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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Afghan peace deal hits its first snag

By PHILLIP WALTER
WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — It took less than 24 hours for the U.S.-Taliban deal to hit its first obstacle — the release of prisoners.

The peace agreement signed Saturday in Qatar calls for up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners and up to 1,000 pro-Afghan-government prisoners held by the militants to be released by March 10.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said Sunday he wasn't ready to release any prisoners before intra-Afghan talks begin next week.

Some in Afghanistan said that the Taliban's refusal to include Ghani in the deal guaranteed some discord from the start and underscored how difficult it will be for Afghan negotiations to bring peace.

"The (prisoner-release) issue has already created a misun-

derstanding," said Afghanistan analyst Mohammad Younas Fakor, a former governor of eastern Herat province. "Many of the articles in the U.S.-Taliban agreement still need to be explained."

The U.S. deal with the militants is clear in broad strokes: If the Taliban prevent terrorists from operating in Afghanistan, hold peace talks and stop waging war on the U.S. and its partners, the U.S. and the foreign coalition would begin a phased withdrawal that would end in 14 months.

But details of the conditions that would allow U.S. and coalition forces to leave are unclear.

The document says the troop drawdown will be contingent on the Taliban fulfilling their counterterrorism assurances and that the militant group needs to "initiate" intra-Afghan talks.

"The agreement is interesting in that it does not say, 'The U.S. will finally withdraw if

the Taliban and the Afghan government reach a full political settlement,'" said Andrew Watkins, a senior Afghanistan analyst at International Crisis Group. "There seems to be a lot of legal room for the United States on what the conditionalities really means."

The ambiguity comes amid concerns by some in Afghanistan that the U.S., in its eagerness to end its longest war, might withdraw even if the country forfeits the gains it has made in areas like women's rights, education and press freedom.

The Taliban said that a seven-day period of reduced violence last week had ended when they inked the deal. U.S. officials have said, however, that the deal would be void if violence accelerated.

Ghani on Sunday said that Afghan forces would maintain reduced violence levels in the hopes it would lead to a complete cease-fire once the intra-

Afghan talks begin.

"Conveying messages underscoring importance of keeping down violence is good," Laurel Miller, former U.S. acting Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, said on Twitter. "But if this is a de facto US condition outside the actual terms of the deal, then there is room for conflicting understandings of what has been agreed."

Despite the deal's shortcomings and the argument over prisoner releases, Michael Kugelman, deputy director of the Asia program at the Wilson Center in Washington, said that it was too early to judge the accord.

"You can be critical all you like, it is certainly an imperfect deal," Kugelman said. "But at the end of the day, this deal puts Afghanistan in its best position ever to launch a peace process and end this war."

Navy: Chinese destroyer shot laser at US aircraft

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

A Chinese navy destroyer shot a weapons-grade laser at a P-8A Poseidon patrol aircraft in a recent move that U.S. Pacific Fleet dubbed "unsafe and unprofessional" in a statement Thursday.

The incident happened Feb. 17 in the Philippine Sea about 380 miles west of Guam while the Poseidon crew was "operating in international airspace in accordance with international rules and regulations," according to the statement.

A sensor on the Poseidon detected the laser, which was

invisible to the naked eye, according to the statement.

"Weapons-grade lasers could potentially cause serious harm to aircrew and mariners, as well as ship and aircraft systems," Pacific Fleet said in the statement.

China's actions violated the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea, which is an agreement between 21 countries — including China and the U.S. — to "reduce the chance of an incident at sea," according to the statement.

The code "specifically addresses the use of lasers that could cause harm to personnel or damage to equipment,"

Pacific Fleet said in the statement.

The lasing incident also violated a U.S.-China memorandum of understanding "regarding rules of behavior for safety of air and maritime encounters," according to the statement.

The Poseidon is assigned to Patrol Squadron 45 based in Jacksonville, Fla., and is deployed to Kadena Air Force Base on Okinawa. The crew regularly conducts maritime patrol and reconnaissance, the statement said.

"U.S. Navy aircraft routinely fly in the Philippine Sea and have done so for many

years," Pacific Fleet said in the statement.

The Pacific Fleet last publicly accused the Chinese navy of taking an "unsafe and unprofessional" action in September 2018, when the Chinese destroyer Luyang veered close to the guided-missile destroyer USS Decatur before pulling away.

The Decatur was on a freedom-of-navigation operation in the South China Sea near the Spratly Islands, which is a source of contention in the region, as China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Vietnam and the Philippines have overlapping claims to territory in the area.

Respawning keep jets in sky during drill

BY SETH ROBSON

Stars and Stripes

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam — Pilots staging mock dogfights over the Pacific last month took a page out of video gamers' playbooks.

Gamers are used to respawning to rejoin a cyberbattle when their characters are killed in massive multiplayer combat.

During this month's Cope North drills in the Northern Marianas, aircraft "shot down" in simulated air battles had to fly to a regeneration point before they could rejoin the fight, said the exercise director, Air Force Col. Mike "Skid" Rowe.

This year's exercise, which began Feb. 12 and concluded Friday, involved more than 100

aircraft and 2,100 military personnel from the United States, Japan and Australia honing skills they'll need to engage a well-equipped enemy force.

As many as 60 aircraft have been airborne over Guam during Cope North, but Rowe said there are limits on how many can take part in a dogfight.

"No more than eight airplanes can be involved in a visual fight at one time in training for safety reasons," he said near the Andersen flight line Feb. 19.

The exercise prepares the three nations' forces to operate in the same air space without spending undue energy keeping out of one another's way, David Johnson, of the Center

for Advanced Defense Studies in Washington, D.C., said in a telephone interview Friday.

Capt. Matt "Chaos" Borek, 29, of Brooklyn, N.Y., flew an F-15 for the 67th Fighter Squadron during the exercise. When the pilots in his unit take to the sky, they don't know how many enemy aircraft they might face but they prepare for the worst, he said.

"If we are outgunned, we are hoping that through our techniques, tactics and procedures we can defeat the bad guys," he said.

The fighters practiced missions such as escorting strike aircraft, defending a point against enemy air attack and protecting a helicopter recov-

ering a downed airman, Borek added.

Tech. Sgt. Lindsay Brown, 32, of Palmdale, Calif., an F-15 maintainer participating in the drills, said he got a kick out of watching so many combat jets take flight.

"During launches you can look down the ramp and see all the other units' aircraft taxiing out," he said. "It provides motivation for all the maintainers."

The forces participating in Cope North have practiced complex missions involving command and control planes, fighters and tanker aircraft flying vast distances over the Pacific, Rowe said.

"Not a lot of air forces around the world can do that and we do it every year," he said.

Wreckage of US bombers shot down in WWII found

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

Wreckage from three U.S. aircraft lost during a February 1944 blitz against Japanese forces has been found in a vast lagoon in the Federated States of Micronesia.

Searchers with the nonprofit Project Recover discovered and identified the wrecks during a series of expeditions and analyses from October to December.

Debris from two SBD-5 Dauntless dive bombers and one TBM/F-1 Avenger torpedo bomber were found in Chuuk State, which was known as Truk Lagoon during World War II.

The wreckage, found at depths of 100 to 215 feet, included propellers, an entry hatch, tail section and dive brakes, said Mark Moline, co-founder of Project Recover and the expedition leader.

The group, which partners with the University of Delaware and Scripps Institution

of Oceanography in San Diego, released underwater photos of the aircraft debris to coincide with the 76th anniversary of the two-day air assault that began Feb. 17, 1944, Moline said.

"These are basically debris piles," he said. "They don't look like aircraft. So, when we go down there, we're using high resolution side-scan sonar."

Based on loss history and the type of aircraft, searchers believe they know the specific identity of two of the planes — and hence the crew members who would have been aboard, Moline said.

The expedition team is now preparing detailed reports for the Micronesia government and the U.S. Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, which is tasked with recovering and identifying American war dead missing overseas.

"It's interesting from a historical perspective to find these wrecks, but really our mission is the servicemen who were left there," Moline said.

On-base shopping for vets faces hurdles overseas

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN

Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — The new rules that extend on-base shopping privileges to an additional 4.1 million U.S. veterans can't be applied in some countries and face restrictions in others, officials said.

So far, outside of the United States, the exchange and commissary benefits are only available in Germany, through a process that includes getting a Veteran Health Identification Card in the U.S., being vetted for base access and then registering with U.S. and German customs offices.

Though on-base products are free from U.S. taxes, veterans will have to report what they buy and pay German taxes.

At least 24 veterans have been approved to use the shopping benefit at U.S. bases in Germany since Jan. 1, said Frank Phillips, a Veterans Affairs service officer for Europe who works from U.S. Army

Garrison Ansbach.

Those who qualify include disabled veterans with a service-connected condition, Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war and designated primary family caregivers of eligible veterans.

About 28,000 veterans and their dependents reside in Germany, though it's unknown how many are eligible for on-base shopping privileges under the new law, Phillips said.

The military is also trying to expand the program to other countries in Europe, he said.

In Asia, the South Korean government is reviewing whether to authorize expanded access on a case-by-case basis, said Jim Guzior, a spokesman with U.S. Army Installation Management Command-Pacific.

The benefit will not be granted in Japan, he said. Use of base facilities by veterans who aren't covered by the status of forces agreement would require a negotiated exception to SOFA, he said.

Virus affects more than 60 countries

Associated Press

TOKYO — The number of countries hit by the coronavirus climbed past 60 Sunday, and infections and deaths continued to mount around the globe, emptying streets of tourists and workers, shaking economies and rewriting the realities of daily life.

In Paris, the Louvre Museum closed, and priests stopped placing sacramental bread into worshippers' mouths. Panic-buying of daily necessities emerged in Japan. Tourist sites across Asia, Europe and the Mideast were deserted. And governments closed schools and banned big gatherings.

Australia and Thailand reported their first deaths Sunday, while the Dominican Republic and the Czech Republic recorded their first cases. Iran, Iraq, Italy and South Korea, among other places, saw the number of infections rise.

China, where the outbreak began two months ago, on Sunday reported a slight uptick in new cases during the past 24 hours to 573, the first time in five days that the number exceeded 500. They remain almost entirely confined to the hardest-hit province of Hubei and its capital, Wuhan.

South Korea reported 210 additional cases and two more deaths from the virus, raising its totals to 3,736 cases and 20 fatalities. South Korea has the second-largest number of in-

fections outside China, with most of the cases in the southeastern city of Daegu and nearby areas.

Iran's death toll from COVID-19, the disease the virus causes, climbed to 54 as the number of confirmed cases jumped overnight by more than half, to 978 people. The new figures represent 11 more deaths than reported on Saturday and 385 new cases.

Iraq's Health Ministry announced the discovery of six more cases Sunday, raising the total to 19 — all Iran-linked. The outbreak in Iran has prompted its neighbors to seal their borders to Iranians, while other Gulf states have halted flights to Iran.

In the Czech Republic, three cases were reported, including a U.S. citizen who has been studying in Milan and had traveled to the Czech Republic on a tourist trip. The others were Czech citizens who had returned from Italy. The person who fell ill in the Dominican Republic was an Italian citizen and marks the first case in the Caribbean.

British health authorities said the number of people confirmed as infected rose by 12, bringing the country's tally to 35, with one death. Most of the new cases involved people who had been in Italy or Iran, both countries hit hard by the outbreak.

Extended quarantine issued for crew of 7th Fleet

BY CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Ships in the 7th Fleet must spend at least 14 days at sea between port visits as nations in the region battle outbreaks of the new coronavirus, a Navy official told Stars and Stripes on Friday.

The directive was issued to the vessels Wednesday "out of an abundance of caution" to monitor crews and prevent the spread of COVID-19, said the official, who declined to comment on the record.

"This is about protecting the force and preventing spread to our allies and partners," the official said.

The move allows time to monitor crews for symptoms as they leave one port for the next.

The 7th Fleet last week began having its ships plan for nine days between each port visit "to allow symptoms of COVID-19 to present prior to arrival to a new port," according to a Feb. 20 unclassified 7th Fleet document obtained Friday by Stars and Stripes.

Pacific Fleet's extended quarantine is better aligned with the time it typically takes for coronavirus symptoms to appear — between two to 14 days after exposure, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Protection.

"Close working and living quarters in military and shipboard operations demand vigilant public health measures to prevent the acquisition, activa-

tion and spread of COVID-19," 7th Fleet said Feb. 15 in an unclassified email to its forces that Stars and Stripes obtained Friday.

The Yokosuka-based 7th Fleet's area of responsibility spans 124 million square miles from the International Date Line to the India-Pakistan border and from the Kuril Islands to the Antarctic. Most COVID-19 cases have been reported in countries within this region.

In China, where the outbreak originated, 79,824 people had tested positive for the coronavirus as of Sunday, The Associated Press reported. Another 2,133 cases had been confirmed in 12 countries in the 7th Fleet's area of responsibility: 1,766 in South Korea; 186 in Japan; 93 in Singapore; and 23 in Australia.

Should a sailor at sea show symptoms of COVID-19 symptoms — sneezing, coughing and shortness of breath — the Navy will isolate the crew member and test them for the virus. The test will then be sent to a lab for review in accordance with CDC guidelines, the Pacific Fleet official said.

The 7th Fleet is also screening all personnel accessing its warships and aircraft for coronavirus exposure and symptoms, spokesman Lt. Joe Keiley said Monday. The checks include questionnaires, self-reporting opportunities and other medical screening.

Candidates appeal to black voters on 'Bloody Sunday'

Associated Press

SELMA, Ala. — Democratic presidential candidates gathered Sunday in this crucible of the civil rights movement to appeal for black support in a town where demonstrators were once beaten for marching for the right to vote.

Two days before the crucial Super Tuesday vote, themes of

fighting voter suppression, providing the poor with a way up and defeating President Donald Trump took center stage at events marking the 55th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday," when white police attacked black marchers in Selma, Ala.

Rep. Terri Sewell, the lone black member of Alabama's congressional delegation, urged

hundreds of people attending a community breakfast to vote for Biden and enable "a return to civility."

Alabama state troopers beat and tear-gassed hundreds of voting-rights demonstrators trying to march from Selma to Montgomery, the capital, on March 7, 1965. Only 25 at the time and years away from join-

ing Congress, Rep. John Lewis led the marchers and was among the injured.

The confrontation both set the stage for the massive Selma-to-Montgomery voting rights march led by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. weeks later and helped inspire passage of the Voting Rights Act later that year.

Socialist hardliner aims gun at Guaido march held in Venezuela

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela — Socialist hardliners in Venezuela opened fire during a march headed by Juan Guaido, injuring a 16-year-old demonstrator and adding to tensions in the country as the opposition leader seeks to revive his campaign to oust Nicolas Maduro.

A photo of the confrontation shows a masked man brandishing a pistol pointed toward a group of opposition activists, including Guaido, who can be seen staring down the unidentified man.

The confusing incident Saturday in the central city of Barquisimeto is believed to be the first time pro-government vigilantes known as colectivos have aimed a weapon at Guaido, who the U.S. and more than 50 other countries recognize as Venezuela's rightful leader following Maduro's re-election in 2018 in a race the opposition says was marred by irregularities.

The city's former mayor and

opposition activist Alfredo Ramos said the marchers led by Guaido were "ambushed" by about 200 colectivo members and government security forces loyal to Maduro.

Ramos said worse bloodshed was avoided because the unidentified man did not open fire at that moment.

But later, as the crowd swelled, a 16-year-old demonstrator was shot in the leg and several others were roughed up as the colectivos harassed participants.

"Courage and strength," Guaido said in a conversation with the injured activist that was videotaped by his aides while their caravan headed back to Caracas. "We're going to achieve freedom for our country."

Later, the opposition leader reiterated a call for supporters to take to the streets on March 10.

"It's time to increase decisively and without fear the actions and pressure on the tyranny headed by Maduro,"

he said in a statement.

There was no immediate comment from the Maduro government.

The AP was not present at the rally so was unable to verify the lawmakers' account.

An opposition lawmaker from the region, Daniel Antequera, said the march through poor neighborhoods drew surprisingly strong support. It lasted about an hour with the armed groups meeting them at various points, he said. They pressed on believing the gunfire was going into the air — until learning that the teen was shot.

"They won't be able to stop an entire country that is starving and that understands the only way to progress is through democracy and liberty," said Antequera, who visited the boy in the hospital.

Dimitris Pantoulas, a Caracas-based political analyst, said the incident underscores the forceful role being played in Venezuela by the colectivos.

Ailing Pope won't be at spiritual gathering

Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — A coughing Pope Francis told pilgrims gathered for the traditional Sunday blessing that he is canceling his participation at a weeklong spiritual retreat in the Roman countryside because of a cold.

It is the first time in his seven-year papacy that he has missed the spiritual exercises that he initiated early in his pontificate to mark the start of each Lenten season. Such retreats are typical Jesuits, an order to which he belongs.

The 83-year-old pontiff, who lost part of a lung to a respiratory illness as a young man, has canceled several official engagements this week as he battled an apparent cold.

His weekly appearance Sunday to pilgrims from a window high above St. Peter's Square was the first time he has been seen publicly since Ash Wednesday, when he was seen coughing and blowing his nose during Mass.

Francis paused twice to cough Sunday while addressing the faithful. At the end, he asked for prayers for the spiritual retreat, adding "unfortunately a cold prevents me from participating this year. I will be following the meditation from here."

Earlier this week, the pope canceled two planned official audiences — formal affairs in the Apostolic Palace where Francis would have delivered a speech and greeted a great number of people at the end.

He was to have left Sunday for the retreat outside of Rome.

The Vatican has described Francis condition as "a slight illness," without giving other details. Francis' illness, though, has come amid general alarm in Italy over the coronavirus outbreak, which has infected more than 1,100 people, mostly in northern Italy.

Syria: Turkey downed 2 warplanes

Associated Press

KASTANIES, Greece — Syria's official news agency said two of its warplane were shot down by Turkish forces inside northwest Syria, amid a military escalation there that's led to growing direct clashes between Turkish and Syrian forces.

SANA says the jets were targeted over the Idlib region, and that the four pilots ejected with parachutes and landed safely.

Turkey's Defense Ministry said it had shot down two SU-24 aircraft and destroyed air defense systems after one of its aerial drones was downed. Earlier, Syrian military-run media said it had downed a drone inside northwest Syria and was closing its airspace

for any flights or drones across the country's northwestern region. It said any aircraft that penetrates Syrian airspace will be treated as hostile and shot down.

The Syrian announcement came after two days of Turkish drone attacks in Idlib province that Syrian activists said caused heavy losses to Syrian government forces. These confrontations have added to soaring tensions between Turkey and Russia, which support opposing sides of the Syrian civil war.

Meanwhile, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had on Saturday announced his country opened its western borders to migrants and refugees hoping to head into the Europe-

an Union. The United Nations said Sunday that at least 13,000 people were massed on Turkey's land border with Greece.

Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar, speaking from military headquarters near the Syrian border, said Turkey aimed to confront Syrian government forces rather than Russian troops.

Referring to losses inflicted on Syria, he said Turkey had "neutralized" more than 2,200 Syrian troops, 103 tanks and eight helicopters.

"The Spring Shield operation, which was launched following the abominable attack in Idlib on Feb. 27, continues successfully," Akar said, referring to airstrikes that killed 33 Turkish soldiers.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Teens steal hearse, crash into utility pole

OH COLUMBUS — Two Ohio teens stole a hearse — with a body inside — for a quick joyride before crashing into a utility pole, officials said.

The two teenagers hijacked the vehicle after finding the keys in the ignition outside a funeral home, according to the Columbus Police Department.

The two teens, who have not been arrested, hit another vehicle with the hearse after witnesses saw them doing donuts in a school parking lot nearby.

Bob Spears, owner of Spears Funeral Home, said the funeral had already taken place for the individual in the casket, and the body was scheduled for cremation.

Police chase stolen ambulance, nab driver

PA PHILADELPHIA — A man stole an ambulance and tried to run over an officer who shot him three times, leading to a low-speed chase that lasted more than an hour, authorities said.

Authorities were called to a motel in northeast Philadelphia for reports of a domestic disturbance involving a man and a woman that necessitated medical attention for one or more parties, Staff Inspector Sekou Kinebrew of the Philadelphia police said.

The man became combative and jumped into the ambulance, driving at one of the officers who medics called for backup, Kinebrew said.

During the ensuing police pursuit, the ambulance traveled at speeds between 10 and 25 mph.

Two marked police vehicles were struck, Kinebrew said.

Girl Scouts hand-deliver cookies to veterans

CT WOODBURY — Girl Scout cookies are typically sold through fundraisers, door-to-door or online. But 45 lucky U.S. veterans received hand-wrapped boxes delivered to their homes.

As a thank you to veterans for their service, local Brownies delivered the cookies with the help of Woodbury firefighters.

Carrie Petrucci, a Woodbury resident and troop leader, said this is the second year that the Brownies have partnered with the Woodbury Volunteer Fire Department to donate Girl Scout cookies to veterans as part of the Valentine's for Veterans program.

Police respond when family duck euthanized

NM SANTA FE — A New Mexico grandfather's effort to euthanize the family duck drew police after residents reported multiple shots fired.

Santa Fe police initially confiscated a handgun from Lorenzo Pacheco, who had fired four shots at the bird, the Santa Fe New Mexican reported.

His granddaughter, Kaelyn Pacheco, said officers showed compassion toward him after learning he had carried out the shooting in an act of mercy.

She said the duck, a family pet, had become paralyzed and couldn't walk, and it also had an eye infection.

Man killed after jumping from moving ambulance

CA ENCINITAS — A man jumped out of the back of a moving ambulance and was struck by a car and killed on an interstate near San

Diego, authorities said.

The man, 23, slipped out of restraints and pushed past the attendant to open the ambulance's rear door, California Highway Patrol Officer Mark Latulippe said.

As the man sprinted across northbound lanes he was struck by a BMW, Latulippe said. He died at the scene.

University solicits notes from brothel interview

UT OGDEN — Notes from a newspaper interview with a Utah brothel owner nearly 70 years ago have drawn widespread interest from people who want a shot at deciphering the cryptic shorthand.

Weber State University received hundreds of offers to decipher notes from an interview with Ogden madame Rosette Duccinni Davie, The Standard-Examiner reported.

Davie and her husband ran the Rose Rooms brothel in the 1940s and 1950s.

Standard-Examiner reporter Bert Strand conducted the interview in 1951, but no one could read his decades-old shorthand style.

Authorities seize gator from basement

OH GROVEPORT — Authorities in Ohio seized an alligator that was being kept in the basement of a home.

According to a Facebook post from the Madison Township Police Department, the owner of the 25-year-old reptile did not have an exotic animal permit and voluntarily surrendered the animal.

State wildlife officials retrieved the animal from the Groveport residence. The American Alligator was taken to an animal sanctuary in Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Spelunkers rescue hunting dog from cave

IN CAMPBELLSBURG — A champion hunting dog that followed a raccoon into a southern Indiana cave and got stuck was rescued after spelunkers squeezed through the cave's cramped entrance and found the dog on an underground ledge.

BuzzMan, a 5-year-old coon hound, was pursuing a raccoon during a sanctioned hunt sponsored by the Campbellsburg Coon Hunters Club when he went missing in the Washington County cave. The signal from his GPS collar stopped at the cave's entrance.

Logan Ray, who helped organize the hunt, and the dog's owner contacted an Indiana conservation officer, who in turn contacted two spelunkers who volunteered to look for the dog.

Ray said BuzzMan is a Professional Kennel Club Gold Champion and the dog has won more than \$11,000 in competitions.

Brothers sentenced for fight in hospital room

ME ELLSWORTH — Three brothers who fought with police officers in their dying grandmother's hospital room were each sentenced to a few days in jail.

Byron Grant, 35; Brighton Sawyer, 22, and Dirk Sawyer, 23, all pleaded guilty to refusing to submit and criminal mischief, the Bangor Daily News reported.

The three men were arrested Jan. 20 after Brighton Sawyer allegedly threatened another driver as the three were driving to the hospital to visit their grandmother. Police pursued the brothers inside the hospital to their grandmother's room.

From wire reports

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Bane propels TCU to upset of Baylor

Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Baylor coach Scott Drew always enjoys watching Desmond Bane play, except when the TCU guard is going against the Bears.

This time, Bane may have cost No. 2 Baylor a shot at its first Big 12 title.

Bane scored 19 of his 23 points after halftime, with eight in a row during the Horned Frogs' big tiebreaking run, in a 75-72 win on Saturday. It was the highest-ranked opponent TCU has beaten on its

home court, and fans streamed onto the court at the buzzer to celebrate.

"I'm so glad Desmond's a senior. ... I love cheering for him when we're not playing him. He's a hard worker and a great kid," Drew said. "He's a monster. What makes him so good is he's so efficient. He's 5-for-8 from the three and everybody's trying to stop him from shooting threes."

The Bears (25-3, 14-2 Big 12) lost for the second time in three games since winning a Big 12-record 23 games in a row. They were the nation's No.

1 team when they lost a week ago to now-No. 1 Kansas (26-3, 15-1), which is a game ahead of them in the league standings after beating Kansas State on Saturday.

This was only the third Big 12 game this season when Baylor, which is also trying to lock up a No. 1 seed in the NCAA Tournament, trailed in the second half.

"We've got to control what we can control," Drew said. "We've got two games ... (the Jayhawks) have two games to go. People probably thought we would have won here today.

That's the Big 12."

Bane made a long tiebreaking three-pointer with 4:42 left that put the Frogs (16-13, 7-9) ahead to stay. After blocking a shot by Jared Butler, Bane then made a turnaround jumper before adding another three to make it 63-55 with just over three minutes left.

"Desmond Bane is a senior and wants to win. In the last five minutes he wanted to win and it showed," Butler said.

That was part of 13 points in a row by TCU, and a bigger 18-1 spurt that Bane had started with another three-pointer.

College basketball roundup

Huff helps Virginia topple No. 7 Duke

Associated Press

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — Jay Huff brought his flair for the dramatic to a new level, and brought down the program he grew up rooting for in his hometown.

Virginia's 7-footer from Durham, N.C., with a career marked by a knack for highlight reel dunks and blocked shots, but not so much consistency, had his best game in three years Saturday, and capped it in dazzling fashion.

After Mamadi Diakite made a short, go-ahead jumper with 37 seconds left, Huff blocked Vernon Carey Jr.'s shot under the basket with 3.7 remaining and ripped the ball away, preserving Virginia's 52-50 victory against No. 7 Duke.

It capped a 15-point, 10-block, nine-rebound effort that Blue Devils coach Mike Krzyzewski said was the difference in the game.

No. 1 Kansas 62, Kansas State 58: Devon Dotson scored 25 points to help the top-ranked Jayhawks absorb the loss of center Udoka Azubuike in a defeat of the host Wildcats.

Azubuike finished with six points and nine rebounds while playing just 20 minutes after hurting his ankle in the opening minutes. David McCormack came off the bench to score nine in his place, helping the Jayhawks (26-3, 15-1) edge closer to clinching at least a share of another Big 12 championship.

No. 3 Gonzaga 86, Saint Mary's 76: Filip Petrusev scored 27 points and the host Zags swept the season series with the

Gaels.

No. 5 San Diego St. 83, Nevada 76: Malachi Flynn scored 36 points on 13-for-20 shooting and the Aztecs overcame a 13-point second-half deficit to beat the host Wolfpack.

Clemson 70, No. 6 FSU 69: Freshman Al-Amir Dawes hit a twisting, driving bucket with a second left and the host Tigers defeated the Seminoles.

Trent Forrest had put Florida State up by a point with a short jumper with 8.4 seconds left. Dawes then took the ball down the right side of the lane and flipped up the game-winning shot.

No. 8 Kentucky 73, No. 15 Auburn 66: Immanuel Quickley had 18 points and a career-high 12 rebounds and the host Wildcats used a big run in the first half before holding off the Tigers to clinch the Southeastern Conference regular season championship.

No. 24 Michigan St. 78, No. 9 Maryland 66: Cassius Winston scored 20 points, including a buzzer-beating, 60-foot shot to end a sensational first half for the visiting Spartans, who denied the Terrapins' bid to clinch a share of the Big Ten regular-season title.

Providence 58, No. 12 Villanova 54: Luwane Pipkins scored 27 points to lead the visiting Friars to their fifth win over a Top 25 team this month.

No. 13 Seton Hall 88, Marquette 79: Myles Powell scored 28 points and Sandro Mamukelashvili added 26 as the visiting Pirates built a big second-half lead and

then held off the Golden Eagles.

No. 18 Iowa 77, No. 16 Penn State 68: Luka Garza scored 25 points and had 17 rebounds as the host Hawkeyes pulled away in the second half.

Garza extended his streak of 20 or more points against Big Ten teams to 14 games, a school record.

No. 17 BYU 81, Pepperdine 64: Yoeli Childs scored a career-high 38 points and the visiting Cougars completed a perfect February.

Oklahoma 73, No. 20 West Virginia 62: Kristian Doolittle scored 19 points two days after undergoing surgery to repair a broken nose and the visiting Sooners boosted their NCAA Tournament hopes.

Texas 68, No. 22 Texas Tech 58: Andrew Jones had a career-high 22 points and the visiting Longhorns (18-11, 8-8 Big 12) scored the game's last eight points, stretching their winning streak to four games.

Lafayette 62, Navy 60: Lukas Jarrett drove the baseline for a reverse layup with 5.9 seconds left to lead the host Leopards to a come-from-behind win.

Colorado State 87, Air Force 74: Kindle Moore scored 21 points on seven three-pointers as the host Rams defeated the Falcons.

Colgate 91, Army 65: Will Rayman and Jordan Burns had double-doubles and the host Raiders rolled past the Black Knights to capture their first outright Patriot League title with a school-record 14 wins. Rayman scored 19 points and grabbed 12 rebounds for Colgate (23-8, 14-4).

Pro leagues monitoring virus in US

Associated Press

Major North American professional sports leagues are talking to health officials and informing teams about the coronavirus outbreak that has led to the first reported death in the U.S.

Officials from the NBA, NHL and MLB say they are all consulting with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other organizations on a regular basis about COVID-19. Washington State reported Saturday that a man in his 50s died from the virus.

There are no immediate plans to cancel or postpone games or have them held in empty stadiums or arenas. Some of those contingencies have been taken in other countries, including Italy, where soccer matches were postponed until May.

Pro sports in the U.S. for now are going on as scheduled, though leagues are closely monitoring the situation. The NBA and NHL are in their regular seasons and MLB in spring training in Arizona and Florida with Opening Day less than a month away.

"The health and safety of our employees, teams, players and fans is paramount," the NBA said in a statement. "We are coordinating with our teams and consulting with the CDC and infectious disease specialists on the coronavirus and continue to monitor the situation closely."

The new virus that first emerged in China in December has infected more than 85,000 people and caused more than 2,900 deaths. There have been 62 reported cases in the U.S., compared to 1,128 in Italy.

The NHL, which has seven teams based in Canada, is in contact with personnel from the CDC and Public Health Canada. Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly said the NHL has not considered any cancellations.

"We are in regular communication with our clubs on the issue and have passed along best practices being recommended by CDC and Public Health Canada medical experts," Daly said. "Most of these steps are common sense precautions."

An NHL spokesman added the league "will implement all necessary safety measures as required." Teams have been getting information from the league about COVID-19 since late January.

MLB has also been actively monitoring the outbreak for some time and been in touch with the CDC and Health and Human Services. It is providing guidance to clubs, staff and players that mirror CDC recommendations.

NHL roundup

Blues extend win streak to 7

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Ryan O'Reilly scored the only goal in the shootout to lead St. Louis to a 4-3 victory over the Dallas Stars on Saturday night and extend the Blues' winning streak to seven games.

David Perron, Tyler Bozak and Brayden Schenn, who scored in his fourth straight game, had goals for the Blues.

The Stars got goals from Tyler Seguin, Denis Gurianov and John Klingberg, who scored with 18 seconds remaining in regulation to send the game to overtime.

The Blues and Stars are each 2-3 in shootouts this season.

Jake Allen (10-6-3) made 28 saves for the Blues and turned aside all three shootout attempts, winning for the second time in four starts — both against Dallas.

Allen had a prime view of O'Reilly going in on Stars goalie Anton Khudobin to score the shootout game-winner.

"He's got some quick hands you know. He's got a different stick but his hands are, you know, really quite probably some of the quickest in the league," Allen said. "So when he gets in those shootout situations, he's got some tricks and it was good to see. It's a great move."

Khudobin made 25 saves and lost his third straight start.

"Another good effort from (Khudobin), like you know what you're going to get, right?" Stars interim coach Rick Bowness said. "He kept us in there when the penalties were coming. Another great game. You're seeing what you expect from him every night now."

St. Louis has a seven-game winning streak for the second time this season. In addition, the Blues won eight straight in December. During their current streak, the Blues have outscored opponents 26-12.

"It's always a lot more fun when you're winning." Bozak said. "You always play better when you have that confidence. We have a lot of depth, a lot of chemistry and different guys can step up and step up on different nights. I think that's why we have the success we do."

Lightning 4, Flames 3: Tyler Johnson and Ondrej Palat scored on the power play and Yanni Gourde added a short-handed goal as host Tampa Bay beat Calgary on Saturday to snap a season-long four-game losing streak.

Alex Killorn scored his 24th goal of the season to help the Lightning win for the first time since an 11-game winning streak. Andrei Vasilevskiy ended a three-game losing streak with 18 saves.

The victory came soon after Tampa Bay

announced team captain Steven Stamkos will undergo surgery for a core muscle injury and was expected to miss the rest of the regular season and potentially the first round of the playoffs.

Bruins 4, Islanders 0: Defenseman Charlie McAvoy had a goal and two assists and Tuukka Rask made 25 saves as visiting Boston beat New York.

The league-best Bruins improved to 41-13-12 for 94 points. The Islanders lost their third straight following a two-game winning streak.

Sharks 5, Penguins 0: Evander Kane had a goal and an assist, Martin Jones made 30 saves in his 24th career shutout and host San Jose sent Pittsburgh to its first six-game losing streak in eight years.

The Penguins have been outscored 24-8 during their first six-game skid since the 2011-12 season when Sidney Crosby was sidelined by an injury.

Kings 2, Devils 1 (OT): Adrian Kempe scored in overtime and host Los Angeles edged New Jersey.

Mackenzie Blackwood had his six-game winning streak broken despite making 36 saves. The Devils earned a point for the fifth straight game.

Blackhawks 3, Panthers 2 (SO): Patrick Kane and Jonathan Toews scored in the shootout to lift Chicago to a win at Florida.

The Panthers have lost six straight home games. Their last home win was a 4-3 victory against Los Angeles on Jan. 16. Florida is 0-5-1 at home in February.

Avalanche 3, Predators 2: Pavel Francouz made 30 saves in a career-best sixth straight win, Erik Johnson had a goal and an assist, and Colorado won at Nashville.

Gabriel Landeskog and Martin Kaut also scored for the Avalanche, who matched a season high with their sixth-straight win.

Canadiens 4, Hurricanes 3 (OT): Jeff Petry scored 52 seconds into overtime, lifting host Montreal over Carolina.

Senators 4, Red Wings 3 (SO): Artem Anisimov scored twice in regulation and added the shootout winner as host Ottawa handed Detroit its ninth loss in 10 games.

Maple Leafs 4, Canucks 2: Martin Marincin scored a rare goal and host Toronto went on to beat Vancouver.

Coyotes 5, Sabres 2: Clayton Keller had two goals and an assist, Antti Raanta stopped 25 shots after a shaky start and host Arizona rallied to beat Buffalo.

Oilers 3, Jets 2: Leon Draisaitl had two goals and an assist as host Edmonton beat Winnipeg. Ryan Nugent-Hopkins scored the tiebreaker with 5:16 remaining and assisted on both of Draisaitl's goals as the Oilers snapped a two-game skid.

Morant powers Grizzlies in rout of Lakers

Associated Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn.—The Memphis Grizzlies snapped their five-game losing streak by beating the team they could face in the playoffs if they hold on to the last spot in the Western Conference.

Rookie Ja Morant had 27 points and matched his season high with 14 assists, and the Grizzlies beat the Los Angeles Lakers 105-88 on Saturday night.

"We just locked in, stayed focused, learned from our losses and came out and played a full 48 (minutes)," Morant said. "We were able to come out with a great win."

Dillon Brooks added 24 points and Jonas Valanciunas had 22 points and 20 rebounds as Memphis helped its chances of keeping the eighth spot in the West. Memphis holds a 2½-game edge on the New Orleans Pelicans, who were idle Saturday night and play the Lakers on Sunday. The San Antonio Spurs, who beat Orlando 114-113

on Saturday night, trail the Grizzlies by three.

"We knew they were going to play with desperation. They are currently the eighth seed in the playoffs and lost five straight," Los Angeles coach Frank Vogel said. "Our guys have done a great job most of the year of playing with energy and matching the home team. We just fell short of that."

LeBron James had 19 points and 10 assists, while Anthony Davis finished with 15 points and nine rebounds as the Lakers lost for only the second time in February. The 88 points was a season-low for Los Angeles, which shot 41% for the game, including only 9 of 36 from three-point range.

The Lakers, the top team in the West, entered the game on a seven-game winning streak, but trailed by as many as 22 in the third quarter as Memphis continued to get balanced scoring. Los Angeles brought James into more of an active role and a couple of three-pointers started the second half.

But the Grizzlies continued to extend the lead and held an 86-66 advantage entering the fourth.

The Memphis lead dropped to single digits with just under 7 minutes left after a 7-0 Lakers run. But the Grizzlies immediately built the lead back to 18 near the three-minute mark, and Vogel put in his reserves.

"They just played a great game. Shot the ball extremely well from the perimeter," James said. "Ja made four threes. Dillon was really good all game and Valanciunas, I think he had like 50 rebounds the last two games. They just played a really good game and kept us at bay."

Memphis hadn't won since the All-Star break and its hold on the final playoff spot had started to dwindle. But, at least outwardly, the young Grizzlies seem to keep their composure.

"We understand there's going to be adversity," Morant said. "So, there's no reason to panic. We're going to control what we can. That's how we play on the floor."

NBA roundup

Hawks find range in defeat of Trail Blazers

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Coach Lloyd Pierce has always known that part of the Atlanta Hawks' problem shooting three-pointers is a lack of ball movement.

Over the last two games, Pierce has seen a promising turnaround.

"It's pretty special now" Pierce said. "Consistency is the key. Can we keep it up? Can we continue to share the basketball and move the basketball that way? But what a great effort by our guys tonight."

Trae Young had 25 points and 15 assists, John Collins added 24 points and 10 rebounds and the Hawks beat the Portland Trail Blazers 129-117 on Saturday night for their second straight victory.

Atlanta, the NBA's worst three-point shooting team this season, dazzled beyond the arc for the second night in a row. The Hawks shot 42.9% on 42 attempts and have 37 treys in two games. De'Andre Hunter picked up where fellow rookie

Cam Reddish left off the night before against Brooklyn, hitting six threes and scoring 22 points.

CJ McCollum finished with 35 points and Hassan Whiteside had 21 points and 13 rebounds for the Trail Blazers. They were done for the night after Hunter and Collins hit consecutive threes to make it a 16-point lead with 3:03 remaining.

Portland has dropped three straight and six of seven to fall nine games under .500. The Blazers, who began the night 10th in the Western Conference, tried a trapping defense against Young, the second-year All-Star point guard, but they couldn't account for his teammates.

"It's part of the game plan to try to stop Trae Young and make some other guys beat us," McCollum said. "And they did tonight."

The rebuilding Hawks have been at or near the bottom of the NBA standings most of the season, but they have won eight

of 10 at home and are looking more comfortable with a promising young nucleus of Young, Collins, Hunter, Reddish and Kevin Huerter.

Atlanta, winning on consecutive nights, took charge of the game during a chippy third quarter.

Collins had a one-handed putback, a three-point play and a straightaway three for an 82-69 advantage. Bruno Fernando's layup put the Hawks up 15 before the teams combined for two technical fouls and a flagrant foul as Atlanta pushed the lead to 20.

Rockets 111, Celtics 110 (OT): Russell Westbrook scored 41 points and James Harden had 21, including a pair of free throws with 25 seconds left in overtime to give Houston a win at Boston.

The Celtics rallied from a four-point deficit in the final 20 seconds of regulation and sent the game to overtime on Jaylen Brown's three-pointer at the buzzer. Boston scored the first basket of the extra period and

led 110-109 but did not score in the final 2:49 of the game, missing its last six shots.

Pacers 113, Cavaliers 104: T.J. Warren scored 30 points, Malcolm Brogdon hit the go-ahead basket midway through the fourth quarter and Indiana won at Cleveland.

Heat 116, Nets 113: Kendrick Nunn scored 21 points and host Miami held off Brooklyn.

Spurs 114, Magic 113: Trey Lyles had 20 points and host San Antonio overcame a shaky fourth quarter to snap Orlando's winning streak at three games.

Knicks 125, Bulls 115: Reserve Mitchell Robinson had a career-high 23 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, Julius Randle added 22 points and 10 boards and host New York snapped a six-game losing streak.

Warriors 115, Suns 99: Eric Paschall led Golden State to a win at Phoenix with 25 points on 10 of 16 shooting from the field. Damion Lee added 20.