

Afghans dig for survivors of earthquake

Associated Press

GAYAN, Afghanistan — Villagers rushed to bury the dead Thursday and dug by hand through the rubble of their homes in search of survivors of a powerful earthquake in eastern Afghanistan that state media reported killed 1,000 people. The Taliban and the international community that fled their takeover struggled to bring help to the disaster's victims.

Under a leaden sky in Paktika province, which was the epicenter of Wednesday's magnitude 6 earthquake, men dug a line of graves in one village, as they tried to lay the dead to rest quickly in line with Muslim tradition. In one courtyard, bodies lay wrapped in plastic to protect them from the rains that are hampering relief efforts for the living.

The state-run Bakhtar News Agency reported the death toll and said an estimated 1,500 more were injured. In the first independent count, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said around 770 people had been killed in Paktika and neighboring Khost province.

It's not clear how the totals were arrived at,

given the difficulties of accessing and communicating with the affected villages tucked into remote mountainsides. Either grim till would make the quake Afghanistan's deadliest in two decades, and officials continued to warn the number could still rise.

"They don't have anything to eat, they are wondering what they can have to eat, and it is also raining," a Bakhtar reporter said in footage from the quake zone. "Their houses are destroyed. Please help them, don't leave them alone."

The disaster heaps more misery on a country where millions already faced increasing hunger and poverty and the health system has crumbled since the Taliban retook power nearly 10 months ago amid the U.S. and NATO withdrawal.

How the international humanitarian community, which has pulled back significant resources from the country, will be able to offer aid and to what extent the Taliban government will allow it to remain in question. The Taliban's takeover led to a cutoff of vital international financing, and most governments remain wary of dealing directly with

them.

U.N. agencies and other organizations still operating in Afghanistan said they sent supplies to the area, including medical kits, tents and plastic tarps, but the needs appeared immense as whole villages sustained massive damage.

"We ask from the Islamic Emirate and the whole country to come forward and help us," said a survivor who gave his name as Hakimullah. "We are with nothing and have nothing, not even a tent to live in."

Search and rescue remained a priority. In hard-hit Gayan District, much of the rubble was too large for people to move with their hands or shovels. They said they hoped large excavators would make it out to their remote homes. For now, there was only one bulldozer in the area.

On Wednesday, a U.N. official said the government had not requested that the world body mobilize international search-and-rescue teams or obtain equipment from neighboring countries, despite a rare plea from the Taliban's supreme leader, Haibatullah Akhundzadah, for help from the world.

Supreme Court strikes NY law, expands gun rights

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court said Thursday that Americans have a right to carry guns in public, a major expansion of gun rights.

The justices' 6-3 decision follows a series of recent mass shootings and is expected to ultimately allow more people to legally carry guns on the streets of the nation's largest cities — including New York, Los Angeles and Boston — and elsewhere.

About a quarter of the U.S. population lives in states expected to be affected by the ruling, the high court's first major gun decision in more than a decade.

The ruling comes as Congress is actively working on gun legislation following recent mass shootings in Texas, New York and California.

Justice Clarence Thomas wrote for the majority that the Constitution protects "an individual's right to carry a handgun for self-defense outside the home."

In their decision, the justices struck down a New York law requiring people to demonstrate a particular need for carrying a gun in order to get a license to carry one in public.

The justices said the requirement violates the Second Amendment right to "keep and bear arms."

California, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Rhode Island all have similar laws. The Biden administration had urged the justices to uphold New York's law.

In a dissent joined by his liberal colleagues, Justice Stephen Breyer focused on the toll taken by gun violence. "Since the start of this year alone (2022), there have already been 277 reported mass shootings — an average of more than one per day," Breyer wrote.

Backers of New York's law had argued that striking it down would ultimately lead to more guns on the streets and higher rates of violent crime. The decision comes at a time when gun violence already on the rise during

the coronavirus pandemic has spiked anew.

In most of the country gun owners have little difficulty legally carrying their weapons in public. But that had been harder to do in New York and the handful of states with similar laws. New York's law, which has been in place since 1913, says that to carry a concealed handgun in public, a person applying for a license has to show "proper cause," a specific need to carry the weapon.

The state issues unrestricted licenses where a person can carry their gun anywhere and restricted licenses that allow a person to carry the weapon but just for specific purposes such as hunting and target shooting or to and from their place of business.

The Supreme Court last issued a major gun decision in 2010. In that decision and a ruling from 2008 the justices established a nationwide right to keep a gun at home for self-defense.

The question for the court this time was about carrying one outside the home.

China's new carrier not for rivaling US

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

China's newest aircraft carrier boasts some advanced technology and presents a growing challenge to the U.S. and its Indo-Pacific allies, but it falls short of matching U.S. carrier prowess, experts told Stars and Stripes.

The Fujian, a Type 003 carrier launched Friday in Shanghai, features a variety of improvements over China's first two carriers. Most significantly it features an electromagnetic catapult system for launching aircraft that's similar to one on the U.S. Navy's newest carrier, the USS Gerald R. Ford.

The transition from "ski-jump" launches off a deck ramp on the first Chinese carriers to an electromagnetic catapult represents a "symbolic and technological leapfrog" for Chinese naval forces, according to Brian Hart, a fellow at the Center for Strategic and Interna-

tional Studies' China Power Project. He said the catapult allows Beijing to field heavier and larger fixed-wing aircraft.

"The transition away from a ski-jump style system puts China in the elite group of countries fielding modern 'flat-top' carriers. Adding to that, China skipped the traditional steam-powered catapult system and jumped straight to the more modern electromagnetic catapults," Hart said. "That's a major technological achievement — assuming it works as intended."

Despite that, the Fujian relies on conventional power for propulsion rather than nuclear power, which severely limits its range. Conventional carriers burn oil or gas for propulsion, according to NavalPost.com. In contrast, the U.S. Navy's 11 aircraft carriers rely on nuclear reactors.

"In terms of size and propulsion, the Fujian is comparable to

the U.S. Kitty Hawk class carriers that first went into service in the U.S. Navy in the early 1960s," Hart said. "I expect China to continue growing its fleet of aircraft carriers, but the [Chinese navy] is decades away from matching the U.S. carrier fleet in number or sophistication."

China may not try to match the U.S. Navy carrier-for-carrier, according to Sam Roggeveen, director of the Australian think-tank Lowy Institute's International Security Program. He suggested that Beijing has longer-term plans.

"I don't think the Chinese carrier project is about matching the U.S.," Roggeveen told Stars and Stripes by email Thursday. "It is more about building a post-American navy, a fleet that can be used for coercion or punishment against smaller states as U.S. influence in Asia diminishes."

China is aware that large, slow

ships like aircraft carriers likely wouldn't survive in a prolonged war with a peer, he said.

"Since the end of the Cold War, carriers have proven useful to the US in conflicts against states with minimal maritime capacity — Iraq, Libya, Yugoslavia — and I suspect China sees them in a similar role," Roggeveen said.

Beijing's investments in technology and naval expansion, despite yielding a capability short of U.S. carrier power, are having significant effects in the Indo-Pacific region, Roggeveen said.

U.S. commitments in the area are getting "harder and harder to sustain," he said, and cited Taiwan as an example. The self-governing island is considered by China a breakaway province that must be reunited with the mainland, by force, if necessary. President Joe Biden in late May said the U.S. would help defend Taiwan militarily against attack from China.

Government funded morale flights on Okinawa to end

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Members of the U.S. military population on Okinawa have slightly more than a month to squeeze in a government-funded morale flight to the U.S. mainland.

The Funded Environmental and Morale Leave program, or FEML, is set to expire Aug. 1, according to an announcement Tuesday by III Marine Expeditionary Force. Approved trips scheduled until July 31 are unaffected, including return travel after that date, according to the email from III MEF spokesman Capt. Gabriel Adibe.

He said eligible travelers may still apply for morale leave but individuals intending to use FEML should contact the officials approving their leave to make reservations and seek further guidance.

Japan ended its post-travel quarantine requirements for anyone under the status of

forces agreement on June 1, according to Adibe's email. That removed the reason FEML was approved in November. Travelers entering Japan must still pass a molecular test for COVID-19, usually a PCR test, 72 hours before starting their international travel, according to III MEF.

The Pentagon approved funded morale leave from Okinawa to alleviate the cost of quarantining in Tokyo during the COVID-19 pandemic. Foreign travelers, including SOFA members, had to enter the country through Tokyo and complete 10 days quarantine in the metro area before heading to their destinations. SOFA outlines the rights and responsibilities of the U.S. military population in Japan.

The costs for quarantine lodging and for the travel leg to Okinawa added up for military travelers already coping with nearly two years of pandemic life on the island.

FEML opened up the Patriot Express for

service members, Defense Department civilians and their families with flights between Seattle and Kadena Air Base on Okinawa. The Patriot Express is a regularly scheduled, government-contracted flight between the U.S. and overseas military bases. Returning travelers were able to quarantine at their homes on Okinawa.

Restrictions apply to the funded leave program. Eligible travelers may take one morale leave and must be on orders to Okinawa for at least two years, including back-to-back one-year assignments.

Morale leave falls under a provision in the Pentagon's leave and liberty policy that permits government-funded travel from duty locations "that are truly isolated, austere or unhealthful."

More than 6,000 service members and civilians used the program through May, according to Adibe's email. The flights, which are listed online, were often fully booked.

Number of unemployment aid claims down in US

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Fewer Americans applied for jobless benefits last week as the U.S. job market remains robust despite four-decade high inflation and a myriad of other economic pressures.

Applications for jobless aid for the week ending June 18 fell to 229,000, a decline of 2,000 from the previous week, the Labor Department reported Thursday. First-time applications generally mirror the number of layoffs.

The four-week average for claims, which smooths out some of the week-to-week vol-

atility, rose by 4,500 from the previous week, to 223,500.

The total number of Americans collecting jobless benefits for the week ending June 11 was 1,315,000, up by 5,000 from the previous week. That figure has hovered near 50-year lows for months. Much of the recent job security and wage gains that Americans have enjoyed recently has been offset by inflation levels not seen in four decades.

Earlier in June, the Labor Department reported that consumer prices surged 8.6% last month by three-quarters of a point.

Andrew Gillum, former Florida governor candidate, indicted

Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Andrew Gillum, the 2018 Democratic nominee for Florida governor, has been indicted on 21 federal charges including conspiracy and wire fraud for funneling donations through third parties back to himself for personal use, prosecutors said Wednesday.

The U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Florida said Gillum, 42, is also charged with making false statements to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for claiming he didn't receive or ask for anything from two undercover agents posing as developers. The undercover agents offered gifts and money in exchange for support for projects.

Sharon Janet Lettman-Hicks, 53 and the owner of a communications company, is a codefendant on the wire fraud charges for funneling money to Gillum in the form of paychecks, U.S. Attorney Jason R. Coody said in a statement.

Prosecutors said the pair "conspired to commit wire fraud, by unlawfully soliciting and obtaining funds from various entities and individuals through false and fraudulent promises and representations that the funds would be used for a legitimate purpose."

Gillum, in a statement released through his lawyers, denied the charges.

"Make no mistake that this case is not le-

gal, it is political. Throughout my career I have always stood up for the people of Florida and have spoken truth to power," the statement said. "There's been a target on my back ever since I was the mayor of Tallahassee. They found nothing then, and I have full confidence that my legal team will prove my innocence now."

He made his first appearance in federal court Wednesday afternoon, entering the courtroom shackled at the ankles and wrists. He and Lettman-Hicks pleaded not guilty to all charges. A trial date was set for Aug. 16. Both were released without bail with instructions not to leave the Northern District of Florida without permission.

Gillum met with undercover FBI agents posing as developers while he was mayor and during his campaign for governor.

His associates sought donations from the agents, and suggested ways to provide money without listing them as political contributions, including paying for a fundraising dinner, according to the indictment.

The agents were asked to contribute \$100,000 to Gillum's campaign and said the money could be given to a private company in order to keep the agents' names out of campaign finance documents.

The agents said they would want favorable consideration on development projects and were told that wouldn't be a problem, according to the indictment.

US importing baby formula to ease shortage

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration announced Wednesday that it is providing logistical support to import the equivalent of about 16 million 8-ounce baby formula bottles from Mexico starting this weekend, as part of its efforts to ease nationwide supply shortages caused by the closure of the largest U.S. manufacturing plant.

The Department of Health and Human Services is expediting the travel of trucks that will drive about 1 million pounds of Gerber Good Start Gentle infant formula from a Nestlé plant to U.S. retailers, the White House said, nearly doubling the amount imported to the U.S. to date. Cargo flights from Europe and Australia already have brought baby formula into the U.S., including two new rounds of air shipments that begin this weekend.

The White House has been working to make supply more available as it has faced pressure from parents over supply issues after regulators in February shuttered a Michigan plant run by Abbott that is the largest domestic manufacturer of baby formula over safety concerns.

The plant reopened on June 4 after the company committed to additional sanitizing and safety protocols, but shuttered again more than a week ago after severe weather caused damage to the plant.

The company said it needs time to assess damage and re-sanitize the factory after severe thunderstorms and heavy rains swept through southwestern Michigan on June 13.

Last month, the Food and Drug Administration moved to ease federal import regulations to allow baby formula to be shipped to the U.S., and Biden authorized the use of the Defense Production Act to provide federal support to move formula from overseas into the United States.

Wednesday's announcement also included air shipments of 1.65 million 8-ounce bottle equivalents of Nestlé NAN Supreme Pro 2 infant formula from Germany to Texas this weekend, and 5.5 million 8-ounce bottle equivalents of Bubs infant formula in two shipments on June 26 and July 5.

The White House says that by June 26, its efforts, dubbed "Operation Fly Formula," will have brought 32 flights and almost 19 million 8-ounce bottle equivalents of infant formula into the U.S.

US readies more aid as Russians advance

Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine — The Russian military extended its grip Thursday on territory in eastern Ukraine, capturing two villages and vying for control of a key highway as it seeks to cut supply lines and encircle some frontline Ukrainian forces, British and Ukrainian military officials said.

Also Thursday, the U.S. will send another \$450 million in military aid to Ukraine, including additional medium-range rocket systems, U.S. officials said.

The latest package will include a number of High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems. The initial four that the U.S. sent have already gone into Ukraine and are in the hand of troops there. The package will also include ammunition and other supplies.

Ukrainian forces withdrew from some areas near the city of Lysychansk to avoid being surrounded as Russians sent in reinforcements and concentrated their firepower in the area, Britain's Defense Ministry said. The city is located in Luhansk province, a major battlefield in Russian President Vladimir Putin's war against Ukraine.

Ukraine's General Staff said Russian forces took control of the villages of Loskutivka and Rai-Oleksandrivka, and were trying to capture Syrotyne, a settlement outside the province's urban administrative center, Sievierodonetsk.

Luhansk Gov. Serhiy Haidai told The Associated Press that the Russians were "burning everything out" in their offensive to encircle Ukraine's fighters.

"The Russians are advancing without trying to spare the ammunition or troops, and they aren't running out of either," Haidai said. "They have an edge in heavy artillery and the number of troops."

"Part of the Luhansk region still remains under Ukrainian control, defying the Russians and causing their fury and desire to burn it to the ground," he added.

For weeks, Russian forces have pummeled Sievierodonetsk with artillery and air raids, and fought the Ukrainian army house-to-house. Ukrainian forces remain holed up with about 500 civilians at the Azot chemical plant, the only part of the city still under Ukrainian control.

Haidai said the Ukrainian soldiers warded off the city's seizure from the plant's spraw-

ling underground structures, but he noted that "the shelling has intensified, and even concrete shelters can't withstand the bombardment." The Russians were using their entire arsenal — heavy artillery, tanks, aircraft," he said.

Haidai said that Lysychansk, which is on a steep river bank facing Sievierodonetsk, also faced a relentless barrage. At least one civilian died and three others were wounded in 24 hours as the Russians concentrated over 100 multiple rocket launchers to "pummel entire blocks," the governor said.

"The Russian army is 'liberating' Sievierodonetsk from life and workplaces," he said in a sarcastic reference to Russia's stated goal of the "liberation" of eastern Ukraine's entire Donbas region.

WHO considers declaring monkeypox an emergency

Associated Press

LONDON — The World Health Organization convened its emergency committee Thursday to consider if the spiraling outbreak of monkeypox warrants being declared a global emergency.

Declaring monkeypox to be a global emergency would mean the U.N. health agency considers the outbreak to be an "extraordinary event" and that the disease is at

risk of spreading across even more borders, possibly requiring a global response.

The WHO said it did not expect to announce any decisions made by its emergency committee before Friday.

Many scientists doubt any such declaration would help curb the epidemic, since the developed countries recording the most recent cases are already moving quickly to shut it down.

Last week, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus described the recent monkeypox epidemic identified in more than 40 countries, mostly in Europe, as "unusual and concerning." Monkeypox has sickened people for decades in central and west Africa, where one version of the disease kills up to 10% of people infected. In the epidemic beyond Africa so far, no deaths have been reported.

Bloodhound takes top spot at Westminster dog show

Associated Press

TARRYTOWN, N.Y. — Now this hound has something to toot his horn about.

A bloodhound named Trumpet won the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show on Wednesday night, marking the first time the breed has ever snared U.S. dogdom's most coveted best in show prize.

Rounding the finalists' ring with a poised and powerful stride, Trumpet beat a French bulldog, a German shepherd, a Maltese, an English setter, a Samoyed and a Lakeland terrier to take the trophy.

"I was shocked," said handler, co-breeder and co-owner Heather Helmer, who also goes by Heather Buehner. The competition was stiff, "and sometimes I feel the bloodhound is a bit of an underdog."

After making dog show history, does Trumpet have a sense of how special he is?

"I think he does," his Berlin Center, Ohio-based handler said.

After his victory, Trumpet posed patiently for countless photos, eventually starting to do what bloodhounds do best — sniff around. He examined some decorative

flowers that had been set up for the pictures, not appearing to find anything of note.

Winston, a French bulldog co-owned by NFL defensive lineman Morgan Fox, took second in the nation's most prestigious dog show.

The seven finalists also included Striker, a Samoyed that also made the finals last year; River, a big-winning German shepherd; MM the Lakeland terrier; Belle the English setter, and a Maltese that clearly was aiming for stardom: Her name is Hollywood.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Agency: Military-style bunker was built by kids

MI TYRONE TOWNSHIP — State officials have determined that a 3-foot-deep military-style bunker surrounded by sand bags in a western Michigan game area was built by kids.

A Kent County man came across the bunker in the Rogue River State Game Area, WOOD-TV reported.

After news reports, a woman contacted the Kent County sheriff's office and told them it was constructed for fun by her 15-year-old son and his friends, according to Michigan's Department of Natural Resources.

The DNR told WOOD-TV that cutting down trees, digging large holes and leaving sandbags on state land is illegal. A conservation officer was expected to meet with the boys and have them refill the hole and restore the area. No charges were expected, the DNR said.

Cops: Man nabbed with \$1M worth of opioids

ND MINOT — Authorities said a Michigan man appeared in court after Minnot police seized 15,000 fentanyl pills and 80 grams of fentanyl powder with an estimated street value of more than \$1 million.

The drugs were found at a storage garage where police say they also found a large amount of marijuana. Two firearms and \$18,000 in a case were found at a second site.

Ryan Rattler, 30, of Flushing, Mich., was charged with possession with intent to deliver more than 40 grams of fentanyl and possession with intent to deliver

marijuana.

Teen loses hand while playing with fireworks

WA FEDERAL WAY — A 14-year-old lost his left hand and injured his other hand while playing with fireworks, South King Fire said.

A firework had blown up in the teen's hand. A 10-year-old was also injured, but it is unclear how bad the child's injuries were, KIRO-TV reported.

Both kids were taken to Harborview Medical Center for treatment. It is not yet known what kind of fireworks the teen was handling.

Dog dragged into water, eaten by alligator

FL TALLAHASSEE — A man was playing with his dog at a park when it was attacked by an alligator, dragged into the water and eaten, wildlife officials said.

Joshua Wells told wildlife authorities that he was playing with his dog near water at a popular park in Tallahassee on June 6 when the alligator snatched his dog, according to a report from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Wells, 44, said he grabbed the alligator, cuffing its legs, but realized that was dangerous.

Wildlife officials later trapped two alligators in the area — one that was 9-feet, 2-inches long and another that was 6-feet, 6-inches long.

Trout to be euthanized after bacteria outbreak

CA INDEPENDENCE — Nearly 350,000

rainbow trout must be euthanized as wildlife officials battle bacteria outbreaks at two fish hatcheries in the eastern Sierra.

The naturally occurring bacteria, *Lactococcus petuari*, was first detected in April at Black Rock and Fish Springs hatcheries in Inyo County, the state Department of Fish and Wildlife said in a statement. The facilities provide fish for stocking waterways in California's inland deserts.

Fish and Wildlife is contracting with an external vendor to provide catchable rainbow trout for planting in waterways later this summer.

New mural to complete wall begun in 1996

KY PADUCAH — A new 10-panel mural is being added to a Kentucky project that began in 1996 to ornament Paducah's floodwall with portraits of the area's history.

The mural will depict trains traveling from New Orleans to Chicago and highlight Paducah's importance in railroad transit, the Paducah Sun reported. The murals will fill every panel of a three-block stretch on Water Street.

Muralist Robert Dafford and several assistants from Dafford Murals will work to complete the mural over the next several weeks. They will get help from the Paducah School of Art and Design, where Dafford has been teaching a murals workshop.

Man pleads not guilty in deaths of 3K hogs

IA RANDALIA — A northeast Iowa farmer pleaded not guilty to neglect

charges after more than 3,000 feeder hogs died on his property.

Derek David Smith, 41, of Randalia, waived an arraignment and filed a written not guilty plea to one count of livestock neglect, the Waterloo Cedar Falls Courier reported.

Court records indicate Smith was hired by Valley Farms to care for the hogs. Authorities found more than 3,000 hogs dead at Smith's confinement operation on June 2, according to court records.

The animals died from lack of feed and another 200 hogs had to be euthanized for health reasons, according to the records.

Smith's trial is tentatively set for August in Fayette County District Court in West Union. The charge is a serious misdemeanor punishable by up to a year in jail and a \$2,560 fine.

Fire at historic church deemed 'suspicious'

ND HARWOOD — A fire at one of southeastern North Dakota's oldest churches is being investigated as "suspicious," authorities said.

The blaze at Maple Sheyenne Lutheran Church near Harwood was reported by a passing motorist who saw smoke coming out of the windows.

Cass County Sheriff Jesse Jahner said an initial investigation shows "some things that are suspicious." State and federal agents have joined in the probe.

Church board member Keith Munson said the church, which is located about 10 miles northwest of downtown Fargo, was founded about 150 years ago.

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Avs win in OT, close in on Stanley Cup

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — The Colorado Avalanche are on the brink of their first Stanley Cup title since 2001, thanks to Nazem Kadri's overtime goal.

Even if the two-time defending champion Tampa Bay Lightning don't believe it should have counted.

Kadri scored at 12:02 of the extra period to give Colorado a 3-2 victory in Game 4 of the Stanley Cup Final and move the Avalanche within a win of their first championship in over two decades.

Without specifically saying Tampa Bay felt Colorado had too many men on the ice for the winning goal, Lightning coach Jon Cooper suggested the goal should not have been allowed.

"We're all in this together. Players, coaches, refs, everybody. But this one is going to sting much more than others," Cooper said.

"It's going to be hard for me to speak. ... I'll speak with you

(Thursday). You're going to see what I mean when you see the winning goal," Cooper added. "And my heart breaks for the players. Because we probably still should be playing."

The NHL released a statement saying the penalty is a judgement call that can be made by the on-ice officials. Each of the four officials said they did not see a too-many-men-on-the-ice situation on the winning play. The call is not subject to video review.

Back in the lineup after being sidelined since June 4 with a thumb injury, Kadri skated in on Andrei Vasilevskiy and slipped a shot under the goaltender's right arm to give Colorado a 3-1 series lead.

"That was a huge win. A resilient win," said Kadri, who had been sidelined since being injured during Game 3 of the Western Conference finals against Edmonton.

"I've been waiting for this my whole life," the Colorado center

added. "I figured it was time to join the party."

The Avalanche outshot the Lightning 11-3 in the extra period. Vasilevskiy stopped Logan O'Connor on a breakaway, and Colorado had a shot clang off the post and another hit the crossbar before Kadri ended it.

Game 5 is Friday night in Denver, where Colorado won the first two games of the series and is 7-2 this postseason.

Anthony Cirelli scored 36 seconds into the game and Victor Hedman also scored in regulation for the Lightning. They took a 2-1 lead into the third period.

Nathan MacKinnon scored on a second-period power play for Colorado, and Andrew Cogliano tied it early in the third.

Darcy Kuemper, pulled from Game 3 after giving up five goals in a 6-2 loss, stopped 37 shots and had an assist on the winning goal for the Avalanche.

Vasilevskiy finished with 35 saves. He has rebounded from allowing 11 goals in Games 1 and

2 to limit the high-scoring Avalanche to five the past two games.

The Lightning are trying to become the first team to win at least three straight Stanley Cup titles since the New York Islanders won four in a row from 1980-83. The Avalanche last hoisted the Cup in 2001.

Injuries

Kadri returned to the lineup after missing four games. He had been out since injuring his thumb when he was boarded by Evander Kane in Game 3 of Colorado's sweep of Edmonton in the Western Conference finals.

Kane received a major penalty and was suspended a game.

Helping hands

Mikko Rantanen and Cale Maker assisted on MacKinnon's goal, giving both of them 20 this postseason — a franchise record for a single playoff year. Peter Stastny had 19 with Quebec in 1985.

Oklahoma ousts Texas A&M, advances to CWS finals

Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Oklahoma's baseball players came to the College World Series calling themselves "a bunch of Davids," a nod to their embrace of the underdog identity they adopted after an underwhelming start to the season.

It was one David — David Sandlin — who got most of the credit Wednesday for taking down Texas A&M, the last of the national seeds in the NCAA Tournament.

Sandlin held the Aggies to one run and struck out a career-high 12 in seven innings, Jimmy Crooks' three-run homer in the first held up and Oklahoma advanced to the CWS finals with a 5-1 victory.

Trying to complete a softball-baseball title sweep, the Sooners

(45-22) have won three straight games at Charles Schwab Field by no fewer than four runs and will play for their first national championship since 1994.

Oklahoma's opponent in the best-of-three finals starting Saturday will be either Arkansas or Mississippi.

As Sooners fans chanted "O-U! O-U!" closer Trevin Michael struck out Brett Minnich to end the game against the Aggies. The celebration was subdued.

"I think those kids are focused," coach Skip Johnson said. "I don't know if it's dog-piling or whatever it is... It's kind of weird sometimes. I don't tell them not to dog-pile, I can tell you that."

Texas A&M (44-20) finished 2-2 in the CWS under first-year

coach Jim Schlossnagle after going 29-27, winning only nine Southeastern Conference games and not even qualifying for the league tournament in 2021.

The Sooners didn't look like an NCAA Tournament team after losing two of their first three Big 12 series and starting 18-12. They've won 27 of 37, including 12 of 14 since the end of the regular season.

Sandlin (9-4) allowed five hits and walked one in his 100-pitch outing.

Arkansas 3, Mississippi 2: At Omaha, Neb., Brady Slavens' home run to the deepest part of the park gave the Razorbacks the lead and they held on to beat the Rebels, who loaded the bases with no outs in the bottom of the ninth inning.

Arkansas (46-20) forced a second bracket final against Ole Miss (39-23) on Thursday, with the winner advancing to play Oklahoma in the best-of-three championship round starting Saturday.

For eight innings, Arkansas all but shut down an offense that had produced 64 runs in its first seven NCAA Tournament games. Kemp Alderman, who hit a tying homer in the second inning, was the only Ole Miss runner to advance past first base to that point.

The Rebels loaded the bases in the ninth after closer Brady Tygart hit two straight batters.

Zack Morris came on and struck out pinch-hitter Hayden Leatherwood and got TJ McCants and Jacob Gonzalez to fly out to end the game.

Former Ravens DT Siragusa dies at 55

Associated Press

Tony Siragusa, the charismatic defensive tackle who was part of one of the most celebrated defenses in NFL history with the Baltimore Ravens, died Wednesday. He was 55.

Siragusa's broadcast agent, Jim Ornstein, confirmed the death. The cause of death was not immediately available.

"This is a really sad day," he said. "Tony was way more than my client, he was family. My heart goes out to Tony's loved ones."

Siragusa, known as "Goose," played seven seasons with the Indianapolis Colts and five with the Ravens. Baltimore's 2000 team won the Super Bowl behind a stout defense that included Siragusa, Ray Lewis and Sam Adams.

Siragusa was popular with fans because of his fun-loving attitude, which also helped him transition quickly to broadcasting after his playing career.

"There was no one like Goose — a warrior on the field and a team unifier with a giving, generous heart who helped teammates and the community more than most people know," said Brian Billick, the coach of that 2000 team. "We would not have won the Super Bowl without him. This is such stunning, sad news."

Siragusa came to Baltimore as a free agent in 1997 and teamed up with Adams to form an imposing defensive tackle tandem. He finished his career with 22 sacks.

"I love Goose like a brother. From the first day we met, I knew that life was different. I knew he was someone who would change my life forever," Lewis said. "He was a one-of-a-kind person who made you feel important and special. You can never replace a man like that."

The news of Siragusa's death came on what was already a tragic day for the Ravens. The

death of Jaylon Ferguson, a linebacker for Baltimore, at age 26 was announced earlier in the day.

"This is a tremendously sad day for the Baltimore Ravens," owner Steve Bisciotti said. "We appreciate everyone who has expressed an outpouring of support for our players, coaches and staff."

Siragusa was a star football player and wrestler at David Brearley High School in New Jersey. He then played collegiately at Pittsburgh, where he had a reputation for wisecracks well before his NFL career.

"If I wanted to learn a school song, I would've gone to Notre Dame or Penn State," he once said. "I want to kill people on the football field. That's why I came to Pitt."

Siragusa went undrafted before signing with Indianapolis, but he turned out to be a championship-winning force in the NFL. Then he took his personal-

ity to the airwaves, working for Fox's NFL coverage.

"His incomparable passion for football established him as one of the most charismatic personalities ever to set foot on the gridiron or in front of a camera," Fox Sports said in a statement. "Goose was a natural in his ability to relate the sport and its players to fans everywhere."

Siragusa also had a role on HBO's "The Sopranos" and hosted shows on the Discovery Channel and DIY Network.

"Tony truly was bigger than life, on and off the field," said Pat Narduzzi, Pitt's current football coach. "He played the game passionately and relentlessly. Despite not being drafted, he thrived in the NFL for 12 years. His post-football life took him so many places but he never forgot Pitt. We could always count on him to send the best recorded pep talks to our guys before our biggest games."

PGA Tour leaning on loyalty to hold onto its players

Associated Press

CROMWELL, Conn. — Commissioner Jay Monahan says the PGA Tour can't win an "arms race" against Saudi-funded LIV Golf when the weapon is money. His response Wednesday was to boost prize money in eight elite events and rely on loyalty and legacy among his players.

Monahan delivered another round of stinging criticism against Greg Norman and his rival league. LIV Golf has snagged players who have combined to win nine majors in the last five years, including Dustin Johnson, Brooks Koepka and Bryson DeChambeau.

The latest to sign was Koepka, whose deal with LIV Golf was announced just as Monahan began his first press conference in three months at the Travelers Championship.

"I am not naive," Monahan said. "If this is an arms race and if the only weapons here are dollar bills, the PGA Tour can't compete. The PGA Tour, an American institution, can't compete with a foreign monarchy that is spending billions of dollars in attempt to buy the game of golf."

"We welcome good, healthy competition. The LIV Saudi golf league is not that," he said. "It's an irrational threat, one not concerned with the return on investment or true growth of the game."

The tour, however, appears to be trying to keep up. Monahan said an increase in prize money was in the works from its latest media rights deal it signed in 2020, noting the threat of LIV Golf accelerated some of those plans.

He announced a streamlined schedule — January to August starting in 2024 — with seven tournaments worth \$20 million or more and fewer spots available for its postseason. The top 125 qualify for the FedEx Cup playoffs. Next year, only the top 70 will be eligible.

The fall would be for the players who finished outside the top 70 to secure cards for the following year, and to give them a chance to move into the top 50 — or try to stay there — to secure spots in some of the elite \$20 million tournaments.

Also planned are three international events in the fall for only the top 50 in FedEx Cup points from the previous season.

Monahan cited Masters champion Scottie Scheffler, who earlier Wednesday was unusually vocal in his support of

the PGA Tour. Scheffler had not won on the PGA Tour until February, and then he won four times in two months to reach No. 1 in the world.

He already has set a PGA Tour record for season earnings at nearly \$12.9 million.

"If you're good enough, you will rise to the top," Monahan said. "And if you don't continue to earn that top spot, someone else as hungry and as talented is right there to take your place. Again, that's the unique beauty of what the tour has and always will offer to fans."

"It's damn good and it's worth fighting for."

Koepka was among the LIV newcomers announced for the field in Oregon next week, and he was as big of a surprise as Johnson was for the inaugural London event.

Ohtani allows two hits with 13 Ks

Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Shohei Ohtani adheres to strict routine in nearly every aspect of his life. When his latest mound start was delayed 12 minutes by a pregame ceremony honoring the Angels' 2002 World Series champions, his meticulous preparation took a hit before he even threw a pitch.

A slightly bumpy beginning still led to a second straight incredible night for the two-way superstar.

Ohtani struck out a career-high 13 over eight dominant innings of two-hit ball, and the AL MVP also reached base three times in Los Angeles' 5-0 victory over the Kansas City Royals on Wednesday.

After giving up two singles to start that delayed first inning, Ohtani (6-4) retired 16 straight Royals and 23 of the final 24 batters he faced. While matching the longest start of his major league career, he allowed just one baserunner over his final seven innings — on a walk that was quickly erased by a double play.

One night after Ohtani hit two three-run homers and drove in a career-high eight runs in an extra-inning loss, he set a new personal best for strikeouts by fanning Emmanuel Rivera on his 108th and final pitch.

Braves 4, Giants 3: Adam

Duvall's run-scoring single capped a three-run rally in the ninth as host Atlanta beat San Francisco.

Duvall's single drove in William Contreras from second base as the Giants wasted another strong start by Carlos Rodón, who allowed only three hits and one run in seven innings.

Orioles 7, Nationals 0: Austin Hays became the sixth player in franchise history to hit for the cycle, completing the feat in the midst of a steady shower and shortly before play was halted for good in host Baltimore's win over Washington.

Soon after Hays doubled in the sixth inning for the cycle, rain stopped play for a second time. The game was eventually called after six innings.

Astros 5, Mets 3: Yordan Alvarez homered twice off Carlos Carrasco as host Houston jumped on him early and held on against New York.

Alvarez hit two of the season-high three homers Carrasco allowed before the pitcher left with lower back tightness in the third inning with the Astros up 5-1.

Yankees 5, Rays 4: Aaron Judge hit his major league-leading 26th and 27th home runs, Jose Trevino delivered a two-run shot that put visiting New York ahead in the eighth inning on its way to a victory

over Tampa Bay.

Judge's 22nd career multi-homer game helped the Yankees come back from a 4-1 deficit after Isaac Paredes hit his fourth home run in two games for the Rays.

Cardinals 5, Brewers 4: Paul Goldschmidt and Nolan Arenado each hit two-run homers as visiting St. Louis beat Milwaukee and moved into first place in the NL Central.

The Cardinals trailed 4-3 before Arenado's sixth-inning drive to left-center — his 14th homer of the season — put St. Louis ahead for good.

Rangers 4, Phillies 2: Brad Miller hit a two-run single against his former team and host Texas beat Philadelphia for the ninth time in a row to hand Zack Wheeler his first loss in two months.

Guardians 11, Twins 10: Oscar Gonzalez tied the game with a two-run single and scored on Owen Miller's go-ahead sacrifice fly as visiting Cleveland rallied for four runs in the ninth inning to beat Minnesota.

Blue Jays 9, White Sox 5: Bo Bichette hit a grand slam and Alejandro Kirk homered for the second straight game, leading Ross Stripling and visiting Toronto over injury-riddled Chicago.

Padres 10, Diamondbacks 4: Jurickson Profar had four

hits, drove in two runs and scored twice for host San Diego, which jumped on Madison Bumgarner early against Arizona for a three-game sweep.

Dodgers 8, Reds 4: Freddie Freeman homered and drove in two runs and visiting Los Angeles extended its winning streak against Cincinnati this season to six games.

Red Sox 6, Tigers 2: Rob Refsnyder hit a two-run homer in the third inning and host Boston posted its third series sweep of the season, powering past Detroit.

Marlins 7, Rockies 4: Pablo López allowed one unearned run in seven solid innings, Garrett Cooper, Jazz Chisholm Jr. and Jorge Soler hit home runs and host Miami beat Colorado.

Cubs 14, Pirates 5: Ian Happ and Patrick Wisdom hit two-run homers early and Alfonso Rivas added a grand slam off a position player late as visiting Chicago routed Pittsburgh.

Held to a total of two runs in the first two games of the series, Chicago broke out for seven runs in the second inning.

Mariners 9, Athletics 0: Jesse Winker homered for the second straight day, Cal Raleigh also connected and visiting Seattle won consecutive games for the first time in more than two weeks by routing Oakland.

Sports court sets July dates to hear Russian appeals

Associated Press

GENEVA — Russian appeals against bans from international soccer because of the country's war in Ukraine are set to be heard at the Court of Arbitration for Sport in July.

The court on July 5 will hear the Russian soccer federation's appeal against FIFA and UEFA's joint decision to suspend its national and club teams days after Russia invaded Ukraine in February.

A second CAS hearing on July 11 will consider an appeal by four Russian clubs,

including national champion Zenit St. Petersburg, against exclusion from the next UEFA club competitions.

UEFA's executive committee made that separate ruling on May 2 among decisions affecting more than 15 European competitions. The Russian women's team was also removed from the European Championship that kicks off next month in England.

Lawyers and officials involved in the cases confirmed the CAS hearing dates which have yet to be listed formally by the court.

Urgent verdicts could be requested by the clubs ahead of scheduled games in qualifying rounds of the Champions League and other UEFA competitions.

The high-profile soccer cases could set the tone for similar appeals cases pending at CAS between Russia and governing bodies of Olympic sports.

The IOC has said suspending Russian athletes and teams is intended not to punish them but to protect the safety and integrity of events at a time of "deep anti-Russian" feelings.