

# The Washington Post

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Sunny, breezy 51/35 • Tomorrow: Sunny 63/50 B18 Democracy Dies in Darkness SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2026 • \$4



House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-Louisiana), shown Friday at the Capitol after a news conference, called the Senate proposal a "joke."

## House GOP rejects Senate-passed DHS funding deal

BY RILEY BEGGIN, KADIA GOBA AND THEODORIC MEYER

House Republicans plan to offer an eight-week measure to fund the Department of Homeland Security, House Speaker Mike Johnson said Friday, rejecting a separate deal the Republican-led Senate passed earlier in the day.

The inter-chamber squabble appears likely to lead to a continued stalemate over the depart-

Drafts eight-week option that faces long odds; pay set to resume for TSA

ment that has gone unfunded since Feb. 14 — leading to lengthy delays at some airports across the country — as Senate Democrats have already said they would not support the House's proposal.

"The Republicans are not going to be any part of any effort to reopen our borders or to stop immigration enforcement," Johnson said, seeking to blame Democrats for the deal cut with Republicans in the Senate.

Johnson called the Senate proposal "a joke" and argued that the Transportation Security Administration would be paid while they wait for the Senate to take up the House proposal, which he said the chamber hopes to vote on "as soon

as possible."

President Donald Trump issued an order Friday to use preexisting funds to pay TSA agents. DHS said Friday that TSA agents would start seeing paychecks as early as Monday.

Johnson said he spoke to Trump on Friday afternoon "and he understands exactly what we're doing and why."

The Senate bill would fund all of DHS, including the TSA, except

SEE DHS ON A6

## Reliance on costly Tomahawks stirs alarm at Pentagon

MORE THAN 850 FIRED IN JUST FOUR WEEKS

Burn rate risks a shortage as U.S. balances global risk

BY DAN LAMOTHE, TARA COPP AND NOAH ROBERTSON

The U.S. military has fired more than 850 Tomahawk cruise missiles in four weeks of war with Iran, burning through the precision weapons at a rate that has alarmed some Pentagon officials and prompted internal discussions about how to make more available, said people familiar with the matter.

The missiles, which can be launched from Navy surface warships and submarines, have been a staple of U.S. military attacks since they were first used in combat in 1991 during the Persian Gulf War. But only a few hundred are manufactured each year, meaning the global supply is limited. The Pentagon does not publicly disclose how many missiles are in its inventory at any one time.

Tomahawks are prized in part because they can travel more

than 1,000 miles, reducing the need to send American pilots into well-defended airspace. The heavy reliance on them in the Iran conflict will require urgent discussions about whether to relocate some from other parts of the world, including the Indo-Pacific, and a concerted long-term effort to build more, said several U.S. officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive military planning.

The dilemma has laid bare broader concerns in both the Pentagon and Congress about the Trump administration's war in Iran, its shifting explanations for why the conflict is necessary, and the risks a shortage could pose to the United States as it

SEE TOMAHAWKS ON A13

**Civilian deaths:** Nearly 1,500 in Iran killed in strikes, report says. **A12**

**Land mines:** Images appear to show first U.S. use since 1991. **A12**

## Financial markets dive to new low for the year

Anxiety grows amid ongoing war and rising prices at the pump

BY RACHEL LERMAN

Financial markets extended a sharp sell-off at the end of the week, hitting a new low for the year, as the Iran war continues to drive anxiety among investors, businesses and consumers about how long the turmoil will last.

The S&P 500, Nasdaq composite index and Dow Jones Industrial Average all finished the week lower, dropping sharply on Friday. The Nasdaq slid into correction territory Thursday, marking a

drop of at least 10 percent from a recent peak, and fell more than 400 points Friday. The Dow entered correction territory on Friday, as well, falling more than 800 points. The S&P notched its fifth losing week in a row.

Investor concerns were driven by energy prices, with gas prices at the pump shooting up to a national average of \$3.98, a dollar higher than a month ago. And prices are expected to worsen in coming days, with Brent crude oil prices, an international benchmark, above \$113 a barrel Friday, up 50 percent from last month.

"The longer oil prices remain elevated, it's going to be harder to avoid a bad economic outcome," said Tom Porcelli, chief economist at Wells Fargo. If the increase in oil

SEE ECONOMY ON A18

## Billionaires buy in to a future of robot labor

Musk, tech elites seize on humanoids to transform manual workforce

BY FAIZ SIDDIQUI

In the utopia proposed by Elon Musk, billions of robots perform all necessary work. A network of autonomous vehicles and humanoids, fueled by solar energy, provide boundless resources. Poverty is eliminated. Work is optional.

And the world's richest person would become the first trillionaire in the process.

While Musk has a well-documented penchant for overpromising, he has recast his companies to chase this future. He pivoted Tesla this year to prioritize building robots, phasing out car models including its popular luxury sedan to stand up a new production line of Optimus humanoids.

Tesla has aggressively recruited workers from other parts of the tech industry, seizing on specific areas of expertise — and development targets — such as mimicking the capabilities and range of motion of the human hand. Musk's rocket company, SpaceX, which is expected to debut on the stock market this year, acquired his artificial intelligence startup xAI, which will build software with Tesla.

The army of robots forms the basis of Tesla's push "to build a

SEE ROBOTS ON A18

## No Kings organizers look beyond big crowds

BY CASEY PARKS, MOLLY HENNESSY-FISKE, N. KIRKPATRICK AND DAN ROSENZWEIG-ZIFF

Nine months ago, Lisa Erbes lingered outside the Minnesota Capitol, and she wasn't sure the Twin Cities would hold its first No Kings march. Earlier that morning, a man had killed a ranking Minnesota House Democrat and her husband in what authorities called a politically motivated at-

The protests across America keep growing. Are they having an effect?

tack. The gunman was on the loose, and he'd left behind a hit list targeting 70 other Democrats. Law enforcement officials urged Erbes and other organizers to cancel the protest.

Erbes, a transplant from Georgia, had worked nearly a decade with the left-leaning Indivisible group, but for most of her tenure, few people had organized alongside her. The momentum had shifted since Donald Trump took office a second time, though. Minnesotans wanted to preserve the democracy they felt the president was dismantling. The rally had to happen, she decided.

By the end of the day, 100,000

SEE NO KINGS ON A5

## Cuba asks Vatican for help as U.S. pressure triggers a crisis

In meetings that include Pope Leo XIV, Cuban officials seek relief from Trump's campaign to isolate the island



People in Cuba are facing fuel shortages and worsening blackouts during a U.S.-imposed blockade.

BY ANTHONY FAIOLA AND SAMANTHA SCHMIDT IN VATICAN CITY

Squeezed by the Trump administration and facing its greatest threat in decades, the Cuban government is seeking the intercession of a higher authority: the Vatican.

In senior-level meetings, including with Pope Leo XIV, Cuban officials have petitioned the Vatican to serve as an interlocutor with the United States. The goal is to facilitate talks and secure an easing of the White House pressure campaign to isolate Cuba through a de facto oil blockade that is causing crippling fuel shortages and worsening blackouts, according to several people familiar with the talks.

Havana's plea comes as the Vatican's concern for Cuba and its 11 million people is growing.

The oil crisis is so bad that it is hampering distribution of U.S. government-funded humanitarian aid being channeled through the Catholic Church. The White

House has cited that assistance as evidence that it is trying to help, not hurt, the Cuban people.

Over the past several weeks, crates of aid have been stranded for extended periods at Cuban docks because of a lack of fuel for transportation. The problem is so severe that some assistance has had to be distributed using donkeys, according to people familiar with the church's relief effort.

Pontiffs at least since John Paul II in 1998 have denounced the broader U.S. trade embargo on Havana (largely in place since 1960) even as the Vatican more quietly has served as a key mediator between the communist government and Washington — most significantly when it laid the diplomatic groundwork for the historic visit by President Barack Obama to Cuba in March 2016.

The hope now, several of the people said, is predicated on the notion that a lofty institution led by a new American pope may have more sway with President Donald Trump, who has threatened to

SEE CUBA ON A14

## IN THE NEWS

**War messaging** Troops and families who lost loved ones say the Trump team's memes and jokes trivialize combat and sacrifice. **A3**

**Headquarters abandoned** The Education Department will give up its D.C. building, the Trump administration's latest move toward eliminating the department altogether. **A4**

**THE NATION** **Merlin**, a pig who "talks" using buttons, gets a Guinness World Record for his fame. **A2** **Democrats** worry that a bruising Maine primary could cost them a shot at Susan Collins. **A4**

**THE WORLD** **Four weeks** into what the president called a "little stopover," Iran's regime has clung to power. Allies fear that Tehran's radicalized ambitions make it more dangerous than ever. **A11**

**THE ECONOMY** **A judge** blocked a Pentagon order labeling AI company Anthropic a national security risk, saying officials probably violated the law. **A15** **Student loan** borrowers in a Biden-era plan must switch or automatically be placed in the most expensive one. **A15**

**STYLE** **Nowruz**, an Iranian holiday of renewal, feels dark for this Iranian American lawmaker. **B1**

**SPORTS** **Tiger Woods** showed signs of impairment and was arrested at the scene of a car crash in Florida with no injuries, authorities said. **B7**

**THE REGION** **An officer** in Prince George's County fatally shot a driver who pulled off during a traffic stop, police say. **B12** **The White House** reignited its effort to get rid of federal properties, selling a massive federal building in downtown Washington. **B12**

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