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NEW YORK NEWS

The Voice of People

From New York

Hawaii Battles Hurricane Lala

Flash Floods Devastate The Islands

Lily Anderson

On August 15, 2026, Hawaii was plunged into a state of emergency as Category 1 Hurricane Lala skirted the Big Island, unleashing torrential rains, mudslides, and destructive flash floods. Although the storm did not make direct landfall, passing within 30 miles of South Point, its impact has been severe. Governor Josh Green confirmed that at least one person died in a weather-related car accident on the Big Island. Meanwhile, Hawaii County officials reported that flash flooding in two areas may have swept several occupied homes off their foundations. Mayor Kimo Alameda announced that search and rescue teams are actively working under hazardous, dark conditions to locate missing residents. The storm brought peak wind speeds of 91 mph and threatened to dump up to 35 inches of rain in some areas. The extreme weather knocked out power to nearly 115,000 customers across the state, forcing three hospitals to rely on backup generators. Air travel was severely disrupted, with 190 flights postponed, including 80% of flights at Hilo International Airport. Tropical storm warnings remain in effect for all eight major Hawaiian islands as the storm continues its westward path.

HIGHLIGHT

●Hurricane Lala brought winds of up to 91 mph.
●At least one weather-related death has been confirmed.

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Photo: Police officers help move a patient to an open-area shelter at a hospital, following an earthquake felt in Labuan Bajo, East Nusa Tenggara province
Image Source: Reuters/BBC

Earthquake Strikes Indonesia

Thousands Displaced Across Flores Island

Alexander Sullivan

A powerful magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck the Indonesian island of Flores on Saturday, August 15, 2026, leaving at least 53 people dead and displacing approximately 5,000 residents. The shallow tremor, which occurred just 15 kilometers below the surface, triggered over 340 aftershocks and caused widespread devastation across East Nusa Tenggara province.
According to the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB), preliminary assessments indicate that more than 900 homes, along with dozens of schools, government offices, and healthcare facilities, have been severely damaged. Abdul Muhari, a spokesperson for the BNPB, confirmed that the hardest-hit areas include Manggarai province, which recorded 25 fatalities, and East Manggarai, with 20 deaths.
The disaster forced hospitals, including the Ruteng Regional Hospital, to treat patients in temporary outdoor tents due to structural damage. While an initial tsunami warning prompted 2,000 people to flee to higher ground, the alert was lifted three hours later. Rescue teams continue to navigate landslides and mountainous terrain to reach isolated communities.

HIGHLIGHT

●A powerful magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck Flores island on Saturday, August 15, 2026.

●At least 53 people have been confirmed dead, with thousands more displaced.

●Over 900 homes and critical public infrastructure suffered severe damage.

Belgium's Record Wildfire Spreads

Blaze Threatens German Border Towns

John Paul

Firefighters from several European countries are battling the largest wildfire in Belgium's recorded history as flames spread through the High Fens nature reserve toward the German border. The fire began on August 14, 2026, in Liege province and has burned more than 27 square kilometers, surpassing the country's previous wildfire record.
More than 250 emergency personnel from Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands have been deployed to contain the blaze.
Authorities evacuated around 600 residents from Waimes and Butgenbach after shifting winds and heavy smoke increased the danger. No homes have been reported destroyed.
Across the border, the German town of Monschau said the fire came within 3 kilometers of its boundary. The wildfire follows weeks of severe drought and extreme heat, with temperatures reaching 37 degrees Celsius.



Photo: A farmer uses his tractor to spray burned fields and forests during a wildfire near Waimes, in the High Fens region, Belgium, August 16, 2026
Image Source: Yves Herman/Reuters



Photo: President Trump showing a rendering of the ballroom in front of construction materials on 19 May.
Image Source: Getty Images/BBC

Trump Appeals Ballroom Halt

Supreme Court Decision Looms

Rodrigo Diaz

President Donald Trump has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to allow construction to resume on a $400 million White House ballroom after a federal appeals court halted the project over the lack of congressional authorization.
The emergency application, filed on August 14, 2026, challenges the order set to take effect on August 21. The National Trust for Historic Preservation had sued over the demolition of the White House East Wing.
Solicitor General D. John Sauer said the project is already 65% complete and argued that stopping construction could create security concerns and give Congress "dangerous leverage."
Chief Justice John Roberts ordered the National Trust to respond by noon on August 18.

HIGHLIGHT

●Trump asks Supreme Court to restart the $400 million White House ballroom project.

●Appeals court halted construction pending congressional approval.

●Administration cites security concerns as the project is 65% complete.

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Rockaway Task Force Proposed

NYN Community Desk

On August 14, 2026, New York City Council Member Joann Ariola, alongside local business owners and civic organizations, formally called for the creation of the Rockaway Adult Care Facility Oversight Task Force. The initiative aims to address long-standing quality-of-life issues along the Beach 116th Street commercial corridor in Queens.
According to a joint letter sent to several city and state agencies—including the NYPD and the New York State Department of Health—local stakeholders have reported persistent problems with aggressive panhandling, loitering, and harassment from residents of nearby adult care facilities. Dr. Harold Paez,



Photo: Council Member Joann Ariola
Image Source: QNS file photo

president of the Rockaway Civic Association, noted that aggressive panhandling remains the number one complaint from community members.
The proposed task force would audit local facilities, engage with operators,
and develop recommendations to ensure these programs fulfill their care missions. Business owners, such as Denise Diehm of The Gift is Love, expressed strong support, calling the oversight long overdue.
In response,
a spokesperson for the New York State Department of Health confirmed that the agency has received the letter and is currently reviewing the proposals, emphasizing their ongoing commitment to monitoring social adult day care centers.

Queens Hosts Backpack Giveaway

NYN Local Correspondent

On Wednesday, Aug. 12, 2026, local families gathered at Gorman Playground in East Elmhurst for a community backpack giveaway aimed at preparing students for the upcoming school year.
The event was jointly hosted by Council Member Tiffany Cabán, Assemblymember Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas, and Team AOC.
Hundreds of colorful, supply-filled backpacks were distributed to school-aged children during the event.
The giveaway is part of a larger, week-long initiative to distribute over 1,000 backpacks across Queens



Photo: Multiple Queens leaders teamed up with a backpack giveaway, which also featured access to resources from local organizations.
Image Source : Alice Moreno

neighborhoods, including Jackson Heights, Corona, and Woodside. The supplies were generously donated by the Astoria Baptist Church and Queens Community Board 1.
Beyond school supplies,
the event served as a hub for essential community resources. Representatives from various local organizations, including Make the Road NY, Elmhurst Hospital, and Sunnyside Community Services, were on hand to provide families with information regarding healthcare, immigration services, mental health, and housing assistance.
Organizers emphasized that the event was designed to ensure students have the tools to succeed while connecting families directly to local support networks.
Additional giveaways were scheduled to follow at Corona Plaza and the NYCHA Woodside Houses.



Photo: The entrance to the Fresh Pond Crematory in Middle Village, as seen in 2018.
Image Source: TimesLedger

Honoring Generations Of Lives

NYN News Correspondent

The historic Fresh Pond Crematory, located on Mount Olivet Crescent in Middle Village, has served as a cornerstone of the community for over a century. Recently, the facility faced its most challenging period yet, operating nearly 24 hours a day during the height of the coronavirus pandemic in late March and early April to accommodate the surge of New Yorkers lost to the virus.
Established on December 5, 1885, the crematory was the first of its kind in New York State. Over the decades, the facility, also known as the U.S. Columbarium Co., has expanded to house more than 16,000 niches containing the remains of over 40,000 individuals.
Among those honored at the site are legendary financier J.P. Morgan and baseball icon Lou Gehrig.
Beyond its historic columbarium, the site features a dedicated 9/11 World Trade Center Memorial,
which honors the 343 firefighters lost in the 2001 terrorist attacks. Today, the
crematory continues its long-standing mission of providing dignity and comfort to grieving families.

Elmhurst Flood Tour Conducted



Photo: Council Member Shekar Krishnan and Small Business Services Commissioner Kenny Minaya toured Elmhurst businesses impacted by recent extreme flooding.
Image Source: Photo courtesy of Council Member Shekar Krishnan

NYN Community Reporter

Council Member Shekar Krishnan, SBS Commissioner Kenny Minaya, and city officials toured flood-damaged businesses in Elmhurst, Queens, on August 11, 2026. The visit focused on businesses along Broadway affected by the severe July 18 storm, which flooded basements, utility rooms, and electrical systems.
Krishnan called for improved catch basin maintenance and green infrastructure, while officials urged affected businesses to seek emergency assistance through Small Business Services.

Park Repair Protests Ignite

NYN Neighborhood Report

On August 13, 2026, more than 150 community members gathered at Flushing Meadows Corona Park to demand increased funding for the historically significant but chronically neglected public space. Organized by Queens Community House and co-sponsored by Queens Power, the rally highlighted concerns over deteriorating infrastructure just days before the nearby US Open.
Protesters near the Queens Theatre pointed to dry



Photo: Over 150 community members came together to call for more funding for repairs and maintenance at Flushing Meadows Corona Park.
Image Source: Queens Community House

fountains, periodic flooding, and aging amenities across the 897-acre park. Queens Community House CEO Ben Thomases estimated that the park faces an annual funding shortfall of about $15 million for proper maintenance and operations.
Queens Borough President Donovan Richards and Council Member Shanel Thomas-Henry recently announced $17.5 million for park renovations, along with another $5 million for 2027 for the Playground for All Children. Advocates, however, continue to call for sustained long-term funding.

Prayer Time IN New York

FAJR	DHUHR	ASR	MAGHRIB	ISHA
04:37	01:01	04:50	07:54	09:21
04:39	01:01	04:49	07:53	09:19
04:40	12:59	04:48	07:51	09:17
04:42	12:59	04:48	07:50	09:15
04:43	12:59	04:47	07:49	09:13
04:45	12:59	04:46	07:48	09:11
04:45	12:598	04:46	07:46	09:10

OPINION

Queens Hosts Backpack Giveaway

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The Beauty of Life with Tawakkal

– Imam Shamsi Ali

This morning after Fajr prayer at the Masjid, I delivered a study circle from the book "Riyadhus Salihin" by Imam An-Nawawi. Our discussion has now reached the Chapter of Tawakkal. It is a fundamental concept in our religion, yet it is often misunderstood disproportionately by many.

Tawakkal is not apathy. It consists of three inseparable components: Ikhtiar, striving to the best of your ability with full sincerity and diligence; Tafwidh, entrusting the final outcome of that striving completely to Allah; and Ridha, accepting that final outcome with a spacious and tranquil heart.

Tawakkal: The Door to Tranquility

We all know there are moments when we feel exhausted, even hopeless, in trying to steer our lives toward what we desire. We have already strived, prayed, and planned, yet the result remains far from our expectations. It is here that we must realize our responsibility is to do our absolute best. As for the final result, that belongs to the Domain of Allah. Entrusting your affairs to Him is not apathy, weakness, or despair. It is an awareness of your own limitations, and a decision to stop forcing life to go exactly as you wish.



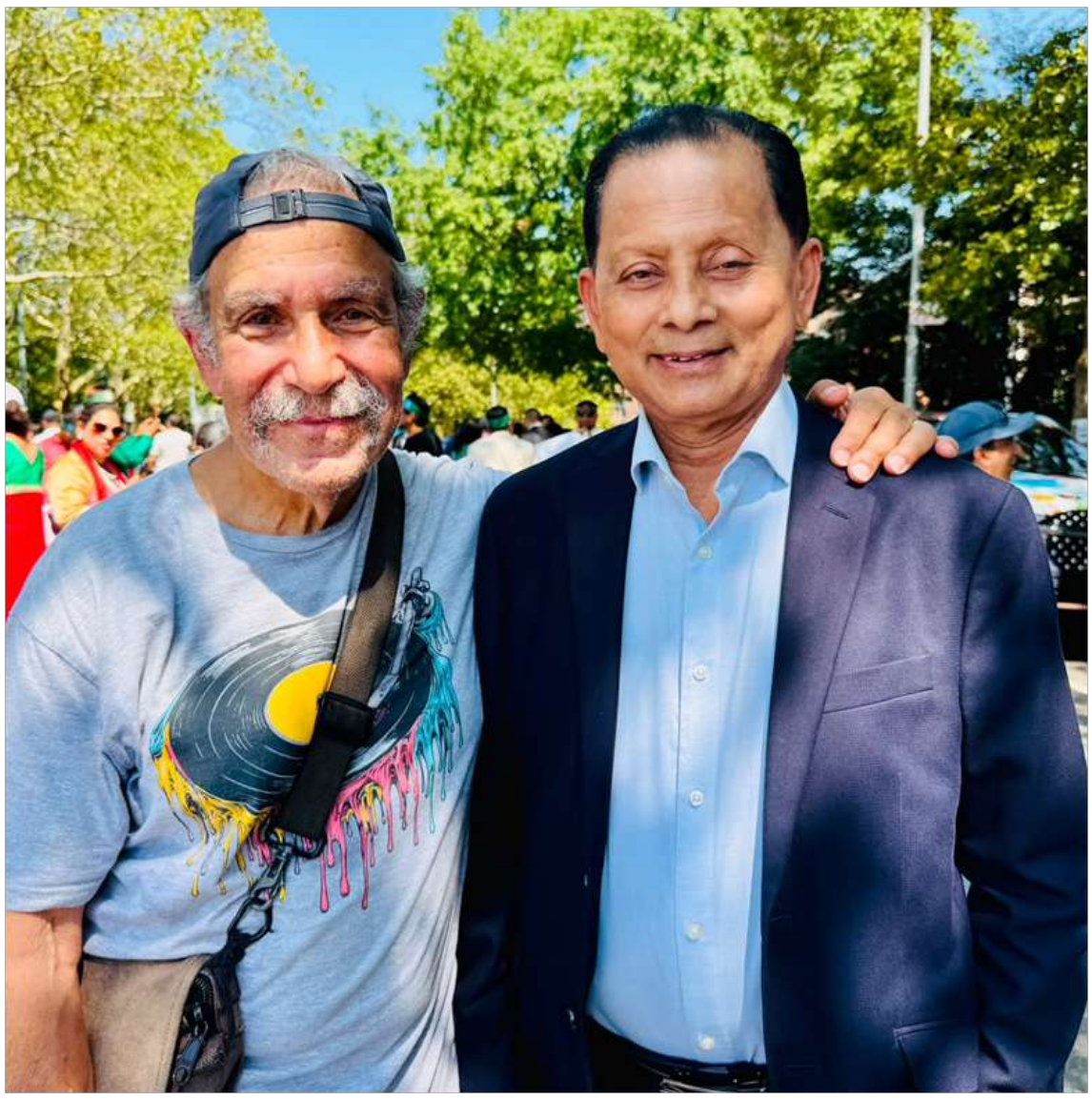
— Imam Shamsi Ali : Director, Jamaica Muslim Center & President, Nusantara Foundation

When we reach the stage of saying, "And I entrust my affair to Allah," as taught in the Quran, we have in fact reached the highest level of victory and peace in life. We continue to strive and to struggle with "itqan" (excellence), but we no longer hang our hopes for the final result on our own effort and ourselves, but on the Owner and Sovereign of all life.

True success is not when everything you want materializes just as you wished. True success is when whatever you desire is met with contentment in the Power of Allah. Success or failure should not rob the heart of its tranquility. At this point, hardship and failure are transformed into lessons and serenity.

So let us strive with our hands, pray with our tongues, and surrender with our hearts. The storm may not yet have passed, the problem may not yet be solved, but the soul remains at peace because it knows to whom all affairs have been entrusted. That is the most beautiful victory. In-shaa-Allah!

"What began as a brief professional greeting quickly unfolded into a deeply engaging and memorable conversation with legendary photojournalist Ira Berger."



"Meeting Ira Berger was far more than an unexpected highlight of the parade; "

Meeting Ira Berger: A Remarkable Encounter

– Akbar Haider Kiron

On a vibrant summer morning in Jackson Heights, the streets stretching from 69th to 89th Street transformed into a colorful tapestry of celebration for the South Asian Unity Day Parade. Festive music, rhythmic traditional drums, and bright attire filled the air as community members gathered to mark the occasion. Attending the event as an invited media partner representing Kiron TV and New York Bangla Dotcom, I was actively engaged in documenting the spirit of the parade and capturing key moments along the route.

Amidst the lively crowd and bustling coverage, my attention was drawn to a seasoned photographer moving purposefully through the scene, camera in hand. His focused presence and experienced eye immediately signaled a lifetime dedicated to the visual craft. What began as a brief professional greeting quickly unfolded into a deeply engaging and memorable conversation with legendary photojournalist Ira Berger.

As we spoke, Ira shared remarkable glimpses of his life journey—a narrative as extraordinary as it is inspiring. Originally trained in physics and engineering, Ira spent his early career working on nuclear submarines for the U.S. Navy. In fact, on July 20, 1969, while Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin walked on the moon, Ira was submerged underwater, observing history unfold from beneath the sea.



— Akbar Haider Kiron Senior Journalist and Writer, Host of Coffee with Kiron

Driven by a passion for human connection and spontaneous storytelling, Ira took a leap of faith in the late 1960s, leaving submarine engineering to pursue photojournalism full-time. Self-taught on the streets of New York, he built an illustrious career as a key contributor and staff photographer for major national publications, including People and Star Magazine. Over decades, his lens captured iconic figures across culture, politics, and sports, including Andy Warhol, Dolly Parton, Willie Mays, and Brooke Shields.

What made our meeting so special was the immediate warmth and mutual respect that developed between us. Here, along 89th Street in Queens, two distinct streams of media and storytelling intersected—one rooted in iconic American photojournalism, the other in vibrant Bengali-American community journalism. Before concluding our conversation, a mutual friend captured a commemorative photograph of us together, and we exchanged business cards with a shared commitment to stay in touch. Meeting Ira Berger was far more than an unexpected highlight of the parade; it was a profound reminder of how journalism connects lives across generations, disciplines, and backgrounds.

EDUCATION

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Elhaam Academy Students Explore STEM

Summer campers learn through hands-on science

NYN Desk Report

Curiosity took center stage as Elhaam Academy's summer camp students spent a day exploring science through hands-on learning at the Queens Hall of Science, turning a summer outing into an engaging STEM experience.

The visit gave students the opportunity to interact with science in a practical setting, where learning moved beyond books and classroom lessons. Through interactive activities and exhibits, participants explored concepts connected to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, while also using creativity and problem-solving skills. Elhaam Academy described the outing as an opportunity for



students to learn by doing. In a post about the visit, the academy said, "Our summer camp students had an amazing hands-on STEM experience at the Queens Hall of Science, exploring science, creativity, and innovation through interactive learning." The trip reflected the value of introducing young learners to science in an environment designed for exploration. By engaging directly with activities, students had the chance to ask questions, observe how ideas work in practice, and connect classroom knowledge with real-world experiences. The visit also placed creativity alongside scientific learning. Rather than treating STEM as a narrow academic subject, the experience encouraged students to think, explore, and experiment. For summer camp participants, the combination of education and recreation helped make the day both meaningful and enjoyable. The academy added, "It was truly an inspiring day of discovery, curiosity, and fun!" That message captured the broader purpose of the trip, which was to help students enjoy learning while building confidence in exploring new ideas. For Elhaam Academy's summer camp students, the visit offered a break from routine while keeping education at the center of the day. The experience gave young participants a chance to strengthen curiosity, engage with interactive learning, and develop a greater interest in how science shapes the world around them.

The outing also reflected Elhaam Academy's effort to make summer programming active and educational. By bringing students to the Queens Hall of Science, the academy created a learning experience where discovery, creativity, and fun came together in one setting.

















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Donovan Richards Meets Jamaica Leaders

Town hall focuses on neighborhood priorities and city services

NYN Special Correspondent



Community leaders and city officials came together in Jamaica, Queens, for a town hall focused on some of the neighborhood's most persistent concerns, from traffic congestion and parking shortages to sanitation, public safety, recreation, and the long-standing call for a permanent Shaheed Minar. The meeting, organized by Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr., was held on Tuesday, August 11, at the Queens Public Library Central auditorium.

It brought together local community and business leaders with officials from several New York City agencies, including Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Sanitation, and the NYPD. The program was coordinated by Mohammad Fakhrul Islam Delwar, a member of Community Board 8 and president of the Jamaica Bangladesh Friends Society.

Mohammad Sadeq, chief engineer from the Borough President's Office, moderated the discussion.

Participants raised concerns about traffic congestion along Hillside Avenue and Jamaica Avenue, limited parking, and ticketing connected with bus lanes. Sanitation issues and concerns about safety in certain areas were also discussed. Community members also called for more recreational space, while noting that expansion work at Captain Tilly Park is already underway. One of the most significant issues raised was the long-standing request from the Bangladeshi American community for a permanent Shaheed Minar in Jamaica.

The monument would serve as a cultural and historical symbol for the community. After hearing the concerns, Borough President Donovan Richards Jr. said he would speak with the NYC Parks and Recreation Department regarding the proposal. Richards also directed attention toward the other neighborhood issues raised during the meeting and assured participants that relevant city agencies would work toward solutions.

The gathering included prominent community figures and professionals, including Mohammad Ali, General Secretary of the Bangladesh Society, who joined others in presenting concerns and recommendations.

The town hall gave Jamaica residents and community leaders a direct forum to raise local issues before city officials. It also placed the proposed Shaheed Minar firmly within the broader discussion about public space, cultural recognition, and community development in Queens.






















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SUMMER CAMP

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Field Day Closes Elhaam Summer Camp

Students enjoy a cheerful final day together

NYN Newsroom

Laughter, friendship, and celebration filled the final day of Elhaam Academy's summer camp, as students came together for a lively Field Day marking the conclusion of the summer program. The event gave students a chance to celebrate the experiences they had shared throughout the season. After weeks centered on learning, creativity, friendship, and recreation, the Field Day offered a relaxed and cheerful way to close the program. "We wrapped up the last day of summer camp with a fun-filled Field Day, and our students enjoyed every moment," Elhaam Academy stated in its post about the event. The final gathering



reflected the balance between education and recreation that shaped the summer camp experience. Students spent the season learning together, building friendships, and taking part in activities designed to keep them engaged during the summer months. Field Day served as a fitting conclusion by giving participants time to enjoy one another's company and celebrate the end of the program. The event also created another shared memory for students who spent the summer developing new skills and forming connections with classmates. Elhaam Academy described the closing event as "the perfect ending to an amazing summer of learning, friendship, and fun." The statement reflected the broader experience of the camp, which brought students together in an environment focused on both personal development and enjoyment.

For the students, the final day carried the excitement of celebration along with the sense of completing a meaningful summer experience. The friendships and memories formed during camp remained at the center of the occasion. The Field Day also gave the academy an opportunity to recognize the spirit of participation that defined the summer. Rather than ending with a formal closing session, the program concluded through shared activity and enjoyment. As the summer camp came to an end, Elhaam Academy looked back on a season shaped by learning, connection, and positive experiences. The final Field Day brought those elements together, giving students one last opportunity to celebrate the summer before moving on to the next chapter of their educational journey.













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SPORTS

Bangladesh Stun Australia in Darwin

Nine-wicket triumph delivers a historic Test victory

NYN Digital Desk



Bangladesh produced one of the greatest victories in its Test cricket history, overwhelming top-ranked Australia by nine wickets in Darwin to secure its first Test triumph on Australian soil and take the lead in the two-match series. The visitors completed the upset on the fourth day after dismissing Australia for 284 in its second innings, leaving only 57 runs to win. Despite losing opener Tanzid Hasan Tamim for a duck, Bangladesh comfortably reached 57-1, with Mominul Haque unbeaten on 30 and Shadman Islam scoring 25. Mominul sealed the victory by cutting Beau Webster to the boundary, triggering celebrations among the Bangladesh players and staff.

Bangladesh had controlled much of the contest after Australia managed only 198 in its first innings. Hasan Mahmud delivered a decisive spell of 6-55, before Bangladesh responded with 426. Tanzid scored 101, captain Najmul Hossain Shanto made 84, and Mehidy Hasan Miraz contributed 65, giving the visitors a commanding first-innings advantage. Australia fought back through Cameron Green, whose 104 anchored the second innings, but Miraz dismantled the rest of the lineup with 5-66. Mahmud added 3-56 to his first-innings haul and finished with nine wickets in the match, earning Player of the Match honors.

"This is the biggest win so far for Bangladesh in any format," Shanto said. He praised his players for their preparation and hard work, adding that the team wanted to achieve more significant results in the future.

Australian captain Pat Cummins acknowledged Bangladesh's superiority. "They outplayed us in all facets, they were patient and disciplined," he said, adding there were "no excuses" for the defeat. The scale of the result was heightened by Bangladesh's recent struggles. The ninth-ranked Test side had been bowled out for 54 by a Cricket Australia XI in a warm-up match only days earlier and entered the Test without injured fast bowlers Nahid Rana and Shoriful Islam.

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman congratulated the players by video call after the victory, telling them, "We're all eagerly waiting to welcome you home."

Bangladesh now carries a historic 1-0 series lead into the second Test, scheduled to begin on August 22.



Miraz was Bangladesh's talisman on day four



Hasan Mahmud (right) was named player of the match after taking nine wickets in the opening Test



















HEALTH

Intermittent Fasting Faces New Questions

Human evidence falls short of early claims

NYN Staff Reporter



Intermittent fasting has built a reputation as a simple route to weight loss and better health, but growing research suggests its benefits in humans are more modest and less certain than early animal studies once implied.

The diet, which limits eating to certain hours or days, has been linked to claims involving weight loss, cancer prevention, improved cognition, and longer life. Yet researchers now say much of the strongest evidence came from studies involving mice, flies, and worms rather than people.

Krista Varady, professor of nutrition at the University of Illinois at Chicago, said intermittent fasting typically produces about 5% weight loss in humans. She described the result as roughly comparable with other dieting strategies. “It’s not magic,” she said.

Some health benefits have still appeared in human research. Studies have reported reductions in cholesterol, blood pressure, and other metabolic risk markers, while certain forms of fasting have also shown potential benefits for people with conditions such as polycystic ovary syndrome. More intense fasting schedules, though, have raised concerns about the loss of lean body mass.

A major reason for conflicting findings lies in how nutrition studies track food intake. Researchers often depend on participants to record meals accurately, and those records are frequently incomplete.

Thomas Wilson, a nutrition researcher at Aberystwyth University, said research suggests about 30% of people underreport their food intake. Some estimates show people underreporting by 400 to more than 800 calories a day.

That gap makes it difficult to determine whether fasting itself causes an outcome or whether changes in calories and food choices are responsible.

Researchers are now testing new methods to improve accuracy. These include wearable cameras, chewing-detection necklaces, smart forks, tooth-mounted nutrient sensors, blood tests, and urine analysis. The goal is to reduce dependence on memory and self-reported food diaries.

Courtney Peterson, associate professor of nutrition at Harvard School of Public Health, has found stronger fasting effects in tightly controlled feeding trials, including lower blood sugar and blood pressure. Yet those studies remain expensive and limited in size.

The emerging picture is more restrained than many social media claims suggest. Intermittent fasting appears to help some people lose weight and improve certain health markers, but researchers say better tracking and longer human trials are still needed before broader claims about longevity, cancer prevention, or cognitive protection receive stronger support.





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END PAGE

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Photo: President Donald Trump, joined by White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt, speaks to the media as he departs the White House on July 15, 2025 in Washington, DC Image Source : Getty Images / BBC

Replacing Press Secretary Leavitt

Trump Searches For New Spokesperson

Amkel Nourush

The departure of White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt has triggered speculation over who will fill the high-profile role in the Trump administration. Leavitt, whom President Donald Trump praised as one of his most trusted aides, is scheduled to step down at the end of August 2026.

Currently, the White House has not announced a successor, and administration insiders report that no final decision has been made. The demanding role requires managing a complex relationship with the press corps while meeting the high expectations of the president.

Several prominent figures have emerged as potential candidates. Among them is Alina Habba, Trump's former personal lawyer and counselor. Another strong contender is Katie Miller, an influential conservative podcaster and former press secretary to Mike Pence. White House Communications Director Steven Cheung, known for his combative media style, and Deputy Press Secretary Anna Kelly are also being discussed.

Until a permanent replacement is selected, the administration may rely on high-ranking officials to conduct briefings, a system previously utilized during Leavitt's prior leave.

Court Blocks Youth Ban

France Overrules Social Media Law

Nassr Al Shams

On August 14, 2026, France's highest constitutional authority blocked a landmark law that would have banned children under the age of 15 from using social media platforms. The Constitutional Council ruled that the legislation, which was passed by French lawmakers in July, represented an unconstitutional infringement on the freedom of expression and communication. The court also raised significant concerns regarding the law's requirement for users



Photo: Teenage girls use social media on their smartphones in France. Photo: July 2026 Image Source: AFP via Getty Images

to provide proof of age, stating that the bill failed to establish the necessary legal safeguards. The blocked legislation was originally scheduled to be introduced in stages starting in September, with full verification of existing accounts mandated by January.

In response to the ruling, President Emmanuel Macron immediately directed Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu to draft a revised version of the bill. The president's office emphasized that the administration remains determined to implement the youth social media restrictions by early 2027.

The decision comes amid a broader European push to restrict youth access to digital platforms. While Australia enacted a ban for under-16s last December, and the United Kingdom plans to implement a similar restriction in January 2027, France's legal setback highlights the complex constitutional hurdles facing governments attempting to regulate the digital sphere.

Democrats Overhaul Primary Calendar

South Carolina Takes Center Stage



Photo: Party Chair Ken Martin participates in the Democratic National Committee's meeting on August 13 in Austin, Texas Image Source: Joel Angel Juarez/AP

Julian Alvez

The Democratic National Committee officially approved a sweeping overhaul of its 2028 presidential primary calendar on August 15, 2026, during a party meeting in Austin, Texas. The decision solidifies a transition toward a nominating process that elevates racially diverse states, aiming to better represent the party's core constituencies.

Under the finalized schedule, South Carolina will lead the nation with its primary on January 22, 2028, officially displacing Iowa from its decades-long position at the front of the calendar. Following the kickoff, Nevada will vote on February 1, with New Hampshire scheduled for February 8. The early-voting window will conclude later that month with contests in New Mexico, Michigan, and Virginia.

DNC Chairman Ken Martin praised the changes, stating that the selected states reflect the true diversity of the nation. While proponents argue the shift ensures a more representative nominating process, the decision has previously sparked friction. Local leaders in New Hampshire and Iowa have expressed concerns over losing their traditional influence, warning that rural and northern voters could feel sidelined. Nonetheless, the party is moving forward with the new lineup as it prepares for the 2028 race.



Photo: Election officials display a ballot paper while sorting and counting votes in Lusaka, Zambia, on August 13, 2026 Image Source: Moses Mwape/Reuters

Zambia Election Faces Turmoil

Vote Counting Suspended Amid Violence

Charles Lewis

International observers monitoring the presidential election in Zambia have expressed deep concern over reports of violence, intimidation, and abductions.

The warnings from the European Union and the Southern African Development Community came after vote counting was temporarily suspended on August 14, 2026, following clashes at polling stations and the alleged theft of ballot papers.

The suspension has fueled anxiety in Lusaka and beyond. Incumbent President Hakainde Hichilema, seeking a second term with the ruling United Party for National Development, currently leads with 438,708 votes (52.6 percent) based on a partial count of 49 out of 226 constituencies. His main challenger, Brian Mundubile of the National Reconciliation Party for Unity and Prosperity, follows with 351,281 votes (42.1 percent).

Mundubile has claimed victory through parallel tallies and warned that the counting delay could allow for result manipulation. Meanwhile, Hichilema urged calm, describing early returns as encouraging.

Security forces have deployed armored vehicles across the capital to maintain order. With 8.7 million registered voters, the nation of 22 million awaits the final results, which were initially expected on Monday. SADC mission leader Samuel Tembenu urged all stakeholders to remain peaceful as the electoral commission continues the tally.

Premier League Returns Dramatically

Arsenal Defends Historic Title

Henry Bob

The 2026-27 Premier League season begins on August 21, 2026, with reigning champions Arsenal hosting newly promoted Coventry. Arsenal enters the campaign looking to defend its historic title under Mikel Arteta. Several major clubs also begin new managerial eras, with Enzo Maresca at Manchester City, Xabi Alonso at Chelsea, and Andoni Iraola at Liverpool.

The season will also feature stricter rules on time-wasting and corner-kick grappling, adding another layer of change to the new campaign.



Photo: Arsenal have signed Brazilian midfielder Bruno Guimaraes from Newcastle in a bid to bolster their title defence Image Source: AFP