

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

## Blast kills, wounds scores in Afghanistan

By ZUBAIR BABAKARKHAIL  
AND E.B. BOYD

*Stars and Stripes*

KABUL, Afghanistan — A water tanker laden with explosives blew up Wednesday on the edge of central Kabul's heavily fortified diplomatic and government zone, killing at least 90 people and injuring more than 460, in one of the deadliest attacks of the 16-year war.

The early-morning blast occurred next to 20-foot-tall concrete walls protecting the German Embassy, just yards from the main entrance to the restricted zone that is home to the U.S. and other embassies, NATO headquarters, the presidential palace and several government ministries.

A NATO spokesman said all U.S. and coalition personnel were accounted for. Gen. John Nicholson, the top U.S. and NATO commander in Afghanistan, visited the site of the blast and consulted with the German ambassador, the spokesman added.

A State Department official said nine Afghan guards at the U.S. Embassy were killed in the attack, The Associated Press

reported. In addition, 11 American contractors were wounded.

No group claimed responsibility for the attack, but the Taliban said in a statement they were not behind it. Islamic State, which U.S. and Afghan forces have been battling in the eastern part of the country, has not commented. The group has conducted a series of brazen attacks in the city in the past, including a raid on a military hospital in March that killed at least 30 people.

Photos from the scene showed a heavily damaged building inside the German Embassy compound, with much of its facade blown in by the force of the explosion. A member of the Afghan parliament who visited the site said that the explosion, which blew a 30-foot-wide hole in the road, had destroyed part of the embassy. An Interior Ministry spokesman said more than 30 cars and trucks on the street outside were also destroyed.

Other embassies within the zone also reported structural damage, blown-out windows and damaged doors. In Paris, Marielle de Sarnez, France's minister of European Affairs, said her country's em-

bassy was among those damaged.

The main thoroughfares around the area are typically packed with traffic and commuters around the time of the blast, which occurred at 8:22 a.m.

NATO's Resolute Support headquarters seemed to suggest that the vehicle had attempted to gain access to the embassy and ministry area, which is surrounded by blast walls and guarded by a series of checkpoints.

Kabul police said the tanker had a permit giving it access to the restricted zone. If so, that would constitute a massive security breach. Only strictly vetted cars and trucks with special passes are allowed onto those roads.

Wednesday is the fifth day of Ramadan, the holy month in the Muslim calendar, when most Afghans fast during the day.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani condemned the attack.

"The terrorists, even in the holy month of Ramadan, the month of goodness, blessing and prayer, are not stopping the killing of our innocent people," Ghani said in a statement.

## Pentagon: US ahead of Iran, N. Korea with anti-ICBM test

By COREY DICKSTEIN

*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — The ground-fired interceptor test-launched Tuesday "completely obliterated" an intercontinental ballistic missile-like target outside Earth's atmosphere, the commander in charge of protecting the homeland from missile attacks said Wednesday.

Initial evaluations of the long-planned test conducted from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California show its primary anti-ballistic missile system "performed as designed" against an ICBM-category threat, said Navy Vice Adm. Jim Syring, director of the U.S. Missile Defense Agency. He described the test of the

Ground-Based Midcourse Defense as realistic and based on an actual threat the United States could face from foes like North Korea or Iran in the next three years, according to intelligence assessments.

"The interceptor that we flew yesterday certainly keeps pace with, and I would say helps us outpace, the threat through 2020," Syring told reporters at the Pentagon on Wednesday. "I was confident before the test that we have the capability to defeat any threat that they would throw at us. I am even more confident today — after seeing the intercept test yesterday — that we continue to be on that course."

Analysts will spend about a month poring through data col-

lected during the \$244 million test, Syring said.

The United States is primarily concerned about the threat from the increasingly belligerent North Korea.

Since January, the reclusive nation has conducted at least eight missile launch attempts, including firing ballistic missiles the last three weekends.

North Korea has vowed to develop an ICBM capable of carrying a nuclear warhead and striking the U.S. mainland.

While it is not the first time the United States has tested the GMD system's ability to intercept a ballistic missile, it is the first time it has tested its ability to track and destroy an ICBM, the longest-range ballistic missiles capable of traveling more

than 3,400 miles.

In the test Tuesday, an ICBM-like target was launched from the Reagan Test Site on Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands, according to an MDA statement. Sensors in the Pacific Ocean and in the United States tracked the target, and a ground-based interceptor missile was launched.

A 5-foot-long "kill vehicle" was then released from the interceptor, which struck and destroyed the target in space over the Pacific Ocean thousands of miles off the U.S. western coast, Syring said. The kill vehicle does not contain any explosives and is designed to destroy ballistic missiles outside Earth's atmosphere using only the force of its impact.

# China invited to 2018 RIMPAC

BY WYATT OLSON

*Stars and Stripes*

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — China has been invited to attend the Rim of the Pacific exercise in Hawaii next year, the Navy said, despite multiple reports this month of China harassing U.S. military planes over Pacific waters.

All 26 nations that participated in the 2016 RIMPAC, including China, have been formally invited to next year's exercise, said Lt. Cmdr. William Knight, a spokesman with U.S. Pacific Fleet in Hawaii.

Neither the Pentagon nor the White House have publicly commented on the 2018 invitation.

China's last invitation to RIMPAC, which is considered one of the world's most prestigious military exercises, drew criticism from both sides of the aisle in Congress.

Critics say that China's participation in RIMPAC should be contingent on it altering aggressive behavior, particularly in the disputed South China

Sea.

The United States has criticized China for creating artificial islands in the sea capable of hosting military planes.

In 2016, Republican Sen. John McCain said he would not have invited China because of its "bad behavior," noting that the country had expanded islands by 600 acres and built a runway on one.

"I don't think there is any doubt about their territorial ambitions," he said.

An earlier letter to the Pentagon from McCain and Sen. Jack Reed, a Democrat, called for "policy options that impose costs on China's disruptive behavior, not reward it."

China's conduct in the South China Sea has changed little since then. It has added 3,200 acres of landfill to mostly submerged reefs, according to satellite imagery posted online by the nonprofit Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative.

Former Defense Secretary Ash Carter supported China's invitation at the time because it

wanted to focus on common security challenges such as piracy and terrorism, as well as to build understanding between the two militaries.

This would be China's third consecutive participation in RIMPAC. In 2016, the country sent a destroyer, frigate, submarine rescue ship, supply ship and hospital ship.

China's participation has been limited mostly to rescue and humanitarian drills.

The United States and China have had limited military-to-military interactions since China's crackdown in 1989 on demonstrators at Tiananmen Square in Beijing, which resulted in Congress banning the sale of arms to China.

In recent years, tensions between the two nations have ratcheted up over China's claims of sovereignty over most of the South China Sea. Vietnam, the Philippines and other countries also have claims on some of the territory within the sea, as well as rights to their exclusive economic zones.

## A-10s train in Alaska amid tension

BY SETH ROBSON

*Stars and Stripes*

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — A dozen A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft took off for an exercise in Alaska, an indication that the U.S. military is carrying on with business as usual despite rising tensions over North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

The divided peninsula has been on edge for months as the United States and North Korea rattle sabers with missile tests and bomber and aircraft carrier deployments.

The 25th Fighter Squadron A-10s are stationed at Osan Air Base in South Korea but were at Yokota Air Base, Japan, over Memorial Day weekend.

They began departing Yokota for Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska, on Wednesday, according to Tech. Sgt. Ashley Tyler, a 51st Fighter Wing spokeswoman.

The planes will be met in Alaska by more air crew and support personnel and will join the Red Flag Alaska 17-2 drills out of Eielson and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson through early July, she said.

The exercise will simulate the first 10 days of combat with a near-peer adversary, Tyler said.

"They will be conducting combat air strikes in conjunction with combined and joint force partners, an integration that maintains readiness and proficiency and utilizes unique training opportunities," she said.

Other A-10s assigned to the 25th will remain at Osan to execute mission requirements there, she said.

Carl Baker, director of programs at the Pacific Forum think tank in Hawaii, said the fact that the aircraft are joining the regularly scheduled exercise suggests that commanders don't think war is imminent.

"If you are going to try to kill tanks in Korea you are not going to send them to Alaska to shoot holes in snow," Baker said.

## Another Futenma suit expected

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE  
AND CHIYOMI SUMIDA

*Stars and Stripes*

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The governor of Okinawa is preparing another lawsuit challenging the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station Futenma to a remote part of the island, according to multiple Japanese media reports.

Gov. Takeshi Onaga plans to submit a bill to the prefectural assembly soon, asking for approval to file a lawsuit against the Tokyo government, the reports said Wednesday.

He will reportedly seek to stop the ongoing new runway project at Henoko, which upon completion is expected to allow Futenma's closure and move U.S. Marine Corps air operations to Camp Schwab in the

island's north.

Onaga reportedly plans to challenge coral reef destruction, which is typically seen as detrimental to local fishermen.

Onaga, who wants the base moved off Okinawa, claims the Japanese government needs his permission for a renewed permit, which expired at the end of March.

Onaga's staff says that local fishermen maintain rights to the waters, while the central government says those rights were relinquished by a local fishermen's organization.

The suit is expected to be filed in Naha District Court as early as July, the reports said. A spokesman for Onaga acknowledged the reports but would not confirm or deny them when asked Wednesday by Stars and Stripes.

"We have sent a query to the Ministry of Defense, asking if [they] plan to submit a request to renew the permission (to break the reef rocks), and the deadline for the query is tomorrow," a spokesman for the governor said Wednesday. "Based on their response, we will respond to the issue."

NHK Okinawa reported that Onaga indicated he would file suit.

The Okinawa Times reported Wednesday that sources close to the governor said he will wait until the reef-breaking is imminent or when evidence of the breaking is confirmed to file the suit.

Ministry of Defense officials said they will move forward with their plans, adding that the federal government holds jurisdiction.



## US begins arming Syrian Kurds

By COREY DICKSTEIN  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON—The United States began providing weapons to Syrian Kurdish fighters for the first time Tuesday, a Pentagon official said, equipping the group to participate in the impending assault on the Islamic State's capital of Raqqa despite objections from American ally Turkey.

The United States started distributing rifles, ammunition and vehicles to the Kurdish People's Protection Unit, known as the YPG, about three weeks after President Donald Trump approved arming the group, said Eric Pahon, a spokesman for the Defense Department. The YPG make up about half of the Syrian Democratic Forces, the U.S.-backed militia force charged with destroying ISIS in Syria.

The move has potential to further inflame tensions between the United States and Turkey, which considers YPG a terrorist organization closely associated with the outlawed Kurdistan Worker's Party, or PKK. The United States considers PKK a terrorist group, but top American officials have consistently said they have observed no evidence that YPG is any threat to Turkey.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan called Trump's May 8 decision to provide military equipment to YPG — made just days before Erdogan visited Washington — “unacceptable.”

Turkey is a member of the more than 60-nation anti-ISIS coalition and is home to Incirlik Air Base, which U.S. and other coalition warplanes use to fly missions against the terrorist group.

Pahon on Tuesday said YPG was receiving only basic military gear, and any equipment provided in the future would be based on “specific military objectives.”

The Pentagon has not provided a detailed list of the gear it will provide to YPG.

# White House official: Trump expected to exit climate deal

*Associated Press*

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is expected to pull the United States from a landmark global climate agreement, a White House official said Wednesday, though there could be “caveats in the language” announcing a withdrawal, leaving open the possibility that his decision isn't final.

Exiting the deal would be certain to anger allies that spent years negotiating the accord to reduce carbon emissions.

The official insisted on anonymity in order to discuss the decision before the official announcement.

Trump tweeted on Wednesday morning: “I will be announcing my decision on the Paris Accord over the next few days. MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!”

While Trump currently favors an exit from the agreement, he has been known to change his thinking on major decisions and tends to seek counsel from a range of inside and outside

advisers, many with differing agendas, until the last minute.

Nearly 200 nations, including the United States under President Barack Obama's administration, agreed in 2015 to voluntarily reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in an effort to combat climate change. Withdrawing would leave the United States aligned only with Russia among the world's industrialized economies in rejecting action to combat climate change.

News of Trump's expected decision drew swift reaction from the United Nations. The organization's main Twitter page quoted Secretary-General Antonio Guterres as saying, “Climate change is undeniable. Climate change is unstoppable. Climate solutions provide opportunities that are unmatched.”

Trump pledged during his presidential campaign to withdraw the U.S. from the pact immediately after taking office, but had wavered on the issue since winning the election.

Trump's top aides were divid-

ed on the issue; some advocated withdrawal, others urged him to stay. One potential compromise that had been discussed involved remaining in, but adjusting the U.S. emissions targets.

Word of Trump's decision comes a day after the president met with Scott Pruitt, the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Like his boss, Pruitt has questioned the consensus of climate scientists that the Earth is warming and that man-made climate emissions are to blame.

Once in power, Trump and Pruitt have moved to delay or roll back federal regulations limiting greenhouse gas emissions while pledging to revive the long-struggling U.S. coal mines.

What is not yet clear is whether Trump plans to initiate a formal withdrawal from the Paris accord, which under the terms of the agreement could take three years, or exit the underlying U.N. climate change treaty on which the accord was based.

## Shulkin: Vets remain a priority for Trump

By NIKKI WENTLING  
*Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — In his second White House press briefing in just over a month, Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin on Wednesday underscored veterans issues as one of President Donald Trump's top domestic priorities.

Wednesday marked Shulkin's 100th day as VA secretary. Along with a renewed focus on reforming 13 areas of “significant risk” at the VA, Shulkin is attempting to bring more transparency to the agency, he said.

“What [Trump] told me is, it's important we be open and candid and transparent about what the problems are,” Shulkin said. “That as a businessman, the only way to fix the issues in

an organization is to come out and talk about what those problems are.”

Shulkin announced that Trump's promised White House hotline for veterans would launch Thursday. The hotline was part of Trump's 10-point plan for VA reform released during his presidential campaign. His plan stated the hotline would be active all day, every day, and answered by a real person. Thursday is the hotline's “soft launch,” Shulkin said. It will be fully operational by Aug. 15. The number for complaints is 855-948-2311.

Shulkin also called on Congress to pass legislation allowing him to more easily fire poor-performing VA workers. The House passed a bill in March to expedite the firing of

VA workers. The Senate is set to vote Tuesday on a revised version of the legislation.

Current law states federal employees are allotted 30 days' advance written notice before they're fired, demoted or suspended. About 1,500 VA employees are at that stage, awaiting disciplinary action, Shulkin said. The span of time from when a manager decides to fire an employee to their removal now averages 51 days, he said. The legislation pending in Congress would cut that 30-day advance notice period to 10 days.

The briefing came one week after the White House released Trump's fiscal 2018 budget proposal, parts of which have been condemned by large veterans service organizations.



# Evacuated civilians on edge as Philippines siege continues

Associated Press

MARAWI, Philippines — There was food and water — welcome commodities amid the frequent tears. There was, finally, safety, at least for the moment. And there were stories — stories of things that mothers and fathers hope never happen to their families.

At an evacuation center outside the besieged Philippine city of Marawi on Wednesday, the results of a week of misery — a week of violence and uncertainty and long nights and promises of better tomorrows — were evident in the faces and hearts of the displaced.

“When you’re desperate, you will do everything to survive,” said Zia Alonto Adiong, a regional lawmaker who welcomed dozens of people, including children, who fled to safety after more than a week trapped inside Marawi.

About 130 people have been killed in the violence, which erupted May 23 after soldiers launched a raid to capture militant leader Isnilon Hapilon, who has been designated leader of the Islamic State group’s Southeast Asia branch.

But the operation went awry and Hapilon got away. Fighters loyal to him surprised government forces with their firepower, fending off airstrikes and house-to-house searches.

The unrest has boosted fears that Islamic State’s violent ideology is gaining a foothold in the country’s restive southern islands, where a Muslim separatist rebellion has raged for decades.

Military spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said Hapilon is believed to still be in Marawi.

“We believe he is still there, and we believe that is why they are putting up a very stiff resistance in the areas that they are still being held up and being cleared,” Padilla told reporters in Manila.

As the two sides battle it out, civilians have been caught in the crossfire.

Bilal Sulaiman, 47, a carpenter, said his wife and three children evacuated to safety early in the conflict but he stayed behind to watch their house near the scene of the battle.

He said when the fighting became too fierce, with bombs exploding two blocks away from his house, he ran for his life to a nearby mountain, where he waited without food and water until he decided to swim across a pond to safety.

He waited in an army-controlled area and was retrieved by government rescuers Wednesday.

Philippine authorities Wednesday said troops had cleared almost 90 percent of Marawi city.

Padilla said 960 civilians had been rescued and an estimated 1,000 residents remained trapped in the city. The dead include 89 militants, 19 civilians and 21 government forces, Padilla said.

Eight other militants surrendered and provided “very, very valuable intelligence” during questioning, Padilla said.

## Prosecutor: Suspect boasted about stabbings

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — A man charged with fatally stabbing two men and injuring a third who tried to shield young women from an anti-Muslim tirade appeared to brag about the attacks as he sat in the back of a police patrol car, saying “that’s what liberalism gets you,” according to court documents.

The probable cause affidavit filed Tuesday offers the most complete official account of the events that unfolded Friday on a light-rail car packed with commuters.

Jeremy Joseph Christian, 35, the man arrested in the stabbings, made his first appearance in court Tuesday. He did not enter a plea and has another court date June 7.

The probable cause affidavit describes a chaotic scene on the train from the moment Christian boarded.

He was drinking sangria and began shouting anti-Muslim slurs once he spotted the two young women. Both are black and one was wearing a Muslim head covering, according to the affidavit signed by Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Ryan Lufkin.

The women moved away from the defendant.

Surveillance video then shows Christian turn his attention to a man, Taliesin Namkai-Meche, who was seated. Namkai-Meche, 23, stood up as Christian began shouting at him.

A third passenger, Micah Fletcher, stood up as well and pushed Christian hard enough to make him stumble.

Christian pulled a folded knife from his pocket and concealed it. As a shoving match ensued, the documents say Christian stabbed first Fletcher, then Namkai-Meche. A fourth passenger, Ricky Best, tried to come to their aid and was stabbed as well.

Best, 53, died on the train and Namkai-Meche died at the hospital a short time later. Fletcher survived and was released from the hospital Monday.

## Immigrant student’s arrest hurts Conn. bill

Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. — A student originally from Mexico, Eric Cruz Lopez, was among the most visible immigration activists on the University of Connecticut campus — up until he was charged with spray-painting expletives about President Donald Trump on the walls of school buildings.

Now his arrest is hurting the push for a bill that would allow students without legal immigration status at the state’s public colleges and universities access to financial aid.

Cruz, who had testified in favor of the legislation, was charged on May 7 with more than 100 counts of misdemeanor vandalism. Police said

he gave a statement admitting to the vandalism and offering to discuss restitution. He did not respond to requests for comment.

The case led state House leaders to postpone a planned vote last week on legislation that would open up \$165 million in institutional financial aid to students without legal status at public colleges and universities. Those students are studying under an Obama-era executive order known as the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, which grants them special visas.

Connecticut Students for a Dream, for which Cruz worked as an organizer, wrote to lawmakers distancing themselves

from his actions.

The group planned a rally at the state Capitol on Wednesday to make another push for the legislation.

But some conservatives, including commentator Ann Coulter, have latched on to Cruz Lopez’s arrest as an example of why they say the students don’t deserve support.

The University of Connecticut and the Connecticut State Colleges & Universities system both support the legislation, which has passed the Senate in each of the last two years.

It was supposed to start this year in the House and may die without a vote in the lower chamber.



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP

## Man with AK-47 fires 108 shots on highway

**FL** MIAMI — Police said a man armed with an AK-47 and a handgun fired 108 rounds at vehicles and officers on a busy Florida highway.

Miami-Dade police Detective Daniel Ferrin said Tuesday that Horvin Ruiz, 36, is facing charges including attempted murder, attempted murder of a police officer and aggravated assault. Ruiz remained jailed Tuesday.

Authorities allege Ruiz began shooting about 1 a.m. Monday as he was driving south on the Palmetto Expressway. Police allege he continued firing after officers arrived. When he ran out of ammunition for the AK-47, he began firing from a 9 mm handgun, police allege. Officers returned fire, and Ruiz surrendered. No one was seriously injured, but several vehicles were damaged.

## Mother arrested after kids share pot cookie

**UT** OGDEN — A mother was arrested in Utah after two of her children shared a cookie laced with marijuana.

The Deseret News reported an ambulance had taken the two girls, ages 3 and 5, to a nearby hospital Saturday after they ate the cookie. They have since been released.

The New Mexico family was getting ready to leave their Utah vacation home in Mountain Green when the girls found and ate the cookie in the family's vehicle.

Their mother caught them eating the last bites and called 911. Police said she admitted it had been her cookie. She was arrested for investigation of child endangerment, possession of marijuana and possession of prescription medication without a prescription.

## Coast Guard member charged in odd attack

**NY** MONTAUK — A U.S. Coast Guard member is accused of beating a 67-year-old woman inside her New York home and was arrested while sleeping in her bed, authorities said.

Matthew Patrick McGee, 22, appeared to be under the influence of drugs, alcohol or a combination when he was arrested Saturday night, East Hampton Police Capt. Christopher Anderson said. He said McGee entered the home in Montauk on eastern Long Island through an unlocked rear door. Investigators said he beat the woman and choked her before she was able to escape, alerting her husband, who was sleeping in another bedroom.

When police arrived, they kicked in the bedroom door and found McGee asleep in the woman's bed. The victim was treated at a hospital for her injuries and released Sunday morning.

McGee, who has no criminal record, was arraigned Monday on charges including assault, burglary and resisting arrest.

## Man accused of assault after popcorn is denied

**TN** CLARKSVILLE — A Tennessee man is accused of throwing a popcorn container at a movie theater worker because the concession stand was closed, then punching and biting a police officer.

Clarksville police spokesman Jim Knoll said in a news release that Paul West, 50, was angry the concession stand would not sell him popcorn Monday night. West then got an empty container from a trash can and demanded a refill.

Knoll said that after the theater staff refused, West threw the container at a worker and ran into the theater. Police said West later threw a trash can at

a police officer and punched and bit her in the face.

Knoll said West was charged with aggravated assault and other counts. He was jailed Tuesday on \$22,500 bond.

## Police issue advisory PSA after pot arrest

**NH** HAMPSTEAD — A New Hampshire police department has issued a public service announcement after a man was arrested with marijuana in his car.

Hampstead police said in a news release Monday, "as a public service announcement — it is illegal to possess recreational marijuana in New Hampshire, even if you only 'smoke it in Massachusetts.'"

WMUR-TV reported that the announcement came after the arrest of Selket Taylor, 27, who was pulled over for using his cellphone while driving. Police said they arrested Taylor after they saw he had a bag of marijuana in a cup holder. He was charged with possession of a controlled drug and transporting a controlled drug in a motor vehicle, among other things.

Recreational use and possession of small amounts of marijuana were legalized in Massachusetts last year.

## Weed whacker sparks brush fire on hillside

**CA** LOS ANGELES — Crews worked through the night Sunday to contain a 55-acre brush fire on a Los Angeles hillside that investigators say was sparked by a weed whacker.

The blaze, which triggered the evacuation of five homes, broke out Sunday on a steep chaparral-covered hillside of Mandeville Canyon and sent up smoke visible for miles. Firefighters were able to contain 95 percent of the fire by Monday.

## Injured trooper dragged as patrol vehicle stolen

**SD** RAPID CITY — A South Dakota Highway Patrol trooper was assaulted and dragged as his patrol vehicle was stolen during a traffic stop.

The Pennington County Sheriff's Office said one suspect was able to get control of the trooper's vehicle Saturday night on Highway 79 south of Rapid City, and the trooper was dragged as the person tried to flee. The trooper shot at the vehicle, which crashed into a creek embankment. The two suspects got away in their own vehicle, but they were arrested later in the night on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

The trooper was treated at a hospital and released.

## Woman probing theft sentenced for stealing

**AK** FAIRBANKS — A woman who had been hired to clean up the mess left after an embezzlement case has been sentenced for embezzling money herself.

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner reported that Bonnie R. Adams was sentenced to six months in prison and three years of probation after being charged with theft, scheming to defraud and falsifying business records. Division of Alaska State Troopers discovered Adams wrote at least \$33,604 worth of checks to herself from the Beaver Kwit'chin Corp. account between November 2012 and March 2013. The BKC board of directors appointed Adams in 2012 to help determine how many current living shareholders the corporation had after she exposed three embezzlers for stealing approximately \$900,000 from the corporation.

From wire reports

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Reporting  
World, National  
and Military News

# Threematch: Cavs-Warriors back again

Associated Press

Here they go again.

For the third straight year, it's Cleveland and Golden State in the NBA Finals. The 2016 champions versus the 2015 champions. The first "threematch" — rematch of a rematch — in league history. It's the matchup most expected, the matchup most predicted, and probably the matchup the Cavaliers and Warriors wanted as well.

"I've been very blessed the last few years to be a part of this league and play on the big stage," said Cleveland star LeBron James, who has now reached the Finals for the eighth time — including each of the past seven years.

The Cavaliers and Warriors split their two meetings this season, both winning at home. Cleveland won by one on Christmas Day, Golden State prevailed by 35 on Jan. 16.

Golden State led the league with 67 wins this season and is a staggering 27-1 in its past 28 games — including a perfect 12-0 in the Western Conference playoffs, the first time a team has gone this deep into an NBA postseason without losing. Cleveland, which seemed sleepy at times in the regular season, went 12-1 in the Eastern Conference playoffs that ended with a win over Boston.

"Playing in this league, you can't take anything for granted," Warriors guard Stephen Curry said. "Thirty teams suit up every year trying to get to this point, and only two teams do. So you have to appreciate it. ... We need to understand the privilege that we have and the opportunity that we have to play in the Finals again, to have

the opportunity to win a championship."

Already, the back-and-forth is underway.

Cleveland coach Tyronn Lue was quoted saying he thought Boston's offense was "harder to defend" than Golden State's. Countered Golden State acting coach Mike Brown, when asked about it: "That's his opinion. It's cute."

And there will be reminders of the Halloween party that James threw for the Cavaliers last fall, with "3-1 Lead" — a nod to what the Warriors lost in last year's Finals — prominently displayed on the drum set.

But there's also a clear respect level between the clubs as well.

"The best team in our league the last three years," James said of the Warriors. "And they've added an unbelievable player in Kevin Durant this year. So it makes it even more difficult. They're going to challenge us a lot, offensively, defensively, mentally, physically. We have to be ready for the challenge."

For James, the Finals are an annual rite.

For Durant, this trip ends a five-year wait.

Durant's only other time in the Finals was 2012 when he was with Oklahoma City. The Thunder lost to Miami in five games, a series that made James a champion for the first time.

At the very moment where the clock ran out in that series, the person James was embracing was Durant — telling the then-Thunder star, his offseason workout partner at the time, how proud of him he was.

"Hopefully," James said that night, "I don't continue to have to run into him."

Durant's decision to leave the Thunder for Golden State as a free agent last summer meant the Warriors went from mere overwhelming favorites to win the West again to super-duper-overwhelming favorites to win the West again. They got a big scare in late February when Durant had a left knee injury, but he's back and the Warriors have rolled since.

"It's a little different, definitely. I can't lie," Durant said, when comparing the 2012 Finals trip to this one. "I went when I was 23 years old, and it felt like the Western Conference finals was almost like the championship. Just getting to that point, you know how hard it is and how much work you put in to start the season. So it's a little different now, obviously. We have a bigger goal in mind."

The storylines are many. Can James win his fourth ring? Can Durant win his first? Will the Warriors be haunted by letting last season's 3-1 lead slip away? Will they become the first team in NBA history to go undefeated in a postseason? How will Golden State guard Kyrie Irving? How will Cleveland try to contain Curry?

There's also the irony that Brown, the first coach who took James to an NBA Finals in 2007 — Cleveland was swept by San Antonio — will now coach against him, likely in the same leading role he's had for Golden State since head coach Steve Kerr was forced to take a break because of continued problems with his surgically repaired back.

"I don't care who you're playing, to make it to the NBA Finals, to win your conference finals, it's a big task," Brown said.

## A look at how NBA Finals teams match up

Associated Press

A position-by-position look at the matchups in the NBA Finals between the Golden State Warriors and the Cleveland Cavaliers:

**Center: Zaza Pachulia vs. Tristan Thompson.** Pachulia is back and ready to go after missing two games in the Western finals with a heel injury. He may not be out there long if the Warriors decide they need more mobility against Thompson, who is nearly averaging a double-double and shooting 60 percent while creating plenty of extra possessions with his offensive rebounding for the Cavaliers. **Edge:** Cavaliers.

**Power forward: Draymond Green vs. Kevin Love.** Green wanted the matchup with the Cavaliers after Golden State fell short last year despite his brilliant Game 7, and now here it comes. On top of his versatility and defense that is so important to Golden State, he's shooting 47 percent from three-point range in the postseason, tops on a team that has some of the best perimeter shooters in the world. Love broke out in a big way in the Eastern finals after opening the playoffs with two quiet rounds, averaging 22.6 points and 12.4 rebounds against Boston. **Edge:** Warriors.

**Small forward: Kevin Durant vs.**

**LeBron James.** Durant has been terrific in his first postseason with the Warriors, averaging 25.2 points on 55.6 percent shooting. James has been even better, putting up 32.5 points on nearly 57 percent shooting, and adding 8.0 rebounds and 7.0 assists per game. James won his first NBA title five years ago at Durant's expense, and now Durant tries to get his first. **Edge:** Cavaliers.

**Shooting guard: Klay Thompson vs. J.R. Smith.** Thompson's shot has been off in the postseason, hitting just about 38 percent from the field, but his defense is probably more important than his offense now anyway as the usual primary defender

against Kyrie Irving. Smith has had a quiet postseason, playing more than 30 minutes and taking more than eight shots just once in the Eastern Conference finals. **Edge:** Warriors.

**Point guard: Stephen Curry vs. Kyrie Irving.** Starting with his big performance in Game 5 that helped start Cleveland's comeback, Irving has repeatedly hurt the Warriors. Now he comes into this series off a sizzling conference finals series, shooting 62 percent against Boston. Curry is averaging 28.6 points in the playoffs and looking like a different player now than heading into last year's Finals after a knee injury earlier in the postseason. **Edge:** Warriors.



# Djokovic, Muguruza win at French Open

Associated Press

PARIS — One struggled, the other had a stroll in the park.

In contrasting fashion, defending champions Novak Djokovic and Garbine Muguruza both advanced to the third round at the French Open on Wednesday.

Second-seeded Djokovic barely put a foot wrong in a 6-1, 6-4, 6-3 win over Joao Sousa, while Muguruza had to dig deep to avoid becoming the first reigning champion at Roland Garros to lose in the second round since 2014, when she upset Serena Williams.

Resuming his quest for a 10th title in Paris, Rafael Nadal later joined Djokovic and Muguruza without dropping a set, dispatching Robin Haase 6-1, 6-4, 6-3 in one hour and 49 minutes.

The fourth-seeded Muguruza had to work hard for more than two hours on the Philippe Chatrier show court before ral-

lying past 53rd-ranked Anett Kontaveit 6-7 (4), 6-4, 6-2.

Playing at Roland Garros for the 20th time, a record in the Open era, Venus Williams also reached the third round after defeating Kurumi Nara of Japan 6-3, 6-1.

As often in Paris, Djokovic spoke in French during his on-court interview, and joked.

"I'm sorry for my French; my teacher is on holiday," he said.

On a more serious note, Djokovic said he was pleased with his form after coming through some difficult times since completing a career Grand Slam at Roland Garros last year.

"I felt better than in the first round, that's exactly what I wanted," he said.

After dropping the opening set against Kontaveit, Muguruza was down a break in the second before coming back. Playing close to the lines, she got back into her stride and took

the decider in 32 minutes on the first of two match points.

"I think she was playing so, so good for the first two sets," Muguruza said. "I was just hanging in there, being aggressive and waiting for my moment."

Earlier in the day, Petra Kvitova's first tournament since being injured in a knife attack at her home came to an early end.

The two-time Wimbledon champion, who was seeded 15th, lost 7-6 (5), 7-6 (5) to American qualifier Bethanie Mattek-Sands. Kvitova threw her racket in frustration after double-faulting on match point, but the players warmly embraced at the net.

Kvitova returned to tennis in Paris after being attacked in the Czech Republic in December.

Home favorite Jo-Wilfried Tsonga also exited the tournament, unable to turn around a first-round match against Roland Garros debutant Renzo

Olivo that had been suspended on Tuesday due to darkness.

Back on court with the 12th-seeded Tsonga trailing 7-5, 6-4, 6-7 (6), 5-4, the Frenchman lasted less than eight minutes, losing the first three points on his serve but managing to save the three match points. Olivo converted the next one with a forehand crosscourt winner to prevail 6-4.

Tsonga had never lost to a player ranked as low as No. 91 at a Grand Slam.

There was also an unexpected visitor at the French Open, Serena Williams.

The winner of 23 Grand Slam singles titles is not playing for the rest of this season because she is pregnant. Williams found a seat in the shade at Court Philippe Chatrier during her older sister Venus' match against Nara.

Serena Williams' baby is due in the fall. She has said she will return to the tour in 2018.

## Pens' Malkin focused on winning Cups, not stardom

Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Just about anywhere else in the NHL, Evgeni Malkin would be "The Guy."

The captain. The unquestioned leader. The brightest star. The fulcrum around which to build a franchise.

Yet he has found comfort, peace and freedom in Pittsburgh, where the player everyone calls "Geno" has spent the last 11 years not as "The Guy" but "The Other Guy." That's not a slight. How can it be when the player a few stalls over in the dressing room happens to be a good friend and the best player in the world?

Sure, if he played in another market, Malkin would be the centerpiece. Why do that when you get to chase Stanley Cups every spring with Sidney Crosby?

"I don't want to be No. 1 in Carolina," Malkin said on the eve of Pittsburgh's Stanley Cup

Final date with Nashville. "I want to be better (with) Sid."

And occasionally more dangerous than Sid.

It's Malkin, not Crosby, who leads the league in scoring during the playoffs. The big Russian's power-play goal in Pittsburgh's 5-3 Game 1 victory over the Predators gave him 25 points in 20 games, just ahead of Crosby's 22 in 19. If the Penguins find a way to fend off Nashville and raise the Cup for a second straight year and the third time in the Crosby and Malkin era, it could be Malkin who walks away with a second Conn Smythe Trophy as postseason MVP.

Not that Malkin is keeping track. Point out he won his Hart Trophy as NHL MVP in 2012 during a season in which Crosby was limited to just 22 games due to a concussion, Malkin shrugs. When he was left off the NHL's list of 100 greatest players released at the All-Star

Break, he cracked a couple of jokes and moved on. Asked to revisit the omission over the weekend, Malkin responded with typical bluntness.

"No, I don't care, my record is Cups," Malkin said. "If I win like one more Cup, it's like my record. I not think about points. It's only team."

If Crosby is the Penguins' captain and conscience, Malkin is their ID. While the unfailingly understated Crosby searches for the right thing to say, Malkin usually only pipes up when there's something he needs to get off his chest.

After Pittsburgh failed to close out Ottawa in Game 6 of the Eastern Conference finals, Malkin groused about the need for him to be better even though he was the best player in black and gold on a night his sublime second-period goal gave Pittsburgh a lead it couldn't quite hold. That's just Geno being Geno.

"He plays a pretty emotional game," Crosby said. "His game is skilled, but physically he's not afraid to engage."

That fearlessness, however, can make it appear at times that the 30-year-old is indestructible. He's not. He gritted his way through the 2016 playoffs despite searing pain in his right elbow, not that it stopped him from putting up six goals and 12 assists as the Penguins won their fourth Cup.

Malkin fled Russia and the Kontinental Hockey League a few weeks after his 20th birthday in 2006 to begin a new life 5,500 miles away from home. He forged a bond with another generational talent, one whose own greatness has forced Malkin not to take his own for granted. He could have chosen to explore free agency three years ago but instead signed an eight-year extension with Pittsburgh long before he hit the open market.

# Dodgers top Cards, move atop NL West

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Chase Utley was searching for his batting stroke in April. He's found it in May.

Utley, Logan Forsythe and Chris Taylor combined to reach base 12 times and totaled six runs, helping the streaking Los Angeles Dodgers rally past the St. Louis Cardinals 9-4 on Tuesday night to move atop the NL West.

The Dodgers went ahead of the Colorado Rockies, who lost 10-4 to the Seattle Mariners.

Utley finished a homer shy of the cycle and was hit by a pitch as the Dodgers won their season-high sixth straight game. Forsythe reached five times, including three walks, and Taylor reached three times.

"Hitting the ball where they're not playing to be honest, squaring some balls up, putting some good at-bats together," Utley said. "Having a little success can breed confi-

dence and I've always had the opinion that a confident hitter is a good hitter."

Adrian Gonzalez's sacrifice fly and Utley's RBI double started the Dodgers comeback in the third. Enrique Hernandez tied it at 3 with a single, and Paul DeJong's throwing error on the same play scored Utley to give the Dodgers a 4-3 lead.

The Dodgers scored three more times behind one hit in the fifth as relievers Tyler Lyons and John Brebbia each walked in a run.

"I think the at-bat quality and there's a thing about winning 90 feet when we need to," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "And guys were able to get on base and win 90 feet when we had too."

Utley has hit .333 (22-for-66) in May and he has three homers in his last six games after hitting just .122 in April.

"It wasn't ideal," Utley said of his slow start. "Not something

you really anticipate, but it is what it is and I've been through some funks through the course of my career before. You try to stay positive. You try to stick with what you know and what helped make you successful and hopefully it turns around."

Kenta Maeda spotted the Cardinals three first-inning runs for the second straight start, but once again held them scoreless after that to give the Dodgers a chance to come back.

Brandon Morrow (1-0) led a parade of six Dodgers relievers. The Dodgers bullpen gave up one run in five innings, the third consecutive game Los Angeles relievers had to get more than nine outs.

The Cardinals, who've lost 10 out of their last 13 games, capitalized on a fortunate call and a couple of Dodgers errors to take a 3-0 lead in the first.

Dexter Fowler appeared to be thrown out trying to steal sec-

ond following a strikeout, but umpire Mark Wegner called a close 3-2 pitch to Tommy Pham ball four. Matt Carpenter followed with a single, Taylor's throwing error scored Fowler, and Pham and Carpenter took an extra base on Maeda's throwing error on the same play. Yadier Molina drove them both home with a single.

"When we score three in the first we anticipate that's a game we're going to add on to and win," Cardinals manager Mike Matheny said. "We started out real well and then we couldn't get anything positive going."

Molina had three RBIs, and his homer off Chris Hatcher in the eighth broke the Dodger bullpen's scoreless innings streak at 24<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings.

Michael Wacha (2-3) needed 77 pitches to get through three innings, the shortest outing for a Cardinals starter this season. Three of the four runs he allowed were earned.

## Sale shaky, but helps Red Sox beat his former team

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Chris Sale made a shaky return to his former home, but Deven Marrero hit two of Boston's season-high six home runs and the Red Sox beat the Chicago White Sox 13-7 on Tuesday night.

Mookie Betts, Jackie Bradley Jr., Xander Bogaerts and Mitch Moreland also went deep. The Red Sox won for the seventh time in nine games after an anticipated duel between aces never materialized.

Sale (6-2) got a warm reception from the crowd and a rude welcome from his old team. The five-time All-Star gave up six runs and 10 hits — both season highs — over five innings in his first appearance against the White Sox.

Chicago left-hander Jose Quintana (2-7) got pounded for seven runs and 10 hits in 2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings.

It was his shortest outing since he lasted one inning

against the New York Yankees on Sept. 2, 2013.

**Angels 9, Braves 3:** Albert Pujols hit his 599th career homer during his team's nine-run third inning, leading host Los Angeles past Atlanta.

**Nationals 6, Giants 3:** Gio Gonzalez (4-1) pitched into the seventh inning to win for the first time since April 27 as visiting Washington beat San Francisco.

**Astros 7, Twins 2:** At Minneapolis, Jose Altuve had four hits and two RBIs, Mike Fiers struck out eight over six innings in his bid to retain a spot in his team's banged-up rotation, and major league-leading Houston earned its sixth straight victory.

**Padres 6, Cubs 2:** Austin Hedges homered and drove in four runs, and host San Diego handed Chicago its fifth straight loss.

**Indians 9, Athletics 4:** Trevor Bauer (5-4) struck out an

AL-best 14 in seven innings, leading host Cleveland past Oakland.

**Yankees 8, Orioles 3:** Brett Gardner and Matt Holliday each homered twice, Aaron Judge drove in two runs and visiting New York received a solid pitching performance from Luis Severino (4-2).

**Mets 5, Brewers 4 (12):** Jay Bruce lined a game-ending single in the 12th inning and host New York rebounded to beat Milwaukee after shortstop Asdrubal Cabrera allowed the tying runs to score in the seventh when he flubbed a bases-loaded popup with two outs.

**Marlins 7, Phillies 2:** Giancarlo Stanton hit his third homer since moving into the No. 2 spot in the batting order, a change that has revived host Miami, which won its third game in a row.

**Diamondbacks 3, Pirates 0:** Arizona left-hander Robbie Ray (5-3) pitched a four-hitter

against host Pittsburgh in his first career complete game.

**Royals 1, Tigers 0:** Eric Skoglund pitched 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> innings of two-hit ball in his major league debut, helping host Kansas City beat Justin Verlander and Detroit.

**Mariners 10, Rockies 4:** Kyle Seager homered and drove in four runs for visiting Seattle, and Robinson Cano also connected against Colorado.

**Rangers 9, Rays 5:** Elvis Andrus had a career-high five RBIs for host Texas, including a tying three-run homer in the seventh inning.

**Blue Jays 6, Reds 4:** Kendrys Morales hit a tiebreaking homer in the eighth inning for host Toronto, and Josh Donaldson belted an upper-deck drive.

All six Toronto runs came on homers. Jose Bautista and Russell Martin also connected for the Blue Jays, who have hit 47 homers in May.