

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## US: More military transparency needed

Associated Press

QINGDAO, China — The response from Beijing and others to an arbitration panel's ruling invalidating China's vast South China Sea maritime claims has brought no surprises, but much more military transparency is needed to reduce tensions in the region, the commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet said Tuesday.

Adm. Scott Swift also criticized China-Russia joint naval exercises planned next month in the South China Sea, saying the choice of location was not conducive to "increasing the stability within the region." He also said any decision by China to declare an air defense identification zone over the strategic water body would be "very destabilizing from a military perspective."

Swift was visiting the northern Chinese port of Qingdao

as part of efforts to build trust and understanding between the navies, now locked in a protracted competition for primacy in East Asia, where the U.S. has traditionally been the dominant power.

Attention has been fixed on the South China Sea since the July 12 ruling by The Hague-based Permanent Court of Arbitration in a case brought by the Philippines. China refused to participate in the case or recognize the ruling, and strongly criticized the U.S. for encouraging its ally to pursue the matter.

Since then, Beijing has launched air patrols over the South China Sea, said it would consider declaring an air defense zone and vowed to continue work on man-made islands created from piling sand atop coral reefs in the highly contested Spratly group.

New satellite photos show work proceeding on what seem to be two-dozen hardened concrete airplane hangars on the islands suitable for housing Chinese air force planes, including strategic bombers and inflight refuelers.

The photos were collected and studied by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington-based think tank, and reported in The New York Times. They show construction work on man-made islands at Fiery Cross, Subi and Mischief reefs.

China has said the new islands are primarily to assist fishermen and other causes, as well as to reinforce its sovereignty claims. China also says that the islands should be able to defend themselves, and that it is entitled to build whatever

structures it wishes on them.

Meanwhile, Japan protested Tuesday over a marked increase in the number of Chinese coast guard and fishing vessels in waters near disputed islands in the East China Sea.

Swift said the responses of all parties to the arbitration ruling had been consistent with their long-held positions and it was unclear what, if any, recent Chinese actions had been taken specifically in response.

"I think it's a mistake to take them individually and not look at them as a collective. And you have to look at it as an extension of an arc," Swift said.

Such judgments were made more difficult by a lack of transparency about intentions, he said, repeating a frequent U.S. criticism of China's secretive military.

## DOD: Militants down to 350 fighters in Sirte

By TARA COPP  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Only about 350 Islamic State fighters remain in the all-but-abandoned Libyan coastal city of Sirte as the United States finished its eighth day of airstrikes there, U.S. defense officials said Tuesday.

The United States, as part of Operation Odyssey Dawn, began targeting Islamic State vehicles and fighting positions Aug. 1. Since then, unmanned aircraft launching from undisclosed locations and Marine AV-8B Harrier jets taking off from the nearby USS Wasp, an amphibious assault warship, have conducted 28 strikes against the terrorist group, according to U.S. Africa Com-

mand and defense officials who spoke on the condition of not being named.

More than half of the strikes have been conducted from unmanned aircraft, one of the defense officials said.

Sirte, once a city of 80,000 people, has about 1,000 residents remaining, the defense official said. Islamic State militants there totaled up to 1,000 fighters at one time. But their numbers have dwindled as well and many of them have moved outside Sirte to the south or blended back into the civilian population, the official said.

Since the airstrikes began last week, U.S. and Libyan forces have worked together to identify targets and allow pro-government forces to retake parts of southeast Sirte.

"A small number of U.S. forces have gone in and out of Libya to exchange information with local forces, and they will continue to do so as we strengthen the fight against [the Islamic State group] and other terrorist organizations. These personnel will not be engaged in fighting [the Islamic State group]," said Henrietta Levin, a defense spokesperson.

With the support of the airstrikes, Libyan forces have been able to retake most of the al-Dollar district in Sirte, near the same conference center where the final surrender of forces loyal to Moammar Gadhafi took place in fall 2011.

Civil war has raged in Libya since that time. In 2015, Islamic State fighters took control of Sirte.

## Oklahoma's chief of the boat is relieved

The USS Oklahoma City's chief of the boat was relieved of duty late last month — the second time this year the vessel has lost a superior.

Master Chief Machinist's Mate Joseph H. Decker III was removed from his position on the Guam-based Los Angeles-class submarine on July 27 because of a "pattern of ineffective leadership," a Navy statement said.

Decker, who had served on the fast-attack submarine since April of last year, has been temporarily reassigned to Submarine Squadron 15 at Polaris Point, Naval Base Guam. He will be replaced by Senior Chief Fire Control Technician Brandon Kyle Edmiston.

From staff reports

# Trump promises to 'jump-start' America

Associated Press

DETROIT — Promising to “jump-start America” to a new era of prosperity, Donald Trump announced a revamped economic plan Monday aimed at revitalizing a stagnant U.S. economy by cutting taxes for workers and businesses.

He assailed Hillary Clinton as a candidate who would merely extend a Democratic period of old ideas and weakness.

Trying to move past recent stumbles, Trump proposed a simplified three-bracket income tax system that hewed closely to what House Republicans have recommended, the latest indication the GOP presidential nominee is working to put infighting

with his party's leaders behind him.

In a shift from the plan he proposed during the primary season, he increased the tax rate that the highest-earning Americans would pay.

With few exceptions, Trump provided more of a philosophical basis for an economic plan than a series of specifics.

He did spell out proposed tax brackets and called for greater child care deductions for families.

As he called for urgent change away from Democratic policies, he envisioned a nation refocused on manufacturing at home and wary of trade deals abroad — a country bearing little resem-

blance to the globally focused economy of recent years.

“Americanism, not globalism, will be our new credo,” he said in his address at the Detroit Economic Club. “Our country will reach amazing new heights — maybe heights never attained before.”

Delivering his speech from a teleprompter, Trump was interrupted repeatedly by protesters who stood on chairs and shouted at him before being pulled out of the room by security guards. He did not react harshly as he often has in the past, either quietly thanking the guards or simply powering ahead in his speech.

Only days ago, Trump triggered panic within the GOP

when he declined to endorse House Speaker Paul Ryan's reelection or that of other leading Republicans.

He sought to put the dust-up to bed Friday by finally backing those candidates while also trying to move past other controversies, like his verbal attacks on a Muslim-American family whose son died fighting in Iraq.

Republicans inside and outside of Trump's campaign have implored him to shift the conversation back to Clinton's perceived shortcomings.

On Monday, he obliged, accusing her of jilting American workers and coming up short on promises to constituents.

## Candidate seeks to quell GOP pushback

Associated Press

WILMINGTON, N.C. — Donald Trump is seeking to quell concerns he lacks the discipline or policy know-how to make a competent president, even as the list of fellow Republicans deeming him unfit for the Oval Office grows.

Maine Sen. Susan Collins, a moderate long wary of Trump, became the latest Republican to announce her intent not to vote for her party's nominee. Days after rebuking Trump for insinuating Somali refugees in Maine were dangerous, Collins said late Monday she'd thought “long and hard” about whether she was obligated to support the GOP nominee and decided she could not.

“With the passage of time, I have become increasingly dismayed by his constant stream of cruel comments and his inability to admit error or apologize,” Collins wrote in a Washington Post op-ed.

Collins wrote that she supports neither party's nominee, although previously she's said

she's open to voting for Hillary Clinton.

The defection of a respected senator added to a chorus of GOP voices insisting they can't back Trump.

Some 50 Republican former national security officials signed an open letter calling Trump the most reckless candidate in history, prompting a counterattack from Trump, who said the signers share blame with Clinton for making the world “a mess” and fueling the Islamic State group's formation.

The renewed focus on GOP discord was not the theme Trump hoped to emphasize, especially as fresh polls appear to show Clinton widening her lead. But Trump suggested Tuesday there would be no dramatic change of strategy to regain control of the race.

“I think it's just, you know, steadiness,” Trump told Fox Business. “And it's just doing what I'm doing.”

## Pulse shooter's father sits behind Clinton at rally

The Washington Post

Seddiq Mateen, the father of the suspect in the June mass shooting at an Orlando nightclub, secured a prime seat at a rally for Hillary Clinton on Monday outside the Florida city.

For 25 minutes, Mateen sat right behind the Democratic nominee for president as she remembered the victims of the Pulse nightclub shooting and laid out her policies.

Mateen's presence was first noted by WPTV reporter Tory Dunnan, who was initially rebuffed for an interview but then was surprised to find Mateen holding a pro-Clinton sign and asking to talk to the press.

“Clinton is good for the United States, versus Donald Trump,” Mateen said in broken English. “I was invited by the Democratic Party; I'm a member.” Asked about his son, Omar Mateen, who killed 49 people in one of the biggest massacres in American history, Mateen said he wished “that my son joined the army and fought ISIS,” or the Islamic State group, instead.

Clinton's campaign was ap-

parently unaware of Mateen's presence at the rally, much less the 25 minutes he spent sharing a frame with the nominee.

“The rally was a 3,000-person, open-door event for the public,” a Clinton campaign official said. “This individual wasn't invited as a guest, and the campaign was unaware of his attendance until after the event.”

Mateen has spent years, and some of his own money, attempting to become better known. He paid to air a news and commentary show in Afghanistan, where he declared a fringe campaign for president and offered support for the Taliban.

After WPTV broke the news of Mateen's rally attendance, several conservative pundits urged Republican nominee Donald Trump to make it an issue in the campaign.

“Donald Trump might be the luckiest son-of-a-gun to ever run for president,” wrote the National Review's Jim Geraghty. “If he can't make some noise over this and make up five points quick, he should just close up shop and let Pence-Cruz handle it from here.”



# Giants' Crawford gets 7 hits

Associated Press

MIAMI — Brandon Crawford was a big hit Monday night. Seven of them, to be exact.

Crawford became the first major leaguer in 41 years to get seven hits in a game, finally putting the San Francisco Giants ahead to stay with an RBI single in the 14th inning of an 8-7 victory over the Miami Marlins.

"A great performance," said Giants bench coach Ron Wotus, who filled in as manager after Bruce Bochy was hospitalized with an illness.

"Bochy picked a heck of a day to take off."

The previous player to get seven hits in a game was Pittsburgh Pirates infielder Rennie Stennett on Sept. 16, 1975, at the Chicago Cubs. He did it in nine innings, the only big leaguer to accomplish that feat since after 1900.

"It doesn't happen very often that you get eight at-bats in a game so I figured it didn't happen a whole lot, but you don't think about stuff like that when you're playing," Crawford said.

The San Francisco shortstop, who entered in a 6-for-36 slide, raised his batting average 13 points to .278. He tripled, doubled and had five singles in eight at-bats, tying the NL record for hits in a game.

"I got a couple to drop in and squeak past and then I hit a few balls hard, too, that found holes," Crawford said. "I felt good."

The seven hits set a franchise mark.

"It's crazy to me," Crawford said. "The history of the Giants with all of the great players that have come through, you would think that somebody pushed across seven hits in one day, but it's pretty crazy to be in pretty small company."

Crawford's hits came off six

different pitchers.

"What do you have to do to get that guy out? I don't know," Marlins manager Don Mattingly said. "We didn't figure it out today. He's a tough out right now and obviously, when you're getting seven hits, you're feeling pretty good about yourself. So I'm sure this whole series, it's not going to be fun trying to get him out."

The only major league player besides Stennett to get seven hits in a nine-inning game was Wilbert Robinson for the old Baltimore Orioles of the National League in 1892.

The game took 5 hours, 34 minutes — the longest of the season for both teams.

"Exhausting," Crawford said. "I'm tired right now."

**Mariners 3, Tigers 0:** Hisashi Iwakuma threw seven shutout innings for his seventh win in his last eight starts, Mike Zunino and Kyle Seager both had RBI singles off Michael Fulmer in the second inning and host Seattle beat Detroit.

**Blue Jays 7, Rays 5:** Devon Travis had a career-high four hits, including the go-ahead single in the seventh inning, and host Toronto beat Tampa Bay.

Edwin Encarnacion hit his 299th career home run as the Blue Jays snapped a three-game losing streak against the Rays.

**Dodgers 9, Phillies 4:** Corey Seager homered twice and Chase Utley and Yasmani Grandal also went deep for host Los Angeles.

Seager has 21 homers, breaking Hanley Ramirez's record for homers by a Dodgers shortstop. He's also the eighth L.A. rookie with 20 or more homers in a season.

**Athletics 3, Orioles 2:** Kendall Graveman pitched seven strong innings, Billy Butler hit

a tiebreaking single in the sixth and host Oakland beat Baltimore despite another home run from slugger Manny Machado.

Machado, who hit home runs in his first three at-bats Sunday, belted his 26th home run of the season with two outs in the eighth.

**Twins 3, Astros 1:** Tyler Duffey pitched six effective innings and host Minnesota took advantage of two misplays by Houston center fielder Carlos Gomez in a three-run fifth.

Gomez, the former Twins outfielder, let Jorge Polanco's single skip by him for a two-base error that allowed one run to score. Then he lost a fly ball off Juan Centeno's bat, turning it into an RBI triple.

**Rangers 4, Rockies 3:** Elvis Andrus hit a two-run single, Mitch Moreland delivered a tiebreaking double and Texas scored three times in the ninth inning to beat host Colorado.

The AL West leader had a double steal before Andrus' single tied it 3-all. Moreland sent Andrus home with a double before he was thrown out stretching at third.

Carlos Estevez (2-7) got his fifth blown save in the ninth.

**Cardinals 5, Reds 4:** Yadier Molina started and ended a five-run rally in the ninth inning as host St. Louis stunned Cincinnati.

Molina singled to open the inning and was hit by a pitch from Ross Ohlendorf with the bases loaded to drive home the winning run.

**Braves 4, Brewers 3 (12):** Matt Kemp scored from third base after Keon Broxton dropped Gordon Beckham's sacrifice fly in the 12th inning, and Atlanta beat host Milwaukee.

With the bases loaded and nobody out, Broxton dropped a drive to deep center field for an error.

# Bosa last draft pick unsigned

Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The San Diego Chargers had their seventh training camp practice on Monday and once again it didn't include Joey Bosa.

Bosa, the third overall pick, remains in a contract dispute with the Chargers.

"I'm worried about the guys that are here," coach Mike McCoy said.

It's believed the sticking points between the parties is when Bosa's \$17 million bonus is distributed and offset language in case he signed another contract if released by the Chargers.

The former Ohio State star is the only unsigned player from this year's draft.

Chargers general manager Tom Telesco wasn't available for comment, according to a team spokesman.

Todd France, one of Bosa's representatives at CAA Sports, didn't return a message.

McCoy said, in general terms, players skipping camp can fall behind.

"Any time you don't practice and you're not in meetings ... it comes down to playing with one another and becoming a team," he said. "If you are new in a system it is more important to be here."

"You got to get in football shape. The offseason in shorts and T-shirts? That's not football. You got to get your pads on. You got to work the bumps and bruises out."

The Chargers open the pre-season against the Tennessee Titans on Saturday. Bosa, a pass-rushing defensive end, is unlikely to play.



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# American King takes gold in breaststroke

BY PAUL NEWBERRY  
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO — This one will surely be seen as a victory for clean athletes over the dopers.

No doubt, that was Lilly King's take.

The feisty American stared down Yulia Efimova, a swimmer at the center of Russia's doping scandal, and then beat her in the pool Monday night.

King could hardly contain her satisfaction at capturing gold in the 100-meter breaststroke — especially given who was in the next lane.

"It just proves you can compete clean and still come out on top with all the hard work you put in behind the scenes, behind the meet, at practice and weight sessions," the 19-year-old Indiana University student said giddily. "There is a way to become the best and do it the right way."

Efimova arrived in Rio as one of the symbols of the massive Russian doping operation, an athlete who had already served a 16-month suspension and tested positive again this year for the now-banned substance meldonium.

Efimova was initially banned from the Olympics, but that decision was overturned on

appeal. King took umbrage at Efimova's No. 1 finger wag during the semifinals, and the bad blood carried over to the final.

After glaring at Efimova in the ready room and giving her a look of disdain on deck, King led all the way to take the gold in 1 minute, 4.93 seconds. Efimova settled for the silver, more than a half-second behind. The bronze went to another American, Katie Meili.

Efimova was booed by many in the crowd when introduced before the race, though a smattering of Russian fans cheered her on.

"I really don't know how I even reached the final," Efimova said, her face red from crying. "It would have really been the end of a fairytale, a horrible dream, if I'd won gold. But that was all I could do right now."

Efimova said she's been treated unfairly, having already served a penalty for a doping violation that occurred while she was training in Los Angeles with one of America's most prominent coaches, Dave Salo. As for the second positive test, any possible sanctions were put on hold while the World Anti-Doping Agency does more research on meldonium, which was only put on the banned list at the beginning of the year.

"Athletes used to be outside

politics," Efimova said. "It's really painful for me that a lot of athletes don't understand that and just watch the TV and accept everything that's said there." She called on them "to swap places with me and understand how I feel."

King's victory highlighted another big night for the Americans, who also extended their domination in the men's 100 backstroke with Ryan Murphy's victory and wound up with six medals in all.

Murphy was fourth at the turn, but rallied on the return lap to give the Americans their sixth straight gold medal in the 100 back. Their last loss came at the 1992 Barcelona Games.

For good measure, David Plummer — a 30-year-old Olympic rookie — claimed the bronze.

Hungary's Katinka Hosszu became the first two-time gold medalist at the Olympic Aquatics Stadium, adding the women's 100 backstroke title to her world-record victory in the 400 individual medley.

Hosszu, known as the Iron Lady for her grueling schedule, propped herself on the lane rope and made a heart sign in the direction of her coach and husband, Shane Tusup.

The silver went to American Kathleen Baker.

"I knew that I could win," Hosszu said. "But I was so tired that I told the Hungarians before the race that I could get anything from first place to eighth place."

In another result sure to stir the doping debate, China's Sun Yang captured gold in the men's 200 free. Two years ago, he served a three-month suspension for taking a banned stimulant.

Yang rallied from his customarily slow start to pass South Africa's Chad le Clos, who went out fast and tried to hang on.

It nearly worked.

Yang surged to the front on the final lap, but Le Clos still managed to grab the silver. Conor Dwyer took the bronze, adding to the U.S. medal haul.

Even on a red, white and blue night at the pool, Missy Franklin endured another stunning disappointment. The darling of the London Games failed to qualify for the final of the 200 freestyle, extending a mystifying loss of form since turning pro last summer.

Franklin finished last in her semifinal heat with only the 13th-fastest time among 16 swimmers. She actually went slower than she did during the afternoon preliminaries.

## US men's gymnastics team finishes in fifth place

Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO — It was 2012 all over again for the Americans on Monday in the Rio Games.

Just as in London, they followed a great performance in the preliminaries of the team competition with a terrible start to the finals and finished fifth.

"In a lot of ways, these guys performed better than I feel we did in London," coach Mark Williams said. "We fought through everything and there's no giving up. Gymnastics is hard and there are a lot of good

teams out there on the men's side."

Four years ago things went wrong when they started on the pommel horse and two of them fell. On Monday it was the floor exercise that put the team in a big hole early with both Alex Naddour and Sam Mikulak stepping out of bounds during their routines.

"It's obviously tough whenever you start from behind, but that's kind of the Team USA motto to never give up, never quit, fight until the end," Chris Brooks said. "So we just tried to rally together and get the ball rolling."

They were able to do that, turning in solid performances on the rings, vault and parallel bars to put them within striking distance of a medal. Only the horizontal bar was left and Danell Leyva knew he had to be aggressive to give the team a chance.

Instead of sticking his routine, he missed a connection, leaving the Americans in fifth place once more.

"We started it off a little rough but we were picking it up toward the end," Leyva said. "I was the one who messed it up at the end. I just slipped on the bar. I really tried grabbing

on and holding on as much as I could but my grip was off, like it was not on the bar, and that's why it slipped off."

It was a day that illustrated the rapidly increasing gap between the U.S. men's and women's teams. While the women are overwhelming favorites to win their second straight team gold, the men have slipped to the middle of the pack after winning team medals in 2004 and 2008. Williams watched the American women dominate the field in qualifying on Sunday night and hoped it would give his group a boost.