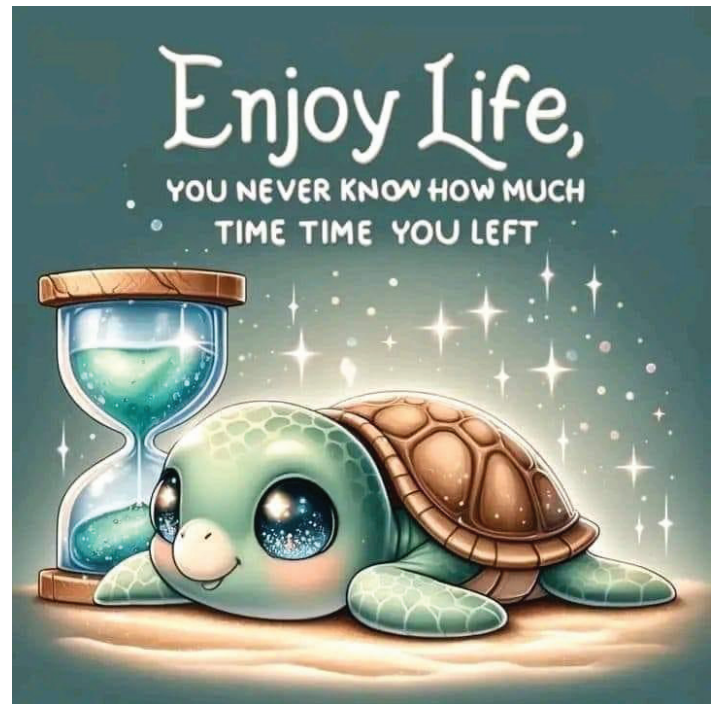


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Tuesday, July 2

Senior Menu: Chicken cordon bleu hot dish, cauliflower/broccoli, pears, whole wheat bread.
Common Cents Community Thrift Store open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Pantry Open, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
Legion hosts Watertown, 5 p.m. (DH)
U12 R/B at Aberdeen 11/12, 5:30 p.m. (DH)
U8 R hosts Webster, 6 p.m. (DH)
T-Ball black hosts Andover, 6 p.m.; Gold practice at 5 p.m.
United Methodist: No Bible Study

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

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1440

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Immunity Ruling

The Supreme Court ruled 6-3 yesterday in finding the president of the United States has some immunity over actions conducted while in office. The case stems from former President Donald Trump's challenge to four felony charges over alleged interference with the 2020 election.

The court's majority opinion draws a distinction between official and unofficial acts of the office of the presidency. Trump's conversations with the attorney general are characterized as official acts, while conversations with others—including then-Vice President Mike Pence—may be categorized as unofficial depending on the context. The court directs lower courts to parse through the allegations to determine which acts may be prosecuted as unofficial acts.

The ruling was one of four the Supreme Court issued on its last day in session. The court kept a pair of state laws on social media content blocked while lower courts reexamine First Amendment considerations; another ruling extended the statute of limitations for businesses to challenge federal regulations.

Boeing Buys Back Supplier

Boeing has agreed to acquire longtime fuselage supplier Spirit AeroSystems for \$4.7B as part of efforts to improve the aerospace company's plane quality and safety. The deal comes as both companies have been under scrutiny after a midair door panel blowout on an Alaska Airlines flight in January.

The Wichita, Kansas-based Spirit AeroSystems was previously owned by Boeing until a spin-off in 2005. Last year, Boeing accounted for 70% of the supplier's revenue. Under the all-stock deal, Spirit AeroSystems will spin off factories that produce parts for Boeing's European rival, Airbus. The transaction is subject to approval from regulators and Spirit AeroSystems' shareholders. It is expected to close by the middle of next year.

Separately, the Justice Department is reportedly preparing to present Boeing with a plea deal to avoid trial over fraud conspiracy charges tied to the deaths of 346 people killed in two crashes in 2018 and 2019.

Bionic Breakthrough

A bionic device developed at MIT allows people to control a leg prosthetic with their minds, according to a new study. The device can yield a more natural gait and reduce phantom limb pain, among other benefits.

The prosthetic takes advantage of muscles' tendency to move in tandem, with control of one leg muscle signaling a complementary action in the other through the body's nervous system. While traditional surgery severs this muscle connection at the amputation site, a below-the-knee surgery can retain them. A bionic prosthetic can then use electrodes to detect muscle movements, resulting in a more natural gait than traditional robotic legs. In contrast, traditional prosthetics rely on preprogrammed gaits responding to environmental factors like terrain.

The study has the potential to change the standard of care for hundreds of thousands of Americans who live with the loss of a leg. Researchers hope to make the bionic prosthetic commercially available within five years.

Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

The 137th Wimbledon Championships began yesterday from the All England Club in London; see full preview for both women's and men's tournaments.

Ismail Kadare, world-renowned Albanian novelist and poet who was nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature 15 times, dies at 88.

Majority owners of the Boston Celtics plan to put the defending NBA champions up for sale; the franchise is valued at a reported \$4.7B.

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Science & Technology

YouTube introduces new policy allowing users to request the takedown of AI-generated content simulating their face or voice.

Fossil discovery suggests different species of grape plants proliferated following the extinction of the dinosaurs; findings include a 60-million-year-old species, the oldest ever found in the Western Hemisphere.

Engineers develop nanorobots capable of killing cancer cells in mouse studies; approach uses a "kill switch" that activates only in the presence of a solid tumor.

Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher (S&P 500 +0.3%, Dow +0.1%, Nasdaq +0.8%) to kick off a holiday-shortened trading week.

European regulators charge Meta with violating new antitrust laws by forcing Facebook and Instagram users to pay to avoid seeing ads on the platforms.

Investor Keith Gill, known as "Roaring Kitty," discloses 6.6% stake in Chewy; pet retailer's shares rise in premarket trading before closing down nearly 7%.

Politics & World Affairs

Israeli military orders evacuations in part of Gaza's southern city of Khan Younis ahead of possible renewed ground operation in the enclave's second-largest city.

Israel releases head of al-Shifa hospital after seven-month detention.

Hurricane Beryl makes landfall on Caribbean island of Carriacou in Grenada as Category 4 storm with a maximum of 150 mph winds; the storm is expected to reach Jamaica tomorrow.

House Judiciary Committee sues Attorney General Merrick Garland over refusal to hand over recordings of President Joe Biden's classified documents interview.

Ex-Trump adviser Steve Bannon begins four-month prison sentence for 2022 contempt of Congress conviction.

*Actual retail prices are set by dealer and may vary. Taxes are additional and vary by location. Freight and PDI charges may be additional and vary by dealer. Models subject to limited availability. Images may not reflect dealer inventory and/or unit specifications. † As rated by Kohler, all power levels are stated in gross horsepower at 3600 RPM per SAE J1940 as rated by engine manufacturer. †† As required by Kawasaki, horsepower tested in accordance with SAE J1195 and rated in accordance with SAE J2723 and certified by SAE International. **See operator's manual for warranty details and information. Certain restrictions apply. Kohler® is a registered trademark of Kohler Co. Kawasaki® is a registered trademark of KAWASAKI JUKOGYO KABUSHIKI KAISHA.

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& Isaac Mell*

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The wedding will take place in Florida on July 30th.

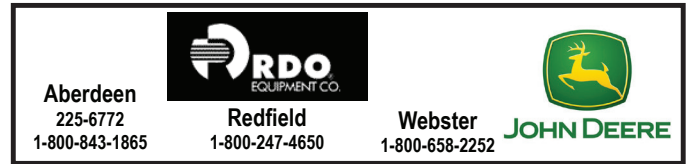
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FROM: JUNE 27TH TO JULY 14TH

*The couple is also registered on Amazon if you prefer to send them a gift.

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July Groton Community Center

Monday: July 1

Senior Menu: Hot pork sandwich, cucumber salad baked beans, sherbet, fruit.

Pantry Open, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Jr. Legion at Aberdeen Smitty's, 4 p.m. (DH)

Jr. Teeners at Webster, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

U12 W/R Baseball hosts Watertown, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

U10 B/W hosts Aberdeen, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

T-Ball Gold at Claremont, 6 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

Tuesday, July 2

Senior Menu: Chicken cordon bleu hot dish, cauliflower/broccoli, pears, whole wheat bread.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Pantry Open, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Legion hosts Watertown, 5 p.m. (DH)

U12 R/B at Aberdeen 11/12, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

U8 R hosts Webster, 6 p.m. (DH)

T-Ball black hosts Andover, 6 p.m.; Gold practice at 5 p.m.

United Methodist: No Bible Study

Wednesday, July 3

Senior Menu: Beef stew, buttermilk biscuit, Waldorf salad, cookie.

Groton Chamber Meeting Noon

Jr. Teeners hosts Aberdeen Smitty's B, 5 p.m. (DH)

Groton CM&A: Family Fun Night, 7 p.m.

Thursday, July 4

Firecracker Couples Golf Tournament, Olive Grove Golf Course, 10 a.m.

Friday, July 5

Senior Menu: Chicken strips, tri-tators, carrots, fruit, whole wheat bread.

Saturday, July 6

Common Cents Community Thrift Store open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 7

Special Needs Swim, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion: St. John's at 9 a.m.; Zion at 11 a.m.

United Methodist: Worship with communion: Conde at 8:30 a.m.; Groton at 10:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.

Monday, July 8

Senior Menu: Beef noodle stroganoff, green beans, vanilla pudding, mandarin oranges, whole wheat bread.

U12 hosts Webster, 6 p.m. (DH)

U10 W/R at Watertown, 6 p.m. (DH)

U8 R hosts Columbia 6 p.m. (1)

T-Ball Black hosts Columbia, 5 p.m.; Gold practice, 6 p.m. on Soccer Complex

Softball at Oakes: U8 at 5 p.m. (1), U10B at 6 p.m. (2)

Jr. Teeners hosts Clark, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

Pantry open, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m.

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DID YOU KNOW . . .

You can use the GDI Fitness Center by paying by the month and you can cancel any time without penalty. Call/Text Paul at 605-397-7460 for details!

Tuesday, July 9

Senior Menu: Lemon chicken breast, au grating potatoes 3-bean salad, pineapple/strawberry ambrosia, dinner roll.

U8 R/B hosts Webster, 6 p.m. (4 games)

Softball at Britton: U8 at 6 p.m. (1), U10G at 6 p.m.m (1)

Jr. Legion at Sisseton, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

Jr. Teeners at Miller, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

Emmanuel Lutheran: Council, 6 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Free SNAP application assistance at Groton Community Center, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store open, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Pantry Open, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., Groton Community Center

Wednesday, July 10

Senior Menu: Hamburger cabbage roll hot dish, mixed vegetables, muffin, pears.

U10 R/B at Milbank, 6 p.m. (DH)

T-Ball Black hosts Claremont, 6 p.m.

Jr. Legion hosts Aberdeen Smitty's 16U, 4 p.m. (DH)

Emmanuel Lutheran: Circles meet, 6 p.m. potluck with joint Bible Study

Groton CM&A: Family Fun Night, 7 p.m.

Thursday July 11

Senior Menu: Chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, oriental blend vegetables, baked apples, whole wheat bread.

Softball at Webster: U8 at 5:30 p.m. (1); U10G at 6:30 p.m. (DH), U12 at 6:30 p.m. (DH)

Softball U14 at Miller, 6:30 p.m. (DH)

Legion at Clark Rotary Tournament

Story Time at Wage Memorial Library 10 a.m.

Groton Lions Club meeting, 6 p.m. 104 N Main

Friday, July 12

Senior Menu: BBQ gilet on bun, scalloped potatoes, tomato spoon salad, watermelon, cookie.

Saturday, July 13

Common Cents Community Thrift Store open, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 14

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship, 9 .m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship at St. John's, 9 a.m.; and at Zion, 11 a.m.

United Methodist: Worship: Conde at 8:30 a.m.; Groton at 10:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.

Summer Fest/Car Show at City Pari, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Monday, July 15

Senior Menu: Chicken Alfredo, broccoli, peaches, whole wheat bread.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

Pantry open, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Groton Community Center

Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Legion at Redfield, 5:30 p.m. (1)

Jr. Legion at Redfield 7:30 p.m. (1)

Softball at Mellette: U10B at 6 p.m. (DH), U12 at 7:30 p.m. (DH)

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Tuesday, July 16:

Senior Menu: Spaghetti with meat sauce, corn, apple crisp, breadstick.

T-Ball B/G Scrimmage, 6 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m.

Common Centers Community Thrift Store open, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Pantry Open, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., Groton Community Center

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Legion at Milbank, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

St. John's Lutheran: Quilting, 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 17

Senior Menu: Roast turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, 7 layer salad, fruit whole wheat bread.

Pro-Am Tourney at Olive Grove

Legion Auxiliary Salad. Buffet and Dessert Bar, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. American Legion

Groton CM&A: Family Fun Night, 7 p.m.

Thursday, July 18

Senior Menu: Baked cod, parsley buttered potatoes, creamy coleslaw, tapioca pudding mandarin oranges, whole wheat bread.

Legion hosts Clark, 5:30 p.m. (1)

Jr. Legion hosts Clark, 7:30 p.m. (1)

Story Time at Wage Memorial Library 10 a.m.

Middle School (upcoming 6th graders) Moonlight Swim, 8:30-10:30 p.m., Swimming Pool

Friday, July 19

Senior Menu: Ham salad on bun, cauliflower/pea/ carrots, salad, fresh fruit, cookie.

Jr. Legion hosts Britton, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

July 12-14: U12 State Tourney at Salem

Saturday, July 20

Common Cents Community Thrift Store open, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 21

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship with communion, 9 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship with communion: St. John's at 9 a.m.; Zion at 11 a.m.

United Methodist: Worship: Conde at 8:30 a.m.; Groton at 10:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.

Monday, July 22

Senior Menu: Meatballs, mashed potatoes and gravy, broccoli, acini depepi fruit salad, whole wheat bread.

Softball hosts Warner: U8 at 5:30 p.m. (1), U10B at 6:30 p.m. (DH), U12 at 6:30 p.m. (DH)

Jr. Legion hosts Selby, 5:30 p.m. (DH)

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

Pantry open, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Groton Community Center

Senior Citizens meet at the Groton Community Center, potluck at Noon.

Tuesday, July 23

Senior Menu: Baked pork chop, sweet potatoes, vegetable capri blend, applesauce, whole wheat bread.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store open 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Pantry open at the Groton Community Center, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Legion Regions at Clark

Wednesday, July 24

Senior Menu: Goulash, green beans, pineapple/ strawberry ambrosia, whole wheat bread.

Groton Golf Association Fundraiser, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Olive Grove

Legion Regions at Clark

Groton CM&A: Family Fun Night, 7 p.m.

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Thursday, July 25

Senior Menu: Oven fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, Harvard beets, acini depepi fruit salad, whole wheat bread.

Emmanuel Lutheran: WELCA (bring a guest, light supper and guest speaker: Kristi Anderson)

Story Time at Wage Memorial Library 10 a.m.

Summer Downtown Sip & Shop, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Treasures Amidst the Trials, Emmanuel Lutheran, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Legion Regions at Clark

Friday, July 26

Senior Menu: Bratwurst on bun, sauerkraut, 3-bean salad, whole wheat bread.

Ferney Open Golf Tourney, 9 a.m., Olive Grove Golf Course

State Teener Tournament at Garretson
Legion Regions at Clark

Saturday, July 27

Common Cents Community Thrift Store open, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Celebration in the Park, 1 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

State Softball Tournament in Watertown (U10B, U12)

State Teener Tournament at Garretson
Legion Regions at Clark

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 3:45-4:15 p.m.; SEAS Mass, 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 28

Emmanuel Lutheran: Worship 9 a.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Worship at St. John's, 9 a.m.; and at Zion, 11 a.m.

United Methodist: Worship: Conde at 8:30 a.m.; Groton at 10:30 a.m.; Coffee hour, 9:30 a.m.

Catholic: SEAS Confession, 7:45-8:15 a.m.; SEAS Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Turton Confession, 10:30-10:45 a.m.; Turton Mass, 11 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

Groton CM&A: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.

State Teener Tournament at Garretson

Monday, July 29

Senior Menu: Baked fish, oven roasted potatoes pea-cheese salad, fruit, whole wheat bread.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

Pantry Open, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Groton Community Center

Tuesday, July 30

Senior Menu: Tater tot hot dish, carrots, peaches, whole wheat bread.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Bible Study, 6:30 a.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store open, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Pantry Open, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., Groton Community Center

Wednesday, July 31

Senior Menu: Ham, au gratin potatoes, creamed cabbage, tropical fruit, whole wheat bread.

Groton CM&A: Family Fun Night, 7 p.m.

65th Anniversary



Don and Nancy Hein will celebrate their 65th Wedding Anniversary on July 3, 2024. Greetings may be sent to 918 Arbor Lane #46, Aberdeen SD 57401.

Swan Lake Reopen to Boating

PIERRE, S.D. - The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) today announced the reopening of Swan Lake in Turner County, which had been included on Governor Noem's previous "no boating declaration."

"The water continues to recede, and conditions are allowing us to lift the boating restriction on Swan Lake," said Sam Schelhaas, Law Enforcement Chief. "Our staff continue to assess the other closed waterbodies daily, and when conditions allow they will be lifted as well."

Boaters utilizing these waterbodies should use caution as there is debris still below the surface.

"We are hopeful we will be able to reopen Wall Lake and lift the no-wake on Lake Campbell in the coming days," continued Schelhaas. "Safety continues to be the number one priority, and we appreciate everyone's patience as we have navigated through the process of evaluating and assessing water levels the last couple weeks."

No boating remains in effect on the waters of:

Wall Lake in Minnehaha County, and

McCook Lake in Union County, South Dakota.

Per the declaration, GFP Secretary Kevin Robling has been appointed as the Governor's designee in order for him to add to, delete, or modify boating restrictions for any bodies of water similarly affected in South Dakota.

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That's Life by Tony Bender: What's on my mind

Train wreck

My Great Uncle Fred Spilloway lived to be 103 or 104. We were never exactly sure. But we knew he was sharp as a tack to his last day. Meanwhile, North Dakota voters just passed an age limit for politicians of 80. While that might not have been fair to Fred, after last week's presidential debate, you could see where supporters of the bill are coming from.

Donald Trump, who has been riffing about sharks and boat batteries, might have claimed the prize as worst debate performance ever—he told a documented 30 lies; maybe he's slipping—except Joe Biden is just too competitive. And worse. He was robotic and tongue-tied. Fred would have mopped the floor with both of them. The next day, however, Biden looked great on the campaign trail. How does that happen? Maybe, after two global diplomatic visits and a fundraiser the night before, he just got a good night's sleep.

Now, I've seen what I saw from both candidates before but it's been at the end of the bar. I'm trying to withhold judgement since being president is the most challenging job in the world. You see the before and after pictures. It ages you. The reality, however, is that tasks are delegated, so a good administration is the key for any president.

This is a cautionary tale. We've seen Trump making addled statements daily on the road and we've seen Biden stiff as a 2x4. I don't want to be an agist, but both parties need to produce a more youthful bench.

King of Suck-Up Mountain

Well, Gov. Doug Burgum may go down in state history as the most disappointing politician ever. He quickly managed to alienate just about every faction in the legislature and now his absorption into the MAGA collective—resistance is futile—and his shameless pandering to Trump in his quest to become his running mate, has become a national embarrassment. And in South Dakota, Kristi Noem is mowing down anything that moves in the gravel pit.

Last weekend, Burgum made the national news talk shows, and absolutely refused to answer the question—would he accept the results of the election? His tap-dancing had the talking heads mocking him right into the Monday morning news shows. "Doug Burgum is like Mike Pence without the smoldering sensuality," Rick Wilson, a Republican strategist, said on MSNBC. He also called him the "King of Suck Up Mountain."

Once you look past the frivolity, it's a serious question. Trump is facing indictments for trying to steal the 2020 election with fake electors, a siege on the U.S. Capitol, and a recorded attempt to coerce a Georgia official into creating 11,000 votes out of thin air.

Now, I'm a fiscal conservative, a social progressive, and a 100% believer in the Constitution and the electoral process. Casting doubt on the process is dangerous but Burgum can't afford to contradict Trump if he wants to be vice president, even though Homeland Security said, "The November 3rd election was the most secure in American history."

From the time I could read, I consumed history and civics, never imagining our democratic republic could be vulnerable to authoritarianism. Well, if you disenfranchise 81 million voters, it's no longer a free country and your voice has been silenced.

Last weekend, Doug Burgum couldn't bring himself to support the one thing that makes us a free country. Free elections.

Independence Day

Most of my readers know I usually reserve political commentary for my weekly column in Forum Communications newspapers. I prefer to write human interest columns in this paper and the others that have supported me for more than 30 years. But, you can't blithely ignore threats to our democracy.

When I became concerned about a sales job to drum up support for the Iraq War—after all, 9/11 was precipitated by Saudis based in Afghanistan—some publishers abandoned my column. Most hung in there, even those who disagreed with me. Because that's what free speech is all about.

This week we celebrated freedom of speech and the many other freedoms established nearly 250 years ago. Today, more than ever, we need to remember how fragile freedom is.

Ronald Reagan said, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free."

Gov. Noem's Second-Chance Licensing Bill Becomes Law

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Labor & Regulation's second-chance licensing bill, SB 57, became law today. The bill creates uniform procedures for consideration of criminal histories and conviction in professional or occupational licensure.

"This important legislation ensures that an unrelated criminal past won't stop qualified applicants from filling our open jobs and successfully reentering the workforce," said Governor Noem. "We want to give people every opportunity to build a career and provide for themselves and their families."

Gov. Noem's Historic Antisemitism Bill Becomes Law

PIERRE, S.D. – The historic bill to combat antisemitism, HB 1076, became law today. The bill requires the consideration of the definition of antisemitism when investigating unfair or discriminatory practices. It defines antisemitism and makes it easier to prove when discriminatory conduct is motivated by antisemitism.

"I am very proud of this historic legislation that will keep our Jewish people secure," said Governor Noem. "Since I signed this bill, antisemitic hatred has only grown worse across the United States – but not in South Dakota. I hope states across the country will follow South Dakota's leadership and take steps to combat this hatred."

Gov. Noem's Teacher Compensation Bill Becomes Law

PIERRE, S.D. – The bill to enhance teacher compensation, SB 127, became law today. The bill establishes a minimum teacher salary and revises the requirements pertaining to average teacher compensation.

"We've all seen the amazing impact a great teacher can have on a student's future," said Governor Noem. "We are making sure our teachers receive the pay that they rightly deserve for all the great work they do."

Gov. Noem's Foreign-Owned Ag Land Bill Becomes Law

PIERRE, S.D. – The Department of Agriculture & Natural Resource's (DANR) foreign-owned ag land bill, HB 1231, became law today. The bill places restrictions on the ownership of U.S. agricultural land, stopping six Evil Foreign Governments from buying up South Dakota's precious ag land.

"Evil Foreign Governments, like the Chinese Communist Party, are not our friends. They should not be free to purchase our precious ag land," said Governor Noem. "This legislation will keep South Dakota's top asset secure and stop Evil Foreign Governments from becoming our neighbors."

Employers Benefiting from Low Unemployment Tax Rates

PIERRE, S.D. – Over 20,000 out of 33,378 South Dakota employers have benefited from a zero percent unemployment tax rate since HB 1101 was passed during the 2023 legislative session. In the prior year, only 4,800 obtained a zero percent rate.

This legislation created a new tax Schedule C to reduce employer contribution rates by 0.5% when the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund balance at the end of the fiscal year is at or above the average high-cost multiplier of 1.5.

"We intended to provide a tax cut while ensuring the fund remained at a healthy and responsible level," said state Labor and Regulation Secretary Marcia Hultman. "Our hardworking business owners saved \$18 million, and we are seeing the positive impacts."

South Dakota's unemployment rate is the lowest in the nation at 2.0%. Only 1,271 people are receiving reemployment assistance benefits – a historic low.

"People are choosing to work, and our economy is booming," said Hultman. "Many new businesses are calling our state home, and thousands of new workers are relocating to the Mount Rushmore state."

The first year for the new schedule was calendar year 2024. Employers are notified each October of what schedule and rates apply to them at the beginning of the new year. Projections indicate Schedule C will remain in place for 2025.

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Updated County Agenda

**BROWN COUNTY
BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING TUESDAY
July 02, 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 of Public Comment
4. Second Reading & Possible Adoption for following Ordinances:
 - a. Ord. #271 – Rezone
 - b. Ord. #272 - Rezone
5. Designate The Aberdeen Insider as an Official Newspaper for Brown County as of July 1, 2024.
6. R-O-W Applications:
 - a. Web Water
 - b. Northern Electric
7. Resolution for Financial Assurance for Subtitle D Landfills
8. Rachel Kippley, Fair/Fairgrounds/Parks Manager
 - a. Aberdeen Security & Investigations Contract
9. Fireworks Permit for Brown County Speedway/Lickfelt Fireworks
10. RFP for Court Appointed Attorneys
11. Consent Calendar
 - a. Approval of Post-Election Audit Minutes of June 24, 2024
 - b. Approval of General Meeting Minutes of June 25, 2024
 - c. Claims/Payroll
 - d. HR Report
 - e. Abatements
 - f. New Per Diem Rates effective July 1, 2024
 - g. May Auditors Report of Accounts
 - h. Set Hearing Date & Authorize Advertising for Temporary Special Event Malt Beverage License – Aberdeen Aqua Addicts
12. Other Business
 - a. Nancy Cutler and Claremont Residents – Concern with Dakota/Missouri Valley/Western Railroad loading semis from Beef Plant
13. Executive Session (if requested per SDCL 1-25-2)
14. Adjourn

Brown County Commission Meeting

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

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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>

2025 Budget Work Session following the Commission Meeting

South Dakota Health Department Issues Mosquito Control Advisory Post-Flooding

This information can be helpful to everyone

PIERRE, SD –The South Dakota Department of Health is advising residents to take proactive steps to reduce mosquito populations following recent floods in several southeastern counties. The excess water from flooding creates ideal breeding conditions for mosquitoes, especially the nuisance species *Aedes vexans*. While *Aedes vexans* does not typically carry the West Nile Virus (WNV), another species, *Culex tarsalis*, can pose a significant risk.

“The simple step of tipping over or discarding containers holding stagnant water during clean-up efforts can help limit excess mosquitoes in the coming weeks,” said Dr. Josh Clayton, state epidemiologist.

The Department emphasizes the importance of removing stagnant water from properties to eliminate mosquito breeding sites and reduce the risk of WNV transmission.

Action Steps to Remove Standing Water:

Empty and Scrub: Turn over, cover, or throw out any items that hold water, such as tires, buckets, planters, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpot saucers, or trash containers. Mosquitoes lay eggs near water.

Cover Water Storage Containers: Tightly cover water storage containers (buckets, cisterns, rain barrels) so mosquitoes cannot get inside to lay eggs.

Use Wire Mesh: For containers without lids, use wire mesh with holes smaller than an adult mosquito.

Fill Tree Holes: Prevent tree holes from filling with water.

Repair Septic Tanks: Repair cracks or gaps in your septic tank. Cover open vents or plumbing pipes with wire mesh.

Tips to Avoid Mosquito Bites:

Spray: Use mosquito repellent on you and your family to keep the bugs at bay.

Water: Even in a small amount of water, mosquitoes hatch in just a few days. Remove Standing Water.

Arms: When outside, wear clothing that covers exposed skin, like arms and legs.

Time: Mosquitos thrive most around dawn and dusk. Either stay indoors or be extra cautious at those times.

The South Dakota Department of Health encourages all residents to remain vigilant and take these preventive measures to protect themselves and their communities from mosquito-borne illnesses. For more information and updates, visit the Department of Health website.

At the heart of the Department of Health’s mission is a simple goal: to protect and improve the health of all South Dakotans. The department is entrusted with the vital task of promoting wellness, preventing disease, and ensuring access to quality healthcare for all South Dakotans.

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Groton City Council Meeting Agenda

July 2, 2024 – 7:00pm
City Hall – 120 N Main Street

(IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CALL IN TO THIS MEETING, PLEASE MAKE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS TO DO SO BY CALLING CITY HALL 605-397-8422)

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Public Comments - pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1
(Public Comments will offer the opportunity for anyone not listed on the agenda to speak to the council. Speaking time will be limited to 3 minutes. No action will be taken on questions or items not on the agenda.)
3. Department Reports
4. Authorization to Purchase Building for Soccer Complex
5. First Reading of Ordinance No. 777 – Supplemental Appropriations
6. Approval of Special Event Liquor License – 1st Annual Celebration in the Park
7. Storybook Land Theatre
8. Security Cameras at City Hall
9. Minutes
10. Bills
11. City Offices Closed – July 4th & 5th for Independence Day
12. Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)
13. Adjournment

Lincoln Krause's Big Day Propels Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 Past Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen

By GameChanger Media

Lincoln Krause collected three hits in five at bats, as Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 defeated Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen 15-9 on Monday. Krause singled in the first inning, singled in the second inning, and singled in the fourth inning.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 got on the board in the top of the first inning after Gavin Englund walked, Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen committed an error, and Kellen Antonsen walked, each scoring one run.

A ground out by Nicholas Morris extended the Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 lead to 4-0 in the top of the second inning.

A double by Jarrett Erdmann extended the Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 lead to 5-1 in the top of the third inning.

Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen flipped the game on its head in the bottom of the fourth, scoring six runs on three hits to take a 8-7 lead. The biggest blow in the inning was a double by Cowboy Haskell that drove in two.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 tied the game in the top of the sixth thanks to a single by Nick Groeblichhoff, and a walk by Antonsen.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 flipped the game on its head in the top of the seventh, scoring six runs on two hits to take a 15-9 lead. The biggest blow in the inning was a single by Groeblichhoff that drove in two.

Antonsen earned the win for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. The reliever surrendered three hits and two runs over three and one-third innings, striking out three and walking one. Michael Dutenhoffer took the loss for Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen. The starting pitcher went three innings, allowing five runs (three earned) on five hits, striking out three and walking three. Groeblichhoff stepped on the hill first for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. The starting pitcher gave up eight hits and seven runs over three and two-thirds innings, striking out one and walking five.

Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 tallied 14 hits in the game. Krause and Carter Simon each collected three hits for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39. Groeblichhoff led Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 with three runs batted in. The pitcher went 2-for-2 on the day. Englund collected two hits for Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 in two at bats. Antonsen led Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 with three walks. Overall, the team had a strong eye at the plate, accumulating 10 walks for the game. Krause stole seven bases. Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 stole 10 bases in the game. Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 were sure-handed in the field and didn't commit a single error. Morris had the most chances in the field with six.

Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen collected 11 hits in the game. Joe Cogley, Drake Soderlund, Haskell, and Karson Borge each collected two hits for Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen. Soderlund, Haskell, Dutenhoffer, and Borge each drove in two runs for Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen. Paxton Ewing paced Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen with two walks. Overall, the team had patience at the plate, accumulating six walks for the game. Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen turned one double play in the game.

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Groton Jr. Legion Post 39 **15 - 9** Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen

📍 Away 📅 Monday July 01, 2024

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R	H	E
GRTN	3	1	1	2	0	2	6	15	14	0
SMTT	0	1	1	6	1	0	0	9	11	2

BATTING

Groton Jr. Legion Post	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
L Krause #2 (RF)	5	4	3	0	1	1
K Fliehs #10 (1B)	4	2	0	0	1	3
G Englund #18 (C)	2	2	2	2	2	0
N Morris #17 (3B)	3	2	1	1	2	0
C Simon #4 (SS)	4	3	3	1	0	0
N Groebli... #12 (P)	2	1	2	3	0	0
J Erdmann #0 (CF)	5	0	1	1	0	1
K Antonsen #7 (2B)	2	0	0	2	3	1
T McGan... #22 (LF)	2	0	1	0	0	0
G Kroll #8 (RF)	2	1	1	2	1	0
Totals	31	15	14	12	10	6

Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO
B Eisenbe... #6 (CF)	4	1	1	0	1	0
P Ewing #5 (2B)	2	3	0	0	2	1
K Borge #11 (SS)	3	1	2	2	0	1
M Dutenho... #2 (P)	3	0	1	2	1	1
J Aviles #3 (P)	1	1	0	0	1	0
B Powell #10 (P)	0	0	0	0	0	0
J Cogley #8 (3B)	2	1	2	0	0	0
J Post #13 (1B)	2	1	0	1	1	0
C Haskell #5 (C)	4	1	2	2	0	1
B Bowman #12 (RF)	4	0	1	0	0	0
D Soderlu... #4 (LF)	4	0	2	2	0	0
Totals	29	9	11	9	6	4

2B: G Englund, T McGannon, J Erdmann, **TB:** G Englund 3, N Morris, C Simon 3, T McGannon 2, J Erdmann 2, N Groeblichhoff 2, G Kroll, L Krause 3, **SAC:** N Groeblichhoff, **CS:** G Englund, **HBP:** G Englund, C Simon, K Fliehs, N Groeblichhoff 2, **SB:** N Morris, K Fliehs, G Kroll, L Krause 7, **LOB:** 11

2B: J Cogley, K Borge, C Haskell 2, **TB:** J Cogley 3, K Borge 3, B Bowman, D Soderlund 2, B Eisenbeisz, M Dutenhoffer, C Haskell 4, **CS:** B Eisenbeisz, **HBP:** K Borge, P Ewing, J Post, **SB:** P Ewing, B Eisenbeisz, **LOB:** 8

PITCHING

Groton Jr. Legion Post	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
N Groe... #12	3.2	8	7	7	5	1	0
K Antons... #7	3.1	3	2	2	1	3	0
Totals	7.0	11	9	9	6	4	0

Smittys Jr Legion 2024 Aberdeen	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	HR
M Duten... #2	3.0	5	5	3	3	3	0
J Aviles #3	2.2	7	4	4	4	2	0
B Powell #10	1.1	2	6	6	3	1	0
Totals	7.0	14	15	13	10	6	0

W: K Antonsen, **P-S:** K Antonsen 46-27, N Groeblichhoff 75-38, **HBP:** K Antonsen 2, N Groeblichhoff, **BF:** K Antonsen 16, N Groeblichhoff 22

L: M Dutenhoffer, **P-S:** B Powell 45-20, J Aviles 60-33, M Dutenhoffer 65-42, **HBP:** B Powell 3, J Aviles, M Dutenhoffer, **BF:** B Powell 12, J Aviles 18, M Dutenhoffer 17

Groton Jr Teeners 14U Defeats Smittys 13/14 2024 Aberdeen On Back Of Clutch Display From Ryder Schelle

By GameChanger Media

Ryder Schelle drove in four runs on two hits to lead Groton Jr Teeners 14U past Smittys 13/14 2024 Aberdeen 15-2 on Monday. Schelle tripled in the fourth inning, scoring three runs, and singled in the third inning, scoring one.

Groton Jr Teeners 14U scored eight runs in the third inning on the way to victory. Alex Abeln singled, scoring one run, Schelle singled, scoring one run, Jordan Schwan tripled, scoring three runs, an error scored one run, and Ethan Kroll grounded out, scoring two runs.

A steal of home by Cash Wagner put Smittys 13/14 2024 Aberdeen on the board in the top of the third.

Groton Jr Teeners 14U scored seven runs on seven hits in the bottom of the fourth inning. TC Schuster drew a walk, scoring one run, Schelle tripled, scoring three runs, Braeden Flihs singled, scoring one run, Kason Oswald singled, scoring one run, and Kolton Antonsen singled, scoring one run.

Schwan earned the win for Groton Jr Teeners 14U. They gave up four hits and two runs over four innings, striking out eight and walking six. Owen Backous took the loss for Smittys 13/14 2024 Aberdeen. They went three innings, allowing eight runs (five earned) on five hits, striking out five and walking one. Schuster tossed one inning of zero-run ball for Groton Jr Teeners 14U in relief. They surrendered one hit, striking out none and walking none.

Groton Jr Teeners 14U amassed 12 hits in the game. Schelle, Schwan, Abeln, Oswald, and Antonsen each collected two hits for Groton Jr Teeners 14U. Groton Jr Teeners 14U ran wild on the base paths, piling up six stolen bases for the game. Groton Jr Teeners 14U didn't commit a single error in the field. Abeln had the most chances in the field with eight.

Benjamin Golz, Wagner, Colton Hanigan, Backous, and Lane Shultz each collected one hit for Smittys 13/14 2024 Aberdeen. Golz led Smittys 13/14 2024 Aberdeen with one run batted in. The infielder went 1-for-3 on the day. Backous led Smittys 13/14 2024 Aberdeen with two walks. Overall, the team had a strong eye at the plate, piling up six walks for the game.

Groton Jr Teeners 14U play at home on Monday against Smittys 13/14 2024 Aberdeen in their next game.

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Groton Jr Teeners 14U Surge Past Smittys 13/14 2024 Aberdeen Thanks To Big First Inning

By GameChanger Media

Groton Jr Teeners 14U defeated Smittys 13/14 2024 Aberdeen 17-0 on Monday thanks in part to 15 runs in the first inning. Braeden Flihs drew a walk, scoring one run, Layne Johnson drew a walk, scoring one run, Lincoln Shilhanek singled, scoring two runs, Kason Oswald drew a walk, scoring one run, a wild pitch scored two runs, Ryder Schelle doubled, scoring two runs, Jordan Schwan doubled, scoring one run, an error scored one run, and an error scored two runs.

A wild pitch extended the Groton Jr Teeners 14U lead to 17-0 in the bottom of the second inning.

TC Schuster earned the win for Groton Jr Teeners 14U. The righty surrendered one hit and zero runs over three innings, striking out six and walking none. Cash Wagner took the loss for Smittys 13/14 2024 Aberdeen. The starting pitcher went one-third of an inning, surrendering 11 runs (10 earned) on two hits, striking out one and walking six.

Shilhanek led Groton Jr Teeners 14U with two runs batted in from the number nine spot in the lineup. They went 1-for-2 on the day. Schuster, Flihs, Sam Crank, Shilhanek, Schelle, Shaydon Wood, and Schwan each collected one hit for Groton Jr Teeners 14U. Groton Jr Teeners 14U worked the count all day, piling up six walks. Groton Jr Teeners 14U were sure-handed and didn't commit a single error. Oswald made the most plays with six.

Lane Shultz went 1-for-1 at the plate to lead Smittys 13/14 2024 Aberdeen in hits.

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A Walk of Faith

"For we walk by faith, not by sight"

II Corinthians 5:7



Ladies' Luncheon

Bethesda Lutheran Church, Bristol

Wednesday, July 10, 2024

By Bethesda Women of the ELCA

Silent Auction opens at 10:30

Speaker: Jeff Peterson, author of "It's Just Walking"
and a graduate of Bristol High School

Luncheon at Noon—Door Prizes

\$15.00 advance tickets please, call:

Kay Espeland 605-492-3507

Jane Goehring 605-290-1420

Or contact any WELCA member





SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

Law banning sale of some near-pot products takes effect, but won't prevent every legal high

Policing plans are in flux for the now-banned substances, while other products stay legal

BY: JOHN HULT - JULY 1, 2024 2:14 PM

As of today, several varieties of intoxicating hemp products are illegal to sell or produce in the state of South Dakota.

That doesn't necessarily put them out of reach for South Dakotans.

It also doesn't mean death for the market in alternative intoxicants that's emerged across South Dakota and the nation in part thanks to a loophole in the 2018 federal farm bill, which legalized hemp.

Even if all the products now banned through the actions of the South Dakota Legislature last winter are pulled from store shelves in the state – an open question as the law takes effect – buyers can purchase them online with little fear of repercussion, as their possession isn't prohibited through the new law.

The law targets synthetically produced delta-8, delta-9, delta-10, THC-O, THC-P and HHC. Each are chemical cousins of delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, the high-inducing compound in cannabis flowers.

Sellers or producers of the hemp-derived products could be charged with a class 2 misdemeanor – the lowest-level crime in the state, punishable by up to 30 days in jail.

But the testing necessary to prove any product violates the law has limits and requires wait times for local law enforcement. The state's largest policing agencies have no immediate plans to prioritize enforcement.

That puts the onus on retailers to follow a law that would cut into revenues or force them out of business.

A federal lawsuit from Pierre-based Hemp Quarters 605 is also in play. The company attempted to block the new law as an unconstitutional overreach that interferes with the interstate commerce permitted under the federal farm bill. But U.S. District Judge Eric Schulte declined to issue a preliminary injunction.

Even without the injunction, though, the company's lawsuit will proceed and could eventually upend the law.

Caleb Rose of Rapid City owns Black Hills Vapors and recently founded a trade group called South Dakota Retailers for Better Alternatives to advocate for stores that sell hemp-derived products.

Rose said he planned to pull the targeted products from the shelves of his West River stores, but the lack of certainty could mean other retailers opt to ignore the new law.

"I think everybody in town and everybody in the state is going to have to make their own calls and consult their lawyers on what they want to do," Rose said.

Testing complications

Questions of enforcement are tied to product testing. A can of gummies on a retailer's shelf might say "delta-8," but prosecutors would have to prove the product is illegal beyond a reasonable doubt.

Doing that requires testing, which for the newly illegal substances involves a waiting period for local officers and prosecutors. There are field tests for some felony-level narcotics like methamphetamine, and some agencies can test for the presence of the active ingredient in traditional cannabis, but there are no such tests for products like hemp-derived gummies or delta-8 vape pens. For those, police would rely on the state Department of Health lab.

That lab can distinguish between delta-8, delta-9 and delta-10 THC, according to spokesperson Tia Kafka.

But there is no test that can show with certainty that the chemicals present in any particular product

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are naturally or synthetically derived. To run afoul of the new law, the offending chemical must have been altered from its original state. In theory, products with high levels of the chemicals would be legal if they were naturally derived.

Kafka said that shouldn't prevent police from making a call on enforcement. Delta-8 is only found in small amounts naturally, so Kafka said high levels of those compounds would be enough to show that they've been modified and are therefore illegal to sell.

Even if a product claims to contain unaltered, unadulterated delta-8, Kafka wrote that testing can help triangulate an intoxicant's origin.

Products with synthetically produced hemp chemicals "often have contaminants from the chemical reaction which can be an indicator that a product is not 100% natural," Kafka said.

The legalization of hemp and medical marijuana has already slowed the pace of cannabis testing at the state lab, though. In 2020, the state conducted 807 tests for cannabis. Last year, the lab did 99.

"Following legalization of industrial hemp and medical cannabis, state laws changed significantly leading to reduced cannabis testing," she said.

Law enforcement awaits guidance

It's unclear if the new law will spur more law enforcement interest in lab testing, but agencies have given no indication that enforcement will become a priority.

Decisions on enforcement come at the local level, Attorney General Marty Jackley said.

There are no plans to push for investigations of shops or hemp products from the state level just because they're sold in hundreds of stores, he said.

No business can be searched or spot-checked for compliance with the law without probable cause and a warrant, he said.

"What I can tell you is the Legislature took certain action. They made certain conduct illegal," Jackley said. "Law enforcement's job is to enforce that. We don't do anything special with respect to that."

In the Hemp Quarters 605 lawsuit, court records show that the Hughes County State's Attorney's Office does not intend to immediately prosecute the company's owners for violations of the new law.

Sioux Falls Police Department spokesperson Sam Clemens said his agency awaits guidance from the Minnehaha County State Attorney's Office on what kinds of enforcement actions it might need to take to enforce the new misdemeanor.

Minnehaha County State's Attorney Daniel Hagggar has not offered guidance on enforcement, though. He told South Dakota Searchlight that his office will evaluate any cases brought by police to determine if prosecutions are necessary.

Katy Urban, spokesperson for the Pennington County State's Attorney's Office, offered a similar response by email. She wrote that prosecutors in Rapid City will consider the merits of any case presented to them by police agencies.

Rapid City Police Department spokesperson Brendyn Medina, meanwhile, said his agency awaits enforcement guidance from the Pennington County State's Attorney's Office.

Even if law enforcement were to doggedly investigate the sale of newly illegal products, plenty of other avenues for a legal high remain, both for sellers and users.

Other non-hemp products include kratom, kava and magic mushroom hallucinogens, the latter of which are produced with different mushrooms from the federally illegal fungus psilocybin. Some classes of non-alcoholic, hemp-derived beverages, available in bars, restaurants and grocery stores around the state, will also remain available.

Joshua Williston manages a Chasing Clouds vape and smoke shop in Sioux Falls, and said late last week he'd remove the now-banned products from the shelf by July 1. Chasing Clouds is a chain store, and he said anything unsold and illegal today will be shipped off for sale in states without a ban.

Williston expects customers who relied on those products will either get medical marijuana cards, buy recreational marijuana on the black market or find other ways to get high.

"It's probably going to slow business down, but it ain't gonna stop," Williston said. "It'll pick back up in other areas, because once it's no longer an option, people will just find other things to substitute it with."

Sponsor: Federal fix needed

Rep. Brian Mulder, R-Sioux Falls, was the new law's prime sponsor. He told South Dakota Searchlight he understands his bill's practical limitations, but that he's hopeful most retailers will reduce the supply of near-pot intoxicants by complying with the law.

He's also hopeful because of ongoing discussions in Washington, D.C., about the next federal farm bill. Congress has debated the next version of that bill for more than a year, and a provision added by the U.S. House Agriculture Committee in May aims to close the loophole that created the market by drawing a legal distinction between hemp grown for chemical extraction and hemp grown to produce things like food or fiber.

Congress has already extended its deadline for passage of the farm bill once. The deadline for passage is now September.

"However quickly that could go into law, it might be moot here in South Dakota for us to try to address anything else," Mulder said.

Requests for comment sent to all three members of South Dakota's congressional delegation on the farm bill and hemp went unanswered.

Mulder, who works with an organization called Volunteers of America that offers chemical dependency services, said lawmakers in South Dakota want to do what he thinks the federal government meant to do with the 2018 farm bill.

The feds didn't mean to legalize weed with a loophole, he said.

"We were trying to deliver something that was the true intent of the 2018 farm bill, where hemp products were being sold for fiber, fabrics, building materials and some of the therapeutics made with CBD," he said.

John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.

Ex-trooper, now a cannabis grower, wants answers on fake weed inaction

Former Highway Patrol leader says cannabis posing as hemp breaks existing laws

BY: JOHN HULT - JULY 1, 2024 2:13 PM

Alan Welsh wasn't just a cop. He was a Very Important Cop. The kind of cop who gets a legislative commemoration for an outstanding career upon retirement.

Now he grows marijuana for a living.

The shock of seeing Welsh in a room full of pot without a badge on his chest or a story to tell about a massive bust can hardly be overstated.

He served 28 years with the South Dakota Highway Patrol. For many of them, he was one of the top leaders for the patrol in the Sioux Falls region. From 2014 through his retirement in 2017, he was in charge of that region.

Regular news readers or viewers in the area heard from Welsh frequently. In 2012, for example, he was quoted in a story about a saturation patrol that led to the seizure of 295 pounds of marijuana.

Now he's a partner in a Dakota Herb, a company with grow operations that produce that much pot on a regular basis.

There are times Welsh is shocked himself. Like during a recent tour of a Dakota Herb facility in Tea, when he walked into a room filled with clear plastic garbage bags of dried marijuana awaiting their turn to be processed into edibles and vapes.

"When I was in law enforcement, I'd have gone crazy seeing this," Welsh said.

Evolution in thinking on cannabis

So how did Welsh go from an avowed enemy of the devil's lettuce to a purveyor of pot for medical patients? "I did my own research, I looked into it, and I kind of changed my mind," he said.

It all began with his first post-policing gig. He was hired to manage security for a trucking company that services oil and gas industry players in North Dakota. It's owned by Welsh's longtime friend Darcy Johnson.

After a few years, the owner asked Welsh about pot. Voters in South Dakota were set to approve a measure legalizing medical marijuana, and Johnson saw an opportunity.

Welsh said no, but Johnson persisted. So Welsh started reading. There were the medical uses to consider, sure, but Welsh's cannabis come-to-Jesus moment came by comparing its relative impact on public safety with that of alcohol.

"This product has a horrible reputation and stigma associated with it, and it's all bull—t, in my opinion," Welsh said.

As he walked through the multimillion-dollar grow building in Tea on June 20, Welsh offered a quote from actor-turned-marijuana-entrepreneur Jim Belushi to sum up his feelings.

"He said 'I used to be a bouncer, and I never broke up a fight between two potheads.'"

Welsh has a sheet of talking points he compiled under the heading "Fact: Marijuana is safer than alcohol." Alcohol causes tens of thousands of deaths, whereas the Centers for Disease Control doesn't even have a code for deaths caused by marijuana, it says.

It also cites peer-reviewed research on marijuana overdose deaths (essentially impossible), the health impacts of marijuana (alcohol is worse), addictive properties (alcohol worse again), as well as the higher risks with alcohol for injuries, traffic accidents, domestic violence and other violent crimes.

Welsh concluded that Dakota Herb was worth a shot. And the new gig came with the added bonus of being closer to home than the North Dakota security job.

It's been smooth sailing ever since.

Sort of.

Welsh: Medical pot more trustworthy

Over the past year, Welsh has grown frustrated with state regulators and his former law enforcement colleagues' response to the quasi-legal market for marijuana alternatives, which can cut into demand for medical marijuana.

With the 2018 farm bill, Congress legalized hemp and defined it as anything containing less than 0.3% delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) by dry weight. Delta-9 THC produces a high from consuming marijuana.

Soon after the bill's passage, companies began to synthesize the hemp-derived chemical cousins of delta-9 THC, such as delta-8 and delta-10 THC, and began adding it to products like gummies and vapes. Those products ape the effects of marijuana, which is still federally illegal. You can also buy smokable hemp, sold as being below the federal THC threshold.

No one needs a medical marijuana card to buy the stuff, and it's sold at smoke shops, gas stations and liquor stores all over South Dakota.

Some of those products have since been banned in several states. In South Dakota last winter, lawmakers passed House Bill 1125, which bans the creation or sale of any delta-8, delta-10 and THC-O products created through chemical modification. The law took effect Monday.

The legislation was framed in part as a protective measure for the medical marijuana industry. If people can buy unregulated hemp products, lawmakers said, they can skip the fees and hassles of obtaining a medical card.

That's a sentiment you'd think Welsh would appreciate, given what it takes to run a medical pot business in South Dakota.

By law, Dakota Herb's products are tracked from seed to shelf and tested for quality and potency all along the way. There are cameras all over the Dakota Herb facility, even one aimed at the room where a machine extracts THC oil for use in vape pens and concentrated "dabs."

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That's not true of the pot alternatives.

"The state has access to our camera system. The state has access to our registers. They see what we sold," Welsh said. "These other places aren't doing any of that."

New law misses part of alternative market

But Welsh isn't doing cartwheels over the new state law. It's unclear how the state will approach enforcement, with officials citing the expense and difficulty of testing products for violations.

That's not even Welsh's issue. He points out that the new law doesn't touch smokable hemp tagged with the term "THC-A." THC-A becomes delta-9 THC when burned.

That means a smokable "hemp" flower can have a bunch of THC-A and remain legal, as long as the delta-9 THC level stays below the 0.3% federal threshold that distinguishes hemp from marijuana.

"It's like me saying, 'Here's a bottle of vodka, but it's not really vodka until you take the cap off and take a drink,'" Welsh said.

By that THC measurement logic, a lot of the Dakota Herb crop could pass federal muster as hemp.

Most of the high any cannabis user feels is produced by unlocking THC-A through temperature, because there's more of that substance in the unburned plant than there is pure delta-9 THC.

That's true for Dakota Herb's product. Which is why Chief Financial Officer Joe Stavig said it wouldn't take much for the company to join the quasi-legal hemp market.

"All we'd have to do is cut the tags off," Stavig said, referencing the tracking tags attached to each plant. "Cut off the tags, make a million dollars."

Law enforcement response

Welsh and Stavig don't plan to do that. Testing is about quality and safety, they say, but there's more to it.

In May, the federal Drug Enforcement Administration issued a letter suggesting that THC-A should be counted in the total THC calculation for legal purposes. It's factored into the total THC counts presented on websites that sell THC-A flower, after all – as a selling point.

That could happen in South Dakota, if the state made doing so a priority. Authorities in Minnesota have begun to factor in THC-A in their calculations, according to a letter from that state's Office of Cannabis Management that references the DEA guidance.

Welsh and Stavig would prefer to be on the right side of the law if South Dakota follows suit.

But they have another bone to pick with the state, and it has nothing to do with chemistry.

South Dakota already bars the sale or possession of smokable hemp. That law makes no mention of THC by weight. As Welsh sees it, if a product is meant to be smoked, anyone selling it or smoking it is breaking that law. A violation of that law is a class 1 misdemeanor, on par with a possession of marijuana charge.

According to the Unified Judicial System, 39 people have been charged under the smokable hemp statute since its passage.

A few months ago, the smoke shop owners who opposed HB 1125 told lawmakers that "hundreds" of businesses would be impacted by the bill.

In other words, there are more stores selling hemp-derived products in South Dakota than people charged with a crime for smoking the hemp sold in them.

By contrast, nearly 1,800 people have been charged with felonies for possession of marijuana edibles or vapes since 2019 (possession of marijuana flower is a misdemeanor).

"When I was in law enforcement, we always said, 'We don't make the laws, we just enforce them,'" Welsh said. "So why aren't they enforcing the law?"

He's put that question to the Sioux Falls Police Department, Attorney General's Office and Department of Health. The responses have basically been "because testing is hard," Welsh said.

Welsh doesn't buy it. Police don't need a test to enforce a smokable hemp law that doesn't consider THC content.

As a trooper, Welsh said responding to the public was part of his duty as a public servant. Regarding the

hemp that hampers his business, Welsh the private citizen isn't satisfied with what's he's been handed. "I'm asking a simple question of all these people, and I can't get one simple answer," he said.

John is the senior reporter for South Dakota Searchlight. He has more than 15 years experience covering criminal justice, the environment and public affairs in South Dakota, including more than a decade at the Sioux Falls Argus Leader.

Libertarians nominate Public Utilities Commission candidate

BY: MAKENZIE HUBER - JULY 1, 2024 1:27 PM

The Libertarian Party of South Dakota has nominated Gideon Oakes, of Keystone, as its candidate for the Public Utilities Commission in the Nov. 5 general election.

Oakes will face incumbent Republican Kristie Fiegen and Democrat Forrest Wilson. Fiegen has served on the Public Utilities Commission for over a decade, after being appointed to the position by Gov. Dennis Daugaard and being reelected twice.

The commission of three is responsible for regulating the rates of natural gas, electric and telephone service companies in the state. The commission also considers permits, such as for the controversial Summit Carbon Solutions pipeline that's proposed to run through eastern South Dakota.

Oakes is a business owner and volunteer EMT. He said in a news release that his candidacy offers voters a better choice for the PUC office and a "fresh perspective."

"The question voters get to decide is whether they want a commissioner that represents the utility industry, one that represents big government, or one that represents the people," Oakes said.

The party also nominated three statehouse candidates Saturday at its state convention in Pierre: Josh Dennert and Tamara Lesnar for House seats in District 1 (Brown, Day, Marshall and Roberts counties) and Greg Zimmerman for District 8 House (Brookings, Kingsbury, Lake and Miner counties).

Makenzie Huber is a lifelong South Dakotan whose work has won national and regional awards. She's spent five years as a journalist with experience reporting on workforce, development and business issues within the state.

Presidential immunity extends to some official acts, Supreme Court rules in Trump case

BY: ASHLEY MURRAY AND JACOB FISCHLER - JULY 1, 2024 11:02 AM

WASHINGTON — U.S. presidents enjoy full immunity from criminal charges for their official "core constitutional" acts, but no immunity for unofficial acts, the Supreme Court ruled Monday, sending former President Donald Trump's election interference case back to the lower courts.

The justices left open the question of how far the boundaries of such official acts reach, possibly reshaping the contours of the American presidency.

The landmark decision by the court's conservatives — the last of the Supreme Court term — was met with intense dismay from Democrats and allies, who described it as a setback for democracy that undermined the Constitution by putting the former president above the law.

Former Capitol Police Officer Harry Dunn, who was in the Capitol on Jan. 6, said Trump was responsible for the attack that day. The court's ruling has empowered the former president, he said.

"Donald Trump is still the single greatest threat to our democracy," Dunn said on a press call organized by the Biden-Harris campaign. "I don't need nine Supreme Court justices to tell me that Donald Trump was responsible for Jan. 6. I was there. Those people that attacked us, they attacked us in his name."

Trump and his allies said the ruling repudiated the prosecutions against him, which he has criticized as politically motivated. "Today's ruling by the Court is a victory for former President Trump and all future presidents, and another defeat for President Biden's weaponized Department of Justice and Jack Smith," U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., said in a statement.

Trump escalated his immunity claim to the nation's highest bench after two lower courts denied his request for protection from federal criminal charges alleging he schemed to overturn the 2020 presidential results.

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A federal indictment in August 2023 alleged Trump knowingly spread falsehoods to his supporters, plotting with co-conspirators to overturn results in seven states and eventually working his base into a frenzy that culminated in a violent attack on the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, the day Congress was to certify electoral votes.

The Supreme Court's timing of its decision likely closes the door to any chance that Trump's election subversion case could go to trial before Election Day. The justices took up the case in February but did not hear oral arguments until April 25.

The trial court, under U.S. District Court Judge Tanya Chutkan, must now grapple with whether Trump's alleged conduct to spread false information about the 2020 election results and conspiring to overturn them qualified as official presidential action.

It is unclear how or whether such proceedings would go forward if Trump, who is already a convicted-felon in New York, wins a second term.

'Sweeping powers and duties'

In the 6-3 opinion, Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. wrote that the president is subject to criminal prosecution for unofficial acts, "like everyone else."

"But unlike anyone else, the President is a branch of government, and the Constitution vests in him sweeping powers and duties," Roberts wrote. "Accounting for that reality—and ensuring that the President may exercise those powers forcefully, as the Framers anticipated he would—does not place him above the law; it preserves the basic structure of the Constitution."

In a dissenting opinion, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote that the decision fundamentally alters the presidency and mocks the principle that no one is above the law.

The majority relied on "little more than its own misguided wisdom" that presidents need to be able to take decisive and quick action, to give Trump "all the immunity he asked for and more."

"Because our Constitution does not shield a former President from answering for criminal and treasonous acts, I dissent," she wrote.

Trump, the Republican Party's presumptive nominee for the 2024 presidential election, declared the high court's decision a victory. "BIG WIN FOR OUR CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRACY. PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN!" he wrote on his Truth Social platform immediately after the opinion's release.

A top Democrat in Congress, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York, said Monday was a "sad day for our democracy."

"This disgraceful decision by the MAGA Supreme Court — which is comprised of three justices appointed by Mr. Trump himself — enables the former President to weaken our democracy by breaking the law," Schumer said in a statement following the opinion. "This decision undermines the credibility of the Supreme Court, and suggests that political influence trumps all in our courts today."

DOJ communications immune

Roberts' majority opinion held that Trump's conversations with Department of Justice officials regarding the election results are immune to prosecution, but left unanswered questions about other conduct named in the indictment of Trump by Smith, the Department of Justice special counsel.

The indictment accuses Trump of leveraging the power of the Justice Department to pressure states to replace legitimate electors with false ones as a way to clinch the presidency. Trump threatened to fire those who did not cooperate, according to the indictment.

"Certain allegations—such as those involving Trump's discussions with the Acting Attorney General—are readily categorized in light of the nature of the President's official relationship to the office held by that individual," the opinion reads. "Other allegations—such as those involving Trump's interactions with the Vice President, state officials, and certain private parties, and his comments to the general public—present more difficult questions."

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Roberts blamed the “expedition of the case” and “the lack of factual analysis by the lower courts” for leaving open what the court described as complex questions.

A federal grand jury indicted Trump on four counts Aug. 1, 2023, but the former president effectively halted all proceedings in October when he moved to dismiss the case based on presidential immunity. The justices, in December, refused a request by Smith to expedite the question of presidential immunity.

While Trump’s communications with the Justice Department are deemed official, the court returns to the lower court the question of whether Trump’s alleged pressure campaign of Vice President Mike Pence leading up to Jan. 6 falls under the president’s scope of constitutional duties.

Trump is “at least presumptively immune from prosecution” for the conversations with his vice president, Roberts wrote.

But the opinion also highlights that the vice president simultaneously serves as the president of the Senate, taking some of his or her duties — including the certification of election results — outside the executive branch.

“It is ultimately the Government’s burden to rebut the presumption of immunity,” Roberts wrote. “We therefore remand to the District Court to assess in the first instance, with appropriate input from the parties, whether a prosecution involving Trump’s alleged attempts to influence the Vice President’s oversight of the certification proceeding in his capacity as President of the Senate would pose any dangers of intrusion on the authority and functions of the Executive Branch.”

Trump and the fake electors

Whether Trump’s communication with election officials in Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, New Mexico, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin about false slates of electors qualifies as official presidential conduct must also be decided by the lower courts.

The federal indictment alleges Trump worked with co-conspirators in the seven states “to marshal individuals who would have served as [Trump’s] electors, had he won the popular vote” and submit the false outcomes to Pence and Congress.

During oral arguments in April, Trump attorney D. John Sauer asserted that it is “[a]bsolutely an official act for the president to communicate with state officials on . . . the integrity of a federal election.” The government argued the discussions amounted to a “private scheme with private actors.”

On this debate, Roberts, citing the Constitution, wrote in Monday’s opinion that “Of course, the President’s duty to ‘take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed’ plainly encompasses enforcement of federal election laws passed by Congress.”

“And the President’s broad power to speak on matters of public concern does not exclude his public communications regarding the fairness and integrity of federal elections simply because he is running for re-election,” Roberts continued.

The answer to whether those discussions and alleged plans were official or unofficial will require “a close analysis of the indictment’s extensive and interrelated allegations” by the lower court, Roberts concluded.

Similarly, the justices returned to the lower courts any determination of Trump’s tweets, White House Ellipse speech to rallygoers and Rose Garden address to rioters on Jan. 6, 2021, as official or unofficial.

“(M)ost of a President’s public communications are likely to fall comfortably within the outer perimeter of his official responsibilities,” Roberts wrote.

“There may, however, be contexts in which the President, notwithstanding the prominence of his position, speaks in an unofficial capacity—perhaps as a candidate for office or party leader,” he continued.

He urged the trial court to conduct a “factbound analysis” of who was involved in communications leading up to Jan. 6 and “what else was said contemporaneous to the excerpted communications” quoted in the indictment.

‘With fear for our democracy’

In a scathing dissent, Sotomayor, writing for the court’s three-member liberal wing that also includes

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Justices Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson, said the majority opinion “invents an atextual, ahistorical, and unjustifiable immunity that puts the President above the law.”

The court did not need to declare a president’s core constitutional duties — which were not at issue in the indictment — as immune from prosecution, Sotomayor wrote. Including a discussion of core constitutional duties seemed to expand their definition, she said.

But more important, she said, was the majority’s finding of presumed immunity for all official acts, which greatly expands a president’s power to commit misdeeds with impunity.

“Whether described as presumptive or absolute, under the majority’s rule, a President’s use of any official power for any purpose, even the most corrupt, is immune from prosecution,” Sotomayor wrote. “That is just as bad as it sounds, and it is baseless.”

The majority’s view that prosecutors cannot even use a president’s official acts as evidence in a prosecution of the president for private offenses was “nonsensical,” she added.

The ruling makes the president “immune from criminal prosecution if he used the trappings of his office to violate the criminal law,” Sotomayor said.

“If the occupant of that office misuses official power for personal gain, the criminal law that the rest of us must abide will not provide a backstop,” she wrote.

“With fear for our democracy, I dissent.”

Jackson dissent

In a separate dissent, Jackson said she fully endorsed Sotomayor’s view, and expanded on the “theoretical nuts and bolts” of what the decision would mean.

“Being immune is not like having a defense under the law,” Jackson wrote. “Rather, it means that the law does not apply to the immunized person in the first place.”

In the majority opinion, Roberts said the dissents overreacted to the ruling.

The dissents “strike a tone of chilling doom that is wholly disproportionate to what the Court actually does today,” Roberts said.

The majority only ruled that Trump’s conversations with Justice Department officials were immune from prosecution and left to lower courts to determine other questions, Roberts wrote.

Barrett argues for narrower immunity

In a concurring opinion, Justice Amy Coney Barrett, the most recent of three justices Trump appointed, agreed with the bulk of the majority’s opinion.

But Barrett argued at least part of the allegations against Trump were valid and said the justices should have explicitly said so, rather than leaving the question to lower courts.

“The Court leaves open the possibility that the Constitution forbids prosecuting the President for any official conduct, instructing the lower courts to address that question in the first instance,” she wrote. “I would have answered it now.”

In particular, the allegations that involve Trump pressuring state officials to appoint alternate slates of electors should not be immune from prosecution, Barrett wrote, citing Trump’s alleged request to Arizona’s House speaker at the time, Rusty Bowers.

“A President has no legal authority—and thus no official capacity—to influence how the States appoint their electors,” Barrett wrote. “I see no plausible argument for barring prosecution of that alleged conduct.”

Court enables Trump’s threat, critics say

Legal scholars and Democratic lawmakers decried the decision as a blow to democracy.

Tom Joscelyn, one of the principal authors of the final report from the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the U.S. Capitol, told States Newsroom Monday the “court is pretending that there’s some ambiguity on what is an official act or not an official act of indictment.”

“The bottom line is the facts are not really in dispute. They’re easy for all Americans to see. We all saw

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how Trump pressured Vice President Pence to overturn the election. When Pence refused to do Trump's bidding, Trump sent a mob down to the Capitol to intimidate him and hunt him," Joscelyn said. "So this is not something where there's some great mystery here. We all know what happened."

U.S. Rep. Daniel Goldman, a New York Democrat who was a lead counsel for the U.S. House impeachments of Trump, including the 2021 proceeding related to Trump's role in the Jan. 6 attack, said Trump has indicated he would use the office to seek retribution if he is returned to the White House.

"It's not just the biggest threat in a generation," Goldman said on the Biden campaign call. "It is far and away the greatest threat since the Civil War."

The Democratic National Committee issued a statement saying President Joe Biden is "(t)he only thing standing between Donald Trump and his threats to our democracy ... and the American people will stand once again on the side of democracy this November."

Victory for 'all future presidents'

Trump's allies celebrated the decision.

House Speaker Johnson said in his statement the court "stated that presidents are entitled to immunity for their official acts. This decision is based on the obviously unique power and position of the presidency, and comports with the Constitution and common sense. As President Trump has repeatedly said, the American people, not President Biden's bureaucrats, will decide the November 5th election."

The far-right Heritage Foundation, the think tank behind the Project 2025 document to enshrine conservative policies should Trump win in November, also hailed the decision.

"Today, the Supreme Court recognized and breathed life into the important constitutional principle of separation of powers by providing former, current, and future presidents with absolute immunity for official acts that they undertook during their administrations," John G. Malcolm, one of the foundation's legal scholars, said in a statement.

"(A)nd also made it clear that the burden falls on the prosecution to demonstrate that any action taken by a former president clearly falls beyond the outer perimeter of his official responsibilities and on the side of being an unofficial act," he said.

In a rambling post on Truth Social Monday afternoon, Trump again cheered the decision and also repeated claims that the New York state hush money case against him originated with Biden and was backed by Hungarian Jewish philanthropist George Soros — a yearslong trope repeated by the right wing.

"Today's Historic Decision by the Supreme Court should end all of Crooked Joe Biden's Witch Hunts against me, including the New York Hoaxes – The Manhattan SCAM cooked up by Soros backed D.A., Alvin Bragg, Racist New York Attorney General Tish James' shameless ATTACK on the amazing business that I have built, and the FAKE Bergdorf's 'case,'" Trump wrote, also referring to the civil case in New York where he was found liable for sexually abusing a writer in a Bergdorf Goodman dressing room.

GOP-led states back Trump

Trump claimed absolute criminal immunity not long after a federal grand jury indicted him on allegations that he schemed to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election, which he lost to Biden.

DOJ's Smith officially charged the former president with conspiracy to defraud the United States; conspiracy to obstruct an official proceeding; obstruction of, and attempt to obstruct, an official proceeding; and conspiracy against rights.

The former president argued that his acts were "official," as they were conducted while he was still in office. He also claimed that the Constitution's Impeachment Clause shields a president from criminal prosecution unless he or she is first impeached and convicted by Congress.

The claim led to some jaw-dropping moments in which Trump's lawyer Sauer argued to both an appeals panel and the high court justices that presidents could not be criminally tried for ordering an assassination of a political rival unless they were first impeached by the House and convicted by the Senate, an inherently political process.

The high-profile case attracted numerous friend-of-the-court briefs.

GOP-led states lined up in support of Trump including 18 Republican state attorneys general who signed a brief in March accusing Smith of trying to "inflict maximum damage on President Biden's political opponent before the November 2024 election."

The attorneys general included on the brief were from Alabama, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah and West Virginia.

Prior to the Supreme Court's decision to take up the case, 26 former GOP officials warned of "terrifying possibilities" if the court accepted Trump's claim of blanket immunity.

The officials, a mix of former GOP Department of Justice attorneys and lawmakers, wrote: "No Court should create a presidential immunity from federal criminal prosecution, even for official acts, that is so vast that it endangers the peaceful transfer of executive power that our Constitution mandates."

Ashley Murray covers the nation's capital as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Her coverage areas include domestic policy and appropriations.

Jacob covers federal policy as a senior reporter for States Newsroom. Based in Oregon, he focuses on Western issues. His coverage areas include climate, energy development, public lands and infrastructure.

South Dakota's Wind Cave is now the world's sixth longest

BY: MARCUS HEERDT - JULY 1, 2024 7:00 AM

HOT SPRINGS — Wind Cave in South Dakota's Black Hills is now the sixth longest cave in the world as explorers have discovered new passageways, bringing the total length to 167 miles.

The addition of these new passageways moves Wind Cave up one spot, from seventh to sixth, on the list of the planet's longest caves. Wind Cave surpassed the Optymistychna Cave near Korolivka, Ukraine, which is nearly 165 miles in length.

"Wind Cave is a difficult cave to explore and doesn't always allow us to discover areas outside of its currently mapped boundaries," said Marc Ohms, physical scientist for Wind Cave National Park. "But we've added a little bit here, and a little bit there, reaching 167 miles earlier this spring."

When the National Park Service began managing Wind Cave in 1903, less than 10 miles of the cave were known. That number increased to 100 in 2001 and 150 in 2019. In April 2022, the Fall River County Herald-Star first reported Wind Cave's milestone of 160 miles of mapped passageways.

Ohms said that park staff, the Paha Sapa Grotto and the Colorado Grotto (both chapters of the National Speleological Society), as well as other volunteer cavers have been exploring the depths of Wind Cave, and have discovered some of the new sections.

Cavers continue to explore an area known as the "Western Fringe," south and west of the park's visitor center. Ohms said it takes cavers approximately six hours to reach the Western Fringe, and there is a camp set up there so explorers can spend three to four days researching in that area before heading back.

In 2022, Ohms said that cave explorers were only 800 feet away from connecting Wind Cave to another cave in the immediate vicinity, the Persistence Cave, which Ohms discovered himself in 2004.

"We are still 800 feet away today ... nothing has changed there," Ohms said.

Even though Wind Cave tours are currently suspended for the general public due to an elevator replacement project, cave exploration and research will continue during the closure. The surface of Wind Cave National Park remains open.

Air pressure studies have indicated that only 5-10% of Wind Cave is currently mapped, leaving the possibility that the cave has hundreds of miles yet to be discovered.

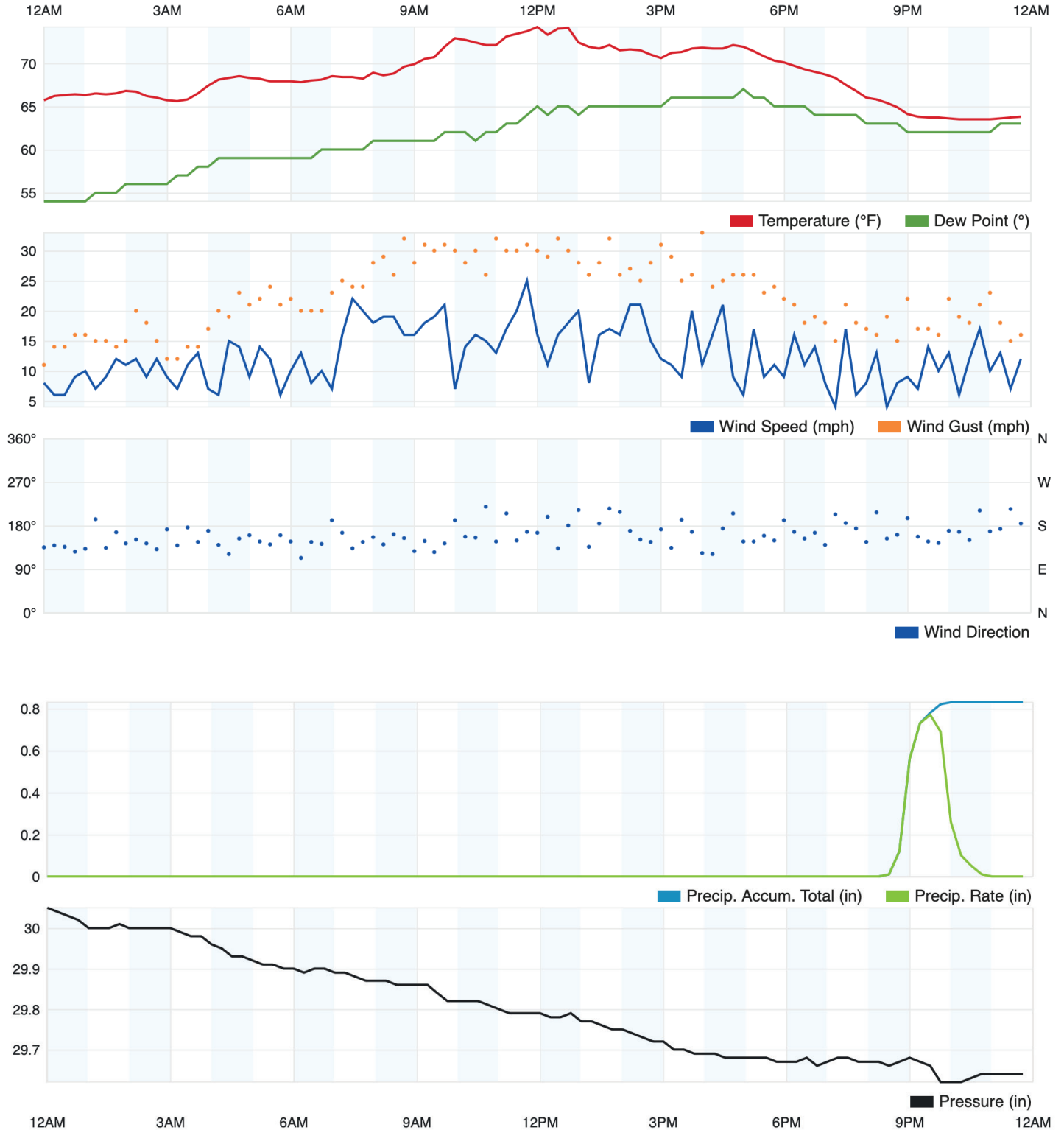
Another Black Hills cave, Jewel Cave, is the world's fifth longest with about 220 miles of known passageways.

Marcus Heerdt is an award-winning reporter for the Fall River County Herald-Star newspaper in Hot Springs. A lover of being outside as well as history, he is the author of five books about South Dakota: three hiking guidebooks and two local history books.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Today



High: 81 °F

Increasing
Clouds

Tonight



Low: 58 °F

Mostly Clear

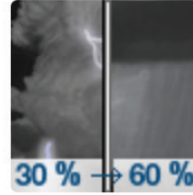
Wednesday



High: 85 °F

Sunny

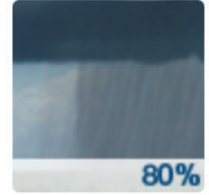
Wednesday
Night



Low: 59 °F

Chance
T-storms then
Showers
Likely

Independence
Day



High: 72 °F

Showers

RAIN CHANCES AHEAD

Today



Highs: 76-82°

Lows: 55-60°

FEW RAIN SHOWERS POSSIBLE OVER
CENTRAL SD INTO EARLY
AFTERNOON

Wednesday



Highs: 81-86°

Lows: 56-64°

AFTERNOON/EVENING T-STORMS
POSSIBLE IN CENTRAL SD,
SOME COULD BE SEVERE

Thursday



Highs: 68-74°

Lows: 55-60°

60-80% CHANCE OF RAIN,
AFTERNOON/EVENING T-STORMS
POSSIBLE



A few rain showers are possible across south central and east central SD this morning into the early afternoon, otherwise dry conditions are expected through Wednesday morning. There is a MARGINAL (1 of 5) risk of severe storms Wednesday afternoon/evening across central SD with large hail and strong winds as the threats. Thursday has a 60 to 80% chance of rain throughout the day with some non-severe thunderstorms possible in the afternoon/evening.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 75 °F at 12:38 PM

Low Temp: 63 °F at 10:30 PM

Wind: 37 mph at 11:48 AM

Precip: : 0.83

Day length: 15 hours, 38 minutes

Today's Info

Record High: 103 in 1949

Record Low: 37 in 1945

Average High: 84

Average Low: 59

Average Precip in June.: 0.23

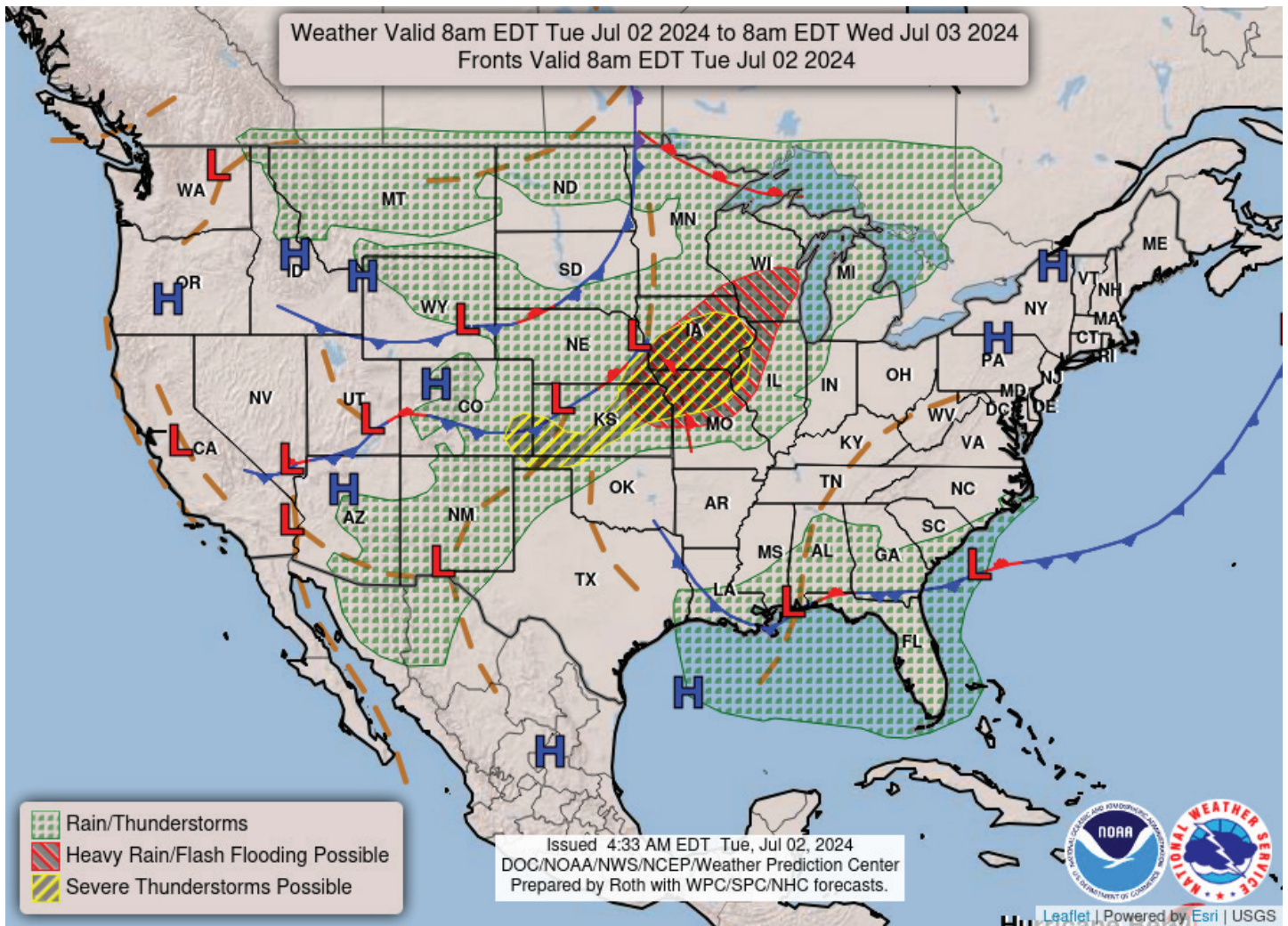
Precip to date in July: 0.83

Average Precip to date: 11.24

Precip Year to Date: 11.88

Sunset Tonight: 9:26:06 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:47:47 am



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Today in Weather History

July 2, 1921: Barns were destroyed on two farms near Frederick in Brown County. A boy who could not make it to the cellar was killed in the open near a barn. This death is one of the earliest known from a significant, estimated F2 tornado in Brown County.

July 2, 1960: Hail shredded corn flattened grain and hay and pounded soybeans into the ground in a strip extending from Clinton to Montevideo in Minnesota. Leaves and bark were stripped from trees. Hailstones were reported to pile up to a depth of four feet in low spots. One farmer lost 2000 turkeys. Twelve barns demolished, many outbuildings destroyed and several homes damaged by winds. Near Appleton, 45 cars of a moving 174 car freight train derailed by the wind, one hanger destroyed, and two planes were damaged. In Big Stone County alone, the cost to repair power lines and poles estimated to be near 10,000 dollars. Total crop acreage affected was near 64,000 acres. The three counties of Big Stone, Swift, and Chippewa Counties, was designated a disaster area.

July 2, 2005: A line of severe thunderstorms with powerful straight-line winds moved from northeast Wyoming and southeast Montana across northwest South Dakota during the evening. Widespread wind gusts of 60 to 80 mph affected northwestern South Dakota; breaking tree limbs, downing trees, and knocking down snow fences. The high winds capsized a boat on the Belle Fourche Reservoir near Orman Dam. Five people, including an infant, were rescued by emergency personnel with no one injured. The strongest winds were reported north of Newell, near Castle Rock, where gusts estimated at 100 mph damaged a barn roof and ripped a chimney off a house. Hail to the size of quarters was also reported across parts of the area, and combined with the wind, caused some minor damage.

1833: The following is from the "History and Description of New England" published in 1860: "On the 2nd of July, 1833, this town (Holland, Vermont) was visited by a violent tornado, which commenced on Salem Pond in Salem, and passed over this place in a northeasterly direction. It was from half to three-quarters of a mile wide and prostrated and scattered nearly all the trees, fences, and buildings in its course. It crossed the outlet of Norton Pond and passed into Canada, and its path could be traced through the forests nearly to Connecticut River."

1843: An alligator reportedly fell from the sky onto Anson Street in Charleston, SC during a thunderstorm.

1987 - Thunderstorms in Colorado produced hail as large as golf balls northwest of Kiowa, which accumulated to a depth of twelve inches. Hail two and a half inches in diameter was reported at Black Forest. Hail damaged 900 acres of crops south of the town of Wiggins. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Twenty-six cities in the eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date. The morning low of 47 degrees at Roanoke, VA, broke the July record set the previous day. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the south central U.S., with 158 reports of large hail and damaging winds through the day. Evening thunderstorms in northeastern Texas produced softball size hail which caused more than five million dollars damage at Allen, and wind gusts to 90 mph at Dallas, which injured eight persons and caused seven million dollars damage. Winnfield LA reported 29.52 inches of rain in six days, for a total of 62.50 inches for the first six months of the year. Midland, TX, reported an all-time record high of 112 degrees. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2001: In Michigan, frost and freezing temperatures were observed in some locations with Grant dropping to 29 degrees. Muskegon reported their coldest July temperature on record with 39 degrees. Other daily record lows included: Lansing: 38, Muskegon: 39, Flint: 40, Youngstown, Ohio: 40, and Grand Rapids, Michigan: 43 degrees.

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Daily Devotionals

Seeds of Hope

MERCY. WHO NEEDS IT?

Alexander the Great was the first conqueror of the world. Even today, as we recognize leaders who have left their imprint and impact on the world, he is considered one of the most remarkable men of history.

Late in his life an artist was commissioned to paint a portrait of him. In discussing the content of the painting Alexander informed the artist that he was anxious to conceal the scar on his face.

To accommodate him, the artist painted the portrait of Alexander in a reflective mood with his head resting on his hand and a finger covering the scar. This act of insight and kindness by the artist worked perfectly, and the scar was hidden.

That is love in action - reflecting the mercy of one who honors the needs of others.

The Apostle Peter summed up the behavior that we, as Christians, are to show to others: "Most important of all," he wrote, "continue to show deep love for each other."

Love is always expressed in deeds of kindness that we offer to those in need. If we say that we have love for others yet do nothing to help them in their times of need, we do not reflect our appreciation for the deeds of kindness that God, through Christ, has shown us.

We can only show our gratitude for the grace of God in our lives by what we do to and for others. Words are not works, and thoughts do not bring change or help to those in need.

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to show our gratitude to You for the love, grace, and mercy You shower on us each day. Give us hearts of compassion and hands that help others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Above all, maintain constant love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins. 1 Peter 4:8



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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WINNING NUMBERS

MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:
06.28.24

28 31 33 42 66 24

MegaPlier: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$137,000,000

NEXT 16 Hrs 10 Mins 15
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.01.24

7 18 36 37 43 9

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$4,240,000

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 25
DRAW: Mins 15 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.01.24

13 22 31 47 48 5

TOP PRIZE:

\$7,000/week

NEXT 15 Hrs 40 Mins 14
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:
06.29.24

2 6 23 29 33

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$23,000

NEXT 1 Days 15 Hrs 40
DRAW: Mins 14 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.01.24

12 18 32 59 61 8

TOP PRIZE:

\$10,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 9
DRAW: Mins 14 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS: 07.01.24

5 9 32 39 55 9

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:
\$138,000,000

NEXT 1 Days 16 Hrs 9
DRAW: Mins 14 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

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Upcoming Groton Events

- 07/04/2024 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 07/09/2024 FREE SNAP Application Assistance 1-6pm at the Community Center
- 07/14/2024 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm
- 07/17/2024 Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar at the Groton Legion 11am-1pm
- 07/17/2024 Pro Am Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 07/25/2024 Dairy Queen Miracle Treat Day
- 07/25/2024 Summer Downtown Sip & Shop 5-8pm
- 07/25/2024 Treasures Amidst The Trials 6pm at Emmanuel Lutheran Church
- 07/26/2024 Ferney Open Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start
- 07/27/2024 1st Annual Celebration in the Park 1-9:30pm
- 08/05/2024 School Supply Drive 4-7pm at the Community Center
- 08/02/2024 Wine on 9 at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm
- 08/08/2024 Family Fun Fest 5:30-7:30pm
- 08/9-11/2024 Jr. Legion State Baseball Tournament
- 08/12/2024 Vitalant Blood Drive at the Community Center 1:15-7pm
- 09/07/2024 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
- 09/07-08/2024 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport
- 09/08/2024 Sunflower Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am
- 10/05/2024 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm
- 10/11/2024 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am
- 10/31/2024 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
- 10/31/2024 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm
- 11/28/2024 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm
- 12/07/2024 Olive Grove 8th Annual Holiday Party & Tour of Homes with Live & Silent Auctions 6pm-close

News from the Associated Press

Harrisburg, Tea, Box Elder lead booming South Dakota cities

By MARIIA NOVOSELIA/South Dakota News Watch South Dakota News Watch

HARRISBURG, S.D. (AP) — This bedroom community just south of Sioux Falls transformed over the past couple of decades into the fastest-growing South Dakota city of more than 5,000 people, according to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau and Population Division report.

Harrisburg's population ballooned by 37.8%, or more than 2,500 residents, between July 1, 2020, and July 1, 2023, the report said. Nearby Tea was just behind with 29.9% growth followed by Box Elder, just east of Rapid City, with a 16.2% increase over the time frame.

After teaching first grade for 14 years in Brookings, Julie LeFebvre needed a fresh start and found it in Harrisburg.

"I applied for a job down here, and I got it right away," LeFebvre said. "With the way that things transitioned so smoothly, I felt like it was meant to be."

Eighteen cities in the state now have populations of at least 5,000, but not all grew between 2020 and 2023. Brandon, just east of Sioux Falls, saw a slight decrease in its population, as did Aberdeen, Madison, Mitchell, Pierre and Sturgis, the Census said.

South Dakota population unlikely to drop

Despite decreases in some cities, South Dakota's overall population grew by 8.9%, or almost 72,500 people, from 2010 to 2020, to 886,667, the U.S. Census Bureau said.

Augustana University economics professor David Sorenson used data from the Internal Revenue Service to examine migration into and from South Dakota in his most recent article for the Dakota Institute. According to the piece, in 2020-2021, more than 25,600 people moved between counties within South Dakota.

Additionally, Sorenson wrote that while 23,000 people from South Dakota relocated to a different state, more than 29,000 chose the Mount Rushmore State as their new place of residence, increasing the population by 6,000 and raising the state's net migration rate to 0.8. The only state in the region with a higher net migration is Montana.

Notably, over the years, Minnesota has contributed the most to migration into South Dakota. Minnesota also seems to have been the state of preference for people looking to move out of South Dakota. In an interview with News Watch, Sorenson said that the Gravity Model, which is similar to Newton's law of gravitation, can explain this trend.

The attraction between two places depends on their sizes and the distance between them, Sorenson said. With Minnesota being a neighboring state with the largest population in the region, its persistent interaction with South Dakota comes as no surprise.

While Sorenson wrote that "there is no guarantee of favorable continuing patterns" in terms of population spikes in the future, he said it is also unlikely that the number of South Dakotan residents will decrease.

Sorenson said the population in the state may expand further thanks to factors like the natural increase, or the difference between births and deaths, which reached 2,800 in 2023, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

West River to grow, led by Box Elder

Another South Dakota city seeing a major population surge is Box Elder, where Ellsworth Air Force Base is located.

The U.S. Census Bureau said its population more than quadrupled over the past 30 years, from 2,700 in 1990 to 11,900 in 2020. Rapid growth has continued with the official population listed at almost 13,900 in 2023 and steady growth continuing since then.

The city, which straddles Interstate 90, is poised for even more growth because it was chosen in 2021 as the main base of operations and training location for the Air Force's new B-21 Raider bomber program.

The B-21 is a \$700 million long-range stealth jet with nuclear capabilities that is intended to replace the

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B-1B Lancer bomber currently based at Ellsworth.

Col. Derek Oakley, commander of the 28th Bomb Wing at Ellsworth, said at a meeting in Rapid City in November 2023 that the Air Force will embark on nearly three dozen individual construction projects on the base at an estimated cost of at least \$1.5 billion.

The B-21 program will add more than 4,000 new military personnel, families and civilian workers to the base over the next 20 years, Oakley said.

The Air Force projected in its B-21 Economic Impact Statement that development of the new bomber program at Ellsworth will create nearly 600 local jobs and almost \$24 million in local economic impact. Once the bombers arrive, some state officials estimate the program will create an annual benefit of \$480 million to the state.

As of February, nearly 300 new housing units were under construction in Box Elder, and the city has seen recent development of new banks, restaurants and other commercial business. It's also planning to build a \$60 million elementary school to further accommodate the anticipated growth.

Monument Health of Rapid City is also preparing for population increases in Box Elder by building a pair of new urgent care clinics in or near the city.

The health group said it has begun construction on a primary and emergency care clinic on 2.1 acres near Liberty Plaza. It will also open an urgent care clinic in Rapid Valley, a community southwest of Box Elder, in 2025, according to a news release.

"As the needs of the community grow, including supporting the mission at Ellsworth Air Force Base, Monument Health remains committed to being a trusted partner in ensuring the health and well-being of our neighbors," said Mark Schulte, Monument Health vice president of operations.

Lincoln County is keeping pace

Lincoln County, which is home to both Harrisburg and Tea, has seen an increase in population too.

According to a U.S. Census Bureau report from March, the county's population grew by 11.6% from July 1, 2020, to July 1, 2023. In western South Dakota, Custer County and Lawrence County are runners up with increases by 9.4% and 8.5% respectively.

Jim Schmidt has been on the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners for over 25 years. He said when he got the job first, the population of Harrisburg was under 500 people and no one paid much attention to Lincoln County because of how rural it was.

Schmidt said the growth of Sioux Falls fuels population increases in Lincoln County, which is why he believes it is important for the county to be "more of a participant in the future of how the whole (Sioux Falls) area is going to develop."

A lot of residents have taken issue with a new men's prison planned for the county because of safety concerns, he said. But many of the people who will work there are likely to relocate to Lincoln County, increasing the population and housing demand, Schmidt said.

COVID-19 leaves a legacy in state

Normally, Harrisburg sells about 14 houses a month, said Brady Daly, director of agent services at Hegg Realtors.

When News Watch spoke with him at the end of May, 64 houses were on the real estate market. This, Daly explained, means that, in theory, it would take about 4 1/2 months to sell all of those houses.

The number of months of inventory can help estimate whether an entity has a seller's or a buyer's market.

Historically, a well-balanced market has six months of inventory, Daly said. Anything below that number would be considered a seller's market where there are fewer houses and more people willing to buy real estate. In a buyer's market, on the other hand, those willing to purchase some property have more control.

Even though Harrisburg's 4 1/2 months of inventory means it is still a seller's market, Daly said it is "aggressively close to a buyer's market."

At the same time, Daly said it is tough to find an affordable spot for a first-time homebuyer in Harrisburg. A lot of new construction is "higher-end houses," which is why they do not sell out as fast, raising the number of months of inventory.

Some of the current demand stems in part from the pandemic, said Harrisburg Mayor Derick Wenck. A

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significant number of people started moving to South Dakota in 2020, many of them young families, he said.

"People were just fleeing areas where their schools were shut down and everything was closed up. Whereas in South Dakota, we shut down for just a little bit but then opened everything back up," Wenck said. "We had people that were buying houses sight unseen, and just moved away from everything. It was crazy."

While leading through the first few months of the pandemic was peculiar, soon enough "it was like any other day," Wenck said. "I felt like we were in a weird area where (COVID-19) was there, but nobody was scared of it."

Even with the pandemic in the past, Harrisburg's population continues to grow, and Wenck said there is no sign of it slowing down.

The increasing number of residents has brought a variety of companies to Harrisburg. A coffee shop, a gas station and a hotel are among some of the businesses set to open later this year. One of Wenck's goals is to attract enough businesses so that people from Harrisburg will not have to go to Sioux Falls to shop.

In addition to making Harrisburg appealing to business owners and young families, Wenck said he and his team have been working on Harrisburg's infrastructure. Last year, the city spent \$12 million on enhancements that included sewer line upgrades, paving a mile stretch of a gravel road and installing a roundabout, he said.

This summer, the city plans to invest \$10 million in infrastructure improvements, including storm drain projects and more paving, Wenck said.

Harrisburg residents offer a helping hand

Before moving to Harrisburg, LeFebvre did a lot of research about the school district, not only because she wanted to work there but also because she wanted her two children to get a good education.

She had visited the city several times for her children's activities, such as a trip to the apple orchard or a sporting event. Harrisburg had "some cool features for just a small little town," LeFebvre concluded.

Among them were people's friendliness and willingness to help. Being "a hop, skip, and a jump away from a big city" is another, she said.

At the same time, LeFebvre said she wishes there were a new family restaurant in town.

"If you ask a typical person, 'What are they building in Harrisburg?' They're gonna say it's either a gas station or townhomes or apartments. But I understand those things are important too," LeFebvre said.

In July 2022, LeFebvre relocated to a bigger house within Harrisburg. This fall, she will start her sixth year teaching first graders in the Harrisburg School District.

School district appeal transcends city limits

When JoAnne VerMulm, director of communications at the Harrisburg School District, walked in through the doors of the high school for the first time in the fall of 2009, she was surprised by the size of the hallways.

She said they seemed too big for the number of children who studied there. At the time, VerMulm worked as a computer teacher and technology integrationist. She said in addition to teaching classes of her own, her responsibilities included facilitating students and teachers with using technology.

"It was a needed position in our district – just with all of our growth," VerMulm said.

According to the 2023-2024 Harrisburg School District annual report, the number of students enrolled has been growing steadily since the 2000-2001 academic year.

In the fall of 2023, the count of all enrolled students topped 6,000. Compared to the 2000-2001 academic year, the student body has grown by 674.6%.

VerMulm said when she began working for the school district in 2009, there were 425 high school students. In contrast, last year, there were more than 480 first-year high schoolers alone.

"Now it makes a lot of sense why those hallways were as wide as they were," VerMulm said. "They were anticipating a lot of growth."

Two-thirds of Harrisburg students live in Sioux Falls

The Harrisburg School District has been building new facilities "almost every other year," VerMulm said. This upcoming fall, a new building will replace the old Liberty Elementary School because it has been

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exceeding its capacity.

"Change is one thing that's constant in our district because we have experienced growth for the last two decades," said Tim Graf, who just completed his fifth year as the superintendent of the Harrisburg School District.

Reinventing Liberty Elementary, however, should be the last addition to the school district for the foreseeable future. Graf said that opening new buildings can be "an extra burden on taxpayers," so the school district has been trying to use the money as efficiently as possible and that the local community has been supportive.

According to the 2022 Recap report from the South Dakota Property Tax Portal, Lincoln County levied \$131.8 million in property taxes that year, with schools receiving 62.3% of it.

Data from the report show that Lincoln County ranks third in terms of the amount of money collected. Ahead of it are Pennington County, which levied more than \$186 million in 2022, and Minnehaha County, which collected \$320 million. Together, the money from these three counties amounted to 41.7% of the \$1.5 billion collected in property taxes statewide.

The Harrisburg School District spans seven elementary schools, three middle schools, one high school and a Freshman Academy. Some, like Harrisburg Journey Elementary School, are located within the Sioux Falls city limits.

"A lot of times I get asked: 'Why have we moved our district into the city of Sioux Falls?'" Graf said. He then explained that school district lines were drawn "generations ago" and the city of Sioux Falls "has just grown into the Harrisburg School District."

Currently, almost two-thirds of all students in the district live in Sioux Falls, Graf said. This may explain why the number of enrolled students nearly equaled the number of all Harrisburg residents in 2002.

Staffing remains a problem

One of the challenges that Graf said the school district faces is staffing. Despite the ongoing teacher shortage in the state, which was previously reported on by News Watch, Graf said that a bigger problem is finding support staff.

"We're fortunate in the teacher-regard in that we're located in the Sioux (Falls) metro area and we're a pretty progressive school district," Graf said. At the same time, the proximity creates competition that makes finding supporting staff a challenge.

In spite of these and other challenges, Graf remains optimistic.

"With growth comes opportunities, and that has allowed us to be innovative and progressive," he said. "We have embraced change – that's been who we are and what we do."

Born in eastern Iowa, Renee Rebnord moved to South Dakota for college. She lives in Sioux Falls but plans to move in late July to Harrisburg, where she has been working since 1980.

"When I started, I knew every staff member from K through 12 and every kid from seventh grade through 12," Rebnord said. "Now, when you have almost 500 kids in a class, that's pretty much impossible to do."

Rebnord first retired from her job as an English teacher in 2012 but then returned to teach a leadership and service class and substitute for colleagues.

"The students and families of Harrisburg as well as the staff – they've always been amazing and supportive," Rebnord said. "For me, it was a dream job."

Currently, she works as an administrative assistant in the principal's office, helping with dual credit registration, appointments, ACT scores and other tasks.

Graf said what makes the Harrisburg School District unique is a variety of personalized learning programs, or pathways. For example, in the 2023-2024 academic year, almost 50 students completed internships with local businesses and organizations. A lot of interns go on to become employees of those companies, he said.

Projections underestimated Harrisburg growth

Originally from the northeast South Dakota town of Gary, Dale Thorpe moved to Harrisburg with his wife and three children in 1971 after living in Minneapolis and Sioux Falls. Thorpe worked in construction and in 1984 joined the Harrisburg School Board.

Thorpe said he spent nine years on the board, and everyone got along. Some issues, however, created disagreement.

"We wanted to build new schools, but the community said, 'We don't want to build schools because if we build schools, we are going to grow and we don't want to grow. We want to be small Harrisburg.' We said, 'We don't have a choice,'" Thorpe recalled.

Years later, Thorpe said the way the community feels about population increases has changed and added that the growth the school board projected was "way less" than what recent U.S. Census Bureau reports show.

"I don't rub their noses in it, but they know we were right," he said.

Thorpe has been volunteering for the Chamber of Commerce for over 10 years. He said he likes to know what is going on and meeting new people. Much like LeFebvre, he pointed out that he would like to see a new restaurant in town but added that what appeals to him is how friendly the community is and how safe he feels in town.

"It's a great place to live in," Thorpe said. "It's rural America at as good as it can get."

Bart Pfankuch contributed to this story.

This story was originally published by South Dakota News Watch and distributed through a partnership with The Associated Press.

Arkansas groups not asking US Supreme Court to review ruling limiting scope of Voting Rights Act

By ANDREW DeMILLO Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — Progressive groups in Arkansas have decided to not ask the U.S. Supreme Court to weigh in on a lower court's ruling that private groups can't sue under a key section of the federal Voting Rights Act.

The Arkansas Public Policy Panel and the Arkansas State Conference NAACP, which challenged Arkansas' new state House districts under the law, did not file a petition by Friday's deadline asking the high court to review the ruling by the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

John Williams, legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Arkansas, said the decision to not seek review did not signal agreement with the court ruling that the groups believe is "radically wrong." The ACLU represents the groups in the case.

Williams said they didn't seek review because they believe there's still a mechanism for private groups to sue under another section of federal civil rights law.

"Because that still exists, there was no need to bring this up before the Supreme Court," Williams said Monday.

The groups' decision avoids a fight before the high court over a ruling that civil rights groups say erodes the law aimed at prohibiting racial discrimination in voting. The groups have argued last year's ruling upends decades of precedent and would remove a key tool for voters to stand up for their rights.

The 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in January denied a request for the case to go before the full circuit court after a panel ruled 2-1 last year that only the U.S. attorney general can enforce Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

Section 2 of the 1965 Voting Rights Act requires political maps to include districts where minority populations' preferred candidates can win elections. Lawsuits have long been brought under the section to try to ensure that Black voters have adequate political representation in places with a long history of racism, including many Southern states.

The Arkansas lawsuit challenged the state House redistricting plan, which was approved in 2021 by the all-Republican state Board of Apportionment.

The 8th Circuit ruling applies only to federal courts covered by the district, which includes Arkansas, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Arkansas' Republican attorney general, Tim Griffin, called the groups' decision to not take the issue to the Supreme Court a "win for Arkansas."

"(The 8th Circuit ruling) confirmed that decisions about how to enforce the Voting Rights Act should be made by elected officials, not special interest groups," Griffin said in a statement.

The Latest | Overnight strike kills 9 in Khan Younis, hours after Israel ordered a mass evacuation

By The Associated Press undefined

An Israeli strike has killed at least nine people in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, Palestinian health officials said Tuesday, within a day of Israel ordering parts of the city to evacuate ahead of a likely ground operation.

The overnight strike hit a home near the European Hospital, which is inside the zone that Israel said should be evacuated. After the initial evacuation orders, the military said the facility itself was not included, but its director says most patients and medics have already been relocated.

Sam Rose, the director of planning at the United Nations agency for Palestinian refugees, known as UNRWA, said Tuesday that the agency believes some 250,000 people are in the evacuation zone — over 10% of Gaza's population of 2.3 million — including many who have fled earlier fighting. He says another 50,000 people living just outside the zone may also choose to leave because of their proximity to the fighting. Evacuees have been told to seek refuge in a sprawling tent camp along the coast that is already overcrowded and has few basic services.

Israel launched the war in Gaza after Hamas' Oct. 7 attack, in which militants stormed into southern Israel, killed some 1,200 people — mostly civilians — and abducted about 250.

Since then, Israeli ground offensives and bombardments have killed more than 37,900 people in Gaza, according to the territory's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between combatants and civilians in its count. The war has largely cut off the flow of food, medicine and basic goods to Gaza, and people there are now totally dependent on aid. The top U.N. court has concluded there is a "plausible risk of genocide" in Gaza — a charge Israel strongly denies.

Currently:

- Israel orders Palestinians to flee Khan Younis, signaling a likely new assault on the southern Gaza city.
- Turkey's president accuses opposition of stoking racism after anti-Syrian rioting erupts.
- Lawsuit accuses Iran, Syria and North Korea of providing support for Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel.
- Iranian presidential candidates accuse each other of having no plan or experience ahead of runoff.
- Follow AP's coverage of the war in Gaza at <https://apnews.com/hub/israel-hamas-war>

Here's the latest:

Israel taps a critic of the International Court of Justice as its ad hoc judge in the genocide case brought by South Africa

JERUSALEM — Israel has tapped a professor critical of the International Court of Justice to be its ad hoc judge in the case before the court accusing Israel of genocide.

On Tuesday, Israeli officials confirmed the appointment of Ron Shapira to replace Aharon Barak, a former chief justice of Israel's highest court who had served on the panel. Barak stepped down from the ICJ post in June, citing family reasons.

Shapira, the rector of the Peres Academic Center and a former Dean of the Faculty of Law at Bar-Ilan University, has called the court "a body that almost all residents of Israel think is unworthy of any level of trust" on his personal Facebook page, according to reports in Israeli media. Now, Shapira will be part of the panel of judges on that same court charged with adjudicating South Africa's claim that Israel's offensive in Gaza constitutes genocide.

Israel denies South Africa's allegations, saying it is waging a war of self-defense against Hamas, the

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Palestinian militant group whose Oct. 7 attack triggered the war.

In May, the court ordered Israel to immediately halt its military offensive in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, an order that Israel has ignored.

2 Israeli soldiers are killed and a third wounded fighting in central Gaza, military says

JERUSALEM — The Israeli military says two of its soldiers have been killed and a third soldier was severely wounded fighting in central Gaza. It did not provide details of the battle in a statement issued Tuesday.

The Islamic Jihad militant group said it shelled Israeli supply lines Monday in the Netzarim Corridor in central Gaza. The army carved out the corridor, which stretches from the border to the sea, early on in the war to sever northern Gaza from the south.

It was not possible to independently confirm battlefield reports from either side.

The military says 674 soldiers have been killed since the start of the war in Gaza, more than half of them in Hamas' Oct. 7 attack that triggered the fighting.

At least 9 are killed in an Israeli strike overnight in southern Gaza

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip — Palestinian health officials say an Israeli strike has killed at least nine people in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis.

The overnight strike came after Israel ordered the evacuation of parts of the city Monday ahead of a likely ground operation.

Records at Nasser Hospital, where the dead and wounded were taken, show that three children and two women were among those killed. Associated Press reporters at the hospital counted the bodies.

The strike hit a home near the European Hospital, which is inside the zone that Israel said should be evacuated. After the initial evacuation orders, the military said the facility itself was not included, but its director says most patients and medics have already been relocated.

The military said it launched retaliatory strikes after Palestinian militants fired a barrage of some 20 projectiles into Israel from Khan Younis on Monday. There were no reports of casualties or damage from the rocket attack. The main United Nations agency providing aid in Gaza says the latest evacuation orders apply to some 250,000 people, many of whom have already been displaced. That's more than 10% of Gaza's population of 2.3 million.

About 250,000 people live in the latest mass-evacuation zone ordered by Israel, UNRWA official says

BEIRUT — A United Nations official says around 250,000 people live in the areas in southern Gaza where Israel has ordered another mass evacuation.

The Israeli military on Monday ordered new evacuations in and around the city of Khan Younis, which suffered widespread devastation during an offensive earlier in the year. It was the third mass evacuation ordered in less than three months.

Sam Rose, the director of planning at the U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, known as UNRWA, said Tuesday that the agency believes some 250,000 people are in the evacuation zone — over 10% of Gaza's population of 2.3 million — including many who have fled earlier fighting. He says another 50,000 people living just outside the zone may also choose to leave because of their proximity to the fighting. Evacuees have been told to seek refuge in a sprawling tent camp along the coast that is already overcrowded and has few basic services.

Issam Shahwan, the director of the European Hospital located within the evacuation zone, said the facility was nearly evacuated, with the last patients and medics awaiting transport to other medical facilities. After issuing the initial evacuation order, the military clarified that the European Hospital did not need to evacuate.

Palestinian militants fired a barrage of around 20 projectiles at Israel from Khan Younis on Monday, without causing any casualties or damage.

Over a million Palestinians fled the southern city of Rafah in May after Israel launched operations there. Israeli forces have repeatedly returned to areas of Gaza where they had previously operated. Palestinians and aid groups say nowhere in the territory feels safe.

Liora Argamani, mother of a freed hostage, dies at 61, less than a month after being reunited with her

daughter

JERUSALEM — The mother of a well-known Israeli hostage who was freed from captivity in Gaza in a recent rescue operation has died, the Ichilov Hospital said in a brief statement Tuesday.

Liora Argamani, 61, who had Stage 4 brain cancer, had pleaded for the release of her daughter, Noa, saying she wanted to see her only child before she died.

Noa Argamani, who emerged as an icon of the hostage crisis after a video from the Oct. 7 Hamas attack showed her being forced onto a motorbike and shouting at her captors not to kill her, was freed along with three other hostages in early June in an Israeli military operation in central Gaza. Palestinian health officials said at least 274 Palestinians were killed.

The two were reunited, but Yaakov Argamani, Noa's father, said Liora was in a "very difficult situation" and barely registered seeing her daughter, Israeli media reported.

Hamas took around 250 hostages in its surprise attack into Israel and is still holding around 120 after most of the rest were released during a cease-fire in November. Around a third of those still held are believed to be dead. Some 1,200 people were killed in the attack. Israel's ongoing offensive, launched in response, has killed at least 37,900 Palestinians, according to Palestinian health officials, who do not distinguish between civilians and fighters in their count.

Le Pen first had success in an ex-mining town. Her message there is now winning over French society

By DIANE JEANTET Associated Press

HENIN-BEAUMONT, France (AP) — In the former mining town at the heart of French far-right leader Marine Le Pen's political strategy, her party's electoral success Sunday came as no surprise to hundreds of supporters who gathered to see her victory speech. The same promises to bring back good jobs and upend the political elite that long resonated here have found a national audience.

Le Pen implanted herself in the northern town of Henin-Beaumont in the early 2000s, hoping to win over disenchanted voters feeling left behind by the new economy and growing tired of decades of Socialist local governance. It was the start of a decade-long effort to detoxify her anti-immigration National Rally and win over voters from across French society.

Several waves of industrial shutdowns have left unemployment levels above the national average, and 60% of the population earns so little it does not need to pay tax, according to data from France's national statistics agency, INSEE. The construction of a mammoth shopping center on Henin-Beaumont's outskirts emptied out the town and dozens of shops, hairdressers and restaurants remain empty.

In 2013, the town's Socialist mayor, Gérard Dalongeville, was sentenced to four years in prison and a 50,000-euro (\$53,000) fine for embezzlement of public funds.

"There was a winning cocktail," including the mayor's corruption and the closure of industrial plants, said Edouard Mills-Affif, a filmmaker who has done two documentaries on Henin-Beaumont and the rise of its far-right mayor, Steeve Briois.

Le Pen easily won her own race for a parliamentary seat in the first-round voting Sunday — garnering more than 64% of the votes in the town. Since she won more than 50% of the vote, she won't have to compete in a second round on July 7.

Overall, her National Rally and its allies won a third of the nationwide vote, official results showed, ahead of leftist coalition New Popular Front and President Emmanuel Macron's centrist party. Sunday's results provide an overall picture of how each camp fared, but they do not indicate how many seats the groups will get in the end.

Still, for the first time since World War II, a majority in Parliament for a party like Le Pen's is within reach.

Although France has some of the highest standards of living in the world, lower unemployment than it's had in decades and a relatively low crime rate compared to its peers, discontent has simmered in some parts in the post-industrial era. But for many National Rally voters, Sunday's victory is a long-coming revenge on a political class that they see as out of touch with everyday people and their concerns, such as

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crime, purchasing power and immigration.

"The French have almost wiped out the 'Macronist' bloc," a victorious Le Pen told supporters in Henin-Beaumont. The results, Le Pen added, showed voters' "willingness to turn the page after seven years of contemptuous and corrosive power."

Henin-Beaumont is where Le Pen began her efforts to turn her father's party from political pariah to a voter-friendly alternative -- a strategy she then sought to replicate on the national level when she took the reins of the party in 2012.

Her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, ran a fringe political party, which too often relied on antisemitism and racism to provoke and draw attention, according to Stanford University professor Cecile Alduy.

"Since (Marine) has been at the helm of the party, she has tried to smooth out the rhetoric, embrace a kind of democratic rhetoric," said Alduy. "Since 2012, it's been a constant rise, in the ballot box and in the polls."

Le Pen's father, now 96, was "a little too extreme" for Magali Quere, born and raised in the town.

"But the National Rally does not scare me," said Quere, 54, who runs a second-hand furniture shop. "It scared me 30 years ago, but not anymore."

And it's not just voters, Alduy said. "Other parties on the right have started to copy her vocabulary or arguments or themes, mainly around immigration and insecurity," she explained, including Macron and former French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

"It normalizes even more what they (the National Rally) have to offer," she said.

Briois, Henin-Beaumont's mayor, was elected in 2014 and reelected for a second term in 2020 with 74% of the votes. He remains a close ally of Marine Le Pen and has been heralded as a model for other National Rally candidates.

A former salesman, his style was a contrast with his predecessors'. He was everywhere. "He associated marketing and advertising techniques with the oldest practices of political action, which is to be at the markets, to go door to door," said Mills-Affif, the filmmaker who followed him for months on the campaign trail.

Briois encouraged dutiful local residents to inform him of any acts of misconduct or vandalism, taking pictures when they could, that he would then use in his campaigns.

Many residents in Henin-Beaumont say it's looking better now than it had in a long time. Briois seems to have set aside some of his most extreme projects, such as building a coalition of mayors who are against migrants or a decree he passed to ban begging in the town center that critics said unfairly targeted the Roma population.

Instead, the town renovated the church and the city hall, improved roads, and sent police to regularly patrol the streets, giving locals a sense of security.

Murielle Busine, 57, who described herself as anti-National Rally, praised the work done by Briois. "I will not go as far as voting for them, but I cannot deny everything he has done for the city, and that he is very accessible," Busine said. "When there's a problem, he tries to fix it."

Now there is Jordan Bardella, the party president and Le Pen's 28-year-old protégé with a huge TikTok following.

"People often say it's the old people who vote National Rally. Bardella brings the youthful momentum that was missing," said 22 year-old student Ewan Vandevraye, who attended the event in Henin-Beaumont from Lille, about 30 kilometers (18 miles) away, with three friends.

On Sunday night, supporters were not just shouting "Marine! Marine!" Men, women and youth alike also chanted Bardella's name.

If the National Rally wins an absolute majority on July 7, Bardella will become France's youngest-ever prime minister. Le Pen has her eyes on a bigger prize: the presidency in 2027.

Associated Press journalist Oleg Cetinic in Paris contributed.

Hurricane Beryl rips through open waters after devastating the southeast Caribbean

By DÁNICA COTO Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Hurricane Beryl roared through open waters on Tuesday as a monstrous Category 5 storm on a path that would take it near Jamaica and the Cayman Islands after earlier making landfall in the southeast Caribbean, killing at least two people.

A hurricane warning was in effect for Jamaica and a hurricane watch for Grand Cayman, Little Cayman and Cayman Brac. Beryl was forecast to start losing intensity on Tuesday but still to be near major hurricane strength when it passes near Jamaica on Wednesday, the Cayman Islands on Thursday and Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula on Friday, according to the National Hurricane Center.

Beryl is the earliest Category 5 storm ever to form in the Atlantic, fueled by record warm waters.

Early Tuesday, the storm was located about 370 miles (595 kilometers) southeast of Isla Beata in the Dominican Republic. It had top winds of 165 mph (270 kph) and was moving west-northwest at 22 mph (35 kph).

"Beryl remains an impressive Category 5 hurricane," the National Hurricane Center said.

A tropical storm warning was in place for the entire southern coast of Hispaniola, an island shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

As the storm barreled through the Caribbean Sea, rescue crews in the southeast Caribbean fanned out across the region to determine the extent of the damage that Hurricane Beryl inflicted after landing on Carriacou, an island in Grenada, as a Category 4 storm.

One person was reported killed in Grenada and another in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, officials said.

An emergency team was expected to travel to Carriacou on Tuesday morning.

"The situation requires our immediate attention, and all efforts must be made to support our sister islands," said Grenadian Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell.

Meanwhile, Ralph Gonsalves, prime minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, promised to rebuild the archipelago in a statement early Tuesday. He noted that 90% of homes on Union Island were destroyed, and that "similar levels of devastation" were expected on the islands of Myreau and Canouan.

The last strong hurricane to hit the southeast Caribbean was Hurricane Ivan 20 years ago, which killed dozens of people in Grenada.

Beryl has broken several records, including marking the farthest east that a hurricane has formed in the tropical Atlantic in June, according to Philip Klotzbach, Colorado State University hurricane researcher.

The storm strengthened from a tropical depression to a major hurricane in just 42 hours, which only six other Atlantic hurricanes have done, and never before September, according to hurricane expert Sam Lillo.

Beryl is the second named storm in the Atlantic hurricane season, which runs from June 1 to Nov. 30. Earlier this month, Tropical Storm Alberto made landfall in northeast Mexico and killed four people.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicted the 2024 hurricane season would be well above average, with between 17 and 25 named storms. The forecast called for as many as 13 hurricanes and four major hurricanes.

An average Atlantic hurricane season produces 14 named storms, seven of them hurricanes, and three major hurricanes.

Associated Press videographer Lucanus Ollivierre in Kingstown, St. Vincent, contributed to this report.

Hungary's leader is in Ukraine for talks with Zelenskyy. It's his first visit since the war began

By JUSTIN SPIKE Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) — Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán was in Kyiv on Tuesday for talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, his first visit to the country since Russia's full-scale invasion in

February 2022.

Orbán's press chief confirmed to Hungarian news agency MTI that the prime minister had arrived in the Ukrainian capital in the morning for the talks. Bertalan Havasi said the main topic of the meeting will be the opportunity for building peace as Ukraine fights off Russia's invasion.

Officials in Kyiv did not confirm Orbán's arrival.

Orbán's visit was a rare gesture in a relationship that long been marred by tensions. Known as Russian President Vladimir Putin's closest EU ally, Orbán has routinely blocked, delayed or watered down EU efforts to extend assistance to Ukraine and to sanction Moscow over its war, frustrating both Zelenskyy other EU leaders.

He has also accused Kyiv of mistreating an ethnic Hungarian minority in Ukraine's western region of Zakarpattia, a community he has used to justify his refusal to provide weapons to Ukraine or allow their transfer across the two countries' shared border.

The self-described "illiberal" leader has long been accused by his European partners of dismantling democratic institutions at home and acting as an obstinate spoiler of key EU policy priorities. The bloc has frozen more than \$20 billion in funding to Budapest over alleged rule-of-law and corruption violations, and Orbán has conducted numerous anti-EU campaigns depicting it as an overcentralized, repressive organization.

This visit comes the day after Hungary took over the six-month rotating presidency of the European Union, a position that has little real power but can be used to set the tone of the bloc's agenda. Hungarian officials have indicated that they will act as "honest brokers" in the role despite worries from some EU lawmakers that Hungary's democratic track record makes it unfit to lead the bloc.

Orbán's visit also comes as he seeks to recruit members into a new nationalist alliance that he hopes will soon become the largest right-wing group in the European Parliament. On Sunday, Orbán met in Vienna with the leaders of Austria's far-right Freedom Party and the main Czech opposition party, announcing the formation of the new group, "Patriots for Europe."

The trio would need to attract lawmakers from at least four more EU countries to successfully form a group in Europe's new parliament, which held elections in June. Right-wing nationalist parties across Europe strengthened their position in the elections, but ideological differences over the war in Ukraine and cooperation with Russia have often prevented deeper alliances among some of the parties.

Biden and the Democrats raise \$264 million in 2nd quarter as they seek to calm post-debate anxieties

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden's reelection campaign and the Democratic National Committee reported raising \$264 million in the year's second quarter, an impressive haul that may help them calm fears within their own party about last week's shaky debate performance.

The total announced Tuesday includes \$127 million collected during June alone, when the campaign says it took in more than \$33 million on the day of the debate and in its aftermath. Biden also has \$240 million in cash on hand, outpacing the \$212 million it reported having last month.

Biden campaign manager Julie Chavez Rodriguez called the totals "a testament to the committed and growing base of supporters standing firmly behind the president."

The announced totals come as Biden's campaign continues to scramble to quell panic among some Democrats, who have questioned whether the president can win November's election after a debate where he appeared raspy, trailed off and at times gave convoluted answers. Some of the campaign's top leaders have held multiple calls since the debate, preaching patience to donors and top surrogates.

Campaign officials nonetheless insist there's been no discussion "whatsoever" of Biden exiting the race nor of any staff shakeups.

Former President Donald Trump, who is set to accept the Republican presidential nomination at the party's convention this month in Milwaukee, has yet to announce the quarterly fundraising totals for his

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campaign and affiliated entities. A spokesman said they would release them "when we're ready."

Biden enjoyed a large fundraising advantage over Trump in the early stages of the race, but the former president has narrowed the gap more recently.

In April, which is included in Tuesday's full second quarter totals, Biden and the DNC reported raising more than \$51 million. That was well short of the \$76 million that Trump and the Republican Party reported taking in for that month.

Trump also reported raising \$141 million in May, padded by tens of millions of dollars in contributions that flowed in after Trump's guilty verdict in his criminal hush money trial.

Biden's most recent quarterly total was enhanced by a glitzy June fundraiser in Los Angeles that he held with superstars George Clooney and Julia Roberts and former President Barack Obama. That event took in more than \$30 million, a record for a Democratic candidate.

The president's campaign said nearly half of the donations that came after the debate were from first-time donors. It said 95% of all second-quarter donations were under \$200, and more than 1.5 million total donors made over 2.8 million contributions.

The campaign said it now has a donor base of 314,000, or nearly 100,000 more than at the end of 2024's first quarter in March.

The Biden campaign has used its funds to help open 200-plus campaign offices in battleground states that work with state Democratic parties and have more than 1,000 staffers. Biden's team said that coming out of the debate last weekend, the campaign staged 1,500 events across the battlegrounds.

"Grassroots donors across the country are chipping in every day because they know that this election will determine the course of history," DNC Chair Jaime Harrison said.

Who are the main players in the UK's upcoming national election?

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Millions of voters in Britain are going to the polls Thursday to choose a new House of Commons and a new government.

Voters will elect 650 lawmakers representing as many constituencies, or local areas, and the leader of the party that returns the most lawmakers will become prime minister.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservatives are widely expected to lose to the main opposition party, the left-of-center Labour, after 14 years in power under five different prime ministers.

The Conservatives and Labour traditionally dominate British politics under the U.K.'s "first past the post" electoral system, which makes it difficult for smaller parties to win representation in Parliament.

But also in the running are the Liberal Democrats, Reform UK, the Scottish National Party and the Greens, among others.

Here's a look at the parties, who's leading them and what they are promising:

CONSERVATIVES

Who's their leader? Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.

Sunak, 44, came to power in October 2022 when he inherited a Conservative Party and an economy in turmoil after Liz Truss's short-lived premiership. The Oxford graduate and former Goldman Sachs hedge fund manager is Britain's first leader of color and the first Hindu to become prime minister. Sunak has stressed he is the man who steadied the ship, but critics say he lacks political judgement and is out of touch with ordinary voters.

How many seats did they win in the last election? 365

What are they promising? Delivering a stronger economy and cutting taxes by some 17 billion pounds per year. Increasing public health spending above inflation, and boosting defense spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2030. The party says this will be paid for by savings on tax evasion and slashing welfare spending. The party also pledges to cap immigration numbers and remove some asylum-seekers to Rwanda.

LABOUR

Who's their leader? Keir Starmer.

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The 61-year-old lawyer, a former chief prosecutor for England and Wales, is the current favorite to be Britain's next leader. A centrist and pragmatist, Starmer has worked hard to steer his party away from the more overtly socialist policies of former leader Jeremy Corbyn and quelled internal divisions. Critics call him unexciting and unambitious, but Labour has surged in popularity under his leadership.

How many seats did they win in the last election? 202

What are they promising? Promoting "wealth creation," encouraging investment and improving Britain's infrastructure like railways under a 10-year infrastructure strategy. Setting up a state-owned clean power company to boost energy security, paid for by a windfall tax on oil and gas giants. Taxing private schools to pay for thousands of new teachers in state schools. Cutting record-high public health waiting times.

LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

Who's their leader? Ed Davey.

Davey, 58, was first elected to Parliament in 1997. The former economics researcher served as the government's energy and climate change secretary under an uneasy Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition from 2012 to 2015. Davey became leader of the left-of-center Lib Dems in 2019 and was not a household name until this election, when he made headlines with multiple zany stunts — including bungee-jumping to urge voters to take "a leap of faith."

How many seats did they win in the last election? 11

What are they promising? Improving Britain's overstretched health and social care systems, including introducing free nursing care at home. Investing in renewable energy and home insulation. Clamping down on sewage-dumping water companies. Lowering the voting age to 16. Rejoining the European Union's single market.

REFORM UK

Who's their leader? Nigel Farage.

Farage, a political firebrand who takes pride in being the disruptor in British politics, has posed a serious headache to the Conservatives since he announced he is running in the election. The 60-year-old populist has long divided opinion with his anti-migrant rhetoric and Euroskeptic stance. A key proponent of Brexit, Farage is capturing many disillusioned Conservative voters with his promises to cut immigration and focus on "British values." Farage previously ran for Parliament seven times but never won.

How many seats did they win in the last election? None — though the party gained its first lawmaker this year when ex-Conservative Party deputy chair Lee Anderson defected to Reform.

What are they promising? Freezing all "nonessential immigration" and barring international students from bringing their dependents with them. Leaving the European Convention on Human Rights so that asylum-seekers can be deported without interventions from rights courts. Scrapping "net zero" goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to bring down energy bills.

SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY (SNP)

Who's their leader? John Swinney.

Swinney, 60, became the SNP's third leader in just over a year in May. The politician has sought to bring stability to the party, which has been in turmoil since Scotland's long-serving First Minister Nicola Sturgeon abruptly stepped down last year during a campaign finance investigation that eventually led to criminal charges against her husband. Swinney has long served the party: he joined its ranks at 15 years old, and previously led the party from 2000 to 2004.

How many seats did they win in the last election? 48

What are they promising? Swinney has said that if his party wins a majority of seats in Scotland he will try to open Scottish independence negotiations with the London-based U.K. government. He wants to rejoin the European Union and the European single market. He also called for boosting public health funding, scrapping the U.K.'s Scotland-based nuclear deterrent, and an immediate cease-fire in Gaza.

GREEN PARTY

Who's their leader? Carla Denyer and Adrian Ramsay.

Denyer, a mechanical engineer, worked in wind energy before she joined the Greens in 2011. The

38-year-old served as a local politician for the southwestern English city of Bristol for nine years. In 2021 she was elected co-leader of the Greens along with Ramsay, also a local government politician who has experience working with environmental charities.

How many seats did they win in the last election? 1

What are they promising? Phasing out nuclear power and getting the U.K. to net zero by 2040. The Greens have pledged 24 billion pounds a year to insulate homes and 40 billion pounds a year invested in the green economy, to be paid for by a carbon tax, a new wealth tax on the very rich and an income tax hike for millions of higher earners.

Hurricane Beryl grows to Category 5 strength as it razes southeast Caribbean islands

By DÁNICA COTO and KOFI JONES Associated Press

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados (AP) — Hurricane Beryl strengthened to Category 5 status late Monday after it ripped doors, windows and roofs off homes across the southeastern Caribbean with devastating winds and storm surge fueled by the Atlantic's record warmth.

Beryl made landfall on the island of Carriacou in Grenada as the earliest Category 4 storm in the Atlantic, then late in the day the National Hurricane Center in Miami said its winds had increased to Category 5 strength. Fluctuations in strength, and later a significant weakening, were forecast as the storm pushes further into the Caribbean in the coming days.

Grenada's Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell said one person had died and he could not yet say if there were other fatalities because authorities had not been able to assess the situation on the islands of Carriacou and Petite Martinique, where there were initial reports of major damage but communications were largely down.

"We do hope there aren't any other fatalities or any injuries," he said. "But bear in mind the challenge we have in Carriacou and Petite Martinique." Mitchel added that the government will send people first thing Tuesday morning to evaluate the situation on the islands.

Streets from St. Lucia island south to Grenada were strewn with shoes, trees, downed power lines and other debris. Banana trees were snapped in half and cows lay dead in green pastures with homes made of tin and plywood tilting precariously nearby.

"Right now, I'm real heartbroken," said Vichelle Clark King as she surveyed her damaged shop in the Barbadian capital of Bridgetown that was filled with sand and water.

Beryl was still swiping the southeast Caribbean early Tuesday on a track heading just south of Jamaica and toward Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula by late Thursday as a Category 1 storm.

It reached Category 5 strength late Monday and intensified further early Tuesday morning to 165 mph (270 kph) winds.

Beryl was about 445 miles (715 kilometers) east-southeast of Isla Beata in the Dominican Republic and was moving west-northwest at 22 mph (35 kph). A hurricane warning was in effect for Jamaica, and a tropical storm warning for the southern coast of Hispaniola, the island shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Fluctuations were likely but Beryl was expected to stay near major hurricane intensity as it moved into the central Caribbean and passed near Jamaica on Wednesday, the National Hurricane Center said. After that, significant weakening was expected.

The last strong hurricane to hit the southeast Caribbean was Hurricane Ivan 20 years ago, which killed dozens of people in Grenada.

On Monday afternoon, officials received "reports of devastation" from Carriacou and surrounding islands, said Terence Walters, Grenada's national disaster coordinator. Mitchell said he would travel to Carriacou as soon as it's safe, noting there's been an "extensive" storm surge.

Grenada officials had to evacuate patients to a lower floor after hospital roof was damaged, he said.

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"There is the likelihood of even greater damage," he told reporters. "We have no choice but to continue to pray."

In Barbados, Wilfred Abrahams, minister of home affairs and information, said drones — which are faster than crews fanning across the island — would assess damage once Beryl passed.

Jaswinderpal Parmar of Fresno, California, who was among the thousands who traveled to Barbados for Saturday's Twenty20 World Cup cricket final, said he and his family were now stuck there with scores of other fans, their flights canceled on Sunday.

He said by phone that it's the first time he has experienced a hurricane — he and his family have been praying, as well as taking calls from concerned friends and family as far away as India.

"We couldn't sleep last night," Parmar said.

Historic hurricane

Beryl strengthened from a tropical depression to a major hurricane in just 42 hours, which only six other Atlantic hurricanes have done, with Sept. 1 as the previous earliest date, according to hurricane expert Sam Lillo.

It also was the earliest Category 4 Atlantic hurricane, besting Hurricane Dennis, which became a Category 4 storm on July 8, 2005. Beryl later became the earliest Category 5 observed in the Atlantic basin on record, and only the second Category 5 hurricane in July after Hurricane Emily in 2005. the National Hurricane Center said.

Beryl amassed its strength from record warm waters that are hotter now than they would be at the peak of hurricane season in September, said hurricane specialist and storm surge expert Michael Lowry.

Beryl also marked the farthest east that a hurricane has formed in the tropical Atlantic in June, breaking a record set in 1933, according to Philip Klotzbach, Colorado State University hurricane researcher.

Beryl is the second named storm in the Atlantic hurricane season, which runs from June 1 to Nov. 30. Earlier this month, Tropical Storm Alberto made landfall in northeast Mexico and killed four people.

Short-lived Tropical Storm Chris had formed Sunday night near eastern Mexico before weakening back to a depression Monday. A cluster of thunderstorms mimicking Beryl's path in the western Atlantic was less organized late Monday but had a small chance of becoming a named storm in the next few days.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicted the 2024 hurricane season was likely to be well above average, with between 17 and 25 named storms. The forecast called for as many as 13 hurricanes and four major hurricanes.

An average Atlantic hurricane season produces 14 named storms, seven of them hurricanes and three major hurricanes.

Coto reported from San Juan, Puerto Rico. Associated Press videographer Lucanus Ollivierre in Kingstown, St. Vincent contributed to this report.

North Korea brags of new missile with 'super-large warhead.' Outsiders doubt the North's claim

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea said Tuesday it had test-fired a new tactical ballistic missile capable of carrying "a super-large warhead," a claim quickly disputed by South Korean officials and experts who speculate the North likely fabricated a successful test to conceal a botched launch.

It's the second time that South Korea has questioned North Korea's claim on the development of new weapons in recent days, as the rivals are locked in heightened animosities over the North's testing activities.

The North's official Korean Central News Agency said that Monday's test involved the Hwasongpho-11 Da-4.5 missile, which can carry a 4.5 ton-class warhead. It said the test was meant to verify the weapon's flight stability and hit accuracy at the maximum range of 500 kilometers (310 miles) and the minimum range of 90 kilometers (55 miles).

The test apparently refers to the two ballistic missile launches that South Korea said North Korea per-

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formed Monday.

Joint Chiefs of Staff spokesperson Lee Sung Joon said at a briefing later Tuesday that the second North Korean missile was found to have fallen on an uninhabited area near Pyongyang, the North's capital. He said he could find few previous test-launches by North Korea that have aimed at ground target sites.

"Regarding the North Korean assessment, we're weighing a possibility of deception," Lee said.

The South Korean military has said the second North Korean missile possibly traveled abnormally during the initial stage of its flight. It said if the missile exploded, its debris would likely have scattered on the ground.

The KCNA dispatch didn't say from where it launched the new missile and where it landed. Unlike previous weapons tests, North Korea also didn't publicize any photos of Monday's test. The fact that it tested both the missile's maximum and minimum ranges suggested North Korea performed two launches.

KCNA, citing North Korea's Missile Administration, reported that North Korea will test-fire the missile again later in July to verify the performances of its simulated warhead at the medium range of 250 kilometers (155 miles).

Some experts say test-firing missiles at ground targets could be related to efforts to test how powerful warheads are to destroy underground bunkers and structures.

But Shin Jongwoo, a Seoul-based military expert, said the lack of any photos on the launches means it's highly likely the North is trying to deceive the outsiders to cover up Monday's failed launches. He said North Korea likely launched an existing missile on Monday, not the new missile at it claimed.

Yang Uk, an analyst at Asan Institute for Policy Studies, said that Monday's tests reflected North Korea's push to acquire a variety of conventional weapons. But he also said if North Korea truly succeeded in hitting a ground target, it probably would have already published related images to brag about its achievements as it's done in the past.

Since 2022, North Korea has sharply accelerated weapons testing activities to enlarge its nuclear arsenal. The North Korea-claimed ranges of the newly tested missile imply it targets South Korea. Experts say North Korea would ultimately want to use an expanded weapons arsenal to increase its leverage in future diplomacy with the U.S.

On June 26, North Korea launched what it called a new multiwarhead missile in the first known test of a developmental weapon aimed at penetrating its rivals' missile defenses. North Korea said the launch was successful, but South Korea dismissed the North's claim as deception to cover up a failed launch. South Korea said the weapon blew up, sending debris in the waters off the North's east coast.

Also Tuesday, South Korea held live-fire drills near the heavily fortified land border with North Korea, the first of its kind since the South suspended a 2018 agreement with the North aimed at reducing front-line military tensions in early June. Last week, South Korea conducted similar firing exercises near its disputed western sea boundary with North Korea.

The back-to-back South Korean exercises could prompt North Korea, which also said it won't be bound by the 2018 pact any longer, to take provocative steps at border areas.

Meanwhile, during a four-day key ruling party meeting that ended Monday, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un claimed that his country's economic and food situations have improved and presented officials tasks to maintain a steady economic development, KCNA said Tuesday. It didn't mention whether the meeting discussed any security or foreign policy issues.

As Iran faces a rare runoff presidential election, disenchanting voters are staying away

By NASSER KARIMI and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Over 20 years ago, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei stood before a crowd at Friday prayers to denounce the United States for its disenchanting electorate.

"It is disgraceful for a nation to have a 35% or 40% voter turnout, as happens in some of the nations that you see having presidential elections," Khamenei said in 2001. "It is obvious that their people do not

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trust their political system, that they do not care about it and that they have no hope.”

Iran now faces what the ayatollah described.

Iran will hold a runoff presidential election Friday, only its second since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, after only 39.9% of its voting public cast a ballot the previous week. Of over 24.5 million votes, more than 1 million ballots were later rejected — typically a sign of people feeling obligated to head to the polls but wanting to reject all the candidates.

Meanwhile, public rage simmers after years of Iran’s economy cratering to new lows, along with bloody crackdowns on dissent, including over the mass protests sparked by the 2022 death of Mahsa Amini after her detention by the country’s morality police allegedly over not wearing her headscarf to their liking. Tensions with the West remain high as Iran enriches uranium closer than ever to weapons-grade levels.

Now, hard-line former nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili faces the reformist Masoud Pezeshkian, a heart surgeon who likely needs a widespread turnout to win the presidency. Pezeshkian’s supporters warn of dark days ahead under Jalili. Meanwhile, many people are unconvinced that their vote even matters.

“I did not vote and I will not, since nobody apologized because of Mahsa and later miseries that young people face, neither the reformists nor the hard-liners,” said Leila Seyyedi, a 23-year-old university student studying graphic design.

Iranian election law requires a candidate to get over 50% of the vote to avoid a runoff. In results released Saturday, Pezeshkian got 10.4 million votes while Jalili received 9.4 million. Parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf came in third with 3.3 million, while Shiite cleric Mostafa Pourmohammadi had over 206,000.

Most voters for Qalibaf, a former general in Iran’s paramilitary Revolutionary Guard and national police chief known for his crackdowns against students and for corruption allegations, likely will break for Jalili after Qalibaf endorsed him, analysts say. That has put Jalili, a 58-year-old known as the “Living Martyr” for losing a leg in the 1980s Iran-Iraq war, in the lead position for the runoff.

But his recalcitrant reputation among Western diplomats during negotiations over Iran’s nuclear program is paired with concern at home over his views. One politician who has aligned himself with the moderates, former Iranian Information and Communications Technology Minister Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi, put the choice between Jalili and Pezeshkian more starkly.

“We will not let Iran fall into the hands of the Taliban,” he wrote on social platform X.

But even such dark warnings seemingly failed to have an effect. On the streets of Tehran after the June 28 vote, many told The Associated Press they didn’t care about the election.

“I did not vote, as former presidents failed to realize their promises,” said Ahmad Taheri, a 27-year-old psychology student. “I will not vote this coming Friday either.”

Mohammad Ali Robati, a 43-year-old electronic engineer and a father of two, said Iranian officials’ apparent indifference to people’s economic pressures caused him not to vote.

“After years of economic difficulties, I have no interest in politics,” Robati said, though he held out the possibility of voting Friday.

At the time of Iran’s 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, the exchange rate for Iran’s currency was 32,000 rials to \$1. Today, it’s 617,000 rials to \$1 — and many have found the value of their bank accounts, retirement funds and other holdings gouged by years of depreciation. It’s nearing its record low of 700,000 rials, briefly reached after Iran’s unprecedented direct attack on Israel in April.

Meanwhile, anger over Amini’s death in September 2022 persists. Her death, in which United Nations investigators said Iran’s government was responsible for the “physical violence” that led to it, sparked months of protests and a security crackdown that killed more than 500 people and saw over 22,000 detained. Less than two years later, hard-liners within Iran’s theocracy have pressed forward with a renewed hijab crackdown.

“The voter participation levels and blank ballots represented a repudiation of regime policies, particularly its crackdown on critics and women who refuse to comply with laws requiring full head covering,” the New York-based Soufan Center think tank said in an analysis Monday.

Pezeshkian has written on X that his government would resist the police enforcement of the hijab along

with restrictions on the internet. However, Tahereh Namazi, a 31-year-old mathematics teacher, said she didn't vote because neither candidate made a clear pledge on those issues.

Those who didn't vote and spoke to the AP described their decision as their own, not part of an organized boycott.

Whether voters heed Pezeshkian on Friday remains in question. In recent days, he has repeatedly cited the story of the "selfless farmer," a tale told to nearly every Iranian child at school about a farmer in 1961 who stripped off his own shirt and set it ablaze to warn a train about boulders blocking the tracks.

Those not taking part in the election believe the train has already crashed.

Karimi reported from Tehran, Iran. Amir Vahdat in Tehran contributed to this report.

US eliminated from Copa America with 1-0 loss to Uruguay, increasing pressure to fire Berhalter

By DAVE SKRETTA AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Gregg Berhalter gave a single-word answer after the United States was eliminated from the Copa America with a loss to Uruguay when asked whether he was the right man to lead the Americans into the 2026 World Cup.

"Yes," Berhalter said.

Plenty of others are sure to have plenty more to say about his future with the national team.

After a disastrous loss to Panama put the U.S. in a dire predicament, Berhalter's lineup of players from European clubs created precious few opportunities against Uruguay. And when Mathías Olivera found the back of the net for a questionable second-half goal, La Celeste walked out of Arrowhead Stadium with a 1-0 victory on Monday night and the Americans were left wondering how everything had gone so wrong.

"We're all going to do a review of the whole tournament and see where we fell short," Berhalter said. "It's obvious the Panama game hurt us, put us behind the 8-ball, and I think collectively — the staff, the players, the sporting department — have to look at where do we improve. How do we get better? We know it's a talented team, one with big potential, and we didn't show it."

Berhalter and the U.S. hoped to show the team had advanced since its round-of-16 elimination against the Netherlands at the 2022 World Cup. Instead, the U.S. managed only a 2-0 win over lowly Bolivia and were upset 2-1 by the Panamanians.

"We had a good start and brought a lot of energy but at the end of the day, just not enough quality," U.S. captain Christian Pulisic said. "I felt like we gave it everything but we just couldn't score."

Indeed, the lone goal Monday night came in the 66th minute when Nicolas De La Cruz swung a free kick in front of the American goal. Matt Turner parried a header by Ronald Araújo, who out-jumped defender Tim Ream, but the rebound went right to Olivera and he tapped the ball in with his left foot.

Olivera appeared to be offside on the initial header but the goal stood after a video review.

Three minutes before Uruguay scored, the U.S. was in position to advance.

Bruno Miranda had tied the score for Bolivia against Panama in a game started simultaneously in Orlando, Florida, which meant the U.S. would only need a tie. But Panama went on to a 3-1 victory to claim the second spot in Group C behind Uruguay, and the U.S. was bounced from the group stage for the first time in 20 continental and global tournaments on home soil.

"This is still a young team. Still a lot of potential. But potential doesn't really matter if you go out on the pitch and you don't get the job done," defender Antonee Robinson said. "Everyone needs to try and up the level, myself included."

Berhalter was rehired in June 2023 and given a contract through the upcoming World Cup, which the U.S. will co-host with Canada and Mexico. But despite a lineup that included Pulisic, Weston McKennie and Tyler Adams, the U.S. failed to even match its last Copa America appearance, when it lost to Argentina in the 2016 semifinals.

During the second half Monday night, the home crowd of 55,460 in less-than-full Arrowhead Stadium

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began chanting, "Fire Gregg."

The U.S. next plays September friendlies against Canada and New Zealand.

"It wasn't only Copa America. It's learning from these high-level games we're playing pre-tournament," Berhalter said, "and having this collective understanding that the margins are so small, and there is very little separating any of these teams."

Uruguay played without coach Marcelo Bielsa, suspended for sending his team out late for the second half of its first two games. Diego Reyes and Pablo Quiroga were in charge on a mild but humid night in Kansas City.

Berhalter and the Americans knew the difficulty of their situation — Pulisic at one point said they would need to play "the best game of our lives" to advance — and they looked like a team with nothing to lose for most of the first half.

It was one marked by physical play and questionable calls.

Folarin Balogun, who had two goals already in the tournament, bore the brunt of several challenges. He was left calling for help after a collision with Uruguayan goalkeeper Sergio Rochet, then was left rolling on the field after Araújo's challenge later in the half. Balogun eventually had to leave with a hip pointer and Ricardo Pepi took his place.

Uruguay lost Maximiliano Araújo earlier in the half after a scary collision with Ream near the U.S. goal. He had to be taken off the field on a stretcher, though he was able to move his arms before heading up the tunnel.

In the middle of the chaos was 32-year-old Peruvian referee Kevin Ortega, whose several questionable calls hurt the U.S.

The first came when Ortega began to pull a yellow card and stop play, then allowed it to continue — while still holding the card — as Uruguay nearly scored on an attack. The second came when the U.S. had a clear advantage after a hand ball on Uruguay, but the Peruvian referee eventually blew his whistle and called the play back for a free kick.

"This referee was awful," Robinson said. "I've never seen a referee, you know, let a quick free kick go while he's got a yellow card in his hand. And it's literally embarrassing. And I hope something happens to him from that."

Uruguay applied more pressure midway through the second half, then had the Americans in desperation mode after the goal. And while the U.S. had a few good runs and a couple of good opportunities in the box, a team that had such big expectations was unable to find the two goals it needed — or even one.

"The U.S. is a very strong team, but if you push us to play tough, we can do that," Uruguay's Manuel Ugarte said. "And we can play beautiful (attractive) soccer as well. We adapt to the circumstances of the match."

AP Copa America coverage: <https://apnews.com/hub/copa-america>

Israel orders Palestinians to flee Khan Younis, signaling likely new assault on southern Gaza city

By MOHAMMAD JAHJOUH, SAMY MAGDY and JULIA FRANKEL Associated Press

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP) — The Israeli army ordered a mass evacuation of Palestinians from much of Khan Younis on Monday, a sign that troops are likely to launch a new ground assault into the Gaza Strip's second-largest city.

The order suggests Khan Younis will be the latest target of Israel's raids into parts of Gaza it had previously invaded in the war, as it pursues regrouping Hamas militants. Much of Khan Younis was destroyed in a long assault earlier this year, but large numbers of Palestinians had moved back to escape another Israeli offensive in Gaza's southernmost city, Rafah.

The evacuation came as Israel released the director of what was once Gaza's largest hospital after holding him for seven months without charge or trial. Israel alleged the hospital had been used as a Hamas

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command center, which he and other Palestinian health officials have denied. The doctor said he and other detainees were held under harsh conditions and tortured.

The decision to release Mohammed Abu Selmia raised questions over Israel's claims surrounding Shifa Hospital, which Israeli forces have raided twice since the start of the war with Hamas. The hospital was left severely damaged after the raids.

Abu Selmia's release triggered an uproar across Israel's political spectrum. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office called it "a grave mistake." Government ministers and opposition leaders expressed outrage and insisted Abu Selmia played a role in Hamas' alleged use of the hospital — although Israeli security services rarely unilaterally free prisoners if they have a suspicion of militant links.

Khan Younis evacuation

Monday's evacuation order covered the eastern half of Khan Younis and a large swath of the Gaza Strip's southeast corner. Earlier in the day, the army said a barrage of rockets out of Gaza was fired from Khan Younis.

As night fell, streams of civilians trudged on foot beside a steady flow of vehicles as people began making their way out of the evacuation zone. A woman dragged a rolling suitcase with a little girl riding on top. Others carried a few crucial belongings — mattresses, clothing, plastic buckets for washing, an electric fan. Trucks were piled high with possessions and furniture.

"We received a message on our mobile phones" to evacuate, said one displaced woman Zeinab Abu Jazar, holding back tears. "Look at these children, how they walk. We did not find a car to ride in."

Israel told people to move to Muwasi, a coastal area designated by the Israeli army as a safe zone and which has become filled with crowded and unsanitary tent camps.

The order suggested a new assault into Khan Younis was imminent. Israeli forces fought for weeks in Khan Younis earlier this year and withdrew, claiming to have destroyed Hamas battalions. But in other places where the military has made similar claims, renewed raids have underscored Hamas' capabilities.

Last week, the military ordered an evacuation from the north Gaza district of Shijaiyah, and intensive fighting has followed.

Netanyahu said Monday that the military was "making progress toward ending the phase of the destruction of Hamas' terror army." But he said forces will continue to "target their remains going forward."

More fighting in the Khan Younis area could further hamper Palestinians' access to much-needed potable water. Included in the evacuation zone is a water line that Israel installed following criticism over its cutoff of water to the strip early in the war.

Also in the zone is the area surrounding the Kerem Shalom crossing, the major aid crossing to southern Gaza, and an aid route inside the territory that Israel has said it would safeguard.

Most of Gaza's population of 2.3 million have fled their homes, with many displaced multiple times. Israeli restrictions, fighting and the breakdown of public order have hindered the delivery of humanitarian aid, fueling widespread hunger and sparking fears of famine.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the new evacuation order "just shows yet again that no place is safe in Gaza" for Palestinian civilians. "It's another stop in this deadly circular movement that the population in Gaza has to undergo on a regular basis," he said in a statement calling for a cease-fire.

Shifa Hospital director's release

The decision to release Abu Selmia and 54 other Palestinian detainees back into Gaza appeared to be meant to free up space in overcrowded detention centers. Since the start of the war, Israeli forces have detained thousands of Palestinians from Gaza and the occupied West Bank. Many are being held without charge or trial in what is known as administrative detention.

"Our detainees have been subjected to all kinds of torture behind bars," Abu Selmia told a news conference. "There was almost daily torture."

He said guards used batons to beat detainees and terrorized them with dogs. He said some detainees had limbs amputated because of poor medical care. He said a beating caused his head to bleed and guards broke his finger.

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The allegations could not be independently confirmed but matched other accounts of Palestinians who have been held in Israeli custody. There was no immediate response from the prison service, which has denied similar accusations.

Israeli forces raided Shifa Hospital in November, alleging that Hamas had created an elaborate command and control center inside. Abu Selmia and other staff denied the allegations and accused Israel of recklessly endangering thousands of patients and displaced people sheltering there. Abu Selmia was detained on Nov. 22.

After its first raid on Shifa Hospital, the military uncovered a tunnel beneath it leading to two empty rooms, as well as evidence that militants had brought wounded hostages to the facility. But the evidence fell short of showing an extensive base as claimed. Israel has since raided other Gaza hospitals on similar allegations, forcing them to shut down or dramatically reduce services.

Amid the uproar over Abu Selmia's release, the various Israeli state organs responsible for detentions scrambled to shift blame.

Netanyahu's office said Abu Selmia "belongs in prison" and that the prime minister had ordered a thorough review into how the release happened. It said the decision was made "without the knowledge of the political echelon or the heads of the organizations."

Itamar Ben Gvir, Israel's far-right national security minister who controls the country's police and prison service, blamed the Defense Ministry.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant's office said prisoner releases are the responsibility of the prison service and the Shin Bet internal security agency. The prison service said the decision was made by the Shin Bet and the army, and released a document ordering his release that was signed by an army reserve general.

The Shin Bet said Abu Selmia had passed a risk assessment, "compared to other detainees." It said the government had decided against its advice to release detainees determined to be less of a threat to free up space.

Israel launched its offensive after Hamas' Oct. 7 attack, in which Palestinian militants killed some 1,200 people across southern Israel and took another 250 hostage. In its campaign, Israel has killed at least 37,900 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not say how many were civilians or fighters.

Magdy reported from Cairo and Frankel from Jerusalem. Associated Press correspondent Edith M. Lederer at the United Nations contributed.

Follow AP's coverage of the war in Gaza at <https://apnews.com/hub/israel-hamas-war>

Haiti's gang violence has displaced 300,000 children, the UN says

By CORAL MURPHY MARCOS Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Gang violence in Haiti has displaced more than 300,000 children since March, the U.N. children's agency said Tuesday as the Caribbean country struggles to curb killings and kidnappings.

Children are more than half of the nearly 580,000 people who have become homeless in the last four months. The spike in violence began in late February after a series of coordinated attacks on key government infrastructure eventually led Prime Minister Ariel Henry to resign in April.

"The humanitarian catastrophe unfolding before our eyes is taking a devastating toll on children," Catherine Russell, UNICEF's executive director, said in a statement. "Displaced children are in desperate need of a safe and protective environment, and increased support and funding from the international community."

Gangs now control at least 80% of the capital Port-au-Prince and the key roads leading in and out of it, with more than 2,500 people killed or injured across the country in the first three months of the year, according to the U.N.

Many children are living in makeshift shelters, including schools that are in poor hygienic conditions,

placing them at risk of disease. School closures are also leading to a higher dropout rate.

The agency said children in Haiti are being forced to join violent gangs to survive as they often lack access to food, health care, clean water and sanitation. Displaced children and teenagers in Haiti also face a higher risk of sexual assault, exploitation, abuse and family separation, according to UNICEF.

The announcement comes days after hundreds of Kenyans arrived in Haiti to help rescue the country from the tight hold of armed gangs. The deployment received mixed reactions after a U.N. peacekeeping mission years ago introduced cholera in the country and was tainted with sexual allegations.

On Monday, U.S. Deputy National Security Adviser Jonathan Finer met with Haitian Prime Minister Garry Conille to discuss the initial deployment of the U.N.-backed mission to Haiti. Finer reminded Conille of the United States' strong support for accountability and oversight mechanisms as part of mission.

Haiti is also bracing for a strong hurricane season, which started earlier than usual. A tropical storm watch was in effect for Haiti's southern coast as Hurricane Beryl moved into the Caribbean Sea.

Highlights from Supreme Court term: Rulings on Trump, regulation, abortion, guns and homelessness

By MARK SHERMAN and LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court ended its term by ruling for the first time that former presidents have broad immunity from prosecution, a decision that almost certainly means Donald Trump won't stand trial before the November election. That closely watched ruling, which drew sharp dissent from the minority justices, was among a cluster of consequential opinions handed down in the court's busy final few weeks.

Here's a look at the major cases the court decided this year.

Presidential immunity

Ruled for the first time that former presidents have broad immunity from prosecution in a decision that extends the delay in Donald Trump's trial in Washington on charges of election interference and all but rules out a trial before the November election. The justices returned the case to U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan, who would preside over a trial. She must now sort out what is left of special counsel Jack Smith's indictment of the former president.

Majority: Chief Justice John Roberts, Justice Clarence Thomas, Justice Samuel Alito, Justice Neil Gorsuch, Justice Brett Kavanaugh, Justice Amy Coney Barrett

Dissent: Justice Sonia Sotomayor, Justice Elena Kagan, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson

Insurrection clause

Ruled unanimously that states cannot invoke the post-Civil War "insurrection clause" to keep candidates for president and Congress off the ballot. The justices reversed a ruling by the Colorado Supreme Court finding that former President Donald Trump, as part of his effort to overturn his election loss in 2020, intentionally organized and incited the crowd of supporters who violently attacked the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, to prevent the peaceful transfer of power.

Majority (unsigned opinion): Roberts, Thomas, Alito, Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, Barrett (in part)

Concurring in judgment: Sotomayor, Kagan, Jackson, Barrett

Jan. 6

Narrowed a federal obstruction charge that has been used against hundreds of people who took part in the violent assault on the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, as well as Trump. The court ruled in the case of a former Pennsylvania police officer and returned it to a lower court to determine if the obstruction charge, enacted in 2002 and meant to discourage tampering with documents sought in investigations, can be used against him. The decision also could have implications for Trump's prosecution on election interference charges.

Majority: Roberts, Thomas, Alito, Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, Jackson

Dissent: Barrett, Sotomayor, Kagan

Abortion pill

Unanimously threw out a legal challenge from anti-abortion doctors to the FDA's initial approval of

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mifepristone in 2000 and more recent decisions easing access to the medication, one of two pills used in medication abortions. The justices determined that the doctors did not have the legal right, or standing, to sue, reversing an appellate ruling that would have rolled back some FDA decisions that make mifepristone easier to obtain, including receiving the drug by mail, and allow it to be used for longer in pregnancy.

Majority: Kavanaugh, Roberts, Thomas, Alito, Sotomayor, Kagan, Gorsuch, Barrett, Jackson
Chevron

Overtaken a 40-year-old decision that has been cited thousands of times in federal court cases and used to uphold regulations on the environment, public health, workplace safety and consumer protections. The court decision colloquially known as Chevron, long targeted by conservative and business interests, called on judges to defer to federal regulators when the words of a statute are not crystal clear. The Supreme Court held that judges, not regulators, should decide the meaning of federal laws.

Majority: Roberts, Thomas, Alito, Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, Barrett

Dissent: Kagan, Sotomayor, Jackson

Guns

Upheld a 1994 law intended to protect victims of domestic violence. The law prohibits people who are under domestic violence restraining orders from having guns. The 8-1 decision reversed an appellate ruling striking down the law based on the Supreme Court's 2022 decision expanding gun rights.

Majority: Roberts, Alito, Sotomayor, Kagan, Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, Barrett, Jackson

Dissent: Thomas

Wealth tax

Upheld a tax on foreign income that was enacted by a Republican-controlled Congress and signed into law by Trump. By a 7-2 vote, the justices rejected an effort by conservative and business interests to strike down the tax as a violation of the Constitution, which might have doomed a much-discussed but never-enacted wealth tax on billionaires.

Majority: Kavanaugh, Roberts, Sotomayor, Kagan, Jackson

Concurring in judgment: Barrett, Alito

Dissent: Thomas, Gorsuch

Redistricting

Preserved a Republican-held South Carolina congressional district in a 6-3 decision, reversing a lower court ruling that found the state Legislature discriminated against Black voters. Dissenting liberal justices warned the court was insulating states from claims of unconstitutional racial gerrymandering. State lawmakers moved 30,000 Black residents out of the district to strengthen Rep. Nancy Mace's hold on it.

Majority: Alito, Roberts, Thomas, Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, Barrett

Dissent: Kagan, Sotomayor, Jackson

Bump stocks

Struck down a ban on bump stocks, rapid-fire gun accessories used in the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history. The 6-3 decision found that the Trump administration overstepped when it changed course from predecessors and banned bump stocks, which allow a rate of fire comparable to machine guns. In a dissent, liberal justices warned the decision could have "deadly consequences."

Majority: Thomas, Roberts, Alito, Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, Barrett

Dissent: Sotomayor, Kagan, Jackson

Consumer Protection

Upheld the method of funding for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which does not depend on yearly appropriations from Congress. By a 7-2 vote, the court reversed a ruling by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that found the funding structure violated the Constitution.

Majority: Thomas, Roberts, Sotomayor, Kagan, Kavanaugh, Barrett, Jackson

Dissent: Alito, Gorsuch

NRA and free speech

The court unanimously cleared the way for the National Rifle Association to sue a former New York state official. Backed in part by the Biden administration and represented by the ACLU, the gun-rights group said

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Maria Vullo pressured companies to blacklist it following the mass shooting at a high school in Parkland, Florida. The opinion said the First Amendment prohibits government officials from using their power to punish or suppress speech.

Majority: Sotomayor, Thomas, Roberts, Alito, Kagan, Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, Barrett, Jackson
Purdue Pharma

By a 5-4 vote, rejected a nationwide settlement with OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma that would have allocated billions of dollars to combat the opioid epidemic, but also provided a legal shield for members of the Sackler family who own the company. The settlement had been on hold since last summer after the Supreme Court agreed to weigh in.

Majority: Gorsuch, Thomas, Alito, Barrett, Jackson
Dissent: Kavanaugh, Roberts, Sotomayor, Kagan

Air pollution

Voted 5-4 to pause the Environmental Protection Agency's air pollution-fighting "good neighbor" plan while legal challenges continue, in response to a plea from Republican-led, energy-producing states and the steel industry.

Majority: Gorsuch, Roberts, Thomas, Alito, Kavanaugh
Dissent: Barrett, Sotomayor, Kagan, Jackson

SEC

Ruled 6-3 that people facing civil fraud complaints from the Securities and Exchange Commission have the right to a jury trial in federal court, rather than be limited to an in-house proceeding. The decision stripped the agency of a major tool in fighting securities fraud and could have far-reaching effects on other regulatory agencies.

Majority: Roberts, Thomas, Alito, Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, Barrett

Dissent: Sotomayor, Kagan, Jackson

Social media and governmental coercion

Threw out a lawsuit by Republican-led states that claimed federal officials unconstitutionally coerced social media platforms to take down controversial social media posts on topics including COVID-19 and election security. The court voted 6-3 that the states and other parties had no legal right, or standing, to sue over their claim that the government leaned on the platforms to limit conservative points of view.

Majority: Barrett, Roberts, Sotomayor, Kagan, Kavanaugh, Jackson

Dissent: Alito, Thomas, Gorsuch

Social media and state regulation

In a limited ruling, the court kept on hold social media laws in Texas and Florida that would limit how Facebook, TikTok, X, YouTube and other social media platforms regulate content posted by their users. But the court's majority recognized that the platforms are much like newspapers and have a constitutional right to make choices about what to include and exclude from their space. The cases will continue in federal appeals courts: One court had upheld the Texas' law; another found the Florida law probably is unconstitutional.

Majority: Kagan, Roberts, Sotomayor, Kavanaugh, Barrett, Jackson

Concurring in the judgment: Alito, Thomas, Gorsuch

Emergency abortions

The Supreme Court cleared the way for Idaho hospitals to provide emergency abortions, for now. In a limited order, the court found it should not have gotten involved in the case over Idaho's strict abortion ban so quickly. By a 6-3 vote it reinstated a lower court order that had allowed hospitals in the state to perform emergency abortions to protect a pregnant patient's health.

Majority: Roberts, Sotomayor, Kagan, Kavanaugh, Barrett, Jackson

Dissent: Alito, Thomas, Gorsuch

Homelessness

The justices found that cities can enforce bans on homeless people sleeping outside in public places.

The majority found such laws don't violate the constitutional prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment when shelter space is lacking. The opinion overturned an appeals court ruling that applied to nine states in the West, including California, which is home to one-third of the nation's homeless population.

Majority: Gorsuch, Thomas, Alito, Roberts, Kavanaugh, Barrett

Dissent: Sotomayor, Kagan, Jackson

Klay Thompson is leaving the Warriors and will join the Mavericks, AP sources say

By SCHUYLER DIXON and TIM REYNOLDS AP Sports Writers

DALLAS (AP) — Klay Thompson has taken off his Golden State jersey for the last time. And the Warriors say they're going to retire it to commemorate his time with them.

Thompson is moving on from the Warriors, with the four-time league champion agreeing to join the Western Conference champion Dallas Mavericks and change franchises for the first time in his 13-year NBA career, two people with knowledge of the decision said Monday.

ESPN and The Athletic first reported the multiteam deal which, as currently constructed, will be executed as the sign-and-trade of a three-year, \$50 million contract involving the Warriors, Mavericks and Charlotte Hornets, said the people, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the agreement has not been announced.

Without mentioning Dallas — by league rule, they technically cannot acknowledge any part of the trade yet — the Warriors released a statement in tribute to Thompson on Monday night, saying they "can't overstate Klay Thompson's incredible and legendary contributions" to the team and that "the amount of joy and happiness that Klay provided Warriors fans ... cannot be minimized."

"His penchant for delivering in pressurized situations on the biggest stage, including many Game 6 heroics, has helped define a career," the Warriors said. "Klay's legacy will live on forever and we look forward to the day we can retire his #11 jersey at Chase Center, where he will join a host of Warriors immortals, including those who helped shape this recent dynasty — himself included."

Thompson is sixth on the NBA's all-time 3-pointers made list with 2,481, behind Reggie Miller (2,560), Damian Lillard (2,607), James Harden (2,940), Ray Allen (2,973) and Thompson's now-former "Splash Brother" with the Warriors, Stephen Curry, and his 3,747 career makes from beyond the arc.

There were indications last season that Thompson and the Warriors might be headed toward a breakup.

Thompson came off the bench 14 times — not much in the grand scheme of things considering he played 77 games, but those were his first appearances as a reserve since his rookie season of 2011-12. He shot 38.7% from 3-point range, the second-worst of his career. He averaged 17.9 points, the third-lowest of his career. He wasn't always in the finishing lineup and the season — and his Warriors career — ended with a 0-for-10 shooting performance against Sacramento in a play-in tournament loss.

Thompson — a five-time All-Star and two-time All-NBA selection who missed two entire seasons with injuries — took a long look around the court after that game, soaking in the scene just in case it would be his final time playing with the Warriors. Turns out, it was. And now he'll join a Dallas team that just went to the NBA Finals as a shooter brought in to help Luka Doncic and Kyrie Irving.

"We thank Klay for his contributions and wish him the best as another chapter in his journey is written," the Warriors said.

The Hornets were planning to acquire guard Josh Green as part of the deal, giving up two second-round draft picks. The 15th overall pick in the 2020 draft, Green has spent all four of his NBA seasons with the Mavericks and averaged 8.2 points, 3.2 rebounds and 2.3 assists this past season.

The league's moratorium on signings and most other offseason movement will be lifted on Saturday.

Maxey, Harris, Hartenstein land deals

They were all undervalued on some level when they entered the NBA. None was a lottery pick, some weren't even first-round picks and they didn't have the label of can't-miss prospects.

That was then. Monday was a very different story for Tyrese Maxey, Derrick White, Isaiah Hartenstein,

Tobias Harris, Isaiah Joe and Aaron Wiggins — who are about to sign deals worth a combined \$565 million.

All were confirmed to the AP by people with knowledge of the negotiations for the players involved.

Maxey, an All-Star this past season, agreed in principle to a five-year, \$204 million extension that keeps him with the Philadelphia 76ers and set to play alongside Joel Embiid and soon-to-be-signed Paul George.

The 76ers, like the rest of the league, are chasing the Boston Celtics, who made a big move by agreeing with guard Derrick White on a four-year extension worth around \$125 million. White averaged 15.2 points and 5.2 assists for the NBA champions this past season.

Hartenstein, a center coming off a breakout year, is leaving New York for Oklahoma City on an \$87 million, three-year deal that includes an option. The Thunder — the No. 1 seed in the Western Conference this past season — also finalized extensions with Joe (\$48 million) and Wiggins (\$47 million).

And Harris is going to Detroit on a two-year deal worth \$52 million, a move first reported by ESPN and one that will give the young Pistons an experienced veteran in the room as they continue their rebuild under newly hired coach J.B. Bickerstaff.

Reynolds reported from Miami. AP Sports Writers Dan Gelston in Philadelphia and Steve Reed in Charlotte, North Carolina, contributed to this report.

AP NBA: <https://apnews.com/hub/nba>

Iranian presidential candidates accuse each other of having no plan or experience ahead of runoff

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's presidential candidates on Monday accused each other of having no solution for the country's problems ahead of Friday's runoff election aimed at choosing a successor for the late President Ebrahim Raisi, who died last month in a helicopter crash.

During a more than two-hour debate on public TV, reformist candidate Masoud Pezeshkian attacked his competitor, Saeed Jalili, a hard-line former nuclear negotiator, for his lack of experience, saying: "Tell me, what single company have you ever managed to make you capable of running the country?"

Jalili, who is known as the "Living Martyr" after losing a leg in the 1980s Iran-Iraq war and is famous among Western diplomats for his haranguing lectures and hard-line stances, defended himself highlighting his career and several positions held, including that of top nuclear negotiator.

Pezeshkian further questioned his opponent on what plans he would have for reaching a nuclear deal, with Jalili responding he would approach it "based on strength not weakness," without providing details.

Jalili accused Pezeshkian of having no plans for managing the country, saying his presidency would drive the country to a "backward position," as it was under relatively moderate former President Hassan Rouhani (2013-2021). Rouhani struck a nuclear deal with world powers that capped Iran's uranium enrichment in return to lifting sanctions but later, in 2018, President Trump pulled the U.S. out from the landmark deal abruptly restoring harsh sanctions on Iran.

Jalili said that "with the support of people," Iran would achieve an economic growth of 8% a year, a promise Pezeshkian mocked, saying authorities should be allowed to "execute him if he failed" to deliver on it.

Iran must implement "a dynamic foreign policy" if it wants to have a successful economy, Jalili said, adding that it should not be limited to those nations that it has a problem with — a reference to the U.S. and the western world. Instead, he said, "Iran should look to the other 200 nations in the world where "foreign relations should be improved."

Pezeshkian said his foreign policy will be based on "engagement with the world" including engaging in "negotiations for lifting sanctions."

Both sides promised to address the problems of the country's poor, workers, women, ethnic groups and religious minorities, and vowed to provide better and faster internet — a plea to a younger generation that showed apathy during Friday's vote.

Pezeshkian and Jalili also said the low turnout in the first round — the lowest-ever poll turnout in the

Islamic Republic's history — should be probed.

"It is not acceptable that some 60 percent (of voters) did not cast a ballot," said Pezeshkian. The candidates will have their second and last debate Tuesday.

Follow the AP's coverage of global elections at: <https://apnews.com/hub/global-elections/>

Ahead of election, Venezuela's Maduro says he has agreed to resume negotiations with United States

By REGINA GARCIA CANO Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuela's government plans to resume negotiations with the U.S. government this week, President Nicolás Maduro announced Monday, less than a month before a highly anticipated election in which he and his party are facing their toughest challenge in decades.

Maduro, who is seeking a third term, wants the U.S. government to lift crippling economic sanctions that were imposed over the last decade in an effort to topple him. He characterized the dialogue as "urgent" during his weekly TV show.

The Biden administration did not immediately respond to a request for comment from The Associated Press.

"I have received the proposal during two continuous months from the United States government to re-establish talks and direct dialogue," Maduro said. "After thinking about it for two months, I have accepted, and next Wednesday, talks will restart with the United States government to comply with the agreements signed in Qatar and to reestablish the terms of the urgent dialogue."

Maduro's government had held parallel talks with the Biden administration and with the U.S.-backed Unitary Platform opposition coalition. But they were suspended as he reneged on promises, including to improve conditions ahead of the election, and his government accused the U.S. of not fulfilling portions of agreements.

Some negotiations with the U.S. happened in Qatar. It was not immediately clear where the latest round of dialogue will take place.

The July 28 election is shaping up to be the biggest challenge the ruling United Socialist Party of Venezuela has faced in its 25-year dominance that began when the fiery Hugo Chávez became president. The party wants to maintain its absolute government control for six more years, but its base is divided, diminished and disappointed after experiencing a complex social, economic and political crisis for 11 years — the entirety of Maduro's presidency.

Ten candidates, including Maduro, will be on the ballot. The only contender with a real chance of defeating the president is Edmundo González Urrutia, who represents the opposition's Unitary Platform coalition.

Last year, Maduro entered into an agreement with the opposition coalition to work toward improving conditions for a free and fair election. But he changed course as the meteoric rise of opposition leader Maria Corina Machado turned into a real threat to his reelection prospects.

The U.S. granted Maduro's government relief from sanctions on its state-run oil, gas and mining sectors after he entered into the agreement with the opposition. But the Biden administration ended the relief as Maduro's ruling party continued to use its control over all government institutions to tilt the balance in his favor, including by blocking Machado's candidacy.

Machado's chosen substitute was barred from the ballot, too. She and the coalition are now backing González, a former diplomat.

After Supreme Court immunity ruling, Biden draws sharp contrast with Trump on obeying rule of law

By COLLEEN LONG and WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden warned Monday that a Supreme Court ruling granting presidents broad immunity from prosecution would make an unchecked Republican Donald Trump “more emboldened to do whatever he wants” if he regains the White House in November’s election.

Biden, under intense pressure after his disastrous debate performance against Trump last week, urged Americans to think carefully about their election decision and signaled he had no intention of dropping out of the race.

Criticizing the decision by the court’s conservative majority — which all but guarantees Trump will not face trial in Washington ahead of the November election over his actions during the violent riot on Jan. 6, 2021 — Biden said it now fell to the American people “to do what the courts should have been willing to do but will not.

“The American people have to render judgment about Donald Trump’s behavior.”

Biden’s efforts to reset his campaign following the debate, which spooked donors and stirred up major Democratic anxiety, has been looking a lot like his past attempts to keep the focus squarely on Trump’s misdeeds and shortcomings. During his brief remarks Monday, he made no mention of last week’s debate or his performance, and did not take questions, delivering an unusually political message from the White House.

“I know I will respect the limits of presidential power as I have for the three-and-a-half years, but any president, including Donald Trump, will now be free to ignore the law,” Biden said.

Biden seemed relaxed and confident, striking a clear and crisp tone and looking tanned and rested — all of which was in stark contrast to his often halting performance during last week’s debate, when his face was notably pale. The president also had the benefit of a teleprompter for his remarks about the court, something he didn’t have while facing off with Trump.

There have been private discussions in Biden’s camp on what more the president could do to counteract what Americans saw during the debate, when he gave convoluted answers, trailed off at times, occasionally stared blankly and sounded raspy-voiced. The talks have included questions about whether Biden should be seen more in public through town-hall-style events or interviews and press conferences, which he has generally avoided during his time in office.

But most in his orbit are waiting on more substantial polling to come back in order to assess how bad the damage was before altering course in any substantial way. That’s according to four Biden advisers who were not authorized to speak publicly about internal discussions and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Biden’s team may not alter anything at all. Many think — or hope — the fraught moment will pass, particularly after Biden’s family encouraged him to stay in the race and keep fighting during a huddle at Camp David on Sunday.

Campaign officials said Monday they had nothing to announce on new events. They said Biden would be campaigning as he has been, hitting battleground states as he has already been doing for months.

An ad released Monday was called “I Know” using clips from Biden’s post-debate North Carolina rally, where he said, “When you get knocked down, you get back up.”

Quentin Fulks, Biden’s principal deputy campaign manager, put the focus on Trump in a call with reporters, saying, “When you do see President Biden out on the trail, he will be talking about the reasons why Americans should be scared of Donald Trump, as he has been for months.”

Even before the debate, the age of the 81-year-old Democratic president had been a liability with voters, and the prime-time faceoff put the issue front-and-center before perhaps the largest audience he will have in the four months until Election Day. CNN, which held the debate, said more than 51 million people watched.

“I think his age was baked in, to a large degree, and I know he can do better than he did on Thurs-

day night. I expected to see better. I'm not sure other voters did," said Jennifer Palmieri, a White House communications director during the Obama administration and a spokesperson for Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign.

She added that, tactically, the campaign has responded by promoting Biden's strong speech in North Carolina on Friday and by continuing to post strong fundraising numbers. Palmieri also said Biden might also want to sit for more interviews to continue to show that the debate was an anomaly.

"Their focus needs to be on getting him in front of voters that matter the most, and more interviews should be part of that. Don't be like Trump in your own little universe," she said. "For now, we're early, but what they're doing is working."

There's a sense that voters may now be watching Biden more closely for signs that show one way or another whether his debate debacle was a blip — whether he is, as he says, capable of doing the job.

Alan Kessler, a lawyer and member of the Biden campaign's national finance team, has spent days calming jittery donors, telling them what he says he has personally witnessed when he's seen the president — that he's "lucid, strong as he's always been."

"To the extent it's necessary, I'm reassuring people," Kessler said.

Biden expressed interest in doing at least one interview. At a Saturday fundraiser in East Hampton, New York, Biden said he had spoken with the broadcaster Howard Stern, who had interviewed him in April, where he answered open-ended questions mostly about his early years.

The president told the crowd he was ready for another sit-down with Stern, saying: "I had a great time on his show. And I'm actually going to take a chance in going back."

Meanwhile, senior Biden campaign officials, including Fulks, Jen O'Malley Dillon and others, kept up damage control, holding a Monday evening call with roughly 500 members of the campaign's National Finance Committee and other donors, according to a person familiar with the private call who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity to discuss it.

They downplayed any potential fallout from the debate, blamed the media for concerns over his popularity and reiterated that Biden was fit to serve. But the call did little to quell concerns from many of the backers, the person said.

Campaign officials have said there was no discussion "whatsoever" of Biden exiting the race nor of any staff shakeups following the debate.

The window of opportunity for that is shrinking anyway. The Democratic National Committee has announced that it will use a virtual roll call to formally make him the nominee before the convention begins in Chicago on Aug. 19. But when that will happen and what it will look like is still unclear.

Associated Press Writers Josh Boak, Michael Rubinkam in Scranton, Pa., and Thomas Beaumont in Des Moines, Iowa contributed to this report.

Supreme Court rules ex-presidents have broad immunity, dimming chance of a pre-election Trump trial

By MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Monday ruled for the first time that former presidents have broad immunity from prosecution, extending the delay in the Washington criminal case against Donald Trump on charges he plotted to overturn his 2020 presidential election loss and all but ending prospects the former president could be tried before the November election.

In a historic 6-3 ruling, the court's conservative majority, including the three justices appointed by Trump, narrowed the case against him and returned it to the trial court to determine what is left of special counsel Jack Smith's indictment.

Trump celebrated a "BIG WIN" on X. President Joe Biden said the justices set "a dangerous precedent (that) undermines the rule of this nation."

The ruling reflected a muscular view of presidential power, and left dissenting judges to criticize it as

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undermining a core democratic principle that no person is above the law.

The court's decision highlighted how the justices have been thrust into an impactful role in the November presidential election. Earlier, they had rejected efforts to bar him from the ballot because of his actions following the 2020 election. The court last week also limited an obstruction charge faced by Trump and used against hundreds of his supporters who stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. The split among the justices also in many ways mirrored the political divide in the country.

"Under our constitutional structure of separated powers, the nature of presidential power entitles a former president to absolute immunity from criminal prosecution for actions within his conclusive and preclusive constitutional authority," Chief Justice John Roberts wrote for the court. "And he is entitled to at least presumptive immunity from prosecution for all his official acts. There is no immunity for unofficial acts."

The chief justice insisted that the president "is not above the law." But in a fiery dissent for the court's three liberals, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote, "In every use of official power, the President is now a king above the law."

Reading from her opinion in the courtroom, Sotomayor said, "Because our Constitution does not shield a former president from answering for criminal and treasonous acts, I dissent." Sotomayor said the decision "makes a mockery of the principle, foundational to our Constitution and system of government, that no man is above the law."

The protection afforded presidents by the court, she said, "is just as bad as it sounds, and it is baseless."

Trump posted in all capital letters on his social media network shortly after the decision was released: "BIG WIN FOR OUR CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRACY. PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN!"

Biden, in evening remarks from the White House, cited accepted restraints on presidential power all the way back to George Washington and bemoaned that "for all practical purposes, today's decision almost certainly means that there are virtually no limits on what a president can do."

Smith's office declined to comment on the ruling.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer denounced the ruling as "a disgraceful decision," made with the help of the three justices that Trump appointed.

"It undermines SCOTUS's credibility and suggests political influence trumps all in our courts today," the New York Democrat said on X.

The justices knocked out one aspect of the indictment. The opinion found Trump is "absolutely immune" from prosecution for alleged conduct involving discussions with the Justice Department.

Trump is also "at least presumptively immune" from allegations that he tried to pressure Vice President Mike Pence to reject certification of Democrat Joe Biden's electoral vote win on Jan. 6, 2021. Prosecutors can try to make the case that Trump's pressure on Pence still can be part of the case against him, Roberts wrote.

The court directed a fact-finding analysis on one of the more striking allegations in the indictment -- that Trump participated in a scheme to enlist fake electors in battleground states won by Biden who would falsely assert that Trump had won. Both sides had dramatically different interpretations as to whether that effort could be construed as official, and the conservative justices said determining which side is correct would require additional analysis at the trial court level.

Roberts' opinion further restricted prosecutors by prohibiting them from using any official acts as evidence in trying to prove a president's unofficial actions violated the law. One example not relevant to this case but which came up in arguments was the hypothetical payment of a bribe in return for an ambassadorial appointment.

Under Monday's decision, a former president could be prosecuted for accepting a bribe, but prosecutors could not mention the official act, the appointment, in their case.

Justice Amy Coney Barrett, who joined the rest of Roberts' opinion, parted company on this point. "The Constitution does not require blinding juries to the circumstances surrounding conduct for which Presidents can be held liable," Barrett wrote.

She also described as unnecessary the analysis of the fake electors claim. "I see no plausible argument for barring prosecution of that alleged conduct," Barrett wrote.

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The work of figuring out how to proceed will fall to U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan, who would preside over Trump's trial.

Trump still could face a trial, said Notre Dame law professor Derek Muller. "But the fact remains that it is almost impossible to happen before the election."

David Becker, an election law expert and the executive director of the nonprofit Center for Election Innovation and Research, called the breadth of immunity granted to Trump "incredibly broad" and "deeply disturbing."

"Almost anything that a president does with the executive branch is characterized as an official act," he said on a call with reporters following the ruling. He said that "for any unscrupulous individual holding the seat of the Oval Office who might lose an election, the way I read this opinion is it could be a roadmap for them seeking to stay in power."

The ruling was the last of the term, and it came more than two months after the court heard arguments, far slower than in other epic high court cases involving the presidency, including the Watergate tapes case.

The Republican former president has denied doing anything wrong and has said this prosecution and three others are politically motivated to try to keep him from returning to the White House.

In May, Trump became the first former president to be convicted of a felony, in a New York court. He was found guilty of falsifying business records to cover up a hush money payment made during the 2016 presidential election to a porn actor who says she had sex with him, which he denies. After Monday's ruling, Trump's lawyers asked the New York judge who presided over that trial to set aside his conviction and delay his sentencing. He still faces three other indictments.

Smith is leading the two federal inquiries of the former president, both of which have led to criminal charges. The Washington case focuses on Trump's alleged efforts to overturn the 2020 election after he lost to Biden. The case in Florida revolves around the mishandling of classified documents. A separate case, in Georgia, also turns on Trump's actions after his defeat in 2020.

If Trump's Washington trial does not take place before the 2024 election and he is not given another four years in the White House, he presumably would stand trial soon thereafter.

But if he wins, he could appoint an attorney general who would seek the dismissal of this case and the other federal prosecution he faces. He could also attempt to pardon himself if he reclaims the White House. He could not pardon himself for the conviction in state court in New York.

The Supreme Court that heard the case included three justices appointed by Trump — Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Barrett — and two justices who opted not to step aside after questions were raised about their impartiality.

Thomas' wife, Ginni, attended the rally near the White House where Trump spoke on Jan. 6, 2021, though she did not go the Capitol when a mob of Trump supporters attacked it soon after. Following the 2020 election, she called the outcome a "heist" and exchanged messages with White House chief of staff Mark Meadows, urging him to stand firm with Trump as he falsely claimed that there was widespread election fraud.

Justice Samuel Alito said there was no reason for him to step aside from the cases following reports by The New York Times that said flags similar to those carried by the Jan. 6 rioters flew above his homes in Virginia and on the New Jersey shore. His wife, Martha-Ann Alito, was responsible for flying both the inverted American flag in January 2021 and the "Appeal to Heaven" banner in the summer of 2023, he said in letters to Democratic lawmakers responding to their recusal demands.

Before the Supreme Court got involved, a trial judge and a three-judge appellate panel had ruled unanimously that Trump could be prosecuted for actions undertaken while in the White House and in the run-up to Jan. 6.

Chutkan ruled against Trump's immunity claim in December. In her ruling, Chutkan said the office of the president "does not confer a lifelong 'get-out-of-jail-free' pass."

Associated Press writers Lindsay Whitehurst, Alanna Durkin Richer, Eric Tucker, Stephen Groves, Farnoush Amiri, Michelle Price and Ali Swenson contributed to this report.

Trump seeks to set aside New York hush money verdict hours after Supreme Court ruling

By MICHAEL R. SISAK and JAKE OFFENHARTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump's lawyers on Monday asked the New York judge who presided over his hush money trial to set aside his conviction and delay his sentencing, scheduled for next week.

The letter to Judge Juan M. Merchan cited the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling earlier Monday and asked the judge to delay Trump's sentencing while he weighs the high court's decision and how it could influence the New York case, according to the letter obtained by The Associated Press.

The lawyers argue that the Supreme Court's decision confirmed a position the defense raised earlier in the case that prosecutors should have been precluded from introducing some evidence they said constituted official presidential acts, according to the letter.

In prior court filings, Trump contended he is immune from prosecution for conduct alleged to involve official acts during his tenure in office. His lawyers did not raise that as a defense in the hush money case, but they argued that some evidence — including Trump's social media posts about former lawyer Michael Cohen — comes from his time as president and should have been excluded from the trial because of immunity protections.

The Manhattan district attorney's office declined comment Monday night.

The Supreme Court on Monday ruled for the first time that former presidents have broad immunity from prosecution, extending the delay in the Washington criminal case against Trump on charges he plotted to overturn his 2020 presidential election loss.

Trump was convicted in New York of 34 counts of falsifying business records, arising from what prosecutors said was an attempt to cover up a hush money payment just before the 2016 presidential election. He is scheduled to be sentenced in the hush money case on July 11.

Merchan instituted a policy in the run-up to the trial requiring both sides to send him a one-page letter summarizing their arguments before making longer court filings. He said he did that to better manage the docket, so he was not inundated with voluminous paperwork.

In denying Trump's bid to move the trial from New York state court to federal court last year, a federal judge found that the allegations at the center of the case pertained to Trump's personal life, and do not "reflect in any way the color of the President's official duties."

"The evidence overwhelmingly suggests that the matter was a purely a personal item of the President — a cover-up of an embarrassing event," U.S. District Judge Alvin K. Hellerstein wrote in the ruling.

Sisak contributed from Fort Pierce, Florida.

What to know about the Supreme Court immunity ruling in Trump's 2020 election interference case

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER, ERIC TUCKER and MICHAEL KUNZELMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court's ruling Monday in former President Donald Trump's 2020 election interference case makes it all but certain that the Republican will not face trial in Washington ahead of the November election.

The Supreme Court did not dismiss — as Trump had wanted — the indictment alleging he illegally schemed to cling to power after he lost to President Joe Biden. But the ruling still amounts to a major victory for the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, whose legal strategy has focused on delaying the proceedings until after the election.

The timing of the trial matters because if Trump defeats Biden, he could appoint an attorney general who would seek the dismissal of this case and the other federal prosecutions he faces. Or Trump could potentially order a pardon for himself.

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Trump posted in all capital letters on his social media network shortly after the decision was released: "BIG WIN FOR OUR CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRACY. PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN!"

In remarks Monday evening, Biden said the court had done a "terrible disservice" to the American people, who he says deserved to know the outcome of the case before they head to the polls.

"The American people will have to render a judgment about Donald Trump's behavior," Biden said. "The American people must decide whether Trump's assault on our democracy on Jan. 6 makes him unfit for public office."

Here's a look at the ruling and what comes next:

THE OPINION

The court's conservative majority said former presidents have absolute immunity from prosecution for official acts that fall within their "exclusive sphere of constitutional authority" and are presumptively entitled to immunity for all official acts. They do not enjoy immunity for unofficial, or private, actions.

The ruling means that special counsel Jack Smith cannot proceed with significant allegations in the indictment — or must at least defend their use in future proceedings before the trial judge.

The justices, for instance, wiped out Smith's use of allegations that Trump tried to use the investigative power of the Justice Department to undo the election results, holding that his communications with agency officials is plainly protected from prosecution.

The justices sent the case back to U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan, who must now "carefully analyze" whether other allegations involve official conduct for which the president would be immune from prosecution.

Among the issues for further analysis is Trump's relentless badgering of then-Vice President Mike Pence to not certify the electoral votes on Jan. 6, 2021. The justices said it was "ultimately the Government's burden to rebut the presumption of immunity" in Trump's interactions with Pence.

The order also directed additional analysis on the various posts on X, then known as Twitter, that Trump made — as well as a speech he delivered to supporters — in the run-up to the riot at the U.S. Capitol. Determining whether that communication represents official versus unofficial acts, the justices said, "may depend on the content and context of each" and thus needs more scrutiny.

THE FAKE ELECTORS SCHEME

The justices required fresh fact-finding on one of the more stunning allegations in the indictment — that Trump had participated in a scheme orchestrated by allies to enlist slates of fraudulent electors in battleground states won by Biden who would falsely attest that Trump had won in those states.

The Trump team had argued that the selection of alternate electors was in keeping with Trump's presidential interest in the integrity and proper administration of the federal elections and cited as precedent an episode he said took place in the disputed election in 1876.

The Smith team, by contrast, portrayed the scheme as a purely private action that implicated no presidential responsibility.

The conservative justices in their majority opinion didn't answer the question as to which side was right, instead saying that "determining whose characterization may be correct, and with respect to which conduct, requires a close analysis of the indictment's extensive and interrelated allegations."

Unlike Trump's interactions with the Justice Department, the justices said, "this alleged conduct cannot be neatly categorized as falling within a particular Presidential function. The necessary analysis is instead fact specific, requiring assessment of numerous alleged interactions with a wide variety of state officials and private persons."

THE DISSENTERS

The three liberal justices — Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson — sharply criticized the majority's opinion in scathing dissents. Sotomayor gave a dramatic speech as she read her dissent from the bench, at times shaking her head and gritting her teeth as she said the conservative majority wrongly insulated the U.S. president as "a king above the law."

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"Ironic isn't it? The man in charge of enforcing laws can now just break them," Sotomayor said.

The dissenting justices said the majority decision makes presidents immune from prosecution for acts such as ordering Navy seals to assassinate a political rival, organizing a military coup to hold onto power or accepting a bribe in exchange for a pardon.

"Even if these nightmare scenarios never play out, and I pray they never do, the damage has been done. The relationship between the President and the people he serves has shifted irrevocably. In every use of official power, the President is now a king above the law," Sotomayor wrote.

In a separate dissenting opinion, Jackson said the majority's ruling "breaks new and dangerous ground."

"Stated simply: The Court has now declared for the first time in history that the most powerful official in the United States can (under circumstances yet to be fully determined) become a law unto himself," Jackson wrote.

The majority opinion accused the liberal justices of "fear mongering" and striking a "tone of chilling doom that is wholly disproportionate to what the court actually does today."

WHAT COMES NEXT

The case will now go back to Chutkan. The trial was supposed to have begun in March, but the case has been on hold since December to allow Trump to pursue his appeal. Chutkan had indicated at that time she would likely give the two sides at least three months to get ready for trial once the case returns to her court.

That had left the door open to the case potentially going to trial before the election if the Supreme Court — like the lower courts — had ruled that Trump was not immune from prosecution.

But the Supreme Court's ruling that Chutkan must conduct further analysis is expected tie the case up for months with legal wrangling over whether the actions in the indictment were official or unofficial.

TRUMP'S OTHER CASES

Trump was convicted in May of 34 felony counts in his hush money trial in New York and is scheduled to be sentenced on July 11. The falsifying business records charges are punishable by up to four years behind bars, but there's no guarantee Trump will get prison time. Other possibilities include fines or probation.

It seems almost certain that Trump's two other criminal cases will not go to trial before the election.

An appeals court recently halted Trump's Georgia 2020 election interference case while it reviews the lower court judge's ruling allowing Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis to remain on the case. No trial date had been set in that case. Trump's lawyers have asserted presidential immunity in that case, though there's been no ruling.

Trump was supposed to stand trial starting in May in the other case brought by Smith, over classified documents found at Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate after he left the White House. But U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon canceled the trial date as the case got bogged down with legal issues. She has yet to schedule a new one. That case, too, involves a claim by the Trump team of immunity that prosecutors have disputed.

Last week, Cannon set the stage further delays by agreeing to revisit a ruling by another judge that permitted crucial evidence related to allegations of obstruction of justice by Trump to be introduced into the case.

One of the arguments Cannon has entertained — that Smith was illegally appointed and that the case should be dismissed — got little traction with the Supreme Court.

A separate concurrence from Justice Clarence Thomas concluded that Smith's appointment was improper, but no other justice signed onto that.

Associated Press reporters Michelle L. Price in New York, Kate Brumback in Atlanta and Stephen Groves in Washington contributed.

Trump says he can end the Russia-Ukraine war in one day. Russia's UN ambassador says he can't

By EDITH M. LEDERER Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Donald Trump has said repeatedly he could settle the war between Russia and Ukraine in one day if he's elected president again. Russia's United Nations ambassador says he can't.

When asked to respond to the claim from the presumptive Republican nominee, Vassily Nebenzia told reporters Monday that "the Ukrainian crisis cannot be solved in one day."

At a CNN town hall in May 2023, Trump said: "They're dying, Russians and Ukrainians. I want them to stop dying. And I'll have that done — I'll have that done in 24 hours." He said that would happen after he met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin. And he keeps repeating the claim on the campaign trail.

During last week's debate with President Joe Biden, Trump claimed, "If we had a real president, a president that knew — that was respected by Putin ... he would have never invaded Ukraine."

Nebenzia said the war could have ended in April 2022 in Istanbul when Russia and Ukraine were "very close" to an agreement. Moscow invaded its neighbor two months earlier on Feb. 24, 2022, though Russia insists its "special military operation" began in 2014 after clashes in Ukraine's east resulted in Moscow seizing the Crimea Peninsula.

The Russian ambassador blamed Ukraine's Western backers for blocking the April 2022 peace deal and telling Kyiv to keep fighting Russia.

Now, he said, Zelenskyy "is running around with his so-called peace plan which, of course, is not a peace plan but a joke." While meeting in Switzerland last month, nearly 80 countries called for the "territorial integrity" of Ukraine to be the basis for any peace agreement to end the war. But some key developing nations did not join in and Russia did not attend the conference.

Nebenzia pointed to Putin's offer on June 14 to "immediately" order a cease-fire in Ukraine and start negotiations if Kyiv begins withdrawing troops from the four regions annexed by Moscow in 2022 and renounces plans to join NATO.

Zelenskyy, who has vowed not to give up any territory, rejected what he called an ultimatum by Putin to surrender more land.

The Trump campaign didn't immediately respond to an email seeking comment about Nebenzia's remarks.

After Russia's full-scale invasion, Ukrainian forces thwarted their drive to the capital. Much of the fighting has been focused in Ukraine's south and east, where Moscow illegally seized four regions, although it doesn't fully control any of them.

But Ukraine is still struggling to stabilize parts of its front line after desperately needed military assistance from the United States was delayed for months before being approved in April. And Russia took advantage of the Ukrainian weapons shortage to launch an offensive and has made gains.

Nebenzia called Zelenskyy's peace formula "a nonstarter" and said he needs to be "realistic" and take into account what's happened since April. The more difficult the situation becomes for Ukraine on the ground, he warned, the more difficult diplomacy will become to end the war.

Florida prosecutors knew Epstein raped teenage girls 2 years before cutting deal, transcript shows

By TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Florida prosecutors knew the late millionaire and financier Jeffrey Epstein sexually assaulted teenage girls two years before they cut a plea deal that has long been criticized as too lenient and a missed opportunity to imprison him a decade earlier, according to transcripts released Monday.

The 2006 grand jury investigation was the first of many by law enforcement over the past two decades into Epstein's rape and sex trafficking of teenagers — and how his ties to the rich and the powerful seem to have allowed him to avoid prison or a serious jail term for over a decade.

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The investigations uncovered Epstein's close ties to former President Bill Clinton and Britain's Prince Andrew, as well as his once friendly relationship with former President Donald Trump and numerous others of wealth and influence who have denied doing anything criminal or improper and not been charged.

Circuit Judge Luis Delgado's release of approximately 150 pages Monday came as a surprise, since there was scheduled hearing next week over unsealing the graphic testimony. Gov. Ron DeSantis had signed a bill in February allowing the release on Monday or any time thereafter that Delgado ordered. Florida grand jury transcripts are usually kept secret forever, but the bill created an exemption for cases like Epstein's.

The transcripts show that the grand jury heard testimony that Epstein, who was then in his 40s, had raped teenage girls as young as 14 at his Palm Beach mansion, often paying them so he could commit statutory rape or assault. The teenagers testified and told detectives they were also paid cash or rented cars if they found him more girls.

"The details in the record will be outrageous to decent people," Delgado wrote in his order. "The testimony taken by the Grand Jury concerns activity ranging from grossly unacceptable to rape — all of the conduct at issue is sexually deviant, disgusting, and criminal."

In 2008, Epstein cut a deal with South Florida federal prosecutors that allowed him to escape more severe federal charges and instead plead guilty to state charges of procuring a person under 18 for prostitution and solicitation of prostitution. He was sentenced to 1.5 years in the Palm Beach County jail system, during which he was allowed to go to his office almost daily as part of a work-release program, followed by a year of house arrest. He was required to register as a sex offender.

Criticism of the deal resulted in the 2019 resignation of Trump's labor secretary, Alex Acosta, who was the U.S. attorney for South Florida in 2008 and signed off on the deal. A 2020 Justice Department investigation concluded that Acosta used "poor judgment" in his handling of the Epstein prosecution, but it didn't rise to the level of professional misconduct.

The chief prosecutor in the Epstein case, former Palm Beach County State Attorney Barry Krischer, did not immediately respond Monday to an email and a voicemail seeking comment about the transcripts' release.

Current Palm Beach County State Attorney Dave Aronberg, who was not involved in the investigation, said in a statement he is glad the records have been released. He said he has not yet read the transcripts, so could not comment on whether Krischer should have pursued a tougher prosecution of Epstein.

Brad Edwards, an attorney for many of the victims, said in a statement that the transcripts show that Krischer's office "took the case to the Grand Jury with an agenda — to return minimal, if any, criminal charges against Jeffrey Epstein."

"A fraction of the evidence was presented, in a misleading way, and the Office portrayed the victims as criminals," he said. "It is so sad, the number of victims Epstein was able to abuse because the State carried water for him when they had a chance to put him away."

Epstein's estate is paying \$155 million in restitution to more than 125 victims.

According to the transcripts, Palm Beach Police Detective Joe Recarey testified in July 2006 that the initial investigation began when a woman reported in March 2005 that her stepdaughter who was in high school at the time said she received \$300 in exchange for "sexual activity with a man in Palm Beach," Recarey testified.

Another teenager, whose name was redacted in the transcript, told detectives that she was 17 years old when she was approached by a friend who said she could make \$200 by providing a massage at Epstein's home.

At the house, when Epstein tried touching her, she told him she was uncomfortable. He then told her that he would pay her \$200 if she brought "girls" to the house. "And he told her, 'The younger, the better,'" Recarey said.

Over time she brought six friends to Epstein's house, including a 14-year-old, and likened herself to Hollywood Madame Heidi Fleiss in October 2005 interviews, Recarey recounted.

When she brought over a 23-year-old friend, Epstein told her that the friend was too old.

"The more you did, the more money you made," the detective said the teen told him. "She explained that there was going to be a massage or some possible touching, and you would have to provide the

massage either topless or naked.”

Another teen testified she visited Epstein’s house hundreds of times in the early 2000s, starting when she was 16. She testified that Epstein paid her \$200 each time she gave him a massage while naked, rented her a car and gave her \$1,000 the time he raped her.

A 2005 police search of Epstein’s mansion found evidence supporting the girls’ testimony. Also, Epstein’s houseman told detectives that the teenagers who came to the mansion were “very young. Too young to be a masseuse.”

Epstein in 2018 was charged with federal sex trafficking crimes in New York — where he also had a mansion that was a scene of abuse — after the Miami Herald published a series of articles that renewed public attention on the case, including interviews with some victims who had been pursuing civil lawsuits against him. Epstein was 66 when he killed himself in a New York City jail cell in August 2019, federal officials say.

Delgado in his order wrote that the transcripts show why Epstein was “the most infamous pedophile in American history.”

“For almost 20 years, the story of how Jeffrey Epstein victimized some of Palm Beach County’s most vulnerable has been the subject of much anger and has at times diminished the public’s perception of the criminal justice system,” Delgado wrote.

Associated Press reporters Mike Schneider in Orlando, Florida, Curt Anderson in St. Petersburg, Florida, and Stephany Matat in West Palm Beach, Florida, Kim Chandler in Montgomery, Alabama, and Sudhin Thanawala in Atlanta contributed to this report.

US Supreme Court Latest: Court sends Trump’s immunity case back to lower court

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court extended the delay in the criminal case against Donald Trump on charges he plotted to overturn the 2020 election, reducing the chance that Trump could be tried before the November election.

In a historic ruling, the justices said Monday for the first time that former presidents can be shielded from prosecution for at least some of what they do in the Oval Office. But rather than do it themselves, the justices ordered lower courts to figure out precisely how to apply the decision to Trump’s case.

The immunity case was the last case argued, on April 25.

The court has since adjourned until the first Monday in October.

Here’s the latest:

Trump critics react to immunity ruling with dark jokes, memes of ‘King Biden’

Anti-Trump influencers and meme accounts on social media are reacting to the Supreme Court’s immunity ruling by suggesting Biden should take advantage.

Social media posts darkly joked that Biden should pack the courts, imprison Trump or postpone the November election, shielded by his newfound presidential immunity. Others made reference to “King Biden” or shared images depicting the president in a crown.

Rick Wilson, co-founder of the anti-Trump organization The Lincoln Project, posted on the social platform X to “thank the Supreme Court for granting Joe Biden godlike official powers.”

“I think his first step should be to declare all Trump golf courses as protected Federal wildlife preserves and seize them by eminent domain...it’s an official act, so it’s cool, right?” Wilson wrote.

Pelosi laments a Supreme Court she says has ‘gone rogue’

Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said in a statement after Monday’s immunity ruling that the Supreme Court had “gone rogue with its decision, violating the foundational American principle that no one is above the law.”

The Democratic congresswoman from California said the decision further erodes the court’s credibility “in the eyes of all those who believe in the rule of law.”

Pro-democracy advocate: Immunity ruling gives presidents “king-like” power

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For future presidents, the immunity ruling is an "open invitation to abuse power," said Wendy Weiser, vice president for democracy programs at the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University.

"This is much worse than I expected, than I was even contemplating as an outcome," she said, adding that the decision gives "virtual king-like immunity for the president."

Weiser said Justice Samuel Alito should have recused himself from the case after his flag controversy. She said his decision-making vote on a section of the ruling relating to how prosecutors can use evidence shows his participation made a difference.

"I think the absence of recusal was not just a misjudgment but a miscarriage of justice, and I think that we can see here that it was consequential," Weiser said.

Historian says immunity decision is a dramatic expansion of presidential power — with a caveat

Presidential power has been dramatically expanding for half a century — and the Supreme Court's immunity ruling falls in line with that trend, said Leah Wright Rigueur, a history professor at the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University.

Still, she said, the Supreme Court's punt to lower courts on the question of which actions are in a president's official capacity leaves some potential for the absolute power of the presidency to be checked.

"I know the Trump people are crowing about this and saying yes, yes, we won, we won, this is a victory," she said. "It's actually not a victory. It's a pass-off."

The Supreme Court has kicked several rulings back to lower courts lately — a sign that some members of the court are still concerned about the appearance of impartiality and objectivity, she said.

Georgetown constitutional law expert says majority opinion is striking for how little it says about the 'grave nature' of the crime

The majority opinion on the immunity case is striking for what it does not talk about, the basis for the criminal case, said Cliff Sloan, a constitutional law expert at Georgetown Law.

"When the court, in its opinion, kind of goes through the different elements, such as talking to the Justice Department, talking to the vice president, one thing I find surprising is the court says very little about the grave nature of the crime," said Sloan, a former law clerk for the late Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens.

"The crime that was charged is a systematic plan to overthrow, a fair and free election. That is the heart of the case before the court ... that through these different activities, President Trump was really seeking to overturn the election and stage a coup. There's no sense of that coming through the majority opinion."

Takeaways from the ruling

The Supreme Court's ruling makes it all but certain that Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, will not face trial in Washington ahead of the November election.

In a 6-3 ruling, the justices said former presidents are shielded from prosecution for official acts but do not have immunity for unofficial acts. The Supreme Court sent the case back to the lower court to determine whether core aspects of the indictment are unofficial versus official and therefore potentially shielded from prosecution.

Read more about the ruling and what comes next.

House Democratic Leader Jeffries says Dems will respond to court's ruling with 'aggressive oversight' if they win back the majority

House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries pledged Monday that Democrats will respond to the high court's ruling with "aggressive oversight and legislative activity" if they win back the majority in November.

"The Framers of the Constitution envisioned a democracy governed by the rule of law and the consent of the American people," Jeffries said in a statement. "They did not intend for our nation to be ruled by a king or monarch who could act with absolute impunity."

Biden campaign: Ruling 'doesn't change the facts'

President Joe Biden's campaign said in a statement that the Supreme Court's immunity ruling on Monday "doesn't change the facts" about the events of Jan. 6, 2021.

"Let's be very clear about what happened on January 6: Donald Trump snapped after he lost the 2020 election and encouraged a mob to overthrow the results of a free and fair election," the campaign said.

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"Trump is already running for president as a convicted felon for the very same reason he sat idly by while the mob violently attacked the Capitol: he thinks he's above the law and is willing to do anything to gain and hold onto power for himself."

The campaign accused the former president of growing "more unhinged" since the 2021 attack and said Biden will make sure Americans reject Trump's quest for power "for good" this November.

Former Capitol Police officer injured on Jan. 6 criticizes court's ruling

Former Capitol Police Sgt. Aquilino Gonell, who was injured by former President Donald Trump's supporters during the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol, said the Supreme Court's decision Monday that former presidents have some immunity from prosecution is "very disappointing."

Gonell was in front of the Supreme Court as the ruling was handed down. He criticized the decision to return the case to a lower court, delaying the criminal case against Trump on charges he plotted to overturn his 2020 presidential election loss.

"What is it that we are playing other than delaying the inevitable, which is that Donald Trump needs to face the consequences?" Gonell asked.

Gonell, who has been campaigning for President Joe Biden, was severely beaten in the Capitol attack. He retired from the force in 2022 due to his injuries.

Justice Sotomayor jabbed at conservative majority while delivering dissent

When it was Justice Sonia Sotomayor's turn to pronounce the dissent on Monday in the immunity case, she gave a dramatic speech.

At the outset, she carefully pronounced the words: "Because our Constitution does not shield a former President from answering for criminal and treasonous acts, I dissent."

She paused at certain moments and at others strongly pronounced each word. In one jab at the conservative majority, Sotomayor cited some of the founding fathers and said, "Interesting, history matters, right?"

Then she looked at the courtroom audience and concluded, "Except here."

In another dramatic rebuke, Sotomayor said, "Ironic, isn't it? The man in charge of enforcing laws can now just break them."

At times, Sotomayor shook her head and gritted her teeth as she criticized the majority's conclusions as "utterly indefensible" and later as elevating the president to "a king above the law."

Senate Majority Leader says immunity ruling undermines court's credibility

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer denounced Monday's ruling by the Supreme Court as "a disgraceful decision," made with the help of the three justices that Trump appointed himself.

"It undermines SCOTUS's credibility and suggests political influence trumps all in our courts today," the New York Democrat said on the social platform X.

Justice Thomas issues separate concurrence in immunity ruling

Justice Clarence Thomas issued a separate concurrence saying that he believed Jack Smith's appointment as special counsel was illegitimate and that the case therefore violates "our constitutional structure."

No other justice signed onto that opinion, but the question took center stage in recent arguments in a separate case against Trump charging him in Florida with illegally hoarding classified documents.

Connecticut senator calls court's ruling a 'cravenly political decision'

Democratic Sen. Richard Blumenthal called the Supreme Court's ruling a "cravenly political decision," meant to shield Trump with a "legal armor that no other citizen enjoys."

"This is a license for authoritarianism," the Connecticut lawmaker said in a statement Monday.

Election law expert calls breadth of immunity granted 'incredibly broad' and 'deeply disturbing'

David Becker, an election law expert and the executive director of the nonprofit Center for Election Innovation and Research, called the breadth of immunity granted to Trump "incredibly broad" and "deeply disturbing."

"Almost anything that a president does with the executive branch is characterized as an official act," he said on a call with reporters following the ruling. "I think putting aside this particular prosecution, for any unscrupulous individual holding the seat of the Oval Office who might lose an election, the way I read this opinion is it could be a road map for them seeking to stay in power."

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Becker said even historic scandals such as Watergate could be seen differently given the ruling. "It's likely that Gerald Ford did not need to pardon Richard Nixon under the interpretation of presidential immunity that this court enunciates today," he said.

Becker lamented the time the Supreme Court took with the ruling, saying Americans had an interest in knowing the result sooner given Trump's candidacy in the upcoming presidential election.

Court adjourns until October

Following its rulings in the three cases on Monday, the Supreme Court adjourned until the first Monday in October.

Majority found the immunity they recognized extends to 'outer perimeter' of official responsibilities

The majority found that the immunity they recognized extends to the "outer perimeter" of the president's official responsibilities, setting what appears to be a high bar for determining what conduct could potentially be prosecuted.

"In dividing official from unofficial conduct, courts may not inquire into the president's motives," Roberts wrote. "Nor may courts deem an action unofficial merely because it allegedly violates a generally applicable law."

The opinion found Trump is "absolutely immune" from prosecution for alleged conduct involving discussions with the Justice Department.

Trump is also "at least presumptively immune" from allegations that he tried to pressure Pence to reject certification of the vote, Roberts wrote.

The majority did reject Trump's arguments that the indictment should be dismissed, and that impeachment is a necessary step in the enforcement of the law.

What to know about today's rulings on regulating social media platforms

The Supreme Court kept a hold on efforts in Texas and Florida to limit how Facebook, TikTok, X, YouTube and other social media platforms regulate content posted by their users.

The justices returned the cases to lower courts in challenges from trade associations for the companies.

While the details vary, both laws aimed to address conservative complaints that the social media companies were liberal-leaning and censored users based on their viewpoints, especially on the political right. The cases are among several this term in which the justices are wrestling with standards for free speech in the digital age.

The Florida and Texas laws were signed by Republican governors in the months following decisions by Facebook and Twitter, now known as X, to cut then-President Donald Trump off over his posts related to the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol by his supporters.

Read more about today's social media rulings.

Ruling directs judge to differentiate between official and non-official actions

The Supreme Court directed U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan to assess whether core aspects of the indictment are official acts and therefore shielded from immunity or are not official acts and therefore potentially subject to prosecution. Those include, among other things, Trump's hectoring of Vice President Mike Pence to not certify the electoral votes — a core feature of the four-count indictment.

The three liberal justices — Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson — all dissented from the majority opinion.

In her dissent, Sotomayor wrote: "Today's decision to grant former Presidents criminal immunity reshapes the institution of the Presidency. It makes a mockery of the principle, foundational to our Constitution and system of Government, that no man is above the law."

Ruling underscores uncomfortable role SCOTUS is playing in the election

In a historic 6-3 ruling, the justices said for the first time that former presidents have absolute immunity from prosecution for their official acts and no immunity for unofficial acts. But rather than do it themselves, the justices ordered lower courts to figure out precisely how to apply the decision to Trump's case.

The outcome means additional delays before Trump could face trial in the case brought by special counsel Jack Smith.

The court's decision in a second major Trump case this term, along with its ruling rejecting efforts to bar

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him from the ballot because of his actions following the 2020 election, underscores the direct and possibly uncomfortable role the justices are playing in the November election.

Court sends Trump's immunity case back to a lower court

The Supreme Court extended the delay in the criminal case against Donald Trump on charges he plotted to overturn the 2020 election, reducing the chance that Trump could be tried before the November election.

In a historic ruling on Monday, the justices said for the first time that former presidents can be shielded from prosecution for at least some of what they do in the Oval Office. But rather than do it themselves, the justices ordered lower courts to figure out precisely how to apply the decision to Trump's case.

The Supreme Court rules for a North Dakota truck stop in a new blow to federal regulations

The Supreme Court just opened the door to new, broad challenges to regulations long after they take effect, the third blow in a week to federal agencies.

The justices ruled 6-3 today in favor of a truck stop in North Dakota that wants to sue over a regulation on debit card swipe fees that the federal appeals court in Washington upheld 10 years ago.

Federal law sets a six-year deadline for broad challenges to regulations. In this case, the regulation from the Federal Reserve governing the fees merchants must pay banks whenever customers use a debit card took effect in 2011.

Read more about the ruling in the Corner Post case.

Alito's flag controversy reignited a discussion on Supreme Court ethics

Chief Justice John Roberts declined an invitation to meet with Democratic senators in May to talk about Supreme Court ethics and the controversy over flags that flew outside homes owned by Justice Samuel Alito.

Roberts' response came a day after Alito separately rejected demands that he recuse himself from major Supreme Court involving former President Donald Trump and the Jan. 6 rioters because of the flags, which are like those carried by rioters at the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol.

Both Alito and another conservative justice, Clarence Thomas, have rejected calls to recuse themselves from cases related to the 2020 election, which Trump lost to Democrat Joe Biden. Thomas' wife, Ginni, supported efforts to overturn the election results.

One possible option for the court

The justices puzzled during arguments on April 25 over where the line should be drawn, and though it seemed unlikely from their questions that they'll adopt Trump's views of absolute immunity, they did seem potentially poised to narrow the case.

One option would be to send it back to the trial judge, Tanya Chutkan, for her to determine which allegations in the indictment constitute official acts and must therefore be stricken from the case — and which do not.

That kind of analysis could be time-consuming and result in additional delays. However, by the same token, a more slender set of allegations could make the case easier for special counsel Jack Smith and his team to prosecute and eat up less time on the election-year clock.

Key takeaways from arguments on Trump's immunity claims

In April, the Supreme Court heard more than 2 1/2 hours worth of arguments on the landmark question of whether former President Donald Trump is immune from prosecution in a case charging him with plotting to overturn the 2020 presidential election.

Some of the many notable moments included:

1. Talk of drone strikes and presidential bribes
2. Historic callbacks, with frequent invocations of the nation's Founding Fathers
3. The 2024 election was the proverbial elephant in the room

Read more key takeaways from oral arguments.

Three additional rulings are likely to come today

The justices also have three other cases remaining on the docket Monday, including another major case over social media laws in Texas and Florida that would limit how platforms regulate content posted.

Both laws aimed to address conservative complaints that the social media companies were liberal-leaning and censored users based on their viewpoints, especially on the political right.

The timing of the Trump immunity ruling could be as important as the ruling itself

The immunity case was the last case argued, on April 25. So in one sense, it's not unusual that it would be among the last decided. But the timing of the court's resolution of Trump's immunity may be as important as the eventual ruling.

By holding on to the case until early July, the justices have reduced, if not eliminated, the chance that Trump will have to stand trial before the November election, no matter what the court decides.

In other epic court cases involving the presidency, including the Watergate tapes case, the justices moved much faster. Fifty years ago, the court handed down its decision forcing President Richard Nixon to turn over recordings of Oval Office conversations just 16 days after hearing arguments.

Even this term, the court reached a decision in less than a month to rule unanimously for Trump that states cannot invoke the post-Civil War insurrection clause to kick him off the ballot over his refusal to accept Democratic President Joe Biden's victory four years ago.

Read more about the stakes of the Trump immunity ruling.

The Supreme Court nears the end of another momentous term. A decision on Trump's immunity looms

In the last 10 days of June, on a frenetic pace of its own making, the Supreme Court touched a wide swath of American society in a torrent of decisions on abortion, guns, the environment, health, the opioid crisis, securities fraud and homelessness.

And, with the court meeting for the final time this term on Monday, an unusual push into July, the most anticipated decision of the term awaits: whether former President Donald Trump is immune from prosecution for his role in the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol.

The court also will decide whether state laws limiting how social media platforms regulate content posted by their users violate the Constitution.

Read more about what to expect as the Supreme Court term wraps.

Trump ally Steve Bannon surrenders to federal prison to serve 4-month sentence on contempt charges

By SUSAN HAIGH and LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

DANBURY, Conn. (AP) — Longtime Trump ally Steve Bannon was taken into custody Monday after surrendering at a federal prison to begin a four-month sentence on contempt charges for defying a subpoena in the congressional investigation into the U.S. Capitol attack.

Bannon arrived at the Federal Correctional Institution in Danbury, Connecticut, around noon and was formally taken into federal custody, the Bureau of Prisons said.

Speaking to reporters, Bannon called himself a "political prisoner," said former President Donald Trump was "very supportive" of him and slammed Democrats, including Attorney General Merrick Garland.

"I am proud of going to prison," Bannon said, adding he was "standing up to the Garland corrupt DOJ."

Shortly before he arrived to surrender, a small group of supporters gathered on the side of the road outside the prison. They cheered as Bannon and GOP Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia spoke during a news conference, holding up flags and signs supporting Bannon as a small group of protesters shouted, "Lock him up!" and "traitor!"

The crowd was rowdy, often breaking into chants of, "USA!" A supporter of President Joe Biden taunted Bannon by yelling "traitor" while Trump supporters tried to shout her down. Police had to stop traffic to allow the black SUV that Bannon was riding in to pull out of a church parking lot where Bannon's supporters had gathered.

A judge had allowed Bannon to stay free for nearly two years while he appealed but ordered him to report to prison Monday after an appeals court panel upheld his contempt of Congress convictions. The Supreme Court on Friday rejected his last-minute appeal to stave off his sentence.

A jury found Bannon guilty of two counts of contempt of Congress: one for refusing to sit for a deposition with the Jan. 6 House Committee and a second for refusing to provide documents related to his involvement in the Republican ex-president's efforts to overturn his 2020 election loss to Biden.

Defense attorneys have argued the case raises issues that should be examined by the Supreme Court, including Bannon's previous lawyer's belief that the subpoena was invalid because Trump had asserted executive privilege. Prosecutors, though, say Bannon had left the White House years before and Trump had never invoked executive privilege in front of the committee.

Bannon's appeal will continue to play out, and Republican House leaders have put their support behind stepping in to assert the Jan. 6 committee was improperly created, effectively trying to deem the subpoena Bannon received as illegitimate.

Another Trump aide, trade adviser Peter Navarro, has also been convicted of contempt of Congress. He reported to prison in March to serve his four-month sentence after the Supreme Court refused his bid to delay the sentence.

Bannon is also facing criminal charges in New York state court alleging he duped donors who gave money to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. Bannon has pleaded not guilty to money laundering, conspiracy, fraud and other charges, and that trial has been postponed until at least the end of September.

Trump had previously pardoned Bannon, his former chief strategist, in the final hours of his White House term as part of a flurry of clemency action. Bannon had been charged federally with duping thousands of donors who believed their money would be used to fulfill Trump's chief campaign promise to build a wall along the southern border. Instead, prosecutors alleged he diverted over a million dollars, paying a salary to one campaign official and personal expenses for himself. His co-defendants were not pardoned.

Whitehurst reported from Washington. Associated Press journalist John Minchillo contributed to this report.

House Republicans sue Attorney General Garland over access to Biden special counsel interview audio

By FARNOUSH AMIRI Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Republicans on Monday filed a lawsuit against Attorney General Merrick Garland for the audio recording of President Joe Biden's interview with a special counsel in his classified documents case, asking the courts to enforce their subpoena and reject the White House's effort to withhold the materials from Congress.

The lawsuit filed by the House Judiciary Committee marks Republicans' latest broadside against the Justice Department as partisan conflict over the rule of law animates the 2024 presidential campaign. The legal action comes weeks after the White House blocked Garland from releasing the audio recording to Congress by asserting executive privilege.

Republicans in the House responded by voting to make Garland the third attorney general in U.S. history to be held in contempt of Congress. But the Justice Department refused to take up the contempt referral, citing the agency's "longstanding position and uniform practice" to not prosecute officials who don't comply with subpoenas because of a president's claim of executive privilege.

The lawsuit states that Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., made a "last-ditch effort" last week to Garland to resolve the issue without taking legal action but the attorney general referred the Republicans to the White House, which rebuffed the "effort to find a solution to this impasse."

Garland has defended the Justice Department, saying officials have gone to extraordinary lengths to provide information to the committees about special counsel Robert Hur's classified documents investigation, including a transcript of Biden's interview with him.

The congressional inquiry began with the release of Hur's report in February, which found evidence that Biden, a Democrat, willfully retained and shared highly classified information when he was a private citizen. Yet the special counsel concluded that criminal charges were not warranted.

Republicans, incensed by Hur's decision, issued a subpoena for audio of his interviews with Biden during the spring. But the Justice Department turned over only some of the records, leaving out audio of the interview with the president.

"The audio recordings, not the cold transcripts, are the best available evidence of how President Biden

presented himself during the interview," the lawsuit reads. "The Committee thus needs those recordings to assess the Special Counsel's characterization of the President, which he and White House lawyers have forcefully disputed, and ultimate recommendation that President Biden should not be prosecuted."

On the last day to comply with the Republicans' subpoena for the audio, the White House blocked the release by invoking executive privilege. It said that Republicans in Congress only wanted the recordings "to chop them up" and use them for political purposes.

But Republicans maintain that access to both the audio recordings and the transcripts are warranted to determine if legislative reforms need to be put in place for the storage, handling and disclosure of sensitive documents by members of the executive branch. Prolonging the investigation also keeps attention on parts of Hur's report that were politically damaging to Biden as he seeks reelection against former President Donald Trump, the presumptive GOP nominee, in November.

Beyond the biting critical assessment of Biden's handling of sensitive government records, Hur offered unflattering characterizations of the Democratic president's memory in his report, sparking fresh questions about his competency and age that cut at voters' most deep-seated concerns about the 81-year-old seeking a second term.

"We need the audio recordings and the transcripts," Rep. Jim Jordan, the GOP chair of the House Judiciary Committee, said during a hearing Thursday. "Put simply, they are the best evidence of the president's mental state."

Executive privilege gives presidents the right to keep information from the courts, Congress and the public to protect the confidentiality of decision-making, though it can be challenged in court. Administrations of both major political parties have long held the position that officials who assert a president's claim of executive privilege can't be prosecuted for contempt of Congress, a Justice Department official told Republicans last month.

Assistant Attorney General Carlos Felipe Uriarte cited a committee's decision in 2008 to back down from a contempt effort after President George W. Bush asserted executive privilege to keep Congress from getting records involving Vice President Dick Cheney.

The White House and congressional Democrats have slammed Republicans' motives for pursuing contempt and dismissed their efforts to obtain the audio as purely political. They also pointed out that Jordan defied his own congressional subpoena in the last session.

It's unclear how the lawsuit against Garland will play out. Courts have not had much to say about executive privilege. But in the 1974 case over President Richard Nixon's refusal to release Oval Office recordings as part of the Watergate investigation, the Supreme Court held that the privilege is not absolute. In other words, the case for turning over documents or allowing testimony may be more compelling than arguments for withholding them. In that context, the court ruled 8-0 that Nixon had to turn over the tapes.

When it came to the Watergate tapes, the Supreme Court said it had the final word, and lower courts have occasionally weighed in to resolve other disputes. But courts also have made clear they prefer that the White House and Congress resolve their disagreements without judicial intervention, when possible.

Lawsuit accuses Iran, Syria and North Korea of providing support for Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel

By JENNIFER PELTZ and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Victims of Hamas' Oct. 7 attack on Israel sued Iran, Syria and North Korea on Monday, saying their governments supplied the militants with money, weapons and know-how needed to carry out the assault that precipitated Israel's ongoing war in Gaza.

The lawsuit, filed in federal court in New York, seeks at least \$4 billion in damages for "a coordination of extrajudicial killings, hostage takings, and related horrors for which the defendants provided material support and resources."

Iran's mission to the United Nations declined to comment on the allegations, while Syria and North Korea did not respond.

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The United States has deemed Iran, Syria and North Korea to be state sponsors of terrorism, and Washington has designated Hamas as what's known as a specially designated global terrorist.

Because such countries rarely abide by court rulings against them in the United States, if the lawsuit's plaintiffs are successful, they could seek compensation from a fund created by Congress that allows American victims of terrorism to receive payouts. The money comes from seized assets, fines or other penalties leveled against those that, for example, do business with a state sponsor of terrorism.

The lawsuit draws on previous court findings, reports from U.S. and other government agencies, and statements over some years by Hamas, Iranian and Syrian officials about their ties. The complaint also points to indications that Hamas fighters used North Korean weapons in the Oct. 7 attack.

But the suit doesn't provide specific evidence that Tehran, Damascus or Pyongyang knew in advance about the assault. It accuses the three countries of providing weapons, technology and financial support necessary for the attack to occur.

Iran has denied knowing about the Oct. 7 attack ahead of time, though officials up to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei have praised the assault.

Iran has armed Hamas as a counter to Israel, which the Islamic Republic has long viewed as its regional archenemy.

In the years since the collapse of Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, Iran and Israel have been locked in a shadow war of attacks on land and at sea. Those attacks exploded into the open after an apparent Israeli attack targeting Iran's embassy complex in Damascus, Syria, during the Israel-Hamas war, which sparked Tehran's unprecedented drone-and-missile attack on Israel in April.

Neighboring Syria has relied on Iranian support to keep embattled Syrian President Bashar Assad in power amid a grinding civil war that began with the 2011 Arab Spring protests. Like Iran, Syria also offered public support for Hamas after the Oct. 7 attack.

North Korea denies that it arms Hamas. However, a militant video and weapons seized by Israel show Hamas fighters likely fired North Korean weapons during the Oct. 7 attack.

South Korean officials, two experts on North Korean arms and an Associated Press analysis of weapons captured on the battlefield by Israel point toward Hamas using Pyongyang's F-7 rocket-propelled grenade, a shoulder-fired weapon that fighters typically use against armored vehicles.

The lawsuit specifically cites the use of the F-7 grenade in the attack as a sign of Pyongyang's involvement. "Through this case, we will be able to prove what occurred, who the victims were, who the perpetrators were — and it will not just create a record in real time, but for all of history," said one of the attorneys, James Pasch of the ADL, also called the Anti-Defamation League. The Jewish advocacy group frequently speaks out against antisemitism and extremism.

Hamas fighters killed around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducted about 250 during the Oct. 7 attack. Israel invaded Gaza in response. The war has killed more than 37,000 Palestinians, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. It doesn't say how many were civilians or fighters.

The lawsuit was filed on behalf of over 125 plaintiffs, including the estates and relatives of people who were killed, plus people who were physically and/or emotionally injured. All are related to, or are themselves, U.S. citizens.

Under U.S. law, foreign governments can be held liable, in some circumstances, for deaths or injuries caused by acts of terrorism or by providing material support or resources for them.

The 1976 statute cited in the lawsuit, the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, is a frequent tool for American plaintiffs seeking to hold foreign governments accountable. In one example, a federal judge in Washington ordered North Korea in 2018 to pay \$500 million in a wrongful death suit filed by the parents of Otto Warmbier, an American college student who died shortly after being released from that country.

People held as prisoners by Iran in the past have successfully sued Iran in U.S. federal court, seeking money earlier frozen by the U.S.

The new lawsuit joins a growing list of Israel-Hamas war-related cases in U.S. courts.

Last week, for example, Israelis who were taken hostage or lost loved ones during Hamas' Oct. 7 attack

sued the United Nations agency that aids Palestinians, claiming it has helped finance the militants by paying agency staffers in U.S. dollars and thereby funneling them to money-changers in Gaza who allegedly give a cut to Hamas.

The agency, known as UNRWA, has denied that it knowingly aids Hamas or any other militant group.

Gambrell reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. AP writers Courtney Bonnell and Eric Tucker in Washington contributed.

At 28, Bardella could become youngest French prime minister at helm of far-right National Rally

By BARBARA SURK and ELISE MORTON Associated Press

NICE, France (AP) — At just 28 years old, Jordan Bardella has helped make the far-right National Rally the strongest political force in France. And now he could become the country's youngest prime minister.

After voters propelled Marine Le Pen's National Rally to a strong lead in Sunday's first round of snap legislative elections, Bardella turned to rallying supporters to hand their party an absolute majority in the decisive round on July 7. That would allow the anti-immigration, nationalist party to run the government, with Bardella at the helm.

Who is the National Rally president?

When Bardella replaced his mentor, Marine Le Pen, in 2022 at the helm of France's leading far-right party, he became the first person without the Le Pen name to lead it since its founding a half-century ago.

His selection marked a symbolic changing of the guard. It was part of Le Pen's decade-long effort to rebrand her party, with its history of racism, and remove the stigma of antisemitism that clung to it in order to broaden its base. She has notably distanced herself from her now-ostracized father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, who co-founded the party, then called the National Front, and who has been repeatedly convicted of hate speech.

Bardella is part of a generation of young people who joined the party under Marine Le Pen in the 2010s but likely wouldn't have done so under her father.

Since joining at age 17, he has risen quickly through the ranks, serving as party spokesperson and president of its youth wing, before being appointed vice president and becoming the second-youngest member of the European Parliament in history, in 2019.

"Jordan Bardella is the creation of Marine Le Pen," said Cécile Alduy, a Stanford University professor of French politics and literature, and an expert on the far right. "He has been made by her and is extremely loyal."

On the campaign trail, Le Pen and Bardella have presented themselves as American-style running mates, with Le Pen vying for the presidency while pushing him to be prime minister, Alduy said. "They are completely in line politically."

How did he become the movement's poster child?

It wasn't only having a different last name that made Bardella an attractive prospect for a party seeking to widen its appeal beyond its traditionally older, rural voter base.

Bardella was born in the north Parisian suburb of Seine-Saint-Denis in 1995 to parents of Italian origin, with Algerian roots on his father's side — and far from seeking to deny these roots, he has used them to soften the tone (if not the content) of his party's anti-immigration stance and its hostility to France's Muslim community.

Although Bardella attended a semi-private Catholic school and his father was fairly well-off, party-sanctioned accounts have stressed his upbringing in a rundown housing project beset by poverty and drugs. Never having finished university, Bardella's relatively modest background set him apart from the establishment.

What's more, he could tell people directly — and crucially young voters — about it. With over 1.7 million

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followers on TikTok and 750,000 on Instagram, Bardella has found an audience for his slick social media content, which ranges from more traditional campaign material to videos mocking Macron and seemingly candid glimpses into the life of the National Rally's would-be prime minister.

With a neat, clean-shaven look and social media savvy, he has posed for selfies with screaming fans. While his rhetoric is strong on hot-button issues like immigration — "France is disappearing" is his tagline — he has been relatively blurry on specifics.

What is he proposing for France?

It was Bardella who in a post on X called on Macron to dissolve the parliament and call early elections after the president's centrist group suffered a crushing defeat by the National Rally at European elections last month.

When Macron did just that, Bardella, often wearing a suit and tie, hit the campaign trail, toning down his popstar image to seem more statesman-like despite his lack of experience in government.

In recent months, the National Rally has softened some of its most controversial positions, including pedaling back some of its proposals for more public spending and protectionist economic policies, and taking France out of NATO's strategic military command.

Laying out the party's new program, Bardella said that as prime minister he would promote law and order, tighter regulation of migration and restricting certain social benefits, such as housing, to French citizens only. He said that dual citizens would be barred from some specific key jobs, such as state employees in the defense and security field. He promised to cut taxes on fuel, gas and electricity, and pledged a rollback of Macron's pension changes. His law-and-order minded government would also extend to the nation's public schools, extending the ban on cellphones to high schools.

Rivals say his policies could do lasting damage to the French economy and violate human rights.

On the international front, Bardella has aimed to counter allegations that Le Pen's party has long been friendly toward Russia and President Vladimir Putin. He said he regards Russia as "a multidimensional threat both for France and Europe," and said he would be "extremely vigilant" of any Russian attempts to interfere with French interests. Although he supports continued deliveries of French weaponry to Ukraine, he would not send French troops to help the country defend itself. He would also not allow sending long-range missiles capable of striking targets within Russia.

For voters with low incomes or who feel left out of economic successes in Paris or the globalized economy, Bardella offers an appealing choice, Alduy said.

"The feeling of vulnerability people have to factors that are beyond their control, calls for a radical change in the minds of many voters," she said. "He has a clean slate and comes with no baggage of the past."

Morton reported from London. Oleg Cetinic in Paris contributed.

Under pressure on plane safety, Boeing is buying stressed supplier Spirit for \$4.7 billion

ARLINGTON, Va. (AP) — Boeing announced plans to acquire key supplier Spirit AeroSystems for \$4.7 billion, a move that it says will improve plane quality and safety amid increasing scrutiny by Congress, airlines and the Department of Justice.

Boeing previously owned Spirit, and the purchase would reverse a longtime Boeing strategy of outsourcing key work on its passenger planes. That approach has been criticized as problems at Spirit disrupted production and delivery of popular Boeing jetliners, including 737s and 787s.

"We believe this deal is in the best interest of the flying public, our airline customers, the employees of Spirit and Boeing, our shareholders and the country more broadly," Boeing President and CEO Dave Calhoun said in a statement late Sunday.

Concerns about safety came to a head after the Jan. 5 blowout of a panel on an Alaska Airlines 737 Max 9 at 16,000 feet (4,876 meters) over Oregon. The Federal Aviation Administration soon after announced

increased oversight of Boeing and Spirit, which supplied the fuselage for the plane.

No one was seriously injured in the Alaska Airlines door incident, which terrified passengers, but Boeing is under pressure from the U.S. Justice Department to plead guilty to criminal fraud in connection with two deadly plane crashes involving its 737 Max jetliners more than five years ago.

Boeing has until the end of the week to accept or reject the offer, which includes the giant aerospace company agreeing to an independent monitor who would oversee its compliance with anti-fraud laws, according to several people who heard federal prosecutors detail a proposed offer Sunday.

The Justice Department said in a May court filing that Boeing violated terms of a 2021 settlement allowing the company to avoid prosecution for actions leading up to the crashes in Ethiopia and Indonesia, which killed 346 people.

Those crashes were blamed on a faulty sensor in a flight-control system and the investigation is separate from the probe of the more recent Alaska Airlines blowout, which involved Spirit.

Boeing spun off Spirit, which is based in Wichita, Kansas, and not related to Spirit Airlines, in 2005. In recent years, quality problems have mounted, including fuselage panels that didn't fit together precisely enough and holes that were improperly drilled.

Spirit removed its CEO in October and replaced him with Patrick Shanahan, a former Boeing executive who served as acting defense secretary in the Trump administration.

Things seemed to be going more smoothly until the Alaska Airlines incident. Investigators said a panel used in place of an extra emergency door had been removed at a Boeing factory to let Spirit workers fix damaged rivets, and bolts that help hold the panel in place were missing after the repair job. It is not clear who removed the bolts and failed to put them back.

Spirit said in May that it was laying off about 450 workers at its Wichita plant because of a production slowdown since the January incident. Its total workforce was just over 13,000 people.

"Bringing Spirit and Boeing together will enable greater integration of both companies' manufacturing and engineering capabilities, including safety and quality systems," Shanahan said.

The acquisition's equity value of \$4.7 billion is \$37.25 per share, while the total value of the deal is around \$8.3 billion, which includes Spirit's last reported net debt, the aerospace company said.

Boeing common stock will be exchanged for Spirit shares according to a variable formula that depends on a weighted average of the share price over a 15-trading-day period ending on the second day before the deal closes, Boeing said.

The companies also announced an agreement with Airbus to negotiate the purchase of Spirit assets involved with programs operated by the European aerospace firm. The Airbus agreement is set to commence when Boeing's acquisition of Spirit is completed, the two U.S. companies said.

Shares of both companies rose by more than 3% Monday.

Ukraine is releasing thousands of prisoners so they can join the fight against Russia

By VASILISA STEPANENKO, EVGENIY MALOLETKA and DEREK GATOPOULOS Associated Press
DNIPROPETROVSK REGION, Ukraine (AP) — At a rural penal colony in southeast Ukraine, several convicts stand assembled under barbed wire to hear an army recruiter offer them a shot at parole. In return, they must join the grueling fight against Russia.

"You can put an end to this and start a new life," said the recruiter, a member of a volunteer assault battalion. "The main thing is your will, because you are going to defend the motherland. You won't succeed at 50%, you have to give 100% of yourself, even 150%."

Ukraine is expanding the draft to cope with acute battlefield shortages more than two years into fighting against Russia's full-scale invasion. And its recruiting efforts have turned, for the first time, to the country's prison population.

Although Ukraine does not announce any details of troop deployment numbers or casualties, frontline

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commanders openly acknowledge that they are facing serious manpower problems as Russian continues to build up forces in eastern Ukraine and make incremental gains westward.

More than 3,000 prisoners already have been released on parole and assigned to military units after such recruitment was approved by parliament in a controversial mobilization bill last month, Ukrainian Deputy Justice Minister Olena Vysotska told The Associated Press.

About 27,000 inmates could potentially be eligible for the new program, according to Justice Ministry estimates.

"A lot of the motivation comes from (inmates) wanting to return home a hero, and not to return home from prison," Vysotska said.

Ernest Volvach, 27, wants to take up the offer. He's serving a two-year sentence for robbery, at the penal colony in Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region. He works in the kitchen, ladling dollops of food into tin bowls.

"It's stupid to sit here doing nothing," Volvach said, adding that since the start of the war he's wanted to "do something for Ukraine" and have the opportunity to enlist. "Now it's appeared."

Ukrainian soldiers on active duty are typically identified only by their first name, or a call sign, for security reasons. Many of the inmates at the Dnipropetrovsk penal colony also asked to be identified only by their first names to avoid difficulties if they enlist.

Another inmate, 30, who gave his name only as Volodymyr, makes rivets at a penal colony workshop. He said he plans to volunteer after his sentence ends in one year, but wouldn't do so now because there's effectively no home leave under the parole program.

Prisoners can get the conditional release after an interview, medical exam, and a review of their conviction. Those convicted of rape, sexual assault, murdering two or more people or crimes against Ukraine's national security aren't eligible.

Ukrainian officials are keen to draw a distinction between their program and recruitment in Russia of convicts to serve in the notorious Wagner mercenary group. Those fighters typically have been funneled to the deadliest battles, the officials say, but the Ukrainian program aims to integrate the inmates into regular Ukrainian frontline units.

The country has a prison population of some 42,000, according to figures forwarded by the government to the European Union.

While recent reforms have reduced the number of prisoners and are credited with improving conditions at some facilities, the U.S. State Department noted credible reports of "degrading treatment or punishment" by prison authorities in its annual report on human rights last year.

After screening, paroled inmates are rushed to basic training at camps where they learn how to handle weapons and other combat fundamentals. Training is completed later once they join the individual units.

Paroled inmate Mykhailo joined an assault course and said it was hard to keep up with the physical demands after months of relative inactivity in prison – clambering in and out of armed personnel carriers and running through obstacle courses.

"I decided to sign up for the Ukrainian Volunteer Army because I have a family at home, children, parents," the 29-year-old said, speaking over the noise of gunfire at a shooting range. "I will be more useful in the war."

Vysotska, the deputy justice minister, said interest in the military parole program has exceeded early expectations, and that it could provide as many as 5,000 new recruits. "That would definitely help," she said.

Gatopoulos reported from Kyiv. Volodymyr Yurchuk in the Dnipropetrovsk region and Dmytro Zhyhinas in Kyiv contributed to this report.

Follow AP's coverage of the war at <https://apnews.com/hub/russia-ukraine>

The brutal killing of a Detroit man in 1982 inspires decades of Asian American activism nationwide

By RYAN DOAN-NGUYEN Associated Press

Two white autoworkers bludgeoned 27-year-old Chinese American Vincent Chin to death with a baseball bat during his bachelor party in Detroit in 1982, but his loved ones' cries for justice fell on deaf ears.

Twelve days passed before any media outlets reported Chin's killing by men who blamed Asian manufacturers for the downfall of the city's mainstay auto industry, and none acknowledged the racism in his killing at the time. The defendants pleaded guilty to manslaughter and were sentenced to three years' probation. Circuit Judge Charles Kaufman reasoned, "These aren't the kind of men you send to jail."

The injustice spurred Asian Americans to unite across ethnic and cultural lines. Hundreds protested the trial's outcome in downtown Detroit. Chin's mother traveled the country sharing his story and pushing for a federal civil rights prosecution.

More than four decades later, activists still fight to ensure Chin is not forgotten, saying his story inspires advocacy nationwide. Law students reenact his trial, Hollywood adapted his story into a movie and Asian Americans remember the impact of his killing on their struggle for racial justice and equality.

"For a whole generation of Asian American activists, the Vincent Chin case was the case that got them involved," says writer and filmmaker Curtis Chin. "It was the thing that brought them to the table."

A chorus of Asian American voices

After the judge spared Vincent Chin's killers, Curtis Chin — then 14 — grabbed his parents' typewriter and wrote outraged letters to newspaper editors. He had found his calling.

Instead of taking over his family's Chinese restaurant, Curtis Chin — who is not related to the man killed on June 23, 1982 — spent the next 30 years elevating Asian American voices, and recounting Vincent Chin's story and the racism of 1980s Detroit.

For Helen Zia, an Asian American activist who moved to Detroit in the 1970s, Chin's case laid bare the glaring injustices that her community faced.

Lacking any local organizations to advocate for Asian American civil rights, Zia co-founded the American Citizens for Justice, which helped to secure a federal trial against Chin's killers. One was acquitted of civil rights violations and the other was convicted and sentenced to 25 years in prison. His conviction was overturned on appeal.

On June 20, the FBI released a 602-page file on Chin's death, revealing previously unseen witness interviews with descriptions of his final moments and the anti-Asian slurs his attackers used, among other details. Activists told the Detroit Free Press, which first reported on the FBI documents, that they were not notified about the file, and the agency did not provide a reason for its release.

Last year, Zia launched the Vincent Chin Institute, an advocacy organization to counter hatred against Asian Americans.

Chin's case has had an impact beyond advocacy. Students at Harvard Law School have reenacted the trials of his attackers to highlight shortcomings in the legal system. And his killing has inspired documentaries, a podcast and a movie, "Who Killed Vincent Chin?"

Vincent Chin was a victim of brutal, racial violence, but from that tragedy emerged "a chorus of Asian American voices," Curtis Chin says.

Considerable work ahead

The autoworkers who attacked Chin blamed foreign vehicle manufacturers for hardships in the U.S. auto industry.

This fear of foreign economic threat parallels modern "anti-China hysteria and scapegoating," says Stop AAPI Hate co-founder Cynthia Choi, pointing to attacks on Asians by people accusing them of culpability in the COVID-19 pandemic.

"What's different for our community today is that we are speaking out. We are speaking out loudly," Choi says.

Established in 2020, Stop AAPI Hate advocates for policy change and collects comprehensive data on

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acts of hatred against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. The group has documented thousands of cases nationwide, including verbal and physical abuse, and discrimination in business and education.

"Close to 50% of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders reported that they experienced some form of race-based hate in the past year," Choi says.

Advocates say there's still considerable work to be done.

No comprehensive history of Asian Americans is included in core K-12 curricula. Asked to name a prominent Asian American in a recent survey, most Americans responded "I can't think of one" or Jackie Chan, who is not American.

"We don't even exist to most Americans," Zia says, citing lack of visibility as a key driver in the perpetuation of Asian American stereotypes.

John Yang, the president and executive director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC, underscores the damage of stereotypes.

"In terms of job opportunities, we are pigeonholed as perpetual foreigners," Yang says. "Asian Americans don't get promoted at the same rate. We don't occupy C-suites. We don't occupy boards in the same way that other Americans do."

Discrimination also extends to housing. The Urban Institute, a think tank that conducts economic and policy research, reports that Asian American buyers are shown 18.8% fewer properties overall compared to white buyers. Yet the stereotype of Asian Americans as the model minority leads some fair housing advocates to exclude Asian Americans from their efforts.

"Everyone is concerned about whether an Asian American is truly an American, and so they're not being shown the same houses," Yang says. "They're not being afforded the same opportunities."

Standing on the shoulders of giants

On Sunday, dozens of residents stood with their heads bowed beneath Boston's Chinatown gate to remember Chin. Wearing T-shirts reading "STOP ASIAN HATE," they arranged candles in the shape of a heart and displayed a portrait of Chin with his name written in Chinese and "May 18, 1955 - June 23, 1982."

Wilson Lee, co-founder of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance Boston Lodge and the Chinese American Heritage Foundation, said he and his wife have organized a vigil for Chin every June 23 for six years. Even as media attention faded, their dedication to Chin's memory has not wavered.

"We're in it for the long haul," Lee says. "Because it's the right thing to do, not because it's the popular thing to do."

A collection of local dignitaries joined the remembrance, as did 16 Asian American elementary and high school students whom Lee described as "stakeholders." They held orange lilies and yellow flowers pressed to their chests.

"We need to make sure that future generations, especially our young people, know about the experience that he went through," Lee says. "They are standing on the shoulders of giants, and Vincent Chin was a giant."

This story was first published on Jun. 29, 2024. It was updated on Jul. 1, 2024 to correct the name of the Asian American Pacific Islander activism group to "Asian Americans Advancing Justice - AAJC."

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Gathered at Camp David, Biden's family tells him to stay in the presidential race and keep fighting

By COLLEEN LONG, ZEKE MILLER and THOMAS BEAUMONT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden's family used a gathering at Camp David to urge him to stay in the race and keep fighting despite his dreadful debate performance, and some members criticized how his staff prepared him for the faceoff, according to four people familiar with the discussions.

Biden spent Sunday sequestered with first lady Jill Biden, his children and his grandchildren. It was a previously scheduled trip to the presidential retreat in Maryland for a photo shoot with Annie Leibovitz for the upcoming Democratic National Convention.

But the gathering was also an exercise in trying to figure out how to quell Democratic anxiety that has exploded following Thursday's performance.

While his family was aware of how poorly he performed against Donald Trump, they also continue to think he's the best person to beat the Republican presumptive nominee. They also believe he is capable of doing the job of president for another four years, according to the people who were not authorized to speak publicly about internal discussions and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Among the most vocal: Jill Biden and son Hunter, whom the president has long gone to for counsel and advice. Both believe the president shouldn't bow out when he's down, and believe that he can come back from what they see as one subpar performance. The family questioned how he was prepared for the debate by staff and wondered if they could have done something better, the people said.

Biden's campaign has spent the days since the debate — where he appeared raspy, trailed off, and at times gave convoluted answers — working to keep donors and surrogates on board as Democrats increasingly questioned whether he should stay in the race.

At this point in the delegate process, Biden would likely have to decide to drop out for there to be a new nominee. And the people he listens to most in the world — his wife and son — are telling him to stay in.

Even before the debate, the age of the 81-year-old Democratic president had been a liability with voters, and the prime-time faceoff appeared to reinforce the public's deep-seated concerns before perhaps the largest audience he will have in the four months until Election Day. CNN said more than 51 million people watched the debate.

While the president was huddled with his family, prominent Democrats rallied to deliver a public show of support for his campaign on Sunday.

"I do not believe that Joe Biden has a problem leading for the next four years," said one close ally, Democratic Rep. James Clyburn of South Carolina. "Joe Biden should continue to run on his record."

Sen. Raphael Warnock, a Georgia Democrat and Baptist minister, said there had been "more than a few Sundays when I wish I had preached a better sermon," relating the experience to Biden's debate performance.

"But after the sermon was over, it was my job to embody the message, to show up for the people that I serve. And that's what Joe Biden has been doing his entire life," Warnock said. It was an echo of the message from other supporters that Biden had a bad debate, but a lifetime of good governance.

Warnock, like Clyburn and others, pivoted to Trump's many falsehoods during the debate — lapses that Biden and the debate moderators often failed to fact check from the stage — including about the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol by Trump supporters, immigration and the outcome of the 2020 election.

"Whenever his mouth was moving, he was lying," Warnock said of Trump.

But concern simmered among some Democrats that Biden's campaign and the Democratic National Committee were not taking seriously enough the impact of the debate.

Former Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin, who served for more than two decades with Biden in the Senate, called the debate "a disaster from which Biden cannot recover."

Harkin suggested that Democratic senators in pivotal races and "maybe all incumbent Democratic Senators should pen a letter to Biden asking him to release his delegates and step aside so the convention can choose a new candidate," according to an email to supporters that was obtained by The Associated Press.

It was first referenced in Iowa journalist Julie Gammack's column on Saturday, Iowa Potluck.

"This is a perilous time, and is more important than the ego or desires of Joe Biden to stay as President," Harkin concluded.

Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-Md., described "very honest, serious and rigorous conversations taking place at every level of our party ... about what to do."

But DNC Chairman Jaime Harrison and Biden's campaign manager, Julie Chavez Rodriguez, held a Saturday afternoon call with dozens of committee members across the country — a group of some of the most influential members of the party — where they offered a rosy assessment of the path forward and gave no opportunity for others on the call to respond with questions.

Multiple committee members on the call, most granted anonymity to talk about the private discussion, described feeling like they were being asked to ignore a serious predicament.

"There were a number of things that could have been said in addressing the situation. But we didn't get that. We were being gaslit," said Joe Salazar, an elected DNC member from Colorado, who was on the call.

Beaumont reported from Des Moines, Iowa. Miller reported from the Bahamas. Associated Press writers Steve Peoples in New York, and Matthew Daly, Seung Min Kim and Michelle L. Price contributed to this report.

European Union accuses Facebook owner Meta of breaking digital rules with paid ad-free option

By KELVIN CHAN AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — European Union regulators accused social media company Meta Platforms on Monday of breaching the bloc's new digital competition rulebook by forcing Facebook and Instagram users to choose between seeing ads or paying to avoid them.

Meta began giving European users the option in November of paying for ad-free versions of Facebook and Instagram as a way to comply with the continent's strict data privacy rules.

Users can pay at least 10 euros (\$10.75) a month to avoid being targeted by ads based on their personal data. The U.S. tech giant rolled out the option after the European Union's top court ruled Meta must first get consent before showing ads to users, in a decision that threatened its business model of tailoring ads based on individual users' online interests and digital activity.

The European Commission, the EU's executive arm, said preliminary findings of its investigation show that Meta's "pay or consent" advertising model was in breach of the 27-nation bloc's Digital Markets Act.

Meta's model doesn't allow users to exercise their right to "freely consent" to allowing their personal data from its various services, including Facebook, Instagram, Marketplace, WhatsApp, and Messenger, to be combined to target them with personalized online ads, the commission said.

Meta's model also doesn't give users the option of a service that's less personalized but still equivalent to its social networks, it said.

"Subscription for no ads follows the direction of the highest court in Europe and complies with the DMA," Meta said in a statement. "We look forward to further constructive dialogue with the European Commission to bring this investigation to a close."

The commission had opened its investigation shortly after the rulebook, also known as the DMA, took effect in March. It's a sweeping set of regulations aimed at preventing tech "gatekeepers" from cornering digital markets under threat of heavy financial penalties.

One of the DMA's goals is to rein in the power of Big Tech companies that have collected vast amounts of personal data on their users, giving them an edge on rivals competing in online ad or social media services. The commission indicated that in order for Meta to comply, it would like to see an option that doesn't rely on a user's full personal information being shared for advertising.

"The DMA is there to give back to the users the power to decide how their data is used and ensure innovative companies can compete on equal footing with tech giants on data access," European Commis-

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sioner Thierry Breton, who oversees the bloc's digital policy, said in a statement.

Meta now has a chance to respond to the commission, which must wrap up its investigation by March 2025. The company could face fines worth 10% of its annual global revenues, which could run into the billions of euros.

Under the Digital Markets Act, Meta is classed as one of seven online gatekeepers while Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Messenger and its online ad business are among two dozen "core platform services" that need the highest level of scrutiny.

Monday's decision is the latest in flurry of regulatory activity by Brussels targeting Big Tech companies. The EU leveled its first charges under the DMA a week ago, accusing Apple of preventing app makers from pointing users to cheaper options outside its App Store. It also recently charged Microsoft with violating the bloc's antitrust laws by bundling its Teams messaging and videoconferencing app with its widely used Office business software.

Today in History: July 2, Civil Rights Act signed into law

By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, July 2, the 184th day of 2024. There are 182 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 2, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law a sweeping civil rights bill passed by Congress prohibiting discrimination and segregation based on race, color, sex, religion or national origin.

Also on this date:

In 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution saying that "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States."

In 1881, President James A. Garfield was shot by Charles J. Guiteau (gee-TOH') at the Washington railroad station; Garfield died the following September. (Guiteau was hanged in June 1882.)

In 1917, rioting erupted in East St. Louis, Illinois, as white mobs attacked Black residents; at least 50 and as many as 200 people, most of them Black, are believed to have died in the violence.

In 1937, aviator Amelia Earhart and navigator Fred Noonan disappeared over the Pacific Ocean while attempting to make the first round-the-world flight along the equator.

In 1962, the first Walmart store opened in Rogers, Arkansas.

In 1976, the U.S. Supreme Court, in Gregg v. Georgia, ruled 7-2 that the death penalty was not inherently cruel or unusual.

In 1979, the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin was released to the public.

In 1986, ruling in a pair of cases, the Supreme Court upheld affirmative action as a remedy for past job discrimination.

In 1990, more than 1,400 Muslim pilgrims were killed in a stampede inside a pedestrian tunnel near Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

In 2002, Steve Fossett became the first person to complete a solo circumnavigation of the world nonstop in a balloon.

In 2018, rescue divers in Thailand found alive 12 boys and their soccer coach, who had been trapped by flooding as they explored a cave more than a week earlier.

In 2020, British socialite Ghislaine Maxwell was arrested in New Hampshire on charges that she had helped lure at least three girls – one as young as 14 – to be sexually abused by the late financier Jeffrey Epstein. (Maxwell would be convicted on five of six counts.)

In 2022, the police chief for the Uvalde, Texas, school district stepped down from his City Council seat amid criticism of his response to the mass shooting that left 19 students and two teachers dead.

Today's Birthdays: Former Philippine first lady Imelda Marcos is 95. Actor Polly Holliday is 87. Racing Hall of Famer Richard Petty is 87. Former White House chief of staff and former New Hampshire governor John H. Sununu is 85. Former Mexican President Vicente Fox is 82. Writer-director-comedian Larry David

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is 77. Rock musician Roy Bittan (Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band) is 75. Actor Wendy Schaal is 70. Actor-model Jerry Hall is 68. Former baseball player Jose Canseco is 60. Race car driver Sam Hornish Jr. is 45. Former NHL center Joe Thornton is 45. Singer Michelle Branch is 41. Actor Vanessa Lee Chester is 40. Figure skater Johnny Weir is 40. Actor-singer Ashley Tisdale is 39. Actor Lindsay Lohan (LOH'-uhn) is 38. Soccer player Alex Morgan is 35. Actor Margot Robbie is 34. Singer-rapper Saweetie is 31. U.S. Olympic swimming gold medalist Ryan Murphy is 29.