

## Lindsey Graham Ends His ‘16 Campaign

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham ended his 2016 campaign for president Monday, saying he remains committed to working to achieve security for the American people and helping the GOP expand its base.

With just over a month to go until voting begins, the South Carolina senator — the only candidate from one of the four early voting states — posted a video telling supporters “we have run a campaign we can be proud of.” He noted his emphasis on national security and improving the nation’s balance sheet, saying he “put forth bold and practical solutions to big problems.”

In a taped interview broadcast later on CNN, the 60-year-old senator warned that the election is “not about 2016” but instead “an election for the heart and soul of the Republican Party.” He warned that the current GOP front-runner Donald Trump cannot defeat a Democrat like Hillary Clinton “without some major adjustments.”

Having mustered little support in the polls, Graham’s exit will not have an immediate effect on the race in the final stretch before the Feb. 1 Iowa caucuses and the Feb. 9 New Hampshire primary. But his decision could produce a ripple effect in his home state, which follows New Hampshire with a Feb. 20 primary. Graham will likely be a highly sought-after endorsement for those still in the race, though he’s given no indication of who he would back.



Graham

## Trump Demands Apology From Clinton

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump says he wants an apology from Hillary Clinton for saying that the Islamic State group used videos of his comments about Muslims to recruit militants.

Trump told NBC’s “Today Show” Monday that “she lies about everything.”

He said: “You’re talking about people dying. You’re talking about making up tapes and videos which don’t exist.”

During the Democratic debate Saturday, Clinton said that Trump had become the Islamic State’s “best recruiter” and that “they are going to people showing videos of Donald Trump insulting Islam and Muslims in order to recruit more radical jihadists.”

There was no evidence to back the claim, and a spokeswoman later said “she didn’t have a particular video in mind.”

Still, Clinton campaign spokesman Brian Fallon on MSNBC Monday insisted “hell no,” Clinton will not be apologizing to Donald Trump.

## Suspect Complains Of Stress In Crash

LAS VEGAS (AP) — A homeless woman accused of slamming a car carrying her 3-year-old daughter into a crowd of pedestrians on the Las Vegas Strip told authorities she was stressed out after being chased by security guards from parking lots where she had been trying to sleep before the crash, according to a police report obtained Monday.

Lakeisha N. Holloway, 24, resided in Oregon and had been in Las Vegas for about a week in her 1996 Oldsmobile sedan, parking it at garages throughout the city, Clark County Sheriff Joe Lombardo said.

After her arrest, Holloway “described a stressful period today where she was trying to rest/sleep inside her vehicle with her daughter but kept getting run off by security of the properties she stopped at,” the police report states.

“She ended up on the Strip, ‘a place she did not want to be,’” the report quoted her as saying. “She would not explain why she drove onto the sidewalk but remembered a body bouncing off her windshield, breaking it.”

Investigators said Holloway had run out of money and she and her daughter had been living in the car. Police believe she was headed to Dallas to find her daughter’s father after they had a falling out.

## SpaceX Launches Rocket After Accident

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — SpaceX sent a Falcon rocket soaring toward orbit Monday night with 11 small satellites, its first mission since an accident last summer. Then in an even more amazing feat, it landed the 15-story leftover booster back on Earth safely.

It was the first time an unmanned rocket returned to land vertically at Cape Canaveral, Florida, and represented a tremendous success for SpaceX. The company led by billionaire Elon Musk is striving for reusability to drive launch costs down and open up space to more people.

SpaceX employees broke into cheers and chants, some of them jumping up and down, following the smooth touchdown nine minutes after liftoff. Previous landing attempts ended in fiery blasts, but those aimed for an ocean platform.

“The Falcon has landed,” SpaceX TV commentators announced.

## Miss Universe Show, Host Apologize

NEW YORK (AP) — The Miss Universe pageant and host Steve Harvey doubled down on the apologies Monday after an excruciating live television moment — announcing incorrectly that Miss Colombia had won and then taking the crown from her head to give to a rival from the Philippines.

The fallout from Sunday’s show made Harvey an online symbol of “oops” moments, drew a reaction from Colombia’s president and even a gloating tweet from Donald Trump, the pageant’s former owner.

As televised on Fox, the contest was down to Ariadna Gutierrez Arevalo of Colombia and Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach of the Philippines when Harvey, a first-time Miss Universe host, proclaimed Gutierrez the winner after a long dramatic pause.

Music swelled, Gutierrez was fitted for a sash, given flowers and a crown was placed on her head. That made it two straight Miss Universe winners for Colombia, where the pageants are taken seriously. She bathed in applause for nearly two minutes before Harvey slowly made his way back onto the stage.

“I have to apologize,” he said. “The first runner-up is Colombia.”

## Some Cardiac Arrest Victims Ignore Warning Symptoms

WASHINGTON (AP) — New research suggests a lot of people may ignore potentially life-saving warning signs hours, days, even a few weeks before they collapse.

Cardiac arrest claims about 350,000 U.S. lives a year. It’s not a heart attack, but worse: The heart abruptly stops beating, its electrical activity knocked out of rhythm. CPR can buy critical time, but so few patients survive that it’s been hard to tell if the longtime medical belief is correct that it’s a strike with little or no advance warning.

An unusual study that has closely tracked sudden cardiac arrest in Portland, Oregon, for over a decade got around that roadblock, using interviews with witnesses, family and friends after patients collapse and tracking down their medical records.

# US Troops Killed Near Bagram, Taliban Insurgency Intensifies

BY LYNNE O'DONNELL

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — A suicide attacker rammed an explosives-laden motorcycle into a joint NATO-Afghan patrol Monday, killing six American troops in the deadliest attack on international forces since August. Two U.S. troops and an Afghan were wounded.

The attack happened as Taliban fighters overran a strategic district in southern Helmand province, the scene of some of the deadliest fighting between the Taliban and international combat forces prior to the 2014 withdrawal, adding weight to Pentagon predictions that the insurgency is gaining strength.

The soldiers were targeted as they moved through a village near Bagram Airfield, the largest U.S. military facility in Afghanistan, NATO and Afghan officials said. The Taliban claimed responsibility.

A U.S. official confirmed that six American troops were killed and two wounded. An Afghan was also wounded. The official was not authorized to discuss the incident publicly so spoke on condition of anonymity.

“Our heartfelt sympathies go out to the families and friends of those affected in this tragic incident, especially during this holiday season,” U.S. Army Brig. Gen. William Shoffner, head of public affairs at NATO’s Resolute Support base in the Afghan capital Kabul, said in a statement.

In Washington, White House press secretary Josh



Earnest said the nation’s thoughts and prayers are with the victims, their families and their loved ones, and that the U.S. will continue to work jointly with Afghans to promote peace and stability in their country.

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter in statement called the attack “a painful reminder of the dangers our troops face every day in Afghanistan.”

It was the deadliest attack on foreign troops in four months. On Aug. 22, three American contractors with the RS base were killed in a suicide attack in Kabul. On Aug. 7 and 8, Kabul was the scene of three insurgent attacks within 24 hours that left at least 35 people dead. One of the attacks, on a U.S. special operations forces base outside Kabul, killed one U.S. soldier and eight Afghan civilian contractors.

In the year since the international drawdown,

the Taliban insurgency has intensified. Although the combat mission ended last year, around 9,800 U.S. troops and almost 4,000 NATO forces remain in Afghanistan. They have a mandate to “train, assist and advise” their Afghan counterparts, who are now effectively fighting a battle-hardened Taliban alone.

Monday’s attack came as Taliban fighters and government forces battled for control of a strategic district in the southern province of Helmand after it was overrun by insurgents, delivering a serious blow to the government’s thinly spread and exhausted forces.

Mohammad Jan Rasulyar, Helmand’s deputy governor, said insurgents took control of Sangin district late Sunday.

Rasulyar had taken the unusual step of alerting Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to the dire security situation and requesting urgent reinforcements through an open letter posted on Facebook on Sunday, saying that he had not been able to make contact through other means.

“We had to take to social media to reach you as Helmand is falling into the hands of the enemy and it requires your immediate attention,” Rasulyar wrote in his Facebook post to Ghani.

On Monday, Defense Ministry spokesman Dawlat Waziri said Afghan Army commandoes and special forces had arrived in Sangin to push a counter-offensive. He told reporters the Afghan air force had conducted 160 combat and transport flights over

Sangin in the past 48 hours.

Helmand is an important Taliban base as it produces most of the world’s opium, a crop that helps fund the insurgency.

Sangin district has bounced in and out of Taliban control for some years, and fighting there has produced some of the highest casualty counts among Afghan and international forces in 14 years of war.

British forces saw intensive fighting there at the height of the war in 2006 and 2007. Among the 450 British troops killed during the country’s combat mission in Afghanistan, more than 100 died in Sangin. In 2008, a battalion of U.S. Marines arrived in Helmand, followed a year later by the first wave of President Barack Obama’s “surge” effort against the Taliban, comprising 11,000 Marines who conducted operations across the province.

The head of Helmand’s provincial council, Muhammad Kareem Atal, said about 65 percent of Helmand is now under Taliban control. “In every district either we are stepping back or we are handing territory over to Taliban, but still, until now, no serious action has been taken,” he said, referring to a perceived lack of support from the capital.

Districts across Helmand, including Nad Ali, Kajaki, Musa Qala, Naw Zad, Gershik and Garmser, have all been threatened by Taliban takeover in recent months. Insurgents are also believed to be dug in on the outskirts of the provincial capital, Lashkar Gah.

# Blood Donation Restrictions On Gay Men Eased

BY MATTHEW PERRONE

AP Health Writer

WASHINGTON — The nation’s three-decade-old ban on blood donations from gay and bisexual men was formally lifted Monday, but major restrictions will continue to limit who can give blood.

The Food and Drug Administration said it is replacing the lifetime ban with a new policy barring donations from men who have had sex with a man in the previous year. While the one-year ban has been criticized by activists it matches policies in other countries, including Australia, Japan and the U.K.

Gay rights activists said the new policy is a “step in the right direction,” but falls short.

“It continues to stigmatize gay and bisexual men,” said David Stacy, of the Human Rights Campaign, the largest U.S. gay rights group. “It simply cannot be justified in light of current scientific research and updated blood screening technology.”

Monday’s policy shift was first proposed in late 2014 and follows years of lobbying by medical groups and gay rights groups, who said the previous ban was outdated and perpetuated negative stereotypes.

Dr. Peter Marks of the FDA said the change is “backed by sound scientific evidence” and will “continue to protect our blood supply.”

The FDA considered eliminating all restrictions on blood donations from gay and bisexual men, but concluded that would increase the transmission of HIV through the blood supply by 400 percent.

“An increase of that magnitude is not acceptable,” Marks

told reporters.

All U.S. blood donations are screened for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. But there is a roughly 10-day window between initial infection and when the virus can be detected by current testing techniques. The American Red Cross estimates the risk of getting an HIV-positive blood donation is 1 in 1.5 million for all U.S. patients. About 15.7 million blood donations are collected in the U.S. each year.

The lifetime ban was put in place during the early years of the AIDS crisis and was intended to protect the blood supply from what was a then little-understood disease.

The FDA concluded that moving to a one-year abstinence requirement would not change the safety of U.S. blood donations, based primarily on data from Australia. That country has had a one-year rule for active gay and bisexual men for over 10 years.

FDA officials said there are no comparable data using shorter restriction periods.

“Right now there are really no large, major countries with shorter intervals than one year,” Marks said during a teleconference.

On the current blood donor questionnaire, men are asked if they have ever had sex with another man since

1977—the start of the AIDS epidemic in the U.S. Potential donors who answer positively are barred from donating blood. The new questionnaire, as outlined under FDA guidelines, would ask men if they have had sex with another man in the last 12 months.

The U.S. blood banking system also bars donations from people who have had sex with a prostitute or an intravenous drug user in the past 12 months.

The FDA sets national standards for the collection and shipment of all U.S. blood donations, which must be screened for transmissible diseases.



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