

1517

Martin Luther sends his Ninety-five Theses to Albert of Brandenburg, Archbishop of Mainz, precipitating the Protestant Reformation



1541

Michelangelo finishes painting “The Last Judgment” on the altar wall of the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City

1876

Great Backerganj Cyclone of 1876 ravages British India (modern-day Bangladesh), killing an estimated 200,000 people

1917

British War Cabinet gives final approval to issue the Balfour Declaration to support a “national home for the Jewish people” in what is then Ottoman-controlled Palestine

Americans facing hunger as shutdown enters second month



People attend the People's Pantry Food drive to replenish food banks ahead of SNAP lapse at the USDA Headquarters, in the National Mall, Washington
AFP | Washington

The US government shutdown barreled towards its second month yesterday and the pain is spreading fast -- with federal workers broke, food aid vanishing and millions of Americans caught in the crossfire.

What started on October 1 as a Washington side-show has morphed into a slow-motion implosion of public services and a growing economic convulsion, with federal offices dark and President Donald Trump's government stuck in neutral.

Republicans warned that millions will begin feeling the full force of the shutdown for the first time this weekend, as unresolved fights over funding for health care and food stamps make them hungrier and poorer.

“Most people haven’t noticed up until this week. Thanks to Donald Trump finding a way to pay our troops last month, that pain was delayed,” Republican House Whip Tom Emmer told Fox News. “But, starting this week... this is starting to become very real.”

At the heart of the fight is money to help Americans cover health insurance under the Affordable Care Act, better known as Obamacare.

Those subsidies -- a lifeline for more than 20 million people -- are set to expire at year's end and, unless Congress acts, premiums will skyrocket by an eye-watering average of 114 percent when the new sign-up period opens Saturday.

But Washington's warring parties are locked in a familiar, bitter loop, as Democrats refuse to reopen the government without a deal to extend the subsidies and Trump's Republicans saying they won't talk until the lights are back on.

As Washington bickers, the shutdown's fallout is rippling through everyday life and starting to pinch where it really hurts -- the dinner table.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which helps 42 million low-income Americans buy groceries, is set to run out of funds this weekend.

Democrats have been pushing the White House to use \$5 billion in emergency cash to cover food stamps but the administration says it cannot legally tap that fund.

Trump’s nuclear testing order sparks confusion

President refuses to confirm if new nuclear tests would include live detonations

- Trump reiterates plan for nuclear testing
- Refuses to specify if tests are explosive
- Pentagon defends directive as “responsible”

AFP | Washington

President Donald Trump reiterated Friday that he wants testing of US nuclear weapons but again failed to clarify whether he meant live explosions in a directive that has provoked global tension, as well as some confusion.

Asked whether he meant conducting explosive tests, Trump told reporters on Air Force One, including from AFP: “I am not going to say.”

“You’ll find out very soon, but we’re going to do some testing, yeah, and other countries do it. If they’re going to do it, we’re going to do it,” he said on his way for a weekend at his golf resort in Florida.

No country other than North Korea has conducted an explosive nuclear weapon test for decades. Russia and China have not carried out such tests since the 1990s and the last US one was in 1992.

The 79-year-old Republican first made his surprise testing announcement by social media post on Thursday, minutes before entering a summit with Chinese leader Xi Jinping in South Korea.

The announcement came in the wake of Russia saying it had tested a nuclear-powered and nuclear-capable torpedo, as well as a new cruise missile.

Iran, which has been in conflict with the United States for years over its controversial nuclear projects, called Trump's directive “regressive and irresponsible.”

“A nuclear-armed bully is resuming testing of atomic weapons. The same bully has been



This handout from the US Air Force shows an unarmed Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile launching during a developmental test

demonizing Iran's peaceful nuclear program,” Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi posted on social media.

Japanese atomic bomb survivors group Nihon Hidankyo sent a letter of protest to the US embassy in Japan.

The order “directly contradicts the efforts by nations around the world striving for a peaceful world without nuclear weapons and is utterly unacceptable,” the Nobel Peace Prize-winning group said in the letter obtained by AFP.

‘Pretty responsible’

Amid expressions of concern abroad and among some in the US Congress, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said “resuming testing is a pretty responsible” policy.

Vice President JD Vance said the US nuclear arsenal needed to be tested to ensure it actually “functions properly.” He too did not elaborate on what type of tests Trump had ordered.

But China's foreign ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun urged the United States to “earnestly

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Japan’s atomic bomb survivors group, Nihon Hidankyo, sent a protest letter to the US Embassy, calling Trump’s nuclear testing directive “utterly unacceptable” and a betrayal of global peace efforts

abide” by a global nuclear testing ban.

United Nations chief Antonio Guterres said through a spokesman that “nuclear testing can never be permitted under any circumstances.”

The United States has been a signatory since 1996 to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which

bans all atomic test explosions, whether for military or civilian purposes.

Russia pushes back

Russia pushed back against any idea that its recent weapon systems tests could justify a return to live test explosions.

The Kremlin questioned whether Trump was well-informed.

The recent weapons drills “cannot in any way be interpreted as a nuclear test,” spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists.

“We hope that the information was conveyed correctly to President Trump.”

Peskov then implied that Russia would conduct its own live detonation tests if Trump did it first.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the Russian stockpile of deployed and stored warheads is 4,309, compared to 3,700 for the United States and 600 for China -- figures that don't take into account hundreds of other warheads scheduled for dismantling.

‘Hundreds dead’ in Tanzania post-election violence, says opposition

AFP | Nairobi

Around 700 people have been killed in three days of election protests in Tanzania, the main opposition party said yesterday, with protesters still on the streets in the midst of an internet blackout.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan had sought to cement her position and silence critics in her party with an emphatic win in Wednesday's election, in which her main challengers were either jailed or barred from standing.

But the vote descended into chaos as crowds took to the streets of Dar es Salaam and other cities, tearing down her



People protest in the streets of Arusha, Tanzania

posters and attacking police and polling stations, leading to an

internet shutdown and curfew.

With foreign journalists largely banned from covering the election and a communications blackout entering its third day, information from the ground has been scarce.

The main opposition party, Chadema, said clashes continued between protesters and security forces in the commercial hub yesterday.

“As we speak the figure for deaths in Dar (es Salaam) is around 350 and for Mwanza it is 200-plus. Added to figures from other places around the country, the overall figure is around 700,” Chadema spokesman John Kitoka said.



TOP
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TWEETS

01



El Fasher is enduring devastating violence. Families are running for their lives, hungry and exhausted. These brutal attacks must end. Now. @WFP must be allowed to operate with full independence and neutrality — and stand with the people of Sudan in their time of immense need.
@WFPChief

02



No child should suffer from a disease we know how to prevent. The good news: #VaccinesWork. And they have saved the lives of millions of children. Together we can protect the rights of children to health through life-saving vaccines.
@unicefchief

03



Millions are caught in Hurricane Melissa's path and need urgent help. We're working with the governments of Jamaica, Haiti and Cuba to save lives.
@UNReliefChief

04



Donald Trump doesn't even know what agency is in charge of nuclear testing. He's a disaster. These are the behaviors of a weak, old man who is desperate for strength and power.
@GavinNewsom

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