

STARS AND STRIPES®

Saturday, March 31, 2018

A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Trump's talk of Syria pullout not new

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's unscripted remark about pulling out of Syria "very soon," while at odds with his own policy, was not a one-off comment: For weeks, top advisers have been fretting about an overly hasty withdrawal as the president has increasingly told them privately he wants out, U.S. officials said.

Only two months ago, Trump's aides thought they'd persuaded him that the U.S. needed to keep its presence in Syria open-ended — not only because Islamic State has yet to be entirely defeated but also because the resulting power vacuum could be filled by other extremist groups or by Iran.

Trump signed off on a major speech in January in which Secretary of State Rex Tillerson laid out the new strategy and declared, "It is vital for the United States to remain engaged

in Syria."

But by mid-February, Trump was telling his top aides in meetings that as soon as victory can be declared against ISIS, he wanted American troops out of Syria, said the officials. Alarm bells went off at the State Department and the Pentagon, where officials have been planning for a gradual, methodical shift from a military-led operation to a diplomatic mission to start rebuilding basic infrastructure like roads and sewers in the war-ravaged country.

In one sign that Trump is serious about reversing course and withdrawing from Syria, the White House put on hold some \$200 million in U.S. funding for stabilization projects in Syria, officials said. The money, to have been spent by the State Department for infrastructure projects like power, water and roads, had been announced by Tillerson at an aid conference

last month in Kuwait.

The officials said the hold, first reported by The Wall Street Journal, is not necessarily permanent and will be discussed at senior-level inter-agency meetings.

The officials weren't authorized to comment publicly and demanded anonymity.

The State Department said it continually reviews appropriate assistance levels and how best they might be utilized. And the agency said it continues to work with the international community, members of the Coalition, and our partners on the ground to provide much needed stabilization support to vulnerable areas in Syria.

Trump's first public suggestion he was itching to pull out came in a news conference with visiting Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on Feb. 23, when Trump said the U.S. was in Syria to "get rid of ISIS

and go home." On Thursday, in a domestic policy speech in Ohio, Trump went further.

"We'll be coming out of Syria, like, very soon. Let the other people take care of it now. Very soon — very soon, we're coming out," Trump said.

The public declaration caught U.S. national security agencies off-guard and unsure whether Trump was formally announcing a new, unexpected change in policy. Inundated by inquiries from journalists and foreign officials, the Pentagon and State Department reached out to the White House's National Security Council for clarification.

The White House's ambiguous response, officials said: Trump's words speak for themselves.

"The mission of the Department of Defense to defeat ISIS has not changed," said Maj. Adrian Rankine-Galloway, a Pentagon spokesman.

US, Turkey on opposing sides on Syrian front lines

Associated Press

HALAWANJI, Syria — Perched on a green hilltop, Kurdish and Arab fighters face a tense front line separating them from Turkish-backed forces in this part of northern Syria. Behind them, American troops drive up and down the roads. Their aim: Make their presence known to prevent bursts of gunfire from spiraling into a battle.

Down the hill and across a stream are the rival forces: Syrian opposition fighters. They have taken positions on a crossroads in the village of Halawanji and on rooftops with views up to the hill. Beyond them, on another hill, Turkish

troops have a base, ready to back up their allies if needed.

This front line threatens to ignite at any time, with the militaries of two NATO members on opposing sides. The crowded terrain has become more combustible as Turkey ever more loudly threatens to push through these lines to attack the nearby Kurdish-Arab town of Manbij and other Kurdish-run towns further east. The presence of the Americans is a main obstacle preventing them from doing so.

Further hiking tensions, a roadside bomb in Manbij late Thursday killed two coalition personnel, an American and a Briton. Kurdish officials accuse Turkey and its allies of

carrying out acts of violence in the town to sow instability, including several recent smaller bombings, protests and an attempted assassination attempt on a Kurdish official — although there is also the possibility Islamic State militants are behind the violence.

Manbij is highly strategic: it is the main town on westernmost edge of the stretch of Syrian territory held by the U.S.-backed Syrian Kurds, running along the border with Turkey. Mixed Kurdish-Arab Syrian forces liberated Manbij from the rule of ISIS in 2016 with help from the U.S.-led coalition. But Kurdish control of the town infuriated Turkey, which views the main U.S.

Kurdish ally, the YPG militia, as "terrorists" linked to Kurdish insurgents on its own soil.

U.S. troops first deployed in the area about 16 months ago, after Turkish-backed Syrian forces advanced on areas near Manbij, in a race for control of territories as ISIS militants collapsed. The deployment prevented repeated clashes between the rival forces.

The U.S.-backed Syrian fighters at Halawanji say their Turkish-backed rivals downhill increasingly open fire on them, trying to provoke a fight and create a pretext for an incursion. One commander said it happens as often as three times a week.

Autopsy disputes police shooting account

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Calls for justice and charges against two police officers who fatally shot an unarmed black man aren't abating in California's capital city after an autopsy showed Stephon Clark was shot in the back, a counter to the department's statement that he was approaching officers when he was killed.

"His back was turned — he didn't get a chance," said Latoria McCain, who joined several hundred Friday in a downtown protest that lasted more than four hours, causing disruption and blocking traffic but largely remaining peaceful.

Sacramento native and former NBA player Matt Barnes has organized another rally for Saturday afternoon, hours before a Sacramento Kings-Gold-

en State Warriors game will bring thousands of fans to the downtown arena that protesters have twice blocked.

Several Kings players joined black community activists' calls for racial justice at a Friday night community meeting, nearly two weeks after Clark's March 18 death.

"I want to make sure that these mistakes that keep happening have consequences," player Garrett Temple said.

Earlier, the famed pathologist Dr. Bennet Omalu announced Clark was hit by eight bullets — six in the back, one in the neck and one in the thigh — and took three to 10 minutes to die. Police waited about five minutes before rendering medical aid.

"The proposition that has been presented that he was assailing the officers, meaning he

was facing the officers, is inconsistent with the prevailing forensic evidence," Omalu said at a news conference with family attorney Benjamin Crump.

He said it was not clear if Clark would have survived had he gotten immediate medical attention.

Sacramento police responded with a brief statement that said the department had not yet received an official autopsy report from the Sacramento County coroner's office. It said the coroner's death investigation is independent from the investigation being conducted by police and the state Department of Justice.

A day after the shooting, police distributed a press release that said the officers who shot Clark "saw the suspect facing them, advance forward with his arms extended and holding an

object in his hands."

Police video of the shooting doesn't clearly capture all that happened after Clark ran into his grandmother's backyard. He initially moved toward the officers, who are peeking out from behind a corner of the house, but it's not clear if he's facing them or that he knows they are there when they open fire after shouting "gun, gun, gun."

After 20 shots, officers call to him, apparently believing he might still be alive and armed. They eventually approach and find no gun, just a cellphone.

"When a young man who is 22 is shot down in his grandma's backyard, which is supposed to be a safe place, I don't know. What's beyond a crisis?" said Nikki Whitfield, who works at a local adoption agency and attended the community forum.

New video shows Baton Rouge killing

Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La. — Kept under wraps for nearly two years, body camera footage of a policeman killing Alton Sterling, 37, shows the officer threatening to shoot the man and screaming profanities before firing the fatal shots that stoked protests across the nation.

The videos, released Friday as Baton Rouge's police chief announced the firing of the white officer who shot Sterling six times, came days after the state attorney general declined to bring criminal charges against the two officers involved in the incident.

The tapes show a police encounter that rapidly turned violent, descending into death threats, a football-style tackle and, finally, the killing of a black man who was selling homemade CDs outside a convenience store in Louisiana's capital city.

Two cellphone videos of the

incident quickly spread on social media after the shooting, but the new footage show the clearest and most complete picture of what happened that night.

In July 2016, Officers Blane Salamoni and Howie Lake II approached Sterling in the parking lot of the Triple S Food Mart and ordered him to put his hands on the hood of a nearby car.

As Sterling asks what he has done, the situation breaks down.

"Put your hands on the car or I'm going to shoot you in your (expletive) head," an officer, apparently Salamoni, is heard saying. A gun is pointed at the back of Sterling's head as the officer's orders rise into a shout.

When Sterling complains that the officers are hurting him, one officer tells the other to use a Taser on him, and an electric buzzing can then be heard. The officer said to be

Salamoni then runs at Sterling, tackling him as the camera footage blurs with motion.

As the men are on the ground, someone yells, "He's got a gun!" Shots ring out. Salamoni had fired six bullets into Sterling.

The officers recovered a loaded revolver from Sterling's pocket. As a convicted felon, Sterling could not legally carry a gun.

L. Chris Stewart, an attorney representing two of Sterling's children, said the newly released video footage shows a "truth" experienced by many black men during encounters with police officers.

"What that truth is, is the silent complaint — or the loud one — of every black person in the inner city who has to deal with an officer like Blane Salamoni," he said.

"You can clearly see there was no value placed on Alton Sterling's life by Blane Salamoni."

Vt. about to pass restrictions on guns

MONTPELIER, Vt. — A package of gun restrictions is on track to become law in Vermont after the state Senate on Friday approved raising the legal age for gun purchases, expanding background checks for private gun sales and banning high-capacity magazines and rapid-fire devices known as bump stocks.

The measure, which the House approved last week and Republican Gov. Phil Scott has said he will sign, reflects a remarkable turnaround for a state that has long opposed gun control measures.

Scott acknowledged that many Vermonters would be disappointed by the vote and by his support for provisions that he opposed as recently as two months ago.

"I share it. I know why they are disappointed," Scott said. "But I think at the end of the day, they'll soon learn that what we have proposed, what's being passed at this time, doesn't intrude upon the Second Amendment.]

From The Associated Press

Israel issues threat over Gaza clashes

Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip— Israel will target “terror organizations” in Gaza if violence along the territory’s border with Israel drags on, the chief military spokesman warned Saturday, a day after thousands of Palestinians staged protests near the border fence.

The mass marches were led by Hamas and touted as the launch of a six-weeklong protest campaign. Palestinian health officials said 15 Palestinians were killed by Israeli fire and more than 750 hit by live rounds.

In Friday’s confrontations, large crowds gathered near the border fence, with smaller groups of protesters rushing forward, throwing stones and burning tires.

Israeli troops responded with live fire and rubber-coated steel pellets, while drones dropped tear gas from above.

Brig. Gen. Ronen Manelis, the chief

army spokesman, denied allegations of excessive use of force, saying those killed by Israeli troops were men between the ages of 18 and 30 who were involved in violence and belonged to militant factions.

He alleged Gaza health officials exaggerated the number of those wounded, and that several dozen at most were injured by live fire while the rest were merely shaken up by tear gas and other riot dispersal means.

Gaza City’s Shifa Hospital received 284 injured people Friday, the majority with bullet injuries, said spokesman Ayman Sahbani. He said 70 were under the age of 18, and 11 were women.

He said 40 surgeries were performed Friday and that 50 were planned Saturday. “These are all from live bullets that broke limbs or caused deep, open wounds with damage to nerves and veins,” he said.

Among those recovering from surgery

was Marwan Yassin, 16, who had thrown stones with a slingshot at the fence Friday and was shot in both legs. One of his legs was wrapped in bandages and the other had a cast and metal fixtures.

His mother said at his bedside that she would ban him from future protests.

On Saturday, a few hundred people gathered at five tent encampments that have been set up several hundred meters from the border fence. The tents serve as the launch points for marches.

Protest organizers have said mass marches would continue until May 15, the 70th anniversary of Israel’s creation. Palestinians mark that date as their “nakba,” or catastrophe, when hundreds of thousands were uprooted during the 1948 war over Israel’s creation. The vast majority of Gaza’s 2 million people are descendants of Palestinians who fled or were driven from homes in what is now Israel.

Malala Yousafzai returns to her hometown for 1st time

Associated Press

MINGORA, Pakistan — Pakistani Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai on Saturday arrived in her hometown for the first time since a Taliban militant shot her there in 2012 for advocating for girls’ education.

Yousafzai and her family arrived in a helicopter provided by the Pakistani military, which took her from Islamabad to the town of Mingora in the Swat Valley. She had arrived in the capital Thursday flanked by heavy security and plans to return to Britain on Monday.

Yousafzai, 20, won international renown after she was shot by the Taliban in Mingora. She received initial treatment in Pakistan and later was taken to England for further care. She stayed on in the United Kingdom to continue her education. She became the youngest person to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014.

Yousafzai entered her childhood home Saturday accompanied by her father, mother and brother. She sobbed upon entering the home where relatives, former classmates and friends were waiting to welcome her with flowers and hugs.

Yousafzai said she waited for the moment for more than five years and said she often looked at Pakistan on the map, hoping one day to return. She said she plans to return to Pakistan after completing her studies.

Arooj Bibi, a neighbor, said she was happy to meet with Yousafzai, but was sad because her visit was so brief. Bibi said Yousafzai “lit the candle of education. God willing, there will be thousands of girls like Malala getting an education” in Swat.

Security had been visibly beefed up in Mingora the previous day. The Pakistani Taliban warned after the attack on the then-14-year-old that they would target her again if they got the chance.

Since her attack and recovery, Yousafzai has led the Malala Fund in which she said has invested \$6 million for schools, books and uniforms for schoolchildren.

Yousafzai has won praise from across Pakistan on her return home, but some critics on social media have tried to undermine her efforts to promote girls’ education. Yousafzai told media outlets Friday that she doesn’t understand why some educated Pakistanis oppose her.

Russia expels more UK envoys over spy dispute

Associated Press

MOSCOW — The crisis between Russia and the West over the poisoning of a former double agent in Britain heightened Friday as Russia ordered new cuts to the number of British envoys in the country.

Russia also summoned 23 foreign ambassadors to inform them some of their diplomats would be expelled, a day after ordering 60 U.S. diplomats to leave and demanding that Washington’s consulate in St. Petersburg close on short notice.

The massive expulsion of diplomats on both sides has reached a scale unseen even at the height of the Cold War.

Two dozen countries, along with NATO, ordered out more than 150 Russian diplomats this week in a show of solidarity with Britain over the nerve-agent poisoning of Russian ex-spy Sergei Skripal, 66, and his daughter in Britain, which London blamed on Russia.

Moscow has vehemently denied involvement in the March 4 nerve agent attack in the English city of Salisbury and announced the expulsion of the same number of diplomats from

each nation.

The ministry escalated its response Friday, saying it has ordered Britain to reduce the number of its diplomats in Moscow to the level that Russia has in London. The exact number wasn’t immediately clear, but state news agency RIA Novosti quoted an unidentified Russian diplomat as saying the number of British diplomatic personnel in Russia exceeds the number of Russian envoys in Britain by more than 50 people.

The ministry said it summoned the British ambassador to hand him a protest over the “provocative and unsubstantiated actions by Britain, which instigated the expulsion of Russian diplomats from various nations for no reason.” It gave London one month to reduce its diplomatic personnel.

The countries informed Friday by Russia of diplomat expulsions were Australia, Albania, Germany, Denmark, Ireland, Spain, Italy, Canada, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Ukraine, Finland, France, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Sweden and Estonia.

Judge might ban Cosby's testimony about Quaaludes

The Philadelphia Inquirer

NORRISTOWN, Pa. — The judge presiding over Bill Cosby's sexual assault retrial signaled Friday that he might ban Cosby's prior testimony about obtaining Quaaludes, prescription sedatives, and using them to seduce women.

The entertainer's decade-old statements, made under oath, about his use of Quaaludes — remarks that when unsealed in 2015 led to the reopening of the criminal investigation against Cosby — were read to jurors at the first trial, which ended with a mistrial in June.

But as he wrapped up two days of pretrial hearings, Montgomery County, Pa., Judge Steven T. O'Neill said he may exclude them this time, in part because he is now permitting testimony from five women who say they were victims of sexual misconduct by Cosby before Andrea Constand, the alleged victim in the case. At the first trial, prosecutors were allowed to call just one other accuser.

"The evidence has changed in this case, pure and simple,"

O'Neill told the lawyers during the hearing in Norristown on Friday. "And I don't know what it is going to look like."

O'Neill said he would not rule on the admissibility of the Quaalude testimony until the trial is underway.

The Cosby deposition that included statements about Quaaludes were read again to jurors as deliberations dragged on. Cosby gave the testimony as part of a civil lawsuit Constand filed against him in 2005. The case was settled out of court in 2006, and Cosby's lawyers are now seeking to include that settlement agreement as evidence at trial. O'Neill said he would rule on that issue before the trial begins.

On Monday morning, 187 Montgomery County residents will be asked to appear in court as potential jurors, O'Neill said. Of that number, 120 will be questioned and could become part of the panel tasked with determining Cosby's fate. Opening arguments are scheduled to begin the following Monday, after 12 jurors and six alternates have been selected and sequestered.

Calif. governor pardons five facing deportation

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — California Gov. Jerry Brown on Friday pardoned five ex-convicts facing deportation, including two whose families fled the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia four decades ago.

The pardons don't automatically stop deportation proceedings but eliminate the state convictions on which federal authorities based their deportation decisions. That gives the men's lawyers strong legal arguments before immigration judges to try to prevent the deportations.

"The pardon does provide enormous benefit to immigrants facing deportation," said Anoop Prasad, an immigration staff attorney at Asian Law Caucus.

Brown's intervention for the men — among 56 pardoned — marked the Democratic governor's third consecutive pardon round in which he intervened on behalf of immigrants who were deported or faced deportation because of criminal convictions. Brown has accused the administration of President Donald Trump of "basically going to war" with California over immigration policy.

Those pardoned Friday included Sokha Chhan and

Phann Pheach, both of whom face deportation to Cambodia, a country ruled in the 1970s by the genocidal Khmer Rouge. Chhan was convicted of two counts of misdemeanor domestic violence in 2002 and served 364 days in jail.

Pheach was convicted of possessing drugs and obstructing a police officer in 2005 and served six months in jail. His wife said he is in federal custody.

Also pardoned was Daniel Maher, who was convicted in 1995 of kidnapping, robbery and being a felon in possession of a firearm and served five years in prison. Maher is facing deportation to China. Chhan, Pheach and Maher hold permanent U.S. residency but had exhausted all legal avenues to fight deportation, making Brown's pardons for them their last hope to stay in the U.S., Prasad said.

Also pardoned while facing deportation were Daniel Mena and Francisco Acevedo Alaniz, but their home countries were not immediately known.

Mena was convicted in 2003 of possessing illegal drugs. Alaniz served five months in prison for a 1997 auto theft conviction.

Brown on Friday also commuted the sentences of 14 others convicted of crimes.

About 1K march against Mormon youth interviews

Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — About 1,000 current and former Mormons marched to the church's headquarters in Salt Lake City on Friday to deliver petitions demanding an end to closed-door, one-on-one interviews between youth and lay leaders at which sexual questions sometimes arise.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints changed its policy last week to now allow children to bring a parent or adult with them to the interviews, but protesters said that doesn't go far enough to keep children safe.

The policy change followed recent revelations that a former prominent missionary

leader was accused of sexually assaulting two women in the 1980s. The ex-leader denies the allegations.

Protesters carried signs such as "Mormon children we have your back" and "No more closed doors," saying the so-called "worthiness" meetings can lead to unhealthy shaming of youth. Some cried as they recalled being asked detailed questions about their sexual activity or being punished after admitting to masturbation.

"This is my church and it has many good things, but it has one thing that has to be eliminated," said campaign organizer Sam Young, a Mormon from Houston, urging an end to one-on-one interviews and all sexu-

ally explicit questions.

Church officials say the interviews allow bishops to get to know youth better and determine their religious habits and obedience to God. They usually happen twice a year starting at age 12. Questions cover topics such as school, sports, hobbies, education goals and family issues, but sometimes delve into sexual behavior because of the church's strict teachings on abstinence before marriage.

The protesters said they delivered 55,000 signatures on petitions and 15 copies of a book with people's stories of inappropriate encounters during the interviews to a church representative from the public relations office.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Ex-driver who used slurs wins board seat

ME MINOT — A former Maine school bus driver who was fired for making racist and sexist comments has been elected to the school board.

The Sun-Journal reports Mike Downing was elected earlier this month to represent Minot on the RSU 16 school board.

Downing was fired from his job as a bus driver in January for his insensitive comments. He used the N-word when describing Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and referred to both Superintendent Tina Meserve and School Board Chairwoman Mary Martin with a sexist slur.

Downing's dismissal was not made public, so it's possible voters didn't know he had been fired.

Man at hospital steals, crashes ambulance

IL CHICAGO — Officials of a Chicago hospital are saying police are mistaken in believing a man was kicked out of the facility before stealing and crashing an ambulance.

According to St. Bernard Hospital chief operations officer Roland Abellera, a patient brought in by the Chicago Fire Department early Tuesday with an undisclosed injury refused treatment and insisted on leaving. As the man was leaving, a man who arrived by ambulance was being disruptive, but was treated.

According to police, the first patient left the hospital, saw the ambulance with doors open and engine running, hopped in and drove away. The 34-year-old man hit a nearby light pole and street sign.

Officers spotted the dam-

aged ambulance driving erratically and pulled it over. The man was taken to a hospital for treatment. Police say charges are pending.

Lawmaker apologizes after OUI arrest

MA BROCKTON — A Massachusetts state senator is apologizing following his arrest on a drunken-driving charge.

Democratic Sen. Michael Brady of Brockton said he was stopped early Saturday morning by Weymouth police on Route 18.

According to a police log, Brady was placed under arrest on charges of operating under the influence of alcohol, negligent operation of a motor vehicle and a marked-lanes violation. He pleaded not guilty Monday and was released pending his next court date.

Brady, 55, said he was driving home when he was stopped.

3 charged following fight at Walmart

NH LEBANON — Three people from Vermont involved at a fight in the frozen food section of a Walmart in New Hampshire have been arrested on simple assault charges.

Police in Lebanon, N.H., said one man confronted another Saturday over money owed to him. The two started fighting, and one had suffered a cut to the head by the time police arrived.

Police said a woman assaulted an off-duty police officer from Hartford, Vt., who tried to break up the fight, and then interfered with Lebanon officers who were attempting to take one of the men into custody.

Author's photo near ship fuels fish oil flap

VA REEDVILLE — A group that works with commercial fishermen is questioning why an author posed for a picture while sitting on a jet ski near a vessel in the Chesapeake Bay rather than ask to come aboard.

Paul Greenberg has written a new book, "The Omega Principle," about omega-3 fatty acids. He tweeted the picture Friday in front of a vessel used by Omega Protein, the Atlantic's largest menhaden harvester. Menhaden are small fish used for omega-3 fish oil supplements.

Washington, D.C.-based group Saving Seafood works with Omega and other harvesters on government and public relations. It said there was no reason for Greenberg to "endanger himself or the crew."

The photo is from 2015. Greenberg said he maintained legal distance from the ship and didn't mean to imply he was denied access.

Police: Judge admits stealing underwear

NY NEW YORK — A New York judge has been relieved of his duties after police say he repeatedly broke into his neighbor's home to steal her underpants.

Robert Cicale, a Suffolk County district court judge, pleaded not guilty Friday to a burglary charge. He was held on \$25,000 bail.

Police said the woman was alone in her East Islip home Thursday when she heard a noise and saw a man running off. Officers said they found Cicale carrying the woman's "soiled undergarments."

Court papers said Cicale admitted that he "went into

the house to take the panties again."

A court spokesman said the judge is "temporarily relieved of his judicial duties."

Nudist campground in need of a lifeguard

RI FOSTER — A Rhode Island nudist campground is looking for a lifeguard, and the uniform is cheap: nothing.

The Providence Journal reported Dyer Woods Nudist Campgrounds' help wanted notice for a lifeguard this summer says qualified candidates must have "excellent communication skills" and the ability to "work as part of a team."

Campground president Jim Johnson said the lifeguard can wear a swimsuit, but it's not necessary.

The campground offers swimming, hiking, volleyball and a sauna for people who aren't afraid to bare it all.

Woman gets prison for pointing gun at toddler

OH COLUMBUS — A judge has sentenced an Ohio woman to four years in prison for texting a photo of herself pointing a semi-automatic handgun at her 17-month-old daughter.

Fasshon Shivers was sentenced last week after pleading guilty to attempted kidnapping and a gun specification. A felony charge of kidnapping and a misdemeanor charge of child endangerment were dropped.

Prosecutors said Shivers, 31, took the photo at her Columbus home and texted it to the child's father May 31. The woman's lawyer said Shivers was "overwhelmed" and "trying to force the father to be a better dad."

The child is currently in her father's custody.

From wire reports

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Women's Final Four

Notre Dame stuns UConn in semifinals

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Arike Ogunbowale etched her name in Notre Dame lore with the shot that lifted the Irish over rival UConn.

Ogunbowale's jumper from the corner with a second left gave Notre Dame a 91-89 overtime victory Friday night, handing the Huskies their second straight stunning and sudden end to an undefeated season in the national semifinals.

She finished with 27 points and Jackie Young had a career-high 32 to lead the Irish back to the championship game for the first time since 2015.

"I know I just had to shoot it at the last minute," Ogunbowale said. "I didn't want to give them a chance to get the ball. I went into Mamba mentality. Kobe's here, so that's what I tried to channel."

It's the second consecutive year an undefeated UConn team lost in the Final Four on a last-second shot in overtime. Last time it was Mississippi

State and Morgan William, ending the Huskies' 111-game winning streak.

"There's nothing you can say to a college kid after experiencing this two years in a row that's going to make them feel any better about, you know," Geno Auriemma said. "We had an amazing run for five months. That's just the way it is. One weekend in March gets to decide your season."

The Irish will face the Bulldogs — who won again in OT earlier Friday — on Sunday night in the title game. Muffet McGraw's squad will be looking for its second national championship to go with the one the Irish won in 2001.

Ogunbowale had a chance to seal the game in the final minute of overtime, but she missed two free throws. Crystal Dangerfield then hit a three-pointer to tie it at 89, setting up the fantastic finish. The Huskies threw the ball down the court after the three, but didn't get a chance to tie it.

"We were a little dejected at the end of regulation, but Arike I think was madder than anyone," McGraw said. "She wanted the ball in her hands and we put it there for the end of the game."

This was the latest chapter in the greatest current rivalry in women's basketball. The sell-out crowd that included Lakers great Kobe Bryant, who was sitting behind the Huskies bench with his wife and daughters, saw quite the show with epic comebacks from both teams. Bryant later tweeted at Ogunbowale, "Big Time shot Arike!"

Notre Dame has never beaten the Huskies in the national championship game. They now have won four of the five meetings in the Final Four, including twice in overtime.

"It was the second or third time we beat them in the semifinal, that's been our lucky charm," McGraw said. "We can't seem to beat them in the final. To have a big lead, squan-

der that and come from behind, this one is really special. It's got to be the best one."

UConn was down five with under a minute to go in regulation before Napheesa Collier hit a three-pointer with 15 seconds left and Kia Nurse had a steal for a layup a few seconds later to tie it. After Notre Dame turned it over with 3.6 seconds left in regulation, Gabby Williams' runner was short, sending the game to overtime.

The teams traded shot for shot in overtime before the Irish led 86-84 with 2:37 left in the extra period. Young then made three free throws over the next 2 minutes to give the Irish a five-point lead with 43 seconds left.

Collier then scored to make it a three-point game. Ogunbowale missed her two free throws a few seconds later. She atoned 37 seconds after a Notre Dame timeout with the shot that set off a wild celebration from the Irish faithful that made the trip.

Mississippi State earns return trip to title game

Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Once Roshunda Johnson hit the tying three-pointer with seven seconds left in regulation and Teaira McCowan forced a miss on the other end, Mississippi State knew it was in good shape.

"We know we're an overtime team," All-American guard Victoria Vivians said.

Especially in the Final Four. McCowan had 21 points and a Final Four-record 25 rebounds, Vivians scored 25 points, and Mississippi State reached the national championship game for the second straight year with a 73-63 OT win over Louisville on Friday night.

After Johnson's jumper, Louisville's Myisha Hines-Allen then drove the length of the floor but missed a layup with McCowan defending her.

In overtime, the Bulldogs asserted themselves and Morgan William, who hit the game-winning shot in OT last year in the Final Four to end UConn's 111-game winning streak, made two free throws in the last minute to help Mississippi State (37-1) pull away.

Louisville (36-3) managed just one basket on 10 shots in the extra period.

McCowan broke the rebounding mark set by Charlotte Smith of North Carolina in 1994 when Mississippi State's 6-foot-7 center grabbed her 24th board.

"She's done that all year against the best competition," Mississippi State coach Vic Schaefer said. "She did it again tonight on the biggest stage."

The Cardinals were hurt when center Sam Fuehring was called for a technical foul

with 2:42 left in the fourth quarter when she slapped the floor after getting called for a foul. That technical fouled her out of the game. The Cardinals were down 54-53 and William hit both free throws to give the Bulldogs a three-point lead.

"It's a shame it has to come down to that," Louisville coach Jeff Walz said. "It was a five-point swing. So it impacted the game."

Louisville came back to take a 59-56 advantage on Hines-Allen's layup with 11 seconds left, setting up the exciting finish in regulation.

Asia Durr scored 18 for Louisville (36-3), which was making its third appearance in the Final Four. Jazmine Jones added 15 in a game in which the lead changed 15 times.

"It was really tough," Jones

said. "They have great guards up and down their team. Victoria (Vivians), she's a great player. She was an All-American. It was really tough guarding her. And their three-point shooters, because they can spread out the floor while driving. So it was really tough tonight."

Recognition

Schaefer took time out to accept an award a few hours before the women's Final Four tipped off. Schaefer was honored as the National Coach of the Year by the U.S. Basketball Writers Association. Schaefer thanked his family, including twins Blair and Charles Logan. Blair is a senior guard for the Bulldogs.

"You know what? She's had a little bit to do with this today," Schaefer said.

Tigers lose after replay overturns win

Associated Press

DETROIT — Nicholas Castellanos slid across home plate, Pittsburgh catcher Francisco Cervelli lunged at him — and for a few fleeting moments, the Detroit Tigers rushed on to the field to celebrate a win on opening day.

All while the Pirates waited for a possible reprieve.

“We thought we had a shot, a legitimate shot, at getting the play our way. The play went our way because we made a good enough throw and good enough tag to get him before he touched the plate,” Pittsburgh manager Clint Hurdle said. “At the end of the day, you just wait to see what they say in New York.”

Sure enough, the call was overturned and Castellanos was ruled out — a replay reversal that left the Tigers miffed over an hour later, after Gregory Polanco’s three-run homer

in the 13th inning gave Pittsburgh a 13-10 victory Friday.

Castellanos was initially called safe with the winning run in the bottom of the 10th, but as the review dragged on, the jubilation died down a bit, and the Detroit players waited patiently in front of their dugout for word from the umpires.

Once it came, Tigers manager Ron Gardenhire wasn’t so calm. In his first game since 2014, he got ejected after the call was flipped.

Then the teams played on.

“We’ve had plenty of plays that need clear and conclusive evidence to overturn, and there was one angle that maybe looked like it could have gotten my sleeve, and let’s overturn the game and not let the Tigers win,” Castellanos said with more than a hint of sarcasm. “It doesn’t really seem consistent to how the process has been run in the past.”

Polanco’s drive to right-center on a 3-0 pitch from Alex Wilson (0-1) finally gave the Pirates a comfortable lead — or as comfortable as could be on a wacky day when both teams scored four runs in the ninth.

Detroit put two men on base in the 13th, but Steven Brault (1-0) was able to hold on and finish his third scoreless inning of relief.

By the time the 5-hour, 27-minute game was over, there were only three umpires and one manager left. Plate umpire Mike Everitt exited in the eighth with a concussion after being hit in the mask by a pitch.

Detroit’s franchise-record streak of six straight wins in season openers was snapped.

This game was pushed back a day, postponed because of rain Thursday. The temperature was 36 degrees at the start.

“Saw some people leaving at the top of the ninth,” said Tigers bench coach Steve Liddle, who spoke to reporters afterward instead of Gardenhire. “I think with this team, you might want to stick around.”

JaCoby Jones hit the single that initially appeared to have scored Castellanos, but the play at the plate was close after a throw by left fielder Corey Dickerson.

“I didn’t feel a tag, and Cervelli says, ‘I can’t believe they overturned it,’” Castellanos said. “So two people involved in the play were shocked.”

Cervelli said he tagged Castellanos, and his surprise over the reversal was more because of the situation.

“I couldn’t believe because the extra innings, but he was out,” Cervelli said. “I thought they were gonna leave it that way.”

MLB roundup

Rojas’ single in 17th inning lifts Marlins over Cubs

Associated Press

MIAMI — Miguel Rojas drove in Brian Anderson with a single to center in the 17th inning, and the Miami Marlins topped the Chicago Cubs 2-1 on Friday night.

It was the second career game-ending RBI for Rojas, who did it once last year with a sacrifice fly. This one will go into Marlins lore, not only for its 5-hour, 18-minute length — but moreso because it’s the first win of Derek Jeter’s era as Miami’s CEO.

Jeter was there until the end, slapping high-fives when it was finally over. It matched the third-longest game in Miami history, and was the longest ever played at Marlins Park.

It took a two-out rally to get it done. Anderson singled to left, and Cameron Maybin followed with a base hit that bounced off shortstop Javier Baez’s glove

and chased Eddie Butler (0-1) after seven innings and 90 pitches of relief.

Brandon Morrow came in to face Rojas, and two pitches later it was over.

There has only been one instance in the last 100 years of teams playing either their first or second game of the season needing this many innings to decide a winner. Kansas City and Minnesota went 17 innings in their second game of the 1969 season, with the Royals winning 4-3.

Going this long, this early, was certainly not on the wish list for either club.

Odrisamer Despaigne (1-0) was supposed to pitch for the Marlins on Saturday at 7:10 p.m. as their starter in the third game of the series, not at 12:14 a.m. as Miami’s seventh reliever. But he worked a perfect 17th.

Giants 1, Dodgers 0: Joe Panik homered for the second straight game off closer Kenley Jansen, and San Francisco beat error-prone host Los Angeles.

Angels 2, Athletics 1: Mike Trout homered and scored twice and visiting Los Angeles beat Oakland despite a rocky ninth inning by closer Blake Parker.

Brewers 8, Padres 6: Ryan Braun hit a three-run homer with two outs in the ninth, part of visiting Milwaukee’s five-run rally against All-Star closer Brad Hand.

Diamondbacks 9, Rockies 8: Nick Ahmed had a career-best five RBIs and host Phoenix regrouped after blowing a five-run lead.

Red Sox 1, Rays 0: David Price was solid in his return to visiting Boston’s rotation, allowing four singles over seven scoreless innings.

Nationals 2, Reds 0: Max Scherzer struck out 10 in six innings and Washington, in its first game with Dave Martinez as a major league manager, beat host Cincinnati to begin defense of its NL East title.

Yankees 4, Blue Jays 2: Masahiro Tanaka pitched six sharp innings and visiting New York beat Toronto without any pop from its sluggers.

Phillies 5, Braves 4 (11): Carlos Santana drove in J.P. Crawford with a sacrifice fly in the 11th inning, and first-year Philadelphia manager Gabe Kapler went through nine pitchers for his first win as the visiting Phillies beat Atlanta.

Rangers 5, Astros 1: Doug Fister mostly silenced the powerful Houston lineup for five innings in his debut with host Texas, Nomar Mazara homered for an early lead and the Rangers beat the Astros.

NBA roundup

Rockets lifted by Green's buzzer beater

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Gerald Green was born and raised in Houston and represents the city to the fullest, from the large block letters that spell out the name of the city on his left forearm to the intricate braids in his hair that form the 'H' from the Houston Astros logo.

So the veteran, who joined the Rockets in December, relished his buzzer-beating shot that gave them a win over the Phoenix Suns on Friday night a little more than any of the other big shots in his career because it came in his hometown.

"I think what makes it more fun is I'm from here," said Green, who made his first start of the season. "Never really got

a chance to do that in front of my mom and my dad before so I think that was more special to me."

Green's shot capped Houston's rally from a 21-point, second-half deficit to get the 104-103 victory.

The win was Houston's 11th straight and extended Phoenix's skid to 14 games, which ties a franchise record.

Cavaliers 107, Pelicans 102: LeBron James scored in double digits in his 867th straight game, breaking the record he shared with Michael Jordan, and host Cleveland rallied to beat New Orleans to avoid slipping in the standings.

76ers 101, Hawks 91: At Atlanta, Ben Simmons had a

triple-double in three quarters, Ersan Ilyasova scored 21 points and Philadelphia won its ninth straight game.

Nuggets 126, Thunder 125 (OT): Paul Millsap scored a season-high 36 points to help Denver beat host Oklahoma City.

Trail Blazers 105, Clippers 96: Jusuf Nurkic had 21 points and 12 rebounds, new father Damian Lillard added 17 points and 11 assists, and Portland held off visiting Los Angeles.

Bucks 124, Lakers 122 (OT): Eric Bledsoe scored 11 of his 39 points in overtime, and Milwaukee overcame host Los Angeles' huge comeback attempt.

Timberwolves 93, Mavericks 92: Karl-Anthony Towns had 21 points and 20 rebounds, Jamal Crawford scored 24 points and visiting Minnesota held off Dallas to gain ground in the tight Western Conference playoff race.

Jazz 107, Grizzlies 97: Donovan Mitchell scored 22 points and Dante Exum had a season-high 21 to lead host Utah over Memphis.

Bulls 90, Magic 82: At Orlando, Lauri Markkanen and Sean Kilpatrick each scored 13 points, rookie Ryan Arcidiacono had all of his eight points in the fourth quarter, and Chicago snapped a seven-game losing streak.

NHL roundup

Bolts end slide, move back atop Eastern Conference

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Brayden Point and Cedric Paquette each scored two goals, and the Tampa Bay Lightning stopped a three-game slide with a 7-3 victory over the New York Rangers on Friday night.

J.T. Miller added a power-play goal in the third period as Tampa Bay regained first place in the Atlantic Division and the Eastern Conference with 108 points. Dan Girardi also scored against his former team, Alex Killorn had a goal and an assist, and backup goalie Louis Domingue made 28 saves.

The Lightning fell from the top spot for the first time since mid-October when they lost to the Bruins on Thursday night.

New York rookie Filip Chytil got his first NHL goal. Chris Kreider and Brady Skjei also scored for the Rangers, and Ondrej Pavelec made 43 saves.

Avalanche 5, Blackhawks 0: At Denver, Sven Andrighet-

to scored twice for Colorado, and Semyon Varlamov stopped 30 shots before leaving in the third period with an apparent injury.

Tyson Barrie, Mikko Rantanen and Tyson Jost also scored for an Avalanche team that remains in contention a season after finishing with a league-worst 48 points.

Varlamov was cruising along until a Chicago player ran into his left pad with 6:25 remaining. Jonathan Bernier came in and finished the Avalanche's 27th home win, which is tied for second-most in franchise history.

Colorado coach Jared Bednar had no update on Varlamov's status after the victory.

Collin Delia stopped 31 shots for Chicago.

Ducks 3, Kings 2 (OT): Rickard Rakell scored 4:41 into overtime, lifting host Anaheim to the win.

Nick Ritchie also scored and John Gibson stopped 28 shots for the Ducks, who are 6-1-1 in their last eight games. Ondrej

Kase had two assists.

Drew Doughty scored and Jonathan Quick made 31 saves for the Kings, who went 2-0-3 in the season series against their Freeway Faceoff rivals.

Los Angeles is one point ahead of Anaheim for third place in the Pacific Division. The Ducks have four games remaining while the Kings have three.

Rakell's 32nd goal came on a shot from the right circle over Quick's shoulder.

Maple Leafs 5, Islanders 4: Auston Matthews scored with 3:58 left, lifting playoff-bound Toronto to the road win.

Mitch Marner and Nazem Kadri each had a goal and an assist, and Nikita Zaitsev and James van Riemsdyk also scored for Toronto. Frederik Andersen stopped 29 shots to help the Maple Leafs win for the eighth time in 10 games and extend a franchise record with their 47th win.

Golden Knights 4, Blues 3: Jonathan Marchessault's goal

22 seconds into overtime lifted host Vegas to the victory.

The expansion Golden Knights (49-22-7) can win the Pacific Division with a point in Saturday's game against San Jose.

Marchessault had two goals, and William Karlsson and James Neal also scored for Vegas. Malcolm Subban stopped 21 shots.

Hurricanes 4, Capitals 1: Justin Faulk scored midway through the second period, and visiting Carolina beat Washington to stay in the playoff race.

The Hurricanes, who haven't made the playoffs for the last eight years, have won four of five. Carolina, which has four games remaining, remains a long shot to qualify for the postseason.

Metropolitan Division-leading Washington had won five in a row. Michal Kempny scored his first goal with the Capitals after he was acquired in a February trade with Chicago.