Acting Navy secretary apologizes for berating ousted captain

By Caitlin Doornbos
Stars and Stripes

Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly quickly apologized in a public statement Monday for saying, in a speech aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt the same day, that the ship’s former commander was “too naive or too stupid” to lead the crew. Modly relieved Capt. Brett Crozier from command Thursday after a letter the captain wrote seeking help for the coronavirus-stricken aircraft carrier was leaked to the media earlier in the week.

In his speech on board the vessel Monday afternoon in Guam, Modly said Crozier “lost sight” of the ship’s mission, according to a transcript and audio recording of the speech posted online the same day.

“He compromised critical information about your status intentionally to draw greater attention to your situation,” Modly said over the ship’s internal public address system.

In a letter to The New York Times published Monday, Modly said Crozier put the nation in danger after “sensitive information about the material condition of our biggest and most powerful warship made its way out into the public arena, in the hands of our adversaries.”

Crozier must have known the letter would have gone public — otherwise, he was “either too naive or too stupid to be a commanding officer of a ship like this,” Modly told sailors in his address.

The decision to relieve Crozier was not well received on the ship or by the public. A petition to reinstate Crozier on Change.org had nearly 300,000 signatures Tuesday and two congressmen and at least 17 senators

See apology on page 5
US mulls ‘war bonds’ to fund pandemic response

In Japan, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe government Tuesday announced a $1 trillion stimulus package to help the country to survive the economic downturn and to protect businesses and jobs.

Abe’s government also declared a monthlong state of emergency for Tokyo and six other prefectures to ramp up defenses against the spread of the coronavirus as the number of infections surges.

Hungary’s prime minister announced a second package of economic measures Monday. Prime Minister Viktor Orban said that the measures would reallocate some 18% to 20% of Hungary’s state budget, or as much as around $32 billion, while raising the budget deficit from 1% of GDP to 2.7%.

Associated Press

The White House is considering coronavirus “war bonds” to fund the federal response to the pandemic.

Larry Kudlow, the director of the national economic council, says the federal government, like most Americans, should make the most of low interest rates.

The U.S. government has had little trouble finding people willing to lend it money so far, even without anything branded as “war bonds.” It’s been able to borrow at interest rates near record lows despite ballooning deficits, as investors around the world look for safe places to park cash.
Taliban exit talks, cite prisoner release issues

**By Phillip Walter Wellman**
Stars and Stripes

**KABUL, Afghanistan** — Afghanistan’s fragile peace process suffered a major blow Tuesday as the Taliban said they were breaking off talks with the government about a prisoner exchange, which is a key part of a deal the insurgents signed with the United States.

The release of prisoners by the insurgents and Kabul is one of several conditions spelled out in the U.S.-Taliban deal signed in late February, which must be met if all international forces are to withdraw from Afghanistan by next spring.

But after a week of face-to-face discussions with government negotiators, the Taliban said Tuesday they were walking away from the dialogue.

“Unfortunately, their release has been delayed under one pretext or another till now,” Taliban spokesman Suhail Shaheen said in a statement on Thursday, adding in a separate tweet that the Taliban had a “lack of seriousness about peace” by quitting the talks, which had reached an “important phase ahead of the release,” said Javid Faisal, a spokesman for Afghanistan’s National Security Council, without providing details.

The government, on the other hand, remained committed to the peace process, he said in a tweet.

The announcement by the Taliban that it was quitting the talks came two days after the group said repeated U.S. raids and “brutal drone attacks” across Afghanistan violated the deal the insurgents signed with the Americans on Feb. 29.

“The deal, which spells out the conditions that must be met if international forces are to completely withdraw from Afghanistan within 14 months, could be in jeopardy if the attacks continue,” the Taliban said in a statement. One of the conditions was the release of up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners in exchange for up to 1,000 prisoners held by the insurgents. Another was the convening of intra-Afghan talks immediately after the release.

United States Forces–Afghanistan described the Taliban’s accusations as “baseless.”

But, USFOR-A spokesman Col. Sonny Leggett said in a tweet, “We will defend our ANDSF if it is attacked, in compliance with the agreement,” using an acronym for Afghanistan’s security forces.

Also causing the Afghan peace process to stumble is the failure of President Ashraf Ghani and his political rival Abdullah Abdullah to agree on which of the two of them won September’s presidential election.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said last month, after failing to resolve the impasse during a lightning visit to Afghanistan, that the U.S. would withhold at least $1 billion in aid to Afghanistan unless a solution is found.

The long row between the two men was eating away at international goodwill toward Afghanistan, the top American diplomat for South and Central Asia, Alice Wells, said this week.

“As the world gets slammed by COVID-19, with devastating economic consequences for all, do not let personal agendas be advanced ahead of the welfare of the Afghan people,” Wells tweeted Monday.

**Africa**

**AFRICOM kills senior al-Shabab leader in Somalia**

**By John Vandiver**
Stars and Stripes

**STUTTGART, Germany** — A senior al-Shabab leader who played a key role in plotting deadly attacks throughout East Africa has been killed in an airstrike, U.S. Africa Command said Tuesday.

Yusuf Jis is was one of three al-Shabab members killed in the April 2 airstrike, AFRICOM said. The strike was one of a flurry of attacks in Somalia in recent days.

Jis was “violent, ruthless, and responsible for the loss of many innocent lives,” AFRICOM commandant Gen. Stephen Townsend said in a statement. “His removal makes Somalia and neighboring countries safer.”

AFRICOM has launched six airstrikes in Somalia since April 2, including one on Monday in which five terrorists were killed, it said.

AFRICOM said no civilians were killed in Monday’s strike on Jilib, around 230 miles south of the capital, Mogadishu, but it is investigating reports that allege there were civilian casualties.

“As with any allegation of civilian casualties U.S. Africa Command vigorously investigates any information it has about the incident, including any relevant information provided by third parties,” it said.

AFRICOM announced last week that it will begin issuing quarterly reports on the outcomes of its investigations into civilian casualty claims as a way to boost transparency.

To date, AFRICOM says only one civilian has been killed in its airstrike campaign in Somalia, but the human rights group Amnesty International says the number is higher. The group has reported that more than a dozen civilians have been killed in U.S. airstrikes in recent years.

AFRICOM this year intensified the pace of airstrikes in Somalia, where al-Shabab has been waging an insurgency for more than a decade. The group is weaker now than it was at its peak in 2011, after it controlled part of Mogadishu as well as the strategic port city of Kismayo, south of Jilib.

Since then, an international military effort has helped push the group out of many of its former strongholds, but al-Shabab still carries out its suicide and roadside attacks in Somalia and abroad, particularly in neighboring Kenya.

The group could pose a threat well beyond East Africa. AFRICOM has warned. While al-Shabab hasn’t demonstrated an ability to carry out attacks in the West, AFRICOM officials say that could change if the group is left unchecked.

“By assisting our partners in East Africa, we diminish a serious threat to Somalia as well as to the U.S. homeland,” said AFRICOM spokesperson Col. Christopher Karns in a statement. “Our efforts help to protect Somalis, Americans, and our international partners.”

More than sea spray

Petty Officer 1st Class Jace Dondany, right, and Petty Officer 2nd Class Susan Küt, both assigned to the littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords, check a sprinkler on the ship’s flight deck during routine cleaning and maintenance Monday in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations.

**US delivers 128 anti-tank Javelin missiles to NATO member Estonia**

**Associated Press**

**HELSDINK — The United States says it has delivered 128 anti-tank Javelin missiles to Estonia as part of a larger contract with the Baltic NATO member and the U.S. Department of Defense.**

The U.S. Embassy in Tallinn said in a statement on Thursday that “the shipment will continue to build upon Estonia’s defensive capabilities and further strengthens our nations’ strategic integration” within NATO, of which Estonia has been a member since 2004.

Washington has provided Estonia, a staunch military ally, with over $100 million in joint defense cooperation over the past few years, the U.S. Embassy said.

The FGM-148 Javelin is an infrared-guided anti-tank missile that can be carried and launched by a single person. It is manufactured by a joint venture between Raytheon Co. and Lockheed Martin Corp.

In December, the Estonian defense ministry said the United States has allocated $175 million in military aid to the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania for 2020.

The three countries are all NATO members and all border Russia.
It was about a 40-hour day

Multinational airlift wing crews deliver medical supplies around the world

By Kent Harris
Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — Crews from a multinational airlift wing have delivered hundreds of thousands of pounds of medical supplies to countries spanning the globe, the U.S. Air Force officer commanding the unit said Tuesday.

The Strategic Airlift Capability’s Heavy Airlift Wing traveled to what under normal circumstances would be nice vacation spots. But their stays in Thailand and the Caribbean were very brief and part of a long mission to aid the global response to the coronavirus.

“It was about a 40-hour day,” said U.S. Air Force Col. James Sparrow, commander of the operational element of the Papa, Hungary-based command, of a mission that also included stops in South Korea and Afghanistan before ending in Romania.

That mission, one of three ferrying protective gear for medical workers, was one the wing is well suited for.

Formed in 2008, the Strategic Airlift Capability assists European countries too small to maintain their own military transport fleet.

The wing consists of about 150 personnel that maintain and fly three C-17 Globemasters. Americans make up about a third of the wing, which also consists of personnel from nine NATO allies, Sweden and Finland.

While carrying personnel and cargo to various deployments around the globe make up a good chunk of the wing’s operations during normal times, Sparrow said operating during a pandemic is different.

“I think it is historic in that respect,” he said Tuesday in a phone interview. “I think we’re extremely satisfied and very proud of what we’re doing.”

Besides providing medical aid to Romania with 270,000 pounds of medical goods, Sparrow said another trip sent intensive-care beds and equipment from Eindhoven, Netherlands, to the Dutch half of St. Martin, in the Caribbean.

“It tripled their capacity on the island,” Sparrow said.

He said he couldn’t discuss future missions, but there are several more to support the response to COVID-19 in the planning stages.

“We think this is our bread and butter for the near future,” Sparrow said.

Air Force Col. James Sparrow, a C-17 instructor pilot, has been a member of the Heavy Airlift Wing in Papa, Hungary, since 2017.

Air Force to test high-energy lasers to take down drones

By Tom Roeder
The Colorado Springs, Colo. Gazette

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Back in December, tales of drones harassing northeastern Colorado were heard.

If they ever come back, the Air Force may have a new way to zap them from the sky. The service announced Monday it is ready to test its first high-energy lasers for use against enemy drones overseas.

“Troops will utilize this system as an operational asset against small unmanned aircraft systems for the duration of the field assessment,” said Michael Jirjis, who headed development of the laser for the Air Force Research Laboratory in Ohio.

The Air Force said it had no involvement in swarms of drones spotted over ranchland in sparsely-populated areas near Colorado’s border with Kansas and Nebraska. But the service has been viewing drones with growing alarm for years.

At F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyo., the Air Force has a program focusing on drones that could pose a security risk to domestic bases. The new lasers, with models under consideration from the Air Force lab and defense contractor Raytheon, would take aim at drones that have already proven worrisome in the Persian Gulf.

Iranian drones were tied to a 2019 attack on Saudi oil production facilities and have been used by Islamic State militants to drop grenades. While the Air Force hasn’t announced where the new lasers will first be tested, the Persian Gulf is all but certain, thanks to those threats.

The Air Force has been experimenting with lasers in a number of programs since the 1980s. One sought powerful lasers as part of the Star Wars program during the Reagan years, but those weapons never came to fruition.

In the early 2000s, the Air Force and the Missile Defense worked together to place a chemically powered laser aboard a Boeing 747 jet. That work was abandoned after it went billions of dollars over budget.

Now, the military is looking at more modest solid-state lasers, which could solve a lot of problems in the future.

Relatively cheap and lightweight, the lasers convert electricity into focused beams of light that destroy targets by melting them or blinding their sensors.

Lasers are cheaper to fire than one-time use missiles, faster than bullets, and create little debris on training ranges.

The new generation of lasers has drawn field tests from the Army, Air Force and Navy in recent years.

“The overseas field assessments are allowing us to understand directed energy as a capability against drones,” Jirjis said.

“This gives us a better picture of the military utility, reliability and sustainability, training requirements and implementation with existing base defense.”

Key questions for researchers include whether lasers are powerful enough to take down targets and fast enough to deal with several incoming drones at the same time.

If the lasers don’t work out, researchers are also looking into using microwave beams to take down drones. That weapon would do to a drone what a microwave oven does to a frozen burrito.
VIRUS OUTBREAK

Distance: Guidelines changing as more data becomes available

FROM FRONT PAGE

“A single cough can release hundreds of droplets, a single sneeze thousands, at speeds of up to 50-200 miles per hour, each droplet containing millions of viral particles...” said a 2013 paper published in the journal of the Superiori di Sanita, Italy’s public health authority.

But just how far droplets travel before gravity drags them down differs within the results of numerous studies of other viruses. World distancing guidelines have their grounding in those studies, rather than controlled results on the virus that causes COVID-19, which is too new for such a body of findings.

The CDC found that the SARS virus, which killed more than 8,000 people in 2002 and 2003, traveled up to 3 feet, its website says. But for COVID-19, “spread is more likely when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet),” the CDC website says.

The CDC did not return emails and a phone call requesting comment on the distancing guidelines.

Meanwhile, a flu study found that 3-foot distance limited the chances of contact with the virus, but wouldn’t prevent it in some instances.

The April 2013 study in The Journal of Infectious Diseases took air samples at 1 foot, 3 feet, and 5 feet and found that 26 of 61 flu-infected patients released virus into the room’s air. How far it traveled varied and some patients released far more virus than others.

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If released infectious amounts of virus up to 6 feet from patients during non–aerosol-generating patient-care activities, predominantly in small particles,” the study said.

Some epidemiologists say smaller droplets can travel farther than that.

But in some areas, even maintaining a 6-foot distance may not be possible. The WHO is sticking with its 1-meter guideline.

“Individual countries are free to go beyond this, as some have and as they are free to do,” James Allworth, a WHO spokesperson said in an email.

The Army Garrison Italy started with a meter, the official Italian recommendation, and distancing of findings.

Credit: Department of Defense

Customers practice social distancing at Naval Support Activity Bahrain, on March 25.

FROM FRONT PAGE

have signed letters asking the Defense Department Investigator General to look into Crozier’s firing.

Crozier, in a four-page letter to senior military officials March 30, said: “sailors do not need to die because "we are not at war."” The San Francisco Chronicle first reported the contents of Crozier’s letter March 31.

Addressing the Roosevelt crew, Modly said this notion bothered him the most.

“Let me tell ya something, the only reason we are dealing with this right now is a big authoritative regime called China was not forthcoming about what was happening with this virus and they put the world at risk to protect themselves and to protect their reputations,” Modly said during his speech.

China is listed among the U.S.’s strategic competitors in the National Defense Strategy, and much of the Navy’s missions in the Western Pacific challenge Chinese claims to islands and reefs in the ocean.

Modly told sailors Crozier’s letter created a “big controversy in the Western Pacific” because Modly’s chief of staff had been in contact with Crozier, who “expressed no alarm to him at all,” but said he was “impatient with the pace of moving sailors off the ship,” Modly wrote in his letter.

In his apology, Modly said that he does not think Crozier “is naive nor stupid.”

“In my view, I think Capt. Crozier is smart and passionate,” Modly said. "I beleive, precisely because he is not naive and stupid, that he sent his alarming email with the intention of getting it into the public domain in an effort to draw public attention to the situation on his ship.”

Crozier’s letter was uncalled for because Modly’s chief of staff had been in contact with Crozier, who “expressed no alarm to him at all,” but said he was “impatient with the pace of moving sailors off the ship,” Modly wrote in his letter. “Bottom line, the public disclosure of this was not appropriate,” Modly said.

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Japan declares monthlong state of emergency

Associated Press

TOKYO — Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe declared a monthlong state of emergency Tuesday for Tokyo and six other prefectures to ramp up defenses against the spread of the coronavirus as the number of infections surges.

But the move came in the form of a stay-at-home request — not an order — and violators will not be penalized.

The outbreak is now rampant and spreading, threatening people’s health and the economy, Abe said. The state of emergency is until May 6.

The state of emergency will only permit Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike and heads of the six other prefectures to do more to reinforce calls for social distancing.

“The most important thing is for each one of us to change our activity,” Abe told a government task force. He urged everyone to cut contacts with others by 70-80% for month.

The announcement follows surges in new cases in Tokyo, including consecutive rises exceeding 100 over the weekend. By Monday, there were 1,116 confirmed cases in the metropolitan region of 14 million people. Nationwide, Japan has reported 91 deaths from COVID-19 and 3,906 confirmed cases in the metropolitan region of 14 million people. Nationwide, Japan has reported 91 deaths from COVID-19 and 3,906 confirmed cases.

Still, the state of emergency could significantly limit people’s movements around and out of the city. Takahide Kiuchi, an economist at Nomura Research Institute, said in a recent report that a state of emergency could cause consumer spending to fall nearly ¥2.3 trillion, leading to a 0.4% drop in Japan’s annual GDP.

As in many places, there are fears over shortages of beds and ICU units for patients with severe symptoms. Osaka Nishi-koike said the Japanese Society of Intensive Care Medicine, noted that Japan has only 500 ICU beds, compared to 12 in Italy and about 30 in Germany.

Abe said that the central gov- ernment had urged other prefectures to declare states of emergency. Still, the state of emergency includes the capital region of 14 million people.

Koike welcomed the emer- gency measures, saying that she expects they “will prevail widely and deeply among the people.”

Abe’s government is thought to have delayed declaring a state of emergency out of fear of how it might hurt the economy. But as fear of the pandemic has grown, the public and medical experts have increasingly supported taking more drastic action.

The state of emergency includes a stay-at-home request, requests to close nonessential businesses and stores, guidance to schools on temporary closures and requests to cancel or postpone events and exhibits. Violators cannot be penalized unless they fail to comply with orders on providing or storing emergency relief goods, such as surgical masks and medical equipment.

By Caitlin Doornbos

Navy bases near Tokyo place restrictive rules on movement

By Caitlin Doornbos

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The declaration of a public health emergency by U.S. Forces Japan on Monday prompted commanders at two naval bases near Tokyo to tighten restrictions on sailors and civilians.

At Naval Air Facility Atsugi, commander Capt. Lloyd Mack implemented a shelter-in-place order Monday night to “further limit movement and potential for exposure,” he said in an announcement on the official base Facebook page Monday evening.

“Shelter-in-place does not confine anyone to their homes, barracks or off-base residences,” Mack said in a video posted to the Facebook page. “It simply restricts all unnecessary movement about the base or off-base.”

The public health emergency gives commanders authority over the civilian dependents and employees, including contractors, on their facilities. Under previous restrictions, most civilians were simply encouraged to abide by travel and other limits imposed on service members.

"These protective measures are not voluntary for civilians they are mandatory," he said. "They are vital to help us kill the spread of the coronavirus."

Under Mack’s order, only “designated mission-essential personnel should report to work, and then, only under the direction of your supervisor,” he said in the video.

Entrance to the base is limited to mission-essential personnel between 7 p.m. and 10 a.m. Monday through Saturday, and 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. on Sunday.

Civilians and service members who live off base may buy “essential goods and groceries” from facilities in the video.

No one associated with Atsugi had tested positive for the coronavirus as of Monday, Mack said in the video.

“We need you to focus on the measures and policies we’re putting in place to … defeat this threat,” Mack told the Atsugi community in the video.

At Yokosuka Naval Base, the USFJ declaration prompted Yokosuka authorities to allow nonessential personnel to enter base only between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. beginning Tuesday. Mission-essential personnel can enter for work purposes anytime.

Nonessential personnel will also be required to identify themselves, their sponsoring commands, their destinations and purpose for entering or leaving the base, according to an image of the form on the official base Facebook page. The form also asks for the number of contacts the subject has recently had.

Yokosuka Naval Base has been under a shelter-in-place order since March 27 after three active-duty sailors tested positive for the coronavirus within 24 hours.

The Navy has since declined to release the number of additional cases at specific installations, but the city of Yokosuka reports that two of its 18 residents who have tested positive as of Monday are base employees, according to its official website.

Memo directs sailors in Japan to log movements and contacts

By Caitlin Doornbos

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — U.S. Naval Forces Japan has directed sailors to keep a daily log of their movements and people with whom they have close contact, according to a memorandum Stars and Stripes obtained Tuesday.

Sailors were also told to write out all contacts and movements they’ll made in the 14 days prior to the memo. The aim is to track the potential coronavirus spread should a sailor later test positive, according to the memo issued Thursday.

“In the event of a positive COVID-19 test, one of the important actions taken by medical professionals is to conduct contact tracing,” Naval Forces Japan commander Adm. Brian Fort wrote in the memo. “This information is vitally important to understand whether other personnel need to be placed in quarantine.”

Sailors with close contact with someone who tested positive for coronavirus are placed under 14-day quarantines even if they do not present symptoms, 7th Fleet spokesman Lt. Joe Keiley told Stars and Stripes in an email last month.

“Close contact” is defined as being within six feet for a prolonged period or having direct contact with someone, such as being sneezed or coughed on, according to Fort’s memo.

Further, sailors were advised to provide specific information in which the information should be tracked, but told sailors that they do not need to share their daily logs with their commands.

“This is your personal and private information. It is only intended to be shared with medical professionals if needed for contact-tracing purposes,” Fort wrote in the memo.

At least three active-duty sailors in Japan had tested positive for the coronavirus by March 27.

The Navy has since implemented a policy not to release the number of positive cases associated with individual installations. Instead, the numbers are lumped together into the official Navy tally of sailors positive with the virus.

As of Monday, 436 sailors had tested positive across the service, according to the Navy’s most recent coronavirus report.

Keeping the daily logs has a second purpose: to cause “each of us to think about our personal interactions, and daily close contacts and consider “hows” this virus impacts our daily norms until we have a vaccine and/or a cure,” Fort wrote in the memo.

“Everyone must recognize the incredible importance of the personal accountability role they individually play in defeating the virus,” Fort said in the memo. “Policies, procedures and protocols can abound, but all of them are null and void without individual accountability.”

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Off-base businesses in Japan feel the squeeze

BY JAMES BOLINGER
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan — Junki Kaku, the owner of Poem and Good Fellows, two bars in downtown Iwakuni, pointed to the empty streets of the Naka Dori district on St. Patrick’s Day. “It’s like martial law here,” he said. “There’s no one.”

Normally, American service members across military bases from Hawaii to South Korea are feeling the squeeze. Starting March 25, when the overarching Indo-Pacific Command authorized stringent measures across military bases from Hawaii to South Korea, commanders have imposed increasing tighter restrictions to stem the coronavirus tide.

For example, many personnel living off base with their families may travel only to and from their duty stations. Bars, sit-down restaurants, karaoke joints, nightclubs and off-base theaters are off limits. Only essential trips for groceries, medical and dental appointments and similar visits are permitted.

With a declaration Monday of a public health emergency by U.S. Forces Japan, that order extends to family members and civilian employees of the Defense Department living in Tokyo and the surrounding area.

In the western Tokyo city of Fussa, the owner of El’s Bar said her popular business is suffering along with scores of others on Bar Row, a 10-minute walk from the main gate at Yokota Air Base. “We are open for food right now, so we can survive,” Grace City said.

Outside Yokosuka Naval Base, about 40 miles south of central Tokyo, bar and club owners tell a similar story. The installation has been on the strictest lockdown among military bases in Japan since March 27 when it reported at least three cases of coronavirus.

“We still get a few Japanese locals and some of their foreign friends come in,” said Mary Jane, the owner of Venes Resto Bar near Yokosuka, “but with the Americans restricted to base, business is noticeably down since there isn’t much volume.”

On Okinawa, Kanako Ibuki, the popular Pour House Bar and Grill in American Village, closed up shop March 29 due to the coronavirus.

“We knew what we had to do to protect our employees, our valuable military customers and their families and prevent spreading the disease,” Ibuki told Stars and Stripes last week.

Nearly 95% of her customers are American military and the rest are usually their guests, Ibuki said.

At Iwakuni, Shinichiro Morihashi of Iwakuni Taxi said fares from the base are down by half these days.

Many of the drivers make round trips to the Shin Iwakuni train station and the bars and Naka Dori district about a mile from MCAS Iwakuni’s main gate. But Marines and sailors at the air station may not leave the base for anything other than essentials. Bars and nightclubs are off limits, and off-duty travel is also forbidden.

“We thought that we would be in a better situation compared to other businesses thanks to the base, but it’s been very difficult,” Morihashi said.

Some proprietors have plans to get through the pandemic. In addition to The Pour House Bar and Grill, Ibuki owns Katsu Okinawa Food Delivery, the only food-delivery service on Okinawa.

“It’s not only our restaurant that is hurting, this is hurting all of our industry,” she said. “I can help and support other restau-

Airman at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam tests positive

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — An airman at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam tested positive for coronavirus Thursday, and is the first active-duty airman stationed at Schofield Barracks to do so, according to the Air Force.

The airman, assigned to Pacific Air Forces headquarters, did not have a history of recent travel, the service said in a statement Friday.

The service member, who is now in isolation in off-base housing, “had contact with personnel throughout the headquarters building,” and base public health officials had begun contact tracing to notify anyone who might have encountered the airman, the statement said.

“The 15th Medical Group Public Health Office is working with appropriate state and military health officials,” Col. Halsey Burks, commander of the joint base’s 15th Wing, said in the statement.

The Army announced March 21 that only one 25th Infantry Division soldier stationed at Schofield Barracks had contracted the virus, making him the first U.S. service member to test positive in Hawaii.

As of Monday, Hawaii had 387 cases of COVID-19. Five people have died in the state.

In coordination with the Joint Base, we continue to execute deliberate precautions to ensure we mitigate COVID-19 transmission while preserving the force and mission capability,” Burks said.

The public notice of the airman’s positive status is a departure from the U.S. Defense Department’s order late last month that installations worldwide stop announcing new coronavirus cases among their personnel.

Friday’s announcement of illness among Air Force personnel at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, however, will apparently be the last.

“In the future and in order to protect operational security as we preserve the nation’s combat readiness, the Air Force and the other military services will only provide total numbers of service members with COVID-19 at the service level,” the statement said.

Marine Corps Base Hawaii said in an online posting last week that it would “strike a balance” between operational security and transparency by posting notices on Facebook when someone on the base tests positive.

“If known, we will share how the individual became infected,” the posting said. Details such as employment and duty status, age or sex of the individual would not be released, nor would a running tally be published, it added. No Facebook notices had been issued as of Monday.

Oahu’s three major installations — the Marine Corps base, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam and the Army’s Schofield Barracks — are all at Health Protection Condition Charlie, which signals sustained community transmission of disease. The next and highest condition, Delta, designates “widespread” transmission.

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A man wearing a face mask to protect against the spread of the coronavirus walks through an alley Tuesday in Seoul, South Korea.

S. Korean city wants to help test civilian workers on bases

By Kim Gamel and Yoo Kyong Chang
Stars and Stripes

PYEONGTAEK, South Korea – The city near the main U.S. Army garrison in South Korea wants to conduct coronavirus tests on American civilians who work for the military after a recent spate of confirmed cases affiliated with U.S. Forces Korea, officials said Tuesday.

The U.S. military said that it is in talks with local officials but nothing has been decided and no details were released, including the extent of the request. Camp Humphreys is the largest overseas U.S. base with a population exceeding 37,000, including service members, dependents, contractors and other civilians.

Officials in Pyeongtaek, about 40 miles south of Seoul, have been alarmed by the rapid increase in the number of infections linked to Camp Humphreys and the nearby Osan Air Base after several American contractors and other civilians tested positive for the virus.

USFK has imposed partial lockdowns on the two installations and restricted most nonessential on-base movement. Camp Humphreys also acknowledged Tuesday that a plan is in the works to limit the number of days personnel who live off-post can shop at the commissary, in line with a similar decision at Osan Air Base.

Only two soldiers have been confirmed positive since USFK began conducting tests when the coronavirus began spreading in South Korea.

The U.S. military has sharply restricted access to bases and ordered most people on Humphreys and Osan to stay home as much as possible as it tries to prevent the further spread of the virus.

Only two soldiers have tested positive in South Korea. The others were military dependents, contractors and South Korean employees.

— Kim Gamel

USFK reports 20th case

CAMP HUMPHREYS, South Korea — Another person working at Osan Air Base tested positive for the coronavirus Monday, raising the total number of cases affiliated with U.S. Forces Korea to 20.

USFK announced the results in a tweet, saying that “contact tracing and thorough cleaning are occurring now.” It didn’t immediately provide more details.

It was the third confirmed case since Friday on the air base, which is near Camp Humphreys, the main Army garrison south of Seoul.

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Lawmakers prod DOD for help on military moves

WASHINGTON — More than 30 lawmakers have requested that Defense Secretary Mark Esper provide more direction and assistance to military moves impacted by the Pentagon’s 60-day stop movement orders.

And while the two movement orders are noble and necessary, this unprecedented action left civilians associated with the military with “extreme financial distress,” the letter states.

Two stop movement orders were issued in March by Esper in response to the spreading coronavirus outbreak and barred all travel, including military moves and redeployments. The travel restrictions have impacted thousands of service members and their families around the world, according to the letter. In one example, the letter stated that since the 60-day travel restriction was implemented, several lawmakers have heard from families who are paying rent on a house at their next duty station while stuck living in a house from which they intended to move. Spouses have left jobs due to anticipated moves, and families who have already shipped their household goods must pay to replace some of their necessities during the travel restriction.

The letter asked Esper to “exercise every measure within your authority to provide [the military’s] services with the guidance and resources needed to ensure care and support to every military member and family” affected by the order.

“The need to move — put out some uniform guidance so that people know what they should do,” Haaland said. “There needs to be a coordination among the military and we need to expedite programs, more coordination with all of the military bases, I should say. And then we should expedite programs that already exist, have barriers to help them... so that they can make it month to month until we can see clear of this pandemic.”

By Caitlin M. Kenney
Stars and Stripes

They need to move — put out some uniform guidance so that people know what they should do — Rep. Debra Haaland, D-N.M.

The military’s main moving season starts in the spring and ends in the fall. About 400,000 service members, Defense Department civilian workers and their families are moved each year, with 40% of moves happening between May 15 and Aug. 31, according to the Pentagon.

The travel restriction, while necessary for the health and safety of service members and families, has caused these unintended consequences, said Rep. Debra Haaland, D-N.M., who led the effort behind the bipartisan letter.

Haaland, who is the daughter of a Vietnam veteran, said that she understands firsthand the struggles other military families face, such as frequent moves.

Barriers cited in the letter are the low monetary caps for programs meant to help families during their moves, and capacity at local installations and family readiness centers to be able to process claims.

“This unparalleled order is... to save lives has led to an unprecedented need for assistance... critically straining the staff and resources available and inevitably resulting in long delays before relief reaches military families,” the letter states.

The lawmakers want any cap on funds meant to help families to be removed during the pandemic, including cuts OMB imposed on the purse of the letter was to raise the lawmakers’ concerns with military leadership and to urge them to minimize the impact additionally.

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The need to move — put out some uniform guidance so that people know what they should do — Rep. Debra Haaland, D-N.M.
USNS Comfort now taking virus patients

BY ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

With a confirmed case of coronavirus among the crew members of the USNS Comfort, the hospital ship docked in New York City will begin formally accepting patients with the respiratory illness, U.S. Northern Command announced Tuesday.

The Comfort’s transition to coronavirus care is to help relieve the growing pressure on the city’s hospital system, according to a news release from NORTHCOM, which is taking the lead under the Defense Department’s coronavirus operations in the United States.

“Effective immediately, USNS Comfort will accept all patients without regard to their coronavirus status,” NORTHCOM said.

The comfort member who tested positive for the virus Monday is an enlisted member and tested positive Monday, said Cmdr. Ashley Hockcyko, spokeswoman for the U.S. 2nd Fleet.

“There is no impact to Comfort’s mission, and this will not affect the ability for Comfort to receive patients,” she said in a statement. “The ship is following protocols and taking every precaution to ensure the health and safety of all crewmembers and patients on board.”

However, the ship will have to reduce its 1,000-patient capacity by half to accommodate highly contagious coronavirus cases, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said Tuesday during a news conference.

“It’s still a tremendous benefit,” Cuomo said.

The governor said he called President Donald Trump on Monday to ask the Comfort treat coronavirus patients because there aren’t many nonvirus patients. He said stay-at-home orders have reduced traffic accidents and crime.

While the number of hospitalizations has begun to plateau in the state, New York saw 751 people die from the virus Monday — the highest of any other day, Cuomo said. In total, the state has more than 130,600 positive cases of the coronavirus, the highest in the nation.

Across the United States, positive cases were approaching 470,000 on Tuesday, according to the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center.

Prior to Tuesday, the Comfort had received more than 41 patients, including several who later tested positive for the coronavirus.

Air Force Brig. Gen. Paul Friederichs, the Pentagon’s Joint Staff surgeon, said Monday during a news conference that those patients, 16 were in intensive care.

“Our commitment has been, if a patient comes to us, we would take care of them,” he said.

By Tuesday morning, the number of patients aboard the Comfort rose to more than 50, Hockcyko said.

Because the ship is geared toward trauma and emergency coronavirus care, nurses are being trained who are able to handle the job.

Army relents, halts sending its recruits to basic training

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Army on Monday stopped sending recruits to initial entrance training amid the coronavirus pandemic that has restricted movement for troops worldwide and placed millions of Americans under stay-at-home orders, service officials announced.

The halt will last at least two weeks as the service looks to implement measures meant to guarantee it can safely move recruits from their hometowns to training bases without a risk of spreading the virus, said Army Gen. Paul Funk, the chief of Training and Doctrine Command. Funk said the pause, which does not affect recruits already in training, would be reevaluated in two weeks and could be extended.

“During the pause our commanders will ensure we have the right, most current procedure and capabilities in place to screen and test our recruits,” Funk told reporters during a telephonic news briefing. “We hold the safety of our force and our communities in the highest regard.”

Funk said Monday that the decision to pause sending recruits to the Army’s four basic training locations is not the result of a coronavirus outbreak on any of those installations: Fort Benning in Georgia, Fort Jackson in South Carolina, Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri and Fort Sill in Oklahoma.

Instead, Funk said service officials determined they could afford to pause temporary, two-week training periods in April and May — the weeks just ahead of typical high school and college graduation dates — are traditionally the slowest months for sending recruits to initial training. For example, he said, only 219 recruits were scheduled to ship to basic training programs between Monday and the end of April.

“It really just happened that this is the lowest time for shipping [recruits] in the Army, and this is the right time to do it,” Funk said.

Nonetheless, as recently as Friday, Army officials were adamant they were not planning to pause sending recruits to basic training. In a Facebook post, Training and Doctrine Command wrote that shipping recruits was “mission essential” to ensure the Army could retain its combat readiness.

The Army reported Monday that at least 334 soldiers had been sickened by the coronavirus.

The Army will continue sending basic training graduates to advanced training programs in which soldiers learn the skills required for their jobs. Soldiers who graduate that training will then be sent on to their first assignments, the general said.

The service is taking measures to keep soldiers moving between training bases or to their first home so long as contacting the general public, using chartered buses or aircraft to keep them isolated together in a “protective bubble.”

Those efforts have been largely successful so far, Funk said. The temporary pause will allow the service to perfect the process, he added.

Recruits who were scheduled to ship to basic training could be eligible to begin receiving pay as though they were already active duty, depending on their personal hardship situation.

The Army approved a new program to pay up to 4,000 recruits who face unusual hardships because of the pandemic. Funk said such circumstances could include recruits who might have let their lease expire because they expected to be entering the Army or recently left their civilian jobs.

Other recruits could receive extra bonuses between $2,000 and $6,000 later, if they are unable to ship to basic training when they expected.

Recruits should stay in touch with their recruiters for the latest information about when they will be sent to basic training through the pandemic, the general said.

“We’re going to take care of them,” he said. “It’s the right thing to do.”
NYC virus deaths exceed city's toll for 9/11 attacks

By MARINA MILLENEAU AND LORI HINNANT Associated Press

NEW YORK — New York City's death toll from the coronavirus officially eclipsed the number of those killed at the World Trade Center on 9/11, health officials said Tuesday. In Britain, Prime Minister Boris Johnson was in intensive care with the virus.

At least 3,202 people have died in New York from COVID-19, according to the count released by the city. The deadliest terror attack on U.S. soil killed 2,753 people in the city and 2,977 overall, when hijacked planes slammed into the twin towers, the Pentagon and a Pennsylvania field on Sept. 11, 2001.

New York state recorded 731 new coronavirus deaths Tuesday, its biggest one-day jump yet, for a statewide toll of nearly 13,100, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said.

But in an encouraging sign, he reported that the average number of people newly hospitalized each day is dropping, as is the number of those receiving breathing tubes, indicating that measures taken to make people keep their distance from each other are succeeding.

And alarming as the one-day increase in deaths might sound, the governor said that’s a “lagging indicator” reflecting people who had been hospitalized before this week. Over the past several days, in fact, the number of deaths appeared to be leveling off.

“You see that plateauing — that’s because of what we are doing. If we don’t do what we are doing, that is a much different curve,” he said. “So social distancing is working, that’s because of what we are doing.”

Across the U.S., the death toll reached about 11,000, with around 370,000 confirmed infections.

In London, the 55-year-old Johnson, the world’s first head of government known to have fallen ill with the virus, was in stable condition and conscious at a hospital, where he received oxygen but was not on a ventilator, said his spokesman James Slack. Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab was designated to run the country in the meantime.

“We’re desperate hoping that Boris can make the speediest possible recovery,” said Cabinet minister Michael Gove, who is among scores of British officials in self-isolation.

Johnson became ill about 10 days after attending a Conservative Party conference in Manchester. The disease he caught was later confirmed as the coronavirus.

Japan’s prime minister made the emergency declaration after a spike in infections in Tokyo, but it was a stay-at-home request — not an order — and violators will not be penalized. Despite having relatively few infections and deaths, Japan is a worrying target for a virus that has been killing the elderly at much higher rates than other age groups.

In some European hot spots, as in New York, authorities were hoping that the outbreak was turning a corner, based on slowdowns in new deaths and hospitalizations. In Italy, a mountain of dead countries, new deaths Tuesday rose to 743 and infections climbed by 5,400 after five days of declines, but the increases were believed to reflect a weekend backlog. Authorities said slowing the contagion will be a long process and were confident in the downward trend.

Italy’s commissioner for fighting the COVID-19 virus appealed to Italians ahead of Easter weekend not to lower their guard and to abide by a lockdown now in its fifth week.

Citing data that shows that transmission of Italian intensive care wards is easing, Domenico Arcuri said that the “cruelest reality is stronger that algorithms.”

“Don’t ever forget even for an instant that this invisible, strong and unknown virus has taken 16,523 lives through yesterday,” Arcuric said, reciting the figure repeatedly. “I beg you, in the next hours and days, do not cancel this message.

New coronavirus cases were also slowing in France and Portugal. To keep up social distancing, Paris banned daytime jogging just as warm spring weather set in.

U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams said that if Americans continue to practice social distancing for the rest of April, “we will be able to get back to some sense of normalcy.”

“I want the American people to know there is a light at the end of this tunnel,” he said. “We can keep doing the right thing for the rest of this month, that we can start to slowly reopen in some places,” he said on ABC’s “Good Morning America.”

One lockdown exception in the U.S. was Wisconsin, which asked hundreds of thousands of voters to ignore a stay-at-home order to participate in its presidential primary Tuesday.

The lines were particularly long in Milwaukee, the state’s largest city and a Democratic stronghold.

The U.S. government’s top infectious-disease expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, was cautiously optimistic, saying that in New York, “what we have been doing has been working.”

Stocks climbed in early trading on Wall Street on Tuesday as markets around the world piled on even more big gains following their huge rally a day earlier. The S&P 500 index rose 3% in the first few minutes of trading and added on to Monday’s 7% surge.

China, the first country to go into lockdown and among the strictest, reported no new deaths over the past 24 hours for the first time since it began publishing statistics on the virus that emerged in December in the city of Wuhan. Many experts, however, have been skeptical of China’s virus figures. The final travel restrictions in Wuhan are being lifted Wednesday.

Doctors wary of drug Trump touts to combat virus

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump and his administration are promoting an anti-malaria drug not officially approved for fighting the coronavirus, even though scientists say more testing is needed before it’s proven safe and effective against COVID-19.

Trump trade adviser Peter Navarro championed hydroxychloroquine in television interviews Monday, a day after the president publicly put his faith in the medication to lessen the toll of the coronavirus pandemic.

“What do I know, I’m not a doctor,” Trump said Sunday. “But I have common sense. In promoting the drug’s possibilities, the president has often stated, “What have you got to lose?”

Trump held out promise for the drug as he grasps for ways to sound hopeful in the face of a mounting death toll and with the worst weeks yet to come for the U.S. The virus has killed more than 10,000 in the U.S., and measures meant to contain its spread have taken a painful economic toll and all but frozen life in large swaths of the country.

But medical officials warn that it’s dangerous to be hawking unproven remedies, and even Trump’s own experts have cautioned against it.

The American Medical Association’s president, Dr. Patrice Harris, said she personally would not prescribe the drug for a coronavirus patient, saying the risks of severe side effects were “great and too significant to downplay” without large studies showing the drug is safe and effective for such use.

Harris pointed to the drug’s high risk of causing heart rhythm problems.

“People have their health to lose,” she said. “Your heart could stop.”

Hydroxychloroquine is officially approved for treating malaria, rheumatoid arthritis and lupus, not COVID-19. Small, preliminary studies have suggested it might help prevent the new coronavirus from entering cells and possibly help patients clear the virus sooner. But those have shown mixed results.

Doctors are already prescribing the malaria drug to patients with COVID-19, a practice known as off-label prescribing. Research studies are now beginning to test if the drugs truly help COVID-19 patients, and the Food and Drug Administration has allowed the medication into the national stockpile as an option for doctors to consider for patients who cannot get into one of the studies.
President Donald Trump speaks about efforts to combat the coronavirus pandemic at the White House on Monday. “We’re going to take good care of our people,” Trump said. “It was not their fault.”

Trump, Biden spoke by phone about pandemic particulars

By Kate Bedingfield

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said he had a “really wonderful, warm conversation” with Joe Biden on Monday about the coronavirus outbreak.

“He gave me his point of view, and I fully understood that, and we just had a very friendly conversation,” Trump said at his daily White House briefing.

The president said he and Biden agreed to show the country the unity in their conversation, but confirmed an earlier statement from the Biden campaign that the Democrat didn’t “suggest” on how to address the pandemic.

Biden previously said he’d like to speak with Trump, despite his predecessor’s allegedlsruhe of granting asylum to Tigray refugees from Ethiopia.

But Trump added: “It doesn’t mean that I agree with those suggestions.”

US government not ready to provide paid sick leave in new law

By Eric Yoder

The federal government is not yet ready to make available to its employees new paid sick leave related to the pandemic that took effect on paper at least, last week.

A law enacted in late-March, expanded the Family and Medical Leave Act by creating new sick leave entitlements, one of which applies to all federal employees, according to the Labor Department. But while the law specifies that the leave was to be available starting April 1, it is not yet in place for federal employees.

In an email, Office of Personnel Management communications director Anthony Marucci said the law requires that the emergency sick leave be paid at a rate which “our payroll systems are not set up to do. Agencies and payroll providers need time to make system adjustments and set up procedures.”

If an employee is subject to a quarantine order, has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine or is experiencing symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis, the law provides paid leave of up to 80 hours (or a two-week equivalent for a part-time employee). That leave is not for a partial work day, when a federal employee’s base pay rate is less than 50%, or for federal employees not covered by the law. Employees, managers and supervisors, and the law’s definition of “medical advice,” do not currently cover everyone.

The law also authorizes up to $200 daily and $2,000 total for federal employees to care for someone under quarantine or to care for a child whose school or day care is closed due to virus-related reasons, or who is experiencing symptoms “substantially similar” to those of COVID-19.
**VIRUS OUTBREAK RoundUP**

**Governor believes California cases to peak in mid-May**

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Gavin Newsom sticking with a mid-May projection for when the COVID-19 outbreak will reach its apex in California, has issued an order for health care facilities to stockpile hospital beds and protective gear for health care workers. The governor said he was forecasting that the spread could be slowing sooner.

While confirmed cases and deaths continue rising in California, the rate of hospitalizations and intensive care placements — a key indicator of the state’s ability to handle a surge in patients — has been increasing more slowly. Both rose less than 5% over the weekend. It was enough that Newsom felt comfortable leaving him and other officials with several dozen days to prepare for the surge and is a tool for hospitals and health systems preparing for the surge and is a tool for hospitals and health systems preparing for the surge and is a tool for hospitals and health systems preparing for the surge.

New Mexico

ALBUQUERQUE — While federal environmental regulators have waived enforcement on a range of legally mandated public health and environmental protections, New Mexico is marching ahead.

Food inspections are ongoing, as is the tracking of methane emissions and other critical work related to drinking water protections and worker safety as the number of new coronavirus cases in the state increased Monday by several dozen.

New Mexico has nearly 600 deaths and the death toll remains at 12. The new cases come a day after President Donald Trump signed off on a federal disaster declaration for New Mexico, freeing up funding to supplement state, tribal and local recovery efforts.

The declaration allows the state to start asking for federal dollars on up to 30% of the state’s spending to help with the response efforts.

“The important thing is that New Mexico has an approved major disaster declaration and our requests will be prioritized at a higher level,” said spokesman Jodi McGinnis-Porter.

**Washington**

OLYMPIA — Schools in Washington state will remain physically closed for the remainder of the school year while more than 1.2 million public and private K-12 students continue distance learning at least until mid-June due to the coronavirus outbreak, officials said Monday.

Schools have been shut statewide since March 17 and were initially scheduled to reopen April 27. That was extended until June 15 — when the spring term ends — and schools were encouraged to continue distance learning.

The order also asks schools to start planning for a potential expansion of the closures into the summer and fall, though Gov. Jay Inslee said that officials would explore whether it was possible to bring students back for graduation later in the year.

Schools Superintendent Chris Reykdal said that the decision was tough, but the risks of returning students to school too soon were high due to the pandemic.

“A rush back to school puts significant risk in learning continuity that, at this time, would not be better than the model we are developing and advancing at a distance,” he said. “We do not want that curve to suddenly spike up because we acted too quickly to come back.”

**Kansas**

KANSAS CITY — Kansas City Public Schools has suspended its free meal distribution program for students after a food service worker helping with the effort tested positive for COVID-19, district officials said Monday.

The district announced the suspension Monday, the Kansas City Star reported. Officials gave no timeline for when the program might resume, but suggested that families go to the Harvesters Community Food Network website to locate food pantries and mobile distribution sites.

“This was not an easy decision,” district spokesman Ray Weikal said. “We understand that many of our families depend on school meals to help meet the nutritional needs of their children.”

It was the second case of the coronavirus among the district’s food service workers. Weeks ago, a worker who was out of town at the time tested positive.

**Nebraska**

LINCOLN — Two remote Nebraska counties have reported their first cases of the coronavirus, state health officials reported.

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services said in a news release Monday night that Cheyenne County in the Nebraska Panhandle reported a woman in her 20s testing positive for COVID-19. The woman had been in close contact with another infected person, local officials said.

And on the opposite side of the state, in northeastern Nebraska’s Stanton County, a man in his 60s with no underlying health conditions has tested positive for the virus. Officials said that his case originates from ongoing travel, meaning health officials can’t trace the source of the infection.

Both counties are rural and sparsely populated, with about 10,000 people calling Cheyenne County home and little more than 6,000 people in Stanton County.

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**Mississippi**

JACKSON — Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves said Monday that hospitals in the state have about 3,000 beds, and projections show that about 300 more beds will be needed when the state reaches peak of the coronavirus outbreak in the next three weeks.

He said that officials are working on a system to send the sickest patients to larger, better equipped hospitals. He said that smaller, rural hospitals could care for patients who have either not yet reached the most severe part of the illness or are past the most severe part and are recovering.

Reeves also said that a military base in north Mississippi, Camp Shelby, has 200 beds that can be used for less severe patients, and that officials are close to finding a site in north Mississippi that could also be set up with a 200-bed capacity.

Reeves said that he will be more Mississipians who die from this virus.” Reeves said Monday. “It is serious, it is contagious and it can be fatal.”

**Colorado**

DENVER — Colorado Gov. Jared Polis on Monday extended Colorado’s emergency declaration for New Mexico, freeing up funding to supplement the state’s efforts to stockpile hospital beds and protective gear for health care workers even as a new analysis shows that the spread could be slowing sooner.

A new analysis from the University of Colorado Denver indicates that the rate of hospitalizations and intensive care placements — a key indicator of the state’s ability to handle a surge in patients — has been increasing more slowly. Both rose less than 5% over the weekend. It was enough that Newsom felt comfortable leaving him and other officials with several dozen days to prepare for the surge and is a tool for hospitals and health systems preparing for the surge and is a tool for hospitals and health systems preparing for the surge.

New Jersey

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While confirmed cases and deaths continue rising in California, the rate of hospitalizations and intensive care placements — a key indicator of the state’s ability to handle a surge in patients — has been increasing more slowly. Both rose less than 5% over the weekend. It was enough that Newsom felt comfortable leaving him and other officials with several dozen days to prepare for the surge and is a tool for hospitals and health systems preparing for the surge and is a tool for hospitals and health systems preparing for the surge and is a tool for hospitals and health systems preparing for the surge.

Newsom on Monday gave his update on the virus efforts in Sacramento as workers prepared 400 hospital beds. It’s part of a plan to add an extra 60,000 hospital beds and 10,000 ventilators.

A new analysis from the University of Colorado Denver indicates that the rate of hospitalizations and intensive care placements — a key indicator of the state’s ability to handle a surge in patients — has been increasing more slowly. Both rose less than 5% over the weekend. It was enough that Newsom felt comfortable leaving him and other officials with several dozen days to prepare for the surge and is a tool for hospitals and health systems preparing for the surge and is a tool for hospitals and health systems preparing for the surge and is a tool for hospitals and health systems preparing for the surge.

Colin Jones

**Pennsylvania**

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania’s COVID-19 death toll continued to rise on Monday, with an additional 37 deaths, bringing the total number of deaths since the onset of the pandemic to 3,076.

The latest figures from the state Department of Health show a total of 115,088 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the state.

The state also reported 2,428 new cases of COVID-19 on Monday, bringing the total number of cases since the pandemic began to 117,516.

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**Star-Telegram Staff Writer**

The Star-Telegram is a daily newspaper in Fort Worth, Texas, that covers local news and sports.

**Image:** A woman wearing a mask exits a Costco store with her purchases Monday in Lenexa, Kan.

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The Star-Telegram is a daily newspaper in Fort Worth, Texas, that covers local news and sports.
VIRUS OUTBREAK

Videoconferencing calls become hackers new target

BY REGINA GARCIA CANO AND AARON MORRISON
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Ceri Weber had just begun to defend her dissertation when the chaos began. Echoes and voices interrupted her. Someone parroted her words. Then Britney Spears music came on, and someone told Weber to shut up. Someone threatened to rape her.

Hackers had targeted the meeting on the videoconferencing platform Zoom while Weber was completing the final step of her doctoral degree at Duke University. The harassment lasted 10 minutes — the result of an increasingly common form of cyber attack known as “Zoom bombing.”

As tens of millions of people turn to videoconferencing to stay connected during the coronavirus pandemic, many have reported unsolicited guests who make threats, interject racist, anti-gay or anti-Semitic messages, or show pornographic images. The attacks have drawn the attention of the FBI and other law enforcement agencies.

A Massachusetts high school reported that someone interrupted a virtual class on Zoom, yelled profanity and revealed the teacher’s home address. Another school in that state reported a person who accessed a meeting and showed swastika tattoos, according to the FBI.

The agency’s field office in Boston recommended that users of videoteleconference platforms prioritize their security by ensuring that hosts have sole control over screen-sharing features and meeting invitations.

In New York, Attorney General Letitia James sent a letter to Zoom with questions about how users’ privacy and security are being protected. In a separate letter, Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut sought information about how the company handles users’ personal data and guards against security threats and abuse.

In a statement issued last week, the company told The Associated Press it takes the security of meetings seriously and encourages users to report any incidents directly to Zoom. The company suggested that people hosting large, public meetings confirm that they are the only ones who can share their screen and use features like mute controls.

Zoom-bombing was always a threat given how the videoconferencing app was configured — geared more toward user-friendliness than privacy, said Justin Brookman, director of privacy and technology policy at Consumer Reports.

When shelter-at-home mandates suddenly converted Zoom into a lifeline for tens of millions of families, it became a juicy target for mischief, he said.

Death and illness rate among black residents alarms cities

BY KATHLEEN FOODY
Associated Press

CHICAGO — Chicago’s mayor pledged an aggressive public health campaign aimed at the city’s black and brown communities Monday amid alarm that an overheating racism is hurting the city’s response to the virus.

Lightfoot

A new team of city and community representatives will focus on contacting residents who are older than 50 and those considered most vulnerable to the virus because of other health conditions to share information about prevention and resources for those who do become ill.

“We can’t simply stand by and let this disease wreak havoc in our communities,” Lightfoot said. “Lives are truly at stake.”

The city’s public health commissioner also ordered all healthcare providers in the city to collect data on COVID-19 patients’ race and ethnicity, seeking to address existing gaps. The department’s leader, Dr. Allison Arwady, said one-quarter of testing results sent to her agency so far have not included that critical information.

A national civil rights group on Monday said that’s a problem across the country and demanded more transparency on race and ethnicity among the COVID-19 testing results, cases and patient outcomes reported by federal health authorities and state health agencies.
White supremacists from Russia will be hit by US sanctions

By Matthew Lee
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration on Monday designated a Russian white supremacist group as a terrorist entity, prompting it to impose sanctions against its leaders while hitting its members with sanctions.

The move against the Russian Imperial Movement is the first time a white supremacist group has been named a “Specially Designated Global Terrorist” group and comes amid doubts the administration believes extremist organizations of that type merit such sanctions.

It was not immediately clear what the practical impact will be as the group is relatively small and does not have major international reach.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and his counterterrorism coordinator, Nathan Sales, announced the step, which makes it illegal for Americans to engage in any transactions with the group and freezes any assets it may have in U.S. jurisdictions. The penalties can also include a travel ban.

In addition to the group, the administration placed individual sanctions on its leaders — Stanislav Anatolyevich Vorobyev, Dennis Vallidovich Gariev and Nikolay Nikolayevich Trushchalov — by adding them to the list.

“Designations are unprecedented,” Sales said. “This is the first time the United States has ever designated a white supremacist terrorist, illustrating how seriously this administration takes the threat. We are taking actions to prevent the threat of white supremacist terrorism seriously, overseas or domestically.”

The Russian Imperial Movement is the first time the United States has ever designated white supremacist terrorists, illustrating how seriously this administration takes the threat.

The move against the Russian Imperial Movement is the first time the United States has ever designated white supremacist terrorists, illustrating how seriously this administration takes the threat.

The Supreme Court rules for federal employee in age-bias case

By Mark Sherman
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Well, OK, boomer.

The Supreme Court made it easier Monday for federal employees 40 and older to sue for age discrimination.

The justices ruled 8-1 that federal workers have a lower burden to overcome than their counterparts in the private sector. The decision came in the case in which Chief Justice John Roberts, a 65-year-old baby boomer, invoked the “OK, boomer” meme during arguments in January for the first time in high-court records.

The court issued the opinion without taking up any bench time on the third straight week because of the coronavirus. Arguments scheduled for the spring have been postponed indefinitely.

Arguments in the case were up for grabs when the court, in an expansive opinion, said the “probability of success” should be assessed first, saying that age discrimination was part of the process, even if the people who were selected were better qualified, the court held in an opinion by another boomer, 70-year-old Justice Samuel Alito. The ruling came in the case of a Veterans Affairs Department employee who was in her early 50s when she sued for age discrimination after being denied promotions and training opportunities.

The outcome stands in contrast to a 2009 decision in which the court said age discrimination was part of the process, even if the people who were selected were better qualified, the court held in an opinion by another boomer, 70-year-old Justice Samuel Alito. The ruling came in the case of a Veterans Affairs Department employee who was in her early 50s when she sued for age discrimination after being denied promotions and training opportunities.

Some colleges fight to survive due to virus-led financial hit

By Collin Binkley and Jeff Amy
Associated Press

Colleges across the nation are scrambling to close deep budget holes and some have been pushed to the brink of collapse after the coronavirus outbreak triggered financial losses that could total more than $100 million at some institutions.

Scores of colleges say they’re taking heavy hits as they refund money to students for housing, dining and parking after campuses closed last month. Many schools are losing millions more in ticket sales after athletic seasons were cut short, and some say huge shares of their reserves have been wiped out amid wild swings in the stock market.

Yet college leaders say that’s only the start of their troubles: Even if campuses reopen this fall, many worry large numbers of students won’t return. There’s widespread fear that an economic downturn will leave many Americans unable to afford tuition, and universities are forecasting steep drop-offs among international students who may think twice about studying abroad so soon after a pandemic.

“If you play out the scenarios that are out there, it really makes you nervous,” said Mary Papa- zian, president of San Jose State University, which estimates it will lose $16 million by the end of May. “We may be looking at cutting academic programs if it comes to it. We may be looking at laying off people. It’s a dire situation if the worst comes to pass.”

Dozens of colleges have instituted hiring freezes, and many are halting construction projects so they have enough money to pay current expenses. But university presidents say the savings will only stretch so far, and many are asking the federal government for a second stimulus package to avoid deeper cuts.

The $2 trillion rescue bill signed by President Donald Trump last month provides $14 billion for higher education. The American Council on Education, an association of college presidents, had requested $50 billion and called the package “woefully inadequate.”

Even colleges with deep reserves are expecting a painful financial blow from the pandemic. Brown University was among the first to announce a hiring freeze, citing “dramatic reductions in revenue.” Yale University followed on March 31, asking departments to update budgets in preparation of a “significant loss” in revenue.

The University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Wisconsin, Madison, each expect losses of about $100 million and that’s assuming campuses reopen by this fall.

It leaves some colleges wondering if they can meet demand for financial aid, which is expected to surge as millions of Americans lose their jobs.
Eugene Sheffer Crossword

ACROSS
1 Outlet letters 5 Pirate's chart 8 Muscat's land 12 Yuletide tune 13 Tramcar contents 14 Hay unit 15 "Prizzi's Honor" actress Huston 17 Slightly open 18 Despots 19 Geisha's garment 21 Site of Apra Harbor 24 Bando of baseball 25 Jitney 28 Spring 30 WWW access enabler 33 "How dare —!" 34 Styfy sort 35 Bill's partner 36 Montreal summer 37 Painter Magritte 38 Cab 39 Cavias 41 Facts and figures 43 Party snack 46 More skilled 50 "Step —!" 51 St. Peter's, for one 54 Formerly 55 Mode lead-in 56 Preserve 57 Mad king of theater

58 Shriv bark 59 Overconfident

DOWN
1 Body sci. 2 Swindles 3 "Vo!" (Warwick hit) 4 Group of priests 5 Miss Piggy's pronoun 6 Curved line 7 High point 8 44th president 9 Colorful tin-glazed pottery 10 Ark in "Argo" 11 Sleuth Wolfe 16 Baton Rouge sch. 20 Cruise stop 22 Ranch measure 23 Small hill

Answer to Previous Puzzle

CRYPTOQUIP

TRKO KEMOCT SCO FCRiemd S
I E D RCO BORTEH HNOL

BETYRJOCOB. KSLO HNOL'CO

TOSCYNEMD EM JOEM.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF SNAKES WERE BOUND BY CONTRACT TO WORK FOR THEIR SUPERIORS, THEY'D BE INDENTURED SERPENTS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals V
Ax-wielding man arrested after standoff

ARKANSAS CITY  — A man with a long-handled ax was taken into custody after a standoff at a police station in southern Kansas.

Arkansas City Police Chief Dan Ward said that Douglas Gleeves, 38, entered the lobby of the police department Sunday afternoon and hit the interior door of the department's secured area with the ax.

Officers blocked off part of the downtown while members of state and county law enforcement agencies tried to talk to him.

A little more than three hours after the confrontation began, Gleeves left the police station and was subdued with a Taser, KWCH reported. Nobody was hurt, Ward said.

Skiers raise more than $500k for nonprofit

ME WESTBROOK — Skiers and snowboarders in Maine raised more than $500,000 for a nonprofit group that helps to work children enjoy more winter activities.

Organizers said that the WinterKids Downhill 24 collected the most revenue in its history at $562,000. The event took place in early March.

This year’s event attracted 4,000 donors, 49 teams and 491 participants, organizers said. The event is the only annual event that brings night skiing to Sugarloaf Mountain, organizers said.

Organizers said that they’d give $25,000 to Sugarloaf Ski Club’s King’s Kids Fund, which lets local children train in Sugarloaf’s weekend ski and ride programs.

Former church property sold to developer

MA NORTHAMPTON — A former church property in Northampton that has been vacant for 10 years has been sold to a developer who plans to build townhouses on the site, authorities said.

The St. John Cantius Church was sold for $1.6 million to Holyoke-based O’Connell Hawley LLC. The seller was the Roman Catholic Bishop of Springfield, according to land records.

Paperwork filed with the city showed that the developer plans to build 23 units on the property. Each will be two-bedroom units and three stories high, according to a permit application submitted by the developer.

The former parish center, the former rectory and a garage will be demolished to make way for the new development. The church building will remain for now, officials said.

Park’s 150th birthday celebration goes online

CA SAN FRANCISCO — Golden Gate Park turns 150 years old Saturday, and the huge party to celebrate San Francisco’s beloved treasure will, for the time being, take place online.

Playing some quaran-tunes

As neighbor Carys Williams, 7, peeks out of her house, drummer Andrew Northcutt waits as singer Elena Lacayo works on technical issues for their band to livestream a porch concert Sunday in Washington. Elena and Los Fulanos is trying to make some income under coronavirus restrictions by livestreaming concerts and asking for contributions from their viewers. Due to internet issues, they had to move the concert into the living room and successfully livestreamed their music an hour later than scheduled.

Originally, city officials planned a yearlong celebration that included free museum admission, concerts and the participation of more than 150 cultural institutions and community groups. A giant Ferris wheel that lifts passengers 150 feet into the sky was brought in for the occasion. But the spread of the coronavirus forced them to delay the event.

Instead, they launched an online concert series featuring musical sets performed in the park over the years. They include an appearance by Boz Scaggs at the Hardly Strictly Bluegrass festival in 2016 and Metallica’s headlining performance at the Outside Lands festival in 2017.

“Golden Gate Park has served as a place of inspiration, hope and refuge for San Franciscans for 150 years,” Mayor London Breed said in a statement. “We hope these virtual experiences will bring some joy and entertainment during this challenging times.”

Strip clubs sue over raised danger age limit

FL JACKSONVILLE — Adult clubs in one Florida city are suing over a new law that raised the minimum age for strippers from 18 to 21.

The law in Jacksonville was enacted March 5 in a bid to reduce human trafficking. But lawyers for the clubs, including the lead plaintiff Wacko’s, contend in a federal lawsuit that it violates the First Amendment by restricting the ability of performers to dance.

“The Constitution does not permit the deprivation of First Amendment rights based on the age of … citizens who have attained the age of 18,” attorneys Gary Edinger and James Benjimin argued in a complaint filed in the names of 13 businesses and four dancers, two of them under age 21.

The Florida Times-Union reported that after the law was signed, the clubs were prevented from using close to 100 dancers under age 21 during a two-week period, according to the lawsuit.

The 140-page suit noted that people under 21 can hold any other job at those businesses, even own the clubs.

Trooper and driver sent to hospital after fight

MD CHESTERTOWN — A Maryland state trooper and a motorist were treated for injuries following an altercation early Saturday that began when the officer spotted a suspicious vehicle and ended in a vehicle pursuit, a news release said.

Maryland State Police said that the driver, who was later taken into custody, had what appeared to be a gunshot wound to the upper torso.

The suspect was flown to the University of Maryland Shock Trauma center in Baltimore. The trooper, whom officers found lying in a ditch and may have been drugged by the vehicle, was also treated at the center, police said.

Bison euthanized after escape from preserve

TN CROSSVILLE — Four bison, one weighing around 1,800 pounds, that escaped from a private hunting preserve in Tennessee were euthanized after attempts to recapture the animals failed, authorities said.

The small herd broke loose from an enclosed area and had been roaming through an area in Crossville since Monday, The Crossville Chronicle reported.

Cumberland County Sheriff Casey Cox said that off-duty Deputy Roy Kemmer had attempted to help the owner round up the animals, but the bison continued to evade capture.

“(Kemmer) told me that the buffaloes would be grazing and as soon as those trying to recapture them got within 150 yards, the animals would smell their presence, raise their heads and take off,” Cox said.

Researcher believes he has ID’d shipwreck

ME PORTLAND — A researcher believes that he has identified the mysterious shipwreck that appears from time to time in the right conditions on a beach in York.

The ship’s remains, which were last exposed by a nor’easter in 2018, are likely those of the Defiance, a sloop that washed ashore during a violent storm in 1769, said researcher Stefan Claeson, owner of Nearview, an aerial drone and archaeological surveying company.

The Defiance was built in 1754 in Massachusetts, which fits with historical documents and tree-dating conducted by Cornell University, he said.

But, he said, “additional historical research and archaeological investigations are needed to confirm the identification.”

From wire reports
Celebs: Kinda just like us
Famous folks revealing closer glimpses during quarantine

By Mark Kennedy
Associated Press

Portia de Rossi has been teaching herself how to cook during the coronavirus lockdown. It’s been an eye-opening experience for the actress — and for her fans.

She’s cut herself and been burned, yes. She’s also discovered she doesn’t like Indian flavors and that her wife, talk show host Ellen DeGeneres, isn’t a fan of curry and garbanzo beans.

“We’re learning a lot about each other in quarantine,” she wrote.

We are indeed learning a lot about each other these days, and that’s especially true with our celebrities. Social distancing has meant they have no fashion shows, no media appearances, and that their wives, talk show hosts and their others.

“Many, and I think celebrities really understand these days, and that’s especially true with our consumers. They’ve been used to, for last month’s FOX’s iHeart Living Room Concert, they were clad in a onesie and a winter hat, writes

So LuPone leaned into the interest, later making little video tours on Twitter that include her subterranean one-armed bandit, a massage table, men, her desk and a pinball machine. "I have so many beautiful experiences and ways to engage with the public," she said. Series star Simone Missick’s background, CBS said.

Celebrities such as singers (top to bottom) Tim McGraw, Lady Gaga and Lizzo appeared from home, and in much more casual garb than fans are used to, for last month’s FOX’s iHeart Living Room Concert for America.

Celebrities who are able to effectively set aside their fame to help those in need during the coronavirus crisis.

“Hidden Valley Road,” a new television series to return to production since the outbreak of the coronavirus.

Judge Lola Carmichael will virtually preside over a trial that involves an argument between brothers and a stolen car. Footage will be shot in cast members’ homes, with special effects used to create the necessary backgrounds, CBS said.

CBS’ ‘All Rise’ to produce TV episode at a distance

The courtroom drama series “All Rise” is resuming production with an episode reflecting the coronavirus crisis in the lives of its characters, the CBS network said Monday.

The episode will follow social distancing rules and be taped remotely using social media and other digital technology, CBS said. “All Rise,” as with other TV programs and movies, had suspended production because of the pandemic.

“It’s a unique chance for our ‘All Rise’ family to band together — our four-suit homes, even cities — to tell a story about resilience, justice and the power of community,” Greg Spottiswood, the drama’s executive producer said in a statement.

Two-cut shows are back on air with their hosts working remotely, freshman drama “All Rise” appears to be the first series to return to production.

The episode, set to air May 4, will reflect the pandemic’s impact on the justice system, CBS said. Series star Simone Missick’s life, as has been reported in the media April 3 that he had tested positive for COVID-19.

Christopher Cross, John Taylor test positive

Grammy-winning artist Christopher Cross announced on social media April 3 that he had tested positive for COVID-19.

The 68-year-old singer-songwriter, best known for the hits “Sailing” and “Arthur’s Theme,” called the virus “possibly the worst illness I’ve ever had.”

Duran Dusan bassist John Taylor took to Facebook Saturday to announce that he was in recovery from the disease.

From wire reports
Sikhs attacked by terrorists, not just ‘criminals’

By DAWINDER “Dave” S. SIDHU
Special to Stars and Stripes

As the civilized world battles the coronavirus, Islamic State continues to wage war against humanity. The group's presence is not limited to the Middle East or Africa. The world is witnessing a rise in attacks against religious and cultural minorities. Sikhs, a religious minority in the Punjab region of India, have been the target of such attacks.

On March 24, 2020, 150 Sikhs assembled in their place of worship in Kabul, Afghanistan, to pray specifically for God's support during the pandemic. The men, women, and children were killed, and their bodies were left in the grave. This is one of the countless incidents that have led to unending grief and loss for the Sikh community.

In a letter to Stars and Stripes, Robert H. Reid, Mideast Circulation Manager, and Caroline E. Miller, Washington, D.C. Manager, expressed their concern about the situation. "The tragic events in Kabul are a reminder of the ongoing threats faced by the Sikh community," they wrote. "We must continue to support and advocate for the safety and well-being of the Sikh community around the world."
The COVID-19 crisis will worsen when it hits rural areas

BY MICHELLE A. WILLIAMS, BIZU GELAVE AND EMILY M. BROAD LEIB
Special to The Washington Post

The COVID-19 crisis will worsen when it hits rural areas severely ill — or even dying — that they become infected.

Rural areas also already suffer from a rural mortality penalty, with a disparity in mortality rates between urban and rural areas that has been climbing since the 1980s. Chronic financial strain and the erosion of opportunity have contributed to the 1980s. Chronic financial strain and the erosion of opportunity have contributed to severe health care and, Type 2 diabetes and stroke. Add in prolonged social distancing and the economic downturn, and these trends will surely worsen.

Long before the new coronavirus emerged as a threat, America’s rural hospitals were already in dire financial straits. About 1 in 4 are vulnerable to being shuttered, with 120 having closed in the past decade. With the pandemic looming, many of these health systems have been forced to cancel elective procedures and non-urgent services such as physical therapy and lab tests, which in some cases account for half of their revenue. As cash flows wane, the American Hospital Association warns that even more hospitals could be forced to shutter their doors exactly when patients need them most.

Rural counties have just 5,600 intensive care beds total, compared with more than 50,000 in urban counties. In fact, half of U.S. counties do not have any ICU beds. And even if these counties are somehow able to scale up their infrastructure, experts are afraid there will not be enough health care staff to staff them. The time to prepare rural America is now. Fortunately, rural health systems will get some relief from the stimulus bill, which allocated $100 billion to health care providers. But it is critical that we find additional ways to alleviate the burden on these health systems to the greatest extent possible.

One way to do that is by expanding telemedicine capabilities, which will allow millions of Americans to be seen by care providers even if there’s no room for them in hospitals. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services recently issued guidelines that expand access to telemedicine for Americans on Medicare. That directive now includes federally qualified health centers, rural health clinics and hospices, so they, too, can be reimbursed for serving patients remotely. Of course, telemedicine is far from a panacea, as bandwidth access remains limited in so much of rural America. The stimulus included an additional $100 million for rural broadband access, but this will not be enough. In the long term, policymakers must continue to close the “digital divide,” recognizing that internet access is both an economic and health necessity. In the short term, internet service providers should consider rolling out mobile internet units and providing WiFi hotspot access to temporarily increase connectivity.

More importantly, we must expand the social safety net, especially the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, child nutrition programs, Supplemental Security Income, housing assistance and Medicaid. Lawmakers must also ensure the availability of these programs to rural residents. For example, unlike their urban counterparts, many rural children cannot come to schools each day to pick up meals. The Agriculture Department launched a pilot program to deliver meals to rural children, but in many cases parents cannot be docking a floating hospital in Nuckolls County, Neb. But if what’s happened in America’s coastal cities can teach us anything, it’s that the coming weeks will determine the trajectory of this virus. And we don’t have a moment to waste.

Michelle A. Williams is dean of the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Bizu Gelave is an assistant professor at Harvard and Massachusetts General Hospital. Emily M. Broad Leib is an attorney, law professor, director of the Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic, and deputy director of the Harvard Law School Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation.
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US alleges bribes in World Cup votes

BY RONALD BLUM
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Prosecutors revealed new details of alleged bribes paid to FIFA executive committee members to gain three votes for Qatar to host the 2022 World Cup and charged a pair of former 21st Century Fox executives with using illegal payments to win broadcast rights for the 2018 and 2022 tournaments.

The allegations, which take place in U.S. District Court in Brooklyn, come just days after former 21st Century Fox executives Alejandro Burzaco, former head of the marketing company Tornos y Competencias, testified in the case. In 2017 that all three South American governing bodies — CONMEBOL, the umbrella body for CONMEBOL officials to obtain broadcast rights bidding information from a co-conspirator whose identity was not revealed.

ESPAN had U.S. English-language television rights to the World Cup from 1994-2014, but Fox regained the rights for the 2018 and 2022 tournaments. After the 2012 tournament in Qatar was moved to late autumn, a time when it is likely to get less attention in the U.S., FIFA awarded Fox rights for 2026 without competitive bidding.

Also charged in the indictment are former Imagina Media Audiovisual executive Alejandro Burzaco, former head of the marketing company Tornos y Competencias, testified in the case. In 2017 that all three South American governing bodies — CONMEBOL, the umbrella body for CONMEBOL officials to obtain broadcast rights bidding information from a co-conspirator whose identity was not revealed.

Burzaco and Alejandro Leoz, who died last August, avoided extradition, as have War- ner and Teixeira. Salguero pleaded guilty in 2018 to two counts of wire fraud conspiracy and one count each of racketeering conspiracy and money laundering conspiracy.

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Potential playoff foes are concern of NBA coaches

By Kyle Hightower

NBA scoreboard

The Philadelphia Flyers’ Tyler Pitlick, left, tries to jump past the Pittsburgh Penguins’ Jack Johnson during a Jan. 21 game in Philadelphia. It’s unclear when or if the coronavirus pandemic-delayed NHL playoffs — which were supposed to begin Wednesday — will be played or what form they’ll resemble.

NHL playoff solutions are all over the ice, for now

By John Wawrow and Stephen Whyno

The idea is many, from a shortened version of the remaining schedule played without fans to the very real possibility of jumping straight into the playoffs to ensure a season is completed before the NBA or the rest of the sports world.

Guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advise against large gatherings make the calendar a major factor in how the league could resume its season.

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Rutherford is concerned. “Whoever wins it, it is going to feel the same whenever they win it, on whatever day they win it, as it would winning it normally in the middle of June,” he said.

The latest the Cup has ever been awarded is June 24, in 1995 — but not lost on Oilers captain Connor McDavid. Edmonton faces the prospect of opening the playoffs against Calgary — a rivalry that featured several penalty-filled regular-season matchups.

“I don’t think you can just step into the playoffs, Game 1, have Calgary come to Edmonton and guys just run around and kill each other and haven’t played a game in two months,” McDavid said.

Flames captain Mark Giordano noted the playoffs would be additionally competitive because teams would face healthier rosters, given the amount of time players have had to recover.

And don’t forget the goals. “You can train and practice and stuff, but when you get to camp, I find the NHL shot and speed of the game is something you have to catch up on,” Vegas goaltender Marc-Andre Fleury said.

With NBA games indefinitely on hold, there has been a lot of discussion about postseason possibilities — including by coaches around the league.

They’re preparing for what a resumption of the season that was shut down March 11 could look like in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

Toronto coach Nick Nurse said he’s trying to prepare for every possibility that would allow the Raptors a chance to defend their title. “We’re ready for whatever is thrown at us,” Nurse said. “What matters is that we attack the title in whatever format it’s going to be presented in and we go for it.”

No one knows what will be thrown at the NBA or the rest of the sports world.

“The coaches were started in on that already and they’ll continue on that. The only difference is there’s no real one-one-one time with me yet. They’ll probably just have to send me the rules and then I’ll just have to watch them and talk to them on the phone.”

If the NBA resumes the season with the start of the postseason, Nurse and Toronto would be the No. 2 seed in the East and would host No. 7 Brooklyn. Other matchups would be: No. 1 Milwaukee vs. No. 8 Orlando, No. 3 Boston vs No. 6 Philadelphia; and No. 4 Miami vs No. 5 Indiana.

In the West, No. 1 L.A. Lakers vs No. 8 Memphis; No. 2 L.A. Clippers vs. No. 7 Dallas; No. 3 Denver vs. No. 6 Houston; No. 4 Utah vs No. 5 Oklahoma City.

Agreed as the matchups look on paper, the play could be sloppy.

Celtics center Enes Kanter estimated it would take at least two to three weeks for players to get their bodies in game shape. Part of the reason, he said, is the time players have had away from the court.

Kanter believes a training camp-like period would probably be needed. “You can’t just say ‘OK, we’re going to play the games a week in. Some players are doing some things. Some players are in their apartments doing nothing,” Kanter said during a conference call. “We need to make sure everyone is doing their stuff and is in good shape to go out there and compete if we jump straight into playoffs.”

Kanter said a training camp setting would also help players re-focus. He said while he’s staying in shape, he’s also spending time reading, watching documentaries and teaching himself to cook and play the piano.

Time is not the NBA’s friend. Tuesday marked the 27th day of the shutdown, a stoppage that has already cost the league more than 100 games.

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By Barry Wilner
Associated Press

Von Miller had to catch his breath after finding out he got the nod for the 2010s All-Decade Team.

Miller, Tom Brady, J.J. Watt and Adrian Peterson are among eight unanimous selections to the 2010s NFL All-Decade Team announced Monday by the NFL and the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

"I never dreamed about making the All-Decade Team," Miller said. "You think about Super Bowls ... but this is such an honor that's so hard to get that you don't really even think about it. It's incredible to be here. It's incredible to achieve this honor!"

Aaron Donald, Joe Thomas, Marshel Yanda and Justin Tucker also are on every ballot of the 48-member Hall of Fame selection committee. All but tackle Yanda and guard Yanda are active.

The 53-member team is comprised only of players who made an AP All-Pro team, a Pro Bowl or a Pro Football Writers of America all-conference squad from 2010-19. Four of the unanimous players — Brady, Miller, Yanda and Tucker — won Super Bowls during the decade.

"Being elected unanimously is really, really cool," said Tucker, who has worked with the same long snapper and holder since breaking into the NFL in 2012.

"There's kind of a lot going on in the world right now, so it's hard to be super excited about stuff that happens in the football world, but it is still an incredible honor."

"It's something that I wouldn't have had a chance at if it wasn't for all the great people around me. It starts with (long snapper) Morgan Cox and (holder) Sam Koch on the field and includes (kicking consultant) Randy Brown, (former special teams coach) Jerry Rosburg, (current special teams coach) Chris Horton, coach (John) Harbaugh. They provide an environment for us as a special teams unit to thrive.

"Seattle has the most honorees with five: linebacker Bobby Wagner, safety Earl Thomas, corner Eric Berry. Selected as defensive backs, while the kickoff returners are still amazing. To get this honor is something that I wouldn't have dreamed of.

Tucker is joined by Stephen Gostkowski as placemakers. Shane Lechler and Johnny Hekker are the punters. Tyreek Hill and Sproles are the punt returners, while the kickoff returners are Cordarelle Patterson and Devin Hester.

Carroll and Bill Belichick are the coaches.

Harris Jr., and Tyrann Mathieu.

"Honored to be named to the All-Decade team among this group of extraordinary men. I can't & won't speak for everyone on this list. But I know personally that each name on this team (& others who deserve to be) drove me to be better every single day!"

Patrick Peterson tweeted.

Harris and former teammate Miller — Harris left the Broncos for the Chargers this offseason — both entered the NFL in 2011. Now they are together on the All-Decade squad.

"It's an honor and a great feeling to make the All-Decade Team with Von," said Harris, who was an undrafted free agent in 2011. "He's definitely worked extremely hard to get it. We came into the league together and he's one of those staple guys who have been great from the moment they stepped onto the football field and are still amazing. To get this honor with Von is a great feeling."

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Ideas are still in the early stage, and the Arizona option would have many obstacles to overcome, the people said.

“MLB has been actively considering numerous contingency plans that would allow play to commence once the public health situation has improved to the point that it is safe to do so,” the commissioner’s office said in a statement Tuesday. “While we have discussed the idea of staging games at one location as one potential option, we have not settled on that option or developed a detailed plan.”

Baseball officials intend to study which options may be viable.

“While we continue to interact regularly with governmental and public health officials, we have not sought or received approval of any plan from federal, state and local officials, or the players’ association,” MLB said. “We are not ready at this time

**TO OUR READERS**

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.