

U.S. and Iran resume attacks after Trump's push to free stranded ships

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The United States and Iran launched new attacks in the Persian Gulf on Monday as they wrestled for control over the Strait of Hormuz with duelling maritime blockades, shaking a fragile truce.

The fresh volleys of missiles and drones came after U.S. President Donald Trump launched a new effort to get stranded tankers and other ships through the strait, the vital energy-trade chokepoint that has been virtually closed since the U.S. and Israel began attacks on Iran in February, triggering a war that has killed thousands of people across the region.

Before Monday was over, several merchant ships in the Gulf reported explosions or fires, the U.S. said it had destroyed six small Iranian military boats, and an oil port in the United Arab Emirates, which hosts a large U.S. military base, was set ablaze by Iranian missiles.

Mr. Trump gave scant details about his new effort, which he called "Project Freedom," to help stuck ships travel through the strait when he announced it on social media, two days after a legal deadline under U.S. law had passed for him to get authorization from Congress for the war.

Mr. Trump told Congress the war was "terminated" and the deadline was moot, a claim disputed by some lawmakers.

■ IRAN, A9

PM to name Mary Simon's successor, with bilingualism top of mind

IAN BAILEY
STEPHANIE LEVITZ OTTAWA

Prime Minister Mark Carney is expected to announce a new governor-general on Tuesday, his first such appointment since taking office, as he faces pressure to name a royal representative who is fluent in French.

The incoming governor-general will replace Mary Simon, who became the first Indigenous person to hold the title when she was appointed by then-prime minister Justin Trudeau in 2021.

One person who has long been viewed as a potential governor-general appointee is former Supreme Court of Canada justice Louise Arbour.

Two sources close to Ms. Arbour and the process declined to comment on whether she has been selected when reached on Monday, but each added that she would be a great choice.

The Globe and Mail agreed not to identify the sources because they were not authorized to speak about the appointment.

Ms. Arbour, who was born in Montreal, is 79 and fluently bilingual in English and French. In addition to her legal career in Canada, Ms. Arbour served as a United Nations high commissioner for human rights, and chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

She has been honoured with the Order of Canada for her contributions to justice and work on human rights.

■ SIMON, A12



People deliver signatures in support of an independence referendum to Elections Alberta's offices in Edmonton on Monday. Under provincial law, Stay Free Alberta was required to collect 178,000 signatures to force a vote. JASON FRANSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Alberta moves closer to separation vote as group submits 301,000 signatures

Leader hails 'historic' day, but initiative still faces hurdles, including First Nations legal challenge

MATTHEW SCACE EDMONTON
CARRIE TAIT CALGARY

Alberta marched one step closer to holding its first referendum on provincial independence, as separatists announced they had collected more than 301,000 signatures from residents endorsing a vote this fall.

Speaking outside Elections Alberta's offices in Edmonton on Monday, separatist leader Mitch Sylvestre told throngs of supporters waving Alberta flags that his group, Stay Free Alberta, had surpassed the target of approximately 178,000 signatures required under provincial law to force a vote. One by one, he and volunteers handed off

boxes full of signatures to Elections Alberta officials.

"This day is historic in Alberta," said Mr. Sylvestre, who was greeted like a conquering hero as he arrived in his truck. On a stage, he stacked dozens of boxes containing the signatures and posed for photos.

Mr. Sylvestre then urged Premier Danielle Smith to ensure his group's question on secession is included on the province's Oct. 19 referendum ballot, regardless of the courts or Elections Alberta's decision on the signatures' validity.

The seemingly successful campaign by Alberta separatists has increased the likelihood that Canada could be facing two referendums on provincial secession. In Quebec, the Parti Québécois has promised to

hold a sovereignty referendum if it wins the provincial election this fall.

The dalliance with independence in the two provinces is part of a broader conversation around Canadian sovereignty and national unity that has been galvanized over the past year and a half by U.S. President Donald Trump's trade war and his repeated comments about annexing the country.

Roadblocks still exist for Stay Free Alberta's referendum question, however.

The group is facing a court-ordered injunction that will prevent Elections Alberta from tallying the signatures until a judge delivers a decision in a case brought forward by First Nations in the province.

■ PETITION, A12

While overdose deaths fall across the country, the streets of Edmonton reveal a different picture

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EDMONTON

In downtown Edmonton, outreach volunteer Angie Staines digs into bags hanging from her back and arms to fish out safer drug-use supplies for a group that has gathered outside a local health centre. She distributes sterile pipes, needles and cookers to anyone who needs them, while offering snacks, bandages and cigarettes.

It would be easy to lose sight of her among the swelling crowd if it weren't for her neon pink and purple hair. The signature style has earned her the nickname

"purple-haired nurse" among people living rough in Alberta's capital city.

Ms. Staines, a licensed practical nurse who has spent countless hours trekking Edmonton's streets armed with naloxone, started a volunteer-led group, 4B Harm Reduction Society, roughly six years ago to honour her son Brandon Shaw. Mr. Shaw, three years into recovery, now volunteers alongside her.

She estimates that she has reversed more than 150 drug poisonings since 2020. Each year, Ms. Staines has the same thought: It can't get any worse. But it does.

Walking down a snow-covered alleyway in mid-April, she stretches out her finger and points. "I can picture doing reversals there and there and there," she says. "Only

two have I not been able to bring back."

Drug deaths have been steadily declining in Canada and the United States over the past two years, sparking hushed optimism from government leaders and addiction experts that the drug-poisoning crisis has finally turned a corner. But national figures obscure a more complicated picture at the local level.

While most jurisdictions are experiencing a downward trend, there are significant disparities in pockets of both countries where drug deaths continue to mount. In the U.S., that includes Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico. In Thunder Bay, Ont., the death rate is five times higher than the provincial average.

■ OPIOIDS, A10



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THE GLOBE AND MAIL

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