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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

stripes.com

Kurds: Turkey violating Syria cease-fire

Associated Press

CEYLANPINAR, Turkey — The Kurdish-led administration in northern Syria accused Turkey on Friday of violating a U.S.-brokered cease-fire that went into effect overnight, as fighters from both sides clashed in and around a border town that has been one of the fiercest fronts in the Turkish invasion.

The town of Ras al-Ayn was emerging as an immediate test for the five-day cease-fire agreed on by Washington and Ankara. Before the deal's announcement, Turkish-backed forces had encircled the town and were battling fierce resistance from Kurdish fighters inside.

The Syrian Kurds raised further uncertainty over a cease-fire deal that already was vague on key points and left significant questions unanswered. The self-rule adminis-

tration said some provisions of the cease-fire deal “need further discussion with the United States.”

It did not specify which provisions, but the Kurds have not publicly committed to a central term of the deal — a pullout of their fighters from the border region. A spokesman for the Kurdish-led fighters said Friday they were not withdrawing from Ras al-Ayn because Turkish forces are still besieging and shelling it.

Criticism of the cease-fire deal — which President Donald Trump called “a great day for civilization” — mounted. EU Council President Donald Tusk said it was “not a cease-fire, it is a demand for the capitulation of the Kurds” and called on Turkey to immediately halt its operation in northeast Syria. French President Emmanuel Macron called the Turkish op-

eration “madness.”

Turkish shelling hit in and around Ras al-Ayn on Friday morning, raising columns of smoke, seen by an Associated Press journalist in Ceylanpinar on the Turkish side of the border, but none was seen after 10:30 a.m., and only sporadic gunfire was heard from inside the town.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and the Rojava Information Center said fighting continued into the afternoon as Turkish-backed Syrian fighters clashed with Kurdish forces in villages on the outskirts of Ras al-Ayn. The Kurdish-led force said five of its fighters were killed and a number of civilians wounded in a Turkish airstrike on one of the villages.

Other activists reported a new exodus of civilians from the villages. Gun battles and

shelling continued around a hospital in the center of Ras al-Ayn, and those injured inside could not be evacuated, said Mustafa Bali, spokesman for the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces. The Kurdish Red Crescent said it was unable to enter the town to evacuate the wounded because of fighting.

Kurdish fighters said the fighting quieted around 4 p.m.

In its statement, the Kurdish-led administration said Turkey “has not adhered with the cease-fire until now in some areas,” particularly in Ras al-Ayn.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan denied any fighting took place Friday and said Kurdish fighters had begun withdrawing, a claim the Kurds denied.

A senior U.S. official said they were awaiting confirmation on the reported fighting.

Navy: Bird strikes ‘doomsday’ plane in costly incident

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Navy’s “doomsday” plane wasn’t supposed to be on the ground in Maryland for long. Instead, the E-6B Mercury — a flying communications and command post designed to play a critical role during a nuclear war — should have briefly touched down before taking off again.

But as the hulking aircraft was attempting to perform the maneuver earlier this month at the Patuxent River Naval Air Station, about 60 miles southeast of Washington, things didn’t quite go according to plan.

A wayward bird struck one of the plane’s four engines

when it was landing on Oct. 2, temporarily grounding it and causing at least \$2 million in damage, Tim Boulay, communications director for the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division, told The Washington Post in an email Thursday. The incident was classified by the Naval Safety Center as a “class A” mishap, which also applies to cases that result in aircraft destruction, death or permanent disability.

At the time of the costly bird encounter, a team of people were on board conducting a systems test, but no one was injured, Boulay said. It is unclear what species of feathered creature collided with the \$141.7 million plane, and the incident

remains under investigation. As of Thursday, Boulay said, the damaged engine had been replaced and the aircraft was back in service.

The bird strike comes just months after another E-6B Mercury sustained millions in damage at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma, the Navy Times reported. Navy officials said the plane was being towed out of a hangar in February when it clipped the structure.

E-6B Mercury planes are a critical component of the Navy’s “Take Charge and Move Out,” or TACAMO, mission. Derived from Boeing’s commercial 707 jet, the aircraft connects U.S. leaders to an arsenal of nuclear warheads ready to be delivered

from land, air and sea in times of crisis, according to a Navy fact sheet. Until 1991, variations of the plane were kept in the air nonstop for three decades, providing a 24-hour link between the president and nuclear submarines during the Cold War, according to The Post.

The E-6B Mercury was accepted by the Navy in 1997 and deployed about a year later. The planes are just over 150 feet long and roughly 42 feet high. They can travel at 600 mph and have a range of 6,600 nautical miles.

Like every other plane, however, the E-6B Mercury does not come equipped with a fool-proof defense against birds.

Army special ops adapt training for future

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Army Green Berets and Rangers will “get brilliant at the basics” to prepare for future battlefields where adversaries like Russia and China could knock out the secured combat outposts relied upon in more recent conflicts, according to a new U.S. Army Special Operations Command Strategy.

“We will shift from a mindset of inhabiting secure forward operating bases to one of surviving and thriving in large-scale combat operations,” the strategy says.

The plan, which was rolled out by USASOC leaders earlier this week at the Association of the U.S. Army’s annual conference in Washington, also says trends like climate change, urbanization and rapid technological advances will test Special Forces soldiers in new ways.

“Drastic changes to global social patterns, the climate, and economies will drive political instability and resource competition,” the strategy states.

But the Army’s main focus is Russia and China and the concerns also go beyond their military modernization programs. Such adversaries avoid provoking a conventional military fight by “weaponizing information at scale” to “fracture our alliances and win without fighting.”

“Great power competition means we are in conflict right now,” the strategy states.

To deal with threats short of armed conflict, Army special operators want to get more out of combat training centers by using cyber and information warfare in all aspects of training.

In 2018, the Pentagon put out a new national defense strategy that placed greater focus on

countering Russia and China. In the year since, the military has grappled with how to manage ongoing threats in the Middle East with the new focus.

The national defense strategy was “clear in its call to shake off strategic atrophy and restore America’s competitive edge,” Lt. Gen. Francis M. Beaudette said in a statement.

To that end, Army Special Operations Forces must be able to operate when technology no longer works, which means getting better at battlefield maneuver and land navigation, the strategy states. In a fight against Russia or China, GPS and communications systems would likely come under attack.

At the same time, ARSOF said it will integrate rapidly changing technology such as “hardened communications” and information-gathering platforms, as well as weapons

that can “reach out and kill the enemy undetected.”

“Our culture will be grounded in a shift on two fronts: brilliant at the basics and revolutionary. Everything we do will emphasize survivability, lethality, and agility,” the strategy says.

Some changes in training have already taken root. The course to qualify for the Green Berets was recently revamped and shortened so that soldiers can get to units faster and receive additional training tailored to their specific mission.

“We need to reestablish our forte, which is our ability to work with partner forces, developing their capabilities to provide an advantage for them and the United States against our adversaries — North Korea, Iran and China and Russia,” the Army’s Maj. Gen. Kurt Sonntag told The Associated Press earlier this month.

Dozens dead, wounded in Afghanistan mosque blast

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — An explosion rocked a mosque in eastern Afghanistan as dozens of people gathered for Friday prayers, causing the roof to collapse and killing 62 worshippers, provincial officials said. The attack underscored the record-high number of civilians dying in the country’s 18-year war.

Attahullah Khogyani, spokesman for the governor of Nangarhar province, said the militant attack wounded 36 others. He said it was not immediately clear if the mosque was attacked by a suicide bomber or by some other type of bombing.

“Both men and children are among those killed and wounded in the attack,” he said.

Sediq Sediqqi, spokesman for Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, strongly condemned the attack on his official Twit-

ter account. “The Afghan government strongly condemns today’s suicide attack in a mosque in Nangarhar province,” he tweeted.

“The Taliban and their partners heinous crimes continue to target civilians in time of worship,” he added.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, but both the Taliban and Islamic State are active in eastern Afghanistan, especially Nangarhar province.

However, Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban’s spokesman in a statement condemned the attack in Nangarhar and called it a serious crime.

Zahir Adil, spokesman for the public health department in Nangarhar province, said 23 of the wounded were transferred to Jalalabad, the provincial capital, and the rest were being treated in the Haskamena district clinic.

The violence comes a day

after a United Nations report said Afghan civilians are dying in record numbers in the country’s increasingly brutal war, noting that more civilians died in July than in any previous one-month period since the U.N. began keeping statistics.

“Civilian casualties at record-high levels clearly show the need for all parties concerned to pay much more attention to protecting the civilian population, including through a review of conduct during combat operations,” said Tadamichi Yamamoto, the U.N. secretary-general’s special representative for Afghanistan.

The report said pro-government forces caused 2,348 civilian casualties, including 1,149 killed and 1,199 wounded, a 26% increase from the same period in 2018.

The report said 2,563 civilians were killed and 5,676 were wounded in the first nine months of this year. Insurgents

were responsible for 62%. July to September were the deadliest months so far this year.

Efforts to restart talks to end Afghanistan’s 18-year war picked up earlier this month, just weeks after President Donald Trump last month declared the talks “dead,” blaming a surge in violence by the Taliban that included the killing of a U.S. soldier.

U.S. peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad visited Pakistan and met with the Taliban’s top negotiator, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, who is a co-founder of the hard-line Islamic movement and was head of a Taliban delegation to the Pakistani capital.

U.S. officials said Khalilzad was in the Pakistani capital only to follow up on talks he held in September in New York with Pakistani officials. They insisted he was not in Pakistan to restart U.S.-Taliban peace talks.

White House: Ukraine aid tied to probe

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House acknowledged that President Donald Trump's decision to hold up military aid to Ukraine was linked to his demand that Kyiv investigate the Democratic National Committee and the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign, a shifting new explanation about events at the heart of the impeachment inquiry.

The Thursday admission from acting chief of staff Mick Mulvaney undercut the president's position that there was no quid pro quo during Trump's phone call with the Ukraine president that sparked the House investigation.

The sudden turn of events

had immediate fallout. Trump's lawyer distanced the Republican president from Mulvaney's account. The Justice Department said the explanation was news to them. And Democrats cast Mulvaney's remarks as further evidence of wrongdoing as Trump sought a "favor" from Ukraine.

Trump, traveling in Texas, appeared to stand by his top aide, calling Mulvaney a "good man."

"I have a lot of confidence" in him, Trump said.

But Mulvaney's initial remarks, made during a rare appearance by an administration official in the White House briefing room, spun open a new phase of the impeachment inquiry.

He indicated that a quid pro quo was at play for the military aid — but a different one than Democrats initially highlighted as they probed Trump's efforts to have Ukraine investigate a company linked to the son of his Democratic rival, Joe Biden.

"The look back to what happened in 2016 certainly was part of the thing that he was worried about in corruption with that nation," Mulvaney told reporters, delivering the White House's most granular explanation yet of the decision to withhold military assistance. "Did he also mention to me in the past the corruption that related to the DNC server? Absolutely, no question about that," Mulvaney continued. "That's why we held up the money."

Within hours, Mulvaney issued a separate statement claiming his remarks were misconstrued.

"Let me be clear: There was absolutely no quid pro quo between Ukrainian military aid and any investigation into the 2016 election," he said. "The president never told me to withhold any money until the Ukrainians did anything related to the server."

But it may be difficult to erase what Mulvaney said as House Democrats dig into their investigation.

Mulvaney, who has already received a subpoena for documents in the impeachment probe, will now likely be asked by investigators to appear for a deposition.

At Texas rally, Trump says Dems 'crazy,' unpatriotic

Associated Press

DALLAS — President Donald Trump tried to turn impeachment rancor into a political rallying cry Thursday, using a Texas rally to bash Democrats as "crazy" and unpatriotic as they push forward with their investigations.

Setting a dire tone, Trump told his supporters, "At stake in this fight is the survival of American democracy itself."

"Don't kid yourselves," he said of the Democrats, "I really don't believe anymore that they love our country."

A day after House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other top Democrats walked out of a White House meeting that had devolved into an insult fest, Trump denounced her as "crazy Nancy."

"She's nuts," he told the crowd at a packed stadium in Dallas.

The comments come as the House continues its quickly unfolding inquiry into Trump's dealings with Ukraine, deposing witness after witness as they build their case. But Trump and his campaign have tried

to turn the inquiry his way, accusing Democrats of using the Constitutional process to try to overturn the results of the 2016 election.

"They're coming after and fighting you, and we never lose," he said, predicting the 2020 election will be "a landslide" for Republicans, despite polling showing him lagging behind.

Trump also continued his attacks on former Vice President Joe Biden, and his son Hunter's work for a Ukraine energy company. Trump's efforts to pressure Ukraine to investigate the Biden family are at the heart of the Democrats' inquiry into whether Trump compromised national security and used his office to try to bolster his 2020 chances by pushing foreign governments to investigate one of his Democratic rivals.

Trump's day included a tour of a new Louis Vuitton leather workshop in north central Texas and a fundraiser in Fort Worth that, combined with a pre-rally reception in Dallas, brought in \$5.5 million, according to the Republican National Committee.

US picks Trump's Doral golf resort for G-7 summit

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump's suggestion that his Miami golf resort host next year's Group of Seven summit became a reality Thursday, sparking an outcry from critics who called it the most blatant example yet of him using the power of his office to boost his business empire.

"There are folks who will never get over the fact that it's a Trump property, but we're still going to go there," acting White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney said in announcing Trump National Doral as host. "It's not the only place. It's the best place."

Mulvaney said the president will not profit from the summit because it will be booked "at cost" and that it stood out from a dozen sites considered because of its location and amenities. But it at least creates the appearance of a conflict of interest because, unlike foreign dignitaries who can choose to stay at the president's Washington hotel and other properties, they have no choice but to

spend money at his resort during the June 10-12 summit.

"He is doubling down on his corruption," said ethics lawyer Kathleen Clark, of Washington University School of Law in St. Louis. "He's daring anyone to prevent him from further enriching himself from the presidency."

The decision comes as several lawsuits accuse Trump of violating the Constitution's emoluments clause, which bans the president from receiving gifts or payments from foreign governments. It also comes as Trump has been repeatedly accusing Joe Biden's family of profiting from public office because of Hunter Biden's business activities in Ukraine when his father was vice president.

Mulvaney brushed off such concerns, as well as the idea that the summit at Trump's Doral course would be nothing more than a massive promotion for his brand.

"Donald Trump's brand is strong as it is," Mulvaney said. "It's the most recognized name in the English language."

Senate OKs use of DOD funds for border wall

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate voted Thursday to sustain President Donald Trump's veto of Democratic-sponsored legislation reversing his raid of military base project money to pay for the U.S.-Mexico border wall.

The 53-36 vote was well short of the two-thirds required to overturn the veto. The vote mirrored ones last month and in March in which a number of Republicans broke with Trump in defending lawmakers' power of the purse. The military projects in question included base schools and target ranges.

In February, Trump declared the security situation along the border a national emergency. That decision enabled him to

take up to \$3.6 billion from such projects to finance wall construction beyond the miles that lawmakers have been willing to fund.

Democrats reacted with outrage and some GOP senators opposed Trump as well. Top Republicans such as Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky had urged Trump not to do it. But once Trump acted, McConnell and others fell into line even as 10 Republicans broke with Trump on Thursday's vote.

"The president's emergency declaration is an unconstitutional power grab. Congress has not fully funded his requests for border wall funding," said Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M. "But this president will not accept Congress's judgment. Or our constitutional authority. His emergency declaration is an exercise of power that is just not his under

the Constitution."

Trump has obtained just over \$3 billion for border barrier construction by working through regular congressional channels, subject to limitations imposed by lawmakers.

He has used various transfer and emergency authorities to shift almost \$7 billion more from the emergency declaration, a forfeiture fund containing money seized by law enforcement, and funding for military counterdrug activities.

Last week, a federal judge in Texas ruled that Trump had exceeded his authority in reallocating the money for military construction to the border wall. The Supreme Court in July issued a stay on a ruling by a California court that blocked Trump from carrying out the maneuver.

At gala, Mattis laughs off insult from Trump

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Former U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis is laughing off an insult hurled at him by President Donald Trump.

Speaking at a New York charity event Thursday the day after Trump demeaned him as "the world's most overrated general," Mattis joked that he took it as a compliment.

"I'm not just an overrated general. I'm the greatest, the world's most overrated," he told diners at the annual Alfred E. Smith Memorial Foundation Dinner.

"I'm honored to be considered that by Donald Trump because he also called Meryl Streep an overrated actress," he said. "So I guess I'm the Meryl Streep of

generals, and frankly that sounds pretty good to me."

Trump lashed out at his former defense secretary Wednesday, during a contentious White House meeting with members of Congress.

The meeting was intended to be a bipartisan discussion of Trump's decision to pull U.S. forces from northern Syria, but it broke up after a testy exchange between Trump and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Before the walkout, Trump disparaged Mattis, who had argued as defense secretary that U.S. troops were needed in Syria to prevent a resurgence of Islamic State fighters.

Trump said Mattis was "the world's most overrated general. You know why? He wasn't tough enough."

"I captured ISIS," Trump went on to say.

Mattis resigned as defense secretary last December after Trump said he intended to pull 2,000 American troops out of Syria. In his resignation letter, the retired Marine general told Trump he had "the right to have a Secretary of Defense whose views are better aligned with yours."

Since then, he has largely refrained from publicly criticizing the administration, saying he owed the commander in chief "a duty of silence."

But he did save a zinger for Trump at the laughter-filled gala, saying the "overrated" moniker didn't bother him.

"I earned my spurs on the battlefield ... and Donald Trump earned his spurs in a letter from a doctor," Mattis joked.

World's 1st female spacewalking team makes history

Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — The world's first female spacewalking team made history high above Earth on Friday, floating out of the International Space Station to fix a broken part of the power network.

As NASA astronauts Christina Koch and Jessica Meir emerged one by one, it marked the first time in a half-century of spacewalking that a woman floated out without a male crew mate.

America's first female spacewalker from 35 years ago, Kathy Sullivan, was delighted. She said it's good to finally have enough women in the astronaut corps and trained for spacewalking for this to happen.

NASA leaders — along with women and others around the world — cheered Koch and Meir on. At the same time, many noted that this will hopefully become routine in the future.

"We've got qualified women

running the control, running space centers, commanding the station, commanding space-ships and doing spacewalks," Sullivan told The Associated Press earlier this week. "And golly gee whiz, every now and then there's more than one woman in the same place."

Tracy Caldwell Dyson, a three-time spacewalker who watched from Mission Control, added: "Hopefully, this will now be considered normal."

NASA Administrator Jim

Bridenstine watched the big event unfold from NASA headquarters in Washington.

"We have the right people doing the right job at the right time," he said. "They are an inspiration to people all over the world, including me. And we're very excited to get this mission underway."

NASA originally wanted to conduct an all-female spacewalk last spring but did not have enough medium-size suits ready to go.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

City to allow women to go topless, with limits

KS MANHATTAN — Women are now legally allowed to go topless in Manhattan, with some restrictions.

The Manhattan City Commission on Tuesday unanimously decided to amend the city code to allow females to go topless. However, property owners and businesses may still require all patrons to wear shirts.

The Manhattan Mercury reported that city attorney Katie Jackson recommended the change to avoid potential lawsuits. She said the code could be changed again later.

Jackson cited a federal ruling in February 2017 that blocked Fort Collins, Colo., from enforcing a law against women going topless. Fort Collins is in the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals, as is Kansas.

She said the government could still prosecute a topless woman who is acting in a lewd manner, which is against state law.

Library reports hiding of left-leaning books

ID COEUR D'ALENE — Staff at an Idaho library have confirmed at least one person is intentionally hiding books throughout the building dealing with issues traditionally assigned to more liberal political platforms.

The Coeur d'Alene Press reported Wednesday that books promoting LGBTQ rights, discussing gun control policies and criticizing President Donald Trump were found hidden in spaces throughout the Coeur d'Alene Public Library.

Staff members say books on other topics have also been moved, including readings on impeachment, white privilege

and women's voting rights.

Library staff say it costs the library about \$20 for each book they must replace for checkout and hours of time to locate original copies.

Pot grower loses 20K plants due to early snow

CO DENVER — A Colorado marijuana grower has lost about 20,000 plants worth millions of dollars because of an early winter storm and said the impact is expected to affect the state's legal pot supply.

The Marijuana Business Daily reported Wednesday that Pueblo-based Los Suenos Farms lost the plants because of subfreezing temperatures and several inches of snow earlier this month.

Company employees said retailers and processors could face higher wholesale cannabis prices.

But extractors are expected to benefit by gaining access to additional plant material to manufacture goods such as infused marijuana products, edibles and concentrates.

Woman allegedly used daughter to hide drugs

AZ PHOENIX — A Phoenix woman has been indicted after authorities say she used her teenage daughter to hide cocaine from police during a traffic stop two months ago.

State prosecutors said Rufina Lopez Covarruvia is accused of multiple felony charges including involving or using a minor in a drug offense.

Covarruvia allegedly told her daughter, 13, to hide a bag of \$130 worth of cocaine inside her bra as the car was being pulled over Sept. 19.

Authorities said a 2-year-old and a 10-year-old also were in

Covarruvia's car at the time.

During the traffic stop, the bag of cocaine reportedly fell out of the girl's bra.

Iconic wedding chapel is no longer up for sale

NV LAS VEGAS — The owner of a Las Vegas chapel where celebrity couples like Joe Jonas and Sophie Turner have gotten married is staying wedded to her business.

Charlotte Richards told KVVU-TV on Wednesday that she is taking A Little White Wedding Chapel off the market.

The iconic property had been listed for \$12 million in April.

Richards said she received one offer but declined it.

Escaped goat caught with help after 2 days

AK FAIRBANKS — An escaped Alaska goat that eluded authorities for nearly two days has been caught after a hunt involving requests for public assistance and reported sightings shared on social media.

The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner reported Wednesday that the goat was in the custody of Fairbanks North Star Borough Animal Control on Tuesday night. The male goat was reported missing from its herd Monday morning.

The state Department of Public Safety said two troopers transported the animal after the goat was caught by members of the public near a road "jumping into traffic and causing some concerns."

The goat was named Curry by Facebook users, who shared requests for information and updates more than 500 times.

Officials said the owner may be willing to pardon the goat and find it a new home.

Prison agency spent \$12,000 on party

CA SACRAMENTO — A newspaper investigation found a California prison agency spent \$12,000 in public money on a retirement party with 300 guests for a longtime manager.

The Sacramento Bee on Wednesday cited records that show the Prison Industry Authority paid for food, equipment, supplies and luxury portable toilets for a Jan. 25 luncheon for Chuck Pattillo.

The report says two dozen employees took time out of two workdays for the event at a Folsom State Prison warehouse. Women in a prison culinary program prepared food.

The authority, which trains inmates for technical careers, declined to answer questions about specific expenditures and who authorized them.

Missing man is found alive in crashed car

MO KANSAS CITY — A Missouri man who had been missing for a week is hospitalized after being found in a wrecked car at the bottom of a ravine.

Lee's Summit police said a dirt bike rider found Ryan Linneman, 37, of Lee's Summit, Wednesday evening in the wreckage along Interstate 470 in Kansas City.

Linneman was taken to a hospital with critical injuries.

Police asked the public for help finding Linneman after he was last seen driving his car on Oct. 9. The Kansas City Star reported that crash investigators determined Linneman's car ran off of Interstate 470 and went down a 50-foot incline. The vehicle landed in a gully that was obscured from the view of passing motorists.

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Chiefs lose Mahomes in win over Broncos

Associated Press

DENVER — The Kansas City Chiefs rediscovered their mojo but lost their maestro.

The Chiefs rallied around their fallen superstar and snapped a two-game skid with a 30-6 thrashing of the Denver Broncos on Thursday night after reigning MVP Patrick Mahomes dislocated his right knee in a pileup near the goal line in the first half.

“I’ve never seen anything like that on the field before,” Denver defensive end Shelby Harris said. “His knee was literally all the way to the side, his kneecap was. I wish him the best. We definitely need him in the league, he’s definitely a big attraction in the league.”

“You never want to see anyone get hurt, especially like that. I hope everything is good and I hope he has a speedy recovery.”

Chiefs coach Andy Reid said after the game that didn’t know how serious Mahomes’ injury was, but added that, “We’re good with whatever direction this thing goes.”

Backup Matt Moore threw a 57-yard touchdown pass to Tyreek Hill and the Chiefs (5-2) collected nine sacks, gave up a season-low 71 yards rushing and beat the Broncos (2-5) for the eighth straight time.

His balky left ankle heavily taped, Ma-

homes completed 10 of 11 passes for 76 yards and a touchdown, before getting injured on a successful sneak on fourth-and-inches at the Denver 5 early in the second quarter.

One by one, players peeled off the pile but when Mahomes didn’t get up, the stadium grew quiet, Broncos players knelt and some Chiefs stormed away in anguish as their quarterback ripped off his helmet and covered his face.

Broncos cornerback Chris Harris Jr. went over to shake Mahomes’ hand as he awaited medical help, his right knee stuck in an awkward angle.

“Hopefully he’s not too injured, for the season,” Harris said. “He’s great for our league, he’s a great player. So, hopefully he’s not hurt too bad.”

As players milled about nervously, the Chiefs’ medical personnel appeared to pop Mahomes’ right knee back in place before he was helped from the field and taken into the locker room.

“Excited for the win,” Moore said. “At the same time, a guy like Patrick goes down it can be deflating.”

Before he got hurt, Mahomes became the fastest player in NFL history to throw for 7,500 yards, in just his 25th game.

“You feel for anybody that has something that looks like it may be pretty serious,” Broncos quarterback Joe Flacco said. “That’s not just other quarterbacks;

that’s everybody. But man, a young guy like that who’s starting off his career the way he has and starting off this season the way he has, it’s definitely not easy to watch guys go down with injuries like that. I hope that he’s all right.”

Mahomes, who has 15 TDs and one interception this season, didn’t speak with reporters after the game but he did lead the team’s “breakdown,” in the winning locker room, praising Moore, who completed 10 of 19 passes for 117 yards, and the defense.

The Broncos had won two straight and were aiming to turn the AFC West upside down by handling the Chiefs their third straight loss. But the Chiefs, who were 24th in the league with just 11 sacks coming in, sacked Flacco a career-high eight times and held Denver’s running back duo in check after allowing an average of 190 rushing yards over their previous four games.

When Flacco did stay upright to deliver deep passes, they fell incomplete. Rookie tight end Noah Fant dropped three passes that would have totaled more than 100 yards, and Denver converted just one of 13 third downs.

“This is about as bad an offense as I’ve seen,” Fox NFL analyst Troy Aikman exclaimed at one point. “I’m shocked there’s as many people still here at the game.”

NBA briefs

Two-time All-Star Deng signs with Bulls, retires

Associated Press

CHICAGO — Two-time All-Star forward Luol Deng has signed with the Chicago Bulls and retired as a member of the team that drafted him.

The No. 7 overall pick in 2004, the 34-year-old Deng averaged 14.8 points and 6.1 rebounds over 15 seasons with Chicago, Cleveland, Miami, the Los Angeles Lakers and Minnesota.

He was part of seven playoff teams — six with Chicago, one with Miami — and averaged 15.9 points and 6.7 rebounds in 62 postseason games. From South Sudan, he played one season at Duke before entering the NBA draft.

Deng was an All-Star on the Bulls’ 2011-12 and 2012-13

teams, leading the league in minutes per game both seasons. He was traded to Cleveland in January 2014.

The Bulls said Thursday they will honor Deng at a game this season.

In other NBA news:

■ Zion Williamson won’t play in New York in the New Orleans Pelicans’ final pre-season game because of a sore right knee.

The Pelicans said Thursday that the No. 1 pick didn’t travel with the team to New York, remaining in New Orleans to undergo further testing and evaluation at Ochsner Sports Medicine.

■ Michael Jordan unveiled the first of two medical clinics in Charlotte he and his family

funded to provide care to underprivileged members of the community.

The six-time NBA champion and Hornets owner was on hand Thursday for the grand opening of the \$7 million Novant Health Michael Jordan Family Medical Clinic. Tears streamed down Jordan’s cheeks as he said, “This is a very emotional thing for me to be able to give back to a community that has supported me over the years.”

The clinic, located in a lower-income section of the city, will provide vital access to primary and preventive care to individuals in the community, including those who are uninsured or underinsured.

■ Sacramento Kings forward Harrison Barnes is cov-

ering a majority of the funeral costs for Atatiana Jefferson, the 28-year-old woman who was fatally shot by a police officer during a wellness check last week in Fort Worth, Texas.

Barnes, who previously played for the Dallas Mavericks, discussed his decision to pay for Jefferson’s funeral following the Kings’ practice Thursday at Golden 1 Center.

■ The Los Angeles Lakers have exercised their contract option on forward Kyle Kuzma for the 2020-21 season.

The Lakers made the move Thursday on Kuzma, who is currently out with a foot injury suffered while playing for USA Basketball during the summer.

Astros power past Yanks in Game 4

Associated Press

NEW YORK — They have the pitching, and they don't need the pitches. Certainly, the Houston Astros have confidence for good reason on the brink of another World Series.

"It's Justin Verlander," reliever Ryan Pressly said.

George Springer and Carlos Correa each hit three-run homers and the Astros got another wild ace off the hook to beat the disheveled New York Yankees 8-3 Thursday night and reach the cusp of a second World Series visit in three years.

The Astros lead the AL Championship Series 3-1, putting the 2017 World Series winners on the brink of a showdown with the NL champion Washington Nationals.

Houston still has Verlander and Gerrit Cole queued up for this series, and the Yankees will have to beat both to survive. Verlander will start Game 5 on Friday night against James Paxton.

Springer lined an errant splitter from playoff star Masahiro Tanaka in the third inning for his homer, and Correa battered Chad Green's fastball when New

York turned to its vaunted bullpen. Those All-Star sluggers have combined for just five hits in the series, but four have been homers.

Earlier in the day, Astros manager AJ Hinch ardently denied that his team has skirted rules to steal signs after an allegation by the Yankees, which was investigated and cleared by Major League Baseball. He also made it clear: If a pitcher is tipping what's coming, Houston will take advantage.

The Astros are tired of that talk detracting from their sluggers.

"I think it's disrespectful that every time we score a lot of runs, people talk about tipping," Correa said. "Nobody was tipping today and we scored, what, eight runs? We're great hitters. We've been doing it for a whole season."

New York worked starter Zack Greinke hard during a 28-pitch first inning, but just like against Cole in Game 3, the clutch hit never came. Pressly dodged a bases-loaded jam in the fifth, and many fans had left Yankee Stadium by the time it ended.

The Yankees are at risk of failing to

make the World Series for an entire decade for the first time since the 1910s. They are 0-for-13 with runners in scoring position the past two games. It didn't help when they committed four errors in Game 4, the most ever for the club in a home postseason game.

"We played poorly tonight, there's no other way to explain it," manager Aaron Boone said. "And we need to flush this immediately."

Tanaka allowed four runs — three earned — his most in eight postseason starts.

CC Sabathia pitched in relief for New York but was pulled with a left shoulder injury during the eighth inning. Planning to retire after the season, an emotional Sabathia covered his face with his glove as he left the field for likely the final time. Fans shouted his name as he walked off, and Cole and Springer were among the Houston players who stood and clapped for the 39-year-old.

"I hate to see that for him," said Hinch, who played with and against Sabathia. "I hate to see that for the sport."

Greinke tunes out taunts, quiets NY crowd

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Sounds as though Zack Greinke got an earful at Yankee Stadium while warming up in the bullpen.

By the time the ninth inning rolled around, most of those fans were long gone.

Awfully satisfying for the Houston Astros.

"They emptied out pretty quick toward the end. I guess there wasn't that much to say," right fielder Josh Reddick said.

Greinke kept his cool after a rocky start Thursday night and the Astros romped to an 8-3 victory over the New York Yankees for a 3-1 lead in the best-of-seven AL Championship Series.

A report by NJ Advance Media detailed some of the jeering directed at Greinke as he got loose before the game. Fans in the left field bleachers insulted his family and taunted the Astros starting pitcher with chants about his social anxiety

disorder, the outlet indicated. At least one was ejected as police officers kept a watchful eye close by.

"I didn't hear anything," Greinke said softly in the Houston clubhouse after allowing one run in 4¹/₃ innings.

The revved-up Bronx crowd also chanted "Donald! Donald!" — which is Greinke's given first name — while he was in the bullpen and on the mound.

"I don't know if low-class is the right word, but they are hectic," Reddick said. "I think winning three straight at their home park is going to make a bigger statement than that."

Greinke walked four — three in the first inning for the first time since April 2007 — and quickly fell behind 1-0. But the 35-year-old right-hander pitched out of an early bases-loaded jam and then settled in. He retired nine in a row before DJ LeMahieu's one-out single in the fifth.

"He really has a very slow heartbeat," Reddick said. "He always seems like he has a calm frame of mind out there."

Before the game, Astros manager AJ Hinch said he would remove his team from the field if fans again threw objects at Houston players.

Reddick said fans tossed water bottles, baseballs and other objects at him during Game 3 at Yankee Stadium.

"I will pull the team off the field if we get in that situation again where bottles are being thrown and balls are being thrown and it becomes unruly," Hinch said prior to Game 4. "There's other ways to support your home team, and this place does as good a job as anybody to trying to police that while also trying to create an environment that's all pro-Yankees. It would be a very ugly scene for baseball, a very ugly scene for the Yankees, if one of our guys was hit by something from the upper deck... nobody

wants that."

A warning was shown on large center-field video board before the game: "Please be advised that it is illegal to throw any substance or object in the stadium. Violators face ejection and a permanent ban from Yankee Stadium, as well as criminal and civil penalties."

A recording from Yankees manager Aaron Boone imploring fans to "please don't throw objects onto the field" was played after the second inning.

Reddick described the fans in the outfield Thursday as "pretty laid-back, actually."

"I didn't get anything thrown at me tonight, so that was nice," he said with a smile. "To come in here and take the first two from a team like this in their home park, this is one of the hardest places to play on the road. The atmosphere is very intense and very unique, so it makes a big statement when we come in here and do that," Reddick added.

NHL roundup

Canadiens' Price tags Wild with shutout loss

Associated Press

MONTREAL — Carey Price made 17 saves for his first shutout of the season and Victor Mete and Nick Suzuki scored their first NHL goals in a first-period burst in the Montreal Canadiens' 4-0 victory over the Minnesota Wild on Thursday night.

Joel Armia and Brendan Gallagher also scored and Nick Cousins had an assist in his Montreal debut to help the Canadiens improve to 3-2-2. The 32-year-old Price has 45 career shutouts.

Alex Stalock stopped 28 shots for the reeling Wild. They dropped to 1-6-0.

Playing his 127th NHL game, the 21-year-old Mete opened the scoring with 5:23 left in the first. He found space in the slot, took a backhand pass from Cousins from behind the net and beat Stalock to the glove side. That ended the longest goal drought to start a career in Canadiens history, a mark previously held by Mike Komisarek at 122 games.

Islanders 3, Jets 1: Mathew Barzal scored two second-period goals and Semyon Varlamov made 32 saves in New York's victory at Winnipeg.

Josh Bailey scored into an empty net on a power play with 27 seconds left in the third period to cap the Islanders' third straight victory and seal the Jets' third loss in a row.

Nikolaj Ehlers had a power-play goal for Winnipeg and Connor Hellebuyck made 23 saves.

New York didn't get its sixth shot until 7:41 of the second period — and it was a power-play goal by Barzal that tied it 16

seconds after Dmitry Kulikov went to the penalty box for tripping.

Canucks 4, Blues 3 (SO): Josh Leivo scored the lone shootout goal and Thatcher Demko stopped 31 shots in Vancouver's victory at St. Louis.

Leivo lifted a shot over Jordan Binnington in the bottom half of the sixth shootout round. Bo Horvat, J.T. Miller and Micheal Ferland scored in regulation for the Canucks.

Vladimir Tarasenko, Alex Pietrangelo and Robby Fabbri scored for the defending Stanley Cup champion Blues. They have lost three in a row.

Lightning 4, Bruins 3 (SO): Steven Stamkos scored the lone goal in the shootout to lift Tampa Bay to a win at Boston.

After the first three shooters for both sides failed, Stamkos put a wrist shot past Tuukka Rask. Andrei Vasilevskiy then stopped Jake DeBrusk.

Brayden Point, Mathieu Joseph and Kevin Shattenkirk scored in regulation for the Lightning and Andrei Vasilevskiy made 33 saves. David Pastrnak had two goals and an assist, and Patrice Bergeron added a goal for the Bruins. Boston three goals came on power plays.

Coyotes 5, Predators 2: Phil Kessel scored his first two goals for host Arizona, and Christian Dvorak scored his third goal in two games in the over Nashville.

The Coyotes, 3-0-1 in their last four games, went 3-for-6 on the power play. Darcy Kuemper stopped 23 shots and set a franchise record by allowing no more than two goals in 12 consecutive games. Jakob

Chychrun added his first goal of the season. Dante Fabbro and Nick Bonino scored for the Predators.

Devils 5, Rangers 2: Kyle Palmieri and Myles Wood scored in the second period and host New Jersey held off New York for its their first victory of the season.

Blake Coleman, Nikita Gusev and P.K. Subban also scored and Mackenzie Blackwood made 29 saves to help the Devils improve to 1-4-2. Tony DeAngelo and Jesper Fast scored for the Rangers.

Flames 5, Red Wings 1: Sam Bennett, Derek Ryan and Mark Giordano scored in a 5:18 span of the third period to break open a close game in host Calgary's victory over Detroit.

Bennett gave the Flames a 3-1 lead at 3:29, Ryan connected at 4:57 and Giordano added a power-play goal at 8:47. Andrew Mangiapane and Elias Lindholm also scored and David Rittich made 27 saves.

Sabres 3, Kings 0: Carter Hutton made 47 saves for his second straight shutout and Casey Mittelstadt scored twice in Buffalo's win at Los Angeles.

Conor Sheary also scored for the Sabres, who bounced back from their first regulation loss of the season at Anaheim on Wednesday.

Golden Knights 3, Senators 2 (SO): Jonathan Marchessault scored his first career shootout game-winning goal and host Las Vegas beat Ottawa.

The Golden Knights fired a franchise-record 54 shots on goal.

Reilly Smith and Nick Holden scored for Las Vegas.

Silver: China asked that Rockets' Morey be fired

Associated Press

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said Chinese officials wanted Houston Rockets general manager Daryl Morey to be fired for his tweet supporting anti-government protesters in Hong Kong, and the league emphatically dismissed the request.

Silver also said that the league is already feeling "substantial" financial losses because of the Chinese reaction to Morey's deleted tweet.

"Obviously, we made clear that we were being asked to

fire him by the Chinese government, by the parties we dealt with, government and business," Silver said Thursday during an appearance at the Time 100 Health Summit in New York. "We said, 'There's no chance that's happening. There's no chance we'll even discipline him.'"

Silver also said he isn't sure what will happen to the NBA's relationship with China, which has been growing steadily over the last three decades.

"I felt we had made enormous progress in terms of building

cultural exchanges with the Chinese people," Silver said. "Again, I have regret that much of that was lost."

The league and LeBron James, one of its biggest stars, has been heavily criticized by some U.S. lawmakers for the perception that they caved to the Chinese regime. Morey has not been rebuked publicly by the league, and Silver has said that the league will support his freedom of expression.

"We wanted to make an absolute clear statement that the values of the NBA, these Amer-

ican values — we are an American business — travel with us wherever we go, and one of those values is free expression," Silver said. "We wanted to make sure everyone understood we were supporting free expression."

The Rockets were of interest in China, largely because of Yao Ming — the Chinese star who spent his entire NBA career in Houston. Yao is now the president of the Chinese Basketball Association, which has suspended its ties to the Rockets because of the tweet.