

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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## Biden roars back into race with 9 states

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A resurgent Joe Biden scored victories from Texas to Massachusetts on Super Tuesday, revitalizing a presidential bid that was teetering on the edge of disaster just days earlier. But his rival Bernie Sanders seized the biggest prize with a win in California that ensured he — and his embrace of democratic socialism — would drive the Democrats' nomination fight for the foreseeable future.

Following Biden's Super Tuesday bounce, former New York City Mayor Mike Bloomberg announced he was dropping out of the race. Bloomberg poured more than \$500 million of his personal fortune into his campaign that centered on racking up wins in Tuesday's contests. The massive investment netted him a single win in American Samoa. Bloomberg announced he was endorsing Biden.

Suddenly, the Democratic Party's presidential field, which featured more than a half-dozen candidates a week ago, transformed into a two-man contest.

Biden and Sanders, lifelong politicians with starkly different visions for America's future, battled for delegates as 14 states and one U.S. territory held high-stakes

elections that marked the most significant day of voting in the party's 2020 presidential nomination fight.

It could take weeks — or months — for the party to pick one of them to take on President Donald Trump in the November general election. But the new contours of the fight between Biden and Sanders crystallized as the former vice president and the three-term Vermont senator spoke to each other from dueling victory speeches delivered from opposite ends of the country Tuesday night.

"People are talking about a revolution. We started a movement," Biden said in Los Angeles, knocking one of Sanders' signature lines.

Without citing his surging rival by name, Sanders swiped at Biden from Burlington, Vt.

"You cannot beat Trump with the same-old, same-old kind of politics," Sanders declared, ticking down a list of past policy differences with Biden on Social Security, trade and military force. "This will become a contrast in ideas."

The Sanders campaign announced Wednesday it would begin airing three new ads in Arizona, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio and

Washington, states that hold primaries March 10 and March 17.

One of the new ads features archived footage of former President Barack Obama praising Sanders. It's a not-so-subtle attempt by the Vermont senator to undercut Biden's frequently spotlighting his closeness to Obama.

Biden's victories were powered by Democratic voters who broke his way just days before casting their ballots — a wave of late momentum that scrambled the race in a matter of hours. In some states, the late-deciders made up roughly half of all voters, according to AP VoteCast, surveys of voters in several state primaries. He drew support from a broad coalition of moderates and conservatives, African Americans and voters older than 45.

Sanders' success proved he could deliver in perhaps the greatest test of his decades-long political career. His success was built on a base of energized liberals, young people and Latinos. But he was unable to sufficiently widen his appeal to older voters and college graduates who make up a sizable share of Democratic voters, according to AP VoteCast.

## US targets Taliban in first airstrike following deal

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN

Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The U.S. military launched its first airstrike Wednesday against the Taliban since signing a peace deal with the group Saturday.

The strike in southern Helmand province targeted Taliban fighters who were attacking an Afghan forces checkpoint, said Col. Sonny Leggett, a spokesman for the U.S. military in Afghanistan.

The Taliban also staged 43 attacks on Afghan forces in Helmand on Tuesday, Leggett said on Twitter, while Afghan officials reported attacks and deaths in other parts of the country.

Earlier this week, the militant group said it would resume attacks against Afghan military targets, after the expiration of a weeklong partial cease-fire that led to

the U.S.-Taliban deal.

"To be clear- we are committed to peace, however we have the responsibility to defend our [Afghan] partners," Leggett said on Twitter. "Afghanistan & US have complied w/ our agreements; however, Talibs appear intent on squandering this opp."

The airstrike Wednesday was the first U.S. attack on Taliban forces in 11 days, Leggett said.

The peace deal between the U.S. and the Taliban calls for permanent cease-fire talks with the Afghan government, but does not explicitly require the Taliban to stop fighting the Afghan security forces.

However, U.S. officials have said the Taliban agreed to fight less during talks leading to the deal.

"Taliban leadership promised the int'l community they would reduce violence and not increase attacks," Leggett said.

"We call on the Taliban to stop needless attacks and uphold their commitments."

"As we have demonstrated, we will defend our partners when required," Leggett said.

The attack on the Afghan outpost came after President Donald Trump told reporters Tuesday that he spoke with one of the Taliban's leaders by phone.

"We had a good long conversation today and ... they want to cease the violence," Trump said.

Meanwhile, about 20 Afghan security personnel were killed in northern Kunduz province during overnight attacks, provincial council member Aminullah Aideen said in a phone interview.

"I do not think any peace effort will have positive results if the situation is like this," Aideen said.

# Army to fire two hypersonic test shots this year

BY COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The Army plans to test-fire two land-based hypersonic missiles this year as it works toward fielding the high-speed munitions by 2023, the service's top civilian said Tuesday.

Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy told the House Armed Services Committee that funding for hypersonics and other long-range weapons were the service's top modernization priority for the foreseeable future. Building the weapons is considered critical to deter potential conflict or fight a war against near-peer rivals such as China and Russia, both of which have spent considerable amounts of money in similar technologies in recent years.

"Long-range fires including ... hypersonic missiles are flying further and hitting their targets, increasing our reach and lethality essential in deterrence and in the joint fight," McCarthy said in defense of the Army's \$178 billion proposed

budget for fiscal year 2021.

The Army's request asks for a more than \$2 billion boost in its research and development coffers for major weapons.

It is requesting of Congress \$10.6 billion to fund its modernization priorities, which include next-generation artillery, helicopters, air and missiles defense programs, ground vehicles and communications networks.

It is asking \$1.7 billion of that money for long-range fires development, which includes hypersonic missiles, extended range cannon artillery and the Army's precision strike missile program.

The hypersonics program would see \$800 million of that request. The Army has already poured about \$1.3 billion into that specific weapon, McCarthy said.

The Army, Air Force and Navy are all working on programs for hypersonic missiles, which are capable of traveling at speeds of more than Mach 5 — or about 3,800 mph — and can maneuver while in flight.

## Study: Taller and heavier female soldiers out-perform their leaner counterparts

BY WYATT OLSON  
*Stars and Stripes*

Female Army trainees and female soldiers who are taller and heavier performed tasks such as carrying sandbags better than their more compact counterparts of the same sex, suggesting that the Army should consider amending its physical standards for women, a study found.

Comparing 362 female soldiers and trainees, researchers found that those with a higher body mass index performed better on so-called common soldiering tasks that require strength and power, such as marching with heavy packs or dragging casualties, according to the study published in the February issue of *Military Medicine*.

Body mass index, or BMI, is not a direct measurement of body fatness, but it is commonly regarded as a proxy for determining a person's ratio of body fat. It is calculated by dividing weight by height squared, using the metric system.

A BMI of 25 or more is regarded as overweight, although caveats apply, particularly with serious athletes who carry more muscle weight.

The Defense Department began allowing women into all combat positions in 2015, so "understanding the physical

capabilities required for performance of job tasks with high physical demands" is needed to "support recruitment and retention of all soldiers," said the study, whose authors are affiliated with the U.S. Army Research Institute for Environmental Medicine, Natick, Mass., and the U.S. Army Public Health Center, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

"It is expected that all female trainees, like their male counterparts, will learn how to successfully perform [common soldiering tasks] during initial entry training and will be expected to become proficient in the performance of these tasks over the course of their military careers," the study said.

The study examined the performance of 133 female trainees recruited from Fort Sill, Okla., and Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and 229 active-duty female soldiers from bases in Colorado, Georgia and Kansas.

The study found that both trainees and soldiers with BMIs near or within the overweight range of 25-29 showed better performance in tasks requiring greater strength and power capabilities.

The study concludes that the Army should consider "adjustments to BMI standards and/or waivers" to maximize performance by trainees and soldiers of power-demanding tasks.

## PETA urges Marines to end 'crude killing of animals'

BY JOSEPH DITZLER  
*Stars and Stripes*

Cutting the heads off cobras and pouring their blood into the mouths of Marines doesn't sit well with at least two constituencies, cobras and the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

PETA wrote the Marine Corps commandant, Gen. David Berger, on Wednesday objecting to "the crude killing of animals during the annual Cobra Gold 2020 military exercise."

The letter from Shalin Gala, PETA vice president for international laboratory methods, cites accounts in the *Daily Mail*, a British newspaper, that during Cobra Gold, "Marines kill chickens with their bare hands, skin and eat live geckos, consume live scorpions and tarantulas and decapitate cobras and drink their blood."

A Marine spokesman working with the exercise did not immediately respond to a request for comment Wednesday by *Stars and Stripes*.

Cobra Gold is an annual, multinational,

military exercise co-hosted by the U.S. and Thailand and staged in Thailand. The 10-day exercise concludes Friday.

Service members posted to the Indo-Pacific region may know Cobra Gold best from the survival training put on by Thai military instructors. Those sessions are among the most photographed events during the exercise.

Drinking cobra blood is a "last resort" that provides nutrition to help a body stay alive, according to a Defense Department news release.

## Army preps for virus during huge Europe drill

By JOHN VANDIVER  
*Stars and Stripes*

STUTT GART, Germany — The Army is “war-gaming” emergency plans that would be rolled out if the coronavirus afflicts troops taking part in Defender Europe 20, one of the largest military drills since the end of the Cold War, a top commander said Wednesday.

With the virus spreading rapidly, including in Europe, some 20,000 U.S.-based troops are rotating to the Continent for Defender Europe, which runs through July.

“We are working and war-gaming public health and medical support plans to identify any shortfall we might have, and we are addressing those shortfalls and requirements with each individual host nation,” U.S. Army Europe deputy commander Maj. Gen. Andrew Rohling told reporters via phone.

“Robust medical support” has been incorporated into Defender to provide care for troops as needed, he said. The Army is aligning its plans with Defender’s host nations to ensure a unified response if the virus affects the exercise, Rohling said.

To date, no U.S. soldiers or members of the Army community in Europe have been affected by the virus, and troop and equipment convoys are proceeding as planned for Defender Europe, Rohling said.

The U.S. expects to spend about \$340 million on Defender Europe, which is intended to serve as a test of military combat readiness and measure just how effective the Army is at rapidly moving troops and equipment across the Atlantic.

The exercise is also intended as a stress test for increased logistics operations in Europe.

While equipment and personnel began arriving in Europe in February for Defender, the exercise’s main action will occur from April to June.

# Anti-virus criteria take drastic turns in Saudi Arabia, Iran, Italy

*Associated Press*

BANGKOK — Saudi Arabia banned citizens from performing the Muslim pilgrimage in Mecca, Italy weighed closing schools nationwide and Iran canceled Friday prayers for a second week as nations scrambled Wednesday to control the coronavirus outbreak.

From religion to sports, countries were taking drastic and increasingly visible measures to curb the new coronavirus that first emerged in China and was spreading quickly through Europe, the Mideast and the Americas.

In the United States, frustration mounted over U.S. officials’ delays and missteps in testing people for the virus.

Deaths spiked in Iran and Italy, which along with South Korea account for 80% of the new virus cases outside China, according to the World Health Organization. In all, more than 94,000 people have contracted the virus worldwide, with more than 3,200 deaths.

“People are afraid and uncertain. Fear is a natural human response to any threat,” said WHO’s leader, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. “But as we get more data, we are understanding this virus and the disease it causes more and more.”

WHO said about 3.4% of people infected with the COVID-19 virus globally have died, making it more fatal than the common flu. The figure was a bit of a surprise, since a study last week in the *New England Journal of Medicine* assessing data from more than 30 Chinese provinces estimated the death rate was 1.4%.

Death rates in outbreaks are likely to skew higher early on as health officials focus on finding severe and fatal cases, missing most milder cases. WHO says the majority of people with the new coronavirus experience only mild symptoms, but the risks rise with the age of the patient and for those with any underlying health conditions.

Iran reported 92 deaths among its 2,922 confirmed cases, the most of any country outside of China. Among the ill are members of the government, and the country canceled Friday prayers for the second week in a row.

In Israel, religious practice also faced new disruption: The country’s chief rabbi urged observant Jews to refrain from kissing mezuzot, small items encasing a prayer scroll posted by Jews on doorposts. Observant Jews typically touch the item and then kiss their hands when walking through

a doorway. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also urged people to adopt the Indian greeting of “namaste,” with hands together, rather than a handshake.

The U.N. health chief has warned sharply against hoarding medical supplies, saying they are needed to protect health care workers on the front line. Accordingly, the Czech Republic, Russia and Germany announced bans on exporting protective gear like masks. That followed a similar move by France, where major hospitals have seen their masks stolen by the boxful.

Italy’s outbreak has been concentrated in the northern region of Lombardy, but fears over how the virus is spreading inside.

In the U.S., more than 120 cases have been reported. Nine people have died, all in and around Seattle.

On Capitol Hill, negotiators have reached agreement on an \$8.3 billion measure to battle the outbreak. The House was to vote on the deal later Wednesday and Senate leaders are pressing for a vote by the end of the week. In addition, the U.S. Army announced all recruits entering basic training will be screened for coronavirus.

## Bloomberg drops out, endorses Biden

*Associated Press*

NEW YORK — Billionaire Mike Bloomberg ended his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination Wednesday and endorsed former Vice President Joe Biden.

It was a stunning collapse for the former New York City mayor, who had his 2020 hopes on the Super Tuesday states and pumped more than \$500 million of his own fortune into the campaign.

Bloomberg announced his departure from the race after

a disappointing finish on Super Tuesday in the slate of states that account for almost one-third of the total delegates available in the Democratic nominating contest. He won only the territory of American Samoa and picked up several dozen delegates elsewhere. Biden, meanwhile, won big in Southern states where Bloomberg had poured tens of millions of dollars and even cautiously hoped for a victory.

“Three months ago, I entered the race for President to defeat

Donald Trump,” Bloomberg said in a statement. “Today, I am leaving the race for the same reason: to defeat Donald Trump — because it is clear to me that staying in would make achieving that goal more difficult.”

Two of Bloomberg’s former Democratic rivals, Amy Klobuchar and Pete Buttigieg, dropped out of the race and endorsed Biden as the moderate alternative to Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders just the day before Super Tuesday.

# Court hears arguments in La. abortion case

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court is taking up the first major abortion case of the Trump era, an election year look at a Louisiana dispute that could reveal how willing the more conservative court is to roll back abortion rights.

The outcome could have huge consequences at a time when several states have passed laws, being challenged in the courts, that would ban abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detected, as early as six weeks.

The justices on Wednesday are examining a Louisiana law requiring doctors who perform abortions to have admitting privileges at a nearby hospital. A federal judge

found that just one of Louisiana's three abortion clinics would remain open if the law is allowed to take effect.

Abortion-rights protesters filled the sidewalk in front of the court Wednesday morning. A smaller group of anti-abortion demonstrators stood across the street, some blowing shofars, rams' horns used in Jewish services, to try to drown out the other side's speakers.

The Louisiana law is similar to one in Texas that the Supreme Court struck down in 2016. Since then, though, Donald Trump was elected president and he appointed two justices, Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh, who have shifted the court to the right. Even with those two additions to the

court, Chief Justice John Roberts almost certainly holds the deciding vote.

When the justices temporarily blocked the Louisiana law from taking effect a year ago, Roberts joined the court's four liberal justices to put it on hold. Kavanaugh and Gorsuch were among the four conservatives who would have allowed the law to take effect.

Those preliminary votes do not bind the justices when they undertake a thorough review of an issue, but they often signal how a case will come out.

Roberts has generally voted to uphold abortion restrictions in more than 14 years as chief justice, including in the Texas case four years ago.

# Cellphone tornado alerts helped Tenn. couple respond

Associated Press

BAXTER, Tenn. — Billy Dyer's cellphone blared out an emergency alert, then his wife Kathy's phone followed, giving them just enough time to get downstairs and flip on a TV to check the news.

Then the tornado hit.

When the sun rose Tuesday morning, the Dyers emerged to find the walls around their corner bedroom gone. Their mattress was perched precariously on their bed's headboard, with only sky all around.

"Thank God we had enough time to get downstairs to the basement or we would probably not be here," Dyer said.

State emergency officials said 24 people were killed as fast-moving storms blew through Tennessee early Tuesday. Eight-

teen of them, including five pre-teen children, died in Putnam County, some 80 miles east of Nashville. Eighty-eight more were injured in the county.

Twenty-one people remain unaccounted for, Putnam Sheriff Eddie Farris said, and about 40% of the rubble still needs to be searched, including a 25-acre field with marshy vegetation reaching 7 feet high.

People across Nashville were awakened by outdoor sirens alerting them to the tornado danger early Tuesday, and sirens also sounded in parts of Putnam County, but in the Dyers' Double Springs community, deep in the Tennessee countryside, no such systems exist.

"If the cellphones didn't have the emergency call, it wouldn't have been good," Dyer said.

The twisters that struck across Tennessee after midnight Tuesday ripped off brick facades, bent metal poles and shredded more than 140 buildings while burying people in piles of rubble and wrecked basements.

Dyer's own daughter, Brooke, 34, managed to take shelter in the basement of the house he grew up in next door, and then "called me screaming and crying." Moments after the tornado passed, he ventured out into the darkness and freed her from the wreckage.

"Thank God my mother had a basement, a very small basement," Dyer, 64, said. "She was standing there between the crack of the door screaming and crying, top of the house gone."

# Clashes on Greece-Turkey border as migrants seek entry

Associated Press

KASTANIES, Greece — Greek authorities were firing tear gas and stun grenades Wednesday morning to repulse a push by migrants to cross its land border from Turkey, as pressure continued along its frontier after Turkey said its own border with Europe was open to whoever wanted to cross.

The clashes were near the border village of Kastanies, along a border fence that covers much of the land border not demarcated by the Evros River running along the frontier.

Turkey made good on a threat to open its borders and send migrants into Europe

last week. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's action triggered days of violent clashes and scenes of chaos at the land border, where thousands of migrants and refugees have gathered.

Hundreds more have headed to Greek islands from the nearby Turkish coast in dinghies. One child died when the rubber dinghy he was in capsized off the coast of the Greek island of Lesbos earlier this week.

The government has called the situation a direct threat to Greece's national security and has imposed emergency measures to carry out swift deportations and freeze asylum applications for one month.

Migrants have been reporting being summarily pushed back across the border into Turkey.

Turkey's announcement that it wouldn't stop those wishing to cross into Europe came amid a Russia-backed Syrian government offensive into Syria's northwestern Idlib province, where Turkish troops are fighting.

The offensive has killed dozens of Turkish troops and sent nearly a million Syrian civilians toward Turkey's sealed border. Oleg Zhuravlev, head of the Russian military's coordination center in Syria, however, said Tuesday the claims about a humanitarian crisis in Idlib were false.

# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Neighborhood Spider-Man exposes himself

**VA** MANASSAS — Police in northern Virginia said a man dressed as Spider-Man exposed himself to a woman at a traffic light.

Prince William County Police said a 44-year-old woman reported the incident at a corner in Manassas.

The woman told police she was stopped at an intersection when the man dressed as Spider-Man exposed himself while making an obscene gesture. Police said the man then observed the woman in the car next to him and rolled down his window, further exposing himself.

## Report: Zookeeper loses finger to hyena

**NM** ALBUQUERQUE — An internal investigation determined a hyena bit off the finger of an Albuquerque zookeeper after the worker violated zoo protocol.

Surveillance video obtained by Albuquerque television station KOB-TV shows the worker entering the hyena enclosure and poking her fingers through the chain link fence. It shows one of the animals biting down on the zookeeper's hand and refusing to let go.

Security records state the zookeeper's middle finger was eaten.

Officials said there's no threat to other staffers or the public.

## Woman accused of stealing from ill brother

**MA** WORCESTER — A Massachusetts woman was accused of breaking into her ill brother's safe that contained up to \$100,000

the day before he died.

Joseph R.J. Riggieri Jr. gave his sister Dolores Riggieri, 70, a key to his home in May so she could watch his dog while he was hospitalized, according to a police report. Worcester police said an investigation showed Dolores Riggieri paid \$250 for the safe to be professionally drilled on June 17, the day before her brother died.

Another sibling told police Joseph R.J. Riggieri Jr. had told him he had about \$100,000 and a firearm in the safe and that he wanted the money divided equally among his siblings. Officer Michael Tarckini Jr. said the money and firearm have not been found.

## Eatery sued over hair caught in machine

**OR** PORTLAND — A woman is suing a family entertainment center saying her hair got caught in a machine at the Southeast Portland center for 20 minutes.

Ashreana Scott is suing CEC Entertainment, also known as Chuck E. Cheese family fun center, for \$1,000, alleging that the business was negligent, The Oregonian/OregonLive reported.

In addition to the money, Scott has asked for a jury trial, and that Chuck E. Cheese put an adequate warning sign next to the machine.

According to the lawsuit, Scott was at the center when her hair got caught in a machine where players feed paper tickets which can be redeemed for prizes. The lawsuit said she was stuck for 20 minutes until an employee freed her.

## Man admits purposely hitting romantic rival

**PA** HEMPFIELD — A Pennsylvania man admitted using his SUV as a

weapon against a romantic rival last year.

Seth Vanderella, 27, of Greensburg, pleaded guilty to simple assault, reckless endangerment and three traffic offenses stemming from the July 4 incident in Hempfield. In return, Westmoreland County prosecutors dismissed an aggravated assault charge.

Authorities said Vanderella saw a man who was dating his former girlfriend and purposely drove into him before speeding away, causing undisclosed injuries.

Vanderella received a sentence of six to 23 months but was freed on parole after he got credit for the jail time he had served.

## Judge changes sentence of man in illegal fish case

**MI** CHARLEVOIX — A fish wholesaler in northern Michigan was given a significant break after federal officials said they couldn't arrange his unusual jail sentence.

John Cross III, of Charlevoix, will serve four months of home detention without an electronic tether, according to a Feb. 18 order by U.S. District Judge Paul Maloney. He can leave home to go to work.

The government said Cross and his business, Cross Fisheries, bought about 50,000 pounds of lake trout from a fisherman who was using so-called trap nets. Those fish should have been thrown back into the water.

Cross was sentenced last spring to a year in jail, a term to be served three to four months at a time outside the fishing season.

The U.S. Bureau of Prisons, however, questioned the legality of an intermittent sentence.

## Sheriff: Dashcam video lost in malfunction

**TN** CHATTANOOGA — A Tennessee sheriff's office lost thousands of videos from dashboard cameras due to a technical malfunction.

A letter delivered to the Hamilton County District Attorney's Office said dash camera footage for all 130 patrol deputies recorded between Oct. 25, 2018, and Jan. 23 of this year was lost after a software failure on Jan. 13, news outlets reported.

Sheriff Jim Hammond said video footage for "any of the hot-button cases that have been going on for the last four months" had already been downloaded, but footage in other cases can't be recovered.

Hamilton County District Attorney Neal Pinkston said his office will review all cases during the time frame in question.

## City won't celebrate Jefferson's birthday

**VA** CHARLOTTESVILLE — The city of Charlottesville will not honor the birthday of Thomas Jefferson this spring for the first time since World War II.

The Washington Post reported that the city would instead celebrate the demise of slavery March 3.

The holiday is known as Liberation and Freedom Day. It commemorates when Union troops arrived in the city in March 1865 and freed enslaved people.

The change is the latest example of this southern city reckoning with its history. It began when the city tried to remove its Confederate monuments. That inspired white supremacists to stage the deadly 2017 Unite the Right rally.

From wire reports

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# Coronavirus could affect NCAA tourney

Associated Press

Imagine an NCAA Tournament with no fans in the arenas.

What normally would be thought an impossibility isn't so far-fetched as the United States and the rest of the world attempt to contain the spread of the new coronavirus.

An advocacy group for college athletes has urged the NCAA to consider holding its winter sports championships with no fans, and the idea has not been dismissed out of hand.

"If you can think of it, it's something that we've gone through an analysis around," NCAA Chief Operating Officer Donald Remy told Bloomberg News on Tuesday. "We've contingency planned for all circumstances."

The NCAA declined further comment to The Associated Press on the possibility of no fans in the stands. Presumably, the games still would be televised.

As of Wednesday afternoon, the virus has sickened more than 93,400 people and killed at least 3,190 worldwide, the vast majority of them in China. Nine people have died in the U.S., all in Washington state. Most cases have been mild.

Also Tuesday, the Stanford athletic department announced the school's emergency coronavirus task force has recommended postponing or adjusting events on campus between March 4 and April 15. Stanford said it plans to "limit the number of attendees at our competitions in order to allow for sufficient social distancing."

Stanford's women's basketball team is ranked No. 7 in the AP poll and was listed by the NCAA on Monday as one of the 16 teams that would potentially host the first two rounds of the NCAA Tournament. The NCAA offers an early look at the possible top seeds in the tournament, known as a reveal.

Later Tuesday, Chicago State

University said its men's basketball team will not travel for two regularly scheduled conference games this week and its women's team will not host two games, citing the spread of the coronavirus, and with the "health and well-being of the campus community in mind."

The cancellations are believed to be the first by a major sport in the United States.

The university said the men's team would not travel to Seattle in Washington or Utah Valley for Western Athletic Conference games on Thursday and Saturday. The school also said the women's team would not host Seattle or Utah Valley at the campus' Jones Convocation Center on the same days.

"Chicago State athletics views our decision as a reaffirmation of our commitment to the well-being, health and safety of our student athletes," Chicago State athletic director Elliott Charles said in the statement.

Also Tuesday, the NCAA

announced it has established an advisory panel of medical, public health and epidemiology experts and NCAA schools to address the virus, also known as COVID-19. NCAA Chief Medical Officer Dr. Brian Hainline will lead the group.

"The NCAA is committed to conducting its championships and events in a safe and responsible manner," Remy said in a statement. "Today we are planning to conduct our championships as planned; however, we are evaluating the COVID-19 situation daily and will make decisions accordingly."

Hainline said the advisory group will make recommendations on competition based on evolving medical protocols established by the Centers for Disease Control, the National Institutes of Health and state and local authorities.

"We are in daily contact with the CDC and are advising leadership on the Association's response to this outbreak," he said.

## IOC unwavering on starting Tokyo Games in July

Associated Press

LAUSANNE, Switzerland — Despite worldwide concern and speculation about whether the fast-spreading virus outbreak will affect the Tokyo Olympics, the IOC's leadership is not joining in the debate.

"Neither the word cancellation nor the word postponement was even mentioned," International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach told a news conference Wednesday about the second day of executive board meeting in Switzerland.

Bach sought to project calm assurance after holding a conference call with local organizers. In Tokyo, officials then briefed local media, some of whom wore protective masks.

Asked how he could be so confident the July 24-Aug. 9 Olympics will go ahead as scheduled,

Bach replied: "Because we talk to the experts."

"We are a sports organization and we follow the advice of the World Health Organization," Bach said, referring to the United Nations agency based around 40 miles away in Geneva.

The new coronavirus that emerged in China late last year had infected more than 94,000 people globally by Wednesday and caused at least 3,190 deaths. Serious outbreaks have been experienced in Iran and Italy.

There have been 12 deaths in Japan, which has closed schools, called off mass gatherings, and canceled several Olympic test events. Preseason baseball in being played in empty stadiums, the soccer J-League is suspended until at least March 18, and a major spring sumo tournament won't allow fans.

Federal authorities in the IOC's home country Switzerland, which shares a border with Italy, have banned public gatherings of 1,000 people until mid-March to help contain the virus spreading.

Around 100 people were in a conference room at IOC headquarters to hear Bach use broadly similar answers to bat away virus questions from different angles.

"I will not add fuel to the flame of speculation," Bach said when asked about deadline for deciding whether to postpone the Tokyo Games.

Asked if the WHO declaring a pandemic would change the IOC's position, Bach said: "I will not take part in any way of such kind of mere speculations."

Bach said he took confidence from having met the WHO's director general and other leading officials last Friday.

A task force of officials from the WHO, IOC and Japanese sports and public officials has also been working together for around three weeks.

The virus has affected qualifying competitions for many of the 33 sports on Tokyo's medal program, with some postponed, venues changed, and travel issues for athletes from China and elsewhere.

"This is challenging, yes," Bach acknowledged, "but I must also say I'm pretty proud of the Olympic movement, for the great solidarity and flexibility everybody has shown so far."

The IOC also disregarded a statement by Japanese Olympic Minister Seiko Hashimoto when she suggested in Parliament on Tuesday that the Tokyo Games could be postponed by a few months from the planned July 24 opening.

## College basketball roundup

# Tennessee knocks off No. 6 Kentucky

Associated Press

LEXINGTON, Ky. — On the brink of being blown out, Tennessee stuck with the plan against No. 6 Kentucky by creating opportunities and then making them count.

The Volunteers emerged with a huge victory that snapped the Wildcats' hot streak along with 10 perfect years of holding a double-digit halftime lead.

John Fulkerson scored a career-high 27 points, and Yves Pons made several key jumpers down the stretch as Tennessee rallied from a 17-point deficit to upset Kentucky 81-73 on Tuesday night.

The Wildcats (24-6, 14-3 Southeastern Conference) had been 129-0 the past 10 years when leading by double digits at halftime, according to ESPN Stats & Info. Considering how the Volunteers (17-13, 9-8) methodically converted that deficit into a lead over the final 20 minutes, they didn't care.

"We just kept fighting," said

Fulkerson, who mingled with happy Tennessee fans long after the final horn. "I kept trying to look at the score at the top of the (scoreboard) and couldn't find it, which I guess was a good thing."

The Wildcats appeared in control leading 51-34 early in the second half before the Volunteers outscored them 29-9 over 10:09 to lead 63-60. Kentucky tied it at 63, but Pons answered with a three-pointer and Fulkerson added two free throws to stay ahead.

**Rutgers 78, No. 9 Maryland 67:** Jacob Young came off the bench and scored 17 points and the host Scarlet Knights bolstered their NCAA Tournament hopes.

**No. 16 Michigan State 79, No. 20 Penn State 71:** Xavier Tillman Sr. scored 23 points and had 15 rebounds to lead the Spartans to a road win.

**Purdue 77, No. 18 Iowa 68:** Eric Hunter Jr. scored a career-high 19 points, and Evan

Boudreaux had 14 points and 14 rebounds to help the Boiler-makers to a road win.

**Texas 52, Oklahoma 51:** Matt Coleman III banked in a three-pointer just before the buzzer to lift the Longhorns to a road win.

**West Virginia 77, Iowa State 71:** Freshman guard Miles McBride, came off the bench to score a team-high 17 points to lead the Mountaineers to a road win.

**Alabama 90, South Carolina 86:** Kira Lewis Jr. scored 25 points and Javian Davis had a season-high 20 to help the host Crimson Tide overcome a slow start and the absence of injured guard John Petty.

**DePaul 69, Marquette 68:** Charlie Moore scored DePaul's final four points at the free-throw line to lift the host Blue Demons.

**Vermont 85, Albany 62:** The host Catamounts wrapped up a championship regular season, but that was overshadowed

by what Josh Speidel did in the opening seconds of the game.

Speidel started the game and after Albany was allowed to score uncontested, Speidel did the same on the other end. He then exited the game with hugs from both teams.

Speidel was a prized Cata-mounts recruit out of Indiana's Columbus North High School when he was injured in a car accident in February 2015 that left him in a coma for weeks and nearly cost him his life. He had to learn to walk and talk again but has persevered and will graduate in May.

**Richmond 80, Davidson 63:** Nick Sherod made four three-pointers and scored 14 points during a 23-6 second-half run and the host Spiders clinched a double-bye in the Atlantic 10 Tournament.

**Stephen F. Austin 77, Abilene Christian 72:** Kevon Harris had 23 points as the visiting Lumberjacks won their 14th straight game.

## NHL roundup

# Crosby picks up 800th assist as Pens rout Senators

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Sidney Crosby scored and collected his 800th career assist as the Pittsburgh Penguins ended a six-game losing streak with a 7-3 win over Ottawa on Tuesday night.

Crosby became the 32nd player in NHL history to reach the 800-assist plateau when he earned the secondary assist on Jason Zucker's goal 36 seconds into the third period that put the Penguins up 5-1. The 32-year-old Crosby needed just 980 games to get to 800, the sixth-fastest ever.

Bryan Rust collected his third career hat trick for the Penguins, who tied a season high in goals.

**Bruins 2, Lightning 1:** Brad Marchand and NHL-leading Boston took a big stride toward winning the Atlantic Division with a win over host Tampa Bay.

Marchand and Jake DeBrusk scored for the Bruins, who opened a nine-point cushion over second-place Tampa Bay in the division standings with 15 games remaining in the regular season.

**Blackhawks 6, Ducks 2:** Dylan Strome, Alex Nylander and Patrick Kane scored on consecutive shots late in the second period, leading host Chicago past Anaheim.

Strome scored twice and added an assist in the rout. The Blackhawks won their third

straight game while chasing a wild-card playoff spot in the Western Conference. Drake Caggiula and David Kampf also scored for Chicago.

**Blues 3, Rangers 1:** Brayden Schenn scored the tiebreaking goal midway through the third period and Jordan Binnington made 25 saves as St. Louis won at New York for its eighth straight victory.

**Canadiens 6, Islanders 2:** Brendan Gallagher had a goal and an assist in a three-goal first period, and Montreal went on to win at New York.

**Jets 3, Sabres 1:** Forward Kyle Connor had two goals and an assist to lead host Winnipeg over Buffalo.

**Wild 3, Predators 1:** Kevin Fiala scored for the fifth

straight game, this time against his former team, and host Minnesota passed Nashville in the Western Conference playoff race.

**Oilers 2, Stars 1 (OT):** Alex Chiasson scored a power-play goal 1:08 into overtime, Mikko Koskinen stopped 42 shots and Edmonton won at Dallas.

**Golden Knights 3, Devils 0:** William Karlsson scored his 100th career goal, Robin Lehner stopped 27 shots in his 300th career game and host Vegas beat New Jersey.

**Sharks 5, Maple Leafs 2:** Evander Kane scored two goals to give host San Jose its first three-game winning streak since November with a victory over Toronto.

# LeBron, Davis lead Lakers past 76ers

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Shortly before halftime, 6-foot-10 Anthony Davis coolly dropped a crossover dribble and a Eurostep layup on the 76ers.

And then shortly after halftime, 35-year-old LeBron James walked the ball upcourt and casually drilled a three-pointer from the “R” inside the Lakers’ half-court logo.

The superstar duo had another full night of doing things that blow people’s minds.

Against an undermanned but lively Sixers lineup, Los Angeles needed most of that magic to win again.

Davis scored 18 of his 37 points during a phenomenal second-quarter surge, and the Lakers held off injury-depleted Philadelphia 120-107 on Tuesday night.

James had 22 points, 14 assists and seven rebounds for Los Angeles, which moved to 47-13 with its ninth win in 10 games. His 40-footer was a stylish flourish on an entertaining all-around game from the Lakers’ two All-Stars, and it came at the end of a 44-10 run in roughly 10 minutes spanning

halftime.

“That was a great stretch for our team, for our season,” Los Angeles coach Frank Vogel said. “To see us be able to take over a game like that was a positive sign.”

James and Davis had to carry their team past the Sixers, who played without injured starters Joel Embiid, Ben Simmons and Josh Richardson. To James, the Lakers can learn from their slow start and big surge as they prepare to make a run at a championship in several weeks.

“We’ve lost to teams that were missing starters this year, but everyone here is an NBA player,” James said. “We all got here for a reason, so you don’t ever disrespect that. You don’t ever disrespect the game. They’re a very good team no matter what.”

Davis hit four three-pointers while grabbing 13 rebounds and going 13-for-19 from the field, with no basket prettier than his crossover to ditch Al Horford. He made all seven of his shots in the second quarter while Los Angeles played some of its prettiest basketball of the year.

“I started off really slow and missed some shots that were wide-open,” Davis said. “I was just trying to figure out how I could get myself going. Once one of us got it going, it got contagious until all of us got going.”

Glenn Robinson III matched his career high with 25 points and Tobias Harris had 18 for Philadelphia, which has lost nine consecutive road games since Jan. 20.

The Sixers lost twice at Staples Center to start their four-game California road trip despite this persistent effort against the powerhouse Lakers.

Philly’s role players and backups got off to an impressive start, taking an early 13-point lead. That’s when Davis took control with a dazzling quarter that included three three-pointers. Los Angeles made 17 of its 19 shots at one point.

“Obviously we played two really good teams here,” Harris said. “I felt like we had a good start, and then that second quarter hurt us. I think where the game really slipped was they picked up their defensive intensity, and from there it rushed us.”

## NBA roundup

# LeVert’s career game lifts Nets in overtime

Associated Press

BOSTON — Caris LeVert scored 37 of his career-high 51 points in the fourth quarter and overtime to help the Brooklyn Nets erase a 21-point, second-half deficit and beat the Boston Celtics 129-120 on Tuesday night.

It was a stunning end to a four-game losing streak for Brooklyn, which is trying to hold onto the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. Boston has lost two straight.

LeVert had all of Brooklyn’s 11 points in the extra period, finishing just three points shy of the Nets’ season high for a player. He sent the game to the extra frame, getting fouled on a three-point attempt by Marcus Smart and connecting on all of his free throws with 0.2 seconds left.

Jaylen Brown led the Celtics with 22 points. Kemba Walker returned to action following a five-game absence with left knee soreness and had 21

points. Smart added 14 points and 10 rebounds before fouling out in overtime.

**Spurs 104, Hornets 103:** Dejounte Murray scored 21 points and visiting San Antonio gave Tim Duncan his first victory as an acting head coach.

Spurs longtime coach Gregg Popovich missed the game while dealing with “personal business,” according to the team. Popovich is expected to return to the bench for Friday night’s game against the Brooklyn Nets.

The team would not say if Popovich made the trip to Charlotte.

Terry Rozier had 20 points and P.J. Washington added 19 with five three-pointers for the Hornets.

**Timberwolves 139, Pelicans 134:** Malik Beasley scored 28 points, D’Angelo Russell scored 14 of his 23 points in the second half, and Minnesota won at New Orleans.

Zion Williamson scored 25

points and Jrue Holiday had 27 points, 12 assists and 10 rebounds for the Pelicans, who dropped their second straight at home and fell four games behind Memphis for the Western Conference’s final playoff spot.

**Clippers 109, Thunder 94:** Kawhi Leonard scored 25 points to help Los Angeles win at Oklahoma City.

Montrezl Harrell and former Thunder player Paul George each added 16 points for the Clippers, who won their fifth straight. George received a warm reception from the home fans. The Thunder traded him last summer.

Dennis Schroder scored 24 points and former Clippers Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and Danilo Gallinari scored 15 for Oklahoma City, which lost its second straight. The 15-point margin matched the Thunder’s worst home loss of the season.

**Warriors 116, Nuggets 100:** Eric Paschall scored nine of his 22 points in the fourth quarter,

Andrew Wiggins turned in a double-double and visiting Golden State rallied to stun Denver.

The Warriors were down 77-65 with 5:08 left in the third quarter. They went on a 43-15 run to take control.

**Raptors 123, Suns 114:** Pascal Siakam scored 33 points, Kyle Lowry added 28 and visiting Toronto rallied in the second half to snap a three-game losing streak.

Norman Powell added 26 points while Chris Boucher gave the Raptors crucial production off the bench, finishing with 19 points and 15 rebounds.

**Kings 133, Wizards 126:** De’Aaron Fox scored 31 points and host Sacramento held on after blowing a 28-point lead to beat Washington.

Bogdan Bogdanovic finished with 21 points and Buddy Hield scored 17. The Kings had seven players in double figures. They won despite being held to 19 points in the third quarter.