

# NATION & WORLD

## DIGEST

### Appeals panel hears arguments over DACA

NEW ORLEANS — Immigrants who grew up in the U.S. after being brought here illegally as children were among close to 200 demonstrators who gathered Thursday outside a federal courthouse in New Orleans, where three appellate judges heard arguments over the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program shielding them from deportation.

At stake in the legal battle playing out at the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals is the future of about 535,000 people with long-established lives in the U.S., even though they don't hold citizenship or legal residency status and they could eventually be deported. Judges on the panel gave no indication when or how they will rule. The case is likely to wind up at the Supreme Court.

DACA opponents, chiefly Texas and eight other Republican-dominated states, said in court arguments and legal briefs that they incur hundreds of millions of dollars in health care, education and other costs when immigrants are allowed to remain in the country illegally.

### Zelenskyy visits allies in cities across Europe

PARIS — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy city-hopped Thursday across Europe to promote a “victory plan” he said “aims to create the right conditions for a just end to the war” against Russia, detailing the proposals to European allies after Hurricane Milton derailed a scheduled summit involving U.S. President Joe Biden.

Zelenskyy's talks in London with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte were quickly followed by a meeting in Paris with French President Emmanuel Macron, who just the prior day visited Ukrainian troops training in France.

Zelenskyy posted on social media that he “outlined the details” of the Ukrainian victory plan to Starmer and added: “We have agreed to work on it together with our allies.” He has yet to publicly present his proposals for victory.

## BRIEFLY

**SETTLEMENT:** TD Bank will pay about \$3 billion in a historic settlement with U.S. authorities who said Thursday that the financial institution's lax practices allowed significant money laundering.

**UNEMPLOYMENT:** The Labor Department reported Thursday that applications for jobless aid jumped to 258,000 last week, up by 33,000 from the prior week. That's the most since Aug. 5, 2023, and well above the 229,000 analysts expected.

**MORTGAGE RATES:** The average rate on a 30-year mortgage in the U.S. surged to 6.32% this week from 6.12% last week, mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday.

**LISTERIA RECALL:** BrucePac of Woodburn, Oregon, this week recalled nearly 10 million pounds of meat and poultry products made at an Oklahoma plant because they may be contaminated with listeria bacteria.

**HAITI:** Gunmen invaded a town north of Haiti's capital Thursday, shooting at people and setting homes on fire, a week after a similar attack killed at least 115 people in Haiti's central region. The number of casualties was not immediately known.

**NUCLEAR EXERCISE:** NATO will hold a long-planned major nuclear exercise next week, the alliance's chief said Thursday, a few weeks after President Vladimir Putin announced changes to Russia's nuclear doctrine to discourage Ukraine's Western allies from supporting attacks on his country.

— Associated Press

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## SEVERE WEATHER

# Millions without power

### Hurricane Milton spawns tornadoes, kills at least 5 people

**JULIO CORTEZ, KATE PAYNE AND HAVEN DALEY**  
Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Florida residents returned to the familiar ritual of assessing hurricane damage Thursday, the day after Milton smashed through many coastal communities and spawned a barrage of tornadoes that killed at least five people less than two weeks after the misery wrought by Helene.

Milton knocked out power to more than 3 million customers, flooded barrier islands, tore the

roof off a baseball stadium and toppled a construction crane.

But many also expressed relief that the storm wasn't worse. The system spared Tampa a direct hit, and the lethal storm surge that scientists feared never materialized.

The system tracked to the south in the final hours and made landfall late Wednesday as a Category 3 storm in Siesta Key, about 70 miles south of Tampa. Damage was widespread, and water levels could continue to rise for days, but Gov. Ron DeSantis said it was not “the worst-case scenario.”

The worst storm surge appeared to be in Sarasota County, where it was 8 to 10 feet — lower than in the worst place during Helene. Milton also dumped up to 18

inches of rain in some areas, the governor said.

“We will better understand the extent of the damage as the day progresses,” DeSantis said. “We've got more to do, but we will absolutely get through this.”

Officials in the hard-hit Florida counties of Hillsborough, Pinellas, Sarasota and Lee urged people to stay home, warning of downed power lines, trees in roads, blocked bridges and flooding.

Just inland from Tampa, the flooding in Plant City was “absolutely staggering,” according to City Manager Bill McDaniel. Emergency crews rescued 35 people overnight, said McDaniel, who estimated the city received 13.5 inches of rain.

“We have flooding in places and to levels that I've never seen, and I've lived in this community for my entire life,” he said in a video posted Thursday morning.

The storm slammed into a region still reeling from Hurricane Helene, which flooded streets and homes in western Florida and left at least 230 people dead across the South. In many places along the coast, municipalities raced to collect and dispose of debris before Milton's winds and storm surge could toss it around and compound any damage.

Power was knocked out across much of the state, with more than 3.4 million homes and businesses without electricity, according to poweroutage.us, which tracks utility reports.

## MIDDLE EAST | LEBANON



**BILAL HUSSEIN, ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Flames and smoke rise Thursday at the scene of destroyed buildings hit by an Israeli airstrike in central Beirut, Lebanon.

# Israeli airstrikes kill at least 18

### Another attack on a school shelter in Gaza leaves at least 27 dead

**BILAL HUSSEIN, WAFAA SHURAF AND SAMY MAGDY**  
Associated Press

BEIRUT — Israeli airstrikes hit central Beirut on Thursday evening, killing at least 18 people and wounding dozens, Lebanon's health ministry said, the latest in Israel's broadening campaign against Iran-backed Hezbollah militants in Lebanon.

The Health Ministry said the strikes badly damaged a residential building and caused another

to completely collapse.

But it comes as Israel has broadened its campaign against Iran-backed Hezbollah militants in Lebanon and launched a ground invasion there.

Israeli strikes have been far more common in Beirut's tightly packed southern suburbs, where Hezbollah bases many operations, but rare deeper inside the Lebanese capital.

There was no immediate statement from the Israeli military on the rare strikes inside Lebanon's capital that rocked two different neighborhoods in the city's west, sending smoke rising from the rubble of damaged buildings.

The fighting boiled over into

all-out war in recent weeks, with Israel carrying out waves of heavy strikes across Lebanon and launching a ground invasion. Hezbollah has expanded its rocket fire to more populated areas deeper inside Israel, causing few casualties but disrupting daily life.

Further south in Lebanon, the U.N. peacekeeping force said an Israeli tank fired on its headquarters in the town of Naqoura, hitting an observation tower and wounding two peacekeepers. The attack drew widespread condemnation and prompted the Italian Defense Ministry to summon Israel's ambassador in protest.

Meanwhile, an Israeli strike in the central Gaza city of Deir al-

Balah killed 27 people, including a child and seven women, according to the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, where the bodies were brought.

The Israeli military said it targeted a militant command and control center inside the school, without providing evidence. Israel has repeatedly attacked schools that were turned into shelters in Gaza, accusing militants of taking cover in them.

Witnesses said the strike occurred while school managers were meeting with representatives of an aid group in a room normally used by Hamas-run police who provide security. They said there were no police in the room at the time.

## Inflation in US reaches lowest point in 3 years

### ‘Core’ prices, which economists watch closely, still elevated

## ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Inflation in the United States dropped last month to its lowest point since it began surging more than three years ago.

Consumer prices rose just 2.4% in September from a year earlier, down from 2.5% in August, and the smallest annual rise since February 2021. Measured from month to month, prices increased 0.2% from August to September, the Labor Department reported Thursday, the same as in the previous month.

Excluding volatile food and energy costs, however, “core” prices, a gauge of underlying inflation, remained elevated in September, driven up by rising costs for medical care, clothing, auto insurance and airline fares. Core prices in September were up 3.3% from a year earlier and 0.3% from August.

Economists closely watch core prices, which typically provide a better hint of future inflation.

Taken as a whole, the September figures show that inflation is steadily easing back to the Fed's 2% target, even if in an uneven pattern. That decline suggests the Fed will likely keep cutting its benchmark interest rate this year, with most economists expecting quarter-point reductions in November and December.

## Social Security benefits to get 2.5% COLA boost

### The cost-of-living adjustment is smaller than in past two years

## ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Millions of Social Security recipients will get a 2.5% cost-of-living increase to their monthly checks beginning in January, the Social Security Administration announced Thursday.

About 72.5 million people, including retirees, disabled people and children, get Social Security benefits. The cost-of-living adjustment, or COLA, for retirees translates to an average increase of more than \$50 for retirees every month, agency officials said.

Before the announcement, retirees voiced concern the boost would not be enough to counter rising costs.

Recipients received a 3.2% COLA increase to their benefits this year after a historically large 8.7% increase in 2023, brought on by record 40-year-high inflation. The smaller increase for 2025 reflects moderating inflation.

Social Security Commissioner Martin O'Malley said the upcoming increase will provide a measure of relief for recipients as inflation cools and the agency serves a record number of retirees while funding is at a historic low.

The agency will begin notifying recipients about their new benefit amount by mail starting in early December.