

## ATTACK ON IRAN

# Iran's leader dead amid strikes

### Trump urges uprising after attacks targeted Khamenei compound

**JON GAMBRELL, KONSTANTIN TOROPIN, JOSH BOAK AND AAMER MADHANI**  
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — The U.S. and Israel launched a major attack on Iran on Saturday, and President Donald Trump called on the Iranian public to rise up against the Islamic leadership.

Israeli officials told the Associated

Press that Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is dead. There was no immediate comment from the U.S. or Iran on his status. The assassination of the second leader of the Islamic Republic, who had no designated successor, would throw its future into doubt.

In a nationally televised address, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said there were "growing signs" that Khamenei was killed when Israel struck his compound early Saturday.

Shortly after the address, two Israeli officials said Israel confirmed his death. They spoke on condition of anonymity

pending a formal announcement and gave no further details.

Iranian state media, citing the Red Crescent, said at least 201 people were killed and more than 700 injured. Iran retaliated by firing missiles and drones toward Israel and U.S. military bases in the region, and exchanges of fire continued into the night.

Earlier, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told NBC News that Khamenei and President Masoud Pezeshkian are alive "as far as I know." He called the attack "unprovoked, illegal and absolutely illegitimate."

In a video announcing the "major combat operations," Trump told Iranians that "when we are finished, take over your government. It will be yours to take."

The strikes marked the second time in eight months that the Trump administration used military force against the Islamic Republic. They also came weeks after a U.S. military operation captured Venezuela's president, Nicolás Maduro.

Please see **IRAN**, Page A3

■ **INSIDE:** World leaders react cautiously to attack on Iran. **Page A2**

## ILLINOIS | AGRIBUSINESS

# FIELDS OF UNCERTAINTY



CLAY JACKSON PHOTOS, THE PANTAGRAPH

Technological advances in agriculture equipment and software have helped farmers plant, fertilize and harvest much more efficiently than even 10 years ago, said Reid Thompson of Thompson Family Farm.

## Soybean farmers deal with tenuous future amid tariff troubles

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**COLFAX** — Like every farmer in Central Illinois, Reid Thompson likes to keep his thumb on the pulse of agribusiness.

Thompson grew up farming soybeans. So did his dad. And his granddad.

He's constantly following trends: the cost of seed, fertilizer, fuel. What are the latest tech upgrades and how much do they cost? What is the price per bushel for food-grade corn? Fuel corn? Soybeans?

But there is more to the picture than can be read on a graph or a market projection because of

outside factors like U.S. and China trade policy, growing competition from South American farmers and the rising cost of inputs.

"There's several factors," Thompson said in mid-February. He sat at an old kitchen table that was a wedding present to his parents.

"Tariffs are obviously a part of it. We got hit on Liberation Day," Thompson said, referring to April 2, 2025, the day President Donald Trump imposed sweeping tariffs on most imported goods. "Like everyone else, with the tariffs on China, the bean market fell."

For their part, Thompson

Family Farm has a diverse list of buyers for their products, including local soybean processors and corn chip makers, Thompson said.

But most other farmers had to take a different route, said Mike Doherty, retired agronomist with Illinois Farm Bureau: Store the beans and wait to sell.

"They have those bins so they can store the beans to sell them later on in the market when the market comes back up ... if the market comes back up," he said. "So, their real concern was, 'Was the market going to come back or not?'"

Please see **FARMERS**, Page A3

## US | IMMUNIZATION

# Majority still believe vaccines are safe

### Poll results present challenge for MAHA

**LEAH DOUGLAS AND JASON LANGE**  
Reuters News Agency

WASHINGTON — A bipartisan majority of Americans believe vaccines are safe and that children should receive them to attend school, according to a new Reuters/Ipsos poll, illustrating the challenges President Donald Trump's administration faces to win broad support for upending decades of health policy.

The six-day poll conducted in February comes as Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has led the U.S. government to drop recommendations for several childhood immunizations and boosted federal support for states providing exemptions to vaccine mandates, such as for school attendance.

Some 84% of respondents, including 92% of Democrats and 81% of Republicans, said vaccines for diseases like measles, mumps and rubella are safe for children. The readings were little changed from when the question was asked in a 2020 Reuters/Ipsos poll.

Seventy-four percent said the government should require healthy children to be vaccinated to attend school, with 23% saying unvaccinated children should be allowed in schools. Nearly all U.S. states mandate vaccination for school enrollment, with some limited exemptions.

## Trump's MAHA push

Trump has embraced many of Kennedy's priorities and those of his followers, organized under the Make America Healthy Again movement, which promotes fewer vaccines and healthier eating, among other policies.

Public health experts have said weakening school vaccine mandates would result in more children being sickened by preventable diseases.

"Having vaccine requirements keeps schools safe, and we know they work. If they are rolled back, we will see vaccine rates fall, and unfortunately, we will see kids suffer," said Sean O'Leary, chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics' Committee on Infectious Diseases.

Views of Kennedy, a longtime anti-vaccine activist, skew along partisan lines. Overall, some 37% of respondents said they view him favorably and 52% unfavorably. By party affiliation, 72% of Republicans gave him a thumbs up, with just 12% of Democrats saying the same.

The poll shows stronger support for federal efforts to tackle unhealthy eating habits than to reduce the number of recommended childhood vaccinations.

Two-thirds of respondents said it is a good idea for the government to do more to discourage unhealthy eating, while just 29% supported reducing the number of recommended vaccines for children.

Please see **VACCINES**, Page A3



Reid Thompson's family has been farming in Central Illinois for at least six generations, the last four at Thompson Family Farm in Colfax in eastern McLean County.