



**MEMPHIS (AP)** -- Forecasters warned of more severe weather, including tornadoes, Tuesday in parts of the South and Midwest hammered just days ago by deadly storms. That could mean more misery for people sifting through the wreckage of their homes in Arkansas, Iowa and Illinois. Dangerous conditions also could stretch into parts of Missouri, southwest Oklahoma and northeast Texas. Farther south and west, fire danger will remain high. Just last week, fierce storms that spawned tornadoes in 11 states killed at least 32 people as the system that began Friday plodded through Arkansas and traveled northeast through the South and into the Midwest and Northeast. The same conditions that fueled last week's storms — an area of low pressure combined with strong southerly winds — will make conditions ideal for another round of severe weather Tuesday into early morning Wednesday, said Ryan Bunker, a meteorologist with the National Weather Center in Norman, Oklahoma.

**VOORSCHOTEN, Netherlands (Reuters)** -- At least one person was killed and 30 injured, many seriously, when a passenger train carrying about 50 people derailed in the Netherlands early on Tuesday after hitting construction equipment on the track, Dutch emergency services said. Rescue teams were seen ferrying away the injured in pre-dawn darkness at the scene of the accident at Voorschoten, a village near The Hague. The accident happened around 3:25 a.m. (0125 GMT), the emergency services said. A fire department spokesman told Dutch radio that 19 people were taken to hospital. Others were being treated on the spot, the emergency services said. The front carriage of the night train from Leiden city to The Hague derailed and ploughed into a field after the accident, ANP news agency said. The second carriage was on its side and a fire broke out in the rear carriage but was later extinguished, it said.

**NEW DELHI/BEIJING (Reuters)** -- India said on Tuesday it rejected attempts by China to rename places in its eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh. "Arunachal Pradesh is, has been and will always be an integral and inalienable part of India," foreign ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said on Twitter. Bagchi was responding to media reports that said China had renamed several places in Arunachal Pradesh. China's Ministry of Civil Affairs on Sunday standardized the names of 11 places including the names of five mountains in southern Tibet, which shares a disputed border with India. In recent years, Indian and Chinese troops have clashed along parts of their long border in the Himalayas. In December last year, the troops had minor scuffles in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh, also claimed by Beijing. The poorly demarcated 3,800-km (2,360-mile) frontier between the nuclear-armed countries had stayed largely peaceful after a war in 1962, before clashes in 2020 sent relations nosediving.

**SEOUL (Reuters)** -- North Korea criticized the U.S. for refusing to extradite a man who was accused of staging a break-in at North Korea's embassy in Spain in 2019, saying Washington was protecting terrorism, state media KCNA reported on Tuesday. The North Korean embassy in Madrid issued a statement marking the fourth anniversary of the raid, during which a group of men bound and gagged staff for hours before driving off with computers and other devices. Pyongyang denounced the incident as a "grave breach of sovereignty and terrorist attack" but accused the U.S. of not investigating the group thoroughly and refusing to extradite its leader, Christopher Ahn, calling it a violation of international law. Ahn, a former U.S. Marine who had worked as a human rights activist, was arrested in Los Angeles in April 2019 but freed on \$1.3 million bail three months later.

**DHAKA (Reuters)** -- Firefighters and army personnel were working on Tuesday to douse a massive fire that raged through a shopping complex with 3,000 shops in Bangladesh's capital of Dhaka, fire officials said. There were no casualties reported so far in the fire, which began in the early hours of Tuesday morning, but army personnel had been called in to help after flames spread rapidly in the cramped, crowded area of Bangabazar, home to the country's famed cloth markets. Most of the shops were burnt to ashes in the fire, but there was no information on whether any people were trapped inside, given that the fire broke in the early hours of the morning before most shops had opened, Khalid said.

**SYDNEY (Reuters)** -- At least four people have been killed and hundreds of houses destroyed in a remote area of northern Papua New Guinea, an official said on Tuesday, a day after a 7.2 magnitude earthquake. Teams from Papua New Guinea's National Disaster Centre were sent to the quake's epicenter near Chambril Lakes, a remote and swampy part of East Sepik province, Felix Taranu, a seismologist with the Port Moresby Geophysical Observatory, told Reuters on Tuesday. Four people are confirmed dead and 300 houses destroyed along the Sepik River region, and there are unconfirmed reports of further deaths and several hundred more houses destroyed, he added. The quake struck at a depth of 80km (49.7 miles) early on Monday, according to the European Mediterranean Seismological Centre (EMSC). Papua New Guinea straddles the Pacific's "Ring of Fire", a region known for frequent earthquakes. A 7.6 magnitude quake last September killed seven and triggered landslides across three provinces.

## China Warns U.S. Over 'Disastrous Mistakes'



Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen departs the Lotte Hotel in Manhattan in New York City, New York, U.S., March 30, 2023.

**BEIJING (Reuters)** -- China warned U.S. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy on Tuesday not to "repeat disastrous past mistakes" and meet Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen, saying it would not help regional peace and stability, but only unite the Chinese people behind a common enemy.

The Republican McCarthy, the third-most-senior U.S. leader after the president and vice president, will host a meeting in California on Wednesday with Tsai, during a sensitive stopover in the United States that has prompted Chinese threats of retaliation.

China, which claims Taiwan as its own territory, staged war games around the island last August after then-Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat, visited the capital, Taipei.

Tsai will make what is formally called a "transit" in Los Angeles on her way back to Taipei after a trip to Central America. The United States says such stopovers are common practice and there is no need for China to overreact.

But China's consulate in Los Angeles said it was "false" to claim it as a transit, adding that Tsai was engaging in official exchanges to "put on a political show".

No matter in what capacity McCarthy meets Tsai, the gesture would greatly harm the feelings of the Chinese people, send a serious wrong signal to Taiwan separatist

forces, and affect the political foundation of Sino-U.S. ties, it said in a statement.

"It is not conducive to regional peace, security nor stability, and is not in the common interests of the people of China and the United States," the consulate added.

McCarthy is ignoring the lessons from the mistakes of his predecessor, it said, in a veiled reference to Pelosi's Taipei visit, and is insisting on playing the "Taiwan card".

"He will undoubtedly repeat disastrous past mistakes and further damage Sino-U.S. relations. It will only strengthen the Chinese people's strong will and determination to share a common enemy and support national unity."

China will closely follow developments and resolutely and vigorously defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity, the consulate added, without giving details.

Meanwhile, prominent Chinese commentator Hu Xijin wrote on his widely followed Twitter account "the Chinese mainland will definitely react, and make the Tsai Ing-wen regime lose much more than what they can gain from this meeting."

Hu, who had voiced his concerns over House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan last year, also wrote "The U.S. side is definitely not getting any real advantage either," on his Weibo account, a Twitter-like social media platform in China.

## U.S. Cannot Confirm China Balloon Gathered Military Intel



U.S. navy sailors recover a high-altitude Chinese surveillance balloon off the coast of South Carolina on February 5, 2023.

**WASHINGTON (Reuters)** -- U.S. President Joe Biden's administration said it could not confirm reports that China was able to collect real-time data from a spy balloon as it flew over sensitive military sites earlier this year, saying analysis was still ongoing.

NBC News on Monday reported that the Chinese balloon was able to transmit data back to Beijing in real time despite the U.S. government's efforts to prevent it from doing so — a disclosure that could deepen Republican criticism of Biden for waiting for the balloon to reach a safe location before shooting it down.

NBC cited two current senior U.S. officials and one former senior administration official.

The White House and the Pentagon told reporters that they could not confirm that account. The Pentagon said experts were still analyzing debris collected from the balloon after it was shot down on Feb. 4.

"I could not confirm that there was real-time transmission from the balloon back to (China) at this time," said Pentagon spokesperson Sabrina Singh, adding, "that's something we're analyzing right now."

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday that China has made it clear that the unmanned civilian airship that flew over U.S. territory was "an unexpected and isolated event".

ing up of this incident," spokesperson Mao Ning said at a regular briefing in response to a question about the U.S. remarks.

The balloon, which Beijing denies was a government spy vessel, spent a week flying over the United States and Canada before the U.S. military shot it down off the Atlantic Coast on Biden's orders.

Reuters has reported that the U.S. officials believe the high-altitude balloon was controlled by Beijing and was able to maneuver as it flew over the United States, at times steering left or right.

Still, at the time, U.S. officials played down the balloon's impact on national security, saying it took measures to limit its ability to collect information on sensitive U.S. sites. It also played down the idea that the balloon was much more capable of collecting information than Chinese spy satellites, while acknowledging the balloon's ability to loiter longer over U.S. locations than a satellite.

The Chinese balloon incident prompted U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken to postpone a planned visit to Beijing and further strained relations between Washington and Beijing.

The episode caused an uproar in Washington and led the U.S. military to search the skies for other objects that were not being captured on radar.

# Finland Joins NATO as Eastward Expansion Rolls on



A Finnish border guard looks on near the border crossing at Pelkola, Imatra, in November 2022.

**BRUSSELS (Dispatches)** -- Finland became the 31st member of NATO on Tuesday, in a historic strategic shift which doubles the U.S.-led alliance's border with Russia.

Completing the ratification in well under a year still makes this the fastest membership process in the alliance's recent history.

All that remained were Tuesday's highly choreographed formalities at NATO headquarters.

Finland's foreign minister handed over the formal accession papers to U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, the keeper of NATO's founding treaty.

Then the country's blue-and-white flag was raised next to those of its new allies, between those of Estonia and France, in front of the gleaming headquar-

ters in Brussels.

Joining NATO places Finland under the alliance's Article Five, the collective defense pledge that an attack on one member "shall be considered an attack against them all".

Invaded by its giant neighbor the Soviet Union in 1939, Finland -- which has a 1,300-kilometre (800 mile) border with Russia -- stayed out of NATO throughout the Cold War.

Now its membership brings a potent military into the alliance with a wartime strength of 280,000 and one of Europe's largest artillery arsenals.

NATO's reach into eastern and southern European countries infuriated the Kremlin and strained its relations with Washington.

Putin cited the threat of NATO

expanding into Ukraine as one of his main reasons for launching the war 13 months ago.

Russia has pledged to bolster its forces and stepped up diplomatic rhetoric in recent weeks, describing Finland and Sweden as a "legitimate target" if they join NATO.

President Vladimir Putin has also announced plans to deploy tactical nuclear weapons in Russia's neighbor Belarus.

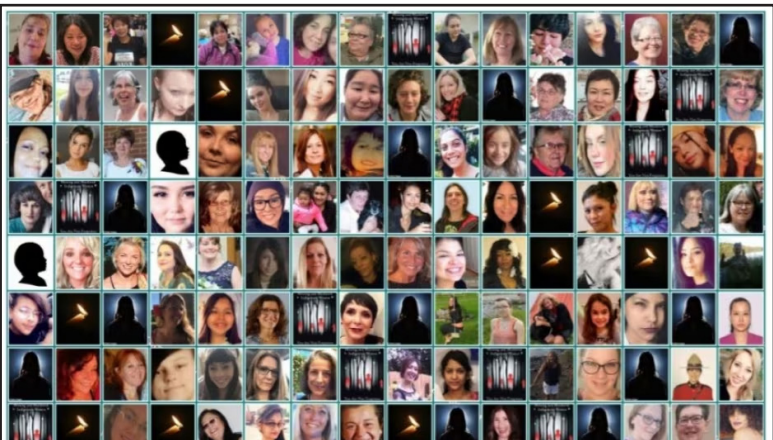
Russia's parliament speaker said on Tuesday that Western leaders have blood on their hands for supporting Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky and that support has led to the creation of a "terrorist state" in Europe's center.

Vyacheslav Volodin, an ally of President Vladimir Putin, said that the killing of prominent war blogger Vladlen Tatarysky in St Petersburg over the weekend was a "terrorist act" committed by Kyiv.

"The support of Washington and Brussels for the Kyiv authorities has led to the creation of a terrorist state in the centre of Europe," Volodin said on the Telegram messaging app.

"The blood of the dead and wounded is on the hands of (U.S. President Joe) Biden, (President Emmanuel) Macron, (German Chancellor Olaf) Scholz and other heads of state who support the Zelensky regime."

## Report: A Woman Killed Every Two Days in Canada



This composite image prepared and released by the CFOJA shows the 160 women and girls killed in Canada in 2020.

**OTTAWA (Dispatches)** -- At least 850 women and girls in Canada were violently killed between 2018 and 2022, mostly at the hands of men, according to the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability's recently released annual report.

It means a woman or girl is killed every two days nationwide.

"This is a crisis. Women are dying every 48 hours," said Linda Basque of Info-Femmes.

The report also finds there was a 27 percent increase in killings of women and girls by a male suspect from 2019 to 2022.

"It just shows that in the pan-

dem context, we've seen more of these rates go up of all forms of gender-based violence, including intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and femicide, and that we have to treat it as an emergency and not just take it for granted that this violence is going to happen," explained Andrea Gunraj, Canadian Women's Foundation's VP of public engagement.

The report finds the average age for a woman killed by a male accused is 42-years-old and about one in five female victims killed by a male accused were Indigenous.

"Do we have everything we need to prevent and intervene in this

violence, which is traumatic, very complicated, and long-lasting? No, we don't in Canada. And that's the point. It's about time that we start thinking about it from that whole community perspective, looking at the complicated ways that it plays out, and the risk factors before, during, and after," explained Gunraj.

Advocates have been calling for femicides to be recognized in the Criminal Code of Canada.

"It's something that happens because we live in a society where it's still possible that things like that can happen because minor types of violence, and coercive control are still minimized and trivialized. And the more we will take these types of violence seriously, the more we will see that that's the route, you know. Control is power and control. So we need to fight this in our society," explained Claudine Thibadeau, clinical supervisor with SOS violence conjugale.

"Sometimes when events like the pandemic happen, it doesn't help. It throws a stick in the wheel if you want. It makes it more difficult for victims to leave violent situations. It gives power to abusers. That's what we seem to see, at least in situations of intimate partner violence, for sure. I'm not surprised, but I'm extremely sad about it. It shows that we still need to work hard at fighting violence against women."

## Trump Charged, Fingerprinted After Court Appearance

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** -- Donald Trump, the ex-president and frontrunner to be Republican nominee in 2024, appeared in court on Tuesday and was formally charged, finger-printed and had a mug shot taken in a watershed moment ahead of next year's presidential election.

Trump was indicted last week, becoming the first sitting or former president to face criminal charges, over a case involving a 2016 hush money payment to porn star Stormy Daniels. He has said he is innocent and is due to plead not guilty.

Trump turned himself in on Tuesday amid tight security as demonstrations were expected for and against a man who has riled liberals and some global allies but is lauded by many white blue-collar and conservative Christian voters.

"We have to take back our country and, MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!" Trump wrote on his Truth Social profile shortly after arriving in New York from Florida on Monday, urging supporters to donate to his campaign.

from dignity and decorum. Judge Juan Merchan late on Monday ruled that five photographers will be admitted before the arraignment starts to take pictures for several minutes until they must stop, with cameras allowed in the hallways of the building.

Trump was to return to Florida and deliver remarks from Mar-a-Lago at 8:15 p.m. on Tuesday (0015 GMT on Wednesday), his office said.

The specific charges in the indictment by a grand jury convened were due to be disclosed on Tuesday. Trump and his allies were portrayed the charges as politically motivated.

Yahoo News late on Monday said Trump would face 34 felony counts for falsification of business records. Citing a single source briefed on Tuesday's arraignment procedures, Yahoo said none of the charges against Trump were misdemeanors.

Police over the weekend began erecting barricades near Trump Tower - where Trump arrived on Monday after flying in from Florida - and the Manhattan Criminal Court building, with demonstrations expected at both sites on Tuesday.