

"All the News  
That's Fit to Print"

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2026

**THE WEATHER**  
Today, plenty of clouds, dry, high 42. Tonight, mainly cloudy, a little rain and drizzle late, low 34. **Tomorrow**, plenty of clouds, rain and drizzle, high 42. Weather map, Page B14.

Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00

## At Least 8 Die In Avalanche In California

### 15 Skiers Ventured Out Despite Warnings

By THOMAS FULLER  
and JILL COWAN

SAN FRANCISCO — It was announced as the first big blizzard of the year in California, and the warnings were stark. The National Weather Service posted on Sunday that avalanche danger was "high" — it rated the danger 4 out of 5 — and said travel to avalanche-prone areas was "not recommended."

As many families cut short their Presidents' Day weekends and rushed home to beat the storm, 15 intrepid skiers, including four professional guides, ventured out on Sunday for a three-day trek into a remote part of the Sierra Nevada where just a few weeks earlier a man had been buried in an avalanche.

Another one struck at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, as the group was finishing up its trip in the middle of the blizzard.

"Avalanche!" someone yelled just before the group was buried, according to survivors' accounts relayed to Capt. Rusty Greene of the Nevada County Sheriff's Department.

"It overtook them rather quickly," Captain Greene said.

On Wednesday, officials announced that eight of the skiers had been found dead after being overcome by the avalanche, which was the size of a football field. Another skier was missing and presumed killed. It was the worst snow disaster in modern California history.

Six members of the group, one man and five women, were rescued after they contacted the authorities on Tuesday afternoon by using avalanche beacons and their iPhones' SOS satellite functions. They sheltered under a tarp until rescuers reached them.

Rescue teams used a snowcat, a vehicle with tank-like treads, and traveled hours over rugged terrain.

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## Mayor Revives Plan to Remove Encampments

By EMMA GOLDBERG  
and JEFFERY C. MAYS

Mayor Zohran Mamdani said on Wednesday that New York City would soon restart sweeping homeless encampments, ending a pause that he instituted on the fifth day of his tenure after expressing skepticism about the approach.

The move comes as the mayor's handling of homelessness has come under scrutiny during a recent cold snap in New York City that led to at least 20 deaths, and concerns that the number of encampments has grown since Mr. Mamdani took office. The administration has said it does not believe that any of the deceased were living in encampments.

Mr. Mamdani said that he was changing aspects of the way the city conducted the sweeps, after concluding that the policy under his predecessor, Eric Adams, had put homeless New Yorkers in danger and was ineffective at persuading them to move into shelters.

The mayor said that the Police Department would no longer lead such interagency efforts; instead, the encampment sweeps would be led by the Department of Homeless Services.

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**20 LIVES** A grandmother and a dancer were among those claimed by New York's freeze. PAGE A12

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## A Crucial Hour For Black Clout In U.S. Politics

### Jackson Legacy Looms in Voting Rights Case

By REID J. EPSTEIN  
and NICK CORASANITI

WASHINGTON — The Rev. Jesse Jackson's death comes at a moment when Black voters are hugely influential within the Democratic Party and there are more Black senators than ever before — yet the future of Black representation in the House of Representatives is uncertain.

The Supreme Court is set to rule in the coming months on a case that will determine the fate of a key provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the federal law that undergirds Southern Black representation in the House. In arguments last fall, the conservative-leaning court seemed skeptical of a key provision of the law, a signature achievement of the civil rights era.

Black voters overwhelmingly support the Democratic Party, despite President Trump's notable gains with them in 2024, and some Democrats and Black faith leaders argue that the country is going backward on civil rights.

"We are witnessing right now in real time the kind of attack on voting rights that really does harken back to the darkest days of the civil rights struggle," Senator Raphael Warnock, a Georgia Democrat and the pastor of the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, said on Tuesday. "I owe it to Rev. Jackson, and we owe it to the next generation, to pass voting rights and ensure that we level the playing field so that every voice can be heard in our democracy."

Some conservatives say that decades of rising political power for Black Americans mean that old legal and policy interventions like the Voting Rights Act are no longer necessary.

During oral arguments in the case in October, Justice Brett M. Kavanaugh said that "this court's cases, in a variety of contexts, have said that race-based remedies are permissible for a period of time — sometimes for a long period of time, decades in some cases — but that they should not be indefinite, and should have an end point."

Some Black Republicans, however, have voiced support for the civil rights legislation.

"I think the Voting Rights Act is very important — it's an important

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## STATES TAKE LEAD AS TRUMP LEAVES VOID ON CLIMATE

### DEMOCRATIC AREAS ACT

### A New Push for Clean Energy by Governors and Legislators

By MAXINE JOSELOW

WASHINGTON — In Colorado, historically a hub of coal mining, legislators are planning to give drivers a \$2,000 discount on new electric vehicles, more than double the current amount offered by the state.

In Virginia, where data centers are driving a record surge in electricity demand, lawmakers want to make it easier for counties to approve sprawling solar farms.

And in California, a longtime leader in environmental policy, legislators want fossil fuel companies to help cover soaring home insurance costs caused by wildfires and other climate disasters.

Across the country, Democratic-led states are accelerating their efforts to address climate change as action stalls at the federal level. Their initiatives took on newfound urgency last week, when the Trump administration moved to stop regulating greenhouse gases from the burning of fossil fuels, the main driver of Earth's dangerous warming.

Experts said a patchwork of state climate policies was no substitute for federal leadership. But they added that state action would be crucial for the United States — historically the largest emitter of greenhouse gases — to continue shifting away from fossil fuels and toward cleaner energy while President Trump remains in office.

"The transition to cleaner, non-fossil fuel is happening very rapidly even though Donald Trump is trying to slow down this progress," said Jay Inslee, a Democrat and the former governor of Washington State. "The states are tremendous powers in this clean energy transition we're going through."

The Environmental Protection Agency last week overturned the scientific determination that carbon dioxide, methane and four other greenhouse gases were a threat to public health and welfare. Known as the endangerment finding, the ruling had required

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GLOBAL PROFILE TSHEPHISO MARUMO

## 'Corn Lady' Builds a Business, Not Always Smiling Ear to Ear

By JOHN ELIGON  
and YVONNE MOOKA

GABORONE, Botswana — Just about everyone close to Tshephiso Marumo condemned her when she chose to sell ears of corn door-to-door a decade ago after earning an honors degree from a university in her native Botswana. It was the sort of thing that people in the southern African nation looked down upon as poor people's work, not something for a sophisticated graduate with dreams of becoming a journalist.

One of her former professors was so dismayed that he derisively nicknamed her Mmamadi, a Setswana term that roughly translates to Corn Lady.

Ms. Marumo, 33, shrugged off the criticism and has since turned that humble beginning into what many people in Botswana call a tale of triumph and inspiration: She has opened two roadside food stalls in the capital, Gaborone, that have become a hit, selling traditional



Tshephiso Marumo has a reputation as a social media bully.

village cooking that you almost never find in urban areas.

Her venture has turned the unglamorous work of roadside food vending into something fashionable, earning her a large social media following and prominent customers, including politicians, musicians and influencers.

Yet the same qualities that

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