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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Official: China should use lasers to deter US

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

The Chinese military should consider using non-lethal lasers on U.S. Navy warships to discourage their transits through the South China Sea, a state-run newspaper in China said Tuesday.

Chinese military expert Song Zhongping told Global Times that the use of electromagnetic weapons, such as low-energy laser devices, could “send a strong warning” by temporarily paralyzing weapon and control systems on U.S. ships — all done “without visible conflict.”

Song’s recommendation came just days after U.S. Navy and Marine units arrived

Sunday in the South China Sea for expeditionary strike force drills.

Participating in the four-day exercise were the Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group, America Expeditionary Strike Group and 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit.

China asserts sovereignty over most of the South China Sea, a claim disputed by other countries bordering it.

China has militarized some disputed islands, and the U.S. Navy routinely sails ships near them during so-called freedom-of-navigation operations to underscore U.S. commitment to “free and open” international waters.

Earlier this month, U.S. Pacific Fleet

said a Chinese navy destroyer directed a laser light at a P-8A Poseidon surveillance plane flying over international waters west of Guam on Feb. 17.

The laser, picked up by the plane’s sensors, could have potentially harmed crew members, the Navy said, describing the act as “unsafe and unprofessional.”

After the USS McCampbell passed near a disputed South China Sea island on March 10, a spokesman for China’s People’s Liberation Army Southern Theater Command told Global Times that the nation “will take any necessary measure to safeguard national sovereignty.”

Hospitals scramble as worldwide death tolls rise

Associated Press

SOAVE, Italy — Italy, Iran and the United States reported soaring new death tolls as the coronavirus pandemic marched relentlessly across the globe Sunday, prompting a scramble in hard-hit regions to set up more hospital beds and replenish the dwindling medical supplies needed to keep health workers safe.

Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte went on live TV to announce that he was tightening the country’s lockdown and shutting down all production facilities except those providing essential goods and services.

As bodies piled up in Italian hospitals, morgues and churches, and as medical workers pleaded for more help, there was no sign that Italy was yet taming its arc of contagion. Italy now has 53,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 4,825 deaths — more than all of China, where the virus first emerged late last year.

The U.S. government’s top infectious disease expert said he remains hopeful the U.S. is not

on the same trajectory as Italy in the coronavirus struggle.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, told CBS’ “Face the Nation” the stringent measures being put in place in the U.S., including travel restrictions, the closing of schools and many businesses and other social distancing, will go “a long way.”

Several U.S. states have ordered residents to stay indoors. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said the government was “literally scouring the globe looking for medical supplies.” Health care workers from Oklahoma City to Minneapolis sought donations of protective equipment. Staff at a Detroit hospital began creating homemade face masks for workers.

Nationwide, there were at least 26,747 cases and 374 deaths as the U.S. overtook Germany as the country with the fourth-highest number of cases.

During his weekly Sunday blessing, Pope Francis urged all Christians to join in reciting

the Lord’s Prayer on Wednesday at noon. “To the virus pandemic, we want to respond with the universality of prayer, of compassion, of tenderness,” the pope said.

In Britain, staff at some hospitals have complained about shortages of ventilators and protective equipment like face masks, safety glasses, gloves and protective suits.

Almost 4,000 medical workers signed a letter to the Sunday Times warning that doctors and nurses in the National Health Service would die if they did not receive better equipment and said they felt like “cannon fodder.”

“NHS staff are putting their lives on the line every day they turn up to work. The reality is that many of us will get sick. Doctors are all too aware of the possibility that they will lose colleagues, as has happened in outbreaks around the world,” the letter said.

In Spain, Europe’s hardest-hit country after Italy, intensive care units in some areas were close to their limits even before

Sunday’s new tally of 28,572 infections and 1,720 deaths.

And in Germany, Chancellor Angela Merkel is now in quarantine after the doctor who gave her a vaccine tested positive for coronavirus.

Worldwide, more than 316,000 people have been infected and nearly 13,600 have died, according to Johns Hopkins University. About 150 countries now have confirmed cases, and deaths have been reported in more than 30 American states.

The Chinese city of Wuhan — where the global pandemic was first detected and the first city to be locked down — went a fourth consecutive day on Sunday without reporting any new or suspected cases. Wuhan must go 14 straight days without a new case in order for draconian travel restrictions to be lifted, but a special train brought in more than 1,000 car factory employees for the first time since the outbreak.

Day after missile launch, Trump offers virus aid to North Korea

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea—North Korea on Sunday welcomed a letter sent by President Donald Trump offering help in fighting the coronavirus but warned that good relations between the leaders was not enough to restart nuclear talks.

Underscoring the continued threat, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un oversaw a missile test Saturday as the communist state pressed forward with weapons development amid the diplomatic deadlock.

Kim's sister praised Trump for sending a letter "at a time as now when big difficulties and challenges lie in the way of developing the bilateral relations."

Trump explained his plan to improve relations between the two countries, Kim Yo Jong said, without elaborating, in a statement on the state-run Korean Central News Agency.

Trump also "expressed his intent to render cooperation in the anti-epidemic work, saying that he was impressed by the efforts by the chairman to defend his people from the serious threat of epidemic," she

was quoted as saying.

Kim Jo Yong stressed the relationship between the two leaders, who have exchanged several letters, remained "very excellent" but warned that was not a guarantee for peace.

"Nobody knows how much the personal relations would change," she was quoted as saying. "And it is not something good to make hasty conclusion or be optimistic about."

She alluded that the country faces hardship from stringent U.S.-led economic sanctions aimed at driving it back to the nuclear negotiating table.

"If impartiality and balance are not provided and unilateral and greedy intention is not taken away, the bilateral relations will continue to aggravate," she said. "Even at this moment we are working hard to develop and defend ourselves on our own under the cruel environment which the U.S. is keen to provide."

Trump and Kim have held three summits, but diplomacy stalled after they failed to reach an agreement during a meeting in February 2019 in Vietnam.

The talks stalled due to deep differences over the extent of sanctions relief in exchange

for steps toward nuclear disarmament.

The North launched two short-range ballistic missiles that flew more than 250 miles across the country at an apogee of 31 miles toward the sea off the eastern coast on Saturday, South Korea's military said.

The missiles were launched from Sonchon, northwest of Pyongyang, according to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Seoul. It called the action "very inappropriate behavior" considering the world is struggling to contain COVID-19.

The tactical guided weapon "precisely hit a target islet" after Kim gave the order to fire, the North's Korean Central News Agency reported Sunday, adding the test was "aimed at reconfirming and showing "the tactical characters and power of a new weapon system" to be delivered to army units.

Kim called it "a brilliant success" and called on his forces to "further build up the striking capability which can wipe out any enemy out of our territory if it dare designs to launch a military action against our state," KCNA said.

Soldier based in Hawaii tests positive

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — A 25th Infantry Division soldier stationed at Schofield Barracks tested positive for coronavirus, making him the first U.S. service member to test positive in Hawaii, the Army said in a statement Saturday.

The soldier is in isolation at his off-base residence, the statement said. He traveled to Las Vegas on March 13 and returned to Oahu two days later.

The soldier was then placed into command-directed restriction of movement at his off-base residence and became symptomatic Wednesday night, the Army said.

The soldier was tested for COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, on Thursday and deemed positive the next day.

This is the second case of a positive test result announced by the Army in Hawaii in a week.

The Army announced Hawaii's first military-related coronavirus infection Thursday after an employee at Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu tested positive.

The civilian employee, who was not identified, had recently traveled to New York and began developing symptoms after returning to Oahu, the Army said in a statement Thursday.

The employee is in self-isolation and being monitored by personnel from the medical center.

Teams from the medical center and Army Public Health Nursing are working with Hawaii's Department of Public Health to determine whether any other individuals may have been exposed.

As of Sunday, Hawaii had 48 confirmed cases.

2 at Yokosuka test negative, no results for Yokota

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
AND SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A child and a staff member at Yokosuka's Child Development Center have tested negative for coronavirus, the base's official Facebook page announced Thursday.

However, the 374th Airlift Wing had "no updates" Friday afternoon on a child development center worker at Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo who would be screened for possible

exposure to the disease. That staffer had shown no symptoms of coronavirus "while in contact with individuals" at Yokota's Child Development Center, a statement said.

The child and staff member from Yokosuka's CDC were tested Wednesday; the main center was cleared late Thursday to readmit children again Friday, according to the base's Facebook post. A second child development center at Ikego Housing Area was unaffected by the temporary shutdown.

Navy Installations Com-

mand on Thursday announced new protocols for child care programs that halt new enrollments and suspend hourly child care programs. Teacher in-service days were also canceled, and all training requirements have been postponed.

For those still attending child care programs, toothbrushing, family-style dining and the use of sensory tables have been discontinued under the protocol, according to the Thursday announcement.

Landstuhl increases testing capacity

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — The Pentagon's largest hospital overseas recently ramped up its testing capacity to process hundreds of coronavirus tests per day if need be, officials said, as the number of confirmed cases continued to climb in the U.S. military community in Europe.

So far, the lab at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, the only military facility in Europe currently able to test for the virus, is performing only a fraction of that, as military health officials balance the need for testing with limited resources.

"We don't have sufficient resources to test everybody who requests testing," said Col. Randall Freeman, the hospital's COVID-19 operations planning team lead and deputy commander for health readiness. "We're trying to maximize our

resources for those that are most likely to be positive."

Patients generally must have a fever of at least 100.4, a cough or shortness of breath to qualify for testing, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention criteria. Medical providers may rule out influenza before testing for the coronavirus since symptoms between the two can be similar.

The Landstuhl lab has performed more than 550 coronavirus tests, Freeman said Thursday, and is currently running about 40 tests per day on average. It recently added more equipment to be able to process up to 435 tests daily. One batch usually takes five to six hours to perform, he said, and turnaround for results is about 24 hours.

LRMC officials could not immediately say how many positive tests have come from its lab. U.S. European Command said last week that about 60 U.S. service members, military

civilians and family members in Europe have tested positive for the virus. The latest include two Air Force dependents at Ramstein Air Base, according to a statement posted on the base's website Friday.

In the weeks since the virus has spread across Europe, LRMC and other base medical facilities have improved their screening, setting up separate COVID-19 clinics to evaluate patients more quickly and isolate those who might be infected. Some Army bases have set up drive-thru screening sites and are asking soldiers at the gate if they're sick.

Health officials are discussing expanding testing labs to other military medical clinics in Europe, which can test for the virus but must use host-nation labs and LRMC for processing, Freeman said. More testing facilities would speed up turnaround time, but it's not known how soon that could happen, he said. Base officials

at Aviano in Italy said that they hope to have the ability to perform tests by mid-April.

"Our number one priority right now is keeping our servicemembers and their families safe," Freeman said.

There is a huge demand worldwide for the specialized nasal swabs used to test for the coronavirus, but Freeman said that LRMC has enough to meet the current testing demand and is working with its supplier to increase its shipments to outlying military medical clinics in the region.

"The stocks are, of course, very hard to come by just due to the short stockage everywhere," Freeman said. "The amount that any given area has waxes and wanes depending on how many get used and how soon they get resupplied."

"We're competing with everyone else in the world," he said.

Kent Harris contributed to this story.

Navy sailor assigned to CENTCOM tests positive

Associated Press

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — A Navy sailor assigned to the United States Central Command in Florida has tested positive for the new coronavirus, a spokesman said Saturday.

The sailor returned to the U.S. from overseas travel on March 15 and went into precautionary quarantine at his home, CENTCOM spokesman Capt. Bill Urban said in a news release.

CENTCOM is located at MacDill Air Force base in Tampa. The sailor started developing symptoms March 18, then called ahead to MacDill health officials. He was met outside the base by doctors.

Officials said that his test returned positive on March 20.

Most people experience

minor flulike symptoms from the coronavirus and recover within a few weeks, but the virus is highly contagious and can be spread by those who appear well.

It can cause severe illness, including pneumonia, in some patients, particularly the elderly and those with underlying health problems.

More than 830 people had tested positive in the state as of Sunday, according to the Florida Department of Health.

The bulk of those have been in Miami-Dade and Broward counties. There have been 13 deaths statewide.

To stem the tide of infections, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis has banned all onsite dining at restaurants statewide, and the Seminole Tribe has closed its casinos.

FDA approves first rapid 'point-of-care' virus tests

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Food and Drug Administration late Friday approved the first coronavirus test that can be conducted entirely at the point of care for a patient — and deliver results in 45 minutes.

The FDA granted "emergency use authorization" to Cepheid, a California company that makes a rapid molecular test for the coronavirus. The turnaround time for Cepheid's product is far shorter than for the tests being used, which are typically sent to centralized labs that may not return results for days.

The FDA authorization is for use in "patient care settings," including doctors' offices, but will initially be used primarily by hospitals and emergency de-

partments, the company said.

As COVID-19 cases proliferate, fears are growing that hospitals will become overwhelmed by patients seeking tests or care. David Persing, Cepheid's chief medical and technology officer, said in an interview that the test will "help alleviate the pressure" on health care facilities by helping doctors find out quickly whether a patient has the disease and select the appropriate treatment.

The specimen can be collected either by a nasal swab or by a saline wash using a small catheter. Neither is particularly comfortable, but the advantage of the wash is that it doesn't require swabs, which are in short supply, said Persing.

The firm plans to begin selling the test at the end of the month.

Calif. governor calls on youth to stay home

Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. — Most Californians stayed at home on a Saturday that was unlike any its 40 million residents had ever seen before.

Less than 48 hours after Gov. Gavin Newsom issued an unprecedented stay-at-home order to help curb the coronavirus spread, shopping centers and streets were empty. Churches were closed and playgrounds were deserted.

Stores and farmer markets, however, were bustling, and many people took advantage of the beautiful spring weather and rushed to the outdoors. At beaches and parks, not everyone heeded calls to practice social distancing, prompting Newsom to call them out.

“Those young people are still out there on the beaches thinking it’s time to party. It’s time to grow up, time to wake up,” he said at an evening news conference. “Time to recognize that it’s not just about the old folks, it’s about your impact on their lives. Don’t be selfish.”

The governor’s effort to curb the pandemic in the nation’s most populous state was by far the most sweeping and was followed Friday by similar announcements in New York and Illinois.

California is one of the hardest-hit states, with 1,382 confirmed cases and 25 deaths as of Saturday.

Los Angeles County Health Director Barbara Ferrer urged people to stay home and only go out for essential needs. Those who have been tested and come back negative shouldn’t have a false sense of security.

“You can be negative today and positive tomorrow,” she said. “Stay home as much as possible. You are safer at home.”

Newsom has said that infection rates of the COVID-19 virus are doubling every four days in some areas and projected that 56% of the state’s population — about 22 million people — could contract the virus in the next two months if aggressive prevention isn’t taken. On Saturday night, the

Los Angeles County Public Health Department announced two deaths from coronavirus and 59 new cases.

Residents have been told to stay 6 feet away from others, not gather in groups and wash their hands frequently. They can go out to get food, fill prescriptions, seek medical care, care for vulnerable relatives or neighbors and get exercise, such as walking.

In general, people seemed to be heeding state and local orders to stay home as much as possible. Normally congested freeways in California were truly free of traffic, and city streets remained mostly empty in areas usually bustling with cars, bikes, scooters and commuters emerging from rail stations and stopping at coffee shops and bakeries. Yosemite National Park closed to visitors Friday.

Most retail businesses and virtually all schools were closed, and those that could were having employees work from home. Gas stations, supermarkets and convenience

stores were open along with auto repair shops and those providing essential services, such as plumbers and electricians, were still on the job. But restaurants were only delivering or providing take-out.

At the farmers market in Pasadena, people appeared to be trying to stay 6 feet apart while waiting in line. The stalls, however, were directly next to each other and shoppers picked out produce close together.

The bright skies, or perhaps the threat of rain on Sunday, drew many people to Venice Beach. Most took care to stay well away from each other on the sand, but spacing became an issue in popular areas like the pier and the boardwalk.

North of San Francisco, the Marin County Sheriff’s office shut down access to the Mount Tamalpais Watershed “due to the astronomical amount of people NOT practicing social distancing and home sheltering.” Authorities there said there was back-to-back traffic to coastal attractions and parking lots to beaches were full.

Rebels from France to Florida flout lockdown practices

Associated Press

PARIS — Young German adults hold “corona parties” and cough toward older people. A Spanish man leashes a goat to go for a walk to skirt confinement orders. From France to Florida to Australia, kite-surfers, college students and others crowd the beaches.

Their defiance of lockdown mandates and scientific advice to fight the coronavirus pandemic has prompted crackdowns by authorities on people trying to escape cabin fever brought on by virus restrictions. In some cases, the virus rebels resist — threatening police as officials express outrage over public gatherings that could spread the virus.

“Some consider they’re little heroes when they break the rules,” said French Interior Minister Christophe Castaner. “Well, no. You’re an imbecile, and especially a threat to yourself.”

After days of noncompliance by people refusing to stay home and venture out only for essential tasks, France on Friday sent

security forces into train stations to prevent people from traveling to their vacation homes, potentially carrying the virus to the countryside or beaches where medical facilities are less robust. The popular Paris walkway along the Seine River was closed and a nightly curfew was imposed in the French Mediterranean city of Nice by Mayor Christian Estrosi, who is infected with the virus.

Florida’s governor closed all of the state’s beaches after images of rowdy spring break college crowds appeared on TV for days amid the rising global death toll, which surpassed 13,000 on Sunday. Australia closed Sydney’s famous Bondi Beach after police were outraged at pictures of the crowds.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Saturday that people from 18-to-49 account for more than half of the state’s coronavirus cases.

Many people were not complying with social distancing recommendations to stay away from each other in New York City’s vast city park network ahead of a ban on congregating in groups that was to go into

effect Sunday night, Cuomo said.

As new coronavirus cases in China dropped to zero several days in a row, the chief medical officer for the International Clinic of Wuhan was alarmed at those elsewhere refusing to follow rules to contain the virus. Dr. Philippe Klein said that people should look to China’s confinement of tens of millions as an example to emulate “with courage, with patience, with solidarity.”

The virus rebels tend to range from restless teens to wealthy adults who can travel to their getaway homes. Even in Italy, where the virus death toll soared beyond China’s last week, authorities are still trying to rein in people from going outside.

In the southern German state of Bavaria, Gov. Markus Soeder lamented that “there are still corona parties, there are young people who cough at older people and shout corona for fun and, above all, there are an incredible number of groups being formed.”

Iran leader refuses US virus help

Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iran's supreme leader refused U.S. assistance Sunday to fight the new coronavirus, citing an unfounded conspiracy theory that the virus could be man-made by America.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's comments come as Iran faces crushing U.S. sanctions blocking the country from selling its crude oil and accessing international financial markets.

But while Iranian civilian officials have increasingly criticized those sanctions, the 80-year-old Khamenei instead chose to traffic in the same conspiracy theory increasingly used by Chinese officials about the new virus to deflect blame for the pandemic.

"I do not know how real this accusation is but when it exists, who in their right mind would trust you to bring them medication?" Khamenei said. "Possibly your medicine is a way to spread the virus more."

He also alleged without offering any evidence that the virus "is specifically built for Iran using the genetic data of Iranians which they have obtained through differ-

ent means.

"You might send people as doctors and therapists, maybe they would want to come here and see the effect of the poison they have produced in person," he said.

There is no scientific proof offered anywhere in the world to support Khamenei's comments.

His comments come after Chinese government spokesman Lijian Zhao tweeted earlier that it "might be US army who brought the epidemic to Wuhan. Be transparent! Make public your data! US owe(s) us an explanation!"

Lijian likewise offered no evidence to support his claim, which saw the U.S. State Department summon China's ambassador to complain.

Wuhan is the Chinese city where the first cases of the disease were detected in December.

Scientists have not yet determined exactly how the new coronavirus first infected people. Evidence suggests that it originated in bats, which infected other animals that spread it to people at a market in Wuhan. The now-shuttered Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market advertised doz-

ens of species such as giant salamanders, baby crocodiles and raccoon dogs that were often referred to as wildlife, even when they were farmed.

An article published last week in the peer-reviewed scientific journal *Nature Medicine* similarly said it was "improbable" that the virus "emerged through laboratory manipulation of a related SARS-CoV-like coronavirus."

Iranian officials have criticized U.S. offers of aid during the virus crisis as being disingenuous. They have accused the Trump administration of wanting to capitalize on its "maximum pressure" campaign against Tehran since withdrawing from their nuclear deal in May 2018. The U.S., however, has directly offered the Islamic Republic aid in the past despite decades of enmity, like during the Bam earthquake of 2003.

Meanwhile on Sunday, Iran imposed a two-week closure on major shopping malls and centers across the country to prevent spreading the virus. Pharmacies, supermarkets, groceries and bakeries will remain open.

For many separating virus fact from fiction can be difficult

Associated Press

The coronavirus pandemic is leading to information overload for many people, often making it difficult to separate fact from fiction and rumor from deliberate efforts to mislead.

Already, text messages predicting a nationwide lockdown have circulated, along with social media posts telling people that one way to get tested for the virus is by donating blood or warning that mosquitoes can carry it. All are untrue. Such falsehoods can endanger public health, sow confusion and fear, and prevent important information from reaching people during a crisis. The Associated Press has debunked many such claims, including one about bananas supposedly preventing people from catching the virus and another on "Harry Potter" actor Daniel Radcliffe testing positive.

Here are some things you can do to separate fact from misinformation:

Look for the source

We are more likely to believe things our friends tell us — that's human nature. It's why rumors spread and why misinformation travels on social media. It's also why the chain text message warning of a nationwide lockdown worked so well: Everyone heard it from a friend of a friend who "knows someone." Be wary of important-sounding information that is not coming from a clear, authoritative source, such as local government agencies and health departments, or national and international public health institutes such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization.

CDC and the WHO

The top public health institutes in the United States and other countries, along with the WHO, are some of the most trusted sources of information

about the outbreak. They provide the latest statistics, advisories and guides on everything from sanitizing your home to managing stress.

Dr. Jessica Justman, an infectious disease expert at Columbia University, said the sheer amount of information online about the coronavirus pandemic can quickly become overwhelming. That's one reason she encourages people to check the websites of the CDC and the WHO.

At the same time, be mindful of scammers taking advantage of the CDC's and other organizations' trusted names.

Act like a journalist

"Everyone right now is trying to figure out: What is going on? What do I need to know? Who can I trust?" said John Silva, director of education at the News Literacy Project, a Washington-based nonprofit that works with educators to teach students how to navigate the news.

Be wary of information from groups or news organizations you don't know — in some cases the groups behind misinformation create websites and social media accounts that look legitimate. Remember that there's a difference between news stories and opinion pieces. News stories should include the source of the information. If there's no source or attribution, be suspicious.

Don't believe everything

Bad actors and trolls looking to exploit people's fears around coronavirus are using a variety of techniques to sow confusion. False news articles are just a small part of this.

Photos and videos can be edited and altered, and real images can be presented out of context. Again, it helps to look for the source. Google's reverse image search can help find its origins. For videos, take a look at who uploaded it — was it a random user? A news outlet? The CDC?

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Preschool teacher whacks child with ruler

VA DANVILLE— A Virginia teacher was accused of striking a student with a ruler at an early childhood education center for low-income children, court records show.

Karen Tucker, 54, was charged with misdemeanor assault and battery in Danville Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, The Danville Register & Bee reported.

Video of the encounter showed Tucker going into a classroom, retrieving a ruler and speaking with a child before striking the student on the hands and head with it, the complaint alleged.

Woman saves daughter from carjacker

IL CHICAGO — A Chicago woman pulled her 6-month-old daughter out of a sport utility vehicle to safety after a gun-wielding man tried to carjack it with the infant inside, police said.

The woman, 22, was outside the SUV in Chicago's River North neighborhood when the man pointed a gun at her, took her belongings and ran toward the parked SUV.

As the man climbed inside the SUV, police said the woman opened the rear door and scooped up her daughter from the back seat, the Chicago Tribune reported.

The armed man then exited the SUV, which still had the woman's items inside, and fled in a dark sedan, police said.

Man sings to girlfriend in assisted living

MA BOSTON — A man got permission to

serenade his girlfriend who lives in a Boston assisted living facility.

Ed Bohld has visited his girlfriend, Mary Lou, at Compass on the Bay assisted living facility every day for nearly five years, WCVB-TV reported.

But new restrictions were put into place in response to the coronavirus.

Bohld said his first request to sing to Lou through a window was denied.

Compass on the Bay said in a statement Bohld insisted the window be open and they denied his request to abide by state restrictions.

But then Bohld was allowed to sing "You Are My Sunshine" to Lou through a partially opened window in the rain.

Funeral home sells bodies, body parts

CO GRAND JUNCTION— Federal authorities arrested the operators of a Colorado funeral home accused of selling body parts or entire bodies without the consent of families.

Megan Hess, 43, and her mother, Shirley Koch, 66, were arrested and charged with six counts of mail fraud and three counts of illegal transportation of hazardous materials, The Daily Sentinel reported. Hess and Koch entered not guilty pleas, the U.S. Attorney's Office said.

A grand jury indictment said that from 2010 through 2018, Hess and Koch purported to provide burial and cremation services, the U.S. Department of Justice said in a statement.

Hess and Koch shipped bodies and body parts that tested positive for, or belonged to people who died from, infectious diseases after certifying to buyers the remains were disease-free, authorities said.

Man found guilty of throwing fatal punch

FL BARTOW — A Florida man faces up to 15 years in prison for fatally punching another man in the face.

Travis Brian Barlow, 37, was found guilty of manslaughter in Polk County, the Ledger reported. His sentencing is scheduled for April 30.

Barlow went to the Lakeland home of Adam Frank Hoffman, 38, in June 2018, the sheriff's office said. Barlow was apparently angry that Hoffman had disrespected Barlow's girlfriend earlier.

Barlow acknowledged that he hit Hoffman once, though other witnesses said Barlow hit the man twice, officials said. The blows triggered a hemorrhage in Hoffman's brain that led to his death.

Man sentenced for upskirting, child porn

KS WICHITA — A former Wichita State University student was sentenced to close to five years in prison for taking lewd photos of children and up-the-skirt videos of women, the Sedgwick County prosecutor announced.

James Dayvault, 30, was sentenced to four years and eight months behind bars.

A judge found Dayvault guilty of one count of sexual exploitation of a child, one count of lewd and lascivious behavior, one count of breach of privacy and one count of attempted breach of privacy in November.

A police investigation found pornographic images of children and images taken up women's skirts at locations throughout Wichita.

Police: Man entered school, tried to kiss girl

MD COLUMBIA — Police charged a 20-year-old Maryland man with entering a high school and trying to grab and kiss a 14-year-old student there, authorities said.

Colby Christopher Johnson fled from Hammond High School in Columbia after approaching an underage female student, grabbing her and attempting to kiss her, the Howard County Police Department said. The victim wasn't hurt, according to authorities.

It's unclear whether he knew the victim.

Johnson was charged with second-degree assault, fourth-degree sex offense and disturbing school operations, police said.

Man sentenced for juvenile crime spree

OH CLEVELAND — A man who sexually assaulted a woman and committed many thefts during a crime spree that occurred when he was a juvenile was sentenced to 33 years in prison.

Michael Hutchins, 18, of Cleveland had pleaded guilty to numerous charges after his case was moved to adult court.

Hutchins' crime spree began when he was 16 years old. Authorities said he escaped from the Cleveland Christian Home in October 2018 and stole a woman's cellphone the next month. He also committed many thefts during the next several months.

The sexual assault occurred in February 2019 in a parking garage. Authorities said he tried to drive away in the victim's car after the attack, but crashed the vehicle into a wall in the garage.

From wire reports

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Answers in short supply for Silver

Associated Press

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver finds himself almost constantly looking at financial numbers and projections. And like the rest of a world that is dealing with the seismic effects of the coronavirus pandemic, he still isn't sure how bad things will get.

Silver said Saturday the league is considering all options — best-case, worst-case and countless ideas in between — as it tries to come to grips with this new normal. But definitive answers on any front are in short supply.

"It's too soon to tell what the economic impact will be," Silver said. "We've been analyzing multiple scenarios on a daily if not hourly basis and we'll continue to review the financial implications. Obviously, it's not a pretty picture but everyone, regardless of what industry they work in, is in the same boat."

Saturday marked the 10th full day of the NBA's shutdown, a stoppage that has cost the league 75 games and counting so far, a total that will reach triple digits on Wednesday and will eventually get to 259 on April 15 — the day the regular season was supposed to end. Play isn't going to resume by then. The financial losses will be massive and obviously just will keep growing if this season cannot resume or if next season is affected.

"Adam is obviously cautious, cautiously optimistic," Cleveland forward Kevin Love said earlier in the week. "We don't know what the future holds, but the NBA has been through a lot, we've seen a lot and I think we'll be incredibly resilient. It just might take time."

Players who are due to get their next paycheck on April 1 will get them. Whether those players will get their April 15 check is in some question; the league can exercise a clause

in the Collective Bargaining Agreement that allows it to take back 1.08% of each player's salary for each game missed in certain times — like war, or in this case, a pandemic.

That clause has not been exercised yet since, officially anyway, no game has been canceled.

"We're exploring all options to resume our season if and when it is safe to do so," Silver said. "Nothing is off the table."

Besides, there are other bridges to cross first. The NBA — which was the first major U.S. pro league to say it would play games without fans and the first league to suspend its season once All-Star center Rudy Gobert of the Utah Jazz tested positive — has been extremely vocal in trying to get its massive fan base to take social distancing and other preventative measures seriously.

"Our focus right now is doing all that we can to support, engage and educate the general public in response to this pandemic," Silver said. "We are also making sure that we are prepared to resume the season if and when it becomes safe for all concerned."

The league has asked teams for building availability dates through the end of August, an indicator that this season — if it resumes — may stretch deep into the summer.

So far, there are 14 people within the NBA community, including at least 10 players, known to have tested positive for COVID-19. Of those positive tests, seven became known publicly on Thursday and Marcus Smart of the Boston Celtics revealed that he has the virus.

"Unfortunately, based on everything we know, significantly more positive cases in our league were inevitable," Silver said. "So, Thursday's results did not come as a huge surprise and just like everyone else, we're just trying to take each day as it comes."

Former top picks still looking for new homes

Associated Press

Cam Newton, Jameis Winston and Jadeveon Clowney didn't have to wait long to find homes in the NFL when they came out of college.

They were No. 1 overall draft picks.

Now they are finding things moving much more slowly as they search for new homes or contracts this offseason.

Winston, the top pick in the 2015 draft, has been supplanted as starting quarterback in Tampa Bay by Tom Brady and is in danger of being on the wrong end of the NFL's version of quarterback musical chairs.

Clowney, who was the No. 1 pick the year before Winston, hasn't been able to find the megacontract he hoped for in the opening days of free agency and might eventually have to settle for a more reasonable contract either to remain in Seattle or sign someplace else.

Newton, who went first in 2011, isn't quite on the open market yet but is having an acrimonious breakup in Carolina. The Panthers are signing a replacement in Teddy Bridgewater and giving Newton permission to pursue a trade even though he said he never wanted to leave.

With no trade partners willing to jump for a quarterback coming off a season-ending foot injury, Newton might ultimately just get released and join a list of many players still seeking a new home.

There are talented receivers in Robby Anderson and Breshad Perriman; offensive tackles such as Jason Peters and Germain Ifedi; and several defensive players such as cornerback Logan Ryan; linebacker Markus Golden; defensive end Everson Griffen; defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh; and safeties Vonn Bell, Eric Reid and Damarious Randall, all still on the open market after an early spending spree in free agency.

Last season, players 2019 sacks leader Shaq Barrett, defensive end Robert Quinn and tight end Jared Cook were

among those who made an impact despite going unsigned in the opening week of free agency.

The process could be slightly more complicated this year with players unable to meet in person with teams or take physicals with team doctors because of restrictions put in place in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

That could be especially problematic for Newton, who must prove he's recovered from foot surgery that forced him to miss the final 14 games last season before a team will be ready to take a chance on the 2015 NFL MVP.

With only a handful of teams still looking for a starting quarterback in free agency, there are few obvious options for either Newton or Winston.

Winston is the first player since the merger to lead the NFL in yards passing one season and change teams the next. But along with the 5,109 yards passing for Winston last season came a league-worst 30 interceptions.

That and the availability of a six-time Super Bowl champion like Brady left Winston looking for work.

Clowney wasn't nearly as prolific last season with only three sacks in his first season in Seattle, contributing to his difficulty finding the type of contract he wants.

The market at receiver where Anderson and Perriman are the top available targets has been hampered by the fact that two of the league's top receivers were traded, with DeAndre Hopkins going from Houston to Arizona and Stefon Diggs being dealt from Minnesota to Buffalo.

On defense, many teams have already made big moves. There are still some likely cheaper signings ahead with Suh possibly headed to his fourth team in as many years, Griffen and Golden as pass-rush options and several capable safeties led by Bell, Reid and Randall.

Toppin the lone unanimous All-American

Associated Press

The college basketball season came to an emphatic, dramatic end with the cancellation of the NCAA Tournament. The dream of playing under the bright lights of March Madness, of possibly hoisting a national championship trophy, wiped out by the coronavirus.

For a handful of players, earning a post-season honor offers a glimmer of happiness amid the uncertainty.

“Getting these awards, it brings brightness to my life right now,” Seton Hall’s Myles Powell said. “To have it end so quickly was just like ... man.”

Powell added to his load Friday when he joined Dayton’s Obi Toppin, Iowa’s Luka Garza, Marquette’s Markus Howard and Oregon’s Payton Pritchard on The Associated Press All-America first team.

Toppin was the lone unanimous choice, receiving 65 votes from a nationwide media panel after averaging 20 points and 7 rebounds while shooting 63% in a breakout season. The 6-foot-9 sophomore helped the third-ranked Flyers match the program’s highest ranking and be on track for a potential No. 1 seed before the NCAA Tournament was shelved. He is Dayton’s first first-team AP All-American.

“I feel like everybody just knew what they had to do to help the next person succeed and that’s why I was so successful this year,” Toppin said. “I thank my teammates every single day for that.”

Garza blossomed into one of college basketball’s best players as a junior. A 6-11 forward, he increased his scoring average more than 10 points from a year ago to 23.9 per game, averaged 9.8 rebounds and shot

54% from the floor.

Garza set Iowa’s single-season scoring record with 740 points and is the first Big Ten player since Ohio State’s Dennis Hopson in 1987 to have at least 20 points in 16 straight conference games. He is Iowa’s first first-team All-American since Chuck Darling in 1952.

“I never could have envisioned this,” Garza said. “It’s honestly crazy, but it’s what I did all the work for and what I’m going to continue to strive for. It kind of adds motivation for me just knowing that putting in the hard work, it can all pay off and makes me grateful for the situation I’m in and the program I’m at.”

Howard was a second-team AP All-American as a junior last season after finishing fifth nationally in scoring at 25 points per game. The 5-11 senior upped his scoring average to 27.8 points to lead the nation in 2019-20 and finished seventh in NCAA history with 434 career three-pointers.

“It’s truly amazing to be mentioned among other great players across the country,” said Howard, the first Marquette player to make the first team since Dwyane Wade in 2003. “It’s truly an honor and definitely means a lot. It’s definitely something I wouldn’t be able to accomplish myself. There were so many people who helped me accomplish that.”

Powell bypassed a shot at the NBA to return for his senior season. A preseason AP All-American, the 6-2 guard averaged 21 points per game, 17th nationally, with 4.3 rebounds and 2.9 assists. Behind Powell, No. 15 Seton Hall earned a share of its first Big East Conference regular-season title since 1993.

“When (they) told me that was I an All-

American, I don’t want to say it was relief, but I did feel like the world was lifted off my shoulders,” Powell said. “I feel like I accomplished a lot with that one. When I heard those words, it touched me.”

Pritchard went to the Final Four with Oregon as a freshman and was hoping to lead the 13th-ranked Ducks back as a senior. He never got the chance, but will go down as one of the greatest players in program history.

The 6-2 guard was the first player in Pac-12 history to have 1,900 points, 500 rebounds and 600 assists during his career. He also was the fourth player in conference history to lead in scoring (20.5 points) and assists (5.5).

SECOND TEAM

Devon Dotson, Kansas, 6-2, 185, sophomore, Charlotte, North Carolina, 18.1 points, 4.1 rebounds, 4.0 assists, 2.1 steals, 46.8% fg, 83.0% ft (30, 237).

Udoka Azubuike, Kansas, 7-0, 270, senior, Delta, Nigeria, 13.7 points, 10.5 rebounds, 2.6 blocks, 74.8% fg (22, 235).

Malachi Flynn, San Diego State, 6-1, 185, junior, Tacoma, Washington, 17.6 points, 4.5 rebounds, 5.1 assists, 1.8 steals, 44.1% fg, 37.3% 3-pt fg, 85.7% ft (12, 191).

Cassius Winston, Michigan State, 6-1, 185, senior, Detroit, 18.6 points, 2.5 rebounds, 5.9 assists, 1.2 steals, 44.8% fg, 43.2% 3-pt fg, 85.2% ft (9, 185).

Vernon Carey Jr., Duke, 6-10, 270, freshman, Southwest Ranches, Florida, 17.8 points, 8.8 rebounds, 1.6 blocks, 1.0 assists, 57.7% fg (3, 132).

THIRD TEAM

Filip Petrusev, Gonzaga, 6-11, 235, sophomore, Belgrade, Serbia, 17.5 points, 7.9 rebounds, 1.5 assists, 56.2% fg (1, 78).

Jordan Nwora, Louisville, 6-7, 225, junior, Buffalo, New York, 18.0 points, 7.7 rebounds, 1.3 assists, 44% fg, 40.2% 3-pt fg, 81.3% ft (0, 69).

Jared Butler, Baylor, 6-3, 190, sophomore, Reserve, Louisiana, 16.0 points, 3.2 rebounds, 3.1 assists, 1.6 steals, 38.1% 3-pt fg, 77.5% ft (0, 63).

Tre Jones, Duke, 6-3, 185, sophomore, Apple Valley, Minnesota, 16.2 points, 4.2 rebounds, 6.4 assists, 1.8 steals, 36.1% 3-pt fg, 77.1% ft (3, 62).

Jalen Smith, Maryland, 6-10, 225, sophomore, Baltimore, 15.5 points, 10.5 rebounds, 2.4 blocks, 53.8% fg, 36.8% 3-pt fg, 75.0% ft (0, 59).

US track joins swimming, urges Olympic delay

Associated Press

DENVER — U.S. Olympic leaders are facing a growing rebellion inside their ranks about holding the Tokyo Games.

A board member of the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee countered leadership by criticizing the IOC, and the USA Track and Field chief added to the call for a postponement because of the mushrooming coronavirus crisis.

USATF CEO Max Siegel sent a two-page note to his counterpart at the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee, Sarah Hirshland, asking the federa-

tion to advocate for a delay. It came late Friday, only a few hours after USA Swimming’s CEO sent a similar letter.

Now, the sports that accounted for 65 of America’s 121 medals and 175 of its 554 athletes at the last Summer Games are on record in urging, in Siegel’s words, “the USOPC, as a leader within the Olympic Movement, to use its voice and speak up for the athletes.”

Also focused on leadership was Steve Mesler, a USOPC board member and Olympic champion bobsledder. In a blog post Friday, Mesler leveled

much more criticism toward the IOC than Hirshland or the board chair, Susanne Lyons, did in earlier statements and interviews.

“The (IOC) ... has not shown the leadership we Olympians desire out of those who are in charge,” Mesler wrote, while careful to emphasize that these were his thoughts “as an Olympian and not those of the USOPC, its Board of Directors, or its leaders.”

Other national committees are also calling on the IOC to act. The federations in Norway and Brazil went public with re-

quests to postpone.

“Our clear recommendation is that the Olympic Games in Tokyo shall not take place before the COVID-19 situation is under firm control on a global scale,” Norway’s federation wrote in a letter to IOC President Thomas Bach.

It’s the U.S., though, that brings the largest contingent to every Summer Games and wins the most medals — both factors that lead have led NBC to pay billions to televise the games through 2032. It would seem to give the USOPC leverage in talks with the IOC,