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 Federal Bureau of Investigation - Seal

February 06, 2025
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Daily News Briefing

(In coordination with the Office of Public Affairs)

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WASHINGTON SCHEDULE

IN THE NEWS

DOJ Official Accuses FBI Leadership of 'Insubordination,' Tamps Down Talk of Revenge on Agents

The [Associated Press](#) (02/05, Tucker, Richer) reported that a top DOJ official accused the FBI's acting leaders of "insubordination" in a Wednesday memo in which he sought to soothe anxiety inside the Bureau over the potential for a broad purge of agents involved in investigating the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol. The memo from acting Deputy Attorney General Emil Bove said agents "who simply followed orders and carried out their duties in an ethical manner" while investigating the Capitol attack face no risk of being fired. According to the article, the memo also provided no reassurances for any agents found to have "acted with corrupt or partisan intent" and suggests those employees, if there are any, are at risk of discipline or even termination as part of a highly unusual review process the Trump administration is embarking upon to identify what it says is potential misconduct. The message from Bove is aimed at providing a measure of clarity after days of turmoil and uncertainty at the FBI as a result of an extraordinary DOJ demand on Friday for the names of agents who participated in the investigations so that officials could determine whether additional personnel action was merited. The article mentioned that many within the FBI had seen that request as a precursor for mass firings, particularly in light of separate moves to fire members of special counsel Jack Smith's team that investigated Donald Trump, reassign senior career DOJ officials, and force out prosecutors on Jan. 6 cases and multiple top FBI executives. Bove, in his memo Wednesday, accused the FBI's acting leadership of "insubordination" for resisting his requests last week "to identify the core team" responsible for Jan. 6 investigations. He said the requests were meant to "permit the Justice Department to conduct a review of those particular agents' conduct pursuant to Trump's executive order" on "weaponization" in the Biden administration. After acting Director Brian Driscoll refused to comply, Bove wrote, that he broadened the request for information about all FBI employees who participated in the investigations. Driscoll had no response to the insubordination allegation, the FBI said. The article stated that the FBI provided personnel details about several thousand employees, identifying them by unique employee numbers rather than by names. "Let me be clear," wrote Bove, who was previously part of Trump's legal team in his criminal cases. "No FBI employee who simply followed orders and carried out their duties in an ethical manner with respect to January 6 investigations is at risk of termination or other penalties." But, he added, "The only individuals who should be concerned about the process initiated by my January 31, 2025 memo are those who acted with corrupt or partisan intent, who blatantly defied orders from Department leadership, or who exercised discretion in weaponizing the FBI." [Reuters](#) (02/05, Lynch), [New York Times](#) (02/05, Thrush, Goldman), [Vanity Fair](#) (02/05, Smith), [NPR](#) (02/05, Lucas), [CNN](#) (02/05, Perez, Rabinowitz), [Politico](#) (02/05, Gerstein), [Newsnation](#) (02/05, Meyer), [Desert Sun](#) (02/05, Morgen), [Fox](#)

[News](#) (02/05, Hagstrom), the [Hill](#) (02/05, Beitsch), [New York Post](#) (02/05, Nelson), [Newsweek](#) (02/05, Whisnant, Taheri), and [Newsmax](#) (02/05, Barron) also reported on the story.

Agents Say Mass Firings Could Dangerously Weaken FBI in Three Ways

[NBC News](#) (02/05, Winter) reported that first-of-their-kind lawsuits, near-daily staff memos from the little-known acting FBI director, and abject fear among agents that they could lose their jobs have distracted and destabilized the FBI workforce, a half-dozen current and former federal law enforcement officials with experience in the Bureau told NBC News. According to the article, if the new administration fires or punishes agents involved in the Jan. 6 investigations it could affect the FBI in three dangerous ways, the current and former law enforcement officials said. The article mentioned that many of the agents involved in the investigations of the riot at the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, work in the FBI's Counterterrorism Division, which operates Joint Terrorism Task Forces in cities across the country with federal and local law enforcement agencies. Those agents investigate terrorism threats both from inside the United States and from overseas groups, such as ISIS, Al Qaeda, Hamas, and Hezbollah. So the potential removal of thousands of those agents — some estimate the number of counterterrorism agents could be over 4,000 — poses a major threat to the FBI's ability to combat terrorist threats, the current and former officials say. Punishing thousands of Jan. 6 case agents could also damage FBI operations not related to terrorism, the current and former officials say. Agents from smaller FBI field offices, for example, were also brought in to work on Jan. 6 cases. Dismissing those agents could affect smaller FBI field offices that investigate misconduct by local law enforcement agencies, corporations and public officials. The article noted that retaliation against agents who worked on Jan. 6 investigations could also have a chilling effect on FBI agents' desire to investigate future cases involving the second Trump administration. The current and former officials say they wonder whether FBI officials would be willing to investigate, for example, a person in Trump's personal orbit. Firing agents would also be likely to damage efforts to retain veteran agents and recruit new ones, the current and former officials say. Agents fired for their work on Jan. 6 cases would be unable to get hired by other federal law enforcement agencies, the officials say. If they managed to get hired by local police departments, it would most likely be for less pay and lower retirement benefits. The [Wall Street Journal](#) (02/05, Gurman, barber, Viswanatha), [WVEC \(ABC-13\)](#) (02/05, Gooding), the [Christian Science Monitor](#) (02/05, Gass, Babcock), and [CNN](#) (02/05, Video) also reported on the story.

Continued Reporting: FBI Agents Sue DOJ, Allege Retaliation Over Jan. 6 Cases

The [Center Square](#) (02/05, Guerra) reported that FBI agents involved in the Jan. 6 Capital riot investigations have filed lawsuits against the DOJ, challenging its efforts to survey and identify personnel who participated in high-profile inquiries such as the riot and handling of classified documents at Mar-a-lago. The FBI Agents Association, a non-profit organization that supports and protects both current and retired FBI agents, represents one group. FBIAA President Natalie Bara and attorney Chris Mattei held a virtual press conference to discuss the legal action they are taking to prevent the DOJ from releasing the names of FBI employees involved in the Jan. 6 investigations. Bara noted that releasing the names could endanger agents and their families. The second lawsuit, a class action filed by nine FBI agents, alleges that Acting Attorney General James McHenry and other top DOJ officials are engaging in politically motivated retribution. The lawsuit states, "plaintiffs reasonably believe and fear that the information gathered in the survey will also be used to target them for retaliatory discharge due to the Trump administration's perception of their loyalties. Donald Trump has made repeated public pronouncements of his intent to exact revenge upon persons he perceives to be disloyal to him by simply executing their duties in investigating acts incited by him and persons loyal to him." [KSTU \(Fox-13\)](#) (02/05, Carlisle), [Newsweek](#)(02/05, Clark), and [CTPost](#) (02/05, Lockhart) also reported on the story.

Sen. Chuck Grassley Says High-Level Justice, FBI Firings Justified

The [Quad City Times](#) (02/05, Watson) reported that U.S. Sen. Chuck Grassley does not take issue with firings of high-level FBI and DOJ officials, he told reporters on Wednesday. But low-level employees following orders should not be held responsible, he said. Grassley, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, noted on a call with reporters on Wednesday a memo to the workforce from high-level justice official that stated FBI agents "who simply followed orders and carried out their duties in an ethical manner" while investigating the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol are not at risk of being fired. "The purpose of the FBI is law enforcement and using people within the department for political purposes of weaponization of politics should be not a part of their operation," Grassley told reporters on Wednesday. "Now I blame this on the seventh floor of the FBI. It's not something that the FBI agents at the grassroots of Iowa or any other state are responsible for." [Fox News](#) (02/05, Video) also reported on the story.

New Attorney General Pam Bondi Orders Review of Trump Cases

The [Associated Press](#) (02/05, Richer, Tucker) reported that new Attorney General Pam Bondi on Wednesday ordered a review of the federal prosecution of Donald Trump as she unveiled a series of directives designed to overhaul a DOJ the president claims is biased against conservatives. Hours after she was sworn in at the White House, Bondi called for the creation of "weaponization working group" that will scrutinize the work of special counsel Jack Smith, who charged Trump in two criminal cases. The group will also review "unethical prosecutions" stemming from the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol, among other things, according to the memo. The article mentioned that the memo satisfies the longstanding contention of Trump and his allies that the DOJ under the Biden administration had become "weaponized" against conservatives, even though some of its most high-profile probes concerned the Democratic president and his son, and there's been no evidence to support the idea that the prosecutions against Trump were launched for a partisan purpose. It was one of 14 directives signed by Bondi designed to roll back Biden administration policies and align the Justice Department with the priorities of a White House determined to exert control over federal law enforcement and purge agencies of career employees it views as disloyal. The article added that Bondi was sworn in by Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas earlier Wednesday alongside Trump in the Oval Office. It the first time that Trump had participated in a second-term swearing-in of a Cabinet member, underscoring Trump's intense personal interest in the operations of the department that investigated him during his first term and indicted him after he left office in 2021. Trump praised Bondi's record as a prosecutor and said she will restore "fair, equal and impartial justice" at the department. Bondi enters with the department roiled by the firings of career prosecutors and senior FBI officials, along with the highly unusual scrutiny of thousands of agents involved in the sprawling Jan. 6 investigation. Acting Deputy Attorney General Emil Bove said in a memo to the workforce Wednesday that FBI agents "who simply followed orders and carried out their duties in an ethical manner" are not at risk of being fired. The only employees who should be concerned, Bove wrote, "are those who acted with corrupt or partisan intent." "There is no honor in the ongoing efforts to distort that simple truth or protect culpable actors from scrutiny on these issues, which have politicized the Bureau, harmed its credibility and distracted the public from the excellent work being done everyday," Bove wrote. The [Washington Post](#) (02/05, Roebuck, Stein), [NBC News](#) (02/05, Doshi, McCulloch), the [Hill](#) (02/05, Samuels), [Politico](#) (02/05, Gerstein, Orden), [UPI](#) (02/05, Hughes), [Newsweek](#) (02/05, Whisnant), [Washington Examiner](#) (02/05, Oliver), [Bloomberg](#) (02/05, Strohm), [New York Post](#) (02/05, Nelson), [Washington Times](#) (02/05, Howell), [Daily Mail](#) (02/05, Earle), [CBS News](#) (02/05, Rosen), [Epoch Times](#) (02/05, Stieber), [Independent](#) (02/05, Rissman), [Wall Street Journal](#) (02/05, Barber, Gurman), [Fox News](#) (02/05, Singman), [CNN](#) (02/05, Rabinowitz, Perez, Reid), [NPR](#) (02/05, Lucas), [NBC News](#) (02/05, Video), and [Fox News](#) (02/05, Video) also reported on the story.

U.S. Immigration Raids Target Illegal Immigrants in Aurora, Colorado

[Reuters](#) (02/05, Brooks) reported that officers from several U.S. federal agencies searched for illegal immigrants on Wednesday in Aurora, the Colorado city with a large migrant population where President Donald Trump laid out his immigration policies during his campaign. Federal officials said they were targeting over 100 alleged members of Tren de Aragua, a Venezuelan gang with prison origins that has expanded throughout the Americas. According to the article, the Denver field office of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said on social media that it partnered with the FBI, Drug Enforcement Agency, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and U.S. Marshals Service to carry out the operations. Some residents say Tren de Aragua has infiltrated Aurora, a city in the Denver suburbs. Local officials have called assertions about Tren de Aragua's reach and activities in Aurora false and incendiary. On Wednesday, ICE Acting Director Caleb Vitello, speaking at the site of one of the Aurora operations, said in a video posted on social media the raids were taking place to target alleged gang members and that "as long as there are bad guys in the streets we're going to be out here arresting them." Colorado Governor Jared Polis, a Democrat, said in a statement his state would work "with federal law enforcement agencies in apprehending dangerous criminals to make Colorado safer for everyone." Polis added that he wants to see more transparency from the federal government about the immigration actions being taken in Colorado, in part to lessen the fears and uncertainty felt by immigrants. The [New York Post](#) (02/05, Taer), [USA TODAY](#) (02/05, Hughes, Jervis), [Daily Wire](#) (02/05, Jewell), [Newsweek](#) (02/05, Gooding), [Colorado Sun](#) (02/05, Brown, Prentzel), [Colorado Newsline](#) (02/05, Woodruff), [Axios](#) (02/05, Hernandez, Alvarez), [Denver Post](#) (02/05, Tabachnik, Boyanton, et al.), [ABC News](#) (02/05, El-Bawab, Barr), [CBS News](#) (02/05, McRae), [Washington Examiner](#) (02/05, Hallas), and [Fox News](#) (02/05, Arias) also reported on the story.

Continued Reporting: Kash Patel Nomination Process and Commentary

Dems' 'Delay Tactic' to 'Malign' Patel and Stall FBI Confirmation Dismissed as 'Baseless' by Top Senate Leader [Fox News](#) (02/05, Deppisch) reported that the head of the Senate Judiciary Committee criticized Democrats on the panel this week for their attempts to schedule a second confirmation hearing for President Donald Trump's FBI director nominee, Kash Patel, describing the effort Tuesday night as a "delay tactic" designed to stall Patel from taking the reins of the sprawling law enforcement agency. According to the article, in a statement Tuesday night, Grassley criticized what he described as the "baseless" attempt by Sen. Dick Durbin, (D-IL), and other Democrats on the panel to push for a second hearing, noting that Patel testified for more than five hours before the committee and disclosed to the panel "thousands of pages" of records, as well as nearly 150 pages of responses to lawmakers' written questions. "No one was convinced by the minority's baseless efforts to mischaracterize and malign Kash Patel," Grassley said. "It's additionally outrageous to assert that a nominee should come before the Senate to answer for government actions that occurred prior to their time at an agency." "Further hearings on his nomination are unnecessary," Grassley concluded. He said the committee still intends to vote on Patel's confirmation as FBI director as early as next week. Grassley's remarks come after Durbin, the Senate Judiciary Committee's ranking Democrat, urged Grassley to delay Patel's confirmation vote Tuesday, citing what he described as "apparent falsehoods" in Patel's testimony last week, as well as the "recent removals and reassignments of FBI career civil servants." The letter, signed by all 10 Democrats on the panel, urged Grassley to delay Patel's confirmation vote until Patel agreed to testify for a second time under oath about the recent removals and reassignments of FBI civil servants; and until DOJ agrees to provide the panel with volume two of former special counsel Jack Smith's final report that refers or pertains to Patel's testimony or actions, among other things. [Spectrum News](#) (02/05, Gannon), and [Just the News](#) (02/05, Severi) also reported on the story.

Was Kash Patel Aware of FBI Firings in Advance?

[MSNBC](#) (02/05, Rubin) reported that in the wake of FBI director nominee Kash Patel's confirmation hearing last week, senators of both parties posed written questions to him to further explore his past comments, particularly with respect to the 2020 election and Jan. 6, 2021, and, perhaps more significantly, assess his response to a slew of recent firings within the FBI. According to the article, MSNBC has obtained those questions — known as "questions for the record" or "QFRs" — and Patel's answers, which comprise 174 pages and reflect inquiries from a dozen members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. According to a source familiar with Patel's nomination process, his responses were provided to the committee on Monday. In his responses, Patel repeatedly denied any involvement in or direction of any of the FBI firings that have taken place since President Donald Trump's inauguration, including those that have occurred since Patel's Jan. 30 confirmation hearing. The article stated that when asked more broadly whether, for example, he discussed with anyone on the Trump transition team or in the current administration the demotion or removal of officials who were still with the FBI as of Trump's inauguration, Patel responded, "Not that I recall." Similarly, when asked whether he knew before his Jan. 30 testimony that "scores of senior FBI officials and rank-and-file agents assigned to the federal cases against President Trump and the Jan. 6 defendants have been told to resign or be fired," Patel replied, "Not that I recall." Patel's responses remained the same — "Not that I recall" — when asked whether, at the time of his Jan. 30 testimony, he was aware of personnel decisions impacting specific, named individuals or "any other plans to dismiss any FBI personnel" or conduct evaluations or reviews of those FBI personnel who worked on Jan. 6 cases or those related to Trump.

The [Washington Times](#) (02/05, Wasinger), [San Antonio Express-News](#) (02/05, Spinks), [Just the News](#) (02/05, Whedon), and the [Economic Times](#) (02/05, Staff Writer) also reported on Kash Patel

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COUNTERTERRORISM

Continued Reporting: New Orleans Ramps up Security for Super Bowl Just Weeks After Terror Attack

The [Associated Press](#) (02/05, Brook) reported that after a New Year's Day terror attack struck New Orleans' historic French Quarter, city officials say they are confident in the security plans they have in place for Sunday's Super Bowl. More than 125,000 visitors — including President Donald Trump — are expected to converge on the Big Easy this week for days of revelry capped off by the clash between the Kansas City Chiefs and the Philadelphia Eagles at the Caesars Superdome to crown this season's NFL champion. According to the article, following the truck-ramming attack that killed 14 people and injured dozens more along Bourbon Street, one of the city's most famous thoroughfares, alleged security lapses triggered multiple lawsuits and investigations. But the city, the NFL and law

enforcement officials insist that after more than a year of preparations, they are ready to play host. "We're going above and beyond what we've seen in the past when we've hosted previously," Mayor LaToya Cantrell said. "We know we're safer than we've ever been before." Super Bowl events will sprawl across neighborhoods far beyond the stadium, said Homeland Security Investigations New Orleans Special Agent in Charge Eric DeLaune, who is leading federal coordination of security. Federal agencies from the FBI to the Secret Service are bringing in rooftop snipers and will position armored SWAT vehicles around the stadium, the French Quarter and downtown, DeLaune said.

Continued Reporting: Trump's Pick to Lead the National Counterterrorism Center Has Called Jan. 6 Rioters 'Political Prisoners'

[NBC News](#) (02/05, Luce) reported that President Donald Trump's pick to oversee U.S. intelligence on terrorism threats is a retired Green Beret who has called Jan. 6 rioters "political prisoners" and has had ties to a man police say was a member of the far-right group known as the "Proud Boys." According to the article, the selection of Joe Kent as director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) is part of a wider effort by the administration to place trusted loyalists and partisan activists in senior government positions in intelligence, law enforcement and diplomacy. Trump and his supporters have said the intelligence community sought to undermine the president in the past and needs a radical overhaul. The National Counterterrorism Center oversees U.S. government intelligence on terrorist threats and retains a database of all known and suspected terrorists. Kent served in Army Special Forces, undertaking 11 combat deployments during a 20-year career, and later worked at the CIA. He lost his wife, a Navy cryptologist, in a terrorist bombing in Syria in 2019. The article mentioned that Kent ran unsuccessfully for Congress twice in Washington state, in 2022 and 2024. Campaign finance documents show that Kent in 2022 made payments for "campaign consulting" to Graham Jorgensen, who was identified as a Proud Boy in a 2018 law enforcement report. The Proud Boys are viewed as "an extremist group with ties to white nationalism" by the FBI, and authorities say they played a significant role in the Jan. 6 storming of the Capitol. The group has denied any connection to racist elements and says it is a fraternal group opposed to political correctness. In a post on Truth Social, Trump praised Kent. "As a Soldier, Green Beret, and CIA Officer, Joe has hunted down terrorists and criminals his entire adult life," Trump wrote. "Above all, Joe knows the terrible cost of terrorism, losing his wonderful wife, Shannon, a Great American Hero, who was killed in the fight against ISIS." The [Guardian](#) (02/05, Wilson) also reported on the story.

Continued Reporting: U.S. Court Convicts Founder of Neo-Nazi Group for Plot to Destroy Baltimore Power Grid

The [Jerusalem Post](#) (02/05, Starr) reported that a U.S. court has convicted the founder of a neo-Nazi group who planned to destroy the Baltimore power grid in an attempt to accelerate racial violence, the DOJ said Tuesday. Brandon Russell, 29, the founder of Atomwaffen Division (AWD) and a resident of Orlando, could receive a 20-year prison sentence for conspiracy to damage an energy facility, it said. He had recruited Maryland resident Sarah Beth Clendaniel, and from 2022-2023, they planned to damage electrical infrastructure that could have caused more than \$75 million in damages, it added.

Continued Reporting: Donald Trump Reveals Dead-Man's Switch in Case of Iran Assassination

[Newsweek](#) (02/05, Orton) reported that President Donald Trump said on Tuesday that he has left orders for Iran to face total destruction if it attempts to assassinate him, as federal authorities continue to track threats from Tehran. "If they did that, they would be obliterated," Trump told reporters while signing an executive order aimed at intensifying U.S. sanctions on Iran. "I've left instructions—if they do it, they get obliterated. There won't be anything left." According to the article, Trump's remarks come amid heightened tensions between the U.S. and Iran, as federal officials continue to monitor threats against him and former members of his first administration. Iranian officials have long vowed retaliation for Trump's 2020 decision to authorize a drone strike that killed Qassem Soleimani, commander of the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' Quds Force. In recent years, U.S. intelligence agencies have reported multiple Iranian plots targeting Trump and other former top officials. Trump was wounded in a July assassination attempt at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania. U.S. officials later confirmed that intelligence agencies had been tracking threats from Iran ahead of the event, though they stated at the time that there was no evidence Iran was involved in the shooting. Trump issued the warning to Iran during the signing of an executive order reinstating the "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran. This strategy aims to halt Iran's nuclear ambitions by reducing its oil exports to zero. The order directs the U.S. Treasury and State Department to

implement stringent economic sanctions and enforcement mechanisms targeting entities that violate existing sanctions.

How ISIS and Al-Qaeda Are Using AI to Target American Jews

[Newsweek](#) (02/05, Sager) reported that a digital safety coalition said that artificial intelligence (AI) has enhanced content for lone-wolf terrorist attacks by ISIS and Al-Qaeda against Jewish communities in the United States. "The trend is unmistakable," Marc Ginsberg, a former U.S. ambassador and the president of the Coalition for a Safer Web, said. "That is a whole new level of threat that I don't think anybody understands or appreciates how sophisticated the penetration operation has really become." According to the article, following the anniversary of October 7, the Coalition for a Safer Web found numerous ISIS and Al-Qaeda websites accompanied by generative AI videos, programs and memes of Gaza's destruction and injured Palestinians. The content is manipulated to appeal to potential lone-wolf recruits in the U.S. to start retribution against Israel's supporters in the U.S., particularly the Jewish community. Since mid-2024, ISIS and Al-Qaeda have been upgrading their propaganda by incorporating generative AI programs, according to Ginsberg and his team's research. The AI programs create a "super stylized" version of extremist web content. It also allows terrorist groups to manipulate algorithms and breach social media content, inciting antisemitic operations. "Generative AI has been hijacked by ISIS and Al-Qaeda in their respective campaigns to achieve global dominance over the other, to leverage the Gaza war, to incite and recruit domestic based U.S. nationals and not to attempt to infiltrate any personnel actually from their operations into the U.S.," Ginsberg said. The article mentioned that there is a surge in terror plots against U.S. Jewish targets since late 2024. The article noted that the FBI and Canadian authorities arrested 20-year-old Muhammad Shazeb Khan, a Pakistani citizen, while he was en route to a planned mass shooting in support of ISIS at a Jewish center in Brooklyn on September 4, 2024. The shooting would have coincided with the anniversary of the Hamas attack on Israel. The article added that the Houston FBI Counterterrorism Task Force arrested Anas Said on November 8. The 28-year-old Houston native was taken into custody for conspiring with ISIS web designers to plot a mass casualty attack against a Houston Jewish installation.

Opinion: Trump's Plan for the Cartels Isn't Tough Enough

An opinion piece by the [New York Times](#) (02/05, Freeman) stated that Trump is right about the immense power of Mexico's transnational drug cartels and the grave threat they pose to American lives. The author added that they agree that weakening and dismantling the cartels should rank at or near the top of U.S. foreign policy priorities. The author argued that the problem with Trump's plan to take them on is that it's not tough or serious enough. The author mentioned that Trump devoted some of his first hours back in the Oval Office to the threat of the cartels, including signing an executive order to designate some of them as terrorist organizations. The author claimed that the cartels are not terrorist groups like Al Qaeda or ISIS. Cartels like Mexico's two largest, the Sinaloa cartel and the Jalisco New Generation cartel, do not want to overthrow the state or remold society in their image. They have a less ambitious goal: limitless profits. The author provided the opinion that if Trump and those around him are serious about weakening the cartels, they need a serious plan. They need to see the cartels for what they truly are: predatory multinational businesses. He needs a strategy to hit them where it hurts — in the pocketbook.

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COUNTERINTELLIGENCE

Continued Reporting: Ex-Google Engineer Faces New U.S. Charges He Stole AI Secrets for Chinese Companies

[Decrypt](#) (02/05, Edwards) reported that a former Google engineer faces up to 175 years in jail after being accused of stealing trade secrets in a DOJ indictment. Linwei (Leon) Ding, 38, was charged by a federal grand jury in San Francisco with seven counts of economic espionage and a further seven counts of theft of trade secrets. Ding, who was arrested in March 2024 and is currently under investigation by the FBI, is accused of having uploaded proprietary data on Google AI supercomputer hardware infrastructure and software to his personal account. The DOJ claims he was doing this to benefit Chinese firms and, ultimately, "the PRC government and instrumentalities." Ding had allegedly been in talks with the chief technology officer of a Chinese tech company since June 2022 and is accused of uploading more than 1,000 Google documents to his personal cloud account between May 2022 and 2023. According to the DOJ, details about Google's SmartNIC, Tensor Processing Unit and Graphics Processing Unit chips were all stolen, while Ding is accused of leaking software built for next-gen AI

innovations. The court documents state that the trade secrets "contain detailed information about the architecture and functionality of TPU chips and systems and GPU systems, the software that allowed the chips to communicate and execute tasks, and the software that orchestrated thousands of chips into a supercomputer capable of training and executing cutting-edge AI workloads." [NTD](#) (02/05, Fang), and [Regtech Times](#) (02/05, Deshmukh) also reported on the story.

Opinion: My Vote to Ban TikTok Was a Mistake, Here's What I've Learned

An opinion piece by [Fox News](#) (02/05, Hunt) stated that the author regretted for voting to ban TikTok. The author said they understood the concerns surrounding TikTok as a Chinese-owned platform and the potential risks associated with foreign access to American data, and they condemn foreign interference in our digital infrastructure, but that we must confront an uncomfortable truth: our government has also collected personal data on its citizens. The author noted that former Director Wray admitted to Congress that the FBI abused its powers to spy on Americans over 250,000 times. The author claimed that for conservatives who believe in a strong America, platforms like TikTok and X remain vital spaces for free speech, and that we must break the cycle of censorship and ensure that every American has the right to express their beliefs without fear of being silenced or "canceled." The author closed by saying that as leaders, we must adapt to the realities of the modern world, recognizing that platforms like TikTok are not merely distractions, but potent tools for communication, activism, and education.

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CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

Burglaries at Homes of Joe Burrow and Other Star Athletes Were Similar, Authorities Say

The [Associated Press](#) (02/05, Collins) reported that the men charged with a burglary at Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow's house took photos of themselves flashing some of the spoils — nearly \$300,000 worth of jewelry, watches, designer luggage and glasses. The article disclosed that one of them wore necklaces with pendants showing the number 9 and "JB9," Burrow's jersey number. The article noted that one of the men tried to delete the photos from a cellphone as police pulled them over in Ohio, but investigators were able to recover the pictures and included some of them in a new federal complaint filed by an FBI agent that was unsealed Wednesday. The investigation has spanned several states and led to the arrests of six people. According to the article, federal authorities say it's a story involving South American burglary crews that have been targeting upscale homes around the country and a fencing operation run out of a New York City pawn shop. The article clarified that in court documents, investigators haven't publicly connected the Dec. 9 burglary at Burrow's home in Cincinnati to other thefts reported at other high-profile athletes' houses, but the complaint released Wednesday said there were similarities in many of the break-ins and the investigation is ongoing. On Wednesday, three of the four men already accused by local authorities of burglarizing Burrow's home were indicted by a federal grand jury in Cincinnati on charges of transporting stolen goods interstate and falsifying records related to the same burglary. The article added that additionally on Wednesday, two other men charged with running a fencing operation in New York City selling stolen items from burglaries around the country pleaded not guilty through their attorneys in federal court in Brooklyn. Investigators alleged one of the men was linked through phone records to one of the men charged in the Burrow home theft. The article outlined that those two men, Dimitriy Nezhinskiy and Juan Villar, were identified by authorities in court documents released Tuesday. Prosecutors said a large amount of suspected stolen property was found at the two men's pawn shop in Manhattan and at storage units in New Jersey belonging to Nezhinskiy. The article further revealed that in the criminal complaint released Wednesday, an FBI agent wrote that authorities tracked the suspects in the theft at Burrow's home to a hotel in Fairborn, Ohio, near Dayton, using cellphone location data and license plate readers. Investigators said they matched data from cell towers to the locations of a vehicle of interest identified by the license plate readers. Local prosecutors said four men were later taken into custody during a traffic stop — Jordan Francisco Quiroga Sanchez, 22; Alexander Esteban Huaiquil-Chavez, 24; Bastian Alejandro Orellana Morales, 23; and Sergio Andres Ortega Cabello, 38. Sanchez, Morales and Cabello were indicted by the federal grand jury Wednesday. [CNN](#) (02/05, Harvey, et al.) highlighted that the FBI said, "These homes are targeted for burglary due to the perception they may have high-end goods like designer handbags, jewelry, watches, and cash." [CBS News](#) (02/05, Gainer), [ABC News](#) (02/05, Katersky, Deliso), [The New York Post](#) (02/05, Schnitzer, Fitz-Gibbon), [Fox News](#) (02/05, Price), [New York Daily News](#) (02/05, Annese), [The Cincinnati Enquirer](#) (02/05, Hodges, Grasha), [ESPN](#) (02/05, Baby), [NewsNation](#) (02/05, Ingle, Noone), [Sports Illustrated](#) (02/05, Heltman), [NBC Sports](#) (02/05, Florio), [Athlon Sports](#) (02/05, Merckerson), [Inkl](#) (02/05, Staff

Writer), [NBC News](#) (02/05, Video), [CBS News](#) (02/05, Video), [Fox News](#) (02/05, Video), [WXIX \(FOX-19\)](#) (02/05, Goffinet), [WXIX \(FOX-19\)](#) (02/05, Video), [WPIX \(CW-11\)](#) (02/05, Video), [WLTW \(NBC-5\)](#) (02/05, Dietz, Johnson), and [WABC \(ABC-7\)](#) (02/05, Staff Writer) also reported on the story.

Continued Reporting: New York Man Pleads Guilty to Firing Shots Outside Albany Synagogue

[New York Daily News](#) (02/05, Wilkinson) reported that an upstate New York man pleaded guilty Tuesday to firing two shotgun blasts outside a Jewish synagogue in Albany on the first night of Hanukkah in 2023. Mufid Fawaz Alkhader, 29, had been arrested at the scene outside Temple Israel on Dec. 7, 2023, after the gunfire sent the synagogue into lockdown. According to the article, Alkhader shouted "Free Palestine!" outside the house of worship and later told federal investigators that "events in the Middle East have impacted him." The article pointed out that he opened fire exactly two months after Hamas attacked Israel, sparking the brutal and ongoing war in Gaza. The article quoted U.S. Attorney Carla Freedman, who said in a statement, "The defendant's violent, antisemitic and terrifying act targeted the Temple Israel congregation, the larger Jewish community, and the right of every person to practice their religion without fear of violence." The article indicated that Alkhader pleaded guilty to obstructing the free exercise of religious beliefs by threat of force, brandishing a firearm during a crime and conspiring to purchase a firearm unlawfully. He faces a minimum of seven years in prison at his sentencing hearing in June. The article detailed that more than 60 children were inside Temple Israel at a daycare when Alkhader opened fire, according to investigators. No one was wounded by the blasts, and Alkhader's gun jammed before he could fire a third shot. The article mentioned that the firearm conspiracy charge was added because Alkhader acquired the weapon from another man, Andrew Miller, who illegally bought it for him in November 2023. Miller copped to his role in the conspiracy and was sentenced to 14 months behind bars. A DOJ [press release](#) also quoted FBI Special Agent in Charge Craig Tremaroli, who said, "Mr. Alkhader's plea confirms his deliberate and premeditated intentions to illegally acquire a gun and use it to bring terror to the Temple Israel community as they were preparing to celebrate the first night of Hanukkah. Thanks to the swift actions of the Temple Israel community and our law enforcement partners, justice has been served. The FBI remains steadfast in our mission to ensure all our communities can live without fear of hateful violence." [WGY \(FM-103.1\)](#) (02/05, Staff Writer) also reported on the story.

DOJ Says It Will Not Bring Charges in Investigation of Project Veritas

The [New York Times](#) (02/05, Schmidt, Goldman) reported that the DOJ said on Wednesday that it would not bring charges against anyone affiliated with the group Project Veritas over their role in trying to publish the contents of a diary that had been stolen from Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s daughter in the final weeks of the 2020 election campaign. The article stated that the prosecutors, who made their announcement in a one-paragraph letter to a judge overseeing the matter, did not say why they were declining to bring additional charges in the long running investigation. In court filings in related cases, the DOJ had laid out evidence of the group's involvement in the effort to acquire and publish the diary, and had fought in court for access to evidence that investigators had obtained from the group's operatives. The article detailed that the investigation had raised difficult legal questions about the extent to which the First Amendment protected the publication of stolen materials. But it was unclear whether the decision was part of a larger pattern by the DOJ since President Trump took office to walk away from cases involving his allies. According to the article, Project Veritas and its founder, James O'Keefe, have long been favorites of Trump's and gained attention by using sting operations and undercover videos to seek to embarrass liberal groups and mainstream news organizations, among others. The article clarified that the investigation started in the final days of the 2020 campaign when federal prosecutors at the U.S. attorney's office in Manhattan began examining how the group had obtained a diary that Biden's daughter Ashley had kept. The group tried to publicize the diary's contents in an attempt to undermine Biden's candidacy. During the investigation, court filings in the case said, the authorities learned that Project Veritas had paid for the diary. The article mentioned that in 2021, FBI agents with warrants searched the homes of several Project Veritas operatives. In response, members of the group went to court trying to stop federal prosecutors from using the evidence, setting off the yearslong court battle. The article noted that about a year later, two people pleaded guilty in connection with their roles in stealing the diary and selling it to the group. One of those individuals, Robert Kurlander, had his sentencing delayed on Wednesday until May.

Continued Reporting: FBI Chicago Captured of Ten Most Wanted Fugitive Arnoldo Jimenez

[USA Today](#) (02/05, Alund) reported that in 2012, less than 48 hours after she was married, police found Estrella Carrera dead in the bathtub of her Illinois apartment. Still wearing her wedding dress, officials reported at the time,

she had been stabbed more than a dozen times. The article stated that days later, a judge in Cook County, Illinois signed an arrest warrant for Carrera's newlywed husband, Arnaldo Jimenez in connection his wife's slaying at her Burbank home. The article highlighted that after being on the run for almost 13 years, the FBI announced, Jimenez has been found and taken into custody in Mexico in connection to Carrera's "gruesome" killing. At the time of his arrest, Jimenez was on the FBI's 10 Most Wanted list. The article quoted Burbank Police Department Deputy Chief William Casey, who said in a statement following Jimenez' Friday arrest in Mexico, "The FBI and Burbank Police Department were committed to bringing justice for Estrella Carrera and her family." The article detailed that according to the FBI, on May 12, 2012 – one day after the couple wed – Jimenez allegedly stabbed his wife to death in his black, four-door, 2006 Maserati. An FBI agent told CBS News Jimenez stabbed his wife 18 times. The article indicated that he then reportedly dragged her body into the bathroom tub of her apartment, the FBI said. A motive in the slaying was not immediately known. The article outlined that Jimenez was charged with first-degree murder, and on May 15, 2012, a judge issued a warrant for his arrest. Two days later, according to a news release issued by the FBI last week, the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois issued a federal arrest warrant for Jimenez after prosecutors charged him federally with unlawful flight to avoid prosecution. The article confirmed that FBI, an FBI legal attaché in Mexico City, and federal court officials collaborated to locate Jimenez, arrested by agents of the Fiscalía General de la República (Mexico's Attorney General's Office) in conjunction with Interpol. The article added that Jimenez remained in custody Wednesday pending extradition proceedings, the FBI told the reporting outlet. His extradition hearing date was not immediately known on Wednesday. [Patch](#) (02/05, Swanson) also reported on the story.

FBI Warn iPhone And Android Users

[Forbes](#) (02/05, Doffman) reported that the FBI is warning smartphone users to beware the threat from dangerous calls that will cost you a significant amount of money if you make a mistake. The article explained that the FBI's warning focuses on scam calls pretending to be from banks or technical support, that trick users into moving money from their account or installing dangerous software on their device. The Bureau says such scam calls may even be able to "spoof" the caller ID number, making the threat even harder to detect. The article indicated that the FBI advised that any such call that comes at you unsolicited, where you haven't first reach out to your bank or technical support, will be a scam. The chance of such a call being legitimate is so small that it's never worth taking the risk. You need to be absolutely sure — beyond any doubt — that the caller is legitimate. The article highlighted that per another recent FBI warning, the scammers insist the matter is urgent, giving you little time to think. If you find yourself talking to a law enforcement officer who is demanding money or any other similar request, then you can hang up. The article pointed out that if you're concerned, then call local law enforcement using a publicly available number and explain what has happened. The article added that the advice is always the same — end the call as soon as the coercion starts, and don't listen to the well-rehearsed script.

Continued Reporting: Trump's Top D.C. Prosecutor Vows to Wield the Law Against Those Who Get In Elon Musk's Way

[MSNBC](#) (02/05, Rubin) reported that shortly after Donald Trump's interim U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia started in his position, he launched a probe of the office's Jan. 6 work, while the DOJ fired prosecutors who worked on those cases against Trump supporters. The article explained that Ed Martin, who was a "Stop the Steal" advocate and lawyer for Jan. 6 defendants, proceeded this week to pledge support for Elon Musk and his "Department of Government Efficiency" workers, assuring Musk that he'd bring the office's full weight to bear "against anyone who impedes your work or threatens your people." The article noted that Martin wrote to Musk on Monday, "We will protect DOGE and other workers no matter what," calling it important to keep American employees safe and to protect "the American people's property." The article mentioned that separately, the federal prosecutor's office for D.C. issued an official statement saying that an initial review showed that "certain individuals and/or groups have committed acts that appear to violate the law in targeting DOGE employees" and that the office has "our prosecutors preparing." The article explained that Martin's letter followed reporting from [Wired](#) that identified "six young men — all apparently between the ages of 19 and 24, according to public databases, their online presences, and other records — who have little to no government experience and are now playing critical roles" in Musk's crew. [Reuters](#) (02/05, Hals, Queen) also reported on the story.

FBI Joins in on Search for Missing New York Family

[News 12 Hudson Valley](#) (02/05, Gomez) reported that the FBI says it has joined the search for a missing New York woman and her toddler who were last seen in November. The article stated that authorities say there's a warrant

out for the mother, Jahaira De La Mora Gomez, after she missed a family court appearance during which full custody of her 3-year-old, Alexandra, was granted to the girl's father. The article detailed that Gomez was last seen with packed bags on surveillance video leaving her New Hampton apartment with her toddler and 8-year-old son from a previous relationship in tow. Officials say it's believed Gomez, who has ties to several states and countries including Mexico and Ecuador, may be trying to leave New York state. The article instructed that anyone with information is asked to contact the FBI's confidential tipline at 800-Call-FBI or by visiting www.tips.fbi.gov.

Man Pleads Guilty to Setting Guard Shack on Fire at FBI Chicago Office

[WLS \(ABC-7\)](#) (02/05, Staff Writer) reported that a man plead guilty after video shows him setting a guard shack on fire at the FBI's Chicago office. The article detailed that security cameras captured James Lofton dousing his jacket with an accelerant and lighting it in November 2022. The station erupted in flames. The article noted that Chicago firefighters said they put out the fire at 2111 West Roosevelt Road quickly with hand pumps. On Tuesday, Lofton plead guilty to depredation of government property. He will be sentenced in May.

FBI Searches Neighborhood in North Carolina

[WTVD \(ABC-11\)](#) (02/05, Bae) reported that more than 50 FBI agents were seen searching the neighborhood and nearby wooded areas off of Highway 15-501 near Chapel Hill, North Carolina, on Wednesday, catching some neighbors off guard. According to the article, the FBI said they were conducting "court-authorized investigative activity in connection with an ongoing federal law enforcement investigation," and declined to comment further. The article indicated that local deputies were also seen in the neighborhood assisting the FBI with this matter. The article added that a neighbor, Candice Welch said, "They were looking for a missing item, that's all they told us. We knew it had to be something important, something very serious because of the fact that it was the FBI, along with the sheriff's deputies, and unmarked cars. There was a little bit of everything out here." [WRAL \(NBC-5\)](#) (02/05, Knese) also reported on the story.

Idaho Man Hospitalized After Being Shot by Officer, FBI Leading Investigation

[KTVB \(NBC-7\)](#) (02/05, Staff Writer) reported that Idaho police said a man is in the hospital after being shot by an officer Wednesday evening. According to the article, police said the shooting happened around 5:00 p.m. in the 3000 block of Manchester Drive. A Caldwell Police Department spokesperson said at least one officer with the Treasure Valley Metro Violent Crime Task Force fired their gun, hitting the man. The article explained that the FBI leads the multi-agency gang task force, which focuses on gang activity. There is no word on why officers were pursuing the man — the reporting outlet is still trying to get in contact with the agency. The article detailed that Randy Thornton, a man who lives a few houses down from where police said the shooting happened, sent the outlet security video footage that shows the moments before the incident. In the video, nearly two dozen shots are heard as police tried to take the man into custody. Police said the suspect was transported to the hospital for his injuries and is expected to survive. The article noted that a spokesperson with Caldwell Police said the man will face charges once he is released from the hospital. There is no timeline for when the charges will be given or what those may be. The FBI is leading the investigation. The article pointed out that the agency has not released any details about the shooting and what led up to it. [KTVB \(NBC-7\)](#) (02/05, Video) also reported on the story.

Weeks After FBI Raid, Feds File Forfeiture Action Against Rhode Island Immigration Lawyer's House

The [Providence Journal](#) (02/05, Mulvaney) reported that weeks after agents raided his office in Providence, RI, federal authorities filed a forfeiture action against the \$1.2 million East Greenwich home of immigration lawyer and former Central Falls municipal court judge Joseph Molina Flynn. Federal prosecutors on Tuesday filed the complaint against Molina Flynn's 65 Woodbridge Drive home, alleging that he lied on his mortgage application and failed to report that he owed taxes to the Internal Revenue Service from 2013 and 2014. The article outlined that according to the filing, federal prosecutors are not requesting to seize the property at this time, but to provide notice for any other person or entity who may claim an interest. Federal authorities also want to inspect, inventory and get an appraisal. The article revealed that Molina Flynn's lawyer noted that no charges have been filed against him and said he just learned of the latest federal action targeting his client's "primary" residence Tuesday. The article pointed out that shortly after news of the FBI's actions broke, Central Falls Mayor Maria Rivera announced that Molina Flynn had stepped down from his post. Municipal Court Associate Judge Robert McConnell will step in temporarily until the position is filled. [WJAR \(NBC-10\)](#) (02/05, Crandall) and [WPRI \(CBS-12\)](#) (02/05, Sherman) also reported on the story.

Secretive Christian Sect Under FBI Probe Is 'Perfect Grounds for Pedophiles'

[KSAZ \(FOX-10\)](#) (02/05, Lum) reported that a secret Christian church with global reach is at the center of an FBI investigation. The religious group goes by multiple names, and as child sex abuse allegations aimed at the church continue to come to light, we are learning more about the organization. The article noted that Cynthia Liles, who is a private investigator specializing in child sex abuse cases, has worked with the FBI on exposing allegations linked to the Two by Two church. The religious group originated in Ireland in the late 19th century. "Ministers go out, two by two. They go out in pairs and they don't have homes. They stay in the members' homes, so the access to children is readily available, sometimes in the same bedrooms as the children," she said. The article highlighted that Advocates for the Truth (AFFT) is a non-profit organization that provides help for sexual abuse survivors in the Two by Two church. People with the group say more than 2,000 victims have reported more than 900 alleged perpetrators to its hotline for abuse as of June 2024. The article quoted one of its former members, who said, "Sometimes, you would get a paper list. If you were an 'Elder' in a meeting, you might be emailed a list. But oftentimes you were told to just hand out the information or tell the information verbally, depending on what the communication was." The former member does not want to be identified due to family members who are still affiliated with the church, but he says those who have left are relieved the FBI is investigating. The article added that the FBI says its Omaha Field Office is seeking the public's help for help in "identifying victims or individuals with knowledge of abuse and/or criminal behavior that has occurred" within the group. The article instructed that if you have any information or believe your child or children have been victimized by anyone affiliated with the church, you can fill out the FBI's questionnaire.

FBI Releases Additional Pictures of Suspect in U.S. Bank Robbery in Kansas

[KSHB \(NBC-41\)](#) (02/05, Staff Writer) reported that the FBI released additional photos of a person suspected of robbing a US Bank in Kansas City, Kansas, last week. The article detailed that on Friday, Jan. 31, the suspect walked into the bank, located at 10959 Parallel Parkway, and pointed a gun at tellers before demanding money. The suspect then fled the scene with an unknown amount of money. The article noted that minutes before the robbery, the Kansas City, Kansas, Police Department received reports of a man with a gun at Lowell Brune Elementary School, which is minutes away from the bank. The school was placed on lockdown while KCK and district police investigated the report of the man. The bank was subsequently robbed. The article indicated that FBI officials said the suspect was wearing a dark hooded sweatshirt, a neon mask and sunglasses. The suspect fled the scene in a silver SUV. [KCTV \(CBS-5\)](#) (02/05, Swartz) also reported on the story.

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CYBER DIVISION

Critical Questions for Boards: Are You Prepared for Ransomware?

[Forbes](#) (02/05, Wishart-Smith) reported that ransomware is a governance imperative demanding strategic oversight, innovation, and proactive leadership engagement. As attacks grow in frequency and sophistication, corporate boards must ensure their organizations build resilience while being prepared to respond to attacks. The article pointed to the NACD's Director's Handbook on Cyber-Risk Oversight, developed in partnership with the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, FBI, and U.S. Secret Service, which provides guidance on working with federal agencies during a ransomware attack. It includes government resources the FBI can provide and protocols for securely sharing information. The article highlighted that Bryan Vorndran, Assistant Director of the FBI Cyber Division, stressed the importance of this collaboration to the reporting outlet, saying, "Establishing communication protocols and knowing when and how to involve the FBI can make a significant difference during an attack." Boards should ensure these relationships are built in advance rather than waiting for a crisis to unfold. The article explained that ransomware is a multifaceted business risk that requires leadership from the top. Boards are uniquely positioned to drive meaningful change by asking tough questions, promoting cross-functional collaboration and championing a culture of resilience. Their effectiveness depends on staying informed, proactive and deeply engaged. The article added that Vorndran said, "The ultimate goal of an executive exercise is to give the board confidence that organizational leaders are prepared to take action in pursuit of what's best for the organization." The article emphasized that with ransomware threats evolving to include ransomware as a service and dual-extortion tactics, this confidence – and the preparation that underpins it – is crucial. By taking a strategic approach, boards can transform the ransomware challenge into an opportunity to strengthen their organizations, protect stakeholders, and build long-term success.

Google Confirms Gmail Attacks—Do Not Ignore FBI Warning

[Forbes](#) (02/05, Doffman) reported that Google confirmed the latest "AI driven" attack on its account holders — for which you can read Gmail. The article highlighted that the intended victim was a highly tech savvy engineer, who described it as "the most sophisticated phishing attack I've ever seen." The article explained that the attack started with a call from Google's support team, warning that someone had tried to access the would-be victim's account overseas. The number looked legitimate and was backed up by an email from a Google domain. It went on for some time, and was only thwarted when the scam caller's fake boss got on the line and slipped up. The article noted that Google wants to emphasize that it should never have gotten that far; the company asked the outlet to "please reiterate to your readers that Google will not call you to reset your password or troubleshoot account issues." The article confirmed that Google has suspended that would-be scammer's account, "which abused an unverified Workspace account to send these misleading emails," and says it is "hardening our defenses against abusers leveraging g.co references at sign up to further protect users." The article mentioned that the FBI has responded to the latest wave of banking scam calls with a repeated warning to never take such calls, that banks will never place them. The article indicated that the FBI's blanket warning on this is clear: "Legitimate customer, security, or tech support companies will not initiate unsolicited contact with individuals."

Law Enforcement, Victim Resilience Lead To 35% Year-Over-Year Drop In Ransomware Payments

[UPI](#) (02/05, Benson) reported that payments for ransomware declined year-over-year through 2024 for the first time since 2022, according to data shared by blockchain analysis firm Chainalysis on Wednesday. The total volume of ransom payments decreased year-over-year by approximately 35%, according to the Chainalysis 2025 Crypto Crime Report, which highlighted Russian ransomware group LockBit and Iran-based ransomware strains, Akira/Fog, and INC/Lynx, as bellwethers of the year's trends. The article emphasized that ransomware attackers, however, have gotten faster with negotiations often starting within hours of data exfiltration. Attackers have ranged from "nation-state actors" to ransomware-as-a-service operations, lone characters and data theft extortion groups. The article mentioned that LockBit claimed in June last year to have breached the U.S. Federal Reserve and threatened to release 33 terabytes of sensitive data, including "Americans' banking secrets." LockBit previously conducted a number of high-profile ransomware attacks on companies, banks and government departments around the world since 2019, including the U.S. DOJ, Japan's Port of Nagoya, Boeing, British Royal Mail and Fulton County in Georgia. The article pointed out that Dmitry Yuryevich Khoroshev, a Russian national accused of leading LockBit, was indicted and sanctioned last year in May by the U.S. and its allies. It came with a \$10 million bounty for Khoroshev's arrest. The article indicated that LockBit saw H2 payments decrease by roughly 79% after it was disrupted early last year by the FBI and Britain's National Crime Agency which showcased the "effectiveness of international law enforcement collaboration." It published as high as 68% repeat or straight-up fabricated victims on its data leak site, according to experts.

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OTHER FBI NEWS

Boston's FBI, DEA Offices Say They're Helping Immigration Enforcement

[WBTS \(NBC-10\)](#) (02/05, Klein) reported that the local offices of the FBI and Drug Enforcement Administration said Wednesday they're assisting Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, with operations across New England. The article explained that a large-scale enhanced operation, similar to ones conducted in Chicago and New York last week, was not underway in Boston, a representative for ICE told the reporting outlet Wednesday. The article disclosed that both the FBI and DEA shared images of agents making arrests, without sharing details about the arrests. They said they were assisting the ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations office. The images depict routine, daily ICE operations which now include other agency partners.

Continued Reporting: Prince Andrew 'Terrified' to Visit U.S. After Fresh Calls for FBI Probe Into Epstein Scandal

The [New York Post](#) (02/05, Shakhnazarova) reported that Prince Andrew is reportedly too "terrified" to ever set foot in the U.S. again as the FBI is facing fresh calls to launch a probe into his late pal and convicted pedophile, Jeffrey Epstein. The article noted that the disgraced Duke of York, 64, has left the UK once in the last six years — and insiders claim that fears of an arrest, civil lawsuits or being subpoenaed are keeping him from ever traveling again. According to the article, Andrew's fears have only worsened after it was revealed last week that he had kept in contact with Epstein for longer than he initially let on. The new information has sparked fresh calls for a criminal

probe into Epstein's close relationships. The article mentioned that President Trump's nominee for FBI director, Kash Patel, has vowed to "do everything" he can to expose those who were involved in Epstein's network. The article quoted Spencer Kuvin, the attorney representing Epstein's victims, who said, "The president should require his new FBI director to fully investigate Andrew's conduct. The government should turn him over for that and demand he volunteer himself to be a part of it. The king should do that. Andrew should be held accountable by the monarchy." The article mentioned that the younger brother of King Charles has denied claims against him and had previously insisted that he has no recollection of ever meeting Virginia Giuffre. In February 2022, Giuffre and Andrew's attorneys filed court papers stating they had reached an agreement in principle to settle the lawsuit she had filed against him. The article stated that Andrew admitted no wrongdoing but wrote in a letter that he regretted his association with Epstein, who Giuffre claims trafficked her to the royal and other rich and powerful men. The article added that in 2020, the FBI had asked the UK Home Office to assist it in bringing Andrew in for questioning, but the investigation was put on hold in 2024 for reasons unknown. The [US Sun](#) (02/05, Sherzad) also reported on the story.

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Trump Aides Defend Gaza Takeover Proposal but Walk Back Some Elements

[Reuters](#), [Associated Press](#), [Washington Post](#), [CBS News](#), [NPR](#), [PBS](#), [New York Times](#)

Rwanda-Backed Rebels Have Seized Another Town in Eastern Congo

[Associated Press](#), [New York Times](#), [Guardian](#), [Reuters](#), [BBC](#)

What We Know About the Mass Shooting in Sweden

[New York Times](#), [ABC News](#), [Associated Press](#), [USA Today](#), [BBC](#)

Philippine Vice President Duterte Impeached Over Marcos Assassination Remark and Other Allegations

[Associated Press](#), [Fox News](#), [New York Times](#), [Al Jazeera](#), [Reuters](#)

French Government Survives No-Confidence Vote

[New York Times](#), [Reuters](#), [Politico](#), [Associated Press](#), [Bloomberg](#)

U.S. Blindsides Panama, Saying American Government Ships Will Get Free Canal Passage

[Wall Street Journal](#), [Fox News](#), [Reuters](#), [Axios](#)

Protesters Storm and Destroy a Family Home of Bangladesh's Ousted Prime Minister Hasina

[Associated Press](#), [Reuters](#), [BBC](#)

Argentina to Withdraw From World Health Organization, Following Trump

[Washington Post](#), [Associated Press](#), [Guardian](#)

Russia Indicates Talks With U.S. Over Ukraine Are Intensifying

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Antisemitic Attacks Mar Australia's Legacy as a Haven for Jews

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Police Seek Motive After a Suspect Was Arrested for a Fatal Shooting at an Ohio Cosmetics Warehouse

[Fox News](#), [Associated Press](#), [New York Post](#), [CNN](#)

Federal Workers Warned 'Majority' of Government Agencies Will Be Downsized and Thursday Is Last Day to Take Buyouts

[New York Post](#), [Wall Street Journal](#), [Politico](#), [Reuters](#)

Trump Signs Order Barring Transgender Student-Athletes From Women's Sports

[Associated Press, NBC News, New York Times, Fox News](#)

Trump to Place at Least 100 EPA Environmental-Justice Workers on Leave

[Wall Street Journal, CNN](#)

White House Orders CIA to Send Names as Worker Purge Expands

[New York Times, Washington Examiner](#)

How Botched Alerts Turned This L.A. Neighborhood Into a Fiery Death Trap

[Wall Street Journal](#)

DOGE Aides Search Medicare Agency Payment Systems for Fraud

[Wall Street Journal](#)

U.S. Is Holding Migrants in Cells That Once Held Al Qaeda Suspects

[New York Times](#)

Trump's New Massachusetts Prosecutor Vows to Probe Officials Impeding Immigration Arrests

[Reuters](#)

F.C.C. Releases '60 Minutes' Interview With Kamala Harris

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What Do President Trump's Immigration-Related Executive Orders Do?

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BIG PICTURE

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- [New Leaders of Justice Dept. Move to Assert Control Over Agency](#)
- [The Aga Khan IV, Wealthy Leader of the Ismaili Muslims, Dies at 88](#)

Wall Street Journal

- [Lawmakers Push for DeepSeek Ban on Government Devices](#)
- [Trump's Sweeping Expulsions Have Sent the FBI Into Chaos](#)
- [How Botched Alerts Turned This L.A. Neighborhood Into a Fiery Death Trap](#)
- [More Than 40,000 Federal Workers Have Resigned So Far, Short of Target](#)
- [Honeywell to Break Up in Bid to Recreate Some GE Magic](#)

Washington Post

- [White House Softens Parts of Trump's Pitch for Gaza](#)
- [Proposal to Remove All Palestinians Draws Swift Backlash in Arab World](#)
- [An Immigrant's Fate Hinges on One Day](#)
- [Order Aims to Ban Trans Athletes From Female Teams](#)
- [Musk Team Taking Over Core Public Operations](#)

ABC News

- [As the Super Bowl Nears, New Orleans Grapples With How Safe Is Safe Enough; ICE Carries Out Raid in Colorado, 100 Members of Venezuelan Gang Targeted for Arrest: Officials](#)

NBC News

- Trump Administration Agrees to Restrict DOGE Access to Treasury’s Payment Systems; Education Department Staff Warned That Trump Buyout Offers Could Be Canceled at Any Time; Agents Say Mass Firings Could Weaken the FBI in Three Ways

CBS News

- Democrats Concerned DOGE Is Targeting Noaa, Sources Say; CIA Offers Buyouts to Employees as Trump Aims to Transform Federal Government

Fox News

- Zelenskyy Makes His Conditions for Peace Clear — Trump Envoy Says No Chance; NCAA Responds to Trump’s Executive Order on Women’s Sports

CNN

- Trump and His Allies Are Determined to Use a Potentially Short Window on Power to Forge Irrevocable Change; What to Know About Trump’s Birthright Citizenship Order, in Charts and Maps

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WASHINGTON SCHEDULE

White House

President Trump

- 6:30 AM: In-Town Pool Call Time
- 7:35 AM: The President departs The White House en route The Capitol
- 7:45 AM: The President arrives at The Capitol
- 8:15 AM: The President delivers remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast
- 8:40 AM: The President departs The Capitol en route Washington Hilton
- 9:00 AM: The President arrives at Washington Hilton
- 9:15 AM: The President delivers remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast
- 9:40 AM: The President departs Washington Hilton en route The White House
- 10:00 AM: The President arrives at The White House
- 11:00 AM: The President meets with Republican Members of Congress on Budget Resolution
- 2:30 AM: The President signs Executive Orders

Vice President Vance

- No official presidential schedule released or announced.

US Senate

- Organizational business meeting to consider committee rules for the 119th Congress, an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 119th Congress, designation of subcommittees for the 119th Congress, designation of members to serve on the Joint Committee on Taxation, and designation of members to serve as Congressional Trade Advisors on Trade Policy and Negotiations. – 9:50 AM – Host: Finance

- Hearings to examine the nomination of Jamieson Greer, of Maryland, to be United States Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador. – 10:00 AM – Host: Finance
- Business meeting to consider an original resolution authorizing expenditures by the committee during the 119th Congress, committee rules for the 119th Congress, designation of subcommittees for the 119th Congress, and the nomination of Kashyap Patel, of Nevada, to be Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice. – 10:15 AM – Host: Judiciary

US House of Representatives

- Hearings to examine the future of electric vehicles. - 10:00 AM - Host: Budget. – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
- Hearing: Combatting Existing and Emerging Illicit Drug Threats – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Energy and Commerce
- Hearing: California Fires and the Consequences of Overregulation. – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on the Judiciary
- Hearing: VA First Veteran Second: The Biden-Harris Legacy – 10:00 AM – Host: Committee on Veterans' Affairs
- Hearing: Time's Running Out: Prosecuting Fraudsters for Stealing Billions in Unemployment Benefits from American Workers. – 2:00 PM – Host: Committee on Ways and Means
- Hearing: Hearing Entitled: Operation Choke Point 2.0: The Biden Administration's Efforts to Put Crypto in the Crosshairs – 2:00 PM – Host: Committee on Financial Services
- Hearing: Transgender Lab Rats and Poisoned Puppies: Oversight of Taxpayer Funded Animal Cruelty – 2:00 PM – Host: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Cabinet Members

- **Secretary of State Rubio** on travel to Panama, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic from February 1-6, 2025.
- Secretary Rubio holds a meet and greet with employees and families of U.S. Embassy Santo Domingo in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic at 9:00 AM (LOCAL)
- Secretary Rubio meets with Dominican Foreign Minister Roberto Alvarez in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic at 10:35 AM (LOCAL)
- Secretary Rubio meets with Dominican President Luis Abinader in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic at 11:45 AM (LOCAL).
- Secretary Rubio participates in a working lunch with Dominican President Luis Abinader in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic at 12:45 PM (LOCAL)
- Secretary Rubio holds a joint press availability with Dominican President Luis Abinader in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic at 2:30 PM (LOCAL)
- Secretary Rubio participates in a law enforcement engagement in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic at 4:05 PM (LOCAL)

Visitors

- No events scheduled.

General Events

- [Carnegie: How Can Our World Rethink Climate Mobility?](#) – Thursday, February 6, 2025. Location: Online event, 9:00 AM. The discourse around climate change and human movement tends toward the apocalyptic and dystopian. Headlines warn that floods, droughts, and other extreme natural disasters—and the resulting displacement of dispossessed people—are the new normal. But what if we create an entirely new, forward-thinking framework around climate mobility, both domestic and international? How would we reconsider borders, rethink international aid and cooperation, and reimagine how communities welcome and absorb newcomers? Can we learn to see mobility as an act of dignity, and another form of adaptation that moves a species forward?
- [CATO Institute: Exploring Energy Policy Under the Trump Administration](#) – Thursday, February 6, 2025. Location: Online event, 1:00 PM. The Cato Institute continues its series of insightful conversations with reporters and scholars tackling today’s most pressing issues. As part of his campaign promises, President Trump vowed to “unleash American energy.” This conversation with Evan Halper, a business reporter for the Washington Post; Travis Fisher, Cato’s director of energy and environmental policy studies; and Joshua Loucks, a Cato research associate in tax and energy policy, will examine energy policies under the new administration and the impact they will have on Americans.
- [AEI: The 10th Annual American Family Survey: Opportunities and Obstacles to a Broad-Based Political Coalition for Families](#) – Thursday, February 6, 2025. Location: AEI Auditorium, 1:00 PM. The past decade has significantly affected Americans’ economic well-being, but they remain optimistic about the strength of their marriages and families. The 10th annual American Family Survey documents striking similarities in Republicans and Democrats’ day-to-day family lives, but it finds significant partisan differences in their ideas about the role of marriage and support for government programs designed to aid families.
- [Atlantic Council: A new era for nuclear energy with the International Energy Agency’s Fatih Birol](#) – Thursday, February 6, 2025. Location: Online event, 10:00 AM. On Thursday, February 6 at 10:00 a.m. ET, the Atlantic Council will host an #ACFrontPage conversation featuring Fatih Birol, executive director of the International Energy Agency (IEA), on the role of nuclear energy in the future.
- [Atlantic Council: Navigating the future of payments with Christopher Waller](#) – Thursday, February 6, 2025. Location: Atlantic Council, 2:30 PM. On February 6 at 2:30 p.m. ET, the GeoEconomics Center will host Federal Reserve Governor Christopher J. Waller for a conversation on the future of payments.
- [Wilson Center: North American Trade War? The Geopolitical Impacts for China and the United States](#) – Thursday, February 6, 2025. Location: Online event, 10:30 AM. In response to what it calls a national emergency; the Trump administration announced the imposition of sweeping tariffs—25% on imports from Mexico and Canada and 10% on imports from China—to pressure its trade partners on migration and fentanyl trafficking. These measures have sparked strong reactions from Mexico, Canada, and China, raising concerns about escalating economic tensions and the future of global trade.
- [Wilson Center: Russian Media in Exile Find Global Relevance](#) – Thursday, February 6, 2025. Location: Online event, 12:00 PM. Putin’s ability to sustain his disastrous war in Ukraine depends nearly as much on his shutting down Russian civil society and independent media as his maintaining the supply of soldiers and weapons. Over the past three years, most independent media have had to flee Russia and start anew abroad. Three years later, Russian independent media in exile are not just surviving: they are producing groundbreaking reporting, investigations, and analyses that are relevant not only for domestic Russian audiences but for American and global ones as well.
- [Hudson Institute: The US-Japan Relationship under New Administrations: A Conversation with Senator Bill Hagerty](#) – Thursday, February 6, 2025. Location: Hudson Institute, 8:30 AM. On Friday, President Donald Trump will host Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba at the White House for the first summit of the second Trump administration. Increasing challenges in the Indo-Pacific necessitate greater economic and security cooperation between the United States and its most important ally, Japan.
- [Hudson Institute: Faith and Freedom: Constitutional Law and Religious Liberty | Political Studies Policy Certificate Program](#) – Thursday, February 6, 2025. Location: Hudson Institute, 6:00 PM. Religious liberty was already central to the United States before the nation formally existed. European settlers came to the new

world in part to practice their religions freely. But the United States also explicitly rejects an established state religion. The US Constitution enshrines these principles in the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses.

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