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Trump dismisses Bondi as attorney general

BY TYLER PAGER AND GLENN THRUSH
NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

President Donald Trump fired Attorney General Pam Bondi on Thursday, removing the nation's top law enforcement officer as his frustration with her job performance deepened.

Todd Blanche, the deputy attorney general, will be the acting attorney general, the president said Thursday.

Bondi becomes the second Cabinet member in recent weeks to lose her job, after Trump ousted Kristi Noem, the secretary of homeland security, last month. She was replaced by Markwayne Mullin.

The dismissal of Bondi, 60, ends a turbulent 14-month tenure as attorney general in which she tried desperately to appease a boss who demanded unimpeded control of the Justice Department to pursue politically moti-

vated investigations against targets of his choosing, even when prosecutors warned that there was no evidence to do so.

In the process, Bondi surrendered much of the department's historic independence and oversaw the exodus of experienced career officials, leaving the department's public corruption and national security units, along with many local U.S. attorneys' offices, weakened and demoralized.

Yet Trump remained annoyed by Bondi's inability to secure indictments of people he referred to as "scum" during a speech in the department's Great Hall about a year ago.

The president's support for Bondi has steadily eroded since last summer, when her early stumbles in managing the release of the Epstein files created a political liability for Trump among a segment of his supporters. He has also com-

plained about her shortcomings as a communicator and TV surrogate — a role he thought would suit her talents.

Bondi spent much of the last day making her case to stay in the Cabinet, according to two people familiar with the situation. But her team could sense those chances slipping away when Trump issued only a lukewarm statement when The New

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French president voices his anger with Trump

BY MARK LANDLER, ERIKA SOLOMON AND THOMAS FULLER
NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

PARIS — Scathing criticism by the French president. Taunts and more missile strikes from Iran. Surging oil prices.

President Donald Trump's 19-minute speech Wednesday night, in which he threatened to bomb Iran "back to the Stone Ages" and said the war would last several more weeks, failed to appease deep global anxieties over where the war was leading.

President Emmanuel Macron of France expressed blunt disapproval on the handling of the war Thursday, chastising Trump for speaking cavalierly and contradicting himself.

"When we're serious, we don't say every day the opposite of what we said the day before," Macron told reporters in response to a question about Trump's threat to continue the war and bomb Iran intensively. "And, maybe, one shouldn't speak every day."

Macron, speaking of Trump's verbal attacks against NATO, also said, "If you create doubt every day about your commitment, you hollow it out."

His comments came during a trip through Asia, the region hit hardest by Iran's selective closure of the Strait of Hormuz to oil tankers and other maritime traffic crucial to the global economy.

Iran's defiance Thursday came in the form of mocking statements and missiles fired across the Middle East.

"Your information about our military power and equipment is incomplete," a spokesperson for the leadership of Iran's Revolutionary Guard said in a video statement Thursday. It came after Trump, in his speech Wednesday, said that Iran's ability to launch missiles and drones had been "dramatically curtailed."

The Israeli military and United Arab Emirates' Defense Ministry both said they had intercepted missiles launched from Iran on Thursday. Saudi Arabia's Defense Ministry also said its forces had intercepted a missile, but did not specify the origin.

Iranian officials, who have consistently denied holding direct talks with the United States, taunted Trump after the speech. Mohammad Ghalibaf, the speaker of Iran's parliament

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STAFF PHOTO BY LARRY SULLIVAN II

Walker Valley High School boys' basketball Coach Will Campbell, middle, talks to his team during a timeout during the 2026 Class 4A state championship game. A new study said Hamilton County should build a new indoor sports facility to help bring events to the area.

'Competitive disadvantage'

Chattanooga tourism study suggests addition of an indoor sports complex

BY DAVID FLOYD
STAFF WRITER

As it competes with surrounding communities for athletic events, Hamilton County may need to construct a large indoor sports complex if it wants to keep up with demand, according to a recent study.

"We have more demand than we have capacity in current venues," Susan Harris, the interim CEO of the Chattanooga Tourism Co., said in a presentation to the Hamilton County Commission on Wednesday. "The industry continues to evolve.

Our competition has large-scale venues — much larger than what have in Hamilton County. That really puts us at a competitive disadvantage with some of those cities, against whom we compete for large-scale youth events."

Officials visited 16 local venues as part of their research. They spoke with hundreds of sports clients and held multiple stakeholder sessions as they assembled the study, she said. Employees with KemperSports, an Illinois-based firm hired to conduct the analysis, delivered the results of its study to county leaders this week.

John Di Meglio, vice president of KemperSports' venues division, said there's a need for a larger, indoor facility in Hamilton County that could house 10 to 12 basketball courts, which could be converted into 20 to 24 volleyball courts and 36 pickleball courts.

"That is going to drive maximum participation," he said.

The county does have a number of rectangular fields that can host sports like soccer, field hockey, lacrosse and football. Centralized sports complexes are key for athletic events, Harris said, allowing organizers to host games in a single location as opposed to spreading them out across a swath of facilities.

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'Unretired' seniors are picking up work to pay bills



AP PHOTO/EMILY WANG FUJIYAMA

Retiree Stu Goldberg prepares to pick up passengers for Uber near Plainview, N.Y.

BY CATHY BUSSEWITZ
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PLAINVIEW, New York — Before Stu Goldberg begins his night shift driving for Uber, he pulls out a notebook to read a handwritten list of reminders. "No tickets. Full stops," he'd scrawled in the book. "Careful backing up. Watch for pedestrians and bikes."

With a Ph.D in neuropsychology and decades of experience running his own business, Goldberg, 74, didn't picture chauffeuring strangers around when he retired. But financially, things didn't go as planned. So he makes the best of his situation

shuttling passengers through New York City at night.

"I like the freedom. I like the flexibility. I like meeting people," Goldberg said. "I like that most of the time I can get, once or twice a day, a good conversation with somebody."

Goldberg is one of a growing number of Americans who have "unretired" in recent years. After concluding decades-long careers at hospitals, universities and corporations, they returned to the workforce due to insufficient retirement savings, rising living costs and a desire to stay active.

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