WASHINGTON — Taking dramatic action, President Donald Trump sharply restricted passenger travel from 26 European nations to the U.S. and moved to ease the economic cost of a viral pandemic that is roiling global financial markets and disrupting the daily lives of Americans.

Trump, in a rare Oval Office address to the nation Wednesday night, said the monthlong restriction on travel would begin late Friday, at midnight. After days of playing down the coronavirus threat, he blamed Europe for not acting quickly enough to address the “foreign virus” and claimed that U.S. clusters were “seeded” by European travelers.

“We made a lifesaving move with early action on China,” Trump said. “Now we must take the same action with Europe.”

SEE TRAVEL ON PAGE 8

By Jill Colvin, Zeke Miller, Lisa Mascaro and Andrew Taylor
Associated Press

President imposes monthlong cutback on arrivals from 26 European countries

A woman checks the departures board at Rome’s Leonardo da Vinci International Airport on Thursday.

A woman checks the departures board at Rome’s Leonardo da Vinci International Airport on Thursday.

Related stories

Americans snap to attention as more measures are taken on page 8
Army exercise in Europe is curtailed amid angst on page 9
Fear, anxiety stillloom although most patients have recovered on page 10
Research groups racing to create virus vaccine on page 11

2 Americans, 1 Briton killed in rocket attack on Camp Taji in Iraq

By Chad Garland
Stars and Stripes

Three coalition troops — two Americans and a Briton — were killed Wednesday when nearly 20 107mm Katyusha rockets struck Camp Taji north of Baghdad, where U.S. and other coalition troops are based, U.S. Central Command’s top officer said.

“They will be remembered,” Marine Corps Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr., head of CENTCOM, told the Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday.

The names of the dead were being withheld pending next of kin notification, the U.S.-led Operation Inherent Resolve said in a statement, which said about a dozen others were wounded.

The U.K. Ministry of Defense confirmed a service member from the Royal Army Medical Corps was killed. The family had been notified but requested privacy.

“Last night’s attack on UK and coalition personnel was a cowardly and retrograde act,” said British Defense Secretary Ben Wallace in a statement Thursday. “The people that did this are not friends of Iraq.”

Coalition and Iraqi security forces were investigating the incident, Inherent Resolve

SEE ATTACK ON PAGE 5
Boeing shares suffer worst one-day drop in years

**Associated Press**

Boeing’s stock tumbled 18% on Wednesday, its biggest one-day percentage drop since 1974, and company leaders painted a sobering picture for the business in 2020. The Chicago-based company said it has imposed a hiring freeze that is undercutting air travel and threatening to kill airlines’ appetite for new planes.

Boeing said it received 18 orders last month for new large planes, but 46 orders were canceled, most of them for the grounded 737 Max, leaving the company with a net loss of 28 orders in February.

The company is also restricting employees’ travel and discretionary spending and limiting overtime to work on getting the Max back in flight.

Shares of Boeing Co. fell below $200 for the first time since mid-2017, closing at $189.08. They have plunged 58% in just over a year.

The latest drop occurred after Bloomberg News reported that Boeing will soon draw down the last of a $13.8 billion bank loan it arranged a little over a month ago.

The company has been burning through cash since halting deliveries of the 737 Max last spring.

“The year ahead is shaping up to be as challenging for our business as any in the recent past,” CEO David Calhoun and Chief Financial Officer Greg Smith said in a note to employees.

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**WEATHER OUTLOOK**

**FRIDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

Baghdad

Djibouti

Riyadh

Doha

Azores

Lajes, Morón

Rota

Sigonella

Lakenheath

Mildenhall/

Naples

Drawsko Pomorskie

Kandahar

Kabul

Bahrain

Brussels

Vicenza

Aviano/

Drawsko Pomorskie

Naples

Lajes

Kandahar

Kabul

Naples

Lajes

Kandahar

Kabul

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**FRIDAY IN EUROPE**

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**SATURDAY IN THE PACIFIC**

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**INTEREST RATES**

Prime rate ........................................... 3.25%
Discount rate ....................................... 1.75%
Federal funds market rate .................. 0.125%
3-month bill ......................................... 0.41%
30-year bond ....................................... 1.32%

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**EXCHANGE RATES**

**Military rates**

Euro costs (March 13) ....................... $1.1546
Dollar buys (March 13) ..................... 0.8661
British pound (March 13) .................. $1.31
Japanese yen (March 13) ................. 10.02
South Korean won (March 13) .......... 1,170.00

**Commercial rates**

Bahrain (Dinar) ................................... 0.3766
British pound (Dinar) ....................... 1.6224
Canada (Dollar) ................................ 1.3774
China (Yuan) ...................................... 0.7014
Denmark (Krone) ............................... 0.6661
Egypt (Pound) .................................... 19.907
Euro .................................................. 1.1337/0.8899
Hong Kong (Dollar) ......................... 7.7184
Hungary (Forint) .............................. 301.43
Israel (Shekel) .................................... 3.6522
Japan (Yen) ........................................ 104.72
Kuwait (Dinar) .................................. 0.3074
Norway (Krone) ................................. 10.6478
Philippines (Peso) ......................... 30.30
Poland (Zloty) .................................... 2.7542
Saudi Arabia (Riyal) ................. 0.8742
Singapore (Dollar) ......................... 1.4952
South Korea (Won) .................... 1,209.56

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New base for Marines taking shape on Guam

By Seth Robson
Stars and Stripes

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam — A new home for thousands of Marines is taking shape on land near Andersen Air Force Base that, until recently, was covered in a thick jungle full of snakes and littered with World War II-era bombs and bullets.

Dozens of workers swarmed over a construction site at Finegayan, near the northern tip of Guam late last month.

The facility they’re building, to be known as Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz, is named in honor of the late Marine Brig. Gen. Vicente “Ben” Tomas Garrido Blaz, a Guam native. The base is designed to accommodate 5,000 Marines under a plan to reduce America’s military footprint on the Japanese island of Okinawa over the next decade.

In 18 months, the workers have cleared snake-infested jungle that covered a small arsenal of unexploded munitions, including bombs as large as 500 pounds, grenades, rockets and bullets.

Heavy equipment is still moving earth across 400 acres that will become work and living areas for single Marines. But it’s possible to get an idea of what the base will look like with a road leading to its main gate and the shells of a few concrete buildings rising from the dirt.

The heart of Camp Blaz, where barracks will be built for unaccompanied Marines, is next door to Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station Guam, just west of Andersen. The top secret listening post includes an impres-
Military family sues over moldy housing conditions at base

BY ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

Another military family in the San Diego area has filed a lawsuit against Lincoln Military Housing, complaining of mold-infested housing that was not properly addressed and caused ongoing illnesses.

There are now at least nine ongoing cases against the military housing management company in San Diego Superior Court, according to the court’s online database.

The latest lawsuit, filed Feb. 18 by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Ryan Prunty, his wife, Cynthia, and their three sons, seeks damages for nine allegations including gross negligence, restatement and negligent infliction of emotional distress.

The family arrived at Camp Pendleton after leasing two other homes at California bases from Lincoln with no issues. Their troubles began after Camp Pendleton on the day they arrived in March 2017, according to the lawsuit. When they moved into the residence, the family “discovered a number of sanitation issues and health hazards on the leased property, including dirt and animal hair imbedded in the floor, dog feces inside the house, a maggot infestation underneath the house and mold inside the closets and within the window-sills,” according to the suit.

The issues were reported to Lincoln and the company classified the mold as cosmetic and directed the family to use bleach and clean it themselves, according to the lawsuit. The Prunty family ultimately paid a cleaning company “to sweep the home and make it habitable.”

Ryan Prunty, a hospital corpsman at the base, also reported water damage and leakage.

Throughout the two years that the Prunty family lived in the house, the couple’s children became sick. All three boys began wheezing, coughing and sneezing, according to the lawsuit. In January 2019, one son spent a month in the hospital for a swollen lymph node.

Lincoln Military Housing said in a statement that the company strictly follows state and federal industry standards.

“While we are looking into the facts in this case, we strongly deny these allegations and look forward to defending ourselves in a court of law,” according to the statement.

The statement also added that Lincoln has worked with its residents over the past year to develop and implement policies to improve customer service and satisfaction.

Of the other ongoing lawsuits filed against Lincoln in San Diego, only one has reached a jury. In September, the jury awarded $2 million in damages to a Marine Corps family. Two months later, however, a judge ruled that the award was excessive and ordered a new trial to determine the appropriate amount the family of four should receive. A hearing is scheduled in that case for this month.

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Marine who died during training exercise identified

BY JOSHUA KARSTEN
Stars and Stripes

MANAMA, Bahrain — The Marine who died in a training accident during an exercise in the United Arab Emirates has been identified as Cpl. Eloiza Zavala of California.

Zavala, 20, a native of Sacramento, was a motor vehicle operator with Combat Logistic Battalion 13 out of Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Two Marines who were injured in the accident were not identified, but Camp Pendleton said in a statement that a lance corporal sustained serious injuries and a corporal suffered non-life-threatening injuries. Both Marines are being treated at medical facilities in Abu Dhabi.

“This is a tragic accident, and we are praying for the loved ones of our lost and injured Marines,” Brig. Gen. Roberta L. Shea of the 1st Marine Logistics Group said in a statement. “Our priority is assisting in medical recovery efforts and to provide comfort and assistance to their families, friends and comrades during this trying time.”

The accident, which occurred Tuesday, involved a single medium tactical vehicle replacement on a road in the UAE. It is currently under investigation, the statement said.

Zavala enlisted in the Marine Corps in April 2018 and graduated from Motor Transportation School at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. She was previously attached to Combat Logistic Battalion 1 at Camp Pendleton in December 2018. Her awards include a National Defense Service Medal and a Global War on Terror Service Medal, according to the statement.

Thousands of U.S. and UAE forces are taking part in Native Fury, a joint biennial training exercise, which started in November. The live-fire exercise is designed to demonstrate the ability to respond to contingencies, natural disasters and other crises in the region.
**WAR ON TERRORISM**

**Iran-controlled militia suspected in attack**

By Corey Dickstein

WASHINGTON — A top U.S. general on Thursday fingered an Iranian-linked Shia militia group as likely responsible for the rocket attack on an Iraqi base that killed two American service members, a Polish service member, potentially reigniting tensions between the United States and Iran.

Marine Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, the commander of the U.S. Central Command, said the investigation into Wednesday's attack on Camp Taji north of Baghdad was ongoing, but Kataeb Hezbollah is probably the culprit.

"I will note that the Iranian militia group Kataeb Hezbollah is the only group known to have previously conducted an indirect fire attack of this scale against U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq," McKenzie said while testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

He also warned attacks resulting in the deaths of American and coalition troops, such as the Wednesday attack, would cross a "red line," foreshadowing some forthcoming American military response to the incident.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper, later Thursday, vowed such retaliation would be focused and "aggressive." Esper said, stopping short of naming Kataeb Hezbollah as responsible.

"I will note that the Iranian militia group Kataeb Hezbollah has previously conducted an indirect fire attack of this scale against coalition forces in Iraq," McKenzie told lawmakers. "The attack Wednesday saw nearly 20 107mm Katyusha rockets strike Camp Taji where American and other troops with the anti-Islamic State coalition train Iraqi forces, according to the coalition. McKenzie confirmed two U.S. service members were killed in the attack and several more were wounded. The United Kingdom on Wednesday said one of its troops, from the Royal Army Medical Corps, was also killed.

Names of the fallen troops had not been released as of Thursday morning, pending the family notification process.

Army Gen. Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said 14 other coalition troops were injured in the attack, including five who required urgent care. He said the wounded included American, British and Polish service members and contractors. Milley said the attack also damaged buildings and structures on the base.

**Congress acts to limit Trump on military action in Iran**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Defying a veto threat, Congress has approved a bipartisan measure to limit President Donald Trump’s authority to launch military operations against Iran.

The House gave final legislative approval to the measure Wednesday, 227-186, sending it to Trump. The president has promised to veto the war powers resolution, warning that if his “hands were tied, Iran would have a field day.”

The resolution, sponsored by Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., declares that Trump must get approval from Congress before engaging in further military action against Iran. Kaine and other supporters say the measure is not about Trump or even the presidency, but instead is an important reassessment of congressional power to declare war.


In the Senate last month, eight Republicans backed the resolution. The resolution “sends a clear message that the American people don’t want war with Iran and that Congress has not authorized war with Iran,” said Rep. Eliot Engel, D-N.Y., chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

**Attack:** Polish soldier injured in incident

**FROM FRONT PAGE**

said. While CENTCOM officials were still working to determine responsibility, McKenzie told lawmakers only the Iranian proxy group Kataeb Hezbollah had previously conducted an indirect fire attack of this scale against coalition forces in Iraq.

In the wake of the attack, Syrian opposition activists and a war monitor reported three unidentified aircraft struck bases hosting American troops and the Green Zone in Baghdad, which houses the U.S. Embassy in Iraq. The group was also deemed responsible for a similar attack on a U.S.-Iraqi base in Kirkuk in northern Iraq in December that killed an American defense contractor and ignited tensions that brought the United States and Iran to the brink of war in January.

The attack Wednesday saw nearly 20 107mm Katyusha rockets strike Camp Taji where American and other troops with the anti-Islamic State coalition train Iraqi forces, according to the coalition. McKenzie confirmed two U.S. service members were killed in the attack and several more were wounded. The United Kingdom on Wednesday said one of its troops, from the Royal Army Medical Corps, was also killed.

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NATO firefighters hold training with US at Ramstein

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — Armed with hoses and oxygen masks, firefighters from four NATO countries took turns Wednesday putting out a propane-fueled fire on a burning jet simulator as U.S. instructors looked on.

The tricky part of the live fire drill was getting the pilot out — a ragdoll-like manikin seated inside the cockpit of the F-15 fire trainer.

One of the lessons the teams from Latvia, Lithuania, the Czech Republic and Bulgaria learned at the U.S. Air Forces in Europe Fire Academy is to carry the pilot down the ladder feet first to protect the head.

Led by instructors from the 435th Construction and Training Squadron, the academy holds courses several times a year for NATO firefighters, offering unique live fire training.

Other drills during the week included a structure burn and room-to-room search and rescue.

“Our Army doesn’t have this similar facility for training,” said Capt. Jan Mericka of the Czech Army’s Logistics Agency.

The F-15 fire trainer was used for the first time Wednesday, said Tech. Sgt. Frank Butler, a 435th CTS instructor. It took about 18 months to align U.S. and European safety requirements before it could be used.

Feeding a line of propane to the trainer, the instructors controlled the height and length of the fire, simulating first an engine intake fire, then a brake fire, Butler said.

The presence of U.S. aircraft throughout Europe underscores the importance of the drills, Butler said.

“They’ll be able to provide that support in the event there was an aircraft emergency,” he said.

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Clockwise from top: A team of Lithuanian firefighters put out the flames coming from a mock fighter jet engine on Wednesday at the USAFE Fire Academy on Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Two members of the Latvian firefighting team carry the pilot, a dummy, away from the mockup of a jet fighter. A firefighting team pulls out the dummy from a fighter jet mockup after putting out a fire on the jet. Czech firefighters get ready for training.

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes
DOD limits travel based on path of virus

BY JOSEPH DITZLER
Stars and Stripes

The Defense Department imposed travel restrictions effective Friday and in some cases banned travel for 60 days to countries affected by COVID-19, according to a memo from Defense Secretary Mark Esper.

The order encompasses eight countries in Asia, Europe and the Middle East, including several where the United States has a substantial military presence.

The DOD essentially banned travel throughout China, Italy, Iran and South Korea, all countries under a Travel Health Notice Level 3 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, according to Esper’s memo. A CDC Level 3 advisory means a widespread community transmission of the disease is occurring.

The “stop movement” order to those countries is for uniformed service members, DOD civilians and family members. It encompasses “all forms of official travel,” including permanent changes of station, temporary duty and government-funded leave.

For uniformed personnel, the order also bans personal leave and other non-official travel. To comply with Level 2 CDC travel advisory, which include Japan, Singapore, the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia, the DOD ordered official travel deferred for anything other than essential missions. Level 2 means a sustained community spread of the disease is underway.

However, official travel by family members of uniformed and DOD civilian employees to Level 2 countries is barred for 60 days starting Friday. DOD instructed travel for civilian positions in Level 2 and Level 3 countries is also on hold for that period, according to Esper’s order.

His memo allows exceptions for “compelling cases,” including humanitarian reasons and extreme hardships.

Combatant commanders have authority to grant exceptions for command members, as do secretaries of military departments and chief management officers for their respective organizations, the memo states.

An accompanying personnel and readiness memo details further instructions for all DOD travel, including travel reclassification, screening prior to boarding military aircraft and managing patients who show COVID-19 symptoms.

All DOD organizations should identify service members who “travel or have traveled in the prior 14 days” to a Level 3 or Level 2 country, whether by military or commercial carriers or by personal means. That instruction applies to all travel, official or personal. Those personnel should be placed on 14-day restricted movement.

Military air crews are exempt from most travel guidance for countries under Level 3 and Level 2 advisories, according to the memo.

In those cases, the DOD expects that “DOD sponsored travelers” who recently visited those countries switch en route to military or DOD-contracted aircraft “to the greatest extent possible.”

It lays out detailed instructions for service members on “restricted movement,” including a 14-day quarantine inside their home or “other appropriate domicile,” avoiding close contact with others and self-monitoring for a fever, cough or difficulty breathing.

“DOD strongly recommends that DOD civilian employees, contractor personnel and family members who travel through, to or from countries under levels 2 and 3 advisories follow the travel guidance for uniformed personnel. The DOD instructions are “more stringent than CDC guidance.”

That also means limiting workplace access for 14 days for those who traveled to the affected countries, and working from home if possible.

Esper confirms more service members, dependents tested positive for virus

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Seven American service members and seven military dependents have confirmed cases of the coronavirus, Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Thursday at the Pentagon.

At least one service member with a confirmed case has been reported in South Korea, Naples, Italy; Quantico, Va.; and Washington state.

Dependents who have been infected are in South Korea and Washington state, but Esper did not say whether all seven cases are from those two locations.

An airman assigned to Altus Air Force Base, Okla., has tested presumptive positive for the coronavirus, the Air Force announced Thursday afternoon. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a presumptive positive result is when a patient has tested positive by a local public health laboratory, but those results are still pending confirmation at a CDC lab.

The airman had recently traveled to Seattle, Wash. The state currently has one of the largest outbreaks of the virus in the country.

A contractor at Moody Air Force Base in Georgia has also tested positive for coronavirus, according to the Air Force.

Starting Friday, all travel for service members, dependents and DOD civilians to and from locations with severe coronavirus outbreaks will be suspended for 60 days, including military moves. Countries with these widespread outbreaks, or Level 3 locations, include Italy, South Korea and Germany.

Travel is also being denied for 60 days for families and DOD civilians to and from Level 2 locations with a sustained community spread, such as Japan, the United Kingdom and Bahrain. Anyone who has traveled to or from these Level 2 or 3 countries will have to undergo a screening and 14-day quarantine.

The DOD travel restrictions are to protect the force.

“We think that rather than moving back and forth, that you’re better off protecting in place,” Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Thursday.

Travel ban extends to US personnel, families in a wide swath of Europe

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — New Pentagon travel restrictions aimed at curtailing the spread of coronavirus in the United States could affect up to 70,000 military and civilian personnel in Europe.

Starting Friday, all travel restrictions, which takes effect Friday, applies to locations the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention deems Level 3 risks because of widespread sustained transmission of the virus. Germany and 28 other European countries were added to the Level 3 list of countries after Defense Secretary Mark Esper ordered the travel ban. The restriction bars all forms of travel, including permanent changes of station, temporary duty, and government-funded leave, the Pentagon said in a statement.

Esper’s order at first only applied to the countries hit hardest by the virus — China, Italy, Iran and South Korea, which the CDC had already advised against traveling to. But the agency moved much of Europe to Level 3 after Esper’s order. The list now includes countries where thousands of American service members, civilians and DOD civilians to and from those locations.

The new travel restrictions are in line with other countries under high levels of risk because of widespread sustained transmission of the virus. Germany and 28 other European states switch en route to military bases in the United States.

Esper’s order at first only applied to the countries hit hardest by the virus — China, Italy, Iran and South Korea, which the CDC had already advised against traveling to. But the agency moved much of Europe to Level 3 after Esper’s order. The list now includes countries where thousands of American service members, civilians and DOD civilians to and from those locations.

The order now applies to all travel, official or personal, for service members on “restricted movement,” including a 14-day restricted movement.

However, official travel by families and contractors of uniformed and DOD civilian employees to Level 2 countries is barred for 60 days starting Friday. DOD instructed travel for civilian positions in Level 2 and Level 3 countries is also on hold for that period, according to Esper’s order.

His memo allows exceptions for “compelling cases,” including humanitarian reasons and extreme hardships.

Esper confirmed more service members, dependents tested positive for virus

At a town hall on Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, on Thursday, leaders addressed concerns about the virus from personnel on the installation. Some issues still have to be sorted out, said Col. David Epperson, the 52nd Fighter Wing commander, such as whether personnel could travel within the restricted countries.

Travel outside of Europe, including for leave that’s already been approved and near-term PCS moves, however, appears “to be off the table right now,” he said during the live-streamed event posted to the wing’s Facebook page.

“For me, it’s very clear guidance from the Secretary of Defense — we are not supposed to travel,” Epperson said.

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Americans realize impact as events cut short

A basketball tournament, with no fans. A St. Patrick’s Day, with no parades. College campuses, with no students. Corporate head- quarters, with baron cubicles. California’s governor urged people to avoid even small social gatherings if they can’t remain six feet apart.

The nation snapped to attention as the new coronavirus was declared a pandemic and stocks slid into bear market territory. As Americans belatedly seemed to come to grips with the outbreak, President Donald Trump held a rare prime-time address from the Oval Office to calm the public.

Health and government officials have been sounding the alarm about the virus for nearly two months as it infected and killed thousands of people, pinn- balling from China to Iran to Italy and beyond before striking Se- attle in the first deadly outbreak in the U.S.

But Wednesday was the momen- tum that the larger American public came to the dawning re- alization that the toll of the virus would be unavoidable for months to come, perhaps longer.

In a matter of hours Wednesday afternoon, the signs were everywhere. The NCAA an- nounced that the rite of spring for so many Americans — its college basketball tournament — would be played before largely empty arenas. The NBA said it would suspend its season until further notice.

News feeds lit up with cancella- tions of St. Patrick’s Day parades, major university systems in Cali- fornia, New York and elsewhere, endings classes for the term and the rest of the semester online mounted.

In New York City, there have only been a few dozen people di- agnosed with COVID-19, but the virus is still all that anyone was talking about. Subway trains, usually jam- packed at rush hour, were unusually uncrowded Wednesday. City transportation officials reported that the number of people cycling to work in Manhattan over the East River bridges has soared 55% over the past few days as people have heeded the mayor’s suggestion to avoid public trans- portation during peak hours.

Rhode Island Gov. Gina Rai- mondo also asked residents not to organize or attend gatherings of more than 25 people; people have stopped short of an outright ban but pleaded for people sick even the just aches and pains to stay home.

“We understand that people have to live their lives and busi- ness has to continue,” she said. “However, we only have one chance to contain this.”

Travel: US citizens, family of citizens are not affected by European ban

FROM FRONT PAGE

Trump said the restrictions won’t apply to the United King- dom, and there would be exemp- tions for “Americans who have undergone appropriate screen- ings.” He said the U.S. would monitor the situation to deter- mine when travel could be reopened earlier.

The State Department followed Trump’s remarks by issuing an extraordinary global health ad- visory cautioning U.S. citizens to “reconsider travel abroad” due to the virus and associated quaran- tines and restrictions.

Trump spoke after days of confusion in Washington and in the face of mounting calls on the president to demonstrate greater leadership. At times, though, his remarks contributed to the uncertainty.

While Trump said all European travel would be cut off, Homeland Security officials later clarified that the new travel restrictions would apply only to most foreign nationals who have been in the “Schengen Area” at any point for 14 days prior to their scheduled arrival to the United States. The area includes France, Italy, Ger- many, Greece, Austria, Belgium and others, and the White House said the zone has the highest number of confirmed COVID-19 cases outside of mainland China.

The restrictions don’t apply to legal permanent residents, im- mediate family of U.S. citizens or others “identified in the proc- lamation” signed by Trump. Vice President Mike Pence said Thursday on ABC’s “Good Morn- ing America” that the Trump administration is also request- ing travelers returning to the U.S. from Europe to “voluntarily quarantine” for 14 days.

Trump said the prohibitions would “not only apply to the tre- ckeness -luding travel to trade and cargo but various other things.” But the official proclamation re- leased after Trump spoke made it clear it applies to people, not goods and cargo.

The Oval Office address re- presented an abrupt shift in tone from a president who has re- peatedly sought to play down the severity of the virus outbreak. Many Americans shared a similar mindset in recent weeks, but the timeline of events Wednes- day changed the mood: Com- munities canceled public events nationwide, universities moved to cancel in-person classes, and families grappled with the impact of disruptions to public schools.

The number of confirmed cases of the infection grew by more than 1,300 people in the U.S. and the World Health Organization declared the global crisis is now a pandemic.
Italy base facilities among nationwide closures

Massive Army exercise in Europe is curtailed amid coronavirus angst

The Women in Military Service for America Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery, temporary duty, government-funded travel, personal leave and non-official travel, government-funded travel, personal leave and non-official travel, a mess said.

Italy, which has the worst coronavirus outbreak outside of Asia and has a near-peer threat from a neighboring nation, has been placed under a 60-day stop transmission of the coronavirus. The CDC advises people to avoid nonessential travel to Level-3 countries.

The food court at the base expressed concern over potential outbreaks of the coronavirus, marking the first time Tuesday and will remain closed through at least Monday, Schonberg said. American service members, their families and base personnel Aviano have been asked to stay home, only going out for mission-essential work, emergencies or to buy necessities such as food. At Aviano, food was available at the commissary, the Italian cafeteria, Mensa, the dining facility and both shopettes, base officials said. Physical training has been limited by Sigonella’s airfield site, although service members can work out on their own at the other two sites on base, public affairs officer Lt. Karl Schonberg said. The base’s schools and other facilities closed for the first time Tuesday and will remain closed through at least Monday, Schonberg said.

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Despite patients recovering, many still have worries

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Amid all the fears, quarantines and stockpiling of food, it has been easy to ignore the fact that more than 60,000 people have recovered from the coronavirus spreading around the globe.

The disease can cause varying degrees of illness and is especially troublesome for older adults and people with pre-existing health problems, who are at risk of severe effects, including pneumonia. But for most of those affected, coronavirus creates only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough, with the vast majority recovering from the virus.

According to the World Health Organization, 60,000 people have recovered in about two weeks, while those with more severe ailments may take three to six weeks to rebound. In mainland China, where the virus first exploded, more than 80,000 people have been diagnosed, but more than 5,800 already have recovered.

Because the difference in impact can be so great, global health authorities have the difficult task of alerting the public to the virus’ dangers without creating panic. Already, the widespread consequences of the virus have been staggering, sending shock waves through the world’s financial markets. Social and economic lives of billions of people have been stunted, as job losses since the Gulf War in 1991, and new restrictions were imposed in Italy and in Israel as the Holy Week approached.

But even some of the most vulnerable patients can fight their way through the disease. Charlie Campbell’s father, Eugene Campbell, 89, has been diagnosed with the coronavirus and hospitalized in Edmonds, Wash. Charlie Campbell said his father’s doctor is cautiously optimistic, adding, “Under normal circumstances, he would discharge my dad, but these aren’t normal circumstances.”

Eugene Campbell came to the hospital from Life Care Center, a nursing home in Kirkland that has been linked to a large share of the state’s coronavirus deaths.

“We went and saw him yesterday and he looked pretty good,” Campbell said, noting that his father is breathing normally and his vital signs and heart rate are good. “He may be the oldest person to recover from coronavirus.”

In China, Tan Shiyun, a postgraduate student at a university in Wuhan, had traveled to her family home in Yichang over 180 miles away when she began to experience minor symptoms from the virus.

She went to the hospital, where she was given common cold medicine and sent home. It was only after a week that she was hospitalized when she visited the hospital a second time for an outpatient CT scan and received a call asking her to come back did she understand her symptoms came from something other than the common flu.

After many days and a number of tests, doctors eventually told her that the infection had spread to both of her lungs.

After that, I felt a heavy head while walking, unable to breathe, and nauseous,” Tan said in a video blog post. But after over two weeks in the hospital, a CT scan showed her infection was disappearing and she was discharged.

For some who’ve been quarantined, anxiety and dread that they will be stigmatized by friends, neighbors and co-workers has been so great that they will become stigmatized ever after. A few patients with the virus who were interviewed by The Associated Press — all of them passengers on the Diamond Princess cruise ship that ended up quarantined and isolated in Japan — described symptoms that were not stronger than a regular cold or flu.

“It has been a 2 on a scale of 10,” said Carl Goldman, hospitalized in Omaha, Neb., since Feb. 17, after developing a 103-degree fever on a chartered flight from Japan to the U.S.

Goldman said he continued coughing for more than two weeks after he first got sick, but would probably only have missed one day of work if he had been diagnosed with the cold or flu.

Greg Yerez, who was diagnosed along with his wife, Rose Yerex, on the Diamond Princess, said he had no symptoms and felt as healthy as he did on any other normal day.

“If I was home, I would be out doing everything I normally do,” he said in an interview conducted via Facebook calls when the couple was still hospitalized in Nagoya, Japan. Rose Yerex tested negative when she got to the hospital.

For Greg Yerez, it was the couple’s mental health that faced the biggest threat as they spent days in quarantine, isolated from friends and family and deprived of any direct human contact.

“It’s like being a prisoner,” he said. “You pace, you worry, you fret, you imagine all sorts of things. You have no control.”

Greg Yerez said that he and his wife have since been released from the hospital.

DC strains for virus response amid closures, confusion

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Washington is straining for an ample response to the coronavirus outbreak that is testing the nation’s political and health care systems after President Donald Trump restricted travel from Europe, Congress ran into trouble approving an aid package and the centers of power of the domed Capitol and stately White House — are being shuttered casually across the world’s financial centers.

The State Department issued a global health advisory cautioning U.S. citizens to “reconsider travel abroad” due to the virus and associated quarantines and restrictions.

Congress’s multibillion-dollar aid package from Democrats was being halted by Republicans before a hoped-for vote Thursday. “Right now we have to find our common ground to work together to get this done as soon as possible,” said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

Trump said he would not support the measure “because there are things in there that have nothing to do with what we’re talking about.” He did not go into detail.

The bill would build on last week’s $8.3 billion emergency coronavirus measure and provide free testing, a new federal sick pay program, more unemployment insurance and food aid for workers and other Americans hit by the crisis.

The package would create a federal sick pay program, providing up to three months of partial pay, for those stricken or caring for those ill from the virus.

It would require health insurance companies to provide free testing for the virus and eliminates cost-sharing requirements such as co-payments for Medicare and Medicaid patients. There’s more than $1 billion in food aid for the poor and senior citizens, including money to replace school lunch benefits for children whose schools have closed. It has $1 billion in extra money for unemployment pay, for the newly jobless.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., called it “an ideological wish list” that Republicans would oppose.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

GREG YEREX/ AP

Greg and Rose Yerex in a hospital in Nagoya, Japan, on Feb. 24. Former passengers of the cruise ship Diamond Princess, they both tested positive for the coronavirus.

Carl Goldman at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, on Feb. 19. A Diamond Princess passenger, Goldman arrived after developing a fever while flying back from Japan.

‘We’re basically, in my opinion, flying blind.’

Rep. Susie Lee

D-Nev.

“We should be exuding confidence nationally,” said Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Calif. “The confusion is damaging.

Congress decided to shut the Capitol to the public until April. Congressional office buildings and the Congressional Visitor Center, through which tourists enter the Capitol, were also being closed. Only lawmakers, staff, journalists and visitors with official business will be permitted to enter. White House tours have been temporarily suspended.

The Smithsonian said it was canceling all public events, programming and gatherings, including rental of its facilities, through May 3. The Smithsonian’s network of museums and the National Zoo will remain open for now.

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Sick leave policies limit options for avoiding virus

By Kelvin Chan and Mae Anderson
Associated Press

LONDON — A barber in Beijing is supporting his wife and child by charging food and other expenses to a credit card while he waits for his employer’s shop to reopen. A waiter at a barbecue restaurant in Kansas City, Mo., washes his hands more often and hopes for the best. A parcel delivery driver in Britain worries about getting sick from the people who sign for their packages.

While white collar workers trying to avoid contagion can work from home or call in sick if they experience symptoms of the virus, that’s not an option for the millions of waiters, delivery workers, cashiers, ride-hailing drivers, museum attendants and countless others who routinely come into contact with the public.

Their dilemma is often compounded by spotty sick leave policies or inadequate health insurance coverage, leaving them vulnerable to the fast-spreading coronavirus that has already claimed thousands of lives and put them in a financially precarious position.

“The recommendations on what people should be doing to protect themselves really gives a sharp contrast to the duties between what a white collar and blue collar workers,” said Shannon Liss-Reardon, a workers rights attorney in Boston.

In the U.S., social distancing is just not equipped at this moment to deal with a crisis like this, and it will disproportionately affect the most vulnerable low wage workers.”

While tech companies like Facebook have implemented work-from-home policies, only 29% of U.S. workers have that option, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That means retail workers like Mendy Hughes must fend for themselves. The Walmart cashier in Malvern, Ark., serves hundreds of people a day, and her big worry is what will happen to her income if she catches the virus or comes in contact with someone who’s had it and must self-quarantine for 14 days.

“If I can’t go to work, I could try to take a leave but it will be unpaid,” said Hughes, who earns $11.60 an hour. “I don’t know what I would be doing about taking care of my family.”

On Tuesday, Walmart announced a new policy that might offer her some relief: employees who work in a region that is required to quarantine by the government or by the retailer, as well as those who have a confirmed case of the new virus, will receive two weeks of pay. If they are not able to return to work after that time, additional pay may be provided for up to 26 weeks for both full-time and part-time hourly workers.

In the United States, about 27% of private sector workers don’t have access to paid sick leave, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Some countries, like Britain, are looking into helping out non-permanent workers.

There is no federal sick leave policy in the U.S., but 12 of the 50 states and Washington, D.C., require employers to offer paid sick leave.

Some House and Senate Democrats have been pushing legislation that would have required employers to allow workers to accrue seven days of paid sick leave and to provide an additional 14 days in the event of any public health emergency, including the current coronavirus crisis. President Donald Trump said he was seeking help for hourly-wage workers to ensure they’re “not going to miss a paycheck” Tuesday when he offered a proposed payroll tax break. Trump’s team offered few specifics at a closed door GOP luncheon Tuesday on the size of the payroll tax break or its duration, senators said.

The British government last week announced statutory sick pay and is working on changes to help millions of non-permanent workers like Cross who aren’t eligible for it. In a sign the industry is waking up to the problem, his parcel company, Hermes, announced a $1.3 million fund to help couriers who need to self-isolate.

The viral outbreak has revealed yawning gaps in health care coverage at a time when people may need it most. Most European countries and Canada have universal health care systems, but the U.S. relies on a patchwork of public and private insurance. About 69% of private sector industry workers in the U.S. have access to health care benefits, but that drops to 43% of service industry employees. Fifty or more employees are required to offer health insurance. But the same protection isn’t provided to temporary workers or independent contractors.

Liss-Reardon said that most gig workers — independent or temporary contractors — represent workers without health insurance:

“We won’t have a fully insured public for the next generation,” said Liss-Reardon. “This will be the private health care,” he said. “The burden is falling on the poorest and most vulnerable in our society.”

Behind the scenes, scientists prep for COVID-19 vaccine test

By Lauran Neergaard
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A team of scientists geared for a view of the lab dish, staring impatiently for the first clue that an experimental drug will be effective against the new coronavirus might just work.

After weeks of constant research at the National Institutes of Health, it was time for a key test. If the vaccine revs up the immune system, the samples in the dish could yield a vaccine that could be used against other coronaviruses.

One frustration when scientists have to start from scratch is that outbreaks too often are waning by the time vaccine candidates are ready for widespread testing.

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Fauci said it is “quite conceivable” that COVID-19 “will go beyond just a season, and come back and recycle next year. In that case, we hope to have a vaccine.”

A waitress at the Chinese restaurant Hot Pot serves customers in London.
**Virus Outbreak**

**Spread triggers travel bans, new limits on society**

**Associated Press**

**ROME** — Sweeping travel bans accelerated around the globe Thursday, walling regions apart, keeping people inside their homes and slowing the engines of commerce to slow the unfolding coronavirus pandemic.

President Donald Trump, who had downplayed the virus for weeks, delivered a somber Oval Office address asking for an emergency declaration in the United States, raising questions about the consequences of the U.S. policy. Trump accused Europe of not acting quickly enough to address the “foreign virus” and claimed that U.S. clusters were “separated by ocean.”

But even as Europe’s cases are surging, WHO emergency chief Dr. Michael Ryan said the virus had killed more than 360 people in the continent. Iran’s death toll soared to 24 as the Islamic Republic faced its biggest challenge since the 1979 revolution.

A couple kiss at the airport in Barcelona, Spain, on Thursday, President Donald Trump, who had downplayed the coronavirus for weeks, suddenly struck a different tone, announcing strict rules on restricting travel from much of Europe to begin this weekend.

**Friday, March 13, 2020**

**Associated Press**

**DUBAI, United Arab Emir- ates** — A spike in cases in the Gulf Arab states helped push infections in the Middle East for the new coronavirus past 10,000 cases on Thursday, with most infected people either in Iran or having recently traveled there.

The vast majority of people recover from the virus within two to three weeks, but for some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness and death.

A man wears a mask and gloves as he checks products at a supermarket in Beirut on Wednesday. Health Ministry officials say there are more confirmed cases of the coronavirus in Lebanon.

Because there is still no vaccine for the infectious disease, countries are implementing drastic measures to restrict its spread, as well as the impact an outbreak could have on emergency rooms and intensive care units.

Multiple top officials in Iran — from its senior vice president to cabinet ministers, members of parliament, Revolutionary Guard members, health workers and health ministry officials — have contracted the virus. Some of those officials have died.

A third Lebanese man died from the coronavirus, state-run National News Agency said Thursday. It said the man’s immune system was impaired because he had cancer. Local media reported the man was 79 years old and that the virus was transmitted to him from the first man who had died in Lebanon earlier this week. Outside of Iran, only Iraq, Egypt and Lebanon have recorded deaths from the virus in the Middle East.

This week, Qatar reported a massive jump in cases of the new coronavirus late Wednesday with 262 new infections. The more than 200 new cases had been found in quarantine. In Bahrain, confirmed cases also rose by nearly 70% this week to 189 confirmed cases, after some 77 new cases were confirmed on a return flight of Bahrainis from Iran.

Kuwait on Thursday closed all workplaces and non-essential business for two weeks, including restaurants, cafes and health clubs. Schools and universities have already been suspended.

All commercial flights are being halted to Kuwait starting Friday. The country has over 70 confirmed cases of the new virus.

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Trump, GOP allies move to discredit and attack Biden

By Zeke Miller and Bill Barrow

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump and his allies are planning sustained personal and reputational attacks against Joe Biden, casting him as ill-equipped for the presidency and pushing unsubstantiated claims of corruption as he emerges as the favorite for the Democratic nomination.

The president and his top campaign aides are stoking division among Democrats, arguing that Biden is only taking the lead in the Democratic primary because the party’s establishment is aligned against progressive rival Bernie Sanders. Fox News host Sean Hannity is portraying the 77-year-old Biden as a doddering old man, devoting nearly 10 minutes of his show Tuesday night to what he called “disturbing” verbal miscues.

And some Republicans in the Senate are moving to ensure there will be renewed scrutiny of Biden’s son, Hunter, and his ties to a Ukrainian company. By deploying the same methods, Trump and his allies believe that voters will favor the president’s combative nature and emphasize the importance of experience and honesty to the White House.

But that burn-it-down style will be moderated, gestão by a Democratic Party that is showing signs of greater unity against Trump than four years ago and hopes to build on victories from the 2018 midterms.

“Increased turnout and all of these big wins across the country make clear voters aren’t buying what Trump is selling this time,” said Scott Milhauser, a Democratic strategist and former Trump spokesman. “They know the Vice President, they like him and it’s clear they think he can win in November.”

But some Republicans warn against overconfidence by Democrats. “We’ve lost our way before. Nobody is better at driving a narrative about his opponents than Donald Trump,” said Republican consultant Terry Sullivan, who ran Marco Rubio’s 2016 presidential campaign. “Love him or hate him, there is no denying that he is a branding master.”

Biden’s campaign believes that its advantage over Trump’s attacks is the former vice president’s likability. As he consolidated support from Democratic lawmakers and other power brokers, his backers often say they’re endorsing Biden because “we’ve had enough,” or that they’ve been “disturbed” by Trump’s behavior.

“He’s been known for decades as someone who is true to himself and speaks his mind,” said Andrew Bates, who runs Biden’s rapid response operation. “This is not some over-calculating politician.”

“On balance,” Bates said, “that becomes an enormous strength.”

Issa advances to November runoff in race for California House seat

By Julie Watson

SAN DIEGO — Former U.S. Rep. Darrell Issa, a relentless critic of President Barack Obama who retired from his increasingly Democratic district two years ago, took a step toward returning to Congress by advancing Wednesday to a runoff in one of Southern California’s last conservative bastions.

Issa, 66, will face off in November against 31-year-old Democrat Ami Bera, who narrowly pulled ahead in the March primary. Issa, who was a California Republican, has been accused by Republicans of running a “no brains” campaign. If Bera wins, it could cost Trump a U.S. House seat in California.

The former congressman, who retired in 2019 after serving 18 years in Congress, had won the district’s 50th District seat in 2010.

Issa and DeMaio, a San Diego radio host and political commentator, were among the top two vote-getters in the March primary. Issa, who was considered a moderate Republican, finished first with 37%. DeMaio, a conservative, finished second with 33%.

Under California’s election rules, candidates from all parties run in a single primary and the top two vote-getters advance.

DeMaio said in an email to his supporters that he will be running in the November runoff. He added that he will support the Republican candidates fighting to win California House seats in November, including his former foe Issa.

Despite his first-place finish in the primary, it will be an uphill battle for Campa-Najjar, a small businessman and former public affairs official for the Obama administration. In Issa, he is up against a former nine-term congressman who has name recognition, a loyal following with the GOP and huge personal wealth from his time running vehicle security companies to underwrite his campaign.

Issa spent more than $2.7 million during the primary to Campa-Najjar’s $1.2 million. He previously represented the neighboring congressional 50th district that includes parts of San Diego and Orange counties, but was facing a tough re-election fight two years ago in the increasingly Democratic district and retired.

Campa-Najjar, a Democrat running to represent the district for the first time, has said he will use the money from his winning bid to secure enough delegates to clinch the nomination before the Democratic National Convention in Milwaukee.

While our campaign has won the ideological debate, we are losing the debate over electability,” Sanders said, meaning that Democrats think Biden has a better chance of beating President Donald Trump in the fall. “That is what millions of Democrats and independents today believe.”

He was quick to add that he thinks he’s the stronger choice, and that he could show that during Sunday’s debate. Sanders promised to press Biden for answers about millions of Americans who don’t have health insurance, a criminal justice system that he said unfairly targets and punishes minorities, and passing the federal minimum wage.

After that, though, Democratic desperate desire to defeat Trump could affect his calculus. Should Sanders get out soon, he could save Democrats months of a money and expensive primary fight. But an early departure would also deprive the party’s most passionate supporters, including many young people, of the one man who embodies the dramatic change they crave.

Sanders also noted that he was winning a greater percentage of young voters while Biden continued to run up the score with older ones.

“It’s hard to imagine an earthquake large enough that would change the outcome,” he said, meaning an Issa victory.

But Democratic political strategist Bill Carrick thinks the party’s fortunes are changing there.

“We’ve seen many congressional districts move slowly but surely from strong Republican to toss up to some now that are pretty Democratic,” said Carrick, who is based in Los Angeles.
Senate approves repeal of rebuke on student loans

By Collin Binkley
Associated Press

The Senate on Wednesday gave final congressional approval to a measure that would overturn rules issued by Education Secretary Betsy DeVos in 2019 that made it harder for students to get loans erased after being misled by for-profit colleges.

DeVos, who served as President Donald Trump’s education secretary until 2019, had threatened a presidential veto of the measure, which passed with a 53-42 vote, stands as a rare rebuke of DeVos by a Republican-led Senate. The House approved the measure in January, and it now goes to President Donald Trump. The White House has threatened a presidential veto but it remains to be seen whether Trump will overturn a resolution that drew support from 10 Republican senators.

The Education Department quickly condemned the move and defended her policy.

“It’s disappointing to see so many in Congress fooled by misinformation from the Left and the fake news narrative about our efforts to protect students from fraud.” Education Department spokeswoman Angela Morabito said in a statement. “Our rule is consistent with Congress’s intent, it protects students and it treats personal financial harm.

DeVos’ rules required students to apply for loan forgiveness 180 days after leaving the school, and they ended a policy allowing the Education Department to cancel loans for large groups of students that attended schools known to have committed fraud.

The measure would undo DeVos’ changes and restore the rules created under President Barack Obama. The move drew quick praise from borrower advocates and consumer protection groups, along with Democrats.

“We applaud the Senate for its bipartisan vote to overturn the borrower defense rule that attacks the rights of borrowers,” said Toby Merrill, director of the Project on Predatory Student Lending at Harvard University. “We call on the president to put the voices of students above the interests of for-profit colleges by signing this bipartisan legislation.”

Among the Republicans who sided with the measure was Sen. Cory Gardner of Colorado who said he was “proud to stand with students who were defrauded by educational institutions.”

White House has several policies to handle asylum-seekers in US

By Elliot Spagat
Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — The Supreme Court has allowed the Trump administration to continue making asylum-seekers wait in Mexico for their U.S. court hearings.

The Trump administration has enacted at least five policies since the beginning of last year that officials contend are designed to address asylum claims that don’t have merit and to confront a sharp increase in border arrests to a 13-year high in May. Here is a look at the policies and what they do.

Return to Mexico to wait for hearings

A Supreme Court decision on Wednesday affected the fate of a policy often called “Remain in Mexico.” It was introduced in January 2019 and gradually extended to all major crossing corridors.

Migrants arriving at the border are turned back to Mexico and must wait there for their court hearings in the U.S. Critics say it’s a reckless and inhumane program that has subjected countless asylum seekers to kidnapping, extortion and violence in Mexico.

Fly to Central America to seek asylum there

The administration has flown more than 800 people to Guatemala since November, denying them a chance to claim asylum in the United States. Instead, they can apply for asylum in Guatemala, which is stricken with poverty and violence.

All people sent to Guatemala so far are from El Salvador and Honduras. They are subject to the policy because they passed through Guatemala on the way to the U.S.

The government plans to expand the “Asylum Cooperative Agreements” program and start sending people back to Honduras and El Salvador to request asylum there as well.

Lightning-fast asylum hearings

About 4,000 Mexicans and Central Americans have been deported after failing initial screenings for asylum that are administered with very little turnaround time. They get one day to prepare while in Customs and Border Protection custody, where lights are on around the clock. During that time, they get a maximum of 60 to 90 minutes to call attorneys and cannot leave call-back numbers.

Asylum-seekers who appeal failed screenings are connected by phone to an immigration judge who reaches a final decision within two days.

Quick deportation flights to Central America

The U.S. government can now more quickly deport immigrants back to Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

Under a new policy, U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials can electronically verify citizenship of people who have final removal orders, avoiding the exercise of obtaining paper travel documents from a consular official, which officials say can take one to two weeks. They do not leave CBP custody, which typically lacks beds and showers.

Flights to Guadalajara for Mexican asylum-seekers

In January, the administration said it would begin deporting about 250 Mexicans a week on flights to Guadalajara from Tucson, Ariz., more than 1,000 miles apart. Authorities believe repeat attempts are less likely if they are returned deep in Mexico.

Attorneys: Chelsea Manning attempted suicide in Virginia jail

By Clarence Williams
The Washington Post

Former Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning attempted suicide inside an Alexandria, Virginia, jail Wednesday and was hospitalized just days before a federal judge is scheduled to hear a motion to release her from custody, according to her attorneys.

Jail officials responded to an incident involving Manning at 12:11 p.m. at the Alexandria Adult Detention Center, according to a statement released by Alexandria Sheriff Dana Lawhorne.

“It was handled appropriately by our professional staff and Ms. Manning is safe,” Lawhorne’s statement said.

Manning, who leaked hundreds of thousands of classified documents to WikiLeaks in 2010, has been held for about a year for refusing to testify to a federal grand jury investigating the anti-secrecy website.

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is charged in Alexandria federal court with violating the Espionage Act and accused of helping Manning expose secret war logs and diplomatic cables. He is fighting extradition from London.

“Ms. Manning has previously indicated that she will not betray her principles, even at risk of grave harm to herself,” her legal team said in a statement Wednesday.

“Her actions today evidence the strength of her convictions, as well as the profound harm she continues to suffer as a result of her ‘civil confinement.’

No other information could be immediately learned about the incident, which was first reported by Gizmodo.
Planet’s forecast is always cloudy with chance of iron rain

**Associated Press**

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — At one hot, faraway world, it’s always cloudy with a chance of iron rain.

That’s the otherworldly forecast from Swiss and other European astronomers who have detected clouds full of iron droplets at a hot Jupiter-like planet 390 light-years away.

This mega planet is so hot on the sunny side — 4,350 degrees Fahrenheit — that iron vaporizes in the atmosphere. The iron likely condenses on the cooler night side of the planet, almost certainly turning into rain.

“Like droplets of metal falling from the sky,” said Christophe Lovis of the University of Geneva who took part in the study.

The iron rain would be extremely dense and pack a pretty good punch, according to the research team whose study appears Wednesday in the journal Nature.

“It’s like in the heavy steel industry on Earth where they melt iron, and you see this melting, flowing metal. That’s pretty much what we are talking about here,” Lovis told The Associated Press.

Discovered just a few years ago, the planet designated Wasp-76b is nearly twice the size of Jupiter, the largest in our solar system, yet takes less than two days to orbit its star.

Because the rotation matches the time it takes to complete one orbit, the same side always faces the star.

So it’s always daytime on the star-facing side, with clear skies. And it’s always nighttime on the night side, where temperatures fall to about 2,700 degrees Fahrenheit and the sky is continually overcast with iron rain, according to the researchers.

Strong wind — gusting at more than 11,000 mph — constantly sweeps some of the vaporized iron from the day to night side of the planet. Inside the day-to-night transition zone, clouds appear to form as temperatures begin to drop.

“Surprisingly, however, we do not see the iron vapor in the morning” as night transitions back into day, lead scientist David Ehrenreich of the University of Geneva said in a statement.

The astronomers concluded the most likely explanation is that it rains iron on the night side.

Ehrenreich and his team studied Wasp-76b and its extreme climate using a new instrument on the European Southern Observatory’s Very Large Telescope in Chile.

While vaporized iron previously has been detected at an even hotter, more distant Jupiter-like world, this is the first time iron condensation has been seen, he said.

And lets people with Down syndrome know they “have lives that are worth living.”

The legislation is a compromise that reflects angst in both parties about the way the surveillance powers have been used, but also a reluctance to strip those powers from the government’s arsenal. The bipartisan bill, negotiated by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Republican leader Kevin McCarthy, would renew provisions that the FBI sees as vital to fighting terrorism even as it aims to ensure stricter oversight of how the bureau conducts surveillance.

The compromise, which passed 278-136, came after Republicans and Democrats in the House broadly agreed that they did not want civil liberties sacrificed in efforts to thwart terrorism and other crimes. Republicans had been aggressively seeking changes to the law as it aims to ensure stricter oversight of how the bureau conducts surveillance.

The Senate is poised to pass the bill, as well, after Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell issued a statement with several other Republicans saying they “strongly support this legislation and urge all of our Senate colleagues to join us.”

“Nothing in Ohio’s law creates a substantial obstacle to women obtaining an abortion,” Judge Jeffrey Sutton, another judge panel ruled the law is likely unconstitutional. It has been on hold since it was enacted.

In another of the Ohio case's legal twists, a group of mothers whose children have Down syndrome has sided with the ACLU of Ohio, Preterm-Cleveland and other abortion providers who brought the suit. They argue the law, which alone “the Down Syndrome Non-Discrimination Act” — actually perpetuates discrimination against their children by singling out their genetic anomaly over others.

Down syndrome is a genetic disorder that can cause a variety of physical and mental disabili- ties. It occurs in about one in 700 babies born in the U.S. each year, or about 6,000 annually.

House OKs restrictions on government surveillance

**Associated Press**

WASHINGTON — Congress has taken a first step toward addressing errors made by the FBI during its investigation of the Trump campaign and Russia, allowing House Republicans Wednesday to impose new restrictions on the federal government’s surveillance tools.

The legislation is a compromise that reflects angst in both parties about the way the surveillance powers have been used, but also a reluctance to strip those powers from the government’s arsenal. The bipartisan bill, negotiated by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Republican leader Kevin McCarthy, would renew provisions that the FBI sees as vital to fighting terrorism even as it aims to ensure stricter oversight of how the bureau conducts surveillance.

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The Senate is poised to pass the bill, as well, after Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell issued a statement with several other Republicans saying they “strongly support this legislation and urge all of our Senate colleagues to join us.”

The statement said the legislation “balances the need to reaffirm these critical authorities with the need for tailored reforms to increase accountability.” Signing on with McConnell were Senate Judiciary Commit- tee Chairman Lindsey Graham, Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Richard Burr, Texas Sen. John Cornyn and South Dakota Sen. John Thune.

But Wyden indicated he would not filibuster, or delay, the bill, saying he was focused on a re- sponse to the spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

It wasn’t certain what tactics Paul or Lee might use to slow down the legislation. Lee said Wednesday that “there are a lot of procedural tools at our disposal,” indicating he might try to delay passage. Paul has been working closely with Trump, who told Re- publican lawmakers at a meet- ing last week that he would not sign an extension of the current surveillance laws, are opposed to the legislation.

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Supercomputer tracks locusts plaguing Africa

BY RODNIE MUHUMUZA AND DESMOND TITO
Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda — A supercomputer is boosting efforts in East Africa to control a locust outbreak that raises what the U.N. food agency calls “an unprecedented threat” to the region’s food security.

“The forecast is quite useful because it helps them to focus their efforts in the areas that are most likely to be affected by the desert locust in the coming say, 10 days,” said Abubakr Salih Babiker, a climate scientist at Nairobi’s regional climate center. “In this way they are more efficient in allocating their resources, allocating the financial capacity to control the desert locust.”

Cubans use social media to find basic goods amid shortages

BY ANDREA RODRIGUEZ
Associated Press

HAVANA — “Where to find it?” and “Whatever you want” and “What do you need?”

These are the names of some of the social media groups catering to thousands of Cubans who are using newly available mobile internet to grapple with shortages of basic goods that are worsening under tighter U.S. sanctions.

Armed with internet access on cellphones that came into general use last year, Cubans are forming online chat groups to share tips about where to find dish detergent, chicken, diesel fuel and other scarce essentials. They do so on WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook.

Without the chat groups, people would have to “spend all day going around the city” looking for things that they need, said Claudia Santander, a graphic designer who administers a dozen WhatsApp groups at no charge.

Now, for example, someone can ask about a certain product — toilet paper or milk powder or soap — and another person on the chat might reply within minutes to say which store in Havana, the Cuban capital, is stocking it.

“I’ve been able to sort out” diaper and other purchases since joining several social media groups aimed at locating essential items, said Havana resident Laura Vela, who has a young child.

“People anxious to get the benefits of being a member. WhatsApp limits group chat size to 256 people, while other platforms accept thousands.

Shopping through social media is easing some of the hardships that come with the collapse of their benefactors in the Soviet Union decades ago, but the situation deteriorated in 2019 after U.S. President Donald Trump escalated sanctions. The economic woes of Venezuela, a key provider of oil to Cuba, has also hurt the Caribbean country.
The road to forgiveness

Schwarzenegger Pratt interviewed people with hard-won experience for book on tricky subject

BY ALICIA RANCHIO
Associated Press

Katherine Schwarzenegger Pratt has made a career of writing what she knows, from teaching about healthy body image to grappling with entering the real world after graduating college.

Her latest book, “The Gift of Forgiveness: Inspirational Stories from Those Who Have Overcome the Unforgivable,” is a deep dive into various stories on forgiveness.

Schwarzenegger Pratt, the eldest child of actor and politician Arnold Schwarzenegger and broadcast journalist Maria Shriver, writes in the book that she came up with the idea when struggling with how to forgive a friend whom she had a falling out with.

She interviewed 22 people, including kidnapped victim Elizabeth Smart and Tanya Brown, the sister of murder victim Nicole Brown Simpson, and Sebastian Marroquin, the son of drug kingpin Pablo Escobar, about their own experiences with forgiveness.

Schwarzenegger Pratt says the biggest lesson learned is that forgiveness is not a one-size-fits-all process.

“There isn’t one way to forgive. There isn’t a right way, a wrong way; there’s only your way,” she said. “I would never be able to tell anybody how to practice forgiveness specifically in their lives because it’s so unique to their situation.”

And: “You talk to people for the book who’ve experienced some pretty heavy circumstances. Were you nervous to do those interviews?”

Schwarzenegger Pratt: “You’re always nervous when interviewing people that you don’t know about a topic that’s very intense like forgiveness. I reached out to everybody and didn’t know anyone beforehand and just blindly asked them if they would be willing to sit down and talk to me about forgiveness. I went into every single interview not knowing how much they would open up or what they would give me in the interview, and every single person was just so incredible to talk to, so inspiring and raw and open and vulnerable.

What did you ultimately take away on forgiveness?”

For some people, it comes very easily and naturally, and they can just decide to forgive someone and be done with it. And for a lot of people, myself included, it’s an ongoing process. So, it’s about being OK with it.

Did you want to be a writer growing up?“ I always would write stories when I was younger and found it very helpful for myself and therapeutic. If you had asked me when I was 10 years old if I would be writing books, I don’t know that I would say that, but I think it’s been such a blessing for me in my life. I’ve been able to take situations and topics that I have struggled with and have looked at others struggling with, and to get permission from me to write about these topics to help other people.

Your dad is Arnold Schwarzenegger. Your mom is Maria Shriver and a member of the Kennedy family. You must have met so many notable people. Is there anyone you haven’t met yet?

I don’t actually know who that would be. A lot of times I think of people who are no longer on this earth that I would like to spend extra time with and I often will think about my grandma, especially as I’ve gotten older. I always try to take your grandparents for granted, and when you’re older, you wish you could go back and talk to them about certain things. So that’s probably who I would think about — both my grandparents — to have more time with.

Talk show, game show hosts getting used to new normal — no audiences

BY BETHONIE BUTLER
The Washington Post

The fans that make up Wendy Williams’ studio audience are so integral to her syndicated daytime talk show that she regularly refers to them as her co-hosts. But when Williams began her show Wednesday, the trademark whoops that welcome her to each episode sounded a little less amplified than usual.

For the first time since her show debuted, in 2008, there were no fans staring back at Williams. The former radio shock jock was instead offering her candid thoughts on pop culture, current news and controversies in front of a collection of show staffers.

Over on “The View,” Whoopi Goldberg offered an enthusiastic greeting at the top of the show. “Well, hello, hello, hello, and welcome to ‘The View,’ y’all.” She turned to the empty gray chairs usually reserved for the show’s studio audience. “Welcome to ‘The View,’ welcome to ‘The View,’” she repeated, feigning an echo effect, as her greeting dissipated into the ether.

“The echo is real,” said her co-host Meghan McCain.

This is the reality of daytime television amid growing fears about the novel coronavirus. As the number of confirmed cases in the United States has topped 1,000, experts have recommended communities practice social distancing, avoiding large crowds and other nonessential interactions that could cause the virus to spread more quickly.

“Jeopardy!” and “Wheel of Fortune” were among the first shows to announce that they would be scrapping their typical live studio audience March 11 due to concerns over coronavirus.

“The View” recorded its daytime talk show without a studio audience March 11 due to concerns over coronavirus.

“Strahan, Sara and Keke,” “Good Morning America” and “Live with Kelly and Ryan” all aired without their typical audiences.

Some, like Williams, turned to their own employees to avoid crickets. The daytime diva opened the show by passing out candy cigarettes. Because why not? On “Strahan, Sara and Keke,” staffers cheered and danced as Strahan explained the reason behind the drastic change. “The great thing is, some of them — their parents didn’t even know they had a job, and we just put them on TV, so now your mama knows you got a job,” he said.

Goldberg said the decision to go without an audience was “unprecedented” on “The View.” But the talk show — like many other daytime staples — tapes in New York City, which has canceled a number of highly attended events, including a half-marathon, as the number of confirmed cases has jumped to more than 200 statewide.

Williams, who also tapes in New York, shared mixed feelings about the decision to remove the audience from her show as she offered a rundown of the precautions people and businesses have taken amid what the World Health Organization has labeled a pandemic. “I’m not sure I’m down with it. Part of me says the stats are going up,” she said. “But the other part of me says they might be creating mass hysteria, including telling me no audience. Even I didn’t go there.”

Tom Hanks, Rita Wilson test positive for virus

Hollywood star Tom Hanks announced Wednesday night that he and his wife, actress Rita Wilson, have tested positive for the novel coronavirus. The 63-year-old Oscar winner is currently in Australia for the pre-production stage of an Elvie Presley biopic.

Hanks noted in a statement shared on his Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts that he and Wilson, also 63, started to feel “a bit tired, like we had colds, and some body aches.”

“I had some chills that came and went, and I continued. ‘Slight fevers too. To play things right, as is needed in the world right now, we were tested for the Coronavirus, and were found to be positive.’” A representative for Hanks confirmed the news as shared on the actor’s accounts.

Hanks is the first American celebrity to publicly announce a diagnosis of the novel coronavirus.

One of the most beloved actors in Hollywood, Hanks kept his statement in tune with his gold-medal personality. He also shared a photograph of a medical glove discarded in a trash can layered with a yellow Kermit the Frog Kermit liner, keeping with his social media theme of lost gloves.

From The Washington Post
Woman charged in case of compensation fraud

CA POMONA — A former Southern California college student has been charged with making false threats in order to portray herself as a victim, prosecutors said.

The criminal complaint alleges that Anayeli Dominguez Pena, 25, of Ontario reported the false threats to police and applied for compensation from the California Victim Compensation Board, the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s Office said.

The former University of La Verne student pleaded not guilty on Tuesday to two felony counts and six misdemeanor counts.

According to the prosecution, the woman created fake messages and email accounts last spring and used them to fake a threat against herself and a student who was unaware of the scheme.

Police: Dealers, players took $100K from casino

CT UNCASVILLE — Two blackjack players and three dealers conspired to cheat a Connecticut casino operated by the Mohegan tribe out of over $100,000 in 2018, according to tribal police.

Three of the five people named in court documents have been charged with involvement in illegal bets, according to an arrest warrant affidavit written by Mohegan Tribal Police Detective John Graves.

Police: Theft suspect claims she’s Beyonce

NM LAS CRUCES — A New Mexico woman is facing charges after police say she stole a car and later tried to claim she was pop singer Beyonce Knowles.

Surena Henry was arrested Saturday in Las Cruces, N.M., when an officer spotted a vehicle that resembled one that had been reported stolen, the Las Cruces Sun-News reported.

According to court documents, Henry, 48, ignored the officer’s orders to pull over and later parked in front of her home.

Documents say Henry told the officer she was Beyonce.

Police also reported Henry told the officer she found the keys in the vehicle and decided to take it for a ride. Henry is charged with unlawful taking of a motor vehicle, concealing identity and resisting or obstructing an arrest.

Man arrested in gas pump skimming scheme

MA BOSTON — A Florida man prosecutors say was involved in a scheme to automate “skimming” devices to pump at gas stations across New England to steal the debit and credit account numbers from thousands of unsuspecting drivers has been charged.

Luis Angel Naranjo Rodriguez, 29, of Hialeah, Fla., was charged Monday with possessing 15 or more counterfeit access devices, and possession of device-making equipment, the U.S. attorney’s office in Boston said in a statement.

Naranjo Rodriguez was arrested in Concord, Mass., in November after police spotted him at a closed gas station next to an unlocked gas pump with keys in the lock, prosecutors said.

Officers searched Naranjo Rodriguez, a nearby vehicle and his hotel room and found multiple skimming devices and additional pump keys, authorities said.

School district to drop Redskins nickname

MI PAW PAW — A school district in southwestern Michigan is dropping its Redskins nickname and mascot after the superintendent urged school board members to end the contentious name.

The Paw Paw school board voted 6-1 on Monday to retire the nickname by the end of the school year following Superintendent Rick Reo’s recommendation last week to drop the nickname.

The board’s decision to drop the Redskins comes after it voted 4-3 in 2017 to keep the name after months of heated debate.

2 charged with defacing ancient rock art

NV LAS VEGAS — Two Nevada men have been indicted on charges of vandalizing an archaeological site after they pleaded guilty to 12 counts of invasion of privacy.

Christopher Esnes, 42, of Long Hill, will forfeit his teaching license as part of a plea deal with authorities.

LA ASHLAND — A Louisianan woman was arrested on drug charges after police determined the $5,000 cash she used to post an inmate’s bail had a “strong odor of marijuana.” Authorities began investigating Stormy Lynn Purfaire, 33, on Friday, shortly after she showed up at the Ashland jail to pay the bond fee for an inmate being held there on drug charges, the Terrebonne Parish Sheriff’s Office said in a statement obtained by news outlets.

After catching a whiff of the cash, a detective searched her car while she was still at the jail and found nearly $40,000 more inside, along with about 100 Xanax pills and a food stamp card that wasn’t registered to Purfaire, according to the sheriff’s statement.
DEA targets drug cartel in massive raid

By MICHAEL BALSAMO
Associated Press

CHANTILLY, Va. — In the darkness, the team suits up quietly, putting on their helmets and tactical gear. Federal agents load battering rams, bolt cutters and heavy weaponry by foot up a hill on a residential California street that’s softly aglow from street lamps. Then the agents turn onto the walkway of their target’s home.

“Police! Search warrant!” one officer yells as agents bang on the front door. “Police search warrant!” And then three thunderous bangs as the task force breaks down the front door.

Moments later, a reputed member of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, known as CJNG, is walked out in handcuffs.

In early-morning raids Wednesday, agents fanned out across the United States, culminating a six-month investigation with the primary goal of dismantling the upper echelon of CJNG and hoping to get closer to capturing its leader, one of the most wanted men in America. There’s a $10 million reward for the arrest of Nemesis “El Mencho” Oseguera.

The gang controls between one-third and two-thirds of the U.S. drug market. It is so violent that members leave piles of bodies in streets and hanging from overpasses in Mexico, and they fill the city of Guadalajara with mass graves. They carry machine guns and hand grenades. They once used rocket launchers to shoot down a Mexican military helicopter.

More than 500 people have been arrested during the operation in recent months, more than 15,000 kilograms of meth were seized and nearly $20 million taken as search and arrest warrants were executed. Dozens were arrested Wednesday.

“El Mencho and his associates prey on the addicts, and they prey on small towns where they can act as bullies and act as small towns,” said Wendy Woolcock, the special agent in charge of Drug Enforcement Administration’s special operations division.

“They promise hope, and they deliver despair.”

For the U.S., combating Mexico’s fastest-growing and most violent gang is a top priority. Law enforcement officials believe that the gang has drug distribution hubs in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Houston and Atlanta. It is believed to have a presence in 24 of Mexico’s 32 states.

Unlike other cartels, CJNG shows no reluctance and is directly attacking police and army patrols, and is blamed for the deadliest attacks against military forces in Mexico. In eliminating rivals, it has carried out spectacular acts of violence.

“Their propensity to violence is a big part of it, they’re a very violent organization, they’re a well-armed organization, but really the gasoline that was thrown on the fire was synthetic drugs,” said Bill Bodner, the special agent in charge of the DEA’s field office in Los Angeles.

The Associated Press had exclusive access to the raid outside Los Angeles and the national command center. In California, about a dozen team members prepared early Wednesday for their target. They searched the home, a statey, salmon-colored Spanish Colonial-style with a large chandelier in the foyer and palm trees in the front yard, and crawled on the ground to look under cars in the driveway. No shots were fired.

Victor Ochoa, 34, was arrested on drug charges. The DEA alleges that he acts as a stash house manager for the cartel. It wasn’t clear yet whether he had a defense attorney.

At the command center tucked inside a nondescript government building in northern Virginia, a group of a dozen analysts and agents sat behind computer screens inside a converted conference room.

As agents were banging down doors across the country, the phones rang at the command center and analysts recorded the number of arrests and amount of drugs seized on printed worksheets.

An analyst entered the information into a DEA computer screen as other analysts ran phone numbers, addresses and nicknames found inside the homes being searched.

The special agent in charge of the special operations division assembled with her team in front of a heat map — red dots glowing darker and darker as more arrests are made, primarily in Texas, California and New Jersey. By 9 a.m., more than 60 people had been taken into custody.

While Mexican drug cartels made their money predominantly from marijuana in past decades, the market has somewhat dissipated with the state-level legalization of cannabis in dozens of states across the U.S.

They’ve now turned to methamphetamine and fentanyl, selling it at almost 14 times the price it costs to make and flooding the streets of the U.S., fueling.homelessness and the opioid crisis, and leaving behind another trail of bodies: from overdoses.

The Jalisco Cartel was formed in 2010 from a wing of the Sinaloa cartel based in the western city of Guadalajara. While it once specialized in producing methamphetamine, like most Mexican cartels it has expanded into multidrug shipments, including fentanyl, cocaine, meth and heroin.

The cartel is led by the elusive Oseguera, whose bodyguards once shot down a Mexican military helicopter to prevent his arrest. In recent weeks, prosecutors have brought charges against his son, Rubén Oseguera, also known as “El Menchito,” and his daughter, Jessica Johanna Oseguera.

And officials say that he’s more dangerous than reputed Mexican drug kingpin and escape artist Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman, who, as leader of the Sinaloa cartel, ran a massive drug conspiracy that spread murder and mayhem for more than two decades.

“I think the threat from El Mencho and CJNG is greater right now because, in my opinion, at the time Chapo was captured or at the time he was kind of at his heyday … the Sinaloa Cartel was fractured, it was a little broken up,” Bodner said.

El Chapo was a little flashier, but Mencho and the Jalisco gang see their drug business as just that — business, Bodner said.

“They have a little bit more discipline. They’re not necessarily into the partying and living the good life, it’s just about the business of drug trafficking and control, and that’s what makes them scarier, Bodner said.

The Jalisco cartel is also known for brazen tactics such as driving around in convoys of pickup trucks marked with the letters “CJNG” and for circulating videos of heavily-armed cartel gunmen in military-style dress. While Mexico says that it is no longer concentrating on detaining drug lords, the Mexican government has extradited Oseguera’s son and has detained some of his associates.
**Food fights**

Trademark law collides with evolving dining landscape

**By Terry Tang**
Associated Press

GILBERT, Ariz. — When picking a name for their Asian-Mexican fusion restaurant in suburban Phoenix, Paul and Nicole Fan settled on “Panda Libre,” hoping the mix of China’s iconic bear and the Spanish word for “free” would signal to customers the type of cuisine it offered.

That decision could cost them dearly. Chinese takeout chain Panda Express sued them in federal court last month alleging trademark infringement.

The lawsuit showcases how trademark law can collide with an evolving dining landscape, where restaurateurs peddling Asian or Asian-inspired foods often pick a name that instantly invokes a connection to that culture. But getting a trademark for the new name can lead to ugly and sometimes public clashes over ownership and cultural appropriation.

In recent years, businesses have butted heads over whether a restaurant or food truck can legally own the name “aloha” and food products.

experts say the concept of “aloha” and food products.

“If you were selling pandas under the name ‘Panda,’ you probably wouldn’t be able to do that because it’s describing literally what you’re doing,” said Mark Simpson, a veteran intellectual property lawyer in Philadelphia. “It’s like trying to trademark the words ‘grocery store.’ You could media posts and other materials with the name.

“Panda Express, which Andrew and Peggy Cherng launched in 1983 as an offshoot of their Panda Inn restaurants, has more than 1,900 locations nationwide. The company says it has a ‘legal obligation to consistently protect them’ but is hopeful for a resolution.

“We believe there is a path forward that allows for this small business to operate while respecting our intellectual property rights, and we remain open to a conversation with those involved,” the company said in an email.

Nicole Fan says nobody has entered Panda Libre thinking it was a Panda Express. She points to the logo — a panda dressed in a cape and mask like a Mexican wrestler — and the fact that there are other eateries that use “panda.”

Panda Restaurant Group said it takes legal action on a “case-by-case basis.” It also says it settled several trademark infringement issues without litigation last year.

Other efforts to trademark cultural words have been met with fierce online backlash.

In 2009, loyalists to chef Roy Choi’s Kogi truck sued to trademark ‘Whole Foods’ the grocery store. It says he acquired the name in an effort to reclaim Kogi’s fame as the voice of American food. The Los Angeles-based truck’s logo featured a masked and food products.

That alone there is hundreds of thousands of dollars in this restaurant,” Nicole Fan said. “Going through this whole ordeal, the lawsuit, will bankrupt us.”

On top of punitive damages and legal fees, Panda Express, which generated $2 billion in sales last year, is asking for all of Panda Libre’s profits since it opened last year in Gilbert, about 20 miles east of Phoenix.

“Unfortunately it’s overrated — the damages — to get the attention of the defendant,” said Charles Valauskas, a Chicago intellectual property attorney who has represented restaurants. “It’s not like (Panda Express) is going to sit there and wait till every last penny is drained from a bank account.”

Experts say Panda Express is within its right to trademark “Panda” for restaurant and food products.

“If you were selling pandas under the name ‘Panda,’ you probably wouldn’t be able to do that because it’s describing literally what you’re doing,” said Mark Simpson, a veteran intellectual property lawyer in Philadelphia. “It’s like trying to trademark the words ‘grocery store.’ You could

In 2018, Chicago-based Aloha Poke Co. trademarked its name and sent cease-and-desist letters to poke restaurants with “aloha” or “aloha poke” in their names. In Hawaii, the birthplace of the raw fish dish, locals decried a “mainlander” dictates how their community used their language. A social media firestorm followed.

Jeff Sampson’s Aloha Poke Shop in Honolulu was among those worried about a lawsuit. But he got a letter from Aloha Poke Co. attorneys that said he was “allowed” to use the term because of the geographic location.

“That was the worst business decision they made to go after ‘aloha’ and ‘poke,’” Sampson, who owns Hawaiian poke, said in an interview.

As a social media firestorm spread, the Aloha Poke Co. said it was “interested in the concept. The Los Angeles-based truck’s logo featured a masked

But the lawsuit didn’t change its underlying policy, which the new lawsuit seeks to end on the grounds that the First Amendment doesn’t allow the government to ban speech just because it finds it offensive.

“We probably wouldn’t challenge a regulation limited to seven obscene words, but it strains credulity to say that there are over 30,000 messages per year,” said Wen Fa.

**Lawsuit aims to end California license plate language limits**

**Associated Press**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — California may have to end most restrictions on personalized license plate language that some might find offensive, if a lawsuit filed Tuesday prevails.

The libertarian Pacific Legal Foundation lawsuit challenges the state Department of Motor Vehicles’ current policy on free speech for license plates.

The department denied more than 30,000 of the nearly 250,000 applications submitted in 2018, the last year for which statistics are available, after deciding that the proposed language “may carry connotations offensive to good taste and decency,” says the lawsuit filed in federal court in San Francisco.

“This broad and vague regulation requires four full-time DMV administrators police license plate applications,” the lawsuit argues. Those denials “deprive plaintiffs their right to freedom of speech, in violation of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.”

Department officials declined to comment on the pending litigation, which challenges a program that brought the state nearly $60 million last year.

The environmental plates challenged in the lawsuit cost $53 initially and $43 annually to renew and are among 14 special interest license plates that help pay for environmental and special programs.

The lawsuit comes months after another federal judge rejected the department’s argument that vehicle license plates constitute government statements, ruling that it is unlikely that “viewers perceive the government as speaking through personalized vanity plates.”

In that challenge filed by the same nonprofit legal organization, the department subsequently allowed California soccer fan Jonathan Kotler to honor his favorite team with the vanity plate “COYR.” Kotler supports London-based Fulham, whose fans often chant “Come On You Whites” for their players in white jerseys.

But the department didn’t change its underlying policy, which the new lawsuit seeks to end on the grounds that the First Amendment doesn’t allow the government to ban speech just because it finds it offensive.

“We probably wouldn’t challenge a regulation limited to seven obscene words, but it strains credulity to say that there are over 30,000 messages per year, ranging from sports cheers (COYW) to someone’s nickname (OGWOOLF) that need to be banned,” foundation attorney Wen Fa said in an email exchange. “As the DMV’s regulation underscores, vague bans on ‘offensive’ speech inevitably lead to arbitrary results.”

The OGWOOLF plate was sought by the firm’s lead plaintiff in the new lawsuit, Army veteran Paul “Chris” Ogilvie of Concord, Calif. He says it combines the first two letters of his last name with an old nickname. The department rejected the plate for fear people would interpret OG as short for “original gangster;” the lawsuit says. It says he acquired the nickname OG during his military service.

The firm probably has a good point, said Eugene Volokh, who teaches First Amendment law at the UCLA School of Law.

“When the government sets up a program in which people can engage in their own speech, like a license plate program, it generally has to administer it in a reasonable and viewpoint-neutral way, so it doesn’t discriminate based on viewpoint,” he said.

The suit includes plaintiffs with four other examples:

- **’B011UX,’** though the lawsuit says “bullocks” has been used to mean “nonsense” in a national advertising campaign.
- **‘SLAAYR,’** which it says is a reference to the metal band
- **‘QUEER,’** which it says is a reference to the plaintiff’s sexual orientation and his record label, Queer Folks Records, which he adopted in an effort to reclaim what has become a pejorative label.

Even if the state ultimately allows more arguably offensive words on license plates, Volokh said, “it’s not such a huge deal. It’s not that people will start distrust the DMV. Anything people can say on a license plate they could say on a bumper sticker.”
**CORONAVIRUS PRESENTS A COMPASSION PARADOX**

**By Nicholas A. Christakis**

Special to The Washington Post

Citizens of democracies can scarcely fathom the extreme, but effective, social controls China has imposed to contain the coronavirus outbreak. But now we are seeing variations on China’s large-scale quarantines across the globe, and elsewhere. Such measures are certainly under consideration in many other countries. On Tuesday, New York Mayor Bill de Blasio and Gov. Andrew Cuomo deployed the state’s National Guard to establish a one-mile containment zone in New Rochelle, a suburb of the nation’s most populous city.

A debate is raging in the United States about where to draw the line between individual freedoms and social responsibilities.

But just as the coronavirus’ spread has forced us to consider suppressing our democratic impulses, it also calls on us to suppress our profoundly human and evolutionarily hard-wired impulses for connection: seeing our friends, getting together in groups or touching each other. Even spousal intimacy can be uncomfortable for a society that has advised people to stay physically distant if one of them is sick.

One lesson comes naturally to us, nor is it easy. In my own case, since I have spent much of my professional career studying marriage, friendship and social networks, and also being married to an anthropologist, I know how much our well-being depends on finding it ironic to be strongly advising against human contact but that’s what I’m doing.

We are being asked to do all this to protect the greater good. If we limit social contact, we can “flatten” the coronavirus epidemic by spreading out the same number of cases across a longer time horizon.

That way, we will have fewer sick people at any given point, allowing health care systems and supply chains to provide precious resources to other patients, such as for intensive-care units and, of course, medical staff.

Yet even in the midst of social distancing, which is so unnatural to our species, we humans have other useful, innate capacities that the virus will allow us to exploit, even as we strive to reduce face-to-face contact. And we can use these natural mental and physical capacities as weapons, too. These innate capacities include our impulse to cooperate and our ability to deliberately teach each other useful things (a defining trait of our species that is exceedingly rare in the animal kingdom).

The complicated agenda we face is that, in the midst of a pandemic, we are not just as we are supposed to distance ourselves, we must also band together. Pandemics are an especially demanding test of our ability to cooperate because we are trying to protect not just people we know but also people we do not know (or even, possibly, care about). When we avoid meetings, decline to shake hands or pull our kids from school, we are showing our fellow citizens and our fellow workers that we believe in the value of cooperation. That is, we value working together to tackle the virus.

We also will be called upon to help those among us who are most vulnerable and who also happen to be left out of the economic work and cooperation that will allow us to repel the invader.

Evolution has set us up for epidemics, but it has also endowed us with the tools to fight them.

Nicholas A. Christakis, a physician and social scientist at Yale University, is the author of The Evolutionary Origins of a Good Society.”

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**OPINION**

**Voters longing or normality benefits Biden**

**By Doyle McManus**

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON

Will coronavirus make Joe Biden president?

President Donald Trump launched his presidential campaign 10 months ago, Biden cast himself as a sober, seasoned and, with a promise to restore the greater good. If we limit social contact, we can “flatten” the coronavirus epidemic by spreading out the same number of cases across a longer time horizon.

That way, we will have fewer sick people at any given point, allowing health care systems and supply chains to provide precious resources to other patients, such as for intensive-care units and, of course, medical staff.

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**OMBUDSMAN**

Ernie Gates

The Stars and Stripes ombudsman protects the free flow of news and information, reporting any attempts by the military or other authorities to undermine the newspaper’s independence. The ombudsman also responds to concerns or questions from readers, and monitors coverage for fairness, accuracy, timeliness and balance. The ombudsman can be contacted by email at ombudsman@stripes.com, or by phone at 202.886.0050.

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**STARS AND STRIPES**

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What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Some young people politically engaged, but others don’t vote

The Palm Beach (Fla.) Post

The New York Times

Friday, March 13, 2020

Some young people politically engaged, but others don’t vote

THE GAP THAT BERNIE IS STRUGGLING TO CLOSE

Kevin Euceda, a 17-year-old Honduran boy, arrived at the U.S.-Mexico border three years ago and was turned over to the custody of the Department of Health and Human Services until his request for asylum could be decided by immigration courts. During that interim period, he was repeatedly threatened with deportation, which could result in his being separated from his family. Euceda, who was 14 at the time, was sent to a shelter for unaccompanied minors in custody, to meet with therapists to help him process what he had gone through.

In those sessions, Kevin was encouraged to speak freely and openly and was told that what he said would be kept confidential. So he poured out his story of a brutalized childhood, of how MS-13 gang members moved into the family shack after his grandmother died when he was 12, of how he was forced to run errands, sell drugs and, as he got older, take part in beating people up. When he was ordered to kill a stranger to cement his position in the gang, Kevin decided to run.

His therapists submitted pages of notes over several sessions to the judge on him, as they were expected to do. But then, DHS officials — without the knowledge of the teen or the therapists — shared the notes with lawyers for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, who used them in immigration court to paint the young migrant as a dangerous gang member who should be denied asylum and sent back to Honduras. In sharing those therapy notes, the government did not break any laws. But it most assuredly broke its promise of confidentiality to Kevin, violated standard professional practices — the first therapist involved quit once she learned her notes had been shared — and offended a fundamental expectation that people cannot be compelled to testify against themselves in this country.

Kevin, whose story was detailed by The Washington Post, wasn’t the only unaccompanied minor to fall victim to the government’s inhumane behavior, though how many have been affected is unknown. The government says it has changed that policy and no longer shares confidential therapy notes, but that’s not particularly reassuring coming from this administration. It adopted the policy once, it could do so again.

Kevin, who is a U.S. citizen and was born in Los Angeles, told that what he said would be kept confidential. Kevin was encouraged to speak freely and openly and was told that what he said would be kept confidential. Kevin was encouraged to speak freely and openly and was told that what he said would be kept confidential. Kevin was encouraged to speak freely and openly and was told that what he said would be kept confidential. Kevin was encouraged to speak freely and openly and was told that what he said would be kept confidential. Kevin was encouraged to speak freely and openly and was told that what he said would be kept confidential.
ST. PADDY'S
SHAMROCK
5K RUN
& POST RACE PARTY
Tuesday, March 17

Start time: 5PM
T-Shirt Pick-up: 4PM
Live Music: 5:30PM

Prizes will be awarded to top three finishers in the men, women's, and youth categories

Location: Mario's Courtyard
Green beer and Irish food for sale in Mario's Courtyard

Free Adult & Youth T-shirts
(Until supplies last)

Call 439-3004/4927 for more information

Navy endorsement is not implied.
College basketball

Women's conference tournaments

America East Conference

Friday, March 13
First Round

Trinity at #1 Albany

Second Round

#1 Albany vs. #2 Stony Brook

#3 UMass Lowell vs. #4 Brandeis

#5 UMass vs. #6 Hartford

Quarterfinals

Friday, March 13

#1 Albany vs. #2 Stony Brook

#3 UMass Lowell vs. #4 Brandeis

#5 UMass vs. #6 Hartford

Semi-Finals

Friday, March 13

#1 Albany vs. #2 Stony Brook

#3 UMass Lowell vs. #4 Brandeis

#5 UMass vs. #6 Hartford

Championship

Sunday, March 15

#1 Albany vs. #2 Stony Brook

Regionals

#1 Albany vs. #2 UConn

Regionals

#1 Albany vs. #2 UConn

Mid-American Conference

Women's conference tournaments

Tuesday, March 16

Semifinal 1

University of Northern Illinois vs. Miami University

Semifinal 2

University of Toledo vs. University of Akron

Championship

Thursday, March 18

University of Toledo vs. University of Akron

Regionals

#1 University of Toledo vs. #2 University of Akron

Regionals

#1 University of Toledo vs. #2 University of Akron

Western Athletic Conference

Women's conference tournaments

Tuesday, March 16

Semifinal 1

University of New Mexico vs. Boise State University

Semifinal 2

University of Nevada Las Vegas vs. University of Hawaii

Championship

Sunday, March 21

University of Nevada Las Vegas vs. University of Hawaii

Regionals

#1 University of Nevada Las Vegas vs. #2 University of Hawaii

Regionals

#1 University of Nevada Las Vegas vs. #2 University of Hawaii

Conference tournaments

Atlantic Hockey Association

Friday, March 13

Quarterfinals

#1 Robert Morris vs. #4 New Hampshire

#2 RIT vs. #3 Air Force

#4 Bentley vs. #5 Providence

#5 Canisius vs. #6 Massachusetts

Semifinals

March 15-16

#1 Robert Morris vs. #2 RIT

#3 Air Force vs. #4 Bentley

Championship

March 17

#1 Robert Morris vs. #2 RIT

America East Conference

Friday, March 13

Quarterfinals

#1 Stony Brook vs. #4 UMass Lowell

#2 University of Albany vs. #3 UMass

#3 UMass Lowell vs. #4 Brandeis

#5 UMass vs. #6 Hartford

Semifinals

March 15

#1 Stony Brook vs. #4 UMass Lowell

#2 University of Albany vs. #3 UMass

#5 UMass vs. #6 Hartford

Championship

March 17

#1 Stony Brook vs. #2 University of Albany

West Coast Conference

Women's conference tournaments

Sunday, March 15

Quarterfinals

#1 Gonzaga vs. #4 Pepperdine

#2 Saint Mary's (Cal) vs. #3 BYU

#4 Pepperdine vs. #5 San Diego

Semifinals

March 17

#1 Gonzaga vs. #2 Saint Mary's (Cal)

#4 Pepperdine vs. #5 San Diego

Championship

March 19

#1 Gonzaga vs. #2 Saint Mary's (Cal)

Michigian vs. Ohio State

Tuesday, March 10

Thursday, March 12

Friday, March 13

Sunday, March 15

Michigan vs. Ohio State
SOCCER/OLYMPICS

Player protests precede apology from US Soccer

By Anne M. Peterson
Associated Press

The U.S. Soccer Federation apologized Wednesday night after it made claims in court documents that women on its national team had lesser responsibilities and physical abilities than their male counterparts, an assertion that drew widespread criticism and sparked a player protest.

The statement from USSF president Carlos Cordeiro came hours after The Coca-Cola Co. denounced the federation for its stance, Cordeiro also announced a shake-up of the USSF legal team.

“I’m very grateful for the outreach and the apology by USSF,” said Mewis, who missed last summer’s World Cup with an injury. “I think it was a huge step in the right direction. Hopefully we can keep going down this path to bring justice for women’s soccer.”

The USSF posted its apology online, saying it was not reflective of the values of our women’s national team, in a court filing earlier this week “unacceptable and offensive.”

Coca-Cola has been a sponsor of the World Cup for 30 years and is a partner of the Women’s World Cup. It was announced in January that the federation had locked the terms of the deal, which would see the beverage company pay $2 million per year for four tournaments.

The reality for Koike and Japanese organizers is that any decision to cancel or delay the Tokyo Olympics will affect the Tokyo 2020 games.

“I can’t say there won’t be an impact,” Koike said Thursday after the World Health Organization labeled the spreading coronavirus a “pandemic,” a decision almost certain to affect the Tokyo Olympics.

“Since the start of the virus, we have understood that the virus may spread significantly,” Koike said. “We will continue to work to control the spread of the virus.”

The biggest obstacle if the games go ahead might be figuring out who is qualified for the next Olympics, said Cordeiro.

Will ‘pandemic’ ruling impact Tokyo Olympics?

By Stephen Wade
Associated Press

TOKYO — Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike spoke Thursday after the World Health Organization labeled the spreading virus a “pandemic,” a decision almost certain to affect the Tokyo Olympics.

“I can’t say there won’t be an impact,” she said. “But I believe cancellation is impossible.”

The reality for Koike and Japanese organizers is that any decision to cancel or proceed with the July 24 opening rests ultimately with the Switzerland-based International Olympic Committee.

Last year, Koike vehemently opposed moving the Olympic marathon out of Tokyo to Sapporo. IOC President Thomas Bach supported the move, and he won.

The IOC and local organizers say the games will open as planned in 4½ months. An irrevocable decision probably needs to be made by the end of May or early June — giving 11,000 Olympic athletes time to plan, TV space to set up, and sponsors enough notice to activate advertising programs.

Of course, the WHO will be consulted. So will international broadcasters and sponsors — and hundreds of lawyers.

The Host City Contract, signed between the IOC and the city of Tokyo and the Japanese Olympic Committee, gives the IOC leverage. It has the right to terminate because of “a state of war, civil disorder, boy...
The NHL is following the NBA’s lead and suspending its season because of the coronavirus pandemic.

NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman announced Thursday it is pausing its season, one day after the NBA player tested positive for COVID-19. Bettman announced the suspension by telephone conference call of the Board of Governors, the NHL said in a statement.

“The NHL has been carefully monitoring the COVID-19 virus in the days and weeks since the NBA’s decision,” Bettman said. “We moved quickly to suspend our season when we were informed that a player tested positive for COVID-19.”

The NHL season is suspended through the completion of the regular season and playoffs. The NHL has 26 teams and the season was scheduled to be completed by May 27.

For most people, the 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, including pneumonia.

The NHL said it is suspending its season “out of an abundance of caution.”

The NBA suspending its season was the first such move in major North American sports, and it comes as the NHL and other leagues weigh how to respond to the outbreak.

The NHL has said it plans to remain in contact with the NBA and other leagues to coordinate its response to the virus.

Bettman said the NHL has not yet made a decision about its plans for the playoffs, and that it will continue to monitor the situation.

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Seattle teams shut out of city because of virus

SEATTLE — The Seattle Mariners are seeking alternative options for their season-opening series after Washington Gov. Jay Inslee announced Wednesday a ban on all large gatherings in the three counties of the Seattle metro area because of the virus outbreak.

Inslee said social gatherings of 250 or more people, including sporting events, are banned through at least the end of March because of the COVID-19 outbreak in the Seattle area. Officials said gatherings of under 250 could also be barred unless specific measures are followed.

The decision impacts the Mariners’ first seven games of the Major League Baseball season against the Texas Rangers (March 26-29) and Minnesota Twins (March 30-April 1), plus home games for the MLS Seattle Sounders, XFL Seattle Dragons and a pair of junior hockey teams in the area.

“We’re working through the alternatives right now,” Mariners owner John Stanton said at the team’s spring training complex in Peoria, Ariz. “We think the alternatives include playing in Seattle in an empty stadium, the alternatives include playing in the home park of our opponents, in this case the Rangers and the Twins. Or playing at a neutral park in Peoria.”

Stanton said he hoped to have an answer on where the team will play the first two series by Friday. He said it’s unlikely the Mariners would play in Seattle at an empty stadium.

“This is a major event, not only in Seattle, but the world.”

MLB could shift the Rangers-Mariners four-game series to Texas. The Rangers are set to open a retractable-roof stadium this year, and Texas general manager Jon Daniels said this week the park would be ready if need be.

“Everything’s being discussed, all potential contingency plans,” Daniels said at the Rangers’ camp in Surprise, Ariz.

“I think one key thing to try to keep in mind is, obviously it’s changed day by day. We’re talking about something a little over two weeks from now and what are the circumstances looking like at that point. So, it is a little early to sit here and kind of break down what pros and cons of each option to them, not totally sure what specifics will be by the time we get them,” he said.

NCAA President Mark Emmert announced Wednesday that all NCAA Division I basketball tournament games will be played with only essential staff and limited family in attendance. That will affect the men’s first and second rounds that are being played at the Spokane Arena in eastern Washington, while early rounds of the women’s tournament could end up being played on campus at Gonzaga, which is also in Spokane.

The Seattle area is dealing with the worst COVID-19 outbreak in the country — there have been 22 deaths from the same suburban nursing home and 29 total in the state. Inslee said Tuesday the state is preparing for potentially tens of thousands of cases, based on estimates of the spread of the disease.

After the opening homestand, the Mariners are not scheduled to play at home again until April 9-14 against Boston and Washington.

Major League Soccer announced Wednesday that it is shutting down for 30 days because of the coronavirus.

That will affect only one Sounders home game — March 21 vs. FC Dallas. The next home game isn’t until April 18, after both the league shutdown and Seattle ban are over. The Sounders played their first two matches at home, including last Saturday with an announced crowd of 33,080.

The XFL Seattle Dragons will host Los Angeles on Sunday with no fans permitted in the stadium. The Dragons also have a home game against New York on March 22.

The Oakland Athletics’ Sean Murphy doubles against the Seattle Mariners during a spring training game on March 7. The Athletics, Mariners and San Francisco Giants will be forced to postpone or relocate games scheduled at their home stadiums this month.

Seattle Sounders, XFL Seattle Dragons and a pair of junior hockey teams in the area.

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Major League Soccer announced Wednesday that it is shutting down for 30 days because of the coronavirus.

That will affect only one Sounders home game — March 21 vs. FC Dallas. The next home game isn’t until April 18, after both the league shutdown and Seattle ban are over. The Sounders played their first two matches at home, including last Saturday with an announced crowd of 33,080.

The XFL Seattle Dragons will host Los Angeles on Sunday with no fans permitted in the stadium. The Dragons also have a home game against New York on March 22.

The Oakland Athletics’ Sean Murphy doubles against the Seattle Mariners during a spring training game on March 7. The Athletics, Mariners and San Francisco Giants will be forced to postpone or relocate games scheduled at their home stadiums this month.

West Coast squads must change plans

The Seattle Mariners, Oakland Athletics and San Francisco Giants will be forced to postpone or relocate games scheduled at their home stadiums this month.

The announcements moved six of those games fall in March. But government officials in Oakland and Seattle have banned large gatherings because of the coronavirus outbreak, which has a capacity of about 12,800.

The Giants, meanwhile, open the regular season on the road, but they will cancel or relocate their March 24 exhibition game against the A’s — previously scheduled to be played at their home stadium of Oracle Park in San Francisco — possibly to their spring training home in Scottsdale, Ariz. The Giants’ home opener is scheduled for April 3 against the Los Angeles Dodgers.

“We are in the process of working with [MLB] and the A’s to finalize alternative arrangements,” Cricket’s chief operating officer Dave Zaslav said in a statement. “We will make that information available as soon as possible.”

MLB prefers relocating games over playing them without fans as much for aesthetic reasons as for revenue concerns, with players expressing deep reservations over the notion of playing to empty stadiums.

The Major League Baseball Players Association would have to approve alterations to the schedule, and its leadership has been in frequent contact with MLB officials and local governments.
No joke: Gobert first to test positive

By Tim Reynolds
Associated Press

It started as a joke: Before leaving a post-practice interview Sunday Rudy Gobert touched all the tape recorders that were placed before him on a table, devices that reporters who cover the Utah Jazz were using during a practice in Utah prior to the demolition window. It isn’t so funny now — not with two Jazz players now having tested positive for the virus, and with a league on edge.

Gobert is now the NBA’s Patient Zero for coronavirus after becoming the first player in the league to test positive, a person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press. And a second person with knowledge told AP on Thursday that Gobert’s Utah teammate, Donovan Mitchell, tested positive as well.

In a follow-up to yesterday’s positive COVID-19 test, Oklahoma health officials tested all members of the Utah Jazz traveling party, confirming one additional positive outcome for a Jazz player,” the Jazz said in a statement Thursday. “We are working closely with the CDC, Oklahoma and Utah state officials, and the NBA to monitor their health and determine the best path moving forward.”

The Jazz have not confirmed that Gobert and Mitchell are the two positive cases.

Gobert, the 7-foot-1 Frenchman, is at the center of why the league has been shut down for the foreseeable future:

— Utah’s game against Oklahoma City Wednesday night was canceled and the Pistons are among five teams that have played the Jazz — and Gobert — since the start of March, the others being Boston, Toronto, New York and Cleveland. And Washington, which played Utah in late February, said Thursday that it was having its players, coaches and basketball operations personnel self-quarantine for the next three to four days.

— The Wizards played at Utah on Thursday and said they would play the opponent’s ballpark or a neutral site.

— The Jacksonville Jaguars, in the NFL, announced that they would have no contact with the Jazz coaches and staff. And everyone he’s been on a plane with in recent days. Or shared a hotel elevator with. Or dined with. Or shopped with.

“The NBA shutdown could cost teams well into the hundreds of millions of dollars depending on how long the shutdown lasts. Those teams that have faced Gobert in recent days will likely face some testing. And some of those Jazz reporters said they were getting tested COVID-19, just in case.”

It’s unprecedented,” Detroit Pistons coach Dwane Casey said. “I think it’s the prudent thing to do. And what went on in Utah, I don’t know if it’s going to be the situation but that definitely shows you how fragile everything is right now.”

Charlotte coach James Borrego said these are scary times in the NBA, and no one argued.

“Everybody in our league should be concerned,” Casey said. “I think everybody in our country right now, more than just basketball, is concerned. We all have to take care of ourselves and look out for our fellow man.”

That’s what Orlando’s Evan Fournier did Wednesday night.

Fournier, a French national teammate of Gobert’s, reached out to him after news of the Jazz player was first to test positive.

“Hello,” Fournier wrote. “He is doing good man. Lets not (panic) everyone. Love you all.”

Suspend: NBA first to pause season, others quickly follow suit

FROM BACK PAGE

remainder of their seasons.

A person with knowledge of the situation said the Jazz player who tested positive was center Rudy Gobert. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because neither the league nor the team confirmed the presumptive positive test.

“The NBA will use this hiatus to determine next steps for moving forward in regard to the coronavirus pandemic,” the league said in a statement.

The test result, the NBA said, was reported shortly before the Utah at Oklahoma City game was called off as a precautionary measure.

The Jazz’s, reached out to him after news of the first NBA player diagnosed with coronavirus. Another member of the Jazz, Donovan Mitchell, tested positive as well after additional tests on Thursday.

ASHER LANDIS, THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS/POOL

Crews break down the court after the Dallas Mavericks defeated the Denver Nuggets Wednesday, at American Airlines Center in Dallas. The NBA has suspended its season “until further notice,” a move that came only after the majority of the league’s owners were leaning toward playing games without fans in arenas.

As well Wednesday, the Mariners said they will move their home games in March out of Seattle, the U.S. city hardest-hit by the outbreak; the team and Major League Baseball have not decided whether the games will be played at the opponent’s ballpark or a neutral site.

The pinnacle of the college basketball season, the NCAA Tournament is a month-long festival of pep bands and face-painting and a cash cow that, along with football, helps fund non-revenue sporting events at schools throughout the country. A decision to play in fanless arenas would cost millions in ticket sales but preserve billions in TV rights fees.

The 68-team men’s tournament is scheduled to begin Tuesday in Dayton, Ohio, where Gov. Mike DeWine has announced plans to ban “mass gatherings” to combat the spread of COVID-19, which was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization on Wednesday.

“It will have a different feel but it will still be highly competitive, and the kids will still play like there’s no tomorrow,” said Kansas Jayhawks coach Bill Self.

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Fournier, a French national teammate of Gobert’s, reached out to him after news of the diagnosis and league-wide shutdown broke.

“We talked a bit about everything,” Fournier said. “He is doing good man. Lets not (panic) everyone. Love you all.”

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“They’ll make the most of it. We’ll make the most of it.”

Elsewhere, the Ivy League canceled all spring sports, as many NCAA schools, as well as those in the NASL and NASL teams not to return from spring break and prepare for classes to be taught online. The conference had already canceled its men’s and women’s basketball tournaments.

More than 1,000 people have tested positive for COVID-19 in the United States, with 32 deaths; those rates are expected to continue to rise.

Most people quickly recover from the virus after experiencing 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, including pneumonia.

According to WHO, people with mild illness recover in about 2 weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover. In China, where the virus first exploded, more than 80,000 people have been diagnosed and more than $8,000 have so far recovered.

Because he had been on the court with Gobert two nights earlier, and who knows how many ballboys, stat-crew employees, security guards, attendants and others did as well.

Rudy. He is doing good man. Lets not (panic) everyone. Love you all.”

Evan Fournier

on French national teammate Rudy Gobert, who was the first NBA player diagnosed with coronavirus because he had been on the court with Gobert two nights earlier, and who knows how many ballboys, stat-crew employees, security guards, attendants and others did as well.

Then there’s Gobert’s teammates and the Jazz coaches and staff. And everyone he’s been on a plane with in recent days. Or shared a hotel elevator with. Or dined with. Or shopped with.

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The NCAA made the unprecedented move on Wednesday in announcing the men’s and women’s Division I basketball tournament games will be off-limits to the general public because of coronavirus concerns.

NCAA’s one silent moment?

Tourament, for now, is on but will be played in mostly empty arenas

By Ralph D. Russo
Associated Press

The NCAA basketball tournaments are on — for now — though the buzzer-beaters, upsets and all the other shining moments will take place in mostly empty arenas.

Trying to avoid spreading the new coronavirus that has become a global pandemic, the NCAA on Wednesday decided the men’s and women’s Division I tournament games will be off-limits to the general public. The major college conferences followed the NCAA’s lead, one by one announcing their league tournament games would go on the rest of the week with restricted fan access.

“If the right answer is we considered every option available to us,” NCAA President Mark Emmert told The Associated Press. “The notion of cancelation, however, is one that is pretty draconian because we’re dealing with student-athletes for whom participating in a national championship is a lifelong dream.

“We debated every option available to us, but that’s the one nobody wanted to pursue.”

A few hours later, the NBA suspended its season after Utah Jazz player Rudy Gobert tested positive for COVID-19, and the NHL and NBA suspended their seasons.

Major conferences canceled tournaments

Major conferences canceled their basketball tournaments on Thursday, putting the NCAA Tournament in doubt.

Initially on Wednesday, The Big Ten, Big 12, SEC, Big East, ACC and Pac-12 conferences were all preparing to play games in large arenas across the country, but with few people in the buildings.

Then, one by one, they announced the tournaments were canceled. The Big East actually got its first game underway before canceling it with St. John’s leading Seton Hall 34-29 at halftime.

As the Bluejays and Red Storm were playing, a few subway stops away at Barclays Center in Brooklyn, the Atlantic-10 was holding a news conference to call off its tournament.

Also, canceling tournaments were the American Athletic Conference in Fort Worth, Texas; the Sun Belt in New Orleans; the Western Athletic Conference in Anaheim, Calif.; and the Mid-American Conference in Cleveland, Ohio at a game that is home to the NBA’s Cavaliers and is scheduled to be the site of NCAA men’s tournament games next week.

The NCAA had announced Wednesday that it planned to play its men’s and women’s tournament games that start next week with restricted access for the general public. The NCAA said only essential staff and limited family members would be allowed to attend the games.

There was no immediate word from the NCAA if it also planned to scrap its celebrated men’s basketball tournament. The NCAA basketball tournament generates more than $800 million per year.

“I thought the right answer is we considered every option available to us,” NCAA President Mark Emmert told The Associated Press. “The notion of cancellation, however, is one that is pretty draconian because we’re dealing with student-athletes for whom participating in a national championship is a lifelong dream.

“The decision applies to more than just men’s and women’s basketball. All NCAA-sponsored championships including hockey’s Frozen Four will be affected.

But the men’s basketball tournament is the crown jewel, one of the most popular events on the American sports calendar.

March Madness draws hundreds of thousands of fans to arenas from coast to coast.

The tournament generated more than $900 million in revenue last year for the NCAA and its member schools, though the majority of that was from a media rights deal with CBS and Turner.

“We’re like any enterprise of this size, we have business interruption insurance, and a variety of other things but we’ll sort that out in due course,” Emmert said.

The ACC announced the cancellation of its tournament about 10 minutes before the scheduled tip-off of its men’s championship final game featuring No. 4 Florida State and Clemson. With the tournament cancelled, the Seminoles will earn the league’s automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

The ACC had announced Tuesday that it was cancelling all of its championship events and spring sports.

The SEC had announced that it was going to cancel its men’s and women’s basketball tournament and have the rest of its spring sports schedule.

The Big 12 had also already decided to cancel its border league.

Other conferences had also made similar decisions.

All NCAA-sponsored championships including hockey’s Frozen Four will be affected.

“The decision applies to more than just men’s and women’s basketball. All NCAA-sponsored championships including hockey’s Frozen Four will be affected.”

said Louisville women’s coach Jeff Walz, whose team is ranked No. 6 in the latest AP poll. “At the same time, I completely understand for the health and safety of the fans and student-athletes and everyone involved.”

Emmert had said the NCAA wants to move the men’s Final Four on April 4 and 6 from Atlanta’s Mercedes-Benz Stadium to a smaller arena in the area.

The NCAA also will consider using smaller venues for second-week regional sites currently set to be played at the Toyota Center in Houston, Madison Square Garden in New York, Staples Center in Los Angeles and Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

“We have to determine the availability of the sites, obviously, but it doesn’t make good sense to have a football stadium be empty,” Emmert said.

All sites for next week’s men’s games will remain the same unless conditions in those areas force relocation, he said. Or worse.

The NCAA said tickets already purchased will be refunded.

First- and second-round sites for the women’s tournament will become official next week. Those games are usually played at or near the campuses of the highly seeded teams.

“The only thing that’s disappointing for all our fans, it’s not in the best interest of our student-athletes, of course,” Emmert told the AP in a phone interview. “But also the public health implications of all of this. We recognize our tournaments bring people from all around the country together. They’re not just regional events. They’re big national events. It’s a very, very hard decision for all the obvious reasons.”

Basketball tournament games will be off-limits to the general public because of coronavirus concerns.

The College Basketball Invitational in Columbus, Ohio, was canceled on Wednesday. This would have been the 13th year of the tournament which invites 16 teams not included in the NCAA Tournament or NIT and included a $50,000 fee to participate.

The Big 12 had also already decided to cancel its border league.

The Southeastern Conference canceled its basketball tournaments and an hour later said the league was suspending regular-season competition for teams in all sports on SEC campuses as well as league championships until March 30.

Like the SEC, the Pac-12 canceled its basketball tournament and then said it was scrapping all league championship events and all competitions effective immediately and until further notice.

In addition to its basketball tournament, the conference is canceling all of its championship events through April 15, including upcoming gymnastics and equestrian meets, and will reassess the rest of its spring sports calendar.

The Ivy League says it will not reschedule its spring sports.

The Ivy League says individual institutions may still decide whether to play spring sports.

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Boston University wins Patriot title

By JOHN KERIS
Associated Press

HAMILTON, N.Y. — Walter Whyte was still in a daze.

“I can’t even put it into words. Unbelievable,” Whyte said Wednesday night after Boston University upset Colgate 64-61 to win its first Patriot League Tournament.

“We faced so much adversity. There’s been some dark moments.”

Not on this night.

Tournament MVP Max Mackney had 18 points and 10 rebounds to lead four players in double figures as the Terriers shocked the regular-season champion Raiders to earn an automatic bid into the NCAA Tournament.

“I am really fortunate to be in this position, really, because I have great kids … that really could do something today. I asked them to do it,” BU coach Joe Jones said. “It’s all about them. They put us in this position. I’m just here for the ride.”

The third-seeded Terriers (21-13) lost both regular-season matchups to top-seeded Colgate (25-9), which was 15-1 at home entering the game, the lone loss to Lafayette. Colgate was going for its second consecutive NCAA Tournament berth.

PBAR

Tears of the coronavirus were nonexistent at Cotterell Court — capacity 1,675 — as a crowd of 1,724 jammed the tiny venue to cheer their two teams.

“Coached us today just to embrace it, go out loud, us against the world,” Mahoney said. “We got the job done.”

Whyte and Jonas Harper each scored 12 points and Javante McCoy had 11 points and seven assists with no turnovers for the Terriers.

Scoreboard

Conference tournaments
America East Conference Semifinals
First Round
Wednesday, March 11
Minnesota 74, Northeastern 57
South Carolina 77, Stony Brook 67
Second Round
Thursday, March 12
Rutgers vs. Michigan
Iowa vs. Minnesota
Pittsburgh vs. UConn
Penn State vs. Indiana
Friday, March 13
Wisconsin vs. Massachusetts
Illinois vs. Minnesota winner
Michigan vs. Purdue-Penn State winner
Maryland vs. Penn State-Indiana winner
Big East Conference Semifinals
First Round
Wednesday, March 11
Kansas State 73, Seton Hall 71
Kansas State 53, TCU 49
Quarterfinals
Thursday, March 12
Texas vs. Texas Tech
Kansa vs. Okla. State
Baylor vs. Virginia
Virginia vs. Oklahoma winner
Texas vs. Kansas Tech winner vs. Kansas-Oklahoma State winner
Baylor vs. Virginia winner
Big West Conference at Anaheim, Calif.
First Round
Thursday, March 12
UC Irvine vs. Long Beach
CS Northridge vs. Fullerton
UC Riverside vs. Hawaii
UC Davis vs. Cal State Monterey
Colonial Athletic Association Championship
First Round
Thursday, March 12
Hofstra vs. Drexel
Drexel vs. Biology
Virginia vs. Northeastern winner
Virginia vs. Northeastern winner vs. Louisville-Syracuse winner
Atlantic Sun Conference Semifinals
First Round
Wednesday, March 11
Liberty 73, Lipscomb 57
Kennesaw State 81, Bellarmine 67
Quarterfinals
Friday, March 13
VMI 72, St. Bonaventure 69
Dayton-Miami (OH)
Ohio State vs. Pittsburgh
Dayton-Miami (OH) winner vs. Louisville-Syracuse winner
Atlantic Ten Conference Semifinals
First Round
Wednesday, March 11
Virginia vs. George Mason
Davidson vs. La Salle
Duquesne vs. St. Bonaventure winner
Quarterfinals
Friday, March 13
Dayton vs. UMBC
St. Louis vs. George Mason
Virginia vs. Davidson winner vs. Louisville-Syracuse winner
Southeastern Conference Semifinals
First Round
Wednesday, March 11
Mississippi State 74, Arkansas 72
Kentucky 71, Tennessee 68
Quarterfinals
Thursday, March 12
LSU vs. South Carolina
Mississippi State vs. Georgia
Mississippi State vs. Georgia winner vs. Kentucky winner
Southeastern Conference Championship
First Round
Thursday, March 12
Louisiana Tech 86, Ole Miss 74
LSU 86, South Carolina 74
Quarterfinals
Friday, March 13
LSU vs. Georgia-Arkansas winner
FLSA vs. Mississippi State winner
LSU vs. South Carolina-Arkansas winner
South Carolina-Arkansas winner vs. Kentucky-Tennessee winner

Missouri Valley Conference Semifinals
First Round
Wednesday, March 11
Missouri State 68, Evansville 61
Wisconsin Valley 72, Valparaiso 50
Quarterfinals
Thursday, March 12
Bradley 80, Valparaiso 66
Missouri State 73, Evansville 51
Bradley vs. Missouri State winner
Missouri State vs. Evansville winner

Pac-12 Conference
First Round
Wednesday, March 11
Colorado 89, Utah 82
Washington State 82, Colorado 68
Second Round
Wednesday, March 11
Utah vs. Colorado
Washington State vs. Oregon State
Oregon-State 71, Utah 69
Oregon-State 78, Colorado 68
Quarterfinals
Thursday, March 12
Colorado vs. Oregon State
Washington State vs. Oregon
Washington State 68, Oregon State 56
Oregon-State 82, Colorado 68

Southland Conference Semifinals
First Round
Wednesday, March 11
Louisiana 83, Texas A&M-Commerce 63
East Texas Baptist 79, Central Arkansas 65
Quarterfinals
Thursday, March 12
Texas A&M-Commerce vs. UIW
Central Arkansas vs. UIW winner
Texas A&M-Commerce winner vs. Louisiana winner

Sun Belt Conference
First Round
Wednesday, March 11
Arkansas State 82, New Mexico State 74
South Alabama 72, Idaho State 68
Second Round
Wednesday, March 11
Arkansas State vs. ULM
South Alabama vs. Appalacian State
Arkansas State vs. ULM winner vs. South Alabama winner
Quarterfinals
Thursday, March 12
Arkansas State vs. ULM winner
South Alabama vs. Appalacian State winner
Arkansas State vs. ULM winner vs. South Alabama winner

Sun Belt Conference Semifinals
First Round
Wednesday, March 11
Arkansas State 77, Loyola 58
South Alabama 56, ULM 69
Second Round
Wednesday, March 11
Arkansas State 77, Loyola 58
South Alabama 56, ULM 69
Quarterfinals
Thursday, March 12
Arkansas State vs. Loyola
South Alabama vs. ULM
Arkansas State vs. Loyola winner vs. South Alabama winner

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US sports leagues suspend play due to pandemic

BY JIMMY GOLEN AND JAY COHEN
Associated Press

The NBA became the first major American sports league to suspend play because of the coronavirus pandemic, raising questions about the future of college basketball’s March Madness and other pro sports.

It looked as if the NBA might be moving toward playing in empty arenas before it announced that a Utah Jazz player tested positive for the coronavirus and it had decided to pause its season after Wednesday’s games.

The NHL followed suit on Thursday, with Commissioner Gary Bettman announcing that the league will ‘pause’ its season with 189 games left and uncertainty about how many more — if any — could be played before the playoffs. A handful of European hockey leagues have already called off the...