

TRUMP assassination attempt How it unfolded



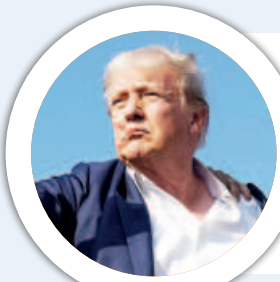
1:00pm ET

Rally grounds at Butler Farm Show grounds opens to Trump supporters, more than four hours before Trump was scheduled to speak. Fans immediately begin pouring in.



4:11pm ET

Former GOP Senate candidate Sean Parnell makes opening remarks by attacking the Biden administration, to cheers from onlookers.



6:15pm ET

Trump takes to the stage and is shot moments after he begins speaking, with gunshots ringing out as he says the words: "Take a look at what happened."



TRUMP ASSASSINATION BID More violence feared

REUTERS, Washington

In a country already on edge, the assassination attempt on former President Donald Trump has enraged his supporters, paused the Democratic campaign and raised fears of further political violence in the run-up to November's election.

Trump's Republican allies painted him as a hero on Saturday, seizing on the image of him with his ear bloodied and fist raised, appearing to mouth the words "Fight! Fight! Fight!"

Whereas Trump has regularly used violent language with his followers, advisers and allies of the former president flipped the script on his Democratic opponent President Joe Biden, saying it was the demonization of the Republican presidential candidate that led to the assassination attempt.

"Today is not just some isolated incident. The central premise of the Biden campaign is that President Donald Trump is an authoritarian fascist who must be stopped at all costs. That rhetoric led directly to President Trump's attempted assassination," US Senator JD Vance of Ohio, a top candidate to be Trump's running mate, said on X.

Biden moved quickly to try to defuse the situation, denouncing the attack as unacceptable political violence and pulling election ads attacking Trump.

"There's no place in America for this kind of violence. It's sick," Biden told reporters.

The motivation of the shooter is not yet known. The suspect, 20-year-old Thomas Matthew Crooks of Bethel Park, Pennsylvania,

was a registered Republican, according to state voter records. He previously made a \$15 donation to a political action committee that raises money for left-leaning and Democratic politicians.

In the short term, the attack will likely boost Trump's appearances in Milwaukee this week at the Republican National Convention as he accepts his party's presidential nomination, fortifying the sense of grievance and estrangement his supporters already feel toward the nation's political class.

Within hours of the shooting, Trump's campaign sent out a text asking voters to contribute to the campaign. "They're not after me, they're after you," the message read.

Billionaires Elon Musk and Bill Ackman also swiftly endorsed Trump. "I fully endorse President Trump and hope for his rapid recovery," Musk said on X, the social media site he owns.

Chris LaCivita, the co-manager of Trump's campaign, said on X that "for years and even today, leftist activists, Democrat donors and now even Joe Biden have made disgusting remarks and descriptions of shooting Donald Trump ... it's high time they be held accountable for it ... the best way is through the ballot box."

LaCivita was apparently referring to recent remarks by Biden made in the context of asking his supporters to focus on beating Trump rather than his own performance. "So, we're done talking about the debate, it's time to put Trump in a bullseye," said Biden, who has always condemned any political violence.

The US is grappling with the biggest

and most sustained increase in political violence since the 1970s. Of 14 fatal political attacks since supporters of Trump stormed the US Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, in which the perpetrator or suspect had a clear partisan leaning, 13 were right-wing assailants. One was on the left.

Despite being a former president, Trump has campaigned as an outsider insurgent, complaining that he has long been targeted by the federal "deep state" and Biden's administration to prevent him from reclaiming power.

He has typically employed violent, degrading and even apocalyptic rhetoric while doing so, warning of a "bloodbath" if he is not elected and saying immigrants in the United States illegally are "poisoning the blood of our country".

Some Republicans were already agitated by his continued stoking of the fire.

"If the country wasn't a powder keg before, it is now," said Chip Felkel, a Republican operative in South Carolina who has opposed Trump.

Brad Bannon, a Democratic strategist, said the shooting could benefit Trump politically because it feeds into his campaign narrative that the country is off-track.

"The attempted assassination creates sympathy for Trump," Bannon said. "It also confirms the idea to voters that something is fundamentally wrong in this nation, which is an idea that drives support for him."

Trump in May was found guilty of engaging in a scheme to cover up an affair with a porn star, a conviction that did little to alter the race and suggested supporters of both sides remain entrenched in their positions.

Biden has dealt with a debate within his own party over whether he should step down as the Democratic candidate because of concerns that he is no longer fit for the job. He says his doctors have told him he is in good shape. Trump has benefited in some polls from Biden's disastrous debate performance last month, but others show the race to be even.

Russia blames Biden admin for attack

REUTERS, Moscow

The Kremlin yesterday said it did not believe the US administration was responsible for Saturday's assassination attempt on US presidential candidate Donald Trump, but that it had created an atmosphere that provoked the attack.

Trump was shot in the ear during a rally in Pennsylvania, in an attack now being investigated as an assassination attempt. The attacker was shot dead and law enforcement officials said they had not yet identified a motive.

"We do not believe that the attempt to eliminate and assassinate Trump was organised by the current authorities," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

"But the atmosphere around candidate Trump ... provoked what America is confronting today."

His comments echoed those of some of Trump's Republican allies, who immediately pinned the blame on Biden.

"After numerous attempts to remove candidate Trump from the political arena - using first legal tools, the courts, prosecutors, attempts to politically discredit and compromise the candidate - it was obvious to all outside observers that his life was in danger," Peskov said.

He added that there were no plans for Putin to call Trump now.

PREVIOUS SHOOTINGS OF US LEADERS



AFP, Washington

RONALD REAGAN (1981)

President Reagan was shot and seriously wounded as he left an event at the Hilton hotel in Washington. The attacker was John Hinckley Jr, who was granted unconditional release in 2022.

Reagan spent twelve days in the hospital. The incident boosted Reagan's popularity, as he displayed humor and resilience during his recovery.

GERALD FORD (1975)

President Ford was left unscathed in two separate assassination attempts by women in September 1975, both in California and within a span of just 17 days.

JOHN F. KENNEDY (1963)

Riding in his motorcade with his wife Jackie, President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas by Lee Harvey Oswald.

The Warren Commission investigating the assassination concluded in 1964 that Lee Harvey Oswald, a former marine who had lived in the Soviet Union, had acted alone.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (1933)

As president-elect, FDR was the target of an assassination attempt in Miami, Florida. He was unharmed, but Chicago Mayor Anton Cermak was killed in the attack.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT (1912)

Like Trump, Teddy Roosevelt was running for the White House as a former president when he was shot in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

WILLIAM MCKINLEY (1901)

President McKinley was shot and killed by anarchist Leon Czolgosz in Buffalo, New York.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1865)

Lincoln was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth, a well-known actor and Confederate sympathizer, while watching a play called "Our American Cousin" at Ford's Theater in Washington.

KP Sharma Oli Nepal's new PM

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's president appointed Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli as prime minister for a fourth time yesterday, after his communist party forged a coalition government with the centre-left Nepali Congress.

"President Poudel has appointed KP Sharma Oli as the new prime minister of Nepal," Kiran Pokharel, press adviser to President Ram Chandra Poudel, told AFP.

Oli, 72, who heads the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), will be sworn into office today, Pokharel added.

His predecessor and former coalition government ally, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, lost a vote of confidence on Friday, barely 18 months after taking office. Dahal was forced to step down after Oli's party withdrew its support.

Oli instead forged a deal with Sher Bahadur Deuba of the Nepali Congress.



A bloodied but defiant Donald Trump, the Republican US presidential candidate, is being taken off the stage by secret service agents after being shot in the ear by an assailant at a campaign event at Butler Farm Show Inc. in Butler, Pennsylvania on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

'US MISSILES IN GERMANY' Russia threatens targeting Europe

AFP, Moscow

The Kremlin on Saturday warned that the deployment of US missiles in Germany could make European capitals targets for Russian missiles in a repeat of Cold War-style confrontation.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov spoke of a "paradox" in which "Europe is a target for our missiles, our country is a target for US missiles in Europe".

"We have enough capacity to contain these missiles but the potential victims are the capitals of these countries," he said, speaking to Russian state television channel Russia 1.

Peskov also hinted that such a confrontation could undermine Europe as a whole -- in the same way that the Cold War ended with the Soviet Union's collapse.

"Europe is coming apart. Europe is not living its best moment. In a different configuration, a repeat of history is inevitable," he said.

The White House announced on Wednesday during a NATO summit that it would periodically station long-range weapons including Tomahawk cruise missiles in Germany from 2026 as a deterrent.

"Exercising these advanced capabilities will demonstrate the United States' commitment to NATO and its contributions to European integrated deterrence," the White House said.

The Kremlin has already criticised the move, accusing Washington of taking a step towards a new Cold War and of directly participating in the conflict in Ukraine.