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Donald Trump, Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin are set to hold unprecedented talks on the sidelines of the APEC summit in Shenzhen, China, this week. GREG BAKER/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Setbacks at home shadow Trump visit

Summit brings together world leaders after spy scandal, midterm defeat

Mei Mei Chu, Trevor Hunnicutt and David Brunnstrom
REUTERS

President Donald Trump heads to Asia this week, reeling from a midterm election drubbing and Chinese spy allegations that have raised the stakes for his latest face-to-face with Beijing's powerful leader, Xi Jinping.

Trump will first visit Manila for meetings with Southeast Asian and other regional leaders on Nov. 17 before jetting to Shenzhen for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, where he will meet the Chinese president and hold three-way discussions with Xi and Russia's Vladimir Putin.

With a fragile trade-war truce between the United States and China extended to early next year, and more Trump-Xi talks due in December at the G20 in Miami, some analysts had initially billed the Shenzhen meeting as a low-stakes summit. But a backlash against Trump's Republican Party in the midterm elections and criticism that his administration failed to act on intelligence that Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang, who has close ties to Trump, had an affair with a suspected Chinese spy, have muddied those expectations.

"With less reason to worry about market reactions or electoral fallout, [Trump] may be more willing to consider disruptive measures," said Ruby Osman, a senior policy adviser on China at the Tony Blair Institute, a London-based think tank.



Chinese President Xi Jinping and Donald Trump are scheduled for more talks in December at the G20 in Miami. WIN MCNAMEE/GETTY IMAGES FILE

President Donald Trump is not expected to directly raise the spy allegations with Xi, one senior U.S. administration said on condition of anonymity, adding that the Nvidia situation "should not really have any bearing on the trip."

Washington has already signaled such willingness ahead of the meeting, urging China to live up to its commitments made under the truce agreed between Trump and Xi a year ago. Chinese analysts say they are particularly concerned that the Nvidia saga, including allegations that restricted semiconductors were diverted to Chinese customers, will now harden U.S. attitudes toward China.

U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-Louisiana, recently said there was growing consensus in Congress on further limiting Chinese access to advanced chips after the scandal, and Democrats are expected to press the issue when they take over the House and Senate majorities in January.

China has said the United States has fabricated the spy narrative to justify a technological blockade.

Zhu Feng, director of the Institute of International Studies at Nanjing University, said the spat could also speed up "the decoupling of AI" between the world's two superpowers even as they try to cooperate on mitigating the technology's risks.

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Culture war midterm attacks failed

Some Republicans call for new election strategy

Arit John and Zac Anderson
USA TODAY

In South Carolina, President Donald Trump called Annie Andrews, who is cisgender, an anti-trans slur.

In Ohio, an ad by Elon Musk's America PAC accused Sherrod Brown of "giving the green light to the radical trans agenda."

And in Texas, Republicans bestowed a laundry list of nicknames on James Talarico, including "Talafreako" and "Six-gender Jimmy" to attack his support of transgender youth.

All three Democratic Senate candidates won their races in states Trump had carried by wide margins in 2024.

In ads and on the campaign trail, Republicans desperate to save their

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Respiratory illnesses rise in Gaza, WHO says

Worst likely to come as winter floods arrive

Olivia Le Poidevin
REUTERS

GENEVA – The World Health Organization warned on Nov. 13 of surging respiratory illnesses in the Gaza Strip, with worse expected after heavy rains flooded tens of thousands of tents housing displaced Palestinians.

"The numbers already show the pressure. Acute respiratory infections are 33,000 cases higher than at the same time last year," Dr. Reinhilde Van De Weerdt, WHO representative in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, told reporters in Geneva from Jerusalem.

Poor living conditions and severe overcrowding are driving up infections as Gaza's population is squeezed into an ever-smaller area, WHO said. The crunch has worsened as the Israeli military expands its control by advancing the "Yellow Line" – a demarcation established under October's U.S.-brokered

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