

Groton Daily Independent

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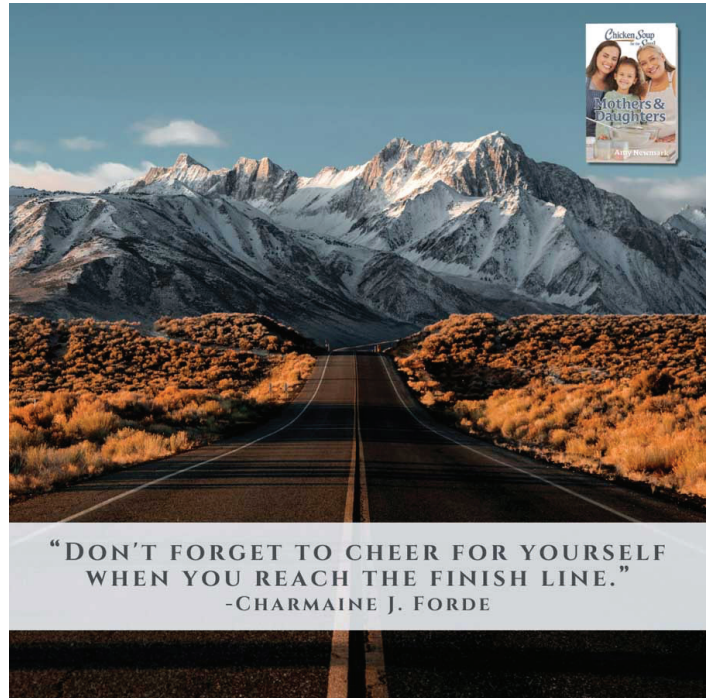


Due to the forecast for additional snow and wind and the continued Winter Storm Warning for our area, there will be no school at Groton Area on Monday, March 25, 2024.

The public opt-out meeting scheduled for Monday night is postponed to Tuesday, March 26 at 6PM at the GHS Gym.

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



Monday, March 25
Postponed: School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
Pantry Open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Senior Citizens Meet at the Groton Community Center with potluck at noon.
Senior Menu: Autumn soup, peas, chicken salad croissant, cinnamon apple sauce.
Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.
PEO meeting (outside group), 7 p.m.

Tuesday, March 26
School Board Meeting 6 p.m., GHS Gym
School Breakfast: Waffles.
School Lunch: Hot dogs, baked beans.
Indoor track meet at Northern State University
Thrift Store open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Food Pantry open 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Senior Menu: Goulash, green beans, pineapple/mandarin oranges, breadstick.
United Methodist: No Bible Study.

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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1440

In partnership with [smartasset™](#)

The death toll in a mass shooting at a popular concert venue outside Moscow rose to around 140 over the weekend, with more than 150 others wounded. It marks the country's deadliest terrorist attack in two decades, with rescue workers saying heavy fire damage continues to impede search efforts (see footage—warning, sensitive content).

Former President Donald Trump faces a deadline today to cover a \$454M judgment handed down in a February New York civil fraud trial to avoid the potential seizure of assets by the state. Lawyers for Trump have argued the fine should be stayed while the full appeals

process plays out.

Israeli officials said 170 militants were killed and nearly 500 others detained following a weeklong raid at Gaza City's al-Shifa hospital in the northern half of the territory. The operation has been described by the Israeli military as one of the most direct engagements with senior Hamas fighters since fighting began.

Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

The second round of the NCAA men's basketball tournament wraps; see Sweet 16 bracket. The second round of the women's tournament continues today.

"Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire" hauls in \$45M to lead domestic box office in its opening weekend.

IRS investigating Los Angeles Dodgers' interpreter for Shohei Ohtani amid allegations he stole millions from Ohtani to cover gambling debt.

Science & Technology

Flight startup Boom successfully carries out first live test of its supersonic aircraft; prototype is the first step in a planned supersonic commercial travel.

Study suggests pregnancy accelerates biological age—the presence of genetic markers seen as bodies grow older—but the post-birth period may reverse many of the effects.

Engineers develop fingertip-sized device to detect toxic chemicals from pharmaceutical waste in water.

Business & Markets

Markets close mixed Friday (Dow -0.8%, S&P 500 -0.1%, Nasdaq +0.2%); Dow drops more than 300 points Friday but still ends with best week since December. FedEx shares jump 7.4% on better-than-expected quarterly profits.

FBI notifies passengers of an Alaska Airlines flight aboard a Boeing 737 Max that lost a door-plug panel midflight they may be victims of a crime; news is the latest in a series of setbacks for the plane manufacturer.

Dog longevity startup Loyal secures \$45M in financing to continue development of age extension therapy for canines.

Politics & World Affairs

Russia continues attacks against Ukrainian energy infrastructure early Sunday, fires over 50 drones and missiles in Lviv and Kyiv; Poland claims missile briefly entered its airspace.

At least 137 Nigerian students freed Sunday after 17 days in captivity to gangs seeking ransom; number is only half of original group of 280 reportedly kidnapped March 7 in country's northwest Kaduna state. Simon Harris, 37, to become Ireland's youngest prime minister once current PM Leo Varadkar steps down next month.

Pope Francis does not deliver homily during Palm Sunday Mass amid respiratory challenges, a rare move to start off Holy Week.

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Regional Destination Imagination Tournament held Saturday in Webster



Extra Xtreme took second place at the Regional Destination Imagination tournament held Saturday in Webster. They competed in the Improv challenge.

Pictured are Calvin Locken, Gideon Rix, Terrence "TJ" Feist and Ayce Warrington. Team manager is Julie Milbrandt with helpers Tracy Rix and Amy Warrington. (Photo from Groton Destination Imagination Facebook Page)



The Four Friends presented their solution to the Early Learning Challenge today! This team is a non-competitive team. They were all smiles waiting for their instant challenge. Team members are Jorie Locken, KayLynn Furman, Paisley Johnson and Ava Strom. Team manager is Joni Groeblichhoff. (Photo from Groton Destination Imagination Facebook Page)



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The Four Heroes performed in the Early Learning challenge which is non competitive. They also had an extra challenge trying to fit their prop inside the performance area but perseverance got the job done! Team members are Kase Ronning, Jax Ronning, Nova Washenberger and Sunny Washenberger. Team manager is Laura Arth. (Photo from Groton Destination Imagination Facebook Page)



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The Hedgehogs placed third in the elementary Improv Challenge. Team members are Aryanna Cutler, Taylor Fliehs, Aschar Warrington, Quinton Ronning, Freddy Cole and Conrad Rix. Team manager is Julie Milbrandt. (Photo from Groton Destination Imagination Facebook Page)



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Nathan Fjelstad



Katie Groeblichhoff

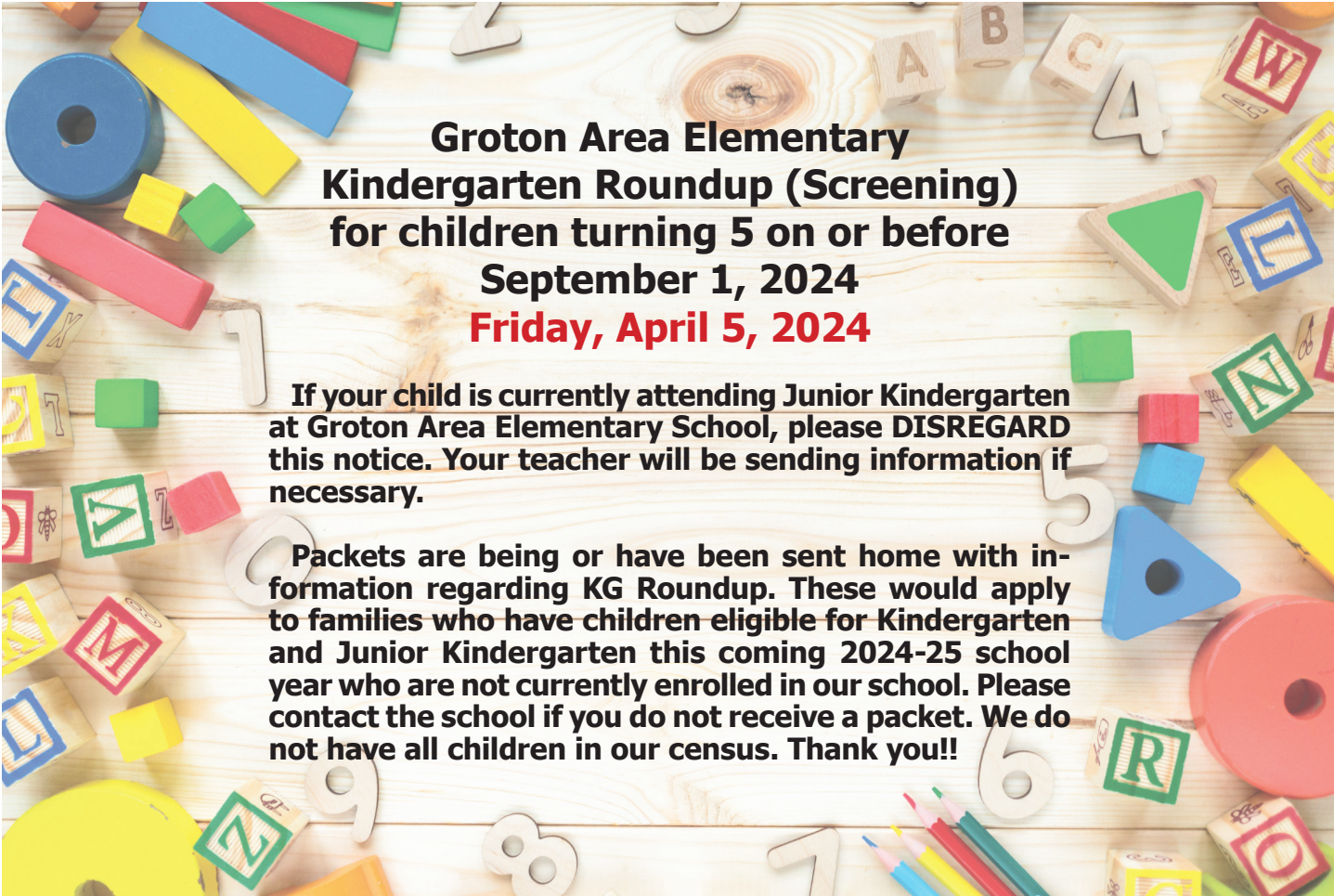
Former Groton Area DI team members Nathan Fjelstad and Katie Groeblichhoff took time to volunteer as Appraisers for Saturday's Eastern South Dakota Regional Tournament held in Webster. (Photo from Groton

Destination Imagination Facebook Page)

Merrie Atherton was instrumental in securing the Webster Area School for the East River Destination Imagination Tournament. It was originally scheduled for Tri-Valley, but there was a scheduling conflict. At the last minute, Atherton went to work and got the region moved to Webster.

The State DI Tournament is scheduled for April 6 in Pierre.

Extra Xtreme and The Hedgehogs are both invited to state. The two Rising Stars teams (The Four Friends & The Four Heroes) will not be traveling to Pierre.



Groton Area Elementary Kindergarten Roundup (Screening) for children turning 5 on or before September 1, 2024 Friday, April 5, 2024

If your child is currently attending Junior Kindergarten at Groton Area Elementary School, please DISREGARD this notice. Your teacher will be sending information if necessary.

Packets are being or have been sent home with information regarding KG Roundup. These would apply to families who have children eligible for Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten this coming 2024-25 school year who are not currently enrolled in our school. Please contact the school if you do not receive a packet. We do not have all children in our census. Thank you!!

EMPLOYMENT

Dairy Queen in Groton is hiring! If you're looking for a fun job with lots of variety, look no further! We're looking for energetic, smiling people – we provide free meals, uniforms, competitive wages, fun atmosphere and flexible scheduling. Part-time – day, evening, week-end shifts available. We will work with your schedule. Stop in today and pick up an application.

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Position available for full-time Public Works Laborer. Formal training and/or experience preferred. Salary negotiable DOE. Benefits include medical insurance, life insurance, and SD State Retirement. Please send application and resume to the City of Groton, PO Box 587, Groton, SD 57445, or email to city.doug@nvc.net. Applications will be accepted until 5pm on April 16, 2024. Full job description and application may be found at <https://www.grotonsd.gov/o/grotoncity/page/employment-options>. For more information, please call 605-397-8422. Equal opportunity employer.

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The Life of Nora Rix



Funeral services for Nora Rix, 93, of Groton will be 11:00 a.m., Thursday, March 28th at St. John's Lutheran Church, Groton. Rev. Jeremy Yeadon will officiate. Burial will follow in Union Cemetery under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Visitation will be held for one hour prior to services.

Nora passed away March 21, 2024 at Angelhaus in Aberdeen.

Nora Anna Lunzman was born on March 11, 1931 in Aberdeen to William and Emilie (Miller) Lunzman. She grew up on a farm near Oberon and attended grade school in Oberon. The family later moved to Aberdeen, where Nora graduated from Central High School. Nora was working at Wheat Growers in Aberdeen when she met William Rix. They were united in marriage on August 23, 1964 in Aberdeen and together they made their home on the family farm north of Groton.

Nora was member of St. John's Lutheran Church, where she was active in Nursery Circle, Ladies Aid, and Quilter's Club. She and Bill dined frequently at Helen's California Kitchen, where they had their own table. Nora loved children, and doted on her great-nieces and nephews.

Celebrating her life are her nephews, Stuart (Stacey) Nelson of Aberdeen, Roger (Pamela) Rix of Groton, nieces, Elaine (Fred) Wolken of Piedmont, Teresa (Larry) Enze of Sioux Falls and many great-nieces and nephews.

Preceding her in death were her parents, her husband in 2001 and her sister, Irma Nelson.

Casketbearers will be Isaac Nelson, Roger Rix, Jarrett Rix and Grant Rix.

Memorials may be directed to Angelhaus, 1717 East Melgaard Road, Aberdeen, SD 57401 or Rosewood Court, 705 North 6th Street, Groton, SD 57445.

We the People

The South Dakota Humanities Council is making available a weekly column -- "We the People" -- that focuses on the U.S. Constitution. It is written by David Adler, who is president of The Alturas Institute, a non-profit organization created to promote the Constitution, gender equality, and civic education.



By David Adler

Chief Justice Oliver Ellsworth: Impeccable Pedigree for a Supreme Court Appointment

President George Washington's nomination in 1796 of Oliver Ellsworth to serve as the third Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court was met with universal approval. Ellsworth boasted a record of experience that few then, and none since, could match. Above all, Ellsworth was a genuine heavyweight in the Constitutional Convention, among a handful of delegates who spoke frequently and authoritatively and played a key role in shaping the final version of the Constitution that the American people ratified in 1787-1788.

Washington, who had known Ellsworth since the Revolutionary War and during his representation of Connecticut in the Continental Congress for six years, observed the intellectual powerhouse at work in the Philadelphia Convention throughout the summer of 1787. As President of the Constitutional Convention, Washington observed Ellsworth's skillful negotiation of the Great Compromise that saved the proceedings from collapse, admired his leadership in crafting Article III of the Constitution—the Judiciary Article—and appreciated his espousal of the awesome power of judicial review, an American invention and major contribution to political science and law. Already regarded as one of the nation's ablest attorneys, Ellsworth demonstrated anew his leadership in championing the separation of powers and checks in balances with the insertion of a judicial check on the legislative and executive branches, to ensure that they did not transgress their boundaries. Ellsworth's credentials and qualifications to serve on the nation's High Bench, based on his participation in the Convention alone, were undeniable.

They were further burnished by his effective leadership as a member of the U.S. Senate, at the time of his appointment. Ellsworth had been the principal author of the Judiciary Act of 1789, the first bill passed by the First Congress, and the most important judicial legislation in the nation's history. The Judiciary Article of the Constitution was not self-executing. Without enactment of a statute, the Supreme Court and lower federal courts could not be called into existence. The 1789 Judiciary Act thus created the Supreme Court and set forth its jurisdiction. Ellsworth, along with William Paterson of New Jersey, who had been a delegate to the Convention and was destined for an appointment to the Supreme Court, were the key members of the Senate committee that drafted the bill. The principal draftsman was Ellsworth; indeed, the last drafts of the legislation were in his handwriting. One of his senatorial opponents declared, "this Vile Bill is a child of his."

The Judiciary Act resolved the question of whether there should be inferior federal courts, in their favor. It established the federal judiciary, with a Supreme Court, consisting of six Justices, as the highest court in the land, as well as a two-tiered system of inferior courts, with district courts located in each state at the base, and three circuit courts organized into the eastern, the middle and the southern circuits, each composed of two Supreme Court Justices and a federal district judge. The federal courts were given limited jurisdiction. The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court was provided for in the form that it has retained ever since. Crucial to the authority of the federal courts and the subsequent history of the nation was that the Supreme Court was given appellate jurisdiction not only over the lower federal courts, but also under Section 25 of the Act, jurisdiction over state courts that involved federal questions. The Supreme Court's power to review state court decisions is what has been called "the keystone of the whole arch of federal judicial power." Without it, the Constitution would be left to the interpretations of 50 state supreme courts, plunging the nation into constitutional chaos and crisis.

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Sen. Ellsworth's appointment to the Court was a major loss to the Senate. "The appointment of the C.J." John Adams wrote to his wife, Abigail, "was a wise Measure," even though by it, "we loose the clearest head and most diligent hand we had in the Senate."

At the time of his appointment to the Court, Ellsworth was 51 years old. A strong Federalist and devout Calvinist who studied theology before switching to the law, Ellsworth had distinguished himself as a young national leader at the Convention, with the likes of other "youngsters" such as James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, and much was expected of him when he became Chief Justice. But poor health, the relatively light calendar of the Court and his acceptance of a diplomatic assignment to France, while serving on the Court for a little more than three years, left him little time to shape the Court's development, let alone become a distinguished Chief Justice. As Chief, he did try, without much success, to initiate the policy of the Supreme Court handing down per curiam opinions or single decisions, for the entire Court as opposed to the English practice of seriatim or separate opinions by individual justices.

While abroad as part of his diplomatic assignment to end the undeclared war with France (1798-1800), Ellsworth resigned the chief justiceship, citing ill health. The timing of his resignation was politically important to President John Adams, who appointed John Marshall, another staunch Federalist, to succeed Ellsworth. Ellsworth returned to Connecticut, where he lived for seven more years.

Death Notice: Eunice Hill-Thome

Eunice Hill-Thome, 95, of Aberdeen passed away Sunday, March 24, 2024 at Avera Mother Joseph Manor, Aberdeen. Services are pending with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

15 N Main St. - Ste. 101
Downtown Groton

Call/Text Paul: 605-397-7460

Call/Text Tina: 605-397-7285



Living Heart Fitness Center

Exercise helps ease arthritis
pain and stiffness. - Mayo Clinic

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Easter Baskets by Tina ~ 605-397-7285



From the Facebook Page of

SDState - College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences

Erdmann represents SDSU at Ag Day at the Pavilion



Meet Tessa Erdmann, our 2023 - 2024 CAFES Advocate, who will spend the day representing SDSU's College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences by advocating for the agricultural industry at Ag Day in the Pavilion!

Tessa is a senior agricultural communications student from Groton, SD, with minors in marketing, public relations, social and digital media and professional writing. On campus, she is an active member of Sigma Alpha Sorority, Little International, Alpha Zeta and is a student employee for CAFES marketing and communications.

Ag Day at the Washington Pavilion in Sioux Falls on behalf of SDSU CAFES, where she and other groups of students within CAFES are representing different clubs and organizations on campus.

Ag Day at the Pavilion allows children and families to learn about agriculture's significance in South Dakota and beyond. Throughout the day, Tessa and Ella Stiefvater, CAFES Prexy Council treasurer, will do a soybean activity with the kids.

"This is my second year attending Ag Day in the Pavilion, and I have really enjoyed having the opportunity to connect with kids and advocate for the agricultural industry," said Tessa. "Allowing kids to have a hands-on agricultural opportunity will help them understand our great industry more!"

GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

Regular School Board Meeting

March 26, 2024 – 6:00 PM – GHS Gymnasium

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed or amended.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

PUBLIC DISCUSSION REGARDING DISTRICT OPT-OUT PROPOSAL

RECESS [Remainder of meeting to be held in GHS Library Conference Room]

OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Open Forum for Public Participation...in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.
2. Program Overview Presentations
 - a. Junior Kindergarten...A. Brudvig
 - b. Kindergarten...A. Gibbs, L. DeHoet
 - c. 1st Grade...C. Fischbach, J. Milbrandt
3. Continued discussion or action regarding football cooperative with Langford School District.
4. Administrative Reports: (a) Superintendent's Report; (b) Principal's Reports; (c) Business Manager Report

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approve request from St. John's Preschool for use of school bus for annual field trip.
2. Consider allowing 6th Grade participation in Track and Field.
3. Adopt Resolution authorizing membership in the SDHSAA for the 2024-25 school year.
4. Adopt Resolution for ASBPT Health Fund and Workers Compensation Fund and approve plan offerings for the 2024-25 school year.
5. Executive session pursuant SDCL1-25-2(1) for personnel and SDCL1-25-2(4) for negotiations.
6. Approve resignation from Shelby Hendrickson, 5th Grade Teacher, at the end of the 2023-24 school year.
7. Approve assignment change for Carrie Cole from 1st Grade to 5th Grade for 2024-25 school year.
8. Approve hiring McKayla Johnston as 1st Grade Teacher for 2024-25 school year.
9. Approve resignation from Rachael Pederson, MS Reading/SS Teacher, at the end of the 2023-24 school year.
10. Approve volunteer assistant track coaches for the 2024 season...Carla Tracy and Bruce Babcock.

ADJOURN

Broton Daily Independent

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BROWN COUNTY
BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING TUESDAY

March 26, 2024 8:45 A.M.

COMMISSIONER'S CHAMBERS, COURTHOUSE ANNEX - 25 MARKET STREET, ABERDEEN SD

1. Call To Order - Pledge of Allegiance
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Opportunity for Public Comment
4. Special Malt Beverage Hearing for Boys & Girls Club
5. Chris Hemen, Weed & Pest Supervisor
 - a. Open Chemical Bids
 - b. Approve purchase of Spray Logger
6. Wade Huntington
 - a. Community Health Services Update & Discuss Agreement
7. Judy Dosch, Building Superintendent
 - a. Court Security Grant
8. Discuss Burn Ban
9. Consent Calendar
 - a. Approval of General Meeting Minutes of March 19, 2024
 - b. Claims/Payroll
 - c. HR Report
 - d. Claim Assignment
 - e. Plats
 - f. Zoning Ordinance – Set Hearing Date/Authorize Advertising
 - g. Lease Agreements
 - h. Abatement
 - i. Travel Request
 - j. Auditor's Report of Accounts
10. Other Business
11. Executive Session (if requested per SDCL 1-25-2)
12. Adjourn

Brown County Commission Meeting

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet, or smartphone.

<https://meet.goto.com/BrCoCommission>

You can also dial in using your phone. United States: [+1 \(872\) 240-3311](tel:+18722403311)

Access Code: 601-168-909 #

Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://meet.goto.com/install>

Public comment provides an opportunity for the public to address the county commission but may not exceed 3 minutes.

Public comment will be limited to 10 minutes (or at the discretion of the board).

Public comment will be accepted virtually when the virtual attendance option is available.

Official Recordings of Commission Meetings along with the Minutes can be found at

<https://www.brown.sd.us/node/454>

“Feeling winded?”

“Well, doc,” the patient was telling me, “I get winded so easily now. I can hardly go to the mailbox without stopping to catch my breath. It did not used to be that way. Do you think something is wrong?”

Many of us have experienced shortness of breath. After a period of inactivity, such as winter or a busy month, when we decide to exercise again, it may be easier to feel winded. That experience can be due to deconditioning, feeling out of shape. A good remedy for that is a gradual increase in exercise, helping us to regain our strength and endurance.

Sometimes we get short of breath for other reasons. A recent infection can be a common cause, giving us a bad cough and leaving us winded for a while. There are several other lung causes like asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, including emphysema and chronic bronchitis, which can leave us short of breath.

However, the feeling of shortness of breath does not necessarily mean there is a problem with the lungs. Shortness of breath can be a symptom of heart disease. A partial or total blockage of an artery in the heart may give someone chest pain, but sometimes shortness of breath could be one of the only symptoms.

One can feel winded from heart failure, when the heart is not pumping as well. As the heart has trouble keeping up, a person can get short of breath from the buildup of fluid, which may cause swelling of the legs and sometimes buildup of fluid in the lungs.

Or, perhaps the shortness of breath is from anemia. If someone is anemic, the hemoglobin level in their blood is low, which reduces the body’s ability to carry oxygen throughout the body. Anemia can have a variety of causes, such as blood loss, low iron or other nutritional deficiencies, or problems with the production of blood cells. Blood loss can be caused from anything from heavy periods to a stomach ulcer. Everything that can result in anemia, can result in shortness of breath.

My patient with shortness of breath from walking to the mailbox came in to see me and we did several tests including a chest x-ray, blood tests, and an EKG. Ultimately, we did a stress test and after an angiogram and stent in the heart, he feels much better and is walking a mile or two nearly every day.

It is important to tell your healthcare provider if you are feeling shortness of breath. While it could be due to anything from your heart, your lungs, being out of shape, or even anxiety, please do not ignore your body if you are feeling winded.

Andrew Ellsworth, M.D. is part of The Prairie Doc® team of physicians and currently practices family medicine in Brookings, South Dakota. Follow The Prairie Doc® at www.prairiedoc.org and on Facebook and instagram featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show celebrating its 22nd season of health information based on science, built on trust, on SDPB and streaming live on Facebook most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.



Andrew Ellsworth, MD

EARTHTALK ™

Dear EarthTalk: Why hasn't biomass caught on more as a renewable energy source? – PJ, via email

Biomass is organic material derived from living or recently living organisms like plants, animals and microorganisms. It can be used as a renewable energy source via combustion, fermentation or conversion to biofuels. Some biomass sources, like oil or alcohol-rich crop residue and animal manure, are widely produced on an industrial scale. As we deplete and intentionally shift away from the pollutive natural gas, oil and coal, optimists believe that biofuel may become a viable widespread renewable alternative.

First-generation biofuels use food crops, like corn and sugarcane, but this diverts resources from food production. Instead, second-generation biofuel uses inedible biomass, like wood and agricultural waste. These are low-cost and can serve also to reduce waste, as they use animal and plant waste that would otherwise go to landfills. The U.S. Department of Energy says using up to a billion tons of biomass each year for biofuel could reduce petroleum consumption by 30 percent and create new domestic jobs.

Biomass proponents call biofuel carbon neutral because the carbon dioxide (CO₂) released during its combustion is offset by the amount that is absorbed by the plants during growth. Others believe this overlooks factors like land use change, biomass processing emissions, and the methane released during decomposition. Biomass combustion also releases carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter, highlighting the environmental and health risks associated with biomass utilization.

It takes decades for biomass-produced carbon to be removed from the atmosphere. Studies suggest that it may even be a dirtier business than fossil fuels, with wood and corn-based ethanol emitting from 1.25 to 1.5 times more CO₂ than coal per kilowatt-hour of electricity generated. Research conducted by Harvard's Jonathan Buonocore suggests that biomass combustion causes more health-related deaths than conventional coal-fired power plants. Moreover, biomass production can contribute to loss of forests and biodiversity, and indirect land use change. Burning biomass can cause significant public health issues, including asthma, heart and respiratory diseases, birth defects, and even death.

Mitigating environmental and health drawbacks and enhancing the effectiveness of current technologies can help make biofuel more viable. Investing in advanced biomass conversion technologies, such as gasification and pyrolysis, can reduce greenhouse gas and toxic byproducts during combustion. Promoting sustainable sourcing practices, including the exclusive use of agricultural and forestry residues rather than dedicated energy crops, can minimize deforestation and habitat destruction.

Biofuels today are more expensive than conventional fuels like natural gas and crude oil. Researchers aim to design processes that better utilize lignin and sugars in biomass. If this can be achieved, biomass-derived aviation fuel could potentially achieve a break-even price as low as \$3.15 per gallon of gasoline-equivalent, offering a competitive edge against traditional jet fuel costs. If we can address these health, environmental and technological challenges, we may well realize the full potential of biofuels.



Once upon a time in the not so distant past a field of canola like this would be turned into biofuel. Credit: Pexels.com.



SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

State accidentally told independent candidates they needed hundreds more signatures than necessary

BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - MARCH 24, 2024 7:00 AM

For more than two months, state officials unintentionally led some potential legislative candidates to believe they needed hundreds more petition signatures than state law requires.

The problem affected independents. Retired Rapid City attorney Jay Davis noticed it.

"I was seeking information on behalf of a prospective candidate who was considering filing as an independent," he said. "I asked how many signatures she would need in her district."

Davis was referencing nominating petitions. To earn a spot on the ballot, candidates need signatures on their petitions from registered voters in their district. The window for circulating and submitting petitions opened Jan. 1 — the same day the erroneous signature guidance was published — and will close for independent candidates on April 30.

The Secretary of State's Office oversees elections in South Dakota. Davis said Rachel Soulek, director of the office's Division of Elections, initially refused to look up the information and told him to find it on the office's website.

"Later, she forwarded me the applicable information from the website, and I was horrified," Davis said.

For example, the list said independent legislative candidates in Sioux Falls-area Districts 12 and 13 needed 1,029 signatures. On March 8, after Davis reported the errors, the numbers were changed to 114 and 88, respectively. Numbers for many other districts were also updated at that time.

State law requires a number of signatures equal to 1% of the votes cast within the district in the last governor's race. The number of people in each legislative district is roughly equal and based on numbers from the 2020 Census, which determined the total population of South Dakota was 886,667. There are 35 legislative districts, making the target number for each 25,333 people. Therefore, even if every person in a district voted in the last governor race, the maximum number of signatures required in any district would be about 250.

But on the erroneous list published by the Secretary of State's Office, independent candidates in Rapid City-area Districts 34 and 35, for example, were listed as needing 454 signatures. On March 8, the figures were changed to 115 and 99, respectively.

Davis doesn't think that fully addresses the problem.

"There may already be people who looked into running as independents for the South Dakota Senate and House who abandoned the idea, after looking at the onerous signature requirements," he said.

Soulek, with the Secretary of State's Office, communicated with South Dakota Searchlight only by email and did not accept phone calls. She offered a lengthy explanation of the events leading up to the publication of the erroneous list. The explanation culminated in a final sentence: "A staff person had an error in our calculations when putting the signature requirements together."

Soulek said the office notified county auditors, who run elections at the county level, once the information was updated.

Davis said the ultimate responsibility lies with the current head of the Secretary of State's Office, Monae Johnson, who did ultimately call him to discuss the error. But, Davis alleged, "my understanding is that some of the numbers for independent signature requirements on their website are still wrong."

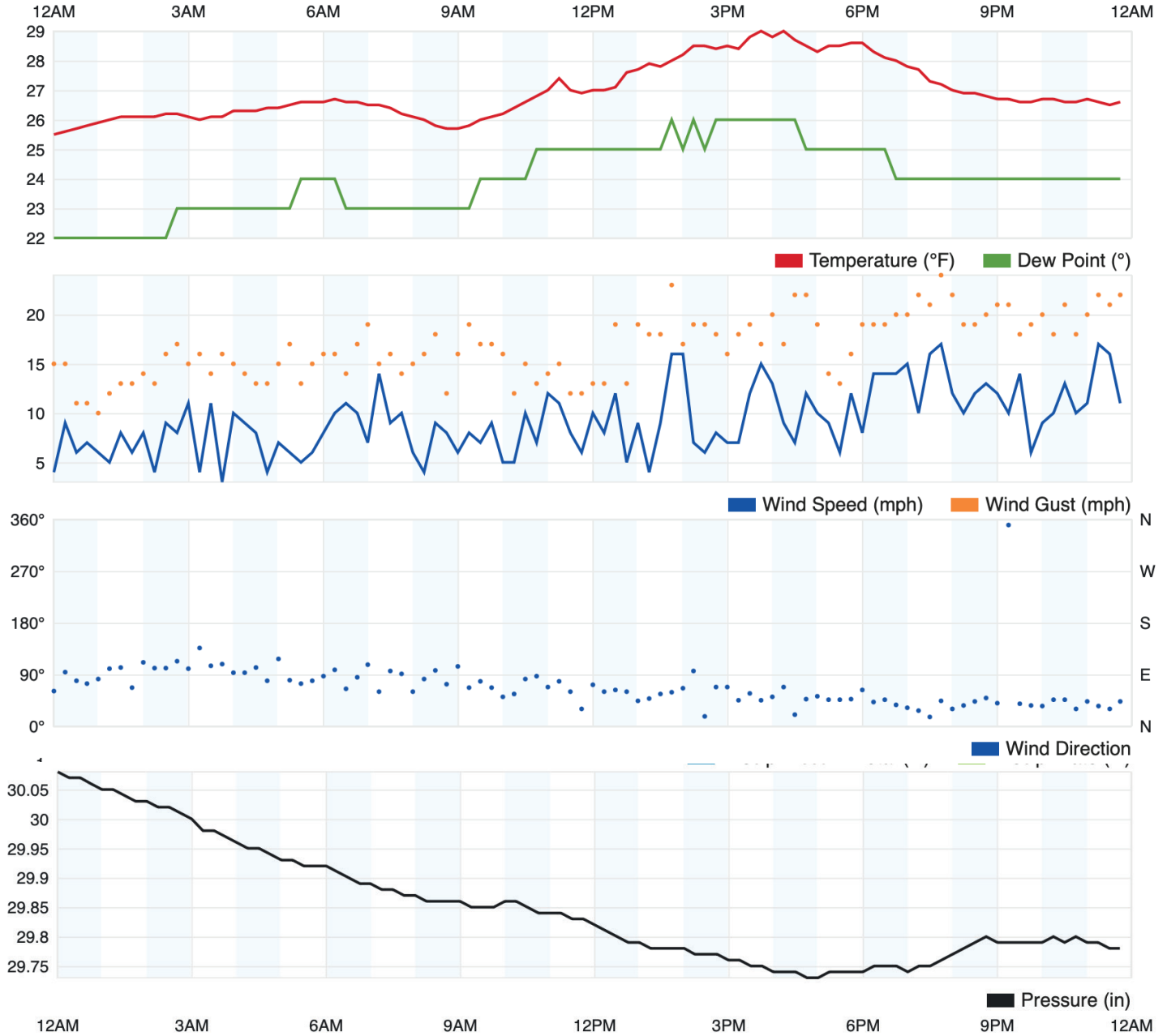
As of Friday afternoon, no independent candidates had submitted nominating petitions to become candidates for legislative offices in the Nov. 5 general election.

There are about 88,000 registered independent voters in the state and 61,000 people registered as non-politically affiliated. There are about 145,000 registered Democrats and 302,00 Republicans.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Winter Weather Advisory
URGENT - WINTER WEATHER MESSAGE
National Weather Service Aberdeen SD
255 AM CDT Mon Mar 25 2024

Brown-Spink-
Including the cities of Aberdeen and Redfield
255 AM CDT Mon Mar 25 2024

...WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY IN EFFECT UNTIL 7 AM CDT TUESDAY...
...WINTER STORM WARNING IS CANCELLED...

* WHAT...Snow and blowing snow. Additional snow accumulations of 1 to 3 inches. Winds gusting as high as 50 mph.

* WHERE...Brown and Spink Counties.

* WHEN...Until 7 AM CDT Tuesday.

* IMPACTS...Plan on slippery road conditions. Blowing snow could significantly reduce visibility. The hazardous conditions could impact the morning or evening commute.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

Slow down and use caution while traveling.

The latest road conditions can be obtained by calling 5 1 1.

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Winter Weather Advisory

Monday

Monday Night



Snow Likely and Blowing Snow

High: 26 °F



Chance Snow and Patchy Blowing Snow

Low: 12 °F

Tuesday



Slight Chance Snow and Patchy Blowing Snow

High: 24 °F

Tuesday Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 2 °F

Wednesday



Sunny

High: 27 °F



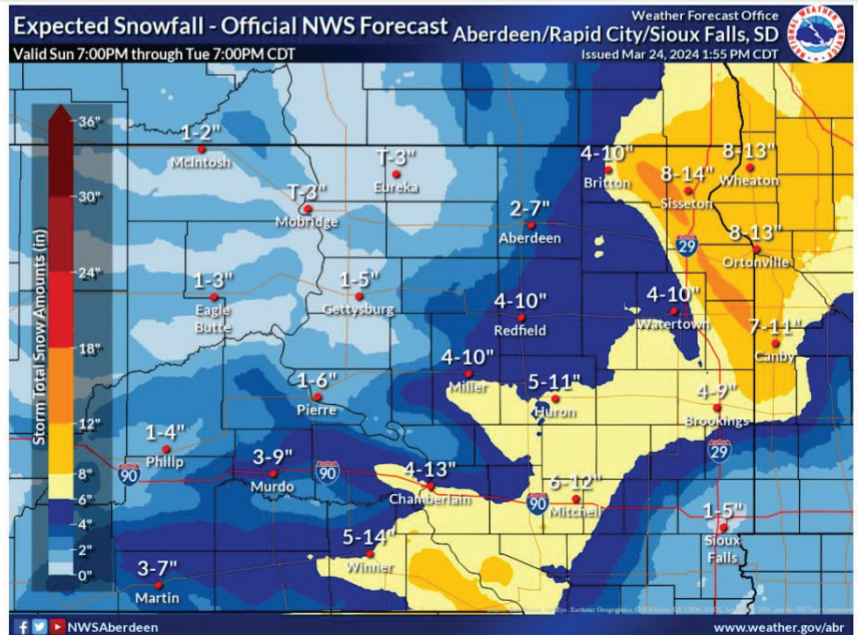
Latest Snowfall Forecast

March 24, 2024
4:20 PM

This Evening Through Tuesday Evening

Key Messages

- Ongoing "lull" in precipitation fills in this evening, particularly east of the James valley.
- Areas of **significant blowing and drifting snow** developing tonight through Monday as winds begin to increase out of the north.
- In general, **lesser snow amounts are forecast compared to 24-48 hours ago**, especially over central/north central SD where not much more snow may fall after today/tonight.



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Confidence continues to increase in regards to receiving significant impacts from this next system. The Winter Storm Watch has been upgraded to a Winter Storm Warning across our forecast area.

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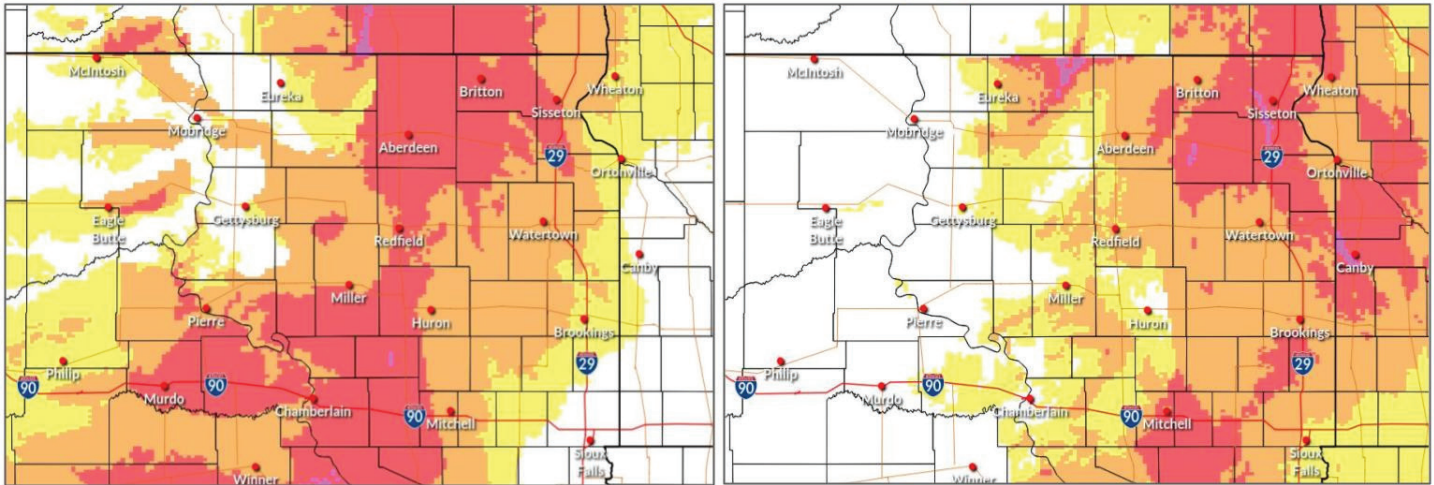
Blowing Snow Impacts - Monday/Tuesday

March 24, 2024
4:20 PM

Significant impacts from blowing snow still showing up in **red** for a good portion of the area

Tonight Through Mid-Day Monday

Monday Night Through Mid-Day Tuesday



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce

Minor ☁️
Patchy Blowing Snow with reduced visibilities expected

Moderate ☁️☁️
Areas of Blowing Snow with reduced visibilities expected

Significant ☁️☁️☁️
Widespread Blowing Snow and greatly reduced visibilities expected

Blizzard ☁️☁️☁️☁️
Significant Blowing Snow possible, travel may be impossible

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Areas where blowing snow is expected to be an issue through mid day Tuesday before



Wind Forecast

March 24, 2024
4:13 PM

Key Messages

- Winds on the increase tonight and Monday, shifting to the north.
- Increased winds increases the potential for blowing and drifting snow.

Winds will be on the increase. Winds will cause blowing and drifting of any newly fallen or falling snow. This will result in difficult to impossible travel conditions tonight/Monday particularly across northeast South Dakota and western Minnesota

	Wind Gust Forecast (mph)																		
	3/24 Sun			3/25 Mon						3/26 Tue									
	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm	12am	3am	6am	9am	12pm	3pm	6pm	9pm
Aberdeen	32	35	37	39	43	46	46	45	44	41	41	41	39	38	44	37	32	29	22
Britton	30	31	35	37	39	43	44	44	43	41	40	39	39	37	44	38	37	31	24
Brookings	25	26	28	29	30	32	32	33	33	36	38	41	40	41	41	39	37	29	21
Chamberlain	23	26	29	38	41	45	45	40	39	39	38	38	35	33	35	31	28	22	13
Clark	31	33	35	37	40	43	45	43	43	41	41	40	40	40	45	40	37	31	22
Eagle Butte	21	29	35	36	38	39	40	39	40	40	37	33	32	31	31	28	25	23	16
Ellendale	29	31	36	39	43	45	47	46	44	43	41	41	40	40	47	41	37	30	24
Eureka	36	38	37	38	40	41	40	40	39	38	36	35	35	33	37	33	31	30	22
Gettysburg	28	35	37	39	41	44	43	41	41	40	38	37	35	36	39	33	31	29	22
Huron	26	30	30	33	38	43	45	43	41	43	45	39	44	44	41	38	33	26	18
Kennebec	23	26	31	36	39	43	43	41	41	40	39	37	37	35	39	35	31	23	15
McIntosh	28	33	37	39	40	40	40	40	40	39	35	32	31	30	29	26	28	24	16
Milbank	23	23	24	25	28	29	29	30	33	37	39	37	39	43	45	43	39	32	28
Miller	23	26	31	37	40	44	43	41	40	40	37	36	36	35	39	33	29	24	17
Mobridge	23	30	35	37	39	39	39	39	38	38	37	35	33	32	31	29	28	26	18
Murdo	21	28	32	36	40	44	45	43	44	41	40	38	35	32	33	30	28	20	12
Pierre	24	29	31	33	37	41	40	38	40	40	37	36	32	30	29	26	28	25	14
Redfield	22	24	31	37	43	45	45	45	43	41	40	38	39	38	41	36	32	28	21
Sisseton	28	28	28	30	31	36	36	36	39	39	40	39	41	43	46	41	40	35	29
Watertown	31	32	31	32	35	38	39	39	40	40	40	38	39	40	44	39	38	32	24
Webster	29	32	36	36	39	44	45	44	46	45	44	41	41	43	53	45	44	38	30
Wheaton	18	20	25	26	29	30	29	29	31	33	35	35	37	39	43	39	38	31	23

Created: 3 pm CDT Sun 3/24/2024 |

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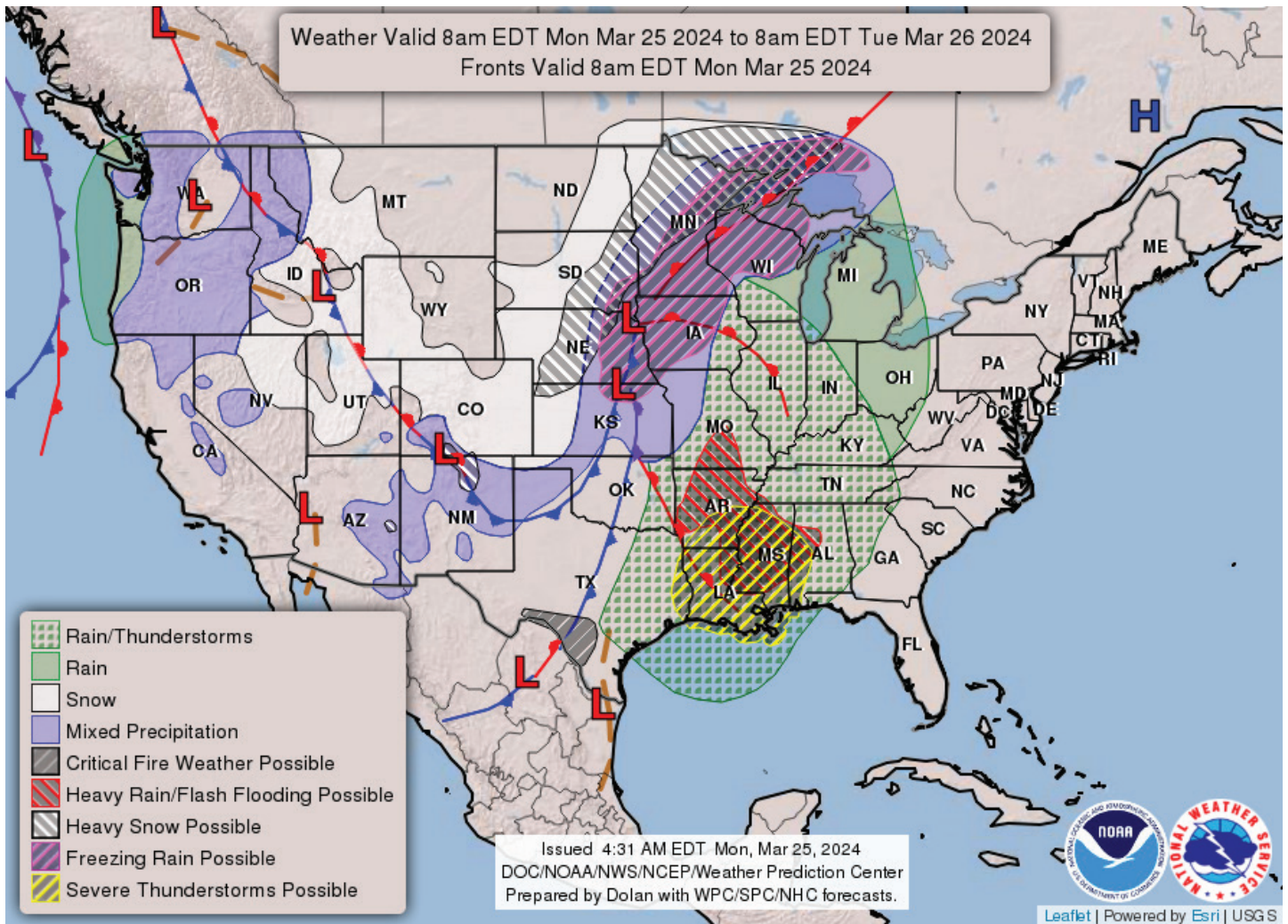
Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 29 °F at 3:35 PM
Low Temp: 26 °F at 12:00 AM
Wind: 24 mph at 7:32 PM
Precip: : 0.36 (about 4")

Day length: 12 hours, 30 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 81 in 1925
Record Low: -10 in 1894
Average High: 47
Average Low: 23
Average Precip in March.: 0.67
Precip to date in March: 0.78
Average Precip to date: 1.84
Precip Year to Date: 0.85
Sunset Tonight: 7:53:28 pm
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:20:52 am



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Today in Weather History

March 25, 2009: Rapid snowmelt and ice jamming caused the Elm River near Westport to rise -above flood stage on March 20th. The Elm River reached an all-time record level of 22.69 feet on March 25th almost 9 feet above flood stage. The previous record was 22.11 feet set on April 10th, 1969. The flood stage for the Elm River at Westport is 14 feet. The city of Westport was evacuated with the flood waters causing damage to many homes and roads in and around Westport. Also, many other roads and agricultural and pastureland along the river were flooded. The Elm River slowly receded and fell below flood stage on March 30th. The flood waters from the Elm River flowed south and into the northern portion of Moccasin Creek. Subsequently, the Moccasin Creek rose as the water flowed south into the city of Aberdeen. Flooding became a concern for Aberdeen and areas along the creek north of Aberdeen. The Governor signed an emergency declaration which allowed the state to help with flood response efforts, including sending 50,000 sandbags to the area. Also, the National Guard was activated to move a variety of heavy equipment. Some sandbagging and a falling Elm River kept the Moccasin Creek from causing any significant flooding in and north of Aberdeen. The creek flooded some township and county roads.

1843 - A second great snowstorm hit the northeastern U.S. The storm produced snow from Maine all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. Natchez MS received three inches of snow, and up to 15 inches buried eastern Tennessee. Coastal Maine received 204 inches of snow that winter. (David Ludlum)

1901: More than 20 people were killed by an estimated F3 tornado that moved across parts of Birmingham, Alabama. The twister cut a 15-mile path from the south side of the city to Avondale and Irondale.

1914 - Society Hill, SC, was buried under 18 inches of snow, establishing a state record. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1934 - A spring storm produced 21 inches of snow at Amarillo TX in 24 hours. However, much of the snow melted as it fell, and as a result, the snow cover was never any deeper than 4.5 inches. (David Ludlum)

1935: Suffocating dust storms frequently occurred in southeast Colorado between the 12th and the 25th of the month. Six people died, and many livestock starved or suffocated. Up to six feet of dust covered the ground. Schools were closed, and tenants deserted many rural homes.

1948 - For the second time in less than a week airplanes were destroyed by a tornado at Tinker AFB in Oklahoma City OK. A March 20th tornado destroyed fifty planes at Tinker AFB causing more than ten million dollars damage, and the March 25th tornado destroyed another thirty-five planes causing six million dollars damage. The first tornado struck without warning, and caused more damage than any previous tornado in the state of Oklahoma. The second tornado was predicted by Fawbush and Miller of the United States Air Force, and their accurate tornado forecast ushered in the modern era of severe weather forecasting. (The Weather Channel) (Storm Data) (The National Severe Storms Forecast Center)

1975 - The town of Sandberg reported a wind gust to 101 mph, a record for the state of California. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Heavy rain left rivers and streams swollen in Kansas and Nebraska, causing considerable crop damage due to flooding of agricultural areas. The Saline River near Wilson Reservoir in central Kansas reached its highest level since 1951. March rainfall at Grand Island NE exceeded their previous record of 5.57 inches. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - An early season heat wave prevailed in the southwestern U.S. The high of 93 degrees at Tucson, AZ, was a new record for March. Windy conditions prevailed across the central and eastern U.S. Winds gusted to 60 mph at Minneapolis MN, and reached 120 mph atop Rendezvous Peak WY. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - A Pacific storm brought wet weather to much of the western third of the country, with heavy snow in some of the higher elevations. La Porte CA was drenched with 3.56 inches of rain in 24 hours. Up to 24 inches of snow blanketed the Sierra Nevada Range. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Temperatures dipped below zero in the Northern Rocky Mountain Region. Hardin MT was the cold spot in the nation with a morning low of 10 degrees below zero. Freezing drizzle was reported in the Southern Plains Region, with afternoon highs only in the 30s from the Southern High Plains to Missouri and Arkansas. (The National Weather Summary)

1992: Hailstones up to four inches in diameter resulted in more than \$60 million in damage in Orlando, Florida. This storm is still the costliest Florida hailstorm on record.

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

IS IT THE END OR THE BEGINNING?

Two men met for prayer early one morning. After reading a passage of Scripture, they knelt in prayer. Said the first, "Lord, it's hard for me to pray. You know that I am at the end of all my resources. I have nothing left. I am totally broken in mind, heart, and spirit!"

Upon hearing his brokenness, his prayer partner put his arm around his shoulder and shouted, "How wonderful! Now you are at the beginning of God's resources."

Mark's Gospel has an exciting story about a ruler and his resources. It reminds us of the importance and necessity of eternal values rather than earthly riches.

Jesus, in speaking of the emphasis we place on money, said, "People with wealth will have a difficult time in getting into heaven." Astonished, one of his disciples asked, "Well, if money won't get us into heaven, what will?"

Calmly He replied, "Humanly speaking, getting into heaven on your own is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God."

Material possessions and our desire to acquire them tend to fix our hearts on the things of this world. When this happens, we lose sight of what is truly valuable: our relationship with God. He becomes unimportant.

For many, it is easier to pass the test of adversity than the test of prosperity. Prosperity places the focus on ourselves, while adversity proves our need for God.

Prayer: Help us to realize, Lord, that unless we place our trust in You and the redeeming love of God, we lose sight of what is important! May we seek Your "way." In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible." Matthew 19:26



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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The Groton Independent Printed & Mailed Weekly Edition

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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
03.22.24

3 8 31 35 44 16

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$1,100,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 38
Mins 50 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:
03.23.24

5 7 12 41 52 4

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$2,400,000

NEXT DRAW: 16 Hrs 53 Mins 50
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:
03.24.24

5 19 30 37 45 13

TOP PRIZE:
\$7,000/week

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 8 Mins 50
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
03.23.24

6 11 16 25 29

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$33,000

NEXT DRAW: 2 Days 17 Hrs 8
Mins 50 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:
03.23.24

18 24 43 46 47 11

TOP PRIZE:
\$10,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 37 Mins 50
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:
03.23.24

6 23 25 34 51 3

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$800,000,000

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 37 Mins 50
Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

News from the Associated Press

The Latest | Aid groups describe an 'unimaginable' situation after visiting a packed Gaza hospital

By The Associated Press undefined

Aid groups that visited a packed Gaza hospital described an "unimaginable" situation in which large open wounds were left untreated.

An emergency medical team organized by three aid groups spent two weeks carrying out surgeries and other care at the European Gaza Hospital near Khan Younis. The southern city has seen heavy fighting between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants since the start of the year.

In a statement released Monday, the team said healthcare workers had been forced to evacuate or were unable to access the hospital. It said Israeli restrictions had led to shortages of medical supplies, including basics like gauze and plates and screws used to stabilize broken bones.

The visiting surgeons "reported large infected open wounds on patients and having to administer emergency nutritional supplies to patients as the lack of food was jeopardizing patient treatment."

International aid officials say the entire population of the Gaza Strip — 2.3 million people — is suffering from food insecurity and that famine is imminent in the hard-hit north.

More than 32,000 people have been killed in the territory, and more than 74,000 wounded, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which doesn't differentiate between civilians and combatants in its counts. It says women and children make up two-thirds of the dead.

Some 1,200 people were killed on Oct. 7 when Palestinian militants launched a surprise attack out of Gaza, triggering the war, and abducted another 250 people. Hamas is still believed to be holding some 100 Israelis hostage, as well as the remains of 30 others.

Currently:

- Palestinians describe bodies and ambulances crushed in Israel's ongoing raid at Gaza's main hospital
- UN to vote on resolution demanding a cease-fire in Gaza during current Muslim holy month of Ramadan
- Thousands of Christians attend Palm Sunday celebrations in Jerusalem against a backdrop of war
- Israeli airstrike in northeastern Lebanon wounds 3, local official says
- Find more of AP's coverage at <https://apnews.com/hub/israel-hamas-war>.

Here's the latest:

ISRAELI AIRSTRIKE KILLS AT LEAST 21 IN CENTRAL GAZA, PALESTINIAN HEALTH OFFICIALS SAY
DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip — Palestinian health officials say an Israeli airstrike on an apartment block in central Gaza killed at least 21 Palestinians from two extended families.

The strike late Sunday killed 10 members of the Salman family and 11 members of the Buhesi family, according to hospital records. An Associated Press reporter saw the bodies at the hospital in the central town of Deir al-Balah.

The Israeli military says it tries to avoid harming civilians and blames civilian casualties on Hamas because the militants fight in dense, residential neighborhoods. But the military rarely comments on individual strikes, which often kill women and children.

The war broke out on Oct. 7 when militants from Gaza stormed into southern Israel, killing at least 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking another 250 hostage.

In response, Israel launched one of the deadliest and most destructive military campaigns in recent history. Gaza's Health Ministry says over 32,000 Palestinians have been killed. It does not differentiate between civilian and combatant casualties but says women and children make up around two-thirds of those killed.

AID GROUPS DESCRIBE 'UNIMAGINABLE' SITUATION IN GAZA HOSPITAL

RAFAH, Gaza Strip — Aid groups that visited a packed Gaza hospital described an "unimaginable" situation in which large open wounds were left untreated.

An emergency medical team organized by three aid groups spent two weeks carrying out surgeries and

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other care at the European Gaza Hospital near Khan Younis. The southern city has seen heavy fighting between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants since the start of the year.

The hospital has expanded to 1,000 beds from its original capacity of 200 to accommodate patients from Nasser Hospital, the main hospital in Khan Younis, which Israeli forces raided last month. There are also an estimated 22,000 people sheltering at the European Gaza Hospital.

The visiting surgeons "reported large infected open wounds on patients and having to administer emergency nutritional supplies to patients as the lack of food was jeopardizing patient treatment."

In a statement released Monday, the team said healthcare workers had been forced to evacuate or were unable to access the hospital. It said Israeli restrictions had led to shortages of medical supplies, including basics like gauze and plates and screws used to stabilize broken bones.

Israel accuses Hamas of using hospitals and other civilian facilities to shield its fighters and has raided a number of medical facilities since the start of the war. Most of Gaza's hospitals have been forced to shut down, even as scores are killed and wounded each day in Israeli strikes.

Israel's offensive has killed over 32,000 Palestinians, and experts warn that even more are at risk of dying from disease and starvation.

The war began on Oct. 7, when Hamas-led militants stormed into Israel and killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted around 250 people.

The emergency medical team was organized by Medical Aid for Palestinians, the International Rescue Committee and the Palestine Children's Relief Fund.

UN SET TO VOTE ON RESOLUTION DEMANDING IMMEDIATE CEASE-FIRE

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. Security Council is set to vote Monday on a resolution demanding an immediate humanitarian cease-fire in Gaza during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

The vote comes after Russia and China vetoed a U.S.-sponsored resolution Friday that would have supported "an immediate and sustained cease-fire" in the Israeli-Hamas conflict.

The United States warned that the resolution to be voted on Monday morning could hurt negotiations to halt hostilities by the U.S., Egypt and Qatar, raising the possibility of another veto, this time by the Americans.

The resolution, put forward by the 10 elected council members, is backed by Russia and China and the 22-nation Arab Group at the United Nations.

THOUSANDS OF CHRISTIANS MARK PALM SUNDAY IN JERUSALEM

JERUSALEM — Thousands of Christian faithful attended Palm Sunday celebrations at Jerusalem's sacred Mount of Olives, marking the first day of Holy Week as conflict surges across the region.

Pilgrims waved branches and fronds in the air, items that were placed before Jesus' feet as he was greeted by cheering crowds during his entrance into Jerusalem, according to the Bible. Earlier Sunday, Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre — revered as the site of Jesus's crucifixion — also held a service.

The annual celebration came as the Israel-Hamas war rages on in Gaza. However, the conflict appeared to have had little effect on the procession, which swelled to a similar size as last year.

The celebration marks the beginning of the most somber week in the Christian calendar, which marks Jesus' crucifixion on Good Friday and his resurrection on Easter.

ISRAELI AIRSTRIKE HITS LEBANON, WOUNDING AT LEAST 3 PEOPLE

BEIRUT — An Israeli airstrike deep in northeastern Lebanon early Sunday wounded at least three people, a local official said.

The airstrike near the city of Baalbek, a stronghold of Lebanon's militant Hezbollah group, was the latest to hit the area in recent weeks.

The strike occurred a few minutes after midnight and wounded three people according to Baalbek's mayor, Bachir Khodr, who posted the news on X.

It was not immediately clear what was struck. The strike came hours after Hezbollah said it used two drones carrying explosives to attack an Israeli Iron Dome missile defense system in the northern Israeli town of Kfar Blum.

The Israeli military said warplanes attacked a workshop used by Hezbollah for military activities. It added

that after the strike some 50 rockets were fired from Lebanon toward Israel, saying some were shot down and others fell in open areas.

Senegalese await the outcome of a peaceful presidential vote, following months of unrest

By BABACAR DIONE and JACK THOMPSON Associated Press

DAKAR, Senegal (AP) — Senegalese anxiously awaited the results of a presidential election Monday, following months of uncertainty and unrest that tested the country's reputation as a stable democracy in a region rife with coups.

The vote Sunday was largely peaceful with a high turnout, observers said. Results from polling stations that had completed counting were posted overnight on social media with official announcements expected later this week.

More than 7 million people were registered to vote in a country of roughly 17 million. To win in the first round, a candidate must gain more than 50% or it goes to a runoff.

Analysts say a second round is likely, between opposition candidate Bassirou Diomaye Faye and former Prime Minister Amadou Ba, the candidate for the governing party.

Some opposition supporters Sunday night were adamant their candidate had already won. In the capital, Dakar, some people sat on car rooftops chanting, while others carried flags, banners and set off fireworks saying Faye would win outright.

"The news is circulating ... there will be no second round," said Dime Jueye, a local vendor.

This is Senegal's fourth democratic transfer of power since gaining independence from France more than six decades ago. It took place one month later than initially scheduled after President Macky Sall tried to delay it until the end of the year. Sall is constitutionally barred from seeking a third term and is expected to step down on April 2 when his mandate ends.

After the polls closed Sunday, voters praised the peaceful outcome amid concerns after months of deadly protests ignited last summer by the jailing of the popular opposition leader Ousmane Sonko and concerns that the president wanted to stay in power. Rights groups said dozens were killed, while hundreds more were jailed.

In a move that defused tensions just ahead of the election, Sonko was released after months in prison along with Faye, to jubilant celebrations on the streets of Dakar. Sonko was barred from the race in January due to a prior conviction and Faye ran in his place.

"Our democracy will emerge stronger from these results," Ndeye Sow, 27, told The Associated Press. "We're delighted, there was no violence here serenity is the order of the day," she said.

But the atmosphere remained tense in some parts of the country as votes were counted. Locals pelted a visiting government delegation with jeers and stones in the northern fishing town of Saint Louis after they entered a closed polling station.

4 men charged in Moscow attack, showing signs of beatings at hearing as court says 2 accept guilt

MOSCOW (AP) — Four men accused of staging the Russia concert hall attack that killed more than 130 people appeared before a Moscow court Sunday on terrorism charges showing signs of severe beatings. One appeared to be barely conscious during the hearing.

Court statements said two of the suspects accepted their guilt in the assault, though the men's condition raised questions about whether they were speaking freely. There had been conflicting reports in Russian media outlets that said three or all four men admitted culpability.

The investigators charged Dalerdzhon Mirzoyev, 32; Saidakrami Rachabalizoda, 30; Shamsidin Fariduni, 25; and Mukhammadsobir Faizov, 19, with committing a terrorist attack resulting in the death of others. The offense carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

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Moscow's Basmany District Court ordered that the men, all of whom were identified in the media as citizens of Tajikistan, be held in custody until May 22 pending investigation and trial.

Russian media had reported that the men were tortured during interrogation by the security services, and Mirzoyev, Rachabalizoda and Fariduni showed signs of heavy bruising, including swollen faces.

Rachabalizoda also had a heavily bandaged ear. Russian media said Saturday that one of the suspects had his ear cut off during interrogation. The Associated Press couldn't verify the report or the videos purporting to show this.

The fourth suspect, Faizov, was brought to court from a hospital in a wheelchair and sat with his eyes closed throughout the proceedings. He was attended by medics while in court, where he wore a hospital gown and trousers and was seen with multiple cuts.

Court officials said Mirzoyev and Rachabalizoda admitted guilt for the attack after being charged.

The hearings came as Russia observed a national day of mourning for the attack Friday on the suburban Crocus City Hall concert venue that killed at least 137 people.

The attack, which has been claimed by an affiliate of the Islamic State group, was the deadliest on Russian soil in years.

Russian authorities arrested the four suspected attackers Saturday, with seven more people detained on suspicion of involvement in the attack, Russian President Vladimir Putin said in an address to the nation Saturday night. He sought to tie the attack to Ukraine and claimed the assailants were captured while fleeing there. Kyiv has firmly denied involvement.

Events at cultural institutions were canceled Sunday, flags were lowered to half-staff and television entertainment and advertising were suspended, according to state news agency RIA Novosti. A steady stream of people added to a makeshift memorial near the burned-out concert hall, creating a huge mound of flowers.

"People came to a concert, some people came to relax with their families, and any one of us could have been in that situation. And I want to express my condolences to all the families that were affected here and I want to pay tribute to these people," Andrey Kondakov, one of the mourners who came to lay flowers at the memorial, told AP.

"It is a tragedy that has affected our entire country," kindergarten employee Marina Korshunova said. "It just doesn't even make sense that small children were affected by this event." Three children were among the dead.

Rescuers continued to search the damaged building and the death toll rose as more bodies were found as family and friends of some of those still missing waiting for news. Moscow's Department of Health said Sunday it had begun identifying the bodies of those killed via DNA testing, saying the process would take at least two weeks.

Igor Pogadaev was desperately seeking any details about his wife, Yana Pogadaeva, who went to the attack concert. The last he heard from her was when she sent him two photos from the Crocus City Hall music venue.

After Pogadaev saw the reports of gunmen opening fire on concertgoers, he rushed to the site, but couldn't find her in the numerous ambulances or among the hundreds of people who had made their way out of the venue.

"I went around, searched, I asked everyone, I showed photographs. No one saw anything, no one could say anything," Pogadaev told AP in a video message.

He watched flames bursting out of the building as he made frantic calls to a hotline for relatives of the victims, but received no information.

As the death toll mounted Saturday, Pogadaev scoured hospitals in the Russian capital and the Moscow region, looking for information on newly admitted patients.

His wife wasn't among the 182 reported injured, nor on the list of 60 victims authorities had already identified, he said.

The Moscow region's branch of the Emergency Ministry posted a video Sunday showing equipment dismantling the damaged music venue to give rescuers access.

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Putin has called the attack "a bloody, barbaric terrorist act" and said Russian authorities captured the four suspects as they were trying to escape to Ukraine through a "window" prepared for them on the Ukrainian side of the border.

Russian media broadcast videos that apparently showed the detention and interrogation of the suspects, including one who told the cameras he was approached by an unidentified assistant to an Islamic preacher via a messaging app and paid to take part in the raid.

Putin didn't mention IS in his speech to the nation, and Kyiv accused him and other Russian politicians of falsely linking Ukraine to the assault to stoke fervor for Russia's fight in Ukraine, which recently entered its third year.

U.S. intelligence officials said they had confirmed the IS affiliate's claim.

"ISIS bears sole responsibility for this attack. There was no Ukrainian involvement whatsoever," National Security Council spokeswoman Adrienne Watson said in a statement.

The U.S. shared information with Russia in early March about a planned terrorist attack in Moscow, and issued a public warning to Americans in Russia, Watson said.

The raid was a major embarrassment for Putin and happened just days after he cemented his grip on the country for another six years in a vote that followed the harshest crackdown on dissent since the Soviet times.

Some commentators on Russian social media questioned how authorities, who have relentlessly suppressed any opposition activities and prosecuted critics, failed to prevent the attack despite the U.S. warnings.

IS, which fought against Russia during its intervention in the Syrian civil war, has long targeted Russia. In a statement posted by the group's Amaq news agency, the IS Afghanistan affiliate said that it had attacked a large gathering of "Christians" in Krasnogorsk.

The group issued a new statement Saturday on Amaq, saying the attack was carried out by four men who used automatic rifles, a pistol, knives and firebombs. It said the assailants fired at the crowd and used knives to kill some concertgoers, casting the raid as part of the Islamic State group's ongoing war with countries that it says are fighting against Islam.

In October 2015, a bomb planted by IS downed a Russian passenger plane over Sinai, killing all 224 people on board, most of them Russian vacationers returning from Egypt.

The group, which operates mainly in Syria and Iraq but also in Afghanistan and Africa, also has claimed responsibility for several attacks in Russia's volatile Caucasus and other regions in past years. It recruited fighters from Russia and other parts of the former Soviet Union.

How the deadliest attack on Russian soil in years unfolded over the weekend

By DASHA LITVINOVA and KOSTYA MANENKOV Associated Press

The auditorium at Crocus City Hall was about three-quarters full, with the crowd waiting to see Picnic, a band popular since the Soviet days of the early 1980s. But the concert was sold out in the 6,200-seat hall, so some of the audience was still likely getting food or were shedding their heavy coats in the cloakroom.

It was 7-10 minutes before the start of the show, scheduled for 8 p.m., said concertgoer Dave Primov.

Then came the popping sounds.

"Initially I thought: fireworks or something like that..." Primov told The Associated Press. "I looked at my colleague, and he also said: 'Fireworks, probably.'"

But it wasn't pyrotechnics. At least four khaki-clad men with automatic weapons were in the building, firing incessantly. Then they set the concert hall on fire.

It was the start of the deadliest attack on Russian soil in years that left 137 people dead and more than 180 more injured in what President Vladimir Putin called "a bloody, barbaric terrorist act." Although he sought to tie Ukraine to it, an affiliate of the Islamic State group claimed responsibility — which U.S.

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intelligence officials confirmed. Kyiv denied any involvement.

Four suspects were arrested in Russia's Bryansk region. Identified in Russian media as Tajik nationals, they were charged with carrying out a terrorist act and face a life sentence. They appeared before a Moscow court on Sunday night showing signs of severe beatings.

FRIDAY NIGHT

Crocus City Hall is a large entertainment and shopping complex in Krasnogorsk, a suburb on the north-western edge of Moscow. It was built by Azerbaijan-born billionaire and property developer Aras Agalarov, who had ties to Donald Trump before he became U.S. president. While Trump was a co-owner of the Miss Universe beauty pageant, he signed an agreement with Agalarov to hold the event at Crocus in 2013.

On Friday night, its vast hallways became a scene of slaughter as the gunmen entered and made their way to the auditorium, firing at anyone nearby, sometimes at point-blank range.

Videos taken by those in the hallways and in the auditorium showed people screaming and trying to flee as the gunmen continued firing shots. Some hid behind the dark-red seats and tried to crawl toward the exits, according to footage and accounts of survivors reported in the media.

In one video, a young man says into the camera, with gunshots ringing out, "They set the auditorium on fire. The auditorium is on fire." For a moment, flames could be seen in a corner of the theater.

Primov and others were able to leave the auditorium before the gunmen got to it, he told AP. It took him about 25 minutes to leave the building altogether.

He described the scene as complete chaos: The panic-stricken people tried to find exits, with gunmen still roaming through it and firing; people fell and collided with each other as they ran; men broke down locked doors, hoping they led to safety.

"We don't know what's ahead. We don't know what is behind this door. We don't know what is going on outside, maybe we're encircled (by the attackers), maybe someone is waiting there," Primov said.

Another survivor who identified herself only as Maria, echoed Primov: "This uncertainty, where to go, what to do, it scared (us) the most as every person there had no idea what was happening."

The musicians of Picnic never made it onstage and left the building shortly after the attack began, its representative Yury Chernyshevsky told AP by phone shortly after news of the shooting broke. Asked if the band was safe, he responded: "How much safety can there be at this point? We hope we're safe."

By 8:30 p.m., a massive fire raged inside the building, with thick, black smoke billowing from the roof that later collapsed. Russian media reported explosions inside, and it wasn't clear whether they were triggered by the gunmen or were caused by the blaze.

Outside, the building was bathed in neon blue from the blinking lights of dozens of ambulances, police and firetrucks. Helicopters dumped water into the blaze.

A special force of the Russian National Guard arrived and searched for the gunmen. Authorities announced the attack resulted in deaths and injuries, without giving numbers, and said they were investigating it as a terrorist act.

Various officials – from Moscow regional Gov. Andrei Vorobyov to Interior Minister Vladimir Kolokoltsev – arrived on the scene.

Elsewhere in Russia, authorities tightened security and canceled big events scheduled for the weekend. In the second-largest city of St. Petersburg, two malls were evacuated, according to media reports.

Putin made no statements Friday night.

About 11 p.m., the Kremlin issued a terse statement saying Putin was informed "within minutes" of the shooting, was "constantly receiving" updates from government agencies, and issued the necessary orders, according to spokesman Dmitry Peskov, who did not elaborate.

SATURDAY

The death toll rose overnight and throughout Saturday as more bodies were discovered at Crocus City Hall, including some found in stairwells and a restroom.

Putin, who on March 17 secured a fifth term in office in an election with no real competition, didn't address the nation until Saturday afternoon -- more than 19 hours after news of the attack broke.

Throughout the night, in Russia and abroad, discussions swirled about who was responsible for the

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brazen attack. Authorities in Ukraine, invaded by Russia more than two years ago, swiftly and vehemently denied any involvement. The denials were quickly backed by U.S. officials, drawing a sharp reaction from Russian officials.

"On what grounds officials in Washington in the middle of a tragedy are making conclusions about someone's noncomplicity?" Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said in an online statement. "If the U.S. has or had reliable information about it, they should immediately pass it on to the Russian side. If they don't, then the White House has no right to hand out absolution."

Several hours after the attack began, an affiliate of the Islamic State group claimed responsibility, but some Russian state media personalities denounced it as fake.

"So far, it looks like an attempt to create a false trail," state TV journalist Andrei Medvedev wrote on Telegram.

On Saturday, Russian authorities sought to tie Ukraine to the attack. The Federal Security Service, or FSB, reported arresting four gunmen in the border region of Bryansk, saying they were headed for Ukraine and had unspecified "contacts on the Ukrainian side." It didn't reveal any details of the manhunt but praised various law enforcement and security agencies for "acting in concert," and saying that 11 people in total were arrested.

In his afternoon address, Putin called the attack "a bloody, barbaric terrorist act."

He also reiterated the narrative, saying without evidence that "a window" was prepared for the assailants to cross into Ukraine. He stopped short, however, of blaming Kyiv for orchestrating the attack. He did not mention the claim of responsibility by the Islamic State affiliate.

He also stopped short of announcing any drastic measures in the wake of the attack, such as lifting a moratorium on capital punishment, starting another wave of mobilization into the army or even escalating hostilities in Ukraine — something Kremlin critics have suggested might be in store.

Moscow's Department of Health said identifying the bodies of the dead will take at least two weeks.

SUNDAY

Sunday was declared a day of national mourning. Events were canceled and flags were lowered to half-staff.

At the burned-out and smoldering Crocus City Hall, a steady stream of people came to lay flowers at a makeshift memorial.

Throughout the day, a heavy police presence was seen at Basmany District Court in Moscow for the anticipated arrival of the four suspects. Russia's Investigative Committee released photos of them at its headquarters in Moscow.

Shortly before 11 p.m. — about 51 hours after the shooting began — the suspects, one by one, appeared in court for their pretrial hearings.

Bruises were visible on their faces; one had a bandaged ear; another was in a wheelchair and hospital gown. According to independent news outlet Mediazona, whose reporters attended the hearings, he was brought in from intensive care.

How he was hurt wasn't immediately clear. Unconfirmed Russian media reports suggested he was wounded during the manhunt.

The court said two of the suspects admitted guilt, though the men's conditions raised questions about whether they did so freely.

The suspects, identified in Russian media as Tajik nationals, were charged with carrying out a terrorist act and face a life sentence.

North Korea says Japan's prime minister offered to meet with leader Kim Jong Un soon

By HYUNG-JIN KIM and KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea said Monday that Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida offered to meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un "as soon as possible," but stressed that prospects

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for their countries first summit in about 20 years would depend on Tokyo tolerating its weapons program and ignoring its past abductions of Japanese nationals.

In a parliamentary session, Kishida said that a meeting with Kim is "crucial" to resolve the abduction issue, a major sticking point in bilateral ties, and that his government has been using various channels to hold the summit.

Kim's sister and senior official, Kim Yo Jong, said in a statement that Kishida recently used an unspecified channel to convey his position that he wants to meet Kim Jong Un in person "as soon as possible."

She said there will be no breakthrough in North Korea-Japan relations as long as Kishida's government is engrossed in the abduction issue and interferes in the North's "exercise of our sovereign right," apparently referring to the North's weapons testing activities.

"The history of the DPRK-Japan relations gives a lesson that it is impossible to improve the bilateral relations full of distrust and misunderstanding, only with an idea to set out on a summit meeting," Kim Yo Jong said, using the abbreviation of the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

"If Japan truly wants to improve the bilateral relations and contribute to ensuring regional peace and stability as a close neighbor of the DPRK, it is necessary for it to make a political decision for strategic option conformed to its overall interests," she said.

In February, Kim Yo Jong issued a similar statement on bilateral ties, saying North Korea was open to improving relationships with Japan and even inviting Kishida to Pyongyang. But she said those would be possible only if Tokyo stops taking issue with North Korea's legitimate right to self-defense and the abduction issue.

Some experts say North Korea is seeking to improve ties with Japan as a way to weaken a trilateral Tokyo-Seoul-Washington security partnership, while Kishida also wants to use possible progress in the abduction issue to increase his declining approval rating at home.

North Korea's advancing nuclear and missile arsenals pose a major security threat to Japan as well as South Korea and the United States. The three countries have expanded their trilateral training exercises in response to the North's provocative run of weapons tests since 2022. Japan and South Korea are two of America's key allies in the region, together hosting about 80,000 U.S. troops on their territories.

North Korea and Japan don't have diplomatic ties, and their relations have been overshadowed by North Korea's nuclear program, the abduction issue and Japan's 1910-45 colonization of the Korean Peninsula. Japan's colonial wrongdoing is a source of on-again, off-again history wrangling between Tokyo and Seoul, as well.

After years of denial, North Korea acknowledged in an unprecedented 2002 summit between Kim Jong Il, the late father of Kim Jong Un, and then-Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi that its agents had kidnapped 13 Japanese, mainly to train spies in Japanese language and culture. It allowed five of them to return to Japan that year, but said the others had died. Japan thinks at least some of them may still be alive, and believes hundreds more may also have been abducted.

In 2004, Koizumi made a second visit to North Korea and met Kim Jong Il again. That was the last summit between the leaders of the two countries.

North Korea and Japan had been scheduled to play a World Cup qualifier on Tuesday in Pyongyang, but FIFA, soccer's governing body, said Saturday it canceled the match. North Korea recently said it couldn't host Japan and requested a neutral venue "due to unavoidable circumstances," according to the Asian Football Confederation.

There are concerns North Korea could further dial up pressure on its rivals and intensify its weapons testing activities in what is an election year in both the United States and South Korea. Kim Jong Un has supervised a series of missile tests and other military drills this year.

Earlier Monday, North Korea's state media reported that Kim Jong Un supervised a tank exercise and encouraged his armored forces to sharpen war preparations in the face of growing tensions with South Korea.

While most analysts doubt Kim is genuinely preparing for war, South Korean officials have raised the possibility of smaller provocations in border regions, including the disputed western sea boundary between the Koreas that has been the site of bloody skirmishes in past years.

Storms sweep the US from coast to coast causing frigid temps, power outages and traffic accidents

By STEVE LeBLANC Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Heavy rain and quarter-sized hail fell in Southern California Sunday as the National Weather Service predicted lightning and wind gusts approaching 60 mph (97 kph) in the mountain area earlier in the day.

The California storm was moving south from the Sierra Nevada, where areas around Lake Tahoe received about a foot (30 cm) of new snow and Mammoth Mountain reported up to 18 inches (45 cm) by Sunday morning. A day earlier, the resort was forced to close several ski lifts after a 91-mph (147-kph) wind gust was recorded.

A 35-year-old woman was rescued after being swept away in the storm-swollen Los Angeles River, the LA Fire Department said. She was airlifted to a hospital with minor injuries and hypothermia, the department said.

The National Weather Service also warned of what it called a significant winter storm over central regions of the country through Monday.

"The winter storm will be high-impact and an extensive system producing widespread heavy snow and gusty winds that will persist over parts of the Northern Plains and Upper Midwest," the agency said in an online post.

Heavy snow is expected to spread across central and eastern Montana and expand into the northern Plains and upper Midwest through Sunday and into Monday. There is a greater than 70% chance of at least 8 inches (20 centimeters) of snow moving from central South Dakota to northeastern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin, the weather service reported.

Police across the Northeast reported hundreds of traffic accidents as cars spun out and drivers grappled with icy roads, while Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia and Boston also saw heavy rain and flooding.

Thousands of hardy souls across New England spent Sunday digging out after a major weekend storm dumped more than 2 feet (0.6 meters) of snow in some areas, which caused multiple road accidents, downed power lines and trees and left hundreds of thousands in the dark, some perhaps for days, in Vermont, New Hampshire and most of Maine.

Many areas of the Northeast saw totals of 8 inches to 12 inches (20 to 30 centimeters) of snow, and some of the highest totals exceeded 30 inches (76 centimeters) in south central Vermont, said Zack Taylor, a meteorologist for the National Weather Service.

"So overall, it was a pretty significant winter storm and for some areas that was some of the most snow they've seen all winter with a single storm," Taylor said.

Central Maine Power, the state's largest utility, said crews began clearing damage and fixing downed lines Sunday, but the company anticipated a multi-day effort in areas hit hardest by the storm. By late Sunday, about 170,000 customers were without power in Maine.

"Damage to trees, poles, and wires was significant overnight on Saturday, and our assessors are taking stock of the damage today so we can begin restoring power to our customers as quickly and as safely as possible," Central Maine Power spokesman Jon Breed said.

In Portland, Maine, city officials opened a warming center at the East End Community School for residents without power who needed a warm place to visit, charge electronics or sleep overnight from Sunday evening to Monday morning.

Another 54,000 customers were without power in New Hampshire. The New Hampshire Department of Safety announced Sunday it had activated an emergency operations center to help local communities clean up from the storm, including those with significant power outages.

In New York, more than 57,000 customers were without power late Sunday, down from more than 90,000 earlier in the day. Areas north of New York City were among the hardest hit, according to online maps from National Grid and PowerOutage.us, a power outage tracking website.

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In New York City, floodwaters snarled subway service, closed part of the Cross Island Parkway and trapped motorists on flooded roads through Central Park, where more than 3.5 inches (9 centimeters) of rain fell. On Fifth Avenue, a giant tree fell over several cars, prompting a road closure.

In Lodi, New Jersey, flooding from the Saddle River inundated nearby roads.

The combination of sleet, freezing rain and heavy wet snow that took down trees and power lines also was blamed for hundreds of delayed and canceled flights at area airports.

Fans of cold weather, including skiers, reveled in the snow from coast to coast.

Kevin Bell, vice president of marketing for Loon Mountain in New Hampshire's White Mountains, said the more snow New England gets, the better it is for ski resorts operating in the late season.

Taylor said another significant winter storm is developing in the West and will continue through Monday across much of the Rockies, the Plains and the upper Midwest. The National Weather Service warned of heavy snow and blizzard conditions for the northern Plains and Upper Midwest persisting to Tuesday.

That system is expected to bring heavy snowfall across portions of Wisconsin, Minnesota, much of the Dakotas and even down into Nebraska and western Kansas with the potential of 8 to 12 inches of snow, with higher amounts across the eastern Dakotas and portions of central Minnesota, Taylor said.

"We're looking at a pretty strong area of low pressure that'll develop across Kansas tonight and then quickly lift up toward the upper Midwest by late Monday into early Tuesday," he said.

A winter weather advisory also was issued through Sunday night for parts of northern Arizona, the Grand Canyon and Flagstaff to the New Mexico border with up to a half foot (15 centimeters) of snow possible at upper elevations and winds gusting to 40 mph (64 kph).

The weather service said snow showers were expected through Sunday night at elevations around 5,000 to 6,000 feet (1.5 to 1.8 kilometers).

Unsettled weather with additional rain and snow showers were forecast for the Flagstaff, Arizona, area Monday and Tuesday with another storm system potentially moving into northern Arizona next weekend.

TikTok bill faces uncertain fate in the Senate as legislation to regulate tech industry has stalled

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The young voices in the messages left for North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis were laughing, but the words were ominous.

"OK, listen, if you ban TikTok I will find you and shoot you," one said, giggling and talking over other young voices in the background. "I'll shoot you and find you and cut you into pieces." Another threatened to kill Tillis, and then take their own life.

Tillis's office says it has received around 1,000 calls about TikTok since the House passed legislation this month that would ban the popular app if its China-based owner doesn't sell its stake. TikTok has been urging its users — many of whom are young — to call their representatives, even providing an easy link to the phone numbers. "The government will take away the community that you and millions of other Americans love," read one pop-up message from the company when users opened the app.

Tillis, who supports the House bill, reported the call to the police. "What I hated about that was it demonstrates the enormous influence social media platforms have on young people," he said in an interview.

While more aggressive than most, TikTok's extensive lobbying campaign is the latest attempt by the tech industry to head off any new legislation — and it's a fight the industry usually wins. For years Congress has failed to act on bills that would protect users' privacy, protect children from online threats, make companies more liable for their content and put loose guardrails around artificial intelligence, among other things.

"I mean, it's almost embarrassing," says Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Mark Warner, D-Va., a former tech executive who is also supporting the TikTok bill and has long tried to push his colleagues to regulate the industry. "I would hate for us to maintain our perfect zero batting average on tech legislation."

Some see the TikTok bill as the best chance for now to regulate the tech industry and set a precedent, if a narrow one focused on just one company. President Joe Biden has said he would sign the House bill,

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which overwhelmingly passed 362-65 this month after a rare 50-0 committee vote moving it to the floor.

But it's already running into roadblocks in the Senate, where there is little unanimity on the best approach to ensure that China doesn't access private data from the app's 170 million U.S. users or influence them through its algorithms.

Other factors are holding the Senate back. The tech industry is broad and falls under the jurisdiction of several different committees. Plus, the issues at play don't fall cleanly on partisan lines, making it harder for lawmakers to agree on priorities and how legislation should be written. Senate Commerce Committee Chairwoman Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., has so far been reluctant to embrace the TikTok bill, for example, calling for hearings first and suggesting that the Senate may want to rewrite it.

"We're going through a process," Cantwell said. "It's important to get it right."

Warner, on the other hand, says the House bill is the best chance to get something done after years of inaction. And he says that the threatening calls from young people are a good example of why the legislation is needed: "It makes the point, do we really want that kind of messaging being able to be manipulated by the Communist Party of China?"

Some lawmakers are worried that blocking TikTok could anger millions of young people who use the app, a crucial segment of voters in November's election. But Warner says "the debate has shifted" from talk of an outright ban a year ago to the House bill which would force TikTok, a wholly owned subsidiary of Chinese technology firm ByteDance Ltd., to sell its stake for the app to continue operating.

Vice President Kamala Harris, in a television interview that aired Sunday, acknowledged the popularity of the app and that it has become an income stream for many people. She said the administration does not intend to ban TikTok but instead deal with its ownership. "We understand its purpose and its utility and the enjoyment that it gives a lot of folks," Harris told ABC's "This Week."

Republicans are divided. While most of them support the TikTok legislation, others are wary of over-regulation and the government targeting one specific entity.

"The passage of the House TikTok ban is not just a misguided overreach; it's a draconian measure that stifles free expression, tramples constitutional rights, and disrupts the economic pursuits of millions of Americans," Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul posted on X, formerly Twitter.

Hoping to persuade their colleagues to support the bill, Democratic Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut and Republican Sen. Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee have called for intelligence agencies to declassify information about TikTok and China's ownership that has been provided to senators in classified briefings.

"It is critically important that the American people, especially TikTok users, understand the national security issues at stake," the senators said in a joint statement.

Blumenthal and Blackburn have separate legislation they have been working on for several years aimed at protecting children's online safety, but the Senate has yet to vote on it. Efforts to regulate online privacy have also stalled, as has legislation to make technology companies more liable for the content they publish.

And an effort by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., to quickly move legislation that would regulate the burgeoning artificial intelligence industry has yet to show any results.

Schumer has said very little about the TikTok bill or whether he might put it on the Senate floor.

"The Senate will review the legislation when it comes over from the House," was all he would say after the House passed the bill.

South Dakota Sen. Mike Rounds, a Republican who has worked with Schumer on the artificial intelligence effort, says he thinks the Senate can eventually pass a TikTok bill, even if it's a different version. He says the classified briefings "convinced the vast majority of members" that they have to address the collection of data from the app and TikTok's ability to push out misinformation to users.

"I think it's a clear danger to our country if we don't act," he said. "It does not have to be done in two weeks, but it does have to be done."

Rounds says he and Schumer are still holding regular meetings on artificial intelligence, as well, and will soon release some of their ideas publicly. He says he's optimistic that the Senate will eventually act to regulate the tech industry.

"There will be some areas that we will not try to get into, but there are some areas that we have very broad consensus on," Rounds says.

Tillis says senators may have to continue laying the groundwork for a while and educating colleagues on why some regulation is needed, with an eye toward passing legislation in the next Congress.

"It can't be the wild, wild west," Tillis said.

Trump is due in court for a hearing in his hush money case after new evidence delayed his trial

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump's hush money case is set for a crucial hearing Monday as a New York judge weighs when, or even whether, the former president will go on trial after a postponement due to a last-minute document dump.

The presumptive Republican nominee is expected in court for a hearing that is happening instead of the long-planned start of jury selection in the first of his four criminal cases to go to trial. The trial has been put off until at least mid-April because of the recent delivery of tens of thousands of pages of records from a previous federal investigation.

Trump's lawyers argue that the delayed disclosures warrant dismissing the case or at least pushing it off three months. Prosecutors say there's little new material in the trove and no reason for further delay.

New York Judge Juan M. Merchan has summoned both sides to court Monday to explain what happened, so he can evaluate whether to fault or penalize anyone and decide on the next steps.

Trump is charged with falsifying business records. Manhattan prosecutors say he did it as part of an effort to protect his 2016 campaign by burying what Trump says were false stories of extramarital sex.

Trump has pleaded not guilty and says the prosecution is politically driven bunk. The prosecutor overseeing the case, Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, is a Democrat.

The case centers on allegations that Trump falsely logged \$130,000 in payments as legal fees in his company's books "to disguise his and others' criminal conduct," as Bragg's deputies put it in a court document.

The money went to Trump's then-personal attorney Michael Cohen, but prosecutors say it wasn't for actual legal work. Rather, they say, Cohen was just recouping money he'd paid porn actor Stormy Daniels on Trump's behalf, so she wouldn't publicize her claim of a sexual encounter with him years earlier.

Trump's lawyers say the payments to Cohen were legitimate legal expenses, not cover-up checks.

Cohen pleaded guilty in 2018 to federal charges, including campaign finance violations related to the Daniels payoff. He said Trump directed him to arrange it, and federal prosecutors indicated they believed him, but they never charged Trump with any crime related to the matter.

Cohen is now a key witness in Manhattan prosecutors' case against Trump.

Trump's lawyers have said Bragg's office, in June, gave them a smidgen of materials from the federal investigation into Cohen. Then they got over 100,000 pages more after subpoenaing federal prosecutors themselves in January. The defense argues that prosecutors should have pursued all the records but instead stuck their heads in the sand, hoping to keep information from Trump.

The material hasn't been made public. But Trump's lawyers said in a court filing that some of it is "exculpatory and favorable to the defense," adding that there's information that would have aided their own investigation and consequential legal filings earlier in the case.

Bragg's deputies have insisted they "engaged in good-faith and diligent efforts to obtain relevant information" from the federal probe. They argued in court filings that Trump's lawyers should have spoken up earlier if they believed those efforts were lacking.

Prosecutors maintain that, in any event, the vast majority of what ultimately came is irrelevant, duplicative or backs up existing evidence about Cohen's well-known federal conviction. They acknowledged in a court filing that there was some relevant new material, including 172 pages of notes recording Cohen's meetings with the office of former special counsel Robert Mueller, who investigated Russia's 2016 election interference.

Prosecutors argued that their adversaries have enough time to work with the relevant material before a mid-April trial date and are just raising a "red herring."

Trump's lawyers also have sought to delay the trial until after the Supreme Court rules on his claims of presidential immunity in his election interference case in Washington. The high court is set to hear arguments April 25.

Top seed UConn steamrolls into Sweet 16 with 75-58 rout of Northwestern in East Region

By MIKE FITZPATRICK AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — UConn again, no contest.

Donovan Clingan, Tristen Newton and the top-seeded Huskies overwhelmed an undermanned Northwestern team 75-58 on Sunday night to sail into the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament.

Newton had 20 points and 10 assists, and Clingan finished with 14 points, 14 rebounds and eight blocks. Connecticut led wire-to-wire and became the first defending national champion to reach the regional semifinals since Duke in 2016.

"Just obviously impressed with the performance. Just really attacked them in the paint," UConn coach Dan Hurley said. "Obviously, the injuries that they have sustained during the year changed the total complexion of that team."

The Huskies (33-3) built a 30-point cushion with 13:27 left and matched a program record for wins set by the 2013-14 national title squad. They'll play Thursday night in the East Region semifinals against No. 5 seed San Diego State in Boston, about an 85-mile drive from UConn's campus.

"It's pretty cool," said Connecticut guard Cam Spencer, who scored 11 points. "It was the goal obviously to get from Brooklyn to Boston, so we are looking forward to that. And you know, we have four more to go. So that's really what we're focused on — our next game."

The Huskies beat a fifth-seeded San Diego State squad 76-59 in last year's national championship game. They lost Adama Sanogo, Jordan Hawkins and Andre Jackson Jr. to the NBA from that talented team, but this balanced and focused group has looked even more dominant as it attempts to become the first program to repeat as NCAA champion since Florida in 2007.

Undersized and overmatched, Boo Buie and the ninth-seeded Wildcats (22-12) were buried under a dizzying display of dunks, blocks, alley-oops and layups.

They made a late push that prompted Hurley to call a timeout with 5:26 remaining, but Northwestern never got the margin under 16.

Brooks Barnhizer scored all 18 of his points in the second half for Northwestern, which has advanced a round in each of its three NCAA Tournament appearances (all since 2017). But the Big Ten program has never reached the Sweet 16.

UConn's victory put all three Big East teams that made the NCAAs in the regional semifinals, following hard-fought wins by Creighton and Marquette in the second round against Pac-12 programs.

The steamrolling Huskies had no such trouble, winning their eighth consecutive NCAA Tournament game by double digits despite going 3 for 22 from 3-point range. The record is nine, set by Michigan State from 2000-01.

"I was very impressed in person with their defense," Northwestern coach Chris Collins said. "They have all the ingredients to win another championship, there's no question about it."

Minus two injured starters, junior guard Ty Berry and 7-foot senior center Matthew Nicholson, the Wildcats had no answer for the 7-2 Clingan. He had a double-double less than 16 minutes into the game and blocked consecutive shots in a span of four seconds during one first-half sequence.

"I feel healthier and lighter than I've ever felt, and I just really got my confidence back," Clingan said. "Just trying to fly around the court and do whatever my team needs me to do to win."

Seeking its sixth national title, all in the past quarter-century, UConn romped into the Sweet 16 for the

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19th time. It was the second blowout of the night in Brooklyn, following Duke's 93-55 dismantling of James Madison in the South Region.

After throttling No. 16 seed Stetson 91-52 in the first round Friday, the Huskies have now won 39 of their last 42 games dating to last season's NCAA Tournament.

"A team is going to have to play really, really, really well to beat them," Collins said.

The initial meeting between the schools was a mismatch from the start. UConn scored the first seven points and opened an 18-4 bulge eight minutes into the game.

By then, the Huskies had already outscored Northwestern 16-2 in the paint and 8-0 on fast breaks as chants of "U-C-O-N-N, UConn! UConn! UConn!" echoed throughout Barclays Center.

On the defensive end, Big East Freshman of the Year Stephon Castle and Sixth Man Award winner Hassan Diarra clamped down on Buie, the leading scorer in Northwestern history.

The star guard, who entered averaging 19.3 points per game, didn't score until sinking two free throws with 1:22 left in the first half that trimmed the deficit to 20. He and Barnhizer, the team's second-leading scorer, were a combined 0 of 14 from the field in the opening 20 minutes as UConn went into the locker room leading 40-18.

"All gas, no brake," said Diarra, who was playing in his New York City hometown.

The Wildcats were held to a season low in first-half points for the second consecutive game. Connecticut also set a season best for points allowed in the first half for the second straight game.

UP NEXT

UConn also played San Diego State in the 2011 Sweet 16, beating Kawhi Leonard and the second-seeded Aztecs 74-67 behind 36 points from Kemba Walker on the way to a national championship.

As Biden tours the country and visits swing states, Trump is fundraising and playing golf

By JILL COLVIN and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As President Joe Biden visited five cities in a multiday trip last week, former President Donald Trump was hardly seen in public, spending most of his time in South Florida.

Trump has held just a single public campaign event since he locked up the Republican presidential nomination on March 12: a rally in Ohio funded not by his campaign but by backers of a Senate candidate whom he had endorsed. The events page on his campaign website has had nothing listed.

Biden, meanwhile, has been barnstorming the country. After a trip to North Carolina on Tuesday, the Democratic president will have touched down in all of the 2024 swing states in the less than three weeks since his State of the Union address.

The differing approaches reflect the deficits each side is facing.

Trump's campaign faces a serious money shortfall and mounting legal bills as he fights four criminal indictments. His focus in recent weeks has been on wooing potential donors as his campaign builds its infrastructure across battleground states to catch up to Democrats, who have a significant head start.

For Biden, 81, the tempo is a message in and of itself as he aims to combat persistent voter concerns about his age. Whoever wins in November will be the oldest president to be inaugurated, though polls find that voters see the issue as more pressing for Biden. Trump is 77.

Both sides are projecting confidence and accusing the other of trying to hide its candidate's problems.

Biden "looks like a lost puppy any time he ventures onto the campaign trail," said Trump spokesperson Karoline Leavitt, who accused Biden's campaign of limiting his events to "stops at field offices with a few paid staffers who look less enthused than attendees at a funeral."

Trump, she went on to say, "is greeted by crowds of enthusiastic Americans everywhere he goes, and he will continue to hold massive rallies around the country with tens of thousands of supporters who want to 'Make America Great Again.' Joe Biden's campaign is a failing, boring, disaster. President Trump is building the greatest political movement in history."

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Biden campaign spokesperson Ammar Moussa disagreed.

"We are two weeks into the general election and Donald Trump can't raise money, is hiding at his country club, and is letting convicts and conspiracy theorists take over his campaign," he said in a statement. "That is not a winning strategy."

Biden's team is trying to sell the public on his accomplishments as concerns persist that voters are unaware of what he's done in office and are instead focused on frustrations over high grocery costs and concerns about the sharp rise in illegal crossings at the U.S.-Mexico border.

"We have not been talking to folks about the issues that President Biden has been delivering on," said Yolanda Bejarano, the state Democratic chairwoman in Arizona, where Biden campaigned last week. "That's what we are determined to do."

His aides have packaged his campaign stops with official White House events designed to promote his policy agenda and legislative achievements.

Trump has been spending his days in and around his Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Florida — fundraising, hosting elected officials who frequently visit, and meeting aides.

But Trump has also made time for other pursuits. He recently said he won two championships at his Palm Beach golf club, writing on his social media site that they were "very exciting" wins on a "GREAT and difficult course." He visited his golf club in West Palm Beach on Sunday to accept two trophies from a cheering audience.

Trump faces a slew of pressing legal challenges. That includes a Monday deadline to pay more than \$454 million in fines and interest. If Trump doesn't come up with the money, New York's attorney general could start the process of seizing his assets.

Instead of his signature large rallies, aides say, Trump has been attending fundraising events five to six days a week. That includes lunches and dinners that bring in immediate cash as well as relationship-building meetings that could result in future checks.

On Thursday, his super political action committee held a \$100,000-per-person roundtable with Hispanic leaders at his golf club in Doral, Florida, according to a copy of the invitation obtained by The Associated Press.

"There is great enthusiasm in the community," said Miami-Dade County Commissioner Kevin Cabrera, one of the hosts.

Not holding events also saves the campaign cash it does not have to waste. Trump's rallies cost "half a million a pop," Trump senior advisor Chris LaCivita said in a podcast interview last year.

Federal campaign finance filings released last week showed Trump's political operation at a serious disadvantage and struggling to catch up to Biden and the Democratic Party, which raised \$53 million last month and ended February with \$155 million cash on hand.

Trump's campaign and his Save America political action committee, two key groups in his political operation, reported raising a combined \$15.9 million in February and ended the month with more than \$37 million on hand.

The empty public calendar is also a reflection of scheduling changes. Trump had been planning to spend much of the next six weeks in court at his New York hush money trial, which was supposed to begin Monday. That trial has since been postponed, forcing the campaign to readjust. (Trump is expected to attend a Monday hearing.)

But even without public events, the developments in Trump's legal cases as well as a steady stream of inflammatory statements — like his assertion that Jews who vote for Democrats hate their religion and Israel — ensure he dominates news cycles.

That assertion came in one of a series of interviews he has done with friendly broadcasters since becoming his party's presumptive nominee, including a sit-down with right-wing British leader Nigel Farage.

Some allies of the former president argue that holding fewer rallies helps him not only by saving money but by limiting opportunities for him to go off-script and say something that might alienate swing voters.

The campaign, however, rejected that thinking and said it has no intention of running the kind of "basement campaign" that Trump aides assailed Biden for running in 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 pan-

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demic. Trump flouted the guidance of his own government's public health experts on social distancing and mask wearing, holding rallies and White House events before vaccines were available, like a reception for his Supreme Court nominee that became a superspreader event.

Biden has also brought in tens of millions of dollars for his campaign in recent weeks. On Thursday, he'll raise even more at a joint event with former Presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton in New York that may break party fundraising records for a single event.

Otherwise, he has been favoring smaller, more intimate events — joining a family for a meal at their kitchen table, popping into small businesses and meeting supporters in backyards.

Like Trump's, his campaign questions the value of expensive-to-produce rallies this far from Election Day. And there are real concerns about his ability to fill a room given still-flagging Democratic enthusiasm as well as the protests he faces from voters angry over his support for Israel's war against Hamas.

The smaller events are designed to produce short social media moments that resonate with Biden's target voters online and reach audiences that would probably miss more conventional campaign stops.

Last week, he met several dozen supporters in Reno, Nevada, center of the state's sole swing county, before heading to south-central Phoenix, where he mingled with about 80 people at a storied Mexican restaurant as his campaign launched a coalition called "Latinos con Biden-Harris," or "Latinos with Biden-Harris."

"I need you badly, I need the help," Biden told them. "Look, there's only about six or seven states that are going to determine the outcome of this election. They're toss-up states, and this is one of them."

'Winners and losers': The world of coffee is being reordered by EU laws to stop cutting of forests

By ANIRUDDHA GHOSAL Associated Press

BUON MA THUOT, Vietnam (AP) — Le Van Tam is no stranger to how the vagaries of global trade can determine the fortunes of small coffee farmers like him.

He first planted coffee in a patch of land outside Buon Ma Thuot city in Vietnam's Central Highland region in 1995. For years, his focus was on quantity, not quality. Tam used ample amounts of fertilizer and pesticides to boost his yields, and global prices determined how well he did.

Then, in 2019, he teamed up with Le Dinh Tu of Aeroco Coffee, an organic exporter to Europe and the U.S., and adopted more sustainable methods, turning his coffee plantation (field) into a sun-dappled forest. The coffee grows side-by-side with tamarind trees that add nitrogen to the soil and provide support for black pepper vines. Grass helps keep the soil moist and the mix of plants discourages pest outbreaks. The pepper also adds to Tam's income.

"The output hasn't increased, but the product's value has," he said.

In the 1990s, Tam was among thousands of Vietnamese farmers who planted more than a million hectares of coffee, mostly robusta, to take advantage of high global prices. By 2000, Vietnam had become the second-largest producer of coffee, which provides a tenth of its export income.

Vietnam is hoping that farmers like Tam will benefit from a potential reordering of how coffee is traded due to more stringent European laws to stop deforestation.

The European Deforestation Regulation or EUDR will outlaw sales of products like coffee from December 30, 2024, if companies can't prove they are not linked with deforestation. The new rules don't just seek to reduce risks of illegal logging and its scope is wide: It will apply to cocoa, coffee, soy, palm oil, wood, rubber, and cattle. To sell those products in Europe big companies will have to provide evidence showing they come from land where forests haven't been cut since 2020. Smaller companies have till July 2025 to do so.

Deforestation is the second-biggest source of carbon emissions after fossil fuels. Europe ranked second behind China in the amount of deforestation caused by its imports in 2017, according to a 2021 World Wildlife Fund report. If implemented well, the EUDR could help reduce this, especially if the more stringent standards for tracing where products come from becomes the "new normal," Helen Bellfield a policy

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director at Global Canopy told The Associated Press in an interview.

It's not failsafe. Companies can just sell products that don't meet the new requirements elsewhere, without reducing deforestation. Thousands of small farmers unable to provide the potentially expensive data could be left out. Much depends on how countries and companies react to the new laws, Bellfield said. Countries must help smaller farmers by building national systems ensure their exports are traceable. Otherwise, companies may just buy from very large farms that can prove they have complied.

Already, orders for Ethiopian grown coffee have fallen. And Peru lacks the capacity to provide information needed for coffee and cocoa grown in the Peruvian Amazon.

This is on top of other challenges, which in Vietnam include worsening droughts and receding ground water levels.

"There will be winners and losers," she said.

Vietnam can't afford to lose — Europe is the largest market for its coffee, comprising 40% of its coffee exports. Six weeks after the EUDR was approved, Vietnam's agriculture ministry started working to prepare coffee growing provinces for the shift. It has since rolled out a national plan that includes a database of where crops are grown and mechanisms to make this information traceable.

The Southeast Asian nation has long promoted more sustainable farming methods, viewing laws like the EUDR as an "an inevitable change," according to an August 2023 agriculture ministry communique. The EUDR could help accelerate such a transformation, according to agriculture minister Le Minh Hoang.

Tam and Tu, his export partner, were quick to adapt.

Even if the costs are higher, Tu said, they can get better prices for their high quality coffee

"We must choose the highest quality. Otherwise, we will always be laborers," Tu said, while sipping a cup of his favorite coffee at his company's coffee processing factory adjoining Tam's farm. This is where trucks laden with red coffee cherries, both robusta and arabica, arrive from other farms, where the pulp of the fruit removed and beans of coffee laid out on tables to dry in the sun.

Tu already has certificates from international agencies for sustainability that will enable him to deal with the EUDR. Such certificates typically address the issue of deforestation, although some tweaks may be needed, said David Hadley, program director for regulatory impacts at the non-profit group Preferred by Nature in Costa Rica.

Ensuring that Vietnam's roughly half a million small farmers, who produce about 85% of its coffee, are able to collect and provide data showing their farms did not cause deforestation remains a challenge. Some may struggle to use smartphones to collect geolocation coordinates. Small exporters need to set up systems to prevent other uncertified products from being mixed with coffee that meets EUDR requirements, said Loan Le of International Economics Consulting.

Farmers also will need documents proving they have complied with national laws for land use, environmental protection and labor, Le said. Moreover, coffee's long value chain — from producing beans to collecting them and processing them — requires digital systems to ensure records are error-free.

Brazil, the world's largest coffee producer, is better placed, said Bellfield of Global Canopy, since its coffee grows on plantations that far are away from forests and it has a relatively well organized supply chain. Also, Brazilian-grown coffee is most likely to meet the EUDR requirements, according to a 2024 Brazilian study, because much of it is exported to the EU, Brazil has fewer small farmers, and about a third of its coffee growing acreage already has some kind of sustainability certification.

The EUDR has acknowledged concerns for less well prepared suppliers by giving them more time and said the European government will work with impacted countries to "enable the transition" while "paying particular attention" to the needs of small holders and Indigenous communities. A review in 2028 will also look at impacts on smallholders.

"Despite this we still anticipate it being costly and difficult for small holder farming communities," she said.

In Peru, collecting information about hundreds of thousands of small farmers is difficult given the country's weak institutions and the fact that most farmers lack land titles, according to a study of EUDR impacts by the Amazon Business Alliance, a joint-initiative by USAID, Canada and the nonprofit group Conservation

International.

Ethiopia, where coffee makes up about a third of total export earnings according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture report, has been slow to react. The national plan it rolled out in February 2024 fails to resolve the fundamental issue of how to gather required data from millions of small farmers and provide that information to buyers, said Gizat Worku, head of the Ethiopian Coffee Exporters Association.

"That requires a huge amount of resources," he said

Gizat, who like many Ethiopians goes by his first name, said that orders are falling due to doubts about the country's ability to comply with the EUDR. Some traders are contemplating switching to other markets, like the Middle East or China, where Ethiopian coffee is "booming," he said. But switching markets isn't easy.

"These regulations are going to have a tremendous impact," Gizat said.

Trump could learn Monday how NY wants to collect \$457M owed in his civil fraud case

By JENNIFER PELTZ and MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Former President Donald Trump could find out Monday how New York state aims to collect over \$457 million he owes in his civil business fraud case, even as he appeals the verdict that led to the gargantuan debt.

After state Attorney General Letitia James won the judgment, she didn't seek to enforce it during a legal time-out for Trump to ask an appeals court for a reprieve from paying up.

That period ends Monday, though James could decide to allow Trump more time. The presumptive Republican presidential nominee has been trying to avoid having to post a bond for the entire sum in order to hold off collection while he appeals, but courts so far have said no.

James, a Democrat, told ABC News last month that if Trump doesn't have the money to pay, she would seek to seize his assets and was "prepared to make sure that the judgment is paid."

She didn't detail the process or specify what holdings she meant, and her office has declined more recently to discuss its plans. Meanwhile, it has filed notice of the judgment, a technical step toward potentially moving to collect.

Seizing assets is a common legal option when someone doesn't have the cash to pay a civil court penalty. In Trump's case, potential targets could include such properties as his Trump Tower penthouse, aircraft, Wall Street office building or golf courses.

The attorney general also could go after his bank and investment accounts. Trump maintained on social media Friday that he has almost \$500 million in cash but intends to use much of it on his presidential run. He has accused James and New York state Judge Arthur Engoron, both Democrats, of seeking "to take the cash away so I can't use it on the campaign."

One possibility would be for James' office to go through a legal process to have local law enforcement seize properties, then seek to sell them off. But that's a complicated prospect in Trump's case, notes Stewart Sterk, a real estate law professor at Cardozo School of Law.

"Finding buyers for assets of this magnitude is something that doesn't happen overnight," he said, noting that at any ordinary auction, "the chances that people are going to be able to bid up to the true value of the property is pretty slim."

Trump's debt stems from a months-long civil trial last fall over the state's allegations that he, his company and top executives vastly puffed up his wealth on financial statements, conning bankers and insurers who did business with him. The statements valued his penthouse for years as though it were nearly three times its actual size, for example.

Trump and his co-defendants denied any wrongdoing, saying the statements actually lowballed his fortune, came with disclaimers and weren't taken at face value by the institutions that lent to or insured him. The penthouse discrepancy, he said, was simply a mistake made by subordinates.

Engoron sided with the attorney general and ordered Trump to pay \$355 million, plus interest that grows daily. Some co-defendants, including his sons and company executive vice presidents, Donald Trump Jr.

and Eric Trump, were ordered to pay far smaller amounts.

Under New York law, filing an appeal generally doesn't hold off enforcement of a judgment. But there's an automatic pause if the person or entity posts a bond that covers what's owed.

The ex-president's lawyers have said it's impossible for him to do that. They said underwriters wanted 120% of the judgment and wouldn't accept real estate as collateral. That would mean tying up over \$557 million in cash, stocks and other liquid assets, and Trump's company needs some left over to run the business, his attorneys have said.

Trump's attorneys have asked an appeals court to freeze collection without his posting a bond. The attorney general's office has objected.

UN to vote on resolution demanding a cease-fire in Gaza during current Muslim holy month of Ramadan

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. Security Council is set to vote Monday on a resolution demanding an immediate humanitarian cease-fire in Gaza during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

The vote comes after Russia and China vetoed a U.S.-sponsored resolution Friday that would have supported "an immediate and sustained cease-fire" in the Israeli-Hamas conflict.

The United States warned that the resolution to be voted on Monday morning could hurt negotiations to halt hostilities by the U.S., Egypt and Qatar, raising the possibility of another veto, this time by the Americans.

The resolution, put forward by the 10 elected council members, is backed by Russia and China and the 22-nation Arab Group at the United Nations.

A statement issued Friday night by the Arab Group appealed to all 15 council members "to act with unity and urgency" and vote for the resolution "to halt the bloodshed, preserve human lives and avert further human suffering and destruction."

"It is long past time for a cease-fire," the Arab Group said.

Ramadan began March 10 and ends April 9, which means that if the resolution is approved the cease-fire demand would last for just two weeks, though the draft says the pause in fighting should lead "to a permanent sustainable cease-fire."

The vote was originally scheduled for Saturday morning, but its sponsors asked late Friday for a delay until Monday morning.

Many Security Council members are hoping the U.N.'s most powerful body, which is charged with maintaining international peace and security, will demand an end to the war that began when Gaza's Hamas rulers launched a surprise attack into southern Israel on Oct. 7, killing about 1,200 people and taking some 250 others hostage.

Since then, the Security Council has adopted two resolutions on the worsening humanitarian situation in Gaza, but none has called for a cease-fire.

More than 32,000 Palestinians in Gaza have been killed during the fighting, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. It does not differentiate between civilians and combatants in its count, but says women and children make up two-thirds of the dead.

Gaza also faces a dire humanitarian emergency, with a report from an international authority on hunger warning March 18 that "famine is imminent" in northern Gaza and that escalation of the war could push half of the territory's 2.3 million people to the brink of starvation.

The brief resolution scheduled for a vote Monday "demands an immediate humanitarian cease-fire for the month of Ramadan." It also demands "the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages" and emphasizes the urgent need to protect civilians and deliver humanitarian aid throughout the Gaza Strip.

U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield told the council Friday that the resolution's text "fails to support sensitive diplomacy in the region. Worse, it could actually give Hamas an excuse to walk away from the deal on the table."

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"We should not move forward with any resolution that jeopardizes the ongoing negotiations," she said, warning that if the diplomacy isn't supported, "we may once again find this council deadlocked."

"I truly hope that that does not come about," Thomas-Greenfield said.

The United States has vetoed three resolutions demanding a cease-fire in Gaza, the most recent an Arab-backed measure on Feb. 20. That resolution was supported by 13 council members with one abstention, reflecting the overwhelming support for a cease-fire.

Russia and China vetoed a U.S.-sponsored resolution in late October calling for pauses in the fighting to deliver aid, the protection of civilians and a halt to arming Hamas. They said it did not reflect global calls for a cease-fire.

They again vetoed the U.S. resolution Friday, calling it ambiguous and saying it was not the direct demand to end the fighting that much of the world seeks.

The vote became another showdown involving world powers that are locked in tense disputes elsewhere, with the United States taking criticism for not being tough enough against its ally Israel, even as tensions between the two countries rise.

A key issue was the unusual language in the U.S. draft. It said the Security Council "determines the imperative of an immediate and sustained cease-fire." The phrasing was not a straightforward "demand" or "call" to halt hostilities.

Before the vote, Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said Moscow supports an immediate cease-fire, but he criticized the diluted language, which he called philosophical wording that does not belong in a U.N. resolution.

He accused U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield of "deliberately misleading the international community" about calling for a cease-fire.

"This was some kind of an empty rhetorical exercise," Nebenzia said. "The American product is exceedingly politicized, the sole purpose of which is to help to play to the voters, to throw them a bone in the form of some kind of a mention of a cease-fire in Gaza ... and to ensure the impunity of Israel, whose crimes in the draft are not even assessed."

China's U.N. ambassador, Zhang Jun, said the U.S. proposal set preconditions and fell far short of expectations of council members and the broader international community.

"If the U.S. was serious about a cease-fire, it wouldn't have vetoed time and again multiple council resolutions," he said. "It wouldn't have taken such a detour and played a game of words while being ambiguous and evasive on critical issues."

Friday's vote in the 15-member council was 11 members in favor and three against, including Algeria, the Arab representative on the council. There was one abstention, from Guyana.

After the vote, Thomas-Greenfield accused Russia and China of vetoing the resolution for "deeply cynical reasons," saying they could not bring themselves to condemn Hamas' terrorist attacks in southern Israel on Oct. 7, which the resolution would have done for the first time.

A second "petty" reason, she said, is that "Russia and China simply did not want to vote for a resolution that was penned by the United States, because it would rather see us fail than to see this council succeed." She accused Russia of again putting "politics over progress" and having "the audacity and hypocrisy to throw stones" after launching an unwarranted invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

The resolution did reflect a shift by the United States, which has found itself at odds with much of the world as even allies of Israel push for an unconditional end to fighting.

In previous resolutions, the U.S. has closely intertwined calls for a cease-fire with demands for the release of Israeli hostages in Gaza. This resolution, using wording that's open to interpretation, continued to link the two issues, but not as firmly.

Senior doctors in South Korea to submit resignations, deepening dispute over medical school plan

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — Senior doctors at dozens of hospitals in South Korea planned to submit their resignations Monday in support of medical interns and residents who have been on a strike for five weeks over the government's push to sharply increase medical school admissions, their leader said.

The senior doctors' action won't likely cause an immediate worsening of hospital operations in South Korea because they have said they would continue to work even after submitting their resignations. But prospects for an early end to the medical impasse were also dim, as the doctors' planned action comes after President Yoon Suk Yeol called for talks with doctors while suggesting a possible softening of punitive steps against the striking junior doctors.

About 12,000 interns and medical residents have faced impending suspensions of their licenses over their refusal to end their strikes, which have caused hundreds of cancelled surgeries and other treatments at their hospitals.

They oppose the government's plan to increase the country's medical school admission cap by two-thirds, saying schools can't handle such a steep increase in students and that it would eventually hurt South Korea's medical services. But officials say more doctors are urgently needed because South Korea has a rapidly aging population and its doctor-to-population ratio is one of the lowest in the developed world.

In a meeting with ruling party leader Han Dong-hoon on Sunday, representatives of medical professors and doctors at some 40 university hospitals — where the junior doctors work while training — expressed support for the striking doctors, saying the government's recruitment plan "would collapse our country's medical system," Kim Chang-soo, head of the emergency committee at those universities, said Monday.

Kim called Yoon's overture a positive step but said the current standoff between doctors and the government won't be resolved unless the government rolls back its recruitment plan.

He said doctors at the universities were expected to stick to earlier plans to submit resignations voluntarily and cut back their working hours to 52 hours per week — the maximum weekly number of legal working hours. Observers say senior doctors have been grappling with excessive workloads after their juniors left their hospitals.

"If the government has an intention of withdrawing its plan or has an intention of considering it, we're ready to discuss all pending issues with the government before the public," Kim said.

After Sunday's meeting, Han asked Yoon's office to "flexibly handle" the issue of planned license suspensions for the striking doctors. Yoon then asked his prime minister to pursue "a flexible measure" to resolve the dispute and seek constructive consultations with doctors, according to Yoon's office.

It's unclear whether and how soon the government and doctors would sit down for talks and reach a breakthrough. Some observers say the government's likely softening of punishments for the striking doctors and its pursuit of dialogue with doctors were likely related to next month's parliamentary elections as further disruptions of hospital operations would be unhelpful for ruling party candidates.

The striking junior doctors represent less than 10% of South Korea's 140,000 doctors. But in some major hospitals, they account for about 30%-40% of the doctors, assisting senior doctors during surgeries and dealing with inpatients while training.

Public surveys show that a majority of South Koreans support the government's push to create more doctors, and critics say that doctors, one of the highest-paid professions in South Korea, worry about lower incomes due to a rise in the number of doctors.

Officials say more doctors are required to address a long-standing shortage of physicians in rural areas and in essential but low-paying specialties. But doctors say newly recruited students would also try to work in the capital region and in high-paying fields like plastic surgery and dermatology. They say the government plan would also likely result in doctors performing unnecessary treatments due to increased competition.

To make water last year-round, Kenyans in dry regions are building sand dams on seasonal rivers

By CARLOS MUREITHI Associated Press

MAKUENI, Kenya (AP) — On a dry riverbed one recent sunny morning, residents of Kasengela village toiled away mixing cement and sand to make concrete. The sound of their shovels resonated through the valley while other residents, working in pairs, carried rocks to the site in wooden frames.

They were building a sand dam, a structure for harvesting water from seasonal rivers. The barrier, typically made of concrete, impedes water flow and coarse grains of sand settle behind it, creating an artificial aquifer that fills up during rainy seasons.

Seasonal rivers flow a few times a year here, and with little piped water and few reliable alternatives, many people here depend on them for water. Building sand dams on these rivers, where people can scoop the sand to fetch the water or use hand pumps, helps minimize water loss through evaporation and recharges groundwater. This is increasingly important as human-caused climate change is leading to prolonged seasons of drought, scientists say, and the simple sand dam solution has gained traction across dry regions of Kenya and some other parts of Africa looking for reliable water sources. But experts also warn that finding the right sites for structures is key to making them work.

Kasengela village is in Machakos County, which, alongside other counties of Makueni and Kitui in southeastern Kenya, is classified as arid and semi-arid. For many communities here, sand dams built on seasonal rivers have grown in popularity.

That's true for Kyalika village in Makueni County, where Rhoda Peter and her welfare group have built three sand dams along a nearby river. When The Associated Press met her, she was fetching water from one of the dams to clean utensils and wash clothes.

Peter put a yellow container on the shallow well platform and walked to the pump, pulling it up and pushing it down until it was full. Nearby, a donkey stood with two containers hanging on its back.

"When I think about sand dams, I feel happy," said Peter, a farmer. "Our shallow well does not dry. It goes all through the dry seasons."

Before the sand dams were built, she and her children would walk many miles to fetch water in springs in the faraway Mbooni Hills. It took them three hours, and many times they'd fall because of the rocky terrain.

Many people in Kenya's dry southeastern region rely on boreholes and rivers for water, but many boreholes produce saline water and permanent rivers are few and far for most people. Earth dams are another source, but they're also few and require regular desilting.

At the site in Kasengela, Mwanzia Mutua, the leader of the group constructing the dam, said that he used to trek seven kilometers (4.3 miles) from his home to Athi River to fetch water for his household and livestock, spending an entire day on the road. Later, a borehole was constructed, shortening the distance, but it was still far. The sand dam will reduce the walk to get water to 10 minutes, he said.

"When water is far, you spend all your time looking for it and are unable to do any other work," said the farmer. "Cattle die because the water is far."

The sand dam in Kasengela was completed on March 14 after two and a half months of construction, and should be ready to use by December 2025, after it fills with sand.

Only 5% of Makueni's nearly 245,000 households had access to clean piped water by 2022. The county produces about 30,000 cubic meters per day against a demand of 60,000 cubic meters.

"The water situation in Makueni is dire," said Mutula Kilonzo Junior, the county's governor. "We have a huge deficit that we are not supplying."

Shortages of water lead to problems for agriculture and health implications as people are forced to use unclean sources, taking the time and energy of children to fetch water, affecting their education, he said.

The Makueni County government has been building sand dams with partner organizations and residents, and by 2022, it had built 71, according to county government data.

"Seasonal rivers run dry barely after a week of raining. So for us, we have to store their water, and this is the best way for us to do it," said Sonnia Musyoka, county minister for environment and climate

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change. "With such dams, we will enable children to stay at school, and parents to concentrate on other economic activities."

The construction of sand dams in the region is community-driven. Africa Sand Dam Foundation — which helped build the dams in Kyalika and Kasengela — is one nonprofit supporting communities in Makeni, Machakos and Kitui to build sand dams. Residents approach the nonprofit with a request to build a dam and provide sand, rocks and other locally available material plus labor. Meanwhile, the nonprofit, through partners, provides hardware material such as cement and skilled expertise. After construction, the community manages the sand dam.

Since it started in 2010, the nonprofit has constructed 680 sand dams in the three counties.

"We've used this model for years, and we've seen its success," said Andrew Musila, development director at Africa Sand Dam Foundation, at the Kasengela site. "To us, sand dams are the best solution for water provision in arid regions and the best solution for providing communities with water throughout the year."

The usefulness of the structures has gained the attention of governments of other local counties, as well as other countries. ASDF has worked with governments and nonprofits in Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Madagascar, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Somalia and India to site, design and build sand dams as well as train people in the processes.

Scientists warn that proper siting of sand dams is key to making them work. A study carried out in Kitui County found that about half of 116 sand dams surveyed were not functional because they were built in locations with unfavorable factors for enabling sand dams to supply water. Factors to consider, the study says, include the rainfall amount, the percentage of clay in the soil and the presence of visible rock formations.

"You cannot put a sand dam anywhere," said Keziah Ngugi, lead author of the study and a hydrologist with interest in dryland areas. "The most important thing to observe is the siting."

And as climate change makes drought more likely, scientists say the structures minimize water loss through evaporation because they store water within sand, and that helps with water supply during dry seasons. Additionally, they say the structures rejuvenate surrounding vegetation and recharge groundwater, raising the water table.

"There are good things that happen when the water table is raised," said Dorcas Benard, an environmental and biosystems engineer. She gave examples of the emergence of alternative water sources or resources like springs and boreholes. "These are very important sources, especially within the arid and semi-arid lands."

And for residents like Mutua, the builder in Kasengela, they offer hope for improved livelihoods. Spending weeks building the dam with fellow residents may be arduous work, but the reward of having reliable water near his home will be fulfilling in immeasurable ways.

"Water is life," he said.

Hardy souls across New England and New York dig out after major winter storm

By STEVE LeBLANC Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Thousands of hardy souls across New England spent Sunday digging out after a major weekend storm dumped more than two feet of snow in some areas, caused multiple road accidents, downed power lines and left hundreds of thousands across the Northeast in the dark, some perhaps for days.

Heavy snowfall from the storm stretched across the region, including upstate and northern New York through Vermont, New Hampshire, and most of Maine. Many areas saw totals of 8 inches to 12 inches (20 to 30 centimeters) of snow, and some of the highest totals exceeded 30 inches (76 centimeters) in south central Vermont, said Zack Taylor, a meteorologist for the National Weather Service.

"So overall, it was a pretty significant winter storm and for some areas that was some of the most snow they've seen all winter with a single storm," Taylor said.

The combination of sleet, freezing rain and heavy wet snow took down trees and power lines and was

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blamed for hundreds of delayed and canceled flights.

In New York City, floodwaters snarled subway service, closed part of the Cross Island Parkway and trapped motorists on flooded roads through Central Park, where more than 3.5 inches (9 centimeters) of rain fell. On Fifth Avenue, a giant tree fell down over several cars, prompting a road closure.

In Lodi, New Jersey, flooding from the Saddle River inundated nearby roads.

Central Maine Power, the state's largest utility, said crews began clearing damage and fixing downed lines Sunday — but that it anticipated a multi-day effort in areas hit hardest by the storm. By late Sunday, about 170,000 customers were without power in Maine.

"Damage to trees, poles, and wires was significant overnight on Saturday, and our assessors are taking stock of the damage today so we can begin restoring power to our customers as quickly and as safely as possible," said Jon Breed, from Central Maine Power.

Another 54,000 customers were without power in New Hampshire. In New York, more than 57,000 customers were without power late Sunday, down from more than 90,000 earlier in the day.

Areas north of New York City were among the hardest hit, according to online maps from National Grid and PowerOutage.us, a power outage tracking website.

The combination of sleet, freezing rain, and heavy wet snow that took down trees and power lines was also blamed for hundreds of delayed and canceled flights at area airports.

Police across the Northeast reported hundreds of traffic accidents as cars spun out and drivers grappled with icy roads, while Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia and Boston also saw heavy rain and flooding.

In Portland, Maine, city officials opened a warming center at the East End Community School for residents without power who needed a warm place to visit, charge electronics or sleep overnight from Sunday evening to Monday morning.

The New Hampshire Department of Safety announced Sunday it had activated an emergency operations center to help local communities clean up from the storm, including those with significant power outages.

Across the country in Southern California, heavy rain and quarter-sized hail fell in neighborhoods around Los Angeles. A 35-year-old woman was rescued after being swept away in the storm-swollen Los Angeles River, the LA Fire Department said. She was airlifted to a hospital with minor injuries and hypothermia, the department said. A severe thunderstorm warning was issued through Sunday afternoon, with the National Weather Service predicting lightning and wind gusts in mountain areas approaching 60 mph (97 kph).

The California storm was moving south from the Sierra Nevada, where areas around Lake Tahoe received about a foot (30 cm) of new snow and Mammoth Mountain reported up to 18 inches (45 cm) by Sunday morning. A day earlier, the resort was forced to close several ski lifts after a 91-mph (147-kph) wind gust was recorded.

Fans of cold weather — including skiers — reveled in the snow from coast to coast.

Kevin Bell, vice president of marketing for Loon Mountain in New Hampshire's White Mountains, said the more snow New England gets, the better it is for ski resorts operating in the late season.

Taylor said another significant winter storm is developing in the West and will continue through Monday across much of the Rockies, the Plains and the upper Midwest. The National Weather Service warned of heavy snow and blizzard conditions for the northern Plains and Upper Midwest persisting to Tuesday.

That system is expected to bring heavy snowfall across portions of Wisconsin, Minnesota, much of the Dakotas and even down into Nebraska and western Kansas with the potential of 8 to 12 inches of snow, with higher amounts across the eastern Dakotas and portions of central Minnesota, Taylor said.

"We're looking at a pretty strong area of low pressure that'll develop across Kansas tonight and then quickly lift up toward the upper Midwest by late Monday into early Tuesday," he said.

A winter weather advisory also was issued through Sunday night for parts of northern Arizona, the Grand Canyon and Flagstaff to the New Mexico border with up to a half foot (15 centimeters) of snow possible at upper elevations and winds gusting to 40 mph (64 kph).

The weather service said snow showers were expected through Sunday night at elevations around 5,000

to 6,000 feet (1.5 to 1.8 kilometers).

Unsettled weather with additional rain and snow showers were forecast for the Flagstaff, Arizona, area Monday and Tuesday with another storm system potentially moving into northern Arizona next weekend.

Ohtani to speak to media for 1st time since illegal gambling, theft allegations against interpreter

By BETH HARRIS AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Shohei Ohtani plans to speak to the media Monday for the first time since the illegal gambling and theft allegations involving the Los Angeles Dodgers star and his interpreter emerged during the team's trip to South Korea.

The interpreter, Ippei Mizuhara, was fired by the Dodgers last week when the team opened the season with two games against the San Diego Padres in Seoul.

Manager Dave Roberts endorsed Ohtani addressing the matter publicly. He said it was the two-way superstar's decision to do so.

"It's the right thing to do," Roberts said. "I'm happy he's going to speak and speak to what he knows and give his thoughts on the whole situation. I think it will give us all a little bit more clarity."

Mizuhara was let go from the team following reports from the Los Angeles Times and ESPN about his alleged ties to an illegal bookmaker and claims from Ohtani's attorneys that the Japanese star had been the victim of a "massive theft."

Major League Baseball has opened an investigation of the matter. The Internal Revenue Service has confirmed that Mizuhara and Mathew Bowyer, the alleged illegal bookmaker in Orange County, California, are under criminal investigation.

Will Ireton, the team's performance operations manager, has taken over translation duties for Ohtani. He previously did the same for then-Dodgers pitcher Kenta Maeda, who is Japanese.

Ohtani made only a brief appearance in the Dodgers clubhouse before Sunday's Freeway Series opener against his former team, the Los Angeles Angels. The teams are playing three exhibition games before the Dodgers host St. Louis in their home opener on Thursday.

Ohtani was cheered loudly by the crowd of 42,607 each time he came to the plate for his first game as a Dodger in his home stadium. As the designated hitter, he went 0 for 2 with a walk and a strikeout before leaving.

He's also expected to play Monday in Los Angeles and Tuesday in Anaheim, where he was a two-time AL MVP before leaving the Angels as a free agent to sign a record \$700 million, 10-year contract with the Dodgers in December.

Roberts said Ohtani has not addressed his teammates as a group.

"I think that he's had one-off conversations with players," Roberts said.

The manager said he checked in with Ohtani to see how he's doing.

"He's kind of business as usual," Roberts said.

Ohtani has a double locker in the Dodgers clubhouse located between the shower room and fellow Japanese pitcher Yoshinobu Yamamoto, who is slated to make his second start of the season on Saturday against St. Louis.

Extra security was posted in the jammed clubhouse on Sunday. Besides the players and a horde of media, eight temporary lockers were set up at one end for minor leaguers brought over from Arizona for the Freeway Series.

Overhead televisions were tuned to men's NCAA Tournament games, baseball and horse racing, with former Los Angeles Dodgers catcher Paul Lo Duca offering TV handicapping tips on the day's races.

The MLB gambling policy is posted in every clubhouse. Betting on baseball — legally or not — is punishable with a one-year ban from the sport. The penalty for betting on other sports illegally is at the commissioner's discretion. Sports gambling is illegal in California, even as 38 states and the District of Columbia allow some form of it.

"The mood in the room is get ready for baseball because I don't hear a lot of conversations and speculation," Roberts said. "That's why I think tomorrow is going to be good for everyone."

Chick-Fil-A backtracks from its no-antibiotics-in-chicken pledge, blames projected supply shortages

By The Associated Press undefined

ATLANTA (AP) — The fast-food chain Chick-Fil-A backtracked from its decade-old "no antibiotics ever" pledge intended to help prevent human antibiotic resistance linked to the rampant use of the drugs in livestock production.

Instead, the company said in a statement that it will embrace a standard known as "no antibiotics important to human medicine," often abbreviated as NAIHM, which entails the avoidance of medications commonly used to treat people and limits the use of animal antibiotics to cases of actual animal illness.

Livestock producers have long used antibiotics to boost rapid weight gain in animals such as chickens, pigs, cows and sheep, improving the profitability of their businesses. Over the past decade, however, many nations, including the United States, have begun to restrict the practice as evidence mounted that it was contributing to drug resistance and reducing the effectiveness of antibiotics against disease in humans.

Chick-Fil-A said it will begin shifting to the new policy in the spring of 2024. A company spokesman added that the move reflects company concerns about its ability to acquire sufficient supplies of antibiotic-free chicken. One of the poultry industry's largest companies, Tyson Foods, said last year that it was reintroducing some antibiotics to its chicken production and removing its "No Antibiotics Ever" package labeling. It began to eliminate antibiotics from some of its poultry production in 2015.

In a May 2023 video featured on the Tyson Foods YouTube channel, Tyson's senior director of animal welfare, Karen Christensen, described the shift as "based on scientific research and industry learnings." She noted that Tyson planned to begin using antibiotics known as ionophores, which don't play a role in human medicine, to "improve the overall health and welfare of the birds in our care." Ionophores have long been used to promote growth in livestock.

Poland demands explanation from Russia after a missile enters its airspace during attack on Ukraine

By VANESSA GERA and TONY HICKS Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Poland demanded an explanation from Russia on Sunday after one of its missiles strayed briefly into Polish airspace during a major missile attack on Ukraine, prompting the NATO member to activate F-16 fighter jets.

It was Russia's third big missile attack on Ukraine in the past four days, and the second to target the capital, Kyiv.

The governor of the Lviv region, Maksym Kozytskyi, said on the Telegram platform that critical infrastructure was hit, but he didn't specify what precisely was struck. No deaths or injuries were reported.

Later, authorities said that rescuers had just put out a fire at a critical infrastructure facility in the Lviv region, which had been attacked with missiles and drones at night and in the morning.

The head of Kyiv's military administration, Serhiy Popko, said Russia used cruise missiles launched from Tu-95MS strategic bombers. An air alert in the capital lasted for more than two hours as rockets entered Kyiv in groups from the north.

He said the attacks were launched from the Engels district in the Saratov region of Russia.

According to preliminary data, there were no casualties or damage in the capital, he said.

Armed Forces Operational Command of Poland, a member of NATO, said in a statement that there was a violation of Polish airspace at 4:23 a.m. (0323 GMT) by one of the cruise missiles launched by Russia against towns in western Ukraine.

The object entered near Oserdow, a village in an agricultural region near the border with Ukraine, and

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stayed in Polish airspace for 39 seconds, the statement said. It wasn't immediately clear if Russia intended for the missile to enter Poland's airspace. Cruise missiles are able to change their trajectory to evade air defense systems.

Polish Defense Minister Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz later told reporters in a televised news conference that the Russian missile would have been shot down had there been any indication that it was heading towards a target in Poland.

He said that Polish authorities monitored the attack on Ukraine and were in contact with Ukrainian counterparts. Polish and NATO F-16s were activated as part of the strategic response.

He said the missile penetrated Polish airspace about a kilometer or two (a half-mile to around a mile) as Russia was targeting the region around Lviv in western Ukraine.

"As last night's rocket attack on Ukraine was one of the most intense since the beginning of the Russian aggression, all the strategic procedures were launched on time and the object was monitored until it left the Polish airspace," he said.

On the diplomatic front, the Polish foreign ministry said that it would "demand explanations from the Russian Federation in connection with another violation of the country's airspace."

"Above all, we call on the Russian Federation to stop the terrorist air attacks on the inhabitants and territory of Ukraine, end the war, and address the country's internal problems," the statement read.

Andrzej Szejna, a deputy foreign minister, told the TVN24 broadcaster that the foreign ministry intended to summon the Russian ambassador to Poland and hand him a protest note.

Henryk Zdyb, the head of the village of Oserdow, said in an interview with the daily Gazeta Wyborcza that he saw the missile, saying it produced a whistling sound.

"I saw a rapidly moving object in the sky. It was illuminated and flying quite low over the border with Ukraine," he told the paper.

Since Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine more than two years ago, there have been a number of intrusions into Polish airspace, triggering worry in the European Union and NATO member state and reminding people of how close the war is.

"We have to come to terms with the fact that the war is taking place right next to us, and we are part of the confrontation between the West and Russia," commentator Artur Bartkiewicz wrote in the Rzeczpospolita newspaper Sunday.

In 2022, two Poles were killed in a missile blast. Western officials blamed those deaths on a Ukrainian air defense missile that went astray, but also accused Russia of culpability because it started the war, with the Ukrainian missiles launched in self-defense.

On Saturday night, one person was killed and four others were wounded in a Ukrainian missile attack on Sevastopol on the Russia-occupied Crimean Peninsula, city Gov. Mikhail Razvozhayev said on his Telegram channel.

Ireland poised to get its youngest ever premier as Simon Harris elected leader of Fine Gael party

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Ireland is poised to get its youngest-ever premier next month after Simon Harris secured the leadership of the Fine Gael party on Sunday, replacing Leo Varadkar who announced his surprise resignation last week.

The 37-year-old Harris, who has been the coalition government's further and higher education minister, was the only candidate to put his name forward to succeed Varadkar, who had been Ireland's previous youngest prime minister, or what Ireland calls its taoiseach.

Harris is expected to be formally elected premier in the Irish parliament in early April after lawmakers return from their Easter break.

In his victory speech in the central Ireland town of Athlone, Harris said this was a "moment for Fine Gael to reconnect" with the people and pledged to fight against populist forces in Irish politics.

"I want this party to fight against populism and deliberate polarization," he said.

He confirmed Fine Gael as a "proudly pro-European party," condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine and called for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza.

"There is a hell of a lot to get done in the time ahead," he said.

Harris said nothing about the coalition government, which came into place at the end of 2020, but has previously said that he would remain fully committed to the program for government agreed upon with partners Fianna Fail and the Green Party. He has stopped short of ruling out a general election this year, but insisted such a poll wasn't his priority.

Varadkar, 45, has had two spells as taoiseach — between 2017 and 2020, and again since December 2022 as part of a job-share with Micheál Martin, the head of Fianna Fáil.

He was the country's youngest-ever leader when first elected at age 38, as well as Ireland's first openly gay prime minister. Varadkar, whose mother is Irish and father is Indian, was also Ireland's first biracial taoiseach.

He played a leading role in campaigns to legalize same-sex marriage, approved in a 2015 referendum, and to repeal a ban on abortion, which passed in a vote in 2018.

He led Ireland during the years after Britain's 2016 decision to leave the European Union. Brexit had huge implications for Ireland, an EU member that shares a border with the U.K.'s Northern Ireland. U.K.-Ireland relations were strained while hardcore Brexit-backer Boris Johnson was U.K. leader, but have steadied since the arrival of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.

Over 130 abducted schoolchildren in Nigeria's northwest are rescued after weeks in captivity

By CHINEDU ASADU Associated Press

KADUNA, Nigeria (AP) — More than 130 children abducted more than two weeks ago from their school in Nigeria's northwestern state of Kaduna were rescued Sunday and are getting psychological support before being returned to their families, the West African nation's military and government officials said.

School authorities had told the state government that a total of 287 students were kidnapped when motorcycle-riding gunmen invaded the remote Kuriga school March 7. However, Kaduna Gov. Uba Sani told local media late Sunday that only 137 young people had been abducted during the attack.

"All of them have come back home safely," the governor said in a broadcast by the Lagos-based Channels Television. The Associated Press could not reach villagers or school authorities in Kuriga town, which does not have cellphone service.

Such varying reports are common in Nigeria's kidnapping crisis, sometimes because of inadequate recordkeeping or because some hostages escape moments after their abduction.

"As the leader, I shouldn't bother myself about figures. What is more important is the return of the children," the governor said.

At least 1,400 students have been kidnapped from Nigerian schools since 2014, when Boko Haram militants seized hundreds of schoolgirls from Borno state's Chibok village. In recent years, abductions have been concentrated in the country's northwestern and central regions, where dozens of armed groups often target villagers and travelers for ransom.

The 137 children were rescued in Zamfara state, an enclave notorious for kidnappings more than 200 kilometers (124 miles) away from their school, Nigerian military spokesman Maj. Gen. Edward Buba said in a statement.

Pictures released by the Nigerian military showed the children looking worn out as they were covered in dust, still wearing their blue-white-and-brown uniforms while being transported following their release. Kuriga town leaders joined other government officials in waiting for their arrival at the Kaduna State Government House, which officials postponed until Monday.

The children were in "high spirits" and were receiving psychological support and medical attention, the governor said.

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At least 17 other schoolchildren in northern Sokoto state were also rescued two weeks after they were taken hostage, according to a statement issued Saturday by the Sokoto state government.

Under growing pressure to end the mass kidnappings in northern Nigeria, President Bola Tinubu promised his administration is "deploying detailed strategies to ensure that our schools remain safe sanctuaries of learning, not lairs for wanton abductions."

Tinubu had vowed to rescue the children "without paying a dime" as ransom. But ransoms are commonly paid for kidnappings, often arranged by families, and it is rare for officials in Nigeria to admit to the payments.

No group has claimed responsibility for the Kaduna kidnapping, which locals have blamed on bandit groups known for mass killings and kidnappings for ransom in the conflict-battered northern region, most of them former herders in conflict with settled communities.

At least two people with extensive knowledge of the security crisis in Nigeria's northwest told AP that the identity of the abductors is known.

Murtala Ahmed Rufa'i, a professor of peace and conflict studies at Usmanu Danfodiyo University, and Sheikh Ahmad Gumi, a cleric who has negotiated with the bandits, said they were hiding in the region's vast and ungoverned forests.

Arrests are rare in Nigeria's mass kidnappings, as victims are usually released only after desperate families pay ransoms or through deals with government and security officials that sometimes involve the release of detained gang members.

Concert hall attack dents Putin's tough image. He tries to use it to rally support for Ukraine war

By The Associated Press undefined

A week ago, President Vladimir Putin swaggered triumphantly onstage at a post-election event surrounded by young people in T-shirts reading "Putin — Russia — Victory," and he confidently shrugged off Western criticism of the vote as neither free nor fair.

This weekend, a very different Vladimir Putin addressed a nation shocked by a massacre at a rock concert on Moscow's outskirts. His image as a tough leader was badly dented by gunmen who mowed down dozens of victims, unchecked by police or security.

Appearing on TV on Saturday, hours after the attack that killed 137 people and wounded over 100, he sought to make it serve his political goals by alleging a link between the gunmen and Ukraine, saying the assailants planned to flee there. He made no mention of the Islamic State group, which claimed responsibility, or of Kyiv's denial of involvement.

It's not the first time in his nearly a quarter-century in power that Putin has tried to use a failure by his security services to achieve his aims.

The 71-year-old former KGB officer came to power on the final day of 1999 while spearheading a war to crush separatists in the mostly Muslim republic of Chechnya who had mounted an incursion into a neighboring province.

He also blamed Chechens for a series of apartment building bombings in Russia, burnishing his macho persona with a famous pledge to hunt down terrorists: "If we catch them in the outhouse, we will flush them down the toilet."

Some Kremlin critics alleged the apartment bombings in 1999 could have been staged by Russian security agencies in a false flag operation to help Putin's rise and rally broad support for the war in Chechnya. The claims were never independently proven and were strongly rejected by Putin and Kremlin officials.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy alluded to them as he dismissed Moscow's allegations of a Ukrainian connection in Friday's attack, accusing Putin of using his own citizens as "expendables."

Long after the battles in Chechnya died down, Russia suffered a series of deadly attacks, including the 2002 siege at a Moscow theater and the 2004 hostage crisis at a school in Beslan in southern Russia. Other attacks targeted public transportation, as well as plane and airport bombings linked to Chechen

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separatists, and later to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group.

But these have been rare in more recent years as Moscow-backed regional strongman Ramzan Kadyrov used his feared security forces to stabilize Chechnya. Friday's attack revived the sense of Russian vulnerability that Putin has sought to replace with strong control and domestic stability, despite the war in Ukraine.

Kremlin critics assailed Putin for focusing Russia's massive police and security services on stifling political opponents, human rights groups and LGBTQ+ activists while leaving the country unprotected from threats by armed extremists.

Maria Pevchikh, a top associate of opposition leader Alexei Navalny who died in an Arctic penal colony last month, said the security agencies were "too busy fighting politicians, activists and journalists, so they didn't have time left to deal with terrorists."

Many commentators wondered how the attackers could conduct their deadly raid and leave the entertainment complex without any police response. Officials said the suspected gunmen were arrested hours later in the western Bryansk region as they headed for Ukraine.

"What happened is unique in that for the first time in Russia, during a terror attack of this scale, security forces were unable to prevent the terrorists' action in any way: they freely entered the building, killed and wounded scores of people, and calmly left the scene of the massacre," political analyst Vladislav Inozemtsev wrote in a commentary. "Years of tightening security and trillions of rubles were spent in vain."

U.S. officials confirmed the claim of responsibility by the Islamic State affiliate and also said they had shared information earlier this month with Russia about a planned assault in Moscow, adding there was no Ukrainian involvement whatsoever.

But three days before the attack, Putin denounced the U.S. warning as an attempt to frighten the Russians and "blackmail" the Kremlin ahead of the presidential election.

Mark Galeotti, head of the Mayak Intelligence consultancy, said Putin had suffered a major blow to his image as the "tough defender of the motherland."

He said the raid — the deadliest attack on Russian soil in two decades — would eat at Putin's legitimacy, creating "that slow and accelerating sense that this is no longer the Putin that was, that he's no longer really fit for the times, that he's no longer able to deliver on his promises."

Galeotti countered allegations by some Kremlin critics that a slow and bungled official response to the attack was a possible sign of a false flag operation, arguing it's always challenging for authorities to avert such bloodshed.

"It's often quite difficult to identify terrorist plots, especially relatively small-scale ones, before they happen," he said in a podcast. "Sometimes terrorists will always get through, regardless of how able your counterintelligence officers, how many police you've got, how many cameras you have."

Putin did not mention the Islamic State group and instead said the suspected gunmen were arrested while trying to escape to Ukraine through a "window" provided to them in advance, even though they reportedly were seized about 140 kilometers (nearly 90 miles) from the Ukrainian border.

If Putin follows up on his statement by directly blaming Ukraine for staging the attack, he will likely use it as justification for even fiercer strikes.

Putin said after the election that Moscow would seek to expand its gains in Ukraine to create a buffer zone to protect Russia from long-range strikes and cross-border raids. He also warned that recent Ukrainian attacks on the border regions "won't be left unpunished."

Hours before Friday's concert hall bloodshed, the Russian military unleashed a barrage on Ukraine's energy system, crippling its largest hydroelectric plant and leaving over 1 million without power in what the Russian Defense Ministry described as "strikes of retribution." More strikes followed over the weekend.

Russian hawks responded to the concert hall raid with calls for even harsher action — but against Ukraine, not militant extremist threats.

Konstantin Malofeyev, owner of a virulently nationalist media outlet, urged the Kremlin to give Ukrainians 48 hours to leave major cities before using "all means" to attack.

Alexander Dugin, a hard-line ideologist whose daughter was killed in a 2022 car bombing blamed on Ukraine, called for a "full mobilization" to "liberate" Kyiv and other big cities.

Putin ordered a partial mobilization of 300,000 reservists in September 2022 while the Russian army retreated under a swift Ukrainian counteroffensive. The highly unpopular move prompted hundreds of thousands to flee Russia to avoid being drafted.

Last year, the military opted for ramping up recruitment of volunteers attracted by relatively high wages and other benefits. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said that over 540,000 signed military contracts last year.

Russian hawks also have pushed for tough steps like restoring capital punishment, which was outlawed when Russia joined the Council of Europe in 1997. After Friday's attack, some lawmakers said they will consider introducing the death penalty, even though the country's Constitutional Court has forbidden it.

"The issue will be thoroughly considered, and the resulting decision will answer society's mood and expectations," said Vladimir Vasilyev, a senior lawmaker with the main Kremlin party, United Russia.

Palestinians describe bodies and ambulances crushed in Israel's ongoing raid at Gaza's main hospital

By WAFAA SHURAFI and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Palestinians who fled an ongoing Israeli raid of Gaza's main hospital described mass arrests and forced marches past bodies in interviews on Sunday, while the United Nations said Israel is now blocking its main agency helping Palestinians from sending food aid to the enclave's devastated north.

Israel's military says it has killed more than 170 militants and detained about 480 suspects in the raid on Shifa Hospital that began Monday, calling it a blow to Hamas and other armed groups it says had regrouped there as the war nears the six-month mark.

The fighting highlights the resilience of Palestinian armed groups in a heavily destroyed part of Gaza where Israeli troops have been forced to return after a similar raid in the war's earliest weeks.

Kareem Ayman Hathat, who lived in a five-story building about 100 meters from the hospital, said he huddled in the kitchen for days while explosions sometimes caused the building to shake.

Early Saturday, Israeli troops stormed the building and forced dozens of residents to leave. He said men were forced to strip to their underwear and four were detained. The rest were blindfolded and ordered to follow a tank south as blasts thundered around them.

"From time to time, the tank would fire a shell," he told The Associated Press. "It was to terrorize us."

Israeli jets on Sunday launched several strikes near Shifa Hospital, which largely stopped functioning following the November raid. After claiming that Hamas maintained an elaborate command center there, Israeli forces months ago exposed a single tunnel leading to a few underground rooms.

Hardly any aid has been delivered in recent weeks to northern Gaza and Gaza City, where Shifa is located. The isolated area suffered widespread devastation in the early days of Israel's offensive launched after the Oct. 7 Hamas attack that triggered the war.

As of Sunday, Israel has told the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees it will no longer approve agency food convoys to northern Gaza, UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini said on social media.

"This is outrageous and makes it intentional to obstruct lifesaving assistance during a man-made famine," he said. The agency, Gaza's biggest humanitarian provider, is repeatedly accused by Israel of having links to Hamas. Israel's government didn't immediately respond.

Experts have said famine is imminent in northern Gaza, where more than 210,000 people suffer from catastrophic hunger.

A day after standing near some of the estimated 7,000 aid trucks waiting to enter Gaza and calling the starvation a "moral outrage," U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres urged an immediate humanitarian cease-fire, the release of hostages held in Gaza and Israel's removal of "obstacles" to allow a flood of aid delivery.

"Looking at Gaza, it almost appears that the four horsemen of war, famine, conquest and death are galloping across it," Guterres said in Egypt, adding that nothing justifies the collective punishment of Palestinians.

Gaza's Health Ministry said that five wounded Palestinians trapped at Shifa Hospital died without food,

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water or medical services. The World Health Organization's director-general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, described conditions as "utterly inhumane."

Jameel al-Ayoubi, among thousands sheltering at Shifa when the current raid began, said tanks and armored bulldozers plowed into the hospital courtyard, crushing ambulances and civilian vehicles. He saw tanks drive over at least four bodies of people killed in the raid.

Israel's military said Saturday it had evacuated patients and medical staff from Shifa's emergency department because militants "entrenched" themselves there, and set up an alternative site for seriously wounded patients.

Abed Radwan, who lived about 200 meters (yards) from the hospital, said Israeli forces stormed all area buildings, detaining several people and forcing the rest to march south. He saw bodies in the streets and several flattened homes.

"They left nothing intact," he said.

Israel's military early Sunday also stormed al-Amal and Nasser hospitals in the southern city of Khan Younis amid "very intense shelling," the Palestinian Red Crescent Society said. Israel's military announced operations in Khan Younis targeting Hamas infrastructure but said troops weren't currently operating in the hospitals. It accused Hamas of using hospitals as shields.

The war has killed at least 32,226 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. It doesn't distinguish between civilians and combatants in its toll, but says women and children make up around two-thirds of the dead.

Among the latest killed were at least seven people, including three children, when an Israeli airstrike hit a house in Rafah overnight, according to health authorities. And an airstrike near Deir al-Balah late Sunday killed at least 10 members of a family including two children, according to an AP journalist who saw the bodies at a hospital.

Israel says it has killed more than 13,000 militants, without providing evidence. It blames civilian casualties on Hamas, accusing it of embedding in residential areas.

More than 80% of Gaza's population of 2.3 million have fled their homes, with most seeking refuge in the southernmost city of Rafah, which Israel calls the next target of its ground offensive. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejects pleas from the United States and others to avoid a major ground operation there, calling it essential for defeating Hamas.

Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said that he was traveling to the U.S. on Sunday at Washington's invitation, with a goal of preserving "our ability to obtain air systems and munitions" for the war and maintaining critical ties with Israel's top ally.

The Hamas-led Oct. 7 attack across southern Israel killed about 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and took scores hostage. Hamas still holds an estimated 100 hostages and the remains of 30 others. Most of the rest were freed in exchange for the release of some Palestinian prisoners in November.

The United States, Qatar and Egypt are trying to broker another cease-fire and release.

Over the border from Gaza on Sunday, Jews celebrated their most joyful of holidays, Purim, the biblical story of how a plot to exterminate Jews in Persia was thwarted as an affirmation of Jewish survival.

On the anniversary of the 1976 military coup, Argentines push back against leaders revising history

By ISABEL DEBRE Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — As Argentina on Sunday marked the most traumatic date in its modern history — the 1976 military coup that ushered in a brutal dictatorship — President Javier Milei posted a startling video that demanded justice. Not for those who suffered repression under the junta, but for those victims of leftist guerrillas before the putsch.

Milei posted the video as tens of thousands of protesters, raising banners vowing "Nunca Mas," or never again, filled downtown Buenos Aires to commemorate the 48th anniversary of the coup and the seven

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years that followed when as many as 30,000 people were killed or forcibly disappeared in a systematic campaign that still haunts the country.

The video by the president, a far-right economist who took office in December, referred to “the other dead” before the coup, part of a contentious effort to change Argentina’s memory of its recent history.

Opponents see the cause as equating guerrilla violence with state terror, justifying the junta’s repression of anyone deemed subversive.

“FOR A COMPLETE MEMORY SO THAT THERE IS TRUTH AND JUSTICE,” Milei wrote on X Sunday with the video, which featured a cast of obscure figures — a woman whose father and sister were killed by guerrilla groups, a repentant leftist militant and a former intelligence official — all recounting the dictatorship’s repression in the context of a wider war.

“Those responsible for these crimes cannot go unpunished,” posted Vice President Victoria Villarruel. Her caption: “It wasn’t 30,000.”

Before becoming vice president and senate leader, Villarruel was best known as a fringe activist who paid prison visits to military junta leader Jorge Rafael Videla, challenged human rights groups’ estimate of 30,000 disappeared people and founded an organization championing victims of leftist militants. Her uncle, Ernesto Guillermo Villarruel, was accused of committing crimes against humanity in a clandestine detention center.

In a dramatic display of defiance Sunday, Argentines of all ages brought downtown Buenos Aires to a halt — singing, drumming and waving signs insisting “There were 30,000.”

“This is an attack against memory, and that’s why we’re here with our granddaughter, for her to understand,” Mariela Bruno said from the march, 8-year-old Mia tugging on her arm in the haze of firework and barbecue smoke.

The extreme views of Villarruel, once dismissed by Argentines united in pain over their country’s memory, are now being discussed in mainstream circles, cracking a consensus that has held through Argentina’s 41 years of democracy.

“This is the first time I’ve seen a government defying the narrative we’ve had for decades,” said 46-year-old Matias Reggiardo, one of 500 Argentines born in captivity and stolen from his dissident parents before they were killed by the military. “It’s terrifying to find people in Milei’s government cast doubt on our stories.”

There is also alarm that changing how the country understands its dictatorship could put the country’s main rallying cry, “Nunca Mas,” at risk.

“Our society is being confronted with the question of its future — whether the era of human rights under which we lived for 40 years is coming to an end or not,” said Gaston Chillier, a human rights lawyer.

“It’s a global trend,” he added, referring to far-movements that gained momentum with former U.S. President Donald Trump and Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, a defender of his country’s military dictatorship.

For years, human rights groups have lauded Argentina as a beacon of progress in settling accounts. Unlike Brazil and Chile that buried their past, Argentina has investigated crimes and imprisoned generals.

The leftist governments of Nestor Kirchner and his wife, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, in the early 2000s advanced Argentina’s historical reckoning. The Kirchners revoked pardons granted to junta members and converted the country’s most notorious clandestine detention site, the Naval Mechanics School, into a UNESCO-recognized Museum of Memory.

“In the world they have settled the discussion regarding what happened in Argentina during the last civil-military dictatorship,” Cristina Kirchner posted Sunday on X, formerly Twitter, addressing “those who still refuse to reflect.”

Milei’s administration has offered a starkly different view.

On the campaign trail, the radical libertarian played down the military’s crimes as “excesses.” Villarruel has described the state terror as “an internal armed conflict” and proposed turning the Memory Museum into schools “that could be enjoyed by all the Argentine people.”

Both have rejected estimates that 30,000 were disappeared, pointing to an independent commission that could identify only 8,960. Advocates concede the number is imprecise, due to the state’s failure to

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return bodies and produce evidence.

"It's clear this new government wants to make things hard for us," said 82-year-old Carmen Arias, who joined a group of Argentine mothers seeking to learn the fates of their disappeared children after her younger brother vanished in 1977. The women, known as Las Madres de Plaza de Mayo, have circled the same Buenos Aires plaza in protest every Thursday for 47 years.

"As long as we're alive, we'll keep going, and after we're gone, the youth will keep it going," Arias said last Thursday, straining to be heard over crowds chanting against Milei.

Protesters fear the creep of authoritarianism. In Milei's first 100 days, his government has banned protests involving roadblocks, scrapped the Women's Ministry and National Institute against Discrimination, closed Argentina's state news agency Télam, citing its political bias, and loosened rules on police shooting. Security Minister Patricia Bullrich has floated the idea of deploying the army to fight spiraling drug violence, a previously taboo topic that dredges up painful memories.

Yet for their supporters, Milei and Villarruel have vindicated grievances over the left-wing political establishment that won the country's peace and, they say, wrote its history.

"Argentine society must recognize that there were a lot of lies that excluded us from the memory of our past," said Arturo Larrabure, whose father was held hostage and killed by a Marxist guerrilla group.

Protesters say they have no issue expanding national commemoration efforts. But they are wary of rewriting a nightmare that isn't even over.

"One side has more to hide than the other," 69-year-old Osaldo Bonomo said from the clogged streets Sunday.

It was only 10 years ago that Reggiardo discovered he had been living a lie — that his father was no ordinary policeman with an explosive temper who had rescued him from the streets, but a member of the death squads that abducted his mother.

Rights groups are still working to track down hundreds of stolen babies. There are 17 trials still underway — the verdict in one case involving the disappearance and torture of 23 pregnant women is expected Tuesday.

"I think about mothers marching every week at the plaza, and I imagine my own pregnant mother, being hungry and tortured, and I am in tears," Reggiardo said. "Justifying that is a problem for me."

New Jersey first lady Tammy Murphy suspends her Senate campaign to replace indicted Sen. Menendez

WASHINGTON (AP) — New Jersey first lady Tammy Murphy on Sunday suspended her U.S. Senate campaign to replace Democratic Sen. Robert Menendez as he faces federal corruption charges,

Murphy said in a video posted to social media that winning the Democratic primary would require her to wage "a very divisive and negative campaign."

"With Donald Trump on the ballot and so much at stake for our nation, I will not in good conscience waste resources tearing down a fellow Democrat," Murphy said.

Her decision to drop out probably clears the way for U.S. Rep. Andy Kim in the Democratic primary on June 4. Kim is mounting a more formidable challenge than is typical against a well-connected political figure in a state where connections count for a lot.

Menendez announced that he would not run in that primary but did not rule out seeking reelection as an independent.

Murphy, a first-time candidate, was running with the backing of influential Democratic figures. Kim has centered his campaign in part on upending the state's unique ballot design, widely viewed as favoring candidates preferred by county party insiders.

"New Jersey's next senator must focus on the issues of our time and not be mired in tearing others down while dividing the people of our party and state," she said.

Kim, a mild-mannered three-term congressman, is perhaps best known for being photographed cleaning debris from the U.S. Capitol after the Jan. 6 insurrection. He won several state county committee votes,

including in his and Murphy's home counties.

The stakes are high, with Democrats competing to hold on to their narrow control of the Senate. Republicans have their own primary unfolding, featuring businessman Curtis Bashaw, Mendham Borough Mayor Christine Serrano Glassner and former TV news reporter Alex Zdan.

Menendez vehemently denies allegations that he and his wife accepted bribes of gold bars, cash and a luxury car from three favor-seeking New Jersey businessmen. The couple is scheduled to go on trial in May.

Carlos Sainz wins F1 Australian GP after early exit for Verstappen with engine fire

By STEWART BELL Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — Ferrari's Carlos Sainz ended Red Bull's Formula 1 winning streak Sunday when the Spaniard took advantage of Max Verstappen's early exit to win the Australian Grand Prix just two weeks after missing the previous race in Saudi Arabia due to an emergency appendectomy.

Sainz, who started on the front row alongside Verstappen, kept his place into turn one, but passed the Dutchman on lap two at turn nine for the lead and took control once his rival retired two laps later with a fiery mechanical failure.

Verstappen had won the first two F1 races of the season in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia and was on a nine-race winning streak.

Sainz finished ahead of teammate Charles Leclerc for Ferrari's first 1-2 result since the 2022 Bahrain Grand Prix, with McLaren's Lando Norris finishing in third for his first podium at Albert Park.

His teammate, Australian Oscar Piastri, was fourth.

Sainz, who will be replaced by Lewis Hamilton at Ferrari from 2025, was thrilled to get his third career win against the odds, his first since last year's Singapore Grand Prix.

"I felt really good out there," he said. "Of course, (I felt) a bit stiff, especially physically. It wasn't the easiest, but I was lucky that I was more or less on my own so I could just manage my pace, manage the tires, manage everything."

"Life sometimes is crazy, you know. What happened at the beginning of the year, then the podium in Bahrain, then appendix, the comeback, the win, it's a roller coaster. But I loved it."

Leclerc, on the podium for the second straight race, was encouraged by Ferrari's pace, and its ability to take the fight to rival Red Bull during its period of dominance.

"We knew that pole position and the race win was possible because we had very good tire degradation, very good pace," he said. "That is a very encouraging sign. However, if you look at the first three races, two out of the first three races, they (Red Bull) had the upper hand in the race, so we still have a lot of work to do."

Norris said it wasn't a surprise that he was able to earn his first podium since Brazil last year.

"I think when you take a Red Bull out of it, I would say no," he said. "I think our pace has been good all weekend. We put things together very nicely yesterday. We showed good long run, high-fuel pace on Friday, so I wouldn't have said we had no chance."

The race finished under the virtual safety car, ensuring there was no racing for most of the final lap, after Mercedes driver George Russell crashed on turn seven. Red Bull's Sergio Pérez closed out the top five, and made up just one place from where he started in sixth, after he was handed a three-place grid penalty for impeding Nico Hülkenberg in qualifying.

Two-time world champion Fernando Alonso finished sixth on the road, but fell to eighth after the stewards gave him a 20-second time penalty and three penalty points on his license, for "potentially dangerous" driving in battling Russell on the final lap.

Alonso lifted off the throttle slightly more than 100 metres earlier than he had done going into turn six during the race, while Russell behind him lost control and crashed at the exit of the corner.

Russell's teammate Lewis Hamilton also didn't finish following a lap 17 engine failure for Mercedes' first

double non-finish since the 2021 Azerbaijan Grand Prix, ending its record of reliability.

Japanese driver Yuki Tsunoda earned RB, the team formerly known as AlphaTauri, its first points of the season - with six points for seventh, having been elevated by Alonso's penalty.

American team Haas earned its first double points finish since the 2022 Austrian Grand Prix, with Hülkenberg and teammate Kevin Magnussen closing out the top-10 in ninth and 10th, respectively.

Verstappen's lead in the drivers' standings has been reduced from 15 points to four, with Leclerc in second place. Verstappen has 51 points and Leclerc 47.

Kate and William 'extremely moved' by support since the Princess of Wales' cancer revelation

By PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Kate, the Princess of Wales, and her husband, Prince William, are said to be "extremely moved" by the public's warmth and support following her shocking cancer announcement as tributes continued to pour in Sunday from around the world.

After weeks of frenzied speculation on social media about her health and well-being, Kate said in a candid video message on Friday that she is undergoing chemotherapy for cancer following major abdominal surgery. The 42-year-old princess said the cancer discovery was a "huge shock" and she was now in the early stages of preventative chemotherapy.

"The prince and princess are both enormously touched by the kind messages from people here in the U.K., across the Commonwealth and around the world in response to Her Royal Highness' message," a spokesperson for Kensington Palace said. "They are extremely moved by the public's warmth and support and are grateful for the understanding of their request for privacy at this time."

There has been a global outpouring of support, including from U.S. President Joe Biden, and King Charles III who is also undergoing treatment for cancer, which was found after he was undertaking treatment for an enlarged prostate. Neither Kate nor the king have revealed what type of cancer they have or the stage at which it was being treated.

Charles' nephew, Peter Phillips, said the king is "frustrated" that his recovery is taking longer than "he would want it to," but that he was in "good spirits" and "pushing" his staff to be able to return to his duties after beginning his treatment for cancer last month.

"I think ultimately he's hugely frustrated," Phillips, the son of Charles's sister Princess Anne, told Sky News Australia. "He's frustrated that he can't get on and do everything that he wants to be able to do. But he is very pragmatic, he understands that there's a period of time that he really needs to focus on himself."

People continued to flock Sunday to the royal's main London residence, Kensington Palace, as well as to Windsor Castle, where they spend most of their time, to show support for the princess, with many leaving flowers.

Until Friday, officials had only said Kate's surgery in January was successful and recuperation would keep the princess away from public duties until April. This has sparked a flurry of rumor-mongering about the "missing" future queen, compounded after Kate acknowledged that she altered an official photo released to mark Mother's Day in the U.K. earlier this month.

The photo, meant to reassure the public, triggered a backlash after The Associated Press and other news agencies retracted it over manipulation concerns.

Even a video published last week by The Sun and TMZ that appeared to show Kate and William shopping near their home didn't dispel the negative coverage.

Criticism of those jumping to sometime-outlandish conclusions continued to be voiced over the weekend.

Paddy Harverson, previously the official spokesman of Kate and the Prince of Wales, said that the speculation and pressure around Kate's health and whereabouts before her video statement was "the worst I've ever seen."

However, he said he thought Kate would have revealed her cancer diagnosis exactly as she had, regardless of what was being speculated.

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"I'm absolutely convinced that if we hadn't had all the madness and social media, if we hadn't had the sort of the Mother's Day photo mistake, they would have still done it like this," he told the BBC. "They would have still waited till this last Friday when the schools are breaking up to make the announcement."

Iran's currency hits a record low

By AMIR VAHDAT Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's currency fell to a record low on Sunday, plunging to 613,500 to the dollar, as its people celebrated the Persian New Year.

On Sunday, people were trying to exchange rials for foreign currency at Tehran's main hub of exchange shops in Ferdowsi Street, but most were closed due to the Nowruz holidays, which are run from March 20 to April 2.

Mohsen, a 32-year-old employee at one of the exchange shops, said the holiday was contributing to the low prices, "The price is not real, the demand for purchasing dollars is very high, but there are just a few exchange shops open." He and other Iranians spoke on condition their last names not be used, because of potential repercussions for speaking to foreign media about the country's economic struggles.

The two-week holiday is an opportunity to travel abroad, driving demand for U.S. dollars and Euros.

Mojtaba, a 49-year-old father, was shocked: "The rial fell 5% compared to the last six days, while the whole country is on vacation!"

Niloufar, 28-year-old wife and her husband Behzad, 30, said that they'd booked a weeklong tour of Turkey at a discount rate, but were now looking at spending as much as full-price tour.

The exchange rate strongly affects other markets, including housing and rentals.

The price was 590,000 to the dollar on March 18, the last workday before the holiday.

Many Iranians have seen their life savings evaporate as the local currency has depreciated. Today, it's worth about one-twentieth as much as it was in 2015, when Iran signed a nuclear accord with world powers.

Since then, it's fallen from 32,000 rials to the dollar to the hundreds of thousands. In February 2023, it briefly reached a nadir of 600,000 rials to the dollar, and since then has not risen above 439,000.

The government's Statistics Center put the country's inflation rate for Feb. 2024 at 42.5%, while Central Bank said it was more than 46%. There is no explanation for the discrepancy.

Iran's relations with the west have been at exceptional lows since then-U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned a deal that called for the country to end its nuclear program in return for access to frozen funds and other benefits. President Joe Biden said he was willing to re-enter a nuclear deal with Iran, but formal talks to try to find a roadmap to restart the deal collapsed in August 2022. In the meantime, tensions in the Middle East have increased significantly, making nuclear diplomacy with Iran more complicated. Iran has further angered Western countries by supplying armed drones to Russia that have been used in its invasion of Ukraine.

Dire economic conditions have contributed to widespread anger at the government in the past, but have also forced many Iranians to focus on putting food on the table rather than engaging in high-risk political activism amid a fierce crackdown on dissent.

The rial's record low came less than a month after a parliamentary election that saw the lowest turnout since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, whose results were dominated by hard-line politicians.

Hard-liners have controlled the parliament for the past two decades — with chants of "Death to America" often heard during its sessions.

Oath Keepers' son emerges from traumatic childhood to tell his own story in a long shot election bid

By AMY BETH HANSON Associated Press

KALISPELL, Mont. (AP) — The eldest son of one of America's most infamous seditionists is building a new life since breaking free from his father's control — juggling work, college classes and volunteer firefighting.

And Dakota Adams has tossed one more ball in the air this year: a Democratic campaign for Montana's

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Legislature.

He also plans to sell the rifles, body armor and tactical gear he used to wear to anti-government protests alongside his father — Stewart Rhodes, founder of the Oath Keepers. It's all part of an effort to push away the last vestiges of what Adams describes as an isolating and abusive upbringing that nearly ruined him, his mother and his siblings.

"I decided that I'm going to double down on betting on the electoral process," Adams said in a recent interview.

Adams knows it won't be easy running as a Democrat for the House in the deep red northwestern corner of Montana. The district covers northern Lincoln County, a mecca for militia members or sympathizers and doomsday preppers. Republican Donald Trump won 74% of the county vote in the 2020 presidential race.

While Adams' campaign may look like a fruitless undertaking, he doesn't see it that way. For him it's a chance to tell his own story — that of an "honest weirdo" who emerged from a traumatic childhood to find his own way in life. It's also a chance to make the case for his own vision of how democracy and personal responsibility intertwine.

Win or lose, Adams' campaign is built on his belief that people sympathetic to extremist groups might be open to seeing things differently.

A DARK CHILDHOOD

Adams, who uses his mother's maiden name and refers to Rhodes only by his first name, was raised in the shadow of one of the nation's most notorious conspiracy theorists.

Rhodes graduated from Yale with a law degree, but Adams called him lazy, paranoid and a grifter who had an exaggerated sense of his own importance as a threat to the government. Rhodes started Oath Keepers in 2009 after Democrat Barack Obama was elected president.

In their lives, as Adams tells it, Rhodes had his family living in constant fear that the government was spying on them and that the apocalypse was always just months away. Rhodes sabotaged his children's home schooling and wouldn't let them speak about their home lives in public, Adams said.

Rhodes' "leadership" of the Oath Keepers was inconsistent, even erratic, Adams said. Rhodes burned bridges with members, as well as with employers and creditors, leading to repeated moves for the family of eight.

"Basically until I'm an adult it's all one continuous gray time of survival and moving boxes," Adams said. "We lived in extreme isolation in one particular cultural bubble in increasingly paranoid and militant right-wing political spheres everywhere we moved in the country, until eventually we ended up in Montana."

They escaped Rhodes in 2018, when Tasha Adams filed for divorce.

Rhodes is now serving an 18-year prison sentence for seditious conspiracy for his role in the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol that sought to keep Trump in power after the then-president lost to Democrat Joe Biden. Rhodes declined through his attorney to comment on Adams' story.

Adams said Rhodes' involvement in the riot didn't surprise him and that Jan. 6 contributed to his decision to run for office.

"It served as a sobering wake-up call in terms of how much danger we are truly in and how the Republican Party enabled a president to become an active danger to this republic," he explained. "I was forced to reevaluate a lot of beliefs and face hard questions about what I really stood for."

'FIGURING MYSELF OUT'

Adams, now 27, has spent his early adult years catching up on his education and participating in therapy to learn about the "long-term effects of living in a toxic or dysfunctional household." His goal, he said, has been "figuring myself out."

He's working in construction and taking college classes with a plan to study political science.

While he read voraciously — mostly history — Adams didn't learn his times tables until he was 19, so he could pass a high school equivalency exam.

"I don't think I'll ever be fully caught up to where I would have been in life if I'd had a semi-normal childhood," he said.

He's gotten encouragement in his bid for the Legislature from Democrats, and some voters in his dis-

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trict have agreed to put signs in their yard. Scott Rodich, the vice chair of the county Democratic Central Committee, said Democrats have been hesitant to run in the Republican stronghold, so party leaders are glad to have Adams on the ballot.

Adams has also appeared at campaign events with Democratic gubernatorial candidate Ryan Busse. Adams met former Montana Gov. Steve Bullock, one of the state's most prominent Democrats, at the party's Mansfield-Metcalf dinner, and found it "incredibly weird" that Bullock knew who he was.

"It sometimes feels very unreal, because I have a normal life 95% of the time. And then 5% of the time, my personal life is relevant to a national news story," Adams said. "The disconnect feels incredibly strange."

Adams sees politics as an extension of community service, like his work with a volunteer fire department and being a responsible gun owner. He owns a pistol, but doesn't carry it because he hasn't kept up with his training.

"American gun culture needs to be rehabilitated from an egotistical and vanity-based, hyper-individualist ego trip culture to civil service and solemn responsibility to the community," he said.

Adams opposes gun control laws, saying they could be used to prevent disadvantaged groups from protecting themselves.

CONNECTING WITH VOTERS

In campaigning, Adams has discovered that he's "actually decent" at talking to people. That came as a surprise because he's struggled with long-term friendships and interpersonal relationships and "normal social skill development like interacting with people as my genuine self and not as a performance I'm putting on."

So he campaigns wearing a leather jacket, band T-shirts and a skull ring that doubles as a bottle opener — a good icebreaker, he said. Adams has long hair and wears dark eye makeup and black fingernail polish.

That may seem out of step with the conservative voters Adams is courting, but it's who he is.

"I have refused to tone any of this down since deciding to run for office," Adams said, gesturing at his clothing, "because I spent so long as a child conforming to a little character to enhance my father's political ambitions and image that I refused to do it ever again for any reason."

Driving home the point, he said: "I feel like being an honest weirdo is a lot better to a lot of people than being a Spirit Halloween cowboy when you're asking for their vote."

Adams feels he might be able to sway far-right voters as Democrats try to cut into the GOP supermajority in the Legislature.

"I'm not starting out from a place of attacking anybody for what they believe," he said. "Because of how I grew up, I understand a lot of the lexicon."

Adams tries to turn conversations away from cultural and social issues to more practical concerns such as housing costs, rising property taxes, inflation and abortion rights.

"There has to be a consistent eye on ensuring that people can afford to still live here who are not moving in with \$200,000-a-year remote jobs," he said. "If it's too expensive to build a life in Montana, then everybody who's trying to do that is going to leave."

He said the state needs a plan to cope with growth so it won't be "consumed by urban sprawl and golf courses."

Adams is realistic about his chances of winning. He said his opponent, Republican Rep. Neil Duram, has a "solid reputation" and even got Adams' vote in 2022.

So Adams has his eye on a threshold set by Bullock, who received 37% of the votes cast in Lincoln County in 2016. But even if he doesn't meet it, he says he'll be back.

"Regardless of what happens, I'm trying again," Adams said. "I think this is going to be a lifelong thing."

Mifepristone access is coming before the US Supreme Court. How safe is this abortion pill?

By LAURA UNGAR and MATTHEW PERRONE Associated Press

The U.S. Supreme Court will take up a case Tuesday that could impact how women get access to mifepristone, one of the two pills used in the most common type of abortion in the nation.

The central dispute in the case is whether the Food and Drug Administration overlooked serious safety problems when it made mifepristone easier to obtain, including through mail-order pharmacies.

Legal briefs filed with the court describe the pill's safety in vastly different terms: Medical professionals call it "among the safest medications" ever approved by the FDA, while the Christian conservative group suing the agency attributes "tens of thousands" of "emergency complications" to the drug.

Earlier this year, a medical journal retracted two studies that claimed to show the harms of mifepristone. The studies were cited in the pivotal Texas court ruling that brought the matter before the Supreme Court. The publisher cited conflicts of interest by the authors and flaws in their research, although the studies' lead author called the retractions a baseless attack.

Here's what to know about the safety of mifepristone, which is typically used with misoprostol in a medication abortion.

What safety limits has the FDA imposed since 2000?

The FDA approved mifepristone in 2000 as a safe and effective way to end early pregnancies.

There are rare occasions when mifepristone can cause dangerous, excessive bleeding that requires emergency care. Because of that, the FDA imposed strict safety limits on who could prescribe and distribute it — only specially certified physicians and only as part of three mandatory in-person appointments with the patient getting the drug.

The doctors also had to be capable of performing emergency surgery to stop excess bleeding and an abortion procedure if the drug didn't end the pregnancy.

Over the years, the FDA reaffirmed mifepristone's safety and repeatedly eased restrictions, culminating in a 2021 decision doing away with any in-person requirements and allowing the pill to be sent through the mail.

How often are there serious problems?

Abortion opponents say the more lax restrictions resulted in many more "emergency complications." But that argument lumps together women experiencing a range of issues with mifepristone — from the drug not working to people who may simply have questions or concerns but don't require medical care.

OB-GYNs say a tiny fraction of patients suffer "major" or "serious" adverse events after taking mifepristone.

A legal brief by a group of medical organizations including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists says: "When used in medication abortion, major adverse events — significant infection, excessive blood loss, or hospitalization — occur in less than 0.32% of patients, according to a highly regarded study with more than 50,000 patients."

The definition that scientists generally use for serious adverse events includes blood transfusions, major surgery, hospital admissions and death, said Ushma Upadhyay, one of the authors of that 2015 study. She added: "The hospital admission is a catch-all for the very serious but more rare events such as major infection."

The prescribing information included in the packaging for mifepristone tablets lists slightly different statistics for what it calls "serious adverse reactions." It cites ranges for how frequently various complications occur: 0.03% to 0.5% for transfusion; 0.2% for sepsis and 0.04% to 0.6% for hospitalization related to medication abortions. The ranges reflect findings across various relevant studies, experts said.

Why do patients go to the emergency room?

Mifepristone's labeling also lists a complication that most medical groups don't consider a serious or major adverse event: ER visits, which ranged from 2.9% to 4.6%. The current FDA label lists going to the ER as an option if patients experience prolonged heavy bleeding, severe abdominal pain or a sustained fever.

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But ER visits don't always reflect big problems, doctors told The Associated Press.

Some people may go there after a medication abortion because they want to be checked out or have questions but don't have a doctor, said Upadhyay, a professor at the University of California, San Francisco. Others, she said, "don't want to go to their primary care provider about their abortion" because of stigma.

A study she co-authored in 2018 found that slightly more than half of patients who visited the ER because of abortions received only observational care. Some, Upadhyay said, "don't receive any treatment."

How effective is the pill?

Mifepristone results in a completed abortion 97.4% of the time, according to U.S. studies cited in the FDA label.

But in 2.6% of cases, a surgical intervention is needed. And 0.7% of the time, the pregnancy continues.

That's compared to a procedural abortion in a clinic, where the chance of the procedure failing to end a pregnancy "is extremely, extremely low," probably less than 0.1%, said Dr. Pratima Gupta, a board member for the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

"Any time a procedural abortion is done, the clinicians ensure that it was a complete abortion" by examining the tissue that is removed or performing an ultrasound during or after the procedure, she said.

Gupta, who has done abortion procedures for more than 20 years, said there are "very few complications from abortion — any kind of abortion, medication or procedural abortion." A recent study suggests that's just as true for medication abortions that happen in a clinic, a doctor's office or at home with the help of telehealth.

How does mifepristone's safety and effectiveness compare to other drugs?

The FDA makes drug approval decisions on a case-by-case basis, weighing effectiveness, safety and other factors.

No drug is 100% effective, and many common medications don't work for a significant portion of patients.

Antidepressants typically help between 40% and 60% of people with depression. New antibiotics approved by the FDA often resolve about 70% of infections.

Since 2000, roughly 6 million patients have taken mifepristone, according to the FDA. A 2021 review of agency records looking for deaths that were likely related to the drug identified 13, or .00027% of patients.

Medical organizations supporting mifepristone's availability say the drug's safety — given the rate of deaths — compares to "ibuprofen, which more than 30 million Americans take in any given day."

Today in History: March 25, 'Scottsboro Boys' are taken off train and wrongly accused

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, March 25, the 85th day of 2024. There are 281 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 25, 1931, in the so-called "Scottsboro Boys" case, nine young Black men were taken off a train in Alabama, accused of raping two white women; after years of convictions, death sentences and imprisonment, the nine were eventually vindicated.

On this date:

In 1634, English colonists sent by Lord Baltimore arrived in present-day Maryland.

In 1894, Jacob S. Coxey began leading an "army" of unemployed from Massillon (MA'-suh-luhn), Ohio, to Washington D.C., to demand help from the federal government.

In 1911, 146 people, mostly young female immigrants, were killed when fire broke out at the Triangle Shirtwaist Co. in New York.

In 1915, the U.S. Navy lost its first commissioned submarine as the USS F-4 sank off Hawaii, claiming the lives of all 21 crew members.

In 1947, a coal-dust explosion inside the Centralia Coal Co. Mine No. 5 in Washington County, Illinois, claimed 111 lives; 31 men survived.

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In 1954, RCA announced it had begun producing color television sets at its plant in Bloomington, Indiana. In 1960, Ray Charles recorded "Georgia on My Mind" as part of his "The Genius Hits the Road" album in New York.

In 1965, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. led 25,000 people to the Alabama state capitol in Montgomery after a five-day march from Selma to protest the denial of voting rights to Blacks. Later that day, civil rights activist Viola Liuzzo, a white Detroit homemaker, was shot and killed by Ku Klux Klansmen.

In 1987, the Supreme Court, in Johnson v. Transportation Agency, ruled 6-3 that an employer could promote a woman over an arguably more-qualified man to help get women into higher-ranking jobs.

In 1990, 87 people, most of them Honduran and Dominican immigrants, were killed when fire raged through an illegal social club in New York City. (An arsonist set the fire after being thrown out of the club following an argument with his girlfriend; Julio Gonzalez died in prison in 2016.)

In 1996, an 81-day standoff by the anti-government Freemen began at a ranch near Jordan, Montana.

In 2017, stars and fans gathered for a public memorial to honor the late mother-daughter film stars Debbie Reynolds and Carrie Fisher.

In 2018, Linda Brown, who as a young girl in Kansas became embroiled in a landmark 1954 Supreme Court case that challenged segregation in public schools, died at the age of 75.

In 2022, Taylor Hawkins, drummer for the Foo Fighters, died at age 50 in a hotel in Bogotá, Colombia during the band's South American tour.

In 2023, powerful tornadoes tore through parts of the Deep South, killing 26 people in Mississippi and obliterating dozens of buildings.

Today's Birthdays: Film critic Gene Shalit is 98. Former astronaut James Lovell is 96. Feminist activist and author Gloria Steinem is 90. Singer Anita Bryant is 84. Actor Paul Michael Glaser is 81. Singer Sir Elton John is 77. Actor Bonnie Bedelia is 76. Actor-comedian Mary Gross is 71. Actor James McDaniel is 66. Movie producer Amy Pascal is 66. Rock musician Steve Norman (Spandau Ballet) is 64. Actor Brenda Strong is 64. Actor Fred Goss is 63. Actor-writer-director John Stockwell is 63. Actor Marcia Cross is 62. Author Kate DiCamillo is 60. Actor Lisa Gay Hamilton is 60. Actor Sarah Jessica Parker is 59. Baseball Hall of Famer Tom Glavine is 58. TV personality Ben Mankiewicz is 57. Olympic bronze medal figure skater Debi Thomas is 57. Actor Laz Alonso is 53. Singer Melanie Blatt (All Saints) is 49. Actor Domenick Lombardozzi is 48. Actor Lee Pace is 45. Actor Sean Faris is 42. Comedian-actor Alex Moffat (TV: "Saturday Night Live") is 42. Former auto racer Danica Patrick is 42. Actor-singer Katharine McPhee is 40. Comedian-actor Chris Redd (TV: "Saturday Night Live") is 39. Singer Jason Castro is 37. Rapper Big Sean is 36. Rap DJ-producer Ryan Lewis is 36. Actor Matthew Beard is 35. Actor-singer Aly (AKA Alyson) Michalka (mish-AL'-kah) is 35. Actor Kiowa Gordon is 34. Actor Seychelle Gabriel is 33.