

DOD official: US on track in Indo-Pacific

By SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A Defense Department official assured lawmakers Tuesday that the recent leak of classified intelligence documents will not affect the U.S. military's strategy in the Indo-Pacific as it calms allied countries in a region dominated by China.

The department is reaching out to allies and partners to make certain that they are "understanding" the position of the Pentagon as it assists the Justice Department with investigating a "disgraceful, criminal act" that has reverberated around the globe, said Jedidiah Royal, the principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for Indo-Pacific security affairs.

"I do want to be clear on this point: This will not knock us off of our strategy, off of our campaigning approach with integrated deterrence in the Indo-Pacific region," he said. "It is an exceptionally unfortunate situation that does come with national security consequences, but it will not knock us off our approach."

Royal made the comments during a House Armed Services Committee hearing on military operations in the Indo-Pacific, the most strategically important theater for American troops as China seeks to challenge the U.S.-led world order.

An Air Force National Guard airman is accused of leaking classified intelligence documents that revealed tactical information about the war in Ukraine as well as embarrassing evidence of the U.S. spying on its allies.

One of the disclosures showed the U.S. had eavesdropped on a conversation involving national security officials in South Korea, a key U.S. partner in the region that also hosts multiple American military bases. A South Korean presidential official said last week that the country plans to discuss with the U.S. "issues raised" because of the leak.

Royal did not specifically refer to South Korea in his testimony Tuesday but said the Defense Department is conducting "outreach" with friends in the region.

"It's very serious, the department is taking

it with the highest degree of seriousness," he said. "We, every single day, have a responsibility to protect information and make sure that our classified information remains ours."

Gen. Paul LaCamera, commander of U.S. forces in South Korea, described the U.S.-South Korea relationship Tuesday as a "center of gravity" for deterring the totalitarian North Korean regime and said strengthening the alliance was one of his top priorities.

Adm. John Aquilino, commander of Indo-Pacific Command, said he is seeking to build a network of like-minded nations in the region that will stand as a bulwark against aggression by China and North Korea. The U.S. has regional treaty alliances with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Australia and Thailand and is looking to pull in additional allies through military exercises and other engagements.

U.S. troops perform exercises with Indonesia, Malaysia and other countries in the region about 120 times per year, Aquilino said. About 60% of the U.S. maritime force is stationed in the Indo-Pacific.

Senators grill Navy secretary over ships' retirement

By DOUG G. WARE
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro clashed with senators Tuesday over plans to retire several amphibious warships and not replace them, which would result in the service having fewer of the ships than is required by federal law.

"This is a big issue, and right now the secretary of the Navy ignoring the Congress of the United States is unacceptable," Sen. Dan Sullivan, R-Alaska, said of the Navy's shipbuilding plans and recent decisions made by Del Toro.

The service's \$255 billion budget request for fiscal 2024, released last month, proposes to decommission several amphibious warfare ships — but it includes no funding for vessels to replace them. The Navy's 30-year shipbuilding plan states the service is doing a cost and capability study on amphibious ships, and that should determine when replacements will be built.

The Navy must have "not less than 31 oper-

ational amphibious warfare ships" to be at full strength, according to the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act, which sets annual spending priorities for the Pentagon. Amphibious warfare ships include dock landing vessels and assault ships that can swiftly deliver Marines and equipment on land during an assault from the sea. The Navy meets the requirement now, but it won't if it succeeds in retiring three of the ships next year.

"We are requesting the divestment of USS Germantown, USS Gunston Hall and USS Tortuga, three amphibious ships that are all at or over 34 years of service and in unsatisfactory material condition," Del Toro said at Tuesday's hearing. "We recognize this request brings us below the 31 amphibious ships we are required to maintain. [We] are committed to ensuring we meet this requirement and doing so in a timely manner but with a capable, sustainable mix of ship classes that will support our Marines and sailors for decades to come."

Last year, Del Toro ordered a strategic

pause on new amphibious warships so the cost and capability study could be completed. The move is part of the Navy's efforts to recalibrate and modernize its capabilities. The 30-year shipbuilding plan includes no San Antonio-class amphibious ships, which were originally intended to replace Whidbey Island-class vessels such as the soon-to-be-retired Germantown, Gunston Hall and Tortuga.

Sen. Roger Wicker of Mississippi, the top Republican on the committee, said that he's concerned about retiring amphibious ships with no replacements and called the Navy's budget request "anemic." He slammed the Navy leaders and said they have "failed yet again to build a Navy fleet that's capable of ... growing strong enough to deter near-term threats."

Later, Sullivan expressed agitation for Del Toro's decision to pause construction of amphibious ships and put the fleet on a path in the coming years to fall below the congressional minimum.

Yoon: 'Large-scale attack' on Ukraine might bring lethal aid from S. Korea

By DAVID CHOI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea—South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol in an interview Wednesday offered some scenarios in which Seoul could provide Ukraine with lethal aid to fight its now 14-month-old war with Russia.

Yoon told the Reuters news agency that in the event of a "large-scale attack on civilians, massacre or serious violation of the laws of war" by Russia, it would "be difficult for us to insist only on humanitarian or financial support" to Ukraine.

According to the Reuters interview, Yoon said he believed "there won't be limitations to the extent of the support to defend and restore a country that's been illegally invaded." But South Korea must "take the most appropriate measures" due to its relationship with other countries involved in the war, he added.

South Korea has pledged over \$100 million in non-lethal aid to Ukraine in the form of vaccines, medical equipment, body armor and power generators since June, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"Considering the growing suffering of the Ukrainian people and refugees due to the prolonged war, the Korean government will strive to deliver the additional aid as quickly as possible in hopes of relieving their pain," the ministry

said in a news release on April 20, 2022. "With the hope that the assistance will help relieve the suffering of Ukraine, the Korean government stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine."

Yoon has condemned the Russian invasion, but so far has publicly declined to send lethal aid directly to Ukraine. In an October speech, he cited Seoul's "peaceful and good relations with all countries around the world."

However, senior South Korean officials have privately explored ways to indirectly provide 155 mm artillery shells to Ukraine, according to news reports about leaked Defense Department intelligence data that included diplomatic communications.

One such report from South Korea's Dong-A Ilbo newspaper Wednesday said Seoul had agreed to lend 500,000 artillery shells to the United States in March.

South Korea's trade policies state that exports must be for peaceful purposes and must not "affect international peace, safety maintenance, and national security."

World leaders have publicly urged Yoon to boost his support for Ukraine. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said Seoul needed to "step up" and that other like-minded nations, such as Germany and Sweden, have since altered their policies to send weapons to Kyiv.

Austin sees Sweden in NATO fold by July

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said Wednesday that he expects a breakthrough in Sweden's stalled NATO bid that will enable the country to gain full alliance membership in time for a major summit this summer.

"You have made the bold and historic decision to apply for NATO membership, and you have the full and firm support of the United States," Austin said during a stop in Stockholm.

Austin met with Swedish Defense Minister Pal Jonson and said he thinks the approval process will be wrapped up by the time heads of state gather in July in Vilnius, Lithuania. Sweden's quest for NATO membership has been delayed by opposition from Hungary and Turkey, which are at odds with Stockholm over various diplomatic issues.

"It's important for all of us that (the Hungarians and Turks) make their decision sooner versus later because we all look forward to having a very capable Sweden sitting at the desk beside us in Vilnius this summer," he said.

Sweden would be NATO's 32nd member.

Initially, allies hoped it would join alongside Finland, which became part of NATO earlier this month. However, Turkish opposition revolving around allega-

tions of Kurdish militants living in Sweden has complicated matters.

Meanwhile, Hungary has delayed approval over grievances related to Swedish criticism of Hungarian President Viktor Orbán's policies, which have been labeled as authoritarian by outside critics.

Austin's stop in Stockholm comes ahead of a meeting at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, on Friday, where he will meet with allies and partners on how to further support Ukraine in its war against Russia.

During those talks, Austin is likely to face questions from partners over a voluminous leak of highly sensitive classified Pentagon material. A 21-year-old Massachusetts Air National Guardsman, Jack Teixeira, is accused of violating the Espionage Act by posting scores of classified documents on social media.

When asked during a news conference whether he had concerns that such a young service member had access to such high-level material, Austin said he doesn't consider age a factor.

"The vast majority of our military is young, and so it's not exceptional that young people are doing important things in our military. That really is not the issue," Austin said. "The issue is how you responsibly execute or carry out your duties and how you protect information."

3 stateside Air Force bases to receive new fighter jets

By KYLE ALVAREZ
Stars and Stripes

Air Force bases in three states are slated to add advanced and upgraded fighter planes to their fleet, the service announced this week.

Barnes Air National Guard Base in Massachusetts, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans and Fresno Air National Guard Base in California were selected, according to an Air Force statement Tuesday.

The Massachusetts installation is due to receive the next F-35A Lightning II squadron, while the other two will replace their F-15C/D Eagles with F-15EX Strike Eagles.

Environmental impact studies

at each base are expected to be completed in the spring of 2024, and the findings will determine whether the service's decisions are finalized.

The Air Force rollout of the F-35s began in 2011.

Patriot missile systems arrive in Ukraine

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Ukraine's defense minister said Wednesday that his country has received the U.S.-made Patriot surface-to-air guided missile systems it has long craved, and which Kyiv hopes will help shield it from Russian airstrikes during the war.

"Today, our beautiful Ukrainian sky becomes more secure because Patriot air defense systems have arrived in Ukraine," Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov said in a tweet.

Ukrainian officials have previously said the arrival of Patriot systems, which Washington agreed to send last October, would be a major boost and a milestone in the war against

Moscow's full-scale invasion. It's the latest contribution from Kyiv's Western allies, who have also pledged tanks, artillery and some types of fighter jets as Ukraine gears up for an expected counteroffensive.

China, on the other hand, has insisted it won't help arm Russia, one of its key allies, and on Wednesday denied recent reports that Chinese drones have been found on Ukraine battlefields.

Beijing maintains strict control over the export of drones in keeping with international standards preventing them from being used for nonpeaceful purposes, the Commerce Ministry said in a statement.

China, which has repeatedly

criticized the United States and other countries' support for Ukraine as "adding fuel to the fire" of the war, has an "objective and fair stance" and seeks peace, the statement insisted.

The Patriot can target aircraft, cruise missiles and shorter-range ballistic missiles. Russia has used that weaponry to bombard Ukraine, including residential areas and civilian infrastructure, especially the power supply over the winter.

Ukrainian air force spokesman Yuriy Ihnat said late Tuesday that delivery of the system would be a landmark event, allowing Ukrainians to knock out Russian targets at a greater distance.

Reznikov thanked the people

of the U.S., Germany and the Netherlands, without saying how many systems had been delivered nor when.

Germany's federal government website on Tuesday listed a Patriot system as among the military items delivered within the past week to Ukraine, and German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock confirmed that to lawmakers in Berlin on Wednesday.

Ukrainian personnel have been trained on the Patriot battery, which can need as many as 90 troops to operate and maintain it.

Experts have cautioned the system's effectiveness is limited and it may not be a game changer in the war, even though it will add to Ukraine's arsenal.

US Navy sails first drone through Strait of Hormuz

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — The U.S. Navy sailed its first drone boat through the strategic Strait of Hormuz on Wednesday, a crucial waterway for global energy supplies where American sailors often face tense encounters with Iranian forces.

The trip by the L3 Harris Arabian Fox MAST-13, a 41-foot speedboat carrying sensors and cameras, drew the attention of Iran's Revolutionary Guard but took place without incident, said Navy spokesman Cmdr. Timothy Hawkins. Two U.S. Coast Guard cutters, the USCGC Charles Moulthrop and USCGC John Scheuerman, accompanied the drone.

The trip saw the drone safely pass with the accompanying ships through the strait, a busy waterway between Iran and Oman that is just 21 miles wide at its narrowest.

A fifth of all oil traded passes through the strait, which connects the Persian Gulf to the

Gulf of Oman.

"The Iranians observed the unmanned surface vessel transiting the strait in accordance with international law," Hawkins told The Associated Press.

He said an Iranian drone and at least one Houdong-class fast-attack vessel operated by Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard observed the MAST-13 drone.

The U.S. Navy's Bahrain-based 5th Fleet patrols Mideast waters, particularly the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, to keep open the waterways for international trade, as well as protect American interests and allies.

Iran views the Navy's presence as an affront, however, comparing it with its forces running patrols in the Gulf of Mexico.

The 5th Fleet launched a special drone task force last year, aiming to have a fleet of some 100 unmanned drones, both sailing and submersible, operating in the region with America's allies.

Report details Russia's effort to target Starlink in Ukraine

The Washington Post

Russia's quest to sabotage Ukrainian forces' internet access by targeting the Starlink satellite operations that billionaire Elon Musk has provided to Kyiv since the war's earliest days appears to be more advanced than previously known, according to a classified U.S. intelligence report obtained by The Washington Post.

Moscow has experimented for months with its Tobol electronic warfare systems in a bid to disrupt Starlink's transmissions in Ukraine, the top-secret assessment, which has not been previously disclosed, contends.

The document, among a cache of sensitive materials leaked online through the messaging platform Discord, dates to March and does not indicate whether any of Russia's tests have been successful. But the intelligence finding is striking nonetheless, as it appears to affirm what observers had only hypothesized previously: that a program ostensibly designed to protect the Kremlin's satellites can be em-

ployed instead to attack those used by its adversaries.

SpaceX, the firm that owns Starlink, declined to comment. Last spring, Musk briefly addressed the Kremlin's attempts to target the technology, writing on Twitter in May that while Starlink had demonstrated its resilience against such "jamming & hacking" attempts, the Russians appeared to be intensifying their efforts.

The Pentagon did not address questions about the leaked assessment. "These systems constitute an important layer in Ukraine's communications network," said Maj. Charlie Dietz, a Defense Department spokesperson. The department's focus, he added, "remains on getting the Ukrainians the satellite capabilities they need."

Kostiantyn Zhura, a spokesman for the Ukrainian defense ministry, said officials in Kyiv are aware of Russia's efforts and "taking measures to neutralize them." The Russian Embassy in Washington did not respond to a request for comment.

Mother, son who took zip ties to 1/6 Capitol riot convicted

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Tennessee man and his mother were convicted on Tuesday of charges that they stormed the Capitol, where they brought plastic zip-tie handcuffs into the Senate gallery as a mob attacked the building, court records show.

U.S. District Judge Royce Lamberth convicted Eric Munchel and his mother, Lisa Eisenhart, on all 10 counts in their indictment, including a charge that they conspired to obstruct Congress from certifying President Joe Biden's 2020 electoral victory on Jan. 6, 2021. The judge is scheduled to sentence both of them Sept. 8.

Lamberth decided the case without a jury after a "stipulated bench trial," an unusual legal proceeding in which defendants do not admit guilt to charges but agree with prosecutors that certain facts are true.

At least three dozen Capitol riot defendants have resolved their cases that way — which allows defendants to preserve their right to an appeal — rather than opting for a traditional trial or pleading guilty.

A jury trial for the pair had been scheduled to start last week.

"Our goal at the end of the day was to show the

court that (Munchel) is accepting responsibility for what occurred on Jan. 6," his attorney, Joe Allen, said after the proceedings ended.

A lawyer for Eisenhart didn't immediately respond on Tuesday to an email seeking comment.

Munchel, 32, of Nashville, Tenn., worked at a restaurant. Eisenhart, 59, of Woodstock, Ga., has worked as a traveling nurse.

On Jan. 6, they attended then-President Donald Trump's "Stop the Steal" rally before joining the crowd that marched to the Capitol. Both of them were wearing tactical vests. Munchel had a stun gun holstered to his right hip.

After grabbing plastic handcuffs they found inside the Capitol, Munchel and Eisenhart entered the gallery above the Senate chamber and stepped over a railing that separated portions of the gallery. Eisenhart chanted, "Treason! Treason!"

Munchel "gleefully" entered the Capitol during a riot while carrying a dangerous weapon, the stun gun, the judge said in a February 2021 ruling.

"By word and deed, Munchel has supported the violent overthrow of the United States government. He poses a clear danger to our republic," Lamberth wrote.

Fox News, Dominion settle suit for \$787M

Associated Press

WILMINGTON, Del. — Fox News agreed Tuesday to pay Dominion Voting Systems nearly \$800 million to avert a trial in the voting machine company's lawsuit that would have exposed how the network promoted lies about the 2020 presidential election.

The stunning settlement emerged just as opening statements were supposed to begin, abruptly ending a case that had embarrassed Fox News over several months and raised the possibility that network founder Rupert Murdoch and stars such as Tucker Carlson and Sean Hannity would have to testify publicly.

"The truth matters. Lies have consequences," Dominion lawyer Justin Nelson told reporters outside a Delaware courthouse after Superior Court Judge Eric Davis announced the deal.

Outside of the \$787.5 million promised to Colorado-based Dominion, it was unclear what other consequences Fox would face.

Fox acknowledged in a statement "the court's rulings finding certain claims about Dominion to be false," but no apology was offered.

"We are hopeful that our decision to resolve this dispute with Dominion amicably, instead of the acrimony of a divisive trial, allows the country to move forward from these issues," Fox said.

Its lawyers and representatives offered no other comment or details about the settlement.

Asked by a reporter whether there was "anything to this other than money," Dominion CEO John Poulos did not answer.

Southwest planes briefly grounded

Associated Press

DALLAS — Southwest Airlines planes were briefly grounded nationwide Tuesday for what the airline called an intermittent technology issue, leading to more than 2,200 delayed flights just four months after the carrier suffered a much bigger meltdown over the Christmas travel rush.

The hold on departures had been lifted by mid-morning Eastern time, according to Southwest and the Federal Aviation Administration, but not before traffic at airports from Denver to New York City backed up.

"Southwest has resumed operations after temporarily pausing flight activity this morning to work through data connection issues resulting

from a firewall failure," the Dallas-based airline said in a prepared statement. "Early this morning, a vendor-supplied firewall went down and connection to some operational data was unexpectedly lost."

Southwest urged customers to check on their flight status "and explore self-service options" for travel as the airline worked on restoring its operation.

By late afternoon on the East Coast, more than half of all Southwest flights were delayed, and the airline accounted for half of all delays nationwide. On the positive side, Southwest had only about a dozen flights canceled, roughly in line with other major airlines, according to FlightAware.

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg retweeted an FAA post about the ground stop, adding, "We are here to ensure passengers have strong protections when airline failures like this affect their plans." He referred travelers to a Transportation Department checklist of passenger rights, and his press secretary noted that "no other airlines experienced disruptions."

Tuesday's delays added more to the picture of an airline that has struggled more than most with technology issues.

"It was a 17-minute ground stop. This will have no long-lasting affect on Southwest's reputation," said Henry Harteveldt, a travel analyst with Atmosphere Research Group.

Another cease-fire issued in Sudan

Associated Press

KHARTOUM, Sudan — Terrified Sudanese who have been trapped for days in their homes by fighting in the capital of Khartoum fled on Wednesday, hauling out whatever belongings they could carry and trying to get out of the city, as the military and its paramilitary rival made a new attempt at a 24-hour cease-fire after a failed truce the day before.

The two sides separately announced that they would abide by the new halt in fighting that took effect Wednesday evening. Residents reported that sporadic gunfire and explosions could still be heard, pointing to the fragility of the efforts.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre on Wednesday called for both sides to stand by the truce, “renounce violence and return to negotiations.” She said the country’s two top generals, whose forces have turned the capital into a war zone for the past five days “are responsible for ensuring the protections of civilians and non combatants.”

Throughout the day Wednesday, residents of multiple neighborhoods in Khartoum told The Associated Press they could see hundreds of people, including women and children, leaving their homes, carrying luggage, some leaving by foot, others crowding into vehicles. Residents had been

desperately holding out in hopes for a halt in the mayhem on their doorsteps, but with food and other supplies running low and no sign of respite, it appeared many had decided to risk making an escape.

Nearly 300 people have been killed in the past five days, the U.N. health agency said, but the toll is likely higher, since many bodies have been left in the streets, unreachable because of clashes.

Residents said the military was pounding positions of the opposing Rapid Support Forces with airstrikes since early Wednesday, while gunbattles continued to rage outside the main military headquarters in central Khartoum.

German president apologizes at Warsaw Uprising ceremony

Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland — Sirens wailed and church bells rang as the presidents of Germany, Israel and Poland bowed their heads Wednesday before a memorial to Jewish insurgents who fought a mismatched, desperate battle against Nazi German forces in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

Celebrations of the uprising’s 80th anniversary honored the hundreds of young Jews who took up arms in the Polish capital in 1943, choosing to fight and die at a time and place not dictated by the Nazis. Most were killed, and no survivors are still alive.

“I stand before you today and ask for forgiveness,” German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said at the site of the ghetto.

“The appalling crimes that Germans committed here fill me with deep shame. But at the same time, it fills me with gratitude and humility that I can take part in this commemoration as the first German head of state ever.”

The leaders were joined by Holocaust survivors and their descendants, amid a poignant sense the responsibility for carrying on the memory of the Holocaust is passing from witnesses to younger generations.

A 96-year-old Polish Holocaust survivor, Marian Turski, told those gathered that German forces did the unimaginable in annihilating Jews, but that the “subsoil” of anti-Semitism existing for centuries made it possible for the Germans to kill so many. He warned against indifference.

“Can I be indifferent, can I remain silent, when today the Russian army is attacking our neighbor and seizing its land?” he said.

Steinmeier said the lessons of his country offer a message amid the war.

“You in Poland, you in Israel, you know from your history that freedom and independence must be fought for and defended,” Steinmeier said. “But we Germans have also learned the lessons of our history. ‘Never again’ means that there must be no criminal war of aggression like Russia’s against Ukraine in Europe.”

The uprising began when the Nazis entered the ghetto on April 19, 1943, the eve of the Passover holiday. Three days later, the Nazis set the ghetto ablaze, turning it into a fiery death trap, but the Jewish fighters kept up their struggle for nearly a month before they were vanquished.

Kim: N. Korea’s 1st spy satellite ready for launch

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said his country has built its first-ever military spy satellite and he planned to launch it on an undisclosed date, state media reported Wednesday.

Previous missile and rocket tests have demonstrated that North Korea can send satellites into space, but many experts question whether it has cameras sophisticated enough to use for spying from a satellite because only low-resolution images were released after past test launches.

During his visit to the country’s aerospace agency Tuesday, Kim said that having an operational military reconnaissance satellite is crucial for North Korea to effectively use its nuclear-capable missiles. Kim cited what he described as serious security threats posed by “the most hostile rhetoric and explicit action” by the United States and South Korea this year, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

Kim said North Korea must launch several satellites to establish an intelligence-gathering capability, KCNA said.

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Tatis ready for debut after missing 2022

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — El Niño is coming.

It could be quite the storm.

Thursday night at Arizona, Fernando Tatis Jr. will be announced as the leadoff hitter for the San Diego Padres and settle into a big league batter's box for the first time since the last game of the 2021 season.

One of baseball's most electrifying players will return from an 80-game PED suspension that shocked and angered his teammates and an entire fan base — and tempered his status as one of the sport's most prominent and likable stars. If a jaw-dropping power display during

a rehab stint at Triple-A El Paso is any indication, the Padres will be getting back the player who was an All-Star at shortstop in 2021, when he led the NL with 42 homers.

Perhaps equally important is the energy and swagger the 24-year-old from the Dominican Republic brings every time he steps on the field, whether it's hitting tape-measure home runs and then dancing in the dugout, or baserunning exploits that sometimes defy physics.

With his troublesome left shoulder surgically repaired during his suspension, Tatis will play right field and could be the spark the Padres desperately

need to overcome a slow start for a lineup that includes fellow superstars Manny Machado, Juan Soto and Xander Bogaerts, and has baseball's third-highest payroll.

"It's big, man," said Bogaerts, who took Tatis' spot at shortstop when he signed a \$280 million, 11-year free agent contract in December. "Time heals a lot. What I've seen so far is someone who wants to come in and show everyone that he's still the real deal and what he did was a mistake and he wants to show that he's matured from that."

Tatis' maturity has been under a microscope since the then-22-year-old signed a \$330

million, 14-year contract prior to the 2021 season, starting with an unusual scene that September when Machado screamed at Tatis that "it's not about you!" during a dugout confrontation. He broke his left wrist the next offseason — reportedly in a motorcycle accident in his native Dominican Republic. He was on the cusp of returning from that when his PED suspension was announced on Aug. 12. He blamed his positive test on a cream he said he used for ringworm.

He ended up missing all of San Diego's season, including a stirring run to the NL Championship Series.

Kershaw shuts out Mets over 7 innings for 200th win

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Clayton Kershaw ended his outing with a fired-up scream and then capped his milestone night with a champagne toast from teammates.

The left-hander delivered a vintage performance for his 200th win, pitching seven splendid innings of three-hit ball as the Los Angeles Dodgers defeated the New York Mets 5-0 on Tuesday.

J.D. Martinez homered twice and drove in four runs, finishing with four hits to help the Dodgers stop New York's five-game winning streak.

Kershaw (3-1) struck out nine to pass Mickey Lolich for 22nd place on the career list with 2,833 strikeouts. The three-time Cy Young Award winner improved to 200-88 in 405 games (402 starts) over 16 major league seasons — the best winning percentage (.694) among the 117 pitchers to win 200 games.

Phillies 7-0, White Sox 4-3: Lucas Giolito and four relievers combined on a one-hitter to give host Chicago a split of its doubleheader with Philadel-

phia.

In the opener, Josh Harrison homered among his three hits and drove in four runs for the Phillies. Bryson Stott began the game with a single, extending his hitting streak to 17 games and surpassing the franchise record of 16 to start a season, set by Puddin' Head Jones in 1950. His streak ended in the nightcap.

Tigers 4-1, Guardians 3-0: Riley Greene hit a sixth-inning homer and Eduardo Rodriguez pitched eight scoreless innings, helping host Detroit sweep a doubleheader from Cleveland.

In the opener, Kerry Carpenter hit game-ending solo homer off James Karinchak (0-3) with two outs in the ninth inning. Alex Lange (1-0) worked a scoreless ninth for the Tigers.

Angels 5, Yankees 2: Shohei Ohtani homered on the 100th anniversary of the original Yankee Stadium, following Babe Ruth's example with a loud two-run drive in the first inning that sent visiting Los Angeles past New York.

Braves 8, Padres 1: Spencer Strider and three relievers

combined on a four-hitter and Matt Olson, Ozzie Albies and Sean Murphy each hit an impressive homer for visiting Atlanta, which beat struggling San Diego.

Rays 10, Reds 0: Taylor Walls homered twice and drove in four runs and rookie right-hander Taj Bradley dazzled in his second start for visiting Tampa Bay.

Orioles 1, Nationals 0: Dean Kremer pitched impressively into the seventh inning and Austin Hays singled home the game's only run in the fourth to lift visiting Baltimore over Washington.

Red Sox 5, Twins 4 (10): Alex Verdugo singled home the winning run with two outs in the 10th inning on a fly ball that barely stayed fair as host Boston beat Minnesota.

Rangers 12, Royals 2: Marcus Semien hit a three-run homer during a five-run sixth inning, Adolis Garcia added another three-run homer in the eighth, and visiting Texas pounced on Kansas City.

Diamondbacks 8, Cardinals 7: Gabriel Moreno hit a three-run homer that capped a six-

run fourth inning for visiting Arizona against St. Louis' Jordan Montgomery.

Blue Jays 4, Astros 2: Matt Chapman homered and doubled, and Chris Bassitt carried a shutout in the seventh inning for visiting Toronto.

Marlins 4, Giants 2: Jazz Chisholm Jr. hit a three-run homer in the fourth inning and host Miami beat San Francisco, which lost starter Alex Wood because of a left hamstring strain in the third.

Cubs 4, Athletics 0: Cody Bellinger hit an RBI single to break a scoreless tie and ignite a four-run outburst in the eighth inning, and visiting Chicago handed Oakland its sixth straight loss.

Pirates 5, Rockies 3: Jack Suwinski homered twice and drove in three runs, Vince Velasquez recovered from a rough start to pitch six solid innings and visiting Pittsburgh sent Colorado to its season-high seventh consecutive loss.

Brewers 6, Mariners 5 (11): Willy Adames drove in the go-ahead run in the 11th inning and visiting Milwaukee defeated Seattle.

Booker scores 38, Suns even series

Associated Press

PHOENIX — Kevin Durant is the shiny new toy for the Phoenix Suns. Devin Booker is still the team's heart and soul.

Booker — the three-time All-Star who has spent all eight of his NBA seasons in Phoenix — scored 38 points, Durant added 25 and the Suns beat the Los Angeles Clippers 123-109 on Tuesday night in Game 2 to tie the Western Conference first-round series.

"He's an all-around player," Durant said about Booker. "He can do everything at an elite level on a basketball court."

The Suns needed a gritty effort after a disappointing loss in Game 1. Their shots weren't falling for much of the first half and they fell into a 13-point hole midway through the second quarter.

But led by Booker, they never panicked.

The 26-year-old drilled a three just before the halftime buzzer to tie it and scored 18 points in the third quarter on 7-for-8 shooting, helping the Suns push to a 92-87 advantage enter-

ing the fourth. The defense also improved after the Clippers got several easy baskets in the second quarter.

"People talk about adjustments all the time and we make them," Suns coach Monty Williams said. "But sometimes basketball is just being able to sit down and guard the ball, keep your man from getting to the basket and contesting the shot."

Phoenix never trailed in the final quarter, slowly pulling away. It was the Suns' first playoff win with Durant on the floor. The team was 8-0 during the regular season with the 13-time All-Star following his trade from the Brooklyn Nets in February.

The series moves to Los Angeles for Game 3 on Thursday night.

Kawhi Leonard led Los Angeles with 31 points after he scored 38 in Game 1. Russell Westbrook added 28 points on 9-for-16 shooting.

"We know it is going to be a tough series," Westbrook said. "They came back and took care of business tonight."

Booker had a stellar shooting night, connecting on 14 of 22 shots, including four of seven on threes. He added nine assists. Deandre Ayton added 14 points — on 7-for-10 shooting — and 13 rebounds.

"We tried to blitz. We tried to fire. We did a lot of different things," Clippers coach Tyronn Lue said. "They played great."

Cavaliers 107, Knicks 90: Darius Garland scored 32 points, 26 while setting an aggressive tone for host Cleveland in the first half, and the Cavaliers beat New York in Game 2 to tie the Eastern Conference playoff series.

Garland scored 15 points in the second quarter, when Cleveland tightened down defensively and dominated New York, forcing nine turnovers on the way to opening a 20-point halftime lead. The Cavs pushed their lead to 29 in the fourth. Cleveland's blowout ended with a hard foul.

New York was still down 23 and playing its starters when Julius Randle was hit in the air by Cavs center Jarrett Allen on

a dunk with 2:22 left. Randle fell hard to the floor, and after getting up, exchanged words with several Cavs players and coach J.B. Bickerstaff.

Caris LeVert scored 24 points off the bench and Donovan Mitchell added 17 and a career playoff-high 13 assists for the Cavs.

Randle scored 22 points and Jalen Brunson added 20 for New York, which got the split it needed in rowdy Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse to head home for Game 3 at Madison Square Garden on Friday night.

Celtics 119, Hawks 106: Jayson Tatum had 29 points and an emphatic dunk to end a clinching late run and host Boston beat Atlanta to take a 2-0 series lead.

Derrick White added 26 points and seven rebounds, and Jaylen Brown scored 18 points. Boston outscored Atlanta 64-40 in the paint.

Dejounte Murray led the Hawks with 29 points, and Trae Young had 24.

Game 3 is Friday night in Atlanta.

Warriors face uphill battle with Green suspended

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Klay Thompson pondered the Golden State Warriors' current playoff situation and expressed some relief. In years past under the old best-of-five format, the defending champions would have been on the brink of elimination trailing 2-0.

Thompson, Stephen Curry and Draymond Green have never been in the hole like this, down by two games — and this is a group that has practically seen it all in the past decade while capturing the franchise's first championship in 40 years with the 2014-15 trophy and three more since, reaching the NBA Finals in five straight sea-

sons from 2015-19.

But the upstart Sacramento Kings, coached by Mike Brown, who helped Golden State accomplish so much as a top assistant, are coming to Chase Center on Thursday night for Game 3 of the first-round series with some serious momentum.

"Luckily, it's first to four. It's not the old format where it's first to three," Thompson said, "that would be not so much fun."

The Warriors had gone 27 consecutive playoff series without falling behind 2-0. Now, this group will need a mighty comeback and will now have to do it without emotional leader Green, who was suspended for one game without pay after he

stepped on Domantas Sabonis during the fourth quarter of Monday night's 114-106 defeat.

The NBA made the announcement late Tuesday of a decision by executive vice president and head of basketball operations Joe Dumars.

"The suspension was based in part on Green's history of unsportsmanlike acts," the release said.

The Kings said Sabonis underwent tests that determined he had a bruised sternum and is questionable for Game 3.

Sabonis was called for a technical foul for grabbing Green's leg and Green received a flagrant-2 foul that led to an automatic ejection and the disci-

pline by the league.

He's hardly the only concern right now.

So far this series, Golden State has misfired from three-point range — a team featuring three shooters with 200 or more three-pointers in Curry, Thompson and Jordan Poole and Thompson with an NBA-best 301 — and has been sloppy taking care of the ball.

"The way our guys fought, they showed what they're made of," coach Steve Kerr said. "So now it's a matter of going home and licking our wounds a little bit. We get a little rest with a couple of days in between games and we go home and take care of our home court."

Kraken stun Avalanche in playoff debut

Associated Press

DENVER — There were of course so many “firsts” for the Seattle Kraken in their postseason debut.

First playoff goal for the franchise (and answer to a future trivia question) — Eeli Tolvanen. First playoff penalty — Will Borgen.

Above all else, first playoff win and brief celebration.

Alex Wennberg had a goal and an assist, Philipp Grubauer stopped 34 shots and the Kraken made a successful postseason debut by beating the defending Stanley Cup champion Colorado Avalanche 3-1 on Tuesday night.

The second-year Kraken became the 13th expansion franchise to earn a win in their first postseason game, according to

NHL Stats.

“Obviously, we played a good game, getting the first franchise win in the playoffs. But right now this is Game 1,” Wennberg said. “Obviously, we are happy about this performance, but we’ve got to do it again and do it again.”

Grubauer was sharp all night against his former team. He frustrated Colorado’s top scorers with one big save after another, while his defense helped neutralize the Avalanche’s blazing speed.

“It’s definitely a weird feeling coming back but also really familiar,” said Grubauer, who spent three seasons with the Avalanche before leaving for Seattle prior to the 2021-22 season. “There’s nothing better than playing against your old

team in the playoffs.”

Nathan MacKinnon didn’t mince words when asked what he saw out of Grubauer.

“Nothing,” the Colorado forward said.

Mikko Rantanen had the lone goal for the Avalanche, who saw their streak of 10 straight first-round wins come to a halt. It was a string that included two sweeps and dated to 2020.

“Our whole team just wasn’t quite good enough,” Avalanche coach Jared Bednar said. “I thought we did some good things. They obviously did more good things.”

Alexandar Georgiev, coming off a career-best 40-win season, made 27 saves.

Game 2 is Thursday in Denver.

The Kraken took a 2-1 lead in-

to the third. They’ve been virtually automatic when leading after two periods, going 35-1-3 in the regular season. Morgan Geekie sealed it with a tally in the third.

Colorado pulled Georgiev for an extra skater with around 1:35 left but couldn’t close the gap.

“Not our best execution tonight, but still had plenty of chances,” MacKinnon said. “Now our focus is to move on.”

Don’t sleep on Seattle. Or perhaps do.

“They can do whatever you want,” Wennberg said of the doubters. “Obviously it comes down to the belief in the group right here. Everyone is going to have an opinion about the way we play now, but the focus is always going to be on us. We have a belief in this group.”

Point has 2 goals, Lightning beat Maple Leafs in Game 1

Associated Press

TORONTO — The Tampa Bay Lightning forgot all about their difficult March and opened their postseason with a rout.

Brayden Point scored twice and the Lightning soundly beat the Toronto Maple Leafs 7-3 on Tuesday night in the opening game of the teams’ first-round playoff series.

Nikita Kucherov and Corey Perry each had a goal and two assists, and Anthony Cirelli and Ross Colton finished with a goal and an assist for Tampa Bay. Pierre-Edouard Bellemare also scored for the Lightning, who scored four goals on the power play.

“We had a tough March, tough end to the season, but it’s about playoffs,” Perry said. “That’s what we were thinking. We were trying to get our game into shape.”

Andrei Vasilevski made 28 saves in his 100th playoff start.

“We have a plan, we stuck to it,” Perry said. “It’s something that works. Everybody’s buying in.”

Ryan O’Reilly, William Nylander and Calle Jarnkrok scored for Toronto. Mitch Marner had three assists and Auston Matthews added a pair.

“It’s a hard one to explain, no doubt,” said Toronto captain John Tavares, who

has gone 0-5 in playoff series since signing in 2018. “We’re disappointed.”

Ilya Samsonov allowed six goals on 29 shots before being replaced by Joseph Woll at the start the third period. The rookie netminder finished with four stops.

“This is just one game for us,” Samsonov said. “We didn’t think this will be an easy series for us.”

Toronto winger Michael Bunting was whistled for a match penalty and game misconduct for an illegal check to the head of Tampa Bay’s Erik Cernak. The hit occurred with 4:20 remaining in the second period. Cernak, who did not have the puck, fell backward to the ice and went to the locker room.

“We were on our heels a bit early on,” said Sheldon Keefe, in his fourth postseason as Maple Leafs head coach.

Game 2 in the best-of-seven series is Thursday night in Toronto.

Rangers 5, Devils 1: Igor Shesterkin stopped 27 shots, Chris Kreider scored two power-play goals and visiting New York stunned New Jersey in Game 1.

Vladimir Tarasenko, Ryan Lindgren and Filip Chytil also scored for the Rangers. Adam Fox had four assists and Artemi Panarin had two in this seventh renewal of this river rivalry in the postseason,

the first since 2012.

The Devils, who set franchise records with 112 points and 52 wins in the regular season and beat New York three times in four games, never got their rush game going. When they did threaten, they either missed the net or Shesterkin denied them.

Their only goal came on a penalty shot by Jack Hughes with 2:46 left to play. Vitek Vanecek had 18 saves.

Game 2 is back in New Jersey on Thursday night.

Jets 5, Golden Knights 1: Adam Lowry scored two goals and Blake Wheeler had a goal and two assists as visiting Winnipeg beat Vegas in Game 1 of their first-round series.

Pierre-Luc Dubois had a goal and an assist, Kyle Connor also scored, and Nino Niederreiter had two assists for the Jets. Connor Hellebuyck made 16 saves on a night in which the Jets’ defense allowed him to have a fairly stress-free game.

William Karlsson scored for the Golden Knights, who suffered their first regulation loss in nine games. It was also the first regulation loss for Vegas goalie Laurent Brossoit, who went 7-0-3 in the regular season. He stopped 26 shots.

Game 2 is Thursday night in Las Vegas.