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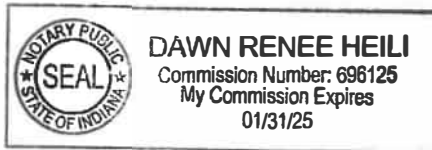
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NATIONAL NEWS

China closing AI gap with the United States

MEAGHAN TOBIN AND CADE METZ
New York Times

SHANGHAI — At the World Artificial Intelligence Conference in Shanghai in July, startup founder Qu Dongqi showed off a video he had recently posted online. It displayed an old photograph of a woman with two toddlers. Then the photo sprang to life as the woman lifted the toddlers up in her arms and they laughed with surprise.

The video was created by AI technology from Chinese internet company Kuaishou. The technology was reminiscent of a video generator, called Sora, that American startup OpenAI unveiled this year. But unlike Sora, it was available to the general public.

“My American friends still can’t use Sora,” Qu said. “But we already have better solutions here.”

While the United States has had a head start on AI development, China is catching up. In recent weeks, several Chinese companies have unveiled AI technologies that rival leading American systems. And these technologies are already in the hands of consumers, businesses and independent software developers across the globe.

While many American companies are worried that AI technologies could accelerate the spread of disinformation or cause other serious harm, Chinese companies are more willing to release their technologies to consumers or even share the underlying software code with other businesses and software developers. This kind of sharing of computer code, called open source, allows others to more quickly build and distribute their own products using the same technologies.

Open source has been a cornerstone of the development of computer software, the internet and, now, artificial intelligence. The idea is that technology advances faster when its computer code is

freely available for anyone to examine, use and improve upon.

China’s efforts could have enormous implications as AI technology continues to develop in the years to come. The technology could increase the productivity of workers, fuel future innovations and power a new wave of military technologies, including autonomous weapons.

When OpenAI kicked off the AI boom in late 2022 with the release of the online chatbot ChatGPT, China struggled to compete with technologies emerging from American companies such as OpenAI and Google. (The New York Times has sued OpenAI and its partner, Microsoft, claiming copyright infringement of news content related to AI systems.) But China’s progress is now accelerating.

Kuaishou released its video generator, Kling, in China more than a month ago and to users worldwide on Wednesday. Just before Kling’s arrival, 01.AI, a startup co-founded by Kai-Fu Lee, an investor and technologist who helped build Chinese offices for both Google and Microsoft, released chatbot technology that scored nearly as well as the leading American technologies on common benchmark tests that rate the performance of the world’s chatbots.

New technology from Chinese tech giant Alibaba has also leaped to the top of a leaderboard that rates open-source AI systems. “We have disproved the commonplace belief that China doesn’t have the talent or the technology to compete with the U.S.,” Lee said. “That belief is simply wrong.”

In interviews, a dozen technologists and researchers at Chinese tech companies said open-source technologies were a key reason that China’s AI development has advanced so quickly. They saw open-source AI as an opportunity



NEW YORK TIMES

Kai-Fu Lee is a co-founder of the startup 01.AI. His company unveiled a new version of its artificial intelligence technology this year that sits near the top of a leaderboard that ranks the world’s best technologies.

for the country to take a lead.

But that will not be easy. The United States remains at the forefront of AI research. And U.S. officials have resolved to keep it that way.

The White House has instituted a trade embargo designed to prevent Chinese companies from using the most powerful versions of computer chips that are essential to building artificial intelligence. A group of lawmakers has introduced a bill that would make it easier for the White House to control the export of AI software built in the United States. Others are trying to limit the progress of open-source technologies that have helped fuel the rise of similar systems in China.

The top American companies are also exploring new technologies that aim to eclipse the powers of today’s chatbots and video generators.

“Chinese companies are good

at replicating and improving what the U.S. already has,” said Yiran Chen, a professor of electrical and computer engineering at Duke University in North Carolina. “They are not as good at inventing something completely new that will bypass the U.S. in five to 10 years.”

But many in China’s tech industry believe that open-source technology could help them grow despite those constraints. And if U.S. regulators stifle the progress of American open-source projects (as some lawmakers are discussing) China could gain a significant edge. If the best open-source technologies come from China, U.S. developers could end up building their systems atop Chinese technologies.

“Open-source AI is the foundation of AI development,” said Clément Delangue, CEO of Hugging Face, a company that houses many of the world’s open-source

AI projects. The U.S. built its leadership in AI through collaboration between companies and researchers, he said, “and it looks like China could do the same thing.”

AI systems require enormous resources: talent, data and computing power. Beijing has made it clear that the benefits accruing from such investments should be shared. The Chinese government has poured money into AI projects and subsidized resources like computing centers.

But Chinese tech companies face a major constraint on the development of their AI systems: compliance with Beijing’s strict censorship regime, which extends to generative AI technologies.

Kuaishou’s new video generator Kling appears to have been trained to follow the rules. Text prompts with any mention of China’s president, Xi Jinping, or controversial topics such as feminism and the country’s real estate crisis yielded error messages. An image prompt of this year’s National People’s Congress yielded a video of the delegates shifting in their seats.

Kuaishou did not respond to questions about what steps the company took to prevent Kling from creating harmful, fake or politically sensitive content.

By making their most advanced AI technologies freely available, China’s tech giants are demonstrating their willingness to contribute to the country’s overall technological advancement as Beijing has established that the power and profit of the tech industry should be channeled toward the goal of self sufficiency.

The concern for some in China is that the country will struggle to amass the computing chips it needs to build increasingly powerful technologies. But that has not yet prevented Chinese companies from building powerful new technologies that can compete with U.S. systems.

Pope names new leader for key U.S. archdiocese

NICK PERRY, PATRICK WHITTLE
AND HOLLY RAMER
Associated Press

BOSTON — Pope Francis accepted the resignation of Cardinal Seán O’Malley as archbishop of Boston on Monday and named the bishop of Providence, R.I., Richard Henning, to replace him as leader of one of the most important Catholic archdioceses in the United States.

The Vatican announcement didn’t mention O’Malley’s other main role as the pope’s main adviser on fighting clergy sexual abuse as head of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, suggesting he would remain in that capacity until a new commission leader is named.

St. John Paul II had tapped O’Malley to take over in Boston in 2003 at the height of the clergy sexual abuse scandal that had exploded there following an investigation by The Boston Globe newspaper. Revelations of years of abuse and cover-ups by the church led to the downfall of then-archbishop Cardinal Bernard Law, who resigned in disgrace in December 2002.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cardinal Sean O’Malley, left, responds to a question from a reporter as the bishop of Providence, R.I., Richard Henning, looks on during a news conference Monday in Braintree, Mass.

“When I arrived it was a time of great crisis and of great pain because of the terrible scourge of sexual abuse,” O’Malley told a news conference as he reflected on all changes the church has seen during his 40 years as a bishop.

“But despite all the challenges we’ve had I’m full of hope.”

At age 80, O’Malley is five years beyond the normal retirement age for bishops. His 59-year-old successor, Henning, from Rockville Centre, Long Island, has

been bishop of Providence since last year.

In terms of clergy abuse, the torch in Boston is being passed from a man whose contemporaries were the accused to one whose peers were the victims.

“When these crimes and sins were committed, I was also a child. I’m grateful to God that I was not affected by it personally, but people in my generation were,” Henning said at the news conference. “Those survivors, they deserve a listening heart. In some ways they have as much to proclaim to us about the gospel as we do to them.”

O’Malley called the arrival of a new archbishop “a time of renewal and hope” and described Henning as “someone who transmits hope to restless hearts.”

The Archdiocese of Boston is the fourth largest archdiocese in the U.S., serving more than 1.8 million Roman Catholics. It had operating expenses of more than \$350 million in fiscal 2023, and its schools serve more than 46,000 students.

O’Malley will be remembered for his advocacy and support for

families experiencing homelessness and victims of human trafficking, as well as his leadership in the fight against climate change, Gov. Maura Healey said in a statement. “I greatly admire his deep faith and his empathy and compassion for all,” Healey said.

Henning said he was “deeply shocked and surprised” that he was chosen.

“I am very well aware that I have a lot to learn,” Henning said. “My first job, really, is just to be listener.”

Francis has long expressed his esteem for O’Malley and selected him as a founding member of his core cardinal advisers, known as the C9. O’Malley advised Francis not only on child protection issues, but also helped design the reform of the Vatican bureaucracy.

O’Malley’s relations with Francis haven’t always been easy. In 2018, he issued a blistering rebuke after the pope dismissed claims by survivors of Chile’s most notorious abuser. O’Malley’s harsh tone was a wakeup call for Francis, who eventually apologized after commissioning an investigation into the Chilean scandal.

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WORLD NEWS

Heat contributed to 47,000 deaths in Europe last year

AUSTYN GAFFNEY
New York Times

More than 47,000 Europeans died from heat-related causes during 2023, the world's hottest year on record, a new report in Nature Medicine has found.

But the number could have been much higher.

Without heat adaptation measures over the past two decades, the death toll for Europeans experiencing the same temperatures at the start of the 21st century could have been 80% higher, according to the new study. For people older than 80, the toll could have doubled.

Some of the measures include advances in health care, more widespread air conditioning, and improved public information that kept people indoors and hydrated amid extreme temperatures.

"We need to consider climate change as a health issue," said Elisa Gallo, the lead author of the study and a postdoctoral researcher at the Barcelona Institute for Global Health, a nonprofit research center. "We still have thousands of deaths caused by heat every year, so we still have to work a lot and we have to work faster."

Counting deaths from extreme heat is difficult, in part because death certificates don't always reflect the role of heat. The study used publicly available death records from 35 countries, provided by Eurostat, the statistics office of the European Union, and representing about 543 million Europeans.

The researchers used an epidemiological model to analyze the deaths alongside 2023 weekly temperature records to estimate



ASSOCIATED PRESS

A woman fans herself Monday in Madrid, Spain, amid a heat wave in Europe. More than 47,000 Europeans died from heat-related causes during 2023.

what fraction of deaths could be attributable to heat.

"We're quickly approaching the limits to what the human body can withstand," said Jordan Clark, a senior policy associate at Duke University's Heat Policy Innovation Hub who was not involved in the study. As the planet continues to warm, he said, "we're racing against the clock."

"We can't adapt forever," Clark said.

Heat waves are becoming more severe and prolonged as global temperatures increase. Ending our reliance on fossil fuels would be a core mitigation strategy, Clark said.

The past two decades have pushed people to modify their behaviors in response to heat, Gallo said. Other policy-level changes like improving urban planning, increasing green spaces, investing more in renewable energy and public transportation, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions could all contribute to adaptation.

"Adaptation has led to less deaths," said Joan Balaster, associate research

professor of climate and health at the Barcelona Institute and a co-author of the study. The term adaptation is meant very broadly, he added. It includes anything that reduces a group's vulnerability to heat.

But pointing to the specific adaptation measures or policies that made the biggest differences is more difficult than estimating mortality, according to researchers.

In future studies, Gallo said she hoped to focus more on adaptations and differences between countries. The highest rates of heat-related deaths in the study occurred in countries that experienced the warmest temperatures over the longest periods of time, including high nighttime temperatures, such as Bulgaria, Spain, Cyprus, Portugal and Italy.

"It's really important to have more studies on evaluations of what's actually being done, that assess the evolution of adaptation," said Francesca de' Donato, an environmental public health researcher at the Lazio Regional Health Service in Rome.

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NATIONAL NEWS

New screening kit offers alternative to dreaded Pap smear

DANIELLE FRIEDMAN
New York Times

For some women, getting a Pap smear is hell.

Since her early 20s, Kevinn Poree has suffered from chronic vaginal pain — pain that led her to scream in agony the first time a gynecologist tried to insert a speculum.

“I completely lost it,” said Poree, 38. After the speculum was removed, she started “crying in the fetal position.”

Ever since, like many women, she has dreaded the cervical cancer screening test, which requires a patient’s legs to be held apart with stirrups and a cold metal device to be inserted vaginally, while a physician scrapes cells from the cervix.

Even when acute pain isn’t an issue, research suggests that, for many, Pap smears are uncomfortable, for a complex set of physical and emotional reasons.

“There are people who experience distress” due to fear or embarrassment or a history of sexual trauma, said Karen Knudsen, CEO of the American Cancer Society.

Now, a few health care companies are preparing to introduce a new model for cervical cancer screening and prevention that would circumvent the speculum: self-collection, in which a woman swabs her vagina in the doctor’s office, using only a narrow swab that looks similar to the one used during a Covid test. Once the sample is collected, a lab would test it for the strains of human papillomavirus, or HPV, most likely to cause cervical cancer.

A key change in HPV screening has made the technique possible: Labs are now able to test using samples taken from the vaginal walls, as opposed to from the cervix itself.

In introducing self-collection, the United States will follow countries including Australia, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden, which have gradually introduced self-sampling for cervical cancer screening in recent years, with

great success in its adoption.

Two decades of research suggest this method is as effective at preventing cervical cancer as traditional Pap tests for women 25 and older.

In May, the Food and Drug Administration approved self-collection tools from pharmaceutical companies Roche and BD (Becton, Dickinson and Co.) for use inside health care settings. Patients can test themselves in private and leave a sample with a health care provider, similar to when they provide a urine sample.

But representatives for the companies said the longer-term goal is at-home cervical cancer screening, in which a test is ordered by a health care provider, a woman collects a sample at home and then sends it to a lab for HPV screening. If the sample comes back positive, her provider would then advise on next steps.

While screening at home is now available in other countries, this method is still under FDA review in the United States. It could gain approval by early next year.

Experts hope the tests — which will be covered by public and private insurance, and free at many federally funded clinics for women who are uninsured — will help reach the 30% of eligible women in the United States who do not get screened regularly, including those who avoid Pap smears due to discomfort. This screening gap results in thousands of preventable deaths from cervical cancer every year.

Self-sampling comes at a time when women are pushing back against culturally embedded beliefs that gynecologic and reproductive pain is something they have to simply endure. Along with advances in alleviating IUD pain and the side effects of menopause, women’s health companies are also designing more comfortable speculums for gynecological exams.

Erin Kobetz, the associate director for community outreach and engagement at the Sylvester



NEW YORK TIMES

A self-collection kit for cervical cancer screening. Starting this fall, women will be able to use a simple swab to screen for cervical cancer — the method offers an alternative to a procedure that many dread.

Comprehensive Cancer Center in Florida, who has spent two decades studying cervical cancer self-sampling, described the new tests as having been “a long time coming.”

Despite being disliked by many women, the patient experience of having a Pap smear with a speculum and stirrups has remained largely unchanged since the 1940s, when the test — named for its inventor, Dr. George Papanicolaou — became standard practice in the United States.

This is in part because it works, said Knudsen of the American Cancer Society. The introduction of the Pap smear reduced cervical cancer mortality by more than 70% in the 20th century, so from that perspective, she said, “the Pap smear is unquestionably a win.”

During a Pap smear, the doctor takes a sample of cells from the cervix, smears it onto a slide and

sends it away to a cytologist, who looks for precancerous or cancerous cells. If the test comes back positive for abnormal cells, and the disease is still in its early stages, a physician can usually remove the affected area and stop the disease from progressing.

More recently, in many cases, samples taken during Pap smears are also tested for the strains of HPV most likely to cause cervical cancer.

Pap smears and HPV tests are especially effective at preventing cervical cancer because the disease progresses slowly, relative to many other cancers; it typically takes years to move beyond the precancerous stage.

Despite the Pap smear’s effectiveness, the drop in cervical cancer deaths has leveled off since 2008. In the United States, about 11,500 women are diagnosed with cervical

cancer each year, and 4,000 will die from it.

Public health officials say many of these deaths are preventable — and due, in part, to the current testing protocol failing to reach millions. “The incidence has really sharply declined” thanks to the Pap smear, Kobetz said, but this decline “has not been experienced equitably.”

Experts told The New York Times that they are cautiously optimistic that broader screening via self-collection — in concert with more robust vaccination against HPV — could help the World Health Organization meet its goal of eradicating cervical cancer in the near future.

“This is the one cancer that we could eliminate in our lifetime,” Kobetz said. From the start of her career, she said, “I thought that I would work myself out of a job.”

Floods lead to dramatic rescues, 2 deaths in Connecticut

DAVE COLLINS, MICHAEL R. SISK AND KAREN MATTHEWS
Associated Press

OXFORD, Conn. — Torrential rains turned streets into raging rivers in parts of Connecticut and New York’s Long Island, trapping people in cars and a restaurant, covering vehicles in mud, and sweeping two women to their deaths, authorities said.

Dramatic rescues unfolded as a foot of rain fell on some parts of western Connecticut late Sunday and early Monday, coming down so fast that it caught drivers unaware. Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont said more than 100 people were evacuated by search and rescue teams Sunday evening.

The bodies of two women who had been in separate cars were recovered Monday in Oxford, a town of 13,000 about 35 miles southwest of Hartford, officials said. Both were Oxford residents.

Firefighters were trying to get the first woman to safety when the flooded Little River swept her away, Oxford Fire Chief Scott Pelletier said at a news conference with other Connecticut officials. The second woman got out of her car and tried to cling to a sign, but “the racing water was too much” and swept her away, too, he said.

“This is a tragic and devastating day for Oxford,” the town’s first selectman, George Temple, said.

U.S. Sen. Richard Blumenthal added, “Who would have thought the Little River would turn into a gushing torrent of destruction, which is what happened.”

In nearby Southbury, Lucas Barber used wilderness



ASSOCIATED PRESS

This photo provided by Beacon Hose Co. No. 1 in Beacon Falls, Conn., shows firefighters rescuing people from the Brookside Inn in Oxford, Conn., after flash floods trapped people inside the building on Sunday.

first responder techniques he learned as a backpacker and rock climber to wade through chest-high water to save Patrick Jennings, who has a prosthetic leg, and Jennings’ dog from a car outside the Southbury Plaza mall.

Barber, 30, said he drove to higher ground and grabbed rope he keeps in his car for emergencies. Jennings’ car, he said, looked like it was “turning in the tide and seemed to be sinking.”

Barber said he first tried to throw his rope to Jennings but changed his approach once told he had a prosthetic leg. He waded and swam to the car, which was filling with water, he said.

He saw Jennings’ golden retriever, Stanley, in the back, scared, and Jennings worried about leaving him behind. “Your dog is coming with us, but also I need to get you out right now,” Barber said he told Jennings.

Jennings took off his prosthetic leg, and Barber wrapped his rope around the man’s waist and chest. Barber tried tying the rope

around the dog’s collar, but it came undone. Once he got Jennings to safety and others could tend to him, he went back for Stanley. Halfway back, Barber said, the dog got excited to see Jennings and swam the rest of the way to his owner.

Barber said he went back a third time to fetch Jennings’ prosthetic leg, which was bobbing next to his car.

In Oxford, rushing waters surrounded the Brookside Inn, trapping 18 people. Firefighters had to stretch a ladder across the floodwaters to reach them as cars and other large debris carried by the torrent smashed into the building, said Jeremy Rodorigo, a firefighter from neighboring Beacon Falls.

The firefighters also rescued a woman and a small dog from an apartment next door, Rodorigo said.

Lamont said he is requesting federal disaster funds for recovery. “This was as severe a storm as we can remember,” he said.

The storm system that hit Connecticut and then moved on to Long Island was separate from Hur-

ricane Ernesto, which on Monday was over the open Atlantic Ocean but still expected to cause powerful swells, dangerous surf and rip currents along the U.S. East Coast.

William Syrett, a professor of meteorology and atmospheric science at Penn State University, referred to the Connecticut-New York system as “training thunderstorms.”

“It’s like each thunderstorm is a car on a train track, and so they just keep going over the same place,” he said. He cited “perfect conditions” for the storms, thanks to the amount of moisture in the air and a slow weather system.

The unusual part was

the amount of rain that fell over several hours, Syrett said, not the thunderstorms themselves.

Ed Romaine, the executive of Long Island’s Suffolk County, said that hundreds of homes were affected by flooding and that mudslides covered the roofs of cars in some areas. He joined other officials at a news conference near a pond in Stony Brook where a dam breached and destroyed a section of a major road and flooded homes.

Town of Brookhaven Supervisor Dan Panico called the flooding “an environmental and economic disaster.”

“Millions of gallons of water, turtles, fish, every-

thing is downstream along with the personal belongings of many of the houses that were flooded,” Panico said, adding that repairs to Harbor Road alone would cost \$10 million.

The storms canceled more than 450 flights at Newark Liberty, LaGuardia and John F. Kennedy airports, officials said.

The storms dropped about 2 to 4 inches of rain on most of northern New Jersey, causing minor to moderate flooding on roads including the Garden State Parkway and other major highways that left some motorists stranded. No deaths, injuries or property damage were reported in New Jersey.

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NATIONAL NEWS

Billionaire plans riskier 2nd trip into space

KENNETH CHANG
New York Times

Three years ago, a billionaire entrepreneur named Jared Isaacman made a groundbreaking trip to space. That spaceflight, which Isaacman called Inspiration4, was the first to orbit Earth without a professional astronaut aboard.

This week, Isaacman, founder and CEO of Shift4, a payment processing company, is scheduled to head into space again. This time the itinerary is longer, more daring and riskier, and includes a spacewalk, the first by private astronauts.

The mission, named Polaris Dawn, hearkens back to the earliest era of spaceflight, the 1960s, when pioneers including Yuri Gagarin of the Soviet Union and John Glenn of the United States pushed the boundaries of what had been accomplished in space, learning how to survive and operate in an airless and weightless environment.

But unlike those expeditions, undertaken by national space agencies, this is a purely commercial effort. For Polaris Dawn, Isaacman is collaborating closely with Elon Musk and his rocket company, SpaceX, to start laying the foundations for Musk's dream of sending people to Mars.

"There's always a risk calculus to it," Isaacman said in an interview a week and a half ago, before he and his three crewmates headed to Florida for the launch. "But the real focus is on what we stand to gain and learn from it. And in this case, we've got some pretty cool things."

Most astronaut missions these days are almost boringly routine, basically taxiderms ferrying people to and from an orbiting space station.

The Polaris Dawn mission is not going to a space station. Instead, it is going



SPACEX

A SpaceX photo shows a test of a spacesuit inside the Dragon capsule. Jared Isaacman, founder and chief of the company Shift4, is leading Polaris Dawn, a mission that will include a daring spacewalk.

farther than anyone has traveled since the Apollo 17 mission went to the moon in 1972.

"It's time to explore," William Gerstenmaier, a former NASA official who is now vice president for build and flight reliability at SpaceX, said during a news conference on Aug. 19.

A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket will launch a Crew Dragon capsule – the same spacecraft that takes NASA astronauts to the International Space Station, or ISS – into an elliptical orbit that swings much farther away from Earth. Polaris Dawn astronauts will pass through regions of intense radiation, and risk bombardment from tiny space rocks as well as bits of human-made debris that could puncture the spacecraft.

The upside of the journey is that it will test new technologies and gather data on the effects it has on the human body when people venture deeper into space.

"This is a mission that sets out to accomplish a lot

of things in a very short period," Isaacman said. "We have some pretty ambitious objectives."

For this flight, SpaceX developed a new spacesuit to be used for the spacewalk, and will also try sending communications via laser pulses, instead of radio signals, between the Crew Dragon and SpaceX's Starlink constellation of internet satellites.

Polaris Dawn is scheduled to lift off from NASA's Kennedy Space Center early Tuesday, during a four-hour launch window that opens at 3:38 a.m.

While Isaacman led and financed Inspiration4 – he essentially chartered a flight using a Falcon 9 rocket and a Crew Dragon capsule from SpaceX – Polaris Dawn and two subsequent missions are, in Isaacman's words, a "joint effort" between Isaacman and SpaceX.

Isaacman declined to say how much he or SpaceX has spent. "We don't ever get into the costs on all this," he said. "I would just say

that there is obviously a lot of contributions that are coming from SpaceX, and myself, in this."

Two members of the Polaris Dawn crew are SpaceX employees: Anna Menon, a lead space operations engineer, and Sarah Gillis, who oversees astronaut training.

The other two crew members are Isaacman and Scott Poteet, a retired U.S. Air Force pilot and longtime friend of Isaacman's who served as the mission director on the ground during Inspiration4.

Polaris Dawn will travel farther from the planet than anyone since the Apollo moon landings ended more than 50 years ago. The first few orbits will pass through a dent in the Earth's magnetic field known as the South Atlantic Anomaly; this magnetic weak spot allows high-energy charged particles from regions known as the Van Allen belts to come much closer to Earth's surface.

Within a few hours, the

Polaris Dawn crew will receive a dose of radiation equivalent to what astronauts on the ISS absorb in three months.

After the Crew Dragon completes about eight orbits, the spacecraft's thrusters will fire to push the apogee, or farthest point of the orbit, to 870 miles above the planet.

That will be about 17 miles higher than the 853-mile altitude NASA astronauts Pete Conrad and Richard Gordon reached during the Gemini 11 mission in 1966, still the record for astronauts on a spaceflight that did not head to the moon.

After about six of these high orbits, the Crew Dragon will fire its thrusters again to drop the spacecraft down to a lower, elliptical orbit, with an apogee of 435 miles.

The highlight of the five-day journey is scheduled for the third day: the spacewalk. During the two-hour operation, the astronauts will put on their spacesuits before all the air is let out of the Crew Dragon; the inside of the spacecraft will become part of the vacuum of outer space.

Then two crew members – Isaacman and Gillis, connected by umbilical cords that will provide power, air and other life support needs – will move outside

the spacecraft to conduct tests on the spacesuits.

Poteet and Menon will remain inside the capsule, keeping an eye on the displays and managing the umbilical cords, but "taking all the same risks we are in the vacuum of space," Isaacman said.

The new technologies needed for Polaris Dawn went through numerous iterations and tests.

Isaacman recalled that he and Gillis had gone to NASA's test facility at White Sands, New Mexico, to observe small projectiles fired at the spacesuits to see how they would stand up. "We obviously weren't in them," he said, "but to see how the suit performs in a micrometeorite environment."

To help ensure that the spacewalk will go smoothly, the entire Crew Dragon capsule was placed in a large vacuum chamber, simulating the emptying of air that will be performed before the spacewalk, and then refilling the capsule with oxygen and nitrogen after the hatch was closed again.

Crew members acknowledge that risks remain, but said that they and the 14,000 employees at SpaceX had done everything they could to be ready to handle them.

The five-day mission will end with a splashdown off the coast of Florida.

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NYSEG Service Territory – Commission Extends NYSEG's Time Period in LAUF calculation to 10 years

Notice is hereby given that, after petitioning the New York State Public Service Commission ("Commission"), New York State Electric & Gas Corporation ("NYSEG") has been authorized by the Commission to modify its' natural gas tariff, extending the period of time used in the calculation of the Loss Factor for NYSEG's Lost and Unaccounted for ("LAUF") gas to a ten-year average instead of the current five-year average. The Commission authorized the proposed tariff change to enable NYSEG to continue to reconcile LAUF gas costs and avoid potential inequities between Sales and Transportation Customers.

The amendment became effective on August 1, 2024.

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