

# Groton Daily Independent

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## Tuesday, Aug. 6

Senior Menu: Roast beef, mashed potatoes with gravy, corn, mandarin orange salad, whole wheat bread.

St. John's Lutheran: Vacation Bible School, 5:30 p.m.

United Methodist: Bible Study, 10 a.m., Vacation Bible School, 5 p.m.

Common Cents Community Thrift Store, 209 N Main, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

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

Wage Memorial Library meeting, 120 N Main, 6 p.m.

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



City Council Meeting, 7 p.m.

Groton Christian & Missionary Alliance: Vacation Bible School, 6:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

## Wednesday, Aug. 7

Senior Menu: Turkey sub sandwich, lettuce and tomato, macaroni salad with peas, broccoli, tropical fruit.

Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran: Vacation Bible School program and cookout, 6 p.m.

United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Vacation Bible School, 5 p.m.

Groton Chamber Meeting, 120 N Main, Noon

Groton Christian & Missionary Alliance: Vacation Bible School, 6:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

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# 1440

**Why 1440? The printing press was invented around the year 1440, spreading knowledge to the masses and changing the course of history. More facts: In every day, there are 1,440 minutes. We're here to make each one count.**

## Veep Chooses Veep

Vice President Kamala Harris officially became the Democratic nominee for president yesterday after a five-day virtual roll-call process ended. She is expected to announce her running mate today before kicking off a five-day campaign tour across seven battleground states.

Harris has reportedly whittled down her choices from a broad bench of candidates to two leading contenders: Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro and Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz. Shapiro's statewide approval rating (54%) is seen as an asset for a campaign seeking to secure Pennsylvania's 19 electoral votes. Meanwhile, Walz has risen in betting markets amid viral media clips and speculated appeal to Midwestern voters. A running mate's impact on elections may nonetheless be relatively small.

Recent polls show Harris closing in on former President Donald Trump's lead, with Trump holding a 1-percentage-point national lead over Harris, down from his 3-point lead over President Joe Biden last month.

## Global Markets Plummet

Global stock markets tanked yesterday over concerns of a slowing US economy after a weaker-than-expected US jobs report Friday showed hiring slowed and unemployment rose to its highest rate in nearly three years. The data triggered the "Sahm Rule," when the three-month average unemployment rate rises 0.5 points above its 12-month low, a historically accurate recession indicator.

The US accounts for nearly a quarter of global gross domestic product and can significantly influence global markets. The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 2.6%, while the Nasdaq composite and S&P 500 declined by 3.4% and 3.0%, respectively. Yesterday's global decline began with Japan's Nikkei 225 index, which fell over 12%, its largest single-day percentage drop since 1987. European markets saw major indexes drop around 3%. The turmoil also extended to cryptocurrencies, with Bitcoin falling over 10%.

Separately, losses in the "Magnificent Seven" tech stocks erased more than \$650B from their combined market value.

## Google Loses Antitrust Case

A federal judge yesterday ruled Google violated antitrust laws by illegally holding a monopoly on online search and text advertising. The verdict comes in the first and biggest tech antitrust trial in over two decades and could alter how technology giants conduct business in the modern internet era.

The US Justice Department, along with over 30 state attorneys general, had sued Google in 2020 for allegedly paying more than \$10B per year to web browsers and phone manufacturers to become the default search engine across those platforms. Yesterday's ruling found Google paid over \$26B in 2021 alone to secure such agreements. The ruling also found Google controls nearly 90% of the world's general search services market on desktop devices and 95% on mobile devices. In 2023, Google's advertising unit generated roughly \$238B—triple the revenue in 2016.

It is unclear what penalties or limitations Google will face to restore competition. Google is expected to file an appeal.

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## Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Simone Biles wins silver medal in floor exercise, her fourth medal of the Paris Olympics and her 11th Olympic medal overall.

"Deadpool & Wolverine" now second-highest grossing film of 2024 as it brings in \$824M at the global box office; Disney becomes first studio of 2024 to top \$3B in sales globally.

Miss Michigan Alma Cooper, a US Army officer, crowned Miss USA 2024; Miss Kentucky Connor Perry and Miss Oklahoma Danika Christopherson named first and second runner-ups.

## Science & Technology

New study suggests Egypt's Pyramid of Djoser was built using primitive hydraulic technology to lift stones.

Nobel Prize winner Tsung-Dao Lee dies at age 97; Lee shared the 1957 award for demonstrating a phenomenon known as parity violation, one of the few known instances of physics not exhibiting symmetry.

New tool developed to track how psychedelic compounds begin to affect neurons within minutes after ingestion.

## Business & Markets

AI chip startup Groq raises \$640M in funding round, valuing the Nvidia challenger at \$2.8B.

Elon Musk revives federal lawsuit against OpenAI and its CEO Sam Altman, alleging he was manipulated into cofounding the ChatGPT maker.

Walmart, Amazon, and State Grid—Chinese state-owned utility giant—top Fortune Global 500 ranking of world's largest companies by revenue.

Vietnamese billionaire tycoon found guilty of defrauding stockholders of nearly \$150M by inflating the value of his company ahead of an initial public offering in Vietnam; Trinh Van Quyet was sentenced to 21 years in prison.

## Politics & World Affairs

At least four people killed after Debby makes landfall on Florida's Big Bend coast on the Gulf of Mexico as a Category 1 hurricane before downgrading to a tropical storm.

Debby now heads to Georgia and South Carolina; see tracker.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigns, leaves country after historic 15-year rule following mass student protests; country's army chief says an interim government will be formed.

Former Trump legal adviser Jenna Ellis agrees to cooperate with Arizona prosecutors in 2020 election interference case; attorney general drops felony charges against Ellis, allowing her to avoid potential jail time.

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Missoula Children's Theatre directors and actors were busy washing and drying clothes at the laundromat in Downtown Groton. Pictured are Ray Medina and Leah Griff. They said there are 25 elementary students involved in the play entitled, "Peter and Wendy." Performances are open to the public and will be held in the GHS Gym on Saturday at 3 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Tickets are free will donation. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



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August 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<h2>Groton Swimming Pool 2024</h2>						
11 Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530pm POOL PALOOZA 3-PreK 545-615pm K-Grade2 630-7pm Grade3-5 715-745 HS Moonlight Swim 8-10pm	12 BCF AM Lap7-8am AMAero 8-845am Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530pm Aero 530-615pm Open 630-830pm	13 BCF Last Day AM LAP & AM/PM Aero Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530pm Aero 530-615pm Open 630-830pm	14 BCF Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530pm	15 BCF Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530pm	16 BCF Open 1-430pm Lap430-530pm	17 BCF Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530pm
18 Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530pm Open 530-730pm	19 Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530pm School Open House	20 Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530pm	21 First Day of School Open 4-6pm	22 Open 4-6pm	23 Open 4-6pm	24 Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530pm Open 530-730pm
25 Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530pm <hr/> Sept 1 Open 1-430m Lap 430-530pm Open 530-730pm	26 Open 4-6pm	27 Open 4-6pm	28 Open 4-6pm	29 Open 4-6pm	30 NO School Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530Ppm Closed @ night for home FB game	31 Open 1-430pm Lap 430-530pm Open 530-730pm
DOGGIE DAY Sunday, Sept 8 4-6pm						

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## Sturgis Rally Monday Report

### Highway Patrol Sturgis Rally Daily Information

Compiled from 6 a.m. Saturday, Aug 03, 2024, to 6 a.m. Monday August 05, 2024

Item	Sturgis	Rapid City District	District Total	Last Year to Date
DUI Arrests	44	6	50	52
Misd Drug Arrests	72	14	86	81
Felony Drug Arrests	43	9	52	35
Total Citations	303	168	471	590
Total Warnings	771	403	1174	1739
Cash Seized	11,094.00	0.00	11,094.00	\$0.00
Vehicles Seized	0	0	0	0
For Drug Poss.	0	0	0	0
For Serial No.	0	0	0	0
Non-Injury Accidents	2	6	8	21
Injury Accidents	6	8	14	26
Fatal Accidents	0	0	0	2
# of Fatalities	0	0	0	2

Fatal Crashes: None

Injury Crashes:

On 08/04/2024 at 11:49 a.m., a 1997 Honda Goldwing, pulling a trailer, was traveling eastbound on I-90 near mile marker 172 when the driver lost control of the vehicle. As the vehicle overturned, the trailer became detached from the motorcycle and struck the passenger. The passenger received life-threatening injuries. The driver received serious non-life-threatening injuries. The driver was wearing a helmet. The passenger was not wearing a helmet. Charges are pending against the driver.

On 08/04/2024 at 12:27 p.m., a 2021 Harley Davidson Street Glide was traveling in the turn lane on Lazelle Street in Sturgis. A 2020 Kymco X-Town was in the driving lane. The driver of the Kymco merged into the turn lane and struck the Harley Davidson. The driver of the Kymco separated from his motorcycle and received serious non-life-threatening injuries. The driver of the Harley Davidson was uninjured. The drivers were not wearing helmets.

On 08/04/2024 at 12:59 p.m., a 2003 Harley Davidson Cruiser was traveling on Rockerville Road near SD 40. The driver failed to negotiate the curve and lost control of the motorcycle. The driver and passenger separated from the motorcycle and received serious non-life-threatening injuries during the crash. Neither the driver nor passenger were wearing helmets.



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On 08/04/2024 at 1:02 p.m. a 2011 Harley Davidson was traveling westbound behind a 2012 Harley Davidson on US14A near mile marker 35. As the vehicles were traveling through a curve, the 2011 Harley Davidson attempted to pass but lost control. The 2011 Harley Davidson struck the rear of the 2012 Harley Davidson causing both vehicles to overturn. The driver and passenger of the 2012 Harley Davidson were wearing helmets and received minor injuries. The driver of the 2011 Harley Davidson was not wearing a helmet and receiving serious non-life-threatening injuries.

On 08/04/24 at 2:49 p.m. a 2007 Harley Davidson FLSTN was traveling westbound on US16A near mile marker 55. A 2013 Harley Davidson FLTRU was traveling eastbound at the same location. The driver of the 2007 Harley Davidson failed to negotiate a curve and crossed the centerline, colliding with the 2013 Harley Davidson in the westbound lane. A passenger on the 2013 Harley Davidson received minor injuries during the crash. The driver and passenger of the 2013 Harley Davidson were wearing helmets. The driver of the 2007 Harley Davidson was not wearing a helmet.

On 08/04/2024 at 5:29 p.m., a 2012 Moto Guzzi Griso was traveling near the intersection of Ford Mountain Road and Old Hill City Road. The driver lost control of the motorcycle as they attempted to stop for a posted stop sign. The motorcycle overturned and the driver was separated from the motorcycle. The driver received serious non-life-threatening injuries. The driver was not wearing a helmet.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol is investigating these crashes. All information released so far is only preliminary.

The Highway Patrol is an agency of the South Dakota Department of Public Safety.

## 2024 Sturgis Rally Vehicle Count – Through Day Three

STURGIS, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT) will provide daily traffic counts at nine locations for vehicles entering Sturgis for the 84th Annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally which runs from Aug. 2-11, 2024. The traffic counts to date for the nine locations entering Sturgis for the 2024 Rally are as follows:

**Friday, Aug. 2, 2024: 51,179 vehicles entered**

Down 1.5% from the previous five-year average

**Saturday, Aug. 3, 2024: 55,127 vehicles entered**

Down 2.3% from the previous five-year average

**Sunday, Aug. 4, 2024: 52,182 vehicles entered**

Down 12.7% from the previous five-year average

**2024 Total to Date: 158,488 Vehicles**

Previous Five-Year Average to Date: 168,139 Vehicles

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## Groton City Council Meeting Agenda

August 6, 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. Daycare Discussion – Charity Hinman
4. Recap of the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Celebration in the Park – Suzie Easthouse
5. Transfer Liquor License for Jungle Lanes & Lounge and Execute Lease Agreement
6. Department Reports
7. Sidewalk/Curb Repair – City Hall
8. Appoint Bank – SD FIT
9. Authorization to Sign State Financial Assistance Agreement for Airport Runway Improvements Project
10. First Reading of Ordinance No. 778 – Amending Verbiage of Markup Fees
11. 2022 Final Audit Report from Eide Bailly
12. Minutes
13. Bills (x2)
14. Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)
15. Authorization to Write-Off Outstanding Invoice
16. Assistant Street Superintendent Wage
17. Adjournment





**Alcohol's impact: 35, dry and dying while waiting for a transplant**  
**Chronic liver disease is now the leading cause of death of South Dakotans in their 30s.**  
**"Alcohol is particularly challenging because it's prevalent. It's relatively cheap, and it's not in any way illegal."**

**By Megan Luther**  
**South Dakota News Watch**

OMAHA, Neb. – Taylor Nielsen rests in a room with a view. The wall-to-wall windows feature midtown on an overcast afternoon in late March. The natural light makes the hospital room more tolerable but exposes just how yellow Taylor's skin is.

He drifts in and out of sleep. His dad, David Nielsen, hovers over his only child, places his right hand on Taylor's swollen belly. He's in excruciating pain. Fluid has bloated Taylor, pooling around his barely functioning liver.

David, 72, hopes his son's suffering isn't in vain. He encourages Taylor to share his experiences. "So we can help at least one to maybe thousands of people avoid going through this, right?"

Taylor nods.

Years of drinking have caught up with the 35-year-old. His liver has given out as have his kidneys. Taylor is dying.

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All that can save him now is a liver transplant. He was flown from Monument Health Rapid City Hospital in South Dakota to Nebraska Medical Center in hopes of being approved.

A nurse walks into Taylor's room asking about the barely touched breakfast tray.

"I got him to eat a couple of bites, that's about it. He was having tummy aches, so it's not a fun time to eat," David adds.

Taylor has good days and bad. Sometimes he's coherent, other times Taylor hallucinates. "Last week, he was talking up a storm," David says.

Today is a quiet day, but Taylor mumbles that he's not really hungry. He's nervous to hear from the doctors.

Taylor's gone through extensive testing, including blood work and a psychological evaluation. The transplant team will decide whether he's a candidate for a new liver. Taylor and David expect to hear the answer today.

Observing David, you wouldn't guess he's waiting for life or death news. He's calm, positive and tries to lift his son's spirits. David, a lifelong veterinarian, knows enough about medical issues to ask questions. He's Taylor's biggest advocate.

"For what he's going through, he's doing really quite well," David says. "When he's on a roll, he's on a good positive roll and he wants to help others, so it's beautiful."

### Alcohol-disease deaths skew younger

I met Taylor once before. Two years ago, we had dinner at his dad's, my neighbor in South Dakota's Black Hills.

Taylor has aged decades since then: hair thinning, face gaunt, body skinny. A tube snakes into his nose for nutrition.

A once strong, howling wolf tattooed on his left forearm now looks malnourished on its shrinking, yellow canvas. Taylor, a former wildland firefighter, weighed 190 pounds. Now his 6-foot-2 frame is down to about 120.

He's feeble, using a bedpan because he can't walk to the bathroom. The hospital staff tries. He's seen regularly by a physical therapist. The goal, someday, is to get Taylor to walk 100 feet. Today, they work on standing and taking a few side steps next to his bed. It's a process, but with the therapist holding on, Taylor stands.

"Nice job, dude. Very good," his therapist says. "Let's take a couple steps to your left, OK?"

Taylor steps forward.

"I want you to step to your left side. Yep, 'cause we're not moving forward, OK? Move that way," the therapist instructs him.

"I'm trying to." Taylor, confused and frustrated, says he has to go to the bathroom, ending what little



**Taylor Nielsen of Lead, S.D., lies in a hospital bed on March 27, 2024 in Omaha, Neb., where the 35-year-old is dying of alcohol-associated liver failure.** (Photo: Megan Luther/ South Dakota News Watch)



**David Nielsen of Lead, S.D., checks the bloated stomach of his son, Taylor Nielsen, on March 27, 2024, at Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, Neb. His liver is so damaged that fluid builds in his abdomen.** (Photo: Megan Luther/ South Dakota News Watch)

progress he's made.

Historically, most alcohol-associated liver disease deaths occurred in men in their 50s and older. But deaths are skewing younger.

For the first time, chronic liver disease is the leading cause of death of 30- to 39-year-old South Dakotans. Nearly all were caused by alcohol.

### **The beginning**

Taylor wasn't always a drinker. Growing up, he watched his mother struggle with alcohol and drugs, something he wanted to steer clear of.

But image is important to Taylor and he wanted to fit in. At summer house parties, he'd take a sip of beer, leave it and grab a second, wasting alcohol and annoying his best friend, Adam Bradsky.

"I remember talking to him like, 'Taylor, it's fine if you don't drink. Just don't waste the

beer.'"

They met in high school in Rapid City when Taylor decided to live with his dad. He grew up with his mother in Ohio and visited David in the summer. When he was 15, Taylor decided to stay.

Taylor's goofy with a great sense of humor. He's a confidant, who listens to Adam without judgement. "I don't think he ever betrayed my trust with any kind of secrets or anything that I ever told," Adam says.

They both ended up going to the University of South Dakota. Adam left with a law degree. Taylor left a year before graduation. Follow-through is not Taylor's strong suit.

It was after college when his friends and family grew concerned about his drinking. Adam vividly remembers the day he realized it was a problem. He stopped by Taylor's place in rural Lead, South Dakota, on a random Wednesday. Taylor was on a tractor, haying, drunk. It was noon.

Taylor remembers his downward spiral starting in 2017 after his mother took her own life. "I had to pick up my mom's ashes. And it really triggered me."

He reached for vodka.

South Dakota saw record liquor store sales during the pandemic, with \$126 million in 2021 sales when adjusted for inflation and seasons. The numbers don't account for sales at grocery stores, bars or restaurants.

While they've declined the past few years, sales have yet to go down to pre-pandemic levels. Last year, liquor sales were still up 20% from a decade ago.

### **Drinking and mental health**

Alcohol is by far the most commonly abused substance seen by Monument Health Rapid City Hospital. And it causes the most mortality and morbidity, says Stephen Tamang, M.D., a board-certified addiction medicine physician.



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“The parent wants it so bad. They’ll do anything. You know, ‘Can I fix this?’ And then they start realizing that they can’t. And then you feel like a failure.”

Kim Humphrey, CEO of Parents of Addicted Loved Ones

“Alcohol is particularly challenging because it’s prevalent. It’s relatively cheap, and it’s not in any way illegal. In fact, in some ways, it has a positive association,” he says.

Excessive drinking can permanently alter the brain. Alcohol becomes air, and an addict can’t get enough.

Sometimes a person gets sober after hitting rock bottom, the lowest point of their life. It’s unclear if Taylor has one. “We should’ve been there by now,” David says.

Taylor didn’t stop when his wife left, when he lost countless jobs or when his dad kicked him out of his home. He went to rehab and had short stays of sobriety. His longest: 260 days.

Long in 2021. “When I met him, he was vibrant. He was just beautiful, full of life. He was vigorous. He was sober,” she says.

His loved ones suspect Taylor also struggles with mental illness. Upwards of 80% of alcoholics have struggled with mental issues, whether that’s before or because of drinking. Taylor doesn’t remember ever being diagnosed.

“I have no (expletive) clue, but no one’s ever said anything of the countless doctors I’ve seen,” he says.

## A family disease

At their lowest, David called the sheriff to remove Taylor from his home after he broke in and wouldn’t leave. David threatened him with a restraining order and the two became estranged until this year when David got the call Taylor was hospitalized.

Addiction is a family disease. Parents try to do all they can to save their child, sometimes to their own detriment.

Kim Humphrey of Phoenix, a former police officer, and his wife watched both of their children struggle with addiction. It put a strain on their marriage and health.

“We were to the point of becoming very reclusive and not going out and such depression that, you know, we just didn’t want to do anything,” he says.

He and his wife started attending Parents of Addicted Loved Ones (PAL) support meetings. The non-profit offers educational resources and support for parents dealing with a child’s addiction. Kim eventually became the CEO to help other parents.

“The parent wants it so bad. They’ll do anything. You know, ‘Can I fix this?’ And then they start realizing that they can’t. And then you feel like a failure,” he says

Kim learned firsthand you can’t control another person.

“The sad part of it is, what you can do is limited. And so what can you do? Well, I’m never going to stop loving my sons. And when they’re ready for help, I’m there for them,” he says.

David says he knew his son would get to this point. He just thought Taylor would be older. “Seriously, I did.”

On his kitchen island, you’ll usually find David’s Bible open with highlighted passages and notes in the margins. It’s how he copes, compartmentalizing and through his strong faith and “God’s healing miracles, strength and love.”

The news

It's another March morning at Nebraska Medical Center. Taylor is quiet. He and David expected the decision yesterday but haven't heard from the doctors. "There's no communication," David says, thinking it isn't good news. He doesn't let Taylor in on his suspicions.

Most patients who need a liver aren't this young: Last year, the average age of a person listed for a potential transplant was 56.

Determining who receives a donated liver – or even gets on the waiting list – is a complex process. Many factors influence a candidate's chances, including their blood type, underlying diagnosis and medical urgency. Over the years, roughly 2 out of 3 candidates ultimately received a liver.

A hospital staffer walks into Taylor's room: "Hello. Hi. I'm with transport. We're going to be taking you down to dialysis."

Since his kidneys aren't working properly, Taylor needs dialysis to rid his blood of waste and extra fluid that builds up.

He's wheeled out of the room in his bed.

David waves goodbye. "Make your kidneys better, bud."

Minutes later, David gets a phone call – the phone call. After niceties are exchanged, the doctor says Taylor doesn't meet the criteria.

"I almost said, 'Oh, they just gave him a death sentence,' but I didn't do that," David says.

### The stigma and shame

The Nebraska Medical Center declined to answer questions about Taylor's case or liver transplants in general. It's one of the biggest liver transplant centers in the region, recording just over 600 transplants in almost six years, behind Mayo Clinic in Minnesota.

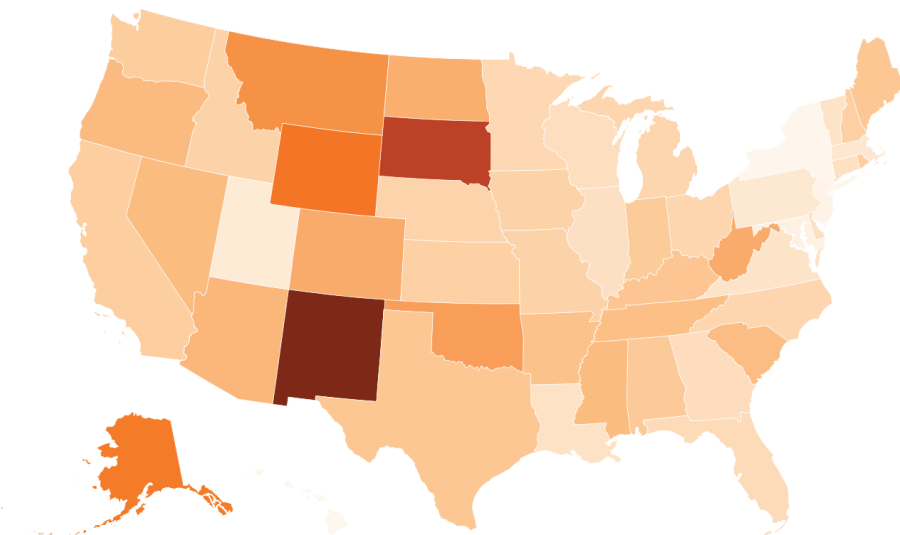
People like Taylor represent a growing share of liver transplant candidates. Thirty years ago, about a quarter of the candidates were listed with an alcohol-related liver disease. Last year, they represented nearly half. The majority of these patients ended up with a liver.

### Chronic liver disease/cirrhosis mortality by state per 100,000 people

SD has the second-highest of liver disease mortality in the country



0 40



Source: CDC • Graphic: Michael Klinski/SDNewsWatch

A Flourish map

There's a stigma, of course, but Jenn Jones of Aurora, Colorado, who almost died from alcohol-associated liver disease, is working to minimize that. She points out that doctors also approve new livers for those who suffer from overeating.

"There's not much difference between the two. It's just a choice of what we decide to put in our bodies," she says.

The shame patients go through is so overwhelming that Jenn founded Sober Livers, an organization to support those suffering from alcohol-associated liver disease, pre- and post-



“I think he knew that he was nearing the end of his life. He seemed to be doing as much as he could in the little bit of time that he had left.”

Lawrence County Sheriff's Office Deputy Megan Merwin,  
a friend of Taylor Nielsen's

transplant patients.

She hopes the general public will provide empathy. “As long as the person is willing to get help, stop drinking ... why would we not want that person a part of our society?”

There are no federally set guidelines for considering potential transplant candidates and it varies by transplant center. Some will not accept patients who are less than six months sober. A patient rejected by one hospital might be accepted by another. David's not giving up and contacts a friend at another facility.

He decides not to tell his son the bad news yet. He

doesn't want Taylor to give up.

### Father becomes caretaker

After multiple phone calls and networking, it's clear to David that Taylor needs to get healthier and log more sober days before doctors will consider him for a transplant.

So far he's been sober as long as he's been hospitalized: three months and 17 days.

In early June, he's well enough to come home and live in the Black Hills with David, who becomes his caretaker. “I don't exactly enjoy cleaning up poop for an hour, but there's no other option, so I just do it.” At 72, he didn't think he'd be taking care of his 35-year-old son. “I thought maybe the other way around.”

David doesn't think Taylor's drinking, but he's not completely following doctor's orders either.

On a July afternoon, Taylor and David decide to go fishing. It's been years since Taylor fly fished, something his dad does weekly.

Taylor drives his dad's Honda SUV to the edge of the pond on David's property. He still can't walk unassisted.

On his passenger seat is his bill from Nebraska Medical Center. The total for his four-week stay: \$219,980. Taylor only has to cover his Medicaid copay of \$50.

He finds it funny. “It's pretty cool because they were like money grabbers.”

Nebraska Medical Center discounted the bill by more than half, with South Dakota Medicaid paying \$97,000.

Taylor's tired today. Against his father's advice, Taylor spends the night in his car in nearby Deadwood, South Dakota, after hanging out with friends. “I think he thinks I drank last night, but I did not.”

David's ready to fish. Taylor needs to eat.

He grabs a take-out bag stacked on top of the car's backseat and digs into leftover shrimp fettuccine Alfredo from the night before. “Oh God, this smells so good.”

It's been sitting in his car since dinner and Alfredo isn't on his low sodium doctor-prescribed diet, which he says he's been following. “Except for this.” Pointing to the creamy pasta. “I don't give a (expletive).”

Taylor won't say the word but when asked if he's an alcoholic, he nods yes. It's something he has yet to acknowledge to his dad, even after all these years. Taylor has struggled throughout his life to take ac-



countability.

David focuses on tying a fly to his line, hoping to catch three large brown trout that have been eating smaller fish.

Taylor leans his head back in the green camping chair and closes his eyes. "Honestly, this is so nice." A clear fishing pond, with the Black Hills forest in the background is pretty serene.

Taylor loves the outdoors. He floods his Instagram with nature landscapes sprinkled in with a few foodie pics.

While Taylor relaxes, David continues to fish, casting back and forth, back and forth. "I think my goal for Taylor has changed," he says, quietly enough for Taylor not to hear.

Earlier this year, David hoped Taylor would get healthy and back to being a functional adult. "That seems to be far off, right now. Like way far off."

Taylor starts to fly fish, but he's a few inches short of reaching the water, so all he catches are weeds. Taylor has a goal too: "Take care of him," he says, pointing to David.

Dark clouds start rolling in accompanied by thunder.

"Let's get out of here before we get fried," David says

"I second that," Taylor replies, a small sign that he still wants to live.

Wearing his hospital socks, he struggles to get out of the camping chair and into the car. His old sweat-pants fall down, showing his diaper.

"I lost quite a bit of dignity in the hospital." Being poked, naked, using a bed pan, Taylor's willing to share it all for one reason.

"If it could help save one person, that's enough, right?"

## **'I have not been drinking a drop'**

Three days later, Taylor travels 45 minutes to Spearfish, South Dakota, to get dialysis but changes his mind. He decides to stay, and a friend gets him a motel room.

Over the next two weeks Taylor reaches out to a lot of contacts, asking for a ride or money, trying to negotiate them down. "Not even \$50," he texts. "\$10" two hours later. He may sound like a desperate man trying to buy a drink, but when he talks on the phone, Taylor's words don't slur.

Friends and family also don't believe he's drinking.

While he speaks coherently, Taylor's not always living in reality. He hangs around Walmart, saying he's looking for a job. He admittedly misses some dialysis appointments but isn't worried. Even though he can barely take two steps from his wheelchair, he buys hiking boots off of Facebook Marketplace.

Lawrence County Sheriff's Deputy Megan Merwin met Taylor during one of his ambulance calls. He's the youngest cirrhosis patient she's met in her decade in law enforcement. Off-duty they became friends.

"I think he knew that he was nearing the end of his life," she says. "He seemed to be doing as much as



**Taylor Nielsen shows his wolf tattoo on his left arm.** (Photo: Megan

Luther / SD News Watch)

he could in the little bit of time that he had left.”

That includes fishing. Megan takes Taylor to Orman Dam near Belle Fourche, South Dakota, multiple times to catch catfish.

On Thursday evening, July 25, Taylor’s on a mission and mad. He wants a ride to Belle Fourche, 18 minutes north. “Spearfish sucks. I get the cops called on me every day for no reason.”

There’s usually a reason. Emergency services are called sometimes by strangers, many times by Taylor himself. One time he called for an ambulance because he needed help sitting up in the motel bed.

Taylor maintains he’s sober. “I have not been drinking a drop.”

His dad arranges for a hospice bed, if he’s willing to go. “I’m not in bad health. I just want to get out of here.” Denial is a strong demon.

Taylor never makes it to Belle Fourche.

The next morning, he’s found unresponsive and rushed to Monument Health Spearfish Hospital.

Taylor never wakes up.

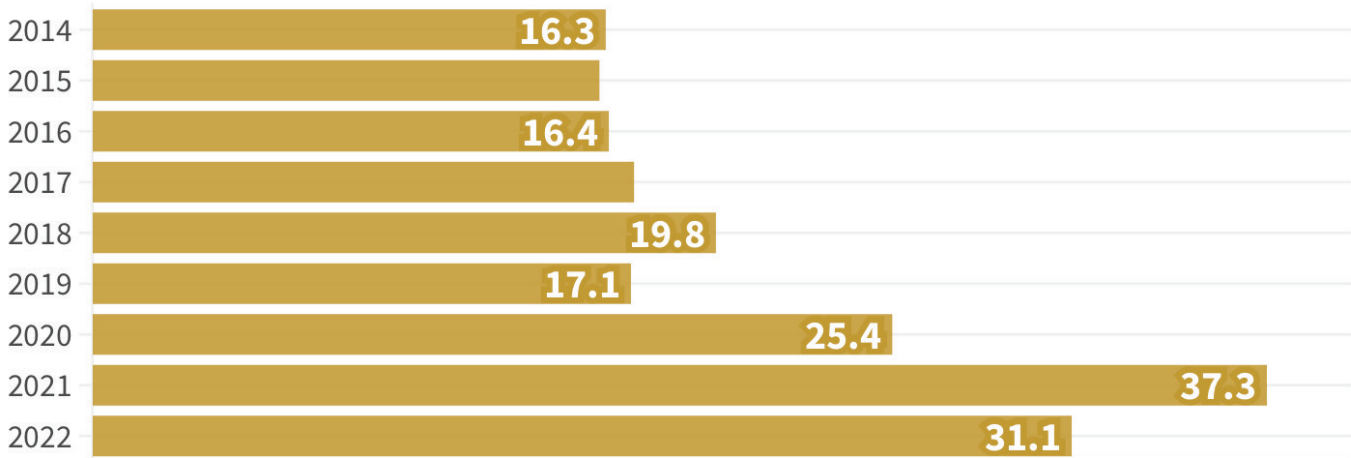
“He’s finally at peace,” David says.

*Editor’s note: Monument Health Rapid City Hospital’s public relations manager, Stephany Chalberg, also serves on the board of directors of South Dakota News Watch.*

This story was produced by South Dakota News Watch, an independent, nonprofit news organization. Read more in-depth stories at [sdnewswatch.org](http://sdnewswatch.org) and sign up for an email every few days to get stories as soon as they’re published. Contact Megan Luther at [megan.luther@sdnewswatch.org](mailto:megan.luther@sdnewswatch.org). Freelance journalist Cody Winchester contributed to this report.

## Chronic liver disease/cirrhosis mortality in SD

Per 100,000 people



Source: [CDC](http://CDC) • Graphic: Michael Klinski / South Dakota News Watch

A Flourish chart



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### Nonprofit launches \$10 million campaign for South Dakota parks and recreation areas

**BY: JOSHUA HAIAR - AUGUST 5, 2024 4:51 PM**

SIOUX FALLS — A foundation that helps fund outdoor recreation projects in South Dakota has launched a \$10 million fundraising campaign.

The five-year effort aims to support 28 projects across the state that would otherwise face delays due to budget constraints.

Representatives of the South Dakota Parks and Wildlife Foundation discussed the campaign at the Downtown Sioux Falls Rotary Club's Monday meeting at the Holiday Inn Sioux Falls City Centre. The foundation works with the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks to fund projects that improve outdoor recreational facilities and conserve wildlife habitats.

The campaign is titled "Great Places Don't Just Happen."

"Without the foundation's help, these projects are going to take years and years to happen," said Jeff VanMeeteren, GF&P director of parks and recreation.

The projects range from amphitheaters, hiking trail bridges and playgrounds to a proposed \$1 million west-side welcome center for Custer State Park.

Kevin Nyberg, foundation board member and president of the South Dakota Retailers Association, highlighted the economic impact of outdoor recreation in the state, which he said amounts to \$1.3 billion annually. He said that includes \$638 million from hunting, \$271 million from fishing and \$212 million from parks.

"Those businesses that benefit off the system, in my opinion, need to realize the system helped make them, and give back to the system," Nyberg said.

In addition to the campaign, the foundation is raising \$3 million for an expansion of the Outdoor Campus in Sioux Falls. The project will feature new indoor and outdoor archery ranges, a game processing space with a walk-in cooler, a meat smoking and grilling space, and an improved bird viewing area.

Past foundation projects include funding the new visitor center and renovation of the Peter Norbeck Outdoor Education Center at Custer State Park. The foundation has also supported the development of Good Earth State Park, and the expansions of Rapid City's Outdoor Campus and Palisades State Park near Garretson.

The foundation took in \$1.38 million in revenue in 2023 and spent \$4.5 million, leaving it with \$12.4 million in total assets. Kristina Coby, the foundation's executive development director, said those assets include land the foundation owns and makes money on through leasing agreements, and endowment principal that the foundation cannot touch.

#### Project list

Projects that would benefit from the South Dakota Parks and Wildlife Foundation's \$10 million campaign:

Mickelson Trail: Kaubisch Bridge replacement; Signage

Palisades State Park: Split Rock Creek bridge; Amphitheater; Playground surfacing

Fort Sisseton State Park: Displays; Playground; Visitor center; Amphitheater/Event stage

Hartford Beach State Park: Indoor fish cleaning station

Oakwood Lakes State Park: Education center

Lake Herman State Park: Education center

Lake Poinsett Recreation Area: Indoor fish cleaning station

Custer State Park: Welcome Center West



Good Earth State Park: Playground; Observation deck  
Walkers Point Recreation Area: Picnic shelter  
Lake Thompson Recreation Area: Picnic shelter  
Pickerel Lake Recreation Area: Picnic shelter  
Big Sioux Recreation Area: Picnic shelter; Amphitheater  
Adams Homestead: Playground additions  
Lewis and Clark Recreation Area: Playground  
Springfield Recreation Area: One to five-acre land acquisition  
Wall Lake Lakeside Use Area: Island access bridge  
Newton Hills State Park: Sargent Creek overlook platform  
Cow Creek Recreation Area: Playground  
Spring Creek Golf Course: Trail

*Joshua Haiar is a reporter based in Sioux Falls. Born and raised in Mitchell, he joined the Navy as a public affairs specialist after high school and then earned a degree from the University of South Dakota. Prior to joining South Dakota Searchlight, Joshua worked for five years as a multimedia specialist and journalist with South Dakota Public Broadcasting.*

## Black Hills National Forest proposes higher fees for motorized trails

**BY: SETH TUPPER - AUGUST 5, 2024 3:06 PM**

Amid a surge in the popularity of off-highway vehicle use, the Black Hills National Forest is proposing increased fees for motorized trail permits.

Forest officials announced the proposal Monday. Prices per vehicle would rise from \$20 to \$30 for a weekly permit, and from \$25 to \$50 for an annual permit.

Businesses that rent vehicles to users currently buy commercial permits for \$125 annually per vehicle; under the new proposal, the commercial permit would be eliminated and replaced with a \$10 daily fee on the user of the rental vehicle.

"Usage at recreation sites on the Black Hills National Forest has changed over the past 15-20 years," said Shawn Cochran, forest supervisor, in a news release. "An increase of fees is needed to meet public expectations and the increasing demands of recreation activities across the forest."

As recently as the early 2000s, there were few restrictions on off-road travel in the forest. Complaints about ruts and other damage to environmentally sensitive areas motivated a new travel management plan in 2010, and the issuance of motorized trail permits beginning in 2011.

That first year, the Black Hills National Forest sold 7,832 permits. The number has since risen beyond 30,000 permits annually, driven by the rising popularity of utility task vehicles, known as UTVs or side-by-sides.

The increased popularity of motorized trails has come with costs for the Forest Service, which has launched a trail ranger program and taken other actions in response to complaints about dust, noise, ruts, off-trail riding, and escaped cattle from riders failing to close gates after crossing public land that's leased for grazing.

The proposal announced by the Forest Service also includes higher usage fees for several popular attractions. Renting the Meeker Cabin would cost \$50 nightly (there is currently no fee), while the rental rate for the Summit Ridge Cabin would change from \$35 to \$100 nightly.

The Jenny Gulch Picnic Site and the Wrinkled Rock Climbing Area, both currently free, would each require a day fee of \$5 per vehicle.

The fee proposal will be reviewed by the Black Hills National Forest Advisory Board and the Wyoming Recreation Action Team, for a recommendation to the forest supervisor. If approved, fee increases would

take effect next year.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story has been updated since its original publication with additional information about the proposed daily motorized trail fee.

## How to comment on the proposed fee increases

Public comment on proposed fee increases in the Black Hills National Forest will be accepted until Nov. 29 through these methods:

Mail to Black Hills National Forest, Attention: Bradley Block – Recreation Program Manager, 1019 N 5th Street, Custer, SD 57730.

Email to [bradley.block@usda.gov](mailto:bradley.block@usda.gov).

Fill out an online form at <https://arcg.is/qyij80>.

Oral comments may be provided in person at the Black Hills National Forest to Bradley Block during normal business hours (Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mountain time) or by calling (605) 673-9200 and indicating you would like to provide comments on the proposed recreation fee changes.

*Seth is editor-in-chief of South Dakota Searchlight. He was previously a supervising senior producer for South Dakota Public Broadcasting and a newspaper journalist in Rapid City and Mitchell.*

## South Dakota farm real estate values increase by 6%

BY: SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - AUGUST 5, 2024 12:16 PM

The value of all farm land and buildings in South Dakota is up by 6% this year to an average of \$2,780 per acre, according to a new report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

That's an increase of \$150 per acre compared to last year.

The average value of cropland in the state is now \$4,350 per acre, and the average value of pastureland is \$1,270 per acre.

Land rental rates are also up. The USDA report says the average irrigated cropland rental rate is up \$6 to \$225 per acre, the average dryland cropland rental rate is up \$5 to \$131 per acre, and the average pasture rental rate is up \$1.50 to \$31.50 per acre.

## 'Republicans for Harris' rallies members of GOP to campaign for Democratic ticket

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA - AUGUST 5, 2024 11:23 AM

WASHINGTON — Vice President Kamala Harris' campaign over the weekend launched a "Republicans for Harris" initiative, as her campaign looks to court moderate GOP voters and others who don't support former President Donald Trump's reelection bid for the White House.

The Harris team said the effort will be a "campaign within a campaign," in which prominent Republicans will aim to attract moderates, independents and Republicans who voted for former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley when she challenged Trump for the nomination. While Haley once stated she would never vote for Trump, she has since said she would.

The GOP drive will kick off on Monday with events in battleground states such as Arizona, North Carolina and Pennsylvania.

National Director of Republican Outreach Austin Weatherford said in a statement that Trump's backing of the far-right playbook Project 2025 is "toxic to the millions of Republicans who no longer believe the party of Donald Trump represents their values."

Weatherford, former chief of staff for former GOP U.S. Rep. Adam Kinzinger of Illinois, who was a vocal critic of Trump, said the Harris campaign will work to earn the support of "Republicans who care about defending democracy and restoring decency — all of which would be torn away in a second Trump presidency."

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## Coalitions, endorsements

As Harris starts her surprise sprint to the November elections as the likely Democratic presidential nominee, following President Joe Biden suspending his campaign in late July, her campaign has quickly built coalitions ranging from "White Dudes for Harris" to "Young Republicans for Harris," which is being led by Reed Howard.

She's also been quick to rack up endorsements from unions such as the hospitality's union UNITE HERE and the National Association of Social Workers.

The "Republicans for Harris" program will have a digital campaign that features testimonials from Republicans who are supporting Harris and they will make their case to Republicans about voting for her.

"I was a proud Republican, but Donald Trump is unfit to lead our nation," Republican former New Jersey Gov. Christine Todd Whitman said in a statement. "'Republicans for Harris' will be an important way for us to bring that message to the voters who will decide this election."

In North Carolina, former state Supreme Court Justice Bob Orr will lead the organizing efforts of "Republicans for Harris" in the state.

"As we approach the final days of this election, there has never been a more important time for Republicans, former Republicans and unaffiliated voters who lean Republican, to come together and put country over party by working to elect Kamala Harris and stopping Donald Trump," Orr said in a statement.

## Former members of Congress

Some of those GOP endorsements include former members of Congress such as Kinzinger; Rod Chandler of Washington; Tom Coleman of Missouri; Dave Emery of Maine; Wayne Gilchrest, who was a GOP member from until 2009, of Maryland; Jim Greenwood of Pennsylvania; John LeBoutillier of New York; Susan Molinari of New York; Jack Quinn of New York; Denver Riggleman of Virginia; Claudine Schneider of Rhode Island; Christopher Shays of Connecticut; Peter Smith of Vermont; Alan Steelman of Texas; David Trott of Michigan; and Joe Walsh of Illinois.

The program also includes former Trump officials such as former White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham and Olivia Troye, a former national security adviser to then-Vice President Mike Pence.

"I might not agree with Vice President Kamala Harris on everything, but I know that she will fight for our freedom, protect our democracy, and represent America with honor and dignity on the world stage," Grisham said in a statement.

"I encourage other Trump administration officials who saw the tyrant we worked for in office to speak out and stand with Kamala Harris this November to keep integrity in the White House and ensure democracy for our country," she continued.

Several former governors are also part of the coalition, such as Jim Edgar of Illinois; Bill Weld of Massachusetts; and former Lt. Governor Geoff Duncan of Georgia.

Over the weekend, during a campaign rally, Trump attacked popular Georgia Republicans such as Gov. Brian Kemp and Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger. Both men are Republicans who resisted Trump's pressure campaign to overturn the 2020 election results, but they have not given their support to Harris.

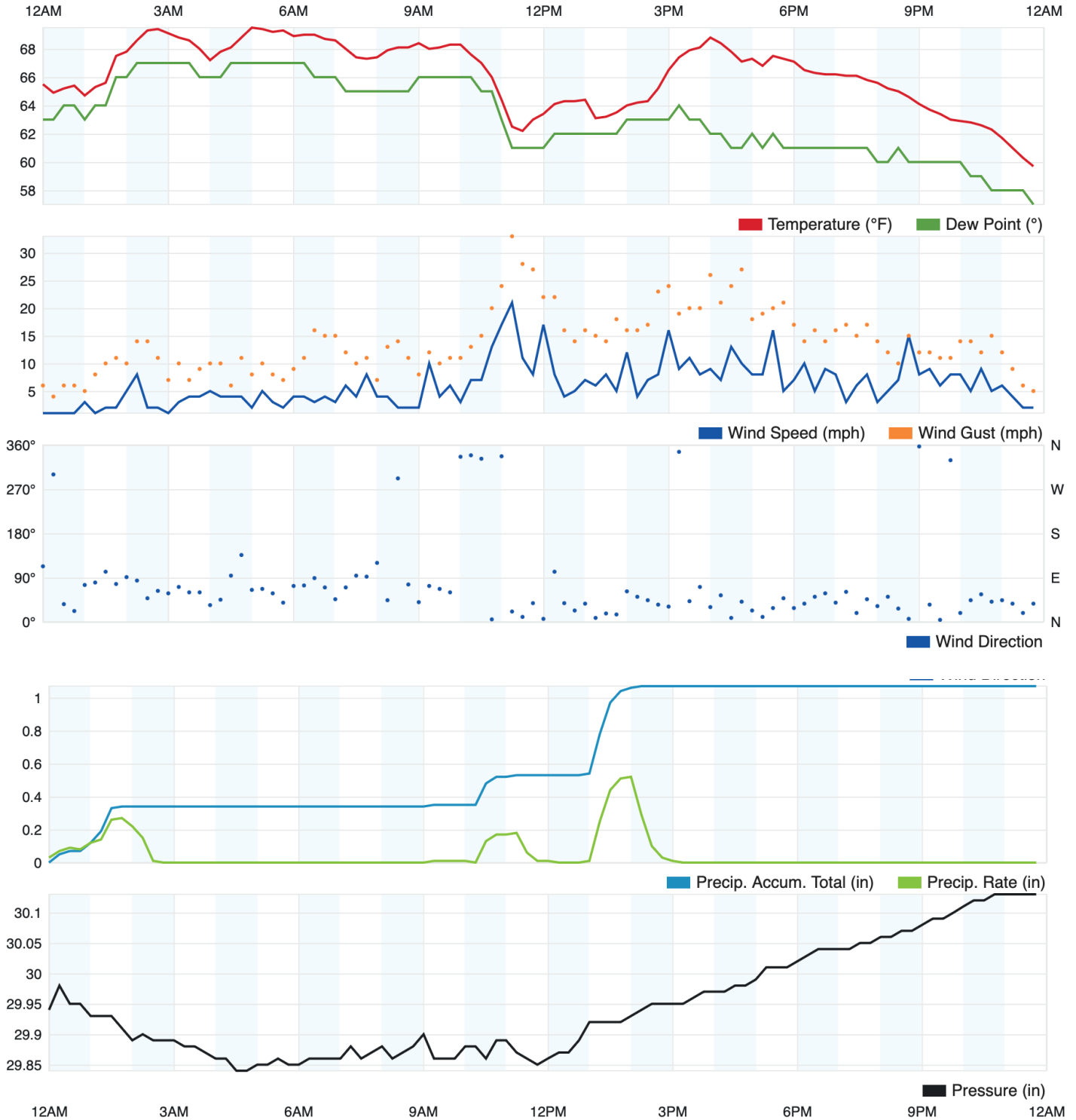
*Ariana covers the nation's capital for States Newsroom. Her areas of coverage include politics and policy, lobbying, elections and campaign finance.*



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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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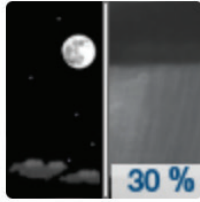
Today



High: 76 °F

Patchy Fog  
then Sunny

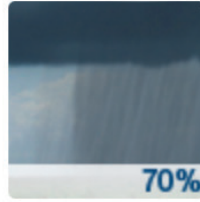
Tonight



Low: 60 °F

Mostly Clear  
then Chance  
Showers

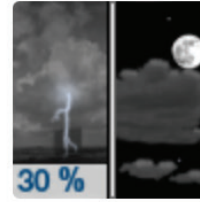
Wednesday



High: 77 °F

Showers  
Likely

Wednesday  
Night



Low: 54 °F

Chance  
T-storms then  
Partly Cloudy

Thursday



High: 69 °F

Sunny

Today



Highs: 72-81°F  
Patchy fog this morning.

Wednesday



Highs: 73-85°F

**There is a 40-70% chance of  
showers and thunderstorms tonight  
through Wednesday night.**

NWS Aberdeen, SD



Today will feature dry conditions with highs in the 70s and low 80s. A low pressure system will track across the area tonight through Wednesday, bringing increasing chances for showers and thunderstorms. Severe weather is not expected.

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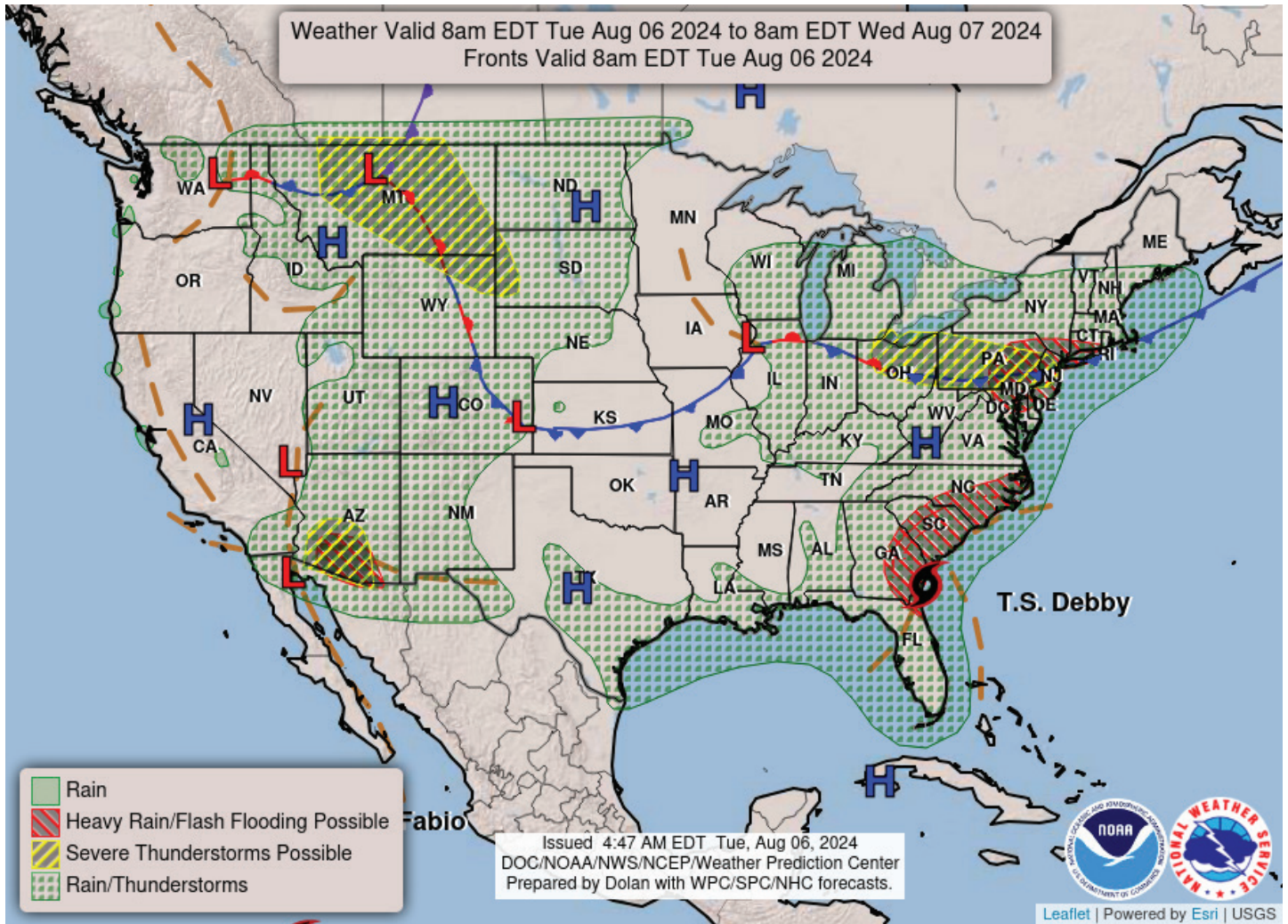
## Yesterday's Groton Weather

**High Temp: 70 °F at 2:36 AM**  
**Low Temp: 60 °F at 11:29 PM**  
**Wind: 33 mph at 11:08 AM**  
**Precip: : 1.07**

Day length: 14 hours, 35 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 108 in 1941  
Record Low: 44 in 1902  
Average High: 84  
Average Low: 59  
Average Precip in Aug.: .44  
Precip to date in Aug.: 1.10  
Average Precip to date: 14.54  
Precip Year to Date: 15.99  
Sunset Tonight: 8:56:04 pm  
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:21:47 am





## Today in Weather History

August 6, 1962: Wind damaged farm buildings and hail damaged crops over a large area. The area affected was northern Faulk, portions of Spink, Northern Clark, Codington, and Grant, along with Day County.

August 6, 1969: During the day and evening hours, two relatively large storms brought destructive weather to much of Minnesota. The northern storm area moved in from North Dakota between Fargo and Grand Forks. The southern storm rapidly developed north of Wadena. These two storms combined to cause twelve tornadoes, two vast areas of wind and hail damage, and one waterspout. The storms killed 15 people, injured 106, and caused 4.8 million dollars in property and public utility damage.

August 6, 1969: The first report of high winds was southeast of Piedmont with gusts of 65 to 70 mph estimated by a National Weather Service employee. Damage in that area included several downed trees and leveled gardens. As the storm moved east, large hail was reported. The first wind gust at Ellsworth AFB was 89 mph at 1918 MST on the northwest end of the runway. By 1925 MST, sustained winds were over 50 mph for nearly 10 minutes, and the peak gust was 114 mph. The sensor on the southeast end of the runway, 2.5 miles away, recorded a wind gust of 114 mph at 1929 MST. The damage on the base included several large trees blown over and snapped in half and roof damage to base housing units. A few tents set up on the taxiways for an air show were blown around, but not significantly damaged. A survey by base meteorologists indicated the main downburst winds hit over open prairie surrounding the runway, where there are no trees or structures. Also between 1920 and 1930 MST, a meteorology student estimated winds between 70 and 80 mph at Box Elder, where gardens were leveled, and wooden fences and roofs were damaged.

1890 - Thunderstorms left four inches of hail covering the ground in Adair County and Union County in Iowa. The hail drifted into six foot mounds, and in some places remained on the ground for twenty- six days. (The Weather Channel)

1918 - Unusually hot weather began to overspread the Atlantic Coast States, from the Carolinas to southern New England. The temperature soared to an all-time record high of 106 degrees at Washington D.C., and Cumberland and Keedysville hit 109 degrees to establish a state record for Maryland. Temperatures were above normal east of the Rockies that month, with readings much above normal in the Lower Missouri Valley. Omaha NE reached 110 degrees. (David Ludlum)

1959 - A bucket survey showed that thunderstorms dropped 16.70 inches of rain on parts of Decatur County IA. The total was accepted as Iowa's 24 hour rainfall record. (The Weather Channel)

1986 - Evening thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 100 mph at Winner SD damaging two hundred homes. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1987 - Afternoon thunderstorms deluged Milwaukee, WI, with 6.84 inches of rain, including more than five inches in two hours, breaking all previous rainfall records for the city. Floodwaters were four feet deep at the Milwaukee County Stadium, and floodwaters filled the basement of the main terminal at the airport. Flooding caused 5.9 million dollars damage, and claimed the life of one person. Death Valley, CA, reported a morning low of 97 degrees. A midday thunderstorm deluged Birmingham AL with nearly six inches of rain in one hour. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Severe thunderstorms produced large hail and damaging winds in Pennsylvania and New York State. A cold front crossing the northwestern U.S. produced wind gusts to 66 mph at Livingston MT. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front produced severe weather from northwestern Texas to the Southern Appalachians, and in the northeastern U.S. There were 136 reports of large hail or damaging winds during the day and evening. Thunderstorms in the Southern Plains Region produced tennis ball size hail northwest of Buffalo OK, and wind gusts to 100 mph at Pampa TX. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1993: Virginia experienced its worst tornado outbreak ever as 18 tornadoes ripped through the state in 5 hours. The most devastating tornado caused severe damage in the historic part of Petersburg. The storm then moved on to Pocahontas Island and into Colonial Heights. There, the storm ripped apart a WalMart store, killing three people and injuring nearly 200. The F4 twister was the first known violent tornado in Virginia history. It killed a total of 4 people and injured 246 along its 12-mile path. Total damages were near \$50 million.



## FINDING LIFE'S SECRETS

Charlie Brown was having a serious conversation with Lucy in one of the "Peanuts" cartoons. Said Charlie Brown, "I've made a giant step forward in unraveling the mysteries of the Old Testament, Lucy!"

"What's that?" asked Lucy, bursting with interest.

"I started reading it," he replied.

Many people view the Bible as a collection of fables, myths or tales and unintelligent stories about a god who hides himself in deep, unfathomable messages. Some claim it is a book beyond the ability of humans to understand its truth. True, it is a book written by humans, but it is not a "human book." It is the story of God making Himself known through Himself, through words and "The Word," and His beloved Son. It is not beyond the ability of humans to understand its contents. God Himself will make its message clear when people ask Him to speak to them through His Holy Spirit.

Through the Holy Spirit, God revealed His Person and plan of redemption and reconciliation - the Gospel Message. The authors of God's revelation in Scripture were inspired by His Spirit to speak on His behalf. God wanted to make Himself known because He wants us to know Him, to love Him and to trust Him.

If we want to know and understand God we need, as Charlie Brown did, to "start reading" His Word.

Prayer: You have spoken to us, Lord, through Your Word. If we seek Your truth and want to know You and please You with our lives, Your Word will show us how. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

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

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The following will be used for your log-in information.

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Password \_\_\_\_\_

Pay with Paypal. Type the following into your browser window:

[paypal.me/paperpaul](https://paypal.me/paperpaul)

Pay with Venmo: [@paperpaul](https://venmo.com/paperpaul) Phone Number to Confirm: 7460



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## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:  
08.02.24

6 7 24 44 54 13

MegaPlier: 4x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$374,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 41 Mins 33 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:  
08.05.24

13 21 29 33 38 2

All Star Bonus: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$6,440,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 16 Hrs 56 Mins 33 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:  
08.05.24

20 26 28 33 44 9

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$7,000/week**

NEXT DRAW: 17 Hrs 11 Mins 34 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:  
08.03.24

1 14 23 27 31

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$58,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 11 Mins 34 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:  
08.05.24

2 18 31 45 60 8

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$10,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 40 Mins 33 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:  
08.05.24

29 42 44 51 54 12

Power Play: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$185,000,000**

NEXT DRAW: 1 Days 17 Hrs 40 Mins 33 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
- Cancelled:** 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
- 11/16/2024 Groton American Legion "Turkey Raffle" 6:30-11:30pm
- 11/28/2024 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm
- 12/01/2024 Groton Snow Queen Contest, 4:30 p.m.
- 12/07/2024 Olive Grove 8th Annual Holiday Party & Tour of Homes with Live & Silent Auctions 6pm-close
- 04/12/2025 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt at the City Park 10am Sharp
- 05/03/2025 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
- 05/26/2025 Memorial Day Services Groton Union Cemetery with lunch at Legion Post #39, 12pm
- 07/04/2025 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 07/13/2025 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm
- 09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm
- 10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm
- 11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm

## News from the **AP** Associated Press

### **South Dakota court decision threatens abortion rights measure on November ballot**

By JACK DURA Associated Press

The South Dakota Supreme Court has reversed a judge's ruling from last month that dismissed a lawsuit aiming to remove an abortion rights initiative from the November ballot.

The court on Friday reversed the order of dismissal and sent the case back for further proceedings. The anti-abortion group Life Defense Fund had appealed Judge John Pekas's ruling that dismissed its lawsuit seeking to invalidate the measure. The group alleged myriad wrongdoing related to petition circulators.

Meanwhile, South Dakota's top election official has an Aug. 13 deadline to inform county auditors of what measures will be on the November ballot.

In a statement, Life Defense Fund co-chair Leslee Unruh said the group is thrilled the court expedited the case and sent it back to the lower court.

"(Measure leader) Rick Weiland and his paid posse have broken laws, tricked South Dakotans into signing their abortion petition, left petitions unattended, and much more. Dakotans for Health illegally gathered signatures to get Amendment G on the ballot, therefore this measure should not be up for a vote this November," she said.

Weiland said, "This is just an ongoing effort by the Life Defense Fund and the right-to-life lobby to stop and impede voters' right to weigh in on this measure, and they continue, and have for almost 18 months, to do everything that they can think of, now, to kick it off the ballot."

Measure backers submitted about 54,000 petition signatures in May. Secretary of State Monae Johnson's office later validated the measure for the ballot.

The measure would bar the state from regulating "a pregnant woman's abortion decision and its effectuation" in the first trimester, but it would allow second-trimester regulations "only in ways that are reasonably related to the physical health of the pregnant woman."

The constitutional amendment would allow the state to regulate or prohibit abortion in the third trimester, "except when abortion is necessary, in the medical judgment of the woman's physician, to preserve the life or health of the pregnant woman."

South Dakota outlaws abortion as a felony crime except in instances to save the life of the mother, under a trigger law that took effect in 2022 after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the constitutional right to abortion.

Abortion-rights supporters have prevailed on all seven statewide abortion ballot questions since the Dobbs decision. Voters in several other states are set to weigh in as well later this year.

### **Israel-Hamas war latest: Palestinians killed in West Bank as world leaders try to avoid regional war**

By The Associated Press undefined

Eight Palestinians were killed, including four teenagers, and another seven were wounded by Israeli fire during military raids in the occupied West Bank, Palestinian officials said Tuesday, as world leaders try to stop tensions in the Middle East from boiling over into a regional war.

Israeli airstrike on a village in the Lebanon's south killed four people, the country's Health Ministry said Tuesday. It was not immediately clear if the dead were civilians or militants. The Lebanese militant group Hezbollah said it launched a drone attack early Monday on northern Israel that the Israeli military said wounded two Israeli troops.

Israel and Hezbollah have exchanged near-daily strikes for the past 10 months during the war in Gaza.

Leaders in Egypt and Turkey say they are exhausting all avenues possible to prevent the Israel-Hamas



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war from becoming a wider regional conflict after the killings of a senior Hezbollah commander in Lebanon and Hamas' top political leader in Iran. But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told his Cabinet over the weekend that Israel is already in a "multi-front war" with Iran and its proxies.

The only corridor for humanitarian aid to enter southern Gaza has been shut down, apparently because of fighting in the area. The Palestinian territory has been plunged into a severe humanitarian crisis in the war ignited by Hamas' Oct. 7 attack into Israel.

Here's the latest:

The only humanitarian air corridor into southern Gaza is shut down

JERUSALEM — The only corridor for humanitarian aid to enter southern Gaza has been shut down, apparently because of fighting in the area.

The Israeli military said that the Kerem Shalom crossing was open, but the humanitarian route leading from the crossing into the city of Rafah was closed Tuesday until further notice.

Hamas' armed wing said it attacked an Israeli tank in the area. It is not possible to confirm battlefield reports in Gaza.

The Palestinian territory has been plunged into a severe humanitarian crisis in the war ignited by Hamas' Oct. 7 attack into Israel. The vast majority of Gaza's population of 2.3 million have been displaced by the fighting, often multiple times, and hundreds of thousands are sheltering in crowded, squalid tent camps. International experts said in June that Gaza was at "high risk" of famine.

Aid groups say efforts to bring in desperately needed food and supplies have been hindered by Israeli restrictions, ongoing fighting and the breakdown of law and order.

An Israeli strike on a village in south Lebanon kills 4, Health Ministry says

BEIRUT — Lebanon's Health Ministry says an Israeli airstrike on a village in the country's south killed four people. The ministry said Tuesday's airstrike targeted a home in the village of Maifadoun near the market town of Nabatiye.

It was not immediately clear if the dead were civilians or militants.

Since early October, Hezbollah began attacking Israeli military posts along the border calling it a backup front for their Palestinian allies in the Gaza Strip. Since then, more than 500 people have been killed in Lebanon, including around 90 civilians. On the Israeli side, 22 soldiers and 24 civilians have been killed.

An Israeli officer is stabbed on the outskirts of Jerusalem, Israeli police say

JERUSALEM — Israeli police say a stabbing at a checkpoint on the outskirts of Jerusalem lightly wounded one Border Police officer.

Police said that the attack occurred after Israeli officers at the checkpoint asked passengers to disembark from a bus for what it called a "routine check." One of the passengers then stabbed a Border Police officer with a screwdriver.

Military Police immediately shot and killed the attacker, police said without identifying the assailant. Israel's rescue services said the 20-year-old female officer wounded in the attack was fully conscious and was being transferred to the hospital.

Violence has surged in the occupied West Bank since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack triggered the war in Gaza. More than 600 Palestinians have been killed, mostly in military raids, gun battles between the army and militants, and violent protests. Palestinians have carried out a number of attacks against Israelis, including stabbings at checkpoints.

8 Palestinians are killed and 7 wounded in Israeli raids in the West Bank

RAMALLAH, West Bank — Palestinian officials say eight Palestinians were killed, including four teenagers, and another seven were wounded by Israeli fire during military raids in the occupied West Bank.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said Tuesday that four people, including two 19-year-olds and a 14-year-old, were killed in an overnight raid in the village of Aqaaba in the northern West Bank. It said another four people, including an 18-year-old, were killed in an Israeli strike on a vehicle in Jenin — a frequent flashpoint — where the Islamic Jihad militant group said its fighters were battling the army.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military.

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Israel has carried out near-daily military raids across the West Bank since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack out of Gaza triggered the ongoing war there. Palestinians from the West Bank have also carried out a number of attacks on Israelis.

The Health Ministry says over 600 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire in the West Bank since the start of the war. Most were killed during military arrest raids and violent protests.

Israel captured the West Bank, along with Gaza and east Jerusalem, in the 1967 Mideast war. The Palestinians want all three territories for their future state. The 3 million Palestinians in the West Bank live under seemingly open-ended Israeli military rule, with the Western-backed Palestinian Authority exercising limited control over population centers. Over 500,000 Jewish settlers, who live in scores of settlements across the territory that most of the international community views as illegal or illegitimate, have Israeli citizenship.

Australia's prime minister condemns Iranian ambassador's comments on social media as 'abhorrent'

SYDNEY — Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Tuesday condemned as "abhorrent" an Iranian ambassador's social media comment on Israel.

Albanese said ambassador Ahmad Sadeghi had been called in for a meeting with Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade officials over his recent post on the social media platform X.

Sadeghi cites Hamas spiritual leader Ahmed Yassin advocating that "wiping out the Zionist plague out of the holy lands of Palestine happens no later than 2027." Sadeghi added: "Looking forward to such a heavenly & divine promise Inshaa-Allah." The Arabic expression means "if God wills."

Albanese told reporters: "I make it clear: There's no place for the sort of comments that were made online on social media by the Iranian ambassador."

"They're abhorrent. And they are hateful, they are antisemitic and they have no place," Albanese added.

Asked by a reporters if the ambassador should be expelled from Australia, Albanese did not directly answer. The Iranian Embassy in Australia later told The Associated Press in an email that Sadeghi's post "has nothing to do with Jewish People, anti-Semitism or raising hate speech or violent ways."

## Japan's share benchmark soars nearly 11% a day after massive sell-offs that shook Wall Street

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index closed more than 10% higher on Tuesday, a day after it set markets tumbling in Europe and on Wall Street. Other markets in Asia also rebounded, but more moderately, appearing to settle somewhat after the rollercoaster ride that started the week.

The scary Monday started with a plunge abroad reminiscent of 1987's crash that swept around the world and pummeled Wall Street with more steep losses, as fears worsened about a slowing U.S. economy.

The Nikkei gained nearly 11% early Tuesday and bounced throughout the day to close up 3,217.04 points at 34,675.46 as investors snapped up bargains after the 12.4% rout of the day before.

On Monday, the S&P 500 dropped 3% for its worst day in nearly two years, closing at 5,186.33. The Dow Jones Industrial Average reeled by 1,033 points, or 2.6%, to 38,703.27, while the Nasdaq composite slid 3.4% to 16,200.08 as Apple, Nvidia and other Big Tech companies that used to be the stars of the stock market continued to wilt.

The drops were the latest in a global sell-off that began last week, and it was the first chance for traders in Tokyo to react to Friday's report showing U.S. employers slowed their hiring last month by much more than economists expected. That was the latest piece of data on the U.S. economy to come in weaker than expected, and it's all raised fear the Federal Reserve has pressed the brakes on the U.S. economy by too much for too long through high interest rates in hopes of stifling inflation.

A report Monday by the Institute for Supply Management said growth for U.S. services businesses was a touch stronger than expected, led by the arts, entertainment and recreation sectors, along with accommodations and food services.

Professional investors cautioned that some technical factors could be amplifying the neck-snapping losses. South Korea's Kospi index careened 8.8% lower, and bitcoin dropped below \$54,000 on Monday

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from more than \$61,000 on Friday. Even gold, which has a reputation for offering safety during tumultuous times, slipped about 1%.

On Tuesday, nearly all markets in Asia aside from Singapore saw gains. The Kospi jumped 4.3% to 2,546.64. Hong Kong's Hang Seng index was up 0.5% at 16,775.65 And in Australia, the S&P/ASX 200 edged 0.3% higher, to 7,677.50.

Taiwan's Taiex was up 1.2% after plunging 8.4% the day before. The Shanghai Composite index, largely bypassed by Monday's drama, was up just over 1 point, at 2,861.87.

Monday's meltdowns reflected fears that damage to the economy from prolonged high interest rates has been so severe that the Federal Reserve will have to cut rates in an emergency meeting, before its next scheduled decision on Sept. 18. The yield on the two-year Treasury, which closely tracks expectations for the Fed, briefly sank below 3.70% during the morning from 3.88% late Friday and from 5% in April. It later recovered and pulled back to 3.89%.

"The Fed could ride in on a white horse to save the day with a big rate cut, but the case for an intermeeting cut seems flimsy," said Brian Jacobsen, chief economist at Annex Wealth Management. "Those are usually reserved for emergencies, like COVID, and an unemployment rate of 4.3% doesn't really seem like an emergency."

The U.S. economy is still growing so a recession is far from certain. The U.S. stock market is still up a healthy amount for the year, with double-digit percentage gains for the S&P 500, the Dow and the Nasdaq Composite.

Some of Wall Street's recent declines may simply be air coming out of a stock market that romped to dozens of all-time highs this year, in part on a frenzy around artificial-intelligence technology. Critics have been saying for a while that the stock market looked expensive after prices rose faster than corporate profits.

Expectations for earnings are still high, with growth for S&P 500 profits this past quarter looking to be the strongest since 2021.

Upcoming U.S. elections could further scramble things: apart from the potential impact of policies that follow the vote, market gyrations could affect the election itself.

A recession would likely to put Vice President Kamala Harris on the defensive, but slower growth would sap inflation. That would oblige former President Donald Trump to focus on ways to revive the economy instead of focusing on higher prices.

The Bank of Japan's move last week to raise its main interest rate from nearly zero last week was another factor driving Monday's plunge in Tokyo. Higher rates can boost the value of the Japanese yen, but oblige traders to scramble out of deals where they had borrowed money for virtually no cost in Japan and invested it elsewhere around the world.

On Tuesday, the dollar was worth 145.33 yen, up from 144.17 yen late Monday.

Surging prices for shares in Big Tech companies, like Apple, Nvidia and others known as the "Magnificent Seven" faltered last month on worries prices had overshot expectations for their future growth. Underwhelming profits from Tesla and Alphabet added to the pessimism.

Apple fell 4.8% Monday after Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway disclosed that it had slashed its ownership stake in the iPhone maker.

Nvidia, the chip company that's become the poster child of Wall Street's AI bonanza, fell 6.4%. Analysts cut their profit forecasts for the company after a report from The Information said Nvidia's new AI chip is delayed. Recent selling has trimmed Nvidia's gain for the year to nearly 103% from 170% in the middle of June.

Alphabet, fell 4.4% after a U.S. judge ruled Google's search engine has been illegally exploiting its dominance to quash competition and stifle innovation.

Other worries also are weighing on the market. The Israel-Hamas war and other global hotspots could cause sharp swings for the price of oil.

Early Tuesday, U.S. benchmark crude oil was up \$1.18 at \$74.12 per barrel and Brent crude, the inter-



national standard, advanced \$1.00 to \$77.30 per barrel.

The euro rose to \$1.0956 from \$1.0954.

## **Hiroshima governor says nuclear disarmament must be tackled as a pressing issue, not an ideal**

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Hiroshima officials urged world leaders Tuesday to stop relying on nuclear weapons as deterrence and take immediate action toward abolishment — not as an ideal, but to remove the risk of atomic war amid conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East and rising tensions in East Asia.

They commented as Hiroshima remembered its atomic bombing 79 years ago at the end of World War II.

The memorial comes days after Japan and the U.S. reaffirmed Washington's commitment to "extended deterrence," which includes atomic weapons, to protect its Asian ally. That is a shift from Japan's past reluctance to openly discuss the sensitive issue as the world's only country to have suffered atomic attacks.

Hiroshima Gov. Hidehiko Yuzaki said nuclear-armed nations and supporters of atomic deterrence "deliberately ignore ... the fact that once people invented a weapon, they used it without exception."

"As long as nuclear weapons exist, they will surely be used again someday," Yuzaki said in his address at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

"Nuclear weapons abolition is not an ideal to achieve far in the future. Instead, it is a pressing and real issue that we should desperately engage in at this moment since nuclear problems involve an imminent risk to human survival," he said.

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui said Russia's war on Ukraine and the worsening conflict between Israel and Palestinians are "deepening distrust and fear among nations" and reinforcing a view that use of force in settling conflict is unavoidable.

The atomic bomb dropped by the United States on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, destroyed the city, killing 140,000 people. A second bomb dropped three days later on Nagasaki killed 70,000 more. Japan surrendered on Aug. 15, ending World War II and Japan's nearly half-century aggression in Asia.

About 50,000 people at the ceremony observed a minute of silence with the sound of a peace bell at 8:15 a.m., the time when a U.S. B-29 dropped the bomb on the city. Hundreds of white doves, considered symbols of peace, were released.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who attended the ceremony, said global conflicts and divided views over approaches to nuclear disarmament make achieving that goal "all the more challenging," but pledged to do his utmost in pursuing "realistic and practical measures" to build momentum within the international community.

His critics say it is a hollow promise because Japan relies on the U.S. nuclear umbrella for protection and has been rapidly expanding its military.

Japan, the United States and other regional allies have been stepping up security cooperation in response to a more assertive China and the growing nuclear and missile threats from North Korea. Japan has sought stronger U.S. protection by its nuclear capability.

Many survivors of the bombings have lasting injuries and illnesses resulting from the explosions and radiation exposure and have faced discrimination in Japan.

As of March, 106,823 survivors — 6,824 fewer than a year ago, and now with an average age of 85.58 — are certified as eligible for government medical support, according to the Health and Welfare Ministry. Many others, including those who say they were victims of the radioactive "black rain" that fell outside the initially designated areas of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are still without support.

Hiroshima officials called on Kishida's government to do more to provide support and address their wishes.

The aging survivors, known as "hibakusha," continue to push for a nuclear arms ban as they desperately campaign to have their effort kept alive by younger generations.

## Sierra Leone not long ago still chained mental health patients. A transformation is underway

By KEMO CHAM Associated Press

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone (AP) — Abdul Jalloh was the only practicing psychiatrist in Sierra Leone when he took over the country's sole psychiatric hospital on the outskirts of the capital. Now six years later, the young doctor is leading a transformation of mental health services in the West African nation.

He abolished the practice of chaining patients to their beds, and has worked hard to attract new talent with the help of a U.S.-based nonprofit that has invested millions of dollars, along with Sierra Leone's government.

The hospital now has three fully qualified psychiatrists and seven doctors in a new residency training program, the first in the country's history. The hospital has also added nine specialized mental health nurses, along with addiction professionals, clinical psychologists and occupational therapists for a total of 135 staff.

During a recent Associated Press visit, an Afrobeats song played during a young men's football game in the courtyard. All were patients, many undergoing treatment for drug addiction.

The scene would have been unthinkable before Jalloh took over.

The hospital was once known among locals as the "Crase Yard," or yard for crazy people. Now it's known as the Sierra Leone Psychiatric Teaching Hospital. It has helped give the facility, the oldest of its kind in sub-Saharan Africa, a new reputation.

"We have been able to change the face of this infrastructure," Jalloh said in an interview. "From a place that people were ashamed to bring their family members, a place that even health workers were afraid to come and work ... to a place that the country is proud of."

The transformation has been backed by the U.S.-based health nonprofit Partners In Health that has invested millions in rehabilitating the hospital including providing training, equipment and services. A new building opened in mid-June as a rehabilitation center for drug users.

But there is little professional medical help for those living in the rest of the country beyond Freetown. The Ministry of Health established units for mental health in all 14 districts of the country almost a decade ago, but few function as intended due to a lack of trained staff and other resources.

Many people still go to traditional healers or religious figures for help, as many mental health conditions are associated with spiritual or demonic forces.

Sierra Leone's population is still scarred from a more than decade-long civil war that began in the 1990s. Widespread unemployment, poverty and other hardship also takes a toll on mental health, helping to contribute to soaring rates of addiction to a locally produced drug known as kush.

There are also wider systemic challenges to mental health services.

Joshua Abioseh Duncan, the head of the Mental Health Coalition of Sierra Leone, a group that advocates for mental health, said the long overdue review of the country's 1902 Lunacy Act that stigmatizes mental health issues — and strips people of basic rights — is contributing to the low level of funding and resources.

"The current law treats people with mental health issues as deviants in society who should be kept out of sight," he said.

Few medical students in Sierra Leone consider psychiatry because of the lack of training opportunities and the limited earnings associated with the career, he added.

The government is taking some steps in coordination with international organizations. The health ministry is implementing a World Health Organization training program that aims to help healthcare workers identify and manage common mental health problems like depression, substance abuse and post-traumatic stress. The first 50 workers took the four-day course in June.

Sierra Leone's director of mental health at the ministry declined to comment to the AP.

"Transforming mental health is a long game, it takes time," said Giuseppe Raviola, a director at Partners In Health, which also set up a mental help line in Sierra Leone last year for counseling and advice. "Part of what takes time is not only building local capacity, but also making sure services are aligned with cultural beliefs and practices, and that things are driven locally."

Jalloh first came to the psychiatric hospital for training during his fourth year of medical school and was shocked by its conditions.

He told his friends he would become a psychiatrist, which they thought was a joke. The profession is known to make little money and often fails to treat its patients. But after three years, he returned to the hospital and vowed to turn it from a place of suffering to sanctuary.

Despite the transformation of the hospital, Jalloh said soaring rates of addiction had taken a toll on his own mental health. The hospital continues to face challenges including a lack of security personnel to stop patients from scaling the walls to buy drugs.

"As you can see me, I am not feeling well. There are a lot of challenges. We don't have the capacity to handle the (kush) crisis, considering human resources, infrastructure, medication," he said. "It's a big challenge and a huge burden on us."

## **Kamala Harris is now Democratic presidential nominee, will face off against Donald Trump this fall**

By SEUNG MIN KIM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Kamala Harris, a daughter of immigrants who rose through the California political and law enforcement ranks to become the first female vice president in U.S. history, formally secured the Democratic presidential nomination on Monday — becoming the first woman of color to lead a major party ticket.

More than four years after her first attempt at the presidency collapsed, Harris' coronation as her party's standard-bearer caps a tumultuous and frenetic period for Democrats prompted by President Joe Biden's disastrous June debate performance that shattered his own supporters' confidence in his reelection prospects and spurred extraordinary intraparty warfare about whether he should stay in the race.

Just as soon as Biden abruptly ended his candidacy, Harris and her team worked rapidly to secure backing from the 1,976 party delegates needed to clinch the nomination in a formal roll call vote. She reached that marker at warp speed, with an Associated Press survey of delegates nationwide showing she locked down the necessary commitments a mere 32 hours after Biden's announcement.

Harris' nomination became official after a five-day round of online balloting by Democratic National Convention delegates ended Monday night, with the party saying in a statement released just before midnight that 99% of delegates casting ballots had done so for Harris. The party had long contemplated the early virtual roll call to ensure Biden would appear on the ballot in every state. It said it would next formally certify the vote before holding a celebratory roll call at the party's convention later this month in Chicago.

An Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll conducted after Biden withdrew found 46% of Americans have a favorable view of Harris, while a nearly identical share has an unfavorable view of her. But more Democrats say they are satisfied with her candidacy compared with that of Biden, energizing a party that had long been resigned to the 81-year-old Biden being its nominee against former President Donald Trump, a Republican they view as an existential threat.

Already Harris has telegraphed that she doesn't plan to veer much from the themes and policies that framed Biden's candidacy, such as democracy, gun violence prevention and abortion rights. But her delivery can be far fierier, particularly when she invokes her prosecutorial background to lambast Trump and his 34 felony convictions for falsifying business records in connection with a hush money scheme.

"Given that unique voice of a new generation, of a prosecutor and a woman when fundamental rights, especially reproductive rights, are on the line, it's almost as if the stars have aligned for her at this moment in history," said Democratic Sen. Alex Padilla of California, who was tapped to succeed Harris in the Senate when she became vice president.

A splash in Washington before a collapse in the 2020 primaries

Kamala Devi Harris was born Oct. 20, 1964, in Oakland, California, to Shyamala Gopalan, a breast cancer scientist who emigrated to the United States from India when she was 19 years old, and Stanford University emeritus professor Donald Harris, a naturalized U.S. citizen originally from Jamaica. Her parents' advocacy



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for civil rights gave her what she described as a “stroller’s-eye view” of the movement.

She spent years as a prosecutor in the Bay Area before her elevation as the state’s attorney general in 2010 and then election as U.S. senator in 2016.

Harris arrived in Washington as a senator at the dawn of the volatile Trump era, quickly establishing herself as a reliable liberal opponent of the new president’s personnel and policies and fanning speculation about a presidential bid of her own. Securing a spot on the coveted Judiciary Committee gave her a national spotlight to interrogate prominent Trump nominees, such as now-Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh.

“I’m not able to be rushed this fast,” then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions said during a 2017 hearing as Harris repeatedly pressed him on potential conversations with Russian nationals. “It makes me nervous.”

Harris launched her 2020 presidential campaign with much promise, drawing parallels to former President Barack Obama and attracting more than 20,000 people to a kickoff rally in her hometown. But Harris withdrew from the primary race before the first nominating contest in Iowa, plagued by staff dissent that spilled out into the open and an inability to attract enough campaign cash.

Harris struggled to deliver a consistent pitch to Democratic voters and wobbled on key issues such as health care. She suggested she backed eliminating private insurance for a full government-run system — “Medicare for All” coverage — before releasing her own health care plan that preserved private insurance. Now, during her nascent general election campaign, Harris has already reversed some of her earlier, more liberal positions, such as a ban on fracking that she endorsed in 2019.

And while Harris tried to deploy her law enforcement background as an asset in her 2020 presidential campaign, it never attracted enough support in a party that couldn’t reconcile some of her past tough-on-crime positions at a time of heightened focus on police brutality.

Joining Biden’s team — and an evolution as vice president

Still, Harris was at the top of the vice presidential shortlist when Biden was pondering his running mate, after his pledge in early 2020 that he would choose a Black woman as his No. 2. He was fond of Harris, who had forged a close friendship with his now-deceased son Beau, who had been Delaware’s attorney general when she was in that job for California.

Her first months as vice president were far from smooth. Biden asked her to lead the administration’s diplomatic efforts with Central America on the root causes of migration to the United States, which triggered attacks from Republicans on border security and remains a political vulnerability. It didn’t help matters that Harris stumbled in big interviews, such as in a 2021 sit-down with NBC News’ Lester Holt when she responded dismissively that “I haven’t been to Europe” when the anchor noted that she hadn’t visited the U.S.-Mexico border.

For her first two years, Harris also was often tethered to Washington so she could break tie votes in the evenly divided Senate, which gave Democrats landmark wins on the climate and health care but also constrained opportunities for her to travel around the country and meet voters.

Her visibility became far more prominent after the 2022 Supreme Court ruling that dismantled *Roe v. Wade*, as she became the chief spokesperson for the administration on abortion rights and was a more natural messenger than Biden, a lifelong Catholic who had in the past favored restrictions on the procedure. She is the first vice president to tour an abortion clinic and speaks about reproductive rights in the broader context of maternal health, especially for Black women.

Throughout her vice presidency, Harris has been careful to remain loyal to Biden while emphasizing that she would be ready to step in if needed. That dramatic transition began in late June after the first debate between Biden and Trump, where the president’s stumbles were so cataclysmic that he could never reverse the loss of confidence from other Democrats.

Headed to the top of the ticket

After Biden ended his candidacy July 21, he quickly endorsed Harris. And during the first two weeks of her 2024 presidential bid, enthusiasm among the Democratic base surged, with donations pouring in, scores of volunteers showing up at field offices and supporters swelling so much in numbers that event organizers have had to swap venues.

The Harris campaign now believes it has a renewed opportunity to compete in Arizona, Nevada, North

Carolina and Georgia — states that Biden had started to abandon in favor of shoring up the so-called “blue wall” states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

“The country is able to see the Kamala Harris that we all know,” said Bakari Sellers, who was a national co-chair of her 2020 campaign. “We really didn’t allow the country to see her” four years ago. Sellers said: “We had her in bubble wrap. What people are seeing now is that she’s real, she’s talented.”

Yet Democrats are anticipating that Harris’ political honeymoon will wear off, and she is inevitably going to come under tougher scrutiny for Biden administration positions, the state of the economy and volatile situations abroad, particularly in the Middle East. Harris has also yet to answer extended questions from journalists nor sit down for a formal interview since she began her run.

The Trump campaign has been eager to define Harris as she continues to introduce herself to voters nationwide, releasing an ad blaming her for the high number of illegal crossings at the southern border during the Biden administration and dubbing her “Failed. Weak. Dangerously liberal.”

The Republican nominee’s supporters have also derisively branded Harris as a diversity hire, while Trump himself has engaged in ugly racial attacks of his own, wrongly asserting that Harris had in the past only promoted her Indian heritage and only recently played up her Black identity.

His remarks are previewing a season of racist and sexist claims against the person who would be the first woman and the first person of South Asian heritage in the presidency.

“I didn’t know she was Black until a number of years ago when she happened to turn Black and now she wants to be known as Black,” Trump said while addressing the annual convention of the National Association of Black Journalists. “So, I don’t know, is she Indian or is she Black?”

In her response, Harris called it “the same old show — the divisiveness and the disrespect” and said voters “deserve better.”

“The American people deserve a leader who tells the truth, a leader who does not respond with hostility and anger when confronted with the facts,” Harris said at a Sigma Gamma Rho sorority gathering in Houston. “We deserve a leader who understands that our differences do not divide us.”

## **Slow-moving Tropical Storm Debby bringing torrential rains, major flood threat to southeastern US**

By JEFF MARTIN and CHRISTOPHER O’MEARA Associated Press

HORSESHOE BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Tropical Storm Debby moved menacingly into some of America’s most historic Southern cities and was expected to bring prolonged downpours and flooding throughout the day Tuesday after slamming into Florida and prompting the rescue of hundreds from flooded homes.

Record-setting rain from the storm that killed at least five people on Monday was causing flash flooding, with up to 30 inches (76 centimeters) possible in some areas, the National Hurricane Center said.

“Hunker down,” Van Johnson, the mayor of Savannah, Georgia, told residents in a social media livestream Monday night. “Expect that it will be a rough day” on Tuesday, he said.

Flash flood warnings were issued in Savannah, Georgia, and Charleston, South Carolina, among other areas of coastal Georgia and South Carolina. Both Savannah and Charleston announced curfews Monday night into Tuesday.

In South Carolina, Charleston County Interim Emergency Director Ben Webster called Debby a “historic and potentially unprecedented event” three times in a 90-second briefing Monday.

In addition to the curfew, the city of Charleston’s emergency plan includes sandbags for residents, opening parking garages so residents can park their cars above floodwaters and an online mapping system that shows which roads are closed due to flooding.

In Edisto Beach, South Carolina, a tornado touched down Monday night, damaging trees, homes and taking down power lines, the Colleton County Sheriff’s Office said on social media. No injuries were immediately reported, officials said.

The National Weather Service continued issuing tornado warnings well into Monday night for parts of

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the state including in the island town of Hilton Head.

Debby made landfall along the Gulf Coast of Florida early Monday as a Category 1 hurricane. It has weakened to a tropical storm and is moving slowly, drenching and bringing areas of catastrophic flooding across portions of eastern Georgia, the coastal plain of South Carolina and southeast North Carolina through Wednesday.

About 500 people were rescued Monday from flooded homes in Sarasota, Florida, a beach city popular with tourists, the Sarasota Police Department said in a social media post. Just north of Sarasota, officials in Manatee County said in a news release that 186 people were rescued from flood waters.

"Essentially we've had twice the amount of the rain that was predicted for us to have," Sarasota County Fire Chief David Rathbun said on social media.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis warned that the state could continue to see threats as waterways north of the border fill up and flow south.

"It is a very saturating, wet storm," he said. "When they crest and the water that's going to come down from Georgia, it's just something that we're going to be on alert for not just throughout today, but for the next week."

Five people had died due to the storm as of Monday night, including a truck driver on Interstate 75 in the Tampa area after he lost control of his tractor trailer, which flipped over a concrete wall and dangled over the edge before the cab dropped into the water below. Sheriff's office divers located the driver, a 64-year-old man from Mississippi, in the cab 40 feet (12 meters) below the surface, according to the Florida Highway Patrol.

A 13-year-old boy died Monday morning after a tree fell on a mobile home southwest of Gainesville, Florida, according to the Levy County Sheriff's Office. In Dixie County, just east of where the storm made landfall, a 38-year-old woman and a 12-year-old boy died in a car crash on wet roads Sunday night.

In southern Georgia, a 19-year-old man died Monday afternoon when a large tree fell onto a porch at a home in Moultrie, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported.

Nearly 160,000 customers remained without power in Florida and Georgia on Monday night, down from a peak of more than 350,000, according to PowerOutage.us and Georgia Electric Membership Corp.

More than 1,600 flights were also canceled nationwide on Monday, many of them to and from Florida airports, according to FlightAware.com.

President Joe Biden approved a request from South Carolina's governor for an emergency declaration, following his earlier approval of a similar request from Florida. Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp said he has asked Biden to issue a preemptive federal emergency declaration to speed the flow of federal aid to the state.

Vice President Kamala Harris postponed a campaign stop scheduled for Thursday in Savannah.

North Carolina is also under a state of emergency after Gov. Roy Cooper declared it in an executive order signed Monday. Several areas along the state's coastline are prone to flooding, such as Wilmington and the Outer Banks, according to the North Carolina Floodplain Mapping Program.

North Carolina and South Carolina have dealt with three catastrophic floods from tropical systems in the past nine years, all causing more than \$1 billion in damage.

In 2015, rainfall fed by moisture as Hurricane Joaquin passed well offshore caused massive flooding. In 2016, flooding from Hurricane Matthew caused 24 deaths in the two states and rivers set record crests. Those records were broken in 2018 with Hurricane Florence, which set rainfall records in both Carolinas, flooded many of the same places and was responsible for 42 deaths in North Carolina and nine in South Carolina.

## **Pelosi warns in her new book that political threats and violence 'must stop'**

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nancy Pelosi thought briefly she might have died on Jan. 6, 2021.

Not quite two years later, the threat of political violence would come for her husband at their home.



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"Where's Nancy? Where's Nancy?"

That was the chilling question the intruder posed to Paul Pelosi before bludgeoning the then-82-year-old over the head with a hammer in their San Francisco house. It echoed the menacing jeers of the rioters roaming the halls of the Capitol calling out "Nancy, Nancy" on Jan. 6.

The through line of escalating political rhetoric and violence in American public life serves as the opening and closing message of Pelosi's new book, "The Art of Power, My Story as America's First Woman Speaker of the House."

Pelosi recounts her nearly four-decade legislative record in Congress but also allows a rare public glimpse into the private devastation around the assault on her husband. With it, she delivers a grave warning that the casual mockery and mimicry of political violence in America is chasing a generation from public service.

"The current climate of threats and attacks must stop," Pelosi writes.

"We cannot ask people to serve in public life if the cost is risking the safety of their families and those they love."

Pelosi's book pages through familiar terrain for those who have followed the 84-year-old's career, rising from "housewife to House member to House speaker." The steely California Democrat, the speaker emerita, is no longer in leadership but running for reelection to the House this fall.

She twice won the speakers gavel, worked alongside seven presidents and, more recently, played a pivotal role in quietly convincing President Joe Biden to reassess his decision to remain in the 2024 presidential election rematch with Republican Donald Trump. Biden bowed out.

But it's the first and final chapters that bring a new element to the Pelosi era, detailing in personal and painstaking ways the toll that America's violent strain is taking on civic life and public service.

"I don't know that we will ever feel safe," she writes.

Written well before the July assassination attempt on Trump, Pelosi's assessment of the nation's dangerous discourse arrives after back-to-back congressional shootings of Republican Rep. Steve Scalise and earlier of Democratic former Rep. Gabby Giffords, and it serves as a walk-off warning in what could be among her final years in Congress.

Pelosi recounts her disbelief at being "pulled off the Speaker's platform" and out of the House chamber by security the afternoon of Jan. 6 as rioters sent by Trump stormed through the halls, some searching for her.

"I can handle it," she protested, telling U.S. Capitol Police she wanted to stay and finish the work as Congress was certifying the 2020 election.

"Their response was curt," she writes. "No, you can't."

After being whisked away to safety at Fort McNair, she writes about huddling with Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell and Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer, the three of them desperately calling the Pentagon to send National Guard troops to restore order at the Capitol. She describes House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy, a Trump loyalist, as almost entirely unseen.

So worried about the rioters' threats against Vice President Mike Pence in hiding at the Capitol, she called and told him, "Don't let anybody know where you are."

"It still took three hours from the time I was dragged out of the House chamber for the Guard to arrive at the Capitol complex," she writes. "It took about three and a half hours to clear the rioters from the building."

Later, surveying the wreckage of broken glass and splintered wood, she was told of blood outside the Speaker's Lobby. In some places, including her office, the mob had "literally defecated on the floors and rugs," she wrote. "What was left behind was pure destruction."

She recalled being in war zones, and in Kyiv at the start of the Russian invasion thinking she may well die in Ukraine. "I briefly thought the same on January 6," she wrote.

"When I became Speaker, I knew that I was making myself into a target," she writes. "However, our accepting the risk is something that is fundamentally different for our families."

Not quite two years later, she was awakened in the middle of the night by the "Knock. Knock. Knock.

Pound, Pound. Pound," of the Capitol Police security detail at her door in Washington.

"The officers' expressions were grim," she writes.

"It's Mr. Pelosi. He's been attacked in your home."

"Is he okay?"

"We don't know."

"Is he alive?"

"We don't know."

Pelosi recounts the dizzying hours, frantic family phone calls and flight back to San Francisco, the hospital, the surgeries and the long recovery for her husband. Their youngest daughter said he looked like a bandaged-up Frankenstein.

Her son, Paul Jr., went to the family's home to vacuum up the broken glass and clean up the blood. Her daughter Alexandra, who had been a high schooler when Pelosi first ran for Congress, told her, had she known what they were signing up for she would "never have given you my blessing."

The attacker was tried, convicted and sentenced to prison. But Pelosi writes, the story of Paul's attack would not go away.

"Our home remains a heartbreaking crime scene," she wrote.

Pelosi said her children told her that for a long time Paul would only sleep in the bedroom when she was there. He still suffers from headaches and dizzy spells, and she said she has seen him faint and fall twice from vertigo. As of February, she wrote, she was still changing bandages from surgery on his arm.

But the "true horror" she writes was the dehumanizing jokes by Republicans from Trump on down, including the former president's son, Donald Trump Jr., who posted a Paul Pelosi Halloween costume to social media, and the way the crowds would "laugh, cheer, and applaud" their cruel remarks.

"It made me profoundly sad for our country," she writes.

Pelosi situates the two bloody episodes in the arc of her career, from the way Republicans vilified her in countless campaign ads from the time she first rose as Democratic leader to the way protesters spit on Democrats, including civil rights leader Rep. John Lewis, the day the House voted for the Affordable Care Act, to the severed pig's head left outside her family's home in the days before Jan. 6.

Pelosi writes that when she speaks to young people about running for office, "especially young women, too often I hear their reluctance to put their families in harm's way."

"This is not the way our country should be — if you engage in public service, you should not be a target, and your family should not be a target."

## **Witnesses will tell a federal safety board about the blowout on a Boeing 737 Max earlier this year**

By DAVID KOENIG AP Airlines Writer

Investigators will question Boeing officials during a hearing starting Tuesday about the midflight blowout of a panel from a 737 Max, an accident that further tarnished the company's safety reputation and left it facing new legal jeopardy.

The two-day hearing could provide new insight into the Jan. 5 accident, which caused a loud boom and left a gaping hole in the side of the Alaska Airlines jet.

The National Transportation Safety Board has said in a preliminary report that four bolts that help secure the panel, which is called a door plug, were not replaced after a repair job in a Boeing factory, but the company has said the work was not documented. During the two-day hearing, safety board members are expected to question Boeing officials about the lack of paperwork that might have explained how such a potentially tragic mistake occurred.

"The NTSB wants to fill in the gaps of what is known about this incident and to put people on the record about it," said John Goglia, a former NTSB member. The agency will be looking to underscore Boeing's failures in following the process it had told the Federal Aviation Administration it was going to use in such cases, he said.

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The safety board will not determine a probable cause after the hearing. That could take another year or longer. It is calling the unusually long hearing a fact-finding step.

Among the scheduled witnesses is Elizabeth Lund, who has been Boeing's senior vice president of quality — a new position — since February, and officials from Spirit AeroSystems, which makes fuselages for Max jets.

Spirit installed the door plug — a panel that fills a space created for an extra exit on some planes — on the Alaska Airlines jet, but the panel was removed and the bolts taken off in a Boeing factory near Seattle to repair rivets.

The NTSB's agenda for the hearing includes testimony about manufacturing and inspections, the opening and closing of the door plug in the Boeing factory, safety systems at Boeing and Spirit, and the FAA's supervision of Boeing.

FAA Administrator Mike Whitaker has conceded that his agency's oversight of the company "was too hands-off — too focused on paperwork audits and not focused enough on inspections." He has said that is changing.

The plane involved had been delivered to Alaska Airlines in late October and had made only about 150 flights. The airline stopped using the plane on flights to Hawaii after a warning light indicating a possible pressurization problem lit up on three different flights.

The accident on flight 1282 occurred minutes after takeoff from Portland, Oregon, as the plane flew at 16,000 feet (4,800 meters). Oxygen masks dropped during the rapid decompression, a few cell phones and other objects were swept through the hole in the plane, passengers were terrified by wind and roaring noise, but miraculously no one was injured.

The pilots landed safely back in Portland. The door plug was found in a high school science teacher's backyard in Cedar Hills, Oregon.

No one from the airline was called to testify this week before the NTSB. Goglia, the former safety board member, said that indicates the agency has determined "that Alaska has no dirty hands in this."

Tension remains high between the NTSB and Boeing, however. Two months after the accident, board Chair Jennifer Homendy and Boeing got into a public argument over whether the company was cooperating with investigators.

That spat was largely smoothed over, but in June a Boeing executive angered the board by discussing the investigation with reporters and — even worse in the agency's view — suggesting that the NTSB was interested in finding someone to blame for the blowout.

NTSB officials see their role as identifying the cause of accidents to prevent similar ones in the future. They are not prosecutors, and they fear that witnesses won't come forward if they think NTSB is looking for culprits.

So the NTSB issued a subpoena for Boeing representatives while stripping the company of its customary right to ask questions during the hearing.

The accident led to several investigations of Boeing, most of which are still underway.

The FBI has told passengers on the Alaska Airlines flight that they might be victims of a crime. The Justice Department pushed Boeing to plead guilty to a charge of conspiracy to commit fraud after finding that it failed to live up to a previous settlement related to regulatory approval of the Max.

Boeing, which has yet to recover financially from two deadly crashes of Max jets in 2018 and 2019, has lost more than \$25 billion since the start of 2019. Later this week, the company will get its third chief executive in 4 1/2 years.

Testimony from NTSB hearings is not admissible in court, but lawyers suing Boeing over this and other accidents will be watching, knowing that they can seek depositions from witnesses to cover the same ground.

"Our cases are already solid — door plugs shouldn't blow out during a flight," said one of those lawyers, Mark Lindquist of Seattle. "Our cases grow even stronger, however, if the blowout was the result of habitually shoddy practices. Are jurors going to see this as negligence or something worse?"



## French Polynesian Kauli Vaast and Caroline Marks of U.S. win gold at Paris Olympics surfing

By VICTORIA MILKO Associated Press

TEAHUPO'O, Tahiti (AP) — French Polynesian Kauli Vaast won the gold medal in men's surfing while Caroline Marks from the United States won the women's surfing gold medal on Monday at the Paris Olympics in Tahiti.

Cheers and tears erupted from boats floating near the wave and crowds of spectators along the shore as the men's final match ended in the afternoon. Vaast pumped his arms into the air in victory after beating Jack Robinson from Australia, who received the silver medal.

"I don't really realize it, but I just made history," said Vaast. "I can't be prouder to represent Tahiti and France at home."

The women's gold medal match ended about thirty minutes later, with Marks beating Tatiana Weston-Webb from Brazil, who was awarded the silver medal.

"Your whole life goes into a moment like this," Marks said with a gold medal hanging around her neck. "It's beyond all my wildest dreams."

For the bronze medals, Gabriel Medina from Brazil and Johanne Defay from France won after beating Alonso Correa from Peru and Brisa Hennessy from Costa Rica, respectively.

"Chopes gave me so many good waves, so many good results. So I can't complain," said Medina, using a common nickname for Teahupo'o.

Medalists — some in bare feet — stepped on to the Olympic podium near the ocean as crowds gathered to cheer and take photographs. Roosters ran along the grass while young local surfers called the names of the athletes as they walked by.

All winners of the Paris Olympics surfing competition are first-time Olympic medalists, after defending Olympic women's champion Carissa Moore of the United States — who won at the Tokyo Games, where Olympic surfing debuted — was beaten in the quarterfinals on Thursday.

"Obviously I'm really sad to not be a part of finals day, to get to represent my home and my family one more time, but I'm really grateful," Moore said after her loss. "I just hope that at the end of the day I can encourage whoever is watching, win or lose, don't be afraid to go into it fearlessly and don't be afraid to fail."

The final day of the Paris Olympics surfing competition began Monday morning after two days of delays due to unfavorable conditions. In the morning, conditions were smaller than the heavy, barrel-shaped waves Teahupo'o is famed for and that were seen during part of the men's competition the week before.

But by the afternoon waves grew larger and more frequent, giving athletes a chance to impress judges with the time they spent inside the barrels. At one point during the competition a whale jumped out of the water while surfers went head to head.

Six of the eight surfers who made it to the semifinals represented different nations. French Polynesian, Peruvian, Australian and other national flags flew from boats near the waves.

While not every surfer who competed was able to bring home a medal, many agreed that the second-ever Olympics surfing competition — filled with viral photographs, record-breaking scores and hours of stunning video footage broadcast to viewers around the world — helped promote the sport.

"Everyone's watching and paying attention," said Medina, who said he gained millions of social media followers after a photo of him floating in the sky next to his surfboard while bailing out of a wave went viral during the competition. "I think surfing wins"

## Tropical Storm Debby hits Florida with floods, threat of record rain in Georgia and the Carolinas

By JEFF MARTIN and CHRISTOPHER O'MEARA Associated Press

HORSESHOE BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Tropical Storm Debby slammed Florida on Monday with torrential rain and high winds, contributing to at least four deaths in the state and the rescue of hundreds from flooded homes before turning menacingly toward the Eastern Seaboard's low-lying regions and threatening to flood some of America's most historic Southern cities.

Record-setting rain was causing flash flooding, with up to 30 inches (76 centimeters) possible in some areas, the National Hurricane Center said.

About 500 people were rescued from flooded homes in Sarasota, Florida, a beach city popular with tourists, the Sarasota Police Department said in a social media post. It was one of the cities hardest hit by flooding on Monday.

"Essentially we've had twice the amount of the rain that was predicted for us to have," Sarasota County Fire Chief David Rathbun said in a social media update.

Just north of Sarasota, officials in Manatee County said in a news release that 186 people were rescued from flood waters.

"We are facing an unprecedented weather event with Hurricane Debby," said Jodie Fiske, public safety director for Manatee County. "The safety of our residents is our top priority, and we are doing everything in our power to respond effectively to this crisis."

A flash flood emergency was issued into Monday evening for the Lake City area in the north central part of the state, where up to a foot (30.5 centimeters) of rain had fallen and more was expected.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis warned that the state could continue to see threats as waterways north of the border fill up and flow south.

"It is a very saturating, wet storm," he said during an afternoon briefing at the state's emergency operations center. "When they crest and the water that's going to come down from Georgia, it's just something that we're going to be on alert for not just throughout today, but for the next week."

Debby made landfall along the Gulf Coast of Florida early Monday as a Category 1 hurricane. It since has weakened to a tropical storm and is moving slowly, covering roads with water and contributing to at least five deaths.

A truck driver died on Interstate 75 in the Tampa area after he lost control of his tractor trailer, which flipped over a concrete wall and dangled over the edge before the cab dropped into the water below. Sheriff's office divers located the driver, a 64-year-old man from Mississippi, in the cab 40 feet (12 meters) below the surface, according to the Florida Highway Patrol.

A 13-year-old boy died Monday morning after a tree fell on a mobile home southwest of Gainesville, according to the Levy County Sheriff's Office.

And in Dixie County, just east of where the storm made landfall, a 38-year-old woman and a 12-year-old boy died in a car crash on wet roads Sunday night. The Florida Highway Patrol said a 14-year-old boy who was a passenger was hospitalized with serious injuries.

In southern Georgia, a 19-year-old man died Monday afternoon when a large tree fell onto a porch at a home in Moultrie, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported.

Nearly 200,000 customers remained without power in Florida and Georgia on Monday afternoon, down from a peak of more than 350,000, according to PowerOutage.us and Georgia Electric Membership Corp.

Airports were also affected. More than 1,600 flights had been canceled nationwide, many of them to and from Florida airports, according to FlightAware.com.

The potential for high water also threatened Savannah, Georgia, and Charleston, South Carolina.

Local leaders in Savannah said flooding could happen in areas that don't usually get high water if Debby stalls out over the city. With winds and rainfall expected to worsen overnight, authorities issued a curfew from 10 p.m. Monday until 6 a.m. Tuesday.

"This type of rain hovering over us, coming with the intensity that they tell us it is coming, it's going to

catch a whole lot of people by surprise," said Chatham County Chairman Chester Ellis.

In South Carolina, Charleston County Interim Emergency Director Ben Webster called Debby a "historic and potentially unprecedented event" three times in a 90-second briefing Monday morning.

The city of Charleston has an emergency plan in place that includes sandbags for residents, opening parking garages so residents can park their cars above floodwaters and an online mapping system that shows which roads are closed due to flooding. Officials announced a curfew for the city starting at 11 p.m. as some of the heaviest rain is expected to fall overnight.

North Carolina is also under a state of emergency after Gov. Roy Cooper declared it in an executive order signed Monday. Several areas along the state's coastline are prone to flooding, such as Wilmington and the Outer Banks, according to the North Carolina Floodplain Mapping Program.

North Carolina and South Carolina have dealt with three catastrophic floods from tropical systems in the past nine years, all causing more than \$1 billion in damage.

In 2015, rainfall fed by moisture as Hurricane Joaquin passed well offshore caused massive flooding. In 2016, flooding from Hurricane Matthew caused 24 deaths in the two states and rivers set record crests. Those records were broken in 2018 with Hurricane Florence, which set rainfall records in both Carolinas, flooded many of the same places and was responsible for 42 deaths in North Carolina and nine in South Carolina.

President Joe Biden was briefed on Debby's progress while at his home in Wilmington, Delaware, the White House said. Biden approved a request from South Carolina's governor for an emergency declaration, following his earlier approval of a similar request from Florida. Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp said he has asked Biden to issue a preemptive federal emergency declaration to speed the flow of federal aid to the state.

Vice President Kamala Harris has postponed a campaign stop scheduled for Thursday in Savannah, Georgia.

Debby made landfall near Steinhatchee, a tiny community in northern Florida of less than 1,000 residents. It's not far from where Hurricane Idalia made landfall less than a year ago as a Category 3 storm.

Sue Chewing lives in nearby Cross City and has weathered both storms. In her nearly 73 years of living in the area, she said she doesn't recall any direct hits from a hurricane — until this one-two punch from Idalia and Debby.

"Some people may say, 'I can't take this anymore'. But I think for the most part ... it's a close-knit community and most of the local people, they're going to stay, dig down, help each other," Chewing said.

## **Venezuela's top prosecutor announces criminal probe against opposition leaders González, Machado**

By REGINA GARCIA CANO and JOSHUA GOODMAN Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — Venezuela's top prosecutor on Monday announced a criminal investigation against the opposition's presidential candidate Edmundo González and its leader Maria Corina Machado over their call on the armed forces to abandon their support for President Nicolás Maduro and to stop repressing demonstrators.

Attorney General Tarek William Saab's statement tied the investigation directly to a written appeal the two members of the opposition sent hours earlier about Maduro and the demonstrators who have come out in force to defend their votes in the July 28 election.

Saab, in a written announcement posted on the social media site X, said the duo "falsely announced a winner of the presidential election other than the one proclaimed by the National Electoral Council, the only body qualified to do so" and they openly incited "police and military officials to disobey the laws."

González's and Machado's written appeal shows the alleged commission of various crimes including usurpation of functions, dissemination of false information to cause fear and conspiracy, Saab said.

The armed forces are traditionally the arbiter of political disputes in Venezuela. But they've shown no signs of ditching Maduro even in the face of credible evidence presented by the opposition that it trounced the self-proclaimed socialist at the polls by a more than 2-to-1 margin.



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González and Machado called on rank and file members of the security forces to rethink their loyalty to Maduro.

"We appeal to the conscience of the military and police to put themselves on the side of the people and their families," the two wrote in a long message.

"We won this election without any doubt. It was an electoral avalanche," the two continued. "Now it's up to all of us to respect the voice of the people."

Authorities have declared Maduro the victor in last Sunday's election but have yet to produce voting tallies to prove he won. The opposition claims to have collected records from more than 80% of the 30,000 polling booths nationwide showing it won.

Maduro announced Saturday that the government has arrested 2,000 opponents and at a rally in Caracas he pledged to detain more people and send them to prison. The post-electoral uprising has also claimed at least 11 lives, according to Foro Penal, a Caracas-based human rights group.

The Venezuela-based human rights organization Provea, in a report issued Monday analyzing the post-election climate, concluded that the government's response in silencing people's discontent has been "through the disproportionate use of force" that has resulted in the deaths of protesters and "the open coordinated action between security forces and groups of armed civilians in favor of Nicolás Maduro to calm the protests" which has led to an increase in arbitrary arrests.

The organization reported that based on figures announced by the Attorney General's Office last week, the number of arrests against real or perceived government opponents is equivalent to about 42% "of the total number of arbitrary arrests recorded by Provea between April and August 2017, the most important cycle of protests in the country since 1989."

González and Machado in their missive called on Venezuelans with family members serving in the security forces to urge their loved ones not to attack protesters and not obey illegal orders. It said it would offer "guarantees" to soldiers who follow the constitution even while promising there would be no impunity for those behind abuses and following illegal orders.

Both González, a former diplomat, and Machado — who was barred by the government from running — have gone into hiding, saying they fear they will be arrested or killed. Maduro and his cadres have threatened to lock them both up.

As Venezuelans fight Maduro on the streets, pressure is also building internationally for the Venezuelan government to publish the full breakdown of the electoral results.

But so far, Maduro has instead asked the country's supreme court — which like all institutions in Venezuela is packed with loyalists — to review any claims of irregularities.

"Respect for popular sovereignty is what moves us to defend the transparency of the (election) results," Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva said Monday in a press conference alongside fellow leftist President Gabriel Boric of Chile.

Boric, who cast doubt on Maduro's victory claim in an unexpectedly strong statement within hours of Venezuela's July 28 election, told reporters that he and Lula discussed the situation in Venezuela on Monday, without elaborating. The leaders did not take questions and their carefully worded statements signaled how leftist leaders in the region are gingerly trying to show respect for Venezuela's sovereignty while voicing doubts about the official results.

A few of Maduro's staunch allies — including Russia, China and Cuba — have applauded his victory. On Monday, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian held a telephone call with Maduro and reiterated his congratulations and "condemned any foreign interference in Venezuela's internal affairs," Pezeshkian's office said.

## **The Latest: Debby blamed for multiple deaths in Florida, Georgia, leaves thousands without power**

By The Associated Press undefined

High winds and heavy rains from Tropical Storm Debby lashed Florida on Monday. At least four deaths were reported in the state, and hundreds had to be rescued from flooded homes.

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The storm is now threatening to flood some of America's most historic Southern cities.

Here's the Latest:

Hundreds rescued from flooded homes in Sarasota, Florida, area, officials say

About 500 people were rescued from flooded homes in Sarasota, Florida, a beach city popular with tourists, the Sarasota Police Department said Monday in a social media post.

"Essentially we've had twice the amount of the rain that was predicted for us to have," Sarasota County Fire Chief David Rathbun said in a social media update.

Just north of Sarasota, officials in Manatee County said in a news release that 186 people were rescued from flood waters.

"We are facing an unprecedented weather event with Hurricane Debby," said Jodie Fiske, Manatee County's public safety director. "The safety of our residents is our top priority, and we are doing everything in our power to respond effectively to this crisis."

Man killed when storm topples large tree onto home in south Georgia, officials say

Heavy winds and rain associated with Debby toppled a large tree onto a porch at a home in south Georgia, killing a 19-year-old man, authorities said Monday.

Colquitt County Coroner C. Verlyn Brock said the man died at the home in the city of Moultrie, about 40 miles (64 kilometers) northwest of Valdosta, Georgia, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reports.

The storm has damaged roofs and downed power lines in Moultrie, Police Chief Chad Castleberry told WALB-TV.

The National Hurricane Center said Debby had top winds near 45 mph (75 kph) Monday evening as it moved slowly to the northeast. It was expected to cross southeastern Georgia and to slow to a crawl as it turns eastward.

Charleston, South Carolina, announces curfew, roads into historic city to be closed

Charleston, South Carolina, officials announced a curfew starting at 11 p.m. Monday for the peninsula that makes up much of downtown and the older parts of the 350-year-old city as some of the heaviest rain from Tropical Storm Debby is expected to fall overnight.

Police will barricade all eight roads leading into the peninsula and only let essential workers and emergency personnel in or out. High-water vehicles will also be staged to go into the area as needed, Charleston Mayor William Cogswell said at a Monday evening news conference.

"We need people to make their way out. This is not something you can stay at the bar until 10:45. We need you to take this seriously," Cogswell said.

The mayor said forecasters told him 10 to 12 inches (25 to 30 centimeters) of rain could fall in Charleston overnight.

City officials will assess the situation early Tuesday and decide how and when to reopen roads and lift the curfew.

No evacuations planned for now in South Carolina, officials say

State officials don't plan any evacuations in South Carolina for now as Tropical Storm Debby slowly spins toward the state.

Large-scale evacuations typically bring people inland from the coast, and forecasters say Debby's biggest impacts could be as much as 30 inches (76 centimeters) of rain in localized areas throughout the state, causing floodwaters to rise quickly in small areas. So any evacuations will up to local leaders.

"This storm may not have the high winds of a hurricane, but it has the potential to cause life-threatening floods across the state. And I would like to emphasize that Tropical Storm Debby is not just a coastal event, but it is a statewide event," state Emergency Management Division Director Kim Stenson said at a Monday afternoon news conference.

Biden approves request from South Carolina's governor for emergency declaration

The White House said Monday that President Joe Biden has approved a request from South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster for an emergency declaration, following his earlier approval of a similar request from Florida.

In a statement, the White House said personnel from the Department of Defense, the Department of

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Homeland Security, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Coast Guard are deploying to the region and are prepared to support recovery efforts.

North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper declared a state of emergency Monday ahead of Debby's anticipated rainfall. Flooding and power outages are expected to start Tuesday and continue through the rest of the week, according to North Carolina Emergency Management officials.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis previously had declared a state of emergency for 61 of Florida's 67 counties, with the National Guard activating 3,000 guard members. Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp also had made his own emergency declaration.

Curfew announced for Savannah and surrounding county as Debby approaches

With Debby's winds and rains expected to worsen overnight, officials for Savannah and surrounding Chatham County announced that an overnight curfew will take effect at 10 p.m. Monday and run to 6 a.m. Tuesday. The National Hurricane Center says the region can expect rains that could exceed 20 inches (51 centimeters).

By Monday afternoon, the storm's outer bands were lashing Tybee Island, home to Georgia's largest public beach, blowing sheets of rain sideways and rattling street signs near the beach pier. The island of 3,100 residents east of Savannah was bracing for a potential double-dose of flooding from an expected 2 to 4 feet of storm surge on top of rainfall.

"This is unprecedented rainfall," said Michelle Owens, Tybee Island's interim city manager. She added: "We don't know what that looks like. So we have to be prepared for the worst. But we are definitely hoping for the best."

Public works crews used earthmoving equipment to heap sand over beach access points to help fortify a storm surge buffer offered by surrounding dunes. Owens said the city also had given out about 2,000 sandbags to island residents.

Angela Thompson had several sandbags ready by the front door of her ground-level apartment near Tybee Creek on the island's west side. She had just started moving in earlier this week and hoped to ride out the storm while unpacking.

"I have food and water and batteries and the things that I need, and I'm going to stay as long as I can," Thompson said.

Florida will be on alert for flooding for the next week, Gov. Ron DeSantis says

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis warned that just because Tropical Storm Debby is moving toward Georgia, that doesn't mean the state won't continue to see threats as waterways north of the border fill up and flow south.

"It is a very saturating, wet storm," DeSantis said during a briefing at the state's emergency operations center. "When they crest and the water that's going to come down from Georgia, it's just something that we're going to be on alert for not just throughout today, but for the next week."

Record-setting rain was forecast to cause flash flooding in coastal Georgia and South Carolina and into North Carolina, with up to 30 inches (76 centimeters) of rainfall in some areas, according to the National Hurricane Center. Debby made landfall early Monday as a Category 1 hurricane over Florida's gulf coast. The storm was moving slowly to the north-northeast and was expected to slow down as it turns to the east.

No deaths or injuries in Florida county where Debby made landfall, sheriff says

The sheriff of Florida's Taylor County, where Debby came ashore as a hurricane Monday, says there are no deaths or injuries in the sparsely populated area located in the state's northern Big Bend region.

But Sheriff Wayne Padgett advised anyone who had evacuated from low-lying and coastal areas to wait before returning because the tide will be coming in and it's unknown how deep the water might get. Several roads are closed due to flooding as well as trees and power lines downed by the storm, Padgett said.

Debby made landfall as a category 1 hurricane near Steinhatchee, a tiny community of less than 1,000 residents.

Mayor warns tourists, residents on South Carolina's Hilton Head Island: Don't let your guard down

No evacuations were planned Monday on South Carolina's Hilton Head Island, one of the state's most popular beach destinations. But Mayor Alan Perry warned tourists and residents not to let their guard

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down with forecasts predicting up to 30 inches (76 centimeters) of rain this week from Debby.

"We don't know how much rain is going to fall. But we have to prepare for the worst," Perry said. "If that happens, we will see an event we have never seen on Hilton Head before."

In a video posted on Facebook, Perry asked island residents and visitors to check on each other before the heavy rain starts — and maybe help the city out by checking storm drains. "If you are able to go out and pull some debris from those drains so they can drain, that's is really key to preventing additional flooding," he said.

Hilton Head Island has about 38,000 residents. Officials estimate up to 250,000 tourists can be on the island on the busiest summer days.

In saturated Savannah, residents prepare for potentially historic rains

As Debby threatened to dump potentially historic flooding rains across southeast Georgia, more than 20 people in Savannah filled sandbags at a park in the city's suburban southside. Rain soaked their clothes and mud stuck to their shoes. Officials are especially concerned about Debby because the area already is saturated after Savannah recorded 8.5 inches of rain in July, 3 inches greater than normal, according to the National Weather Service.

Jim Froncak tossed a dozen full bags into the back of his pickup truck while his son and a friend did the shoveling. Even though his home sits about 2 feet off the ground, Froncak said he won't be surprised if a nearby ditch overflows with floodwaters capable of reaching his doors.

"A really heavy thunderstorm will fill it up," Froncak said. "So whatever's coming is really going to fill it up and flow over."

City crews spent days ahead of Debby's arrival clearing storm drains throughout Savannah. Some low-lying neighborhoods outside the historic downtown area had flooded streets from thunderstorms less than two weeks ago.

Packages containing cocaine wash up on beach in Florida Keys during storm, Border Patrol says

In the Florida Keys, Debby blew packages containing 70 pounds (32 kilograms) of cocaine onto a beach, the U.S. Border Patrol's Miami sector reported Monday.

A "good Samaritan" found the drugs and contacted authorities, the agency said. The cocaine has a street value of more than \$1 million, the agency said on social media. It's didn't say exactly where the cocaine was found.

Vice President Harris postpones trip to Georgia

Vice President Kamala Harris is postponing a scheduled trip to Georgia amid the ongoing effects of Tropical Storm Debby.

Harris' campaign said her stop planned in Savannah, Georgia, on Thursday, was being put off due to the storm.

Harris is choosing her running mate and will introduce the choice during a rally in Philadelphia on Tuesday. The pair will then travel together starting on Wednesday to a series of key battleground states: Wisconsin, Michigan, North Carolina, Arizona and Nevada. But the Georgia leg of the original journey has been canceled for now.

Debby made landfall in Florida on Monday as a Category 1 hurricane and was expected to bring potentially record-setting rainfall to Georgia and South Carolina as it heads east.

Debby forces flight cancellations at Florida airports

More than 1,600 flights were canceled nationwide by midday Monday, many of them to and from Florida airports, according to FlightAware.com. One out of every five flights scheduled to leave Orlando International Airport was canceled Monday, with just as many incoming flights canceled there.

Nearly 30 percent of flights scheduled to depart Tampa International Airport on Monday were canceled. High numbers of canceled flights were also reported at airports in Jacksonville and Fort Myers.

Biden briefed on Debby's progress

President Joe Biden was briefed on Debby's progress while at his home in Wilmington, Delaware, the White House said Monday.



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The White House said Biden on Saturday approved Florida's request for an emergency declaration and that federal rescue personnel, meals and water have been deployed to the storm-stricken region. The administration is closely monitoring the storm and response effort with state and local officials, it said.

A 13-year-old boy dies when tree falls on mobile home in Florida, and officials report other deaths in storm  
A 13-year-old boy died Monday morning after a tree fell on a mobile home located southwest of Gainesville, Florida, according to the Levy County Sheriff's Office.

Officials reported other deaths as Debby moved inland.

A truck driver died early Monday on Interstate 75 in the Tampa area after he lost control of his tractor trailer, which flipped over a concrete wall and dangled over water before the cab dropped into the water below.

East of Steinhatchee, a tiny community in northern Florida near where the storm made landfall, a 38-year-old woman and a 12-year-old boy were killed late Sunday when the car she was driving on a wet road struck a median and then overturned off the road. A 14-year-old boy who was a passenger was hospitalized with serious injuries, according to the Florida Highway Patrol.

Debby weakens to a tropical storm but flooding threat continues

Debby has weakened into a tropical storm with top winds hovering around 45 mph (75 kph) Monday evening. The National Hurricane Center in Miami said the storm was moving slowly to the northeast. It was expected to cross southeastern Georgia and to slow to a crawl as it turns to the east. Debby made landfall as a hurricane in the Big Bend region of Florida, one of the state's least populated areas.

Forecasters are still warning that heavy rain could spawn catastrophic flooding in Florida, South Carolina and Georgia. Substantial rainfall was expected as well in central and northeast North Carolina through Wednesday morning.

Big worry is storm surge from Debby

Forecasters said storm surge was expected to be the biggest threat for Florida, with 6 to 10 feet (1.8 to 3 meters) of inundation above ground level predicted in part of the zone near the Big Bend.

"That part of the coast is a very vulnerable spot," John Cangialosi, a hurricane specialist with the National Hurricane Center, said Monday. Some areas, including Sarasota and Manatee counties, have already received 10 to 12 inches (25 to 30 centimeters) of rain.

In Georgia, the National Weather Service is predicting major flooding on some rivers: the Canoochee River near Claxton, the Ochopee River near Reidsville and the Ogeechee River near Eden. All those rivers were below flood stage Monday but could see their water levels more than double by later in the week.

Hundreds of thousands without power

More than 300,000 customers were without power in Florida and Georgia on Monday afternoon, down from a peak of more than 350,000, according to PowerOutage.us and Georgia Electric Membership Corp.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said some 17,000 linemen are working to restore electricity. He warned residents in affected areas to sit tight until conditions are safe.

"When the water rises, when you have streets that can be flooded, that's hazardous," DeSantis said. "Don't try to drive through this. We don't want to see traffic fatalities adding up. Don't tempt fate, don't try to go through these flooded streets."

## Proxy forces armed by Iran could take part in retaliation against Israel over Hamas leader's killing

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — As Iran threatens to respond to the suspected Israeli assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, the regional militias that the Islamic Republic has armed for decades could play a role in any attack.

Here's a look at Iran's history of arming militias, its allies in the region and what part they could play.

Why has Iran armed proxy forces?

Iran's policy of arming militias took root in the aftermath of the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Before it, the

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U.S. provided major weapon systems including F-14 Tomcat fighter jets to the government of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. After the revolution and the U.S. Embassy hostage crisis, those shipments and needed maintenance programs stopped. Iran's eight-year war with Iraq in the 1980s destroyed much of its arsenal. International sanctions on Iran, including over its nuclear program, also have kept it from receiving new arms while Israel and Gulf Arab states allied with the U.S. have received advanced weapons. While developing its own missile program, Iran can't match those sophisticated weapons. It relies on militias as an asymmetric threat to squeeze both Israel and the United States.

Who are Iran's regional allies?

Iran's arming began in earnest in the 1980s with Shiite forces in Lebanon fighting against Israel. They became the Hezbollah militia. The arming expanded with the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq that toppled dictator Saddam Hussein, a longtime foe of Tehran. Iran strongly backed Syrian President Bashar Assad in his country's long war. And Iran has continued when the opportunity has arisen, even arming Sunni militants while viewing itself as the world's defender of Shiite Muslims. Those relationships are managed by Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, one of the most powerful armed groups in the Middle East.

The militias in Iran's self-described "Axis of Resistance" include these:

Iraqi militias

In Iraq, Iran supported a slew of forces that mobilized in 2014 to battle the Islamic State group. Those state-sanctioned, mainly Shiite militias, known as the Popular Mobilization Forces, have grown into a powerful political faction, armed with rockets, drones and other weaponry. The International Institute for Strategic Studies puts their strength at some 180,000 fighters. Other smaller or little-known militant groups have emerged and claimed attacks against U.S. forces as well amid this Israel-Hamas war. Iran-backed armed groups attacked U.S. personnel in Iraq more than 60 times between October and Feb. 4, according to the Congressional Research Service. The deadliest came on Jan. 28, when the U.S. said a drone launched by Iranian-backed Iraqi militias hit a facility known as Tower 22 in Jordan on the Syrian border, killing three American troops and wounding dozens of others. In response, U.S. airstrikes hit more than 85 targets at seven locations, including command and control headquarters, intelligence centers, rockets and missiles, drone and ammunition storage sites and other facilities connected to the militias or the Guard's expeditionary Quds Force.

Lebanon's Hezbollah

Hezbollah formed in 1982 amid Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon. Israel remains highly wary of Hezbollah, particularly over the vast missile arsenal it is believed to possess and its battle-hardened forces who also supported Assad in Syria. While Israel has sophisticated missile defenses including its Iron Dome system, a mass barrage of fire from Hezbollah and others at the same time could overwhelm the country. Estimates suggest Hezbollah has an arsenal of 150,000 rockets and missiles, including precision-guided missiles. The militia also has been blamed for suicide bombings in the past, including a 1983 bombing in Beirut that killed 241 American servicemen, though the group maintains it wasn't behind the attack. Hezbollah also has drones and surface-to-air missile systems. Hezbollah's forces number as many as 25,000 full-time fighters, with additional tens of thousands in reserves, according to an Israeli military assessment. Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah in 2021 said the group had 100,000 trained fighters.

Palestinian militant forces

Despite being Sunni, both the Palestinian militant group Hamas and Islamic Jihad have received weaponry and other materiel from Iran. The groups, however, have been struck hard by Israel since the Oct. 7 Hamas attack that began the war, which saw militants kill 1,200 people and take 250 others hostage. Israel's war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip since has killed at least 39,580 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between civilians and combatants in its count. Israel's military says it has killed roughly 15,000 militants in the war.

Yemen's Houthi rebels

The Houthis have held Yemen's capital, Sanaa, since 2014 as part of that country's ruinous war. They follow the Shiite Zaydi faith, a branch of Shiite Islam that is almost exclusively found in Yemen. While

broadly an insurgent force, the group with Iran's support is now able to launch drone and missile attacks that have drastically disrupted shipping in the Red Sea corridor and now even reach Israel. The U.S. Navy's efforts at stopping the shipping attacks have led to the most intense continuous combat its sailors have faced since World War II, but has yet to end the assaults. The amount of direct command Iran wields over the Houthis, however, remains a matter of debate among experts. The Houthis' attacks have raised their international profile while cracking down on dissent at home. The rebels claim they've recruited 200,000 additional fighters since launching their attacks. The rebels and their allies have a fighting force of some 20,000 fighters, according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

What could any retaliatory strike look like?

In April following an Israeli attack on the Iranian Embassy compound in Syria, Iran launched 170 bomb-carrying drones, more than 30 cruise missiles and more than 120 ballistic missiles toward Israel. Israel, the U.S. and other nations shot down many of the projectiles, some of which came from Yemen. Iran could launch a similar assault, but this time Hezbollah may get involved as the militia seeks revenge for the Israeli strike last week killing senior commander Fouad Shukur. Such an assault could strain Israeli air defenses, meaning more missile strikes raising the risk of casualties — and of a further escalation experts fear could lead to a wider regional war.

## **Bangladeshi PM Sheikh Hasina resigns as widening unrest sees protesters storm her official residence**

By JULHAS ALAM and KRUTIKA PATHI Associated Press

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — Bangladesh's prime minister resigned and fled the country Monday after weeks of protests against a quota system for government jobs descended into violence and grew into a broader challenge to her 15-year rule. Thousands of demonstrators stormed her official residence and other buildings associated with her party and family.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's departure threatens to create even more instability in the densely populated nation on India's border that is already dealing with a series of crises, from high unemployment to corruption to climate change. Amid security concerns, the main airport in Dhaka, the capital, suspended operations.

Violence just before and after her resignation left at least 41 people dead and about 200 others injured, according to media reports, which could not be independently confirmed. More than a dozen were reportedly killed when protesters set fire to a hotel owned by a leader in Hasina's party in the southwestern town of Jashore.

The military chief, Gen. Waker-uz-Zamam said he was temporarily taking control of the country, and soldiers tried to stem the growing unrest. Mohammed Shahabuddin, the country's figurehead president, announced late Monday after meeting with Waker-uz-Zamam and opposition politicians that Parliament would be dissolved and a national government would be formed as soon as possible, leading to fresh elections.

Speaking after the embattled leader was seen in television footage boarding a military helicopter with her sister, Waker-uz-Zaman sought to reassure a jittery nation that order would be restored. Experts, though, warned the road ahead would be long.

Hundreds of thousands of people poured into the streets waving flags and cheering to celebrate Hasina's resignation. But some celebrations soon turned violent, with protesters attacking symbols of her government and party, ransacking and setting fires in several buildings.

"This is not just the end of the tyrant Sheikh Hasina, with this we put an end to the mafia state that she has created," declared Sairaj Salekin, a student protester, on the streets of Dhaka.

Protests began peacefully last month as frustrated students demanded an end to a quota system for government jobs that they said favored those with connections to the prime minister's Awami League party. But amid a deadly crackdown, the demonstrations morphed into an unprecedented challenge to Hasina, highlighting the extent of economic distress in Bangladesh, where exports have fallen and foreign exchange reserves are running low.

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Waker-uz-Zaman promised that the military would launch an investigation into a crackdown that had left nearly 300 people dead since mid-July, some of the country's worst bloodshed since the 1971 war of independence, and which had fueled outrage against the government. Nearly 100 people, including 14 policemen, were killed Sunday, according to the country's leading Bengali-language daily newspaper, Prothom Alo. At least 11,000 people have been arrested in recent weeks.

"Keep faith in the military. We will investigate all the killings and punish the responsible," he said.

The military wields significant political influence in Bangladesh, which has faced more than 20 coups or coup attempts since independence in 1971. But it was not clear if Hasina's resignation or the military chief's calls for calm would be enough to end the turmoil.

Nahid Islam, a top student coordinator, told reporters late Monday that the movement would propose an outline for the new interim government — and they would not accept any other solution.

Throughout the day, people continued to pour into and out of Hasina's official residence, where they set fires, carried out furniture and pulled raw fish from the refrigerators. They also massed outside the parliament building, where a banner reading "justice" was hung.

Crowds also ransacked Hasina's family's ancestral home-turned-museum where her father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman — the country's first president and independence leader — was assassinated. They torched major offices of the ruling party and the country's two leading, pro-government TV stations — both of which were forced to go off air.

Elsewhere, protests were peaceful, and thousands gathered Monday evening outside the presidential palace, where the military chief, opposition politicians and the country's figurehead president met.

Hasina, meanwhile, landed in a city in India on the border with Bangladesh, according to a military official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to release the information to the media. It was not clear where she would go next.

The 76-year-old was elected for a fourth consecutive term in a January vote that was boycotted by her main opponents. Thousands of opposition members were jailed in the lead-up to the polls, and the U.S. and the U.K. denounced the result as not credible, though the government defended it.

Hasina had cultivated ties with powerful countries, including both India and China. But under her, relations with United States and other Western nations have come under strain, as they have expressed concerns over human rights violations and press freedoms in the predominantly Muslim nation of 170 million people.

Her political opponents have previously accused her of growing increasingly autocratic and have blamed the unrest on that authoritarian streak. In total, she served more than 20 years, longer than any other female head of government.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged a peaceful transition, according to a statement from U.N. deputy spokesman Farhan Haq, calling for "a full, independent, impartial and transparent investigation into all acts of violence."

U.S. State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller, speaking to reporters in Washington, welcomed the announcement that an interim government would be formed and called for "calm and restraint in the days ahead."

Ali Riaz, an expert on Bangladeshi politics who teaches political science at Illinois State University, said the country now faces an immense political challenge, as politicians and the military will struggle to restore calm while satisfying various camps and reining in attempts to settle scores.

"So the challenges on the process going forward are daunting," he said, adding that observers will be watching to ensure that the military's role stays that of mediator, given the history of army takeovers.

Protests continued even after the Supreme Court last month ruled that the quota system — which set aside up to 30% of government jobs for family members of veterans who fought in Bangladesh's war of independence against Pakistan — must be drastically cut.

The debate has highlighted the fact that there's a lack of quality jobs for college graduates, who increasingly seek the more stable and lucrative government jobs. But there aren't enough to go around — each year, some 400,000 graduates compete for around 3,000 jobs in the civil service exam.



The unrest has resulted in the closure of schools and universities across the country, and authorities at one point imposed a shoot-on-sight curfew. Fears also rose among Hindus that they might be targeted in the unrest since they are generally thought to be supporters of Hasina's party.

Authorities also shut off mobile internet on Sunday, and broadband internet was cut briefly Monday but services were restored later in the day.

Hasina's son, Sajeeb Wazed Joy, told the BBC that he doubted his mother would make a political comeback, as she has in the past, saying she was "so disappointed after all her hard work."

## Japan's share benchmark soars nearly 11% a day after massive sell-offs that shook Wall Street

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index soared nearly 11% early Tuesday, a day after it set markets tumbling in Europe and on Wall Street.

The Japanese index advanced more than 3,300 points, not quite making up for the huge loss of more than 4,400 points the day before, when it plunged 12.4% in its worst single-day decline since 1987.

The scary Monday started with a plunge abroad reminiscent of 1987's crash swept around the world and pummeled Wall Street with more steep losses, as fears worsened about a slowing U.S. economy.

The S&P 500 dropped 3% for its worst day in nearly two years. The Dow Jones Industrial Average reeled by 1,033 points, or 2.6%, while the Nasdaq composite slid 3.4% as Apple, Nvidia and other Big Tech companies that used to be the stars of the stock market continued to wilt.

The drops were the latest in a global sell-off that began last week, and it was the first chance for traders in Tokyo to react to Friday's report showing U.S. employers slowed their hiring last month by much more than economists expected. That was the latest piece of data on the U.S. economy to come in weaker than expected, and it's all raised fear the Federal Reserve has pressed the brakes on the U.S. economy by too much for too long through high interest rates in hopes of stifling inflation.

Professional investors cautioned that some technical factors could be amplifying the action in markets, and that the drops may be overdone, but the losses were still neck-snapping. South Korea's Kospi index careened 8.8% lower, and bitcoin dropped below \$54,000 from more than \$61,000 on Friday.

Even gold, which has a reputation for offering safety during tumultuous times, slipped about 1%.

That's in part because traders began wondering if the damage has been so severe that the Federal Reserve will have to cut interest rates in an emergency meeting, before its next scheduled decision on Sept. 18. The yield on the two-year Treasury, which closely tracks expectations for the Fed, briefly sank below 3.70% during the morning from 3.88% late Friday and from 5% in April. It later recovered and pulled back to 3.89%.

"The Fed could ride in on a white horse to save the day with a big rate cut, but the case for an intermeeting cut seems flimsy," said Brian Jacobsen, chief economist at Annex Wealth Management. "Those are usually reserved for emergencies, like COVID, and an unemployment rate of 4.3% doesn't really seem like an emergency."

Of course, the U.S. economy is still growing, the U.S. stock market is still up a healthy amount for the year and a recession is far from a certainty. The Fed has been clear about the tightrope it began walking when it started hiking rates sharply in March 2022: Being too aggressive would choke the economy, but going too soft would give inflation more oxygen and hurt everyone.

Goldman Sachs economist David Mericle sees a higher chance of a recession within the next 12 months following Friday's jobs report. But he still sees only a 25% probability of that, up from 15%, in part "because the data look fine overall" and he does not "see major financial imbalances."

Some of Wall Street's recent declines may simply be air coming out of a stock market that romped to dozens of all-time highs this year, in part on a frenzy around artificial-intelligence technology. Critics have been saying for a while that the stock market looked expensive after prices rose faster than corporate profits.

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"Markets tend to move higher like they're climbing stairs, and they go down like they're falling out a window," according to JJ Kinahan, CEO of IG North America. He chalks much of the recent worries to euphoria around AI subsiding, with pressure rising on companies to show how AI is turning into profits, and "a market that was ahead of itself."

The only way for stocks to look less expensive is either for prices to fall or for their profits to strengthen. Expectations are still high for the latter, with growth for S&P 500 profits this past quarter looking to be the strongest since 2021.

Professional investors also pointed to the Bank of Japan's move last week to raise its main interest rate from nearly zero. Such a move helps boost the value of the Japanese yen, but it could also force traders to scramble out of deals where they borrowed money for virtually no cost in Japan and invested it elsewhere around the world.

Treasury yields also pared their losses Monday after a report said growth for U.S. services businesses was a touch stronger than expected. Growth was led by arts, entertainment and recreation businesses, along with accommodations and food services, according to the Institute for Supply Management.

Still, stocks of companies whose profits are most closely tied to the economy's strength took sharp losses on the fears about a slowdown. The small companies in the Russell 2000 index dropped 3.3%, washing out what had been a revival for it and other beaten-down areas of the market.

Making things worse for Wall Street, Big Tech stocks tumbled as the market's most popular trade for much of this year continued to unravel. Apple, Nvidia and a handful of other Big Tech stocks known as the "Magnificent Seven" had propelled the S&P 500 to record after record this year, even as high interest rates weighed down much of the rest of the stock market.

But Big Tech's momentum turned last month on worries investors had taken their prices too high and expectations for future growth are becoming too difficult to meet. A set of underwhelming profit reports that began with updates from Tesla and Alphabet added to the pessimism and accelerated the declines.

Apple fell 4.8% Monday after Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway disclosed that it had slashed its ownership stake in the iPhone maker.

Nvidia, the chip company that's become the poster child of Wall Street's AI bonanza, fell even more, 6.4%. Analysts cut their profit forecasts over the weekend for the company after a report from The Information said Nvidia's new AI chip is delayed. The recent selling has trimmed Nvidia's gain for the year to nearly 103% from 170% in the middle of June.

Another Big Tech titan, Alphabet, fell 4.4% after a U.S. judge ruled Google's search engine has been illegally exploiting its dominance to squash competition and stifle innovation.

All told, the S&P 500 fell 160.23 points to 5,186.33. The Dow sank 1,033.99 to 38,703.27, and the Nasdaq composite tumbled 576.08 to 16,200.08.

Worries outside corporate profits, interest rates and the economy are also weighing on the market. The Israel-Hamas war may be worsening, which beyond its human toll could cause sharp swings for the price of oil. That's adding to broader worries about potential hotspots around the world, while upcoming U.S. elections could further scramble things.

Wall Street has been concerned about how policies coming out of November could impact markets, but the sharp swings for stock prices could affect the election itself.

The threat of a recession is likely to put Vice President Kamala Harris on the defensive. But slower growth could also further reduce inflation and force former President Donald Trump to pivot from his current focus on higher prices to outlining ways to revive the economy.

"It comes down to jobs," said Quincy Krosby, chief global strategist for LPL Financial. Jobs drive spending by U.S. consumers, which in turn is the biggest part of the U.S. economy.

"When we get to election day, the unemployment rate is going to be extremely important."

## Rally dates are set. Venues are chosen. The only thing missing for Harris' blitz is her VP choice

By COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The dates are set. The venues are chosen. The only thing missing from this week's campaign blitz with Vice President Kamala Harris and her 2024 running mate is the name of the running mate.

After a weekend spent interviewing finalists, Harris must decide on her wingman before the two set off Tuesday on a tour across key battleground states where they will introduce the new Democratic ticket to voters and highlight the stakes of the election.

Everything about her campaign has been rapid-fire out of necessity. She's only been a candidate for a little over two weeks, since President Joe Biden bowed out of the race following a dismal debate performance and escalating calls within the Democratic party for him to step aside. The Democratic National Committee chair said Friday that Harris had already secured enough votes to become the party's nominee and will accept the nomination Monday night when voting ends.

And about 8 in 10 Democrats say they would be somewhat or very satisfied if Harris became the Democratic nominee for president, according to a survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, which was conducted after Biden withdrew from the race.

Harris has had to do condensed vetting of her potential running mates as the party's convention draws near. That means there's not much time left for advocates for and against different picks get in their final licks.

Harris was zeroing in on three running mate contenders, whom she interviewed Sunday in Washington. They were Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro, Arizona Sen. Mark Kelly and Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, according to a person familiar with the process who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss the negotiations. Three other men have been in the mix: Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker, Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear and Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg.

Walz is in his second term as governor of Minnesota. He has made his state a bastion of liberal policy and, this year, one of the few states to protect fans buying tickets online for Taylor Swift concerts and other live events. He comes from rural America and in his first race for Congress, Walz upset a Republican incumbent.

Walz spoke before an energetic crowd at a fundraiser Monday evening in downtown Minneapolis, but didn't drop any hints about his status on Harris' shortlist. But the governor spoke of a "politics of joy" that he hopes to spread on the campaign trail on behalf of Harris.

"We've got to run this campaign against the serious threat that's there, but we have to do it every single day with a sense of joy," he said.

Walz also criticized Donald Trump and Republicans who wanted to regulate what books children read and undermine abortion rights.

The Minnesota Democratic Party, meanwhile, posted a booster for Walz online. "IMPORTANT PSA: There's no 'T' sound in 'Walz' (But there is one in 'Vice President Walz')," the group wrote with a winking smiley face emoji.

Some congressional Democrats have promoted Kelly, a former Navy pilot and astronaut whose state has more than 370 miles or 600 kilometers of border with Mexico. They say his selection could help defuse Trump's arguments that the Biden-Harris administration's immigration policies are too relaxed.

Shapiro has prominent supporters, too, like Philadelphia Mayor Cherelle Parker. She caused a stir by posting a video Friday depicting several Philadelphia-area officials and Democrats promoting Harris, but also playing up Shapiro as her running mate. A person familiar with the mayor's thinking said she had no insider knowledge about Harris' intentions.

When asked about the veepstakes Monday, Shapiro said he had no information.

"I got nothing for you, man," he told an Associated Press reporter as he arrived at the Pennsylvania state capitol in Harrisburg. "Have a great day."

Both Kelly and Shapiro have seen their detractors become more vocal as Harris closes in on a decision. Some labor groups have criticized Kelly, saying he opposes proposed legislation they argue would boost union organizing. The senator's office counters that while he did not co-sponsor the proposed legislation, he has said he would vote for it.

The nonprofit Institute for Middle East Understanding has been vocal about Shapiro, saying in a statement last week that he was not the right candidate for the job.

Shapiro has aggressively confronted what he views as antisemitism cropping up from pro-Palestinian demonstrations and he has professed solidarity with Israel in its drive to eliminate Hamas as it battles the militants in Gaza. But he's also criticized Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, while suggesting that any end to the Israel-Hamas war requires the removal of Hamas from power.

Harris and her running mate — whoever that is — will launch Tuesday into an aggressive battleground state tour that begins in Philadelphia on Tuesday and winds later in the week through Wisconsin, Michigan, North Carolina, Arizona and Nevada. A scheduled stop in Savannah, Georgia, was canceled due to the expected effects of Hurricane Debby.

Campaign officials are aware that momentum can be fleeting and are working to capitalize on the energy now, while managing expectations by continuing to emphasize that the race with Republican nominee Donald Trump is tight. But the strong rollout has allowed the Harris campaign to put a number of states back in play that had been feared out of reach when Biden remained at the top of the ticket.

Trump's running mate, JD Vance, was heading out on almost exactly the same campaign schedule as Harris: Philadelphia on Tuesday, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and Detroit on Wednesday and Raleigh, North Carolina, on Thursday.

He told Fox News on Sunday that Harris' pick doesn't matter to him. "Whoever she chooses, the problem is going to be Kamala Harris' record and Kamala Harris' policies," he said, adding, "It's not going to be good for the country."

Harris' early rallies have attracted enthusiastic thousands. Campaign officials say each stop will be loaded with local election officials, religious leaders, union members and more in an effort to show the diversity of her coalition. Some Republicans will also appear with her, according to the campaign.

The campaign this week launched "Republicans for Harris." The program will be a "campaign within a campaign," according to Harris' team, using well-known Republicans to activate their networks, with a particular emphasis on primary voters who backed former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley.

## **A rocket attack at an Iraqi military base injures US personnel, officials tell AP**

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Several U.S. personnel were injured in a suspected rocket attack at a military base in Iraq, U.S. defense officials said Monday, in what has been a recent uptick in strikes on American forces by Iranian-backed militias.

The attack comes as tensions across the Middle East are spiking following the killings last week of a senior Hezbollah commander in Lebanon and Hamas' top political leader in Iran, in suspected Israeli strikes. Both groups are backed by Iran.

The U.S. defense officials said troops at al-Asad air base were still assessing the injuries and damage, and it appeared that as many as seven military troops and civilians were injured. Earlier Monday, Iraqi security officials confirmed the attack, but no group has claimed responsibility.

The American officials said the U.S. looked into reports of a possible second attack at the base but determined there had not been another one.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss military operations. The White House said the president and vice president were briefed on the attack.

In recent weeks, Iranian-backed Iraqi militias have resumed launching attacks on bases housing U.S. forces in Iraq and Syria after a lull of several months, following a strike on a base in Jordan in late January



that killed three American soldiers and prompted a series of retaliatory U.S. strikes.

Between October and January, an umbrella group calling itself the Islamic Resistance in Iraq had regularly claimed attacks that it said were in retaliation for Washington's support of Israel in its war against Hamas in Gaza and were aimed at pushing U.S. troops out of the region.

## Google illegally maintains monopoly over internet search, judge rules

By MATTHEW BARAKAT and MICHAEL LIEDTKE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A judge on Monday ruled that Google's ubiquitous search engine has been illegally exploiting its dominance to squash competition and stifle innovation, a seismic decision that could shake up the internet and hobble one of the world's best-known companies.

The highly anticipated decision issued by U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta comes nearly a year after the start of a trial pitting the U.S. Justice Department against Google in the country's biggest antitrust showdown in a quarter century.

After reviewing reams of evidence that included testimony from top executives at Google, Microsoft and Apple during last year's 10-week trial, Mehta issued his potentially market-shifting decision three months after the two sides presented their closing arguments in early May.

"After having carefully considered and weighed the witness testimony and evidence, the court reaches the following conclusion: Google is a monopolist, and it has acted as one to maintain its monopoly," Mehta wrote in his 277-page ruling. He said Google's dominance in the search market is evidence of its monopoly.

Google "enjoys an 89.2% share of the market for general search services, which increases to 94.9% on mobile devices," the ruling said.

It represents a major setback for Google and its parent, Alphabet Inc., which had steadfastly argued that its popularity stemmed from consumers' overwhelming desire to use a search engine so good at what it does that it has become synonymous with looking things up online. Google's search engine processes an estimated 8.5 billion queries per day worldwide, nearly doubling its daily volume from 12 years ago, according to a recent study released by the investment firm BOND.

Kent Walker, Google's president of global affairs, said the company intends to appeal Mehta's findings.

"This decision recognizes that Google offers the best search engine, but concludes that we shouldn't be allowed to make it easily available," Walker said.

For now, the decision vindicates antitrust regulators at the Justice Department, which filed its lawsuit nearly four years ago while Donald Trump was still president, and has been escalating its efforts to rein in Big Tech's power during President Joe Biden's administration.

"This victory against Google is an historic win for the American people," said Attorney General Merrick Garland. "No company — no matter how large or influential — is above the law. The Justice Department will continue to vigorously enforce our antitrust laws."

The case depicted Google as a technological bully that methodically has thwarted competition to protect a search engine that has become the centerpiece of a digital advertising machine that generated nearly \$240 billion in revenue last year. Justice Department lawyers argued that Google's monopoly enabled it to charge advertisers artificially high prices while also enjoying the luxury of not having to invest more time and money into improving the quality of its search engine — a lax approach that hurt consumers.

Mehta's ruling focused on the billions of dollars Google spends every year to install its search engine as the default option on new cellphones and tech gadgets. In 2021 alone, Google spent more than \$26 billion to lock in those default agreements, Mehta said in his ruling.

Google ridiculed those allegations, noting that consumers have historically changed search engines when they become disillusioned with the results they were getting. For instance, Yahoo was the most popular search engine during the 1990s before Google came along.

Mehta said the evidence at trial showed the importance of the default settings. He noted that Microsoft's Bing search engine has 80% share of the search market on the Microsoft Edge browser. The judge said

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that shows other search engines can be successful if Google is not locked in as the predetermined default option.

Still, Mehta credited the quality of Google's product as an important part of its dominance, as well, saying flatly that "Google is widely recognized as the best (general search engine) available in the United States."

The Consumer Choice Center, a lobbying group that has fought other attempts to rein in businesses, decried Mehta's decision as a step in the wrong direction. "The United States is drifting toward the anti-tech posture of the European Union, a part of the world that makes almost nothing and penalizes successful American companies for their popularity," said Yael Ossowski, the center's deputy director.

Mehta's conclusion that Google has been running an illegal monopoly sets up another legal phase to determine what sorts of changes or penalties should be imposed to reverse the damage done and restore a more competitive landscape. He scheduled a Sept. 6 hearing to begin setting the stage for the next phase.

The potential outcome could result in a wide-ranging order requiring Google to dismantle some of the pillars of its internet empire, or preventing it from paying to ensure its search engine automatically answers queries on the iPhone and other devices. Or, the judge could conclude only modest changes are required to level the playing field.

"Google's loss in its search antitrust trial could be a huge deal — depending on the remedy," said Emarketer senior analyst Evelyn Mitchell-Wolf.

Regardless, she added, a drawn-out appeals process will delay any immediate effects for both consumers and advertisers.

The appeals process could take as long as five years, predicted George Hay, a law professor at Cornell University who was the chief economist for the Justice Department's antitrust division for most of the 1970s. That lengthy process will enable Google to fend off the likelihood of Mehta banning default search agreements, Hay said, but it probably won't shield the company from class-action lawsuits citing the judge's findings that advertisers were gouged with monopolistic pricing.

If there is a significant shakeup, it could turn out to be a coup for Microsoft, whose own power was undermined during the late 1990s when the Justice Department targeted the software maker in an antitrust lawsuit accusing it of abusing the dominance of its Windows operating system on personal computers to lock out competition.

That Microsoft case mirrored the one brought against Google in several ways and now the result could also echo similarly. Just as Microsoft's bruising antitrust battle created distractions and obstacles that opened up more opportunities for Google after its 1998 inception, the decision against Google could be a boon for Microsoft, which already has a market value of more than \$3 trillion. At one time, Alphabet was worth more than Microsoft, but now trails its rival, with a market value of about \$2 trillion.

If Mehta decides to limit or ban Google's default search deals, it could squeeze Apple's profits, too. Although parts of his decision were redacted to protect confidential business information, Mehta noted that Google paid Apple an estimated \$20 billion in 2022, doubling from 2020. The judge also noted Apple has periodically considered building its own search technology, but backed off that after a 2018 analysis estimated the company would lose more than \$12 billion in revenue during the first five years after a break-up with Google.

Google's payments have helped Apple's steadily growing services division, which generated \$85 billion in revenue during the company's last fiscal year. Apple didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

The Justice Department's antitrust division has recently taken on some of the biggest companies in the world. It sued Apple in March and in May announced a sweeping lawsuit against Ticketmaster and its owner, Live Nation Entertainment. Antitrust enforcers have also opened investigations into the roles Microsoft, Nvidia and OpenAI have played in the artificial intelligence boom.

The Biden administration has won some big cases, including blocking mergers of some of the world's biggest publishers as well as JetBlue Airways and Spirit Airlines. It's also had some notable setbacks, including in the sugar and healthcare industries.

Google faces several other legal threats both in the U.S. and abroad. In September, a federal trial is scheduled to begin in Virginia over the Justice Department's allegations that Google's advertising technol-

ogy constitutes an illegal monopoly.

## France beats Egypt 3-1 and will face Spain in the men's soccer final at Paris Olympics

By JAMES ROBSON AP Soccer Writer

LYON, France (AP) — Thierry Henry stood with his arms outstretched, facing the jubilant crowd and soaking up the atmosphere.

The final of the men's soccer tournament at the Paris Olympics was in sight after France had been pushed to the limit by Egypt in Monday's semifinal at Stade de Lyon.

Jean-Philippe Mateta, meanwhile, was being mobbed by his teammates after scoring his second goal in a 3-1 win that sets up a final against Spain at Parc des Princes on Friday.

"It was like, I don't know how to say — it was incredible," Mateta said.

France vs. Spain means there will be a European gold medalist at the Olympics for the first time in 32 years.

The host nation's place in the final looked in serious doubt as Egypt was closing in on an upset after leading through Mahmoud Saber's 62nd-minute goal.

France had hit the frame of the goal on three occasions before Mateta equalized in the 83rd and sent the game into extra time.

His second came in the 99th and Michael Olise added France's third in the 108th.

"It's not easy, right? We knew that. But at the end of the day, we kept on coming. We kept on trying. We kept on creating from the wing and trying to play and we got our reward," France coach Henry said.

While this ensures gold for a European team for the first time since Spain's victory at Barcelona 1992, it also ends the dominance of Latin American nations after the last five editions of the tournament saw victories for Brazil and Argentina — two each — and Mexico.

It also gives Henry the chance to added to his storied career, having won the World Cup and European Championship with France as a player.

This would be his first major honor in a coaching career that is still early in its development.

"I'm not there yet. We have the medal, that's for sure. Let's not talk about the gold," he said.

France's only Olympic gold came at Los Angeles 1984 and it also took silver when the Games were held in Paris in 1900.

One of the pre-tournament favorites, Henry's team had gone into the semifinal with a perfect winning record, having taken maximum points in the group phase and beaten Argentina in the quarterfinals.

But Egypt had already proved capable of upsetting the odds by beating Spain to top its group. And it came so close to another surprise win when Saber flashed a shot past France goalkeeper Guillaume Restes.

By that point, Loic Bade had already headed against the foot of the post in the first half.

Egypt's goal sparked a reaction from the French fans, who roared loudly to try to lift their team.

Egypt keeper Alaa Hamza denied Alexandre Lacazette from point blank range. France hit the frame of the goal twice more in the space of seconds when Lacazette headed against the foot of the post and Bade hit the bar with a follow up header.

The equalizer finally came when Olise strode through the middle of the field and slipped a pass into the run of Mateta.

With Hamza advancing to cut down the angle, Mateta got to the ball first and swept home.

France thought it had won a penalty deep into stoppage time when VAR reviewed a handball by Omar Fayed.

Referee Said Martinez spent agonizingly long reviewing the sideline monitor before eventually determining there had been a foul in the buildup.

While that was a reprieve for Egypt and sent the game to extra time, Fayed was sent off in the 92nd, having been booked during heated scenes when the potential penalty was being reviewed.

France took advantage of the extra man and went ahead through Mateta's second goal of the match.

Once again Olise was at the heart of it — swinging a ball into the box for Kiliann Sildillia head across goal. Mateta rose and headed past Alaa.

Olise then got on the score sheet himself firing low with a first time left-footed shot from inside the box. “We showed the team that we have character, and we showed the fans and everyone that we have character,” Mateta said. “We can believe we can score, and we do.”

Egypt, which has finished fourth on two previous occasions — Amsterdam 1928 and Tokyo 1964 — will play Morocco in an all-African bronze medal match in Nantes on Thursday.

## **Ex-Trump attorney Jenna Ellis to cooperate in Arizona fake electors case, charges to be dropped**

By JACQUES BILLEAUD Associated Press

PHOENIX (AP) — Former President Donald Trump’s campaign attorney Jenna Ellis, who worked closely with his personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, will cooperate with Arizona prosecutors in exchange for charges being dropped against her in a fake electors case, the state attorney general’s office announced Monday.

Ellis has previously pleaded not guilty to fraud, forgery and conspiracy charges in the Arizona case. Seventeen other people charged in the case have pleaded not guilty to the felony charges — including Giuliani, Trump presidential chief of staff Mark Meadows and 11 Republicans who submitted a document to Congress falsely declaring Trump had won Arizona.

“Her insights are invaluable and will greatly aid the State in proving its case in court,” Attorney General Kris Mayes said in a statement. “As I stated when the initial charges were announced, I will not allow American democracy to be undermined — it is far too important. Today’s announcement is a win for the rule of law.”

Eleven people who had been nominated to be Arizona’s Republican electors had met in Phoenix on Dec. 14, 2020, to sign a certificate saying they were “duly elected and qualified” electors and claimed Trump had carried the state in the 2020 election. President Joe Biden won Arizona by 10,457 votes.

A one-minute video of the signing ceremony was posted on social media by the Arizona Republican Party at the time. The document was later sent to Congress and the National Archives, where it was ignored.

Last year, Ellis was charged in Georgia after she appeared with Giuliani at a December 2020 hearing hosted by state Republican lawmakers at the Georgia Capitol during which false allegations of election fraud were made. She had pleaded guilty in October to one felony count of aiding and abetting false statements and writings. The cooperation agreement signed by Ellis in the Arizona case requires her to provide truthful information to the Attorney General’s Office and testify honestly in proceedings in any state or federal court. Prosecutors can withdraw from the deal and refile charges if Ellis violates the agreement.

Prosecutors have already asked a court to dismiss the Arizona charges against Ellis. It wasn’t immediately clear if a judge had yet approved the request.

The Associated Press left messages with Ellis’ attorney, Matthew Brown, after the agreement was announced Monday. Mel McDonald, a retired lawyer and former Arizona U.S. Attorney and judge in metro Phoenix, said cooperation agreements like the one signed by Ellis are common in Arizona state courts and are typically given to insiders who can explain how a crime unfolded.

“You need someone who is part of it to fill in the blanks,” said McDonald, who isn’t involved in the Arizona case.

While not a fake elector in Arizona, prosecutors say Ellis made false claims of widespread election fraud in the state and six others, encouraged the Arizona Legislature to change the outcome of the election and encouraged then-Vice President Mike Pence to accept Arizona’s fake elector votes.

The indictment said Ellis, Giuliani and other associates were at a meeting at the Arizona Legislature on Dec. 1, 2020, with then-House Speaker Rusty Bowers and other Republicans when Giuliani and his team asked the speaker to hold a committee hearing on the election.

When Bowers asked for proof of election fraud, Giuliani said he had proof but Ellis had advised that it



was left back at a hotel room, the indictment said. No proof was provided to Bowers.

Ellis also is barred from practicing law in Colorado for three years after her guilty plea in Georgia.

Prosecutors in Michigan, Nevada, Georgia and Wisconsin have also filed criminal charges related to the fake electors scheme.

Arizona authorities unveiled the felony charges in late April. Overall, charges were brought against 11 Republicans who submitted the document falsely declaring Trump had won Arizona, five lawyers connected to the former president and two former Trump aides.

Trump himself was not charged in the Arizona case but was referred to as an unindicted co-conspirator in the indictment.

## **UN fires additional staffers after probe finds potential involvement in Oct. 7 attack on Israel**

By JULIA FRANKEL Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — The United Nations said Monday it has fired additional staff members from its agency for Palestinian refugees after an internal investigation found they may have been involved in the Hamas-led Oct. 7 attack against Israel.

The U.N. secretary-general's office announced the move in a brief statement to journalists. Farhan Haq, deputy spokesperson for the secretary-general, did not elaborate on the UNRWA staffers' likely role in the attack or on the evidence that prompted its decision.

UNRWA previously fired 12 staffers and put seven staffers on administrative leave without pay over the claims. The group of nine staffers the U.N. announced it had fired Monday includes some from each group, said Juliette Touma, communications director for UNRWA.

The U.N. did not clarify how many have now been fired from the agency in total.

The U.N.'s internal watchdog has been investigating the agency since Israel in January accused 12 UNRWA staffers of being involved in the Oct. 7 attack on Israel, in which militants killed 1,200 people and abducted some 250 others.

Israel's allegations initially led top donor countries to suspend their funding for UNRWA. That caused a cash crunch of about \$450 million dollars. Since then, all donor countries except for the US have decided to resume funding.

Oren Marmorstein, the spokesperson for Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, wrote on X following the announcement of the firings that Israel was again calling for donor countries to suspend funding "as the funds may go to terrorist elements."

"UNRWA is part of the problem and not part of the solution, and anyone who seeks the best interests of Israel, the Gaza Strip and the region should act to replace UNRWA's activities with other agencies," he wrote.

The U.N. watchdog charged with investigating UNRWA, called the Office of Internal Oversight Services, said it drew on evidence provided by Israel in discussions with Israeli authorities. It said it could not independently corroborate that evidence since it did not have direct access to it. The investigators also reviewed internal UNRWA information, including staff records, email and other communications data.

It said it found sufficient evidence pointing to nine employees' potential involvement in the Oct. 7 attack.

An Israeli official with knowledge of the discussions, who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to brief the media, said that Israeli authorities spent hours on each accused UNRWA staffer when briefing U.N. investigators on their findings.

"I have decided that in the case of these remaining nine staff members, they cannot work for UNRWA," the agency's head Philippe Lazzarini said in a statement.

"The agency's priority is to continue lifesaving and critical services for Palestine refugees in Gaza and across the region, especially in the face of the ongoing war, the instability and risk of regional escalation," said Lazzarini, who also said he condemned the Oct. 7 attack.

In nine other cases, the evidence was insufficient, and in one other case there was no evidence pointing to involvement.

UNRWA has been the main agency distributing aid to Palestinians in Gaza during the 10-month old war there, which Gaza Health officials say has killed over 39,600 people and unleashed a mass humanitarian catastrophe.

Israel has escalated calls for the agency's shutdown since the war began. It has long accused UNRWA of collaborating with Hamas and turning a blind eye to the militant group's activities. Throughout the war, it has released images of tunnels built next to UNRWA facilities and charged that many more UNRWA staffers than those who have been fired are members of militant groups.

During the war, far-right protesters demonstrating against the agency have set portions of the its facility in Jerusalem ablaze.

UNRWA denies collaborating with Hamas. The agency says that more than 200 UNRWA staffers have been killed, and 190 of the agency's installations have been damaged during the war — including U.N.-run schools that have been turned into shelters for displaced Palestinians.

## Supreme Court shuts down Missouri's long shot push to lift Trump's gag order in hush-money case

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Monday shut down a long-shot push from Missouri to remove a gag order in former President Donald Trump's hush-money case and delay his sentencing in New York.

The Missouri attorney general went to the high court with the unusual request to sue New York after the justices granted Trump broad immunity from prosecution in a separate case filed in Washington.

The order states that Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito would have allowed Republican Andrew Bailey to file the suit, though not grant his push to quickly lift the gag order and delay sentencing.

Bailey argued the New York gag order, which Missouri wanted stayed until after the election, wrongly limits what the GOP presidential nominee can say on the campaign trail around the country, and Trump's eventual sentence could affect his ability to travel.

"The actions by New York have created constitutional harms that threaten to infringe the rights of Missouri's voters and electors," he wrote.

Bailey railed against the charges as politically motivated as he framed the issue as a conflict between two states. While the Supreme Court typically hears appeals, it can act as a trial court in state conflicts. Those disputes, though, typically deal with shared borders or rivers that cross state lines.

New York, meanwhile, said the limited gag order does allow Trump to talk about the issues important to voters, and the sentence may not affect his movement at all. Democratic New York Attorney General Letitia James argued that appeals are moving through state courts and there's no state-on-state conflict that would allow the Supreme Court to weigh in at this point.

"Allowing Missouri to file this suit for such relief against New York would permit an extraordinary and dangerous end-run around former President Trump's ongoing state court proceedings," she wrote.

Trump is under a gag order imposed at trial after prosecutors raised concerns about Trump's habit of attacking people involved in his cases. It was modified after his conviction, though, to allow him to comment publicly about witnesses and jurors.

He remains barred from disclosing the identities or addresses of individual jurors, and from commenting about court staffers, the prosecution team and their families until he is sentenced.

His sentencing has been delayed until at least September.

Trump was convicted in Manhattan on 34 counts of falsifying business records arising from what prosecutors said was an attempt to cover up a hush money payment to porn actor Stormy Daniels just before the 2016 presidential election. She says she had a sexual encounter with Trump a decade earlier, which he denies.

The charge is punishable by up to four years behind bars, though it's not clear whether prosecutors will seek prison time. Incarceration would be a rare punishment for a first-time offender convicted of Trump's charges, legal experts have noted. Other potential sentences include probation, a fine or a conditional discharge requiring Trump to stay out of trouble to avoid additional punishment.

Trump is also trying to have the conviction overturned, pointing to the July Supreme Court ruling that gave him broad immunity from prosecution as a former president. That finding all but ended the possibility that he could face trial on election interference charges in Washington before the election.

The high court has rejected other similar suits framed as a conflict between states in recent years, including over the 2020 election results.

## Hundreds in Israel mark the 5th birthday of a child held hostage in Gaza

By MELANIE LIDMAN Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Hundreds of Israelis sent orange balloons into the air Monday to mark the fifth birthday of one of two children held captive by militants in the Gaza Strip.

Ariel Bibas, along with his 1-year-old brother Kfir, has become a symbol of the struggle to release the hostages. The orange balloons are meant to symbolize Ariel and Kfir's bright red hair.

During its Oct. 7 attack, Hamas killed 1,200 people and took some 250 people hostage, according to Israeli authorities. Among the 110 still held hostage, the Bibas boys are said to be the only children. Israeli authorities say more than a third of the remaining hostages are no longer alive though Israel does not consider the Bibas boys to be part of that tally.

Ariel Bibas' relatives said they were stunned to be marking the birthday while Ariel was still in captivity, 304 days after he was kidnapped.

"It's unbelievable. It's something we never imagined, that Ariel will turn five as a hostage," said Tomer Keshet, a cousin of Ariel's father Yarden.

Ariel, Kfir and parents Shiri and Yarden Bibas were kidnapped from Kibbutz Nir Oz on Oct. 7. Video of the kidnapping, with Shiri seen swaddling her two redheaded boys in a blanket and being whisked away by armed men, ricocheted around the world in the hours after the attack.

In January, family members marked what they dubbed "the saddest birthday in the world" as Kfir turned 1 year old. Keshet said he believed there were major differences between how Kfir and Ariel were experiencing their time in captivity.

"The difference between a child and a baby is that a child understands, a child knows that the situation is terrible, a child knows what a birthday is," he said.

On Monday, hundreds of supporters gathered in Tel Aviv to march with photos of Ariel wearing Batman costumes. He loved all of the superheroes, and Batman especially, said relative Jimmy Miller, who wore a shirt with Batman on it in Ariel's honor. He showed a picture of a beaming Ariel at his nursery school before his kidnapping, with a photo he drew of the Batman symbol.

"Instead of watching Ariel running in the fields with his Batman cape and celebrating with his friends in the nursery school," said Miller, "he's probably in some tunnel from Hamas surrounded by enemies who yell at him if he raises his voice."

Kfir and Ariel Bibas were among the youngest of about 30 children taken hostage Oct. 7. Under a weeklong temporary cease-fire in November, Hamas released 105 hostages — including foreign nationals, women, children and teens — but Shiri Bibas and her sons were not among them. Yarden Bibas, who was taken captive separately, appears in photos to have been wounded during the abduction.

Since the Hamas attack sparked war, more than 39,000 Palestinians have been killed, according to the Health Ministry in Hamas-ruled Gaza. The vast majority of the population has been displaced multiple times and are facing severe food shortages as well as terrible sanitation conditions.

Since the attack, orange has come to represent the Bibas family across Israel. Hundreds of people wore

orange in his honor on Monday, and his grandmother Pnina Bibas spoke about how during Ariel's captivity, the orange fruits he loved, loquats and kumquats, had started and finished their seasons while he was being held.

"The kumquat tree you love so much has blossomed again, its branches filled with tiny orange fruits," she said at the birthday event. "The loquat tree near your home has also borne fruit, orange ones, and I can imagine you running to your mum, so proud of what you've picked."

## What's the deal with the Olympics? Your burning questions, answered

By MALLIKA SEN Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The Olympics have their own language, traditions and rules — ones that are ever-evolving. It can be a lot to take in so here, The Associated Press will be answering some of the most asked questions about the Paris Games.

I thought it was the Paris Olympics. Why are so many events ... not in Paris?

Most of the events are in or around Paris, but select competitions are scattered around France — or in Tahiti. It's not uncommon for host cities to tap venues outside municipal limits. It's down to a few factors: space, appropriate facilities for each discipline, a sustainability commitment that meant only two new venues were constructed in Paris and, in Tahiti's case, the best place to get sick waves with minimal impact.

What's in the box athletes get with their medals?

Gold, silver and bronze medalists can skip the trip to the gift shop. When the winners take the podium, they're handed a long, thin package containing the official Paris Olympics poster. They also get special stuffed Olympic Phryges with their corresponding medal.

On that note — what IS the Paris 2024 mascot?

It's the Olympic Phryge, a triangular red behemoth that has confounded some. It's meant to commemorate the phrygian bonnet, a hat that is a symbol of the French Revolution. The Paralympics mascot is much the same but has a prosthetic leg.

Why isn't Russia at the Olympics?

The Russians were already on thin ice at the Olympics before the invasion of Ukraine. Amid doping investigations, Russian athletes competed on the Olympic Athletes from Russia team in Pyeongyang and as the Russian Olympic Committee in Tokyo and Beijing. After the invasion of Ukraine, the International Olympic Committee suspended the ROC for forming sports councils in eastern Ukraine — a breach of the Olympic Charter.

So then, who are the AINs?

Russia is not at the Olympics, but some Russian athletes are. After Belarus and Russia were barred over the war in Ukraine, the IOC permitted some of the athletes from those countries to compete as Individual Neutral Athletes, abbreviated to AIN based on the French term. Winning AINs will not hear their country's anthem or wear its colors. They also weren't allowed to participate in the opening ceremony.

Why are people going crazy over pins?

Pins are currency, pins are souvenirs, pins are life. Many countries, news organizations, brands and even people have customized pins — lapel-sized but often found weighing down lanyards, hats, jackets and so on. Pins are swapped, used to entice or simply savored by fans, journalists, volunteers and athletes alike.

On the subject of branding, what do the Olympic rings represent?

The five interlocking rings "represent the five parts of the world now won over to the cause of Olympism," according to modern Olympics founder Pierre de Coubertin. But the colors of the rings do not correspond to any particular world regions or continents.

What does 'repechage' mean?

It means second chance, though this is the first time Olympic track and field athletes will get to use it. Athletes in the 200-meter through 1,500-meter races and hurdle events can get a chance at the semifinals by competing in the repechage round. Some other Olympic sports already employ it.



What are the new Olympic events?

A number of events have been tweaked, but there's one wholly new sport debuting: breaking. There's also a new event under canoe slalom, kayak cross.

Wait, what is the difference between a sport and an event?

Well, there are sports and then there are disciplines and then ... there are events. There are 32 sports at these Olympics, with 45 disciplines among them. Marathon swimming and springboard diving are very different disciplines but both fall under the umbrella of World Aquatics. And then among the 45 disciplines, there are 329 events in which athletes can compete.

Speaking of swimming: Why are people swimming in the Seine in the first place?

Sure, the swimming portion of the triathlon is only 1.5 kilometers — the same distance Katie Ledecky swam to nab her 12th Olympic medal. But can you imagine more than 50 people swimming 30 laps in the pool at the same time? Both triathlon and marathon swimming don't employ heats — all competitors start at the same time, in an open-water swim. In this case, the selected body of water was Paris' famous — and, at times, infamous — Seine River. The location also helped triathletes transition relatively seamlessly to the cycling leg of the race.

Why is the track for athletics events purple?

The track at the Stade de France, where athletics events are being held, is purple-hued — a marked change from the typical rusty red. Paris Games organizers wanted to stand out, in more than one way. According to Olympics.com, Paris 2024 organizers commissioned a track in a unique color so viewers would remember it. They also worked in conjunction with Olympic Broadcasting Services, which determined that the track color would help highlight competitors.

## **This preschool in Alaska changed lives for parents and kids alike. Why did it have to close?**

By MORIAH BALINGIT AP Education Writer

WASILLA, Alaska (AP) — She was a teenager, and the mother of a 2-year-old, when a knock came on the door of the trailer she called home. Two women were there to tell her about a federally funded preschool program called Head Start that was opening near her home in Chugiak. Would she be interested in enrolling her daughter?

Then pregnant with her second child, Kristine Bayne signed up. She hoped it would make a difference for her daughter. What she didn't know: It would shift the trajectory of her life, too.

Bayne, who finished high school through correspondence courses after she got pregnant at 16, would go on to take a job with her child's Head Start. Her confidence buoyed, she returned to school to earn a bachelor's degree and a counseling certificate from the state. She would rise through the ranks of CCS Early Learning, the nonprofit that ran the region's Head Start centers, and would retire as a family partnerships coordinator, lending the same kind of help to families that she and her husband received.

"I learned so much," says Bayne, now 65. "How to take care of my children, how to advocate for them, how to have a voice for myself. ... They take you where you're at, and they help you move forward to become a better person."

In this part of Alaska, countless parents tell stories like Bayne's. Head Start has helped them earn degrees that put them on track for better jobs. As drug addiction ravages the community, it has helped parents in recovery and educated children who have ended up in foster care. It has done this while readying youngsters for kindergarten, conditioning them for the school day's rhythms and teaching them how to be good friends and students.

Which is why it was so wrenching when CCS Early Learning closed the Chugiak Head Start, where Bayne had sent her children. In January, it announced it was shuttering another center — this time in Meadow Lakes, where Bayne's granddaughter Makayla, who is now in her care, was enrolled.

Not enough grownups

The impending closure is not for lack of need. This is the fastest-growing part of the 49th state, and the

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nonprofit's Head Start program has a waiting list. It can — and did — fill Meadow Lakes' three classrooms to capacity.

The problem is with the grownups.

Specifically, there are not enough of them who want to work at a Head Start. Not when they can make more money working at the nearby Target, which hiked its pay during the pandemic. And not when, with the same credentials, they can get a better-paying job at the local school district.

As a teacher shortage grinds on, what is unfolding in this corner of the state — a region that contains both massive tracts of untamed wild and a booming Anchorage bedroom community — offers a preview of what other programs could face.

Head Start teachers, 70% of whom hold a bachelor's degree, earn an average of \$39,000 a year. In 2022, nearly a quarter of them left their jobs, some retiring early and others lured away by higher-paying work in retail or at school districts.

Without those teachers, the preschools cannot serve as many students as they once did. It means fewer options for parents who want to return to work but cannot afford child care, and fewer early learning opportunities for children from the neediest families. In rural communities, Head Start might be the only child care center for working parents.

The number of children and parents served by Head Start has tumbled precipitously since its peak in 2013. That year, it served 1.1 million children and pregnant people, according to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, which analyzed federal data. Nine years later, its enrollment stood at around 786,000.

Some of the children who would have enrolled in Head Start instead migrated to state-funded preschool programs, which have expanded. There are also fewer babies being born. Still, the percentage of children in poverty heading to preschool has been unchanged for two decades, which concerns researchers like Steve Barnett, of the National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers University.

"The fewer resources (children) have at home, the more they benefit from high-quality environments" like Head Start, Barnett says. Without it, he said, they show up in kindergarten further behind their classmates from middle- and upper-income households.

In Wasilla, the regional Head Start group decided to raise employee pay to keep more staff from leaving. To do that, it had to close one center. Mark Lackey, executive director of CCS Early Learning, found he was competing for employees with the service sector, which raised pay during the pandemic to lure back reluctant workers. Last year, CCS Early Learning was paying teacher aides with two years on the job about \$16 an hour, while Target was offering more than \$17 to entry-level employees, Lackey said.

"It's just tragic," Lackey says. "There's so many more kids we could be serving."

Lackey was hopeful the state would provide some financial relief. Lawmakers hiked Head Start funding by \$5.2 million in this year's budget. But Alaska Gov. Mike Dunleavy, a Republican, vetoed half the funding increase at the end of June.

A closing without closure

Meadow Lakes' Head Start was tucked into a strip mall off a four-lane highway, its pine green facade sandwiched between a charter school and a laundromat that offered showers. The kids who arrived there were sometimes smiling, sometimes crying, often carrying tiny backpacks to fit their small frames.

They came from households where their caretakers were often struggling with problems too complex for them to understand: poverty, illness, financial strife, homelessness. Their caregivers included teen parents daunted by the responsibility of raising children, and grandparents who had unexpectedly taken in grandchildren.

Head Start was there to help all of them.

Its pioneering, multigenerational approach sought to build healthy environments for the children it served — and that meant supporting the adults in their lives, too. Many of the parents who sent their kids to Meadow Lakes attended Head Start themselves, like Cha Na Xiong, who had a child at the school. The son of Hmong refugees, he went to Head Start to learn English, allowing him to get a grasp on the language before he started kindergarten.

Kendra Mitchell, whose mother had her at 16, also went to Head Start, and sent her son Wayne to the

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Meadow Lakes school. He'll head to kindergarten next year, but she said she's seen how it's shaped both his life – and hers.

"He's actually, you know, verbalizing his emotions and learning how to regulate his emotions at such a young age, which is extremely hard," Mitchell said.

Wayne's childhood has been marked by instability as Mitchell struggled with addiction and sent him to live with relatives. Wayne returned to live with her when she started recovery. When she enrolled him in Head Start, she said staff embraced her without judgment and helped connect her with resources as she got back on her feet. She told staff she was living in a cabin without running water; they got her a voucher so she could take Wayne to the neighboring laundromat for showers and laundry.

"They weren't just lifting our son up. They were lifting us up as well," Mitchell says.

Saying goodbye one last time

In May, the Meadow Lakes children came and went for the last time. Class started with routines that had become familiar. The children sang a song to learn the days of the week, set to the tune of the "Adams Family" theme. They talked about the weather — that day it was rainy — then lined up to wash their hands before sitting down at a pair of long tables for breakfast.

In a school day, there was so much more than met the eye. Every activity was loaded with lessons large and small. As they talked about the calendar — it was May 6 — they practiced saying "sixth." Teacher Lisa Benson-Nuyen instructed them to "pretend your tongue is a little turtle head, sticking out of the shell." She taught them, too, that the last day of school could bring a mix of emotions.

"For some people, that's a happy face. For other people, ... that's a sad face," Benson-Nuyen said.

At breakfast, the children learned blueberries do not belong in their ears. Then came tooth-brushing and play time. All these routines were built to help children feel secure and learn responsibility. And every conflict with a classmate marked an opportunity to teach children how to interact with one another and how to manage their emotions. It's why the classroom had a "comfort corner," a cozy space with pillows where at least one student was often curled up.

That last week, there were small signs things were coming to a close. The classroom walls, still brightly decorated, were no longer draped with student art. Teachers began talking about what to do with class pets. On the final day, staff tried to keep things cheerful and celebratory, even as they struggled to maintain composure. They painted the students' hair bright colors and had a dance party.

Eryn Martin, the program office assistant, called out to Mitchell as she left for the last time: "Good luck, Kendra! You've been working really hard and I'm proud of you."

Martin, herself a Head Start graduate and alumna parent, had been crying on and off all day, and her cheeks were once again wet with tears. Willow Palmer practiced what she learned in the classroom — when people are upset, she can help comfort them. The 5-year-old rushed back into the classroom, then reemerged with a neon-green stuffed frog. She gave it to Martin. Then she leaned in and gave her a hug, too.

On the playground that day, some students released butterflies they had been watching for weeks inside their classrooms, as they emerged from cocoons. Now they were full-grown. They flew away in the crisp spring air — away from the school, and into the unknown.

## **At the Paris Olympics, it will no longer be personal for Ukraine's athletes. This time, it's war**

By HANNA ARHIROVA and JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — For Ukrainian hurdler Anna Ryzhykova, each stride on the Paris Olympic track will have meaning far beyond the time she clocks.

Her competitions are no longer strictly an individual battle, but war on a different front. Her goal is not just gold, but also to rivet global attention on her country's fight for survival against Russia.

"You're not doing it for yourself anymore," she says. "Winning a medal just for yourself, being a champion, realizing your ambitions — it's inappropriate."

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But the broader war is making it increasingly difficult for Ukraine, once a post-Soviet sports power, to get those headline-capturing medals, an Associated Press analysis found.

This story is part of an AP series that documented and visualized the toll the Russia-Ukraine war has had on Ukrainian athletes, coaches and sports facilities ahead of the Paris Olympics. AP is republishing it as Ryzhykova prepares to race Tuesday in the semifinals of the 400-meter hurdles at the Games.

Skater Oksana Baiul won Ukraine's first Olympic gold, at the 1994 Winter Games, just three years after Ukraine declared independence. The medal ceremony in Lillehammer, Norway, was delayed while organizers hunted for a recording of Ukraine's anthem, finally securing one from the Ukrainian team.

Pole vault star Sergei Bubka and the boxing Klitschko brothers — Vitali and Wladimir, the Olympic super-heavyweight champion in 1996 — were among other athletes who put the new nation on sport's map. At the Summer Games, Ukraine outperformed every former Soviet or Eastern bloc state — except Russia and, in 2000, Romania — and through to London in 2012, always finished among the top 13 nations, ranked by total medals won.

Ukrainian performances began dipping after 2014. Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea that year was followed by eight years of armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, where Moscow backed armed separatists before unleashing its even deadlier full-scale invasion in 2022 to subdue the whole country.

Ukraine's haul of 11 medals at the 2016 Rio Games was its smallest as an independent nation and it tumbled to a low of 22nd in the country rankings. Ukraine recovered to 16th at the pandemic-delayed Olympics in Tokyo in 2021 but just one of its 19 medals was gold — another new low.

Part of the explanation is that fighting takes lives and resources. Just as important is the psychological burden the war imposes on athletes.

While honing their bodies and skills for Paris, they have wrestled with their consciences. Athletes have had to explain to themselves and others why they are still competing when soldiers are dying and lives being ripped apart. Some are emerging from the journey with their priorities reordered and armed with new motivation to fight, through sport, for the broader national cause.

"Our victories are to draw attention to Ukraine," Ryzhykova says.

She ran on Ukraine's bronze medal-winning 400-meter relay team in the London Olympics in 2012, and placed 5th in her specialty in Tokyo, the 400-meter hurdles. Any medals she earns this summer will be for her country in a very real sense.

"Attention is drawn to you only when you win, when you perform, when you are on the podium," she said in an AP interview. "The higher you are, the more attention you attract."

A sports power being destroyed

More than 500 sports facilities have been destroyed since the war began in February 2022. That was the year Russian missiles hit the Lokomotiv sports center in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, depriving Ukrainian artistic swimmers of the training venue they used before winning the team bronze medal in Tokyo. The gleaming "Neptune" aquatic center in Mariupol was bombed in the Russian siege of that devastated port city and now the city is under occupation. That ruined the plans of diver Stanislav Oliferchuk to use it as his Olympic training base for Paris.

High jumper Oleh Doroshchuk, aged 23 and one of Ukraine's brightest prospects in Olympic track and field in Paris, has learned to ignore aid raid sirens that blare over his hometown, Kropyvnytskyi in central Ukraine, so they don't interrupt his training. Still, after particularly deadly Russian attacks that regularly hit the country, Doroshchuk says he's been forced to look inside himself, questioning whether it's morally right that he's "just training" when other men are defending front lines.

"I think everyone has these kinds of thoughts," he said. "Many people among those whom I know are fighting, and some were killed."

Across Ukraine, air raids often derail training.

"You sit in the bomb shelter for an hour, then come out for 15 minutes and start warming up and moving again. The alarm goes off again, and you go back to the bomb shelter," Ryzhykova says. She mostly



trains abroad as a result.

Sports in mourning

Among Ukraine's many tens of thousands of dead and injured are athletes, coaches and others in sports organizations who together helped Ukraine to stand on its own as a sporting nation after it broke free of the former Soviet sports machine.

Some of the athletes killed might have had a shot of qualifying for Paris. Some of the coaches had been nurturing future generations.

Ryzhykova lost a mentor who helped ignite her passion for sports. Coach Valentyn Vozniuk and his wife, Iryna Tymoshenko, were among 46 people killed by a supersonic missile that slammed into an apartment building in Dnipro in 2023.

Vozniuk, who was 75, led the Dnipro sports school where Ryzhykova started track and field and where she still trains on trips home.

"He was always very cheerful, a happy person who did everything to make children come, enjoy, and stay," she recalls.

She worries the war will accelerate a downward spiral for Ukrainian sport. "Few children are coming for training now, many have left," she notes.

"There are times when depression and a feeling of not wanting to do anything set in," she says. "And when you're at a training camp and read the news about a massive rocket attack, you worry about all your relatives and loved ones."

Facing Russia in Paris

In Paris, Ukrainian athletes will endure another ordeal: the likelihood of crossing paths with competitors from Russia and ally Belarus.

The International Olympic Committee barred the two nations from team sports in Paris but didn't bend to Ukrainian pleas for their complete exclusion.

Instead, Russians and Belarusians who pass a two-step vetting procedure will compete individually as neutrals. They must not have publicly supported the invasion or be affiliated with military or state security agencies.

The IOC has said dozens of Russian and Belarusian athletes qualify.

Ryzhykova struggles with the prospect of face-to-face encounters.

"I can't even imagine this anger," she says. "How to restrain oneself, how to look at them."

Her priority remains Ukraine and keeping its losses and sacrifices in the spotlight.

"We cannot be without a position, be on the sidelines — because we are opinion leaders. And we have to be a support for our people," Ryzhykova says.

"It will be challenging at this Olympics because there is no room for defeat or injury," she adds. "It's tough to cope with, but it's both motivation and responsibility."

## **In Israel and Lebanon, life goes on even as the region teeters on the edge of all-out war**

By MELANIE LIDMAN and BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — In Beirut, shops are open and traffic is as snarled as ever. In Tel Aviv, cafes hum with patrons and umbrellas sprout across crowded beaches.

Such scenes may seem surreal in a region teetering on the edge of all-out war — and beneath the surface there is plenty of fear and anxiety. But after 10 months of near-daily border skirmishes, strikes further afield and escalating threats, a sense of fatalism seems to have set in.

The killings last week of two militant leaders in Beirut and Tehran — attributed to Israel — brought vows of revenge from Iran and Lebanon's Hezbollah. Everyone expects that an all-out war would be far more devastating than any previous conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, including the 2006 war.

But in Nahariya, a coastal Israeli town just 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) south of Lebanon, Israelis lounged at the beach and surfers caught waves in the shadow of the hills rolling along the border.

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Nahariya resident Shauli Jan said the area was "tense" but that most people were still going about their daily lives despite frequent air raid sirens. He decided to come to the beach as usual.

"We just want it to be calm," he said. "We prefer to have a political arrangement and not war."

In Beirut, about 110 kilometers (70 miles) to the north, the streets were bustling even in Dahiyeh, a neighborhood that houses many of Hezbollah's political and security operations and where an Israeli airstrike killed Hezbollah commander Fouad Shukur and six other people last week.

The area, which is also a densely populated residential and commercial district, was devastated during the 2006 war; Israel has warned it would be flattened in the next one.

Some residents said they were moving to other parts of Beirut, while others vowed to stay.

"I will not leave Dahiyeh, no matter what happens," said Khalil Nassar, 75, who was carrying Lebanese, Palestinian and Hezbollah flags in a show of solidarity as he went about his day. "They are trying to intimidate us."

Even those who fear the worst may feel there's little to be done. Authorities on both sides have yet to issue any orders to evacuate or prepare, even as several countries have put out dire travel warnings and many airlines have suspended service.

Israel's military had not as of Monday released any special guidelines or warnings for civilians, meaning beaches were full, summer camps were ongoing and people still headed to work as they have throughout most of the war in Gaza. No one seemed to be stocking up on supplies and grocery shelves were full.

For many, the worrisome anticipation was tempered by the obligation, for now, to carry on.

"There is no change to the Home Front Command's defensive policy," the military's chief spokesperson Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari told Israelis in a nationally televised address on Sunday. "At the same time, we are in strong readiness for defense in the air, at sea, and on land, and we are preparing for any sudden threat."

After an apparent Israeli strike on an Iranian consular building in Syria killed two Iranian generals in April, Iran responded with an unprecedented direct attack on Israel, launching some 300 ballistic missiles and drones, nearly all intercepted by a coalition of international forces.

Elad Karta, who works in real estate, said his response to the latest Iranian threat was to come to the beach in Tel Aviv with his wife and son.

"It's summer break, so we're doing it for him," he said.

He and his wife had discussed buying extra cooking gas or emergency lighting but in the end decided against it.

"We don't feel scared, but we do feel kind of unsure of what will happen next," he said.

In Lebanon, Hezbollah legislator Amin Sherri told The Associated Press the government has an emergency plan in case of all-out war, and the country has enough fuel and medicine to last between two and four months. On Monday, caretaker Health Minister Firass Abiad received 32 tons of medical equipment and medicine from the World Health Organization.

Sherri said there was great uncertainty over Israel's next moves.

"We don't know when it will initiate its aggression," he said.

Several countries, including the United States, Britain, France and Canada have warned their citizens to exercise caution or leave the region. Many airlines have canceled flights to Lebanon and Israel, causing crowding as travelers try to rebook. Some of the expatriates who came to Lebanon to spend the summer have cut their trips short.

At Beirut's Rafik Hariri International Airport, some international flights were canceled while others delayed their flights, leaving passengers packed at the departure terminal. Passengers who spent hours waiting were sleeping on the ground waiting for the next flight.

Roy Steinmetz, spokesperson for the Israel Airports Authority, said the airline cancellations were expected to have an immediate effect, with tens of thousands fewer passengers set to pass through the country's main international airport compared to the same time last year.

In the Beirut neighborhood of Dahiyeh, streets were filled with shoppers even around the building targeted by the Israel airstrike last Tuesday. Hezbollah has vowed to respond in kind without specifying

when or how.

Nearby, 54-year-old Saad Baydoun surveyed the damage to his shops, which sell internet and sound systems. His apartment was also damaged in the airstrike, forcing his wife and children to move in with relatives in another part of Beirut.

"Israel wants war but we don't, there is no doubt about that," said Baydoun. "What I felt is 1% of what the people of Gaza are passing through."

Near Tel Aviv's central Dizengoff Square, boutiques and ice cream shops welcomed patrons as Israelis walked their dogs or meandered.

"We're just holding on, waiting to see the size of the attack," said Tim Pshshinski, 21, who said he recently completed his compulsory Israeli military service.

"Life must continue, and there's not much else we can do."

## Takeaways from AP's story on Olympics security hitting minorities, others flagged as terror risks

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — French authorities are making wide use of discretionary anti-terror powers to keep hundreds of people they deem to be potential security threats away from the Paris Olympics.

Minorities — largely with backgrounds in former French colonies — are often among those forbidden from leaving their neighborhoods and required to report daily to police, their lawyers say.

French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin says the restrictions aim to prevent "very dangerous" people from attacking the Games.

Here are some of the key findings by the Associated Press:

Who is affected?

Darmanin says he applied the movement restrictions and daily police check-ins to more than 500 people this year as part of France's security buildup for the Games. The use of the powers appears unprecedented in scope. In contrast, the restrictions were imposed on 205 people in the first 26 months after France's parliament passed anti-terror legislation authorizing such powers in 2017.

AP spoke to six lawyers for about 20 people whose movements have been restricted. Those affected during the Games include Amine, an apprentice bank worker and student now forbidden from leaving his suburb south of Paris — except to report at 6:30 p.m. daily to police. The 21-year-old French national whose father was born in Morocco has no criminal record and has not been charged with any crime, he and his lawyer say.

Amine believes French intelligence services mistook him for someone else who posted decapitation images and threats against LGBTQ+ people on a video-sharing app. AP is not identifying Amine by his full name because he fears potential employers and schools may reject him if they learn police flagged him as a threat.

"I am not dangerous for France. I am not a terrorist. I am just a student who works to finance his studies," Amine said.

Police have visited him twice in the last four months, seizing his phone and computer in one instance, which made boning up for his exams harder, he said.

"If my name was Brian, if I was blond and blue-eyed, the situation would have been different. Except that it is not the case. I am a North African Muslim, and I've been targeted in France," Amine said.

What prompted the measures' wide use?

Interior Ministry notes seen by AP say security services foiled several alleged terror plots ahead of the Games, with Olympic soccer matches, an LGBTQ+ night club and France's Jewish community among suspected targets. The ministry's notes say the Israel-Hamas war has heightened the terror risk in France.

The Olympic host city was hit by Al-Qaida and Islamic State gunmen and suicide bombers who killed 147 people in attacks in 2015.

Darmanin says he applied the restrictions to people with "possible" extremist links who served jail time

and others who weren't sentenced but "represent a danger for us."

"What would the French people say, what would the world say, if people who we can suspect might carry out actions, who are radicalized, are left perfectly free and then commit attacks?" he asked last week.

Are the measures challenged?

Yes. Some of the lawyers AP spoke to said they understand the measures' use for Olympic security but others say they're applied too broadly.

Paris attorney Margot Pugliese described the powers as "really the total failure of the rule of law" because they can only be contested in court after they have been applied.

Of the lawyers AP spoke to, about half of their clients have immigrant backgrounds, mostly with family roots in North Africa.

Darmanin says minorities aren't being singled out. People suspected of left- or right-wing extremism are under surveillance, too, he said.

Paris attorney Antoine Ory represented three people who have been affected — two of them with no criminal records. One was born in Madagascar; the other two are French Algerian and French Moroccan dual nationals.

"It's extremely abusive," he said. "Two weeks before the Games, they come along and say, 'You're dangerous.'"

A week before the July 26 Olympic opening ceremony, Ory successfully overturned the restrictions for his Madagascar-born client. A court ruled that the Interior Ministry failed to prove that the man is a terror risk and ordered the state to pay him 1,500 euros (\$1,600).

## Olympics security means minorities and others flagged as potential terror threats can't move freely

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — They are Nabil, Amine, François and more. But they will not be seen around the Paris Olympics, because France's government barred them from getting anywhere close.

French authorities are making unprecedentedly broad use of discretionary powers under an anti-terror law to keep hundreds of people they deem to be potential security threats away from the biggest event modern France has ever organized.

Minorities — largely with backgrounds in former French colonies — are often among those forbidden from leaving their neighborhoods and required to report daily to police, their lawyers say. Some are alarmed by the sweeping use of what one described as "a terribly dangerous tool."

Some of those now restricted in their movements, with orders that don't require prior approval from judges, include a man who had mental health issues in the past but is now receiving treatment. There also is an apprentice bank worker and business student who believes he's been targeted in part because he's Muslim and his father was born in Morocco, plus a halal food delivery driver who risks losing his job because he is banned from straying far from home during the 2024 Olympics and ensuing Paralympics, their lawyers say.

French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin says the restrictions aim to prevent "very dangerous" people from attacking the Games.

Darmanin says he's applied them to more than 500 people this year as part of France's security preparations for the Games and the Olympic torch relay that preceded the July 26 opening ceremony.

Those affected include Amine, the bank apprentice now forbidden from leaving his suburb south of Paris — except to report at 6:30 p.m. daily to a local police station. The France-born 21-year-old has no criminal record and has not been charged with any crime, he and his lawyer say.

Amine believes French intelligence services have mistaken him for someone else who posted decapitation images and threats against LGBTQ+ people on a video-sharing app. The Associated Press is not identifying Amine by his full name because he fears potential employers and schools may reject him if they learn that police flagged him as a threat.



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"I am not dangerous for France. I am not a terrorist. I am just a student who works to finance his studies," Amine said in an interview at his studio apartment strewn with books and with family photos on the fridge.

Police visited twice in the last four months. They busted down a neighbor's door the first time, seemingly because they had the wrong address, and then seized Amine's phone and computer, which made boning up for his exams harder, he said. The second time, a month before the Games, was to notify him that he could no longer move around freely.

"If my name was Brian, if I was blond and blue-eyed, the situation would have been different. Except that it is not the case. I am a North African Muslim, and I've been targeted in France," he said.

Fearing terror attacks, French authorities have massively ramped up security for the Games, flooding Paris streets with up to 45,000 police, plus soldiers armed with assault rifles, and tasking intelligence services to identify and neutralize potential threats in advance.

Interior Ministry notes seen by AP say security services foiled several alleged terror plots ahead of the Games, with Olympic soccer matches, an LGBTQ+ night club and France's Jewish community among suspected targets. The ministry's notes also say the Israel-Hamas war has heightened the terror risk in France, which has the largest Muslim and Jewish communities in Europe.

The anti-terror preventive effort also includes the liberal use of police powers to restrict the movements of people the ministry deems to be potential threats. The measures can only be challenged afterward in court, which some of those affected are now doing — a few successfully.

The powers were part of reinforced anti-terror legislation that sped through both houses of parliament in 2017, when France was still reeling from attacks by al-Qaida and Islamic State gunmen and suicide bombers in 2015.

The attacks killed 147 people — including in Paris neighborhoods now teeming with Olympic visitors and outside what is now the Olympic stadium, hosting track and field and rugby sevens.

The anti-terror law empowers France's interior minister to restrict anyone's movements when there are "serious reasons" to believe they're a grave security threat and have terror ties or sympathies.

A powerful security tool for the Games

The power the interior minister is using to distance people from the Olympics by forcing them to stay close to home is called an "individual measure of administrative control and surveillance," known by the French acronym, MICAS.

Darmanin told reporters last week that "just under 200" of the more than 500 Olympic-related MICAS cases he ordered this year are still in force during the Games.

They have been applied to people with "possible" extremist links who served jail time and others who weren't sentenced but "represent a danger for us," he said.

"We have evidence or very important suspicions that they are radicalized and could prepare an attack," the interior minister said.

Paris' chief of police, Laurent Nuñez described the restrictions' wide use as "extremely positive."

"We must use the full range of legal and administrative tools at our disposal, which is what the interior minister asked for," he said last week as he toured the venue for Olympic table tennis, weightlifting, handball and volleyball.

"He asked us to further tighten the net as we approached the Olympic Games, and that is what we did," Nuñez said.

Lawyers say authorities are abusing the restrictions

AP spoke to six lawyers for about 20 people whose movements have been restricted. Some said they understand the measures' use for Olympic security, while others say the powers are being applied too broadly.

The use of the restrictions for the Olympics appears unprecedented in scope, some lawyers say. While over 500 people saw their movements curtailed this year and Darmanin says it's now less than 200 remaining during the Games, that compares with 205 people subjected to MICAS restrictions in the first 26 months of the 2017 law going into effect, according to a French Senate report from 2020.

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"It's really directly connected to the Olympic Games," said Paris attorney Margot Pugliese. She described the powers as "a horror" and "really the total failure of the rule of law" because they can only be contested in court after they have been applied.

"It is a terribly dangerous tool whenever there is a repressive government," Pugliese said.

Lawyers say some of their clients have no prior convictions and only tenuous links to suspected extremism. Of the lawyers AP spoke to, about half of their clients have immigrant backgrounds, mostly with family roots in North Africa.

Darmanin says minorities aren't being singled out and that people suspected of left- or right-wing extremism are under surveillance, too.

"What would the French people say, what would the world say, if people who we can suspect might carry out actions, who are radicalized, are left perfectly free and then commit attacks?" he asked.

Paris attorney Antoine Ory has represented three people hit by MICAS restrictions in the Olympics run-up — two of them with no criminal records. One was born in Madagascar; the other two are French Algerian and French Moroccan dual nationals.

One of the men completed a five-year sentence for terror-related offenses in 2021, which included four months of jail time and other periods of semi-liberty or with an electronic bracelet to flag his whereabouts, Ory says. The MICAS order bans him from leaving his northeastern suburb of Paris.

Ory says police intelligence used to justify restrictions for his two other clients was flimsy at best. He alleges that intelligence services dipped back into old information they long had at their disposal, targeting people who before the Games weren't deemed enough of a risk to warrant MICAS orders.

"It's extremely abusive," he said. "Two weeks before the Games, they come along and say, 'You're dangerous.'"

A week before the Olympic opening ceremony, Ory successfully overturned the MICAS order for his Madagascar-born client. A court southeast of Paris ruled that the Interior Ministry failed to prove that the man is a terror risk and ordered the state to pay him 1,500 euros (\$1,600).

A police mix-up?

A note from police intelligence services — seen by AP — that requested movement restrictions and daily police check-ins for Amine from July 1 to the Sept. 8 closing of the Paralympics cited "the particularly serious threat he represents to public security and order, his adherence to radical Islam, and the specific context of the terrorist threat in the framework of the organization of the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games."

The note flagged a TikTok video that Amine posted on Oct. 10 of himself in front of the Eiffel Tower, which was lit in Israeli colors following the Oct. 7 attacks on Israel by Hamas militants. Wearing the shirt of Deportivo Palestino, a Chilean soccer club founded by Palestinians, and the motorcycle helmet he'd worn on his ride to the tower, Amine then posted photos of himself making obscene gestures at the monument.

In hindsight, "it wasn't the best idea I've ever had," he acknowledges. Amine says he was frustrated that French authorities at the time were banning pro-Palestinian protests. "It seemed like a lack of impartiality to me," he said.

He also posted an image of himself with one finger pointing at the badge on his shirt and another pointing at the Star of David illuminating the tower. The intelligence services' MICAS request described the raised finger as a sign of allegiance to Allah.

Amine says he was copying soccer players he's seen raise fingers in celebration when they score goals. "But when it's them, it's not a problem," he said.

The police note also tied Amine to an account on the video-sharing app Rave, saying the user posted decapitation images and "worrying comments" that expressed a desire to join a terror group and kill LGBTQ+ people. The note alleged that Amine "does not hide his anti-Zionist and homophobic positions."

Amine told AP that the Rave account isn't his. He filed a police complaint in May that the account's user had stolen his identity.

"I am not at all anti-Zionist, homophobic or anything. All those ideas are alien to me," Amine said.

The MICAS order — seen by AP — that bars Amine from leaving his Paris suburb except for his daily

police check-in warns that he risks three years in prison and a fine of 45,000 euros (\$48,600) if he violates the restrictions or fails to check in.

Stuck at home or close to it, Amine says each day is like the last. He can watch the Paris Olympics only on TV.

And although the Olympic opening ceremony celebrated France's freedoms, Amine feels that its promises of "liberté, égalité, fraternité" aren't being applied to him.

"I have neither liberty, nor fraternity towards me," he said.

## **This preschool in Alaska changed lives for parents and kids alike. Why did it have to close?**

By MORIAH BALINGIT AP Education Writer

WASILLA, Alaska (AP) — She was a teenager, and the mother of a 2-year-old, when a knock came on the door of her trailer. Two women were there to tell her about a federally funded preschool program called Head Start that was opening near her home in Chugiak. Would she be interested in enrolling her daughter?

Kristine Bayne signed up. She hoped it would make a difference for her daughter. What she didn't know: It would shift the trajectory of her life, too.

Bayne, who finished high school through correspondence after she got pregnant at 16, would go on to take a job with her child's Head Start. Her confidence buoyed, she returned to school to earn a bachelor's degree.

"I learned so much," says Bayne, now 65. "How to take care of my children, how to advocate for them, how to have a voice for myself. ... They help you move forward to become a better person."

In this part of Alaska, countless parents tell stories like Bayne's. Head Start has helped them earn degrees that put them on track for better jobs. It has helped parents in recovery from drug addiction and educated children who have ended up in foster care. And it has readied youngsters for kindergarten.

Which is why it was so wrenching when CCS Early Learning closed the Chugiak Head Start, where Bayne sent her children. In January, it announced it was shuttering another center — this time in Meadow Lakes, where Bayne's granddaughter Makayla, who is now in her care, was enrolled.

Not enough grownups

The impending closure is not for lack of need. The nonprofit's Head Start program has a waiting list. It can — and did — fill Meadow Lakes' three classrooms.

The problem is with the grownups.

Specifically, there are not enough of them who want to work at a Head Start. Not when they can make more money working at the nearby Target, which hiked its pay during the pandemic. And not when, with the same credentials, they can get a better-paying job at the local school district.

In 2022, nearly a quarter of Head Start teachers left their jobs, some retiring early and others lured away by higher-paying work in retail or at school districts.

Without those teachers, the preschools cannot serve as many students. It means fewer options for parents who cannot afford child care, and fewer early learning opportunities for children from needy families. Between 2013 and 2022, Head Start enrollment fell by nearly 350,000, according to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, in part because of staff shortages.

In Wasilla, the regional Head Start group decided to raise employee pay to retain staff. To do that, it had to close one center.

"It's just tragic," says Mark Lackey, executive director of CCS Early Learning. "There's so many more kids we could be serving."

A closing without closure

Meadow Lakes' Head Start was tucked into a strip mall, sandwiched between a charter school and a laundromat that offered showers. The kids who arrived there were sometimes smiling, sometimes crying, often carrying tiny backpacks.

Their caregivers included teen parents daunted by the responsibility of raising children, and grandparents who had unexpectedly taken in grandchildren.

Head Start was there to help all of them.

Its pioneering, multigenerational approach sought to build healthy environments for the children it served — and that meant supporting the adults in their lives, too. Many of the parents who sent their kids to Meadow Lakes attended Head Start themselves.

Kendra Mitchell, whose mother had her at 16, also went to Head Start, and sent her son Wayne to the Meadow Lakes school. He'll head to kindergarten next year, but she said she's seen how it's shaped both his life — and hers.

Wayne's childhood has been marked by instability as Mitchell struggled with addiction and sent him to live with relatives. Wayne returned to live with her when she started recovery. When she enrolled him in Head Start, she said staff embraced her without judgment. She was living in a cabin without running water; they got her a voucher so she could take Wayne to the laundromat for showers and laundry.

"They weren't just lifting our son up. They were lifting us up as well," Mitchell says.

Saying goodbye one last time

In May, the Meadow Lakes children came and went for the last time. Class started with routines that had become familiar. The children sang a song to learn the days of the week. They talked about the rainy weather, then washed their hands.

Every activity was loaded with lessons. As they talked about the calendar — it was May 6 — they practiced saying "sixth." Teacher Lisa Benson-Nuyen taught them, too, that the last day of school could bring a mix of emotions.

"For some people, that's a happy face. For other people, ... that's a sad face," Benson-Nuyen said.

At breakfast, the children learned blueberries do not belong in their ears.

That last week, there were small signs things were coming to a close. The classroom walls, still brightly decorated, were no longer draped with student art. On the final day, staff tried to keep things cheerful and celebratory, even as they struggled to maintain composure.

Eryn Martin, the program office assistant, called out to Mitchell as she left for the last time: "Good luck, Kendra! You've been working really hard and I'm proud of you."

Martin, herself a Head Start graduate and alumna parent, had been crying. Willow Palmer practiced what she learned in the classroom — when people are upset, she can help comfort them. The 5-year-old rushed back into the classroom, then reemerged with a neon-green stuffed frog. She gave it to Martin. Then she leaned in and gave her a hug, too.

On the playground that day, some students released butterflies they had been watching for weeks inside their classrooms, as they emerged from cocoons. They flew away in the crisp spring air.

## Competing for two: Pregnant Olympians push the boundaries of possibility in Paris

By JOCELYN NOVECK AP National Writer

PARIS (AP) — Many Olympic athletes take to Instagram to share news of their exploits, trials, victories and heartbreaks. After her fencing event ended last week, Egypt's Nada Hafez shared a little bit more.

She'd been fencing for two, the athlete revealed — and in fact had been pregnant for seven months.

"What appears to you as two players on the podium, they were actually three!" Hafez wrote, under an emotional picture of her during the match. "It was me, my competitor, & my yet-to-come to our world, little baby!" Mom (and baby) finished the competition ranked 16th, Hafez's best result in three Olympics.

A day later, an Azerbaijani archer was also revealed on Instagram to have competed while six-and-a-half months pregnant. Yaylagul Ramazanova told Xinhua News she'd felt her baby kick before she took a shot — and then shot a 10, the maximum number of points.

There have been pregnant Olympians and Paralympians before, though the phenomenon is rare for



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obvious reasons. Still, most stories have been of athletes competing far earlier in their pregnancies — or not even far enough along to know they were expecting.

Like U.S. beach volleyball star Kerri Walsh Jennings, who won her third gold medal while unknowingly five weeks pregnant with her third child.

“When I was throwing my body around fearlessly, and going for gold for our country, I was pregnant,” she said on “Today” after the London Games in 2012. She and husband Casey (also a beach volleyball player) had only started trying to conceive right before the Olympics, she said, figuring it would take time. But she felt different, and volleyball partner Misty May-Treanor said to her — presciently, it turned out — “You’re probably pregnant.”

It makes sense that pregnant athletes are pushing boundaries now, one expert says, as both attitudes and knowledge develop about what women can do deep into pregnancy.

“This is something we’re seeing more and more of,” says Dr. Kathryn Ackerman, a sports medicine physician and co-chair of the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee’s women’s health task force, “as women are dispelling the myth that you can’t exercise at a high level when you’re pregnant.”

Ackerman notes there’s been little data, and so past decisions on the matter have often been arbitrary. But, she says, “doctors now recommend that if an athlete is in good condition going into pregnancy, and there are no complications, then it’s safe to work out, train, and compete at a very high level.” An exception, she says, might be something like ski racing, where the risk of a bad fall is great.

But in fencing, says the Boston-based Ackerman, there is clearly protective padding for athletes, and in less physically strenuous sports like archery or shooting, there’s absolutely no reason a woman can’t compete.

It’s not just an issue of physical fitness, of course. It is deeply emotional. Deciding whether and how to compete while trying to also grow a family is a thorny calculus that male athletes simply don’t have to consider — at least in anywhere near the same way.

Just ask Serena Williams, who famously won the Australian Open in 2017 while pregnant with her first child. When, some five years later, she wanted to try for a second, she stepped back from tennis — an excruciating decision.

“Believe me, I never wanted to have to choose between tennis and a family,” Williams — who won four Olympic golds — wrote in a Vogue essay. “I don’t think it’s fair. If I were a guy, I wouldn’t be writing this because I’d be out there playing and winning while my wife was doing the physical labor of expanding our family. Maybe I’d be more of a Tom Brady if I had that opportunity.”

Williams welcomed Adira River Ohanian in 2023, joining older sister Olympia. And Olympia was the name that U.S. softball player Michele Granger’s mother reportedly suggested for the baby Granger was carrying when she pitched the gold-medal winning game in Atlanta in 1996. Her husband suggested the name Athena. Granger preferred neither.

“I didn’t want to make that connection with her name,” said Granger to Gold Country Media in 2011. The baby was named Kady.

The choice to combine motherhood and a sports career involves many factors, to be sure, which vary by sport and by country. Franchina Martinez, 24, who competes in track for the Dominican Republic, says more female athletes retire early than male athletes in her country, and one reason is pregnancy.

“When they get pregnant, they believe they won’t be able to return, unlike in more developed countries where they might be able to,” said Martinez. “So they quit the sport, they don’t return to compete, or they aren’t the same.”

For the sake of her career, she said, she doesn’t plan to have children in the near future: “As long as I can avoid it for the sake of my sport, I will postpone it because I am not ready for that yet.”

At the Paris fencing venue over the weekend, fans were mixed between admiration for the bravery and determination of Hafez, a 26-year-old former gymnast with a degree in medicine, and speculation about whether it was risky.

“There are certainly sports that are less violent,” said Pauline Dutertre, 29, sitting outside the elegant Grand Palais during a break in action alongside her father, Christian. Dutertre had competed herself on

the international circuit in saber until 2013. "It is, after all, a combat sport."

"In any case," she noted, "it is courageous. Even without making it to the podium, what she did was brave."

Marilyne Barbey, attending the fencing from Annecy in southeastern France with her family, wondered about safety too, but added: "You can fall anywhere, at any time. And, in the end, it is her choice."

Ramazanova, who was visibly pregnant when competing, also earned admiration, including from her peers. She reached the final 32 in her event.

Casey Kaufhold, an American who earned bronze in the mixed team category, said it was "really cool" to see her Azerbaijani colleague achieving what she did.

"I think it's awesome that we see more expecting mothers shooting in the Olympic Games and it's great to have one in the sport of archery," she said in comments to The Associated Press. "She shot really well, and I think it's really cool because my coach is also a mother and she's been doing so much to support her kids even while she's away."

Kaufhold said she hoped Ramazanova's run would inspire more mothers and expectant mothers to compete. And she had a more personal thought for the mom-to-be:

"I think it's awesome for this archer that one day, she can tell her kid, 'Hey, I went to the Olympic Games and you were there, too.'"

## Microplastics are everywhere, but are they harming us?

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Microplastics have been found in the ocean and the air, in our food and water. They have been found in a wide range of body tissues, including the heart, liver, kidneys and even testicles.

But are they actually harming you?

Evidence suggests they might, but it's limited in scope. Some researchers are worried, but acknowledge there are lots of unanswered questions.

Dr. Marya Zlatnik, a San Francisco-based obstetrician who has studied environmental toxins and pregnancy, has seen studies raising concerns about microplastics' impact on the health of babies and adults.

But it's a young research field, and it's not something she generally discusses with patients.

"I'm not entirely sure what to say yet," Zlatnik said.

Here's a look at what's known so far:

### WHAT ARE MICROPLASTICS?

Plastics are man-made materials — many of them derived from oil or other petroleum products. They can break down into smaller particles, through exposure to heat and weather and even animal digestion.

Researchers have increasingly been interested in microplastics, which can be as wide as a pencil eraser or as small as a fraction of the width of a human hair. Nanoplastics, another area of study, are even smaller.

These minuscule plastics have been detected in air, water and soil, in milk, and in bottled and tap drinking water. They also have been found in a variety of foods, including salt, sugar, honey, rice and seafood.

### ARE THERE MICROPLASTICS IN YOU?

Most likely yes.

There is scientific debate about how much people inhale and ingest, and it can vary on what they eat and drink and where they live, researchers say.

Some Australian researchers, on behalf of the World Wildlife Fund, calculated in 2019 that many people each week consume roughly 5 grams of plastic from common food and beverages — the equivalent of a credit card. That estimate is not universally embraced by researchers, but is commonly mentioned in news articles.

Researchers are still trying to understand exposure levels, but study after study is finding signs of plastics in body tissues.

"Microplastics have been measured in pretty much all of the body tissues that have been evaluated," said Tracey Woodruff, a University of California at San Francisco researcher. Scientists have even reported

finding them in the penis, in ovaries and in placentas.

WILL MICROPLASTICS HURT YOU?

That's still being sorted out.

A 2022 World Health Organization report concluded there was no clear risk to human health, based on the available evidence.

There's also not an obvious signal of widespread public health impact, at least in terms of mortality. Cancer, heart disease and stroke death rates have been falling, not rising.

But researchers only started measuring plastics in the human body — and trying to assess the health effects — in recent years. Some of that work is only coming to fruition now.

It makes sense that microplastics are harmful because they contain toxic chemicals, said Woodruff, who was part of a team that reviewed nearly 2,000 studies about microplastics at the request of California legislators. It may be, for example, that microplastics play a role in rising occurrences of some cancers in younger people, she said.

Available information indicates plastics can spark inflammation and cause other problematic changes in the body that can, for example, raise the risk of heart attack and stroke.

A small study in the New England Journal of Medicine earlier this year suggested, but did not prove, that patients with evidence of plastics in their arteries were at greater risk of death from heart attacks and strokes. But an expert not involved in the research suggested the study may have overstated any effects.

"Even though there's a lot we still don't know about microplastic particles and the harm they cause to humans, the information that is available today is in my mind very concerning," said Dr. Philip Landrigan, of Boston College.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT MICROPLASTICS?

There are ways to reduce potential microplastics exposure, researchers say.

Take your shoes off before you go in the house, to avoid tracking in plastics-laden dust (not to mention germs, dirt and other debris) throughout your home.

Eat foods — especially fresh fruits and vegetables — that you prepare in the home.

Don't microwave a meal in a plastic tray, no matter what TV dinner instructions might say, Woodruff said.

And opt for reusable stainless steel or glass water bottles, rather than disposable plastic ones, she added.

Zlatnik, the obstetrician, noted that families with limited incomes may have bigger things to worry about.

"If someone is worried about where their next meal is going to come from, I'm not going to give them advice to keep their leftovers in glass containers and to not microwave in plastic," she said.

## Sheikh Hasina came back from tragedy to lead Bangladesh — until protests forced her to flee

By KRUTIKA PATHI and JULHAS ALAM Associated Press

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) — Sheikh Hasina, the longest-serving prime minister in Bangladesh's history, resigned and fled the country on Monday, bringing a tumultuous end to her 15-year rule as an extraordinary wave of protest succeeded in toppling her government.

Her ouster came after weeks of relentless protests and clashes with security forces that have killed nearly 300 people since mid-July, according to local media reports. What began as peaceful demonstrations by students frustrated with a quota system for government jobs unexpectedly grew into a major uprising against Hasina and her ruling Awami League party.

The recent upheaval was the largest and last crisis for the 76-year-old leader, the world's longest-serving female head of government, who won a fourth consecutive term in January in an election boycotted by the main opposition amid concerns that the polls were not free or fair.

How it all began

Hasina first became prime minister in 1996, and then returned in 2008 to win the office she held until Monday.

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Analysts who have tracked her rise say her political life was driven by tragedy. On Aug. 15, 1975, her father and the first leader of independent Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujib Rahman, was assassinated in a military coup.

That fateful night, while 28-year-old Hasina was in Germany with her younger sister, a group of army officers burst into the family's Dhaka home and killed her parents, three other siblings and the household staff — 18 people in all.

Some say the brutal act pushed her to consolidate unprecedented power. It was also what motivated her throughout her political career, analysts say.

"Hasina has one very powerful quality as a politician — and that is to weaponize trauma," Avinash Paliwal, a former university lecturer who specialized in South Asian strategic affairs, said in January ahead of the general election.

To Hasina, her father was the founder of independent Bangladesh after its forces, aided by India, defeated Pakistan in 1971.

After the assassination, Hasina lived for years in exile in India, then made her way back to Bangladesh and took over the Awami League. But the country's military rulers had her in and out of house detention all through the 1980s until, after a general election in 1996, she became prime minister for the first time.

## Two women, two parties

What followed was a decadeslong power struggle between Hasina and former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, the chief of the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party, who's now ailing and under house arrest.

The two women ran the country alternatively for years in a bitter rivalry that polarized Bangladesh politics. Hasina has often accused the BNP of courting hard-line extremists that her party, which calls itself moderate and secular, had worked to stamp out, while Zia's BNP claims the Awami League is using oppressive tactics to stay in power.

The two traded blame as the recent protests turned violent. The BNP, which backed the student protesters, repeated calls for Hasina to step down while she accused them of stoking the violence.

She said the protests had been overtaken by the BNP and another opposition party that her government banned recently.

## Years of turmoil

After Hasina lost the general election in 2001, she became the leader of the opposition. Political violence, unrest and military interventions marked the years until she was reelected.

Back in power, she fixed her sights on the economy and built infrastructure previously unseen in Bangladesh: a strong electricity grid that reaches far-flung villages and big-ticket projects such as highways, rail lines and ports. The country's garment industry became one of the world's most competitive.

The development gains sparked other advances. Girls were educated on par with boys, and an increasing swell of women joined the workforce. Those close to her described Hasina as hands-on and passionate about uplifting women and poor people.

On the international stage, Hasina cultivated ties with powerful countries including both India and China. But the United States and other Western nations expressed concerns over violations of human rights and press freedoms, straining relations. In January, after she won a fourth consecutive term, the U.S. and the United Kingdom said the polls were not credible, free and fair. Previous elections in 2018 and 2014 were also marred by allegations of vote rigging and a boycott by opposition parties.

Her critics for years accused her government of using harsh tools to muzzle dissent, shrink press freedoms and curtail civil society. Rights groups have also cited forced disappearances of critics, which her government denied.

## Opposition rises

Her government employed the same heavy-handed approach when these protests began, which inflamed tensions even more, analysts said.

The student-led movement also came as Bangladesh underwent an economic churn given the recent global slowdown. Ahead of the January polls, there was labor unrest and dissatisfaction with the government.

But the latest furor highlighted the extent of economic distress in the country, where exports have fallen and foreign exchange reserves are running low. Experts say there's a lack of quality jobs for young gradu-



ates, who increasingly seek the more stable and lucrative government jobs.

"There have been plenty of protests during Awami League's regime over the last 15 years, but nothing as large, long, and violent as this one," said Michael Kugelman, director of the South Asia Institute at the Wilson Center. He added that the especially ferocious government response of excessive force and deep pent-up anger at the state as well as growing economic stress led to the escalation.

What's next?

After 15 years of Hasina's administration, it's not clear what comes next.

Shortly after she was seen on TV boarding a military helicopter with her sister, the country's military chief, Gen. Waker-uz-Zaman, said he would seek the president's guidance on forming an interim government.

He promised that the military would launch an investigation into the deadly crackdown on student-led protests that fueled outrage against the government.

"Keep faith in the military, we will investigate all the killings and punish the responsible," he said. "I have ordered that no army and police will indulge in any kind of firing."

"Now, the students' duty is to stay calm and help us," he added.

Thousands of protesters celebrated in the capital, waving Bangladeshi flags as the news broke, while others looted her official residence, carrying out furniture and even fish from the kitchens.

It is an "end of a regime that delivered a lot of development but was increasingly authoritarian, as we saw with the mass killings these past weeks," said Naomi Hossain, a research professor specializing in Bangladesh at the London-based SOAS University.

The country has seen interim governments in the past, Hossain said, adding that for now the hope is that the army will ensure peace.

But there are fears of reprisal violence. "It could get ugly if the army isn't able to calm people down and defuse the issue. It could be a while before we are out of the woods," she added.

## **For female athletes of color, scrutiny around gender rules and identity is part of a long trend**

By NOREEN NASIR Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — Overcome with emotion, Algerian boxer Imane Khelif left the ring in tears after a resounding victory this weekend. Khelif has faced days of hateful comments and false accusations about her gender following her first fight against an Italian opponent who quit seconds into their bout.

"It's because she's African, because she's Algerian," 38-year-old Algerian fan Adel Mohammed said Saturday, when Khelif clinched an Olympic medal. "These comments are coming from white people ... it's a kind of racism."

Female athletes of color have historically faced disproportionate scrutiny and discrimination when it comes to sex testing and false accusations that they are male or transgender, historians and anthropologists say. Khelif and Taiwanese boxer Lin Yu-Ting, who won her bout Sunday after similar abuse and questions about her gender, are the latest examples of women of color who have found themselves caught in the contentious debate around gender regulations and perceptions in sports.

More women from the Global South or developing countries are affected by sex testing in sports, said Payoshni Mitra, executive director of Humans of Sport, an advocacy organization that focuses on human rights issues for athletes. She has worked with dozens of female athletes across Asia and Africa to fight sex testing practices.

"Sport is very Eurocentric — the approach is not necessarily global," Mitra said. "We need to accept women in all their diversity. And we are not seeing that at this point."

Mitra and other advocates and anthropologists note that international sporting federations don't tend to promote an understanding of diversity in sex and gender identity and that gender tests have often targeted female athletes of color who don't conform to typically Western, white ideals of femininity.

In 2009, after her 800-meter victory in the world championships, South African runner Caster Semanya was sidelined for 11 months because of track and field rules about hormone levels. She has spent years

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in her legal battle against requirements for her to suppress her natural testosterone to compete.

Semenya was identified as female at birth, raised as a girl and has been legally identified as female her entire life. She has one of a number of conditions known as differences in sex development, or DSDs, which cause naturally high testosterone.

World Athletics, track and field's governing body, said Semanya's testosterone levels give her an athletic advantage comparable to a man competing in women's events and that rules are needed to address that. Critics of the rules — which were put in place in 2011 and have tightened over the years — have considered naturally high testosterone levels to be a genetic gift, comparing it to a basketball player's height or a swimmer's long arms.

"Nobody was disqualifying Michael Phelps for having particular biological features that allowed him to excel in swimming," said medical anthropologist Danyal Kade Doyle Griffiths, an adjunct professor with the City University of New York.

Indian sprinter Dutee Chand also faced a swarm of scrutiny and was dropped from the 2014 Commonwealth Games after reports of elevated testosterone. She underwent rounds of testing and ultimately took the international track federation to court, challenging rules that enforced a limit on female athletes' naturally occurring testosterone levels.

Regardless of differences in sex or hormones, women of color — and Black women in particular — have often been subjected to stereotypes that portray them as more masculine. Dehumanization and objectification stretches back to chattel slavery, when enslaved Black women were valued for auction based on their physical appearances and skills that were seen as more masculine or more feminine.

Conspiracy theories and misinformation have spread online around tennis superstar Serena Williams, falsely alleging that she was born a man. In 2017, she wrote an open letter to her mother, thanking her for being a role model in facing people who were "too ignorant to understand the power of a Black woman."

Basketball star Brittney Griner also has faced similar false accusations amid scrutiny over Black women and their bodies that is rooted in historical racism: They are often perceived as not feminine enough, too muscular, intimidating or masculine.

"These examples strike me as particular cases where racism and transphobia and intersex phobia are kind of inseparable," Griffiths said. "It ties back to a much longer history of the way that race is gendered, in which Black women are taken to be more masculine compared to white women."

The definition of womanhood "is often reliant upon Westernized notions of white femininity or standards of white beauty," said Cheryl Cooky, professor of American studies and women's, gender and sexuality studies at Purdue University. If a female athlete doesn't fit into those white, Westernized standards, "they're subject to these questions and these accusations."

In Khelif's case, the banned International Boxing Association disqualified her from the 2023 world championships after it claimed that she failed unspecified eligibility tests for the women's boxing competition, citing elevated levels of testosterone. The Russian-dominated body — which has faced years of clashes with the International Olympic Committee — has refused to provide any information about the tests.

"The whole process is flawed," IOC spokesman Mark Adams said Sunday. "From the conception of the test, to how the test was shared with us, to how the tests have become public, is so flawed that it's impossible to engage with it."

Adams previously said Khelif "was born female, was registered female, lived her life as a female, boxed as a female, has a female passport."

The Olympic body released a 10-principle approach on gender and sex inclusion in 2021 that recognized the need for a "safe, harassment-free environment" honoring athletes' identities while ensuring competitions are fair. Advocates like Mitra hopes those are taken seriously.

Meanwhile, Algerians have rallied behind Khelif, defending her against hateful comments. Algerian athlete Zahra Tatar, competing in hammer throwing, called Khelif's fight "beautiful" and said "we all hope she gets the gold medal."

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## Today in History: Aug. 6, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Tuesday, Aug. 6, the 219th day of 2024. There are 147 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Aug. 6, 1945, during World War II, the U.S. B-29 Superfortress Enola Gay dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, resulting in an estimated 140,000 deaths.

Also on this date:

In 1806, Emperor Francis II abdicated, marking the end of the Holy Roman Empire after nearly a thousand years.

In 1825, Upper Peru became the autonomous republic of Bolivia.

In 1890, at Auburn Prison in Auburn, New York, William Kemmler became the first person to be executed via electric chair.

In 1926, Gertrude Ederle became the first woman to swim across the English Channel.

In 1942, Queen Wilhemina of the Netherlands became the first reigning queen to address a joint session of Congress, telling lawmakers that despite Nazi occupation, her people's motto remained, "No surrender."

In 1945, during World War II, the U.S. B-29 Superfortress Enola Gay dropped an atomic bomb code-named "Little Boy" on Hiroshima, Japan, resulting in an estimated 140,000 deaths.

In 1962, Jamaica gained independence from the United Kingdom after 300 years of British rule.

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act, prohibiting racial discrimination in voting.

In 1991, the World Wide Web made its public debut as a means of accessing webpages over the Internet.

In 2011, insurgents shot down a U.S. military helicopter during fighting in eastern Afghanistan, killing 30 Americans, most of them belonging to the same elite Navy commando unit that had slain Osama bin Laden; seven Afghan commandos also died.

Today's Birthdays: Children's performer Ella Jenkins is 100. Actor-director Peter Bonerz is 86. Actor Louise Sorel is 84. Actor Michael Anderson Jr. is 81. Actor Ray Buktenica is 81. Actor Dorian Harewood is 74. Actor Catherine Hicks is 73. Rock singer Pat MacDonald (Timbuk 3) is 72. Actor Stephanie Kramer is 68. Actor Faith Prince is 67. R&B singer Randy DeBarge is 66. Actor Leland Orser is 64. Actor Michelle Yeoh is 62. Country singers Patsy and Peggy Lynn are 60. Basketball Hall of Famer David Robinson is 59. Actor Jeremy Ratchford is 59. Actor Benito Martinez is 56. Country singer Lisa Stewart is 56. Movie writer-director M. Night Shyamalan (SHAH'-mah-lahn) is 54. Actor Merrin Dungey is 53. Singer Geri Halliwell Horner is 52. Actor Jason O'Mara is 52. Actor Vera Farmiga is 51. Actor Ever Carradine is 50. Actor Soleil (soh-LAY') Moon Frye is 48. Actor Melissa George is 48. Rock singer Travis "Travie" McCoy is 43. Actor Leslie Odom Jr. is 43. Actor Romola Garai is 42. U.S. Olympic and WNBA basketball star A'ja Wilson is 28.