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AP PHOTOS BY JOHN LOCHER AND EVAN VUCCI

Linda Porter kneels at a memorial for the Tulsa Race Massacre on Standpipe Hill near the historic Greenwood District during centennial commemorations of the massacre, on June 1 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. ■ Lady Freedom, center, of Birmingham, Alabama, cries as she holds hands with John Shafer as they speak at a memorial for the Tulsa Race Massacre near the Greenwood District during centennial commemorations of the massacre. ■ President Joe Biden walks with Housing and Urban Development Secretary Marcia Fudge as he arrives in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Biden honors victims of Tulsa race massacre

Visit marks first presidential remembrance

BY JONATHAN LEMIRE
AND DARLENE SUPERVILLE
Associated Press

TULSA, Oklahoma — President Joe Biden is leading Tuesday's remembrance of one of the nation's darkest — and largely forgotten — moments of racial violence, marking the 100th anniversary of the destruction of a thriving Black community in Tulsa.

Biden is helping commemorate the deaths of hundreds of Black people killed by a white mob a century ago, his visit coming amid a national reckoning on racial justice. It stands in stark contrast to former President Donald Trump's trip last year, which was greeted by protests.

Biden will be the first president to participate in remembrances of the destruction of what was known as "Black Wall Street." On May 31 and June 1, 1921, white Tulsa residents looted and burned the Greenwood district.

Historians say the massacre in Tulsa began after a local newspaper drummed up a furor over a Black man accused of stepping on a white girl's foot. When Black Tulsans showed up with guns to prevent the man's lynching, white residents responded with overwhelming force.

Up to 300 Black Tulsans were killed, and thousands of survivors were temporarily forced into internment camps overseen by the National Guard. Burned bricks and a fragment of a church basement are about all that survive today of the more than

30-block historically Black district.

Biden will meet privately with survivors of the massacre.

During Tuesday's meeting, Biden will "convey his heartfelt gratitude for their bravery in sharing the stories of the trauma and violence that was wrought on them and their families," said White House principal deputy press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre.

Biden also "will explain that we need to know our history from the original sin of slavery, through the Tulsa race massacre to racial discrimination and housing in order to build common ground, to truly repair and rebuild," Jean-Pierre said.

Hundreds stood around Greenwood Avenue in front of the historic Vernon African Methodist Episcopal Church awaiting Biden's arrival at the nearby Greenwood Cultural Center. Vendors were selling memorabilia, including Black Lives Matter hats, shirts and flags.

The names and pictures of Black men killed by police hung on a chain-link fence next to the church.

America's continuing struggle over race will continue to test Biden, whose presidency would have been impossible without overwhelming support from Black voters, both in primaries and the general election.

Biden has pledged to help combat racism in policing and other areas following nationwide protests after George Floyd's death a year ago that reignited a national conversation about race. Floyd, a Black

man, was killed by white Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin, who knelt on Floyd's neck for more than nine minutes.

After Chauvin was convicted in April, Biden said the country's work was far from finished with the verdict, declaring, "We can't stop here."

He called on Congress to act swiftly to address policing reform. But he has also long projected himself as an ally of police, who are struggling with criticism about long-used tactics, training methods and difficulties in recruitment.

The Tulsa massacre has only recently entered the national discourse — and the presidential visit will put an even brighter spotlight on the event.

Eddie Glaude, chair of the Center for African American Studies at Princeton University said Biden's visit "has to be more than symbolic. To tell the truth is the precondition for reconciliation, and reconciliation is the basis for repair."

Biden is set to announce new measures to help narrow the wealth gap between Black and white Americans and reinvest in underserved communities by expanding access to homeownership and small-business ownership.

The White House said the administration will take steps to address disparities that result in Black-owned homes being appraised at tens of thousands of dollars less than comparable homes owned by

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TEXAS LEGISLATURE

House Speaker reacts to veto vow

BY CASSANDRA POLLOCK
The Texas Tribune

Texas House Speaker Dade Phelan said Tuesday he is concerned by Gov. Greg Abbott's recent vow to veto a section of the state budget that funds the Legislature, citing how the move to block such pay could impact staffers and legislative agencies.

"I understand the frustration the governor has in (lawmakers) not passing those emergency items. They were priorities of the governor, they were priorities of mine, priorities of many members of the Legislature," said Phelan, a Beaumont Republican in an interview with The Texas Tribune. "My only concern is how it impacts staff, especially those who live here in Austin, which is not an inexpensive place to live and raise your family and children."

Abbott's vow came after House Democrats walked out of the Legislature on Sunday, blocking the passage of Abbott's voting rights bill, Senate Bill 7.

"No pay for those who abandon their responsibilities," Abbott said in a tweet.



House Speaker Dade Phelan, R-Beaumont, speaks to fellow legislators. He has expressed concern over Gov. Greg Abbott's vow to veto on May 31, 2021.

Phelan also said he thinks that, under the Constitution, lawmakers would have to be paid even if Abbott carried out his veto. Lawmakers are paid \$600 a month in addition to \$221 every day the Legislature is in session, during both regular and special sessions.

The governor has said he will summon the Legislature back to Austin for an overtime round to pass the legislation, though he has not yet specified

when he plans to do so. Lawmakers are already expected to return this fall for a special session to redraw the state's political maps.

Phelan said if Abbott carries out the veto, which he has until June 20 to do, lawmakers could be back for an earlier-than-anticipated overtime round to deal with the issue, since the budget at issue covers the fiscal year starting Sept. 1.

staged a walkout and broke quorum, making it impossible to give final approval to Senate Bill 7, a massive GOP priority voting bill that would tighten the state's election laws, before the midnight deadline.

Abbott quickly made clear that the bill, along with other priority legislation that would have made it harder for people arrested to bond out of jail without cash, "STILL must pass" — and said that the two issues "will be

■ LEGISLATURE, Page 2

Houston upset over lack of flood funds

BY JUAN A. LOZANO
Associated Press

HOUSTON — Residents of the East Aldine neighborhood of Houston are tired of their homes flooding during hurricanes and of worrying about street and waterway drainage every time it rains.

Like the rest of the Houston area, East Aldine was hammered in 2017 by Hurricane Harvey, which caused an estimated \$125 billion in damage throughout Texas but nowhere more than in the nation's fourth-largest city and surrounding Harris County. East Aldine residents fled their homes through chest-high water, many carrying their children on their shoulders as they sought higher ground. The working-class, predominantly Latino neighborhood was flooded again two years later during Tropical Storm Imelda.

"Whether you flooded or not, whether you had to evacuate or not, you are traumatized by the fact that rain is coming and you don't know what's going to happen and you don't know how it's going to impact your family," Shirley Ronquillo, a community activist who grew up in East Aldine, said Thursday.

That's why she and many other Houston residents were outraged when a state agency recently announced that Houston wouldn't get a cent of the initial \$1 billion in federal funding that was promised to Texas following Harvey to help pay for flood mitigation projects, including drainage improvements and the widening of bayous. The Harris County government was also iced out, though four smaller cities in the county were awarded a total of \$90 million.

The awarding of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funding led to a rare show of solidarity by local Democratic and

Republican officials, who condemned the way the Texas General Land Office, or GLO, picked its winners and losers. Ronquillo called it a "slap in the face" to communities of color that have historically been denied assistance.

Some officials and residents accused the GLO of playing politics, given that Houston and Harris County are Democratic strongholds in a GOP-controlled state. The areas have been at odds with the state's Republican leaders since Harvey over recovery funding issues.

The land office said the competition for the initial distribution of funding was fair and not political, and that it used scoring criteria based on HUD guidance. But a HUD spokesman, Michael Burns, said the federal agency didn't require the criteria used by Texas and that it believes "all areas of the state, including Houston and Harris County, should receive the resources they need to recover from Hurricane Harvey."

Faced with the criticism, Land Commissioner George P. Bush — a Republican grandson of former President George H.W. Bush — said he would ask HUD to approve \$750 million for Harris County, though none of it would be given directly to Houston, and it's unknown whether HUD would approve that outlay.

Bush suggested that "red tape requirements and complex regulations" under President Joe Biden's administration were responsible for Houston and Harris County not being awarded any of the funds. During a news conference Thursday, some Democratic members of Houston's congressional delegation accused Bush of politicizing the awards process by criticizing the Biden administration even though

■ FLOOD, Page 2

State politicians finish 140-day session

BY CASSANDRA POLLOCK
AND SHAWN MULCAHY,
The Texas Tribune

The Texas Legislature closed out its regular 140-day session Monday with sniping among the state's top political leaders and lawmakers, who are already well aware they will be back this calendar year for an overtime round.

"We will be back — when, I don't know, but we will be back," House Speaker Dade Phelan, R-Beaumont, told members from the speaker's dais. "There's a lot of work to be done, but

I look forward to doing it with every single one of you."

Talk of a special session — and questions about how soon one may happen or what additional issues Gov. Greg Abbott could task legislators with — has largely defined the last weekend of the Legislature's 140-day stretch after lawmakers left unfinished a number of GOP priorities and tensions between the two chambers escalated.

That drama reached new highs Sunday night when House Democrats

Border counties have high vaccination rates

BY KAREN BROOKS HARPER AND CARLA ASTUDILLO
The Texas Tribune

When Rio Grande Valley retiree Robert Chapa finally got his COVID-19 vaccine in March after months of trying to secure an appointment, it was a nearby school district that came through for him.

After a year of living in a national hot spot for the virus, where death rates were once among the highest in the nation, Chapa, 59, was eager to get the shot.

"I was at high risk, with one kidney," said Chapa, who lost the organ in a car accident decades ago. "I stood in line for three hours, I think. But if you gotta get it, you gotta get it."

Counties on the Texas-Mexico border that were among the hardest-hit by COVID-19 are now seeing some of the highest vaccination rates in the state. From El Paso to Brownsville, every county along the border is outpacing the state average for the percentage of residents fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Of the 39 Texas counties currently above the state average, more than a third of them are border counties, according to state numbers.

Statewide, 35% of the total population has been fully vaccinated. In the Rio Grande Valley, three of the four counties have already surpassed 40% of their total population fully vaccinated.

The biggest motivator for residents to show up in such large numbers for the shot, locals say, is that the region suffered so much death during COVID-19 surges. In El Paso County, more than 2,700 residents died from

the virus, and COVID-19 deaths were so frequent in the fall that inmates were used as labor to help deal with the bodies. Hidalgo County reported more than 2,800 deaths — at one point last summer, one in 10 COVID-19 deaths in Texas had happened in the county of nearly 900,000 people.

Border counties are home to some of the poorest communities in the country; lower-income Texans tend to have less access to vaccines.

"I'm proud, but more than anything else, I'm grateful," said Dr. Ivan Melendez, Hidalgo County Health Authority and a COVID survivor. "All the vaccine hype about how minorities were more hesitant to get the vaccine than the rest of the population hasn't really panned out."

The same culture that made distancing and isolation from families particularly difficult to bear as the virus was hammering border counties is now leading families to get vaccinated so they can safely see each other again, and adult children to push their family members to get vaccinated to avoid more deaths, said Frank Arredondo, a CVS pharmacist in Pharr and a COVID-19 survivor.

When Arredondo caught the virus last year, doctors twice told his wife that he was about to die, he said. Now that he's recovered, he tells that story to his patients — who pass that on to their families.

One man heard the story from his wife and told Arredondo, "I would hate for my family members to get that phone call."

Leveraging that bond in public health messages about the vaccine to



ELI HARTMAN

Amanda De Lara, 16, right, wincing as she receives the first dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine from National Guard Specialist Noah Vulpi during a vaccination clinic held by the National Guard on May 27, 2021 in Odessa, Texas.

younger generations was a vital part of the effort to convince the area's most vulnerable elderly residents to get the shot, said Dr. Antonio Falcón, a local doctor. Health officials modeled their "Starr County Strong" campaign after '80s ads that urged kids to push their parents to quit smoking. In Starr County alone, about 97% of residents 65 and older have gotten at least one shot.

"It was for the love of grandkids that the grandparents wanted to get vaccinated," Falcón said. "I think that was very effective, priming grandma and grandpa to get the vaccine when it came out. It helped to get the word out through the kids."

The participants — health workers for the state health department, Valley counties, the city of Laredo, the Texas Military Department, Texas A&M University and community volunteer organizations — provide free child immunizations, hearing and vision screenings, diabetes and blood pressure screenings, and physicals that draw nearly 10,000 people each year.

The success of the various vaccination efforts comes as a relief to Melendez, who recalls getting teary-eyed while watching older people gather in the waiting area of a mass vaccination clinic in Hidalgo County in January.

"For the first time in a year," he said, "I left with some hope."

Houston upset over flood funds

■ FLOOD from Page 1

delays in establishing rules to use the funding and the creation of criteria for awarding it happened during the Trump administration.

The lack of flood mitigation funding has left many Houstonians seething.

During a meeting of the Harris County Commissioners Court last week, Rick Martinez, a pastor in the East Aldine area, said residents were "being used as political pawns." He asked GLO officials to visit his community after the next storm.

"Drive on past as our children are wading in disgusting floodwaters,

all because not a dime was spent to improve our drainage systems," said Martinez, a lifelong Republican whose church has flooded during four hurricanes and tropical storms in the last 20 years.

The lack of flood mitigation funding is also aggravating a \$1.4 billion shortfall Harris County faces in fully funding flood control projects that Houston-area voters approved in 2018 in response to Harvey.

During a tour of East Aldine and surrounding neighborhoods, Ronquillo, 42, highlighted the streets that flood even during a normal rain and how the bottom of her SUV is rusting because she keeps having to drive through high water.

Standing along Halls Bayou, a few blocks from her home, she said the lack of funding would likely endanger families who live along the waterway,

which has experienced major flooding 14 times since 1989. Many of these families can't afford flood insurance and have little savings because they're focused on day-to-day survival, said

Ronquillo, who co-founded the community group Houston Department of Transformation.

In the Allen Field subdivision north of East Aldine, houses and mobile homes are raised 6 to 8 feet off the ground because of perpetual flooding. But many residents, including Dolores Mendoza, are being forced to move because of a mandatory flood buyout program.

Six generations of Mendoza's family have lived in the subdivision and she would rather stay, but the flooding is

It's a "slap in the face" to communities of color.

SHIRLEY RONQUILLO

"getting a lot worse."

Her home is near Greens Bayou, and the open drainage ditches that line her street are often clogged by debris and do little to remove water when

it floods. Heavy rainfall last week made the roads leading to her home impassable.

Mendoza said, "People don't really understand what it really is like out here," making the GLO's funding decision unsurprising.

"With the lack of support from the state, the fear is that once again, we're not going to get the funding that we need and therefore we will continue to flood," Ronquillo said.



EVAN VUCCI

President Joe Biden listens to program coordinator Michelle Brown-Burdex during a tour of the Greenwood Cultural Center on June 1, in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Biden honors victims

■ BIDEN from Page 1

white people as well as issue new federal rules to fight housing discrimination.

The administration is also setting a goal of increasing the share of federal contracts awarded to disadvantaged small businesses by 50% by 2026, funneling an estimated additional \$100 billion to such businesses over the five-year period, according to the White House.

Disagreements among Black leaders in Tulsa over the handling of commemorative events and millions of dollars in donations have led to two disparate groups planning separate slates of anniversary events.

Organizers called off a separate commemoration for the 100th anniversary of the Tulsa race massacre, saying no agreement could be reached over monetary payments to three survivors of the deadly attack. It highlights broader debates over reparations for racial injustice.

Reparations for Black Americans

whose ancestors were enslaved and for other racial discrimination have been debated in the U.S. since legal slavery ended in 1865.

Some of Tulsa's Black residents question whether the \$20 million spent to build the Greenwood Rising museum in an increasingly gentrified part of the city could have been better spent helping Black descendants of the massacre or residents of the city's predominantly Black north side miles away from Greenwood.

Biden, who was vice president to the nation's first Black president and who chose a Black woman as his own vice president, supports a study of reparations in Tulsa and more broadly but has not committed to supporting payments. He recently declared the need for America to confront its past, saying, "We must acknowledge that there can be no realization of the American dream without grappling with the original sin of slavery and the centuries-long campaign of violence, fear and trauma wrought upon African American people in this country."

He issued a proclamation designating Monday as a "day of remembrance" for the massacre.

Legislature wraps up

■ LEGISLATURE from Page 1

added to the special session agenda."

The governor has not yet specified whether he plans to order one ahead of an overtime round already planned for the fall to handle the redrawing of the state's political maps.

Before lawmakers adjourned, though, Abbott made clear he intends to reprimand the Legislature over its unfinished business by vetoing the section of the state budget that funds the legislative branch.

"No pay for those who abandon their responsibilities," he tweeted. "Stay tuned."

Shortly after lawmakers adjourned for the final time, Abbott released a lengthier statement in which he applauded the Legislature

for pushing through a series of conservative victories, while doubling down on his demands that lawmakers pass voting and bail legislation.

House Democrats earlier this week successfully killed proposals that would've banned local governments from using taxpayer dollars to pay lobbyists, prohibited social media companies from blocking users because of their viewpoints and barred transgender students from playing on sports teams based on their gender identity. Abbott had previously said he would sign those bills.

"I expect legislators to have worked out their differences prior to arriving back at the Capitol so that they can hit the ground running to pass legislation related to these emergency items and other priority legislation," he said.

Thanks for standing up for the Texas House.

TODD HUNTER, R-Corpus Christi

breeze in the fall."

Phelan during his speech also alluded to the special session, telling members that while he hoped the Legislature would not return until the fall, the decision was not his.

"Let's just have a restful, peaceful summer and hopefully be back here in the fall," Phelan said. "But that's not my decision. That's someone else's decision."

Phelan also emphasized abiding by legislative rules in an apparent dig at Patrick and the Senate, which moved in the early hours of Sunday morning to suspend its rules and jam through a series of last-minute additions to the expansive voting bill.

"No matter the external forces that tried to distract us or diminish the work of this body, we are the Texas

Austin Pride hosts many festivities

The coronavirus pandemic caused most Pride Month events to be moved online in 2020. This year, activities are a mix of online and in-person. Here are a few of the events taking place in Austin.

Sing Out: A Pride Musical Revue June 3

Austin Artists Project is collaborating with Ground Floor Theatre for a show in Austin on Thursday. It will feature six Tony and Grammy award winners and nominees as well as selections from musicals such as "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" and "The Color Purple," according to its website. Tickets from Ground Floor, at 979 Springdale Road, start at \$25 for a nine-person pod but are otherwise "pay what you can."

Pride Mini Film-A-Thon June 4-6

The All Genders, Lifestyles, and Identities Film Festival will hold a virtual Pride film-a-thon from Friday through Sunday. Among the weekend's offerings are four feature films with limited numbers of views, according to the festival's site.

Queer Artist Market June 6

Austin's Queer Artist Market will feature over 20 LGBTQ vendors, a prize wheel, and tacos, taking place at Garden Seventeen at 604 Williams St. from noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

The Boiz of Austin June 8

Drag king group the Boiz of Austin will host a Pride show Tuesday at Elysium Austin, 705 Red River St. Doors open at 9 p.m. and there is a \$5 entry fee for people ages 21 and older. Adults under 21 must pay \$10, according to the event Facebook page.

(I'm)perfectly queer June 9

(I'm)perfectly Queer, a youth event hosted by Austin Black Pride will take place from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. June 9 at The Little Gay Shop at 828 Airport Blvd.

Capital City Ball: Coming to Austin Kiki Ball June 11

Capital City Ball and Austin Black Pride will hold an event for people 18 and older June 11 at Highland Lounge, 404 Colorado St. The ball will begin with a 9 p.m. red carpet. Tickets are \$15 for 18- to 20-year-olds and \$10 for ages 21 and up.

Trap Paint and Sip June 12

Austin Black Pride is selling \$25 tickets to its Trap Paint and Sip event taking place at Rain, 217 W. 4th St. from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. June 12. All attendees, who must be at least 21 years old, will receive food, supplies and a drink, according to the event page.

Drip Drop June 12

Austin Black Pride will host Drip Drop, a hip hop, bounce and trap party, from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. June 12 at Elysium, 705 Red River St.

House," Phelan said. "In this House, we work hard — and our rules matter. Our rules matter."

Meanwhile, across the Capitol, senators slowly filled the chamber Monday morning — many with family members in tow — as they exchanged cordial handshakes and friendly smiles.

Clusters of bipartisan conversation presented a stark contrast to the late-night partisanship that largely defined a strange legislative session.

The first order of business as Patrick gavelled in the final regular session meeting of the upper chamber was the election of the body's president pro tempore during the interim — a largely ceremonial role reserved for the longest-serving senator who has not previously served in such a capacity. This year, that honor fell to state Sen. Donna Campbell, R-New Braunfels.

Members, each wearing a yellow rose in homage to Campbell, took turns commending her heart, perseverance and faith. "Many people consider her an iron first in a velvet glove, perhaps because of her firmness and her brevity," said state Sen. Judith Zaffirini, D-Laredo.

Campbell was flanked by her four daughters as she addressed her colleagues from the dais, the events from a tumultuous session seemingly weighing on her mind.

"We are chosen leaders of this great state of Texas at a time of great challenges," she said. "We came into our position, our position of leadership, for a time such as this."

After approving a series of memorial resolutions and technical changes to bills, the Senate prepared to gavel out for the final time this regular session. A hint at unfinished business rang out in Patrick's closing remarks.

"I normally say I'll see you in 18 months, but I might see you in 18 days or so," he said.

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BRIEFS

OPEC to increase oil output as global economy recovers

FRANKFURT, Germany — The OPEC oil cartel and allied producing countries have confirmed plans to restore 2.1 million barrels per day of crude production. Energy ministers made the decision during an online meeting Tuesday.

During the worst of the pandemic, oil-producing countries made drastic cuts to support prices and must now judge how much additional oil the market needs as producers slowly add more production.

The cartel decided to stick with its previous decision to raise production by 2.1 million barrels per day from May to July. The group planned to add back 350,000 barrels per day in June and 440,000 barrels per day in July. At the same time, Saudi Arabia is gradually adding back 1 million barrels in voluntary cuts it made beyond its group commitment.

The combined OPEC Plus format of members led by Saudi Arabia and nonmembers, chief among them Russia, faces concerns that renewed COVID-19 outbreaks in countries such as India, a major oil consumer, will hurt global demand and weigh on prices.

Bombs in Afghan capital kill at least 10, wound 12

KABUL, Afghanistan — Three bombs rattled the Afghan capital, Kabul, late Tuesday, killing at least 10 people and plunging the city into darkness.

Two bombs exploded in quick succession in separate locations of a west Kabul neighborhood, killing at least 10 and wounding a dozen others, said deputy Interior Ministry spokesman Said Hamid Rushan. Those bombings both targeted minivans and happened in a mostly ethnic Hazara area of the capital, Rushan added.

A third bomb heavily damaged an electrical grid station in north Kabul, said Sangar Niazi, a spokesman for the government power supply department.

No one claimed responsibility for the bombings, but the Islamic State group affiliate operating in Afghanistan has previously declared war on minority Shiites, who make up roughly 20% of the majority Sunni Muslim nation of 36 million people.

The attacks come as the United States withdraws the last of its 2,500-3,500 troops along with 7,000 allied NATO forces. The last soldiers are to be gone by Sept. 11 at the latest, generating fears of increased chaos in an already deeply insecure country.

Foundation seeks to help LGBT movement in Poland

WARSAW, Poland — A Nobel laureate, a Netflix star and a fashion model are among the board members who helped launch an initiative Tuesday to raise money for LGBT rights groups in Poland, where LGBT face backlash from the country's conservative government and Catholic Church.

The Equaversty Foundation plans to seek international donations to fund organizations working in Poland. Activists say the help is needed to counter homophobic rhetoric from the highest levels of Poland's government and from Catholic leaders.

During an online conference Tuesday, several initiators described the foundation as a way to combat a rising tide of anti-LGBT discrimination.

Polish President Andrzej Duda said last year while running for reelection that the term "LGBT" is "not people" but an "ideology" more dangerous than communism.

Meanwhile, Catholic Church leaders have also used the term "rainbow plague" to describe the movement for LGBT.

The atmosphere has led some LGBT people to leave the country. Equaversty board member Holland said that 70% of LGBT youth in Poland have suicidal thoughts.

WHO grants emergency to 2nd Chinese vaccine

GENEVA — The World Health Organization has issued an emergency use listing for the COVID-19 vaccine made by Sinovac for adults 18 and over, the second such authorization it has granted to a Chinese company.

In a statement Tuesday, the U.N. health agency said data submitted to its experts showed that two doses of the vaccine prevented people from getting symptoms of COVID-19 in about half of those who got the vaccine. WHO said few older adults enrolled in the research, so it could not estimate how effective the vaccine was in people over 60.

Mexico report suggests sex abuse ring at some schools

MEXICO CITY — A study published Monday by a children's rights group in Mexico suggests a disturbing pattern at as many as 18 schools and childcare centers where multiple adult employees allegedly collaborated and used eerily similar practices to sexually abuse pupils between 3 and 7 years old.

The "11 offenders are accused of committing the abuse in a coordinated fashion," according to the report by the civic group Center for the Defense of Children's Rights. Children were forced to watch adults performing sexual acts or touch or abuse other kids. The legal team reviewed 37 cases found "to possibly match the criminal patterns we identified. Of these cases we were only able to attain greater detail as to the narratives of the children in 18 schools that confirmed similar patterns."

CHILDREN OF GAZA



JOHN MINCHILLO

Ibrahim Al-Masri, 10, sits for a portrait in his bedroom that was damaged when an airstrike destroyed the neighboring building prior to a cease-fire that halted an 11-day war between Gaza's Hamas rulers and Israel May 26 in Beit Hanoun, Gaza Strip.

Vatican outlaws adult abuse

BY NICOLE WINFIELD
Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis has changed Catholic Church law to explicitly criminalize the sexual abuse of adults by priests who abuse their authority and to say that laypeople who hold church office also can be sanctioned for similar sex crimes. The new law is set to take effect on Dec. 8. A bishop can be removed from office for "culpable negligence," meaning he does not report sex crimes to church authorities. However, the canon law foresees no punishment for failing to report suspected crimes to the police.

The Vatican has long considered any sexual relations between a priest and an adult as sinful but consensual, believing that adults can offer or refuse consent purely by the nature of their age. Amid the #MeToo movement and scandals of seminarians and nuns being sexually abused by their superiors, the Vatican realizes that adults can be victimized if there is a power imbalance in the relationship.

According to the new law, priests who engage in sexual acts with anyone can be defrocked if they use "force, threats or abuse of his authority" to engage in sexual acts. Previously the Vatican only considered it a crime if



ANDREW MEDICINI/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mons. Filippo Iannone, right, and Mons. Juan Ignacio Arrieta Ochoa de Chinchetru hold a press conference to illustrate changes in the Church's Canon law, at the Vatican, June 1. Pope Francis has changed church law to explicitly criminalize the sexual abuse of adults by priests who abuse their authority and to say that laypeople who hold church office can be sanctioned for similar sex crimes.

the priest used force or threats and lumped the provision alongside sexual abuse of a minor.

The law doesn't explicitly define which adults are covered, saying only an adult who "habitually has an imperfect use of reason" or for "whom the law recognizes equal protection." Arrieta said the Vatican chose not to define precisely who is covered but noted that the Vatican previously de-

fined vulnerable adults as those who even occasionally are unable to understand or consent because of a physical or mental deficiency or are deprived of their personal liberty.

The Rev. Davide Cito, a canon lawyer at the Pontifical Holy Cross University, said the broadness of the law "allows it to protect many people" who might not necessarily fall under the strict definition of "vulnerable" but are

nevertheless deserving of protection.

But Kurt Martens, a canon lawyer, and professor at Catholic University of America, wondered how the church would enforce the payment of fines, suggesting the penalty might be an example of "wishful thinking" on the Vatican's part.

"You can have the most perfect legislation and the louisiest enforcement," Martens said in a phone interview. "Unlike civil authorities, what is the power of the church to enforce penalties she ultimately chooses to enforce?"

The need for such a lay-focused provision was made clear in the case of Luis Figari, the lay founder of the Peru-based Sodalitium Christianae Vitae, a conservative movement that has chapters throughout South America and the U.S. and 20,000 members.

An independent investigation concluded Figari was a paranoid narcissist obsessed with sex and watching his underlings endure pain and humiliation. But the Vatican and local church dithered for years on how to sanction him since he wasn't a priest and couldn't be defrocked — the worst penalty foreseen for sexual abusers.

Ultimately the Vatican decided to remove him from Peru.

Meat company latest cyberattack victim

BY ROD MCGUIRK
Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia — A ransomware attack on the world's largest meat processing company is disrupting production worldwide just weeks after a similar incident shut down a U.S. oil pipeline.

JBS S.A. of Brazil notified the U.S. of the ransom demand from a criminal organization likely based in Russia. JBS said the cyberattack affected servers supporting its operations in North America and Australia. JBS employs more than 66,000 people at 84 locations in the U.S. and has around 11,000 employees in Australia, where it is the country's largest meat and food processing company with 47 facilities.

The government minister said it might be days before production resumes. Last month, hackers shut

down operation of the Colonial Pipeline, the largest U.S. fuel pipeline, for nearly a week. The closure sparked long lines and panic buying at gas stations across the Southeast. Colonial Pipeline confirmed it paid \$4.4 million to the hackers.

Jason Crabtree, the co-founder of QOMPLX, an artificial intelligence company, said companies need to do a better job of rapidly detecting bad actors in their systems.

"A lot of organizations aren't able to find and fix different vulnerabilities faster than the adversaries that they're fighting," Crabtree said.

Crabtree said that President Biden's recent executive order on cybersecurity — which requires all federal agencies to use security measures, like multi-factor authentication — is a good start.



OLIVIA ZHANG/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mother of two, Yue Yan looks after one of her daughters at a park in Beijing May 20.

China faces strains as population ages

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIJING — Yue Yan is glad to have two daughters but sees why fewer Chinese women are giving birth, even with the ruling Communist Party urging them to have more children.

Yue, 35, spends days looking after her 2-year-old and evenings helping her 10-year-old with homework. Yue quit a restaurant job to do that, so the family lives on her husband's salary, which many can't afford to do.

"If a young couple is busy working and their parents can't help take care of the children, they will not want kids," Yue said. "The pressure is just so heavy."

The Communist party is easing official limits on the number of children each couple can have, hoping to counter the rapid aging of Chinese society. But the number of births is falling. Couples are put off by costs, disruptions to jobs and the need to look after elderly parents.

On Monday, the ruling party announced it would ease birth restrictions to let all couples have three children instead of two. But its track

record suggests rule changes alone do little to change long-term trends.

Rules enforced since 1980 that limited most couples to one birth were changed in 2015 to allow two. After a brief uptick the next year, however, the number who had even one child fell, while the share of the population over age 65 rose.

China's population of 1.4 billion already was expected to peak later this decade and start to decline. Census data released May 11 suggest that is happening faster than expected, adding pressure to prepare for slower economic growth and do more to help the elderly. The rise in average age could disrupt ambitions to turn China into a technology leader and consumer-driven economy.

While a population decline might ease strains on resources, "this is not sustainable," said Song Jian, a professor at Beijing's Center for Population and Development at Renmin University.

China needs to "boost the willingness to have children," Song said. "We need to make people feel that having children or forming a family is attractive."

Travel restrictions increase U.S. drug trafficking

By SUMAN NAISHADHAM
Associated Press

PHOENIX — Authorities have apprehended an increasing number of American citizens trying to smuggle illegal drugs into the U.S. The closure of the border to nonessential traffic has sharply limited the number of foreign citizens entering the U.S. by land. In contrast, Mexican authorities have allowed most U.S. citizens to drive south across the border with ease.

Authorities apprehended U.S. citizens nearly seven times more often than Mexican citizens between October 2020 and March 2021 for attempting to smuggle drugs, U.S. Customs and Border Protection data shows.

In 2020, U.S. citizens had been apprehended about 2,400 times for drug

smuggling during inspections of vehicles crossing checkpoints. Just 361 such apprehensions during the same period involved Mexican citizens.

In March, a 24-year-old from Houston was arrested after an inspection at a port of entry in Laredo, Texas, uncovering nearly 127 pounds of liquid methamphetamine concealed in the gas tank of the SUV she was driving, court documents said.

Barboza told law enforcement officials that she agreed to drive the shipment to Houston in exchange for \$10,000. Abundio Rene Cantu, a lawyer representing Mendoza, estimates the number of cases he has handled of U.S. citizens facing drug smuggling charges has doubled since 2019, crediting the border policy.

Federer wins Grand Slam return

**BY JOHN LEICESTER AND
SAMUEL PETREQUIN**
AP Sports Writers

PARIS — They feted Roger Federer with as loud as applause gets from a crowd capped at 1,000 people in Court Philippe Chatrier when he walked out with a wave, when he hit one of his 48 winners, and even when he attempted a back-to-the-net 'tweener and hit the ball out.

The sunshine-bathed match Monday marked Federer's long-awaited return to the French Open and Grand Slam action, and he gave the excited fans the victory they wanted perhaps as much as he did.

Federer's first competition at any major tournament in 16 months ended with him on the right side of a 6-2, 6-4, 6-3 score against qualifier Denis Istomin at the French Open as fans chanted, "Ro-ger! Ro-ger!"

It was a case of many happy returns — and serves, forehands, backhands, volleys and drop shots, too.

"What a pleasure to be back," Federer said.

Federer showed no signs of rust or trouble with his right knee, which needed two operations last year. He produced over twice as many winners as his 20 unforced errors and never faced a break point while improving to 8-0 against Istomin over their careers.

"Always great to be on court with this legend. To play against him is always a big (deal)," Istomin said. "I was expecting all the spectators to cheer for him."

They sure did, with one voice from the stands shouting, "A delight, Roger! A delight!" as Federer went up 4-2 in the third set.

Federer, whose 40th birthday is Aug. 8, hadn't appeared on the Grand Slam stage since Jan. 30, 2020, when he lost to Novak Djokovic in the Australian Open semifinals.

This was only Federer's second trip to the French Open since 2015. In addition to last year's absence because of knee issues, he withdrew in 2016, citing a bad back, then sat out the clay-court circuit each of the next two years to focus on the grass-court portion of the season.

He acknowledged recently he has zero chance of claiming the trophy this time around in Paris; instead, he

Florida governor OKs limits on transgender student athletes

BY BOBBY CAINA CALVAN
Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Florida's Republican governor signed a bill Tuesday barring transgender females from playing on public school teams that match their gender identity, plunging the state into a war over transgender rights.

"In Florida, girls are going to play girls sports and boys are going to play boys sports," Gov. Ron DeSantis said as he signed the bill in Jacksonville. The new law inflames discussion nationally.

Florida's measure takes effect July 1 and says a transgender student athlete can't participate without first showing a birth certificate identifying her as female at birth. The final wording of the "Fairness in Women's Sports Act" stripped away some of its most contentious elements, including a requirement that transgender athletes in high schools and colleges undergo testosterone or genetic testing and submit to having their genitalia examined.

But the legislation signed by the governor advances an underlying principle asserted by supporters: Biological differences between males and females make it unfair for athletes identified as boys at birth to compete on teams for girls and women.

Democrats and LGBTQ advocates said the law is discriminatory and will be challenged in court as unconstitutional. "This is yet another hate-driven attack from the governor and Republican legislators, and it's insulting that they've staged this morning's photo-op on the first day of Pride Month," said state Sen. Shevrin Jones."This bill is very simply about making sure that women can safely compete," said state Sen. Kelli Stargel, who championed the bill.

A Connecticut track athlete, Selina Soule, joined the Florida governor at the news conference to talk about how she failed to advance in competitions because she competed against transgender athletes.

"This is not out of need or necessity," said Orlando Gonzales, the executive director of SAVE, a South Florida LGBTQ rights advocacy group, during a news conference. "This is really just to throw red meat out there to really rally the base of people who are anti-LGBT."



DeSantis



THIBAUT CAMUS / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Switzerland's Roger Federer plays a return on day two of the French Open on Monday. This match marks his long-awaited comeback to the Paris tennis tournament and Grand Slam action.



THIBAUT CAMUS / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Poland's Iga Swiatek plays a return to Slovenia's Kaja Juvan during their first round match on day two of the French Open tennis tournament.

is hoping to be ready to challenge for a championship at Wimbledon, where play begins in late June.

"In a way I like this situation — that I don't know what's next, how my next match will be. I don't even know who I play, to be honest," said Federer, whose second-round opponent will be 2014 U.S. Open champion Marin Cilic.

"I take it round by round, match by match."

After rhythmic clapping accompanied Federer's trot to the baseline for the match's opening point, he got off to the perfect start against Istomin, who is ranked 204th and is now the owner of a seven-match Grand Slam losing streak, but did upset Djokovic at the

Vaccines pushed pre-Olympics

BY MARI YAMAGUCHI
Associated Press

TOKYO — Japan is scrambling to catch up on a frustratingly slow vaccination drive less than two months before the scheduled start of the Summer Olympics, which were delayed by a year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Olympics risk becoming an incubator for "a Tokyo variant," as 15,000 foreign athletes and tens of thousands of officials, sponsors, and journalists from about 200 countries descend on — and potentially mix with — a largely unvaccinated Japanese population, said physician Dr. Naoto Ueyama, head of the Japan Doctors Union.

With infections at high levels and hospitals already under strain treating serious cases, experts have warned there is little slack in the system.

Even if the country meets its goal of fully vaccinating all 36 million older adults by the end of July — already a week into the Games — about 70% of the population would not be inoculated. Many already view the target as overly optimistic.

To meet it, Japan is vowing to start administering 1 million doses daily. It is giving only 500,000 per day.

The International Olympic Committee says more than 80% of athletes and staff in the Olympic Village will be vaccinated — and they are expected to remain largely in a bubble.

On Tuesday, Japan started vaccinating athletes who will go to the Games, the Japanese Olympic Committee said.

But vaccination rates are not clear for foreign participants, including those from hard-hit regions, and experts warn that even strict rules won't prevent all mingling, especially among nonathletes. Spectators from overseas have been barred.

Prominent medical journals have questioned the wisdom of pushing ahead with the Tokyo Games. But the



KAZUSHI KURIHARA / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Olympic torchbearers wearing face masks sit and wait for their turn in Kanazawa, central Japan on Monday. Japan, seriously behind in coronavirus vaccination efforts, is scrambling to boost daily shots as the July start of the Olympics.

government has said it's determined to push ahead, with the viability of Suga's leadership and geopolitical competition with rival Beijing, the next Olympics host on the line.

"By using a new weapon called vaccines and taking firm preventive measures, it is fully possible" to hold the Olympics safely, Suga told a parliamentary session Tuesday.

Dr. Shigeru Omi, former World Health Organization regional director and head of a government taskforce, said it is crucial to start inoculating younger people, who are seen as likely to spread the virus, as soon as possible.

More than three months into Japan's vaccination campaign, only 2.7% of the population has been fully vaccinated.

Inoculations for older adults, who are more likely to suffer serious problems when infected, started in mid-April, but were slowed by initial supply shortages, cumbersome reservation procedures and a lack of medical workers to give shots.

CRUCIAL MATCH UP



TONY GUTIERREZ / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Going into the fifth and final game in the Western Conference, the Dallas Mavericks and the Los Angeles Clippers are tied 2-2. Los Angeles Clippers' Kawhi Leonard (2) and Terance Mann (14) defend as Dallas Mavericks guard Luka Doncic (77) drives to the basket in the first half in Game 4 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series in Dallas. The Mavericks travel to Los Angeles for Game 5 on Wednesday at 9 p.m. The Mavericks are 21-21 against all Western Conference opponents.

BRIEFS

Firefighter kills colleague, wounds another at station

SANTA CLARITA, California — An off-duty Los Angeles County firefighter fatally shot a fellow firefighter and wounded another at their small community fire station Tuesday before setting his nearby home on fire and apparently killing himself, authorities said.

A 44-year-old fire specialist died and a 54-year-old firefighter was shot when the gunman opened fire shortly before 11 a.m. at Fire Station 81, about 45 miles north of Los Angeles, Fire Chief Daryl Osby told reporters. The wounded man was in critical but stable condition at a hospital.

The shooter was a firefighter specialist and engineer, authorities said. The fire chief said he could not speak to the motive for the attack and doesn't know about any disciplinary actions.

Armed suspect killed in nightclub incident

HOUSTON — An off-duty deputy working security at a Houston nightclub fatally shot an armed suspect after gunfire at the club left one other person dead and wounded two more people, police said.

Shots were fired at about 1:15 a.m. Monday, and police said one person was pronounced dead at the scene. A second person was struck several times and is in critical condition, police said, while a third person was treated for a gunshot wound to the leg.

A Harris County deputy who was working security opened fire after the shooting, killing "an armed suspect," police said. Authorities were still working to determine whether anyone else opened fire at the nightclub. Police did confirm Monday that the "armed suspect" was among the two dead at the club.

Names of those involved had not been released Tuesday.

Boston cop who tackled Marathon bomber retires

WATERTOWN, Massachusetts — Watertown police Sgt. Jeffrey Pugliese, who became a national hero in 2013 when he tackled one of the Boston Marathon bombers, retired Monday after more than 41 years on the force.

He wanted to keep working but had reached the state's mandatory police retirement age of 65.

"The best part of being a police officer is getting out there and helping people, saving lives," Pugliese told WCVB-TV.

During the gunfight with the marathon bombers, Pugliese came face to face with Tamerlan Tsarnaev.

"We were just 6 feet, maybe 7 feet apart," he told WBZ-TV. "The only thing separating us was a four-foot chain link fence."

As Pugliese and two other officers held Tsarnaev down, his younger brother, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, sped toward them in an SUV.

Pugliese grabbed Tamerlan Tsarnaev by the belt to pull him out of harm's way.

Dzhokhar Tsarnaev ran over and killed his older brother.

Justices reject J&J appeal of \$2B talc verdict

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court is leaving in place a \$2 billion verdict in favor of women who say they developed ovarian cancer from using Johnson & Johnson talc products.

The justices did not comment Tuesday in rejecting Johnson & Johnson's appeal. The company argued that it was not treated fairly in facing one trial involving 22 cancer sufferers who came from 12 states and different backgrounds.

A Missouri jury initially awarded the women \$4.7 billion, but a state appeals court dropped two women from the suit and reduced the award to \$2 billion. The jury found that the company's talc products contain asbestos and that asbestos-laced talc can cause ovarian cancer. The company disputes both points.

Johnson & Johnson has stopped selling its iconic talc-based Johnson's Baby Powder in the U.S. and Canada, though it remains on the market elsewhere.

The lead attorney for the women during the trial, Mark Lanier, praised the court's refusal to hear Johnson & Johnson's appeal.

Pelosi rules out having Biden create commission

WASHINGTON — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is ruling out a presidential commission to study the Jan. 6 insurrection at the Capitol, telling House Democrats on Tuesday that having President Joe Biden appoint a panel is unworkable even after the Senate blocked an independent probe last week.

Pelosi laid out four possible options after Friday's Senate vote, in which Senate Republicans blocked legislation to investigate the siege by former President Donald Trump's supporters.

The first option, Pelosi said, is to give the Senate another chance to vote on the commission, which would be modeled after a highly respected panel that investigated the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

The other three options all involve the House investigating the attack, meaning the probes would be inherently partisan. Pelosi suggested that she could appoint a new select committee or give the responsibility to a single committee. The fourth option would be for committees to simply push ahead with their own investigations.

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