

Trump may cut Civilian Protection Center

The Washington Post

The Trump administration is moving to abolish a Pentagon office responsible for promoting civilian safety in battlefield operations, suggesting that incoming Defense Department leaders may attempt to loosen restrictions on U.S. military operations worldwide.

In the days before Donald Trump's inauguration, his transition team provided Pentagon officials with a set of orders outlining early priorities for his second term, including a desire to review and potentially abolish the Civilian Protection Center of Excellence, said a U.S. defense official. The office, housed within the Department of the Army, helps the military to limit unintended civilian deaths.

As a result of that order, the Army has begun drafting a pro-

posal to defund and potentially "disestablish" the office, according to five people familiar with the discussions and an internal document reviewed by The Washington Post. All spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the nascent plan. The document, issued Monday and signed by Army staff director Lt. Gen. Laura A. Potter, requires senior Army leader review no later than Feb. 21.

Shuttering the office, which was established under a 2023 law, would require congressional approval. It was not immediately clear whether the Trump administration would seek to reallocate some of the center's functions elsewhere.

"As is routine in a new administration, the [Defense Department] Agency Review Team tasked the Army to review its

programs and responsibilities," an Army spokeswoman, Cynthia O. Smith, said in a statement. "The Army continues to fund and support the Civilian Protection Center of Excellence" as the Pentagon department tasked with hosting it.

The early moves suggest the Trump Pentagon may distance itself from a host of measures established under President Joe Biden to prioritize the safety of noncombatants in conflict zones. Trump's nominee for defense secretary, Pete Hegseth, who has promised to make the U.S. military more lethal, has complained about overly restrictive rules of engagement and said that service members "fight lawyers as much as we fight bad guys."

Hegseth, a former National Guard soldier who served in

Iraq and Afghanistan, used his perch as a Fox News host to advocate during Trump's first presidential term for lenient treatment of troops accused in war crimes cases. Trump pardoned two of those soldiers and intervened on behalf of a Navy SEAL.

He also suggested shortly before being tapped for the Pentagon role in November that he had told troops under his command in Iraq they could ignore rules of engagement communicated to them.

People familiar with the effort to shut down the office said that even if Congress blocks its closure, military and administration officials could act to zero out its budget, fire or reassign personnel, or take other steps to render the office functional on paper but practically inert.

Coast Guard orders forces to 'Gulf of America'

The Washington Post

The Coast Guard will surge additional resources to the "Gulf of America" and several other locations after the Trump administration sacked its top admiral and alleged that she had failed to prioritize the security of U.S. borders.

Tuesday's statement marked one of the U.S. government's first official uses of President Donald Trump's desired name for the Gulf of Mexico, a policy shift that has elicited derision from his domestic political foes and leaders in Mexico. Trump signed an executive order soon after his inauguration Monday setting a 30-day deadline for the Interior Department to take "all appropriate action" needed to codify the new name.

Asked about the statement's reference to "Gulf of America," Coast Guard officials cited Trump's executive order. The Defense Department, which also is preparing to deploy additional forces in support of the new administration's emphasis on border security, said it had no updates to provide when asked whether the Pentagon will also adopt Trump's desired name for the gulf.

The Coast Guard said in its statement that, in addition to its deployments to the Gulf of Mexico, commanders will increase the service's presence in waterways approaching Florida and the maritime border around Alaska, California, Hawaii, Texas, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands,

Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Coast Guard has carried out such operations for years, and it was not immediately clear Wednesday how that may evolve under Trump, who has made border security central to his administration's agenda. In the closing days of the Biden administration, those operations included the interdiction of 15 migrants off Point Loma in California and the interdiction of 58 migrants off the coast of Puerto Rico. In the latter case, Coast Guard personnel returned the individuals involved to the Dominican Republic, the service said.

U.S. defense officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss military prepara-

tions, said they have spent weeks devising options for Trump to bolster U.S. forces along the southern border. In another executive order issued Monday, Trump directed U.S. Northern Command, which oversees military operations in North America, to develop a plan within 30 days.

The Trump administration announced Tuesday that it had "terminated" Adm. Linda Fagan as commandant, alleging that she had performed poorly as the service's top officer and focused too much on diversity, equity and inclusion programs at the expense of homeland defense. She was replaced on an acting basis with the service's No. 2 officer, Adm. Kevin Lunday.

Hegseth said he paid \$50,000 to accuser

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Pete Hegseth, President Donald Trump's nominee for defense secretary, paid \$50,000 to the woman who accused him of sexual assault in 2017, according to answers he provided to a senator during his confirmation process that The Associated Press has obtained.

The written answers were provided to Massachusetts Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren in response to additional questions she had for Hegseth as part of the vetting process.

His attorney, Timothy Parlatore, declined to comment Thursday on the dollar figure, which was previously unknown. In November, Parlatore confirmed that the settlement payment had been made, and Hegseth told senators during his confirmation hearing last week that he was "falsely accused"

and completely cleared.

News of the payment came as the Senate advanced Hegseth's nomination along party lines, with a final vote on his confirmation expected Friday. Democrats — and two Republicans — have raised concerns about Hegseth, who also has faced allegations of excessive drinking and abuse of his second wife, which he denies.

Two days after Hegseth was grilled by senators at this confirmation hearing, Trump's transition team briefed the two leaders of the Senate Armed Services Committee on an additional statement that Hegseth's second wife, Samantha Hegseth, had provided to the FBI.

In the statement that the transition team read Jan. 16 to Mississippi Republican Roger Wicker and Rhode Island Democrat Jack Reed, she said Pete Hegseth had and continues to

have a problem with alcohol abuse, a person familiar with the FBI briefing and its findings told The Associated Press.

Reed has called Hegseth's FBI background check substandard.

He said in a statement Thursday that he and Wicker received multiple FBI briefings about the defense secretary nominee, something he had not seen in more than 25 years on the Armed Services Committee, and that "the recent reports about the contents of the background briefings on Mr. Hegseth are true and accurate."

Parlatore, Hegseth's attorney, said Thursday that "Reed is knowingly lying" because what Samantha Hegseth actually told the FBI is that Pete Hegseth drinks more often than not, but she also acknowledged that she had not spent time with him for about seven years.

Senators also received an affidavit Tuesday from a former sister-in-law of the Pentagon nominee alleging his repeated drunkenness and that he was abusive to Samantha Hegseth to the point where she feared for her safety. He and his ex-wife have denied that he was abusive, and Parlatore called the affidavit a "clear and admitted partisan attempt to derail Mr. Hegseth's confirmation."

Meanwhile, the \$50,000 payment was made years after the woman told police that Hegseth sexually assaulted her in a California hotel room in 2017 after he took her phone, blocked the door and refused to let her leave, according to an investigative report released in November.

Hegseth told police at the time that the encounter had been consensual and denied any wrongdoing.

500 Marines, sailors from Pendleton head to border

The Orange County Register

Troops from California's Camp Pendleton have been ordered to immediately deploy to the nation's southern border, Marine Corps officials announced Thursday.

The 500 Marines and sailors from the I Marine Expeditionary Force will be tasked "to carry out directed missions called for by the president to secure the border and protect and defend the territorial integrity of the United States," IMEF officials said. The deployment is through the U.S. Northern Command and Joint Task Force North.

President Donald Trump took office Monday and quickly declared a national emergency at the southern border, direct-

ing the Department of Defense to help address the situation.

The troops are part of a deployment of 1,500 service members announced Wednesday by Department of Defense officials to "augment troops already conducting enforcement operations in that region," acting Secretary of Defense Robert S. Lessles said in a statement.

The Camp Pendleton Marines and sailors being sent had previously been prepared to assist with wildfires in California, but were never called upon, a DOD official said in a Thursday call with media.

The deployment also includes 1,000 Army personnel. The troops will initially work to reinforce the border in San Diego and El Paso, Texas.

Ratcliffe OK'd to lead CIA

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate on Thursday confirmed John Ratcliffe as CIA director, President Donald Trump's nominee to lead America's premier spy agency and his second nominee to win Senate approval.

Ratcliffe was director of national intelligence during Trump's first term and is the first person to have held that position and the top post at the CIA. The Texas Republican is a former federal prosecutor who emerged as a fierce Trump defender while serving as a congressman during Trump's first impeachment.

The vote was 74-25, with some Democrats voting no.

At his Senate hearing last week, Ratcliffe said the CIA must do better when it comes to

using technology such as artificial intelligence to confront adversaries including Russia and China. He said the United States needed to improve its intelligence capabilities while also ensuring the protection of Americans' civil rights.

Ratcliffe said he would push the CIA to do more to harness technologies such as AI and quantum computing while expanding use of human intelligence collection.

While some Democrats raised questions about Ratcliffe's ability to lead the CIA objectively, Republicans hailed his experience and said they looked forward to confirming the rest of Trump's national security nominees.

Ratcliffe was sworn into office shortly after winning Senate confirmation.

Judge blocks Trump's order covering birthright citizenship

The Seattle Times

A federal judge in Seattle blocked, temporarily, President Donald Trump's attempt to rescind birthright citizenship — the idea spelled out in the Constitution that every person born in the United States is an American citizen.

Senior U.S. District Judge John Coughenour on Thursday was blistering in his criticism of Trump's action as he granted a temporary restraining order that blocks Trump's executive order from taking effect nationwide.

"I've been on the bench for over four decades. I can't remember another case where the question presented is as clear as this one is. This is a blatantly unconstitutional order," Coughenour, an appointee of Ronald Reagan, said from the bench.

Coughenour interrupted before Brett Shumate, a Justice Department attorney, could

even complete his first sentence.

"In your opinion is this executive order constitutional?" he asked.

Said Shumate, "It absolutely is."

The executive order will remain blocked for at least 14 days while lawsuits in Washington and elsewhere proceed. Washington will next seek a preliminary injunction from Coughenour, which would continue to block the executive order as cases move along.

Washington Attorney General Nick Brown sued Trump and his administration Tuesday, the day after the president issued his executive order ending birthright citizenship. Brown, at a news conference Tuesday, called the order an "unconstitutional, un-American and cruel... attempt to redefine what it means to be an American."

Coughenour's ruling is the first after a flurry of lawsuits

was filed this week across the country attempting to block the executive order. Washington was joined in its lawsuit by Oregon, Illinois and Arizona. Eighteen other states filed a similar lawsuit in federal court in Massachusetts and several immigrant rights groups have sued the administration in federal court in New Hampshire.

His ruling also was reminiscent of the earliest days of Trump's first presidency, when a federal judge in Seattle blocked Trump's executive order banning travel from a group of seven predominantly Muslim countries. That ruling was appealed, but courts ultimately blocked the order and a subsequent one, before the Supreme Court allowed a third, slightly narrower, order to take effect.

More than a century of legal precedent has recognized the Constitution's 14th Amendment as granting U.S. citizenship to every person born here.

Release of JFK, RFK, MLK files ordered

Associated Press

DALLAS — President Donald Trump has ordered the release of thousands of classified governmental documents about the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy, which has fueled conspiracy theories for decades.

The executive order Trump signed Thursday also aims to declassify the remaining federal records relating to the assassinations of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. The order is among a flurry of executive actions Trump has quickly taken the first week of his second term.

Trump said, "everything will be revealed."

Trump had promised during his reelection campaign to make public the last batches of still-classified documents surrounding President Kennedy's assassination in Dallas, which has transfixed people for decades. Trump made a similar pledge during his first term, but ultimately bent to appeals from the CIA and FBI to withhold some documents.

Trump has nominated Kennedy's nephew, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., to be the health secretary in his new administration. Kennedy's father, Robert F. Kennedy, was assassinated in 1968 as he sought the Democratic presidential nomination. The younger Kennedy has said he isn't convinced that a lone gunman was solely responsible for the assassination of his uncle, President Kennedy, in 1963.

The order directs the director of national intelligence and the attorney general to develop a plan within 15 days to release the remaining John F. Kennedy records, and within 45 days for the other two cases.

Natural disasters losses soared in 2024

Associated Press

Economic losses from hurricanes and other natural disasters soared in the U.S. last year and were above average globally, reflecting another year of costly severe storms, floods and droughts.

Damage caused by Hurricanes Helene and Milton helped push total economic losses from natural disasters in the U.S. to \$217.8 billion last year, according to insurance broker Aon PLC. That figure represents an 85.3% increase from 2023, when losses totaled about \$117.5 billion. It's also the largest annual tally of economic losses from natural disasters since 2017.

Insured losses, or the portion of economic losses that are cov-

ered by insurance, also rose last year. They climbed 36% to \$112.7 billion, the most since 2022.

Hurricane Helene tore across six southeastern states last fall, costing \$75 billion in economic losses, mainly due to inland and coastal flooding, according to Aon. Less than two weeks later, Hurricane Milton made landfall on the west coast of Florida, causing some \$25 billion in economic losses.

At least two other hurricanes, several severe "convective" storms and a drought contributed to the losses from natural disasters in the U.S. last year.

In addition to the severe storms in the U.S., deadly floods in the Valencia region of Spain

and other natural disasters drove worldwide economic losses from natural disasters to \$368 billion last year, according to Aon. That's a 7.3% decline from 2023, but about 14% higher than the annual average going back to 2000. Global insured losses, meanwhile, climbed 15.1% to \$145 billion.

While it's impossible to predict the timing, location and losses from natural disasters, 2025 is not off to an encouraging start.

The devastating wildfires that erupted in Los Angeles County on Jan. 7, killing at least 28 people and destroying more than 14,000 structures, are already projected to be among the costliest natural disasters.

Progress made on huge fire north of LA

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Evacuation orders were lifted Thursday for tens of thousands as firefighters with air support slowed the spread of a huge wildfire churning through rugged mountains north of Los Angeles, but new blazes erupted in San Diego County, briefly triggering more evacuations.

Southern California is under a red flag warning for critical fire risk through Friday. The area has been facing constant challenges in controlling the fires, as dangerous winds gained strength again Thursday.

The Hughes Fire broke out late Wednesday morning and in less than a day charred nearly 16 square miles of trees and brush near Castaic Lake, a pop-

ular recreation area about 40 miles from the devastating Eaton and Palisades fires that are burning for a third week.

Crews made significant progress by late afternoon on the Hughes Fire, with more than one-third of it contained.

Two new blazes were reported Thursday in the San Diego area. Evacuations were ordered but were later lifted after a brush fire erupted in the late afternoon in the wealthy enclave of La Jolla near the University of California, San Diego, School of Medicine. Further south, near the U.S.-Mexico border, another blaze was quickly spreading through the Otay Mountain Wilderness, home to the endangered Quino checkerspot butterfly and other unique species.

In Ventura County, a new fire briefly prompted the evacuation of California State University Channel Islands in Camarillo. Water-dropping helicopters made quick progress against the Laguna Fire that erupted in hills above the campus of about 7,000 students. The evacuation order was later downgraded to a warning.

Rain is forecast for the weekend, potentially ending Southern California's monthslong dry spell. Winds are also not as strong as they were when the Palisades and Eaton fires broke out, allowing for firefighting aircraft to dump tens of thousands of gallons of fire retardant.

That helped the fight against the Hughes Fire in the Castaic area north of Los Angeles, al-

lowing helicopters to drop water, which kept it from growing, fire spokesperson Jeremy Ruiz said.

"We had helicopters dropping water until around 3 a.m. That kept it in check," he said.

Nearly 54,000 residents in the Castaic area were still under evacuation warnings Thursday, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department said. There were no reports of homes or other structures burned.

Rain was expected to start Saturday, according to the National Weather Service. Officials welcomed the wet weather, but crews also were shoring up hillsides and installing barriers to prevent debris flows as residents returned to the charred Pacific Palisades and Altadena areas.

Hamas names 4 hostages to be released Saturday

Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — The Hamas militant group on Friday published the names of four hostages it said it would release Saturday as part of the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip.

There was no confirmation of the names from Israel. The hostages are to be freed Saturday in exchange for the release of dozens of Palestinians imprisoned or detained by Israel.

Relatives of hostages still being held by militants in Gaza had earlier Friday called on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to ensure that all remaining captives are freed, while also appealing to U.S. President Donald Trump to continue pressing for their release.

As a fragile six-week ceasefire between Israel and Hamas entered its sixth day, Israelis were waiting anxiously for the names of the next four hostages who will be released from

among the more than 90 still held in Gaza.

In the Palestinian enclave, civilians in the central and southern part of the Gaza Strip hoping to return to the remnants of their home in the battered north faced an agonizing wait.

Israel believes about a third, or possibly as many as half, of the more than 90 hostages still in Gaza have died. Hamas has not released definitive information on how many captives are still alive or the names of those who have died.

"Dear President Trump, first of all we want to say thank you for the happy moments we felt this week. But we want to tell you we still have 94 hostages; we need them all at home," said Ayelet Samerano, whose son Yonatan Samerano is among those still being held. "Please do not stop. Please continue to press and do everything so that all the 94 hostages will come home immediately."

Afghans prod Pakistan after Trump pauses US programs

Associated Press

ISLAMABAD — Afghan refugees on Friday appealed to Pakistan's premier to ease a visa regime on humanitarian grounds after President Donald Trump paused the U.S. refugee programs.

Many Afghans whose visas have either expired or will expire soon fear arrest and deportation.

"We don't know exactly when the pause of the U.S. refugee program will be lifted, but we request Pakistan to extend our stay for at least six months after the expiry of our visas," said Ahmad Shah, a member of the Afghan USRAP Refugees advocacy group.

An estimated 20,000 Afghans are currently waiting in Pakistan to be approved for resettlement in the U.S. via an American government program.

Refugees approved to travel to the United States in coming days have had their travel plans

canceled by the Trump administration.

Among those affected are the more than 1,600 Afghans cleared to resettle in the U.S.

Pakistan says it is yet to receive any official information from the United States about the suspension. Afghans who are in the country were supposed to be relocated by September 2025.

The program was set up to help Afghans at risk under the Taliban because of their work with the U.S. government, media, aid agencies and rights groups. The U.S. pulled out of Afghanistan in 2021 when the Taliban took power.

But in its first days in office, Trump's administration announced the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program would be suspended from Jan. 27 for at least three months.

Shah said most of the Afghans who are in transit to the United States were now living in a very difficult conditions.

Djokovic quits mid-match, puts Zverev in final

Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Spectators booed an injured Novak Djokovic as he left the court in Rod Laver Arena after quitting one set into his Australian Open semifinal against Alexander Zverev on Friday.

Dealing with what he said was a torn muscle, Djokovic lost the opening set 7-6 (5) when he put a forehand volley into the net, then began shaking his head and immediately walked over to tell Zverev the match was over. The 37-year-old Djokovic packed up his equipment and walked toward the locker room, pausing to respond to the jeers by giving two thumbs-up.

At his news conference, Djokovic said the pain in his taped left leg was “getting worse and worse.” He hurt it during his quarterfinal victory over Carlos Alcaraz on Tuesday night.

“I knew,” Djokovic said, “even if I won the first set, it was going to be a huge uphill battle for me.”

He was bidding for an 11th

championship at the Australian Open and record 25th Grand Slam title overall. Instead, it will be No. 1 seed and defending champion Jannik Sinner facing No. 2 Alexander Zverev in Sunday's final.

Sinner overcame some third-set cramping and beat No. 21 Ben Shelton of the United States 7-6 (2), 6-2, 6-2 in Friday's second semifinal to return to the Australian Open final as he seeks a third Grand Slam title.

Zverev is 0-2 in major finals; this will be his first at Melbourne Park.

“Everything can happen,” said Sinner, who is on a 20-match unbeaten run. “He's an incredible player.”

For Djokovic, this is the second time in the past four major tournaments he was unable to finish because of an injury: He withdrew from last year's French Open before the quarterfinals because he tore the meniscus in his right knee during a match.

Djokovic underwent surgery

in Paris and, less than two months later, reached the final at Wimbledon, then won a gold medal for Serbia at the Paris Olympics.

Zverev, a 27-year-old German, lost finals in five sets at the 2020 U.S. Open and 2024 French Open.

“My goal is still to compete with the big guys and to compete for these kind of tournaments and try to win them,” Zverev said. “For that, I need to get better. I need to improve on the court. I need to improve physically.”

During his on-court interview, Zverev pleaded with the fans not to give Djokovic a hard time.

“I know that everybody paid for tickets and everybody wants to see hopefully a great five-set match,” he said. “But you've got to understand—Novak Djokovic is somebody that has given this sport, for the past 20 years, absolutely everything of his life.”

The only set of Djokovic vs.

Zverev lasted 1 hour, 21 minutes and included 19 points that lasted nine strokes or more apiece. The first four games alone lasted 31 minutes, slowed both by the lengthy baseline exchanges and Djokovic's deliberate pacing between points, taking the 25-second serve clock down to the full allotment.

The match was grueling — and would have been even without dealing with a leg problem that initially became an issue late in the first set against Alcaraz.

“I didn't hit the ball (from after the) Alcaraz match until like an hour before today's match,” Djokovic said.

“I did everything I possibly can to basically manage the muscle tear that I had. Medications and, I guess, the (tape) and the physio work helped to some extent today,” he added. “But towards the end of that first set, I just started feeling more and more pain and it was too much for me to handle. Unfortunate ending, but I tried.”

James picked for record 21st straight All-Star Game

Associated Press

LeBron James is extending his All-Star records. And Gianinis Antetokounmpo is the people's choice, again.

The NBA revealed the starters — some of them, anyway — for the revamped All-Star Game on Thursday night, and there wasn't much in the way of surprises. James is now officially an All-Star for the 21st year, and Antetokounmpo is now the ninth player to win the fan vote in back-to-back seasons.

The other starters:

■ New York's Jalen Brunson and Cleveland's Donovan Mitchell as the Eastern Conference guards.

■ Boston's Jayson Tatum and New York's Karl-Anthony Towns as the East frontcourt players alongside Antetokounmpo.

■ Golden State's Stephen Curry and NBA leading scorer Shai Gilgeous-Alexander as Western Conference guards.

■ Phoenix's Kevin Durant and Denver's Nikola Jokic as the West frontcourt players

alongside James.

The starters were picked through a system of weighted balloting: 50% was fan voting, 25% was a media panel and 25% was voting by current players.

There are 14 more All-Stars yet to be announced, and they'll be chosen in a vote of the league's head coaches. That list will be revealed on Jan. 30, and the All-Star Game — now games, really — happen in San Francisco on Feb. 16.

Among the candidates for those reserve spots: San Anto-

nio's Victor Wembanyama, the Lakers' Anthony Davis, Minnesota's Anthony Edwards, Dallas teammates Luka Doncic and Kyrie Irving, reigning All-Star Game MVP Damian Lillard of Milwaukee, Miami's Tyler Herro, Atlanta's Trae Young and Charlotte's LaMelo Ball — who led East guard fan voting.

There will be at least 15 players who “start” as All-Stars this season. It's the first year of a new format, with three games. The All-Stars will be drafted into three teams of eight players.

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Unranked Maryland crushes No. 17 Illinois

Associated Press

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — Julian Reese had 27 points and 17 rebounds and Derik Queen scored 25 points to lead Maryland to a 91-70 victory over No. 17 Illinois on Thursday night.

Ja’Kobi Gillespie added 15 points and Selton Miguel 14 for the Terrapins (15-5, 5-4 Big Ten), who won for the fourth time in five games, with the lone loss a buzzer-beater by Northwestern.

NCAA men

Illinois (13-6, 5-4) lost for the third time in four games and fell in back-to-back games for the first time in two seasons.

Kasparas Jakucionis had 21 points and seven assists and Dra Gibbs-Lawhorn scored 15 points for Illinois (13-6, 5-4), which lost for the third time in four games and dropped consecutive games for the first time in two seasons. Kylan Boswell had 14 points and nine rebounds.

Illinois committed 16 turn-

overs that led to 27 Maryland points.

■ **No. 24 Memphis 61, Wichita State 53:** PJ Haggerty scored 22 points and Tyrese Hunter added 16 as No. 24 Memphis used a late rally to beat Wichita State.

Memphis (15-4, 5-1 American Athletic Conference) broke open the tight game by scoring 12 straight points in the final five minutes.

There were 10 lead changes and three ties in the contest.

Harlond Beverly led the

Shockers (11-8, 1-5) with 18 points. Corey Washington scored 11 points and Quincy Ballard added 10 points and 10 rebounds for Wichita State, which has lost five of six.

The first half was filled with turnovers and poor shooting. Memphis’ sloppy play led to 14 miscues before the break.

Neither team shot better than 40%, and together they shot 5 for 20 from 3-point range.

The Shockers led 27-23 at the break.

No. 12 Ohio State rallies to upset No. 8 Maryland

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Freshman guard Jalonni Cambridge had 20 points and eight rebounds and No. 12 Ohio State rallied from a 15-point deficit in a 74-66 victory over No. 8 Maryland on Thursday night.

Cotie McMahon added 14 points and five rebounds for the Buckeyes (18-1, 7-1 Big Ten).

Taylor Thierry had 13 points and five rebounds and Kennedy Cambridge finished with a season-high 12 points and four steals.

Maryland led 29-14 with eight minutes left in the first half. But Ohio State cut that lead to seven by halftime and then went on a 24-4 run over an eight-minute stretch in the second half.

Kaylene Smikle had 17 points, five rebounds and four assists for Maryland (16-3, 6-2). Saylor Poffenbarger added 13 points, Allie Kubek had 12 points and nine rebounds, Sarah Te-Biasu scored 11 points and Christina Dalce finished with 10 points and 18 rebounds.

■ **No. 1 UCLA 84, Rutgers 66:** Lauren Betts had 25 points, 13 rebounds and five blocks to help No. 1 UCLA beat Rutgers.

The 6-foot-7 Betts now has 21 blocks over her last three games

for UCLA (19-0, 7-0 Big Ten).

This was the first time Rutgers faced the No. 1 team in the country since 2014, when the Scarlet Knights played UConn twice in the American Athletic Conference.

The Scarlet Knights hung around for about 12 minutes before the Bruins asserted themselves behind Betts to go up 45-29 at the half. Rutgers never got closer than 14 in the second half.

Destiny Adams led Rutgers (8-12, 0-9) with 15 points and 13 rebounds.

■ **No. 3 Notre Dame 89, Boston College 63:** Hannah Hidalgo scored 23 points and Olivia Miles added 16 to lead No. 3 Notre Dame to a victory over Boston College and help the Fighting Irish earn their 12th straight win.

Sonia Citron added nine points, nine rebounds and six assists for the Irish (17-2, 8-0 Atlantic Coast Conference), who have not lost since dropping back-to-back games against TCU and Utah in the Cayman Islands Classic over Thanksgiving weekend.

T’yana Todd scored 18 and Andrea Daley had nine rebounds for Boston College (12-9, 3-5), which had its two-game winning streak halted.

There were six lead changes

and three ties in the first quarter, and BC went into the break with an 18-17 lead. The Irish made the first two baskets of the second to take the lead for good.

■ **No. 7 Texas 80, No. 17 Tennessee 76:** Madison Booker scored 26 points, including the go-ahead basket with 27 seconds left, and No. 7 Texas beat No. 17 Tennessee.

Tennessee was without coach Kim Caldwell, who gave birth this week to a son and did not make the trip. Assistant Jenna Burdette will serve as acting head coach until Caldwell returns.

After Booker scored, Tennessee’s Zee Spearman missed a 3-point attempt with 7 seconds left, and Rori Harmon sealed the victory for Texas with two free throws.

Taylor Jones had 21 points and 14 rebounds for Texas (19-2, 5-1 Southeastern Conference), which has won 17 straight at home dating back to late January 2024.

Ruby Whitehorn led Tennessee (15-4, 3-4) with 21 points. Spearman scored 14.

■ **Texas A&M 61, No. 11 Kentucky 55:** Aicha Coulibaly scored 21 points, Sole Williams and Erica Moon had their only baskets in a late 11-1 run and Texas A&M beat No. 11 Ken-

tucky.

Williams also had four free throws in the last 32 seconds for the Aggies (10-8, 3-3 Southeastern Conference). Lauren Ware had 10 points and four blocks, two in the last two minutes. Coulibaly also had a block in the last minute.

Dazia Lawrence converted a three-point play for a 51-50 Kentucky lead midway through the fourth quarter. But that was the last basket for the Wildcats. Sahara Jones had a putback to put the Aggies back on top with four minutes to go. Williams drilled a 3-pointer a minute later and Moon scored for a 57-52 lead.

Ware then had blocks on the next two Kentucky possessions before the Wildcat drought ended on a free throw by Georgia Amooore at 47 seconds. Williams then had her free throws. Kentucky, which missed its last six field goal attempts, had two late free throws.

Teonni Key scored 20 points and grabbed nine rebounds for the Wildcats (16-2, 5-1), who had their nine-game winning streak snapped.

Amooore added 15 points but was 5-of-18 shooting, including missing all eight 3-pointers. Kentucky was 1 of 18 behind the arc.

Wembanyama shines in his native France

Associated Press

PARIS — Victor Wembanyama scored 30 points in his first NBA game on his native French soil, Devin Vassell added 25 and the San Antonio Spurs beat the Indiana Pacers 140-110 on Thursday night.

Wembanyama finished with 11 rebounds, six assists and five blocks for the Spurs. Harrison Barnes scored 20 for San Antonio, which won for only the second time in its past eight games.

The Spurs had a huge 57-31 edge in rebounding.

Bennedict Mathurin led Indiana with 24 points. Pascal Siakam added 18, Myles Turner scored 14 and Tyrese Haliburton and Obi Toppin finished with 13 each for the Pacers.

Indiana had won eight of its previous nine contests.

■ **Trail Blazers 100, Magic 79:** Anfernee Simons scored 21 points and the Portland Trail Blazers extended their winning streak to three with a victory over Orlando, spoiling the return of Magic forward Franz Wagner.

Toumani Canara added 16 points and six rebounds for Portland. Deni Avdija finished with 13 points, five rebounds and five assists, while Jabari Walker had six steals in 19 minutes.

Wagner, who missed 20 games after tearing his oblique in early December, led Orlando with 20 points. Tristan Da Silva came off the bench with 16 points. Paolo Banchero had eight points and nine rebounds, but shot 1 for 14 with five turnovers.

Blazers guard Scoot Henderson fouled out with 6:12 left, having played 14 minutes.

■ **Raptors 122, Hawks 119:** Scottie Barnes had 25 points, including a key basket in the final minute, and Toronto picked up their second road win of the season with a victory over Atlanta.

Bruce Brown had 18 points, while Jacob Poeltl and Chris Boucher each had 17 in the

opener of a two-game series in Atlanta.

The Hawks had a chance to tie with 2.7 seconds left, but good defense forced a 3-pointer by Onekya Okongwu at the buzzer that was an airball.

Bogdan Bogdanovic shook off a recent shooting slump to score 23 points and hit three of his five 3-pointers for the Hawks. He had missed his last 14 field goal attempts entering the game. Dyson Daniels had 22 points, eight rebounds, five assists and four steals.

The Hawks have lost three straight. They host Toronto again on Saturday.

Grady Dick and RJ Barrett scored 15 points apiece for the Raptors, who have won four of five.

■ **Bucks 125, Heat 96:** Damian Lillard had 29 points, 11 assists and nine rebounds and Milwaukee overcame travel issues to beat Miami for their fifth straight victory.

Lillard had appeared to get his fourth career triple-double before leaving with 3:57 remaining, but the 10th rebound that had been credited to Lillard was changed.

The start was pushed back an hour due to the Bucks' troubles getting out of New Orleans, which had a historic snowstorm Tuesday. The Bucks' scheduled Wednesday game with the Pelicans was postponed, and their plane arrived in Milwaukee less than three hours before the start Thursday.

Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo had 25 points and 12 rebounds. Gary Trent Jr. scored a season-high 21 points and shot 7 of 10 on 3-point attempts.

Kel'el Ware had 22 points and 10 rebounds for Miami.

■ **Mavericks 121, Thunder 115:** Spencer Dinwiddie scored 28 points, and Dallas beat Oklahoma City.

P.J. Washington had 22 points and 19 rebounds and Kyrie Irving added 24 points for the Mavericks, who have been without

Luka Doncic for nearly a month because of a left calf strain. Dallas has won three of the four meetings this season against a Thunder team that leads the Western Conference and only has eight losses all season.

Jalen Williams led Oklahoma City with 33 points. Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, who was named an All-Star starter earlier in the evening, scored 16 of his 31 points in the fourth quarter for the Thunder. Gilgeous-Alexander scored a career-high 54 points in a win over Utah on Wednesday, but made just 5 of his first 15 shots against Dallas before getting on track.

Gilgeous-Alexander did not play last time the teams met, when the Mavericks won 106-98 in Dallas on Jan. 17.

The Thunder led 62-60 at halftime, but Dallas took over in the third quarter and led by 13 at one point. Gilgeous-Alexander banked in a shot from the lane at the buzzer to cut Dallas' lead to 91-83 heading into the fourth.

■ **Nuggets 132, Kings 123:** Nikola Jokic had his fifth straight triple-double before the fourth quarter, finishing with 35 points, 22 rebounds and a season-high 17 assists to help Denver beat Sacramento.

Jokic has an NBA-leading 20 triple-doubles this season, 14 before the fourth quarter. He had 20 points and 20 rebounds before the end of the third quarter.

The Nuggets led by 22 at halftime and used a 14-5 run at the end of the third, capped by Jokic's 66-foot heave at the buzzer, to take a 25-point lead.

Domantas Sabonis had 23 points and 17 rebounds for Sacramento. The Kings lost for the third time in 13 games since Doug Christie took over as the interim coach.

■ **Warriors 131, Bulls 106:** Stephen Curry had 21 points and seven assists, Quinten Post scored a career-high 20 points and Golden State routed Chicago.

Gui Santos added 19 points with five 3-pointers and Andrew Wiggins had 17 points as the Warriors completed a back-to-back after squandering an 18-point lead in a 123-117 loss at Sacramento on Wednesday.

Zach LaVine scored 24 points and Josh Giddey added 16 points and 11 rebounds for Chicago, which snapped a five-game skid at the Clippers on Monday.

Curry, playing back-to-back games for the first time since November before dealing with tendinitis in both knees, went 5 for 12 on 3-pointers.

■ **Lakers 117, Celtics 96:** Anthony Davis scored 24 points, Austin Reaves added 23 and the Los Angeles Lakers cruised to a victory over Boston.

LeBron James had 20 points and 14 rebounds after being selected for the All-Star Game for the 21st consecutive season earlier in the day.

James also passed Hakeem Olajuwon into seventh place in defensive rebounds in NBA history early in the third quarter. James, who has 9,720, needed six going into the game to pass the Hall of Fame center.

Kristaps Porzingis led Boston with 22 points and Jaylen Brown added 17.

■ **Clippers 110, Wizards 93:** James Harden had 17 points, 13 assists and 12 rebounds for his 79th career triple-double and the Los Angeles Clippers led all the way in routing NBA-worst Washington.

Harden surpassed the late Wilt Chamberlain for the eighth-most triple-doubles in league history.

Norman Powell led the Clippers with 22 points — 14 in the fourth — and Derrick Jones Jr. added 19.

Kawhi Leonard had 15 points and seven rebounds in 24 minutes. He reached his minutes limit late in the third and didn't play the rest of the game to manage his surgically repaired right knee.

Surging Rangers dominate Philadelphia 6-1

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Defenseman K'Andre Miller had a goal and an assist and Igor Shesterkin made 35 saves as the surging New York Rangers routed the Philadelphia Flyers 6-1 on Thursday night.

Braden Schneider, Adam Edstrom, Filip Chytil, Adam Fox and Reilly Smith also scored for the Rangers.

Owen Tippett scored for the Flyers. After Tippett scored his 14th goal 1:25 into the game, Schneider tied it with his third at the nine-minute mark of the first.

Edstrom then beat Flyers netminder Samuel Ersson for his fifth to put New York ahead 2-1 at 10:24.

Miller extended the lead in the second period with his third goal of the season and first since Dec. 8. Assists went to defenseman Will Borgen and Artemi Panarin.

Chytil made it 4-1 early in the third. Fox added a short-handed empty-netter late in the third before Smith scored on the power play.

■ **Red Wings 4, Canadiens 2:** Dylan Larkin had a power-play goal and an assist in his 700th career NHL game and Detroit snapped a three-game losing streak with a victory over Montreal.

Andrew Copp scored Detroit's second short-handed goal of the season, while Alex DeBrincat and Jonatan Berggren also scored for the Red Wings. Cam Talbot made 27 saves.

Kirby Dach had a goal and an assist while Kaiden Guhle also scored for the Canadiens.

Brendan Gallagher, playing in his 800th NHL game, assisted on Dach's goal. Christian Dvorak and Patrik Laine each added an assist in the 500th games of their careers.

■ **Bruins 2, Senators 0:** Boonas Korpisalo made 29 saves against his former team, David Pastrnak set up Morgan Geekie's goal and added an empty-

netter and Boston beat Ottawa.

Korpisalo had his third shutout of the season and seventh overall. He was traded to Boston in June in a deal for former Vezina Trophy winner Linus Ullmark.

Early in the second, Pastrnak wrapped around the net and sent a pass across the crease to Geekie, who banged it into the net before goalie Anton Forsberg could get across. Pastrnak put it away with five seconds left.

■ **Hurricanes 7, Jackets 4:** Seth Jarvis had two goals and two assists and Sebastian Aho added a goal and two assists as Carolina scored five goals in the second period and beat Columbus.

Eric Robinson, Jackson Blake, Jordan Martinook and Jesperi Kotkaniemi also scored for Carolina. Jarvis closed the scoring with an empty-netter. Martin Necas had two assists as the Hurricanes won their fourth straight.

Kent Johnson and Kirill Marchenko scored in the first period and James van Riemsdyk and Dmitri Voronkov added goals in the second for Columbus. Daniil Tarasov had 36 saves.

The Hurricanes erased a two-goal deficit with five goals in the first 12 minutes of the second period and had a 24-3 edge in shots in the second period.

■ **Utah 4, Wild 0:** Karel Vejmelka made 26 saves for his first shutout of the season, Barrett Hayton scored twice and Utah beat Minnesota for its third straight victory.

Clayton Keller and Lawson Crouse also scored, and defenseman Nick DiSimone assisted on both of Hayton's goals.

Hayton's first goal was part of an early surge by Utah, which outshot the Wild 16-5 and outscored them 2-0 in the opening period.

Hayton closed the scoring early in the third with a backhand shot off a rebound that Gustavsson couldn't control.

■ **Golden Knights 4, Blues 2:** Mark Stone scored 19 seconds into the game and had an assist as Vegas snapped a four-game skid with a win over St. Louis.

Victor Olofsson, Pavel Dorofeyev and Tomas Hertl also added goals while Ilya Samsonov made 15 saves as Vegas won for the second time in its past eight games.

Jordan Kyrou and Robert Thomas scored goals and Joel Hofer made 27 saves for St. Louis.

■ **Oilers 6, Canucks 2:** Zach Hyman had two goals and an assist, Leon Draisaitl had a goal and two assists and Edmonton beat Vancouver.

Adam Henrique, Ryan Nugent-Hopkins and Kasper Kapalanen also scored for the Oilers, who have won nine of their past 12 games. Calvin Pickard made 24 stops in net.

Brock Boeser and Filip Hronek replied for the Canucks, who have lost eight of 10. Thatcher Demko made 28 saves.

The win came five days after the Canucks beat Edmonton 3-2 in a chippy game at Vancouver.

Oilers superstar Connor McDavid and Canucks defenseman Tyler Myers sat out Thursday after receiving three-game suspensions for cross-checking in that earlier game.

■ **Flames 5, Sabres 2:** Jonathan Huberdeau had a goal and two assists to lead Calgary to a victory over Buffalo.

Nazem Kadri added a goal and two assists, and Jakob Pelletier had a goal and an assist for Calgary. Yegor Sharangovich and Mikael Backlund added empty-net goals. Rookie goaltender Dustin Wolf had 32 saves and won for the fifth time in six starts to improve to 17-7-2 on the season.

Tage Thompson and Mattias Samuelsson scored for Buffalo.

The teams were tied at 2 in the third period before Pelletier

gave Calgary the lead at 2:29 on a deflection of a point shot by Brayden Pachal.

■ **Ducks 5, Penguins 1:** Mason McTavish and Alex Killorn each scored twice and Anaheim beat Pittsburgh.

Frank Vatrano also scored and Troy Terry and Jacob Trouba each had a pair of assists as the Ducks snapped a four-game winless streak. John Gibson made 31 saves.

Michael Bunting scored on a power play for Pittsburgh. Rickard Rakell had an assist in his return to the lineup after missing a game due to family reasons. Alex Nedeljkovic made 29 saves.

■ **Capitals 3, Kraken 0:** Alex Ovechkin moved 20 goals away from breaking Wayne Gretzky's NHL record with an empty-netter, helping Washington beat Seattle for their sixth straight victory.

Charlie Lindgren made 22 saves in his first start since Jan. 10 for his first shutout of the season — and the NHL-leading Capitals' third in five games after Logan Thompson blanked Anaheim and Ottawa in consecutive games last week.

Aliaksei Protas and Ethen Frank also scored.

■ **Predators 6, Sharks 5:** Filip Forsberg scored twice to extend his goals streak to seven games, Fedor Svechikov broke a tie on a power-play midway through the third period and Nashville beat San Jose for their fifth straight victory.

Luke Schenn had three assists, Justin Barron and Roman Josi each had a goal and Justus Annunen made 30 saves for the Predators, who won after blowing a three-goal lead.

Macklin Celebrini scored his NHL rookie-leading 15th goal for San Jose. Mario Ferraro scored his career-high fifth goal of the season and also had an assist. Henry Thrun, Fabian Zetterlund and newly acquired Walker Duehr scored.