

# [***AP News in Brief at 6:04 p.m. EDT***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BSS-6171-JC5B-G34N-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

Iran's state-run news agency says Iran has fired ballistic missiles at targets inside Israel

JERUSALEM — Iran says it has launched ballistic missiles as part of its attack targeting Israel.

The state-run IRNA news agency quoted an anonymous official saying ballistic missiles were part of the attack.

Already, slow-moving Shahed-136 bomb-carrying drones have been seen in the skies over Iran. However, those are more easily shot down.

A ballistic missile moves on an arch trajectory, heading up into space before gravity brings the weapon down at a speed several times faster than the speed of sound.

Israel has missile defense systems capable of targeting ballistic missiles. However, in a massive attack involving multiple drones and missiles like the campaign launched late Saturday by Iran, the likelihood of a strike making it through is higher.

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Biden meeting with his national security team as US pledges 'support' for Israel against Iran

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden cut short a weekend stay at his Delaware beach house to meet with his national security team at the White House Saturday and monitor the situation in the Middle East as Iran launched an attack against Israel.

Tensions are at their highest since the Israel-Hamas war began six months ago after a suspected Israeli strike this month on an Iranian consular building in Syria killed 12 people, including two senior Iranian generals in the Revolutionary Guard’s elite Quds Force. Iran has promised to retaliate against Israel, and U.S. and Israeli officials have been bracing for an attack, raising concerns about the conflict escalating into a wider regional war.

National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said in a Saturday statement that “Iran has begun an airborne attack against Israel.” She added: “The United States will stand with the people of Israel and support their defense against these threats from Iran.”

Biden boarded the presidential helicopter from a park near his house in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, to return to Washington Saturday afternoon shortly before Israeli officials confirmed that they had detected drones being launched toward their territory from Iran. He was set to convene a principals meeting of the National Security Council in the White House Situation Room to discuss the events and plan the U.S. response.

The Pentagon reported that Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin had spoken with his Israeli counterpart “to discuss urgent regional threats ... and made clear that Israel could count on full U.S. support to defend Israel against any attacks by Iran and its regional proxies." National security adviser Jake Sullivan also spoke with his counterpart to reinforce Washington's “ironclad commitment to the security of Israel.”

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The Latest | Iran launches its first-ever full-scale military attack on Israel

Iran launched its first full-scale military attack against Israel on Saturday, sending drones toward Israel. Iran’s state-run media reported that dozens of drones had been fired.

The Israeli army’s spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, said it would take several hours for the attack aircraft to arrive and that the country was prepared.

Iran had been threatening to attack Israel after an airstrike earlier this week widely blamed on Israel destroyed Iran’s consulate in Syria, killing 12 people, including two elite Iranian generals.

Israel has made missile defense a priority, with a variety of air-defense systems available to shoot down incoming missile and drone fire.

Currently:

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Progressive candidates are increasingly sharing their own abortion stories after Roe's demise

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — For decades, only three people knew Gloria Johnson had had an abortion.

But a year of watching women and doctors agonize under Tennessee's strict abortion ban kicked up a fire in the longtime Democrat. She watched in dismay as her Republican colleagues in the General Assembly dismissed concerns that the law was harming women. Many GOP lawmakers argued that only on rare occasions was an abortion needed to save a life.

So without telling her legislative staff or family in advance, the then-60-year-old state representative stood before a Republican-controlled House panel in March 2023 and testified about the abortion she had at age 21. She made the decision to have an abortion, she said, as a newly married college student after being diagnosed with an aortic aneurysm. That would likely have killed her if she did nothing, but might have harmed the baby if Johnson got the treatment she needed to save her own life.

“The reality is that we're in a situation where people act like stories like mine are one in a million when actually they happen every day,” Johnson said in a recent interview, nearly a year after her dramatic testimony.

Johnson, now running as a Democrat for the U.S. Senate against Republican incumbent Marsha Blackburn, has joined the growing ranks of progressive candidates choosing to tell their own abortion stories. They are doing so more frequently in states that have banned abortion in the aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court's 2022 decision to overturn Roe v. Wade.

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How a hush money scandal tied to a porn star led to Trump’s first criminal trial

NEW YORK (AP) — It was the kind of tawdry tale that Donald Trump might have relished before ***politics***: a porn actor claiming they had had sex.

But on the eve of the 2016 presidential election, Trump feared the story, which he says is false, would cost him votes. So, prosecutors say, he arranged to pay Stormy Daniels to keep quiet.

Now, after years of fits and starts before an indictment last year, Trump is set to stand trial Monday in New York on state charges related to the very sex scandal that he and his aides strove to hide.

Barring a last-minute delay, it will be the first of Trump’s four criminal cases to go to trial. It will be an unprecedented event in U.S. history — the first criminal trial of a former president.

It wasn’t always clear the hush money allegations would even lead to charges — let alone be the first to reach trial. It is arguably the least perilous of Trump’s indictments, with others involving government secrets and threats to democracy.

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Nearing 50 Supreme Court arguments in, lawyer Lisa Blatt keeps winning

WASHINGTON (AP) — No woman has appeared more often before the Supreme Court than Lisa Blatt, who will make her 50th argument this month.

No lawyer, male or female, has done it with quite the same mix of humor, passion and style. And her win-loss record isn't bad, either: 40-6, with two cases yet to be decided.

She elicits laughs and the occasional sharp response from the justices, who seem to enjoy Blatt's presentations as much as they respect her legal acumen.

When Blatt joked that Justice Samuel Alito was being her “enforcer” with a friendly question in a case about a claimed retaliatory arrest that was argued last month, the justice said, “I’m not trying to be your enforcer by any means. ... You don’t need one, by any means.”

The Supreme Court's guide for lawyers who are arguing before the justices essentially warns against trying to emulate Blatt.

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Barges break loose on Ohio River in Pittsburgh, damaging a marina and striking a bridge

PITTSBURGH (AP) — More than two dozen river barges broke loose from their moorings and floated down the Ohio River in Pittsburgh, striking one bridge that had already been preemptively closed and damaging a marina, officials said. The boats eventually were pinned to the riverbank or went over a dam downstream, officials said.

Pittsburgh police, fire and emergency medical services responded around 11:25 p.m. Friday to reports of the barges “floating uncontrolled” down the river, Pittsburgh Public Safety said in a statement. The area had been hit by flooding after heavy rains Thursday.

The Sewickly Bridge was struck by a barge a few minutes before 2 p.m. Saturday, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation said. It “was closed in advance of the strike and will remain closed until our crews complete an inspection," spokesperson Steve Cowan said.

Officials in Moon Township, which is connected by the bridge to the community of Sewickly, earlier said the span would be temporarily closed “due to unmanned barge passing through.”

Eleven of the 26 barges that broke free were quickly contained to one side by another towing vessel just downstream, said Cmdr. Justin Jolley of the Coast Guard marine safety unit in Pittsburgh. Nine others were collected at the Emsworth lock and dam downstream.

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How O.J. Simpson burned the Ford Bronco into America's collective memory

The Ford Bronco initially was conceived and designed for rugged outdoorsy types, a two-door means of escape to nature from the bustling cities of mid-century America.

But it had already been tamed and polished for suburbanites, with cruise control and air conditioning, by 1994, when O.J. Simpson cowered in the back of one, a handgun to his temple, as patrol cars followed it for about two hours in the California twilight.

The model was discontinued two years later. But the Bronco — or at least that white Bronco — became one of America's most iconic automobiles after the slow-speed chase that played out on TV screens before an audience of millions, a moment that was seared indelibly into the nation's cultural memory.

“Kids who were born in the 2000s, even they know that’s O.J.,” Marcus Collins, a University of Michigan marketing professor, said of his students. “It’s just as salient as me showing the twin towers on fire. It definitely became etched in the zeitgeist because of all the contextual associations that we applied to it.”

The Bronco ridden in by Simpson, who died Wednesday, now sits in a crime museum in Tennessee, parked near a Volkswagen Beetle that was driven by serial killer Ted Bundy.

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As a landmark United Methodist gathering approaches, African churches weigh their future.

The United Methodist Church lost one-fourth of its U.S. churches in a recent schism, with conservatives departing over disputes on sexuality and theology.

Now, with the approach of its first major legislative gathering in several years, the question is whether the church can avert a similar outcome elsewhere in the world, where about half its members live.

The question is particularly acute in Africa, home to the vast majority of United Methodists outside the U.S. Most of its bishops favor staying, but other voices are calling for regional conferences to disaffiliate.

At the upcoming General Conference in Charlotte, North Carolina, delegates will tackle a wide range of proposals – from repealing the church’s ban on same-sex marriage and ordaining LGBTQ people, to creating more autonomy for regional conferences to set such rules, to making it easier for international churches to leave the denomination.

Delegate Jerry Kulah of Liberia said he believes it’s time for African churches to leave.

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Masters weekend has three-way tie and more forgiving conditions. It also has Tiger Woods

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — The 60 players who survived one of the most wind-blown, grueling days at the Masters were greeted by an Augusta National that appeared to be far more agreeable on Saturday.

“This weekend is going to be nice," predicted Phil Mickelson, a three-time champion playing in his 31st Masters, after making the cut on Friday. “Hopefully there will be some opportunities to make a run.”

Turns out looks can be deceiving.

It was still hard to score Saturday even without the wind gusting to 45 mph (72 kph), especially as the greens firmed up — and sped up — and some tricky hole locations left Tiger Woods and a whole lot of others scratching their heads.

By the time Scottie Scheffler, who shared the second-round lead with Bryson DeChambeau and Max Homa at 6 under, pitched in for a birdie on the opening hole to move into the solo lead, Woods was in the middle of a first-nine meltdown.

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