

Poland: US will not cut troop presence

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Key NATO ally Poland said it was told that the American military footprint will be maintained in the country, which has emerged as the center of gravity for the U.S. Army in Europe.

“We have received confirmation that there will be no reduction in the presence of American troops in Poland,” Polish Defense Minister Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz said in a statement Thursday.

There are now about 8,000 troops in the country, mostly carrying out missions on a rotational basis with the aim of deterring Russian aggression.

Poland’s announcement comes on the heels of a decision Wednesday to end the deployment of a rotational U.S. Army brigade to Romania, where the Defense Department had increased troop levels in the aftermath of Russia’s 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The situation has prompted some allies to seek answers

about U.S. military plans for Europe, where an ongoing Pentagon force posture review could entail more cuts.

Along NATO’s eastern flank, there is heightened concern about the future of the U.S. commitment to collective defense.

In all, there are about 85,000 U.S. troops in Europe, roughly 20,000 of whom are on rotational missions.

Germany is home to the largest American contingent, with some 38,000 troops spread out

at various bases and garrisons in the country.

Poland joins Estonia in receiving notification that there are no plans for Pentagon troop cuts in their countries.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth had previously offered reassurances to Warsaw that the U.S. military presence in Poland was on firm ground.

And in September, President Donald Trump said he was open to the idea of increasing the American troop commitment in Poland.

DOD launches new strike in Caribbean, killing 3

Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — The U.S. military has carried out another lethal strike on alleged drug smugglers in the Caribbean Sea, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth announced Saturday.

Hegseth in a social media posting said the vessel was operated by a U.S.-designated terrorist organization but did not name which group was targeted. He said three people were killed in the strike.

It’s at least the 15th such strike carried out by the U.S. military in the Caribbean or eastern Pacific since early September.

“This vessel—like EVERY OTHER—was known by our intelligence to be involved in illicit narcotics smuggling, was transiting along a known narco-trafficking route, and carrying narcotics,” Hegseth said in a posting on X.

The U.S. military has now killed at least 64 people in the strikes.

Trump has justified the at-

tacks as a necessary escalation to stem the flow of drugs into the United States. He has asserted the U.S. is engaged in an “armed conflict” with drug cartels, relying on the same legal authority used by the Bush administration when it declared a war on terrorism after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

U.S. lawmakers have been repeatedly rebuffed by the White House in their demand that the administration release more information about the legal justification for the strikes as well as greater details about which cartels have been targeted and the individuals killed.

Hegseth in his Saturday posting announcing the latest strike said “narco-terrorists are bringing drugs to our shores to poison Americans at home” and the Defense Department “will treat them EXACTLY how we treated al-Qaida.”

Senate Democrats renewed their request for more information about the strikes in a letter on Friday to Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Director of Na-

tional Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard and Hegseth.

“We also request that you provide all legal opinions related to these strikes and a list of the groups or other entities the President has deemed targetable,” the senators wrote.

Among those signing the letter were Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer as well as Sens. Jack Reed, Jeanne Shaheen, Mark Warner, Chris Coons, Patty Murray and Brian Schatz.

The letter says that thus far the administration “has selectively shared what has at times been contradictory information” with some members, “while excluding others.”

Earlier Friday, the Republican chairman and ranking Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee released a pair of letters sent to Hegseth written in late September and early October requesting the department’s legal rationale for the strikes and the list of drug cartels that the Trump administration has designated as terro-

rist organizations in its justification for the use of military force.

The Navy has eight warships in the Caribbean, about 10 percent of its deployed fleet, The Washington Post reported. That includes several destroyers and two amphibious ships. A submarine and a Special Operations vessel carrying helicopters also are in the region, and an aircraft carrier and several more destroyers are on the way. The military has flown helicopters and bombers close to Venezuela multiple times and moved F-35s and other aircraft to Puerto Rico.

Trump has said repeatedly that the boat strikes may expand to include targets on land, at times suggesting he may hit Venezuelan territory. “We are certainly looking at land now, because we’ve got the sea very well under control,” he said.

On Friday, however, when asked whether he was considering strikes within Venezuela, he told reporters, “No, it’s not true,” according to the Post.

Osprey unit's command team removed

BY BRIAN McELHINEY
Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps has relieved the command team of an MV-22 Osprey squadron based in Hawaii, citing a loss of trust and confidence in their ability to meet aviation standards, a service spokesman said.

Lt. Col. Shaina Hennessey was relieved of command Tuesday of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 268 at Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay, said 2nd Lt. B.K. Rhodes, a spokesman for the Okinawa-based 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.

Hennessey was removed by wing commander Maj. Gen. Marcus Annibale due to a "loss of trust

and confidence in her ability to uphold the safety and readiness standards expected in Marine Corps aviation," Rhodes said in an email Thursday.

The squadron's senior enlisted adviser, Sgt. Maj. Jamie Lampley, and its executive officer were also relieved that day, Rhodes said.

He declined by phone Thursday to name the executive officer "out of respect for the position." Rhodes declined to say why the other two leaders were fired.

"We take accountability seriously in the Marine Corps, and we want to make sure that we maintain the trust of the American people and the integrity of our mis-

sion," he said.

The 268th is one of two Osprey squadrons at Kaneohe Bay under Marine Aircraft Group 24, which transports troops, supplies and equipment, according to the group's website.

Hennessey took command of the squadron on Dec. 6. An Osprey and CH-46E Sea Knight pilot, she previously served as an operational planner for the I Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Pendleton, Calif., from July 2021 to June 2024, according to her LinkedIn profile.

A California native, Hennessey joined the Marine Corps in 2007, according to her service biography. She previously flew with the

wing on Okinawa.

Lampley, a native of Tennessee, enlisted in 2000 and previously served with the wing at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, according to his biography.

Lt. Col. John Campbell has taken command of the squadron, Rhodes said. Campbell most recently led the personnel support detachment for Marine Aircraft Group 24 at Kaneohe, according to his service biography.

Sgt. Maj. Joshua Henderson has been assigned as the squadron's new senior enlisted leader. He previously served in the same role for Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 24, also based at Kaneohe, according to his biography.

US, China to set up direct military communications

Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia — U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Sunday that Washington and Beijing would establish military-to-military communications channels, adding that bilateral ties between the countries have "never been better."

Hegseth said he spoke with his Chinese counterpart, Adm. Dong Jun, late Saturday on the sidelines of a regional security meeting and that they agreed that "peace, stability and good relations are the best path for our two great and strong countries."

His remarks posted on X came hours after he urged Southeast Asian nations to stand firm and strengthen their maritime forces to counter China's increasingly "destabilizing" actions in the South China Sea.

"China's sweeping territorial and maritime claims in the South China Sea fly in the face of their commitments to resolve disputes peacefully," Hegseth said at a

meeting with his counterparts from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on Saturday.

"We seek peace. We do not seek conflict. But we must ensure that China is not seeking to dominate you or anybody else," he added.

The South China Sea remains one of Asia's most volatile flashpoints. Beijing claims almost the entire region, while ASEAN members the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei also claim ownership of coastal areas and features. The Philippines, a key U.S. ally, has had frequent clashes with China's maritime fleet.

Manila has repeatedly urged a stronger regional response, but ASEAN has traditionally sought to balance caution with economic ties to Beijing, the region's largest trading partner.

Hegseth said on X that he also spoke with President Donald Trump and they agreed "the relationship between the U.S. and China has never been better."

Hegseth seeks to reassure a cautious Vietnam, stay tight

Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam — U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth was in Vietnam on Sunday, reaffirming a partnership built on healing the scars of the Vietnam War in a trip that will test whether Washington can reassure a vital but wary partner.

Hegseth said addressing the legacies of the war, which ended 50 years ago in April, "remains the foundation of our defense relationship and a top priority for this administration and the Department of Defense."

Hegseth's visit also marks 30 years of diplomatic ties between the former foes and two years since they upgraded relations to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, Vietnam's highest diplomatic status. He arrived in Hanoi from a meeting of counterparts from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Cooperation on postwar issues remains an emotional and political foundation of U.S.-Vietnam

relations. Since normalizing ties in 1995, the two countries have worked together to clear unexploded ordnance, recover remains of missing service members and clean up dioxin used in Agent Orange from former U.S. air bases. There were concerns about the future of these efforts when U.S. funding for several programs was slashed.

The visible recommitment to these projects could help stabilize relations and "create space" for further defense cooperation, said Nguyen Khac Giang, a visiting fellow in the Vietnam Studies Program at Singapore's ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.

"War legacy cooperation is the foundation enabling deeper defense ties," he said. "For Washington, it demonstrates long-term responsibility and goodwill to solve lingering war consequences. For Hanoi, it provides essential political cover for expanding relations with a former adversary."

Trump threatens Nigeria military action

Associated Press

ABUJA, Nigeria — President Donald Trump on Saturday said he's ordered the Pentagon to begin planning for potential military action in Nigeria as he stepped up his allegations that the government is failing to rein in the persecution of Christians in the West African country.

On Sunday, a Nigerian presidential spokesman said the U.S. cannot unilaterally carry out any military operation in Nigeria over its claims of Christian persecution.

Such military threat from Trump is based on misleading reports and appears to be part of "Trump's style of going forceful in order to force a sit-down and have a conversation," according to Daniel Bwala, a spokesman for

Nigerian President Bola Tinubu.

Bwala was responding to Trump's comment on Saturday that he has ordered the Pentagon to begin planning for potential military action in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, over alleged Christian persecution in the country. The president also warned that he "will immediately stop all aid and assistance to Nigeria."

"If the Nigerian Government continues to allow the killing of Christians, the U.S.A. will immediately stop all aid and assistance to Nigeria, and may very well go into that now disgraced country, 'guns-a-blazing,' to completely wipe out the Islamic Terrorists who are committing these horrible atrocities," Trump posted on social media.

The warning came after Tinubu earlier on Saturday pushed back on Trump announcing a day earlier that he was designating the West African country "a country of particular concern" for allegedly failing to rein in the persecution of Christians.

In a social media statement on Saturday, Tinubu said that the characterization of Nigeria as a religiously intolerant country does not reflect the national reality.

"Religious freedom and tolerance have been a core tenet of our collective identity and shall always remain so," Tinubu said. "Nigeria opposes religious persecution and does not encourage it. Nigeria is a country with constitutional guarantees to protect citizens of all faiths."

Trump on Friday said "Christianity is facing an existential threat in Nigeria" and "radical Islamists are responsible for this mass slaughter."

Trump's comment came weeks after U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, urged Congress to designate Africa's most populous country as a violator of religious freedom with claims of "Christian mass murder."

Nigeria's population of 220 million is split almost equally between Christians and Muslims. The country has long faced insecurity from various fronts including the Boko Haram extremist group, which seeks to establish its radical interpretation of Islamic law and has also targeted Muslims it deems not Muslim enough.

Video shows ICE agent punching restrained man

Associated Press

Police in a Chicago suburb are collecting videos and other evidence to send to the Illinois attorney general's office after a car crash involving a U.S. Border Patrol vehicle led to a violent arrest caught on video showing an agent repeatedly punching a man in the head while pinned to the ground.

Immigration agents arrested three people after a sedan collided with the rear of the U.S. Border Patrol vehicle around noon Friday in the city of Evanston. The episode drew a crowd of onlookers and quickly escalated.

Videos posted to social media show some in the crowd appearing to try to interfere with the arrests. Federal agents are seen at times deploying pepper spray, punching a man who approaches the officers, and pointing a gun in the direction of another woman who opened the agents' vehicle door, where a detainee had been placed.

Federal agents have been spreading throughout Evanston in recent days as part of President Donald Trump's immigration enforcement activities in the Chicago region. In response some Evanston community members have set up "rapid response" teams, organizing to warn residents when federal agents are spotted and working to slow the agents as they travel through the region.

One agent who was restraining a man on the ground Friday appeared to punch him in the head as it was pressed against the asphalt. The Department of Homeland Security later said the officer delivered "defensive strikes" after the man "grabbed the agent's genitals and squeezed."

Some witnesses claimed online that the agents caused the crash by suddenly braking in front of the sedan, though federal officials disputed that account. City leaders swiftly condemned the agents' actions.

Mich. lawyer disputes FBI director's terror plot claim

Associated Press

A Michigan defense lawyer is disputing FBI Director Kash Patel's allegations that his 20-year-old client and four other young suspects were planning to carry out a terror attack on Halloween weekend.

Announcing their arrests on Friday, Patel said more information would be coming soon, however the FBI and Michigan authorities have offered few details about the case. Spokespersons for the state and national FBI and the U.S. Attorney in Detroit did not immediately respond to messages Saturday.

The investigation involved discussion in an online chat room involving at least some of the suspects who were taken into custody, according to two people briefed on the investigation who could not publicly discuss details. They spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity. The group allegedly discussed carrying out an attack around Halloween, referring to

"pumpkin day," according to one of the people. The other person briefed on the investigation confirmed that there had been a "pumpkin" reference.

However, lawyer Amir Makled, who represents a man from the suburb of Dearborn who was still detained on Saturday, said federal authorities haven't given him many details about the investigation but after reviewing the matter, he concluded that no terror event was planned. He said he doesn't expect any charges will be filed.

"I don't know where this hysteria and this fearmongering came from," Makled said. He described the all-male group of U.S. citizens as gamers, and said they range in age from 16 to 20.

"If these young men were on forums that they should not have been on or things of that nature, then we'll have to wait and see," Makled said. "But I don't believe that there's anything illegal about any of the activity they were doing."

Police rule out terrorism in UK train stabbing

Associated Press

LONDON — Police were questioning a 32-year-old British man Sunday on suspicion of attempted murder over a mass stabbing attack that spread fear and panic on a London-bound train and left 11 people hospitalized.

A second man initially arrested as a suspect was released without charge. Police said they have determined that the 35-year-old was not involved. Police are not treating the stabbings as an act of terror but have not disclosed a possible motive or the type of knife, or knives, used.

Six people remained in hospi-

tals Sunday, one of them in a life-threatening condition. Police said he is a member of railway staff who tried to stop the attack and saved many lives with his “heroic” actions. Five other injured people were discharged from hospitals.

The men were arrested eight minutes after the first emergency calls were made at 7:42 p.m. Saturday from aboard the train, where passengers had reported scenes of panic and chaos with many running through the carriages and some seeking safety in the toilets.

“This is a shocking incident and my thoughts are with those who have been injured and their

families,” British Transport Police Superintendent John Loveless said outside the station in Huntingdon in eastern England where the train halted soon after the attack.

“There is nothing to suggest this is a terrorist incident,” he added.

The train made an emergency stop in Huntingdon, a market town around 75 miles north of London. Bloodied and confused passengers spilled out of the train as dozens of police waited, some of them armed.

During the immediate response to the attack, police said that “Plato,” the national code word used by police and emer-

gency services when responding to what could be a “marauding terror attack,” was initiated. That declaration was later rescinded.

The attack took place as the 6:25 p.m. train from Doncaster in northern England to London’s King’s Cross station was about halfway through its two-hour journey, having just departed from a stop at Peterborough.

Following reports that some of those on board the train put themselves in harm’s way to protect others, Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood praised the “exceptional bravery of staff and passengers on the train.”

Israel says latest remains returned are not hostages

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — The remains of three people Hamas handed over to the Red Cross in Gaza do not belong to any hostages, Israel said Saturday, in the latest setback to the U.S.-brokered ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war.

The handover followed Israel’s return on Friday of the bodies of 30 Palestinians to Gaza, which completed an exchange after militants turned over remains of two hostages earlier in the week.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s office confirmed that the remains did not belong to hostages. It was unclear who the remains belonged to.

Hamas’ armed wing said it had offered to hand over samples on Friday of unidentified bodies but Israel refused and asked for the remains for examination.

“We handed the bodies over to stop the claims of Israel,” the statement said. Health officials in Gaza have struggled to identify bodies without access to DNA

kits.

Families and supporters rallied once again on Saturday night to call for the return of all hostages. While Yael Adar, mother of the late Tamir Adar, asserted to a rally in Tel Aviv that “the Hamas scum are mocking us,” Moran Harari, friend of the late Carmel Gat, urged Israel to have restraint during a rally in Jerusalem.

Since the ceasefire took effect on Oct. 10, Palestinian militants have released the remains of 17 hostages. Eleven remain in Gaza. Militants have released one or two bodies every few days. Israel has urged faster progress. Hamas has said the work is complicated by widespread devastation and Israeli military presence in some areas.

Israel has been releasing the unidentified remains of 15 Palestinians for the remains of each Israeli hostage. The number of Palestinian bodies returned by Israel since the ceasefire began now stands at 225. Only 75 have been identified by families, according to Gaza’s Health Ministry.

Aid efforts struggle to reach hurricane-hit Jamaican areas

Associated Press

KINGSTON, Jamaica — Rescuers and aid workers fanned out across Jamaica on Saturday to distribute food and water and reach communities still isolated four days after Hurricane Melissa hit the island.

Essential relief supplies are now rolling into hurricane-stricken St. Elizabeth and Westmoreland, most of which had been cut off by concrete posts and trees strewn across roads.

But in some parts, people were forced to dip buckets into rivers, collecting the muddy water for everyday use, while others have been drinking coconut water and roasting breadfruit.

In Westmoreland, mangled metal sheets, splintered wooden frames of houses and fragments of furniture littered the coastline.

Social Security Minister Parnell Charles Jr. was among several convoys of emergency responders en route to deliver ready-to-eat meals, water, tarpaulins, blankets, medicine and other essentials.

“The priority now is to get help to those who need it,” said Charles Jr. during a brief stop en

route to Black River for the first time with long-awaited relief supplies.

The Jamaica Defense Force set up a satellite disaster relief site at the Luana community center near Black River where care packages are being dispatched to hurricane-stricken residents.

Many have been without vital supplies since Tuesday and quickly converged around a JDF truck as word spread that relief supplies were being distributed in the sweltering afternoon sun.

Melissa has left devastation in its wake, snapping power lines and toppling buildings, disrupting food and water distribution and destroying crop fields.

Some people have been walking for miles in search of basic goods and to check on loved ones, as more than 60% of the island remained without power. Helicopters have been dropping food in cut-off communities.

“People are in shock and they’re waiting on relief,” said World Vision’s national director of domestic humanitarian and emergency affairs Mike Bassett, who traveled to the town of Santa Cruz in St. Elizabeth on Friday.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Over 1,000 items stolen in early morning heist

CA OAKLAND — Police are investigating the theft of more than 1,000 items from a museum's collection including metalwork jewelry, Native American baskets and everyday items like athletic trophies that tell the story of the Golden State.

The burglary occurred in the early morning hours of Oct. 15 at an off-site storage facility of the Oakland Museum of California, Oakland Police said in a news release Wednesday.

Lori Fogarty, the museum's director, said Thursday the investigation was going public because the artifacts might show up at flea markets, antique stores or pawn shops.

Blood pressure medicine recalled over chemical

DC WASHINGTON — The U.S. Food and Drug Administration says drug makers have recalled more than a half-million bottles of the blood pressure medication prazosin hydrochloride over concerns it may include a cancer-causing chemical.

New Jersey-based Teva Pharmaceuticals USA and drugs distributor Amerisource Health Services issued voluntary nationwide recalls last month of more than 580,000 bottles of various strengths of prazosine capsules, according to the FDA.

Doctors prescribe prazosin, which relaxes blood vessels, to help lower blood pressure. It also is sometimes prescribed for nightmares and other sleep disturbances caused by post-traumatic stress disorder.

Secret sex video part of conspiracy case

MD ANNAPOLIS — A Maryland state senator has been indicted on federal charges including extortion related to her 2022 campaign for a state House seat for allegedly conspiring to threaten the release of an explicit video of a former consultant's affair.

State Sen. Dalya Attar, a Baltimore Democrat, was charged in a federal indictment unsealed Thursday that involves her brother, Joseph Attar, and Kalman Finkelstein, a Baltimore police officer who worked on her campaign.

The group conspired to silence a former consultant by threatening to make public a video of her in bed with a married man, according to the indictment. The alleged purpose was to obtain evidence that could be used to prevent her from saying negative things about the lawmaker's campaign.

The senator said in a statement that the case centers on "the allegations of my former disgruntled employee," and she noted that "we have yet to see any tangible evidence to support the claim that I knew of any illegal actions taken on my behalf."

2 sheriffs, 12 officers face bribery charges

MS JACKSON — Federal authorities Thursday announced indictments against 20 people, including 14 current or former Mississippi Delta law enforcement officers, that allege the officers took bribes to provide safe passage to people they believed

were drug traffickers.

The yearslong investigation swept across multiple counties in the Mississippi Delta region of Mississippi and Tennessee. Two Mississippi sheriffs, Washington County Sheriff Milton Gaston and Humphreys County Sheriff Bruce Williams, were among those arrested.

Some bribes were as large as \$20,000 and \$37,000, authorities said at a news conference.

2 die in basements flooded from record rain

NY NEW YORK — Two people died in flooded New York City basements Thursday during a rainstorm that shut down roadways and caused airport delays, authorities said.

A scuba team recovered the body of a 39-year-old man after firefighters received a call of a person trapped in the flooded basement of a three-story townhouse in Brooklyn at about 4:30 p.m., police said.

In Manhattan, a 43-year-old man was found dead inside the flooded basement boiler room of an apartment building, police said.

Some spots around the city saw record rainfall. Preliminary reports showed 1.8 inches of rain fell in Central Park on Thursday, which would surpass the record of 1.64 inches set for the park in 1917, the National Weather Service said.

Overfishing blamed as lobster population falls

ME PORTLAND — A new report says America's lobsters, which have been in decline since 2018, are now being overfished off New England.

The stock has declined by 34% since that year in its most important fishing grounds, the regulatory Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission said Thursday. The commission said it now considers overfishing of the species to be occurring, and that could bring new management measures that restrict fishermen from catching them in the future.

Lobsters are among America's most lucrative seafood species, and they were worth more than \$700 million at the docks last year. The industry caught record high numbers of the crustaceans in the 2010s.

Fired newspaper adviser claims speech violation

IN BLOOMINGTON — A faculty adviser for Indiana University's student newspaper filed a federal lawsuit Thursday arguing his free speech and due process rights were violated when he was fired for refusing to ensure no news stories appeared in the homecoming print edition last month.

A lawyer for the adviser, Jim Rodenbush, said it's a case seeking "to have a court state that the First Amendment still matters."

Rodenbush, in a complaint filed in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, seeks reinstatement to his job and monetary damages. He was dismissed Oct. 14 for his "lack of leadership and ability to work in alignment with the university's direction for the Student Media Plan," according to David Tolchinsky, dean of the university's media school, who also ended the newspaper's print product.

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Dodgers repeat as World Series champs

Associated Press

TORONTO — In a World Series for the ages that went back and forth again and again, Will Smith delivered the biggest swing of all for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Smith connected in the 11th for the first extra-inning homer in a winner-take-all title game, and Miguel Rojas became the first player to hit a tying home run in the ninth inning of a Game 7. On a roller-coaster night of see-sawing emotions, the Dodgers outlasted the Toronto Blue Jays 5-4 on Saturday to become the first repeat champion in a quarter century.

"You dream of those moments," Smith said after the 4-hour, 7-minute thriller. "I'll remember that for forever."

In the type of dramatic Game 7 that kids conjure in backyards, the Blue Jays led 3-0 on Bo Bichette's third-inning homer off Shohei Ohtani and 4-2 before Max Muncy's eighth-inning solo homer off star rookie Trey Gersh.

Toronto was two outs from its first championship since 1993 when Rojas, inserted into the slumping Los Angeles lineup in Game 6 to provide some energy, homered on a full-count slider from Jeff Hoffman and stunned the Rogers Centre crowd of 44,713.

"I've cost everybody in here a World Series ring," Hoffman said.

Rojas hadn't homered since Sept. 19.

"I had a conversation with my wife," he said. "She told me something big was waiting for me."

World Series MVP Yoshinobu Yamamoto escaped a bases-loaded jam in the bottom half, and Blue Jays reliever Seranthony Domínguez stranded three Dodgers runners in the 10th.

Smith, who hit a go-ahead homer in Game 2, sent a 2-0 pitch from Shane Bieber into Toronto's bullpen in left field, where it

bounced into the seats and gave LA its first lead of the night. Running between first and second, Smith raised his arms in triumph.

"He hung a slider," Smith said. "I banged it."

Bieber, the 2020 AL Cy Young Award winner, was making his first relief appearance since 2019.

"He was looking for it and I didn't execute," he said.

Of course, there had to be even more drama in just the sixth winner-take-all Series game to go extra innings. It matched the Marlins' 3-2 win over Cleveland in 1997 as the second-longest Game 7, behind only the Washington Senators' 4-3, 12-inning victory against the New York Giants in 1924.

Vladimir Guerrero Jr. doubled leading off the bottom of the 11th and was sacrificed to third. Addison Barger walked and Alejandro Kirk hit a broken-bat grounder to shortstop Mookie Betts, who started a title-winning 6-6-3 double play. It was only the second double play to end a Series, after the Yankees turned one in 1947 against the Dodgers.

"I thought we had chances to sweep them," Blue Jays manager John Schneider said. "Going back to the beginning of the Series when people were calling it David vs. Goliath, it's not even close."

Smith set a Series record by catching 73 innings. Betts earned his fourth title in the finale of baseball's 150th major league season, the first that began and ended outside the United States.

In the Los Angeles bullpen for the last game of his decorated 18-year career, Clayton Kershaw lost track of the outs.

"When he hit the double play, I thought the run scored and it was tied," he said. "I thought I had the next batter."

The Dodgers and their \$500 million roster overcame a 3-2 Series deficit on the road. LA became the first repeat champion

since the 1998-2000 Yankees won three in a row, and the first from the National League since the 1975 and '76 Cincinnati Reds.

With their ninth championship and third in six years, the Dodgers made an argument for their 2020s teams to be considered a dynasty. Dave Roberts, their manager since 2016, boosted the probability he will gain induction to the Hall of Fame.

"To do what we've done in this span of time is pretty remarkable," Roberts said. "I guess let the pundits and all the fans talk about if it's a dynasty or not."

After throwing 96 pitches in a Game 6 win Friday, Yamamoto tossed 43 more over 2½ innings for his third win of the Series. He finished the postseason 5-1 with a 1.45 ERA.

"Before I went in, to be honest, I was not really sure if I could pitch up there to my best ability," Yamamoto said through a translator. "But as I started getting warmed up... I started making a little bit of an adjustment, and then I started thinking I can go in and do my job."

This Series produced its first pinch-hit grand slam, its first complete game in a decade, an 18-inning Game 3 featuring Shohei Ohtani reaching base nine times, six outs on the bases and Freddie Freeman becoming the first to hit two walk-off homers, the first back-to-back homers opening a game, Yesavage striking out a rookie-record 12 just six weeks after his debut and the first game-ending double play in which an outfielder had a putout or assist.

"That game had every single thing you could possibly have," Freeman said. "Just an absolutely incredible game, incredible Series."

Bichette, eyes bulging, put Toronto ahead in the third with a 442-foot drive off Ohtani, the two-way star pitching on three days' rest after taking the loss in Game 4.

Los Angeles closed to 3-2 on sacrifice flies from Teoscar Her-

nández in the fourth off 41-year-old Max Scherzer, just the fourth pitcher to start multiple winner-take-all Game 7s, and Tommy Edman in the sixth against Chris Bassitt.

Andrés Giménez restored the Blue Jays' two-run lead with an RBI double in the sixth off Glasnow, who relieved after getting the final three outs on three pitches to save Game 6 on Friday.

In a Series filled with key defensive plays, Rojas stumbled in the ninth while fielding Daulton Varsho's one-out, bases-loaded grounder off Yamamoto. Rojas managed to throw home for a forceout as Smith kept his foot on the plate to beat Isiah Kiner-Falefa, who had taken an unusually short 7.8-foot lead off third.

Ernie Clement then flied out to center fielder Andy Pages, who had just come off the bench for defense. Pages sprinted 121 feet and made a jumping, backhand catch on the left-center warning track as he crashed into left fielder Kiké Hernández.

Then with the bases loaded and one out in the 10th, Pages grounded to shortstop, where Giménez threw home for a forceout. Guerrero fielded a grounder to the right side and tossed to Domínguez covering first, just beating Hernández in a call upheld upon video review.

While the Dodgers were sprayed with silver confetti amid another celebration, Toronto pondered how close it came in falling short. Eyes were red and voices cracked amid the sobbing.

"I've been crying for like probably for an hour," Clement said long after the final out. "I thought I was done with the tears."

In the midst of the celebration, Freeman already looked ahead to big, bad LA taking on the rest of baseball again in 2026.

"The Yankees are three-time back-to-back," he said, "so we get to use that same narrative next year."

No. 18 Oklahoma beats No. 14 Tennessee

Associated Press

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. — John Mateer threw for 159 yards and ran for 80 yards and a clinching touchdown with less than two minutes to play to lead No. 18 Oklahoma to a 33-27 win over No. 14 Tennessee on Saturday night.

The Sooners (7-2, 3-2 South-eastern Conference) capitalized on three turnovers by the Volunteers (6-3, 3-3) to score 13 points.

Though the Vols dominated the first-half offensive stats (255-99), their mistakes allowed Oklahoma to lead 16-10.

The Sooners' defensive pressure was obvious. Joey Aguilar, who threw for 393 yards and a pair of touchdowns to Braylon Staley, was sacked four times and harassed several other times. Oklahoma allowed just 63 rushing yards.

After the Sooners recovered the onside kick, Xavier Robinson ran 43 yards and intentionally went down at the 1-yard line. Mateer's 1-yard run iced the victory.

No. 1 Ohio St. 38, Penn St. 14: Julian Sayin passed for 316 yards and four touchdowns, Jeremiah Smith scored twice and the top-ranked Buckeyes pulled away in the second half to defeat the visiting Nittany Lions.

Ohio State (8-0, 5-0 Big Ten) had a 17-14 lead at halftime but took control in the second half, scoring on three of their first four

possessions.

No. 2 Indiana 55, Maryland 10: Fernando Mendoza threw for a touchdown and ran for one, and the visiting Hoosiers remained undefeated with a rout of the Terrapins.

Maryland (4-4, 1-4) lost its fourth straight. It had a chance to make it interesting early, intercepting Mendoza on the first drive and taking over at the Indiana 12-yard line.

No. 5 Georgia 24, Florida 20: Gunner Stockton threw two touchdown passes, Chauncey Bowens scored on a late 36-yard run and the visiting Bulldogs escaped the rivalry known as the "World's Largest Outdoor Cocktail Party" with a victory against the Gators.

It was Georgia's fifth consecutive victory in the series and its eighth in the last nine meetings.

No. 7 Mississippi 30, South Carolina 14: The Rebels sacked LaNorris Sellers six times and host Ole Miss held off the upset-minded Gamecocks.

No. 20 Texas 34, No. 9 Vanderbilt 31: Longhorns quarterback Arch Manning returned from a concussion a week earlier to pass for 328 yards and three touchdowns, including a 75-yard connection with Ryan Wingo on the first play of the game, to lead host Texas over the Commodores on Saturday.

The Longhorns led 34-10 in the fourth quarter before Vanderbilt staged a desperate rally behind quarterback Diego Pavia's touchdown run, 67-yard scoring pass to Eli Stowers and a final TD toss to Richie Hoskins with 33 seconds left.

No. 12 Notre Dame 25, Boston College 10: Jeremiyah Love broke free for a 94-yard touchdown run on the first play after a Fighting Irish interception squelched a potential game-tying drive and visiting Notre Dame won its sixth straight, beating the Eagles.

No. 13 Texas Tech 43, Kansas State 20: Berhen Morton threw for 249 yards and two touchdowns in his return from an injury, J'Koby Williams ran for 135 yards and a score, and the visiting Red Raiders romped past the sloppy, mistake-prone Wildcats.

The Red Raiders are off to their best start in conference play since the 2008 season, when Mike Leach guided the team to the Cotton Bowl.

No. 15 Virginia 31, California 21: J'Mari Taylor ran for two touchdowns and the visiting Cavaliers extended their winning streak to seven straight games for the first time since 2007 by beating the Golden Bears.

The Cavaliers sealed their first win as a top-15 team since 2004.

No. 16 Louisville 28, Virginia Tech 16: Isaac Brown rushed for 130 yards and a touchdown before leaving late with a leg injury and Keyjuan Brown scored twice in the second half to lift the visiting Cardinals over the Hokies.

No. 20 Utah 45, No. 17 Cincinnati 14: Devon Dampier threw for 213 yards and two touchdowns to lead the host Utes over the Bearcats, snapping their seven-game winning streak.

Wayshawn Parker added 104 yards and a touchdown on the ground. The Utes (7-2, 4-2 Big 12) racked up 480 total yards, including 267 rushing yards.

No. 21 Michigan 21, Purdue 16: Jordan Marshall had career highs with 185 yards rushing and three touchdowns, helping the host Wolverines hold off the Boilermakers.

West Virginia 45, No. 22 Houston 35: Scotty Fox Jr. threw for 157 yards and accounted for three touchdowns as the visiting Mountaineers snapped their five-game losing streak with a win over the Cougars.

No. 23 Southern Cal 21, Nebraska 17: King Miller ran for 129 yards and the go-ahead touchdown in the fourth quarter and the visiting Trojans overcame their worst passing performance in seven years to beat the Cornhuskers.

Jones kicks winning FG to lift Army over Air Force

Associated Press

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — Cale Hellums threw a 42-yard pass to Brady Anderson with 24 seconds left and Dawson Jones made a game-winning 27-yard field goal on the final play to give Army a 20-17 victory over Air Force on Saturday.

Army (4-4) has won seven of the last nine meetings with Air Force (2-6), including three in a row — its first three-game streak in the series since 1976-78.

Hellums was stopped on a

fourth-and-1 sneak deep in Army territory with 2:10 left. The Falcons took advantage of the great field position, and a pass interference call in the end zone, to tie it at 17-all on Liam Szarka's 2-yard sneak with 1:26 left.

Hellums threw for 102 yards with a touchdown, and he carried it 26 times for 98 yards and another score. Briggs Bartosh added 74 yards rushing.

Szarka was 13-for-17 for 161 yards but he was intercepted twice for Air Force, which also

lost a fumble for a three-turnover game. Szarka had two touchdowns on the ground and 91 yards.

North Texas 31, Navy 17: Caleb Hawkins ran for four touchdowns and host North Texas beat Navy, handing the Midshipmen their first loss this season and ending their 10-game winning streak.

Hawkins, a true freshman, rushed for a season-high 197 yards on 33 carries — the rest of the team netted minus-21. Fresh-

man Drew Mestemaker was 19-of-24 passing for 234 yards.

Hawkins' 7- and 3-yard scores finished a pair of long North Texas (8-1, 4-1 American Conference) drives. After a failed Navy (7-1, 5-1) onside kick, Hawkins added a 14-yard score for a 21-3 lead.

Navy quarterback Blake Horvath was 8-for-14 for 80 yards with two interceptions. He rushed for 112 on 19 carries with a TD. Brandon Chatman rushed for the other Navy TD.

Predators defeat Flames to snap skid

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Michael Bunting had a goal and two assists, and the Nashville Predators beat the Calgary Flames 4-2 on Saturday.

Matthew Wood had a goal and an assist for the Predators, who snapped a three-game losing streak. Jonathan Marchessault and Filip Forsberg also scored, and Juuse Saros made 33 saves.

Jonathan Huberdeau and Joel Farabee scored for Calgary in its third consecutive loss. Dustin Wolf and Devin Cooley combined to make 20 saves.

Wood made it 2-0 at 11:18 when he wired a wrist shot from the right circle just underneath the crossbar on the far side. Wood scored his first NHL goal Thursday in Philadelphia.

Bruins 2, Hurricanes 1: Casey Mittelstadt and Viktor Arvidsson scored third-period goals as Boston extended its winning streak to three games with a home victory over Carolina.

Jets 5, Penguins 2: Rookie forward Brad Lambert scored his first NHL goal and backup goalie

Eric Comrie made 28 saves as host Winnipeg beat Pittsburgh.

Kyle Connor scored twice, and Gabriel Valardi and Vladislav Namestnikov also scored for Winnipeg (9-3-0).

Sharks 3, Avalanche 2 (OT): Philipp Kurashev scored his second goal of the game 1:48 into overtime, and host San Jose beat Colorado.

Colorado remained winless in five games decided after regulation despite outshooting the Sharks 38-23.

Panthers 4, Stars 3 (SO): Brad Marchand capped an emotional night by getting what became the winning goal in a shootout, and host Florida beat Dallas.

Marchand got a tribute score, Sam Reinhart got a milestone one and Sam Bennett also scored for the Panthers. Sergei Bobrovsky stopped 20 shots, six of them in overtime.

Canadiens 4, Senators 3 (OT): Alex Newhook scored 1:40 into overtime and host Montreal beat Ottawa.

Cole Caulfield, Juraj Slafkovsky and Ivan Demidov scored in

regulation for Montreal. Nick Suzuki had two assists to extend his point streak to a career-high 11 games, and Samuel Montembeault had 14 saves.

Sabres 4, Capitals 3 (SO): Bowen Byram scored the deciding goal in the shootout to give Buffalo a home win over Washington.

Alex Ovechkin was held without a goal for the fourth straight game and remains one shy of 900 for the Capitals, who have lost four in a row.

Maple Leafs 5, Flyers 2: Auston Matthews scored a goal, John Tavares assisted on two others, and visiting Toronto beat Philadelphia.

Tavares assisted on goals by Nicholas Robertson and Easton Cowan as the Maple Leafs won for the third time in four games.

Blue Jackets 3, Blues 2: Zach Werenski had a goal and an assist, Sean Monahan scored for his 600th NHL point, and host Columbus beat St. Louis for the Blue Jackets' fourth straight win.

The Blue Jackets have won six of their last seven games.

Wild 5, Canucks 2: Marco Rossi scored the go-ahead goal in the second period and Vladimir Tarasenko had a goal and two assists, helping Minnesota stop a five-game losing streak with a home victory over Vancouver.

The Canucks (6-7-0) have lost five of their last seven games and have only three regulation wins.

Devils 4, Kings 1: Brian Halonen scored his first NHL goal and Dawson Mercer got two short-handed goals in the third period of New Jersey's road victory over Los Angeles.

Oilers 3, Blackhawks 2 (OT): Evan Bouchard scored 2:43 into overtime and host Edmonton beat Chicago.

The Oilers have won two of their last three games. Stuart Skinner finished with 27 saves.

Rangers 3, Kraken 2 (OT): Will Cuyille scored at 2:42 of overtime and visiting New York beat Seattle.

In the extra period, Cuyille scored from the right circle on a snap shot to give the Rangers their third consecutive win to end the road trip.

Timberwolves get first win since Edwards' injury

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Julius Randle scored 30 points to lead the Minnesota Timberwolves past the Charlotte Hornets 122-105 on Saturday night, their first victory since All-Star Anthony Edwards was sidelined with an injury.

Without Edwards, who has a right hamstring strain, Minnesota had lost home games to Denver and the Los Angeles Lakers.

Donte DiVincenzo and Naz Reid added 18 points each, Rudy Gobert had 14 points and 15 rebounds and Jaden McDaniels added 14 points for Minnesota.

Miles Bridges had 30 points and LaMelo Ball had 18 points, seven rebounds and eight assists to lead Charlotte, which has lost

its last three games.

Kings 135, Bucks 133: Zach LaVine had 31 points, DeMar DeRozan scored 29, and Sacramento turned back a late rally to hold on for a road victory over Milwaukee.

The Bucks, who trailed 108-102 entering the final period, pulled within 133-132 on Miles Turner's 3-pointer from the right corner with 51 seconds remaining.

Magic 125, Wizards 94: Paolo Banchero had 28 points and 11 rebounds as visiting Orlando beat Washington.

Orlando outrebounded Washington 53-40 — a margin that narrowed late — and held an opponent under 100 points for the first time this season.

The Magic are 2-2 on their five-game trip and 3-4 overall.

Keyshawn George scored 17 points and CJ McCollum added 13 as the Wizards lost their fourth straight overall and third straight at home. Washington has dropped 11 consecutive games against the Magic.

Pacers 114, Warriors 109: Quenton Jackson scored 12 of his 25 points in the fourth quarter as Indiana snapped a season-opening five-game losing streak with a home victory over Golden State.

Aaron Nesmith scored 31 and Pascal Siakam added 27 for the Pacers.

Rockets 128, Celtics 101: Kevin Durant scored 26 points in three quarters before resting the

fourth, Amen Thompson added 17 points and nine rebounds, and visiting Houston beat Boston.

Alperen Sengun had 16 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists for the Rockets. Jabari Smith Jr. and Josh Okogie each scored 12 as Houston won its third straight following an 0-2 start to the season and ended Boston's three-game win streak.

Pistons 122, Mavericks 110: Jalen Duren had 33 points and 10 rebounds, Cade Cunningham added 21 points with 18 assists and host Detroit pulled away in the fourth quarter to beat Dallas in Mexico City.

Duncan Robinson added 18 points and Ausar Thompson had 15 for the Pistons, who won their second game in a row.