

# [***AP News in Brief at 6:04 p.m. EDT***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C2F-4PH1-DYMD-60HG-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

Helicopter carrying Iran's hard-line president apparently crashes in foggy, mountainous region

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — A helicopter carrying Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, the country's foreign minister and other officials apparently crashed in the mountainous northwest reaches of Iran on Sunday, sparking a massive rescue operation in a fog-shrouded forest as the public was urged to pray.

The likely crash came as Iran under Raisi and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei launched an unprecedented drone-and-missile attack on Israel last month and has enriched uranium closer than ever to weapons-grade levels.

Iran has also faced years of mass protests against its Shiite theocracy over an ailing economy and women’s rights — making the moment that much more sensitive for Tehran and the future of the country as the Israel-Hamas war inflames the wider Middle East.

Raisi was traveling in Iran’s East Azerbaijan province. State TV said what it called a “hard landing” happened near Jolfa, a city on the border with the nation of Azerbaijan, some 600 kilometers (375 miles) northwest of the Iranian capital, Tehran. Later, state TV put it farther east near the village of Uzi, but details remained contradictory.

Traveling with Raisi were Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian, the governor of Iran's East Azerbaijan province and other officials and bodyguards, the state-run IRNA news agency reported. One local government official used the word “crash," but others referred to either a “hard landing” or an “incident.”

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Helicopter crash could reverberate across the Middle East, where Iran's influence runs wide and deep

JERUSALEM (AP) — The apparent crash of a helicopter carrying Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, the country's foreign minister and other officials is likely to reverberate across the Middle East.

That's because Iran has spent decades supporting armed groups in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and the Palestinian territories that allow it to project power and potentially deter attacks from the United States or Israel, the sworn enemies of its 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Tensions have never been higher than they were last month, when Iran under Raisi and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei launched hundreds of drones and ballistic missiles at Israel in response to an airstrike on an Iranian Consulate in Syria that killed two Iranian generals and five officers.

Israel, with the help of the United States, Britain, Jordan and others, intercepted nearly all the projectiles. In response, Israel apparently launched its own strike against an air defense radar system in the Iranian city of Isfahan, causing no casualties but sending an unmistakable message.

The sides have waged a shadow war of covert operations and cyberattacks for years, but the exchange of fire in April was their first direct military confrontation.

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Airstrike kills 27 in central Gaza and fighting rages as Israel's leaders are increasingly divided

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — An Israeli airstrike killed 27 people in central Gaza, mostly women and children, and fighting with Hamas raged across the north on Sunday as Israel's leaders aired divisions over who should govern Gaza after the war, now in its eighth month.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces criticism from the other members of his War Cabinet, with main political rival Benny Gantz threatening to leave the government if a plan is not created by June 8 that includes an international administration for postwar Gaza. His departure would leave Netanyahu more reliant on far-right allies who support full military occupation of Gaza and rebuilding of Jewish settlements there.

U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan met with Netanyahu to discuss an ambitious U.S. plan for Saudi Arabia to recognize Israel and help the Palestinian Authority govern Gaza in exchange for a path to eventual statehood. Netanyahu's office in a statement said they focused on Israel's military operation in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, humanitarian aid and hostages held in Gaza.

Netanyahu opposes Palestinian statehood, saying Israel will maintain open-ended security control over Gaza and partner with local Palestinians unaffiliated with Hamas or the Western-backed Palestinian Authority.

The U.S. said Sullivan said Israel should “connect its military operations to a political strategy” and proposed measures to ensure more aid “surges” into Gaza.

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What we've learned so far in the Trump hush money trial and what to watch for as it wraps up

NEW YORK (AP) — Testimony in the hush money trial of Donald Trump is set to conclude in the coming days, putting the landmark case on track for jury deliberations that will determine whether it ends in a mistrial, an acquittal — or the first-ever felony conviction of a former American president.

Jurors over the course of a month have heard testimony about sex and bookkeeping, tabloid journalism and presidential ***politics***. Their task ahead will be to decide whether prosecutors who have charged Trump with 34 counts of falsifying business records have proved their case beyond a reasonable doubt.

Here's a look at what the two sides have argued, who has been missing from the case, what to listen for in the final days and what prosecutors will have to prove to secure a conviction.

Through witnesses including a porn actor, a veteran tabloid publisher and longtime Trump aides, the prosecution aimed to link the presumptive Republican nominee for the White House this year to a hush money scheme during the 2016 presidential campaign that resulted in the filing of phony business records to mask the alleged conspiracy.

Jurors heard testimony that two women and a doorman were paid tens of thousands of dollars to keep quiet during that campaign about stories that, had they emerged, could have embarrassed Trump. Jurors heard claims of sex, saw copies of texts, emails and checks and listened to a secret recording in which Trump and his then-lawyer can be heard discussing a plan to buy the silence of a Playboy model.

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The Israel-Hamas war is testing whether campuses are sacrosanct places for speech and protest

BERKELEY, Calif. (AP) — Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. Stephen Hawking on the Big Bang. Millions of students for civil rights and against the Vietnam War.

They were provocative in their times, products of an ideal that holds universities as sacrosanct spaces for debate, innovation — and even revolution. But Hamas’ deadly Oct. 7 attack on Israel and the resulting war in Gaza are testing that perception, as anger over the brutal military campaign collides with election-yearpolitics and concerns about antisemitism in places where freedom of expression is supposed to rule.

“Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making,” wrote poet John Milton, an alumnus of Cambridge University, in his 1644 treatise against censorship in publishing. “Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.”

That lofty principle has clashed with the stark reality of the Israel-Hamas war. Hamas militants who crossed the border killed about 1,200 people and took about 250 hostage. Israel’s drive to root out Hamas has killed more than 35,000 people in Gaza, according to the local health ministry, and left millions on the edge of famine.

Administrators on some campuses have called in local police to break up pro-Palestinian protesters demanding that their schools divest from Israel in demonstrations that Israel's allies say are antisemitic and make campuses unsafe. From Columbia University in New York to the University of California, Los Angeles, thousands of students and faculty have been arrested in the past month.

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Dominicans await results of general elections with eyes on crisis in neighboring Haiti

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — Voters in the Dominican Republic cast ballots Sunday in general elections likely to reinforce the government's crackdown on its shared border with Haiti and the hundreds of thousands of people fleeing the violence-stricken nation.

The frontrunner was President Luis Abinader, seeking reelection as one of the most popular leaders in the Americas. He needed to top 50% of the votes to win outright and avoid a runoff election.

Trailing him were former President Leonel Fernández and Mayor Abel Martínez.

Dominicans also voted in legislative elections. Voting centers closed at 5 p.m., with first results expected a few hours later.

Many of the 8 million eligible voters are still traumatized by an electoral authority decision to suspend the 2020 municipal elections due to a technical glitch. Abelardo Ubrí Antomarche, a teacher who lives in capital city of Santo Domingo, was one of the first to vote shortly after 7 a.m.

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Biden tells Morehouse graduates that scenes in Gaza from the Israel-Hamas war break his heart, too

ATLANTA (AP) — President Joe Biden on Sunday offered his most direct recognition of U.S. students' anguish over the Israel-Hamas war, telling graduates of historically Black Morehouse College that he heard their voices of protest and that scenes from the conflict in Gaza break his heart, too.

“I support peaceful nonviolent protest," he told students at the all-male college, some of whom wore Palestinian scarves known as keffiyehs around their shoulders on top of their black graduation gowns. "Your voices should be heard, and I promise you I hear them.”

Biden said there's a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, "that's why I've called for an immediate cease-fire to stop the fighting" and bring home hostages still being held by Hamas after its militants attacked Israel on Oct. 7. The president's comments came near the end of a commencement address in which he also reflected on American democracy and his role in safeguarding it.

“It’s one of the hardest, most complicated problems in the world,” Biden said. “There’s nothing easy about it. I know it angers and frustrates many of you, including my family. But most of all I know it breaks your heart. It breaks mine as well.”

To date, Biden had limited his public comments around the protests on U.S. college campuses to upholding the right to peaceful protest.

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Ed Dwight, America's first Black astronaut candidate, finally goes to space 60 years later

VAN HORN, Texas (AP) — Ed Dwight, America’s first Black astronaut candidate, finally rocketed into space 60 years later, flying with Jeff Bezos’ rocket company on Sunday.

Dwight was an Air Force pilot when President John F. Kennedy championed him as a candidate for NASA’s early astronaut corps. But he wasn’t picked for the 1963 class.

Dwight, now 90, went through a few minutes of weightlessness with five other passengers aboard the Blue Origin capsule as it skimmed space on a roughly 10-minute flight. He called it “a life changing experience.”

“I thought I really didn't need this in my life,” Dwight said shortly after exiting the capsule. ”But, now, I need it in my life .... I am ecstatic."

The brief flight from West Texas made Dwight the new record-holder for oldest person in space — nearly two months older than “Star Trek” actor William Shatner was when he went up in 2021.

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At least 11 killed as Russia presses forward with its offensive in northeastern Ukraine

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — At least 11 people were reported killed in attacks in Ukraine’s war-ravaged northeast on Sunday as Russia pushed ahead with its renewed offensive.

In the Kharkiv region, the focus of the offensive, the Kharkiv Regional Prosecutor's Office said six people were killed and 27 wounded in a Russian strike on the outskirts of the regional capital, also called Kharkiv.

Regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said that five more people were killed and nine wounded in an attack on the region’s Kupiansk district, southeast of the regional capital.

Russia’s Ministry of Defense said Sunday that its forces in the area were “continuing to advance into the depths of the enemy’s defense.” Ukraine’s General Staff said Russia had stepped up its attacks around Kharkiv and that the situation was “dynamic.”

Russia launched an offensive in the Kharkiv region late last week, significantly adding to the pressure on Ukraine’s outnumbered and outgunned forces which are waiting for delayed deliveries of crucial weapons and ammunition from Western partners. Ukraine’s overstretched forces are trying to slow Russia on the new front by using bomb-laden drones to destroy military vehicles.

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Diddy admits beating ex-girlfriend Cassie, says he's sorry, calls his actions 'inexcusable'

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Sean “Diddy” Combs admitted that he beat his ex-girlfriend Cassie in a hotel hallway in 2016 after CNN released video of the attack, saying in a video apology he was “truly sorry” and his actions were “inexcusable.”

“I take full responsibility for my actions in that video. I was disgusted then when I did it. I’m disgusted now,” the music mogul said in a video statement posted Sunday to Instagram and Facebook.

The security video aired Friday shows Combs, wearing only a white towel, punching and kicking Cassie, an R&B singer who was his protege and longtime girlfriend at the time. The footage also shows Combs shoving and dragging Cassie, and throwing a vase in her direction.

Cassie, whose legal name is Cassandra Ventura, sued Combs in November over what she said was years of sexual, physical and emotional abuse. The suit was settled the next day, but spurred intense scrutiny of Combs, with several more lawsuits filed in the following months, along with a federal criminal sex-trafficking investigation that led authorities to raid Combs’ mansions in Los Angeles and Miami.

He had denied the allegations in the lawsuits, but neither he nor his representatives had responded to the newly emerged video until Sunday.

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