

Trump's Supreme Court push roils US election

A political battle has broken out following the death of Justice Ginsburg

● Trump pushes for Ginsburg's successor in US Supreme Court 'without delay'

AFP | Washington

US President Donald Trump yesterday urged Republican lawmakers to back his upcoming nomination for the Supreme Court "without delay" as the issue upended the election only a day after the death of liberal stalwart Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

The 87-year-old justice, immensely popular among Democrats, died Friday after a long battle with cancer.

Coming shortly before the November 3 election, in which Trump trails his Democratic rival Joe Biden in the polls, the vacancy offers Republicans a chance to lock in a conservative majority at the court for decades.

The choice of a new justice



An image of Ruth Bader Ginsburg is projected onto the New York State Civil Supreme Court building in Manhattan

ice would likely affect such far-reaching controversies as abortion, healthcare, gun control and gay rights.

The president's tweet pushing for the Ginsburg vacancy to be rapidly filled fuelled speculation of a fierce partisan nomination battle at the height of the election campaign.

The prospect of a Senate confirmation vote before the

election has already brought an explosive response from Democrats, still seething over Republicans preventing Barack Obama from filling a court vacancy through most of the 2016 election year.

"Democrats are hopping mad about this -- not just a little mad," University of Virginia political scientist Larry Sabato told CNN.



The voters should pick the president and the president should pick the justice for the Senate to consider

JOE BIDEN

Biden made clear on Friday that any nomination should await the results of the election.

"The voters should pick the president and the president should pick the justice for the Senate to consider," he said.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said that "this vacancy should not be filled until we have a new president" -- carefully echoing the words of Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell in 2016 when he blocked Obama nominee Merrick Garland.

Republicans in theory have the Senate votes to push through a Trump nominee, but they could be blocked by only a handful of defections.

News in brief



◆ Thousands of protesters in Thailand's capital demonstrated against the government of former coup leader and Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, with many also demanding reforms to the powerful monarchy. Police said at least 5,000 people had gathered at the campus of Thammasat University, long seen as a hotbed of opposition to the military and royalist establishment, and scene of a massacre of protesters in 1976..

Thousands rally in Thai capital against government

US military strengthens deployment in Syria

◆ The US Army announced it was stepping up its military deployment -- both troops and equipment -- in northeastern Syria despite a push to limit its presence there, a move that follows tensions with Russia in the region. US Central Command (Centcom) "has deployed Sentinel radar, increased the frequency of US fighter patrols over US forces, and deployed Bradley Fighting Vehicles to augment US forces" in the area, which is controlled by the US and its Kurdish allies, spokesman Captain Bill Urban said in a statement.



◆ Peru's President Martin Vizcarra survived an impeachment vote in Congress as his opponents failed to win the votes necessary to remove him from power. Congress had voted last week to open impeachment proceedings against the 57-year-old president for "moral incapacity" over accusations he incited aides to lie to anti-graft investigators. After a 10-hour debate, only 32 legislators voted for his dismissal, while 78 voted against and 15 abstained.

Peru President survives impeachment vote

Man arrested scaling tallest building in Paris

◆ A man was arrested after climbing up the facade of the Tour Montparnasse, the tallest building in Paris, a police source said. The unnamed climber, who used no harnesses or other aids, was detained after he got to the top of the 210-metre (690 feet) office block, the source said. He began the ascent in the early evening and was arrested at 8:00 pm (1800 GMT) after a rescue worker descended on a rope and accompanied him to the roof of the tower.



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◆ Tens of thousands of people defied government restrictions to attend the funeral of a religious leader in eastern Bangladesh. People from different parts of the country travelled to the eastern Brahmanbaria district for the last rites of Muslim preacher Jubayer Ahmad Ansari, who was also the deputy head of an Islamic political party, the Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis. Local media, citing residents and police officials, reported that around 100,000 people attended the funeral despite a nationwide coronavirus lockdown.

Shooting at a backyard party in Rochester leaves 2 dead and 14 wounded

Reuters | New York

Two people were killed and 14 others wounded in a shooting in Rochester, New York, police said yesterday.

The shooting appeared to start at a backyard party just before 12:30 a.m., with about 100 people running to and from a



Rochester police gather at the scene

"very chaotic scene", said Rochester Interim Police Chief Mark Simmons.

"We have 16 confirmed victims of shooting. And I'm sad to announce that two of those 16 received a fatal wound," Simmons said at a news conference.

The two people killed were

a man and woman in their late teens or early 20s, he said.

Simmons said it was unclear if the shooting was a targeted or random act of violence. The wounded were being treated in hospital and their injuries were not thought to be life threatening.

India arrests nine al Qaeda militants planning 'terrorist attacks'

Reuters | New Delhi

India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) said yesterday it has arrested nine al Qaeda militants who were planning attacks in several locations including the capital New Delhi.

"The group was planning to undertake terrorist attacks at vital installations in India with an aim to kill innocent people and strike terror in their minds," the country's main counter-terrorism arm said in a statement.

Those arrested "were motivated to undertake attacks at multiple places" including the capital region.

Six of the militants were arrested in the eastern state of West Bengal and while three in the southern state of Kerala, the NIA said, adding the individuals were "associated with Pakistan sponsored module of al Qaeda".

Lebanon army surveys 85,000 building units post-Beirut blast

Reuters | Beirut

Lebanon's army said it has carried out a survey of more than 85,000 dwellings, businesses and other building units damaged by the massive Beirut port blast last month.

The August 4 explosion of hundreds of tonnes of ammonium nitrate stored at Beirut port killed more than 190 people, wounded thousands and ravaged large parts of the capital.

"A total of 85,744 affected units have been surveyed," the army said.

It had surveyed 60,818 housing units, 19,115 businesses, 1,137 heritage units, 962 restaurants, 82 teaching institutions and 12 hospitals, among other units.

It recorded almost 550,000 square metres of glass ravaged,



A building near Beirut port is seen with broken windows

and well as 140,000 square metres of glass facades broken.

More than 108,000 doors had been damaged, the survey showed.

The army said it was still looking for nine people -- three Lebanese, five Syrians and an Egyptian -- still missing after the blast.

The survey "is considered to be sufficient, and there is therefore no need for further surveys by donor countries", it said in a statement.

The army said the donors, non-governmental organisations or volunteers could request access to the results.

On August 9, international donors pledged over 250 million euros (around \$300 million) in emergency aid, in a video conference jointly organised by France and the United Nations.

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Global

Covid-19 Cases:
30,906,084
 Deaths
959,630
 Recovered:
22,507,351
 New cases
+219,614
 New deaths
+3,900

Countries worst affected

Country	Total cases	New cases	Total Deaths	New deaths
1 USA	6,958,427	+32,486	203,679	+512
2 India	5,392,645	+87,170	86,704	+1,079
3 Brazil	4,503,002	+5,568	136,035	+178
4 Russia	1,097,251	+6,065	19,339	+144
5 Peru	756,412		31,283	
6 Colombia	750,471		23,850	
7 Mexico	688,954	+4,841	72,803	+624
8 South Africa	659,656	+2,029	15,940	+83
9 Spain	659,334		30,495	+33
10 Argentina	613,658		12,705	+49
11 Chile	444,674	+1,847	12,254	+55
12 France	442,194	+13,498	31,274	+26
13 Iran	419,043	+2,845	24,118	+166
14 UK	390,358	+4,422	41,759	+27

Middle East

Figures as of closing

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases	Serious, Critical	Tot cases/1m pop
Egypt	101,772		5,733		87,958	8,081	41	991
Saudi Arabia	329,271	+551	4,458	+28	309,430	15,383	1,166	9,427
UAE	84,242	+809	404	+1	73,512	10,326		8,495
Kuwait	99,049	+521	581	+1	89,498	8,970	96	23,120
Oman	91,753		818		84,648	6,287	180	17,872
Qatar	123,146	+229	209		120,089	2,848	58	43,858