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CA avalanche killed 8 despite warnings



Authorities are investigating “the totality” of the avalanche that killed eight people, Nevada County Sheriff Shannan Moon said at a news conference Feb. 18, which includes finding out why the trip wasn’t canceled. FRED GREAVES/REUTERS

Tour guide company facing tough questions

Amanda Lee Myers and Thao Nguyen
USA TODAY

The warnings were clear and eerie. A winter storm warning forecast up to 8 feet of snow in California’s Lake Tahoe region and avalanche conditions were considered “very dangerous.” Blackbird Mountain Guides, now under scrutiny for its role in the deadliest avalanche in the United States in four decades, had multiple social media posts

that acknowledged possible avalanche threats in the region. “Big storm incoming!” one post read on Feb. 15. “Avalanches could behave abnormally, and the hazard could last longer than normal.” That same day, an ill-fated group of 11 clients led by four guides with Blackbird Mountain Guides left for a three-day trip that would end in tragedy. They went to a pristine alpine lake called Frog Lake, just a few miles north-

east of the infamous Donner Party disaster of 1847. They stayed in the hard-to-reach Frog Lake huts for two nights and enjoyed a full day of backcountry skiing. But on the third and final day of the trip, an avalanche came crashing down, killing three guides and five guests, and leaving six survivors. A ninth person was not found and is presumed dead. As families grieve and crews come up with a plan to remove the bodies from the mountain when it’s safe, the

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Former prince arrested, suspected of ‘misconduct in public life’

Kim Hjelmggaard
USA TODAY

Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor was released from police custody Feb. 19 after British authorities arrested him on suspicion of misconduct in public life. The disgraced former prince was spotted departing from Aylsham Police Station in an image obtained by Reuters. The photo showed Andrew seated in the back seat of a vehicle as he left the police station.



Mountbatten-Windsor

The United Kingdom’s Thames Valley Police said in a statement that they arrested an unnamed man in his 60s earlier that day, who had been released under investigation. They carried out searches at addresses in Norfolk and Berkshire, the police said. The Daily Telegraph newspaper reported that six unmarked police cars and around eight

plainclothes officers were seen arriving at Wood Farm on the Sandringham estate in Norfolk, England, where Andrew recently moved. O’bryan Grandison, a professor of policing at the U.K.’s Birmingham City University, said in emailed comments that Andrew is the first senior royal to be arrested in modern history. The specific police allegations under investigation have not been

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Trump pressures Iran to make deal

Lauds ‘good talks,’ appears to set deadline

REUTERS

WASHINGTON – President Donald Trump warned Iran on Feb. 19 that it must reach a deal over its nuclear program or “bad things” will happen, and appeared to set a 10-day deadline before the U.S. might take action. Amid a massive U.S. military build-up in the Middle East that has fueled fears of a wider war, Trump said negotiations with Iran were going well but insisted Tehran has to reach a “meaningful” agreement. “Otherwise bad things happen,” Trump, who has repeatedly threatened to attack Iran, told the first meeting of his Board of Peace in Washington. Trump spoke of the U.S. airstrikes carried out in June, saying Iran’s nuclear potential had been “decimated,” adding “we may have to take it a step further or we may not.” “You’ll be finding out over the next probably 10 days,” he said, without elaborating.

U.S. threats to bomb Iran, with the two sides far apart in talks on Tehran’s nuclear program, have pushed up oil prices, and a Russian warship on Feb. 19 joined planned Iranian naval drills in the Gulf of Oman, a vital sea route for global energy. Iranian and U.S. negotiators met on Feb. 17 and Iranian Foreign Minister

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Iranian women walk past an anti-U.S. billboard on Feb. 19 in Tehran. U.S. threats to bomb Iran, with the two sides far apart in talks on Tehran’s nuclear program, have pushed up oil prices. MAJID ASGARIPOUR/WANA VIA REUTERS

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