

Charlemagne becomes the sole King of the Franks after the death of his brother Carloman

Earthquake strikes Naples; about 35,000 die

US President James K. Polk triggers Gold Rush of 1849 by confirming a gold discovery in California



Four-node ARPANET network is established



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TWEETS

01



Whistleblowers reveal that the USPS is responsible for tampering with hundreds of thousands of ballots. @OANN This long time Democrat stronghold got rid of massive numbers, especially in swing states, during and before delivery of the ballots. Well documented evidence!

@realDonaldTrump

02



@JoeBiden and I sat down for our first joint interview yesterday and committed to making sure the vaccine first gets in the hands of those who need it most.

@KamalaHarris

03



UAE-Israel-Bahrain ties via the Abraham Accords 'unlock opportunities' for women in the Middle East - The National

@IvankaTrump

04



Trump's rants about a "fraudulent election" are not a joke. They are the most significant attack against our democracy in history. If the election system's "rigged," if the media's "fake," if federal officials are part of a "deep state," who can you trust? You got it. A dictator.

@BernieSanders

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stances)

# Biden to call for 100 days of mask-wearing

US President-elect Joe Biden has said he will ask Americans to wear masks for his first 100 days in office to curtail the spread of coronavirus

● The president-elect has frequently emphasized mask-wearing as a "patriotic duty" and during the campaign floated the idea of instituting a nationwide mask mandate

AP | Washington

Joe Biden said that he will ask Americans to commit to 100 days of wearing masks as one of his first acts as president, stopping just short of the nationwide mandate he's pushed before to stop the spread of the coronavirus.

The move marks a notable shift from President Donald Trump, whose own skepticism of mask-wearing has contributed to a politicization of the issue. That's made many people reticent to embrace a practice that public health experts say is one of the easiest ways to manage the pandemic, which has killed more than 275,000 Americans.

The president-elect has frequently emphasized mask-wearing as a "patriotic duty" and during the campaign floated the idea of instituting a nationwide mask mandate, which he later acknowledged would be beyond the ability of the president to enforce.

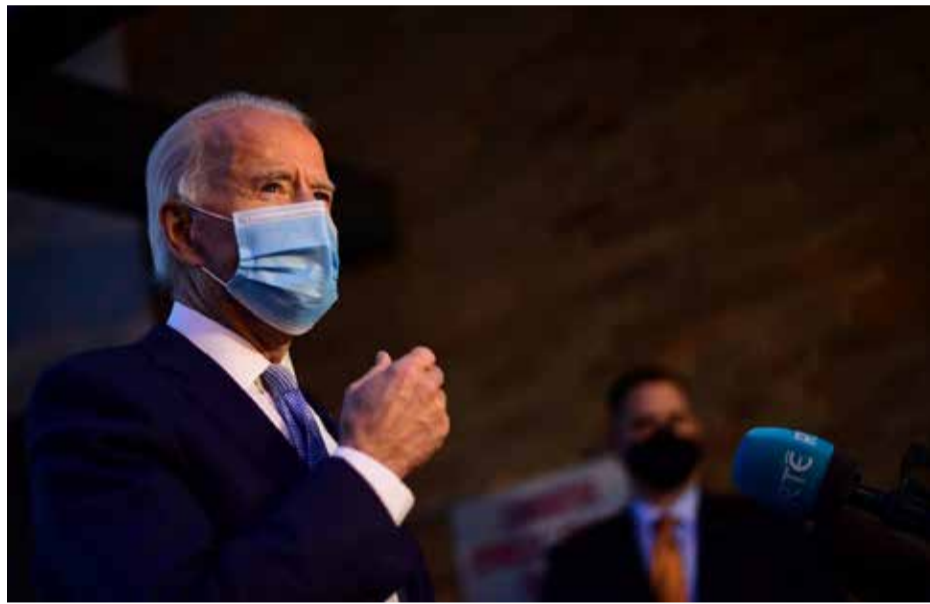
Speaking with CNN's Jake Tapper, Biden said he would make the request of Americans on Inauguration Day, Jan. 20.

"On the first day I'm inaugurated, I'm going to ask the public for 100 days to mask. Just 100 days to mask — not forever, just 100 days. And I think we'll see a significant reduction" in the virus, Biden said.

The president-elect reiterated his call for lawmakers on Capitol Hill to pass a coronavirus aid bill and expressed support for a \$900 billion compromise bill that a bipartisan group of lawmakers introduced this week.

"That would be a good start. It's not enough," he said, adding, "I'm going to need to ask for more help."

Biden has said his transition team is working on its own coronavirus relief pack-



US President-elect Joe Biden wears a mask as he speaks during an event



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JOE BIDEN

age, and his aides have signalled they plan for that to be their first legislative push.

The president-elect also said he asked Dr. Anthony Fauci to stay on in his administration, "in the exact same role he's had for the past several presidents," as the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, the nation's top infectious-disease expert.

He said he's asked Fauci to be a "chief medical adviser" as well as part of his COVID-19 advisory team. Fauci told NBC's "Today" show on yesterday, "I said yes right on the spot."

Regarding a coronavirus vaccine, Biden offered begrudging credit for the work Trump's administration has done in expe-

ditioning the development of a vaccine but said that planning the distribution properly will be "critically important."

"It's a really difficult but doable project, but it has to be well planned," he said.

Part of the challenge the Biden administration will face in distributing the vaccine will be instilling public confidence in it. Biden said he'd be "happy" to get inoculated in public to assuage any concerns about its efficacy and safety. Three former presidents — Barack Obama, George W. Bush and Bill Clinton — have said they'd also get vaccinated publicly to show that it's safe.

"People have lost faith in the ability of the vaccine to work," Biden said, adding that "it matters what a president and the vice president do."

In the same interview, Biden also weighed in on reports that Trump is considering pardons of himself and his allies.

"It concerns me in terms of what kind of precedent it sets and how the rest of the world looks at us as a nation of laws and justice," Biden said.

Biden committed that his Justice Department will "operate independently" and that whoever he chooses to lead the department will have the "independent capacity to decide who gets investigated."

## Ecuador finds nest of huge, endangered sea turtle



A leatherback sea turtle

AFP | Quito

Conservationists in Ecuador have found a nest of endangered leatherback sea turtles, a whopper of a species that can weigh up to a tonne and be three meters (10 feet) long.

Also known as the lute turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), it is the world's largest species of sea turtle.

The Environment Ministry said the nest was found in Manabi province but did not say how many eggs were in it. They should hatch in about 60 days, it said.

A protective perimeter has been set up around the nest and a thermometer was installed.

This is the third time a nest of these creatures has been found since 2015 on the coast of Ecuador.

Its status is listed as "vulnerable," and in the eastern Pacific experts say it is in danger of disappearing altogether.

The leatherback lives in tropical, subtropical and subarctic waters of the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans.

"If we manage to hatch these eggs, this would be a historic event because this species is very special due to its vulnerability," said Paco Castro, the Environment Ministry director in the region where the nest was found.

In the earlier finds in 2015 and 2017 the eggs in those nests did not hatch.

## Monolith monotony? Another mystery structure appears and vanishes in California

Reuters | Los Angeles

A 10-foot-tall metallic monolith appeared mysteriously atop a Central California mountain this week, then vanished just as suddenly on Thursday in what seemed to be a copycat of one that appeared and then vanished in a Utah desert.

"I can't say it's aliens, but it was here and now it's gone," said Terrie Banish, deputy city manager of Atascadero, California, a city of about 30,000 off U.S. Highway 101 near the central coast city of San Luis Obispo.

"It appeared only (Wednesday) and in the middle of the night someone hauled it off," she said.

"It's under investigation by our police department, but it's not been reported stolen."

The 10-foot tall monolith in Utah, found by officials counting bighorn sheep in a remote desert last month, sparked worldwide awe and drew throngs of hikers making pilgrimages to see.



A monolith stands on a Stadium Park hillside in Atascadero, California

It hearkened to Stanley Kubrick's 1968 film, "2001: A Space Odyssey", based on a novel by Arthur C. Clarke, in which alien monoliths mysteriously appear.

Another shiny metal monolith found last week in Romania's mountainous Neamt county close to an ancient Dacian fortress vanished four days later on Tuesday.

Like the obelisk in Utah, word spread

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The monolith's straight sides and height are similar to one discovered in the Utah desert and another found in Romania. Like those structures, the origin of the California edifice is also mysterious

quickly about the Atascadero curiosity, drawing scores of people hiking up the two-mile trail to see, the Atascadero News reported.

But then video posted on social media showed a group of people replacing it with a wooden cross, Banish said.

"At the end of the day, it doesn't seem like extraterrestrials," she said.