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Israel launches Gaza ground assault

Rubio offers U.S. support; U.N. probe says Israel has committed genocide

Steven Scheer and Nidal al-Mughrabi REUTERS

JERUSALEM – Israel unleashed a long-threatened ground assault on the Gaza Strip on Sept. 16, declaring "Gaza is burning" as Palestinians there de-

scribed the most intense bombardment they had faced in two years of war.

An Israel Defense Forces official said ground troops were moving deeper into the enclave's main city, and that the number of soldiers would rise in the coming days to confront up to 3,000 Hamas combatants the IDF believes are still in the city.

"Gaza is burning," Defense Minister Israel Katz posted on X. "The IDF strikes with an iron fist at the terrorist infrastructure and IDF soldiers are fighting bravely to create the conditions for the release of the hostages and the defeat of Hamas."

In launching the assault, Israel's government defied European leaders threatening sanctions, and warnings from even some of Israel's own military commanders that it could be a costly mistake. But Washington offered its

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1700s saw a border war in NJ

Line battles helped give state its northern slant

Tobias Conrad Lotter's 1748 map of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York along the Delaware River.

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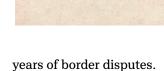
David M. Zimmer NorthJersev.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - NEW JERSEY

New Jersey's border with its neighbor, New York, wasn't always as peaceful as it is today. It took the intervention of a king to make it so.

As the country looks back at its history as the 250th anniversary approaches, we reflect on some North Jersey history.

We look back on a Sunday in 1765, when settlers along New Jersey's northern edge marched on their neighbors in Port Jervis, New York, to settle



The clash was brief but violent. It was also unexpected, breaking out at a local church where men expecting quiet prayer were met with fists and fury. Caught off guard, New York leaders were overpowered, captured and taken briefly to Sussex County before tempers cooled, according to local histories.

Ultimately, that church brawl became the final flare-up in the New York-New Jersey Line War. Though not a war in the modern sense, it was at times a bloody struggle. The conflict, sometimes political, sometimes violent, stretched across generations and only formally ended when King George recognized the

boundary in the early 1770s. The border region's ownership clashes began early in New Jersey's colonial history, but they intensified in the 18th century. Originally, the boundaries were relatively clear. The line ran from Station Rock on the west side of the Hudson River in Orangetown, Rockland County, west to the Delaware River near present-day Cochecton, New York. A 1664 grant from the Duke of York to John, Lord Berkeley, and Sir George Carteret established New

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Murphy signs bill legalizing natural burials **Lucas Frau and Katie Sobko** NorthJersey.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - NEW JERSEY

Gov. Phil Murphy has signed a bill that will allow for a "natural" process of decomposing human remains.

The bill allows for a "natural organic reduction" or "controlled supervised decomposition" of the human body.

The method accelerates the process of turning human remains into soil, said the National Funeral Directors Association.

The body is placed in a "container along with organic materials like wood chips, straw and alfalfa," and over several weeks, "microbial activity breaks down the body, transforming it into nutrient-rich soil."

Both chambers of the Legislature passed the bill in June. It was first introduced by then-Assemblyman and now U.S. Rep. Herb Conaway.

This process is legal in Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, New York, Oregon, Vermont and Washington, and is viewed as an eco-friendlier option.

The State Board of Mortuary Science can now create and regulate natural organic reduction facilities and oversight of the organic reduction

Funeral directors will have to make sure people know a deceased person can still be placed in a cemetery even after the natural organic reduction.

The natural organic reduction facility would have to be annually registered and be inspected and approved by the Department of Environmental Protection, with the process under personal supervision, direction, management and control of a person duly licensed as a practitioner of mortuary science or duly licensed as a funeral director. It would have to be at an appropriate distance from drinking water wells.

Rep. Gottheimer introduces bill to make e-bikes safer

Megan Burrow

NorthJersey.com

USA TODAY NETWORK - NEW JERSEY

New Jersey and other states need to do more to make riding electric bikes safer in response to the recent rise in ebike crashes, particularly involving children and teenagers, said Democratic U.S. Rep. Josh Gottheimer.

On Thursday, Sept. 11, the congressman introduced legislation called the Safety and Funding for E-Bikes Ride Act, or SAFE Ride Act, to increase federal investment for states to create electric bike safety plans to cut down accidents and reduce injuries.

"E-bikes are everywhere; it's a fast-

growing trend. While fun and efficient, without the right safety precautions, ebikes can be dangerous," Gottheimer said when announcing the proposed bill outside of Hackensack High School on Sept. 5. "It's heartbreaking, and it's becoming increasingly common."

His e-bike safety plan includes promoting helmet use and safe riding practices, providing crash data, and supporting local law enforcement to provide safety outreach for kids and enforce helmet wearing.

The bill aims to give states resources to address bike safety challenges and reduce crashes and accidents.

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