

N. Korea tests possible sub-launched missile

BY DAVID CHOI
AND HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — North Korea launched at least one missile into the sea off its eastern coast, the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff announced on Tuesday morning.

The short-range projectile is believed to have been a submarine-launched ballistic missile, according to a military official who spoke to Stars and Stripes on the condition of anonymity because he was not allowed to discuss the details.

The official said an initial assessment indicated the missile flew over 360 miles at a maximum altitude of 37 miles.

No reports of injuries or damages from the 10:17 a.m. launch were reported by the Japan Coast Guard, according to an

agency spokesman. Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told reporters his military detected two ballistic missiles and called it “extremely regrettable.”

South Korean military officials believe the missile was fired from Sinpo, home to a North Korean shipyard where analysts have said the communist regime has been developing a ballistic missile submarine.

North Korea has been testing SLBMs for several years. In 2019, the regime tested an SLBM from an underwater platform that flew nearly 280 miles. South Korean military officials on Tuesday did not confirm whether the North's latest test originated from a newly developed submarine or a launch platform. North Korea did not release any announcement about its launch by Tuesday afternoon.

The South Korean presidential Blue House convened with its National Security Council in response to the launch, and in a joint statement expressed “deep regret” over the North's latest weapons test.

The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command in a statement condemned the launch and called on North Korea “to refrain from any further destabilizing acts.”

“While we have assessed that this event does not pose an immediate threat to U.S. personnel, territory, or that of our allies, we will continue to monitor the situation,” the command said Tuesday.

The launch comes as several high-level discussions between Washington and Seoul about North Korea are expected this week.

The U.S. special representa-

tive for North Korea policy, Sung Kim, will be traveling to Seoul to discuss the possibility of declaring a formal end to the 1950-53 Korean War, a move that South Korean President Moon Jae-in has advocated for since his presidential campaign.

North Korea's latest launch comes as Avril Haines, the U.S. director of national intelligence, is scheduled to speak with South Korean and Japanese intelligence leaders throughout the week.

The United States has continued to offer North Korea a venue to hold discussions without preconditions. State Department spokesman Ned Price in September said the U.S. held “no hostile intent” toward the regime and that “we hope [North Korea] will respond positively to our outreach.”

Navy transforms into pioneer in contraceptive care

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY
Stars and Stripes

The days of “Love Boat” ridicule for the Navy over unplanned pregnancies are a distant memory now.

The destroyer tender USS Arcadia gained the nickname during the Gulf War when at least 36 of its service women had to be transferred off the ship while deployed to the Persian Gulf due to pregnancies.

In the years since, the Navy has surpassed the other services in providing access to contraceptives, including those considered the most foolproof and effective.

Nearly 30% of Navy and Marine women were using long-acting reversible contraceptives, or LARCs, by 2019, according to a study in the current issue of the Defense Health Agency's monthly medical journal.

By contrast, less than a quarter of Air Force women were using the intrauterine devices and hormonal implants, which are

nearly 100% effective in preventing pregnancy, and fewer than 20% of Army women were.

“Navy medicine continues to prioritize both contraception education and contraception access for sailors and Marines,” Navy spokeswoman Angela Steadman said in an email. “We recognize that contraception is not only for family planning purposes, but is also incredibly important to our active duty women for menstrual management and operational readiness should they desire it.”

The study showed increases in LARC use since 2016, when the Navy opened walk-in contraceptive clinics offering same-day services without an appointment to increase access to contraceptive counseling and prescriptions.

As of February, the Navy had more than 22 such clinics, usually held once weekly, including at bases in Europe. The Army had five, including a monthly clinic at

Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, and the Air Force had one.

The Defense Health Agency is now considering whether to mandate them at all military treatment facilities.

“The Navy has done a really great job with those clinics,” said Army Lt. Col. Erin Keyser, the director of the gynecologic surgery and obstetrics program at Brooke Army Medical Center.

Keyser said that after the walk-in clinics patterned on the Navy's were launched at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, it took on average two hours for a patient to be provided with a LARC or other contraception.

That was compared with the average of eight hours it took when troops had to make appointments, often with different providers.

“Especially for young service women, it was a struggle, needing two or three appointments, and the delays that caused,” Keyser said.

Chinese, Russian warships transit strait

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — A flotilla of Russian and Chinese warships transited a narrow waterway separating the major Japanese islands of Honshu and Hokkaido for the first time on record Monday, according to the Japanese government.

Five Russian and five Chinese vessels, including destroyers and frigates, passed through the Tsugaru Strait — 12 miles wide at its narrowest point — from the Sea of Japan to the Pacific Ocean, Japan's deputy chief cabinet secretary Yoshihiko Isozaki said during a news conference Tuesday.

The transit is the first involving warships from Russia and China at the same time, Isozaki said.

"The Japanese government pays close attention with great interest to such activities of Chinese and Russian navies in the region," he said.

The vessels were first spotted by the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force around 8 a.m. Monday about 68 miles southwest of Okushiri Island in the Sea of Japan, according to news release that day from Japan's Joint Staff.

Japan will take all possible measures to continue monitoring the surrounding waters and airspace, Isozaki told reporters.

The strait is one of the few passageways through the chain of islands, including the Japanese archipelago, that separates continental Asia from the Pacific Ocean. It is considered an international waterway, according to public broadcaster NHK.

The Chinese and Russian navies held an exercise in the Sea of Japan this month that included countercommunications, sea mine countermeasures, air defense, live-fire shooting at maritime targets, joint maneuvering and joint anti-

submarine missions, according to an Oct. 14 report in China's state-run Global Times newspaper that cited the Chinese navy.

"Not only did they do the exercise, but they did a joint transit at the end to catch Japan's attention," James Brown, an international affairs expert at Temple University's Japan campus, said in a telephone interview Tuesday.

Russian and Chinese forces have been training together since 2005 but the latest drills are sending messages about the "Quad" grouping involving the U.S., Japan, Australia and India, he said.

Naval forces from the four nations kicked off the second phase of Exercise Malabar in the Bay of Bengal on Oct. 11 with an armada led by the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson.

"Russia and China don't like the Quad grouping," Brown said.

The Sea of Japan training and

transit of the Tsugaru Strait sends a message that involvement in the group has consequences for Japan, he said.

Cooperation between Russia and China is happening at a tense time in Europe with Russia shuttering its permanent mission to NATO and suspending the alliance's liaison office Monday in Moscow. The move came less than two weeks after NATO expelled eight members of the Russian delegation, accusing them of working as undercover spies.

"I don't think anyone thinks China is going to come to Russia's defense over issues in Europe," Brown said. "Likewise, I don't think Russia would see it in their interest to support China if there was a conflict over Taiwan."

The countries' security relationship is not on par with the U.S.-Japan alliance but it's more than just a partnership, he said.

Navy spouse watches her 'Project Runway' debut with supporters on base

By ALEX WILSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — Cheers and laughs filled a room at the Yokosuka Officer's Club on Saturday night as more than 60 people celebrated a Navy spouse's debut on prime-time television.

The crowd — friends, family, higher-ups and "Project Runway" fans — turned out for a watch party to support Yokosuka resident Katie Kortman's first appearance on the Bravo show. Kortman, 40, is taking on 15 other designers in the Emmy-winning fashion competition.

"It's so exciting to have everyone here for their support and hearing them cheering me on," Kortman told *Stars and Stripes*

that night. "I experienced this all back in May and June, but I couldn't tell anyone about it except for my family — but now everybody gets to see what happened."

During the first episode, Kortman and the other designers were divided into two teams that competed to design a collection of outfits based on either the warm or cool sides of the color wheel. Kortman, on the "cool" team, designed a hand-painted dress.

Kortman's team didn't win the competition, and one of her teammates was eliminated as a result. However, the judges were restrained in deriding her design, meaning she'll continue to the second episode, which airs Thursday at 9 p.m. EST.

US envoy for Afghanistan steps down after 3 years

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. special envoy for Afghanistan is stepping down following the chaotic American withdrawal from the country, the State Department said Monday.

Zalmay Khalilzad will leave the post this week after more than three years on the job under both the Trump and Biden administrations. He had been criticized for not pressing the Taliban hard enough in peace talks begun while Trump was president, but Secretary of State Antony Blinken thanked him for his work.

"I extend my gratitude for his decades of service to the American people," Blinken said of Khalilzad, a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and Afghanistan.

Khalilzad had initially planned to leave the job in May after Biden's announcement that the U.S. withdrawal would be completed before the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks in September. He was asked to stay on, however, and did so.

Khalilzad had served as the special envoy for Afghan reconciliation since September 2018, when then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo brought him on board to lead negotiations with the Taliban and the Afghan government.

An Afghan native, Khalilzad was unsuccessful in getting the two sides together to forge a power-sharing deal, but he did negotiate a U.S. agreement with the Taliban in February 2020 that ultimately led to the end of America's longest-running war.

House Jan. 6 panel plans contempt vote

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A House committee tasked with investigating the Jan. 6 Capitol insurrection is moving swiftly Tuesday to hold at least one of Donald Trump's allies in contempt as the former president is pushing back on the probe in a new lawsuit.

Trump is aggressively trying to block the committee's work by directing former White House aide Steve Bannon not to answer questions in the probe while also suing the panel to try to prevent Congress from obtaining former White House documents. But lawmakers on the House committee said they will not back down as they gather facts and testimony about the attack involving Trump's supporters that left dozens of police officers injured, sent lawmakers running for their lives and interrupted the certification of President Joe Biden's victory.

"The former president's clear objective is to stop the Select Committee from getting to the facts about January 6th, and his lawsuit is nothing more than an attempt to delay and obstruct our probe," said Chairman Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., and Republican Rep. Liz Cheney, of Wyoming, the panel's vice chairwoman, in a joint statement late Monday.

They added: "It's hard to imagine a more compelling public interest than trying to get answers about an attack on our democracy and an attempt to overturn the results of an election."

Trump's lawsuit, filed after Biden decided to waive his right to block the document release over executive privilege concerns, claims that the panel's August request was overly broad and a "vexatious, illegal fishing expedition," according to papers filed in federal court in the District of Columbia.

The lawsuit was expected, as Trump has repeatedly made clear that he will challenge the investigation of the violent attack by a mob of his supporters. But Trump's challenge went beyond the initial 125 pages of records that Biden recently cleared for release to the committee. The suit, which names the committee as well as the National Archives, seeks to invalidate the entirety of the congressional request, calling it overly broad, unduly burdensome and a challenge to separation of powers. It requests a court injunction to bar the archivist from producing the documents.

The Biden administration, in clearing the documents for release, said the violent siege of the Capitol more than nine months ago was such an extraordinary circumstance that it merited waiving the privilege that usually protects White House communications.

EPA has strategy to regulate toxic 'forever chemicals'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration said Monday that it is launching a broad strategy to regulate toxic industrial compounds associated with serious health conditions that are used in products ranging from cookware to carpets and firefighting foams.

Michael Regan, the head of the Environmental Protection Agency, said his agency is taking a series of actions to limit pollution from a cluster of long-lasting chemicals known as PFAS that are increasingly turning up in public drinking water systems, private wells and even food.

The Defense Department said it is moving

to assess and clean up PFAS-contaminated sites throughout the country, while the Food and Drug Administration will expand testing of the food supply to estimate Americans' exposure to PFAS from food. Additionally, the Agriculture Department will boost efforts to prevent and address PFAS contamination in food.

The plan is intended to restrict PFAS from being released into the environment, accelerate cleanup of PFAS-contaminated sites such as military bases and increase investments in research to learn more about where PFAS are found and how their spread can be prevented.

"This is a bold strategy that starts with im-

mediate action" and includes additional steps "that will carry through this first term" of President Joe Biden, Regan said in an interview with The Associated Press. "We're going to use every tool in our toolbox to restrict human exposure to these toxic chemicals."

PFAS, called "forever chemicals" because they last so long in the environment and have been associated with serious health conditions, including cancer and reduced birth weight.

PFAS is short for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances that are used in nonstick frying pans, water-repellent sports gear, stain-resistant rugs and many other consumer products.

Supreme Court asked to pause Texas abortion law

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is asking the Supreme Court to block the Texas law banning most abortions, while the fight over the measure's constitutionality plays out in the courts.

The administration also took the unusual step of telling the justices they could grant the Texas law full review and decide its fate this term, which already includes a major case about the future of abortion rights in the United States.

No court has yet reached a decision on the constitutionality of the Texas law, and the

Supreme Court rarely grants such requests.

The law has been in effect since September, aside from a district court-ordered pause that lasted just 48 hours, and bans abortions once cardiac activity is detected, usually around six weeks and before some women know they are pregnant.

The Justice Department asked the high court Monday to lift an order imposed by a conservative federal appeals court that has allowed Texas to continue enforcing the nation's strictest curbs on abortion through a novel law that was written to make it hard to challenge in the federal court system. The

department had announced its intentions last Friday.

The Texas law defies the Supreme Court's major decisions on abortion rights "by banning abortion long before viability — indeed, before many women even realize they are pregnant," the Justice Department wrote in its plea to the court.

"The question now is whether Texas' nullification of this Court's precedents should be allowed to continue while the courts consider the United States' suit. As the district court recognized, it should not," the Justice Department wrote.

FDA set to clear mix-and-match vaccines

The Washington Post

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is poised to clear the use of a COVID-19 booster from a different manufacturer than the one that supplied a patient's original inoculation, according to people familiar with the matter.

The FDA is still considering the scope of the measure, including whether to allow the widespread mixing and matching of vaccines or whether to narrow the param-

eters of use, the people said, speaking on condition of anonymity before any announcement.

The FDA declined to comment and it's not clear when a decision will be announced. Allowing mixing-and-matching would be the agency's first such clearance for coronavirus vaccines.

While the scope remains under discussion and may come with restrictions, the recommendation is expected to ap-

ply across all brands of the vaccine.

For instance, that means someone who originally received Johnson & Johnson's one-dose vaccine could get a booster shot from Moderna or Pfizer and BioNTech, which is based on a different technology. Or, someone who received an initial two shots of the Moderna vaccine could get a Pfizer-BioNTech booster.

The New York Times earlier reported that the FDA is plan-

ning to allow mixing and matching.

Preliminary results of a U.S. government-sponsored trial found that mixing coronavirus vaccines produces as much or more antibodies as using the same shot as a booster.

The findings were discussed at an FDA advisory panel meeting Friday. While no formal vote was taken, many committee members said mixing and matching should be allowed.

Activists press for boycott of Beijing Winter Games

Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece — Human rights activists urged international governments, sponsors and athletes on Tuesday to boycott what they called China's "genocide games" as Greek officials handed over the Olympic flame to 2022 Beijing Winter Games organizers.

Activist groups, which also disrupted the flame lighting ceremony in southern Greece on Monday, accused the International Olympic Committee of granting legitimacy to rights abuses in China by allowing the Winter Games to go ahead in Beijing.

"We have yet again borne witness to the hypocrisy (of the IOC)," Mandie McKeown, the executive director for the International Tibet Network, said at a news conference in

Athens. "They're handing over the Olympic torch to a host government that is so far removed from holding any of (the Olympic) ideals that it seems we're living in a kind of warped reality."

There has been international criticism of China's treatment of Uyghur Muslims in the northwest region of Xinjiang, its crackdown on protesters in Hong Kong and its policies toward Tibet and Taiwan.

But the IOC, which held the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, has shied away from the issue, saying it's out of its remit.

In his speech in the ancient stadium of Olympia on Monday, IOC President Thomas Bach stressed that the Games must be "respected as politically neutral ground."

Activists on Tuesday argued that human

rights in the country have deteriorated since 2008, claiming that the Summer Games "emboldened" China.

Beijing launched a brutal crackdown about four years ago that swept up to a million or more Uyghurs and other mostly Muslim minorities into detention camps and prisons. Chinese authorities have said their goal is not to eliminate the Uyghurs — a historically Muslim group of 13 million people — but to integrate them.

"If this press conference was to take place in China, I, as an Uyghur, would end up in a camp and maybe be subjected to sexual abuse and torture, as millions of my fellow Uyghurs are," said Zumretay Arkin, program and advocacy manager for the World Uyghur Congress.

Report: Haiti gang seeks \$17M for US missionaries

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — A gang that kidnapped 17 members of a U.S.-based missionary group has demanded a \$17 million ransom for them, according to Haiti's justice minister, as quoted by the Wall Street Journal.

Justice Minister Liszt Quitel said the gang was demanding \$1 million per person. Quitel did not immediately return messages for comment, but he also confirmed the figure to the New York Times. The Journal said he identified the ages of the abduct-

ed children as 8 months and 3, 6, 14 and 15 years.

A wave of kidnappings prompted a protest strike that shuttered businesses, schools and public transportation in a new blow to Haiti's anemic economy, and unions and other groups vowed to continue the shutdown Tuesday.

FBI agents and other U.S. officials are helping Haitian authorities hunt for the 12 adults and five children linked to the Christian Aid Ministries in Ohio who were kidnapped Saturday during a trip to visit an orphanage.

It is the largest reported kidnapping of its kind in recent years, with Haitian gangs growing more brazen and abductions spiking as the country tries to recover from the July 7 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse and a magnitude 7.2 earthquake that struck southern Haiti on Aug. 14 and killed more than 2,200 people.

"We are calling on authorities to take action," said Jean-Louis Abaki, a moto taxi driver who joined the strike Monday to decry increased killings and kidnappings in the hemisphere's

poorest nation.

With the usually chaotic streets of Haiti's capital quiet and largely empty Monday, Abaki said that if Prime Minister Ariel Henry and National Police Chief Léon Charles want to stay in power, "they have to give the population a chance at security."

At least 328 kidnappings were reported to Haiti's National Police in the first eight months of 2021, compared with a total of 234 for all of 2020, said a report last month by the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

ROTC students rebuild bridge from skills test

WI LA CROSSE — ROTC students from three colleges along the Wisconsin and Minnesota border came together to rebuild a bridge that is part of a trail system used in an annual national competition.

The Eagle Battalion included about a dozen students from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and Viterbo University in Wisconsin and Winona State University in Minnesota. They replaced an old bridge on the Oak Trail, part of the Lower Hixon Trail System in the city of La Crosse.

Students frequently use the trail system during the Northern Warfare Challenge, a yearly skill and endurance challenge involving ROTC programs from across the country.

Mistake in records: Home is sold for \$236

MS PICAYUNE — A Mississippi woman said the Pearl River County government sold her house for \$236 because of a mix-up in land records — and she wants assurances that her family won't be left homeless because of someone else's mistake.

Tiffany Ingram, of Picayune, told WLOX-TV that an investment company, which thought it was buying a vacant lot, bought the house when the county sold properties that had unpaid taxes.

Ingram said her family bought a lot in Hunters Trace subdivision, but a developer built the Ingrams' home on the lot next door. The builder sold the house and stopped paying

taxes on it. The Ingrams ended up paying taxes on an imaginary house at the original address.

Ingram said she found out her house had been sold when she saw a note on her front door from Viking Investments.

WLOX spoke to the developer and the investor who bought the property. Both said they would find a way to resolve the problem without Ingram losing her house or any money.

Partial road closure expected for park

AK DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE — About half the main road through Denali National Park and Preserve will remain closed next year as officials work to address a long-running landslide issue, the park announced.

In August, the road west of mile 43 was closed to nonessential vehicles, pedestrians and bikes because of conditions caused by a landslide in the Polychrome Pass area. The roadbed has slumped about 30 feet since Sept. 6, "already exceeding the total movement seen from October 2020 to March of 2021," according to a statement from the park.

Given the acceleration trend, the National Park Service "expects landslide movement over this winter will exceed the park's ability to restore or maintain the road surface to safely allow for bus traffic," the statement said.

Man ordered to pay state for timber theft

TN NASHVILLE — A man was ordered to pay restitution for illegally taking timber logs from Bledsoe

State Forest in Tennessee, state agriculture officials said.

John T. Simmons, of Pikeville, was charged in June with theft, trespass and vandalism after he was seen loading logs onto a trailer alongside a road in the east Tennessee forest, the state agriculture department said in a news release.

Simmons agreed with prosecutors in August to pay \$878 in restitution to the Tennessee Department of Agriculture for damages, department spokeswoman Corrine Gould said.

State urges limits to eating fish from creek

MD ANNAPOLIS — Maryland is recommending people limit their consumption of certain fish in the Piscataway Creek in Prince George's County because of PFAS contamination.

The Baltimore Sun reported it's the first time the state has issued such an advisory. It's because of elevated levels of a chemical compound known as per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances in seafood.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has determined that prolonged exposure to certain PFAS can increase the risk of health concerns.

For Piscataway Creek, the Maryland Department of the Environment is recommending that adults and children eat no more than one meal per month of redbreast sunfish.

Troopers: Man grabbed wheel, caused crash

FL TAMPA — A 20-year-old Florida man is accused of grabbing the steering wheel and causing a woman to lose control of the car she was

driving as they traveled on Interstate 75, officials said.

Nathaniel Allen Klippel was arrested in Tampa, the Florida Highway Patrol said. He is accused of attempted murder and witness tampering and bond was set at \$150,000.

The incident happened as Klippel was arguing with the 20-year-old driver, a news release said. She lost control of the car and crashed.

They were both taken to a hospital, where multiple witnesses heard Klippel trying to intimidate the woman into not reporting what caused the crash, troopers said in the report. The woman's name was not released.

Woman sentenced for burglaries during fires

OR OREGON CITY — A 35-year-old Oregon woman was sentenced Oct. 12 to more than seven years in prison for her role in several burglaries that happened while residents were evacuated from wildfires over Labor Day weekend in 2020.

Sandy Faye Lenox pleaded guilty last month to burglary, theft and attempted burglary, according to the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office.

The investigation began when deputies were patrolling evacuation zones in Clackamas County during the wildfires, KATU reported. They learned that two people may have walked onto a property near Mulino.

The deputies found several suspects, including Lenox and James Dean Shotwell.

Shotwell pleaded guilty to burglary and theft. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison.

— From wire reports



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Bucks' Giannis vows to get better

Associated Press

Giannis Antetokounmpo sometimes looks like he might dunk from the foul line.

Other times, the Milwaukee Bucks forward struggles just to reach the rim with a shot from it.

Even with holes to fill in his game, Antetokounmpo is already among the best players in the NBA. He is a two-time MVP who could probably start drafting his Hall of Fame speech without ever adding to what he does now.

Listen to the him for just a few minutes and it's clear that's not his plan.

"I want to keep getting better," Antetokounmpo states matter-of-factly.

That is coming from a player who had one of the finest NBA Finals ever, the unanimous MVP after averaging 35.2 points, 13.2 rebounds and 5.0 assists while shooting 61.8%. No player had ever reached those numbers.

Maybe because it's just possible there has never been a player like him.

Antetokounmpo finished off Phoenix with 50 points, 14 rebounds and five blocked shots in Game 6, going 17 for 19 from the line. Few players have ever displayed such a mastery of their craft in seemingly every facet of the game.

Yet, Antetokounmpo is the same player who was mocked on social media during the postseason for shooting airballs on free throws, who had fans on the road counting to 10 or beyond to show that sometimes he wouldn't even attempt the shot within the allowed time.

It was such a glaring weakness that it reignited criticism that he is an elite athlete who isn't all that skilled at basketball.

He's not as bad as he looked then.

He's also as good as he could be.

"We continue to say we feel like Giannis has got a lot of room for improvement, which is a lot of respect for how much he already does and how great a player and how impactful he is to winning," said Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer.

But the coach believes there are "some significant jumps that he can take."

If there was ever a time to ease up, it would seem Antetokounmpo just earned it after carrying Milwaukee to its first title in 50 years. But Richard Jefferson, who won a title with LeBron James in Cleveland, said that's exactly when the great players take it up another notch because they don't want to settle for one.

"So, I think for guys like Giannis, he's the same way" and wants more, said Jefferson, now an analyst for ESPN and YES Network.

"He knows that people still say that Kevin Durant's the best player, or LeBron James is the best player in the world. And he's won two MVPs, a finals MVP, an All-Star MVP, and no one is saying he's the best player in the world. ... That should make any great player want to wake up and continue pushing."

Antetokounmpo did rest a hyperextended left knee that forced him to miss two games in the Eastern Conference finals and took a trip back to his home in Greece with his championship hardware. He enjoyed the extra time with his fans and his family, having become a father for the second time.

"But you've got to be able to do it for yourself, figure out what you want. And right now, what I want is to get better," Antetokounmpo said. "I don't care about trophies."

"I don't care about MVPs. I don't care about defensive player of the year. I don't care about all those things. I care about getting better, because I know if I do that, there's

more things coming with that and that's what I've done my whole career and that's why I'm in this position."

Unlike an Anthony Davis or Zion Williamson, who arrived in the NBA as No. 1 picks with can't-miss expectations after a year at a college basketball powerhouse, Antetokounmpo was no sure thing. He was only the No. 15 pick of the 2013 draft, averaging just 6.8 points as a rookie on a team that went 15-67. Neither he nor the Bucks were going anywhere without plenty of work.

That comes easily for Antetokounmpo. It's a trait he learned from his parents, who moved from Nigeria to Greece and he said worked nonstop while raising he and his brothers with little money.

"No matter how they felt — happy, sad, tired — they didn't stop," Antetokounmpo said. "That's kind of the mindset I have and that I'm going to keep having."

It's one that's helped him climb from his shaky NBA start to three straight seasons averaging better than 25 points, 10 rebounds and 5.0 assists. He's still below a 30% three-point shooter for his career but looked quicker and more confident on his release in the preseason.

A reliable outside shot would make the 6-foot-11, 250-pound Antetokounmpo close to unguardable, given his unique combination of speed and strength that makes him too big for most forwards and too agile to be guarded by centers.

Many teams try to stop him by packing a wall of defenders in his path to the rim, but Antetokounmpo could foil that strategy by simply shooting before he got to it.

Then, no wall would be in his way.

"I'm ready for any obstacles," Antetokounmpo said.

Curry on brink of record and other things to follow

Associated Press

In the opening seconds of Stephen Curry's NBA career he got an assist on the first possession, a steal on the second and then tried a three-pointer for the first time at the professional level.

It missed.

In that moment, there probably were not very many people expecting he would become the most prolific three-point shooter in NBA history. Yet as the new

NBA season gets started, so does the countdown toward Curry surpassing Ray Allen's mark for threes made in a career.

Allen retired with 2,973 three-pointers in regular-season games. Curry is 141 behind, with 2,832 in his career. At his typical rate of threes made in recent years — about five per game — the Golden State sharpshooter could have the record by mid-December.

Curry is the only player in NBA history to average at least five made threes per game over a full season. He's done it three times. Curry also has four of the five seasons of at least 300 made threes; James Harden had the other.

Allen never made more than 269 in a season. Curry has topped that on six different occasions.

Chasing Kareem

LeBron James could become

the NBA's career scoring leader next season.

James enters the season No. 3 on the scoring list, 1,561 points away from No. 2 Karl Malone's 36,928 points. Kareem Abdul-Jabbar tops the list with 38,387 points — currently 3,020 ahead of James.

If James averages 25 points per game, which he did last year, he would catch Malone in his 63rd game this season.

Schwarber, Red Sox slam Astros 12-3

Associated Press

BOSTON — Red Sox starter Eduardo Rodríguez walked off the mound with a six-run lead and a message for Carlos Correa and the rest of the Houston Astros:

Now it's Boston's time.

Tapping his wrist to mimic Correa's Game 1 celebration, Rodríguez rode four more Red Sox homers — including Kyle Schwarber's record-setting grand slam — to a 12-3 victory Monday night as the team took a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven AL Championship Series.

The taunt drew a rebuke from Boston manager Alex Cora, who reminded his pitcher that they still need two more wins to advance to the World Series for the fifth time since 2004. Games 4 and 5 are at Fenway Park on Tuesday night and Wednesday.

"It's not that I'm mad at him," said Cora, who was celebrating his 46th birthday. "We don't act that way. We just show up, we play, and we move on."

One game after J.D. Martinez and Rafael Devers each hit an early grand slam in Houston, Schwarber launched a second-inning 3-0 pitch 430 feet into the right field grandstand at Fenway.

The Red Sox are the first team with three slams in a postseason series.

"Electrifying. It's unbelievable," outfielder Alex Verdugo said. "You can have a big swing and get four runs in on just that one play — it's huge."

"It's one of the best plays in baseball, man. You give up a grand slam, it takes a lot out of you," he added. "And just to kind of keep stepping on their neck and adding the pressure, it's huge."

Martinez and Devers each homered again, Christian Arroyo also hit one, and Kiké Hernández had two more hits for Boston, which opened 9-0 leads and coasted to victory in back-to-back games. Right fielder Hunter Renfroe ended it with a diving catch of Correa's line drive.

"They count as one (loss)," Astros manager Dusty Baker said. "We come back and win tomorrow and the series is even. You don't like it tonight, but you come back in the morning."

Rodríguez gave up five hits, including Kyle Tucker's three-run homer, and struck out seven. He retired Correa to end the sixth and let the Astros shortstop know that his gesture in Game 1 was not appreciated. Cora

chastised Rodríguez before giving him a hug when he reached the dugout.

"He just told me, 'Don't do that,'" said Rodríguez, who said he would apologize to Correa if he sees him. "It was something that was part of the moment. But (Cora) just told me, 'We don't do that here. Stay humble. Just go out there and play hard every time.'"

"Besides that," Cora said, "he was outstanding."

Correa said he "loved every single bit of it."

"It's just the way baseball should trend, moving forward," he added. "You need to let the players have fun."

Boston matched a franchise record with its seventh straight postseason win at home. The Red Sox had 11 hits in all, becoming the first team in major league history to reach double digits six straight times in a single postseason.

Hernández, who has 18 hits during the playoffs and is batting .500 — both leading the majors — left the game after six innings.

Asked why, Cora said with a smile: "He has been running the bases a lot in the last few days, or weeks, or whatever."

Henry, defense help Titans hang on to topple Bills

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Derrick Henry showed once again how important he is to the Tennessee Titans.

This time, he had help from the Tennessee defense.

Henry scored his third touchdown with 3:05 left, and the Titans stopped Josh Allen on a fourth-down quarterback sneak in the final seconds to beat Buffalo 34-31 on Monday night, snapping the Bills' four-game winning streak.

The AFC East-leading Bills drove to the Tennessee 3 on their final possession and could have sent the game to overtime with a field goal, but instead went for the win — and didn't execute.

First, Allen was marked shy of the first-down marker on a scramble. On fourth down, the rugged quarterback moved from the shotgun to take the

snap under center. The Titans' defensive line surged forward to meet Allen, whose legs went out from under him before Tennessee tackle Jeffery Simmons smothered the quarterback.

The Titans (4-2) took over with 12 seconds left to start a much-needed celebration for the battered defending AFC South champs.

"We got some dogs over there," Henry said of Tennessee's defense. "They fight to the end. They showed it right there."

Henry came in as the NFL's rushing leader even with most teams in the league having played six games, and he finished with 143 yards, topping 100 for the fifth consecutive game. It's the longest streak in the NFL since DeMarco Murray had eight straight in 2014 for Dallas.

The 2020 AP Offensive Player

of the Year also had a 76-yard TD run and a 3-yarder. His long TD — the first of seven lead changes in the game — came with the Titans trailing 6-0 early in the second thanks to the defense holding Buffalo to a pair of early field goals.

"We continue to jump on Derrick's back, and he's willing and able to carry us," Titans coach Mike Vrabel said. "And it's just something that you know you have in your back pocket, front pocket. We pull it out and we use it. It just gave us a big shot of life there."

Quarterback Ryan Tannehill added another TD run against a Bills defense that came in ranked third against the run.

Harold Landry had two of Tennessee's three sacks, and Kevin Byard intercepted a pass.

Buffalo (4-2) wanted to go for the win instead of playing for OT, and the fourth down caught

the team slightly off guard. Bills coach Sean McDermott said officials initially signaled Allen got the first down on his third-down scramble. McDermott said he talked after the game with referee Clete Blakeman, who told him an official radioed down from the box that Allen had come up short.

"We didn't get it done," McDermott said.

Allen, who had converted an NFL-best 24 quarterback sneaks for first downs since 2018, said he didn't have great footing.

"I was just trying to find a window to get in there, and quarterback sneaks aren't the funnest play by any means," Allen said.

Buffalo extended its NFL record of leading at halftime to 15 straight games. But its defense, which came in allowing a league-best 12.8 points a game, gave up a season high in points.

Flyers rout Kraken in Hakstol's return

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The final months of Dave Hakstol's time coaching the Flyers came with angry fans chanting "Fire Hakstol! Fire Hakstol!" With this kind of lopsided score in his return, Philly fans might just throw out a welcome mat.

Claude Giroux and Travis Konecny scored, Carter Hart stopped 24 shots and the Flyers spoiled Hakstol's return to Philadelphia with a 6-1 win over the Seattle Kraken on Monday night.

"We were out of sync, we couldn't put ourselves back on the right track," Hakstol said. "And that's the end result."

Joel Farabee, Derick Brassard, Ryan Ellis and Justin Braun also scored for the Flyers.

Carson Soucy scored the first goal in four games for a Kraken defenseman in team history. The previous three were each decided by one goal.

Hakstol was hired by Philadelphia in 2015 right out of a college job at North Dakota and fired in December 2018 after he went 134-101-42, coaching the third-most games in franchise history behind Fred Shero and Mike

Keenan — and the most for the Flyers without winning a playoff series.

Philadelphia scored three times in the first period and treated Seattle like a run-of-the-mill expansion franchise, not as an instant contender, such as the Vegas Golden Knights.

Flyers mascot Gritty even got in on the fun and pie-faced some dude in an octopus costume, his tentacles waving in the air like eight green flags of surrender.

"We've got a good group here. We have fun at the rink," Hart said. "But we know when it's time to go to work."

Hakstol caught up with some of his former players at the morning skate and had brief conversations before moving on to prep his current team. Only three years later, just nine players remain from his final game in Philly.

Rangers 2, Maple Leafs 1 (OT): Artemi Panarin scored in overtime, Igor Shesterkin stopped 40 shots and New York won at Toronto.

Mika Zibanejad had a goal and an assist for the Rangers (2-1-1), the 100th two-point game of his NHL career.

Michael Bunting scored for the Maple Leafs (2-1-1), who got 21 saves from Jack Campbell.

Panarin won it at 3:48 of a frantic, end-to-end extra period off a faceoff in the Toronto end. He played a quick give-and-go with Zibanejad before firing a shot past Campbell.

Ducks 3, Flames 2 (OT): Jamie Drysdale scored in overtime to give Anaheim a win at Calgary.

Drysdale tapped in a pass from Troy Terry at 3:26 of overtime for the winner.

Cam Fowler and Rickard Rakell also scored for the Ducks, who started a four-game trip with a victory. Anaheim goaltender John Gibson made 41 saves.

Blues 7, Coyotes 4: Jordan Kyrou had two goals and two assists, and St. Louis scored five times in a 5:07 span of the second period for a win at Arizona.

Kyrou and Klim Kostin had two goals apiece during the second-period flurry, which began when Justin Faulk scored on a power play to tie it 2-all at 11:10 after goalie Carter Hutton lost his stick during a scramble in the crease.

WSU's Rolovich fired for refusing COVID-19 vaccine

Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — Washington State fired football coach Nick Rolovich and four of his assistants on Monday for refusing a state mandate that all employees get vaccinated against COVID-19, making him the first major college coach to lose his job over vaccination status.

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, a Democrat, had set a deadline of Monday for thousands of state employees, including the Cougars' coach, to be vaccinated. Rolovich applied for a religious exemption, which was denied Monday, Washington State athletic director Pat Chun said.

Defensive coordinator Jake Dickert will be elevated to acting coach and his first game in charge will be Saturday at home against BYU.

"This is a tough day for Washington State football," Chun said at a news conference. "Nobody wants to be here."

Also fired for refusing vaccination were assistant coaches Ricky Logo, John Richardson, Craig Stutzmann and Mark Weber. Chun said there may be no precedent for a team losing its head coach and so many assistants in the middle of a season.

NHL suspends Kane for using fake vaccine card

SAN JOSE, Calif. — The NHL has suspended San Jose Sharks forward Evander Kane for 21 games for submitting a fake COVID-19 vaccination card.

The league on Monday announced the suspension without pay and said Kane will not be eligible to play until Nov. 30 at New Jersey. Kane will forfeit about \$1.68 million of his \$7 million salary for this season with the money going to the Players' Emergency Assistance Fund.

The league also announced that a concurrent investigation into allegations of sexual and physical abuse made against Kane by his estranged wife, Anna, could not be substantiated.

Lightning's Kucherov out with lower-body injury

TAMPA, Fla. — Tampa Bay Lightning star Nikita Kucherov will be out indefinitely with a lower-body injury he suffered late in the two-time defending Stanley Cup champions' overtime win over the Washington Capitals last weekend.

Kucherov missed all of the 2020-21 regu-

lar season after undergoing hip surgery in the offseason. He returned in the playoffs to have eight goals and 24 assists to help the Lightning win their second consecutive Stanley Cup.

76ers suspend Simmons 1 game for conduct detrimental to team

CAMDEN, N.J. — Ben Simmons has been suspended by the Philadelphia 76ers for one game due to conduct detrimental to the team. Simmons will miss the 76ers' season opener Wednesday night at New Orleans.

The three-time All-Star guard was a hold-out in training camp in the wake of his off-season trade demand. He reported last week and practiced Sunday and Monday with the Sixers. He was scheduled to practice and talk to the media on Tuesday.

Mayfield plans to play despite nagging shoulder injury

BEREA, Ohio — Baker Mayfield said he expects to play Thursday night against the Denver Broncos despite a painful left shoulder injury that has worsened since he hurt it a month ago while trying to make a tackle.