Donald Trump (left) and JD Vance (right) at the Republican National Convention on July 15

DID YOU KNOW? In recent years, Presidential candidates have launched their campaigns about 19 months prior to the election.

Who is JD Vance?

Donald Trump chose JD Vance, a US senator from Ohio, to be his Vice Presidential running mate on the Republican ticket. Vance, age 39, was elected to office in 2022. Before that, he served in the US Marines, attended Yale Law School, and wrote a best-selling book called *Hillbilly Elegy*, a memoir about his difficult childhood.

Republicans rally around Trump

The Republican National Convention (RNC) opened this week in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, after a shooting occurred in Butler, Pennsylvania, two days earlier. On July 13, gunshots were fired at a campaign rally for Donald Trump, the Republican who served as President from 2017–2021 and is seeking a second term in this year's election. Trump and two other people were injured, and two people died, including the gunman. Trump recovered and, on July 15, he announced his pick for Vice President and attended the convention.

What happened on July 13?

A few minutes after Trump began speaking at the rally, held outdoors at a fairground, several shots were fired toward him from a rooftop outside the arena. A bullet grazed Trump's right ear. He ducked behind the lectern and was immediately surrounded by agents from the Secret Service (government agency responsible for protecting current and former Presidents). The agents moved Trump safely offstage and into an SUV. He was taken to a nearby hospital, treated for a minor injury, and released. A person in the crowd, Corey Comperatore, age 50, was killed, and two people were seriously injured by the bullets fired. The shooter was killed by the Secret Service.

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How did people react?

World leaders and US elected officials from both political parties strongly condemned the shooting and said political violence has no place in our nation. After the incident, Trump wrote on social media, "In this moment, it is more important than ever that we stand united and show our true character as Americans." In a special address from the White House, President Joe Biden called for Americans to "lower the temperature of our politics." He said, "While we may disagree, we are not enemies. We must stand together."

What is known about the shooter?

The shooter was identified as Thomas Matthew Crooks, age 20. He was a registered Republican from Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, who worked as an aide at a nursing facility. The gun he used was an AR-15 rifle (a military-type weapon) that was bought legally by his father. Investigators said Crooks left few clues about what his motive for the shooting might have been. Authorities said he had no history of violence and no sign of mental health issues and had not been identified as a threat by law enforcement. Investigators said they believe he was acting alone and that there were no additional concerns for public safety.

What else happened?

On July 15, Trump announced JD Vance, a US senator, as his choice for Vice President (see box above). The announcement came on the first day of the RNC in Milwaukee, and Trump and Vance appeared together that evening at the event. Each of the two major political parties (Republican and Democrat) holds a convention in the summer before a Presidential election. People representing voters from all 50 states, known as delegates, gather to listen to speeches given by party leaders and choose their nominees. Trump and Vance were officially nominated as the Republican candidates on the first night of the four-day convention.

What will happen next?

The FBI (top federal law enforcement agency) said it was investigating the July 13 shooting and trying to determine why Crooks carried out the attack. Biden ordered an independent review of the shooting, and investigators are looking into any lapses in security that enabled Crooks to access a rooftop so close to a Presidential rally. Republican officials said security is very tight at the RNC, where Trump and Vance were set to speak when *The Week Junior* went to press. The Democratic National Convention will take place from August 19–22 in Chicago, Illinois.