

Three CA universities named in federal probe

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Trump: Kyiv, Moscow OK ‘energy ceasefire’

President says Ukraine needs new leader

Miles J. Herszenhorn USA TODAY

President Donald Trump said Ukraine and Russia agreed to what he described as an “energy ceasefire,” a day after he called for a leadership change in Ukraine.

In an Oct. 11 social media post, Trump said the energy ceasefire was taking effect immediately but did not elaborate further. There was no immediate confirmation from Kyiv or Moscow, Reuters

reported.

On Oct. 10, Trump blamed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for driving up global energy prices and prolonging a war that Russia started.

“I think it’s time for Ukraine to get a new president,” Trump told reporters Oct. 10. “I suggest they get a new leader who can make a deal.”

Zelenskyy said Oct. 11 that he will organize Ukraine elections if Russian

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Rescuers work at a site of an apartment building damaged during a Russian military strike on Oct. 10 in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine. REUTERS



From left, Florida Tech students Sampada Koirala, Leighton Karpinia and Leyla Avant display a tubular “mini-lab” identical to their experiment that will launch to the International Space Station. MALCOLM DENEMARK/FLORIDA TODAY

FL students’ experiment heads to space

Rick Neale Florida Today | USA TODAY NETWORK

How can NASA design a spacesuit capable of protecting astronauts from deadly radiation during long-duration missions to the moon and Mars?

That’s the question a team of Florida Institute of Technology engineering students hopes to help answer. After nearly two years of research and laboratory work, the students are sending a micro-gravity experiment to the International Space Station to test whether a hydrogel might someday serve as a flexible radiation shield for future spacesuits.

Their experiment is due to launch Oct. 13 aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket and Dragon cargo spacecraft on NASA’s CRS-35 resupply mission from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station.

“Honestly, our biggest fear is that the hydrogel won’t take. It’ll fall apart right on the spot. Or we add water, and half of it gets hydrated and half of it doesn’t. Which is why we’re testing now,” Florida Tech mechanical engineering major Leighton Karpinia said last year.

“We get one tube. So, one shot,” Karpinia said.

Liftoff is scheduled for 6:33 a.m. from Launch Complex 40 at the Space Force installation. The Dragon will ferry 6,322 pounds of cargo up to the orbiting outpost, including 1,307 pounds of scientific investigations.

The development of Florida Tech’s “Hydrogel Radiation-Shielding Viability Under the Influence of Microgravity” ISS experiment dates to January

2025 and is the brainchild of five students: Karpinia; aerospace engineering major Leyla Avant; biomedical engineering majors Emily Matheson and Caroline Moore; and biomedical engineering doctoral student Sampada Koirala.

“Radiation is a huge, huge problem. Not only on the ISS, but we’re talking about the moon, Mars,” said John Z. Kiss, Florida Tech provost and senior vice president for academic affairs.

Kiss – who served as a principal investigator on nine spaceflight experiments – said one of his pet peeves is hearing space-industry figures describe visions of deep-space crewed missions without taking radiation into account.

“Send the astronauts there, they’re going to be jellyfish because of all the radiation,” Kiss said.

“Understanding radiation effects is crucial for long-term space travel, particularly if you’re going to set up stuff on other planets. That was one reason why [the hydrogel experiment] was very appealing to me. I think the topic is very important,” he said.

The topic is also timely in light of NASA’s phased push to develop a moon base near the lunar south pole. The agency plans to launch robotic exploratory missions through 2029, then develop foundational infrastructure through 2032. And next year, the Artemis III astronauts are expected to launch from Kennedy Space Center to test Blue Origin and SpaceX’s

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Federal antitrust investigation targets TV news outlets

Zac Anderson USA TODAY

WASHINGTON – The Justice Department is conducting an antitrust investigation into a group of television networks after they suspended their White House pool coverage in solidarity with CNN following President Donald Trump’s decision to ban the news organization, and two other media outlets, from the White House.

“Members of the television press pool have proudly boycotted covering White House events,” the department said in a statement. “Group boycotts among commercial competitors can violate the Sherman Act. The Antitrust Division is investigating to determine whether these news organizations have violated the antitrust laws.”

The investigation further rattles up the administration’s efforts targeting the White House press corps. The five networks that make up the television press pool – which distributes broadcast feeds of White House events to other outlets – are ABC, CBS,

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Poll: Trump backers not enthusiastic about voting

Nathan Layne and Jason Lange REUTERS

Voters who backed Democratic former Vice President Kamala Harris in 2024 are far more enthusiastic about casting ballots this November than those who supported President Donald Trump, a Reuters/Ipsos poll found, in a potential warning sign for Republicans heading into the midterm elections.

The six-day poll, completed Oct. 5, also found that men were more enthusiastic about voting and more certain to cast ballots than women, and that male voters showed signs of shifting toward Democrats. That could signal erosion in Republican support among a demographic that was a pillar of Trump’s 2024 victory.

Some 48% of 2024 Harris voters said they were “very enthusiastic” about voting in the Nov. 3 midterm

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