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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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USFK forum addresses racism in military

BY KIM GAMEL

Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — U.S. military leaders have been unusually outspoken about the need to address institutional racism amid a growing wave of civil unrest over the latest killing of a black man in police custody.

Many black service members speaking Sunday at a forum organized by U.S. Forces Korea welcomed the outrage but called for words to be translated into deeds.

Sgt. Dasha Long, 35, thanked U.S. Forces Korea commander Gen. Robert Abrams for tackling the long-taboo topic, saying the discussion was an important first step.

“This isn’t new, right? But it feels like it took too long for us to hear something about it,” Long said, wearing a T-shirt emblazoned with the phrase “I Can’t Breathe,” which was uttered by George Floyd before

he died as a white Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes on May 25.

“I feel safer outside the country that I serve than I do in it, so I want to know aside from words what actions are going to take place because I’m tired,” she said.

Anger over Floyd’s death, which was captured on video, has sparked massive protests calling for racial justice and an end to police brutality in the United States. It also has led to soul searching in the military, which has long prided itself as promoting diversity.

Nearly 19% of active-duty enlisted service members are black, but that number falls sharply to just under 9% when it comes to officers, according to a 2018 Defense Department demographics report. Many also complain that they are unfairly targeted by the military justice system and receive unfair sentences compared to

their white counterparts.

Abrams convened the two-hour town hall-style meeting dubbed “Stronger Together” at a chapel on Camp Humphreys — with everybody in civilian clothes — after tweeting on Friday that he had spoken privately with several black service members and had directed leaders at all echelons to hold discussions on the issue.

While the event only drew a few dozen people in-person, it also was broadcast live on Facebook and had 27,000 views by Monday evening.

Most in the audience wore face masks and every other pew was roped off to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

“Now, from my time of service I’ve tried real hard to be part of the solution, and it was really difficult for me to come to grasp this week that I have fallen way short in helping eliminate racism and bigotry in our own ranks,” Abrams said.

“Let me be clear about this

— we are better together where everyone is treated with dignity and respect regardless of the color of their skin, or their gender, or where they practice their faith, or whether they practice faith at all, or their gender orientation,” he added. “I also want to be clear about this. There is zero room, zero, for racism and bigotry and hate in the military.”

Troops and other members of the military community also expressed concern about families at home and asked how they can express solidarity without violating regulations against political activity.

The director of USFK’s office of judge advocate gave troops a green light to participate in gatherings planned on base to denounce racism and social injustice, including a candlelight vigil that he said was scheduled for Thursday on Camp Humphreys. The community at Osan Air Base held a candlelight vigil on Sunday.

Taiwan Strait transit is Navy’s 7th of this year

BY JOSEPH DITZLER

Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — The guided-missile destroyer USS Russell passed through the Taiwan Strait last week, the Navy’s seventh such transit this year and the second in three weeks as the U.S. and China continue to step up their activities in the Western Pacific.

The Russell steamed through the 110-mile-wide strait separating the island of Taiwan from mainland China over Thursday and Friday, according to a statement from Cmdr. Reann Mommsen, a spokeswoman for the 7th Fleet.

The Russell transited the strait “in accordance with international law,” she said in an email Monday. The ship’s passage “demonstrates the U.S. commitment to a

free and open Indo-Pacific.”

China typically protests U.S. presence in the strait, but military and foreign affairs officials were silent as of Monday. State-run media, however, took note.

The English-language Global Times newspaper, in a report Friday, quoted Chinese military expert Song Zhongping, who characterized the Russell’s transit as “a provocation to the Chinese mainland.”

Summing up other analysts, the report stated: “The move is not only preparing the U.S. military for a potential conflict in the region and an attempt to provoke the Chinese mainland, but also an attempt to shift domestic pressure from widespread protests, [the coronavirus] and a poor economy, for which the Chinese mainland should maintain its strategic focus and not dance to the U.S.’ tune.”

The pace of naval operations picked up this year as both nations seek an advantage against the backdrop of the pandemic and resulting international economic slowdown. In addition to its presence in the Taiwan Strait, the Navy has sent warships past contested areas of the South China Sea, territory that China considers its own.

China regards Taiwan as a break-away province and the strait as territorial waters.

The U.S. under the “One China” policy acknowledges that Beijing considers Taiwan part of China. However, the U.S. provides aid to the self-governing island’s defense.

The Global Times, quoting Song, said U.S. transits send the wrong signal “to Taiwan secessionists,” by letting them think the U.S. military is backing them up.

Former Naval Academy trustee apologizes for remarks on social media

Associated Press

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — A former member of the U.S. Naval Academy alumni trustees issued an apology statement Sunday for racially insensitive comments made on social media.

Retired Capt. Scott Bethmann was asked to resign as a trustee Saturday after a live conversation with his wife that was posted on Facebook disparaged admission by the academy of African Americans, Asian Americans and women. News reports said the couple didn't appear to realize they were streaming via Facebook Live.

"There are no words that can appropriately express how mortified and apologetic my wife and I are about the insensitive things we said that were captured on social media,"

Bethmann said in the statement. "There is never a time when it is appropriate to use derogatory terms when speaking about our fellow man."

The comments were made by Bethmann and his wife, Nancy, while they were watching TV news and discussing the Black Lives Matter movement. The Florida Times-Union reported that by the end of the 33-minute stream, the video shows Bethmann realizing he's live. It said he began reading the comments aloud and asked, "What are they talking about?" before muttering "oops," and cutting the feed.

Retired Adm. Samuel J. Locklear III, chairman of the academy's alumni association, said he accepted Bethmann's resignation and asked the chapter in Jacksonville, Fla., to appoint someone else.

FBI probe link between 2 killings of Calif. police

Associated Press

SANTA CRUZ, Calif. — The FBI and local investigators are trying to determine a possible link between the ambush-style killing of a Northern California sheriff's deputy Saturday night and that of a federal officer who was fatally shot outside the U.S. courthouse in Oakland more than a week ago.

The FBI office in San Francisco confirmed Sunday its investigators were working with the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department to determine a possible motive and links to other crimes committed in the San Francisco Bay Area, including the attack that killed a Federal Protective Service officer and critically wounded another officer on May 29. Both involved shooters in a van.

An active-duty U.S. Air Force sergeant has been ar-

rested on suspicion of fatally shooting Santa Cruz Sheriff's Sgt. Damon Gutzwiller, 38, and wounding two other officers Saturday.

On Saturday, deputies responded to a 911 call around 1:30 p.m. about a suspicious van in Ben Lomond, an unincorporated area near Santa Cruz. The caller said there were guns and bomb-making devices inside, Santa Cruz County Sheriff Jim Hart said. When deputies arrived, the van pulled away and the deputies followed. The van went down a driveway at a home, and the deputies were ambushed by gunfire and explosives.

The suspect, Steven Carrillo, 32, attempted a carjacking and was shot during his arrest, Hart said. He was being treated at the hospital for non-life-threatening injuries.

How DOD could cut forces in Germany

BY JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A reported plan to remove 9,500 troops from Germany in the months ahead would strain military planners who normally have years to work out large-scale, international unit transfers that affect service members, their families and civilian support staff.

The Defense Department has yet to comment publicly on the order, which was first reported by The Wall Street Journal on Friday, citing unnamed government officials.

The last major cutback in Europe in 2012 eliminated two Army brigades, support units and moved about 10,000 troops, following planning that began nearly 10 years earlier.

The Journal reported President Donald Trump issued a September deadline, though reports from other outlets haven't mentioned a time frame.

A mass move would mean finding new homes for troops and their families, along with transfers of civilian workers to new posts; accounting for the space available at other bases; schools for dependents if relocated within Europe; and identifying or building infrastructure to carry out missions. It would also follow a Pentagon stop movement order issued amid the coronavirus pandemic that has created a backlog of troops waiting to head to their next duty station.

Trump wants nearly a third of the military's roughly 34,500 troops in Germany removed with at least some of the personnel shifted to Poland, multiple reports last week said, citing unnamed government and defense officials.

Poland signed an agreement last year with the U.S. for a modest troop boost and has

offered to pay for more infrastructure to host U.S. troops.

So far, there are few details on the precise units that would go, but The New York Times reported that an F-16 squadron and Army "support units" were among those identified.

In Germany, there is only one such squadron — the 480th Fighter Squadron out of Spangdahlem Air Base. The unit has nearly 30 F-16s and is part of the 52nd Fighter Wing, which includes 5,000 airmen and civilians. It is the military's only squadron in Europe with a "suppression of enemy air defense" mission, though the first U.S. F-35s are supposed to begin arriving at RAF Lakenheath, England, in fall 2021.

For nearly 10 years, the Spangdahlem-based unit has carried out missions in Poland as part of the special detachment operating in the central town of Lask. That mission could be beefed up to support a full squadron. Still, there are no DOD schools on bases in Poland, which also lack many other quality-of-life amenities on bases in Germany. That could complicate sending large numbers of troops on accompanied tours with their families.

If Army support units move, the main one in Germany is the 16th Sustainment Brigade. It is based in several locations, including Baumholder, a small garrison town that was on and off DOD's base closure list during the long post-Cold War drawdown.

Any move out of Baumholder would be a major blow to that community, which relies heavily on the Army economically.

But the shift would be welcomed by Poland. Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said Saturday on radio station RMF24 that he was hopeful Poland would be getting more troops.

Stars and Stripes reporter Marcus Kloeckner contributed to this story.

DOD: 38 states, 5 nations now can let troops, families travel

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Almost 40 states and five countries have met conditions to allow for service members and their families to travel during the coronavirus pandemic, the Pentagon announced Monday.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper signed a memorandum May 22 that laid out the conditions needed for locations to allow for travel to and from bases. Esper had put in place stop-movement orders on official travel for all Defense Department personnel and their families in March due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Pentagon's list only includes states and countries that have met conditions to lift travel restrictions as of Monday. No specific military installations

in these states or countries are listed.

The criteria that states and countries must meet to become "green locations," or allow for lifting restrictions, are the removal of shelter-in-place orders or travel restrictions, a 14-day decline in flu or virus symptoms, and a 14-day decline in new cases or positive tests, according to the Pentagon statement.

Each installation or department facility will be assessed by its military service and combatant commanders to determine whether to lift travel restrictions based on local conditions and service availabilities, even if they are in a green location. These conditions include lifting of local travel restrictions, availability of essential services such as child care, and sufficient medi-

cal treatment facility capacity, according to Esper's memo.

Service members should work with their chain of command or their military service to see if an installation has lifted travel restrictions, Jessica Maxwell, a Pentagon spokeswoman, wrote Monday in an email.

Locations that are not included on the green locations list are still under the stop-movement order, which has been extended indefinitely. States and host nations can have their travel restrictions reassessed if there is "any subsequent significant change" from local outbreaks, according to Esper's memo.

South Korea, seen as an early success story at the start of the pandemic in its strict shutdown and testing policies, is not on the list.

Air Force streamlines PCS process at Yokota

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — The coronavirus is changing the way the Air Force handles service members' moves to new duty stations, according to airmen at the home of U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo.

Yokota is dealing with a backlog of permanent change of station, or PCS, moves that built up following a stop movement order announced by Secretary of Defense Mark Esper in April and extended indefinitely.

The order includes waivers for such things as mission-essential operations, so some service members are already on the move and officials are gearing up for more travel when it expires.

Yokota, which expects to transfer 600 service members and their families to other duty stations from now until December, has changed its process to streamline moves and maintain social distancing.

Airmen from agencies dealing with issues such as housing, flights, household goods shipment and finance gather in Yokota's Airmen and Family Readiness Center three days a week.

Personnel with PCS orders pass through the center every 15 minutes, said Senior Airman Jacqueline Caraway, of San Antonio, Texas, a member of Yokota's force support squadron, which is helping run the process.

"We created a one-stop shop for members to process more efficiently and limit the contact they have with others," she said.

In a normal PCS season, airmen would visit offices all over base to out-process, she said.

The support squadron's personnel flight superintendent, Senior Master Sgt. Ines Watkins, 40, of Panama, said that a separate task force is helping inbound personnel, who need to quarantine for 14 days on arrival.

Restrictions eased at 4 bases in Japan

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
AND JAMES BOLINGER
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Broad, strict measures designed to curb the coronavirus' spread among U.S. service members in Japan have been eased at four installations on the mainland.

Yokosuka Naval Base and Naval Air Facility Atsugi, both in Kanagawa prefecture south of Tokyo, loosened their shelter-in-place orders Monday, according to Facebook posts by their commanders. In western Japan, the commander of Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni allowed personnel living off base greater freedom in nearby Hiroshima.

At Yokota Air Base, home to U.S. Forces Japan in western Tokyo, the base commander on Friday eased restrictions to allow limited use of public transportation for travel to school, work and day care.

Yokosuka and Atsugi residents may now leave the installations for take-out food, groceries and outdoor exercise, and those with access may now visit the bases without an "essential" purpose.

Previously, base residents had been barred from leaving the installations and off-base residents could enter only for essential activities

such as work, commissary visits or medical services. The restrictions applied to military personnel, Defense Department civilian employees, contractors and their families.

The change represents a "move toward Health Protection Condition Bravo," the military's moderate risk level, Yokosuka base commander Capt. Rich Jarrett said in a video posted to Facebook.

Condition Bravo also indicates there is a risk of "increased community transmission," according to the Department of Defense. U.S. Forces Japan has been under condition Charlie, or "substantial risk" of infection, since March 25.

"These measures are not intended to sound the all-clear for COVID-19," Jarrett said, referring to the disease caused by the coronavirus. "In fact, cases are rising again in the Tokyo metropolitan area and we must continue to restrain our activities."

The number of new, daily coronavirus cases spiked to 34 in the metro area on June 2, exceeding the previous daily high of 30 on May 14, according to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government website. On Thursday, the government recorded 28 new cases and on Saturday, 26. In mid-May, it recorded a one-day high of 206 new cases.

Stars and Stripes reporter Seth Robson contributed to this report.

NYC reopening tests a city torn by crises

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Scarred by the deadliest coronavirus outbreak in the nation, New York City gradually began reopening Monday in a turning point in the three-month-long crisis and a life-and-death test of the city's discipline.

With the virus in check — at least for now — stores previously deemed nonessential were cleared to reopen for delivery and curbside pickup, though customers cannot yet browse inside. Construction, manufacturing and wholesalers also received the go-ahead to resume work.

"This is the place where it was going to be the hardest to make a comeback, and yet New York City is so strong and resilient, we are making that comeback," Mayor Bill de Blasio said.

But he warned the city against letting its guard down and jeopardizing its progress against the virus: "Let's hold onto it. Let's build on it."

Unrest over racism and police brutality could compound the challenges facing the nation's biggest city as it tries to move past three bleak months. Officials who had focused for months on public health and economic woes are now also facing urgent pressure for police reform.

"All eyes will be on New York this next couple of months," said urban policy expert Jonathan Bowles, executive director of the Center for an Urban Future. "The city now has to prove that it really knows what it's doing, that it can still be a dense city like New York and yet figure this out."

Edwin Arce thinks that the

city can regroup. A chef at a Manhattan restaurant, he was heartened to see more customers than expected when it reopened for takeout and delivery.

"As a city, we are ready to be back, start going out, living life — with the new reality, though," of masks and 6-foot separation, said Arce, 31.

New York City, which has a population of 8.3 million, has already reawakened somewhat as warm weather drew people outdoors, more restaurants offered carryout service and thousands of people marched in protest over the killing of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police.

Subway ridership is ticking back up after plunging from 5.4 million rides per weekday in February to under 450,000 in April, the city's transit agency

said. Subway schedules are returning to normal, though there are signs showing riders how far apart to stand on platforms, and the 1 a.m.-to-5 a.m. shutdowns that began in May will continue so that trains can be cleaned.

But as the city tries to recover, will the virus strike back? Months of social distancing, mask-wearing, hand-washing, shock and fear have made New Yorkers better prepared to keep the virus under control, health experts said.

Yet Dr. Ian Lipkin, a Columbia University epidemiologist who had COVID-19 himself in March, is concerned that the virus might spread at the protests following Floyd's May 25 death. And the virus's toll — in lives, despair and exhaustion — weighs on him: "It's very difficult to see how we recover."

New Zealand appears to have eradicated COVID-19

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — New Zealand appears to have completely eradicated the coronavirus — at least for now — after health officials said Monday that the last known infected person had recovered.

The announcement was greeted with joy around the country and means that the nation of 5 million people will be among the first to welcome throngs of fans back into sports stadiums, embrace crowded concerts and remove seating restrictions from flights.

It has been 17 days since the last new case was reported, during which time an additional 40,000 people have been tested, bringing the total number tested to about 300,000. Monday marked the first time since late February that there were no active cases.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said that she was confident New Zealand had halted the spread of the virus, but it still

must be prepared for more.

"We are confident we have eliminated transmission of the virus in New Zealand for now, but elimination is not a point in time, it is a sustained effort," she said at a news conference. "We almost certainly will see cases here again, and I do want to say that again, we will almost certainly see cases here again, and that is not a sign that we have failed, it is a reality of this virus. But if and when that occurs, we have to make sure — and we are — that we are prepared."

More cases are likely to be imported as people enter the country. For now, the border remains shut to all but citizens and residents, with some limited exceptions. Everybody who does enter has to go into quarantine.

Ardern announced that the Cabinet had agreed to remove almost all remaining virus restrictions from midnight, with the exception of the border strictures.

Marine accused of stealing 10K yen arrested in Japan

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — An Okinawa-based Marine who apparently broke coronavirus liberty restrictions was arrested by Japanese police Sunday after reportedly stealing money from a Naha bar.

Lance Cpl. Michael John Defries II, 20, assigned to Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, was taken into custody outside a bar in Naha's Kumoji neighborhood shortly after police were called at 3:24 a.m., a Naha Police spokesman said Monday.

Defries pocketed a 10,000 yen note — the equivalent of about \$91 — that another customer had placed on the bar, the spokesman said. Bar staff reviewed surveillance footage.

Defries admitted to police that he took the money but said he "made a mistake," the spokesman said. Defries was intoxicated, but his blood alcohol level was not available.

Government spokespeople in Japan customarily speak on condition of anonymity as a condition of their employment.

A theft charge for Defries was expected to be referred to the Naha District Public Prosecutor's Office on Monday afternoon, the police spokesman said. Until then, he was being held at Naha Police Station.

The incident is under investigation by U.S. military and Okinawa police, Marine Corps Installations Pacific told Stars and Stripes.

"We take all allegations of misconduct by U.S. service members very seriously," the command said in an emailed statement. "To preserve the integrity of the investigative process, it would be premature to comment on any details at this time."

A theft conviction may result in up to 10 years in prison or up to \$4,500 in fines, according to Japan's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

Hundreds line up for Floyd's memorial

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Hundreds of mourners lined up outside a church in George Floyd's native Houston for a final public viewing Monday as his death two weeks ago at the hands of police continued whipping protesters, leaders and cities around the world into action over demands to address racial injustice and police brutality.

As the doors opened at The Fountain of Praise church in Houston, where Floyd spent most of his life, Floyd was lying in an open gold-colored casket, dressed in a brown suit and blue tie. His body was escorted to what organizers say will be a six-hour public viewing that was expected to draw thousands of mourners.

Mourners, many wearing masks and T-shirts with the words "I Can't Breathe," stood 6 feet apart as they paused briefly

to view the casket. Some made the sign of the cross as they passed by. On the stage behind the casket were two identical murals of Floyd wearing a black cap that read "Houston" and angel wings drawn behind him.

Among those expected to attend the service was Republican Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, who has called Floyd's death a "horrific act of police brutality."

Floyd died May 25 after a white Minneapolis police officer pressed his knee into his neck for several minutes even after he stopped responding. His death has inspired international protests and drawn new attention to the treatment of African Americans by police and the criminal justice system.

A majority of the Minneapolis City Council has vowed to dismantle the city's 800-member police agency. "It is clear that our

system of policing is not keeping our communities safe," City Council President Lisa Bender said Sunday. "Our efforts at incremental reform have failed, period."

On Monday, Derek Chauvin — the officer filmed pressing his knee on Floyd's neck and one of four to be fired from the department in the aftermath of Floyd's death — was scheduled to make his first court appearance since the charge against him was upgraded to second-degree murder.

Floyd's funeral will be Tuesday, followed by burial at the Houston Memorial Gardens cemetery in suburban Pearland, where he will be laid to rest next to his mother, Larcenia Floyd.

Former Vice President Joe Biden planned to travel to Houston to meet with Floyd's family and will provide a video message for Floyd's funeral service.

Cristobal weakens to a depression, moves north

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — Tropical Storm Cristobal weakened into a depression early Monday after inundating coastal Louisiana and ginning up dangerous weather along most of the U.S. Gulf Coast, sending waves crashing over Mississippi beaches, swamping parts of an Alabama island town and spawning a tornado in Florida.

Heavy rainfall and a storm surge continued posing a threat across a wide area of the coast after Cristobal made landfall Sunday afternoon packing 50-mph winds between the mouth of the Mississippi River and the since-evacuated barrier island resort community of Grand Isle.

Early Monday morning, the storm was centered about 40 miles north of Baton Rouge, La., with top winds of 35 mph and moving north-northwest at 10 mph. Cristobal's remnants could be a rainmaker for days. Its forecast path takes it into Arkansas and Missouri by Tuesday, then through Illinois and Wisconsin to the Great Lakes.

Forecasters said that up to 12 inches of rain could fall in some areas. The weather service

warned that the rain would contribute to rivers flooding on the central Gulf Coast and up into the Mississippi Valley, posing a new test of the beleaguered pumping system designed to drain flood waters from the streets of New Orleans.

Coastal Mississippi news outlets reported stalled cars and trucks as flood waters inundated beaches and crashed over highways. On the City of Biloxi Facebook page, officials said that emergency workers helped dozens of motorists through flood waters, mostly on U.S. 90 running along the coast.

In Alabama, the bridge linking the mainland to Dauphin Island was closed much of Sunday. Police and state transportation department vehicles led convoys of motorists to and from the island when breaks in the weather permitted.

In Florida, a tornado — the second in two days in the state as the storm approached — uprooted trees and downed power lines Sunday afternoon south of Lake City near Interstate 75, the weather service and authorities said. There were no reports of injuries.

Dems kneel, then unveil police reform overhaul

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Democrats proposed a sweeping overhaul of police oversight and procedures Monday, a potentially far-reaching legislative response to the mass protests denouncing the deaths of black Americans in the hands of law enforcement.

Before unveiling the package, House and Senate Democrats held a moment of silence at the Capitol's Emancipation Hall, reading the names of George Floyd and others killed during police interactions. They knelt for 8 minutes and 46 seconds — now a symbol of police brutality and violence — the length of time prosecutors say Floyd was pinned under a white police officer's knee before he died.

"We cannot settle for anything less than transformative structural change," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, drawing on the nation's history of slavery.

The Justice in Policing Act would limit legal protections for police, create a national database of excessive-force incidents and ban police chokeholds, among other changes,

according to an early draft. It is the most ambitious change to law enforcement sought by Congress in years.

Rep. Karen Bass, D-Calif., chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, which is leading the effort, called it "bold" and "transformative."

Despite the worldwide protests, with tens of thousands of demonstrators taking to the streets in cities across America and abroad since Floyd was killed May 25, the idea of broad-based U.S. police reforms remains politically polarized and highly uncertain in this election year.

While Democrats are expected to swiftly approve the legislation this month, it does not go as far as some activists want to "defund the police." The outlook for passing the package in the Republican-held Senate is slim.

President Donald Trump was quick to characterize the Democrats as having "gone CRAZY!"

As activists call for restructuring police departments the president tweeted, "LAW & ORDER, NOT DEFUND AND ABOLISH THE POLICE."

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man's hand blown off in plot on cheerleaders

VA ABINGDON — A southwest Virginia man who blew off his hand in an apparent explosives accident was charged in federal court after authorities said they found evidence he was making a bomb and wanted to target “hot cheerleaders” because of his sexual frustrations.

An FBI affidavit filed in federal court in Abingdon said Cole Carini, 23, of Richlands showed up at a hospital with one hand blown off, fingers blown off his second and other shrapnel wounds.

He told authorities he'd been in a lawnmower accident. But authorities searched his property, and found explosives materials, rusty nails, pipes and pieces of flesh.

Fire chief, arts manager ousted over black mural

FL BOYNTON BEACH — A Florida fire chief and arts manager have been removed from their jobs after a mural depicting black former fire department officials was replaced with one showing them with white faces.

The Palm Beach Post reported City Manager Lori LaVerriere removed Matthew Petty, the city's fire chief, and fired Debby Coles-Dobay, the city's public arts manager. LaVerriere said in a statement she would not tolerate disrespect to any part of the community.

The mural, which the city unveiled this month, erased the image of Latosha Clemons, who was the city's first and only black female firefighter and deputy chief. Also erased on the mural was the face of Glenn Joseph, the city's former fire chief. He was the first

black firefighter in Boca Raton's department.

WWII museum, road race team up for challenge

LA NEW ORLEANS — The National WWII Museum and the organization that puts on an annual road race in New Orleans are collaborating on a challenge to honor the museum's 20th anniversary and the Allied route to liberate France in 1944.

The Liberty Road Challenge will run from July 5 through Sept. 10, the Crescent City Classic organization said in a news release.

The goal is 100 miles for individuals and a total of 712 miles for teams, adding up all members' mileage.

The shorter distance is that from Sainte-Mere-Eglise, the first village liberated by the Allies, to Saint-Malo in France. The longer distance marks the length of the route from Sainte-Mere-Eglise to Bastogne, Belgium, which the Allies liberated on Sept. 10, 1944, after the six-week-long Battle of the Bulge.

Protester arrested in plot to steal bulldozer

NE OMAHA — A man was arrested after stealing a bulldozer from a construction site and telling a 911 dispatcher that he was headed to Omaha to protest, authorities said.

Chad Thiessen, 39, said he planned to “deliver a message to the world about all the corruption and false information the media and government are communicating,” the Cass County Sheriff's Office said in a news release. He also said that people should “stay out of his way.”

Thiessen fortified the cabin of the bulldozer after stealing it

from a road project in the town of Murray, the sheriff's office said. He fastened two large pieces of lumber to the bottom part of the front windshield, and he placed many other pieces of timber in the side entrances.

Ice cream vendor fired over racist remark

ME PORTLAND — The Portland Sea Dogs ditched the baseball team's ice cream supplier over a racist comment.

Online criticism was swift after Shain's of Maine owner Jeff Shain was accused of using a racial slur and asking a black employee why white people couldn't use the word. The employee later confronted him over the exchange and quit her job.

The Portland Sea Dogs announced that the minor league affiliate of the Boston Red Sox was discontinuing its relationship with the ice cream maker, whose products include the popular “Sea Dog Biscuit.”

In an online apology, Shain said he didn't direct the slur at anyone and that he was commenting on its use in music that employees were playing in the store.

The Sanford-based business is “welcoming of all races,” he said.

Confederate Cemetery monument vandalized

SC MOUNT PLEASANT — Police in South Carolina are investigating after a monument at the Confederate Cemetery in Mount Pleasant's Old Village was covered in spray paint.

The graffiti included a swastika, an X, “sic semper” and “USA,” The Post and Courier reported. The Latin phrase sic semper tyrannis, coined by Shakespeare in “Julius Cae-

sar,” translates as “thus always to tyrants.”

Century-old golf course auctions restaurant gear

IN ELKHART — A golf course that has operated in Elkhart for more than a century auctioned restaurant equipment, the result of financial problems related to a sewer leak.

The restaurant at Christiana Creek Country Club was damaged by a sewer leak. The lack of revenue from the restaurant has prevented the golf course from opening, said attorney Michael Misch, who represents owner Brent Stettler.

“He's always had a dream of running a golf course, and with the restaurant destroyed, he's not going to be able to live out that dream,” Misch said.

Bob Dorsam, who's been a member since 1987, said there aren't enough younger golfers.

“The average age of a lot of these golf clubs has got to be over 60 because those are the people who have the time to play because a lot of them are retired,” he said.

Zoo employee bitten on arm by orangutan

PA ERIE — An employee at a northwestern Pennsylvania zoo was bitten on the arm by an orangutan, authorities said.

Erie County emergency dispatchers said the 29-year-old zookeeper sustained puncture and bite wounds to his forearm during the attack at the Erie Zoo.

He was taken to Saint Vincent Hospital for treatment of injuries described as moderate and non-life-threatening, dispatchers said.

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MLB floats plan for 76-game season

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Major League Baseball teams have proposed a 76-game regular season and up to 16 playoff clubs in a coronavirus-delayed year with players making about 75% of their prorated salaries if the postseason is completed, people familiar with the plan told The Associated Press.

The people spoke on the condition of anonymity Monday because details were not announced.

MLB's latest offer would guarantee 50% of players' prorated salaries over the regular season. It also would allow for playoff teams to expand from 10 to as many as 16.

The proposal would eliminate all free-agent compensation for the first time since the free-agent era started in 1976. It also would forgive 20% of the \$170 million in salaries already advanced to players during April and May.

Players agreed in March to a deal calling for prorated salaries that depend on games played, a deal in exchange for a guarantee of service time if the season was scrapped.

"If the players desire to accept this proposal, we need to reach an agreement by Wednesday," Deputy Commissioner Dan Halem wrote in a letter to union negotiator Bruce Meyer that was obtained by The Associated Press. "While we understand that

it is a relatively short time frame, we cannot waste any additional days if we are to have sufficient time for players to travel to spring training, conduct COVID-19 testing and education, conduct a COVID-19 testing and education, conduct a spring training of an appropriate length, and schedule a 76-game season that ends no later than Sept. 27."

"While we are prepared to continue discussion past Wednesday on a season with fewer than 76 games, we simply do not have enough days to schedule a season of that length unless an agreement is reached in the next 48 hours," he added.

MLB says it can't afford to play in ballparks without fans and on May 26 proposed an 82-game schedule and a sliding scale of pay cuts that would cause the biggest stars to lose a larger percentage of their salaries. The union countered with a 114-game schedule at prorated pay that would extend the regular season by a month through October.

MLB is worried a second wave of the virus would endanger the postseason — when MLB receives \$787 million in broadcast revenue.

Teams estimate the new offer plan would guarantee \$1.43 billion in compensation: \$955 million in salaries, including an allowance for earned bonuses; \$393 million

if the postseason is played for a 20% bonus for every player with a big league contract; \$50 million for the regular season postseason pool normally funded with ticket money; and \$34 million for the forgiven advances.

MLB estimates its revenue would drop from \$9.73 billion last year to \$2.75 billion this year with a 76-game season. Adding prorated shares of signing bonuses, option buyout, termination pay, assignment bonuses and benefits, MLB says players would get 70.2% of revenue, up from 46.7%. Also factoring in signing bonuses for amateurs in the draft this week and international players, MLB projects players would get 86.2%, up from 52.1%.

Free agent compensation has long caused bitter fights since the arbitration decision in December 1975 that struck down the reserve clause — it led to an eight-day strike during spring training in 1980 and a 50-day strike during the 1981 season. Compensation had been narrowed in recent years but still caused some free agents to have fewer bidders and to sign later.

MLB proposed dropping the loss of draft picks or international signing bonus pool allocation for signing a qualified free agent.

NFL outlines reopening plans for teams

Associated Press

The NFL and the players' union sent a planner to the 32 teams Monday outlining procedures for the full reopening of their practice facilities, which were closed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

In a lengthy four-part memo to the clubs written by Commissioner Roger Goodell and approved by the NFL Players Association, the league described protocols focusing on screening, testing, and infection prevention and treatment for COVID-19, including response for new infections. Also included were instructions on proper facility access, cleaning and disinfecting; physical distancing; hygiene, health education and medical services; food preparation; supplies; and team travel.

No timetable has been set for the return of most players to team complexes — only players rehabilitating injuries have been allowed to enter the buildings. But this is the next major step toward allowing all players back in club facilities.

Goodell ordered all facilities closed in late March, and the league has taken small steps toward reopening them. Last week, coaching staffs were approved to return, but only if local governmental rules allowed it.

Goodell noted that the protocols for a full return were developed in consultation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Duke's Infection Control Network and other universities.

"No set of protocols can eliminate the risk of contracting COVID-19, nor ensure that the disease itself will be mild," Goodell wrote in the memo, which was obtained by The Associated Press.

Training camps are scheduled to begin in late July, with the first preseason game, Dallas vs. Pittsburgh in the Hall of Fame game, on Aug. 6. The NFL still plans to kick off the regular season in Kansas City on Sept. 10.

A tiered approach will be used within team facilities and must be presented to the league for approval at least seven days be-

fore the reporting date for training camp. Players, most coaches, trainers, physicians and the head equipment manager — anyone who must have direct access to players — will be in Tier 1, with a maximum of 60 in addition to the players. They will have access to such restricted areas as fields and sidelines, locker rooms, training rooms, medical exam areas, meeting rooms and weight rooms.

The second tier will consist of ownership representatives; facility staff; additional coaches and equipment personnel; the general manager and football operations employees; club communications staff; security personnel; and "certain NFL and NFLPA staff as needed." They will have limited access to restricted areas.

All of those people must undergo daily screening and testing before entering the complex.

In the third tier will be personnel who perform essential facility, stadium or event services but do not require close contact with Tier 1 individuals.

Harvick drives for change after victory

Associated Press

HAMPTON, Ga. — After another dominant performance at one of his favorite tracks, Kevin Harvick relished the past and looked ahead to the future.

He wasn't entirely focused on what he can do behind the wheel.

Harvick cruised to victory Sunday over Kyle Busch and Martin Truex Jr. in the NASCAR Cup race at Atlanta Motor Speedway, leading the final 55 laps on a day that began with the series acknowledging the social unrest in the country.

Harvick also joined other drivers in making a video that promised to push for much-needed changes in the fractured nation.

"Something has to change. When you look at what happened in Minneapolis, it's just disgraceful to everyone," he said. "It's just unbelievable to sit and watch these things happen. It's really confusing. It makes you confused and mad. Now we know what we need to do and where to start."

Harvick won for the second time since NASCAR returned from the shutdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic, adding to his emotional victory at Darlington in the first race back.

Harvick came into the day having led 1,138 laps on the 1.54-mile Atlanta trioval, far more than any other driver in the 40-car field.

This one was more of the same. Harvick was out front for 151 laps — more than twice as many as anyone else — and claimed his a third victory in Atlanta, where he got his first Cup triumph in 2001 and another win two years ago.

"For me, this place is pretty special," said Harvick, who beat Busch by more than 3½ seconds, with Truex nearly 5 seconds behind. "It brings back a lot of memories."

On a reverse victory lap, Harvick held three fingers outside his car, a tribute to the late Dale Earnhardt. Harvick replaced Earnhardt after the seven-time champion was killed in a crash at Daytona in 2001.

Three weeks later, Harvick took the checkered flag in Atlanta.

"To celebrate the life of Dale Earnhardt and everything he meant to our sport, is obviously pretty special to me," Harvick said.

He now has 51 wins — breaking a tie with Ned Jarrett and Junior Johnson for the 12th spot on the career list.

"You just shake your head and say, 'Man, I can't believe this is happening,'" Harvick said. "It's pretty crazy when you think about (it). I've been very lucky to drive cars for a living."

Seven-time Cup champion Jimmie Johnson, in what may have been his final Atlanta appearance, was given the honor of delivering the "start your engines" command to his fellow drivers. The speedway also renamed a grandstand in honor of Johnson, who is retiring as a full-time competitor at the end of the year.

A five-time winner on the 1.54-mile trioval, Johnson had another strong run in Atlanta.

But his seventh-place showing extended a winless that stretches back more than three years.

Bubba Wallace, the only African American in the Cup series, donned a black T-shirt with the words "I Can't Breathe" and "Black Lives Matter" while standing on pit road before the race.

Wallace finished 21st and appeared to faint after climbing from his car on a blistering day when temperatures climbed into the mid-80s. He said he was OK and did a portion of a television interview, but then was wasn't able to speak.

Wallace was taken by ambulance to the infield care center, where to was sitting up as he was taken inside on a stretcher. He was treated and released a short time later, though no additional details were provided on what caused his problem.

Maybe it was the heat.

Maybe it was just the emotion of becoming the sport's most outspoken voice since Floyd died while in the custody of Minneapolis police.

NASCAR vows to do more to address racial inequality

Associated Press

HAMPTON, Ga. — Bubba Wallace donned a black T-shirt with the words "I Can't Breathe" and NASCAR paused before Sunday's Cup race at Atlanta Motor Speedway to acknowledge the country's social unrest. The governing body vowed to do a better job of addressing racial injustice in the wake of George Floyd's death.

During their warm-up laps, the 40 cars pulled to a stop in front of the empty grandstands and shut off their engines so NASCAR President Steve Phelps could deliver a message over their radio sets.

"Thank you for your time," Phelps said. "Our country is in pain and people are justifiably angry, demanding to be heard. The black community and all people of color have suffered in our country, and it has taken far too long for us to hear their demands for change. Our sport must do better. Our country must do better."

A black NASCAR official took a knee along pit road, mimicking a gesture used by protesters in tribute to former NFL

quarterback Colin Kaepernick.

All 40 crews stood on the wall in front of their pit boxes.

"The time is now to listen, to understand and to stand against racism and racial injustice," Phelps said. "We ask our drivers ... and all our fans to join us in this mission, to take a moment of reflection, to acknowledge that we must do better as a sport, and join us as we now pause and take a moment to listen."

Wallace, the only African American driver in NASCAR's top series, has been the sport's most outspoken voice since Floyd died while in the custody of Minneapolis police, sparking massive protests in all 50 states and around the world demanding an end to law enforcement brutality against people of color.

Wallace's T-shirt carried Floyd's pleading words when an officer, identified as Derek Chauvin, pinned a knee on his neck for more than eight minutes while he was handcuffed. Chauvin and three other officers have been fired and charged in the

incident, which followed the deaths of Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery.

Protesters have cited all three African American victims in their demands for social justice.

After Phelps spoke to the NASCAR drivers, they observed a 30-second moment of silence. Then, as the cars refired their engines and slowly pulled away for the green flag, the Fox broadcast cut to a video made by a number of Cup drivers, including Wallace and seven-time champion Jimmie Johnson, as well as retired star Dale Earnhardt Jr.

Several drivers also posted the video on their Twitter accounts, vowing to "listen and learn" from the protests that have rocked the nation. They vowed to "no longer be silent" and pledged to "work together to make real change."

With its roots in the South, NASCAR has a checkered racial history. The organization has launched diversity programs but still struggles to shake its reputation as a largely white sport.