

The background of the page features a large, grey inflatable bulldog mascot with its mouth wide open, showing sharp white teeth. In the foreground, three Fresno State football players in red jerseys and helmets are visible. The player on the left has the number 6, the middle player has 73, and the player on the right has 34. The jerseys have "FRESNO STATE" printed on the back. The scene is set outdoors, likely at a stadium.

GWIRE

WEEKLY DIGEST
FEBRUARY 1, 2019

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BULLDOGS ARE THE CHAMPIONS OF CALIFORNIA COLLEGE FOOTBALL

January 28, 2019 | GV Wire

Add another laurel to the Fresno State Bulldogs' historic 12-2 football season. College football writer Alex Kirshner at SBNation [has declared the Bulldogs champions of California college football.](#)

When you consider that California is home to such traditional powers as USC, Stanford, and UCLA, it's an honor worth noting. Kirshner writes that his selections, while subjective, are based on "record, championships, head-to-head, and general goodness."

Numbers Say Bulldogs Deserve No. 9 Final Ranking

In his post today, Kirshner selects a "team of the year"

"It's hard to argue anyone put on a better show (in California) than 12-2 Fresno State. The Bulldogs won the Mountain West by winning at Boise State, and they finished ninth in S&P+ after whooping ... Arizona State in the Las Vegas Bowl." — SBNation college football analyst Alex Kirshner

in all 50 states plus the District of Columbia. As there are no college football teams in Alaska, he awarded team-of-the-year honors to "the guy and his dogs who won the Iditarod. The musher is Joar Leifseth Ulsom of Norway, and his lead dogs are named Russeren and Olive." About the Mountain West champion Bulldogs, Kirshner says: "It's hard

to argue anyone put on a better show (in California) than 12-2 Fresno State. The Bulldogs won the Mountain West by winning at Boise State, and they finished ninth in S&P+ after whooping ... Arizona State in the Las Vegas Bowl." [You see the S&P+ rankings compiled by Football Outsiders at this link.](#)

Bulldogs in Top 3 West of the Rockies

Associated Press slotted Fresno at No. 18 — highest in program history — in its final poll. Fresno State was the third-highest ranked team west of the Rockies, trailing only No. 10 Washington State and No. 13 Washington. Fresno State finished No. 22 in 2004 under coach Pat Hill. In the Jim Sweeney era, the Bulldogs had a final ranking of No. 24 in 1992.

Looking Ahead

The highlights of [Fresno State's 2019 schedule](#) include nonconference games at USC and a home date against Minnesota. Boise State isn't on the Bulldogs' regular-season schedule, but a home date against Utah State is.

The Aggies finished 11-2 and ranked No. 22 after destroying North Texas, 52-13, in the New Mexico Bowl. Kirshner declared Boise State the best team in Idaho and Utah State the best in Utah for 2018, giving the Mountain West three mythical state champions.



MONEY BACK GUARANTEE GETS 7-0 VOTE, BUT FINE-TUNING AHEAD

January 31, 2019 | David Taub

A proposal to guarantee that Fresno delivers planning department services on time received a 7-0 vote from the city council Thursday. But council members also made it clear that important issues must be ironed out before the “money back guarantee” plan is adopted. The bill, introduced by Garry Bredefeld (District 6) and Steve Brandau (District 2), would return fees to developers if the city planning department, known as DARM, does not advance projects according to specified timelines. “Over the course of 30 or 40 years, staffing levels have gone up. Staffing levels have come down. What has remained consistent is the problem in terms of the culture, the anti-business culture.

And that is what this is an effort to address,” Bredefeld said upon introducing the bill. While others on the council agreed with the concept of service and accountability, they had many questions about implementing the plan. And, with that came several “friendly” amendments. While the vote advances the bill, it will not be final until the amendments are sorted out and the council takes a second vote at a future meeting. As

Councilman Miguel Arias (District 3) said after the preliminary tally, “Don’t count your chickens.” Even with debate on the finer points of implementation, all sides had one universal agreement: Developers would much rather have their projects proceed in a timely fashion than get their money back.

Developers Pushed for Money Back Guarantee
When Bredefeld first proposed the money back guarantee last year, it ran into resistance from Mayor Lee Brand and the Fresno Chamber of Commerce. Both vocalized support for the plan Thursday. The building industry helped craft the plan and advocated for it during the debate. Among those voicing their support: Josh Petersen of Wathen Castanos Homes and Darius Assemi of Granville Homes. Assemi is the publisher of GV Wire. Petersen warned that there are many nearby communities where developers can go, including Clovis. Dirk Poeschel, a planning consultant, called the proposal a “very creative solution.” Sam Frank, the president of the union representing DARM workers, told the council that short-staffing jeopardizes the plan. “We do not oppose a money back guarantee...

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RED MOON RISING. NEW GRIZZLIES UNIFORMS INCLUDE UNUSUAL FEATURE

January 29, 2019 | David Taub

The Grizzlies will sport two major changes as they head into their 22nd season in Fresno. One is a subtle— not so subtle change— as the team becomes the affiliate of the Washington Nationals. I’m not sure how much the fans will actually notice that [AJ Reed](#) and [Reymin Guduan](#) are no longer around. The second change will be a little more obvious: new threads.

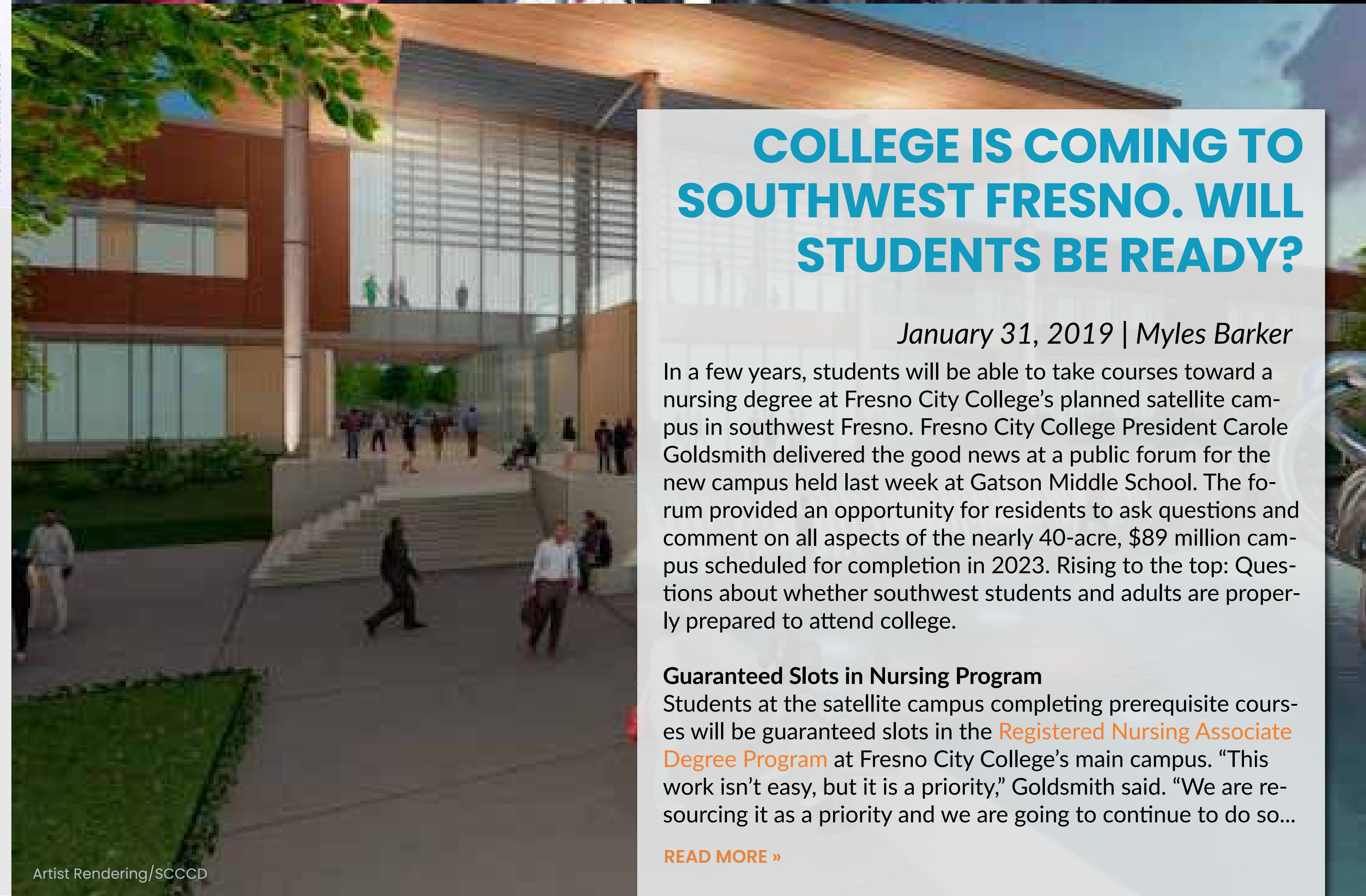
The team introduced its new uniforms at the Maya Cinema on Tuesday (Jan. 29) night. It’s the fourth major overhaul since the team first took to the field in 1998. Now that the parent club no longer wears orange like the previous two (Giants, Astros), that color is gone in favor of red. That includes a red jersey, a red cap, and (gasp) red pants. Yes, red pants.

The Grizzlies have always been bold in marketing the team. Taco Throwdowns, wild themed jersey nights, Parker! But those pants, which for now will be the main home uniform paired with a cream-colored top, may be a gimmick too far...

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GV Wire Photo/Jahz Tello



Artist Rendering/SCCDB

COLLEGE IS COMING TO SOUTHWEST FRESNO. WILL STUDENTS BE READY?

January 31, 2019 | Myles Barker

In a few years, students will be able to take courses toward a nursing degree at Fresno City College’s planned satellite campus in southwest Fresno. Fresno City College President Carole Goldsmith delivered the good news at a public forum for the new campus held last week at Gatson Middle School. The forum provided an opportunity for residents to ask questions and comment on all aspects of the nearly 40-acre, \$89 million campus scheduled for completion in 2023. Rising to the top: Questions about whether southwest students and adults are properly prepared to attend college.

Guaranteed Slots in Nursing Program
Students at the satellite campus completing prerequisite courses will be guaranteed slots in the [Registered Nursing Associate Degree Program](#) at Fresno City College’s main campus. “This work isn’t easy, but it is a priority,” Goldsmith said. “We are re-sourcing it as a priority and we are going to continue to do so...

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AP Photo/Rich Pedroncelli

CALIFORNIA WANTS FASTER WAY TO CUT WILDFIRE RISK

January 30, 2019 | AP News

SACRAMENTO — California wildland managers said Tuesday that they want to speed up logging and prescribed burns designed to slow wildfires that have devastated communities in recent years. After the deadliest

"I really believe desperate times call for desperate measures. I normally would not be that guy who would want to interfere in the environmental process but, listen, we're losing lives." — State Sen. Bill Dodd (D-Napa)

and most destructive blazes in state history, officials are scrapping 12 years of efforts and starting anew on creating a single environmental review process to cover projects on private land, such as cutting back dense stands of trees and setting controlled fires to burn out thick brush. A new process would still need to clear administrative hurdles and may face lawsuits. The goal of the one-step process is to double the state's forest management efforts to a half-million acres (202,347 hectares) of non-federal land each year, a target set by former Gov. Jerry Brown. The new system is slated to be ready within a year.

Trump Critical of California Forest Management

Republican President Donald Trump has repeatedly criticized California's Democratic officials for not doing a good enough job managing the state's forests and has threatened to cut off the state's federal disaster funding. California's strict environmental laws require individual reviews of projects to determine if they will be harmful, but some elected officials of both political parties say the laws have been used to slow necessary improvements. Environmental groups are already predicting lawsuits over the new policy. They say the state should concentrate on protecting homes from wind-driven embers, something they say no amount of forest-thinning can accomplish.

Sierra Club Doesn't Like New Plan

CalFire, the California Conservation Corps, and pri-

vate landowners like logging and biofuel companies already do forest management projects. But each one requires its own environmental review, said Matt Dias, the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection's executive officer. The board will try again to create a sweeping environmental review to encompass projects that meet certain criteria. Dias said the new review would be quicker and "much less onerous." The state is taking the wrong approach, said Sierra Club California director Kathryn Phillips and California Chaparral Institute director Richard Halsey.

The problem in Paradise, Santa Rosa, and other communities was firestorms of embers driven miles ahead of the flames, Phillips and Halsey said in separate interviews, adding that the state would better spend its efforts on hardening homes to withstand sparks. "This focus on dead trees and forests is just insanity. That's not where people are dying," said Halsey.

CalFire Director Explains New Approach

The new environmental document isn't a panacea, but part of a more comprehensive approach, said CalFire Director Thom Porter and forestry board chairman Keith Gilles. "When you have a healthy forest and a wind-driven fire runs into it, it will reduce to a ground fire and not take out the entire forest," said Porter. "It's less likely to burn down the community as well." The state also must consider changes to zoning and land use decisions in areas that are prone to wildfires; make individual homes less likely to burn; improve evacuation routes; and increase community preparedness, Gilles said.

Lawmakers Praise Environmental Streamlining

Republican Assemblyman James Gallagher of Yuba City, who represents Paradise, said that when he talks to his constituents, "It's almost always the No. 1 thing that gets brought up, why can't we do more timber..."

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PROPOSED BALLOT MEASURE WOULD LET CALIFORNIA PAROLEES VOTE

January 29, 2019 | AP News

SACRAMENTO — Tens of thousands of parolees would be allowed to vote under a state constitutional amendment proposed Monday by California’s secretary of state and Democratic lawmakers who called it the next civil rights issue.

The proposal intended for the 2020 ballot would help nearly 50,000 felons who have served their time adjust to being back in the community, said Secretary of State Alex Padilla and other advocates. Parolees currently are prohibited from registering to vote in local, state or federal elections. California is one of several states that have or are considering expanding voting rights for felons. The proposal would include

murderers, rapists and others convicted of violent crimes. It would not affect criminals until they are released from custody, unlike in some other states. The proposal continues California’s pattern in recent years of reducing sentences and increasing earlier releases from prison, said Christine Ward, executive director of the Crime Victims Action Alliance.

“Why should the individuals who committed these horrible crimes be given the same rights as the rest of us who are following the rules?” Ward said. Democrats control the two-thirds legislative majorities needed to put the measure on the ballot, but the amendment’s author, Assemblyman...

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JUDGE UPHOLDS PROTECTION FOR GRAY WOLVES IN CALIFORNIA

January 29, 2019 | AP News

LOS ANGELES — A California judge on Monday upheld protection for gray wolves under the state’s Endangered Species Act, rejecting a legal challenge from ranchers and farmers who fear the predators will threaten their livestock. The judge in San Diego ruled that California was right to list the wolves as endangered in 2014. A lawsuit on behalf of the California Farm Bureau Federation and the California Cattle-men’s Association argued the listing was arbitrary because there are so few wolves in the state.

The suit was filed to give ranchers “more flexibility in co-existing with wolves,” said Jim Houston, the farm bureau’s manager of legal and governmental affairs. The group is committed to working with the state to reduce “the burdens of raising livestock in areas with wolves, but we do not expect it to be easy,” Houston said in a statement. A wolf known as OR-7 made headlines in 2011 when it traveled south from...

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BAY AREA CITY APPROVES 25-CENT FEE ON DISPOSABLE CUPS

January 26, 2019 | AP News

SAN FRANCISCO — Patrons of restaurants and coffee shops in Berkeley who don’t bring a reusable cup for their beverage will have to pay a 25-cent fee for a disposable cup as part of an ordinance approved by city officials to reduce restaurant waste. Berkeley’s City Council voted unanimously Tuesday to approve the fee on single-use cups that will take effect January 2020.

“The goal is to transition Berkeley from throwaway to reusable food ware, to incentivize people to bring their own cup,” said Councilwoman Sophie Hahn, who co-authored the ordinance with Mayor Jesse Arreguin. The ordinance, called Disposable-Free Dining, also requires restaurants to provide takeout containers that are compostable by mid-2020 and to provide only reusable plates and utensils for those eating in. It also says other disposable items, like lids and stirrers, can only be offered when requested. Restaurants would keep all...

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Rudy Gutierrez/The El Paso Times via AP

ICE FORCE-FEEDING DETAINEES ON HUNGER STRIKE

January 31, 2019 | AP News

Federal immigration officials are force-feeding six immigrants through plastic nasal tubes during a hunger strike that's gone on for a month inside a Texas detention facility, The Associated Press has learned. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement says 11 detainees at the El Paso Processing Center have been refusing food, some for more than 30 days. Detainees who reached the AP, along with a relative and an attorney representing hunger strikers, said nearly 30 detainees from India and Cuba have been refusing to eat, and some are now so weak they cannot stand up or talk.

Another four detainees are on hunger strikes in the agency's Miami, Phoenix, San Diego and San Francisco areas of responsibility, said ICE spokeswoman Leticia Zamarripa on Wednesday. The men say they stopped

"They are not well. Their bodies are really weak, they can't talk and they have been hospitalized, back and forth. They want to know why they are still in the jail and want to get their rights and wake up the government immigration system." — Amrit Singh from California

eating to protest verbal abuse and threats of deportation from guards. They are also upset about lengthy lock ups while awaiting legal proceedings. In mid-January, two weeks after they stopped eating, a federal judge authorized force-feeding of some El Paso detainees, Zamarripa said. She did not immediately address the detainees' allegations of abuse but did say the El Paso Processing Center would follow the federal standards for care.

Men Are Having Persistent Nose Bleeds

ICE officials say they closely monitor the food and water intake of detainees identified as being on a hunger strike to protect their health and safety. The men with nasal tubes are having persistent nose bleeds, and are vomiting several times a day, said Amrit Singh, whose two nephews from the Indian state of Punjab have

been on hunger strike for about a month. "They are not well. Their bodies are really weak, they can't talk and they have been hospitalized, back and forth," said Singh, from California. "They want to know why they are still in the jail and want to get their rights and wake up the government immigration system." Singh's nephews are both seeking asylum. Court records show they pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge in September after illegally walking across the border near El Paso.

"They go on hunger strike, and they are put into solitary confinement and then the ICE officers kind of psychologically torture them, telling the asylum seekers they will send them back to Punjab." — Ruby Kaur, a Michigan-based attorney

There have been high-profile hunger strikes around the country at immigration detention centers in the past, and non-consensual feeding and hydration has been authorized by judges in court orders. Media reports and government statements don't indicate immigration detainees actually underwent involuntary feeding in recent years, opting to end their hunger strikes when faced with nasal intubation. ICE did not immediately respond to queries about how often they are force-feeding detainees. To force-feed someone, medical experts typically wind a tube tightly around their finger to make it bend easily, and put lubricant on the tip, before shoving it into a patient's nose. The patient has to swallow sips of water while the tube is pushed down their throat. It can be very painful.

Rules Vary by District and Type of Court

The El Paso detention facility, located on a busy street near the airport, is highly guarded and surrounded by chain-link fence. Ruby Kaur, a Michigan-based attorney representing one of the hunger strikers, said her client had been force-fed and put on an IV after more than three weeks without eating or drinking water. "They...

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DEMS ROAST STARBUCKS TYCOON OVER INDEPENDENT 2020 BID

AP File Photo

January 28, 2019 | AP News

SEATTLE — The most powerful super PAC in Democratic politics is promising to make former Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz “a target” if he launches an independent presidential bid.

Democrats across the political spectrum lashed out at the billionaire businessman on Monday after he teased the prospect of an independent 2020 bid, a move Democrats fear would split their vote and all but ensure President Donald Trump’s re-election. “If Schultz entered the race as an independent, we would consider him a target... We would do

everything we can to ensure that his candidacy is unsuccessful,” said Patrick McHugh, executive director of Priorities USA. The super PAC spent nearly \$200 million in the 2016 presidential contest, much of it to support Democrat Hillary Clinton.

“The bottom line,” he said, “is that I don’t think Americans are looking for another selfish billionaire to enter the race.” Democrats conceded that they had few tools to dissuade Schultz from launching an independent campaign — as he told “60 Minutes” he was considering — though many were...

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AP Photo/Lynne Sladky, File

US CONSUMERS RATTLED BY SHUTDOWN, ROILING MARKETS

January 29, 2019 | AP News

WASHINGTON — U.S. consumer confidence tumbled this month to its lowest reading in a year and a half, tested by the partial government shutdown and roiling financial markets. Still, consumer spirits remain robust by historic standards. The Conference Board, a business research group, said Tuesday that its consumer confidence index fell to 120.2 in January, down from 126.6 in December and the lowest level since July 2017.

The index measures consumers’ assessment of current economic conditions and their expectations for the next six months. Both declined in January. Consumers’ expectations for the future dropped to the lowest point since October 2016. The government reopened Monday after the 35-day shutdown, the longest federal closure in U.S. history. The shutdown is expected to cause slight permanent harm to...

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WHERE’S MY ROBOT LAWN MOWER? ROOMBA MAKER HAS AN ANSWER.

January 30, 2019 | AP News

BEDFORD, Mass. — Robot vacuums have now been around long enough that you might watch one bump around a living room and think, why isn’t there a robot that could mow my lawn? Turns out, it’s not for lack of trying. For more than a decade, iRobot, the company behind the Roomba vacuumbot, has been working — and working — on robotic lawn mowers. Now it finally has something to show for the effort, though it’s come at a cost.

“Honestly, this robot drove me insane,” said iRobot CEO Colin Angle after showing off Terra, the company’s long-awaited first lawn mower. “It has been an obsession.” The flat square autonomous grass-cutter that Angle’s company unveiled Wednesday resulted from a protracted engineering struggle that included dead-end experiments and a conflict with radio astronomers. Angle and his colleagues have been fielding the question, “So, when are you going to mow my lawn?” since...

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AP Photo/Elise Amendola



AP File Photo

WORLD

AP INTERVIEW: IRAQI MILITIA LEADER WANTS US TROOPS TO LEAVE

January 28, 2019 | AP News

BAGHDAD — The leader of one of the most powerful Iranian-backed Shiite militias in Iraq said Monday that he expects a vote in the coming months by Iraq's parliament calling for the withdrawal of U.S. troops, underscoring the jostling for power between Iran and the U.S. in this key Middle Eastern country. Qais al-Khazali, who rose to prominence as a leader in the Shiite insurgency after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion, said there's no longer a justification for thousands of U.S. troops to remain in Iraq now that the Islamic State group has been defeated. He suggested U.S. troops may eventually be driven out by force if they do not yield to the will of the Iraqi people.

"I think more than half the members of parliament reject the presence of American military forces as a matter of principle," he said. "If the United States wants

"I think more than half the members of parliament reject the presence of American military forces as a matter of principle. If the United States wants to impose its presence by force, and to bypass the Iraqi constitution and parliament, Iraq can treat it the same way and drive it out by force... But the first phase is political."

— Qais al-Khazali, the leader of the militant Shiite group Asaib Ahl al-Haq

to impose its presence by force, and to bypass the Iraqi constitution and parliament, Iraq can treat it the same way and drive it out by force... But the first phase is political," al-Khazali said. The 45-year-old head of Asaib Ahl al-Haq, or League of the Righteous, spoke with The Associated Press in a wide-ranging interview at one of his group's offices in a highly-fortified area

in the Iraqi capital, just across the Tigris River from the U.S. Embassy. Curbing foreign influence has become a hot-button issue in Iraq after parliament elections in May in which Shiite militias backed by Iran made significant gains. The militias fought alongside U.S.-backed Iraqi troops against IS in recent years, gaining outsized influence and power along the way.

The Continued Presence of U.S. Forces

Now, after defeating IS militants in their last urban bastions, Iraqi politicians and militia leaders are increasingly speaking out against the continued presence of U.S. forces on Iraqi soil. American forces withdrew from Iraq in 2011, but returned in 2014 at the invitation of the government to help battle IS after it seized vast areas in the north and west of the country, including Iraq's second largest city, Mosul. A U.S.-led coalition provided crucial air support as Iraqi forces regrouped and drove IS out in a costly three-year campaign. Iraqi politicians were angered when U.S. President Donald Trump visited American forces at a base in western Iraq without meeting with any Iraqi officials, a snub that added to calls for U.S. troops to withdraw. Trump has said he has no plans to withdraw the 5,200 troops in the country and that Iraq could be used for U.S. airstrikes inside Syria after the U.S. withdraws its troops from that country.

Al-Khazali, whose forces are fighting in Syria alongside President Bashar Assad's troops, said he was "certain and confident" there will be an Iraqi parliament vote calling for the withdrawal and regulation of U.S. forces in the country. "If the main purpose for their presence is to confront the military danger posed by Daesh, then this threat is eliminated," he said, referring to IS. "So what is the justification for keeping this number (of troops) now?" He said a small contingent of advisers and trainers for logistical matters could stay on as determined by a joint committee that would specify their numbers and locations.

Increasingly Frequent Israeli Airstrikes Targeting Syria

"Anything other than that will be considered an infringement on sovereignty by the Iraqi parliament, the Iraqi people and political factions, including ours, and we will not allow it," he said. Al-Khazali was jailed by British and U.S. forces from 2007 to 2010 for his role in the Shiite insurgency. His group has fought in...

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HOW MUSLIMS IN ALBANIA SAVED JEWS FROM THE HOLOCAUST

AP Photo

January 29, 2019 | GV Wire

Most anywhere else in Nazi-occupied Europe, a run-in with authorities by a Jewish family probably would have resulted in severe malnutrition, eventual starvation, or execution. Not so in Albania.

Following the German occupation in 1943, the Albanian population, the majority of whom were Muslims, refused to comply with the occupier's orders to turn over lists of Jews living there.

In addition, the government gave many Jewish families fake documents so that they could move about freely in the coun-

try. The Albanians not only protected their Jewish citizens, but also provided sanctuary to Jewish refugees who had arrived in Albania, when it was still under Italian rule, and now found themselves faced with the danger of deportation to concentration camps.

In fact, there were more Jews in Albania at the end of the war than beforehand.

To learn more, read [“Besa: A Code of Honor”](#) at this link or [“What made Muslim Albanians risk their lives to save Jews from the Holocaust?”](#) from The Times of Israel.

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AP Photo/Moises Castillo

MEXICO WON'T ACCEPT MINORS AWAITING US ASYLUMS CLAIM

January 29, 2019 | AP News

MEXICO CITY — The head of Mexico's immigration agency said Monday that his country won't accept migrants younger than 18 while they await the resolution of their U.S. asylum claims. National Immigration Institute Commissioner Tonatiuh Guillen also said Mexico won't extend the policy beyond a single border crossing, the El Chaparral crossing in Tijuana.

Mexican officials had previously said the United States expressed interest in extending the “remain in Mexico” policy to other border crossings. But Guillen said Mexico will accept only asylum seekers aged 18 to 60 at El Chaparral. Mexico will accept migrants only from Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, and will give them four-month visas. Guillen said that since Dec. 1, Mexico has given 3,983 transit visas to Central Americans, most of whom hope to reach the United States. Mexico will also extend other work-visa programs to apply to more Mexican states and more Central American countries. The “remain in Mexico” program had been set...

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US INTEL LISTS NORTH KOREA, NOT BORDER, AS THREAT

January 30, 2019 | AP News

WASHINGTON — Directly contradicting President Donald Trump, U.S. intelligence agencies told Congress on Tuesday that North Korea is unlikely to dismantle its nuclear arsenal, that the Islamic State group remains a threat and that the Iran nuclear deal is working. The chiefs made no mention of a crisis at the U.S.-Mexican border for which Trump has considered declaring a national emergency.

Their analysis stands in sharp contrast to Trump's almost singular focus on security gaps at the border as the biggest threat facing the United States. Top security officials including FBI Director Christopher Wray, CIA Director Gina Haspel and Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats presented an update to the Senate intelligence committee on Tuesday on their annual assessment of global threats. They warned of an increasingly diverse range of security dangers around the globe, from North Korean nuclear weapons to Chinese....

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