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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

CENTCOM, US forces in Afghanistan track spread of coronavirus

BY J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S.-led international coalition in Afghanistan is closely monitoring the potential spread of coronavirus in the country, as Afghan officials confirmed the first case of infection Monday.

The health and safety of the international forces are “top priorities,” NATO’s Resolute Support mission said in a statement, which came as American military officials throughout the Central Command area of responsibility were working to respond to the virus’ spread.

“As suspected cases are beginning to appear regionally, we are closely monitoring and implementing the guidance from the Center for Disease Control [and Prevention] (CDC) to ensure our forces remain effective and able to continue support to our (Afghan) partners while preventing the spread of the virus,” the statement said.

A man from the western city of Herat who recently traveled to Iran has tested positive for the virus and has been quarantined, said Ahmad Tawhid Shokohmand, deputy spokes-

man for the Afghan Health Ministry. The city is home to an Italian-run regional headquarters for the NATO mission at Camp Arena, which is home to some American and other international troops. The bulk of U.S. troops are based in the country’s east and south, hundreds of miles from the city.

Traders and workers from Herat frequently cross into Iran, where coronavirus infections have killed several people across the country, The Associated Press reported Monday.

Afghanistan has issued a ban on travel to Iran, Shokohmand said.

The U.S. 5th Fleet in Bahrain, which lies across the Persian Gulf from Iran, also issued new guidance after the island kingdom said Monday that it had confirmed a coronavirus infection. Service members entering Bahrain from China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and South Korea are subject to a 14-day home quarantine in line with Bahraini guidelines, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command said in a statement Monday. Service members are also being prevented from taking leave in those countries and territories.

Trump says if truce holds, he’ll sign Taliban peace deal

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Sunday he’s ready to sign a peace deal with the Taliban in Afghanistan if a temporary truce holds in America’s longest war. “Time to come home,” he said.

“They want to stop. You know, they’ve been fighting a long time. They’re tough people. We’re tough people,” Trump told reporters as he left the White House for a trip to India. “But after 19 years, that’s a long time.”

The two sides earlier this month announced the truce, which took effect last Friday and set the stage for a broader deal aimed at ending 18 years of war in Afghanistan and bringing U.S. troops home.

If the truce proves a success, it will be followed by the signing of the peace accord on Saturday, wrapping up the U.S.’s longest-running conflict and fulfilling one of Trump’s chief campaign promises.

“We think they want to make

a deal. We want to make a deal. I think it’s going to work out. We’ll see,” Trump said.

For the Taliban, the successful completion of the truce and Afghanistan peace talks would give the militants a shot at international legitimacy, which they lacked at the time they ran the country and gave Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaida associates safe haven.

U.S. officials have noted the possibility that “spoilers” uninterested in peace talks could disrupt the truce. Determining who is responsible for potential attacks during the seven days will therefore be critical.

On Sunday, Trump expressed cautious optimism about reaching a peace deal.

“You know we have a certain period of nonviolence. It’s been holding up, it’s a day and a half, so we’ll see what happens. But people want to make a deal, and I think the Taliban wants to make a deal, too; they’re tired of fighting.”

There are more than 12,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

Driver of car that hit crowd at German Carnival arrested

Associated Press

BERLIN — A man intentionally drove a car into a crowd of people at a Carnival parade in a small German town Monday, injuring dozens of people including children, police said.

The driver was arrested, but police couldn’t immediately provide details about the man’s

motivations for crashing into the celebrations in Volkmarshagen, about 175 miles southwest of Berlin.

“We are working on the assumption that it was a deliberate act,” police spokesman Henning Hinn said, but added that further details of the driver’s motives weren’t yet known.

Hinn said that “there were several dozen injured, among them some seriously and sadly also children.”

Some of the injuries were life-threatening, he said.

Emergency responders set up a makeshift clinic in a town pharmacy to treat casualties with minor injuries, the Frankfurter Rundschau newspaper

reported. Witnesses said the car drove around a barrier blocking off traffic from the parade, according to the paper.

Video from the scene showed a silver Mercedes station wagon with local license plates on a sidewalk, its front windshield smashed and hood dented, and its hazard lights blinking, while emergency crews walked by.

7th Fleet to screen all personnel boarding ships

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The 7th Fleet has begun screening all personnel accessing its warships and aircraft as the new coronavirus continues to spread across parts of Asia, Navy officials said Monday.

The new screening requirements apply to crew, visitors, civilians, contractors and others entering 7th Fleet “units and platforms” throughout its area of responsibility, 7th Fleet spokesman Lt. Joe Keiley said in an email Monday evening.

“At this time, there are no indications that any U.S. 7th Fleet personnel have been affected by [the coronavirus]” he added.

The 7th Fleet’s checks will include questionnaires and self-reporting opportunities, as well as other medical screening, Stars and Stripes learned Monday. Officials have also made plans to provide supportive care and isolation if warranted, and ship commanding officers can implement additional screenings after the initial assessments if deemed necessary.

The U.S. Embassy in Japan raised the travel risk in the country to Level 2 — “exercise increased caution” — over the weekend. As of Sunday, there were 132 confirmed cases of the virus in Japan, according to the World Health Organization. Symptoms include cough, sneezing and shortness of breath.

The Yokosuka-based 7th Fleet’s area of operations spans 124 million square miles from the International Date Line to the India-Pakistan border and from the Kuril Islands to the Antarctic. The four countries with the most coronavirus cases — China, South Korea, Japan and Singapore — all fall within the 7th Fleet’s area of responsibility.

At nearby Camp Zama, the Army is monitoring the situation and “looking at our force health protection measures,” U.S. Army Japan spokesman Maj. Elias Chelala said Monday.

The U.S. Army Japan commander will also host a town hall Wednesday at the Camp Zama Community Club “to discuss housing and health concerns,” he added.

US takes precautions ahead of Cobra Gold

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

The U.S. military is sending a larger contingent this year to Cobra Gold, one of the Indo-Pacific’s largest multinational exercises, even as the new coronavirus sweeps the region, according to U.S. officials.

Additional medical personnel and supplies will be on hand to guard against the virus called COVID-19 when Cobra Gold 2020 begins Tuesday in Thailand, officials said. The World Health Organization on Sunday reported 35 cases of the virus in Thailand, according to its website.

This year, the 39th replay of Cobra Gold, military personnel from 29 countries plan on taking part in activities ranging from amphibious assaults to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, according to a statement from the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok.

The United States is sending approximately 5,500 service personnel — ashore and afloat — up from about 4,500 last year, the embassy statement said.

They will be joined by full participant nations Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea, Marine Capt. George McArthur of the Cobra Gold 2020 Combined-Joint Information Bureau told Stars and Stripes via email on Thursday.

The coronavirus appeared in the Chinese city of Wuhan in December and has since spread around the globe.

However, the risk of infection from COVID-19 remains low, and U.S. military commands place a strict emphasis on prudent force health protection measures, McArthur said.

The exercise, co-sponsored by the Royal Thai and U.S. armed forces, is scheduled to run until March 6 throughout Thailand.

US military in Italy extends virus measures

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

VICENZA, Italy — The military has moved to try to prevent the coronavirus spreading to U.S. bases in Italy, even as Italian officials struggle to contain the largest outbreak of the respiratory illness in Europe.

In Vicenza, U.S. Army Garrison Italy shuttered on-base schools, child care centers, gyms and churches. Initially, they said they would remain closed through Wednesday, but then they followed the city’s lead and extended the closures until March 1.

While there were no confirmed cases of coronavirus in the city Monday, 200 people have been diagnosed with the illness throughout Italy, including a cluster of at least 22 cases in Vo’ Euganeo, just 30 miles away from Vicenza.

The other confirmed cases were in the Lombardy region, where Italian officials have locked down more than 50,000 people in a dozen towns.

At least six people have died in Italy and 26 people are in intensive care, officials said.

Vicenza military personnel were ordered to avoid nonessential travel to Lombardy and Vo’ Euganeo.

At Aviano Air Base, located in a different province than the Army garrison, base schools remained open but officials have banned service members and their families from traveling to Lombardy and the Veneto.

The 31st Fighter Wing’s health clinic at Aviano has set up a hotline, which anyone who recently visited either area can call to arrange a screening for the virus. Some people who traveled to Venice’s Carnevale, which was cut short Sunday

amid coronavirus fears, were told to stay home.

Americans in Vicenza who need to be tested for the virus will be directed to San Bortolo hospital and not the base clinic, which doesn’t yet have access to the diagnostic test for the virus.

So far, the virus response hasn’t affected operations, garrison officials said. But it would if Italians lock down one of the towns where many Americans live, such as Torri di Quartesolo, they said.

On Sunday evening in Vicenza, the commissary was so packed that no shopping carts were available and customers waited in lines for an hour to check out. Officials said that the store had done double its usual Sunday business and stocks of many items were wiped out.

But if all expected deliveries arrived on Monday, there would be no shortages, they said.

USMC prioritizes gender integration in jobs

BY IMMANUEL JOHNSON

Stars and Stripes

Furthering gender integration in job fields previously closed to women, expanding maternity leave and raising the intellectual bar for infantry troops are among the Marine Corps' priorities, the service's top officer said.

In a series of posts on Twitter last week, Commandant Gen. David Berger highlighted his "most important matters," which also include barring officer and enlisted applicants with a prior conviction for gender-based violence and domestic violence.

It's unclear why he chose to highlight the ban on applicants with gender-based or domestic violence convictions, which was the first of the measures he mentioned.

The service already prohibits those convicted of sex-related crimes or domestic violence from serving, and such disqualifications can't be waived, said Gunnery Sgt. Justin Kronenberg, a spokesman for Marine Corps Recruiting Command.

Berger's tweets aimed at rectifying gen-

der-related issues within the service, which has the smallest percentage of women in its ranks and has long faced criticism for its gender-segregated basic training and resistance to integrating women into combat roles.

Berger called for a review to determine the feasibility of women in the reserves returning to active duty in units and jobs that were previously gender-restricted.

The service's leaders should also seek out active duty women in company-grade officer ranks to volunteer for the Infantry Officer Course and serve in infantry battalions, he said.

The commandant's plans are an attempt to put female Marines in leadership positions, Sgt. Callahan Brown, of the III Marine Expeditionary Force, said Monday.

There are few women in infantry battalions, said Brown, a female Marine who was part of an integrated ground combat element from October 2014 to July 2015.

"A steady stream of additional women in the job fields will ensure prosperity for the future women and men entering the Ma-

rine Corps," Brown said.

The commandant also ordered a study of the effects of extending the current 12 weeks of maternity leave to 12 months, which former Navy Secretary Ray Mabus told Military.com last week was a good way to recruit and retain more women.

Another change to parental leave policies Berger called for would extend the policy to cover adoptive parents, including same-sex couples.

Two other of Berger's ideas focused on intellectual requirements.

They would raise the general intelligence standard for entry into the infantry and incorporate academic standing into fitness reports for sergeants and above attending military education courses.

Currently, Marines receive "non-observed" fitness reports while at military schools.

If it won't hurt the Corps' recruiting efforts "irreparably," Berger said, he wants to raise the minimum general technical score for would-be grunts to 100.

USFK: Employee furloughs would hamper military

BY KIM GAMEL

Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — A threatened furlough of South Koreans who work for the U.S. military would have "a negative impact on military operations and readiness," the top commander, Gen. Robert Abrams, said Monday, as the United States raised pressure on Seoul to agree to a new defense cost-sharing deal.

The Pentagon said in a statement Sunday it will fund critical contracts and salaries but warned that most South Korean employees will be furloughed in April if a new agreement isn't reached.

The comments came on the eve of a planned meeting in Washington between Defense Secretary Mark Esper and his South Korean counterpart, Jeong Kyeong-doo, nearly two months after the previous contract, known as the Special Measures Agreement, expired. The defense chiefs were to discuss the agreement and other bilateral issues.

South Korea's defense ministry promised to step up efforts to reach a deal but declined to discuss details, citing the ongoing negotiations.

"I can tell you that we will beef up our efforts to try to conclude the negotiations as soon as possible in order to minimize the effect of the absence of an SMA," ministry spokesman Moon Hong-sik said Monday at

a press briefing in Seoul.

The allies have been unable to bridge the gap after Washington demanded that South Korea pay as much as \$5 billion per year, a fivefold increase.

U.S. negotiators said they have softened their demands but are reportedly still seeking to expand the number of costs covered by the agreement.

South Korea, which has helped support U.S. troops under the agreement since 1991, has insisted that negotiations should be kept within the current framework, with most of the funds used for more than 9,000 South Korean employees, logistical support and construction projects.

The funds aren't used for American troop salaries or military operations.

The vast majority of SMA contributions go back into the South Korean economy, the Pentagon said, adding that the clock was ticking for U.S. funds being used to sustain South Korean salaries after the deal lapsed at the end of last year.

U.S. funds will be exhausted March 31 unless the South Korean government agrees to materially increase its support for U.S. forces committed to the defense of South Korea, according to the Pentagon statement.

"It will be necessary to furlough most [Korean national] employees on April 1, 2020, and suspend many construction and

logistics activities," if no deal is reached, the statement said.

However, the Pentagon announced that "critical" logistics cost-sharing contracts and the salaries of "key" South Korean employees will continue to be funded by the Defense Department.

Furloughs may be avoided if South Korea agrees to a "more equitable" Special Measures Agreement, it said, insisting the United States "remains committed to negotiating a mutually acceptable agreement which provides for fair and equitable burden sharing."

U.S. Forces Korea, which commands the 28,500 American service members stationed in South Korea, welcomed Esper's decision to fund critical contracts and services.

"The potential furlough will have a significant impact — both emotionally and financially — to our Korean national employees," said Abrams, the USFK commander.

"It will also have some negative repercussions to installation services," he added. "The USFK community relies heavily on our installations for quality of life services, and the potential furlough will have more than just a negative impact on military operations and readiness."

Stars and Stripes reporter Yoo Kyong Chang contributed to this report.

Weinstein found guilty on two counts

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Harvey Weinstein was convicted Monday of rape and sexual assault against two women and was immediately led off to jail in handcuffs, sealing his dizzying fall from powerful Hollywood studio boss to archvillain of the #MeToo movement.

The 67-year-old had a look of resignation on his face as he heard the verdict that could send him to prison for up to 29 years.

He was convicted on charges stemming from a 2006 sexual assault and a 2013 rape. The jury found Weinstein not guilty on the most serious charge, predatory sexual assault, which could have resulted in a life sentence. Weinstein's lawyers said they will appeal.

The most damaging conviction, for the sexual assault of production assistant Mimi Haley, would carry a maximum sentence of 25 years.

The verdict followed weeks of often harrowing and excruciat-

ingly graphic testimony from a string of accusers who told of rapes, forced oral sex, groping, masturbation, lewd propositions and that's-Hollywood excuses from Weinstein about how the casting couch works.

Jurors signaled their struggles with the Sciorra charges four days into deliberations. On Friday, after reviewing sections of her testimony and related evidence, they sent a note to the judge indicating they were deadlocked on the counts but had reached a unanimous ver-

dict on the others. After some debate in the courtroom, the judge ordered jurors to keep deliberating.

Weinstein now faces charges in Los Angeles. In that case, announced just as the New York trial was getting under way on Jan. 6, authorities allege that Weinstein raped one woman and sexually assaulted another on back-to-back nights during Oscars week in 2013. One of those women testified as a supporting witness at the New York trial.

White House aides downplay meddling

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's national security adviser, in an exchange that touched on a perennial sore point for the president, said Sunday he had no knowledge of intelligence agency warnings that Russia is trying once again to help Trump by interfering in the 2020 campaign.

Another senior White House aide, meanwhile, insisted that last week's abrupt removal of retired Vice Adm. Joseph Maguire as acting director of national intelligence was unrelated to Trump's unhappiness over a closed-door intelligence briefing to lawmakers about Russian attempts at election interference.

Trump has moved to punish those he saw as supporters of his impeachment for abusing power and obstructing Congress. During the proceedings, which ended with his acquittal earlier this month in a Senate trial, his backers suggested that Ukraine — not Russia — interfered with the 2016 campaign.

National security adviser Robert O'Brien said that he was not aware of any effort by Russia to try to bolster Trump's 2020 prospects, as the U.S. intelligence community concluded

Moscow sought to do in 2016.

"There's no briefing that I've received, that the president has received, that says that President [Vladimir] Putin is doing anything to try and influence the elections in favor of President Trump," O'Brien said. "We just haven't seen that intelligence."

Multiple news reports have said lawmakers were told last week that the Kremlin is seeking to aid Trump, and also looking to help Sen. Bernie Sanders, of Vermont secure the Democratic nomination. Sanders acknowledged Friday that he was apprised last month by U.S. officials about unspecified Russian efforts to help his chances of becoming the nominee.

A prominent Democratic lawmaker Sunday pointed to the prospect of intelligence findings on Russia's activities being wielded as a weapon by the White House in the months between now and the November vote.

"I think we all worry about this administration controlling massive amounts of intelligence, massive amounts of classified information and leaking it out to the press when it advantages them," said Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn.

India pours on the pageantry for Trump

Associated Press

AHMEDABAD, INDIA — Basking in adulation from a massive, colorful crowd, President Donald Trump and India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, lavished each other with praise Monday in a reaffirmation of U.S.-India ties as the subcontinent poured on the pageantry in a joyful welcome for the U.S. president. Trump capped his whirlwind day with a sunset tour of India's famed Taj Mahal.

More than 100,000 people packed the world's largest cricket stadium in Modi's home state to give Trump the biggest rally crowd of his political career. The event was the pinnacle of the day's enviable trio of presidential photo-ops and was sandwiched between Trump's visits to a former home of independence leader Mohandas Gandhi and the Taj Mahal.

Nearly everyone in the stadium in Ahmedabad in western India sported a white cap with the name of the event, "Namaste, Trump" or "Welcome, Trump," and roared for the introductions of both leaders.

But miles away in the capital of New Delhi, Indian police used tear gas and smoke grenades to disperse a crowd of

clashing protesters hours before Trump was due to arrive, as violence broke out over a new citizenship law that excludes Muslims. Anti-Trump street demonstrations also erupted in Delhi, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Gauhati, but not in the city where Trump was hosted.

Embarking on a whirlwind 36-hour visit, Trump opened his speech in Ahmedabad by declaring that he had traveled 8,000 miles to deliver the message that "America loves India, America respects India and America will always be faithful and loyal friends to the Indian people."

The boisterous scene featured musicians on camels and a musical medley of Bollywood hits and Trump's campaign rally playlist, including numerous Elton John songs that seemed to puzzle most of the crowd.

The president will conclude his visit on Tuesday in the capital, including meetings with Modi over stalled trade talks and a gala dinner. The two nations are closely allied, in part to act as a bulwark against the rising influence of China.

Trump announced at the stadium that India would soon buy \$3 billion of American military equipment.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man finds 2 suspected bombs while on hike

HI HILO — An adventurer in Hawaii found two suspected unexploded military bombs while hiking on the Big Island.

Kona resident and adventure television host Kawika Singson discovered the bombs while exploring the lava fields of Mauna Loa last week, the Hawaii Tribune-Herald reported. Singson is the host of “Everything Hawaii.”

Singson saw the back end of the bomb sticking out of the lava, and when he entered the tube he saw the front end protruding through the ceiling, he said.

‘Gopher bomb’ may have started 7-acre brush fire

CA BRENTWOOD — A bomb used to get rid of gophers may have started a brush fire in a Northern California suburb, authorities told the East Bay Times.

The fire burned seven acres in Brentwood in Contra Costa County before firefighters put it out.

If the fire is determined to have been started by a gopher bomb, it would be reminiscent of a scene in the 1980 movie “Caddyshack” in which a frustrated groundskeeper played by Bill Murray used dynamite in a futile effort to get rid of the burrowing rodents.

US soldier in Iraq helps catch burglars at home

IL PARK RIDGE — Two suspected burglars were arrested after a man who said he was a soldier deployed to Iraq called police to say he’d just watched two men on his smartphone he’d hooked up to his doorbell camera walk out of

his garage carrying his power tools, authorities said.

Park Ridge officers responded to the area and spotted two men walking along a road not far from the address where the caller said he lived. Police said the men were carrying items they determined had been taken from the garage, as well as other items they believe had been stolen from cars in the area.

The Park Ridge Herald-Advocate reported that officers arrested Andres Gutierrez, 23, of Chicago, and Brandon Shaw, 24, of Arcola.

Dogs take a bite out of mail delivery people

GA GLYNN COUNTY — Loose dogs are such a problem in a south Georgia mobile home park that it’s not safe to deliver the mail, postal officials said.

One of the dogs bit a mail carrier in December, tearing a ligament, a U.S. Postal Service supervisor said.

Mail has not been delivered ever since to the Transvilla Mobile Home Park in Glynn County, The Brunswick News reported.

“I can’t have anyone else go in there and get bitten,” Orlene Garcia, supervisor of customer services at the local post office, said.

“In the meantime, until we can come up with a solution, we have their mail here.”

Teacher denies paper on same-sex marriage

MI MONTROSE — A Michigan teacher denied a request from a student with two mothers to write about same-sex marriage for a class assignment.

Destiny McDermitt, a junior at Hill McCloy High School in Montrose, was given an assign-

ment to write a speech discussing an issue they felt strongly about and to take a stand for or against it, M-Live reported.

The teacher, who the district is not naming, allegedly told McDermitt she couldn’t write about same-sex marriage because the topic could offend someone in the class, according to McDermitt and other students in the classroom at the time. The student wrote a complaint letter to administrators and later moved to a different class.

Worker cleans, secures fallen flag at vet’s home

ME AUGUSTA — A propane delivery driver in Maine brushed off and secured an American flag that had been knocked off a veteran’s home, the veteran told news outlets.

David Price told news outlets that he was upset when he saw via home security cameras connected to a phone app that his U.S. flag had fallen to the ground.

Price then got a motion alert on his phone from the camera and watched as a driver with Dead River, a company that provides heating and propane oil, arrived, brushed snow off the flag, secured it back in the post and returned to work making the propane delivery.

Price called it “a great act of kindness and respect.”

Video captures inmate’s crash through ceiling

OH DAYTON — A security camera captured footage of a jail inmate’s apparent escape attempt from a holding room that ended with her falling through a ceiling and landing head-first in a trash can.

Jessica Boomershine, 42, was charged with escape and

vandalism following the episode late last month, according to the Montgomery County Prosecutor’s Office in Ohio.

Jail security video shows Boomershine climbing up a holding room wall as other inmates watch, and then moving out of sight. A few seconds later, parts of ceiling tiles fall to the floor. Boomershine’s legs then appear, and guards pull her down. She ends up head-first in a trash can that then tips over.

Mascot to alter image after KKK references

VT RANDOLPH — The depictions of a Vermont high school’s mascot will be removed following complaints the images were associated with the Ku Klux Klan.

Superintendent Layne Millington of the Orange Southwest School District announced the gym wall at Randolph Union High School showing a shrouded ghost riding a horse will be painted over, WPTZ reported.

But Millington made it clear that while the illustration of the mascot will change, the mascot itself won’t.

Should a new image replace the one being removed, it’ll be a version from the school archives that shows a skeleton, he said.

9 injured in accident involving 2 fire trucks

NH MANCHESTER — A crash involving two fire trucks and a pickup truck in New Hampshire’s largest city sent eight firefighters and one other person to the hospital.

Manchester Fire Department District Chief Mike Gamache said all of the firefighters have been treated and released. The condition of the pickup truck driver was unclear.

From wire reports

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STARS AND STRIPES®

Top 25 roundup

No. 25 Buckeyes beat No. 7 Terappins

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio State coach Chris Holtmann sat across from Luther Muhammad at a recent lunch and told him there would soon be a day when the sophomore guard would need to “be the difference.”

That day turned out to be Sunday.

Muhammad scored 22 points and No. 25 Ohio State beat No. 7 Maryland 79-72, snapping the Terrapins’ nine-game winning streak.

Ohio State (18-9, 8-8 Big Ten)

defeated a Top-10 team for the fourth time this season.

Four other Buckeyes scored in double figures, led by Kaleb Wesson with 15 points. Duane Washington Jr. added 13, while Andre Wesson and C.J. Jackson each had 12.

Aaron Wiggins led Maryland (22-5, 12-4) with 20 points and Eric Ayala had 16, but the Terrapins got little help from their big guns. Leading scorer Jalen Smith, who averages 17.1 points per game, was held to eight. Anthony Cowan, who averages 16.9, scored 10 before fouling out.

Indiana 68, No. 9 Penn State 60: Al Durham scored 14 points and Trayce Jackson-Davis had 13 points and 10 rebounds to lead the Hoosiers past visiting Penn State.

Devonte Green contributed 10 points for the Hoosiers (18-9, 8-8 Big Ten), who started hot but needed to hit their final four free throws to help seal it.

Lamar Stevens led Penn State (20-7, 10-6) with 29 points.

No. 15 Creighton 81, No. 21 Butler 59: Marcus Zegarowski made all seven of his three-pointers and finished with 25 points, and the host

Bluejays beat the Bulldogs for their fourth straight win over an AP Top 25 opponent.

Creighton (22-6, 11-4 Big East) has won nine of 10 and remains one game behind conference-leading Seton Hall.

Butler (19-9, 7-8) dropped its third straight game.

No. 16 Seton Hall 81, St. John’s 65: Myles Powell scored 18 points, Sandro Mamukelashvili added 16 points and nine rebounds and the Pirates beat the visiting Red Storm.

Jared Rhoden added 14 points for Seton Hall (20-7, 12-3 Big East).

BYU win over Zags should solidify tourney spot

Associated Press

BYU might just have gone from the most precarious of positions on the NCAA Tournament bubble to a near lock in one memorable night, thanks to a spectacular effort against second-ranked Gonzaga.

The Cougars (23-7) were trending in the right direction anyway, winning seven straight heading into their matchup with the Bulldogs. But the show they put on in a 91-78 victory Saturday night, long after folks on the East Coast probably went to bed, was exactly the kind of game BYU coach Mark Pope had been hoping to see as March drew near.

“I’m super happy. It just doesn’t happen like this,” he said. “They just kind of dug in and kept battling for four years or five years or six years. Then they set the table with a summer that was really demanding and difficult. Waking up every single morning and fighting their own agenda so that they could sacrifice for this team. A lot of times you do all that stuff and you don’t get that senior night, but these guys did and it’s extraordinary and I am so happy for them.

“It’s actually really humbling,” Pope added, “because it just doesn’t work like this a lot, but it worked for this crew. I hope that all 18,000 of us in there and everybody that watched it on TV got to see something they’ll never forget.”

Now, the question isn’t whether the the Cougars will get into the tournament but where they will be seeded. They have one more regular-season game left against

Pepperdine before the West Coast Conference Tournament, where they could face the Zags in a rubber match — the Bulldogs beat them at home earlier this season.

“When you experience those lows,” BYU guard T.J. Haws said, “winning is that much sweeter. This team has been through a lot this year but what I love about us is that we continue to fight. Adversity comes our way and the next day we’re at practice ready to fight. When you have a team that works so hard, moments like this happen.”

On a related note, the loss by Gonzaga could put its No. 1 seeding in jeopardy. But losses by top-ranked Baylor and No. 4 San Diego State helped its cause, and the Bulldogs still have some of the best advanced metrics in the country.

Rising

Virginia (19-7, 11-5 ACC): The reigning national champions were an afterthought a month ago, but wins over Boston College and Pittsburgh last week have continued a hot streak stretching to four games. And with games down the stretch against Louisville and Duke, there are plenty of chances of the Cavaliers to become a lock.

Michigan (18-9, 9-7 Big Ten): Has any team gone on a bigger roller coaster this season than the Wolverines? They shot up the polls with a brilliant start, went through a mid-season swoon, and now have won five in a row to get back in the picture for an at-large bid.

Utah State (22-7, 11-5 Mountain West): The Aggies are poised to make the Mountain West more than just a one-bid

league regardless of what happens with San Diego State in the conference tournament. They’ve ripped off five straight wins and behind Sam Merrill’s continued offensive brilliance.

UCLA (17-11, 10-5 Pac-12): There are a whole bunch of bubble teams in the league — we see you, Southern California and Stanford. But the Bruins have come alive under Mick Cronin, winning five straight to make a strong at-large case.

Falling

North Carolina State (17-10, 8-8 ACC): There is no shame in a competitive loss to Florida State, but the Wolfpack now have dropped five of their last eight games. Duke is also on the schedule during their final four-game stretch.

Marquette (17-9, 7-7 Big East): The Golden Eagles have been a mainstay in the Top 25 most of the season, and they have one of the nation’s most exciting players in Markus Howard. But three straight losses have put them on the NCAA Tournament bubble, and tough games against Georgetown and No. 16 Seton Hall loom.

Oklahoma (16-11, 6-8 Big 12): The Sooners have dropped three straight, and while losses to Baylor and Kansas are hardly a black eye, a lopsided loss to Oklahoma State was especially damaging.

South Carolina (16-11, 8-6 SEC): The Gamecocks’ postseason hopes took a big blow last week with losses to Mississippi State and LSU. They’ll get the Bulldogs again during a four-game finishing kick in which they should be favored to win out.

NHL roundup

Karlsson's hat trick drives Golden Knights

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — William Karlsson and the Vegas Golden Knights have the NHL's longest current winning streak, and they've built it in all sorts of ways.

Blowing a two-goal lead in the third period wasn't what they had in mind. No matter — no slowing Vegas on this roll.

Karlsson got his third career hat trick, Shea Theodore scored in overtime and the Golden Knights extended their winning streak to a season-high six games with a 6-5 victory over the Anaheim Ducks.

Theodore's winner 3:50 into OT came after the Vegas squandered a two-goal lead late in the third period. Mark Stone assisted on the goal to complete his second four-assist game during the winning streak.

Stone started the rush by intercepting Ryan Getzlaf's pass. He passed it to Theodore, who skated up the right side of the ice before releasing a wrist shot from the right faceoff circle to beat goaltender John Gibson.

"I think we've just played good hockey. We've really tightened up our systems," said Theodore, who has nine goals this season. "I think we are

sticking to that and really starting to feel that pressure of the end of the season."

Karlsson hadn't scored a goal in his last 20 games coming into Sunday but broke out of that in a big way. His snap shot 19:03 into the second period while Gibson was screened was his first goal since Dec. 13.

Capitals 5, Penguins 3: T.J. Oshie scored the go-ahead goal midway through the third period, Braden Holtby made 33 saves and host Washington beat Pittsburgh to snap their losing streak at four and leapfrog their archrivals into first place.

The Capitals endured a back-and-forth, chippy game to win for just the second time in their past eight games.

Despite being outshot 36-23, Washington put together responses to some potential momentum-crushing Penguins goals. Pittsburgh's Patric Hornqvist and Sidney Crosby scored 26 seconds apart late in the second and Evgeni Malkin had a highlight-reel goal in the third that tied it.

Tom Wilson scored 76 seconds into the third to make it 2-2, two-time Penguins Stanley Cup champion Carl Hagelin put the Capitals up and Oshie shoveled the puck in on a scramble

in front with 9:20 left.

Oilers 4, Kings 2: Connor McDavid had a goal and two assists in his return after missing six games because of a quad injury and Edmonton won at Los Angeles.

Leon Draisaitl scored on the power play, Ryan Nugent-Hopkins had a goal and the Oilers moved ahead of idle Vancouver into second place in the Pacific Division. Mike Smith made 21 saves.

Blues 4, Wild 1: Oskar Sundqvist had a goal and an assist, Jordan Binnington made 32 saves and St. Louis won at Minnesota.

Jordan Kyrou, Brayden Schenn and Ivan Barbashev also scored for the Blues, who have won four straight and retained their spot atop the Western Conference standings.

Sabres 2, Jets 1: Kyle Okposo enjoyed his first two-goal game in 23 months, and host Buffalo continued its playoff push with a victory over Winnipeg.

Okposo scored the go-ahead goal 7:37 into the third period and the Sabres won their fifth in six games. Rookie Jonas Johansson stopped 25 shots to earn his first victory in three NHL starts.

Buffalo's surge has moved it into a tie for fifth with Montreal in the Atlantic Division.

Stars 2, Blackhawks 1: Tyler Seguin scored the tie-breaking goal in the second period and host Dallas beat Chicago.

The Stars' Joe Pavelski opened the scoring in the first period.

Blackhawks rookie Dominik Kubalik tied the game in the second period on the power play.

Islanders 4, Sharks 1: Anders Lee scored twice, Semyon Varlamov made 29 saves and New York won its second straight at Nassau Coliseum, beating San Jose.

Defenseman Devon Toews also scored to help the Islanders move within a point of idle Philadelphia for third place in the tightly contested Metropolitan Division. The reeling Sharks lost their fourth straight.

Flames 4, Red Wings 2: Johnny Gaudreau and Sean Monahan scored in the first period, and Calgary started its road trip by beating Detroit.

Andrew Mangiapane scored the Flames' last two goals, one of which came into an empty net at the end.

Virus may force Italian soccer to play minus fans

Associated Press

ROME — The Italian government is moving toward having soccer matches played behind closed doors in affected areas as authorities try to contain a spreading virus that has made northern Italy the focal point of the outbreak in Europe.

Serie A president Paolo Dal Pinto sent a letter to the government on Monday asking that games no longer be postponed in the affected areas but played without fans in attendance — noting there is little time for make-up dates considering all elite soccer competitions must be completed by May 24 because of the upcoming European Championship.

Sports Minister Vincenzo Spadafora also proposed the closed-door plan to Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte — although no final decision had been made.

"Playing all sports behind closed doors for the next week could be possible, because then fans can more easily stay at home," said Maurizio Casasco, the president of the Italian federation for sports physicians. "But the clubs have to be in agreement.

"There's more than just soccer in Italy. It's an issue that regards all sports."

Four Serie A games scheduled for the previous round on Sunday were postponed, including Inter Milan's game against Sampdoria at San Siro Stadium.

Officials still hadn't pinpointed the ori-

gin of Italy's outbreak and were struggling to contain the number of cases, which by Monday had spread to a half-dozen regions and prompted Austria to temporarily halt rail traffic across its border with Italy.

In South Korea, local soccer authorities indefinitely postponed the start of the 2020 season. The K League made the announcement after an emergency meeting in Seoul as the country grapples with the outbreak. The number of reported cases in South Korea reached 763 on Monday, including seven deaths.

Also in Asia, the Japanese hockey federation canceled its national women's team's games against North America's top players because of the virus.

NBA roundup

LeBron's jumper lifts Lakers past Celtics

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Although LeBron James is still relatively new to the Los Angeles Lakers' rivalry with the Boston Celtics, he relishes the chance to participate in the history and passion behind this series.

When James had the chance Sunday to make another significant mark in this chapter of NBA history, he stepped back and did it with pleasure.

James scored 29 points and put the Lakers ahead on a fallaway jumper with 30 seconds to play, and Los Angeles split its season series with Boston in a 114-112 victory.

James also had nine assists and eight rebounds in another superb all-around game. He missed a tying free throw moments before he coolly nailed the turnaround shot over Jayson Tatum to put the Lakers ahead to stay in their fifth straight win overall.

"I had been setting him up all night with the back-down to the drop step to the baseline," James said. "I figured he would sit on it, thinking I would try it again, so I just went to my back-down, gave a little Dream Shake to the baseline and was able to open up the middle and get my fadeaway."

Raptors 127, Pacers 81: Kyle Lowry and surging Toronto tuned up for their showdown with Milwaukee by pounding visiting Indiana.

Lowry had 16 points and 11 assists, extending his career-best streak of double-doubles to six, and Toronto hammered Indiana 127-81 on Sunday, the most lopsided victory in Raptors history.

Pascal Siakam scored 21 points and Serge Ibaka had 15 points and a season-high 15 rebounds as Toronto led from wire-to-wire and posted its 13th straight home win over the Pacers. The Raptors won for the 17th time in 18 games and extended their home winning streak to nine.

That streak will be tested when Giannis Antetokounmpo and the Bucks come north of the border Tuesday night, the first of three meetings between the teams down the stretch. The NBA leaders have won seven of eight heading into Monday's game at Washington.

"They're a well-coached team, they're a well-oiled machine," Lowry said. "All we can do is worry about ourselves."

Lowry's double-double was his 13th of the season. He's averaging 19.3 points and 10.8 assists over his current six-game run.

Bulls 126, Wizards 117: Coby White scored 33 points to join Michael Jordan as the only Bulls rookies with consecutive 30-point games, and host Chicago overcame Bradley Beal's career-high 53 points to snap an eight-game losing streak.

Zach LaVine added 32 points and broke the franchise record for three-pointers in a season. Thaddeus Young scored 25 points, going 5-for-7 from beyond the arc.

Beal surpassed his previous best of 51 points at Portland on Dec. 5, 2017.

Nuggets 128, Timberwolves 116: Paul Millsap scored a season-high 25 points on 9 of 11 shooting and host Denver bounced back from its first loss in the Northwest Division to beat Minnesota.

Millsap made his first six shots of the game before missing with 54 seconds left in the first half.

Nikola Jokic was nearly as sharp, making all six of his shots in the first half and going 11-for-14 from the field. He finished with 24 points and Jamal Murray had 19. The Nuggets shot 58.9% after hitting 68.2% in the first half.

Kelan Martin had 19 of his career-high 21 points in the first half for the Timberwolves.

Thunder 131, Spurs 103: Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 22 points and 13 rebounds, Steven Adams added 21 points and 14 rebounds and host Oklahoma City rolled past San Antonio.

Luguentz Dort, a rookie who is on a two-way contract, scored 15 points on 6-for-6 shooting, and Chris Paul added 12 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds to help the Thunder win for the 12th time in 15 games. Eight Oklahoma City players scored in double figures — a first for the team since moving from Seattle in 2008.

Pelicans 115, Warriors 101: Zion Williamson had 28 points and seven rebounds, Jrue Holiday scored 11 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter and New Orleans pulled away to win at Golden State.

Nicolo Melli matched his career high with 20 points and six three-pointers, and Brandon Ingram had 17 points and five assists to help the Pelicans win for the fifth time in six games.

Bumgarner admits he competed in rodeos under alias

Associated Press

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Arizona Diamondbacks left-hander Madison Bumgarner has been competing in rodeo events under the alias Mason Saunders and even won \$26,560 in a team-roping competition in December, according to a story published Sunday by The Athletic.

Bumgarner told the website he has discretely competed in rodeos for a while, including in March of last year two days before pitching for the San Francisco Giants in a Cactus League spring training game. He has

been roping since he was 15 or 16 years old and said he's been at it so long that "it's just part of who you are."

The 2014 World Series MVP agreed to an \$85 million, five-year contract with the Diamondbacks in December, about two weeks after winning the rodeo competition in Wickenburg, Ariz.

Bumgarner famously injured his shoulder in 2017 in a dirt bike accident and missed three months of San Francisco's season. He apologized at the time and called it a "stupid" decision that likely violated

his contract, although the Giants are not believed to have pressed the issue with the four-time All-Star.

Diamondbacks general manager Mike Hazen told The Athletic he was "not going to get into discussing specific contract language" when asked about Bumgarner's hobby.

Photos of Bumgarner roping were posted to the Facebook page for Rancho Rio in Wickenburg. Bumgarner — a right-handed roper — said he's often recognized at rodeo events, but he's maintained the alias to keep his profile low. He formed

the Mason Saunders moniker by shortening his first name and adopting his wife's maiden name as the surname.

"Something for my wife to call me when we were out in public to keep people from recognizing me," Bumgarner said. "But you're going to ruin that for me."

Bumgarner disputed a widespread narrative that he signed with Arizona "just to have my horses," but did acknowledge it was a benefit. He also said he may pursue roping more rigorously after his baseball playing days are done.