

The Breakfast Table Times

THE DAY'S NEWS, IN FULL

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TOP STORY

NASA's Roman Space Telescope Nears Launch After Years of Development

CAPE CANAVERAL, FLA. — NASA is preparing to launch its newest space observatory, the Nancy Grace Roman Space Telescope, this weekend. The telescope is named after Nancy Grace Roman, an astronomer who helped build NASA's astronomy program decades ago. Engineers designed the telescope to study several major questions scientists still cannot fully answer. One major goal is understanding dark energy, a mysterious force pushing the universe apart. Scientists still do not know exactly what dark energy is or how it truly works.

The telescope will also search for exoplanets, which are planets orbiting stars beyond our solar system. It will study infrared light, wavelengths of light invisible to human eyes, to see objects other telescopes miss. This ability lets researchers detect distant galaxies and faint cosmic objects more clearly. Scientists hope the data will help answer long-standing questions in astrophysics, the study of stars and galaxies. The telescope has faced years of development delays before finally nearing launch.

Its readiness has been highly anticipated within the scientific community for years. Once launched, it will orbit far from Earth to avoid atmospheric interference. NASA scientists believe the mission could reshape our understanding of the universe for decades. Space enthusiasts around the world plan to watch live coverage of the launch this weekend. NASA officials say the mission represents one of the agency's most ambitious astronomy projects yet.

BACKGROUND

The telescope has been under development for more than a decade, facing funding and schedule challenges along the way.

Why it matters: *Understanding dark energy and finding new exoplanets could reshape how scientists explain the universe's history and future.*

What to watch: *Watch NASA's livestream this weekend for the launch and early telemetry updates.*

Source: NPR — <https://www.npr.org/sections/news/>

NATION & WORLD

Missing Toll Tops 2,400 as Himalayan Flood Search Continues

KATHMANDU, NEPAL — Rescue teams in Nepal and Tibet are still searching for survivors nearly a week after a deadly flash flood. Officials say a sudden, tsunami-like wall of water and debris swept down mountain valleys without warning. The flood destroyed homes, roads, and bridges across several villages in the region. The number of people reported missing has climbed past 2,400 people. Rescue workers have recovered 623 bodies so far, officials confirmed. Emergency responders warn the death toll is likely to rise further.

Many affected areas remain difficult to reach because of damaged roads. The Red Cross estimates that as many as 93,000 people may have been affected overall. Some people were displaced from their homes, while others suffered injuries or property loss. Aid workers describe the emotional toll on survivors as enormous and overwhelming. Many families are still waiting anxiously for news about missing loved ones. International aid groups have begun delivering food, clean water, and temporary shelter.

The mountainous terrain has slowed relief efforts considerably in recent days. Experts say flash floods like this often result from heavy rain and rapid snowmelt. Some scientists believe changing weather patterns may be increasing this kind of risk. Local governments have sent soldiers and emergency crews to help with search efforts. Officials caution that full recovery could take many weeks or even longer.

BACKGROUND

The Himalayas are prone to flash floods due to steep terrain, heavy rainfall, and melting glaciers.

Why it matters: *The scale of the disaster highlights growing risks mountain communities face from extreme weather events.*

What to watch: *Watch for updated casualty figures and the international aid response in coming weeks.*

Source: The Times of Israel — <https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog-august-29-2026/>

NATION & WORLD (CONT.)

Six Months Into War, Iran's Fuel Crisis Deepens

TEHRAN, IRAN — It has been six months since the United States and Israel entered a war with Iran. The conflict's economic effects are becoming more visible with each passing week. Iran's fuel crisis has worsened recently, with long lines forming at gas stations. Motorists in Tehran, Karaj, and Mashhad have waited for hours as supplies dwindle. Videos from the region show frustrated drivers and empty fuel pumps. These images suggest Iran's fuel distribution system is under serious strain.

The war has also pushed fuel prices higher well beyond Iran's borders. In the United States, diesel prices have climbed to nearly \$5.60 a gallon. That increase is beginning to affect everyday institutions, including public schools. Diesel fuel powers the buses that carry millions of students each day. Higher diesel costs translate directly into higher transportation expenses for districts nationwide. School officials say they are closely watching fuel markets this fall.

Transportation budgets are often set months ahead and cannot easily absorb sudden price jumps. Analysts note that global oil markets react strongly to conflicts involving major producers. Iran remains an important player in the region's overall energy supply. Whether shortages inside Iran ease depends on how the wider conflict unfolds. For now, both Iranian civilians and American school leaders face the ripple effects of ongoing war.

BACKGROUND

Iran is one of the world's major oil producers, and conflicts involving the country often affect global fuel markets.

Why it matters: *Rising fuel costs tied to the war are reaching everyday institutions, including U.S. schools, far from the conflict zone.*

What to watch: *Watch whether diesel prices stabilize or continue rising as the conflict continues.*

Source: NCRI — <https://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/iran-news-in-brief-august-29-2026/>; NPR — <https://www.npr.org/sections/national/>

GOVERNMENT

Social Security's Funding Gap Draws Little Public Debate

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Social Security sends monthly payments to retirees and other eligible Americans nationwide. The program's trust fund faces a significant financial shortfall in coming years. Even so, the issue is receiving surprisingly little public attention right now. Experts who study the program say this silence is troubling for the future. Most Americans do not fully understand how serious the funding gap has become. Without shared understanding, it becomes harder for citizens to weigh in on solutions.

Possible fixes include raising taxes, adjusting benefits, or changing the retirement age. Social Security has supported older Americans since the program began in the 1930s. It remains a critical income source for retirees, disabled workers, and survivors. If the shortfall goes unaddressed, future benefits could eventually be reduced. Lawmakers have debated potential fixes for years without reaching lasting agreement. Political disagreements have repeatedly delayed major legislative action on the issue.

Analysts warn that waiting longer could make eventual solutions more difficult and costly. For today's students, the outcome could shape their own future benefits decades from now. Learning about the program now allows young people to engage in this important debate. Congress has the power to act, but progress so far has been slow. Experts urge policymakers to address the shortfall before it grows more severe.

BACKGROUND

Social Security has been a cornerstone of retirement income in the U.S. since it was created in 1935.

Why it matters: *Changes to the program could affect financial security for millions of Americans, including future retirees who are in school today.*

What to watch: *Watch for congressional proposals addressing the trust fund shortfall in coming months.*

Source: NPR — <https://www.npr.org/sections/national/>

GOVERNMENT (CONT.)

Tariff Refunds Flow to Businesses, Leaving Shoppers Out

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The federal government has been refunding certain tariffs on imported goods this year. Tariffs are taxes placed on products brought into the country from abroad. New reporting shows most refunded money is going to businesses, not shoppers. Companies typically pay tariffs when goods first enter the country. When tariffs are later reduced, those same companies receive the refunds. Consumers who bought the imported goods usually get nothing back directly.

Economists say this pattern raises questions about who truly benefits from trade policy. Some businesses might lower prices once their costs decrease. There is no guarantee, however, that companies will pass along any savings. Firms often keep the extra money to boost profits or cover other costs. Tariffs are often described as tools to protect domestic industries from unfair competition. Yet their financial effects can be complicated and unevenly distributed among groups.

Shoppers hoping for lower prices at checkout may end up disappointed. Refunded tariff money may never reach store shelves in a noticeable way. Policy analysts suggest tracking where tariff refunds actually go in the economy. Doing so could reveal whether trade policies help the public as intended. For now, businesses appear to be the primary beneficiaries of these refunds.

BACKGROUND

Tariffs are import taxes that governments sometimes adjust in response to trade negotiations or economic conditions.

Why it matters: *Understanding who benefits from tariff refunds helps clarify the real economic impact of trade policy on ordinary consumers.*

What to watch: *Watch for reports on whether businesses pass any savings on to shoppers.*

Source: NPR — <https://www.npr.org/sections/news/>

Worries Grow Over Manipulation of Election Prediction Markets

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Concerns are growing about efforts to manipulate prediction markets ahead of this year's midterm elections. Prediction markets are online platforms where users bet on outcomes of elections and other events. A recent incident involving fake polling data drew fresh attention to the issue. Investigators say the stunt itself may not have been a deliberate attempt to rig betting markets. Still, the episode has intensified worries among officials and researchers about future manipulation. Bad actors could try to influence these markets in more serious ways as midterms approach.

Prediction markets have grown rapidly in popularity over the past several years. Supporters argue these markets sometimes forecast outcomes more accurately than traditional polling. Critics counter that markets can be vulnerable to manipulation by determined bettors. A small number of large bets could create a misleading impression of a race's direction. Media outlets and social media users widely cover prediction market odds and shifts. Distorted odds could shape public perception even without genuine political sentiment behind them.

Election security experts say protecting these markets matters for overall election integrity. Safeguarding markets is becoming part of broader efforts against misinformation and interference. Regulators and platform operators face growing pressure to add stronger protections soon. The debate reflects a larger challenge as technology and politics increasingly intersect. Ensuring reliable information will remain complicated but essential heading into the midterms.

BACKGROUND

Prediction markets let users bet real money on the outcome of events, including elections, and are increasingly watched as informal forecasting tools.

Why it matters: *If prediction markets can be manipulated, they could spread misleading signals about elections to millions of people.*

What to watch: *Watch for new rules or safeguards ahead of the midterm elections.*

Source: NPR — <https://www.npr.org/sections/news/>

MONEY & WORK

School Districts Face Budget Strain as Diesel Prices Surge

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Diesel fuel prices have surged this year, creating real pressure for school districts nationwide. The new academic year is beginning just as transportation costs climb sharply higher. Diesel now costs nearly \$5.60 a gallon in many parts of the country. Districts that rely on buses to move millions of students face rising expenses. Transportation budgets are typically set months in advance based on earlier fuel estimates. Those estimates can quickly become outdated when global events cause sudden price swings. The current spike is closely tied to the ongoing war involving Iran.

Iran is a major oil-producing nation, and the conflict has disrupted global energy markets. Fuel costs have risen worldwide as a result of the disruption. Districts already operating with tight budgets may face difficult financial decisions. Some may need to cut other programs or dip into reserve funds. Others might seek additional funding from state or local governments instead. Some districts are exploring more fuel-efficient buses as a longer-term solution.

Adjusted bus routes could also help reduce fuel consumption over time. These changes, however, take both time and money to put in place. Families may not notice rising diesel prices directly in daily life. Still, school services could be indirectly affected if funds shift toward transportation. Education finance experts say global events can have direct financial consequences locally. Districts will keep watching fuel markets closely as the school year unfolds.

BACKGROUND

School transportation costs are a significant part of many district budgets, and fuel represents a major, often unpredictable, expense.

- Why it matters:** Rising fuel costs tied to global conflicts can strain local school budgets and potentially affect other student services.
- What to watch:** Watch how school districts adjust budgets if fuel prices remain high through the fall.

Source: NCRI — <https://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/iran-news-in-brief-august-29-2026/>; NPR — <https://www.npr.org/sections/national/>

SPORTS

Yankees Edge Red Sox 1-0 in Pitching Duel

NEW YORK, N.Y. — The New York Yankees edged the Boston Red Sox 1-0 on Friday night. The game was a tightly contested pitching duel between the two longtime American League rivals. Both starting pitchers dominated opposing lineups for most of the evening, limiting hard contact and stranding runners in scoring position. The Yankees' lone run proved decisive in a game defined by sharp defense and disciplined pitching from both sides. Neither offense generated much sustained pressure, reflecting the caliber of arms on the mound throughout the contest.

The victory keeps New York competitive as the regular season approaches its final stretch. Postseason positioning becomes increasingly important across both leagues at this point in the year. The Yankees and Red Sox are scheduled to meet again on Saturday afternoon, with first pitch set for 1:05 p.m. at Yankee Stadium. Their rivalry is one of the oldest and most storied in professional sports. It continues to draw significant national attention more than a century after it began. Low-scoring, tightly pitched games like Friday's often hinge on a handful of pivotal moments rather than sustained offensive production.

Bullpen management carries extra weight late in the season. Managers must balance the urgency of individual wins against the long-term health of their pitching staffs. Every decision, from mound visits to relief changes, can shift the outcome of closely contested games like this one. Fans on both sides will be watching closely to see how Saturday's rematch unfolds, particularly given the tight margins separating contenders in the standings. As August draws to a close, both teams remain sharply focused on strengthening their positions for a potential postseason run.

BACKGROUND

The Yankees-Red Sox rivalry is one of the oldest and most storied in American professional sports.

- Why it matters:** Games between rival teams late in the season can carry extra weight for playoff positioning.
- What to watch:** Watch Saturday's rematch at Yankee Stadium, starting at 1:05 p.m.

Source: ESPN — https://www.espn.com/mlb/game/_/gameId/401874913/red-sox-yankees; MLB.com — <https://www.mlb.com/gameday/red-sox-vs-yankees/2026/08/28/823504/preview>

OUR TEAMS

New York Yankees

Yankees 1, Red Sox 0 (Final, Aug. 28)

The two teams play again Saturday at 1:05 p.m. at Yankee Stadium.

New York Giants

Giants 23, Jets 6 (preseason finale, Aug. 28)

Giants finish the preseason 2-1 in John Harbaugh's first year as head coach.

SPORTS (CONT.)

Giants Finish Preseason 2-1 With Win Over Jets Ahead of Roster Cuts

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — The New York Giants closed their preseason with a 23-6 win over the Jets on Friday night at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey. The victory gave the team a 2-1 record in coach John Harbaugh's first year leading the franchise. Undrafted rookie kicker Dominic Zvada delivered a standout performance, making three field goals, including a 53-yard attempt that showcased his range. Running back Tyrone Tracy Jr. and receiver Xavier Gipson each found the end zone. Their scores gave the offense a strong final tune-up before the regular season begins.

The Giants defense allowed only one early score before shutting the Jets out for the remainder of the contest. That effort offered a promising final impression ahead of difficult roster decisions. NFL teams must trim their rosters from ninety players down to fifty-three before the deadline arrives at 6 p.m. Eastern time on Sunday. Coaches and front-office staff across the league now face the challenge of evaluating depth at every position while weighing preseason performance against long-term potential.

Players on the roster bubble often depend heavily on performances like Friday's to secure a spot on the final fifty-three-man roster. A strong showing in the preseason finale can be the difference between making the team and being released outright. Harbaugh and his coaching staff will spend the weekend finalizing these difficult decisions. They will weigh performance, positional depth, and long-term potential for every player under consideration. Giants fans will be watching closely for roster news as the deadline approaches. They are eager to see which new faces earn a place on the team heading into the regular season.

BACKGROUND

NFL teams must reduce rosters from 90 to 53 players each year before the regular season begins.

Why it matters: Roster cuts this weekend will determine who represents the Giants when the regular season begins.

What to watch: Watch for the Giants' final roster announcement before Sunday's 6 p.m. deadline.

Source: Yahoo Sports — <https://sports.yahoo.com/articles/york-giants-vs-jets-live-212525825.html>; Giants.com — <https://www.giants.com/news/instant-analysis-giants-close-preseason-with-23-6-win-over-jets>

OUR TEAMS

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GOOD NEWS

Mural-Covered House Honoring Latin Rock Scene Becomes Landmark

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. — A house in San Francisco's Mission District has officially become a city landmark. The building is covered in a sprawling mural honoring dozens of local musicians. Those musicians helped build the neighborhood's influential Latin rock scene decades ago. The landmark designation protects the house from major alteration or demolition. This ensures the artwork and its history remain part of the neighborhood for years to come. The Mission District has long been recognized as a hub for Latin music culture.

Influential musical acts blending rock, jazz, and Latin traditions emerged there decades ago. In recent decades, the neighborhood has faced skyrocketing home prices and major redevelopment. These changes have worried longtime residents about losing touch with cultural roots. Supporters say protecting sites like this mural house helps preserve community history. Preservation matters even as neighborhoods change rapidly around long-standing landmarks.

City officials called the mural an important visual reminder of local musical history. Local advocates hope the landmark status encourages people to learn about the area's legacy. The mural house joins a growing list of San Francisco sites recognized for cultural significance. The designation reflects a broader effort to balance development with historic preservation. Residents say the mural continues to inspire pride in the neighborhood's artistic roots.

BACKGROUND

The Mission District has been home to influential Latin rock musicians since the genre's rise in the late 20th century.

Why it matters: Landmark protections help preserve cultural history in neighborhoods facing rapid development and rising costs.

Source: NPR — <https://www.npr.org/sections/news/>