

STARS AND STRIPES®

Monday, June 25, 2018

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Koreas discuss relocating artillery

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — The rival Koreas are discussing the possible relocation of North Korea's long-range artillery guns away from the tense Korean border, South Korea's prime minister said Monday, as the countries forge ahead with steps to lower tensions and extend a recent detente.

If realized, it would be yet another conciliatory step by North Korea since it entered talks on giving up its nuclear weapons earlier this year. But some experts say it might be a tactic to push Seoul and Washington to withdraw their more sophisticated artillery systems from front-line areas in return for pulling back its outdated conventional weapons.

In a speech marking the 68th anniversary of the start of the 1950-53 Korean War, Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon said that "moving (North Korea's) long-range artillery to the

rear is under discussion" as he explained what types of goodwill steps between the Koreas have been taken in recent months.

Lee's comments appeared to be Seoul's first official confirmation of media reports that South Korea demanded that North Korea reposition its forward-deployed artillery pieces during inter-Korean military talks on June 14. Seoul's Defense Ministry, which has denied those reports, said it had no immediate comment on Lee's speech.

North Korea has deployed an estimated 1,000 artillery pieces and rockets along the 155-mile border, putting the Seoul metropolitan area within its striking distance. Seoul, a capital city with 10 million people, is about 25 to 30 miles from the border.

Many experts have called the North Korean artillery threat "significant" because it can inflict massive casualties and can

devastate much of Seoul in the initial hours of a war before the much-better-equipped U.S. and South Korean militaries could fully respond.

But there are also views that such an assessment could be an exaggeration, as the North's artillery guns in general have poor accuracy and cannot destroy hard concrete structures. During a North Korean artillery strike on a South Korean border island in 2010 that killed four people, 90 of the 170 shells fired by the North fell into the sea while 30 of the 80 shells that reached the island didn't explode, according to military commentator Lee Illwoo.

North Korea's pullout of its artillery would be "meaningless" or a symbolic "gesture for peace," Lee said.

South Korean media speculated that during the June 14 military talks, North Korea likely demanded that South Korea and the U.S. withdraw their own artillery systems

from the border as a reciprocal measure. Local media reports said North Korea also proposed the two Koreas and the U.S. stop flying surveillance and other aircraft near the border.

Shin Won-sik, a retired three-star South Korean general, said in a newspaper column last week that the South might not be able to find any place to reposition its artillery assets in densely populated rear areas if it pulls them from the border.

North Korea has said it's willing to give up its nuclear program if it's provided a reliable security assurance from the U.S.

But it hasn't taken any serious steps toward disarmament while repeating a vague pledge to achieve "complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," a phrase it has used in the past when it requested the U.S. withdraw its 28,500 troops from South Korea and stop military exercises with the South.

N. Korea skips annual anti-US rally

Associated Press

PYONGYANG, North Korea — In another sign of detente following the summit between leader Kim Jong Un and President Donald Trump, North Korea has decided to skip one of the most symbolic and politically charged events of its calendar: the annual "anti-U.S. imperialism" rally marking the start of the Korean War.

Fist-pumping, flag-waving and slogan-shouting masses of Pyongyang residents normally assemble each year for the rally to kick off a month of anti-U.S., Korean War-focused events designed to strengthen national-

ism and unity. It all culminates on July 27, which North Korea celebrates as a national holiday called the day of "Victory in the Fatherland Liberation War."

Last year's event was held in Kim Il Sung Square with a reported 100,000 people attending. North Korea even issued special anti-U.S. postage stamps.

Officials had no on-the-record comment on the decision not to hold the event this year. But Associated Press staff in the North Korean capital confirmed Monday that it would not be held.

North Korea has toned down its anti-Washington rhetoric noticeably during the past sev-

eral months to create a more conciliatory atmosphere for the summit and to avoid souring attempts by both sides to reduce tensions and to increase dialogue.

North Korea's state media were filled with reports, photos and video of the June 12 meeting between Trump and Kim in Singapore.

A 42-minute documentary-style news special was aired on the state television network two days after the summit and has been repeated frequently since, meaning that by now, there are probably few North Koreans who are unaware of the changes in the air. For many North

Koreans, the program also quite likely was the first time they ever had seen what Trump looks like.

Still, North Korea's handling of the changes and how it presents them to its people remains highly nuanced.

So far, it hasn't said much about what Washington is interested in the most — denuclearization. But it has made significantly fewer references to its need to have nuclear weapons than it was making last year, when Kim was test-launching long-range missiles at a record pace and tensions with Washington neared the boiling point.

Mattis avoids China criticism

Associated Press

EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska — Defense Secretary Jim Mattis laid out plans for a less contentious, more open dialogue with Chinese leaders as he travels to Asia, less than a month after he slammed Beijing at an international conference for its militarization of islands in the South China Sea.

Speaking to reporters on his plane Sunday en route to a stop in Alaska, Mattis avoided any of the sharp criticism of China that he had voiced recently. Instead, he insisted that he is going into the talks with Chinese leaders without any preconceived notions and wants to focus on larger, more strategic security issues.

According to officials, a key topic of the discussions later this week will be the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the role China can play, considering its longstanding friendship with North Korea.

“I want to go in right now

without basically poisoning the well at this point. I’m going there to have a conversation,” said Mattis. “I do not want to immediately go in with a certain preset expectation of what they are going to say. I want to go in and do a lot of listening.”

Mattis’ more diplomatic tack reflects the U.S. administration’s recognition of China’s crucial influence on Korea as negotiations move ahead to get North Korea to abandon its nuclear program.

One senior U.S. official said that while Mattis will willingly lay out America’s position on China’s military buildup in the South China Sea and other points of contention, the Pentagon chief doesn’t want to open the conversations with “the irritants.” Instead, the goal is to have higher quality talks about the two countries’ military relationship, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations on the trip.

Last month, Mattis abruptly disinvited China from a multinational exercise in the Pacific

that will begin in a few days, in retribution for Beijing putting weapons systems on manmade islands in the South China Sea. Days later he publicly threatened “much larger consequences in the future” if the militarization continued.

China recently has deployed anti-ship missiles, surface-to-air missiles, electronic jammers and other equipment on the Spratly Islands and landed a bomber aircraft at Woody Island. China says it is within its rights to build up defenses on islands in the South China Sea that it believes are its sovereign territory.

Many nations fear Beijing will use the construction on the islands to extend its military reach and potentially try to restrict navigation in the South China Sea.

It’s all but certain the Chinese will raise those issues with Mattis, as well as Beijing’s long-held opposition to increasing U.S. contacts with Taiwan. China claims the self-ruled island as its territory.

NC doctor to become first in space

The Fayetteville (N.C.) Observer

While he was in the fourth grade, Drew Morgan wrote a letter to Apollo astronaut Alan Bean.

Today, Morgan, an Army lieutenant colonel and emergency physician, often thinks back to what happened next.

Bean, the fourth person to walk on the Moon, sent Morgan a signed lithograph.

For a boy growing up with the movie “The Right Stuff” and father-son visits to see the space shuttle, the gesture meant the world to a young Morgan.

Now, it’s Morgan, who took an unusual route to becoming an astronaut himself, who receives letters from children all over the world.

And while he hasn’t walked on the Moon, Morgan is preparing for his first trip into space.

Last month, NASA announced that Morgan would be one of two American astronauts heading to the International Space Station next year.

He will launch aboard a Russian Soyuz 59S rocket and spacecraft in July 2019 as a member of Expedition 60/61.

Morgan is set to become the first Army doctor to go to space.

Now, with training for his launch underway, Morgan still finds the time to respond to the letters he receives.

“That was a pinnacle moment when I was young,” he told the Observer last week from Houston. “It really ingrained in me how important it is, how role models have an impact in shaping the next generation.”

Morgan said he responds to the letters in hopes that those who receive his answer will be inspired to do something they love.

“You will be more successful in life if you love what you do,” he said. “It doesn’t have to be an astronaut. If that’s not your interests ... pursue what you love.”

Billing backlog at European health command

By JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The Army’s Regional Health Command Europe is sending out incomplete delinquency notices and asking patients to call their insurance companies to find out how much they really owe due to a billing backlog the command attributes to staffing shortages.

The health command, which couldn’t immediately say Monday how many customers have been affected, oversees 15 Army health care facilities in Germany, Belgium and Italy.

“Currently, the UBO (Uniform Business

Office) is processing insurance checks received in March 2018. We have detailed employ-

ees from other sections to assist with processing payments from insurance companies,” health command resource management chief Lt. Col. Yun Fan said in a statement.

For customers, that means accounts are not getting reconciled in a timely manner and patients could receive delinquency notices that do not reflect payments from their insurance companies, the command said.

While the command works through its backlog, no accounts will be sent to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service or the Treasury Department for collection until the accounts are reconciled and the backlog is cleared, according to the command.

“We expect the check-pro-

cessing backlog to be reduced to 60 days by the end of July,” Fan said.

Doctors perform a surgical procedure at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. Patients’ medical bills are getting processed months late by Regional Health Command Europe, where staffing shortages have created a backlog, health officials said Monday.

Meanwhile, customers should contact their insurers to find out how much of a bill their policy will cover and then pay the remainder, the medical command said.

“We ask that our patients pay their portion on time so the claims can be closed as soon the insurance payments are processed,” Fan said.

What to publicize is looming issue for special counsel probe

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — America has waited a year to hear what special counsel Robert Mueller concludes about the 2016 election, meddling by the Russians and — most of all — what Donald Trump did or didn't do. But how much the nation will learn about Mueller's findings is an open question.

Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein could end up wrestling with a dilemma similar to the one that tripped up fired FBI director James Comey: how much to reveal about Trump's actions in the event the president is not indicted. Rosenstein, who lambasted Comey for disclosing negative information about Hillary Clinton despite not recommending her for prosecution, could himself have to balance the extraordinary public interest in the investigation against his admonition that investigators should not discuss allegations against people they don't prosecute.

The quandary underscores how there's no easy or obvious endgame for the investigation, which last month reached its one-year anniversary. Though Mueller is expected to report his findings to Rosenstein, there's no requirement that those conclusions be made public. Whatever he decides will unfold against the back-

drop of a Justice Department inspector general report that reaffirmed department protocol against making detailed public statements about people who aren't charged.

"Those are going to be the hard questions at the end of Mueller's investigation: What is the nature of that report, and which, if any, parts are provided to Congress and the public," said Georgetown law professor Marty Lederman, a former official in the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel.

"There's just no way for us to know what, if any, parts of those reports can be made public or should be made public or will be made public."

The investigation has hit a critical phase. A forthcoming decision by Trump and his lawyers on whether to sit for an interview with Mueller, who is examining whether the president sought to obstruct justice, could hasten the conclusion of the investigation with regard to the White House.

What happens next is unclear, though Mueller has been closely conferring along the way with Rosenstein, the No. 2 Justice Department official who appointed him special counsel.

If he decides a crime was committed, it's theoretically possible he could seek a grand

jury indictment, though that outcome is seen as highly questionable given a Justice Department legal opinion against charging a sitting president. Trump's lawyers say Mueller's team has indicated that it plans to follow that guidance.

Depending on his findings, he also could seek to name Trump as an unindicted co-conspirator in a case against other defendants, an aggressive step taken by the special prosecutor who investigated President Richard Nixon.

The regulations require Mueller to report his findings confidentially to Rosenstein, who then would decide how and whether to share with Congress. Lawmakers and the public almost certainly would demand access to that report, no matter the conclusion; a determination of wrongdoing presumably would be forwarded to Congress to begin impeachment proceedings, while a finding that no crime was committed would be trumpeted publicly by Republicans as vindication of the president.

The easiest avenue for public disclosure in any criminal investigation is an indictment in which prosecutors lay out their allegations. But options are much trickier when cases close without prosecution.

Northern California fires prompt evacuations

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Hundreds of Northern California homes and businesses were threatened Monday after wind-driven wildfires broke out during the weekend, forcing thousands of residents to flee their homes throughout rural regions north of San Francisco.

The biggest fires continued to grow but there were no reports of injuries or deaths, California's Department of Forestry and Fire Protection said.

About 3,000 residents evacuated homes in Lake County, about 120 miles north of San Francisco. A wildfire there that was not contained at all grew to 13 square miles and destroyed at least 22 homes and buildings, the agency reported.

Fire Battalion Chief Jonathan Cox said more than 230 firefighters using helicopters, bulldozers and other equipment were battling the Lake County fire in a rugged area that made it difficult to get equipment close to the blaze.

Authorities also ordered residents to evacuate in Tehama County, about 200 miles north of San Francisco, where two wildfires were burning.

A Red Bluff police officer helping residents evacuate lost his home to the smaller wildfire, authorities said.

Red Bluff Police Lt. Matt Hansen said Cpl. Ruben Murgia's pregnant wife and three young children were ordered to evacuate their home while he was on duty Saturday when the fire started. The family escaped safely but lost nearly all of their possessions, Hansen said.

Hansen said about \$10,000 in cash along with furniture and clothing has been donated to the family as they search for a rental home.

Residents also fled a wildfire in Shasta County about 300 miles north of San Francisco.

Prosecutors cancel meeting with Stormy Daniels

The Washington Post

Stormy Daniels had been scheduled to be interviewed Monday by prosecutors in the Southern District of New York, preparing for a potential grand jury appearance about a \$130,000 payment from President Donald Trump's attorney Michael Cohen in exchange for her silence about an alleged af-

fair with Trump, according to a person familiar with the investigation, but her lawyer said late Sunday that the meeting has been canceled.

Michael Avenatti said he received a call late Sunday from two prosecutors who said they were concerned about media interest in the interview and canceled the meeting, accord-

ing to The Associated Press.

Daniels and Avenatti have been cooperating with prosecutors and provided documents about the payment, made shortly before the 2016 election, in response to a subpoena, said the person, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to provide the information about Monday's interview.

Victorious, Turkey's Erdogan prepares to assume wider powers

Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey — Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has dominated Turkish politics for the past 15 years, prepared Monday to extend his rule and to take on sweeping new powers after his victory in the country's landmark presidential and parliamentary elections.

Turkey's High Electoral Board declared Erdogan, 64, the winner of Sunday's votes, which usher in a new executive presidential system in which the prime minister's post is eliminated and executive powers are transferred to the president, who rules with only limited checks and balances.

The Turkish leader is accused by critics of adopting increasingly authoritarian tactics but is loved by supporters for bringing prosperity and stability. Erdogan may be facing rough times ahead, however, because analysts predict an economic downturn for Turkey amid rising inflation and a struggling currency.

His win also could deepen Turkey's rift with its Western and NATO allies, who are already concerned by the country's setbacks in democracy and human rights as well as Turkey's closer ties with Russia. Russian President Vladimir Putin sent Erdogan a telegram Monday congratulating him on his victory, one of the first world leaders to do so.

Turkey's currency, the lira, rallied Monday over Erdogan's victory, which reduces instability in the short term.

In his victory speech, Erdogan said he would work toward achieving his goal of making Turkey one of the world's top 10 economies by 2023, when the Turkish Republic marks its centenary.

He also pledged a more "determined" fight against outlawed Kurdish rebels and suspected members of a movement led by U.S.-based cleric Fethullah Gulen, whom he accuses of orchestrating a

2016 failed coup against his government. Gulen denies involvement.

Some 50,000 people have been arrested and more than 110,000 civil servants have been fired in a massive government crackdown that has taken place under a state of emergency imposed after the coup that is still in place.

"Turkey made its choice in favor of a more determined fight against the PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party) and (Gulenists)," Erdogan said. "We will go after terror organizations with stronger determination."

Under the new system, Erdogan himself will appoint ministers, vice presidents and high-level bureaucrats, issue decrees, prepare the budget and decide on security policies.

According to unofficial results that have yet to be confirmed by the electoral board, Erdogan garnered 52.5 percent of the presidential vote, while his ruling Justice and Development Party, or AKP, won 42.5 percent of the parliamentary vote. Erdogan's closest contender, Muharrem Ince of the secular opposition Republican People's Party, won 30.7 percent support.

Erdogan's AKP fell short of winning a parliamentary majority, but a better-than-expected performance by its nationalist ally is expected to allow the party to control the 600-seat legislature.

Ince, who complained that it was an unfair election, accepted Erdogan's victory during a news conference Monday.

"There are no significant differences between our records and the Supreme Election Council's records," Ince, 54, told reporters. "I accept the results of the elections."

The former physics teacher, who led a robust campaign against Erdogan, called on him to end his divisive policies.

"Be the president of 81 million (Turks), embrace everyone," he said. "That's what I would have done if I had won."

Pentagon: 2 bases will house immigrants

Associated Press

EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska — The Pentagon is preparing to build temporary camps for immigrants at two military bases, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Sunday.

He did not name the two bases, but said the details are being worked out, including how much capacity is needed. The Pentagon had initially talked about four potential bases but Mattis indicated the number is now two.

The Pentagon last week said it would make space available on military bases for as many as 20,000 unaccompanied migrant children detained after illegally crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. It wasn't clear Sunday if the housing would be limited strictly to children or if it would also involve families.

Speaking to reporters traveling with him to Asia on Sunday, Mattis said the military has housed people in the past, including Vietnamese fleeing their country as well as Ameri-

cans needing shelter in the wake of natural disasters.

"We consider that to be a logistics function that's quite appropriate" for the department, Mattis said.

The request for temporary shelter — amid a growing political battle over detained migrants — was made by the Department of Health and Human Services and accepted by the Defense Department.

HHS has assessed facilities on four military bases: Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas, plus three bases in Texas: Dyess Air Force Base, Goodfellow Air Force Base and Fort Bliss.

The Pentagon has said it will have no role in operating the temporary shelters, which would be controlled by HHS.

A Pentagon memo to members of Congress, obtained by The Associated Press, said it has been asked to have the facilities available as early as July, through the end of the year.

Donations surge at Texas asylum-seeker center

Associated Press

MCALLEN, Texas — One by one, around Father's Day, the surge of Amazon boxes containing shirts, pants, underwear and many other items began arriving at an asylum-seeker rest center in the border town of McAllen, Texas.

Included in the packages were notes of support. One read: "As someone who has a dad who would do anything for their child I hope this helps a few of the dads that come through your doors with the same ideas."

The boxes started arriving as people across the country began to learn about President Donald Trump's policy of separating children from their

families.

"All of the sudden, they started getting like a thousand boxes a day and then more and then more. And they had to come and secure space here and that filled up and they got another space and that filled up," said Natalie Montelongo, a native of nearby Brownsville who flew in from Washington to volunteer at the center. She set up an Amazon wish list with items needed by the shelter and posted the link on social media.

Now, the immigrant respite center run by Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley has received so many boxes that it had to rent additional storage space.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Veteran given \$15K in equipment after theft

OK TULSA — A veteran in Oklahoma whose life and business were disrupted when his lawn equipment was stolen no longer needs to face acres of grass using a push mower.

The Tulsa World reported Cody Nichols received \$15,000 worth of new lawn-mowing equipment on Friday through the nonprofit group Soldier's Wish.

The Tulsa-based organization works to meet the needs of military veterans.

Nichols, who served in the Marines, operates Our Troops Services.

The small business hires veterans for landscaping, fencing and construction jobs.

Historic Taos Inn up for sale for \$7.1M

NM TAOS — The Historic Taos Inn in New Mexico is up for sale.

The Albuquerque Journal reported the 44-room hotel, bar and restaurant that spans two acres and comprises several 19th-century adobe buildings is on the market for \$7.1 million.

The current ownership group has had the hotel for 30 years.

The Taos Inn was put on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.

It opened in 1936 as the Hotel Martin — named after Dr. Thomas Paul "Doc" and Helen Martin, who came to Taos in the 1890s.

Arrest made in graffiti on historic missions

TX SAN ANTONIO — A 19-year-old man was arrested and two other people are sought for spray-painting

graffiti on two historic San Antonio missions.

One of the paint messages was: "I don't care. Do you?" It's the meme displayed on the back of first lady Melania Trump's jacket as she boarded a plane Thursday to South Texas to visit immigrant children.

San Antonio police said Andres Castaneda turned himself in late Friday night.

The graffiti was sprayed on walls of the 18th-century Mission San Jose and Mission San Juan. Castaneda is charged with felony defacing of a church or school.

Conservancy to protect rare plant

VT MONKTON — The Nature Conservancy in Vermont said it will ensure a rare flower is protected while builders renovate a hiking trail in the town of Monkton.

Conservancy critical lands manager Lynn McNamara told WCAX-TV the new walkway will be built away from the winged loosestrife in the Raven Ridge Natural Area.

The flower, long thought to be extinct in Vermont, was discovered by a botanist in Monkton last year.

The state said a small number of winged loosestrife plants were last observed by a botanist in Middlebury in 1979.

European firm to open US distillery

NY ALBANY — A European company plans to open a new distillery in New York City's northern suburbs, adding to the growing number of craft distilleries in New York state.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced Friday that the Alexandrion Group, Romania's

largest spirits producer, will build its first U.S. distillery in the town of Carmel in Putnam County, 55 miles north of New York City.

Cuomo said that when the 120,000-square-foot distillery opens in 2020 it will produce premium spirits such as bourbon, gin, brandy and vodka.

Grocery chain to give teachers free supplies

GA ATLANTA — Teachers stocking up for the upcoming school year are getting a little extra help from Kroger.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported the grocery chain is offering free bags of school supplies to metro Atlanta teachers for two days in July.

At each event, a valid teacher's ID gets educators an empty bag that they can fill with the school supplies of their choice.

The event will be held July 10 at the Infinite Energy Center in Duluth and on July 17 at the Georgia International Convention Center in College Park.

Dog eyed to detect invasive mussels

WA SPOKANE — The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife said it plans to use a dog to help check boats and prevent invasive mussels from entering the state.

The agency told KREM-TV that the dog will likely be stationed in Spokane and work mostly at the Stateline boat check station.

The agency said it will use grant money to purchase a dog sometime next year.

Agency spokesman Eric Anderson said a dog can cut boat inspection time from 10 minutes to two minutes.

Police credit dog for saving missing toddler

MI PAW PAW — Michigan parents have their dog to thank for leaving a trail of paw prints that police used to track a 2-year-old who was missing for several hours.

Van Buren County authorities returned Princeton Peake to his parents after he escaped his locked home in Paw Paw last week.

Myhia Perez, Princeton's mother, said she woke up to find her son missing from the bedroom and the front door unlocked.

Sheriff Daniel Abbott said the family's pit-boxer mix named Apollo may have saved Princeton's life by staying by his side. Police followed Apollo's tracks to find Princeton in a muddy, wooded area up to a mile away. The toddler was discovered without his diaper, covered in scratches and bug bites.

Cruise ship cleared after hitting sailboats

MA BOSTON — A 175-foot cruise ship with more than 300 passengers that briefly lost power and drifted into several moored sailboats on Boston Harbor, sending one man scrambling for safety, was cleared to resume operations.

WFXT-TV reported Friday that the Coast Guard cleared the Odyssey after a sea trial.

No injuries and no significant damage were reported after the vessel struck six sailboats Thursday.

Video taken by passengers shows Vernon Fritch, an instructor with the Boston Harbor Sailing Club, hopping from one small sailboat to another to avoid the oncoming ship.

From wire reports

Your objective source for military news
updated 24/7 from bases
around the world.
Now online at www.stripes.com.

STARS AND STRIPES®

Perfect Uruguay hands host first loss

Associated Press

SAMARA, Russia — Luis Suarez and Edinson Cavani scored a goal each and Uruguay went on to defeat Russia 3-0 on Monday, finishing undefeated in group play and handing the host nation its first loss of the World Cup.

Both teams were already assured of spots in the knockout round, but Uruguay's victory put it at the top of Group A and looking toward a match in Sochi on Saturday against the second-place finisher from Group B.

Uruguay, which also benefited from an own-goal in the first half, had its third straight shutout of the tournament after consecutive 1-0 victories over Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

By advancing to the round of 16 with victories over Saudi Arabia and Egypt, Russia secured its best World Cup showing in the post-Soviet era.

But Uruguay — ranked No. 14 in the world — posed a far greater challenge to the hosts.

Suarez, who seems to have put past World Cup controversies behind him, scored with a low shot from just outside the box that sailed past the wall of Russian players and into the right corner of the goal. The Bar-

celona striker blew a kiss to the corner of Samara Stadium where most of La Celeste's cheering supporters were seated.

Uruguay went up 2-0 over Russia on an own-goal — the sixth of the World Cup to tie the tournament record. Midfielder Diego Laxalt's shot from long range deflected off Denis Cheryshev's foot and past goalkeeper Igor Akinfeev.

Russia, the lowest ranked team in the field at No. 70, went down to 10 men after right back Igor Smolnikov received a second yellow card in the 36th minute. Russia coach Stanislav Cherchesov immediately took off Cheryshev for defender Mario Fernandes.

Cavani scored in the 90th minute and was taken out a short time later. The Paris Saint-Germain forward put a rebound into the left corner of the net after Diego Godin's header was parried by Akinfeev.

Uruguay was making its 12th appearance at the World Cup, which it won in 1930 and 1950. More recently, the team finished fourth in South Africa in 2010 and made the round of 16 in Brazil four years ago.

Uruguay midfielder Lucas Torreira made his first start of the World Cup. Since the 22-year-old Torreira has been in Rus-

sia there have been persistent rumors that he is headed to Arsenal.

Russia left back Yuri Zhirkov was taken out of the match against Egypt because of an ankle injury but was available as a substitute on Monday. Teammate Alan Dzagoev was out again because of a hamstring injury sustained in the opener against Saudi Arabia but he may return for the knockout round.

Defender Jose Maria Gimenez didn't play for Uruguay because of a right thigh injury. Gimenez scored in the team's opening match of the tournament, a 1-0 victory over Egypt. The team did not say when he might return.

Russia's home-country advantage could only carry it so far against its more experienced opponents. But the Russians had recent history to think they were up to the challenge: The teams played to a 1-1 draw in a 2012 friendly in Moscow.

Suarez scored in that match, and thwarted Russia in this one, too. His goal on Monday was the 53rd of his career, in his 101st appearance. It was his second goal of the tournament after also scoring in the 1-0 victory over Saudi Arabia.

Colombia shuts out Poland El Hadary sets mark

Associated Press

KAZAN, Russia — Four years after Radamel Falcao was supposed to lead Colombia at the World Cup, he's doing just that.

Falcao missed the tournament in Brazil with a knee injury and had to wait until arriving in Russia to score his first World Cup goal. It came in Colombia's 3-0 victory over Poland on Sunday.

"It's a dream goal," Falcao said. "I'm happy for the victory, for the team's performance and the goal that I scored, which I've been waiting for for many years."

The victory kept Colombia in the running for a spot in the round of 16 and knocked out Poland, the first European country to be eliminated.

Falcao, Colombia's all-time leading scorer, with 30 goals, made sure he would stay healthy for this year's World Cup by sitting out several matches with his Monaco club this season.

"We always hope that he can score and hope that he can be

fit as he was today, and we want to help him," Colombia coach Jose Pekerman said. "I think the fact that he scored was very important, not just for today but for the matches to come."

"He is a symbol of the national team. He is a symbol of Colombian football."

Playing some scintillating soccer in Kazan, Falcao scored with the outside of his foot in the 70th minute after a superb pass from playmaker Juan Quintero in the back of the defense.

Yerry Mina scored the first goal in the 40th and Juan Cuadrado completed the win in the 75th.

Both teams lost their Group H openers and knew another loss would end their hopes of advancing. Colombia will next face Senegal on Thursday in Samara with a chance to win the group, while Poland will play Japan in Volgograd.

Mina out-jumped the Poland defense to head in the opening goal from James Rodriguez's cross, rewarding a spell of domination by the Colombians.

Associated Press

VOLGOGRAD, Russia — The oldest person to play in a World Cup match made some spectacular saves Monday. He also watched two go past him.

Egypt goalkeeper Essam El Hadary, who is 45, took the field for his team's final group match to set the record. Although he saved one penalty, he couldn't stop Saudi Arabia from winning 2-1 in a game between two teams that had already been eliminated.

"I am very sorry for the fans, for everyone in Egypt," El Hadary said. "I want to thank my teammates. It was a great honor for me to play."

Salem Aldawsari scored the winner for the Saudis with almost the last kick of the match, volleying past El Hadary from a tight angle inside the Egypt penalty area.

Mohamed Salah, playing for the second time since injuring his left shoulder in last month's Champions League final, had put Egypt ahead in the 22nd

minute after deftly controlling a long ball from Abdalla Said and then lobbing goalkeeper Yasser Almosailem.

It was Salah's second goal at the World Cup, and Egypt's first in open play at the World Cup since 1934.

Salman Alfaraj got the Saudis level with a penalty kick in first-half stoppage time after Ali Gabr brought down Fahad Almuwallad in the area. The decision was confirmed after a video review and the penalty was taken in the sixth minute of injury time.

"I think that in general we kept control of the pace, we kept possession ... and I think that we deserved to win," Saudi coach Juan Antonio Pizzi said. "Talking about the future, well, the association will have to decide what they're going to do."

Almuwallad had earlier missed a chance to equalize when El Hadary saved his penalty. The veteran goalkeeper dived to his right and flicked his left hand up to push the shot onto the bar before it was cleared.

Trickery helps Truex pass Harvick for win

Associated Press

SONOMA, Calif. — Martin Truex Jr. was running second as the laps dwindled in Sonoma, and crew chief Cole Pearn didn't think they were as fast as Kevin Harvick.

Pearn told his team to prepare for a pit stop on the 73rd lap, and he told Truex over the radio to bring in the car.

It was all trickery.

Harvick's crew chief, Rodney Childers, called in his driver for tires and fuel in anticipation of Truex's stop — but Pearn's driver actually stayed out for seven more laps. When Truex finally pitted, he got the fresh tires he needed to blow past Harvick for a sweet victory.

"I called him off at the last second," Pearn said with a sly smile. "As far as he knew, we were pitting. I'd like to say we're smart enough to use codes, but we're not. We'd probably mess it up."

Truex won the NASCAR Cup Series race in Sonoma on Sunday because of that clever pit bluff, cruising to his second career victory on the challenging road course.

Truex easily held off Harvick for his second win in three weeks and his third victory of the season in his Furniture Row Racing Toyota. Truex led 62 laps and won by a whopping 10.513 seconds.

"The last 10 laps of the race were easy," Truex said. "A little stressful. I was just hoping for no cautions, because I had a big lead. This place is so tricky and so technical, but when you start to take care of your equipment and have time to think, it's almost harder. You can overshoot a corner easily."

The defending Cup Series champion didn't make a mistake after he waited to pit until the 81st lap, a full eight laps later than Harvick. With fresh tires, Truex passed Harvick for the lead around the final hairpin turn with 19 laps to go.

"That was all Cole," Truex said. "I'll do whatever he wants to do. Awesome job by him today. ... Honestly, all you're doing is begging, hoping that the caution doesn't come out and hope the engine stays together."

Truex's victory in his manufacturer's title race was the 18th of his career. He earned his sec-

ond career victory at Sonoma in 2013 for Michael Waltrip Racing, making him the only racer to win twice in the past decade at Sonoma.

Cup Series leader Harvick went to the pits shortly after Truex passed him, but never got the caution that would have been necessary for him to catch up. Clint Bowyer finished third and Chase Elliott was fourth.

Truex began his racing career as a kid running go-karts on road courses, and those lifelong skills are showing. After winning at Watkins Glen last year and taking Sonoma this year, his three career road course victories are second among active drivers to the four on non-oval tracks by Kyle Busch, who finished fifth.

"I enjoy them," Truex said. "I think it's fun to do something different."

Here are more things to know about the race in wine country:

Bigger worries. Harvick wasn't angry about the pit strategy that probably decided the race. "The call was one thing, but I think I was too hard on the car the first couple of stages," Harvick said. "The brake pedal was long after qualifying and

never really came around during the race. It progressively got worse."

Canadian scarface. Pearn turned heads on pit row even before his strategy decisions thanks to a nasty-looking vertical scar running down his forehead. The crew chief said he needed stitches earlier in the week after he got hit in the face by a large corner post while building a treehouse for his family. The blow cut his forehead down to the skull — but he went home from the hospital and finished the treehouse anyway. "I wish I [had been] fighting a bear or a cougar, or something like that," he said.

Dinger dinged. A.J. Allmendinger won the first stage and had dreams of getting a rare victory — until he missed a shift and blew his engine on the 33rd lap. Allmendinger is a standout road course racer, but he made a key mistake. "I haven't missed a shift on a road course in 10 years," Allmendinger said. "It was just me. I was trying to be so patient and so smooth. It was unexpected. It's on me. I let everybody down here."

Newgarden claims third IndyCar victory

Associated Press

ELKHART LAKE, Wis. — Josef Newgarden put in a lot of work to make his win at Road America look easy.

With no caution flags all afternoon to slow him down, the pole-sitting Newgarden finally pulled away late from Ryan Hunter-Reay for a comfortable victory.

Newgarden led 53 of 55 laps, crossing the finish line with a 3.38-second cushion over second-place finisher Hunter-Reay for his third win of the season.

"We had our work cut out for us today," Newgarden said. "We had to be perfect."

The defending series champion savored the victory in the 222-mile-long Kohler Grand Prix on his cool-down lap, tak-

ing in the crowd at the rural Wisconsin road course. Newgarden has such a devoted following here that fans planted a garden in his honor in time for this weekend's race.

"These people have a professional garden set up with little 'Baby Josefs' growing," Newgarden said with a smile. "It was kind of cool."

The victory might have been more satisfying. It completed an impressive weekend for the Team Penske driver at the 14-turn track, where Newgarden's No. 1 Chevy registered the top speed in practice.

Points leader Scott Dixon finished third. He was part of the three-car pack led by Newgarden that separated from the field with about 13 laps left.

They couldn't catch Newgarden. He returned to the podium

following a five-race stretch finishing no higher than eighth.

"No concern, just ready to go win," Newgarden said when asked about the previous five races. "Our outlook didn't really change."

What might be considered a slump for Newgarden came to an emphatic end. He picked up his 10th career victory and first at Road America.

After staying within about 1 second of Newgarden for much of the race, Hunter-Reay lost ground when Newgarden's car got a fresh set of tires on his last pit stop. Newgarden said he felt good about his chance with about eight laps left.

"In hindsight, I should have pressured him a bit more in the first stint. We were focused on a fuel number at the time," Hunter-Reay said. "Unfortu-

nately, that Penske fuel number comes into play [and you] can't really go hard."

A caution-free race also worked to Newgarden's advantage, with the field unable to reset from a restart. It was the ninth start-to-finish, green-flag race at Road America.

"I was hoping for a yellow (flag) to mix things up," Hunter-Reay said. "It never came through."

It still didn't make for a stress-free day for Newgarden, with Hunter-Reay's No. 28 Honda chasing the Penske car down all afternoon.

"We needed to keep to our strategy and save fuel. But Ryan was so quick that it was tough to just stay in front of him and try to work on my race. He was really pressuring me," Newgarden said.

Murphy helps Nationals avoid sweep

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The offense that Washington Nationals manager Dave Martinez has been waiting for showed up just in time to prevent a sweep at the hands of a division rival Sunday night.

Daniel Murphy's single drove in the tying and go-ahead runs in the eighth inning and the Nationals rallied past the Philadelphia Phillies 8-6 to salvage the finale of the three-game series.

Anthony Rendon homered and doubled, Bryce Harper tied a career high with three doubles and Michael A. Taylor and Murphy each had three singles as Washington pounded out 17 hits in a game that was delayed 38 minutes by rain in the bottom of the fourth inning.

"We weren't scoring very many runs," Martinez said, "and for us to come out and compete like we did today and put up eight

runs and just really work very good at-bats, I felt really good for the boys and I know they'll feed off it."

Rhys Hoskins and Nick Williams homered for the Phillies, who had won three straight.

Pinch hitter Brian Goodwin led off the eighth with a walk. With one out, righthander Seranthony Dominguez (1-2) came on to face Harper, who doubled to right, with Goodwin stopping at third.

After Rendon grounded out, Phillies manager Gabe Kapler elected to walk rookie Juan Soto and pitch to the veteran Murphy, who began the day hitting .135.

"You pick your poison right there," Kapler said. "You have two very good hitters. The first one in Soto has been elite. And Murphy has struggled a little bit. And we went after the guy that was struggling and coming off injury."

After throwing three 98-mph plus fast-

balls to get ahead 1-2, Dominguez tried a slider that Murphy lined to shallow right. Taylor's single made it 8-6.

"I was watching some film on him and he had kind of gone with the slider as a kill shot to a couple lefties, so once I got two strikes I was aware of it," Murphy said. "I hadn't seen it yet, so that's never any fun, but fortunately I was able to get it in the air enough and kind of scoop it over Cesar (Hernandez's) head at second base."

Ryan Madson (2-3) pitched the eighth inning, and Sean Doolittle finished for his 21st save.

The Phillies took a 6-2 lead in the fifth on a two-run triple by Odubel Herrera and a two-run homer by Williams, but the bullpen surrendered six runs.

Washington pulled within a run at 6-5 in the sixth with four two-out hits, including an RBI triple by Trea Turner and RBI doubles by Harper and Rendon.

MLB roundup

Dodgers hit 7 HRs and get past Mets in 11

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Watching from the visitor's dugout, Justin Turner saw his teammates spray Citi Field with a bunch of home runs and figured the Los Angeles Dodgers wouldn't need any from him.

His power proved to be the difference.

Turner hit the Dodgers' seventh home run of the game, a go-ahead drive in the 11th inning that led Los Angeles over the New York Mets 8-7 Sunday.

"I was hoping we didn't need one," said Turner, who went 1-for-9 in the first two games of the series before getting the day off. "But it kind of worked out."

Cody Bellinger and Kike Hernandez each homered twice as the Dodgers beat the Mets for the 12th straight time dating to 2016. Max Muncy and Joc Pederson also connected for Los Angeles. Hernandez and Muncy led off the game with back-to-back shots.

The Dodgers' team record for home runs in a game is eight, set in 2002 against Milwaukee.

The defending NL champs

have gone 25-9 since falling behind 10 games under .500 on May 16, and have won three straight after losing the last two games of a three-game series last week at Wrigley Field against Chicago.

The Dodgers are now 2½ games behind NL West-leading Arizona.

"We had a lot of injuries, a lot of bad luck and nothing was going our way," Hernandez said. "Slowly things started to turn around. It was just a matter of time because if you look at our team, even now that we're doing really good, there's no reason why we shouldn't have the record we have now."

The Mets matched a team record for the most homers allowed in a game, and lost their sixth in a row overall.

Indians 12, Tigers 2: Edwin Encarnacion hit an eighth-inning grand slam, helping the host Indians to their season-high seventh straight win.

Red Sox 5, Mariners 0: Chris Sale struck out 13 over seven dazzling innings and Mitch Moreland hit a two-run homer, leading host Boston to

the victory.

Reds 8, Cubs 6: Pitcher Michael Lorenzen and Jesse Winker connected for pinch-hit homers in host Cincinnati's seven-run seventh inning, sending the Reds to their seventh straight victory.

Rays 7, Yankees 6 (12): Rookie Jake Bauers led off the 12th inning with a home run, finishing off host Tampa Bay's three-game sweep.

Braves 7, Orioles 3: Freddie Freeman hit a two-run single in the first, pinch-hitter Dansby Swanson belted a two-run homer in the eighth and the host Braves earned their first win over the Orioles in six years.

Diamondbacks 3, Pirates 0: Clay Buchholz pitched five solid innings before leaving with an injury, and the visiting Diamondbacks completed a four-game sweep of the Pirates.

Cardinals 8, Brewers 2: Luke Weaver won for the first time in eight starts and Jose Martinez hit a three-run homer for visiting St. Louis.

Twins 2, Rangers 0: Jose Berrios struck out a career-

best 12 seven innings, and the host Twins beat Bartolo Colon and the Rangers.

Astros 11, Royals 3: Yuli Gurriel hit a grand slam in host Houston's eight-run second inning.

Marlins 8, Rockies 5: Derek Dietrich homered for the third straight game and tied a career high with four hits, leading visiting Miami to the victory.

Giants 3, Padres 2 (11): Hunter Pence hit a two-run double in the 11th inning, sending host San Francisco to the win.

Blue Jays 7, Angels 6 (10): Kendrys Morales connected for a pinch-hit homer in the 10th inning, lifting visiting Toronto.

Morales hit a two-out drive to right off Hansel Robles for his eighth homer. Robles (2-3) was making his Angels debut after he was claimed off waivers from the New York Mets.

White Sox 10, Athletics 3: Yoan Moncada broke out of a slump with a three-run homer and six RBIs, and the host White Sox salvaged a split of the four-game series.