

4 charged with transporting weapons

2 SEALs died while intercepting vessel suspected of carrying Iranian gear

RICHMOND, Va. — Four foreign nationals were arrested and charged Thursday with transporting suspected Iranian-made weapons on a vessel intercepted by U.S. naval forces in the Arabian Sea last month. Two Navy SEALs died during the mission.

The criminal complaint unsealed Thursday in U.S. District Court in Richmond alleges that the four defendants — who were all carrying Pakistani identification cards — were transporting suspected Iranian-made missile components for the type of weapons used by Houthi rebel forces in recent attacks.

“The flow of missiles and other advanced weaponry from Iran to Houthi rebel forces in Yemen threatens the people and interests of America and our partners in the region,” Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco said in a news release.

U.S. officials said that Navy Special Warfare Operator 1st Class Christopher J. Chambers was boarding the boat on Jan. 11 and slipped into the gap created by high waves between the vessel and the SEALs’ combatant craft. As Chambers fell, Navy Special Warfare Operator 2nd Class Nathan Gage Ingram jumped in to try to save him, according to U.S. officials familiar with what happened.

“Two Navy SEALs tragically lost their lives in the operation that thwarted the defendants charged today from allegedly smuggling Iranian-made weapons that the Houthi could have used to target American forces and threaten freedom of navigation and a vital artery for commerce,” Monaco said.

Attorney General Merrick B. Garland pledged that the Justice Department “will use every legal authority to hold accountable those who facilitate the

flow of weapons from Iran to Houthi rebel forces, Hamas, and other groups that endanger the security of the United States and our allies.”

Muhammad Pahlawan is charged with attempting to smuggle advanced missile components, including a warhead he is accused of knowing would be used by the Houthi rebels against commercial and naval vessels in the Red Sea and surrounding waters. He is also charged with providing false information to U.S. Coast Guard officers during the boarding of the vessel.

Pahlawan’s co-defendants — Mohammad Mazhar, Ghufuran Ullah and Izhar Muhammad — were also charged with providing false information.

Pahlawan’s attorney, Assistant Supervisory Federal Public Defender Amy Austin, said Pahlawan had an initial appearance in U.S. District Court

Thursday and is scheduled to be back in court Tuesday for a detention hearing. She declined to comment on the case.

According to prosecutors, Navy forces boarded a small, unflagged vessel, described as a dhow, and encountered 14 people on the ship on the night of Jan. 11, in the Arabian Sea off the Somali coast.

Navy forces searched the dhow and found what prosecutors say were Iranian-made weapons, including components for medium range ballistic missiles and anti-ship cruise missiles.

All 14 sailors on the dhow were brought onto the USS Lewis B. Puller after Navy forces determined the dhow was not seaworthy. They were then brought back to Virginia, where criminal charges were filed against four and material witness warrants were filed against the other 10.

Netanyahu seeks open-ended control over Gaza affairs

Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip — Israel seeks open-ended control over security and civilian affairs in the Gaza Strip, according to a long-awaited postwar plan by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. It was swiftly rejected Friday by Palestinian leaders and runs counter to Washington’s vision for the war-ravaged enclave.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu presented the two-page document to his security Cabinet late Thursday for approval.

Deep disagreements over Gaza’s future have led to increasingly public friction between Israel and the United States, its closest ally. The Biden administration seeks eventual Palestinian governance in Gaza and the Israeli-occupied West Bank as a precursor to Palestinian statehood, an outcome vehemently opposed by Netanyahu and his right-wing government. Netanyahu’s plan envisions hand-picked Palestinians in Gaza administering the territory.

Separately, cease-fire efforts

appeared to gain traction, with mediators to present a new proposal at an expected high-level meeting this weekend in Paris. The U.S., Egypt and Qatar have been struggling for weeks to find a formula that could halt Israel’s devastating offensive in Gaza, but now face an unofficial deadline as the Muslim holy month of Ramadan approaches.

In Gaza, Israeli airstrikes in the center and south of the territory killed at least 68 Palestinians, including children and women, overnight and into Fri-

day, health officials and an Associated Press journalist said. Another 24 bodies remained trapped under the rubble.

At a hospital in the central town of Deir al-Balah, relatives wept over bodies laid out in burial shrouds in the courtyard, and a man cradled a dead infant.

Gaza health officials said the Palestinian death toll since the start of the war rose to more than 29,500, with close to 70,000 people wounded. The death toll amounts to close to 1.3% of Gaza’s population of 2.3 million.

Sweden, Hungary smooth over tensions ahead of NATO vote

Associated Press

BUDAPEST, Hungary — Nearly two years after Sweden formally applied to join NATO, its membership now hinges on convincing one country — Viktor Orbán's Hungary — to formally ratify its bid to join the military alliance.

Hungary's nationalist government has delayed holding a vote on Sweden's membership for more than 18 months, creating tension with Stockholm and drawing mounting pressure from its allies to finally move forward on ratification.

Yet Orbán's party this week announced it will vote on ratifying Sweden's NATO bid on Monday, suggesting the delays — and the diplomatic tensions — could be drawing to a close. While neither Hungarian nor Swedish officials have specified what led to Hungary dropping its objections, there are indications that the two countries are

closing in on an agreement for Hungary to acquire Swedish-built military equipment.

Jens Wenzel, a Sweden-based defense analyst with Nordic Defence Analysis, a consultancy, said that Hungary's delays in ratifying Sweden's NATO bid has in part been a form of pressure on Stockholm "to come up with some kind of needed equipment acquisition deals" for the Hungarian military.

"Sweden has a very strong defense industry, and there is probably an interest from Hungary to acquire some of that defense material," he said. "Viktor Orbán wants to gain the maximum out of utilizing this delay just before we close the (ratification) deal on Monday, so deals probably could be struck with Sweden in terms of arms supplies."

All of NATO's 31 other member countries have lent their

support to Sweden's membership, and speculation on the reasons for Hungary's enduring resistance has abounded.

Orbán says his government is in favor of bringing Sweden into NATO, but that lawmakers in the prime minister's governing Fidesz party remain unconvinced — offended by "blatant lies" from some Swedish politicians that he says have excoriated the quality of Hungary's democracy.

As for specific demands from Orbán's government on how Sweden should mend the hurt feelings, few have been forthcoming.

But Wenzel, the defense analyst, said there is interest in Hungary in acquiring, among other equipment, Swedish-built Gripen fighter jets.

Hungary currently leases 14 JAS 39 Gripen jets from Stockholm, and has expressed its intention to expand the fleet.

Putin flies in nuclear bomber before vote

Associated Press

MOSCOW — Russia's President Vladimir Putin on Thursday took a co-pilot's seat in a nuclear-capable strategic bomber on a flight that appeared aimed at bolstering his image ahead of next month's election he's all but certain to win.

Putin's 30-minute flight in a Tu-160M supersonic strategic bomber also seemed intended to send a reminder of Russia's nuclear might amid soaring tensions with the West over the fighting in Ukraine.

Putin, 71, who is running as an independent candidate, relies on a tight control over Russia's political system that he has established during 24 years in power. Friday's death of imprisoned Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny sent a chilling reminder of the Kremlin's ruthless crackdown on dissent and dealt a heavy blow to the beleaguered Russian opposition.

On Thursday, Putin, clad in a flight suit, boarded the warplane at a snow-covered airfield of an aircraft-making plant in the Volga River city of Kazan that has built the heavy bombers since the Soviet times.

The plant has received state orders to produce a modernized version of the Tu-160 that first flew in the 1980s and was code-named Blackjack by NATO.

The aircraft Putin flew was one of the first such revamped bombers built, equipped with new engines and avionics and designated Tu-160M.

Speaking to reporters after the flight, Putin praised the new aircraft as "excellent," noting that it has big improvements compared to the initial version.

US, South Korea fly interception drills following North Korea's missile tests

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea and the United States flew advanced stealth fighters in a joint missile-interception drill Friday over the Korean Peninsula, South Korea's air force said, an apparent response to a spate of weapons tests this year by rival North Korea.

North Korea has conducted six rounds of missile tests so far this year, most of them reportedly involving cruise missiles that typically fly at a low altitude to overcome opponents' missile defenses. Analysts say

that in the event of a conflict, North Korea aims to use cruise missiles to strike U.S. aircraft carriers as well as U.S. military bases in Japan.

South Korea's air force said in a statement the drill on Friday involved stealth F-35A fighter jets from both countries and other fighter jets from South Korea.

It said the U.S. F-35As were deployed in South Korea on Wednesday from Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan.

North Korea has ramped up its weapons tests since 2022 in what experts call an attempt to

increase its leverage in future diplomacy. South Korea and the U.S. have responded by expanding their military exercises and trilateral training involving Japan.

On the sidelines of a G20 meeting in Rio De Janeiro on Thursday, the top diplomats from South Korea, the U.S. and Japan agreed to strengthen their joint response capability against North Korea's evolving nuclear threats and coordinate to block the North's financing of its nuclear program, according to South Korea's Foreign Ministry.

Schumer visits Ukraine amid aid squabble

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer is in Ukraine to try to reassure President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and other officials that Congress will deliver another round of U.S. aid, even as a package that would provide \$60 billion is stalled in the U.S. House.

Schumer's surprise trip Friday comes at a perilous time for Ukraine. Zelenskyy has said that delays in aid from the U.S. and other Western countries are creating an opening for Russia to make advances on the battlefield, with Ukrainian forces running dangerously low on ammunition and weaponry.

Lawmakers from both parties have traveled to Europe in the last week to promise that the United States will not desert Ukraine and other European allies. Yet the path ahead is far from certain. The Senate passed a \$95 billion package to aid Ukraine, Israel and Taiwan last

week, but House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., has not yet put forward a plan for passing it in the House.

In an interview before his trip, Schumer, D-N.Y., told The Associated Press that he plans to tell Ukrainian officials that "we're going to win this fight, and America is not abandoning them."

"I feel I have to be there because it's so crucial," Schumer said. "We are right at a vortex, a critical turning point in the whole West. And if we abandon Ukraine, the consequences for America are severe."

The Senate passage of the aid package last week came after the collapse of a broader framework that would have combined the aid with changes to American border policies. The Senate quickly moved ahead with just the foreign aid portion, passing it on a 70-29 vote, with 22 Republicans in support.

But GOP opponents of aiding Ukraine are a vocal faction in

the House, where Republicans have narrow control and former President Donald Trump, the front-runner for the GOP presidential nomination, holds more sway. Trump has opposed the aid package and urged Republicans to vote against it.

Schumer is in the western city of Lviv where he and four other Democratic senators are expected to meet with Zelenskyy and other top officials. Sens. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, Michael Bennet of Colorado, Maggie Hassan of New Hampshire and Jack Reed of Rhode Island are joining him on the trip. Reed is the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The visit comes days after senators and House lawmakers from both parties traveled to the Munich Security Conference to try to assuage European leaders, including Zelenskyy, who are closely watching the U.S. developments. The conference coincided with Ukraine with-

drawing troops from the eastern city of Avdiivka after months of intense combat.

Johnson is caught between a wide swath of his Republican members who support the Ukraine aid and a vocal faction on the right who strongly oppose it. Some House Republicans have threatened to try to remove him from his job if he puts the aid package up for a vote. He has said he "won't be rushed" into a decision.

House Republicans have floated possible ways to push the aid to passage, including by scaling it back, but no plan has so far emerged. It remains unclear how Johnson — only months into the job after replacing ousted Speaker Kevin McCarthy — will navigate the deep divisions within his party.

Republicans who oppose the aid say the money is better spent in the U.S. and it should be paired with legislation to curtail record numbers of crossings at the southern border.

Informant who allegedly lied about Bidens arrested

The Washington Post

The FBI informant charged with telling lies about President Biden and his son Hunter was rearrested Thursday in Las Vegas, apparently out of concern he might flee — just days after a federal magistrate decided he could be released on bond.

Alexander Smirnov, whose arrest last week surprised Republican and Democratic lawmakers alike, was taken into custody again Thursday in his lawyer's office. Prosecutors had argued that Smirnov's claims of having significant relationships with Russian intelligence operatives, as well as millions of dollars at his disposal, meant that he was a flight risk.

In a court filing, the defense lawyers called their client's

rearrest "bizarre" and unnecessary and ask that he be released.

Smirnov was indicted by a Los Angeles grand jury in a case brought by special counsel David Weiss, who is overseeing a separate investigation and prosecution of Hunter Biden for gun and tax charges. A dual U.S.-Israeli citizen, Smirnov is charged with lying to the FBI in 2020 when he claimed to have knowledge of corruption by Joe Biden and his son.

The accusations by Smirnov, memorialized in an FBI document, were championed by congressional Republicans last year as a central part of their effort to impeach President Biden and accuse his family of corruption related to the Ukrainian firm Burisma.

Dismissal urged in Trump classified documents case

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Former President Donald Trump urged a Florida judge to dismiss the criminal case charging him with illegally retaining classified documents, claiming in part that presidential immunity protects him from prosecution even as that sweeping argument has so far failed in federal appeals courts in a separate case.

In one of a slew of motions attacking the case brought by special counsel Jack Smith, Trump's lawyers Thursday echoed arguments that were rejected by a federal appeals court this month in his 2020 election interference case in Washington. Trump has asked the Supreme Court to intervene in that case as the Republican

presidential primary front-runner seeks to delay the trial until after the November election.

Trump's lawyers wrote that the classified documents charges turn on his alleged decision to designate the papers as "personal" records under the Presidential Records Act, and argued that he cannot be prosecuted since that was an "official act" made while he was still in the White House.

Washington's federal appeals court in its decision this month was unsparing in its repudiation of Trump's novel claim that former presidents enjoy absolute immunity for actions that fall within their official job duties. But Trump's lawyers argued that the appeals court's decision was wrong.

AT&T: Cell outage incident not result of a cyberattack

Associated Press

AT&T said the hourslong outage to its U.S. cellphone network Thursday appeared to be the result of a technical error, not a malicious attack.

The outage knocked out cellphone service for thousands of its users across the U.S. starting early Thursday before it was restored. AT&T blamed the incident on an error in coding, without elaborating.

"Based on our initial review, we believe that today's outage was caused by the application and execution of an incorrect process used as we were expanding our network, not a cyber attack," the Dallas-based company said.

Outage tracker Downdetector noted that outages, which began at about 3:30 a.m. ET, peaked at around 73,000 reported incidents. AT&T had more than 58,000 outages around noon ET, in locations including

Houston, Atlanta and Chicago. The carrier is the country's largest, with more than 240 million subscribers. By 9 p.m. ET, the reports on AT&T's network were fewer than 1,000.

Cricket Wireless, which is owned by AT&T, had more than 9,000 outages at one point but the reports had also tailed off later in the afternoon. Users of other carriers, including Verizon and T-Mobile, also reported issues but those companies said their networks were operating normally and the problems were likely stemming from customers trying to connect to AT&T users.

During the outage, some iPhone users saw SOS messages displayed in the status bar on their cellphones. The message indicates that the device is having trouble connecting to the cellular provider's network, but it can make emergency calls through other carrier networks,

according to Apple Support.

The Federal Communications Commission contacted AT&T about the outage and the Department of Homeland Security and FBI were also looking into it, National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said.

"Should we learn of any malicious activity we will respond accordingly," the FBI said.

The outage also raised concerns on Capitol Hill.

"We are working to assess today's disruption in order to gain a complete understanding of what went wrong and what can be done to prevent future incidents like this from occurring," said a statement issued by Cathy McMorris Rodgers, a Washington Republican who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and Ohio Republican Bob Latta, chair of the Communications and Technology Subcommittee.

Private US lander on the surface of the moon

Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — A private lander on Thursday made the first U.S. touchdown on the moon in more than 50 years, but managed just a weak signal back until flight controllers scrambled to gain better contact.

Despite the spotty communication, Intuitive Machines, the company that built and managed the craft, confirmed that it had landed upright. But it did not provide additional details, including whether the lander had reached its intended destination near the moon's south pole. The company ended its live webcast soon after identifying a lone, weak signal from the lander.

"What we can confirm, without a doubt, is our equipment is on the surface of the moon," mission director Tim Crain reported as tension built in the company's Houston control center.

Added Intuitive Machines CEO Steve Altemus: "I know this was a nail-biter, but we are on the surface and we are transmitting. Welcome to the moon."

Data was finally starting to stream in, according to a company announcement two hours after touchdown.

The landing put the U.S. back on the surface for the first time since NASA's famed Apollo moonwalkers.

Intuitive Machines also became the first private business to pull off a lunar landing, a feat achieved by only five countries. Another U.S. company, Astrobot Technology, gave it a shot last month, but never made it to the moon, and the lander crashed back to Earth. Both companies are part of a NASA-supported program to kick-start the lunar economy.

EA's college football game to prevent adding players who reject NIL opt-in

Associated Press

Gamers will be blocked from manually adding players to EA Sports' new college football game who decide not to accept an offer to have their name, image and likeness used in it, the video-game developer said Thursday.

EA Sports revealed the safeguard in its announcement that it has begun reaching out to athletes to pay them to be featured in the video game that's set to launch this summer.

EA Sports said players who opt in to the game will receive a minimum of \$600 and a copy of EA Sports College Football 25. There will also be opportunities

for them to earn money by promoting the game.

Players who opt out will be left off the game entirely.

EA Sports didn't say in its email to The Associated Press how it plans to prevent people playing the game from adding — or creating — the opt-outs. But gamers will still be able to create their own players, a staple of past college sports video games that allowed people to depict themselves alongside their favorite athletes.

The developers' yearly college football games stopped being made in 2013 amid lawsuits over using players' likeness without compensation. The

games featured players that might not have had real-life names but resembled that season's stars in almost every other way. That major hurdle was alleviated with the approval of NIL deals for college athletes.

EA Sports has been working on its new game since at least 2021, when it announced it would pay players to be featured in it.

Ramogi Huma, executive director of the National College Players Association, said his focus for years has been on getting athletes opportunities like this. From that standpoint, he sees the opt-in offer as a major milestone.

MLB players voice concerns about new see-through pants

Associated Press

PEORIA, Ariz. — MLB's new uniform reveal hasn't gone very well. Now some of the rampant criticism has moved below the belt.

Major League Baseball Players Association deputy executive director Bruce Meyer confirmed on Thursday that the organization is relaying concerns from players to MLB about the new pants, which are somewhat see-through. The complaints — first reported by ESPN — are part of broader scorn for the new uniforms, which are designed by Nike and manufactured by Fanatics.

"I know everyone hates them," Phillies shortstop Trea Turner said last week. "We all liked what we had. We understand business, but I think ev-

eryone wanted to keep it the same way, for the most part, with some tweaks here or there."

MLB officials say the new uniforms improve mobility by providing 25% more stretch and also will dry 28% faster. The lettering, sleeve emblems and numbering are less bulky in an attempt to make uniforms more breathable and comfortable.

Commissioner Rob Manfred previously said he expects criticism to fade, but that was before the below-the-belt complaints.

Some MLB players don't know if they like the new pants — because they don't have them yet. The San Diego Padres played their first spring training game against the Los

Angeles Dodgers on Thursday in last year's pants.

Veteran pitcher Joe Musgrove wasn't sure when the Padres were supposed to get their new pants.

"Hopefully by Opening Day," Musgrove said. "We tried stuff on last year, we tried stuff on again in spring, but the samples they gave us, they didn't have the proper length for anybody, so it's hard to gauge if they fit right or not."

Musgrove shrugged off the controversy, saying that it was far from the most important thing he's worried about this spring, even if it's a little annoying.

"Pants are pants — we're going to wear them," he said. "If they don't fit right, you'll deal with it."

Woods' son shoots 86 in pre-qualifier

Associated Press

HOBE SOUND, Fla. — The PGA Tour will have to wait for the 15-year-old son of Tiger Woods. In a pre-qualifier for the Cognizant Classic on Thursday, Charlie Woods took a 12 on one hole and shot 86.

The teenager didn't make a birdie at Lost Lake Golf Club and tied for 110th among the 112 players who turned in their cards.

The top five and ties from each of four pre-qualifier sites advance to the Monday qualifier, from which four players earn a spot in the Cognizant Classic at PGA National.

Charlie Woods has played the 36-hole PNC Championship with his father the last four years in a scramble format.

He ran into trouble early with a pair of bogeys and a double bogey on the par-5 fifth hole. But it was on the seventh, with water down the right side and water behind the green, where the teen's hopes ended for good. He made a 12.

Woods made the turn in 47 and had two bogeys and a double bogey on the back for an 86. The leading score was a 65, and it took a 67 to advance.

Woods played with Olin Browne Jr., who qualified for the U.S. Open last summer in Los Angeles. The son of three-time PGA Tour winner Olin Browne shot 72.

The pre-qualifier comes with a \$250 entry fee for players with no tour status.

Punter Matt Araiza, no longer facing rape lawsuit, signs with Kansas City

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The Kansas City Chiefs are signing punter Matt Araiza, who was dropped from a lawsuit in December that had been filed by a woman who alleged she was raped by San Diego State football players in 2021.

The signing was announced by Araiza's agent, Joe Linta, and confirmed a short while later by the team.

"I am proud and honored to sign a contract with the Chiefs," Araiza said in a statement. "I am

thrilled to be able to continue my NFL career. I want to thank my family, who have been my rock, and my many friends who have been unwavering in their support. I am excited to begin the next phase of my career with the Super Bowl champs!"

Araiza earned the nickname the "Punt God" at San Diego State while earning All-America honors during the 2021 season, when his massive kicks helped the Aztecs go a school-best 12-2 his senior season. He was drafted by the Buffalo Bills

in the sixth round of the 2022 NFL draft, but he was released two days after the woman filed her lawsuit.

She alleged that she was 17 and attending an off-campus party in October 2021 when Araiza, then 21, had sex with her in a side yard at an off-campus house. The woman then claimed he brought her to a bedroom, where a group of men took turns raping her, but Araiza has said he never entered the home during the party and left before the alleged rape occurred.

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Mavericks top Suns for 7th straight win

Associated Press

DALLAS — Luka Doncic scored 41 points, Kyrie Irving added 29 and the Dallas Mavericks beat the Phoenix Suns 123-113 on Thursday night, extending their winning streak to seven games in the return from the All-Star break for both teams.

Dallas pulled even with Phoenix in the standings at 33-23 and took the head-to-head tiebreaker with a 2-1 record in a pairing of teams battling for a guaranteed spot in the playoffs.

Doncic had 11 assists and nine rebounds matched against fellow All-Stars Devin Booker, who scored 35 points, and Kevin Durant, who had 23 on an ordinary shooting night for the 14-time All-Star. The Suns had won five of six before the break.

Dallas extended its longest winning streak of the season in the first visit from new majority owner Miriam Adelson. The widow of casino mogul Sheldon Adelson was sitting courtside. Her company, Las Vegas Sands Corp., finalized the deal with Mark Cuban in December.

Nuggets 130, Wizards 110: Nikola Jokic became the third player in NBA history to record at least one triple-double against every opponent in the league, going 10 for 10 from the floor and finishing with 21 points, 19 rebounds and 15 assists in host Denver's victory over Washington.

Jokic had his 16th triple-double of the season, second in the league to Domantas Sabonis' 19. He nearly got there in the first half, with 10 points, 14 rebounds and nine assists. LeBron James and Russell Westbrook are the other players with a triple-double against every opponent.

Michael Porter had 22 points and 11 rebounds for the defending champion Nuggets, who returned from the All-Star break and snapped a three-game skid.

Kyle Kuzma had 31 points and 13 rebounds for the Wizards, who matched their worst skid of the season with their ninth

straight loss.

Warriors 128, Lakers 110: Stephen Curry scored 32 points, hitting six 3-pointers, and had eight assists, leading Golden State Warriors past a Los Angeles Lakers team missing LeBron James.

With his 6,000th career assist, Curry became the eighth player in NBA history with at least 23,000 points and 6,000 assists — joining James, Russell Westbrook, Kobe Bryant, James Harden, Oscar Robertson, Jerry West and John Havlicek.

Anthony Davis had 27 points and 15 rebounds for the Lakers. They were without James because of a left ankle injury that also sidelined the 39-year-old forward Feb. 14 at Utah before the break.

Kings 127, Spurs 122: Domantas Sabonis had his NBA-leading 19th triple-double with 22 points, 11 assists and 11 rebounds, De'Aaron Fox added 28 points and nine assists and host Sacramento beat San Antonio.

Sabonis was a game-time decision due to illness, then ended up with his fourth triple-double in five games. He has had at least a double-double in 38 straight games.

Kevin Huerter and Malik Monk each added 21 points.

Devin Vassell led San Antonio with 32 points, and Victor Wembanyama had 19 points, 13 rebounds, five steals and four blocks. The Spurs lost for the ninth time in 10 games.

Celtics 129, Bulls 112: Derrick White scored 28 points, Jayson Tatum added 25 and NBA-leading Boston beat host Chicago for its season-high seventh straight victory.

White and Tatum each made five of Boston's 23 3-pointers. Jaylen Brown scored 21 points, and the Celtics came away with another convincing victory after pounding Brooklyn by 50 prior to the All-Star break.

Boston went from leading by 16 to trailing by three at halftime before regaining control in the

third. The Celtics outscored the Bulls 37-21 in the quarter.

Nikola Vucevic led Chicago with 22 points and 14 rebounds.

Thunder 129, Clippers 107: Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 31 points and host Oklahoma City beat Los Angeles in a matchup of Western Conference contenders.

Lu Dort added 19 points, Jalen Williams had 18 and Chet Holmberg 17 for Oklahoma City. The Thunder won the season series with Los Angeles and improved to 38-17 to move a game behind Western Conference-leading Minnesota.

Gordon Hayward played 14 minutes in his first game with the Thunder since being acquired in a trade with Charlotte. He missed both of his shots and had four rebounds.

Kawhi Leonard scored 20 points and Nolan Powell added 19 points for Los Angeles.

Knicks 110, 76ers 96: Jalen Brunson had 21 points and 12 assists with Spike Lee cheering from courtside and visiting New York spoiled former Villanova star Kyle Lowry's 76ers debut.

Bojan Bogdanovic scored 22 points for New York. Josh Hart had 18 points and 12 rebounds and Precious Achiuwa added 18 points and 11 rebounds.

All-Star Tyrese Maxey led the 76ers with 35 points. Maxey made 11 of 24 shots but had little other offensive help, a common theme for the Sixers in MVP Joel Embiid's absence.

Pacers 129, Pistons 115: All-Star point guard Tyrese Haliburton had 25 points and 13 assists to help host Indiana beat NBA-worst Detroit.

Coming off a 32-point night Sunday in the NBA All-Star Game on his home floor at Gainbridge Fieldhouse, Haliburton had his 15th game of the season with at least 25 points and 10 assists. Pascal Siakam added 20 points for Indiana.

Cade Cunningham had 30 points and eight assists for Detroit. The Pistons have lost four

straight to fall to 8-47.

Magic 116, Cavaliers 109: Moritz Wagner had 22 points, younger brother Franz added 14 and visiting Orlando handed Cleveland just its third loss in 21 games.

The Cavs, who have been the NBA's hottest team since mid-December, played without leading scorer and All-Star Donovan Mitchell. Mitchell sat out with an unspecified illness.

Orlando played the final 22 minutes without starting guard Jalen Suggs, who went out midway through the third quarter with a head injury and didn't return.

Pelicans 127, Rockets 105: Zion Williamson had 27 points and nine assists and host New Orleans beat struggling Houston for its eighth victory in nine games.

CJ McCollum scored 28 points, Jonas Valanciunas had 20 points and 14 rebounds, and Herb Jones had 17 points and seven steals for New Orleans.

Alperen Sengun had 20 points and nine rebounds for Houston. The Rockets have lost six of seven.

Hornets 115, Jazz 107: Miles Bridges had 26 points and 14 rebounds, Grant Williams scored 24 points and visiting Charlotte beat Utah for its fourth straight victory following a 10-game slid.

Brandon Miller added 16 points and Tre Mann had 13. The Hornets made 20 of 42 3-pointers and upped their record to 14-41.

Lauri Markkanen scored 21 points for Utah. The Jazz have lost five in a row and 11 of 14.

Raptors 121, Nets 93: Gary Trent Jr. scored 25 points, Scottie Barnes had 18 points and 12 rebounds and Toronto spoiled Brooklyn interim coach Kevin Ollie's debut.

Immanuel Quickley had 24 points for Toronto. RJ Barrett added 12 points and matched a season high with seven assists.

Mikal Bridges led Brooklyn with 21 points.

Washington State beats No. 4 Arizona

Associated Press

TUCSON, Ariz. — Jaylen Wells had a 4-point play in the final minute and scored 27 points to help No. 21 Washington State beat No. 4 Arizona 77-74 on Thursday night for its eighth straight victory.

Washington State (21-6, 12-4 Pac-12) won in its first game in the AP Top 25 since the 2007-08 season and leapfrogged the Wildcats (20-6, 11-4) for first place in the conference race.

Arizona's Caleb Love drove to the hoop for a layup and got fouled with 51.2 seconds left, hitting the free throw to complete the 3-point play for a 74-71 lead. Wells responded on the next possession with a corner 3 — also while being fouled — and made the free throw for a 4-point play and a 75-74 lead with 24.6 seconds left.

The Wildcats had a chance to win, but Love was called for traveling after slipping and fall-

ing on a drive to the basket with 4.7 seconds left. Wells hit two free throws with 2.7 seconds left for a 77-74 lead that sealed it.

Arizona lost for the first time at home this season after winning 13 straight. Love led the Wildcats with 27 points and Umar Ballo had 16 points and 11 rebounds.

No. 3 Purdue 96, Rutgers 68: Zach Edey scored 25 points on near-perfect shooting, Camden Heide added a career-high

18 and host Purdue routed Rutgers.

Edey was 7 of 8 from the field and made 11 free throws without a miss. He also had seven rebounds. Heide was 7 for 7 from the field, making four 3-pointers, after entering the game averaging 3.0 points. Lance Jones added 17 points for the Boiler-makers (24-3, 13-3 Big Ten).

Jeremiah Williams scored 12 points for Rutgers (14-12, 6-9). Noah Fernandes had 11.

No. 14 Indiana shuts down Iowa star Clark in victory

Associated Press

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — Sara Scalia scored 25 points, All-America center Mackenzie Holmes had 24 points and nine rebounds, and No. 14 Indiana frustrated Iowa superstar Caitlin Clark in an 86-69 win over the fourth-ranked Hawkeyes on Thursday night.

Playing for the first time since she broke the NCAA women's career scoring record, Clark finished with 24 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds but struggled from the field. She was 8 of 26 overall and 3 of 16 on 3-pointers while scoring just four points in the second half.

Clark now has 3,593 points and is 57 away from her next milestone, Lynette Woodard's major women's college scoring record, with three games left in the regular season.

Indiana, the defending regular-season Big Ten champion, had something to prove after Monday night's loss at Illinois, and the Hoosiers (22-4, 13-3) didn't disappoint. Yarden Garzon made three 3s and finished with 15 points.

No. 1 South Carolina 72, Alabama 44: Ashlyn Watkins had 14 points and 10 rebounds and host South Carolina claimed a share of its third straight Southeastern Conference regular-season title in coach Dawn Staley's 600th career win.

The Gamecocks (26-0, 13-0 SEC) cruised without top scorer and rebounder Kamilla Cardoso, who felt sore following a win over Georgia and didn't play.

Bree Hall had 13 points and Tessa Johnson added 12 for South Carolina.

Jessica Timmons led Alabama (20-8, 7-6) with 20 points.

No. 2 Ohio State 82, Penn State 69: Jacy Sheldon scored 20 points, Cotie McMahon and Celeste Taylor added 16 apiece as visiting Ohio State won its 14th straight game.

The Buckeyes (23-3, 14-1 Big Ten) never trailed.

Ashley Owusu scored 22 points and Ali Brigham and Leilani Kapinus added 10 apiece for the Lady Lions (16-11, 7-9).

North Carolina 80, No. 6 N.C. State 70: Lexi Donarski scored 23 points to power host North Carolina past North Carolina State.

The Tar Heels (18-9, 10-5 Atlantic Coast Conference) also got 13 points and 11 rebounds from Alyssa Ustby, a career-high 12 points from Alexandra Zelaya, 12 points and seven rebounds from Maria Gakdeng and 11 points from Indya Nivar.

Aziaha James led the Wolfpack (23-4, 11-4) with 24 points.

No. 12 UCLA 82, No. 18 Utah 52: Londynn Jones had career highs of 23 points and seven 3-pointers, and host UCLA

avenged an earlier overtime loss to Utah.

Lauren Betts added 14 points and six rebounds and Charisma Osborne had 13 points, five rebounds and seven assists for the Bruins (21-5, 10-5 Pac-12).

Alissa Pili had 20 points and 11 rebounds for the Utes (19-8, 9-6).

No. 13 LSU 71, Auburn 66: Angel Reese had 25 points and 20 rebounds for her 17th double-double of the season, Last-Tear Poa added 13 points and host LSU beat Auburn.

Reese was 8 of 13 from the field and 9 of 11 from the free throw line. Flau'jae Johnson added 11 points off the bench for LSU (23-4, 10-3 SEC).

Honesty Scott-Grayson scored 28 points and made a career-high five 3-pointers for Auburn (16-10, 5-8).

No. 16 Gonzaga 74, San Francisco 48: Yvonne Ejim scored 20 points, Brynna Maxwell added 18 and Gonzaga extended its overall winning streak to 21 games and its home winning streak to 33 games.

Eliza Hollingsworth added 12 points and Kaylynne Truong had 10 for the Bulldogs (27-2, 14-0 West Coast Conference).

Cami Fulcher had 14 points to lead the Dons (11-15, 7-6).

Duke 58, No. 17 Syracuse 45: Kennedy Brown scored 12 points, Regan Richardson add-

ed 11, and Duke (17-9, 9-6 ACC) halted Syracuse's five-game win streak. Syracuse's Dyaisha Fair, who entered with 3,257 career points, scored 22 on 7-of-25 shooting.

Georgia Woolley added 11 points for Syracuse (22-5, 12-4).

No. 19 Notre Dame 74, Clemson 47: Sonia Citron scored 16 points on 5-of-6 shooting, Maddy Westbeld had a double-double and host Notre Dame dominated the middle quarters in a win over Clemson.

The Irish trailed by two points after one quarter, but led 59-36 entering the fourth. Westbeld had 13 points and 12 rebounds for Notre Dame (20-6, 10-5 Atlantic Coast Conference).

Ruby Whitehorn had 14 points and 10 rebounds for Clemson (11-16, 4-11).

No. 20 Louisville 80, Georgia Tech 62: Sydney Taylor scored 23 of her season-high 31 points in the first half, Jayda Curry added 13 points and visiting Louisville won its 11th straight in the series.

Taylor surpassed her previous season high in the first half with 7-for-11 shooting from the field, including 5 of 8 from 3-point distance, giving Louisville (22-6, 11-4 ACC) a 43-28 lead.

Kara Dunn finished with 17 points and Tonie Morgan added 16 for Georgia Tech (15-13, 6-10).

Aho, Hurricanes slip past Panthers 1-0

Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — Sebastian Aho scored with 18.9 seconds left, helping Pyotr Kochetkov and the Carolina Hurricanes beat the Florida Panthers 1-0 on Thursday night.

Kochetkov stopped 44 shots in his third shutout of the season. Carolina has won four straight and six of its past seven games.

Florida had won 11 straight road games, one short of tying the NHL record.

Aho lifted Carolina to the win in this one when he beat Sergei Bobrovsky after a shot attempt by Andrei Svechnikov was blocked before it could get to the net. Bobrovsky finished with 28 saves.

Red Wings 2, Avalanche 1 (OT): Patrick Kane scored at 3:42 of overtime to give host Detroit the win over Colorado.

Red Wings captain Dylan Larkin dropped a pass to Kane, who whipped a quick shot from the top of the hash marks past Avalanche goalie Justus Annunen.

Nathan MacKinnon scored for the Avalanche. Larkin had Detroit's other goal.

The victory ended the Red Wings' 10-game losing streak against the Avalanche. Detroit had not beaten Colorado in nearly eight years. The Red Wings' last win over the Avalanche was 5-3 in Detroit on Feb. 27, 2016.

Annunen made 28 saves while Detroit goaltender Alex Lyon stopped 30 shots.

Flames 3, Bruins 2 (OT): Nazem Kadri scored an unassisted goal 3:56 into overtime to lead host Calgary to the win over Boston.

Kadri took the puck up ice on a 3-on-1 and fired a shot into the far corner past Linus Ullmark just seconds after Jakob Markstrom stopped David Pastrnak at the other end.

Oliver Kyllington and Martin Pospisil also scored for Calgary and Markstrom made 32 saves.

Charlie Coyle scored both goals for Boston, which extended its road point streak to 11 games. Ullmark stopped 27 shots.

Maple Leafs 7, Golden Knights 3: Auston Matthews scored again to continue his sizzling surge, Max Domi had two goals and visiting Toronto beat Vegas for the Leafs' sixth straight win.

Jake McCabe, David Kampf, John Tavares and Pontus Holmberg also scored for Toronto. Martin Jones had 23 saves.

Matthews stretched his goal streak to five games with 10 goals and 13 points over that stretch. On Wednesday at Arizona, Matthews became the fastest U.S.-born player to reach 50 goals in a season, reaching that mark in 54 games. He has an NHL-best 52 goals this season.

Jonathan Marchessault had a goal and assist for the Golden Knights, and William Karlsson and Michael Amadio each scored a goal.

Rangers 5, Devils 1: Alexis Lafreniere scored twice, Artemi Panarin had three assists and New York beat New Jersey for its ninth straight win to tie the team's longest streak in eight seasons.

Igor Shesterkin made 39 saves and picked up his first assist of the season as the Rangers moved a win away from tying their longest winning streak in franchise history. They had 10-game runs in 1972-73 and 1939-40.

Mika Zibanejad scored a power-play goal, linemate Chris Kreider got his 29th of the season and Vincent Trocheck tallied late for New York.

Jack Hughes broke up Shesterkin's bid for a second shutout this season with 2:07 to play. Nico Daws made 13 saves for New Jersey, which lost its second straight.

Blues 4, Islanders 0: Pavel Buchnevich and Brandon Saad combined for three goals in a 32-second span in the second

period, sending host St. Louis to the victory over New York.

Buchnevich also scored midway through the third, finishing his fourth career hat trick. Robert Thomas had three assists, and Jordan Kyrou had two.

Jordan Binnington made 38 saves to earn career win No. 137, moving him into a tie with Curtis Joseph for third on the franchise wins list. It was Binnington's third shutout of the season and No. 15 for his career.

Semyon Varlamov made 21 saves for the Islanders, who fell to 1-2-2 in their past five games.

Kraken 5, Canucks 2: Jared McCann had a goal and three assists, Jordan Eberle added two goals and an assist and host Seattle handed NHL-leading Vancouver its fourth straight loss.

Vince Dunn and Justin Schultz also scored for Seattle, which took the season series against their Pacific Northwest rival and is 3-0-1 since a 2-7-1 skid. Philipp Grubauer made 19 saves in his first home start and second overall since suffering a lower-body injury on Dec. 9.

J.T. Miller and Sam Lafferty scored for Vancouver, which is 3-5-1 since a 12-game point streak. Thatcher Demko made 26 saves.

Predators 4, Kings 1: Colton Sissons had a goal and two assists and Juuse Saros made 27 saves, helping visiting Nashville beat Los Angeles.

Nashville has won three in a row for the first time since a four-game streak Dec. 10-16. Jeremy Lauzon had a goal and an assist for the Predators, and Mark Jankowski and Yakov Trenin also scored.

Kevin Fiala scored for the Kings, who had won four in a row. David Rittich made 17 stops in the team's second loss in seven games under interim coach Jim Hiller.

Capitals 5, Lightning 3: Rasmus Sandin snapped a tie with 4:59 left in the third period, and visiting Washington beat Tam-

pa Bay for its third consecutive win.

Connor McMichael had two goals for the Capitals, including an empty-netter. Anthony Mantha and Nicolas Aube-Kubel also scored, and Tom Wilson had two assists. Charlie Lindgren made 29 saves for Washington.

Andrei Vasilevskiy stopped 19 shots for Tampa Bay. Brandon Hagel, Nicholas Paul and Tyler Motte scored.

Penguins 4, Canadiens 1: Bryan Rust and Drew O'Conner scored 21 seconds apart in the second period to break open a close game and host Pittsburgh gave its flagging postseason hopes a boost with a win over Montreal.

Pittsburgh, which began the day eight points out of a wildcard spot in the jumbled Eastern Conference with less than two months to go in the regular season, won for just the second time in its past seven games behind 31 saves from Tristan Jarry.

Mike Matheson collected his eighth goal of the season for Montreal. Cayden Primeau stopped 23 shots but the Canadiens lost for the sixth time in seven games.

Kris Letang had the other two Pittsburgh goals, including an empty netter.

Sentors 4, Stars 1: Josh Norris score two goals and host Ottawa beat Dallas for its second win in three games.

Thomas Chabot and Shane Pinto also scored for Ottawa while Anton Forsberg stopped 14 shots.

Joe Pavelski scored for Dallas, which has now lost four in a row.

Jake Oettinger started in net for Dallas but was pulled in the second period after allowing three goals on 11 shots. Scott Wedgewood gave up one goal on 19 shots in relief.

The Senators scored three unanswered goals while holding the Stars to just four shots in the second period.