

## Trump indicted in election plot probe

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump was indicted on felony charges Tuesday for working to overturn the results of the 2020 election in the run-up to the violent riot by his supporters at the U.S. Capitol, with the Justice Department acting to hold him accountable for an unprecedented effort to block the peaceful transfer of presidential power and threaten American democracy.

The four-count indictment, the third criminal case against Trump, provided deeper insight into a dark moment that has already been the subject of exhaustive federal investigations and captivating public hearings. It chronicles a months-long campaign of lies about the election results and says that, even when those falsehoods resulted in a chaotic insurrection at the Capitol, Trump sought to exploit the violence by pointing to it as a reason to further delay the counting of votes that sealed his defeat.

Even in a year of rapid-succession legal reckonings for Trump, Tuesday's indictment, with charges including conspiring to defraud the United States government that he once led, was stunning in its allegations that a former president assaulted the "bedrock function" of democracy. It's the first time the defeated president, who is the early front-runner for next year's Republi-

can presidential nomination, is facing legal consequences for his frantic but ultimately failed effort to cling to power.

"The attack on our nation's Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, was an unprecedented assault on the seat of American democracy," said Justice Department special counsel Jack Smith, whose office has spent months investigating Trump. "It was fueled by lies, lies by the defendant targeted at obstructing a bedrock function of the U.S. government: the nation's process of collecting, counting and certifying the results of the presidential election."

The Trump campaign called the charges "fake" and asked why it took two-and-a-half years to bring them.

Trump was the only person charged in Tuesday's indictment. But prosecutors obliquely referenced a half-dozen co-conspirators, including lawyers inside and outside of government who they said had worked with Trump to undo the election results. They also advanced legally dubious schemes to enlist slates of fake electors in battleground states won by Democrat Joe Biden to falsely claim that Trump had actually won them.

The indictment accuses the defeated president and his allies of trying to "exploit the violence and chaos" by calling lawmak-

ers into the evening on Jan. 6 to delay the certification of Biden's victory.

It also cites handwritten notes from former Vice President Mike Pence that give gravitas to Trump's relentless goading to reject the electoral votes. Pence, who is challenging Trump for the GOP presidential nomination, declined overtures from a House panel that investigated the insurrection and sought to avoid testifying before the special counsel. He appeared only after losing a court fight, with prosecutors learning that Trump in one conversation derided him as "too honest" to stop the certification.

Trump is due in court Thursday. The case is already being dismissed by the former president and his supporters — and even some of his rivals — as just another politically motivated prosecution. Yet the case stems from one of the most serious threats to American democracy in modern history.

The indictment centers on the turbulent two months after the November 2020 election in which Trump refused to accept his loss and spread lies that victory was stolen from him. The turmoil resulted in the riot at the Capitol, when Trump loyalists violently broke into the building, attacked police officers and disrupted the congressional counting of electoral votes.

## Intense winds from Typhoon Khanun batter Okinawa

*From staff and wire reports*

TOKYO — A powerful typhoon slammed Okinawa and other islands in southwestern Japan on Wednesday with high winds injuring more than 30 people.

U.S. bases on Okinawa remained at Tropical Cyclone Condition of Readiness-1E throughout Wednesday, meaning the installations are experiencing sustained winds of 58 mph or greater. Outdoor activity is prohibited.

The Japan Meteorological Agency said the typhoon is heading to the East China Sea, but may change course and head back to Japan later this week.

Typhoon Khanun, which means jackfruit in Thai, was heading west at speeds

of 9 mph, packing surface winds of up to 100 mph. It was at sea southwest of Okinawa's main island, according to the agency.

Thirty-four people were injured, with three seriously hurt, according to the Okinawa prefectural government. The typhoon damaged several homes and forced transportation to halt and stores to close as it slowly moved west. Many hospitals were only receiving emergency cases.

The storm also left nearly 200,000 homes, or about 30%, of those in Okinawa, without power, according to the Okinawa Electric Power Company.

In the Ogimi village in northeastern Okinawa, a man was found without vital

signs after a garage collapsed on him possibly due to violent wind, the Fire and Disaster Management Agency said.

The 90-year-old man was later pronounced dead in a hospital. Officials said they are investigating his death to see if it was due to the typhoon. Several other homes were also damaged.

Hundreds of domestic and international flights in and out of the Naha airport were canceled, and public transportation, including buses, light rail transit systems and ferries connecting the region's islands, were suspended.

Up to 7.8 inches of rainfall were expected in the Okinawa region by midday Thursday, the agency said.

# 'What right looks like'

## 3 years after deadly accident, Marines make progress in amphibious vehicle training

*The Orange County (Calif.) Register*

In the last few months, Marines at Camp Pendleton, Calif., have been retraining in the use of the new Amphibious Combat Vehicle, a troop carrier that's expected to be the service's most valuable asset in the amphibious fight and critical to the nation's crisis response.

The new training program's top amphibious combat leaders announced in a media roundtable that 59 Marines have now been certified in the revamped program. Another group will start training in mid-August, with more in September and October.

By the fall of 2024, 250 vehicle operators and 50 vehicle maintainers will have been recertified, officials said.

The Marines retooled the training after several vehicles flipped in the surf as the crews got familiar with the new transport. There have been no reported injuries.

Marines are now first learning in the classroom, ensuring they have sound fundamentals of the vehicles, officials said. Building on that, they move to "highly controlled practical evaluations" in the motor pool before transitioning into ground-based training. The new training program ends with the water and in the surf zone.

"This is not just pass/fail," said Col. Howard Hall, who headed designing the new training program earlier this year. "This is a consequential outcome-based approach where we can measure proficiency for safe operations of the vehicle. It is the most comprehensive effort the (amphibious assault) community has undertaken.

"It's a blank slate," he said, "to define what right looks like."

The Amphibious Combat Vehicle is replacing the Amphibious Assault Vehicle the Marines have used for more than 50 years to transport troops between ships and the shore. The vehicles were introduced at Camp Pendleton in 2019 so Marines could put them through their paces and then begin broader training with them before taking the new transports on deployment.

The vehicle developed by BAE Systems — the same manufacturer of the legacy AAV — was moved from initial testing into the fleet after a training accident on July 30, 2020, in which nine men died when an AAV they rode in sank to the ocean floor off California's San

Clemente Island.

It was the worst of the Marines' amphibious accidents in the service's history.

Multiple Marine and Navy investigations deemed the accident "preventable" and outlined a confluence of causes, including a lack of following standard protocols, lapses in training and leadership and the poor conditions of the aging fleet of AAVs.

Shortly after Camp Pendleton Marines started training with the replacement ACVs, four of the vehicles flipped in the surf zone — in one training event, two had accidents on the same day. There have also been reports of mechanical issues, including with the vehicle's tow mechanism, delays in water steering and water intrusion in the engine and the transmission.

The vehicles were quickly pulled from water training for a while in 2021 and then later restricted to only training in the base's protected Del Mar harbor. The vehicles also missed their debut deployment with the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit, which recently returned from seven months in the Indo-Pacific.

Hall, a 29-year veteran of the amphibious community who was once the commanding officer of Camp Pendleton's 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, said that part of the stumble in training stemmed from the Marines' long-term reliance on the AAV.

"Fifty years of experience with the legacy vehicle created muscle memory," he said. "It led us to focus on similarities rather than differences. There were hundreds of changes to the technical manuals, faster than the schools could keep up with. It became clear we needed a mindset shift on how we focus on the advanced capability."

Externally, the older AAVs are flat-bottomed and run on tracks, like a tank, while the new ACV has a V-shaped hull and eight wheels. The two vehicles' steering and propeller systems are completely different; at 36 tons, the ACV is also about 10 tons heavier. Because of the differences in their design, it has been reported that the vehicles behave differently in the surf zone.

As of April, the Marines had 139 ACVs in the fleet, with each vehicle costing \$5.9 million. More are on order. Military leaders say the ACV is significantly better "in mobility, lethality, protection and safety" than the AAVs.

As part of the training preparation, Hall said he and his team — which also included experts from the infantry and aircraft community — started from scratch.

"We took an A-to-Z scrub of all technical manuals and all previous mishaps with the ACVs and the AAV," Hall said, adding that the information gleaned was used to find "trends and blindspots."

Then new training protocols, testing plans and standards were built, he said.

"In 29 years, I've never seen a small handful of mostly sergeants define an entire (specialty) for an entire community," he said, calling the newly certified Marines "the first black belt instructors."

"I'm very proud of them for that," he said.

So far, the Marines who've been certified in water operations have made 100 loops — meaning splashing out from the beach and back in — through the surf zones with no incidents, said Lt. Col. Frederick Monday, who took over from Hall and now heads up the training unit.

"The surf zone is the most dangerous and we want them to be proficient there," he said, adding that detailed feedback from Marines who are being certified is being taken back to the teachers and other students going through both the operating and maintenance courses for the vehicle.

"We report on what Marines did well, but also where they need support," Monday said. "Marines are benefiting from guided discussions and hands-on operations and the program will continue to evolve.

"When anyone graduates," he added, "everybody is on the same standard."

Some veterans from the AAV community have questioned whether the ACV will ever be safe through the surf zone, which is critical to any war-fighting plans of the future.

The AAV was able to right itself if it tipped over, but because the ACVs have eight rubber tires instead of the heavier tracks, critics of the ACV program have wondered if the ACV can avoid the flips.

"We believe the approach we've taken will lessen the likelihood of rollover incidents," said Lt. Col. Benjamin Venning, who heads up the amphibious school.

"As this training continues, we lessen the rate."

# Drone strikes cause fires near Romania

*Associated Press*

KYIV, Ukraine — Russian forces hit port infrastructure in southern Ukraine with drones close to the border with NATO member Romania, the Ukrainian military and prosecutor-general's office said Wednesday, damaging a grain elevator and causing a huge fire at facilities that transport the country's crucial grain exports.

Since leaving a deal that allowed Ukraine to export grain to world markets through the city of Odesa, Russia has hammered the country's ports with strikes. In the past two weeks, dozens of drones and missile attacks have targeted the port of Odesa and the region's river ports, which are being used as alternative routes.

The prosecutor-general's office said the overnight strikes hit in the area of the Danube River that forms part of the Ukraine-Romania border. It didn't immediately give further details. Video obtained by The Associated Press showed explosions and a large fire in the distance on the Danube, captured by fishermen in Romania on the other side of the river.

Three Ukrainian ports along the Danube are currently operating.

"The goal of the enemy was clearly the facilities of the ports and industrial infrastructure of the region," Ukraine's South operational command wrote in an update on Facebook. As a result of the attack, a fire broke out at industrial and port facilities,

and a grain elevator was damaged.

Ukraine's air force intercepted 23 Shahed drones over the country overnight, mostly in Odesa and Kyiv, according to a morning update.

All 10 drones fired at Kyiv were intercepted, said Serhii Popko, the head of Kyiv City Administration. Numerous loud explosions were heard overnight as air defense systems were activated. Debris from felled drones hit three districts of the capital, damaging a non-residential building, Popko said.

"Russian terrorists have once again targeted ports, grain facilities and global food security," President Volodymyr Zelenskyy posted Wednesday morn-

ing on Telegram. "The world must respond."

He confirmed that some drones hit their targets, with the most "significant damage" in the south of Ukraine.

Wheat prices rose about 3% and corn prices nearly 2% on Wednesday in Chicago trading following the new attacks, before erasing those spikes and trading down. It showed the continued volatility in world markets as Russia targets Ukraine's ports and agricultural infrastructure.

Ukraine is a major supplier of wheat, corn, vegetable oil and other agricultural products important to the Middle East, Africa and parts of Asia where people have struggled with high food prices and hunger.

## Foreign nationals look to evacuate Niger's capital

*Associated Press*

NIAMEY, Niger — Foreign nationals lined up outside an airport in Niger's capital Wednesday morning to wait for a French military evacuation flight, while a regional bloc continued talks about its response to the military coup that took place last week.

France, Italy and Spain all announced evacuations for their citizens and other Europeans in the capital, Niamey, following concerns they could become trapped after soldiers detained President Mohamed Bazoum and seized power.

The United States has yet to announce plans for an evacuation, but some of its citizens have left with the help of the Europeans.

France's first two flights evacuated more than 350 French nationals, as well as people from Niger and at least 10 other countries, the French Foreign Ministry said. The Pa-

ris airport authority said two more evacuation flights are scheduled to land Wednesday afternoon.

Some 1,200 French citizens are registered at the French embassy, said the Foreign Ministry, and about half have asked to be evacuated.

An Italian military aircraft landed in Rome on Wednesday with 99 passengers, including 21 Americans and civilians from other countries, said the Italian defense minister.

Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said, "In some way, we were authorized by the new government, which gave permission for the operation."

Germany, which has encouraged its civilians in Niger to evacuate on French flights, said it doesn't currently see any need to evacuate the approximately 100 troops it has in the country, largely connected to the U.N. mission in neighboring Mali.

## Many worry Joshua trees may burn in fire

*Associated Press*

MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE, Calif. — Firefighters aided by rain fought to contain a massive blaze that swept through the California desert into Nevada and is threatening the region's famous spiky Joshua trees.

The York Fire that erupted last Friday is California's largest wildfire this year.

As of early Wednesday, it had burned through more than 128 square miles of land and was 30% contained, fire officials said.

Humid monsoonal weather conditions Tuesday afternoon brought brief but heavy rain, especially on the south end of the fire, and kept its spread to a minimum, fire officials said.

The approximately 400 firefighters battling the blaze, however, had to balance their efforts with concerns about disrupting the fragile ecosystem in California's Mojave National Preserve.

Crews used a "light hand on the land," clearing and carving fire lines without the use of bulldozers in order to reduce the impact in the ecologically-sensitive region, which is home to some 200 rare plants.

"You bring a bunch of bulldozers in there, you may or may not stop the fire, but you'll put a scar on the landscape that'll last generations," said Tim Chavez, an assistant chief for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The blaze erupted near the remote Caruthers Canyon area of the vast wildland preserve, crossed the state line into Nevada on Sunday and sent smoke further east into the Las Vegas Valley.

The fire started on private lands within the preserve, but the cause remains under investigation.

Less than 3% of the land in the 2,500-square mile preserve is privately owned.



# Utah law requiring porn sites to verify age stays

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — A Utah law requiring adult websites to verify the age of their users will remain in effect after a federal judge dismissed a lawsuit from an industry group challenging its constitutionality.

The dismissal poses a setback for digital privacy advocates and the Free Speech Coalition, which sued on behalf of adult entertainers, erotica authors, sex educators and casual porn viewers over the Utah law — and another in Louisiana — designed to limit access to materials considered vulgar or explicit.

U.S. District Court Judge Ted Stewart did not address the group's arguments that the law unfairly discriminates against certain kinds of speech, violates the First Amendment rights of porn providers and intrudes on the privacy of individuals who want to view sexually explicit materials.

Dismissing their lawsuit on Tuesday, he instead said they couldn't sue Utah officials because of how the law calls for age verifi-

cation to be enforced. The law doesn't direct the state to pursue or prosecute adult websites and instead gives Utah residents the power to sue them and collect damages if they don't take precautions to verify their users' ages.

"They cannot just receive a pre-enforcement injunction," Stewart wrote in his dismissal, citing a 2021 U.S. Supreme Court decision upholding a Texas law allowing private citizens to sue abortion providers.

The law is the latest anti-pornography effort from Utah's Republican-supermajority Legislature, which since 2016 has passed laws meant to combat the public and mental health effects they say watching porn can have on children.

In passing new age verification requirements, Utah lawmakers argued that because pornography had become ubiquitous and easily accessible online, it posed a threat to children in their developmentally formative years, when they begin learning about sex.

# Texas cop holds innocent family at gunpoint after typo was made

Associated Press

FRISCO, Texas — A Texas police department is apologizing after officers pulled over what they wrongly suspected was a stolen car and then held an innocent Black family at gunpoint.

The driver of the car, her husband and one of the two children being driven by the Arkansas couple to a youth basketball tournament can all be heard sobbing on body camera video posted online by police in Frisco, Texas, in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

"We made a mistake," Frisco Police Chief David Shilson said in a statement. "Our department will not hide from its mistakes. Instead, we will learn from them."

The video shows an officer pointing his handgun toward the Dodge Charger as he orders the driver to get out and walk backward toward officers with her hands raised. Also in the car were the woman's husband, their son and a nephew.

Police order one of the children to step out

and lift his shirt. The driver's husband and the other child are told to stay inside and raise their hands through the windows.

"I've never been in trouble a day of my life," the pleading driver says on the video. "This is scaring the hell out of me."

Frisco police acknowledged the traffic stop was caused by an officer misreading the car's license plate. As she saw it leaving a hotel in the city north of Dallas, the officer checked its license plate number as an Arizona tag. The car had an Arkansas license plate.

The officer who initiated the traffic stop told the driver she was pulled over because her license plate was "associated essentially with no vehicle."

"Normally, when we see things like this, it makes us believe the vehicle was stolen," the officer tells the crying woman on the body-camera video.

Frisco police said all the department's officers received guidance stressing the need for accuracy when reporting information.

# Lizzo accused of harassment and hostile settings

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Lizzo has been sued by three former dancers who accuse the Grammy winner of sexual harassment and allege the singer and her production company created a hostile work environment.

The civil lawsuit filed Tuesday in Los Angeles County Superior Court claims Lizzo pressured the dancers to engage with nude performers at a club in Amsterdam and shamed one of them for her weight gain before firing her.

Plaintiffs Arianna Davis, Crystal Williams and Noelle Rodriguez make numerous charges including sexual, religious and racial harassment, disability discrimination, assault and false imprisonment.

The legal complaint seeks unspecified damages and names Melissa Viviane Jefferson, known professionally as Lizzo, her production company Big Grrrl Big Touring, Inc., and Shirlene Quigley, captain of the performer's dance team.

Representatives for Lizzo didn't immediately respond to emails seeking comment on the lawsuit.

The court filing claims that after performing a concert in Amsterdam, Lizzo and her crew attended a sexually themed show at a club in the city's notorious Red Light District where "Lizzo began inviting cast members to take turns touching the nude performers." During the show, Lizzo led a chant pressuring Davis to touch the breasts of one of the nude women performing at the club, the filing states.

"Finally, the chorus became overwhelming, and a mortified Ms. Davis acquiesced in an attempt to bring an end to the chants," the complaint states. "Plaintiffs were aghast with how little regard Lizzo showed for the bodily autonomy of her employees and those around her, especially in the presence of many people whom she employed."

Lizzo, who routinely champions body positivity, is also accused of calling out Davis for her weight gain after accusing the dancer of not being committed to her role. Davis was fired in May for recording a meeting during which Lizzo had given out notes to dancers about their performances, according to the complaint.

Quigley, who served as a judge on the singer's reality show "Lizzo's Watch Out for the Big Grrrls," is accused in the lawsuit of pushing her Christian beliefs onto dancers.

## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

**Inmate sues prison operators over stabbing**

**KS** LEAVENWORTH — An inmate is suing one of the nation's largest private prison operators over his 2021 stabbing inside a now-defunct maximum security federal facility in Kansas.

Joshua Braddy, who is now incarcerated in Illinois, amended his suit Monday to add CoreCivic, alleging the company was negligent in how it ran the Leavenworth Detention Center, prioritizing "profit over safety." Also added were prison staff and the prison's health care contractor.

The suit initially named as defendants three former Leavenworth detainees accused of stabbing Braddy.

Just a few weeks after the attack on Braddy, civil rights advocates and federal public defenders urged the White House in a letter to shutter the facility. The letter cited a host of other problems, including suicides and an attack on a correctional officer.

CoreCivic responded at the time that the claims were "false and defamatory." But with President Joe Biden calling on the U.S. Marshal's Office to end its reliance on private prisons, the contract for the facility was ended in December 2021.

**Groups say they'll sue to block leaving compact**

**VA** RICHMOND — A coalition of environmental groups announced plans Monday to file a lawsuit to try to block Virginia from withdrawing from a multistate compact designed to reduce greenhouse gases.

Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin made withdrawal from the compact a priority, citing its impact on the cost of electricity. The State Corporation Commission has estimated the typical monthly bill could increase by \$2 to \$2.50 for the years 2027 to 2030.

Last month, the state's Air Pollution Control Board voted 4-3 to repeal Virginia's participation in the initiative.

The initiative is an effort by mid-Atlantic and Northeast states to reduce power plants' carbon emissions through a cap-and-trade system. In 2021, Virginia became the first Southern state to join the compact. Participating states require certain power plants to purchase allowances to emit carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming.

**Engineer says he was fired after speaking Hindi**

**AL** HUNTSVILLE — An Indian American engineer says he was fired last year from his long-time job with a missile defense contractor's Alabama office after he was heard speaking Hindi on a video call, according to a federal lawsuit he filed against the company.

Anil Varshney, 78, filed a civil rights lawsuit in the Northern District of Alabama against Parsons Corp. and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, whose department oversees the United States Missile Defense Agency, AL.com reported Monday.

In a response filed with the court, Parsons denied wrongdoing and asked for the lawsuit's dismissal.

The lawsuit goes on to say that Varshney, who worked at Par-

sons' Huntsville office from July 2011 to October 2022, accepted a video call from his brother-in-law in an empty cubicle and spoke to him for about two minutes. The company then said he committed a security violation by using the FaceTime application at the classified worksite and fired him. He claims there was no policy prohibiting the call he accepted.

**Monorail kills boy who was painting a building**

**WA** SEATTLE — A 14-year-old boy who was spray painting a Seattle building was struck and killed by the Seattle Center Monorail on Sunday night, according to police.

Officers responded just before 9 p.m. to reports that a person had been hit by the monorail near the intersection of Fifth Avenue and Denny Way, the Seattle Police Department said in a post on its website.

Officers found the teen unresponsive, police said, and he died despite lifesaving measures by Seattle fire personnel.

The teen had been spray painting a building next to the monorail tracks before he was hit, according to video reviewed by police.

**Judge declines to block law barring sex teaching**

**IN** INDIANAPOLIS — A federal judge has declined to block the enforcement of a new state law barring the teaching of human sexuality to students from pre-K through the third grade.

U.S. District Judge J.P. Hanlon ruled late Friday that claims by Indianapolis Public Schools teacher Kayla Smiley that the

law infringes on her First Amendment free speech rights and is too vague to be enforced were insufficient to justify a preliminary injunction blocking the law. Hanlon wrote that teachers do not have unlimited free speech rights in the classroom; instead, as government employees, their speech is limited to subjects and messages approved by the Legislature.

"Ms. Smiley cites no authority establishing that an elementary school teacher has the right to speak in her capacity as a private citizen when expressing an educational message to her students," Hanlon wrote in his 15-page ruling. "Without a substantial effect on protected speech, Ms. Smiley is unlikely to succeed on her claim that (the law) — on its face — violates the First Amendment."

**NASA hears signal from Voyager 2 spacecraft**

**FL** CAPE CANAVERAL — After days of silence, NASA has heard from Voyager 2 in interstellar space billions of miles away.

Flight controllers accidentally sent a wrong command nearly two weeks ago that tilted the spacecraft's antenna away from Earth and severed contact.

NASA's Deep Space Network, giant radio antennas across the globe, picked up a "heartbeat signal," meaning the 46-year-old craft is alive and operating, project manager Suzanne Dodd said in an email Tuesday.

The news "buoyed our spirits," Dodd said. Flight controllers at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California will now try to turn Voyager 2's antenna back toward Earth.

— From wire reports

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# Valdez throws 16th no-hitter in Astros history

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Framber Valdez was determined to improve this month after a subpar July where he posted a 7.29 ERA.

On the first day of August, he certainly did that.

Valdez threw the 16th no-hitter in Houston Astros history in a 2-0 victory over the Cleveland Guardians on Tuesday night.

"The last couple of games I just wasn't as focused as I could have been and I'll be the first to admit that," Valdez said in Spanish through a translator. "But today I just came very focused, very positive and just ready to leave it all out on the field."

Hours after the Astros reacquired ace Justin Verlander from the New York Mets, Valdez allowed just one baserunner on a walk in the fifth inning, but still faced the minimum thanks to a double play in that frame.

"It's a wonderful day," manager Dusty Baker said. "(Valdez) started out with a bang. He had his breaking ball from the very beginning ... and you could

tell he was on and he stayed on."

Gabriel Arias grounded out to start the ninth before Myles Straw lined out to center field. Cam Gallagher then lined out to Jeremy Pena to end it and set off the celebration.

Valdez (9-7) raised his arms above his head and then clapped as a huge smile crossed his face. He's the first left-hander to throw a no-hitter for Houston.

"When I got to the seventh inning I thought to myself, 'OK, I can finish this game without any hits,'" Valdez said. "Got to the eighth inning and still felt good, felt like it was still the first inning so I said, 'I'm just going to continue attacking the hitters, trying to do my best out there.'"

The 29-year-old from the Dominican Republic had pitched five complete games, including two complete-game shutouts before Tuesday's gem.

Catcher Martín Maldonado caught the third no-hitter of his career. He said he could tell from Valdez's warmup that he would have a good night.

"I noticed from the bullpen,

he wasn't joking around," Maldonado said. "He was straight business from the moment he walked out there."

Maldonado had a simple answer as to what made Valdez so special Tuesday night.

"Just Framber being Framber," he said.

Indeed, Valdez relies heavily on getting groundouts, and this game was no different. Valdez entered the game first in the AL in ground ball percentage at 54.7, and 12 of his outs against the Guardians were on groundouts.

"It's easy to see the two-seam movement, but his curveball — man, just so good, and he threw a couple changeups," Cleveland manager Terry Francona said. "But his curveball was really good."

The no-hitter was the third in the majors this season. New York Yankees right-hander Domingo Germán pitched a perfect game at Oakland on June 28, and Matt Manning, Alex Lange and Jason Foley of the Detroit Tigers threw a com-

bined no-no against Toronto on July 8.

It's Houston's first no-hitter in the regular season since Cristian Javier, Hector Neris and Ryan Pressly combined to no-hit the Yankees on June 25, 2022, and the first by a single pitcher since Verlander against Toronto on Sept. 1, 2019.

The Astros made the move for Verlander as they chase the Texas Rangers for first place in the AL West. Texas beat the White Sox 2-0 on Tuesday to leave Houston a half-game back.

Baker thought it was special that Valdez threw the first individual no-hitter for the Astros since Verlander's on the day Verlander was traded back to Houston.

"It was sort of destined to be," Baker said. "And I'm sure Justin is smiling right now on his way here and he'll be the first one to congratulate Framber when he gets here. It's a great day."

Kyle Tucker provided the offense with a two-run single in the third inning.

## Verlander back in Houston; deal caps flurry of late trades

Associated Press

CHICAGO — In a matter of days, Justin Verlander and Max Scherzer went from teammates on the New York Mets to opposite sides of a Lone Star rivalry.

That's how it goes this time of year.

Verlander was shipped from New York to Houston ahead of Tuesday's trade deadline, returning to the Astros after he helped them win the World Series last year. The retooling Mets received minor league outfielders Drew Gilbert and Ryan Clifford in the deal.

"It's a big day when you have your Cy Young guy come back," Houston owner Jim Crane told The Associated Press.

Verlander's reunion with the Astros headlined a deadline day that seemed more suited for the sellers than the buyers. With a handful of talented players staying on their underwhelming teams, there were few surprises.

"This was a very strong sellers' market," Phillies President Dave Dombrowski said.

"There were very few clubs that were actually looking to sell, and a lot of clubs that were willing to buy."

Looking for another deep October run, Philadelphia acquired Michael Lorenzen from the Detroit Tigers. With the addition of the All-Star right-hander, the NL champion Phillies are planning to go with a six-man rotation.

A couple more NL East contenders also were active. The major league-leading Atlanta Braves strengthened their bullpen by adding reliever Brad Hand in a trade with the Colorado Rockies. The Miami Marlins upgraded their lineup by acquiring infielder Jake Burger from the Chicago White Sox and first baseman Josh Bell from Cleveland.

The AL East-leading Baltimore Orioles added Jack Flaherty to their rotation in a trade with St. Louis. The disappointing Cardinals also dealt shortstop Paul DeJong to Toronto, which acted quickly after Bo Bi-

chette was sidelined by right knee soreness.

Looking to salvage an underwhelming season, San Diego acquired 43-year-old left-hander Rich Hill and first baseman/designated hitter Ji Man Choi in a trade with the Pittsburgh Pirates. The Padres began the year with World Series aspirations, but they need a strong finish just to make the playoffs.

The New York Yankees are facing a similar situation. They upgraded the organization's pitching depth by adding right-handers Keynan Middleton from the active White Sox and Spencer Howard in a deal with Texas.

Tigers left-hander Eduardo Rodriguez, White Sox shortstop Tim Anderson and Mariners outfielder Teoscar Hernández were among a group of players who were thought to be on the market but remained in place after the deadline passed. The White Sox also held on to ace right-hander Dylan Cease.



# Santander slam leads Orioles to rout Blue Jays

Associated Press

TORONTO — Anthony Santander hit his second career grand slam, Gunnar Henderson homered for the second straight game and the AL-leading Baltimore Orioles remained unbeaten in Toronto this season by beating the Blue Jays 13-3 Tuesday night.

Santander went 3-for-4 with a walk and four RBIs. He cleared the bases with his 19th home run, a deep drive off Nate Pearson in the eighth. Henderson went 3-for-5 with two RBIs, and Ryan Mountcastle reached base four times and drove in two runs as the Orioles won for the fourth time in five games and improved their league-best record to 66-41.

Right-hander Kyle Bradish (7-6) allowed three runs and four hits in seven innings, snapping a two-start losing streak. Bradish walked one and struck out seven.

Blue Jays catcher Danny Jansen hit a two-run home run and Brandon Belt added a solo shot, but Toronto fell to 1-7 against the Orioles, including 0-5 north of the border.

**Braves 5, Angels 1:** Michael Harris II ended a homer drought with two blasts, including a go-ahead shot in the fifth, Spencer Strider (12-3) added to his majors-leading total with nine strikeouts and host Atlanta beat Los Angeles.

Strider allowed one run in 6½ innings in his first victory since July 8. He has nine or more stri-

keouts in 17 of 22 starts, giving him 208 for the season.

The Angels began the day three games behind the final AL wild card and 4½ games behind AL West leader Texas.

**Rays 5, Yankees 2:** Zach Eflin (12-6) pitched six shutout innings of three-hit ball to become the American League's first 12-game winner, Randy Arozarena hit a two-run homer off Carlos Rodón and Tampa Bay beat New York.

Yandy Díaz also connected for the Rays, who won their third straight game and have gone deep six times in the last two nights at Yankee Stadium.

Rodón (1-4) struggled in his fifth start for New York after missing three-plus months with forearm and back injuries. The left-hander gave up four runs and four hits in four innings.

**Dodgers 7, Athletics 3:** Lance Lynn (7-9) gave up three home runs in his debut with his new team, Mookie Betts hit his 28th homer and host Los Angeles earned its 60th victory of the season.

Traded last week by the Chicago White Sox, Lynn retired the first seven batters he faced. But he soon surrendered his 29th, 30th and 31st homers of the season.

**Rangers 2, White Sox 0:** Andrew Heaney (8-6) struck out 11 without a walk while throwing two-hit ball over six innings, Mitch Garver and Adolis Garcia

hit solo homers and AL West-leading Texas shut out visiting Chicago.

Josh Sborz and Aroldis Chapman each pitched an inning before Will Smith's perfect ninth for his 18th save in 20 chances to wrap up the Rangers' eighth shutout this season.

**Cubs 20, Reds 9:** Dansby Swanson homered twice and drove in five runs, and host Chicago pounded Cincinnati.

Mike Tauchman also went deep and finished with four RBIs as Chicago won for the ninth time in 11 games. The Cubs bashed seven homers while also setting season highs for runs and hits with 21.

**Giants 4, Diamondbacks 3:** Patrick Bailey picked off Geraldo Perdomo at first base for the final out in host San Francisco's victory over Arizona.

Perdomo singled off Ryan Walker leading off the inning. Sean Manaea, signed in the offseason to be part of San Francisco's rotation, came on and got Ketel Marte to foul out and Corbin Carroll to fly out.

**Phillies 3, Marlins 1:** Nick Castellanos slugged a tiebreaking two-run homer in the ninth inning to rally visiting Philadelphia past Miami.

Castellanos, who has been mired in an 8-for-68 skid in the second half of the season, drilled a slider from Marlins closer David Robertson (4-3) over the wall

in left-center to punctuate the three-run outburst in the inning. Earlier in the ninth, Bryce Harper tied the game with an RBI double.

**Brewers 6, Nationals 4:** Brice Turang and Joey Wiemer hit consecutive two-run singles as part of a four-run fourth inning, and visiting Milwaukee defeated Washington to snap a four-game skid.

**Red Sox 6, Mariners 4:** Alex Verdugo hit a two-run homer, Reese McGuire added his first of the season fresh off the injured list, and visiting Boston snapped a three-game losing streak.

**Twins 3, Cardinals 2:** Donovan Solano hit a tiebreaking, two-run single in the seventh inning and Pablo Lopez (6-6) tossed six effective innings as AL Central-leading Minnesota snapped a five-game skid with a win over host St. Louis.

**Royals 7, Mets 6 (10):** Josh Walker balked home the winning run in the 10th inning and host Kansas City rallied past New York for its season-best fourth straight victory.

**Pirates 4, Tigers 1:** Rookie Liover Peguero hit a two-run home run and Johan Oviedo (5-11) pitched seven strong innings to lead host Pittsburgh over slumping Detroit.

**Padres 8, Rockies 5:** Juan Soto homered twice and drove in four runs, helping visiting San Diego beat Colorado.

## Rams' Kupp injures hamstring at training camp

Associated Press

IRVINE, Calif. — Rams receiver Cooper Kupp left Los Angeles' practice early with a hamstring injury Tuesday night, and the team is uncertain how long he will be sidelined.

The former Super Bowl MVP walked off the field with the training staff about 30 minutes into the two-hour workout at UC Irvine. Matthew Stafford and other players didn't see exactly what had happened, but coach Sean McVay said he was told Kupp "came up a little bit in a red

zone route."

"Obviously we're much better when he's here, and we hope he's going to be OK," McVay said. "If he's not, we'll see what happens, but the practice had to go on."

Some media outlets reported Kupp would miss a few weeks.

Kupp is returning for his seventh NFL season this fall after missing the final eight games of last season with a high ankle sprain. He also missed the final eight games of his second season due to a torn knee ligament.

Kupp won the NFL's triple crown of receiving in 2021, leading the league in catches (145), yards receiving (1,947) and touchdowns (16). He had 75 catches for 812 yards and six touchdowns in only nine games last season before his ankle sprain.

Kupp is one of just a few key veterans left with the Rams, who are likely to field the NFL's least-experienced roster this season after parting ways with most of their veteran depth in the offseason. Stafford and Aaron Donald are also back with the Rams, who went 5-12 last year.

# Jamaica earns surprise berth in next round

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Jamaica advanced to the knockout round for the first time following a 0-0 draw Wednesday that ended Brazil's run in the group stage for the first time since 1995 at the Women's World Cup.

The scoreless game in Melbourne also ended Brazilian great Marta's World Cup career.

"For me, that is the end, but it's just the beginning for the others," said Marta.

She holds the all-time scoring record with 17 goals at the World Cup but couldn't add to her tally in her sixth trip to the global tournament.

After conceding 12 goals in its Women's World Cup debut in 1999, Jamaica shut out France, Panama and Brazil in consecutive games to finish second in Group F behind the French.

"It's the best feeling I've ever had in my life," said Jamaica coach Lorne Donaldson. "To be able to do this is unbelievable to just watch it, while I'm alive. I thank the girls for doing this for the country. The country should be proud."

In addition to being ranked well below both Brazil and France, Jamaica progressed despite the financial struggles it faced before the tournament.

These difficulties resulted in Jamaica receiving support from

fans through crowdfunding due to inadequate support from its federation. Nearly \$100,000 was raised for the team through two fundraisers.

After opening the tournament with a 4-0 victory over Panama, Brazil failed to get the victory it needed to extend Marta's World Cup campaign.

With Marta starting the match for the first time in the group stage, Brazil maintained possession for most of the first half but struggled to test Jamaica goalkeeper Rebecca Spencer.

The second half saw Brazil lift the tempo as the team chased the goal needed to advance. Brazil recorded six shots on tar-

get but struggled to threaten Jamaica's goal as Jamaica's organized defense stifled the team throughout the game.

Marta was replaced after 80 minutes with the game still in the balance.

A free kick from Andressa and a header from Debinha in stoppage time represented Brazil's closest chance of scoring the winning goal. It was close, but not close enough.

With the draw, the Reggae Girlz advance to the Round of 16 in their second Women's World Cup. The team made its debut in 2019 but lost all three group-stage matches, including a 3-0 loss to Brazil. This time, Jamaica finishes unbeaten in Group F.

## Sweden locks up first in Group G, faces US next

Associated Press

HAMILTON, New Zealand — Rebecka Blomqvist's second-half goal lifted Sweden to a 2-0 win over Argentina on Wednesday to advance the Blagult to a round-of-16 showdown with the United States in the Women's World Cup.

Argentina was eliminated from the tournament.

Neither side looked close to scoring for much of the match until Blomqvist broke the deadlock with a headed goal at the 66th-minute mark to help the blue and yellow finish 3-0 and win Group G.

Sweden, which rested nine starters to open the match, threatened at times in the first half. A combination of disjointed play and fouls prevented Sweden from taking early control of the game.

Playing at times in a pelting rain, Argentina did not create a real chance in open play, and suffered a blow when veteran Florencia Bonsegundo was stretchered off in tears after a late tackle by Blomqvist in the 41st minute.

Late in the match, Gabriela

Chavez committed a foul while defending a corner kick. Elin Rubensson converted the penalty kick in stoppage time to seal the victory for Sweden.

Sofia Jakobsson picked out the head of Blomqvist perfectly on a cross from just outside the 18-yard box for the decisive goal.

The clash between the United States, the two-time reigning World Cup champions, and third-ranked Sweden will be their seventh meeting and tie the record for the most-played matchup in Women's World Cup history.

Argentina's run ended in the group stage just as it had in its three previous appearances, in 2019, 2007 and 2003. La Albiceleste are still without a tournament win.

**South Africa 3, Italy 2:** At Wellington, New Zealand, Italy's players dropped to their knees, buried their faces and tearfully wondered how their tournament had suddenly ended following a shocking loss to South Africa.

The 54th-ranked team in the world stunned Italy, ranked

16th by FIFA, with a victory over the Italians in the Group G finale. South Africa won with a stoppage-time goal by Thembi Kgatlane.

South Africa was ecstatic as players screamed and danced and said thankful prayers in the hallway leading to their locker room.

The Italians left in tears and unable to explain the upset.

**France 6, Panama 3:** At Sydney, France has had to roll with the punches.

The No. 5-ranked team was held to a surprise draw against Jamaica in its opening game and had the shock of going a goal down to Panama in the first two minutes of the Group F finale.

France responded to Marta Cox's 30-meter free kick goal by scoring five times by the 52nd minute en route to a victory and the round of 16 from atop the group.

The French had to thank Kadidiatou Diani, who scored a hat trick to put them well ahead by the time Panama came back into it with two more goals.

"On a personal note it was wonderful to be able to score my first goals at a World Cup," she said. "I think I'm going to keep on the positives. We were able to score six goals."

"There are a couple of negative notes. We conceded three goals, but for me the most important thing is to hold our heads high and we've got a couple of days to work on our defensive set play."

Celebrations were muted after being pushed by another underdog.

"From the get-go the most important thing for us was to finish at the head of the group after three games," said France coach Herve Renard.

He spoke after the Jamaica game of the way in which the gap is closing in women's international soccer. And Wednesday was further evidence of that as Panama exposed France's defensive weaknesses and Jamaica held Brazil 0-0 to advance as runner-up in the group.

France could face two-time champion Germany in the round of 16.