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USS Truman to stay at sea for safety

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The USS Harry S. Truman will remain at sea in the Atlantic Ocean in an attempt to protect its sailors from the coronavirus, the Navy announced Monday.

The aircraft carrier, and the ships accompanying it as part of its carrier strike group, will remain stationed at sea to be ready to deploy if called upon, according to the 2nd Fleet in Norfolk, Va.

“The ship is entering a period in which it needs to be ready to respond and deploy at any time,” Vice Adm. Andrew Lewis, commander of the 2nd Fleet, said in a prepared statement.

“Normally we can do that pierside, but in the face of [the coronavirus pandemic], we need to protect our most valuable asset, our people, by keeping the ship out to sea,” he said.

The Navy said that it will continue to evaluate the carrier strike group’s situation and will update the group’s sailors and their families in about three weeks.

The Navy has the highest number of coronavirus cases of all the military services at 1,056. The USS Theodore Roosevelt was diverted to Guam in late March due to an outbreak of the virus aboard the aircraft carrier, which has since infected nearly 600 sailors. The death of one Roosevelt sailor from the virus was announced Monday.

The former commander of the Roosevelt, Capt. Brett Crozier, wrote a letter asking naval officers for help with the outbreak aboard the ship. The ship’s environment, with its narrow corridors and shared bedrooms, makes it easy for the virus to spread and impossible for the crew to follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention health guidance, he wrote.

The Roosevelt remains docked on Guam as the Navy attempts to control the outbreak. About 4,021 sailors have been transferred from the ship to the island.

The Navy also has two other aircraft carriers dealing with the coronavirus.

The USS Nimitz, currently in

port in Bremerton, Wash., has had one sailor placed in isolation off of the ship after showing some symptoms but having an “inconclusive” test for the coronavirus. Another sailor was on leave in early March when that person tested positive and has not returned to the Nimitz.

The USS Ronald Reagan is preparing for deployment from Yokosuka Naval Base in Japan, where it has been undergoing maintenance. More than 1,000 sailors from the Reagan and its strike group were bused to Yokota Air Base and Naval Air Facility Atsugi last week to complete a 14-day isolation before they deploy.

Navy spokesman Lt. Samuel Boyle confirmed that there is a “small number of cases” aboard the Reagan, but he could not say specifically how many there are.

The 2nd Fleet is responsible for the Truman and the carrier strike group when it is in the Atlantic Ocean.

The carrier strike group has a total of 6,000 sailors, with the Truman alone at about 5,000. The strike group is made up of

the Truman, one guided-missile cruiser and three guided-missile destroyers, as well as eight squadrons in the carrier air wing aboard the aircraft carrier, according to Cmdr. Ashley Hockycko, a spokeswoman with the 2nd Fleet.

The Truman is heading back to the United States after a deployment to the 5th Fleet in the Middle East and the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea, according to the Navy. The ship left Norfolk in November after the rest of the strike group had already deployed in September due to repairs for an electrical malfunction.

“After completing a successful deployment, we would love nothing more than to be reunited with our friends and families,” Rear Adm. Andrew Loisel, commander of Carrier Strike Group 8, said in the statement.

“We recognize that these are unique circumstances and the responsible thing to do is to ensure we are able to answer our nation’s call while ensuring the health and safety of our sailors.”

Four more from Roosevelt admitted to hospital

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Four more USS Theodore Roosevelt sailors infected with the coronavirus have been hospitalized in Guam, the Navy announced Tuesday, one day after a fellow crew member died from the illness.

The sailors are currently being treated at the U.S. Naval

Hospital Guam, according to a Navy statement. One of the sailors is in the intensive care unit for closer observation due to suffering from shortness of breath.

The hospitalizations come just one day after another USS Theodore Roosevelt sailor died from the coronavirus that spread among the crew of the aircraft carrier.

The deceased sailor, who has

not yet been identified, tested positive for the virus March 30 and was placed in quarantine on Guam with four other sailors. It was not clear Tuesday from the Navy’s statement whether the new hospitalizations are the same sailors.

The deceased sailor was found unresponsive Thursday during a medical check. He was taken to the hospital and

placed in intensive care, where he died Monday.

As of Tuesday, there are 589 Roosevelt sailors with positive tests for the coronavirus. Most of the about 4,800-member crew have been tested, with 3,922 receiving a negative result. About 4,024 sailors have been transferred from the ship to Guam.

DOD: Zoom app no longer option for official use

Stars and Stripes

The Defense Department is banning the use of a popular videoconferencing application for official business due to questions about its security, a Pentagon spokesman told a military news site.

Zoom is no longer an option for teleconferencing sessions involving service members and DOD civilians, according to a Monday report in *Military.com*. The site attributed the statement to Air Force Lt. Col. Robert Carver.

The order applies to use of government devices such as computers and cellphones for official business, the report said. An approved option called Zoom for Government is still available for DOD use.

The FBI on March 30 warned about an increase in “Zoom-bombing” incidents in which uninvited participants infiltrate teleconferencing sessions on the application.

Zoom has gained popularity as a telework platform thanks to stay-at-home orders and increased teleworking. The *New York Times* on April 3 called it “a de facto social platform for the coronavirus era.” In a news release, the FBI in Boston said it received “multiple reports of conferences being disrupted by pornographic and/or hate images and threatening language.”

In one incident, a Massachusetts high school teacher conducting an online class was interrupted in mid-session by an individual who yelled profanity and the teacher’s home address, according to the FBI.

The *Times* reported an incident March 29 in which an infiltrator drew a racial slur across a slide during a call involving a global network of Muslim leaders, followed by a screen-shared pornographic video.

Friday, the Voice of America, quoting an unnamed Pentagon spokesman, reported the DOD had issued similar guidance, a ban on “Zoom’s free or commercial offerings.”

However, Zoom for Government is still an option for DOD videoconferencing, according to the VOA report and Carver in *Military.com*.

Zoom for Government is a paid tier service, hosted in a separate cloud authorized by the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program. Seven government agencies, including three Cabinet-level departments, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Customs and Border Protection are listed as users on the program website.

The program, also known as FedRAMP, enables government agencies “to rapidly adapt from old, insecure legacy IT to mission-enabling, secure, and cost effective cloud-based IT,” according to its website.

7 members of USNS Mercy crew test positive for virus

The San Diego Union-Tribune

SAN DIEGO — Naval health officials are fighting an outbreak of COVID-19 among the crew of the hospital ship *Mercy* where four more sailors tested positive for the virus over the weekend, bringing the total cases among the crew to seven, a Navy official told *The San Diego Union-Tribune* on Monday.

The affected sailors, as well as those with whom they had close contact, have left the ship and are either isolated or quarantined off the ship, according to Cmdr. John Fage, a 3rd Fleet spokesman.

“Seven Medical Treatment Facility crewmembers on board *USNS Mercy* have tested positive for COVID-19 and are currently isolated off the ship,” Fage said in an email. “The ship is following protocols and taking every precaution to ensure the health and safety of all crewmembers and patients on board.”

The outbreak has not affected *Mercy*’s ability to receive patients, Fage said.

The *Mercy* is pier-side at the Port of Los Angeles. Its first case of COVID-19 among its crew was reported by the *Union-Tribune* last Wednesday. On Friday, two more cases on board were confirmed by the Navy.

The *Mercy* left San Diego on March 23 and arrived in Los Angeles four days later. Its mission is to relieve Los Angeles hospitals by treating patients who do not have COVID-19. All incoming patients are tested before coming aboard.

The sailors came aboard after serving at various Navy medical installations, including Naval Medical Center San Diego.

Because some medical staff rotated through the COVID-19 screening area prior to deploying on the *Mercy*, one sailor told the *Union-Tribune*, there is concern on board that the crew brought the virus with them when they left San Diego.

The *Mercy* has a medical crew of more than 1,000 personnel and a smaller civilian crew that maintains the vessel’s shipboard systems.

The Navy has struggled to contain an outbreak of the virus on board another San Diego-based ship, the aircraft carrier *USS Theodore Roosevelt*. That ship has been sidelined in Guam since late March when several sailors tested positive for COVID-19. As of Tuesday, 589 sailors on the *Theodore Roosevelt* have tested positive.

One died Monday of complications from the virus, the Navy said.

DOD says avoid insecticide-treated uniform fabric when making masks

BY JAMES BOLINGER

Stars and Stripes

The Marines and Air Force have warned do-it-yourself mask makers to avoid using military uniforms treated with insect repellent or fire retardant due to possible health risks.

Protective face coverings are mandatory in many closed settings across the U.S. military as one measure aimed at curbing the spread of the coronavirus. Manufactured masks are in short supply and the military has approved versions of the homemade variety.

The use of uniform materials to make custom masks has been popular among service members after photos and instructions on how to create the masks were shared on military-oriented social media sites.

Marines face possible “toxicological exposure to permethrin via inhalation,” however, if they wear face protection

made from camouflage uniforms treated with the potent insecticide, according to an April 8 post on the III Marine Expeditionary Force, Okinawa, official Facebook page. III MEF posted the warning based on a Defense Department safety bulletin, according to the message.

Permethrin protects troops from diseases such as mosquito-borne malaria and West Nile virus and tick-borne Lyme disease while in garrison, training and in noncombat deployed environments worldwide, according to the Army Public Health Center.

Breathing in permethrin can irritate the nose and lungs, and cause difficulty breathing, headaches, dizziness, nausea and vomiting, according to the National Pesticide Information Center website.

While not all uniforms are pretreated with permethrin, those that have been can be identified by a tag inside the garment that identifies it as insect-repellent apparel.

Virus becomes latest US-Iran battle zone

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Even as both face the same invisible enemy in the coronavirus pandemic, Iran and the United States remain locked in retaliatory pressure campaigns that now view the outbreak as just the latest battleground.

Initially overwhelmed, Tehran now seeks to sway international opinion on U.S. sanctions by highlighting its struggles with COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus. Iran asked for \$5 billion from the International Monetary Fund even as it enriches uranium beyond the limits of its 2015 deal with world powers.

The U.S., which unilaterally withdrew from the deal in 2018 under President Donald Trump, insists that aid can reach the Islamic Republic — though humanitarian organizations have said that Washington's sanctions disrupt even permitted trade.

At the same time, the U.S. is now withdrawing troops from Iraqi bases, redeployments it insists are pre-planned even as Trump has alleged that Iran plans “a sneak attack” against them.

The risk of open conflict between the countries is dwarfed by the outbreak. Yet it persists — some have said at levels as high as immediately after the January drone strike by the U.S. that killed Iranian Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani in Iraq.

“After Soleimani’s killing, everybody thought there would be war, but nothing happened,” said Mahsa Rouhi, a research fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies. “Whereas we were so close to war that it’s not that nothing happened. And we are not back to normal ... We are back to a situation where any move could easily escalate into a conflict.”

The current tensions can seem trivial compared to the outbreak, which has infected at

least 1.9 million people worldwide and killed over 119,000. This perception has been helped by mocking social media posts from the U.S. State Department and a former leader of Iran’s paramilitary Revolutionary Guard seemingly backing the fringe idea of California seceding from the U.S.

The stakes, however, are anything but trivial. The night Iran retaliated for the Soleimani killing, it also accidentally shot down a Ukrainian jetliner, killing all 176 people aboard. Allied Shiite militias in Iraq also continue to threaten American forces deployed there after the fight against Islamic State.

While largely silent in the initial days of the outbreak in Iran, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has begun a concerted campaign targeting American sanctions. It’s a way to absolve Iran’s civilian government of responsibility for an outbreak it hasn’t contained. But Zarif’s allegations of “med-

ical terror” by the U.S. also highlight the challenge Tehran faces in accessing some medical supplies.

All this comes as Iran keeps producing low-enriched uranium with equipment and sites barred by the nuclear deal.

Overall tensions remain extraordinarily high. There have been reported maritime incidents in and around the strait as well. On Tuesday, armed men boarded a Hong Kong-flagged oil tanker off the coast of Iran near the crucial Strait of Hormuz, a British monitoring organization and a private intelligence firm said Tuesday.

The incident near Iran’s Ras al-Kuh coast was not immediately acknowledged by either the U.S. Navy’s Bahrain-based 5th Fleet or Iranian officials. It comes, however, after the private maritime intelligence firm warned of suspicious incidents in recent days near the strait, through which a fifth of all oil is traded.

Ending lockdowns means tests, tech, unified strategy

Associated Press

BERLIN — Governments battling a virus that has crossed borders with breathtaking speed pinned their hopes Tuesday on tests, technology and a coordinated approach to ease the tight restrictions on movements that have slowed the outbreak but strangled the global economy.

While the European Union looked into creating a COVID-19 smartphone app that could function across the bloc, governors on both U.S. coasts pledged to work together as they planned an easing of the confinement of millions. The main concern is to avoid a resurgence by the virus.

As governments grapple with when and how to reopen their countries for business, the International Monetary Fund projected that the world economy will suffer its worst year since the Great Depression in the 1930s. The grim

forecast Tuesday underscored the dilemma facing world leaders as they strive to balance public health against economic stability.

Around the world, India extended the world’s largest lockdown on 1.3 billion people until May 3. In Britain, new data showed that hundreds more people died of the virus than have been recorded in the government’s daily tally from hospitals. The dead include a wave of victims in nursing homes.

China faced a new flare-up along its remote border with Russia. The border has been sealed and medical units have rushed to the area to prevent travelers from returning with the virus.

New infections appear to have leveled off in much of Asia and Europe, including Italy, France, Spain and Germany, said Dr. Sebastian Johnston, a professor of respiratory medicine at Imperial College London.

Even in New York — where reported coronavirus deaths passed 10,000 on Monday — Gov. Andrew Cuomo declared that the “worst is over if we can continue to be smart.” More than 23,000 people have died of the virus in the U.S. overall, with close to 600,000 confirmed infections, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

With social distancing and lockdowns in place across much of the world, projections that the virus would spread with equal ferocity to other corners have yet to materialize. But without a vaccine or widespread antibody tests to determine how many people are immune to the virus, governments fear new outbreaks.

Germany’s foreign minister, Heiko Maas, called for a single smartphone app across the EU.

“It’s important we don’t end up with a patchwork of 27 corona apps and 27 data protection regimes, but coordinate as best as possible,” he told Germany’s

Funke media group.

Maas said that a contact-tracing app already being jointly developed by several countries showed that the EU “doesn’t have to copy the Big Brother methods of authoritarian states,” but can instead safeguard both personal privacy and public health.

Lothar Wieler, head of the Robert Koch Institute, Germany’s disease control center, said that constantly exchanging information among countries and institutions about best practices, vaccine studies and protecting vulnerable people is key.

The virus has also forced rival firms to work together. Two of the world’s biggest drug companies — Sanofi Pasteur and GSK — said that they will combine forces to work on a vaccine. Apple and Google also announced a joint effort to help public health agencies worldwide use Bluetooth wireless technology to trace the contacts of infected people.

Calif. orders insurance premium refunds

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — California's insurance commissioner on Monday ordered some companies to refund premiums for March and April because of the coronavirus, issuing a broad directive that includes payments made for workers compensation, medical malpractice and private and commercial auto policies.

The order from Ricardo Lara is based on a voter-approved law from 1988 that gives the insurance commissioner authority to approve rates before they go into effect. The law also says that no rate will "remain in effect" that is excessive, adequate or unfairly discriminatory.

The order covers premiums for March and April, but could be extended if closures continue.

Alaska

JUNEAU — Four employees at a state-run prison in Juneau have tested positive for COVID-19, officials said Monday.

No staff at other Department of Corrections facilities have tested positive, and no inmates within the system have tested positive, department spokeswoman Sarah Gallagher said by email.

Three recent cases in Juneau have involved staff from the Lemon Creek Correctional Center. Results from a fourth case came in as positive but, given reporting protocols, will show up in the state's count Tuesday, according to the state health department.

Arizona

PHOENIX — Arizona on Monday reported seven more deaths from the coronavirus, bringing the statewide total to 122.

The number has nearly doubled from 65 a week ago. The latest deaths were in Maricopa, Coconino and Apache counties.

State health officials also reported more than 3,700 cases of COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus. That was up 163 since Sunday and nearly 1,250 from a week ago.

California

RIVERSIDE — Three Southern California churches that want to keep their doors open during the coronavirus outbreak sued Gov. Gavin Newsom and other officials Monday, arguing that social distancing orders violate the First Amendment right to freedom of religion and assembly.

The suit, filed in the federal court for the Central District of California, also names state Attorney General Xavier Becerra and officials of San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

The suit seeks to block Newsom's month-old stay-at-home order and two county orders designed to slow the spread of COVID-19 by having people mostly stay at home, closing businesses except for those deemed essential and barring group gatherings. The orders don't list houses of worship among the critical infrastructure where face-to-face contact is permitted.

Hawaii

HONOLULU — Hawaii Emergency Management Agency Incident Commander Kenneth Hara said Monday that Gov. David Ige's administration is exploring further stemming the flow of visitors amid the coronavirus pandemic by disrupting their ability to make hotel reservations.

Hara told a state House committee for the coronavirus that federal law won't allow Hawaii to restrict travelers coming into the state.

"To try to circumvent that, we're looking at possibly restricting their ability to make reservations with lodging," Hara said, adding that he was working with the state attorney general on the issue. T

The Hawaii Tourism Authority said that 91 visitors arrived in the state on Sunday and 89 the day before.

Michigan

LANSING — The state of Michigan will offer cash-

strapped bars and restaurants relief by buying back their liquor inventory during the coronavirus pandemic.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer signed an order authorizing the program in a flurry of moves late Monday.

She also delayed the expiration of valid driver's licenses and state ID cards. And she extended a measure to keep intact a prohibition against dine-in service at restaurants and to continue the closure of many places of public accommodation through April 30 — when her stay-at-home order is scheduled to expire.

Michigan's 8,500 on-premises liquor licensees will have until 5 p.m. Friday to request that the Liquor Control Commission buy back spirits purchased before March 16.

Mississippi

JACKSON — A Mississippi mayor said Monday that people will not have to pay \$500 tickets that police issued to them last week for attending drive-up church services during the coronavirus pandemic.

Greenville Mayor Errick D. Simmons said, however, that the city's ban on such gatherings remains in place to try to save lives as the highly contagious virus continues to spread. The Democrat also called on Republican Gov. Tate Reeves to issue clear statewide guidance on whether people are allowed to congregate for worship during the governor's statewide stay-at-home order that remains in effect until April 20.

The governor's order tells people not to gather in groups of 10 or more.

New Mexico

SANTA FE — The Republican Party urged New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on Monday to use "common sense" and allow certain nonessential small businesses to re-open with some requirements for social distancing, putting a new partisan divide on display on responses to the coronavirus

pandemic.

Speaking on a virtual press conference with small business owners, GOP Chair Steve Pearce said that new restrictions are unfairly hurting small "mom and pop" shops while allowing big box stores like Walmart to continue operating.

Lujan Grisham has indicated that she is working on a plan to eventually re-open the state economy and warned that premature changes risk a surge in infections.

South Carolina

WEST COLUMBIA — With hurricane season less than two months away, officials in South Carolina said Monday that they don't yet have a good plan in place if a storm hits during the coronavirus outbreak, particularly for people potentially displaced from their homes in the aftermath.

During the latest media briefing on the outbreak, Kim Stenson, director of the state Emergency Management Division, said his agency is still working to configure solutions for how to potentially handle thousands of evacuees in an age of social distancing.

The Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1 through November 30.

Utah

SALT LAKE CITY — Utah on Monday canceled a coronavirus emergency alert system launched three days earlier that was supposed to send text messages to drivers entering the state, but ended up also sending texts to hundreds of people who were in their homes, state officials said.

Thousands of motorists received the alerts, but the system that used cellphone towers near state borders sent the alerts to far more people than intended, said Joe Dougherty, spokesman for the Utah Division of Emergency Management.

The text alerts that began Friday asked drivers to fill out online forms to report virus symptoms and their recent travel histories.

Voters reject Trump's pick in Wis. court race

Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — A liberal challenger ousted a conservative Wisconsin Supreme Court justice endorsed by President Donald Trump, overcoming a successful push by Republicans to forge ahead with last week's election even as numerous other states postponed theirs due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Joe Biden also emerged victorious, as expected, Monday in the state's Democratic presidential primary. Biden's easy victory became academic when Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders dropped out, one day after Wisconsin held in-person voting.

But the absentee-ballot-fueled victory by liberal Supreme Court candidate Jill Karofsky was a huge win for Democrats. It reduced conservative control of the court

to 4-3, giving liberals a chance to take control in 2023.

Karofsky will now be on the court when the Republican-controlled Legislature tackles redistricting next year, a fight that many expect to be decided by the state Supreme Court.

Her win will also certainly be seen as a bellwether in battleground Wisconsin ahead of the November presidential election. Trump barely carried the state four years ago, and both parties see it as critical this year.

Justice Dan Kelly was an early underdog in the Supreme Court race, given the expected higher Democratic turnout since the election was on the same day as the presidential primary. With so much riding on the turnout, the Republican push to proceed with the election was viewed

by Democrats as a bid to suppress Democratic votes, particularly among minorities in Milwaukee.

Karofsky credited her win to voters rising up and rejecting Republican efforts to suppress turnout.

"People were willing to do that because they wanted their voices to be heard in this election," she said. "A lot of times on election day we're wringing our hands because we're so upset about voter apathy. That wasn't the problem on Tuesday. People wanted their voices heard."

Karofsky voter Caleb Andersen, of Milwaukee, worked the polls on election day and thought that the hurdles put up to voting in person motivated some people to come out who wouldn't have otherwise.

"I'm sure there's some level of vindication," Andersen said of the Karofsky win.

Sanders endorses Biden's presidential campaign

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Bernie Sanders has endorsed Joe Biden's presidential campaign, encouraging his progressive supporters to rally behind the presumptive Democratic nominee in an urgent bid to defeat President Donald Trump.

"I am asking all Americans, I'm asking every Democrat, I'm asking every independent, I'm asking a lot of Republicans, to come together in this campaign to support your candidacy, which I endorse," the Vermont senator said Monday in a virtual event with Biden.

The backing came less than a week after Sanders ended his presidential campaign, which was centered around progressive policies such as universal health care.

There were early signs that some leading progressives weren't ready to fully follow Sanders' lead. And Trump's campaign was eager to use the endorsement to tie Biden more closely to Sanders, whose identity as a democratic socialist is objectionable to Republicans and some Democrats.

Still, Sanders' embrace of Biden was crucial for someone who is tasked with bridging the Democratic Party's entrenched ideological divides. Democratic disunity helped contribute to Hillary Clinton's loss to Trump in 2016.

Perhaps eager to avoid a repeat of that bruising election year, Sanders offered his endorsement much earlier in the 2020 campaign. Sanders backed Clinton four years ago, but only after the end of a drawn-out

nomination fight and a bitter dispute over the Democratic platform that extended to the summer convention.

Biden and Sanders differed throughout the primary, particularly over whether a government-run system should replace private health insurance. Biden has resisted Sanders' "Medicare for All" plan and has pushed instead a public option that would operate alongside private coverage.

Sanders said there's "no great secret out there that you and I have our differences."

But Sanders said the greater priority for Democrats of all political persuasions should be defeating Trump.

"We've got to make Trump a one-term president," he said. "I will do all that I can to make that happen."

N. Korean fighter jets fire missiles off eastern coast

By KIM GAMEL
AND YOO KYONG CHANG
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korean fighter jets fired missiles into the sea off the country's eastern coast while units launched a salvo of cruise missiles from the ground on Tuesday, South Korea's military said.

The maneuvers were a show of strength on the eve of the 108th birthday of the North's late founder Kim Il Sung as the communist state persists with military activity despite global concerns about the

coronavirus pandemic.

They also may have been aimed at trying to influence South Korea's election of its 300-seat parliament on Wednesday, experts said.

The cruise missiles were launched at about 7 a.m. and flew about 93 miles before splashing into the sea in a salvo that lasted about 40 minutes, according to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Seoul.

North Korean fighter jets also flew over the eastern city of Wonsan, then fired multiple missiles into the nearby sea, a military official said in a briefing, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with depart-

ment rules.

U.S. and South Korean intelligence officials were still analyzing the situation, according to the JCS.

"Our military is paying sharp attention to the possibility of additional military launches in North Korea and is maintaining a firm readiness posture," it said.

It was the latest in a series of launches as the North has pressed forward with its weapons programs since nuclear talks with the United States stalled last year.

North Korea frequently conducts missile tests in connection with high-profile events.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Court sentences man by teleconference

SC CHARLESTON — A man who prosecutors said robbed at least three stores at gunpoint and fired at a South Carolina trooper trying to arrest him was sentenced to 24 years in prison in a hearing held outside a federal courtroom because of COVID-19.

D'Angelo Antonio Coakley was one of four people involved in a robbery ring that held up a Dollar General store in Awendaw, a Verizon store in Summerville and a Verizon store in Waxhaw, N.C., in 2107, U.S. Attorney Peter McCoy Jr. said. Friday's sentencing hearing for Coakley, 30, was held on a teleconference because of the coronavirus.

Arrests made in fatal shooting of teen

FL MIAMI — Two men are charged with murder in the death of a South Florida high school student during a shoe robbery.

Miami-Dade police arrested Adrian Cosby and George Walton, both 19, early Sunday and charged them with the April 7 slaying of Andrea Camps Lacayo and the wounding of her boyfriend, Sergio Berben.

According to the Miami Herald, detectives said that Camps, 18, and Berben agreed on social media to sell Cosby and Walton three pairs of Adidas Yeezy sneakers for \$935. Pairs of those shoes are selling for up to \$500 each online.

The deal was set for outside an abandoned house. Police said that as the couple sat in their car, Walton approached alone and asked to try on the shoes. Detectives said that Cosby sneaked up on them and opened fire, hitting Camps and grazing Berben.

Police said they found Cosby

and Walton by going through the victims' social media communications. Both confessed, with Walton telling detectives his intention was to steal the shoes after trying them on.

Cosby and Walton are both charged with second-degree murder, robbery and attempted murder, and are being held without bond.

Vandal causes damage at construction site

NJ BRIDGETON — A vandal used a backhoe to damage numerous items at a southern New Jersey construction site, including the backhoe.

Bridgeton police responded to the site around 8:30 p.m. Saturday after someone called 911, authorities said. They were told that a man in a construction helmet had used a backhoe to ride around the site and smash an electric utility pole, breaker box, an office trailer and the backhoe itself.

The suspect had left the area before police arrived and remained at large Monday.

Artist sought to spend time in forest solitude

ME MILLINOCKET — The state of Maine is looking for an artist to spend two weeks in solitude in one of the most remote parts of the state.

The state is taking applications for the Allagash Wilderness Waterway Visiting Artist Program. The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry said that the program "provides artists with the opportunity to immerse themselves in a remote, rustic wilderness, to interpret and share their experiences through their medium."

The artist will receive lodging at Lock Dam Camp, a one-

room cabin on the northern end of Chamberlain Lake in the North Maine Woods, 60 miles from the nearest town, Millinocket. The two-week stay is scheduled for August.

Applications are available online and due April 30.

Deputies: Three dozen arrested in drug sting

FL DAYTONA BEACH — About three dozen people were arrested Saturday in a central Florida drug sting, officials said.

Investigators seized drugs, money and guns during the sting, Volusia County Sheriff's spokesman Andrew Gant told news outlets.

As the drug bust was happening, investigators said that Thaddeus Robinson, 40, began threatening detectives. He was arrested and charged with corruption by threat. Officials said that he told a deputy he knew his address and would see him later.

The 36 arrests were in addition to 25 drug arrests made earlier in the week during an operation that targeted street crime, Gant told the Daytona Beach News-Journal.

Fire that destroyed church was no accident

PA STEELTON — Police said a fire that destroyed a Pennsylvania church on Good Friday was no accident.

Steelton police on Saturday posted a notice seeking information from the public on what they call "a non-accidental fire" in a vacant house next to Bible Fellowship Christian Church shortly after 5 p.m. Friday.

Authorities said that the flames quickly spread to the church. Firefighters were able to salvage a few items from the pulpit. Officials said that the

congregation hasn't been inside the building since the start of the coronavirus epidemic.

Crash victim steals car of good Samaritan

CT SHELTON — The driver of a vehicle involved in a rollover crash early Saturday allegedly stole the car of a good Samaritan who stopped to help and was involved in a second crash, authorities said.

Connecticut State Police troopers responded to a crash around 6:30 a.m. on Route 8 in Shelton. A vehicle hit a metal beam guard wire and rolled over. The driver wasn't injured. The driver then allegedly stole the car of a man who stopped to help and was involved in a second crash into a tree around 7 a.m. Authorities said the driver was hospitalized for serious injuries.

School board president facing gun charges

NM LAS VEGAS — The president of a northern New Mexico school board is facing charges after police said that he fired a gun at a family member's feet.

The Las Vegas Optic reported Las Vegas City School Board of Education president Robert Duran was arrested last week following an argument with a family member. Duran was charged with aggravated assault and negligent use of a deadly weapon.

According to police, Duran said the family member called him to ask about a slapping incident with another family member. When the family member tried to approach Duran, police said that he took a gun out of his pickup truck and fired at the ground near the family member's feet.

From wire reports

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Reporting
World, National
and Military News

Transfer portal a headache to coaches

Associated Press

WICHITA, Kan. — Gregg Marshall began his career as an assistant at tiny Randolph-Macon and Belmont Abbey, but it was during eight years on the staff of Hall of Fame coach John Kresse at College of Charleston that he learned to build a basketball program.

Marshall learned how to recruit players who fit his style. He learned how to find overlooked gems, guys who were still growing or had yet to discover their shot. He learned how to sit in their living rooms and convince moms and dads that their sons would get a good education and in four years be prepared for the real world.

Many of those lessons have helped Marshall become Wichita State's winningest coach. But many have lost their value, and the reason is simple: The NCAA transfer portal has forced coaches to build teams rather than programs.

The system was implemented two years ago, intended to help ease the burden on administrators, increase transparency and empower athletes who complained about being prevented at times from going elsewhere. But in the eyes of many coaches, the portal has made transferring too easy, giving players an easy out for any reason: amount of playing time, location, level of competition, even something as silly as school colors.

"It's created a system in which, when

problems arise, (players) are not going to fight through the problems and adversity," Marshall said. "You're going to make a move. It's going to be easy to do. That's the problem I see with it."

The Shockers went 23-8 and spent much of last season hanging around the Top 25, and they were likely to receive an at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament had it not been canceled. Fast forward a few weeks and Marshall is wondering how he might need to replace seven players who placed their names in the transfer portal.

They run the gamut from high-scoring guard Erik Stevenson, who has committed to Washington, and talented freshman Grant Sherfield, who is headed to Nevada, to role players that hardly saw the floor. But together, they left Marshall with a roster full of holes that he must plug even while the coronavirus pandemic has put the brakes on recruiting.

So much for those lessons he picked up from Kresse back in Charleston.

More than 500 names have been entered into the portal in the month since the season ended, and new names are added by the day. Some come from big-name programs in search of a fresh start, others from small schools with something to prove. Many are graduate transfers who can play immediately, though most will have to sit out a year under NCAA transfer rules.

"You have to respect each young guy's decision because that's the culture we live

in today," Missouri coach Cuonzo Martin said. "You have guys leaving teams. That's just the way it is. But when you're talking about freshmen, they have to have the opportunity to play from Day 1 or you'll be looking at a lot of this."

No brand of school is unaffected, either.

Johnny Juzang and Kahlil Whitney jumped into the portal after their freshman seasons at Kentucky, and Alex O'Connell made the move after his junior year at Duke, creating holes for the bluest of blue bloods. Some Power Five programs such as Iowa State, with five players in the transfer portal, have begun to resemble a bus stop with players coming and going.

Then there are the mid-majors such as George Washington, which likewise watched five players enter the portal — four have already found new homes. In a bit of symmetry, the Colonials have filled three of those scholarships with transfers of their own from Southern Miss, LSU and Vanderbilt.

Not every coach believes the transfer portal has become a problem.

Some of them point to the hypocrisy of coaches being able to freely change schools while players have long been locked into scholarships, and the fact that the transfer portal has created a level playing field where everybody can have a shot at a player interested in new surroundings. Those adept at landing high-profile transfers often have benefited, too.

Tokyo: No Plan B for second Olympic postponement

Associated Press

TOKYO — There is no "Plan B" for the Olympics if they need to be postponed again because of the coronavirus pandemic, Tokyo organizers said Tuesday.

Masa Takaya, the spokesman for the Tokyo Olympics, said organizers are proceeding under the assumption the Olympics will open on July 23, 2021. The Paralympics follow on Aug. 24.

Those dates were set last month by the International Olympic Committee and Japanese officials after the coronavirus pandemic made it clear the Tokyo Games could not be held as scheduled this year.

"We are working toward the new goal," Takaya said, speaking in English on a teleconference call with journalists. "We don't have a B Plan."

The severity of the pandemic and the death toll has raised questions if it will even be feasible to hold the Olympics in just over 15 months.

"All I can tell you today is that the new games' dates for both the Olympic and Paralympic Games have been just set up," Takaya said. "In that respect, Tokyo 2020 and all concerned parties now are doing their very best effort to deliver the games next year."

IOC President Thomas Bach was asked about the possibility of a postponement in an interview published in the German newspaper Die Welt on Sunday.

He did not answer the question directly, but said later that Japanese organizers and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe indicated they "could not manage a postponement beyond next summer at the latest."

The Olympics draw 11,000 athletes and 4,400 Paralympic athletes and large support staffs from 206 national Olympic committees.

There are also questions about frozen travel, rebooking hotels, cramming fans into stadiums and arenas, securing ven-

ues and the massive costs of rescheduling, which is estimated in Japan at \$2 billion-\$6 billion.

Tokyo organizing committee CEO Toshiro Muto addressed the issue in a news conference on Friday. He is likely to be asked about it again on Thursday when local organizers and the IOC hold a teleconference with media in Japan.

The other major question is the cost of the delay, and who pays.

Bach said in the Sunday interview that the IOC would incur "several hundred million dollars" in added costs. Under the so-called Host City Agreement, Japan is liable for the vast majority of the expenses.

"This is impossible to say for now," Takaya said. "It is not very easy to estimate the exact amount of the games' additional costs, which have been impacted by the postponement."

Soccer matches may be off until 2021

Associated Press

Most international soccer might not be played until 2021 due to coronavirus pandemic travel restrictions and the need to give club competitions the chance to resume, a FIFA vice president said Monday.

Victor Montagliani, a Canadian who is president of the governing body for North and Central America and the Caribbean, has been heading a FIFA working group formulating plans to deal with the implications of the world's biggest sport being largely shut down since last month.

FIFA already has called off matches between countries that were due to be played in March and June. Montagliani, CONCACAF's president, believes the September, October and November windows for national team matches could be scrapped.

"I personally think that might be a bit of a challenge, not so much because of just the health issues around the world

and the various degrees of preparedness, but also committing to international travel as soon as we come back," Montagliani said. "I think that domestic football is a priority. September is still in the books, but I would garner to say that I'm not sure it's there on solid ground the way things are trending."

The return of fans into packed stadiums could be dependent on a vaccine for the COVID-19 disease being ready.

"If we get the green light to play a football match, I highly doubt that first football match will be with fans. I just can't see that. I think that would be taken a massive risk," he said in a video interview from Vancouver, British Columbia. "I'm pretty sure it'll be a phased-in approach, just like the rest of society is going to be in terms of us trying to get back to normal here."

A full resumption of soccer in 2020 might not be possible in parts of the world hardest hit by the pandemic, including Europe and North America.

"If you take that across international boundaries, that's a significant issue," Montagliani said. "And so, yes absolutely, there's always that possibility."

CONCACAF's hexagonal that determines the region's three direct qualifiers is to start in the fall with each nation playing two games each in September, October and November. The United States, Mexico, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Honduras and either El Salvador or Canada will compete.

Scheduling will be discussed further by a working group featuring the six confederations.

"I'm fairly confident the March window in 2021 will be fine," Montagliani said. "The priority is to help our national leagues, then look at our events."

The qualifying format for the World Cup in Qatar might have to be curtailed with the time frame tightening to play matches to reach the tournament that starts in November 2022.

"We're likely going to be having to seriously look at re-

formatting some of our events," Montagliani said. "We're committed to our final four (in the Nations League). But we have other events that we have to probably look at reformatting, whether it's some of our youth competitions, even our World Cup qualifying, where we're going to have to, in the balance of probabilities, look at how that would work in a situation where the calendar there is now less than what we expected it to be."

Montagliani maintains that CONCACAF is in a good financial situation to cope with the disruption to the match calendar.

"A lot of the things we can recoup over time. We don't have fixtures every weekend like a league does," he said. "But I think where the financial impact is going to happen in CONCACAF is within the stakeholders, within the leagues and the clubs. That's where I think the biggest financial impact is going to be."

Sports briefs

Source: Panthers make McCaffrey highest-paid RB

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The Carolina Panthers have rewarded Christian McCaffrey for his production and versatility, making him the highest-paid running back in the NFL.

The team agreed to a four-year, \$64 million contract extension with McCaffrey on Monday, a person familiar with the contract negotiations told The Associated Press.

The person spoke to the AP on the condition of anonymity because the Panthers have not announced the extension. Details on how much of the contract is fully guaranteed were unavailable.

The \$16-million-a-year deal eclipses Ezekiel Elliott's contract with the Dallas Cowboys

that is worth \$15 million per season.

Yankees co-owner Steinbrenner dies

Hank Steinbrenner, the oldest son of George Steinbrenner and one of the four siblings who own the controlling shares of the New York Yankees, died Tuesday at age 63. The team said he died at home in Clearwater, Fla., due to a longstanding health issue.

Organizers postpone Tour de France

PARIS — After weeks of holding out hope the Tour de France would be able to go ahead as planned despite the

coronavirus pandemic, the world's most famous cycling race was finally added to the list of sporting events called off.

It may still happen this year, but it's clear the three-week race won't be starting on June 27 in the Riviera city of Nice as scheduled.

Larson fired after sponsors drop driver

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Kyle Larson was fired Tuesday by Chip Ganassi Racing, completing a stunning downfall for the budding NASCAR star who uttered a racial slur during a live-streamed virtual race and then watched nearly every one of his sponsors drop him.

The 27-year-old Larson, in

his seventh Cup season with Ganassi and considered the top free agent in NASCAR just three days ago, is now out of a job.

Former Royals, Cubs manager Frey dies

SOMERSET, N.J. — Jim Frey, who managed the Kansas City Royals to the 1980 AL pennant and the Chicago Cubs within one win of the 1984 World Series, has died. He was 88. Frey died Sunday at his home in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., according to the Atlantic League's Somerset Patriots, the minor league team he had been affiliated with since its launch in 1998. The Patriots did not announce a cause of death.