

Trump charged in Ga. election probe

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Donald Trump and 18 allies were indicted in Georgia on Monday over their efforts to overturn his 2020 election loss in the state, with prosecutors using a statute normally associated with mobsters to accuse the former president, lawyers and other aides of a “criminal enterprise” to keep him in power.

The nearly 100-page indictment details dozens of acts by Trump or his allies to undo his defeat, including beseeching Georgia’s Republican secretary of state to find enough votes for him to win the battleground state; harassing an election worker who faced false claims of fraud; and attempting to persuade Georgia lawmakers to ignore the will of voters and appoint a new slate of Electoral College electors favorable to Trump.

In one particularly brazen episode,

it also outlines a plot involving one of his lawyers to access voting machines in a rural Georgia county and steal data from a voting machine company.

“The indictment alleges that rather than abide by Georgia’s legal process for election challenges, the defendants engaged in a criminal racketeering enterprise to overturn Georgia’s presidential election result,” Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis, whose office brought the case, said at a late-night news conference.

Other defendants include former White House chief of staff Mark Meadows; Trump attorney and former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani; and a Trump administration Justice Department official, Jeffrey Clark, who aided the then-president’s efforts to undo his election loss in Georgia. Other lawyers who advanced legally dubious

ideas to overturn the results, including John Eastman, Sidney Powell and Kenneth Chesebro, were also charged.

Willis said the defendants would be permitted to voluntarily surrender by noon Aug. 25. She also said she plans to seek a trial date within six months and that she intends to try the defendants collectively.

The indictment bookends a remarkable crush of criminal cases — four in five months, each in a different city — that would be daunting for anyone, never mind someone like Trump who is simultaneously balancing the roles of criminal defendant and presidential candidate.

It comes just two weeks after the Justice Department special counsel charged him in a vast conspiracy to overturn the election, underscoring how prosecutors after lengthy investigations that followed the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol have now,

two-and-a-half years later, taken steps to hold Trump to account for an assault on the underpinnings of American democracy.

The Georgia case covers some of the same ground as Trump’s recent indictment in Washington, including attempts he and his allies made to disrupt the electoral vote count at the Capitol. But in its sprawling web of defendants — 19 in total — the indictment stands apart from the more tightly targeted case brought by special counsel Jack Smith, which so far only names Trump as a defendant.

In charging close Trump aides who were referenced by Smith only as unindicted co-conspirators, the Georgia indictment alleges a scale of criminal conduct extending far beyond just the ex-president.

Trump and his allies have characterized the investigation as politically motivated.

Female admiral is now filling in as Navy’s top officer

By ALISON BATH
Stars and Stripes

Adm. Lisa Franchetti assumed responsibilities of the Navy’s top officer this week, giving the service a stopgap while her appointment and hundreds of other military promotions languish in a political feud over abortion.

Franchetti became interim chief of naval operations as Adm. Michael Gilday departed the role in a ceremony Monday. She will provisionally remain in the position until someone can be formally appointed, the Navy said in a statement the same day.

“The work of our Navy contin-

ues undisrupted and unabated,” Franchetti said in a message to the fleet Monday. “We continue to operate our ships, submarines and aircraft at the point of friction with our competitors and at the point of friendship with our allies and partners.”

In July, President Joe Biden nominated Franchetti to be the 33rd chief of naval operations and the first woman to lead the service.

But hundreds of promotions across the military are being stalled by Sen. Tommy Tuberville, R-Ala., who opposes Pentagon policies that grant service members leave for abortion and pay their travel costs associated

with the procedure.

As a result, three branches of the military are without a Senate-confirmed leader for the first time in the Defense Department’s history, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said at Monday’s ceremony at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md.

“This is unprecedented. It is unnecessary. And it is unsafe,” Austin said.

He added that the Senate’s inability to confirm the promotions of Franchetti and other military officers was undermining preparedness and hurting the services’ ability to keep good leaders.

It is also unfair to service members and their families, Austin said.

The chief of naval operations is a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and advises the president, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council and the secretary of defense. The role also includes command of naval forces and shore activities.

Franchetti is the appointed vice chief of naval operations and is therefore required by federal law to serve in the chief’s role when the position is vacated or the Navy’s top officer is absent or disabled, the service said.

Troops search, secure fire-gutted Maui town

By JOSEPH DITZLER
Stars and Stripes

National Guard and active-duty troops are providing security and searching for remains at Lahaina, the historic town on the Hawaiian island of Maui nearly destroyed by wildfire a week ago, according to Hawaii Guard Brig. Gen. Stephen Logan.

Gen. Charles Flynn, commander of U.S. Army Pacific, is expected to visit the affected area on Tuesday with Hawaii's adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Kenneth Hara, Logan said.

"Gen. Flynn's visit is to see firsthand the damage and what may be needed that he can leverage as support," Jeff Hickman, spokesman for the Hawaii Department of Defense, said by email Tuesday.

The death toll from the wildfire that gutted the town Aug. 8 reached 99 on Monday, Hawaii Gov. Josh Green told reporters at a news conference Monday on Maui.

That toll is expected to climb as further remains are recovered, Hawaii authorities said.

"The search goes on," Green said.

Flynn's command coordinates all federal defense support to civil authorities across the Pacific in the event of a disaster,

U.S. Army Pacific spokesman Jonathan Riley said by email Tuesday.

Logan, commander of Joint Task Force 50, at the same news conference said 254 people from the U.S. Army, and Air and Army National Guard are on duty at Lahaina. Logan has "dual status" authority over active and Guard troops in the zone.

"Many of them are involved in the security operations in support of the chief of police," Logan said. "Most of that is at a shelter center or the impact zone of Lahaina to help the recovery through this phase."

Another 47 troops are "fatality search-and-recovery experts," doing "hard, emotional-type work," Logan said.

They are working with Maui first responders and with dog teams from the FBI and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Hickman said.

Federal agencies brought 90 personnel and 20 cadaver dogs to search the burned-over zone, Maui Mayor Richard Bissen told reporters.

Hickman said 42 guard members are patrolling outside the impact zone with the Maui Police Department. Another 62 are working with Maui police on traffic control.

US and Japan working on hypersonic missile defense

By SETH ROBSON
AND HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — The U.S. and Japan already have a high-flying interceptor they can improve to shoot down advanced weapons like hypersonic missiles, according to a missile-defense advocate.

The Pacific allies are working on an agreement to jointly develop a new kind of missile interceptor to defend against hypersonic weapons, Japan's national broadcaster NHK reported Sunday.

President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio may agree on a missile defense plan during Kishida's visit to the U.S. that begins on Thursday, The Associated Press reported Tuesday.

Cooperation on hypersonic missile defense is a natural progression for the two allies, Riki Ellison, chairman of the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance, based in Virginia, said by email Monday.

The alliance lobbies for missile defense, deployment and development.

"Japan already builds the SM3 Block IIA (missile) with the United States in partnership and the defense against hypersonic glide will be launched off the SM3 Block IIA stages," he said.

The U.S. and Japan jointly developed SM-3 Block IIA guided missiles between 2006 and 2017, a spokesperson for Japan's Ministry of Defense said in an email to Stars and Stripes on Monday.

The SM-3 is the next generation of the Aegis Weapon System and intercepts ballistic missiles midway in their flight path, according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "SM-3s are unique due to being the only Standard Missile designed to operate in the vacuum of space," according to the center in Washington, D.C.

"In the U.S.-Japan 2-plus-2 meeting held in January of this year, we agreed to start discussions on the possibility of joint development of interceptors in the future in order to counter hypersonic technology and we are currently discussing the specifics," the ministry spokesperson said.

China and Russia have already fielded hypersonic missiles. Russian forces have used them in battle during its war in Ukraine, the Pentagon has said.

Some Japanese government officials are required to speak to the press only on condition of anonymity.

"In any case, we will continue to consider the issue so that we can come to a conclusion as soon as possible," the official wrote.

US: 4 Russian military aircraft seen flying near Alaska

By MATTHEW ADAMS
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Russian military aircraft were spotted near Alaska late Sunday and early Monday morning, U.S. officials said.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD, said Monday that it detected and tracked four Russian military aircraft near Alaska.

The Russian aircraft remained in international space and did not enter U.S. or Canadian territory. The aircraft did enter the Alaska Air Defense Identification Zone, a stretch of mostly international airspace some 200 nautical miles off the

Alaskan coast.

"This Russian activity in the Alaska ADIZ occurs regularly and is not seen as a threat," the agency said in a statement.

Monday's detection was at least the fifth one in 2023. The first incidents happened on consecutive days in February. Military officials at the time said

the Russian planes were in no way related to incidents in which U.S. fighter jets shot down a Chinese surveillance balloon or multiple unidentified objects over U.S. and Canada.

Two more incidents occurred several days in May as large-scale military exercises took place in and around Alaska.

Russia unleashes missile barrage on Ukraine

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — Russian forces unleashed a barrage of missiles on regions across Ukraine in the early hours of Tuesday morning, killing civilians and damaging civilian infrastructure.

The barrage came just hours before top Russian military officials and their counterparts from Asia, the Middle East and Africa gathered outside Moscow for a security conference, where the fighting in Ukraine is likely to dominate the agenda. Moscow's war in Ukraine is nearing the 18-month mark.

The Ukrainian Air Force said Russia fired a total of 28 cruise missiles at the country. Sixteen of them were intercepted, the statement said.

"Deliberate large-scale attacks on civilians. Solely for the sake of killing and psychological pressure," presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak said on X, formerly known as Twitter. Podolyak added that the barrage

was "an undeniable manifestation" of Russia's "terrorist activity, legally documented by numerous destructions and victims."

Six out of seven Russian-launched missiles hit the western region of Lviv, wounding 15 people, Lviv Gov. Maksym Kozyskyi reported. Forty buildings and houses were damaged in the region that borders Poland, including in the city of Lviv, and the power grid was also damaged.

In the neighboring region of Volyn, three people were killed by a Russian missile strike and three others were injured, according to Oleksii Kuleba, deputy head of Ukraine's presidential office. In the southeastern Dnipropetrovsk region, two people were injured in the region's capital. In the nearby Ivano-Frankivsk region, missile debris hit a private house.

Parts of the city of Smila in the central Cherkasy region were left without access to water after the Russian strikes. The attack dam-

aged a medical facility, as well as water and heat supply networks.

In one of the villages of the front-line Zaporizhzhia region, a missile struck a stadium at a school, damaging the facility's building as well as residential houses and a kindergarten. Russian forces also hit a grocery warehouse in Kramatorsk, a city in the front-line Donetsk region in the east, killing one person and wounding another.

The countrywide barrage came a day after Russian forces unleashed a wave of missile and drone strikes on the non-frontline region, Odesa, in the country's southwest region.

The Kremlin's forces have recently pummeled Odesa, hitting facilities that transport Ukraine's crucial grain exports and also wrecking cherished Ukrainian historical sites. The repeated attacks on Odesa follow Moscow's decision to break off a landmark agreement that had allowed grain to flow from Ukraine to countries in Africa, the Middle

East and Asia and help reduce the threat of hunger.

In Russia on Tuesday, top Russian military officials and their counterparts from Belarus, China, India, Middle Eastern and African nations gathered outside Moscow for a security conference.

Addressing the conference in a pre-recorded video statement, Russian President Vladimir Putin has once again accused the West of fueling the conflict "by pumping billions of dollars" into Kyiv and "supplying it with equipment, weapons, ammunition, sending their military advisers and mercenaries."

"Everything is being done to ignite the conflict even more, to draw other states into it," Putin said.

Russia's Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu sought to downplay the significance of the western support for Ukraine, saying in turn that despite all that support, Kyiv's forces "fail to achieve results on the battlefield."

Russian interest rate hike tries to prop up ruble

Associated Press

TALLINN, Estonia — Russia's central bank made a big interest rate hike Tuesday, an emergency move designed to fight inflation and strengthen the ruble after the country's currency reached its lowest value since early in the war with Ukraine.

The ruble has lost more than a third of its value since the beginning of the year as Moscow increases military spending and Western sanctions weigh on its income from energy shipments.

The flagging currency does not mean the Russian economy is in freefall — though it is facing challenges, including rising prices for households and businesses, according to analysts who study Russia.

A lower exchange rate allows Moscow to transfer the dollars it earns from selling oil and natural gas into more rubles to pay pensions and run government agencies. But the drop in value went a bit too far, and officials are now tightening it up, analysts say.

While sanctions will erode long-term economic growth over time, the recently weaker

ruble "does not imply an underlying economic crisis, it doesn't suggest Russia is about to fall off a cliff," said Chris Weafer, CEO of Macro-Advisory Partners.

The central bank hiked its key rate 3.5 percentage points to 12% after announcing a meeting of its board of directors a day earlier as the ruble declined.

The Russian currency passed 101 rubles to the dollar Monday, hitting the lowest level in almost 17 months. The ruble strengthened after the rate hike announcement but has since given up some of those gains to hit about 98 to the dollar.

The central bank said demand for goods has exceeded the country's ability to expand output, increasing inflation and affecting "the ruble's exchange rate dynamics through elevated demand for imports."

Until now, the ruble's decline suited the government because it increased the amount of rubles for each dollar of oil revenue, helping the Kremlin maintain spending on the military and social programs, Weafer said.

The government and the central bank have

been able to manage the ruble's decline by telling energy exporters when to exchange their dollar earnings. "It is an entirely managed currency," Weafer said.

That intentional devaluation now "appears to be overdone. I think this is now the message from the central bank — the weakness was planned, but it's overdone and they want to pull it back," he said.

Sergei Guriev, provost and professor of economics at the Sciences Po institute of political studies in Paris, also said "there is no disaster" despite Russia's economy having "big problems" — such as the decrease in oil and gas revenue, capital fleeing the country, a budget deficit and the weaker ruble.

A weaker ruble benefits the government but also means "higher costs for households and for certain parts of the Russian war machine," Guriev said.

"If you need to buy (weapon) components in Iran or circumvent sanctions through third countries, you need foreign currency," Guriev said. "That's why you have the budget deficit."

Mother of boy who shot teacher pleads guilty

Associated Press

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. — The mother of a 6-year-old boy who shot his teacher in Virginia pleaded guilty Tuesday to a charge of felony child neglect, seven months after her son used her handgun to critically wound the educator in a classroom full of students.

Prosecutors agreed to drop a misdemeanor charge of reckless storage of a firearm against Deja Taylor. As part of the plea agreement, prosecutors said they will not seek a sentence that is longer than state sentencing guidelines, which call for six months in jail or prison. A judge will have full discretion and will ultimately decide the length of Taylor's sentence. A sentencing hearing is scheduled for Oct. 27.

Taylor was charged in April with felony child neglect and a misdemeanor count of recklessly

storing of a firearm.

The January shooting shocked the nation and roiled this ship-building city near the Chesapeake Bay. The case against Taylor is one of three legal efforts seeking accountability, including the teacher's \$40 million lawsuit that accuses the school system of gross negligence. Police said the first-grader intentionally shot teacher Abby Zwerner as she sat at a reading table during a lesson. Zwerner, who was hit in the hand and chest, spent nearly two weeks in the hospital and has endured multiple surgeries.

Moments after the shooting, according to search warrants filed in the case, the child told a reading specialist who restrained him: "I shot that (expletive) dead," and "I got my mom's gun last night."

Police said the student brought the gun to school in his backpack, but it had been unclear exactly

how the 6-year-old got the gun.

During Taylor's plea hearing Tuesday, a prosecutor said the boy told authorities he got the gun by climbing onto a drawer to reach the top of a dresser, where the gun was stored in his mother's purse. Those details were contained in a "stipulation of facts," a list of facts that both sides agree are true.

When police arrived at the school that day, they entered the classroom and saw the boy being restrained by the reading specialist, according to the stipulation of facts document read aloud by the prosecutor.

The boy used a profanity and said "I shot my teacher," before breaking free and punching the reading specialist in the face, the document states.

The gun was on the floor nearby. "My mom had that. ... I stole it because I needed to shoot my

teacher," the boy said, according to the document.

The document said the boy had been diagnosed with a defiance disorder. He had previously taken his mother's car keys from her purse, which prompted her to put her keys in a lock box. But she continued to keep her gun in her purse, the document states.

Taylor told police she believed the gun was in her purse, secured with a trigger lock, according to search warrants. She said she kept the gunlock key under her bedroom mattress. But agents with Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives said they never found a trigger lock after conducting searches, according to federal court documents.

Taylor did not speak during the plea hearing except to answer questions from the judge about whether she understood the proceeding.

Woman who helped dispose of soldier's body gets 30 years

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas — A Texas woman was sentenced Monday to 30 years in prison for helping dispose of the body of a U.S. soldier, whose 2020 killing sparked a movement of women speaking out about sexual abuse in the military and led to changes in how they can report it.

Cecily Aguilar is the only suspect arrested in the death of Vanessa Guillén, who was killed at Fort Cavazos, formerly known as Fort Hood, near Killeen, Texas. Aguilar was 24 years old when she pleaded guilty in November at a federal court in Waco, Texas, to one count of accessory to murder after the fact and three counts of making a false statement.

The sentence came after hours of testimony from attorneys, experts and Guillén's family. It was the maximum punishment Aguilar could receive, said Jaime Esparza, the U.S. attorney for the Western District of Texas.

Aguilar aided boyfriend Army Spc. Aaron Robinson, 20, of Calumet City, Ill., in dismembering and disposing of Guillén's body in a rural, wooded area near the base, according to federal and state authorities. Robinson died by suicide on July 1, 2020, the day Guillén's remains were found.

Following Guillén's death, her family's claims that she was harassed and assaulted at the base ignited a movement on social media of former and active service members who shared their experiences at military bases throughout the country using the hashtag #IAmVanessaGuillen.

State and federal lawmakers passed legislation in 2021 honoring Guillén that removed some authority from commanders and gave survivors more options to report abuse and harassment. Army officials disciplined 21 commissioned and noncommissioned officers in connection with Guillén's death.

Rights group can't access detained officials in Niger

Associated Press

NIAMEY, Niger — Human rights activists in Niger say they have been unable to gain access to top political officials detained after mutinous soldiers ousted the democratically elected president nearly three weeks ago.

After soldiers ousted President Mohamed Bazoum on July 26, they also arrested several former ministers and other political leaders, but requests to see them and check on their well being have gone unanswered, Ali Idrissa, executive secretary of a local human rights group, the Network of Organizations for Transparency and Analysis of Budgets, told The Associated Press.

The junta has also been holding Bazoum, his wife and son under house arrest in their compound in the capital. Those close to Bazoum say his electricity and water have been cut off and he's running out of food. The junta

says it plans to prosecute Bazoum for "high treason" and undermining state security. If convicted, he could face the death penalty, according to Niger's penal code.

In a television broadcast Sunday evening junta spokesperson Col. Maj. Amadou Abdramane said it was treating the detained officials humanely and that Bazoum had regular access to medical visits and no health concerns had been raised. It did not immediately respond to questions about whether rights organizations would be granted access.

A meeting with the African Union Peace and Security Council took place Monday to discuss Niger's crisis, but there has been no news on the outcome. The council could overrule the West African bloc ECOWAS's decision if it thought an intervention threatened wider peace and security on the continent.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Teen survives 100-foot fall at Grand Canyon

AZ GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK — A 13-year-old North Dakota boy has survived a fall of nearly 100 feet at the North Rim of the Grand Canyon during a family trip.

Authorities said it took emergency crews two hours to rescue Wyatt Kauffman after he slipped on a cliff and plunged the nearly 100 feet at the Bright Angel Point trail.

The teenager was airlifted to a Las Vegas hospital for treatment of nine broken vertebrae plus a ruptured spleen, a collapsed lung, a concussion and a broken hand and dislocated finger.

"I was up on the ledge and was moving out of the way so other people could take a picture," Kauffman told Phoenix TV station KPNX. "I squatted down and was holding on to a rock. I only had one hand on it.

"It wasn't that good of a grip. It was kind of pushing me back. I lost my grip and started to fall back," he added.

Brian Kauffman said his son was discharged from the hospital.

Firearms ads allegedly for kids, militants banned

IL CHICAGO — Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker has signed a law banning firearms advertising that officials determine produces a public safety threat or appeals to children, militants or others who might later use the weapons illegally — opening the door for lawsuits against firearms manufacturers or distributors.

Pritzker signed the Firearm Industry Responsibility Act, making Illinois the eighth state to approve legislation that rolls back legal protections for firearms manufacturers or distributors. The legislation comes after the deadliest six months of mass killings recorded in the United States since at least 2006 — all but one of which involved guns.

Pritzker signed the bill alongside lawmakers and gun control advocates at Gun Sense University, an annual training conference of more than 2,000 Moms Demand Action and Students Demand Action volunteers and survivors, hosted by Everytown for Gun Safety.

"We hold opioid manufacturers accountable. Vaping companies accountable. Predatory lenders accountable. Gun manufacturers shouldn't get to hide from the law — and now, they won't be able to," Pritzker said in a statement.

Coast Guard and Navy rescue 4 divers off coast

SC MYRTLE BEACH — The Coast Guard and Navy rescued four divers who were reported missing off the Carolinas, officials said.

The U.S. Coast Guard Mid-Atlantic said the divers were rescued about 46 miles southeast of North Carolina's Cape Fear River.

The four men were reported missing after they did not resurface. They dove from a pleasure craft named Big Bill's.

The Coast Guard said in a news release that the vessel was about 50 miles south of Cape Fear, N.C., and about 63 miles east of Myrtle Beach, S.C.

The many shipwrecks off the coasts of both states are a popular draw for divers. The area is known for hundreds of shipwrecks and is called the "Graveyard of the Atlantic."

5 dead after blast wrecks 3 homes, damages 12

PA PLUM — Five people were found dead after a house explosion in western Pennsylvania that destroyed three structures and damaged at least a dozen others, authorities said.

Plum Borough Police Chief Lanny Conley said the bodies of four adults and one adolescent were recovered after the blast in the borough, about 20 miles east of Pittsburgh.

"This is certainly a sad, sad day and a sad time, for not just the folks in Plum but all the folks in the community and in this region," said Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald.

Of the three people taken to hospitals, two were released while one remained in critical condition, said Steve Imbarlina, deputy director of fire and emergency services for Allegheny County. Fifty-seven firefighters were treated at the scene for minor issues.

The cause of the explosion is under investigation by the county fire marshal's office along with borough and county law enforcement.

Pilot, crew member eject before crash at air show

MI BELLEVILLE — A pilot and crew member escaped serious injury when they ejected from a vintage jet that crashed during a Michigan air show, officials said.

The MiG-23 demonstration plane crashed during the Thunder Over Michigan Air Show, the Wayne County Airport Authority said in a statement.

The Soviet fighter plane crashed into a parking lot and struck unoccupied vehicles at a nearby apartment complex in Belleville, about 30 miles west of Detroit.

No injuries were reported on the ground at the apartments or the air show hosted by the Yankee Air Museum in Belleville.

The pilot and "backseater" crew member did not appear to have significant injuries but were transported to an area hospital, the authority said.

Man cited for neglect after dog dies during hike

AZ PHOENIX — A man was cited for animal neglect after his dog died from heat-related issues while on a hike in north Phoenix, according to authorities.

Phoenix police didn't immediately release the name of the 29-year-old man, but said he was "issued a citation in lieu of detention" for neglect of animals.

They said the hiker called 911 to say he and his two dogs were experiencing heat-related issues on the Piestewa Peak mountain trail.

Phoenix Fire Department crews located the hiker some 300 yards from the trailhead and said one of the man's dogs was dead at the scene.

Firefighters were able to cool down the other dog, who also was in heat distress but survived the hike in triple-digit weather.

— From wire reports

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Spain earns berth in World Cup final

Associated Press

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — Spain will play for its first Women's World Cup championship after Olga Carmona's goal in the 89th minute lifted La Roja to a 2-1 victory over Sweden in the Tuesday semi-final.

Spain, which overcame last year's near mutiny by its players against coach Jorge Vilda, will play the winner of tournament co-host Australia and England on Sunday in the final in Sydney.

The controversy surrounding Spain dates to last September, when 15 players signed a letter complaining about Vilda and the conditions for the national team. Three of those players are on this World Cup team.

Now, La Roja has a chance to become a first-time World Cup champion.

"This is a historic day," said Vilda. "We're in the final. That's what we wanted."

He again thanked the federation and its leadership for the

support that has Spain one win away from the World Cup.

"The end result is a learning process which has made us all stronger in my opinion, and to leave it archived in the past and think about the future," Vilda said through a translator.

Carmona's goal capped a flurry of late scoring that saw Sweden tie the game, then Spain win it 90 seconds later on the surprise score.

Salma Paralluelo, the 19-year-old super-sub who also scored the game-winner in extra-time of Spain's 2-1 quarter-finals victory over the Netherlands, scored in the 81st minute to put Spain up 1-0. She gestured for the crowd to cheer, and the crowd thought it was celebrating Spain's decider.

But the celebration was brief. Rebecka Blomqvist tied it for Sweden in the 88th.

Then, just 90 seconds later, Carmona beat Sweden goalkeeper Zecira Musovic with the game winner.

"It was really, really, really

crazy," Spanish defender Irene Paredes said. "After scoring the first one it was like, 'OK, this is the end, we have to keep this score.' But they scored quite fast and I was like, 'What the hell happened?' But we had confidence that we could create something else."

Sweden has now lost in four of five semifinals and will try to finish third for a fourth time.

"I have to watch the game, I really do, before I can make any assessments," Sweden coach Peter Gerhardsson said. "Right now I am full of emotions. It is the third loss in the semifinals. I think everyone just feels sadness and huge disappointment."

Paralluelo became just the second teenager to score in a Women's World Cup semifinal after Kara Lang of Canada in 2003, also against Sweden.

"It was a magic moment. It is something very unique when I scored the first goal. To be able to repeat is really incredible," Paralluelo said.

Spain is playing in only its third World Cup. Four years ago, La Roja advanced to the knockout round but lost to the United States, the eventual champion.

"Now it's the final. I think we have to do what we've done in every match," said Paralluelo. "We've overcome every challenge and now we face the ultimate challenge, the big one."

The Swedes have never won a World Cup. Sweden won the silver medal at the Tokyo Olympics two years ago, and at the 2016 Games in Brazil.

"I'm tired of crying big tournament tears," said Kosovare Asllani.

Sweden also lost in the semifinals of the Euros last September.

Spain fell to second in its group after a blowout loss to Japan, but rallied to beat Switzerland 5-1 and the Netherlands to reach the semifinals. It was La Roja's first appearance in a major semifinal since the 1997 European Championships.

Ivy League coaches happy conference has stability

Associated Press

BOSTON — There's one college football conference sitting out the reshuffling going on among its big-money brethren: The Ivy League will start the season with the same eight members it has had since it formed in 1956.

"It's lunacy going on nationally right now," Brown coach James Perry said on the Ivy League Media Day Zoom on Monday. "This league has always put the student-athlete first, his interests first, making him the best ballplayer he can be while still being a student. ... In the changing landscape of college athletics, that's how you do things right over a very, very long period of time."

Conference realignment has

been going on for decades, but the pace accelerated this year with moves that bulldozed longtime league affiliations and the regional rivalries they fostered. By next season, the traditional Midwestern power Big Ten will have 18 members from UCLA and Southern California on the West Coast to Rutgers and Maryland in the East.

The root of the problem: An influx of TV money for the top programs that pressures rivals to trade up if they want to compete.

"The financial aspect of it has just taken it right off the rails," Harvard coach Tim Murphy said. "I think it will get better. But it's never coming back to the way it was, which is such a shame."

Although "Ivy League" was

previously used as an unofficial designation of eight private liberal arts schools in the Northeast known for elite academics and ivy-covered halls, the group became a formal athletic conference in 1956 with the same eight members it has today: Brown, Cornell, Columbia, Dartmouth, Harvard, Pennsylvania, Princeton and Yale.

The "Ancient Eight" — Harvard and Yale predate the rise of college sports by centuries — don't offer athletic scholarships, and the institutions also agree to restrictions on admission and eligibility designed to keep the focus on schoolwork rather than sports. Executive Director Robin Harris praised the league's "model of sustained success" and positioned it as the antidote

to the dollar-chasing that has destroyed longtime conference affiliations and many of the regional rivalries that go with them.

"During this time when there is so much uncertainty in college athletics, with realignment and many questioning the path college football and college sports will take," she said, "I invite you to ... take notice of a conference that is rooted in collegiate stability and principle with incredibly talented student-athletes on and off the field."

And with compact travel, a shorter season and limits on practice (along with restrictions on tackling when they're there), the Ivy players have a chance to get the education they were promised.

RBs Cook, Elliott join AFC East rivals

Associated Press

Aaron Rodgers and the New York Jets' offense just got another big-time playmaker.

Former Minnesota Vikings running back Dalvin Cook agreed to terms on a one-year contract with the Jets on Monday, according to a person with knowledge of the deal.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because the team hadn't announced the agreement. NFL Network and ESPN first reported the deal is worth up to \$8.6 million.

Cook, who turned 28 last week, has run for at least 1,000 yards in each of the past four seasons and has gone to four Pro Bowls but was released by the Vikings on June 8 for salary cap savings. He was scheduled to count more than \$14.1 million against the Vikings' salary cap.

After a few weeks of speculation about where he'd sign, Cook joins a revamped Jets offense led by Rodgers and coordinator Nathaniel Hackett and includes

wide receiver Garrett Wilson, last season's AP Offensive Rookie of the Year.

The Jets' AFC East rival Patriots also added a former Pro Bowler and 1,000-yard rusher.

Three-time Pro Bowl running back Ezekiel Elliott has signed a one-year deal with New England worth \$4 million, a person familiar with the terms told The Associated Press.

The person, speaking on condition of anonymity because the team hasn't announced the move, said the contract can be worth up to \$6 million with incentives.

The 28-year-old Elliott ran for 68 touchdowns and more than 8,000 yards in seven years with the Dallas Cowboys.

At this point in his career, Elliott is expected to provide the team with depth behind Rhamondre Stevenson, who is in his third year with the team.

Cook visited with New York on July 30 and watched practice after saying during an interview on NFL Network's "Good Morn-

ing Football" the Jets "are right at the top of the list" and the odds of signing with them were "pretty high."

The former Florida State star also said in the interview he was interested in the Miami Dolphins and that it would be "a Cinderella story" to play for his hometown team.

Instead, he picked the Jets. And it's another sign New York is going all-in to not only end the NFL's longest postseason drought at 12 seasons, but to go deep into the playoffs.

"We'll never say no to a great player," Jets coach Robert Saleh said recently while confirming the team's interest. "If the opportunity presents itself in the right way. So we're excited about him and his visit."

The Jets wanted to make sure his surgically repaired shoulder checked out OK during his visit.

"He's dynamic," Saleh said. "He's a dynamic ball carrier. He's been a dynamic ball carrier for a long time. He's great in the passing game. And so it's

just a matter of, like I said, all the details of that. I'm not going to get too detailed, but you can't say no to a good football player. They usually find a way."

Cook, who's third on Minnesota's career rushing list with 5,993 yards after six seasons with the Vikings, joins Rodgers in New York after the former Green Bay quarterback was acquired by the Jets in April. Rodgers has made it clear since joining the Jets he thinks the team could make a deep playoff run.

And Cook agrees with his new quarterback.

"It's a unique situation because I think they're building something special over there," Cook told "Good Morning Football." "When you look at it, you always want to be around a great QB, you always want to be around somebody you can pick his brain and just learn from. A-Rod is a four-time MVP. So, just being around a guy like that you can learn a lot more and just develop as a player."

US basketball players getting used to different rules

Associated Press

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — There were 1.4 seconds left in the first half of USA Basketball's first exhibition game of its pre-World Cup tour this summer, with the Americans taking the ball out on the far end of the floor. U.S. coach Steve Kerr signaled for a quick inbounds pass and desperation heave.

If he was coaching such a game in San Francisco, or any other NBA city, Kerr probably would never call timeout in that situation. Only this summer, he's coaching under FIBA rules. And after getting a bit of an education on how timeouts don't carry over into the second half under FIBA rules, Kerr realized he could have called one to set up a better play.

"All this stuff comes into play now," said Kerr, coach of the Golden State Warriors. "That's what these exhibition games are for — for players and coaches."

The international game and the NBA game are basically the same: The rims are still 10 feet off the ground, teams still play 5-on-5 and fouls are still fouls. But there are a slew of differences — some nuanced, some not so much — that will make the World Cup seem different from the game that the Americans are used to playing in the U.S.

And the five-game exhibition slate for the Americans, which wraps up this week in Abu Dhabi, is a chance to figure out many of those changes.

"The games," said U.S. forward Bobby Portis of the Milwaukee Bucks, "are two totally

different games."

The games are shorter at the FIBA level — 10-minute quarters as opposed to 12 in the NBA — and so is the three-point line, from a couple of inches in the corners to about 18 inches at its deepest points. Players foul out on their fifth foul in FIBA, not their sixth like in the NBA. There's no defensive 3-second rule in FIBA. Players can't call timeout to avoid a jump ball or held-ball situation, and once a ball touches the rim it's fair game for the offense and the defense.

"The physicality is different," U.S. forward Paolo Banchero of the Orlando Magic said. "You can be physical on defense in terms of redirecting your man, the way you can guard. That's the biggest thing that stands out.

And a 40-minute game, it goes by quicker. In the NBA, you can be down 20 in the first quarter and not be worried because you've got time. You can ease into the game a little bit. Not here; you want to be going 100 mph from the jump."

Jaren Jackson Jr. clearly doesn't have any issue with NBA rules when it comes to defense; the Memphis Grizzlies center is the league's reigning defensive player of the year. And he's finding that FIBA's rules allow him to play even more freely on that end of the floor.

"It's great with the rule changes," Jackson said. "You can be a lot more physical, guards can be physical up high, they can kind of funnel everything down to the big down low."

3 straight homers lift Marlins over Astros

Associated Press

MIAMI — Jorge Soler, Luis Arraez and Josh Bell hit consecutive homers in the eighth inning and the Miami Marlins beat the Houston Astros 5-1 on Monday night.

Houston starter Framber Valdez (9-8) limited the Marlins to four hits and two runs — one earned — through 7⅓ innings before Soler and Arraez connected with solo shots to make it 4-1 and end the left-hander's outing.

"It's fun because I never hit homers," Arraez said. "I followed Soler and said it was my time."

Hector Neris relieved and allowed Bell's blast over the wall in right. Bell, who celebrated his 31st birthday, extended his on base streak to 12 games since he joined the Marlins on Aug. 2.

"A lot of smiles, a lot of jumping up and down. It makes you feel like a kid sometimes," Bell said of the homer outburst. "Sometimes the game is the hardest thing in the world, but when you can do something like that and celebrate as a team, it makes the down side of the game that much easier."

It was just the second time in franchise history — the first was in 1998 — the Marlins hit three consecutive home runs.

"Those are really nice, especially against a team like that,"

Marlins manager Skip Schumaker said. "That offense, there were a lot of loud outs today, so I was totally OK with adding some insurance runs late."

Marlins starter Braxton Garrett (7-3) threw five scoreless innings and was lifted after 75 pitches. The left-hander gave up four hits, walked two and struck out one.

The Astros stranded 10 runners and were 2-for-12 with runners in scoring position. Garrett escaped a bases loaded one-out jam in the second by striking out Jake Myers and retiring Martin Maldonado on a pop out.

"That was a huge blow for us to come away with nothing," Astros manager Dusty Baker said. "But we hit the ball great. Line drive after line drive. Just wasn't our night."

Braves 11, Yankees 3: Max Fried allowed two runs in his first home start in more than three months, Nicky Lopez had three hits and three RBIs in a fill-in role and host Atlanta defeated New York.

Eddie Rosario drove in four runs with three hits, including a two-run homer, in Atlanta's 15-hit attack.

Fried (4-1) gave up eight hits in six-plus innings in his first home start since May 5. He returned from the 60-day injured list on Aug. 4 after missing 70 games

with a left forearm strain and allowed a combined four runs in two road starts.

Orioles 4, Padres 1: Ryan O'Hearn homered and Gunnar Henderson hit a bases-clearing double off Yu Darvish for AL-best Baltimore against host San Diego, earning a third straight win.

Rookie right-hander Grayson Rodriguez (3-3) held the Padres to one run on three hits while going seven innings for the first time. He struck out six and walked one to win for the first time in nine starts. His last victory came May 9 against Tampa Bay.

Félix Bautista finished the combined four-hitter by pitching the ninth for his AL-leading 32nd save in 38 chances. He walked Fernando Tatis Jr. and Juan Soto with one out and then got Manny Machado to ground into a double play to end it.

Rangers 12, Angels 0: Max Scherzer allowed only one infield single and one walk while striking out a season-high 11 in seven innings to record his third win in as many starts for host Texas.

Marcus Semien had two hits and a season-high five RBIs, including a three-run home run in the seventh inning. Three batters later, Adolis Garcia increased his AL-best RBI total to

91 with a two-run shot that was his 30th of the season.

Rays 10, Giants 2: Christian Bethancourt homered and singled in a run to back Tyler Glasnow's fourth straight winning decision, and visiting Tampa Bay won their first game since placing All-Star shortstop Wander Franco on the restricted list.

Glasnow (6-3) had plenty of run support in winning his third start in a row. The right-hander struck out seven and walked three over six innings.

Royals 7, Mariners 6: Dairon Blanco executed a suicide squeeze bunt in the ninth inning to score Samad Taylor, and host Kansas City rallied to hand playoff-contending Seattle its third straight loss.

Rockies 6, Diamondbacks 4: Nolan Jones singled in the go-ahead run in a three-run eighth inning and host Colorado beat Arizona to snap a five-game losing streak.

Mets 7, Pirates 2: Francisco Lindor became the first Met to reach 20 home runs and 20 stolen bases since 2008 as host New York won consecutive games for the first time this month.

Cardinals 7, Athletics 5: Rookie Jordan Walker hit a bases-loaded triple in the seventh inning, and host St. Louis rallied for the win over Oakland in a matchup of last-place teams.

Franco investigated for alleged relationship with minor

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Authorities in the Dominican Republic are investigating Tampa Bay Rays All-Star shortstop Wander Franco for an alleged relationship with a minor, according to a statement Monday from the office of the attorney general in his native country.

The Rays, meanwhile, placed the 22-year-old on the restricted list, a move that will sideline Franco for at least six games while MLB investigates social media posts involving the player.

The investigations follow reported social media posts suggesting Franco was in

a relationship with a minor. The Associated Press has not been able to verify the reported posts. Asked about Franco's alleged relationship with the minor, the media office of the attorney general in the Dominican Republic said in a statement "there are investigations regarding that matter."

The Rays did not detail the nature of the social media posts but said the team and Franco "mutually agreed" he would go on the restricted list. Franco will be paid during his time on the restricted list.

MLB has launched an investigation, a person familiar with the probe told The

Associated Press, speaking on the condition of anonymity because no announcement was made.

Franco did not play in Sunday's home series finale against Cleveland at Tropicana Field and did not accompany the Rays to San Francisco for the start of a six-game road trip that began Monday night against the Giants.

"The Tampa Bay Rays and Wander Franco have mutually agreed that he will go on the Restricted List and take leave from the club for the duration of the current road trip," the team said in a one-sentence statement.