

Groton Daily Independent

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Groton Community Calendar

Wednesday, Nov. 2

School Breakfast: Hash brown pizza.

School Lunch: Nacho chips and cheese

Senior Menu: Turkey and dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, broccoli, apple sauce, pumpkin bar with topping, whole wheat bread.

St. John's Lutheran: Bible Study, 2:45 p.m., Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.; Confirmation, 6 p.m.

Groton CM&A: Kids' Club, Youth Group and Adult Bible Study begins at 7 pm

9:30am UMC: Community Coffee Hour

4:00pm UMC: Confirmation

7:00pm UMYF Bible Study

Thursday, Nov. 3

Region 1A Volleyball: 6 p.m.: Groton Area at Roncalli

School Breakfast: Oatmeal.

School Lunch: Chicken sandwich, fries.

Senior Menu: Tuna noodle casserole, peas and carrots, swedish apple pie square, whole wheat bread.

2 p.m.: Emmanuel Lutheran Nigeria Circle

6:30 p.m.: UMC Bible Study with Ashley

Friday, Nov. 4

School Breakfast: Cereal

School Lunch: Pizza crunchers, green beans.

Senior Menu: Sloppy joe on wheat bun, oven roasted potatoes, mixed vegetables, fruit sauce.

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



OPEN: **Recycling Trailer in Groton**
The recycling trailer is located west of the city shop. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

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Region 1A Volleyball

Lady Tigers take down Webster in straight sets

Groton Area advanced in Region 1A competition Tuesday with a 3-0 win over Webster Area. The Tigers avenged an earlier season 3-2 loss to the Bearcats.

Groton Area came out with a vengeance in the first set, after winning the coin toss, Groton Area took a 6-0 lead and Webster had no answer to the Tiger's offensive powers as Groton took a 25-16 win. Aspen Johnson powered in five kills while Sydney Leicht had four kills, Jerica Locke had two ace serves, Elizabeth Flihs had a kill and an ace serve, Anna Fjeldheim and Hollie Forst each had a kill and Carly Guthmiller had an ace serve.

Webster Area adjusted in the second set and kept the game close with it being seven times and two lead changes. After trailing 17-16, the Tigers rallied to take the set, 25-19. Fjeldheim had two kills and an ace serve, Johnson had two kills and a block, Laila Roberts and Lydia Meier each had two kills, Frost had a kill and a block, Locke had an ace and a kill and Leicht had a kill.

Coach Chelsea Hanson earned her pay in the third set when the Tigers were struggling to get a foothold on the set. The set was tied four times before the Bearcats took a commanding 15-7 lead and still held an 18-11 advantage. Hanson called time-out and started to switch up the line-up. Groton Area would score eight straight points to take the lead, 19-18 and would go on to win, 25-21. Leicht had four kills and an ace serve, Fjeldheim had three kills, Emma Kutter had two kills, Roberts and Johnson each had a kill and Flihs and Jaedyn Penning each had had ace serve.

Overall, Johnson had eight kills and a block, Leicht had nine kills and an ace and Fjeldheim had six kills and an ace. Webster was led by Gracie Cadwell with six kills while Elliott Steiner had five kills and a block, Baylie Somsen had three kills and an ace, Payton Snell had two kills, Kara Kwansniewski had a kill and an ace serve, Erin Sannes had a kill and a block and Katie Braun and Jersey Johnson each had a kill.

Justin Hanson and Ryan Tracy did the play-by-play calling on GDILIVE.COM. The event was sponsored by Heavy Hitter Detailing with Cyrus DeHoet, Hefty Seed, Rutgear605, Bierman Farm Service, Groton Legion, BK Custom T's & More, Blocker Construction, Milbrandt Enterprises Inc, Groton Chiropractic Clinic, John Sieh Agency, Dacotah Bank, Lori's Pharmacy, Thunder Seed - John Wheeting, Weismantel Insurance Agency, Bahr Spray Foam, Groton Chamber Commerce, Karma Salon, Bary Keith at Harr Motors and the SD Army National Guard with Brent Wienk.

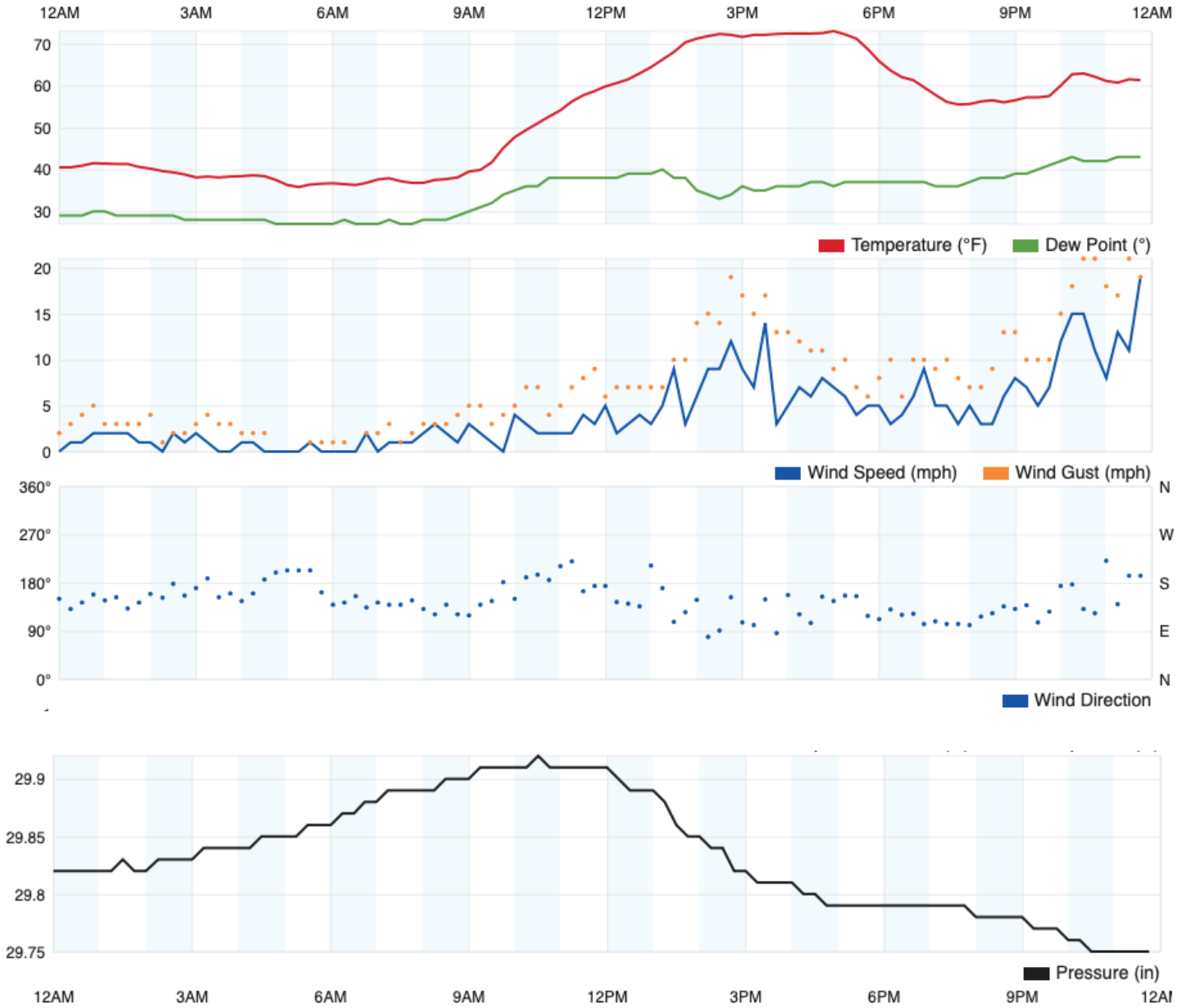
Groton Area will play Aberdeen Roncalli at Roncalli on Thursday at 6 p.m. That event will be broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM and will not require a ticket for viewing.

- Paul Kosel

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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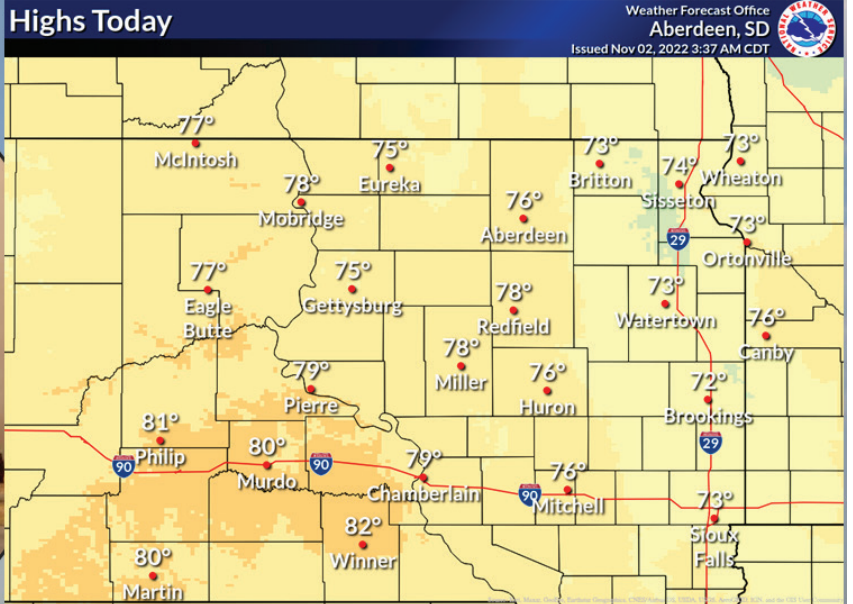
Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
				
Mostly Sunny and Breezy	Mostly Clear	Breezy. Mostly Sunny then Slight Chance Rain	Chance Rain/Snow then Chance Snow	Mostly Sunny
High: 75 °F	Low: 40 °F	High: 49 °F	Low: 26 °F	High: 42 °F



Near Record Temperatures Dry & Windy Again Today!

Highs Today

Weather Forecast Office
Aberdeen, SD
Issued Nov 02, 2022 3:37 AM CDT



RECORDS	
Aberdeen.....	78.....1903
Watertown.....	74.....1965
Pierre.....	77.....1965
Mobridge.....	78.....1917
Sisseton.....	79.....1965

www.weather.gov/abr

NWS Aberdeen Updated: 11/2/2022 3:49 AM

Again we will see enhanced fire weather conditions across the region with near record temperatures, low humidity and windy conditions. Additionally, a wind shift is expected with a front crossing the region overnight. Temperatures will drop behind the front with a stiff northwest breeze, though little moisture is expected with this system.

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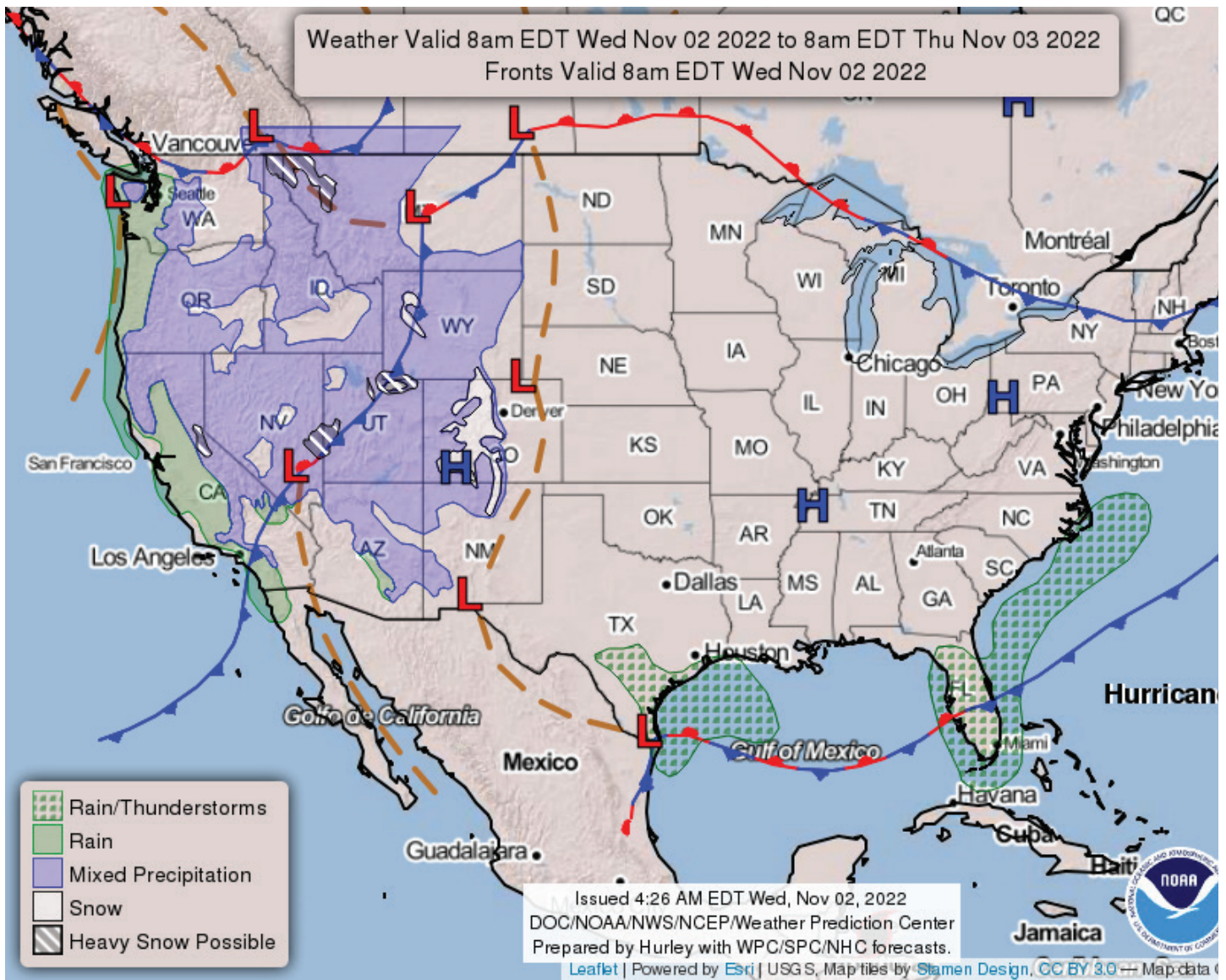
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 73 °F at 4:57 PM
Low Temp: 36 °F at 5:08 AM
Wind: 22 mph at 10:35 PM
Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 10 hours, 7 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 78 in 1903
Record Low: -0 in 1911
Average High: 50°F
Average Low: 25°F
Average Precip in Nov.: 0.07
Precip to date in Nov.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 20.54
Precip Year to Date: 16.50
Sunset Tonight: 6:19:53 PM
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:13:24 AM



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Today in Weather History

November 2nd, 1961: A snowstorm began in western South Dakota and spread to the remainder of the state on November 2nd. Snowfall was relatively minimal, with 1 to 3 inches falling over most of the state's central and eastern parts, but 40 to 50 mph winds accompanied the storm in eastern South Dakota. Also, temperatures fell rapidly with the passage of a cold front with 24-hour changes of 40 to over 50 degrees. Huron dropped from 73 on the 1st to 21 only 24 hours later, a 52-degree drop.

November 2nd, 1972: Freezing rain caused up to 2 inches of ice to form on trees, bushes, wires, cars, and buildings. The ice brought down many trees and utility lines. Some of the most significant damage occurred from Tulare to Redfield and Doland and Troy to Sisseton in Spink, Brown, Day, Grant, and Roberts Counties. Also, heavy snow up to 20 inches fell in south-central South Dakota. Some snowfall amounts include; 5.2 inches in Huron, 10 inches in Wessington Springs; 12 inches in Platte; 12.5 in Bonesteel, and 19.5 inches in Gregory.

November 2nd, 1997: A low-pressure system over the Great Lakes produced 50 to 60 mph winds over much of northern and central South Dakota. In McLaughlin, high winds damaged a catwalk at the McLaughlin livestock auction. The winds tipped over half of the 400-foot walkway. Along with six-foot waves, the winds destroyed an 85-year old 40 x 75-foot dance hall located on Medicine Lake, 15 miles northwest of Watertown. In Aberdeen, brick from a top portion of an abandoned building collapsed. There were also widespread reports of tree limbs blown down.

1743: Benjamin Franklin's "eclipse hurricane" unlocked the key to storm movement. A rainstorm prevented Ben Franklin from viewing a lunar eclipse in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but his brother in Boston saw it, though the rain began an hour later.

1946: A tornado hit Washington in Hempstead County in Arkansas, killing one.

1946 - A heavy wet snow began to cover the Southern Rockies. Up to three feet of snow blanketed the mountains of New Mexico, and a 31 inch snow at Denver CO caused roofs to collapse. (David Ludlum)

1961 - The temperature at Atlanta, GA, reached 84 degrees to establish a record for November. (The Weather Channel)

1966 - A storm brought 18 inches of snow to Celia KY in 24 hours. It tied the state 24 hour snowfall record first established at Bowling Green. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A dozen cities, mostly in the Ohio Valley, reported record high temperatures for the date. Record highs included 83 degrees at Paducah KY and 84 degrees at Memphis TN. Temperatures reached 70 degrees as far north as southern Lower Michigan. Showers and thundershowers over southern Florida, associated with a tropical depression, produced 4.77 inches of rain at Tavernier, located in the Upper Florida Keys. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A very intense low pressure system brought heavy rain, snow, and high winds, to parts of the northeastern U.S. Portland ME established a record for November with 4.52 inches of rain in 24 hours, and winds along the coast of Maine gusted to 74 mph at Southwest Harbor. Heavy snow blanketed parts of northern Vermont and upstate New York, with 15 inches reported at Spruce Hill NY. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Squalls in the Upper Great Lakes Region the first three days of the month buried Ironwood MI under 46 inches of snow, and produced 40 inches at Hurley WI. Arctic cold invaded the Southern Plains Region. Midland TX reported a record low of 22 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

OUR WISE AND WONDERFUL GOD

The earth spins around like a top at a speed of about 1,000 miles per hour. This spinning is what makes our days and nights. If it slowed down gradually through the years, our days would become so long that the sun would burn our vegetation during the day or freeze all vegetation during the long nights.

The earth tilts to one side as it goes around the sun. It is this tilt that makes the seasons. If it were not tilted 23½ degrees, vapors from the ocean would move north and south, piling up continents of ice.

Most of the time, the moon is about 237,000 miles from the earth. As it revolves around the earth, it exerts a "pull." This "pull" causes tides - the rise and fall of the oceans. If the moon were not at the exact distance it is from the earth, the tides would completely overflow the land twice a day.

The earth is a great storage facility. Its resources produce the foods we eat. It contains the fuels we need for heating and transportation. It has the minerals we need for survival hidden beneath its soil. It grows the lumber we need for building homes. Its vegetation purifies the air we breathe by removing various impurities that would suffocate us.

Can all this be the result of an accident? Was there a "big bang" that threw "things" up into the air and when things settled down there was form and function? Or was the Psalmist right when he wrote, "How many are Your works, O Lord! In wisdom You made them all."

Prayer: It is amazing, Lord, how carefully You planned everything to fit together perfectly to reflect Your wisdom. What a comfort to know that You intentionally made us too. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: How many are Your works, O Lord! In wisdom You made them all. Psalm 104:24



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

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2022-23 Community Events

- 07/21/2022: Pro Am Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
07/22/2022: Ferney Open Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start
07/24/2022: Moonlight Swim at the Swimming Pool 9-11pm for 9th grade to age 20
07/27/2022: Golf Fundraiser Lunch at Olive Grove Golf Course 11a-1pm
08/05/2022: Wine on Nine at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm
08/12/2022: GHS Basketball Golf Tournament
No Date Set: Groton Firemen Summer Splash Day 4-5pm GHS Parking Lot
09/10/2022: Lions Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
09/11/2022: 6th Annual Doggie Day at the Swimming Pool 3-5pm
09/11/2022: Couples Sunflower Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10 a.m.
09/02-04: Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
10/01/2022: Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
10/07/2022: Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
10/31/2022: Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)
10/31/2022: United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
11/13/2022: Snow Queen Contest
11/19/2022: Legion Post #39 Turkey Party 6:30pm (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
11/24/2022 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm (Thanksgiving)
12/03/2022 Tour of Homes & Holiday Party at Olive Grove Golf Course
12/10/2022: Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services 9am-12pm
01/29/2023 Groton Robotics Pancake Feed, 10am-1pm, Community Center
01/29/2023 85th Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
04/01/2023 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt 10am Sharp at the City Park (Saturday a week before Easter)
04/22/2023 Firemen's Spring Social at the Fire Station 7pm-12:30am (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
04/23/2023 Princess Prom 4:30-8pm (Sunday after GHS Prom)
05/06/2023 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday in May)
05/29/2023 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
07/04/2023 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Registration, 10am Start (4th of July)
07/09/2023 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm (Sunday Mid-July)
09/09/2023 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
10/31/2023 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm (working day on or closest to Halloween)
10/31/2023 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
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News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

05-09-15-16-17, Mega Ball: 25, Megaplier: 3

(five, nine, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen; Mega Ball: twenty-five; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$119,000,000

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: 1,200,000,000

Tuesday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Brandon Valley def. Mitchell, 25-19, 26-24, 23-25, 25-21

Harrisburg def. Watertown, 25-21, 25-22, 25-16

Sioux Falls Jefferson def. Pierre, 25-13, 25-14, 25-17

Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Huron, 25-23, 25-17, 25-12

Sturgis Brown def. Rapid City Central, 25-21, 25-14, 25-18

SDHSAA Playoff=

Class A=

First Round=

Region 1=

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Waubay/Summit, 25-13, 25-9, 25-7

Groton Area def. Webster, 25-16, 25-19, 25-21

Milbank def. Tiospa Zina Tribal, 25-14, 25-17, 25-16

Redfield def. Sisseton, 25-14, 25-16, 25-17

Quarterfinal=

Region 2=

Elkton-Lake Benton def. Great Plains Lutheran, 25-15, 25-16, 25-6

Flandreau def. Florence/Henry, 20-25, 25-22, 25-21, 25-23, 15-8

Hamlin def. Clark/Willow Lake, 25-12, 25-16, 25-21

Sioux Valley def. Estelline/Hendricks, 25-16, 25-16, 25-19

Region 3=

Baltic def. Tri-Valley, 25-15, 25-16, 25-18

Garretson def. Dell Rapids, 25-19, 21-25, 25-16, 22-25, 15-10

McCook Central/Montrose def. Madison, 22-25, 25-23, 22-25, 25-23, 16-14

Sioux Falls Christian def. West Central, 25-10, 25-14, 25-11

Region 4=

Canton def. Vermillion, 25-20, 25-23, 24-26, 25-22

Dakota Valley def. Parker, 25-7, 25-9, 25-7

Tea Area def. Lennox, 20-25, 25-23, 25-9, 25-17

Region 5=

Kimball/White Lake def. Bon Homme, 22-25, 25-27, 25-21, 25-22, 16-14

Mt. Vernon def. Parkston, 25-21, 27-25, 25-23

Platte-Geddes def. Hanson, 25-13, 25-13, 25-16

Wagner def. Sanborn Central/Woonsocket, 25-19, 25-2, 25-11

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Region 6=

Dupree def. North Central Co-Op, 22-25, 25-20, 29-27, 25-23

Mobridge-Pollock def. McLaughlin, 25-6, 25-8, 25-11

Stanley County def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-19, 25-20, 21-25, 25-19

Region 7=

Lakota Tech def. Todd County, 25-11, 25-14, 25-13

Little Wound def. St. Francis Indian, 25-11, 25-23, 25-16

Pine Ridge def. Bennett County, 25-15, 25-20, 25-19

Winner def. Red Cloud, 25-18, 25-23, 25-15

Region 8=

Belle Fourche def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-10, 25-8, 25-7

Hill City def. Custer, 25-9, 25-21, 25-10

St. Thomas More def. Hot Springs, 25-14, 23-25, 19-25, 25-22, 15-9

Region 4=

Quarterfinal=

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Beresford, 27-25, 25-23, 25-12

Region 6=

Quarterfinal=

Miller def. Crow Creek, 25-15, 25-3, 25-4

Class B=

Quarterfinal=

Region 1=

Hitchcock-Tulare def. Britton-Hecla, 21-25, 25-21, 25-12, 25-23

Leola/Frederick def. Langford, 25-14, 25-16, 25-23

Northwestern def. Wilmot, 25-4, 25-10, 25-3

Warner def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-6, 25-6, 25-12

Region 2=

Arlington def. James Valley Christian, 25-13, 25-21, 25-18

Castlewood def. DeSmet, 25-13, 25-11, 25-12

Oldham-Ramona/Rutland def. Deubrook, 25-18, 25-17, 19-25, 25-20

Wolsey-Wessington def. Iroquois/ Lake Preston Co-op, 25-14, 25-18, 25-9

Region 3=

Chester def. Bridgewater-Emery, 25-10, 25-16, 25-16

Colman-Egan def. Canistota, 25-16, 25-20, 25-20

Dell Rapids St. Mary def. Sioux Falls Lutheran, 20-25, 25-14, 25-16, 25-16

Ethan def. Howard, 18-25, 25-22, 25-15, 25-22

Region 4=

Freeman def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-19, 25-11, 25-12

Gayville-Volin def. Menno, 25-18, 25-15, 23-25, 25-17

Scotland def. Alcester-Hudson, 25-22, 22-25, 20-25, 25-21, 15-11

Viborg-Hurley def. Centerville, 25-20, 25-8, 25-8

Region 5=

Burke def. Corsica/Stickney, 25-13, 25-13, 25-14

Gregory def. Andes Central/Dakota Christian, 25-21, 25-19, 29-27

Tripp-Delmont/Armour def. Colome, 25-8, 25-17, 25-13

Wessington Springs def. Avon, 25-16, 26-24, 25-18

Region 6=

Herreid/Selby Area def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-21, 25-17, 25-18

Potter County def. Sully Buttes, 22-25, 25-20, 25-18, 25-14

Region 7=

Jones County def. Crazy Horse, 25-1, 25-2, 25-2
New Underwood def. Kadoka Area, 25-17, 25-17, 26-24
Philip def. White River, 25-15, 25-9, 25-16
Region 8=
Faith def. McIntosh, 25-17, 25-21, 25-16
Lemmon def. Bison, 25-13, 25-21, 26-24
Newell def. Harding County, 25-16, 25-16, 25-22
Timber Lake def. Takini, 25-14, 25-5, 25-8

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

Federal court rules SD ballot measure law curbs free speech

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A federal appeals court on Tuesday upheld a lower court's decision to block parts of a South Dakota law that would have required ballot petition workers to publicly disclose their personal identification information.

The Republican-controlled Legislature in 2020 passed a law that would have required paid ballot measure circulators to list their personal information, including phone number, residential address, email address and driver's license information, in a directory. The law was just one attempt by lawmakers in recent years to add barriers to ballot measures, which have given progressive causes a chance at enactment in the politically red state.

Circuit Judge Steven Grasz wrote in an opinion for a three-judge panel of the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals that being forced to disclose the information would be "chilling in today's world" and the law would violate the First Amendment.

United States District Judge Lawrence Piersol issued a temporary injunction against the law last year.

Dakotans for Health, an organization that was formed around a ballot measure to expand Medicaid eligibility, sued to have the law overturned. The organization is now focused on placing a proposed constitutional amendment on the 2024 ballot to codify abortion rights.

"Our state Legislature continues to try to destroy the initiative process with these kinds of laws," said Rick Weiland, the director of Dakotans for Health. "We've had success in the federal courts based on the First Amendment."

Weiland said that the ruling from three appeals court judges who were appointed under former President Donald Trump showed the importance of "protecting a long-standing tradition to circulate and pass laws at the ballot box."

Powell likely to be pressed on whether Fed will slow hikes

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Looming over the Federal Reserve meeting that ends Wednesday is a question of intense interest: Just how high will the Fed's inflation-fighters raise interest rates — and might they slow their rate hikes as soon as next month?

The Fed on Wednesday is expected to announce a hefty three-quarter-point hike in its key short-term rate — its fourth straight — which will lead to still-higher loan rates for many businesses and consumers. What many Fed-watchers hope is that Chair Jerome Powell will hint at a news conference that the central bank may ease the pace of its hikes, perhaps to a half-point in December and two quarter-point hikes next year.

Even at that more moderate pace, the central bank's benchmark rate would reach 4.75% to 5%, which would be its highest range since 2007, up from the current 3% to 3.25%. Fed officials have stressed that they need to sharply raise rates to tame inflation, which reached 8.2% in September from 12 months earlier, barely below a 40-year high. Chronic inflation has also become a central point of attack for Republicans

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against Democrats in the midterm congressional elections.

So far this year, the Fed has raised its key rate five times in an aggressive pace that has sent borrowing rates surging across the economy and heightened the risk of a recession. The home market, in particular, has been badly bruised as a consequence. The average rate on a 30-year fixed mortgage, just 3.14% a year ago, surpassed 7% last week, mortgage buyer Freddie Mac reported. Sales of existing homes have dropped for eight straight months.

One reason the Fed's policymakers might feel they can soon slow the pace of their rate hikes is that some early signs suggest that inflation could start declining in 2023. Consumer spending, squeezed by high prices and costlier loans, is barely growing. Supply chain snarls are easing, which means fewer shortages of goods and parts. Wage growth is plateauing, which, if followed by declines, would reduce inflationary pressures.

Still, the job market remains consistently strong, which could make it harder for the Fed to cool the economy and curb inflation. On Tuesday, the government reported that companies posted more job openings in September than in August. There are now 1.9 available jobs for each unemployed worker, an unusually large supply.

A ratio that high means that employers will likely continue to raise pay to attract and keep workers. Those higher labor costs are often passed on to customers in the form of higher prices, thereby fueling more inflation.

If Powell does signal Wednesday that the Fed may lift its foot slightly off the economic brakes, it could spark a rally in stock and bond prices. Such higher asset prices, though, might then fuel more spending just when the Fed wants to cool things down to throttle inflation.

To offset any potential burst of optimism, the Fed may signal at its next meeting in December that it expects to add at least another rate hike early next year. That would serve to make borrowing even more expensive and would further heighten the risk of a recession.

Ultimately, economists at Goldman Sachs expect the Fed's policymakers to raise their key rate to nearly 5% by March. That is above what the Fed itself had projected in its previous set of forecasts in September.

For now, many Fed officials have said they see few signs that inflation is easing in any sustainable way. They point, in particular, to so-called core inflation, which excludes volatile food and energy costs and is considered a good reflection of underlying price pressures.

"We need to see actual progress in core inflation and services inflation," Neel Kashkari, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, said recently. "And we are not seeing it yet."

Israel's Netanyahu appears to edge toward victory after vote

By TIA GOLDENBERG Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appeared headed toward victory Wednesday, with some 85% of the ballots from national elections counted and showing that voters gave him and his far-right allies what looks like a majority in the country's parliament.

Votes were still being counted and results were not final. But if preliminary indications were correct, Israel was potentially headed to its most right-wing government, bolstered by a strong showing from the ultra-nationalist Religious Zionism party, whose members use inflammatory anti-Arab and anti-LGBTQ rhetoric.

The initial results pointed to a continued rightward shift in the Israeli electorate, further dimming hopes for peace with the Palestinians and setting the stage for possible conflict with the Biden administration and Israel's supporters in the United States.

The early results also showed that Netanyahu had overcome his detractors, who claimed he was not fit to rule while on trial for corruption and have refused to sit with him in government. Netanyahu's partners have promised to help him evade a conviction.

"We are on the verge of a very big victory," Netanyahu, 73, told supporters at a gathering in Jerusalem early Wednesday. "I will establish a nationalist government that will see to all Israeli citizens without any exceptions."

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Elections officials worked through the night tallying votes and by Wednesday morning, about 85% of the ballots had been counted. The vote, like past elections, was tight but initial indications showed Netanyahu was headed back to the premiership with a majority in the country's 120-seat parliament.

Final results are expected on Friday. The hundreds of thousands of remaining ballots — mostly from those who voted away from their regular place of residency, in nursing homes and elsewhere — have to be cross-checked for accuracy, a more time-consuming effort. They could lend a boost to Netanyahu's opponents, reducing the size of his majority.

With Netanyahu and his allies projected to win more than the 61-seat majority needed to form a government, the country's protracted political crisis may be headed toward a conclusion, though Israel remains as divided as ever.

Tuesday's election was Israel's fifth in less than four years, with all of them focused largely on Netanyahu's fitness to govern. On trial for a slew of corruption charges, Netanyahu, who denied wrongdoing, is seen by supporters as the victim of a witch hunt and vilified by opponents as a crook and threat to democracy.

Even if Netanyahu and his allies emerge victorious, it could still take weeks of negotiations for a coalition government to be formed.

Netanyahu was Israel's longest-serving prime minister, governing for 12 consecutive years — and 15 years altogether — before he was ousted last year by a diverse coalition led by the centrist Yair Lapid, the current caretaker prime minister.

But the coalition that Lapid cobbled together, which included the first Arab party ever to join a government, was decimated by infighting and collapsed after just one year in power. Those parties were poised to capture about 50 seats, according to initial results.

Lapid, addressing supporters early Wednesday, insisted that the race was not decided.

"Until the last envelope is counted, nothing is over and nothing is final," he said.

The night's strongest showing was by the far-right Religious Zionism party, which emerged as the third-largest party. At an all-male campaign gathering in Jerusalem, religious men wearing Jewish skullcaps and waving Israeli flags danced in celebration. At the celebration, supporters of the party's top candidate, Itamar Ben-Gvir, chanted "Death to terrorists."

Ben-Gvir is a disciple of a racist rabbi, Meir Kahane, who was banned from parliament and whose Kach party was branded a terrorist group by the United States before he was assassinated in New York in 1990.

Kahane's agenda called for banning intermarriage between Arabs and Jews, stripping Arabs of Israeli citizenship and expelling large numbers of Palestinians.

But while Kahane was seen as a pariah, Ben-Gvir is one of Israel's most popular politicians, thanks to his frequent media appearances, cheerful demeanor, knack for deflecting criticism and calls for a harder line against Palestinians at a time of heavy fighting in the occupied West Bank. Young ultra-Orthodox men are among his strongest supporters.

Ben-Gvir lives in the hard-line West Bank settlement of Kiryat Arba and is a strong proponent of settlement construction. He has described Arab colleagues in parliament as "terrorists," called for deporting those who are "disloyal" and recently brandished a handgun in a tense Palestinian neighborhood of Jerusalem as he called on police to shoot Palestinian stone-throwers.

"We want to make a total separation between those who are loyal to the state of Israel — and we don't have any problem with them — and those who undermine our dear country," he said.

Muhammad Shtayyeh, the Palestinian prime minister, said the rise of Israel's far right was "a natural result of the growing manifestations of extremism and racism in Israeli society."

It appeared as though two of the three parties representing the country's 20% Palestinian minority earned enough votes for a spot in parliament, as polls had predicted.

But it was unclear whether Meretz, a dovish party that opposes Israel's occupation of the West Bank and a member of the current coalition, would make it into parliament.

If the Netanyahu alliance ends up controlling a majority, Ben-Gvir and his party leader, Bezalel Smotrich, are sure to drive a hard bargain. Ben-Gvir has said he will demand the Cabinet post overseeing Israel's

police force.

The pair have also said they will seek legal reforms aimed at weakening the independence of the judiciary and giving parliament power to override court decisions they don't like. That could clear the way for the dismissal of criminal charges against Netanyahu. Smotrich and other members of the party have also made repeated anti-LGBTQ comments.

Such positions could put a future Netanyahu government on a collision course with the Biden administration, which supports a two-state solution with the Palestinians. It could also alienate Israeli allies in the U.S., particularly the predominantly liberal Jewish American community.

In Israel, voters vote for parties, not individual politicians. No party has ever won a majority on its own, and coalition-building is necessary to govern.

Tensions meanwhile rose Wednesday as a Palestinian slammed his car into an Israeli army officer near the Maccabim checkpoint between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. The soldier, seriously injured, opened fire on the man, the military said. The Palestinians said the suspected attacker, Habas Abdel Hafeez Yousef Rayan, 54, died soon after.

Trump 2024 campaign prepares for post-midterms launch

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — As he played to a crowd of supporters in Robstown, Texas, former President Donald Trump drew cheers as he talked up his first two runs for the White House — and teased a third.

"In order to make our country successful, safe and glorious again, I will probably have to do it again," he said last month.

That carefully placed "probably" may soon be gone from Trump's stump speech. Aides to the former president are making quiet preparations for a 2024 presidential campaign that could be launched soon after next week's midterm elections as Trump tries to capitalize on expected Republican wins to propel himself toward becoming the front-runner for his party's nomination.

"I'm like 95% he's going to run," said Reince Priebus, Trump's former White House chief of staff. "The real question," he added, "is are other big challengers going to run? If President Trump runs, he will be very difficult for any Republican to defeat."

Another campaign would be a remarkable turn for any former president, much less one who made history as the first to be impeached twice and remains embroiled in multiple and intensifying criminal investigations, including probes of classified information held at his Mar-a-Lago club and his effort to pressure election officials to overturn the results of the 2020 election. Trump has a history dating back to the 1980s of publicly toying with White House bids only to back down.

But Trump, according to people close to him, is eager to be back in the political game. While he has been talking up a bid since before he left the White House, aides and allies are now eyeing the two-week stretch after the Nov. 8 midterms as a possible window for an announcement, though they caution that he hasn't made a decision and that — as always when it comes to Trump — things could change, particularly if the election results are delayed due to recounts or a possible runoff election in Georgia.

Indeed, even as discussions are underway about potential venues and dates for a formal announcement, Trump continues to tease the possibility of declaring his intentions at one of the rallies he's planned for the election's homestretch.

The preparations come as Trump has been stepping up his efforts to help midterm candidates in the election's final weeks, hoping to piggyback off expected Republican gains in Congress to build momentum for his own campaign.

Trump has dramatically ramped up his spending after facing criticism for failing to financially help his favored candidates while continuing to vacuum up small-dollar donations. His newly launched MAGA Inc. super PAC has now spent more than \$16.4 million on ads in a handful of competitive states, according to the ad tracking firm AdImpact, with additional investments expected through Election Day, according to people familiar with the effort, who, like others, spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal operations.

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And Trump continues to hold events to bolster his candidates, with 30 rallies so far in 17 states, along with dozens of virtual rallies and more than 50 candidate fundraisers. His final midterm rally blitz will take him to Ohio and Pennsylvania, two crucial presidential voting states where his endorsements helped candidates secure their nominations. He'll also return to Iowa, which holds the first contest of the presidential nominating calendar.

In total, Trump's Save America PAC says he has raised nearly \$350 million this election cycle for Republican candidates and party committees, including online fundraising solicitations.

While Trump's team has been identifying potential staff prospects in key states and drawing up paperwork to file should he move forward with an announcement, according to people familiar with the planning, one stressed that hiring has not yet commenced. Trump's campaign, at least in its early months, is expected to remain headquartered in Florida and look much like his current political operation, overseen by the small clutch of advisers he's fostered since leaving office — reminiscent of his famously threadbare 2016 campaign.

Chris LaCivita, the Republican strategist who was behind the "Swift Boat Veterans for Truth" campaign that badly damaged Democrat John Kerry's 2004 presidential prospects, is working for Trump's super PAC and expected to take on a senior leadership role in the campaign operation, according to people familiar with the conversations, as is Susie Wiles, the longtime Florida operative who has been overseeing his political efforts.

The 2024 campaign will effectively kick off when the polls close on Nov. 8, and potential challengers have spent months carefully laying the groundwork for their own expected campaigns. That includes Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who is widely seen as Trump's most formidable challenger and who has been cultivating a deep donor network as he runs for reelection.

Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, Florida Sen. Rick Scott and Arkansas Sen. Tom Cotton have been aggressively stumping for midterm candidates, as have former Vice President Mike Pence, former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley.

Trump, meanwhile, faces mounting challenges. He remains a deeply polarizing figure, particularly after spending the last two years spreading lies about the 2020 election. And while Trump remains overwhelmingly popular among Republicans, an October AP-NORC poll found 43% said they don't want to see him run for president in 2024.

Underscoring that polarization, many in Trump's orbit had urged him to wait on an announcement until after the midterms to avoid turning the election into a referendum on him.

Others close to Trump remain skeptical that he will ultimately go through with another run, contending that his ego can't take another loss or fearing a possible indictment. Others question whether he will ultimately end up on the ballot in 2024, even if he does launch a campaign.

Campaigns also need staff and Trump's orbit has shrunk considerably over the last two years. Many former aides are expected to steer clear of another effort either because they have broken with Trump, have moved on, or are fearful that involvement could expose them to potential legal scrutiny — and lawyers' bills.

For someone on the verge of launching a presidential campaign, Trump also remains unusually distracted by legal threats.

There is the Justice Department's intensifying investigation into how hundreds of documents with classified markings ended up at his club in Palm Beach, Florida. State prosecutors in Georgia continue to probe his efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election, as do the DOJ and the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 U.S. Capitol attack, which recently served him a subpoena demanding testimony.

In New York, Attorney General Letitia James has sued Trump, alleging his namesake company engaged in decades of fraudulent bookkeeping. The Trump Organization is now on trial for criminal tax fraud charges, and Trump recently sat for a deposition in a lawsuit filed by E. Jean Carroll, who alleges Trump raped her in the mid-1990s. Trump denies the allegations.

All the while, Republicans across the country, from high-dollar donors to longtime GOP leaders and rank-and-file voters, have been considering whether they want to stick with Trump.

At a recent Iowa Republican Party fundraiser headlined by Pence, voters praised Trump's time in office but were mixed on whether they want him to mount another campaign.

"I'd like to see him run again," said 81-year-old Jane Murphy, a longtime county Republican volunteer who lives in Davenport. "He makes me angry with some of the things he says. But he gets the job done, plain and simple."

But Carol Crain, an eastern Iowa GOP activist, voiced reservations.

"I think a lot of Republicans are just tired of the drama and the fighting," said Crain, 73. "It's really wearing. Under their breath, people say it would be nice if he could endorse somebody and go away with grace."

Russia rejoins wartime deal on Ukrainian grain exports

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Russia agreed Wednesday to resume its participation in a deal brokered by Turkey and the U.N. to keep grain and other commodities moving out of Ukraine's ports during Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Turkey's president said.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu informed Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar that the deal for a humanitarian grain corridor would "continue in the same way as before" as of noon Wednesday.

Erdogan said the renewed deal would prioritize shipments to African nations, including Somalia, Djibouti and Sudan, in line with Russia's concerns that most of the grain exported since the agreements first was reached in July was ending up in richer nations.

The Russian Defense Ministry said Russia agreed to continue carrying out its role in the deal after receiving written guarantees from Kyiv that Ukraine would not use the sea corridor for military actions against Moscow, according to a statement by the Russian defense ministry.

Russia suspended its participation in the grain deal over the weekend, citing allegations of a Ukrainian drone attack against its Black Sea fleet. The Russian Defense Ministry said Monday that ship traffic from ports in southern Ukraine was halted, calling the movement "unacceptable."

The Defense Ministry said Wednesday that Ukraine had formally committed to using the safe shipping corridors through the Black Sea "exclusively in accordance with the stipulations of the Black Sea initiative," a reference to the separate U.N. and Turkey-backed agreements signed by Moscow and Kyiv on July 22.

Ships loaded with grain departed Ukraine on Tuesday despite Russia suspending its participation in the U.N.-brokered deal, which aimed to ensure safe passage of critical food supplies meant for parts of the world struggling with hunger. But the United Nations had said vessels would not move Wednesday, raising concerns about future shipments.

The United Nations and Turkey brokered separate deals with Russia and Ukraine in July to ensure Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia would receive grain and other food from the Black Sea region during Russia's war in Ukraine.

Brazil's Bolsonaro tells Supreme Court election 'is over'

By MAURICIO SAVARESE and DIANE JEANTET Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's administration signaled a willingness to hand over power, two days after a nail-biting election loss to leftist Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and amid speculation the far-right incumbent might fight the result.

Bolsonaro reportedly told members of Brazil's Supreme Court Tuesday that his election battle against da Silva has come to an end. Earlier, in a brief speech at the presidential palace, he said: "I have always played within the four lines of the constitution," although he stopped short of conceding.

After a private meeting with Bolsonaro, Supreme Court Justice Luiz Edson Fachin said the conservative leader had said: "It is over. So, let's look ahead." The justice made the comment in a video broadcast on local media.

Two other justices questioned by journalists declined to comment on the tenor of the hour-long meeting. Brazil's economy minister Paulo Guedes was also present, but didn't comment.

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In a subsequent statement, the top court said the justices told Bolsonaro during the “cordial and respectful meeting” that it is important he recognize the election’s results, as well as the Brazilian people’s right to freedom of movement. The country has seen widespread gridlock as pro-Bolsonaro protesters block highways.

Earlier, in his first public comments since results came in, Bolsonaro didn’t concede, but immediately afterward his chief of staff told reporters the conservative leader had authorized him to begin the process of handing over power.

Bolsonaro, who before the election had repeatedly questioned the reliability of the country’s electoral system, had little room for potentially rejecting the results.

U.S. President Joe Biden and other international leaders have publicly recognized da Silva’s victory, as have some of Bolsonaro’s closest allies. And Cabinet members, governors-elect and evangelical leaders who have been strident supporters of Bolsonaro are now offering overtures to the incoming leftist government.

Bolsonaro lost Sunday’s race by a thin margin, garnering 49.1% of the vote to da Silva’s 50.9%, according to the nation’s electoral authority. It was the tightest presidential race since Brazil’s return to democracy in 1985, and marks the first time Bolsonaro has lost an election in his 34-year political career.

Flanked by more than a dozen ministers and allies as he delivered a two-minute speech at the presidential residence, the fiery leader did not mention the election results. Instead, he defended his tenure and said he supports ongoing protests by truckers who have erected nationwide roadblocks, as long as they don’t become violent.

“Current popular movements are the result of indignation and a feeling of injustice regarding how the electoral process occurred,” he said.

The president’s statement amounted to a “two-fold move,” said Thomas Traumann, an independent political analyst.

“He didn’t recognize his defeat, and sustains the suspense,” Traumann said. “But as he wants to continue to dominate, to be the leader, he maintains the possibility of peaceful demonstrations.”

Much like former U.S. President Donald Trump, whom Bolsonaro openly admires, he has claimed that electronic voting machines are prone to fraud. He hasn’t provided any proof, even when ordered to do so by the electoral court.

Many of his supporters also said they believed the election had been fraudulent and some called for military intervention and for Congress and the Supreme Court to be disbanded.

Earlier Tuesday, Brazil’s Supreme Court ordered the federal highway police to immediately clear the roads.

A majority of the court’s justices backed the decision, which accuses the highway police of “omission and inertia.” By 8:30 p.m. local time, highway police said that they had removed 419 blockades, but nearly 200 were still in place.

Earlier in Sao Paulo — Brazil’s most populous state and largest economy — traffic jams around the international airport led to dozens of flight cancellations, with videos on social media showing travelers rolling their suitcases along the highway in the dark trying to catch their flights. The highways had been cleared by Tuesday morning, but airport officials said access remained difficult as traffic was still backed up in and out of the airport.

There, Dalmir Almeida, a 38-year-old protester, said that after completing three days of strikes, he and others will drive their trucks to the military barracks to ask for their support.

“The army will be in our favor,” he said

At another road block in Sao Paulo state, protesters set tires on fire. Several demonstrators were wrapped in the Brazilian flag, which has been co-opted by the nation’s conservative movement for demonstrations. Huge lines of cars could be seen snaking along the highway.

Sao Paulo Gov. Rodrigo Garcia said the time for negotiations was over, and he was not ruling out the use of force.

In Minas Gerais, a key battleground state in the election, a video on social media showed a protester telling a reporter from the O Tempo news outlet that the election was “fraudulent” and warned of future

protests.

"We want Bolsonaro in 2023 and for the years to come," he said.

In Itaboraí, a region in Rio de Janeiro state, an Associated Press reporter saw truck drivers kneeling in front of police officers and refusing to evacuate.

Users on social media, including in multiple Telegram and WhatsApp chat groups, shared demands that the military take the streets, or that Congress and the Supreme Court be disbanded and the president remain in office.

The Supreme Court's decision on Tuesday permits regular state police forces to reinforce federal highway police. The same was done in 2018, when an 11-day trucker strike brought Brazil to a halt.

Bolsonaro commands wide support from the police forces' rank and file, however, and it wasn't clear how effective their involvement would be.

The 2018 stoppage caused food prices to spike and left supermarket shelves without products as gas stations ran out of fuel. It caused billions in losses and revealed the vast power that truckers possess. Bolsonaro, a lawmaker at the time and months away from winning that year's presidential election, was an outspoken supporter of the truckers, who are now among his constituents.

CVS Health agrees to \$5B settlement of opioid lawsuits

By GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

CVS Health has announced an agreement in principle that would make it the first major pharmacy chain to reach a nationwide settlement of lawsuits over how it handled prescriptions for powerful and addictive prescription opioid painkillers that are linked to an overdose epidemic.

The Woonsocket, Rhode Island company would pay about \$5 billion over 10 years under a deal that, if accepted, would be one of the largest settlements over the crisis. Other pharmacies, including Rite Aid, Walgreens and Walmart have reached agreements with individual states.

CVS announced its proposed deal Wednesday as it released its quarterly earnings. The company did not admit liability or wrongdoing and said that nonfinancial terms remain to be resolved.

"We are pleased to resolve these longstanding claims and putting them behind us is in the best interest of all parties, as well as our customers, colleagues and shareholders," Thomas Moriarty, the CVS chief policy officer and general counsel said in a statement. "We are committed to working with states, municipalities and tribes, and will continue our own important initiatives to help reduce the illegitimate use of prescription opioids."

The company has launched educational programs and installed safe disposal units for drugs in stores and police departments, among other measures designed to reduce misuse of opioids.

In the lawsuits, governments said pharmacies were filling prescriptions that they should have flagged as inappropriate.

Under the settlement plan, CVS would pay \$4.9 billion to state and local governments and about about \$130 million to Native American tribes over the next decade. The exact amount would depend on how many governmental entities accept the terms of the deal.

The proposed settlement brings a nationwide tally of finalized and completed settlements between companies and governments to more than \$45 billion. Under terms of the deals, most of the money must be used to address the continuing epidemic.

Opioids have been linked to more than 500,000 deaths in the U.S. over the past two decades. Most of the deaths initially involved prescription drugs. As governments, doctors and companies took steps to make them harder to abuse and obtain, people with opioid use disorder increasingly switched to heroin, which proved more deadly.

In recent years, opioid deaths have soared to record levels around 80,000 a year. Most of those deaths involve illicitly produced version of the powerful lab-made drug fentanyl, which is appearing throughout the U.S. supply of illegal drugs.

The settlement was announced as litigation over the role of pharmacies in the opioid crisis has ramped

up. On Tuesday, 18 companies — most of them pharmacy-related — submitted reports to a judge overseeing opioid litigation detailing where they face lawsuits.

Only a handful of opioid settlements have had bigger dollar figures attached than the CVS plan. Distributors AmerisourceBergen, Cardinal Health and McKesson this year finalized a combined settlement worth \$21 billion and drugmaker Johnson & Johnson finalized a \$5 billion deal.

Purdue Pharma, the maker of OxyContin, and members of the Sackler family who own the company, have a proposed settlement that would involve up to \$6 billion in cash plus the value of the company, which would be turned into a new entity with its profits used to combat the epidemic. That plan has been put on hold by a court.

N Korea fires 23 missiles, prompting air-raid alert in South

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Air raid sirens sounded on a South Korean island and residents there evacuated to underground shelters after North Korea fired more than 20 missiles Wednesday, at least one of them in its direction and landing near the rivals' tense sea border. South Korea quickly responded by launching its own missiles in the same border area.

The launches came hours after North Korea threatened to use nuclear weapons to get the U.S. and South Korea to "pay the most horrible price in history" in protest of the ongoing South Korean-U.S. military drills that it views as an invasion rehearsal. The White House maintained that the United States has no hostile intent toward North Korea and vowed to work with allies to curb North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

The North's barrage of missile tests also came as world attention was focused on South Korea following a weekend Halloween tragedy that saw more than 150 people killed in a crowd surge in Seoul in what was the country's largest disaster in years.

South Korea's military said North Korea launched at least 23 missiles — 17 in the morning and six in the afternoon — off its eastern and western coasts on Wednesday. It said the weapons were all short-range ballistic missiles or suspected surface-to-air missiles. Also Wednesday, North Korea fired about 100 artillery shells into an eastern maritime buffer zone the Koreans created in 2018 to reduce tensions, according to South Korea's military.

The 23 missiles launched is a record number of daily missile tests by North Korea, some experts say.

One of the ballistic missiles was flying toward South Korea's Ulleung island before it eventually landed 167 kilometers (104 miles) northwest of the island. South Korea's military subsequently issued an air raid alert on the island, according to the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff. South Korean media published photos showing island residents moving to underground shelters.

Hours later on Wednesday, South Korea's military said it lifted the air raid alert on the island. South Korea's transport ministry said it has closed some air routes above the country's eastern waters until Thursday morning in the wake of the North Korean launches.

That missile landed 26 kilometers (16 miles) away from the rivals' sea border. It landed in international waters but far south of the two countries' border, off the east coast of South Korea. South Korea's military said it was the first time a North Korean missile had landed so close to the sea border since the countries' division in 1948.

"This is very unprecedented and we will never tolerate it," South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

In 2010, North Korea shelled a frontline South Korean island off the peninsula's western coast, killing four people. But the weapons used were artillery rockets, not ballistic missiles whose launches or tests are banned by multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Later Wednesday, South Korean fighter jets launched three air-to-surface, precision-guided missiles near the eastern sea border to show its determination to get tough on North Korean provocations. South Korea's military said the missiles landed in international waters at the same distance of 26 kilometers (16 miles) north of the sea border as the North Korean missile fell earlier Wednesday.

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It said it maintains a readiness to win "an overwhelming victory" against North Korea in potential clashes. "North Korea firing missiles in a way that sets off air raid sirens appears intended to threaten South Koreans to pressure their government to change policy," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul. "North Korea's expanding military capabilities and tests are worrisome, but offering concessions about alliance cooperation or nuclear recognition would make matters worse."

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff earlier identified three of the North Korean weapons launched as "short-range ballistic missiles" fired from the North's eastern coastal town of Wonsan, including the one that landed near the sea border.

North Korean short-range weapons are designed to strike key facilities in South Korea, including U.S. military bases there.

In an emergency meeting with top security officials, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol ordered officials to take swift unspecified steps to make North Korea face consequences for its provocation. He said he would consider the North Korean missile's landing near the border "a virtual violation of (our) territorial waters."

During the emergency South Korean meeting, officials also lamented that the North Korean missile launches came as South Korea is in a mourning period over the crowd crush. They noted this "clearly showed the nature of the North Korean government," according to South Korea's presidential office.

Earlier Wednesday, Japanese Defense Minister Yasukazu Hamada told reporters that at least two ballistic missiles fired by North Korea showed a possibly "irregular" trajectory. This suggests the missiles are the North's highly maneuverable, nuclear-capable KN-23 missile, which was modeled on Russia's Iskander missile.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida called North Korea's continuing missile tests "absolutely impermissible."

Analyst Cheong Seong-Chang at the private Sejong Institute in South Korea said that the danger of armed clashes between the Koreas off their western or eastern coasts is increasing. He said South Korea needs to make "proportional responses" to North Korean provocations, not "overwhelming responses," to prevent tensions from spiraling out of control and possibly leading the North to use its tactical nuclear weapons.

Animosities on the Korean Peninsula have been running high in recent months, with North Korea testing a string of nuclear-capable missiles and adopting a law authorizing the preemptive use of its nuclear weapons in a broad range of situations. Some experts still doubt North Korea would use nuclear weapons first in the face of U.S. and South Korean forces.

North Korea has argued its recent weapons tests were meant to issue a warning to Washington and Seoul over their series of joint military drills that it views as an invasion rehearsal, including this week's exercises involving about 240 warplanes.

In a statement released early Wednesday, Pak Jong Chon, a secretary of the ruling Workers' Party who is considered a close confidant of leader Kim Jong Un, called the so-called Vigilant Storm air force drills "aggressive and provocative."

"If the U.S. and South Korea attempt to use armed forces against (North Korea) without any fear, the special means of the (North's) armed forces will carry out their strategic mission without delay," Pak said, in an apparent reference to his country's nuclear weapons.

"The U.S. and South Korea will have to face a terrible case and pay the most horrible price in history," he said.

U.S. and South Korean officials have steadfastly said their drills are defensive in nature and that they have no intentions of attacking North Korea.

"We reject the notion that they serve as any sort of provocation. We have made clear that we have no hostile intent towards (North Korea) and call on them to engage in serious and sustained diplomacy," White House National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said late Tuesday.

North Korea "continues to not respond. At the same time, we will continue to work closely with our allies and partners to limit the North's ability to advance its unlawful weapons programs and threaten regional

stability," Watson said.

EXPLAINER: Status of women in Qatar, host of World Cup

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

The foreign fans descending on Doha for the 2022 World Cup will find a country where women work, hold public office and cruise in their supercars along the city's palm-lined corniche. They've been driving for decades, unlike in Saudi Arabia, where women gained the right just a few years ago.

There are Qatari female ambassadors, judges and ministers, even race jockeys. The emir's mother, Sheikha Moza bint Nasser al-Missned, is one of the most famous women in the Arab world. In a region where rulers' wives and mothers keep a low-profile, she behaves like a Western-style first lady — advocating for social causes and grabbing headlines as a style icon.

Yet the emirate has for years sat near the bottom of the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report, which tracks gaps between women and men in employment, education, health and politics.

It's a traditional society that traces its roots to the interior of the Arabian Peninsula, where an ultraconservative form of Islam known as Wahhabism originated. Rights groups say that the Qatari legal system, based on Islamic law or Shariah, hinders women's advancement.

Here's a look at the situation of women in the tiny sheikhdom that has undergone a massive social transformation from a generation ago, when most women kept close to home.

RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

Qatar's constitution enshrines equality among citizens. But the U.S. State Department and human rights groups say the Qatari legal system discriminates against women when it comes to their freedom of movement and issues of marriage, child custody and inheritance. Under Shariah law, for example, women can inherit property, but daughters receive half as much as sons. Men can easily divorce their wives, while women must apply to courts from a narrow list of acceptable grounds. Men can marry up to four wives without issue, while women must obtain approval from a male guardian to get married at any age. Under a rule rarely enforced, Qatari women under the age of 25 also must secure a male guardian's permission to leave the country. Husbands and fathers may bar women from traveling. Unmarried Qatari women under 30 cannot check into hotels. Single women who get pregnant face prosecution for extramarital sex. There is no government office dedicated to women's rights.

POLITICS

Just last year, emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani appointed women to two Cabinet posts, bringing the number of female ministers to three — the highest number in Qatar's history. Prominent Qatari women hold other high-level positions, too. The female deputy foreign minister gained prestige as the spokeswoman for Qatar's critical diplomatic efforts amid the U.S. military and NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan. Another powerful woman is Sheikh Tamim's younger sister, the head of the Qatar Museum Authority who has become one of the international art world's most popular figures. Last year, Sheikh Tamim appointed two women to the country's advisory Shura Council. But the legislative elections for the 45-member council were a stark testament to Qatari women's limited role. Female candidates did not win a single seat.

WORKFORCE

Laws guarantee the right to equal pay for Qatari women and men. But women do not always receive it. They also struggle to obtain high-level posts in private companies and the public sector, even though more than half of all college graduates are women. There is no law prohibiting gender discrimination in the workplace. Laws ban women from jobs broadly defined as dangerous or inappropriate. Women also must seek permission from a male guardian to work in the government and special institutions. Despite the obstacles, some women have managed to succeed professionally.

TRADITIONAL ROLES

Traditional roles in Qatar are enshrined in laws that differentiate between women's and men's rights and responsibilities. Wives, for instance, are legally in charge of the household and are required to obey their husbands. They can lose financial support if they defy their husband's wishes. Religious and tribal

customs mean that conservative families frown on women mingling with unrelated men, even for business. Although women have made major forays in recent years, the world of politics and finance remains male-dominant. With Islam encouraging female modesty, Qatari women typically wear a headscarf and loose cloak known as the abaya. Bedouin women are more conservative and some cover their faces with the niqab veil.

Women's soccer makes gains in Mideast despite conservatives

By LEE KEATH and OMAR AKOUR Associated Press

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — Sarah Asimrin still hears it from her uncles sometimes: "You're a girl, it's not right." But on a recent evening, the 13-year-old Jordanian was on her club's soccer field practicing alongside other girls and boys.

"I fell in love with the game because it's got action. I love it a lot, more than any other sport," said Asimrin.

Her younger sister Aya plays soccer as well and, despite the reservations of a few uncles, their family supports them. In fact, their father is a soccer coach at a private academy in the Jordanian capital, Amman.

Women's soccer has been long neglected in the Middle East, a region that is mad for the men's game and hosts the World Cup for the first time this month in Qatar. The women's game has been held back by lack of financing and by conservative attitudes contending that girls aren't made for sports or that uniforms like shorts are too revealing.

But some places show signs of momentum. The growth usually depends on active government promotion of women's sports. Where that happens, it taps into pent-up enthusiasm among girls and women and can shift public attitudes.

Jordan has been one of the leaders, with one of the region's most successful national teams and a network of girls' youth and school leagues.

Others are making new pushes. Last month, the first matches of a new women's Premier League were held in Saudi Arabia, where women have only been allowed to attend soccer games since 2017. The Saudi national women's team played against international teams for the first time this year.

Newly launched tournaments give women's teams opportunities for international competition and, proponents hope, will encourage the creation of more teams.

The Asian and the much smaller West Asian football associations each held their first women's club championships in 2019. The African federation inaugurated its women's club championship last year in Cairo, and this year's games began this week in Morocco, with a \$400,000 prize for the winners — though that's way below the \$2.5 million that the winning men's club gets.

The new venues fuel the dreams of young women hoping to reach professional levels.

Masar Athamneh, a 20-year-old on the women's team at Amman's Orthodox Club, said she's been playing soccer since she was 12 or 13. She used to join her brother with the boys on the pitches in her neighborhood and watched European leagues on TV. Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo has been her idol "because he worked hard on himself."

She's hoping to one day play on Jordan's national team in international matches.

"Sometimes we face some difficulties, of course. ... Like, 'This is a game only for boys or males,' 'why do you wear shorts?' ... and so on. This is a huge problem we face," she said. "But I think with the time, it's getting better and better."

Jordan's Football Association provides financial support for clubs to form women's teams, prompting even some conservative clubs to jump in, sports analyst Owni Fraij said.

Still, money remains the biggest problem. Clubs treat women's teams that don't generate income "as a kind of luxury," he said.

Egypt perhaps shows the region's starkest contrast. Its biggest men's teams are wealthy powerhouses that win regional tournaments regularly, while women's soccer languishes despite repeated efforts to end its neglect. A single team, Wadi Degla, wins most women's competitions.

Egyptian women have faced public backlashes as well. In 2020, a victory by the under-20 national women's

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team over Lebanon was met by a barrage of sexual harassment on social media, with obscene comments and sneers that girls shouldn't be playing soccer.

Administrators' response was even more disturbing. They suspended upcoming games and fired the team's coaching staff, raising fears that the entire team would be disbanded. Players went on TV talk shows and spoke out on social media, and the squad survived.

Outside pressure may give Egyptian women a boost. The African Champions League will require clubs in its men's tournament to also have women's teams, which should force the hands of top Egyptian clubs.

Where politics and powerful social opposition intersect, girls' enthusiasm for the game never finds an outlet. For example, while women's soccer is relatively active among Palestinians in the West Bank, it's virtually non-existent in the Gaza Strip.

Gaza's 2.3 million residents are generally conservative. Its Islamist rulers, the militant Hamas group, grant little space for women's freedoms. The economy has also been crippled by a 15-year Israeli-Egyptian blockade, leaving little to spend on what are considered leisure activities.

One of Gaza's few female sports teams is that of the Beit Hanoun Al-Ahli Youth Club, with 20 girls playing soccer and basketball. They wear pants instead of shorts, and long-sleeve shirts. Once they reach 17, they stop playing, often to get married, team manager Maha Shabat said.

"There is no support for women's sports in the Gaza Strip ... no support to be like girls in other parts of the world," Shabat said.

Rama Ashour, a 14-year-old player on the soccer team, said she hopes to be able to keep going and even play on a national team.

"On the internet, I see many girls (elsewhere) playing normally," she said. The largest obstacle in Gaza is society and tradition, but she said she wants to "think positively about the criticism. I will take it as a motive to proceed and challenge everyone."

But others on the team are facing up to the limits. "My ambition — to be a player — is something impossible in this society," said 16-year-old Hala Qassem.

The most tragic setback came in Afghanistan, where the Taliban takeover just over a year ago crushed the nascent women's sports scene.

Hundreds of female athletes fled. Australia evacuated the women's national team, and Portugal took in the girl's youth team, while members of the youth development team were flown to Britain.

Those left behind have had their lives suffocated by Taliban bans on women's sports and on teen girls going to school and restrictions on women moving around in public.

Sabera Akberzada had been playing center on her high school's girls soccer team. Now the 17-year-old can't play or attend school. She has lost contact with most of her teammates.

"Life has become hell for us, as a woman we can't do anything by our choice," Akberzada said. She had hoped one day to make it to Afghanistan's national team. "Unfortunately, my dream remained just a dream."

A former captain of the women's national team, Khalid Popal, is now in Denmark, trying to keep the sport alive. She's working to get out members of the under-15 team still in Afghanistan.

"I feel so worried and so sorry for women, young women who wanted to be independent," she said. "I don't think women will play sports again in Afghanistan."

Israel's Netanyahu appears to hold lead in election

By JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appeared to edge toward election victory on Wednesday, with nearly two-thirds of ballots showing that he and his ultranationalist and religious allies are poised to achieve a stable majority in the country's parliament.

Votes were still being counted and results were not final. But if preliminary indications were correct, Israel was likely headed to one of its most right-wing governments, bolstered by a strong showing from the ultranationalist Religious Zionism party, whose members use inflammatory anti-Arab and anti-LGBTQ rhetoric.

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The initial results pointed to a continued rightward shift in the Israeli electorate, further dimming hopes for peace with the Palestinians and setting the stage for possible conflict with the Biden administration and Israel's supporters in the U.S.

Tuesday's election was Israel's fifth in less than four years, with all of them focused largely on Netanyahu's fitness to govern. On trial for a slew of corruption charges, Netanyahu is seen by supporters as the victim of a witch hunt and vilified by opponents as a crook and threat to democracy.

Elections officials worked through the night tallying votes and by early Wednesday, some 62% of the ballots had been counted. The vote, like past elections, was tight but indications showed Netanyahu was headed back to premiership with a firm majority in Israel's 120-seat parliament.

If Netanyahu's allies emerge victorious, it could still take weeks of negotiations for a coalition government to be formed. Continued deadlock and a new round of elections are also a possibility.

Speaking in Jerusalem in the middle of the night, Netanyahu asked his supporters to have patience and said his Likud Party was "on the verge of a very big victory."

Perhaps fearing that Arab voters would deny him victory, Netanyahu tweeted allegations of violence and vote tampering at Arab polling stations. He provided no evidence, and the country's nonpartisan Central Elections Committee dismissed the "baseless rumors."

Netanyahu later said he was "asking for total electoral purity because that's the basis of democracy."

Arabs make up some 20% of Israel's population and have been a key factor in blocking Netanyahu in recent elections. But this time around their vote was split among three different factions, each of which was at risk of falling below the threshold, which would mean those votes were wasted.

Netanyahu was Israel's longest-serving prime minister, governing for 12 consecutive years – and 15 years altogether – before he was ousted last year by a diverse coalition led by the centrist Yair Lapid.

But the coalition that Lapid cobbled together, which included the first Arab party ever to join a government, was ravaged by infighting and collapsed after just one year in power. Those parties were poised to capture just 54 seats, according to the polls.

Lapid, addressing supporters early Wednesday, insisted that the race was not decided.

"Until the last envelope is counted, nothing is over and nothing is final," he said.

The night's strongest showing was by far-right lawmaker Itamar Ben-Gvir's Religious Zionism, which emerged as the third-largest party. At an all-male campaign gathering in Jerusalem, religious men wearing Jewish skullcaps and waving Israeli flags danced in celebration.

Ben-Gvir is a disciple of a racist rabbi, Meir Kahane, who was banned from parliament and whose Kach party was branded a terrorist group by the United States before he was assassinated in New York in 1990.

Kahane's agenda called for banning intermarriage between Arabs and Jews, stripping Arabs of Israeli citizenship and expelling large numbers of Palestinians.

But while Kahane was seen as a pariah, Ben-Gvir is one of Israel's most popular politicians, thanks to his frequent media appearances, cheerful demeanor, knack for deflecting criticism and calls for a harder line against Palestinians at a time of heavy fighting in the occupied West Bank. Young ultra-Orthodox men are among his strongest supporters.

Ben-Gvir lives in the hard-line West Bank settlement of Kiryat Arba and is a strong proponent of settlement construction. He has described Arab colleagues in parliament as "terrorists," called for deporting those who are "disloyal" and recently brandished a handgun in a tense Palestinian neighborhood of Jerusalem as he called on police to shoot Palestinian stone-throwers.

At the celebration, Ben-Gvir's supporters chanted "Death to terrorists."

"We want to make a total separation between those who are loyal to the state of Israel — and we don't have any problem with them — and those who undermine our dear country," he said.

Muhammad Shtayyeh, the Palestinian prime minister, said the rise of Israel's far right was "a natural result of the growing manifestations of extremism and racism in Israeli society."

If the Netanyahu alliance ends up controlling a majority, Ben-Gvir and his party leader, Bezalel Smotrich, are sure to drive a hard bargain. Ben-Gvir has said he will demand the Cabinet post overseeing Israel's

police force.

The pair have also said they will seek legal reforms aimed at weakening the independence of the judiciary and giving parliament power to override court decisions they don't like. That could clear the way for the dismissal of criminal charges against Netanyahu. Smotrich and other members of the party have also made repeated anti-LGBTQ comments.

Such positions could put a future Netanyahu government on a collision course with the Biden administration, which supports a two-state solution with the Palestinians. It could also alienate Israeli allies in the U.S., particularly the predominantly liberal Jewish American community.

"Ben-Gvir is one of the most radical politicians in Israeli history. If he comes with so much political power, this will pose a major headache for Mr. Netanyahu," said Yohanan Plesner, president of the Israel Democracy Institute, an independent think tank.

He said Netanyahu, if asked to form the next government, might try to seek other potential coalition partners instead. With Netanyahu's opponents vowing never to sit in a government with him, that could be a difficult task.

In Israel, voters vote for parties, not individual politicians. No party has ever won a majority on its own, and coalition-building is necessary to govern.

The Likud Party was projected to be the largest, with some 31 seats in parliament, followed by Lapid's Yesh Atid, with 22 to 24 seats.

Lapid was the mastermind of the coalition that turned Netanyahu into the opposition leader.

The coalition was made up of nationalists who oppose Palestinian statehood, dovish parties that seek a peace agreement and — for the first time in the country's history — a small Arab Islamist party. The groups were united over their distaste for Netanyahu.

But that coalition collapsed this spring because of infighting.

The centrist Lapid, a former author and broadcaster who became premier as part of a power-sharing agreement, has portrayed himself as an honest and scandal-free change from the polarizing Netanyahu.

In his short term as caretaker leader, Lapid welcomed President Joe Biden on a visit to Israel, led the country in a brief military operation against Gaza militants and signed a diplomatic agreement with Lebanon setting a maritime boundary between the enemy nations.

Climate change and rising seas threaten Egypt's breadbasket

By SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

ROSETTA, Egypt (AP) — Sayed Abuel-Ezz has seen his crops wither from seawater before. As the Nile Delta farmer walks among his mango trees on his land not far from the Mediterranean Sea, he worries it will happen again despite spending the equivalent of tens of thousands of dollars to prevent it.

"If it gets higher, the trees will die," Abuel-Ezz said, looking towards the sea.

Here, the impact of climate change has long been obvious to farmers, in the creeping salt that eats away roots and cakes their fields, turning them barren. They pay a fortune to bring in truckloads of earth to try to raise their crops above the salt pushed into the soil by rising sea levels. But they say it is getting worse.

Bus drivers can see the changes too, how the sea more and more easily spills over onto the land. Now every winter, parts of the vital international highway running the length of Egypt's coast are flooded, say drivers on the route.

Situated on Egypt's northern coast on the Mediterranean, the Nile River Delta is one of the world's three most vulnerable hot-spots to climate change impacts, including rising sea levels, according to a 2007 report by the United Nations-backed Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

As Egypt hosts the U.N.'s global climate summit COP27 this month, the country's leaders have said the predicament of the Delta, known for millennia for its fertile soil, is foremost among their concerns. Residents are hoping for help to deal with the consequences of a warming planet.

The Delta covers roughly 240 square kilometers (93 square miles), starting just north of the capital of Cairo where the Nile River fans out. The rivers' branches created the rich, fertile land by depositing silt

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as they made their way to the sea. Since ancient times, the area has been the food basket of empires.

It's heavily populated, home to some 40% of Egypt's 104 million people and accounts for half of the country's economy, according to the U.N. food agency. Farms and fisheries along the two Nile branches, Rosetta in the west and Damietta in the east, help feed the country and provide products for export.

All of that is increasingly threatened by climate change and rising seas. A quarter of the Delta sits at or below sea level. An increase between 0.5 and 1 meter (1.6 to 3.2 feet) — which could happen by 2100 in one of the U.N.-backed panel's worst case scenarios — will shift the coastline inward by several kilometers, submerging large areas and rendering more barren with salt. That's according to a recent report by an international group of scientists overseen by the Cyprus Institute's Climate and Atmosphere Research Center and the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry.

"This would imply severe challenges for coastal infrastructure and agriculture, and can lead to the salinization of coastal aquifers, including the densely populated and cultivated Nile Delta," said George Zittis, who co-authored the report.

The scenario judged to be more likely by the panel is that the sea will rise by 0.3-0.6 meters by 2100. That will still render thousands of acres unfit for farming or habitation.

The Associated Press spoke with more than three dozen farmers, fishermen and other residents in several villages and cities along the Mediterranean coast, the breadth of the Delta.

Spanning several generations, they said they have sensed climate change's effects for years, particularly in rising sea levels. They have seen greater shore erosion and groundwater contaminated by salt. The saltwater intrudes as pressure grows from rising sea water, and the counter-pressure from fresh water has lessened.

Saltwater intrusion is the most challenging threat to the Delta, said Mohamed Abdel Monem, a senior adviser on land and climate change with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization.

"This means less productivity and in many cases crops' death and therefore food insecurity," he said.

Hamdy Salah, a 26-year-old farmer outside the town of Rosetta in the western Delta, says planting practices have changed drastically. They once grew a variety: tomatoes, eggplants, pumpkins, and other vegetables. Now they grow mostly mango and citrus, which are less vulnerable to salt.

"We tried other crops like apple, but saltwater also killed its roots," he said.

Abuel-Ezz's family have farmed in Rosetta for generations, and he and his two brothers cultivate two farms of mango and citrus, five acres each.

A decade ago, they elevated their farmlands, one field by 1 meter (3.3 feet) and the second by 2 meters (6.6 feet), to combat rising saline water in the body of their farms. It cost them around 2 million pounds (\$101,700) by today's prices, said Sayed's brother, Saber Abuel-Ezz.

The elevation, along with a government-built runoff system meant to reduce salt in the soil, bought them some time.

"It was costly but there was no alternative," said Sayed, a 36-year-old father of two.

Besides bringing in tons of earth, many cultivate plants in raised beds and use whatever natural or chemical fertilizers they can afford to counteract the saline.

Without these measures, the land quickly turns desolate. On the other side of the river from Rosetta town, sheets of dried salt cover former farmland outside the town of Mutubas.

On one September afternoon, a half-dozen farmers sat near a machine pumping water from an irrigation canal onto raised beds in a mango farm in Mutubas. The trees have just started to blossom, next year could be their first harvest.

Ouf el-Zoughby, one of the farmers, said this is his third time trying to grow mangos. Past attempts have been thwarted by salt.

"You see the tree dying before your eyes," the 47-year-old farmer said, remembering how he had to pull the husks out one-by-one. His fields are within 3 kilometers (1.8 miles) of the Mediterranean.

This time, he's hoping the newly elevated farmlands and a government-built runoff system will help them survive, in addition to expensive chemical fertilizers. He's not sure what he will do if the crop fails again. He worries that without more government help, thousands could desert their farms.

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The area has always been exposed to the nearby sea, but farmers say salinity was kept in check by supplies of fresh water and silt from the Nile. Even after the construction of the Aswan High Dam in over 50 years ago ended seasonal flooding, fresh water still reached the fields through canals. But even that has lessened, as the government has rationed agricultural water use, to account for the country's growing population. There's no longer enough to wash away the salt.

Further down the coast on the eastern side of the Delta, concrete barriers have been put down just outside the city of Port Said, aiming to keep the rising waves back.

Abdel-Wahab Ramadan, a 61-year-old retired engineer, remembers spending summer vacations on white sand beaches here 30 years ago. Now, his grandchildren play next to the massive wave breakers in the muddy shallows.

"We are aware that this is necessary, but there are protection methods better than this ugly one," he said.

They are still just a half measure. They were not enough to stop waves from flooding beach-side restaurants and cafes in the town of Ras el-Bar in recent winters. Many now close during the winter months.

"Last year, we spent a week to repair the place, but unfortunately water flooded it again," said Abd Allah Gareib, who manages a café by the beach. It sustained water damage the past two years. This year, the sea already crossed the first two lines of wave breakers in October.

The barriers and runoff systems are part of government efforts to protect the Delta from climate change's effects.

Egypt's former Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, Mohamed Abdel-Atty, said in January the government had installed concrete barriers on 120 kilometers (74 miles) along the Mediterranean coast, meant to shelter 17 million people. That is equivalent to about half the coastline of the Delta and the city of Alexandria. Egypt's entire Mediterranean coast stretches 990 kilometers (615 miles). Abdel-Atty said they were also working to build a warning system to alert any climatic changes like rises in sea levels.

At the same time, authorities are trying to put a stop to high-polluting practices, like brick-making and an old farming custom, the burning of rice straw, which shrouds the Delta's skies with smoke every year after the harvest.

But there's understanding from Egyptians that this is a small step in tackling a global problem.

"Though Egypt contributes 0.6% of the global carbon dioxide emissions, it is one of the most vulnerable (countries) to the impacts of climate change, and the agriculture sector and food production are the most affected," said Abdel Monem, the FAO's expert.

World Series: Phils hammering away at home, lead Astros 2-1

By The Associated Press undefined

Bryce Harper and the hammering Philadelphia Phillies clearly are enjoying a home-field edge at Citizens Bank Park.

More like a homer field advantage.

Harper started the Phillies' World Series record-tying barrage of five home runs Tuesday night in a 7-0 romp over the Houston Astros for a 2-1 lead.

The rout boosted the Phils' mark to 6-0 at home this postseason, fueled by the 17 homers they've hit in those wins.

"It's tough to play here. I can't imagine what it's like for the Astros," Phillies outfielder Nick Castellanos said.

"They just have zero breathing room," he said. "And that's a good thing."

The Phillies are 22-9 all-time at the Bank in the postseason since hosting their first playoff game there in 2007.

"The fan base, I mean, it's just so much fun. They showed up tonight knowing that we needed 'em, and they continue to do that," Harper said.

Alec Bohm hit the 1,000th home run in World Series history Tuesday night, and the Phillies quickly went to work on launching the next thousand.

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Harper, Bohm and Brandon Marsh teed off early against Houston starter Lance McCullers Jr. in Game 3 of the 118th World Series. Kyle Schwarber and Rhys Hoskins hit back-to-back drives to finish McCullers in the fifth inning and make it 7-0.

The five home runs tied a World Series record done three previous times — by the 1928 Murderers' Row New York Yankees when Babe Ruth hit three and Lou Gehrig also connected, by the Bash Brothers-led 1989 Oakland A's in the first game after the Bay Area earthquake, and by the sign stealing scandal-tainted Astros in 2017.

McCullers became the first pitcher in postseason history to get tagged for five home runs in a game.

"I don't really get hit around like that, so I was a little bit in disbelief," he said.

Cristian Javier pitches next for the Astros in Game 4 on Wednesday night. He won his last start, holding the New York Yankees to one hit in 5 1/3 shutout innings in the Bronx during the AL Championship Series.

Aaron Nola starts for the Phillies. One of their aces, he was done after giving up five runs in 4 1/3 innings in the World Series opener.

SERIES SCHEDULE (All times ET)

Game 4: Wednesday in Philadelphia, 8:03 p.m., FOX

Game 5: Thursday in Philadelphia, 8:03 p.m., FOX

Game 6 (if necessary): Saturday in Houston, 8:03 p.m., FOX

Game 7 (if necessary): Sunday in Houston, 8:03 p.m., FOX

PHIRST LADY

Phillies supporter and first lady Jill Biden is expected at Citizens Bank Park for Game 4, a day after President Joe Biden took a playful swing at Philly's infamously ornery sports fans — including the one in his own home.

"Phillies fans are the most virulent, obnoxious fans in the world," he said while campaigning in Florida.

The president often kids about the first lady being "a Philly girl" and her rooting interests in the local teams.

"Like every Philly fan, she's convinced she knows more about everything in sports than anybody else," Biden joked in September when he hosted the 2021 World Series champion Atlanta Braves.

Biden added Tuesday, however, that if he didn't root for Philadelphia teams, he'd be sleeping alone.

BP WITH BEATS

The Philadelphia Phillies are keeping the hits coming at this World Series -- on the scoreboard, and from Billboard.

The homer-happy Phillies have hired locals Mr Hollywood DJ and DJ Smooth to spin tunes during batting practice. The pair has a turntable that gets set up near the home dugout, where they crank out hits from a playlist created by backup catcher Garrett Stubbs.

"A lot of the guys have the music they like, and then I just ended up just putting it all together," Stubbs said.

On Tuesday, some players occasionally shimmied between swings as they prepared to play the Houston Astros. They sure had their timing down by first pitch, crushing five homers in the first five innings.

"They kind of wanted to pump it up a little bit more, bring the energy," Mr Hollywood DJ said. "The players love it. They have a good time."

GOLDEN

Many fans wondered how well the Houston Astros could fill their shortstop hole this year after All-Star Carlos Correa signed with Minnesota. Turns out Jeremy Peña did just fine.

Peña added to his AL Championship Series MVP award when he won an AL Gold Glove — he was the first rookie shortstop to win a Gold Glove, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

"I heard that today and I was in shock because I didn't know that was a thing," he said. "But it's pretty cool."

Houston outfielder Kyle Tucker also won in awards announced Tuesday before Game 3 of the World Series. Philadelphia catcher J.T. Realmuto won for the second time — his honor was announced to the

crowd, and he drew a rousing ovation.

Russia calls vote on unfounded Ukraine bio weapons claims

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. Security Council scheduled a vote Wednesday on a resolution that would establish a commission to investigate unfounded Russian claims that Ukraine and the United States are carrying out “military biological” activities that violate the convention prohibiting the use of biological weapons.

Russia circulated a 310-page document to council members last week alleging that this biological activity is taking place in Ukraine with support from the U.S. Defense Department. The document included an official complaint to the Security Council, allowed under Article VI of the 1972 biological weapons convention, and a draft resolution that would authorize the Security Council to set up a commission comprising the 15 council members to investigate Russia’s claims.

Russia’s initial allegation of secret American biological warfare labs in Ukraine, made soon after its Feb. 24 invasion of its smaller neighbor, has been disputed by independent scientists, Ukrainian leaders and officials at the White House and Pentagon. An Associated Press investigation in March found the claim was taking root online, uniting COVID-19 conspiracy theorists, QAnon adherents and some supporters of former President Donald Trump.

Ukraine does have a network of biological labs that have gotten funding and research support from the U.S. They are owned and operated by Ukraine and are part of an initiative called the Biological Threat Reduction Program that aims to reduce the likelihood of deadly outbreaks, whether natural or manmade. The U.S. efforts date back to work in the 1990s to dismantle the former Soviet Union’s program for weapons of mass destruction.

In September, the 197 state parties to the biological weapons convention met at Russia’s request on the activities at biological laboratories in Ukraine, but a final report said it wasn’t possible to reach consensus.

Diplomats said it is highly unlikely that the Russian draft resolution will be adopted by the Security Council when it is put to a vote, expected late Wednesday afternoon. Approval requires a minimum nine “yes” votes and no veto by one of the five permanent members -- the U.S., Britain, France, Russia and China.

Russia called a Security Council meeting on its claims last Thursday, which the United States and its Western allies vehemently dismissed.

U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield called the meeting “a colossal waste of time” and rejected Russia’s allegation as “pure fabrications brought forth without a shred of evidence.” She said the claim is part of a Moscow “disinformation campaign” that is attempting “to distract from the atrocities Russian forces are carrying out in Ukraine and a desperate tactic to justify an unjustifiable war.”

“Ukraine does not have a biological weapons program,” she said. “The United States does not have a biological weapons program. There are no Ukrainian biological weapons laboratories supported by the United States.”

Russia’s U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia accused the U.S. of conducting work in Ukraine with deadly pathogens — including cholera, plague, anthrax and influenza — that couldn’t be justified under the guise of public health. He said documents and evidence recovered by Russian authorities suggested a military application.

Nebenzia told the Security Council that the Russian military during its time in Ukraine had recovered drones capable of spraying bioagents as well as documents that he said related to research on the possibility of spreading pathogens through bats and migrating birds.

Thomas-Greenfield countered that Russia’s claims are “absurd for many reasons, including because such species, even if they could be weaponized, would pose as much a threat to the European continent and to Ukraine itself as they would to any other country.”

Takeoff, dead at 28 in shooting, was ‘chill’ Migos member

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By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr. AP Entertainment Writer

At just 28, rapper Takeoff had cultivated a rich hip-hop legacy with Migos — along with a reputation as the trio's most lowkey member — before he was killed in a shooting early Tuesday.

Takeoff was pronounced dead at the scene outside a Houston bowling alley, police there said at a press conference Tuesday afternoon. No arrests had been made, and police were imploring witnesses to come forward with information.

Born Kirsnick Khari Ball, Takeoff grew up in suburban Atlanta — Gwinnett County was less than flatteringly name-checked in a couple Migos tracks — alongside the two other members of the group. Quavo was his uncle and Offset was his cousin, and the trio was raised in large part by Takeoff's mom.

Takeoff was the youngest of the three, and viewed as the most laidback member. He didn't appear in headlines at the rate of Offset, who is married to Cardi B, and he wasn't in high demand as a featured act on top 10 tracks like Quavo, who has guested on hits with Post Malone, DJ Khaled and Drake.

Quavo and Offset have also both released solo albums, unlike Takeoff. But despite being more reserved, he did a lot of his talking through his rhymes. He had hoped to gain more respect for his lyrical ability through "Only Built for Infinity Links," an album he released with Quavo just last month.

"It's time to give me my flowers," Takeoff said on a recent episode of the podcast "Drink Champs," acknowledging his reputation as "chill." "I don't want them later on when I'm not here."

Migos broke out nearly a decade ago with the 2013 hit "Versace," which hit even greater heights in popularity though a Drake remix. The group had other radio-friendly singles such as "Bando" and "Hannah Montana." The trio later earned Grammy nominations for best rap album with 2018's "Culture," while a track off it, "Bad and Boujee" nabbed a nod for best rap performance.

But the hit — which charted No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 and was shouted out in "Atlanta" creator Donald Glover's Golden Globes acceptance speech — didn't actually include Takeoff. Quavo said during an interview that Takeoff — who was sitting next to him — was left off "Bad and Boujee," which did feature Lil Uzi Vert, because of "timing." He said the song was rushed out on Soundcloud because the group didn't have fresh music out at the time.

Nonetheless, Takeoff's musical presence played a major role in helping the Migos become one of the most popular hip-hop groups of all time. The trio took flight with their rapid-fire triplet flow, a rap style when three notes are performed in one beat that they helped popularize.

Quavo and Takeoff put out a Halloween-themed music video for "Messy" just a day before Takeoff's death. The video, which begins with Takeoff waking up and recounting a messy dream, had racked up around 1.5 million views by Tuesday afternoon.

The duo were both in Houston on Monday. Quavo, who posted a video of himself driving around the city with friends to his Instagram story, had yet to comment publicly. Offset had not released a statement either.

Houston Police Chief Troy Finner said he received many calls about Takeoff after the shooting.

"Everyone spoke of what a great young man he is, how peaceful he is, what a great artist," Finner said. He wouldn't speculate on whether Takeoff was the intended target, and asked "everyone to understand the pain, the suffering of" Takeoff's mother.

Takeoff's last post on social media was a photo posted just before the shooting on his Instagram story. It was a photo of himself, soundtracked by Playboi Carti's "Stop Breathing."

Climate Migration: Nomads move to towns in warming Ladakh

By AIJAZ HUSSAIN Associated Press

KHARNAK, India (AP) — For decades, Konchok Dorjey grazed the world's finest cashmere-producing goats in the arid, treeless Kharnak village in India's Ladakh region, a high mountainous cold desert that borders China and Pakistan. But a decade ago, the 45-year-old nomad gave up his pastoral life in search of a better future for his family. He sold off his animals and migrated to an urban settlement in the outskirts of a regional town called Leh.

Dorjey now lives with his wife, two daughters and a son in Kharnakling, where scores of other nomadic

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families from his native village have also settled in the last two decades.

"It was a tough decision," Dorjey said recently, sitting on the veranda at his home. "But I did not have much choice."

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story is part of an ongoing series exploring the lives of people around the world who have been forced to move because of rising seas, drought, searing temperatures and other things caused or exacerbated by climate change.

As this region in Asia is particularly vulnerable to climate change, shifting weather patterns have already altered people's lives through floods, landslides and droughts in Ladakh, an inhospitable yet pristine landscape of high mountain passes and vast river valleys that in the past was an important part of the famed Silk Road trade route.

Frequent loss of livestock due to diseases, lack of health care, border conflict and shrinking grazing land — worsened by extreme climatic changes — has forced hundreds to migrate from sparsely populated villages to mainly urban clusters in the region known for its sublime mountain landscape and the expensive wool.

In the remote Himalayan region, glaciers are melting fast while still villagers largely depend on glacial runoff for water.

Dorjey, the nomad-turned-cabbie, has seen it all.

When growing up, Dorjey said elders would often talk about moving somewhere else because there was so much snow that daily life was difficult.

"As I grew up, snow fell so little that we would contemplate leaving the place," Dorjey said.

He still stuck out there, herding some 100 cashmere goats, yak and sheep. But an illness of his younger daughter, Jigmet Dolma, now 18, changed the family's course.

Dolma initially suffered from pneumonia. Then she had seizures and would often faint, sending the family some 100 miles (170 kilometers) north to Leh, where they would spend days for her treatment. As the family was yet to come to terms with her ailment, incurring losses to their livestock due to diseases and cold was draining them of their resources, Dorjey said.

"It was a cataclysmic year and extreme cold badly hit livestock. It just devoured large number of baby goats," he said. At about 15,000 feet altitude, the temperatures in the region can fall to minus 35 Celsius (-31 Fahrenheit) during long winter months.

In 2011, Dorjey locked his stone house and left Kharnak for good. He painstakingly built his new life in Kharnakling and now drives a taxi for a living. The health of his daughter Dolma has improved while the two other children are studying.

"Ultimately, it boils down to safeguarding your family," he said as he took a deep breath.

"Urban life has brought its own issues and almost everything runs on money," he said as he explained his earlier predicaments of new life. "Life was much easier there (in Kharnak) with all its hardships."

Dorjey's wife, Sonam Kunkhen, expressed contentment about their flight from old village.

"It's better here for me and my family," the 47-year-old woman said. "It took us a while to adjust, but I'm glad we moved here."

On a recent sunny day, Dorjey drove to his native village Kharnak where he met his maternal uncle, Tsering Choldan. The 64-year-old nomad announced to him that he too was leaving soon. Other shepherds were also packing up their bags.

Dorjey pointed out that the village in recent years had received considerable attention as authorities built some prefab huts for nomads and spruced up animal feed facilities. But he said he was skeptical by experience that such facilities would stop migration.

"There are some facilities that were not there when I was living here. But there are also some other regressive changes that have occurred," Dorjey said.

The worst, he said, is unpredictability of the weather and shortage of water in recent years.

Many of Kharnak's pasturelands have become barren owing to unusual weather in recent years. And

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the multiple glaciers that covered the surrounding high peaks have shrunk drastically in last two decades causing water shortages, the shepherds said.

"Few small ones that rested on mountain peaks in my years of nomadic life have now almost entirely disappeared," Dorjey said pointing to a barren mountain range in Kharnak.

Dubbed as a part of water tower of Asia, Ladakh is home to thousands of glaciers, including Siachen glacier that is the longest outside the Polar region. Some of the region's glaciers also feed the Indus Basin Irrigation System, one of the world's largest that services India and China and considered a lifeline for agricultural land in Pakistan.

But they are receding at an alarming rate, threatening the water supply of millions of people.

In recent years, the changes on the ground are visually stark.

There are some fruit and vegetables, like apple and broccoli, now grown in the region due to favorable weather conditions. About a decade and a half back such farming was unheard of.

Bird watchers now spot winged creatures like paradise flycatcher and Eurasian scops owl that don't belong to the region. At the same time some native wildlife like Tibetan antelope or Ladakh urial are disappearing from the region's landscape.

The ongoing military standoff between India and China has witnessed deployment of tens of thousands of additional soldiers to the already militarized region and has led to massive infrastructure development in recent years. It has in turn increased localized pollution manifold, mainly in the form of carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels like coal and kerosene, and wood for heating shelters to keep soldiers warm in freezing temperatures.

Dorjey said some places in the region "still receive a regular snowfall, but it melts fast," an indication of what experts point out to Ladakh's warming weather.

A quiet flight of nearly 100 nomadic families from the village has dwindled its population to just 17 families who herd some 8,000 animals. While food security, health care and education are at the heart of their migration, the worsening climatic conditions exacerbated their flight.

Among the former Kharnak dwellers, most aging and old people are nostalgic about their old village. But they're mostly ones who have lived their productive years of life and now sit inside their homes or assemble in prayer halls or roadside shops to reminisce about what they've lost and gained.

Dorjey's eldest daughter, 21-year-old Rigzen Angmo, has visited Kharnak only twice. "I would like to visit there once in a while. Just that. There is not much for me there," said Angmo who is an undergraduate business commerce student.

The other lot, mostly young, are largely apathetic. Most of them want to do anything but shepherd animals high in the mountains. Many of them are working in government offices, run their own businesses or do menial jobs with the Indian military.

Sitting on bank of a brook in Kharnak, Dorjey said he can't take the nomad out of himself.

"It was the hardest decision in my life to leave my village. My soul is still here," he said. But he also acknowledged he was thinking less and less of returning as "urban life has possessed and softened me."

"On practical terms also, Kharnakling has better food and health facilities. Weather is not as harsh," he said.

Denmark PM to try to form new government after election win

By JAN M. OLSEN and KARL RITTER Associated Press

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) — Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen was in a strong position to remain in power after her Social Democrats won the most votes Tuesday in Denmark's election and a center-left bloc in Parliament that backs her appeared set to retain a majority by just one seat.

The result was preliminary and based on the assumption that a vote count in Greenland expected early Wednesday would give the autonomous Danish territory's two seats to the center-left bloc.

"I am so thrilled and proud. We have gotten the best election result in 20 years," Frederiksen told supporters early Wednesday in Copenhagen.

Despite the success, Frederiksen, who heads a Social Democratic minority government, said she would

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resign as prime minister and try to form a new government with broader support across the political divide, something she had said suggested before the election.

"It is also clear there is no longer a majority behind the government in its current form. Therefore, tomorrow I will submit the government's resignation to the queen," said Frederiksen, adding that she would meet with other parties about forming a new government.

Frederiksen was forced to call the vote earlier this month amid the fallout from her government's contentious decision to cull millions of minks as a pandemic response measure. The cull and chilling images of mass graves of minks have haunted Frederiksen since 2020 and eventually led to cracks in the center-left bloc.

The Social Democrats remained Denmark's top party with 28% of the vote, but it remained unclear long into the night whether the center-left parties together would reach the 90 seats needed for a majority in the 179-seat Parliament. Exit polls suggested they would fall short, but the decisive seat flipped at the very end of the vote count.

Before that former Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen appeared set to become kingmaker. His newly formed centrist party won 9% of the vote for 16 seats, according to the preliminary results.

Løkke Rasmussen said he too wanted to Mette Frederiksen to try to form a government but he would not point at her "as prime minister."

A two-time government leader who lost the 2019 election to Frederiksen and abandoned the center-right Liberal party following an internal power struggle, Løkke Rasmussen, wouldn't say whom he would back as the next prime minister or whether he saw that role for himself.

"I know for sure that Denmark needs a new government," he told jubilant supporters in Copenhagen. "Who is going to sit at the end of the table we do not know."

Denmark may be a small, tranquil country known for having some of the happiest people on Earth, but its politics is filled with intrigue that will be familiar to fans of the fictional Danish TV drama series "Borgen."

Before the election, Frederiksen, 44, floated the idea of a broader alliance that would also include opposition parties, but was rebuffed by opposition leaders Jakob Ellemann-Jensen of the Liberals and Søren Pape Poulsen of the Conservatives, who both ran as candidates for prime minister in a center-right government.

Even though the election result suggested she could ostensibly carry on as prime minister with only center-left support, Frederiksen said she would keep her ambition to also reach out to opposition parties.

"The Social Democrats went to the election to form a broad government," she said. "I will investigate whether it can be done."

Denmark's more than 4 million voters could choose among over 1,000 candidates — the most ever — from 14 parties. Four of the 179 seats in the Danish legislature, Folketinget, are reserved for the Faeroe Islands and Greenland, which are autonomous Danish territories.

Concerns about rising inflation and energy prices linked to Russia's war in Ukraine and a shortage of nurses in the public health care system were key themes in election campaigns.

"What I feel is important and is a worry to many are the soaring prices, whether it be electricity, bread or gasoline," said Inge Bjerre Hansen, 82, after casting her vote in Copenhagen. "My son is reducing the number of his visits because it has become expensive to fill the tank (of his car)."

Unlike in previous elections, immigration received little attention. Denmark has some of Europe's strictest immigration laws and there is broad agreement among the major parties to keep it that way.

That and internal squabbles help explain the collapse of the populist Danish People's Party, which spearheaded Denmark's crackdown on immigration two decades ago. Once polling over 20%, the party recorded its worst parliamentary election result since its creation in 1995, with around 3% of the vote, the results showed.

The Danish People's Party faced competition for nationalist voters from new right-wing parties. Among them are the Denmark Democrats, created in June by former hardline immigration minister Inger Støjberg. In 2021, Støjberg was convicted by the rarely used Impeachment Court for a 2016 order to separate asylum-seeking couples if one of the partners was a minor.

She was eligible to run for office again after serving her 60-day sentence. The official results showed her party getting 8%.

Frederiksen, who became Denmark's youngest prime minister when she took office at 41 more than three years ago, teamed up with the opposition to hike NATO-member Denmark's defense spending in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Her steadfast leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic was partly overshadowed by the mink-culling episode.

The decision to slaughter up to 17 million minks to protect humans from a mutation of the coronavirus was taken in haste and without the required legislation in place. It dealt a devastating blow to Danish mink farmers, even though there was no evidence the mutated virus found among some minks was more dangerous than other strains.

3 tragedies in Asia take hundreds of lives in 1 month

By DAVID RISING Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — More than 400 people died in October in a series of crowd-related disasters in Asia, when a bridge packed with revelers collapsed in India, Halloween parties were crushed in South Korea's capital, and spectators fled a stadium in Indonesia after police fired tear gas.

The dynamics in the three situations were distinct, though experts say poor planning and crowd management contributed to the disasters in Indonesia and South Korea. In India, authorities are investigating whether the recently repaired bridge was properly inspected.

In Seoul, 156 people died when more than 100,000 flocked to the popular nightlife district of Itaewon on Saturday for Halloween celebrations, the first since the country's strict COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.

The narrow, sloping alleys of the district became clogged with people, leading to what experts call "crowd turbulence." That's when people are so packed together that they don't have full control over their movements, and the crowd moves as a continuous body.

"It doesn't require anybody to misbehave, doesn't require anybody to aggressively or intentionally push," said Milad Haghani, a researcher at Australia's University of New South Wales, Sydney.

It is well documented that when crowd densities reach the levels estimated at the Itaewon celebration, people will fall, triggering a domino effect, said Haghani, who has studied more than 275 such crowd-related tragedies dating back to 1902.

But it's also preventable, he said.

Seoul authorities have been criticized for having 137 officers on hand Saturday to deal with such a large crowd. Officials regularly dispatch many more police to control protests in the capital.

Yoon Hee Keun, commissioner general of the Korean National Police Agency, told a televised news conference Tuesday that he felt a "heavy responsibility" for the loss of life.

By looking at past celebrations, and factoring in the end of COVID-19 restrictions, authorities could have easily anticipated large crowds, Haghani said.

More important than additional police, South Korean authorities could have employed crowd-control experts to monitor the flow of people and prevented the area from getting as packed as it did, he said.

Lessons from well-studied tragedies like Germany's 2010 Love Parade disaster, where 21 people died trying to exit an area through a bottleneck, make crowd turbulence situations predictable when experts are watching, he said.

"It is really disappointing to see that despite all of the expert experience, all of the studies, all of the conclusions and everything that was done, it happened again in another country, in another location, and it actually resulted in many more people dying," said Haghani.

Indonesia is still investigating the Oct. 1 tragedy at a soccer stadium, in which 135 people died, including dozens of children. Police fired tear gas into the stadium, where some gates were locked, after some the crowd of 42,000 spilled onto the field, sending them rushing toward the exits and causing a crush.

Soehatman Ramli, chairman of Indonesia's World Safety Organization, told The Associated Press that the case showed what can occur without a proper risk management plan and courses of action in case

of emergency.

"These plans should include evacuation routes and crowd management for controlling panic situations," Ramli said.

Already, police have said that Kanjuruhan stadium in Malang city did not have a proper operating certificate and that criminal charges would be brought against six people for negligence, including the three police officers who allowed or ordered officers to use tear gas.

Authorities have removed the police chiefs of East Java province and Malang district and suspended other officers over violations of professional ethics.

A fact-finding team set up by President Joko Widodo found that the tear gas was the main cause of the tragedy — a conclusion Haghani said was not surprising.

"Experience has shown that tear gas in a sports stadium is a recipe for disaster, in that it agitates the crowds, it creates a fight-back tendency in the crowd, and more aggressive behavior," he said.

After the weekend collapse of a newly repaired suspension bridge in India's Gujarat state in which 134 people died, authorities have announced the arrest of nine people, including managers of the bridge's operator.

The 143-year-old bridge reopened four days before Sunday's collapse under the weight of hundreds of people who were celebrating during the Hindu festival season.

A security video of the disaster showed it shaking violently and people trying to hold on to its cables and metal fencing before the aluminum walkway gave out and crashed into the river.

The bridge split in the middle with its walkway hanging down and its cables snapped.

Investigations are still underway, but a local official told the Indian Express newspaper that the company reopened the bridge without first obtaining a "fitness certificate."

All three October disasters serve as reminders of the variety of ways in which authorities are responsible for ensuring public safety, said Dirk Helbing, a professor of computational social science at the ETH Zurich university who studies crowd dynamics.

"In the past decades, science has provided many new insights and tools to contribute to crowd safety and management," he said. "I hope this knowledge will spread quickly and thereby help to avoid disasters in the future."

Musk emerging as Twitter's chief moderator ahead of midterms

By MATT O'BRIEN and HALELUYA HADERO AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Days after taking over Twitter and a week before the U.S. midterm elections, billionaire Elon Musk has positioned himself as moderator-in-chief of one of the most important social media platforms in American politics.

Musk has said he won't make major decisions about content or restoring banned accounts before setting up a "content moderation council" with diverse viewpoints. But his own behavior as a prolific tweeter has signaled otherwise.

He's engaged directly with figures on the political right who are appealing for looser restrictions, including a Republican candidate for Arizona secretary of state who credits Musk with enabling him to begin tweeting again after his account was briefly suspended Monday.

Musk even changed his profile to "Twitter Complaint Hotline Operator" — with a photo of himself when he was a toddler holding a telephone. But it is almost impossible for those outside of Twitter to know what strings he is pulling or whose accounts have been suspended: The company has stopped responding to media questions, except for the few that Musk answers by tweet.

Musk's promised interventions started last week on his first full day as Twitter's owner. A conservative political podcaster shared examples of the platform allegedly favoring liberals and secretly downgrading conservative voices — a common criticism that Twitter's previous leaders dismissed as inaccurate. "I will

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be digging in more today," Musk responded.

It continued when the daughter of Canadian psychologist Jordan Peterson, whose provocative critiques of "politically correct" culture and feminism are popular with some right-wing activists, appealed for Musk to restore her father's account after a tweet about transgender actor Elliot Page that apparently ran afoul of Twitter's rules on hateful conduct.

"Anyone suspended for minor & dubious reasons will be freed from Twitter jail," Musk pledged. He had months earlier said in reference to Peterson that Twitter was "going way too far in squashing dissenting opinions."

One of Musk's first big moves was an open letter to advertisers — Twitter's chief revenue source — promising that he would not let Twitter descend into a "free-for-all hellscape" as he follows through with his plans to promote free speech on the platform. And he's suggesting asking users to pay \$8 for a coveted verified blue check mark as a way to diversify revenue.

The check mark has been criticized as a symbol of elitism on the platform. But its primary purpose has been to verify that accounts in the public eye — such as politicians, brands and journalists — are who they say they are. It's been a tool to prevent impersonation and help stem the flow of misinformation.

But some still have their worries about Musk opening the platform to a flood of online toxicity that's bad for their brands. General Motors has said it will suspend advertising on Twitter as it monitors the platform under Musk, and others are facing pressure to review their own plans. On Tuesday, more than three dozen advocacy organizations sent an open letter to Twitter's top 20 advertisers, calling on them to commit to halting advertising on the platform if Twitter under Musk undermines "brand safety" and guts content moderation.

Over the weekend, the billionaire posted — then deleted — an article that contained baseless rumors about the attack on House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's husband. And much of his commentary in recent days has been a response to appeals from conservative voices.

In a text exchange with The Associated Press, Mark Finchem, the Republican running to become Arizona's secretary of state, said his access to the platform was restored quickly after reaching out to Musk via his personal Twitter handle. Asked why his account was suspended, Finchem said: "Perhaps you should reach out to Elon Musk. We were banned for an unknown reason, we reached out to him and 45 minutes later we were reinstated."

Finchem, who questions the results of the 2020 presidential election and was at the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, has drawn national attention for his statements about election security and his ability to change election rules if he wins the state's top election post next week.

Musk tweeted Monday evening that he was "Looking into it" in response to a complaint about Finchem's apparent suspension. The complaint came from attorney Jenna Ellis, who was a legal adviser to former President Donald Trump's campaign. About 40 minutes later, Finchem posted a "test" tweet on his account, which was followed by a lengthier post thanking Musk for restoring his ability to use the site.

"Thank you @elonmusk for stopping the commie who suspended me from Twitter a week before the election," Finchem wrote in the Tweet. "Twitter is much better with you at the helm."

Jared Holt, a senior research manager at The Institute for Strategic Dialogue, said big social media companies have typically operated on the whims of their owners. But "that problem is especially glaring when somebody like Elon Musk takes the reins and kind of establishes himself as king of the platform, rather than an owner trying to run a coherent business," Holt said.

At the same time, Musk has sent mixed signals about his intentions. Despite overt examples of appealing to conservative calls and complaints about Twitter's policies, there's also plenty of evidence that the platform's policies on combating misinformation are still in effect. Separately, Musk has defended Twitter's ongoing head of trust and safety, Yoel Roth, after some conservative users called for his firing over past comments expressing liberal views.

Roth remained on the job this week after other top executives were fired or resigned. And apart from Musk, he appeared to be the chief public voice of Twitter's content moderation, explaining that the com-

pany spent the weekend working to remove a "surge in hateful conduct" following Musk's takeover.

"We've all made some questionable tweets, me more than most, but I want to be clear that I support Yoel," Musk tweeted in response to a complaint from another conservative commentator. "My sense is that he has high integrity, and we are all entitled to our political beliefs."

Some longtime Twitter observers have expressed skepticism about the effectiveness of Musk's planned content moderation council. In part, that's because Twitter already has a trust and safety advisory council to address moderation questions.

"Truly I can't imagine how it would differ," said Danielle Citron, a University of Virginia law professor who sits on the council and has been working with Twitter since 2009 to tackle online harms, such as threats and stalking. "Our council has the full spectrum of views on free speech."

Citron said she's still waiting to hear if the council will be having its next meeting, scheduled for the day after the midterms.

Officials: Suspect in Pelosi attack was on 'suicide mission'

By OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ and STEFANIE DAZIO Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The man accused of breaking into House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's home, beating her husband and seeking to kidnap her told police he was on a "suicide mission" and had plans to target other California and federal politicians, according to a Tuesday court filing.

David DePape was ordered held without bail during his arraignment Tuesday in San Francisco Superior Court. His public defender entered a not guilty plea on his behalf. It was his first public appearance since the early Friday attack.

In the court filing, prosecutors detailed the attack in stark terms as part of their bid to keep DePape behind bars. Paul Pelosi was knocked unconscious by the hammer attack and woke up in a pool of his own blood, the filing said.

DePape's intent "could not have been clearer," San Francisco District Attorney Brooke Jenkins wrote in the filing: "He forced his way into the Pelosi home intending to take the person third in line to the presidency of the United States hostage and to seriously harm her. Thwarted by Speaker Pelosi's absence, Defendant continued on his quest and would not be stopped, culminating in the near fatal attack on Mr. Pelosi."

Without being questioned, DePape told officers and medics at the scene that he was sick of the "lies coming out of Washington D.C.," the filing said. "I didn't really want to hurt him, but you know this was a suicide mission. I'm not going to stand here and do nothing even if it cost me my life."

DePape allegedly told first responders he had other targets, including a local professor as well as several prominent state and federal politicians and members of their families. The filing did not name any potential targets.

"This case demands detention," Jenkins wrote. "Nothing less."

Wearing orange jail clothing and with his right arm in a sling, DePape only spoke during his arraignment Tuesday to tell Judge Diane Northway how to pronounce his last name (dih-PAP').

After the hearing, DePape's public defender Adam Lipson said he looks forward to providing him with a "vigorous legal defense." He said his 42-year-old client's shoulder was dislocated during the arrest.

"We're going to be doing a comprehensive investigation of what happened. We're going to be looking into Mr. DePape's mental state, and I'm not going to talk any further about that until I have more information," Lipson said.

He later said he was pleased that Paul Pelosi was improving and urged the public not to pass judgment on what he called "a complicated situation."

The attack on 82-year-old Paul Pelosi sent shockwaves through the political world just days before the hotly contested midterm elections. Threats against lawmakers and elections officials have been at all-time highs in this first nationwide election since the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the Capitol, and authorities have issued warnings about rising extremism in the U.S.

DePape faces state charges of attempted murder, burglary and elder abuse. He also faces federal charges

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including attempted kidnapping of a U.S. official.

While prosecutors have not offered a timeline prior to Friday's events, Jenkins previously told The Associated Press that the attack appeared premeditated.

"This was not something that he did at the spur of the moment," she told the AP on Monday.

The court filing said DePape smashed his shoulder through a glass window early Friday in the back of the Pelosis' Pacific Heights home and confronted a sleeping Paul Pelosi, clad only in boxer shorts and a pajama top.

"Are you Paul Pelosi?" DePape said, standing over him around 2 a.m. holding a hammer and zip ties. "Where's Nancy? Where's Nancy?"

A groggy Pelosi told DePape that his wife was not home and would be gone for several days. DePape then allegedly threatened to tie Paul Pelosi up — the first of 10 such threats, the filing says.

Paul Pelosi was eventually able to call 911 from the home's bathroom, where his cellphone was charging. While speaking to the dispatcher, DePape was gesturing and telling Pelosi to hang up, the filing said.

Pelosi then told the dispatcher that he did not need police, fire or medical assistance but he instead asked "for the Capitol Police because they are usually at the house protecting his wife."

Moments later the dispatcher heard him interacting with a man and Paul Pelosi said "Uh, he thinks everything's good. Uh, I've got a problem, but he thinks everything's good."

Two officers who raced to the home witnessed DePape hit Pelosi with the hammer at least once, striking him in the head, the filing states. Jenkins has said the assault was captured on the officers' body cameras.

Speaker Pelosi was in Washington at the time and under the protection of her security detail, which does not extend to family members. She quickly returned to San Francisco, where her husband was hospitalized and underwent surgery for a skull fracture and other injuries.

In Washington, U.S. Capitol Police Chief Tom Manger provided a sobering update Tuesday of security protocols for members of Congress.

Manger said that although many improvements have been made since the Capitol attack, including the hiring of nearly 280 officers by the end of this year, "there is still a lot of work to do."

"We believe today's political climate calls for more resources to provide additional layers of physical security for members of Congress," he said.

Manger said the attack on Pelosi's husband was "an alarming reminder of the dangerous threats elected officials and public figures face during today's contentious political climate."

Julie Powell, food writer of 'Julie & Julia,' dies at 49

By MARK KENNEDY AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Food writer Julie Powell, who became an internet darling after blogging for a year about making every recipe in Julia Child's "Mastering the Art of French Cooking," leading to a book deal and a film adaptation, has died. She was 49.

Powell died of cardiac arrest Oct. 26 at her home in upstate New York, The New York Times reported. Her death was confirmed by Judy Clain, Powell's email and editor in chief of Little, Brown.

"She was a brilliant writer and a daring, original person and she will not be forgotten," Clain said in a statement. "We are sending our deepest condolences to all who knew and loved Julie, whether personally or through the deep connections she forged with readers of her memoirs."

Powell's 2005 book "Julie & Julia: 365 Days, 524 Recipes, 1 Tiny Apartment Kitchen" became the hit, Nora Ephron-directed film "Julie & Julia," with the author portrayed in the movie by Amy Adams and Meryl Streep as Child.

Her sophomore and last effort — titled "Cleaving: A Story of Marriage, Meat and Obsession" — was a bit jarring in its honesty. Powell revealed she had an affair, the pain of loving two men at once, of her fondness for sadomasochism and even a bout of self-punishing sex with a stranger.

"People coming from the movie 'Julie & Julia' and picking up 'Cleaving' are going to be in for some emotional whiplash," she told The Associated Press in 2009. "I don't believe it's going to be a Nora Ephron

movie.”

Powell began her affair in 2004 as she was putting the finishing touches on her first book, a time she writes when she was “starry-eyed and vaguely discontented and had too much time on my hands.”

By 2006, she had landed an apprenticeship at a butcher shop two hours north of New York City, which offered an escape from her crumbling marriage and a place to explore her childhood curiosity with butchers.

“The way they held a knife in their hand was like an extension of themselves,” she said. “I’m a very clumsy person. I don’t play sports. That kind of physical skill is really foreign to me, and I’m really envious of that.”

The book explores the link between butchering and her own tortured romantic life. At one point, while cutting the connective tissue on a pig’s leg, she writes: “It’s sad, but a relief as well, to know that two things so closely bound together can separate with so little violence, leaving smooth surfaces instead of bloody shreds.”

Her book tapped into the growing interest in old school butchery and her experience slicing meat actually resulted in her eating less of it. She was an advocate for humanely raised and slaughtered animals.

“People want to get their hands dirty. People want to participate in the process. People want to know where their food is coming from,” Powell said. “People don’t want the mystery anymore.”

She is survived by her husband, Eric.

Supreme Court clears way for Graham testimony in Georgia

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Tuesday cleared the way for Sen. Lindsey Graham’s testimony in a Georgia investigation of possible illegal interference in the 2020 election by then-President Donald Trump and his allies in the state.

The court lifted a temporary hold on Graham’s appearance before a special grand jury, now scheduled for Nov. 17.

But in an unsigned order, the justices noted that Graham still could raise objections to some questions.

“Today, the Supreme Court confirmed that the Constitution’s Speech or Debate Clause applies here. They also affirmed that Senator Graham may return to the District Court if the District Attorney tries to ask questions about his constitutionally protected activities. The Senator’s legal team intends to engage with the District Attorney’s office on next steps to ensure respect for this constitutional immunity.”

The South Carolina senator, a top Trump ally, had argued that a provision of the Constitution, the speech and debate clause, shields him from being forced to testify at all.

Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis had told the justices that “the delay resulting from a stay would be unavoidably harmful” to the grand jury investigation.

Lower courts had rebuffed Graham’s plea for a pause while the legal case plays out.

Tuesday’s order dissolved a temporary hold that Justice Clarence Thomas had placed on the testimony while he and his colleagues weighed the arguments.

Graham’s legal team plans to reach out to Willis’ office about what happens next, according to a statement from the senator’s office.

Graham, a four-term senator who last won reelection in 2020, was first subpoenaed in July by Willis. The district attorney opened her investigation shortly after a recording of a January 2021 phone call between Trump and Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger was made public. In that call, Trump suggested Raffensperger could “find” the votes needed to overturn his narrow loss to Democrat Joe Biden.

Willis wants to question Graham about two phone calls he made to Raffensperger and his staff in the weeks after the election.

During those calls, Graham asked about “reexamining certain absentee ballots cast in Georgia in order to explore the possibility of a more favorable outcome for former President Donald Trump,” Willis wrote in a petition seeking to compel his testimony.

Graham also “made reference to allegations of widespread voter fraud in the November 2020 election in Georgia, consistent with public statements made by known affiliates of the Trump Campaign,” she wrote.

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She said in a hearing last month that Graham may be able to provide insight into the extent of any coordinated efforts to influence the results.

Raffensperger said he took Graham's question about absentee ballots as a suggestion to toss out legally cast votes. Graham has dismissed that interpretation as "ridiculous." Graham has also argued that the call was protected because he was asking questions to inform his decisions on voting to certify the 2020 election and future legislation.

Lower courts already have told Willis that she "may not ask about any investigatory conduct," which is protected under the Constitution.

The justices wrote Tuesday that their intervention is unnecessary because the courts "have held that Senator Graham may not be questioned about such activities."

He also can return to federal court if disputes arise over the questioning in front of the grand jury, the justices wrote.

Thomas initially dealt with Graham's appeal, but involved the rest of the court in Tuesday's order, as is customary.

But Thomas did not step aside from the case, and indeed he has participated in all the election-related disputes brought to the court by Trump and his allies, despite the involvement of the justice's wife, Virginia "Ginni" Thomas, in efforts to question Trump's defeat in 2020.

Ginni Thomas, a conservative activist and staunch Trump supporter, attended the Jan. 6 "Stop the Steal" rally on the Ellipse and wrote to then-White House chief of staff Mark Meadows in the weeks following the election, encouraging him to work to overturn President Joe Biden's victory and keep Trump in office.

She also contacted lawmakers in Arizona and Wisconsin in the weeks after the election, though no evidence has emerged that she contacted Georgia officials.

Ginni Thomas was recently interviewed by the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection, and she stood by the false claim that the 2020 election was fraudulent, despite the fact that numerous federal and local officials, a long list of courts, top former campaign staffers and even Trump's own attorney general have all said there is no evidence of mass fraud.

Brazil's Bolsonaro declines to concede, but OKs transition

By DIANE JEANTET and CARLA BRIDI Associated Press

BRASILIA, Brazil (AP) — Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro on Tuesday stopped short of conceding the election to leftist rival Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, instead using his first public comments since his defeat two days ago to thank his supporters and encourage their protests, as long as they remain peaceful.

Moments after the remarks, which lasted less than two minutes, the outgoing president's chief of staff, Ciro Nogueira, announced that Bolsonaro had authorized him to begin the process of handing over power.

The conservative leader, who before the election had repeatedly questioned the reliability of the country's electoral system, had little room for potentially rejecting the results. U.S. President Joe Biden and other international leaders have publicly recognized da Silva's victory, as have some of Bolsonaro's closest allies. And Cabinet members, governors-elect and evangelical leaders who have been strident supporters of Bolsonaro are now offering overtures to the incoming leftist government.

Bolsonaro lost Sunday's race by a thin margin, garnering 49.1% of the vote to da Silva's 50.9%, according to the nation's electoral authority. It was the tightest presidential race since Brazil's return to democracy in 1985, and marks the first time Bolsonaro has lost an election in his 34-year political career.

Flanked by more than a dozen ministers and allies as he delivered his short speech at the presidential residence, the fiery leader did not mention the election results, however. Instead, he defended his tenure.

"I have always been labeled as anti-democratic and, unlike my accusers, I have always played within the four lines of the constitution," he said.

Bolsonaro also thanked the 58 million people who voted for him and said he supports ongoing protests by truckers who have erected nationwide roadblocks, as long as they don't become violent.

"Current popular movements are the result of indignation and a feeling of injustice regarding how the

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electoral process occurred," he said.

The president's statement amounted to a "two-fold move," said Thomas Traumann, an independent political analyst.

"He didn't recognize his defeat, and sustains the suspense," Traumann said. "But as he wants to continue to dominate, to be the leader, he maintains the possibility of peaceful demonstrations."

Much like former U.S. President Donald Trump, whom Bolsonaro openly admires, the far-right incumbent has claimed that electronic voting machines are prone to fraud. He never provided any proof, even when ordered to do so by the electoral court.

Many of his supporters also said they believed the election had been fraudulent and some called for military intervention and for Congress and the Supreme Court to be disbanded.

Earlier Tuesday, the Brazilian Supreme Court ordered the federal highway police to immediately clear the roadblocks.

A majority of the court's justices backed the decision, which accuses the highway police of "omission and inertia." Failure to comply will mean its director could be fined up to 100,000 reais (more than \$19,000) per hour, be removed from his duties and even face arrest. Federal prosecutors in Sao Paulo and Goias states said they had opened investigations into the blockades.

Highway police said late Tuesday that they had removed 358 blockades, but more than 200 were still in place.

Earlier in Sao Paulo — Brazil's most populous state and largest economy — traffic jams around the international airport led to dozens of flight cancellations, with videos on social media showing travelers rolling their suitcases along the highway in the dark trying to catch their flights. The highways had been cleared by Tuesday morning, but airport officials said access remained difficult as traffic was still backed up in and out of the airport.

There, Dalmir Almeida, a 38-year-old protester, told The Associated Press that after completing three days of strikes, he and others will drive their trucks to the military barracks to ask for their support. "The army will be in our favor," he added.

At another road block in Sao Paulo state, protesters set tires on fire. Several demonstrators were wrapped in the Brazilian flag, which has been co-opted by the nation's conservative movement for demonstrations. Huge lines of cars could be seen snaking along the highway.

Concern about escalation grew as the country's leftist Landless Workers' Movement, a key ally of da Silva's that has long staged occupations of what it considers vacant or unused lands, asked its militants on Tuesday to organize demonstrations in several states to unblock roads.

Sao Paulo Gov. Rodrigo Garcia told a news conference that the time for negotiations was over, and he was not ruling out the use of force by law enforcement.

In Minas Gerais, a key battleground state in the election, a video on social media showed a protester telling a reporter from the O Tempo news outlet that the election was "fraudulent" and warned of future protests. "We want Bolsonaro in 2023 and for the years to come," he said.

In Itaboraí, a region in Rio de Janeiro state, an Associated Press reporter saw truck drivers kneeling in front of police officers and refusing to evacuate.

Users on social media, including in multiple Telegram and WhatsApp chat groups with names like "Paralysis," shared demands that the military take the streets, or that Congress and the Supreme Court be disbanded and the president remain in office.

Following the election, the electoral authority blocked two dozen Telegram groups that defended a military coup and called on their more than 150,000 followers to organize demonstrations, according to online news site UOL.

The Supreme Court's decision on Tuesday permits regular state police forces to reinforce federal highway police. The same was done in 2018, when an 11-day trucker strike brought Brazil to a halt.

Bolsonaro commands wide support from the police forces' rank and file, however, and it wasn't clear how effective their involvement would be.

The 2018 stoppage caused food prices to spike and left supermarket shelves without products as gas stations ran out of fuel. It caused billions in losses and revealed the vast power that truckers possess, particularly when they organize through social media platforms.

Bolsonaro, a lawmaker at the time and months away from winning that year's presidential election, was an outspoken supporter of the truckers, who are now among his constituents. This year, his administration limited interstate fuel taxes to help bring down prices and launched a financial aid program for truckers just months before the election.

In his speech Tuesday, Bolsonaro was "sending a message to his hardcore supporters to keep protesting," said Robert Muggah, co-founder of Igarapé Institute, a Rio de Janeiro-based think tank focused on security. "He's playing with fire: There's a real risk that prolonged unrest and police inaction could ignite simmering tensions."

Tribe seeks to adapt as climate change alters ancestral home

By TAMMY WEBBER and MARTHA IRVINE Associated Press

SANTA CLARA PUEBLO, N.M. (AP) — Raymond Naranjo sings for rain, his voice rising and falling as he softly strikes his rawhide-covered drum.

The 99-year-old invites the cloud spirits, rain children, mist, thunder and lightning to join him at Santa Clara Pueblo, where Tewa people have lived for thousands of years on land they call Kha'p'o Owingeh, the Valley of the Wild Roses.

"Without water, you don't live," says Naranjo's son Gilbert, explaining the rain dance song his father, a World War II veteran, has sung for decades — and with increasing urgency as the tribe fights for the survival of its ancestral home.

With unsettling speed, climate change has taken a toll on the the pueblo's 89 square miles (230 square kilometers) that climb from the gently rolling Rio Grande Valley to Santa Clara Canyon in the rugged Jemez Mountains of northern New Mexico.

Hotter temperatures and drier conditions, exacerbated by global warming, have made their forests a tinderbox, shrunk waterways and parched pastures and gardens, threatening a way of life tied to land, water and animals they pray for daily and celebrate through stories, songs and dances passed down through the ages.

Elders in the tribe of about 1,350 remember dense forests of fir, pine, spruce and aspen. A creek cascading through a series of ponds in the canyon. A valley of sage and juniper with shady cottonwood galleries and gardens along a creek and river.

They hunted deer and elk, gathered firewood and medicinal and ceremonial plants and dug clay to make the shiny black and redware pottery pueblo artisans are renowned for. Fields irrigated by the creek and the Rio Grande bore a bounty of corn, beans, squash and chiles.

But three large wildfires in 13 years burned more than 80% of the tribe's forested land. The last one, the 2011 Las Conchas fire — then the largest in New Mexico history — burned so hot it hardened the ground like concrete.

And in a cruel twist two months later, it took just a quarter-inch of rain to unleash the first of several devastating flash floods, scouring charred slopes and sending tree trunks, boulders and vast quantities of sediment surging through the pueblo. It buried sections of a Santa Clara Canyon road 50 feet (15 meters) deep, blew out earthen dams and drained ponds where the tribe planned to reintroduce native trout. It decimated habitat for beavers, bears, elk, mule deer and eagles.

In the valley, flash floods still fill irrigation ditches with sediment and ruin crops planted near the creek. And now tribal farmers who for centuries freely diverted water from the Rio Grande can only do so on designated days because the river has been critically low. Hotter temperatures and stronger winds dry the soil quickly, rain is unpredictable, snowfall is scarce.

People here in the high desert are familiar with drought. About 500 years ago, the tribe moved from the pueblo's cliff dwellings — called Puye, or "where the rabbits gather" — to the Rio Grande Valley after

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drought dried up a stream and made dryland farming difficult.

But the megadrought now gripping the West and Southwest, the worst in 1,200 years, makes the future less certain.

"How do you prepare ... with so many unknowns?" says Santa Clara Pueblo Gov. J. Michael Chavarria. "Where do we go? We have nowhere else to go."

So the people are trying to adapt by returning to their roots: embracing natural methods to restore their watershed and make the forests more resilient, growing trees and crops from native seeds that evolved to withstand drought. But they're also willing to embrace new ways if that helps them stay.

Their connection to this place and the future of their people is too important to do otherwise, Chavarria says. "We can't just pack up our bags and leave."

ROAD TO RESTORATION

Garrett Altmann peers into the woody debris, looking for conifer seedlings planted last fall along Santa Clara Creek. Only a third have survived.

But as he keeps walking, Altmann is surprised to find fir and spruce seedlings sprouting naturally in a previously burned area. Though just an inch high, they represent an ecological victory, says Altmann, a geographic information systems coordinator and project manager with the tribe's forestry department.

About 60% of the more than 2 million trees planted in the past 20 years, from seeds collected on the pueblo, have died. And some areas, especially unshaded south-facing slopes, may never again support trees in a hotter, drier world.

So to see some sprouting on their own is "like the apex of restoration," says Altmann, who has crews place logs and scatter tree branches to stop erosion and build up soil. "Knowing that you're doing something that nature will be able to propagate from, it just makes me happy."

The tribe hopes to restore and even reengineer the canyon by combining scientific and native knowledge and using natural materials: rocks to slow water, bend waterways and create ponds and floodwater diversions; tree roots and debris to create habitats, enrich the soil and shade seedlings and Santa Clara Creek.

"My goal for this watershed is to build it back better than it was before," says Altmann, who is not a tribal member.

That's a difficult but important target, tribal officials say — not just to protect the canyon and prevent runoff that could threaten the village, but also to ease the tribe's collective grief and restore some of what's been lost: family hunting and camping trips, pilgrimages to ancient sites so sacred they're kept secret from outsiders.

Some elders weep when they see treeless slopes, deeply eroded stream banks and burned out cabins, says Daniel Denipah, the tribe's forestry director.

"They say, 'This just doesn't look like the same place,'" he says. "It breaks your heart."

They also worry a generation of children — many who've never seen the canyon — will lose an important connection to their culture, including songs that identify special places and give thanks to the animals, plants and life itself.

So the forestry department enlists schoolkids to help plant trees and grass plugs and build rock dams to forge a bond with the land. That's what motivates Denipah, who says it could take more than 100 years for the tribe's beloved forests to regrow.

"I'm going to ... try my hardest to put things back the way they were and to keep this culture alive," says Denipah. "That's what's important to me — trying to give that back to the people."

HOPE AND FEAR

Signs of renewal are everywhere.

A carpet of green, including wild onions and currants, spreads beneath blackened trees. Bulrushes hug the streambanks. Young aspens are coloring an area where conifers burned. Bluebirds flit about a meadow of mullein and wild roses.

A bear and two cubs wade in Santa Clara Creek, disappearing into a thicket when Altmann stops his truck. A pair of eagles soars overhead as squirrels dart between logs. Deer, turkey and bobcats also are

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returning.

But there still is much to do — and much uncertainty — even after about \$100 million in federal disaster aid and other funding was spent for emergency response and to rebuild a temporary canyon road, widen bridges, erect steel mesh barriers to catch debris sliding from ravines, and to dig ash and sediment from ponds and the creek.

It could cost almost \$200 million more to rebuild a permanent road in the canyon and build dams to restore the ponds, where the tribe wants to reintroduce a pure strain of native cutthroat trout, pueblo officials say.

But they believe they can spend less and accomplish more with their nature-based approach to restoration, while recognizing limitations in a warmer climate.

For example, the tribe will be strategic about where it replants trees, choosing the most promising sites and leaving space between future forest stands. They'll revive prescribed burns — an ancient practice long discouraged by state and federal agencies — to keep forests from again becoming overgrown, which made them susceptible to drought, insects and disease.

Still, people here fear climate change could outpace recovery, that another large wildfire could undo years of progress.

"I want to be hopeful. But the way things are going now, I don't know," says Eugene "Hutch" Naranjo, 63, who had hoped to share his childhood experiences — hunting, fishing, camping — with his grandchildren.

He recalls his grandfather's advice from more than a half century ago: Remember how the canyon looks so you can tell your kids and grandkids, "because things are changing and I don't know if (they) will ever see things the way you see them now."

FEAST OR FAMINE

Hutch and Norma Naranjo bend over rows of chiles tucked among drying corn stalks, filling baskets to roast and preserve or mill into powder.

Normally they'd be harvesting the corn, but it ripened a month earlier, in August, after a long dry spell was quenched by unexpectedly heavy and prolonged rains. They scrambled to get the crop in before it rotted or became too hard, then roasted and dried the kernels, a staple of the Tewa diet.

Farming is now "a guessing game," says Hutch, lifting a load of chiles into his pickup truck. He and Norma also grow alfalfa, beans, squash, sweet peas and watermelon, raise cattle and pasture horses on Santa Clara land inherited from Hutch's grandfather.

Dozens of families once farmed on ancestral plots, enabling the pueblo to be so self-sufficient, they say, that they barely noticed the Great Depression, didn't worry about grocery shopping.

But sustaining that life is increasingly difficult.

"Fields just aren't producing like they used to," says Gilbert Naranjo — no relation to Hutch — who's in charge of plowing farmers' fields. He says some people now buy starter plants because it can be difficult to get seeds to germinate.

This year, many farmers — including him — didn't bother planting after losing much of last year's crop to winds and a late-summer frost. Of the 15 or so who did, some lost crops again when it didn't rain for more than 2 1/2 months, after unusually heavy monsoon rains in July and August, or when elk that used to stay in the canyon raided their fields.

"Man, this weather is strange," says Naranjo, who had someone else grow chiles for him this summer. "It has really changed."

Farmers say there are more days when the temperature surpasses 90 and 100 degrees (32 and 38 Celsius), including in typically mild autumn. The wind blows harder, drying soil and flattening crops. And mountain snowpack that once melted in spring, filling waterways and recharging aquifers, is increasingly scarce.

Norma Naranjo says their grandfathers used to tell them not to plant until the snow disappeared from the peaks. She tries to recall the last time it stayed all winter.

"Years. It's been years," Hutch says.

A recent National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration assessment for New Mexico projects there will be even less mountain snowpack in the future, along with more intense heat waves and droughts that could lead to more wildfires and dust storms.

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The changes over the past 30 years already contribute to both drought and extreme weather events, says hydrologist Andrew Mangham, from the National Weather Service in Albuquerque.

The summer monsoons, for example, are more erratic. "It's becoming very, very feast or famine," Mangham says. "We either have no rain or we get 5 inches at once or 8 inches at once."

WATER WORRIES

Tribal members say rainfall can be bittersweet — they need it for their crops but it also can wreak havoc. Former Santa Clara Gov. Walter Dasheno was hoping for a decent corn harvest after rains started. But in late July, sediment from the canyon destroyed his irrigation system, which connects to Santa Clara Creek, during a flash flood, then weeds grew so high and thick that he couldn't get to surviving crops.

But that same rain helped boost Hutch and Norma Naranjo's crops. They irrigate from the Rio Grande and had worried they might lose some crops because the river was low and irrigation sporadic.

Irrigation ditches now are only about a quarter full. The forestry department cuts down elm trees and invasive salt cedar and Russian olive trees because they compete for water. Meanwhile, stands of native cottonwoods that thrived along the Rio Grande are dying because they require periodic floods.

Still, water security feels precarious, and they worry whether groundwater, which supplies pueblo homes, will continue to recharge quickly enough amid drought and lack of snowfall.

Denipah, the forestry director, says the tribe is hoping to lower the banks of the Rio Grande in some places to recreate historical wetlands and help recharge surface and groundwater.

Dasheno, who's on a pueblo water rights committee, says he wants to make irrigation more reliable to encourage people to resume farming, perhaps by drilling a solar-powered well, rerouting a ditch to improve access to the creek or finding a way to store water from Santa Clara Creek.

All ideas are on the table, Gov. Chavarria says, because water "is going to be more valuable than gold." "If you don't have good water to irrigate your crops ... what happens to them? They die off," he says. "So if we don't have a good water source, good quality of water, we may die off as well."

NATIVE WAYS

Hutch Naranjo believes he has another answer to drought. He pulls back a tarp to show wire racks of drying corn — a native variety passed down to him by his grandfather, who got the seeds from his own father.

This is one key, Naranjo believes, to his successful harvest when so many others failed.

"The seed over the years has learned how to grow even in times when we don't have any water; it still grows and it still produces," he says. "I think a lot has to do with the prayers that we have ... for our crops."

But Naranjo worries store-bought hybrid corn planted by others will cross pollinate with his, making it more difficult to pass on the native, hardy strains to his grandchildren.

He shares his seeds and harvest with others from the pueblo because his grandfather instilled in him, "Corn is life."

The dried kernels — chicos — are used in stews and puddings. It's ground into meal for bread. It's used in songs and dances, and is the basis of many Tewa prayers.

"One of the things that he would say (is) 'Don't be stingy with what you grow. Give it away so that people will be nourished,'" Naranjo says.

He also credits his success to other native growing traditions: rotating crops, planting sweet peas to restore soil nitrogen and putting cattle into his corn fields after harvest to help with fertilization.

He and Norma also are teaching their grandchildren to farm, and they're involved from sowing to roasting.

Pueblo elders say ancestral knowledge is key for future generations to develop a strong cultural and spiritual sense of self, a connection to this ancient place so they have a fighting chance to preserve their way of life.

"As caretakers of this world, of ... Mother Earth, we need to learn how to preserve, how to cherish, how to respect the mother, the water, the land, the mountains, the trees, the animals, everything in it," says Gilbert Naranjo, who calls his jar of native seeds "my wealth," and is teaching his 5-year-old grandson traditional Tewa customs and songs centered on nature.

"That's our mission. To take care of it, not to destroy it."

Ships sail after Russia exits grain deal, but future in flux

By COURTNEY BONNELL Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Ships loaded with grain departed Ukraine on Tuesday despite Russia suspending its participation in a U.N.-brokered deal that ensures safe wartime passage of critical food supplies meant for parts of the world struggling with hunger. But the United Nations said vessels would not move Wednesday, raising concerns about future shipments.

Three ships carrying 84,490 metric tons of corn, wheat and sunflower meal left Ukraine through a humanitarian sea corridor set up in July, while 36 other vessels cleared inspections near Turkey to head to their final destinations, the U.N. said. The corridor, brokered by Turkey and U.N., was seen as a breakthrough to ensure Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia would receive grain and other food from the Black Sea region during Russia's war in Ukraine.

Russia cited allegations of a Ukrainian drone attack against its Black Sea fleet in announcing over the weekend that it was suspending its part in the grain deal. The Russian Defense Ministry said Monday that ship traffic from ports in southern Ukraine was halted, calling the movement "unacceptable."

But a total of 14 ships sailed that day, including one chartered by the U.N. World Food Program to bring wheat to Ethiopia, which along with neighboring Somalia and Kenya, is badly affected by the worst drought in decades. The U.N. has warned that parts of Somalia are facing famine. Thousands of people have died there.

Despite grain-laden ships leaving Ukraine this week, the U.N. announced that such vessels would not travel Wednesday, raising fears about the future of the initiative. Amir Abdulla, the agreement's U.N. coordinator, later tweeted that "we expect loaded ships to sail on Thursday."

But it was unclear what would happen later this week. Ukraine, Turkey and the U.N. have carried out vessel inspections without Russia, allowing some shipments to continue, in what the international body called "a temporary and extraordinary measure."

The U.N. operation had been prioritizing a large backlog of ships waiting for checks off Istanbul, said Munro Anderson, head of intelligence of the risk consultancy Dryad Global.

After suspending its participation, "it is likely that Russia will use this as a tool of negotiation to secure what it needs from the deal," Anderson said. "We know that Russia has been looking to export fertilizer products and to seek a sanctions reprieve on those so it can do so effectively."

While Western sanctions on Russia don't affect its grain exports and a parallel wartime deal was meant to clear the way for the country's food and fertilizer shipments, some shipping and insurance companies have been wary of running afoul of the penalties or want to avoid doing business with Moscow.

Russian President Vladimir Putin pointed to the fertilizer issue in a call Tuesday with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, saying Russia's agricultural exports still were not unblocked. Putin also said resuming the grain deal would require an investigation into the attack on Russia's Black Sea fleet, according to a Kremlin readout of the call.

Erdogan told Putin "that if they solve the grain crisis through a constructive approach, they will (also) encourage steps toward a return to negotiations" to end the war in Ukraine, according to the Turkish president's office.

The July 22 deal to spur exports of grain and fertilizer was a response to skyrocketing food prices as a result of slashed supplies from two major producers following Russia's Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine. The U.N. said that as of Tuesday, more than 9.7 million metric tons of grain and other food has been shipped from three Ukrainian ports on the Black Sea.

Analysts say Russia still is bound by the terms of the grain deal it signed, which include a commitment not to target civilian vessels taking part in the initiative. Such an attack also would violate international law.

"Although it is not currently participating in that deal, it is still a signatory to it. Russia's interests are not going to be served in any way, shape or form by attacking vessels and groups in the international community," Anderson said.

He added that Russia's primary concern is likely that vessels might be going unchecked and could be

used to bring in weapons. That is why the grain deal established a Joint Coordination Center in Istanbul to coordinate checks between the warring nations, Turkey and the U.N.

Russia has announced plans to conduct its own inspections of ships that have already cleared the joint checks in Istanbul, but further details were not known.

Ukrainians grapple with power outages as winter approaches

By SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — The decorative candles Yaroslav Vedmid bought more than a year ago were never meant to be lit, but the dried wax that now clings to them attests to how they've been used almost nightly — a consequence of power cuts across Ukraine.

Seated at the dinner table with his wife in a village on the outskirts of the capital, Kyiv, the two can't count the number of times they've eaten in the dark since Russian attacks triggered the blackouts beginning in early October. Moscow has openly declared its intention to target the country's energy infrastructure and drive the nation into the cold.

"When you're relying on electricity, the worst thing is that you can't plan ... Psychologically it's very uncomfortable," said Vedmid, a 44-year-old business owner in Bilohorodka. The cuts are getting longer — nearly 12 hours of outages a day, he said.

So far, Russia has destroyed about 40% of Ukraine's energy infrastructure, affecting 16 regions, according to the Ukrainian government.

The latest assault came Monday, when a massive barrage of Russian cruise missile and drone strikes hit Kyiv, Kharkiv and other cities, knocking out water and power supplies in apparent retaliation for what Moscow alleged was a Ukrainian attack on its Black Sea fleet.

In Kyiv, some 80% of consumers in the city of 3 million were left without water because of damage to a power facility Monday. By Tuesday, water was fully restored as well as some power. Kyiv region governor, Oleksiy Kuleba said that 20,000 apartments in the region remained without power.

The unpredictable rolling blackouts are increasing as the government scrambles to stabilize the energy grid and repair the system ahead of winter. The cuts add another layer of angst and uncertainty to a population already struggling with the stress of nearly nine months of war.

To try to ease people's burdens, energy companies are publishing daily schedules of when neighborhoods won't have power. But it's not consistent, especially as strikes intensify. Last week a power station in the central region was damaged, causing an emergency shutdown and prompting the government to warn citizens of tougher and longer outages.

"Unfortunately, the destruction and damage are serious," Kyiv region Gov. Oleksiy Kuleba said in a Telegram post. "It is necessary to prepare for emergency power outages for an indefinite period," he said.

Across the capital, residents are stocking up on heaters, blankets, warm clothing and power banks to charge electronics. While most say they're willing to bear the brunt of the blackouts for the sake of the war, the frequency and fluidity of the outages are taxing.

Starting Tuesday, the government plans to change the schedule of the Kyiv subway to include longer wait times to save energy.

On the day that The Associated Press visited Vedmid's house in October, there was an unscheduled five-hour power outage and then a scheduled one during dinner.

Every time the power shuts off, the family loses internet service. Because the village also has a weak phone network, the household is often unable to communicate with others.

Staring at his mobile phone, Vedmid shrugs. Google Maps isn't working, and he doesn't know how long it will take to reach the train station for a planned trip with his wife to the country.

But what concerns him most are the months ahead when temperatures could drop to minus 20 degrees Celsius (minus 4 degrees Fahrenheit). "My major fears are for (the) cold part of season, for winter, because right now it influences our comfort but doesn't threaten our lives," he said.

The family has ordered a generator, which should be installed by December, but demand has spiked

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and not everyone can afford to buy one or the fuel to run it. Diesel has doubled in price since the start of the war, local residents said.

Still, some have found a silver lining to the shutdowns. Vedmid's wife, Olena, said she reads more books rather than constantly refreshing the internet to see the latest war developments. It helps her feel less anxious.

If not for Russia's incessant shelling and the lack of repair equipment, much of which must be imported, the damage could be restored within weeks, energy experts said.

"The main danger is repeated missile attacks," said professor Gennadii Riabtsev, chief researcher on energy security at the National Institute for Strategic Studies. Residents of cities near the front lines, such as Mykolaiv, Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv, will suffer the most from the outages, he said.

DTEK, Ukraine's main energy company, said it has run out of equipment for repairs. The cost of the equipment runs into the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Russia is likely to continue the war into the winter, hoping to weaken Western support for Ukraine and "freeze Europe into surrender," according to a report issued this week by the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank.

Residents near the front lines say they are bracing for conditions to get worse.

Mariia Chupinina was dealing with blackouts in Kharkiv even before the rolling outages began in the region this week. The woman who fosters orphaned children lives on the fifth floor of an apartment building and takes care of four babies who are less than 12 months old. When there's no electricity, it's impossible to heat the apartment, and every time they leave, they have to walk down five flights of stairs in the dark, she told the AP by phone.

If Chupinina forgets to plan ahead, the babies won't have anything to eat. "If you have not prepared, you don't have time to fill the Thermos, and there's no warm water or formula," she said.

'Blockbuster' is a workplace comedy about people connecting

By ALICIA RANCILIO Associated Press

Actors are accustomed to change, always beginning and ending new projects in various locations with new people. But for Melissa Fumero, who starred in "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" for eight seasons, taking on a new role in the Netflix series "Blockbuster" was anxiety-inducing.

"I told myself 'Look, that kind of magic doesn't happen again. You had your one unicorn in your career. It's probably never going to be that good again,'" Fumero said in a recent interview. Those jitters went away when co-star Randall Park and the rest of the cast assembled to film the 10-episode show about the employees of the sole surviving Blockbuster video store.

"I met this cast and met Randall, and we started all working together, and it was literally the same magic unicorn again. I can't believe it."

Park — best known for the ABC comedy "Fresh off The Boat" which aired for six seasons — plays Timmy, the proud manager of a Blockbuster store in a small town in Michigan. Quickly into the first episode he gets word that all remaining Blockbusters will be shut down effective immediately, corporate's office is being turned into a WeWork, but Timmy's Blockbuster can remain open because it still generates a small amount of business. He becomes the de facto owner of the last Blockbuster in the world. (The actual last remaining Blockbuster is in Bend, Ore.)

Timmy loves his job, his coworkers, and connecting with the people who come to his store. In the pilot episode, as Timmy chats with a customer who hasn't rented a movie in a while, he says, "What's it been? Three years this March?" The customer breaks it to him that he's been using Netflix, but ends up renting "Under the Tuscan Sun" on Timmy's recommendation to help get through a breakup.

Timmy's genuine belief is that the in-person exchange of renting a movie, or just leaving the house to visit any brick-and-mortar store, is valuable because human beings need socialization. His employees (played by actors including Madeleine Arthur, Olga Merediz and Tyler Alvarez) don't exactly match his conviction, but they'll go along with his lofty ideas to bring attention to the store — and to keep working.

"Timmy is the same kind of boss I would be, I think. Which is not necessarily a good thing," said Park. "The problem with Timmy and the problem with me, is this deep desire to be liked. ... He puts out a lot of positivity and a lot of love. That's what really speaks to me about the character. But his need to be liked gets him in trouble often."

Vanessa Ramos, "Blockbuster" creator and showrunner, says when she was coming up with its characters Park is who she had in mind all along for Timmy.

"In my original pitch, Timmy was described as 'a Randall Park-type,' and that was because they're like, 'there's no way we can get Randall Park.'" Enter Netflix, which suggested sending it to Park and seeing what happened.

"He read it and was in. In my brain I was like, 'OK, this is as good as it going to get. Like, I've really lucked out here,'" said Ramos.

That good fortune continued when her pal and former colleague Fumero, whom she wrote for on "Brooklyn Nine-Nine," became available. Fumero plays Eliza, a down on her luck Blockbuster employee who previously worked with Timmy at the store when they were in high school and he's had a secret crush on her ever since. Eliza went to Harvard — for a semester — but dropped out because she got pregnant. She married, had a baby and is now separated from her husband whom she caught on a date with another woman in the Costco cafe.

"The thing about Eliza that I was really drawn to was this woman who things didn't go exactly the way she thought they would," said Fumero. "We're catching her at this moment in her life where she's figuring out what's next and who she is after she's already raised a kid."

Timmy and Eliza have a classic will they/won't they running storyline which the actors say they enjoy.

"Everyone loves a romance," said Park. "The fact that these two characters also had a history before, makes it so special and different and complicated and all those things. I'm very invested."

Fumero says "Blockbuster," like "Brooklyn Nine-Nine," is a workplace comedy where employees become family and in some ways know each other better than family.

"No matter what industry you work in are these little dysfunctional families that exist everywhere and these people that you spend all these hours with every day and it's a part of everyone's life."

Families unleash grief and anger on Parkland school shooter

By TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Families of the 17 children and staff members Parkland school shooter Nikolas Cruz murdered cursed him to hell, wished him a painful death and called him a coward Tuesday as they got their one chance to address him directly before he is sentenced to life in prison.

For hours, parents, wives, siblings, children and some of the 17 Cruz also wounded at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on Valentine's Day 2018 stood 20 feet (6 meters) from him. They looked the shackled killer in the eye and gave vehement, angry and sometimes tearful statements.

Most decried that his jury voted 9-3 for death but did not reach the unanimity required under state law for that sentence to be imposed.

Cruz, 24, stared back at them, dressed in a bright red jail jumpsuit, showing no emotion behind a COVID-19 face mask. The two-day hearing will conclude Wednesday when Circuit Judge Elizabeth Scherer formally sentences him to life without parole.

"This creature has no redeemable value," said Max Schachter, whose 14-year-old son Alex died when he was shot through a classroom window. Speaking at Cruz but refusing to say his name, he said he hopes "other prisoners you will encounter in your new life will inflict that pain upon you, hopefully 17 times over again, until you are screaming for mercy, just like your victims."

Schachter said that it was his birthday and that when he blew out his cake's candles Tuesday night, he would wish Cruz a painful death — and would every year until it happens.

Some of the families verbally attacked Cruz's public defenders, accusing them of misleading the jurors who voted for a life sentence into believing his birth mother's excessive drinking had left him brain dam-

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aged and unable to control himself. Some hoped that their consciences would haunt them forever and would experience the pain they have felt, with at least one parent mentioning the attorneys' children.

"The legal system should protect and impart justice, justice, justice," Patricia Oliver said, leaning over the lectern toward the defense attorneys and accusing them of "shameful, despicable behavior." Cruz wounded her 17-year-old son Joaquin in the leg and then tracked him into a bathroom alcove. There, Cruz fatally shot her son in the head with his AR-15-style semiautomatic rifle as he raised his hand to protect himself.

"If this, the worst mass shooting to go to trial, does not deserve the death penalty, what does?" she said.

Nine other U.S. gunmen who killed at least 17 people took their own lives or were killed by police. The suspect in the 2019 deaths of 23 people at a Walmart in Texas is awaiting trial.

Lead defense attorney Melisa McNeill eventually asked Judge Scherer to stop the families from attacking her and her colleagues directly, saying they had worked within the parameters of Cruz's constitutional rights in defending him.

"I did my job, and every member of this team did our job, and we should not personally be attacked for that, nor should our children," McNeill said, drawing a murmur from where the families sat.

Prosecutor Carolyn McCann told Scherer that the victims have the right under state law and the Constitution to "express themselves and be heard."

When McNeill tried to respond to McCann, telling the judge she knew the parents were violating court decorum, Scherer stopped her. The two have had a testy and sometimes hostile relationship since pretrial hearings.

"Stop suggesting that I know that something is improper," Scherer said, saying she had heard enough. She took no action against the families.

The argument resumed after lunch, with Scherer yelling at and ejecting one of McNeill's assistants. The assistant had asserted that the judge would be more concerned about the statements if the parents had mentioned Scherer's own children.

Cruz's attorneys say he is not expected to speak. He apologized in court last year after pleading guilty to the murders and attempted murders, but families told reporters they found the apology aimed at garnering sympathy. He fired 140 shots during his seven-minute attack, which he had planned for seven months.

That plea set the stage for a three-month penalty trial that ended Oct. 13 with the jury failing to reach unanimity. Jurors said those voting for life believed Cruz is mentally ill and should be spared.

That led to the current hearing and the raw emotions expressed by the families and surviving victims. This is just some of what they said to Cruz:

— "You stole him from us, and you did not receive the justice that you deserved," said Debra Hixon, whose husband, athletic director Chris Hixon, died running at Cruz to stop him. Cruz shot him again after he fell wounded to the ground. "You'll be sent to jail, you'll begin your punishment, you'll be a number, and for me you will cease to exist."

— "We hope that you, the monster who did this to our son, endure a painful existence in your remaining days," said Eric Wikander, the father of student Ben Wikander, who has undergone seven surgeries to repair his wounds.

— "Because of you, I check for all exits wherever I am," said teacher Stacey Lippel, who was wounded. "Because of you, I think of the worst-case scenario for myself and my family. Because of you, I will never feel safe again. I have no forgiveness in my heart for you."

As housing prices surge, rent control is back on the ballot

By JANIE HAR and MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Liberty McCoy was out Saturday urging voters to pass a Nov. 8 ballot measure to limit rent increases in Pasadena because she's afraid she'll be priced out of the city where she grew up and where her aging parents live.

The librarian and her husband, a freelance consultant, received notice of a \$100 monthly rent increase last year and another for \$150 this year, bringing the rent on their home outside Los Angeles to \$2,350 a

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month. They can absorb the increases for now — but not forever.

"A lot of times people are like, 'Well, just try and pick up and move to someplace cheaper,'" the 44-year-old said. "But I have a job locally, my family, my friends. It would be a big challenge to uproot my entire life chasing cheaper rent."

With rental prices skyrocketing and affordable housing in short supply, inflation-weary tenants in cities and counties across the country are turning to the ballot box for relief. Supporters say rent control policies on the Nov. 8 ballot are the best short-term option to dampen rising rents and ensure vulnerable residents remain housed.

Opponents, led by the real-estate industry, say rent control will lead to higher prices for tenants in housing not covered by rent caps, harm mom-and-pop landlords relying on rental income for retirement, and discourage the construction of badly needed affordable housing. They have spent heavily to stop ballot initiatives, even going to court to halt them.

In Orange County, Florida, home to Disney World and other theme parks, voters will consider a ballot initiative to limit rent increases to the annual increase in the consumer price index. But a court ruling last week means that even if it passes, it could be nullified.

Proponents in Orlando and other Orange County cities point to a population that has increased 25% since 2010 and rents that jumped 25% between 2020 and 2021 — and experienced another double-digit increase this year. The housing shortage was magnified by Hurricane Ian, with an estimated 1,140 rental properties suffering \$44.5 million in damage.

"I've had a lot of constituents reach out to me, and they are fearful of becoming homeless. They don't know what to do," said Orange County Commissioner Emily Bonilla, who authored the ballot initiative ordinance after hearing from tenants facing rent increases upwards of 100%.

Last year, voters in St. Paul, Minnesota, passed a ballot measure capping rents at 3% a year while residents across the river in Minneapolis backed a measure allowing the city council to enact a rent control ordinance.

This summer, Kingston, New York, became the first upstate city to enact rent control. The measure means around 1,200 units — buildings built before 1974 with six or more units — must limit rents to a percentage set by a rent guidelines board.

Boston's Mayor Michelle Wu was elected last year and made bringing back rent control to the city part of her campaign. The biggest hurdle to that proposal is that Massachusetts voters narrowly approved a 1994 ballot question banning rent control statewide.

"Rent stabilization can provide protections for everyone, but do so in a way that really targets benefits to low-income renters, renters of color, renters who are most desperately impacted by housing instability," said Tram Hoang, a housing policy expert who was involved in the St. Paul campaign.

The fight over rent control has been most intense out West, where in 2019, lawmakers in California and Oregon approved statewide caps on annual rent increases. California's annual cap cannot exceed 10% and Oregon's is set at 7%, plus the consumer price index.

Both laws exempt new construction for 15 years, a compromise to encourage developers to keep building, and apply only to certain units.

But that hasn't quelled tenant activism in California, where nearly half the state's 40 million residents are renters. Advocates say the statewide law — which expires in 2030 — does not go far enough.

Voters in the San Francisco suburb of Richmond and Southern California beachside city of Santa Monica will consider measures to further tighten existing rent caps to a maximum of 3%.

In the city of Pasadena — home to the annual Rose Parade and Rose Bowl college football game — voters will consider a measure to create a rent oversight board and limit rent increases to 75% of the consumer price index, which supporters say translates to 2% to 3% a year.

Rent stabilization advocates failed to collect enough signatures to qualify for the 2018 ballot, and they thought it would be hard this time around because the state had enacted protections. But campaign field director Bee Rooney said tenants financially wrecked by the pandemic were eager to back the initiative.

"Any amount when you're not expecting it is a lot," Rooney said. "Some people, their rent doubled or

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went up by 50%.”

Pasadena retiree Paulette Brown received the state-allowed increase of 10% in July, bringing the rent on her two-bedroom apartment to \$1,175 a month. Budgeting will be tighter.

“I really can’t afford any mishaps, because I’m not able to save anything,” said the 64-year-old Brown, who lives with her daughter and grandson.

Opponents of the measure, which include the national and state realtors associations, say curtailing rent increases to a fraction of inflation will result in property owners taking rentals off the market and doing minimal maintenance.

“What’s being proposed here is draconian and for the most part landlords who have good tenants aren’t trying to get rid of them,” said Paul Little, president and CEO of the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce.

Michael Wilkerson, senior economist at Portland, Oregon-based ECONorthwest, describes both the California and Oregon state laws as “anti-price gouging” measures aimed at protecting the most vulnerable tenants from exorbitant increases, while encouraging new housing development.

Rent-control policies have been around for decades, put in place after World War II in New York City and elsewhere to combat rising housing prices and again in the 1970s in the Northeast and California. However, the real-estate industry has since succeeded in passing state laws that made it difficult, if not impossible, for many local municipalities to cap rents.

The data on rent control has been mixed. The policy, according to an Urban Institute report, was found to have reduced rent on covered units in Cambridge, Massachusetts, San Francisco and New York but resulted in no significant decreases in New Jersey cities.

Some studies, however, have shown that rent control can reduce the number of housing units available and discourage landlords from maintaining them.

Opponents also say rent regulation can scare off developers. St. Paul’s original ordinance, for example, applied to almost all housing and mandated landlords stick to the 3% cap even with new tenants.

Within weeks, council members were hearing from developers who blamed the new law for scuttling housing projects because they lost funding. Building permits issued for new housing through August plummeted 31% from the four-year average.

In response, the city council approved amendments in September to exempt low-income housing as well as new construction for 20 years. It also allows landlords to raise rents 8% plus the consumer price index after a tenant moves out.

Orange County’s ballot measure is up in the air after an appeals court rejected the proposal last week and suggested it won’t be certified even if voters approve it.

The court, which acknowledged the state law “set an extremely high bar” for local governments to pass rent control ordinances, said a consultant hired by the county didn’t identify a housing emergency — a requirement under a 1977 state law preempting local rent control.

The county plans to file a motion for a rehearing and with ballots already out, the Orange County Supervisor of Elections said it has no plans to issue new ones. Supporters of the measure said they will keep campaigning.

For tenants like Jessy Correa, the setback means she faces a 20% rent increase on her three-bedroom apartment in Orlando come January. The 44-year-old mother of six is already struggling to afford the current rent of \$2,300.

A recruiter at a faith-based nonprofit, she was hoping the ballot initiative would “bring stability, give us a moment to breathe.” Instead, she is now forced to make difficult choices, like getting another job.

“Where is the American dream of being able to live, to enjoy?” she asked tearfully after learning of the court ruling. “What are we doing? It’s frustrating.”

China fishing fleet defied U.S. in standoff on the high seas

By JOSHUA GOODMAN Associated Press

This summer, as China fired missiles into the sea off Taiwan to protest House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s

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visit to the island, a much different kind of geopolitical standoff was taking shape in another corner of the Pacific Ocean.

Thousands of miles away, a heavily-armed U.S. Coast Guard cutter sailed up to a fleet of a few hundred Chinese squid-fishing boats not far from Ecuador's Galapagos Islands. Its mission: inspect the vessels for any signs of illegal, unreported or unregulated fishing.

Boarding ships on the high seas is a perfectly legal if little-used tool available to any sea power as part of the collective effort to protect the oceans' threatened fish stocks.

But in this case, the Chinese captains of several fishing boats did something unexpected. Three vessels sped away, one turning aggressively 90 degrees toward the Coast Guard cutter James, forcing the American vessel to take evasive action to avoid being rammed.

"For the most part they wanted to avoid us," said Coast Guard Lt. Hunter Stowes, the highest-ranking law enforcement officer on the James. "But we were able to maneuver effectively so that we were safe the entire time."

Still, the high-seas confrontation represented a potentially dangerous breach of international maritime protocol, one the U.S. sees as a troubling precedent since it happened on the Coast Guard's first-ever mission to counter illegal fishing in the eastern Pacific.

The Associated Press reconstructed details of the never-before-reported incident from the Coast Guard and six U.S. non-military officials who spoke of the operation in greater detail but requested anonymity to avoid jeopardizing a multilateral process seeking to force China to sanction the vessels. While diplomats in China accused the Americans of acting improperly, they didn't provide their own detailed account.

The Coast Guard's unprecedented voyage was prompted by growing alarm from activists and governments in Latin America over the activities of China's distant water fishing fleet, the world's largest. Since 2009, the number of Chinese-flagged vessels spotted fishing in the south Pacific, sometimes for months at a time, has surged eightfold, to 476 last year. Meanwhile, the size of its squid catch has grown from 70,000 tons to 422,000 — a level of fishing that some scientists fear is unsustainable even for a resilient species.

As revealed in an AP-Univision investigation last year, the Chinese flotilla includes some of the seafood industry's worst offenders, with long records of labor abuse, illegal fishing and violations of maritime law. But they're being drawn to the open ocean around the Americas — where the U.S. has long dominated — after depleting fish stocks closer to home and fueled by an increasingly fierce race between the two superpowers to secure access to the world's dwindling natural resources.

The illegal fishing patrol, which took place over 10 days in August, was initially kept quiet. The Coast Guard, more than a month later, released a brief statement celebrating the mission along with photos from two ships it did manage to successfully board. But it made no mention of the three that ran away or gave any clue to the vessels' nationality — a posture the Coast Guard maintained in its conversations with the AP.

But the incident didn't go unnoticed in China.

Within days, Beijing fired off a formal written protest, according to the U.S. officials. Additionally, the issue was raised when U.S. Ambassador Nicholas Burns was summoned by China's foreign ministry for an emergency meeting over Speaker Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, one of the officials said.

China's foreign ministry told the AP that it has zero tolerance for illegal fishing and said it was the U.S. that is flouting international norms by carrying out unauthorized inspections that don't follow COVID protocols, potentially putting seafarers' lives at risk.

"The behavior of the United States is unsafe, opaque and unprofessional," the foreign ministry said in a statement to the AP. "We demand that the U.S. side stop its dangerous and erroneous inspection activities."

The Coast Guard disputes that assertion, saying all members of the boarding team, in addition to being vaccinated, were wearing masks, gloves and long sleeves.

The Biden administration also reported possible violations discovered on the two boats it did inspect to the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization, or SPRFMO, a group of 16 members — including China and the U.S. — charged with ensuring sustainable fishing in 53 million square kilometers of ocean.

One of the most serious accusations is against the Yong Hang 3, a refrigerated cargo vessel used to

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transport fish back to China so that smaller vessels can stay on the water for longer periods. The vessel was among those that ran from the Coast Guard patrol, disobeying direct orders to cooperate from maritime authorities in Panama, to which the vessel was flagged. To obscure activities, some vessels, especially refrigerated cargo vessels, often fly under other flags but are named, managed and docked in China.

Ultimately, if history is any guide, China's communist government is unlikely to punish a fleet of 3,000 distant water fishing vessels it views as an extension of its growing naval prowess and promotes with generous state loans and fuel subsidies.

The Coast Guard's patrol was meticulously planned, according to Lt. Stowes. The United States warned fisheries officials more than a year ago that it intended to conduct boardings in the area and filed papers showing pictures of the badges the crew would be carrying as well as the blue-and-white checkered flag the cutter would be hoisting. Five other countries, including Chile and New Zealand, have filed similar paperwork under rules allowing members fishing in the south Pacific to inspect each others' vessels.

"Just our being out there and doing the boardings really makes a statement," Stowes said.

At-sea inspections are considered a vital tool to verify that fishing vessels are following rules regarding the use of forced labor, environmentally hazardous gear and the targeting of threatened species such as sharks.

China has repeatedly blocked efforts to strengthen inspection procedures in the south Pacific. The most recent stonewalling took place last year, when China argued that fishermen would be at risk if at-sea patrols were allowed to carry firearms.

Rules adopted unanimously in 2011 are guided by a 1995 United Nations treaty, known as the Fish Stocks Agreement, that allows inspectors to use limited force to stay safe.

In a sign of how geopolitical rivalry may be escalating since the Pacific incident, one official told AP that the State Department sent a sternly-worded diplomatic note reminding Beijing of its international obligations as well as the distant water fleet's long track record of labor abuses and violations.

The Biden administration is also weighing whether it will seek to have the vessels blacklisted for illegal fishing and banned from returning to the south Pacific at an upcoming meeting in Ecuador of the fishing management organization.

Most candidates for top election posts say no to hand counts

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

The vast majority of candidates running to become their states' chief election officers oppose hand counting ballots, a laborious and error-prone process that has gained favor among some Republicans embracing conspiracy theories about voting machines.

An Associated Press survey of major-party secretary of state candidates in the 24 states found broad skepticism about hand counting among election professionals of all ideological stripes. Of 23 Republicans who responded to the survey, 13 clearly said they opposed implementing a statewide hand count of ballots instead of a machine count.

GOP candidates in Arizona and New Mexico have previously endorsed the idea of a hand count. But others cautioned it was a dangerous road to follow.

"Hand counting ballots is a process that requires time, manpower, and is prone to inaccuracies," Kansas Secretary of State Scott Schwab, a Republican who is seeking reelection this year, wrote in response to the AP survey.

The desire to hand count ballots stems from conspiracy theories spread by former President Donald Trump and his allies that the electronic machines that tabulated the results of the 2020 presidential election were rigged. Now some Republicans inspired by his election lies seek to expand or require hand counting of all ballots.

Counting by hand takes longer, requires large groups of people to examine ballots, and has been found by multiple studies to be less reliable than using voting machines.

"The reason the U.S. moved to counting machines is due to both human error and fraud with hand

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counts, so we looked for a better way to count the vote," said Kim Crockett, the Republican nominee for secretary of state in Minnesota, in an email. "The error rate for hand counts is higher than the error rate for ballot counters in most cases."

Crockett, who has called the 2020 election "rigged" and echoed some of Trump's other election falsehoods, also stressed that she thinks her state's voting machines still need further inspection.

The process came under scrutiny last week when rural Nye County in Nevada embarked on an unprecedented full hand count of this year's midterm votes, starting with mailed ballots and those cast early in-person. The process was painstakingly slow until it was halted by the state's supreme court over concerns that early vote tallies could be leaked publicly.

While the AP survey found most candidates strongly favor machine tabulators, two GOP secretary of state candidates in politically pivotal states — Arizona and New Mexico — want to shift to the unreliable method of counting ballots. A third in yet another swing state, Nevada, has backed Nye County's effort and voiced support for making that sort of procedure standard statewide.

In Arizona, Republican State Rep. Mark Finchem, who is running for secretary of state, joined his party's nominee for governor, Kari Lake, in filing a lawsuit seeking to outlaw the use of any machine to record or tabulate votes. The case was dismissed by a judge who levied sanctions against the Republicans.

In New Mexico, GOP secretary of state nominee Audrey Trujillo has said she wants widespread hand counting of votes.

"Hand count my ballot. We already have paper ballots," she said in an interview on the video platform Rumble. "If we had that, I guarantee you tons more people would go out and vote."

Neither Finchem nor Trujillo responded to the AP's survey.

Nevada's Republican secretary of state candidate has offered conflicting responses. A campaign spokesman for Republican nominee Jim Marchant told the AP that Marchant would be fine with a machine count as long as there also are paper ballots, which are universally used in Nevada. But the prior month, Marchant told the AP in a separate interview, "My goal is to go to a hand count paper ballot system."

Nevada's current secretary of state, Republican Barbara Cegavske, told interim Nye County Clerk Mark Kampf to halt the hand count of early arriving mailed ballots and early in-person votes until after polls close Nov. 8 following a ruling late last week from the state's high court. The state chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union had sought to halt the hand count over concerns that observers could hear the results as they were announced, risking a potential public leak of early returns.

The nascent hand-count had been riddled with problems on its first day, with repeated delays and errors among the volunteer staff of 12 teams of five split into two different shifts. They got through 900 of 1,950 ballots on the first day, with one volunteer lamenting the slow pace: "I can't believe it's two hours to get through 25."

An AP reporter observed two teams of five taking as long as three hours to count 50 ballots. When teams realized they had mismatched tallies for certain candidates, they would stop and recount the ballots for those candidates again. That effort followed a hand count in another rural Nevada county, Esmeralda, where election workers in June spent more than seven hours hand-tallying the 317 primary ballots.

Kampf said the teams improved during the second day.

Eleven candidates, mostly Republicans, did not respond to the AP's survey, including one of the most prominent election conspiracy theorists running for the position — Republican Kristina Karamo in Michigan, a community college instructor who has spread the lie that voting machines in 2020 were rigged.

"Election deniers are using the language of election integrity to dismantle the actual infrastructure of election integrity," said David Becker, the co-author of "The Big Truth," a book about the risks of Trump's voting lies, and executive director of the Center for Election Innovation & Research. "If you want inaccurate results that take a really long time and cost a lot, then hand counting is your solution."

Voting machines are routinely checked before and after voting to make sure they count accurately. The post-election test usually involves pulling a sample of random ballots and counting them by hand to see if the automated tally differs.

But repeated studies — in voting and other fields such as banking and retail — have shown that people

make far more errors counting than do machines, especially when reaching larger and larger numbers. They're also vastly slower.

Jennifer Morrell, a former local election official in Colorado and Utah, noted that hand counts are enormously labor-intensive. The election consulting firm where she works estimated that in a typical-sized jurisdiction of 270,000 voters, it would take 1,300 people to count the ballots within seven days.

That's because the typical ballot has dozens of races on it, which machines tabulate automatically but humans would have to count line by line, page by page.

"Voting equipment is uniform and efficient in a way that humans will never be," Morrell said.

UK minister under fire for calling migrants an 'invasion'

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain's interior minister faced criticism Tuesday for describing migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats as an "invasion," days after an immigration center was attacked with firebombs.

Home Secretary Suella Braverman used the term while defending conditions at a processing center for new arrivals where some 4,000 people have been held in a facility intended for 1,600.

Braverman referred to small-boat crossings on Monday as "the invasion of our southern coast" and said "illegal immigration is out of control."

"Let's stop pretending that they are all refugees in distress," she said of migrants crossing the Channel.

Her deputy, Immigration Minister Robert Jenrick, distanced himself from her words.

"In a job like mine you have to choose your words very carefully," he told Sky News. "And I would never demonize people coming to this country in pursuit of a better life."

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, who appointed Braverman after he took office last week, told his Cabinet on Tuesday that Britain "would always be a compassionate, welcoming country," his spokesman said.

Braverman — a leading figure on the right wing of the governing Conservative Party who supports expelling people who enter the U.K. without authorization — did not respond to the criticism on Tuesday.

The number of asylum-seekers attempting to reach Britain by boat has increased steadily, and the system for considering applications has slowed to a crawl amid turmoil in the Conservative government, which is on its third prime minister and third home secretary this year.

Manston — a former airfield in southeast England — is supposed to be a temporary processing center where new arrivals spend 24 hours before moving on to longer-term accommodation, but refugee groups say some people have been stuck there for weeks. Some families are sleeping in tents, and there have been cases of diphtheria and scabies.

Chief Inspector of Prisons Charlie Taylor said that when he visited the site recently, he saw people sleeping on floors and "lots and lots of people in a room, all squished in together."

"For a few hours, that would be acceptable, but where people are spending long periods of time there, it just isn't," he told Sky News.

Critics accuse Braverman of deliberately worsening conditions at Manston by refusing to book hotel rooms for asylum seekers.

The government said "large numbers" of people were being moved out of Manston on Tuesday to relieve pressure. It said a facility some 20 miles (32 kilometers) away in the port town of Dover that was firebombed Sunday had reopened.

Police said counterterrorism officers were leading the investigation into the firebombing, which slightly injured two staff members. The suspect, a 66-year-old man from a town about 100 miles (160 kilometers) away, threw "a number of crude incendiary devices," then drove away and killed himself.

Detective Chief Superintendent Olly Wright of Counter Terrorism Policing South East said the attack was "likely to be driven by some form of hate-filled grievance."

Just over 48,000 people applied for asylum in the U.K. in 2021, fewer than in Germany, France or Spain. But there has been a sharp increase in the number of people trying to cross the Channel in dinghies and

other small craft as alternative routes, such as stowing away on trucks, have become more difficult.

Some 40,000 people have made the hazardous journey across one of the world's busiest shipping lanes so far this year, up from 28,000 in all of 2021 and 8,500 in 2020. Dozens have died, including 27 people in November 2021 when a packed smuggling boat capsized.

Britain and France have wrangled over how to stop the people-smuggling gangs that organize the journeys.

Britain's government has announced a controversial plan to send people who arrive in small boats on a one-way journey to Rwanda — a plan it says will deter people from crossing the Channel and break the business model of smuggling gangs. Critics say the plan is immoral and impractical, and it is being challenged in the courts.

Mishka Pillay, campaigns consultant with the group Detention Action, said the Manston crisis arose because "the government has failed to process asylum claims efficiently," creating a huge backlog.

"This is a crisis of the home secretary's own making," Pillay said.

Strong RSV vaccine data lifts hopes after years of futility

By LAURAN NEERGAARD AP Medical Writer

New research shows vaccinating pregnant women helped protect their newborns from the common but scary respiratory virus called RSV that fills hospitals with wheezing babies each fall.

The preliminary results buoy hope that after decades of failure and frustration, vaccines against RSV may finally be getting close.

Pfizer announced Tuesday that a large international study found vaccinating moms-to-be was nearly 82% effective at preventing severe cases of RSV in their babies' most vulnerable first 90 days of life. At age 6 months, the vaccine still was proving 69% effective against serious illness — and there were no signs of safety problems in mothers or babies.

"Moms are always giving their antibodies to their baby," said virologist Kena Swanson, Pfizer's vice president of viral vaccines. "The vaccine just puts them in that much better position" to form and pass on RSV-fighting antibodies.

The vaccine quest isn't just to protect infants. RSV is dangerous for older adults, too, and both Pfizer and rival GSK recently announced that their competing shots also proved protective for seniors.

None of the findings will help this year when an early RSV surge already is crowding children's hospitals. But they raise the prospect that one or more vaccines might become available before next fall's RSV season.

"My fingers are crossed," said Dr. William Schaffner, an infectious disease specialist at Vanderbilt University. "We're making inroads."

Tuesday's data was reported in a press release and hasn't been vetted by independent experts.

Here's a look at the long quest for RSV vaccines.

WHAT IS RSV?

For most healthy people, RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus, is a cold-like nuisance. But for the very young, the elderly and people with certain health problems, it can be serious, even life-threatening. The virus can infect deep in the lungs, causing pneumonia, and in babies it can impede breathing by inflaming tiny airways.

In the U.S., about 58,000 children younger than 5 are hospitalized for RSV each year and several hundred die. Among adults 65 and older, about 177,000 are hospitalized with RSV and 14,000 die annually.

Worldwide, RSV kills about 100,000 children a year, mostly in poor countries.

WHY IS THERE NO VACCINE?

A tragedy in the 1960s set back the whole field. Using the approach that led to the first polio vaccine, scientists made an experimental RSV vaccine by growing the virus in a lab and killing it. But testing in children found not only was the vaccine not protective, youngsters who caught RSV after vaccination fared worse. Two died.

"For a period of 20 years, even though science was advancing, nobody wanted to go near development of an RSV vaccine," Schaffner said.

Even today's modern RSV vaccine candidates were tested first in older adults, not children, he noted.
WHAT GOT DEVELOPMENT BACK ON TRACK?

Modern vaccines tend to target the outer surface of a virus, what the immune system sees when a germ invades. For RSV, that target is the so-called F protein that helps the virus latch onto human cells. Again there was a hurdle: That protein is a shape-shifter, rearranging its form before and after it "fuses" to cells.

It turns out that the immune system only forms effective RSV-fighting antibodies when it spots what's called the pre-fusion version of that protein, explained structural biologist Jason McLellan of the University of Texas at Austin.

In 2013, McLellan and virologist Barney Graham were working at the National Institutes of Health when they homed in on the correct shape and figured out how to freeze it in that form. That finding opened the way to today's development of a variety of experimental RSV vaccine candidates.

(That same discovery was key to the hugely successful COVID-19 vaccines, as the coronavirus also is cloaked in a shape-shifting surface protein.)

WHAT'S IN THE PIPELINE?

Several companies are creating RSV vaccines but Pfizer and rival GSK are furthest along. Both companies recently reported final-stage testing in older adults. The competing vaccines are made somewhat differently but each proved strongly effective, especially against serious disease. Both companies plan to seek regulatory approval in the U.S. by the end of the year, as well as in other countries.

The older-adult data "looks fantastic," said McLellan, who has closely followed the vaccine development. "I think we're on the right track."

And if vaccinating pregnant women pans out, it could be "a win for two individuals instead of just one," by offering protection to both mom-to-be and baby, said Dr. Wilbur Chen of the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

Pfizer's maternal vaccine is the same recipe that it tested successfully in older adults — and it also plans to seek Food and Drug Administration approval for those vaccinations by year's end.

The new study included 7,400 pregnant women in 18 countries, including the U.S., and spanned multiple RSV seasons. Preliminary results reported Tuesday show the vaccine was most effective against severe disease. For milder illness, effectiveness was 51% to 57% -- short of the study's statistical requirements but a result that Pfizer still called clinically meaningful because it could mean fewer trips to the doctor's office.

Roberts delays handover of Trump tax returns to House panel

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Chief Justice John Roberts on Tuesday put a temporary hold on the handover of former President Donald Trump's tax returns to a congressional committee.

Roberts' order gives the Supreme Court time to weigh the legal issues in Trump's emergency appeal to the high court, filed Monday.

Without court intervention, the tax returns could have been provided as early as Thursday by the Treasury Department to the Democratic-controlled House Ways and Means Committee.

Roberts gave the committee until Nov. 10 to respond. The chief justice handles emergency appeals from the nation's capital, where the fight over Trump's taxes has been going on since 2019.

Lower courts ruled that the committee has broad authority to obtain tax returns and rejected Trump's claims that it was overstepping.

If Trump can persuade the nation's highest court to intervene in this case, he could potentially delay a final decision until the start of the next Congress in January. If Republicans recapture control of the House in the fall election, they could drop the records request.

The temporary delay imposed by Roberts is the third such order issued by justices in recent days in cases related to Trump.

The court separately is weighing Sen. Lindsey Graham's emergency appeal to avoid having to testify before a Georgia grand jury that is investigating potential illegal interference by Trump and his allies in

the 2020 election in the state.

Also before the court is an emergency appeal from Arizona Republican party chairwoman Kelli Ward to prevent the handover of phone records to the House committee investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol.

The House Ways and Means panel and its chairman, Democrat Richard Neal of Massachusetts, first requested Trump's tax returns in 2019 as part of an investigation into the Internal Revenue Service's audit program and tax law compliance by the former president. A federal law says the Internal Revenue Service "shall furnish" the returns of any taxpayer to a handful of top lawmakers.

The Justice Department, under the Trump administration, had defended a decision by then-Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin to withhold the tax returns from Congress. Mnuchin argued that he could withhold the documents because he concluded they were being sought by Democrats for partisan reasons. A lawsuit ensued.

After President Joe Biden took office, the committee renewed the request, seeking Trump's tax returns and additional information from 2015-2020. The White House took the position that the request was a valid one and that the Treasury Department had no choice but to comply. Trump then attempted to halt the handover in court.

Then-Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. obtained copies of Trump's personal and business tax records as part of a criminal investigation. That case, too, went to the Supreme Court, which rejected Trump's argument that he had broad immunity as president.

Trump had most recently sought the justices' intervention in a legal dispute stemming from the search of his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida in August. The court rejected that appeal.

After tragic crush, lost shoes await owners at Seoul gym

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Days after more than 150 Halloween revelers died in South Korea's deadliest crowd surge, a quiet but wrenching reminder of the disaster remained Tuesday: Hundreds of abandoned shoes have been laid out in neat rows in a badminton court in the capital, Seoul.

Police have assembled the crumpled tennis shoes, loafers and Chuck Taylors — part of 1.5 tons of personal objects left by victims and survivors of the tragedy — in hopes that the owners, or their friends and family, will retrieve them.

The deadly crush in the nearby nightlife district Itaewon happened after tens of thousands gathered for Halloween celebrations Saturday evening. Part of the crowd got jammed in a narrow, downhill alley between a dense row of storefronts and the district's landmark Hamilton Hotel. Partygoers were seen carrying out the wounded and dead, while dozens of lifeless bodies covered in blankets were laid out in rows on the nearby pavement.

Most of the victims were women and many of them were missing shoes, which experts say reflects the force of a crowd surge that stripped footwear from their feet in the crush.

Some 250 pairs of shoes at the gym are part of a huge collection of abandoned items found in Itaewon following the tragedy. There are also hundreds of pieces of clothing, including coats and movie character costumes, as well as handbags, smartphones, Bluetooth earpieces and a few passports, including at least one belonging to a U.S. citizen.

Yongsan police officials, who will keep the gym open for 24 hours until Sunday, didn't immediately confirm how many of the items have been returned to their owners.

As of Tuesday afternoon, 156 people were confirmed dead and 151 were being treated for injuries, with 29 of them in critical condition. Officials say 26 of the dead were foreign nationals, including five Iranians, four Chinese, four Russians, two Americans and two Japanese citizens.

Qatar gives fans paid trips to sing at World Cup ceremony

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By GRAHAM DUNBAR AP Sports Writer

GENEVA (AP) — Up to 1,600 fans of the teams that qualified for this year's World Cup are being recruited for an all expenses-paid trip to Qatar to sing in the opening ceremony and stay for at least two weeks promoting positive social media content about the soccer tournament and the host nation.

Fans from each of the 32 teams are needed for a five-minute, fan-themed section of the ceremony before Qatar plays Ecuador in the opening match on Nov. 20. They will perform a chant or song specific to each country, chosen by the organizers, according to documents seen by The Associated Press.

"We will share with you the chant/song selected from your country to ensure you are familiar with it," organizers told the fans.

The program has excluded "persons with obvious political affiliation" and aims to recruit 30 to 50 supporters from each team who were able to show "their status as a purist fan," the documents state.

"The camera will focus on each national fan group in turn," the recruits have been told about the show at Al Bayt Stadium north of Doha. "Be ready in your shirt, flags and scarves to cheer and shout."

The fans are being offered economy-class flights and use of apartments worth thousands of dollars to stay until at least Dec. 4, or for the entire tournament if they choose, plus a daily allowance of 250 Qatari riyals (\$68).

The opening ceremony project is an extension of a longer-term plan by World Cup organizers to choose "Fan Leaders" in each country who are asked to be social media influencers using the hashtag "IAMAFAN."

Those key fans are asked to "incorporate, where appropriate" content provided by Qatari organizers and support the World Cup "by 'liking' and re-sharing third party posts."

The fan leaders have been told "we are not asking you to (be) a mouthpiece for Qatar," but "it would obviously not be appropriate for you to disparage" the country or the tournament.

The influencers have also had to agree to "report any offensive, degrading or abusive comments" on social media to the organizing committee and, if possible, take screenshots.

In a statement, Qatari organizers said they had consulted with a "Fan Leader Network" of more than 450 people in 59 countries to help improve the World Cup for visitors.

"As the tournament nears, we have invited our most active fan leaders to personally nominate a small selection of fans to join us as our guests to participate in the opening ceremony," the Qatari Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy said, as a way of "thanking them for their collaboration."

The Qataris claim that the influencers are "leaders within their communities." But the Football Supporters Europe group, which is recognized by UEFA to consult on fan issues, disputed that assertion.

"What is very clear is that they are not fan representatives. They are employees or volunteers of the World Cup and should be considered as such," FSE executive director Ronan Evain told the AP.

About 1.2 million international visitors are expected in Qatar for the month-long tournament, which has faced criticism and skepticism ever since the gas-rich emirate was picked by FIFA in December 2010.

Qatar was among nine candidates to host the 2018 or 2022 World Cup. The process later underwent a FIFA-appointed investigation into the integrity of bidding campaigns.

The FIFA ethics committee, which had limited powers to gather evidence, said in a 2014 report published in full three years later that there was widespread misconduct among the bidders but it had not swayed the hosting votes. Russia was awarded the 2018 World Cup and Qatar got the 2022 edition.

Qatar has since faced intense scrutiny and criticism of its treatment of migrant workers, who were needed to build essential World Cup projects including stadiums, metro lines, roads, hotels and apartments, often in oppressive heat.

Although Qatar bid to stage a June-July tournament with air-conditioned stadiums, FIFA decided in 2015 to move the World Cup into cooler months in the middle of the traditional European soccer season.

Fans who wished to be picked for the trips to perform in the opening ceremony had to send a statement or image showing their love of soccer by an Oct. 10 deadline. They are being given tickets only to the opening match, during what was described to them as a "curated visit to Qatar" with no obligation to take part in other events such as a soccer tournament for fans.

"It is an unpaid and voluntary role," the Qatari organizing committee said.

15 hurt, including 3 children, in Chicago Halloween shooting

CHICAGO (AP) — As many as 15 people, including three children, were injured in a drive-by shooting on Halloween night that sent shots flying into a crowd along a Chicago street corner, police said.

Chicago Police Superintendent David Brown said the three juvenile victims are a 3-year-old, an 11-year-old and a 13-year-old. The others wounded by gunfire Monday night are adults ranging in age from their 30s to their 50s.

In addition, police said a woman fleeing from the shooting scene was struck by a vehicle as she crossed traffic. She was hospitalized in fair condition.

The Chicago Fire Department said it sent at least 10 ambulances to the scene in Chicago's Garfield Park neighborhood. Brown said the victims' conditions range from non-life threatening injuries to critical condition. No fatalities were immediately reported and police were waiting to interview the shooting victims after they received medical treatment.

Brown said the drive-by shooting happened around 9:30 p.m. and was over in a matter of seconds. It was captured on police surveillance video, which investigators are reviewing.

Preliminary information indicates there were at least two shooters seen on the video, firing indiscriminately into the crowd.

Community activist Andrew Holmes said the children shot during the incident are "just young."

"They're putting on an outfit just to enjoy the evening and then you got a clown that goes and discharges that weapon, bringing great bodily harm to these families," he told WGN-TV.

Investigators are trying to determine a motive and get a description of the car and those responsible, Brown said. No one was in custody.

Brown said there were no known conflicts at the street corner Monday night. Brown said there were several large groups at the corner, which is a popular gathering spot in the neighborhood. Some were reportedly attending a vigil.

S. Korea officials admit responsibility in Halloween tragedy

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korean officials admitted responsibility and apologized on Tuesday for failures in preventing and responding to a Halloween crowd surge that killed more than 150 people and left citizens shocked and angry.

The government is facing growing public scrutiny over whether the crush Saturday night in Seoul's Itaewon district, a popular nightlife neighborhood, could have been prevented and who should take responsibility for the country's worst disaster in years.

National police chief Yoon Hee Keun said an initial investigation found there were many urgent calls from citizens notifying authorities about the potential danger of the crowd gathering in Itaewon. He said police officers who received the calls failed to handle them effectively.

"I feel a heavy responsibility (for the disaster) as the head of one of the related government offices," Yoon said in a televised news conference. "Police will do their best to prevent a tragedy like this from happening again."

Yoon said police have launched an intense internal probe into the officers' handling of the emergency calls and other issues, such as the on-the-spot response to the crowd surge in Itaewon that night.

Separately, South Korea's interior minister, emergency office chief, Seoul mayor and the head of a ward office that includes the Itaewon neighborhood all offered public apologies.

Seoul Mayor Oh Se-hoon apologized deeply and wept and briefly halted his news conference as he talked about the parent of a 20-year-old woman who was declared dead earlier in the day.

"When I tried to comfort a person with a daughter hospitalized at the National Medical Center yesterday,

they said their daughter would survive and they believed so," he said. "But I heard she passed away this morning. I am sorry that my apology has come late."

The disaster — which left at least 156 people dead and 151 others injured — was concentrated in a narrow downhill alley in Itaewon. Witnesses described people falling on one another, suffering severe breathing difficulties and falling unconscious. They said rescuers and ambulances failed to reach the cramped alleys in time because the entire Itaewon area was packed with slow-moving vehicles and partygoers clad in Halloween costumes.

Most of the dead were in their 20s and 30s, and about two-thirds were women.

During a Cabinet council meeting Tuesday, President Yoon Suk Yeol acknowledged that South Korea lacks research on crowd management. He called for the use of drones and other high-tech resources to develop an effective crowd control capability, and said the government will soon meet with experts to review national safety rules.

The crowd surge is South Korea's deadliest disaster since a 2014 ferry sinking that killed 304 people and exposed lax safety rules and regulatory failures. Saturday's surge has raised public questions about what South Korea has done since then to prevent human-made disasters.

"My heart is aching a lot as all the victims were like my grandchildren," 74-year-old Chung Kil-soon said after paying respects at a mourning station Tuesday. "People say our country is an advanced country, but I don't think we are truly advanced."

After the Itaewon disaster, police launched a 475-member task force to find its cause.

Senior police officer Nam Gu-Jun told reporters Monday that officers have obtained videos taken by about 50 security cameras in the area and were analyzing video clips posted on social media. Nam said police had also interviewed more than 40 witnesses and survivors so far.

Police said they had sent 137 officers to maintain order during the Halloween festivities on Saturday, much more than the 34-90 officers mobilized in 2017, 2018 and 2019 before the pandemic. But some observers questioned whether the 137 officers were enough to handle the estimated 100,000 people gathered Saturday in Itaewon.

Adding more questions about the role of police was the fact that they sent 7,000 officers to another part of Seoul earlier Saturday to monitor dueling protests involving tens of thousands of people. Police also acknowledged that the 137 officers dispatched to Itaewon were primarily assigned to monitor crime, with a particular focus on narcotics use, not crowd control.

The death toll could rise as officials said that 29 of the injured were in serious condition. The dead included 26 foreign nationals from Iran, China, Russia, the United States, Japan and elsewhere.

President Yoon asked officials to provide the same government support to the bereaved families of the foreign victims as for the South Korean dead and injured people. He also thanked many world leaders for sending condolence messages.

The Itaewon area, known for its expat-friendly, cosmopolitan atmosphere, is the country's hottest spot for Halloween events and parties, with young South Koreans taking part in costume competitions at bars, clubs and restaurants. Saturday's gathering was the biggest Halloween celebration in the area since the pandemic.

Halloween festivities in Itaewon have no official organizers. South Korean police said Monday they don't have any specific procedures for handling incidents such as crowd surges during an event that has no organizers.

India PM visits site of bridge collapse as families mourn

By SHEIKH SAALIQ and AIJAZ HUSSAIN Associated Press

MORBI, India (AP) — India's prime minister on Tuesday visited the site in western India where a newly repaired 143-year-old suspension bridge collapsed into a river, sending hundreds plunging into the water and killing at least 135 in one of the country's worst accidents in years.

Narendra Modi inspected the collapsed bridge in Morbi town in Gujarat state and talked to rescuers. He

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also visited injured people at a hospital. Security was tight as police and paramilitary soldiers blanketed the area.

Gujarat is Modi's home state and he was already visiting it at the time of the accident. He said on Monday that he was "deeply saddened by the tragedy" and his office announced compensation for families of the dead.

Angered and bereaved families mourned the dead as attention turned to why the pedestrian bridge, built during British colonialism in the late 1800s and touted by the state's tourism website as an "artistic and technological marvel," collapsed Sunday evening, and who might be responsible. The bridge had reopened just four days earlier.

Police Inspector-General Ashok Yadav told The Associated Press that no one was missing according to an official tally, but emergency responders and divers continued to search Tuesday.

"We want to be on the side of caution," Yadav said.

The officer said at least 196 people were rescued and all 10 of the injured were in stable condition.

At the accident site, at least half a dozen divers searched through the dark water.

"Silt, weeds and mud are hampering our efforts to find missing people," said Ankit Yadav, a diver.

Gaffar Shah, the caretaker of the main Muslim graveyard in Morbi, said he helped bury 25 bodies after the disaster.

"I have never seen anything like this in my life," Shah said as he sat on the graveyard's pavement. "Entire families have been wiped out."

Some families stood near freshly dug graves covered with marigold flowers as they prayed.

A little more than a mile (about two kilometers) away from the graveyard, at a Hindu crematorium where over a dozen bodies were brought for their last rites, the atmosphere was somber. A caretaker said they were "overwhelmed with dead bodies." He said it was particularly painful to cremate children.

On Monday, police arrested nine people, including managers of the bridge's operator, Oreva Group, as they began a probe into the incident.

Gujarat authorities opened a case against Oreva for suspected culpable homicide, attempted culpable homicide and other violations.

In March, the Morbi town government awarded a 15-year contract to maintain and manage the bridge to Oreva, a group of companies known mainly for making clocks, mosquito zappers and electric bikes. The same month, Oreva closed the bridge, which spans a wide section of the Machchu river, for seven months for repairs.

The bridge has been repaired several times in the past and many of its original parts have been replaced over the years.

It was reopened Oct. 26, the first day of the Gujarati New Year, which coincides with the Hindu festival season. The attraction drew hundreds of sightseers.

Sandeepsinh Zala, a Morbi official, told the Indian Express newspaper the company reopened the bridge without first obtaining a "fitness certificate." That could not be independently verified, but officials said they were investigating.

Authorities said the structure collapsed under the weight of hundreds of people. A security video of the disaster showed it shaking violently and people trying to hold on to its cables and metal fencing before the aluminum walkway gave out and crashed into the river.

The bridge split in the middle with its walkway hanging down and its cables snapped.

It was unclear how many people were on the bridge when it collapsed. Survivors said it was so densely packed that people were unable to quickly escape when its cables began to snap.

Modi was the top elected official of Gujarat for 12 years before becoming India's prime minister in 2014. A Gujarat state government election is expected in coming months and opposition parties have demanded a thorough investigation of the accident.

The bridge collapse was Asia's third major disaster involving large crowds in a month.

On Saturday, a Halloween crowd surge killed more than 150 people attending festivities in Itaewon, a

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neighborhood in Seoul, South Korea. On Oct. 1, police in Indonesia fired tear gas at a soccer match, causing a crush that killed 132 people as spectators tried to flee.

India's infrastructure has long been marred by safety problems, and Morbi has suffered other major disasters. In 1979, an upstream dam on the Machchu river burst, sending walls of water into the city and killing hundreds of people in one of India's biggest dam failures.

In 2001, thousands of people died in an earthquake in Gujarat. Morbi, 150 kilometers (90 miles) from the quake's epicenter in Bhuj, suffered widespread damage. According to a report in the Times of India newspaper, the bridge that collapsed Sunday was also severely damaged.

Today in History: November 2, Washington's Farewell Address

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Nov. 2, the 306th day of 2022. There are 59 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 2, 1783, General George Washington issued his Farewell Address to the Army near Princeton, New Jersey.

On this date:

In 1861, during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln relieved Maj. Gen. John C. Fremont of his command of the Army's Department of the West based in St. Louis, following Fremont's unauthorized efforts to emancipate slaves in Missouri.

In 1917, British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour issued a declaration expressing support for a "national home" for the Jews in Palestine.

In 1920, white mobs rampaged through the Florida citrus town of Ocoee, setting fire to Black-owned homes and businesses, after a Black man, Mose Norman, showed up at the polls to vote on Election Day; some historians estimate as many as 60 people were killed.

In 1950, playwright George Bernard Shaw, 94, died in Ayot St. Lawrence, Hertfordshire, England.

In 1976, former Georgia Gov. Jimmy Carter became the first candidate from the Deep South since the Civil War to be elected president as he defeated incumbent Gerald R. Ford.

In 1994, a jury in Pensacola, Florida, convicted Paul Hill of murder for the shotgun slayings of an abortion provider and his escort; Hill was executed in September 2003.

In 2000, American astronaut Bill Shepherd and two Russian cosmonauts, Yuri Gidzenko (gihd-ZEENG'-koh) and Sergei Krikalev (SUR'-gay KREE'-kuh-lev), became the first residents of the international space station.

In 2003, in Iraq, insurgents shot down a Chinook helicopter carrying dozens of U.S. soldiers, killing 16.

In 2004, President George W. Bush was elected to a second term as Republicans strengthened their grip on Congress.

In 2007, British college student Meredith Kercher, 21, was found slain in her bedroom in Perugia, Italy; her roommate, American Amanda Knox and Knox's Italian boyfriend, Raffaele Sollecito (rah-fy-EHL'-ay soh-LEH'-chee-toh), were convicted of killing Kercher, but both were later exonerated. (Rudy Guede (GAY'-day), a petty criminal who was convicted separately in the case, was released from prison in November 2021 after serving most of a 16-year sentence.)

In 2016, ending a championship drought that had lasted since 1908, the Chicago Cubs won the World Series, defeating the Cleveland Indians 8-7 in extra innings.

In 2020, in the closing hours of the presidential campaign, President Donald Trump charged across the nation delivering an incendiary but false allegation that the election was rigged, while Democrat Joe Biden pushed to claim states that were once seen as safely Republican.

Ten years ago: Four days before Election Day, President Barack Obama accused Mitt Romney of scaring voters with lies, while the Republican challenger warned grimly of political paralysis and another recession if Obama reclaimed the White House. The New York City Marathon was canceled when Mayor Michael Bloomberg reversed himself and yielded to mounting criticism that it was no time to be running a race in

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the wake of Superstorm Sandy.

Five years ago: President Donald Trump tapped Jerome Powell to replace Janet Yellen as Federal Reserve chair at the end of her term in February. Authorities in Los Angeles and New York said they had opened new investigations prompted by sexual misconduct allegations against Harvey Weinstein. Twitter reported that a customer support worker who was on his or her last day on the job had deactivated President Donald Trump's Twitter account for a few minutes, resulting in an error message that the user "does not exist."

One year ago: Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy of New Jersey narrowly won reelection in his reliably blue state while a Republican political newcomer, Glenn Youngkin, upset Democrat Terry McAuliffe in the Virginia governor's race. Democratic former police captain Eric Adams won New York's mayoral race. Minneapolis voters defeated a ballot initiative that would have replaced the city's police department with a reimagined public safety unit in the city where George Floyd died under an officer's knee. World leaders promised to protect Earth's forests, cut methane emissions and help South Africa wean itself off coal at the U.N. climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland. The Biden administration launched a wide-ranging plan to reduce methane emissions, targeting a potent greenhouse gas that contributes significantly to global warming. The Atlanta Braves won their first World Series championship since 1995, hammering the Houston Astros 7-0 in Game 6.

Today's Birthdays: Political commentator Patrick Buchanan is 84. Actor Stefanie Powers is 80. Country-rock singer-songwriter J.D. Souther is 77. Actor Kate Linder is 75. Rock musician Carter Beauford (The Dave Matthews Band) is 64. Actor Peter Mullan is 63. Singer-songwriter k.d. lang is 61. Rock musician Bobby Dall (Poison) is 59. Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Lynn Nottage is 58. Actor Lauren Velez is 58. Actor Sean Kanan is 56. Actor David Schwimmer is 56. Christian/jazz singer Alvin Chea (Take 6) is 55. Jazz singer Kurt Elling is 55. Former Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker is 55. Rock musician Fieldy is 53. Actor Meta Golding is 51. Rock singer-musician John Hampson (Nine Days) is 51. Actor Marisol Nichols is 51. Rapper Nelly is 48. Actor Danny Cooksey is 47. Rock musician Chris Walla is 47. Actor Reshma Shetty is 45. TV personality Karamo Brown ("Queer Eye," "Dancing With the Stars") is 42. Country singer Erika Jo is 36. Actor-singer Kendall Schmidt is 32.