heavy rains and high winds. Strong straight-line winds pushed south into areas that include Lincoln and Omaha, National Weather Service meteorologist Brian Barjenbruch said.

“Once that rain-cooled air hit the ground, it surged over 100 miles, sending incredibly strong winds over the area,” Barjenbruch said.

Omaha Public Power District reported more than 55,500 customers without power in Omaha and surrounding communities.

Marsh said there’s concern about widespread power outages across several states. Add high heat, people with medical conditions that require power and the pandemic, and he said “it becomes dire pretty quickly.”

Borenstein reported from Kensington, Maryland. AP reporter David Pitt in Des Moines and Sara Burnett in Chicago contributed.

5 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. RUSSIA REGISTERS VIRUS VACCINE Vladimir Putin says that a coronavirus vaccine developed in his country has been registered for use and one of his daughters has already been inoculated, despite international skepticism.

2. ‘IT WAS A CASCADING EFFECT’ New York’s coronavirus death toll in nursing homes could be a major undercount because it includes only residents who died on nursing home property and not at hospitals, AP finds.

3. CORONAVIRUS HITTING ANTI-AIDS EFFORT HARD Across Africa and around the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the supply of antiretroviral drugs to many of the millions of people who take them, endangering their lives.

4. SEATTLE’S TOP COP STEPPING DOWN The move by Carmen Best, the city’s first Black police chief, was made public the same day the City Council approved reducing the department by as many as 100 officers through layoffs and attrition.

5. ANGELINA JOLIE SEEKS JUDICIAL CHANGE The “Changeling” actor asks that the private judge overseeing her divorce from Brad Pitt be disqualified because of insufficient disclosures of his business relationships with one of Pitt’s attorneys.

Russia clears virus vaccine despite scientific skepticism

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia on Tuesday became the first country to clear a coronavirus vaccine and declare it ready for use, despite international skepticism. President Vladimir Putin said that one of his daughters has already been inoculated.

Putin emphasized that the vaccine underwent the necessary tests and has proven efficient, offering a lasting immunity from the coronavirus. However, scientists at home and abroad have been sounding the alarm that the rush to start using the vaccine before Phase 3 trials — which normally last for months and involve thousands of people — could backfire.

Speaking at a government meeting Tuesday, Putin said that the vaccine has undergone proper testing

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and is safe.

"I know it has proven efficient and forms a stable immunity, and I would like to repeat that it has passed all the necessary tests," he said. "We must be grateful to those who made that first step very important for our country and the entire world."

The Russian leader added that one of his two adult daughters has received two shots of the vaccine. "She has taken part in the experiment," Putin said.

Putin said that his daughter had a temperature of 38 degrees Celsius (100.4 Fahrenheit) on the day of the first vaccine injection, and then it dropped to just over 37 degrees (98.6 Fahrenheit) on the following day. After the second shot she again had a slight increase in temperature, but then it was all over.

"She's feeling well and has high number of antibodies," Putin added. He didn't specify which of his two daughters — Maria or Katerina — received the vaccine.

The Health Ministry said in Tuesday's statement that the vaccine is expected to provide immunity from the coronavirus for up to two years.

Putin emphasized that vaccination will be voluntary,

Russian authorities have said that medical workers, teachers and other risk groups will be the first to be inoculated. Deputy Prime Minister Tatyana Golikova said that the vaccination of doctors could start as early as this month.

Professor Alexander Gintsburg, head of the Gamaleya Institute that developed the vaccine, said that vaccination will start while the Phase 3 trials continue. He said that initially there will be only enough doses to conduct vaccination in 10-15 of Russia's 85 regions, according to the Interfax news agency.

Russian officials have said that large-scale production of the vaccine will start in September, and mass vaccination may begin as early as October.

Russia has registered 897,599 coronavirus cases, including 15,131 deaths.

When the pandemic struck Russia, Putin ordered state officials to shorten the time of clinical trials for potential coronavirus vaccines.

Becoming the first country in the world to develop a vaccine was a matter of national prestige for the Kremlin as it tries to assert the image of Russia as a global power. State television stations and other media have praised scientists working on it and presented the work as the envy of other nations.

Gintsburg raised eyebrows in May when he said that he and other researchers tried the vaccine on themselves.

Human studies started June 17 among 76 volunteers. Half were injected with a vaccine in liquid form and the other half with a vaccine that came as soluble powder. Some in the first half were recruited from the military, which raised concerns that servicemen may have been pressured to participate.

Amid Russia's rush to become the first to create a vaccine, the U.S., Britain and Canada last month accused Russia of using hackers to steal vaccine research from Western labs.

As the trials were declared completed, questions arose about the vaccine's safety and effectiveness. Some experts scoffed at Russian authorities' assurances that the vaccine drug produced the desired immune response and caused no significant side effects, pointing out that such claims need to be backed by published scientific data.

The World Health Organization said all vaccine candidates should go through full stages of testing before being rolled out. Experts have warned that vaccines that are not properly tested can cause harm in many ways — from a negative impact on health to creating a false sense of security or undermining trust in vaccinations.

Constraints gone, GOP ramps up effort to monitor voting

By ERIC TUCKER and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Since 1937, the state of Pennsylvania has had strict rules about who can stand in polling stations and challenge the eligibility of voters. The restrictions are meant to curb the use of "poll monitors" long sent by both parties to look out for voting mishaps but at times used to intimidate voters.

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In June, the Republican National Committee sued to ease those rules, saying they imposed arbitrary limits on the party's ability to keep tabs on the voting process no matter where it occurs.

The Pennsylvania lawsuit over an obscure slice of election law is just one piece of the party's sweeping plan to expand poll monitoring this election year. Thanks to a federal court ruling that freed the party from restrictions — a result of tactics found to be aimed at minority voters — the GOP is mounting a broad effort to keep a close watch on who casts ballots.

The GOP is recruiting 50,000 monitors, typically party activists and specially appointed volunteers, across 15 battleground states. Meanwhile, the party has filed, or intervened in, lawsuits challenging election rules across the country, including cases in battleground states like Nevada, Wisconsin and Florida that challenge laws meant to ease access to absentee ballots and voting by mail.

Republicans say they are focused on preventing the fraud they have long maintained, without evidence, is rampant in U.S. elections. Democrats and voting rights groups fear the planned influx of poll watchers under the imprimatur of the RNC is a veiled effort to suppress Democratic turnout, particularly in minority communities.

The issue is especially contentious for two parties already clashing over how to protect the right to vote during a pandemic. As election officials prepare for an unprecedented surge of mailed ballots, both parties are gearing up for the possibility of protracted legal battles over how those votes are tallied, giving new weight to the question of who can monitor the count.

"By and large, these kinds of ballot security operations, especially in a heated partisan and polarizing environment and with the emotions surrounding elections — they risk crossing lines, causing disruptions," said Wendy Weiser, who directs the Democracy Program at the Brennan Center for Justice.

Republicans say the monitors they're recruiting will receive training to ensure they follow state laws. The real reason Democrats are objecting is because Republicans know that "the playing field has been leveled," said RNC spokesperson Mandi Merritt.

"We can do what Democrats and other Republican groups have been able to do for decades," Merritt said in a statement. "This is about getting more people to vote, certainly not less."

Democrats say they, too, have spent millions of dollars building up staff. They say their goal is to support voters who need questions answered and to combat what they say is a misinformation campaign aimed at suppressing turnout.

Former Vice President Joe Biden told those attending a July fundraiser that his campaign has 600 attorneys and 10,000 volunteers ready to ensure voters can cast ballots.

Traditionally, poll watchers monitor polling locations and can alert campaigns and party lawyers about perceived irregularities, including people being unfairly blocked from voting, identification laws not being followed or poor signage. In some states, citizen observers can lodge challenges against individual voters, kicking ballots to a review board or forcing them to be counted provisionally until the complaint is settled.

In 2020, when as many as half of ballots may be cast by mail, poll watching may extend to mail balloting, where boards that include observers from both parties often review individual ballots to determine whether they should be counted.

The Pennsylvania lawsuit seeks to overturn state law that says poll watchers may serve only in the counties where they live. Republicans are asking a judge to allow monitors to be present any place votes are cast, including any locations where absentee or mail ballots are returned.

Even before the coronavirus reconfigured the election, both parties were bracing for a titanic battle over voting in courts and at the polls.

Intensifying the conflict was a judge's 2018 decision to lift a consent decree, in place for nearly 40 years, that required the RNC to have court approval for organized poll monitoring activities, such as interrogating prospective voters about their qualifications before they cast ballots or deputizing civilians as law enforcement officials.

"There is no modern precedent for what to expect," said Marc Elias, who represents Democrats in voting rights lawsuits across the country.

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The 1982 agreement resolved a lawsuit that accused the RNC and the New Jersey Republican State Committee of voter intimidation tactics in that state's gubernatorial election one year earlier. Those included the hiring of off-duty law enforcement officers to patrol polling places in minority communities.

Newly freed from the decree, the RNC can now centralize what individual parties and campaigns and the states had to perform.

"For 40 years, the Republican Party has been fighting this battle with one hand tied behind its back," Justin Clark, now a senior counsel to Trump's campaign, told a conservative conference in March.

Democrats are concerned an organized poll-watching force could engage in the type of activity that produced the consent decree in the first place. The agreement was modified several times after Democrats raised new allegations that it had been violated, including in 1990 after the North Carolina State Republican Party sent postcards to Black voters warning them that submitting false information to a federal election official was a crime.

Republicans have given some clues as to how their poll watchers might be deployed.

The monitors will ideally both watch the setup of election systems, where Clark said the bulk of errors occur, and eyeball Election Day activity for possible fraud. Rather than solely focusing in Democratic bastions, they'll also spread out to smaller cities, such as Eau Claire, Wisconsin, where Trump will try to run up robust margins.

"What we're going to be able to do if we can recruit the bodies is focus on these places because that's where our voters are," Clark told a Republican lawyers group in Wisconsin in November, according to a recording posted online by the Democratic group American Bridge. "Traditionally it's always been Republicans suppressing votes in places, but let's start protecting our voters. We know where they are now."

Another Republican operative, Josh Helton, speaking at the March conservative conference, recalled organizing 2,000 volunteers to watch polling places in Philadelphia in 2016.

"Just having a presence of some sort is a deterrent for probably 80% of the bad behavior that is going to happen," Helton said. "If people are left unattended and unchaperoned in some of these areas where there is no Republican presence whatsoever, then they're going to cheat."

Democrats, for their part, have hired voter protection staffers in 19 states, created an online tool to warn voters they may be purged from registration systems, and launched toll-free numbers where voters could report problems.

"We have a really robust operation," said Rachana Desai Martin, Biden's voter protection director. "We have a ton of interest. My inbox is filled with people who want to help us protect the right to vote."

Riccardi reported from Denver.

Analysis: Trump has a go-to solution, and it's more Trump

By JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has a ready solution for almost any crisis: more Donald Trump.

In a template forged in his 2016 convention speech when he declared that "I alone can fix it," the president has repeatedly put himself forth as the answer, injecting himself into controversies and refusing to cede the spotlight. And that has only accelerated as he barrels toward Election Day.

He resumed the coronavirus task force briefings and, against the advice of some aides, sidelined the public health officials in favor of standing solo on stage. He has bet heavily that his one-on-one debates with Joe Biden will be his best chance to overcome his deficit in the polls.

Hustled to safety Monday by a Secret Service agent after a shooting just outside the White House gates, Trump reappeared at the podium minutes later and said, "I didn't even think about not coming back."

After initially staying on the fringes of stalled negotiations, he put himself at the center of the latest coronavirus economic relief effort by signing a series of executive actions that, while perhaps of limited legality and effectiveness, were intended to be viewed as a decisive action. He added that he was but a

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phone call away if House Speaker Nancy Pelosi wanted to talk.

"Part of the strategy is to suck out all of the oxygen in the room," said Michael Steele, the former Republican National Committee chair and Trump critic, adding: "The substance of the thing is not always the thing that matters. What matters is how the spotlight is hitting my forehead."

Like no president before him, Trump fixates on his media coverage, intent on not just winning a news cycle but winning any single moment's social media headline or cable news chyron, according to three current or former campaign officials not authorized to publicly discuss private conversations.

That emphasis on tactics rather than strategy, gunning for a short-term win without consideration that it could also lead to long-term trouble, has allowed the Republican president to survive threats that imperiled his presidency but also may have contributed to the polling slide that began soon after the coronavirus pandemic reached American shores.

For a moment, Trump seemed willing to let someone be the face of coronavirus response. Vice President Mike Pence chaired the task force and was poised to lead the briefings that would educate the public on the deadly virus.

But as the pandemic rattled Wall Street for the first time in late February, the president, just hours after returning from a trip to India, took the podium and didn't relinquish it for nearly two months. In the weeks that followed, as the news conferences grew increasingly scattershot, aides saw Trump's standing slide and the briefings were curtailed soon after the president mused about injecting disinfectant.

A new White House press secretary, Kayleigh McEnany, was brought in to revive press briefings. Yet Trump never relinquished idea of holding his own news conferences, complaining to aides that he missed the strong ratings the briefings generated on television. Congressional allies and White House aides alike counseled the president to let Pence or the public health professionals like Dr. Deborah Birx lead the briefings and, potentially, be the bearers of bad virus news.

But Trump refused, resuscitating the news conferences last month, taking the stage alone, in his favored late afternoon time slot. Always believing he is his own best spokesman, he has begun briefing on days when McEnany also does, relegating her news conferences to those of an opening act.

Trump told aides that he would keep his briefings shorter and do better at sticking to his talking points, largely eschewing fights with journalists in hopes of projecting a better command of the pandemic, which aides believe will be essential to victory in November.

"It's all tactics, not strategy," said Republican strategist Alex Conant. "Trump's background is in TV. In TV, when the camera's not pointed on you, you're not relevant. His strategy has always been to keep the cameras pointed at him all the time."

As the campaign enters a more urgent phase, Trump has emphasized the importance of a few upcoming set pieces where, alone under the spotlight, he has told aides he can turn the race around.

First, his upcoming convention speech, which he teased Monday would either be delivered at the White House or the Civil War battlefield in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. And then a series of debates with Biden.

"The American people elected Donald Trump because they saw an outsider, successful businessman, and problem solver who could get things done and fight for them," said White House spokesman Judd Deere.

Three and a half years in office, a degree of the president's ability to command attention has worn off; some of his tweets that once would have turned Washington upside-down now pass without much reaction. Cable news stations cut away from his briefings. There have been moments when the president has taken a back seat, as during periods of the pandemic when he placed the onus for the response on the states. But they rarely last.

From his days as a New York tabloid star, Trump has long believed in the power of a headline, even if not always good.

He has dominated the 2020 campaign, but somewhat to his detriment. The race to this point, instead of a choice between candidates, has largely been a referendum on his handling of the coronavirus outbreak.

"Donald Trump's presidency has never been about making Americans' lives better, a tragic truth he proved yet again this weekend by creating the illusion of leadership with executive orders that will only gin up more chaos and fail to meaningfully address the public health and economic crisis plaguing families

across the country," said Biden spokesman TJ Ducklo, who added that "this president is engineering ways to take credit instead of implementing a real national response to this pandemic."

EDITOR'S NOTE — Jonathan Lemire has covered the White House and politics for The Associated Press since 2013.

Follow Lemire on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/@JonLemire>.

Seattle police chief to resign following department cuts

By LISA BAUMANN Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Seattle's police chief says she is stepping down, a move made public the same day the City Council approved reducing the department by as many as 100 officers through layoffs and attrition.

Carmen Best, the city's first Black police chief, said in a letter to the department that her retirement will be effective Sept. 2 and the mayor has appointed Deputy Chief Adrian Diaz as the interim chief, KING-TV reported Monday. Councilmembers had approved the cuts Monday.

"I am confident the department will make it through these difficult times," Best said in the letter. "You truly are the best police department in the country, and please trust me when I say, the vast majority of people in Seattle support you and appreciate you. ... I look forward to seeing how this department moves forward through the process of re-envisioning public safety. I relish the work that will be done by all of you."

In an email to police Mayor Jenny Durkan said she she accepted Best's decision "with a very heavy heart."

"I regret deeply that she concluded that the best way to serve the city and help the department was a change in leadership, in the hope that would change the dynamics to move forward with the City Council," Durkan wrote.

Durkan and Best planned a Tuesday morning news conference.

The mayor picked Best in July of 2018 to lead the department. She had been serving as interim chief.

A military veteran, Best joined the department in 1992 and had worked in a wide variety of roles, including patrol, media relations, narcotics and operations and deputy chief.

Cuts to the department have been supported by demonstrators who have marched in the city following the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis but strongly opposed by Durkan and Best.

Measures that would cut less than \$4 million of the department's \$400 million annual budget this year passed out of committee unanimously last week. On Monday, only council member Kshama Sawant voted against the budget package, saying it does not do enough to defund the police.

Seattle currently has about 1,400 police officers and the reductions fell far short of the 50% cut to the department that many Black Lives Matter protesters are seeking. Several council members on Monday said the changes were a starting point in a long process to reimagine policing and public safety.

The City Council also cut Best's roughly \$285,000 annual salary and the pay of other top police leaders, although the final cuts to Best's salary were significantly more modest than those approved last week. The council plan also takes officers off a team that removes homeless camps.

"While we can't do everything in this summer rebalancing package, we have set the path forward for tremendous work in front of us as a council and as a city," Council member Teresa Mosqueda said.

Durkan and Best had urged the council to slow down its discussions about police budgets, saying the issue could be taken up in earnest when the 2021 city budget is considered. They also said any layoffs would disproportionately target newer officers, often hired from Black and brown communities, and would inevitably lead to lawsuits.

Durkan has proposed cutting about \$20 million from the police budget this year largely because of reduced revenues amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Last month, the mayor sketched out a plan to reduce the police budget by about \$75 million next year by transferring parking enforcement officers, the 911 call center and other areas out of the department.

"It is unfortunate Council has refused to engage in a collaborative process to work with the mayor, Chief

Best, and community members to develop a budget and policies that respond to community needs while accounting for — not just acknowledging — the significant labor and legal implications involved in transforming the Seattle Police Department,” Durkan said in a statement after the vote.

Portland protesters rally as arrest of activist draws ire

By GILLIAN FLACCUS Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — The arrest during protests in Portland, Oregon, of a Black woman who became a leading activist in the racial justice movement after she was assaulted by a white supremacist three years ago has galvanized local and national Black Lives Matter groups.

More demonstrations were planned in the city Monday night, and authorities declared one outside the North Precinct an unlawful assembly, ordering everyone to leave. Portland has seen more than two months of often violent, nightly protests since George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis.

Authorities said Demetria Hester, 46, won't be charged following her arrest early Monday. Hester had been booked on suspicion of disorderly conduct and interfering with a police officer during the protest that began Sunday night. Hester's arrest drew a sharp rebuke from national Black Lives Matter activists, who are increasingly focusing on demonstrations in Oregon's largest city.

After her release, Hester said at a news conference that she would keep protesting and joined others in announcing plans for a fundraiser to send Black mothers to Washington, D.C.

“I was born and bred to do this. This is a dream come true,” Hester said. “This is a revolution and we're getting reparations.”

Hester and 15 other people were arrested during Portland's 73rd consecutive nights of protest. A group of about 200 demonstrators gathered at a park and then marched to the police union headquarters, where some people set fires outside the building and launched fireworks at officers.

Two officers were injured, including one who was burned on the neck when a firework exploded, police said.

Police declared a riot shortly after 10 p.m. and began arresting people, including Hester.

President Donald Trump once more seized on the protests and said on Twitter that Portland was “out of control.” He urged Democratic Gov. Kate Brown to bring in the Oregon National Guard.

On Monday, civil rights groups in Portland and members of the international Black Lives Matter organization, who traveled to Portland, decried Hester's arrest and said the city was at the center of the racial justice protest movement.

“The struggle here in Portland has become almost ground zero because what we've seen under this administration is the kind of flexing that we haven't really seen in our generation, ever,” said Janaya Khan, co-founder of Black Lives Matter Toronto. “People only protest when politicians and policies and police have failed to protect them.”

Hester gained prominence in 2017 when she was assaulted by a white supremacist while riding a light-rail train. The man who attacked Hester, Jeremy Christian, stabbed two men to death the following night and critically injured a third man when they came to the defense of two Black women — one of them wearing a Muslim head-covering — who were being harassed by Christian.

Hester gave emotional testimony this spring at Christian's murder trial. Christian was convicted and given two life sentences without possibility of parole.

Hester has reappeared in public this summer as one of the main organizers of a group of mostly white parents who have been protesting nightly. She leads marches each night, using a bullhorn to chant in a voice cracking with fatigue.

Follow Gillian Flaccus on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/gflaccus>

Protester dies in clashes after disputed Belarus vote

By YURAS KARMANAU Associated Press

MINSK, Belarus (AP) — A protester died amid clashes between police and thousands of people gathered for a second straight night Monday in Belarus after official results from weekend elections — dismissed by the opposition as a sham — gave an overwhelming victory to authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko.

Interior Ministry spokesman Alexander Lastovsky said the victim was part of a crowd of people protesting results of Sunday's presidential vote. The protester intended to throw an explosive device, but it blew up in his hand and killed him, Lastovsky said.

The death came amid demonstrations in at least four areas of Minsk that met with a harsh response from police who tried to disperse protesters with flash-bang grenades and rubber bullets. Near the Pushkinskaya subway station, some 3,000 protesters tried to build barricades.

Lukashenko's hardline rule began in 1994 and his victory would extend it until 2025. He derided the opposition as "sheep" manipulated by foreign masters.

Dozens were injured and thousands detained hours after Sunday's vote, when police brutally broke up mostly young protesters with tear gas, water cannons and beat them with truncheons. Rights activists said one person died after being run over by a police truck — which authorities denied.

Election officials said Lukashenko won a sixth term in office with 80% of the vote, while opposition challenger Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya got 10%. Tsikhanouskaya submitted a formal request for a recount to the Central Election Commission.

After submitting the request, both Tsikhanouskaya and her spokeswoman remained unreachable. Upon leaving the commission's headquarters she said "I have made a decision, I must be with my children."

It was unclear if her statement meant that she was heading abroad to reunite with her children, whom she had earlier sent to an unspecified European country after receiving threats.

On Monday evening, scattered groups of opposition supporters began gathering in downtown Minsk, chanting "Freedom!" and "Long live Belarus!" A heavy police contingent blocked central squares and avenues, moving quickly to disperse protesters and detained dozens.

Later, about 1,000 protesters gathered near a big shopping mall in downtown Minsk before being dispersed by police. The Viasna rights group said protesters also gathered in several other Belarusian cities, including Brest, Mogilev and Vitebsk, where detentions also took place.

The police crackdown drew harsh criticism from European capitals and will likely complicate Lukashenko's efforts to mend ties with the West amid tensions with his main ally and sponsor, Russia.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement that the election was not "free and fair" and added: "We strongly condemn ongoing violence against protesters and the detention of opposition supporters."

Lukashenko, whose iron-fisted rule since 1994 has fueled growing discontent in the ex-Soviet nation of 9.5 million, warned that he wouldn't hesitate to use force again. He argued that the protesters met a due response overnight after injuring dozens of police officers and attempting to take control of official buildings in several Belarusian cities.

"We will not allow them to tear the country apart," he said.

The 65-year-old former state farm director asserted that the opposition was being directed from Poland and the Czech Republic, adding that some groups in Ukraine and Russia could also have been behind the protests.

"They are directing the (opposition) headquarters where those sheep don't understand what they want from them," he said in a dismissive reference to Tsikhanouskaya and her campaign.

Czech Foreign Minister Tomas Petricek dismissed Lukashenko's claim, saying his country has not organized any protests.

The Interior Ministry said 89 people were injured during the protests late Sunday and early Monday, including 39 law enforcement officers, and about 3,000 people were detained, some 1,000 of them in Minsk.

Tsikhanouskaya, a 37-year-old former English teacher without any prior political experience, entered the race after her husband, an opposition blogger who had hoped to run for president, was arrested in May.

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She has managed to unite fractured opposition groups and draw tens of thousands to her campaign rallies — the largest opposition demonstrations since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

"We don't agree with (election results), we have absolutely opposite information," Tsikhanouskaya told The Associated Press on Monday. "We have official protocols from many poll stations, where the number of votes in my favor are many more times than for another candidate."

The coronavirus-induced economic damage and Lukashenko's swaggering response to the pandemic, which he airily dismissed as "psychosis," has fueled broad anger, helping swell the opposition ranks. The post-election protest, in which young demonstrators — many of them teenagers — confronted police, marked a previously unseen level of violence.

Internet and mobile networks went down after the polls closed as authorities tried to make it more difficult for protesters to coordinate.

"The more they beat us, the less we believe in the official results," said Denis Golubev, a 28-year-old IT specialist who joined the protests.

The European Union condemned the police crackdown and called for an immediate release of all those detained.

In a joint statement, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell and the EU commissioner responsible for relations with Europe's close neighbors, Oliver Varhelyi, lamented that "the election night was marred with disproportionate and unacceptable state violence against peaceful protesters."

Belarus' EU and NATO neighbors, Poland and Lithuania, also issued strong rebukes. Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki called on European Union's leaders to convene an extraordinary summit to support the Belarusian people's democratic aspirations.

The U.K. Foreign Office also urged Belarusian authorities to "refrain from further acts of violence following the seriously flawed presidential elections."

In the early 2000s, the United States and the European Union slapped sanctions against Lukashenko's government, but they lifted most of the penalties in recent years after Lukashenko freed political prisoners and allowed some opposition protests.

The Trump Administration has recently sought to improve long-strained ties with Lukashenko, who some officials believe could be a valuable partner in countering Russian influence in eastern and central Europe. In early February, Pompeo became the first U.S. chief diplomat in more than 25 years to travel to Belarus, and offered to sell U.S. oil and gas to the country to reduce its dependence on Russian energy.

The administration has also nominated an ambassador to Belarus who, if confirmed, would be the first to the country since 2008.

Throughout his tenure, Lukashenko has tried to exert pressure on the Kremlin with the prospect of normalizing ties with the West in a bid to win more Russian subsidies. But the violent crackdown now appears likely to derail Lukashenko's hopes for those ties as Russia exerts pressure on its small neighbor.

Moscow this year cut supplies of cheap oil to Belarusian refineries, depriving the country of an estimated \$700 million in revenues from oil product exports. Russia-Belarus ties were further strained last week, when Belarusian law enforcement agencies arrested 33 Russian private military contractors and accused them of planning to stage "mass riots."

Moscow has rejected the charges. Russian President Vladimir Putin called Lukashenko Friday to mend the rift, and quickly congratulated him Monday on winning the vote. The Belarusian leader also received congratulations from Chinese President Xi Jinping and heads of several ex-Soviet nations.

Associated Press journalists Jim Heintz, Vladimir Isachenkov and Daria Litvinova in Moscow, Lorne Cook in Brussels, Matthew Lee in Washington, Danica Kirka in London, Vanessa Gera in Warsaw, Frank Jordans in Berlin and Karel Janicek in Prague contributed to this story.

Shooting near White House interrupts Trump's briefing on TV

By COLLEEN LONG, MICHAEL BALSAMO and JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

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WASHINGTON (AP) — A uniformed Secret Service officer shot and wounded a man during a confrontation near the White House that led to President Donald Trump being abruptly escorted out of a briefing room during a televised news conference Monday, authorities said.

The White House complex was not breached and no one under Secret Service protection was in danger, said Tom Sullivan, chief of the Secret Service Uniformed Division.

The name of the man, 51, and his condition were not released by Sullivan. The District of Columbia fire department said the man suffered serious or possibly critical injuries.

Sullivan said the man had claimed he was armed, moved aggressively toward the officer, and appeared ready to fire before the officer shot him once. Sullivan did not address whether the man had indeed been armed.

Law enforcement officials were trying to determine a motive and authorities were investigating whether the man had a history of mental illness.

Trump had just begun a coronavirus briefing when a U.S. Secret Service agent escorted him from the briefing room. The president returned minutes later, saying there had been a "shooting" outside the White House that was "under control."

"There was an actual shooting and somebody's been taken to the hospital," Trump said. The president said law enforcement had fired the shots and that he believed the individual who was shot was armed. "It was the suspect who was shot," he said.

Trump said the agent had escorted him to the Oval Office. The White House was placed on lockdown following the incident.

In a Monday night statement to reporters, Sullivan said the shooting occurred just before 6 p.m. EDT after the man approached the uniformed Secret Service officer near 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue and told the officer he had a weapon.

The man then turned around and "ran aggressively toward the officer, and in a drawing motion, removed an object from his clothing," Sullivan said. The suspect then "crouched into a shooter's stance, as if about to fire a weapon" before the officer shot the man once in the torso, he said.

Both the suspect and the officer were taken to the hospital. Sullivan released no information about the officer and would not answer any questions at a late-night news conference near the scene.

An internal review of the shooting by the Secret Service was underway, and the Metropolitan Police Department was also investigating, a standard protocol.

At the White House, Trump praised Secret Service personnel for their work in keeping him safe. Asked if he was shaken by the incident, Trump asked reporters: "I don't know. Do I seem rattled?"

New York's true nursing home death toll cloaked in secrecy

By BERNARD CONDON, MATT SEDENSKY and MEGHAN HOYER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Riverdale Nursing Home in the Bronx appears, on paper, to have escaped the worst of the coronavirus pandemic, with an official state count of just four deaths in its 146-bed facility.

The truth, according to the home, is far worse: 21 dead, most transported to hospitals before they succumbed.

"It was a cascading effect," administrator Emil Fuzayov recalled. "One after the other."

New York's coronavirus death toll in nursing homes, already among the highest in the nation, could actually be a significant undercount. Unlike every other state with major outbreaks, New York only counts residents who died on nursing home property and not those who were transported to hospitals and died there.

That statistic that could add thousands to the state's official care home death toll of just over 6,600. But so far the administration of Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo has refused to divulge the number, leading to speculation the state is manipulating the figures to make it appear it is doing a better than other states and to make a tragic situation less dire.

"That's a problem, bro," state Sen. Gustavo Rivera, a Democrat, told New York Health Commissioner

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Howard Zucker during a legislative hearing on nursing homes earlier this month. "It seems, sir, that in this case you are choosing to define it differently so that you can look better."

How big a difference could it make? Since May, federal regulators have required nursing homes to submit data on coronavirus deaths each week, whether or not residents died in the facility or at a hospital. Because the requirement came after the height of New York's outbreak, the available data is relatively small. According to the federal data, roughly a fifth of the state's homes reported resident deaths from early June to mid July — a tally of 323 dead, 65 percent higher than the state's count of 195 during that time period.

Even if half that undercount had held true from the start of the pandemic, that would translate into thousands more nursing home resident deaths than the state has acknowledged.

Another group of numbers also suggests an undercount. State health department surveys show 21,000 nursing home beds are lying empty this year, 13,000 more than expected — an increase of almost double the official state nursing home death tally. While some of that increase can be attributed to fewer new admissions and people pulling their loved ones out, it suggests that many others who aren't there anymore died.

However flawed New York's count, Cuomo has not been shy about comparing it to tallies in other states.

Nearly every time Cuomo is questioned about New York's nursing home death toll, he brushes off criticism as politically motivated and notes that his state's percentage of nursing home deaths out of its overall COVID-19 death toll is around 20%, far less than Pennsylvania's 68%, Massachusetts' 64% and New Jersey's 44%.

"Look at the basic facts where New York is versus other states," Cuomo said during a briefing Monday. "You look at where New York is as a percentage of nursing home deaths, it's all the way at the bottom of the list."

In another briefing last month, he touted New York's percentage ranking as 35th in the nation. "Go talk to 34 other states first. Go talk to the Republican states now — Florida, Texas, Arizona — ask them what is happening in nursing homes. It's all politics."

Boston University geriatrics expert Thomas Perls said it doesn't make sense that nursing home resident deaths as a percentage of total deaths in many nearby states are more than triple what was reported in New York.

"Whatever the cause, there is no way New York could be truly at 20%," Perls said.

A running tally by The Associated Press shows that more than 68,200 residents and staff at nursing homes and long-term facilities across the nation have died from the coronavirus, out of more than 163,000 overall deaths.

For all 43 states that break out nursing home data, resident deaths make up 44% of total COVID deaths in their states, according to data from the Kaiser Family Foundation. Assuming the same proportion held in New York, that would translate to more than 11,000 nursing home deaths.

To be sure, comparing coronavirus deaths in nursing homes across states can be difficult because of the differences in how states conduct their counts. New York is among several states that include probable COVID-19 deaths as well as those confirmed by a test. Some states don't count deaths from homes where fewer than five have died. Others don't always give precise numbers, providing ranges instead. And all ultimately rely on the nursing homes themselves to provide the raw data.

"Everybody is doing it however they feel like doing it. We don't have very good data. It's just all over the place, all over the country," said Toby Edelman of the Center for Medicare Advocacy, a nonprofit representing nursing home residents.

New York health chief Zucker explained during the legislative hearing that New York only counts deaths on the nursing home property to avoid "double-counting" deaths in both the home and the hospital. And while he acknowledged the state keeps a running count of nursing home resident deaths at hospitals, he declined to provide even a rough estimate to lawmakers.

"I will not provide information that I have not ensured is absolutely accurate," Zucker said. "This is too

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big an issue and it's too serious an issue."

Zucker promised to provide lawmakers the numbers as soon as that doublechecking is complete. They are still waiting. The AP has also been denied access to similar nursing home death data despite filing a public records request with the state health department nearly three months ago.

Dr. Michael Wasserman, president of the California Association of Long Term Care Medicine, said it is unethical of New York to not break out the deaths of nursing home residents at hospitals. "From an epidemiological and scientific perspective, there is absolutely no reason not to count them."

Nursing homes have become a particular sore point for the Cuomo administration, which has generally received praise for steps that flattened the curve of infections and New York's highest-in-the-nation 32,781 overall deaths.

But a controversial March 25 order to send recovering COVID-19 patients from hospitals into nursing homes that was designed to free up hospital bed space at the height of the pandemic has drawn withering criticism from relatives and patient advocates who contend it accelerated nursing home outbreaks.

Cuomo reversed the order under pressure in early May. And his health department later released an internal report that concluded asymptomatic nursing home staffers were the real spreaders of the virus, not the 6,300 recovering patients released from hospitals into nursing homes.

But epidemiologists and academics derided the study for a flawed methodology that sidestepped key questions and relied on selective stats, including the state's official death toll figures.

"We're trying to find out what worked and what didn't work and that means trying to find patterns," said Bill Hammond, who works on health policy for the nonprofit Empire Center think tank. "You can't do that if you have the wrong data."

AP reporters Jim Mustian and Marina Villeneuve, and investigative researcher Randy Herschaft contributed to this report.

In virus talks, Pelosi holds firm while Mnuchin wants a deal

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Speaker Nancy Pelosi is not about to blink.

The Democratic leader has been here before, negotiating a deal with the White House to save the U.S. economy, and lessons from the Great Recession are now punctuating the coronavirus talks. With Republicans again balking at big government bailouts, the Democrats believe they have the leverage, forcing President Donald Trump into a politically risky standoff over help for millions of Americans.

"It's impossible to know whether she has overplayed her hand until we see if there is a COVID package," says Michael Steel, a former top aide to then-Speaker John Boehner.

Monday brought no new talks between Trump's team and negotiators on Capitol Hill as the president tries a go-it-alone strategy. Over the weekend, he launched a series of executive actions that give the appearance of a White House taking charge but may end up providing little help for ordinary Americans.

The president's orders seek to reverse the devastating fallout from unemployment assistance, eviction protections and other aid that has expired. But there are limits, and legal pitfalls, in trying to make an end run around the legislative branch.

Pelosi dismissed Trump's proposals Monday as an "illusion" in an interview on MSNBC.

Trump acknowledged he's still quite open to a deal with Congress. "So now Schumer and Pelosi want to meet to make a deal. Amazing how it all works, isn't it," he tweeted Monday. "They know my phone number."

With Trump now having played his hand, however, Democrats appear in no rush to show theirs.

It will take days, if not weeks, to sort out what Trump intended with his executive actions, as guidance from the administration is sent to the states. Already, the Department of Labor is telling governors that Trump's promised \$400 weekly jobless benefit boost will actually amount to just \$300 if states are unable to provide the rest, according to information obtained Monday by The Associated Press.

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Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer dismissed the Trump's administrative actions as "all sizzle and no steak," held together by "spit and glue."

In the meantime, countless Americans are already feeling the squeeze. What had been a \$600 weekly unemployment benefit boost is gone, as are federal eviction protections. Schools that had been eyeing federal help now face the prospect of reopening on shoestring budgets.

The virus shows no signs of easing, with more than 5 million infections and 160,000 deaths nationwide and stark new evidence that many Americans' jobs may never return.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, on a conference call with governors on Monday, said action by Congress remains the administration's "first choice."

Mnuchin and Vice President Mike Pence urged the governors to reach out to congressional leaders and push for legislation, according to audio of the call obtained by AP.

"Anytime they want to meet — and they're willing to negotiate and have a new proposal — we're more than happy to meet," Mnuchin said later at the White House. He confirmed he has not spoken to the Democratic leaders since talks collapsed Friday.

Pelosi has been here before, at the start of the last recession, when George W. Bush's Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson dropped to a knee at the White House and all but begged her not to let a financial rescue plan fail in Congress.

Democrats provided the bulk of the votes in 2008 for Bush's bank bailout and, with the majority in both the House and Senate, they also approved President Barack Obama's economic recovery plan in 2009. They often see that era as mopping up after a Republican president.

Now, facing a far greater crisis — the raging virus and economic shutdown — Pelosi is standing firm.

She told The Associated Press earlier this year that Mnuchin is a "good listener" and they have a good rapport, having negotiated a relief package in March.

But she said, "When President Bush was president he would say to me, 'Secretary Paulson speaks for me.' This case, I don't - I'm not sure."

Negotiations over the latest coronavirus bill shifted with the arrival of Mark Meadows, the president's new chief of staff, a conservative former head of the House Freedom Caucus who is widely seen as a counter-force to Mnuchin.

During days of closed-door talks, Meadows often declares one issue after another a "nonstarter," according to an aide granted anonymity to discuss the private sessions.

Another aide said both Meadows and Mnuchin used that phrase several times as they pushed back against the Democratic proposals.

Pelosi has said repeatedly that Trump and the Republicans don't grasp the gravity of the situation facing the nation.

She and Schumer have put their latest compromise offer on the table, dropping their \$3 trillion-plus package of relief by \$1 trillion to \$2.5 trillion, and asking the White House to do the same, raising its \$1 trillion proposal to at least \$2 trillion. That was rejected last week.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell accused the Democrats of "hostage taking."

The GOP leader, who has chosen to stay on the sidelines in the talks, has a weakened hand because unlike the Democratic leaders, who have most of their rank-and-file behind them, his Republican majority is fractured. Almost half the GOP senators prefer no new aid at all.

"Democrats think they smell an opening," he said.

McConnell nevertheless can play an influential role if and when he decides to bring the votes he's sure of to the table. That could lead to one path for an eventual deal.

Associated Press writer Alan Suderman in Richmond, Virginia, contributed to this report.

Inaction by Congress leaves states to pay for election costs

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Congress' failure so far to pass another round of coronavirus aid leaves state and local officials on their own to deal with the soaring costs of holding a presidential election amid a deadly pandemic.

That could leave them scrambling to solve problems that surfaced during the primary season in time for November's election.

The coronavirus outbreak has triggered unprecedented disruptions for election officials across the U.S. They are dealing with staffing shortages and budget constraints while also trying to figure out how to process a flood of absentee ballot requests, as more and more states have moved to mail-in balloting as a safer way to vote.

"It is appalling that Congress has not provided the needed resources for state and local elections officials during the COVID-19 pandemic," said California Secretary of State Alex Padilla. "Elections officials' ability to fill the gap is nearly impossible given the already strained state and local government budgets."

In its first round of virus relief in March, Congress sent \$400 million to state election offices to help cover unexpected costs related to the pandemic. But that is far short of the \$2 billion the Brennan Center for Justice has said is needed.

"Congress's failure to reach a coronavirus deal is imperiling November's elections," said Wendy Weiser, director of the center's democracy program. "Without an infusion of federal funds, election officials simply won't be able to prepare adequately for the election, and we will see massive meltdowns across the country."

In the U.S., state and local officials are responsible for administering elections and covering the costs. But there was no way for them to plan for holding an election in the middle of a pandemic, essentially having to deal with a massive surge in absentee ballots while also trying to keep in-person voting options available after many workers opted out of staffing the polls during the primaries.

"This wasn't in anyone's budget," said Ben Hovland, chairman of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, which provides support for state and local election officials.

Experts point to the rocky execution of the primaries since the pandemic began, in which there were numerous reports of absentee ballots failing to arrive or rejected for being late. Primaries were marred by hours-long lines in Atlanta, Milwaukee and Las Vegas as polling places were consolidated.

"Without proper funding, guidance and preparedness, the problems seen in previous elections are going to be just the tip of the iceberg this November," Sylvia Albert, voting and elections director with Common Cause, warned lawmakers during a congressional hearing last week.

If more federal money is made available, it could allow local election offices to hire more temporary workers to help process ballot requests and count ballots on Election Day. It also could be used to boost the pay of poll workers.

In Ohio, Secretary of State Frank LaRose has said he would seek approval to pay postage for absentee ballot applications and returned ballots if he had more money.

In New Mexico, state election regulators are anticipating a \$6 million shortfall without additional funding for the November general election. Of the nearly \$3.9 million New Mexico received in the first round of congressional virus relief, all but \$750,000 was spent during the primary, according to Alex Curtas, spokesman for Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver.

U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, who has been pushing for more funding for elections, said she remains hopeful a deal can be reached. But she warned that the window was closing for states to take action, such as paying the cost of postage, purchasing drop boxes for ballots, and recruiting and training a new group of poll workers.

"If Congress acts quickly, states can still implement these measures to help keep voters safe this November," Klobuchar said. "September seems way too late to make a big difference."

Voters will judge Omar's mix of progressivism and celebrity

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By STEVE KARNOWSKI and MOHAMED IBRAHIM Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Rep. Ilhan Omar is about to learn whether voters in her Minneapolis-area congressional district support the mix of confrontational, anti-Trump progressivism and celebrity that she brings to the job.

Omar, the first Somali American and one of the first two Muslim women elected to Congress, is facing a surprisingly well-funded challenger in Minnesota's Democratic primaries on Tuesday. Antone Melton-Meaux, a Black lawyer and mediator, raised millions of anti-Omar dollars to fill mailboxes and flood airwaves. His "Focused on the Fifth" message has portrayed Omar, a member of "The Squad" of four progressive female lawmakers, as out of touch with the 5th District.

Omar rejected Melton-Meaux's attacks, saying they were funded by interests that wanted to get her out of Congress because she's effective. She also downplayed Melton-Meaux's money and played up her ground game before the vote, saying, "Organized people will always beat organized money."

The outcome may not be known Tuesday night if the results are close. Absentee voting in Minnesota was heavy, and officials must count mail-in ballots that arrive as late as Thursday under safety rules imposed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Democratic U.S. Sen. Tina Smith and Republican challenger Jason Lewis were expected to easily win their primaries in the only statewide races on the ballot. Elsewhere, in western Minnesota's conservative 7th District, former state Sen. Michelle Fischbach was the endorsed Republican in a three-way race for the right to challenge Democratic Rep. Collin Peterson. Peterson, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, is one of the GOP's top targets to flip a House seat in November.

After entering Congress with fanfare, Omar hurt herself early with comments about Jews, money and Israel that even some fellow Democrats called anti-Semitic, and found herself apologizing. She also came under scrutiny when her marriage fell apart and she married her political consultant months after denying they were having an affair.

Republicans also raised questions about continuing payments to her new husband's firm, though experts said they aren't necessarily improper.

Progressive Democrats gained confidence in Omar's reelection chances after primary victories last week by fellow "Squad" member Rashida Tlaib in Michigan and by a Black Lives Matter activist in a St. Louis-area congressional primary. Progressives also claimed momentum from the renewed focus on racial and economic justice following George Floyd's death in Minneapolis.

Shari Dveris, a 42-year-old school teacher, said she voted for Melton-Meaux because she doesn't think the congresswoman "has done anything for her constituents," echoing the challenger's claim that Omar prioritized celebrity over the interests of her district. Dveris, who voted early on Monday in St. Louis Park, a Minneapolis suburb with a large Jewish community, said Omar "pulled a bait-and-switch" on the Jewish community during her 2018 campaign, namely with her support for the Boycott, Divest and Sanction, or BDS Movement against Israel.

"I just think that he'll do more for us," she said. "(Melton-Meaux) seems very honest and upfront, and I'm impressed with what he's said so far."

John Hildebrand, a 47-year-old teacher in Minneapolis who voted for Omar, said her national profile is an advantage.

"I think just her presence encourages other Muslims and Somalis to run for office and to seek to be represented," he said. "I think she just engages people in the political system more and more."

Mohamed Ibrahim is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

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Trump abruptly escorted from briefing after shooting near WH

By COLLEEN LONG, MICHAEL BALSAMO and JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump was abruptly escorted by a U.S. Secret Service agent out of the White House briefing room as he was beginning a coronavirus briefing Monday afternoon. He returned minutes later, saying there had been a “shooting” outside the White House that was “under control.”

“There was an actual shooting and somebody’s been taken to the hospital,” Trump said. The president said the shots were fired by law enforcement and that he believed the individual who was shot was armed. “It was the suspect who was shot,” Trump said.

Trump said he was escorted to the Oval Office by the agent. The White House was placed on lockdown following the incident.

The shooting occurred just before 6 p.m. after a 51-year-old man approached a uniformed Secret Service officer near 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue just blocks from the White House and told the officer he had a weapon, Tom Sullivan, chief of the Secret Service Uniformed Division, said Monday night.

The man then turned around and “ran aggressively toward the officer, and in a drawing motion, removed an object from his clothing,” Sullivan said. The suspect then “crouched into a shooter’s stance, as if about to fire a weapon” before the officer shot the man once in the torso, he said.

Sullivan would not answer any questions at a late-night news conference near the scene and did not say whether the suspect was armed.

Both the suspect and the officer were taken to the hospital. The District of Columbia fire department said the suspect suffered serious or possibly critical injuries. Sullivan released no information about the officer.

Law enforcement officials were still trying to determine the suspect’s motive and authorities were investigating whether he has a history of mental illness. The suspect’s name was not immediately released.

“At no time during this incident was the White House complex breached or were any protectees in danger,” Sullivan said. The shooting has prompted an internal review by the Secret Service and is also being investigated by the Metropolitan Police Department, a standard protocol.

Trump praised the work of Secret Service personnel for their work in keeping him safe. Asked if he was shaken by the incident, Trump asked reporters: “I don’t know. Do I seem rattled?”

Ganges River flows with history and prophecy for India

By ALTAF QADRI Associated Press

ALONG THE GANGES, India (AP) — More than 2,000 years ago, a powerful king built a fort on the banks of India’s holiest river, on the fringes of what is now a vast industrial city.

Today, little of the ancient construction remains, except for mounds of rubble that tannery workers pick through for bricks to build shanties atop what was once the fortress of the great King Yayati.

And Kanpur, where Yayati built his fort, is a city known for its leather tanneries and the relentless pollution they pump into the Ganges River.

For more than 1,700 miles, from the Gangotri Glacier in the Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal, the Ganges flows across the plains like a timeline of India’s past, nourishing an extraordinary wealth of life. It has seen empires rise and fall. It has seen too many wars, countless kings, British colonials, independence and the rise of Hindu nationalism as a political movement.

In India, the Ganges is far more than just a river. It is religion, industry, farming and politics. It is a source of water for millions of people, and an immense septic system that endures millions of gallons of raw sewage.

To Hindus, the Ganges is “Ganga Ma” — Mother Ganges — and a center of spiritual life for more than a billion people. Every year, millions of Hindus make pilgrimages to the temples and shrines along its shores. To drink from it is auspicious. For many Hindus, life is incomplete without bathing in it at least once in their lifetime, to wash away their sins.

But all is not well with the Ganges.

Pollution has left large sections of it dangerous to drink. Criminal gangs illegally mine sand from its banks

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to feed India's relentless appetite for concrete. Hydroelectric dams along the river's tributaries, needed to power India's growing economy, have infuriated some Hindus, who say the sanctity of the river has been compromised.

And over the past 40-some years, the Gangotri Glacier — source of almost half the Ganges' water — has been receding at an increasingly frightening pace, now losing about 22 meters (yards) per year.

For millennia, the Gangotri's glacial melt water has ensured the arid plains get enough water, even during the driest months. The rest comes from Himalayan tributaries that flow from the colossal chain of mountains.

As the Ganges flows across the plains, its once clean and mineral-rich water begins collecting the toxic waste from the millions of people who depend on it, becoming one of the most polluted rivers in the world. Millions of liters (gallons) of sewage, along with heavy metals, agricultural pesticides, human bodies and animal carcasses, are dumped into the Ganges every day.

At times, officials try to fix things but vast stretches of it remain dangerously unhealthy.

Still, to Hindus, the river remains religiously pure.

Every year, tens of thousands of Hindus bring the bodies of their loved ones to be cremated at the Ganges, in the city of Varanasi. A Hindu who dies in the city, or is cremated alongside it, is also freed from that cycle of birth and death.

After Varanasi, the Ganges continues its eastward journey through endless farmland as it nears the coast, eventually splitting off into ever-smaller rivers in the great wilderness of her delta. The biggest river, the Hooghly, heads south towards the sea, passing through Kolkata, the largest city in eastern India. Once the capital of the British raj, known as Calcutta, today the seething metropolis is home to nearly 15 million people.

Eventually, its waters spill into the Bay of Bengal.

Up near the Gangotri glacier, a genial Hindu holy man who goes by the name Mouni Baba and spends much of his life in silent meditation sees all of mankind reflected in the river.

"Human existence is like this ice," he said. "It melts and becomes water and then merges into a stream. The stream goes into a tributary which flows into a river and then it all ends up in an ocean. Some (rivers) remain pure while others collect dirt along the way. Some (people) help mankind and some become the cause of its devastation."

In virus talks, Pelosi holds firm; Mnuchin wants a deal

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Speaker Nancy Pelosi is not about to blink.

The Democratic leader has been here before, negotiating a deal with the White House to save the U.S. economy, and lessons from the Great Recession are now punctuating the coronavirus talks. With Republicans again balking at big government bailouts, the Democrats believe they have the leverage, forcing President Donald Trump into a politically risky standoff over help for millions of Americans.

"It's impossible to know whether she has overplayed her hand until we see if there is a COVID package," says Michael Steel, a former top aide to then-Speaker John Boehner.

Monday brought no new talks between Trump's team and negotiators on Capitol Hill as the president tries a go-it-alone strategy. Over the weekend, he launched a series of executive actions that give the appearance of a White House taking charge but may end up providing little help for ordinary Americans.

The president's orders seek to reverse the devastating fallout from unemployment assistance, eviction protections and other aid that has expired. But there are limits, and legal pitfalls, in trying to make an end run around the legislative branch.

Pelosi dismissed Trump's proposals Monday as an "illusion" in an interview on MSNBC.

Trump acknowledged he's still quite open to a deal with Congress. "So now Schumer and Pelosi want to meet to make a deal. Amazing how it all works, isn't it," he tweeted Monday. "They know my phone number."

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With Trump now having played his hand, however, Democrats appear in no rush to show theirs.

It will take days, if not weeks, to sort out what Trump intended with his executive actions, as guidance from the administration is sent to the states. Already, the Department of Labor is telling governors that Trump's promised \$400 weekly jobless benefit boost will actually amount to just \$300 if states are unable to provide the rest, according to information obtained Monday by The Associated Press.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer dismissed the Trump's administrative actions as "all sizzle and no steak," held together by "spit and glue."

In the meantime, countless Americans are already feeling the squeeze. What had been a \$600 weekly unemployment benefit boost is gone, as are federal eviction protections. Schools that had been eyeing federal help now face the prospect of reopening on shoestring budgets.

The virus shows no signs of easing, with more than 5 million infections and 160,000 deaths nationwide and stark new evidence that many Americans' jobs may never return.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, on a conference call with governors on Monday, said action by Congress remains the administration's "first choice."

Mnuchin and Vice President Mike Pence urged the governors to reach out to congressional leaders and push for legislation, according to audio of the call obtained by AP.

"Anytime they want to meet — and they're willing to negotiate and have a new proposal — we're more than happy to meet," Mnuchin said later at the White House. He confirmed he has not spoken to the Democratic leaders since talks collapsed Friday.

Pelosi has been here before, at the start of the last recession, when George W. Bush's Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson dropped to a knee at the White House and all but begged her not to let a financial rescue plan fail in Congress.

Democrats provided the bulk of the votes in 2008 for Bush's bank bailout and, with the majority in both the House and Senate, they also approved President Barack Obama's economic recovery plan in 2009. They often see that era as mopping up after a Republican president.

Now, facing a far greater crisis — the raging virus and economic shutdown — Pelosi is standing firm.

She told The Associated Press earlier this year that Mnuchin is a "good listener" and they have a good rapport, having negotiated a relief package in March.

But she said, "When President Bush was president he would say to me, 'Secretary Paulson speaks for me.' This case, I don't - I'm not sure."

Negotiations over the latest coronavirus bill shifted with the arrival of Mark Meadows, the president's new chief of staff, a conservative former head of the House Freedom Caucus who is widely seen as a counter-force to Mnuchin.

During days of closed-door talks, Meadows often declares one issue after another a "nonstarter," according to an aide granted anonymity to discuss the private sessions.

Another aide said both Meadows and Mnuchin used that phrase several times as they pushed back against the Democratic proposals.

Pelosi has said repeatedly that Trump and the Republicans don't grasp the gravity of the situation facing the nation.

She and Schumer have put their latest compromise offer on the table, dropping their \$3 trillion-plus package of relief by \$1 trillion to \$2.5 trillion, and asking the White House to do the same, raising its \$1 trillion proposal to at least \$2 trillion. That was rejected last week.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell accused the Democrats of "hostage taking."

The GOP leader, who has chosen to stay on the sidelines in the talks, has a weakened hand because unlike the Democratic leaders, who have most of their rank-and-file behind them, his Republican majority is fractured. Almost half the GOP senators prefer no new aid at all.

"Democrats think they smell an opening," he said.

McConnell nevertheless can play an influential role if and when he decides to bring the votes he's sure of to the table. That could lead to one path for an eventual deal.

Associated Press writer Alan Suderman in Richmond, Virginia, contributed to this report.

Trump, coaches push for college football as cracks emerge

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Football Writer

President Donald Trump on Monday joined a U.S. senator and a number of coaches calling to save the college football season from a pandemic-forced shutdown as supporters pushed the premise that the players are safer because of their sport.

There was speculation two of the five most powerful conferences — the Big Ten and the Pac-12 — might call off their seasons and explore the possibility of spring football.

The Mountain West became the second conference in the NCAA's Football Bowl Subdivision to do just that, joining the Mid-American Conference in giving up hope on playing any sports in the first semester. Back east, Old Dominion canceled fall sports, too, becoming the first school in college football's highest tier to break from its league; the rest of Conference USA is going forward with plans to play.

A Big Ten spokesman said no votes on fall sports had been taken by its presidents and chancellors as of Monday afternoon. The conference's athletic directors were scheduled to meet later in the day, but it's the university presidents who will have the final say on whether football is played. In the Pac-12, presidents were scheduled to meet Tuesday, a person familiar with the meeting told AP condition of anonymity because the meeting was not being made public,

The powerful Southeastern Conference made clear it was not ready to shutter its fall season.

"Best advice I've received since COVID-19: 'Be patient. Take time when making decisions. This is all new & you'll gain better information each day,'" SEC Commissioner Greg Sankey posted on Twitter. "Can we play? I don't know. We haven't stopped trying."

A growing number of athletes have spoken out about saving the season, with Clemson star quarterback Trevor Lawrence among a group posting to Twitter with the hashtag #WeWantToPlay. Trump threw his support behind them Monday.

"The student-athletes have been working too hard for their season to be cancelled," the president tweeted.

That didn't help the Mountain West, which announced all fall sports including football were postponed. Though Air Force would be permitted the opportunity to play the other service academies, Army and Navy.

Old Dominion dropped out earlier in the day. The Virginia school, a relative newcomer to major college football, canceled fall sports less than a week after C-USA set out a plan to play a football season.

"We concluded that the season — including travel and competition — posed too great a risk for our student-athletes," ODU President John Broderick said.

Michigan coach Jim Harbaugh took a different stand, saying the Wolverines have shown that players can be safe after they return to school. He cited Michigan's COVID-19 testing stats, including 11 positives out of 893 administered to the members of the football program and none in the last 353 tests.

"I'm not advocating for football this fall because of my passion or our players desire to play but because of the facts accumulated over the last eight weeks since our players returned to campus on June 13," Harbaugh wrote.

Nebraska coach Scott Frost made similar claims and said if the Big Ten doesn't play, that might not stop the Cornhuskers.

"Our university is committed to playing no matter what, no matter what that looks like and how that looks," Frost said. "We want to play no matter who it is or where it is."

Ohio State coach Ryan Day said the Buckeyes might look elsewhere for games, too, and Penn State coach James Franklin on Twitter implored Big Ten leaders to have patience, delay and seek clarity.

Sen. Ben Sasse, a Nebraska Republican, picked up on the safer-with-football theme in a letter to the presidents and chancellors of the Big Ten.

"Life is about tradeoffs. There are no guarantees that college football will be completely safe — that's absolutely true; it's always true," he wrote. "But the structure and discipline of football programs is very

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likely safer than what the lived experience of 18- to 22-year-olds will be if there isn't a season."

Michigan's situation falls in line with what many medical staffers are seeing on their campuses.

"We've seen it spread thus far within roommates and outside of our facilities primarily. We haven't seen a lot of spread within athletic facilities themselves," said Dr. Kyle Goerl, medical director at Kansas State.

Doctors and epidemiologists outside of college sports are less convinced that big-time college football programs decrease the risk of getting and spreading COVID-19.

"This is a very convenient, self-serving narrative for people who want college football to happen whether to score political points or for revenue purposes," said Zachary Binney, an epidemiologist with Oxford College at Emory University. "But I've yet to see anyone of them do it with actual data.

"Estimate the risk for me of what would have happened with these students were they not to play college football versus what's going to happen to them if they do? That's actually a really complicated, really difficult question to answer. I don't think we know for sure."

The number of confirmed infections in the U.S. is more than 5 million, the most in the world.

Dr. Amesh Adalja, a senior scholar at the Johns Hopkins University Center for Health Security, said only an NBA-type bubble can really protect college athletes more than the general population and keep the season from being disrupted by the virus.

"If we're going to try and minimize the risk of the virus, it's really that the setting of the country as whole is the issue, not really actually the sport," said Adalja, a member of the NCAA's COVID-19 advisory panel.

The number of cases per day has declined recently, but not for long enough to say the pandemic has been controlled, said Lucia Mullen, an epidemiologist and analyst for the Johns Hopkins University Center for Health Security.

Mullen hears echos of the nation's debate over reopening schools in the case made by football players and coaches. Structure and support is healthy for young people, she said.

"The worry with the U.S. is, and this is something I put to the sports as well, we all do want sports back, but it's going to be incredibly aggravating if we try and bring it back and we have to cancel the season because it's not working," she said. "And that it delays us for yet another year and we can't have any sports for the rest of the year because our virus outbreak is too uncontrollable."

Adalja said the window for a college football season is closing.

"Because of the fact that we cannot solve these simple problems in a larger community of testing, tracing and isolating," Adalja said. "If we can't solve those problems there, it's going to be very hard to do that in a college campus atmosphere."

Follow Ralph D. Russo at <https://twitter.com/ralphDrussoAP> and listen at <http://www.westwoodonepodcasts.com/pods/ap-top-25-college-football-podcast/>

More AP college football: <https://apnews.com/Collegefootball> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25

Hundreds ransack downtown Chicago businesses after shooting

By DON BABWIN Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Hundreds of people descended on downtown Chicago early Monday following a police shooting on the city's South Side, with vandals smashing the windows of dozens of businesses and making off with merchandise, cash machines and anything else they could carry, police said.

Police Superintendent David Brown told reporters that the Sunday afternoon shooting of the man who had opened fire on officers apparently prompted a social media post that urged people to form a car caravan and converge on the business and shopping district.

Some 400 additional officers were dispatched to the area after the department spotted the post. Over several hours, police made more than 100 arrests and 13 officers were injured, including one who was struck in the head with a bottle, Brown said.

Brown dismissed any suggestion that the chaos was part of an organized protest of the shooting, calling

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it "pure criminality" that included occupants of a vehicle opening fire on police who were arresting a man they spotted carrying a cash register.

No officers were wounded by gunfire, but a security guard and a civilian were hospitalized in critical condition after being shot, and five guns were recovered, he said.

Mayor Lori Lightfoot agreed that the melee had nothing to do with a protest. "This was straight-up felony criminal conduct," she said. "This was an assault on our city."

The mayhem brightened the national spotlight that has been on Chicago for weeks after a surge in gun violence that resulted in more homicides in July than any month in decades. President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly criticized the city's handling of the violence, recently ordered more federal agents to Chicago to take part in what Attorney General William Barr called "classic crime fighting."

Further ratcheting up the tensions in the city was a video circulating on Facebook that falsely claimed that Chicago police had shot and killed a 15-year-old boy. Posted at 6:30 p.m. Sunday, the video shows upset residents confronting officers near the scene where police shot and wounded an adult suspect they said had fired at them that day. By Monday morning, the footage had been watched nearly 100,000 times.

Latrell Allen, 20, was charged with attempted murder Monday for allegedly firing on officers, according to Chicago police. Officers returned fire, wounding the man, who was taken to a hospital for treatment. He was expected to recover. Brown said the man had a long criminal history, including arrests for domestic battery and child endangerment. A gun was recovered at the scene, he said.

Witnesses to the unrest described a scene that bore a striking resemblance to the unrest that unfolded when protests over the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis devolved into chaos. Brown suggested that the lenient treatment of people arrested then played a role in what happened Monday.

"Not many of those cases were prosecuted to the full extent," he said. "These looters, these thieves, these criminals being emboldened by (the lack of) consequences ... emboldened to do more."

At the same news conference, Lightfoot addressed looters directly, telling them that police had collected a lot of surveillance video and other evidence that will be used to arrest and prosecute as many as possible.

"We saw you, and we will come after you," she warned.

Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx disputed any suggestion that her office had shied away from prosecuting people who were arrested for ransacking businesses weeks ago. She said none of those cases had been dropped.

"That is simply not true," she said. "Those cases are coming to court now."

Videos of the vandalism showed huge crowds of people smashing their way into businesses and streaming out of the broken windows and doors with clothes and other merchandise. They loaded up vehicles, some moving slowly and deliberately, apparently not worried about being caught by police or being recorded by scores of cellphone cameras.

Vehicles drove away slowly, some leaving behind boxes of rocks that they had apparently brought to shatter the windows. Cash register drawers and clothes hangers were strewn about the streets, along with automatic teller machines that had been ripped from walls or pulled from inside businesses.

Stores miles from downtown were also ransacked, their parking lots littered with glass and boxes that once contained television sets and other electronics.

"This was obviously very orchestrated," the Rev. Michael Pfleger, a prominent Roman Catholic priest and activist on the city's South Side, told Chicago television station WBBM.

The havoc left some downtown residents rattled.

"I've lived here for 20 years, and it's getting scary, because you can't walk out now," said Alan Freeman, who lives in the downtown area. "You don't know if they're going to start with the people walking on the streets, instead of the stores."

Train and bus service into downtown was temporarily suspended, and bridges over the Chicago River were lifted, preventing travel to and from the downtown area. Some highway ramps were also closed. Although those restrictions were eased later in the day, they were to be reimposed beginning Monday evening until Tuesday morning.

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Brown said the police department would maintain a huge presence in the downtown area indefinitely, telling reporters that all days off had been canceled until further notice.

On the South Side, police responded about 2:30 p.m. Sunday to a call about a person with a gun in the Englewood neighborhood and tried to confront someone matching his description in an alley. He fled from officers on foot and shot at officers, police said.

More than an hour after the shooting, police and witnesses said a crowd faced off with officers after someone reportedly told people that police had shot and wounded a child. That crowd eventually dispersed.

But police later came across the social media post about a caravan of cars "being prompted to go to our downtown to loot," Brown said. "Within 15 minutes, we respond and almost immediately the caravan is in our downtown area."

Associated Press video journalist Teresa Crawford in Chicago contributed to this report.

Health officials are quitting or getting fired amid outbreak

By MICHELLE R. SMITH and LAUREN WEBER Associated Press and KHN

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — Vilified, threatened with violence and in some cases suffering from burnout, dozens of state and local public health leaders around the U.S. have resigned or have been fired amid the coronavirus outbreak, a testament to how politically combustible masks, lockdowns and infection data have become.

One of the latest departures came Sunday, when California's public health director, Dr. Sonia Angell, was ousted following a technical glitch that caused a delay in reporting hundreds of thousands of virus test results — information used to make decisions about reopening businesses and schools.

Last week, New York City's health commissioner was replaced after months of friction with the Police Department and City Hall.

A review by the Kaiser Health News service and The Associated Press finds at least 49 state and local public health leaders have resigned, retired or been fired since April across 23 states. The list has grown by more than 20 people since the AP and KHN started keeping track in June.

Dr. Tom Frieden, former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, called the numbers stunning. He said they reflect burnout, as well as attacks on public health experts and institutions from the highest levels of government, including from President Donald Trump, who has sidelined the CDC during the pandemic.

"The overall tone toward public health in the U.S. is so hostile that it has kind of emboldened people to make these attacks," Frieden said.

The last few months have been "frustrating and tiring and disheartening" for public health officials, said former West Virginia Public Health Commissioner Dr. Cathy Slemple, who was forced to resign by Republican Gov. Jim Justice in June.

"You care about community, and you're committed to the work you do and societal role that you're given. You feel a duty to serve, and yet it's really hard in the current environment," Slemple said in an interview Monday.

The departures come at a time when public health expertise is needed more than ever, said Lori Tremmel Freeman, CEO of the National Association of County and City Health Officials.

"We're moving at breakneck speed here to stop a pandemic, and you can't afford to hit the pause button and say, 'We're going to change the leadership around here and we'll get back to you after we hire somebody,'" Freeman said.

As of late Monday, confirmed infections in the United States stood at over 5 million, with deaths topping 163,000, the highest in the world, according to the count kept by Johns Hopkins University. The confirmed number of coronavirus cases in the world topped 20 million with about 734,000 deaths.

Many of the firings and resignations have to do with conflicts over mask orders or social distancing shutdowns, Freeman said. Despite the scientific evidence, many politicians and others have argued that

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such measures are not needed, no matter what health experts tell them.

"It's not a health divide; it's a political divide," Freeman said.

Some health officials said they were stepping down for family reasons, and some left for jobs at other agencies, such as the CDC. Some, like Angell, were ousted because of what higher-ups said was poor leadership or a failure to do their job.

Others have complained that they were overworked, underpaid, unappreciated or thrust into a pressure-cooker environment.

"To me, a lot of the divisiveness and the stress and the resignations that are happening right and left are the consequence of the lack of a real national response plan," said Dr. Matt Willis, health officer for Marin County in Northern California. "And we're all left scrambling at the local and state level to extract resources and improvise solutions ... in a fractured health care system, in an under-resourced public health system."

Public health leaders from Dr. Anthony Fauci down to officials in small communities have reported death threats and intimidation. Some have seen their home addresses published or been the subject of sexist attacks on social media. Fauci has said his wife and daughters have received threats.

In Ohio, the state's health director, Dr. Amy Acton, resigned in June after months of pressure during which Republican lawmakers tried to strip her of her authority and armed protesters showed up at her house.

It was on Acton's advice that GOP Gov. Mike DeWine became the first governor to shut down schools statewide. Acton also called off the state's presidential primary in March just hours before polls were to open, angering those who saw it as an overreaction.

The executive director of Las Animas-Huerfano Counties District Health Department in Colorado found her car vandalized twice, and a group called Colorado Counties for Freedom ran a radio ad demanding that her authority be reduced. Kim Gonzales has remained on the job.

In West Virginia, the governor forced Slemp's resignation over what he said were discrepancies in the data. Slemp said the department's work had been hurt by outdated technology like fax machines and slow computer networks. Tom Inglesby, director of the Center for Health Security at Johns Hopkins, said the issue amounted to a clerical error easily fixed.

Inglesby said it was deeply concerning that public health officials who told "uncomfortable truths" to political leaders had been removed.

"That's terrible for the national response because what we need for getting through this, first of all, is the truth. We need data, and we need people to interpret the data and help political leaders make good judgments," Inglesby said.

Since 2010, spending on state public health departments has dropped 16% per capita, and the amount devoted to local health departments has fallen 18%, according to a KHN and AP analysis. At least 38,000 state and local public health jobs have disappeared since the 2008 recession, leaving a skeletal workforce for what was once viewed as one of the world's top public health systems.

Another sudden departure came Monday along the Texas border. Dr. Jose Vazquez, the Starr County health authority, resigned after a proposal to increase his pay from \$500 to \$10,000 a month was rejected by county commissioners.

Starr County Judge Eloy Vera said Vazquez had been working 60 hours per week in the county, one of the poorest in the U.S. and recently one of those hit hardest by the virus.

"He felt it was an insult," Vera said.

In Oklahoma, both the state health commissioner and state epidemiologist have been replaced since the outbreak began in March.

In rural Colorado, Emily Brown was fired in late May as director of the Rio Grande County Public Health Department after clashing with county commissioners over reopening recommendations. The person who replaced her resigned July 9.

Brown said she knows many public health department leaders who are considering resigning or retiring because of the strain.

The months of nonstop and often unappreciated work are prompting many public health workers to

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leave, said Theresa Anselmo of the Colorado Association of Local Public Health Officials.

"It will certainly slow down the pandemic response and become less coordinated," she said. "Who's going to want to take on this career if you're confronted with the kinds of political issues that are coming up?"

Weber reported from St. Louis. Associated Press writers Paul Weber, Sean Murphy and Janie Har, and KHN writer Anna Maria Barry-Jester contributed reporting.

Weber is a reporter with Kaiser Health News. This story is a collaboration between The Associated Press and KHN, which is a nonprofit news service covering health issues. It is an editorially independent program of KFF (Kaiser Family Foundation) that is not affiliated with Kaiser Permanente.

No federal relief leaves states, cities facing big deficits

By GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

State and local government officials across the U.S. have been on edge for months about how to keep basic services running while covering rising costs related to the coronavirus outbreak as tax revenue plummeted.

It's now clear that anxiety will last a lot longer. Congressional talks over another coronavirus relief package have failed, with no immediate prospects for a restart.

The negotiation meltdown raises the prospect of more layoffs and furloughs of government workers and cuts to health care, social services, infrastructure and other core programs. Lack of money to boost school safety measures also will make it harder for districts to send kids back to the classroom.

On Monday, governors, lawmakers, mayors, teachers and others said they were going to keep pushing members of Congress to revive talks on another rescue package.

"Congress and the White House made a commitment to the governors that there would be a second round of relief for states — we are going to hold their feet to the fire until they uphold that commitment," New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu, a Republican, said in a statement.

How soon that might happen is anyone's guess. Congress has gone home, and President Donald Trump over the weekend took executive action to address what had been a key part of the negotiations. He extended an extra benefit for the jobless but cut it by a third — to \$400 a week — and told states they would have to pick up 25% of the cost.

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy, a Democrat, urged Congress to restart negotiations, boost the jobless benefit back to \$600 and immediately provide more aid to state and local governments.

"Let's be clear about something: States are going broke and millions of Americans are unemployed, yet the solution called for states to create a new program we cannot afford and don't know how to administer because of this uncertainty," he said.

Stay-at-home orders in the spring, business shutdowns and tight restrictions on businesses that have reopened are slamming state and local government revenue. In a June report, Moody's Analytics found that states would need an additional \$312 billion to balance their budgets over the next two years while local governments would need close to \$200 billion.

Many states already are staring at ledgers of red ink. Texas is projecting a \$4.6 billion deficit. In Pennsylvania, it's \$6 billion. In Washington, the deficit is expected to be nearly \$9 billion through 2023. California's budget includes more than \$11 billion in cuts to colleges and universities, the court system, housing programs and state worker salaries.

The pandemic's fallout also has trickled down to towns and cities, many of which are considering layoffs of police, firefighters and other essential workers. The association representing municipal governments in California said 90 percent of the state's 482 cities will have to cut staff or services.

Grass Valley, a town of about 13,000 east of Sacramento in the Sierra foothills, has laid off four employees and frozen seven unfilled positions — including in the police and fire departments.

"It is heartbreaking to have to cut services and lay off staff that are so integral to making Grass Valley a

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wonderful, vibrant place to live," Councilwoman Jan Arbuckle said in a statement. "This could be avoided if we had strong federal support."

Officials say the \$150 billion for state and other governments in a congressional aid bill passed in late March is not enough to keep them afloat and came with too many restrictions. Many governors have pressed Congress to allow them to use it to help balance their budgets.

The U.S. House of Representatives, where Democrats hold the majority, passed a coronavirus relief bill in May worth more than \$3 trillion, with close to one-third of that going to state and local governments. In the Senate, which Republicans control, some senators didn't want a new round of aid at all, in part because they were concerned about the ballooning federal deficit.

Without Congress stepping in, the budget situation is growing worse in many places, especially with a surge in COVID-19 cases throughout the country leading to another round of restrictions.

In Arlington, Texas, Mayor Jeff Williams expects a \$20 million shortfall in the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1, which is about 4 percent of the annual budget. For the year after that, the budget gap is expected to be between \$30 million and \$50 million.

"We'll be cutting every department," Williams said.

He has been one of the leaders of the U.S. Conference of Mayors' push for more federal help, arguing that big cuts to city governments would only deepen the recession.

Another mayor involved in that effort, Dayton, Ohio's Nan Whaley, already has approved employee buy-outs and furloughs, and canceled some infrastructure projects to get through the year. Cuts to the police department -- a major expense for most local governments -- are likely, she said.

"The irony is that the person who will defund the police is Donald Trump," Whaley said.

Richard Sheets, deputy director of the Missouri Municipal League, said local governments there need to be allowed more time to use the federal aid they've received so far. Currently, it all must be spent this year.

North Carolina's 550 local governments anticipate a combined \$600 million cumulative drop in revenue for the coming fiscal year, according to estimates from the state's League of Municipalities.

Rick Schuettler, executive director of the Pennsylvania Municipal League, said many of his 116 member governments have not received any federal aid so far. That will translate into cuts to police, fire, parks and basic services.

"If you think the impact on local government isn't going to affect the overall economy, it is," he said.

Among the biggest needs is more money to make schools safe so teachers and students can get back in the classroom. In many districts across the country, learning will be done remotely when classes resume for the new year.

Several groups have been pushing for at least \$100 billion more to help schools deal with the pandemic.

Cheryl Bost, a teacher and president of the Maryland State Education Association, said schools need money to buy protective gear and cleaning supplies, test students and staff, and upgrade air ventilation systems.

"School systems can't achieve these necessary standards with reduced funding," she said.

Associated Press writers Scott Bauer in Madison, Wis.; Adam Beam and Don Thompson in Sacramento, California; Mike Catalini in Trenton, N.J.; David Eggert in Lansing, Michigan; Rachel La Corte in Olympia, Wash.; Marc Levy in Harrisburg, Pa.; David A. Lieb in Jefferson City, Missouri; Holly Ramer in Hopkinton, N.H.; Gary Robertson in Raleigh, North Carolina; and Paul Weber in Austin, Texas, contributed to this report.

Lebanese government resigns after Beirut blast, public anger

By BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Lebanon's prime minister stepped down from his job Monday in the wake of the catastrophic explosion in Beirut that has triggered public outrage, saying he has come to the conclusion that corruption in the country is "bigger than the state."

The move risks opening the way to dragged-out negotiations over a new Cabinet amid urgent calls for

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reform. It follows a weekend of anti-government protests after the Aug. 4 explosion in Beirut's port that decimated the facility and caused widespread destruction, killing at least 160 people and injuring about 6,000 others.

In a brief televised speech after three of his ministers resigned, Prime Minister Hassan Diab said he and his government were stepping down.

"May God protect Lebanon," he said, repeating the last phrase three times. As he spoke, protesters demonstrated in the streets near parliament for a third straight day.

The moment typified Lebanon's political dilemma. Since October, there have been mass demonstrations demanding the departure of the entire sectarian-based leadership over entrenched corruption, incompetence and mismanagement.

But the ruling oligarchy has held onto power for so long — since the end of the civil war in 1990 — that it is difficult to find a credible political figure untainted by connections to it.

Diab blamed corrupt politicians who preceded him for the "earthquake" that has hit Lebanon.

"They (the political class) should have been ashamed of themselves because their corruption is what has led to this disaster that had been hidden for seven years," he added.

"I have discovered that corruption is bigger than the state and that the state is paralyzed by this (ruling) clique and cannot confront it or get rid of it," said Diab, who was a professor at the American University of Beirut before he took the job.

After the catastrophe, Diab had sought to stay on for two months to organize new parliamentary elections and allow a map for reforms. But the pressure from within his own Cabinet proved to be too much. With the mass resignation, the call for early elections appears dead, so the same factions will debate on forming a new Cabinet.

Diab's government was formed after his predecessor, Saad Hariri, stepped down in October in response to the demonstrations. It took months of bickering among the leadership factions before they settled on Diab.

His government, which was dominated by the Hezbollah militant group and its allies and seen as one-sided, was basically doomed from the start, tasked with meeting demands for reform but made up of all the factions that reformers want out.

Now the process must start again.

"I hope that the caretaking period will not be long because the country cannot take that. Lets hope a new government will be formed quickly," Public Works Minister Michel Najjar said. "An effective government is the least we need to get out of this crisis."

The pressure from the streets — and from French President Emmanuel Macron, who visited Beirut last week after the blast — could push the political factions to put aside their differences and form a unity government. Diab's government largely excluded Hezbollah's opponents, the Eurasia Group said in an analysis, adding that the factions may now see the need to carry out greater reform.

The group said a government of independent experts could be created, although Hezbollah is a main obstacle to that since it fears that would eventually lead to the group being forced out of the political system.

The weekend protests saw clashes with security forces firing tear gas at demonstrators.

The explosion is believed to have been caused by a fire that ignited a 2,750-ton stockpile of highly volatile ammonium nitrate that had been stored at the port since 2013 with few safeguards despite numerous warnings of the danger.

The result was a disaster that the Lebanese people blame squarely on their leadership's corruption and neglect. Losses from the explosion are estimated at \$10 billion to \$15 billion, with nearly 300,000 people left homeless.

On Monday, a French chemical expert working at the shattered port told The Associated Press that his team is working to secure at least 20 potentially dangerous chemical containers there after finding one that was leaking.

He also said there are flammable liquids in other containers as well as batteries and other products that

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could increase the risk of an explosion, describing huge containers tossed around the port by the powerful blast. The expert identified himself only as Lt. Anthony in accordance with French government policy.

The last decision by Diab's government before its resignation was to refer the case of the explosion to the Supreme Judicial Council, which handles crimes infringing on Lebanon's national security as well as political and state security crimes. The Supreme Judicial Council is Lebanon's top judicial body.

A judge on Monday questioned the heads of the country's security agencies. Public Prosecutor Ghassan El Khoury questioned Maj. Gen. Tony Saliba, the head of State Security, according to state-run National News Agency. It gave no further details, but other generals are scheduled to be questioned.

State Security had compiled a report about the dangers of storing the material at the port and sent a copy to the offices of the president and prime minister on July 20. The investigation is focused on how the ammonium nitrate came to be stored at the port and why nothing was done about it.

Najjar, the public works minister, said he learned about the material's presence 24 hours before the blast, receiving a report about the material and holding a meeting with port officials before calling its chief, Hassan Koraytem.

"I wrote a report in the morning the explosion happened in the evening," Najjar said. Asked why he only learned of it the day before, Najjar said, "I don't know. Truly I don't know."

About 20 people have been detained after the blast, including the head of Lebanon's customs department and his predecessor, as well as the head of the port. Dozens of people have been questioned, including two former Cabinet ministers, according to government officials.

On Sunday, world leaders and international organizations pledged nearly \$300 million in emergency humanitarian aid to Beirut, but warned that no money for rebuilding the capital would be made available until Lebanese authorities commit themselves to the political and economic reforms demanded by the people.

French expert: Dangerous chemicals remain in Beirut port

By NADINE ACHOUI-LESAGE Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Chemical experts and firefighters are working to secure at least 20 potentially dangerous chemical containers at the explosion-shattered port of Beirut, after finding one that was leaking, according to a member of a French cleanup team.

Some of the containers were punctured when last week's deadly blast ripped through the port and the Lebanese capital, said Lt. Anthony, a French chemical expert at the site who was not authorized to be identified by his full name according to government policy.

French and Italian chemical experts working amid the remains of the port have so far identified more than 20 containers carrying dangerous chemicals, Anthony said.

"We noted the presence of containers with the chemical danger symbol. And then noted that one of the containers was leaking," he told The Associated Press in a TV interview on Monday.

The experts are working with Lebanese firefighters to secure all of the containers and analyze their contents, he said. "We need to clean everything and put all in security."

He didn't identify what chemicals were involved or provide further details. Lebanese officials have not commented on the potential chemical risks at the port.

"There are also other flammable liquids in other containers, there are also batteries, or other kind of products which could increase the risk of potential explosion," Anthony said, describing huge containers tossed around the port by the powerful force of the blast.

It is unclear whether there could be additional potentially dangerous containers in other zones of the port. The French and Italian experts were assigned to a specific zone to examine and secure that section, Anthony said.

The explosion last Tuesday in the port killed at least 160 people and injured about 6,000 others. It is believed to have been caused by a fire that ignited a 2,750-ton stockpile of highly volatile ammonium nitrate. The material had been stored at the port since 2013 with few safeguards despite numerous warnings of the danger.

The chemical experts are among scores of French emergency workers who arrived to help search for bodies, aid the sick and clean up after the blast. Nearly 50 French police are also in Beirut helping investigate what happened.

Associated Press writer Angela Charlton in Paris contributed to this report.

McDonald's sues ousted CEO, alleging employee relationships

By DEE-ANN DURBIN AP Business Writer

McDonald's says it's suing Stephen Easterbrook, the CEO it ousted last year over an inappropriate relationship with an employee, alleging Monday that he covered up relationships with three other employees and destroyed evidence.

The company now wants to reclaim millions of dollars in compensation paid to Easterbrook.

"McDonald's does not tolerate behavior from employees that does not reflect our values," said McDonald's President and CEO Chris Kempczinski, who was promoted following Easterbrook's departure, in a message to employees Monday.

The lawsuit puts a spotlight — again — on a years-long reckoning over sexual harassment at Chicago-based McDonald's and its 39,000 restaurants. In the U.S. alone, more than 50 workers have filed separate sexual harassment charges against McDonald's with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or in state courts.

Leaders with Fight for \$15, which supports higher wages and unions for fast food workers, said Monday that McDonald's should use any money it recoups from Easterbrook for worker-led programs that combat sexual harassment.

In his message to employees, Kempczinski said he is committed to making sure that employees are "encouraged and comfortable coming forward with information about any behavior that doesn't align with our values."

McDonald's also told workers Monday it is conducting a global survey and listening sessions to assess the current state of its corporate culture. The assessment will be completed and shared with employees in November, McDonald's Chief People Officer Heidi Capozzi said in a message obtained by The Associated Press.

McDonald's fired Easterbrook last November after he acknowledged exchanging videos and text messages in a non-physical, consensual relationship with an employee. Easterbrook told the company that there were no other similar instances. An initial search of his cellphone confirmed that.

Based on what the company knew at the time, McDonald's board approved a separation agreement "without cause" that allowed Easterbrook to keep nearly \$42 million in stock-based benefits, according to Equilar, which tracks executive compensation. Easterbrook also collected 26 weeks of pay, amounting to compensation of about \$670,000.

According to the lawsuit, McDonald's received an anonymous tip in July that Easterbrook had engaged in a sexual relationship with another employee. After an investigation, McDonald's confirmed that relationship as well as two other physical, sexual relationships in the year before he was fired. Easterbrook also approved a special grant of restricted stock, worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, to one of those employees, the lawsuit said.

The company said Monday that Easterbrook removed evidence of those relationships — including sexually explicit photos and videos sent from corporate email accounts — from his cell phone, preventing investigators from learning about them prior to his firing. But that evidence remained on the company's email servers.

McDonald's didn't say why those servers weren't checked during its initial investigation. In the lawsuit, the company says it relied on Easterbrook — its highest ranking executive — to be truthful.

"That reliance caused the company injury," McDonald's said in the lawsuit.

In the lawsuit, which was filed in Delaware, McDonald's said it would not have terminated Easterbrook without cause if it had known of the additional relationships.

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Tim Hubbard, an assistant professor of management at the University of Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business, said firing a CEO with cause can lead to protracted, expensive legal battles, which is why boards try to avoid it. Easterbrook's case seemed clear-cut, he said.

But Hubbard applauded McDonald's for reopening the investigation when new information came forward. He said McDonald's experience may teach other companies not to reach severance agreements without a thorough investigation.

"That's my big hope with this thing, that we learn from it," he said. "Companies are not going to settle for this anymore."

McDonald's is now attempting to block Easterbrook from exercising his stock options and said it will seek compensatory damages.

It's unclear how much Easterbrook might have to pay. In the lawsuit, McDonald's says Easterbrook's separation agreement makes clear that his 2018 and 2019 equity awards may be forfeited if the company determines he has engaged in "detrimental conduct." Easterbrook was awarded more than \$29 million in stock-based compensation in those two years.

Telephone and email messages seeking comment were left with Easterbrook's attorney.

Easterbrook and his wife divorced in 2015, the same year he became McDonald's CEO. Easterbrook, who is British, began his career with McDonald's in 1993 when he served as a finance manager in London.

McDonald's has taken steps to halt harassment in its ranks. In 2017, Easterbrook assured McDonald's board that he and other executives were completing anti-harassment training. Last October — a month before Easterbrook was fired — McDonald's introduced a new harassment training program for its 850,000 U.S. employees. But franchisees — who own 95% of McDonald's U.S. restaurants — aren't required to offer it.

McDonald's shares were flat at \$204.23 in midday trading.

Antonio Banderas says he's tested positive for coronavirus

NEW YORK (AP) — Antonio Banderas says he's tested positive for COVID-19 and is celebrating his 60th birthday in quarantine.

The Spanish actor announced his positive test in a post Monday on Instagram. Banderas said he would spend his time in isolation reading, writing and "making plans to begin to give meaning to my 60th year to which I arrive full of enthusiasm."

"I would like to add that I am relatively well, just a little more tired than usual and hoping to recover as soon as possible following medical instructions that I hope will allow me to overcome the infection that I and so many people in the world are suffering from," wrote Banderas.

A spokesperson for Banderas didn't immediately respond to messages Monday.

Earlier this year, Banderas was nominated for the Academy Award for best actor for his performance in Pedro Almodóvar's "Pain & Glory."

55 years after riots, Watts section of LA still bears scars

By BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — There were no fires this time in Watts. There was no looting, no shooting and no National Guard troops patrolling.

Protesters filled the streets around the country in late May and June following the Minneapolis police killing of George Floyd, demanding an end to police brutality. There was violence and looting in some places, including Los Angeles, but not in LA's Watts neighborhood, forever linked to an uprising that broke out in the segregated community 55 years ago and became known as the Watts riots.

Demonstrators made a point not to go into Watts or other poor neighborhoods this time.

Watts has never fully recovered from fires that leveled hundreds of buildings or the violence that killed 34 people — two-thirds of whom were shot by police or National Guard troops. Those who lived through those frightening days and those who grew up in its aftermath are keenly aware of that past and the les-

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sons it taught.

"People have learned from the history to say we're not going to burn our community," said state Assemblyman Mike Gipson, who was born in Watts a year after the turmoil. "We realize our community is not going to be built again."

Watts has changed from an exclusively Black neighborhood in the 1960s to one that's majority Latino. It remains poor, with high unemployment.

The uprising started Aug. 11, 1965, in a nearby neighborhood after the drunken driving arrest of a young Black man by a white California Highway Patrol officer. The violence reflected pent-up anger over an abusive police force, a problem that has ebbed but not entirely faded, according to those who live here.

Improvements over the years include a more diverse Los Angeles Police Department that better reflects the city's population. One of Watts' major public housing developments, Jordan Downs, is being rebuilt with a nearby retail shopping complex.

A government commission that studied the cause of the rebellion called for better police-community relations and more low-income housing, along with better schools, more job training, more efficient public transportation and better health care. While some gains have been made, those who live here say the area has a long way to go to overcome decades of neglect.

Black residents, people born here and those who work to make life better in Watts spoke to The Associated Press about the challenges they faced and those that remain.

Donny Joubert remembers the chaos of 1965 through the eyes of a 5-year-old.

Smoke filled the air and adults wept in front of a black-and-white TV tuned to images of their community burning and widespread looting.

When he saw National Guard troops walking outside, Joubert thought his plastic toy soldiers had come to life.

"What really shocked me was I look up and I see the same guys I was holding were walking through the development with guns on their shoulders," Joubert said.

Like some young men in the area, Joubert joined a gang and ended up in jail.

But at 20, and with a young daughter, he got a second chance. Through a program founded by U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters of California he eventually got a job at the Los Angeles Housing Authority, where he's now a grounds supervisor.

He's also vice president of the Watts Gang Task Force, which meets weekly with police. If there are reports of an abusive officer — someone roughing people up or prone to stopping cars without cause — they tell the captain. The officer may get transferred, though Joubert is concerned that just moves the problem to another neighborhood.

He wants to see more done to prosecute police for brutality and fatal shootings. Only two officers in Los Angeles County have been prosecuted for on-duty killings in the past 20 years, a period in which close to 900 people, mostly Black and Latino, have been killed by law enforcement.

"It's been a crooked system when it came to us. They always had a system to keep us locked up, to keep a knee in our neck," Joubert said. "Every dirty cop that took a Black life, that took a Latino life without cause, we want them in prison because that's what they did to us."

Residents of Watts are still living with collateral damage from 1965, said the Rev. Marcus Murchinson, who preaches at the Tree of Life Missionary Baptist Church and also runs a charter high school, drug rehab clinics and offers health care.

Many of the businesses that burned were never rebuilt. A corridor of Black-owned restaurants, clothing stores and bars never rebounded.

The area has long been termed a "food desert" because of a lack of fresh fruits and vegetables and a plethora of fast food restaurants and convenience and liquor stores stocked with booze, junk food and cigarettes. It took 20 years for a supermarket to be built after the uprising.

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"It was almost an act of punishment when they burned down the grocery store," Murchinson said of the time it took to get a new one.

Murchinson, 36, who didn't grow up in Watts, said the community has survived uprisings in 1965 and 1992 following the acquittal of the officers who beat Rodney King. But surviving is not enough.

"The spirit of the people of Watts has not changed. They are still resilient. They are still vibrant," he said. "They have the root of survival. That is a good and bad thing. When you have the testimony of surviving, you sometimes think that is success and think surviving equates to thriving, and it doesn't."

He said residents still suffer from years of systemic racism in policing, banking and housing. Multiple generations of the same families continue to live in public housing projects and only a small percentage get off government assistance and achieve the dream of owning a home.

"What project is going on there?" he asked. "The project seems to be to warehouse people and make them comfortable, not competent."

Lavarn Young, 81, who moved to Watts from Texas in 1946, said she's seen a lot of good change since the uprising.

Freeways built nearby make it easier to get around, there's a light rail stop in the heart of Watts and shopping centers eventually replaced businesses that burned down in 1965.

But she said gangs have made the neighborhood more dangerous than it was a half-century ago, even if crime is not as bad as during the crack cocaine epidemic of the 1980s and early '90s.

Young, who was horse race bookie and later worked in special education in schools, lives in her parents' house, which is lined with family photos.

One of her sons lives in the house behind her. He gets by on disability pay after a bullet lodged in his brain when he was shot in the eye. He survived two other shootings, as well.

Young has 15 grandchildren and lots of nephews and nieces who are in and out of the house. She doesn't ask if they are in gangs.

"You don't have to be in a gang, but you're associated with it," she said. "If you're in a Blood hood, you're a Blood. If you're in a Crip hood, you're a Crip. It depends where you were born."

Fences now separate homes on the streets where children once played on one another's lawns, and bars cover many windows.

"Now, you hardly know your neighbors," she said.

Former gang member Eric Frierson, 37, lives in Imperial Courts, one of the housing projects he refers to as "tribal institutions" because of the rivalries that divide residents despite sharing "the same struggle."

Frierson laments losing focus on becoming a good athlete and falling prey to the "distractions."

"You come outside and see the sidewalk stained with blood. It doesn't go anywhere. Every time you go by it, you see it," he said.

His father was in prison, and Frierson served time for robbery, a felony conviction that prevents him from getting work.

"I went behind that wall. I continued the trend," Frierson said.

He said he's not optimistic the current activism will lead to big improvements. But he's planning to set up some type of club that will provide sorely lacking activities for kids.

Frierson still sees a lot of good within the walls of the housing projects.

"There's a lot more love in those bricks than they give us credit for," he said.

Hank Henderson, 62, and his family arrived in Watts from Indianapolis the year before the uprising and has seen the bad and good of the neighborhood. He remembers the fires, shattered windows, burned-out cars and soldiers in the streets.

He saw the businesses that never returned: banks, doctor's offices, a gas station, pharmacies, a dental office, barbershops, a grocery store and cleaners.

The neighborhood was rough, but Henderson stayed out of trouble — his father wouldn't tolerate it and

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he played sports. He was a local Golden Gloves champ and trains young boxers today.

The Black Lives Matter movement and Floyd's death have brought attention to abuses Black people have witnessed and suffered for years, though Henderson said that situation has improved since LAPD started listening to their complaints.

"The police car says, 'To protect and to serve' but 'seek and destroy' is what they were doing," Henderson said. "People are listening now. They're realizing what's been going on all these years."

Henderson moved out of Watts about two years after a son, Rayshawn Boyce, was gunned down in 2009. The suspected killer was caught but never charged because witnesses feared for their safety.

"Here, they got this code. You don't say nothing," Henderson said. "They had witnesses at first but then they backed off. They would have had to move, and where were they going to go?"

Henderson left the Nickerson Gardens housing project after nearly 50 years, moving to the suburbs about 30 miles (50 kilometers) inland.

"I didn't want to get out of here for years. I just wasn't ready. A lot of people moved out, but they weren't ready for the real world," he said.

The divisions in Watts — the gangs, the different housing projects — trickle down to children, who grow up aware of the feuds.

"Our park is surrounded by three different areas," Benjamin Jackson Jr. said. "Certain kids from our community of Watts can't get together. We don't even have a neutral meeting place."

Jackson grew up in Jordan Downs public housing, a weather-beaten collection of two-story apartment buildings originally built to house steelworkers after World War II. The complex is undergoing a major makeover that will include much-needed retail.

He still lives in the project.

"It's easy to get in one, harder to get out because we're born in it," Jackson said. "The only time seeing anything different from the projects was me being incarcerated."

Jackson got in trouble at age 10 and was in an out of lockups much of his life. He was a member of the Grape Street Crips, but now, at 44, he's older, wiser and "no longer a gangbanger."

He said police used to pick up him and others ostensibly for questioning. On the way to the station, they'd say they had to respond to another call and would drop him in rival turf, all alone.

They no longer do that, but he said he's still harassed despite being a carpenter who hasn't been on parole or probation in 10 years.

"They put me up against a wall. 'Let's jack him up and see if he got any warrants,'" Jackson said. "They'll say the music was too loud when I don't have music playing or spot me with people in the car and will just pull me over."

He said the main goal is to get out of the projects, to give his children a better life with a house and a yard. The oldest of his seven kids, a 24-year-old daughter, has realized that dream and lives in central California.

"She ain't never coming back," Jackson said.

On a small building that backs up to freight train tracks on Compton Avenue, an image of Martin Luther King Jr. is painted on a wall across the word, "DREAM."

Inside the Shack by the Track, Lorinda Lacy tries to make those letters come to life for Watts residents.

In addition to assembling party supplies for a living and serving snacks — hamburgers, cookies, candy — she spends a lot of her time and energy helping others.

Lacy, known as Auntie Moe, is one of many in Watts, including nonprofits and charities, who provide for those in need.

Lacy does all her work on a shoestring budget, providing blankets and pillows to the homeless, feeding children who miss out on school lunches during the summer and providing hundreds of free meals each holiday to anyone who's hungry. She gets contributions, buys food when it's cheap and gets handouts

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from churches and food pantries.

"I don't have anything to give back but my love," she said. "I'm not rich. I'm poor."

Lacy said her brother, the rapper Kevin "Flipside" White, was her inspiration and mentor for giving back to the community. White was part of the group OFTB, or Operation from the Bottom, that recorded with Death Row Records and worked on several tracks with the late Tupac Shakur.

White died in a drive-by shooting in 2013.

Lacy, 45, moved out of Watts 20 years ago because she didn't want her daughters to grow up with the trauma she experienced.

She said she eventually became "immune" to the violence after stepping over bodies on the way to school and finding out who had been killed the night before or who had their house shot up. As a child, she slept on the floor because of frequent drive-by shootings.

"If it wasn't every night, it was every other night," she said.

Even though she moved out, she hasn't given up on her old neighborhood, where her mother still lives in the house where Lacy grew up.

She's trying to provide a safe place where people can hang out while she works. Music plays in the background and kids play games outside.

"All I'm doing is taking my stand and doing my part," she said.

Gipson attributes his success partly to hardworking parents — a father who was a truck driver and a mother who was a domestic worker — who did not spare him from discipline. They taught him to respect others, and neighbors also looked out for him and told his parents when he was out of line.

There was immense pressure to join a gang, and he wanted to be part of one. But Gipson said the leader wouldn't let him join, partly because he was afraid of Gipson's mother.

Gipson's turning point came in middle school when he overcame a speech impediment and low self-esteem and was elected class president.

"It was difficult growing up, but not impossible growing up in Watts," he said.

Inspired by a cousin who worked as a U.S. marshal, Gipson eventually became a police officer in the city of Maywood and then left for a series of jobs working for politicians and unions. He was elected to City Council in Carson in 2005 and state Assembly in 2014 to represent an area that includes Watts.

He said the legacy of the Watts riots is something he keeps in mind as he tries to make life better for residents.

"I would say, even though I didn't know them in 1965, those people didn't lose their lives in order for someone to grow up in Watts and not create and make a better place for the next generation," he said. "What you have seen, my God, even in 2020 where people feel disenfranchised, marginalized, feel like they've been pushed aside and left for dead, been invisible, their voices have not been elevated to the point where change is effective."

Asked why so much is still needed in Watts, Gipson said change is slow. He cited the millions poured into rebuilding Jordan Downs. A new hospital that serves the area opened five years ago to replace the county-run Martin Luther King Jr. hospital that was closed after patient deaths and shoddy care.

Floyd's death inspired Gipson to introduce legislation to ban the use of a controversial neck hold that police officers use to restrain suspects. Floyd was handcuffed on the ground and gasping for air as an officer pressed a knee in his neck for nearly eight minutes.

Gipson also wants to see bias training for police, more people of color hired on the force and an affirmative action ban in the state repealed.

"We're not the same California we were 55 years ago or the city of Los Angeles 55 years ago. We're moving forward, we're bringing people together," Gipson said. "Voices are saying, 'We've been mistreated.' Change is in the air."

Hong Kong newspaper raided, tycoon detained under new law

By ZEN SOO Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong authorities arrested media tycoon Jimmy Lai on Monday, broadening their enforcement of a new national security law and stoking fears of a crackdown on the semi-autonomous region's free press. Police were seen carting away boxes of what they said was evidence at Lai's pro-democracy Next Digital headquarters.

In the evening, police arrested pro-democracy activist Agnes Chow Ting on charges of inciting secession under the same law, according to tweets by fellow activist Nathan Law, who left Hong Kong for Britain soon after the law took effect. An earlier post on Chow's official Facebook page said police had arrived at her home and her lawyers were rushing to the scene, and a separate post later confirmed that she had been taken away by police.

Two days after Chinese and Hong Kong officials shrugged off sanctions imposed on them by the U.S., the moves showed China's determination to enforce the new law and curb dissent in the semi-autonomous city after months of massive pro-democracy demonstrations last year.

The arrest of Lai, two of his sons and several company officers and the search of Next Digital marked the first time the law was used against news media. Next Digital operates Apple Daily, a feisty pro-democracy tabloid that often condemns China's Communist Party-led government.

"Raiding a news institution is a severe attack on press freedom and should not be tolerated in a civilized society," Next Digital said in a statement. "Hong Kong's press freedom is now hanging by a thread, but our staff will remain fully committed to our duty to defend the freedom of the press."

Apple Daily's popularity stems from its celebrity news and flamboyant stories, but it is also known for investigative reporting and breaking news coverage. It has frequently urged readers to take part in pro-democracy protests.

On July 1, it condemned the new national security law on its front page, calling it "the final nail in the coffin" for the "one country, two systems" framework under which the former British colony has been able to enjoy much greater civil liberties than in mainland China since its return to Chinese rule in 1997.

The British government condemned Lai's arrest, saying authorities are using the new law to quash dissent.

"This is further evidence that the national security law is being used as a pretext to silence opposition," Prime Minister Boris Johnson's spokesman, James Slack, said Monday.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a tweet that he was "deeply troubled" by reports of Lai's arrest and that it was proof the Chinese Communist Party has "eviscerated Hong Kong's freedoms and eroded the rights of its people."

The arrests of Lai and Chow came on the same day Beijing announced sanctions on 11 Americans, including six members of Congress, in retaliation for Friday's U.S. sanctions on Hong Kong and mainland officials over Hong Kong policy.

And in Chinese-claimed Taiwan, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar became the highest-ranking American official to visit since 1979, fueling an escalating battle between the two nations over technology, security, trade and human rights.

Hong Kong police arrested Lai on Monday morning, an aide to the businessman said, in the highest-profile detention under the new law since it took effect on June 30. Lai, 71, is an outspoken pro-democracy figure who regularly criticizes China's authoritarian rule and Hong Kong's government.

Mark Simon, a Next Digital executive and Lai's aide, said Lai was charged with collusion with foreign powers.

Hong Kong police said they arrested at least 10 people between the ages of 23 and 72 on suspicion of violating the security law and other offenses. They did not release the names of those arrested or provide further details of the charges.

Following Lai's arrest, about 200 police raided Next Digital's headquarters, cordoning off the area, searching desks and at times getting into heated exchanges with staff. What police were looking for in the building wasn't clear, although they later said they took away 25 boxes of evidence for processing.

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Lai, who was arrested at his mansion in Kowloon in the morning, was also brought to the headquarters of Next Digital, where he remained for about two and a half hours before police took him away in a car.

"We are completely shocked by what's happening now, with the arrest and followed by the ongoing raid inside the headquarters of Next Digital," said Chris Yeung, chairman of the Hong Kong Journalists Association.

"With the passage of the national security law and the really tough powers given to the police in their operations, we have seen now what we call 'white terror' become a reality, which will affect media organizations and journalists' reporting."

Police only allowed journalists from 15 select media to cover the raid from inside the cordoned-off area. They barred public broadcaster RTHK and foreign outlets including The Associated Press, saying only larger local media that had not obstructed or posed a threat to police in the past could enter.

Senior Superintendent Steve Li said the arrests were not politically motivated.

Police unblocked Next Digital's headquarters at midafternoon, with Li saying staff were free to resume work.

Bruce Lui, a senior lecturer in Hong Kong Baptist University's journalism department, said authorities are making an example of Apple Daily under the new law.

"They're used as an example to terrify others ... of what can happen if you don't obey or if you go too far," Lui said. "I think other media may make a judgment to censor themselves."

The share price of Next Digital soared over 200% in the afternoon, following posts on a popular online forum encouraging investors to support the company by buying its stock.

The reasons for the charge against Lai weren't clear.

In May, shortly after Beijing announced its intention to pass the national security law for Hong Kong, Lai condemned the legislation in a series of tweets. The state-owned newspaper Global Times called the tweets "evidence of subversion."

Lai also wrote an op-ed in The New York Times in May stating that China was repressing Hong Kong with the legislation.

"I have always thought I might one day be sent to jail for my publications or for my calls for democracy in Hong Kong," Lai wrote. "But for a few tweets, and because they are said to threaten the national security of mighty China? That's a new one, even for me."

Lai was arrested in February and April for allegedly participating in unauthorized protests last year. He also faces charges of joining an unauthorized vigil June 4 marking Beijing's crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Last year, Lai met U.S. Vice President Mike Pence and Pompeo at the White House to discuss a controversial bill — since withdrawn — that would have allowed criminal suspects in Hong Kong to be sent to mainland China for trial.

But Hong Kong officials have said the security law, which took effect June 30, would not be applied retroactively. The law is widely seen as a means to curb dissent after anti-government protests rocked the semi-autonomous city for months last year.

The legislation outlaws secessionist, subversive and terrorist acts, as well as collusion with foreign forces in the city's internal affairs. The maximum punishment for serious offenders is life imprisonment.

Taiwan condemned the arrests in a statement, saying they were a tool for the Chinese Communist Party's "political cleansing and hegemonic expansion." It said the law is being abused to suppress freedom of speech, press freedom and the civil rights of Hong Kong people.

Associated Press writer Jill Lawless in London contributed to this report.

Born with 1 hand, she's an inspiration in virus fight

By STACEY PLAISANCE Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Two years out of medical school, respiratory therapist Savannah Stuard is on the front lines of the fight against COVID-19 in New Orleans, operating ventilator equipment or manually pumping air into patients' lungs.

It's challenging work under any circumstances, involving 12-hour shifts, head-to-toe protective equipment and constant vigilance to avoid catching or spreading the disease. It's even more complicated for Stuard, who was born without a left forearm.

"I don't have two hands, only the one," she said, discussing the challenges of working while maintaining a sterile environment. "So I have to sit there and methodically think it out, what to touch next, what to put on my hand to make it as sterile as possible."

Stuard, who works at Ochsner Medical Center, keeps the tip of her left arm covered with a glove secured by tape.

To prepare for close contact with patients, she practices procedures such as "bagging" — manually pumping air into a patient's lungs — in a simulation room on a mannequin.

Stuard says she enjoys her work and likes to inspire others along the way.

"It's so rewarding," she said. "Most patients see me, and they're like, 'Whoa.' They ask me questions, and I answer them. It's amazing."

Stuard volunteers at foundations where she mentors young people with limb differences to show them how she learned to do things like tie her shoes, participate in gymnastics and other sports and learn karate.

She has also shared her experiences with patients she encounters who have lost limbs.

"They'll say, 'I lost my leg in a car accident, and you just give me so much hope,'" Stuard said. "That's what I love to hear, and that's what I strive (for) — to help people to be better, because they see someone that has less and doing more, and it makes them feel like they can do more."

Stuard's story caught the attention of New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees, who has undertaken charitable efforts to help front-line medical workers and provide health care in underserved communities in New Orleans and Baton Rouge.

Brees noted her efforts as part of his work with The Real Heroes Project, a collaboration involving 15 men's and women's sports leagues. Athletes who participate share personal thank-you messages to health care workers on social media.

"He wrote my name on the back of his jersey and said, 'This is for you, the real hero,' and he was just thanking me for what I was doing," Stuard said. "To get recognized like that, it was really great and exciting."

While nonstop news about the effects of the coronavirus has become commonplace, so, too, have tales of kindness. "One Good Thing" is a series of AP stories focusing on glimmers of joy and benevolence in a dark time. Read the series here: <https://apnews.com/OneGoodThing>

China sanctions 11 US politicians, heads of organizations

BEIJING (AP) — China on Monday announced unspecified sanctions against 11 U.S. politicians and heads of organizations promoting democratic causes, including Senators Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz, who have already been singled out by Beijing.

Foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian on Monday said the 11 had "performed badly" on issues concerning Hong Kong, where China has cracked down on opposition voices following its imposition of a national security law in the semi-autonomous southern Chinese city last month.

The number of Americans named by the ministry exactly equals the number of Hong Kong and Chinese officials placed on a sanctions list by the U.S. last week over the crackdown.

China showed its determination to defy such pressure on Monday by arresting leading independent media tycoon Jimmy Lai and raiding the publisher's headquarters.

"The relevant actions of the U.S. blatantly intervened in Hong Kong affairs, grossly interfered in China's

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internal affairs, and seriously violated international law and the basic norms of international relations," foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said at a daily briefing on Monday.

"China urges the U.S. to have a clear understanding of the situation, correct mistakes, and immediately stop interfering in Hong Kong affairs and interfering in China's internal affairs."

Four other lawmakers were named by the foreign ministry: Senators Josh Hawley, Tom Cotton and Pat Toomey and Representative Chris Smith.

Cotton, an Arkansas Republican, said he was sanctioned for defending the victims of Communist Party rule, including Hong Kong students fighting for democracy.

"Chinese Communism is the most dangerous threat to freedom in the world, and I will never back down from fighting it," he said in a statement.

The others sanctioned were National Endowment for Democracy President Carl Gershman, National Democratic Institute President Derek Mitchell, International Republican Institute President Daniel Twining, Human Rights Watch Executive Director Kenneth Roth, and Michael Abramowitz, President of Freedom House.

Beijing already placed a travel ban on Rubio, Cruz and Smith last month after Washington announced similar measures against Chinese officials linked to measures taken against Muslims in the northwestern Chinese region of Xinjiang.

The standing committee of China's national legislature passed the National Security Law last month, bypassing the city's Legislative Council and the public, where such legislation has faced stiff opposition for years.

The move came in response to months of sometimes violent anti-government protests last year that Beijing said were encouraged by foreign forces in a bid to overthrow Chinese rule over the former British colony that was handed over to Chinese rule in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" framework meant to last until 2047.

US employers post more jobs in June, pull back on hiring

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. employers advertised more jobs in June compared with the previous month, but overall hiring fell, painting a mixed picture of the job market.

The number of jobs posted on the last day in June jumped 9.6% to 5.9 million, the Labor Department said Monday, a solid gain but still below the pre-pandemic level of about 7 million. And employers hired 6.7 million people in June, down from 7.2 million in May, a record high.

The figures suggest that restaurants, bars, retail shops, and entertainment venues — businesses that were subject to shutdown orders in April — continued to bring back workers at a healthy pace. Job openings in those industries also rose.

But outside those categories, employers remain reluctant to bring on new workers, a trend that could weigh on the economy in the coming months. Hiring slowed sharply in manufacturing, construction, and health care services in June.

The government has previously reported that the nation gained 4.8 million jobs in June. That figure, however, is a net total, while Monday's report, known as the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, or JOLTS, provides gross hiring figures, without subtracting layoffs or quits.

On Friday, the government said employers added a net 1.8 million jobs, a solid gain but far below June's increase and below the 2.7 million added in May. Employers slashed 22 million positions in March and April, and so far 42% of those lost jobs have been regained.

The number of people quitting their jobs, meanwhile, rose by one-quarter to nearly 2.6 million, a huge gain that is unusual in the depths of the recession, when workers typically try to hold onto their jobs. Many workers may be reluctant to remain in jobs that they believe put their health at risk. Economists also worry that many women and men are quitting jobs to look after children, a trend that could also hold back job growth.

MTA asks Apple's help to solve iPhone mask issues

By DAVID PORTER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York's mass transit agency wants Apple to come up with a better way for iPhone users to unlock their phones without taking off their masks, as it seeks to guard against the spread of the coronavirus in buses and subways.

In a letter to CEO Tim Cook obtained by The Associated Press, Metropolitan Transportation Authority Chairman Patrick Foye said riders have been seen removing their masks to unlock their phones using face-recognition technology, despite a recent update by Apple that simplifies the unlock process for people wearing masks.

Previously, an iPhone user wearing a mask would have to wait a few seconds as face recognition software tried to identify them before they eventually could enter a passcode. In response to the pandemic, Apple's iOS 13.5, released in May, automatically presents the passcode field after a user swipes up from the bottom of the lock screen. Also, Apple Pay Express Transit, introduced last year, allows riders on some bus and subway lines to pay with their iPhone or Apple Watch without having to wake the device.

"We understand Apple is working to address the issue and know that Apple has a range of technologies at its disposal as a global leader among tech companies," Foye wrote in the letter sent Sunday. "We urge Apple to accelerate the deployment of new technologies and solutions that further protect customers in the era of COVID-19."

Foye added that the MTA would be willing to collaborate with Apple on messaging to make sure users know about the recent iPhone modification.

"There's nothing more important to us than the health and safety of our customers," Apple said in an emailed statement that noted the upgrades it has already made. "We are fully committed to continuing to work with the MTA to support their efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19."

Bus and subway use in New York and other cities plunged during the height of the pandemic. The MTA lost more than 90% of its subway ridership, which along with reduced revenue at its other properties has created a fiscal hole that will take years to fill, officials have said. Ridership has slowly increased but still lags far behind pre-pandemic levels.

In addition to an aggressive cleaning program that has included the unprecedented step of shutting down the subway overnight, the MTA requires all riders to wear masks and socially distance. The authority has said in recent weeks that more than 90% are wearing some form of face covering.

Denmark's fence to keep out wild boars seems to be working

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) — The number of wild boars in Denmark has fallen since a 70-kilometer (43.4-mile) fence was erected along the German border to protect the valuable Danish pork industry.

The fence was put up last year in an attempt to prevent wild swine crossing from Germany and breeding with farm pigs or possibly bringing in disease. There were concerns the barrier would not work because the fence had gaps where it crossed roads and rivers.

Since then, the number of wild pigs in Denmark has fallen from 35-40 to fewer than 25, even though some piglets have been born in recent months, officials said Monday.

Inge Gillesberg of the Danish Nature Agency said she could not say whether the fence had stopped boars from coming in from Germany but that the agency's cameras along the border had not seen many doing so.

Denmark is the only EU member country where pigs outnumber people, with 215 pigs to every 100 residents.

Approximately 90% of Denmark's pork production is exported, accounting for almost half of all agricultural exports and for more than 5% of the country's total exports, according to official figures. Danish pig meat goes to more than 140 countries, with the largest markets being Germany, Britain, Poland, China, Japan, Italy, Russia and Sweden.

No cases of African swine fever have been reported in Denmark or in Germany, although they have been in some neighboring countries.

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Extreme poverty rises and a generation sees future slip away

By ELIAS MESERET and CARA ANNA Associated Press

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (AP) — As a domestic worker, Amsale Hailemariam knew from the inside out the luxury villas that had grown up around her simple shelter of raw metal and plastic sheeting. And in them, she saw how her country, Ethiopia, had transformed.

The single mother told herself, "Oh God, a day will come when my life will be changed, too." The key lay in her daughter, just months from a career in public health, who studied how to battle the illnesses of want and hunger.

Then a virus mentioned in none of her textbooks arrived, and dreams faded for families, and entire countries, like theirs. Decades of progress in one of modern history's greatest achievements, the fight against extreme poverty, are in danger of slipping away because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The world could see its first increase in extreme poverty in 22 years, further sharpening social inequities.

"We are living in a state where we are above the dead and below the living," Amsale said, near tears. "This is not life."

With the virus and its restrictions, up to 100 million more people globally could fall into the bitter existence of living on just \$1.90 a day, according to the World Bank. That's "well below any reasonable conception of a life with dignity," the United Nations special rapporteur on extreme poverty wrote this year. And it comes on top of the 736 million people already there, half of them in just five countries: Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Congo and Bangladesh.

This story was produced with the support of the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting.

India is struggling with one of the world's largest virus caseloads and the effects of a lockdown so abrupt and punishing that Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked the poor to forgive him. Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, has surpassed India with the most people in extreme poverty — roughly half its citizens. And Congo remains one of the world's most crisis-ridden countries, with outbreaks of Ebola and measles smoldering.

Even China, Indonesia and South Africa are expected to have more than 1 million people each fall into extreme poverty, the World Bank says.

"It's a huge, huge setback for the entire world," Gayle Smith, president of the ONE Campaign to end extreme poverty, told The Associated Press. Smith, a former administrator for the U.S. Agency for International Development, called the global response to the crisis "stunningly meager."

Most of the millions newly at risk are in sub-Saharan Africa, a region that against countless odds had some of the world's fastest growing economies in recent years. The World Bank shared with the AP the earliest data out of Ethiopia as it takes a global measure of the pandemic's direct effects over several months, showing that the pain is already widespread. Similar efforts are under way in more than 100 countries.

Back in 1991, when Ethiopia began its transformation, the country was exhausted by war. A new leader, Meles Zenawi, was shaking off years of Marxist dictatorship and terrifying drought whose images of withered children left the world aghast. The former rebel had a vision that became his legacy, one of bringing millions of countrymen out of grinding poverty.

Amsale was newly arrived in the capital, Addis Ababa, from what is now neighboring Eritrea, her baby daughter in her arms. For her the child, Bethlehem Jafar, became a tiny symbol of the city's rise.

Bethlehem benefited from the welfare of the state and the charity of those who saw in her a better future. Her mother scraped by through manual labor, vowing her girl would never do the same.

Fellow Ethiopians were moving up in the world, as the government looked to emulate China's astonishing lifting of more than 800 million people from poverty. Some embraced new manufacturing jobs. Others left subsistence farms for the growing sectors of hospitality, services and aviation that catered to the changing times, hoping to join Africa's expanding middle class.

The number of people in extreme poverty dropped dramatically, from nearly half of Ethiopia's population in the mid-1990s to 23% two decades later. "Impressive," the World Bank said.

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The high-altitude city of Addis Ababa, Africa's diplomatic capital, became an aviation hub, and a magnet for millions of citizens seeking better lives. Some grasped the first rung of upward mobility in the hustle of the untaxed informal sector, dodging the growing number of cars in the streets that signaled the middle class.

Under the country's Nobel Peace Prize-winning prime minister, Abiy Ahmed, the capital in the past two years has seen a wave of new construction, including malls and luxury apartments. And a source of national pride is a massive dam near completion on the Nile, funded completely by Ethiopia and its citizens in a bid to pull millions more from poverty.

Now Ethiopians of all kinds are hurting in the pandemic. The country, along with Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa, is expected to see half of sub-Saharan Africa's new extreme poor.

As the huge economic toll ahead became clearer, Ethiopia's prime minister took the global lead in appealing to rich countries to cancel the debt of poorer ones, saying his own country spends twice as much on paying off external debt as it does on health.

In trying to grasp the impact of a global slide into extreme poverty, even some experts feel at a loss. From his home in Addis Ababa, Fitsum Dagmawi has heard his countrymen's fear. As part of the World Bank survey, he is calling people across the country and asking how their lives have changed since the virus arrived.

"We might interview five to 10 people a day, and this pandemic is affecting everyone," he said. "We are feeling this stress every day."

Some people begin weeping, recounting family member's deaths, asking bewildered questions: What will we do now?

Jobs are gone. Families wonder how to feed their children. The gatherings that played a stabilizing role — church services, weddings, funerals — have been limited or lost.

"I will have to struggle," one head of a household said.

The first round of calls to 3,200 households in Ethiopia found a 61% drop in employment, with many job losses in sectors closely tied to the country's growth: construction, hospitality, restaurants, big hotels.

The second round of calls saw some rebound, but employment could mean anything in a country where most work remains informal. Now some people with degrees find themselves seeking manual labor.

"Small shocks in income can have devastating effects," World Bank senior economist Christina Wieser said.

It shows. In Ethiopia, 55% of households blamed a drop in regular income for the inability to buy items like medicine or staple foods. Nearly 40% had lost all earnings from remittances from the large diaspora, a crucial way to stay afloat.

For many Ethiopians, there is still little cushion between getting by and destitution. Just over 20% of households were relying on savings, and 19% were already eating less. A quarter had run out of food in the last 30 days, and just over 5% of households received support of any kind.

"I have not paid my rent for two months, and I'm not sure my landlord will give me more time," a 32-year-old father of two told the AP. "Just imagine, out of work and living with COVID. It's very stressful."

He was fired in May from a Chinese-owned company in one of the industrial parks that have sprung up in recent years as a government-backed engine of development.

"We were told business is slow due to the virus," the man said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he hoped to be rehired.

So much depends on how long the pandemic lasts. The African Development Bank once assumed that COVID-19 would subside by June, country director Abdul Kamara said. Now, he said, "decades of poverty reduction in Ethiopia could be lost."

Before the pandemic, the bank estimated the country's economy would grow by more than 7% this year. The current worst-case scenario shows just 2.6%.

Ethiopia's revenue losses are estimated at \$1.2 billion, at a time when the government needs more money to expand social safety nets, Kamara said. And some 2.5 million jobs are threatened, roughly the same number of Ethiopians who enter the workforce every year.

For a young woman like Bethlehem, the way forward seems in shambles. She was forced home from

her studies as school closed and now shelters with her mother.

Their home is just steps away from a public toilet that overflows with the rainy season. "Even if we protect ourselves from infection, the area we are living in makes us vulnerable," Amsale said. "And that worries us to death."

The better-off neighbors who once welcomed her into their homes to cook and clean now turn her away, fearing the virus.

"They told me we should avoid contact," she said. "There was no help I received from them since."

She and her daughter make do with the equivalent of \$34 a month that Amsale receives from local authorities for helping with projects like beautifying public spaces and sweeping the streets. But she doesn't like to go out, fearing infection.

Bethlehem did not want to be photographed, anxious that images of her in the humble surroundings could further challenge her suddenly difficult future. She sat in their home, going over her books and lingering over a former teacher's scribbled message of hope: "Bethi, we love you so much & wish you success in your education."

Her knowledge of public health makes her keenly aware how poverty compounds the risks of a deadly pandemic.

"I think Ethiopia's peak (virus) season is yet to come, and I really hope some vaccines will be available soon," Bethlehem said. "For now, we are waiting for a miracle that can change our lives."

Anna reported from Johannesburg.

Follow AP pandemic coverage at <http://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

Pandemic wrecks global Class of 2020's hopes for first job

By KELVIN CHAN AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — British fashion school graduate Phoebe St. Leger's dream of landing a job at a design label is on hold. Like many others in the global Class of 2020, the pandemic is clouding her career ambitions.

The coronavirus forced the cancellation of her university graduating class's final-year fashion show, removing the chance to show her knitwear collection to people in the industry, some of whom might have liked her work enough to offer her a job.

Instead, St. Leger, 23, returned to her family home in Winchester, southern England, and submitted her classwork online. She has applied for about 40 jobs and received only rejections.

"All the jobs have all dried up - everywhere," she said. She knows graduates from previous years who have been fired or furloughed and is prepared to get a job at a bar. "It's still hard to be hopeful when you're not seeing anyone doing well at the moment."

Around the world, young people armed with new degrees, diplomas and professional qualifications are struggling to enter the workforce as the pandemic pushes the global economy into recession. COVID-19 has thwarted hopes of landing first jobs - important for jumpstarting careers - as employers cut back graduate recruiting plans or even revoke job offers.

The latest U.S. job numbers Friday underscored the murky outlook: 1.8 million jobs were added in July, a sharp slowdown in employment growth from the month before. It means the world's biggest economy has regained just 42% of jobs lost to the coronavirus.

U.S. careers website Glassdoor says the number of jobs advertised as "entry level" or "new grad" was down 68% in May from a year ago. In Britain, companies plan to cut student recruitment by 23% this year, according to a survey of 179 businesses by the Institute of Student Employers.

The wave of delayed employment will ripple out through the economy, says Brian Kropp, chief of HR research at consultancy Gartner.

Many grads will have student loan debts they won't be able to start paying off until they find a job, he

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said.

"If you can't get an entry level job today, that means that you don't move out of your parent's house, you don't develop real work experience, you don't buy your first home until later, and you don't get married until later."

Michael Welch, 22, has been scouring LinkedIn, Monster and Indeed for postings and connections after earning a University of Connecticut engineering degree. He hadn't planned to start his job search until after graduation.

"That plan was disrupted because I was planning to go into a good job market," he said. "Suddenly I was in one of the worst job markets in recent history."

Welch, who moved back home with his parents, worries about online interviews and starting a job remotely.

"Remote jobs are great for someone who doesn't have to commute and already has a job," he said. But "for someone entering the job market it is a scary prospect. It's difficult to learn technical skills when you're in a remote setting."

Noah Isaak, a 2019 grad and newly certified teacher, has been applying for jobs in the Chicago public school system and has done a few interviews but they didn't lead anywhere. Most of the people he knows from his program are having trouble, too.

Now he's considering applying for minimum wage jobs at Target, Costco, coffee shops and Amazon.

"I'm stressed," said Isaak, 23. "Nothing is really going how we expected it to go. It's comforting that it's not a personal flaw and other people are going through the same struggle. But it is difficult not knowing."

One important long-term effect for young graduates who take longer to find good first jobs is lower pay over the course of their careers, experts said.

Someone who takes a year or more to find their first job lags behind their peers when it comes to promotions and also competes with younger people who come on to the job market later.

The problem, like the pandemic, is global.

Graduate job vacancies for July are down from the previous year in 10 countries, according to Adzuna, a job postings search engine. Britain, India and the Netherlands have seen the biggest declines, with postings down by more than half from a year ago, but other countries including Austria, Australia, Brazil, and France are also seeing double digit percentage drops.

Graduate jobs are expected to shrink in 21 countries, with most unlikely to recover next year, according to a separate report by Britain's ISE.

Maria Jose Casco, a newly qualified doctor, hasn't found work after graduating in Ecuador in April. Casco, 24, said she's been searching for health-related jobs as well as work in other industries.

Even though the pandemic means more need for health services, she found employers aren't hiring for full time jobs.

"They're looking for temporary staff they can easily fire," Casco said. She and her husband are living off savings and his \$480 monthly salary and, like others, are considering emigrating. "Because there is no future, many of my colleagues are looking at the possibility of leaving Ecuador."

The pandemic is compounding problems for young people in countries plagued by chronic economic instability.

Two years after graduating with from Zimbabwe's Midlands State University, 24-year old Emmanuel Reyai is no closer to his goal of getting a job related to his degree in local governance. His search is stymied by both the African country's economic collapse and the coronavirus outbreak.

"I have applied more than 40 times - nothing," he said, clutching a plastic folder containing his academic certificates.

More than two thirds of Zimbabwe's population, including university grads, get by on informal trade such as street hawking. Reyai initially resold cooking gas from a shack in his poor Harare neighborhood but the local council razed it after the outbreak. Now he makes and sells peanut butter around the city.

"There are no hopes of getting a job," said Reyai. "I have tried all I can to apply for jobs but the situation is not getting any better. It is actually getting worse."

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In Indonesia, Clara Karina, 25, graduated in January with an accounting degree from a well-known business and finance school in Jakarta.

She wanted to work as a civil servant but applied for jobs at private firms as the government froze recruitment. Only three of 20 companies replied to her applications. Two turned her down and the third is in progress.

"Companies aren't recruiting new employees, they're reducing employees now," Karina said. "I need to be more patient."

For some, there are happy endings.

In China, 23-year-old Li Xin graduated this summer with a statistics degree but had started looking for a job in January - just as the pandemic forced many companies to suspend operations. She encountered apparent scams from companies hiring for finance and IT jobs that wanted hefty "training fees."

Some classmates found banking jobs thanks to their connections. Others without ties ended up in industries unrelated to their degrees. Several are doing tutoring jobs, and Li found one herself but lasted just a week.

She felt hopeless but also realized everyone has it hard.

"I'd sit in the subway, seeing the people come and go around me, and I'd suddenly feel that it wasn't easy for anyone," Li said.

Eventually, Li landed a data analysis job in her hometown near Beijing that started this month. More than half her class, though, have yet to find jobs.

Gonzalo Solano in Quito, Ecuador, Mae Anderson in New York, Edna Tarigan in Jakarta, Indonesia and Farai Mutsaka in Harare, Zimbabwe contributed to this story.

Follow Kelvin Chan at twitter.com/chanman

Today in History

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, Aug. 11, the 224th day of 2020. There are 142 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 11, 1997, President Bill Clinton made the first use of the historic line-item veto, rejecting three items in spending and tax bills. (However, the U.S. Supreme Court later struck down the veto as unconstitutional.)

On this date:

In 1934, the first federal prisoners arrived at Alcatraz Island (a former military prison) in San Francisco Bay.

In 1949, President Harry S. Truman nominated General Omar N. Bradley to become the first chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

In 1952, Hussein bin Talal was proclaimed King of Jordan, beginning a reign lasting nearly 47 years.

In 1960, the African country of Chad became independent of France.

In 1964, the Beatles movie "A Hard Day's Night" had its U.S. premiere in New York.

In 1965, rioting and looting that claimed 34 lives broke out in the predominantly Black Watts section of Los Angeles.

In 1991, Shiite Muslim kidnappers in Lebanon released two Western captives: Edward Tracy, an American held nearly five years, and Jerome Leyraud, a Frenchman who'd been abducted by a rival group three days earlier.

In 1992, the Mall of America, the nation's largest shopping-entertainment center, opened in Bloomington, Minnesota.

In 1993, President Bill Clinton named Army Gen. John Shalikashvili (shah-lee-kash-VEE'-lee) to be the new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, succeeding the retiring Gen. Colin Powell.

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In 2012, Republican presidential contender Mitt Romney announced his choice of Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin to be his running mate. Usain Bolt capped his perfect London Olympics by leading Jamaica to victory in a world-record 36.84 seconds in the 4x100 meters.

In 2017, a federal judge ordered Charlottesville, Virginia, to allow a weekend rally of white nationalists and other extremists to take place at its originally planned location downtown. (Violence erupted at the rally, and a woman was killed when a man plowed his car into a group of counterprotesters.)

In 2014, Academy Award-winning actor and comedian Robin Williams, 63, died in Tiburon, California, a suicide.

Ten years ago: In Baton Rouge, Louisiana, police and FBI agents captured Michael Francis Mara, suspected of being the so-called "Granddad Bandit" who'd held up two dozen banks in 13 states for about two years. (Mara later pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 25 years in prison.) Dan Rostenkowski, a former Illinois congressman who'd wielded enormous power on Capitol Hill for more than 30 years, died at his Wisconsin summer home at age 82.

Five years ago: Federal authorities charged that an international web of hackers and traders had made \$100 million on Wall Street by stealing a look at corporate press releases before they went out and then trading on that information ahead of the pack. China rattled global financial markets by devaluing its currency in an effort in part to revive economic growth.

One year ago: A day care center in Erie, Pennsylvania where children could stay overnight was ravaged by a fire that killed five children. Two Americans used their medal-winning moments at the Pan American Games in Peru to draw attention to social issues back home; fencer Race Imboden took a knee, and hammer thrower Gwen Berry raised her fist.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Arlene Dahl is 95. Songwriter-producer Kenny Gamble is 77. Rock musician Jim Kale (Guess Who) is 77. Magazine columnist Marilyn Vos Savant is 74. Country singer John Conlee is 74. Singer Eric Carmen is 71. Computer scientist and Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak is 70. Wrestler-actor Hulk Hogan is 67. Singer Joe Jackson is 66. Playwright David Henry Hwang is 63. Actor Miguel A. Nunez Jr. is 61. Actor Viola Davis is 55. Actor Embeth Davidtz is 55. Actor Duane Martin is 55. Actor-host Joe Rogan is 53. Rhythm-and-blues musician Chris Dave is 52. Actor Anna Gunn is 52. Actor Ashley Jensen is 52. Actor Sophie Okonedo (oh-koh-NAY'-doh) is 52. Rock guitarist Charlie Sexton is 52. Hip-hop artist Ali Shaheed Muhammad is 50. Actor Nigel Harman is 47. Actor Will Friedle is 44. Actor Rob Kerkovich is 41. Actor Merritt Wever is 40. Actor Chris Hemsworth is 37. Rock musician Heath Fogg (Alabama Shakes) is 36. Singer J-Boog is 35. Rapper Asher Roth is 35. Actor Alyson Stoner is 27.