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**ASSEMBLYMAN ADAM GRAY DEMANDS PROBE OF PG&E'S CHIEF REGULATOR »**

**SENATE OPENS TO HEAR ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT AGAINST TRUMP »**

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Twitter/Office of the Governor of California

# LOCAL

## NEWSOM PLEDGES \$11.5 MILLION TO FRESNO FOR HOMELESS NEEDS

January 15, 2020 | David Taub

Continuing a statewide tour, Gov. Gavin Newsom visited a mental health crisis center in Fresno on Wednesday, announcing that \$11.5 million in help is coming to the area. The funding will be in the form of emergency grants for the city and Fresno County. "Enough is enough. We got to own this. We got to meet this moment. This issue is a crisis.

**"This issue is a crisis. It's a state of emergency. People are down on the streets and sidewalks. There is no compassion stepping over people." — Gov. Gavin Newsom**

It's a state of emergency," Newsom said. "People are down on the streets and sidewalks. There is no compassion stepping over people."

Newsom is spending this week touring facilities that provide services for the homeless. Last week, he announced \$1 billion in the state budget in homeless response funding. "Shelter solves sleep. Housing and supportive services solve homelessness as we frame a housing first model," Newsom said.

### Brand: Equitable Distribution of Beds

Fresno Mayor Lee Brand said the money won't come all at once as Newsom implied, rather over four-to-five years. It will be used to expand the 241 emergency beds available now to the homeless. "It is not going to be in one area of town," Brand said as to where more bed space would go. "It's going to be done on a fair and equitable basis ... we don't want to have one massive encampment in one area." The mayor also wants more mental health services.

### Support for Low Barrier Shelters

Newsom said that if homeless people refuse services, service providers just need to keep on trying. The governor discussed the many restrictions shelters may have, including being clean and sober. "I love that. The clean and sober is one of the big-

gest damn mistakes this country ever made," Newsom said. He said he "self medicates" with a nightly glass of wine and understands why the homeless do as well. "It is hard to moralize that (clean and sober requirements). My point is, we have to provide more options, more choices," Newsom said.

### 100 in 100 Challenge

Newsom said he wants to implement a challenge to cities — in 100 days, he wants 100 people off the streets. But, it could be "100 whatever" Newsom added, saying local jurisdictions could alter the incentive for their needs. He added that of the \$750 million for his Access to Housing and Services Fund going to regions "there will be contracted obligations to put (the region's) goals out in transparent ways and meet and measure those goals and finance those goals. That is something we've never done on a regional basis." For Brand, his first goal is to end the increase in homelessness. "The first is to maintain (so we) don't go any higher. After that is dropping it slowly by introducing all these services and having the funding, which is the key thing, to do a variety of services, learning from what you are doing, not throwing money away," Brand said. The next point-in-time homeless count is Tuesday, Jan. 28.

**"It is not going to be in one area of town. It's going to be done on a fair and equitable basis ... we don't want to have one massive encampment in one area." — Fresno Mayor Lee Brand, talking about where to provide shelter for homeless people**

### Newsom Wants to Hold Cities, Counties Accountable

Newsom said he supports a plan announced this week by his Council of Regional Homeless Advisors to hold cities and counties accountable to address the problem. That could come in the form of a state...

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# MLB PROPOSAL WOULD DROP FRESNO GRIZZLIES TO SINGLE-A CAL LEAGUE

GV Wire File

January 15, 2020 | David Taub

Will Major League Baseball force the Fresno Grizzlies out of the Triple-A Pacific Coast League and down two notches to the California League? Details have emerged of an MLB proposal to drastically alter its relationship with Minor League Baseball. These include eliminating 42 teams and others, such as the Grizzlies, shifting leagues.

While the thought of the Grizzlies playing at a lower level might be unthinkable to their fans, history is littered with reorganizations forced by MLB, which provides players for minor league teams. At issue is the Professional Baseball Agreement expiring at the end of the 2020 season. The PBA is the agreement between MLB and Minor League Baseball spelling out their relationship. Simply said: Fewer teams mean less expense for the big league clubs. Right now, [a group of minor league](#)

[players is engaged in a class-action lawsuit](#) over their salaries under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

## Will Grizzlies Replace Lancaster in Cal League?

According to a November [Baseball America](#) story, 42 teams would be shuttered, mostly in the lower levels of the minors. One of them is the Lancaster JetHawks of the California League at the High-A level. The Grizzlies would take Lancaster's place in the Cal League, [according to Ballpark Digest](#). Grizzlies president and part-owner Derek Franks, as well as PCL President Branch Rickey III, deferred to Minor League Baseball for comment. "Minor League Baseball is currently negotiating a new PBA with MLB. An early MLB proposal suggested switching the Fresno club to the Class-A California League," said Jeff Lantz, communications director for Minor League...

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## CHEERLEADER'S FAILURE TO APOLOGIZE COULD COST HER \$12K FOR LEGAL FEES

January 15, 2020 | Nancy Price

A 16-year-old Bullard cheerleader who went to court in July to seek a restraining order against a Fresno Unified trustee could be on the hook for \$12,000 in legal fees and court costs. Trustee Terry Slatik, the target of the teen's legal effort, says she wouldn't be facing a legal bill if she had agreed earlier to apologize to him and the Fresno County Superior Court, in exchange for his agreeing to have the case dismissed.

But her attorney, Aida Macedo, told GV Wire on Wednesday that the girl has nothing to apologize for. Although Slatik and his attorney have described her case as "frivolous," the teen genuinely felt she was in jeopardy, Macedo said. The teen is named in court filings because she identified herself when she filed the initial paperwork seeking a restraining order, but GV Wire is not identifying her because she is a minor. The request for the restraining order stemmed from Slatik's appearance in July at a summer meeting of the Bullard cheerleading teams that has been described by some as an admonishing lecture and others...

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GV Wire File

## GAVIN'S LAW, PUNISHING HIT-AND-RUN DRIVERS, ADVANCES IN ASSEMBLY

January 14, 2020 | David Taub

A law to toughen criminal penalties on hit-and-run drivers inspired by a Fresno tragedy passed a major legislative hurdle Tuesday. The Assembly Public Safety Committee approved "Gavin's Law" 5-0 with three members not present. "(This bill closes) a loophole and sort of change this perverse incentive to hit, run, kill and leave," Assemblyman Jim Patterson (R-Fresno) told the committee.

### Driver Who Killed Gladding Already Out of Prison

Last year, Patterson won over a skeptical committee on enhancing the penalties for hit-and-run drivers. Patterson proposed Gavin's Law — [AB 582](#) — in response to the 2018 death of Clovis Unified educator Gavin Gladding. He was killed while jogging on Friant Road, by a 19-year-old driver who fled the scene. Upset about the lack of consequences for a driver not stopping when causing catastrophic injuries, Patterson pushed for the law. Rogelio Alvarez Maravilla, who drove the truck that killed Gladding, received a three-year prison sentence. But...

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# ASSEMBLYMAN ADAM GRAY DEMANDS PROBE OF PG&E'S CHIEF REGULATOR

January 15, 2020 | AP News

SAN FRANCISCO — A state lawmaker on Wednesday demanded an extensive review of the California Public Utilities Commission to determine whether regulators' lax oversight enabled neglect at Pacific Gas & Electric that triggered catastrophic wildfires, a messy bankruptcy and exasperating blackouts. The request by Assemblyman Adam Gray could turn up the heat on the commission as it prepares to play a key role in determining PG&E's future.

The nation's largest utility has submitted a rehabilitation plan that must be approved by the commission and a federal bankruptcy judge by June 30 to qualify for coverage from a special fund state lawmakers created to help insulate California utilities from massive losses if their power lines ignite more devastating fires. PG&E landed in bankruptcy nearly a year ago after a series of wildfires blamed on the utility in 2017 and 2018 killed

**The request by Assemblyman Adam Gray could turn up the heat on the commission as it prepares to play a key role in determining PG&E's future.**

nearly 130 people and destroyed nearly 28,000 homes, raising the specter that it might be asked to pay more than \$50 billion in claimed losses. Gray, a Democrat from Merced, thinks it's time for his fel-

low lawmakers to assign the state auditor to dig deeper into the commission and analyze "what went wrong" at an agency that can sometimes seem arcane to the millions of Californians who depend on it to set the prices they pay for electricity and natural gas.

PG&E deserves plenty of blame for neglecting to upgrade its power system during the past decade as climate change increased wildfire risks, but "government incompetence is also part of the story," Gray said in a statement. He asserted the commission "knew about the decaying and outdated condition of PG&E's infrastructure, yet they failed to act."

## PG&E Got out of Bankruptcy the First Time After Working out a Plan

The commission did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Things have gotten so bad that PG&E now resorts to deliberately turning off power in some areas in hot, dry and windy conditions to reduce the chances of causing even more fires, a tactic it used eight times in 2019, affecting as many as 2 million people at some points and keeping the electricity off for several days in parts of its sprawling service territory. The commission is conducting an investigation into how the utility handled those power shutoffs, a practice management expects to rely upon for at least several more years each summer and autumn.

**The commission is conducting an investigation into how the utility handled those power shutoffs, a practice management expects to rely upon for at least several more years each summer and autumn.**

It isn't the first time the commission has been accused of falling down on the job and contributing to the problems facing PG&E. But the findings of a state audit could prod state lawmakers to propose drastic reforms of the century-old agency. Perceived shortcomings at the commission have already prompted three different governors to overhaul the regulator since PG&E first sought bankruptcy protection from 2001 to 2004. Last summer, California Gov. Gavin Newsom appointed a new commission president, Marybel Batjer, a former casino executive before she served as an operations administrator in state government.

PG&E got out of bankruptcy the first time after working out a plan, much of it in secret, with the commission president at that time, Michael Peevey, a former executive at another utility. That deal was widely criticized by consumer advocates, who called it an unmerited \$7.2 billion bailout that required PG&E's...

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January 15, 2020 | CalMatters

In yet another push to make higher education more accessible in California, a bill filed in the state Legislature last week would extend the state’s tuition-free college guarantee to four years — and beyond community college — for some students, making it one of the most generous programs in the nation.

Students who earn an associate’s degree for transfer through the California College Promise program could finish their bachelor’s degrees for free at California State University under the legislation, authored by Los Angeles Assemblyman Miguel Santiago. While [the bill](#) must still make its way

through the legislative process, it has surfaced at a time when free college has become a hot topic during the Democratic presidential primaries, just a year after California’s liberal governor and Legislature gave community college districts [money to waive two years of fees](#) for first-time, full-time students. Santiago authored that law, too, and said his goal now is for students from low-income families to see a bachelor’s degree as within their financial reach.

“If we want a truly debt-free education, you’ve got to begin that conversation by cutting tuition and fees,” he said. “If you don’t tell these kids every single day that you’re going to go...

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## RARE VIDEO SHOWS 5 MOUNTAIN LIONS TOGETHER IN CALIFORNIA

January 16, 2020 | AP News

JACKSON — Five California mountain lions were seen together on home surveillance video in a rare gathering of the notoriously solitary big cats. The footage was recorded at a rural residence at the edge of the El Dorado National Forest east of Sacramento, KTXL-TV reported Wednesday. “We shared the videos and photos with several of our wildlife biologists, and none of them could recall ever seeing five mountain lions together,” said Peter Tira, spokesman for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. He called the images “extraordinary.”

### Biologists Are Getting More Images of Mountain Lions

One of the cougars is bigger than the others, so scientists speculate it’s the mother lion. The others are likely her cubs, but Tira does not believe all of them are from the same litter. Mothers often chase off their cubs after a year, so seeing a family of them is uncommon, he said. According to biologists, the only time mountain lions are spotted together is either...

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Chris Bruetsch via AP

## WATCH: FEARLESS PET CAT FENDS OFF THREE COYOTES

January 13, 2020 | GV Wire

What chance does a 16-year-old house cat have against three hungry coyotes? Well, if you are Max the super cat, you beat the odds and become a national video sensation. “He’s always been crazy,” Max’s owner, Maya Gurrin, told [CBS Los Angeles](#). “Like if this were to happen with any cat, it would be him.”

### Max Never Let Coyotes Gang up Against Him

Max was minding his business in the backyard of Gurrin’s Highland Park home in southern California. Then three coyotes showed up. He fended them off with aggressive moves — never allowing the coyotes to team up against him. He even made one coyote retreat to atop a retaining wall. “My husband and I were watching a movie right here and all of a sudden we see this kind of shadow of a tail,” she said. “We walk outside and all of a sudden we see just three coyotes completely surrounding him.” Gurrin scared off the coyotes, but it wasn’t until later when she checked the home’s security cameras that she became aware of Max’s life-or-death battle. “You don’t see...

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# SENATE OPENS TO HEAR ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT AGAINST TRUMP

January 16, 2020 | AP News

WASHINGTON — The Senate opens its historic proceedings against President Donald Trump on Thursday with a formal reading of the charges by House prosecutors, followed by the arrival at the Capitol of Chief Justice John Roberts, who will swear in all 100 senators as jurors for only the third impeachment trial in U.S. history. The chamber begins to transform itself into an impeachment court at noon following a second day of ceremonial protocol that shifts the proceedings out of Speaker Nancy Pelosi's Democratic-run House to the Republican-majority Senate.

**Related Story: Trump Reportedly Admitted Impeachment Played a Big Role in His Soleimani ...**

The House lawmakers prosecuting the case will read the charges to the Senate, then, later in the day, Roberts will administer the jurors' oath to senators who swear to deliver "impartial justice." The events, unfolding during an election year as Trump seeks another term, will be a test not only of his presidency but also of the nation's three branches of power and its system of checks and balances. Several senators are running for the Democratic party's nomination to challenge Trump in November. The president calls the impeachment a "hoax," even as new information emerges about his actions toward Ukraine that led to the charges against him. He faces a charge that he abused his presidential power by pressuring Ukraine to investigate Democratic rival Joe Biden, using military aid to the country as leverage. Trump was also charged with obstructing Congress' ensuing probe. Ahead of the proceedings the Government Accountability office said Thursday that the White House violated federal law in withholding the security assistance to Ukraine, which shares a border with hostile Russia.

**"Today we will make history. This president will be held accountable."  
— House Speaker Nancy Pelosi**

**'What Is the President Hiding?'**  
Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell opened the chamber Thursday decrying Pelosi's decision to hand out "souvenir pens" after she signed the resolution to transmit the charges to the Senate. "This final display neatly distilled the House's entire partisan process into one perfect visual," McConnell said. "It was a transparently partisan process from beginning to end." Democratic Senate leader Chuck Schumer renewed his party's request that the trial include new witnesses and documents not available for the House impeachment proceedings. "What is the president hiding? What is he afraid of?" Schumer said. "The gravity of these charges is self-evident," he said. "The House of Representatives have accused the president of trying to shake down a foreign leader for personal gain." The president has suggested recently that he would be open to a quick vote to simply dismiss the charges, but sufficient Republican support is lacking for that. Still, an eventual vote to acquit Trump is considered highly likely.

**"The challenge is to get a fair trial. It shouldn't be a challenge — if the senators are really going to live up to their oath to be impartial, they'll want a fair trial. That's obviously not where Mitch McConnell is coming from." —House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff**

On Wednesday, in a dramatic procession across the U.S. Capitol, House Democrats carried the charges to the Senate. "Today we will make history," Pelosi said as she signed the documents, using multiple pens to hand out and mark the moment. "This president will be held accountable." Moments later the prosecutors walked solemnly through the stately hall, filing into the Senate back row as the clerk of the House announced the arrival: "The House has passed House Resolution 798, a resolution appointing and authorizing managers of the impeachment trial of Donald John Trump, president of...

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## HIGH ANXIETY: PROPOSED US HEMP RULES WORRY INDUSTRY

January 13, 2020 | AP News

PORTLAND, Ore. — Hemp growers and entrepreneurs who were joyous a year ago after U.S. lawmakers reclassified the plant as a legal agricultural crop now are worried their businesses could be crippled if federal policymakers move ahead with draft regulations. Licenses for hemp cultivation topped a half-million acres last year, more than 450% above 2018 levels, so there's intense interest in the rules the U.S. government is creating. Critical comments on the draft have poured in from hemp farmers, processors, retailers and state governments.

Growers are concerned the government wants to use a heavy hand that could result in many crops failing required tests and being destroyed. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, the agency writing the rules, estimates 20% of hemp lots would fail under the draft regulations. "Their business is to support farmers — and not punish farmers — and the...

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AP File

## FEVER CHART: EARTH HAD ITS HOTTEST DECADE ON RECORD IN 2010S

AP File

January 15, 2020 | AP News

WASHINGTON — The decade that just ended was by far the hottest ever measured on Earth, capped off by the second-warmest year on record, two U.S. agencies reported Wednesday. And scientists said they see no end to the way man-made climate change keeps shattering records.

"If you think you've heard this story before, you haven't seen anything yet," Gavin Schmidt, director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, said at the close of a decade plagued by raging wildfires, melting ice and extreme weather that researchers have repeatedly tied to human activity.

"This is real. This is happening." The 2010s averaged 58.4 degrees Fahrenheit worldwide, or 1.4 degrees higher than the 20th century average and more than one-third of a degree warmer than the previous decade, which had been the hottest on record, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

The decade had eight of the 10 hottest years on record. The only other years in the top 10 were 2005 and 1998. NASA and NOAA also calculated that 2019 was the second-hottest year in the 140 years of record-keeping. Five other global...

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## US BUDGET DEFICIT RUNNING 11.8% HIGHER THIS YEAR

January 13, 2020 | AP News

The U.S. budget deficit through the first three months of this budget year is up 11.8% from the same period a year ago, putting the country on track to record its first \$1 trillion deficit in eight years. In its monthly budget report, the Treasury Department said Monday that the deficit from October through December totaled \$356.6 billion, up from \$318.9 billion for the same period last year.

Both government spending and revenues set records for the first three months of this budget year but spending rose at a faster clip than tax collections, pushing the deficit total up. The Congressional Budget Office is projecting that the deficit for the current 2020 budget year will hit \$1 trillion and will remain over \$1 trillion for the next decade. The country has not experienced \$1 trillion annual deficits since the period from 2009 through 2012 following the 2008 financial crisis. The actual deficit for the 2019 budget year, which...

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AP File





AP/Ebrahim Noroozi

# WORLD

## IRAN ANNOUNCES ARRESTS OVER DOWNING OF PLANE THAT KILLED 176

January 14, 2020 | AP News

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran said Tuesday that authorities have made arrests for the accidental shootdown of a Ukrainian passenger plane, which killed all 176 people on board and set off protests in the country demanding accountability after officials initially concealed the cause of the crash. Iran's Judiciary spokesman Gholam-

**"The responsibility falls on more than just one person." — President Hassan Rouhani**

hossein Esmaili said "some individuals" were arrested after "extensive investigations." His statement on the judiciary's website did

not say how many people had been detained or name those arrested. Iran at first dismissed allegations that a missile had brought down the plane, but in the face of mounting evidence officials acknowledged on Saturday — three days after — that its Revolutionary Guard had shot down the plane by mistake as the force braced for a possible military confrontation with the United States.

**Related Story: Ukrainian Airplane Crashes Near Iran's Capital, Killing 176**

The plane, en route from Tehran to the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv, was carrying 167 passengers and nine crew members from several countries, including 82 Iranians and 57 Canadians, many of whom were Iranians with dual citizenship. There were several children among the passengers, including an infant. Iran's president on Tuesday called for a special court with "a ranking judge and dozens of experts" to be set up to probe the incident. "The responsibility falls on more than just one person," President Hassan Rouhani said in a televised speech, adding that those found culpable "should be punished."

### US Sanctions Have Devastated Iran's Economy

"There are others, too, and I want that this issue is expressed honestly," he said, without elaborating. Rouhani called the incident "a painful and unforgivable" mistake

and promised that his administration would pursue the case "by all means." "This is not an ordinary case. The entire the world will be watching this court," he said. Tensions have been escalating since President Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, then reimposed sanctions that had been lifted under the accord. The deal has quickly unraveled since then, with Iran steadily breaking away from limits on its nuclear program and Europe unable to find ways to keep Tehran committed. The U.S. sanctions have devastated Iran's economy. On Tuesday, Britain, France and Germany triggered the so-called "dispute mechanism" action that paves way for possible further sanctions in response to Iran's moves. Tensions sharply escalated further after on Jan. 3, when a U.S. airstrike killed Iran's most powerful commander, Revolutionary Guard Gen. Qassem Soleimani, in Baghdad.

### A 'First Good Step'

In response, Iran launched ballistic missiles on military bases housing U.S. troops in Iraq to avenge Soleimani's killing. The Ukrainian

plane was shot down in Tehran as Iranian forces were on alert for possible U.S. retaliation.

While Rouhani pointed to mistakes and negligence, he also repeated the government's line

that the plane tragedy was ultimately rooted in U.S. aggression. "It was the U.S. that made for an agitated environment. It was the U.S. that created an unusual situation. It was the U.S. that threatened and took our beloved (Soleimani)," he said. Rouhani called the government's admission that Iranian forces shot down the plane a "first good step." He added that Iranian experts who retrieved the Ukrainian plane's flight recorder, the so-called black box, have sent it to France for analysis...

**"It was the U.S. that made for an agitated environment. It was the U.S. that created an unusual situation. It was the U.S. that threatened and took our beloved (Soleimani)." — President Hassan Rouhani**

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# AUSTRALIA FIREFIGHTERS SAVE WORLD'S ONLY RARE DINOSAUR TREES

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service via AP

January 16, 2020 | AP News

CANBERRA, Australia — Specialist firefighters have saved the world's last remaining wild stand of a prehistoric tree from wildfires that razed forests west of Sydney, officials said Thursday. Firefighters winched from helicopters to reach the cluster of fewer than 200 Wollemi Pines in a remote gorge in the Blue Mountains a week before a massive wildlife bore down, National Parks and Wildlife Service Director David Crust said.

The firefighters set up an irrigation system to keep the so-called dinosaur trees moist and pumped water daily from the gorge as the blaze that had burned out of control for more

than two month edged closer. Firefighting planes strategically bombed the fire front with fire retardant to slow its progress. "That helped just to slow the intensity of the fire as it approached the site," Crust told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

"The Wollemi Pine is a particularly important species and the fact that this is the only place in the world where they exist and they exist in such small numbers is really significant," he added. New South Wales state Environment Minister Matt Kean said the operation had saved the stand, although some plants had been singed. "These pines outlived the...

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AP/Jerome Delay

# 1ST MALARIA VACCINE TRIED OUT IN BABIES IN 3 AFRICAN NATIONS

January 16, 2020 | AP News

TOMALI, Malawi — A pinch in the leg, a squeal and a trickle of tears. One baby after another in Malawi is getting the first and only vaccine against malaria, one of history's deadliest and most stubborn of diseases. The southern African nation is rolling out the shots in an unusual pilot program along with Kenya and Ghana. Unlike established vaccines that offer near-complete protection, this new one is only about 40% effective.

But experts say it's worth a try as progress against malaria stalls: Resistance to treatment is growing and the global drop in cases has leveled off. With the vaccine, the hope is to help small children through the most dangerous period of their lives. Spread by mosquito bites, malaria kills more than 400,000 people every year, two-thirds of them under 5 and most in Africa. Seven-month-old Charity Nangware received a shot on a rainy December day at a health clinic in the town of Migowi. She watched curiously as the needle slid into...

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# QUESTIONS OF RACISM LINGER AS HARRY, MEGHAN STEP BACK

January 15, 2020 | AP News

LONDON — When accomplished, glamorous American actress Meghan Markle married Prince Harry in 2018, she was hailed as a breath of fresh air for Britain's fusty royal family. That honeymoon didn't last. Now the couple wants independence, saying the pressure of life as full-time royals is unbearable. And a debate is raging: Did racism drive Meghan away?

When Prince Harry, who is sixth in line to the throne, began dating the "Suits" actress — daughter of a white father and African American mother — the media called it a sign that Britain had entered a "post-racial" era in which skin color and background no longer mattered, even to the royal family. U.K. Labour Party lawmaker Clive Lewis, who like Meghan has biracial heritage, says the royal rift shows that Britain still has a problem with "structural racism." "We can see it with Meghan Markle and the way that she's been treated in the...

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