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World News Briefs

UK's Johnson Moves to Suspend Parliament Ahead of Brexit

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson maneuvered Wednesday to give his political opponents even less time to block a chaotic no-deal Brexit before the Oct. 31 withdrawal deadline, winning Queen Elizabeth II's approval to suspend Parliament. His critics were outraged.

Though Johnson previously had refused to rule out such a move, the timing of the decision took lawmakers - many of whom are on vacation - by surprise.

Johnson insisted he was taking the step so he could outline his domestic agenda, and he shot down the notion that he was curbing debate, saying there would be "ample time" to discuss Brexit and other issues.

Lawmakers reacted with fury, including John Bercow, speaker of the lower House of Commons, who was not told in advance of Johnson's plan.

"Shutting down Parliament would be an offense against the democratic process and the rights of parliamentarians as the people's elected representatives," Bercow said. "Surely at this early stage in his premiership, the prime minister should be seeking to establish rather than undermine his democratic credentials and indeed his commitment to Parliamentary democracy."

Storm Dorian Expected to Strengthen, Could Hit Puerto Rico

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) - Tropical Storm Dorian threatened Puerto Rico with a direct hit on Wednesday, as forecasters said it made a last-minute shift in its path and could reach near-hurricane strength in its approach to the U.S. territory.

The storm is expected to pass over or near western and central Puerto Rico, with landslides, widespread flooding and power outages possible. President Donald Trump declared an emergency Tuesday night and ordered federal assistance for local authorities.

"Practically the entire island will be under sustained tropical storm force winds," said Roberto García, director of U.S. National Weather Service San Juan, during a press conference late Tuesday.

However, he said the forecast could change over-

adding night, late shifts occur with storms such as Dorian



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that do not have a well-defined center.

Early Wednesday, Dorian was located about 240 miles (390 kilometers) east southeast of Ponce. Puerto Rico. The U.S. National Hurricane Center said it had strengthened slightly, with maximum sustained winds of 60 mph (96 kph) while moving northwest at 13 mph (20 kph).

OxyContin Maker, Government **Attorneys in Settlement Talks**

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — State attorneys general and lawyers representing local governments said Tuesday they are in active settlement talks with Purdue Pharma, the maker of the prescription painkiller OxyContin that is facing billions of dollars in potential liability for its role in the nation's opioid crisis.

Purdue has been cast by attorneys and addiction experts as a main villain in the crisis for producing a blockbuster drug while understating its addiction risk. A report by NBC News said the privately held company has offered to settle for \$10 billion to \$12 billion.

In a statement, the Stamford, Connecticut-based company said it's prepared to defend itself but sees little good in years of "wasteful litigation and ap-

"Purdue believes a constructive global resolution is the best path forward, and the company is actively working with the state attorneys general and other plaintiffs to achieve this outcome," the company said.

News of the settlement talks involving more than 2,000 lawsuits against the company and other players in the painkiller industry comes about two months



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before the first federal trial over the toll of opioids is scheduled to start in Cleveland.

Deutsche Bank Has Tax Returns Sought in Congressional Probe

NEW YORK (AP) - President Donald Trump's longtime bank revealed Tuesday that it has tax records Congress is seeking in its investigation of the president's finances.

Deutsche Bank said in court papers it has tax returns responsive to a subpoena sent this year, in which Congress asked the bank for a host of documents related to Trump and his family.

Trump has long declined to release his tax returns and wants to block two House committees from getting the records, calling their document requests unlawful.

A federal appeals court ordered Deutsche Bank to say whether or not Trump's tax returns were in its possession after an attorney for the bank refused to answer that question during a hearing last week.

The bank, in its court filing Tuesday, blacked out the name of the person or people whose tax records it had, citing privacy rules. It said it also has tax records "related to parties not named in the subpoenas but who may constitute 'immediate family" of individuals named in the document request.

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