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Event Calendar

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Date	Event	Location/Time	Other Information
9-13 Apr 2018	LEIU/IALEIA Training Event	Marriott Hotel, 700 West Convention Way Anaheim, CA 92801 (714) 750-8000	http://www.ialeia.org/2018_conference.php
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Events, Opportunities

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HEADLINE	08/31 State Dept. issues Europe travel alert
SOURCE	https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings/Europe.html
GIST	<p>The United States on Thursday issued a <u>travel alert</u> for Americans heading to Europe, just a day before a <u>similar alert issued in May</u> was set to expire.</p> <p>Citing recent attacks in France, the United Kingdom, Spain and other countries, the State Department said ISIS and its affiliates “have the ability to plan and execute terrorist attacks in Europe.” The State Department added that it “remains concerned about the potential for future terrorist attacks.”</p> <p>Earlier this month, ISIS claimed responsibility for an attack in Barcelona that killed 14 people. The U.S. is urging Americans to heed the advice of local officials and “be prepared for additional security screening and unexpected disruptions.”</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Tacoma mayor, city council to get pay cuts
SOURCE	http://www.thenewstribune.com/news/local/article170495902.html
GIST	<p>Tacoma’s mayor and City Council members are about to get a pay cut, but it’s a much more modest decrease than one proposed two years ago.</p> <p>Both the mayor and the members of the council will get about \$1,000 less in annual pay starting in 2018. The mayor’s annual salary will drop to \$100,000 and members of the council to \$45,000. The deputy mayor position, which rotates on an annual basis, will be paid \$50,000, about \$750 less than the current salary.</p> <p>That’s less of a decrease than previously recommended by a citizen commission that decides salary levels for Tacoma’s elected officials.</p> <p>In a 2015 report, that commission recommended dropping the mayor’s salary to \$78,000 and the council members’ to \$38,000 starting in 2018. It also voted to end annual 2.75 percent cost-of-living increases the council members and mayor were getting each year.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Another Native woodcarver, SPD incident
SOURCE	http://crosscut.com/2017/08/another-incident-involving-a-native-woodcarver-and-seattle-police/
GIST	<p>Virtually on the eve of the seventh anniversary of Native-American woodcarver John T. Williams’ death by Seattle police — an event that helped spur a federal civil rights investigation into the department’s use of force — a young woodcarver said he was roughly and wrongly arrested after a brawl broke out near Pike Place Market.</p>

The young woodcarver: Williams' nephew, Eagleson Williams.

Bystanders, surprised at the sudden arrest of a man who appeared to have little or nothing to do with the brawl, captured video of Eagleson Williams being grabbed by officers and held against a car.

"Seven years and we are still getting [screwed] by the police," said Eagleson Williams, who is 23. "I'm just a number and a paycheck for them."

Eagleson Williams spoke to Crosscut on Wednesday in Seattle Center before he, his brother and two friends paid respects to the slain woodcarver at a nearby totem pole erected in the uncle's memory.

Police arrested Williams on suspicion of obstructing officers on Monday.

The tragedy involving his uncle occurred on Aug. 30, 2010, when a Seattle police officer said he felt threatened by John T. Williams, 50, who was carrying a closed woodcarving knife. The officer told Williams, who was hard of hearing, to drop the knife before fatally shooting him, and the department's firearms review board ruled the shooting unjustified. The officer resigned before the department formally fired him. Later, the city paid \$1.5 million to the Williams family, who belong to the Ditidaht First Nation, a tribe with roots in Vancouver Island.

On Monday, Eagleson Williams, his brother Thunderheart Williams, 24, and friend Tristen Bonneville, 21, finished work for the day as woodcarvers and went to Victor Steinbrueck Park in Bonneville's car about mid-evening to check in with a family member. They left Bonneville's car running with the key in the ignition. The Williams brothers said they left their woodcarving knives in the car; Bonneville, who is learning the craft from Eagleson, had seven woodcarving knives but they were in his pockets, he said.

Then a minor street brawl erupted around Bonneville's car among some of their acquaintances, the trio said. A young woman hit her boyfriend and he pushed her back, according to the police report. Two more people, who the Williams brothers and Bonneville also knew, got involved in the fight and a short, confused melee occurred next to Bonneville's car, the three said.

The woman and her boyfriend each ended up punching or kicking the first man who intervened, the police report said. The fighting stopped with the participants and several onlookers standing around.

The police report said five people ultimately participated in the fight, including Eagleson Williams. The Williams brother and Bonneville did not take any real part in the fight, all three said.

After the fighting stopped, police, who had apparently been summoned by an onlooker, arrived.

Eagleson Williams said he reached into Bonneville's car to turn off the ignition. Officers grabbed him and Thunderheart Williams, and roughly forced them to put their hands on the hood of Bonneville's car, the three said. "I wanted to shut the car off and they assumed I was going for a knife," Eagleson Williams said.

He said he had no intention of reaching for one of the woodcarving knives, which were located in the car's center console.

The Seattle police report tells a different story.

The officer's report said Williams was standing on the driver's side of the car. "He looked up as I approached and then quickly leaned into the front driver's window," the officer wrote. "He was leaning in up to his waist. [The officers'] concern was that he was reaching for a weapon. When Williams came back out of the vehicle he had a black handled knife in his right hand. Williams refused to obey ... orders to stop and he attempted to walk away around the front of the vehicle. Officers physically stopped him but he refused to cooperate. It was determined that he no longer had the knife in his hand."

The report went on: “Williams continued to attempt to walk away stating that he did not have to comply with us. He was stopped and escorted to the hood of the vehicle. Williams began to struggle to get away from officers. Officers attempted to place Williams into handcuffs. Williams resisted by pulling his arms away from officers. This necessitated officers control[ing] him by applying control holds on his arms and upper body. Officers were able to get Williams into handcuffs. He was then searched for weapons. I recovered two folding knives [sic] from his pockets. One of them was the black handled knife that he had previously had in his hand.”

Eagleson Williams said he struggled as he was pushed to the hood. A video shot by Devon Connor-Greene, a recently graduated law student at the University of San Francisco from the Olympia area, confirms this, showing three officers — later joined by the fourth — engaged in pinning down Eagleson Williams.

Eagleson and Thunderheart Williams believe they were singled out because they were the only Natives at the scene. Bonneville, who is white, said he was the only one of the three with any knives and officers did not search him.

Law grad Connor-Greene, who was in Seattle visiting family and friends, expressed dismay at the police handling of the incident. “[The police] arrived moments after the fight had ended,” he wrote in an email to Crosscut. “Without asking questions, they charged in and arbitrarily grabbed a young man.”

Connor-Green said Eagleson Williams appeared to be only an onlooker. On the video, Eagleson Williams can be heard yelling, “I didn’t do anything!” Connor-Green said other onlookers repeated this sentiment. Bonneville added that Eagleson Williams kept saying, “Help me. They’re hurting me.”

“I was telling them my rights as a human being,” Eagleson Williams said, who added that one officer twisted his left arm behind his back. At the time, Eagleson Williams said, he thought there were more than the four officers at the scene — in the video, others can be seen near the car — and flashbacks of his uncle’s shooting death entered his mind while he was on the car’s hood.

“It reminded me of what they did to my uncle,” he said.

The arrest of Eagleson Williams and two of the fighters proceeded without incident. One woman was arrested on suspicion of domestic assault. She and her boyfriend were both charged in connection with injuries to the first man who intervened. Thunderheart Williams was not arrested or charged.

Alluding to one of the key issues in the police reform efforts that have followed John T. Williams’ death, Connor-Green wrote: “The police should be a de-escalating force in our communities, yet here, as they do so often, they arrived on scene, only to further exacerbate the situation at hand. The officers claimed this was necessary for their safety, yet, if you are only focused on one person, an innocent person, and the actual perpetrators are milling around behind you unnoticed, how safe are you?”

At the scene, Eagleson Williams complained to police that his left arm and wrist hurt badly, and he said officers laughed at him during a medical exam at the jail.

Eagleson Williams was released on \$1,700 bail; his first court appearance is scheduled for Oct. 9 in Seattle Municipal Court. He said officers also found a 6-year-old bench warrant on him for a drunk driving charge, which he incurred shortly after his uncle’s death.

Since then, the younger Williams has been battling depression, his recent arrest only making things worse, he said.

“I’d rather get shot by cops and die than to live this life,” Eagleson Williams said, tears pooling in his eyes. “It’s not worth it.”

HEADLINE	08/31 Kalama port drops methanol permit appeal
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/737349/kalama-port-drops-methanol-shoreline-permit-appeal/
GIST	<p>LONGVIEW, Wash. (AP) — The Port of Kalama is dropping its appeal of the state’s shoreline permit for the Kalama methanol plant, removing a major challenge to the permit.</p> <p>The Columbian reported Thursday the port had opposed the permit because officials worried it would require the port to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at its marine terminal, which would serve the methanol plant.</p> <p>The port dropped the appeal when it learned recently that the reduction requirements apply only to the plant, not its docks.</p> <p>The permit still faces a challenge by Columbia Riverkeeper, Sierra Club and the Center for Biological Diversity. Their appeal argues the shoreline permits “fail to address threats to climate, safety and public health.”</p> <p>The same groups, represented by attorneys from Earthjustice, have also appealed the adequacy of the environmental impact statement of the project last October.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Space Needle restaurant closed 9mo.
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/737310/space-needle-restaurant-closed-for-9-months/
GIST	<p>After Thursday, the restaurant on the top of Seattle’s Space Needle is closed for the next nine months while it undergoes a \$100 million renovation.</p> <p>The plan is to replace the floor with thick glass, allowing diners to see the 500 foot drop below. The restaurant will be the first rotating restaurant with a glass floor. The observation deck fence will also be replaced with glass. The Space Needle will also get another set of elevators.</p> <p>It’s the largest investment into the landmark since its construction before the World’s Fair in 1962.</p> <p>Some employees of the restaurant tell KIRO Radio they haven’t received a guarantee they will be hired back once the remodel is over in May 2018.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Western State workers claim retaliation
SOURCE	http://komonews.com/news/local/western-state-workers-claim-theyre-victims-of-retaliation-despite-federal-investigation
GIST	<p>LAKEWOOD, Wash. - Two workers at Western State Hospital claim they are victims of retaliation, despite a <u>warning from the feds</u> for the hospital to stop that pattern of behavior.</p> <p>The hospital has been under a federal microscope ever since two dangerous patients escaped from the Lakewood facility more than a year ago. The feds investigated and ordered the psychiatric hospital to fix safety problems, including a pattern of retaliation against employees who speak out.</p> <p>"I was scared to death, I thought they were going to come and arrest me," said hospital psychiatrist Dr. Joseph Wainer. But, two Western State employees - including Wainer - insist despite the federal scrutiny, the retaliation at the facility has not stopped.</p>

"I think there is a long tradition to make people afraid, placing them under investigation makes them afraid, it made me afraid," said Wainer.

In April, the hospital put Dr. Wainer under investigation, alleging he inappropriately discharged a patient. He was told the State Patrol is leading the investigation against him. Western State relies on troopers to handle some of its investigations.

"I can't talk about any case under investigation, but what I can tell you is every DSHS employee is afforded due process," said Adolfo Capestan who is the Communication Director for DSHS, which oversees the hospital.

Dr. Wainer denies any wrongdoing and thinks the investigation is really retaliation for him speaking out against the hospital in court, and in a newspaper editorial where he called hospital leadership, "authoritarian" and claimed employees were ignored, shamed and intimidated into silence.

Just three days after the editorial, Wainer - a ten-year employee and former chief of medical staff - said he was abruptly informed he was under investigation.

"Retaliation has no place in our business," said Capestany. "We know it's been an issue but it's something we're working on."

Capestany said he can't comment on the ongoing investigation or any claims made in response. But, he insists ridding the hospital of retaliation is a priority.

Retaliation is just one of the issues outlined in a list of health and safety violations that the hospital has been ordered to fix.

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HEADLINE	08/31 Record heat hitting Seattle
SOURCE	http://www.king5.com/news/local/record-heat-hitting-seattle-just-in-time-for-labor-day-weekend/469899655
GIST	<p>Bust out your flip flops, bathing suits, sunscreen and water bottles because we're about to see temperatures soar this weekend.</p> <p>After a morning of light rainfall a drizzle earlier this week, we're right back to our sunny skies and very warm temperatures. Highs this weekend are expected to climb into the mid to upper 80s with lower 90s by early next week.</p> <p>We'll start things off with sunshine on Friday and get things going slowly with a Seattle high around 80. That means many spots in the Northwest Interior will stay in the 70s, which I'm sure you'll enjoy. By Saturday we top out at 88 and isolated lower 90s will begin to sprinkle in.</p> <p>Let me break down the next few days and compare them to the current record setting highs: Friday: High 80° Record: 91°F (1987) Saturday: High 88° Record: 98°F (1988) Sunday: High 88° Record: 92°F (1988) Monday: High 89° Record: 87°F (1963) Tuesday: High 90° Record: 88°F (1973)</p> <p>After Tuesday, we'll begin to see temperatures level out a bit with a bit cooler temperatures moving back in by next weekend.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 WSP testing drones for crash scenes
SOURCE	http://q13fox.com/2017/08/31/state-troopers-testing-drones-to-speed-up-crash-scene-investigations/
GIST	<p>SHELTON, Wash. – The Washington state patrol is taking to the skies in an attempt to cut down on the time it takes troopers to investigate traffic accidents.</p> <p>A handful of detectives are now learning to fly drones that the agency believes could save all of us time and money when investigators have to close down freeways during crashes.</p> <p>On Thursday, the WSP invited Q13 News to see a demonstration of the agency’s training at its academy in Mason County.</p> <p>“This is the latest and greatest that’s out there right now,” said Detective Eric Gunderson.</p> <p>Detectives Kevin Nelson and Eric Gunderson practiced their unmanned aerial vehicle piloting skills at a mock crash scene. The two are some of the first of what could be several licensed and trained drone pilots at the state patrol.</p> <p>The agency’s goal is to improve safety for troopers on the ground and cut down the time roads are closed for crash scene investigations.</p> <p>“We’re trying to get these roadways open as quick as possible,” said WSP public information officer Kyle Moore. “We understand what it’s like to be in a backup, nobody wants to be in that.”</p> <p>The drones, manufactured by Lockheed Martin, are fitted with Sony cameras and beefier components than what hobby drone pilots typically use.</p> <p>“The motors on this machine rated at 10,000 hours where your typical hobby one is somewhere in the 100 to 200 hour range,” said Gunderson.</p> <p>The state patrol has deployed three drones for detectives working from Marysville to Olympia for the pilot program.</p> <p>“We’re training different detectives in those regions to use these UAV’s, take these pictures, roll them out during accident scenes and try to clear the collisions quicker,” said Moore.</p> <p>Detectives say the drones are already making their job easier.</p> <p>“We’ve already seen drastic improvements in road closure times,” Gunderson said.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Outdoor burn ban northwest Wash.
SOURCE	http://q13fox.com/2017/08/31/state-announces-outdoor-burn-ban-in-northwest-washington-feds-set-restrictions-at-national-parks/
GIST	<p>OLYMPIA, Wash. — The state announced an outdoor burn ban in northwest Washington, effective at 12:01 a.m. Friday.</p> <p>“The ban applies to all outdoor burning including recreation fires on state forests, state parks and forestlands under DNR fire protection within Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, Island and San Juan counties,” the Washington State Department of Natural Resources said in a news release.</p> <p>“This ban also includes all outdoor fires on improved lands under county jurisdiction. Burn restrictions on federal lands such as national forests, national parks, national wildlife refuges or other areas administered by federal agencies are set by local ranger stations. Federal burn restrictions are posted at https://www.fs.usda.gov/mbs .</p>

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HEADLINE	09/01 Flooding displaces 100,000 central Nigeria
SOURCE	http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/A/AF_NIGERIA_FLOODING?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-09-01-06-05-47
GIST	<p>WARRI, Nigeria (AP) -- Nigeria's president says more than 100,000 people have been displaced by flooding in the central part of the country. It is not immediately known whether anyone has died in the flooding in Benue state.</p> <p>President Muhammadu Buhari says emergency response teams are being sent to the area, where nearly 2,800 households have been displaced.</p> <p>Benue state is prone to flooding because of a prominent river that runs through the area. In 2012, more than 50,000 households were submerged and dozens died in flooding.</p> <p>More than 30 people have lost their lives across Nigeria since the start of the rainy season.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Lyft halts pickups in Everett
SOURCE	http://www.seattlepi.com/local/transportation/article/Lyft-halting-pickups-in-Everett-over-proposed-12164592.php
GIST	<p>Lyft halted ride pickups in Everett Thursday in response to new rules in the city that the company said require a local business license and another vehicle inspection to operate in the city.</p> <p>Under the rules -- which were set to be enforced starting Thursday -- drivers who didn't meet the requirements could face up to \$1,000 in fines and up to a year in jail.</p> <p>Drivers got word late Wednesday about the change and Lyft said it hoped the "pause" wouldn't last long.</p> <p>"Out of an abundance of caution and to protect drivers from fines and potential jail time, we have paused pick ups in Everett until we can conclude negotiations with city council," said Lyft spokesperson Scott Corriell in an emailed statement. "We apologize for the inconvenience and are very hopeful that we'll be able to reach common ground soon."</p> <p>Both Lyft and Uber have been vocal about parts of the Everett regulations that they say stand out from other cities. Vehicle inspections, for example, are already required for vehicles operating in Seattle and throughout King County. Uber and Lyft argue that Everett's language would require another duplicate inspection.</p> <p>The City of Everett, however, said that's not quite the case.</p> <p>Independent contractors operating within the city are required to hold a city business license -- but that requirement that predates any rules around ride share companies, said Meghan Pembroke, communications director for Everett.</p> <p>As for the vehicle inspections, Pembroke said the city issued a clerk's rule after the passing of the ordinance in June that said a King County vehicle inspection was "sufficient proof of the vehicle's compliance with the City's inspection requirements."</p> <p>"The City's ordinance does not require a separate vehicle inspection outright, but Lyft felt that the City's vehicle checklist was more expansive than many other jurisdictions and might cause the vehicle to need an</p>

	<p>Everett-specific inspection," Pembroke said by email Thursday.</p> <p>Uber doesn't plan to halt any service in Everett -- for now -- but continued to suggest it may have to stop serving Everett if the new rules are not altered.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Seattle new 24-hr homeless shelter opens
SOURCE	http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/new-homeless-shelter-on-first-hill-includes-space-for-100-beds/
GIST	<p>One hundred beds. That's how much more space local officials will have to offer people living on the streets, when a second 24-hour homeless shelter at Seattle First Presbyterian Church opens on Thursday.</p> <p>Located in the church's refurbished basement, the new facility will cater to the long-term homeless. Like the <u>recently opened Navigation Center</u>, the city's first 24-hour "low-barrier" shelter, it's designed to be more accessible to people who might otherwise be unable or unwilling to pursue space in local homeless shelters.</p> <p>New arrivals will have access to shower and kitchen facilities. Men and women will sleep on opposite sides of the shelter's cavernous main room. Clients will be able to meet with case workers and each other in on-site conference rooms.</p> <p>Unlike more restrictive shelters, clients will be able to store their belongings, bring along their partners and come and go when they like. Operator Compass Housing Alliance (CHA) will offer clients mental-health, substance-abuse and other supportive services.</p> <p>Speaking at a Wednesday reception at the facility, Mayor Ed Murray called the opening another step forward. Pathways Home, his plan to address homelessness, calls for a pivot from traditional overnight shelters to those that provide comprehensive services and longer-term shelter.</p> <p>"The piecemeal approach is not working," he said. "It is through these innovative challenges that we will be able to do something about homelessness."</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Police commission questions SPD payout
SOURCE	http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/crime/police-commission-questions-payout-to-fired-officer-in-golf-club-arrest/
GIST	<p>Members of the Seattle Community Police Commission have questions over the recent <u>settlement agreement to pay a former police officer over \$100,000 in back pay</u> after she was fired in 2015 over her arrest of an elderly African-American man.</p> <p>The commission is seeking a meeting with Police Chief Kathleen O'Toole and City Attorney Pete Holmes and have requested documents related to the settlement, which members only learned of from news reports Wednesday, says a letter signed by Executive Director Fé Lopez.</p> <p>Former Officer Cynthia Whitlatch, an 18-year police veteran, received the settlement after she appealed her <u>firing for biased and overly aggressive policing</u> over the July 2014 arrest of William Wingate, now 72, on Capitol Hill.</p> <p>Wingate, who was held in jail for 30 hours and charged with a misdemeanor crime before his case was dismissed, filed a federal lawsuit and was <u>awarded \$325,000 in November after a jury found that Whitlatch engaged in racial discrimination</u>.</p>

His settlement plus legal fees cost taxpayers nearly \$1.3 million. The settlement agreement was signed last week by O'Toole.

Whitlatch, who is white, denied race played a role in her decision to detain Wingate after he, according to her testimony at trial, swung a golf club toward her patrol car as she drove by him at 12th Avenue and East Pike Street.

Wingate, who was 69 at the time of incident, maintained he never swung the club.

"As you're no doubt aware, there is significant community interest in this case, particularly as the initial dismissal of Officer Whitlatch was widely reported, as was Chief O'Toole's justification for that outcome," Lopez wrote. "If there are legitimate reasons consistent with police accountability principles for the back pay agreement and for resignation in lieu of termination, it is important that those reasons be made clear to the public."

Though Whitlatch was the subject of the settlement agreement, it came about as a result of a grievance filed by the Seattle Police Officers' Guild (SPOG) over her termination because of the untimeliness of her discipline.

SPOG's former president, Ron Smith, told The Seattle Times in 2015 he believed the department "blatantly violated" a requirement to complete the investigation within a required 180-day limit. Police should have opened it in September 2014, when two commanders learned of the matter at a meeting with community members, not in January 2015, Smith said at the time.

Under the settlement agreement, Whitlatch will receive a lump sum of \$105,570.90 for back pay from the time of her firing in September 2015 through Sept. 15 of this year. Additionally, SPD will make a lump-sum contribution to her retirement fund for the disputed time, and change her status from "terminated" to "retired in lieu of termination."

In exchange, Whitlatch agreed not to seek another job with the city or as a commissioned law-enforcement officer, the agreement says.

"There have been longstanding issues with initial discipline being adjusted after appeal in a way that undermined the transparency and legitimacy of the initial discipline process," Lopez's letter says.

Commission members want to know whether any supervisors or commanders were also disciplined over the incident or the reasons discipline wasn't imposed, the letter says.

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HEADLINE	08/31 NKorea threatens South 'field of ruin'
SOURCE	https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2017/08/31/North-Korea-threatens-to-turn-South-into-field-of-ruin/6421504201680/?utm_source=fp&utm_campaign=lh&utm_medium=9
GIST	<p>Aug. 31 (UPI) -- A North Korean committee advocating peace on the peninsula threatened to turn South Korea into a "field of ruin," following the launch of a midrange ballistic missile that flew over Japan on Tuesday.</p> <p>The warning comes after a squadron of South Korean F-15K <u>fighter jets staged</u> a live-bombing drill against North Korea's leadership on Tuesday.</p> <p>Seoul's military also test-fired the 300-mile range ballistic missile Hyunmoo-2B, capable of hitting targets on ground and in water.</p> <p>"The [North Korea] drill this time was a righteous exercise of self-defense and was part of a demonstration against the Ulchi Freedom Guardian joint military exercises," the North Korean committee said, according</p>

	<p>to Yonhap.</p> <p>"The puppets may scream about serious provocations, but this is the height of impudence, and extreme paranoia," the committee said in a segment that aired on state-controlled KCTV on Thursday. "One must not forget for a moment the Mount Paektu revolutionary forces maintain final preparedness and could turn South Korea's territory into a field of ruin if they play with fire."</p> <p>The committee then advised South Korea to "reflect on the significance of [North Korea] ballistic missile training."</p>
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HEADLINE	09/01 Kenya court overturns president election
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/world/2017/09/01/kenya-court-overturns-presidents-election-win.html
GIST	<p>Kenya's Supreme Court has overturned the re-election of President Uhuru Kenyatta, citing irregularities in last month's election. The court has called for a new election within 60 days.</p> <p>Opposition candidate Raila Odinga had claimed that the electronic voting results were hacked into and manipulated in favor of Kenyatta, who won a second term with 54 percent of the vote.</p> <p>Kenyans had been braced for another round of protests if the court upholds Kenyatta's victory.</p> <p>Odinga had unsuccessfully challenged the results of the 2013 vote.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/01 Houston evacuees start to return home
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/01/us/houston-evacuees-hurricane-home.html
GIST	<p>All around Houston, people have begun returning home. Some came in trucks, others in boats. Not everyone stayed; some searched for prized possessions or medications before heading back to shelters. Most simply could not bear to wait any longer to find out: How bad is it?</p> <p>It was uncertain how many of this region's residents have tried to return home since the storm, but Houston officials said the numbers in shelters were dropping. The George R. Brown Convention Center, Houston's main shelter, was housing fewer than 8,000 evacuees by late Thursday, down from about 10,000.</p> <p>"I do want people to exercise caution if they are leaving the shelters and returning home," Mayor Sylvester Turner said late Thursday, "or if they sought lodging someplace else and are returning home. They just need to be extra careful when they are returning."</p> <p>The process of going home had its own complications, given all that this city has been through. Local and state authorities issued an array of cautions: Do not eating anything that had come into contact with floodwaters; check for wildlife, including snakes; and visit homes in daylight.</p> <p>Some went home and moved back in. Others made calls to contractors and landlords, planning repairs. Still others carried out wedding photographs or clothes, then headed back to shelters or the homes of relatives for what may be months. In many cases, the homes are not livable.</p> <p>Tequoya Stewart-Miller, 30, saw her home for the first time since the flood on Thursday, rolling up to the peach-colored two-story house that she shares with her grandmother and other relatives in the Cypress Creek neighborhood, northwest of downtown.</p> <p>The water had inundated the first story. Her strongest memory of the visit, she said, was the smell of the</p>

	place: "mildew and death."
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HEADLINE	08/31 Harvey 'Waffle House Index' strength
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/waffle-house-index-hurricane-harvey-strength/
GIST	<p>Craig Fugate, the former director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, invented the "Waffle House Index" as a way to <u>assess</u> a storm's impact at a glance.</p> <p>The tongue-in-cheek coinage derives from the breakfast chain of the same name that is famous for being open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Under Fugate's index, a Waffle House restaurant switching to a limited menu is a bad sign; if the restaurant closes, it means conditions are dire. The index is also intended to give a general sense of how fast a community will recover from a natural disaster.</p> <p>On Thursday, the chain tweeted that six locations in Houston were closed due to tropical storm <u>Harvey</u>, illustrating the storm's devastating <u>impact on the city and its surrounding areas</u>.</p> <p>But 34 Waffle houses in the area remained open, serving up eggs, coffee and waffles, and giving locals a place to recharge.</p> <p>In an op-ed following 2012 Hurricane Irene, Waffle House CEO Walt Ehmer <u>wrote</u> that the company is able to keep restaurants open or to reopen their doors quickly in a disaster because it prepares managers to handle disruptions.</p> <p>"After each emergency, we look at our planning to decide what worked well and what needs to be tweaked. But the biggest part of our planning is to show up and decide what is needed," he wrote.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Supplies low, South Sudan rebels fight on
SOURCE	https://widerimage.reuters.com/story/short-on-supplies-south-sudan-rebels-fight-on
GIST	<p>Before the South Sudanese rebels attacked the town of Kaya, they handed out supplies - a ragged strip of red cloth to identify themselves to each other as friendly forces, a packet of biscuits, and two precious magazines of ammunition per fighter.</p> <p>But government forces counter-attacked, killing several rebels and an American journalist. The rebels ran out of ammunition after 40 minutes and had to retreat back to their base in the bush.</p> <p>"We lack funds and support. The guns we have, the ammunition we have, we take from the enemy," General Matata Frank Elikana, the rebel governor for Yei River State, told Reuters during the long march through rain-soaked elephant grass to the front line.</p> <p>Oil-rich South Sudan became the world's youngest nation when it won independence from neighbouring Sudan in 2011 following decades of conflict. But civil war quickly followed in 2013 after President Salva Kiir, an ethnic Dinka, fired his deputy Riek Machar, a Nuer.</p> <p>Since then the conflict has been punctuated by gruesome massacres of civilians and extreme sexual violence. Ethnic militias have divided the country into a patchwork of fiefdoms.</p> <p>"With Salva Kiir in power there will be no peace. He has to leave," said rebel Colonel James Khor Chuol Lengdit.</p> <p>The violence has paralysed oil production, fuelled hyperinflation and plunged parts of the country into famine briefly earlier this year. Nearly a third of South Sudan's 12 million citizens have fled their homes,</p>

	<p>creating Africa's biggest refugee crisis since the Rwandan genocide.</p> <p>Before the rebels attacked Kaya, a town near the Ugandan border and one of four that were simultaneously attacked on Aug. 26, the fighters prayed together and told jokes.</p> <p>Then they tied their red strips of cloth around their heads and ran forwards, firing, to positions near cement walls or corrugated iron market stalls.</p> <p>The town was eerily empty; there were no civilians to be seen. Shops, a market and the school echoed with the sound of gunfire and explosions.</p> <p>"In government-controlled areas there are no civilians. They don't feel safe as soldiers abuse them," said Colonel Lam Paul Gabriel, the deputy military spokesman for the rebels, just before the attack. "They kill civilians. They rape women. They do a lot of atrocities in the area."</p> <p>"Government ... cannot do anything harmful to civilians," presidential spokesman Ateny Wek Ateny told Reuters last week, denying that government forces had killed or abused civilians.</p> <p>Many international rights bodies, such as Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and the United Nations, have documented possible war crimes by both government and rebel forces.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Vietnam protests China military drill
SOURCE	http://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-vietnam-china/vietnam-protests-over-chinese-military-drill-in-south-china-sea-idUSKCN1BB2CG?il=0
GIST	<p>BEIJING/HANOI (Reuters) - China urged Vietnam on Friday to take a calm and rational view of its military drills in the South China Sea, after Vietnam expressed opposition, as tension between the neighbors worsens over the disputed strategic waterway.</p> <p>China has appeared uneasy at Vietnam's efforts to rally Southeast Asian countries over the busy waterway as well as at its neighbor's growing defense ties with the United States, Japan and India.</p> <p>In July, under pressure from Beijing, Vietnam suspended oil drilling in offshore waters that are also claimed by China.</p> <p>Vietnam was deeply concerned about the exercises in the Gulf of Tonkin area, at the north end of the South China Sea, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Le Thi Thu Hang said in a statement, but did not make clear what drills were being referred to.</p> <p>"Vietnam proposes China to cease and refrain from repeating acts that complicate the situation in the East Sea," Hang said, employing Vietnam's name for the South China Sea.</p> <p>All foreign activities in Vietnamese waters must comply with Vietnamese and international laws, she added.</p> <p>Vietnam's Foreign Ministry conveyed its position to a Chinese embassy representative on Thursday, the statement added, without saying when China's announcement was made or when any drill might take place.</p> <p>In Beijing, Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said the drills were routine annual exercises and were being carried out in the northwestern part of the South China Sea.</p> <p>"The relevant sea is under China's jurisdiction," she told a daily news briefing on Friday, adding that China had the right to carry out such drills in the waters there.</p>

	“We hope the relevant side can calmly and rationally view it,” she added.
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HEADLINE	09/01 Putin: NKorea situation verges on conflict
SOURCE	http://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-missiles-putin/putin-warns-north-korea-situation-on-verge-of-large-scale-conflict-idUSKCN1BC470
GIST	<p>MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russian President Vladimir Putin warned on Friday that the tense standoff between North Korea and the United States was on the verge of large-scale conflict and said it was a mistake to try to pressure Pyongyang over its nuclear missile program.</p> <p>Putin, who is due to attend a summit of the BRICS nations in China next week, wrote in an article published on the Kremlin’s web site ahead of his trip that he favored negotiations with North Korea instead.</p> <p>“It is essential to resolve the region’s problems through direct dialogue involving all sides without advancing any preconditions (for such talks),” Putin wrote.</p> <p>“Provocations, pressure, and bellicose and offensive rhetoric is the road to nowhere.”</p> <p>The situation on the Korean Peninsula had deteriorated so much that it was now “balanced on the verge of a large-scale conflict,” said the Russian leader.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Houston officials look to recovery
SOURCE	http://time.com/4924485/houston-floods-rescuers-dead-alive/?xid=homepage
GIST	<p>(HOUSTON) — As floodwaters receded and rescuers searched waterlogged neighborhoods for more potential victims, Houston officials began turning their attention to finding temporary housing for those in shelters and getting enough gasoline for people to fill up cars — but also to the city's long-term recovery, which will take years and billions of dollars.</p> <p>Authorities raised the death toll from the storm to 39 late Thursday. And the latest statewide damage surveys revealed the staggering extent of the destruction.</p> <p>The Texas Department of Public Safety said more than 37,000 homes were heavily damaged and nearly 7,000 were destroyed, figures that did not include the tens of thousands of homes with minor damage.</p> <p>About 325,000 people have already sought federal emergency aid in the wake of Harvey. More than \$57 million in individual assistance has already been paid out, FEMA officials said.</p> <p><u>Harris</u> County FEMA director Tom Fargione said the agency was looking for ways to house people who lost their homes to Harvey, with 32,000 people reported in shelters across Texas. Some evacuees had begun returning to their homes — the George R. Brown Convention Center where 10,000 people took shelter housed 8,000 evacuees late Thursday.</p> <p>The priority is to get those who weren't able to return to their homes into some form of temporary housing, Fargione said.</p> <p>"Right now nothing is off the table. This is a tremendous disaster in terms of size and scope."</p> <p>The block-by-block search of tens of thousands of Houston homes that rescuers began Thursday is expected to be completed by Friday. Fire Chief Sam Pena said his department had responded to nearly</p>

16,000 calls since the storm hit Saturday, over 7,600 of them for water rescues.

More than 200 firefighters, police officers and members of an urban search-and-rescue team fanned out across the Meyerland neighborhood for survivors or bodies. They yelled "Fire department!" as they pounded with closed fists on doors, peered through windows and checked with neighbors.

"We don't think we're going to find any humans, but we're prepared if we do," said District Chief James Pennington of the Houston Fire Department.

Unlike during Hurricane Katrina's aftermath in New Orleans, crews used GPS devices to log the homes they checked rather than painting neon X's on the outside. That avoided alerting potential thieves to vacant homes.

Although it has been downgraded to a tropical depression, Harvey was still expected to dump heavy rain on parts of Louisiana, Tennessee and Kentucky through Friday. Forecast totals ranged from 4 to 8 inches (10 to 20 centimeters), with some places possibly getting up to a foot.

As the water receded in the nation's fourth-largest city — officials expected that the floodwaters would be almost entirely gone by late Friday or early Saturday — the greatest threat of damage shifted to a region near the Texas-Louisiana state line.

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HEADLINE	08/31 Myanmar cracks down on Rohingya
SOURCE	http://time.com/4924560/myanmar-rohingya-suu-kyi-crackdown/?xid=homepage
GIST	<p>(COX'S BAZAR, Bangladesh) - Nearly 400 people have died <u>in fighting that has rocked Myanmar's northwest</u> for a week, new official data show, making it probably the deadliest bout of violence to engulf the country's Rohingya Muslim minority in decades.</p> <p>Around 38,000 Rohingya have crossed into Bangladesh from Myanmar, United Nations sources said, a week after Rohingya insurgents attacked police posts and an army base in Rakhine state, prompting clashes and a military counteroffensive.</p> <p>"As of August 31, 38,000 people are estimated to have crossed the border into Bangladesh," the officials said on Friday, in their latest estimate.</p> <p>The army says it is conducting clearance operations against "extremist terrorists" and security forces have been told to protect civilians. But Rohingya fleeing to Bangladesh say a campaign of arson and killings aims to force them out.</p> <p>The treatment of Myanmar's roughly 1.1 million Rohingya is the biggest challenge facing national leader Aung San Suu Kyi, accused by some Western critics of not speaking out for a minority that has long complained of persecution.</p> <p>The clashes and ensuing army crackdown have killed about 370 Rohingya insurgents, but also 13 security forces, two government officials and 14 civilians, the Myanmar military said on Thursday.</p> <p>By comparison, communal violence in 2012 in Sittwe, the capital of Rakhine, led to the killing of nearly 200 people and the displacement of about 140,000, most of them Rohingya.</p> <p>The fighting is a dramatic escalation of a conflict that has simmered since October, when similar but much smaller Rohingya attacks on security posts prompted a brutal military response dogged by allegations of rights abuses.</p> <p>Myanmar evacuated more than 11,700 "ethnic residents" from the area affected by fighting, the army said,</p>

referring to the non-Muslim population of northern Rakhine.

More than 150 Rohingya insurgents staged fresh attacks on security forces on Thursday near villages occupied by Hindus, the state-run Global New Light of Myanmar said, adding that about 700 members of such families had been evacuated.

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HEADLINE	08/31 Future hurricanes worse than Harvey?
SOURCE	https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-08-31/future-hurricanes-will-be-worse-than-harvey
GIST	<p>How powerful would Hurricane Harvey have been in 1880? How much stronger might it be in 2100?</p> <p>A single Hurricane Harvey has been more than anyone can bear. But to better prepare cities for future storms, researchers are preparing to re-watch Harvey thousands of times. They've already been studying earlier storms, and their conclusions don't bode well for the decades to come.</p> <p>In the months and years after Superstorm Sandy's 2012 assault on New Jersey and New York, Gary Lackmann, an atmospheric science professor at North Carolina State University, was asked how the event might be understood in light of human-driven global warming. He knew that the question everyone wants answered—did climate change cause the storm—wasn't the right one. Hurricanes were around long before the industrial revolution.</p> <p>Two questions did, however, resonate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How does climate change affect the frequency or intensity of huge storms?• What would the weather pattern that sustained Sandy have spawned in a cooler past or a hotter future? <p>The first question is the more difficult one, though research has shown that the future will likely see more <u>intense storms</u>, even if there may be fewer overall. Asking the second question, however, might lead to useful conclusions about weather extremes, he felt.</p> <p>Lackmann spent the past several years gleaning insight from atmospheric research models of violent storms, such as Hurricane Floyd in 1999 and the flooding in the south-central U.S. in 2010, in an effort to answer question number two.</p> <p>A <u>2015 paper</u>, "Hurricane Sandy Before 1900 and After 2100," looked at how warmer or cooler versions of the same large-scale weather pattern that carried Sandy would affect its intensity and path along the U.S. East Coast. Lackmann held everything constant except variables affected by temperature, including the sea, air, and land temperatures that influence humidity. In other words, how projected increases in global warming will affect storms decades from now, and how the warming thus far helps feed storms today.</p> <p>Sandy had many idiosyncrasies, notably including a square left-turn from its north-northeastern route in the Atlantic Ocean, smack into the East Coast. Lackmann found that the difference between an 1880 Sandy and the Sandy of 2012 was small compared with the gap between the 2012 version and a Sandy that arrived in 2100. The 19th century-simulations revealed a slightly weaker storm than the real-life one. The 1880 Sandy also made landfall about 60 miles south of where the actual 2012 storm hit, coming ashore near Atlantic City.</p> <p>"The difference between the 1800s version and the present-day Sandy was not that significant," Lackmann said.</p> <p>That's not true of the Sandy projected to strike in 2100. Given Lackmann's assumptions, that storm would hit land about 120 miles farther to the north-northeast, around eastern Long Island or Connecticut. Along that simulated path, it grows significantly stronger than the 2012 Sandy, an observation that became clear</p>

early in the simulations.

Lackmann conducted his research using the mathematically simulated reality of computer models. First, he tested how well several general-circulation models were able to reproduce the storm once it passed a certain point (in this case, near the Bahamas). Satisfied that the simulations came close to the actual data, he re-created the large-scale weather features documented at the end of October 2012. He then turned down variables related to 20th century warming, to approximate conditions around 1880. He then re-ran 2012 conditions. Finally, through the same weather system, he ran the warming variables as projected into the future, which were developed for the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#).

By simulating different heat-profiles over the same weather, he was able to produce estimates of an 1880 and a 2100 Sandy. The study doesn't look at whether the storm would have formed under different conditions, only how warming may have affected its development, and path.

No two storms are identical, particularly Sandy and Harvey. "Sandy didn't stall," Lackmann notes. Nor did, for example, Hurricane Irene in 2011 or Matthew last year. Harvey's destructive holding pattern in and around Houston has placed stalling storms front-of-mind for hurricane researchers. [Whether there's been a change](#) in high-level wind patterns that "steer" storms is of paramount importance, according to Kerry Emanuel, atmospheric science professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

One challenge that Lackmann identified is pinpointing whether storms really are slowing down, and consequently dumping more water where people live. Hurricane Easy in September 1950 looped around Florida's central Gulf Coast and dropped more than 45 inches of rain over the course of a week. Hurricane Flora poured 100 inches on Santiago de Cuba, in Cuba, in October 1963.

"These events have happened before," Lackmann said. "It would be very difficult to say that Harvey stalled because of climate change. It would be difficult to ever truly sort that out."

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HEADLINE	08/31 Harvey wreaks market havoc on ethylene
SOURCE	https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-09-01/world-s-most-important-chemical-made-rare-commodity-by-harvey
GIST	<p>Few Americans care about ethylene. Many have probably never heard of it.</p> <p>As it turns out, this colorless, flammable gas is arguably the most important petrochemical on the planet -- and much of it comes from the hurricane-stricken Gulf Coast. Ethylene is one of the big reasons the damage wrought by Hurricane Harvey in the chemical communities along the Gulf is likely to ripple through U.S. manufacturing of essential items from milk jugs to mattresses.</p> <p>"Ethylene really is the major petrochemical that impacts the entire industry," said Chirag Kothari, an analyst at consultant Nexant.</p> <p>Texas alone produces nearly three quarters of the country's supply of one of the most basic chemical building blocks. Ethylene is the foundation for making plastics essential to U.S. consumer and industrial goods, feeding into car parts used by Detroit and diapers sold by Wal-Mart Stores Inc.</p> <p>With Harvey's floods shutting down almost all the state's plants, 61 percent of U.S. ethylene capacity has been closed, according to PetroChemWire.</p> <p>Ethylene occurs naturally -- it's the gas given off by fruit as it ripens. But it also lies at the heart of the \$3.5 trillion global chemical industry, with factories pumping out 146 million tons last year, Kothari said Thursday.</p> <p>Processing plants turn the chemical into polyethylene, the world's most common plastic that's used in</p>

garbage bags and food packaging. When transformed into ethylene glycol, it's the antifreeze that keeps engines and airplane wings from freezing in winter, and it also becomes the polyester used in textiles and water bottles.

Ethylene is an ingredient in vinyl products such as PVC pipes used to bring water to homes, life-saving medical devices and cushy sneaker soles. It helps combat global warming with polystyrene foam insulation and lighter, fuel-saving plastic auto parts. It helps commuters get to work safely when made into synthetic rubber found in tires. It's even an ingredient in house paints and chewing gum.

Man makes the chemical by starting with oil or natural gas, then steam heating it to 1,500 degrees Fahrenheit (816 Celsius) inside massive furnaces that crack apart the molecular bonds. The resulting ethylene gas is separated from co-products such as propylene, and then piped to other production units for conversion to a vast array of products.

Ethylene and its derivatives account for about 40 percent of global chemical sales, said Hassan Ahmed, an analyst at Alembic Global Advisors. The U.S. accounts for one of every five tons on the market, and ethylene plants globally were running nearly full out to meet rising demand before Harvey, he said.

"So any little hiccup -- and this is much beyond a hiccup -- will dramatically tighten supply-demand balances," Ahmed said Thursday.

While Gulf Coast chemical plants are designed to withstand hurricane-force winds and floods, Harvey has thrust the industry into uncharted territory. Ethylene producers hit by the storm along the Texas Gulf Coast include LyondellBasell Industries NV at the southern end in Corpus Christi, Exxon Mobil Corp. in Baytown outside Houston, and Chevron Phillips Chemical Co. in Port Arthur by the Louisiana border.

"The combination of Harvey's path, duration and rainfall total is wreaking havoc with the supply side of the U.S. chemicals industry on an unprecedented scale," said Kevin McCarthy, an equity analyst at Vertical Research Partners. "We certainly haven't seen anything quite like it in our 18 years of following chemical stocks on Wall Street."

The sudden dearth of ethylene and other materials is being felt up and down the supply chain. More than half of the country's capacity for making polyethylene plastic has been shut down in the past week. More than 60 percent of production of polypropylene -- another plastic, has been curtailed.

Chemical and plastics buyers can continue operating only so long without replenishing their inventory, Ahmed said. Many producers are already telling customers that they won't be able to meet their contractual supply obligations because of the storm.

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HEADLINE	08/31 Gasoline prices hit 2-yr high; still rising
SOURCE	http://www.newsmax.com/Finance/Markets/gasoline-harvey-refinery-oil/2017/08/31/id/811017/
GIST	<p>Gasoline hit a two-year high on Thursday as Tropical Storm Harvey hit the U.S. Gulf coast again, after already knocking out a fifth of the nation's refining capacity.</p> <p>Motiva Enterprises LLC's Port Arthur refinery, the country's biggest, began a controlled shutdown because of severe flooding. The disruption sent motor fuel as much as 6.6 percent higher in New York, while the resulting reduction in demand from plants hit by the storm kept crude near a five-week low.</p> <p>Harvey, the strongest storm to hit the U.S. since 2004, is throwing the energy market into disarray. About 18 percent of national refining capacity has been halted, meaning less fuel is being produced than normal, according to the Energy Information Administration.</p> <p>The storm is also affecting the distribution of gasoline via pipeline, hindering crude exports and could</p>

	<p>eventually force oil fields to shut if the disruption endures for weeks.</p> <p>“Gas prices at the pump will be a bit higher over the next few weeks,” says Resolute Wealth Editor Andrew Packer. “However, the impact will be temporary—we’ve seen this come and go before. The oil market isn’t taking off on the news; it’s strictly the lack of refining capacity right now driving gas prices higher.”</p> <p>Gasoline for September delivery, which expires Thursday, climbed as much as 11.76 cents to \$1.9009 a gallon on the New York Mercantile Exchange, the highest in more than two years. The more-active October contract rose 5.7 cents to \$1.6587 at 1:40 p.m. in London.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Asteroid Florence fly-by Friday, Saturday
SOURCE	https://www.newsmax.com/TheWire/asteroid-florence-flyby-friday/2017/08/31/id/810928/
GIST	<p>Asteroid Florence will fly by the Earth on Friday and the rare space object will be visible to those with backyard telescopes.</p> <p>According to Space.com, asteroid Florence will zoom past Earth at a distance of about 4.4 million miles on Friday, making it the biggest space object to come this close to the Earth since 1890.</p> <p>NASA officials said an asteroid is not expected to travel this close to the Earth again until 2500.</p> <p>According to Sky & Telescope magazine, Florence viewing might have a little interference given the fact that the moon reached its first-quarter phase on Tuesday, raising its level of brightness.</p> <p>"Despite some interference from moonlight, 3122 Florence should be fairly easy to spot in even modest backyard telescopes," said Kelly Beatty, a senior editor at Sky & Telescope magazine.</p> <p>For those who can't wait to get a glimpse of Florence – much like those who ditched work last week to view the solar eclipse – the best time to view the asteroid is Thursday night when it will be at its brightest.</p> <p>The magazine also notes that Saturday at 8 p.m. EDT is another perfect time to view the enormous asteroid.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Initial lawsuit over travel ban settled
SOURCE	http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/trump-travel-ban-lawsuit/2017/08/31/id/811003/
GIST	<p>Foreigners who were barred from entering the U.S. during President Donald Trump's first attempt to ban travel from seven Muslim-majority nations will get government help reapplying for visas under a lawsuit settlement reached Thursday.</p> <p>Civil rights lawyers and the Trump administration announced the deal in during a conference call in federal court in Brooklyn, one scene of the legal battle over the treatment of hundreds of travelers who were detained at U.S. airports over a chaotic weekend last January.</p> <p>Under the terms of the settlement, the government agreed to notify anyone overseas who was banned that they can reapply for visas with the help of a Department of Justice liaison for a three-month period. In return, the plaintiffs said they would drop all their claims.</p> <p>"We are pleased with the settlement and that this chapter in the fight is done," said American Civil Liberties Union Attorney Lee Gerlent.</p>

Gerlent said it's unclear how many people will benefit from the settlement because the government has refused to disclose the total.

There was no immediate comment from Justice Department officials.

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HEADLINE	09/01 Muslims celebrate Eid w/hajj in final days
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/muslims-world-celebrate-eid-hajj-enters-final-days-49557495?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>Muslims around the world are celebrating the Eid al-Adha holiday on Friday as some 2 million Muslim pilgrims carry out the final rites of the annual hajj in Saudi Arabia.</p> <p>Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims made their way toward a massive multi-story complex in Mina after dawn on Friday to cast pebbles at three large columns. It is here where Muslims believe the devil tried to talk the Prophet Ibrahim out of submitting to God's will.</p> <p>Muslims believe Ibrahim's faith was tested when God commanded him to sacrifice his only son Ismail. Ibrahim was prepared to submit to the command, but then God stayed his hand, sparing his son. In the Christian and Jewish version of the story, Abraham is ordered to kill his other son, Isaac.</p> <p>The final days of hajj coincide with the Eid al-Adha holiday, or "Feast of Sacrifice," to commemorate Ibrahim's test of faith. For the holiday, Muslims slaughter livestock and distribute the meat to the poor.</p> <p>For the final three days of hajj, pilgrims sleep in a large tent valley called Mina and for three days take part in a symbolic stoning of the devil. Mina is also where more than 2,400 people were killed two years ago in a stampede and a collision of two crowds that crushed people under the force.</p> <p>The Saudi government has since widened some roads in Mina to try and improve the safety of the hajj. More than 100,000 security forces are managing the hajj this year, assisting pilgrims and directing the massive crowds that move from one location to another in the areas around Mecca for five days during the hajj. The Saudi government also offers all pilgrims free health care and access to hospitals during the hajj.</p> <p>Most pilgrims will remain in Mina until Monday before completing the hajj. They will then circle the cube-shaped Kaaba in Mecca, Islam's most sacred site, before departing. The Kaaba represents the metaphorical house of God and the oneness of God in Islam. Observant Muslims around the world face toward the Kaaba during the five daily prayers.</p> <p>The five-day-long hajj is a series of rituals meant to cleanse the soul of sins and instill a sense of equality and brotherhood among Muslims. The pilgrimage is required of all Muslims with the means to perform once in a lifetime.</p> <p>During the last three days of hajj, male pilgrims shave their heads and remove the terrycloth white garments worn during the hajj. Women cut off a small lock of hair in a sign of spiritual rebirth and renewal.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/01 BRICS summit in China Xiamen
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/explainer-brics-summit-chinas-xiamen-49557733?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	As China prepares to host next week's summit of leaders from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa , some are questioning whether the club of fast-developing nations is viable anymore given economic woes and sharp rivalries.

With no unifying political philosophy, the BRICS group has never been as cohesive as other global alliances like NATO. And with the global economy slowing, some BRICS members have been hit harder than others.

In recent weeks, the competition between China and India has also come into focus with a tense military standoff across disputed borders in the high Himalayas.

The summit Monday and Tuesday in the city of Xiamen gives Chinese President Xi Jinping an opportunity to showcase his leadership and promote his country as a central pillar of 21st century global governance.

Here is a guide to BRICS, its future prospects and what to expect from the summit.

WHAT IS BRICS?

A Goldman Sachs economist came up with the acronym BRICs for Brazil, Russia, India and China in 2001 to describe emerging economies that might challenge the West. The four held their first summit in 2009, and were joined by South Africa in 2011.

Together, the five countries now account for 40 percent of the world's population, and have accounted for 45 percent of the increase in world growth since 2009, driven mainly by China and India. The BRICS also account for 23 percent of its gross domestic product — a figure that is expected to steadily increase.

WHAT'S IN STORE FOR THE XIAMEN SUMMIT?

The summit's agenda — under the theme "Stronger Partnership for a Brighter Future" — includes discussions on economic collaboration, political and security cooperation and people-to-people exchanges, and probably also issues of particular concern for China and India like renewable energy and coping with [climate change](#).

Officials are also expected to discuss setting up a BRICS credit rating agency as an alternative to the big three Western agencies that some nations accuse of favoring Western economies. China's own credit rating was downgraded by Moody's in May.

They may also discuss expanding BRICS to include new members, something analysts say may be crucial in energizing the grouping. China has employed a "BRICS Plus" approach this year by inviting leaders from Egypt, Guinea, Mexico, Tajikistan and Thailand to attend the summit. The goal was for "a more broadly based partnership," Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said Wednesday.

The BRICS nations will likely position themselves as advocates of globalization, even if protectionist elements persist in their economies, especially in China, where key sectors are still closed to foreign investors.

Their final statement is expected to underline their commitment to globalization — in contrast to the West's more inward-looking trend following the election of U.S. President Donald Trump and the British vote to leave the European Union.

WHAT HAS BRICS ACHIEVED TO DATE?

Observers say one of the group's top achievements is somewhat intangible — shifting the global power balance toward the developing world, and winning a bigger say in global economic discussions at the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

The group is also lauded for establishing the alternative New Development Bank in 2014. This week, the bank announced \$1.4 billion in new loans for sustainable development projects in China, India and Russia. BRICS nations "have a demographic advantage" over Western nations, said analyst Sreeram Chaulia, dean of Jindal School of International Affairs near New Delhi.

"We have high [economic growth](#), and in some cases also rising military power."

	BRICS also promotes ties between countries that had limited links before. Brazil's politically embattled president is eager to court potential investors to help his country's ailing economy, and the opportunity to meet face-to-face with other leaders makes this his "most important weekend on the foreign policy front of the year," said Oliver Stuenkel, professor of international relations at Getulio Vargas Foundation in Sao Paulo.
	The China-India dialogues could help reduce tensions between the world's two most populous nations.
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HEADLINE	09/01 Russia 'to study' US closure decision
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/russia-studying-us-decision-shut-consulate-49558246?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>Russian Foreign Minister <u>Sergey Lavrov</u> says Moscow has yet to study the United States' decision to shut its consulate in San Francisco before considering possible retaliation.</p> <p>The U.S. on Thursday abruptly ordered <u>Russia</u> to shutter its San Francisco consulate and close offices in <u>Washington</u> and New York within the next 48 hours, intensifying tensions between the former Cold War foes. The Trump administration described its action as retaliation for the Kremlin's "unwarranted and detrimental" demand earlier this month that the U.S. cut its diplomatic staff in Russia.</p> <p>Speaking at Russia's top diplomacy school on Friday, Lavrov said Moscow would react to the decision once it has finished analyzing it. Lavrov defended Russia's decision to cut U.S. diplomatic staff as reciprocal reaction to the U.S. expelling Russian diplomats last December.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Harvey's impact public school students
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/US/million-public-school-students-estimated-impacted-hurricane-harvey/story?id=49511399
GIST	<p>As Harvey continues to bring devastation to the Gulf Coast, the Texas Education Agency estimates more than 1 million students in the state's public school system have been affected by the storm.</p> <p>"Roughly 20 percent of our student population has been affected by Harvey," Texas Education Agency spokeswoman Lauren Callahan told ABC News Wednesday. "This is absolutely an ongoing situation and our first and foremost priority is making sure everyone is safe."</p> <p>The TEA, which oversees the education of 5.3 million public school students, reports that 200 of the state's 1,200 school districts have had some sort of closures this week.</p> <p>Aransas County Independent School District, which includes schools <u>in the hard-hit town of Rockport</u>, announced Wednesday that schools in the district would be closed "indefinitely."</p> <p>The district serves 3,316 students, <u>according to its website</u>. A later statement from Superintendent Joseph Patek to clarify how long schools will be closed painted a stark picture of the area's current conditions and road to recovery.</p> <p>"We used this word because we are attempting to be as transparent as possible. We do not have a timeline for how long the recovery process will take," <u>Patek's statement read</u>. "We must first have drinkable water and power. After that, we must ensure our facilities are safe and then we will be able to allow teaching staff in the buildings to look at their needs for supplies."</p> <p>Students in Houston, the state's largest city, where an estimated 30,000 to 40,000 homes have been destroyed, were supposed to start school on Monday.</p>

Today, on the eve of what would have been the end of the first week of school, district officials have only been able to reach around 45 of the district's nearly 300 campuses to assess the damage.

"We're anticipating once the waters start receding, we're going to be finding pretty extensive damage," Houston Independent School District (ISD) Superintendent Richard A. Carranza told ABC News Wednesday, adding that water and roof damages and power outages have been found so far in the accessible campuses.

Houston's school district is the largest in the state and the seventh-largest in the U.S., and serves around 215,000 students and 29,000 employees, according to its website. Carranza said district officials assume 90 percent of students were affected by Harvey.

The school district is working with the Council of the Great City Schools, a coalition of 68 of the nation's largest urban public school systems, to place crisis counselors in schools when they reopen and make sure students have the clothes and school supplies they need, Carranza said. The district has already posted a resources page on its website for employees.

Houston ISD also announced Wednesday that all students will receive three free meals per day during the 2017 to 2018 school year through the National School Lunch/Breakfast Program in the wake of Harvey.

The stability of the school day will be a crucial element for students and staff as school districts across Texas recover, according to Doug Harris, professor of economics at Tulane University and the director of the Education Research Alliance for New Orleans.

Harris studied the rebuilding of the New Orleans school system after Hurricane Katrina.

"One thing we saw in New Orleans that you can expect in Texas is, especially for young kids, it's easy for them to be traumatized and have symptoms like post-traumatic stress disorder that are long-lasting in something like this," he said. "One lesson just from that alone is that you want to get them resources."

Harris continued, "Make sure [students] are being fed and have access to counselors and give them a sense of normalcy as quickly as possible."

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HEADLINE	08/31 Harvey devastation: by the numbers
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/US/hurricane-harvey-wreaks-historic-devastation-numbers/story?id=49529063
GIST	<p>The remnants of Hurricane Harvey continued to dump rain on several southern states nearly a week after making landfall in Texas as the most powerful storm to hit the mainland in over a decade.</p> <p>Harvey's torrential rain, devastating winds and widespread flooding have so far cost at least 32 lives, driven over one million people to evacuate their homes in Texas and caused extensive destruction that will likely make it one of the costliest storms in U.S. history.</p> <p>Here is a look at the storm's historic devastation, by the numbers:</p> <p>20 trillion gallons: That's the total amount of rain that fell on the Houston area after Harvey came ashore, a staggering deluge that represents enough water to supply New York City's needs for over five decades.</p> <p>\$125 billion: Texas Gov. Greg Abbot said his state will need federal relief money "far in excess" of that total. Moody's Analytics has estimated \$97 billion in destruction alone and some \$108 billion in total damages counting lost output.</p>

80 percent: Texans who don't have flood insurance.

51.88 inches: The amount of rain recorded at Cedar Bayou on the outskirts of Houston in just under five days, marking a new record for the heaviest rainfall for a storm in the continental U.S., according to the National [Weather Service](#).

3: The number of times Harvey has made landfall since Friday -- once as a hurricane and twice more as a tropical storm.

1.5 miles: The radius around the Arkema chemical plant in Crosby, Texas, that was evacuated after a container of chemicals ignited due to floodwater knocking out the plant's power.

30 to 40 feet: Estimated height of the flame at the Arkema plant after the chemicals combusted, sending a plume of black smoke into the air. Several more containers holding similar chemicals remain at the site, according to the Associated Press.

10: Gulf Coast region refineries that remain shut down by Harvey. Together they account for over 3 million barrels per day of output, or nearly 17 percent of the total U.S. refining capacity, according to the Energy Department.

\$2.45: The national average gas price on Thursday, according to AAA, marking a 10-cent jump over the past week.

500,000: Barrels of crude released on Thursday from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, according to Energy Secretary Rick Perry.

93,942: Homes estimated to be damaged or destroyed by Harvey in Texas, according to the Texas Division of Emergency Management.

32,000: People in shelters across Texas, according to Gov. Greg Abbott.

325,000: People who have registered for assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as of Thursday, according to FEMA.

10,000: People rescued by federal forces as of Thursday, FEMA said, plus countless other Good Samaritan rescues.

200,000: Customers without power on Thursday, according to the Energy Department.

900: Calls that poured in per hour to call centers around Houston at the height of the disaster.

120,000: Residents without water in Beaumont, Texas, on Thursday.

24,000: The number of National Guard troops deployed to assist in relief efforts, including all of Texas' members as well as some from other states. The Texas governor said these troops will be needed for months to search homes and restore the state to order.

1.3 million: The population of the Houston metropolitan area lacking health insurance, according to Census estimates.

22.5 percent: Houston population living below the poverty line, according to Census figures.

Over 2 million: Meals and liters of water distributed by FEMA to Texas and Louisiana so far.

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HEADLINE	08/31 Texas chemical plant fire out
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/US/texas-chemical-plant-fire-federal-investigation-launched/story?id=49548581&cid=clicksource_81_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>The U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) has launched an investigation into the fire at the chemical plant owned by Arkema Inc. in Crosby, Texas, after explosions and fires rocked the plant during the early hours of Thursday in the wake of Hurricane Harvey.</p> <p>But at 5:30 p.m. ET Thursday, Arkema announced that the fires were out. "At this writing, one of the trailers at the Crosby plant containing organic peroxides caught fire early Thursday morning and burned," the statement read. "Some of the area surrounding the trailer was burned or charred, but any adjacent fires burned themselves out."</p> <p>The statement continued, "We continue to monitor the temperature in the remaining trailers and there is evidence suggesting that other trailers will soon burn, but there have been no reports of any fires or smoke."</p> <p>The chemical plant -- which sits about 15 miles east of Houston's city center -- was compromised by the record flooding in the area. While Arkema executive Richard Rennard said in a press conference Thursday morning that the plant was emitting "noxious" smoke, he would not respond to a question as to whether the smoke from the burning substances was toxic.</p> <p>But later in the day, the EPA said its aerial surveillance aircraft did not detect toxic concentrations of chemicals at the site. "Following this fire, EPA sent aerial surveillance aircraft to test resulting smoke and did ground-level air quality monitoring," read a statement. "EPA's plane instrumentation is capable of measuring 78 different chemicals, including peroxides. Neither testing methods found toxic concentration levels in areas away from the evacuated facility."</p> <p>"The smoke and loud 'popping' noises came from one of nine containers on site holding liquid organic peroxides that must remain cold, or the chemicals will become unstable and will start to break down as they warm up," Rennard said.</p> <p>The plant lost its ability to keep the products refrigerated because of the storm's floodwaters and power loss in the area.</p> <p>"It's not a chemical release that's happening and I want to be clear about that," Rennard added. "What we have is a fire."</p>
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HEADLINE	09/01 Mayor: Houston 'mostly dry'
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/US/houston-begins-assess-hurricane-harveys-trail-devastation/story?id=49536088
GIST	<p>Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner said Thursday that the city is now "mostly dry," after having taken an aerial tour of the city.</p> <p>The two areas still dealing with flooding issues are Kingwood and West Houston, Turner said.</p> <p>Six days after Hurricane Harvey roared ashore in southeastern Texas, officials and residents have begun to assess the storm's trail of destruction in Houston as the flood waters slowly started to recede.</p> <p>First responders, as well as urban search and rescue teams, launched a block-by-block, door-to-door search of badly flooded areas of Houston today to conduct recovery operations now that the <u>weather</u> has cleared and the rain has finally stopped.</p> <p>On Thursday, the Houston Fire Department had received 800 service calls, but only 22 were water-related,</p>

	<p>a spokesperson said. Since the operation began, the fire department has received about 16,000 service calls, about 7,600 of which were water-related.</p> <p>Police had participated in three rescues in high water between 6 p.m. Wednesday and 11 a.m. Thursday, a spokesperson said Thursday. Officers are still searching for 19 people who were reported missing, the spokesperson said.</p> <p>The number of people in shelters is going down, Turner said. By the end of Friday, the people at the Toyota Center will be transferred to the George R. Brown Convention Center.</p> <p>The Toyota Center had been opened as a result of overcrowding at the convention center, which housed 10,000 people at its peak. Less than 8,000 people are currently at the convention center, Turner said. There are still 37,000 homes in the area without power.</p> <p>Police have arrested 69 people total, eight of whom were arrested for looting, they said.</p> <p>One year from now when people visit Houston, they will not see signs of Harvey, Turner said.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Smoky haze returns to western Wash.
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/736873/haze-returns-labor-day-weekend-2017/
GIST	<p>Take a deep breath, and then get ready to hold it come Monday morning when a smoky haze settles in over Western Washington — again.</p> <p>“I think we will return to hazy conditions this weekend,” said KIRO 7 meteorologist Nick Allard. “I think we will go right back into it again.”</p> <p>“We have (a wildfire) in the Cascades,” Allard said. “Most of that smoke is being pushed north, northeast. A lot of this smoke (drifting into Seattle) is coming in from Oregon as it has been for the past few days.”</p> <p>The August air in Western Washington <u>has been filled with a heavy haze</u> from wildfires in British Columbia, Washington and Oregon. Smoky air moved through the region earlier this week. <u>Wind moved that haze away</u>, improving air quality, but it seems that the smoke will return Sunday evening into Monday (over Labor Day weekend). KIRO 7’s Morgan Palmer reports that air quality is expected to take a dive with the next round of smoke.</p> <p>That’s what briefly happened this week when the <u>air quality index</u> tracked quality going from good to moderate within hours. <u>Check the air quality index</u> over the weekend to see how the haze affects Western Washington’s air.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Labor Day weekend traffic
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/735926/labor-day-weekend-traffic-2017/
GIST	<p>We can’t stress this enough — plan ahead and leave very early. Multiple events will add up to rather sluggish Labor Day Weekend traffic throughout Western Washington.</p> <p>The Washington State Department of Transportation has estimates for the best travel times. In short: mid-day travel will see the heaviest traffic. Also, check ferry times and expect long lines to cross Puget Sound.</p> <p>Here’s what’s to know: A traffic trifecta from mega events will push hundreds of thousands of people into Seattle’s core. SoDo, downtown, and the Seattle Center will all get hit at once with heavy traffic coming off of I-5, I-90 and Highway 99. It will be a downtown-sized bottleneck.</p>

Sports

Mariners vs. Athletics: Friday at 7:10 p.m.; Saturday 6:10 p.m.; and Sunday at 1:10 p.m. All three games are at Safeco Field. You can expect packed light rail lines and roads around the stadium, especially coming off of I-5 and I-90 into SoDo. Good luck with parking.

Bumbershoot

Sept. 1-3 at Seattle Center. Seattle's end of summer arts festival always attracts thousands of participants to see three days of music and more. Transit and traffic is likely to swell around the Seattle Center with fans for Weezer, The Roots, Margaret Cho, and more.

The nearest major routes are likely to slow. This includes Highway 99 (Aurora Avenue). The Mercer mess could also get extra messy with traffic coming to the festival off of I-5. Denny Way to the south could also get hit with heavy traffic.

PAX West

Sept. 1-4 at the Washington State Convention Center at the heart of Pike and Pine Streets. The "Penny Arcade Expo" or PAX is the largest gaming convention on the planet and is expected to attract more than 80,000 people to downtown Seattle. And don't expect the crowds to lessen during the evening. PAX after-parties all over town have become as nearly as popular as the event itself.

Construction

Road construction crews generally take a break over the holidays, but there will be some remnants of ongoing work that will slow down major routes.

I-90: Lane reductions on I-90 over Snoqualmie Pass and on through Cle Elum will tighten traffic on this major freeway. The popular Ellensburg Rodeo (see below) will be one event filling this lane-restricted route.

Highway 2: Expect delays along Highway 2. You can read more [here](#) about why lately traffic is so bad lately on this highway. But Labor Day Weekend traffic is expected to snarl as drivers escape Western Washington for the three-day break.

Other events

Washington State Fair – Puyallup

The Washington State Fair kicks off on Friday and runs Sept. 1-24 in Puyallup. That means I-5, Highways 512 and 167, and other routes south of Seattle will be packed with fair-goers eager for face paint, miniature horses, and concerts. Nickelback is opening up the fair on Friday. Lady Antebellum is taking the stage Saturday night. Steven Tyler of Aerosmith will perform on Sunday. All concerts are likely to draw considerable crowds driving to the show.

Ellensburg Rodeo – Ellensburg

The popular Ellensburg Rodeo is all weekend and will add to the congestion along I-90, which will already be tight from lane restrictions (see above).

Evergreen State Fair – Monroe

It's the final weekend of the Evergreen State Fair in Monroe. Country Music star Trace Adkins is performing Friday night. Highway 522 leads into the area, as well as Highway 2. As stated above, Highway 2 is already expected to be slow.

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HEADLINE 08/31 Fentanyl fueling new opioid OD crisis

SOURCE <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2017/08/31/fentanyl-opioid-fueling-new-overdose->

GIST

WASHINGTON — Fentanyl, a super potent [synthetic opioid](#) at the center of a new overdose epidemic, is presenting uniquely vexing challenges for law enforcement officials because it's so deadly, so versatile and so profitable.

It's flowing into the U.S. across the southern border and via the mail system. It's being trafficked by Mexican cartels with vast dealer networks and by small-time operators ordering the drugs online. It's being purchased by desperate opioid addicts looking for the most potent dose on the street and by unsuspecting consumers looking for cheap pain pills from shady Internet retailers.

"It truly is everywhere," said Barbara Carreno, a spokeswoman for the federal Drug Enforcement Agency.

Here are the key things to know about the drug fueling this deadly crisis:

Where is the fentanyl coming from?

The [primary source](#) of this synthetic opioid is China, where thousands of illicit labs led by rogue chemists manufacture fentanyl and a raft of copycat substances.

Experts say the primary buyers are Mexican drug cartels, who mix the fentanyl with heroin and other substances and then smuggle those diluted mixtures across the U.S.-Mexico border. But the amount of fentanyl coming into the U.S. via the mail system is on the rise — in smaller packages and at much greater potency.

"I expect that in fiscal year 2017, the numbers of seizures in the mail and express consignment environment (such as FedEx and UPS) will be much higher than they were last year," said Robert Perez, an acting commissioner with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency.

Perez said the CBP seized more than 400 pounds of fentanyl in fiscal year 2016 — up from eight pounds in 2014. A few granules of the drug can be deadly, and many customs agents are now equipped with Narcan, the anti-overdose medication, in case they come into contact with the substance.

What role is China playing?

Chinese officials were initially slow to respond to pleas from American officials to crack down on fentanyl, which is a Schedule II narcotic in the U.S.

China has a booming pharmaceutical industry, and fentanyl was not causing a deadly overdose epidemic in China, so the government there wasn't focused on controlling it.

"It's hard to get cooperation from another country on a substance that's not illegal in their country," said Richard Baum, acting director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

But China has become more aggressive, Baum and others say. Earlier this year, for example, China's National Narcotics Control Commission banned four fentanyl-class substances, including carfentanil — which is normally used as a large-animal tranquilizer and is 10,000 times more potent than morphine, [according to the DEA](#).

That should cause a drop in the amount of carfentanil flowing into the U.S. But every time the Chinese ban one synthetic opioid, drugmakers in that country tweak their recipes to get around the new restrictions.

"These rogue chemists in China can just tweak a molecule and then you have a new substance," said Carreno. That often leaves American law enforcement officials "three or four generations behind" the chemists, she said.

Why is fentanyl supplanting heroin as a key driver of the overdose epidemic?

It's easier and cheaper to produce than heroin, which is derived from poppy plants. With fentanyl, there are no crops, just chemicals.

“You can make it as strong as you want, and in bulk and fast,” said Tim Reagan, a Cincinnati-based DEA agent. And because it’s so potent, a little bit goes a long way, making it extremely profitable.

How difficult is it for local law enforcement officers to prosecute cases?

Very.

“With it coming through the mail, it just adds a whole different dynamic that we’ve never dealt with with any other drug,” said Tom Synan, police chief in Newtown, Ohio, which has been particularly hard hit by the influx of fentanyl.

Synan said it’s dangerous to collect evidence at an overdose scene because fentanyl is so toxic. In May, a police officer in northeast Ohio overdosed after he brushed a bit of the white powder off his uniform. He had just returned to the station from making a drug arrest, where he had used gloves and a mask to search a suspect’s car. Without the protective gear, it took four doses of Narcan to bring him back.

Synan said his officers focus on reviving overdose victims and keeping themselves safe, and they worry about making arrests and building cases later. Even when officers are able to ensnare dealers, Synan and others said, it can be hard to connect them to a broader drug ring.

“When you had crack cocaine, you had a lot of organized gangs that were really the primary pushers,” said Synan. With fentanyl, some dealers are connected to Mexican cartels, but many others are independent operators.

The dealer may lead to just “one string, instead of a tree,” Synan said. “Right now, we’re just kind of surviving and just trying to save lives.”

Reagan said the DEA has had “a ton of success identifying street dealers” whose transactions have resulted in overdose deaths. But those dealers are often unwilling to cooperate, stymieing efforts to target operators further up in the supply chain.

As for tracing sources in China, Reagan said, the DEA can turn over incriminating information to Chinese authorities to see whether they will prosecute. Or try to bring charges in the U.S. and ask for extradition. “There’s definitely more cooperation than ever,” he said. But “this is all kind of new.”

Why do addicts take fentanyl-laced drugs when they are so likely to result in an overdose?

First, medical experts note that addiction is a brain disease that can impair self-control and judgment. Addicts are not making rational decisions.

Second, some addicts don’t realize fentanyl has been mixed into the drugs they’re buying. Take this user, who [posted a message](#) in a fentanyl chat room on Reddit asking about what might be in his opioid pills.

“With real oxy, I usually have at least a day after my last dose before the withdrawals (sic) kick in, but now it’s literally like 3-4 hours after my last dose,” this person wrote. “Is this normal for fent or are my pills laced with something else?”

Finally, addicts want the most intense high, and some seek out fentanyl-laced drugs even if they realize it could kill them. “If a user dies ... (others) are going to try to find that dealer, because they’re looking for the best stuff,” Reagan said.

Another addict on Reddit [explained the decision](#) to use fentanyl this way:

“So because oxycodone is so gosh darn expensive I've decided to start using fentanyl but have no idea how to use it,” this person wrote. “How much am I supposed to use without killing myself thanks for your help.”

What role is the Internet playing in fentanyl sales and distribution?

A big one. Dealers and addicts can buy fentanyl directly from Chinese manufacturers with just a Google search and a few clicks.

More sophisticated operators use the so-called dark web, which hides the servers and identities of a websites administrators and users. These clandestine sites often use digital currencies, such as Bitcoin, to further disguise financial transactions.

“These dark web markets are like eBay” for illegal products, said Isak Ladegaard, a researcher at Boston College who has studied [digital drug markets](#). “If you order something through the dark web and it’s delivered to your address, there is no evidence you were the person making the order.”

The Department of Justice [announced on July 20](#) that it had shuttered one the largest online criminal marketplaces, AlphaBay, and Dutch authorities also recently closed a similar site called Hansa Market. At the time of the AlphaBay bust, there were more than 250,000 listings for illegal drugs and toxic chemicals on the site, the Department of Justice said, along with thousands of listings for other illicit goods.

But Ladegaard said the DOJ crackdown would not dampen the illegal fentanyl trade.

“All research thus far suggests that when a market is closed down, there is a period when there is some instability and people are not entirely sure what to do,” he said. “But fairly soon, traffic moves on to other (dark web) marketplaces.”

How do Customs officials stop fentanyl shipments from getting into the U.S.?

In June, Border Patrol agents seized 34 pounds of fentanyl during a vehicle stop at a California checkpoint — discovering 10 plastic-wrapped bundles of fentanyl in the car’s trunk, with an estimated street value of more than \$1 million, according to a [CBP news release](#).

But the dangers at the border are the same as on the street. Even drug-sniffing dogs are at risk of death if they accidentally ingest fentanyl during searches, and the agency is now engaged in a pilot project to specially train dogs for these synthetic opioids.

Finding fentanyl in the mail can be even more difficult, because of the sheer volume of packages and the lack of electronic data detailing shipments sent via the U.S. postal service.

“How we inspect and how we select packages in the mail is still a very manual process,” said Perez, the CPB commissioner.

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HEADLINE	08/31 Harvey wrecked up to 1M cars, trucks
SOURCE	https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/cars/2017/08/31/hurricane-harvey-cars/619785001/
GIST	<p><u>Hurricane Harvey</u> and its catastrophic aftermath likely destroyed more vehicles than any other natural disaster in U.S. history, according to several early estimates.</p> <p>The storm may have ruined several hundred thousand vehicles along the Texas Gulf Coast, including more than one in seven cars in the Houston area, according to analysts from Evercore ISI, an investment banking advisory and research firm.</p> <p>Harvey destroyed about 300,000 to 500,000 vehicles owned by individuals, Cox Automotive chief economist Jonathan Smoke estimates. Insurance is expected to cover a large portion of those losses.</p> <p>Smoke’s projections were based on Houston-area storm damage and vehicle ownership, compared with scrappage rates and insurance claims following Superstorm Sandy in the New York region in 2012 and Hurricane Katrina in the New Orleans area in 2005.</p>

Vehicle ownership rates are higher in Houston than in New Orleans during Katrina and New York during Sandy.

Houston has 1.8 vehicles per household compared with 1.6 in New Orleans and 1.3 in New York during the earlier catastrophes.

Sandy is believed to have destroyed about 250,000 vehicles, while Katrina ruined about 200,000, according to Cox Automotive.

Other research estimates Katrina's destruction at closer to half a million cars and trucks, but those figures include vehicles that may have been wrecked by storms that occurred in the region later, including Hurricane Rita and Hurricane Wilma.

"It makes sense that the total vehicles damaged will be more severe than we saw in either of those cases," Smoke says, adding that 300,000 is "a fairly conservative estimate" and that 500,000 is "clearly plausible."

Another 366,000 new vehicles stored on dealership lots were probably "affected," with about 150,000 to 200,000 of those cars and trucks located in the hardest-hit areas, Jessica Caldwell, an analyst for car-buying website Edmunds, estimates.

Automotive data source Black Book says more than 500 dealerships in the Houston area were affected. That included all 17 stores owned by AutoNation, the largest dealership network in the U.S., which reopened its locations Thursday.

Black Book estimates the number of vehicles that must be replaced at 500,000 to one million.

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HEADLINE	08/31 Harvey as tropical depression heads north
SOURCE	https://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2017/08/31/As-Texas-recovers-from-hurricane-Harvey-moves-north-as-tropical-depression/8111504188050/?utm_source=fp&utm_campaign=ls&utm_medium=2
GIST	<p>Aug. 31 (UPI) -- Hurricane Harvey was downgraded to a tropical depression as it moved through Louisiana and Mississippi on Thursday.</p> <p>Now that much of Harvey has moved northeast of Texas, officials throughout the state are beginning to quantify just how destructive the storm, which has led to at least 38 deaths, has been. More than 32,000 people <u>remained in shelters</u> statewide, including nearly 19,000 in the Houston area.</p> <p>With the opening of Houston's NRG Center to evacuees, another 30,000 beds are available, Gov. <u>Greg Abbott</u> said. He added that 210,000 people have registered with FEMA for emergency assistance.</p> <p><u>At least 770 homes</u> had been destroyed in Harris County, which includes Houston, and nearly 44,000 homes were damaged. The Texas Division of Emergency Management said more than 5,500 Texans are now living in state parks.</p> <p>By next week, 24,000 Texas National Guardsmen will be deployed to the area for rescue and cleanup work. Abbott said there have already been about 8,500 rescues since the storm's landfall.</p> <p>About 274,000 customers remain without electrical power on Thursday, with about 171,000 of those in the Houston area.</p> <p>Twenty inches of water fell in the city of Port Arthur in 24 hours, Mayor Derrick Freeman said Thursday, and an undetermined number of residents remain stranded. The Beaumont-Port Arthur metropolitan area, 85 miles east of Houston, lost its <u>main and backup water supplies</u> and inspectors are waiting for flood water to recede before they can inspect damaged pumps. An evacuation center in Port Arthur filled with</p>

water, forcing evacuees to relocate.

Officially, Beaumont has received 45.73 inches of rain since last week, the National Weather Service said. "We will have to wait until the water levels from this historical flood recede before we can determine the extent of damage and make any needed repairs," Beaumont's city government said in a statement Thursday. "There is no way to determine how long this will take at this time."

Houston's two major airports reopened Wednesday, but there has been no indication when the flights will resume their normal schedules.

Although the hurricane has diminished to a tropical depression, flood and flash flood warnings are in effect from east Texas and the lower Mississippi Valley through the Tennessee Valley and into southern Ohio, the National Weather Service said in [its 4 a.m. report](#) Thursday.

At least three to five inches of rain are expected in those areas, with the possibility of six to 10 inches in some areas. The center added that "catastrophic and life-threatening flooding will continue" in the Houston, Beaumont/Port Arthur and southwestern Louisiana regions for the rest of the week.

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HEADLINE	08/31 Harvey scams abound
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/08/31/harvey-scams-abound-as-crooks-prey-on-disaster-victims-and-altruistic-americans.html
GIST	<p>Harvey's floodwaters are beginning to recede in Houston and the devastating storm is finally loosening its grip on the Gulf Coast, but many dangers and hardships still loom for drenched residents in Texas and Louisiana.</p> <p>Thousands still remain in shelters across the region, awaiting news of when they can return to their devastated homes and neighborhoods. A series of explosions at a chemical plant and the threat of toxic waste and crude oil seeping into floodwaters have sparked health concerns. State and federal officials are working overtime to get airports, railways and highways up and running at pre-Harvey levels.</p> <p>And then there are the scams.</p> <p>Targeting both Harvey victims and those looking to donate to relief efforts, scam artists are using the storm – and people's sense of charity – the swindle thousands of dollars from unwitting targets. In order to prevent any more victims, Fox News has compiled a list of some of the more popular scams and how to avoid them:</p> <p>Flood Insurance Scams: Numerous homeowners and renters throughout Texas and Louisiana are getting robocalls that inform them that their flood premiums are overdue. To make sure they're covered for any damage from Harvey, the automated calls say, policy holders must pay immediately or risk losing it all. "Don't do it," the Federal Trade Commission noted in a warning about the scams. "Your reports help the FTC and other law enforcement agencies bring scam artists to justice and put an end to unfair and misleading business practices."</p> <p>Instead, the FTC advises that anyone concerned about their flood premiums call their insurance agent because he or she could be the same person who also handles your flood insurance policy.</p> <p>Charity Scams: With Americans across the country donating millions of dollars to charities providing relief efforts to victims of Harvey, it should come as no surprise that criminals looking to make a quick buck will prey on those with a benevolent heart. There have been numerous reports of people receiving phone calls, text messages, emails or posts on their social media accounts that ask for money for Harvey relief efforts. While there are a number of legitimate organizations that are helping collect money for Harvey victims -- the American Red Cross, Direct Relief and Catholic Charities are just a few of the</p>

biggest -- it is sometimes hard to determine which charity is real and which is a scam.

The FTC has posted a charity checklist for donors to follow so they don't get bamboozled. Among their recommendations are checking with the National Association of State Charity Officials to see if the group contacting you is registered, never sending a cash donation and being wary of groups that spring up too suddenly in response to current events and natural disaster. Another great way to find a legitimate charity is to visit Charity Navigator's Hurricane Harvey page, which has compiled a list of highly-rated organizations responding in the aftermath.

Phishing Scams: Hard to avoid and even harder to trace, email phishing scams have become the con of choice for hackers looking to rip-off altruistic Americans. These crooks send out messages via email or social media with links that promise to help you aid Harvey victims. Instead these links send you to bogus websites that can pinch your login and credit card information, infect computers with malware and even steal your identity.

The United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT) issued a warning Monday that noted these phishing scams have cropped up before during previous natural disasters and warning donors to be on the lookout. "[R]emain vigilant for malicious cyber activity seeking to capitalize on interest in Hurricane Harvey," the advisory read. "Emails requesting donations from duplicitous charitable organizations commonly appear after major natural disasters."

Crowdfunding Scams: Over the last few years, crowdfunding has become one of the most popular ways for everybody from cancer patients to new businesses to raise money, with sites like GoFundMe and Kickstarter leading the pack. But they could also be used by criminals as a way to bilk people donating to a cause, only to keep the money for themselves. To help prevent their site from being abused by phonies, GoFundMe briefed officials in Texas and Louisiana on the steps the company was taking to ensure all of the funds raised on their site go to the right place.

"We are hoping for the best, planning for the worst, and we will stay in close touch with all organizers and beneficiaries to ensure the resources get to people in need as soon as possible," the company wrote in a post on Medium. "When all's said and done, what matters most to us is that you are protected and those who need help get the help they deserve."

Copycat Scams: Similar to the phishing scams, these ploys use a name or URL that closely resembles that of well-known charitable organizations in order to trick people into thinking it is a real group. The FTC warns donors to double-check any URLs as most websites of legitimate charities end in .org instead of .com. Also another red flag is groups asking for money transfers as most legitimate organizations don't solicit these types of donations.

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HEADLINE	08/31 Forecasters nailed Harvey's rain dump
SOURCE	https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/how-forecasters-nailed-harvey-s-massive-rain-dump-n797506
GIST	<p>Houston generally gets about 50 inches of rain a year, at least before Hurricane Harvey came to town. Normally it takes 104 days of rain to get that much moisture, so no one could have imagined that much falling in just a few days.</p> <p>No one, that is, except America's principal computer weather-forecasting system. And a bunch of meteorologists, who issued sharp warnings of the disaster to come.</p> <p>The alert from the Global Forecast System (GFS) of the potential for a seemingly unthinkable 50-inch downpour arrived in meteorologists' computers on Aug. 23 — two full days before Harvey roared ashore.</p> <p>The prediction went out almost immediately, starting with climate scientist Ryan Maue of WeatherBell</p>

Analytics, who tweeted: "Exact amount unknown, but this ballpark extreme value rings alarm bells #Harvey."

Though forecasters hedged a bit from the largest possible totals, they left little doubt about the impending threat. That same morning, a Wednesday, AccuWeather, a consultant to businesses and media, warned of possible "life-threatening" floods. The Washington Post's weather blog foreshadowed how the deluge would linger: "Harvey will stall over the Texas-Louisiana area through most of the weekend." Al Roker of NBC News warned of "a major flooding event." By the next day, the network predicted 30 inches of rain.

The ability of weather forecasters to nail the magnitude of the threat posed by Harvey days in advance was seen as a marked improvement in the forecasting business, one that is being celebrated in their close-knit community. They did a particularly good job in plotting the track of the storm and its rainfall potential, which have traditionally been among the most difficult tasks for forecasters.

But as the devastation from the storm became a reality, meteorologists raised other important questions: Could their warnings have been even stronger? Is more imagination (or virtual reality?) needed to penetrate the public consciousness? And why didn't public officials do more?

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HEADLINE	08/31 Gas shortages emerge in Texas
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SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/gas-shortages-in-texas-as-harvey-knocks-out-refineries/
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GIST	Drivers in northern Texas are rushing to fill up their gas tanks as prices at the pump in the area rise and some stations run out of fuel altogether as <u>Harvey</u> continues to wreak havoc.
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QuikTrip, a chain with 135 gas stations in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, is keeping about half of them without gas, said spokesman Mike Thornbrugh. "Our experience has been, if you try to keep every store full... you'll run out," he told CBS Dallas-Fort Worth. Strategically closing stations can help sustain supplies in different parts of the city, according to the company. QuikTrip maintains a list of stations that have gasoline available on its website.

Around Dallas, pumps at several service stations in places like Denton, McKinney and Little Elm are seeing gas shortages, leading customers to scramble.

The majority of North Texas gas stations are not expected to run out of gas, but costs are expected to rise. Gas prices in the region are up almost 20 cents from this time last week, CBS Dallas-Fort Worth reported. That jump comes just ahead of the Labor Day holiday weekend, which typically sees heavy driving.

U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry on Thursday announced a transfer of 500,000 barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which, at a capacity of 713 million barrels, is the largest emergency crude oil supply in the world. However, the main reason for the gas shortage isn't a lack of crude oil, but rather the shutdown of 10 oil refineries in the Gulf Coast, as well as infrastructure to transport it, as Harvey continues to pound Texas and Louisiana.

"There's a glut of crude, but there's never a glut of gasoline during driving season because we operate on 'just-in-time' refining," said Tom Kloza, global head of energy analysis at the Oil Price Information Service. "Now we've lost about 40 percent of our ability to make gasoline east of the Rockies. We're seeing apoplectic increases in the futures market and even more so in the spot market."

Kloza predicted "a couple weeks of very serious scrambling, serious price increases," noting that prices could go up by as much as 50 cents a gallon in some parts of the country.

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HEADLINE	08/31 Forecast: Hurricane Irma major storm
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SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/hurricane-irma-forecast-major-storm/
GIST	<p>MIAMI -- Far out over the Atlantic, Hurricane Irma has turned into a Category 3 storm, the <u>U.S. National Hurricane Center</u> said in its latest advisory. It poses no immediate threat to land.</p> <p>Maximum sustained winds have increased to near 115 mph with higher gusts. Irma is moving toward the west-northwest near 12 mph. This motion is expected to continue today, followed by a westward turn on Saturday, and a west-southwestward motion by Sunday.</p> <p>Irma formed along a course that could bring it near the eastern Caribbean Sea by early next week. The storm's center was about 650 miles west of the Cabo Verde Islands off the west coast of Africa Thursday morning.</p> <p>Irma is expected to be an extremely dangerous hurricane for the next several days.</p> <p>CBS Dallas / Fort Worth's meteorologist Jeff Jamison says computer models for Irma differ on where the storm makes landfall. Only 10 to 15 percent of hurricanes located where Irma is have struck the United States.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 UN: no violations by Iran w/nuke deal
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/agency-notes-iranian-violations-nuclear-deal-49539581?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>The U.N. agency monitoring Iran's compliance with its <u>nuclear deal</u> with the U.S. and five other world powers has noted no violations by Tehran in its latest quarterly report on the issue.</p> <p>Agreed upon over two years ago, the nuclear deal commits Iran to strict limits on uranium enrichment and other programs that could be used both for peaceful purposes and in the pursuit of a nuclear weapon.</p> <p>President <u>Donald Trump</u> has repeatedly criticized the deal, but has yet to pull the U.S. out of it.</p> <p>The <u>International Atomic Energy Agency</u> report Thursday does not explicitly say Iran is honoring the deal but mentions no deviations by Tehran. The confidential report obtained by The Associated Press says the agency continues to hunt for "undeclared nuclear material and activities."</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Group: rising anti-Semitism in Poland
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/european-jewish-congress-sees-rising-anti-semitism-poland-49544971?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>The European Jewish Congress has expressed "grave concerns" over what it says is a rise in anti-Semitism in <u>Poland</u> and a "deteriorating relationship between the Polish government and the Jewish community."</p> <p>The Brussels-based organization says no Polish government minister has met with leaders of the Union of Jewish Communities in Poland, the officially recognized Jewish community, for around a year amid the rise in anti-Semitic incidents.</p> <p>The group's president, Moshe Kantor, said that "there has been a distinct normalization of anti-Semitism, <u>racism</u> and xenophobia in Poland recently and we hope that the Polish government will stem this hate and act forcefully against it."</p> <p>Jewish leaders wrote to ruling party leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski in early August with their concerns, but didn't receive an answer or a meeting with him.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 TS Lidia swirls to Los Cabos resorts
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/tropical-storm-lidia-swirls-mexicos-los-cabos-area-49530476?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>About 1,400 people sought refuge in storm shelters in the Los Cabos resorts at the tip of the Baja <u>California</u> Peninsula Thursday as Tropical Storm Lidia gained strength and closed in on an area just north of the resorts.</p> <p>Lidia spread rains over a broad swath of <u>Mexico</u>, including Mexico City, where it was blamed for flooding that briefly closed the city's airport.</p> <p>Civil Defense Commissioner Luis Felipe Puente said strong winds and rain were lashing Los Cabos at midday. Authorities also warned residents to prepare for a possible dangerous storm surge.</p> <p>The U.S. <u>National Hurricane Center</u> said Lidia could produce total accumulations of as much as 8 to 12 inches (20 to 30 centimeters) across much of Baja California Sur state and western Jalisco state on the mainland, threatening flash floods and landslides.</p> <p>Lidia's maximum sustained winds rose to 65 mph (105 kph) at midday and some strengthening was possible before landfall expected later in the day. Its center was about 25 miles (40 kilometers) south of Cabo San Lucas and heading north-northwest at 9 mph (15 kph).</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Experts: Texas floodwaters contaminated
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/US/small-sample-texas-floodwater-levels-coli-bacteria-expert/story?id=49529875
GIST	<p>As many parts of southeastern Texas have been inundated with brown murky floodwater left behind by Hurricane Harvey -- now a <u>tropical depression</u> -- experts are warning residents and rescuers about the possible health risks lurking within the deluge of water.</p> <p>Dr. Terry Gentry, an associate professor at Texas A&M University, examined small samples of both drinking water and floodwater from Cypress, Texas--a community just outside of Houston--at the university's microbiology lab. While the results of the lab tests revealed that the drinking water was safe, Gentry found that the levels of E. coli and coliform bacteria in the floodwater samples raised cause for concern.</p> <p>"We saw elevated levels of E. coli," Gentry told ABC News. "This indicates the very likely presence of pathogenic bacteria viruses and other organisms that could cause disease in some individuals."</p> <p>The E. coli figures Gentry found in the floodwater samples were more than 125 times the amount that the U.S. <u>Environmental Protection Agency</u> recommends being exposed to while swimming, and more than 15 times higher than their standard set for wading within water.</p> <p>The Harris County Department of Health told ABC News in a statement that "the results in the report would be exactly as we would expect," adding that with the flooding, "the waters in the streets can easily be overrun and contaminated with sewage, trash, and displaced animals, making it dangerous and unsafe."</p> <p>Dr. Susan Whittier, an associate professor at Columbia University in New York City, told ABC News that rescuers and residents exposed to the floodwaters should be cautious, especially if they had open wounds. Whittier also advised people to try and stay "clean as much as possible."</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Police warn of creepy clown sightings
SOURCE	http://philadelphia.cbslocal.com/2017/08/31/pennsylvania-police-clown-sightings/
GIST	<p>PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — Pennsylvania State Police are warning about the possible return of “creepy clown” sightings.</p> <p>Police issued a community awareness bulletin as the Stephen King movie “IT” nears its theatrical release next month.</p> <p>“With the fall of 2017 upon us, it is anticipated that similar ‘creepy clown’ sightings could be reported starting as soon as September, in part due to the fact that the movie ‘It’ will be released in theaters on 9/8/2017,” the bulletin reads.</p> <p>“The movie, which is adapted from a Stephen King novel by the same name, portrays an evil demon who takes on the shape of a clown named Pennywise, ‘that stalks kids from within the sewers and killing them when they least expect it.’”</p> <p>Sightings were reported in 16 states last year, including <u>Pennsylvania</u>.</p> <p>“The creepy clown craze in September 2016 resulted in at least a dozen people arrested in Georgia, Alabama, and Virginia for either taking part in the menacing stunt or for making false reports.”</p> <p>Police added that “creepy clown” sightings are not new, as several were reported nationwide in the 1980s.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Price gouging post-Harvey reported
SOURCE	http://money.cnn.com/2017/08/31/news/hurricane-harvey-price-gouging/index.html
GIST	<p>Texas officials say they've gotten hundreds of complaints about price gouging and scams in the wake of Hurricane Harvey.</p> <p>One convenience store in Houston reportedly charged \$20 for a gallon of gas, \$8.50 for a bottle of water and \$99 for a case of water, according to the Texas Attorney General's office.</p> <p>The state has received 684 complaints in all, according to Kayleigh Lovvorn, a spokeswoman for the office. The agency has started looking into nine cases so far but expects more.</p> <p>U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry on Thursday said that even though gas prices will increase because of supply issues, retailers should be wary of inflating prices unfairly.</p> <p>"Every state's attorney general will be watching to make sure that there's no price gouging going on," he said, adding that all who are considering raising prices inappropriately "need to watch out."</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 FEMA: true scale of disaster unknown
SOURCE	http://www.cnn.com/2017/08/31/us/hurricane-harvey-scope-questions/index.html
GIST	<p>(CNN)Pam Jones said the water crept up on them with shocking speed. It started to pour in through the garage of her elderly parents' home in Dickinson, Texas, where the family had gathered to ride out Hurricane Harvey. Within hours three feet of it swamped the home, trapping Jones, her 83-year-old mother and 86-year-old father upstairs. They called for help.</p> <p>That was Saturday. Jones and her family weren't rescued until Sunday. They weren't found by the Coast Guard but by <u>a volunteer with a boat</u>.</p>

Since Hurricane Harvey slammed the region, thousands of residents like Jones have been plucked from their homes. But each rescue has underscored broader questions about the disaster's true scope.

In all, 53 Texas counties issued emergency declarations -- an area that's home to around 11.4 million people. How many people successfully fled their homes ahead of the storm? How many are still waiting to be rescued?

"At this time, we don't know," FEMA director Brock Long said Thursday.

There are compelling reasons for the lack of answers.

On Thursday, six days after the storm first made landfall, the Houston Fire Department was set to begin a door-to-door mission in southwest Houston in hopes of finding residents still waiting to be plucked from the floodwaters.

Lt. Gen. Russel Honoré -- who oversaw relief operations in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 - - said that officials won't know the true scale of the disaster until that door-to-door search is complete.

Honoré said that it was during those searches after Katrina that authorities in New Orleans "really found the bad news."

"The worst is yet to come in terms of the outcome, which means people stuck in their homes and we can't get them out, and they're isolated," he said.

Disaster relief efforts typically have three phases: rescue, recovery and rebuild, according to Honoré. The coastal Texas region still sits largely in the rescue phase, which means that immediate issues of food, water and shelter come first.

"This is very much still a life-saving, life-sustaining response effort," two senior FEMA officials said Tuesday.

Among the hardest-hit communities is Houston, the fourth-largest city in the country, with a metropolitan area population of 5 million.

Houston police had responded to more than 5,000 rescue requests by Wednesday afternoon, Police Chief Art Acevedo said. More than 10,000 people have been saved by federal rescue teams, FEMA director Brock Long said. And those totals don't include the unknown numbers saved by volunteer groups and neighbors.

US Air Force Maj. Gen. James Witham, the National Guard's director of domestic operations, said that planning the response to this storm was "very different" than that for previous disasters.

"Normally, we plan a response for that first 72 hours (or) 96 hours, the weather passes, then we're really into recovery mode," he said. "We will be doing life-saving and life-sustaining efforts for a much longer period due to the nature of this storm."

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HEADLINE	08/31 US issues Russia closure orders
SOURCE	http://www.cnn.com/2017/08/31/politics/us-russia-retaliation-orders-closure-consulate/index.html
GIST	(CNN)The US announced Thursday it will shutter the Russian consulate in San Francisco, as well as annexes in Washington and New York, in response to mandated staff cuts at the US mission in Russia. The move comes one day before Moscow's deadline for US personnel to leave their positions and will take

	<p>effect Saturday.</p> <p>"The United States has fully implemented the decision by the Government of the Russian Federation to reduce the size of our mission in Russia," State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in a statement announcing the decision. "We believe this action was unwarranted and detrimental to the overall relationship between our countries."</p> <p>"In the spirit of parity invoked by the Russians," she continued, "we are requiring the Russian government to close its Consulate General in San Francisco, a chancery annex in Washington, DC, and a consular annex in New York City."</p> <p>Nauert also noted the United States was allowing Russia to maintain additional annexes "in an effort to arrest the downward spiral in our relationship," but was "prepared to take further action as necessary and as warranted."</p> <p>The Russian Foreign Ministry acknowledged the move in a statement on their website, saying Tillerson spoke directly with Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov in a phone call, and that Lavrov "expressed regret at the escalation of tension in bilateral relations, which was not initiated by (Russia), and indicated that Moscow will carefully study the new measures announced by the Americans, after which we will inform them of our reaction."</p>
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Cyber Awareness

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HEADLINE	08/31 Hacking retail gift cards remain 'easy'
SOURCE	https://www.wired.com/story/gift-card-hacks/
GIST	<p>IN NOVEMBER OF 2015, Will Caput worked for a security firm assigned to a penetration test of a major Mexican restaurant chain, scouring its websites for hackable vulnerabilities. So when 40-year-old Caput took a lunch break, he had beans and guacamole on his mind. He decided to drive to the local branch of the restaurant in Chico, California. While there, still in the mindset of testing the restaurant's security, he noticed a tray of unactivated gift cards sitting on the counter. So he grabbed them all—the cashier didn't mind, since customers can load them with a credit card from home via the web—and sat down at a table, examining the stack as he ate his vegetarian burrito.</p> <p>As he flipped through the gift cards, he noticed a pattern. While the final four digits of the cards seemed to vary randomly, the rest remained constant except one digit that appeared to increase by one with every card he examined, neatly ticking up like a poker straight. By the time he finished his burrito, he had a plan to defraud the system.</p> <p>After years of examining the retail gift card industry following that initial discovery, Caput plans to present his findings at the Toorcon hacker conference this weekend. They include all-too-simple tricks that hackers can use to determine gift card numbers and drain money from them, even before the legitimate holder of the card ever has a chance to use them. While some of those methods have been semipublic for years, and some retailers have fixed their security flaws, a disturbing fraction of targets remain wide open to gift card hacking schemes, Caput says. And as analysis of the recently <u>defunct dark web marketplace AlphaBay</u> shows, actual criminals have made prolific use of those schemes too.</p> <p>"You're basically stealing other people's cash through these cards," says Caput, who now works as a researcher for the firm Evolve Security. "You take a small sample of gift cards from restaurants, department stores, movie theaters, even airlines, look at the pattern, determine the other cards that have been sold to customers and steal the value on them."</p> <p>To pull off the trick, Caput says he has to obtain at least one of the target company's gift cards. Unactivated cards often sit out for the taking at restaurants and retailers, or he can just buy one. (Not all</p>

cards change by a value of one, as that first Mexican restaurant did. But Caput says obtaining two or three cards can help to determine the patterns of those that don't.) Then he simply visits the web page that the store or restaurant uses for checking a card's value. From there, he runs the bruteforcing software Burp Intruder to cycle through all 10,000 possible values for the four random digits at the end of the card's number, a process that takes about 10 minutes. By repeating the process and incrementing the other, predictable numbers, the site will confirm exactly which cards have how much value. "If you can find just one of their gift cards or vouchers, you can bruteforce the website," he says.

Once a thief has determined those activated, value-holding card numbers, he or she can use them on the retailer's ecommerce page, or even in person; Caput's written them to a blank plastic card with a \$120 magnetic-strip writing device available on Amazon, and found that most retailers accept his cards without questions. (Caput only asks the store or restaurant to check the card's balance, rather than spend any money from the cards belonging to actual victims.) "It's a pretty anonymous attack," Caput says. "I can go in, order food, and walk out. The person's card says it has \$50 on it, and then it's gone."

Caput has been warning retailers and restaurants about his scheme since he first discovered it nearly two years ago. Potential targets, including Trader Joe's, Macy's, and Taco Bell, have all responded by either taking down their gift card value-checking web pages and requiring users to check their gift cards by phone or by adding CAPTCHAs to their card value-checking web pages, designed to prevent automated programs from bruteforcing gift card numbers.

But other restaurants, retail outlets, and companies, which Caput declined to name on the record, have either failed to implement security measures against his fraud trick or added a defense that he was able to circumvent. He found that many gift card purveyors now use a CAPTCHA on their card value-checking page that he can strip away simply by disabling javascript elements on the page, using the software tool Burp Proxy. That allowed him to carry out the same bruteforce attacks, find the numbers of activated cards, and exploit them just as he had in 2015. Other one-off retailers and regional chains he's tested haven't added CAPTCHAs at all, or use simple incremented numbers on their gift cards that don't even require bruteforcing.

Some retailers' cards use PIN numbers in addition to the number encoded into the card. But that PIN is only required to check the card's balance, not to spend its value, Caput says. And if a hacker really wanted to determine the value of one of those PIN-protected cards, they could bruteforce it with Burp Intruder just as easily as the card's number itself.

Caput points out that even restaurants and retailers that have added robust CAPTCHAs to their gift card value-checking pages can remain vulnerable. If gift cards are left accessible, he can simply grab the entire stack of cards, photograph the back of them, and later place them back in the tray. Then he simply checks on those numbers periodically via the restaurant or retailer's website until the card's been activated. When it is, he can spend whatever money has been added to it.

The vulnerabilities that Caput found aren't merely theoretical. In May security firm Flashpoint [released a report](#) in which the company found hundreds of discussions of "cracked" gift cards on criminal web forums, spiking in the summer of 2016 and again in early 2017, compared with virtually none before 2016. Flashpoint analyst Liv Rowley says one vendor on the dark web marketplace AlphaBay alone had made more than \$400,000 in sales between November of 2016 and July of this year when AlphaBay was shut down by the FBI, largely by selling stolen gift cards for more than a dozen brands, including stores like OfficeMax and Whole Foods. When Flashpoint talked with one of the affected retailers, the company's researchers determined that the seller was indeed using an automated tool to bruteforce activated gift cards, just as Caput has shown. "A lot of gift cards are numbered sequentially, and it appears he or she was just checking them like that," Rowley says.

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HEADLINE

08/31 Inside cyberpirate sting operation

SOURCE	http://www.cnn.com/2017/08/31/us/cyber-pirate-sting-operation-crack99-author-david-hall-declassified/index.html
GIST	<p>(CNN)When they discovered what was going on, US authorities were shocked. A man named Xiang Li was selling high-end defense software from his home in Chengdu, China, to anyone who could pay the going price. It posed a serious threat to America's national security.</p> <p>Li and his website CRACK99 became the focus of an undercover US investigation in 2010, led by former US Navy intelligence officer and federal prosecutor David Locke Hall.</p> <p>Eventually US prosecutors and agents learned that Li's black market clients included an American engineer at NASA and a defense contract employee who worked on software for the radar system on Marine One, the helicopters used to fly the President of the United States.</p> <p>When it was all said and done, Li became the only software pirate ever lured from China to the United States for prosecution, according to Hall. Prosecutors believe CRACK99 racked up a total of \$100 million in sales out of an inventory worth \$1 billion on the black market.</p> <p>CRACK99 made US defense industry software easily available to rival nations like Russia and China, as well as to terrorist groups. American contractors who bought software from CRACK99 for use on defense projects exposed their otherwise secure computer systems to malware and spyware.</p> <p>After an 18-month undercover sting operation, Hall and federal agents from <u>Homeland Security Investigations</u> and the <u>Defense Criminal Investigation Service</u> caught Li red-handed and hauled him back to the US for trial. He was convicted of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and conspiracy to commit criminal copyright infringement and sent to a federal prison in Fort Dix, New Jersey. Li was given a 12-year sentence in 2013 -- described by Hall as the heaviest US criminal copyright infringement sentence ever imposed.</p> <p>CNN spoke with Hall about the operation, which is featured in <u>CNN's Original Series "Declassified,"</u> and is the subject of Hall's book, <u>"CRACK99, The Takedown of a \$100 Million Chinese Software Pirate."</u></p> <p>The riskiest moment of the entire undercover operation, Hall said, took place at a hotel on the island of Saipan, a US territory located in the western Pacific, about 120 miles north of Guam. It was the first time Hall and a team of US undercover agents had come face to face with Li after months of dealing with him online. Once Li admitted he was the man who had sold the illegal software, they arrested him and put him in handcuffs.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/01 Los Angeles launches Cyber Lab
SOURCE	https://cities-today.com/los-angeles-launches-first-us-city-based-cyber-lab/
GIST	<p>Eric Garcetti, <u>Mayor of Los Angeles</u>, has launched America's first city-based <u>Cyber Lab</u> to help thwart cyber attacks against businesses and residents. The new lab places Los Angeles as one of the first cities in the US to share its cyber threat data with the public.</p> <p>The lab, formed in partnership with Cisco, will disseminate information and intelligence based on analysis of more than 1 billion security-related events and over 4 million attempted intrusions into city networks each day. Previously, the city could only handle 45 million cyber security events a week.</p> <p>"Members of the LA Cyber Lab will be able to exchange security alerts and threat intelligence, and update their systems accordingly," Adam Gertz, from the Mayor's Office, told <i>Cities Today</i>. "The goal here is to collaborate with businesses to find technology solutions that keep everyone safe."</p> <p>The lab will alert small and medium-sized business partners to attacks as they occur, and larger businesses can receive automated updates to their own cyber defence systems. There is no cost or obligation to join,</p>

	<p>of which 123 members have signed up so far.</p> <p>The city envisages the platform will evolve into a mutual exchange of threat information with private sector partners, strengthening LA’s capacity to thwart cyber criminals.</p> <p>City officials hope the new lab will be a permanent institution that continues to work with the Los Angeles Community as cyber security threats evolve and use the Cyber Lab as an incubator for innovation in cyber security.</p> <p>“The next phase of the lab will include a test bed for security vendors to test appliances and tools via virtual connections to a live but isolated city network—known colloquially as a ‘honeypot’,” added Gertz. “We will also partner with local universities to test populate the Innovation Incubator with student interns who can gain real world experience in a security environment.”</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Daily Stormer website shuttered again
SOURCE	http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/aug/31/neo-nazi-website-daily-stormer-shutters-again-afte/
GIST	<p>Internet regulators in the European country of Albania are the latest to take action against The Daily Stormer, a notorious neo-Nazi website that’s struggled to stay online since instigating an unprecedented crackdown this month against sites publishing hate speech.</p> <p>The Daily Stormer disappeared Wednesday from its most recent web address, dailystormer.al, after the Albanian government allegedly ordered a regional domain host to eject the infamous website two days after going live at its latest address — one of a handful The Stormer has rotated through since being booted from its .com domain and effectively banned from the internet this month after its publisher mocked a woman killed protesting a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia.</p> <p>“We’re sorry to report that AKEP (the registry of all .AL domains) has gave an order to disable dailystormer.al,” Bulletproof Domain, the company that offered the .al address, said Wednesday. “This is out of the registrar and our control.”</p> <p>The Daily Stormer had violated “clear regulations on racism and hateful agenda,” said Host.al, another major regional domain registrar.</p> <p>AKEP, formally Albania’s Electronic and Postal Communications Authority, did not immediately return an email seeking comment.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Judge: FBI to disclose Clinton probe
SOURCE	http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/aug/31/judge-fbi-must-disclose-hillary-clinton-email-prob/
GIST	<p>A federal judge ordered the <u>FBI</u> on Thursday to disclose more details about how it handled its investigation into <u>Hillary Clinton</u>’s secret email account.</p> <p>U.S. District Judge James E. Boasberg said court papers describing the grand jury subpoenas the <u>FBI</u> obtained to compel information from <u>Mrs. Clinton</u>’s internet service providers can be made public.</p> <p>In doing so, he overruled objections by the Trump administration that had insisted making the information public would violate grand jury secrecy rules.</p> <p>“After reviewing the document in camera, the court concludes that it largely rehashes information already</p>

	made public, thus obviating any need for secrecy,” the judge said. Two groups, Judicial Watch and Cause of Action Institute, have been prodding the government for more information about the Clinton emails, and they cheered the judge’s ruling as a victory for transparency.
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HEADLINE	08/31 Ransomware volume to top 2016 figures
SOURCE	https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/ransomware-infections-course-2016/
GIST	<p>The volume of ransomware attacks this year looks set to outstrip even 2016 figures, with organizations increasingly bearing the brunt of infections, according to new figures from Symantec.</p> <p>The security giant claimed that it has seen 319,000 infections already during the first half of the year. If attacks continue at the same rate, it will be a significant increase on the 470,000 infections the company blocked during the whole of last year.</p> <p>The WannaCry and ‘Petya’ campaigns of May and June respectively have done much to drive up infection rates and could be a worrying sign of things to come, especially for organizations, according to Symantec’s Dick O’Brien.</p> <p>“The impact of WannaCry and Petya makes it quite likely that more attackers will attempt to replicate the tactics used by deploying ransomware as a worm. The propagation mechanisms employed by both ransomware families enabled the threats to spread quickly across an entire computer network. Many consumer computers are not connected to a network, unlike those found in organizations,” he explained.</p> <p>“While WannaCry and Petya also did have the ability to spread across the internet to other vulnerable computers, this means of transmission again largely affected other organizations. Most home internet routers would have blocked infection attempts involving the EternalBlue exploit.”</p> <p>This is partly why ransomware infections of organizations have spiked in recent months. In 2015 and 2016 businesses accounted for around 29% to 30% of infections, versus 42% in the first half of 2017, according to Symantec.</p> <p>On the plus side, although ransomware demands more than tripled during 2016, from an average of \$294 to \$1077, this year has seen them level out at \$544; although this is per machine so costs could soon add up for businesses.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Cyber-squatters target luxury brands
SOURCE	https://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/news/cybersquatters-target-luxury-brands/
GIST	<p>DomainTools has uncovered a widespread trend of cyber-squatters targeting global haute couture brands, with 538 registered domains using the trademarked names of eight of the world’s leading fashion houses.</p> <p>Cyber-squatting is the practice of purchasing domains with the intent of stealing internet traffic from a well-known brand or individual. The firm analyzed domains mimicking Cartier, Givenchy, Louis Vuitton, Burberry, Hermes, Chanel, Prada and Gucci and found hundreds with close-but-no-cigar web addresses. Examples include givenchy[.]com, burberryyuk[.]com, cartierwatches[.]me, hermes-bag[.]us and more.</p> <p>These domains are often used in phishing email campaigns and various other kinds of scams, including pay-per-click ads, for-profit survey sites and social media scams to trick customers into handing over personal details and money for a product.</p> <p>“The ease of creating a domain is great for the average person looking to start their own website, but it is</p>

	a never-ending nuisance for brands that have to monitor for domain squatters,” said Tim Helming, director of product management at DomainTools. “The bigger and more lucrative your brand, the more of a target you become for cyber-criminals.”
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HEADLINE	08/31 Study: IOT devices pwned every 2min.
SOURCE	https://www.scmagazine.com/connected-devices-can-get-pwned-by-attackers-every-2-minutes/article/685542/
GIST	<p>When Johannes Ullrich, dean of research at the SANS Technology Institute, <u>exposed a digital video recorder to the Internet</u> he was probably expecting the worse to happen.</p> <p>His expectations were met, and then some. After being online for just 45 hours, the IoT device had been accessed more than 1,250 times by attackers using the correct login credentials. It should be pointed out that the DVR in the research was rigged to reboot every five minutes so as to allow all login attempts to be more accurately logged. This is because some of the malware that is installed by attackers will disable telnet post-infection in order to prevent other attackers exploiting the now pwned device. It's this that allowed the true scope of the attack to be logged: a successful credentials-based attack once every two minutes on average.</p> <p>This won't come as any great surprise to those within the security research sector, as all IoT honeypot systems are attacked equally ferociously. Indeed, ever since <u>the Mirai malware</u> that seeks out and compromises IoT devices to build offensive botnets launched as the proof of concept that nobody wanted to see, so vendors have been reporting a flow of probing requests on ports 22, 23 and 2323 looking for default credentials.</p> <p>What the SANS research also revealed, courtesy of the nearly 600 logged IPs that were known to the Shodan IoT discovery search engine, was the fact that attackers covered a broad swathe of the world map. Perhaps predictably, the threat actor hotspots appear to be China, South Korea, India and Brazil followed by Russia, the United States and Turkey. This pretty much matches the early geographic spread of Mirai activity. According to Ullrich "we see a pretty steady set of 100,000 to 150,000 sources participating in telnet scans. This problem isn't going away anytime soon."</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Leak: CIA malware targets Windows PCs
SOURCE	https://thehackernews.com/2017/08/cia-boot-sector-malware.html
GIST	<p>A team of hackers at the CIA, the Central Intelligence Agency, allegedly used a Windows hacking tool against its targets to gain persistent remote access.</p> <p>As part of its <u>Vault 7 leaks</u>, WikiLeaks today <u>revealed</u> details about a new implant developed by the CIA, dubbed AngelFire, to target computers running Windows operating system.</p> <p>AngelFire framework implants a persistent backdoor on the target Windows computers by modifying their partition boot sector.</p> <p>AngelFire framework consists five following components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Solartime — it modifies the partition boot sector to load and execute the Wolfcreek (kernel code) every time the system boots up. 2. Wolfcreek — a self-loading driver (kernel code that Solartime executes) that loads other drivers and user-mode applications

3. Keystone — a component that utilizes DLL injection technique to execute the malicious user applications directly into system memory without dropping them into the file system.

4. BadMFS — a covert file system that attempts to install itself in non-partitioned space available on the targeted computer and stores all drivers and implants that Wolfcreek starts.

5. Windows Transitory File system — a new method of installing AngelFire, which allows the CIA operator to create transitory files for specific tasks like adding and removing files to AngelFire, rather than laying independent components on disk.

According to a user manual leaked by WikiLeaks, AngelFire requires administrative privileges on a target computer for successful installation.

The 32-bit version of implant works against Windows XP and Windows 7, while the 64-bit implant can target Server 2008 R2, Windows 7.

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HEADLINE	08/31 Massive email campaign sends 'Locky'
SOURCE	https://thehackernews.com/2017/08/locky-ransomware-emails.html
GIST	<p>Whenever we feel like the Locky ransomware is dead, the notorious threat returns with a bang.</p> <p>Recently, researchers from two security firms have independently spotted two mass email campaigns, spreading two different, but new variants of the Locky ransomware.</p> <p>The campaign spotted by researchers at AppRiver sent out more than 23 million messages containing Locky ransomware in just 24 hours on 28 August across the United States in what appears to be one of the largest malware campaigns in the second half of this year.</p> <p>According to the researchers, the emails sent out in the attack were "extremely vague," with subjects lines such as "please print," "documents," "images," "photos," "pictures," and "scans" in an attempt to convince victims into infecting themselves with Locky ransomware.</p> <p>The email comes with a ZIP attachment (hiding the malware payload) that contains a Visual Basic Script (VBS) file nested inside a secondary ZIP file.</p> <p>Once a victim tricked into clicking it, the VBS file starts a downloader that downloads the latest version of the Locky ransomware, called Lukitus (which means "locked" in Finnish), and encrypts all the files on the target computer, and appends [.]lukitus to the encrypted data.</p> <p>After encryption process ends, the malware displays a ransomware message on the victim's desktop that instructs the victim to download and install Tor browser and visit the attacker's site for further instructions and payments.</p> <p>This Locky Lukitus variant demands a sum of 0.5 Bitcoin (~\$2,300) from victims to pay for a "Locky decryptor" in order to get their files back.</p> <p>This Lukitus attack campaign is still ongoing, and AppRiver researchers had "<i>quarantined more than 5.6 million</i>" messages in the campaign on Monday morning.</p> <p>Sadly, this variant is impossible to decrypt as of now.</p> <p>In separate research, security firm Comodo Labs discovered another massive spam campaign earlier in August, which sent out over 62,000 spam emails containing a new variant of Locky ransomware in just three days in the first stage of the attack.</p>

	Dubbed IKARUSdilapidated , the second variant of Locky ransomware has been distributed using 11,625 different IP addresses in 133 different countries—likely made of a botnet of "zombie computers" to conduct coordinated phishing attacks.
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HEADLINE	08/31 FICO: debit card compromises up 39%
SOURCE	https://www.darkreading.com/endpoint/us-debit-card-compromises-up-39--fico/d/d-id/1329777?
GIST	<p>Compromises of ATMs and point-of-sale (POS) devices rose 21% in the US during the first six months of 2017, compared with the same timeframe one year prior. The number of compromised debit cards rose 39% in the same period, reports software firm FICO.</p> <p>FICO's Card Alert Service monitors ATMs and card readers in the US, and its findings indicate the number of compromises is on pace to set a record high. FICO vice president TJ Joran, who manages FICO's fraud solutions, says the rate of fraud pattern changes has accelerated in the last 24 months.</p> <p>The spike in card compromise should serve as a reminder to cardholders to use caution when using ATMs.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Global firms struggle w/China cyber law
SOURCE	https://www.darkreading.com/cloud/international-firms-struggle-to-adapt-as-chinas-cybersecurity-law-takes-shape/a/d-id/1329717?
GIST	<p>With China's broad-based and controversial Cybersecurity Law officially taking effect on June 1, 2017, the full range of implications for the international business community is just beginning to become clear — and the costs of compliance will likely be high.</p> <p>Since the law was finalized last year, the Cybersecurity Administration of China and other government offices have released a series of more targeted rules aimed at clarifying some of the law's more sweeping statutes, including a set of hardware standards for network operators and guidelines restricting cross-border information transfers, among others.</p> <p>The newest set of regulations, released July 10, governs critical information infrastructure (CII), a category of particularly sensitive network operators that will be subject to an additional level of scrutiny. Though the rules were intended to provide specificity, they still raise many more questions than they answer.</p> <p>What Is CII? The overarching Cybersecurity Law designated CII as a separate class of industries and companies whose data, if damaged, leaked, or destroyed, would constitute a serious threat to national security or public welfare. Communication and information services, electronic governance, financial services, traffic, and major utilities were specifically listed as CII in the original law, but the new rules cast an even wider net.</p> <p>Who Is Likely to Be Affected? Article 18 of the new CII regulations list five broad industry classes within which network operators could be considered CII. Two notable inclusions are likely to have international firms on edge over the coming months.</p> <p>First, cloud computing, big data, and other large-scale public information network services are on the CII list. China is one of the most connected countries in the world, with more than 730 million Internet users underpinning a vast market for data services. China is currently investing heavily in its domestic cloud computing and big data industries, turning a once-sleepy town in Guizhou province into the country's own "big data valley."</p>

The CII label means that companies in this space will have to conform to stringent security checks and data localization laws, maintaining all data on Chinese operations within the country's borders. International companies are already changing business practices to comply: Apple recently announced a partnership with a Chinese company to open a data center in Guizhou, and Airbnb relocated some of its servers to China late last year. Microsoft recently released a custom version of Windows 10 tailored for Chinese government use, saying it's an "honor and a privilege today to be in China."

Second, the CII list wraps up with a vague mention of "other key sectors." In essence, basically any company can be classified as CII as long as the current administration deems it sufficiently key to domestic stability. That degree of regulatory uncertainty poses a significant barrier to entry particularly for new tech companies interested in tapping into the Chinese market.

Leaving the CII list open-ended also underscores the degree to which the Chinese legal infrastructure on cybersecurity is still in flux. Companies under the Article 18 umbrella could be considered CII, but the very next article of the law states that yet another set of regulations for identifying CII operators is still forthcoming and that officials in individual industries will be responsible for designating what counts as CII and what doesn't. Even with this proliferation of regulations, we're still a long way from a cogent, clearly enforceable cybersecurity statute.

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HEADLINE	08/31 Bugs demonstrate social media risk
SOURCE	https://www.darkreading.com/endpoint/new-facebook-instagram-bugs-demonstrate-social-media-risk/d/d-id/1329781?
GIST	<p>Researchers at Kaspersky Lab recently discovered cyberattacks on Instagram and Facebook Messenger intended to steal credentials and spread malware, respectively. Both instances demonstrate the potential danger when an attacker seeks power in a social network.</p> <p>The two attacks, while similar in their use of social networks, were otherwise different in nature. The Instagram attacks were manual and targeted high-profile victims. The Facebook campaign used advanced tactics to infect a large and indiscriminate pool of users.</p> <p>Instagram's vulnerability exists in mobile version 8.5.1, which was released in 2016. Attackers can simply select "reset password," capture the request using a Web proxy, select a victim, and submit a request to Instagram's server with the target's unique identifier or username. The server returns a JSON response with the victim's personal data, like email and phone number.</p> <p>"The attacks are quite labor intensive," Kaspersky Lab researchers explain. "Each one has to be done manually since Instagram uses mathematical calculations to prevent attackers from automating the request form."</p> <p>Hackers were found on an underground forum exchanging personal credentials for celebrity accounts. Researchers reported the bug to Instagram on August 29; on August 30, the photo-sharing app had warned users of the vulnerability and issued a fix. Users are advised to update their apps to the latest version and alert Instagram to emails about password restoration.</p> <p>David Jacoby, senior security researcher for Kaspersky Lab's Global Research and Analysis Team, picked up on the Facebook Messenger-driven malware when he received a suspicious note from a distant contact. Within minutes, he realized he had received an advanced form of multi-platform malware/adware, which was using multiple domains to prevent tracking.</p> <p>Infected messages contain a shortened link, which leads victims to a Google Doc containing an image resembling a fake video player with the sender's profile photo. Google Chrome users who click the link are redirected to a fake YouTube page, which prompts them to download a fake Chrome extension. If</p>

installed, it spreads malicious links to the victims' online friends.

Chrome was the browser highlighted in a blog post co-authored by Jacoby and Frans Rosén, security advisor at Detectify, who was also investigating the Facebook malware. The two determined it was clear Chrome was a targeted browser for spreading the attack to other victims; in other browsers, ads were displayed and adware was downloaded on the victim's machine.

Jacoby and Rosén found several Chrome extensions were used in this campaign. All were newly created with stolen code, and similar names, to legitimate extensions. Each contained obfuscated background script that would only fetch an external URL if installed from the Chrome Webstore. Locally installed versions would not trigger an attack.

"The script would like a page on Facebook that was hardcoded in the script," researchers explain. "This was most likely used by the attackers to count the amount of infected users by keeping an eye on the amount of likes on this page."

Indeed, when observed, the "like" count quickly rose from 8,900 at one point to 32,000 a few hours later.

Google Chrome's security team disabled all malicious extensions to stop the spread of attack as much as possible; however, attackers had stolen all the access tokens from victims' accounts. This means attackers can still access these profiles, even if victims have changed their passwords, signed out, or disabled platform settings.

"We are currently discussing this with Facebook," Jacoby and Rosén report, "but at the moment it seems like there is no simple way for a victim to revoke the token the attackers stole."

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HEADLINE	08/31 Guilty plea in software tax theft
SOURCE	http://www.seattletimes.com/business/technology/bellevue-restaurant-owner-pleads-guilty-to-tax-theft-using-software-that-hid-cash/
GIST	<p>The owner of a Bellevue restaurant pleaded guilty Wednesday to using software that deleted transactions and allowed her to steal an estimated \$395,000 in sales taxes.</p> <p>Yu-Ling Wong, the owner of Taiwanese restaurant Facing East, has agreed to pay \$300,000 in restitution to the Department of Revenue. The Everett man who sold Wong the software <u>pleaded guilty in December</u> and was <u>sentenced</u> to 18 months in prison in April.</p> <p>This was the first prosecution in the United States for the use of sales suppression software, according to a news release from the office of Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson, which prosecuted the case.</p> <p>"Sales suppression software helps dishonest businesses steal from Washington taxpayers," Ferguson said in the statement.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Bots flood FCC seeking public comments
SOURCE	http://www.theolympian.com/news/nation-world/national/article170556542.html
GIST	<p>WASHINGTON - The Federal Communications Commission on Thursday swam in a sea of nearly 22 million comments after a deadline passed for the public to offer opinions on an issue that could shape the internet for years to come.</p> <p>But the comments may settle little. Millions of them appeared to come from robotic networks, or bots, and were the equivalent of spam mail.</p>

The confusion generated by the fake comments left powerful telecommunications and cable companies battling with citizen advocacy groups over the true nature of public sentiment ahead of an open FCC meeting Sept. 28. Both sides said public opinion was on their side.

AT&T, the communications conglomerate, claimed that “most” of the 21.8 million comments sent to the FCC “appear to us to be fraudulent.”

“Millions of comments were generated using phony email addresses. Millions of others were generated using duplicative email or physical addresses. And still others originated overseas,” Joan Marsh, AT&T’s executive vice president of regulatory and state external affairs, wrote in a blog post.

She said that “nearly 450,000 comments were filed using Russian addresses.”

Once fake comments are weeded out, Marsh said, “the large majority of commenters” support the position of AT&T and other internet providers that could open the door to differential rates for consumers for the content they want on the internet.

At stake is a principle known as net neutrality that bars internet service providers from slowing down access to the internet, or forcing consumers and companies to pay more for certain types of web content.

Rules enforcing net neutrality were codified by the FCC in 2015 with strong support from then-President Barack Obama. Opponents describe it as overregulation and seek to repeal the 2-year-old rules.

Defenders of net neutrality say a rollback, as proposed by the Trump administration, could create a tiered system that would favor large internet players. They suggested that opponents may be behind the avalanche of fake comments in order to discredit the entire public airing process.

“I’ve seen a lot of dirty tricks out there,” said Timothy Karr, a senior director of Free Press, an advocacy group that supports the digital rights of internet users. He said filling the FCC mailbox with form letters and spam comments appeared to be part of a drive “to delegitimize every comment.”

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HEADLINE	08/31 Judge: Yahoo to face litigation in breach
SOURCE	http://www.reuters.com/article/us-verizon-yahoo-breach-idUSKCN1BB25Q
GIST	<p>(Reuters) - A U.S. judge said Yahoo must face nationwide litigation brought on behalf of well over 1 billion users who said their personal information was compromised in three massive data breaches.</p> <p>Wednesday night’s decision from U.S. District Judge Lucy Koh in San Jose, California, was a setback for efforts by Verizon Communications Inc, which paid \$4.76 billion for Yahoo’s Internet business in June, to limit potential liability.</p> <p>The breaches occurred between 2013 and 2016, but Yahoo was slow to disclose them, waiting more than three years to reveal the first. Revelations about the scope of the cyber attacks prompted Verizon to lower its purchase price for the company.</p> <p>In a 93-page decision, Koh rejected Yahoo’s contention that breach victims lacked standing to sue, and said they could pursue some breach of contract and unfair competition claims.</p> <p>“All plaintiffs have alleged a risk of future identity theft, in addition to loss of value of their personal identification information,” the judge wrote.</p> <p>Koh said some plaintiffs also alleged they had spent money to thwart future identity theft or that fraudsters had misused their data.</p>

Others, meanwhile, could have changed passwords or canceled their accounts to stem losses had Yahoo not delayed disclosing the breaches, the judge said.

While many claims were dismissed, Koh said the plaintiffs could amend their complaint to address her concerns.

"We believe it to be a significant victory for consumers, and will address the deficiencies the court pointed out," John Yanchunis, a lawyer for the plaintiffs who chairs an executive committee overseeing the case, said in an interview. "It's the biggest data breach in the history of the world."

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Terror Conditions

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HEADLINE	09/01 Homegrown extremists 'more threat' to UK
SOURCE	http://news.sky.com/story/homegrown-extremists-more-threat-to-uk-than-returning-islamic-state-jihadists-11014711
GIST	<p>The threat to the UK from returning Islamic State jihadists is not as significant as police and intelligence agencies had originally feared, security sources have told Sky News.</p> <p>However, the threat from homegrown extremists has reached unprecedented levels, with significant numbers of people being directly encouraged or instructed to carry out attacks.</p> <p>One source said: "The threat picture has diversified enormously in recent months and is likely to remain severe for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>"As IS comes under pressure in Raqqa, as they did in Mosul, the impetus to go and join them has started to dissipate, but their message remains potent for those willing to listen.</p> <p>"Part of the problem is that propaganda had democratized the threat so that self-starters and lone actors can view material that is pumped out encouraging them to get out with knives or vehicles to launch these low-tech attacks."</p> <p>More than 800 Britons have travelled to Syria and Iraq to fight with ISIS.</p> <p>Police and security services feared that, as the terror group crumbled in the Middle East, hundreds would find their way back home as fully-trained killers.</p> <p>But the actual number of jihadist returners is significantly less than they expected.</p> <p>Around 350 British citizens have already returned to the UK. Some have been prosecuted, but police believe most of the others were probably not directly associated with IS.</p> <p>Sky News has been told up to 200 British fighters are believed to have been killed in the Middle East, with the remainder either unwilling or too afraid to return for fear of prosecution.</p> <p>The source said: "We now think that fewer are likely to return from Syria and Iraq than had previously been feared, partly because they are likely to have been killed in the fighting as it escalates and partly because those that survive are likely to seek refuge in other countries.</p> <p>"The threat from those who have never left the UK for Syria and Iraq is the predominant threat - they are still highly motivated and increasingly they are taking direction from individuals in the Middle East."</p> <p>Authorities tell us they are monitoring around 100 British jihadists who they believe may return, so that</p>

	<p>threat has not gone away.</p> <p>Security minister Ben Wallace MP said: "I think what has happened is IS has very cleverly switched tactics.</p> <p>"They have realised that they cannot get the supply of fighters into Syria and Iraq and indeed they have been defeated, predominantly in Iraq.</p> <p>"But at the same time, IS think they need to spread terror, so what we have seen them do is use more inspiration, use more of the internet to radicalise those people to take action at home, and do whatever they can to kill people."</p> <p>But terrorism experts say the authorities have an ever greater challenge this time around.</p> <p>Raffaello Pantucci, director of International Security Studies at the Royal United Services Institute, said: "The difficulty for the security services is that they have now got a threat picture that is now so diffuse; it's incredibly easy for anyone to pick up a knife, get into a car, and commit something, which from their perspective, they would consider a terrorist act in advance of their cause."</p> <p>UK authorities believe there are as many as 3,500 individuals here who have an Islamist extremist mindset and may be susceptible to messages encouraging them to turn to violence.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Chicago driver arrested on terror charges
SOURCE	http://wgntv.com/2017/08/31/west-suburban-man-charged-with-attempting-to-support-isis/
GIST	<p>CHICAGO — A 31-year-old truck driver was arrested Thursday at his suburban Chicago home on federal terrorism charges filed in New York. He is accused of being part of a U.S. network that raised money for would-be terrorists to travel to Syria to join Islamic State militants and another designated terrorist group, the al-Nusra Front.</p> <p>Dilshod Khusanov, who is married and originally from Uzbekistan, made an initial appearance in U.S. District Court in Chicago hours after his 6 a.m. arrest at his Villa Park home. He stood before the judge in a red-checkered shirt and with his ankles shackled above red tennis shoes. Several relatives looked on from courtroom benches.</p> <p>When the U.S. Magistrate Judge M. David Weisman asked if he understood the process by which he would likely be sent to Brooklyn, New York, to answer the charges, Khusanov responded: "I don't understand what this means. ... Can you explain in more detail?" The judge then did explain further.</p> <p>In a two-count indictment unsealed Thursday in U.S. District Court in Brooklyn, Khusanov is charged with one count of conspiracy to provide material support to foreign terrorists and one count of attempting to provide material support to foreign terrorists. Each count carries a maximum 15-year prison term.</p> <p>Court papers supporting his detention argue Khusanov poses a danger to the community and is a risk to flee the United States, including because he is a citizen of Uzbekistan and still has family in the Central Asian nation. Judge Weisman scheduled another hearing in Chicago for Sept. 7.</p> <p>Filings link Khusanov to four others indicted in New York previously for being part of the same network, as well to two others who aspired to go to Syria. One, Abdurasul Juraboev, pleaded guilty in 2015. He allegedly threatened attacks in the U.S., mentioning killing the president or possibly setting off a bomb at Coney Island.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/01 EU security chief: 50,000 militants Europe
SOURCE	https://www.thenational.ae/world/europe/50-000-militant-islamists-in-europe-warns-top-security-chief-1.624849
GIST	<p>The EU's top security expert has warned that up to 50,000 militant Islamists live in Europe.</p> <p>Gilles de Kerchove, the organisation's anti-terror chief, told Spain's El Mundo newspaper that 35,000 of those are in the UK alone, prompting fears of further violence after a wave of recent terrorist attacks.</p> <p>Out of those radicals living in the UK, 3,000 were "worrying" for MI5 but only 500 were under constant attention by the authorities, he said.</p> <p>"We must select those who are really worrying and the most dangerous, and they should be monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week," he said.</p> <p>Limited resources mean only a fraction of the hundreds of suspected Islamist extremists at large can be subject to intensive 24/7 surveillance at any one time.</p> <p>It comes as security sources told Sky News that the threat to the UK from homegrown extremists is much more significant than that posed by returning ISIL jihadists.</p> <p>Police and intelligence agencies initially feared that, as the terror group lost influence in the Middle East, extremists would return to Britain and continue the attacks at home.</p> <p>In fact, far fewer jihadists returned than expected, partly because of fear of prosecution and partly because they have been killed in the fighting.</p> <p>However, the threat from homegrown extremists has shot up, with self-starters and 'lone wolves' being encouraged to carry out 'low-tech attacks' with their own cars and weapons.</p> <p>One source said: "The threat picture has diversified enormously in recent months and is likely to remain severe for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>"As [ISIL] comes under pressure in Raqqa, as they did in Mosul, the impetus to go and join them has started to dissipate, but their message remains potent for those willing to listen.</p> <p>"Part of the problem is that propaganda had democratised the threat so that self-starters and lone actors can view material that is pumped out encouraging them to get out with knives or vehicles to launch these low-tech attacks."</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Caliphate crumbles, what next for ISIS?
SOURCE	http://www.newsweek.com/isis-global-where-next-jihadi-group-its-caliphate-crumbles-639068
GIST	<p>The caliphate, at least on land, is ending. The Islamic State militant group (ISIS) no longer controls Mosul, the northern Iraqi city where its leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi declared its creation three years ago, almost to the day. Now, Raqqa, its other grand prize, is vulnerable. A Kurdish-Arab coalition backed by U.S.-led coalition forces has captured more than half of the city.</p> <p>If and when Raqqa is liberated, all that will remain in the hands of the jihadi group are the eastern Syrian cities of Deir Ezzor and Mayadin, the northwestern Iraqi city of Tal Afar, and the lawless borderlands that connect the country with Iraq.</p> <p>Now, security services in Europe are increasingly concerned about foreign fighters returning to their home countries, where they might commit attacks individually or as part of a cell, such as during the Paris attacks. But ISIS's influence has spread to other corners of the world, with affiliates looking to piggyback</p>

on their brand, or actively working with the group to capture territory.

Here are the areas of the world where ISIS and its influence could pose the greatest threat to security.

Middle East

AFGHANISTAN (KHORASAN PROVINCE)

The Islamic State in **Afghanistan**—known locally as Khorasan Province, or ISIS-K—was formed in January 2015 and is named after a historical region that was made up of modern-day Afghanistan and Pakistan. It is active in several areas of Afghanistan, most notably the eastern region of Nangarhar, as well as the northern provinces of Badakhshan, Jawzjan and Faryab, and the western provinces of Ghor and Baghdis.

A large majority of its members derive from rival radical Islamist groups such as the Taliban. The affiliate has carried out several mass-casualty attacks since the beginning of 2016, particularly in the Afghan capital, Kabul, where it has attacked a Shiite mosque and protesters from the ethnic Hazara minority in suicide bomb blasts. Washington has sought to target the affiliate's leaders in the country and last month killed its top leader, Abu Sayed, in a drone strike in Kunar Province.

SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi Arabia is frequently accused of inspiring ISIS, possibly even funding it, but it denies these claims. Riyadh points out that with an estimated 2,500 Saudis fighting overseas for the group (as of October 2015), it is one of the most at risk countries in the world when it comes to foreign fighters returning home. There are, of course, similarities between the radical strain of Sunni Islam followed by ISIS and the ultra-conservative Wahhabi faith that is Saudi Arabia's state religion, but for decades the Saudi state has faced the threat of Islamist-inspired terrorism by young men who consider the ruling family apostates for their alliance with the West, particularly the U.S. Saudi Arabia has suffered dozens of terrorist attacks over the past decade, often targeting its Shiite minority, and Riyadh fears that Saudi fighters returning from Iraq and Syria will seek to continue their violent jihad at home.

ISIS has its own affiliate in Saudi Arabia, known as Najd Province, which has claimed suicide bomb attacks on Shiite mosques in the country, as well as in neighboring Kuwait, killing more than 50 people. The group has also claimed responsibility for an attack on one of Islam's holiest sites, Medina, carrying out a suicide bombing at the Prophet's Mosque in July 2016.

YEMEN

With a war raging in **Yemen** since March 2015, between Houthi rebels and pro-government forces backed by a Saudi-led coalition, an ISIS affiliate emerged amid the chaos, carrying out suicide bombings against Shiite mosques in the capital, Sana'a. The security vacuum has allowed the group to vie for dominance with the more powerful Al-Qaeda wing, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, which the U.S. military is conducting a drone campaign against. ISIS's affiliate is yet to seize territory in the country, unlike AQAP, which captured the port city of Mukalla in 2015 and held on to it for a year. But it has presented its more brutal tactics to a Yemeni audience, beheading and executing prisoners and rival militants.

North Africa

EGYPT (SINAI PROVINCE)

The ISIS affiliate in **Egypt**, known as Sinai Province, developed from the radical militant group Ansar Beit al-Maqdis. It pledged allegiance to ISIS and rebranded in November 2014. The faction is waging an insurgency against Egyptian security forces and conducting attacks against Coptic Christians, mostly in the restive northern region of the Sinai Peninsula that remains under a state of emergency, but it has also claimed responsibility for attacks in Cairo, Tanta and Alexandria.

It is also responsible for what is believed to be the deadliest attack ever committed by an ISIS affiliate, the downing of a Russian Metrojet flight over the Sinai Peninsula with an explosive device in October 2015, killing all 224 people on board. Its members include Al-Qaeda defectors, jihadists from the neighboring Gaza Strip, and Egyptian radical Islamists who have returned from conflict zones in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan.

LIBYA

Since the fall of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi in October 2011, **Libya** has been wracked with instability. As ISIS rose to prominence in mid-2014, leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi dispatched a top aide, Iraqi national Abu Nabil al-Anbari, to create ISIS's affiliates in the country—Tripoli Province in the west, Barqa Province in the east, and Fezzan Province in the south. The jihadist group carried out grizzly executions of Ethiopian Christians on the Mediterranean coast, set up training camps near the cities of Derna and Sabratha for foreign fighters, and eventually captured the central coastal city of Sirte in mid-2015, imposing its brutal brand of radical Islamic law over the population in Gaddafi's former hometown. Pro-government forces ousted the group from Sirte in December 2016, and the U.S. began an airstrike campaign on key ISIS positions in the country. But, without territory, the group remains influential here, only last week beheading 11 troops aligned to the eastern Libyan strongman Khalifa Haftar.

TUNISIA

There is no clear ISIS affiliate in **Tunisia**. It was reported that the Ansar al-Sharia group in the country had committed itself to both ISIS and Al-Qaeda in 2014, but ISIS has not officially accepted its *bayah*, or pledge of allegiance. But ISIS has claimed three deadly attacks in Tunisia, all believed to have involved the group. These were the Bardo museum attack, the Sousse beach massacre and a bomb blast against Tunisian presidential guards in the capital, Tunis. All took place in 2015 and left dozens dead.

ISIS fighters in Libya have also crossed into Tunisia, launching an attack on the border town of Ben Guerdane in March 2016. Tunisian security forces ultimately foiled the attempted takeover.

Tunisia is the largest exporter of foreign fighters to ISIS's ranks, and as the group continues to lose territory in Iraq and Syria there are fears that many will return to the country. Since 2015, the government has stepped up counter-terrorism raids and arrests in a bid to quash a radical Islamist insurgency in one of the only success stories of the Arab Spring revolts.

Sub-Saharan Africa

NIGERIA (ISLAMIC STATE WEST AFRICA PROVINCE)

Boko Haram, which has been conducting attacks against security forces in northern **Nigeria** since 2009, pledged allegiance to ISIS in March 2015, the group's first affiliate in west Africa. It rebranded as the Islamic State West Africa Province. It has continued to carry out suicide bombings and its attacks have crossed into neighboring Cameroon, Niger and Chad. It has previously captured territory but a Nigerian military offensive ousted the group from most of the areas it had controlled, forcing its members to retreat to its heartland, the Sambisa Forest in Borno State.

It split into two factions in 2016, with ISIS naming a new leader for the breakaway as Abu Musab al-Barnawi in an attempt to replace the elusive Abubakar Shekau. This led to a power struggle between the two factions. Experts said ISIS rejected Shekau as the affiliate's chief because of Boko Haram's attacks against Muslims and Sunni mosques while it was under his leadership. The group regularly uses women in its suicide bombings and more than 20,000 people have been killed in eight years of the group's insurgency.

BURKINA FASO (ISLAMIC STATE IN THE GREATER SAHEL)

ISIS accepted the pledge of allegiance from a new faction in the **Sahel** known as the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, in October 2016. Its leader was named as Abu Walid al-Sahrawi, an Algerian jihadist who had fought for the Al-Qaeda-linked Al-Mourabitoun in North Africa. As in Yemen and Afghanistan, the ISIS affiliate in the area that stretches across six African countries from Senegal to Chad is overshadowed by more dominant radical Islamist groups, in this case Al-Qaeda's affiliates—Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, Ansar Dine and al-Mourabitoun. But it has claimed several attacks in Burkina Faso, including one in October 2016 that left three soldiers dead near the Malian border.

Burkina Faso and the Sahel offer ISIS-linked fighters opportunity. The lawless desert region is open to smuggling and the movement of fighters, while Burkina Faso is threatened by the mere fact that it does not have institutions or security forces that are strong enough to deal with well-armed and well-funded

extremist groups.

Europe

RUSSIA (CAUCASUS PROVINCE)

ISIS's affiliate in the Russian republics of the **Caucasus** was established in June 2015, and it claimed its first attack in the region in the same year. It was formed by jihadists who defected from the Al-Qaeda-aligned Islamic Caucasus Emirate (ICE). The U.S. designated the group's purported leader, Aslan Avgazarovich Byutukaev, a former chief of ICE, as a terrorist in July 2016.

ISIS has regularly named Russia as a target of its operations for its support of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and bombing of the group in Syria. Many of the group's top commanders have been Chechens or come from former Soviet Republics, such as its now-dead Minister of War Abu Omar al-Shishani, a Georgian-Chechen. The group has carried out several attacks against Russian forces in the Muslim-majority republics of Dagestan and Chechnya. On Monday, ISIS claimed responsibility for an attack by two men armed with knives that killed a police officer in the Caspian Sea town of Kaspiysk in Dagestan.

Asia

PHILIPPINES (ABU SAYYAF)

Abu Sayyaf was once known as a ragtag group of radical Islamist bandits who carried out criminal activity such as hostage-taking for financial gain in the **Philippines**. But it has beheaded two Canadians and one German national since January 2016. Its leader Isnilon Hapilon, the country's most-wanted militant, directed the armed campaign by Abu Sayyaf militants—some of whom fought for ISIS in Iraq and Syria—and allied fighters from the Maute group on the southern city of Marawi in May. The fighters took control of parts of the city in Mindanao province and fighting is ongoing three months later. It has beheaded civilians and used them as human shields in the assault. Evidence has also emerged that ISIS's leadership in Syria funneled funds to the Asian militants before its takeover. The group, now with greater battlefield experience, has become the most serious ISIS threat to southeast Asian security.

Ones To Watch

Algeria

An ISIS-inspired affiliate emerged in Algeria in 2014, known as Jund al-Khalifa, or the Caliphate Soldiers in Algeria, but it quickly faded from influence. In September 2014, it captured French hostage Herve Gourdel, beheading him after a deadline for France to halt its participation in coalition airstrikes passed. Algerian security forces have largely kept a lid on the threat of a large-scale jihadist attack in the country ever since, though that threat still remains as ISIS-aligned militants continue to carry out smaller attacks against security forces.

Bangladesh

ISIS claimed a gun and knife attack in the Bangladeshi capital, Dhaka, in July 2016. Militants besieged a popular cafe, killing 22 people, mostly foreign nationals. Radical Islamists have targeted westerners, Christians, Hindus, secular writers, and LGBT activists in the country. But the government says that the attackers are not ISIS or Al-Qaeda, but domestic groups Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh and Ansarullah Bangla Team. While officials have cast doubt on ISIS's links in the country, there is evidence of its inspiration for several attacks, and its influence could continue to grow here.

Gaza Strip

While there is no official ISIS affiliate in the coastal enclave that remains under an Israeli economic blockade, there are small pockets of ISIS support in Gaza. Salafis pledging support for the group have claimed responsibility for rocket attacks on Israel. Earlier this month, the first suicide bomb attack against Hamas forces inside the Gaza Strip took place, killing one border guard when he tried to prevent the bomber from crossing into Egypt. Officials said the culprit was an ISIS sympathizer.

While Palestinian militant group Hamas retains control of the territory, it faces an increasing threat from jihadists both within and outside of its territorial control.

In June 2015, ISIS released a video threatening to overthrow Hamas for not being strict enough on enforcing religious law. Israel accuses Hamas of working with ISIS in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, which borders both Israel and the Gaza Strip. Israel is not only concerned that ISIS's Egyptian affiliate could infiltrate its own territory, but also Gaza, potentially overthrowing Hamas rule.

Somalia

An ISIS affiliate is vying for influence with the Al-Qaeda-affiliated Al-Shabab in the East African state, claiming several suicide bomb attacks against security forces and a hotel in Mogadishu. The faction, mainly based in the semi-autonomous Puntland region to the north of Somalia, remains small compared to the size and influence of Al-Shabab, which formed in 2006 and has since waged a bloody insurgency against the Somali and Kenyan governments.

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HEADLINE	09/01 Philippines' battle against ISIS rages on
SOURCE	https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/01/world/asia/marawi-philippines-isis-civilians.html
GIST	<p>MARAWI, Philippines — The houses still standing after more than three months of fierce urban combat in Marawi are barely holding on — pocked with bullet holes on the outside and blackened by fire from within.</p> <p>“I really can’t say when we will be able to finish this,” said Brig. Gen. Melquiades Ordiales, with the Philippine Marines. A cackle of small-arms fire and the thuds of mortar shell explosions could be heard in the distance as soldiers targeted another pocket of militant fighters.</p> <p>Rubble and debris had been swept from the street around him, making room for a large group of journalists, including three from The New York Times, who were allowed to visit a newly recaptured part of the city this week.</p> <p>With the battle now past the 100-day mark, it was the first time in months that the military had allowed the press in. And though the tour was tightly choreographed, there was no hiding either the <u>profound destruction from airstrikes and artillery barrages</u>, or the fact that the fighting remains intense. Just Thursday, three soldiers were reported killed, and 52 more were injured.</p> <p>Marawi and the surrounding area, on the southern island of Mindanao, was once home to 200,000 people, the biggest Muslim-majority city in the <u>Philippines</u>. It is now a mostly emptied-out field of wreckage, contested by a dwindling group of Islamist militants who claim loyalty to the Islamic State, and by the government of <u>President Rodrigo Duterte</u>, who has vowed to root them out no matter the cost.</p> <p>That cost has been grim, particularly for the civilians who had already felt like a mistreated minority and have now been displaced by the battle. Their frustration is rising.</p> <p>According to the Red Cross, 300,000 people from the city and surrounding area have fled the fight, many taking up residence in camps just six miles away. Cramped inside hot tents with donated bedsheets to separate their rooms, most people here desperately want to return home but are coming to grips with the fact that they are stuck.</p> <p>“They told us to pack for only three days,” said Esnimeh Dago, 22. She was a makeup artist in Marawi and fled with her mother, grandmother and 1-year-old son on the first day of the militants’ assault.</p> <p>“The government is giving us food and some support, but we want to go back to our jobs,” she said. “Now it looks like there is nothing to go back to.”</p> <p>This area has been a wellspring for resistance to the Philippine government for a long time — by insurgent movements, Islamist groups, criminal gangs, sometimes all three together.</p>

	<p>The militants who seized Marawi in May have pledged loyalty to the Islamic State, also known as <u>ISIS</u> or ISIL. At the battle's start, there were thought to be about 600 fighters, led by the Maute brothers and their gang along with Isnilon Hapilon, the longtime leader of the militant group Abu Sayyaf and now the head of the Islamic State branch in the Philippines.</p> <p>The attraction of the ISIS brand is obvious: a boost to recruiting and a fearsome reputation to graft onto their own. But in recent months, counterterrorism experts have acknowledged that <u>real aid from the Islamic State's central command</u> — mostly financial, though including a few dozen foreign fighters — has strengthened the local group.</p> <p>Now, the government contends that only a few dozen militants are alive in the city. But the battle's end does not seem near, and the fact that the fighters have held on so long is troubling to many.</p> <p>"I would guess that even the insurgents are surprised at how long this has gone on," said Zachary M. Abuza, a professor at the National War College in Washington who specializes in Southeast Asian security issues.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Philippines: militant tactics from Iraq, Syria
SOURCE	http://www.benarnews.org/english/news/philippine/militant-tactics-08312017151050.html
GIST	<p>Islamic State-inspired Filipino militants who still hold a portion of the battle-ravaged southern city of Marawi have adapted tactics they learned from the Middle East, including in the Iraq and Syria wars, a senior Marine official said Thursday.</p> <p>Specifically, Maj. Gen. Danilo Pamonag said, sniper attacks had intensified to deter advancing Philippine government troops from retaking militant-held positions.</p> <p>"They used previous war tactics in the Middle East. What they are employing here are the same as in Iraq and Syria," said Pamonag, commander of the Joint Task Force Trident spearheading the assault to retake Marawi, a once bustling city of 200,000 reduced to a virtual wasteland of pockmarked buildings.</p> <p>Additionally, a 2013 urban assault by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in Zamboanga city, served as a model for the militants, the general said.</p> <p>The MNLF was a rebel group the signed a peace deal with Manila in 1996, leading to the creation of a Muslim self-rule area in the south. Many MNLF rebels became politicians, but the area remained poor despite the millions of pesos poured into the region for economic development projects.</p> <p>The MNLF staged the 2013 uprising to protest the peace deal with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a breakaway faction that has since signed its own pact with government.</p> <p>More than 200 rebels and troops were killed in the urban warfare that lasted three weeks before the government finally reestablished control. An estimated 100,000 people were left homeless.</p> <p>"They learned a lot too from the war in Zamboanga because there they strengthened their sniper and bomb-making squad," Pamonag said.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Lebanon declares 'victory' over ISIS
SOURCE	http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/syria-lebanon-isis-evacuation-criticised-stranded-deir-ezzor-iraq-a7923036.html
GIST	After a week-long campaign to oust <u>Isis</u> from its territory on the Lebanon-Syria

	<p>border, <u>Lebanese</u> President Michel Aoun has declared the country has been victorious over the militant group - but angry Iraqi and US coalition officials have pointed out that in fact, the jihadists have just been bussed over the border to become someone else's problem.</p> <p>In their first ever publicly acknowledged evacuation deal, rather than fight to the death in the pockets in the border mountains still under Isis control, fighters agreed to a <u>Hezbollah</u>-brokered evacuation plan which saw 300 men and their families bussed over the border back into Syria on Monday.</p> <p>The decision was met with outrage in <u>Iraq</u> and by the US-led international coalition against Isis, which, along with the Syrian army, is fighting for control of the militants' last areas of control in northeast <u>Syria</u> and on the border with Iraq.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 EU: Britain home to 35K Islamist fanatics
SOURCE	http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/08/31/britain-home-35000-islamist-fanatics-country-europe-top-official/
GIST	<p>Britain is home to 35,000 Islamist fanatics, more than any other country in Europe, the EU anti-terror chief has said.</p> <p>Gilles de Kerchove told Spain's El Mundo newspaper: "The United Kingdom has identified 20,000 to 35,000 radicals.</p> <p>"Of these, 3,000 are worrying for MI5, and of those 500 are under constant and special attention.</p> <p>"France has 17,000. Spain many less, but more than 5,000 I suppose. In Belgium almost 500 have been to Syria and there are around 2,000 radicals or more.</p> <p>"I wouldn't like to put a concrete figure on it, but (in Europe) tens of thousands, more than 50,000.</p> <p>"We must select those who are really worrying and the most dangerous, and they should be monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week."</p> <p>Mr de Kerchove said it was vital that European intelligence agencies and police properly analyse and share the data they collect.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Claim: AQ group mining uranium for Iran
SOURCE	https://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/al-qaida-affiliate-mining-uranium/2017/08/31/id/811016/
GIST	<p>Radical Islamic terrorists in Africa are mining uranium and plan to send it to Iran, according to a new report.</p> <p>Fox News reported Thursday that al-Qaida affiliate al-Shabaab is working with a regional Islamic State (ISIS) network in Somalia. The groups have seized control of a uranium mine and are currently strip mining the ore.</p> <p>The revelations were detailed in an Aug. 11 letter prepared by Somalia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Yusuf Garaad Omar and sent to U.S. Ambassador to Somalia Stephen Schwartz. Fox News posted a copy of the letter.</p> <p>"This issue can be summed up in a single word: uranium," Omar wrote. "Al-Shabaab forces have captured critical surface exposed uranium deposits in the Galmudug region and are strip mining triuranium octoxide for transport to Iran."</p>

	<p>Uranium is used for nuclear fuel and nuclear weapons. Iran signed an international agreement in 2015 that severely curbed its nuclear activities, although it's not entirely clear if Iran is abiding by the terms.</p> <p>"Only the United States has the capacity to identify and smash Al-Shabaab elements operating within our country," Omar's letter reads. "The time for surgical strikes and limited engagement has passed, as Somalia's problems have metastasized into the World's problems."</p> <p>The Iran nuclear deal was signed under former President Barack Obama and has been highly criticized by Republicans, who say it did not do enough to stop Iran's nuclear ambitions. This month, Iran's President Hassan Rouhani threatened to restart his country's nuclear program.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/01 Afghanistan reaches out to Pakistan
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/afghan-president-reaches-peace-neighbor-pakistan-49557972?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>Afghan President <u>Ashraf Ghani</u> in his Eid al-Adha message has reached out to neighbor Pakistan offering "comprehensive negotiations" to bring peace to their troubled relationship.</p> <p>Like most Muslim countries, <u>Afghanistan</u> celebrates the Islamic holiday on Friday while in Pakistan the holiday is celebrated on Saturday. It commemorates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son.</p> <p>"Peace with Pakistan is our national agenda," said Ghani while also urging insurgents to lay down their weapons.</p> <p>Afghanistan routinely accuses Pakistan of harboring <u>Taliban</u> insurgents, while Islamabad says its enemies have found sanctuaries in Afghanistan.</p> <p>The two countries also squabble relentlessly over the border that separates their two countries. Known as the Durand Line, Afghanistan refuses to accept it as the international border. Firefights between the armies have broken out as Pakistan seeks to fence it.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 US: ISIS leader probably still alive
SOURCE	http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/isis-leader-baghdadi-still/2017/08/31/id/810970/
GIST	<p>The U.S. commander of forces fighting the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria believes the militants' top leader is still alive. That's contrary to Russia's claims that it probably killed him in an airstrike.</p> <p>Army Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend tells reporters he's seen "some indicators in intelligence channels" that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is alive. He did not elaborate.</p> <p>Russian officials claimed in June there was a "high probability" that al-Baghdadi had died in a Russian airstrike on the outskirts of Raqqa, Syria, in May.</p> <p>Townsend spoke to reporters at the Pentagon from his headquarters in Baghdad. He says U.S. forces are actively searching for Baghdadi. He says if they find him, they probably will kill him rather than capture him.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Pentagon orders more troops to Afghanistan
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SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/james-mattis-signs-orders-for-additional-afghanistan-troops/
GIST	<p>Defense Secretary Mattis has signed orders for the additional <u>troops to Afghanistan</u>, and they will start moving in the next few days, according to CBS News' David Martin.</p> <p>Speaking with reporters at the Pentagon Thursday, he wouldn't give the exact number but said the troops deployed will include advisers and fire support, that is, artillery. Mattis said he won't disclose the number of troops until after he testifies before Congress on Sept. 6. But that number is 3,800, and that about half of them will come from the 82nd Airborne.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Russia FSB uncovers ISIS attack plot
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/russia-security-agency-uncovers-attack-plot-detains-49536428?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>Russia's top domestic security said Thursday it has detained two suspects from ex-Soviet Central Asia accused of plotting attacks on civilians in Moscow on behalf of the Islamic State group.</p> <p>The Federal Security Service, or FSB, said the suspects were preparing to launch the attacks on Friday, the beginning of the school year in <u>Russia</u>.</p> <p>The agency said one of the suspects was planning to carry out a suicide bombing. It said a powerful homemade explosive device was found at his apartment.</p> <p>Another man was preparing to attack civilians with an ax and put out a video statement pledging adherence to the IS. The suspect had contacted IS recruiters and received instructions from the group, the FSB said.</p> <p>President <u>Vladimir Putin</u> said in April that some 9,000 militants, about half of them from Russia and the rest from ex-Soviet Central Asian nations, have joined the Islamic State in <u>Syria</u>.</p> <p>Putin has said that a key goal for the Russian military campaign in Syria is to destroy the militants there and prevent them from coming back home.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Catalan officials deny US attack warning
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/catalan-officials-deny-us-warning-attack-barcelona-49534368
GIST	<p>Regional authorities in Catalonia on Thursday denied news reports that U.S. anti-terrorism officials had warned them of an attack targeting Barcelona, but acknowledged that they did receive tips of possible attacks from other sources that they deemed not credible enough.</p> <p>Catalan regional interior chief Joaquim Forn said regional police were not warned by the CIA or the National Counterterrorism Center in the U.S. about the Aug. 17 van attack on Barcelona's famous Las Ramblas boulevard that killed 14 people. Forn added that such warnings are typically made through state channels.</p> <p>Barcelona-based El Periodico newspaper reported that the U.S. sent a warning on May 25 to regional police, specifically mentioning Las Ramblas. Other Spanish media outlets published similar stories.</p> <p>Regional police senior officer Josep Lluís Trapero said there were generic warnings of an attack, including one received May 25, but he said both Spanish and Catalan authorities considered them not reliable.</p> <p>He said the warnings did not come from the CIA or the NCTC but he gave no details on their source.</p>

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HEADLINE	08/31 Syria troops seize mountain near ISIS
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/latest-official-urges-protection-raqqa-civilians-49536142?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>Syrian activists and Iranian state TV say Syrian troops and allied forces have seized a strategic mountain overlooking Deir el-Zour province, which is mostly controlled by Islamic State militants.</p> <p>Syrian government forces control part of the provincial capital of the same name and its airport, but have been besieged by IS for years.</p> <p>Russia, which is providing air support to Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces, says capturing the oil-rich Deir el-Zour province is the current military priority.</p> <p>The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights says the advancing forces gained control of the Bishri Mountains on Thursday. Iran's state-run Al-Alam TV also reported the advance.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 ISIS convoy stuck after US airstrikes
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/hands-hezbollah-body-iranian-killed-49533089?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>A convoy of Islamic State militants being evacuated from the Lebanon-Syria border was moved to another Syrian government-held area Thursday after their passage to IS-held territory further east was blocked by U.S.-led airstrikes.</p> <p>More than 300 militants and their families are in the convoy of buses after vacating the border area as part of a Hezbollah-negotiated deal to transport them to an IS-held town in eastern <u>Syria</u> near the Iraqi border.</p> <p>The deal has angered Iraq and the U.S., which launched airstrikes Wednesday to block the convoy's advance.</p> <p>After being stuck for hours at an exchange point, the buses moved further north to a government-controlled area while negotiations continued in search of a new way to reach an IS-held area further east.</p> <p>The militants revealed the locations of the remains of Lebanese soldiers captured in 2014 in exchange for safe passage through Syrian government-held territory to an IS-held area near the Iraqi border.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Iraq PM: Tal Afar 'liberated' from ISIS
SOURCE	http://www.cnn.com/2017/08/31/middleeast/iraq-tal-afar-isis/index.html
GIST	<p>(CNN)Iraqi forces have seized the strategically important town of Tal Afar from ISIS, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said Thursday.</p> <p>An operation to retake the northwestern town, captured by the extremists on June 16, 2014, <u>began 10 days ago</u>.</p> <p>Tal Afar was the last town still under the control of ISIS militants in Iraq's Nineveh province following the liberation of Mosul, about 45 miles to the east.</p> <p>"The joy of victory has been completed and the entire province of Nineveh has become in the hands of our</p>

	<p>heroic forces," al-Abadi said, in a statement released Thursday by his media office.</p> <p>"I declare to you that Tal Afar has joined the liberated Mosul and returned to the homeland."</p> <p>Al-Abadi also issued a warning to any fighters for ISIS, also known as Daesh, who remain in Iraq.</p> <p>"We say to the criminals of Daesh: Wherever you are, we are coming for liberation, and you have no choice but to die or surrender."</p> <p>The US-led coalition against ISIS, which has been backing the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in their battle, congratulated them in a statement Thursday.</p> <p>"Following their historic liberation of Mosul and now a swift and decisive victory in Tal Afar, the ISF have shown, once again, they are an increasingly capable force that can protect the Iraqi people, defeat ISIS within Iraq and secure the country's borders," said Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend, commander of US and coalition forces in Iraq and Syria.</p>
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Suspicious, Unusual

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HEADLINE	09/01 Guam: missile calls not pranks; tests calls
SOURCE	http://www.guampdn.com/story/news/2017/09/01/guam-agency-retracts-prank-calls-info-says-test-calls-were-legitimate-ballistic-missile-were-not-pra/623973001/
GIST	<p>The Offices of Guam Homeland Security and Civil Defense retracted a <u>statement</u> released Friday morning about what they thought was a prank call.</p> <p>They issued a correction hours after releasing a public statement denouncing an automated phone call from a toll free number 866-609-8026.</p> <p>Residents reported getting a call from that number and hearing an automated message stating, "Exercise, exercise, exercise. Inbound ballistic missile."</p> <p>GHS/OCD researched the number and thought it was a spoof number, according to their statement. The automated calls were actually legitimate, and were supposed to be sent to a limited number of people, according to GHS/OCD.</p> <p>"Further research with our partners in Joint Region Marianas revealed that the JRM Regional Operations Center did conduct a test of their internal mass notification system as part of a routine emergency management exercise designed to maintain a high level of readiness to respond to threats," GHS/OCD said in a statement.</p> <p>JRM intended to send the message to a limited audience "but inadvertently triggered the external mass notification function."</p> <p>JRM recommended that people do not block the 866-609-8026 phone number. Guam Homeland Security had initially advised people not to answer the calls and to block the number before the retraction.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Hanford fined over unidentified powder
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/737126/energy-department-penalized-16k-over-unidentified-powder/
GIST	RICHLAND, Wash. (AP) — The state of Washington has levied a \$16,000 fine for failure to identify a white powder on the Hanford Nuclear Reservation.

	<p>The penalty is against the U.S. Department of Energy and its cleanup contractor at the Plutonium Uranium Extraction Plant.</p> <p>The Washington state Department of Ecology assessed the penalty after trying for more than a year to get the powder identified.</p> <p>Before it was closed in the 1980s, the PUREX plant made most of the plutonium for the nation's arsenal of nuclear weapons.</p> <p>The Ecology Department says the white powder was first discovered in 2015, and was still unidentified as recently as April. The agency says that if the powder is a dangerous waste, it must be cleaned up.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 'Zombie' drug impacts another UK city
SOURCE	http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4840100/Zombie-drug-spice-takes-Lincoln.html
GIST	<p>A set of horrifying photographs of people passed out after taking spice has given a shocking insight into how the 'zombie' drug is taking over another city in Britain. The drug users have been found lying on shop floors, slouched in a phone box and lying in a daze beside a memorial to the war dead in Lincoln in recent days.</p> <p>Business owners in the cathedral city say the addicts, who are normally young white men, pester their customers, shout abuse and beg people for change.</p> <p>One pub said the users were putting families off coming inside, while workers say the addicts are making them afraid to come into the office in the morning.</p> <p>Residents are in fear of being approached by addicts hooked on former legal highs like Spice, which is known to leave users in an aggressive or catatonic state.</p> <p>The city introduced a ban on legal highs in April 2015, but problems remain - and one businesswoman compared the users to characters in TV's The Walking Dead.</p> <p>Lincolnshire Police has acknowledged the problem is still there and is vowing to clamp down on people caught taking legal highs such as Spice and Mamba. But there is confusion about who is responsible for dealing with people who may have committed a criminal offence, but may also have health or mental health problems, and may require assistance from drug support bodies.</p> <p>How smoking a spice joint is akin to smoking up to 100 with cannabis</p> <p>As addictive as heroin and crack, the drug costs just £5 per bag. Smoking a single spice joint is akin to smoking up to 100 containing normal cannabis – and addiction can take hold in just three days.</p> <p>It has left addicts suffering severe psychotic episodes, hallucinations, vomiting and even seizures.</p> <p>Ministers outlawed possession of the Class B drug last year, but there is confusion amongst police over whether those caught with it can be arrested.</p> <p>Officers also say the drug has become more potent as supply has shifted from shops to streets. The drug's relative cheapness has also made spice popular among the homeless and in prisons.</p> <p>In Manchester, police and ambulance chiefs admitted they were struggling to cope with the number of call outs to spice users who were collapsing in the city centre daily. It is estimated that 96 per cent of the city's young homeless are hooked on the drug.</p>

	<p>Lancashire Police said it dealt with 120 spice-related incidents in 2016/17, compared with just 18 between April 2014 and March 2015. It is also estimated that an ambulance is called to British jails every 42 minutes as a consequence of a spice epidemic in prisons. Last year, ambulances were called 12,576 times, an increase from 6,677 in 2014, figures from England's ten ambulance services revealed.</p> <p>Such psychoactive substances have also been linked to a rise in violence against staff and inmates, prisoner blackouts, seizures and heart attacks.</p> <p>Each call-out costs about £300 so the bill for all incidents in 2015-16 was £3.7million.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Mukilteo residents still cutoff by landslide
SOURCE	http://www.king5.com/news/local/mukilteo-residents-still-cut-off-6-months-after-landslide/469828030
GIST	<p>A hillside gave way over the winter blocking the only legal way in and out of Ken Livingston's Mukilteo home. He figured the city would clear it within a few days. That was six months ago.</p> <p>"It's not right," he said. "The city has an obligation to protect the community and to keep public roads open."</p> <p>Landslides are nothing new along the stretch of 61st Place West in the city's Smuggler's Gulch neighborhood. What is new is how long this one has taken to clear.</p> <p>"It's kind of an unbelievable situation," said Livingston.</p> <p>Engineers determined the slope was and still is too dangerous for anyone to clear the road. The city closed it to all traffic.</p> <p>Officials even sent letters to the four homes impacted saying not even firefighters or medics would be allowed to use the road.</p> <p>With no other options, Livingston and his neighbors grabbed their shovels and cleared one lane of the debris so they could get in and out. They routinely have to move "road closed" signs that the city has put up.</p> <p>A clearly frustrated Public Works Director Mick Matheson said Mukilteo is now involved in a dispute with the owner of the home where the slide happened. Each side says the other is responsible for the mess with the Livingstons stuck, quite literally, in the middle.</p> <p>"We understand it creates a hardship for the residents that rely on this road for access to their homes, but it's a very dangerous situation," said Matheson.</p> <p>Matheson said the danger zone that needs to be fixed is beyond that right of way, and if city workers were to touch that land they would be trespassing.</p> <p>As summer turns to what will be another wet winter, Matheson said it isn't a matter of if, but when another slide happens along 61st Place.</p> <p>"It's undetermined when that road will reopen," he said.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 State Fair WWII internment exhibit
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SOURCE	http://www.king5.com/news/local/state-fair-visitors-can-re-live-wwii-internment-in-exhibit/469152671
GIST	<p>The Washington State Fair in Puyallup will feature an exhibit on Japanese internment where visitors can step into the past and re-live what the camps were like.</p> <p>Not many people know that close to 8,000 Japanese Americans were forced to live under the grandstands at the Puyallup fairgrounds for months in 1942 before being sent off to World War II American concentration camps. The military called the fairgrounds the Puyallup Assembly Center (PAC) but the incarcerated called it "Camp Harmony."</p> <p>In the video, Eileen Yamada Lamphere (from left), Elsie Yotsuuye Taniguchi and Sharon Sobie Seymour stuff pillowcases with straw. Yotsuuye Taniguchi remembers doing this as a 5-year-old when her family first arrived at the fairgrounds.</p> <p>Visitors to the exhibit can try their hand at it, as well as other interactive activities. The exhibit includes re-created horse stall and barracks apartments, period suitcases and clothing and pot belly stoves from camp.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Homeless student population spikes
SOURCE	http://q13fox.com/2017/08/31/homeless-student-population-spikes-in-tacoma-and-seattle/
GIST	<p>TACOMA, Wash. — There is a room geared just for homeless students at Tacoma Public Schools. It's a place where McKinney Vento program coordinators stockpile donations. Everything from blankets, school supplies and jackets are stored there as the weather gets colder.</p> <p>"We were grateful to get anything," Keyonia Stabler said. Because Stabler and her children had nothing.</p> <p>They ended up homeless after their Tacoma townhouse became infested with mice.</p> <p>Stabler says no matter where she spent the night she made sure her 3 sons attended school the next morning.</p> <p>"I was busing my kids from North Seattle all the way to Tacoma," Stabler said.</p> <p>Then Tacoma Public Schools reached out telling Stabler about the McKinney Vento program.</p> <p>"I wouldn't have known the resource was even there," Stabler said.</p> <p>By law school districts have to help homeless students get to school through bus passes, taxis and transportation reimbursements.</p> <p>Coordinators with the McKinney Vento program identify families who are homeless doing everything they can to provide not only transportation but other basic needs.</p> <p>"It's a huge obstacle," McKinney Vento liaison Linda Seferian said.</p> <p>Like many districts Tacoma Public Schools has little funding when it comes to dealing with homeless students, a population that is spiking.</p> <p>"Every year we are identifying at least another 100 more kids per year," Seferian said.</p> <p>Seferian says there are about 1,800 homeless students in Tacoma Public Schools. More than half of them are in elementary schools.</p> <p>"We have supply of socks, socks are always needed," Seferian said.</p>

<p>Return to Top</p>	<p>In Seattle Public Schools, the number is even higher.</p> <p>“Last year we identified over 4,600 students,” Natalie Long said.</p> <p>That's a 20% increase in one year and every single case is heartbreaking.</p> <p>“I had a student share with me that he had to sleep in the trunk of the car while his sister was sleeping in the back seat and his parents in the front seat,” Long said.</p> <p>Long is a family support worker who works at Dunlap Elementary school in South Seattle. Last year she helped up to 80 homeless students at Dunlap.</p> <p>So a state grant pumping more than \$1.5 million to help homeless students across the state couldn't have come at a better time.</p> <p>“That is going to allow us to get another liaison in the district,” Seferian said.</p> <p>The Seattle district says they will also hire more staff with the extra funds.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Men attempt robbery in pub full of police
SOURCE	http://q13fox.com/2017/08/31/men-accused-of-trying-to-hold-up-bar-during-police-retirement-party/
GIST	<p>WOODLAWN, Md. – Two would-be armed robbers bungled <u>an attempt to rip off</u> a Maryland bar when they walked into police retirement party Tuesday evening, according to The Baltimore Sun.</p> <p>The officers were celebrating the career of a veteran sergeant at Monaghan’s Pub in Woodlawn when Joseph McInnis III, 21, and Tyree McCoy, 22, walked in around 5:30 p.m., according to the paper. The masked duo allegedly demanded money from the register and ran out.</p> <p>Several off-duty officers followed them down the street and arrested McInnis and McCoy not far from the pub. Both face charges of armed robbery, theft and related offenses.</p> <p>“I’m sure that they weren’t planning on there being a large room filled with police officers,” Baltimore County police Officer Jennifer Peach <u>told WBAL</u>.</p> <p>Bar owner Jack Milani told The Baltimore Sun he was surprised anyone would target Monaghan’s, which is located across the street from a police precinct.</p> <p>“It’s kind of odd you would even attempt it,” Milani told the paper. “[Officers] are always in here. There was a decent amount of them.”</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Ga. cop to driver: we only kill black people
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/chief-recommends-firing-of-cobb-county-officer-greg-abbott-who-told-motorist-we-only-kill-black-people/
GIST	<p>COBB COUNTY, Ga. -- A Georgia police chief said he is recommending the firing of a lieutenant who was <u>heard on video during a traffic stop saying, "we only kill black people."</u></p> <p>Dashcam video from July 2016 shows a woman in a car telling Cobb County police Lt. Greg Abbott she was scared to move her hands in order to get her cellphone. According to <u>television station WSB-TV</u>, Abbott, who is also white, interrupts her and says, "But you're not black. Remember, we only shoot black</p>

	<p>people. Yeah. We only kill black people, right?"</p> <p>Police Chief Mike Register told reporters Thursday that he has started the process to terminate Abbott's employment.</p> <p>Register said the comments were inappropriate regardless of the context in which they were uttered.</p> <p>"In no context can I tolerate this type of language," Register said during a Monday press conference. "I don't think we can sit here and justify any type of language when the verbiage is what we heard on that video."</p> <p>Register, who has led the department since June, said the comments are "not indicative of the culture I'm trying to instill here."</p> <p>Register said he learned of the comments from television station WSB on Friday, which obtained the video through an open records request. Abbott had been placed on administrative duty pending the outcome of the investigation.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Mystery: new space sound bursts
SOURCE	http://www.newsmax.com/Newsfront/nasa-space-aliens-astronomy/2017/08/31/id/811014/
GIST	<p>A new burst of 15 short pulses of radio emission from a distant galaxy have astronomers wondering if they are from rapidly spinning neutron stars or black holes — or are signs of spacecraft from alien civilizations, <u>CBC News reported</u>.</p> <p>The new fast radio burst — FRB 121102 — just milliseconds long, is the only known one to be repeating, something astronomers cannot yet explain, the outlet reported.</p> <p>Earlier this month, astronomers in West Virginia not only found the 15 bursts, but found them at a higher radio frequency than was ever observed before, they reported in <u>The Astronomer's Telegram</u>.</p> <p>"It's not surprising that we've found 15 more from this source; we've been detecting many of them over the past few years," Paul Scholz, an astronomer who studies FRBs with the Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory in Penticton, B.C., told CBC News.</p> <p>"The one thing that's unique about these [new ones] is that they are at a higher frequency than we've ever seen before."</p> <p>It also behaves like no other FRB, CBC News reported. Usually, objects that emit similar signals, such as pulsars, do so in a smooth fashion across many frequencies.</p> <p>"So it's kind of perplexing," Scholz said of FRB 121102, adding: "It's a mystery that needs to be solved."</p>
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HEADLINE	08/21 Ex-FARC rebels change name to—FARC?
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/colombian-rebels-change-farc-49550617?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>Former leftist rebels in <u>Colombia</u> have chosen a familiar-sounding, if polarizing, acronym for their fledgling political movement — FARC.</p> <p>At a meeting Thursday 900 members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia voted overwhelmingly to change the group's name to the Alternative Communal Revolutionary Forces,</p>

	<p>scrubbing any reference to its armed past. Since both names in Spanish carry the acronym FARC, its common use name will remain unchanged.</p> <p>The decision came as part of a weeklong congress in which the rebels are mapping out their future political strategy after having laid down their weapons as part of a historic peace deal.</p> <p>While ex-combatants are proud of their insurgent past it remains to be seen if regular Colombians are ready to vote for a party with a name they've grown to associate with violence during the nation's half-century conflict.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 FBI: 'kidnapped' woman killed self
SOURCE	http://komonews.com/news/local/fbi-woman-who-reported-being-kidnapped-then-found-dead-in-trunk-killed-self
GIST	<p>HELENA, Mont. (AP) — A woman who reported being kidnapped at a Montana rest stop and was found dead in the trunk of her car in Spokane, Washington, killed herself, the FBI said Thursday.</p> <p>Rita Maze, 47, was found Sept. 7, 2016, near Spokane International Airport. The FBI said its investigation concluded she died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound.</p> <p>Rochelle Maze has said her panicked mother called on the evening of Sept. 6 and reported she'd been abducted at a rest stop along Interstate 15 between Helena and Great Falls, was riding around in the trunk of a car and didn't know where she was. She said she feared her abductor had access to her gun, which was in her purse.</p> <p>The call cut off and the family was unable to reach her again, Rochelle Maze said.</p> <p>Law enforcement officers pinged Maze's cellphone to determine her location. Her family learned her bank card had been used to make purchases of about \$25 at gas stations in the towns of Kingston, Idaho, and Ritzville, Washington.</p> <p>An officer who called Maze's cellphone during the search said someone answered the phone and the officer heard gunshots, then silence. The gun was found in the trunk.</p> <p>Just days later, Spokane County investigators indicated that they did not believe there was any danger to the community.</p> <p>In December, the FBI announced it was not actively seeking suspects in the case.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 'Proud Boys' back in Canada military
SOURCE	http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-41116175
GIST	<p>Canadian military personnel who were suspended after crashing an indigenous ceremony are back on regular duty.</p> <p>The five men identify as members of the "Proud Boys", a right-wing group with chapters in the US and Canada.</p> <p>They were suspended after they crashed a 1 July protest in Halifax, Nova Scotia marking Canada's history of atrocities against indigenous people.</p> <p>After being reinstated, they were warned "further inappropriate behaviour could result in their</p>

	<p>termination".</p> <p>On Thursday, the military announced that four of the five men had returned to duty in early August, and that the fifth man under review had voluntarily quit.</p> <p>Rear-Admiral John Newton told reporters during a press conference that the men had displayed "behaviour inconsistent with the values and ethics expected of those in uniform" and that they would remain on probation.</p> <p>"If they fail. they are gone," he said. "This is not lightweight punishment."</p> <p>On Facebook, the Proud Boys describe themselves as "a fraternal organisation of Western Chauvinists who will no longer apologise for creating the modern world". Founded by Vice co-founder Gavin McInnes, members have organised rallies in Denver, Colorado and participated in recent protests in Charlottesville, Virginia.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Antidepressants found in fish brains
SOURCE	https://phys.org/news/2017-08-antidepressants-fish-brains-great-lakes.html
GIST	<p>Human antidepressants are building up in the brains of bass, walleye and several other fish common to the Great Lakes region, scientists say.</p> <p>In a new study, researchers detected high concentrations of these drugs and their metabolized remnants in the <u>brain</u> tissue of 10 <u>fish</u> species found in the Niagara River.</p> <p>This vital conduit connects two of the Great Lakes, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, via Niagara Falls. The discovery of antidepressants in aquatic life in the river raises serious environmental concerns, says lead scientist Diana Aga, PhD, the Henry M. Woodburn Professor of Chemistry in the University at Buffalo College of Arts and Sciences.</p> <p>"These active ingredients from antidepressants, which are coming out from <u>wastewater treatment</u> plants, are accumulating in fish brains," Aga says. "It is a threat to biodiversity, and we should be very concerned. "These drugs could affect fish behavior. We didn't look at behavior in our study, but other research teams have shown that antidepressants can affect the feeding behavior of fish or their survival instincts. Some fish won't acknowledge the presence of predators as much."</p> <p>If changes like these occur in the wild, they have the potential to disrupt the delicate balance between species that helps to keep the ecosystem stable, says study co-author Randolph Singh, PhD, a recent UB graduate from Aga's lab.</p> <p>"The levels of antidepressants found do not pose a danger to humans who eat the fish, especially in the U.S., where most people do not eat organs like the brain," Singh says. "However, the risk that the drugs pose to biodiversity is real, and scientists are just beginning to understand what the consequences might be."</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 SPLC: 3 Army bases Confederate icons
SOURCE	http://dailycaller.com/2017/08/31/splc-says-army-bases-are-confederate-monuments-that-need-to-come-down/
GIST	The Southern Poverty Law Center has declared three of America's largest Army bases Confederate monuments "with the potential to unleash more turmoil and bloodshed" if activists don't "take down" the Army bases.

	<p>The SPLC included Fort Hood in Texas, Fort Bragg in North Carolina and Fort Benning in Georgia on a <u>list</u> of 1,500 “Confederate monuments” that the SPLC claims could inspire more violence like what happened in Charlottesville, Virginia last month. All three bases are named after Confederate military leaders.</p> <p>The list makes no mention of renaming namesakes of Confederate monuments; taking the monuments down is presented as the only option. The recent leftist campaign against Confederate namesakes and monuments has included a willingness among some <u>far-left actors</u> to destroy government property to accomplish their goals.</p> <p>“More than 1,500 Confederate monuments stand in communities like Charlottesville with the potential to unleash more turmoil and bloodshed,” the SPLC website states. “It’s time to take them down.”</p> <p>The SPLC is urging leftists around the country to flood their local newspapers with letters to the editor urging the removal of the monuments, although the group’s campaign against the army bases could serve as a dogwhistle for left-wing militants willing to take extreme measures to take down Confederate monuments.</p>
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Crime, Criminals

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<p>HEADLINE</p>	<p>09/01 FBI, DHS warn of more ‘antifa’ attacks</p>
<p>SOURCE</p>	<p>http://www.politico.com/story/2017/09/01/antifa-charlottesville-violence-fbi-242235</p>
<p>GIST</p>	<p>Federal authorities have been warning state and local officials since early 2016 that leftist extremists known as “antifa” had become increasingly confrontational and dangerous, so much so that the Department of Homeland Security formally classified their activities as “domestic terrorist violence,” according to interviews and confidential law enforcement documents obtained by POLITICO.</p> <p>Since well before the Aug. 12 rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, turned deadly, DHS has been issuing warnings about the growing likelihood of lethal violence between the left-wing anarchists and right-wing white supremacist and nationalist groups.</p> <p>Previously unreported documents disclose that by April 2016, authorities believed that “anarchist extremists” were the primary instigators of violence at public rallies against a range of targets. They were blamed by authorities for attacks on the police, government and political institutions, along with symbols of “the capitalist system,” racism, social injustice and fascism, according to a confidential 2016 joint intelligence assessment by DHS and the FBI.</p> <p>After President Donald Trump’s election in November, the antifa activists locked onto another target — his supporters, especially those from white supremacist and nationalist groups suddenly turning out in droves to hail his victory, support crackdowns on immigrants and Muslims and to protest efforts to remove symbols of the Confederacy.</p> <p>Those reports appear to bolster Trump’s insistence that extremists on the left bore some blame for the clashes in Charlottesville and represent a “problem” nationally. But they also reflect the extent that his own political movement has spurred the violent backlash.</p> <p>In interviews, law enforcement authorities made clear that Trump’s inflammatory rhetoric and policies — first as a candidate and then as president — helped to create a situation that has escalated so quickly and extensively that they do not have a handle on it.</p> <p>“It was in that period [as the Trump campaign emerged] that we really became aware of them,” said one senior law enforcement official tracking domestic extremists in a state that has become a front line in</p>

clashes between the groups. “These antifa guys were showing up with weapons, shields and bike helmets and just beating the shit out of people. ... They’re using Molotov cocktails, they’re starting fires, they’re throwing bombs and smashing windows.”

Almost immediately, the right-wing targets of the antifa attacks began fighting back, bringing more and larger weapons and launching unprovoked attacks of their own, the documents and interviews show. And the extremists on both sides have been using the confrontations, especially since Charlottesville, to recruit unprecedented numbers of new members, raise money and threaten more confrontations, they say.

“Everybody is wondering, 'What are we gonna do? How are we gonna deal with this?’” said the senior state law enforcement official. “Every time they have one of these protests where both sides are bringing guns, there are sphincters tightening in my world. Emotions get high, and fingers get twitchy on the trigger.”

Even before Charlottesville, dozens and, in some cases, hundreds of people on both sides showed up at events in Texas, California, Oregon and elsewhere, carrying weapons and looking for a fight. In the Texas capital of Austin, armed antifa protesters attacked Trump supporters and white groups at several recent rallies, and then swarmed police in a successful effort to stop them from making arrests.

California has become another battleground, with violent confrontations in Berkeley, Sacramento and Orange County leading to numerous injuries. And antifa counter-protesters initiated attacks in two previous clashes in Charlottesville, according to the law enforcement reports and interviews.

Rallies are scheduled over the next few months across the country, including in Texas, Oregon, Missouri and Florida. Authorities are particularly concerned about those in states where virtually anyone, including activists under investigation for instigating violence, can brandish assault rifles in public.

Tensions have gotten so heated that after activists traded accusations after Charlottesville, a rumor circulated online that antifa would try and shut down the massive Sturgis, South Dakota, motorcycle rally because there were too many Confederate flags and Trump signs. It wasn’t true, but it prompted an outpouring of pleas by attendees for anti-fascists to come so they could assault them. One displayed a “Sturgis Survival Kit” for potential antifa protesters, complete with a tourniquet, morphine, body cast and defibrillator.

“Both the racists and a segment of violent antifa counter-protestors are amped for battle in an escalating arms race, where police departments are outmaneuvered, resulting in increasingly violent dangerous confrontations,” said former New York City police officer Brian Levin, who has been monitoring domestic militants for 31 years, now at the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University, San Bernardino. “It’s an orchestrated dance. The rallies spill over into social media and then even more people show up at the next rally primed for violent confrontation.”

In recent decades, authorities have focused almost exclusively on right-wing groups as the most likely instigators of domestic terrorist violence, especially since Timothy McVeigh blew up the Oklahoma City federal building in 1995, killing 168 people.

More recently, the antifa groups, which some describe as the Anti-Fascist Action Network, have evolved out of the leftist anti-government groups like “Black bloc,” protesters clad in black and wearing masks that caused violence at events like the 1999 Seattle World Trade Organization protests. They claim to have no leader and no hierarchy, but authorities following them believe they are organized via decentralized networks of cells that coordinate with each other. Often, they spend weeks planning for violence at upcoming events, according to the April 2016 DHS and FBI report entitled “Baseline Comparison of US and Foreign Anarchist Extremist Movements.”

Dozens of armed anti-fascist groups have emerged, including Redneck Revolt and the Red Guards, according to the reports and interviews. One report from New Jersey authorities said self-described antifa groups have been established in cities including New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and San Francisco.

Some of the DHS and FBI intelligence reports began flagging the antifa protesters before the election. In one from last September, portions of which were read to POLITICO, DHS studied “recent violent clashes ... at lawfully organized white supremacist” events including a June 2016 rally at the California Capitol in Sacramento organized by the Traditionalist Workers Party and its affiliate, the Golden State Skinheads.

According to police, counter-protesters linked to antifa and affiliated groups like By Any Means Necessary attacked, causing a riot after which at least 10 people were hospitalized, some with stab wounds.

At the Sacramento rally, antifa protesters came looking for violence, and “engaged in several activities indicating proficiency in pre-operational planning, to include organizing carpools to travel from different locations, raising bail money in preparation for arrests, counter-surveilling law enforcement using three-man scout teams, using handheld radios for communication, and coordinating the event via social media,” the DHS report said.

The intelligence assessments focus less on guns than handmade weapons used by antifa, with photos of members brandishing ax handles and shields, often with industrial-sized bolts attached to create crude bayonets. A senior state law enforcement official said, “A whole bunch of them” have been deemed dangerous enough to be placed on U.S. terrorism watch lists.

The FBI and DHS had no comment on that, or on any aspect of the assessments, saying they were not intended to be made public.

By the spring of 2016, the anarchist groups had become so aggressive, including making armed attacks on individuals and small groups of perceived enemies, that federal officials launched a global investigation with the help of the U.S. intelligence community, according to the DHS and FBI assessment.

The purpose of the investigation, according to the April 2016 assessment: To determine whether the U.S.-based anarchists might start committing terrorist bombings like their counterparts in “foreign anarchist extremist movements” in Greece, Italy and Mexico, possibly at the Republican and Democratic conventions that summer.

Some of the antifa activists have gone overseas to train and fight with fellow anarchist organizations, including two Turkey-based groups fighting the Islamic State, according to interviews and internet postings.

In their April 2016 assessment, the DHS and FBI said the anarchist groups would likely become more lethal if “fascist, nationalist, racist or anti-immigrant parties obtain greater prominence or local political power in the United States, leading to anti-racist violent backlash from anarchist extremists.”

The assessment also said the anarchist groups could become more aggressive if they seek to “retaliate violently to a violent act by a white supremacist extremist or group,” they acquire more powerful weapons or they obtain the financial means to travel abroad and learn more violent tactics.

Several state law enforcement officials said that all of those accelerating factors have come to pass. And recent FBI and DHS reports confirm they are actively monitoring “conduct deemed potentially suspicious and indicative of terrorist activity” by antifa groups.

But one of the internal assessments acknowledged several significant “intelligence gaps,” including an inability to penetrate the groups’ “diffuse and decentralized organizational structure,” which made it difficult for law enforcement to identify violent groups and individuals. Authorities also “lack information to identify the travel patterns linking U.S. and foreign anarchist extremists,” the assessment said.

The two agencies also said in their April 2016 assessment that many of the activities the groups engaged in “are not within the purview of FBI and DHS collection” due to civil liberties and privacy protections, including participating in training camps, holding meetings and communicating online.

	In another assessment this past August, DHS warned about the potential for unprecedented violence at Charlottesville. The agency also acknowledged gaps in its understanding of antifa, saying it had only “medium confidence” in its assessments regarding both the affiliations among the various groups and the motivation of attackers.
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HEADLINE	08/31 Ontario, Canada in midst of mob war?
SOURCE	https://news.vice.com/story/ontario-may-be-in-the-midst-of-a-mob-war
GIST	<p>A string of suspicious fires and dozens of unsolved violent attacks this year is stoking fears of an ongoing mob war across southern Ontario.</p> <p>Most recently, a fire broke out at a home on Mellings Drive in Woodbridge, north of Toronto, early Wednesday morning. It’s the same home that York Regional Police found bullet holes in two other times this summer. Though the home was <u>under guard</u> at the time of the fire, nobody was inside, a police spokesperson told reporters. There were no injuries during the two alleged shootings.</p> <p>These incidents come on the heels of a massive <u>explosion</u> in June at the Caffé Corretto, also in Woodbridge, one of 11 cafés and social clubs in the area raided by organized crime investigators in 2016 who <u>seized</u> 74 illegal gambling machines as part of Project Oeider. And in May, Angelo Musitano, the younger brother of well-known mobster Pasquale who runs a bakery, was fatally gunned down outside of his home, near Hamilton. The pair pleaded <u>guilty</u> in 1997 to conspiring to kill a crime boss in Niagara.</p> <p>While former Hamilton undercover officer Paul Manning <u>told</u> the Toronto Star in July that the fires and killings likely symbolize a power struggle to fill the void left after the death of Canada’s most top mafia don Vito Rizzuto in 2013, police forces still working on the cases haven’t been making those connections publicly.</p> <p>“The way we are investigating each of these incidents is on its own,” York Regional Police spokesperson Constable Andy Pattenden told VICE News. “We haven’t put out any links in these cases at this point in time, but I can tell you that our investigators who are looking at all these cases obviously keep an open mind to the fact that there could be links and there could be organized crime involvement.”</p> <p>Pattenden pointed to <u>recent</u> media reports that show just how confined the recent violent acts have been to certain areas in the Greater Toronto Area, in particular the corridor along Highway 7, since the summer of 2013, when well-known mobster Sam Calautti was gunned down alongside an associate outside a <u>stag party</u> at a Woodbridge banquet hall.</p> <p>Still, because the recent incidents are being investigated in isolation, Pattenden insists it would be inaccurate to describe what’s going on as a battle among mobsters. “To use the term ‘mob war’ is not something that the police would do,” he said.</p> <p>“Our ongoing appeal is for witnesses and people to come forward. That’s one of the ongoing challenges we’ve had in a lot of these investigations, people not telling us about what’s going on or what they’ve seen.”</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Man dies in Snohomish jail after arrest
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/736969/man-dies-in-snohomish-county-jail-hours-after-arrest/
GIST	<p>EVERETT, Wash. (AP) — Authorities say a 35-year-old man has died in Snohomish County Jail hours after he brought there for investigation of an attempted vehicle prowl.</p> <p>A multi-agency team investigating the death says the Everett-area man became unresponsive when he was</p>

	<p>placed in a restraint chair early Thursday morning after struggling with officers. Officials tried to revive him but he died.</p> <p>A spokeswoman with the Snohomish County Multiple Agency Response Team said the man struggled with Everett police officers when he was arrested. Julie Moore says that once the man was brought to jail around 2:30 a.m., he was uncooperative and resisted jail officers.</p> <p>Moore says a jail nurse was present when staff tried to get the man to comply, including using a Taser on him.</p> <p>The medical examiner will determine the cause and manner of death. His identity was not released.</p>
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HEADLINE	09/01 Deputy DA beaten in gang attack
SOURCE	http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/09/01/female-deputy-da-found-bloody-beaten-after-gang-attack-in-california.html
GIST	<p>A deputy district attorney was the victim of a gruesome gang attack in Orange County, Calif., in an apparent attempt to prevent her from giving closing arguments in a gang murder trial.</p> <p>The woman, whose name has been withheld, stumbled -- bloody and bruised -- into the Newport Workout gym in Newport Beach early Thursday morning, Fox 11 Los Angeles reported. A trainer inside the gym came to her aid.</p> <p>"It looked as if a bucket of red-blood paint was poured over her head and every part of her face and shirt was red," trainer Ron Cary told Fox 11, adding that he initially thought the woman had fallen while jogging.</p> <p>"One of the trainers yelled, 'Call the police.' She didn't run and fall, she was attacked," Cary said. "I overheard her saying she either works for the DA or is the DA of San Bernardino and she's either in a trial or acting for the murder trial."</p> <p>San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office spokesman Christopher Lee confirmed to Fox 11 the following: "A member of our office was involved in an incident that is currently under investigation."</p> <p>Lee declined to comment further.</p> <p>A law enforcement source told the local news station that the woman was about to give closing arguments in a gang murder trial and may have been targeted by gang members and that she's been followed before.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 White nationalist denied bond
SOURCE	https://www.cbsnews.com/news/white-nationalist-christopher-cantwell-denied-bond/
GIST	<p>CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. -- A judge has denied bond for white nationalist Christopher Cantwell, who faces felony charges in connection with a torchlit rally at the University of Virginia.</p> <p>According to CBS affiliate WCAV, Cantwell was initially granted a \$25,000 bond. Virginia appealed the decision, and another hearing was set for Thursday afternoon.</p> <p>Prosecutors planned on showing video of Cantwell from Vice News and from his own website, WCAV reports.</p> <p>When prosecutors said Cantwell posed a flight risk and a risk to public safety, his attorney pointed out he</p>

	voluntarily turned himself in when the charges were announced.
	After the hearing, the judge reversed the decision and bond was denied.
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HEADLINE	08/31 Feds to combat prison cellphone problem
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/wireStory/justice-dept-implores-fcc-combat-prison-cellphone-problem-49538442?cid=clicksource_79_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed
GIST	<p>The U.S. Department of Justice is pressing federal regulators to come up with a way of keeping inmates from using cellphones in the nation's prisons.</p> <p>In a letter obtained Thursday by The Associated Press, Assistant Attorney General Beth Williams told the Federal Communications Commission that addressing the security threat posed by contraband cellphones "should be a chief priority" of both the FCC and Justice, which oversees the <u>federal Bureau of Prisons</u>.</p> <p>The letter follows an appeal from South Carolina's prisons director to Attorney General <u>Jeff Sessions</u> in June, beseeching the top prosecutor for help pursuing FCC permission to jam cell signals of the phones, which are thrown over fences, smuggled by errant employees, even delivered by drone. <u>South Carolina Gov. Henry McMaster</u> also lobbied, writing Sessions an August memo on the dangers of prison cellphones and thanking him for any help he could provide.</p> <p>A decades-old law says federal officials can grant permission to jam the public airwaves only to federal agencies, not state or local ones. Telecommunications companies are opposed, saying jamming cell signals could set a bad precedent and interfere with legal cell users nearby.</p> <p>Corrections Director Bryan Stirling told AP on Thursday he has twice briefed Sessions on the security threats posed by the phones, most recently during a meeting in Charleston two weeks ago about public safety issues.</p> <p>"I cannot thank the Department of Justice enough for this," Stirling said.</p> <p>Stirling has been among the most vocal corrections directors in the country to speak out about how dangerous the phones can be in the hands of prisoners. Last year, he took now-FCC Chairman Ajit Pai on a tour of a South Carolina prison to show him first-hand the benefit of technologies like jamming, which render cell signals useless.</p> <p>Earlier this year, Stirling testified at an FCC hearing in Washington alongside a former South Carolina corrections officer who was nearly killed by a hit that was orchestrated by an inmate using an illegal phone. In July, an inmate was able to escape from a maximum-security South Carolina prison, in part thanks to help from a smuggled cellphone. Jimmy Causey was recaptured three days later in Texas.</p> <p>In her letter, Williams gave other examples: A Tennessee inmate using a smuggled phone to upload child porn images; a North Carolina inmate calling in a hit on a prosecutor's father.</p> <p>Pai has signaled that the FCC is willing to work with states on the issue. In March, after taking testimony from Stirling and Capt. Robert Johnson, commissioners voted 3-0 to approve rules to streamline the process for using technology to detect and block contraband phones in prisons and jails across the country.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Drug suspect 30yrs on lam now in custody
SOURCE	http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/california-drug-suspect-custody-30-years-lam-49551823?cid=clicksource_76_4_article%20roll_articleroll_hed

GIST	<p>U.S. officials say the leader of a <u>California</u> drug smuggling ring in the 1980s who was on the run for almost 30 years was brought from <u>Australia</u> to face charges.</p> <p>The U.S. Marshals Service says 72-year-old Peyton Eidson, who lived in Queensland, Australia, was escorted by Australian officials and taken into custody Thursday at San Francisco International Airport.</p> <p>Eidson was indicted in 1988 for importing tons of high-grade <u>marijuana</u> throughout the 1980s.</p> <p>Authorities say Eidson had a false passport and lived abroad for decades. He was arrested in Australia in 2011 but had fought deportation.</p> <p>Officials say two of his associates tried to fake their own deaths by sinking a fishing boat in the 1990s.</p>
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HEADLINE	08/31 Elderly brothers face child porn charges
SOURCE	http://mynorthwest.com/736867/the-latest-elderly-seattle-brothers-face-child-porn-charges/
GIST	<p>SEATTLE (AP) — The Latest on three elderly brothers in Washington state who face child pornography charges (all times local):</p> <p>9:25 a.m. An 82-year-old man who faces child pornography charges along with two of his elderly brothers was rolled into court in a wheelchair and his attorneys asked that he be given a mental competency evaluation.</p> <p>Charles Emery did not enter a plea Thursday in King County Superior Court. Thomas Emery, 80, entered a not guilty plea, while 78-year-old Edwin Emery was not in court. The brothers are each being held on \$500,000 bail after their arrests this month.</p> <p>Investigators say a relative discovered evidence of child exploitation as she was cleaning out the garage of a home her uncles had shared for 55 years.</p> <p>Seattle police say a search found child pornography and children’s toys and clothes. A King County prosecutor wrote in court papers that investigators found evidence that the men “shared the majority of their lives sexually abusing children to whom they had access.”</p> <p>8:17 a.m. Three elderly brothers facing child pornography charges are due to be arraigned in a Seattle courtroom.</p> <p>The men — 82-year-old Charles Emery, 80-year-old Thomas Emery and 78-year-old Edwin Emery — are each being held on \$500,000 bail after their arrests this month. Investigators say a relative discovered evidence of child exploitation as she was cleaning out the garage of a home her three uncles had shared for 55 years.</p> <p>When Seattle police searched the home, they say they found it packed floor-to-ceiling with child pornography and children’s toys and clothes — though the men have no children of their own. A King County prosecutor wrote in court papers that investigators found evidence the men “shared the majority of their lives sexually abusing children to whom they had access.”</p>
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