Los Angeles Times

$3.66 DESIGNATED AREAS HIGHER © 2026 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2026 latimes.com



STEPHEN LAM San Francisco Chronicle

THE SEA ROARS ASHORE

In Pacifica, Calif., Natalie Nunez, Chris Aceves and David Lechuga try to protect a home from waves. Massive surf also slammed the coast from Malibu to San Diego, and the danger isn't over. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Facing probes, Trump calls critics 'corrupt'

His unproven charges and threats borrow from the authoritarian playbook, experts say.

BY KEVIN RECTOR

Facing fresh oversight and investigations from congressional Democrats come January, President Trump and his supporters have increasingly turned to a tactic experts say they recognize from authoritarian regimes the world over.

Without evidence or any clear legal reasoning, they've accused their political opponents of being criminal or "corrupt."

Trump has alleged in a series of recent social media posts that the Democratic Party is led by "one of the most Corrupt and anti-American groups of political leaders and hacks in the history of our Country, and even the World," and that there is "Massive Corruption and Crime taking place in Democrat run Cities and States."

He said Democrats cheated to win the midterms and are now "illegally threatening Republicans with knowingly false accusations and charges."

He also renewed his previous calls for the prosecution of six Democratic lawmakers who advised U.S. military personnel to not follow illegal orders — calling them the "Seditious Six" — and wrote, "THE DEMOCRATS ARE CORRUPT AND EVIL, and I am the exact opposite."

Trump's posts followed White House Counsel Will Scharf warning Democratic lawmakers — including Rep. Robert Garcia (D-Long Beach), the likely next chair of the House Oversight and

[See **Trump,** A5]

County executive election scramble is now on

Horvath has declared candidacy for the new post, and others are in the conversation.

BY JON REGARDIE AND CONNOR SHEETS

Thought election season was over? Think again. Nithya Raman may have been elected the next mayor of Los Angeles, but the race is just beginning for an even bigger job, encompassing all of Los Angeles County.

In 2028, voters will elect the first L.A. County executive, who will have many mayor-like powers and sit atop a government with a $54-billion budget and 110,000 employees. The new executive will oversee a realm of nearly 10 million people, more than all but 10 states.

"It will be the most powerful local government job in California and will probably be one of the top local jobs in the United States," said Zev Yaroslavsky, a former county supervisor who is director of the Los Angeles Initiative at the UCLA Luskin School for Public Affairs. Whoever fills the post, he added, "will be held accountable for how the county operates — the good, the bad and the ugly."

The race kicked off last week, when L.A. County Supervisor Lindsey Horvath filed the paperwork to become the first candidate to enter the race. The question of who else may run — from elected officials to business and civic leaders — is generating speculation and rippling through text chains

[See **Executive,** A6]

How L.A.'s ultrarich are displacing the rich

They buy, raze and build bigger in tony enclaves

By Michael Liu

In some Los Angeles-area neighborhoods, the ultrarich are displacing the rich, leveling old-money homes to make way for mega-mansions.

For half a century, 1360 Laurel Way in Beverly Hills was a one-story, three-bedroom house with a simple garden. Builders knocked it down in 2023 and replaced it with a three-story mansion featuring waterfalls, a 20-car garage, a penthouse pickleball court and a moat.

The 19,000-square-foot home is now listed for $53 million.

Nearby, a one-story, five-bedroom home was flattened to make way for a sprawling building with a spa and a movie theater. The developer — who bought the location for less than $8 million — sold it this summer for $32 million.

Even as the property market cools, certain corners of the L.A. area are still so hot that it makes sense to tear down very expensive homes and replace them with ridiculously expensive ones.

Although most Californians struggle to afford even a basic home or rental, a growing number of the ultrarich want to own impressive properties in posh L.A.-area neighborhoods, said luxury developer Ramtin Ray Nosrati of Huntington Estate Properties.

"There's not much land in prime locations, [and] luxury has had a demand like it's never had," he said. "We're generating so many millionaires and billionaires right now."

[See **Properties,** A10]

California loses foreign college students at twice the U.S. rate

BY JAWEED KALEEM

Fewer students from abroad are coming to U.S. colleges, and California is seeing a sharper decline than most parts of the nation — ending the state's decades-long hold as the top destination for international students, according to data released Sunday.

California's population of international students for the last school year fell 5.8% to 131,276, more than twice the national rate of decline, according to the Institute of International Education's annual report.

The total is below the state's pandemic-era count, when borders closed and classes moved to Zoom, and is the lowest in more than a decade. New York edged past the state with 133,715 international students.

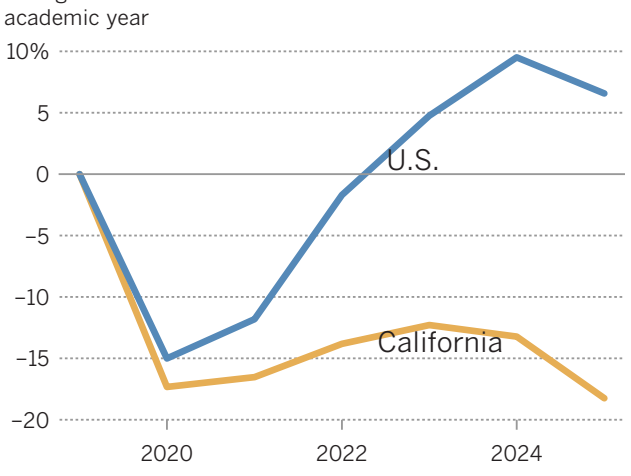
Texas' international stu-

[See **Colleges,** A6]

State enrollment falls

In 2025, international student enrollment declined more in California than in the U.S.

Change in international students from the 2019-2020 academic year



Totals include students on Optional Practical Training visas who may have graduated.

Institute of International Education

HAILEY WANG Los Angeles Times

Fears grow of U.S. pivot toward China

The first stop of the president's Asia trip aims to allay worries of allies in the region.

BY MICHAEL WILNER

MANILA — Fifty years ago, a disgraced Republican president led his party to historic defeat in the 1974 midterm elections. Richard Nixon's resignation months prior during the Watergate scandal was not enough to stem the political fallout.

But the Chinese Communist Party — among Nixon's greatest admirers — never abandoned him. He would go on to visit Beijing several times under a banner of friendship.

Donald Trump can expect similar treatment on his second trip to China in less than a year, a first for an American president, despite receiving a similar rout from American voters this month. "We do not forget our friends," one Chinese official told The Times.

Trump's overtures to Chinese President Xi Jinping in his second term mark a sharp break from his first, raising alarm among longtime U.S. allies in Asia that they have been sidelined in a great power bargain as Beijing grows more assertive across the region.

The first stop on the president's trip, in the Philippine capital on Tuesday night, is designed to allay those concerns. Trump will gather in

[See **Asia,** A3]

REBUKE AGAINST MYANMAR: Leader banned from summit over attacks on civilians. **WORLD, A3**

Dueling views on oil platform 'reefing' plan

BY HAYLEY SMITH

A quiet proposal from the Trump administration could change the way offshore oil platforms are managed when they reach the end of their useful lives, leaving more of them to lie permanently on the seafloor off the coast of California.

Buried within a September executive order about recreational fishing, President Trump's directive requires the Department of the Interior — through its newly formed Marine Minerals Administration — to establish a federal "reef-in-place" program for decommissioned offshore oil and gas platforms. "Reefing" refers to leaving all or part of the metal structures in the ocean, where they can become artificial reefs for marine life.

There are 23 platforms in federal waters off the state's coast, eight of which are in various stages of decommissioning. Four others are within state waters.

The Interior Department has signaled that it intends to go one step further. A rulemaking scheduled for 2027 would make "toppling in place" the default decommissioning method if approved. It's largely what it sounds like: knocking all or most of the platform over onto its side to rest on the sea bottom. Though it's been done in the Gulf of Mexico, it has never been tried in the Pacific waters off California, where all previously decommissioned platforms have been removed.

Critics say the action is designed to benefit fossil fuel companies, which have already profited from sev-

[See **Oil rigs,** A8]

Rams avenge loss to the Cardinals
Matthew Stafford passes for three touchdowns and Blake Corum rushes for 100 yards in a 34-6 victory. **SPORTS, D1**

Dead man on cusp of election victory
Candidate for Calaveras County supervisor died months earlier during an accident while campaigning. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Space museum takes flight
Schoolkids mark the opening of the Samuel Oschin Air and Space Center with astronauts. **ENTERTAINMENT, E1**

Weather
Some showers.
L.A. Basin: 68/54. **B6**

