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**Body**

Trump wins South Carolina, easily beating Haley in her home state and closing in on GOP nomination

CHARLESTON, S.C. — Donald Trump won South Carolina’s Republican primary on Saturday, easily beating former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley in her home state and further consolidating his path to a third straight GOP nomination.

Trump has now swept every contest that counted for Republican delegates, adding to previous wins in Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Haley is facing growing pressure to leave the race but says she's not going anywhere despite losing the state where she was governor from 2011 to 2017.

A 2020 rematch between Trump and President Joe Biden is becoming increasingly inevitable. Haley has vowed to stay in the race through at least the batch of primaries on March 5, known as Super Tuesday, but was unable to dent Trump’s momentum in her home state despite holding far more campaign events and arguing that the indictments against Trump will hamstring him against Biden.

The Associated Press declared Trump the winner as polls closed statewide at 7 p.m. That race call was based on an analysis of AP VoteCast, a comprehensive survey of Republican South Carolina primary voters. The survey confirmed the findings of pre-Election Day polls showing Trump far outpacing Haley statewide.

“I have never seen the Republican Party so unified as it is right now,” Trump declared, taking the stage for his victory speech mere moments after polls closed. He added, “You can celebrate for about 15 minutes, but then we have to get back to work.”

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Takeaways from South Carolina primary: Donald Trump's Republican home field advantage is everywhere

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump trounced Nikki Haley on Saturday in the South Carolina primary, a victory that emphatically punctuated the depth and breadth of his support among Republican primary voters as he vanquished his lone remaining major opponent in her home state.

Trump did not even have to mount a vigorous campaign, making few appearances and spending relatively little money. Haley has vowed to stay in the race and planned to visit Michigan, the site of the next primary, on Sunday. But the loss further eroded the rationale for her candidacy, barring something unforeseen that would derail the former president.

Here are some takeaways from the South Carolina leg of the campaign:

Haley talked up her chances in “my sweet state of South Carolina” for months. Twice elected governor, initially as a tea party candidate in 2010, she was universally known in her state, and mostly for positive reasons. She had even served as Trump's ambassador to the United Nations. Her conservative record was clear.

And yet her credentials were no match for Trump's hold on the party.

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Israeli officials to meet on a proposed pause in Gaza while the Cabinet is set to OK a Rafah plan

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — Israeli officials will meet Saturday night on the next steps after the latest talks with the United States, Egypt and Qatar in search of a deal on pausing the fighting in Gaza, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said.

But Netanyahu announced that he'll convene the Cabinet early next week to “approve the operational plans for action in Rafah,” including the evacuation of civilians, despite widespread warnings from the international community about a military ground operation in the southern city where more than half of Gaza's population shelters. "Only a combination of military pressure and firm negotiations” would achieve Israel's aims in the war, he said.

A senior official from Egypt, which along with Qatar is a mediator between Israel and the Hamas militant group, said mediators were waiting for Israel's official response to a draft deal that includes the release of up to 40 women and older hostages held in Gaza in return for up to 300 Palestinian prisoners held by Israel, mostly women, minors and older people.

The Egyptian official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss the negotiations, said the proposed six-week pause in fighting would include allowing hundreds of aid trucks to enter Gaza every day, including the northern half of the besieged territory. He said that both sides agreed to continue negotiations during the pause for further releases and a permanent cease-fire.

Negotiators face an unofficial deadline of the start of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan around March 10.

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US and British strikes on Houthi sites in Yemen answer militants’ surge in Red Sea attacks on ships

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. and Britain struck 18 Houthi targets in Yemen on Saturday, answering a recent surge in attacks by the Iran-backed militia group on ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, including a missile strike this past week that set fire to a cargo vessel.

According to U.S. officials, American and British fighter jets hit sites in eight locations, targeting missiles, launchers, rockets, drones and air defense systems. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity in order to provide early details of an ongoing military operation.

This is the fourth time that the U.S. and British militaries have conducted a combined operation against the Houthis since Jan. 12. But the U.S. has also been carrying out almost daily strikes to take out Houthi targets, including incoming missiles and drones aimed at ships, as well as weapons that were prepared to launch.

The U.S. F/A-18 fighter jets launched from the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower aircraft carrier, which is currently in the Red Sea, officials said.

“The United States will not hesitate to take action, as needed, to defend lives and the free flow of commerce in one of the world’s most critical waterways,” said U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. “We will continue to make clear to the Houthis that they will bear the consequences if they do not stop their illegal attacks.”

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The body of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny has been handed over to his mother, aide says

The body of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny has been handed over to his mother, a top aide to Navalny said Saturday on his social media account.

Ivan Zhdanov, the director of Navalny’s Anti-Corruption Foundation, made the announcement on his Telegram account and thanked “everyone” who had called on Russian authorities to return Navalny’s body to his mother.

Earlier on Saturday, Yulia Navalnaya, Navalny’s widow, accused President Vladimir Putin of mocking Christianity by trying to force his mother to agree to a secret funeral after his death in an Arctic penal colony.

“Thank you very much. Thanks to everyone who wrote and recorded video messages. You all did what you needed to do. Thank you. Alexei Navalny's body has been given to his mother,” Zhdanov wrote.

Navalny, 47, Russia’s most well-known opposition politician, unexpectedly died on Feb. 16 in an Arctic penal colony and his family has been fighting for more than a week to have his body returned to them. Prominent Russians released videos calling on authorities to release the body and Western nations have hit Russia with more sanctions as punishment for Navalny's death as well as for the second anniversary of its invasion of Ukraine.

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Western leaders rally around Kyiv to mark 2 years since Russia's full-scale invasion

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — President Volodymyr Zelenskyy welcomed Western leaders to Kyiv Saturday to mark the second anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion, as Ukrainian forces run low on ammunition and foreign aid hangs in the balance.

Allies from the EU and the Group of Seven wealthy democracies rallied around Kyiv to express solidarity, with Zelenskyy joining a virtual G7 meeting Saturday and four world leaders traveling to Ukraine's war-weary capital.

“Two years ago, here, we met enemy landing forces with fire; two years later, we meet our friends and our partners here,” Zelenskyy said as he met the dignitaries at Hostomel airfield just outside of Kyiv, which Russian paratroopers unsuccessfully tried to seize in the first days of the war.

A somber mood hangs over Ukraine as the war against Russia enters its third year and Kyiv’s troops face mounting challenges on the frontline amid dwindling supplies and personnel challenges. Its troops recently withdrew from the strategic eastern city of Avdiivka, handing Moscow one of its biggest victories. And Russia still controls roughly a quarter of the country after Ukraine failed to make any major breakthroughs with its summertime counteroffensive.

Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni, Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen arrived in Kyiv shortly after a Russian drone attack struck a residential building in the southern city of Odesa, killing at least one person. Three women also sustained severe burns in the attack Friday evening, regional Gov. Oleh Kiper wrote on his social media account. Rescue services combed through the rubble looking for survivors.

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'Oppenheimer,' Lily Gladstone win at 30th Screen Actors Guild Awards

“Oppenheimer” continued to steamroll through Hollywood’s awards season on Saturday, winning the top prize, for outstanding cast, along with awards for Cillian Murphy and Robert Downey Jr., at the 30th Screen Actors Guild Awards.

As the Academy Awards draw closer, Christopher Nolan’s blockbuster biopic — already a winner at the Golden Globes and the BAFTAs — has increasingly looked like the run-away favorite. The SAG Awards, streamed live on Netflix for the first time, will only add to the momentum for “Oppenheimer,” the lead Academy Awards nominee with 13 nods.

The night’s most thrilling moment, though was Lily Gladstone winning female actor in a leading role in Martin Scorsese’s “Killers of the Flower Moon.” No category has been more hotly contested, with analysts evenly split between Gladstone and Emma Stone for “Poor Things.”

But Gladstone won Saturday and the crowd erupted. Stone, too, vigorously applauded. More is riding on Gladstone than perhaps any other Oscar contender this year. Her win would be a first for Native Americans.

“We bring empathy into a world that so much needs it,” said Gladstone. “It’s so easy to distance ourselves. It’s so easy to close off, to stop feeling. And we all bravely keep feeling. And that humanizes people. That brings people out of the shadows. It brings visibility.”

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Biden and Utah's governor call for less bitterness and more bipartisanship in the nation's ***politics***

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden and Utah Gov. Spencer Cox disagree on many issues but they were united Saturday in calling for less bitterness in ***politics*** and more bipartisanship.

“***Politics*** has gotten too personally bitter," said Biden, who has practiced ***politics*** since he was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1972. “It's just not like it was.” The Democratic president commented while delivering a toast to the nation's governors and their spouses at a black-tie White House dinner in their honor.

Biden said what makes him “feel good” about hosting the governors is "we have a tradition of doing things together. We fight like hell, we make sure that we get our points across. At the end of the day, we know who we work for. The objective is to get things done.”

Cox, a Republican and chairman of the National Governors Association, preceded Biden to the lectern beneath an imposing portrait of Abraham Lincoln above the fireplace in the State Dining Room.

The Utah governor said the association “harkens back to another time, another era, when we did work together across partisan lines, when there was no political danger in appearing with someone from the other side of the aisle and we have to keep this, we have to maintain this, we cannot lose this,” he said.

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Mexico president's son, presidential candidate denounce leak of phone numbers, say threats received

MEXICO CITY (AP) — The eldest son of Mexico’s president and the governing party's presidential candidate said Saturday that their telephone numbers were published on social media and that they have received threats and insults. Both denounced the action.

The incident came a day after President Andrés Manuel López Obrador disclosed the phone number of a reporter for The New York Times, which published a story about a U.S. probe into claims that López took money from drug traffickers. López Obrador denied the allegations.

The first to report the release of his phone number was the president’s oldest son, José Ramón López Beltrán, who wrote on the X platform that he considered the action “a kind of vengeance” and said it puts his family in danger.

It wasn't immediately clear who made the number public. López Beltrán said the incident began with a letter that contained “threats and lies” directed at the president and his sons. He did not elaborate.

On Saturday, Mexico’s president told reporters that it was “embarrassing for them to act that way,” referring to everyone involved.

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Georgia university town is shaken by the killing of a nursing student who was out on a run

ATHENS, Ga. (AP) — The killing of a nursing student in Georgia who was out running has shaken the university town of Athens.

Laken Hope Riley, 22, who was studying nursing at Augusta University, went out for a run Thursday morning. After a friend told police she had not returned, officers immediately began a search and found her body on the University of Georgia campus in a forested area near Lake Herrick that includes trails popular with runners and walkers.

Emergency medical responders determined she died before officers found her. University of Georgia Police Chief Jeff Clark said the cause of death was blunt force trauma, but he did not elaborate.

Jose Ibarra, 26, was taken into custody for the slaying of Riley on Friday, police said. Ibarra is not a U.S. citizen and is from Venezuela, but his immigration status is not yet known, said Clark, the university police chief.

Melissa Hodges, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Attorney's Office, said in an email Saturday that she did not have any additional information on the immigration status of Ibarra, who now faces charges that include murder and kidnapping.

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