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“While I applaud the measures that have been taken, I feel more can and should be done,” said Radcliffe, a Marine veteran who is awaiting the birth of her second child. “All appropriate measures to stop transmission should be taken. The military is not exempt from this.”

The safety concerns as the virus spreads highlight the Pentagon’s challenges in preparing for the pandemic as calls grow louder for it to take a greater role in the U.S. response.

U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class DeMarcus Baldwin takes a sailor’s temperature Saturday aboard U.S. 7th Fleet flagship USS Blue Ridge in the Philippine Sea. The Blue Ridge is one of the ships that has received medical teams equipped with test kits to combat the spreading coronavirus, according to the 7th Fleet.

ERIK RIVERA JR. / U.S. Navy

VIRUS OUTBREAK

U.S. Navy sends medical teams to test for virus aboard ships

Page 4

VIGILANCE AT SEA

Navy sends medical teams to test for virus aboard ships

Page 4

Amid pandemic, US troops and their families ask what’s next

BY DAN LAMOTHE

The Washington Post

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A defense contractor who tested positive for the virus and worked at the Defense Security

STAFF COVERAGE: Tokyo wants cherry blossom viewers to keep it moving during outbreak

Page 7

Army in Stuttgart mass-testing people without symptoms in bid to prevent virus spread

Page 6

USNS Mercy deployed to Port of Los Angeles to begin mission to help during pandemic

Page 4

SEE PANDEMIC ON PAGE 8
BUSINESS/WEATHER

US futures, world shares sink as crisis deepens

BY ELAINE KURTENBACH
Associated Press

BANGKOK — U.S. futures slipped more than 3% on Monday and share benchmarks in many world markets had sharp losses as governments tightened restrictions to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

Stocks fell in Paris, Frankfurt and London after a brutal session in Asia on Monday.

Japan’s Nikkei 225 index was the outlier, gaining 2% after the White House continued after the Senate voted against advancing a nearly $2 trillion economic rescue package. Another vote was expected Monday.

Democrats said the bill was tilted too much toward aiding corporations and would not do enough to help individuals and health care providers weather the crisis brought on by the pandemic.

By 4:45 a.m. EST, the S&P 500 future contract was down 3.4% at 2,209.70. The future for the Dow Jones industrial average fell 3.6% to 18,431.00.

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"Stars and Stripes" is a daily newspaper published by the U.S. military in non-U.S. areas.

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The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

EXCHANGE RATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Currency</th>
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<tr>
<td>Swiss franc</td>
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<tr>
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Pompeo makes surprise visit to Afghanistan

By Phillip Walter Wellman
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Secretary of State Mike Pompeo made a surprise visit to Kabul on Monday to try to salvage the 3-week-old deal between the U.S. and the Taliban, which has faltered amid disagreements over presidential election results and a prisoner release, and could be further delayed by the coronavirus pandemic.

Pompeo’s visit, which came despite a State Department warning against all international travel because of the coronavirus, underscored the urgency the U.S. places on advancing the peace process, which could see all American troops withdraw from Afghanistan by May.

Pompeo held talks with President Ashraf Ghani and his main political rival Abdullah Abdullah to try to end their standoff over who won last year’s presidential election. The claim by both men that they won has been partly responsible for delaying the start of talks between the government and the Taliban, officials from both sides said.

Pompeo left Afghanistan the same day, the Associated Press reported. There was no immediate announcement that a power sharing agreement had been reached.

Talks between the government and the Taliban are a key precondition for the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan in the deal signed by the U.S. and Taliban on Feb. 29 in Qatar. A phased drawdown that began this month will be completed within 14 months, provided all sides fulfill their commitments under the U.S.-Taliban deal.

Among those commitments was for intra-Afghan talks to begin on March 10 and, prior to that date, for the Taliban to release up to 1,000 detainees and the government up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners.

On Saturday, the Taliban rejected the offer, saying that only 400 of their fighters will be released at once.

On Sunday, the Taliban and government moved ahead on prisoner release when they held the first “technical talks” on the issue, via Skype video conferencing, U.S. special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad said on Twitter.

The virtual talks, which were facilitated by the U.S. and Qatar, lasted more than two hours and were “important, serious and detailed,” Khalilzad said. A follow-up meeting was expected to be held in the next two days, Khalilzad said.

The meeting “solely centered on prisoner release … other issues will be dealt with during the intra-Afghan negotiations,” Taliban spokesman Suhail Shaheen said on Twitter.

The coronavirus led to the talks being held via Skype, The New York Times reported.

As of Monday, there were 42 confirmed coronavirus cases in Afghanistan and one person had died after contracting the virus, the health ministry said.

Not only could the number of cases in Afghanistan rise sharply in the coming weeks, but it’s also unlikely that planned intra-Afghan talks will be able to start in Europe any time soon because of the virus.

The World Health Organization has said the continent is the epicenter of the global pandemic and many European countries have closed their borders to try to stem the spread of the virus.

The U.S.-led NATO mission in Afghanistan last week announced it was halting deployments to the country and that some troops currently in Afghanistan might have their deployments extended because of the coronavirus pandemic.

So far, no coalition member has tested positive for the virus, a Resolute Support spokesman said.

Zubair Babakarkhail contributed to this report.
Navy teams batch test on 7th Fleet ships

BY CHRISTIAN LOPEZ
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Pentagon on March 17, for example, are tested, especially in the United States.

Since January, military community cases near 250, prompting new measures in the United States had tested positive for the virus.

The defense contractor’s death was announced Sunday. He had been hospitalized since March 10 with symptoms consistent with the fast-spreading virus.

The precautions include going to minimal social interactions, according to the statement.

The military teams are only looking for people who have been infected without symptoms, the Joint Service Provider, which supplies conducting test samples in a BioFire Film RT-PCR System, which allows the team to perform more comprehensive coronavirus tests at sea.

The medical teams are only looking for the presence of coronavirus on board those ships.

The military community cases near 250, prompting new measures

BY COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Cases of coronavirus in the military community neared 250 worldwide, including in the United States, Pentagon officials said Monday.

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So you’re stationed overseas and it’s an election year...

This handy flowchart on absentee voting lays it all out.

**DO YOU WANT TO VOTE IN U.S. ELECTIONS?**

- **YES**
  - Have you registered to vote absentee and requested your ballot?
    - **YES**
      - Good job! Have you received your ballot yet?
        - **YES**
          - You're on track. Have you filled out your ballot and sent it in?
            - **YES**
              - If you know someone who wants to vote, share this with them!
            - **NO**
              - Great! Have you checked that your ballot arrived?
                - **NO**
                  - Send it in like your regular ballot.
                - **YES**
                  - PRO TIP
                    - If your regular ballot arrives, fill that out and send it in too. Don’t worry; only one ballot will be counted.
          - **NO**
            - If you haven’t received your state ballot in time to vote, use the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) as a backup ballot. Get it at FVAP.gov.
    - **NO**
      - If you haven’t received your state ballot in time to vote, use the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB) as a backup ballot. Get it at FVAP.gov.

- **NO**
  - If you know someone who wants to vote, share this with them!

**PRO TIP**

Don’t miss your vote-by-date! Send in your ballot by **October 13** if you’re overseas or **October 27** if you’re stateside. If you don’t have access to Military Postal Service, send it by **October 5.**

**FVAP.gov**

**FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**
Ramstein keeps flying amid crisis

By Brian Ferguson and Jennifer H. Stain
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — The main base in the largest overseas U.S. military community has reduced flight operations, shuttered base services and canceled group official functions as it tries to keep the coronavirus at bay.

At Ramstein Air Base, while screening measures — for the most part, medical personnel taking temperatures and asking people if they’re feeling sick — have rapidly increased, testing has not.

Medical workers have screened hundreds at the clinic and the passenger terminal for the virus, placing the total of confirmed cases at five among the roughly 11,000 personnel assigned to Ramstein Air Base. Of those screened, the base had tested 12 people and placed 50 in quarantine or isolation as of Monday, base officials said.

Two civilian employees and two dependents of active-duty airmen at Ramstein have tested positive for the virus, placing the total of confirmed cases at five among the roughly 54,000 in the U.S. military community living in the Kaiserslautern area.

Ramstein is generally testing only those who show symptoms, which include a fever in combination with a cough or trouble breathing, in line with U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance. The guidance continues despite concern over the spread of the virus by asymptomatic carriers, though U.S. health officials say data on that remains preliminary.

At U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart, which had 31 confirmed infections by Monday, more than any other overseas military area, testing for asymptomatic people paused after two days due to limited supplies.

Without a fever or lower respiratory symptoms, it’s unlikely someone will need a test, said Lt. Col. Tracy Bozung, the installation’s public health emergency officer.

“It depends on how prevalent this becomes and in what communities it’s prevalent,” she said.

Tests can yield false results, “because your viral load has to get to a certain level before the test pops positive,” Bozung said. Because of that, a negative test could end up falsely reassuring people without symptoms, she said.

For airmen in mission-critical jobs, such as health care workers, there can be “a lower trigger threshold for testing,” Bozung said. “It’s a balance,” she said, “because we’ve still got a mission to do.”

The 86th Airlift Wing has adjusted to comply with guidance and regulations from each country that has been affected by the pandemic, wing commander Brig. Gen. Mark K. August said.

Flight operations have slowed down and many people are staying home, he said, but mission-essential functions such as air traffic control, aerial port, aircraft maintenance and flight operations are operating.

“We’ve got to keep the installation open,” the commander said.

The base has planned for different scenarios, from if an airman contracts the virus to one with 100 on-base coronavirus cases, August said.

The base last week set up a COVID-19 hotline and screening center, which is averaging about 80 calls a day. When airmen and their families show up at the base’s medical clinic, they’re asked questions like whether they have a cough, a fever or trouble breathing.

Everyone gets their temperature taken and are urged to stay home if they’re feeling sick or have symptoms.

“From my perspective, (the virus) is pretty much everywhere,” he said.

A testing center was set up at the Exchange on Panzer Kaserne over the weekend and 250 test samples were taken, Col. Jason Condrey said in an announcement Sunday.

“In order to get ahead of the virus, we need to look in every workspace, in every stairwell apartment within our family housing, and look at our work,” Condrey said.

More testing, along with strict adherence to social distancing — as the military tried a new strategy to stem the spread of the virus, which is more confirmed cases than any other military area overseas.

The virus has been diagnosed in roughly 60 personnel at U.S. bases in Europe.

As results from the first batch of tests come in, the garrison expects to better understand the scope of the problem, Condrey said.

“Asymptomatic people — there’s lots of them,” he said.

Asymptomatic people, she said, are “part of the same household, and closure of international airport, is unusual among garrisons in Europe, which are typically in smaller towns.

Further, there’s been a lack of high-quality tests, with the military searching for more.

Military health officials are discussing whether to add labs in Europe to analyze coronavirus tests, which could speed up the time it takes to determine if someone has the virus. It’s not known how soon more test sites could be added, LRMC’s Col. Randall Freeman told Stars and Stripes.

As of Friday, LRMC had processed about 550 total coronavirus tests and was averaging roughly 40 test analyses per day, hospital officials said. The recent arrival of new processing equipment has allowed the hospital to increase the test rate more than tenfold to 435 daily.

More testing, along with strict adherence to social distancing — keeping at least six feet away from anyone other than family members or close friends — is key, he said.

Since the coronavirus outbreak reached Europe in late January, testing within the U.S. military community on the Continent has largely been restricted to those with symptoms, people who had recently traveled to an area where the virus was known to be circulating — such as Wuhan in China, where it began — or who had come in contact with an infected person.

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Army restarting limited virus testing in Stuttgart

By John Vander
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — Coronavirus testing at the Army garrison here briefly expanded to include asymptomatic people who live in on-base apartment buildings, work in customer service, or, as the military tried a new strategy to stem the spread of the virus, officials said.

For the effort, launched over the weekend, was curtailed two days after it began because of a lack of test kits, officials hope to restart limited testing Tuesday.

“The big concern because there’s the potential you can overwhelm the system,” garrison commander Col. Jason Condrey said in an interview Monday.

Thirty-one people in the Stuttgart military community have tested positive for the virus, placing the total of confirmed cases at five.

“We've had a change in how we do testing to those without symptoms to reduce the spread of the virus by people who are infected but show no signs of illness,” Condrey said.

Testing asymptomatic people doesn’t mean everyone on post can get screened, Condrey said.

“We have a change in how we do testing that makes this possible, but even with that change, we don’t have enough test kits to test everyone,” he said.

Instead, the Stuttgart garrison health team is targeting certain areas on post to get as comprehensive a sampling as possible, Condrey said, adding that the best way to keep the virus from spreading was to practice social distancing.

Condrey said the ability to expand testing was the result of guidance from U.S. Army Europe boss Lt. Gen. Christopher Cavoli, which has given local commanders more flexibility.

A drive-thru screening site next to the health clinic at Stuttgart’s Patch Barracks will continue to test people with symptoms that could indicate coronavirus. Other military facilities across Europe have set up similar sites. 
**VIRUS OUTBREAK**

**By Hana Kusumoto**  
Stars and Stripes

**Tokyo tells cherry blossom viewers to keep it moving**

TOKYO — The Tokyo Metropolitan Government is cautioning visitors to city parks to set aside tradition to avoid the threat of coronavirus as they enjoy the iconic, seasonal Japanese cherry blossoms.

Nonetheless, throngs of visitors gathered beneath the cherry blossoms in Tokyo city parks over the weekend. Of those that turned up Sunday in Ueno Park, where more than 3 million took part in cherry blossom season last year, many came wearing surgical-style face masks.

The advent of sakura, or cherry blossoms, came early this year, on March 14, thanks to temperatures more like May than March, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency. The blooms’ peak occurred Sunday.

In early March, the Tokyo government called on visitors to refrain from having hanami picnics in city parks to combat the spread of coronavirus. Hanami is Japanese for flower viewing, a pastime tied to cherry blossoms, coming early this year,

A sign asks visitors to Ueno Park in Tokyo to “refrain from putting out picnic sheets and having parties where you eat and drink in groups during the cherry blossom season.”

People stroll Monday near the Meguro River in central Tokyo to see the cherry blossoms.

AARON KIDD/Stars and Stripes

**Washington trying to keep crowds away from blossoms**

WASHINGTON — As signature cherry blossom trees go through peak bloom in the nation’s capital, officials in the District of Columbia are resorting to mass street closures to keep large crowds away in the face of the coronavirus pandemic.

Public officials are publicly pleading for low turnout and one prominent local chef has launched the #StayHomeCherryBlossomsChallenge to make low visitation numbers into some sort of community goal. Health officials have said limiting public gatherings and keeping a distance of about 6 feet from others would help stop the spread of the disease which has sickened more than 250,000 worldwide.

The Metropolitan Police Department closed a dozen streets, bridges and traffic circles Sunday morning trying to limit the traditional crowds who pack the area around the Jefferson Memorial and the tree-lined Tidal Basin. The iconic cherry blossoms reached peak bloom Friday and should last that way for about 10 days.

“It’s getting weirder and weirder,” said Brian Litterst, National Park Service spokesman Mike Litterst of his unprecedented challenge to keep one of Washington’s crown jewels as empty as possible.

The crowds, Litterst said, have already been “a fraction of what we would see in a normal spring.” Friday’s crowd was manageable he said, Saturday brought a surge in visitors that convinced authorities to take extraordinary steps. It appeared to be working: At the Tidal Basin on Sunday, visitors wandered in small clusters of three or four instead of larger groups.

She declared a state of emergency and closed all schools through the end of April. D.C.-based celebrity chef and philanthropist Jose Andres took to Twitter to plead for community compliance in avoiding the Tidal Basin. Under the hashtag #StayHomeCherryBlossomsChallenge, Andres pledged to “cook a huge Paella for thousands of Washingtonians” next year if they kept the number down.
**VIRUS OUTBREAK**

**Ramstein, Aviano airmen provide Italy with support**

**By Kent Harris**

**Stars and Stripes**

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — The U.S. military is assisting Italy’s coronavirus response by providing a modular unit capable of helping medical workers treat up to 40 patients a day, Air Force officials said Monday.

A C-130-J transport plane from the 436th Airlift Wing at Ramstein Air Base in Germany delivered five pallets of material to Aviano on Friday night containing medical supplies for 22 days, 10 beds and two tents, said Maj. Sarah Babcock, 31st Fighter Wing spokeswoman.

The En-Route Patient Staging System is meant for treating patients and not for coronavirus testing, Babcock said.

No personnel have been assigned to accompany the supplies, Babcock said.

“We're just waiting to turn it over to the Italians,” she said, referring questions about its intended use to the Italian Defense Ministry, who were not immediately available for comment Monday.

Aviano is ready to serve as a staging area for more supplies if needed, Babcock said.

“It's evidence this airfield and us being mission-ready is so important,” she said. “So supplies like this can come in. We’re always ready to support our partners during these challenging times.”

Elsewhere in Italy, the 405th Army Field Support Battalion-Africa is gathering supplies at Camp Darby, said Jim Brooks, spokesman for U.S. Army Garrison Vicenza.

It's the second recent notable exchange between the two NATO allies, who are both confronted by tens of thousands of people who have tested positive for COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus.

The Associated Press quoted officials as saying Monday that Italy recorded a smaller day-to-day increase in new coronavirus cases for a second straight day.

Data released by Italy’s Civil Protection agency on Monday showed 4,789 new cases, nearly 700 fewer than the day-to-day increase of 5,560 new cases reported Sunday. The Johns Hopkins coronavirus resource center reported that as of Monday, there are 63,927 confirmed cases and 6,077 deaths in Italy.

Meanwhile, the U.S. turned to Italy last week for help in alleviating shortages of the nasal swabs used to test for coronavirus.

The U.S. Air Force C-17a transported 1 million testing swabs from Aviano to Memphis, Tenn.

**Pandemic: DOD pushes back on setting quarantine measures for military**

FROM FRONT PAGE

Cooperation Agency died on Saturday, the Pentagon said. That marks the first Pentagon official to die from the virus.

The defense department death associated with COVID-19.

While President Donald Trump has fashioned himself in recent days as a “wartime president” battling a new threat, defense officials warn that there are limitations to what the military can do as it safeguards national security and tries to protect 1 million-plus service members from the virus.

“It is at the end of the day a political and social issue, we have to pull everything we have as far as the resources as much as we can, and we have to be ready,” said Kathleen H. Hicks, a senior vice president at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

About 7,300 National Guardsmen spread across all 50 states, three territories and the District of Columbia have been activated so far, military officials said in a statement Sunday. They are performing tasks that range from helping others how to wear protective equipment to flying testing swabs from Italy. Tens of thousands of guardsmen eventually could be called upon, officials say, a major commitment for a force whose members usually have civilian jobs.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper said the department will make its laboratories available to test civilians, and senior Army officials have said they have a plan in place to increase testing capacity from 810 samples per day to more than 16,000. But the timeline for doing so is not yet clear, said Lt. Gen. Scott Dingle, the Army’s surgeon general.

The Navy’s two hospital ships, the USNS Mercy and USNS Comfort, are being prepared for deployments in the coming days, Trump announced last week. But neither is designed to handle virus patients because of their open floor plans, so the military has offered to treat other illnesses and injuries to free up bed space in civilian hospitals.

The military will make available 5 million N95 respirator masks and 2,000 ventilators from its strategic reserves. But that amounts to a small percentage of the equipment needed in a fight for which experts have said a few billion respirators could be required. Defense officials have not said whether more are available.

The commanding general of the Army Corps of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Todd Seesimon, detailed an ambitious plan to convert hotels, dormitories and facilities into makeshift hospitals in New York and other cities where there is need, relying on money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Amid the planning, senior defense officials have sought to stamp out unsubstantiated rumors on social media that the Trump administration could federalize the National Guard, effectively taking over control from governors, to enforce lockdowns or quarantines.

“I hear unfounded rumors about #NationalGuard troops supporting a nationwide quarantine,” Gen. Joseph L. Lengyel, chief of the National Guard Bureau, tweeted Friday. “Let me be clear: There has been no such discussion.”

Meanwhile, the number of coronavirus cases in the military continues to rise.

“Senior defense officials have unveiled a cascading series of new protective measures, including an announcement on Friday that the Army will close all recruiting stations and rely solely on “virtual recruiting” online.

Senior defense officials also suspended nearly all nonessential travel for eight weeks beginning March 13, limited access to its military installations and even relaxed grooming standards for sailors so they do not need haircuts as frequently.

US. Central Command, which oversees operations in the Middle East, announced Friday a new 14-day quarantine for all troops before they deploy to protect forces already in the region.

But other protective steps have been scuttled, at least for now.

A Defense Department employee who worked in the Camp Lejeune area, speaking on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue, said many contractors and civilian employees continue to report to work, operating flight simulators in close quarters with Marines and performing other tasks.

A military planning document obtained by The Washington Post shows that senior Army and Navy officials discussed stopping the training of all recruits, but the Pentagon rejected the idea last week, citing concerns about detrimental effects to the military.

“We operate our training facilities year-round to keep up with our need to recruit new military members,” said Hoffman, the chief Pentagon spokesman. “Shutting down training for an extended period could cause a gap in our personnel pipeline that would take time to clear.”

Senior defense officials have declined to issue a blanket prohibition on commanders convening large groups of soldiers, despite reports that such activities continue. One Army officer, who also spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue, said a commander gathered 70 soldiers in a room at Fort Bragg, N.C., on Tuesday and told them that social distancing applies to social gatherings and not anything related to work.

Esper, asked about whether he would ban the gatherings, said the “short answer is no.”

“My view is the commanders have the authorities they need to take whatever precautions...” he said.

Hoffman said Friday evening that the defense secretary “is not going to second guess” those commanders.

“One of the realities of the military is that there is not a lot of room for social distancing in a missile silo, a B-2 cockpit or some other mission-critical situations, but we balance risk with our national security mission demands.”

Pentagon officials have had frequent conversations in recent days with U.S. military officials in South Korea, where the virus struck in January. The Defense Department has said the response there — which included close coordination with South Korean officials and a robust attempt to speak to service members and families — is a model for other senior commanders.
VIRUS OUTBREAK

Chaos marks launch of drive-thru testing sites

By Michelle R. Smith
Associated Press

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Drive-thru sites have been springing up around the United States to make it quicker and safer to test people for COVID-19. But much like the rest of the U.S. response to the pandemic, the system has been marred by inconsistencies, delays and shortages.

Many people who have symptoms and a doctor's order have waited hours or days for a test.

More than a week after President Donald Trump promised that states and retail stores such as Walmart and CVS would open drive-thru test centers, few sites are up and running, and the few that are not yet open to the general public.

Some states are leaving it to the private sector to open test locations. Others are coordinating the effort through state health departments.

Patients have complained that they had to jump through cumbersome bureaucratic hoops and wait days to get a test, even longer for a result. Testing centers opened in some places only to be shut down the next day because of shortages of supplies and staff. And while the drive-thru test centers that have opened are generally orderly, there have been long lines at some.

The slow ramp-up of the COVID-19 testing and the spotty nature of the system makes it hard for public health officials to track the spread of the disease and bring it under control.

"We need to be testing more broadly," Rhode Island Health Department Commissioner Dr. Brett Giroir, the federal health official tasked with overseeing testing, said at a White House coronavirus task force briefing last week. "I think what we're trying to do is to get a handle on the scope of the public health situation we are facing," said Joseph Wendelken, a spokesman for the Rhode Island Department of Health.

"This is our unfortunate reality this world that will look at this epidemic as an opportunity," the official said.

The vast network of drive-thru sites and retail chains that Trump said more than a week ago was coming has so far failed to materialize. CVS has opened one site in Massachusetts, which it calls "a model for testing." Walmart launched two sites Sunday and Walgreens said it’s launching one, all three in Illinois. Only health care workers and first responders are allowed, and Walmart said that a maximum 150 tests per day could be performed at its federal sites.

The patchwork of approaches has caused confusion for patients. Caroline Mauldin was ordered to get a test by her doctor in Charleston, S.C., on Tuesday after experiencing aches and chills for several days.

To get an appointment at a drive-thru site at a medical center, she had to fill out a lengthy online questionnaire and spent two days calling a number that rolled to voicemail and wouldn't take messages.

She resorted to tweeting at the hospital several times just to move things forward.

On Thursday, she finally got an appointment for Monday. She was told that the results would not come back until four to five days after that. The visit will cost her $25, she said. Complicating matters, she doesn't have a car and has to borrow one from a friend.

"We have a lot of elderly, low-income people here who don't have access to the internet and who don't have access to transportation. And given that they’re the highest risk population, how are we getting tests to them?" she asked.

Justice Department brings first fraud case stemming from epidemic

By Matt Zapotosky
The Washington Post

The U.S. Justice Department this weekend brought its first case of alleged fraud stemming from the coronavirus crisis, convincing a federal judge to issue a restraining order to block a website claimed to be distributing vaccines.

In court documents, the department said that the operator of coronavirusmedicalkit.com was facilitating a wire-fraud scheme, "intentionally making false statements" about the vaccines, which do not exist.

The website falsely claims that the World Health Organization is giving away free vaccine kits and that individuals who visit the website can order such a kit by paying $4.95 for shipping," the Justice Department wrote. "The

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India halts vital train network to curb spread

Associated Press

NEW DELHI — As India expanded its virus-containment measures and halted its train network, the country’s livelihood, the federal government warned Monday of strict legal action for those who flout the rules.

"Please save yourself, save your family," Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted in Hindi, calling for states to follow the preventive measures issued by the federal government to contain the spread of the virus.

The strict legal action vowed wasn’t immediately clear. Other places have simply sent violators home since alternatives like detention would create crowded conditions where the virus could spread.

To contain the outbreak, authorities have gradually started to lockdown many of the country of 1.3 billion people, sending stock markets to record lows. Parliament adjourned its session, and India’s civil aviation authority banned all commercial flights within India starting Wednesday. International flights were kept from landing from Sunday until at least March 31.

At least 80 districts where cases of infection have been detected are under stringent lockdown. Police and healthcare were operating, but commercial establishments have closed except for essential services. Banks have asked their customers to switch to online transactions and reduced staff.

The government has fervently appealed for people to practice social distancing and wash their hands often.

But Modi’s call for a 14-hour curfew on Sunday was the first nationwide effort to enforce social isolation practices the World Health Organization believes are critical to slowing the outbreak to a level that doesn’t overwhelm health care systems. Lockdowns in other places have lasted at least two weeks, which is believed to be the maximum incubation period of the virus.

Scores across India’s cities on Sunday were deserted as citizens stayed indoors heeding Modi’s call. But key train stations were packed with thousands of migrant workers suddenly out of work and trying to head to their villages, risking carrying the infection to the nation’s vast hinterland.

Late Sunday, train services were suspended until March 31 while crowds were still waiting to board. The suspension included major long-distance trains and public transit in India’s big cities, exempting only freight. The New Delhi Railway Station, usually teeming with activity, was empty on Monday.

India’s national railway system totals 42,000 miles and carries more than 8 billion passengers a year.

India has at least 415 active cases of infection with the new coronavirus and seven deaths from COVID-19, the illness it causes.

Many were linked to foreign travel, but indigenous spread of the disease is considered inevitable in India, where tens of millions live in dense urban areas with irregular access to clean water.

War-torn Syria braces for major lockdown after 1st case reported

BY ALBERT AJI

and BAASEM MROUE

Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria — Syrians rushed to stock up on food and fuel Monday amid fears that authorities would resort to even stricter measures after reporting the first coronavirus infection in the country, where the healthcare system has been decimated by nearly a decade of civil war.

The arrival of the global pandemic in Syria as well as the Gaza Strip has raised concerns it could run rampant in some of the most vulnerable areas in the Middle East. War-torn Libya and Yemen, which have yet to report any cases, are also a source of concern.

The worst outbreak in the Middle East is unfolding in Iraq, where state TV reported another 127 deaths on Monday, bringing the total number of fatalities to 1,812 amid more than 23,000 confirmed cases. Iraq has faced widespread criticism for not imposing stricter quarantine measures early on. It is also suffering under severe U.S. sanctions.

Lines formed outside grocery stores, banks and petrol stations across the Syrian capital, Damascus, as people braced for wider closures. The government has already closed restaurants, cafes and other businesses, and has halted public transportation.

The city’s famed Hamidiyeh souk, a network of covered markets running through the Old City, was deserted after the government ordered all shops closed on Sunday.

Authorities closed border crossings with Lebanon and Jordan, and Damascus International Airport was closed to commercial traffic after a final flight arrived from Moscow. State-run newspapers issued their last print edition and will only be available online.

Countries across the Middle East have already ramped up restrictions to contain the global pandemic. Many have sealed their borders and canceled flights.

The United Arab Emirates, home to the world’s busiest international airport, said it was suspending all passenger and transit flights for two weeks. Dubai’s airport is a vital hub connecting Western nations with Asian countries and Australia, and suspending transit flights there affects travelers around the world.

Syria has close ties to Iran, which is a key ally of the government in the civil war, and Shiites pilgrims frequently travel between the two countries. Syria’s Health Ministry reported the first case of coronavirus late Sunday — a 20-year-old woman it said had arrived from another country, without elaborating.

Syria’s health care system has been ravaged by nearly a decade of war that has displaced millions of people and spawned rampant poverty. Hospitals and clinics across the country have been destroyed or damaged. The government is also under heavy international sanctions linked to its conduct during the war.

An open-ended curfew went into effect Monday in parts of northern and eastern Syria, which are controlled by a Kurdish-led civilian administration. It was not immediately clear how that would affect hundreds of U.S. troops stationed in the region.

In Iraq, authorities have begun using a loudspeaker system for the first time since the 1990 Gulf War to urge citizens to stay at home and avoid large gatherings. Jordan used air raid sirens on Saturday to announce the start of a three-day curfew.

Iraq’s Health Ministry reported three more virus deaths on Monday, bringing its total to 23 fatalities among 266 confirmed cases. Jordan has reported 85 cases.

South Africa’s cases jump to 402, has most in Africa

BY MOGOMOTSI MAGOME

Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG — South Africa’s coronavirus cases jumped to 402 Monday, up 128 from the day before, continuing worrying exponential growth and making it the country with the most cases in Africa.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa is expected to speak to the nation about the growing threat and many expect him to announce new restrictive measures to try to slow the spread of the disease.

More than half of South Africa’s total cases are in Gauteng province, which includes Johannesburg, the country’s largest city with 5.7 million people, and the capital, Pretoria, with 2.4 million, according to the figures released by the government health ministry.

South Africa has overtaken Egypt to become the African country with the highest number of cases. South Africa has not registered a death from the disease. The majority of cases are from travelers from Europe and other countries, but the number of cases that are locally transmitted is rising.

An Indian municipal worker spray disinfectants as a precautionary measure against COVID-19 outside a temple in Jammu, India, on Friday. India has halted its crucial train network, Monday, to try to stop the spread of coronavirus.
Fed to buy government debt, lend to businesses

WASHINGTON — In its boldest effort to protect the U.S. economy from the coronavirus, the Federal Reserve says it will buy as much government debt as it deems necessary and will also begin lending to small and large businesses and local governments to help them weather the crisis.

The Fed's announcement Monday removed any dollar limits from its plans to support the flow of credit through an economy that has been ravaged by the viral outbreak. The central bank's all-out effort has now gone beyond even the extraordinary drive it made to rescue the economy from the 2008 financial crisis.

"The coronavirus pandemic is causing tremendous hardship across the United States and around the world," the Fed said in a statement. "While great uncertainty remains, it has become clear that our economy will face severe disruptions. Aggressive efforts must be taken across the public and private sectors to limit the losses to jobs and incomes and to promote a swift recovery once the disruptions abate."

The intensifying need for cash means that banks and other investors are seeking to rapidly unload Treasuries, short-term corporate debt, municipal bonds and other securities. The Fed's move to step in and act as a buyer of last resort is intended to provide that needed cash.

The central bank's actions increase pressure on Congress to approve a nearly $2 trillion stimulus package that stalled late Sunday. The bill includes funds that would provide that needed cash. In unleashing its aggressive new efforts, the Fed, led by Chair Jerome Powell, is trying to stabilize the markets and avert panic in financial markets. Many corporations and city and state governments are in desperate need of loans to pay bills and maintain operations as their revenue from customers or taxpayers collapses. That need has escalated demand for cash. In the meantime, large businesses have been drawing, as much as they can, on their existing borrowing relationships with banks.

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Just knowing that the Fed is on the case should reassure businesses as the programs ramp up, Kohn said. "The fact that this is coming: People will know it," Kohn said. "They know the Fed is on the job. If there are issues that come up, what you're seeing from this Federal Reserve is: 'We will deal with it.'"

The Fed mostly creates the money it will use to buy bonds and lend to large and medium-sized businesses, with the Fed's support, by Friday.

In its announcement Monday, the Fed said it will establish three new lending facilities that will provide up to $300 billion by purchasing corporate bonds, a wider range of municipal bonds and securities tied to such debt as auto and real estate loans. It will also buy an unlimited amount of Treasury bonds and mortgage-backed securities to try to hold down borrowing rates and ensure markets function.

The central bank's movements increase pressure on Congress to approve a nearly $2 trillion stimulus package that stalled late Sunday. The bill includes funds that would help backstop the Fed's lending. Many economists say that whatever financial support Congress eventually provides will likely be even more important than the Fed's intervention. And they warn that such fiscal help needs to come soon. "The Fed's intervention is not a substitute for fiscal stimulus," said Joseph Gagnon, a former Fed economist who is now senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. "Let's hope Congress passes something quickly."

"They're really setting the economy up to start functioning again when the health crisis subsides," said Donald Kohn, a former Fed vice chair who is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. "Part of this is about the other side of the valley: Make sure the credit is there."

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The central bank's new go-for-broke approach is an acknowledgment that its previous plans to keep credit flowing smoothly, which included dollar limits, wouldn't be enough in the face of the viral outbreak, which has brought the U.S. economy to a near standstill as workers and consumers stay home. Last week, it said it would buy $500 billion of Treasuries and $200 billion of mortgage-backed securities, then quickly ran through roughly half those amounts by week's end.

And on Monday, the New York Federal Reserve said it would buy $75 billion of Treasuries and $50 billion of mortgage-backed securities each day this week.

"They're really setting the economy up to start functioning again when the health crisis subsides," said Donald Kohn, a former Fed vice chair who is a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. "Part of this is about the other side of the valley: Make sure the credit is there."

Still, Kohn noted, "These things will take some time to set up. These are complicated programs."

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Brookings Institution senior fellow

A boarded-up Wine and Spirits store Friday in Philadelphia. The Federal Reserve said it will buy as much government debt as it deems necessary and will also begin lending to small and large businesses and local governments to help them weather the crisis.

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VIRUS OUTBREAK

Over 1.5 billion globally asked to stay home

BY LORI HINNANT AND FOSTER KLUG
Associated Press

PARIS — The hunt for masks, ventilators and other medical supplies consumed the U.S. and Europe, as more than 1.5 billion people — one-fifth of the world’s population — were urged or ordered to stay home Monday to try to blunt the spread of the coronavirus.

Political paralysis stalled efforts for a quick aid package from Congress. Investor fears about the outbreak’s economic toll pushed U.S. stocks down in morning trading even after the Federal Reserve said that it will buy as much government debt as necessary and lend to small and large businesses and local governments to help them cope.

In New York, a near-lockdown took effect statewide over the weekend amid worries that the city of 8.4 million could become one of the world’s biggest hot spots. Nearly 10,000 people have tested positive in the city, and almost 100 have died.

Democrats announced plans to convert a huge New York City convention center into a hospital with 1,000 beds. Meanwhile, the mayor warned that the city’s hospitals are just 10 days away from shortages in “really basic supplies” needed to protect health care workers and patients alike.

“If we don’t get the equipment we’re literally going to lose lives,” Mayor Bill de Blasio told CNN.

The risk to doctors, nurses and others on the front lines has become plain: Italy has seen at least 18 doctors with the coronavirus die. Spain reported that more than 3,900 health care workers have become infected, accounting for roughly 12% of the country’s total cases.

British health workers pleaded curfews more years ago that they felt like “cannon fodder.” In France, doctors scurried masks from construction workers, factory floors and architecture.

“There’s a wild race to get surgical masks,” Francois Blanchet, a biologist on the front lines of testing, told France Inter radio.

“We’re asking mayors’ offices, industries, any enterprises that might have a store of masks.”

With the crisis easing in China, where it began late last year, only the area around the city of Wuhan was still considered high-risk, with people asked to stay inside.

In the U.S., a fierce political battle over ventilators has emerged, especially after President Donald Trump told governors that they should find their own medical equipment if they think they can get it faster than the U.S. government. Alaska is expected to run out of money imminently to pay doctors, hospitals and clinics who treat Medicaid patients.

China has been the one nation to counter this trend, sending plane loads of equipment like masks, gloves and protective gear as well as doctors to countries across Europe, including hard-hit Italy, France and Spain as well as places with weaker medical systems like Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia.

“The U.S. is completely wasting the precious time that China has won for the world,” said Geng Shuang, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman.

Authorities kept up their push to get people to stay home, but some were clearly not listening.

Social media sites showed snapshots of packed London Underground trains.

British Health Secretary Matt Hancock described those ignoring the government’s recommendations as “very selfish” and warned that stricter rules might be coming soon.

Other countries, though, said the restrictions were working.

After 12 days of a national lockdown in Denmark, “we have together succeeded in changing our behavior very radically,” Prime Minister Metter Frederiksen said, in extending closings until mid-April.

Trump appears on 15-day shutdown as Congress pursues aid

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump expressed qualms Monday about extending the current 15-day shutdown recommended by the federal government, even as his officials warned that the coronavirus crisis is deepening and Congress and the White House struggle to complete a nearly $2 trillion economic rescue package.

“I didn’t expect to be starting off my week with such a dire message for America,” Surgeon General Jerome Adams said on “CBS This Morning.” “Things are going to get worse before they get better. We really need everyone to understand this.

Yet only hours earlier, Trump suggested that the remedies may be more harmful than the outbreak in a tweet contradicting the advice of medical experts across the country.

In all capital letters, he tweeted: “We cannot let the cure be worse than the problem itself. At the end of the 15-day period, we will make a decision as to which way we want to go.”

On Sunday, Vice President Mike Pence said that the country should expect new federal guidance “which will make it possible for people that have been exposed to return to work more quickly with — by wearing a mask for a certain period of time.”

Trump officials and congressional leaders resumed talks after working through the night on the massive economic rescue plan. Democrats had derailed the plan Sunday night, arguing that it was tilted toward corporations and did too little to help workers and health care providers.

“Your nation cannot afford a game of chicken,” warned Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., his voice rising on the Senate floor Sunday night.

Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., sounded optimistic.

“This bill is going to affect this country and the lives of Americans, not just for the next few days, but in the next few months and years — so we have to make sure it is good,” he said.

But he cited “serious problems” with McConnell’s bill, such as “corporate bailout funds without restrictions or without oversight — you wouldn’t even know who is getting the money.” He said the bill doesn’t have enough money for hospitals and broader emergency health care needs, and none for state and local government.

Yet, he added, “We’re getting closer and closer.”

It also said that it will buy an unlimited amount of Treasury bonds and mortgage-backed securities in an effort to hold down interest rates and ensure those markets function smoothly.

With a population on edge and Democrats said that the largely Republican-led effort does not go far enough to provide health care and worker aid, and fails to put restraints on a proposed $500 billion “slush fund” for corporations. They voted to block its advance.

Democrats won a concession — to provide four months of expanded unemployment benefits rather than just three as proposed, according to an official granted anonymity to discuss the private talks. The jobless pay would also extend to self-employed and so-called gig workers.

Central to the package is as much as $350 billion for small businesses to keep making payroll while workers are forced to stay home. There is also a one-time rebate check of about $1,200 per person, or $3,000 for a family of four, as well as the extended unemployment benefits.

Hospitals would get about $110 billion for the expected influx of sick patients, said Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin.

Democrats have warned that the draft plan’s $500 billion for corporations does not put enough restraints on business, saying that the ban on corporate stock buy-backs is weak and the limits on executive pay are only for two years.

“We’re not here to create a slush fund for Donald Trump and his family, or a slush fund for the Treasury Department to be able to hand out to their friends,” said Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren. “We’re here to help workers, we’re here to help hospitals.”

The president, when pressed by a reporter, dodged a question as to whether his own business would seek federal money.

Monthly of the Military Child

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LOS ANGELES — Pacific Gas & Electric announced Monday it has pleaded guilty to 84 counts of involuntary manslaughter related to California’s most destructive wildfire that burned much of Paradise, Calif., in 2018.

In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, PG&E said it reached the settlement with the Butte County district attorney’s office on March 17. Under the deal, PG&E said prosecutors won’t pursue further criminal charges.

PG&E also pleaded guilty to one count of causing a fire in violation of the state penal code. “The Utility will be sentenced to pay the maximum total fine and penalty of approximately $3.5 million. The Agreement provides that no other or additional sentence will be imposed on the Utility in the criminal action in connection with the 2018 Camp Fire,” PG&E said in its filing. “The Utility has also agreed to pay $500,000 to the Butte County District Attorney Environmental and Consumer Protection Fund to reimburse costs spent on the investigation of the 2018 Camp Fire.”

Last year, Pacific Gas & Electric admitted in federal court that its equipment likely caused 10 wildfires this year in Northern and Central California. The Camp Fire, which raced through Paradise in 2018, killed 85 people and destroyed more than 13,900 homes. Both the California Public Utilities Commission and the state Department of Forestry and Fire Protection concluded that poorly maintained PG&E equipment sparked that blaze.

The commission also noted that for years, PG&E failed to do climbing inspections of a century-old tower that malfunctioned, causing sparks where the fire originated. Investigators said there was “visible wear” on the arms of a tower linked to the blaze, but that PG&E crews had not climbed the tower since at least 2001.

Such an inspection could have identified problems with a small metal hook that was supposed to hold up a transmission line and insulator on the tower, and “its timely replacement could have prevented the ignition of the Camp Fire,” investigators said.

The omission of climbing inspections on the failed tower “is a violation of PG&E’s own policy requiring climbing inspections on towers where recurring problems exist,” investigators wrote.

Utility’s equipment likely caused devastating Calif. wildfire

PG&E pleads guilty to involuntary manslaughter

BY MATT HAMILTON, JOSEPH SERNA and SHELBY GRAD
Los Angeles Times

The Daily Guide to Navigating the European Business Market

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Global food supply is not running out, companies struggle with distribution

"There could be a supply shock in terms of logistics, not being able to move it from point A to point B. It's that uncertainty that right now is the biggest danger."

Abdolreza Abbassian
senior economist at the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization

Global warehouses are stuffed with frozen cuts of pork, wheels of cheese and bags of rice. But as the coronavirus snarls logistical operations, the question becomes: How does all that food actually get to people? Despite the inventories, grocery stores are looking almost apocalyptic with aisles of empty shelves. Panic buying has made it nearly impossible for retailers and suppliers to keep up with the unprecedented spike in demand. In just one example of the constraints, there’s a finite number of trucks that can load up at warehouses to bring in the chicken or ice cream or toilet paper that people want to buy.

There are limits on how much time can be spent stocking shelves or filling rail cars. Then there’s this weird knock-on from port closures and limits on trade to “real shortages” starting with these children and their families. The group said Egypt’s criminal justice system has failed to “seriously investigate the children’s allegations of torture and ill-treatment.” The report alleged that a prosecutor in one case threatened to send a boy “back to the officer” who had tortured him if the boy refused to make a confession.

The group quoted a boy it said was arrested at age 16 as telling a relative that he had been told he might “never marry or be able to have children” because of what security officials had done to him in detention. HRW said it and Belady, a non-governmental organization aiding street children, corroborated statements from the children, their families and defense lawyers, using court documents, appeals to authorities, medical records, and videos.

"The harrowing accounts of these children and the families reveal how Egypt’s machinery of repression has subjected children to grave abuses," said Aya Hijazi, co-director of Belady. Hijazi is a dual-U.S.-Egyptian citizen who has been held in detention for nearly three years over accusations related to Belady, which is Arabic for “our nation.” She was arrested along with her husband and six others in May 2014 on charges of abusing children. She was acquitted and released three years later.

According to the HRW’s report, Belal B. was 17 years old when Egyptian security officers arrested him and put him in solitary confinement at a Cairo police station.

“I knew nothing about my parents and they knew nothing about me,” he quoted by HRW as saying. Officers then “tied me to a chair for three days,” causing severe pain, he added.

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Three children said security officers tortured them with electricity, including stun guns, it added.

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**Eugene Sheffer Crossword**

1. Serb or Croat
2. Clue to your next move
3. Trouser less in the end
4. Caesar's gem
5. Cloudy with a chance of rain
6. Bedbug
7. The Jolly Green Giant
8. Psalm
9. Letter of the alphabet
10. Harry Potter
11. Soccer
12. The Great Gatsby
13. Surfboard
14. Australian marsupial
15. Tennis racket
16. Luke Skywalker
17. The Godfather
18. Superman's cousin
19. Superhero
20. Doctor Who
21. Robin Hood
22. The Joker
23. Captain America
24. Spider-Man
25. The Hulk
26. The Flash
27. Green Lantern
28. The Men in Black
29. The Punisher
30. The Avengers
31. The X-Men
32. The Defenders
33. The Fantastic Four
34. The Hulk
35. The Avengers
36. The Flash
37. The Punisher
38. Spider-Man
39. Captain America
40. Superman
41. The Joker
42. The Green Lantern
43. Luke Skywalker
44. Superman
45. The Hulk
46. The Black Knight
47. The Flash
48. The Punisher
49. Spider-Man
50. Captain America
51. The Hulk
52. Superman
53. The Joker
54. The Green Lantern
55. Luke Skywalker

**ACROSS**

1. Serb or Croat
5. Tax prep pro
8. James of “The Godfather”
12. Leslie Carol film
13. Onassis nickname
14. Golden Rule preposition
15. Beatnik’s assent
16. Not extreme
18. Small amount
20. Birth-related
21. — Alamos
22. Iota
23. Brag
26. Gallo winery setting
30. Moreover
31. Salary
32. Born abroad?
33. Decorum
36. Parceled (out)
38. “Caught ya”
39. Scoundrel
40. “West Side Story” role
43. Vintage Ford
47. Trio on “70s TV, with “The”
49. Manhattan area
50. Draft status
51. Numbered rd.
52. Coaster
53. Pains part
54. Remiss
55. Charitable donation

**DOWN**

1. Slender
2. Chic beach resort
3. “Put — on it!”
4. Candelight ceremonies
5. “The Stranger” author
6. Senior moment?
7. Succor
8. Organize an art show
10. “— girl!”
11. Yuletide tune
17. Oklahoma city
19. Guest’s bed
22. Lad
23. “Kapow!”
24. Music’s Yoko
25. Do sums
26. Spring month
27. NBC weekend show
28. Casual shirt
29. British refer.
31. School org.
34. Others
35. Cager O’Neal, for short
36. Pop
37. Black Sea port
39. Ancient manuscript
40. Singer Tori
41. Zilch
42. Notion
43. — Hari
44. Lounge
45. Not us
46. Lays down the lawn
48. Web address

**Answer to Previous Puzzle**

```
M E S H  B W  S P A M
E L L A  E L I  U R S A
I S A W  F I S H  N E T S
R E P A I R  P A S S A T
I S I S  Y E E
C A B I N E T S  T R E E
U R L  T N O T E V A L
B E E S  D R A G N E S T
S T U E R G O
A B S O R B  T O P H A T
B A Y O N E T S  R O W E
B L O G  T R U  O B O E
A D J U E  H I P  B O L D
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**3-24 CRYPTOQUIP**

```
G X P P  Q J P P K A D W J  E G H N Q G N H J,
B E N K K D E J  G A X G  Q D N P F  P J X F
G D  X  G D M J H  D N G X U J.

Yesterday’s Cryptquip: QUACKING AQUATIC CHARACTER WHOSE DIET CONSISTS LARGELY OF STICKY, CHEWY CANDY: TAFFY DUCK.

Today’s Cryptquip Clue: M equals W
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**AMERICAN ROUNDUP**

**MD**
FREDERICK — Two young men were seriously injured when they fell from the back of a pickup truck whose tires were spinning as the vehicle got back on a Maryland road, authorities said.

The Frederick County Sheriff’s Office said the vehicle was part of a street-racing event that officers received a call about. A second call directed them to the injuries, the sheriff’s office said in a news release.

The truck was traveling with at least three people in the flattbed when it went off a road and then back onto the road. A 19-year-old man and a 22-year-old man were taken away to an ambulance. The woman reportedly fought with impersonating an officer and the driver was not injured and the cause of the single-vehicle crash was under investigation, said Santa Barbara County Fire Capt. Niki Stevens. He said crews were racing to stop the oil that spilled into the Cuyama River from reaching Twitchell Dam and reservoir, which provides flood control and water conservation to the region on the Central Coast.

**WA**
SEATTLE — Custom-made bronze gates that stood at the entrance to the Washington Park Arboretum in Seattle since 1976 have been stolen, facility workers said.

Arboretum curator Ray Larson said staff noticed the gates were missing when gardeners arrived for work, The Seattle Times reported.

“The would be a pretty enormous task to haul them out,” Larson said. “People are just shocked, and appalled. It was so brazen. Our hope is that someone may have seen something.’’

The solid bronze Memorial Gates were made by internationally renowned sculptor George Tsutakawa and commissioned in 1971 by the University of Washington and the Arboretum Foundation as a memorial to all who loved and cared for the arboretum. The gates are about 20 feet wide and kept open in part because they are so heavy, he said, adding that he fear thieves will take them to a scrap for the value of the metal.

**GA**
JONESBORO — A Georgia man was arrested and accused of posting an Instagram video of himself pointing a gun at a police officer, authorities said.

A video uploaded showed a man aiming a gun at a Jonesboro police officer, who was performing a traffic stop, The Augusta Chronicle-Constitution reported.

Clayton County Sheriff Victor Hill said detectives identified Jordan Jones, 18, as the owner of the Instagram account. A news release said Jones’ mother turned him in, and he was later charged with one count of pointing a gun at another.

**AZ**
SCOTTSDALE — A woman is accused of stealing a taxi in Scottsdale and then biting an off-duty Maricopa County Sheriff’s deputy on the arm after she was arrested, police said.

Ciara Leticia Enns, 25, is facing charges of vehicle theft, resisting arrest and aggravated assault.

Police said the cab driver was standing outside his vehicle when Enns reportedly jumped into the taxi and drove off.

The driver alerted two off-duty MCSO deputies as he ran after his cab.

Enns crashed the cab nearby and was detained by the deputies until police arrived on the scene.

The woman reportedly fought with the two deputies as they were placing her in a patrol car and she bit one officer.

**MO**
SPRINGFIELD — During a time of panic buying and store closures amid the coronavirus pandemic, one Walmart store in Springfield had some joyful news when a woman gave birth to a baby girl in the store.

Store manager Jessica Hinkle said the woman told employees that her water broke and she was about to go into labor in the toilet paper aisle of the store.

Hinkle held up a sheet for privacy while a labor nurse who happened to be in the store and firefighters helped the woman deliver her baby in just 45 minutes, KYTV reported.

Customers encouraged the woman throughout the birth and cheered as she and the baby were taken away to an ambulance.

**NC**
CHADBourn — A 20-year-old man was charged with desecrating a gravesite this week after witnesses reported he drove in circles through a North Carolina cemetery and damaged headstones and floral arrangements.

Deputies with the Columbus County Sheriff’s Office responded to a graveyard in Chadbourn on calls someone was “doing donuts” in a vehicle through the area, the office said in a statement.

The investigation led deputies to Christian Quinn Walters, the statement said. He was charged with desecration of a gravesite in excess of $1,000 and jailed on a $50,000 bond.

**FL**
BOCA RATON — The family of a second-grade autistic boy who was left on a Florida school bus for more than five hours in 2015 will receive a $200,000 settlement from Palm Beach County public schools.

The school board approved the payment to settle a lawsuit brought by the 7-year-old boy’s parents, Eva Palomino and Eddi Guevara.

The child boarded the bus to head to J.C. Mitchell Elementary in Boca Raton on Oct. 12, 2015, but never made it to the campus, the Palm Beach Post reported.

He remained on board as the bus peeled away and dropped off middle school students and was still on board when the driver and bus aide returned the vehicle to the bus depot in Boynton Beach.

The driver and aide then left the bus without doing a thorough inspection, officials said.

**GA**
AUGUSTA — A Georgia man was charged with impersonating an officer after authorities caught him pulling a car over and identifying himself as a special agent with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, a sheriff’s office said.

Deputies with the Richmond County Sheriff’s Office saw Maurice McNeal follow a car into a parking lot last weekend and pull over the driver, according to the agency’s statement.

Deputies approached the man and McNeal presented them and the driver with a U.S. Department of Homeland Security ID and a U.S. Customs ID, the statement said. McNeal told investigators he was working for the department and had pulled the car over because he thought somebody inside stole a camera from his motorcycle.

The Department of Homeland Security told investigators McNeal no longer worked for them, according to the sheriff’s office.

**MD**
WESTMINSTER — A Maryland woman was convicted of assault in a grocery store theft in which she nearly ran over an employee with her car.

Shana Christina Frundt, 27, was sentenced to six years in jail with all but 18 months suspended, the Carroll County State’s Attorney’s Office said in a press release.

Known as the “Crab Leg Bandit,” Frundt was accused of taking $250 worth of food last year from Martin’s Food store in Eldersburg, news outlets reported.

Frundt noticed an employee taking photos of her car and attempted to take his phone, the release stated. She then got in her car and drove toward the employee, and he had to jump out of the way to avoid being hit.

**Family of boy left on school bus gets $200K**

**2 injured after falling from pickup truck**

**Bronze gates stolen from park arboretum**

**Man filmed himself pointing gun at officer**

**Flipping out**

Jacob Swain, 17, does a back flip off Route 365 into the Wakulla River during an outing with friends in Crawfordville, Fla.

**The census**

**6K**

The approximate amount in gallons of oil that spilled from an overturned tanker near Santa Maria, Calif. The tanker truck overturned down an embankment Saturday, spilling more than 6,600 gallons of crude oil into a river that flows into a dam and reservoir, authorities said. The driver was not injured and the cause of the single-vehicle crash was under investigation, said Santa Barbara County Fire Capt. Niki Stevens. He said crews were racing to stop the oil that spilled into the Cuyama River from reaching Twitchell Dam and reservoir, which provides flood control and water conservation to the region on the Central Coast.

**Flipping out**

**Man damaged graves while ‘doing donuts’**

**Woman guilty of trying to run over employee**

From wire reports
The Netflix documentary “Crip Camp” could follow a different path to Oscars eligibility — if there is a 2021 awards show at all.

**Oscars’ restrictions reconsidered**

**Movie theater closures have film academy rethinking eligibility rules**

BY GLENN WHIPP
Los Angeles Times

“Crip Camp,” a documentary about a “summer camp for the handicapped run by hippies” that inspired the disabled rights movement, opened the Sundance Film Festival in January with volunteers turning away ticket holders because every seat in the Eccles Theater was spoken for.

The movie, which counted among its executive producers Barack and Michelle Obama, left Sundance with the festival’s Documentary Audience Award, great reception and an anticipation that it could follow the path of “American Factory,” the Netflix/Higher Ground film that won the Academy Award for best documentary feature in 2019, noting that it is “in the process of lining up for 2021 eligibility.”

The academy is adapting its streaming premiere on Netflix. The Netflix documentary “Crip Camp” could follow a different path to Oscars eligibility — if there is a 2021 awards show at all.

The motion picture academy’s leadership has been actively discussing changing its rules in recent days, with an announcement likely in the next couple of weeks that could ease the requirements for movies qualifying for the 2021 Oscars.

“It’s all we talk about,” said a source close to the academy not authorized to comment on record.

The academy issued a statement March 19, noting that it is “in the process of evaluating all aspects of this uncertain landscape and what changes may need to be made,” adding that its leadership is “committed to being nimble and forward-thinking” in its evaluations.

“Translated,” says one of the academy’s 54 governors, “that means everything is on the table this year because we have no idea what the next several months are going to look like right now.”

“Crip Camp” was set to open theatrically Wednesday in Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco, concurrent with its streaming premiere on Netflix. The documentary will still land on Netflix, but whether it ever plays in theaters remains in question with the nationwide closure of cinemas because of COVID-19.

Currently, for a movie to qualify for the Clive Davis: The Soundtrack of Our Lives film academy not authorized to comment on record.

It may be difficult for the “theatrical experience” to be integral to anything this year, including the Oscars.

If and when theaters reopen, there could be a glut of postponed movies vying for release dates and screens Awards season contenders (presuming there is even an awards season to begin with) might need to shift to 2021.

New publisher releases book by Woody Allen

BY GLENN WHIPP
Los Angeles Times

Almost a month after The Associated Press reported that its recent book, "Apropos of Nothing," was released Monday by Arcade Publishing.

The book is a candid and comprehensive personal account by Woody Allen of his life, Arcade announced, "ranging from his childhood in Brooklyn through his film-making, theater, television, print and standup comedy, as well as exploring his relationships with family and friends."

And even if we’ve sung that hook 10 million times at karaoke, it’ll always be strange to hear Rogers uphold the values of being simple-minded. At the same time, it’s a reminder that his voice, and his songs, are not to be taken lightly. Rogers was a master of understatement, and his music speaks to a deeper truth that is often missed in today’s fast-paced world.

To best hear Rogers funnel life’s roughness into a spiritual smoothness, revisit "Islands in the Stream," his 1983 duet with Dolly Parton and his grand achievement. The song was written by the Bee Gees, and its lyrics describe the profundity of human connection: a blindness, a deepness, an ambiguity, a clarity — all in a jumble of mixed metaphors that might only make sense when you're falling in love.

But even in this era of quotable soundbites, Rogers’ legacy endures. His music is a reminder that even in the midst of chaos, there is beauty to be found, and it is up to us to listen. And so, as we remember Rogers, let us all make a vow to ourselves: to run faster, to sing higher, and to find the beauty in the world around us.

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Taking stock of strange days in America

By Ted Anthony
Associated Press

Change came to the United States of America during the third week of March in 2020. It did not come all at once, though it came quite rapidly. As had happened in other lands, there was no explosion, no invasion other than a microscopic one that nobody could see. The sky didn’t fall, fire, no flood, no famine. There were no barbarians at the gates.

Change came quietly in most towns and cities, because the change was one of withdrawal, a shutting of municipal and regional and national doors.

The weather was the same weather. The streets were the same streets. The emptiness fell bit by bit, piece by piece, until the most crowded of places became some of the most ghostly.

Some stopped going out in the evening. Then in the afternoon. Then all day. Some stopped going to the store, and some stopped cutting hair. Some stopped going out to eat, and some restaurants shut their doors except for takeout and delivery. Some, many, most stopped going to school. Home became the primary landscape. Those who worked outside the home became those who worked from home or became those who did not work at all.

It was like S2 pickup, that sort-of-kind-of game card where someone throws up the deck and it lands all over the place, and when the cards are retrieved from the floor they are the same cards but in an entirely different order. Some are upside down. Some are facing backward. Some are bent at the edges.

Delivering a pizza became an act of bravery. Supermarket shopping became an activity of anxiety, both because of what people might not be able to get and because of what people might accidentally touch. Toilet paper became a source of stress and a recurring joke. Some people came to fear that anger was coming and others grew deeply angry that fear was coming.

Those who could work at home sat by the glow of their computer screens, which became a collage of pixelated portals into other people’s living spaces. Tiny images of people’s colleagues were stacked, row by row, as home offices came into shamrock being. Overnight, the verb “to Zoom” roared out of corporate settings and into basements and kitchens and living rooms where it had never been used before.

When change came to the United States of America last week, as it had to China and Italy and many other places already, it swarmed much harder than it did others, depending on where you lived, how others, depending on where you lived, how others, depending on where you lived, how others, depending on where you lived, how others, depending on where you lived.

People, confident in invincibility, grined and played on spring break beaches. In states where governors restricted movement and commerce, people bristled and said it went too far, did too much, damaged the livelihoods of too many. Jobs started disappearing, deleted from the landscape in batches as if it was a tactical move in a city-building video game.

The people in their homes, on the inside looking tentatively out, struggled with the change. Groceries were bought and sometimes hoarded. Images of empty shelves, shared online by the tens of thousands, produced even more distress. Families relationships were suddenly placed under stress by proximity and unease. Wi-Fi clogged, struggled, slowed. Hands wrung over income-tax deadlines until, to great relief, they were pushed back. Time, or at least the notion of it, changed too. Thursday seemed like Friday, or maybe Friday seemed like Tuesday. Weekday melted into weekend. Lunchtime sometimes decided to arrive in the late afternoon. For some, happy hour, if you could still call it that, came hours before the afternoon rush hour, which was OK, because by Wednesday in many places that was gone, too.

The television and the internet, already many people’s hearts and constant companions, burrowed even deeper into lives. Heads talked. Experts laid out numbers. flatten the curve became an incantation. Officials promised and parried and throttled.

In this particular week of change, the fiercest debate centered around two key notions. One was how to react to the strongest way possible. The other was whether reacting in the strongest way possible was actually most of the problem.

Some tried to tell the story of change as one of obviousness and common sense. Some seemed sure that the country they had loved and known and for, some fought for was disappearing before their eyes.

In the United States of America last week, the event themselves came fast and loud and fierce, unfolding as invisible organisms marched their invisible and perilous march. But change came gradually and, sometimes, inaudibly.

The thing about change is that sometimes it requires an inventory to measure it. In many cases, the people who are changed are the ones to do that inventory. That may not happen here, at least not immediately. The changed, those who would undertake that inventory, may be too busy for a while. Because the fourth week of March in 2020 is now here, and more change is coming.

Ted Anthony, director of digital innovation for The Associated Press, has written about American culture since 1990.
Looking at the news

A weekly sampling of U.S. editorial cartoons

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LISA BENSON/Washington Post Writers Group

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TIM CAMPBELL/Washington Post News Service
Players huddle up at home as they try to stay ready

By Teresa M. Walker
Associated Press

Tennessee Titans offensive tackle Dennis Kelly has been hunkered down with his family in the Indianapolis area since the birth of his third daughter a month ago. He has been self-isolating before the spread of COVID-19, the coronavirus.

“We’re already kind of in a self-imposed quarantine on our own, because with a new baby and not having shots and everything like that, especially with it being winter and how bad the flu was this year,” said Kelly, one of hundreds of NFL players who are self-isolating while the league sorts through what’s next. “We’re in week four already of kind of being separated. For most of society, obviously it’s even more extreme.”

Though it’s the offseason for the NFL, the need for social distancing and self-isolation by the pro football community was driven home when New Orleans coach Sean Payton announced Thursday he was the first in the NFL to test positive.

NFL players usually use this time to prepare for offseason programs that traditionally start in April. With those programs delayed indefinitely, players are trying to stay connected with teammates via group chats and social media. Workouts also are an issue with more gyms closing, though some players have their own equipment at home.

New Orleans Saints long snapper Zach Wood, who signed an extension just before free agency started, lives in an apartment and has been staying away from gyms in Dallas. His workouts involve push-ups, pull-ups and squats and now more running outside. He’s also throwing sweat everywhere, which is disgusting, so I guess I better start going outside and finding ways to do something in the park or on a trail or something because the apartment is just not having it for me,” Wood said.

Ryan Tannehill, who received a four-year, $118 million contract from Tennessee, normally would be busy lining up workouts with wide receivers to start honing their chemistry and timing.

“Guys getting on planes right now is not a good situation,” said Tannehill, who is also doing some personal training while sticking around the house with his two children and enjoying more home cooking by his wife, Lauren. “Hopefully as a nation we can kind of get this thing turned around, flatten the curve sort to speak, and start moving forward.”

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness.

NFL free agency business has been one of the few things close to normal in the sports world in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

Cornerback A.J. Bouye is one of the players facing the challenge of changing teams during this isolation period after being traded by Jacksonville to Denver. The group chats that Tannehill and Kelly use to stay in touch aren’t easy for a player with new teammates.

Taking care of his family is at the top of Bouye’s to-do list. His daughters are in a different state, and he’s continuing to work out at his home gym in Atlanta, also is focused on his parents and other relatives.

“Guys have been talking to teams in the league. We’re kind of everything situation with that, we just have to monitor when we could go back,” Bouye said. “One thing about it, I’m just focused more on working out also. I have everything set up at home. My trainer is with me, so I’m definitely good with that.”

Tenten center Ben Jones also has been working out at home. In video shared on social media Friday by Tennessee, Jones could be seen throwing a medicine ball at the wall beside his garage and lifting weights outdoors.

Before New England traded linebacker Duron Harmon to Detroit, he was able to go to the stadium. On Friday, he worked out on a Peloton bike in his basement, and can run on a hill near his home.

“Anything I need is right here,” Harmon said. “I’m willing to go out there and do that each and every day, until I’m able to get to the grocery store, and you can’t get eggs, peanuts and tree nuts.

“All of these people that are in a sense panic shopping, and getting all these supplies — you hear the jokes about the toilet paper going out — we have one brand of milk that she drinks because we know it’s safe,” Kelly said.

“If that is kind of taken out, that kind of leaves us in a predicament in that regard. That’s just kind of where we’re at right now. Scary situation for us, personally, with her.”

A situation that changes daily.

Jays’ Shapiro: A restart would take a month

By Ian Harrison
Associated Press

TORONTO — With no sign of when training camps can resume, Toronto Blue Jays president Mark Shapiro says he thinks Major League Baseball would need at least a month of workouts and exhibition games before regular season play can begin.

Opening day has been postponed until at least mid-May because of the coronavirus pandemic.

“Knowing that so many players are not even having any access to throwing and hitting at all, but most importantly just throwing, and probably limited access to just training and exercise, it’s hard to imagine we could get ready in less than four weeks,” Shapiro said in a teleconference with Toronto reporters.

Shapiro cautioned that training camps aren’t likely to reopen for some time yet.

“I do think that we’re, by and large, waiting for some sort of flattening of the curve and recognition that we have done our best to limit the strain on the healthcare system and the economic system,” he said. “Until that time, the exact outcome and impact on our schedule, and all of the corresponding business that cascades off that, really can’t be determined.”

“It certainly looks like we are not dealing with days and likely not weeks, but closer to months,” he said.

Shapiro said he expects negotiations between Major League Baseball and the players’ union on an industry-wide plan to compensate players for missed games to conclude “in the next 24 to 48 hours.”

All but three of Toronto’s major league players have left the team’s spring training site in Dunedin, Fla. Those that remain are South Korean left-hander Hyun-Jin Ryu, Japanese right-hander Shun Yamaguchi and right-hander Rafael Dolis, who is from the Dominican Republic.

Shapiro said the three players “did not have any place to go.”

Ryu is accompanied by his wife, who is seven months pregnant.

Shapiro said no Blue Jays players or staff have displayed any symptoms of the new coronavirus, and that no one has been tested.

Some 30 minor league players and four staffers who have been unable to go home are being housed in a Dunedin-area hotel, Shapiro said. Eighteen of those players are from Venezuela, and cannot return home.
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Japanese baseball, soccer could restart in late April, say experts

Associated Press

TOKYO — On a day when Japan’s prime minister admitted postponing the Tokyo Olympics may be unavoidable, medical experts says that baseball and soccer seasons can resume by the end of next month.

“Baseball and soccer are different sports and they can be played separately,” said Dr. Kenji Iida, a professor in infection control and prevention at Tohoku Medical and Pharmaceutical University. “If the sporting organisations and the J.League received advice Monday from medical experts to start the fourth meeting of the joint panel that was formed to assess impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

Iida, a professor in infection control and prevention at Tohoku Medical and Pharmaceutical University, said the sporting organisations and the J.League advised at least 1,000 athletes would be possible for the top-flight Japanese baseball and soccer seasons to resume by the end of next month.

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Two women take a selfie with the Olympic rings in the background in the Odaiba section of Tokyo. The president of the international governing body for track and field, Sebastian Coe, called for a postponement of the 2020 Games on Sunday.

**Athletes group calls for postponement**

By Eddie Pelle

A worldwide group representing Olympic hopefuls is calling on the IOC to postpone the Tokyo Olympics until the coronavirus pandemic is under control — a decision the IOC says could be as long as four weeks away.

"As the world unites to limit the spread of COVID-19 virus, the IOC ... must do the same," Global Athlete said in a news release Sunday.

The statement came out a few hours before an IOC announcement that said the committee was considering several scenarios and would finalize a decision within four weeks. The Games are scheduled to start July 24.

The group's director general, Rob Koehler, reacted to that news, saying it was "unacceptable, irresponsible, and once again ignores athletes' rights." He was echoing what some athletes in the group are saying, along with others who have spoken on social media.

"It's bizarre the IOC hasn't shown any real leadership," said Caradh O'Donovan, a Global Athlete founder from Ireland whose karate training has been put on hold due to restrictions in her country. "They're acting as though it's business as usual and it just seems very strange.

O'Donovan said the unevenness around the globe regarding training, doping control and qualifying standards are among her key concerns.

"Without a clear answer, athletes are being indirectly asked to train," Koehler said. "If anyone knows how competitive athletes work, they will stop at nothing to achieve their goals. We understand it's a difficult decision but the IOC has a duty of care toward athletes which they have not exercised."

The group also called on broadcasters, specifically NBC, and sponsors to support the IOC and International Paralympic Committee "with flexibility and understanding during these uncharted times."

Also on Sunday, Sebastian Coe, the president of the international governing body for track and field, called for a postponement of the Games.

"Nobody wants to see the Olympic Games postponed but ... we cannot hold the event at all costs, certainly not at the cost of athlete safety," Coe said.

It's a thought being echoed by the Global Athlete group.

"My dream is to go to the Olympics this year but it’s an impossible task from my perspective and it’s the same for a huge number of athletes," O’Donovan said. "I’d be absolutely stunned if they go on in July, as planned."
The IOC will fully examine what to do over the next four weeks, and in that process... (postponement) may be included.

Yurko Koike
Tokyo Governor

The IOC’s move seemed inevitable for a week with pressure mounting from all quarters — athletes, sponsors, broadcasters and more than 200 national Olympic committees, and international sports federations.

Shortly after Bach’s statement, the Canadian Olympic Committee said it won’t send teams to the Olympics unless the games are postponed by a year. Australia issued a statement saying it was advising its athletes to prepare for an Olympics in 2021.

World Athletics President Seb Coe sent a letter to Bach saying that holding the Olympics in July “is neither feasible nor desirable.” He outlined a

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