

Molly White @molly0xFF Sun Jan 10 20:50:07 +0000 2021

As the news broke on Wednesday that there was a riot at the U.S. Capitol, volunteer #Wikipedia editors worked to document what was happening. A thread about the fascinating process of breaking news editing: <https://t.co/8FoCCphKVJ>

The screenshot shows the Wikipedia article page for "2021 storming of the United States Capitol". The article text is partially visible, starting with "On January 6, 2021, rioters supporting United States President Donald Trump's attempts to overturn his defeat in the 2020 presidential election stormed the United States Capitol. After breaching multiple police perimeters, they occupied, vandalized, and ransacked parts of the building for several hours." To the right of the text is a thumbnail image titled "2021 storming of the United States Capitol" showing a crowd gathered outside the Capitol building. Below the image is a metadata box with the following information: Date: January 6, 2021; Location: United States Capitol, Washington, D.C.; Caused by: Opposition to the results of the 2020 United States presidential election; Goals: Disrupt or delay the Electoral College.

At 18:34 UTC (1:34 p.m. EST) on January 6, an editor created a short article titled "January 2021 Donald Trump rally" about what was at the time only a rally in Washington, D.C. <https://t.co/bSZqjApsJG>

This article documents a current event.
Information may change rapidly as the event progresses, and initial news reports may be unreliable. The latest updates to this article may not reflect the most current information. Please feel free to improve this article (but note that updates without valid and reliable references will be removed) or discuss changes on the talk page. *(Learn how and when to remove this template message)*

On January 6, 2021, thousands of Donald Trump supporters gathered in Washington, D.C. to reject results of the November 2020 presidential election.^{[1][2]} At least 10 people have been arrested.^[3]

See also

- Demonstrations in support of Donald Trump

References

- ¹ <https://www.npr.org/sections/congress-electoral-college-tally-live-updates/2021/01/06/953616207/diehard-trump-supporters-gather-in-the-nations-capital-to-protest-election-resul>
- ² <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2021/01/06/dc-protests-trump-rally-live-updates/>
- ³ <https://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/news/532907-10-arrested-by-dc-police-during-the-pro-trump-protests-tuesday>

Shortly after 2 p.m. EST, protesters breached the Capitol building. The information was first introduced to the article at 2:33 p.m. EST, and at this point many editors began rapidly updating the page. <https://t.co/Yvtzv75WwT>

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url=|archive-date=|access-date=January 6, 2021|website=[[The Washington Post]]|language=en}}</ref><ref name=":0" /> At least 10 people have been arrested. Select buildings in the Capitol Hill complex were evacuated, and protesters broke past security to enter the Capitol building.<ref name=":0">{{Cite web|last=McEvoy|first=Temal|date=January 6, 2021|title=DC Protests
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At the peak of editing, I would estimate there was an edit being saved every ten seconds—many more were unsuccessful due to "edit conflicts", which occur when two editors try to simultaneously save conflicting revisions.

A @wikidata item, Q104705419, was created at 19:49 UTC (2:49 p.m. EST) to record structured data about the event. <https://t.co/nn8h14wWiL>

By 3 p.m., articles about the event had already been created on the Arabic and Basque Wikipedias. They were followed soon after by Persian and Russian, then Simple English.

At 20:17 UTC (3:17 p.m. EST), an editor observed that the title was ambiguous (there had been other January 2021 Donald Trump rallies), and moved the page to a new title at "January 2021 United States Capitol protests".

Shortly after, the first of many, many discussions about what to title the page began, with many suggestions. Some suggested titles were "storming", "riots", and "insurrection".

More than 200 editors contributed in under twelve hours to a discussion about page titling, which closed at 08:00 UTC (3 a.m. EST) on January 7 with a decision to title the page "2021 storming of the United States Capitol".

By the time the Capitol was cleared by police at 5:40 p.m. EST, the page was already over 1,800 words long.

People began looking for images to illustrate the article. The first, a photo of pro-Trump protesters outside of Union Station that was taken just before noon EST, was added to the article at 6:36 EST. <https://t.co/CHA6RN0IJL>
<https://t.co/qB1X8CtiAo>



As of today, the article has been edited more than 4,500 times by almost 800 different people, who collaborated to create an article that is nearly 14,000 words long and cites 480+ sources. It's been viewed almost a million times.

That's only direct edits to the page. The talk page, where changes are suggested and consensus is achieved, has been edited more than 3,300 times by over 700 people. There are six pages of archived discussion.

The article has been translated into 47 languages, including the constructed language Esperanto and the auxiliary language Interlingua. There are also entries about the event on other Wikimedia projects including Wikinews and Wikiquote.

More than 500 freely-licensed images and videos have been uploaded to Wikimedia Commons. <https://t.co/wgz8fi15ht>

Editors have written related articles, including a timeline of events (<https://t.co/U5pMnRmNFy>) and an article about international reactions to the incident (<https://t.co/dDFvvk0LLu>)

It's amazing to watch an all-volunteer group of [@Wikipedia](#) editors, some who've edited for more than a decade and some editing for the first time, collaborate to create something like this: <https://t.co/Hm2Htlks17>

[@Wikipedia](#) And the work is hardly done. Discussions continue on the talk page (including more naming discussions), and the page itself has been edited more than 25 times in the past hour.

With the perspective that time brings and the emergence of more journalism and research about the events of January 6, the article will be updated to reflect the mark the insurrection has made on history.