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October 28, 2025
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Daily News Briefing

(In coordination with the Office of Public Affairs)

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IN THE NEWS

Minnesota Man Arrested After Allegedly Offering \$45,000 for the Killing of AG Bondi

[NBC News](#) (10/27, Li, Kosnar) reported that a Minnesota man, Tyler Avalos, was arrested after allegedly offering \$45,000 for the killing of AG Bondi, according to court documents and the FBI. Investigators said the threat was first flagged to the FBI National Threat Operations Center on Oct. 9 by a tipster who saw Avalos' TikTok post showing Bondi's photo "with a sniper-scope red dot on her forehead," along with the caption offering the bounty "dead or alive" but "preferably dead." According to the article, FBI Special Agent Caleb Jurchisin wrote in an affidavit that Avalos' TikTok account also included anarchist symbols and references to an "Anarchist FAQ book," and that the Bureau traced his online activity through assistance from TikTok, Google, and Comcast. Avalos, who has prior convictions for stalking and domestic battery, was charged with making an online threat to injure and released on GPS monitoring after his initial court appearance. The article noted that AG Bondi's office declined to comment while the FBI continues to review the case. Additional reporting on the story was provided by the [Washington Times](#) (10/27, Delaney), [Breitbart](#) (10/27, Furr), [CBS News](#) (10/27, Quinn), [Economic Times](#) (10/27, Walia), [Fox News](#) (10/27, Rumpf-Whitten), [Hindustan Times](#) (10/27, Kukreti), [Just the News](#) (10/27, Mittelstadt), [Newsweek](#) (10/27, Stanton), [New York Post](#) (10/27, Crane), [Patch](#) (10/27, Bornhoft), [Telegraph](#) (10/27, Bates), and [UPI](#) (10/27, Benson).

California Man Part of Extremist Network Accused of Animal Abuse, Sexually Exploiting Minor

[KPX \(CBS-5\)](#) (10/27, Fang) reported that a 19-year-old Central California man, Tony Christopher Long of Porterville, was indicted on multiple federal charges, including animal abuse, sexual exploitation of a minor, and cyberstalking, after an investigation by the Department of Justice. Prosecutors said Long, who used aliases such as "Inactive" and "Inactive0," was affiliated with "764," an extremist group described by authorities as composed of "Nihilistic Violent Extremists." According to the article, AG Bondi said, "This defendant allegedly engaged in acts of extreme cruelty by exploiting a child, abusing animals, and threatening violence — his conduct reflects the depravity of '764,'" and added that such networks "seek to terrorize and destabilize our communities by preying on the most vulnerable." The indictment accused Long of "purposely engaging" in animal crushing, sexually exploiting a youth in Washington, and making online threats against another youth in Kern County. The article noted that Long remains in state custody and faces sentences ranging from seven to thirty years per count if convicted. [UPI](#) (10/27, Cone) quoted a statement from Director Patel: "The FBI has no tolerance for anyone who preys on children or other vulnerable members of society. The FBI will work with our law enforcement partners to investigate and hold accountable anyone who engages in such reprehensible and illegal activity." The [press release](#) quoted FBI Sacramento Special Agent in Charge Sid Patel: "Violent online networks of predators, such as 764, are exploiting digital platforms to coerce minors and vulnerable individuals into producing graphic content depicting animal abuse, self-harm, and child exploitation. The FBI will not stand by while these victims suffer. We are taking decisive action to dismantle these networks and bring the offenders to justice. Working together with educators, health care professionals, and families, we will protect those at risk and respond swiftly to suspected criminal activity." Additional reporting on the story was provided by [Hoodline](#) (10/27, Sullivan), [KMPH \(Fox-26\)](#) (10/27, Hawkins), [Daily Caller](#) (10/27, Angela), [GVWire](#) (10/27, Haddad), [KSEE \(NBC-24\)](#) (10/27, Houghton), and [The Business Journal](#) (10/27, Gonzales).

FBI 'Permanently Removes' Major Drug Trafficking Operation in Philadelphia

The [Washington Examiner](#) (10/27, Staff Writer) reported that the FBI and the Department of Justice announced the takedown of the Weymouth Street Drug Trafficking Organization in Philadelphia's Kensington neighborhood, resulting in 33 indictments and what Director Patel called a "historic" operation. According to the article, Director Patel stated, "We have permanently removed a drug trafficking organization out of the streets of Philadelphia, and they're going to stop pouring guns, chemicals, and drugs into our communities," adding that "our children are safer today." He later emphasized that "these individuals were charged with distributing fentanyl, heroin, and cocaine on

one of the most prolific drug blocks in Philadelphia,” and that “the FBI will continue our work to put an end to drug trafficking and violence in our cities.” The article noted that FBI Special Agent in Charge Wayne Jacobs described how the group “devastated the community, fueled violence, and spread fear among residents for nearly a decade,” while U.S. Attorney David Metcalf and Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche praised the operation as a major victory against organized crime and the opioid epidemic.

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COUNTERTERRORISM

Indiana Trans Student Admits to Plotting Valentine’s Day School Shooting, Kept ‘Shrine’ to Mass Killers

[Fox News](#) (10/27, Wehner) reported that Trinity J. Shockley, an 18-year-old transgender student from Indiana, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit murder after being accused of plotting a Valentine’s Day mass shooting at Mooresville High School, as part of a plea deal that dropped two terrorism-related intimidation charges. Authorities said the FBI’s Indianapolis field office “swiftly coordinated” with local police after receiving a tip that Shockley planned a shooting, had obtained an AR-15 rifle and body armor, and expressed admiration for past mass shooters such as Nikolas Cruz, Dylann Roof, and Ethan Crumbley. According to the article, investigators discovered a “shrine” to these killers, along with notebooks and online posts in which Shockley wrote about “homicidal thoughts” and messages referencing a “Parkland part two.” Court documents indicated that Shockley later told police the statements were made “out of rage” and that he was seeking help, but had previously been denied mental-health treatment by his father. The article noted that sentencing is set for November 24, with prosecutors seeking up to 30 years in prison under Indiana’s Level 2 felony guidelines. Additional reporting on the story was provided by [IndyStar](#) (10/27, Padilla), [New York Post](#) (10/27, Oliveira), [WRTV \(ABC-6\)](#) (10/27, Staff Writer), [WTHR \(NBC-13\)](#) (10/27, Nye), and [WLKY \(CBS-32\)](#) (10/27, Staff Writer).

FBI Warns of Online Extremist Networks Targeting Children to Commit Acts of Violence

[Muddy River News](#) (10/27, Gengenbacher) reported that FBI Special Agent Jake Griffin and Tactical Specialist Keeley Cronin warned at a Massachusetts presentation that rapidly growing nihilistic violent extremist (NVE) networks are radicalizing children online, with Griffin saying, “By the end of the presentation, hopefully you will believe that there’s online domestic terrorist groups that are trying to convince children to conduct random acts of violence.” Griffin and Cronin described how channels like 764 and copycats recruit on Discord, Telegram, Roblox and social platforms to extort victims, spread child sexual abuse material, push live-streamed animal cruelty, teach weapon- and sabotage-how-tos, and coerce kids into violence and swatting. According to the article, Griffin warned the speed and tactics are alarming — “With one rifle and 30 rounds, I could cripple most of central Illinois in about six hours,” and he summarized the strategy as, “That’s militant accelerationism in a nutshell.” The piece recounted FBI interventions and arrests — including the December 2024 Virginia farm raid that uncovered more than 150 bombs and juvenile arrests for planned attacks — and quoted Griffin holding up prevention materials: “I have lots of guides here, and I will tell you right now, all of these have come from kids in our area.” The article noted that the FBI stresses this threat is uniquely online and fluid, making prevention difficult, and quoted Griffin’s closing point that “It’s not as easy as opening a community center. It’s not as easy as removing some people from the street or disrupting the drug flow so they don’t have drugs to sell,” because “It’s on the internet.”

FBI Offers Clearer Footage of Suspect Placing Pipe Bombs Near DNC, RNC Headquarters in 2021

The [Washington Times](#) (10/27, Matthews) reported that the FBI has released new video footage of a suspect who placed pipe bombs near the Democratic and Republican national headquarters on January 5, 2021. The suspect is described as 5-foot-7, wearing a gray hoodie, black gloves, and Nike Air Max Speed Turf shoes, with a reward of \$500,000 for information leading to their identification. The FBI is still investigating the suspect’s identity, motive, and potential connection to the January 6 riot at the US Capitol. “Without being able to confirm the suspect’s identity, it is very hard to definitively establish motive. Therefore, it would be difficult for us to state that there is a link, although we can’t state there is not one,” David Sundberg, formerly the assistant director in charge of the FBI’s D.C. field office, told The Associated Press in January. [Newsmax](#) (10/27, Staff Writer) reported that investigative journalist Julie Kelly urged the newly restructured FBI to reopen the unsolved Jan. 6 pipe bomb case, claiming the original investigation was “prematurely dropped and riddled with inconsistencies.” According to the article, Kelly highlighted discrepancies in FBI records about the woman who reported finding one of the devices near the Republican National Committee, questioning her timeline and statements about a “suspicious woman” that surveillance footage did not corroborate. The FBI has maintained that the two pipe bombs were planted the

night before the Capitol riot and described them as “viable and potentially deadly.” Kelly disputed that assessment, saying, “That also was a lie because they were not viable in any way, shape or form,” and argued that “it’s imperative that this FBI gets the job done that the old FBI refused to do.” The article noted that Kelly believes current Director Patel and Deputy Director Bongino are committed to identifying and prosecuting those responsible after what she called the Biden Justice Department’s decision to “basically shut down” the case in 2021.

Continued Reporting: Video Shows What Happened After Wounded U-Haul Driver Left Bay Area Coast Guard Base

[San Francisco Chronicle](#) (10/27, Cassidy) reported that newly obtained surveillance video captured what occurred after a U-Haul truck backed toward Coast Guard personnel at the entrance of Coast Guard Base Alameda, prompting them to open fire during a night of protests against planned immigration raids. According to the article, the FBI said it took one of the individuals into custody and confirmed that its evidence response team, crisis management team, and special agent bomb technicians were assisting in the investigation, though the agency has not identified the person or released further details. The article noted that the video showed a car arriving minutes after the shooting, with someone helping the wounded U-Haul driver into the vehicle before driving away, and that the FBI and U.S. Attorney’s Office have both declined to comment as the investigation continues.

Continued Reporting: Idaho Teen Pleads Guilty to Planning Attack in Support of ISIS

[Idaho State Journal](#) (10/27, White) reported that a Coeur d’Alene teen, Alexander Scott Mercurio, pleaded guilty to attempting to provide material support to the Islamic State after FBI agents uncovered online posts and plotted attacks on multiple churches and other violent acts. The FBI investigation — which used an informant to meet with Mercurio after agents learned of his online allegiance — prompted his April 2024 arrest; former FBI Director Christopher Wray called Mercurio’s plot “truly horrific.” According to the article, prosecutors say Mercurio swore an oath of loyalty to ISIS, planned a suicide mission using knives, guns and fire, discussed stealing his father’s guns, and intended to send his money to the group after the attack. The article noted that Mercurio, who was 18 at arrest and graduated from Coeur d’Alene Public Schools in 2023, faces up to 20 years in federal prison and is scheduled to be sentenced on January 27 next year. The article added that Mercurio told reporters he self-radicalized while studying online, expressed praise for extremist figures, and was apprehended before carrying out any of the violent plans.

Jake Tapper Says New Book on Extremist Brought to Justice Shows Risk of Trump ‘Devaluing’ Experts

[The Philly Voice](#) (10/27, Tanenbaum) reported that CNN anchor Jake Tapper discussed his new book, *Race Against Terror*, which recounts how the FBI was alerted by Italian authorities in 2011 after al-Qaeda operative Spin Ghul arrived on a refugee ship from Libya and confessed to killing U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan. According to the article, Ghul’s unprecedented U.S. trial required extensive coordination between the FBI, international partners, and federal prosecutors to collect battlefield evidence and testimonies proving his involvement in a 2003 ambush near Pakistan that killed two American service members; he was convicted of terrorism offenses in 2017 and sentenced to life in prison. The article noted that Tapper warned of the dangers of political interference in national security, citing that “the devaluing of expertise and the placing of politics above all else carries enormous risks,” and emphasized that building terrorism cases “takes a huge effort and a lot of experts who know what they’re doing.”

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COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

Former Politico Reporter Under Investigation for Allegedly Spying for China

[The Post Millennial](#) (10/27, Wakerell-Cruz) reported that European intelligence services are investigating a former Politico reporter accused of spying for the Chinese government and using their position to collect information from officials in Brussels. According to the article, intelligence sources told Euractiv that the reporter allegedly cultivated contacts at international organizations and even made sexual advances toward certain officials as part of efforts to obtain sensitive information. The article also cited related espionage cases, including the conviction of Jian Guo, a former aide to a member of the European Parliament in Germany, who was sentenced to nearly five years in prison for passing information to Beijing, and the U.S. prosecution of Jinchao Wei, a Navy sailor convicted of selling classified military data to a Chinese intelligence officer for \$12,000. Politico said European authorities had not contacted the company and declined to comment on the reporter’s departure, describing it as a “confidential

personnel matter." The article noted that authorities in Brussels have not yet confirmed whether formal charges have been filed against the former reporter. Jinchao Wei was [investigated](#) by the FBI.

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CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

FBI Seeks Photos and Videos of Lincoln University Shooting for Investigation Assistance, Suspect in Custody

[WPVI \(ABC-7\)](#) (10/27, Staff Writer) reported that a mass shooting occurred on the campus of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, resulting in one death and six injuries. According to the article, authorities believe multiple shooters were involved and are reviewing footage to investigate, with the FBI seeking photo and video evidence. One person, Zecqueous Morgan Thompson, is in custody and charged with carrying a concealed gun without a license, but it's unclear if his weapon was used in the shooting. "As we've seen in a lot of investigations recently here, every investigation seems to begin with video evidence," said Scott Curtis, a retired FBI agent. "Once you can identify who may have been involved in this shooting here, then you're working in two directions," said Curtis. Special Agent Curtis added. "To see where that individual went, who he may have collaborated with or associated with, and to the point where then hopefully we can fully identify these individuals there to arrest them down the line. To see how they go to that scene, how they got to that moment in time, who they collaborate with, how did they get there, what mode of transportation there, any other corroborating evidence they can obtain there. So, I'm sure there was a lot of cell phones that were capturing, whether it were still photographs or videos, there, and hopefully everybody that has something that's useful in this investigation will voluntarily forward it to the FBI, so they have it." The Philadelphia FBI office has set up a webpage where you can upload photos and videos. Additional reporting was provided by [WFMZ-TV](#) (10/27, Reinhard), [WGAL \(NBC-8\)](#) (10/27, Staff Writer), [Anadolu Agency](#) (10/27, Kurt), [Pottstown Mercury](#) (10/27, Renno), [Statesman Journal](#) (10/27, Funk), [Delaware Online](#) (10/27, Parra), [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) (10/27, Vella, Snyder), [PhillyVoice](#) (10/27, Althouse), and [HBCU Buzz](#) (10/27, Staff Writer).

German Inventor Bernhard Fritsch Sentenced to 15 Years for Fraud but Avoids Prison After Returning to Germany

[Frank Report](#) (10/27, Parlato) reported that Bernhard Fritsch, a 64-year-old German inventor, was sentenced to 15 years in federal prison for wire fraud; however, he will not serve his sentence unless he reenters the United States, as he has returned to Germany, where citizens cannot be extradited for non-violent financial crimes. According to the article, the federal case against Fritsch was initiated by Danny Guy, a venture capital investor who claimed he was deceived into investing \$7 million in Fritsch's start-up, StarClub, despite being warned by Goldman Sachs about the risks. The article noted that Guy, who has a history of significant financial losses and questionable business practices, including his involvement in the Uranium One deal, had not lost any money in StarClub at the time he reported Fritsch to the FBI. The company was actually growing with significant contracts and investments.

Two Indicted in Grocery-Store Pickpocketing Scam

[Look Out Eugene-Springfield](#) (10/27, Adame) reported that two Romanian nationals, Lucian Sulitanu and Rexona Caldararu, have been indicted on federal charges of bank fraud and aggravated identity theft in connection with a series of pickpocketing incidents targeting grocery store customers, including elderly victims. According to an FBI affidavit unsealed on August 25, the pair allegedly stole debit cards from shoppers at WinCo grocery store parking lots, including one location in Springfield, and used the stolen cards to conduct unauthorized transactions. The indictment lists six counts of bank fraud and five counts of aggravated identity theft, to which both defendants have pleaded not guilty. The article noted that the case took an unexpected turn in September, when federal prosecutors declined to comment after proceedings appeared to pause without explanation. The FBI affidavit, which had been publicly accessible for about a week, has since been removed from availability.

Prosecutors Indict Leaders of Church With North Carolina Ties, Accused of Preying on Military

[The Fayetteville Observer](#) (10/27, Riley) reported that leaders of the House of Prayer Church, including Rony Denis, Anthony Oloans, and others, have been indicted on charges of conspiracy to commit bank and wire fraud, as well as filing false tax returns. According to the article, the indictment alleges that the church leaders siphoned over \$23.5 million in VA education benefits and exploited service members and veterans through a scheme involving straw buyers for real estate and control over members' personal lives. The FBI raided 11 House of Prayer churches across the country in June 2022, including the House of Prayer Church and Bible Seminary in Fayetteville. The church has

not responded to media requests for comments. Its website shows purported footage of the FBI raid in Georgia and claims the footage is evidence of then-President Joe Biden's "anti-Christian bias." The FBI, meanwhile, has set up a website seeking to identify potential victims of the House of Prayer Christian Church.

Tennessee Secretary of State Asks FBI Review List of Potential Non-US Citizens Who Voted

[Chattanooga](#) (10/27, Staff Writer) reported that Tennessee Secretary of State Tre Hargett referred 42 potential non-U.S. citizens who voted to the FBI for further review. According to the article, the individuals were identified using the federal Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements program, which compared 4 million records. "Tennessee is proud to be ranked number one in the nation for election integrity for four consecutive years," Tennessee Coordinator of Elections Mark Goins said. "We will continue to safeguard the process so that every eligible vote counts and only eligible votes are cast." The Secretary of State's office has transmitted the names to the FBI for investigation and possible enforcement action. Voter fraud is a felony with serious consequences. Additional reporting was provided by [WBBJ \(ABC-7\)](#) (10/27, Staff Writer).

\$10K Reward Offered for Tips Leading to Arrest in South Carolina Shootings

[WYFF \(NBC-4\)](#) (10/27, Rainey) reported authorities are offering a \$10,000 reward for information leading to arrests in connection with two shootings at South Carolina State University that occurred on October 4, which left 19-year-old Jaliyah Butler dead and a man seriously injured. According to the article, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED) announced that investigators are seeking to identify and speak with an individual who was on campus the night of the shootings. The reward, funded through an anonymous donor, will be split evenly—\$5,000 for information leading to an arrest and conviction in the first shooting at Hugine Suites, and \$5,000 for the second near Poplar Hall. The article noted that SLED is leading both investigations with assistance from the FBI's Columbia Field Office, emphasizing the urgency of public cooperation. Authorities are encouraging anyone with information, especially cellphone video or other multimedia evidence, to come forward. Additional reporting was provided by [WSAV \(NBC-3\)](#) (10/27, Tatum).

Florida Police and FBI Arrest Las Vegas Human Trafficking Fugitive

[WTVJ \(NBC-6\)](#) (10/27, Staff Writer) reported that Dshante Styles, a 35-year-old fugitive, was arrested in Miami Beach for human trafficking and other violent offenses. According to the article, Styles, who has an extensive and violent criminal history, was wanted in Las Vegas and was tracked down using license plate reader technology and FBI intelligence. The article noted that he was taken into custody after a brief pursuit and now faces new charges of fleeing and eluding police, in addition to the existing fugitive warrant.

California Prison Reentry Program Legacy Alliance and Its Founder Face FBI Investigation

[The Modesto Focus](#) (10/27, Stapley) reported that Legacy Alliance Outreach, a nonprofit founded by Michael Baldwin Sr., is under FBI investigation after being dismissed from multimillion-dollar government grants in March. According to the article, a nonprofit organization once dedicated to supporting former inmates and marginalized communities has been terminated following revelations of financial discrepancies and irregularities despite having received millions in public funding. Authorities have not yet disclosed the full extent of the alleged mismanagement, but the organization's abrupt closure has drawn scrutiny over how its funds were administered and monitored. The group's founder, Michael Baldwin Sr., has strongly denied any wrongdoing, describing himself and the organization as victims of "racist envy." Despite the investigation, many people testified to the positive impact of the program on their lives, including helping them with housing, addiction, and reentry into society. The FBI did not return messages seeking comment. County Supervisor Terry Withrow, a component of the FBI investigation appears to focus on Baldwin's romantic relationships.

Missing Nine Year Old California Girl's Appearance May Have Been Altered

[NBC News](#) (10/27, Burke) reported that detectives believe a 9-year-old California girl, Melodee Buzzard, may have had her appearance altered with a wig before she disappeared. According to the article, a security camera video shows Melodee wearing a gray hooded sweatshirt and what appears to be a wig on October 7, and her mother, Ashlee Buzzard, is known to wear wigs. Authorities are investigating Ashlee Buzzard, who rented a car and took a road trip from October 7 to 10, but Melodee was not with her when she returned, and her current whereabouts are unknown. The FBI's Los Angeles field office said it is assisting the sheriff's office with its search. Additional reporting was provided by [The Independent](#) (10/27, Cavallier), [The Sun](#) (10/27, Bradford), [NewsNation](#) (10/27, Schlepp), and [People](#) (10/27, Philipp).

Florida Sheriff's Office Fires Six Officers Following FBI National Academy Cheating Investigation

[WTVT \(FOX-13\)](#) (10/27, Gay) reported that Hillsborough County Sheriff Chad Chronister stated that six high-level officials, including Chief Deputy Anthony Collins, Colonels Christopher Rule and Michael Hannaford, and Captains Zuleydis Stearns and Marvin Johnson, have lost their jobs due to an academic cheating scandal. According to the article, the scandal involved the officials paying someone to complete coursework for training classes at the FBI National Academy, with Chronister saying they "paid with their careers" and can no longer work in law enforcement. The article noted that Chronister emphasized that the investigation was not criminal, but rather a breach of professional and ethical standards, and that the actions of the few involved do not define the professionalism of the entire agency. Additional reporting was provided by [Tampa Bay Times](#) (10/27, Sullivan, Marrero), [Bay News 9](#) (10/27, Cole, Lewis), [WFLA \(NBC-8\)](#) (10/27, Suter), [Tampa Free Press](#) (10/27, Shultz), and [Hoodline Tampa](#) (10/27, Rodriguez).

Continued Reporting: NBA at the Mercy of FBI in Gambling Scandal

[News Nation Now](#) (10/27, Taub) reported that ESPN analyst Stephen A. Smith said the NBA is "at the mercy" of FBI Director Kash Patel and President Trump's administration following FBI arrests last week tied to a federal gambling probe involving over 30 people, including an NBA coach and player. According to the article, Smith defended his comments after Director Patel criticized him, saying, "Kash Patel can act like I'm off my rocker... I ain't got time to be getting into it with no FBI director," while clarifying that he did not claim the investigation lacked legal standing. The article noted that Smith suggested Trump authorized Director Patel to pursue the arrests, arguing the president "doesn't forget" past NBA protests and "had no problem inconveniencing" the league, which he believes leans against him politically.

DNA Found on Victim Belongs to "Perpetrator," but Not the Texas Man Serving Twelve Years

[KRIS \(NBC-6\)](#) (10/27, Jaramillo) reported that Fred Martinez is serving a 12-year sentence for indecently touching a child, but DNA evidence found on the victim's clothing does not match his DNA. According to the article, the DNA evidence, which includes semen and sperm, has been entered into the FBI's national criminal database as belonging to the "putative perpetrator" of the crime, excluding Martinez. The article noted that despite this evidence, Martinez's latest habeas corpus petition was recommended for denial by Judge Susan Barclay, with his attorneys arguing that key evidence was withheld from Martinez and his attorneys, violating his constitutional rights.

Israeli Official Pleads Not Guilty in Nevada Court

[KLAS \(CBS-8\)](#) (10/27, Charns) reported that Tom Alexandrovich, an Israeli government official, pleaded not guilty in a Las Vegas court to a charge of luring children with the use of technology. According to the article, a grand jury indicted Alexandrovich for allegedly chatting online with an FBI decoy posing as a 15-year-old girl about meeting for "sexual contact". The article noted that Alexandrovich's trial is scheduled for March, and his attorneys plan to challenge parts of the grand jury process. Additional reporting was provided by the [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#) (10/27, Dillon).

Second Circuit Upholds Keith Raniere Sex Cult Abuse Conviction

[Courthouse News Service](#) (10/27, Stapley) reported that the Second Circuit Court of Appeals upheld NXIVM cult leader Keith Raniere's conviction and 120-year prison sentence, rejecting his claims that federal investigators and the FBI tampered with digital evidence used to convict him of child sexual exploitation and pornography-related racketeering acts. According to the article, Raniere argued that the FBI had planted nude photographs of a 15-year-old cult member on a computer hard drive, but the appellate panel found he failed to present any newly discovered or suppressed evidence and that "ample evidence" already supported the jury's verdict. The article noted that U.S. District Judge Nicholas Garaufis had earlier dismissed Raniere's motion for a new trial, and the appeals court concluded there was "no real concern that an innocent person may have been convicted," affirming that his defense had full access to the forensic material during trial.

Charges Announced Against Suspects in Delaware and Maryland Bank Robberies

[WMDT \(ABC-47\)](#) (10/27, Peters) reported that Donald Gross and Marlyn Gramajo-Gutierrez have been arrested and charged in connection with bank robberies in Seaford and Cambridge. According to the article, Gross faces charges including robbery, theft, and terroristic threatening, while Gramajo-Gutierrez is charged with conspiracy to commit robbery and theft. The suspects are also being investigated for a bank robbery in Hurlock, but no charges have been announced in that case yet. The article noted that the FBI Violent Crime Task Force, Homeland Security, and

U.S. Marshals Service joined Seaford Police in the operation. Additional reporting was provided by [WBOC \(CBS-16\)](#) (10/27, Curtis).

Suspect Jailed for Series of Missouri Bank Robberies

[St. Joseph Post](#) (10/27, Staff Writer) reported that federal authorities have arrested Weston R. Womack, a 24-year-old Kansas City resident, in connection with a string of recent bank robberies in the Kansas City area. According to an FBI statement, Womack was taken into custody on October 24 and charged in the Western District of Missouri with multiple counts of bank robbery tied to incidents on October 22 and October 23 in Kansas City and Gladstone. The article noted that the investigation was led jointly by the Kansas City Police Department Career Criminal Task Force and the FBI's Metro Kansas City Violent Crime Task Force, with significant support from the Gladstone Police Department. Additional reporting was provided by [Roo News](#) (10/27, Summers).

Continued Reporting: California Doorbell Video Captures Masked Men Posing as Federal Agents

[The Independent](#) (10/27, Dobkin) reported that masked men pretending to be federal agents broke into a California home in Jurupa Valley, as captured by Ring doorbell footage. According to the article, the men, wearing tactical gear and FBI jackets, claimed to have a search warrant and zip-tied the family before robbing them. The article noted that a police report was filed, and the Riverside County Sheriff's Department is investigating, but no arrests have been made, according to Sergeant Robert Martinez. The Independent has reached out to the FBI for comment. Additional reporting was provided by [Raw Story](#) (10/27, Edwards).

Opinion: Yes, Letitia James Should Be Prosecuted

An opinion piece from [Washington Examiner](#) (10/27, Roberts) reported that New York Attorney General Letitia James pleaded not guilty in federal court to charges of bank fraud and making false statements to a financial institution, offenses that each carry potential penalties of up to 30 years in prison and \$1 million in fines. According to the article, the case has drawn political outrage across party lines, with critics on the left calling it retaliation and some on the right warning of a "banana republic" cycle of revenge, though the author argued that such prosecutions have precedent and compared it to past financial fraud cases, including the 1985 conviction of Geraldine Ferraro's husband. The article noted that the author viewed James's prosecution as justified, emphasizing her responsibility as New York's top legal officer to uphold the law and suggesting that her alleged conduct undermines public trust in the justice system. The author assessed that holding James accountable is necessary to "end the cycle of partisan prosecutions" and to deter future officials from engaging in politically motivated abuses of power.

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CYBER DIVISION

AI Fuels a New Era of Holiday Scams: FBI and CISA Issue Urgent Cybersecurity Warnings

[Financial Content](#) (10/27, Staff Writer) reported that the FBI and the CISA issued urgent warnings ahead of the 2025 holiday season about a surge in artificial intelligence-driven scams, emphasizing that AI is enabling cybercriminals to create highly realistic fake websites, deepfakes, and personalized phishing messages that are increasingly difficult to detect. According to the article, the FBI highlighted that these AI-enhanced schemes have contributed to widespread financial losses, with its IC3 reporting hundreds of millions of dollars lost annually to non-delivery and credit card fraud, underscoring how AI now fuels scams such as fake package delivery alerts and fraudulent retailer impersonations. The article noted that both the FBI and CISA warned consumers and businesses to remain vigilant and adopt stronger cybersecurity practices, as AI-generated deception marks a new era in cybercrime requiring rapid adaptation by law enforcement, the private sector, and the public.

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OTHER FBI NEWS

FBI Makes Case to Continue Camp Bonneville Training in Washington

[The Reflector](#) (10/27, Helgason) reported that FBI officials, led by Special Agent in Charge Doug Olson of the Portland field office, urged the Clark County Council to reconsider its decision to end the bureau's training agreement at Camp Bonneville, emphasizing the FBI's contributions to public safety and local partnerships. According to the article, Olson highlighted recent FBI-led operations in the region — including a 2025 child

exploitation sting in Battle Ground that resulted in 12 arrests and a 2023–2024 operation that dismantled a drug trafficking network — as evidence of the need for continued tactical training. The article noted that the FBI defended its financial and environmental stewardship of the facility, citing investments in infrastructure, lead mitigation efforts, and new security measures after a theft incident, while county officials weighed public concerns over conservation requirements and potential future civilian uses of the property.

House Judiciary Accuses Biden FBI of Retaliating Against Whistleblower

[Just the News](#) (10/27, Severi) reported that the House Judiciary Committee, led by Chairman Jim Jordan, sent a letter to Director Patel on Monday, accusing the Biden FBI of retaliating against a whistleblower, Special Agent Valentine Fertitta. According to the article, the FBI allegedly used a security-clearance process to investigate Fertitta, who blew the whistle on the bureau's misuse of "law-enforcement authorities", and also questioned his wife, Emily Fertitta. The article noted that the Judiciary Committee has requested that the FBI provide all documents related to the investigation of the Fertitta family by November 10, 2025, citing concerns over potential violations of whistleblower protections and spousal privilege. "Documents available to the Committee show that SecD investigators denied Mrs. Fertitta the right to receive advice from an attorney during her interview and the opportunity to review FBI guidelines regarding the interview process beforehand," the letter states.

FBI Employees Ordered to Dig for Jimmy Hoffa-Related Documents

[CNN](#) (10/27, Campbell) reported that the Trump administration has ordered FBI employees to search for documents related to the disappearance of Jimmy Hoffa. According to the article, this is part of a series of unusual demands to search for files on decades-old mysteries, including the disappearance of Amelia Earhart. The article noted that the search for Jimmy Hoffa documents is the latest priority task for FBI employees, who have also been working on topics like immigration enforcement and redacting files related to Jeffrey Epstein.

Conservative Watchdog Sues FBI Over 'Pattern' of Blocking Records Requests

The [Washington Examiner](#) (10/27, Deese) reported that the Oversight Project, a conservative transparency group, filed a federal lawsuit accusing the FBI of a long-standing "pattern and practice" of blocking access to public records and violating the Freedom of Information Act. According to the article, Oversight Project President Mike Howell said, "The FBI's FOIA process is broken. We can't rely on Director Patel finding documents in burn bags and closets for lasting transparency," arguing that the bureau's culture of secrecy "has outlasted multiple directors and political eras." Vice President of Legal Kyle Brosnan added that "the deep state that's running the FOIA shop is not aligning with the transparency of the administration." The article noted that the lawsuit seeks a court order to overhaul the FBI's FOIA process, potentially forcing the release of documents related to major controversies, including the Russiagate probe, the Mar-a-Lago raid, and Operation Arctic Frost, while Howell warned that "the FBI will also never be able to fully investigate itself. Selective transparency is always going to be problematic."

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Turkish Prosecutors File New Espionage Charges Against Istanbul's Jailed Mayor

[Associated Press](#)

US Warship Docks in Trinidad and Tobago, Putting More Pressure on Venezuela

[Associated Press](#)

Trump Praises Japan's 'Great' Female Leader in Talks on Trade, Critical Minerals

[Reuters](#)

Iran, Russia and the New Zealand Insurer That Kept Their Sanctioned Oil Flowing

[Reuters](#)

Trump Says Putin Should End the Ukraine War, Not Test Missiles

[Reuters](#)

Hurricane Melissa Begins Lashing Jamaica as 'Catastrophic' Category 5 Storm

[Reuters](#)

China Pushes to Silence Victims of African Mining Disaster

[Wall Street Journal](#)

Prince Andrew Hosted Epstein, Maxwell and Weinstein at Royal Lodge

[The BBC](#)

The 92-Year-Old President Who Never Loses

[The BBC](#)

Iranian Women Flout Law on Mandatory Veiling as Police Curtail Arrests

[Washington Post](#)

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OTHER WASHINGTON NEWS

Hundreds of People With 'Top Secret' Clearance Exposed by House Democrats' Website

[WIRED](#)

Pressure Builds on Congress to End the Shutdown, but a Quick Breakthrough Appears Unlikely

[Associated Press](#)

Suspect in Charlie Kirk Killing Can Wear Street Clothes in Court Amid 'Extraordinary' Attention

[Associated Press](#)

Amazon Targets as Many as 30,000 Corporate Job Cuts, Sources Say

[Reuters](#)

Musk Could Leave Tesla if \$1 Trillion Pay Plan Is Rejected, Chair Warns

[Reuters](#)

Trump Dismisses 2028 VP Run as 'Too Cute,' Leaves Door Open to Third Term

[Reuters](#)

Trump Confirms Recent MRI but Declines to Give Reason Why

[Reuters](#)

ICE Leadership Shakeup Exposes Growing DHS Friction Over Deportation Tactics, Priorities

[Fox News](#)

Bill Gates Says Climate Change 'Will Not Lead to Humanity's Demise'

[New York Times](#)

Mamdani Admits Inaccuracy in Post-9/11 Story About Aunt Scared to Wear Hijab

[Washington Examiner](#)

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WASHINGTON SCHEDULE

White House

President Trump

- 2:45 AM: The President participates in a Troop Visit and Remarks on the USS George Washington [3:45 PM Local]
- 6:05 PM: The President participates in a Reception and Dinner with Business Leaders [7:05 PM Local]

Vice President Vance

- No official presidential schedule released or announced.

US Senate

- [Hearings to examine the nominations of Marc Berkowitz, of Virginia, Joseph Jewell, of Indiana, and James Caggy, of New York, each to be an Assistant Secretary, and Brendan Rogers, of Connecticut, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Navy, all of the Department of Defense.](#) – 9:30 AM – Host: Armed Services
- [Hearings to examine reviving commercial shipbuilding.](#) – 10:00 AM – Host: Commerce, Science, and Transportation
- [Hearings to examine competition issues in the seed and fertilizer industries.](#) – 10:15 AM – Host: Judiciary
- [Hearings to examine politically violent attacks, focusing on a threat to our constitutional order.](#) – 2:30 PM – Host: Judiciary

US House of Representatives

- No events scheduled.

Cabinet Members

- **Secretary of State Rubio** is on travel to Israel, Malaysia, Japan, and the Republic of Korea from October 22-30, 2025.
- **Secretary of State Rubio** follows President Trump's schedule in Tokyo, Japan.
- **Secretary of State Rubio** meets with family members of Japanese who were abducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in Tokyo, Japan at 11:30 AM (LOCAL).
- **Secretary of State Rubio** meets with Japanese Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu in Tokyo, Japan at 12:45 PM (LOCAL).

Visitors

- No events scheduled.

General Events

- [Brookings: Renegotiating the USMCA: Next steps and key issues](#) – Tuesday, October 28, 2025. Location: Online event, 2:00 PM. The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) is up for its first formal review in July 2026. Projections predict that this review, however, is shaping up to be more of a transformative renegotiation. Discussions are set to focus on areas of non-compliance, places where the agreement can be updated to reflect new global trade and multilateral realities, and how new U.S. tariffs may add complexities.
- [CSIS: Demining Ukraine: Outcomes from the 2025 Ukraine Mine Action Conference](#) – Tuesday, October 28, 2025. Location: Online event, 11:00 AM. Landmines and unexploded ordnance contaminate tens of thousands of hectares of farmland across Ukraine, preventing farmers from tending some of the most productive land in Europe. Facilitating expedient, safe demining procedures at scale remains a prerequisite for Ukraine's agricultural recovery and economic reconstruction broadly—especially as other significant economic activities like critical mineral mining depend on safe access to potentially contaminated land.
- [CSIS: Unpacking the CRINK Axis](#) – Tuesday, October 28, 2025. Location: Online event, 2:00 PM. Join the CSIS Korea Chair for a discussion unpacking the growing ties among China, Russia, Iran and North Korea, which some have called a CRINK axis or an "Axis of Upheaval."
- [AEI: Election Watch 2026: One Year \(and One Week\) Out](#) – Tuesday, October 28, 2025. Location: AEI Auditorium, 12:00 PM. With just over a year until the 2026 midterms, AEI's Election Watch team will gather for a look at key off-year elections in New Jersey, New York City, and Virginia. The panel of election experts will also examine the latest on mid-decade redistricting, including a preview of California's special election on Proposition 50. What will all this mean for the midterm elections in 2026?

- [AEI: Doing Great Harm: A Book Event](#) – Tuesday, October 28, 2025. Location: AEI Auditorium, 5:00 PM. Social justice ideology is encroaching on the medical profession, with its impact most apparent in medical education. What inspired this new movement and what is its impact on trainees and patients? How can physicians uphold their ethical commitment to patients when the American Medical Association, and other professional entities, urge them to “to dismantle white supremacy”? How should physicians, the legal system, the Administration, and Congress respond when identity politics preempt optimal patient care?
- [Atlantic Council: The economic and political implications of Argentina’s midterms](#) – Tuesday, October 28, 2025. Location: Online event, 10:30 AM. The Atlantic Council’s Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center hosts a discussion on Argentina’s midterm elections and what the results mean for President Javier Milei’s economic reform agenda, fiscal policy, and market trajectory.
- [Atlantic Council: ABB’s Chairman Peter R. Voser on innovating for the electrified economy](#) – Tuesday, October 28, 2025. Location: Online event, 2:00 PM. Exploring how technology bridges energy supply-demand gaps while firms advance energy security, economic growth, and geopolitical objectives.
- [Hudson Institute: Africa’s Role in Addressing America’s Critical Minerals Refining Vulnerability](#) – Tuesday, October 28, 2025. Location: Hudson Institute, 10:30 AM. Refining capacity is the greatest vulnerability in the United States’ critical minerals supply chain. After a decades-long campaign to price out competitors, China now dominates the refining sectors for many minerals and metals that are central to the global economy and to the US defense sector. In some sectors, Chinese firms account for as much as 90 percent of global capacity. This dominance is central to Beijing’s quest to recenter the international system away from the US and toward China.
- [Hudson Institute: The Future of US Broadband and Spectrum Strategy](#) – Tuesday, October 28, 2025. Location: Hudson Institute, 3:00 PM. Earlier this year, the Trump administration announced reforms to the \$42.45 billion broadband expansion program carried out by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA). These reforms aim to prevent waste, speed up deployment, and unleash the full force of the competitive marketplace. At the same time, the president’s One Big Beautiful Bill Act mandated the NTIA to create the largest spectrum pipeline in American history, laying the groundwork for the United States’ wireless future. These moves are part of the administration’s broader strategy to promote innovation and spur investment to ensure that all Americans are connected and secure US leadership in fifth- and sixth-generation wireless networks, artificial intelligence, and other vital technologies.

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