



THE ACADIANA ADVOCATE

THEACADIANAADVOCATE.COM | THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2026 \$2.00

Sheriff: Parade crash not hate crime

10 remain hospitalized following Saturday incident

BY ASHLEY WHITE
Staff writer

There is no evidence that the man who is accused of driving his car into the Lao New Year parade while intoxicated on Saturday did so as a hate crime or act of terrorism, said Iberia Parish Sheriff Tommy Romero.

“At this point in our investigation, we have no evidence to support this being a hate crime or a terrorist act,” he told reporters Wednesday morning. “This was a tragic event in which an individual decided to operate his vehicle while intoxicated, drive in a reckless manner, striking multiple pedestrians.”

As of Wednesday morning, most of the people who were transported to area hospitals have been released, Romero said. Three people, who were initially in critical condition, are now in stable condition. Another seven patients are still receiving treatment at a hospital.

Todd Landry, 57, of Jeanerette, who is still being held at Iberia

Parish Jail, had his bail set at \$247,500 after he was booked on 18 counts of first-degree negligent vehicular injuring, one count operating a vehicle while intoxicated (first offense), open container and careless operation, according to the Iberia Parish clerk of court.

Landry hit 18 people with his car during the Lao New Year parade at about 2 p.m. on Saturday. Several videos showed revelers running to and from the scene where

Landry's blue Chevrolet came to a stop in a shallow ditch, allegedly with a woman trapped underneath. Witnesses described the scene as horrific and said they were in disbelief.

Deputies “responded immediately” to detain Landry and render aid, Romero said.

During the investigation, Landry showed signs of impairment and

➤ See **PARADE**, page 5A

\$1.5B coastal plan hits delay



STAFF FILE PHOTO BY SOPHIA GERMER

Work on the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion project began in 2023.

Advocates push for answers over cancellations

BY MIKE SMITH
Staff writer

Louisiana's \$1.5 billion annual plan for coastal protection and restoration ran into a delay at the state Legislature on Wednesday after advocates raised concerns over a major change in strategy by Gov. Jeff Landry's administration.

The advocacy group Women of the Storm, formed in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, has posed a series of questions to the state's coastal authority related to the

cancellation of expansive river diversion projects. Senate President Cameron Henry has signaled his intent to have those questions answered before the plan can move forward, officials were told at a Senate committee hearing.

The delay is the latest turn in a long-running controversy surrounding the Landry administration's move to cancel the Mid-Barataria and Mid-Breton Sediment Diversions. Mid-Barataria broke ground in 2023, while construction had not begun on Mid-Breton.

Those unprecedented projects had long been seen as linchpins in the state's coastal master plan, and around \$700 million had already been disbursed for them. But Landry opposed the plans based on cost and the damage they would do to commercial fisheries in those areas.

The projects were being largely paid for



2026 LEGISLATURE

➤ Louisiana schools must justify their placement of students with special needs under new bill. **Page 3A**

➤ Republicans shut down bill to create Louisiana Voting Rights Act. **Page 1B**

with fines and settlement money related to the 2010 BP oil spill. The state's coastal authority now plans to focus instead on building large-scale “land bridges” and restoring barrier islands.

Sen. Patrick Connick, R-Marrero,

➤ See **COASTAL**, page 6A

Mississippi jail used to hold detained immigrants

Stays are usually brief before transfer

BY MARTHA SANCHEZ
Staff writer

After Mandonna “Donna” Kashanian was arrested by federal immigration agents last summer outside her longtime New Orleans home, she spent the night in a jail in Hancock County, Mississippi.

The 64-year-old Iranian woman was soon released after public outcry and a nudge from U.S. Rep. Steve Scalise, the Republican House majority leader from Jefferson. She was one of hundreds of newly detained immigrants in Louisiana and across the Gulf Coast to pass through the Mississippi Coast facility.

Hancock County's partnership with Immigration and Customs Enforcement has quietly transformed the jail near Bay St. Louis into a crucial tool for the federal government as President Donald Trump's administration departs thousands of immigrants lacking permanent legal status across the country.

“It's a real simple agreement,” Hancock County Sheriff Johnny Alison said. “We have the space.”

The complex is among dozens of local jails around the nation that the Department of Homeland Security is using to hold migrants who are often not charged with crimes.

The number of immigrants at the jail, who are generally held there in the days immediately after their arrests before transferring to longer-term ICE detention facilities, has soared since Trump took office. Federal data shows the facility's average daily population of ICE detainees nearly tripled last year.

Local leaders said the partnership brings thousands of dollars a month to Hancock County, where Trump won almost 80% of the votes in the

➤ See **DETAINED**, page 6A

Ceasefire threatened as Israel strikes Lebanon, Iran closes strait

BY BASSEM MROUE, SAMY MAGDY, JON GAMBRELL and SAM METZ
Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — A ceasefire deal to pause the war in Iran appeared to hang by a thread Wednesday after the Islamic Republic closed the Strait of Hormuz again in response to Israeli attacks in Lebanon. The White House demanded that the channel be reopened and sought to keep peace talks on track.



The U.S. and Iran both claimed victory after reaching the agreement, and world leaders expressed relief, even as more drones and missiles hit Iran and Gulf Arab countries. At the same time,

Israel intensified its attacks on the Hezbollah militant group in Lebanon, hitting several commercial and residential areas in Beirut without warning. At least 182 people were killed and hundreds were wounded in one of the deadliest days in the latest Israel-Hezbollah war.

➤ **Iran's Strait of Hormuz toll proposal violates trade norms.** PAGE 5A

The fresh violence threatened to scuttle what U.S. Vice President JD Vance called a “fragile” deal.

The Iranian parliament speaker said planned talks with the U.S. to seek a permanent halt to hostilities were “unreasonable” because Washington broke three of Tehran's 10 conditions

➤ See **CEASEFIRE**, page 5A



Pro-government demonstrators in Tehran, Iran, celebrate Wednesday after the announcement of a two-week ceasefire in the war with the United States and Israel.

ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTO

WEATHER
HIGH 80
LOW 60
PAGE 6A



Business	10C	Commentary	3B	Nation-World	2A
Classified	4A	Deaths	4B	Opinion	2B
Comics-Puzzles	7C-9C	Living.....	5C	Sports	1C

101ST YEAR, NO. 283

