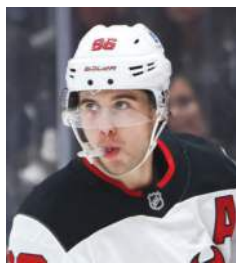


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STARS AND STRIPES®

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PHOTOS BY AIDEN GRIFFITHS/U.S. Army

U.S. Army Col. Anthony Marante meets with U.S. soldiers and a member of the German armed forces regarding humanitarian aid delivery and distribution on Nov. 12 at the Civil Military Coordination Center in Israel.

Keeping the peace

Some 150 US troops at warehouse in Israel drive bid to preserve Gaza calm

BY LARA KORTE
Stars and Stripes

KIRYAT GAT, ISRAEL — Prior to last month, the central nervous system for President Donald Trump's Gaza peace plan was nothing but an empty warehouse in this industrial city south of Tel Aviv.

The task of overseeing the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas has since brought about 150 American troops and scores of international staffers to the facility, which is called the Civil Military Coordination Center and is under the



Drivers from various locations prepare to offload humanitarian aid at the Kerem Shalom crossing point on Thursday in Israel.

■ UN approves White House plan for future of Gaza
Page 7

auspices of U.S. Central Command.

Tucked between semiconductor plants and abandoned gas stations in an industrial park, the center makes for an unlikely place for facilitating the flow of humanitarian

SEE PEACE ON PAGE 7

Policies to keep patients safe reviewed at Fort Hood

BY ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

As criminal investigators look into allegations that a Fort Hood doctor secretly recorded his exams, base officials said they are also reviewing hospital policies and systems put in place to protect patients from abuse.

A military health care policy requires that doctors accommodate a patient request for a chaperone during exams, yet women who saw Maj. Blaine McGraw, an OB-GYN at Fort Hood, in Texas, have reported he was able to take advantage of them because they were in the room alone during breast or pelvic exams, according to legal filings. Some said McGraw did not provide a medical gown and denied requests to have their spouse or partner in the room with them during exams.

Women have reported that McGraw used his phone to record their appointments without permission, groped them during exams and made inappropriate comments or after-hours phone calls that made them uncomfortable, according to a lawsuit filed in Bell County court and an administrative claim filed directly to the Army. Both were filed on behalf of women each using the anonymous moniker "Jane Doe."

McGraw, 47, has not been charged with a crime, but was suspended Oct. 17 from his position at Fort Hood's Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center as the Army Criminal Investigation Division investigates the allegations against him.

Systems, clinical processes, policies and other areas related to the situation are also being re-

SEE POLICIES ON PAGE 5

BUSINESS/WEATHER

FlyDubai orders 150 Airbus A321neo aircraft

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — FlyDubai, the lower-cost sister airline to long-haul carrier Emirates, announced an order Tuesday for 150 Airbus A321neo aircraft at the Dubai Air Show — an estimated \$24 billion purchase that will see the carrier for the first time expand its fleet beyond Boeing.

The deal would more than double FlyDubai's current fleet of aircraft and the airline said it had options to buy another 100 A321neos. It also represents a major pur-

chase for the airline as Dubai prepares across both carriers to expand as it builds a five-runway airport in this desert sheikhdom in the United Arab Emirates.

The A321neo is a mid-range, two-engine, single-aisle aircraft, matching the style of the Boeing 737s that FlyDubai has relied on since launching flights back in 2009.

The airline currently has a fleet of 95 aircraft.

Airbus and FlyDubai declined to take questions from journalists

at the announcement and did not elaborate on whether it was a so-called "firm" order. Both firms referred to the order as a "memorandum of understanding."

"It's an exciting step in expanding and diversifying our fleet and strengthening our long-term expansion plans," said Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, the chairman and chief executive of Emirates and chairman of FlyDubai.

Airbus also praised FlyDubai in the announcement.

EXCHANGE RATES

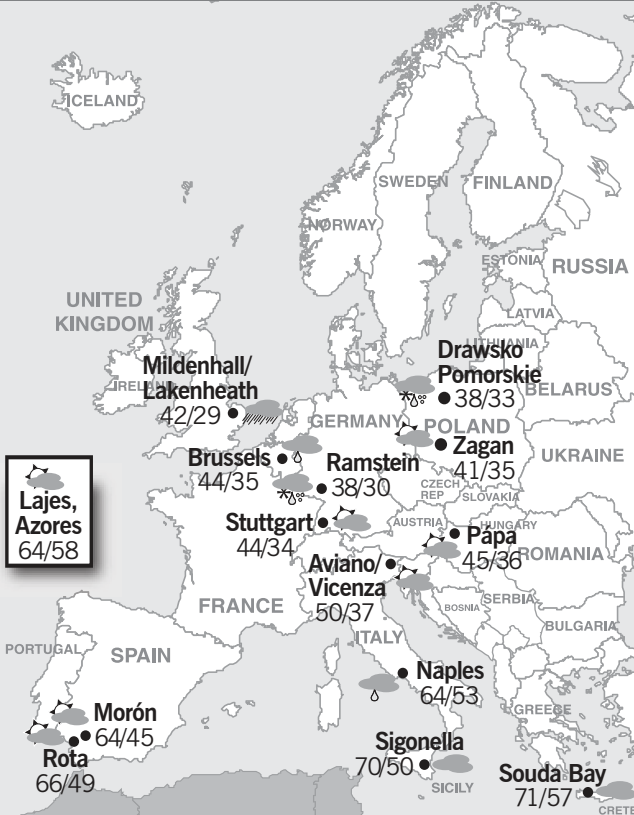
Military rates			
Euro costs (Nov. 19)	0.84	Switzerland (Franc)	0.7966
British pound (Nov. 19)	\$1.28	Thailand (Baht)	32.38
Japanese yen (Nov. 19)	151.00	Turkey (NewLira)	42.3400
South Korean won (Nov. 19)	1,428.00		
Commercial rates			
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3744	(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.) INTEREST RATES	
Britain (Pound)	1.3159		
Canada (Dollar)	1.4013		
China (Yuan)	7.1075		
Denmark (Krone)	6.4372		
Egypt (Pound)	47.1710		
Euro	0.8619		
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7838		
Hungary (Forint)	331.26		
Israel (Shekel)	3.2807		
Japan (Yen)	155.22		
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3064		
Norway (Krone)	10.1137		
Philippines (Peso)	58.82		
Poland (Zloty)	3.65		
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7458		
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3015		
South Korea (Won)	1,460.26		
		Prime rate	7.00
		Interest Rates Discount rate	4.00
		Federal funds market rate	3.88
		3-month bill	3.89
		30-year bond	4.73

WEATHER OUTLOOK

WEDNESDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



WEDNESDAY IN EUROPE



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PACIFIC

General: ‘East up’ shows strategic advantages

USFK commander urges adjusting view of region on maps

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

The commander of U.S. Forces Korea is urging military planners to rethink how they view East Asia — literally — by rotating the map. Army Gen. Xavier Brunson argues that turning a regional map 90 degrees to place east at the top reveals overlooked strategic advantages for the United States and its allies.

He outlined the idea in an opinion piece posted Sunday on USFK’s website.

“The most profound strategic insights sometimes emerge from the simplest shifts in perspective,” he wrote. “In the Indo-Pacific theater, where geographic relationships determine operational possibilities and alliance effectiveness, military planners may be overlooking critical advantages simply because of how they view their maps.”

An “east-up” map, Brunson wrote, highlights how South Korea, Japan and the Philippines — all U.S. treaty allies — gain strategic depth through cooperation at a time when Washington has encouraged closer coordination in



SARAH WILLIAMS/U.S. Air Force

Army Gen. Xavier Brunson, commander of U.S. Forces Korea, greets Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth at Osan Air Base on Nov. 4.

the face of challenges from China, North Korea and Russia.

Historical grievances and territorial disputes have often slowed such efforts.

In the article, titled “The East-Up Map: Revealing Hidden Strategic Advantages in the Indo-Pa-

cific,” Brunson wrote that the traditional U.S. view emphasizes the Indo-Pacific’s vast distances and downplays the benefits of deployed forces.

The east-oriented perspective, he said, shows that troops on the Korean Peninsula are not “distant

assets requiring reinforcement,” but instead are already situated inside the “bubble perimeter” the U.S. would need to penetrate during a crisis.

USFK’s headquarters at Camp Humphreys lies just 158 miles from Pyongyang, 612 miles from Beijing and 500 miles from Vladivostok.

“Korea is positioned to address northern threats from Russia while simultaneously providing western reach against Chinese activities in the waters between Korea and China,” Brunson wrote.

From Beijing’s vantage point, Brunson added, U.S. installations such as Osan Air Base south of Seoul do not appear remote but instead offer “resources positioned to achieve effects in or around China.”

“Perhaps the most significant insight from east-up mapping is the emergence of a strategic triangle connecting Korea, Japan and the Philippines,” he wrote. “When these three mutual defense treaty partners are viewed as vertices of a triangle rather than isolated bilateral relationships, their collective potential becomes clear.”

In written responses to South Korean media — provided to Stars and Stripes by USFK — Brunson expanded on that concept: “Each partner brings a distinct capability: Korea’s central depth, Japan’s

technological advantage and maritime reach, and the Philippines’ access to key southern sea lanes.”

Brunson argues that U.S. forces already in the region can impose costs on adversaries while retaining defensive advantages and that current force posture, particularly in South Korea, may provide greater strategic value than widely recognized.

The east-up approach mirrors long-standing Australian strategic thinking and aligns with India’s “Look East” perspective, said Paul Buchanan, an American security analyst based in New Zealand.

U.S. commanders, he told Stars and Stripes by email Tuesday, should study regional geopolitics in countries such as Thailand, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and Australia “to get more well-rounded East-Up perspective rather than something more narrowly construed by U.S. interests alone.”

Ralph Cossa, former president of the Pacific Forum think tank in Hawaii, said the map-rotation concept is eye-catching but may have limited staying power.

“It does stress the importance of Korea and also of Japan and the Philippines to regional security,” he said by email Tuesday. “It also subtly (or perhaps not so subtly) makes the point about Korea’s regional role.”

China jams communications amid Filipino supply delivery

By JIM GOMEZ
Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — Philippine forces transported food, fuel and new personnel to a territorial outpost in a long-disputed shoal in the South China Sea, where Chinese government ships jammed communications during the hourslong supply mission as part of Beijing’s security practice in the far-flung atoll, two top officials in the Philippines said Tuesday.

The transport by the Armed Forces of the Philippines of supplies and a fresh batch of navy personnel to the Second Thomas Shoal was successfully “conducted without any untoward incident” Friday despite the presence of Chinese Coast Guard and other ships which have been guarding the periphery of the Philippines-occupied shoal for years, the officials told The Associated Press.

They did not elaborate and spoke on condition of anonymity because of the issue’s sensitivity.

Chinese officials did not immediately issue a statement.

They have previously claimed the fishing atoll and virtually the entire South China Sea and have repeatedly demanded the Philippines pull away a grounded warship, the BRP Sierra Madre, from



AARON FAVILA/AP

Delegates link arms during the Southeast Asia Maritime Law Enforcement Initiative Commander’s Forum held in Makati City, Philippines, Tuesday.

the Second Thomas Shoal.

One of the officials said the Chinese Coast Guard jammed communications in and around the shoal while Philippine forces were delivering supplies to the Sierra Madre apparently to prevent possible drone surveillance by the United States and other foreign forces which have committed to help preserve the rule of law in the South China Sea, a key global

trade route.

The Philippine military has carried out 12 such deliveries of supplies and new personnel without incident to the long-grounded Sierra Madre since last year.

Confrontations have been averted after China and the Philippines signed a temporary nonaggression arrangement in July 2024 to prevent new confrontations in the fishing atoll, which both Asian

countries have long claimed.

In August, however, China deployed more coast guard and suspected militia ships to the closely guarded shoal, including some with more powerful machine guns, backed by a helicopter and an unmanned surveillance drone.

At the time, a Chinese Coast Guard ship was spotted firing its powerful water cannon in an apparent drill or intimidating ges-

ture and a Chinese boat came as close as 164 feet to the Sierra Madre.

The Chinese vessel was blocked by two boatloads of Filipino forces from coming closer to the Filipino ship outpost, the Philippine military said.

The Philippine military deliberately grounded the Sierra Madre in the turquoise shallows of the Second Thomas Shoal in 1999 to serve as a territorial outpost.

China, which also claims the shoal, later surrounded the atoll with its ships.

The yearslong territorial standoff has caused frequent faceoffs between Philippine military supply boats and Chinese forces in the past until Filipino and Chinese diplomats forged the nonaggression arrangement last year covering the shoal, a landmark deal between two claimant Asian states.

Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan also have overlapping territorial claims in the sea passage.

The U.S. lays no claims to the waters but has repeatedly warned it is obligated to defend the Philippines, its oldest treaty ally in Asia, if Filipino forces, aircraft and ships come under an armed attack, including in the South China Sea.

MILITARY

Coast Guard's heavy icebreaker turning 50

BY GARY WARNER
Stars and Stripes

SEATTLE — The USCGC Polar Star, the only heavy icebreaker operated by the United States, is leaving this week from its homeport on Puget Sound for a four-month deployment to Antarctica, the ship's captain said late last week.

"We'll be down in Antarctica, in the Ross Sea, and if all goes well, we'll celebrate the ship's 50th birthday right off Cape Polar Star down there, which was named after the ship back in the early 1980s when it was doing a little scientific research support," said Capt. Jeff Rasnake, the ship's commander since July 2024.

Commissioned in 1976, the icebreaker remains the most powerful vessel in the Coast Guard. The 75,000 horsepower generated by its three gas turbines and six diesel engines can push the 13,500-ton ship through miles of ice up to 21 inches thick.

Two medium icebreakers, the Healy and the Storis, are currently homeported in Seattle. The Pentagon plans on adding three heavy and three medium icebreakers to the Coast Guard over the next decade, with some of the ships built under a partnership with Canadian and Finnish designers and shipbuilders.

The Polar Star's annual trip to Antarctica is a key piece of Operation Deep Freeze, the effort to



The U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker Polar Star holds an “ice liberty” in Antarctica, when crew members can step out on the frozen Ross Sea while the ship cuts a path as part of Operation Deep Freeze in January.

open ice-clogged supply routes to scientific stations in Antarctica. Each year, the ship deploys for the 16,000-mile round-trip to the tip of the frozen oceans in the Southern Hemisphere.

Seasons are the opposite of the

Northern Hemisphere, and the Polar Star's arrival is timed to when the ice on the outer edges of the Antarctic continent begins to thaw, enabling the ship to slice its way closer to research installations.

New this year, the Coast Guard is fielding a team of cold-water-trained divers who can work on ships and around installations on the itinerary. Previously, the diving was done partially with Coast Guard crews and equipment, aid-

ed by either U.S. Navy or commercial divers.

When not plowing through ice to make a path for other ships, the 399-foot Polar Star moves along at a top speed of 18 knots, with a cruising speed of 13 knots.

While the work in Antarctica is the main event of the deployment, the round-trip to McMurdo Station and back usually includes stops in Honolulu, Sydney, the South Pacific and South America.

Painted in the traditional Coast Guard colors of a red hull and white superstructure, the ship stands out amid the vast white of ice and dull blue of frigid waters at the south end of the globe.

Rasnake, the ship's captain, said that while there are signs of age on the nearly half-century-old ship, it can keep doing its job if the 170-plus-member crew and researchers maintain it.

"When I showed up as the executive officer in 2017, they said, you know, 'she's an old ship, but she's a good ship — we got to make her last 10 more years,'" Rasnake said." I got here last summer and I asked, 'how much longer do you think we can keep Polar Star going?' They said, 'she's an old ship, but she's a good ship, make her last another 10 years.' I said, 'I've heard that before.' But I think the reality is the ship will be around as long as we need her around. And we need her around."

Last of its kind Independence-class LCS USS Pierre is commissioned

Stars and Stripes

The newest ship in the Navy, the USS Pierre, was commissioned Saturday in Panama City, Fla.: "Welcome to the fleet," said Navy Secretary John Phelan, who gave the keynote address.

Pierre is the 19th and final Independence-variant littoral combat ship. The ship bears the name of the capital city of South Dakota.

"This is a moment of pride, not only for her crew, but for the shipbuilders of Austal USA, for the city of Pierre, S.D., and for all who will serve aboard her in the years ahead," Phelan said. "This is not just a milestone, but a critical step forward in strengthening our Navy and ensuring America's global maritime dominance."

Phelan praised the shipbuilders, the sponsors and the namesake city.

"Our defense is above all the work of a nation united in purpose. (The ship's) motto, 'On the move, On the hunt' — drawn from the city's official motto — captures her continuous mission to find, hunt and neutralize threats before they can harm our sailors or Marines,"

he said. "That mission is backed by serious capability: mine countermeasures, anti-submarine warfare capabilities, and a flexible mission bay and flight deck that can embark helicopters, unmanned aerial systems and small boats, allowing this crew to respond rapidly to evolving threats or humanitarian operations in some of the world's most challenging littoral environments."

Also among the speakers was the ship's sponsor, Larissa Thune Hargens, a native of South Dakota and the daughter of Senate Majority Leader John Thune.

"Today marks a moment of pride, purpose and profound connection between the ship, her crew, her namesake city of Pierre and our great nation," Hargens said. "As the ship sponsor, I again commit my support and appreciation to each of you and each crew member who follows in your wake."

The commissioning of the Pierre marks the end of an era.

Littoral combat ships are fast, nimble vessels prized for their abilities in coastal areas and the open ocean.

In the early 2000s, shipbuilders developed two variants, Independence and Freedom, each capable of surface warfare and mine hunting. The ships have different hulls and are designed and built by separate shipbuilders.

At one point, the Navy planned to have the ships make up about one-sixth of the service's oceangoing fleet.

But the Independence variant suffered costly setbacks and delays, including cracked hulls and propulsion issues.

About 17 Independence-class vessels are active.

The Freedom variant also was plagued by propulsion problems and other costly issues. As a result, the Navy in 2022 proposed mothballing nine Freedom-class ships well ahead of their end-of-service dates. Ultimately, five of the ships were saved.

About 10 Freedom-class ships remain in service, according to the Navy's website. The variant's final vessel, USS Cleveland, is planned to be commissioned this fall, according to usscleveland.org.

The service now is prioritizing



The crew aboard the Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Pierre brings the ship to life during the commissioning ceremony on Saturday in Panama City, Fla.

production of the Constellation-class frigate, which it says delivers a more powerful punch.

But with the aging Avenger-class minesweepers nearing retirement, the Navy recently designated at least three Independence-class ships — USS Canberra, USS Tulsa and USS Santa Barbara — to be homeported in Bahrain.

The USS Pierre — led by Cmdr. Justin Guernsey — will have a crew of 112 and depart Panama City next week, making several stops before arriving at its home-

port of San Diego in December.

In the week leading up to the commissioning ceremony, the Pierre crew spent time around Panama City, hosted tours onboard for local organizations and built ties with the city hosting their ship's commissioning ceremony.

Following her address, Hargens asked the crew to board the ship: "Officers and crew of the USS Pierre, man our ship and bring her to life."

"Aye, aye ma'am," the crew responded.

MILITARY

Report: DOD vulnerable due to publicly open info

By Wyatt Olson
Stars and Stripes

The Pentagon’s missions and personnel are increasingly vulnerable to “malicious actors” who can disrupt operations by aggregating digital information from data brokers, websites and other sources, a government watchdog concluded in a report issued Monday.

An 18-month audit by the Government Accountability Office of 10 Defense Department components — all five military services, U.S. Cyber Command, U.S. Special Operations Command, National Security Agency, Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency and Defense Intelligence Agency — found that all but one “did not consistently train personnel on risks of digital information in the public across all relevant security areas,” the report states.

U.S. Special Operations Command provided a digital force protection training course aimed at helping personnel manage their online identities, among other things, the GAO found.

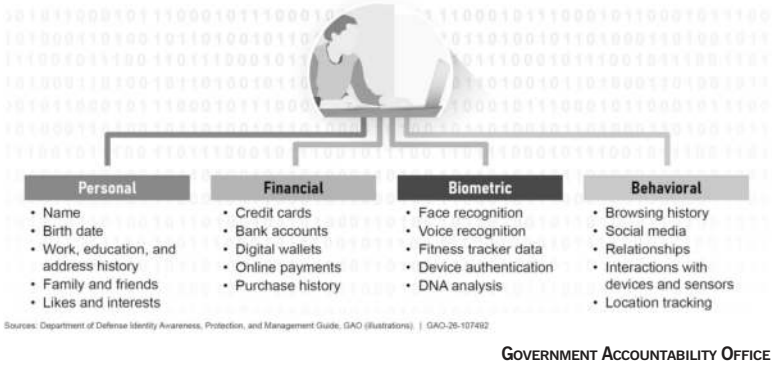
“Eight of ten components did not conduct assessments of threats across the required security areas of force protection, insider threat, mission assurance, and operations security,” the report states. “While the department has taken actions related to a wide field of traditional security areas, its actions to reduce safety, security, privacy, and operational risks posed by the digital profile are limited.”

The security risks posed by malicious actors — criminals, terrorists and adversarial nations — have increased with the proliferation of ubiquitous digital devices, social media and “big data” that

can now be combed using artificial intelligence.

“The digital activity of DOD’s service members, contractors, and family members — from websites visited to emails sent to photos posted on social media — can generate volumes of traceable data that can threaten their privacy and safety, and ultimately our national security,” the GAO report states. “These digital footprints represent a piece of a larger puzzle that, when tied to other sources, can create a digital profile and adversely affect military functions and missions.”

A malicious actor can create a digital footprint for an individual by purchasing personal information from a data broker for just pennies and combining it with online posts and location “pings” from cellular towers from devices such as fitness trackers, the report states.



Defense Department service members, civilian employees, contractors and family members knowingly or unknowingly leave behind sensitive information via digital activity that can be used by malicious actors, as shown in this Defense Department graphic.

The report illustrates a hypothetical scenario in which the operations of an aircraft carrier could be disrupted or sabotaged by a malicious actor using Pentagon news releases, media reports, online activity, social media posts and ship coordinates routinely posted by maritime aficionados.

The DOD concurred with 11 of 12 recommendations from GAO and partially concurred with one.

Among the recommendations were that:

- The secretaries of the Air Force and Army and the Defense Counterintelligence and Security

Agency conduct required assessments in the security areas of force protection, insider threats and mission assurance

- U.S. Cyber Command, Defense Intelligence Agency and National Security Agency conduct required assessments in the security areas of force protection, insider threats, operational security and mission assurance
- The Navy secretary ensure that the service is conducting required assessments in the security areas of force protection, insider threats, operational security and mission assurance

Policies: Claim says some patients’ partners were not allowed in room

FROM PAGE 1

viewed, according to a statement from Fort Hood.

“These investigations are intended to ensure that the rigorous standards in place were followed. Fort Hood recognizes the great trust and responsibility inherent in caring for our soldiers, families, and beneficiaries, and will continue to care for everyone involved throughout this process,” Fort Hood officials said.

The Defense Health Agency policy allows a patient to request a chaperone or standby during physical exams and treatments. The request can specify the chaperone’s gender and, when possible, the medical staff should honor the request or help the patient reschedule the appoint-

ment. The policy makes an exception for emergency situations.

The American Medical Association recommends this type of policy, as well as use of appropriate gowns, draping and private facilities for undressing.

Doctors should also clearly explain components of the physical exam, according to the association.

Attorney Andrew Cobos filed a lawsuit against McGraw on behalf of a client in Bell County, where Fort Hood is located, and said he wanted to file the suit quickly to get these policies scrutinized.

“That’s the only way change is going to occur,” Cobos said.

Christine Dunn, an attorney representing five patients of

McGraw’s who intend to file administrative claims, said policies meant to protect patients are only as good as their enforcement.

“How is someone supposed to know that they should ask for a chaperone if they aren’t being told what their rights are?” she said. “I think a better policy is, ‘We will ask you if you would like a chaperone, and you have the right to say yes or no.’”

One client said she thought she remembered a sign on the wall during her appointment explaining the chaperone policy, but Dunn said this again puts the burden on the patient.

An administrative claim filed with the Army last week by attorney Laurie Higginbotham on behalf of a client stated there

were “systemic violations” of the chaperone policy and there were no supervisory measures in place to prevent McGraw from isolating patients or to respond to concerning behavior.

“On numerous occasions, patients requested that their husbands or partners be present during examinations, but the Army denied these requests and forced patients to be alone with Dr. McGraw” according to the lawsuit claim.

The claim further stated support staff around McGraw were not trained to recognize, report or prevent physician misconduct.

Fort Hood said that criminal investigators arrived within hours on Oct. 17, when officials received the first report from a

patient describing misconduct by McGraw, and the doctor was immediately suspended.

Dunn said hospital staff, in general, can be hesitant to report concerning behavior they observe because of the power dynamics that exist in hospitals and because some abusers present themselves well in public.

Some of her clients have said that McGraw was personable and generally well-liked. He had positive reviews on medical evaluation websites and was recommended by patients on social media.

“I’ve had at least one client say that this is incredibly hard because it has tainted all of the sweet memories of giving birth to her child,” Dunn said.

3-star general tapped to lead top Army logistics command

By John Vandiver
Stars and Stripes

A three-star general has been nominated to lead the Army’s top logistics command, a job that traditionally has gone to those with four stars.

Lt. Gen. Christopher Mohan was selected Monday for reappointment to the grade of lieutenant general with assignment as commander of U.S. Army Materiel Command at Redstone Arsenal in Alabama, a Defense Department statement Monday said.

Mohan, the headquarters’ current deputy commanding general, has been acting commander since

the 2024 firing of Gen. Charles Hamilton, who lost his job after an Army inspector general investigation into allegations of improper involvement in a subordinate officer’s promotion process.

However, the statement made no mention of a corresponding fourth star for Mohan with the promotion. If he’s confirmed for the post as a lieutenant general, that would mean the command has been downgraded to a three-star headquarters.

The Army didn’t immediately respond to a request for comment on the matter.

Army Materiel Command,

which was established in 1962, manages the global supply chain and sustainment activities across the service. Its informal slogan states: “If a soldier shoots it, drives it, flies it, wears it, eats it or communicates with it, AMC provides it.”

The Pentagon has made it a priority to reduce the number of four-star leaders and other generals in the ranks as it looks for efficiencies.

In May, the department announced plans for a 20% reduction of four-star positions across the active component and a similar reduction of all general officers

within the National Guard. The directive also called for a 10% cut of all flag and general officer positions.

Some of the changes have already gone into effect. In October, the top U.S. Air Force job in Europe was reduced from a four-star command to three stars.

There also have been smaller tweaks to command structures. For example, when Maj. Gen. Christopher Norrie took over as deputy commander of U.S. Army Europe and Africa in October, the promotion didn’t come with the third star previously linked with the position.

The Pentagon hasn’t indicated whether it intends to reduce Army and Navy four-star headquarters in Europe to three-stars as it did with the Air Force.

In another leadership move announced Monday, the Pentagon tapped U.S. European Command’s Maj. Gen. John Rafferty for a third star.

He has been EUCOM’s chief of staff for just a few months.

Rafferty was nominated to serve as the commander of U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/U.S. Army Forces Strategic Command based at Redstone Arsenal.

MILITARY

Ex-Marine in NC attack had warning signs

By ALLEN G. BREED
Associated Press

Marc Simmons hadn't heard from his estranged friend in nearly seven years. Then, Nigel Max Edge showed up at his work and falsely accused Simmons of stealing his identity.

They met taking community college classes and bonded over their time with the Marines in Iraq. Simmons' kids once called Edge "Uncle Sean" — back when his name was still Sean William DeBevoise.

Simmons was now terrified his old friend would retaliate against him, he told a judge.

"The defendant, Nigel Edge, is mentally unstable," Simmons said in a handwritten request for a protective order. "Always has a pistol on him, on high doses of medications that cause defendant to be anxious."

That was back in May, four months before authorities say Edge, a former Marine sniper, guided a motorboat up to a crowded Cape Fear River bar in Southport, N.C., and opened fire with an AR-style rifle, killing three and wounding five.

Edge, 41, is charged with first-degree murder and attempted murder and has been in jail without bond since the Sept. 27 shooting at the American Fish Company. A November hearing to determine next steps in the case was pushed to January.

Options to intervene

Following the shooting, police recovered two handguns and a short-barreled rifle from Edge's car and boat. At his home, they found two more rifles and pistols, including one with a silencer.

Democratic Gov. Josh Stein said North Carolina needed to join the 21 states that have "red flag laws," which allow authorities to temporarily confiscate guns from people deemed a threat. But there was another legal option.

It's unclear whether anyone petitioned a magistrate to involun-



Nigel Max Edge, then Sean DeBevoise, lies in a hospital bed next to his wife, Rachel Crawl, in Tampa, Fla.

tarily commit Edge to a psychiatric facility for evaluation because the records are not public. But anyone could have, not just close family and friends, said Mark F. Botts, a University of North Carolina School of Government associate professor.

"It seems like he was estranged from the very people that would normally intervene," Botts said.

Rachel Crawl, Edge's ex-wife, feels there's a lot of blame to go around, from his family, to the government, even herself.

"We failed him, as a whole," she said.

Struggling to understand

Edge joined the Marines right after high school, eventually rising to the elite recon sniper corps. He was shot four times in 2006 on his second deployment to Iraq. The wounds led to his medical re-

tirement in 2009.

When he returned from Iraq, a large chunk of his skull missing and an insurgent's bullet still lodged in his brain, Marine Sgt. Sean DeBevoise — as he was then known — still seemed to have a firm grip on reality, Crawl said.

Crawl, who fell in love at 14 with the blond, blue-eyed wrestler when he came to her New York middle school for a match, said his description of how he was wounded in Iraq matched his comrades' version of events; he loved his family, and they loved him.

Then he began patrolling the house with a rifle and sleeping with a loaded pistol under his pillow. Separate bedrooms led to estrangement, then, ultimately, divorce.

When Crawl last saw him, 10 years ago, "it was heartbreaking," she said.

"He looked me straight in my face and told me a completely different story," she said. "Basically, how I hired the platoon to kill him, and the friendly fire. And did I know they buried him and peed on him? And why would I do this? And then asked me about if I remember us being sex trafficked when we were in high school, and told me his parents had kidnapped him and weren't his parents."

Those are the stories he told in "Headshot: Betrayal of a Nation," the book he self-published in 2020. Three years later, he legally changed his name, saying there are "events in my life that I don't understand" and that he did "not trust my family."

Doubts about how to help

Crawl said she didn't hear from Edge again until May, when the man she'd nursed, bathed and fed

filed a federal lawsuit against her, Simmons, an ex-girlfriend and a former Marine from his first Iraq deployment. It alleged they were all part of a "Civil Conspiracy" to sexually traffic and kill him, or to make him kill himself.

Edge filed lawsuit after lawsuit against friends, family, doctors, hospitals, the Department of Veterans Affairs, even a church. Crawl and others said they thought authorities would get him the mental health care they felt he clearly needed.

"Plaintiff suffers from war injuries and he suffers from delusions" and post-traumatic stress disorder, his mother, Sandra DeBevoise, wrote in a legal response last December, after he sued her and her husband. "The VA needs to take care of him!!!"

The VA declined to comment, citing medical privacy laws.

The legal onslaught became so bad that a judge in Brunswick County moved to restrict Edge from filing lawsuits without court approval.

Several people said they believed they lacked standing to file a commitment petition because they were not close relatives.

And the state Department of Health and Human Services cautions that this is "a last resort."

"A person like this just falls through the cracks," Botts said.

In June, a judge ordered Edge to stay away from Simmons. Simmons told AP he did not want to talk about his former friend.

Behind bars, Edge hasn't been idle.

About three weeks after the shooting, he filed a handwritten notice of appeal after a federal judge dismissed his civil rights lawsuit against the FBI, U.S. Department of Justice, several local law enforcement agencies and a charity that helps veterans.

He wrote, without further context: "Recent events, 'Self defense' against 'White Supremacist Pedophiles' directly related to this case."

Marine denies sexual assaulting woman at gym on Okinawa base

By BRIAN McELHINEY AND KEISHI KOJA
Stars and Stripes

NAHA, Okinawa — A U.S. Marine in a Japanese court Tuesday denied sexually assaulting a Japanese woman on a Marine Corps base but admitted injuring another woman during the March incident.

Pfc. Austin Wedington, during his first appearance in Naha District Court, pleaded not guilty to forcible sexual intercourse before a three-judge panel presided over by Judge Kazuhiko Obata.

Wedington pleaded guilty to in-

jur-ing the second woman, but disputed the case presented in court by prosecutor Kazutaka Maeda.

Wedington, 28, testified that he had "no memory of any of what's being said happening," before his attorney, Tetsu Amakata, entered a not guilty plea on the Marine's behalf.

The prosecutor alleged in court that around 10 p.m. March 18, Wedington entered the women's restroom in Gunners Fitness Center on Camp Foster, climbed into a stall occupied by the first woman, 20 at the time of the incident, and grabbed her mouth.

Maeda alleged that the second woman — 50 at the time of the incident — tried to intervene and was stomped in the face and placed in a rear chokehold, causing bruising, a neck sprain and a shoulder abrasion.

After she escaped and sought help, Wedington penetrated the first woman with his finger while grabbing her neck, performed oral sex and tried to have sexual intercourse with her, Maeda said.

The second woman returned about seven minutes later with another Marine, who broke down the door and held Wedington back as

the woman ran away, Maeda said.

Wedington pleaded not guilty to the sexual assault and guilty to choking the second woman and causing the sprain, defense attorney Amakata said in court.

However, he did not stomp on the woman's face or cause the bruising and shoulder abrasion, Amakata said.

Maeda submitted security camera footage of Wedington and the second woman, Wedington's fingerprints found on the stall door and DNA samples. Obata said he would rule on evidence at the next court date.

The judge questioned Amakata about the "capability of the defendant to make decisions at the time of the incident."

Amakata responded she will "consider it and respond before the next court date."

Wedington, of California, served as a correction and detention specialist with the Headquarters and Service Battalion on Foster, according to Marine Corps Installations Pacific.

The first woman is a Japanese civilian employee on a U.S. base, Japanese public broadcaster NHK reported April 24.

MIDEAST



LARA KORTE/Stars and Stripes

A U.S. Army officer briefs members of the Israeli military at the Civil Military Coordination Center in Kiryat Gat, Israel, on Monday. The center has been established to oversee the ceasefire agreement.

Peace: CENTCOM rebuffs claims of base for US troops near Gaza being considered

FROM PAGE 1
ian, logistical and security assistance into Gaza.
Including the U.S. service members, the center’s staff is made up of nearly 600 civilians and soldiers from more than 40 nations and international partners, including Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.
The center is co-led by U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Patrick Frank and the American ambassador to Yemen, Steven Fagin. A British major general acts as the deputy commander of the center.
Military officials offered reporters a brief look inside the center on Monday but did not allow them to speak with anyone working there.
The space spans the length of a football field and is carpeted with artificial turf. Underneath 20-foot ceilings, clusters of desks and conference tables are spread throughout the open warehouse, with working groups huddled around TV screens and whiteboards.
A floor-to-ceiling screen displays a map of Gaza and live updates. Propped against a concrete pillar near the center of the room are two white poster boards, detailing the president’s peace plan.
CENTCOM had initially expected it would take two weeks to stand up the space, said Navy Capt. Tim Hawkins, a spokesman for the command. It took one, and by the second week, international partners had arrived and the center was up and running.
“That’s a rapid pace for any large-scale multinational effort,” Hawkins said.
Operating the center is a critical role for the U.S., which has the necessary expertise and a vested interest in making sure the ceasefire holds, analysts say.
But its existence and its location about 20 miles from Gaza also reflect a strategy that’s aimed at pre-

venting escalation while avoiding long-term military entanglements, according to experts.
“I think our administration is trying to make sure that we don’t get caught up in mission creep here,” retired Gen. Joseph Votel, who led CENTCOM from 2016 to 2019, said in an interview.
As the ceasefire deal enters its second month, top of mind in the center is the deployment of an international security force composed of troops from partner nations, a key part of Trump’s peace plan.
While the military has an important role to play inside the center, administration officials have been adamant that U.S. service members will not enter Gaza.
Shortly after the ceasefire deal, Vice President JD Vance made the rounds on weekend talk shows to assure Americans that there would be no boots on the ground.
And recently, U.S. Central Command was quick to shut down recent reports suggesting the military was looking to build a base near Gaza that could house 10,000 of its troops.
The idea is for the U.S. military to act as a conduit rather than a direct participant, bringing together different nations in the hopes of eventually allowing others to take the lead, said Votel, who is also a distinguished military fellow at the Middle East Institute.
“I think what we’re trying to do is bring our skills for communication, for coordination, for planning together, along with our good relationship with the government of Israel, to help orchestrate what I hope will be more significant on-the-ground contributions from other militaries,” he said.
On Monday, the United Nations adopted a resolution endorsing Trump’s 20-point ceasefire plan, which would authorize an international stabilization force in Gaza to oversee borders, provide security

and demilitarize the territory.
The resolution’s approval could jump-start that effort. Arab and other Muslim-majority countries that expressed interest in providing troops for an international force had signaled that U.N. authorization was essential for their participation, according to The Associated Press.
Questions remain as to just how long and in what capacity the U.S. military will stay involved in post-war Gaza.
Hawkins declined to share a timeline for U.S. military involvement.
“This is a very fragile process and we’re very focused on doing all we can to provide an opportunity for what is very historic in terms of what can be achieved to create conditions for lasting peace,” he said.
The ceasefire halted a war that began Oct. 7, 2023, when Hamas launched attacks on Israel. The militant group has controlled the Gaza Strip since 2007.
In addition to the international stabilization force, Trump’s peace plan calls for the disarming of Hamas, redevelopment of Gaza, and eventual return of control in the territory to the Palestinian Authority.
Rehabilitating Gaza is going to require long-term focus, said Bradley Bowman, an expert in U.S. defense strategy who also spent 15 years in the Army as a company commander, pilot and staff officer in Afghanistan.
While the U.S. certainly wants peace in the Middle East, the Pentagon also learned its lesson from long, drawn-out conflicts in Iraq and Syria and now is also balancing competing interests in the Pacific, Eastern Europe and the Western Hemisphere, Bowman said.
“Resources are not infinite,” he said. “And we have to establish priorities.”

UN approves White House’s plan for Gaza

By EDITH M. LEDERER
Associated Press
UNITED NATIONS — The Trump administration’s blueprint to secure and govern Gaza won strong approval at the United Nations on Monday, a crucial step that provides international support for U.S. efforts to move the devastated territory toward peace following two years of war.
The U.S. resolution that passed the U.N. Security Council authorizes an international stabilization force to provide security in Gaza, approves a transitional authority to be overseen by President Donald Trump and envisions a possible future path to an independent Palestinian state.
“This will go down as one of the biggest approvals in the History of the United Nations, will lead to further Peace all over the World, and is a moment of true Historic proportion!” Trump posted on social media.
The vote endorses Trump’s 20-point ceasefire plan and builds on the momentum of the fragile ceasefire he helped broker with allies. It marks a key next step for American efforts to outline Gaza’s future after the Israel-Hamas war destroyed much of the territory and killed tens of thousands of people.
The proposal calls for a yet-to-be-established Board of Peace as a

transitional authority that Trump would head. It also provides a wide mandate for the international stabilization force, including overseeing the borders, providing security and demilitarizing the territory. Authorization for the board and force expire at the end of 2027.
Arab and other Muslim countries that expressed interest in providing troops for an international force had signaled that U.N. authorization was essential for their participation.
Russia, which had circulated a rival resolution, abstained along with China on the 13-0 vote after fears Moscow might use its veto in the Security Council.
However, Hamas opposed the resolution, saying in a statement that it does not meet the “Palestinian people’s political and humanitarian demands and rights.”
U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Mike Waltz said the resolution “represents another significant step towards a stable Gaza that will be able to prosper and an environment that will allow Israel to live in security.”
The proposal still gives no timeline or guarantee for an independent state, only saying it’s possible after advances in the reconstruction of Gaza and reforms of the Palestinian Authority, which now governs parts of the West Bank.
tion and a teenager in moderate condition.
The military said Israeli troops then opened fire, killing two Palestinian attackers.
Also Tuesday, Al Jazeera’s local bureau chief, Walid al-Omari, said Israeli forces shot a cameraman for Al-Jazeera in the legs while he was covering a protest in the West Bank city of Tulkarem. The military did not respond to a request for comment.
On Monday, Israeli settlers launched a rampage through the Palestinian village of al-Jab’a, torching homes and cars. The violence drew a rare condemnation from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other top Israeli leaders.

1 Israeli killed, 3 hurt in West Bank stabbing

Associated Press
JERUSALEM — Palestinian attackers stabbed an Israeli to death and wounded three more in the West Bank on Tuesday before being shot down by troops in the latest violence to rock the occupied territory, the Israeli military said.
The attack follows a spate of settler attacks on Palestinians across the West Bank.
The Israeli military said the stabbing took place at the Gush Etzion junction south of Jerusalem, a site of many past attacks by Palestinian militants.
Israel’s emergency rescue services said a man in his 60s died of stab wounds at the scene. Three other people were hospitalized, including a woman in serious condi-

MILITARY

Trump open to sending troops into Venezuela

By Kelly Kasulis Cho, Leo Sands and Alec Dent
The Washington Post

President Donald Trump said Monday that he will not rule out the possibility of sending U.S. troops into Venezuela, as a build-up of U.S. forces in the region — and his increasingly combustible rhetoric — raises the prospect of military action there.

“I don’t rule out anything, we just have to take care of Venezuela,” Trump said when asked at a news conference about putting American personnel “on the ground” in Venezuela.

Trump’s remarks in the Oval Office appeared startlingly at odds with his claim Sunday night that the administration “may be having some discussions” with Nicolás Maduro, Venezuela’s strongman president, whom Trump has repeatedly vilified as an armada of U.S. warships has been assembled in the Caribbean Sea in recent weeks.

Trump has accused Maduro of leading a narcotics organization, the Cartel de los Soles, and said he is responsible for sending drugs and criminals to the United States.

In his conversation with reporters late Sunday, Trump indicated that the Venezuelan leader “would like to talk” and that the

U.S. may be willing to listen, suggesting a diplomatic off-ramp may exist.

Separately on Sunday, the State Department said it intends to designate Cartel de los Soles as a foreign terrorist organization, effective Nov. 24. The designation, which the administration has used for other Venezuelan groups, such as the Tren de Aragua gang, would raise pressure on Maduro by further financially isolating people connected to Cartel de los Soles.

High-level U.S. officials have been holding discussions on whether and how to strike in Venezuela, The Washington Post reported last week.

Trump indicated Monday that he is open to carrying out military action in other countries where cartels operate, saying he would be OK with launching strikes in Mexico “to stop drugs” and that he would “be proud” to knock out “cocaine factories” in Colombia.

The U.S. has had long-standing partnerships with both countries that have focused on disrupting the illicit drug trade.

Those relationships have become strained, however, amid the Trump administration’s campaign of deadly military strikes against vessels suspected of hauling narcotics in the waters around Latin America.



GEORGE WALKER IV/AP

A member of the National Guard stands watch on Beale Street Oct. 24, in Memphis, Tenn.

Tennessee judge blocks Trump’s use of National Guard in Memphis

By Adrian Sainz and Jonathan Mattise
Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — A Tennessee judge on Monday blocked the use of the National Guard in Memphis under a crime-fighting operation by President Donald Trump but also put the order on hold, giving the government five days to appeal.

Davidson County Chancellor Patricia Head Moskal’s decision sides with Democratic state and local officials who sued, contending that Republican Gov. Bill Lee cannot deploy the Tennessee National Guard for civil unrest unless there is rebellion or invasion and even then it would require action by state lawmakers.

The plaintiffs also said another provision spells out a need for a request from a local government to use the Guard in some scenarios, including a “breakdown of law and order,” they said.

Moskal agreed that the defendants have a likelihood of success in their lawsuit based on their claims that calling the National Guard into the city violates the state’s military code and that they have shown “they are suffering or will suffer irreparable harm” if the injunction isn’t granted.

But she also paused the order for at least five days so that the government has time to file an “immediate application for permission to appeal,” without providing her reasoning.

The state has said Tennessee law gives the governor “the authority to dispatch the Guard when needed and to determine when that need exists.”

The judge concluded that the governor’s power as commander-in-chief of the National Guard “is not unfettered.”

In a statement posted on the social platform X, Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris, a plaintiff in the case, said he is pleased.

“The injunction does not take effect immediately, and the state has a chance to seek leave to appeal,” he wrote. “However, this is a positive step toward ensuring the rule of law applies to everyone, including everyday Tennesseans and even the Governor.”

Trial begins for US airman charged in fatal autobahn crash

By Jennifer H. Svan and Marcus Kloeckner
Stars and Stripes

A U.S. airman being tried in the German justice system over a deadly autobahn collision near Spangdahlem Air Base admitted in court Tuesday through his attorney that he had consumed a large quantity of alcohol before the crash.

The unidentified airman, who was charged by prosecutors in Trier with negligent homicide and negligent bodily injury, also apologized and asked for forgiveness.

“I am terribly sorry,” the 24-year-old airman said on the opening day of the trial, his attorney, Christian Hoelzer told Stars and Stripes on Tuesday.

The apology was addressed to the parents and sister of the 23-year-old German woman who was killed in the crash, as well as the

two young women who survived it, Hoelzer said.

German prosecutors have not released the airman’s name or unit. He most recently worked for the Spangdahlem airport’s fire department, local news outlet Sol.de reported.

The crash occurred May 3 on the autobahn A60 near Landscheid, a few miles east of the base. The airman was driving his Jeep Wrangler the wrong way and hit a car driven by the 23-year-old woman.

She was taken to a hospital, where she later died of her injuries.

Two 24-year-old passengers also suffered serious injuries. The airman’s injuries were minor.

Prosecutors say he had a blood alcohol level of 0.14% at the time of the crash. The legal limit in Germany is 0.05% in most cases.

Through a statement read by Hoelzer in court Tuesday, the airman said he had been drinking with fellow service members before the crash to celebrate promotions that had been announced earlier in the day, Sol.de reported.

The airman admitted to consuming a 0.5-liter bottle of tequila and unknown quantities of beer and other alcoholic drinks, Hoelzer said.

The statement also said that although the airman was aware of his intoxication, he decided to drive from Wittlich to his home in Trier but couldn’t recall the exact route he took, Sol.de reported.

In May, German prosecutors announced they would retain jurisdiction of the case.

Trying an American service member in German court is somewhat unusual.

While Germany has primary ju-

risdiction in cases involving U.S. military personnel and German citizens, it usually waives this right under a supplementary provision to the NATO Status of Forces Agreement.

However, the agreement allows the waiver to be withdrawn within 21 days for egregious offenses such as robbery, rape or crimes that result in death.

In the past six years, German authorities have ceded jurisdiction to the U.S. military in at least two fatal cases involving American service members.

One of those cases was the highly publicized murder trial of a Spangdahlem airman in 2024. A military court found Airman 1st Class Grant Harrison not guilty of unpremeditated murder in the stabbing death of martial artist Michael Ovsjannikov.

Ovsjannikov, 28, was killed Aug.

19, 2023, during an early morning altercation at a street fair in near-by Wittlich.

Harrison’s acquittal sparked outrage in the communities around Spangdahlem and led to several protests outside the base. Residents at the protests said it had created mistrust in the U.S. military’s judicial system.

The prosecutor’s office said the decision to retain jurisdiction in the latest case was based on the number of victims involved. Five joint plaintiffs have joined the case, including the two women who were seriously injured in the crash.

The trial resumes on Nov. 26, and a verdict is expected Dec. 3, according to a statement from the court in Trier.

The airman remains under U.S. military control, the 52nd Fighter Wing said in a statement.

NATION

Crown prince embraced by Trump, businesses on visit

By AAMER MADHANI
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump welcomed Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to Washington on Tuesday as the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia makes his first White House visit since the 2018 killing of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi agents.

Trump warmly received Prince Mohammed when he arrived at the White House Tuesday morning for a pomp-filled arrival ceremony that included a military flyover and a thundering greeting from the U.S. Marine band.

The U.S.-Saudi relationship had been sent into a tailspin by the operation targeting Khashoggi, a fierce critic of the kingdom, that U.S. intelligence agencies later determined Prince Mohammed likely directed the agents to carry out.

But seven years later, the dark clouds over the relationship have been cleared away.

And Trump has tightened his embrace of the 40-year-old crown prince he views as an indispensable player in shaping the Middle East in the decades to come. Prince Mohammed, for his part, denies involvement in the killing of Khashoggi, a Saudi citizen and Virginia resident.

Khashoggi was an afterthought as the two leaders unveil billions of dollars in deals and huddle with aides to discuss the tricky path

ahead in a volatile Middle East. They planned to end their day with an evening White House soiree, organized by first lady Melania Trump, to honor the prince.

The president dismissed questions to the crown prince about the journalist's killing.

"Whether you like him or didn't like him, things happen," Trump said of the international incident.

Trump, during an Oval Office meeting with the prince by his side, even commended the Saudi leader for strides made by the kingdom on human rights without providing any specific detail.

"I'm very proud of the job he's done," Trump said. "What he's done is incredible in terms of human rights and everything else."

The crown prince for his part announced Saudi Arabia was increasing its planned investments in the U.S. to \$1 trillion, up from \$600 billion that the Saudis said they planned to invest in the United States when Trump visited the kingdom in May.

Trump's family has a strong personal interest in the kingdom. In September, London real estate developer Dar Global announced that it plans to launch Trump Plaza in the Red Sea city of Jeddah.

It's Dar Global's second collaboration with the Trump Organization, the collection of companies controlled by the U.S. president's children, in Saudi Arabia. Last year, the two companies an-

nounced the launch of Trump Tower Jeddah.

Trump pushed back on the notion Tuesday that there was a conflict of interest.

"I have nothing to do with the family business," said Trump on Tuesday, adding that his family has relatively little interest in the kingdom.

Technically, it's not a state visit, because the crown prince is not the head of state. But Prince Mohammed has taken charge of the day-to-day governing for his father, King Salman, 89, who has endured health problems in recent years.

Most foreign leaders who come to meet with Trump are driven up to the doors of the West Wing, where the president often greets them. But Prince Mohammed, accompanied by the Saudi prime minister, was welcomed with a formal arrival ceremony on the South Lawn.

An Oval Office meeting and luncheon in the Cabinet Room was to follow.

In addition to White House pomp, the two nations are also planning an investment summit at the Kennedy Center on Wednesday that will include the heads of Salesforce, Qualcomm, Pfizer, the Cleveland Clinic, Chevron and Aramco, Saudi Arabia's national oil and natural gas company, where even more deals with the Saudis could be announced.



MARK SCHIEFELBEIN/AP

President Donald Trump stands with Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on his visit to the White House, on Tuesday.

Trump says he will sell F-35s to Saudi Arabia

By AAMER MADHANI
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Monday he will sell F-35 fighter jets to Saudi Arabia despite some concern within the administration that such a sale could lead to China gaining access to the U.S. technology behind the advanced weapon system.

The announcement came on the eve of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's highly anticipated Washington visit, his first to the United States in more than seven years.

"I will say that we will be doing that," Trump said when asked if he would sell the jets to Saudi Arabia. "We'll be selling F-35s."

The sale of the jets is one of several major deals between the two countries expected to be announced. Saudi Arabia is expected to an-

nounce a multibillion-dollar investment in U.S. artificial intelligence infrastructure, and the two countries will lay out details about new cooperation in the civil nuclear energy sector, according to a senior Trump administration official who was not authorized to comment ahead of the formal announcement.

The crown prince had been expected to arrive with a wish list that includes receiving formal assurances from Trump defining the scope of the U.S. military protection for the kingdom and an agreement to buy U.S.-made F-35 fighter jets, one of the world's most advanced aircraft.

The Republican administration, however, has been wary about upsetting Israel's qualitative military edge over its neighbors, especially at a time when Trump is depending on Israeli support for the success of his Gaza peace plan.

House heads toward vote on bill forcing release of Epstein files

By STEPHEN GROVES
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House was headed toward a vote Tuesday afternoon on legislation to force the Justice Department to publicly release its files on the late financier Jeffrey Epstein, the culmination of a months-long effort that has overcome opposition from President Donald Trump and Republican leadership.

When a small bipartisan group of House lawmakers introduced a petition in July to maneuver around House Speaker Mike Johnson's control of which bills see the House floor, it appeared a longshot effort — especially as Trump urged his supporters to dismiss the matter as a "hoax." But both Trump and Johnson failed in their efforts to prevent the vote.

Now the president has bowed to the growing momentum behind the bill and even said he will sign it if it passes the Senate. His blessing ensures an overwhelming vote to pass the vote in the House, putting fur-



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

ther pressure on the Senate to take it up.

The vote could be a pivotal moment for long-held demands that the Justice Department release its case

files on Epstein, a well-connected financier who killed himself in a New York jail while awaiting trial in 2019 on charges he sexually abused and trafficked underage girls.

From left, Reps. Ro Khanna, D-Calif., Thomas Massie, R-Ky., and Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., speak during a news conference ahead of a House vote on the Epstein Files Transparency Act, at the Capitol on Tuesday. They are joined by survivors and family members who recounted their personal stories of Jeffrey Epstein.

"These women have fought the most horrific fight that no woman should have to fight. And they did it by banding together and never giving up," said Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene as she stood with some of the abuse survivors outside the Capitol Tuesday morning.

"That's what we did by fighting so hard against the most powerful people in the world, even the president of the United States, in order to make this vote happen today," added Greene, a Georgia Republican and longtime Trump loyalist.

A separate investigation conducted by the House Oversight Committee has released thousands of pages of emails and other documents from Epstein's estate, showing his connections to global leaders, Wall Street powerbrokers, influential political figures and Trump himself. In the United Kingdom, King Charles III stripped his disgraced brother Prince Andrew of his remaining titles and evicted him from his royal residence after pressure to act over his relationship with Epstein.

Trump has said he cut ties with Epstein years ago, but tried for months to move past the demands for disclosure. On Monday, he told reporters that Epstein was connected to more Democrats and that he didn't want the Epstein files to "detract from the great success of the Republican Party."

Still, many in the Republican base have continued to demand the release of the files. Adding to that pressure, several survivors of Epstein's abuse rallied outside the Capitol on Tuesday morning. Bundled in jackets against the November chill and holding photos of themselves as teenagers, they recounted their stories of abuse.

"We are exhausted from surviving the trauma and then surviving the political conflicts that surround it," said Jena-Lisa Jones, one of the survivors.

She added that she had voted for Trump, but had a message for the president: "I beg you Donald Trump, please stop making this political."

NATION

FEMA acting chief resigns

By GABRIELA AOUN ANGUEIRA
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The acting chief of the Federal Emergency Management Agency left his job Monday after just six months, according to the Department of Homeland Security, the latest disruption in a year of mass staff departures, program cuts and policy upheaval at the agency charged with managing federal disaster response.

David Richardson, who in his brief term remained largely out of public sight, is leaving the post after he faced a wave of criticism for his handling of the deadly Texas floods earlier this year. He replaced previous acting head Cameron Hamilton in May.

DHS did not comment on the details of Richardson's departure, but a FEMA employee familiar with the matter told The Associated Press that Richardson resigned.

"The Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Homeland Security extend their sincere appreciation to the Senior Official Performing the Duties of the Administrator, David Richardson, for his dedicated service and wish him continued success in his return to the private sector," a DHS spokesperson told The Associated Press.

A former Marine Corps officer who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and also led the DHS Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction office, Richardson had no previous emergency management experience when he assumed the role of "senior official performing the duties of administrator" in May.

After replacing Hamilton, who was fired one day after telling a House appropriations committee that he did not think FEMA should be eliminated, Richardson vowed to help fulfill President Donald Trump's goal to push more disaster recovery responsibilities to the states and told FEMA employees he would "run right over" anyone who tried to obstruct that mission.

But Richardson's leadership was questioned by members of Congress and FEMA employees, particularly after remaining largely out of sight following the deadly Texas floods last July that killed at least 136 people.

When asked by a House committee in July why he did not arrive on the ground until one week after the disaster, Richardson said he stayed in Washington, D.C., to "kick down the doors of bureaucracy," but also said he was camping with his sons for the July 4 weekend when the floods first hit and initially helped manage the response from inside his truck.

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem has also kept a tight grip on FEMA programs and spending, requiring that she personally approve any agency expenditure over \$100,000. Richardson had denied reports that the approval policy slowed down FEMA's response in Texas.

FEMA Chief of Staff and former cybersecurity official Karen Evans will assume the role on Dec. 1, according to DHS. The FEMA administrator is required by law to have emergency management experience, but the Trump administration has circumvented those requirements up to now by appointing temporary leaders.



Former FBI Director James Comey, with his attorney, David Kelley, right, speaks to reporters after a day of testimony before the House Judiciary and Oversight committees, in Washington, Dec. 7, 2018.

Judge scolds Justice Department for 'profound missteps' in Comey case

By ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department engaged in a "disturbing pattern of profound investigative missteps" in the process of securing an indictment against former FBI Director James Comey, a federal judge ruled Monday in directing prosecutors to provide defense lawyers with all grand jury materials from the case.

Those problems, wrote Magistrate Judge William Fitzpatrick, include "fundamental misstatements of the law" by a prosecutor to the grand jury that indicted Comey in September, the use of potentially privileged communications during the investigation and unexplained irregularities in the transcript of the grand jury.

"The Court recognizes that the relief sought by the defense is rarely granted," Fitzpatrick wrote. "However, the record

points to a disturbing pattern of profound investigative missteps, missteps that led an FBI agent and a prosecutor to potentially undermine the integrity of the grand jury proceeding."

The 24-page opinion is the most blistering assessment yet by a judge of the Justice Department's actions leading up to the Comey indictment.

The Comey case and a separate prosecution of New York Attorney General Letitia James have hastened concerns that the Justice Department is being weaponized in pursuit of Trump's opponents. Both defendants have filed motions to dismiss the cases against them, arguing the prosecutions are vindictive and the prosecutor who filed the charges, Lindsey Halligan, was illegally appointed.

The sole prosecutor who defense lawyers say presented the case to the grand jury was Halligan, a former White House aide

with no prior prosecutorial experience who was appointed just days before the indictment.

Fitzpatrick's order ticked off nearly a dozen irregularities in the case that he said alarmed him.

They include two different comments that a prosecutor — presumably Halligan — made to the grand jury that he said represented "fundamental misstatements of the law."

The actual statements are blacked out, but Fitzpatrick said the prosecutor seems to have ignored the fact that a grand jury may not draw a negative inference about a person who exercises his right not to testify in front of it. Comey did not appear before the panel. He said she also appeared to suggest to grand jurors that they did not need to rely only on what was presented to them and could instead be assured that there was additional evidence that would be presented at trial.

EPA moves to limit clean water law to reduce wetlands

By MATTHEW DALY
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Environmental Protection Agency announced Monday it is redefining the scope of the nation's bedrock clean water law to significantly limit the wetlands it covers, building on a Supreme Court decision two years ago that removed federal protections for vast areas.

When finalized, the new "Waters of the United States" rule will ensure that federal jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act is focused on relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of water, such as streams, oceans, rivers and lakes, along with wet-

lands that are directly connected to such bodies of water, the EPA said.

The proposal is among dozens of environmental regulations being rolled back by the Trump administration as part of what EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin says is a concerted effort to accelerate economic prosperity while putting "a dagger through the heart of climate change religion." Critics call the water rule a giveaway to ranchers and industry.

At a news conference at agency headquarters, Zeldin said the new rule will fully implement the direction provided by the Supreme Court in a case known as Sackett v.

EPA. The 2023 ruling sharply limited the federal government's authority to police water pollution into certain wetlands and boosted property rights over concerns about clean water in a ruling in favor of Michael and Chantell Sackett, an Idaho couple who sought to build a house near a lake.

Zeldin, a former Republican congressman who has led a drive to roll back regulations perceived as climate-friendly, said Democratic administrations had long "weaponized the definition of navigable waters to seize more power from American farmers, landowners and families." Still, he said the proposed rule change was not

motivated by ideology or partisanship but instead was intended to be a "clear, simple, prescriptive rule that will stand the test of time."

Environmentalists slammed the proposal.

"The Trump EPA's shortsighted push to encourage industries to plow over more wetlands and streams will destroy thousands of miles of waterways critical to wildlife across the United States," said J.W. Glass, a policy specialist at the Center for Biological Diversity.

Zeldin, who has traveled to all 50 states since taking office this year, said complaints about the

water rule have emerged in every state. The Trump administration has listened to concerns from farmers and other groups worried about federal interference in how they use their land, he said, and has moved to set limited rules defining which waterways the Clean Water Act protects.

Trump sought to shrink the water law's reach in his first term, while Democratic administrations have expanded federal power to regulate the nation's lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands and oceans. The change in administrations has created drastic swings in how the water law is interpreted and applied.

NATION

Judge approves opioid lawsuit settlement plan

By GEOFF MULVIHILL
Associated Press

A federal bankruptcy court judge on Tuesday formally approved OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma's plan to settle thousands of lawsuits over the harms of opioids.

U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Sean Lane was set to give his reasoning Tuesday for approving the plan, which requires members of the Sackler family who own the company to contribute up to \$7 billion over 15 years. Most of the money is to go to government entities to fight the opioid crisis that has been linked to 900,000 deaths in the U.S. since 1999.

A portion of the money is to be distributed next year to some people who had OxyContin prescriptions and their survivors.

The new agreement replaces one the U.S. Supreme Court rejected last year, finding it would have improperly protected members of the family against future lawsuits. Under the current agreement, entities that do not opt into the payments can still sue members of the family.

Sackler family members, who have not had direct involvement in the company for seven years, will officially give up ownership and be barred from selling opioids anywhere in the world. The company will eventually get a new name — Knoa Pharam — and be operated



"Pill Man," made by Frank Huntley of Worcester, Mass., from his opioid prescription pill bottles, is seen during a protest by advocates for opioid victims, at the Justice Department in Washington in 2021.

with a public-interest mission. The deal, which the judge said he would accept last week, is among the largest in a series of opioid settlements brought by state and local governments against drugmakers, wholesalers and pharmacies that to-

taled about \$50 billion. Sackler family members agreed to pay up to \$7 billion over 15 years, providing most of the cash involved in the settlement. The funds distributed to state and local governments and some individual Native Ameri-

cans is to be used mostly to address the opioid crisis, as has been the case with other opioid settlements. About \$850 million of that is to go to individual victims, including children born with opioid withdrawal. People with addiction and survi-

vors of those who died must prove they were prescribed OxyContin to participate. Those who do could receive payments of around \$8,000 or around \$16,000, depending on how long they received the drug and how many other people qualify. The money for individual victims is to be distributed next year.

Sackler family members are also agreeing not to have their name put on institutions in exchange for contributions — something they've done often in the past, though many institutions have cut ties with them.

The company has also agreed to make public a trove of internal documents that could shed additional light into how the company promoted and monitored opioids.

One feature that won't be repeated under this new deal that was in a previous one: forcing members of the Sackler family to hear directly from people harmed by OxyContin.

Purdue filed for bankruptcy protection in 2019 when it was facing thousands of opioid-related lawsuits from state and local governments and others. A judge approved a settlement two years later. But the U.S. Supreme Court later rejected that plan because it gave members of the Sackler family protection from lawsuits over opioids even though they were not personally declaring bankruptcy.

Fed governor blasts mortgage fraud allegations against her as 'baseless'

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
AND BRIAN SLODYSKO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In a letter to Attorney General Pam Bondi on Monday, lawyers for Federal Reserve Governor Lisa Cook disputed allegations by a Trump administration official that she committed mortgage fraud.

President Donald Trump used the accusation as a basis to seek her firing, the first time a president has sought to remove a Fed governor in the central bank's 112-year history.

The letter is the first response by Cook to a criminal referral in August by Bill Pulte, director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency. Pulte has made several other mortgage fraud accusations, including against leading Democrats such as New York Attorney General Letitia James, Sen. Adam Schiff of California, and California Rep. Eric Swalwell.

The attempted firing occurred as Trump has repeatedly attacked the Fed for not cutting its key interest rate quickly enough. If Cook is ultimately removed from her position, it would give the president the opportunity to appoint a fourth member to the Fed's seven-member board, securing a majority.

Cook sued to keep her job, and the

Supreme Court ruled last month that she could remain in the position while she fights the administration in court. The Supreme Court has said it would hear arguments in the case in January.

In the letter Monday, Cook's attorney, Abbe Lowell, wrote that the case against her largely rests on "one stray reference" in a 2021 mortgage document that was "plainly innocuous in light of the several other truthful and more specific disclosures" about the homes she has purchased.

Cook is the first Black woman to serve on the Fed's governing board, and was appointed in 2022 by President Joe Biden.

A Justice Department spokeswoman said the department "does not comment on current or prospective litigation including matters that may be under investigation." The FHFA did not respond to a request for comment.

In August, Pulte accused Cook of committing mortgage fraud by declaring two different homes — one in Ann Arbor, Mich., the other in Atlanta — as her "primary residence." Such declarations can result in lower mortgage rates or a smaller down payment requirement than if a property is declared to be a second

or vacation home.

"Do not declare two principal residences in President Trump's America," Pulte said Aug. 20 on social media platform X. "Mortgage fraud is a serious crime and must be prosecuted as such."

Yet Lowell said Monday that Pulte has pursued mortgage fraud on a partisan basis, focusing on Democrats and refusing to pursue similar allegations against Republicans. Pulte made a criminal referral to the Justice Department in August, and followed up with a second referral on a third property in Cambridge, Mass. Pulte alleged that Cook also classified that property as a primary residence, even though she rented it out.

Lowell argued that Cook has mostly lived in the Ann Arbor property since first purchasing it in 2005. As a result, it was accurate for her to refer to it as her "primary residence" in a June 2021 application to refinance its mortgage, the letter said.

A month later she purchased a condominium in Atlanta, and in a July 2021 document also referred to it as her "primary residence." Lowell said that it was an "isolated notation" that did not reflect an intent to defraud.

Former Fed governor's '24 trades violated ethics rules

Associated Press

A former Federal Reserve governor who retired in August listed several stock trades in her financial disclosure documents for 2024 that violated the central bank's ethics rules.

The transactions are outlined in a report released Saturday by the U.S. Office of Government Ethics, which reviewed Adriana Kugler's financial disclosures after the Fed referred them to its inspector general earlier this year.

Kugler, who unexpectedly stepped down from the Fed board Aug. 8, disclosed more than a dozen individual stock trades, including several made during financial trading "blackout periods" around the time the Federal Reserve's policymaking committee meets to set interest rates and other monetary policy.

Southwest Airlines, Apple, Caterpillar and Fortinet were among the companies listed as individual stock transactions in 2024 by Kugler. The largest was a purchase of Apple stock in April 2024 ranging between \$100,000-\$250,000.

The central bank's decisions on interest rates and bank regulations can cause significant swings in the prices of stocks, bonds and other securities.

As such, Fed officials are barred

from investing in individual stocks, bonds or cryptocurrencies, although they are allowed to invest via diversified investments such as mutual funds.

They must provide 45 days' notice of any trade and secure approval of such trades. And they must provide public notice of any trades made in the previous 30 days.

It's also forbidden for Fed officials to engage in financial transactions during the blackout period around the eight times during the year when the Fed's policymaking committee meets. That blackout period is roughly 10 days before a Fed meeting and one day after the meeting ends.

Kugler, who did not provide a reason for stepping down in her resignation letter, was appointed to the Fed's seven-member board of governors by former President Joe Biden in September 2023. She was the first Hispanic Fed governor. Prior to joining the Fed, she was a professor at Georgetown University and was the U.S. representative to the World Bank. Kugler returned to the Georgetown faculty in the fall.



Kugler

WORLD

UK government proposes new asylum policy

Changes include extending wait time to 20 years, allowing seizure of valuables

By Karla Adam
The Washington Post

LONDON — The British government on Monday proposed sweeping changes to its asylum policy, including measures that would extend the waiting time for permanent residency to 20 years from five and would allow officials to seize valuables from asylum seekers to help cover processing costs.

The move comes amid mounting frustration over the Labour government’s inability to curb small-boat crossings of the English Channel, where migrants often risk their lives to attempt the dangerous journey in overcrowded, unseaworthy boats.

Shabana Mahmood, the British home secretary, described the reforms as “an entirely new asylum model for this country.”

“We have become the destination of choice in Europe, clearly visible to every people smuggler and would-be illegal migrant across the world,” Mahmood wrote.

Despite the rhetoric, according to government figures published in a separate document, Germany, Spain, France and Italy each received more asylum claims than Britain.

Immigration is a top concern for British voters, as the number of arrivals by small boats has risen

sharply since Prime Minister Keir Starmer took office. In the first half of 2025, arrivals were up by about 50% compared with the same period in 2024. The government said it would take a tougher line on removing people whose asylum claims have failed.

“When an asylum seeker has failed in their claim, we will take a far more hard-headed approach to removing them. We will remove people we have not removed before, including families who have a safe home country they can return to,” Mahmood wrote.

Some Labour lawmakers criticized the reforms. Stella Creasy, a member of Parliament, wrote in the Guardian, “In reality if this policy becomes law the UK will require ICE-style raids to remove people — and their children,” referencing recent actions by Immigration and Customs Enforcement in the United States.

The British government has taken inspiration from Denmark, whose center-left government has introduced some of Europe’s toughest asylum policies. Denmark’s focus on temporary protection and the possible return of refugees once their home countries have been deemed safe has been praised by some but criticized by human rights groups that say it creates deep insecurity and hampers employment prospects.

MI5 says Chinese spies using LinkedIn to reach lawmakers

Associated Press

LONDON — Britain’s domestic intelligence agency on Tuesday warned lawmakers that Chinese spies were actively reaching out to “recruit and cultivate” them via headhunters or cover companies.

Writing to lawmakers, House of Commons Speaker Lindsay Hoyle said a new MI5 “espionage alert” warned that Chinese nationals were “using LinkedIn profiles to conduct outreach at scale” on behalf of the Chinese Ministry of State Security.

“Their aim is to collect information and lay the groundwork for long-term relationships, using

professional networking sites, recruitment agents and consultants acting on their behalf,” he said.

MI5 issued the alert because the activity was “targeted and widespread,” he added.

The alert named two women, Amanda Qiu and Shirly Shen, and said other similar recruiters’ profiles were acting as fronts for espionage.

Home Office Minister Dan Jarvis said that apart from parliamentary staff, others including economists, think tank consultants and government officials have been similarly targeted.



PHOTOS BY BABA AHMED/AP

An employee of the Ahmed Baba Institute of Higher Islamic Studies and Research displays manuscripts at the exhibition hall in Timbuktu, Mali, on Sept. 4.

Timbuktu’s famed manuscripts once escaped al-Qaida but threat lingers

By Baba Ahmed
Associated Press

TIMBUKTU, Mali — Thirteen years ago, Abdoulaye Cissé risked his life to smuggle tens of thousands of fragile manuscripts out of Timbuktu as al-Qaida-linked extremists swept into the desert town.

At night, he loaded crates of manuscripts from the Ahmed Baba Institute of Higher Islamic Studies and Research onto donkey carts, aware that their pages carried evidence of his people’s glorious past. They were taken to the river, where wooden boats and then buses took them to Mali’s capital, Bamako — a 750-mile journey.

“It was dark, but we knew the route by heart,” said Cissé, the institute’s general secretary.

Moving the manuscripts took a month. The institute’s staff knew they risked their lives.

The 28,000 manuscripts returned safely to Timbuktu in August after a request from local leaders and civil society. It reflected both the city’s pride in cultural preservation and concerns about



One of the manuscripts is shown.

the potentially damaging humidity in Bamako. Mali’s government has portrayed it as a victory.

But al-Qaida remains a threat. Its fighters attacked Timbuktu as recently as June, and affiliated fighters with the JNIM group have imposed a fuel blockade on landlocked Mali, threatening to bring down the military regime.

Beyond the institute, which is owned by the government, Timbuktu is home to private libraries holding an estimated 377,000 manuscripts in total. All were smuggled to the capital, where they remain.

“What we find in these docu-

ments does not exist anywhere else in the world,” said Mohamed Diagayeté, director of the institute, who specializes in old manuscripts.

The trove contradicts assumptions that African history has been primarily oral. The manuscripts are an archive of dealings among West African empires and tribes, with histories dating back centuries.

Timbuktu was once a center of Islamic learning, with scholars also coming to study mathematics, science, astrology and governance.

The manuscripts offer evidence that Islam in the region was long marked by tolerance and respect. One manuscript in a private library records a local decree warning men not to impose themselves on women, and granting women the right to seek justice if they do.

The brutality of al-Qaida’s arrival in 2012 was a shock. The militants destroyed more than 4,000 manuscripts, some dating back to the 13th century, according to the findings of a United Nations expert mission.

Probe: One airplane engine accelerated after landing in Hong Kong before crash

By Kanis Leung
Associated Press

HONG KONG — An investigation into a deadly plane crash in Hong Kong last month found an engine of the aircraft accelerated after touching down, according to a preliminary report on Tuesday.

The Boeing 747, flown by Turkey-based ACT Airlines from Dubai, skidded after landing at the city’s airport on Oct. 20 and collided with a security patrol car, sending both vehicles into the sea. Two workers in the car were killed.

The four crew members on the plane were unhurt.

The Transport and Logistics Bureau wrote in a Facebook post that existing evidence showed the flight and conditions such as weather, runway and air traffic control were all normal before the plane veered off.

The report from the Air Accident Investigation Authority listed the crash as an accident, saying its Number 4 engine accelerated after landing.

Examination of the flight deck

showed thrust levers of Number 1, 2 and 3 engines were closed and their reverse thrust levers were selected to the maximum.

“The Number 4 engine thrust lever was in the full forward thrust position. Number 4 engine reverse thrust lever was fully forward,” the report said.

The bureau said the investigation would focus on why Number 4 engine’s thrust lever was in that position, including whether there were problems that caused its loss of control.

EUROPE

Ukrainians working for Russia suspected in rail blast

By CLAUDIA CIOBANU
Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland — Two Ukrainian citizens working for Russia are suspected of blowing up a railway line in Poland over the weekend, Prime Minister Donald Tusk said Tuesday.

Speaking to the Sejm, the lower house of the Polish parliament, Tusk said the two suspects had been collaborating with Russian secret services for a long time. He said their identities were known but could not be revealed to the public because of ongoing investigations. The pair have already left Poland.

Tusk has described the explosion on a rail line linking Poland's capital, Warsaw, to the border with Ukraine as an "unprecedented act of sabotage."

In a separate incident, which Polish officials are also now confirming as sabotage, power lines over another segment further south were also damaged.

A meeting of the governmental National Security Committee had taken place earlier on Tuesday, with the participation of military commanders, heads of the intelligence services and a representative of the president.

Patrols have been sent to check the safety of railways and other key infrastructure in the east of the country, the defense minister said.

Polish prosecutors have initiated an investigation into "acts of sabotage of a terrorist nature" directed against railway infrastruc-

ture and committed for the benefit of foreign intelligence.

"These actions brought about an immediate danger of a land traffic disaster, threatening the lives and health of many people and property on a large scale," prosecutors said in a statement.

In the first incident, an explosion damaged the tracks near the village of Mika and, in a separate incident, power lines were destroyed in the area of Pulawy, about 30 miles from Lublin. Trains carrying passengers were forced to stop at both locations, but no one was hurt.

"The explosion was most likely intended to blow up the train," Tusk said.

The damage caused at both locations has been repaired.



Prime Minister Donald Tusk, second right, said two suspects working for Russia blew up part of a rail line near Deblin, Poland, last weekend.

Zelenskyy will visit Turkey in new bid for talks with Russia

By ILLIA NOVIKOV
Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Tuesday that he will travel to Turkey this week in an attempt to jump-start negotiations on ending Russia's invasion, which began nearly four years ago.

U.S. special envoy Steve Witkoff will join Zelenskyy in Turkey, a senior Turkish official told The Associated Press, but the Kremlin said that Russia won't be sending anyone.

Turkey provided a setting for low-level talks between Ukraine and Russia earlier this year though the only significant progress in Istanbul was on exchanging prisoners of war.

U.S.-led international peace efforts have brought no breakthrough, either.

Zelenskyy said that he would be in Turkey on Wednesday, a day after visiting Spain where he hoped for pledges of new support on Tuesday.

"We are preparing to reinvigorate negotiations, and we have developed solutions that we will propose to our partners," Zelenskyy said on social media, without providing details. "Doing everything possible to bring the end of the war closer is Ukraine's top priority."

President Donald Trump has expressed frustration with Russian President Vladimir Putin's refusal to budge from his demands for putting an end to the in-

vasion.

Heavy new American sanctions on Russia's all-important oil industry, devised to push Putin to the negotiating table, are due to take effect on Friday.

The sanctions against oil companies Rosneft and Lukoil seek to starve Putin's war machine of cash and to halt its grinding war of attrition, which has claimed tens of thousands of lives throughout Ukraine.

The sanctions also carry the threat of secondary penalties against anyone violating them, raising the stakes for Putin. China and India are major importers of Russian oil.

Zelenskyy said that he would meet with senior officials in his

government on Thursday, as well as with the leadership of Ukraine's Parliament and his political party, called Servant of the People.

The Ukrainian leader was meeting later Tuesday in Madrid with Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez and King Felipe VI, with a visit planned as well to Spain's parliament.

Kicking off a busy week, Zelenskyy was in Paris on Monday where he signed a letter of intent to buy up to 100 Rafale warplanes from France, along with drones and ground-to-air systems.

On the battlefield, Ukraine launched a surprise aerial attack on energy infrastructure in occupied parts of its eastern Donetsk

region.

A day earlier, Pushilin also reported Ukrainian drones attacking energy infrastructure in the region, denying power to around 500,000 consumers. The occupied part of the region has also endured water shortages.

Ukrainian forces, despite being heavily outnumbered, are fighting hard to prevent Russia's army from capturing any more of Donetsk.

In Ukraine's northeastern Kharkiv region, meanwhile, a 17-year-old girl was killed and 10 other people were wounded in a Russian missile strike on the town of Berestyn, located about 70 miles from the Russian border, regional head Oleh Syniehubov said.

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man who shot two Latino men sentenced to life

VA ALEXANDRIA — A Virginia man was sentenced to life in prison on federal hate crime and firearms charges Thursday, after pleading guilty to shooting two men because he suspected they were migrants from outside the United States.

Douglas Wayne Cornett, 59, had told detectives that he was angry undocumented migrants were receiving resources from the government, according to court records, and had fantasized about shooting undocumented migrants at the border from a helicopter to deter people from “attempting to cross the border.” He pleaded guilty in June.

“No one in this country should be hunted down and shot at because of who they are or where they come from,” said Assistant Attorney General Harmeet K. Dhillon of the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division in a news release.

Cornett was already serving a life sentence at the Rappahannock Regional Jail for state hate crime and gun charges he incurred for the same shooting. While at the facility, he was diagnosed with stage-four lung cancer, a condition prosecutors and Cornett’s defense said would be best treated if he serves the rest of his time in federal custody.

Cheetah mom gave birth during shutdown

VA FRONT ROYAL — Although the federal government was partially closed last month, a creature in its custody, apparently unaware of any restrictions, produced a litter of four little ones in a breeding milestone.

Seemingly unconcerned by any legalities, a 5-year-old female cheetah named Amabala gave birth to the cubs Oct. 17 and 18 at the conservation facility in Front Royal, Va., operated by the Smithsonian Institution’s National Zoo.

However, the news of what gossip columns used to describe as the blessed event, became public only Saturday, in an announcement made when the zoo reopened after the government shutdown.

The staff of the zoo remained on duty throughout the shutdown, according to the zoo, to care for their cheetahs and other charges.

Amabala, the mother cheetah, is doing well, and is doing “a great job” in caring for her babies, the zoo said. The cubs “appear to be strong, active, vocal and eating well,” according to the zoo.

New prosecutor takes on case against Trump

GA ATLANTA — A long-time prosecutor announced he will take over the Georgia election interference case against President Donald Trump and others, after Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis was removed from the case and no one



GREG EANS, THE MESSENGER-INQUIRER/AP

'Tis almost the season

Heath Stallings, buildings and grounds supervisor with Daviess County Fiscal Court, lowers a wreath into position on the side of the Daviess County Courthouse while working to decorate for the Christmas season, last week, in Owensboro, Ky.

else wanted the job.

The nonpartisan Prosecuting Attorneys’ Council of Georgia was tasked with replacing Willis after she was disqualified over an “appearance of impropriety” created by a romantic relationship with the special prosecutor she’d chosen to lead the case. The organization’s executive director, Pete Skandalakis, said Friday that he would take the case on himself.

Legal action against Trump is unlikely to proceed while he is president. However, 14 other defendants still face charges, among them former New York mayor and Trump attorney Rudy Giuliani as well as former White House chief of staff Mark Meadows.

Feds expand terrorism charges in ICE shooting

TX DALLAS — Federal prosecutors in Texas have charged six more people with a new terrorism-related charge in the July shooting outside an immigration detention center near Dallas and said six others are scheduled to enter guilty pleas in the case.

The latest indictment in the case, issued Friday, expands on previous charges and relies on President Donald Trump’s recent declaration that deems the decentralized movement known as antifa a domestic terrorist organization.

The case stems from the July 4 shooting outside the Prairieland Detention Center in Alvarado,

southwest of Dallas, that injured a police officer.

Prosecutors said the group threw fireworks at the facility, vandalized vehicles and then shot at responding police and correctional officers.

Patrick McClain, a lawyer for defendant Zachary Evetts, said he has seen no evidence to support the government’s view of the case. He said his client would again plead not guilty at the Dec. 3 arraignment on the new charges.

Jets cornerback critically wounded in shooting

NY NEW YORK — New York police have released surveillance images of a man sought in the shooting of New York Jets cornerback and special teams standout Kris Boyd.

Boyd remained in critical but stable condition Monday, a day after he was shot in midtown Manhattan. A motive for the shooting remains under investigation and authorities said it’s not clear if Boyd was targeted by the shooter. No other injuries were reported and no arrests have been made.

The shooting happened just after 2 a.m. Sunday outside a business on West 38th Street near 7th Avenue.

The Jets have said they are “aware of the situation involving Kris Boyd” but have declined further comment. Boyd’s agent has not responded to a text message inquiring about the incident.

Boyd hasn’t played this season, his first with the Jets, after going on the season-ending injured reserve list on Aug. 18 with a shoulder injury that required surgery to repair.

Man charged in killing of retired football coach

CA OAKLAND — A 27-year-old man was charged Monday with murder in the shooting death of celebrated former football coach John Beam, who died Friday after being shot in the head on the junior college campus in Oakland where he worked.

Cedric Irving Jr. could face 50 years to life if convicted, said Alameda County District Attorney Ursula Jones Dickson at a Monday press conference.

Beam, 66, was a giant in the local community, a father figure who forged deep relationships with his players while fielding a team that regularly competed for championships. The Netflix docuseries “Last Chance U” focused on Beam and the Laney Eagles in its 2020 season. He’d most recently been serving as the school’s athletic director after retiring from coaching last year.

Disability rights activist Alice Wong dies at 51

CA SAN FRANCISCO — Alice Wong, a disability rights activist and author whose independence and writing inspired others, has died. She was 51.

Wong died of an infection Friday at a hospital in San Francisco, said Sandy Ho, a close friend who has been in touch with Wong’s family.

Ho called her friend a “luminary of the disability justice movement” who wanted a world in which people with disabilities, especially ones of marginalized demographics who were people of color, LGBTQ+ and immigrants, could live freely and have full autonomy over their lives and decisions.

The daughter of Hong Kong immigrants, Wong was born with muscular dystrophy.

US students win 2026 Rhodes scholarships

DC WASHINGTON — Five students at U.S. military academies and three each from Yale University, Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology are among the 32 American winners named Sunday as 2026 Rhodes scholars.

The group includes students focused on housing, health outcomes, sustainability and prison reentry programs.

The students will attend the University of Oxford as part of the Rhodes scholar program, which awards more than 100 scholarships worldwide each year for students to pursue two to three years of graduate studies.

From Associated Press and Washington Post reports

Bizarro



Loose Parts



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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ACROSS

- 1 Lawn mower brand
- 5 Kitty's doc
- 8 Miles off
- 12 Guitarist Clapton
- 13 Blunder
- 14 Party cheese
- 15 Cheap way to live
- 17 Email command
- 18 Classic Ford
- 19 Icy downpours
- 21 — chi
- 22 Foundered
- 23 Drummer Starkey
- 26 Old CIA foe
- 28 "Star Trek" genre
- 31 Brit. queen featured in "The Crown"
- 33 "La-la" lead-in
- 35 Nobel Prize subj.
- 36 Kitchen gadget
- 38 Soda
- 40 Decks in the ring
- 41 Make a scarf
- 43 Writer Harper
- 45 Have a cocktail (or two)
- 47 New York player
- 51 Tub toy
- 52 Money owed by a tenant
- 54 Foot fraction
- 55 Prefix with meter
- 56 "Simpsons" bus driver

- 57 Fifth Avenue store
- 58 Dazzle
- 59 Lunch hour

- 23 Last letter in London
- 24 Boxing legend
- 25 Relax
- 27 Conk on the head
- 29 Egg — yung
- 30 Connections
- 32 Pinnacles
- 34 "Gee whiz!"
- 37 Tease
- 39 High point
- 42 Former quarterback Tim
- 44 Bankrupt energy company
- 45 Nile bird
- 46 "— Lisa"
- 48 Trendy low-carb diet
- 49 Within (Pref.)
- 50 Harrow rival
- 53 Commotion

DOWN

- 1 School session
- 2 Sandwich cookie
- 3 Cantaloupe cover
- 4 Quartet doubled
- 5 Hitchcock thriller
- 6 Before
- 7 Lock of hair
- 8 Lack
- 9 Award for a soccer foul
- 10 "— She Sweet"
- 11 Some wines
- 16 Criticism
- 20 Vegas opener?

Answer to Previous Puzzle

G	H	E	E		L	I	D		C	R	A	M
I	O	U	S		E	N	E		A	V	I	A
F	O	R	E	S	T	R	Y		R	E	D	S
T	K	O		U	T	E		S	P	R	A	T
			C	V	S		L	I	E			
H	O	O	H	A		T	U	R	N	I	P	S
O	I	S	E		G	I	G		T	R	I	O
P	L	U	M	P	I	E		T	R	A	P	S
			I	O	N		H	A	Y			
Y	E	A	S	T		C	A	L		B	O	T
A	M	A	T		T	A	P	E	S	T	R	Y
L	I	A	R		A	S	P		P	U	C	K
E	T	S	Y		M	A	Y		A	S	H	E

11-19

CRYPTOQUIP

DGZU KS WSN UGTQH GSVQYK
LZVO ZQTOZJB IVSMZMJW DZQU
LSV MVYZHLZBU ZLUYV DZHTQA
NI? ASZUOYZJ.

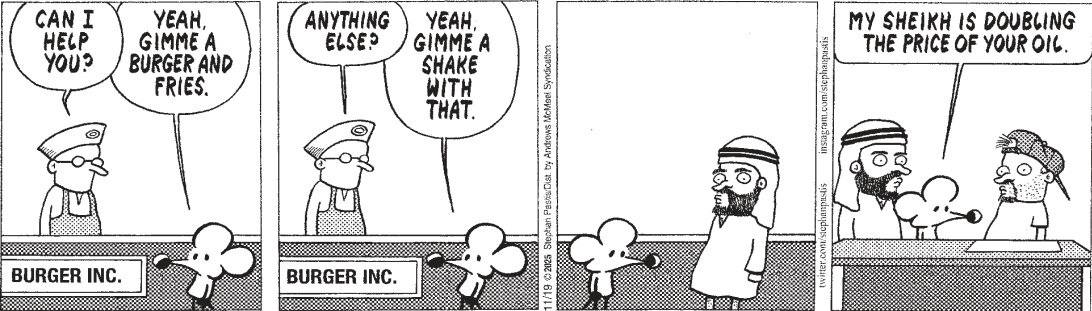
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF SINGER PATTI GOES TO A VERY LAVISH PARTY, SHE'LL UNDOUBTEDLY BE LABELLE OF THE BALL.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals H

Frazz



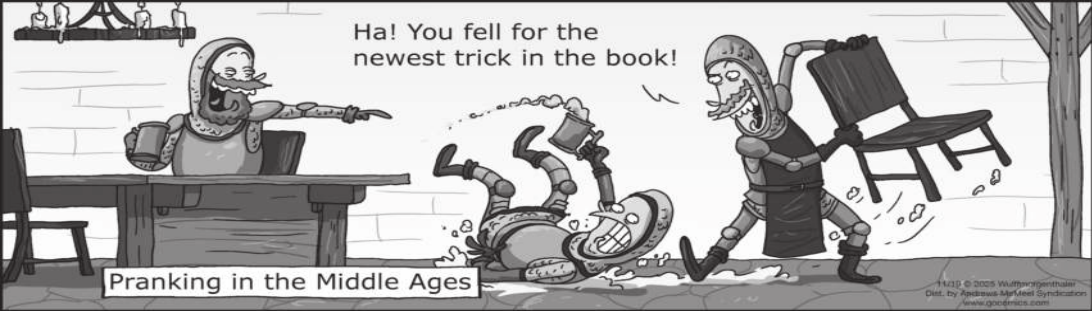
Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



Wumo



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey





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OPINION

Trumpty Dumpty and the Venezuelan boat strikes

BY GEORGE F. WILL
 The Washington Post

CIA personnel running the Air-bridge Denial Program, a drug-interdiction operation in Peru between 1995 and 2001, wanted to avoid catastrophic mishaps, such as, they said, shooting down “a planeload of nuns.” Then they shot down a family of American missionaries. According to Tim Weiner in “The Mission: The CIA in the 21st Century,” all 15 shootdowns by CIA operatives and Peruvian allies between 1995 and 2001 violated explicit presidential rules about identifying and warning planes suspected of carrying drugs.

Are there any rules regarding today’s “lethal kinetic strikes” on boats driven by “narco-terrorists” who are “poisoning” Americans? This language is from self-designated Secretary of War Pete Hegseth on X, where he notifies narco-terrorists: “We will kill you.” The tattooed tough guy is waging war. But not “hostilities.” Read on.

Terrorism is indiscriminate violence intended to sow fear, thereby advancing political objectives. Drug trafficking is for-profit commerce. “Narco-terrorists” is a self-contradictory neologism coined to turn crime (drug trafficking) into war, thereby enabling lethal kinetic stuff by the war secretary.

The Obama administration, pursuing regime change, assured Congress that U.S. participation in NATO’s 2011 intervention in Libya’s civil war involved “non-kinetic support” (intelligence, logistics, refueling). There also were, however, some kinetic-seeming attacks on Libyan air defenses and other targets.

When two people survived an Oct. 16 boat strike, they were not taken into U.S.

custody. They were sent to their home countries, Ecuador and Colombia. Strangely, or perhaps not, they were not detained for extensive interrogations that might have confirmed, or not, Trump administration suppositions about who is doing what with the boats. Also, a boat farther from a U.S. shore than Miami is from Philadelphia would need to refuel numerous times getting there. How would that work? The vessels allegedly are carrying fentanyl. Strange. Most of this comes to America overland from Mexico. South America, the boats’ origin, produces cocaine.

Channeling his inner Humpty Dumpty (“‘When I use a word,’ Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, ‘it means just what I choose it to mean — nothing more nor less’”), Donald Trump has decided that this hypothetical fentanyl from Venezuela might be a “chemical weapon” (like mustard gas or sarin?). An odd one, that Americans pay for and ingest.

If the boats are, as U.S. intelligence sources supposedly know, carrying drugs (intelligence sources knew Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction existed), they are pulled to America by the demand for drugs by Americans who poison themselves. The national tragedy of 80,000 U.S. fatal overdoses last year is not ameliorated by, it is deepened by, terminological obfuscations that erase the agency of drug users.

The president says each boat strike prevents 25,000 overdose deaths. Reason’s Jacob Sullum says this means he already has saved 350,000 lives, six times the number of U.S. lives lost in Vietnam. But, then, Attorney General Pam Bondi has said that in his first 100 days in office, Trump saved “258 million lives” (75% of the U.S. population) by intercepting fentanyl shipments.

The U.S. Coast Guard specializes in at-

sea interdictions. And using Reaper drones and Hellfire missiles against boats is (as a former U.S. ambassador to Venezuela told the Economist) like “trying to cook an egg with a blowtorch.” One wonders: Is this what U.S. pilots and drone operators enlisted to do?

Administration lawyers say the boat strikes do not involve U.S. armed forces in “hostilities,” as that term is used in the 1973 War Powers Act, which involves Congress in uses of military force. President Gerald Ford’s administration said “hostilities” occur when U.S. forces are “actively engaged in exchanges of fire.” So, are “hostilities” happening when U.S. service members are not endangered while executing strikes on unarmed boats?

The president has “determined” — presidential determinations are formal and consequential — that the ongoing boat strikes constitute an armed conflict. Although only one side is armed. A Trump administration briefing for senators on the boat strikes excluded Democrats. A reasonable surmise: The administration invited only members of the Republican caucus because most of its members consider questioning the president’s judgment an act of lèse-majesté.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio is puzzled: “We have deployed U.S. assets and interests all over the planet, but when we do it in our own hemisphere ... everyone sort of freaks out.” (“Freaks out.” Imagine such teenager-talk from other secretaries of state — say, John Quincy Adams or Dean Acheson.) What is the antecedent of Rubio’s pronoun “it”? Deploying “assets and interests”? Hardly “everyone,” but some people have questions about activities antispectically described as “lethal kinetic strikes.”

Will AI be an economic net positive? Probably not.

BY BILL DUDLEY
 Bloomberg Opinion

The boom in artificial-intelligence investment is undoubtedly boosting both the U.S. stock market and the broader economy right now. But what about the longer term? Will AI be a big net positive, delivering prosperity and solving the nation’s fiscal problems?

Most likely, I’m sorry to say, it’ll be closer to a wash.

To assess AI’s longer-run implications for the economic outlook, one must consider three questions:

- How much will it lift productivity and growth?
- How will it change the demand for labor and the equilibrium unemployment rate?
- How will it affect interest rates?

On productivity, there’s no consensus. It’s still hard to say what kinds of work AI can handle and how quickly businesses can reconfigure their processes to take full advantage. The advent of electricity, for example, took several decades to transform manufacturing; of the computer age, the economist Robert Solow famously said in 1987 that one could see it “everywhere but in the productivity statistics.”

Nobel laureate Daron Acemoglu argues that AI won’t have a significant impact on most tasks performed by most workers and hence will boost the level of productivity by

less than 1% over the next decade. Economists at Goldman Sachs, by contrast, estimate a 15% boost when it’s “fully adopted and incorporated into regular production,” which might take considerably longer.

Most likely, the impact will be very modest at first and then grow over time as businesses put the technology to use — first internally, where the risks of hallucinations and bias can better be managed, then externally in client-facing products and services, where reputation risk and legal liability are more of a concern.

As regards the labor market, one key issue is whether AI will replace workers or just help them do their jobs better. Probably a bit of both. Consider coding: AI will speed it up, reducing the number of workers required to do a given project; but it also should boost the demand for software by lowering the cost of development. The total demand for coders will depend on which of those two effects dominates.

A second issue is friction. If coders lose their jobs, how easily can they retrain and find employment elsewhere? The pace of change matters a lot. If AI displaces many workers in a short period, more of them will be in limbo as they seek to move into new jobs and professions. In that scenario, equilibrium unemployment — the rate consistent with stable inflation — will be higher.

AI’s effect on interest rates is more

straightforward. Historically, technological innovation has both increased the prospective return on investment and required new kinds of investment to adapt to new ways of doing business. The added demand for capital, in turn, pushes up real interest rates. During the internet boom of the late 1990s, for example, spending to build the national fiber optic network pushed real interest rates well above 3%. In the case of AI, the impact will likely be frontloaded, given the scale and speed at which computing and energy infrastructure must be built.

It’s hard to see how AI’s effects, taken together, will cure the U.S. government’s unsustainable fiscal trajectory. Higher productivity and growth will be positive to the extent they happen, generating more tax revenue and boosting the denominator in the country’s debt-to-GDP ratio. But higher interest rates will increase debt service costs, which will push in the opposite direction.

No doubt, AI is important. Yet it’s unlikely to dramatically change the nation’s long-term economic outlook. One can hope for the best, but hope is not a strategy.

Bill Dudley is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist. A former president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, he is a non-executive director at Swiss Bank UBS and a member of Coinbase Global’s advisory council. This column reflects the personal views of the author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial board or Bloomberg LP and its owners.

FACES

Danes', Rhys' parallel lives finally merge

Actors with a lot in common working together for 1st time in Netflix's 'The Beast in Me'

By ALICIA RANCILIO
Associated Press

When prestige TV was first thought to be eclipsing movies, with quality scripts and meaty acting roles, two shows frequently bandied about were "Homeland" with Claire Danes and "The Americans" starring Matthew Rhys and Keri Russell.

Danes acknowledges other parallels with Rhys. "I mean, you married an American lady, I married a British gentleman," she said, referring to her marriage to Hugh Dancy and Rhys' partner, Russell.

"We've just been mirroring each other's lives," added Rhys, noting that they also had children around the same time.

Danes and Rhys had never worked together, until now. They co-star in the new cat-and-mouse limited series "The Beast in Me," streaming on Netflix.

Danes plays Aggie, a prickly Pulitzer prize-winning author who has a looming deadline for her second book and a major case of writer's block. She's also grieving the death of her young son and dissolution of her marriage soon after. When Rhys' Nile, a real estate tycoon, moves in next door, his reputation precedes him because



NETFLIX/AP

Author Aggie (Claire Danes), left, offers to write about new neighbor Nile (Matthew Rhys) to help him clear his name in the disappearance of his ex in "The Beast in Me."

he was a suspect in his ex-wife's disappearance. Nile's aggressive dogs and loud security alarm unnerves Aggie. He and his new wife try to charm the neighbors, but she's a tough nut to crack and returns their gifted bottle of wine.

"You're not how I pictured you ... at all," Nile says to Aggie in an early encounter. "On the page you're a lot more self-assured."

Somehow he entices Aggie to have lunch,

and the ice between them begins to thaw.

"I think they're both crazy smart and rarely encounter another person who thinks as quickly as they do. They're kind of hyperperceptive. And they kind of enjoy challenging each other," Danes said.

Although she doesn't completely trust Nile, Aggie proposes she write a book about him to get his narrative out there.

"He goes, 'Hang on, I can undo this kind of, you know, a societal scar that I've been

living with, and I can possibly clear my name," Rhys said. "He foolishly thinks he could use Aggie in that sense."

"The Beast in Me" reunites Danes with some of the team who worked on "Homeland," including showrunner Howard Gordon.

When filming began, only three scripts had been written so no one really knew what was going to happen. "We were all discovering the evolution of the story in real time," said Danes, who adds her history with the production team made her "trust them implicitly." Even Rhys was OK with the unknown because it served his portrayal of Nile.

"In a way it's kind of liberating because then you're only playing the present and what's on the page in that moment," he said. "Sometimes I think when you do know the outcome, I have a tendency sometimes to kind of play into that or to do something ridiculous that flags it. So there's freedom in the fact that you don't know."

What they knew for sure was to lean into their character's unlikely chemistry.

"The pyrotechnics were pretty much contained within these sparring sessions. There is a little murder in there, but that's not where the tension really lies. They are hiding a lot from each other," Danes said. "They're playing each other but they also are forging a genuine intimacy and connection that unnerves both of them."

"I mean there's actually nothing I enjoy more than that," she said.

New this week: 'Bad Guys 2,' music from 'Wicked,' 'Man on the Inside'

Associated Press

Here's a collection curated by The Associated Press' entertainment journalists of what's arriving on TV, streaming services and music platforms this week.

Movies

■ "Train Dreams" (Friday on Netflix), Clint Bentley's adaptation of Denis Johnson's acclaimed novella, stars Joel Edgerton as Robert Grainier, a railroad worker and logger in the early 20th century Pacific Northwest. The film, scripted by Bentley and Greg Kwedar (the duo behind last year's "Sing Sing"), conjures a frontier past to tell a story about an anonymous laborer and the currents of change around him.

■ In the DreamWorks Animation sequel "The Bad Guys 2" (Friday on Peacock), the reformed criminal gang of animals returns for a new heist caper. In the film, with a returning voice cast including Sam Rockwell, Awkwafina, Craig Robinson, Anthony Ramos and Marc Maron, the Bad Guys encounter a new robbery team: the Bad Girls.

■ In "The Roses," streaming Thursday on Hulu and Disney+,

Jay Roach, from a script by Tony McNamara, remakes Danny DeVito's 1989 black comedy, "The War of the Roses." In this version, Olivia Colman and Benedict Cumberbatch star as a loving couple who turn bitter enemies.

— AP Film Writer Jake Coyle

Music

■ Musical theater fans, your time has come ... again. "Wicked: For Good" is upon us, and with it comes the release of its official soundtrack. On Friday, after or before you catch the film in theaters, stream its life-affirming



Republic Records

The "Wicked: For Good" soundtrack is out Friday.

compositions to your heart's content. Might we suggest Ariana Grande's "The Girl in the Bubble"? Or Cynthia Erivo's "No Place Like Home"? And there's gold to be unearthed for Jeff Goldblum and Jonathan Bailey lovers, too.

■ Rock this way: Aerosmith is

back with new music. Following its 2023 "Greatest Hits" collection and just a few months after the conclusion of the "Peace Out: The Farewell Tour" (the band said it would no longer hit the road due to singer Steven Tyler's vocal cord injury and permanently damaged voice), it's teaming up with next gen rock 'n' roller Yungblud. It's a collaborative EP called "One More Time," out Friday. The anthemic opening track, "My Only Angel," sets the tone. What's another one for the road?

— AP Music Writer Maria Sherman

Television

■ Raise your hand if you still miss "Succession" Sundays on HBO. An acclaimed Swedish drama called "Vanguard" debuted Tuesday on Viaplay that's of the same vein. It's a dramatization about Jan Stenbeck, one of Europe's most influential media moguls. There's ambition, betrayal and, yes, sibling rivalry.

■ Ted Danson's "A Man on the Inside" returns to Netflix for its second season on Thursday. Danson plays a widower named Charles who has found a new



Netflix

Season 2 of "A Man on the Inside," starring Ted Danson as a widower who becomes an amateur private detective, starts Thursday. In this season, Danson's real-life wife, Mary Steenburgen, joins the cast.

sense of purpose as an amateur private detective. In Season 1, Charles moved into a retirement home to catch his culprit. In Season 2, he goes back to college to solve a case. Danson's real-life wife, Mary Steenburgen, joins the cast as Charles' love interest as he explores the idea of a second chance at romance.

■ Keeley Hawes and Freddie Highmore co-star in "The Assassin" for AMC+. Hawes ("Bodyguard") plays a retired assassin living in solitude on a Greek island

whose peaceful life is turned upside down when her estranged son (Highmore) comes to visit. When the two find themselves in danger, they must work together to stay alive. It premieres Thursday.

■ Jordan Peele has a new documentary series called "High Horse: The Black Cowboy," coming to Peacock on Thursday. The three-part series examines how stories of Black cowboys have been erased from both pop culture and history books.

— Alicia Rancilio

SCOREBOARD

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

AP Men’s Top 25

The top 25 teams in The Associated Press’ college basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, and total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote and previous ranking.

	Record	Pts	Prv
1. Purdue (44)	4-0	1502	2
2. Houston (12)	4-0	1457	1
3. UConn (2)	4-0	1389	3
4. Arizona (2)	4-0	1314	5
5. Duke (1)	4-0	1277	4
6. Louisville	4-0	1161	12
7. Michigan	3-0	1103	6
8. Illinois	4-0	1017	14
9. BYU	3-1	972	7
10. Florida	3-1	949	10
11. Alabama	2-1	928	8
12. Kentucky	3-1	798	9
13. Gonzaga	4-0	772	19
14. St. John’s	2-1	732	13
15. Texas Tech	3-1	678	11
16. Iowa St.	3-0	664	16
17. Michigan St.	3-0	585	17
18. North Carolina	4-0	516	18
19. UCLA	3-1	423	15
20. Tennessee	3-0	416	20
21. Arkansas	3-1	247	21
22. Auburn	3-1	188	22
23. Wisconsin	3-0	180	24
24. Kansas	3-1	132	25
25. NC State	3-0	97	-

Others receiving votes: San Diego St. 71, Indiana 65, Vanderbilt 57, Oregon 28, Ohio St. 21, Southern Cal 16, Georgetown 16, Creighton 12, Baylor 11, Saint Mary’s 8, Missouri 7, Mississippi 5, Iowa 3, Utah St. 2, Georgia 2, Virginia 1, Virginia Tech 1, Stanford 1, Kansas St 1.

USA Today Men’s Top 25

The USA Today Sports Top 25 men’s basketball poll, with team’s records through Sunday in parentheses, total points based on 25 for first place through one point for 25th, ranking in last week’s poll and first-place votes received.

	Pts	Prv	1st
1 Purdue (4-0)	760	1	20
2 Houston (4-0)	747	2	9
3 Connecticut (4-0)	705	3	0
4 Duke (4-0)	677	4	2
5 Arizona (4-0)	625	6	0
6 Louisville (4-0)	568	12	0
7 Michigan (3-0)	568	5	0
8 Illinois (4-0)	504	14	0
9 Florida (3-1)	494	10	0
10 Brigham Young (3-1)	440	7	0
11 Alabama (2-1)	404	9	0
12 Gonzaga (4-0)	402	19	0
13 Kentucky (3-1)	391	8	0
14 Iowa State (3-0)	368	16	0
15 Texas Tech (3-1)	353	11	0
16 St. John’s (2-1)	349	13	0
17 Tennessee (3-0)	304	18	0
18 Michigan State (3-0)	303	17	0
19 North Carolina (4-0)	233	20	0
20 UCLA (3-1)	173	15	0
21 Wisconsin (3-0)	139	22	0
22 Arkansas (3-1)	115	21	0
23 Kansas (3-1)	86	24	0
24 Vanderbilt (4-0)	64	NR	0
25 Indiana (4-0)	48	NR	0

Dropped out: No. 23 Creighton (2-1); No. 25 Auburn (3-1).
Others receiving votes: North Carolina

State (3-0) 42; Auburn (3-1) 37; Saint Mary’s (4-0) 27; Mississippi (4-0) 22; San Diego State (2-0) 20; Southern California (3-0) 20; Oregon (3-0) 19; Baylor (3-0) 16; Creighton (2-1) 15; Virginia (4-0) 14; Missouri (4-0) 7; Georgetown (4-0) 6; Iowa (3-0) 5; Ohio State (4-0) 4; Saint Louis (4-0) 1.

Men’s Top 25 schedule

Tuesday’s games	
No. 5 Duke (4-0) vs. No. 24 Kansas (3-1) at New York	
No. 12 Kentucky (3-1) vs. No. 17 Michigan State (3-0) at New York	
No. 18 North Carolina (4-0) vs. Navy (2-2)	
No. 19 UCLA (3-1) vs. Sacramento St. (3-2)	
No. 21 Arkansas (3-1) vs. Winthrop (2-2)	
Wednesday’s games	
No. 3 UConn (4-0) vs. No. 4 Arizona (4-0)	
No. 7 Michigan (3-0) vs. Middle Tennessee (3-0)	
No. 8 Illinois (4-0) vs. No. 11 Alabama (2-1) at Chicago	
No. 22 Auburn (3-1) vs. Jackson State (0-3)	
Thursday’s games	
No. 1 Purdue (4-0) vs. Memphis (1-2) at Nassau, Bahamas	
No. 2 Houston (4-0) vs. Rider (1-2)	
No. 14 St. John’s (2-1) vs. Bucknell (2-2)	
No. 15 Texas Tech (3-1) vs. Wake Forest (3-1) at Nassau, Bahamas	
No. 20 Tennessee (3-0) vs. Tennessee State (2-2)	
Friday’s games	
No. 5 Duke (4-0) vs. Niagara (2-1)	
No. 6 Louisville (4-0) vs. Cincinnati (4-0) at Cincinnati	
No. 9 BYU (3-1) vs. No. 23 Wisconsin (3-0) at Salt Lake City	
No. 10 Florida (3-1) vs. Merrimack (1-3)	
No. 12 Kentucky (3-1) vs. Loyola (Md) (2-3)	
No. 17 Michigan State (3-0) vs. Detroit Mercy (1-3)	
No. 19 UCLA (3-1) vs. Presbyterian (3-3)	
No. 21 Arkansas (3-1) vs. Jackson State (0-3)	
Saturday’s games	
No. 8 Illinois (4-0) vs. LIU (3-1)	

Monday men’s scores

EAST	
Colgate 72, Siena 69	
Le Moyne 74, Niagara 68	
Pennsylvania 83, Saint Joseph’s 74	
Pittsburgh 84, Bucknell 50	
West Virginia 81, Lafayette 59	
SOUTH	
Clemson 81, North Alabama 61	
Drake 71, Charleston 62	
Florida Atlantic 92, Coastal Georgia 63	
Georgia 87, Florida A&M 57	
High Point 93, Canisius 50	
Lamar 79, Louisiana-Monroe 66	
Liberty 98, Carolina 46	
North Carolina State 85, VCU 79	
Tennessee 91, Rice 66	
UAB 112, Rhodes 56	
UCF 87, Oakland 83	
West Georgia 61, Tennessee Tech 59	
MIDWEST	
Iowa State 96, Stonehill 57	
Kansas State 84, Tulsa 83	
Missouri 91, Prairie View A&M 73	
North Dakota St. 92, Southern Illinois 85	
South Dakota State 94, Peru State 46	
Western Illinois 74, Coe College 63	
Wisconsin 94, SIU-Edwardsville 69	
SOUTHWEST	
Tarleton State 77, Angelo State 54	
FAR WEST	
Arizona State 75, Georgia State 62	
Colorado 94, Alabama State 66	
Gonzaga 122, Southern Utah 50	
Loyola Marymount 78, UC Santa Barbara 74, OT	
Oregon 87, Oregon State 75	
Portland St. 93, Cal State Bakersfield 80	
San Jose State 110, Bethesda 56	
Texas Rio Grande Valley 110, Southwest-ern Adventist 53	

AP Women’s Top 25

The top 25 teams in The Associated Press’ women’s college basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, and total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote and previous ranking.

	Record	Pts	Prv
1. UConn (28)	4-0	794	1
2. South Carolina (3)	4-0	759	2
3. UCLA (1)	5-0	748	3
4. Texas	4-0	700	4
5. LSU	4-0	668	5
6. Michigan	3-0	560	14
7. Baylor	4-0	557	7
8. Oklahoma	4-1	548	6
9. Maryland	5-0	529	9
10. TCU	4-0	521	17
11. Southern Cal	2-1	465	8
12. Iowa St.	5-0	411	16
13. Mississippi	3-0	406	13
14. North Carolina	3-1	401	11
15. Tennessee	3-1	354	12
16. NC State	2-2	284	10
17. Vanderbilt	3-0	246	19
18. Oklahoma St.	5-0	239	20
19. Iowa	4-0	202	21
20. Kentucky	5-0	199	23
21. Louisville	3-1	164	22
22. Michigan St.	4-0	143	24
23. West Virginia	4-0	126	-
24. Notre Dame	3-1	121	18
25. Washington	3-0	103	25

Others receiving votes: Duke 89, Minnesota 24, Ohio St. 12, Stanford 8, South Dakota St. 7, Nebraska 6, Richmond 3, Princeton 2, Fairfield 1.

Women’s Top 25 schedule

Wednesday’s games	
No. 2 South Carolina (4-0) vs. Winthrop (2-2)	
No. 4 Texas (4-0) vs. James Madison (3-2)	
No. 8 Oklahoma (4-1) vs. East Texas A&M (2-1)	
No. 16 North Carolina State (2-2) vs. Coastal Carolina (2-3)	
No. 17 Vanderbilt (3-0) at Western Kentucky (2-2)	
No. 18 Oklahoma State (5-0) at St. John’s (3-1)	
No. 21 Louisville (3-1) vs. Morehead State (1-2)	
No. 25 Washington (3-0) vs. Fresno State (3-1)	
Monday’s women’s scores	
EAST	
Delaware 68, American 57	
Maine 79, Stonehill 53	
New Haven 87, Bard 28	
SOUTH	
Alabama 66, Alabama A&M 43	
Auburn 69, Georgia State 65	
LSU 101, Tulane 71	
Longwood 71, George Washington 62	
Presbyterian 86, Erskine 50	
USC Upstate 78, South Carolina State 69	
VCU 69, Howard 66	
MIDWEST	
Lindenwood 80, Kansas City 71	
Northwestern 79, DePaul 72	
Southern Indiana 87, Indiana University East 32	
Western Illinois 86, Chicago State 75	
SOUTHWEST	
Sam Houston 77, Prairie View A&M 49	
Stephen F. Austin 82, Houston 78	
UT Rio Grande Valley 77, Texas State 65	
FAR WEST	
Colorado State 71, San Diego 44	
Eastern Washington 78, Cal Poly 67	
Utah Valley 74, Benedictine at Mesa 34	

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Schedule

Tuesday MIDWEST	
Akron (4-7) at Bowling Green (3-7)	
Umass (0-10) at Ohio (6-4)	
W. Michigan (6-4) at N. Illinois (3-7)	
Wednesday EAST	
Miami (Ohio) (5-5) at Buffalo (5-5)	
MIDWEST	
Cent. Michigan (6-4) at Kent St. (4-6)	
Thursday SOUTH	
Nicholls (4-7) at SE Louisiana (8-3)	
Stephen F. Austin (9-2) at Northwestern St. (1-10)	
SOUTHWEST	
Louisiana-Lafayette (4-6) at Arkansas St. (5-5)	
Friday SOUTH	
Florida St. (5-5) at NC State (5-5)	
FAR WEST	
Hawaii (7-3) at UNLV (8-2)	
Saturday EAST	
Harvard (9-0) at Yale (7-2)	
Dartmouth (7-2) at Brown (4-5)	
NC Central (7-4) at Morgan St. (4-7)	
Bryant (3-8) at Stony Brook (5-6)	
Wagner (5-6) at LIU Brooklyn (5-6)	
Albany (NY) (1-10) at Monmouth (NJ) (9-2)	
Mercyhurst (5-6) at CCSU (7-4)	
Fordham (1-10) at Merrimack (3-8)	
Tulsa (3-7) at Army (5-4)	
Lehigh (11-0) at Lafayette (8-3)	
Columbia (1-8) at Cornell (4-5)	
Hampton (2-9) at Rhode Island (9-2)	
Princeton (3-6) at Penn (5-4)	
SC State (8-3) at Delaware St. (8-3)	
Bucknell (5-6) at Colgate (4-7)	
Maine (6-5) at New Hampshire (7-4)	
St. Francis (Pa.) (0-10) at Stonehill (3-8)	
Campbell (2-9) at Towson (5-6)	
Sacred Heart (8-3) at Villanova (8-2)	
Duquesne (6-5) at Robert Morris (3-8)	
Norfolk St. (1-10) at Howard (4-7)	
Tulane (8-2) at Temple (5-5)	
Holy Cross (2-9) vs. Georgetown (6-5) at Boston	
Michigan (8-2) at Maryland (4-6)	
Nebraska (7-3) at Penn St. (4-6)	
SOUTH	
Miami (8-2) at Virginia Tech (3-7)	
Delaware (5-5) at Wake Forest (7-3)	
W. Carolina (6-5) at VMI (1-10)	
Charlotte (1-9) at Georgia (9-1)	
Richmond (6-5) at William & Mary (7-4)	
Ark.-Pine Bluff (4-7) at Alabama State (8-2)	
Washington St. (5-5) at James Madison (9-1)	
Dayton (6-4) at Davidson (2-9)	
San Diego (7-4) at Stetson (3-8)	
UT Martin (6-5) at Tennessee Tech (10-1)	
Old Dominion (7-3) at Georgia Southern (5-5)	
The Citadel (4-7) at ETSU (6-5)	
Marist (5-6) at Presbyterian (9-2)	
W. Illinois (3-8) at Gardner-Webb (7-4)	
Chattanooga (5-6) at Wofford (5-6)	
Missouri St. (7-3) at Kennesaw St. (7-3)	
S. Utah (6-5) at North Alabama (2-9)	
Tennessee St. (2-9) at Charleston Southern (4-7)	
E. Illinois (3-8) at Alabama (8-2)	
NC A&T (2-9) at Elon (5-6)	
Mercer (9-1) at Auburn (4-6)	
Marshall (5-5) at Appalachian St. (4-6)	
Sam Houston St. (2-8) at Middle Tennessee (1-9)	
South Florida (7-3) at UAB (3-7)	
UConn (8-3) at FAU (4-6)	
Liberty (4-6) at Louisiana Tech (5-5)	
Jacksonville St. (7-3) at FIU (5-5)	
Bethune-Cookman (5-6) vs. Florida A&M (5-5) at Orlando, Fla.	
Alcorn St. (5-6) at Jackson St. (8-2)	

Kentucky (5-5) at Vanderbilt (8-2)

Southern Miss. (7-3) at South Alabama (3-7)

Duke (5-5) at North Carolina (4-6)

Oklahoma St. (1-9) at UCF (4-6)

Georgia St. (1-9) at Troy (6-4)

Coastal Carolina (6-4) at South Carolina (3-7)

Furman (6-5) at Clemson (5-5)

Pittsburgh (7-3) at Georgia Tech (9-1)

Tennessee (7-3) at Florida (3-7)

W. Kentucky (8-2) at LSU (6-4)

MIDWEST

Rutgers (5-5) at Ohio St. (10-0)

Kansas (5-5) at Iowa St. (6-4)

Minnesota (6-4) at Northwestern (5-5)

S. Illinois (6-5) at Illinois St. (8-3)

Murray St. (0-11) at Indiana St. (3-8)

Valparaiso (2-9) at Butler (5-6)

Morehead St. (6-5) at Drake (7-3)

Ball St. (4-6) at Toledo (6-4)

Youngstown St. (7-4) at N. Iowa (3-8)

S. Dakota St. (7-4) at North Dakota (7-4)

Lindenwood (Mo.) (5-6) at SE Missouri (4-7)

Syracuse (3-7) at Notre Dame (8-2)

St. Thomas (7-4) at N. Dakota St. (11-0)

Michigan St. (3-7) at Iowa (6-4)

Illinois (7-3) at Wisconsin (3-7)

BYU (9-1) at Cincinnati (7-3)

SOUTHWEST

Louisville (7-3) at SMU (7-3)

Samford (1-10) at Texas A&M (10-0)

Missouri (7-3) at Oklahoma (8-2)

MVSU (1-9) at Prairie View (8-3)

Incarnate Word (4-7) at Houston Christian (2-9)

New Mexico St. (3-7) at UTEP (2-8)

Alabama A&M (4-7) at Texas Southern (5-5)

Arkansas (2-8) at Texas (7-3)

East Carolina (7-3) at UTSA (5-5)

McNeese St. (4-7) at Lamar (8-3)

TCU (6-4) at Houston (8-2)

Abilene Christian (7-4) at Cent. Arkansas (3-8)

La.-Monroe (3-7) at Texas State (4-6)

Austin Peay (7-4) at Tarleton St. (10-1)

East Texas A&M (3-8) at UT Rio Grande Valley (8-3)

North Texas (9-1) at Rice (5-5)

FAR WEST

Baylor (5-5) at Arizona (7-3)

Portland St. (1-10) at N. Colorado (3-8)

Montana St. (9-2) at Montana (11-0)

Nevada (2-8) at Wyoming (4-6)

N. Arizona (7-4) at Weber St. (3-8)

Southern Cal (8-2) at Oregon (9-1)

Kansas St. (5-5) at Utah (8-2)

Idaho St. (5-6) at Idaho (4-7)

E. Kentucky (4-7) at Utah Tech (2-9)

Sacramento St. (7-4) at UC Davis (7-3)

E. Washington (5-6) at Cal Poly (3-8)

Colorado St. (2-8) at Boise St. (6-4)

New Mexico (7-3) at Air Force (3-7)

California (6-4) at Stanford (3-7)

Arizona St. (7-3) at Colorado (3-7)

San Jose St. (3-7) at San Diego St. (8-2)

Utah St. (5-5) at Fresno St. (7-3)

Washington (7-3) at UCLA (3-7)

Top 25 schedule

Saturday	
No. 1 Ohio St. (10-0) vs. Rutgers (5-5)	
No. 3 Texas A&M (10-0) vs. Samford (1-10)	
No. 4 Georgia (9-1) vs. Charlotte (1-9)	
No. 6 Oregon (9-1) vs. No. 16 Southern Cal (8-2)	
No. 8 Oklahoma (8-2) vs. No. 23 Missouri (7-3)	
No. 9 Notre Dame (8-2) vs. Syracuse (3-7)	
No. 10 Alabama (8-2) vs. E. Illinois (3-8)	
No. 11 BYU (9-1) at Cincinnati (7-3)	
No. 12 Vanderbilt (8-2) vs. Kentucky (5-5)	
No. 13 Utah (8-2) vs. Kansas St. (5-5)	
No. 14 Miami (8-2) at Virginia Tech (3-7)	
No. 15 Georgia Tech (9-1) vs. Pittsburgh (7-3)	
No. 17 Texas (7-3) vs. Arkansas (2-8)	
No. 18 Michigan (8-2) at Maryland (4-6)	
No. 20 Tennessee (7-3) at Florida (3-7)	
No. 21 James Madison (9-1) vs. Washington St. (5-5)	
No. 22 North Texas (9-1) at Rice (5-5)	
No. 24 Tulane (8-2) at Temple (5-5)	
No. 25 Houston (8-2) vs. TCU (6-4)	

PRO SOCCER

MLS playoffs	
Conference Semifinals	
Eastern Conference	
Sunday, Nov. 23	
Philadelphia vs. New York City	
Miami vs. Cincinnati	
Western Conference	
Saturday, Nov. 22	
Vancouver vs. Los Angeles FC	
Monday, Nov. 24	
San Diego vs. Minnesota	
NWSL playoffs	
Semifinals	
Saturday, Nov. 15	
Washington 2, Portland 0	
Sunday, Nov. 16	
Gotham FC 1, Orlando 0	
Championship	
Saturday, Nov. 22	
At PayPal Park	
San Jose, Calif.	
Washington vs. Gotham FC	

AP SPORTLIGHT

Nov. 19

1983 — Kareem Abdul-Jabbar of Los Angeles becomes the second player in NBA history to score 30,000 points, joining Wilt Chamberlain, as the Lakers win 117-110 at Portland.

1993 — Oregon and Oregon State play to a 0-0 tie in Eugene. It’s the last scoreless tie in FBS history. Overtime for NCAA games starts in 1994.

1995 — The Baltimore Stallions defeat the Calgary Stampeders 37-20 to become the first U.S. team to win the Grey Cup in the CFL’s 83-year history.

2004 — Indiana’s Ron Artest and Stephen Jackson charge into the stands to fight with Auburn Hills fans in the final minute of their game against the Detroit Pistons. The brawl forces an early end to the Pacers’ 97-82 win.

2009 — South African runner Caster Semenya will keep her 800-meter gold medal from the world championships, and the results of her gender tests will be kept confidential.

2019 — LeBron James scores 25 points, 11 rebounds, and 10 assists as the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Oklahoma City Thunder 112-107 to become the first player in NBA history to record a triple-double against all 30 franchises.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference								
Atlantic Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Boston	21	12	9	0	24	69	69	
Detroit	19	11	7	1	23	58	60	
Montreal	19	10	6	3	23	63	66	
Ottawa	19	9	6	4	22	64	65	
Florida	19	10	8	1	21	58	59	
Tampa Bay	18	9	7	2	20	54	55	
Toronto	19	8	9	2	18	67	72	
Buffalo	19	7	8	4	18	56	65	
Metropolitan Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
New Jersey	18	13	4	1	27	61	52	
Carolina	19	13	5	1	27	70	54	
Pittsburgh	19	10	5	4	24	62	50	
N.Y. Islanders	19	10	7	2	22	61	62	
Columbus	19	10	7	2	22	60	60	
N.Y. Rangers	20	10	8	2	22	51	49	
Philadelphia	18	9	6	3	21	51	51	
Washington	19	9	8	2	20	53	49	
Western Conference								
Central Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Colorado	19	13	1	5	31	78	47	
Dallas	19	12	4	3	27	64	54	
Winnipeg	18	11	7	0	22	59	50	
Chicago	18	9	5	4	22	59	47	
Utah	19	10	7	2	22	60	58	
Minnesota	20	9	7	4	22	56	61	
St. Louis	19	6	9	4	16	53	75	
Nashville	20	6	10	4	16	49	70	
Pacific Division								
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	
Anaheim	19	12	6	1	25	70	60	
Los Angeles	20	10	6	4	24	56	57	
Seattle	18	9	4	5	23	49	50	
Vegas	18	8	4	6	22	57	53	
Edmonton	21	9	8	4	22	63	75	
Vancouver	21	9	10	2	20	67	77	
San Jose	19	8	8	3	19	56	63	
Calgary	20	5	12	3	13	43	62	
Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.								
Monday's games								
Washington 2, Los Angeles 1 Buffalo 5, Edmonton 1 Carolina 3, Boston 1 Florida 8, Vancouver 5 Columbus 4, Montreal 3, SO Anaheim 3, Utah 2, OT								
Tuesday's games								
New Jersey at Tampa Bay Seattle at Detroit St. Louis at Toronto Columbus at Winnipeg N.Y. Islanders at Dallas Calgary at Chicago N.Y. Rangers at Vegas Utah at San Jose								
Wednesday's games								
Edmonton at Washington Calgary at Buffalo Carolina at Minnesota Boston at Anaheim								

ROUNDUP

Bennett's tiebreaker lifts Panthers

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. — Sam Bennett scored the tiebreaking goal at 4:02 of the third period and the Florida Panthers beat the Vancouver Canucks 8-5 on Monday night.

Seth Jones had two goals and Luke Kunin, Evan Rodrigues, Anton Lundell, A.J. Greer and Brad Marchand also scored for the two-time defending champion Panthers, who had a season-high scoring total for their third win in four games. Sam Reinhart had three assists and Carter Verhaeghe added two. Sergei Bobrovsky had 10 saves.

Elias Pettersson had two goals, and Drew O'Connor and Jake DeBrusk also scored for the Canucks, who have lost four of five (1-2-2). Quinn Hughes had three assists and Kiefer Sherwood and Evander Kane each added two, and Jiri Patera finished with 33 saves.

Bennett deflected a slap shot by Niko Mikkola to put Florida ahead 6-5 early in the third.

Jones then got his second of the night at 8:19, beating Patera from in front on a power play for a two-goal lead, and Marchand's short-handed empty-netter with 1:46 remaining capped the scoring.

Pettersson scored at 7:55 of the second and again at 1:24 of the third to pull Vancouver within one. Hronek's power-play goal at 3:14 tied the score 5-5.

Capitals 2, Kings 1: Alex Ovechkin scored his 903rd career NHL goal and host Washington beat Los Angeles.

Matt Roy also scored for the Capitals, who ended a two-game losing skid to gain some traction in the standings.

Anze Kopitar scored for lone goal for the Kings, who had won four straight. It was just their second



REBECCA BLACKWELL/AP
Florida Panthers center Sam Bennett, left, scores his team's sixth goal past Vancouver Canucks goaltender Jiri Patera during the third period on Monday in Sunrise, Fla. The Panthers won 8-5.

regulation road loss of the season.

In the second period, Ovechkin crashed the crease and got to the front of the net before burying a behind-the-net feed from Connor McMichael. Ovechkin, who now has goals in back-to-back games and three of his last four overall, also passed Gordie Howe for the most regular-season goals scored at a single venue with his 442nd goal at Capital One Arena.

Hurricanes 3, Bruins 1: Jordan Staal outmuscled a Boston defenseman for a goal with one arm, Pyotr Kochetkov stopped 29 shots and visiting Carolina cooled off the hot Bruins.

Former Bruin Taylor Hall and Mark Jankowski also scored for

the Hurricanes, who won for the sixth time in eight games and evened the season-series after losing the first meeting on Nov. 1.

Riley Tufte spoiled the shutout with 10 seconds left and Jeremy Swayman made 29 saves for Boston, which had a six-game home-winning streak halted and lost for just the second time in 10 games overall.

Staal, positioned at the edge of the crease, held off Andrew Peeke with his left arm, and knocked in the rebound of Joel Nystrom's shot from the point to make it 1-0 at 8:25 of the second period.

Sabres 5, Oilers 1: Rookie center Noah Ostlund scored twice for his first multigoal game in the

NHL, and host Buffalo beat Edmonton.

A first-round draft pick by the Sabres in 2022, Ostlund gave them a 1-0 lead late in the first period and then put away the game with his second goal of the night midway through the third.

The Oilers have lost two of three and are 2-2-0 on their eight-game trip.

Buffalo took a 3-1 lead with two goals in 1:02 during the second period. Byram's goal at 8:41 gave Buffalo a 2-1 advantage, and Malenstyn made it 3-1 at 9:43. Byram's goal extended his point streak to four games.

Blue Jackets 4, Canadiens 3 (SO): Kirill Marchenko scored the deciding goal of the shootout, and host Columbus beat Montreal.

Zach Werenski and Dmitri Voronkov had a goal and an assist, and Adam Fantilli also scored in regulation as the Blue Jackets extended their point streak to five games (3-0-2).

Kent Johnson also scored in the tiebreaker for Columbus, and Cole Caufield tallied for the Canadiens.

Ducks 3, Mammoth 2 (OT): Olen Zellweger scored 1:50 into overtime after Troy Terry tied it with 4.1 seconds left in regulation, and Anaheim dramatically snapped its three-game skid with a home victory over Utah.

Terry forced OT when he tapped in a rebound after Chris Kreider deflected Cutter Gauthier's shot off the post with an extra attacker on the ice for the Ducks.

Lukas Dostal made 16 saves and Jackson LaCombe scored his first goal of the season for Anaheim, which moved back into first place in the Pacific Division with its first victory since winning seven in a row.

Pain: Devils maintaining lead in division despite regular rotation of injured players

FROM PAGE 24

ing banged up as an excuse.

"We've got to play with those guys that are available," Hirschier said. "Nobody wants to be out. Obviously it's great to have Dougie back and Brownie, as well, and we move on from here."

Winger Jesper Bratt, who leads New Jersey with 12 assists, pointed out that Hughes is a particularly hard player to replace. Hughes has big roles at even strength and on the power play and also gets some penalty-killing time as part of his 21 minutes a night.

When Hughes was sidelined in March, brother Jack, Hirschier and Bratt were all point-a-game producers down the stretch.

"You never want to be used to it or anything, but there was definitely a situation that we got known for a little bit from last year: losing him in the end of the season through the playoffs, new guys stepping up and taking on bigger rules and stuff like that," Bratt said. "From that standpoint I

think that we, as a group, just got to move forward."

Sheldon Keefe, in his second season as the Devils' coach, is counting on defending to carry his team through to sometime in January when Hughes should be ready to return.

"Even with Jack, producing offense was a challenge for us, so not having him and the number of others we've been missing, the expectation is offense is going to be harder to come by, so let's not give them any freebies," Keefe said. "We've got to be smart and we've got to protect our goaltender: reduce the amount of shots and high-quality chances so that we can keep the goals against down."

Missing Hughes, Keefe knows he cannot ask more out of Hirschier but will lean on the likes of Ondrej Palat, Stefan Noesen and rookie Arseni Gritsyuk and others to pick up some more slack. Getting other reinforcements back should also help.

"You manage it as best you can," Keefe said. "And you hope that along the way here, we can stay healthy and get some people back and then that can make it a lot easier."



SETH WENIG/AP
New Jersey's Jack Hughes, right, shoots past Minnesota Wild's David Jiricek during a game last month in Newark, N.J. Hughes is expected to be out until at least January.

NBA/SOCCER

NBA ROUNDUP

Banged-up Pistons win 10th straight

Associated Press

DETROIT — Jalen Duren scored 31 points in his return from an ankle injury and Daniss Jenkins added 26 points as the short-handed Detroit Pistons won their 10th straight game, beating the NBA-worst Indiana Pacers 127-112 on Monday night.

The Pistons are on their longest winning streak since an 11-game run in 2007-08, despite playing the last three games without several key players. Cade Cunningham (hip), Tobias Harris (ankle) and Ausar Thompson (ankle) were among the players on the sidelines against Indiana.

The 1-13 Pacers, meanwhile, have lost eight straight games. The NBA finalists from a year ago are mired in their longest losing streak since the 2014-15 season.

Ten players scored for Detroit, with five reaching double figures. Javonte Green scored 20 points off the bench. Duncan Robinson had 13 points and Isaiah Steward added 10.

Heat 115, Knicks 113: Norman Powell scored 19 points, Kel’el Ware finished with 16 points and 14 rebounds and host Miami held off a frantic rally in the final moments to beat New York.

Davion Mitchell scored 18 points for the Heat, who got 14 from Simone Fontecchio and 13 apiece from Jaime Jaquez Jr. and Pelle Larsson.

Deuce McBride scored 25 for the Knicks, who got 23 from Mikal Bridges and a 22-point, 16-rebound effort from Karl-Anthony Towns.

Cavaliers 108, Bucks 106: Donovan Mitchell scored 37 points and host Cleveland rallied for a victory over Milwaukee, which saw All-Star forward Giannis Antetokounmpo leave the game due to injury.

Antetokounmpo immediately went to the locker room with 3:03



RYAN SUN/AP

Pistons center Jalen Duren dunks the ball against Indiana Pacers guard Benedict Mathurin during the first half Monday in Detroit.

remaining in the second quarter and did not return due to a left groin strain. The 14-year veteran came into the game tied for second in the league and leading the Eastern Conference in scoring at 32.6 points per game. Coach Doc Rivers said Antetokounmpo would have further testing on Tuesday.

Mitchell, second in the Eastern Conference in scoring at 30.4 points per game, had 25 points in the first half.

76ers 110, Clippers 108: Tyrese Maxey scored 39 points, Paul George had nine points and seven rebounds in his season debut, and host Philadelphia rallied for a victory over short-handed Los Angeles.

Quentin Grimes added 19 points and Andre Drummond had 14

points and 18 rebounds while filling in for Joel Embiid.

James Harden scored 28 points for the Clippers, who have lost eight of nine. Harden became the 11th player to eclipse 28,000 career points.

Thunder 126, Pelicans 109: Chet Holmgren scored 26 points and grabbed nine rebounds, and visiting Oklahoma City raced to an early double-digit lead it maintained throughout in a victory over reeling New Orleans.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 23 points and Lu Dort 17 for the Thunder, who set a franchise record for points in a quarter with 49 in the first. Isaiah Hartenstein added 16 points for OKC, which won its sixth straight for a 14th victory in 15 games.

Rookie guard Jeremiah Fears scored a season-high 24 and Trey Murphy III added 18 points for the Pelicans, who’ve lost six straight for the second time in their first 14 games, and two straight since interim coach James Borrego took over in the wake of Willie Green’s firing Saturday.

Bulls 130, Nuggets 127: Kevin Huerter and Nikola Vucevic hit big 3-pointers down the stretch and visiting Chicago overcame a triple-double by Nikola Jokic to hold off Denver.

The Bulls squandered an 18-point lead in the first half. They also let a 13-point lead in the fourth quarter slip away before rallying late to snap a five-game losing streak.

Jokic finished with 36 points, 18 rebound and 13 assists for his eighth triple-double of the season. He was an assist shy of reaching the mark by halftime. Jamal Murray scored 18 of his 34 points in the fourth quarter.

Raptors 110, Hornets 108: RJ Barrett scored the tiebreaking basket with 18 seconds left in the fourth quarter, Brandon Ingram and Scottie Barnes both had pivotal blocked shots in the final moments and host Toronto won for the eighth time in nine games by beating Charlotte.

Ingram scored 27 points, Barnes and Barrett each had 16 and Immanuel Quickley added 15 points and 10 rebounds as the Raptors won their fourth straight.

Timberwolves 120, Mavericks 96: Naz Reid scored a season-high 22 points and host Minnesota beat short-handed Dallas.

Reid scored 10 points in the first quarter and led all scorers with 19 points in the first half. He hit a 3-pointer just before the end of third quarter, capping his 22-point game and sending the Timberwolves into the fourth quarter with a 32-point lead.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	9	5	.643	—
New York	8	5	.615	½
Philadelphia	8	5	.615	½
Boston	7	7	.500	2
Brooklyn	2	11	.154	6½
Southeast Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	9	5	.643	—
Miami	8	6	.571	1
Orlando	7	7	.500	2
Charlotte	4	10	.286	5
Washington	1	12	.077	7½
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Detroit	12	2	.857	—
Cleveland	10	5	.667	2½
Chicago	7	6	.538	4½
Milwaukee	8	7	.533	4½
Indiana	1	13	.071	11
Western Conference				
Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	9	3	.750	—
San Antonio	9	4	.692	½
Memphis	4	10	.286	6
Dallas	4	11	.267	6½
New Orleans	2	12	.143	8
Northwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Oklahoma City	14	1	.933	—
Denver	10	3	.769	3
Minnesota	9	5	.643	4½
Portland	6	7	.462	7
Utah	5	8	.385	8
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Lakers	10	4	.714	—
Golden State	9	6	.600	1½
Phoenix	8	6	.571	2
L.A. Clippers	4	10	.286	6
Sacramento	3	11	.214	7
Monday's games				
Detroit 127, Indiana 112				
Miami 115, New York 113				
Cleveland 118, Milwaukee 106				
Philadelphia 110, L.A. Clippers 108				
Oklahoma City 126, New Orleans 109				
Chicago 130, Denver 127				
Toronto 110, Charlotte 108				
Minnesota 120, Dallas 96				
Tuesday's games				
Golden State at Orlando				
Boston at Brooklyn				
Detroit at Atlanta				
Memphis at San Antonio				
Utah at L.A. Lakers				
Phoenix at Portland				
Wednesday's games				
Charlotte at Indiana				
Houston at Cleveland				
Toronto at Philadelphia				
Golden State at Miami				
Denver at New Orleans				
Sacramento at Oklahoma City				
Washington at Minnesota				
New York at Dallas				
Chicago at Portland				

Germany, Netherlands reach World Cup with qualifying wins

By STEVE DOUGLAS

Associated Press

So much for Germany being at risk of missing the World Cup.

A 6-0 thrashing of Slovakia on Monday completed Germany’s recovery from a shocking start to group play as the four-time champion maintained its proud record of always qualifying for the World Cup.

“A brilliant game from our team, with a lot of pressure,” Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann said.

The Germans will be competing on soccer’s biggest stage for the 21st time in 23 editions. They didn’t enter the inaugural 1930 World

Cup and were not allowed to enter the 1950 edition.

The Netherlands — a long-standing rival of Germany — also won its group to reach next year’s tournament being held in the United States, Canada and Mexico. A 4-0 win over Lithuania saw the Dutch qualify with an unbeaten record, finishing ahead of Poland.

Slovakia and Poland will be in the playoffs, the draw for which takes place Thursday.

Germany and the Netherlands joined England, France, Portugal, Croatia and Norway as the European teams to have qualified for the 2026 World Cup.

The remaining five automatic spots were booked Tuesday when group play wrapped up.

It was Slovakia which handed Germany a surprising 2-0 loss in the first round of matches in Group A. That was only the Germans’ third ever defeat in World Cup qualifying but they have responded with five straight wins, culminating in the heavy beating of Slovakia in Leipzig where the pressure was firmly on Nagelsmann’s team.

Four of the goals came in the first half; Leroy Sane scored twice after strikes by Nick Woltemade — his fourth in the last three qualify-

ing games — and Serge Gnabry.

The second-half goals were by two Leipzig players — substitute Ridle Baku and Assan Ouédraogo, a 19-year-old midfielder making his debut.

Germany entered the game needing only a draw and finished three points ahead of Slovakia.

“I think we’re back on the road,” Nagelsmann said. “We can prepare with a free and open mind in March because we don’t have the pressure of playing in the playoffs.”

The Netherlands will get another chance to win that elusive first World Cup trophy, four years after

exiting the 2022 tournament in a dramatic penalty shootout loss to Lionel Messi’s Argentina in the quarterfinals.

A draw with Lithuania on Monday would also have been enough for the Dutch, who started the game three points clear of Poland, but they wound up pouring in the goals in Amsterdam — starting with Tijjani Reijnders in the 16th.

Cody Gakpo made it 2-0 from the penalty spot in the 58th and there were more goals from Xavi Simons and Donyell Malen, who scored off a powerful effort at the end of his solo run that began inside his own half.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

QBs Dampier, Ficklin in sync for No. 13 Utah

By STEPHEN HAWKINS
Associated Press

WACO, Texas — Utah quarterbacks Devon Dampier and Byrd Ficklin are pretty much always together, sometimes even on the field at the same time during games.

Dampier, the banged-up dual-threat junior, and true freshman Ficklin have become close friends and quite a QB tandem for the 13th-ranked Utes (8-2, 5-2, No. 13 CFP), who still have hope of getting into the Big 12 championship game, and maybe the College Football Playoff. They were up two spots Sunday in the latest Associated Press poll.

“Just going out there and play ball,” Ficklin said. “That’s my motto, just go out there and have fun.”

That is certainly the case for the 6-foot-1 left-hander from Muskogee, Okla. And Utah, which plays its home finale Saturday against Kansas State, then ends the regular season at Kansas.

Ficklin had touchdown runs of 67 and 74 yards, both on plays with Dampier lined up wide to the opposite side, in a 55-28 win at Baylor on Saturday night. It was the Utes’ third win in a row and fifth in six games.

“Anytime we get to see each other shine, we’re all for it,” said Dampier, whose TD pass in the first quarter put Utah ahead to stay.

The quarterbacks came to the Utes around the same time, Dampier after transferring from New Mexico and Ficklin as a January enrollee after graduating early from high school.

When Dampier didn’t play against Colorado on Oct. 25 because of a lower-body injury after being hobbled for several games before that, Ficklin got his first start. He busted loose for a 63-yard TD run on his second play in the 53-7 win over the Buffaloes, and set a Utah quarterback rushing record with 151 yards. He sur-

passed that with 166 yards on six carries against Baylor.

Coach Kyle Whittingham acknowledged after Saturday night’s game that Dampier is still playing hurt, and has been limited in practice for much of this season. The coach said Dampier, who has thrown for 1,668 yards and 16 TDs while running for another 520 yards and five scores, likely wouldn’t have been available if the Utes had a game instead of an open date last week.

“He’s a competitor, he’s a warrior. He goes out and, unless he absolutely can’t function at all, he’s going to want to play,” Whittingham said. “It’s great to have Byrd in the bullpen.”

Ficklin took his first snap against Baylor early in the second quarter, faked a handoff and then went through a gap over the left side for a 67-yard sprint to the end zone and a 21-7 lead. Midway through the third quarter, after Baylor had gotten within eight points, he got loose again, this time to the right and shoving past a defensive back near midfield on a 74-yarder that made it 35-20.

His seven rushing touchdowns are already a Utah freshman QB record.

“He’s maturing and becoming more seasoned every single week. He has not had a game that he was inserted where the stage was too big. He’s responded well every single time he’s been in the game,” Whittingham said. “The moment is not too big for Byrd. He’s going to be a really good one.”

While the quarterbacks are constantly together at practice and in meetings, and also room together on the road, Dampier said they still FaceTime probably five times a day.

“Nothing but fun,” Ficklin said. “It’s literally almost like if Dev’s going to be there, Byrd’s going to be there. ... We’re just too happy to hang out together almost all the time almost every day.”



Utah quarterback Devon Dampier, left, has thrown for 1,668 yards and 16 TDs while running for another 520 yards and five scores this season.

JULIO CORTEZ/AP



BARRY REEGER/AP

Former Penn State head coach James Franklin was hired by Virginia Tech on Monday. Franklin went 104-45 with the Nittany Lions in 11-plus seasons but struggled this year, going 3-3.

Virginia Tech hires Franklin after exit from Penn State

By JIMMY ROBERTSON
Associated Press

BLACKSBURG, Va. — James Franklin was hired as Virginia Tech’s coach Monday, a little more than a month after he was fired during his 12th season at Penn State.

The Hokies became the first Power 4 football program to fill a coaching vacancy this season. Franklin was set to be formally introduced at a news conference Wednesday morning.

He was fired by the Nittany Lions on Oct. 12, a day after they lost at home to Northwestern to fall to 3-3.

The 53-year-old Franklin went 104-45 at Penn State, winning a Big Ten championship (in the 2016 season), a Fiesta Bowl (2017) and a Rose Bowl (2022). Last season, he led the Nittany Lions to a first-round victory in the College Football Playoff.

“I’m honored and humbled to join the Hokie family,” Franklin said in a statement. “My vision is simple: to restore unmatched excellence, to build something that lasts and to serve this university, the Commonwealth of Virginia and our amazing fan base with honor, integrity and passion. I look forward to getting to work with our players, our staff and the entire Virginia Tech community.”

Terms of Franklin’s contract were not released. Before he was hired by the Hokies, Penn State had been on the hook for a buyout worth nearly \$50 million. But

Franklin and the Nittany Lions negotiated a settlement under which he’ll be paid \$9 million instead, according to multiple reports.

Franklin has a 128-60 overall record, including his three seasons at Vanderbilt. In Blacksburg, he takes over for his former Penn State defensive coordinator, Brent Pry, who was fired Sept. 14 after Virginia Tech lost its first three games by an average of 18.7 points. The Hokies started 0-3 for the first time since 1987.

Pry went 16-24, including 10-13 in Atlantic Coast Conference play, in his three-plus seasons. Virginia Tech (3-7, 2-4 ACC) has since been led by interim coach Philip Montgomery.

Franklin was maligned at Penn State for not winning big games — he went 4-21 against teams ranked in the top 10 of the AP poll — but he brings credibility to a Hokies program that has struggled since Frank Beamer retired in 2015 after 29 years at the helm.

Athletic director Whit Babcock first hired Justin Fuente and then Pry in hopes of continuing the success enjoyed by Beamer, but both coaches floundered. That prompted Virginia Tech President Tim Sands to form a search committee to hire the next coach and limit the scope of Babcock’s role.

The Hokies have just four winning seasons since Beamer’s retirement and six since Babcock became the AD in 2014.

The committee landed on Franklin, whose Penn State teams

won at least 10 games six times during his tenure. Franklin also showed an ability to recruit in Virginia. In 2023, he signed six of the top 10 prospects in the state, according to various recruiting services, and one of his best players in the past five years was Tyler Warren, a tight end from the Richmond area who was a first-round NFL draft pick by the Indianapolis Colts this spring and is flourishing as a rookie.

“His experience, passion and record of success embody our commitment to compete at the highest level,” Sands said of Franklin in a statement. “His selection is the result of unprecedented collaboration by our athletic administration with university leaders, esteemed alumni, including former NFL coaches and players, and our most dedicated supporters.”

“James will provide the leadership and inspiration our student-athletes need, and the performance on the field that our university community, alumni and fans expect and deserve.”

Virginia Tech has committed to providing Franklin with the resources he needs to be successful. The Board of Visitors approved a plan in late September to add \$229 million to the athletic department’s budget over the next four years, primarily to bolster the football program. Half of that money, though, is coming from philanthropy and needs to be raised.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL/NFL

TOP 25 ROUNDUP

No. 13 Gonzaga gets 2nd-largest victory in program history

Associated Press

SPOKANE — Braden Huff scored 22 points on 11-for-13 shooting and Davis Fogle had a career-high 19 points as No. 13 Gonzaga beat Southern Utah 122-50 on Monday night.

Mario Saint-Supery added 16 points, seven assists and six steals in his first career start for the Bulldogs (5-0), who secured the second-largest scoring output and margin of victory in program history. Graham Ike and Adam Miller had 13 points apiece for Gonzaga.

Elijah Duval scored 10 points to lead the Thunderbirds (1-4) as they fell to their worst start under third-year coach Rob Jeter. Southern Utah struggled offensively all night, finishing with more turnovers (23) than made field goals (18).

The Bulldogs jumped out to a 17-2 lead behind smothering defense and transition scoring. One early sequence began with Ike blocking a layup attempt from Zach Bell, nearly pinning the ball against the backboard. It ended with Adam Miller hoisting a lob to Tyon Grant-Foster for a two-handed finish.

No. 16 Iowa State 96, Stonehill 57: Joshua Jefferson and Tamin Lipsey scored 23 points apiece and the host Cyclones pulled away late in the first half of a win over the Skyhawks.

Jefferson added nine rebounds, seven assists and four steals in a terrific all-around performance that helped Iowa State (4-0) to another lopsided victory. Their average winning margin is 33.3 points per game.

The Cyclones missed all seven of their 3-point attempts in the first half but went 5 of 8 to start the second and put away the game. Iowa

State reeled off a 15-0 run and held Stonehill to one field goal over eight minutes spanning halftime. Back-to-back 3s by Killyan Toure and Jefferson made it 48-27, and it was a 30-point game when Jama-rion Batemon hit a 3 midway through the second half.

No. 20 Tennessee 91, Rice 66: Felix Okpara had 20 points and eight rebounds, Nate Ament added 19 points and 10 boards, and the host Volunteers cruised to a victory over the Owls despite an injury to forward J.P. Estrella.

The 6-foot-11 redshirt sophomore went down in a scrum of bodies in the first half and appeared to hurt his left knee. Estrella entered averaging 17.3 points and 8.7 rebounds per game this season. He missed most of last season with a foot injury.

Ja’Kobi Gillespie finished with 17 points and eight assists for Tennessee (4-0). Ethan Berg scored 11.

No. 24 Wisconsin 94, SIU Edwardsville 69: John Blackwell scored 24 points, Nick Boyd added 22 and the host Badgers closed a four-game, season-opening homestand by defeating the Cougars.

Wisconsin has scored at least 85 points in each of its first four games for the first time since the 1975-76 season. Blackwell and Boyd led the way, with Blackwell going 5-for-6 on 3-point attempts and Boyd making 4 of 7.

No. 25 NC State 85, VCU 79: Darrion Williams scored 28 points, Tre Holloman added 25 and the host Wolfpack marked their first appearance in the national rankings this season by beating the Rams.

Matt Able had 12 points off the bench and Ven-Allen Lubin provided 11 points and nine rebounds for the Wolfpack (4-0), who overcame 17 turnovers.



KIN CHEUNG/AP

The Jets are set to bench quarterback Justin Fields, left, in favor of Tyrod Taylor. New York has struggled on offense all season, averaging just 139.9 passing yards per game for last in the NFL.

NFL BRIEFS

Source: Struggling Jets bench QB Fields, name Taylor starter

Associated Press

Justin Fields is heading to the bench and Tyrod Taylor is replacing him as the New York Jets’ starting quarterback.

Coach Aaron Glenn decided to play Taylor over the embattled Fields at Baltimore on Sunday, a person with knowledge of the decision told The Associated Press on Monday.

Glenn said last week that he would evaluate all positions over the weekend, leaving the door open for a change at quarterback. And he decided to make the switch to Taylor, according to the person who spoke to the AP on the condition of anonymity because the team didn’t announce the move, which was first reported by The Athletic.

Glenn told the team of his decision during a meeting Monday morning, when the Jets returned to work after a few days off.

New York (2-8) is coming off a 27-14 loss at New England last Thursday night. Fields’ subpar play has been a major reason for the struggles of the passing offense, which ranks last in the NFL with 139.9 yards per game — 20 fewer than 31st-ranked Cleveland.

Falcons QB Penix to miss at least 4 games on IR

ATLANTA — Atlanta Falcons quarterback Michael Penix will be placed on injured reserve and

will miss at least four games with a left knee injury, leaving Kirk Cousins as the starter.

Penix suffered the injury in Sunday’s 30-27 overtime loss to Carolina, extending Atlanta’s losing streak to five games.

The Falcons’ top wide receiver, Drake London could also miss at least one week with a knee injury. Coach Raheem Morris on Monday said London’s status is “week to week.”

Penix left in the third quarter with Atlanta leading 21-16. He missed the Falcons’ 34-10 loss to Miami on Oct. 26 with a bone bruise on his left knee. He may have suffered a more significant injury when he was hit by Panthers safety Tre’von Moehrig after throwing an incomplete pass.

Steelers’ Rodgers could still play with broken wrist

PITTSBURGH — Pittsburgh quarterback Aaron Rodgers and his fractured left wrist could still play Sunday when the Steelers visit Chicago.

Pittsburgh coach Mike Tomlin said Tuesday that the team will evaluate Rodgers’ availability later in the week, and that the key to Rodgers’ potential return will be whether he can function safely with a brace protecting the wrist.

Mason Rudolph, who filled in capably in the second half of Sunday’s 32-14 over Cincinnati, would

start for the AFC North-leading Steelers (6-4) when they face the NFC North-leading Bears (7-3) if Rodgers cannot.

The 41-year-old Rodgers, the oldest active player in the league, appeared to hurt the wrist while getting hit after a heave to the end zone with Pittsburgh driving late in the first half.

Packers RB Jacobs might be ready to play Sunday

Green Bay running back Josh Jacobs received some good news on the knee injury that caused the three-time Pro Bowl selection to exit a victory over the New York Giants on Sunday.

Packers coach Matt LaFleur said Monday that Jacobs won’t need to go on injured reserve. LaFleur added Jacobs could “potentially” be available for their game Sunday against the Minnesota Vikings.

“We’ll see where it’s at,” LaFleur said. “It’s a contusion, so it’s just more or less trying to get the swelling down. And unfortunately, that’s a pretty hard surface over there, and sometimes (that’s) the byproduct of that.”

Jacobs hurt his left knee when he was knocked out of bounds by Jevon Holland on a first-quarter carry. Jacobs initially stayed in the game before going to the sideline in obvious pain and eventually heading into the locker room.



YOUNG KWAK/AP

Gonzaga guard Jalen Warley drives to the basket during the second half against Southern Utah on Monday in Spokane, Wash.

Scoreboard

American Conference							
East							
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
New England	9	2	0	.818	292	206	
Buffalo	7	3	0	.700	292	229	
Miami	4	7	0	.364	226	269	
N.Y. Jets	2	8	0	.209	209	268	
South							
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Indianapolis	8	2	0	.800	321	206	
Jacksonville	6	4	0	.600	240	226	
Houston	5	5	0	.500	220	163	
Tennessee	1	9	0	.100	143	273	
North							
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Pittsburgh	6	4	0	.600	246	232	
Baltimore	5	5	0	.500	252	251	
Cincinnati	3	7	0	.300	228	334	
Cleveland	2	8	0	.200	162	234	
West							
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Denver	9	2	0	.818	257	192	
L.A. Chargers	7	4	0	.636	246	238	
Kansas City	5	5	0	.500	254	181	
Las Vegas	2	8	0	.200	155	253	
National Conference							
East							
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Philadelphia	8	2	0	.800	234	201	
Dallas	4	5	1	.450	296	293	
Washington	3	8	0	.273	236	296	
N.Y. Giants	2	9	0	.182	237	300	
South							
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Tampa Bay	6	4	0	.600	252	250	
Carolina	6	5	0	.545	207	249	
Atlanta	3	7	0	.300	195	239	
New Orleans	2	8	0	.200	155	250	
North							
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
Chicago	7	3	0	.700	258	264	
Green Bay	6	3	1	.650	240	196	
Detroit	6	4	0	.600	292	216	
Minnesota	4	6	0	.400	218	232	
West							
	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	
L.A. Rams	8	2	0	.800	272	172	
Seattle	7	3	0	.700	294	193	
San Francisco	7	4	0	.636	261	252	
Arizona	3	7	0	.300	224	256	
Thursday's game							
New England 27, N.Y. Jets 14							
Sunday's games							
Miami 16, Washington 13, OT, Madrid Buffalo 44, Tampa Bay 32 Carolina 30, Atlanta 27, OT Chicago 19, Minnesota 17 Green Bay 27, N.Y. Giants 20 Houston 16, Tennessee 13 Jacksonville 35, L.A. Chargers 6 Pittsburgh 34, Cincinnati 12 L.A. Rams 21, Seattle 19 San Francisco 41, Arizona 22 Baltimore 23, Cleveland 16 Denver 22, Kansas City 19 Philadelphia 16, Detroit 9							
Monday's game							
Dallas 33, Las Vegas 16 Open: Indianapolis, New Orleans							
Thursday, Nov. 20							
Buffalo at Houston							
Sunday, Nov. 23							
Indianapolis at Kansas City Minnesota at Green Bay N.Y. Giants at Detroit N.Y. Jets at Baltimore New England at Cincinnati Pittsburgh at Chicago Seattle at Tennessee Cleveland at Las Vegas Jacksonville at Arizona Atlanta at New Orleans Philadelphia at Dallas Tampa Bay at L.A. Rams							
Monday, Nov. 24							
Carolina at San Francisco Open: Denver, L.A. Chargers, Miami, Washington							
Thursday, Nov. 27							
Green Bay at Detroit Kansas City at Dallas Cincinnati at Baltimore							
Friday, Nov. 28							
Chicago at Philadelphia							

Cowboys honor Kneeland, beat Raiders

BY MARK ANDERSON
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The Cowboys spent 11 days mourning defensive end Marshawn Kneeland before taking the field Monday night.

Dallas then paid tribute to Kneeland by dominating the spiraling Raiders for 60 minutes.

Dak Prescott passed for 268 yards and four touchdowns in a 33-16 victory over Las Vegas, the Cowboys' first game since Kneeland's death.

The 24-year-old Kneeland was found dead on Nov. 6 of an apparent suicide. Coach Brian Schottenheimer and Dallas players wore shirts honoring Kneeland, and they bowed their heads during a moment of silence before the game.

The Cowboys (4-5-1) played one of their best games of the season to keep alive their slim playoff hopes. Dallas had lost three of four and has games coming up against Philadelphia, Kansas City and Detroit.

"They wanted to honor him, and we're not done honoring him," Schottenheimer said. "He's a part of our family forever. But it's been tough, man. I mean, these past 11 days have been really tough. I'm proud of those guys because just the way they played today, they played with Marshawn's play style."

"I'd be lying if I said I didn't have some tears when I first put the shirt on, as you can imagine. But more than anything, I know Marshawn was looking down on us, and we wanted to make him proud, and I think we did that."

Owner Jerry Jones credited Schottenheimer's leadership through a dark time.

"In a way, a competition like this with the Raiders is good therapy to come back and get in it," Jones said. "They know how much that Marshawn loved to compete, how much he loved the Cowboys. And to me, it's just a way of saying, 'This one's for you Marshawn.'"

Bengals' Chase suspended 1 game for spitting

BY JOE REEDY
Associated Press

Cincinnati Bengals wide receiver Ja'Marr Chase was suspended without pay for one game Monday for spitting on Pittsburgh Steelers cornerback Jalen Ramsey.

Chase spat on Ramsey during a confrontation in the fourth quarter of Sunday's game. Ramsey grabbed Chase by the face mask and punched him, which resulted in Ramsey's ejection.

In announcing the suspension, the NFL said Chase was disciplined under a rule that applies to "any act which is contrary to the generally understood principles of sportsmanship."

Chase denied having spat after the Bengals' 34-12 loss, but a Cincinnati television station had video of the incident. Chase did not speak to reporters in the Bengals' locker room Monday.

When asked if officials saw Chase spit on



From left: Dallas Cowboys players Bryan Anger, Kenny Clark, Sam Williams, linebackers coach Dave Borzonzi and Marist Liufau pause during a moment of silence for late teammate Marshawn Kneeland on Monday.

Las Vegas (2-8) continued its downward slide under first-year coach Pete Carroll. The Raiders have lost four straight and eight of nine.

Prescott was precise — minus a miss of a wide-open CeeDee Lamb for an easy touchdown — completing 25 of 44 passes to snap his four-game winless streak (0-3-1) in prime-time games. His four TD passes tied a season high, matching his total from Oct. 5 against the New York Jets.

He threw primarily to George Pickens and Lamb. Pickens (nine catches, 144 yards, one touchdown) and Lamb (five receptions for 66 yards and a TD) produced big numbers despite Schottenheimer benching them for Dallas' first drive.

Javonte Williams provided the Cowboys with balance by rushing for 93 yards on 22 carries.

Las Vegas had little balance, go-

ing with 32 called pass plays and three runs — Geno Smith also scrambled for 7 yards — in the first half alone. It became only the third team since at least 1991 with 30 or more dropbacks and four or few runs in a first half. The four rushes were also the Raiders' second-fewest in a first half since at least that year; they had three runs against the Atlanta Falcons in a 2008 game.

"It was a bunch of play-action passes, and I really wanted to see us do that," Carroll said. "There's only one person to look at. It's me because I was influencing the game plan. ... (Offensive coordinator) Chip (Kelly) and I knew what was going on, but we were trying to stay with it to see if we could continue to get the big plays, which we were getting. Then we just stalled in the red zone."

"I don't really care about pleasing people with our run-pass mix. I'm trying to move the football."

Las Vegas finished with 12 rushes, tied for the 12th fewest in franchise history. Ashton Jeanty, taken with the sixth pick in this year's draft to boost what was the NFL's worst rushing game, rushed just six times for 7 yards, and was stopped in the end zone for a safety in the fourth quarter. He had two carries in the first half, gaining 10 yards.

"That's up to the guys upstairs, so just take whatever I get," Jeanty said of the play-calling.

The air-it-out approach didn't work, with Smith finishing 27-for-42 for 238 yards with a touchdown and an interception.

Dallas' defense made sure Smith had few chances to execute the offense, sacking him four times, including 1½ by recent trade acquisition Quinnen Williams. The Cowboys sent the Jets a 2027 first-round draft pick, a 2026 second-rounder and defensive tackle Mazi Smith for Williams.



Chase

Ramsey, referee Bill Vinovich told a pool reporter after the game that "we did not see anything that rose to that level at all."

Chase will miss Cincinnati's home game against the New England Patriots this weekend. He has a right to appeal the suspension.

The Bengals are 3-7 and have lost three straight.

Cincinnati coach Zac Taylor said before the league announced the suspension that he had talked to Chase about the incident.

"It's like we are trying to make something out of this situation. It's the only thing that's kind of upset me as I'm sitting in here," Taylor said. "For a guy that has done everything we can to build our organization around, he's been awe-

some. Not perfect. I'm not perfect. Trust me, I made plenty of mistakes yesterday (that) people don't see on camera. Unfortunately his was. He's going to have to own up for that. That will be part of his journey."

It's the second time this season that the league has disciplined a player for spitting. Philadelphia Eagles defensive tackle Jalen Carter was initially suspended one game for spitting on Dallas Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott during the first quarter of the Sept. 4 season opener. Carter eventually forfeited his Week 1 game check worth \$57,222 and avoided missing any more games because the ejection happened early in the game and the league applied that as time served.

According to the NFL Players Association database, Chase will be docked at least \$448,333.33 in base salary as a result of the suspension.

SPORTS



Honoring their teammate
Cowboys top Raiders in first game since Kneeland's death » **NFL, Page 23**

NHL

More pain for Devils

East-leading New Jersey faces another long stretch without best player Hughes

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**
Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J.

Jack Hughes is a big reason the New Jersey Devils are atop the Eastern Conference and one of the best teams in the NHL six weeks into the season, and now they'll have to endure the next two months without their best player.

Hughes is out long term after undergoing surgery to repair a non-hockey-related finger injury, and his teammates are faced with the challenge of filling the void left by the absence of the face of the franchise. They've been here before, forced to play the final two months of last regular season and the playoffs after Hughes had shoulder surgery, and with an upgraded roster might be even better equipped this time around to handle it.

"You've got to now just dig in for it," captain Nico Hischier said after practice Monday. "Obviously he's a game-changer type of guy that can decide games for us. We've still got enough skill in here, but we've got to be even more glued together, stick together and keep working on our process that we believe can have us being a successful hockey team."

There has been a lot of success early for New Jersey, which won 13 of 17 games with Hughes leading the way with 10 goals and 20 points. Beating Washington on Saturday night without him ensured first place in the East at least into the start of an upcoming road trip.

First-line winger Timo Meier said the Devils have not been beating themselves and know they cannot rest on what has worked in the past, given it's a long season.

"We're giving ourselves a chance every night to win the game, and we have high expectations on ourselves," Meier said. "We've got to continue and raise that level every day."

They are playing at a high level despite a bevy of injuries. Defensemen Brett Pesce and Dougie Hamilton, forwards Connor Brown, Cody Glass and Evgenii Dadonov and No. 1 goaltender Jacob Markstrom have all missed time.

Hamilton, Brown and Dadonov could all return this week, though no one around the team wants to use be-



JESSIE ALCHEN/AP

New Jersey center Jack Hughes, shown during a Nov. 1 game, will sit out until January after a non-hockey-related finger injury required surgery. The Devils have played at a high level despite several notable player absences.

SEE PAIN ON PAGE 19

Franklin going to Virginia Tech as coach

» College football, Page 20

