

Trump hails NATO allies' spending push

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

President Donald Trump on Wednesday hailed NATO's push to increase defense spending at the start of a high-level summit in which alliance leaders underlined their commitment to its collective security guarantee.

The president also pushed back against reports that U.S. bombing strikes on Iran's nuclear program had failed to deliver a knockout blow.

"It was a complete obliteration," Trump said of the Saturday strike in Iran.

Trump's comments at the NATO gathering in the Dutch city of The Hague came after reports that Saturday's bombardment had set Iran's nuclear program back by only a couple of months.

An assessment by the administration's Defense Intelligence Agency determined that the attack did not completely destroy

Iran's program, according to reporting by The Associated Press and other news agencies on Tuesday.

But Trump, flanked by NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, said that such reports are false and that Iran's nuclear ambitions were set back "decades."

"I don't think they'll ever do it again. ... I think they've had it," Trump said. "I mean, they just went through hell. I think they've had it. The last thing they want to do is enrich [uranium]."

Trump also said the U.S. strike on Iran paved the way for a ceasefire between Israel and Iran.

"This ended that with the war," he said.

The U.S. attack on Iran and the broader conflict between Tehran and Israel have overshadowed what has been billed as a historic NATO summit in

The Hague, where leaders were prepared Wednesday to approve a plan for major defense spending increases inside the alliance.

Trump, who has delivered tough critiques of NATO over the years, praised allies for meeting his demand to spend much more on defense.

During his first term, Trump frequently voiced doubts about the alliance's value and characterized the bloc as a collection of security free riders because of their weak defense spending. On Wednesday, he said his outlook has changed.

"It's not a rip-off, and we're here to help (allies) protect their country," Trump said of the 32-nation pact.

When asked about the U.S. commitment to NATO's Article 5 provision that calls for allies to come to one another's defense in the event of an attack, Trump

said, "I stand with it. That's why I'm here. If I didn't stand with it I wouldn't be here."

A day earlier, Trump delivered a more ambiguous message on NATO's mutual defense pact. When asked whether he backed the linchpin NATO concept, Trump said, "depends on your definition. There's numerous definitions of Article 5."

Rutte, who has credited the American president with being the force behind NATO's increased spending, said he is convinced of Trump's support for the alliance.

"For me, there is absolute clarity that the United States has totally committed to NATO, totally committed to Article 5," Rutte said Wednesday.

He also heaped praise on Trump, saying his election last year was the reason that close to 10 NATO countries finally hit the 2% mark this year.

Iran remains a threat to US troops, admiral says

By SVETLANA SHKOLNIKOVA
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Iran retains the ability to threaten U.S. service members despite being in a weakened state following Israel's military campaign against Tehran and American assaults on its nuclear program, the deputy commander of U.S. Central Command said Tuesday.

Navy Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, who is nominated to take command of U.S. forces in the Middle East in the summer, told senators at his confirmation hearing that the protection of troops is top of mind because Iran continues to possess "considerable tactical capability."

"The thing I think that we need to do right now and that we are doing, with clarity, is making sure our men and women are safe in the Middle East," Cooper said in testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee. "That's where our focus is today."

Iran's missile attack Monday on an American base in Qatar demonstrated the strength of Tehran's remaining tactical powers, he said. The attack was rebuffed, but the risk remains for additional retaliation for last weekend's American strikes on Iran's major nuclear facilities.

About 40,000 troops and civilians are working for the Defense Department throughout the Middle East, including in Iraq, Bahrain, Kuwait and United Arab Emirates.

Iran's strike Monday on Al Udeid Air Base was limited in scope and was communicated beforehand, but Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., warned it was likely not the end of Iran's retribution campaign.

"It doesn't mean that there might not be another response in a day or week or month or year or three years, and it could be missiles or rockets against our troops, or it could be trying to blow up an embassy around the world, or targeting American citizens for a terrorist

attack," he said.

Cooper agreed with that assessment. Iran's proxies, including Hamas in the Gaza Strip and Hezbollah in Lebanon, have been degraded, but Iranian-backed militias remain intact, he said.

"We've got to be in a three-point stance ready to go every single day," Cooper said. "They have and they continue to be threats to the United States."

The Pentagon is also closely monitoring Iranian activity on the Strait of Hormuz, a 90-mile waterway connecting the Persian Gulf to the open ocean that serves as a key shipping route for oil and liquefied natural gas.

Cooper shared his confirmation hearing Tuesday with Air Force Lt. Gen. Alexis Grynkeiwich, who is nominated to take over as commander of European Command and Supreme Allied Commander Europe — NATO's top military officer — from Army Gen. Christopher Cavoli.

US intel: Iran nuke program not 'obliterated'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON—A U.S. intelligence report suggests that Iran's nuclear program has been set back only a few months after U.S. strikes and was not "completely and fully obliterated" as President Donald Trump has said, according to two people familiar with the early assessment.

The report issued by the Defense Intelligence Agency on Monday contradicts statements from Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about the status of Iran's nuclear facilities. According to the people, the report found that while the Sunday strikes at the Fordo, Natanz and Isfahan nuclear sites did significant damage, the facilities were not totally destroyed. The people were not authorized to address the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

The U.S. has held out hope of restarting negotiations with Iran to convince it to give up its nuclear program entirely, but some experts fear that the U.S. strikes — and the potential of Iran retaining some of its capabilities — could push Tehran toward developing a functioning weapon.

The assessment also suggests that at least some of Iran's highly enriched uranium, necessary for creating a nuclear weapon, was moved out of multiple sites before the U.S. strikes and survived, and

it found that Iran's centrifuges, which are required to further enrich uranium to weapons-grade levels, are largely intact, according to the people.

At the deeply buried Fordo uranium enrichment plant, where U.S. B-2 stealth bombers dropped several 30,000-pound bunker-buster bombs, the entrance collapsed and infrastructure was damaged, but the underground infrastructure was not destroyed, the assessment found. The people said that intelligence officials had warned of such an outcome in previous assessments ahead of the strike on Fordo.

The White House rejected the DIA assessment, calling it "flat-out wrong," and Trump defended his characterization of the strike's impact.

"It was obliteration, and you'll see that," Trump told reporters while attending the NATO summit in the Netherlands. He said the intelligence was "very inconclusive" and described media outlets as "scum" for reporting on it.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, who was also at the NATO summit, said there would be an investigation into how the intelligence assessment leaked and dismissed it as "preliminary" and "low confidence."

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said "these leakers are profes-

sional stabbers."

The CIA and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence declined to comment on the DIA assessment. The Israeli government also has not released any official assessments of the U.S. strikes.

Trump special envoy Steve Witkoff, who said he has read damage assessment reports from U.S. intelligence and other nations, reiterated Tuesday that the strikes had deprived Iran of the ability to develop a weapon and called it outrageous that the U.S. assessment was shared with reporters.

"It's treasonous so it ought to be investigated," Witkoff said on Fox News Channel.

Trump has said in comments and posts on social media in recent days, including Tuesday, that the strike left the sites in Iran "totally destroyed" and that Iran will never rebuild its nuclear facilities.

Netanyahu said in a televised statement on Tuesday that, "For dozens of years I promised you that Iran would not have nuclear weapons and indeed ... we brought to ruin Iran's nuclear program." He said the U.S. joining Israel was "historic" and thanked Trump.

Outside experts had suspected Iran had likely already hidden the core components of its nuclear

program as it stared down the possibility that American bunker-buster bombs could be used on its nuclear sites.

Bulldozers and trucks visible in satellite imagery taken just days before the strikes have fueled speculation among experts that Iran may have transferred its half-ton stockpile of enriched uranium to an unknown location. And the incomplete destruction of the nuclear sites could still leave the country with the capacity to spin up weapons-grade uranium and develop a bomb.

Iran has maintained that its nuclear program is peaceful, but it has enriched significant quantities of uranium beyond the levels required for any civilian use. The U.S. and others assessed prior to the U.S. strikes that Iran's theocratic leadership had not yet ordered the country to pursue an operational nuclear weapon, but the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency has repeatedly warned that Iran has enough enriched uranium to make several nuclear bombs should it choose to do so.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi informed U.N. nuclear watchdog chief Rafael Grossi on June 13 — the day Israel launched its military campaign — that Tehran would "adopt special measures to protect our nuclear equipment and materials."

USS Ford strike group deploys to European theater

By CAITLYN BURCHETT
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford and the ships that make up its strike group deployed Tuesday to the European theater, where it could move closer to Israel.

"We are America's away team," said Rear Adm. Paul Lanzilotta, commander of the strike group. "As we say farewell to our

loved ones today, it is with the knowledge that we are taking the watch and protecting our America[n] values of freedom, prosperity and security on the high seas through sustained operations. Our force is the physical reality of the notion of 'peace through strength.'"

The Ford and destroyer USS Bainbridge left Naval Station Norfolk, Va., and will meet up

with destroyer USS Forest Sherman, which deployed in May. The strike group — a force of 4,500 sailors — also includes destroyers USS Winston S. Churchill, USS Mitscher and USS Mahan and nine aviation squadrons.

The Ford is sailing to the U.S. European Command. But the strike group could be directed elsewhere, such as the Eastern Mediterranean and closer in

proximity to Israel and Iran, according to Lanzilotta.

The deployment has been scheduled for months, though the strike group's departure coincides with a nearly two-week conflict in which Israel and Iran had exchanged almost daily bombing raids. The U.S. joined the attacks, employing more than 125 aircraft to attack three nuclear sites in Iran, the Pentagon said Sunday.

Ex-Reagan skipper eyed to lead 7th Fleet

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A familiar face may soon return here to lead the U.S. 7th Fleet, whose current commander is in line for a senior position at the Pentagon.

President Donald Trump nominated Rear Adm. Michael “Buzz” Donnelly for promotion to vice admiral and appointment as commander of 7th Fleet — the Navy’s largest overseas force — the Defense Department announced June 18.

If confirmed, Donnelly’s new position would mark at least his third senior Yokosuka-based command.

He served as skipper of the

aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan from 2016 to 2018 and led Carrier Strike Group 5 and Task Force 70 from 2021 to 2023.

The current head of 7th Fleet, Vice Adm. Fred Kacher, was nominated to become the next director of the Joint Staff at the Pentagon.

The Joint Staff is responsible for assisting the Joint Chiefs of Staff — the highest levels of leadership in the U.S. military — in leading the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps in a “unified strategic direction,” according to its website.

U.S. 7th Fleet spokeswoman Cmdr. Megan Greene declined to comment on Donnelly’s nomination.

Donnelly, of Kent Island, Md., is a veteran flight officer. As of 2021, he had logged more than 3,000 flight hours and 990 carrier landings in F-14 Tomcats and F/A-18 Super Hornets.

As 7th Fleet commander, he’d be responsible for the coordination of a force of up to 70 warships, 150 aircraft and more than 27,000 sailors.

Among the 7th Fleet’s subordinate commands are the aircraft carrier USS George Washington and its carrier strike group, which replaced the Ronald Reagan in November; Destroyer Squadron 15, a group of 10 Arleigh-Burke class destroyers; and Submarine Group 7, five Los Angeles-class nucle-

ar-powered fast-attack vessels.

The nominations follow a flurry of other changes in the region, including additional command changes, ship rotations and security concerns.

The amphibious assault ship USS Tripoli arrived Monday at Sasebo Naval Base to take its post as the lead ship of Amphibious Squadron 11.

The Tripoli — the newest and most advanced of the Navy’s America-class warships — replaced the USS America. Both ships are small flattops that can carry a variety of aircraft, including F-35B Lightning II stealth fighters, MV-22 Osprey tiltrotors and MH-60S Knight-hawk helicopters.

Rotational US Marines extend stay in Philippines

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

Members of a Marine Corps rotational force are on their fourth exercise in the Philippines since March, creating a near-constant presence by U.S. forces in the country as tensions simmer between China and the American ally.

A company from Marine Rotational Force-Darwin began 23 days of training Monday on the western island of Palawan alongside the Philippines’ 3rd Marine Brigade, according to a force news release Tuesday. A company is typically composed of between 150 and 200 Marines.

The Archipelagic Coastal Defense training was designed to enhance readiness in environments found throughout Southeast Asia.

It includes marksmanship, patrolling, jungle survival and drone training and culminates in an airfield seizure exercise at Roxas Airfield, Palawan, according to the release.

“It’s showing our operational

reach from Australia,” Col. Jason Armas, commander of the 2,500-strong rotational force, said Thursday. “We are extending forward into the first island chain.”

The Australia-based force’s extended presence in the Philippines comes amid increased tension between Manila and Beijing in the South China Sea. China’s coast guard employed a water cannon to expel a Philippine Bureau of Fisheries vessel at Scarborough Shoal on Friday, according to media reports.

The rotational Marines began their Philippine training in spring as the bulk of the force arrived in Australia’s Northern Territory to kick off its annual six-month deployment.

A company of rotational Marines traveled to the Philippines’ southern island of Mindanao in mid-March and joined Marine Exercise 2025.

In April, force Marines were in Palawan for the Balikatan exercise. And in May, members of the force participated in the annual Kamandag drills.

Navy, NASA’s Hawaii lease impact statement available

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

NASA and the U.S. Navy are seeking public comment on a draft environmental impact statement that proposes their continued use of state land for a missile range and observatory on Kauai island in Hawaii.

The Navy proposes to retain 8,172 acres of state land on Kauai for training, testing and operations at the Pacific Missile Range Facility, according to the 428-page draft issued Friday. The statement’s appendix spans more than 3,000 pages.

“Navy use of these state lands is required to maintain technological and safety capabilities supporting [missile range] training and testing,” the Navy said.

Navy training and testing operations do not take place on the state lands, which serve in part as a buffer near the installation.

NASA proposes retaining 23 acres of state land for continuing operations at the Kokee Park Geophysical Observatory.

NASA uses the observatory for measuring the Earth’s rota-

tion, orientation in space and field of gravity. The information is central to scientific studies and navigation applications.

The Navy and NASA are considering two alternatives that would allow them to meet their operational needs.

In the first, the two would secure new lease agreements with the state for the same areas they currently hold in leaseholds and easements. There would be no change from the current footprint of state lands.

Under the second alternative, the two would acquire roughly 700 acres of leasehold land, taking fee simple title to the property. They would renew agreements for the easements in their current footprint.

The Navy’s quest to continue using state land comes as the Defense Department faces growing public skepticism in Hawaii over the military’s environmental stewardship.

The Navy-NASA draft statement can be viewed at <https://pmrf-kpgo-eis.com/documents/>.

20-plus states sue over billions in cuts

Associated Press

BOSTON — Attorneys general from more than 20 states and Washington, D.C., filed a federal lawsuit Tuesday challenging billions of dollars in funding cuts made by the Trump administration that would fund everything from crime prevention to food security to scientific research.

The lawsuit filed in Boston is asking a judge to limit the Trump administration from relying on an obscure clause in the federal regulation to cut grants

that don't align with its priorities. Since January, the lawsuit argues, the administration has used that clause to cancel entire programs and thousands of grants that had been previously awarded to states and grantees.

"Defendants' decision to invoke the Clause to terminate grants based on changed agency priorities is unlawful several times over," the plaintiffs argued. "The rulemaking history of the Clause makes plain that the (Office of Management and Budget) intended for the Clause

to permit terminations in only limited circumstances and provides no support for a broad power to terminate grants on a whim based on newly identified agency priorities."

The lawsuit argues the administration has used the clause for the basis of a "slash-and-burn campaign" to cut grants.

"Defendants have terminated thousands of grant awards made to Plaintiffs, pulling the rug out from under the States and taking away critical federal funding on which States and

their residents rely for essential programs," the lawsuit added.

The White House's Office of Management and Budget did not immediately respond to a request made Tuesday afternoon for comment.

Rhode Island Attorney General Neronha said this lawsuit was just one of several the coalition of mostly Democratic states have filed over funding cuts. For the most part, they have largely succeeded in a string of legal victories to temporarily halt cuts.

Musk 'robotaxis' scrutinized following mishap videos

Associated Press

Federal traffic safety regulators are looking into suspected problems with Elon Musk's test run of self-driving "robotaxis" in Texas after videos surfaced showing them braking suddenly or going straight through an intersection from a turning lane and driving down the wrong side of the road.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said Tuesday that it has asked Tesla for information about the apparent errors.

Though many other videos

show robotaxis driving perfectly, if regulators find any major issues, that would likely raise questions about Musk's repeated statements that the robotaxis are safe and his claim that Tesla will dominate a future in which nearly all cars on the road will have no one behind the wheel — or even need a steering wheel at all.

"NHTSA is aware of the referenced incidents and is in contact with the manufacturer to gather additional information," the agency said in a statement.

Passengers in Tesla robotaxis

on the road in Austin, Texas, have generally been impressed, and the stock rose 8% Monday. Investors grew more cautious Tuesday after news of NHTSA's inquiry, and the stock fell more than 2%.

In one video, a Tesla moves into a lane with a big yellow arrow indicating it is for left turns only but then goes straight through the intersection instead, entering an opposing lane on the other side.

The car seems to realize it made some mistake and begins to swerve several times, with

the steering wheel jerking back and forth, before eventually settling down.

But the Tesla proceeds in the opposing lane for 10 seconds. At the time, there was no oncoming traffic.

Another video shows a Tesla stopping twice suddenly in the middle of the road, possibly responding to the flashing lights of police cars. But the police are obviously not interested in the Tesla or traffic in front or behind it because they were parked on side roads responding to an unrelated event.

NYC temps hit 100 amid multi-day eastern heat wave

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Extensive triple digit heat, broken temperature records and oppressive humidity piled up into a steaming mess as the heat dome crushing the Eastern half of the United States sizzled to what should be its worst Tuesday.

New York City's John F. Kennedy Airport hit 100 degrees Fahrenheit a little after noon, the first time since 2013. Then Baltimore, Philadelphia and Boston joined the 100 club. More than 150 million people woke up to heat warnings and forecast-

ers at the National Weather Service expected dozens of places to tie or set new daily high temperature records Tuesday.

The dangerous heat sent people to the hospital, delayed trains and caused utilities to urge customers to conserve power.

"Every East Coast state today from Maine to Florida has a chance of 100 degree actual temperature," said Ryan Maue, a former National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration chief scientist.

Tuesday's heat came on top of

39 new or tied heat records Monday. But just as dangerous as triple digit heat is the lack of cooling at night, driven by the humidity.

"You get the combination of the extreme heat and humidity but no relief," said Jacob Asherman, a meteorologist at NOAA's Weather Prediction Center. "It's kind of been just everything stacked on top of itself. ... It just speaks to how strong this heat wave is. This is a pretty, pretty extreme event."

Asherman and Maue said Tuesday is the peak of the high

pressure system that sits on top of the Mid-Atlantic and keeps the heat and humidity turned up several notches.

Utilities across the Midwest and East braced for the surge of extra demand in the heat, at times asking people to cut back on air conditioning when it felt like it was needed the most.

In Memphis, Tenn., residents were asked to turn off unnecessary lights and electronics, wait until nighttime to use dishwashers, washing machines and dryers, and raise thermostats a few degrees, if health allows.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Ford recalls Mustang Mach Es due to latches

MI DEARBORN — Ford Motor Co. is recalling nearly 200,000 electric Mustangs because the door latches could falter, potentially trapping passengers in the back seat.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said Dearborn, Mich.-based Ford is recalling 197,432 Mustang Mach E midsize SUVs, model years 2021-2025.

The government agency that regulates automobile safety said that the electronic door latches may remain locked after a driver or front seat passenger exits the vehicle and shuts the door, potentially trapping a child or other passenger who is unable to use the interior door releases.

The NHTSA said letters notifying owners of the safety risk were scheduled to be sent on June 23.

Ford dealerships will fix the problem by updating the vehicles' software, with the remedy expected to be available by late September.

Owners may contact Ford customer service at 1-866-436-7332. Ford's number for the recall is 25S65.

Dog trainer charged with animal cruelty

CA IRVINE — Eleven dogs died while in the care of a California dog trainer and prosecutors say he and his girlfriend tried to destroy the evidence by dropping off the dogs' bodies at different crematoriums.

Kwong (Tony) Chun Sit, of Ir-

vine, pleaded not guilty Monday in Orange County Superior Court to 11 counts of animal cruelty, 11 counts of animal abuse by a caretaker, seven counts of attempting to destroy evidence and one count of destruction of evidence, according to the Orange County District Attorney's Office.

Tingfeng Liu, of Vista, who is dating Sit, pleaded not guilty Monday to accessory to a felony and destruction of evidence, police said.

Sit, 53, and Liu, 23, are both in custody on \$550,000 bail each.

A pet owner contacted police last week saying their dog trainer told them their dog had died and had been cremated, police spokesperson Kyle Oldoerp said.

Investigators since have determined that 11 dogs died and that nine of them died on or around June 18, police said.

15 sets of twins graduate from same high school

NY HEMPSTEAD — A high school in the suburbs of New York City will be seeing double on graduation day this weekend: Among the nearly 500 students in its graduating class, 30 are twins.

It's a tight knit group. Some of the students at Long Island's Plainview-Old Bethpage John F. Kennedy High School have known each other since kindergarten, their parents meeting through a local twins club. Some even still plan family vacations together.

These days, some of the twins are on a group text chain, which has helped them cope with their newfound notoriety as graduation day approaches.

City in 'Jumanji' marks anniversary with events

NH KEENE — Madeline Murphy remembers the instructions she was given on the set of "Jumanji" when she was an extra some 30 years ago: "Pretend you're frightened and you're screaming because an elephant's coming after you."

So, that's what she did in the Central Square of Keene, N.H., running back and forth, over and over, on a long day in November 1994.

"I was pretty tired by the end of the day, and it was cold," said Murphy, 61. She got a check for \$60.47 — and several seconds of screen time.

Murphy was one of about 125 extras cast in the classic Robin Williams film, which is marking its 30th anniversary. It has spawned several sequels, including one planned for next year. The city of about 23,000 people in the southwestern corner of the state celebrated its ties to "Jumanji" over the weekend.

The festivities included a parade, scavenger hunt and a "Rhino Rumble Road Race" saluting the film's stampede scenes of elephants, rhinos and zebras. Runners in inflatable animal costumes sprinted about a quarter mile around the square Saturday.

Last body found after boat capsizes

CA SOUTH LAKE TAHOE — The body of the last person missing from a boat that capsized on Lake Tahoe in California during a sudden and powerful weekend thunderstorm was found Mon-

day, bringing the death toll to eight.

Ten people were on board the 27-foot gold Chris-Craft vessel when it flipped Saturday afternoon near D.L. Bliss State Park on the lake's southwest edge as the storm whipped up high waves, U.S. Coast Guard officials said.

Two people were rescued immediately and taken to a hospital. Six bodies were recovered later Saturday and a seventh body was found Sunday evening, according to the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office. Divers searched a section of Lake Tahoe and found the last body Monday afternoon.

Governor vetoes bill that would ban THC products

TX AUSTIN — Texas Gov. Greg Abbott vetoed a bill Sunday to ban all THC consumables, allowing the booming market flush with THC-infused vapes, gummies and other products to continue to be sold across the state.

Abbott, a Republican, waited until the final moment to veto the bill in what would have been one of the most restrictive THC bans in the country and a significant blow to the state's billion-dollar industry.

The law would have made it a misdemeanor to own, manufacture or sell consumable THC, or tetrahydrocannabinol, products and was the latest push by states to regulate THC after a 2018 federal law allowed states to regulate hemp, a similar plant to marijuana that can be synthetically processed to produce THC, the compound giving marijuana its psychoactive properties.

— From wire reports

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Kipyegon seeking historic 4-minute mile

Associated Press

Faith Kipyegon's already a three-time Olympic 1,500-meter champion. She's already the world-record holder in the mile and 1,500.

Next on her to-accomplish list: Become the first woman to break the 4-minute mile barrier.

The 31-year-old Kipyegon is making a run at that hallowed mark in a Nike-sponsored event dubbed "Breaking4: Faith Kipyegon vs. the 4-Minute Mile" on June 26 at the Stade Charlety in Paris. She set the world record mark of 4:07.64 nearly two years ago during a Diamond League meet in Monaco.

"I think breaking four will really cement my legacy," Kipyegon said in a Zoom call on Wednesday. "The next generation is looking up to us to show them the way and this is what I'm doing now. ... Everything we do, we have to dream big and just believe in ourselves that we could do it."

It was more than 71 years ago when British runner Roger Bannister became the first person to ever eclipse 4 minutes when he ran 3:59.4.

For Kipyegon, finding extra speed to trim a little more than 7.64 seconds occupies her thoughts and drives her in training. But really, she and her coach, Patrick Sang, aren't altering from their routine too much to chase a sub-4 mile time.

What Kipyegon's doing in workouts now has already proven highly successful. She won her third straight 1,500 Olympic title in Paris last August. A month before that, she broke her own 1,500 record on the same track where she will run Thursday.

"For me, I would say being mentally strong and believing in everything I do," Kipyegon said of preparing for big moments. "Believing in the training, believing in waking up to empower the

next generation, believing in everything that has been from my younger time when I was running barefoot to where I am now. It has really given me that drive to wake up and go for training and just be strong."

Kipyegon will be wearing the latest innovations from Nike, too, from her aerodynamic track suit to her spikes. Should she break the mark, it would be subject to ratification by World Athletics.

Fellow Kenyan runner, long-time friend and training partner Eliud Kipchoge has been providing emotional support. Kipchoge had an event set up for him in 2019, when he ran a marathon in 1:59:40 to break the 2-hour marathon barrier at the INEOS 1:59 Challenge in Austria. The mark wasn't ratified by the sport's governing body.

"It will be lovely to see Eliud after the finish line," said Kipyegon, who's a four-time world champion. "I get positive mes-

sages from around the world that I can do it. ... It really motivates me a lot going on to this challenge. I know it will not be easy, but I'm going to try my best and we will see what the finish line offers."

Kipyegon's eager for the challenge to show the next generation of female runners that anything is possible. That includes her young daughter, Alyn.

"You have to dream and just be patient for it," Kipyegon said.

Same with her quest today, which she will approach in increments.

"You have to dream of how will I cross the 800 mark? How will I cross that 1,200 mark?" Kipyegon explained. "It's the repetition of, 'I have to be myself and just think of how will I shed the seven seconds?'"

"I will feel so great if I just run after that finish line and see under four minutes. It will be historical."

Reds rookie Burns strikes out first 5 in debut vs. Yankees

Associated Press

CINCINNATI — Major league debuts are a milestone for any player.

Chase Burns had one for the record books.

The Cincinnati Reds rookie became the first starting pitcher in the expansion era to strike out the first five batters of his career Tuesday night against the New York Yankees.

The 22-year old Burns, the second overall pick in last July's amateur draft, gave up three runs in five innings, but his teammates made sure that the night ended on a positive note as the Reds rallied for a 5-4 victory in 11 innings.

"I feel like after the first batter, I kind of settled in there, but I was amped up, so it was fun," Burns said. "It was everything I could ask for. I mean, to walk it off like that, to be in the dugout and see that, there's nothing better than that."

The right-hander struck out his first five batters before Jazz Chisholm Jr.'s single, but Burns followed that up by striking out Anthony Volpe.

Burns gave up six hits and struck out eight, the seventh Cincinnati starter to have at least that many in his first career start.

According to the Elias Sports Bureau, Burns also joined the Yankees' Al Leiter (vs. Brewers in 1987) and the Tampa Bay Rays' Wade Davis (vs. Tigers in 2009) as the only pitchers since 1961 whose first six outs in their debuts were strikeouts. Both gave up a run during the first two innings.

The Dodgers' Pete Richert struck out the first six batters he faced in relief against the Reds in 1962, but the third batter reached on a third strike passed ball.

"That was pretty cool," Cincinnati manager Terry Francona said. "He didn't get too excited, I think he enjoyed the competition. There's a lot to like. His slider is really good."

Burns struck out seven of his first 10 hitters and allowed only one hit until Ben Rice led off the fourth by connecting on a hanging slider that went 413 feet and two-thirds of the way in to the right field sun deck at Great American Ball Park.

Aaron Judge followed with a base hit. Burns retired the next two hitters, Chisholm got aboard with a single and Volpe hit a two-run triple when center fielder TJ Friedl made an ill-advised dive and the ball got by him.

Catcher Tyler Stephenson, however, no-

ticed the three-run fourth did not faze Burns too much.

"I think the maturity shows when they score a couple runs and then he goes right back out the next inning and goes out and attacks," he said.

Burns averaged 98.1 mph with 48 fastballs, topping out with a pair at 100.1 mph in the first inning. He threw 24 sliders, eight changeups and one curveball.

New York was 1 for 9 with six strikeouts in Burns' first time through the order and 5 for 9 with a triple and home run the second time through.

Burns threw 53 of 81 pitches for strikes.

Burns' first big league pitch was a 98.4 mph fastball to Trent Grisham that just caught the inside corner of the plate. He got Judge to chase a 91.1 mph slider for the third out in the first inning.

"Big arm. Excited for his future. He's running it up there at 100 miles per hour and has a good feel for all the breaking pitches," Judge said. "It was impressive to see him out there doing his thing. You see guys like that kind of amped up and throwing it all over the place, but he did a good job of attacking the zone."

Springer's grand slam lifts Blue Jays

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — George Springer broke the game open with a grand slam in the eighth inning, Eric Lauer held Cleveland scoreless until the sixth and the Toronto Blue Jays beat the Guardians 10-6 on Tuesday night.

Springer's eighth career slam and 11th home run this season gave Toronto a 10-4 lead. He went 3 for 5 with three runs scored to pace the Blue Jays' 14-hit night.

Lauer (4-1) allowed one run — a solo shot by Carlos Santana in the sixth inning — and five hits in 5½ innings. The left-hander struck out five and walked three to stretch his winning streak to three games.

It was the second time Lauer pitched in Cleveland during his seven-year career. He grew up in Grafton, Ohio, about 30 miles away and played at Kent State.

Alejandro Kirk hit RBI singles in the first and fifth innings for Toronto. Jonatan Clase extended the lead to 6-1 with a two-run single in the seventh.

Lane Thomas drew the Guardians to within 6-4 with a three-run home run in the seventh. Kyle Manzardo connected in the ninth.

Cleveland starter Logan Allen (5-5) gave up four runs (three earned) and eight hits over 5½ innings.

Brewers 9, Pirates 3: Joey Ortiz homered twice and Caleb Durbin added a three-run shot as host Milwaukee defeated Pittsburgh.

Durbin and Ortiz — the last two hitters in the Brewers' lineup — went a combined 4 of 8 with four runs and seven RBIs.

Milwaukee's Freddy Peralta (8-4) held the Pirates scoreless until he ended his night by allowing two singles and Nick Gonzales' homer to start the sixth inning.

Diamondbacks 4, White Sox 1: Ketel Marte hit a solo homer in the first inning, Alek Thomas

and Geraldo Perdomo each had a seventh-inning RBI single and visiting Arizona beat Chicago.

The White Sox have lost 11 of their last 13.

Diamondbacks starter Ryne Nelson gave up a run with seven strikeouts in five innings. Ryan Thompson (2-2) gave up a walk to Lenyn Sosa before he got Luis Robert Jr. to line out to end the sixth and got Edgar Quero to ground out in the seventh before he was replaced by Jalen Beeks. Shelby Miller pitched a 1-2-3 ninth for his ninth save of the season.

Mike Vasil (3-3) gave up two runs, one earned, on three hits in 5½ innings.

Cardinals 8, Cubs 7: Masyn Winn homered, drove in four runs and scored twice to lead host St. Louis over Chicago for its seventh win in its last eight games.

Cardinals starter Michael McGreevy allowed five runs on seven hits in 4½ innings, striking out one and walking one. Steven Matz (4-2) went 1½ innings of relief and Ryan Helsley earned his 15th save in 20 tries.

The Cubs lost their third straight, tying a season high.

Astros 1, Phillies 0: Cooper Hummel hit a solo home run in the eighth inning and Framber Valdez and two relievers combined for a four-hitter in host Houston's win over Philadelphia.

There was one out in the eighth when Hummel connected off Ranger Suárez (6-2) on an opposite-field shot to the bullpen in right-center field.

Valdez scattered four hits across seven scoreless innings. Bryan Abreu (2-3) struck out one in the eighth and Josh Hader struck out two in the ninth for his 20th save.

Padres 4, Nationals 3: Martín Maldonado hit a tying home run in the fifth off San Diego native Trevor Williams and Jose Iglesias brought in the go-ahead run with a bases-loaded groundout in the sixth as the host Padres

beat Washington.

San Diego rookie right-hander Ryan Bergert was forced out in the fourth after being hit on his pitching elbow by a 103-mph line drive by Jacob Young.

Bergert bent over for a minute with his arm pulled in tight and then popped up and grabbed the ball, which landed near the rubber. Bergert threw to first, but Young beat it out for an infield single.

Angels 3, Red Sox 2 (10): Christian Moore hit a tying homer in the eighth inning and a two-run walk-off shot in the 10th, sending Los Angeles to a home victory over Boston.

After Marcelo Mayer's leadoff RBI single off Reid Detmers (3-2) put Boston ahead in the 10th, Moore capped his 11th major league game by driving a slider from Justin Wilson (2-1) to right field.

Rangers 6, Orioles 5 (10): Evan Carter slid safely home in the top of the 10th inning, lifting visiting Texas to a victory over Baltimore.

Carter was the automatic runner, and he went to third when Seranthony Domínguez (2-2) threw a one-out wild pitch. Sam Haggerty then hit a grounder to second baseman Jackson Holliday. When Holliday threw home, Carter was initially called out, but he was ruled safe on a replay review.

Mariners 6, Twins 5: Julio Rodríguez drove in the go-ahead run with a sacrifice fly in the ninth inning after Jhoan Duran hit a pair of batters with pitches, lifting visiting Seattle over Minnesota for its eighth win in 11 games.

Duran (4-3) hit Jorge Polanco with one out and pinch-runner Dylan Moore moved to third on Cole Young's single.

Tigers 11, Athletics 4: Dillon Dingler hit a three-run home run, Kerry Carpenter added a two-run homer and host Detroit beat the Athletics.

Riley Greene had four hits, in-

cluding a double, two RBIs and scored twice for the Tigers and Wenceel Pérez added two hits and two RBIs.

Tarik Skubal (9-2) gave up four runs on six hits with eight strikeouts in six innings.

Rays 5, Royals 1: Danny Jansen hit a two-run home run and finished with three RBIs, Taj Bradley pitched two-hit ball for 6½ scoreless innings and visiting Tampa Bay beat Kansas City.

Díaz and Curtis Mead hit back-to-back singles and Díaz scored when Aranda, with two out in the fifth, reached on a throwing error by starter Kris Bubic (6-5).

The Royals' Maikel Garcia hit a two-out double and scored on a single by Vinnie Pasquantino to cap the scoring in the ninth.

Dodgers 9, Rockies 7: Michael Conforto hit a three-run homer, Shohei Ohtani added a two-run shot and NL West-leading Los Angeles, held off last-place Colorado.

Trailing 2-0, the visiting Dodgers got their bats cranked up in a six-run fourth inning. Conforto sent a knuckle-curve from Germán Márquez (3-9) over the fence in right.

Ohtani lined his 27th homer of the season into the left-field seats in the sixth to make it 8-3. He finished 1 for 5 with a strikeout.

Braves 7, Mets 4: Matt Olson had three RBIs, including a tie-breaking single that capped a five-run sixth inning, and visiting Atlanta rallied past New York.

Spencer Strider (3-5) overcame one rugged inning to win his third straight start, and the Braves took advantage of nine walks by six Mets pitchers.

Marlins 4, Giants 2: Otto Lopez had two hits and an RBI, and visiting Miami kept Justin Verlander winless this season with a win over San Francisco.

Verlander (0-5) allowed three runs and five hits in five innings. He had five strikeouts and one walk.

Celtics trade Porzingis in 3-team deal

Associated Press

Kristaps Porzingis is being traded by the Boston Celtics to the Atlanta Hawks, and part of what will be a three-team deal was set to give the Brooklyn Nets another selection in Wednesday's first round of the NBA draft, according to a person with knowledge of the agreement.

Porzingis is going to Atlanta, while Georges Niang and a second-round pick will be acquired by Boston, and Brooklyn will wind up with Terance Mann and the No. 22 pick that was held by the Hawks in Wednesday's draft, said the person who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because the trade isn't expected to be finalized until the start of the new league year July 6.

ESPN first reported the trade, which was later confirmed by The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

The move is the second major one of the week by the Celtics, after the team agreed to trade Jrue Holiday to Portland. The combination of those moves still has Boston past the tax line for next season but out from under the second apron, which gives the Celtics — who will be with-

out Jayson Tatum for, at minimum, a significant portion of next season because of an Achilles tear — more flexibility moving forward.

Getting under the second apron is important; that threshold, once exceeded, limits ways that teams can trade for or sign players.

Porzingis — who, like Holiday, was part of the team that helped Boston win the 2024 NBA title — will make \$30.7 million next season on an expiring contract. He was slowed by illness at times in the second half of this past season, as well as in the Celtics' playoff run this spring. But he intends to play for Latvia at EuroBasket this summer, which is a good sign for his recovery.

Porzingis averaged 19.5 points, 6.8 rebounds and 2.1 assists in 42 games this season.

The Nets were set to technically have five picks in Wednesday's first round.

Irving and Mavs agree on \$119M, 3-year deal

DALLAS — The Dallas Mavericks and Kyrie Irving have agreed on a \$119 million, three-year contract with the All-Star

guard still recovering from a torn ACL that will sideline him into the 2025-26 season, a person with knowledge of the deal said Tuesday night.

Irving is declining the \$43 million player option in the final year of his current three-year contract, the person told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deal isn't expected to be finalized until the start of the new league year July 6.

The new contract will align Irving with co-star Anthony Davis, who joined Dallas in the seismic trade that sent Luka Doncic to the Los Angeles Lakers in February. Davis has three years remaining on his contract, with a player option that now will be the same season as Irving in 2027-28.

The agreement with Irving came on the eve of the NBA draft, with the Mavericks poised to take former Duke star Cooper Flagg with the No. 1 overall pick.

Source: Pelicans trade for Wizards' Poole

NEW ORLEANS — The New Orleans Pelicans have agreed to trade veteran guard CJ McCollum, center Kelly Olynyk and a

future second-round pick to the Washington Wizards for guard Jordan Poole, wing Saddiq Bey and the 40th overall pick in Thursday's second round of the NBA Draft, a person with knowledge of the agreement said.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on Tuesday on the condition of anonymity because the trade has not been announced.

McCollum, a 12-year veteran who has averaged 19.6 points per game throughout his career, now joins his third team since 2022 after spending the bulk of his career with Portland.

Poole, a six-year veteran who has averaged 16.8 points per game, also joins his third franchise after spending his first four seasons with Golden State and the past two with Washington.

The Wizards will gain a ton of financial freedom in the deal, which they can use going forward to continue their rebuild. They easily could have around \$100 million in cap space for the summer of 2026, largely by clearing \$57 million in expiring contracts for McCollum and Olynyk this coming season.

Oilers trade Kane to Canucks to create cap space

Associated Press

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Evander Kane is going home to play for the Vancouver Canucks after a trade from the Edmonton Oilers that helps the two-time defending Western Conference champions free up some much-needed salary cap space.

Vancouver acquired Kane on Wednesday for the 117th pick in the upcoming NHL draft, taking on his entire \$4 million salary. Edmonton clears \$5.125 million off the cap, with Leon Draisaitl's new contract taking effect and Evan Bouchard set for a raise of his own.

"Evander is a physical power forward who will add some much-needed size and toughness to our group," Canucks general

manager Patrik Allvin said. "We like the way he wins puck battles along the boards and handles himself in the dirty areas in front of the net. Evander moves well around the ice and has proven to be a productive goal scorer in the National Hockey League. We are excited to bring him back home to Vancouver and our staff looks forward to working with him this coming season."

The soon-to-be 34-year-old winger broke the news on social media that he had been traded to the Canucks, his agent soon confirmed it and the teams announced it not long after. Kane posted a lengthy message thanking the Oilers and saying he was looking forward to the next chapter of his career in his hometown in British Columbia.

Kane returned early in the playoffs after

missing the entire regular season following multiple surgeries to repair a series of injuries and had six goals and six assists on Edmonton's second consecutive run to the Stanley Cup Final. He took six minor penalties and led all players with 32 penalty minutes in the series loss to Florida.

"To my teammates — thank you for the battles, the friendships, and the memories," Kane posted. "I'll always remember the playoff runs, the highs and lows, and the pride of going to war with a special group of guys."

Vancouver will be the fifth organization and sixth city for Kane, who was drafted by Atlanta, followed that franchise to Winnipeg and has also played for Buffalo and San Jose.