

NATION & WORLD

DIGEST

DOJ files antitrust lawsuit against Visa

NEW YORK — The U.S. Justice Department filed an antitrust lawsuit Tuesday against Visa, alleging that the financial services behemoth uses its size and dominance to stifle competition in the debit card market, costing consumers and businesses billions of dollars.

The complaint says Visa penalizes merchants and banks who don't use Visa's technology to process debit transactions, even though alternatives exist.

According to the DOJ's complaint, 60% of debit transactions in the United States run on Visa's debit network, allowing it to charge over \$7 billion in fees each year for processing those transactions.

Military aid package heading to Ukraine

WASHINGTON — The U.S. will send Ukraine an undisclosed number of medium-range cluster bombs and an array of rockets, artillery and armored vehicles in a military aid package totaling about \$375 million, U.S. officials said Tuesday.

Officials expect an announcement Wednesday, as global leaders meet at the U.N. General Assembly, and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy uses his appearance there to shore up support and persuade the U.S. to allow his troops to use long-range weapons to strike deeper into Russia. The following day, Zelenskyy will meet with President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris in Washington.

The aid includes air-to-ground bombs as well as munitions for the High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, Javelin and other anti-armor systems, officials said.

BRIEFLY

HAITIANS: The leader of a non-profit representing the Haitian community invoked a private-citizen right to file charges Tuesday against former President Donald Trump and his running mate, JD Vance, over the threats experienced by Springfield, Ohio, since Trump spread lies about legal immigrants there during a presidential debate.

ALEX JONES: Conspiracy theorist Alex Jones' Infowars media platform and its assets will be sold off in auctions this fall to help pay the more than \$1 billion he owes relatives of victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, under an order expected to be approved by U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Christopher Lopez in Houston.

SON ARRESTED: Oran Alexander Routh, the son of the man suspected in the assassination attempt in Florida against former President Donald Trump, was arrested this week on federal charges of possessing child sexual abuse images.

CRYPTOCURRENCY: Caroline Ellison, a former top executive in Sam Bankman-Fried's fallen FTX cryptocurrency empire, was sentenced to two years in prison Tuesday after she apologized repeatedly to everyone hurt by a fraud that stole billions of dollars from investors, lenders and customers.

ANTONY BLINKEN: Republicans on the House Foreign Affairs Committee were moving Tuesday to hold Secretary of State Antony Blinken in contempt of Congress after a contentious back-and-forth with the Cabinet secretary over an appearance to testify about the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.

CONFIDENCE DECLINES: The Conference Board, a business research group, said Tuesday that its consumer confidence index fell to 98.7 in September, from 105.6 in August. It was the biggest month-to-month decline since August of 2021.

— Associated Press



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UNITED NATIONS | MIDDLE EAST

Biden: Peace is possible

President urges end to conflicts in final speech to General Assembly

AAMER MADHANI, MATTHEW LEE AND ZEKE MILLER
Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — President Joe Biden declared in his final address to the U.N. General Assembly on Tuesday that the U.S. must not retreat from the world, as Israel and Hezbollah militants in Lebanon edged toward all-out war and Israel's bloody operation against Hamas in Gaza neared the one-year mark.

Biden used his wide-ranging address to speak to a need to end the Middle East conflict and the

17-month-old civil war in Sudan and to highlight U.S. and Western allies' support for Kyiv since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. He also raised concern over artificial intelligence and its potential to be used for repression.

His appearance before the international body offered Biden one of his last high-profile opportunities as president to make the case to keep up robust support for Ukraine, which could be in doubt if former President Donald Trump defeats Vice President Kamala Harris in November. Biden insisted that despite global conflicts, he remains hopeful for the future.

"I've seen a remarkable sweep of history," Biden said. "I know many look at the world today and

see difficulties and react with despair but I do not."

"We are stronger than we think" when the world acts together, he added.

"Full scale war is not in anyone's interest," Biden said, and despite escalating violence, a diplomatic solution is the only path to peace.

Meanwhile, the head of the UN warned the gathered leaders of nations Tuesday that impunity, inequality and uncertainty are driving modern civilization toward "a powder keg that risks engulfing the world" — the latest in an increasing number of clarification calls from Antonio Guterres in recent years that the global situation is becoming intolerable and unsustainable.

"We can't go on like this,"

the secretary-general said in an alarming state-of-the-world address as he opened the annual high-level gathering of the U.N.'s 193 member nations.

He said the world is in "an era of epic transformation" facing challenges never seen before, with geopolitical divisions deepening, the planet heating and wars raging in the Middle East, Ukraine, Sudan and elsewhere with no clue how they will end.

"We are edging towards the unimaginable — a powder keg that risks engulfing the world," Guterres told presidents, prime ministers and ministers in the vast General Assembly hall.

But he stopped short of saying hope was gone. "The challenges we face," he said, "are solvable."

TROPICAL WEATHER



LUIS ALBERTO CRUZ, ASSOCIATED PRESS

A person walks in the rain Tuesday after the passing of Hurricane John in Marquelia, Mexico.

Helene forms in the Caribbean

A second storm hits Mexico, killing two and leaving a path of ruin

HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH AND DÁNICA COTO
Associated Press

Tropical Storm Helene formed Tuesday in the Caribbean Sea and could strengthen into a major hurricane while moving north toward the U.S., forecasters said. Heavy rains and big waves already lashed the Cayman Islands, and some Florida residents filled sandbags days ahead of anticipated flooding.

Hurricane warnings were is-

sued for the northwestern Florida coastline and part of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula. Hurricane watches were issued for parts of western Cuba and Florida, including Tampa Bay, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said. A tropical storm warning was issued for parts of Cuba and Florida's southwestern coastline, including the Florida Keys.

The storm was expected to strengthen into Hurricane Helene on Wednesday as it approached the Gulf Coast and could become a major hurricane Thursday.

Meanwhile, former Hurricane John dissipated over Mexico on Tuesday after barreling into the country's southern Pacific coast

overnight, leaving two dead and a trail of destruction in its path.

It came ashore near the town of Punta Maldonado before weakening back to tropical storm status early Tuesday and was expected to weaken rapidly. Still, the U.S. National Hurricane Center warned that the storm's slow pace and heavy rains could cause potentially catastrophic flash flooding and mudslides.

In the U.S., federal authorities positioned generators, food and water, along with search-and-rescue and power restoration teams, White House spokesperson Jeremy Edwards said.

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis declared a state of emergency Mon-

day ahead of the storm's arrival on the state's Gulf Coast as soon as late Thursday and increased the counties included in the high-risk area Tuesday from 41 to 61.

The storm is expected to move over deep, warm waters, fueling its intensification. People in regions under watches and warnings should be prepared to lose power and should have enough food and water for at least three days, an official said.

Helene, the eighth named storm of the Atlantic hurricane season, could strengthen into a major Category 3 hurricane — with winds of at least 111 mph — before approaching the northeastern Gulf Coast.

Israeli airstrike kills a Hezbollah commander

Two sides continue to exchange strikes as region on edge of war

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIRUT — The Israeli military said it killed a top Hezbollah commander Tuesday as part of a two-day bombing campaign that has left more than 560 people dead and prompted thousands in southern Lebanon to seek refuge from the widening conflict.

With the two sides on the brink of all-out war, Hezbollah launched dozens of rockets into Israel, targeting an explosives factory and sending families into bomb shelters.

Families that fled southern

Lebanon flocked to Beirut and the coastal city of Sidon, sleeping in schools turned into shelters, as well as in cars, parks and along the beach. Some sought to flee the country, causing a traffic jam at the border with Syria.

Israel said late Tuesday that fighter jets carried out "extensive strikes" on Hezbollah weapons and rocket launchers across southern Lebanon and in the Bekaa region to the north.

Asked about the duration of Israel's operations in Lebanon, military spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said at a news conference that it aims to keep them "as short as possible, that's why we're attacking with great force. At the same time, we must be prepared for it to take longer"

Suspect handed more federal charges in Fla.

Man who staked out golf course accused of planning assassination

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — A man who authorities say staked out Donald Trump for 12 hours on his golf course in Florida and wrote of his desire to kill him was indicted Tuesday on an attempted assassination charge.

Ryan Wesley Routh was initially charged with two federal firearms offenses. The upgraded charges contained in a five-count indictment reflect the Justice Department's assessment that he methodically plotted to kill the Republican nominee, aim-

ing a rifle through the shrubbery surrounding Trump's West Palm Beach golf course while Trump was playing.

Routh left behind a note in which he described his intention, prosecutors said.

The attempted assassination indictment was foreshadowed during a court hearing Monday in which prosecutors successfully argued for Routh, 58, to remain behind bars.

The charge of attempted assassination carries a potential life sentence in the event of a conviction. Other charges in the indictment include assaulting a federal officer, possessing a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence and the two original firearms charges he faced last week.