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War in Iran

WIDER CONFLICT SEEN

U.S. sinks Iranian warship off Sri Lanka

Israeli airstrikes hit centers of power

Supreme leader succession in works

By Jon Gambrell, Elena Becatoros and Samy Magdy
ASSOCIATED PRESS

A U.S. submarine sank an Iranian warship in the Indian Ocean as Washington and Israel intensified their bombardment Wednesday of Iran's security forces in Tehran and around the country.

Iran, meanwhile, launched more missiles and drones as it warned of the destruction of military and economic infrastructure across the Middle East.

The tempo of the strikes on Iran was so intense that state television announced the mourning ceremony for Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was killed at the start of the conflict on Saturday, would be postponed. Millions attended the funeral of his predecessor, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, in 1989.

The U.S. and Israel launched the war on Saturday, targeting Iran's leadership, missile arsenal and nuclear program while suggesting that toppling the government is a goal. But the exact aims and timelines have repeatedly shifted, signaling an open-ended conflict.

Israel was also trading fire with the Iranian-backed Hezbollah militant group in Lebanon, while Iran fired on Bahrain, Kuwait and Israel. As the conflict spiraled, Turkey said NATO defenses intercepted a ballistic missile launched from Iran before it entered Turkey's airspace.

The war has killed more than 1,000 people in Iran, more than 70 in Lebanon and around a dozen in Israel, according to officials in those countries. It has disrupted the supply of the world's oil and gas, snarled international shipping, and stranded hundreds of thousands of travelers in the Middle East.

See **IRAN** on Page A12

Inside: Senate GOP votes down Iran war powers resolution. **A10**



Flags fly at half-staff at White Bear Lake City Hall on Wednesday in honor of Sgt. 1st Class Nicole M. Amor. Amor, 39, of White Bear Lake, was identified Tuesday as one of four Army Reserve members killed in an Iranian airstrike in Kuwait on Sunday. The three other soldiers from Amor's Iowa-based unit who were killed and have been identified are profiled on **Page A12**. **JOHN AUTEY — PIONEER PRESS**

White Bear Lake soldier brought light in 'dark times'

Sgt. 1st Class Nicole M. Amor, 39, was among the first U.S. fatalities in Iran war

By Mary Divine and Kathryn Kovalenko
PIONEER PRESS

Sgt. 1st Class Nicole Marie Amor loved gardening, rollerblading and bicycling. She helped people during dark times. She was sarcastic and funny.

The White Bear Lake soldier, who was killed Sunday during an Iranian drone strike in Kuwait, was married and had two children.

"She loved with all her heart," her husband, Joey, said in a statement posted on social media. "She always knew exactly when to throw that

perfectly timed sarcastic remark your way. That was her: strong, loving and real."

Amor, 39, who grew up in White Bear Lake, was one of six American soldiers killed Sunday during a drone strike at a command center in Port Shuaiba, Kuwait. She and the other members of the Army Reserve worked in logistics and kept troops supplied with food and equipment.

Amor was just a few days away from returning home to her husband and son, Owen, and daughter, Adeline, when she was killed.

"You don't go to Kuwait thinking something's going to happen,

and for her to be one of the first — it hurts," Joey Amor said.

A week before the drone attack, Amor was moved off-base to a shipping container-style building that had no defenses, Joey Amor told the Associated Press. "They were dispersing because they were in fear that the base they were on was going to get attacked and they felt it was safer in smaller groups in separate places," he said.

He last spoke to her about two hours before she was killed. He said she was working long shifts and they had been messaging about her tripping and falling the night before. "She just never responded in the morning," he said.

See **AMOR** on Page A12



With a photo posted to Facebook on Wednesday, Joey Amor eulogized his wife, Nicole M. Amor. The 39-year-old Army Reserve sergeant 1st class, of White Bear Lake, was killed in an Iranian airstrike on Sunday. **COURTESY OF JOEY AMOR**

ST. PAUL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Districtwide online learning to end next week

By Imani Cruzen
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The last day of temporary virtual learning for St. Paul Public Schools students is March 13 and students will return to in-person classes on or before March 16.

As of Tuesday, district officials said the majority of students who enrolled in the district's virtual learning option have returned to in-person classes.

The temporary option began in late January as an alternative for students who may have

felt unsafe attending in-person classes during the federal immigration enforcement crackdown taking place in the Twin Cities at that time.

Around 7,900 of the district's approximately 33,260 students signed up for virtual learning at

its peak. As of late February, that number had dropped to about 3,700 students. Early on as many as half of SPPS students at some schools were enrolled in the virtual option.

See **LEARNING** on Page A3

OBITUARY

LOU HOLTZ, 89



Lou Holtz, who coached the Minnesota Gophers in 1984-85, and later won a national championship with Notre Dame, died Wednesday in Orlando, Fla. **SPORTS, PAGE B1**

PHOTO COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

CONGRESS

Minnesota fraud gets hearing in House

Walz, Ellison testify, say ICE surge hurt federal investigations

By Alex Derosier
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Testifying before a U.S. House oversight panel Wednesday, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz and Attorney General Keith Ellison clashed with Republican members of Congress over the state's handling of significant fraud in social-service programs funded by the federal government.

Walz told the Republican-led House Oversight and Government Reform Committee that he accepted responsibility for his administration's handling of recent fraud scandals — though in his opening remarks, he said he believed the state had become a target of unfair persecution by the Trump administration.

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ST. PAUL DOWNTOWN

Driver killed in car crash with deputy

Squad responding to incident with lights and sirens activated

By Mara H. Gottfried
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A 51-year-old man died and four people were injured when a Ramsey County sheriff's squad car collided with a vehicle Tuesday night in downtown St. Paul.

The deputy was responding with emergency lights and sirens to assist with an incident involving a different vehicle that had been stolen, according to Steve Linders, sheriff's office spokesman.

See **CRASH** on Page A4

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