

3 US news outlets return to White House after judge orders ban lifted

BY JOCELYN NOVECK, HALLIE GOLDEN AND LAURIE KELLMAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Three news organizations banned from the White House for days were back Thursday after a judge handed CNN, MS NOW and Politico a reprieve in an extraordinary showdown between President Donald Trump and outlets whose coverage he dislikes.

But media coverage of Trump’s White House was hardly normal. On a high-profile day when Chinese leader Xi Jinping was visiting Washington and planning to attend a state dinner, no major American network was airing live coverage.

After the White House banned CNN from a rotation of five major U.S. broadcast outlets who take turns shooting and sharing video, the other four — in a show of solidarity — were still declining to participate in the so-called video pool.

The president posted online that TV networks “refused to cover one of the Biggest and Most Beautiful Events to take place in many years ... because they knew how good it would be, they didn’t want credit to be given to “TRUMP.”

It was a chaotic day for the media at the White House and in court.

Initially, in the morning, CNN, MS NOW

and Politico journalists were denied entry. A Secret Service agent had confiscated their credentials as part of the ban. After the ruling for the outlets in the early hours Thursday, White House operations officials were notified to restore access to the affected reporters, but said they needed time to find, reactivate and deliver their entry badges. The process took over two hours, according to an administration court filing.

In his decision to provisionally lift the ban, U.S. District Judge Timothy Kelly ordered the White House to “immediately return, reinstate, and restore” the three outlets’ access. He said they had met the legal thresholds to obtain a temporary restraining order and were likely to succeed in showing that their press passes were revoked without due process.

The ruling did not address CNN’s removal from the White House video pool. The White House did not respond to an email seeking comment.

THE JUDGE’S RULING ISSUED A TEMPORARY ORDER

Kelly — whom Trump nominated in 2017 and who ordered a CNN journalist’s access restored in a similar case in 2018 — said the government must have clear standards for conduct that would lead to revoking a press pass. He called the standard of objec-

tionable reporting outlined in letters that the White House sent the outlets “so vague it hardly does the trick.”

The judge also made clear he did not buy the administration’s argument that the news outlets’ reporting endangered national security — and noted that Trump himself had not used that argument in the beginning, focusing solely on what he called negative coverage.

Theodore Bortous Jr., the news outlets’ attorney, said the judge’s quick ruling vindicated the freedom of the press, due process and the rule of law.

“I think we’re going to end up stronger because of this, and this tactic of just attacking the press, attacking individual journalists, is going to be discredited,” Bortous said in an interview on MS NOW Thursday afternoon. “The law is just clearly on our side here,” he said.

The temporary restraining order — typically designed to preserve the status quo pending a closer review of the case by the court — expires in two weeks. The judge gave both sides until Oct. 5 to file their arguments over whether he should consider issuing a longer-lasting ruling called a preliminary injunction. Kelly said he “intends to rule expeditiously” on the preliminary injunction request.

8 sailors attempted suicide on extended deployment

BY BEN FINLEY AND KONSTANTIN TOROPIN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Eight sailors attempted suicide while deployed with the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier strike group, which spent a record-setting uninterrupted time at sea supporting the Iran war, the Navy’s top civilian leader said this week.

Acting Navy Secretary Hung Cao provided the information to Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand in a letter dated Tuesday after the New York Democrat inquired last month about the strike group’s crew. The Lincoln’s extended deployment drew the nation’s attention following reports of crew stress and poor mental health, as well as supply shortages, including food and hygiene products.

Eight attempts in a strike group of 6,000 sailors over 10 months is actually low, experts say. The Navy reported 356 suicide attempts across the service in 2024, while there were more than 1,500 attempts among all active duty personnel that year, according to the latest annual report.

However, the reported attempts are not the best measure for conditions on the Lincoln and its supporting destroyers, particularly with no other additional details, said Dr. Harold Kudler, a former national lead for mental health services at the Department of Veterans Affairs and a retired VA psychiatrist.



Sakchai Lalit | AP

The U.S. Navy aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln arrives at the port in Laem Chabang, Chonburi, Thailand, Sept. 2.

“But something happened to get those families upset. Something happened to raise concerns about the health and well-being of those troops,” Kudler said, referring to media reports that quoted sailors and their families. “It reverberated through the military and reverberated across the country. So we need to understand what that was because we don’t need that to happen again.”

ACTING NAVY SECRETARY OFFERS INFORMATION FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE

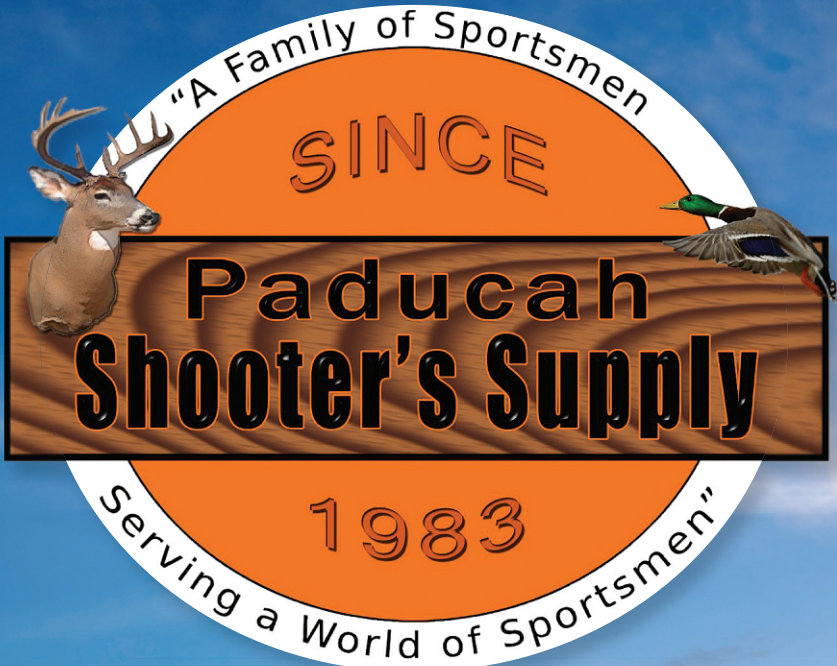
Gillibrand had asked Cao several questions focused on ship conditions, including about the availability of mental health support and healthy food as well as hygiene. The senator also asked if there were any suicides.

“There have been no suicides on board

during this deployment,” Cao wrote in the letter, which was obtained by The Associated Press and reported earlier by CNN. “Since the beginning of LINCOLN’S deployment, there have been a total of eight suicide attempts across the strike group — this number includes the LINCOLN crew and Sailors from the carrier wing, strike group and destroyer squadron staff, escorting destroyers, and all embarked aviation squadrons.”

Cao wrote that the carrier deployed with a psychologist, a clinical social worker, a counselor, three behavioral health technicians and a therapy dog.

Cao said the Lincoln maintained adequate food supplies, but because combat operations limited resupply opportunities, meal options were reduced from two to one for a short time. However, he wrote that four nutritionally balanced meals were served daily.



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