US base in South Korea tries new way to sniff out virus

BY KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The Army garrison in Daegu, the center of South Korea’s coronavirus outbreak, is trying a new way to sniff out people who may have the respiratory disease—a smell test.

Beginning Friday, people trying to enter U.S. installations in the southeastern city were being randomly asked if they can smell apple vinegar as part of the health screening process that has been in place since the outbreak began on Feb. 20.

“We are now performing random smell tests at the entrance gates of Camp Walker, Carroll and Henry to help better detect personnel who may be infected by COVID-19,” the garrison said Friday on its Facebook page, using the virus’ official name.

“Those personnel who cannot detect the screen will be further screened.”

Officials said Sunday the test began on an experimental basis at Camp Walker this weekend and would likely be expanded to the other bases in coming days.

Medical organizations have pointed to mounting evidence that anosmia, the loss of smell or taste, may be an early indicator of the highly contagious virus, although it has so far been largely anecdotal.

Army Garrison Daegu was the first military base to implement a strict screening regimen that includes temperatures checks and a questionnaire to determine potential exposure by location.

Those procedures have been emulated on bases across the divided peninsula and...
Small business relief launches, hits snags

Associated Press

NEW YORK — The federal government’s $349 billion relief program for small businesses got off to a rocky start Friday as hundreds of thousands tried to apply for desperately needed loans.

Many small business owners ran into bureaucratic or technological roadblocks. Some even discovered that their bank wasn’t yet prepared to accept applications, and when they tried another bank, they were told that only established customers were being accepted.

Still, some did succeed in at least getting the process started. Bank of America alone said that 75,000 small businesses had applied for $7 billion of loans. Once the bank handles the application, it goes to the Small Business Administration, which said Friday afternoon that it had approved more than $2.2 trillion economic package passed by Congress last week. Because of the tight timeline, some banks were ready to start accepting loans while others, large and small, complained that they hadn’t received the details of the program from the Treasury soon enough to be ready for the launch Friday morning.

The Paycheck Protection Program is meant to help small businesses keep workers and pay bills during this pandemic, and is part of the $2.2 trillion economic package passed by Congress last week. Because of the tight timeline, some banks were ready to start accepting loans while others, large and small, complained that they hadn’t received the details of the program from the Treasury soon enough to be ready for the launch Friday morning.
In Germany, a warning to heed restrictions

By BRIAN FERGUSON and MARCUS KLOECKNER
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Americans in Germany who violate restrictions aimed at stopping the spread of the coronavirus could face hefty fines from the government and disciplinary action from the military, a top Army official in Europe said Friday.

“This is serious business and you need to take it seriously,” Maj. Gen. Chris Mohan, head of the 21st Theater Sustainment Command, said in a Facebook post.

“We tragically lost a teammate last weekend to this virus, so be assured, I am more determined than ever to protect our people with everything in my power,” he said, referring to a longtime German employee who died March 28 at a Kaiserslautern hospital.

Mohan last month issued a general order spelling out coronavirus restrictions for service members, Defense Department civilians, contractors and family members within the command’s responsibility.

They include a curfew from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m., social distancing rules and bans on exercising or traveling more than 30 kilometers from home, or about 19 miles, except under certain circumstances.

American service members have already been hit with fines, which took effect March 23 in the state of Rheinland-Pfalz, where Ramstein Air Base and several other U.S. bases are located, including Panzer Kaserne, where the 21st TSC is headquartered.

“Just this past week, four soldiers riding in a personal vehicle were fined 100 euros each by the German authorities for defying local social distancing rules,” Mohan said. “Not only is this a breach of host nation laws, but it’s also a violation of my area of responsibility.” The 21st TSC includes bases throughout Europe.

The fines in Rheinland-Pfalz range from 55 euros for a minor administrative offense to 4,000 euros for hosting or organizing a meeting of 11 or more people. Failure to observe social distancing rules could lead to a fine of at least 100 euros.

Americans living in Bavaria, the German state hardest hit by the coronavirus, are subject to 150 euro fines for flouting social distancing rules. The same fine applies to anyone in Bavaria who leaves their home without an acceptable reason, such as shopping for essentials, to go to work or to get medical care.

The state, which is home to the Army training areas in Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels and an Army base in Ansbach/Katterbach, has been under a stay-at-home order since March 20.

In Hesse, where U.S. Army Europe has its Wiesbaden headquarters, gatherings of more than two people or groups of families or people living together in one household, could lead to a fine of 200 euros. Repeat offenders can expect greater punishment, German media reported.

A 27-year-old man in Landshut, Bavaria, was arrested and sentenced to a week in jail after he violated the rules three times, meeting with his friends to smoke and drink, online news portal merkur.de said.

Police in Rheinland-Pfalz stopped a private barbecue in Pirmasens attended by several people, and in Lauterecken, they are investigating a 23-year-old man who insulted officers after they spotted him with six other people in public and questioned him.

Last weekend in Rheinland-Pfalz, which is home to Kaiserslautern where some 54,000 Americans live, police said most people seemed to be following the rules, according to local media SWR.

Mohan recognized that the vast majority of people are doing the right thing, but said, “Now is not the time to relax our guard.”

There were 73,522 confirmed cases and 872 deaths from coronavirus in Germany, the Robert Koch Institute said Friday on its website.

By JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

DODEA schools adjust learning schedules

The staggered schedules, expected to be implemented after students return from spring break April 13, should also help with bandwidth issues, particularly in villages with patchy internet service, Sanchez said.

DODEA schools in Germany closed to students March 16 to help curb the spread of the coronavirus and shifted to online instruction shortly afterward. All 66 DODEA schools in Europe are now closed. No decision has been made on when or if schools will reopen to students this school year.

When classes first went online, instruction times were more spread out and often overlapped at different grade levels.

The need to adjust the digital learning schedule was identified in a short, online survey emailed to parents last month. Some 3,500 parents of the district’s 15,000 students responded, Sanchez said during a virtual town hall Thursday night with local Army and Air Force leaders.

A top issue was that, “for different grade levels, even within the same school, the workload might be excessive,” he said. “When we started out, we had no illusions this was going to be perfect.”

Many parents have reported positive experiences with online learning but some have said that the workload and time students are online are too much.

“We are two parents teleworking full-time with three young children in school,” a commenter posted on Facebook during the virtual town hall. “It takes long days for all of us to finish daily assignments and put our time in for work. It’s a bit overwhelming.”

Teachers in the Europe East district have been asked to “look at what are the most meaningful standards that kids need to know as we move forward and focus more on those critical standards,” Sanchez said.

One of the cons of online school is “it’s really hard work” for teachers, parents and students, he said at the town hall.

“But, the big pro of this is, we have a continuity of education here,” he said, noting that a number of school districts in the States were forced to shut down completely because they lack the infrastructure, command of port or both to move to online teaching.

“Your kids are going to get credit, they’re going to move forward to the next grade level” and they’ll get to graduate, Sanchez said.

By GARRICK W. MORGENWECK/U.S. Army

Kendal Morgenweck, a fifth grader at Hohenfels Elementary School, does her daily online assignments from home last month at Hohenfels Training Area.

GARRICK W. MORGENWECK/U.S. Army
Japan’s travel ban OKs some DOD personnel

By Seth Robson
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Some U.S. military personnel are still able to come to Japan despite a policy imposed Friday that bars entry for those arriving from the United States and 72 other countries.

Japan’s travel ban comes as the nation reports its biggest daily increase in new coronavirus cases to date with 277 people, including 97 in Tokyo, testing positive Thursday, according to Japan’s Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

The soldiers participated in Cobra Gold 2020, a joint military exercise until March 30.

The soldiers participated in Cobra Gold 2020, a joint military exercise until March 30.

“Both U.S. units and the Royal Thai Army have reduced the size of our formations during training, and we are attempting to maximize social distancing,” Army Garrison Hawaii said in an online update.

“Some travelers have had difficulty with airlines allowing them to board flights bound for Japan or with Japan’s Ministry of Health allowing them to avoid quarantine in the immediate vicinity of the airport after arriving, the website states.

“Members who have received their exemption memos from their gaining units are not permitted to take public transport from the airport, and will be restricted on base for fourteen days upon arrival. All members must coordinate with their gaining units before departing the US.”

Once they arrive in Japan, U.S. military personnel aren’t allowed to transfer to domestic flights or use other forms of public transportation.

“A SOFA personnel are not permitted to use public transportation upon arrival and will undergo a 14-day quarantine at their installations,” USFJ tweeted.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper issued orders last week barring nearly all official movement overseas for Defense Department personnel.

Firman said Friday that “very few” people are still proceeding with permanent change of status moves to Japan and some mission-essential personnel are arriving in the country.

Customs and immigration staff receiving U.S. personnel at Narita International Airport are directing them to government shuttle buses. It’s also OK for units to pick up new arrivals in government vehicles, Firman said.

The best way for SOFA personnel to arrive in Japan for travel to Misawa Air Base, Marine Corps Base Hawaii and other locations in Okinawa is via the Patriot Express, a military charter flight, the USFJ website states.

“This will allow for uninterrupted travel to their final destination,” the website states.

Soldiers face quarantine in Hawaii after training ends

By Wyatt Olson
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAPTER, Hawaii — Nearly 1,400 soldiers who have trained in Thailand since February as part of Pacific Pathways will soon head home to Hawaii — and to a mandated 14-day quarantine to prevent the possible spread of coronavirus.

“Our soldiers in Thailand will be returning home in the next few weeks,” Maj. Gen. James Jarrard, commander of the 25th Infantry Division, said Thursday evening during a livestream on Facebook.

“The redeployment of our soldiers will be done in the same thoughtful manner we have implemented for all of our soldiers returning throughout this crisis,” he said. “It will be focused on carefully and prudently mitigating the risk of exposure to maintain the safety and well-being of all. It will also reemphasize our commitment to the state of Hawaii and the city and county of Honolulu in slowing the spread of COVID-19.”

He added that 551 coronavirus cases as of Saturday, with four deaths. More than three-quarters of the cases were linked to residents returning home from other areas, according to the Hawaii Department of Health.

The soldiers participated in Cobra Gold from Feb. 26 through March 6, then shifted location in Thailand for the Hanuman Guardian exercise.

Pacific Pathways is an initiative aimed at keeping soldiers deployed in the Pacific for longer periods by moving them to successive exercises in the region.

About 1,440 soldiers participated in Hanuman Guardian, and roughly 1,350 of them will be returning to Hawaii in the next few weeks, said 25th ID spokesman Lt. Col. Adam Hallmark in a written response to a query from Stars and Stripes.

During daily Facebook streaming updates, Army Garrison Hawaii officials have been peppered with questions by family members about the safety of soldiers training in Thailand.

Officials have said that medical personnel in Thailand checked soldiers daily for fever and other coronavirus symptoms.

“These displaying any symptoms were evaluated by medical providers.

“Both U.S. units and the Royal Thai Army have reduced the size of our formations during training, and we are attempting to maximize social distancing,” Army Garrison Hawaii said in an online update.

Numerous photos published by the Army show U.S. and Thai soldiers wearing face masks.

No soldier has contracted the coronavirus in Thailand, Hallmark said. Two were tested and found negative, he said.

“I know many of you want a definitive date on when you can expect your soldier home, and what we can tell you is that it will be soon,” Command Sgt. Maj. William Pouliot said during the Thursday livestream. “The process has begun, and just like it took a few weeks to get there, it’s going to take the same to get home.”

The Army will implement “stringent controls” that comply with Hawaii Gov. David Ige’s direction to institute a 14-day quarantine and observation period for any one returning to the state, Pouliot said.

“Every one of our team members returning from Thailand will follow this direction,” he said. “Hawaii is our home, and we will remain in close coordination and communication with state and local officials.”

By Nancy Montgomery
Stars and Stripes

VICENZA, Italy — Shoppers at grocery stores and the few other establishments that have remained open in Italy during its nationwide lockdown to fight the coronavirus are now required to wear a mask or scarf over their nose and mouth, the Italian government announced Friday.

Like previous decrees, the new rule, which was to take effect Saturday, also applies to people shopping at commissionaires and post exchanges, and using postal services at bases such as Caserma Ederle, officials with U.S. Army Garrison Italy said.

“Social distancing measures,” comprising 173rd Airborne Brigade soldiers who have been ensuring shoppers remain three feet away from each other, will enforce the rule at the base in Vicenza.

Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization insisted for weeks that masks are unnecessary for healthy people and should be reserved for health care workers on the front line of the pandemic. But indications that some people infected with the coronavirus may show no symptoms and could be unwittingly spreading it through respiratory droplets have caused the CDC to reevaluate its position.

The White House, “while stopping short of declaring an official policy, joined the movement, urging residents of several European nations and much of Asia in recommending that people wear cloth face masks in public, even if they have no symptoms.” The New York Times reported Friday.

Italy had the highest mortality rate, 12%, from the disease caused by the coronavirus of any country in the world as of Friday, with nearly 14,700 deaths out of 119,827 confirmed cases, according to Italian Health Ministry data.

Stars and Stripes reporter Hana Kusumoto contributed to this report.

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**MILITARY**

**Officials: S. Korean police shoot retiree by accident**

*By Kim Gamel and Yoo Kyong Chang*

**Stars and Stripes**

**PYEONGTAEK, South Korea** — South Korean police shot an American military retiree near his home outside Osan Air Base, shattering his jaw in what officers said was an accident involving a “fierce dog.”

Retired Air Force Tech Sgt. Arnold Samberg, 63, was walking home from a dentist appointment March 26 when he suddenly noticed police near a convenience store. The next thing he remembered was finding himself bleeding on the ground.

Samberg was rushed to the emergency room at the hospital on Osan, then transferred to the intensive care unit at Brian D. Allgood Army Community Hospital on Camp Humphreys, where he underwent eight hours of surgery, his family said. He was moved to a regular hospital room Thursday but still has his jaw wired shut and will require more reconstructive surgery. Samberg can’t speak, but he has written notes explaining what happened for his wife, Tonia.

“Every time he coughs it breaks my heart because it hurts him so much,” she said Friday in an interview at their home, less than 500 feet from the site of the shooting.

Samberg and his family expressed frustration over the way the situation has been handled, saying they aren’t satisfied with the police explanation, and they want somebody to be held accountable.

Pyeongtaek police said Samberg was accidentally hit by a stray bullet as officers were trying to shoot a “fierce dog” belonging to an American service member stationed at the base.

The dog had escaped the service member’s yard and attacked a South Korean woman who was walking her dog, a senior police officer told Stars and Stripes on Friday, speaking on condition of anonymity to provide details about an ongoing investigation.

“The police didn’t mean to shoot the American guy. The police were trying to shoot the fierce dog, but the bullet ricocheted and hit him,” the officer said.

He said police had ordered people to evacuate the area before shooting but promised to investigate the incident “fairly and objectively.”

Samberg said he doesn’t remember seeing a dog but he made eye contact with the police before he was shot.

“His only way of communication is writing on a piece of paper. And his biggest question is why was I shot? I was just walking,” his son-in-law, Army Staff Sgt. Nicholas Pollack, said in a telephone interview from Fort Rucker, Ala.

He and Samberg’s daughter, Jacqueline, have been unable to fly to South Korea to help her family. The foundation estimated that veteran unemployment could reach the highest it’s ever been in the post-9/11 era.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported Friday a rise in unemployment from 3.5% in February to 4.4% in March. Veteran unemployment increased from 3.6% to 4.1%, the bureau reported.

“I need justice,” she said. “After my husband served for 24 years in the Air Force, this is what he gets?”

The 51st Fighter Wing at Osan said it could not release information about the case because it falls outside U.S. jurisdiction and the South Korean police have the lead on the investigation.

“We’re working closely with them, and we have made contact with the family to ensure they have the resources available to receive the answers,” the public affairs office said in an email.

The hospital at Camp Humphreys declined to comment on Samberg’s condition, citing privacy rules.

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Trump: VA will extend deadlines, delay debt collection

*By Nikki Wentling*

**Stars and Stripes**

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump promised the Department of Veterans Affairs would extend veterans’ deadlines for disability benefits and postpone any debt collections as the country grapples with the coronavirus pandemic.

Trump made the vow during a briefing at the White House on Thursday evening. The extension was an effort to lessen the financial effects of the pandemic on veterans.

“We take very good care of our veterans,” Trump said. “At my direction, Secretary (Robert) Wilkie will use any authority at his disposal to extend deadlines for benefits and postpone debt collections.”

The announcement came after Sens. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., and Jon Tester, D-Mont., urged Wilkie this week to waive veterans’ filing deadlines that — if not met — could result in loss of VA benefits.

The senators, who lead the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, argued that veterans are some of the most vulnerable to the virus because of their age and underlying health conditions. They should not be leaving their homes to receive help with their complex benefits paperwork, they said.

Moran and Tester asked Wilkie to delay all deadlines by 180 days. It was uncertain Friday how long the VA might extend the filings.

The Bob Woodruff Foundation, a nonprofit that aids post-9/11 veterans, released a report this week that found the pandemic could disproportionately affect veterans.

A significant number of veterans in the workforce are employed by industries most likely to experience immediate layoffs, researchers found. The social isolation and economic impacts could also negatively affect veterans with pre-existing mental health issues and create a surge in demand for mental health resources that are already challenging to access.

The foundation estimated that veteran unemployment could reach the highest it’s ever been in the post-9/11 era.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported Friday a rise in unemployment from 3.5% in February to 4.4% in March. Veteran unemployment increased from 3.6% to 4.1%, the bureau reported.

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Esper defends Navy secretary in firing captain

BY KATIE FELDMAN
New York Daily News

Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Sunday that he supported acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly’s decision to fire the Navy captain who wrote a letter to his superiors about his concerns of the coronavirus pandemic aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt.

“I think acting Secretary Modly made a very tough decision, a decision that I support,” Esper said on CNN. “It was supported by Navy leadership.”

Esper was referring to the letter by Capt. Brett Crozier, who was relieved of his post Thursday, two days after his letter appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle.

In the letter, Crozier informed his bosses to provide resources for the more than 5,000 people aboard the ship, which has been docked in Guam.

“Captain Crozier was faithful to his duty — both to his sailors and his country,” the former vice president tweeted. “Navy leadership sent a chilling message about speaking truth to power. The poor judgment here belongs to the Trump Admin, not a courageous officer trying to protect his sailors.”

FROM FRONT PAGE

in other countries since the virus emerged as a global pandemic, infecting more than 1 million people and killing more than 56,000.

Daegu, a city of 2.5 million people, was hard hit with more than 60% of South Korea’s 10,236 cases as of Sunday, according to the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Eight of the 18 cases affiliated with the U.S. military in South Korea were at USAG Daegu, including the first soldier to be infected who was stationed at Camp Carroll.

However, Daegu military officials believe those infections occurred off-post.

“We have not had a single transfer of the disease on our base,” garrison commander Col. Edward Ballaico said Thursday in a Facebook live community update. “This will be another step that we can take to prevent that from happening.”

The smell test was modeled on a similar process employed at local hospitals, he added.

A driver takes a smell test as part of screening measures at Camp Henry, South Korea, on Friday.

 Sniff: Experts say those infected may have loss of smell; bases give vinegar scent test

“It won’t be every car. We’re just going to experiment with this and see how it works and how it goes,” he said, displaying a plastic cup with a sponge soaked in vinegar.

The process was adapted over the weekend, with the garrison saying it would use soaked cotton swabs that could be handed to each individual, then immediately discarded.

People who don’t have a sense of smell or who are allergic to vinegar were instructed to inform the screeners about their condition.

The World Health Organization has said it is probing a possible link between anosmia and coronavirus but has not yet listed anosmia as a symptom.

The most common symptoms of the disease caused by coronavirus are fever, fatigue and a dry cough, although some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea, according to the WHO.

ENT UK, a group representing ear, nose and throat doctors in the U.K., said in a guidance document last week that significant numbers of patients in countries with high coronavirus rates, including South Korea, had developed anosmia.

The American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery also established a “COVID-19 anosmia reporting tool for clinicians.”

Researchers at King’s College London found that 59% of 579 respondents who reported suspected coronavirus symptoms to an app and tested positive for the disease reported loss of smell or taste, the BBC reported.

“When combined with other symptoms, people with loss of smell and taste appear to be three times more likely to have contracted COVID-19 according to our data, and should, therefore, self-isolate for seven days to reduce the spread of the disease,” Tim Spector, a King’s professor who led the study, was quoted as saying.

4 more American contractors test positive in South Korea

By Matthew Keeler
Stars and Stripes

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea — U.S. Forces Korea reported that four civilian contractors tested positive for coronavirus over the weekend, bringing the number of cases affiliated with the U.S. military on the peninsula to 19.

Two of the contractors work at Camp Humphreys, which had already reported two positive infections. The other two work at nearby Osan Air Base and are the installation’s first coronavirus cases.

The patients — all U.S. citizens — are in isolation at their off-base residences as directed by the USFK medical personnel and the Korea Centers for Disease Control. USFK said USFK announced in separate press releases Friday that contractors working at Osan — the installation’s first coronavirus case — and Camp Humphreys tested positive. On Saturday, it reported that another Osan contractor is infected.

On Sunday evening, USFK announced its latest case, another Camp Humphreys contractor. It was the ninth infection reported by Camp Humphreys as it surpassed the Army garrison in Daegu with the most cases.

Osan is at Health Protection Condition Charlie-plus, according to a post on the 51st Fighter Wing official Facebook page Friday. Condition Charlie means the area is experiencing “sustained community transmission” of the coronavirus, according to the Defense Department.

Personnel at Osan other than those deemed essential were ordered to their homes while teams retracted the contractor’s contacts, according to the Facebook post.

Tighter restrictions at the air base are a response to seven confirmed cases at Camp Humphreys, an Army installation and the largest U.S. base in South Korea, and numerous cases just outside Osan’s gates in the city of Songtan, wing commander Col. John Gonzales said during a Facebook Live update on Thursday.

The same day, the South Korean air force, which shares the installation, declared some on-base U.S. services, such as the bowling alley and food courts, off limits.

Gonzales, “in solidarity” with the South Koreans, also declared South Korean facilities off limits to U.S. service members, civilian employees, contractors and family members.

Most services on the installation have closed until further notice, including the commissary and base exchange, while they are cleaned and sanitized.

Ally Saval, a 27-year-old military spouse from Baltimore, said she’s impressed with how Osan has handled the pandemic.

“The fact that we have gone this long without a positive case is impressive, and I think everyone has been doing their part to be responsible and stay safe,” she told Stars and Stripes on Friday.

“Our attitude today is to not panic over the closure and just know that things are being handled as swiftly as possible,” she said.

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Military: Public will be told about cases on Okinawa

By Matthew M. Burke and Aya Ichihashi
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — The U.S. military on Okinawa is vowing transparency to its troops, their families and local civilian authorities, days after the Pentagon ordered commanders to stop publicly announcing new coronavirus cases on their bases.

Officials from the Air Force and the Marine Corps, whose troops make up the bulk of the approximately 30,000 U.S. service members on Japan’s southern island prefecture, said they would inform the public about positive cases.

At the same time, those officials said they would no longer release a tally of how many service members are infected.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper on March 27 ordered commanders to stop reporting new coronavirus cases on their installations, citing a concern that potential adversaries might exploit that information. The Pentagon instead would continue to release near-daily updates of total cases among troops, DOD civilian workers, military dependents and defense contractors, Esper said.

On Okinawa, the “Marine Corps will communicate with our force, our families, and our local communities about positive COVID-19 cases,” III Marine Expeditionary Force spokesman 1st Lt. Ryan Bruce wrote in an email to Stars and Stripes on Thursday.

“This includes informing the Okinawan Prefectural Government through official medical reporting channels,” he said. “We recognize that ultimately our bases are part of the larger community, and we will provide information in a way that balances our need for operational security with our responsibility to keep our Marines, sailors, civilians, their families, and our local communities informed.”

To date, no Marine Corps personnel have tested positive in Japan, Bruce said. The force plans to share on social media announcements by Marine Corps Installations Pacific when an individual has tested positive.

“I know, we will share how the individual became infected,” he said. “No further details will be released about positive cases, for example: the employment: duty/sofa status, age, or gender of the individual.”

SOFA refers to the status of forces agreement that defines the legal status of U.S. military forces in host countries. SOFA status covers service members but also their families and Defense Department civilian employees.

At Kadena Air Base, the Air Force’s 18th Wing said it has established a direct channel with the Japanese and prefectural governments to report details of cases on base.

“Recently the Office of the Secretary of Defense published new guidance concerning what information can be shared at the installation level with regard to COVID-19,” said a message posted Thursday to Kadena’s official Facebook page. “This created concern not only with our Facebook followers but with the local community.”

Simply put, the guidance states we can no longer publish a running tally of positive cases,” the message said. “However, we will continue to share information about new cases in the interest of public health and safety just as we did Tuesday.”

On Tuesday, the 18th Wing announced that an airman’s visiting relative had tested positive for coronavirus. The airman had tested positive earlier.

The wing provided no further information about how the family member got to Okinawa, why he was visiting or where he had been prior to contact tracing except to say he had no contact with anyone on or off base.

Information about cases on Kadena will be shared directly with Okinawa prefecture through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Okinawa Defense Bureau, which represents Japan’s Ministry of Defense on the island, a prefectural spokesman said.

However, local officials were unsure what information they would be given. They were assured they would be informed about any contacts individuals on base with coronavirus may have had with the local community.

Chatan Mayor Masaharu Nomuji was “relieved to hear that 18th Wing will continuously share information with us,” the mayor’s spokesman told Stars and Stripes on Thursday.

“Okinawa Defense Bureau officials said as soon as they get the information from the 18th Wing, they will share it with us if any new cases happen,” Burke.matt@stripes.com
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Navy reports its first positive case at Sasebo Naval Base

By Joseph Ditzler
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Sasebo Naval Base in southwestern Japan has confirmed one case of coronavirus, its first, the installation’s commander announced in a video posted to Facebook on Friday.

“So, like it or not, the COVID-19 pandemic is no longer a distant news story,” said Capt. Brad Stallings, using the new coronavirus’ official name. “It is here now in the Sasebo community.”

The person who contracted the virus has been in quarantine “since they arrived in Sasebo” and is receiving medical care, he added.

Stallings said he could provide no further information on the individual. “I can’t tell you whether the individual is assigned to the base, one of our tenant commands or one of the ships here,” he said.

The Defense Department on March 27 ordered base commanders to refrain from reporting case-by-case coronavirus updates, citing a security concern. The Pentagon instead plans a “daily public update” on reporting totals of cases among service members, civilian employees and contractors.

DOD on Thursday reported 893 cases among service members and one death. The number of cases, including uniformed personnel, civilian employees, contractors and family members, was 1,550 that day. An updated figure was unavailable Friday.

The base on Kyushu island is shared with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force. It is home to a group led by the amphibious assault ship USS America, which was at sea with the amphibious transport dock USS Green Bay and the Okinawa-based 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, according to the U.S. Naval Institute Fleet and Marine Tracker on March 30. The America alone carries 1,000 sailors and can embark about 1,700 Marines.

Stallings said the city of Sasebo reported three cases of its own.

Stallings said the person sickened at Sasebo may interact only with caregivers. The risk of transmission from that person is low; a team is tracing the individual’s previous contacts to identify any possible exposure, he said.

“Please believe me when I say the health and safety of the [Sasebo] community is my absolute priority,” he said.

“It is critical that each of you practice strict personal hygiene, social distancing and follow the preventative measures we’ve directed so far,” he added. “I need you right now to be all in for this fight. I hope I can count on your support.”

The Navy in the western Pacific has its share of coronavirus cases. Yokosuka Naval Base, home of the U.S. 7th Fleet, reported the first case among the U.S. military in Japan. It announced three cases total before the Pentagon policy muffled further reports.

On Thursday, acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly said 114 sailors on the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt had tested positive for the virus. The carrier had diverted to Guam and its commander, Capt. Brett Crozier, was relieved Thursday after his email plea to higher ups for urgent action was leaked to the media.

Crozier in his letter warned the outbreak could kill some sailors, and “if we do not act now, we are failing to properly take care of our most trusted asset — our sailors.”

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PAGE 7
Clear skies tempt Europe; UK queen urges restraint

 ***

**BY DANICA KIRKA**

**AND DAVID RISING**

Associated Press

LONDON — As warm, sunny weather beckoned across Europe, Queen Elizabeth II appealed to Britons on Sunday to exercise self-discipline in "an increasingly challenging time" as the country saw a record 24-hour jump in coronavirus deaths that even outpaced the daily toll in hard-hit Italy.

As of Sunday, Britain has recorded 4,934 virus deaths overall among more than 47,000 cases. Those coming down with the virus in the UK include Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the health secretary, England’s chief medical official and Prince Charles, heir to the throne.

There are wide fears that Johnson’s Conservative government did not take the virus seriously enough at first and that beautiful spring weather will tempt Britons and others to break social distancing rules.

In an address to the nation to be televised later Sunday, the 93-year-old queen said that the pandemic had caused enormous disruptions, bringing grief, financial difficulties and daunting challenges to everybody. It is only the fourth time since her reign began in 1953 that she has given such an address.

"I hope in the years to come everyone will be able to take pride in how they responded to this challenge," she said in pre-released remarks. "And those who come after us will say that the Britons of this generation were as strong as any."

The queen’s son, Charles, on Friday remotely opened a vast temporary hospital for coronavirus patients in a London convention center after completing a week of isolation. Johnson still had a fever and others to break social distancing rules.

As the sun shone and the temperatures rose toward 68 degrees Fahrenheit, Health Secretary Matt Hancock said that sunbathing in public places was not allowed and the UK might even ban outdoor exercise if people still flout the rules.

“The vast majority of people are following the public health advice, which is absolutely critical, and staying at home,” Hancock told Sky TV. “But there are a small minority of people who are still not doing that — it’s quite unbelievable, frankly, to see that.”

As the numbers of infections rose, the deputy head of Britain’s National Health Service Providers said that the agency needs to focus on quickly increasing ventilator capacity and getting more protective equipment for health care workers.

“I think that we are just a week away from the surge of this,” Saffron Cordery told Sky TV. Restrictions on movement vary from country to country. In Germany and Britain, residents can get out to exercise and walk their dogs, as well as go to the supermarket, the post office and other essential tasks. Yet in Serbia and South Africa, dog walking is not allowed.

In France, heat-seeking drones have been whizzing over Fontainebleau forest to identify rule-breakers after the former royal estate in the Paris suburbs was closed to the public. That high-tech measure has been coupled with more traditional police patrols on horseback and roadblocks that turn back the cars of those seeking to escape urban areas.

In Sweden, authorities have advised the public to practice social distancing, but schools, bars and restaurants are still open.

Italians have not been immune to lure of the good weather either, even though the country has the world’s highest coronavirus death toll at more than 15,000.

Top Italian officials took to national television after photos were published showing huge crowds out shopping in Naples, Rome, Genoa and even the hard-hit Veneto city of Padua. Lombardy vice governor Fabrizio Sala said that cellphone data showed that 38% of the region’s people were out and about — the highest figure since March 20.

Health Minister Roberto Speranza told RAI state television that all the sacrifices Italians have made since the nationwide lockdown began on March 10 risked being reversed.

**FROM FRONT PAGE**

Worst: Coming week of cases will be ‘shocking to some’ says Fauci

For most people, the virus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and death.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said the coming week is “going to be shocking to some.”

“For most people, the virus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and death. Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said the coming week is “going to be shocking to some.”

“But that’s what is going to happen before it turns around, so just buckle down,” Fauci said on CBS’s "Face the Nation."

Fauci said that the rate of new cases will determine whether the US is putting the worst behind it.

“We’ve seen that in Italy,” Fauci said. “We’re going to hopefully be seeing that in New York very soon, and that’s the first sign of that plateau and coming down.”

Fauci also warned that unless the world gets the virus under control, it will “assume a seasonal nature.”

“We need to be prepared that, since it unlikely will be completely eradicated from the planet, that as we get into next season, we may see the beginning of a resurgence,” Fauci said. “That’s the reason why we’re pushing so hard in getting our preparedness much better than it was.”

While most states have adopted restrictions on people’s movement, a few states have declined to order residents to stay home. Adams was asked on NBC’s “Meet the Press” if they should join the rest of the country.

“Ninety percent of Americans are doing their part, even in the states where they haven’t had a shelter in place,” Adams said. “But if you can’t give us 30 days, governors, give us a week, give us what you can, so that we don’t overwhelm our health care systems over this next week.”
Cuomo: NY gets 1,100 ventilators with help from China, Oregon

BY KAREN MATTHEWS  
AND JENNIFER FELTZ  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — New York secured a planeload of ventilators from China on Saturday, and Oregon was sending its own shipment of its own to help treat coronavirus patients.

“redeploy” ventilators that some hospitals weren’t using.

He alluded Saturday to the plan, but details were unclear. “We find what equipment we have, we use it the best we can,” the Democrat said Saturday, saying he’d seek 20% of “unused and available” ventilators, a number he pegged at 500 in all.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, left, said the state has secured a planeload of ventilators from China on Saturday, and Oregon was sending its state a shipment of its own to help treat coronavirus patients.

That’s your normal, is people being on top of you,” Hunter said about New York. “Now that people are not on top of you, it’s become, ‘Well this is what we’re doing now.’

“Fuggedaboutit.


“New York City’s 8.6 million inhabitants have largely been ordered to stay home, with most of the state’s 122,031 cases coming from the city, including 2,624 deaths as of early Sunday in NYC from the virus. A makeshift morgue has been set up outside Bellevue Hospital, and authorities are hunting down beds, medical equipment, doctors and nurses for fear the number of sick people will explode in the coming weeks, overwhelming hospitals the way the virus did in Italy and Spain.

While public health officials grapple with the growing enormity, most New Yorkers have been left in an uncertain limbo — unable to help in any way but to stay at home.

Exceptions have been made for essential employees — health care workers, grocery clerks, restaurant chefs preparing gourmet for GrubHub. But most are working from home and going out only for essentials, giving the city that never sleeps a most glum feel.

In Times Square, a custodian idled Wednesday morning with a broom and dustpan, waiting for people to emerge from home and go seeking unvisited locks, and sidewalks around Manhattan were mostly uninhabited except for a few construction workers and deliverymen from local grocers.

Rush-hour subways are running with two or three riders per car, and bus riders are being kept socially distant from the driver by yellow chains draped across the front seats. Many grocers have taped place marking six feet of space for checkout lines, and clerks are wearing gloves, masks and riot gear-like helmets to quell the spread.

Lines at the Park Slope Coop, Hunter’s regular market, have routinely swept around the block. When first faced with the prospect of an hourlong grocery ordeal, Hunter decided to drive to New Jersey. He found the lines shorter but the crowds unnerving.

“Virus Outbreak

Same NY attitude? No, fuggedaboutit

New Yorkers anxiously wait out coronavirus pandemic with surprisingly gentler approach

BY JAKE SEINER  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — To a casting director, he might have seemed too fact for the role. — broad, bald and with a booming voice, tattoos on his neck and hands visible under his construction jacket. Justin Hunter stood in line outside the Park Slope Food Coop, one of several dozen shoppers spaced 6 feet apart in a queue that stretched around the corner.

Hunter’s attitude, though, was all wrong for the part. No griping about store management, no shoving ahead toward entrance — even a hint of annoyance.

“New York is the pandemic’s U.S. epicenter, with more than 122,031 confirmed cases as of Sunday morning. More than 3,500 people statewide have died, and about 15,000 coronavirus patients are hospitalized. More than 4,100 are critically ill coronavirus patients kept growing at the current rate.

“it’s going to make a significant impact when we’re out of the way. Your patience is needed.”

The influx offered some hope that the virus would be slowed, at least.

But two hospital umbrella groups didn’t protest. The Greater New York Hospital Association portrayed the idea as ongoing reciprocity among medical centers as the outbreak’s hotspots shift, while the Healthcare Association of New York State noted that some hospitals have already voluntarily sent staff and equipment to harder-hit institutions or accepted patients from them.

Both groups, and several upstate hospitals, said Saturday they had gotten no further information on the governor’s plan. The state Health Department said no information was available beyond the governor’s remarks.

National Guard spokesman Eric Durr said Saturday that the collection had not yet begun.

Governors around the U.S. have been pleading, competing and scouring the global marketplace for needed supplies, especially ventilators, to treat the sick.

Cuomo said Saturday that New York at one point made purchase orders for 17,000 of the devices, but only 2,500 came through.

You get a call that says, ‘We can’t fill that order,’” he said.

Cuomo and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, also a Democrat, said last week that the federal government agreed to send about 2,400 ventilators to the city and another 2,000 to the state.

“people being on top of you,” Hunter said about New York. “Now that people are not on top of you, it’s become, ‘Well this is what we’re doing now.’

Forget the old New Yorker’s refrain of “I’m walking here!” Big Apple citizens are taking a more tentative tack since the city became a hot zone for the novel coronavirus pandemic that has sickened at least 480,000 and killed 21,000 worldwide.

No pushing forward in lines. No irritably dodging slow-walk- ing pedestrians. No swearing at yellow cabs for cutting into cross-walks. Moms with strollers are leaving wide berths for texting teens and slow-moving seniors.

Supermarket shoppers are anxiously and awkwardly sidestep- ping each other, trying their best to keep six feet away.

Under threat amid a global outbreak, New Yorkers have become downright polite. Invading someone else’s personal space? Fuggedaboutit.

“Our closeness makes us vulnerable,” New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Wednesday. “But it’s true that your greatest weakness is your greatest strength.

And our closeness is what makes us who we are. That is what New York is.

Cuomo is sending a shipment of ventilators to Oregon on Sunday, and Gov. Kate Brown of Oregon said her state is sending its own to New York City’s Javits Center that became a temporary hospital in response to the pandemic with surprisingly gentler approach

“redploy” ventilators that some hospitals weren’t using.

He alluded Saturday to the plan, but details were unclear. “We find what equipment we have, we use it the best we can,” the Democrat said Saturday, saying he’d seek 20% of “unused and available” ventilators, a number he pegged at 500 in all.

The idea has alarmed Republican politicians and some hospital leaders upstate. They said it would leave people in their areas vulnerable and pit the state’s regional against one another.

But two hospital umbrella groups didn’t protest. The Greater New York Hospital Association portrayed the idea as ongoing reciprocity among medical centers as the outbreak’s hotspots shift, while the Healthcare Association of New York State noted that some hospitals have already voluntarily sent staff and equipment to harder-hit institutions or accepted patients from them.

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Cuomo and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, also a Democrat, said last week that the federal government agreed to send about 2,400 ventilators to the city and another 2,000 to the state.

Red tape meant that the state of Oregon had volunteered to send 140 more breathing machines.

The influx offered some hope after the governor repeatedly warned that the state’s supply of the vital machines would be exhausted in days if the number of critically ill coronavirus patients kept growing at the current rate.

“It’s going to make a significant difference for us,” Cuomo said.

New York is the pandemic’s U.S. epicenter, with more than 122,031 confirmed cases as of Sunday morning. More than 3,500 people statewide have died, and about 15,000 coronavirus patients are hospitalized. More than 4,100 are in intensive care — many, if not all, of them needing ventilators.

The outbreak is heavily concentrated in the New York City metropolitan area.

Cuomo’s announcement came a day after he said he would have the National Guard collect and

Stacks of medical supplies on March 24 are housed at the Jacob Javits Center that became a temporary hospital in response to the coronavirus outbreak in New York.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

Same NY attitude? No, fuggedaboutit

New Yorkers anxiously wait out coronavirus pandemic with surprisingly gentler approach

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Associated Press

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Puerto Rico has found cache of medical supplies

By Danica Coto
Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — The suspected mishandling of essential supplies during Hurricane Maria turned out to be a boon for Puerto Rico as it fights a rise in coronavirus cases.

Health Secretary Lorenzo Gonzalez said Saturday that officials discovered a cache of urgently needed personal protective equipment at a hospital in the northern island of Vieques that remains closed since the Category 4 storm hit the U.S. territory in September 2017.

He said the equipment includes face masks, gloves, gowns and face shields worth $4 million donated during Hurricane Maria, and that nearly all of it had expired. He did not provide details about what specific items were found.

Puerto Rico has reported 18 deaths related to COVID-19, including that of a nurse, and more than 450 confirmed cases, including several police officers who join health workers in demanding more personal protective equipment.

“The government is not protecting us like it should,” said Gregorio Matias, vice president of a police union.

Medical technicians handle a vial containing a nasal swab at a drive-thru testing site in Wheat Ridge, Colo., on Tuesday.

No at home testing available yet

By Matthew Perrone
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Home testing for the new coronavirus may sound like a good idea, but U.S. regulators say it’s still too risky.

They’ve stopped companies that quickly launched home-testing kits until they can show their products can accurately detect the virus.

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Trump, Dems clash on boosting mail-in voting during pandemic

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After a botched rollout, testing in the U.S. has ramped up thanks to high-volume testing machines and new rapid tests. Last week, federal officials said total tests topped 1.4 million, and labs are processing nearly 100,000 tests daily.

But Trump opposes voting by mail and is leading Republicans in a battle to limit its scope and encourage Fraud and lead to so many people voting that his party could not win.

For the 2020 presidential election is creeping ever closer, and there are no signs yet of the pandemic abating, nor any word on when Americans on orders to stay home can resume normal life. And the widespread drive-thru testing proposed for parking lots at chains like Walmart, Walgreens and Target has barely gotten off the ground.

Meanwhile, the Food and Drug Administration is aggressively pushing new options onto the market. Genetic tests are the gold standard for detecting COVID-19 infections. New, quicker ones are replacing the original laboratory tests that have to be manually mixed and developed.

The idea behind both tests is the same: chemical solutions are used to isolate the virus from the patient sample, grab its genetic material and then reproduce it millions of times until it’s detectable with a computer.

New rapid tests such as the one by Abbott Laboratories automate the process, cutting the time from four to six hours to about 15 minutes.

Abbott said it plans to begin shipping 50,000 tests per day this month.

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Abbott said it plans to begin shipping 50,000 tests per day this month. U.S. officials said they’d go first to remote areas with less access to labs.

For now, only a health care professional can order a coronavirus test.

“If you’re not sick, you don’t need to be tested,” has been the mantra for weeks.

Accurately testing for coronavirus involves several steps, including carefully swabbing the nose or throat to collect a sample, placing it in a sterile tube, storing it below 46 degrees Fahrenheit and then shipping it to a lab within three days.

Health officials warn a number of things could go wrong if consumers try to swab, store and ship their own samples, potentially resulting in testing errors and undetected infections.

The FDA is talking to companies working on at-home kits, but they’ll be required to show that their results are comparable to those of people under professional care, agency spokesperson Jeremy Kahn said in a statement.

Many of the proposed at-home tests aren’t like home pregnancy tests — they won’t provide instant results. The samples still need to go to a lab.

Simpler, cheaper blood tests could also have a role in tracking the virus — and possibly expanding testing to the home.

The FDA is permitting companies to launch certain types of finger-prick tests that can detect coronavirus antibodies they may have recently been infected.

Instead of detecting the virus itself, these tests detect proteins called antibodies that the immune system generates to fight COVID-19.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Restrictions bring new religious freedom tension

BY ELANA SCHOR
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Despite state and local limits on public gatherings, some faith leaders have persisted in holding in-person services — a matter of religious freedom, they say, as the nation approached its fourth Sunday battling the coronavirus pandemic.

The most high-profile clash over in-person worship — and crowd limits designed to stop the virus’ spread — came in Florida, where Pastor Rodney Howard-Browne of the River Church in Tampa was arrested last month for violating a county order by hosting a large number of congregants at the church. The county later ended its effort to apply limits on large gatherings to religious services after a statewide order described religious gatherings as essential.

Pastor Alvin Gwynn Sr., of Baltimore’s Friendship Baptist Church, said that police tried to halt services at his church Sunday even though he had limited in-person attendance to 10 people.

Gwynn said in an interview that he still plans to hold in-person Easter services, citing the First Amendment’s protections for freedom of worship and assembly. Baltimore has “been through a lot” in recent years, said Gwynn, who leads a local ministers’ group that criticized the city’s police department leadership in 2015 following the death of 25-year-old Freddie Gray.

“This is safer, in the church with potential virus, or go out the door and catch a bullet?” Gwynn said.

In Florida, attorneys at the Christian Legal Nonprofit representing Howard-Browne tabled their plans to file a federal lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the county’s action against him after the county reversed course.

“Instead of using a scalpel to address this, they’re using a chainsaw,” said Liberty Counsel founder Mathew Staver, who added that executive orders designed to limit gatherings during the pandemic were “flying off printers and being signed by government officials with no constitutional readiness.”

Elsewhere, Texas GOP Gov. Greg Abbott also described religious services as essential in his order to limit gatherings during the pandemic. In Georgia, where some of the state’s worst virus outbreaks have been linked to large religious services, GOP Gov. Brian Kemp on Thursday issued a stay-home order that states no faith-based gathering can occur with more than 10 people unless they keep a six-foot distance.

While some faith leaders who continue to hold in-person services have pointed to their First Amendment rights, including Ohio’s Solid Rock megachurch, it’s not clear that their activity during the pandemic would be legally protected.

State or local governments would be “constitutionally justified” in including houses of worship in their closure orders during a public health emergency as long as those orders are “generally applicable,” said John Inazu, a law professor at Washington University in St. Louis who studies the First Amendment.

Before issuing his order, Kemp held two calls with hundreds of clergy from across Georgia, urging houses of worship to stream services online or implement other social distancing measures, like holding drive-up services where people listen from their cars.

Most religious services across the country have already moved online.

“We’re making the best of a bad situation. It’s going to be devastating in the short term,” said Todd Gaddis, senior pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dallas, Georgia, referring to the loss of potential donations from in-person services. “But I’m confident there will be spiritual dividends in the long run.”

Mormon leaders adhere to social distancing guidelines at conference

SALT LAKE CITY — Leaders from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sat 6 feet apart inside an empty room as the faith carried out its signature conference Saturday by livestreaming speeches with more than 10 people unless off printers and being signed by government officials with no constitutional readiness.

First Amendment.

But the pandemic hasn’t cut the connection that Jews from all backgrounds feel to one of their most important holidays — and, for many, the global crisis has deepened its meaning.

Rabbi Noam Marans, director of interreligious relations at the American Jewish Committee, described the gravity of Passover during the coronavirus pandemic. He noted how the biblical narrative with the outbreak of the pandemic has become a resonant this year, as Jews find the outbreak of what feels like a real-life plague.

Weinstein said, “we’ll find ways of this more somber Passover, as Jews in all branches of the faith are also taking the opportunity to ensure those in high-risk populations have enough of the food, including the unleavened bread known as matzo, which represents their ancestors’ exodus from bondage in Egypt.

The Chabad-Lubavitch movement of Hasidism has expanded its annual distribution of “seder-to-go” kits, which had typically been prepared for hospitalized or otherwise housebound Jews, to help serve families and individuals confined to their homes during a quarantine. Chabad projects it will distribute 250,000 seder kits throughout North America.

Steve Weinstein, 62, is preparing for a seder for two this year — just Weinstein and his wife, without the extended family they typically host in Milwaukee.

Although he’s only started to think about the broader message of this more somber Passover, Weinstein said, “we’ll find ways to be able to equate” the holiday’s biblical narrative with the outbreak. The virus could be viewed in one sense, he said, as the oppressive rule that Jews eventually overcame.
Hawaii forced to change its customs

Associated Press

WAIANAE — Glen Kila has long greeted people in the traditional Native Hawaiian way: Foreheads touching, he breathes in the person’s ha, or breath.

That stopped, and he began adopting the behaviors in some Asian cultures, when a new term emerged: social distancing.

The South’s responses ranged to curb the transmission of the coronavirus is the antithesis of traditions in Hawaii, where cultural norms revolve around intimacy greetings with hugs, kisses and lei — and families are close-knit, Kila said.

“It’s really taking away that aloha from our culture,” said Kila, a Hawaiian cultural practitioner in Waianae, a coastal Oahu town home to one of the largest concentrations of Native Hawaiians.

“It’s really sad, but we must abide by these safety rules.”

California

SACRAMENTO — California has cut its COVID-19 testing backlog by more than two-thirds, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced Saturday, but has still managed to test less than one half of 1% of the state’s nearly 40 million residents.

“I own that,” Newsom said during his daily press briefing. “I have a responsibility as your governor to do better.”

California has tested 126,000 people. Of those, 13,000 test results are still pending as of Friday.

That’s down from the 59,500 pending that were reported Thursday. As of Friday, the state reported 12,026 confirmed coronavirus cases, a 12.4% increase from the previous day, plus 276 deaths.

Colorado

CENTENNIAL — A member of Colorado’s Unified Command Group at the State Emergency Operations Center in Centennial said Friday that the state has tested 725 people positive for the coronavirus, officials said.

The Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management said that the worker tested positive Saturday.

Spokeswoman Michelle Trost said that staffers who determined they worked in the same area in the last 48 hours are being told to quarantine.

Trost said that medical screenings of staff are being increased from once daily to twice a day. A decontamination service cleans the facility daily.

Illinois

JOLIET — The bodies of a suburban Chicago man and woman were found inside a residence in what authorities say was a murder-suicide that was apparently prompted by the man’s concern that the two of them had contracted the coronavirus.

In a news release Monday, the Will County Sheriff’s Office said that deputies who were dispatched to a home in Lockport Township conducted a welfare check discovered the bodies of Patrick Jesernik, 54, and Cheryl Schriefer, 59. The two, whose bodies were found in separate rooms in the residence, had each been shot once and a gun was near Jesernik’s body.

The investigation determined that Jesernik had shot Schriefer in the back of the head before shooting himself.

According to the release, relatives told detectives Jesernik had been frightened he and Schriefer had contracted the COVID-19 virus and that Schriefer was having difficulty breathing.

The relatives told investigators that Schriefer had been tested earlier in the week, but they did not believe she’d received the results.

According to the release, an autopsy revealed determined that Jesernik and Schriefer tested negative for the virus.

Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS — State health officials reported 11 more deaths from COVID-19 on Sunday, bringing the statewide total to 127.

The Indiana State Department of Health announced 444 additional cases with the most in Marion County, which had 191.

Overall, there have been more than 4,400 cases.

Officials in a Wells County community offered “isolation packets” for elderly residents who fear leaving home during the pandemic and need help. The packets that Diatom officials and police made available contained a colored-coded paper system residents can hang on windows to communicate.

Green signals that the person is fine, yellow means help is needed for everyday errands like shopping and red means urgent errands like prescription pickup, according to WANE-TV.

“We know a lot of our residents are just worried about leaving their homes at all and so we completely understand that,” said Osian Sergeant St. Clair, who works at a doctor’s office while also acting as a nurse.

“The isolation communication packet kind of gives them a way to let the community know or friends and neighbors know that they have a need in their home.”

Maine

PORTLAND — The seafood industry has been upended by the spread of the coronavirus, which has halted sales in restaurants and sent fishermen and dealers scrambling for new markets.

Seafood is a global industry that relies on a complex network of fishermen, processors, buyers and distributors, all of which have been affected by the virus.

In Bar Harbor, the town of 2,100 people in the eastern section of the town and led some fishermen to tie up their boats until the outbreak subsides.

Members of the U.S. seafood industry are calling on the Trump administration and Congress to help them weather the uncertain time.

But for now, the market for big-money items such as scallops and lobster is “pretty much nonexistent,” said Bert Jonkerend, general manager of the Portland Fish Exchange, a Maine auction house.

The auction house usually moves up to 60,000 pounds of fish in a week but is down to less than a third of that, Jonkerend said.

Pennsylvania

GREENSBURG — Charges are planned against two people accused in separate incidents of purposely coughing on a fast-food restaurant worker and staff members at a doctor’s office while saying that they have the coronavirus, state police in western Pennsylvania said.

Police in Westmoreland County said that a 48-year-old North Huntingdon woman became upset at a drive-thru window of a restaurant near her home in Hempfield. Trooper Anthony Direnzo alleged that she “began purposely coughing at the staff member as well as stating ‘I hope you get COVID-19 and die.”

Disorderly conduct, reckless endangerment and simple assault charges are planned, Direnzo said.

At a doctor’s office in Latrobe, police alleged that a 53-year-old Cherry Tree man saw a staff member wearing a protective mask and said “That mask is not going to help you.” Police alleged that he then coughed repeatedly in her ear and said “I guess we’ll find out.”

West Virginia

CHARLESTON — A nursing home patient with underlying health conditions became the third person to die from the coronavirus in West Virginia, health officials said Sunday.

The Department of Health and Human Resources said that the 76-year-old man was a resident of the Sundale nursing home in Morgantown, where 21 residents and eight staff members tested positive for the virus.

West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice has tightened restrictions on people in Monongalia County and five other counties in the state to try to curb coronavirus hotspots.

Three of those counties are in the eastern panhandle.

Statewide totals Saturday showed 54 positive cases in Berkeley County, 51 in Kanawha, 49 in Monongalia, 24 in Harrison, 21 in Jefferson and three in Morgan.
Trump hints that IG firing was payback for impeachment

Associated Press
WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump suggested that he fired the inspector general for the intelligence community in retaliation for his impeachment, saying the official was wrong to provide an anonymous whistleblower complaint to Congress as the law requires.

Trump called Michael Atkinson a “disgrace” after informing Congress late Friday night that he intended to fire him. In letters to the House and Senate intelligence committees, Trump wrote that he had lost confidence in Atkinson but gave little detail.

A day later, Trump was more blunt, telling reporters at the White House: “I thought he did a terrible job, absolutely terrible.” The president added: “He took a fake report and he took it to Congress with an emergency, OK?”

Not a big Trump fan, that I can tell you.”

The whistleblower report was not fake, but a detailed complaint written by an anonymous intelligence official who described Trump’s pressure on Ukraine to investigate Democrat Joe Biden and his son. Atkinson determined that the complaint was urgent and credible, and he was therefor required by law to disclose it to Congress, but he was overruled for weeks by the acting director of national intelligence, Joseph Maguire.

On Saturday, Trump questioned why Atkinson didn’t speak to him about the complaint, though Atkinson’s role is to provide independent oversight.

“Never came in to see me, never requested to see me,” Trump said. He added: “That man is a disgrace to IGs.”

Top Sanders advisers urge him to consider ending presidential run

BY SEAN SULLIVAN
The Washington Post

A small group of Bernie Sanders’ top aides and allies — including his campaign manager and his longtime strategist — have encouraged the independent senator from Vermont to consider withdrawing from the presidential race, according to two people with knowledge of the situation.

The group includes campaign manager Faiz Shakir and Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash., a top Sanders surrogate and ally, according to the people, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe sensitive private discussions.

Sanders himself has become more open to the prospect of dropping out, according to one of the people with knowledge of the situation and another close ally, especially if he suffers a significant defeat in Tuesday’s Wisconsin primary, which polls suggest Joe Biden will win handily.

Longtime strategist Jeff Weaver has also privately argued that exiting the race quickly and on good terms with Biden would give Sanders more leverage in the long run, according to one of the people; the other said Weaver has used a light touch in presenting his case.

Sanders has not made a final decision, the people said, and other close allies have privately urged him to keep running, such as national campaign co-chair Nina Turner, while Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich., is also said to favor him remaining in the race.

Larry Cohen, a longtime ally who chairs a nonprofit aligned with Sanders, is waging a public campaign for him to stay in until the Democratic National Convention.

Divers search for Kennedy Townsend’s daughter, grandson

Associated Press
ANNAPOIS, Md. — Divers and boats on Saturday resumed searching the Chesapeake Bay for the bodies of the daughter and grandson of former Maryland Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Maryland police said.

The search began Thursday afternoon after a report of a canoe in the bay that didn’t return to shore and appeared to be overtaken by strong winds.

The search was suspended Saturday night and was to resume Sunday morning, a Maryland Natural Resources Police news release said.

The missing canoeists were identified as Maeve Kennedy Townsend McKean, 40, and her son Gideon Joseph Kennedy McKean, 8-year-old son, Gideon Townsend McKean, 40, and a grandson of former Maryland Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend.

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Pope celebrates Palm Sunday without public

Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis celebrated Palm Sunday Mass without the public, since the traditional ceremony in St. Peter’s Square was scrapped because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Normally, tens of thousands of Romans, tourists and pilgrims, clutching olive tree branches or palm fronds would have flocked to an outdoor Mass led by the pontiff. Instead, Francis was leading the ceremony inside St. Peter’s Basilica, which seemed even more cavernous than usual because it was so empty.

Besides his aides, a few invited prelates, nuns and laypeople were present, sitting solo in the first pews and staggered yards apart to reduce the risks of contagion.

Looking pensive, Francis blessed braided palms held by the others, then held one himself.

Palm Sunday solemnly opens Holy Week leading up to Easter, which on this year falls on April 12. The Vatican announced Francis will preside over all the traditional ceremonies without the public in keeping with lockdown measures in Italy and at the Vatican to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Among the usual events is the Good Friday Way of the Cross procession. This year, instead of the customary crucifix procession at Rome’s Colosseum, the Way of the Cross will be presided over by Francis in St. Peter’s Square.

The Vatican said there are seven cases of COVID-19 among the residents or employees of the tiny independent city state.

Like the entire population of France, Romans-sur-Isere’s residents have been ordered to stay home except for a few exceptions. The victims were doing their food shopping, one of the permitted outside activities, on the street that has bakeries and grocery stores, the prosecutor’s office said.

French media reported that the knife-wielding attacker was out shopping in one of the few permitted outside activities when he was nabbed.

French Interior Minister Christophe Castaner arrived at the scene in the town south of Lyon within hours and thanked shopkeepers for their help.

Some 100 police and 45 firefghters were involved in the operation and securing the area, authorities said.

There have been a number of knife attacks in France in recent months. In January, French police shot and injured a man in Metz who was waving a knife and shouting “Allahu akbar.”

Two days earlier, another man was shot dead by police after he stabbed one person fatally and wounded two others in a Paris suburb.

It is unclear whether the suspect in Saturday’s attack had psychological problems or any links to extremism. Analysts say some extremist groups see the upheaval from the virus pandemic as an opportunity to win over more supporters.

Terrorism inquiry opened after knife attack in France

By Thomas Adamson

Associated Press

PARIS — A man wielding a knife attacked residents of a French town while they ventured out to shop amid a nationwide coronavirus lockdown Saturday, killing two people and wounding five others in an act that led authorities to open a terrorism inquiry.

France’s counterterrorism prosecutor’s office said the assailant was arrested near the scene of the attack in the town of Romans-sur-Isere, south of Lyon, as he was kneeling on the sidewalk praying in Arabic. It said one of his acquaintances also was detained.

Prosecutors did not identify the suspect. They said he had no identity documents but claimed to be Sudanese and to have been born in 1987.

During a subsequent search of his home, authorities found handwritten documents that included arguments about religion and a complaint about living in a “country of unbelievers,” officials said.

The prosecutor’s office did not confirm reports that the man used the term “Allahu akbar” (God is great) as he stabbed and slashed people.

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Pakistan to challenge acquittal of man accused in 2002 killing of US journalist

Tribune News Service

ISLAMABAD — The Pakistani foreign minister said Saturday that the government will file an appeal against a court decision acquitting the man accused of the 2002 murder of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl.

“It has been decided to file an appeal against the decision in the Supreme Court,” Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said in a statement.

The U.S. had expressed concerns over the decision, which Qureshi said were “natural.”

“It is now up to the court either to dismiss or (uphold) the appeal,” he said.

Sindh High Court on Thursday overturned the death sentence on Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, a British Pakistani man accused of killing and kidnapping the US journalist.

Three of his co-defendants who were handed life prison terms in 2002 were also acquitted.

The four men were supposed to walk free, but they were rearrested after one day under a law that allows Pakistani authorities to keep people in detention for up to three months without any charge.

Pearl, a New Delhi-based South Asia correspondent for the Wall Street Journal, was kidnapped and killed in the southern Pakistani city of Karachi in February 2002.

Pearl disappeared Jan. 23, 2002, in Karachi while researching links between Pakistani militants and Richard C. Reid, who became known as the “shoe bomber” after he was arrested on a flight from Paris to Miami with explosives in his shoes.

19 dead in clash between rival Mexican drug gangs

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — A big shootout between rival drug gangs killed 19 people in the northern Mexico border state of Chihuahua, state prosecutors’ office said Saturday.

A total of 18 corpses, two grenades, vehicles and guns were found at the scene of the clash in the hamlet of Chihuachupa in the township of Madera.

Two other men were found armed and wounded on the dirt road where the confrontation occurred late Friday. One died later at a hospital, and the other is in custody.

The office said police and soldiers had been sent to secure the area, where groups allied with the Sinaloa cartel have been fighting other gangs, including a remnant of the Beltran Leyva gang and others aligned with the Juarez cartel.

In an area about 60 miles to the north of Friday’s clash, nine U.S.-Mexican dual citizens were ambushed and slain Nov. 4 by suspected drug gang assassins along a remote road.

It was not clear if any of the same groups were involved in the two sets of killings.
Her family’s business

Ashley McBryde not afraid to dish dirt on ‘Never Will’

By KRISTIN M. HALL

Ashley McBryde doesn’t have any problem using real people to inspire her country songs and revealing the sordid details of their lives, even if she’s dishing dirt about her own family and friends.

Her new album “Never Will,” out on Friday, is full of songs about opiated women, small-town secrets, motel trysts and revenge fantasies. One of those is “Martha Divine.” The name may not be real, but the person behind the song is.

“Maybe I’m gonna piss my father off by saying this, but I don’t care,” McBryde said. “The song, and what I did to that person in the song, was based off of one of my dad’s girl friends, I really wanted to hit her in the head with a shovel.”

The Mammoth Spring, Ark-native is just at home in a bar — be it on a red carpet. She carved her own path in country music after her 2018 major label debut earned her a string of new artist awards from the CMAs, ACMs and CMT and multiple Grammy nominations.

But country radio has still not embraced what critics have called sordid, entertaining stories about family and friends. McBryde is among many female country singers who struggle to get their story heard on country radio.

“I don’t think I can do anything that will cater to radio,” said McBryde. “We have to figure out how to get along.”

The album title song “Never Will” reminds everyone that she’s not willing to change now that she’s achieved success on her own terms. She notes that everyone that she’s not willing to change now that she’s achieved success on her own terms.

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Ashley McBryde

‘Top Gun Maverick’ joins summer movie graveyard

Associated Press

Hollywood’s summer movie season is all but finished. “Top Gun Maverick,” the latest would-be blockbuster to be rescheduled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

On April 2, Paramount Pictures announced that the sequel to the 1986 original will now open Dec. 23 instead of June 24. “Top Gun Maverick,” starring Tom Cruise, follows an exodus of the big-budget spectacles that the block hit land in theaters in summertime.

Most of the season’s top movies have in the past two departed the summer. With the pandemic’s quickening spread, it remains uncertain when movie theaters will open.

Summer is typically Hollywood’s most lucrative time of year. When the theaters are closed, the industry turns to sequels, superhero films and action movies. Last year, summer ticket sales accounted for $4.3 billion in U.S. and Canadian theaters.

“Ghostbusters: Afterlife,” “Wonder Woman 1984,” “Black Widow,” “Morius” and “In the Heights” have all been delayed or taken off the schedule, along with major spring releases including “No Time to Die” and “Mulian.”

Some films have also been postponed because of new film production, leading to reshuffling of next year’s schedule, too.

‘Lean On Me,’ ‘Lovely Day’ singer Withers dies

Bill Withers, who wrote and sang a string of soulful songs in the 1970s that have stood the test of time, including “Lean On Me,” “Lovely Day” and “ Ain’t No Sunshine,” has died from heart complications, his family said in a statement to The Associated Press. He was 81.

The three-time Grammy winner, who recorded from making music in the mid-1980s, died on Monday in Los Angeles, the statement said.

Withers’ songs during his brief career have become the soundtracks of countless engagements, weddings and backyard parties. They have powerful melodies and perfect grooves melded with a smooth voice that conveys honesty and complex emotions without vocal acrobatics.

“Lean on Me,” a paean to friendship, was performed at the inaugurations of both Barack Obama and Bill Clinton. “Ain’t No Sunshine” and “Lean on Me” are among Rolling Stone’s list of the 500 Greatest Songs of All Time.

DiCaprio, others launch $12M relief food fund

Leonardo DiCaprio will help launch America’s Food Fund, which has already raised $12 million to help communities impacted by the coronavirus.

The organization said April 2 that the funds will be aimed to help low-income families, the elderly, individuals facing job disruptions and children who rely on school lunch programs. The food fund will work with hunger relief organizations World Central Kitchen and Feeding America.

On April 2, Oprah Winfrey announced a $1 million donation to the fund and $10 million in total to feed the hungry during the crisis.

Patterson sets up fund for indie bookstores

James Patterson has a history of helping independent bookstores. The best-selling novelist has donated millions in recent years to bookstores, while also giving millions to schools and libraries and literacy programs. Now, with stores closed or closing nationwide because of the coronavirus outbreak, Patterson has launched a new initiative.

On April 2, he announced a grant for Savandel Booksellers Association and the Book Industry Charitable Foundation. Patterson’s foundation will contribute $500,000, and is urging others to contribute this month.

“I’m concerned about the survival of independent bookstores, which are at the heart of main streets across the country,” Patterson said. “I believe that books are essential. They make us kinder, more empathetic human beings, and I think that we need to help the power to take us away — even momentarily — from feeling overwhelmed, anxious, and scared.”

ABA member bookstores can apply for a grant on Savandel Booksellers.com.

Taylor Swift donation helps Nashville store

Pop superstar Taylor Swift is helping out a Nashville record store closed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Grimey’s co-owner Doyle Davis said the store got a call a week ago from Swift’s publicist asking how they were doing. It was in March when Nashville’s mayor issued a stay-at-home order, and Davis was sending all the employees home.

The store, which also serves as a small concert venue, has been a Nashville fixture for 20 years, working closely with local record labels and many up-and-coming artists.

Swift’s donation will provide direct relief to the store’s 10 full time employees and three months of health care costs for the store’s group insurance plan.

Other news

• Films that were slated for this year’s canceled South by Southwest event will appear exclusively on Amazon Prime Video for 10 days this spring. The films will be available for free to consumers, but they will need to sign up for a free Amazon account. Both Amazon and SXSW announced the launch date for the streaming event for later this month.

• On April 2, Ashley McBryde announced her family’s business.
Thieves steal another Red Cross supply trailer

RIVERSIDE — A second Red Cross trailer loaded with emergency supplies was stolen from a Southern California office of the organization, police said.

Two men in a pickup drove into a Red Cross parking lot in Riverside, pried a lock, connected the trailer to their truck and left, a police statement said.

The trailer was used for establishing emergency shelters and was filled with clothing, blankets and some masks worth about $4,000.

Red Cross spokesman Brian Kelly told The Press-Enterprise the supplies were not related to the coronavirus.

The first trailer was stolen several weeks ago, The Press-Enterprise said.

Man tries to set wife on fire over stimulus check

ALBUQUERQUE — A New Mexico man faces charges after police said he became enraged because he didn’t qualify for a COVID-19-related stimulus check and tried to set his wife on fire.

The Albuquerque Journal reported Joe Macias was arrested following an argument with his disabled wife, where he allegedly doused her with gasoline.

The wife told police Macias was “upset because he did not qualify for the stimulus check.”

According to police, Macias, 63, threw gas on his wife and their mobile home.

The wife told officers Macias then pulled out a cigarette and attempted to light it several times, but was unsuccessful due to the lighter having gasoline on it.

Exotic animals seized during narcotics search

TEXAS — Authorities seized animals including a white Bengal tiger, bobcat, kinkajou, porcupines, lamas, emus and deer after finding them at a South Texas residence while executing a search warrant.

Drug Enforcement Administration Special Agent Sammy Miles of herring spawn measured in survey

SITKA — The Alaska Department of Fish and Game measured miles of herring spawn in Sitka Sound, an official said.

Humming along

Artist Kris Connors, owner of Custom Sculpture & Sign Co. in Nicklesville, Va., works on a sculpture at a home Friday in Bristol, Tenn. The hummingbird and flowers are being carved from a pin oak tree that had to be taken down for safety reasons. A seven-foot base was left for the sculpture when the tree was removed.

A fish and game official said more than 4 miles of spawn was measured in an aerial survey on the Kruzof Island shoreline, The Daily Sitka Sentinel reported.

THE CENSUS

$22K

The amount in fines the town of Farmington, Maine, must pay for failing to ensure that its firefighters had the proper training and equipment when they investigated a propane leak that caused a deadly explosion last year. The Farmington explosion destroyed the nonprofit group LEAP Inc., killed Farmington fire Capt. Michael Bell and injured seven other people, Farmington Town Manager Richard Davis told the Daily News the town does not dispute the citations, has corrected the violations and plans to ask for lesser fines.

Feds: Glider in crash was lacking equipment

MORRISTOWN — A glider that crashed in a heavily wooded section of Vermont’s Sterling Mountain in 2018, killing the pilot and two passengers aboard, was overloaded and undersupplied, according to federal investigators.

The plane showed no signs of mechanical failure in other parts of the aircraft, according to a report released last week by the National Transportation Safety Board.

Investigators note in the report that the glider weighed around 50 pounds over the plane’s allowable maximum, the Burlington Free Press reported.

The plane apparently stalled and spun out of control during what was supposed to be a 30-minute sightseeing tour.
Antipandemic rules don’t threaten religious liberty

By R. Albert Mohler Jr. and Kelly J. Shackelford
Special to The Washington Post

Perhaps the most quintessential question of the pandemic—whether as a theologian or a religious liberty attorney—is whether religious liberty is best served by allowing religious officials responding responsibly to the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic. We do not think so.

An antipandemic treaty—only of course “条约” (synergy) of religion and the “right of the people peaceably to assemble” as articulated in the First Amendment and the Articles of Confederation—is a cornerstone of our founding. When asked to curtail any part of it—even temporarily—skeptics just as treasured religious freedom remains and the enduring vigilance with which they maintain it.

Most people are willing to tolerate temporary restrictions on even our most treasured freedoms if it means demonstrating love for neighbor in a time of crisis. Of course, the key to that tolerance is that the restrictions be both temporary and acceptable.

Careless comments by New York Mayor Bill de Blasio, for instance, threatening the permanent closure of houses of worship, do no good. Nor do reports of pastors facing arrest for dogmatically defying health officials’ repeated requests to temporarily postpone meetings that would otherwise unhelpful are impressed draft orders that leave religious leaders wondering whether and how they can serve their communities.

Still, it is government’s responsibility, in the defense of public health, to respect those crucial religious freedoms. For that reason, the corresponding role of the church is to demonstrate love for God and neighbor in accordance with the authority of the state when it requests we forgo, just temporarily, the assembly of the saints until it is once more safe to gather again.

Religious liberty faces genuine challenges and threats from the secularization of our culture and the hostility toward religion often expressed by political elites. That same pressure has pushed skepticism toward such requests reveals an understandable apprehension that, because of the coronavirus, holiness and the sacred in recent years, relenting even for a pandemetic might sacrifice such a precious freedom permanently. On the other side of the coin, institutions and leaders have a responsibility to respect and protect all of our cherished rights in full—as quickly as possible.

Still, asking houses of worship to briefly suspend large gatherings is neither hostile to religion nor unreasonable in light of the threat. Rather, this is a time for all of us to exercise prudence over defiance. Love for God and neighbor demands nothing less.

Nonetheless, the authority of the state cannot escape the thoughtful limitations of the Constitution. As the courts have evidenced, when the government is known for acting arbitrarily or compelling, government may temporarily curb the free exercise of religion. Every coronavirus case is different and circumstances curbing the spread of a worldwide pandemic is sufficiently compelling to merit government orders limiting the gathering of people. But in可根据 the Constitution, government orders that are temporary and fair—those restrictions are applied temporally and fairly, we see no reason, morally or legally, that Americans should be penalized. But churches and religious institutions cannot be singled out.

Of course, some difficulty comes in applying. For instance, city officials in McKinney, Texas, imposed restrictions last month that allowed restaurants to remain open but forced patrons through pick-up and drive-through service, while churches were limited to 10 or fewer staffers. Such imprecision could preclude physical churches from distributing food to the needy, using the same methods of a restaurant’s pick-up service, though staff at any organization could be at risk for infection. After First Liberty Institute sent a letter pointing out the inequity, city officials quickly made adjustments.

The threat to the future of religious liberty, such stories ought to lend encouragement. Mistakes will be made. Overreach must be addressed. But the ideal will only be achieved with the help of this church and state.

Let us also remember the example of history. In 1918, the Rev. J. Cochran Hunt, a Presbyterian minister facing public health orders to stay home during the flu pandemic, told The Cincinnati Enquirer: “I believe the action of the authorities in prohibiting public gatherings was a wise move, and they should be forlorn [sic] and assisted by the entire public in stamping out this disease.”

If that was not enough, I performed his diocese by letter that they ought to strictly comply and “pray that the impending plague may be averted.”

Life can go on.

Church and state should work together to exercise prudence in the face of this con- tingency. At a time when people are scared to the point of hoarding, let our churches be known for the ministry and support they uniquely provide: care, comfort and calm. And may the government continue to protect the health and safety of citizens. May it do well.

At this crucial moment, the issues we face are not merely constitutional: They are matters of life and death.

R. Albert Mohler Jr. is a theologian and president at First Liberty Institute, a nonprofit law firm and think tank in Plano, Texas, dedicated to defending religious freedom.

Maybe a love for teaching will prove to be infectious

By ANN B. FRIEDMAN
Special to The Washington Post

E veryone’s looking for a silver lin- ing to this quasi-medieval nightmar es we’re living through. Here are some candidates: plumpening air pollution. Phones ringing again as people call their relatives and longtime friends who may be feeling a little well-being — everybody is always home! Facebook re- deeming itself. Nonagenarians learning to zoom. Gray is the new blond . . . and black and brown. Long-sleeved cookbooks being cracked open. Walking and stretching are the new office breaks . . . and the new gym class, March Madness and NBA playoffs.

Another candidate might be added to the list: This could virus inspire new con- temporary-romance novels. They could be set on the battlefronts of the 1918 influenza pandemic galvanized the science of vaccine research. Think of all the parents now home-schooling their children, helping more with homework, creating resources to assist them, setting up classrooms in their homes and apartments. I was an English teacher before I was a playwright, and one of剪辑 of his daughter-in-law showing off her home-school setup like a real estate agent pointing out the features of an in-home movie theater.

And I can relate. After all, it was motherhood that prompted me to become a teacher after years of searching for “the real me.” I never considered teaching when I was in college, and before I had children, I worked briefly as a copy editor, a translator, and an investment banker. It was when we became a new appreciation of the importance of schools, and teachers, of critical thinking and literacy — including media literacy — and of the importance of six functional and reasonable classes.

Ombudsman

Ernie Gates

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By Harry Litman
Los Angeles Times

The Department of Justice recently sent out a memo with this arrest detail: Prosecutors around the country should consider corona-
virus as a “biological agent” akin to anthrax or botulism, and its “possession” or transmission as a crime of terrorism, as is novel as the virus and it carries its own exponential danger.

Until now, the core concept of a biological agent in terrorism law is an engineered or spliced virus, created for the purpose of destruction: that definition to a naturally occurring virus we all can catch and carry, and one we so far know nothing about, is just not in line. The FBI has added terrorism crimes to offenses involving vi-
lence and intimidation against a large body of people, a natural disaster. There are legitimate applications of the DOJ's definition. The paradigm for federal jurisdiction would be an individual feared to transmit the virus. It's hard to see someone who then malevolently contracts the disease and dies, reckless homicide.

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But for many other potential coronavirus crimes or civil offenses, what could follow from the “biological agent” rubric is just not right.

There already have been reported instances of people threatening others with the disease to force breaches to someone and then said he had the virus. A woman in a supermarket in Pennsylvania coughed if someone was too fresh, and said “I have coronavirus and you are all going to get sick.” She next tried to shoplift a 12-pack of Coors Light. State authorities charge her with two felony counts of terror-
orist threats and, perhaps with the DOJ in mind, one count of threats to use a “biologi-
cal agent.”

Antisocial, sad sack criminal conduct? Yes. But domestic terrorism akin to building a bomb and trying to set it off in Times Square?

Or imagine what lawyers would consider the potential “reckless” transmission of the disease. Last Monday, Florida authori-
ties arrested the pastor of a local church who held services in contravention of stay-at-home orders.

He was charged with unlawful assembly and violation of public health emergency rules, both second-degree misdemeanors. But it would be a mistake to view the DOJ’s definition of the virus as a biologi-
cal agent, and the possible end result is a range of federal felony charges, including if a parishioner contracts the disease and dies, reckless homicide.

Most theoretically, there could be “negligent” transmission of the virus, not with the intent to harm or even done reck-
lessly, but done without taking proper care nonetheless. It's a kind of negligent criminal conduct that we may see with the virus.

For instance, the Los Angeles Times recently reported on a choral group in Washington state that decided to go forward with practice notwithstanding the then-rapid spread of the virus in Seattle. Today, 45 members are infected, three have been hospitalized and two have died. The DOJ’s definition increases the prospects for recovery in a civil case associated with such conduct, along with the likely amounts. It might also push local authorities, who are now deploying aggressive in combating the coronavirus, toward a charge of crimi-
nal liability.

The coronavirus definition set by the department doesn’t quite seal the deal on how the law will view coronavirus, but because the department is the agency tasked with ad-
ministering the criminal code, the courts usually defer to its interpretations. Unfor-
tunately, the memo may serve as a giant step toward making transmission of a dis-
ease into chemical warfare and suicide bombs.

There will have to be some reckoning down the line related to COVID-19, some assignment of fault for at least the most culpable transmitters of the disease. The courts might attempt to look to normal principles of everyday liability, including for negligence, as they have done (with notably inconsistent results), in cases of transmission of AIDS. Done lightly, the immensity and unprecedented nature of the coronavirus threat will require a legisla-
tive solution from Congress, involving partial compensation and rough justice.

But it would be a mistake to rely gener-
ally on a body of law developed for acts of terrorism to account for the spread of the coronavirus. Confronting the legion problems of the pandemic is daunting enough without reconceptualizing disease as a massive terrorist attack from within.

Harry Litman is a former U.S. attorney and host of the podcast "Talking Feds."
Every controversial topic has two sides. We look into the ones that matter to you.

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Elite: Duncan calls group elected Saturday ‘an amazing class’

FROM BACK PAGE a nine-person group announced Saturday as this year’s class of enshrinees into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

“An amazing class,” Duncan said. They all got into the Hall in their first year as finalists, as did WNBA great Tamika Catchings. Others had to wait a bit longer for the good news: Two-time NBA champion coach Rudy Tomjanovich finally got his call, as did longtime Baylor women’s coach Kim Mulkey, 1,000-game winner Barbara Stevens of Bentley and three-time Final Four coach Eddie Sutton.

They were the eight finalists who were announced in February, and the panel of 24 voters who were tasked to decide who merited selection wound up choosing them all. Also headed to the Hall this year: for-virtually every sport around the globe. Stevens has coached for 43 years and is a five-time Division II coach of the year. Sutton won more than 800 games in nearly four decades, and Baumann was one of the most powerful voices in international basketball until his death in 2014.

The Spurs’ Tim Duncan defends the Miami Heat’s Udonis Haslem during Game 5 of the NBA Finals at the AT&T Center in San Antonio, Texas, Sunday, June 15, 2014.

Duncan called group elected Saturday ‘an amazing class’

Duncan spent the entirety of his career with the Spurs and is now back with the team as an assistant coach under Gregg Popovich.

“Duncan, on the broadcast, said of his enshrinement. “It was an incredible career that I enjoyed so much. To call it a dream come true isn’t even doing any justice to it. I never dreamt I’d be at this point.”

Duncan, Garnett and Bryant were similar in many ways as players: The longevity of their careers, the eye-popping numbers, always perennial inclusion on award lists. They also shared a dislike for touting personal accomplishments.

“Bob was one of the most powerful voices in international basketball until his death in 2014.

A weekly and four-time Olympic gold medalist, Tomjanovich, who had overwhelming support from NBA peers who couldn’t understand why it took so long for his selection, was a five-time All-Star as a player, guided Houston to back-to-back titles and took the 2000 U.S. Olympic team to a gold medal.

“It’s a scary time and families are being shattered by this pandemic. To get something positive right now is so wonderful,” Tomjanovich said.

Mulkey has three NCAA titles as a coach, won two others as a player and had Baylor in position to vie for another championship this season had the global coronavirus pandemic not forced the shutdown of virtually every sport around the globe. Stevens has coached for 43 years and is a five-time Division II coach of the year. Sutton won more than 800 games in nearly four decades, and Baumann was one of the most powerful voices in international basketball until his death in 2014.

The incredible emotions that I felt after receiving the call from the Hall of Fame Friday afternoon, I can’t even put into words,” Stevens said. The enshrinement ceremony Springfield, Mass., is scheduled for Aug. 29. Baumann was one of the most powerful voices in international basketball until his death in 2014.

For this year, large because of the star power of this class, the Hall chose to enact a one-year suspension of direct elections from the Veteran’s, Women’s Veteran’s, Early African-American Pioneers and Contributors categories.

With Bryant, Duncan and Garnett as perhaps the top NBA trio to ever enter simultaneously, the Hall wanted to make sure that no enshrinee would be overlooked.

“One of us can trust that this Basketball Hall of Fame honor is one Kobe would, and will, deeply appreciate.”

Catchings was a 10-time WNBA All-Star and four-time Olympic gold medalist.
President Donald Trump pushed for the quick return of pro sports leagues

BY TIM REYNOLDS
Associated Press

President Donald Trump met by phone with many U.S. pro sports leaders Saturday to discuss how that industry has been affected by the global coronavirus pandemic, saying he was looking forward to the resumption of competitions “as soon as we can.”

The NBA, NHL, NFL and Major League Baseball were all represented on the call by their commissioners — Adam Silver, Gary Bettman, Roger Goodell and Rob Manfred, respectively.

“I want fans back in the arena,” Trump said later in a briefing at the White House. “I think it’s ... whenever we’re ready. As soon as we can, obviously. And the fans want to be back, too. They want to see basketball and baseball and football and hockey. They want to see their sport. They want to go out onto the golf courses and breathe nice, clean, beautiful fresh air.”

A person with direct knowledge of what was discussed on the call said Trump believes the NFL season — scheduled to begin Sept. 10 — will start with fans in seats.

A second person with knowledge of the call said that some commissioners, Silver among them, stressed to Trump that they are working on multiple plans to resume their seasons but cautioned that none of those plans can be enacted without clearance of anonymity because no discussions from the call were to be revealed publicly.

Others on the call included PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan, Indianapolis Motor Speedway owner Roger Penske, UFC President Dana White, World Wrestling Entertainment’s Vince McMahon, MLS Commissioner Don Garber, WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert, LPGA Commissioner Mike Whan and Breeders’ Cup president Drew Fleming.

The NBA was the first of the major U.S. sports leagues to shut down on March 11, doing so after Utah Jazz center Rudy Gobert tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. Other leagues quickly followed, and hundreds of games have already been lost.

NASCAR gave teams a tentative schedule to resume racing on May 24 with the Coca-Cola 600 at Charlotte Motor Speedway. North Carolina’s stay-at-home order is through April 30. Penske has re-scheduled the Indianapolis 500 to Aug. 23.

Trump even addressed Little League players on Saturday, tweeting to tell them, “hang in there! We will get you back out on the fields, and know that you will be playing baseball soon. We will get through this together, and bats will be swinging before you know it. In the meantime, take care of mom and dad, and know that this will not be forever!”

Trump even said the need for social distancing is affecting his 14-year-old son Barron. The president described his son as a good athlete and soccer fan.

Trump said his son is happy, but would be happier if he were able to enjoy sports again.

“We have to get back,” Trump said. “We have to get back. Remember that. We have to get back and we have to get back soon.”

BY JOHN ZENOR
Associated Press

Alabama coach Nick Saban said he doesn’t believe extending preseason camp for college football teams is necessarily the best way to get them ready. Saban said Thursday that he’d prefer some “teaching sessions on the field” over the summer to prepare for camp, even if it is in shorts and T-shirts.

Saban: Extra teaching time better than longer fall camp

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Athletes Village could house virus patients

TOKYO — The under-construction Athletes Village for the Tokyo Olympics could be used as a temporary hospital for coronavirus patients.

Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike has been talking about the possibility of occupying the massive development on Tokyo Bay, which is to house up to 11,000 Olympic and 4,400 Paralympic athletes and staff during the games.

The complex, which will eventually include 24 buildings, is expected to remain unoccupied with the Olympics delayed for 16 months.

Koike said the Athletes Village was “one of the options, but the village is not finished yet. We are talking about places that are available even today or tomorrow and checking a possibility one by one.”

As another alternative, Koike said on Friday that the Tokyo city government would buy a hotel to house patients.

Through Thursday, Japan had reported about 3,300 cases of coronavirus with 74 deaths, according to the health ministry. Tokyo reported 97 new cases on Thursday with officials looking for more beds in the capital as totals rise.

The coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms for most people and can include a fever, coughing and mild pneumonia. The risk of death is greater for older adults and people with other health problems.

The 5,600 units in the Athletes Village will be renovated after the Olympics and sold. Almost 1,000 are now for sale, or have been sold. Occupancy was supposed to begin in 2023, and apartment prices are listed between $500,000 and $2 million.

The Athletes Village is a joint venture involving 10 major companies and the city of Tokyo. The complex will be known as Harumi Flag and the developers include Mitsui Fudosan Residential Co., Nomura Real Estate Development Co., and Sumitomo Realty & Development Co.

The group running Harumi Flag said the proposal to use the property for coronavirus beds was speculation and added the developers had not heard from the city. The group also said Harumi Flag had not decided on its plans for the development in light of the 16-month Olympic postponement.
The shot' lifts Duke past Kentucky

By Jim O'Connell
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Christian Laettner has made the shots of two lifetimes. The All-American ended one of the greatest college basketball games ever with a turnaround jumper at the overtime buzzer, giving defending national champion Duke a 104-103 victory over Kentucky and a fifth straight trip to the Final Four.

It was the second time that Laettner had made a last-second shot in overtime to send Duke to the Final Four. "I can't believe it happened to me twice in a career," Laettner yelled as he was pounded by teammates and fans.

"We beat a very determined and great basketball team," Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski said. "It was an unbelievable game where kids made great plays."

The victory means a fourth Final Four appearance in as many years for Laettner and fellow senior Brian Davis. It means the top-ranked Blue Devils, who now face Indiana, a 106-79 winner over UCLA on Saturday, have a chance to become the first repeat national champions in 19 years.

And it also means Laettner has earned a niche in history as the man who hits the biggest of the big shots.

"It was a designed play. We had a few options, but I was the first option," Laettner said, sounding as if he were describing a regular-season shot. "I was just trying to catch the ball," he said. "I didn't miss a shot — 10 from the field, 10 from the free throw line — and finished with 31 points. This seemed to take a lot longer than the Connecticut shot. After I shot it, I didn't see it go in, but I knew it did. There can't be a better feeling than this."

Duke's Final Four run seemed to be at an end against a team that hadn't been to the NCAA Tournament for three years, the last two because of probation. The Wildcats (29-7) had played the best game of a season few had expected three years ago when Rick Pitino took over the program.

"I told the guys, 'Don't let two seconds determine your basketball life because it's worth a lot more than that,'" Pitino said. "He made a great shot with a man on him. Two seconds is a long time. But he's a great player, and he made the shot so we have to give him credit."

Woods' shot was the fourth lead change in the final 30 seconds. It had seemed to be one of the best ever made to win a regional championship — until Laettner's.

"We were probably a little disappointed, as lucky as my shot was, he made an incredible shot because he shot it over Bobby (Hurley) and me," Laettner said. "Obviously, it would have been disappointing not to go back to the Final Four. We just feel very lucky and very happy we're able to go to Minneapolis."

Duke has looked to be taking Easy Street as it had all season.

The Wildcats went on a 12-2 run over the next 2:01, and suddenly thoughts of great upsets filled the heads of everyone in the building. Woods hit a three-pointer with 5.28 left to tie the game 81-81, and neither team led by more than three points the rest of the way.

"When you make a mistake you don't think you'll be punished for it every time, but we were," Laettner said of Kentucky's game-tying run.

The intensity was there, even if the style of play people have come to expect from Duke wasn't.

Deron Feldhaus, one of four Kentucky seniors who stayed in the program rather than leave when the probation was announced, tied the game 93-93 with 38 seconds left in regulation on Aminu Timberlake when the Kentucky freshman had submarined the All-American on a drive to the basket.

"It's just a case where I was a little off-balance, Laettner said. "The kid was underneath me. I didn't even hit him hard. I didn't mean it."

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As the sports world pauses to join the rest of the world in fighting the coronavirus pandemic, you will see fewer sports stories in Stars and Stripes. We look forward to resuming our normal coverage when the leagues and governing bodies determine it is safe for athletes and fans to return to competition.

Kobe Bryant’s resume has yet another entry to validate his greatness: He’s now, officially, a Hall of Famer.

And he’s got plenty of elite company in the 2020 class, one that may be as glitzy as any.

Bryant, who died in a helicopter crash on Jan. 26, and fellow NBA greats Tim Duncan and Kevin Garnett headlined the nine-person 2020 Hall of Fame class.

Kobe Bryant, above, who died in a helicopter crash on Jan. 26, and fellow NBA greats Kevin Garnett and Tim Duncan, below, headline the nine-person 2020 Hall of Fame class.

‘It’s definitely the peak of his NBA career and every accomplishment that he had as an athlete was a steppingstone to be here.’

Vanessa Bryant
Kobe Bryant’s widow, on his enshrinement in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame

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